L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, conducted as usual by Manfred Hipseley, was the focus of a nationwide radio broadcast, an event which marks a return to Victoria Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Wolfgang Sawallisch, October 10. The Swiss guide and renegade musicologist, generally appearing under the joint sponsorship of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation, works to Kresge Auditorium last night. From the first strains of Ravel's Alborada del Moro to the last wavering sounds of Gregorian chanting, the orchestra held the audience rapt. Ravel's late masterpiece, Nightingale, was a lovely, wistful evocation of the walka, La Vie. The piece was performed with soulful poignancy; the orchestra were clearly enjoying themselves, and the performance, at the Paris premiere, fulfilled a role in the wistful and warm poetry. Kresge departed for the Orient next, as the program notes it. This was followed by the RavelIANAD -- launched on Ravel's Shantyboat, Waves of orchestral sound build, ebb, and build endlessly as they do, meditative to the extreme. The ensemble's shapely execution of Ravel's Les Chansons de Bemelmans, I believe, is the first such performance here, and it was a treat to remember. I look forward to seeing them again.

GENEVE 10: WEN

Equally wonderful was the arrival of the Vienna University Orchestra, conducted as usual by Jeff Winner. The cellists, I was glad to note, were all seated with their backs to the audience, a la Bruckner's symphonies. Again, the cellists were well balanced and well rehearsed, a feat not often found in this ensemble. Perhaps the most notable aspect of this performance was the quality of the violinists, who were all evenly balanced and well rehearsed. The ensemble was well conducted and well rehearsed, and the performance was a testament to the quality of the orchestra. The audience sounded as if they were at the concert.