

The Millennium year Proms at St Jude's



Suburb musicians Robert Max and Joan Atherton



Viva Musica at Alyth Gardens



"Most successful yet, attracting large audiences."

The Millennium year Proms at St Jude's was the most successful yet attracting large audiences and putting on a really enjoyable series of both lunchtime and evening concerts that made an enormous contribution to the social and cultural life of the Suburb. More than £8000 was raised for the Dame Henrietta Barnett Fund and the Organ Appeal.

Susie Gregson, who helped create the Proms eight years ago said "this has been the best year ever, it's a lot of work for the committee and all our helpers. I would particularly like to thank

our principal sponsors the Residents Association, the Trust, Godfrey & Barr, Chase & Partners, White Young Green and especially the Suburb audiences for supporting us so generously."



Some members of the Proms committee, Simon Abbott, John Wheeler, Susie Gregson, Richard Clegg, and Rev Alan Walker with Robert Max who conducted the first concert.



Alon Goldstein and Miriam Honeyball

The Lunchtime Proms

What could be nicer than a one-hour concert at lunchtime? Especially when what is on offer is so good. The standard of performance was very high, and it has good to see that each concert was better attended this year. The pianist, Alan Goldstein, has given recitals throughout the United States and Europe - including the Purcell Room. Of special interest was his playing of Janacek's sonata 'From the Street' and 'Canto' by Radzynski, which displayed his fine touch.

Absolutely stunning was the young flautist, Zoë Allen, still in her first A-level year at Henrietta Barnett School, whose programme included the lovely 'Undine Sonata' by Reineck and Bozza's 'Image'.

She was accompanied by Mark Fielding, who is a member of the ensemble Camerada, which focuses on promoting new music. The acoustic at St Jude's is wonderful for the flute and piano, which made this recital sheer delight.

A violin and organ recital sounded a strange combination, but in hands of the violinist, Anete Graudina-Jeannet, and the organist, Andrew McCrea, it made a fascinating hour. Two works by Rhinberger and one by Svendsen were encased in the better known 'Benedictus' by Lloyd-Webber and the ever-popular 'Adagio' by Albinoni. Another artist from Latvia was the cellist, Kristine Blaumane, who produced a lovely sound in Debussy's 'Sonata'. She was accompanied by Magrit Tohver, whose piano solo by Scriabin was especially interesting. Hopefully in future years the reputation of these recitals will draw greater audiences. Another bonus is that they are free - you pay what you can afford. What a bargain!

LEONIE STEPHEN

At the Proms

A small but appreciative audience had the pleasure of hearing three extremely talented performers on Monday June 12, when the Proms moved to the attractive hall at the Alyth Synagogue with its beautiful stained glass windows and wall hangings.

Viva Musica - Anete Graudina-Jeannet (violin) Judith Brearley (cello) and Carol Kohn (piano) - presented a programme which showed off their versatility.

Judith Brearley opened the concert with three movements from J S Bach's unaccompanied Cello Suite no.3 in C major; a brave move to open a concert with a solo cello, but her fine playing was equal to the occasion.

Beethoven's Violin and Piano Sonata (op. 12 no. 2) was followed by a popular selection of music by Kreisler for solo violin and piano and Gabriel Fauré's Après un Rêve. Bourrée by a (to me) unknown composer, W H Squire, was an unexpected treat and completed the first half of the programme.

After the interval came some spirited playing of Dvorak's 'Dumky' Trio in E minor, op. 90. A stirring work, coloured with the unmistakable rhythms and melodic patterns of Czech folk music, it made a memorable end to the concert.

Last Night of the Proms

The final concert on Saturday June 17 was provided by the Covent Garden Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Rupert Bawden, with the Festival Choir - combined choirs of St Jude's, Alyth Choral Society and the Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church - directed by Vivienne Bellos.

The orchestra, although non-professional, is one of the leaders in its field, with a repertoire ranging from ancient to modern - Bach to Villa-Lobos.

Humperdinck's lively Hansel and Gretel Prelude opened the concert, followed by Dvorak's Symphony no.8 in G, which once



Jazz singer Stacey Kent with Rev Alan Walker.



Alon Goldstein kept the pupils of Annemount enthralled.

again showed the influence of his native country's folk music on the composer.

For me, the high spot of the second half was the soprano Grace Davidson, soloist in Mozart's glorious Exultate Jubilate KV 165, backed by the choir and orchestra. Her voice, pure and clear as a bell, was an absolute joy to hear.

The concert ended in traditional style with Sir Henry Wood's Fantasia on British Sea

Songs and Elgar's pomp and Circumstance March No.1.

Complete with flag waving and audience participation, it inevitably invited comparison with the real thing, but that is in a class of its own. With so much musical talent in the area, perhaps we can expect a specially composed rousing ending for the last night of the Proms at St Jude's next year.

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