

# Herbig demonstrates sense of showmanship

By Avigdor Zaromp  
staff writer

The term "superstar" is most commonly associated with rock and popular music. It is seldom used in the classical music vocabulary. One often wonders whether classical music, the way we know it, is not a vanishing breed.

Happily, once in a long while, there is an event that inspires our confidence in the future of classical music.

One of these took place on Tuesday, Sept. 11, with the special gala opening of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra season. The concert, not part of the regular subscription series, had been sold out several weeks in advance, with a long waiting list of those less fortunate.

The featured superstar was Israeli born violinist, Itzhak Perlman, who performed the violin concerto by Tchaikovsky.

This was also the first appearance of

Maestro Cuthbert Herbig as the official music director of the DSO, even though the qualifier "designate" has been occasionally omitted in previous references.

THE SELECTIONS consisted of the New England Triptych by the contemporary American composer William Schuman and music from three of Wagner's operas.

While the name of Perlman in itself is enough to virtually guarantee a sell-out event, his music proves that this at-

traction of large crowds is well justified and goes beyond the name of the performer.

It is true that his selections have a proven track record. Two years earlier he performed the Brahms concerto here on a similar occasion. But his performance presents these popular selections in a way that is fresh and eventful, without resorting to artificial demonstrations of eclecticism.

A persistent problem involving performances for orchestra and solo in-

strument is that of spontaneous rhythmic variation. If such a variation is too capricious, there is a falling apart between soloist and orchestra.

The other extreme is a version that is overly predictable. This performance had the right balance between the two extremes.

While some of the rhythmic shifts resulted in a delayed orchestral response, it was never more than a couple of beats and in tolerable range. The resulting imaginative phrases were well worth the small compromise.

In some instances, more attention was given to segments taken for granted. A case in point is the ornamented variation of the main theme of the first movement, at the end of the development. This was played at a slower tempo than usual, obviously not due to lack of technique.

The second movement created a feeling of urgency and sentiment, but without undue prolongation. The final movement was presented with its shiny glitter. Perlman performed it with the customary out, which avoids some overly repulsive phrases.

MAESTRO Herbig demonstrated his inspiring ability in the orchestral selections. The opening Schuman selection featured balanced sound and measured pace. While one could argue that the approach was overly romantic, there was less harshness of sound and the symphonic dimensions unfolded in a more apparent way.

The percussion at the end of the "Chester" episode went hand in hand with the rest of the orchestra and didn't completely dominate as with many other versions.

In the Wagner selections, Herbig was in full command of the enormous or-

chestral forces. In the prelude to "Die Meistersinger," the outline remained clear and well defined even during the most complex convergences of the multiple themes.

The music from "Tristan and Isolde" was descriptive yet well focused, rather than a feeble, sleep inducing attempt of stoniness.

In the Overture to "Tannhauser,"

Herbig demonstrated some showmanship when he conducted simultaneously two different rhythms when the main themes converged towards the end. There is no denying that Perlman is unique. But we can't expect to have him on a weekly basis (that's one of the things that make him unique). However, with such a capable orchestra and music director, we should have our own resources to generate large crowds in time. This might be wishful thinking, but all we need is enough people to share this wish.

## Recital slated at Marygrove

A dual piano and vocal recital will open the 1984-85 Faculty Recital Series of the Music Department of Marygrove College at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in Drnk Chapman Hall on the campus in northwest Detroit.

Featured in this year's opening concert are dual pianists Evelyn Brown and How Lewis and vocalist Barbara Williams Youngman.

The fee for the concert is \$5 for general admission and \$1.50 for senior citizens.

For more information regarding the faculty recital contact Evon at 960,000, Ext. 420.

## Classes designed for better health

Providence Hospital Novi Center health education schedule for fall includes opportunities for people to improve their own health.

Most classes are given in the Providence Hospital facility at 10 Mile Road and Haggerty Road, but exact locations and registration information will be given by calling 552-9041.

Smokers can try to be free of the habit in five days with a course called "Smokeless." An introductory session starts at 7:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 8 and 9.

The class continues with skill development and maintenance Oct. 15 and 16 and Oct. 24 and 25. The introductory session is free. Skill development and maintenance carry a \$40 fee which includes a lifetime guarantee.

"Smokeless" is taught by faculty from the American Institute for Preventive Medicine.

On Thursdays, Oct. 11 and Nov. 8, classes will be given called "Heart-saver CPR," defining the signs and signals of heart attack, risk factors, healthy heart living and one-person

rescue. This three-hour class results in certification by the American Heart Association. There is a \$3 fee to cover supplies.

Basic cardiac life support will be offered Thursdays, Oct. 18 and 25. Participants must have previously passed the heart-saver course.

A class in stress management, a two-session seminar, will be offered at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 31, and 7-10 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 1. The fee is \$55 for the two classes.

Singers from five communities assemble for the third annual "Recreation Singers" concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 14 in Our Lady of Mercy High School. The program brings together 400 voices from the community choruses of Dearborn, Farmington, Livonia, Novi and Plymouth.

The concert will highlight performances from each of the participating groups and will be climaxed by two combined numbers, "Gonna Spread A Little Light" by Lani Smith and Barry Manilow's powerful "One Voice."

The concept of "Recreation Singers"

can be seen as a result of the desire of area choruses to share together musically and socially. Each of the groups involved is an adult chorus sponsored by their local parks and recreation department.

Hosting the event this year will be the Farmington Hills Department of Parks & Recreation. The responsibility for presenting the concert is passed from community to community.

A \$3 donation will be accepted at the door. The high school is located on the corner of Middlebelt and 11 Mile Road.

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## Humanistic Judaism philosophy spelled out

Rabbi Sherwin Wine has designated the first Wednesday evening of every month for a program that will describe the philosophy of Humanistic Judaism and tell of the programs offered in Birmingham Temple for prospective members of the congregation.

Interested persons are invited to the informal sessions, which begin at 8:30 p.m. in the temple library, 28611 12

Mile Road. The sessions will provide an introduction to the character of the congregation.



## Women host square dance

Women of North Farmington host an evening of square dancing Saturday, Oct. 13, in Millford. Reservations, at \$9 each, must be made no later than Oct. 6 with Marion Prover, 471-4361.

"Chicken snacks are served, but you might want to bring your own drinks and some other snacks," said Mary Bertsch. The event is open to guests.

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