

ON THE  
MARQUEE

Livonia chorus

The Livonia Civic Chorus will present a concert, "Sing We Noel," 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20, at the Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile. Doors open 2:45 p.m.; admission is free. Concert will feature many familiar and traditional carols, John Rutter's Christmas fable "Brother Heinrich's Christmas" with guest artists on flute and bassoon.

Nutcracker

The Oakland Festival Ballet Company will present "The Nutcracker" through Sunday, Dec. 20, at the Birmingham Theatre, 211 South Woodward. Curtain times are 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 17; 2:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 18; 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 19 and 20. Tickets start at \$14 for children and senior citizens, \$16 for adults. Call Ticketmaster, 645-6666, or the box office, 644-3533.

Southfield Symphony

The Southfield Symphony is hosting an International Holiday Festival, 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20, at the Southfield Pavilion, north of Civic Center Drive on Evergreen. Tickets \$5; call 354-4717 for reservations.

Trinity House

Trinity House Theatre of Livonia announces open auditions 7:30-10 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 4 and 5 for "Quilters," a musical that tells the tales of a pioneer woman and her six daughters, set in the American frontier. Roles available for seven women of varying ages with musical and dance abilities. The auditions will be at Trinity House Theatre, 38840 W. Six Mile on the corner of I-275. Audition candidates are requested to bring a prepared vocal piece with sheet music. Wear comfortable clothes for movement. For information, call 464-6302.

Special dinners

Cafe Cortina, 30715 W. 10 Mile in Farmington Hills, is taking reservations now for a very special dinner, 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24. Chefs will be roasting on the fire while guests enjoy five courses of Italian cooking by the Taroni family. Harpist Nadia Marks will perform. Cost \$42 per person; call 474-3033. New Year's Eve will feature an open menu starting 4 p.m. Reservations not required, but honored to assure seating. The party will begin at 8:30 p.m. and feature a six-course dinner with filet mignon. Vegetarian menu available. Disc jockey and dancing, champagne, party hats. Cost \$62 per person.

Carillon concert

Christ Church Cranbrook, 470 Church Road, at Cranbrook and Lone Pine Roads in Bloomfield Hills, is presenting its annual Christmas Carillon Concert at 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 20. The public is invited. There is no charge, but patrons are encouraged to bring nonperishable food items for distribution to area hunger programs. For information, call 644-5210.

Polish dinner

The American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple at Dequindre, Troy, will present its traditional holiday celebration of "Opłatek," with traditional foods and music, Sunday, Jan. 10. Cost is \$17.50 and includes dinner and refreshments. Call 689-3638 for reservations.

Delightful young cast in musical

Performances of the Lunch Bunch Players production of "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown," continue Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 27 at Henry Ford Centennial Library, Michigan Avenue, East of Southfield in Dearborn. For ticket information, call 277-6669 or 326-7042.



MARY JANE DOERR

Happiness is a compliment from Lucy, especially in the Lunch Bunch Players' production of "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" where an acid, but very pretty, Janet Patton of Farmington Hills, plays the cynical comic strip heroine.

Like the other six high school students in this production at Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn, Patton has been schooled in her role by director Mary Bremer, musical director Tim Spriggs, and choreographer David Leidhold.

This musical is a series "clips" from the comic strip, a live version of the "Funnies," and Patton captures that arrogance and the unpleasant nature of the demanding Lucy, especially when she sings a song to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" to Joey.

There is no real story line to the show but a series of 11 show time numbers that parody other theatrical

styles and bring out each characters' nature.

Ryan Jones understands the vaudeville style of his number "They Like Me" and is quite jazzy in "Supper Time."

Of course, (if you take Lucy's word for it), Charlie Brown is stupid, clumsy, inferior, has a lack of confidence and does nothing well. But Steve Thompson of West Bloomfield is good at making that evident in the leading role.

Thompson's facial expressions bring out Charlie Brown's moods and failures, like the time he strikes out like "Casey at the Bat" with two runners on and loses the game, or how he can't get up enough courage to be friends with Patty.

Corrie Boczek is bouncy as a pig-tailed Patty, really kind but ignorantly missing the point of everything. Chris Jones of Southfield doesn't miss much as the blanket-carrying Linus who outsmarts Lucy in "My Blanket and Me" with affectionate childishness.

