

The original documents are located in Box 6, folder “4/01/76 - Medal of Freedom Presentation for Arthur Rubinstein” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

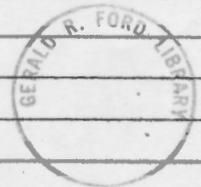
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Date Issued 3/29/76
By P. Howard
Revised 3/30/76

FACT SHEET
Mrs. Ford's Office

Event MEDAL OF FREEDOM CEREMONY
Group For: Arthur Rubinstein APRIL 1, 1976
DATE/TIME Reception at 12:00 Noon - Ceremony at 1:00 p. m. - Private Luncheon at 1:25 p.m.
Contact Pat Howard Phone _____
Number of guests: Total approx. 200 Women x Men x Children _____
Place State Floor
Principals involved President and Mrs. Ford
Participation by Principal yes (Receiving line) yes
Remarks required yes
Background --



REQUIREMENTS

Social: Guest list yes (Social Entertainments' Office will distribute - X 2510)
Invitations yes Programs no Menus no
Refreshments coffee and fruit pastries and luncheon format
Entertainment no
Decorations/flowers yes
Music yes
Social Aides yes
Dress Business Suits - Short Dresses for the Ladies Coat check yes (DRR)
Other --
Press: Reporters yes
Photographers yes
TV Crews yes
White House Photographers YES Color YES Mono. _____
Other _____
Technical Support: Microphones yes PA Other Rooms no
Recording yes
Lights no
Transportation cars - enter thru SW Gate
Parking South Grounds
Housing --
Other -- (Risers, stage, platforms) yes

Project Co-ordinator Pat Howard Phone 2927

Site diagrams should be attached if technical support is heavy.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 25, 1976



TO: MRS. FORD

FROM: MARIA DOWNS

M

Enclosed are Henry's proposed menus for the small luncheon honoring Arthur Rubinstein to be held after the presentation ceremony awarding him the Medal of Freedom.

Henry's thinking was because of Mr. Rubinstein's age it might be wise to serve the crab cakes or something similar. I know the cakes would be delicious but somehow this strikes me as a very special occasion that calls for something more elegant. The lamb chops may pose a problem to Mr. Rubinstein so I have included a third menu which might handle both situations.

Please let me know what you would like.

Friday
April 2, 1976
11-15 guests
12:30 PM

LUNCHEON

Menu # 1

Beef Consomme
Cheese Straws

Crab Cakes w/ Mustard Sauce
Steamed Rice
Leaf Spinach

Macedoine of Frest Fruit
Petits fours

Menu # 2

Lobster Bisque
Cheese Straws

Broiled Lamb Chops
Fresh Asparagus
Tossed Green Salad

Strawberry Mousse



Medal of Freedom Luncheon
Friday, April 2, 1976
12:30 PM

LUNCHEON

Avocado Soup

Roast Loin of Veal
Broiled Tomatoes with Mushrooms
String Beans

Leaf Spinach Salad

Lemon Mousse with Strawberries



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 29, 1976

FOR: MRS. FORD

FROM: MARIA DOWNS 



The background on the Rubinstein children is quite interesting. Miss Alina Rubinstein is 26 and a medical student at Columbia. "Miss" Eva Rubinstein is 38 or 39 and a professional photographer. Eva was married to the William Coffin, Jr. of Yale. They have been divorced about 10 years and she has taken her maiden name. John Rubinstein is about 30 and had the lead in "Pippin." Perhaps it might be interesting to Susan or Jack to join the luncheon if they are available.

I have also had a request to add Mr. and Mrs. Buchen to the luncheon because Mrs. Buchen was instrumental in this presentation. It is my belief there were others who were also instrumental such as Barbara MacGregor. When we open the door, where do we stop? The luncheon list as it stands are all requests of Mrs. Rubinstein.

Please let me know whether Susan or Jack can attend and what your feeling is of expanding the luncheon.

Thank you.



This ageless hero, Rubinstein

He cannot go on like this forever (though some would not bet on that). In fact, there are now some troubling signs.

By Donal Henahan

One day, in what we may only hope is the distant future, an archeologist sifting through the detritus of Western civilization may come upon certain puzzling artifacts. A pair of tennis sneakers, perhaps, with 4-inch platform soles. A goose-quill pen with a felt tip. A petrified senator holding a Pentagon budget request. Or, if Western civilization is lucky, some piano recordings made by Arthur Rubinstein when he was on the brink of 90 and still playing with astonishing vigor, virtuosity and panache. Like Heinrich Schliemann pondering the myths and legends of Homeric Troy, the excavator will have a mystery on his hands. Did such a hero really live in those benighted times?

We know the answer, of course. Rubinstein made his New York debut 70 years ago at Carnegie Hall, performing with the Philadelphia Orchestra on Jan. 8, 1906. But actually he has been playing in public for 85 years. Although he did not make his formal debut until he was 7 years old, he was performing for small audiences of family friends in his native city of Lodz, Poland, by the age of 4 and at 6 was appearing at charity concerts. He had taken to the piano unbidden and uncoerced, at 3, when his parents brought an old upright into their home so that two older sisters could take lessons.

Tomorrow night, he has another recital scheduled at Carnegie Hall. Nothing special. Just one of 20 appearances on his United States itinerary this season. And yet, each time Rubinstein steps out on a stage nowadays, it is something to note, for the man's spirit and prowess at 89 make him a musical, not merely a gerontological, phenomenon. By his latest reckoning, he was born on Jan. 28, 1887. He cannot go on like this forever, probably, although there are people who know him well who would not care to bet on that. Max Wilcox, for one. Wilcox, who has produced more than 60 Rubinstein records for RCA and five concerto performances for television, has several sessions planned for next month when the tireless Arthur is scheduled to record two more Mozart concertos. More fuel for the Arthurian legend.

