

Tribune
- Herald -

New York,

RY 28, 1927

Pablo Casals' Last Recital of Season Ranked With Best

Gifted Celloist Wins Acclaim; Phillip Morrell Gives Vio- lin Recital; Anna Kwartin Invades Adult Song World

Pablo Casals's last concert of the season drew an audience of impressive proportions to Town Hall yesterday afternoon. Those who left their arm-chairs and Sunday papers for the discomforts of the straight seats crowding the stage, as well as those more astute individuals who had helped buy out the house some days before, were amply rewarded, for music was made at that 'cello concert which may be ranked with the finest and most radiant and satisfying which the current season has produced.

Of course there is no one among contemporary artists who can play a Bach suite as does this gifted Spaniard, and yesterday's program included one of the most delightful of them all, that in D minor. That he delivered it with consummate art, his interpretive genius embroidered with perfection of technique, needs only grateful recording, not critical comment. The same, in different manner, may be said of the Andante which prefaced the suite, transcribed by Siloti for the cello, and of the opening Chopin Sonata, Opus 65. The largo of this work sung with an intensive beauty which seemed to give the eloquent instrument a living voice.

Turina's atmospheric "Le Jeudi Saint a Minuit," three Brahms Hungarian dances, ravishingly played, and Valentini's Sonata in E completed a list to which other numbers were added through irresistible popular acclaim. Nicolai Mednikoff was an able assistant at the piano.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO TODAY

March 15, 1902

MINNIE MADDERN FISKE, playing in "A Bit of Old Chelsea," fell eight feet down stairs in a St. Louis theater, striking on her head. The late bulletins said she "was still unconscious but not fatally hurt." Mrs. Fiske recovered from her hurt and later resumed her stage career.

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EMMMA NEVADA, famous as a light operatic soprano, gave her farewell concert in San Francisco. The Chronicle's music critic, after paying her a compliment for her grace and sweetness of tone, said: "It must be admitted that the first honors of the engagement go to Pablo Casals, the cellist, one of the assisting artists."

Casals, who has done for the cello what Paganini did, for the

violin, is now regarded by many as the greatest solo artist in the world of instrumental music.

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THE Associated Press let it be known from the New York office that the arrangements for covering the news of the visit of the Kaiser's brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, were under the direction of Martin Egan, a former San Francisco newspaper man.

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A CHICAGO inventor gave an exhibition of the newly patented process of cutting steel with an electric torch. The reports spoke only of its possible use in opening safes and nothing was said of its tremendous possibilities in industry, which have since been developed.

Evening Bulletin

January 17

9 FULL

JANUARY 17, 1928

SOPRANO AND 'CELLIST

Florence Austral and Pablo Casals Appear Before Forum Members

Florence Austral, soprano, scored another success with an audience of Philadelphia Forum members last night at the Academy of Music, in a joint recital with Pablo Casals, 'cellist. As her first selection the artist sang the tremendous aria, "Ocean, Thou Mighty Monster," from Weber's "Oberon," which calls for almost every device of vocal accomplishment. Miss Austral, with her full, resonant voice, gave the aria a magnificent treatment, surmounting the difficulties of range with ease and paying careful attention to dramatic values. Her most enjoyable numbers, however, were three German songs of Strauss, "Morgen," "Cacile" and "Allerseelen," which she sang with a lyric sweetness that gave complete satisfaction to the listener. In this group was the aria from "Tanhaeuser," "Dich Theure Halle." Miss Austral concluded the program with a group of English songs, and gave Brunnhilde's War Cry as one of her encores. The accompaniment of Celius Dougherty was notable throughout.

Pablo Casals, 'cellist, also was well received. He opened the program with Handel's Sonata in G, the third movement of which, Sarabande, was notably his best number of the evening. Mr. Casals and his accompanist, Nicolai Mednikoff, played their numbers with such careful restraint as to almost preclude variety in tonal coloring, but the audience seemed to enjoy each number, chief of which were Air (Hure), Sicilienne (Faure), Allegro Appassionato (Saint-Saens), the "Abendlied" of Schumann, and a Minuet of Haydn.

