

Bruckner's music was in good hands

By Aviador Zerom
special writer

Maestro Gunther Herbig has proven himself to be extremely capable in his few previous programs with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. His latest program showed this capability is solidly rooted.

While most new appointees might tend to show their best side during

their initial engagement, with the full cooperation of the musicians, the ability to sustain that quality is what makes the difference in the long run.

While predicting the future is always a risky business, Maestro Herbig has demonstrated his skilled leadership, this time with a work that isn't universally embraced — the Symphony No. 5 by Bruckner.

Ironically, this long work turned out

review

to be more convincing, in terms of performance, than the far more familiar opening selection — the Piano Concerto No. 3 by Beethoven.

The Beethoven Concerto was played by Andre-Michel Schub, winner of the Van Cliburn competition in 1981. The shortcomings in this performance weren't due to Maestro Herbig or the orchestra, however.

In fact, the orchestral aspect of this work was among the highest in quality that I can recall in live performances. This emphasized even more the weakness in Schub's playing.

While there is no doubt in my mind that he is a very capable musician, that particular evening wasn't one of his best.

HE SHOWED good technique with all notes in place, but there was a lack of eventfulness. The dynamic changes, while following the general recommended trend, didn't go beyond the call of duty.

A case in point was the end of the development section of the first movement. This is one of the dramatic, climactic moments in that movement and calls for more than a mild crescendo.

Another example is the new theme in the middle section of the final movement (A flat major), which should depict a distinct, darker element, rather than follow the pattern of the rest of the movement.

The Bruckner Symphony was one of

the rare successful attempts to breathe life into this style, which isn't appealing to everybody. There was a consistent awareness of the grand design of this work, a concept that didn't fall in being projected and communicated to the audience.

The brass sound was exceptionally clean and well phrased. The sonorities were all-encompassing, overpowering and without unnecessary "crotchets." This is one work by the composer in which the global structure is more explicitly emphasized by references to previous movements.

WHILE NO single performance is likely to turn me into an instant Bruckner fan, this one at least made it easier to understand what this style has to offer and why some listeners find it so appealing.

To be sure, not everybody shared in this enthusiasm. Following the second movement, many people, obviously bored and frustrated, left. It was their loss, however, since they missed the best portions. These included the masterful double fugues in the final movement and the dramatic, powerful conclusion.

That final portion gave even more meaning to the previous three, well-shaped movements. There was the feeling that Bruckner reached his carefully designed goal on this occasion, even though he took a long path to get there.

Bruckner might not be for everybody, and I don't feel yet ready to listen to him too frequently. But in the right hands, his music can be a rewarding learning experience. On this occasion, one could hardly have hoped to find Bruckner to be in better hands.

Beasley-Cheyne

Mrs. Alex T. Drobish of Farmington Hills and Barry Beasley of Southfield announce the engagement of their daughter Bonnie Sue to John William Cheyne, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Cheyne of Berkley.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of North Farmington High School and a student at Oakland Community College, employed with Fitness Management Corp., owner of Silhouette American Health Spas. Her fiancé is a graduate of Berkley High School and a student at Oakland Community College, employed with Continental Cablevision.

A May wedding is planned in Ward Presbyterian Church.



Seniors, handicapped honored with concert 'Strictly American'

Senior citizens and handicapped people will be honored at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 6 in Harrison High School auditorium when the Farmington Community Band presents a concert called "Strictly American."

The annual affair will also feature the Farmington Community Chorus under the direction of Jim Whitten. Among its selections are "As Time Goes By" by J. Hupfeld, "Check to Check" by Irving Berlin and "What Is This Thing Called Love" by Cole Porter.

The concert band under the direction of R. Paul Barber will perform American selections including "Show Boat" by Jerome Kern, "A Symphonic Por-

trait" by Cole Porter, "Holiday for Winds" by Glenn Osser, "Dixieland Jamboree" arranged by John Warrington and "The Gallant Seventh" by John Phillip Sousa.

As a grand finale the band and chorus will join forces for Peter Withouk's setting of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Special transportation arrangements are being made for area nursing home residents to attend the concert. Favors will be given to all seniors and handicapped people and the traditional "house of goodies" will be served to all attending.

The concert is sponsored in cooperation with the Farmington Area Arts Commission. Also assisting is Farmington Public Schools, area Kiwanis clubs, and Boy and Girl Scout troops.

Aerobics offered

An aerobics class called "Fitness for Health" is offered twice a week for eight weeks beginning the week of May 28 in Botsford Hospital. Participants have a choice of times and days.

Registration information is given by calling the hospital's Health Promotion and Development Department, 471-8090 between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. weekdays.



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