

POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

Son et Lumiere at St. Jude's

The Suburb's very first Son et Lumiere — Pomp and Circumstance — a celebration of the work of Sir Edwin Lutyens, Architect, and his contemporary, Sir Edward Elgar, Composer, was presented to a packed audience at St. Jude's, on the evening of Thursday, 20 September, 1984.

Held inside the building, not only in deference to the vagaries of the English climate, but also to highlight the major features of the great church itself, the "son" came from live music and tape-recorded script, and the "lumiere" from slide film projected on two giant screens, with powerful spotlights directed at the altars, the majestic aisles and arches, soaring into the central dome and bringing to life the Starmer frescoes.

Any lingering doubts that the organisers may have had about patronage of their unique venture were dispelled as the hurly-burly of traffic jams jostling queues at the door, and the anxious scurrying of ushers subsided, the notes of the generously extended organ voluntary died away, and the lights went down — the "house" was undoubtedly full.

From the moment that his mother's sweet lullaby hymn introduced the infant Lutyens, to the final triumphant blasts of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance" marches, the audience was treated to a sensory biography and professional appreciation of the Architect Laureate of modern times. The "variations" on the Lutyens

"engima" were carefully matched with selected pieces by Elgar, Surrey folk songs and a "glee" by other composers, in the first part of the programme. Elgar, reputed to be Lutyens' favourite composer, lived for a few years nearby in Hampstead, and often sought peace and respite from his fits of depression in walks upon Hampstead Heath, through the Garden Suburb and on to Mill Hill and Totteridge, whence came the inspiration for some of the part-songs sung by the choir.

In the second part the music was reserved for the finale, and the gleeful chatter of his assistants, learning to work as hard as their master "Lut-Lut" who tolerated their youthful pranks with avuncular chuckles, gave way to a serious and scholarly conversation. This was between a young architectural student, come to study St. Jude's and to sketch Lutyens' characteristic hallmarks, and an unexpected visitor, who, of course, was the master himself.

Here, Cyril Luckham as the visitor and Mark Hayford as the student, achieved a rapport which brilliantly bridged the generation gap and invested

warmth and humanity into the maze of technical details covered in the script, illustrated by a wealth of slide material and the spectacular lighting effects.

Where to start on the credits? Well, why not at the beginning? The organisers are grateful to the North West London Society of Architects for the compliment to the Garden Suburb in seeking to include St. Jude's in their programme for the Architectural Festival Year; to Alfred Lester for developing the whole idea to include a tribute to Elgar, and to Peter Lea Cox organist at St. Jude's for accepting this with enthusiasm, tolerating a number of vicissitudes as the project hiccuped its way forward, and producing and performing in a masterly fashion an entirely appropriate selection of solos by himself and Lorna Osbon (violin) assisted by the ever delightful voices of the St. Jude's Choir.

Thanks too, to the Vicar, Rev. Michael Porteus, for valuable encouragement and assistance with the use of the church, to Barbara Britton for "spreading the word" and securing help from the congregation, notably the Freeborn family, who performed a prodigious feat of organisation of refreshments and ushering.

The fascination of the Suburb story and Lutyens himself clearly gripped the scriptwriter, Nancy Goodchild, who chose so deftly the details of such a giant saga and presented them so convincingly, aided by her talented young friends: Mark Hayford, John Cooper, Paul Collins, Chris Vince, Gail Garside, Caroline Butcher, Leigh Lovell, who recorded the "cast" and our own Cyril Luckham who captured the spirit of Lutyens the mischievous prankster, the lover and the mature creator, whose pursuit of the "High Game" led him to the Suburb commissions and St. Jude's itself.

The lighting and recording by Graham Walne and Lynton Black (Leisureplan) required many hours of setting up and taking down — far beyond the scope of the shoe-string budget, but most cheerfully and efficiently done. All credit to Stuart Gray, from whose notes the technical sections of the script were drawn, based on his own student days when he was taught by Lutyens. Brigid Grafton Green, Suburb Archivist, advised on selection of slides and photographs from the archives; Mervyn Miller lent notes and slides from his own lectures on Lutyens given last year at the Suburb Institute; Dawn Orr contributed to research and generally kept everybody going — including through the entry doors on the night, assisted by her daughters Judy and Nancy with Freda Fidler; Edwin Taber counted the income and told us what could be spent and when; Brenda Dean took dozens and dozens of slides, and turned Alfred Lester's witty cartoons into posters and programmes.

The Suburb Trust, Suburb Institute, Residents' Association (special thanks to Treasurer Janette Harris) Design Study Group and North West London Society of Architects helped with publicity and ticket sales, and J. Brown Ogden Estate Agents and Hugh Lloyd Chemists gave most welcome cash sponsorship. Given more sponsorship, there

HGS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

HGS Horticultural Society had an extremely successful summer season in 1984. Entries for shows were almost 100 up each time, and many visitors enjoyed the variety of flowers, fruit, vegetables and cookery to be seen. The extremes of weather brought problems to some of the growers, but this did not seem to affect the display very much. The Society is always keen to increase its membership from new and old residents of the Suburb alike, and people can join at any time of year. Details from the

membership secretary, Mr. J. Guppy (455 8953). Winter lectures on many gardening subjects are held from January onwards at Fellowship House, and are always advertised in the Diary of Suburb News.



David Over achieved a first with a collage in the under fives.



Alexander Dillon's birthday card won a first prize.



Jacqueline Murrell won a fourth prize.



Elizabeth Over's card was worth a third prize.

could have been more lavish lighting, more film, more sensitive sound, more surplus for the Roof Restoration Fund... as it was, the achievement of this unusual persistence and many hours of labour given literally for love.

The large number of people involved from outside the Suburb and the many who came from far away to see it remind us that our heritage on the doorstep is not just for us to enjoy. We are but trustees, privileged for a short time to care for and enhance what we have inherited.

So... if YOU didn't get to see the Son et Lumiere... perhaps you might now be prompted to send the Vicar a donation to the Roof Restoration Fund, as a tribute in this year of Architectural Festival to the work of Lutyens in the church of St. Jude "a good and settled epic" as he called it, which "conquers the site on which it stands..." DO

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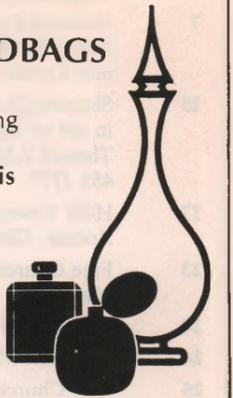
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