

# Light delights of love

By W. L. HOFFMANN

*Songs of Love and Lust.* The Llewellyn Choir in Llewellyn Hall. October 3.

**T**HIS was a concert that offered out of the usual programming and light musical delights, with choral works *a capella* and accompanied and interspersed with solo items. Indeed, it gently suggested music-making in the drawing-rooms of the 19th century with the choristers seating themselves informally around the stage of Llewellyn Hall for the solo items.

Meanwhile, the imaginative program offered songs "appropriate to the stirrings of the Spring season", ranging from love songs to bawdy ballads, and opening with the *Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op 52*, by Brahms.

This group of 18 delightful love songs set to Viennese rhythms show Brahms in a non-serious and unbuttoned mood. However, it took a little while for the choir to catch its light and lilting mood, with some initial uncertainty and wavering intonation. Happily, as the songs progressed the confidence of the singers grew, encouraged by the sparkling piano-duet accompaniments played by Gabor Rozsa and Colleen Rae-Gerrard.

## Music

The other choral pieces were mainly by British composers of the 19th and 20th centuries, including E. J. Moeran, Edward German and Gustav Holst. Under the firm direction of conductor Richard McIntyre, the choir responded with singing of good tonal quality in which the texts were clearly enunciated and the general lightheartedness of the songs nicely conveyed.

The three soloists were all young singers from the School of Music. Soprano Sharon Ode, excellently accompanied by pianist Anthony Hunter-

Smith, delighted with attractive realisations of songs by Granville Bantock and Richard Hageman. Then Thomas Layton gave suitably rollicking performances of *Simon the Cellarer* and *The Floral Dance*, and later of the English folk song *The Foggy, Foggy Dew*, while Judith Crispin-Cresswell injected some Spanish passion with lively presentations of three *Popular Spanish Songs* by Manuel de Falla. Colleen Rae-Gerrard provided the piano accompaniments for these two singers.

To conclude this evening of lively vocal delights, the choir sang with suitable aplomb three bawdy ballads from 18th century England.

## Hope for the paralysed

**C**HRISTOPHER REEVE told a six-year-old girl paralysed in an amusement-park accident in the United States that advances in spinal-cord research might help her walk again some day.

Reeve, who was paralysed in a 1995 equestrian accident, attended a fundraiser in Indianapolis for Emily's Walk

for Spinal Research, a foundation established by Emily Hunt's parents.

Reeve said research involving rats offered hope that spinal-cord injuries could be mended. "What we're talking about now is simply the financing of the procedure," he said. "It's going to happen."

— Associated Press