

Symphony performs a real Masterpiece

KWS impresses audience with works by Haydn, Mozart, Stravinsky, Morawetz

BY COLLEEN JOHNSTON
RECORD STAFF

Included in this weekend of celebration, parties, and thankfulness is a fascinating Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Masterpiece program.

At Centre in the Square yesterday, listeners heard Sinfonia Concertante, consisting of works by Haydn, Mozart, Stravinsky and Canadian composer Oskar Morawetz.

What at first looked like an eclectic program turned out to be well-designed, primarily because each of the selected works highlighted quite differing aspects of the multifaceted interpretive capabilities of KWS principal conductor Martin Fischer-Dieskau.

Each of the composers, as well, was a trend-setter. Haydn, dubbed the "father of the symphony," singlehandedly freed instrumental music from its motoric spinning, replacing studious counterpoint with light, symmetrical tunes and whimsical humour.

In Haydn's Symphony No. 59 (Feuersymphonie or Fire Symphony), Fischer-Dieskau coaxed elegant clarity from

the players.

The airy moments brushed with nonchalance fanned the segments of Haydn's dramatic fire.

This was a stunning performance; one that ought to be repeated and recorded for posterity.

Igor Stravinsky's sharp Symphony in C was also well-interpreted. Veering from key to key, this highly syncopated neo-classical composition speaks the language of the classic composers Haydn and Mozart, but with a different dialect. Parts of it are based on fluff and ornaments, yet it remains a compelling work when handled properly.

Stravinsky's neo-classical style brought a fresh sense of invention to orchestral music during his vagabond years in the 1930s and '40s. Fischer-Dieskau examined the score deeply, and found aspects of Stravinsky's neo-classical style in film composers, such as Hitchcock's favourite, Bernard Herrmann.

It's universally accepted that Mozart, in every available genre, composed with alacrity and perfect

artistry.

KWS concertmaster Stephen Sitarski and principal violist David Rose took on lead roles in Mozart's gorgeous Sinfonia Concertante, K. 364. An exciting performance by soloists and accompanying orchestra here, and again, a lovely balance was reached throughout.

Balance of phrasing, blend and conversations between sections led Mozart's beautiful inspiration to be transformed into magic.

Up until fairly recently, Morawetz was the most frequently performed Canadian composer. A true trend-set-

ter, Czech-born Morawetz came to Canada in the 1940s, and took on a long-term and successful professorial post at the University of Toronto shortly thereafter.

His charming Overture to a Fairytale, an early work, opened the second portion.

Tinged with Czech folk elements, brilliantly and colorfully orchestrated and rhythmically virile, Morawetz's skill was brought out in every phrase of this work.

Morawetz is, in many ways, a trailblazer.

His style combines compositional

proWess and emotional depth, in a modernistic setting.

Like all the other featured composers on this program, Morawetz has exerted an important influence on his students and contemporaries.

All in all, a showcase concert displaying the many possibilities of the KWS and Fischer-Dieskau.

The conviction and energy poured into each different work was impressive; most surprising was the stylistic integrity of all performances.

This fascinating, panoramic program repeats tonight at Centre in the Square at 8 p.m.



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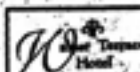
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the KWS in Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante
featuring Concertmaster Stephen Sitarski
and Principal Violist David Rose.

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