

WFMT syndicates Baroque series

By John von Rhein
Music critic

The rest of the country at last will be able to hear what Chicago audiences have been shouting about. Music of the Baroque and WFMT [98.7 FM] have entered an agreement whereby the radio station will syndicate tapes of the ensemble's concert performances for nationwide broadcast, starting this fall.

The initial series of broadcasts is scheduled to run for 13 weeks beginning in October. Locally, the two-hour programs, all of them conducted by music director Thomas Wikman, have been set to air at 8 p.m. Fridays.

The first program, Oct. 3, will be a complete performance of Monteverdi's "Vespers of 1610," taped in spring, 1983. Later broadcasts in the series will include Bach cantatas and the Orchestral Suite No. 2, Handel's "Athaliah" and orchestral works from the 17th and 18th Centuries.

The idea of a Music of the Baroque radio series originated some three years ago with Lucille Ollendorff, the organization's president and general manager, who succeeded in getting Ray Nordstrand, WFMT president, interested in distributing the programs across the country.

Nordstrand said that WFMT will offer the series to more than 300 radio stations and expects that 100-200 stations will agree to purchase the series. Although no sponsor has yet been engaged, he said "we fully expect the underwriting to come through. If we don't get it, we will still go ahead with the se-

Music notes

ries."

"We think the rest of the country will be very excited about these broadcasts," Nordstrand added. "It's a kind of music that is underrepresented on radio and thus will fill a real programming gap. We believe the series will reflect well on what is going on in Chicago music."

Music of the Baroque also has announced the programs for its 1986-87 main series and cantata series. The concerts will be given under Wikman's direction at various city and suburban churches.

The 16th season will begin in late October with Bach's B-Minor Mass. The annual holiday program in mid-December will hold brass and choral music of the 16th and 17th Centuries. Orchestral works by Mozart, Pachelbel and others make up the January, 1987, program, to be followed in March by sacred and secular choral music of Mozart and Handel. The main season will conclude in late May and early June with Handel's oratorio "L'Allegro, Il Penseroso ed il Moderato."

The 1987 cantata series has added a second location, Alice Millar Chapel on the Evanston campus of Northwestern University, to the present concert venue, Notre Dame Church, 1335 W. Flournoy St. Bach's secular cantata "Phoebus and Pan" is the featured work on the February opener, to be followed by more Bach cantatas in March and May. For season ticket information, call 461-9541.

KARAJAN RETURNS: The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, last heard in Chicago in November, 1976, will present an all-Richard Strauss concert Oct. 20 at Orchestra Hall under auspices of the Orchestral Association. Music director Herbert von Karajan, also absent from the city for a decade, will conduct "Metamorphosen" [Study for 23 Solo Strings] and "Ein Heldenleben."

As one might expect for a Karajan appearance, tickets are being scaled to the skies. Top price is \$100 for a box seat; lowest is \$15 for seats in the gallery.

Orchestra Hall has announced two other special concerts taking place this year.

Georg Solti will conduct his Chicago Symphony in an extra performance of the Beethoven Ninth Symphony, Sept. 24, to benefit the musicians' pension fund. The work is also set for the opening week of subscription concerts Sept. 25-27.

Zubin Mehta, music director of the New York Philharmonic, will make his CSO podium debut Dec. 1, when he will conduct the two Brahms piano concertos with Daniel Barenboim as soloist.

WFMT-FM will broadcast "Sousa at the Symphony" live from Grant Park's Petrillo Music Shell at 8 p.m. July 3. Presiding over the Independence Day concert will be Keith Brion, portraying bandmaster John Philip Sousa. The concert will be broadcast live via satellite to commercial and noncommercial radio stations across the country, in addition to the 357 U.S. cities that receive WFMT on cable.