The other day, while Rubinstein was stopping off in New York during a midwinter break in his concert schedule, I spent several exhilarating

though eventually quite sobering hours with him in his suite at the Drake Hotel. The first minutes, as usual, were taken up in making sure the visitor had the most comfortable, the softest seat in the room. Rubinstein insisted on a plain, hard chair for himself. "All my life I have been sitting up straight, you know. Which reminds me of a story, a very funny story. . . ." (And off he goes. If you have questions to ask Rubinstein, you had better get them in early or it's no use.) "Not long ago in Boston, they gave me what is called the Agnon Award. You know who Agnon was? S. Y. Agnon, the old Hebrew poet who died a few years ago. He won a Nobel Prize and they named this award for him. Well, as it happened, I had been giving a concert in Jerusalem some years ago and a friend of mine brought Agnon back to see me. I said to him, 'Do you like music?' And he said, 'I don't know, this is the first time in my life that I go to a concert. But I like how you sit so straight at the piano.'"

You are never far from a good laugh when you are around Rubinstein, but his is not a mindless good humor. An Academy Award-winning documentary film about his career, made in 1968 but released here only last year, was titled "Love of Life," and it is true, he says, that "I love life unconditionally." He shrugs impatiently. "But it is not that I walk around stupidly smiling [pantomime of a slack-jawed, grinning lout]."

Thomas Mann, hardly one to be impressed by a stupid smile, called Rubinstein "that civilized man," and a story of my own may illustrate his deep-grained civility. The city was Buffalo, where on a bitter midwinter's night four years ago I went to talk with Rubinstein on the occasion of his 85th birthday, the trip being necessary because his concert schedule at that time was to bring him no nearer to Manhattan. I arrived at his hotel in the evening at what I believed was the agreed-upon hour, called his room and found to my horror that Rubinstein had not been told of our date. A communications breakdown somewhere in his entourage, I later learned. Moreover, the voice on the phone instantly suggested itself as that of a man who had been aroused from sleep. He grasped finally that I was from a newspaper, but apparently thought it was a local one, and my attempts to explain did not penetrate. But he said, "Please, can you give me 15 minutes before coming up?"

When I arrived at his room, unexpected and, I am quite sure, unwanted, Rubinstein had gotten into a dark blue suit, with the rosette of a Commander of the Legion of Honor in a lapel,

and was ready to receive me, all apologies. He had the flu, he said, and his wife had been calling him to tell him to cancel his tour. "But when I am at the piano, my sickness goes away and that makes me terribly happy. I won't cancel." Despite all, he managed to be vivacious and full of stories I had not heard before. Since then, I often have thought of Rubinstein in that Buffalo hotel room, trying to sleep off the flu, and at the mercy of whoever might pick up the house phone. And I try to imagine how gracious I would have been under similar circumstances. Not very, I'm afraid.

Grace under pressure is a gift not given to most people, and for a long time now Rubinstein has been graceful under the ultimate, inescapable pressure of being old. How did he get that way? And more puzzling, how does he stay that way?

To answer those questions with confidence, one would have to know exactly how to solve the old equation in which nature and nurture are both unknown factors. As far as he knows, Rubinstein does not come from particularly long-lived ancestors, although the pogroms and wars that swept over Poland in the last century or so seem to have made that question academic. His six brothers and sisters, for instance, disappeared along with six million other Jews during World War II. Physically and mentally, he has been a living refutation of the old wives' tale about the weakness of children born to older fathers: He was the seventh child, born when his father was past 40, a ripe age in the Poland of that day. Rubinstein's physique has often been mentioned as a reason for his continuing puissance. He is not tall (5 feet 8 inches) or heavy (about 165), but he has a powerful chest, blacksmith biceps and disproportionately long legs.

Until now, at least, he has suffered from almost none of the usual human infirmities. He has no arthritis or rheumatic aches, and subscribes to no fanatical health-food regimen. He arises at 8 or thereabouts, hungry for breakfast, but first does about 20 minutes of setting-up exercises. However, he gets his most strenuous exercise by playing the piano—which is perhaps exercise enough if you play as flamboyantly as Arthur Rubinstein. According to his wife and other intimates of long standing, he takes no pills of any kind other than vitamin C. For many years, he has enjoyed the best wines and the most expensive cigars (two or three a day, only with coffee) and, in his sybaritic approach to daily existence, has long been the Winston Churchill of the piano. His adherence to the Pleasure Principle is no doubt rooted somehow in his genes and nurtured by a lifetime of adulation. But he also

Donal Henahan is a music critic for *The Times*.

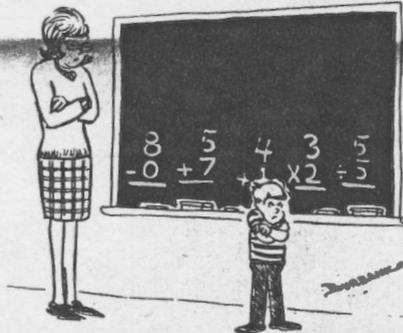
Observations



The lion's share. Who reaps the most cash when gasoline pump prices rise? Actually, federal, state and local governments. They collect six times more in taxes per gallon than oil companies make. For the record, most oil companies average about 2¢ profit per gallon of gasoline. Federal and state taxes average 12¢ per gallon. It may be that the gasoline pump has become America's most efficient tax collector.

