

Armin displays amazing bow

by Rick Collins, in collaboration with Brad Warner.

Tuesday evening, January 25th, and as the idle chatter of the audience subsided in accordance with the last-minute rustling of programmes, the dimming lights heralded the entrance of violin virtuoso Otto Armin. Accompanied by Dalhousie's Lynn Stodola, Armin, with a brief acknowledgement of the opening applause, commenced a preliminary warm-up on his instrument, with Stodola taking her seat at the piano to perform a similar ritual.

Otto Armin, currently the Performance Co-ordinator at the Hamilton Philharmonic Institute, is also a faculty member of the National Youth Orchestra — the organization which formed the base of his musical career. After touring Europe and the Soviet Union with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra, and performing as assistant concertmaster to the Montreal Symphony under Zubin Mehta, he went on to capture popular acclaim as the laureate of the Jean Sibelius International Violin Competition in Helsinki, and eventually with the Carl Flesch International Violin Competition in London. He also performs with the intriguing, newly-formed group, the "Armin Electric String Quartet".

Lynn Stodola, with her Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School, was the official pianist for the classes of Leonard Rose, Ivan Galamian and Nathan Milstein, prior to her appointment at Dal. She was also well known in the New York area as a Chamber Music performer, and is the wife of violinist Djokic of the Dalart Trio.

Both musicians now at the ready, they launch into their first scheduled selection, composed of twelve variations in G Major on the French song "La Bergère Célimène," KV. 359, by Mozart. Far from intricate, the piece smacked of polite parlour-room stylizing, with an air of detached elegance, such as might have been heard in a fashionable 18th-century court. Rather indecisive in establishing the capabilities and compatibility of the musicians, it served as a trial-and-error exercise in timing and individual accentuation, with Stodola's piano accompaniments coming out of a discreet



background to almost overwhelm Armin's playing towards the conclusion of the piece.

The second selection, Bach's "Partita No. 2 in D Minor", comprised a lengthy solo from Armin, who by now had warmed up quite admirably to the task before him, reaching moments of inspiration during the "Sarabande" and "Chaconne" after a little unsteadiness in beginning his "Allemande".

With the social derring-do and drinking of the intermission done and dispensed with, the audience settled down to take in a rendition of Grieg's "Sonata No. 3 in C Minor", with Stodola back in position to tickle the ivories. The ensuing performance, although still not establishing a perfect rapport between both instruments, took on a greater cohesion and sense of purpose than the first attempt, and Armin, his playing fully-charged with the appropriate degree of passion required to suit the piece, achieved a beautifully animated climax to lend the necessary magic to Edvard Grieg's haunting composition.

The fourth and final selection was the "Baal Shem Suite" of composer Bloch, with all three movements boasting Yiddish titles: namely, "Vidui", "Nigun", and "Simchastorah". This may well have been some of Armin's finest work in the entire evening, with the artist's energetic and forceful mastery of Bloch's dramatic concept well in hand. Amazing bowmanship was especially evident as Armin's violin, under the skilful guidance of the performer's adept fingers, soared from sonorous lows to highs of crystal clarity and perception. Justice was definitely done, and a delighted audience directed their most vociferous applause of the en-

tire concert to the stage.

Bowing out gracefully, Armin and Stodola returned twice more to offer satisfactory interpretations on compositions from Tchaikovsky and Paganini before quitting the stage.

Despite the enthusiasm of the audience, however, it was somewhat disappointing to notice so many empty seats; c'mon, Dalhousie people! We can give a performer of Armin's calibre a better turnout than that! Just view the man as the Moe Koffman of his particular field, and the Cohn Box Office will have no trouble in selling out the next Otto Armin concert at Dal whatsoever.

Film

Hiding Place honest

by Brian Manning

The Hiding Place, a movie based on the book of the same title, is an honest religious film. The movie is the true story of a family of Dutch Christians during the Nazi occupation of Holland during World War II. The ten Boom's, Corrie, Betsie, and Papa, aid Jewish refugees fleeing the country. They pursue their extremely dangerous work with a zeal that is not marked by hatred for the Nazis but is based on intense love for their God and Mankind.

The ten Boom's in the face of great adversity cling to their fundamentalist beliefs though these doctrines are often challenged in situations where survival of their hiding place is threatened. Throughout the film the theme of truth vs. untruth is dealt with. It greatly bothered the ten Booms when they were forced to lie to the Germans. Love and Hate fight a continual battle in the minds of the sisters as they struggle to survive under the harsh conditions of the German Labour camp.

The film captures the landscape and architecture of Holland in the 1940's and contrasts it to the impersonality of the Nazi War machine. Several scenes catch the viewers eye and stab it with a view that is so starkly effective that it seems to make all the senses aware of the severity that was reality. The directors through strict attention to

detail have been successful in recreating the confusion and agony that these women must have suffered as they were herded into railway cars and transported to the concentration camp in Germany.

Arthur O'Connell in his portrayal of Papa ten Boom immediately draws one's admiration, not ones sympathy. Ten Boom was a man who lived by the strength of his own convictions and though aged he would not allow others to be persecuted as long as he had strength to do something. O'Connell in his interpretation of this gentleman successfully recreates the feelings of strength and wisdom that would have brought such a family to heroism.

Julie Harris plays the dauntless Betsie ten Boom and throughout the film emphasizes this aspect of Miss ten Boom. She sees Freedom in captivity, sanity where there is only insanity, and most importantly love where there is hate.

Corrie ten Boom, portrayed by Jeannette Clift, gives the play its credibility. She is given, at times, to moments of hatred towards the Nazis and experiences honest emotions in the surroundings of the camp. Corrie, now some eighty years old, makes a personal appearance at the end of the movie. The movie deals honestly with the problems of relating Christian doctrine to adverse situations such as the ten Boom story.

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