# Small audience shows up to hear harpsichordist

The annual Bach festival opened with a recital given by one of the most distinguished Bach performers, floor Kipnis, renowned harpschordist. He has been recognized as a top Bach interprete for many years.

An artist of such callber should be perforning before a sellout audience on a regular basis. This, however, didn't happen at Orchestra Hall last week. The small audience was barely enough to occupy a few front raws, and even that other has been considered that the performance of th

raws, and even that with a lot of spaces in between.

The music of Bach could never compete with hard rock in terms of addience appeal, a fact that Kipnis is upflowitedly aware of. That may be the reason this program had only one work by J. S. Bach.

The rest was works by Bach's most prominent son, Carl Philip Emanuel Bach. Other compositions were by J. G. Goldberg and the Span-



#### **Avigdor** Zaromp

ish baroque composer Antonio Soler. Goldberg's only claim to fame is through Bach's Goldberg Variations, which were ostensibly commissioned by Goldberg's mentor, Count Kaiser-ling, as a remedy for Goldberg's in-somala.

Similar HARPSICHORD SEEMS to suffer from the same neglect as some of the composers on this program. I have heard several distinguished musicians condemn it for its lack of dynamic flexibility. However, in the right hand of music, the harpsichord can be a most sparkling and exciting instrument.

Kipnis is one of the few who can bring this instrument to life. Bach's Chromatle Fantasy and Fugue became an emotional drama in this performance. This, of course, was the case when viewed by baroque standards. The instrument, built by Wichigan harpstchord builder Thomas Ciul, proved to be capable of singing under these conditions, even with perceived dynamic changes. The harpstchord, unlike a plano, is incapable of varying its intensity gradually — the only possible changes are by using different registrations. However, the combination of chords and the number of musical

parts has an effect on the total

sound.
This, with appropriate use of ruba-to, can result in musical richness that isn't inferior to the romantic sound obtained with more powerful

sound outsined with more powers.

Some may argue that the music of C. P. E. Bach is unjustifiably neglected. Among the several selections on this program, he short items from the book of Anna Magdena could hardly make a case for this music. These are easy pieces that are regularly assigned to beginning piano students, which were originally attributed to J. S. Bach. These pieces also received the weak pieces pieces also received the weak pieces pieces also received the weak pieces in the music if a musician doesn't feel sufficiently challenged by these pieces to invest long hours of practice in them. But if his is the case, why bother to present them to the audience? The same

laor Kipnis is one of the few who can bring this instrument to life.

may be said about the three short po-lonaises and a prelude by Goldberg. A couple of Goldberg Variations would have been preferable.

Kipnis was impressive with the technical feats required for Soler's Fandango, featuring lively acrobatics around a simple basic harmony.

Toward the end of the program, he presented the harpsichord as a live instrument which is capable to serve even contemporary music. The short "desert" selections, ranging from Bartok to Duke Ellington and David Fox, proved to be entertaining and potentially appealing to the large audience that didn't materialize.

Kipnis showed a keen sense of humoras he fold amusing anecdotes.
All of this, however, doesn justify the first he had been as a constant of the first he had been as a constant the sense of the first have been restricted.

A program with more music by Bach probably wouldn't have adstracted a larger audience, given the reality of our present culture. But this would have been a far better thing to do in terms of artistic integrity. It must have been parfacularly rustrating for Kipnis that such an extreme sacrifice and compromise in musical content proved to be in vain.

### one more time Lafayette Quartet outdoes itself -

By Avigdor Zaromp special writer

The Lafayette String Quartet is a truly fine chamber group. This is itardly news — it has been stated here on several previous occasions. But each concert makes this even

But each concert makes this term clearer.

Their program of quartets by Haydn, Berg and Beethoven at Oak-land University last week was an ex-ample of a diverse, refined and at-tractive presentation that is rarely

tractive presentation that is ratedy encountered.

The most controversial item on the program — the String Quartet Qp. 3 by Alban Berg, proves to be roper masterful with every exposure. This feeling may not be universal. Berg, whose financial fortunes were lean most of the time, report-

#### review

edly hocked his furniture in order to publish this work. One listener later commented that he would have dene a favor to all, including himself per deneral the public of the control of t

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demic formalism as long as it is artistic as well.)
It should be easy to pick seldom performed works from Hayda's repertoire of more than 80 string quartets. The Quartet Op. 20 No. 2 is not that isn't a more stylistic duplication. The Quartet Op. 20 No. 2 is not that isn't a more stylistic duplication. The series are supported and reflined structure have some unique elements that can't be taken for granted. Hearing it performed here was an illuminating, learning experience.

Beethoven's Quartet Op. 59 No. 2, the second of the three "Razumovsky" quartets; so one of the challonging staples of the repertoire. The intensity of this performance didn't compromise the overall clarity. There was a penetration beyond the formidable technical challenges, which reached the heart of this monumental music.

THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT wavering was in the fast coda of the final movement where speed com-

promised accuracy.

The sound of the group was enhanced by the Guadanini violins that

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In response to the intense ap-plause, the Lafayette played a minuet from another Haydn quartet as an encore.







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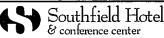
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