

# A well-balanced program with colourful singing

By MALCOLM TAPSCOTT

The Llewellyn Choir and the Canberra School of Music Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Richard McIntyre. Llewellyn Hall, June 13.

**T**HIS concert presented two great choral and orchestral works: one from the French romantic period of the 19th century and the other a 20th century work written in 1923.

The first was Charles Gounod's *Messe Solonelle* (Solemn Mass for St Cecilia's Day), composed in 1855; the second, Zoltan Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungaricus*. Between these two works was the orchestral piece *Swan of Tuonela*, by Jean Sibelius.

The CSM Symphony Orchestra was in fine form in the Gounod Mass. It not only sounded good, but looked impressive, especially with a row of four harps on stage.

The conductor, Richard McIntyre, led the orchestra safely through the simplicities and

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complexities of the lush, romantic score and inspired the Llewellyn Choir to give of its best at moments of heightened expression.

Soloists Lorina Gore (soprano), Carl Cooper (tenor) and Tom Layton (bass) were secure in the projection of their voices and parts.

Sibelius's *Swan of Yuonela*, *Op 22, No 3*, gave cor-anglais player Bettina Crimmins a chance to shine in her considerable obligato part. This piece was included in the program as a tribute to this player, who also doubles as *repetiteur* for the choir.

Another member of the orchestra distinguished himself by his fine, warm and centred sound: cellist William Martina also had a considerable solo part to play in this work.

Kodaly's *Psalmus Hungari-*

*cus* is a well-constructed work from a formal standpoint. It is also an expressive and sometimes passionate work, based as it is on a paraphrase of Psalm 55 from the *Psalms of David*.

While there was much colourful singing from the choir and the supporting Ainslie Primary School Choir, tenor soloist Daniel Song failed to project above the choir and orchestra for much of the time. I would like to have heard Canberra tenor Carl Cooper tackle this part. I am sure he would have acquitted himself well.

The Llewellyn Choir's assistant director, Pirooska Varga, also directed the Ainslie Primary School Choir and coached both choirs in the Hungarian language sung in the Kodaly work.

This program was well-balanced and complete in the efficacy of its musical expression.