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Artistry of Nicanor Zabaleta Wins Enthusiastic Ovation From Audience

By SHIRLEY YULE
A fascinated full-house audience in the Civic Centre last night stared with awe as the curtain opened on a sky-blue stage setting centred by a beautiful harp.

They remained awed as Nicanor Zabaleta plucked the first heavenly notes from his heavenly instrument, then settled back to thoroughly enjoy themselves and to give the artist their thanks with an ovation almost unheard of before in this city.

And well they might have been fascinated and awed. The artist's graceful, fluid hands, his intriguing accent as he outlined the history and operation of the instrument were fascinating, but best of all were the pure, clear notes he drew from the harp.

The notes were sweet, almost like the high notes of a very young boy soprano, and the over-all effect somewhat like that of a piano with a beautiful tone, played in the higher registers without use of a sustaining pedal.

Most of us had never heard a harpist in recital before and so had no basis of comparison of his skill and technique, but we

needed no expert to tell us Mr. Zabaleta was superb.

Throughout his all-too-brief program he held the audience enthralled, despite the fact that none of the music had ever been heard before by most of us, and that several of the composers were new to us, too.

SPECIAL MUSIC

His entire program was composed of music written specially for the harp, but his opening number, Three Etudes by Bochs sounded like Bach's works for piano. Variations on a Swiss Theme by Beethoven and a Sonata by Rosetti both were recognizable in the pianoforte style of the two great composers.

The Aostetti Sonata was especially beautiful as played by Mr. Zabaleta, particularly the Romanza movement with its hauntingly beautiful melody.

Perhaps outstanding in the program were "Bravura Variations on Italian Themes" by Parish-Alvars and "Songs in the Night," a contemporary composition.

The Bravura Variations compared to the earlier part of the program as Chopin compares to Bach, allowing the artist a full sweep of emotions released in beautiful chords, rippling arpeggios and trills.

Songs In The Night brought the beauty of night winds and stars to the audience, interspersed with touches of humor, as the harpist rapped out a staccato beat on the wood of his instrument.

The program also featured a Mehul Sonata, including a dainty

minuetto movement, a Prokofieff prelude, typical of the contemporary composer's work and "Jazz-Band" by Tournier, a nostalgic melody with a slight suggestion of a jazz beat. Spanish and German compositions were played as encores.

The enthusiasm of the audience argued well for next season's concert series, which may hinge on answers submitted by concert-goers in a questionnaire handed out last night.

It asked whether or not the series should continue, whether or not holders of season's tickets wished to renew their subscriptions for next season, and finally, asked for suggestions on the series.

EXPRESSES THANKS

At intermission time, R. C. Telford of the Civic Centre board thanked the groups who had assisted throughout the season and urged the audience to complete the questionnaires.

He said that a sales campaign for next season probably would be launched in late April or early May, noting that about 400 season tickets would have to be sold to guarantee the series.

At the reception following the concert, members of the Credit Women's Breakfast Club served refreshments.

Thursday, February 18, 1954



HUGH WALLER

Waller Assumes UIS Post Here

The new manager of the Unemployment Insurance Commission office here, Hugh Waller, has arrived from Prince George with his family and is now living on Seventh Avenue.

Mr. Waller, former well-known hockey player and active curler in George, succeeds Alex Haig, who is now manager of the Kelowna office.

A member of the Royal Canadian Navy during the Second World War, Mr. Waller joined the UIC a year after his discharge and spent the past seven years in Prince George. In his first year in the interior city, he worked for a lumber company.

Legion Auxiliary Holds Card Party

Last of the February card parties sponsored by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Canadian Legion was held last night with fine tables in play.

Winners were: Whist: Mrs. Amoth and Mrs. B. Collinge; Bridge: Mrs. Alma Murray and Mrs. Elsie Storrie; bridge: Mrs. W. Rothwell and Mrs. G. Krause. Committee in charge were Mrs. Keith DeWitt, Mrs. C. Morrow and Mrs. W. Rothwell.

Next party is set for March 3.

Future Champs?

OSLO (AP) — A total of about 7,000 Norwegian boys and girls are enrolled in special skiing schools operated by the Association for the Promotion of Skiing. Largest of the schools, at Gjøvik on Lake Mjøsa, has more than 700 students.

Mrs. J. S. Black Completes Tour

Mrs. J. S. Black, first vice-president of the Provincial Command, Canadian Legion, returned yesterday after a visit to the Ocean Falls auxiliary.

Mrs. Black has 15 auxiliaries in the northern territory to visit and only last week returned from Terrace where she officiated at installation ceremonies.

While there was no installation at Ocean Falls, Mrs. Black spoke briefly to members and congratulated them on their fine work and co-operative spirit among the group.

Mrs. Black's territory extends as far east as Fort St. John.

Church Meet Under Way

The executive of the Prince Rupert Presbytery of the United Church in Canada is in session here today at the First United Church.

The sessions, starting yesterday afternoon and ending tonight, are centred on mission work in the presbytery.

Here for the meeting are Rev. A. F. Crewe, missionary on the Thomas Crosby IV mission boat which will visit Port Simpson tomorrow, and his family, Rev. H. M. Wingfield of Ocean Falls, Rev. A. N. Greenaway of Port Simpson and Rev. W. P. Bunt of Vancouver, superintendent of home missions for British Columbia, meeting with the Rev. L. G. Sheher of First United Church.

Also attending the sessions are lay delegates Don Forward of Kitimat and Dr. G. W. Fiddes of Miller Bay.



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