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RECORD ENTRY FOR THE "GOLDEN ROSE"

This month's contest for the "Golden Rose of Montreux" — the world's top award for TV light entertainment — promises to be the most successful ever held.

A record number of programmes have been entered — 28 from 25 different countries. Most of them are in colour.

Attending the contest, with the hundreds of representatives of world TV networks, will be more than 120 journalists and TV critics — including most of Britain's leading TV reporters.

Three countries which have never before entered for the "Golden Rose of Montreux" are submitting programmes. The newcomers are Israel, Greece and Brazil.

For the first time, too, a woman is taking a prominent role in the festival. Mrs. Leda Mileva, Director of Bulgarian Television, will be one of the two vice-chairmen of the contest jury — the other being Howard Kany, International Relations Director for CBS Television in New York. (The chairman of the jury, as already announced, will be Hans Solvhoj, Director-General of Danish Television.) The panel will include two British experts, Donald Baverstock, Director of Programmes, Yorkshire TV Ltd., ITV Leeds and Michael Mills, Head of Comedy, Light Entertainment, BBC London. The Swiss representative is Jean-Louis Roy, *Réalisateur* with Swiss TV (French-speaking part).

The Chairman of the Press Jury is Otto Pünter of Berne.

The "Golden Rose of Montreux" opened yesterday, 24th April, and lasts until Thursday, 2nd May.

NO CARPET-BAGGING AT MONTREUX FESTIVAL

Tom Sloan, BBC TV's Head of Light Entertainment, is leading a BBC contingent for the annual international contest for the "Golden Rose of Montreux", which opened on 24th April and lasts till 1st May. 28 programmes have been entered from 25 countries.

Britain has two programmes bidding for the "Golden Rose" — and the coveted title of the world's top TV variety show. The BBC, which has won twice before, is entering "It's Marty Feldman". ITV will be represented by ATV's "This is . . . Tom Jones".

Talking to Tony Bilbow in "Late Night Line-up", Tom Sloan said of Montreux:

"It's the one festival that I have any experience of in which commercialism — everybody carpet-bagging, everybody trying to sell everybody else series of programmes — simply does not exist.

"The people who run it — the Swiss — insist that to be accredited you have to be a bona-fide television professional.

"I know that certain people run little telecine apparatus in their bedrooms and try to flog their series, but if found out they are very soon discouraged.

"It is, in fact, a gathering of pros, and I have the highest regard for it. It is well worth while."

How did the "Golden Rose of Montreux" begin — and who's idea was it?

Said Tom Sloan: *"Montreux, tucked away at the end of the lake of Geneva, used to be a sort of playground for Grand Dukes and Maharajas in the Edwardian era. Just before the first world war, that absurd Christmas cake of a hotel, the Montreux Palace, which is now the headquarters of the 'Golden Rose', was stuffed with those sort of people. Then after the war, Montreux began to decline.*

"The whole idea of the festival began in the brain of the very bright tourist director for Montreux who suddenly thought of a gimmick of how to put Montreux back on the map.

"He talked the Swiss television people into this idea of launching a light entertainment television festival. No such thing existed anywhere else in the world."

It is still the only one of its kind. They got in at the beginning. They got Eurovision's blessing. It became as it were an 'official event'. And it's gone from strength to strength.

Tony Bilbow gave the run-down of the BBC's record at Montreux and referred to various successes and failures over the past eight years. He ended by saying:

"Two years ago, 'Frost over England', full of visual gags and irreverent swipes at our politicians, delighted the non-English speaking delegates at Montreux. So the BBC got the 'Golden Rose' and the Press Award — and London Weekend Television got Frost.

"Less success last year. But Charlie Drake did get the comedy award".

Of this year's entry, "It's Marty Feldman", which was shown on BBC-2 last month, Tony Bilbow said there had been several telephone calls from viewers objecting about a VIP football match sketch, in which impersonations

are given of the Queen and Prince Philip. But if it were in bad taste it wouldn't be in the programme. The reason it is in the programme is that it's a very funny sequence, and Tom Sloan does not believe for one moment that it can cause any offence.

"It's Marty Feldman" is a compilation of some of the best items in the recent Feldman series.

For the first time since the "Golden Rose" Festival opened in Montreux in 1961, the five gala-evening performances will be open to the public.

The last Gala on 1st May, will see the end of this magnificent series of performances and will mark the conclusion of the "Golden Rose" Contest. The many VIPs, visitors and guests will flood the Casino to enjoy the wines and cheeses of France and drinks of the region. At midnight, the world-famous Munich beer will go down well. Also during the evening there are the eagerly awaited presentations of the "Golden Rose" prizes by Petula Clark and the music of the Dutch Swing College Band will, no doubt, ensure that the whole party goes with a swing.

COMPTOIR GUESTS OF HONOUR

Honouring the official invitation extended by the Management of the Lausanne Fair, "Comptoir Suisse", Mexico has agreed to take part in this important event as foreign guest of honour. This decision is bound to gladden the hearts of everyone interested in the development of relations between Mexico and Switzerland, since trade between the two countries at present represents a total value of over 200 million Swiss francs. The "Comptoir Suisse" second foreign guest of honour for 1969 will be Czechoslovakia. This year's Swiss guest of honour will be the Canton of Zurich.

(O.S.E.C.)

WORLD GASTRONOMIC CENTRE

From 23rd to 26th May, 1970, Lausanne will be the world capital of gastronomy during an international congress which will be attended by nearly 1,000 members of the Chain of Restaurateurs. During the four days, the promoters of this congress will offer their guests an overall picture of Swiss gastronomy, presented, commented and sampled in specially decorated and equipped premises, a glimpse of the tourist riches of French-speaking Switzerland, an exhibition devoted to wines from all over the world, as well as several "enthroning" ceremonies, including one in Chillon Castle.

(O.S.E.C.)