



Striking a familiar pose is Collette Daboval.

Gretchen Newburger has toured Europe as a guest soloist and recently appeared with the London Festival Ballet. Nevertheless, many talented individuals remain in the Crescent City to share their expertise with local fans. Miss Minnette L. Starts and Miss Beverly A. Trask, as two examples, have danced across many of the city's finest stages, appearing in numerous musical and dance productions. In addition, Starts (who appeared in the Junior Philharmonic's premier performance in 1948 and currently serves as the group's president) and Trask (who was most recently cast as Roxie Hart in the Tulane Summer Lyric's production of "Chicago" last July) have been instrumental in the development of the Newcomb Dance Department.

Over one thousand youngsters have performed with this group since its inception after World War II. Many of these performers are from the New Orleans area (including Tulane, Loyola, and UNO students), but an occasional musician hails from Baton Rouge, Shreveport, and even Houston. "The beauty of the organiza-

tion," cites Paolini, "is that the performer develops pride in himself and in his work. It gives me a tremendous amount of pleasure to be a part of this opportunity for our young people." Mrs. William Dean, a past Junior Philharmonic pianist whose daughter and granddaughter have also joined the ranks, agrees. "We give these youngsters the support and encouragement to further their studies in the performing arts," she states. Dean also added that many performers, like herself, remain active within the framework of the organization and glory in the performances of their children.

Dean, who is presently the group's Program Chairman, cites the organization's structure as the key to its longevity and success. With four performances each year—October, December, February, and May—and rigorous audition requirements, the participants demonstrate a great deal of dedication and commitment to the field of performing arts. Because of the nature of the group, the performers practice individually until the morning of the concert, when the entire group is assembled for a run-through rehearsal. Paolini believes that the participants "develop poise as well as responsibility" because of this format.

Each hour-long concert, three of which are scheduled on Saturday mornings, with

the fourth occurring on a Friday night, offers a balanced program of vocal, instrumental, and dance performances. The group's 185th concert will take place on February 18 at 10:45 a.m. at Tulane's Dixon Hall. The featured performing artists will be twelve year-old Collette Daboval of New Orleans (dance); Becky Kahl, a fifteen year-old from Slidell (piano); Metairie resident Aimee Boyle, eighteen (piano); and eighteen year-old David Chang of Baton Rouge (violin). As always, the concert is free and the public is encouraged to attend.

Almost immediately following the February performance, auditions for the 1989-90 Junior Philharmonic season will be held April 28. Interested musicians and dancers can obtain a list of audition requirements and an application form by contacting either Mrs. Gilbert Paolini at 866-0315 or Mrs. William Dean at 895-7253.

For forty years, the Junior Philharmonic Society of New Orleans has enriched the lives of South Louisiana's residents with the music and the dance of the area's youngsters. By promoting this appreciation of the performing arts, the Junior Philharmonic has perpetuated one of New Orleans' favorite traditions—the love of music. □

◆ by Leslie Holzmark, Assistant Editor



Junior Philharmonic members Leonard Lionnet, Sissy Vallas, Hsaio-Wun Chen, and Lorraine Melito.