

The Beat goes on for songweaver Henry Mancini

by SENA TAYLOR
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It was a day for families and an evening to follow, for those who attended the Utah Symphony's first Deer Valley concert July 4.

Star of the show was musical great Henry Mancini, a man with a timeless quality about him that quickly captured the attentions of young and old alike Saturday evening.

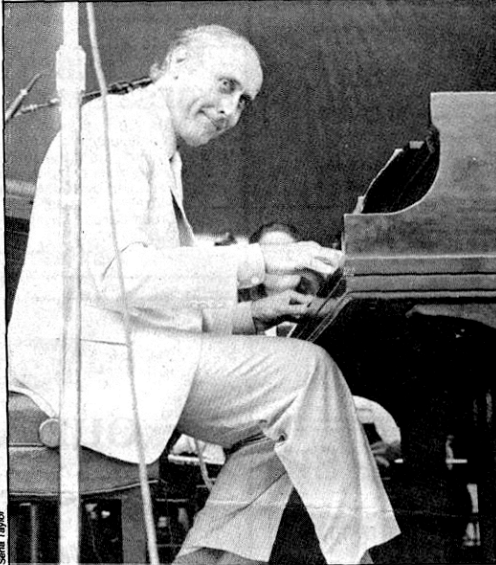
The guest conductor was in Utah to lead the symphony for three concerts, beginning July 3 in Symphony Hall and ending Sunday afternoon at Snowbird. The orchestra ably performed musical selections that included his own writings and others, beginning with a piece he put together for the Boston Pops to commemorate its 100th anniversary. Entitled, "Overture to a Pops Concert," it made the 3,200-person crowd seated on the slopes of Deer Valley quickly show its delight for the superstar composer/conductor with a welcome round of applause.

Mancini displayed his ability to please the mixture of concert-goers with a variety of selections, resounding his individual style that has spanned the musical spectrum from jazz to Latin, country western to big band, marchtime and ragtime. Refusing to stagnate, Mancini has kept up with the ever-shifting musical scene, saying, "The milk of sacred cows has a way of turning sour."

Mancini chuckled at the crowd throughout the concert, noting the casual atmosphere of the "natural" concert hall — a casualness that even the concert-goers exhibited. Children tried to crawl up to him, and many thought it was no big deal to simply walk in between the audience and stage. At one point, Mancini singled out a middle-aged listener passing by for a sip of his beer — a request granted at once.

But the laid-back feeling did not seem to bother this man whose many honors have included four Oscars and 20 Grammy awards for his television and film work, and doctorates from several colleges including Duquesne University and the California Institute of the Arts.

The mood of the day had been light for everyone, and the music fit that feeling. From the film "A Fine Mess," Mancini directed the sym-



Mancini was a crowd pleaser in the symphony's opening concert at Deer Valley.

phony to "Stan and Ollie," a piece he wrote. Three television themes of his then followed, to "Hotel," "Newhart" and "Remington Steele."

Mancini also led the symphony to three more film themes: "Moment to Moment," "Two for the Road" and "Sunflower."

Up to this time the concert had been a mixture of songs directed to the older folk, with the exception of the television movie themes, which most everyone knew. But Mancini put one over on the crowd with a Sternberg remake, "Walk Like an Egyptian," just made popular by the rock group The Bangles. To this selection, the overwhelming tone of humming came from younger throats.

Then back to the popular past the symphony went, playing a medley of songs creating a portrait of famed conductor Arthur Fiedler. Most were written by Anderson: "Fiddle Faddle," "Blue Tango," "Syn-

copated Clock" and "Trumpeter's Lullaby." But the finishing touch to the medley was Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," a fitting touch to the day's commemoration.

But that wasn't the end of the concert, only the first half, giving concert-goers a chance to close up their picnic baskets for part two. They then settled into "Charade" by Mancini, and his theme from the movie "Lifeforce," a recent film he pointed out was a real loser. Another theme was played, written by Barry to "Out of Africa." Following that the children in the audience were once again humored, this time with the main title to the Disney movie "The Great Mouse Detective," a Mancini composition.

The crowd reacted to the symphony concert like it later reacted to the firecrackers lit nearby. Listeners oohed, aahed and even sang out to the top hits of Mancini's fame such as "The Pink Panther" and "Peter Gunn." Those were the



Deer Valley seems to have hit upon the perfect summer complement for their winter resort.

"big blasts" of the evening. But the audience seemed to enjoy the in-between quiet times, especially when Mancini seated himself to the piano at center stage and played along with the orchestra. This was perhaps best expressed in the variety of melodies he wrote to accompany the movie "The Thorn Birds," as the orchestra played its theme, and the music that accompanied portions of the movie such as the arrival at the Vatican, "Meggie's Theme" and "It's Shearing You're Hearing."

Mancini introduced the five soloists that travel with him to add their talents to the orchestras they visit. They included Jack Gilfooy on drums, Cecil Welch on trumpet, Jim Johnson on bass, and Michael Clinco on guitar. A saxophone player named Don Menza was perhaps the most notable of the soloists, dueling it out with Mancini the pianist and the rest of the orchestra to "The Pink Panther."

Not to be missed concluding the concert were some of Mancini's ballads, which appropriately ended the evening. He took the tempo down

with "Life in a Looking Glass," to which he was a solo pianist with the orchestra, followed by the theme from the movie "10," "Crazy World" from the movie "Victor/Victoria," "Mr. Lucky" and the "Days of Wine and Roses."

It was actually at this point in the evening that Mancini took the swig of beer from the audience member. Not yet finished with his conducting duties for the evening, he asked the audience point blank: "Now how am I supposed to do 'Moon River' after that?" But he seemed to have no problem.

That popular ballad was last on the list of the evening's selections, but the enthusiasm of the crowd kept the orchestra on stage with two encores of "The Stripper."

So, it was a pleased audience that left the first of the symphony's Deer Valley concerts, with some exiting as the fireworks were displayed, but most waiting and watching before journeying home.

The Utah Symphony is set to complete a roster of Deer Valley concerts in its summer series that includes a program of the great romantics, including Wagner,

Mendelssohn, Strauss and Bizet on July 11. A July 17 concert will feature "The Fiedler Tradition," with Newton Wayland conducting. That concert will include Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," Liszt/Mueller's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2," Shostakovich's "Festival Overture," and an arrangement by Wayland that features selections from *The Symphonic Beatles Band Book*.

A Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto will be held July 25, and "The Southwestern Experience," will play Aug. 1. That concert will present dance episodes from Copland's "Rodeo," Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite," and some of Michael Martin Murphy's hits. This concert will be a special feature of the Park City Art festival.

The last summer concert at Deer Valley will be Aug. 8, featuring the "1812 Overture" by Tchaikovsky. Mountain Men of the Wasatch will provide the cannon for the concert. Also to be presented at that concert will be Sibelius' "Finlandia," Gershwin's overture to "Girl Crazy," and Copland's Old American Songs.