Krips disappointing at Symphony

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, under its guest conductor José Krips, met with an enthusiastic reception from the large audience at Symphony Hall last Thursday, October 27. Considerable renown had preceded both the orchestra and its conductor, and one waited with great interest to see if such expectations would be fulfilled.

Krips opened with the well-known Beethoven Leonore No. 3 Overture, an inspired musical synopsis of the Opera Fidelio. Krips' rendition was sensitive and intelligent, but lacking in élan. The strings and winds of the orchestra soon revealed themselves to be of high caliber, but the horns were surprisingly tentative and even shaky. Perhaps the most novel moment of this performance was the off-stage trumpet's entrance, which was really distant and, though spirited, somewhat distant.

The Hornegg Symphony No. 5 for strings was written in Paris in 1941, just after the Nazi invasion, and the music largely reflects the mood of that time. The first two movements are gray and melancholy, while the finale, containing a chorale played in unison by four trumpets, expresses the joy of freedom. Krips' performance was very fine, and the music itself was written in Paris in 1941, just after the Nazi invasion, and the music largely reflects the mood of that time. The first two movements are gray and melancholy, while the finale, containing a chorale played in unison by four trumpets, expresses the joy of freedom. Krips' performance was very fine, and the music itself would probably grow in interest with more performances.

By happy coincidence, Krips presented the second performance of Schubert's Symphony No. 9 I have heard within a week. Last week I mentioned the problems of performing this vast work in discussing the NE Conservatory's performance. Krips had many good, and a few rather strange, ideas about how to solve them. For instance, he accomplished the transition from the introductory Andante to the first Allegro by the simple expedient of playing the introduction too fast. The first movement continued to pull along cheerfully and somewhat glibly until the reappearance of the introduction theme midway through the coda, when Krips suddenly checked his momentum so drastically that I could hardly believe my ears. As if to make up for this, he then gave us yet another movement through the Andante, at which speed the Israeli players tried valiantly to get Schubert's message through. Why so many modern conductors insist on taking this movement so fast that it begins to sound more like a Boy Scout hiking song than an expression of resignation and sadness?

The Scherzo was very lively and deftly done, and the Finale was treated with great drive and energy. The brass often tended toward over-vehemence, though my 2nd balcony chair may have been responsible for this.

In passing, it is fairly safe to say that we will never hear "The Star-Spangled Banner and "Hatikvoh", the Israeli National Anthem, played with greater precision and refinement, than they have been responsible for this. But Answer Too Easy

"Inherit The Wind", now playing at the Capri, attacks the difficult and controversial issue of academic freedom in the public schools. Although, producer-director Stanley Kramer treats this fictionalized version of the celebrated "Monkey Trial" of 1925 in an artistically superior manner, he offers an over-simplified solution to the basic problem.

In the "Monkey Trial", a Tennessee schoolteacher was brought to court by religious Fundamentalists for attempting to teach the theory of evolution in violation of a state law. William Jennings Bryan was prosecutor for the Fundamentalists, and Clarence Darrow was attorney for the defense. As the authors of the Broadway play and cinematographer Kramer realized, the real issue was not the conflict between science and religion, but rather, the question of academic freedom for public school teachers.

In the film the answer is obvious. The "defenders of the faith" are characterized as sick, while the "martyrs of science" are depicted as knights in shining armor. Frederick March, as the academic-award-deserving portrayal of prosecutor Matthews Harrison Brady as a senile windbag who refuses to believe that his glory is a thing of the past. The townspeople are delineated as a mob of self-seeking, ignorant, bigots led by a sadistically fanatic minister who is well played by Claude Akins. In contrast, Spencer Tracy rises from his usual mediocrity to competence and is pleasingly avuncular, as gifted, dedicated criminal lawyer, Henry Drummond, who would rather see right triumph than achieve personal acclaim. Dick York, too, does well as Bert Cates, the homespun young schoolmaster who "just wants his pupils to learn the truth".

Unfortunately, life is not that simple. The fundamentalists' refusal to allow the teaching of a valid scientific doctrine, because it conflicted with their religious beliefs, was a constitutional crime. But, a free-school teacher is a public servant and must teach what it feels the next generation must know to preserve the society. It will also forbid the dissemination, in its journal curriculum, and our state legislatures seem no better. I don't know the answer, but it is not as simple as "Inherit The Wind" would have us believe.

— Allen S. Krieger, '62