

Grande-dame's recital so good, Consort cellist is knocked out

I attended the TSO — with the Toronto Consort and Gina Bachauer appearing as (separate) guest soloists — concert last week (Wed. Feb. 25). The Orchestra demonstrated that it is in top form under Davis-baton.

First on the program was Haydn's Symphony No. 88. The piece, typically good-natured Haydn, is full of such of the composer's humorous devices as the irregular pulse in the "musette" of the third movement. The reading was remarkably full-sounding; even the brass section, which has endured its share of the critics slings and arrows, was holding its own.

There was much to appeal to

Toronto Consort fans in the second piece, Lothar Klein's "Musica Antiqua", a work dedicated to the Toronto Consort. Far from being dull, the work is rich in ideas and full of surprises, entertaining visually, as well as aurally; and the craftsmanlike performance by the TC makes it easy to see why they have such a devoted following.

Finally, there was Brahms' B-flat Major Piano Concerto, No. 2. It is a big work, a "warhorse", and Gina Bachauer, a lady of "grande-dame" dimensions, was equal to it. She gave an extremely powerful and exciting performance . . . there is little else to be said, short of searching for superlatives.

It was interesting to note that Daniel Domb, having handled the solo for cello which begins the third movement very well, was playing a bit sharp when the part returns later in the movement. But it was, somehow, not out of keeping with things; in fact, one might be amused by the notion that he was so knocked out by Miss Bachauer's interpretation, he had trouble finding his feet . . . and he ably reasserted himself when the piano joined in again, to complete a fine overall performance. The audience had no trouble finding its feet at the end of things, calling back the distinguished "artistes" twice to take their bows.

Philip Cortens