

ALL STARS

ALL STARS' Classical Jewels concerts are now an event that no one with any pretensions to an interest in "serious" music would willingly miss. No matter how famous the artists or how excellent the recording, there is no substitute for live music. And All Stars' live music sparkles with a special brilliance.

The intense concentration and the enthusiasm of all the members of the orchestra generate an excitement that has the audience listening as if for the first time to Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Bizet, Glinka.

Theirs is not a perfect performance — no live concert is. Perfection (for conductor, arranger and musicians) can only be heard on records when technical electronic skills have cut out the "fluffs" and spliced in re-recorded segments to produce the perfect master tape with every note precise and precisely in place.

Being live there were one or two "fluffs" in All Stars' performance — but it took an alert ear and long familiarity with the music to notice the odd slip.

Traditionally, for this reviewer, each new Classical Jewels is a voyage of discovery. What new music will All Stars tackle? What new instrument will the orchestra accompany? What new soloists will prove that pan can complement the human voice?

HIGH POINTS

In Classical Jewels V the high points were Mozart's Concerto in A for clarinet and orchestra and Teleman's Sonata in B Minor.

Clive Telemaque and Leon Edwards (on tenor and tenor base — sic — respectively) held this reviewer spellbound with their exciting, masterly interpretation of the Teleman's sonata; so much so that one wonders if the future for pan in serious music lies in duets, ensemble playing by three or four musicians (no, I won't call them "pannists", they are musicians who are great artists performing on new instruments) and as soloists in a concerto... when a composer of international repute finally gets around to composing for pan.

By ANNE HILTON

A result of hard work

George Scott's performance of the Mozart clarinet concerto must have earned him new respect in music circles; one held one's breath at the first, familiar notes... and then relaxed to enjoy the novel sounds of pan respectfully accompanying his impressive performance.

Of the other soloists, Bernadette Scott proved, once again, that she has a glorious voice but somehow she didn't seem to be as much at ease with All Stars as Jocelyn Sealey in former years. Perhaps it takes more than one appearance to adjust to singing with steel?

On the other hand soloist Maurice Brash appeared to be quite at ease; however, one was disappointed in Mozart's "Non piu Andrai". One feels that an actor of Maurice Brash's experience could have got a great deal more out of that aria. It could have been due to the Italian words. It could have been that the soloist was nervous, or that, popular as the melody is, it didn't really suit his voice and style.

Christopher Herbert's rendering of Sparrow's "Calypso Memories" reminded the audience we have our own composers of our own special music. Not surprisingly, it was much appreciated.

"Evening Chimes" by Stanley, which featured All Stars' soloist Earl Wells, is one of those pieces of music that used to be played at Band Concerts in the Botanic Gardens. It didn't stir one. Not because there were faults to find in the performance, but it's not my kind of music. Well, All Stars can't win them all...

...but they try. Oh, how hard they try for their musical director "Uncle" Gerry Jemmott and guest conductors Pat Bishop and Paul Hill. The Prelude to Bizet's L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1 and the last movement to Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony — which began and (almost) ended the programme demonstrated the great rapport between orchestra



BERNADETTE SCOTT



PAUL HILL

and musical director.

The Eine Kleine Nachtmusik under the baton of Pat Bishop was a little fuzzy around the edges, but one senses it takes time to build up the close relationship between steel orchestra and conductor — and this was Pat Bishop's first appearance with All Stars.

When Paul Hill took over the baton for the Overture to Glinka's "Ruslan and Lyudmila" the orchestra pulled out almost all the stops; almost, because they reserved that last ounce of musical energy for a repeat (and repeated) performance of Sullivan's "La Cachuca" with conductor Hill demonstrating both the dance and his absolute confidence in All Stars with a solo performance of his own.

In conclusion, one can only thank the tuners, arrangers, musical director, guest conductors, soloists and all of All Stars for their hard work, discipline and dedication in bringing us the glorious sounds, excitement and experience of a full orchestra giving a real, live performance in Queen's Hall. And, being greedy, ask — when can we start counting the days to Classical Jewels VI?

SPARKLE



Catelli All Stars at last year's Classical Jewels.

A VIOLINIST LOOKS AT ALL STARS IN CONCERT

When volume dominated beauty slipped away

By

MC DONNELL

CARPENTER

AS A CONCERT manager I have presented Heifetz, Menuhin, Mischa Elman, Segovia, Rubinstein, Richard Tauber and many others. I have been music critic for the Trinidad Guardian and the Gleaner of Jamaica; I am a quite respectable violinist.

My resume, therefore, hopefully establishes me as a long-experienced musical ear and this letter concerns the final concert by Catelli Trinidad All Stars Steel Orchestra at the Queen's Hall on Sunday, November 10.

I was tremendously impressed both by the virtuosity of the orchestra and possibly even more so by the tonal capacity, the energy within the playing and great beauty of sounds achieved from time to time. I say from time to time because there were equally moments when volume predominated and beauty had meekly slipped out of hearing hiding somewhere, waiting again to make her appearance on stage.

The Catelli All Stars Steel Orchestra is a super, high powered tonal group: any conductor who would dare to whip it would be in precisely the same position of any violinist who would dare to dig his bow into a Stradivarius. Just as much as the strand demands that it be coaxed however firmly, (no whipping please!) so the steel orchestra makes identical demands.

I venture to say that when this steel orchestra and a leader has thoroughly grasped and mastered the art of painting tonal colours from pianissimo to a forte, only stressing tonal subtleties, then in my humble opinion two precious qualities would have been achieved; the steel would have received a tiny velvet pad (like the piano) and too, intensity of feeling would have replaced mere loudness as such.

The Catelli All Stars now takes on all comers from Mozart to the Mighty Sparrow. This is fine in its own way but again I venture to say that, from its sheer natural character, specialisation which is to say certain music (there is so much music indeed) should shape its repertoire.

The day and the dawn is clearly visible when the Catelli Steel has learned to function within a tonal

world where shouting for the sake of the shout is absolutely prohibited and music suited to its extraordinary capacity and its peculiar nature is interpreted, then this Orchestra can stand side by side with world-recognised symphony orchestras, for what is has to offer is totally unique and, too, it simply overflows with true and exceptional talent.

To see Mr. Telemaque play is to visualise the true Trinidadian exhibit his totally unique characteristics and interpreted by Telemaque this is a memorable sight as well as quite a musical experience, for with Mr. Telemaque's innate Trinidad rhythm and intuitive musical projection are inseparably welded into one entity.

At the concert I found myself rising to shout "bravo" at Bernadette Scott, Maurice Brash, acting as well as singing remarkably well. It is no exaggeration to say someday in the not too far future this Catelli can follow on stage the Leningrad Symphony, the London Symphony, the Philadelphia Symphony or any other famed instrumental group.

A "bravo" indeed it certainly deserves.