

strongest and the subtlest, Mr. Maazel's the most blatant and Mr. von Dohnanyi's the simplest, despite its force, and the most understated. But in all three, no matter what approach the conductor takes (and Mr. Maazel's case, maybe in spite of it), the musicians play every note with radiant care. Robert Vernon and Ralph Curry both played under Szell; both say they were taught the tradition when they arrived and that they passed it on to those who came in after them.

They haven't changed what they look for, they said, when new players audition. "A beautiful sound," Robert Vernon summarizes, "not the flashiest playing." "Someone who listens," William Preucil offered. "Our character," Mr. Vernon said, "is to sacrifice our own position to be with the other person"—something I noticed.

These musicians, orchestra staff members said, play their best on matter where they are. And I heard that myself when some of them gave a concert in the gym of a local elementary school. This was part of a new program called Learning Through Music, which (though Cleveland is hardly the first orchestra to do this) not only puts musicians in the schools, but makes them part of the schools' curriculum. The gym was packed with kids and their working-class parents. The program ranged from standard classical repertoire—a movement, for instance, from the Berlioz "Symphonie Fantastique," cannily arranged for 10 or so players—to rock and jazz and the sharp contemporary rhythm of Steve Reich's "Clapping Music" (played after a minute of silence, during which the kids were encouraged to hear the sounds that rustled and stirred around them). And while it's hardly a secret that orchestras don't always care about performance for children, in this one the musicians spoke to the kids with all the flair of accomplished entertainers and played with the same arresting certainty you'd hear on their records with Mr. von Dohnanyi. The audience was on its feet screaming; I've never seen an orchestra make so many friends so quickly.

But, then, the culture of the Cleveland Orchestra goes deeper than music. "There's a sense of community you don't find many other places, and a can-do spirit," said Richard Kessler, director of the American Music Center, who got to know many orchestras from the inside when he worked as a consultant on orchestral education programs (including Cleveland's). "I've never been in an institution that had less internal tension," said Patricia Wahlen, the orchestra's veteran director of development, after I'd watched her conduct a meeting. "Talent I know I can find," said Thomas W. Morris, the executive director, talking about how he hires new staff. "So I look for imagination."

"The personality is the main thing, finally," Mr. Dohnanyi told me, describing what he looks for in new musicians. I spoke to four people on the board of directors, and none of them mentioned what his day job was until I asked. All four were powers in the Cleveland business world; they'd have to be, since the board raised \$25 million toward the recent \$116 million.

"We have a passion for the music, for the musicians," said the board president, Richard J. Bogomolny (himself an accomplished violinist who plays chamber music with members of the orchestra, though, characteristically, it wasn't he who let me know that), John D. Ong, one of two co-chairmen of the board, describing the orchestra's position in the city, told me, "George Szell lived in Cleveland and was seen doing the normal

things that people do." One of Mr. Von Dohnanyi's sons just graduated from Case Western Reserve University here, and many people mentioned the city itself as one reason for the orchestra's success. Philanthropically, Mr. Ong told me, Cleveland is "extraordinarily generous."

To learn more, I called Ohio Sen. George Voinovich, who'd earlier been Cleveland's mayor, and John Grabowski, assistant professor of history at Case Western Reserve and director of research at the Western Reserve Historical Society. Mr. Grabowski talked about Cleveland's "climate of service" and how loyal Cleveland workers are to their jobs. But what struck me most was that both men had their own connection with the orchestra.

For many years, nearly every school-child in Cleveland was bused to Severance Hall; Mr. Grabowski heard concerts that way, while Senator Voinovich's mother took him to performances. "I really miss that part of my life," the senator said, almost wistfully. "As the mayor of the city, one of the nice things was to go to Severance Hall and be known by some of the musicians."

The renovated hall is breathtaking—an art deco palace, red and gold with silver and faux-Egyptian highlights, more playful than you might expect, but also simpler and more serious. Inside it, the orchestra plays wonderfully serious concerts, with soloists chosen for their connoisseur's appeal ("We don't hire big names just because they're names," Edward Yim, the orchestra's artistic administrator, very quietly declared), and programs carefully constructed, with a constant presence of contemporary scores.

Are there problems? The only one I might have found was an apparent disagreement over incoming music director Franz Wälser-Möst, who'll succeed Mr. von Dohnanyi two years from now; the board, I think, adores him, but the musicians only said (as musicians often will).

"Let's wait and see."

I started asking everybody what difficulties there might be; Thomas Morris answered "complacency"—not now, but maybe in the future. I'll raise his bet and offer "smugness." Mr. Morris isn't smug (I was amazed to find that his institution seemed even stronger than he says it is), but it's tricky being sure that you're the best. The musicians made comparisons with other orchestras that can't easily be quoted; they're surely true, but baldly written down they might not seem plausible. And there's a curious artistic challenge, which springs from a problem of perception. The Cleveland Orchestra, as I've said, is musically preeminent, but ever since George Szell, this largely has been preeminence for connoisseurs. What's missing, at least from the orchestra's image, is the expectation of simpler musical virtues, especially direct emotional expression. Mr. von Dohnanyi ("not an obvious choice," said Mr. Ong, "but perfect for us" understands musical integrity; he allows great sonic explosions, for example, only at climactic moments).

At Carnegie Hall, at the start of Charles Ives's "The Unanswered Question," he evoked the softest orchestral sound I've ever heard, a kind of wordless aural poetry just a breath away from silence, but even though he might surprise you in romantic music—try his wrenching, limpid Tchaikovsky "Pathétique" on Telarc—he's most strikingly emotional in unpopular atonal works by Berg and Schoenberg. Mr. Wälser-Möst, of course, will have his own story to tell. But Mr. von Dohnanyi's version of Cleveland's

impeccable tradition almost guarantees that the orchestra can't be wildly popular. It may not want to be; it's surely aiming higher. But still it's true that other orchestras remain more famous—the Vienna Philharmonic, for example, whose very name seems synonymous with classical music. Cleveland might be a better orchestra, but because it's not flashy, the final peaks of fame may so far have eluded it.

CELEBRATING THE ASSOCIATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
MEXICAN AMERICANS' 30TH
YEAR OF SERVICE TO THE HIS-
PANIC COMMUNITY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 2, 2000

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on October 20, 2000, the Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA) will be celebrating the 30th year of service to the Hispanic community. This is a tremendous achievement, and I wish them continued success.

Founded in 1970 in Houston, Texas, AAMA is the largest Hispanic nonprofit service provider in Texas. This community organization was founded to advance the needs of Hispanic families that are coping and struggling to beat back the grip of poverty, poor health and family planning, and low educational attainment. Today, AAMA provides services in Houston and across South Texas.

In my congressional district, AAMA operates the George I. Sanchez Charter High School, which provides at-risk Hispanic youth with an alternative educational environment. Today, the school is one of the largest and most successful charter schools in Texas.

In addition to these education services, AAMA also operates many social service programs, including three gang intervention programs, two HIV and AIDS counseling programs and several drug and alcohol abuse programs throughout Texas. With these programs in place, it is easy to see why AAMA is the largest social service provider in Texas.

AAMA is also involved in community development. The AAMA Community Development Corporation is dedicated to the revitalization of Houston's inner-city through the development of affordable and decent housing. The AAMA Community Development Corporation recently completed and leased a new 84-unit affordable living center in Houston's East End.

I am proud of everyone associated with AAMA. They work tirelessly on behalf of our communities. I ask every Member of the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating AAMA's 30th year of service and in wishing them continued success.

HONORING GEORGE MANZANARES

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 2, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honor a remarkable human