

**Welsh Night at the Proms,  
St David's Hall, Cardiff**

# The fine-spun tones were enchanting

BY IFAN PAYNE

## REVIEW

TO JUDGE from the thronging activity-filled foyer and the Come To Britain Award the Welsh Proms is certainly a successful marketing exercise.

Inside the foyer there are modern jazz groups, while outside St David's Hall under the natural band shell of the entrance porch ensembles play jazz for brass.

On Tuesday the fine sound of the South Glamorgan Youth Band could be heard and on Wednesday evening it was the turn of the excellent Tower Brass, for me one of the best brass ensembles in Cardiff.

Incidentally, Tower Brass can often be heard for free, busking in the Hayes on a weekend.

Meanwhile, inside the auditorium during this Wednesday's Welsh Night the ear was enchanted by the fine-spun tone of the Cardiff Polyphonic Choir, especially in Mozart's *Ave Verum Corpus* and in Mansel Thomas' Elgarian *Go Song Of Mine? Cennin Aur*.

Tenor Arthur Davies was also attractive in his singing of *M'apari* but

his essentially lyric voice was not heard at its best during the vocally inappropriately heavier demands made by his other selections.

And what of the male voice choirs?

In the film *Casablanca*, you will recall, the police rounded up the "usual suspects."

In Wales male voice choruses sing through "the usual favourites."

And the full-throated *bloedd* of the combined Llanelli and Dunvant male voice choirs did precisely this to the equally usual considerable effect.

I cannot comment on the playing of the Philharmonia Orchestra under their associate conductor Owain Arwel Hughes other than to say that the location of my seat in the hall resulted in a bass and timpani-dominated orchestral balance of which the most noticeable aspect was the sound of the trumpet echoing strongly off the adjacent balcony front and flapping me about the ears. One up to the brass.