

Contributions To Our Musical Life

By JOHN HORNER

In the Burnside Town Hall last night, the City of Burnside Symphony Orchestra (conductor, John Black; leader, Teresa Commene) made three important contributions to our musical life.

It gave its 41 members a precious opportunity of maintaining the kind of concert experience that all orchestral players must have; it gave a young opera singer a chance to sing two arias with their proper accompaniment; and it provided a suburban audience with an intimate glimpse of an orchestra at work.

The singer was Janice Hearn, whose impassioned delivery of "O Mio Fernando" (Donizetti) and "O don fatale" (Verdi) displayed to advantage her rapidly developing dramatic powers and her amplitude of volume and range.

The symphony orchestra lived up to its name by playing two symphonies — Mozart's No. 33 in B flat and Schumann's No. 4 in D minor, plus the Fledermaus

Overture (Strauss) and Reinecke's Prelude to Act 5 of "King Manfred."

There were some weak moments, the most easily remediable of which I should think would be the intonation of the cellos and basses, which too often failed to provide a solid unison foundation.

The violins, with a much smaller margin of finger error, managed to maintain a very fair level of intonation.

The horns did not always hit the notes they aimed at, but when they did (as in the prelude to "O Mio Fernando") the full advantage of an orchestral accompaniment over a piano became gloriously evident.

I was sorry I missed the Divertimento of Wind Quintet by Hayden. This sort of novelty, and Dr. Black's excellent idea of playing the lesser-known Mozart symphonies, are further rare advantages that the enterprise of the Burnside City Council has made available through their support of orchestral music.

Dr. Black conducted with vitality and precision.