Back to basics? Yeah, well, like, uh, there was this big test, see, that, uh, these kids took to test their, you know, their writing abilities and what do you think was revealed? Youngsters now write as they talk, in mass media styles of TV, newspapers and advertising. Sampling thousands of student "essays," the National Assessment of Educational Progress discovered increased incoherence, conceptual fuzziness and fragmented phrasing—especially among seventeen-year-olds.

Now the good news. Oil people have been quick to point out that many Americans—college grads among them—don't know enough about basic economics and are fuzzy on the role of profits, the need to raise capital, and the incentives of a free market. Happily, that's changing, with universities reporting a sharp upturn in enrollment in economics courses. Some schools report that basic economics has replaced biology as the favorite field of study—apparently leaving the birds and the bees to extracurricular activities.



"BECAUSE BATTERIES GO DEAD IN POCKET CALCULATORS, THAT'S WHY."

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A quote we like. "Govern a great nation as you would cook a small fish—don't overdo it." *Confucius*

Second time around. If you missed Eugene O'Neill's *A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN* as a Mobil Showcase Presentation last year on TV, you might welcome seeing it this week over the Public Broadcasting Service. Praised by critics as a "magnificent" production, it stars Colleen Dewhurst and Jason Robards, and was co-directed for television by Jose Quintero and Gordon Rigby. Check your TV listings for broadcast time in your area.

Mobil

Observations, Box A, Mobil Oil Corporation, 189 East 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10017



With his wife: Arthur and Aniela Rubinstein, at a party in New York in 1971 on the occasion of his 84th birthday. They were married in 1932.

feels there is a pragmatic philosophical basis for his cheery temperament and open nature, and his ability to sustain a youthful outlook into what is, chronologically, very old age.

In fact, the civility and wholehearted humanism that his audiences sense and find so appealing is completely unselfish in origin and grew out of Rubinstein's clear-eyed analysis, early on, of a hard world. He is a firm agnostic. "When I was a child, I looked and I did not see any god. I doubt if Moses saw him, really. All those little girls who saw the Virgin. All that, no, a lie." He laughs and waves one of the largest hands ever placed at the disposal of a great pianist. He can span a 12th that is, an octave plus four more keys. "They did not convince me. Jeanne d'Arc, a charming story. But not my idea of what is. Look at those Irish people now, who produce such fine poetry—civilized, musical people, like you and me. But one side is Protestant and the other is Catholic, so they kill each other for it. The Arabs and the Israelis, what do they want of each other? The Arabs have Mohammed, Israel has another fellow, so they say, sorry, but we must kill you for that. So, long ago, I decided I did not see any god. We are put here on earth without being asked if we want to live, just like any animal but more unfortunate because we also have this brain." Rubinstein's voice has lost its rich timbre by this time and dropped to an enervated whisper. Then, jerking himself up straight, he brightens.

"I felt I was left alone in the world, forced to live." And here he launches into one of his favorite stories, about the time when he tried to hang himself. He made the attempt in Berlin at the age of 21 when his career had hit bottom. It was a gray day in 1908. He was out of money and being dunned by hotels and restaurants. He could not get concert engagements. He was not, for the moment, in love. So he tried to hang himself in his bathroom. Fortunately, the rope (his bathrobe belt) broke and sent him sprawling ("If I saw today such a scene on television, I would roar with laughter," he comments in his memoirs). And he found

himself born again, looking at the world with an ecstasy that, 68 years later, he manages to sustain. This is not a man glumly marking time, waiting to be released from life. Three years ago, he published his first book, the charming memoir entitled "My Young Years." His newly recorded complete set of Beethoven concertos is out this month.

According to Max Wilcox, who has produced all of Rubinstein's recordings since 1959, the Beethoven sessions "went terribly well." Done last year in London with Daniel Barenboim conducting the London Philharmonic, the five concertos were recorded in seven-and-a-half sessions, a total of not quite 19 hours. "That would be very quick for anybody, but for someone who's nearly 90, well..." Wilcox pauses to think. "Has there ever been a reigning piano virtuoso at this age? I don't think so." Saint-Saëns, Isidor Philipp, Francis Planté and others played in public when they were approaching or even past 90, but apparently at nothing like Rubinstein's level.

Another who has worked closely with Rubinstein—at his side, in fact, as piano tuner and sometime page turner—is Stephen Borell. Formerly head technician of Steinway (and later of Baldwin), Borell is on his own now and no longer tunes Rubinstein's Steinways. But for years he traveled with the pianist to tend his piano, and finds it easy to grow lyrical about both the artist and the man. "He has such a spirit, such a sense of humor, such a natural graciousness. And that tone..." The Rubinstein tone, full and sonorous at any volume level, has been one of the distinctive features of his playing from the beginning, and piano experts have never given up trying to explain it. Borell knows all the theories—the thick pads of flesh at the fingertips, the arm-weighted stroke, the pianist wrists—but he has a close-up observation to offer, too.

"Sitting beside him and turning pages, I was able to watch what he does, and I discovered something surprising. You know the way he likes to rise off the piano bench, lift his hands high (Continued on Page 28)



Erwin Heler

The artist at 89: Young people who hear Arthur Rubinstein this season must strain their imaginations to realize that this man was 10 years old when Brahms died.



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James Buchanan



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Blended Scotch Whisky 86.8 Proof, Heublein, Inc. Hartford, Conn.

Continued from Page 20

over the keys and bring them down with what you'd expect to be a terrible crash. Well, I noticed that, just before hitting the keys, he stops for a split second and then pushes on into them. It's done so fast you can barely see it, but that's what happens." Rubinstein enjoys the dramatic impact that he can provide with such high-handed tactics, but it is not done purely for the eyes, as you can prove by closing your own when he is about to strike. In fact, an almost imperceptible pause before pushing into the keys can act to cushion the tone, and if you have a piano handy you might even be able to check out Borell's theory for yourself. "The man doesn't just sit down at a strange piano and start playing," Borell goes on. "He experiments for a while to find out what its potential is, what its character is. Then he adjusts with incredible speed. That's typical of his whole approach to life, too." No man is a hero to his valet, it says in Flaubert, but Arthur Rubinstein is a hero to his piano tuner.

