

# Pianist handles Schoenberg challenge well

By Avigdor Zaromp  
special writer

The latest Detroit Symphony Orchestra concert at Ford Auditorium offered some unusual features: two were works that are seldom performed — the Symphony No. 32 by Mozart and the Piano Concerto by Schoenberg.

The first of these had been performed here only once before, in 1979, and the Schoenberg concerto received its first performance here on this occasion.

Another new presence on this program was that of visiting conductor, Jan Krenz. This Polish-born conductor has made a strong impression so far in other countries and continents.

If his name isn't well known to audiences in this area, this may change. Judging from this event, Maestro Krenz is a person of impressive ability and talent.

**THE SOLOIST** in the Schoenberg concerto was far more familiar and many would say more liked, than the work he was performing. Emanuel Ax was here as recently as last season, when he performed a Beethoven concerto.

His ability in both technique and musical perception is a fact that few would dispute. The Schoenberg concerto, academic in nature and, consequently, hard for many listeners, professional or otherwise, to grasp, poses a challenge to the musician attempting to get it across. Thus, the reasons for its unpopularity are obvious.

Ax overcame many of these difficulties. He made the atonal patterns as clear and accessible as possible, treating the composition as a work of art rather than an abstract study



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in tone rows.

Ax obliged by playing a Brahms Intermezzo as an encore. While Schoenberg could never compete with Brahms in my mind, the performance of the Schoenberg concerto was illuminating in terms of expanding one's horizons.

**THE PROGRAM** opened with Mozart's Symphony No. 32, which is among the less performed of Mozart's symphonies. It is essentially a one-movement work with a slow middle portion.

Originally it was composed for one of Mozart's unfinished operas, "Zaide." This work sounded ripe and complete in this performance in

spite of its limited scope.

The most impressive orchestral presentation was in Dvorak's "New World" Symphony, performed in the second portion of the program. Due to the popularity of this work, there is no novelty in the mere fact of its performance and one has to find

other means to hold the attention. Maestro Krenz proved extremely capable in that respect. The full, saturated orchestra delivered its well-focused passages with an intensity that didn't obscure the clarity. The broad dynamic range gave this work an almost Brahmsian impact, especially when certain climactic spots were reached.

It was one of the rare occasions in which Dvorak sounded like a profound composer, rather than a merely popular one.

Krenz proved to be an extremely capable conductor on this occasion. It is hoped that he will be scheduled to visit here again.



## Pop series guest

The Larry Nozaro Quartet will be the guests for the opening concert of the season for the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra at 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25 at Seaholm High School, Lincoln at Cranbrook, Birmingham. The season continues with two more pops concerts at Seaholm and three classical concerts at West Bloomfield High School. Nozaro and quartet will play a new work arranged for them by Matt Michaels as well as Country Suite for jazz quartet and orchestra by James Hartway. For ticket information, call 643-7288.

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