

ISRAEL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA, Juan Pablo Izquierdo, conducting; with Emanuel Gruber, cello (Tel Aviv Museum, January 20). Mozart: Symphony No.30 in D Major ("Prague"), K.504; Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony No.1, Op.9; Ligeti: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra (1966); Weil: from "Kleine Dreigroschenmusik."

Worthwhile risk

MUSIC/Benjamin Bar-Am

OUTSTANDING in its choice of programme and its execution, this concert offered three 20th century works and this was an unusual event. Conductor Izquierdo undoubtedly took a risk, but to judge by the audience's enthusiastic response, it paid off extremely well.

Opening with Mozart, Izquierdo immediately created confidence and established authority. Though his movements are restrained, the orchestra responded eagerly, giving him what he asked for. The "Prague" symphony is one of Mozart's greatest, heralding not only his last three, but also Beethoven. Here was profound depth of expression.

Schoenberg's *Chamber Symphony* was played with such intensity and surrender that it was impossible to ignore or withstand the composer's sweeping emotionalism.

I was fascinated by this remarkable, almost disturbing performance. The music bore the unmistakable marks of a turbulent romantic era.

Schoenberg overwhelms with the lushness of his sound; Ligeti

deprives us of sound. Silences, whispers, hints of sound, mysterious noises, mutes slowly evolve into pitches. Ligeti's sound, the antithesis of Schoenberg's sound, is freed of emotional connotations. But Izquierdo again proved the man to present the soundscapes. Within the severe limits of the lowest level of sound, he created a wealth of contrast and sonoral development. Gruber handled the strange, antisolistic solo with complete understanding, never trying to overstep the composer's intentions.

Weil's *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* evoked the spirit of pre-Nazi Germany of the early Thirties with all its terrible connotations. This was an amusing and yet foreboding finale to a highly dramatic evening.

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