

It's nicely blended

By IFAN PAYNE

HAD Sir Michael Tippett only ever composed that overwhelmingly emotional work, *A Child Of Our Time*, he would have remained forgotten.

As it is, youthful as ever, he has reached the age of 80 and the celebrations came to Cardiff with the composer himself leading the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra at St David's Hall last night in a performance of his *Ritual Dances from The Midsummer Marriage*.

For all the idiosyncratic post-impressionism of the dances the music, as in so much of his work, is stylistically knotty and awkward.

REVIEW

However, Sir Michael wove the orchestra together in a tonally full-bodied performance of sturdy brilliance, which contained a nicely-blended trio of solo violins and some enchanting muted horn playing.

From old age to youth. Thirty-two-year-old Jacek Kasprzyk took over the baton to lead both the orchestra and the 34-year-old pianist Christian Zacharias in a performance of Brahms' *Piano Concerto No 2*.

I had been impressed with Zacharias's award-winning debut recording

and for a period of time when he won the 1983 Van Cliburn Competition he was constantly in the news. Thus it was a pleasure to hear him in person and his explosive second entry proclaimed that we were in for an interesting performance.

Power

Zacharias's piano-playing is big-toned and rock solid and he assailed a frontal attack on the Concerto. By midway through the second movement he had forced the orchestra and Kasprzyk out of tiptoeing around the music and, if only for the sake of self-preservation, they began to match the pianist's dynamism. From there on the performance continued in triumphal style.

The young Mr Zacharias lacks neither musical guts nor power and he has the fire of youth in his fingers.

On the other hand ... How nice to be 80 and be able to wear a pale blue jacket and wave so naturally from the platform to one and all and to blow a kiss to the audience!

AGM of the West Glamorgan Commoners Association

will be held on February 19, 1985

Venue: Welfare Hall, Felindre

Time: 7.30pm

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