

Outstanding pianist Tazaki makes Santa Barbara debut

By Bert Willard

The Santa Barbara Symphony, under the direction of Frank Collura, yesterday afternoon presented a concert program featuring compositions by Dvorak, Bartok, Haydn and Janacek and an outstanding piano soloist making her West Coast debut.

The concert was held at the Arlington Center and will be repeated tomorrow night.

The opening, "Slavonic Dances" by Dvorak, got the program off to a rousing start, with the orchestra playing three of the dances in Dvorak's set with reckless abandon, remarkable suavity and rhythmic propulsion. Collura was at all times in complete command.

Bartok's Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra, which brought Etsko Tazaki to the fore as soloist, was a wise choice to succeed the Dvorak piece. Bartok was greatly influenced by the folk music of his native Hungary in the writing of this concerto, his final work, and it is a composition that gave the soloist full reign to display the wizardry of the keyboard.

From the opening unison octave passages and the captivating Romanian-inspired folk melodies, through the middle movement, a chorale-like adagio inspired by birdcalls and

other natural sounds, to the finale, with its rather tricky rhythms and counterpoint, the orchestra gave sympathetic backing to the diminutive Japanese pianist. She is a highly skilled technician who played the concerto in a distinctly personal style.

After the intermission, the orchestra took over for the second half of the program, playing Haydn's Symphony No. 95 in C Minor and closing with Janacek's Sinfonietta.

The Haydn symphony, one of 12 commissioned by Johann Peter Salomon familiarly known as the London symphonies, was given a polished reading by the local orchestra. It provided staid and conservative contrast to the Czech and Hungarian works.

The final work, the Sinfonietta, brought into play all of the orchestra's instrumental sections, focusing major attention in the first and final movements on martial fanfares by the augmented brass section — trumpets, tubas, bass trumpets, trombones and horns — together with kettledrums.

In the other movements, woodwinds joined with string in presenting descriptive contrasts to the heavy brass. There were interesting rhythmic changes and melodic structures in fifths and even in 13/8 meter, all meant to portray the moods

and feeling of the city of Prague.

Although this was a work in modern vein, with dissonances and rhythms not too often heard by local audiences, the listeners loved it, and gave Collura and the musicians a well-deserved ovation. It was one of the symphony's best programs of the season.

Next and final concert of the 1980-81 season will bring Ruggero Ricci, violinist, to Santa Barbara in May.