

Painting pictures with Bach

BY TRISTAN STEWART-ROBERTSON

It was a beautiful day outside and the sunlight streamed through the stained-glass windows, picking up the rich hues of blues and reds and spreading them within the hall. In the same way, Symphony Nova Scotia and its special guests painted the rich hues of J. S. Bach and spread them to each audience member in attendance.

And indeed it was a packed hall. In all the concerts I have attended with the Symphony and the St. Cecilia Concert Series in St. Andrews United Church in my three years at Dal, I have never seen it as crowded as it was this past Sunday. Apparently all but one or two tickets were sold to a crowd of every age and background. It made me wonder if churches were packed in the same way when Bach originally performed his works.

The first half featured the third and final set of 16 out of the total

45 *Figural Chorales*, written by Bach, and orchestrated by John Beckwith. The *figurals* are somewhat ambiguous in their original intent but are essentially the melody of a Lutheran hymn, embellished to possibly introduce a chorale for a congregation, or simply to inspire. Beckwith has arranged what were organ *figurals* for the orchestra made up of instruments capable of evoking the original colours of the organ performance (hence the use of "nontraditional" orchestral instruments such as the saxophone, harp, clarinet, and others).

Following what I thought was the intermission, Bach's *Piano Concerto in D Minor* was brilliantly directed by the ever-talented Georg Tintner, with Peter Allen on the piano. I could not see Mr. Allen from where I was sitting at the back of the church, but I could hear and feel his enjoyment in what he

played and the colours he evoked.

What I realized hours later was that I had left at the intermission.

Myself and my accompaniment for the afternoon saw people leaving, but also many people just standing on the steps. So we left. But we missed the performance of Bach's *Fourth Brandenburg Concerto*.

We didn't find the specific page listing the pieces and many, like myself, must have assumed the break between pieces where the piano was moved in and the orchestra left, was the intermission. When the performers left at the end of the first *Concerto*, we assumed the concert was over, not knowing how many pieces were being performed, nor their order. I apologize to the performers and must assume their presentation was as flawless and enjoyable as it always is.

Overlaid overdue

BY CHRIS LEPAN

The King's Theatrical Society production of Robertson Davis' *Overlaid*, was finally showcased last weekend, one week overdue. The entire original cast was unable to perform for a variety of understandable reasons, so, in came Gordon Cameron, Sue Mossing and Bob Mann to save the day. Mossing and Mann had a mere five days to get into character. Suffice to say, they did a quality job.

The play began somewhat strangely, as a number of audience members scrambled to find their seats. It wasn't until I sat down and removed my coat that I realized the two main characters were already acting on stage.

Cameron and Mossing, playing the roles of Pop and Ethel, offered an effective glimpse of what to expect from their characters as they moved about the set. Pop tapped his foot and tossed his head in jubilation to the sound of the opera, *Lucia di Lamermoor*, coming from his old radio, while Ethel worked diligently, cooking and cleaning, hating his music.

The two characters' silence during this ten-minute period was an excellent way to draw attention to the finer points of the play, such as the elaborately-decorated kitchen setting. The order, cleanliness and inherent sentimentality of Ethel's kitchen provided a realistic backdrop for the particular struggle Pop and Ethel faced.

Ethel's orderly kitchen was a symbol and product of her duty and sense of self-righteousness. Her Pop represented a direct contrast to this life style.

Seemingly fed up with small town life and family commitments,

Pop antagonizes Ethel with his New York City dreams of Dionysian abandon.

Cameron conveyed Pop's mocking nature humorously, particularly when G.B., the shady insurance broker played by Bob Mann, enters the kitchen to settle Pop's insurance plan.

Mann's elastic facial expressions offered comic relief amid the conflict between Pop and Ethel over what should be done with the insurance money. Pop ridicules the broker, until he agrees to give him all his money in one lump sum. After the insurance bozo storms out of the kitchen in a huff, the emotional father-daughter struggle reaches a climax.

At this point, Cameron and Mossing showed their true worth. Pop and Ethel reveal the depths of their souls as they try to understand what was at the root of their conflict. The more Pop tests his "emotionally under-stimulated" daughter the more she reveals about her rigid life.

Mossing effectively conveyed the emotional strain of a woman whose every action is motivated by a need "to be remembered". Though Pop finds his daughter's request for a granite gravestone somewhat ludicrous, he shows compassion when he gives her the insurance cheque. The play ends hopefully, with father and daughter having reached a new plateau in their relationship.

In charming fashion the three main characters reappeared on stage for a dance waltz outro. This delighted the audience, hyping their applause for an engaging presentation that directors Colin Lake and Tessa Logan-Wright should be proud of.

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

CLOSED FOR READING WEEK - FEBRUARY 22 - 26, 1999

The 1999/2000 admission cycle has begun and applications are streaming in. To ensure that applications will have been entered in the new Banner system by the various deadlines for admission and scholarships, it will be essential to close the Registrar's Office to the public for reading week. This should give staff time to concentrate on processing and data entry. If you require assistance urgently, please use e-mail. Thank you.

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Feb 15th-18th

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Sean Moreman, Chief Returning Officer

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