

Music in Review

■ British period-instrument ensemble ■ Prize-winning cellist in a debut ■ Vocal power from Martina Arroyo ■ Beethoven by fewer players.

Hanover Band

Alice Tully Hall

One of Britain's best period-instrument orchestras for Classical-era repertory offered splendid performances of Haydn, Mozart and the adolescent Mendelssohn on Sunday afternoon. Led by Roy Goodman, this 35-member group plays with an ensemble sound the ear "sees through." Provided, in other words, is a translucence quite different from the often impenetrable walls of brilliance that modern instruments bring to the same repertory. Haydn's daring, often very funny, D-major Symphony, No. 86, was as well paced and powerfully felt as the infinitely darker "Prague" Symphony by Mozart at the end. Also receiving period-instrument treatment was Mendelssohn's astonishing B-minor Symphony for Strings, probably from the composer's 13th year.

Elsewhere, Anthony Halstead played the old valveless horn in Mozart's E-flat Concerto (K.495). Uneven in texture, spectacularly treacherous in execution yet capable of a wonderful whole-grain beauty when on its best behavior, the natural horn on public display proved once again an adventure. Mr. Halstead's playing of it was intrepid and often quite lovely.

BERNARD HOLLAND

Martina Arroyo

Soprano
Kaye Playhouse
Hunter College

A recital by Martina Arroyo was Friday's contribution to inaugural week at this resuscitated concert space. Ms. Arroyo's soprano is, if anything, a voice of experience, and it has retained many of its best virtues: a forthright declamatory strength and a respectful musicality, to name two. The Aria and Scena from Donizetti's "Marino Falliero" was all power and muscle. Indeed, the songs by Strauss and Duparc seemed almost bruised by Ms. Arroyo's emphatic style.

In Turina's "Tres Poemas" and in four spirituals at the end, the singer turned to a low-key, almost conversational approach, and with good effect. She also sang Miranda's Aria from Leslie Adams's opera "Blake." The music was agreeably tuneful, a familiar amalgam of European rhetoric and New World folk gestures that the 1930's developed and made into an identifiable American style. Ms. Arroyo's faithful pianist was Henri Venanzi.

BERNARD HOLLAND