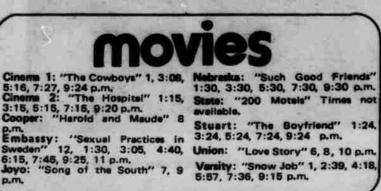
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Igor Kipnisentertainer, not musician

by Sara Schwieder

He sits in front of his gold and red lacquered \$10,000 harpsichord, talking to the audience, gesturing, the smoke from his cigarette curling up around his fingers. Delicate tingles of sound brush across the packed room like foam across a wave.

Igor Kipnis considers himself less of a classical musician and more of an entertainer.

"I try to stress informality-to get rid of formalities like cost and tails-and take it to the kids. There is no earthly reason why classical music should be the domain of a few cultured people. One doesn't have to learn that much about it to like it," Kipnis said.

Kipnis is down-home, he cats with the audience, answers questions, cracks jokes and explaines the music he plays. The audience sits on the floor or sprawls in chairs--and thoroughly enjoy themselves.

Kipnis has given five workshops and one lecture since he arrived in Lincoln Tuesday and will end his visit here by giving a free concert tonight in the Nebraska Union ballroom at 8 p.m.

About 200 people sat for an hour listening to Kipnis' verbal and musical cavortings Wednesday night in Selleck Quadrangle cafeteria.

It presented a strange picture: ugly neon lights, Selleck's distinct institutional flavor, the room packed with a crowd that ranged from footballers to classical music majors, hips, straights, old and young people-all transfixed by the music flitting around the room. The crowds are always attentive. . when Kipnis plays, everybody listens.

But when he talks, everybody relaxes and has a good time.

He played a wide range of classical pieces from all periods. Mozart, Bach, Scarlotti, English folk songs, French composers, Handel. He frequently called for requests "I leave the piano alone. I still like the piano but I don't recognize its existence," he said.

Kipnis is the son of a famous singer, Alexander Kipnis, and his grandfather was a composer. He studied plano many years without thinking of performing professionally, and graduated from Harvard with a degree in social relations. He said he played the harpsichord occasionally in college, but didn't become a professional until several years after he graduated.

Kipnis worked in broadcasting for several years programming classical music, and he was art and editorial director for Westminster Records for five years. Later he wrote reviews for the New York Herald-Tribune.

He made records with groups for a while, then made his solo debut in 1962. His first solo record came out in 1964 and he has 16 solo LP's now, with two to be recorded in May.

"I was nominated for a Grammy Award this year; they announced the winners a couple of days ago, but there is so little interest in classical music that they didn't even announce the classical music winners. I don't know if I won it or not," Kipnis said.

Kipnis is professor of music at Fairfield University. He travels five weeks per term and has toured Europe three times, twice on a Rockefeller Foundation grant and once on his own. He spent November and December touring Australia.

"I can't convince everyone that classical music is good, but it is just a matter of exposure. The more they hear it, the more they like it," Kipnis said.



from the audience, giving off-the-cuff answers to questions. Kipnis covered harpsichord technique, the construction of the instrument and even rattled off an impromptu history lesson.

"I started talking to audiences by accident," Kipnis said. "People don't expect you to talk at a classical music concert, but I just did it once, and everyone liked it so much that I've done it ever since."

Kipnis has been performing in dormitories and in lounges where students live-in order to better facilitate his informal approach and to "bring classical music to the people that count-the younger generation."

"There are a lot of ordinary people that, if exposed to classical music, could be good audiences. College kids stay away unless one makes a special effort to accomodate them." he said. Harpsichord is an art form, just like the movies.

Kipnis played piano for years, but finds it difficult to play both instruments because the keys are further apart on the piano, and the piano has a completely different touch than the harpsichord.

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