

Pianist is at her best with Brazilian composers

By Avigdor Zoromp
special writer

There is a hefty contingent of capable pianists of Brazilian horizons in our area. One such is Maria Nicla, who presented a recital at the Lila Jones-Johnson Theater on the Oakland Community College Royal Oak campus last weekend.

Nicla is the sister of another acclaimed pianist in our area, Maria Meirelles, who has performed on the same series.

Music by Bach, Chopin, Schumann, Ravel, Debussy and the Brazilian composer Alberto Nepomuceno was on this varied program.

The opening Bach Prelude was a 20th century arrangement of the original. It was similar to the opening item in the recital of Meirelles a few weeks earlier.

Being a Bach purist, the task of evaluating a non-original Bach puts me in an awkward position akin to that of an Orthodox Rabbi faced with the prospect of passing judgment on the quality of a new brand of imported ham.

Since my opinion would have little effect on those with a different taste, I will simply pass on to the flet mignon, which even a Rabbi would accept as long as it is kosher. Among the major courses on this program was Chopin's Sonata No. 3 in B Minor.

As with much of the program, the artist's approach was on the cautious side. There was a tenderness of ex-

pression with a clear attempt at poetic articulation. However, I found this rendition too cautious and limpid. The Scherzo needed more sparkle and the final movement needed more turbulence. She did overcome most of the tremendous technical challenges in this land-

mark composition.

Schumann's Arabesque was refined and intimate, but needed more motion. There was some more sparkle in Ravel's "Jeux d'eau" and Debussy's "L'isle Joyeuse."

Nicla really came to life in the set of daring variations by Nepomu-

cento, in which the vivid performance surpassed the scope of the limited musical content. The ultimate was reached in the encore selection, "Musical Impressions" by Villa Lobos.

Nicla's affinity for music by Brazilian composers is obvious. She could perform con-

vincingly music by other masters under the right circumstances. Her art and technical ability are impressive, but she needs a more extroverted, active approach for the other items on this program and a greater sense of natural ease with those composers.

Ballet classes, auditions set

The Michigan Ballet Foundation will sponsor a series of classical ballet master classes Saturday-Sunday, May 5-6, at the Lascu School of Ballet, 782 Denton Ct., Bloomfield Hills.

Classes will be conducted by Veronica Tennant of the National Ballet Company of Canada, and Oleg Briansky, founder and director of the Saratoga Ballet Center in New York.

In conjunction with the Master Class Session, auditions will be Sunday, May 6, for the second Maria Lascu Memorial Scholarship Awards Competition. Tennant and Briansky will serve as judges for this event.

Maria Lascu, for whom the scholarship is named, was ballet mistress, teacher and co-founder of the Lascu School of Ballet. She was

also a ballet teacher in the Continuing Education Division at Marygrove College.

BOTH THE classes and competition are open to dancers of intermediate and advanced abilities who reside in Michigan and are 12-18 years of age as of Jan. 1 this year. The competition is limited to the first 25 qualified applicants.

Scholarship awards will be \$1,000 (first place), \$500 (second place), \$250 (third place), and two honorable mentions for junior level dancers who demonstrate promising talents. The awards are to be used toward the advancement of the recipients' dance education.

Call the Lascu School of Ballet, 334-7100.

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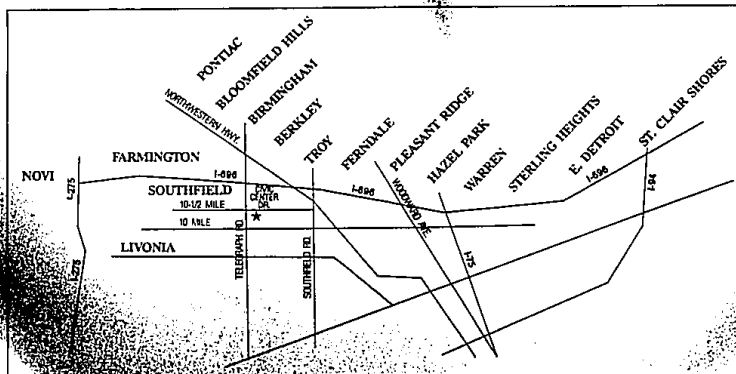
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