

Tchaikovsky would have been proud

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The Lima Symphony Orchestra's concert dedicated to the music of Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was an evening of great musical and theatrical energy. Tchaikovsky, a formidable Russian composer of symphony and ballet, was presented in a fine manner by Maestro Crafton Beck and the LSO.

The concert opened with the "Festival Coronation March," a piece composed for the coronation of Alexander III. The march was clearly conducted with great energy by Beck and was, I am sure, a dream for the low brass section of the orchestra to play. They were featured in elements that were reminiscent of the "1812 Overture," which arrived surprisingly later in the concert.

Beck was the impeccable storyteller as he provided an introduction to the "Suite to Swan Lake Opus 20." He gave what he referred to as the Reader's Digest version of the plot of the ballet composed in 1875-76.

The orchestra beautifully created an atmosphere of what Beck referred to as a "beautiful lake at moonlight." The first number, "Scene," opened with a gorgeous oboe solo played skillfully by Terri Rivetti. It was undeniable how familiar this rather large audience was with this piece and how much they enjoyed listening to it.

The second number, a waltz, could easily stand alone as its own piece because of its beautiful melody interposed with moments of the large orchestral sound so commonly associated with the works of Tchaikovsky. What was the most striking was how the first violins swayed in unison as they

the way Beck conducted the piece and how the orchestra responded to his leadership.

At the end of the first half of the concert, the audience was treated with the finale of the "1812 Overture."

Stephanie Patick served as guest conductor while Dr. Farzin Fotouhi provided the canon blasts with a group of colleagues. Each was featured in the concert because of generous donations in a symphony auction last year.

Patick took to the podium and had her moment while Beck served as a gracious host as well as teacher. He often assisted her in maintaining her pattern as well as maneuvering through tempo changes and difficult cues.

Fotouhi, along with three others, provided the canon blasts by firing 12 gauge shotguns into a sand barrel. The blasts were extremely effective and even were accompanied by the essential cloud of smoke.

The audience enjoyed a moment of humor as the members of the orchestra equipped themselves with ear plugs and when asked if ready to proceed responded with "huh?" and "what?"

The wonderful evening came to a fantastic close by the performing of Tchaikovsky's "Symphony No. 5." The performance was phenomenal with Beck clearly and effectively leading this orchestra in this endeavor. The musical nuance that was so distinctive of the composer could easily be read on Beck's face and was transferred from his baton to the members of the orchestra. The piece has many rhythmic challenges that could, if not handled well, lead to utter chaos on stage. However, that never occurred during this performance.

The rather large audience