



Melissa Mitchell

Guest artist returns to do 'Nutcracker'

Michigan Ballet Theatre with music by the Birmingham Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra will present "The Nutcracker" ballet at 8 p.m. Friday and 1:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at West Bloomfield High School, 4925 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield.

Guest artists will be Melissa Mitchell and William Baierbach. Mitchell is a member of the San Jose Cleveland Ballet. She began her performing career with Michigan Ballet Theatre School and studied with Evelyn Kresson and on scholarship with the American Ballet Theatre. She then joined the Pennsylvania Ballet. She has been a guest artist with the Canton (Ohio) Ballet, the Long Beach Bal-

let and the Margaret Wingrove Dancers in San Jose.

Baierbach, a native of Pittsburgh, has been with the San Jose Cleveland Ballet since 1982. Previously he has performed with Pittsburgh Ballet and Ballet Oklahoma. As a guest artist he has performed with the Tidewater Ballet and in San Jose with the Margaret Wingrove Dancers.

This new production is the full length version of the classic holiday tale. Evelyn Kresson is artistic director of Michigan Ballet Theatre and Felix Resnick is the conductor of Birmingham Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra. Tickets are \$6, \$9, \$10, \$13. For information, call 624-5599.

Different approach wins plaudits

By Avigdor Zoromp
special writer

Orchestra Hall was packed last Friday for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra concert, repeated the next day at Eli Auditorium. This was especially encouraging in view of the worrisome trend of declining attendance.

The guests proved to be as gifted and capable as their mostly European reputations suggest. Maestro Ivan Fischer and pianist Peter Frankl have both appeared separately with the DSO. One obvious thing they have in common is their Hungarian nationality.

Taking population into account, Hungary is probably the most prolific producer of top-rate musical talents. While nationality may not guarantee success and achievement, Fischer and Frankl are two who possess the rare gift of superb talent.

The programs featured Haydn's Symphony No. 101 ("The Clock"), the Piano Concerto No. 25 in C Major, K. 503 by Mozart and "Also Sprach Zarathustra" by Richard Strauss.

One normally thinks of works by Haydn and Mozart as being close to chamber music. Orchestras and concert halls in those days were significantly smaller than their modern counterparts. The approach to the Haydn symphony and the Mozart concerto in this program, however, was different than the characteristic one, which tends to be timid and low-key.

IN THE MOZART concerto, both conductor and soloist seemed to have a similar approach, with a remarkable degree of cooperation.

A purist like myself would tend to criticize such approach as unauthentic and contrary to the nature and character of the style. However, this was one of the few occasions in which some distortions from commonly perceived tradition were justified.

In conversation with me, Frankl reiterated his position on so-called authentic performances and/or instruments. In his view, the music produced by the masters was the then-available resources serving only as temporary mediums. These masters would have been glad, he said, if modern resources with their greater capabilities had been available to them.

Different approaches will always exist. They are a major factor in making music such a challenging, rewarding and unpredictable field. To me, such approach as manifested by Fischer and Frankl is valid, as long as it keeps the period in at least some significant perspective. Such, indeed, was the case most of the time.

The second movement of Haydn's symphony, in its climactic passages, was more reminiscent of the Big Ben than of a delicate Swiss wristwatch. But then, the latter came later, making the bigger sound, in a sense, more authentic.

The Mozart concerto is a robust work, even with Mozart's orchestration, which was small-scale by 19th century Romantic standards. This performance was moving, convincing and, at times, exhilarating.

THE SIMPLE, first theme of the final movement, for example, sounds too benign and trivial

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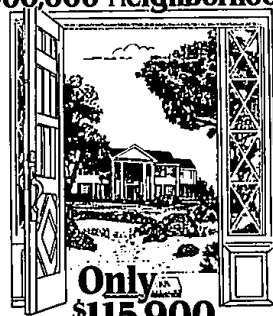
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