

# Hammer dazzles audience

Marcia Johnson

The Community Chamber Orchestra of York University opened its fourth season with solo violinist Moshe Hammer featured in its rendition of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto opus 55 (Eroica).

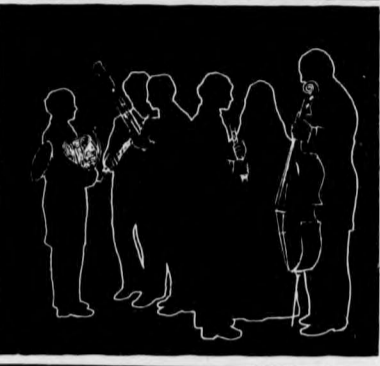
The orchestra (which played on the 22nd at Church of the Holy Trinity and the 23rd at Theatre Glendon) is composed of 55 players performing at a high professional level. This is especially praiseworthy considering that most of the musicians are amateurs and this is only its fourth season.

Mendelssohn was performed first and brought forth a tremendous reaction from the audience. Theatre Glendon provided for great acoustics and the finest details could be heard and appreciated. The audience was fortunate than Hammer's concert at the Church of the Holy Trinity because, according to John Kraglund (Globe and Mail, Nov. 23), the acoustics in the Church occasionally distorted his performance. Hammer, himself, said that that was only expected of the resonance of churches.

There were no hindrances on Monday night at Glendon.

Hammer, though totally involved in his playing was always aware of the orchestra behind him. There was perfect symmetry between the two. When asked how it was possible to keep so much music memorized, Hammer modestly replied that it was just like memorizing a particular part of a play.

Hammer teachers part-time at McLaughlin. His students should consider themselves lucky because this man's background is impressive to say the least. He has studied, played and won scholarships from various countries including Israel, the United States, the Thibaud competition in Paris



and closer to home, at the Stratford Festival. He was one of

the youngest concert masters when joining the Calgary Philharmonic orchestra.

One could see the difference between the two composers when Beethoven was performed. Whereas Mendelssohn was more of a gentleman, Beethoven was filled with emotion and power. This storminess was evident in the piece played by the York musicians.

The Allegro con brio was fast paced and exciting. Even the Marcia funebre, translated 'funeral march' (which, incidentally, didn't do much for this reporter's self esteem concerning her name), with its sombre undertone, held the true essence of Beethoven through its intense emotion brought about by a building effect. Occasionally, there seemed to be an escaping feeling expressed by the wind section.

The Finale showed the true capabilities of the group. There seemed to be many different variations of one melody played at the same time. It can be described as busy and full of life. One contrabass player was heard to say after the energetic performance: "I can't wait to hit the showers."

# Monroe's music mesmerizes many

Mike Guy

The Baha'is of York featured Gordie Munroe, guitarist and vocalist, on Wednesday of last week in Founders College Jr. Common Room. Munroe, a Halifax-born musician, taught himself to play the guitar. And if the applause is an indicator, the audience, of forty or so people thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Munroe, himself a Baha'is, had his first major performance on Prince Edward Island. He played with a little-known professional band and "from the start it was do or die". Since Prince Edward Island, Munroe has traveled all over Canada; he has done a number of solo performances in Winnipeg and Northern Ontario. Munroe, however, prefers performing in the country as opposed to the city, because "the country is for souls and the city is for bodies". On his tours from city to city, he never misses an opportunity to spread the knowledge of Bahau'llah. Bahau'llah is the prophet of his religion: progressive revelation. Progressive revelation means

that "God sent prophets to guide man in his day to day life. Jesus, Mohammad, Buddha, and Bahau'llah are a few of the prophets." In his song, *The Matador*, recorded with Bob Balin (ex-Guess Who) Munroe goes into the further details of his religion.

*Dylan, Tosh, Gillespie, major influences*

Balin is just one of the individuals who have influenced Munroe's musical style. Bob Dylan, Peter Tosh, and Dizzy Gillespie have also influenced him. As Munroe said, "We can get something from everyone, whether it's a feeling or a new technique". And his is constantly in search of a technique.

In order to better himself musically, he studies composition of music. His studies will enable him to "play any

instrument". To Munroe, it's important to know how to play his instruments, but even more important is knowing how to sing properly.

"A lot of vocalists destroy their voice, because they never learned to sing properly. They put all the pressure on their vocal cords. What they should do is use their ribs, legs, and their muscles to sing." That is the reason Munroe exercises regularly, and eats properly to keep himself in shape. "With lots of exercise, I feel more rested and more vibrant. When I'm physically fit, I perform best. A soft belly means a soft sound."

Munroe's music definitely was not soft. He played like a professional. He brought forth every aspect of his diverse musical background. As Munroe said, "there is unity in diversity. For which is better a garden with one kind of flower, or a garden with a variety of flowers? Obviously, the garden with many flowers is better since one flower compliments the other."

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