

Thursday, September 17, 1981

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Harrison hosts premiere

Symphony launches season of artistic variety

A football team kicks off its season once and doesn't know whether it will reach a bowl game. Oakway Symphony

Orchestra will kick off its season of subscription concerts twice and knows for sure there will be a post-season cabaret concert.

A football team practices in private. Oakway will precede each of the six concerts with a public preview at a shopping mall.

"The orchestra is strong at 90 members," said Francesco DiBlasi, principal conductor and music director since Oakway was formed nine years ago.

"We have a strong violin complement, with Emily Mutter Austin returning as concertmaster. There are still some openings for a viola, two cellos and a string bass."

"We rehearse at 7:30 p.m. Mondays in Harrison High School in Farmington Hills. You can call the Oakway office at 476-6544 for an audition appointment," DiBlasi said.

That number also may be called for a brochure and ticket order form. Persons who purchase membership in the Oakway Symphony Society, Inc. get a discount on tickets, and their contributions are deductible under the federal income tax.

"AN EVENING on Broadway" will open the subscription series at 8 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 3 and 4, respectively.

Both concerts will be in Harrison High, 12 Mile west of Middlebelt. (Other concerts also are rotated between Birmingham, Southfield and Livonia.)

"The program will be all Broadway, with selections from 'My Fair Lady,' 'Sound of Music,' 'Oliver,' 'Porgy and Bess,' 'The King and I,' 'Fiddler on the Roof' and 'Oklahoma,'" DiBlasi said.

"Ralph Valatka, formerly director of the Southfield Players, is directing this program. He's also director of the Goro Theater at the Book-Cadillac Hotel."

"Dolores Allison will do two dances to music from 'Chorus Line' and 'Jesus Christ Superstar,'" DiBlasi added.

Vocal soloists will be Marley Mercer Hequist, who sang the lead in Oakway's 1980 performance of Puccini's "Sour Angelica"; David Pulice, who has sung in Gilbert and Sullivan perfor-



Harbinger Dance Company will be performing at the Oakway Symphony series. Part of the group includes, Alan Loumasson, Connie Bergstein Dow, Gayle Stern Eubanks, Kevin Weldon and Kitty Skillman.

mances and with the Kenneth Jewell Choral, Barbara Scanlon, who has sung in "Carnegie" and "The Sound of Music" and in dinner theater, and Mark Vondrak, who has sung in "The Magic Flute" and "Hansel and Gretel."

ALL OTHER concerts will be at 3 p.m. Sundays. The lineup:

• Nov. 15 in Birmingham Groves High School — pianist Maria Meirelles as soloist in the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 1. Community orchestras rarely tackle the works of Brahms because of their difficulty, DiBlasi said. Ms. Meirelles last season played all 32 Beethoven piano sonatas in Detroit's Orchestra Hall and has toured in the United States, Mexico and South America.

• Jan. 24 in Harrison — the Harbinger Dance Company, directed by Lisa Nowak. "Their background is classical, but it's done in a modern vein," said DiBlasi, who will also conduct the orchestra in Prokofiev's Classical Symphony.

• Feb. 14 at Madonna College, Livonia — winners of the Young Artists' Competition will be soloists with the orchestra in movements from concertos. The actual competition will be the weekend of Jan. 15-16 and is open to the public.

• March 14 in Southfield-Lathrup High School — Gordon Staples, concertmaster of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, will be soloist in the Tchaikovsky Concerto for Violin and

Orchestra, one of the half-dozen best and most difficult violin concertos.

• May 16 in Harrison High — a two-hour, fully staged version of Bizet's "Carmen," directed by Alice Engram, head of the voice department at Oakland University. This will be Oakway's first venture into opera since "Sour Angelica," a one-act opera. "Carmen" will be in four acts.

ONE-HOUR previews of each program will be performed prior to each concert in either the Tel-12 Mall in Southfield or 12 Oaks Mall in Novi.

The "Broadway" preview will be at 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 27 in Tel-12. Ernest A. Jones, popular guest conductor and friend of the orchestra, will lead part

of the program. In December, Oakway will take part in non-subscription performances of Tchaikovsky's ballet "The Nutcracker" in Livonia and Southfield. Times and places will be announced later.

