

## **Orchestra is given rapturous welcome**

### **– MUSIC –**

HOUSE FULL notices and a sense of expectancy marked the first Ulster Hall concert given by the Ulster Orchestra last night.

If the players were tensed up by a sense of occasion so were their auditors and the rapturous welcome extended to Northern Ireland's first full time orchestra outside the BBC reflected a feeling that Maurice Miles and his musicians led by Janos Fürst deserve the highest encouragement

The eccentricity of the arrangement of the National Anthem was a slightly off putting start to the concert but the felicities of Mendelssohn's overture, *Fingal's Cave*, dispelled the first doubts and Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* revealed a beauty of tone and a capacity for subtleties in interpretation that were very moving.

### **Powerful**

The latter work however was not as well integrated as it might have been and throughout the evening one was conscious of lapses in co-ordination that will have to be ironed out before we can feel that the orchestra is making the best of its potential.

A powerful performance of Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto in which John Ogdon showed the qualities of greatness that we have come to expect of him was followed by a delightful presentation of Schubert's high spirited Sixth Symphony.

One would like to hear more effective string playing especially in the upper sections. Fourteen violins should be capable of a richer sound and greater boldness in attack.

Perhaps one is expecting too much that an orchestra which has played together for such a short time should show a higher standard of ensemble but for the future we must judge the Ulster Orchestra by the standard it is setting for itself – the highest.

RATHCOL