



Basmadjian captivates audience

By Ann Haywood

From the opening notes of THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER to the closing strains of the encores of a Toccato and a Fugue the Ramona audience of approximately 400 was captivated by the exciting organ playing of Aram Basmadjian. The Ramona Community Concert took place on March 4 at the Performing Arts Center.

Basmadjian performed beautifully. Various composers such as George Frederic Handel's Concerto in F Major, Johann Sebastian Bach's Trio Sonata IV in E Minor, which was composed for his children was the beginning of a master of his instrument. The lovely Adagio Contabile by Bach and the powerful Roulade by Seth Bingham were warmly received by the Ramona audience. Aram explained the workings of the huge organ with its many keyboards and pulls and technical assists. His commentary was witty and amusing.

A "behind the scenes" story was told to me by Marlene Robershaw, President ...The 1200 Lb. Allen Tour Organ was a feat of choreography, skill and the knowledge that

Woody Kirkman possessed to get the massive instrument on the stage at the Olive Peirce Middle School. When it became evident that the organ would not make the passage at the backstage ramp, Woody, from Woodward's Hardware Store on Main Street, came to the rescue with the "yellow forklift" and gently set it on the stage.

After the intermission the Louis Vierne Scherzo filled the auditorium with sounds of bubbling brooks and waterfalls for delightful listening. This was followed by the traditional "Danny Boy" and the dramatic Prelude Fugue in C Minor by Marcel Dupre. Basmadjian received a standing ovation.

Comments by various people in the audience ranged from "remarkable," "his feet literally danced on the pedals," "his fingers moved so fast I couldn't keep up with his movements," to one word - he is a "genius!"

The next concert will take place on April 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center. Check the article on CONNIE JONES AND THE CRESCENT CITY JAZZ BAND, which appears in this issue of the newspaper.