

Concert a success despite the turmoil

By Mary Jane Doerr
special writer

Economic ills are affecting more than the auto industry. Our cultural life is being altered by the depletion of government grants.

The West Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra was nearly discontinued last month because of the loss of their extra government funds which provided for hiring Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians as principals for each section of the suburban orchestra. Also, recent fund-raising efforts were unsuccessful.

"Symphonic Fireworks" was the name Conductor Felix Resnick had chosen for the March 7 concert cancelled for lack of funds. The name might have been more appropriately applied to the events that have taken place in the orchestra's board in recent weeks.

Finally, after reorganization and changes in policy by the new board, the orchestra's version of "Symphonic Fireworks" was given last Sunday without the principals in most of the sections. Because the orchestra couldn't pay them, the musicians didn't play.

Gordon Peterson, concertmaster, was the only exception. According to Resnick, Peterson had been involved in all of the rehearsals, and arrangements made with him had been different. Resnick said the orchestra was continuing the arrangement. Other principals were only hired for the final rehearsals and the concert.

THE CONCERT CONSISTED OF a variety of popular music from composers attempting to musically describe explosive and exciting events. It was a program that depended upon the brass and woodwind sections except for "Music for the Royal Fireworks" by Handel. The other selections ranged from the 19th century to the present.

Carnival Overture was composed by Anton Dvorak to symbolize "one of the

three great creative forces of the universe" — life. It describes a lonely traveler who chances upon a street carnival and watches two lovers.

Oddly, the orchestra showed a remarkable balance between the sections. The strings were left somewhat weakened in numbers in the second violin section and the violoncello section, but the strong first violin section was impressive. At no time during the concert did the sections outbalance each other. One can only say, judging from the overall quality of the performance, that the Detroit Symphony Orchestra principals left their sections well trained.

Stravinsky's "Fireworks," or "Feu d'Artifice," was written as a wedding gift to the daughter of his friend, Rimsky-Korsakoff. However, the present arrived after the death of his friend.

The work's impressiveness lead to the compositions for which Stravinsky is so famous. The work is shorter and full of rhythm.

WAGNER'S "THE RIDE OF the Valkyries" comes from the operas "Die Walkure." The scene is the mountain retreat of the warrior daughters of Wotan, the Valkyries. A storm covers the mountain as Wotan explosively reveals his anger toward his daughter, Brunnhilde. It is anger that dissolves into fatherly compassion.

"El Salon Mexico" by Aaron Copland describes a dance hall in Mexico City, "Salon Mexico." The tunes involve a popular interchange of melodies between the clarinet and other sections. The difficult work was effectively performed.

There was no better way to finish this evening than with one of John Philip Sousa's famous marches, arranged by Hershey Kay into "Stars and Stripes Suite."

The audience was somewhat smaller than usual, but far more enthusiastic, giving the orchestra a standing ovation at the close.

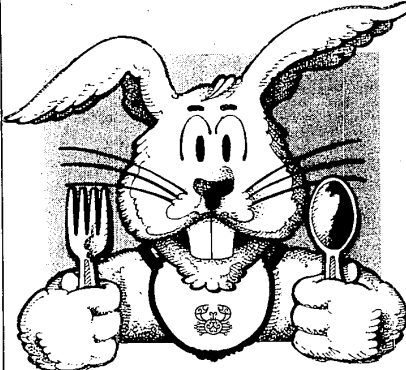


ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

Oliver opens

Students at Clarenceville High School are putting on the musical, "Oliver," April 2-4 in the school's Lewis E. Schmidt auditorium. Several females are cast in male roles in the production. One of those is Tracey Kershaw (above) who appears with Ken Murawski. Kershaw plays the Artful Dodger; Murawski has the title role. Tickets are \$2.50 and available at the door.

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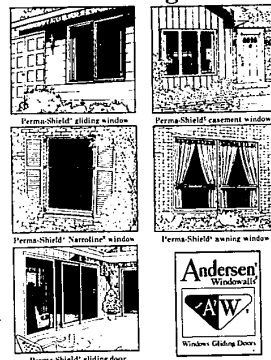
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