The Real Thing: Original Bach

The Bach Ensemble, Mass in B minor at the First Presbyterian Church

If you're accustomed to hearing spectacular masses and oratorios, the Bach Ensemble's rendition of the B minor Mass could have been a letdown. If you're open to trying something different, however, this performance could have proven to be interesting. For the classical music enthusiast, this concert was a unique opportunity to hear the Mass from a different perspective.

One of Bach's most famous works, the B Minor Mass has traditionally been performed in a manner unlike that which he apparently had intended. The Bach Ensemble, under the direction of Joshua Rifkin, strove to present the work as the great master conceived it. A music project of Acoustic Research, this edition was presented using a new text and score which was felt to be closest to the original version. Since Bach had been dead for several decades before the Mass was first performed in its entirety, it has evolved into something quite different from what he had in mind.

For the most part, the quality of the performance was somewhere between good and excellent. The concert, performed in Jordan Hall of the New England Conservatory, 28th and Bank will be performed daily except for Monday. Call 491-3342 for details.

The American Premiere Stage will present three short plays today through Sunday. Lanford Wilson's Someone and the Somebodies. For the most part, the quality of the performance was somewhere between good and excellent. For the overall blend of the five vocalists was good, but the impact in passages such as “Ouiai in Excelsis” was not very effective due to the limited number of performers. The effect of the string section and woodwinds was excellent, the oboes in the “Missa” being especially superb. Although it was a pity that Rifkin decided against a harpsichord in the continuo, the organist nonetheless did a fine job. The only significant weakness of the entire performance was the brass section. The horn and trumpets seemed to have difficulties finding the proper pitch. I would imagine this was due to the older brass instruments being extremely awkward to play.

For the musical historian and the “state of the arts” aficionado, this performance was well worth the while, but if you expected something along the lines of Handel’s Messiah, you were in for a disappointment.

Mimi Yenari

What Is To Be Fun

The Newbury Street Theater has something different to see, Perveze, Ismael, and Fred, a theatrical essay on life in the U.S.A. The production premieres Friday, and runs thru Dec. 19, on Fri., Sat. and Sun., at 8pm. Tixs are $3.50/call 354-0517 if you fit the bill.

People’s Theater presents Island Tale (A Male Chauvinist Comedy), Performances through Saturday are at 8pm and 10pm, on Fri., Sat. and Sun. Admission is $4-50/5.50 the day of the show. The curtain goes up at 8:30. For further information, call 267-9300. Harvard. For details, call 423-5763.

On the Town

Visage: Large Format Portraiture on display at the Creative Photography Gallery. The gallery is open 9am-6pm weekdays, 10am-6pm Saturdays, and Noon-8pm Sunday.

Table Settings plays tonight at the Next Move Theater at 8pm. Call 423-5763 for further information.

The Brookline Arts Center celebrates its newly restored building with an open house 2-4pm, this Sunday. 596-6715.

New Portraits are on display at the Museum School Gallery, 239 the Fenway, through Dec. 5. Do as you ought to.

An exhibition of prints by Max Klinger —one of the Maestro's finest characters— will be on view at the Busch-Reisinger Museum at Harvard. For details, call 495-327.

Here’s a rate you’ll be thankful for.

“ULTIMA LLAMADA”: LA LIBERTAD DE EXPRESIÓN EN MÉXICO

UNA CONFERENCIA EN ESPAÑOL POR EL NOVELISTA Y ENSAYISTA MEXICANO MAURICIO GONZÁLEZ DE LA CARZA

Iones, 25 noviembre, 3:30 de la tarde

Adla 4-159

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Presentada por Idéntica y Literaturas Extranjeras
Para información, llame a 257-4771

We feature GM cars like this Chevrolet Chevette.

You deserve National attention.

National Car Rental

You deserve National attention.

Available at:

183 Dartmouth St., Boston, Mass. ... 267-6830
1663 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. ... 661-8747
Westland Ave., Boston, Mass. ... 536-5871

Rate available from noon Wednesday, Nov. 25 to noon Monday, Nov. 30. You pay for gas and return car to renting location. Rate applies to car shown or similar make and model, subject to availability. Specific cars subject to availability.