

Performers erase doubts about future

By Avigdor Zarnop
Special writer

On many occasions, one may detect a certain amount of concern about the aging, established masters — whether there will be anybody sufficiently brilliant to take their place.

One of the young talents who goes a long way toward alleviating that concern is violinist Gidon Kremer. Born in Latvia in 1947, he has an impressive list of credentials and his star is still rising.

Not to be outdone is pianist Valery Afanasyev, who was born the same year in Moscow. Both appeared last week in Orchestra Hall, in a program of the Chamber Music Society of Detroit (CMS). This program illustrated their wide and diverse areas of interest. Included were works by Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Takahashi, George Enescu and Brahms.

THE SCHUMANN Sonata for Piano and Violin was discovered only in 1856 and is seldom performed today. And infrequently does one hear such a refined and delicate Schumann played in this performance. The imaginative phrasing made this composition and unique.

There seems to be a Shostakovich revival these days. It might be related to extensive promotion of the composer's works by his son Maxim Shostakovich. Was just completed two weeks as guest conductor with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

One hears some of the Shostakovich chamber compositions more frequently than this season. The Sonata for Piano and Violin is definitely a beautiful composition, made even more rewarding and appealing in this performance. Every single note made sense.

The second portion of the program contained some controversial works. The first of these, a violin solo by the Japanese composer Takahashi, titled "Seven Roses Have One Stem" (Seven Roses Have One Stem), isn't the kind of music a classical listener like myself will go out of his way to hear. But at the hands of Kremer, it became an in-

review

tricate and artistically, articulate piece.

ANOTHER contemporary piece was a portion of "Makrokosmos" by George Crumb, written for amplified piano. Here, Afanasyev amazed the audience with his stage performance, which included an unconventional technique of plucking the piano strings while diving into the microphone. He also yelled and growled into the microphone, which was placed above the strings. Some weird and bizarre sound effects were produced by the combination of pedals and microphone.

The one aspect that came close to conventional music was a surprise quotation from Chopin's "Fantasia Impromptu" in the first of the three selections.

WHILE the high entertainment value of this piece can't be denied, I wouldn't go so far as to confuse it with music. The dominant entertaining element, in my opinion, was in observing the stage performance, rather than the sound. If one were to merely listen to a recording, the sound would be quite obnoxious.

The concluding piece was the Sonata No. 3 for Piano and Violin in D minor, by Brahms. In the many performances of this composition I have heard so far, none was as artistically delicate and meaningful as this one.

The tempo was never dull and monotonous. The first movement was much more subdued and refined than one ordinarily encounters. Even in the last movement, which is forceful and vigorous, there was no lack of subtle restraint.

With such an overwhelmingly impressive performance, these artists are certainly entitled to their share of eccentricity. For, whatever they happen to be doing, they are certainly doing well.

Music students win honors

Kirsten Agrestia and John Donnell were recently named state winners of Piano Solo Divisions by the Michigan Federation of Music Clubs at Albion College.

Kirsten, a student at Derby Middle School, also won the Amity Music Club Scholarship for All State Division at the National Music Camp, first place in

the Oakland Youth Symphony Concerto Competition and third place in the Livonia Youth Symphony Concerto Competition earlier this spring.

She recently performed on the harp for a masters class at Indiana University.

John is a student at Bloomfield Hills Junior High School.

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The location is known in the Sierra mountain range for its good logging. So many butterflies cling to a branch that they have been known to break off a tree branch. They are there from November through March.

IF YOU HAVE A "liker" in your family you will be interested in the bicycle cultivator described in the March issue of Gardens for All News, Dept.



down to earth
Alice Burlingame

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If you have brought up children you probably have an old bike in your garage. The back wheel is removed. A one-inch steel rod is used to attach a three-prong steel cultivator, the kind you buy with a wooden handle.

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