

Swiss church

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A BEAUTIFUL CONCERT IN THE SWISS CHURCH AT ENDELL STREET

Twenty youths born between 1940 and 1955, most of them music students, two teachers, a few secretaries and a housewife came to perform works by Bach, Handel, Telemann and Albinoni at the Swiss Church. The "Frenckendorf Kammer Ensemble" had come to perform under the auspices of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique. Their journey to London had led them to St. Georges Church, Hanover Square, to St. Paul's of Wilton Place and to St. Martin-in-the-Fields. But they said that their best concert was the one given at the Swiss Church. Apparently, it is also where they reaped the most from the collection bag. They made £30.

They began with the Sinfonia in A major for strings and the whole assembly vibrated with such sweet Italian melodies and the hum of the violins. The sixty members present (about thirty of them from the N.S.H.) were given the permission to applaud, although they were in a church, and did so without inhibition. The next piece was a viola concerto in G by Telemann. The soloist was Conrad Zwicky, who was also the group's conductor. The viola is a rare instrument and it was a new experience to listen to its sad and mellow sound from so close in the dry acoustics of the Swiss Church.

There was a short interval following which we listened to Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor. The soloist was a young girl from Tokyo, now studying with Hansheinz Schneeberger in Basle, called Hisayo Nagai. She played flaw-

lessly, except perhaps during the last movement, which is an allegro and calls for considerable virtuosity. I had the feeling that the understanding between her and the orchestra was being lost and that the conductor was not quite in control of the situation. But as this happened on the final beats of the concerto, little harm was done. The performance ended with Handel's Concerto Grosso in G minor. The young orchestra then gratified us with two encores. They left the church, beaming with their rosy Swiss faces, put their instruments inside a hired van, and left for a party at the pizzeria next door.

ANOTHER HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL CONCERT

Flute and harpsichord together is not a particularly frequent combination. On 8th March at the Wigmore Hall we heard just that. The Swiss flautist Peter-Lukas Graf and the Swiss harpsichordist Jörg Ewald Dähler got together and performed sonatas for flute and harpsichord by Johann Sebastian Bach and his son Johann Christian Bach. Peter-Lukas Graf also played a fantastic but esoteric "Sequenza for flute solo" and got all the wrong notes right. The harpsichordist performed a few pieces in solo, among them the delightful "Variation on an old drinking song" of Hugo Distler. The Daily Telegraph said that the duo "set a standard of musicianly excellence which threw into shade much of today's artists' shortcomings in balance and execution". The Wigmore Hall was fairly full and the Swiss were present in strength. The number of compatriots who turn up on such occasions can be surprising.

The next time you chance to go to the Swiss Centre, perhaps note that a record by Peter-Lukas Graf and Jörg Ewald Dähler is on sale at the kiosk. It is a beautiful stereo recording of works by Mozart, Bach, Quantz and Handel.

THE MAYOR OF LUCERNE COMES TO LONDON

The Stadtpräsident of Lucerne and Mrs. H. R. Meyer, the Councillor of the town and his lady, Mrs. Kurzmeyer, spent a busy and glamorous three days in London. Relying entirely on the printed programme of the Corporation of London, which played hosts to these eminent Swiss civil servants, the story of these three days runs as follows:

The Mayor (and his suite) arrived at London Airport on Tuesday afternoon, 7th April, at 4.20 p.m. They were driven like VIPs straight to Mansion House, where they were met by the Lord Mayor's private secretary, who took them to meet the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. After an informal conversation which lasted about one and a half hours, they left Mansion House for the Innholders Hall, where they were to attend the Innholders Company Dinner.

There they were met by the Aldermanic Sheriff and Lady Mais and by Col. Harvey-Kelley. They were shown the Aldermanic and Lord Mayor's Rolls.

The next day, they left Mansion House for the Central Criminal Court to watch the ceremony in which the Lord Mayor greets Her Majesty's Judges at 10.10 a.m. They then visited the Old Bailey. At 11.20 the party was at Buckingham Palace to sign the visit-

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