Symphony successful

By Laurence Duffy

MIT is fortunate to have among its many student organizations one particular group which never fails to meet with critical acclaim—the MIT Symphony Orchestra.

Aside from its regular concerts given each year at the Institute, which often have packed audiences, the orchestra has an impressive record of tours and performances. Concerts have been held at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and numerous New England colleges and universities. The orchestra toured the country during the spring season four years ago.

A highlight in the orchestra's history occurred last March when its first recording was released on the Vox/ Turnabout label. This album was the first of four recorded by the orchestra, and features Professor of Music David Epstein (conductor and acting music director of the MIT Symphony) conducting two American works: Aaron Copland's 'Dance Symphony' and the suite from 'The Incredible Flutivt by Walter Piston. The subsequent albums include some previously unrecorded works, among which are Ernest Bloch's orchestral version of his own 'Suite Hibraique' and a piece written by Epstein, 'Night Voices.' All four releases are currently available at local record stores.

The orchestra has between 95 and 100 members, according to MIT Symphony President Howard Schnapp '79, but there are still a number of openings waiting to be filled by auditioners from the MIT and Wellesley student bodies. The greatest need is for violists, cellists, bass players, and percussionists. Schnapp indicated that the few woodwind and brass positions are always heavily oversubscribed, and that competition is fierce. The orchestra actively seeks new members, and anyone interested in auditioning should contact either the Music Office at x3-2906 or Schnapp at x5-9454. Candidates should have solid experience in high school or all-state orchestras.

The orchestra's programs are quite diverse, due mainly to what Schnapp calls an "acute sense of programming" on the part of the conductor Epstein. He attempts to reach the greatest number of differing musical tastes among his audiences, as well as giving the musicians a broad range of experience.

The biggest item on the orchestra's agenda this year is a concert at Avery Fisher Hall on April 12. The program for that concert has yet to be determined. On-campus concerts will include Mahler's 'Fourth Symphony' and Stravinsky's 'Schéhérazade.'

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