

# Talent transcends language barrier

**m.m. memos**  
**Margaret Miller**

## Memory lane untraveled

It was a battle between nostalgia and expediency. Expediency won, and I found myself wondering what the result was saying about the romance — or lack of it — to be found in my soul these days.

What happened was that I had reason last Saturday morning to make one of my rare trips to downtown Detroit. Both our elderly cars were ailing, so I drove the man of our house to work our son-in-law could administer a mechanical tonic.

As long as I was going down, I reasoned, I could do a bookstore errand I had been contemplating. Then I could easily get back for the luncheon I was planning to attend.

After dropping off my husband where one of Detroit's daily newspapers is published, I pointed the car toward the bookstore. I couldn't have done that in the old days when I spent a lot of time downtown, because then there would have been no parking spaces near the stores.

**BUT ON THIS** Saturday morning near Christmas, 1982, there was no problem finding an empty space. After parking I completed my errand quickly.

And then I looked down the street and realized I was only a couple of blocks from Hudson's soon-to-close downtown store.

Decision time. I had maybe an hour before I had to head home. The car was parked. I could wander over for a final visit. On the other hand, if I left right away, I might be able to stop at one

**By Avigdor Zaromp**  
**special writer**

Birmingham Unitarian Church is the focus for many chamber programs in our area. Seldom have the audiences had the opportunity to listen to a gifted guest of the caliber of Dan Iordachescu.

The Romanian-born baritone, who had other recent engagements in the area, appeared last Sunday at the church under the auspices of the Lyric Chamber Ensemble.

It is no secret that the turnout for many events at the Birmingham Unitarian Church is rather small, which is no reflection on the high quality of most of these programs. The time, however, the place was filled to capacity. The extensive advertising campaign was partly responsible for it. But a significant portion of the audience consisted of members of the Romanian community in the area.

IORDACHESCU was accompanied on the piano by Fedora Horowitz, director of the series. She knows him from a long time ago, when both studied at the music conservatory in Bucharest.

Being a top-rated baritone and having performed with the world's best singers and conductors, Iordachescu is used to large halls and audiences. For this reason, there were some adjustment problems at the beginning of the program.

In the opening selection, "Victoria, Mio Caro" by Carissimi, his vibrant and resonant voice was too large for the small surroundings. This baroque-style aria sounded too overblown and dramatic. The Mozart aria from the "Marriage of Figaro," "Non Più Andrai," was much better adjusted and artistically executed. In the Schumann Lied, "Der Nussbaum," there was an over-reaction the other way — some passages were so plaintive that the piano accompaniment became too overpowering.

After this adjustment phase, however, things fell into place to yield an extremely rewarding program, consisting of some 18 selections. These ranged from well-known pieces by Schumann, Brahms, Schubert and Verdi to some lesser known ones by Ravel, Enescu, Hahn and Danza. The program also contained some Romanian folk-songs that were known to some Romanian members of the audience.

IORDACHESCU TURNED out to be not just a top rate singer, but a good actor and mimic as well. In two humorous Romanian songs by Bredeanu and Valeriu, I found myself enjoying the humor without understanding a single word, and only after the concert did I have them translated to me to find out what I was laughing about. The program concluded with a song by Musorgsky, "The Flea Song," which has achieved some degree of popularity, being among the better known songs by the composer. The rousing, standing ovation was a well deserved tribute to this talented singer.

The next program of the Lyric Chamber Ensemble at the Birmingham Unitarian Church will take place on March 20. It will consist of piano trios by Mozart, Mendelssohn and Ravel. For more information, call 357-1111.

## Baptists celebrate 60th anniversary

**Continued from Page 17**

Weinhold's history recounted an earlier event that might have a familiar ring.

In 1923, when the tiny congregation moved out of the schoolhouse, the storefront on Grand River was purchased.

"Our first big stumbling block," she wrote "came when... the neighbors got up a petition to stop work as they said it would spoil the residential quality of Grand River Avenue." A court ruled in favor of the young church since there was other business property along the street.

**THE LONGTIME** members found a lot to remember as they looked back. "So many things," said Holben. "I guess one of the things I remember best was our Quinlance Club. It was in the early '30s, and the Depression was hard. Young people couldn't get jobs.

"Three young women in the congregation started the club. It was for study, but it gave the young people a chance to get together Sunday evenings. Later there was a class of older men. We'd get together two or three times in the summer and cook breakfast in Rouge Park.

Ankron laughed as she remembered coming back to her old church after she had had some inactive years and it had moved to Livonia.

"Rev. Earl Bosley was new then, and he asked if I was visiting," she said. "I said not exactly. He decided then to put me to work, and I've been working ever since.

The four talked how the congregation burned the mortgage in 1960 and immediately started in on a building program to house its growing program and membership. They looked back to the move, \$500,000 from the city "but we had to pay rent until we got out."

Holben mentioned the first service in the Livonia building. "It was New Year's Eve," he said, "and it was so cold. It was not a dedication that time, really an initiation."

**THE TIME** in Livonia has brought many events. Besides building the church, a parsonage was constructed, and a large parking lot paved and repaved. A barbecue was built behind the church and a play yard was fenced.

NOW I'M a lifelong Detroit. I've ridden the bus downtown and shopped and lunched in that original fantasyland. I visited Santa as a child and later made annual visits to Hudson's 12th floor to admire the dolls and stuffed animals. I even took my daughters there a few times, during their early childhood which now seems almost as long ago as mine.

I loved it all. Of course it was part of Christmas.

But Saturday I decided quickly to go back to the car and drive back to civilization as I know it now.

I had a lot to accomplish, and if I moved with efficiency I could get it done.

And I realized that for sure that particular Christmas shine would glow more brightly in memory. Maybe I'm a romantic after all.

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