

School musicians admirable

By IFAN PAYNE
Music Critic

The enthusiastic applause given each young composer on Monday evening was a long cry from the more tender beginnings of the composition competition last year in KSU's Forum Hall.

Monday's occasion was the Music In Our Schools Week Concert given in the Auditorium of Manhattan High School, and the stars of the show were four young composers, each of whom was presented with a winner's certificate (Artist Award).

Each of them also showed an ability far above the norm for their respective ages.

The winner in the 1st-4th Grade Division was Jeff Harshbarger. He performed his composition, *Quasar*, first on the piano, and then as a vocal solo. In doing so, he not only demonstrated that he is a talented musician, but also that he has a great deal of poise for one so young, and

that he also has an enviable ability to sing a difficult, unaccompanied, work strongly and in tune.

Elaine Foley Romanelli was the winner of the 5th-6th Grade Division, and this amazing young lady presented not one, but three compositions. *Come Ride* showed a considerable talent for performing as well as composition and the size of the score of *Dance of the Instruments* showed industriousness as well as talent.

None of the compositions performed by these two artists were childlike, or out of the My-First-Book-of-Easy-Piano-Pieces school of composition, but rather showed a keen ear for current modalities.

As was also the case with Sonja Henry, winner of the Middle School Division, and her blues-based composition for alto saxophone, *Ease Up*.

Perhaps the greatest degree of daring came from the pen of Tim Stark who won the High School Division

with a composition, *Horn Call and Chorale*, for four horns. One horn is a difficult enough instrument to lick into shape, requiring four of them to sound together is testing providence too much...that he conceived of such a thing should get him a medal for valor in addition to his certificate.

The concert opened with a Brass Fanfare from the High School Brass Choir and closed with the *Kyrie* from the *Mass in G* by Franz Schubert, who, by the way, composed it when he was eighteen years old, during which year — of which there were only twelve months, like any other! — he composed five complete operas!...two Masses and four other large scale religious works!...a work for chorus and orchestra!...fifteen(!) works for chorus and piano...two symphonies!...a string quartet...two piano sonatas, four other piano works...started a further six sets of piano works which were completed later...and (wait for it!)...over one hundred (yes!) and forty songs with piano accompaniment!

All of this was fitted in between his duties as a school teacher!

Meanwhile, back at the concert, Lynne Shanline was the attractive soprano soloist in the *Kyrie*, which was performed by the massed ensembles of USD 383, conducted by Janice Albright.

Sandwiched between all of this were fine performances by the Elementary School Choir conducted by Fran Kahler and Heather Reed, and an energetic rendering of Emma Lou Diemer's *Youth Overture* by the Middle and High School Orchestras.

The logistics alone of such a concert boggle the mind, and one can only admire all those who made the concert possible, as well as the dedication of so many talented young musicians.

And young Franz Schubert?

He died in debt and poverty at the age of 31.

There must be a moral of some sort in there somewhere.

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