

m.m. memos

Margaret Miller

A Superior pilgrimage

"What is it about Lake Superior you like so much?"

The question was put by my sister-in-law when I called her to say we were back home after a short trip to Michigan's northern reaches.

It's nice, but it's just a lake," she added. And I have to admit her views are shared by many.

Superior is cold, really cold. It's a long, really long, drive away. And if it's inland ocean views you want, there are some pretty spectacular ones along the much closer reaches of Lakes Huron and Michigan. Better resorts there too, I'm reminded.

Ah, but these places aren't Superior. And I know from conversations with a few others who are slightly daft that our family is not alone in feeling the mystic pull of that northern sea.

FOR ME, I KNOW there's a sense of being both in awe and at home each year when the long drive finally brings us to place poet Longfellow described as the shining Big-Sea-Water.

I feel it with each summer's first glimpse, and I go on feeling it, whether the waters are blue or deep green or grey, whether its surface is smooth or inviting or churned into crashing waves, whether it's chill-cold or warmed enough to provide some of the best swimming in the world.

So this summer, though available vacation time was short, the man of our house and I were back by Superior for a vacation that has become a pilgrimage.

We made time in few days to swim at our lovely beach where the waters of the river climb up to the waters of the lake. We went back to a spectacular, rock-strewn beach, where always I am sure that the very next handful of stones will turn up a spectacular agate.

We also made a return visit to a beach recently discovered, one that requires three miles of hiking through the woods. And of course we went back to sit on the red and rocky boulders near Marquette to watch the breakers break.

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Young talent enlivened Meadow Brook season

By Avigdor Zoromp
special writer

With last Sunday's performance, another Detroit Symphony Orchestra Meadow Brook Festival season came to an end.

This program featured a young and able guest performer — Chinese born violinist Cho-Liang Lin.

He performed the Mendelssohn violin concerto so superbly and convincingly that one could almost forget the million past performances of this favorite selection.

The weak link in this performance was conductor Neville Marriner. While the role of the orchestra isn't crucial during most of this composition, it didn't rise to the occasion on those few instances when it had to make a showing.

During the coda to the first movement, the solo and orchestra managed to start and finish together, but had no common ground in between. Orchestral themes in the third movement seemed to have vanished into thin air. Had Mendelssohn a glimpse into the future, he might have decided to rewrite the work into a partita for unaccompanied violin.

THE PROGRAM opened with a premiere performance of a Diver-timento by Stanley Hollingsworth, composer-in-residence at Oakland University.

While bracing myself, as I usually do before any premiere performance, I was pleasantly surprised to find that the composition had been written in neo-classical style, and had some good elements in it.

A comparison with classical masterpieces would be unrealistic, but this piece is far better than many contemporaries.

review

THE FINAL movement was a manifestation of total butchery. The opening theme for full orchestra was in such a disarray that it a matter of pure chance as to which orchestral section would prevail. The ending was saturated with uncontrolled commotion with a lot of decibels which elicited a proportionate amount of applause. In spite of this, I still have a high regard for the composition.

During this current season, we were fortunate to have had cooperative weather all the time. Among the guest performers, credit should be given to those of the younger generation who have enriched us with their skills and talent.

This includes both solo performers and conductors. As long as such young, gifted people are around, we have reasonable assurance that the future of classical music is in good hands.



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