

Chamber events filled with rich repertoire

This past week was exceedingly rich in chamber music events. Each of the four described here would be deserving a separate review under normal circumstances.

The fact that they are discussed in one combined review is no reflection on their significance. Highlights are listed here in chronological order.

On Tuesday, the Renaissance City Chamber Players (RCCP) presented its program at Varner Hall, Oakland University. The program featured mostly works by Mozart, with a charming work by Stravinsky thrown in for good measure.

Most remarkable was guest pianist, Mario Delli-Ponti, who performed the Mozart Piano Concerto K. 449 in E Flat

Major (No. 14). While this isn't one of Mozart's best concerti and my own appreciation of this work is less than that of the heartbeated Delli-Ponti was successful in making it sound artistically appealing.

ITALIAN—BORN Delli-Ponti is not only a leading pianist of his native country, but is highly regarded in all musical circles.

Judging from this performance, this high regard is well justified. One drawback of the performance was the lack of supplemental winds. While these winds are considered optional, they would have significantly enhanced the texture of the dry scoring of this concerto.



Avigdor Zoromp

Such added texture was successfully provided by the two horns in the concluding Divertimento K.334 in D Major. Other works on the program were Mozart's Adagio and Fugue and the Concerto in D Major for Strings by Stravinsky.

The Lyric Chamber Ensemble presented its program in the "Music in Motion" series at the Lila R. Jones Auditorium in Oakland Community College, Royal Oak. This series features the combination of music and dance. While this isn't unprecedented — the musical ballet has been used for centuries — the setting of the particular works on the program to dance was unusual.

The participants from the Lyric Chamber Ensemble consisted of the founder and director, pianist, Fulera Horowitz; violinist, Stacy Woolley; clarinetist, Douglas Cornelison; and soprano, Earnestine Nimmons. Woolley and Cornelison are Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians. The dancing was by the Detroit Dance Collective, a group formed in 1980 by four of its present members.

Not all of the selections seemed equally suitable for a dance adaptation. The most suitable was the opening English Suite in G minor by Bach.

While a suite, by definition, is a collection of dances, a Bach suite isn't meant for dancing any more than Chopin's waltzes and mazurkas are — the music is too sophisticated.

The performance by Horowitz was

attractive and stylistically correct, even though somewhat over-embellished, in my opinion.

Among the vocal selections, I was most impressed with Nimmons' rendition of Schubert's "Shepherd on the Rock," possibly due to the fact that the music was the best. Other vocal selections by Cole Porter and Joplin had their share of attraction, but I found the singing too restrained.

Among the danced selections, the suite "Rhythme" by Darius Milhaud was the most convincing and the music, which is little known, is of reasonable quality. While the Porter and Joplin pieces can't compete with Bach, they do have a highly entertaining value and were warmly received by the audience.

SUNDAY OFFERED two chamber events. The "Concerts in the Garden" series, sponsored by the City of Southfield, presented violinist Nathan Gordon with some of his friends. Gordon, who recently retired as principal viola player in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, is currently teaching at Bowling Green University of Ohio.

He brought with him two other faculty members — pianist, Virginia Marks, and clarinetist, Edward Marks, who are husband and wife. Cellist, Marjory Chateaux, from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra also participated. The event took place at the Shops on Main Street in Tel-Twelve Mall.

The location wasn't a good one. The surrounding establishments opened earlier than expected and the noise

from the kitchen fans and appliances was rather obnoxious.

This was, however, offset by the high quality of the pieces and the performance. Among the more familiar selections were a Brahms sonata and a Mozart trio — both with one alternate instrument.

The Brahms work was his Second Sonata for Clarinet, one of the four final works written for Muchfeld, but performed here on the viola, an alternative that Brahms himself supported.

In the Mozart Trio K. 498, the clarinet substituted for the violin, so that from the global viewpoint justice was served. Two lesser known works consisted of a Beethoven duo for viola and cello, a work with some good Beethovenian qualities and a suite for piano and viola by Vivaldi.

The Vivaldi work was rather untypical — it had more variety than his characteristic tonic-dominant tri-tone alternation and its final movement, with theme and variations, sounded suspiciously similar to a theme from a Telemann sonata.

Gordon, who participated in all the selections, demonstrated again that he is one of the most impressive players on his instrument. The Marks couple proved to be extremely talented and capable and one hopes to have a chance to hear them again.

THE AFTERNOON offered another program in the American Artists Series. Joann Freeman, pianist and direc-

tor of the series, came up again with an attractive selection of unknown works and concluding with a more established one — the Piano Quintet Op. 81 by Dvořák.

The less familiar works were a Phantasy for Violin, Viola, Cello and Piano by Frank Bridge, a piano quintet by the Polish woman-composer, Grazyna Bacewicz. (If you wonder how to pronounce it — give me a buzz) and a trio for clarinet, viola and piano by Leslie Bassett.

