

New Mexican American Studies Coordinator

Ex-Farm Laborer Counsels Chicanos

By JOE EHRENKRANZ
TM Staff Writer

He's worked the grape fields, he's lived the life of the barrio, he's seen the violence it breeds and now he's trying to guide Chicanos into the academic way of life.

The Chicanos, or as he says it, "without getting into the argument of semantic terminology... the browns, the Mexican-Americans or the Latin speaking people, are going to get ahead by bettering themselves and their own kind."

He's Phil Rodriguez, Mexican-American Studies coordinator at Cerritos. He further believes that the stress should be on getting the potential dropout from school pointed back into education.

That's why he's coordinating a new community services program from working with high school students in the

Cerritos district. Presently the recruitment program is targeted at Excelsior, Glenn, Gahr and Artesia.

Retention Goal

His job is to assist Tony Rodriguez, no relation, in the recruitment and retention of phase of the Mexican American Studies project.

The most important thing according to the younger Rodriguez is to get the borderline dropout onto the campus, show them around and point out the fact that there are people interested in their welfare.

Research into the records of persons on probation, both those who have returned to campus and those who were away from school this past year, has shown that a lot of the recorded "F" grades were the result of failure to drop classes correctly.

Rodriguez's task, as he sees it, is to write to these people, over 50 per cent of those on probation, and get them to petition office to have the poor grade expunged.

commented Rodriguez.

Last fall's total net graded students, those who received final grades for the fall semester, this past January, numbered 16,585.

High Rate

Of this figure, according to the assistant coordinator, only 1,773 were of Spanish surnamed students. Disproportionately, according to Rodriguez, 20 per cent or 362 students are on scholastic probation.

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Sees Trend

He points out that he senses a trend towards success in his efforts, since in one week's time that there has been 17 answers received back.

Last week, the second high school group arrived for briefings and counseling. Seven students from Gahr High in Cerritos were given a tour of the

campus and later counseled by Bedal Diaz. Six of these seven pre-enrolled and one was already receiving state aid from the Vessey program.

Before then a group of 60 students from Artesia High were bussed to campus and Rodriguez learned that it is easier to work with smaller groups and thus the smaller group from Gahr.

None Excluded

He stresses that even though his job is mainly involved with recruitment of the Mexican American studies program participants, "by no means stretch of the imagination are we going to exclude any student who comes to us for aid and counseling."

"We are making a conscious effort to hit all the lower economic groups. Getting them early gives them a better chance to get classes at the semester's outset."

They come to the campus and are counseled and pre-programmed by Diaz and then may return on their appointment date when registration begins. The only advantage they have over other students is that they have a pre-plan, according to Rodriguez. Other than that, these students face the same problems of closed out classes, says Rodriguez.



HELPING HAND — Paul Vargez gets registration help from Philip Rodriguez who is recruiting high school students especially Mexican American students from local high schools.

(TM Photo by George Cormany)

Record Review

Lightfoot — Dominant Line

By LARRY BAKER
TM Staff Writer

Many an obscure folksinger has spent years doing tasteful work for a label that doesn't know how to handle his talents. Moving to another company that knows the value of advertising, he must then, more often than not, put up with a not-too-conservative arranger embellishing his work with all kinds of syrupy strings and things.

Gordon Lightfoot spent nearly a decade relatively unknown with United Artists before moving to Reprise Records almost two years ago. Since then he has

released two impeccable and widely-renowned LP's for that company. Although the strings are present, they are, for the most part, tastefully controlled and have only added to the inherent beauty of Lightfoot's music.

His third LP for Reprise, entitled *Don Quixote* and due out this week, continues in the same mold as its two predecessors, which is simply, compelling Lightfoot lyrics, sung with a hypnotizing Lightfoot voice, and intertwined with masterful Lightfoot guitar work with a little help from his friends.

Most of this material was previewed

at the newly-bewhiskered Lightfoot's appearance here at the *Troubadour* in January, and now, as then, stands as a tribute to the Canadian's immense musical talent. The LP, as the two previous, contains not a single weak track, and has two unqualified masterpieces, mesmerizing in their beauty.