Childish? — The show is childish only in it's short one hour length and the simple melody lines of the songs. Otherwise this production of "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" is quite adult.

The show is double cast. Cast A features Nicole Link of Livonia as Lucy, Jenny Florkowski of Redford as Snoopy, Brooke Andres of Livonia as Patty, and Parker Plague of Canton



Lunch Bunch Players: The talented young cast in "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" rehearse a scene from the show. Charlie Brown is portrayed by Bradley Ellison, other cast members include Parker Plague, Andrew Keenan Bolger, Jenny Florkowski, Maggie Keenan Bolger, Brooke Andres and Nicole Link as Lucy.

as Schroeder. Cast B features Steve Thompson of West Bloomfield as Charlie Brown, Janet Patton of Farmington as Lucy, Chris Jones of Southfield as Linus, Ryan Jones of Southfield as Snoopy and Ashley Armbruster of Canton as Woodstock.

Woodstock.

Mary Jane Doerr of Troy is a full-time teacher and freelance writer who specializes in opera and musical theater.

Pianist shows artistic spirit, has potential

Musica Viva! will present two world premieres — "Ezra Haim" (The Tree of Life) Tone Poem for Viola, Flute and Chamber Orchestra, and "Sephardic Song Cycle," for soprano and chamber orchestra, based on original music from 14th century Spain — at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31 at Temple Beth El in Birmingham. For ticket information, call 479-2228.



AVIGDOR ZOROMP

This seems to be the Armenian phase of music in our area. Following special recent events at the Armenian Center of St. John's Church in Southfield, we were treated to a recital on the Musica Viva! series by another prominent artist of Armenian descent.

The music on this occasion was more traditional, consisting of four Beethoven piano sonatas. Dickran Atamian is the winner of several coveted prizes. Among them was the Naumberg Piano Competition award in 1975, which launched his career. He has appeared with major orchestras, including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

This all-Beethoven program was given at the Smith Theatre on the Orchard Ridge campus of Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills. It started with the "Pathétique," and ended with the "Appassionata."

In between were two of his later sonatas which tend to appeal to those with more advanced musical background, but still offer substantial listening pleasure to those with lesser exposure. These were the Sonata in A major Op. 101 and the Sonata in A flat major Op. 110 — which correspond to numbers 28 and 31 of Beethoven's 32 sonatas.

Atamian is an artist who attempts to make a statement in his performance which is not a mere imitation of other pianists. A lot is being said about contemporary artists who tend to worship technique above art. Atamian cannot be accused of such a misplaced sense of priorities. Unfortunately, he tends to go to the other extreme.

While raw technique for its own sake is no substitute for art, its neglect is not necessarily a virtue. Atamian has a credible amount of artistic drive and energy, but his sometimes sloppy technique and undisciplined execution tend to blur the impact and direction of his artistic goals.

His tempo is always on the fast side — even in the slower movements. In the "Pathétique" he would rush things so much that he wouldn't wait for the full values of the longer notes. The middle movement, which has been hammered at us for generations by Karl Haas and which tends to evoke that connection each time it's played, lost a lot of its distinct lyricism due to its rushed pace.

Among the better movements on that program were the slow, opening movement of the Op. 101 and the slow movement, before the fugue, of Op. 110. Most of the other movements, however, suffered from some serious deformities. The second movement of Op. 101, for example, has the character of a march with intensive accents. In this version, however, it became an irregular sprint with many measures rather blurred. The final movement hit several snags due to its excessive speed.

The fugue in Op. 110 is one of the most elegant that Beethoven wrote, and its introduction sounded promising. However, as its complexity grew, so did the sense of chaos and diminished control.

The final movement of the "Appassionata" is marked Allegro ma non troppo — which means fast, but not excessively so. There is good reason for this — the theme in the Coda, marked Presto, is restated at a much faster pace.

Due to his excessive speed in the main movement, Atamian couldn't master the pace in the Coda, in which he stumbled and fumbled repeatedly.

There is little doubt that Atamian does possess an abundance of artistic spirit and potential, but he needs to cultivate much more precision and discipline to get it across. Technical wizardry and predictable tempo are sneered at by many, including several in the audience who would use this

See PIANIST, 10B

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