

JUNE BUGS

Young composers are grounded in the past

By **THOMAS PUTNAM**
News Contributing Reviewer

HERE THE great modern century is coming toward its close, and young composers are faced with, what, the problem of making something new?

These young composers seemed on good terms with the past. The program was often vibrant and challenging, but not violent or threatening.

There were works for one or two players, and at the end of the program there were big ensemble pieces.

The biggest sounding piece, actually, was a quintet of English horn, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn and cello. This was Piotr Grella-Mozejko's wonderful-sounding "Kyrie." It is notable for its strikingly consonant two-part writing — English horn and bassoon, double-stop cello, horn and bass clarinet. The piece changes seamlessly. Timbres are rich, pulsing. There is mystery in "Kyrie," and not a great complexity. Eric Ona was the conductor of this and the other ensemble pieces. "Kyrie" sounded like the hit of the evening with the audience, too.

Michelle Green's sextet, "Proposition 6," for flute, clarinet, bassoon, horn, violin, and cello, had a somewhat strenuous appearance. Its brooding character came largely from the sound of the bass clarinet; its heroism was in the sound of the trumpeting horn.

The program closer was Ketty

Nez's "Affinities," for flute, clarinet, two violins, viola, and cello. Somewhat impressionistic, the piece is cleverly scored, with mixtures of string textures (bowings and pluckings). Subtlety is a virtue here; we are not knocked on the head by this music of happy and gentle complexities.

What did certainly knock us on the head was the blast that announces Donald Erb's "Diversion for Two" (1965). Erb is on the June in Buffalo faculty, one of the several big-time composers here for the week. The performers who served him well were Ryan Anthony, trumpet, and Kirk Brundage, percussion. The music starts with a blast, but goes on to carve a carefully melded course.

Sally Lamb's Four Pieces for Violin and Piano, played by Curtis Macomber, violin, and Kathleen Supove, piano, is music of rigorous disjunction.

Dorothy Hindman's solo piano piece "Forward Looking Back" was given a commanding performance by Marc Couroux. This is music of terrific romantic gesture. Particularly attractive was a dreamy mood movement, a kind of improvisation for a night in the city.

"Cadre" by Ock Mi Han for viola and cello was rather unpleasant to hear — music of wiry strands, close and murky dissonance, unsettling glissandos.

Ryan Anthony played Robert Pound's solo trumpet piece, "Post-Jurisimprudence Conferentiality," music of neo-classic clarity, and he made it sound splendid.

CONCERT

June in Buffalo

One in a series of programs of new compositions.

Works of Robert Pound, Ock Mi Han, Dorothy Hindman, Piotr Grella-Mozejko, Michelle Green, Ketty Nez, Sally Lamb.

Thursday night in Baird Recital Hall, University of Buffalo's North Campus.