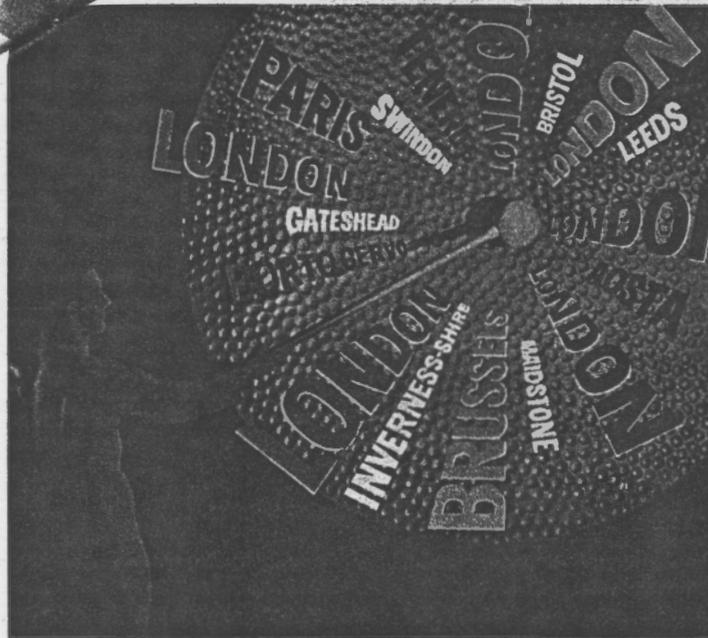
If you turn on your television set, you may well come upon this ageless hero playing a concerto by Brahms, Chopin or Beethoven in the "Great Performers" series (he also has done Grieg and Saint-Saëns, for future release). Musical America has named him Musician of the Year for 1976. Everywhere he goes someone presses a new award or honorary degree upon him. Last year he was invited to take part in a symposium on "The Majesty of Man" at the Stanford University Medical Center, to discuss the mysteries of human creativity. His fellow panelists were scientists, including two Nobel Prize-winners, Linus Pauling and Joshua Lederberg. Poor innocent scientific souls! As anyone could have told them, Rubinstein does not appear on panels, he performs on them. According to a report in The Stanford Observer, the pianist waited until the others had carried on for a time about "how 1/10-volt nerve impulses travel at 250 miles per hour through the body," and then began to talk about "his concept of happiness and the importance of emotion." As the reporter noted with unconcealed glee, Rubinstein stole the show. Recalling the event now, Rubinstein chortles over how "they wanted to poke my brain and examine me—they seemed amazed

I was still alive. Look, he still can walk and talk! By Jove, I tell you I had a good time. I wanted them to tell me in which part of the body the soul is located but they couldn't."

Last year, for the first time in 16 years, he went back to Poland, where he visited Lodz, an event that was documented in a film titled "The Comeback." He had been quite apprehensive about returning after so many years, during which both his homeland and he had changed so much. But everything went well. "It is a very touching country, you know, a very proud little country. They have something in common with the Spaniards, a certain noble pride. A bit stupid, some practical people might say. They will go a thousand strong against an army of a million Russians, fighting with forks and spoons and I don't know what. They are already proud to know that, if they fall on the battlefield, there will be beautiful poems written in their honor. They have kept that, even now. They are the only ones who opposed Hitler from first to last."

Rubinstein seldom goes on for long without talking politics, especially international politics in relation to Israel. "When I have been playing for nothing, you know, for the last 30 years." He is outraged by the treatment Israel has been getting in the United Nations and has as little respect for that body as for all the other bodies that misgovern the people of the world—his people, all of them his personal friends. "Look here, the United Nations, if you will allow me to say it, is an assembly absolutely of rascals. It is supposed to be a gentlemen's club. So in this club they have had a Stalin, heh, heh, heh. A Mr. Kadar who has killed I don't know how many thousands of people in Hungary. The Czech fellow whom I would like to kick. And all those others who are not ripe for such a club, who don't know what it is all about. An absurdity, really."

Rubinstein, who was living in Paris with his wife and two children (subsequently two more arrived) when World War II broke out, picked up his family and moved to the United States, like so many European refugee artists, among them Mann, Bartok, Schoenberg, Hindemith and Stravinsky. And like so many of them, Rubinstein moved to California, where he settled in Bever-



A gentle reminder (as if you need one).

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With his piano: Rubinstein in 1906, when he made his American debut. He did not make "an unforgettable impression."

ly Hills in what was, by that time, his 32d home. He became a United States citizen in 1946 but now lives—when he is not making the international hotel circuit on his incessant tours—in homes in Marbella on Spain's Costa del Sol and in his prewar house on the Avenue Foch in Paris, close to the balcony home of Debussy.

Many of Rubinstein's old friends have deserted him by now and while the ranks have been filled by the multiplying millions of us who know him through his music-making, the absentee list is a glorious one. Man and boy, Rubinstein has been close to virtually all the important artists and public figures of the century. He was, it is startling to realize, a protégé of Joseph Joachim, the man to whom Brahms dedicated his Violin Concerto, and of Paderewski, the only pianist ever to be the political leader of his country (one makes this statement in full recognition of the fact that Harry Truman, Richard Nixon and others have been known to sit at the instrument on occasion). He was befriended by Saint-Saëns, rubbed elbows and minds with Hemingway and Picasso ("I knew him before he was Picasso and I was Rubinstein") and championed the music of such friends as Stravinsky, Albéniz, Granados, Falla, Szymanowski, Ravel, Foulenc and Milhaud when these names were considered part of the accursed avant-garde. He even—yes, even this—knew Sol Hurok before Hurok was an impres-

ario. Now, of course, the Great Sol is gone, too, and Rubinstein is lonelier for it.

