

Symphony orchestra concerts strike a chord with Miltonians



Photo by JON BLACKER

Harpist Marie Lorcini was a featured performer at Friday evening's presentation by the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra. The second in the concert series sponsored by Milton Arts Productions was titled 'Spanish Serenades'. The series wraps up Friday, Mar. 2 with 'The German Baroque'.

I still can't get over it, even after all these years. I mean, how many towns have the privilege of a big city symphony orchestra visiting them on a regular basis?

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the members of Milton Arts Productions, Miltonians can experience the pleasures of live entertainment with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Last Friday night, the orchestra, consisting of 29 musicians, played for the first time in our latest concert location — the new Milton Baptist Church. Conductor Boris Brott commented that performing in the large room was "as intimate as playing chamber music in someone's livingroom." We were like a gathering of friends, he said.

Not wanting to miss any of the action, I sat in the front row — a leg-stretch away from a violinist. Choosing an off-centre seat, I was also able to get a constant profile of Mr. Brott. I didn't see him grimace during the performance, so I guess everyone hit the right notes and came in at the right time.

Some of the musicians felt they would not be able to read their music if the room lights were turned down, while others preferred a darker room. Mr. Brott wondered aloud if they should take a vote, but in the end, the "let there be light" folks won out. This also meant that we had to behave ourselves and not fall asleep.

Mr. Brott has trained us well. We rarely applaud at inappropriate times anymore. Before the orchestra headed off into Manuel de Falla's ballet suite, *El Amor Brujo*, Mr. Brott warned us that we might have difficulty knowing when the end was near. As soon as we heard the chimes, he said, we should get ready to clap.

As Jean-Norman Jadeluca busily

Review  
with ESTHER CALDWELL

struck the tympani and swung at the chimes for the resounding climax, a tuxedoed man unexpectedly popped up from behind the chimes and muffled them with a firm grip. He turned out to be the bassoonist, who had nothing else better to do at the time. Besides, Mr. Jadeluca would have needed four hands to carry out the tricky manoeuvre.

I found out later from Mr. Jadeluca that the poor chimes had met an unfortunate fate at Hamilton Place. A wall had come crashing down on them. As a result, he had brought only three of the chimes and had hung them on his gong stand.

Joaquin Rodrigo is best known for his guitar compositions. But since a guest harpist, Marie Lorcini, had come along for the evening, we got to hear his *Sones en la Catedral*. It was composed for harp.

Ms Lorcini also performed Joaquin Turina's *La Oracion del Torero*, which was originally intended for harp and piano. In both cases, the orchestra accompanied Ms Lorcini. The orchestral versions had never before been performed.

Ms Lorcini appeared to have the usual five fingers on each hand, but the number of notes played at any

one time exceeded her 10 digits. Maybe she used a knuckle-nail combination. I couldn't figure it out, even though she and her giant harp were only six feet away from me.

The orchestra played two pieces by whiz kid Juan Crisostomo Jacobo Antonio de Arriaga y Balzola (probably Jack for short) — *Los Esclavos Felices* (an opera overture) and his *Symphony in D Minor*.

During the intermission, I plucked up enough courage to approach Vivian Minden, one of the flutists and an 18-year veteran of the orchestra. I asked her a question that had been bothering me for some time.

"Do you ever get bored waiting for your turn to play?" I asked.

"No," she replied. "I have to pay careful attention and count the beats so I am ready to play."

I felt I needed a second opinion, but Mr. Jadeluca gave me the same answer at the end of the performance. I had noticed that he hadn't played the tympani much through the evening. He too said that just meant he had to concentrate more. The tympani keep him busy with tunings throughout a performance, more so that evening because the heat from the ceiling lights affected the instrument.

There is a difference between listening to music on the stereo at home and watching and hearing it come alive in a concert hall, as if for the first time.

Theatre for the mind

All in the name of love, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and Theatre Sheridan will present a special fundraising performance at Sheridan College next month.

Students in the music theatre performance and music theatre technical programs at the Oakville school will present *Half a Sixpence* February 22 at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$17.50 and can be purchased by calling 845-5044. Sheridan College is located on Trafalgar Road.

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