



Superb husband-and-wife team help visiting ensemble to fulfil great expectations

THURSDAY evening's concert of euphoric Elgar created great expectations for the remaining three instalments of "The Zukerman Experience", and well-founded hopes were not dashed

On Friday, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and James Judd primed us for Brahms with his Academic Festival Overture, a rather ordinary medley on Brahms' part much livened through Judd's ear for unexpected colours and the resounding tones of the NZSO's new Thein trombones. His Third Symphony captivated from the moment a waltzing D major theme reminded us that Brahms was a great admirer of Johann Strauss.

Predictably, Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth shone in Brahms' rarely heard Double Concerto.

The husband-and-wife team ran the gamut from melting lyricism in

the Andante to earthy vigour in the Hungarian dance of its Finale. Their lines intertwined in nonchalant repartee one minute and defiant dialogue the next; Forsyth, playing from memory, was the epitome of musicianly and sartorial elegance.

After opening with a vibrant Leonore III overture, Saturday afternoon's Beethoven concert had Zukerman on stage wittily demystifying the composer's Violin Concerto with quips, reminiscences and beautifully chosen morsels from the score.

After interval, the reward was a transcendent Concerto, its first movement seemingly illuminated from the very soul. Zukerman effortlessly spun his magic in the Larghetto and the "hunt's up" Finale revealed all playing parties in rollicking good form.

A capacity town hall for Saturday's Zukerman Chamber

Players must have cheered Chamber Music New Zealand.

Kodaly's mercurial Duo was given the ultimate work-out by Zukerman and Forsyth. The Hungarian composer's endlessly inventive score benefited as much from the musicians' personal chemistry as from their technical and interpretative wizardry.

Mendelssohn and Brahms Quintets are not frequently come upon in the concert hall. Any slightness of content in Mendelssohn's Opus 87 was disguised by the faith and gusto with which the five players investigated its busy pages. Walls of Vivaldian tremolo were much in evidence.

The catalyst in the success of Brahms' Opus 111 Quintet was the rich-toned violas of Jethro Marks and Ashan Pillai.

CONCERT

- **What:** New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and the Zukerman Chamber Players.
- **Where:** Auckland Town Hall.
- **Reviewer:** William Dart.