Rice symphony debuts

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Thresher Reviewer

The Rice Symphonic Society present its first concert of the year, much to the delight of the small audience that gathered to hear it Sunday night in the RMC Grand Hall. The orchestra, now in its second year of operation, showed much progress over the first.

With a new conductor and many new faces, the group seems to have lost none of the zest or freshness that was its earmark last season. Of course the Symphonic Society is still not ready to be judged by professional standards, but neither is it reasonable to think that it should be. The amazing thing is that a group such as this exists at all on a campus void of music majors.

The program consisted of Rossini's Overture to La Gazza Ladra, Lugini's Ballet Egyptien, Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony, and the Dance Bacchanale of Saint Saens.

The music of Ballet Egyptien proved to be the best offering of the evening. The first and fourth movements were especially good, with the orchestra displaying clarity, unity, and much spirit. The Schubert Symphony was also given a creditable performance.

The Danse Bacchanale was given a fair reading, considering the very difficult score. The opening was the best part of the piece, highlighted by a fine clarinet solo by Alan Cooper. The tempo was somewhat slower than normal, but perhaps this was for the best.

The opening selection, Rossini's overture to La Gazza Ladra, was unfortunately a disaster. But in light of what followed, this can be excused.

George Bright, a Will Rice Junior, was most impressive in his debut as conductor of the Society. He seemed to know the scores quite well and he kept the orchestra well under control. His conducting was probably the highlight of the evening.

In any case, the evening was most pleasant. The Rice Symphonic Society certainly earned the opportunity to play before a bigger audience its second concert.