

GATEWAY TO THE arts

PAGE EIGHT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1963

Arts Calendar

Amphitryon 38

Studio Theatre
Old Education Building
Oct. 29 - Nov. 2

Symphony Concert Enjoyable Despite Nature Of Program

By Michael Massey

"Most enjoyable" is the best way to describe last Sunday's symphony concert under guest conductor Zoltan Rozsnyai. The orchestra managed to make the badly chosen, uninteresting, program quite appealing.

The concert opened with the overture *Opening Night*, by the Canadian composer, Robert Turner. This is a difficult and brilliant work, full of colorful orchestration and rhythms, yet retaining clear themes. Overall good coordination between the brass, strings, and woodwinds yielded an enjoyable performance.

The concert's guest artist was dramatic soprano Irene Jordon. Although she exhibited a great deal of technical proficiency, her voice did not project to the back of the auditorium; she produces most of the sound too far back in her throat, and hence, when singing in a low register, is almost completely smothered by the orchestra. Yet high passages were characterized by rich full tone and high dramatic quality. The selections from Verdi's *Othello* were sung with good tone, beautiful expression and—except for perhaps too much glissando on the higher notes—admirable intonation. The sleep-walking scene from *MacBeth*, however, suffered from lack of dramatic tone in the low register; it seems unwise to choose such a dramatic scene for the concert stage, where the acting necessary for an ef-

fective performance is impossible.

Mozart, light and rejoicing, came as an excellent contrast to the dramatic heaviness of Verdi. Miss Jordan sang the *Alleluia* very well.

After intermission the orchestra attempted *Symphonie Fantastique* by Berlioz, a most difficult work to perform, retaining high interest through all five movements. However, the orchestra's worthwhile execution proved a success.

Good balance of tone and dynamic control marked the first movement. The *appassionato* section, I felt however, could have been broader and more intense. Highlight of the symphony was the third movement. The pastoral atmosphere was set by the dialogue between the English horn and oboe admirably performed in the clear plaintive tones of shepherd's pipes. And the mood was sustained throughout the entire movement.

The fourth movement was very exciting. Equal color and brilliance characterized the last and most "fantastique" movement of the five. In general, the performance of the symphony was very good, although in places one wished the brilliant orchestrations had been better accented, and the tempo more fluent.

This year's first concert shows that the Edmonton symphony is improving and gives promise of good concerts in the coming season—with, I hope, more interesting programs.

Chopin Concert Disappoints

By Michael Massey

Last Friday night's all-Chopin concert by the famous Polish pianist Witold Malczuzinski proved a disappointment; the quality of the performance did not match the artist's reputation. Yet many good points redeemed Malczuzinski as an excellent musician.

The C sharp minor polonaise with which the program opened exhibited from the start the amazing tone and dynamic control of Malczuzinski's right hand; he produced exactly the right tone for each phrase. Although the lyric passages of the fantasy which followed were beautiful, the dramatic parts lacked power. In trying to build a climax, he brought too much base and too little attention to individual notes in the fast runs of the right hand. The result was not power—but harshness.

Malczuzinski's performance of Chopin's B minor sonata left much to be desired. The lack of definite tempo in the first passages detracted from the sense of architecture so important to the sonata form. Again in the second movement the fast passages lacked clarity.

The pianist brought out excellent contrast in the trio, however. The slow movement was played with a beautifully controlled tone and excellent balance between hands. My preference is for a trifle slower middle section. Yet Malczuzinski was consistent and convincing in his interpretation. The last portion seemed too much for him technically. His slanting tempo was slightly slow; instead of holding the excitement, it became labored and heavy. The last recurrence of the theme was played at three-quarters the speed of the first, depriving the movement of the excitement and drive it deserves.

In the second half of the program, where Malczuzinski interpreted smaller forms, he seemed more at ease. Nocturn in C minor was beautifully executed,

with well-shaped melodies and brilliant octaves, as was the lyrical A flat Ballade. Mazurka and waltz were played most effectively in light, clear style. Last on the program came the popular B flat minor scherzo. Despite occasional confusing irregularities

of tempo the performance was in general laudable.

Yet the concert as a whole fell short of expectations—perhaps because Malczuzinski seemed more interested in public-pleasing than setting a high standard of performance.

Film Society Opens Season With 'Nights Of Cabiria'

By Bob Pounder

You are fully aware, I'm sure, that prostitutes in the movies have hearts of gold. But it isn't often that we find one quite so sweet as the young lady portrayed by Guilietta Masina in Federico Fellini's *Nights of Cabiria*, which opened the Edmonton Film Society's season on Monday night.

The abuse and unhappiness that the girl suffers in the course of this exercise would be enough to sour the sunniest of Pollyannas, but little Cabiria, bless her, just cocks her cute chin and goes on to meet the next crisis with a tear and a smile.

When we first meet her she is thrown into a river on the outskirts of Rome by her money-grubbing lover of the moment and is nearly drowned. But that is just the start of her troubles. Trying to satisfy a spiritual longing within, she goes to a shrine with some fellow tarts and a crippled friend; she finds not inner satisfaction or reward but frustration and anger at the phoniness of the place. No change has occurred in her or in the criples, and in an effective scene she berates a band of pilgrims as they trudge along.

An episode with an famous actor provides some delicious comic moments. One of the best scenes in the movie takes place on the stage of a tired old vaudeville house, where, with

jaded chorines preening in the wings, Cabiria under hypnosis bares her innocent soul with plenty of pathos to a rowdy audience. Her final disastrous affair followed by a "rebirth" is a bit much to swallow, but Mr. Fellini is a clever cook.

He uses his directorial skills with rewarding results, never overstating his point and employing a light touch reminiscent of his earlier picture, *La Strada*. However, he begins here to use some of the highly theatrical effects (such as the demented prostitute at the Baths of Caracalla) which he later uses to such good advantage in *La Dolce Vita*.

And who could fail to be charmed by Miss Masina? She is as ingratiating as a beagle puppy and the absolute mistress of the half-smile, the cocked eyebrow and the couldn't-care-less shrug. She helps to put credibility into Fellini's basic premise, which seems here to be that in every cloud there lurks a sterling silver lining.

Nights of Cabiria was, by the way, badly chopped in places by the Alberta censor. This situation has plagued the province for years in almost intolerable fashion and it is heartening indeed to learn that the Film Society has taken an official stand on the subject. It is now up to us to back this stand and to the government to make the required changes.

"Sophisticated - Spicy"

AMPHITRYON 38

Giraudoux

Studio Theatre

Old Education Building

8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 29

thru

Saturday, Nov. 2

TWOFORS

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2 Reserved seats for the price of one Wednesday, Oct. 30, Thursday, Oct. 31