PABLO CASALS PLAYS AT MOUNT HOLYOKE

Large Audience Enjoys Recital by Eminent Spanish 'Cellist

By FRANCIS REGAL

South Hadley, Feb. 17—Pablo Casals, the eminent Spanish 'cellist, gave a recital tonight in the Mount Holyoke concert course to a large and enthusiastic audience that included many visitors from out of town, and among them a number of musicians and music lovers from Springfield. Casals is exceptional among 'cellists in in-

teresting violinists as much as he does the professional and amateur players of his own instrument. This must be largely because he has so successfully applied to the 'cello many of the elements of violin technic, an ideal which he set himself early in life and to which he has devoted an exceptionally original and creative talent.

The 'cello was evolved a century or so later than the violin and its technic and literature have lagged about a century behind. Its great possibilities were early seen, but to realize them was another matter. To a great extent technic quite naturally followed the line of least resistance, but Casals set himself the task of breaking down the barriers set by custom or by caution and of achieving the same lightness, freedom and ease of utterance that had long been enjoyed by the great violinists. This involved not only perfect bow mastery but the development of extraordinary suppleness, speed and certainty in the left hand in order to overcome or at worst to conceal the obstacles presented by the clumsiness of the large instrument with its long strings, long stretches, and long jumps. This revised and perfected mechanism he put at the service of a fastidious and richly expressive musical art; to him the 'cello is not a means of display but a medium for rich and varied expression. He avoids cheap trickery and equally he abhors the sentimental and the slushy; his style is essentially classical, and the greater the music the greater appears his art.

The repertory of the 'cello is somewhat limited, chiefly because it was later than the violin to develop, but for this very reason it may fairly be allowed to borrow from the literature of other instruments upon occasion. But in general Mr Casals sticks to works composed for the 'cello and his initiative has restored to favor many classics that had long been overlooked. He began tonight with Handel's sonata in G, and the first notes were of thrilling beauty, stirring the audience to an emotion which was sustained throughout the program. Then came the familiar Saint-Saens concerto, which loses less than most works of the kind from shifting the orchestral parts to the piano. Nothing in the program was finer than the Bach adagio, a record of which is available. With this went a gay "Allegro Spiritoso" from a sonata by the 18th century French composer Senaille, and seven variations by Beethoven on a theme from Mozart's "Magic Flute." Beethoven wrote several such works but this is the best and is charming when played by a casals. The piano part was also finely played by Nicolas Mednekoff.

In the closing group were the "Allegro Appassionata" by Saint-Saens, the beautiful intermezzo from "Goyescas" by the Spanish composer Granados; "The Bee" by Schubert, which was a remarkable feat of virtuosity, and a "Mazurka" by David Popper. For encores Mr Casals played a Haydn minuet, Popper's Spanish dance "Vito," and "The Swan" by Saint-Saens, which is probably the most popular of all short compositions for 'cello and cannot be thought hackneyed when played with such exquisite perfection. Fritz Kreisler once called Casals "the greatest artist who draws a bow," and the whole performance tonight was one of consummate mastery.

Famous Cellist and Miss Austral Appear at Forum

Philadelphia Record
Australian Soprano Sings
Stirring Arias From
Wagner Operas.

January 17
Casals at His Best

By H. T. CRAVEN.

Nothing new is to be said at this late day of the art of Pablo Casals, the premier cellist of his generation. The great Catalan virtuoso appeared last night at a Forum concert in the Academy of Music as co-star with Florence Austral, Australian dramatic soprano.

Miss Austral is new to this public. In England she has gained much repute as a Wagnerian singer of the first class. Her gifts in this direction were displayed last night in an authoritative interpretation of the "Dich theure Halle" aria from "Tannhaeuser" and in a stirring encore, thoroughly demonstrating that Miss Austral belongs in opera, the Brunhilde "Battle Cry" from "Die Walkure."

Miss Austral has a powerful dramatic soprano, used with vigorous and resourceful effect. It is of interest that she will soon be the Brunhilde in the forthcoming production of "Die Walkure" by the Philadelphia Civic Opera organization. Her lieder, although given with a great deal of drive and ringing intensity, proved on the whole less attuned to her medium than the music-drama offerings. She sang the "Morgen," "Cacile" and "Allerseelen" of Richard Strauss and a group of English numbers, the ancient "Shepherd, Thy Demeanor Vary," Cyril Scott's "The Unforseen," La Forge's "To a Messenger" and Frank Bridge's "Love Went a-Riding."

