

# Roof raiser

**THE Eastbourne Sinfonia will be raising the roof of the Winter Garden Theatre in Eastbourne later this month (February 23) with their 21st Gala Concert.**

The programme includes work from composers such as Tchaikovsky, Mozart and Schumann and guest appearances from Mrs

Jane Gow, John York and the Eastbourne Silver Band.

Jane Gow, wife of Eastbourne's MP, Mr Ian Gow, joins the Sinfonia

for Mozart's Piano Concerto No 21. Mrs Gow has a growing reputation as a quality keyboard virtuoso, and now gives regular recitals in Sussex.

The Tchaikovsky favourite, the 1812 Overture, will be performed accompanied by the very talented Eastbourne Silver Band and soloist John York takes the stage for the George Gershwin composition of Rhapsody In Blue.

## Horns

Ron Harris, Nicholas Korth, Stuart Korth and Graham Hills, the four regular horn players of the Sinfonia, will be performing Concertstruck For Four Horns, a beautiful, but little known piece of music by Schumann.

The programme is completed by Rossini's

Overture of The Thieving Magpie. Compé for the evening is Stella Blond.

Tickets for the 21st Gala Concert can be obtained from the Congress Theatre box office, telephone Eastbourne 36363.

## SINFONIA SUNDAY: RIKKI WARBURTON

# SUPER STRINGS AND MAGPIE MAGIC

**NOT SO much a concert; more a musical party with distinguished guests performing. But then the Sinfonia did advertise it as a 'Gala' event. And at the end, an admittedly biased audience gave them a standing ovation.**

The music, better than one would normally expect from an amateur orchestra. Take for instance the opening overture.

Any one who lives in the country must be intimately acquainted with that marauding gentleman in immaculate black and white who looks clumsy and is not. Who is cunning and comical, and gets the best of most encounters, except with the gamekeeper's gun. Rossini painted him in splendidly evocative music, *The Thieving Magpie*.

And how faithfully the Sinfonia interpreted that brilliant overture at the beginning of this 21st concert. The strings bowing better than I have seen them previously, producing a beautifully free melodic flow. The woodwind splendidly controlled. A delightful picture.

Jane Gow improves all the time. On this occasion she had little opportunity to do more than suggest, in the andante of the Mozart Piano Concerto No 21 in C, that she is a very good recitalist on her own account.

In this extract she was well served by an unobtrusive, reduced orchestra.

The Schumann Concert struck for Four Horns even as arranged by Anthony Randall was perhaps asking too much of

three enthusiastic amateurs, even when strengthened by guest professional Ron Harris. But it was a brave attempt to tackle a special arrangement for one of the more difficult orchestral instruments.

John York, our own ex-Eastbourne Grammar School pupil, professor of piano at the Guildhall, international recitalist, and patron of the Sinfonia, was exactly what we expect from John York whatever the occasion.



Gershwin in his orchestral version of *Rhapsody in Blue* makes tremendous demands, more so on piano than on orchestra.

John York meets them head on with scintillating virtuosity. His natural feel for the jazz and blues element combined with the years of training in classicism, all put together with flawless technique, was pure Gershwin. And as always the orchestra rose to the occasion.

The 1812 Overture was plainly a party piece, which was in a

sense the composer's intention. In spite of its immense public appeal when backed by flashing lights and loud noises on and off one would hesitate to call it great music.

On this occasion the Eastbourne Silver Band under their conductor David Padget added their musical skill and enthusiasm to that of the Sinfonia, both conductors perfectly handling the not over difficult feat of keeping together and keeping their musicians in time.

Inevitably after the audience had stood to show their appreciation there had to be an encore, and again almost inevitably Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*.

Stella Blond in her own charming fashion compered the whole show and professionally filled in the gaps during necessary piano shifting.

Graham Jones, musical director of the Sinfonia, presented us with a happy gala afternoon. And surely Mr Jones must have been happy at the giant strides his orchestra, particularly the disciplined string section, has taken in the seven years of its existence.

The Mayor, Mr Leslie Mason, with Mrs Mason and other invited guests, met John York, Jane Gow, and the orchestra and commere after the concert at a reception in the Gold Room.