

# Experience triumphant in contrast of concerts

By PATRICIA BEACH SMITH

The benefit of experience won over the passion of youth in a comparison of two weeks worth of Meadow Brook Music Festival concerts.

The superior playing the Detroit Symphony Orchestra has been doing this summer helped to make both the Aug. 2 and Thursday (Aug. 7) concerts memorable.

The first was a performance of works by Charles Ives in composer well-reckoned-with by the orchestra and conductor Stanislaw Skrowaczewski. Beethoven and Brahms.

OUTSTANDING WORK on the program was the Beethoven Concerto for Piano No. 4 played by Rudolf Firkušny. His artistry is so subtle, so low-key, that it is most difficult to realize.

Through this Beethoven work, however, he was able, in complete and wonderful cooperation with the orchestra, to show his virtuosity without upsetting the well-thought-out balance of the work.

The effort through was an honest exchange of artistic respect and responsiveness. Firkušny is a serious artist who does not resort to theatrics to make his points because he knows they are already in the music; it is the passages are played properly—which he did almost faultlessly.

The bittersweet juxtaposition of the traditional and mandatory "Decoration Day" marches against the lamenting "Taps" for those who died and whose graves are being "decorated" is the haunting theme of Ives' small but significant piece which gives a capsule look at what America is like, and the picture was duly painted by the orchestra.



The playing of the Brahms Symphony No. 2, on the other hand, was cloudy and not very exciting for anyone, leastwise the audience.

Skrowaczewski was conducting very cryptically, a switch for a man who always seemed so well-ordered and almost machine-like previously. There was less assuredness in his strokes, and the work did not come off well as it was laggy and baggy in too many spots.

THE CONCERT Thursday (Aug. 7) was better programmatically, if not musically. One of the things it pointed up about the season's concerts is the emphasis which has been put on the talented people we have in Detroit, who should be called upon more often to perform.

The excitement of the evening was generated by conductor Peter Maag, who is genuinely brilliant and non-chalant at the same time about his work.

The all-Mendelssohn program was perfectly picked for such a summer's eve. It wasn't difficult at all to see little gremlins running around "Fingert's Taps" for those who died and whose graves are being "decorated" is the haunting theme of Ives' small but significant piece which gives a capsule look at what America is like, and the picture was duly painted by the orchestra.

chestra in E minor with vigor, but not stupendous intonation. Perhaps it was the dampness in the air.

At any rate, he played with a great deal less youthful passion than one might have expected of this work, and that stood for something. He did not waste himself in useless gesturing and was careful in his thoughtful interpretation of the composition.

THE EXTREMELY difficult and delicate section did not seem to pose anything but pitch problems for this young, talented artist. Maag appeared to be in complete agreement with Heifetz's interpretation and manifestation of his thoughts.

The result was a rendition of quality which should even improve with age.

Maag is a master conductor as he proved at these concerts. It is obvious from his casual stance (hands frequently in pockets) that he is used to conducting a good deal in pits where the audience is not as aware of the conductor's pose.

The orchestra sounded fantastic under his direction.

This week's concerts will herald the return of the DSO's former music director and conductor Paul Paray. He will conduct the orchestra Thursday (Aug. 14) and Saturday in concerts of French composers to include Ravel, Debussy, Berlioz, Saint-Saens, Faure and Bizet.



## Some familiar faces

Familiar Faces, which has been together one year, now has a new face, Dale Bender (left). Others in the group, appearing through Aug. 30 at Ted's Old Town Inn in Bloomfield Hills, are Terry Wayne (second from left), Pam

Martin and Dave Adams. Pam not only has a musical background but was first runnerup in the Miss Kentucky Pageant. Ted's is located at Woodward Avenue and Square Lake Road.

# Senior citizens look at Toronto

Thirty-four senior adults from the Birmingham Parks and Recreation Senior Citizen Program recently made a three-day trip to Toronto. The group was accompanied by Darrell C. Middlewood, parks and recreation superintendent, and his wife Joanne.

The seniors stopped for lunch near Woodstock, Ont., and arrived in Toronto in the early afternoon at the Lord Simcoe Hotel. The remainder of the afternoon was free for sightseeing, shopping and relaxing.

Highlight of the evening was dinner at Ed's Warehouse, a restaurant of early 1900s decor. Following dinner, many of the group visited the Toronto-Dominion Centre, a complex of three large office buildings offering a panoramic view of the city from the observation deck on the 55th floor.

The scheduled bus tour of the metropolitan area on Friday included a trip past the new Toronto City Hall; University of Toronto; Yorktown, a newly renovated section of the city with shops and boutiques; Casa Loma, a 98-room castle built in the early 1900s at a cost of \$1,000,000; and along University Avenue where the flowers are changed every six weeks to maintain their full-blown attractiveness.

THE BUS TOUR was followed by a boat trip to Centre Island with its parks, canals, marinas and amusement rides. The skyline of Toronto could be observed without interruption, with the new 1,300-foot Canadian National Tower imposing itself over the entire metropolitan area.

Several members of the group ate lunch at Captain John's Fireboat Restaurant, a converted City of Detroit fire boat. The afternoon was free with traveling on the subway and trolley, or enjoying the restaurants and activities of Ontario Place.

Dinner and dancing at the UmpaPa Room in the Dominion Place Centre to the beat of an original German band concluded the day's activity.

Saturday morning found the group on the trip home and a stop at the Kitchener Farmers Market, largest enclosed market of its kind in the continent, and Doon's Pioneer Village, an early Canadian reconstruction of early pioneer history.

The next trip the group is planning is to Kensington Park. All trips are open to any senior adult, 55 years of age or older.

## Goat may be a star

Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT) has launched a search for a talented goat to play a lead role in its October production of "Porgy and Bess".

"The goat we are seeking need not have acting experience, but it certainly would be helpful," explained David DiChiera, MOT's general director. "We see this as a rare opportunity for a goat who has aspirations to pursue a theatrical career to gain valuable experience in a professional setting."

DiChiera said that the lucky goat who is selected will be on stage during most of the production.

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