Bassett, a prolific Michigan composer residing at the University of Michigan, was also the guest lecturer at the Prelude feature, in which he talked about his music.

The Bridge work was one of the composer's early compositions, featuring Romantic style. The work by Bacewicz (1893-1969) is a serious, complicated work influenced by French Impressionist style, worthy of consideration. The Bassett trio has its share of attractive passages, featuring a prominent role for the viola with lines that are rather inspired.

The Dvořák quintet was performed in an ecstatic manner. I found the performance of the poignant second movement most enchanting. In the faster movements there were some stylistic clashes, but the dominant feeling was that of overwhelming enthusiasm. These exciting Dvořák sounds brought this eventful week to an end, with the exception of the task of writing these lines.



Bob Welbel

Strong drama powerfully done

Performances of "Extremities" by the Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford will continue at 8 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays, Feb. 21-22 and Feb. 28-March 1, at the guild's playhouse in Redford. For tickets, call 522-0657.

Fireplaces generally conjure up memories of happy times, glowing embers, pictures on the mantel and a clock that's only accurate twice a day.

Life's pleasant memories, however, (indeed our very lives) can be shattered at any moment by unforeseen events, as depicted by the Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford's current offering, "Extremities." A fireplace also can be used as a cage to detain a would-be rapist.

The idea of a homey fireplace as a cell for a man who is more beast than human is somehow ironic. This is not a play of irony, however, but one of brutal reality. Author William Mastrosimone shows how rape degradation and humiliates women. No doubt he would be proud of this guild production that presents the difficult subject with feeling and understanding.

The first scene packs as much emotional power as you'll ever likely experience. The language is explicit. The action graphic. No rape occurs, but it might as well have. The rapist has defiled our most tender moment — and we are all lesser beings.

His attempt is foiled because the woman grabs a can of bug spray during the attack and gives him a shot in the eyes. While he is momentarily blinded, she ties him with cord, stuffs him in the fireplace and chains the front with a bicycle.

NOW THE puzzle. What to do with him. Call the police? No, they would

only acquit him for lack of evidence. Kill him? Now there's a thought. Presently, her roommates come home.

The discussion that follows reveals the complexity of the moral dilemma. No two women bring the same values or experiences to the situation. Does this "animal" deserve justice? Did the woman entice him with her scanty attire? Is the woman's or the man's story the correct version of events? The relationship between the three women is severely tested as they work out the answers.

At the center of the controversy is Raoul, the rapist, played expertly by Alan Madeline. He was repulsive from the beginning (with his obscene endearments and sadistic commands) to the middle (as he used his street smarts to play one woman against the other) to the end (as he pitifully begged for understanding).

SIHAWN DALE is Margorie, Raoul's intended victim. She plays the attack scene with terrific reality. It doesn't get much better than that. She wields a mean hammer at Raoul (and sometimes her roommates) throughout, although at times her physical actions could have been more decisive. Vicki Cravens looked the very essence of the social worker, Patricia, who mouthed sociological jargon in her attempt to talk sense to Margorie. She had the difficult task of showing compassion for Raoul. And she did it very well.

Susan Shoel is convincing as Terry, a cheerful young woman who is all for calling the police and getting the incident out of their lives as quickly and painlessly as possible.

As always, Warren Reinecker's set established the proper mood and was finely detailed.

auditions

Open auditions in the midwest region for Month Pictures "Whiskey River" will be held at Huron High School at 2727 Fuller/Geddes Road in Ann Arbor on Monday and Tuesday, March 3 and 4 from 5 to 10 p.m.

The company will be casting 10 principal characters for this action/adventure film centering on four ex-war buddies who reunite a year later, hopefully leaving the war-torn fields of Vietnam behind them. Set in northern Michigan, the drama uses Michigan locations for 90 percent of the fictional "Whiskey River" set.

Marion T. Chaney III, a southeastern Michigan filmmaker, nearly a decade, will direct. Gregory J. Laney, a 1985 business graduate of the University of Michigan, will produce. "Whiskey River" is privately funded.

Monday's audition is for males age 20 to 40, females age 20 to 35 and males 40 to 50 will audition on Tuesday. A resume and photograph will be required at the time of the audition although acting experience is not necessary. For more information, call 434-1010.

Noel Harrison stars in comedy

The national touring company of the hit Broadway and London comedy "Noises Off," starring Noel Harrison, will perform at 8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 27, at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor.

Tickets at \$15.50 and \$25.50 are available at the box office from 11

a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. For more information, call 663-9397. "Noises Off" ran for two seasons on Broadway and is currently in its third year in London. The play is about the comic misadventures of a floundering British acting troupe touring the small towns of England in an awful sex farce called "Nothin' On."

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