

Nero Conquers Birmingham Audience

Reviewed by
BARBARA GIBSON

The Birmingham Lions Club, whose activities have long been noted and appreciated in this area, contributed yet another service to the community. By bringing Peter Nero to Birmingham they gave a capacity crowd at the Birmingham Theatre 90 minutes of toe-tapping enjoyment.

This enormously talented young man of the piano, ably supported by Joe Cascades on drums and Herb Mickman on bass, opened the show with the song "Mountain Greenery," or perhaps we should say "Mozart Greenery," since it was done in that composer's style.

HE FOLLOWED that with an arrangement of Cole Porter's "Night and Day," intertwining the melody with that of the first movement of Beethoven's "Sonata #14" (the "Moonlight").

But it wasn't until his third number that he really hit his stride with a little musical background in the style of Rachmaninoff and ended in pure Nero.

FROM THAT POINT on it was one musical climax after another, and for those in the audience with a little musical background it was intriguing to try to guess what composer he would work into his arrangement next, while the "squares" who did not know Chopin (for example, my husband) just sat back and had a winking good time.

There was something for everybody: like an arrangement of "Tea for Two," which was really "Two in One" since Nero played "Tea for Two" with his left hand and the "Moon Love" theme from Tchaikovsky's "Fifth" with his right.



Pianist Peter Nero, backstage, gets ready for his performance.

This was followed by a fascinating rendition of "My Funny Valentine" a la Debussy, then Peter (of course), and lastly Rachmaninoff.

IN COUNT BASIE'S "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" there were no old masters, only young ones—namely Mr. Nero and Mr. Mickman, the latter performing his bass solo with a charming beatnik expression on his face which belied his considerable talent.

We returned to the old masters with "Scratch My Back," an original composition by Nero, and "The Way You Look Tonight," which was some more swinging Johann, then another original Nero with the tongue-in-cheek title "Hokey Hokey for the CIA," notable for



Meanwhile ticket takers like usher Gene Moore return stubs to concert patrons like Mr. and Mrs. Jim Cole.

some inspired drum work by Joe Cascades.

THE FIRST HALF of the program ended with an arrangement of the score of "West Side Story," and its composer, Leonard Bernstein, should be grateful to Nero for this wonderful setting.

Highlights from the second half included "My Secret Love," beginning in the Oriental bell-tinting style of the contemporary Armenian composer Hovhanness and then plunging into the spine-tingling virtuosic style of Nero; "Scarlet Ribbons," done in the manner of a Chopin prelude; a Mozartian version of "Yellow Rose of Texas," as big musically as Texas is big geographically; and a rip-snorting presentation of "Midnight in Mos-

cow" utilizing the last movement and relaxed when he speaks to the audience; and he and the boys showed a flair for comedy with their take-off on a Leonard Bernstein "musical analysis."

They also gave us encores "Over the Rainbow" which had everything in it from Mozart to Tchaikovsky (only Judy Garland was missing) and a block-busting, toe-peelifying rendition of "I've Got Plenty of Nuthin'" which should be retitled "I've Got Plenty of Something" in Nero's honor.

ALONG WITH his impressive musical gifts, Nero has an attractive personality and is engaging and relaxed when he speaks to the audience; and he and the boys showed a flair for comedy with their take-off on a Leonard Bernstein "musical analysis."

YES, THE Birmingham Lions performed a service last Oct. 9, a service vastly different from their usual charitable works, but a service nevertheless, as any member of Nero's audience can tell you.

Winding Rhine River Followed in Travelog

"Valley of the Rhine," a new color film completed this past summer, will open the Birmingham Film Travel Series at the Community House, 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 1 and 2.

Clifford Kamen, well known California world traveler and award-winning television producer, will personally narrate his film.

Kamen films the Rhine River from its source beneath a Swiss Mountain glacier to its mouth at Rotterdam. Among the highlights are Lake Constance; Heidelberg and its famous university; Mainz, the wine district and Cologne with its celebrated cathedral.

OTHER INCLUDED are picturesque castles, the rock of the Lorelei, quaint villages, Dusseldorf, Duisberg, and other tourist highlights of Germany and Holland.

This year's Travel Film Series is being presented under the auspices of the Community House, with speakers personally selected

Film Program Scheduled at Art Center

A program of three films, sponsored by the Bloomfield Art Association, can be seen Friday evening at the Birmingham Art Center, 1510 S. Cranbrook Road. It is the second in the fall series of programs presented for members and their guests.

The film "Van Meegeren's Faked Vermeers" has been scheduled along with two films, "House" and "Kaleidoscope," related to the current interior design exhibition at the art center, "Living with Art."

"HOUSE," SUPPLIED by Herman Miller, Inc., of Birmingham, takes the viewer through the Ray and Charles Eames steel-framed house in Carmel. "Kaleidoscope" is a short film of color impressions by former Michigan resident Alexander Girard.

Both Girard and Eames are known for their designs for Herman Miller—the former does fabrics; the latter, furniture.

The program is open to the public at an admission charge. There is no charge for BA members.

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Movie Guide

Parenteen Committee
Birmingham P.T.A. Council

Green Sheet National Legion of Decency

MOVIE

Raven A-1
Girl Hunters B
Spook Chasers A-3
Auntie Mame A-3
A Summer Place A B
David and Lisa A-MY A-2
30 Years of Fun A-1
David and Goliath A-1
CODE A-1
GREEN SHEET

These audience symbols are intended as broad guides to selection, and do not indicate either recommendation or non-recommendation of the films to which they are applied.

A Adults
MY Mature Young People
Y Young People (12 years to 16 years)
C Children (unaccompanied by adults)
GA General Audience

NATIONAL LEGION OF DECENCY
A1 Morally Unobjectionable for General Patronage
A-2 Morally Unobjectionable for Adults and Adolescents
A3 Morally Unobjectionable for Adults
B Morally Objectionable in Part for All
C Censored
SC A separate classification is given to certain films which, while not morally offensive in themselves, require some analysis and explanation as a protection to the uninformed against wrong interpretations and false conclusions.

Skinner
(Continued from 1-D)

Following her was vivacious, flirtatious Kathryn Howard, who speaks of her husband as "big-bellied Harry," and carries a spite ball.

Orthey say I carry it as a small conceit—but, as I've heard said, the hog is not aware of its own stench."

The last sketch took place at Henry's bedside at the time of his death, with his last wife Katherine Parr, reassuring him in his delirium that she was not either of the first two "Catherine's."

ALL SCENES were given poignancy by such lines and Miss Skinner's mastery of dialects and acting skill.

There was no question but that she had conveyed her insights in a program about women, by a woman, for women.

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