

KSU Symphony playing with confidence

By IFAN PAYNE
Music Critic

There is no doubt about it, the KSU Symphony sounds more secure and more confident with every concert that it plays. That was much in evidence during the concert given in McCain Auditorium on Thursday evening.

The orchestra was joined by the Concert Choir and the Kansas Bach Choir for a performance of the luminous *Mass in C Major* by Beethoven, for which Ralph Winkler led these forces in a robust and enjoyable performance.

The *Mass in C* does not rise to the heights of the same composer's later *Missa Solemnis*, yet it is nevertheless a tuneful and charming work, with some moving episodes. The *Benedictus*, for example, does not equal the sublime simplicity of its counterpart in the later work, yet the unaccompanied vocal solo quartet at the start makes for a magical moment. The same is true of that distinctive episode in the *Sanctus* when the choir sings briefly *a capella*.

The chorus, well trained by Rod Walker, sang throughout with

discipline and, as in the *Gloria*, rhythmic surety. The sensitive vocal soloists, notable for their attentiveness to each other, were Jean Sloop, Jennifer Edwards, Jerry Langenkamp and William Myers. They and the woodwind combined to make a particularly lovely moment of "Qui Tollis".

After an untidy start, the performance of Bach's *Overture No. 3* swept along at a crisp pace with plenty of bounce. Lyndal Nyberg was a secure violin soloist during the first movement. It was a pity that the masses of, and massed (first and seconds seated

next to each other), violins swamped the orchestral balance and that Bach's two oboe lines were reduced to one.

The audience activity in the auditorium during the performance resembled that of a Greyhound bus station, complete with uncouths who used flashlights to take photographs and that bane of contemporary attempts at solitude and concentration, the digital alarm watch that is programmed to seek the moment of greatest silence during which to go off.

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