ARTS ARTS ARTS
New Orchestra Refined and Sensitive

The second half was dominated by solo arias by each of the evening's soloists, and the chorus sang the role with rage, clipped phrasing and great poignancy. Her voice, especially thick in a slow-moving essay, added a compelling sense of the suffering in her voice. "Take him all," she sang, "but spare my child," she continued, as the strings and computer reconstituted the sound and harmony. The result was a compelling and heart-rending performance.

The following performance, "As If," was the highlight of the second half, and indeed of the concert. Composed by Paul Lankas, it utilized the International String Quartet from Brown University variously accompanied by and accompanying a tape. Presented in four movements, the interaction of the strings and computer resulted in a complex and beautiful flow of harmonies. The composer intended to juxtapose the dynamic presence of the string instruments with the predesigned momentum of the recorded tones. The result was the most interesting and stimulating collaboration of strings and computer of the evening.

The second half of the concert started with "Red Cup and Ray (What's Wrong With This Picture?)," by Douglas Fulton. It was a short and lively collection of rhythms and tones, entirely on tape, but ending too soon. The ending of the second half was taken up by "Electronic Enudes," by Tod Machover. Five in number, the enudes explored the new limits of the soundmaking capabilities of the cells, with and without sophisticated electronic effects.

On the whole, the concert provided some interesting harmonies and tones, but much of the performance was spent in the non-linear areas of the instrument. The result was various squawks, groans, and plunks, a technique difficult to find meaningful. Though it's dangerous to be a critic with such musical styles, it seems to me that an instrument such as the cello provides several advantages for making the most of the soundmaking opportunities for an instrument. This is not to say that advantages escape me. However, on the whole, the evening provided a valuable glimpse into the newest trends in music. The Experimental Music Studio continued for an hour with an informal concert and performances on April 19 and May 11.

Scott Lichtenberg