

League's home tour includes surprises

The National Home Furnishings League is sponsoring a tour of five homes 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 30. The five homes are in Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and West Bloomfield.

Each of the homes was done by a well-known area designer and each reflects a different lifestyle, type of furnishings and architecture.

• A cluster home in Bloomfield Hills is the residence of a couple who moved from a large house. They like the combination of choice antiques and clean line contemporary furnishings.

ishings. This is comfortable formal living in a contemporary atmosphere.

• A Birmingham home built in the 1930s was short on architectural detailing and long on challenges for the designer. Much has been added to give it charm and eye-appeal. There is a greenhouse off the dining room. Important furniture includes a George I flip top desk and a 17th century French armchair. The house is a series of contrasts, contemporary art against a traditional background and trompe l'oeil marbled

preview

moldings.

• New home in Birmingham is a mix of contemporary and Victorian styling. The owner, a designer, is a contemporary painter and her work is shown throughout the house. The multi-story greenhouse front is striking.

The classic furnishings are com-

plemented by antique, Art Deco chandeliers in the kitchen and dining room, hand decorated sconces in the living room and handpainted wall paper in the entry.

• A West Bloomfield home which meets the needs of residents who combine business entertaining and large family functions incorporates lots of exciting contemporary furnishings. In a circular conversation area there are five orchid suede chairs trimmed in black. At the opposite end are two black and white Deco-inspired sofas, a glass top fossil and mother-of-pearl cocktail

table plus two Swan pull-up chairs. All face a Lowell Nesbitt iris on the fireplace. The dining room walls are brushed silver tiles.

• Easy entertaining is the byword for the couple who moved from a large, traditional house to this 3,000-square-foot ranch. They have grown children, so this one could be all theirs. The walls of the library are covered in black ultrasuede. A gray pearlized sofa sets off the texture of the walls and black lacquer plantation shutters complete the sophisticated look.

Tickets, \$10 each, have maps and League members will be in each home to assist visitors and answer questions.

Tickets are available at: The Designer Group, 1700 Stutz, Suite 34, Troy; Gorman's, 20145 Telegraph, Southfield; Gorman's, 1465 West Big Beaver, Troy; Gorman's Fairlane, 260 Town Center Drive, Dearborn; Pearson's Interiors, 2773 West Big Beaver; Walter Herz, 350 Pierce, Birmingham; Relly and Sands, Ltd., 397A Fisher Road, Grosse Pointe; and Mary Lee Draperies, 1939 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills.

Soprano presents Mahler songs with sensitivity

By Avigdor Zarnoff
special writer

Last week's Detroit Symphony Orchestra program featured two unusual items. The first was "Livres pour Orchestre," a 1968 work by the contemporary Polish composer Witold Lutoslawski. The other rare item was the "Ruechert Lieder," a song cycle by Mahler based on poems by the German poet Friedrich Rueckert.

Of these, the Lutoslawski work proved to be by far the most controversial. Lutoslawski, a leading Polish composer, is universally acknowledged and respected for some of his works, among them his Symphony No. 3, which was performed here last season to substantial acclaim. The "Livres pour Orchestre" ("Book for Orchestra") uses some of the latest Western experimental stylistic techniques — including quarter notes, string glissando and aleatory (chance) music. Maestro Gunther Herbig prefaced the performance with an explanation from the stage. I found that far more rewarding than the music.

review

Because of the explanation it was clear, for example, that the orchestra was out of tune in the normal sense — the strange effect was due to the indicated quarter notes.

While this lets the musicians off the hook as far as technique is concerned (and I never had any doubts about that), the music still sounded out of tune to most of the listeners I talked to.

This doesn't prove anything, to be sure — the quality of art can't be determined by a public opinion poll. But if this music has a profound artistic message, it failed to reach me on this occasion. It apparently is one of those things that have to be performed in the line of duty.

A redeeming grace was offered by the Mahler song. Canadian soprano Edith Wiens performed these with rare sensitivity and insight. For most part, her singing was characterized by clarity both in terms of the notes as well as in the diction. Her voice was impressive in its rich texture, without being obscured by excessive vibrato. Even the higher notes were firm, with few exceptions.

Herbig conveyed the orchestral part well, which is far more than a mere accompaniment. It was supportive of the singing, complementing it without infringing upon it. As in the previous week's performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 5, Herbig showed his skill with this composer's music.

Pro dancers help program

There will be a stamp of professionalism on the "An Evening of Dance" program to be presented by Cranbrook Kingswood School at 8 tonight, Friday and Saturday at the Performing Arts Center, 520 Leno Pine, Bloomfield Hills.

Highlight of the performance, directed by Jessica Sinclair, will be "Movement in Space," by Michael Angelo Davis, Sinclair's former student who now performs professionally in Hollywood and Atlanta.

Davis, here especially for this show, choreographed his own dance and assisted Sinclair by sharing his professional dance techniques with the cast.

Another feature will be a modern piece choreographed by Sinclair called "Fashion," with costumes created by local fashion designer Betty Appel, who is nationally recognized, and music by David Bowie.

Included will be performances by two Strickland Dance Award recipients who choreographed their own routines; dances choreographed to music by Supertramp and Bix Beiderbeck; segments incorporating a fiber

sculpture made by a Cranbrook Academy of Art student; and a 20s extravaganza. The finale is based on Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum's Orpheus Fountain, with music by Ramsey Lewis.

Tickets are \$3 for adults, \$2 for students and \$1 for seniors and children under 11. For information, call 645-3440.

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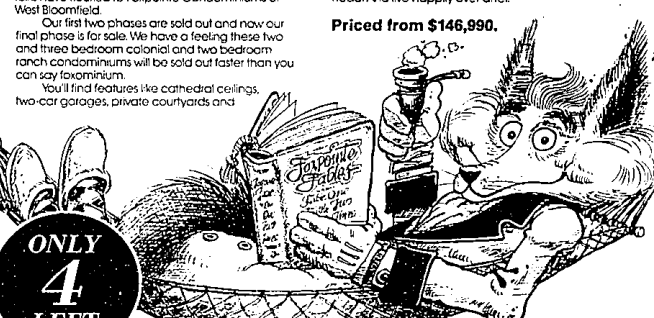
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