



Opening the holidays

The Holiday Sales Show at Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association opens with a 2-5 p.m. reception Sunday, \$2 at the door. It continues, free of charge, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday-Friday, until 4 p.m. Saturday, 1518 S. Crenbrook. Pictured above are carved wood and painted folk art figures by Bruce and Diane May. Above right are porcelain bird tree ornaments by Theresa Poltowicz and ceramics by Eugene Meso. Among the more than 100 artists are Steve and Laura Pounder, functional pottery; Terry Hanson, dolls; and Ron Blanchard, Potolocky stone sculpture.

Staff photos by Mindy Saunders

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Chopin needed more sparkle

By Aigdor Zaromp
special writer

This is the year of the tricentennials — celebrating the 300th birthdays of Bach and Handel. In all this hoopla, some other anniversaries have been overshadowed.

One such was celebrated recently by the Friends of Polish Art of Metropolitan Detroit. The occasion was the 175th anniversary of the birth of Chopin. The event, which took place at the Detroit Museum of Arts on Sunday, Nov. 16, featured Polish-born pianist, Leszek Bartkiewicz. It was a sell-out.

Bartkiewicz, who came to this country some three years ago, has distinguished himself in many performances in this area since then. He is currently on the faculty of the Detroit Community Music School.

The selections on the program consisted of eight waltzes, an impromptu, Rondo a la Mazur, a nocturne, three mazurkas and the Sonata in B Minor, the latter being the biggest item on the program.

In his performance, Bartkiewicz emphasized expressiveness and delicate touch. His approach to Chopin's music is different than other leading pianists, especially of the late Rubinstein.

CHOPIN was known to be physically frail and ill, his life having been cut short by the onset of tuberculosis. This frailty seems to have been injected in

Bartkiewicz' performance of Chopin's music.

Gloom and sadness are, of course, a valid component of this music. However, it is my opinion that these were overdone in this performance. The first waltz on the list, for example, the Op.34 No. 1 in A Flat Major is titled "Valse Brillante."

It should contain more sparkle and grandeur than presented here. When listening to a recording of Rubinstein, there is a feeling of elevation and excitement — the music is separate from the person.

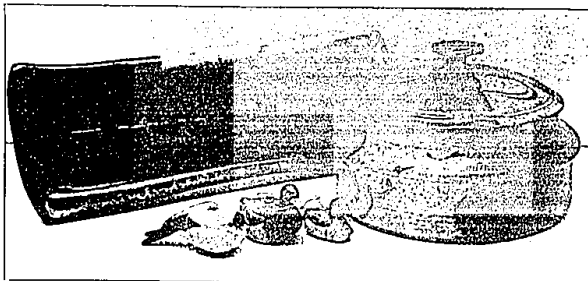
The point here isn't Bartkiewicz's failure to measure up to Rubinstein — few of the greatest pianists could even attempt it. Rather, it is my opinion that there should be more effort to emphasize other aspects of Chopin's style.

Among the less gloomy presentations was the Waltz Op. 70 No. 1 in G Flat Major, in which a sense of joyful playfulness came through.

The final sonata featured some impressive performance, with a sparkling scherzo and expressive slow movement.

The final movement had some drive to it, but some technical difficulties were apparent, possibly due to the tremendous demands of this extensive program.

Bartkiewicz has shown impressive ability on previous occasions with other composers as well. His talent is by no means restricted to one composer. Featuring Chopin was, of course, appropriate for this occasion.



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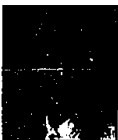
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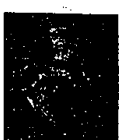
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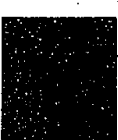
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