

Soviet cancellation brings lovely surprise

The cold-war cancellation of a Soviet soloist previously scheduled brought an unexpected dividend to Orchestra Hall last week.

Anne-Sophie Mutter, a 17-year-old replacement violinist, brought down a packed house with her triumphant rendition of Beethoven's "Romance for Violin and Orchestra in G-Major," and Mozart's "Concerto for Violin No. 3," both performed with superlative accompaniment by Sir Georg Solti's Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Entertainment

There emerged from these concertos a picture of a gifted young artist of immense promise. This sweet-looking young woman possesses splendid technique and plays with flair and spirit. From the first bar of the Beethoven, she took command, performing with great verve.

This was a premier performance of the Beethoven by the Chicago Symphony and Solti kept the instrumentalists under careful discipline to avoid overriding the soloist.

The Mozart is a lovely piece and was played in its first movement in a fast tempo, displaying Miss Mutter's technical skill in a clean and crisp rendition.

In the slow second movement, she blended her sound with the exquisite flutes, achieving variations of color and changes of mood which excited the admiration of the audience.

It is difficult to do justice to Bruckner in a room as acoustically dead as Orchestra Hall. Solti drew out the orchestra as broadly as possible for the Symphony No. 4 in E Flat Major, known as the "Romantic."

Possibly Bruckner's most popular work, it is a symphony of great scope, giving emphasis to the winds and brass.

Sir Georg moved it along with an unbroken course of glorious tone, showing perfectly disciplined orchestral cohesion.

There was a virtuosity brought out in all passages, with an incandescence of the trumpets and the French horns and a sweet glory from the flutes. The conductor directed a clear articulation of the strings in the andante, where the sound flowed easily and gracefully.

In the B Flat scherzo the fanfare of horns against tremolo strings was done with easy inspiration and was followed by the G Flat melody for flute and clarinet done with great virtuosity by the principals.

The woodwind and horn filigrees gave beautiful texture to the work. There was a natural flow of the musical line, rising to the call of the conductor with rhythmic explosions of glorious sound. Sir George imparted to the orchestra an inspired rendition of unsurpassed quality, ending the evening with prolonged applause.

—Eugene Lieberman