

Sturgis Journal

STURGIS, MICHIGAN

Mar 15, 1997

Ovation earned before intermission

BY CAROLYN MAGRUDER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The best entertainment to hit the Sturgis area in the past three years was on stage at the auditorium Saturday and was a perfect musical ending to the 1996-97 Sturgis Council of the Arts series.

There are not enough superlatives to describe the "Oh Henry!" concert which featured pianist/composer Mac Frampton and trumpeter Cecil Welch.

Henry Mancini is probably most well-known to the general public for his "Pink Panther" theme but his musical career has a greater depth than just one movie title, as evidenced by the musical selections at the concert. This depth is shown in the theme from "Romeo and Juliet," "Peter Gunn," "The Days of Wine and Roses."

However, having musical genius and depth is fine, but it is worthless unless this music is performed and in doing so, reaches one person, a whole audience, or the world. Frampton and the orchestra played Mancini's music with care, love, and at times with the exact precision it required as in "Hong Kong Fireworks," a song featuring the percussionist.

Many professional entertainers at the auditorium have received standing ovations at the end of their performances. Many entertainers per-

form and leave the stage without being asked for an encore.

But in the last three years there has never been an ovation before intermission. Before Mac Frampton and the orchestra had finished playing the "007 Suite," a compilation of James Bond movie themes, the audience was on their feet, clapping, stomping, screaming, "more" and "Bravo."

The orchestra itself was world-class and it was refreshing to observe how they left the traditional "stuffed shirt" symphony attitude at the stage door by clapping for each other's performances. Violinists tapped their string bows against music stands. Frampton actually clapped for the musicians, and the brass section pounded their chair seats. Bravos to the orchestra for having an attitude of "let's enjoy each other's musical talents and let's not be afraid to show it to the audience."

Finishing the concert was "Moon River." What more can be said about this classic except to say it was the easy choice to end on. However, Frampton, Welch, and the orchestra didn't get off as easily. Three encores of "Peter Gunn" later, the crowd was finally satisfied and Frampton and the musicians took their final bows. Bravos to the council for selecting a world-class performance and a grateful bravo to Frampton and his friends.