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Colin Farmer reports from Montreux

SOME 700 star television producers and personalities from more than 30 countries are converging on Switzerland this month for the world's foremost festival in the field of TV light entertainment – the Golden Rose of Montreux.

First started in the picturesque lakeside resort 21 years ago, this competitive festival is co-organised annually by the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation and the Montreux Tourist Office. The aim of the festival is to “promote a better knowledge of light entertainment programmes and to encourage the creation of original works”.

General Secretary of the Golden Rose since its launching in 1961 has been SBC's Frank R. Tappolet. He recalls: “The first year we said that if we had 11 programmes entered we would risk running the festival for a second year. We had 13 entries. Now we have over 40 programmes from more than 30 countries. The 1961 festival lasted for only five days – this year's event will run for almost double that time.

“The most remarkable feature over the years? Besides the increasing international interest in the Golden Rose, I would say the actual evolution of television light entertainment.

“When the festival was first held all the programmes were in black and white. And most of the shows – even the ones that took top prizes – were little more than a series of individual items strung together in a not very imaginative way.

“Then came colour and the evolution in electronics. Now



The winner of the first Golden Rose of Montreux in 1961 – the BBC's Black and White Minstrel Show

Small screen festival with the big name

we're seeing technical and artistic brilliance which was totally unthinkable only 20 years ago.”

Every year the Golden Rose attracts programmes from every continent. Over the past two decades participating nations

have ranged geographically from Belgium to Brazil, Malaysia to Mexico, Pakistan to Poland, and from Norway to Nigeria.

Seven countries – West Germany, East Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Britain and Switzerland – have competed in every Golden Rose. The United States and the Soviet Union have also been among the most regular participants.

Of the 40 nations which have competed since 1961, 18 have shared the 94 prizes awarded to date. Nineteen awards have been won by Britain, 10 each by Czechoslovakia and Norway, seven by the United States, and five each by France, Spain, Italy, Austria, the Netherlands and

Switzerland. By far the most successful broadcasting organization has been the British Broadcasting Corporation with 13 prizewinning programmes.

The Swiss Broadcasting Corporation is this year expected to enter two programmes – as are the BBC and ITV (London Weekend and Southern).

The contest is divided into three categories – one for musical programmes, one for humorous programmes, and another for programmes characterised by a search for new forms of revealing new trends.

The International Jury awards a Silver Rose, plus a cash prize of Sfr 10,000. In addition a Press Prize is awarded by a jury of accredited journalists.



Frank Tappolet, general secretary of the Golden Rose of Montreux ... “an evolution in artistry and electronics”.