

HVP, Marsalis offer some fine playing

By MF Heresniak
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The pendulum swings. After many months of some pretty disappointing work, Sunday night's concert by the Hudson Valley Philharmonic at the Bardavon 1869 Opera House showed the orchestra to be already well on its way in traveling back up the arc.

The "Lieutenant Kije Suite" by Sergei Prokofiev was some of the finest playing the orchestra has done in the three years I have been reviewing it. The last movement, save about five measures from the trombones, was enough to do any music lover proud.

There were some great performances from the orchestra members. Principal trumpet Gary Boyd triumphed with the offstage cornet and his onstage assurance. Tubist David Winograd and the entire horn section gave forth a strong and sure sound.

The concert opened with John Harbison's "Ulysses' Raft" which



HUDSON VALLEY PHILHARMONIC. Harbison: Ulysses' Raft; Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kije Suite; works by Haydn and Hummel. Wynton Marsalis, trumpet; Imre Pálo, conductor. **BARDAVON 1869 OPERA HOUSE, 35 Martket St., Poughkeepsie.**

did not, unfortunately, show the orchestra in as pleasing a light. There were some ragged ends and some mistunings here.

Harbison's score proves that

creativity is not all there is to composition. This is a work by a composer who knows his craft well. There is an inventive mix of percussion, albeit overused in spots, and the orchestrations are fascinating combinations of sounds, some old hat, some innovative, but all effective and evocative.

Wynton Marsalis, the newest star and wunderkind in the musical world, was guest trumpet soloist for performances of trumpet concertos by Hummel and Haydn.

This young man has superlative technique and a nonchalance that is uncanny. I doubt he even conceptualizes the meaning of stage fright. He is, however, far from a mere technician. His playing is so sure and so totally in hand that he can transcend the immediacy of notes and rhythms to achieve a higher plane of musical interpretation.

Marsalis' tone ranges from gold to silver to satin. His ability to

play with tenderness on the most archetypically blatant of instruments is nothing short of astounding. He is so sure of his talent and worth that there is no need to play with brassiness or to overdo. Phrasings leap to lives of their own, capturing the essence of the style and leaving nothing to be desired.

We won't discuss the cadenzas to either of the concertos played, as everyone has the right to a few bad notes.

It is precisely because of his crossover to the jazz idiom that this trumpeter can have such success in the classical field. Hearing Marsalis is hearing an alloy of talent. He combines uncanny natural technique, soulful jazz sensibilities, and sound feeling for the classical idiom. Each is a fine quality in its own right, but when combined and cross-influenced with the others, the result transcends any of the individual parts. To think what will come of this mix in 10 years' time...