Schickele plays PDQ Bach and audience loses

By William Lasser

A boy with one cavity and a dog with no teeth stole the show Monday evening as Professor Peter Schickele thrilled a sell-out Kresge audience with his renditions of some of P. D. Q. Bach's least enjoyable music.

The dog, Dietrich Fischer-Bauau, gave a stirring performance in the lead role of the cantate canis "Waghs! Art!" (Schickele K9), moving the crowd almost to tears with his emotional plaint in the penultimative movement, the famous lamento "Au!"

The Professor, on tour from the University of Southern North Dakota at Hoople, also conducted the MIT Symphony Orchestra in P. D. Q. Bach's "Hindenburg Concerto" (S. LZ-129), and played the solo role in the much-maligned composer's Concerto for Bassoon vs. Orchestra (S. 8). Schickele is the world's foremost authority on the so-called music of P.D.Q. Bach, the last son of the more famous Johann Sebastian Bach. He has discovered scores of compositions by the rather non-obnoxious, unpleasant music. He has discovered scores of compositions by the rather non-obnoxious, unpleasant music.

Schickele described by Schickele as "wild," at last agreed to perform when he was leashed by the orchestra's sheet music found its way into the Kresge air-conditioning system. The music reappeared from a duct during the performance of the Andante Cantabile from F. J. Haydn's Op. 3 No. 5.

Schickele was forced to conduct both the "Hindenburg" Concerto and the Andante Cantabile himself, due to the refusal of scheduled conductor Atlas D. Atlantis to appear, apparently for contractual reasons. She finally agreed to terms and directed the orchestra through both the Cantata and the Bassoon Concerto.

The "Hindenburg" is a piece in which the younger Bach took advantage of his father's more famous Brandenburg Concertos. It contains, said the Professor, the worst portions of each of the six Brandenburgs. The orchestra seemed at times ragged; some of the balloons were released at inopportune moments.

After a shaky performance in the Haydn work, included to please the demands of the musicians who would otherwise have refused to play P. D. Q. Bach's works, the orchestra fell behind the precise direction of Miss Atlantis and the emotionalism of Bauau, the dog, at first reluctant to sing before the crowd later described by Schickele as "wild," at last agreed to perform when he was leashed by force to the concertmaster's leg.

Following intermission, two trios composed in the Echo Sonata for Two Friendly Groups of Instruments (S.999999999). The work, scored for trumpet, horn and trombone against bassoon, flute and oboe, was eagerly presented by the latter group but was not so enthusiastically rendered by the former, who were finally forced at gunpoint to conclude the piece.

Orchestra, conductor and soloist combined in a delightful performance of the bassoon concerto, a three-movement work in which the soloist is asked to perform on various parts of his instrument while competing in a sort of endurance test with the orchestra. Atlantis and Schickele labored against each other with grace and beauty, concluding the Rondo alla Turkey with a drive and abandon that marked the musicians' desire to leave the stage.

The immensely enjoyable musical evening, while hardly relaxing, was a perfect admixture of farce, satire and music. Professor Schickele's return to MIT is anxiously awaited.

Dragnetshop's fourth and final evening of one-act plays will be performed at 8pm on Friday, March 11 and Saturday, March 12 in the Little Theater, Kresge Auditorium. The plays to be presented are Harold Pinter's A Slight Ache and Samuel Beckett's Embers. The plays are free and open to the public. A critique and coffee hour will follow the performances. For further information call 3-2908.

An exhibition of works on paper and handmade paper objects by Michelle Stuart will be on view in Hayden Gallery from March 12 through April 8. The presentation is sponsored by the MIT Committee on Visual Arts. A public preview will be held on Friday, March 11 from 8 to 10pm and the artist will give an informal gallery talk at 7pm.

Israeli conductor Dalia Atlas will direct the MIT Symphony Orchestra in a concert to be given in Kresge Auditorium on March 12 at 8:30pm. Free tickets will be distributed in Lobby 10 the week of the concert; tickets at the door will cost $1.00.

We Tickle the Earth's Belly is pleased to announce the opening of its Spring Mime Repertory Series, March 22 through April 2, at the Cyclorama Theatre, Boston Center for the Arts, 541 Tremont Street, Boston. For full information and reservations, call Quik Charge, 426-6210.