Kottler overcomes obstacles at benefit

Mischa Kottler, the guru of pin-nists and music lovers in this area, recently performed an all-Chopin re-cital at Meadow Brook Hall for the benefit of the American Artists Se-

The setting, in the former home of Matilda Wilson Dodge on the Oakland University campus, was an ide-al atmosphere for the music of this

romantic composer. The grand piano, however, was far less suitable.
Joann Freeman, founder and artistle director of this respected series, which starts its season at Cranbrook Kingswood School Auditorium
Jan. 8, introduced her former teacher and guest and mentioned that the
instrument wasn't of the quality elther of them were accustomed to.

But a Kottler performance always
has a special magic about it. The
quality of his music making is from



a bygone era. One of his teachers, Emil von Sauer, was a student of Liszt. That accounts for some of Kot-tler's stylistic authenticity. And his



After the all-Chopin concert, Mischa Kottler took a moment to relax with benefit chairman Doe Heinzerling, left and Joann Freeman, American Artists Series, founder and artistic dirtec-

Artists Series holds successful benefit

The American Artists Series Iirist benefit at Meadow Brook Itali late last month has already generated enthuisam for a second.

Mischa Kottler, planist, played an all-Chopin piano program in a setting reminiscent of royal salons of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The whole event had a romantic ir about it from the music tiself to the amblance of the great hall where the cocktall reception was held after the concert to the eleganty served dinner in the Christopher Wren dining room.

About 100 people came for the black-tle-optional affair and warmly applianced Kottler and interestricts founder, artistic direction and the concern of the black-tle-optional affair and the program of the black-tle-optional affair and interest of the services founder, artistic direction.

The gracious chairman presented those who worked with her on

this first benefit, now destined to become an annual event, a long stem American beauty rose— Evelyn Plotnik, Jo Kessler, Lois Anderson, Frances Watson, Mari-lyn Karabeinick, Gillian von Drehle (in absentia), Ned Heinzer-ling (ther husband) and Freeman. Kottler, too, received roses.

Freeman, a concert planist, started the series more than 17 years ago. It has continued to attract audiences over the years because of her adventuresome programming of chamber music events, the quality of her core of instrumentalists — the American Artists Series Chamber Players — and the variety that she builds into each season.

For information on the series, 647-2230.

ing gives him an annity to surmount formidable britiers, one being the planto.

The harsh sound was apparent only during the first few phrases. Soon, the seductive sounds of Chopin's "Barcarole" took over and the singing quality of the music transcended the limitations of the instrument. The encompassing themes of the Sonata in B minor overshadowed all else. Other large-scale works, the Ballad in F minor and the Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise had many shining passages.

Few plants, even those with astonishing technical skills, come close to finding as much beauty in this mu-

sic as Kottler does.

The quality of the instrument may have been distracting to the artist. There were some technical slips and lapses, some of these may also have been caused by the angle of the lighting, which he found uncomforbibe. But, despile these, one felt the rare miracle of spirit overcoming matter. Under no other hands could such a deficient instrument produce such refined music.

Kottler played several encores for the appreciative audience. The last of these, the Waltz in C sharp minor, is one he customarily uses as a significant of the statement of the statement of the significant in the seemingly simple piece, using an unusual sequence toward the end.



Musicale gives Christmas program

Birmingham Musicale will give a Christmas program at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 11 at the Con-gregational Church of Birmingham, 1000 Cran-brook at Woodward, Bloomfield Hills.

The program, "Orpheus: Song," offered by the Musicale as its season's gift to the public, will be followed by a special Christmas tea.

ing the Orpheus theme, ending with the Toccata from Symphony No. 5 for Organ by C.M. Widor. Olson is on the organ and plano faculty at Ma-comb Community College, is organist at St. Owen Catholic Church and is director of the Rochester

Catholic Church and is director of the isoenesse Catholic Chorate. Fluits Johanna Beth Bowers, a new member, is a 1985 graduate of Northwestern University. She will play "Melodie — Dance of the Blessed Spir-ies" from "Orpheus" by Christoph W. von Gluck and "La Flute de Pan" by Jules Mouguet.

Gail Mitchell, soprano, teaches voice at Macomb Community and Mercy colleges. She will sing Three Mystical Songs by Atce Rowley and will be accompanied by Fontaine Laing.

Concluding the program will be the Birming-ham Musicale Choral Ensemble directed by Mary Pardee and accompanied by Eleanor Whelan.

Mary Johnson is chairman of the day and Jean Conway and Karen Mitchell are tea ename For information, call Mary Pardee, 646-3093.



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outsized. A choir composed of the Southfield High Madri-A choir composed of the Southiled High Madri-gal Singers, the Schooleraft College Community Choir and the Southfield-Lathrup High School Ma-drigal Singers will sing some unaccompanied pieces and then will be joined by the orchestra in works by Bach, Bennett and a medley of tradi-tional holiday songs.

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The concert will open with the orchestra play-ing Rimsky-Korsakov's Polonalse from the Christmas Eve Sulte and close with selections from the Nutcracker Ballet.

Douglas Morrison will conduct the orchestra and David Jorlett is the choir director. Tickets are \$7 and \$5 for seniors and students under 18. For ticket information, call 644-9203.



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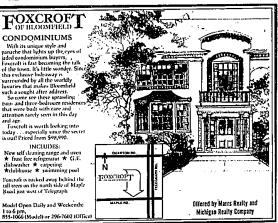
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