

LSO to feature talented young pianist at concert

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
SPECIAL WRITER

The 19th century romanticism of Schumann and Wagner, as well as, dramatic melodies from "The Phantom of the Opera" take center stage to open the 20th anniversary concert season of the Livonia Symphony Orchestra 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 2, at Church-Hill High School Auditorium, 8900 Newburgh, Livonia.

Guest artist Anthony Bonamici, 17, a national award-winning pianist and composer will perform "Piano Concerto in A minor" by German composer Robert Schumann.

Tickets are \$12, (\$8 seniors, \$6 students, \$3 children under age 12) and available at the Livonia Civic Center Library, Farmington Road at Five Mile, Madonna University, Schoolcraft and Levan, Hammill Music, 16630 Middlebelt and at the door the night of the concert. For information, call the symphony office 421-1111, or

PREVIEW

the 24-hour hot-line 468-6575.

"Anthony is probably one of the best talents I've ever heard. He's an outstanding pianist," said LSO music director/conductor, Francesco DiBlasi.

"Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor, of all the piano concertos, it's the most accessible. If you've never been to a concert don't miss this one because Schumann will jump right up and grab you."

A 1993 graduate of Stevenson High School in Livonia, Bonamici performed with the LSO in February after winning second place in instrumental category in the 16th annual Young Artist Competition at Madonna University in January.

"I was very happy about being asked back. I enjoyed playing with the Livonia Symphony last

time," Bonamici said. "It's nice to come back home and perform. I like achieving recognition in my hometown."

Bonamici, who practices three to four hours a day seven days a week, began piano studies at age five. Originally, he was fascinated with learning to play organ, but his parents insisted, piano lessons would come first.

"I decided to be serious about piano in the seventh or eighth grade and within the last year or so knew I would be a concert pianist," said Bonamici.

"I like the classical music — Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Mozart. I like to show people what I like about it."

Schumann's concerto in A minor, is a standard repertoire piece, said Bonamici. "It's very well liked. It's nice sounding. It's a challenge musically."

Prior to entering Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, Texas this fall to study

with John Perry, Bonamici studied with Donald Morelock in Ann Arbor.

Bonamici has performed extensively throughout Michigan with several youth orchestras, Schoolcraft Wind Ensemble, Livonia Symphony Orchestra and in Florida with the University of Miami Symphony. As a competition winner he performed with the Lyric Chamber Ensemble, and Jewish Community Center of Metropolitan Detroit.

In high school, Bonamici won many first place awards for piano solo and concerto competitions. In 1991 he won the prestigious Yamaha/Music Teachers National Association's High School Piano Competition in Miami, and placed second in the Young Keyboard Artists Association's International Competition at Oberlin Conservatory of Music where young pianists from all over the world compete.

In 1992, Bonamici won the 40th

BMI Student Composer Competition for a piano concerto he wrote. Competing against 352 contestants up to age 26, he was awarded the "First William Schuman Prize," named in honor of the late American composer, for the score judged "Most Outstanding."

DiBlasi is conducting the LSO for the 20th season. He has been with the orchestra since its inception as the Oakway Symphony in 1973. During its early years the orchestra performed in Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Farmington, Royal Oak and Southfield.

"It was called Oakway because it served the communities of Oakland and Wayne County," DiBlasi said.

Amongst a myriad of problems including financial strain, the orchestra decided to consolidate efforts by joining the arts-oriented Livonia community. In 1988 the nearly 80-member ensemble chose reincorporation as the Livonia Symphony Orchestra.

In 1979 the LSO founded its Young Artist Competition which awards \$2,000 annually to prom-



Featured soloist: Award-winning pianist Anthony Bonamici performs with the Livonia Symphony Orchestra Oct. 2 to open its 20th anniversary season.

ising young instrumentalists and vocalists. This year's competition will take place Feb. 2-3.

Linda Chomin of Canton Township is a free-lance writer who specializes in the arts and classical music.