As singers in our vernacular go, her diction is good, but it is not quite good enough to be invariably intelligible. Yet the feat can be performed, as the current Gilbert and Sullivan company unequivocally demonstrates. Perhaps the obscurity of enunciation in the average recital must be ascribed chiefly to the composer who covers up the words with too much tone. Sullivan was one of the few English composers who understood how not to do this and, of course, Gilbert, with his inevitably singable lyrics, was of emphatic assistance.

CASALS WINS ACCLAIM

IN RECITAL TO FORUM

Philadelphia Inquirer

'Cellist Provides Excellent Programme With Florence Austral, Soprano

January 17

All the consummate artistry which has won for Pablo Casals the reputation of the greatest living 'cellist brought to him last night at the Academy of Music the riotous acclaim of members of the Philadelphia Forum who had braved an exceptionally nasty evening to hear him with Florence Austral, soprano, in joint recital.

Miss Austral likewise gave a finished performance and was in excellent voice. She was brilliant in two Wagner numbers, the "Dich theure Halle," from "Tannhauser," and Brunhilde's "Battle Cry," from the Valkyries, which she sang as an encore.

There was much in Mr. Casals' programme to evoke the enthusiastic applause which the audience accorded him. He began the Sonata in G, by Handel, followed with a group, an Air by Hure; "Sielliene," by Faure, and Allegro appassionato, by Saint-Saens, presenting three widely divergent moods. This "Abenlied," of Schumann, and "Minuetto con variazione," by Haydn, were beyond the power of words to describe adequately.

It became necessary for him to play four encores, the last of which was the Prelude from the Sixth Suite, of Bach, without accompaniment. For sheer artistry and technique, "Vito," by Pappé, was the best offering of his programme. He also played the Adagio, by Bach, and the intermezzo from "Gogescas," by Granadas.

Miss Austral opened her programme with the "Ocean Thou Mighty Monster," from "Oberon." Her next group included three piquant little numbers by Strauss, "Morgeu," "Cacile," and "Allerseelen," followed by the "Tannhauser" aria and the "Battle Cry."

She closed her programme with four melodies in English, all of which were charming. They were "Shepherd Thy Demeanor Vary," an old English air; "The Unforeseen," by Cyril Scott; "The Messenger," by Frank La Forge, and "Love Went a Riding," by Frank Bridge. He was accompanied at the piano by Celius Dougherty, who proved to be an artist by his reading of the intricate Wagnerian scores. Mr. Casals was accompanied by Nicolai Mednikoff in a manner befitting the 'cellist's reputation.

Evening Ledger
January 17

CASALS, AUSTRAL HEARD BY FORUM

Great Cellist Wins Unusual
Tribute at Recital in Acad-
emy of Music

SOPRANO WELL RECEIVED

Pablo Casals, supreme master of the violoncello, and Florence Austral, soprano, gave a joint recital in the Academy of Music last evening for the members of the Philadelphia Forum, in the course of which Mr. Casals scored one of the most brilliant successes that has ever been known in Philadelphia, and this too, before an audience not especially responsive to musical events.

It is unnecessary to speak of the technical skill of Mr. Casals; he is undoubtedly the greatest violoncellist of all time in his absolute command of the instrument and to an even greater extent of the bow, with which he appears to be able to produce a tone exactly similar in power and quality at any point, while his command of the fingerboard is apparently limitless.

But the art of Mr. Casals goes far deeper than a perfect technique, essential as that is to the instrumental artist. He has the ability to interpret, in exactly the spirit of the composer, virtually every kind of music—ancient, classic or modern—and added to these is the perfectly effortless manner in which such results are achieved.

The simplicity which is said to lie at the base of great art is admirably illustrated by the way in which he interprets and plays. The enthusiasm with which he was received obliged him to respond with at least one encore number after each appearance and with three after the final group.

