

## No place for sleepy-heads

By IFAN PAYNE

SOMETIMES a critic feels not a little stale as he wanders in search of quality and illumination from concert to concert containing over-repeated works performed by jet- and train-lagged semi-stars.

It was a joy then to attend the concert given by Aquarius in the Rardon Smith Lecture Theatre in Cardiff last night and to be entertained by a TV personality, an opera singer,

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three composers in attendance and thought-provoking and enjoyable music performed with sensitivity and flair.

The recital started with a nocturnal thread which ran through Peter Paul Nash's *Insomnia*, whose wired feverishness was in direct contrast to Dallapiccola's impressionistic, shimmering and pre-

ciously beautiful evening perfume as portrayed in *Piccola Musica Notturna*.

Notions of sleep were swept away by Hodinott's light and quirky *Bagatelles for Oboe and Harp*, which contained the magical writing for the harp.

Robert Saxton's *Processions and Dances* started in bleak mid-winter and wound its way through alternately stately and rhythmic progressions before alighting on a brief satisfying major chord.

Aquarius is directed by Nicholas Cleobury, who led the instrumentalists, Richard Stilgoe and Annabel Hunt, through an inspired performance of Walton's *Facade*.

The giggles of pleasure from the audience were evidence enough of the eternal freshness of Edith Sitwell's verse and the effectiveness of Walton's buoyant and glittering music and instrumentation. And what a brilliant score this is, dancing, indeed, a caprice to the wind's tambourine.