"I met Hurok when I was 40, you know, and we were both struggling to begin. Chaliapin, who was my dear friend—my big brother almost, I adored him—invented me to his hotel here in New York for breakfast. This was in those for me very dark 20's, you see. And there was a little man sitting in the corner. Chaliapin treated him terribly, told him to sit there, don't speak, things like that. I played 'Petroushka' on the piano and the little man—who, of course, was Hurok—thought it was fine."

At the time of meeting Hurok, Rubinstein was middle-aged and a notoriously erratic artist. Although he had made his New York debut in 1906 and had returned in 1919 for a second try at the brass ring on the American concert carousel, he had made something less than an unforgettable impression. Technically, he insists (although there are those who will dispute him on the basis of existing recordings) he was not first-class. So, after his marriage at 43 in 1932 to Aniela Myinarski, he made up his mind to become a responsible fellow. He cloistered himself in an Alpine village and practiced 12 to 16 hours a day, trying to rebuild from the ground up a technique that could match his innate musicality and flair. "You see, before that I was a little too interested in other things at certain periods of my life. I adored literature. I enjoyed hearing intelligent

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people talk and that stopped me from wanting to practice." (As others remember it, and as Rubinstein documents it in his memoirs, the problem was not so much literature as women, wine and song, to revise slightly the traditional recipe for oats-sowing.)

"So, here was this little fellow Hurok, at that time putting on low-priced concerts here in the Hippodrome. Mischa Elman, the circus, horse shows, Galli-Curci, everything—oh, how it smelled. Hurok remembered me from Chaliapin's and came to see me. I have Titta Ruffo for a concert but he is able to sing only a few arias, so would you play two items on his program? Yes, I would. As it happened, Ruffo was not in voice, but I was in voice and the audience made me give two encores in the middle of the concert. Hurok was very impressed. He thought my kind of personality was absolutely right for the country at that moment and so we made the career together, Hurok and I."

Hurok was a shrewd judge of performing chemistry and it is not hard to see now why Rubinstein has enjoyed such a large and fanatically devoted audience. Above all, he pays attention to a work's "jine," its overall meaning and design and, as Sir Thomas Beecham once reminded an orchestra, "That's all the audience really cares about." Rubinstein himself remembers that "even in the days when the critics used to complain most about details, the line was there, it jolly well was there." However, the line, must be supported by innumerable nuances of phrasing, accentuation, color changes and dynamic gradations or it will fail to please discerning listeners and the fact is that musicians have been Rubinstein's most dedicated fans throughout his career. It is not given to every pianist to please both the finest musicians of his time and Sol Hurok's millions.

Mrs. Rubinstein, a lively blonde woman who is 23 years younger than her husband, had joined the conversation by this time and put in, "We miss him very much, Hurok. He was so funny about that 'Artur' business." Rubinstein nodded and immediately slipped into his Sol Hurok impression, rumbling in the familiar tone of the Ukrainian immigrant-

showman: "Ah, my dear Artooooor." Hurok insisted on calling Rubinstein Artur for publicity purposes because he thought the name had more class than plain Arthur. "But I always signed my name in Spain as Arturo, in Slavic countries as Artur, and in America I want to be Arthur. It's silly to make a fuss and I feel guilty about it, but I always preferred that."

At the word "guilty," Mrs. Rubinstein looks at her husband reproachfully. "This man, he is ridden with guilt. He feels guilty about the wars, about being a survivor when so many others are gone. And he even feels guilty about not having played some great pieces of music." Rubinstein nodded glumly. "Yes, I will die with the feeling that there are at least a hundred works that I might have played—the Sixth Sonata of Prokofiev, for instance, also the First and Third concertos. But, you know I really never wanted to play the last sonatas of Beethoven in public. I think these are private works, for the drawing room. The public pretends to love them but really it gets rather bored. The slow movement of Op. 111 is sublime but in the concert hall, unless it is played in an absolutely sublime way, I want to fall asleep."

Such Rubinstein attitudes as that have always gotten him in trouble with people who consider themselves more serious than he about music. But while he may be temperamentally in tune with much of the piano literature that these more somber souls admire, he has found much of it unsuited to his public needs. Until recent years, for instance, he played little Mozart and less Schubert, though when he got around to recording a Schubert sonata, he chose the greatest and most challenging of them all, the posthumous B-flat. He isn't very good at explaining why he favored Brahms or Chopin. "I always had the feeling that music is good to be heard but not too much spoken about. That's why I didn't write so much about music in my book. I find them pretty funny, actually, those little books that musicians write about how they play." He casts his astonishingly pliable face into the caricature of a philosopher-pedant and ponderously intones, "I was reading one day more of Schopenhauer, and then I played the Chaconne a little—ah, slow—A throwaway joke, deliv-



ered with the timing of the both comedian."

Despite a career-long addiction to the music of Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann, Rubinstein seems to have grown increasingly disturbed about the nation that produced them. He has not played in public on German soil since the beginning of World War I, when he became outraged at the treatment of the Belgians by the German invaders. For a while after the holocaust of World War II, he even refused to get out of planes when they touched down in Germany for brief stopovers.

