

Two Concerts Bring May Festival To Dramatic End

By Leonard S. Gregory

The fifth and sixth concerts of the May Festival Series brought the forty-ninth season to a dramatic close.

The Saturday afternoon program, devoted entirely to the works of Sergei Rachmaninoff, saw the composer at the piano for the performance of his own second concert in C minor, Opus 18 with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy.

The program opened with the symphonic poem "The Isle of the

work did not strike such a favorable note. The tempo was too hurried and instrumentation too ambitious. The total result was thick and fuzzy to say the least.

Four soloists—Judith Hellwig, soprano, Enid Szanthe, contralto, Jan Pearce, tenor and Mack Harrell, baritone with the Choral Union, the Philadelphia Orchestra and Dr. Ormandy then launched into the Choral Ninth Symphony of Beethoven.

The first and third movements of the symphony received a tasteful interpretation at a satisfactory tempo, but the second movement was assuredly out of proportion as to speed. We will admit that it gains esprit and sprightly wit at top flight but there is, unfortunately, a limit to human endurance. Triple tonguing French horns and cross fingering bassoons at two hundred and forty notes a minute does not contribute to clarity and precision. Not after six consecutive concerts! The thought is pleasant but the action impossible.

Fourth Movement Fine

The fourth movement, however, was as fine as any we have heard. It moved with dignity and grace; the soloists were in good voice and the chorus, in spite of countless rehearsals, was alert, responsive and on pitch. This movement is perhaps the most difficult to present effectively, but it surely came through on Saturday night.

As a closing thought may we make a slight curtsy to Thor Johnson for his tireless efforts which resulted, in Dr. Ormandy's own words, in the finest chorus he has had the privilege of directing.

Civic Orchestra Comes To Rescue Of Eugene Ormandy

The Ann Arbor Civic Orchestra played an unexpected role in the final May Festival concert Saturday night when Eugene Ormandy, conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, decided to make an addition to the program.

His last-minute plans called for the playing of the Navy hymn "Anchors Aweigh" in commemoration of the U. S. Navy men who died in the recent victorious battle against Japanese forces in the Coral sea. A hurried search revealed that the visiting organization had no musical scores on hand. Then it was discovered that the local civic orchestra possessed a complete set. The transfer was made to Mr. Ormandy in time for the 8:30 program.

Dead." This work is of such a character that it can, under inexperienced guidance, easily disintegrate into a series of disconnected scenes; but Dr. Ormandy's conception of the work divided the chief climax between the end of part one and the beginning of part two, with the closing section counterbalancing the opening division. This reading provided the unity the work requires. The orchestra's response was very evident throughout the piece.

The macabre note established was continued in the Symphonic Dances, Opus 45 that followed. Like most pieces of our time, the rhythmic element is uppermost. The dances are not especially exciting, thematically, but they do provide a good pre-intermission offering.

Mr. Rachmaninoff's presence at the piano for the concerto provoked no little demonstration from the audience—a demonstration that carried a tribute to a man and artist, who, for the past half century, has represented musical perfection.

The performance of the concerto was received with equally vociferous acclaim. Numerous curtain calls finally coaxed a childish smile from the artist, and then at long last an encore—his own Prelude in G major.

Unusual Program

Saturday evening's program was somewhat unusual in several respects. After singing the National Anthem, Dr. Ormandy turned to the audience and asked that they again rise while the orchestra played the Navy Hymn "Anchors Aweigh" as a tribute to our men in service who had given their lives in the present "Battle of the Coral Sea."

The "Toccatina, Intermezzo, and Fugue" of Bach, as an orchestral transcription by the conductor followed. After having heard the Handel overture on Wednesday, this

Alabama-Licensed Car's Drivers Sought

YPSILANTI — Guy Witsoe, Wayne, is suffering from a dislocated left arm and severe cuts about the face, and Ypsilanti state police are seeking a party of motorists in a car bearing Alabama license 47-C5164, said to have beaten Witsoe on Sunday and to have been involved in two hit-and-run accidents near here.

Witsoe, according to his statements to the officers, was just alighting from the automobile of a friend on the Ecorse Rd., east of here, when the Alabama car swerved suddenly to the wrong side of the highway and sideswiped the other machine. The driver stopped to bend a front fender up off from the tire, and Witsoe took down the license number of the car.

The driver and his two companions, another man and a woman, sprang from the car, beat Witsoe seriously, and then fled, according to the report.

About 90 minutes later the same Alabama car swerved suddenly to the wrong side of Ecorse Rd. again and sideswiped a car driven by Miss Elsa Marx, Detroit. Again the driver stopped to pull a fender up off a tire, and again he fled without giving his name or other information.

The license number and description of the party as obtained by Miss Marx corresponds with that obtained by Witsoe.

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