

This evening's Twilight Organ Recital highlights Colin Andrews' chosen field of specialisation, British twentieth century organ music. He begins in Wales with WILLIAM MATHIAS. The *Fantasy opus 78* is one of Mathias's most substantial organ works. It was commissioned by the 1978 Manchester International Organ Festival in association with the Welsh Arts Council.

Mathias's music has many things in common with the music of Bela Bartok, particularly with reference to rhythm and harmony. Strangely, this is not a trait normally heard in the organ music, only in his orchestral scoring. This work is an exception, however. Its melodic lines are built from minor thirds and spiky sevenths, and these are contrasted with chordal-like passages built on parallel fifths, not dissimilar to Bartok's Night Music. There are three sections welded into a continuous movement.

HERBERT HOWELLS (1892-1983) was brought up as an organist, being an articled pupil to Sir Herbert Brewer at Gloucester Cathedral from the age of 14 (along with Ivor Gurney). Gloucester always had a central place in his affections, and his Evening Canticles for the Cathedral stand out as probably the most original and personal of all his many settings.

The *Psalm Preludes* are divided into two sets of three. The first set was written between 1915 and 1916, and is effectively a miniature tone-poem. This one, dedicated to his later teacher, Sir Walter Parratt, is based on the sixth version of Psalm 34, 'The Poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles'.

PAUL PATTERSON celebrates his fortieth birthday this year, and thus it is appropriate to include a piece of his in the Week. *Fluorescence* is a fanfare-like piece in a light-hearted style. It was commissioned by the Incorporated Association of Organists for its Congress in Exeter Cathedral in 1973. Under toccata-like figuration in the manuals, a striding melody emerges in the pedals.

BACH's *Prelude and Fugue in G*, BWV541 is thought to date from 1716 when he was employed at Weimar. The Prelude is in the German organ toccata style, bristling with broken chord figures and scales, in sharp contrast to the repeated-note figure of the fugue subject.

*Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr* (BWV662) is the twelfth of the collection known as 'the Eighteen'. The melody is adapted from the plainsong Gloria of Mass I and it forms the basis of more of Bach's organ chorales than any other melody, which, as Peter Hurford has pointed out, is hardly surprising as the hymn was sung at nearly every service. In this version, the ornamental melody is in the top part, accompanied on a different registration by the left hand and pedal.

In 1859, LISZT (1811-1886) wrote a Prelude for piano based on Bach's *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*. Three years later he wrote a set of variations on the same theme and then the year after that – 1863 – he transcribed the variations for organ. The theme comes from a chorus in Bach's Cantata No. 12. It is a chromatically descending ground bass which Bach also used in the *Crucifixus* of his B minor Mass. Liszt leaves Bach's theme more or less unaltered and keeps generally to its four-bar pattern, but he often moves the theme up from the bass to the middle or even top of the texture. In the second half of the work, Liszt begins to introduce short recitative-like sections between the statements of the theme, and at the end, he introduces the hymn tune *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* – the same chorale that ends Bach's Cantata.

## WEDNESDAY 15 JULY

STAHL THEATRE at 7.30pm

THE GREAT MR GERSHWIN

Nuala Willis Mezzo Soprano

Tudor Davies Tenor

Elizabeth Layton Violin

Courtney Kenny Piano

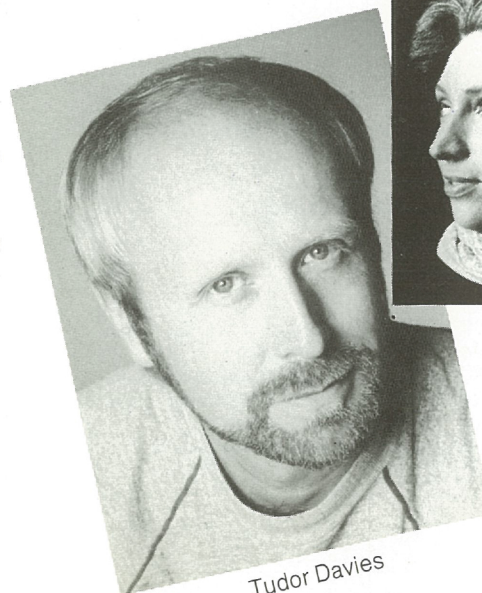
*Sponsored by Central Television*

NUALA WILLIS began her career in the theatre as a costumier/designer and actress. She began private singing lessons in 1971, and was invited to join the Monnaie Opera Studio in Brussels in 1975. She worked with Glyndebourne Festival Opera in 1976 and toured with it in 1978.

Since that time she has appeared in prestigious title roles with Scottish Opera, Opera North and English National Opera. Miss Willis made her début at Covent Garden in 1986 as Martha in *Faust*.

TUDOR DAVIES was born in Oxford and spent the first two years of his career in revue and TV in Holland. Returning to England, he appeared in *Twang* and later the musical *Robert and Elizabeth*. He was also the first man to play the usually female role of Dandini in *Cinderella* at the London Palladium.

More recently Mr Davies has appeared in a staggering variety of roles, singing leading parts with New Sadlers Wells Opera, directing and starring in pantomime, as a successful choreographer, and featuring in numerous television light entertainment shows: many may have seen him *Fix It* for Jimmy Savile by dancing on top of a taxi whilst riding down Regent Street!



Tudor Davies



Nuala Willis



Courtney Kenny