

George Byrd

Press

RHEINPFALZ
Speyer

A CONCERT OF SUPERLATIVES

One was fascinated by the radiating influence of a wonderfully musical and competent conductor – personality, who suggestively and still humanely, shapes and forms, but also by the zest and vigour of the Pfälzer Philharmonie, by its unconditional willingness to follow BYRD'S intentions. And that which one hardly dared to hope for, became a happy reality: a musical experience of superlatives.

Lothar Messmer

THE
WESTFÄHLISCHER
ANZEIGER

A PROGRAM AND AN **EVENING FOR CONNOISSEURS**

This orchestrator GEORGE BYRD was at the same time conductor of the evening. Also a personality, an orchestra-leader with clear directions, compelling in his conceptions and interpretations. The suite from Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" was through him the "Symphonic Picture" for which it was announced, and never slid down into the field of a medley.

DR. Martin Wolscke

**THE NEW YORK
TIMES
New York**

**BYRD LEADS BOBESCU
VERSION OF “KREUTZER”**

At yesterday’s concert, Mr. BYRD made a good impression, not least for his bravery in presenting the American premiere of Beethoven’s Kreutzer Sonata as arranged for orchestra by Bobescu.

Mr. Byrd, a one time Juilliard student who has built a career in Europe, led a smooth performance of Tschaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony.

Donal Henehan

**NEWHOUSE
NEWSPAPERS
The Jersey Journal**

(PHILHARMONIC HALL)

GEORGE BYRD was the knowing conductor, and the orchestra responded to his direction with playing of remarkable virtuosity and musicality.

Byrd’s concept of Brahms’ “Variations on a Theme of Haydn” was almost daringly broad, in the Germanic tradition, but the orchestra performed with glowing warmth, and moved from stolidity to an ultimately moving reading. The concluding Beethoven “Eroica” First movement was also handsomely played, and we regretted being unable to hear it all.

B.B.

DIE WELT

Hamburg

”BYRD, the black man”, brings us the instinctively sure and fantastic musicality of his race, and it proves itself even in the Brahms Symphonie. He takes the work heavy blooded, eruptive, completely away from the “pastorale” to which one so willingly-but also so conditionally accredits this work. In the third movement, with it’s many difficult transitions, it becomes especially clear and understandable from what from what clear imagination BYRD departs and how sure he is to communicate this to the orchestra. The audience thanked him with long lasting and hearty applause.

Joachim Matzner

T Z

Munich

**10. Concert: Munich Philharmonic.
 Theater Gemeinde
 Congress Hall
 GEORGE BYRD-Conductor**

**One is also not protected against agreeable surprises.
What should a concert with Prokofieff's Piano Concerto
Nr. 3 and the 5th symphonie of Tschaikowsky bring us
of basically essential importance?.....**

**The surprise of the evening was above all GEORGE BYRD,
born 1926 in North Carolina, (since his Gershwin Concert
with the Philharmonic in 1958) –is ONE OF BIGGEST SECRET
TIPS FOR EVERY CONCERT FAN. He still takes
the Russian soul of Tschaikowsky serious, he identifies
himself with the prescribed “con anima” of the 5th
Symphonie. THE PHILHARMONIC PLAYERS GAVE HIM
EVERYTHING; FROM THE SPOTLESS HORN
SOLO IN THE ANDANTE INCLUDING THE BEWITCHING
“CANTABILE” OF THE STRINGS.**

**KARL ROBERT
DANLER**

**MITTELDEUTSCHE
NEUESTE NACHRICHTEN
Halle**

The american black conductor GEORGE BYRD from New York stood on the podium of the 16th Gewandhaus concert. Immediately at the beginning of the Symphonie in G-Major (nr.88) of Haydn , it was revealing to see in how much understanding and love for the German classic he had immersed himself, and how much close contact he had with the orchestra. With noticeably intensive rehearsals he had achieved clean and precise playing, through which the fine thematic ramifications were clearly exposed.

