



It has been agreed that there will be two jazz medals awarded annually in future. The Silver Medal will be awarded to an established artist and a Bronze Medal to an exceptionally talented young jazz musician. The selection for the Bronze will take place at Pizza-on-the-Park on Sunday 7th November and the winner will be given a gig in midsummer.

This summer's jazz evening with medallist Tim Garland in company with Alec Dankworth and Robin Aspland was another success with a continuing high standard of music.

At the recent meeting of the Jazz Committee, Stan Tracey was voted to receive this year's Silver Medal.

On the suggestion of Liveryman John Dankworth it was agreed that a further special Silver Medal should be awarded to Marian McPartland. Although British, she has become known as one of the best jazz pianists in the United States through her regular programmes on radio, 'Piano Jazz'.

It is unlike any other music series because it is generally unstructured and the resulting spontaneity has provided many memorable broadcasts. She has an uncanny gift of improvisation which, combined with her empathy for each guest's style, makes for some very imaginative and inventive sessions. She has never played before with many of her guests and there is no rehearsal. 'Just set the tempo and away we go, skating up and down the keyboards.



Marion McPartland. Photo. Tim Hall, Redferns

That's really living dangerously!" she exclaimed. As well as featuring established artists such as Bobby Short, Oscar Peterson, George Shearing, Dave Brubeck and Dizzy Gillespie, she has also helped to launch some less well known artists.

As she is currently visiting England it was decided that she should be presented with her medal now.

By Assistant Jonathan Rennert.

The City of London undoubtedly possesses the finest collection of historic pipe-organs of any English city, and yet knowledge of this treasure tends to be limited. Congratulations, therefore, are due to Nicholas Plumley for his new book, 'The Organs of the City of London from the Restoration to the Present.' (published, Positif Press, 130 Southfield Road, Oxford OX14 IPA. 224 pp, £24.95 plus 95p postage. ISBN 0 906894 06 9.)

The author not only considers in detail the histories of the fifty pipe-organs now residing within the square mile, and of many instruments in churches which were culled by the Church of England, the Luftwaffe or the IRA. His detailed introduction gives much general background to organ-building developments over the centuries, which are themselves a reflection of the fortunes and fashions of the City and its churches.

Although Plumley is generous in his acknowledgments to other authors, he has himself completed a mammoth piece of original research (I remember his first approach to me for information more than a decade ago). He has trawled church records, organ builders' archives and other source material, and in the process has uncovered various mistaken traditions: for example, he tells us that the 'Father Smith organ of 1697' in St James Garlickhythe is in fact a remarkable survival of the early eighteenth-century builder John Knopple; and the "1684 Smith" in St Martin-within-Ludgate is actually an instrument which replaced that original in 1847.

The black and white pictures are beautifully reproduced, and include fascinating prints of churches in their pre-World War II states. The instruments considered came in all shapes, styles and sizes, from the 'barrel and finger organ' (of one manual and six stops) in St Benet, Paul's Wharf, to the five manual monster in St. Paul's Cathedral; from the long-forgotten 3-manual instrument in St. Matthew, Friday Street (a church which was demolished in 1881) to the 1995 restoration (following bomb damage) in St Helen, Bishopsgate.

Throughout the descriptions, the names of certain organ builders recur frequently: Father Smith, Renatus Harris, Byfield, Hill, England, Gray & Davison, Willis, Bishop, Rushworth and Dreaper and Mander - and Plumley rightly pays fulsome tribute to Noel Mander, who

saved so many organs and organ cases, as well as other church furnishings after the last war and ensured that they were beautifully restored.

The author does not duck the issue of the parlous present state of certain famous instruments in the city: the fire-damaged organ in St. Magnus the Martyr; the virtually unplayable instrument in St. Katherine Cree (whose 1686 pipework cries out for sympathetic restoration); the tragedy of the magnificent nineteenth-century Hill organ of St. Mary-at-Hill, which is still in storage following a serious fire ten years ago; and the fascinating but rarely-heard instrument in the Musicians' Church, St. Sepulchre, Holborn (whose future seems still to be uncertain).

Now that Lord Templeman's proposals to close the majority of the City Churches have thankfully been dropped, those of us who use these priceless architectural and spiritual heirlooms (including the Musicians' Company) should be aware that they need support. We, as musicians, can surely not stand by, as we see exceptionally fine musical instruments decay.

Of course, the restoration of an historic, but often much-rebuilt, organ is fraught with difficulty. Builders and advisors must decide whether to be purists, by restoring the instrument to its state at a particular date (for example, 1848 or 1684). Alternatively, they might decide to leave it as a hybrid - the result of successive tinkering and additions over the centuries. Then again, they must consider the instrument's current use. In the City, where many churches do not have Sunday services, is the organ chiefly to be used to accompany congregational hymn-singing or Cathedral style choral services? Is it mainly used as a recital instrument or for teaching and examining? Finally, what architectural restrictions must there be in dealing with such a large and important piece of church furniture in a listed building? Inevitably, most solutions will be compromises. However, the compromise of inaction, which allows an instrument to fall into disrepair (or remain in storage) cannot be acceptable.

The Company's Senior Warden is himself a distinguished, now retired, master organ builder. He will, I have little doubt, wish to express his views on this important topic during his year in the Chair.