

A Symphony Standard Sparkles

Detroit Free Press, Detroit

Collins George

27-07-1974

Yuri Ahronovitch, hitherto unknown in this area, proved to be one of the finest conductors in the succession of guests to appear before the Detroit Symphony Orchestra this summer out at the Meadow Brook Festival.

Ahronovitch, slight and intense, rose to become the chief conductor of the U.S.S.R. Radio and Television Orchestra, then emigrated to Israel in 1972. This is his second summer as a guest conductor on the summer festival circuit in America.

Some inkling of his ability was made known at Meadow Brook Thursday when the Schumann "Manfred" Overture, an orchestra staple, sounded more dramatic than usual.

Ahronovitch's ability was most clearly seen in what one had expected to be the most tiresome work of the evening, the umpteenth playing of the Tchaikovsky Symphony No.5.

It is a work that almost any musician might play without looking at the score either with his eyes or his mind. As a result its performance has become hackneyed and full of Tchaikovskian clichés.

But Ahronovitch approached each note, each phrase as if he were presenting something new. Nor did he permit any sloppy playing from the musicians.

As a result there was extremely clear identification in all the various choirs of the orchestra. There was throughout great and fresh contrasts in the rhythms employed and in the dynamics of the work.

It was still the Tchaikovsky Fifth but it was wonderful to hear with a different interpretation.

Ahronovitch, incidentally, came near not playing it at all. He was given Aldo Ceccato's conducting score to use. Each conductor marks his score with the bowing he wants his strings to use, the tempi he will employ, and the like. And so Ahronovitch simply refused to rehearse the work unless an unmarked score were found for him. It was.