However, in 1963, he gave a special concert in the Netherlands, just across the German border, to which bus-loads of his German admirers were brought, simply to show that he clearly distinguishes the people of any country from the fools and scoundrels who rule them. He has faith in them, even now. "Why should I be cynical? My public is individuals, made up of people who love music. I hate all the nations in the world because can you ever really believe one word that their leaders say? Hypocrites! Russia, for instance—250 million Russians, and 240 million are slaves. Revolutions are always made by decent people, but right away..."

Because Rubinstein has never been able to treat music as one of the abstract sciences, his ideas about composers and their works seem to conflict at times or overlap into politics. Even Brahms, his be-

loved Brahms, can be annoyingly Prussian. "Do you know that Brahms broke off his friendship with a Viennese doctor, a great patron of the arts, because that doctor once invited Massenet to dinner? Massenet had come to Vienna to produce his opera 'Werther.' Brahms said to his friend, 'How could you tolerate that dirt, that so-called music? You are no friend of mine.' He didn't even go to the doctor's funeral. I was absolutely furious when I read that. I spat blood, because I adore Brahms. But he was always rude, terribly rude, a vicious fellow, if you like. But what can you do about it? You know how rude he was to Clara Schumann at the close of her life? Last year I swallowed eight volumes of Max Kalbeck's biography of Brahms, absolutely, day by day. He tells those stories on Brahms." Rubinstein talks heatedly, not about some historical figure, but about a contemporary whose life became intertwined, through Joachim, with his own.

We have moved to the dining table by now, and Mrs. Rubinstein is revealing to me one of the possible answers to the mystery of her husband's physical and mental resilience—his eating habits. "For many years I have cooked for him. I am a professional cook, I love it. You know, this new fat-free French cuisine they are talking about, I like it very much because I have always done it. I take off all the grease, all the fats, and at the end



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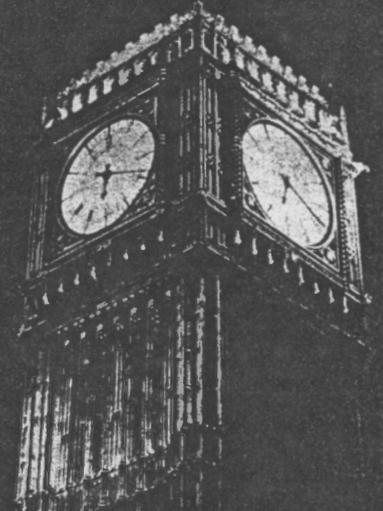
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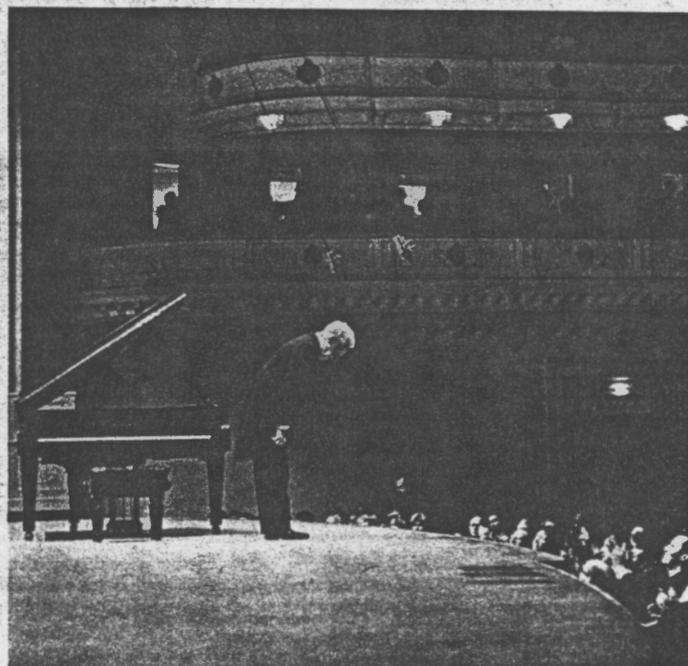
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With his audience: Rubinstein acknowledges applause after a Carnegie Hall concert, 1924.

I put in a little cream here and there."

The Rubinsteins laugh a lot, loudly and with gusto, and seem to enjoy each other's jokes enormously. "For 43 years, all my married life, I have cooked that way. He is a very easy fellow to feed. Good appetite. He loves chicken, so I have a million ways to cook it. He could eat it every day and not complain. He doesn't very much like red meat." Rubinstein drops his jaw, hunches over his plate and gives his imitation of your average American gourmand tearing at a bloody steak, complete with cave-man growls and digestive sound effects. But then the winds of Rubinstein's moods change again. "You know," he says quietly, "I would like to continue writing—but no, it is too late now, I am too old, and my eyes . . ."

Mrs. Rubinstein winces, and the reason quickly becomes clear: Rubinstein is losing his sight. "Shall we tell?" Mrs. Rubinstein asks her husband. He smiles and shrugs. "Why not, after all," she goes on, "when it is really more wonderful that you play without . . ." And so the suspected but still startling facts come out.

"For the last six concerts

I couldn't see the keys," Rubinstein says. The trouble, which has been growing increasingly more serious in the last few years and now affects both eyes, seems to date from a time when Rubinstein was hospitalized by an attack of shingles. A type of eye failure that is not helped by glasses, it is caused by a hardening of blood vessels in the eyeball. Rubinstein has been left with only dim peripheral vision. Moreover, as has become increasingly evident during our conversation, the hearing in his right ear is just about gone.

