Schickele gives fine concert

Classical music is generally considered to be serious music as opposed to light music represented by pop and entertainment tunes, anything that isn't too scrious.

too serious.

However, one well kept secret, known among truly serious musicians, is that the greatest classical masters indulge in musical humor.

Saltro of good quality and substance reaches far beyond the trivialization of profound material. It requires the perpetrator have a sense of ingenuity of his own in addition to a deep understanding of the material being used. Few individuals can by claim to such talents.

One who can is Peter Schickele, the inspired creator of the composer P.D.Q. Bach. To lend credence to this character, it was decreed that he lived from 1807 to 1742, in that order.

The spirit of a typical program is invariably reflected in the titles of the works. The items on last week's program at Ford Auditorium included: P.D.Q. Bach, "Desceration of the flows" Overture (S. 10-8-8-7-6-8-4-3-2-1) and P.D.Q. Bach "Hinden-burg Concerto (S. LZ-129).

Other items, more briefly, consisted on a Canine Camitata, "Wachnet Art" with a solo by the houndertenor Dietrich Fischer Bauau; Echo Sonata for Two Unfriendly Groups of Instruments and a Concerto for Bassoon vs. Orchestra (S.8).

WHILE THIS latter is a genuine work by a genuine composer, it had its surprise elements a la Schickele — sudden drum beats, unexpected twists and power failures, culminating with a collapsing

podlum.

Others who made the program so highly entertaining were William Walters, serving as Schickele's assistant who was responsible for the contrived power failures and other bits of stage showmanship and conductor, Stephen Stein, Exxon Arts
Endowment conductor of the Detroit Symphony Or-

One more indispensible participant was, of



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course, the Detroit Symphony.
Few can match Schickele's versatility. On the
musical level, bis capabilities for mixing and
transforming authentic themes is actounding.
In the 'Hindenburg' Conerto, which was inspired
by J.S. Bach's six Brandenburg concerti, themes
from the originals are there, but not without tricks
and madic.

and magic.

For example, the theme from the first movement
of the fourth Brandenburg Concerto is naturally,
matter of factly molded in to Ravel's Bolero, without losing much of Bach's fugue structure.

The Concerto for Bassoon vs. Orchestra is based, predictably on Mozart's concerto for this instrument. But much of the musical universe is also traversed in the process from the 'Rite of Spring' to a modern tango. Even for those not familiar with all the musical material used, the final effect is high quality, sophisticated entertainment.

SCHICKELE is also an inspired actor. While Stein was the official conductor, some works were conducted by Schickele, allegedly because Stein was demanding a raise at the last moment. That, at least, was Schickele's excuse to take over in his shabby outfit with one of the tails of his formal coat considerably shorter than the other.

He told the audience they were going to "pay

MICHAEL FARRELL

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(Between 5 & 8 Mile Rd.) through the cars" as a result of the supposed finan-

introgatite cars as a result of the supposed manifold hagging. Schickele proved to be a capable bassoon player as he demonstrated in the Bassoon Concerto. His statement that he had to learn to play the instrument in three days because he was unable to recruit a professional performer, had to be taken with a grain of sail.

Among the bassoon feats he demonstrated were playing rather complicated onssares on the reed

Among the bassoon feats he demonstrated were playing rather complicated passages on the reed alone and winning a contest with the orchestra on echoing a sequence of pre-catenza passages of growing complexity.

Two of the many attractions in the program were the balloons and the dog's costume in the Canina. The original of that, by the way, is Bach's Canitala No. 140 "Washet Aul."

A program of P.D. Q. Bach is bound to have even the great master himself rolling with laughter—somewhere.

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