The title track and "Ode to Big Blue," opening bands on each side, rank with the best of Lightfoot's work, which should say enough for them.

In addition to those two, "Second Cup of Coffee," "On Susan's Floor," "Looking at the Rain," and "Beautiful" exude the same Lightfoot charm which has enchanted many a couple and sealed many a relationship.

This LP, if it accomplishes nothing more, merely confirms a dominant Lightfoot line from the release: "I'm not your ordinary man."



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NO RESPONSE — Conductor Phillip Westin and piano soloist John Jensen (right) try to elicit a decent response from the Cerritos Symphony Orchestra without great success. The concert took place last Thursday at Burnight Center.

(TM Photo by George Thompson)

Lack of Rehearsal Evident at Concert

By ROGER PARKS
TM Copy Editor

Good programming does not always make a symphony orchestra, or a good concert. Such was the case when the Cerritos Symphony Orchestra presented its concert last Thursday night.

The piece selected for the opening was the "Prelude" from Wagner's opera "Der Meistersinger von Nuremberg." It was, as were all of the selections, plagued by intonation difficulties.

The concert's principle problem seemed to be a rather obvious lack of rehearsal. I must, however, admire the skill, and the nerve, of Phillip Westin for his prowess in conducting.

It takes much courage to "even attempt" to present such a program. The only criticism I have for him is that the final section of the "Prelude" was really not interpreted for all of the dramatics contained in the opera.

Too Loud

The other major complaint is that the orchestra itself played the section prior to the climax much too loudly. This resulted in little or no contrast, especially in dynamics contained within the powerful finale.

The one selection that really lived up to advance billing was the Brahms' First Piano Concerto, with John Jensen as soloist. He played the solo part with

great vigor and style. Unfortunately, the orchestra had a very difficult time in keeping up with him so far as dynamics and phrasing were concerned.

In particular, the violinists had a bad time in the first movement playing the secondary theme. Once again, that old demon of bad intonation came back to harry them.

The second movement contains some of what I consider to be Brahms' best writing. Jensen acquitted himself extremely well in this movement, especially in the cadenza. The orchestra surprised quite pleasantly here, playing fine support -- without encumbering, and cleanly but not hollowly.

The third movement opened with the soloist playing tightly, and the orchestra playing loosely. This section ended in a similar manner, but between the opening and closing chords, the orchestra managed to play with the best style that was heard that evening. In general, the opinion was that the orchestra besides needing much more time in rehearsal, needed more taste in playing.

After intermission, the orchestra came back to embalm an already dead composer, Mussorgsky, with one of his own works, "Pictures at an Exhibition." The opening "Promenade" was played with much taste and control, but somehow the performance went downhill from this point.

Scream of Pain

The next major scream of pain came in the second major section, "The Old Castle." It served to re-inforce the opinion that one should always obtain an alto saxophone player from outside the orchestra, rather than relying on the principle oboist to allegedly double on alto.

There the problem was that he rushed all of the solo alto entrances, thus covering up quite a bit of really good sectional playing. The "stepping upon" was just as irritating as Abbott clobbering Custello's lines.

The final section, "The Great Gate at Kiev," was played, perhaps over-played, for acoustical capabilities of Burnight Center. It was, however, played with some notion of dynamics and musical style.

An over-all opinion would be that this orchestra shows much promise for the future, and should be considered for a very entertaining evening.

Spring Film Festival Begins

The Spring Foreign Language Film Festival begins Monday March 13 with the first presentation of "Moment of Truth", a Spanish film presented in color with English subtitles.

The movie depicts a bullfighter climbing to success. Miguel Mateo Miguelin, one of Spain's outstanding matador, portrays the poor young man who acquires fame and fortune as a result of these skills in the ring.

The Thomas Mann novel prize winning story "Buddenbrooks" will be shown next Thursday, March 16. An outstanding cast of international acclaimed German players is featured according Margaret Bluske, department chairman of foreign languages.

Both films begin at 7:30 in Burnight center and everyone is invited to see the movies free of charge.

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