

local teachers.

Belgian Organ Virtuoso Gives Tribute Recital

BY THOLA TABOR SCHENCK

Flor Peeters, Belgian organ virtuoso and composer, was presented last night to an appreciative audience in Mizpah auditorium by the Syracuse Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

The recital was dedicated to the memory of Leon Verrees, late organist, composer and choir director of Syracuse, and founder of the local chapter of the guild. As special tribute, Mr. Peeters included on his program, Mr. Verrees' prize composition, the Choral-Improvisation on "O God Our Help in Ages Past." This page from the Verrees album won the Diapason Prize in 1935 in a competition sponsored by the American Guild of Organists.

The Belgian visitor, who is now on his first concert tour in the United States, listed compositions for performance calculated to please his organist hearers, reserving one spot for the hearing of one of his own works, "Sinfonia," in Allegro energico, Adagio, Fantasia and Triple fugue movements.

Well built musically, modern in content, the "Sinfonia," composed during the dark days of the occupation, aroused considerable interest. The dynamic fortissimo of the first movement led to a polytonal adagio of obscure meaning. Its third movement with pedal solo and moved in colorful rhythm with the fugue returning in greater volume and grand finale. Ovational response was heartfelt.

Mr. Peeters evidenced clarity and dexterity of finger and foot technique in his opening Bach Prelude and Fugue. His attacks were sharp and clear cut with excellent phrasing and volume shading.

He was sensitive to the melodic line of the Frescobaldi "Toccata," and the piping, cheerful "Von Himmel Hoch," by Pachelbel pleased hearers. The spirited Buxtehude Prelude, not so familiar to the general public, made effective use of the echo organ for its iterated phrases.

The Franck "Pastorale," replete in sinuato measures provided contrast. "Le Banquet Celeste," of an ethereal, weird and almost dissonant melody by Messiaen was beautifully expressive of humble reverence at the Lord's Table.

Mr. Peeters added a brilliant encore in response to applause at the program's close, playing its delicate, lightful passages without score. The successful recital marks the second season of soloist presentations, conducted by the local chapter.

Girl Hurt in Tumble

Flor Peeters Recital-Verrees Memorial, Syracuse October 1947

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