

Orchestra maintains brisk pace

By Avigdor Zaromp
special writer

The Polish Chamber Orchestra with works by Grieg, Mozart, Lutoslawski and Haydn made an impressive showing on the Chamber Music of Detroit series.

Predictably, many area residents of Polish descent attended this event, which had some significant French ingredients as well. These were the conductor, Emmanuel Krivin, and violinist Augustine Dumay,

who performed Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4, K. 218, in D Major. This orchestra's lively approach makes even works from the standard repertoire sound delightfully refreshing. Grieg's "Holberg" Suite, for example, emerges as rather mundane and shallow in many performances. Only rarely is its charm so distinctly felt as it was here.

The opening Præcludium and the closing Allegretto were taken at a fast clip, yet with uncanny accuracy and lively rhythm. The slower and

more lyrical movements in between provided a sense of dream that is quite distinct from the sense of tired sleep that these movements all too often evoke.

Dumay is a young French violinist who appeared with many orchestras and has several recordings to his credit. It was impossible to ignore his height of almost seven feet, and there were predictable quips about the possibilities of a career as a basketball star, which would have earned him a lot more money. Fortunately, Dumay has chosen to share the richness of his art, which is quite substantial.

His performance of Mozart's concerto had the clarity and technical control that one can expect from a top violinist. But his approach, phrasing and choice of tempi made this performance unique. In the final movement, for example, the opening four-quarter rhythm was paced more briskly than usual, but following the switch to the triple meter the tempo was slow and contempla-

tive, only gradually picking up speed.

Such different approaches, however, still agreed with the musical context and didn't constitute eccentricity for its own sake.

Lutoslawski's short suite, "Musique Funèbre," which was completed in 1958, was a belated tribute to Bartok, who died in 1945. Among works by this leading Polish composer that I have heard in the past, I have found some to be rather unappealing. This suite is an exception. Underneath its dissonances lies a forceful, moving musical style. Unlike some of his other works, this suite arouses the desire to become

better acquainted with it.

Haydn's Symphony No. 49, "La Passione," is an unusual early work with aspects that point toward opera on one hand and baroque style on the other. It is all too easy to make it sound immature when compared with the more established symphonies by later masters. This performance presented this rarely performed work as a legitimate artistic entity.

An earnest, in-depth stylistic orientation is one reason for the vitality of this group. If one compares a horse-driven carriage to an automobile, the latter is predictably faster.

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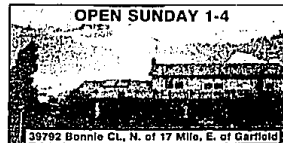
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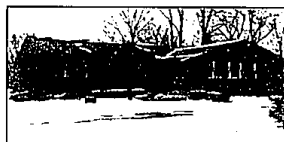
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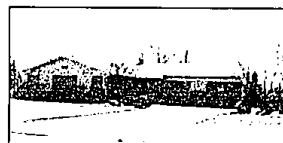
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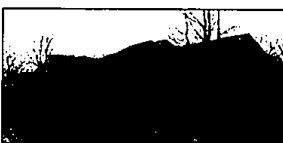
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