Some of the more conspicuous of the encore numbers were the St. Vito of Popper, a superb piece of violoncello playing, and the Allemande from the sixth sonata of Sebastian Bach for violoncello unaccompanied.

Mr. Casals began his regular program with the G minor sonata of Handel, followed by a group consisting of an Air by Hure, a Sicilienne of Faure, and one movement from the Saint-Saens concerto.

Then came a second group of Schumann's "Evening Song," played with exquisite beauty of tone, and the Minuet and variations of Haydn. Mr. Casals was accompanied by Nicolai Mednikoff, one of the most artistic accompanists on the concert stage today.

Miss Austral, who has appeared here before, was in splendid voice. She sang brilliantly the aria, "Ocean, Thou Mighty Monster," from "Oberon," but did her finest work in a group of Strauss songs—"Morgen," "Cecillie" and "Allerseelen"—and the aria, "Dich theure Halle," from "Tannhauser."

Her last group, which closed the concert, was in English and consisted of Scott's "The Unforseen," La Forge's "To a Messenger" and "Love Went a-Riding," by Frank Bridge. Like Mr. Casals, Miss Austral was obliged to respond with encore numbers after each appearance. Her accompaniments were exceedingly well played by Celius Dougherty.

S. L. L.

THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

M. VLADIMIR SHAVITCH'S CONDUCTING.

The fifth concert of the London Symphony Orchestra's series at the Queen's Hall last night was conducted by M. Vladimir Shavitch, a conductor of real authority and knowledge. There is little of the sensational in the effects he aims at, rather a broad line, a firm rhythm, and depth more than brilliance of tone.

Such a method, naturally, was well fitted to reveal the character of Brahms's "Academic Festival" overture and his C minor Symphony, but this is not to say that M. Shavitch missed the note of eloquence or impulse; indeed, the performances were really enjoyable by reason of the general steady flow of the music, bending here and there to some moment of special significance or charm and yet not so much as to break the continuity of the whole. Similarly in Strauss's "Don Juan," although the high lights of its picturesque instrumentation came out vividly enough, M. Shavitch kept one in touch with the structure and did not let the music fall into a mere string of brilliantly coloured episodes.

The one other work in the programme was Tchaikovsky's Pianoforte Concerto in B flat minor. In this Miss Tina Lerner played the solo part extremely well; she was very sure and showed great power, while her tone in the slow movement had beauty and in the climaxes a fine sonority. She was warmly applauded by an audience which, if owing to the fog was not as large as usual, was at any rate very appreciative.

WOOLGAR & ROBERTS'

— PRESS CUTTING, —

PRINTING & ADVERTISING AGENCY,

12, 13, 14, RED LION COURT,

169, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C. 4.

TELEPHONE: 810 CENTRAL.

Cutting from

SUNDAY TIMES

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THE WEEK'S MUSIC

The London Symphony Concert.

M. Vladimir Shavitch, who took command of the London Symphony Orchestra at their fifth concert, on Monday, does not find it necessary to mime his rôle. His quiet bearing is consistent with a cast of mind that plainly aims not at taking the listener by forced marches through tortuous bye-paths, known only to himself, but with willing feet, along the well-conned highway, in following which, the pleasure of picking up each well-loved landmark shall be shared by all.

The method is one that calls for the deeper qualities of generalship, and won him cordial respect. Dispensing with score and desk, he became completely immersed—and we with him—in a re-discovery of the characteristic features of the Academic Festival Overture of Brahms, and his first Symphony, in C minor—the third of this series heard at these concerts this season—and Strauss's "Don Juan." Where rational expression was given to well-known music, there is little more to say, except to record that the orchestra displayed to the full their excellent form. That in precision of *ensemble* the band now falls, by ever so little, short of the ideal of perfection, I have before ventured to suggest. That opinion was confirmed. The symptom is almost inevitable with a constant change of conductors.

There were many gratifying moments in the piano concerto—that of Tchaikovsky—in which the solo part was played by the conductor's wife, Mme. Tina Lerner. The unhasty precision of her arm—and finger—work, in noticeable evidence in the difficult double-octave passages, and the unforced elasticity of her interpretation, were exemplary.

