

# German Requiem shone as festival highlight

**By Avigdor Zaromp**  
special writer

Brahms was very particular about the quality of his works. Only those that passed his demanding scrutiny were published. He destroyed the rest.

Consequently, his orchestral output is far more limited than that of other established masters. This limited choice inevitably results in more frequent exposure of these works, all of which are masterpieces.

One work that receives somewhat less exposure is the Double Concerto

for Violin and Cello. While still very much in the mainstream of the standard repertoire, the price of hiring two soloists instead of one is a factor in its selection.

Last week during the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Brahms Festival, we had the chance to hear this work with two excellent soloists — violinist Elmar Oliveira and cellist Mischa Malsky. Oliveira performed the violin sonata with Jutta Czupak two days earlier at Orchestra Hall.

This was Malsky's debut with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. His name should be added to the list of musicians with the same first name

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Concerto doubled up their zest and inspiration to produce masterful phrasing that is rarely heard in a live performance. Their artistic temperaments, were well coordinated. Their unison passages were clear and in tune and their double-stops rich and well focused.

The one flaw in this performance was in the orchestral role, which sounded too much like a sequence of incidental bridge passages, some of them not well balanced. Some of the important orchestral themes were glossed over, seeming to surrender to the dominance of the solo roles.

Maestro Gunther Herbig was at his best in the Symphony No. 1 on Wednesday's program. This oft-performed masterpiece sounded more powerful and convincing than ever.

**FRIDAY'S PROGRAM**, with the

German Requiem, was dedicated to the memory of Robert Semple, former DSO president, who died last week.

This performance of the German Requiem was one of the major landmarks of this festival. The well-rehearsed rendition of this masterpiece provided us with an experience that is seldom matched. The outer portions, which are low key, were nevertheless saturated with energy and steady movement that kept the tension and interest alive.

The inner movements, with some of their explosive peaks, were done with good proportion and taste and with ultimate balance and coordination. Relyea delivered the suffering phrases in "Her, Lehre doch Mich" with expression but without a sense of exhaustion.

who represent the highest quality. CHORAL WORKS by Brahms are infrequently performed. One of these, the Rhapsody for Alto and

Male Chorus, is a short work. It comprised only a small part of the program which also featured the Symphony No. 1 and the Double Concerto.

Mezzo-Soprano Brigitte Fassbaender, with her rich, powerful voice, saw to it that this short work received its due in terms of quality.

Brahms's major choral work, the German Requiem, was on a program, which opened with the Tragic Overture. The Detroit Symphony Orchestra was joined by the Detroit Symphony Chorus, baritone Gary Relyea and soprano Marvin Martin.

Quality was the rule in these two events. The soloists in the Double

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