



the conductor
... his music
and views

David Zinman is one of the American-born conductors who are slowly rolling back the dominance of eastern Europeans in serious music. The maestro, 34, is presently conductor of the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. He has conducted the Royal Philharmonic and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, and has made a record with the London Symphony and Pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Frank Crociata, music critic of the Courier-Journal, spoke to Zinman during a break in the rehearsal of his third appearance with the Rochester Philharmonic this season. Still aglow from the successful rehearsal, Zinman spoke competently and optimistically of his career and the future of music.

By FRANK CROCIATA

Like so many of the great conductors, Zinman started as a string player. He studied the violin from age 7 and later the viola, at the Oberlin Conservatory. At the University of Minnesota he was choral director, "but I hesitate to admit this, for all too often choral conductors make poor orchestral conductors."

When he was 25 he was invited to conduct the Minneapolis Symphony and shortly afterward he was invited to tour as assistant to the famed maestro Pierre Monteux. Conducting came naturally to Zinman, who does not attribute his technique to a teacher or method. "Oh yes, I took classes in beating time (he demonstrates a square 4/4 rhythm), but I knew how to conduct long before these classes."

He did learn a great deal from Monteux, who was in his 80s when Zinman toured with him. Monteux conducted the premier of Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" in 1913, a performance that resulted in a riot, and he championed modern music throughout his long career. I asked if Monteux's influence extended to Zinman's own tastes. "Not at all. He never played Mahler, and very little Mozart. Of course with my chamber orchestra I play a great deal of Mozart."

Zinman likes the interesting and the unusual. He is particu-

larly fond of Mahler and has studied several of his symphonies (he played Mahler's first symphony with the Rochester Philharmonic). He also conducted music of Hungarians, Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly here and pointed out that "it is not the changes of tempo that appeal in Hungarian music, it is the inflexion within the tempi."

Asked about modern and experimental music, he indicated an interest, but one feels that he is not at the forefront of the avant-garde. Rather he's concerned with the development of music along traditional lines, expanding tonal and instrumental resources. Electronic music appeals to him, particularly insofar as it expands instrumental capabilities. He cited the work of Harry Partch as an example of the development of new instruments. He is, however, firmly grounded in the future of tonal music. "... there will be melody as long as men are human."

Zinman's recording of the Chopin "F. Minor" Piano Concerto and the Bach "D. Minor" Piano Concerto with Vladimir Ashkenazy and the London Symphony Orchestra won the Edison Prize at the Grand Gala du Disque in Amsterdam last fall and the Grand Prix du Disque.

He spoke of the Rochester Philharmonic in the most laudatory terms and hopes to return. He pointed with particular delight to the woodwinds and stated flatly, "you have the finest trombone section of any orchestra in America."

As a conductor he considers himself a part of the orchestra, "the one in authority, of course, but one can abuse this authority, demoralizing the players to the detriment of the music."

The outstanding conductors of the century, Toscanini, Koussevitzky, Szell, Reiner, all distained excessively superlative titles, preferring to be recognized merely as "honest musicians". Both on the podium and in conversation Zinman presents himself as an honest musician. There is no greater indication to me that he is an outstanding conductor.

Benefit Party Set
For Holy Childhood

The annual stag party and smorgasbord for the benefit of the School of the Holy Childhood will be held Saturday, Feb. 6, from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. at Mother of Sorrows hall, 5000 Mt. Read Blvd. Tickets will be available at the door.

This benefit party is sponsored by the fathers of the children at the school, which provides special education and training for eighty-nine mentally retarded youngsters aged seven to 18.

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'Good Old Days'
To Live Again

For those who long for "the good old days", Holy Apostles Mothers Club plans a re-visit to the era of gas lamps, music halls, 10-cent beers and barbershop quartets at "Gay 90s Night", the annual parish dinner-dance.

Dancing at 8 p.m. will follow cocktails and dinner beginning at 6:30. Breakfast will follow the dancing for which Freddie Besk and his Orchestra will play at 2 Austin St.

Ticket reservations may be made by calling Jean Bianchi (254-1273) or Marie D'Ambra (254-4744). Others on the committee are Dolores Cringoli, chairman; Madge Doyle, Sylvia Mancuso and Cathy Ritzen-thaler.

COURIER DEADLINE

Parish correspondents and other contributors to the Courier-Journal should please remember that the deadline is Thursday morning for the following Wednesday's paper.



Quinn Halford (left), Herman Arbeit and George Bamford, members of the National Theater Company in a scene from Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman," scheduled Feb. 3 at St. Agne High School.

As I See It

Ralph Edwards,
Stay Retired

By Pat Costa



If ever there was an argument against the "golden age of television" as that period 15 to 20 years is often referred to, it popped up last week on Channel 13.

"This is Your Life" came back to life. Better that it should have remained a memory.

With Ralph Edwards as host of this horror, the debut show took poor Ruth Buzzi of "Laugh-In" fame down the pot-holed path.

To give Miss Buzzi mere credit for the way she handled herself and thus the eventual outcome of the show would be to underestimate her talents.

In addition to being comedienne of no little skill, she proved herself a warm, resourceful person as Edwards flung cousins in her face whom she had never met, showed pictures of the family business (memoirial stones) and had a letter from her father read, adding somewhat belatedly that he was now deceased.

Dom DeLuise and his wife Carol, friends and show business colleagues of Miss Buzzi, added the one bright, spontaneous note to the evening of well-wishers.

Naturally, Edwards cut them off in the middle of a sentence with a memorized line of un-forgivable saccharine.

Yuki

"Dr. Cook's Garden", a TV movie, adapted from a Broadway play by Ira Levin and starring Bing Crosby and Frank Converse along with relatively new Broadway star Blythe Danner was not first rate thriller material.

Billed as such by ABC, the story about a kindly Vermont doctor who keeps a perfect garden by removing all sick and unhealthy plants to let the good ones prosper, and doing the same with the people in his town, grew repetitive.

One set of death throes followed another, only the very first mildly frightening.

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