

By Edward Rothstein

June 12, 1983

Music

When the Musicologist Is Also the Performer

By GILLES TRONSON
According to one opinion, the most important quality of a musician is his ability to understand the music he is playing. But it is not always clear that the musician who understands the music he is playing is also the musician who performs it best. This is the central theme of the article...



Richard Taruskin conducts a rehearsal of Cappella Nova, which sings early music this evening at St. Jaeger's Church.

Richard Taruskin, a learned and elegant musical scholar, is also a highly respected performer. He is the conductor of the Cappella Nova, a vocal ensemble of the musical organization, which performs early music. He is also a graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley.

MUSIC NOTES

Why Does It Hurt?

By GILLES TRONSON
During the past few months, the profession of musicologist has been in a state of flux. The musicologist is no longer the scholar who sits in a library, poring over ancient manuscripts. He is now a performer, a conductor, a composer. This is the central theme of the article...

MUSIC VIEW

Composers Who Don't Do It All And the Orchestrators Who Help Them

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It is Mozart's music that has inspired the composer to orchestrate his own works. The article discusses the relationship between composers and orchestrators.

Opera in the Park



Michèle Arnaud will perform Xenakis's 'L'Esprit de la Liberté' with Mariella Devia heading the cast in a Metropolitan Opera season performance on the Great Lawn of Central Park Tuesday night.

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During the past few months, two physicians at Massachusetts General Hospital who have been treating Leon Fleisher and Gary Graffman for their physical difficulties playing the piano, have been distributing questionnaires to other musicians about their pains and playing habits. The inquiry is expected to be part of a research project examining the disabilities of professional musicians. Questionnaires have been distributed to members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; the doctors also plan to distribute the forms to students at the New England Conservatory, the Curtis Institute of Music and the Peabody Conservatory.

The two physicians, Dr. Fred H. Hochberg, a neurologist, and Dr. Robert D. Leffert, an orthopedic surgeon, are part of a team of doctors treating medical problems of musicians at the hospital. About 250 patients have been seen since Gary Graffman went for treatment in 1980 after suffering from difficulties using his right hand. Mr. Graffman referred Mr. Fleisher to the doctors. Mr. Fleisher had to retire from his career as a pianist in the early 1960's because of debilitating cramps and tension in his right hand.

The doctors diagnosed Mr. Fleisher's problem as carpal-tunnel syndrome, in which the tissue around the central nerve in the wrist became inflamed and hardened. An operation was performed in

January, 1981, which, according to the physicians, removed one potential source of difficulty; treatment continued with biofeedback, physical therapy and massage. In September 1982, Mr. Fleisher, who has in the last decade become a conductor, played his first two-handed piano performances in 17 years at the opening of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's new concert hall.

The Fleisher case drew the attention of other musicians to Dr. Hochberg and Dr. Leffert and requests were made for treatment. A paper discussing their first 100 patients was published in the American Medical Association Journal in April. The report indicated that very few such problems are psychological in origin. According to the doctors, some patients have greatly benefited, while others have more difficult problems that are still being treated.

Between 5 and 10 musicians consult with the doctors each week. A patient is first screened by advisors to the physicians, including Fred Wanger, formerly of the Boston University piano department. Dr. Hochberg and Dr. Leffert then examine the patient together, often videotaping him in performance. Consultations are also made with other members of the group including a rheumatologist, a specialist in electro-diagnosis of disorders and an occupational and physical therapist.

"We try," Dr. Leffert explained, "to see as many people as we can in the context of our usual practice." The questionnaire being distributed is designed to provide information about the extent of musicians' physical problems. One version was published in the Winter 1982-83 issue of *The Piano Quarterly*. The musician is requested to identify the

physical sensations associated with the complaint ("pain; fatigue; swelling; redness; stiffness; pins and needles; weakness; tightening; cramping; loss of control; curling or drooping"). There are questions about medical background and previous diagnoses ("tendinitis; nerve entrapment syndrome; thoracic outlet syndrome; carpal tunnel syndrome; arthritis"), and questions about previous treatments. The musician is asked to describe his musical education, the nature of the repertory, the frequency of practice sessions, the nature of finger, wrist and arm technique, and the frequency of concertizing.

The doctors have more than 100 returned questionnaires, from readers of *The Piano Quarterly*, from patients, from students and from members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; more questionnaires will be distributed before the data is analyzed.

"Our initial concern," said Dr. Hochberg, "was to provide medical care to people with difficulties. We are now interested more in preventive medicine, to find out what is 'normal,' and to integrate standard medical care with technical retraining."

The physicians hope to use computer software, developed at M.I.T. that will allow analysis of high-speed muscular movements. The only previous extensive studies of pianists' muscles were made by Otto Ortmann and Arnold Schultz, both about a half-century ago.

The doctors are now searching for financial support to expand the project, to make use of new technologies and create a center for the rehabilitation of musicians. "This study," said Dr. Hochberg, "is of vital

importance for curative and preventive medicine for musicians." A Beacon "Ring"

Wagner's complete "Ring" cycle will be staged in its entirety in the space of five days this summer - not in Seattle or Bayreuth, but in New York, at the Beacon Theater. It is being brought here by the Boston Lyric Opera Company which will premiere its new productions of the four operas during the week of July 25 in Boston, and will begin the New York presentation on Aug. 8.

The performances will be conducted by John Balme, the general director of the company. This fully staged production is inspired by the company's successful concert performances of the cycle last summer in Boston. The operas will be sung in German by an all-American cast including Roger Roloff as Wotan, Ticho Parly as Siegfried, DeNice Jenssen as Brunnhilde, Kathleen Watt as Sieglinde and John Seabury as Alberich. The productions are directed by Anne Cathrine Ewers, with set designs by Richard Schreiber, costume design by Suzanne Young and lighting design by Russell Swift.

"Das Rheingold" will be performed at 8 P.M. on Aug.8, "Die Walkure" at 7 P.M. on Aug.9, "Siegfried" a 7 P.M. on Aug.11, and "Gottterdammerung" at 6 P.M. on Aug.13. Tickets are available from the company in Boston, with single tickets ranging from \$10 to \$40 and subscriptions from \$35 to \$140. A Juilliard Tour

The Juilliard Chamber Orchestra began its first tour of Central and South American on June 5. The tour of 11 countries will include 17 concerts and will last until July 2. Performances are scheduled for Venezuela, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic. The 33

players are being conducted by Jose Serebrier in repertory which includes Schubert, Mozart, Haydn and Tchaikovsky, in addition to works by Peter Mennin, Charles Ives and Mr. Serebrier. The pianist Lorin Hollander and the cellist Paul Tobias will be soloists. The tour, organized by Grapa Concerts of Argentina and New York, is taking place under the auspices of the United States Information Agency.

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