

Mark Votapek is a 'high' point man at Scandinavian finale

By Mary Jane Doerr
special writer

MARK VOTAPEK likes basketball and he looks like a basketball player.

But Mark, son of the noted pianist Ralph Votapek, is a graceful, technically intriguing cellist who towers over his instrument as if it were a violin. Last Saturday evening at Southfield High School, he performed a delicate Bocherini "Concerto for Cello and Orchestra in B-flat" with the Scandinavian Symphony, under conductor Douglas Morrison's direction.

The performance was filled with lots of cadenzas. Votapek has a very clear, sweet sound, which he seems to produce quite effortlessly. Much of the concerto's solo part lay in the upper ranges of the cello. No matter how high the notes, though, Votapek maintained that same singularity of tone quality and gentle resilience.

BOCHERINI WAS a contemporary of Haydn and is noted for the elegance of his chamber music. Morrison reduced the size of his orchestra to a predominantly string orchestra for the accompaniment, an accompaniment that consisted of an equal balance between orchestra and soloist.

Votapek, a 19-year-old freshman at Indiana University, studies with the noted cellist Janos Starker. Last year he was second in the Morosini Mutual Quest for Excellence in Detroit. In 1985, he was the winner of the concerto competition at Interlochen.

The major work of the evening

review

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was Schubert's great C Major symphony. Morrison's approach was exacting and deliberate yet maintained the continuity of the complex work. The brass and the woodwinds were especially strong throughout the piece. Most impressive was the shading of the orchestra in the opening and at the end of the second movement and the dynamics at the end of the fourth movement.

THE PLEASANT PROGRAM opened with the Verdi's Overture to La Forza del Destino. The opera's famous "fate" theme is almost as well known as that of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Morrison had a tendency to cut notes short in a blunt, less romantic conducting style. As the performance continued, the clear, clean response of the orchestra made the emotional climatic buildup at the ending more in keeping with the lush Veridian impact.

The concert marked the close of the Scandinavian Symphony's 58th season.

Pops concert ends Metropolitan season

Metropolitan Youth Symphony will wind up its sixth season with a spring pops concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in Royal Oak Dondoro High School auditorium.

Featured will be the string orchestra led by Judith Culler playing the theme from "New York, New York" and Quagmire's Fiesta Mexicana.

The concert orchestra, conducted by Douglas Bianchi, will offer Bernstein's "West Side Story" and Offenbach's Ballet Parisien. Alan Mac-

Nair, conductor of the symphony orchestra's senior group, will perform Mozart's Overture from "The Magic Flute," Copland's "Rodeo" and a "Star Wars" medley by Williams.

Comprised of 223 students from 23 Detroit area communities, the symphony will mark National Music Week with a noon performance Saturday, May 7, in Tel-Twelve Mall, sponsored by the Birmingham Musicale.

Tickets for Saturday's event may be purchased at the door for \$3.50.

briefly speaking

• SYMPHONY AUDITIONS

The new Livonia Symphony Orchestra, formerly the Oakway Symphony orchestra, announces auditions for the 1988-89 season. All areas of instrumentation are open. The new orchestra will provide an opportunity for professional, semiprofessional, college and upper high school musicians to perform in a community orchestra. Private study is a requirement of high school students.

Auditions will be 5-7 p.m. in the music wing of Madonna College, 36600 Schoolcraft Road, on April 29, 30, May 1, 6, 7 and 8. For audition appointments, call the Livonia Community Resource Department, Information Center, 421-2000, Ext. 351, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

• OAKWAY CABARET

Oakway Symphony winds things up at 8 p.m. Saturday with its annual cabaret concert in Madonna College. Program emcee will be baritone Bob Taylor. Guest conductors will be Madonna President Sister Franceline and Ernest Jones. Also planned are an appearance by Julie Filipiak, "Miss Livonia" singing selections from "The King and I," and an audience singalong.

For more information/reservations, call 355-9280 or 353-9128.

• PHOTOGRAPHERS MEET

More than 2,500 from across the Midwest will meet this weekend at the Dearborn Civic Center for the spring photo trade show, Photorama USA.

New and used photo equipment will be available to buy, sell or trade. Allan Lowry will conduct a workshop on model photography that will include models in studio setting with special lighting and backdrops. The public may participate by bringing their cameras.

The show is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$4. The civic center is at 15801 Michigan Ave.

• SPRING PERENNIAL SALE

The Friends of the University of Michigan Botanical Garden will hold its annual spring perennial sale 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1.

The spring sale offers a selection of perennials, wildflowers, herbs, rock garden plants, ferns and hanging baskets. The sale offers a wide range of difficult-to-obtain plants that are highly desirable and have proven growth records in this climate. In addition, there will be information stations set up for interested gardeners with questions. Experi-

enced gardeners will be on hand to answer questions. The gardens are at 1800 Dixboro Road, and can be reached by taking I-94 west to U.S. 23 North and exit on Plymouth Road. Turning right, take Plymouth Road east one mile to Dixboro, turn right.

• QUILT SHOW

Trinity Piecemakers and Trinity United Methodist Church of Allen Park will hold a quilt and craft show at the church, 9077 Allen Road, Allen Park, Friday, May 13, and Saturday, May 14. Show hours are 1-8 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Donation is \$1. Quilt appraisals will be offered on Friday by Birmingham quilter Merry Silber. There will be no charge for verbal appraisal, but a \$5 charge for a written appraisal.

• COUNTRY CRAFTS

Country Crafts and Fine Arts Show will be held this weekend in Edgar Sports Arena, Lyndon and Farmington roads, Livonia. Friday hours are 9-5 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

• SMOCKERS' TEA

Handsmocked articles and French hand sewing-by-machine will be featured at the annual tea sponsored by the Village Smockers from 10 a.m.

to 1 p.m. Thursday, May 5, in First United Methodist Church, 22124 Garrison, Dearborn.

Refreshments and baby sitting will be available. The group is a member of the national smoking guild, Smoking Arts Guild of America. Membership is open to any interested person.

• DEARBORN YOUTH SYMPHONY

A tribute to teachers will be the focal point of the final concert of the season of the Dearborn Youth Symphony. The concert will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday in Stout Junior High School, Dearborn. For more information, call 943-3354 or 278-1350.

• HULL-SKERITT EXHIBIT

Opening of the Back Door Studio, 13922 Michigan Ave., between Schaefer and Greenfield roads, will be marked with exhibits by area artists Beth Hull and Les Skeritt.

Both Hull of Southfield and Skeritt of Livonia are former Visual Art Association of Livonia instructors. Skeritt will exhibit recent drawings and paintings. Hull, formerly of Livonia, will show canvas constructions and paintings. The show will continue through April 30. The gallery will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday.

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