

Herbig conducts with authority

Beethoven is a fundamental part of classical music. Music director Gunther Herbig is well aware of this. Season after season he uses Beethoven's music as a sure-fire way to attract large audiences — which are hard to come by.

The ticket sales for opening night last Thursday were augmented by more than 750 that were given away. But, however it came to be, the large audience was encouraging.

Moreover, it turned out to be a most educated and appreciative audience, which listened to the music without the continual whispers and coughing that is all too common.

The works featured — Leonore Overture No. 3 and symphonies 1 and 5 — are among Beethoven's most-established works. As such, their performance is unlikely to make history or to break barriers to new frontiers. But a capable, inspired and convincing performance will always impress the attentive listener.



Avigdor Zaromp

tener with the musical treasures even after repeated exposures.

EVEN BEETHOVEN'S music may suffer from over-exposure, to be sure. His Fifth, for example, had just been performed this summer by the Israel Philharmonic at Meadow Brook.

Some people are critical of Maestro Herbig for the lack of innovative repertoire. But when new works, are performed, some of the same people proclaim their worthlessness. This is but one of the many challenges in trying to appeal to a broad audience without substantial compromise in artistic and musical quality.

Whether familiarity with Beethoven's music will breed contempt or create a renewed sense of awe and admiration depends very much on the performing forces. The criticism of Herbig for his failure to feature a wider repertoire may have some validity. But few can deny his convincing authority with the standard repertoire, especially Beethoven's music.

On this program these masterpieces were impressive in authenticity and artistic integrity. There were no unusual tempi, accents or accelerations. The fermata (pause) in the opening theme of the Fifth was just long enough to convey the dramatic impact without overdoing it.

Giving concert

Pianist Leszek Barthelemy will perform at 3 p.m. Sunday at Madonna College, 36600 Schoolcraft at Levan, Livonia. He is a faculty member at Center for Creative Studies/Institute of Music and Dance where he is first Aetna artist-in-residence. He was recently selected as a Dame Myra Hess Series Concert Artist for the 1988/89 season at the Chicago Cultural Center. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. For information, call Madonna College, 591-5188.



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table talk

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