

Composer writes memorable piece for special event

Among the various occupations surrounding the art of music, the most brave and daring task may be that of the composer.

The challenge for the performing artist is awesome, to be sure. But a performing artist has one advantage over a composer.

In the performing arena one may be pitted against the masters of one's own era, but there is no fierce competition from beyond the grave by performers who lived before recording techniques were developed.

For a composer, however, it is next to impossible to penetrate the triple B-barrier and get lasting recognition. Getting a work commissioned is a first and important step, but in itself its impact is only temporary.

MOST COMMISSIONED works are forgotten after their sole performance. A special work featured here recently will, most probably, not enjoy many future performances, but it will be remembered by the multitude of listeners who came in droves for this special occasion.

The special event took place at Temple Israel on Tuesday, March 31. The occasion was the 500th anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. The title of the work, "Ever Since Babylon," represented the wide historic scope condensed into it.

It was written by Samuel Adler, a prolific composer who has been prominent on the faculty of the Eastman School of Music. The text was arranged by Samuel Rosenbaum.

Among the dignitaries attending this event was Joaquín Ma, de Aris-



Avigdor Zaromp

regul, Consul General of Spain, who delivered a special message.

The one element that made it easier for the listeners to relate to this work is its rich historic material. The full text was printed and visible in the fully illuminated performance.

Names of prominent Jewish poets from the Spanish Golden Age, such as Yehuda Halevi, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Solomon Ibn Gebirol and many others are mostly distant specks

from my early school history classes.

THIS PERFORMANCE, featuring quotations from several of these poems, brought their authors to life far more than any boring school lecture could. Quotations from Emma Lazarus' verses on the Statue of Liberty were also featured.

It seemed initially that the music served as an insignificant background to the text. But as the performance progressed, the musical

presence became more pronounced. Simultaneous multiple themes complemented each other with their contradictions.

It became apparent that the participants felt as part of a very special occasion, which elevated this music above the obscurity of yet another forgettable undertaking of a contemporary work.

THIS WORK was performed by the Jackson Symphony Orchestra, directed by Steven Osmond, and the Temple Israel Choir, directed by Gregory Gyllsdorff. Solo singers consisted of bass-baritone Daniel W. Glaudel, tenor Harold Orbach (cantor of Temple Israel), soprano Martha Warren and mezzo soprano Alicia Hunter. The text was narrated by Paul Winter and Evelyn Orbach. Glaudel substituted, on a short no-

tice, for Richard Allen. Under the circumstances, he adapted to the unfamiliar role impressively well.

Some minor flaws consisted of timing problems between the narrated text and the singers, when Paul Winter would read too far ahead. Some other moments of uncertainty in the singing were evident as well. But these were insignificant in relation to the devotion and conviction felt in this performance.

As a rule, I don't find art that serves political or promotional ends to be overly exciting or stimulating. "Ever Since Babylon" is one of the rare exceptions.

Avigdor Zaromp, born in Poland, educated in Israel and the United States, has a Ph.D. in math and has studied piano, music theory and history.

POS wraps up season April 11

Nationally known soprano Patricia Dell'Ortone will be the featured guest artist at Pontiac-Oakland Symphony's final season concert 8 p.m. Saturday, April 11, at the Oakland Community College Highland Lakes campus in Union Lake.

Dell'Ortone, a Pontiac native, made her operatic debut with the Michigan Opera Theatre as Ginevra in Donizetti's L'Elisir d'Amore, and has since sung the roles of Pamina, Susanna, Micaela, Musetta, Oscar, the Dew Fairy/Sandman and others with such regional companies as Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Company of Boston, and Brooklyn Lyric Opera.

On Saturday, she will perform works by Samuel Barber and Spanish composer Joaquín Rodrigo.

Also on the program, the POS will complete its season with Charles Ives' Symphony No. 2 to conclude the performance.

The orchestra, led by conductor David Daniels of the Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, is comprised of OU students, community and professional musicians.

Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling 334-6024. General admission is \$9, student and seniors, \$5. Highland Lakes campus is at 7350 Cooley Lake Road, near Hospital Road in Union Lake.



Patricia Dell'Ortone is the featured guest artist at the Pontiac-Oakland Symphony's final concert of the season, April 11.

table talk

Radisson Plaza at Town Center

Easter Brunch Buffet, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, April 19 featuring smoked whitefish, apple crepes with brandy cinnamon sauce, waffles and gourmet omelettes made to order, baked chicken with hazelnut peach sauce. Cost \$17.95 adults, \$7.95 children under 10. Reservations suggested. Radisson Plaza Hotel at Town Center is at 1500 Town Center, Southfield. Call 827-1382.

The Lark

A shore dinner 7 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, April 27 and 28 at The

Lark, 6430 Farmington Road, West Bloomfield. Menu features fresh stone crab claws, deep-fried soft shell crab, Maine lobsters, potatoes O'Brien, asparagus spears. Cost \$67.50 per person. The last date for cancellation without charge will be April 17. Call 661-8891 for reservations.

Ernesto's

Annual Italian food and wine tasting 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 13 at Ernesto's, 41661 Plymouth Road, Plymouth. Event features 10 wine tastings, a grande Italian buffet, background music provided by strolling violinist Johnny Giovanni and guitarist Bobby M. Tickets \$25 per person. For reservations, call 452-2002.

Cafe Cortina

Cafe Cortina, 30715 W. Ten Mile Road, Farmington Hills, presents "Saluting the Foods and Music of Italy," 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 29, six course dinner and Prosecco featuring music from "Festival di San Remo" by Pino Marrelli and Lisa Agazzi. Cost \$42 per person. Call 474-3033 for reservations.

Rock Montana's

Karaoke contest Wednesday, April 15, 22, 29, Steve King & the Ditties, Thursdays, April 9, 16, 23, 30. Sunglasses after Dark, April 10, 11, 6-10 p.m. Sundays, teen karaoke, at Rock Montana's, 30375 Plymouth, Livonia. Call 458-8480.

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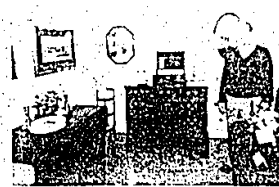
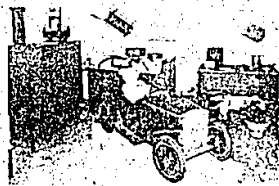
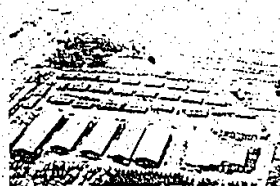
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