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**NEW YORK POST
New York**

The Intercultural choir of the Harlem YMCA sang a concert which included music by,Scarlatti, Palestrina, Jacob Händel,Mozart and Brahms... Mr BYRD is a born conductor, who combines sound musicianship with an inspirational quality which communicates itself to his singers.They in turn are able to transmit extraordinary results to an audience.

Harriet Johnson.

**LONG ISLAND
PRESS**

New York – (Philharmonic Hall)

**BYRD’S concept of the Brahms
“Variations” on a Theme of Haydn
was almost daringly broad in the
Germanic tradition, the orchestra
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played...**

Byron Belt

**DAILY
TELEGRAPH
London**

**Mr BYRD was a most sympathetic
exponent of Gershwin’s genius.**

**THE LONDON
TIMES
London**

**No conductor could have lavished
more understanding and affection
on this side of the composer than
GEORGE BYRD.**

**DERNIERES
NOUVELLES
D'ALSACE**

**UN“VOLKSSYMPHONIEKONZERT“
VRAIMENT EXCEPTIONNEL;DIRIGÉ
PAR GEORGE BYRD.**

**Des les dernieres mesures du premier
mouvement, les applaudissements
fuserent dans la salle: à la fin du
concerto,ces applaudissements ne
semblèrent prendre fin. L'exécution
de ce concerto fut à la fois passionnée
et passionnante. GEORGE BYRD «dosa»
l'orchestre à merveille et accompagna la
soliste avec une infinie douceur.**

**Tres grand ,athletique, noir et ayant tous
les rythmes du jazz á la fleur de peau,
GEORGE BYRD fut le chef ideal pour
l'exécution de «Un Americain à Paris».
Cet «Americain à Bâle enflamma l'orchestre
bâlois et lui conféra une fougue digne de
Glenn Miller ou d'un orchestre de Dixieland.
J.-J.D.**

NEUE WESTFÄLISCHE

**GEORGE BYRD, a world wide celebrated guest on the
podium, held, without effort, the large ensemble together,
and led it to boundless joy in playing.
Otto Lewe**

**THE MOZ
Frankfurt Oder**

MOZ interviews the conductor GEORGE BYRD.

“You will conduct three concerts with the Philharmonic Orchestra Frankfurt (Oder)...Is it difficult for a conductor to work with a new orchestra ?”

BYRD: “ I think that it is more difficult for the musicians. Nevertheless, they are “nakedly” exposed before the critical ear of the conductor. Therefore, when the conductor discovers weaknesses in the orchestra, he must still demand but also encourage the players. Despite all ambitions towards perfection, he must never forget that these players are human beings.”

**SCHWEIZER
NATIONALZEITUNG**

GEORGE BYRD – the wisely reserved “highlight of the evening”.

Dr. Otto Maag

**SPEYRER TAGESPOST
Speyer**

GEORGE BYRD pressed the stamp on this evening as conductor. He, the mentally agile man in his mid fifties, is of a decisively strong musical expression, is also of a carefully planned watchful circumspection, in which superficial effects for the public do not exist. In a word: an out and out musician.

**ERLANGER
NACHRICHTEN
Erlangen.**

GEORGE BYRD, who, from his stature and musical nature reminds us a little bit of “great old Satchmo”, was also at home with the thoughts and feelings of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. Looking always toward the symphonic whole, he exposed variating and plastic moods, shaped and formed mysteriously-sinister, as well as friendly pastorales and folksy-extended episodes. BYRD allowed the friendly and warm melodies of Mendelssohn to integrate “cantabile” into the dynamic stream.

The second march-like theme in the quiet Adagio had grandeur, the sparkling Allegro vivacissimo had, despite every relaxed manner of playing, symphonic importance. Fairy-like magic was modestly sprayed in the Scherzi.

Applause and “Bravo” was in the first instance , for BYRD.

Silke Zeiten