But Rubinstein's reservoir of good humor seems bottomless and his élan does not desert him even at this dark turn of events. "Of course, it is very bad for me, this thing of the eyes, because, next to music and my family, I love books the most. So my wife will have to read to me now. We are making plans for this new kind of life. Naturally, I regret this very much, but what can you do? I am getting old and these things happen to one at this time. I still will enjoy every day, and keep on playing if I can." Fortunately, he has a photographic memory in which is stored hundreds of

pieces, including about 40 concertos.

Something has been nagging at my own memory during this discussion and, after leaving the Rubinsteins, I go home and look up my notes from that 1972 interview in Buffalo. I find a few sentences that hadn't seemed important enough to include in the article I wrote then but which now leap out of the page. Rubinstein had been good-naturedly defending his flamboyant style of playing, his way of leaning back, gazing at the ceiling and lifting his hands high off the keyboard. "As you know, I was always the champion of wrong notes, but I don't care because I need the impact that I can get in this way," he had said. "I must confess, in fact, that my dream is to play whole pieces, maybe whole programs, without looking at the keys once."

The dream is now reality. Perhaps there will again be a few wrong notes? Perhaps. But Rosina Lhevinne, herself one of the famous pianists and teachers of her time, long ago had the last word on that. To a student who mentioned Rubinstein's occasional wrong notes, Lhevinne responded dreamily, "Ah, yes, but what wrong notes." ■

Rubinstein

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Awards this

Presidential Medal of Freedom

With Distinction

to

ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN



Musician, gentleman, and bon vivant, Arthur Rubinstein has shared his singular and deeply personal mastery of the piano throughout the world. For over seven decades, his ceaseless vitality, his luminous spirit and his profound depth of mind have brought a fresh sparkle to the lives of people everywhere. His audiences love him; his colleagues and friends revere him; and his country, the United States of America, is proud to proclaim him as a giant among artists and men.

There is no scenario because they won't know until 10:00 if or not Rubenstein will play the piano.

12:10 The President will come upstairs to get Mrs. Ford

12:15 The President and Mrs. Ford will join Mr. and Mrs. Rubenstein and children in the Red Room

12:20 Rubenstein children proceed four principals entering East Room (Mrs. Ford will sit on the platform with the Rubensteins.

President Speaks and presents medal

Rubenstein Speaks

Rubenstein May play piano

12:50 If he plays there will be brief mingling (5 min. with the principals and guests)

There will be a receiving line in the hall after ceremony

1:20 President goes up to the luncheon which is in the Yellow Oval Room

2:20 Luncheon ends

3:15 pm - PSA Taping



NOT FOR RELEASE

Guest list for the reception to be given by the President and Mrs. Ford on the occasion of the Presentation of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Arthur Rubinstein on Thursday, April 1, 1976 at twelve o'clock

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein

Miss Alina Rubinstein

Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein

Miss Eva Rubinstein

Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein

Mr. and Mrs. John Rubinstein

Son and daughter-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein

His Excellency The Ambassador of Austria
and Mrs. Halusa

His Excellency The Ambassador of Belgium
and Mrs. Van Cauwenberg

His Excellency The British Ambassador
and Lady Ramsbotham

His Excellency The Ambassador of Chile
and Mrs. Trucco

Mrs. Jacques Kosciusko-Morizet
Wife of the Ambassador of France

The Honorable Niels Hansen
Charge d'affaires, Embassy of the Federal
Republic of Germany

His Excellency Simcha Dinitz
Ambassador of Israel

Mrs. Roberto Gaja
Wife of the Ambassador of Italy

The Honorable Emile Tydeman and Mrs. Tydeman
Charge d'affaires, Embassy of the Netherlands

His Excellency The Ambassador of the Polish People's Republic
and Mrs. Trampczynski

His Excellency The Ambassador of Portugal
and Mrs. Themido

Dr. Gheorghe Ionita
Counselor, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Romania

His Excellency The Ambassador of Spain
and Mrs. Alba

His Excellency The Ambassador of Sweden
and Mrs. Wachtmeister

Mrs. Dean Acheson, Washington, D. C.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Allbritton
Publisher, The Washington Star

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Werner Amram, Washington, D. C.



Mr. Walter Anderson

Music program director, National Endowment for the Arts

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Mr. and Mrs. Percy Aycock, McLean, Virginia
Campbell Music Company, Inc.

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Mrs. Philip Barry, Washington, D. C.

The Honorable Jacob D. Beam and Mrs. Beam, Washington, D. C.

Captain Peter Belin, USN, retired, and Mrs. Belin, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Samuel Ellison Belk III, Washington, D. C.

Mrs. Luis Bolin, Washington, D. C.

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Librarian of Congress

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The Honorable Philip W. Buchen and Mrs. Buchen
Counsel to the President

The Honorable Ellsworth Bunker and Mrs. Bunker
Ambassador at Large; Mrs.--The Honorable Carol C. Laise,
Director General of the Foreign Service

The Honorable W. Randolph Burgess, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Paul Callaway, Washington, D. C.

Mrs. Harvey L. Cliburn, Shreveport, Louisiana
Mother of Mr. Van Cliburn

Mr. Van Cliburn, Shreveport, Louisiana
Concert pianist

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Director, National Air and Space Museum

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Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Cox, Washington, D. C.

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Feinstein
Executive Director of Performing Arts, JFK Center for the
Performing Arts

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Medal of Freedom recipient 1970

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Medal of Freedom recipient 1976

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LUNCHEON - April 1, 1976

Mrs. Robert Low Bacon

Mr. John Rubinstein

MRS. FORD

Mr. Arthur Rubinstein

Miss Alina Rubinstein

Mr. William M. Cook

Mrs. Arthur Rubinstein

THE PRESIDENT

Miss Eva Rubinstein

Mrs. John Rubinstein

The Secretary of State

ENTRANCE



Yellow Oval
Room -

Miss Alina Rubinstein -- 26 years old, medical student, Columbia University

Miss Eva Rubinstein -- 38 years old, professional photographer - Eva was married to Rev. William Coffin of Yale Divinity School but has been divorced from him for 10 years - assumed maiden name.

