

Zinman's Farewell Shows Fine Touch

by FRANK CROCIATA

The sixth Philharmonic concert, last Thursday, was the final appearance of this season for guest conductor David Zinman. In November he conducted marvelous performances of music by Brahms, Faure, Mozart, Bartok, and an outstanding performance of the Prokofiev Second Violin Concerto, with Itzhak Perlman. He concluded his first concert with the Mahler "Titan Symphony". It was a performance that would have been considered representative anywhere; in Rochester it was nothing short of a miracle.

Zinman is an orchestral builder in the classical Szell-Solti tradition, and the excellence was maintained through the last appearance. An extremely expressive and virile director, Zinman's gestures are large and his cues are clear. He subdivides his beat as if it were as natural to him as breathing. He knows what he is wants from the orchestra and how to get it.

The orchestra played marvelously, rising to what was indeed a special occasion. Zinman began with "Overture to Benvenuto Cellini" of Berlioz, an excessive and sometimes vulgar work of a composer prone to excess. The orchestra played it accurately and during the overture I was aware that the rear desks of the strings, particularly the celli, were audible. I've never really heard them before and they add a rather exciting dimension to the ensemble. Now that Zinman has found them perhaps we will profit with a richer string sound.

Concertmaster Howard Weiss played the Dvorak Violin Concerto before intermission. He had pitch problems in the upper registers during the first movement, a Slavonic dance, was quite lovely and the last movement, a slavic dance, was alive with excitement. Zinman provided a superb accompaniment. Dvorak might be out of style, but as I hear more of his music I realize what a fine craftsman he was.

After intermission, Zinman played "Decoration Day" from "The Holidays" of the Ameri-

can insuranceman Charles Ives. The piece is full of gimmicks and random references to whatever came into Ives' mind. Ives was a fine and patient craftsman, but I doubt the result is worth the trouble. Nonetheless, whether the piece was music or not, the audience heard every note of it accurately played.

Zinman closed with "Dances of Galanta" of Zoltan Kodaly. It is a wonderful piece and Zinman and the orchestra clearly enjoyed it. There was outstanding playing from the woodwinds and the French horns produced their first truly musical sounds I have heard from them in a while.

Zinman skillfully balanced the tone of the brass under the woodwinds and strings, avoiding the possibility of destroying the ensemble.

Zinman's stay in Rochester has been an altogether rewarding experience for the orchestra, the school, and the subscription audience. He is an extraordinarily gifted young man who knows exactly what he is doing and where he is going. He is, in my mind, the finest of a new generation of conductors.

Volunteers Sought To Staff Hospitals

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Interviews, by appointment only, will be held at Red Cross Headquarters, 50 Prince St., Rochester, Monday, Feb. 1, and Wednesday, Feb. 3, from 10:30 a.m.-Noon, 1:30-4 p.m., and 7-9 p.m. To make an interview appointment or obtain more information, call Red Cross, (716) 275-9800.

PENFIELD SERIES CENTERS ON FAMILY

St. Joseph's parish, Penfield, resumed its adult education program last Sunday night, Jan. 17, with a panel discussion entitled Male, Female and Marriage.

Participants were Father Gerald Dunn, pastor of St. Theodore's, who directed the diocesan Family Life Bureau for 11 years; Dr. Ronald E. Stevens, a physician; County Judge John J. Conway and Dr. Francena Miller, a sociologist, lecturer and researcher in family structure and society.

The winter series includes four such discussions under the general title, Home and Family. Meetings, open to the public, are scheduled for alternate Sundays at 8 p.m. in the school hall.

On Jan. 31, the topic Human Drives and Controls will be explored by Dr. Barbara Sobieszek, a University of Rochester sociologist; Father Charles Lavery, CSV, president of St. John Fisher College; Dr. Christopher Hodgman, psychiatrist and teacher at Strong Memorial Hospital, and Leo Kesselring, county chairman of the Conservative Party.

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