

## LIMA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA REVIEW

# Orchestra, soloists give brilliant performances

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LIMA — If you haven't been to a Lima Symphony Orchestra concert lately, or ever, it's time. And if you have school-age children, they should go with you. With new "edgy" marketing and programming, and continued performance excellence, the perception of stuffy and elitist is a thing of the past.

Beginning with Benjamin Britten's "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra," narrated by former LSO board president, Jim Chiles, was brilliant programming. Each instrument family was introduced and featured and then combined in a rousing conclusion.

For the "Thunder and Lightning Polka" by Johann Strauss, the podium was taken over by guest conductor Linda Burkhalter, another former LSO board president and winner of last year's LSO silent auction bidding for the honor of conducting.

If anyone thought this was going to be a "business as usual" performance, it soon became clear that Burkhalter had brought sheer joy to the podium. The audience delighted in her enjoyment for the job at hand, and the orchestra was clearly under her spell as they followed her direction.

The first half of the program closed with Rimsky-Korsakov's "Capriccio Espagnol." This work featured the entire orchestra and the individual solo work was impressive, although some of the ensemble work in this piece and throughout

the first half suffered from occasional ragged entrances. Nonetheless, the piece was glittering and very enjoyable with especially impressive wind solos and string textures.

One individual that deserves special mention is principal clarinetist Shannon Ford. Called upon several times for solo passages that involved scalar and extensive arpeggiated figures, Ford was stunning in her pyrotechnics and musicality.

The second half of the concert was an experience that was so inspiring that it virtually transported me to another realm. The orchestra rose to the occasion and played at a level higher than many regional orchestras can attain.

The Violin Concert in D, Op. 61, by Beethoven, featured soloist Kurt Nikkanen, a student of the Juilliard School where he studied with Dorothy DeLay. Students of DeLay often play with a distinct sound, a unique way to shape a phrase, a certain stance while performing. They take command of the music and communicate it to the listener in a way that others cannot. Nikkanen did not disappoint.

His performance was brilliant. He was nimble, with perfectly well-tuned double stops, effortless passagework and trills, exquisite timing and pacing of phrases, and often displaying well-timed, sudden contrasts of character. Collaboration between Nikkanen, Beck, and the LSO was a great example of a partnership to achieve beauty and unity.

Saturday night's concert was part of the ninth

annual Daniel Pearl World Music Days, a week set aside for orchestras around the world to use the power of music to show a commitment to tolerance and humanity — to bring people together. Daniel Pearl, a slain Wall Street Journal reporter, was also a musician who often traveled with his instruments as a way of communicating with a diverse group of people.

As I listened and watched Saturday night, and thought of the rehearsals where a diverse group of people, all with different values, opinions, and religious affiliations, gathered together to create something of beauty, I was reminded of a quotation seen in another concert venue: "Dedicated to World Friendship Through the Universal Language of the Arts". Music has the ability to create harmony among people.

The evening offered something for everyone. It was relaxed, with a diverse range of repertoire, and short injections of humor, including a short O-H-I-O cheer to preview the next LSO concert, Nov. 6, Buckeyes and Berlioz. This concert will pay tribute to OSU-Lima's 50th anniversary and begin with a tailgate party before the concert. Put it on your calendar, I know I have.

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