

# Pianist kept program from wilting

By Avigdor Zaremp  
special writer

Beethoven has been attracting large crowds for many generations. This fact has been taken for granted by many musicians and conductors. But even this rule has some exceptions. Such an exception occurred last Sunday at Meadow Brook, where an all-Beethoven program was given, with DSO music director Gunther H-rbig conducting.

The small turnout was in contrast to opening night on June 19, in which the combination of Beethoven's Ninth and master violinist Itzhak Perlman, who played the Mendelssohn concerto, drew a record crowd.

While few events or performers can match the crowds attracted to Perlman, one can normally expect a better turnout for a Beethoven program. Indeed, there is nothing wrong with the "Egmont" overture, the Piano Concerto No. 1 and the Symphony No. 5, the works presented on this latest program. All of these are compositions of high quality, if quality is to be the sole criterion. Other factors, however, are also at work when appeal to listeners is concerned.

Most works, including the best masterpieces, have a saturation point. One may point out some pieces that seem to defy this rule — the Pachelbel Canon, Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" and a few others. These, however, don't have the high artistically nutritional value contained in the Beethoven works mentioned above. The most popular of these works, the Symphony No. 5, turned out to be the biggest liability of that program.

This work, one may recall, was also used to close the DSO's final regular performance at Ford Auditorium just about a month ago. In last Sunday's performance, it was already showing signs of fatigue.

For example, the fermata or pause between the first and second four-note phrases was so brief as to render it ineffective. There were some serious drawbacks as well. In the second movement the reiteration of the fast flowing theme in the strings was obliterated by the pulsating chords. For the casual listener, this deficiency is hardly noticeable — the inner ear anticipates the familiar approach.

IN SPITE of these flaws, this



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most popular symphony was not without its rewarding moments, but this shouldn't be construed as a recommendation to perform it again without a reasonable time lapse.

The most positive aspect of the program was the Concerto No. 1 performed by the young Russian pianist Sergei Edelmann. His rendition of this lively work made the program, as a whole, into a worthwhile event. If his name is not as established yet, it is hoped that this will change in the future.

Pianistic ability such as his certainly merits a much larger crowd. His phrases were clean and meticulous for the most part, with only some isolated slips. The artistic treat-

ures in the second movement were presented with a rare sense of depth and revelation.

In the outer movement, there was the right balance between the elements of refinement and intensity. There was a good left-hand technique in the applicable passages, yielding the right mixture between the emerging Beethoven style and the still existing Mozart influence. Edelmann is one of those gifted artists who merit repeat engagements.

The program this week will be dedicated to music by American composers. Works by Schuman, Gershwin, Ives and Copland will be performed. Guest conductor will be David Zinman. There will be fireworks following the program.

## Collector strikes a new pose

"Rex Lamoreux," a watercolor portrait of the Pontiac resident and art collector, is among the works exhibited in "Immortalization," an exhibit of work by Center for Creative Studies College of Art and Design alumni. The portrait was done by Mary Aro. The exhibit, at the Detroit Historical Museum, addresses the rights of an urban area. It runs through Sunday, Aug. 31. For more information call the Center for Creative Studies, 872-3118.

## Science serves gardeners, too

down to earth  
**Alice Burlingame**

It is important for gardeners to realize that science is an important part of our favorite hobby.

It is never too late for us to be aware of scientific contribution in the handling of seeds and plant material.

Scientists have found it is better to wash soil away from a plant before transplanting it. Plants take 50 percent of their nutrition from the air while 10 percent comes from the ground.

Lettuce seed will germinate in 10 days instead of two or three weeks if the seed is soaked in water for one hour. If the seed is exposed for two hours under a 60-watt filament lamp before planting, it will germinate even more rapidly.

IF RAINFALL is over 20 inches a year, the water and soil will be acid. Otherwise, alkaline predominates.

If you cut flowers between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., the blooms will last for a longer period of time.

If black pepper is sprinkled over the tips of iris leaves and their rhizomes, the rhizomes will increase.

Plants grown in the sun respond best to organic fertilizer.

If you wish to analyze the condition of your soil, avoid contact with the skin and have a clean tool for examining the soil. Roots rarely penetrate deeper than eight inches.

For fast seed germination, soak the seeds in one teaspoon of house-

hold ammonia in one gallon of water. Soak small seeds for one hour and large seeds for half a day, then wash the seeds in clear water.

WHEN WE REMOVE a plant from the soil and examine it, scientists tell us that in addition to the roots we can easily see, there are minute hair roots which remain in the soil.

The above comments will make you realize your successes and failures in the field of horticulture are often dependent upon a knowledge of plants and their needs. It is always a temptation to share with my readers the academic training and study I have gained through the years.

We may expect some dry, hot days in July and August and gardeners shudder at the thought of dried-out lawns, shrubs and vegetables. To make matters worse, this is the time of year when city fathers often warn us to conserve water. Under such conditions, the use of Canadian sphagnum peat moss can do wonders to keep plants moist. It will hold 12 to 20 times its weight in water.

It has the greatest moisture-retaining capacity of any organic material. Work it into clay soil. It will aerate the soil. In addition, it binds the soil and helps it to retain fertilizer. Sphagnum peat is 98-percent organic and is free from harmful salts, chemicals and insect life.

## DSO celebrates July 4

Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the direction of David Zinman presents, appropriately enough, a program of American composers for its Independence Day concert.

The programs are set for 8 p.m. Thursday, July 3, and 8 p.m. Sunday, July 6, at Meadow Brook Music Festival on the Oakland University campus, near Rochester.

David Golub is the featured pianist for the program that includes William Schuman's "New England Triptych," George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," Charles Ives'

"Third Symphony" and the Four Dance Episodes from Aaron Copland's "Rodeo."

Zinman, music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, has been head of the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the Rochester Philharmonic. Golub has performed extensively with Isaac Stern.

The program is made possible through a grant from the Chrysler Foundation. For ticket information, call the Meadow Brook Music Festival Box office, 377-2910.

## Be an almost-diva with La Scala opera

Do your Walter Mitty dreams include visions of being spear by shield with opera stars during a performance? In a world of Madonna wannabes are you a Maria Callas wanna-be?

The folks at EXPO 86 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada are looking for dreamers like you. They need 19 supers and 35 extras to appear in non-singing roles during Teatro alla Scala of Milan's production of "I Lombardi" Aug. 24 to Sept. 4, at the EXPO in Vancouver's Pacific Coliseum. Selected participants must be available from Aug. 13 to Sept. 4 for rehearsals and performances.

A total of 19 supers, who are re-

quired to have some stage experience, and 35 extras are needed. The production needs 13 men and six women to play crusaders, Turkish soldiers, harem girls and other general character roles. These roles require a considerable amount of participation in the production.

The EXPO promoters also need 36 men for roles which don't require as much acting.

To apply, send a letter including your name, address, telephone number, age, height, gender and a brief description of any performing experience to: Lesley MacMillan, assistant supervisor, Royal Bank/EXPO 86 World Festival, P.O. Box 1086, Station A, Vancouver, B.C. Canada, V6C 2X5.



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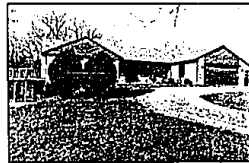
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