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#### MUSIC REVIEW

## Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra show goes on

By Richard S. Ginell  
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With the finish line of his Mozart piano concerto cycle in sight, the hard-working music director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Jeffrey Kahane, was forced to postpone the final lap of his gigantic project this past weekend after his doctor determined he had severe hypertension. An orchestra representative said the conclusion to the cycle is being rescheduled.

Nevertheless, the concerts went on, but with different leaders and a somewhat, but not too different, focus. Of the four concertos that Kahane was to play at Royce Hall on Sunday (Nos. 8, 14, 20 and 27), No. 27 was retained, with Ignat Solzhenitsyn playing and conducting. To begin the evening, concertmaster Margaret Batjer led a lushly appointed treatment of the Mozart Divertimento in D, K. 136, at standard tempos, from her chair. Solzhenitsyn concluded by conducting Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony, a most compatible concert-mate for Mozart.

Since appearing on the scene in a minor blaze of publicity based on curiosity — yes, he is the famous Russian author's son — Solzhenitsyn has carved out a solid but not ostentatious foothold for himself. Now in his third season as music director of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, he has become a more interesting musician since I heard him play a Mozart concerto with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood in 1997 and perform four-hand Schubert with Mitsuko Uchida in Ojai the following year.

In the Sunday program's insert, the Mozart concerto's cadenzas were credited to "Mozart/Solzhenitsyn," but that didn't quite explain what was going on. The cadenzas in the first and third movements were Mozart's, and there were a handful of added figurations elsewhere in those movements. Solzhenitsyn's contribution was mainly an extensive elaboration of the second movement's piano part.

Thus, the second movement was almost a recomposition — yet tastefully done — played by Solzhenitsyn with a near improvisatory feeling and an inward glow. Throughout the concerto, the oboe work by Allan Vogel was as fine as you'll hear anywhere.

Away from the piano and in front of LACO, Solzhenitsyn definitely had stimulating ideas about Mendelssohn. At a fast walking pace, he displayed a command of the long line in the symphony's second movement and enforced vigorous tempos and individual phrasings in the other movements, producing a dynamic response from the orchestra. The Saltarello finale was taken very, very quickly, really pushing the envelope as to what is humanly possible. But these gifted musicians hung on to the whirlwind, often grinning with delight.

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