The cabaret concert will be at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 3, at Madonna College, Livonia. Sonny Eliot, television weatherman, will narrate Allan Sherman's "Peter and the Commissar," a parody of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf." Guest conductors will be Jones and Sister Mary Francine VanDeVeer, president of Madonna. Cabaret tickets may be ordered separately.

The president of the Oakway Symphony Society this year is Richard Thompson.



Ernest Jones
guest conductor



Sonny Eliot
cabaret narrator



Maria Meirelles
piano soloist



Gordon Staples
violin soloist

Farmington AAWW

Used-book sale observes 'Year of the Handicapped'

The Farmington Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) will observe the "International Year of the Handicapped" as members cooperate with New Horizons and Community Living Centers in preparation for their fall used-book sale.

The sale will run from Sept. 17-20 during regular mall hours in Livonia Mall, Seven Mile and Middlebelt roads.

AAUW members and the young men training with New Horizons will transfer the books from the workshop in Duncel School to the mall, then later set up the sale.

"Not only does this work provide an opportunity to teach appropriate social and work behavior to the mentally impaired," said Doris Gaston, speaking paired, "just as important as the opportunity to get to know them as individuals,

to talk and laugh together while working."

Staff from both New Horizons and Community Living Centers will be on hand to supervise and work along with the young men.

NEW HORIZONS, dedicated to the physically and mentally impaired, is concerned with the total development of each person, their social interaction, personal growth and self-esteem, as well as vocational and educational training.

After evaluation and training, many of the clients work in sheltered workshops which challenge them in work situations that more closely resemble actual jobs.

The demands of the work help trainees learn advanced skills, appropriate work attitudes and the importance of teamwork.

Many clients graduate to competitive employment, and some who may have become welfare recipients because of their disabilities become productive workers and taxpayers instead.

"AAUW in Michigan has long held the belief that the handicapped are the responsibility of the entire community," Mrs. Gaston said. "It supports policies and programs which allow handicapped persons to function to their fullest potential."

Proceeds from the sale are used to further education, both nationally and locally.

AS SALE DAYS draw near, AAWW members find themselves with an unusually large selection in the "almost-new" category.

Among the 20,000 books ready for shipment are fiction, both hardcover and paperback. In the many categories

of non-fiction, "there will be an especially good supply of gardening, Michigan lore, status of women, foreign language and cookbooks this year," Mrs. Gaston said.

The sale climaxes on Sunday with the popular bag sale when shoppers may buy by the bag the books remain-

ing after selective shippers have made their choices.

Chairwoman for the sale is Jean Moran, assisted by co-chairwomen Perle Briggs and Carole Malzone.

The week after the sale closes, Ellen Harper and Gail Tinney take the job of co-chairwomen and begin preparations

for the 1982 sale. The sale is the club's only fund-raiser.

Sister chapters continue their AAWW-sponsored book sales into October in the Detroit area. Birmingham AAWW's sale will run from Sept. 19-21 in Birmingham Masonic Temple.

Players enter 30th season

Farmington Players enter their 30th season of community theatre with a line-up of three plays — a comedy, a mystery and a musical.

The season opens with Jack Sharkey's "Kiss or Make Up," a comedy of errors. Performance dates are Oct. 30-31, Nov. 6-8, 12-15 and 19-21.

Lucille Fletcher's "Night Watch," a mystery with a surprising turn of

events, plays Jan. 29-31, Feb. 5-7, 11-14 and 18-20.

The season winds up with Rodgers and Hammerstein's "South Pacific." Play dates are April 30 to May 2, May 6-9, 13-16 and 20-22.

Advance season tickets are available now, priced at \$10.75 for Thursdays; \$12.25 for Fridays and Sundays; and \$13.75 for Saturday performances.

"Kiss or Make Up" tickets go on sale Oct. 1.

Individual tickets are priced at \$3.50 Thursdays, \$4 Fridays or Sundays and \$4.50 for Saturdays for both "Kiss or Make Up" and "Night Watch."

Inquiries will be taken by calling the players' box office, 535-8622. The Players' Barn is on 12 Mile Road between Farmington and Orchard Lake roads.