

WOMAN CONDUCTOR PRESENTS OWN MUSIC

Arlen, Walter

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Among women in music, the great majority are singers. Fewer are pianists, and very few play other instruments. Women conductors and composers are practically nonexistent.

But there are always exceptions. One of these is Ethel Leginska who conducted a program of her own compositions in Wilshire Ebell Theater Thursday night.

For the occasion, Miss Leginska had assembled a 26-piece chamber ensemble containing about a dozen key members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and other fine performers, and as soloists Katharine Hilgenberg, contralto;

Kristina Kohler, soprano, and Steve Stagner, tenor.

Miss Leginska is also a pianist, and it was her work at the keyboard that appeared the most acceptable. Her conducting was not exactly inspired. But since she is said to be 77 years old, all one could do at that was to admire the energy and spryness she displayed.

As a composer, Miss Leginska was prolific indeed. The program contained what must have been a lifetime of music—or so it seemed—though we suspect there is much more that she didn't happen to have with her.

For the record, here is what the evening had in store: "From a Life" for 11

instruments; 15 songs with piano or chamber orchestra; Four Poems (after Tagore) for string quartet; "Triptych" for 11 instruments, and two duets from the opera "The Rose and the Ring." And there were encores, too.

The instrumental pieces were quite substantial in length. In style, they were heavily chromatic and their form was not always clear.

Some of the vocal pieces, particularly the cycle of six Nursery Rhymes, were in a different idiom altogether and showed a certain charm at least if not a great deal of professionalism.

WALTER ARLEN.