Variety keynote to symphony season

The Livonia Symphony Orchestra's 20th anniversary season offers three series of 13 concerts. For ticket information, call 421-1111 or the 24-hour hot-line 468-6575.

On Oct. 30, Warren Pierce serves as guest narrator in the second of five Series A Saturday evening concerts. At 8 p.m. the Halloween concert will feature members of the orchestra performing in costume. The LSO wants the audience to join in the fun. They will automatically be entered in the LSO audience costume competition for special prizes.

"We're offering a nice variety to please most everybody this season. We have the annual holiday classics which includes our Was-

sell dinner feast Dec. 18 at Madonna University, and the Nutcracker in early December," said Leo Alanskas, who is publicity chairwoman, and on the board of directors for the Livonia Symphony Society Inc.

The orchestra, under guest conductor Volodymyr Seschuk, will present two fully staged performances of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 3, and 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 4, with the Contemporary Civic Ballet under artistic director, Rose Marie Floyd. Tickets are \$15, seniors/students, \$12 and children, \$8.

The annual Holiday Pops concert 8 p.m. Dec. 4 provides a taste of lighter fare with the Stevenson High School Choir singing

"Christmas Ornaments" by Randall Bass.

Volodymyr Seschuk guest conducts the third Series A concert, "Slavic Classics and Winter Dreams" Feb. 19 with guest pianist, Leszek Bartkiewicz. Chopin's "Piano Concerto No. 2," and Tchaikovsky's "Symphony No. 1, Winter Dreams" will provide untypical symphony fare.

Seschuk made his American conducting debut last season with the LSO. After emigrating to the United States from Ukraine nearly two years ago, Seschuk joined the orchestra's first violin section.

Concluding Series A, the New Reformation Dixieland Band will swing on stage as well as the winners of the Young Artists Competition.

Series B, the Library Series, presents chamber style concerts in the intimacy of the 300-seat Livonia Civic Center Library Auditorium. At 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 28, the principal chairs of the LSO will be the featured artists. Other Series B concerts take place Mar. 11 and Apr. 16.

Series C, the Children's Series opens 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 29. Guest artist for the "Point a Picture" program is caricaturist, Chuck Borshanian. Children will learn to hear how music can lead your eyes to see better.

On Saturday, March 12 the theme is "Tell A Story" with narrator, Gordon Draper and on April 16 "Old Time Movie Mania" takes center stage with classics from the 1920s and 1930s.

Farmington Players to present 'Lend Me A Tenor'

Farmington Players open their 1993-94 season 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15, with "Lend Me A Tenor," at the Farmington Players' Barn, 32332 12 Mile Road, west of Orchard Lake Road.

Shows 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 7 p.m. Sunday with one matinee at 2 p.m. through Nov. 6. For more information and tickets, call the Farmington Players at 563-2955.

Auditions for "A Couple" White Chicks Sitting Around Talking" will be held 7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 4. Parts for two women. Call 563-2955 or Bob Myers, 661-5272 for audition information.

PREVIEW

Written by Ken Ludwig, "Lend Me A Tenor" is about the internationally renowned tenor that travels to Cleveland for a performance of "Othello," that will save the local opera company. Attempts to meet him, romance him, subdue him and replace him are the fuel in this hilarious, door-slaming farce and recent Broadway hit. Sharlan Douglas directs.

The season continues Dec. 3-18 with "A Couple" White Chicks Sitting Around Talking," written

by John Ford Noonan. The play, directed by Bob Myers, is a modern day comedy that takes place in suburban New York.

Gracing the stage Feb. 11-26 will be Arthur Miller's "All My Sons," directed by Bob Salisbury. This classic tale of drama and deception is about two families drawn together by an innocent lie

that may, in the end rip them apart.

Rounding out the season April 29 through May 21, will be the spicy tale "Lee Linsion Dangers," by Christopher Hampton. A Tony nominee that takes the audience to 1780s France. The play will be directed by Nancy Harrower.

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