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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (lte)

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Description

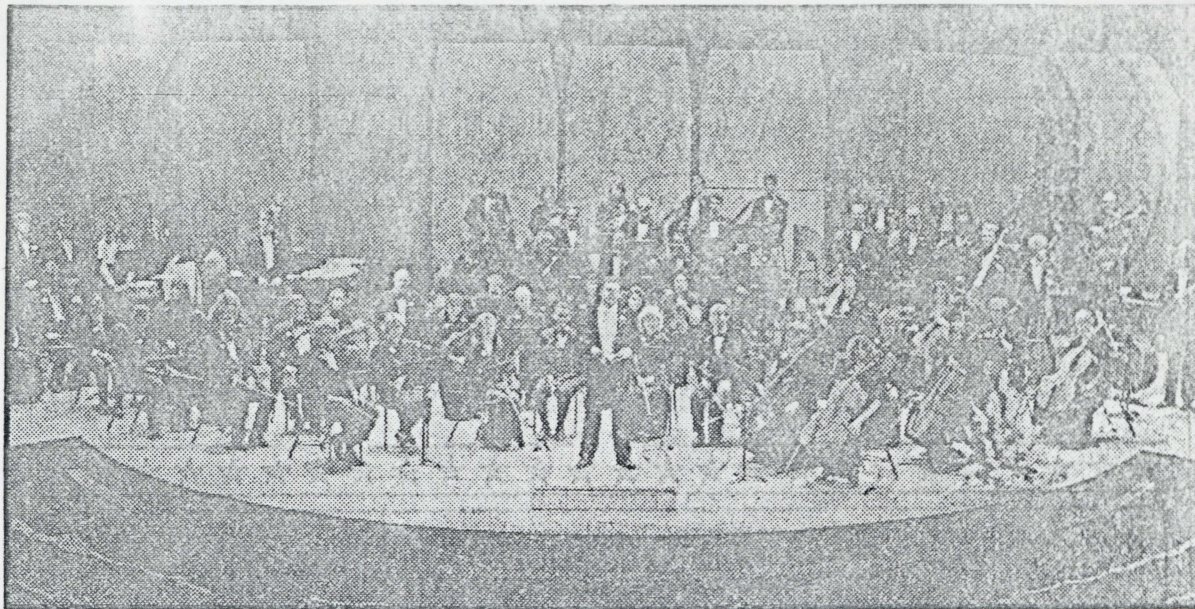
This collection contains material pertaining to the life, career, and activities of Henri Temianka, violin virtuoso, conductor, music teacher, and author. Materials include correspondence, concert programs and flyers, music scores, photographs, and books.

Keywords

Henri Temianka, culture, virtuosity in musical performance, violinist, chamber music, press, California Chamber Symphony Society, The Knox-Galesburg Symphony

Comments

Due to the exact date of the letter being unknown an estimated date has been provided.



THE KNOX-GALESBURG SYMPHONY READY TO REHEARSE

Special composition 'heroic affair'

By JERRY KLEIN
Journal Star critic

GALESBURG — Saturday night's Sesquicentennial Concert by the Knox-Galesburg Symphony was clearly one of the big events of an eventful weekend and the best news it had to offer was the world premier of conductor Bruce Polay's "Encomium," composed especially for the occasion.

While I was not present at the gala concert, a final rehearsal run-through suggested it is one of those rare, modern works that generates enough sheer excitement to bring an audience surging to its feet in wild applause.

Polay's work, which was commissioned by the Knox College Sesquicentennial Committee, is a brilliant, dramatic, even heroic affair, and a fitting celebration as well. It speaks of youth and age, an "America being born" and a nation "seeking its way amid storm and dream."

With Carl Sandburg's text, drawn mainly from "Good Morning, America" and "Youth and Pioneers: An Ode," both written for the rededication of Old Main during Knox's Centenary in 1937, "Encomium" utilizes narrator — Studs Terkel here — and the Carl Sandburg Children's Choir, with song and narration stitched through the fabric.

It opens simply, playing on the theme from "Illinois," in an almost visionary sense. Another theme used is "Stand Up for Jesus," whose words were written by the Rev. George Duffield, who was a preacher at the

First Presbyterian Church of Galesburg over a century ago.

Terkel's voice, deep, rich, as polished as old walnut, sounded strong and clean in those celebratory lines: "The fingers turn the pages. The pages unfold as a scroll . . ." And the choir, with its simple clarity, added its own character to the work, ". . . the evening air mail droning from Omaha to Chicago, droning across Iowa and Illinois."

The harmony and melodic lines are simple, perhaps minimalist, or falling with what is called the "new tonality." Discord is used as a device to convey tension, and while it may sound slightly derivative at times, it has its own poetry, its own uplifting melodies soaring above the rippling figuration in the strings, moments of high drama, its own heart and soul.

The orchestra's program provided more suitable works for the occasion, including a rousing "Academic Festival" Overture by Brahms, a work also stitched together from well-known and historic songs, Aaron Copland's "Old American Songs" with the Carl Sandburg's Children's Choir directed by Steven R. Jobman, and the Prelude to "Parsifal" by Wagner.

Whether "Encomium" may be the best thing to come out of this sesquicentennial celebration is perhaps too soon to say. But Polay and his Knox-Galesburg Symphony — Illinois Symphony of the Year — provided a sense of grandeur for the occasion with this concert before a full house at the Central Congregational Church. It was, by any measure, something to be excited about.