

Pianist Cherkassky impresses

By Avigdor Zaromp
special writer

There were four separate nationalities represented on the Detroit Symphony Orchestra program last week. Maestro Gunther Herbig, whose background consists of two nationalities (born in Czechoslovakia to Austrian parents), presented these works with distinction.

Three of these works fell in the category of "program music," that is, music based on folklore or literary characters. These were Ravel's "Mother Goose" Suite, the tone poem "Dan Jann" by Richard Strauss and the Scythian Suite by Prokofiev.

The solo work on the program featured the Russian pianist Shura Cherkassky, who played Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E Flat Major. In the orchestral selections, the DSO exhibited some of its best form. In the Ravel suite, the colorful and clear texture attacked the senses in

a way hard to resist. At times, the orchestral sound was on the heavy side, supplementing the French hors d'oeuvres with some wiener schnitzel, but leaving enough airiness to make the music breath.

THE "DON JUAN" suite was the closest to Herbig's home territory, and it was presented with dramatic vigor. Careful attention was given, however, to the refined and delicate episodes in the middle portion.

In Prokofiev's ballet suite, the raw texture of the harsh movements was cultivated by the high quality orchestral sound, with still sufficient spontaneous energy left. There was the right balance between spontaneity and orchestral discipline.

Pianist Shura Cherkassky was most impressive with his Liszt performance. As is the case with most of Liszt's music, this concerto requires a tremendous amount of technique and Cherkassky had plenty. His execution of even the most chal-



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langing passages was clean and without undue strain.

He delivered the intensity wherever it was needed without pounding the piano to pieces. Even more important than the display of technique, however, was the fact that the musical aspects were given proper attention.

IN THE SOFT, slow passages, Cherkassky exhibited impressive control, by being able to express the delicate shades, without compromising the well-shaped phrases. A case in point was the almost perfect mingling of the piano with the ringing sound of the triangle.

In the more robust passages his tempo tended to be spontaneous, causing occasional rifts with the or-

chestra, which were, however, temporary and minor.

In the heavy textured orchestral passages, Cherkassky was sometimes overwhelmed by the orchestra and Herbig had to watch the keyboard to adjust his tempo. Overall, it was one of the more satisfying performances of this concerto that I have heard.

This week is the final one of the DSO regular series. Herbig will be conducting works by Webern, Vivaldi and Bloch. Collet Janor Starker will be soloist.

Avigdor Zaromp, born in Poland and educated in Israel and the United States, has a PHD in math and has studied piano, music theory and history.

Rochester Symphony closes its season

The Rochester Symphony Orchestra will present its final subscription series concert of the season, "Something for Everyone, A Concert of Favorite Movements" at 8 p.m. Saturday. It will again be at the Rochester High School Auditorium, Livernois and Walton Blvd.

Some of the talent from the orchestra will be featured.

Allen McNair, concertmaster, will be soloist in Vivaldi's "Summer" from the "Four Seasons" to complete his performance of the whole cycle.

The Haydn Trumpet Concerto in E flat will be performed by Paul Roache, principal trumpet and man-

ager of the orchestra.

Linda Borushko, principal clarinet, will perform Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. To round out the program from each of three well-loved symphonies, the Kalinikov Symphony No. 1, Tchaikovsky No. 6 and Brahms Symphony No. 3.

Tickets, \$6 regular, \$4, seniors and students, may be purchased at Janet Varner, Main St.; Hiller's Mens Store, North Hill Shopping Plaza and at the door.

The first concert of next season will be in October featuring Ursula Walker and her Trio.

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