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Dimitri ... a clown in the greatest tradition

THE celebrated Swiss mime artist, Dimitri, is to give six performances at the London Mime Festival at the Shaw Theatre this month.

Born in 1935 at Ascona in the Ticino, he did his artistic training in Paris at the Etienne Decroux school of pantomime and later became a member of the Marcel Marceau troupe. He did his circus training with the clown Maise.

He gave the first performance of his solo programme in his home town of Ascona, since when he has appeared in most of the world's capitals.

In 1971 he opened his own theatre in Verscio, in the Ticino, and four years later founded a

theatre school there. Major awards he has received have included the Grock Prize (named after Switzerland's greatest clown), the Silver Mask and the Hans Reinhart Ring.

Marcel Marceau wrote of his former pupil: "Il y a chez Dimitri une fraîcheur naïve, une simplicité et l'âme du poète. Il a l'étoffe d'un grand, et sa jeunesse et sa persévérance lui ouvriront de grandes voies. Clown-musicien. Dimitri nous livre son cœur, fait

vivre les objets réels comme des personnages de légende.

"Dans les projecteurs il apparaît avec son visage poétique et écarquillé comme une grande étoile. Dimitri, clown d'Ascona, nous vous regardons avec notre âme".

And another international artist who knows him well, Yehudi Menuhin, wrote: "Dimitri is a clown in the very greatest tradition, a clown who can move one from tears to laughter in a

split second and without uttering a word.

"He knows our deepest sorrows and our greatest elations through his own, and because he has compassion. Whether it is a five year old or an eighty year old, he touches them all in the same way.

"A wonderful musician, a remarkable acrobat, a juggler, and above all an artist, a human being who remakes us in the image of a child".





Kentner's pupil visits Britain

THE Bernese pianist, Christine Harnisch, who gives a recital at the Purcell Room, London, on January 3, did part of her musical training in London with the celebrated Louis Kentner.

She has since given recitals and appeared with orchestras and chamber music ensembles in Switzerland, France and Austria, and given numerous performances on the radio. This

month's recital is, however, her first professional appearance in England. This year Miss Harnisch will make her first LP, which will introduce her talent to a much wider audience.

IN a tribute to the Swiss composer Bernard Reichel, a performance of his "Gloria" was held in King's College Chapel, Taunton, last month given by the Somerset Opera Group, the Taunton Choral Society and the Somerset County Orchestra.

Over the last 12 months many concerts of his music have been held in Switzerland in celebration of his 80th year.

Bernard Reichel has written more than 200 works and his compositions are very well known in Switzerland and Germany, although not in Britain.

Coming events

Christine Harnisch, piano, gives a recital of works by Scarlatti, Beethoven, Bartok, Liszt and Chopin:

Sunday, January 3, 7pm
Purcell Rooms, London.

Tamas Vasary conducts the Northern Sinfonia of England in the following concerts:

Wednesday, January 20, 7.30pm St Cuthberts Church, Carlisle (works by Haydn, Kodaly, Haba and Medelssohn).

Thursday, January 21, 7.45pm
Newcastle City Hall (same programme).

Friday, January 22, 7.45pm
Queen Elizabeth Hall, London (same programme).

Charles Dutoit conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the following concerts:

Thursday, January 21, 7.30pm
Royal Albert Hall (works by Beethoven and Mendelssohn).

Friday, January 29, 7.45pm
Royal Albert Hall and February 5 (works by Beethoven and Rachmaninov).

Charles Dobler, piano, is the soloist in "The Magic Mountain" by John Hopkins in a concert with the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra.

Saturday, January 23, 8pm,
The Guildhall, Cambridge.

Dimitri, mime, performs in the London Mime Festival:

Thursday, January 14 7pm,
Shaw Theatre, London.

Friday and Saturday, January 15 and 16, 7.30pm,
Shaw Theatre, London.

Monday to Wednesday, January 18 to 20, 7.30pm,
Shaw Theatre, London.