

NEIGHBORS

The Republic, Columbus, Ind., Saturday, September 29, 2012 **B9**

Brass, Philharmonic make delightful music

BY ROBERT BONNER
For The Republic

The Columbus community was treated to a thrilling evening of a variety of light-hearted and endearing musical favorites, through the talents of each member of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic, with special guest artists, The Canadian Brass.

The annual generosity by the family of the Johnson Distinguished Guest Artist sponsorship afforded this popular brass quintet to draw an essentially sold-out house at Columbus North High School Sept. 22.

The orchestra opened with the lively, Gliere's "Russian Sailors' Dance," which set the listeners on pace for an

upbeat evening of delights. The orchestra's director, David Bowden, prevailed upon the musicians for precision of musical expression.

Next the clever, jazzy arrangement "I Got Rhythm/Fascinatin' Rhythm," with Gershwin melodies playfully darting through instrument groups.

Another Gershwin arrangement, the "Suite from Porgy and Bess," brought a sense of nostalgia among the audience, while investing his melodies to the younger generation present.

Congratulations to parents who had their youngsters on hand. The CIP as well as the Canadian Brass encourage musical advancement of the younger generation to the joys

of classic music by educational performances.

A few dozen more than the 15 or 20 children interspersed in the audience would have been even more gratifying.

Then stealthily, a soft tune drifted in from the darkness of the back of the auditorium, the Canadian Brass, playing the familiar "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," soberly marching onto the stage platform.

A Canadian Brass arrangement of five songs by Gershwin, featured solos from each quintet member, at times tricky to coordinate between orchestra and brass.

Conductor Bowden securely managed all difficulties. The soloists always produced their gorgeous tones to match the

musical style while perfectly in-tune.

The Canadians' next stand-alone offering of waltzes by Brahms, the Brass used their own arrangement, playing three "well-mannered" "drinking songs", completing with the soul-soothing "Brahms Lullaby."

Two more Canadian Brass listener favorites were the captivating "Killer Tango", and the comical "Tuba Rag" played by the wryly funny tubist, who while tooting, managed a couple of slow-motion acrobatic rotations of his huge instrument.

After intermission, the full CIP brought a solid "Festive Overture" by Shostakovich, with that full, bold Russian flavor.

With the flare of the opening fanfare in the brass section, and mighty magnificent chords in a slower section, listeners found themselves taken on a high-speed knuckle-whitening ride with strings and prominent off-beats to another fanfare to end the piece.

Center stage again, the Canadian Brass with CIP demonstrated more instrumental nimbleness with a medley of arrangements of Beatles songs.

Finally, the Brass expanded their talents into the operatic realm, portraying five characters from Bizet's opera "Carmen", a shortened version of under 10 minutes.

The "wiggled" acts brought hilarious laughter as rejected

lover's pursuits scenes ended with the bull fight.

With a wholehearted standing ovation, the Brass returned with their "Hallelujah Chorus" mixed cleverly with themes of "When the Saints Go Marching In."

More audience cheers as a ridiculously fast "Flight of the Bumblebee," performed delicately on a high-pitched piccolo trumpet with incredible fast-tonguing, not losing a single note, brought the evening to a close.

Indeed one extraordinary and delightful evening that will be fondly remembered.

Reviewer Robert Bonner has played trumpet with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and other central Indiana community orchestras.