

Chance to shine

By IFAN PAYNE

THROUGH the medium of their recordings the National Youth Orchestra of Wales have gained a justly deserved international reputation for their fine performances of contemporary Welsh music.

In contrast to those adventurous works, the concert given by the orchestra at St David's Hall, Cardiff, last night, was guaranteed to tickle the fancy of every ear and to provide the orchestra with an opportunity to impress the audience with its virtuosity.

For the first half of the concert two sets of works gave young soloists a

REVIEWS

chance to shine and these were framed by three works which provided a platform for the orchestra to display its brilliance.

Vivaldi's *Concerto in E Minor for Four Violins* provided the showcase for four excellent young violin soloists, who included Elenid Owen, this year's winner of the Welsh Young Musician of the Year Award.

Philip Lloyd-Evans was the even and attractively-voiced baritone soloist in music by Mendelssohn, Vaughan Thomas and Mozart.

Where the three orchestral works were concerned it was interesting to note

how little stylistic variation there is in the 100 years that span Musorgsky's *Night on the Bare Mountain*, Bliss's underrated and effective *Checkmate* and Gareth Wood's Coplandesque *Suffolk Punch*.

In all of these the orchestras, kept on a tight reign by Arthur Davison, played with security and panache.

For the second half the orchestra performed Sibelius's *Symphony No 1*, which is a substantial piece of music filled with representations of complex and emotions.

A special note of thanks to Arthur Davison for not succumbing to the temptation for an encore which would have undone the excellent care which went into the programming.