

UAS' Kardash experiments again — new mood a success

Last Wednesday's symphony concert marked the emergence of a major Canadian conductor—his name is Ted Kardash.

The program obviously agreed with Mr. Kardash's musical tastes, and by the end of the evening there was no question that he had done it justice. There was only one weak point in the program and that was a surprisingly lifeless and academic performance of Chopin's Concerto No. 1 in E minor for piano and orchestra by the Indiana School of Music intellectual and pianist Roman Rudnytsky. He played the notes well enough, but the impression was not unlike a room full of early 19th century furniture populated with wax figures. Rudnytsky's Chopin had all the feeling of an academic argument on some obscure critical point. It lacked humanity; it was dead. This is not to say that Rudnytsky has no sense of phrasing, because he has; but it is to say that my attention was always drawn to the pianist and not the music.

Luckily for the concert, Ted Kardash has tremendous musical vitality. He has a sense of rhythm which showed in everything he did. He gave the orchestra a solid beat which carried them through the slower passages (which frequently sound muddled in other orchestras) and kept them together at a faster tempo.

It is difficult to pick high points in a program as good as this one. "A Night on Bald Mountain" demonstrated again how much the horn section in this symphony has improved. Mr. Kardash also got good closure on the phrasing in this piece, something which has held this orchestra back. The three dances from "The Bartered Bride" were also well played, with the exception of the last one where the orchestra did not observe the tempo they were given. The real triumph of the evening was Dvorak's "Symphony No. 8 in G major". I particularly liked Ted Kardash's use of silence. He knows how to use the pause which follows a phrase that closes a crescendo, and this came through strongly in the first movement. The second movement showed us something we had not seen in Mr. Kardash's conducting here before. He can hold an orchestra together, and hold it to in interpretation in a slower movement. Kardash has always

been excellent on strongly rhythmic pieces, but it seems his ability has been limited by the ability of the U of A Symphony. In the last movement Harlan Green blew a beautiful jazz-like flute solo that summed up the aliveness and discovery of the whole evening.

Apart from the music, Ted Kardash tried to create a new atmosphere among the usually stodgy symphony audience. The experiment, to me, was a success. At the start of the evening all the house lights went down and we listened to some tape-recorded statements by young people on the symphony and symphony-goers. The young people were right. The symphony-goers we have now are up-tight clothes-horses out displaying themselves. They

by Brian Campbell

are snobbish and annoying. The symphony is in trouble, both with youth and with the bank. Ted Kardash made a start because the concert hall was more comfortable last Wednesday.

But if the symphony is ever going to bail itself out of the bind it is in now there will have to be a change in the whole style of life in Edmonton. The symphony is just one part of what should be a cultural community in this town, and that community must stretch beyond the Citadel and the Jubilee Auditorium (referred to in past years as "Manning's Emporium for the Arts") and Studio Theatre. Before the symphony can expect to attract anything more than the clothes-horse, snob-conscious audience it has now, the whole artistic experience in this town must be enjoyable. Symphony going in any cultural centre worthy of the name is part of a group experience. And for young that group experience does not happen. For the old there always is the clothes and what dear sweet Mrs. X did in Acapulco. For the young there is nothing after the double glass doors of the Auditorium slam behind them.

Let me put it this way. There's just nowhere to go

after the symphony or the theatre in this town. And there's no place to go before either. Student entertainment is limited to those alcoholic feed-lots like the Corona or the Riviera. No one discusses symphony in an environment like that, and I don't want to even if they did. If you go to the symphony you have no home within the auditorium and no home when you get out.

If we are going to attract young people to the symphony we are going to attract them with a total image of the symphony-goer. Telling us about good old Lawrence Leonard and the hard-practising viola player just won't do it. Why not get the young together after the symphony so they can develop a group identity after the concert; and through the identity, slowly but surely, will develop a solid relationship to music.

What the directors of the ESO should do is this: they should make an arrangement with Tommy Banks at the Embers to let any student with stubs in for half-price after the concert. The Embers is the only night-club in the city worthy of the name and it has a great band led by P. J. Perry which is one of the best in town. I'm sure that Mr. Banks would be amenable to this since his club is never crowded on Wednesdays, and anyway it's in keeping with the policies of any other major jazz club.

At the Jazz Workshop, for instance, students got in for half-price on Tuesdays, servicemen on Wednesdays, ladies free on Thursdays, and so on.

The second thing I think the ESO should try is a revival of the celebrations on St. Cecilia's Day. It falls on November 22, and in the days of Purcell it included a series of concerts during the day and a banquet in the evening, following which the new ode in honor of Saint Cecilia was performed. Perhaps we could rent a large hall and hold a banquet and over coffee and liquors an orchestra and chorus would perform Purcell's Ode. After that a rock band would perform their Ode specially commissioned for the occasion. Dancing, of course, would be encouraged during and after the rock ode as the band would remain for the rest of the evening. Basically, it would be a musical blast and this city needs an explosion if the symphony is going to get off the ground.

Lenin Prize winner to perform with ESO

This weekend the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra will present what should be the best concert of the season.

The programme will be presented Saturday night at 8:30 and Sunday afternoon at 3:00 at the Jubilee Auditorium, with Lawrence Leonard conducting. *The Mastersingers* by Wagner and Brahms' Symphony No. 4 will be performed.

The highlight of the concert will be, of course, the guest artist Mstislav Rostropovich. This Russian cellist, who has frequently been called the heir to the mantle of the great Pablo Casals, will play that cello concerto in E minor by Elgar.

Three years ago, Rostropovich thrilled and amazed Edmonton musical audiences with his interpretation of Dvorak's cello concerto. His technique is truly astonishing. The Montreal Star said of his performance "we are never made aware of the mechanics of the instrument: the listener does not ask himself how this man can draw such a powerful flow of molten sound from his cello . . . the how does not matter. It is enough that he does it."

Rostropovich's tone is unsurpassed and his combination of technical skill and intense musicality is unique. He is the Soviet Union's No. 1 cellist and for his outstanding achievements in the concert field he was named People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. in 1964.

He has also distinguished himself in the field of composition, and in 1950 was admitted to the Union of Soviet Composers. It is his nature to expect perfection from himself, and he does not feel that he has achieved this in composition.

When asked why he has never composed anything for his wife, the famous Bolshoi soprano Galina Vichnevskaya, he replied "I love my wife too much to cause her any unpleasantness."

Besides being an extremely active performing artist, the Moscow cellist also teaches at the Moscow conservatory. In 1964 he was awarded the Lenin Prize, the highest award which may be bestowed upon Soviet performers.

Rostropovich is presently conducting a cross-country tour of Canada, under the exclusive Canadian management of Canadian Concerts and Artists, as part of the cultural



MOSCOW CELLIST IN EDMONTON THIS WEEKEND

. . . playing Elgar E minor concerto

exchange program between Canada and the U.S.S.R.

Rostropovich's repertoire is probably the most complete of any cellist living today. Prokofiev, Shostakovitch, Britten and other renowned composers have written their major cello works for him. Dmitri Shostakovitch writes "Rostropovich is a musician of rare qualities . . . his skill

reveals a searching nature based on high artistic principles of music."

Tickets are on sale at the Bay. This is one performance that no one in the musical public of Edmonton can afford to miss. "Such wonderful music can be heard only once in a century."



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