

# GREAT WEEK FOR MUSIC-LOVERS

## SUPPORT FOR FESTIVAL CONCERTS

### COMPOSER'S TRIBUTE

Attendances at the events of the fourth annual Guildford Summer Music Festival are providing a complete answer to those who felt that, in choosing a large proportion of works not popularly known, Mr. Crossley Clitheroe, the Borough Director of Music, was jeopardising support.

The County Technical College Hall was filled for Saturday's performance of the Bach Mass in B Minor; there was another satisfactory audience for the string concert in St. Mary's Church on Monday, although the programme was composed largely of seldom-heard works by contemporary composers; the Wednesday concert drew an audience double the size of the event on the same evening last year; and the lunch-hour chamber music at Guildford House on Tuesday and Thursday was enjoyed by many business people, who took their sandwiches with them.

Last (Friday) evening's event was a lecture-recital on the music of Brahms and Liszt, and the Festival will reach its climax to-morrow, when Mr. Crossley Clitheroe will share the rostrum at the afternoon concert at the Odeon with Dr. Arthur Bliss. The great composer will conduct his own compositions, including his piano-forte concerto, in which Shulamith Shafir will be the soloist.

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Both the Municipal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Festival Choir, conducted by Crossley Clitheroe, distinguished themselves in the performance of the B Minor Mass, and Parry Jones was notable among the soloists. A notice of this event appeared in the mid-week "Surrey Advertiser," together with a notice of the concert at St. Mary's Church, at which two of the composers whose works were played, Newell Wallbank and William Wordsworth, were present.

On Wednesday the orchestra and the smaller Philharmonic Choir provided an interesting contrast with the Bach Mass when they performed Fauré's Requiem.

Here again was devotional music of great beauty, but intimate, personal and dramatic as against the massive splendour of the Bach. This neglected example of French 19th century music was presented with a flawless-ness in execution and an intensity of feeling which showed it as the masterpiece it is—a thing of grace without floridity, of passion without grandiloquence.

The choir, singing with fine control, brought the work to a superb climax in the agonised "Liberate Me," followed by the soaring cadences of "In Paradisium," and in the former Fielden Buckley, the bass soloist, sang with real dramatic power, despite the fact that his voice was rather light. The 18-years-old schoolgirl, Pamela Lawrence, was an excellent choice for the soprano solo "Pie Jesu," for it called for a bell-like purity of tone and expression—the ethereal quality of a perfect treble.

## EXACTING TEST

The first half of the programme comprised one of the early Mozart Symphonies—No. 27 in G—with a pliquant second movement and a rather dull third; the adagietto movement from Mahler's Fifth Symphony, and Elgar's Serenade for Strings.

The Mahler was a real test for the conductor and orchestra, and they passed it magnificently. Not only were the extreme technical difficulties mastered, but the work was played with appreciation for the smouldering emotional fire which characterises the work of a composer who thought of himself, with a certain amount of justice, as Beethoven's successor. The performance achieved so much more than mere competence that even those who already recognised that Guildford had something out of the ordinary in provincial orchestras were left with an enhanced respect. Obviously neither the insight and vision of the conductor nor the range of the orchestra limit programme selection at Guildford.

## NEW QUARTET

At the first of the two lunch-hour recitals the artistes were Peggie Sampson ('cello) and Rex Stephens (pianoforte). At the second (on Thursday) the Meinardi String Quartet were unable to appear because of an accident to their leader, and their place was filled by the Gibbs Quartet, making one of their first public appearances.

They are proteges of the famous Griller Quartet, and, like them, live together and devote their lives to the service of this purest form of musical expression. They played quartets by a Haydn and Mozart, and made a very favourable impression indeed. When officially launched next year, the Gibbs Quartet will obviously achieve rapidly a considerable reputation in the world of chamber music.

## COMPOSER'S TRIBUTE

the world of chamber music.

## COMPOSER'S TRIBUTE

*To the Editor*

Sir,—As a composer who had the honour of having a work performed at the Guildford Music Festival, may I pay tribute to the outstanding musical work being done by Mr. Crossley Clitheroe?

There are surely few, if any, places of the size of Guildford which can show such abundant musical life. On Monday last, the string section of the Municipal Philharmonic Orchestra, under Mr. Clitheroe, gave a really inspired performance of an exacting programme of music ranging from the eighteenth century to our own day. His interpretations (and here I am bound to refer particularly to my own work) showed the conductor to be not only an excellent craftsman but, what is far more rare, an artist with a vital and inspired insight into the works he chose.

Good luck to a great future for music in Guildford.—Yours, etc.,

NEWELL WALLBANK.

London, May 24th, 1949.

## GUILDFORD DANCE CLUB

The Guildford Dance Club held its fifth evening dress dance of the season