John Rubinstein -- 30 years old - has had a lead role in "Pippin."

Mrs. John Rubinstein -- wife of son.

Mrs. Robert Low Bacon -- grande dame - Washington society -- Rubinsteins' are house guests of Mrs. Bacon.

William Cook -- Stock Broker, Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith - long time friend of the Rubinsteins - has acted as liaison for this event.



Brief Background Notes on Arthur Rubinstein

Arthur Rubinstein was born 89 years ago in Lodz, Poland, the seventh child in his family. His father owned a hand-loom factory.

He was recognized as a prodigy while still a child, and by the time he was eight had given his first concert -- for charity. Soon thereafter he began studying under a great Hungarian violinist, Joachim (who was a friend of Brahms).

At the age of 16, he made his first appearance in the U.S. playing in Philadelphia, in Carnegie Hall, and elsewhere. That was in 1906 -- 70 years ago!

For the next 25 years he played in several continents. Audiences loved him, especially Spanish-speaking ones, because of his great exuberance and zest, but he always fell below his recognized talents. It was said that he paid too much attention to women, wine and song -- in that order -- and not very much to his practice.

He became much more serious about his music in the 1930s, especially after he married the daughter of a Polish conductor, Aniela Mlynarski. She has been a great influence upon his life.

Rubinstein really became a great figure upon the American scene when, after an absence of 10 years, the impresario Sol Hurok brought him back here in 1937. He was a smashing success and has been returning regularly to the U.S. ever since -- and his fame has been steadily growing.

He has since been decorated by practically every major country in the world. The U.S., his adopted country, is about the last to recognize him -- a sore point in the art world.

* * *

Great, good humor and a love of life have always been two of the Rubinstein trademarks. He is regarded as a very fine conversationalist, interested in almost everything -- including foreign affairs.

* * *

One of the saddest parts of Rubinstein's career for his fans is his rapidly growing blindness. On this tour of the U.S., it is said that he cannot really see the keyboard. He is limited mostly to peripheral vision. His hearing is also impaired in his right ear. (He will be shown a copy of the President's remarks prior to the Thursday ceremony so that he will understand what has been said and can respond appropriately.) His music now is played from memory -- and he can play some 200 pieces by heart.

* * *

GERALD R. F.

Another enormous influence upon his life has been the two world wars. He was personally aware of German brutality in Belgium during the WW I, and in WW II, his six brothers and sisters disappeared in concentration camps along with six million other Jews. Since WW I, he has refused to play in Germany and for many years he refused even to get off airplanes when they stopped there for refueling.

He is also a very close friend of the Israelis and has been highly decorated there.

* * *

Rubinstein was living in Paris with his wife and two children (two more came later) when WW II broke out. He picked up his family and moved to the U.S. like so many other European refugee artists (Thomas Mann, Bartok, Schoenberg, Hindemith and Stravinsky). Like many of them, he settled in California (Beverly Hills) in what for him was his 32nd home.

In 1946 he became an American citizen, and it is said that his citizenship papers are his proudest possession.

Since then, the Rubinsteins have re-established a regular home in Paris, but his children remain here along with many of his fans and memories.

* * *

Rubinstein enjoys telling of another Polish pianist who went into politics -- Paderewski.

After WW I, Paderewski went to Versailles for the Peace Conference as the Polish premier.

He was introduced to Clemenceau, the French premier, and Clemenceau said, "Aren't you the famous Paderewski?"

"Yes."

"The musician, the pianist?"

"Yes."

"And you are now the Premier of Poland?"

"Yes."

"Well," said Clemenceau, "what a downfall."

* * *

Abroad, his name is spelled Artur Rubinstein -- a Hurok twist. Here in the U.S., it's Arthur.

* * *

REMARKS FOR ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN PRESENTATION

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I want to welcome all of you to the White House this afternoon. Many of you have been here from time to time over the years, and as long as Betty and I are here, I hope you will regard it as a "home away from home."

As most of you know, the Medal of Freedom is the highest civilian honor that it is within the power of a President of the United States to bestow.

I feel deeply privileged today to act on behalf of all Americans in presenting that medal to one of the giants of our time.

The legend of Arthur Rubinstein has been built upon many pillars.

By the account of critics, he is the greatest master of the piano living today -- a musician as thoroughly familiar with Chopin and Beethoven as with interpretations of more modern



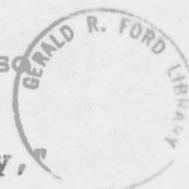
Spanish and impressionist pieces.

It is difficult for many of us to believe that Arthur Rubinstein made his New York debut in Carnegie Hall some 70 years ago.

He was a young man then and by his own account, he was not yet the artist that he knew he could be. But in the years that have passed since then -- through his extraordinary dedication and through the support of his lovely wife and family -- who are with us today -- he has turned his vision and interpretations into an uncompromising standard of musical excellence.

Yet to millions of fans across the globe, Arthur Rubinstein has given something more than the joy of music. He has also given the joy of life itself. "I love life unconditionally," he has said, and he has communicated that sheer delight to generation after generation.

It was his late and very fine friend, Sol Hurok, who wrote after first hearing Mr. Rubinstein in 1921: "The power of his



personality and the sense of grandeur and poetry that enveloped his playing filled me with almost unbearable excitement."

The multitudes who have packed concert halls in Europe, in the Soviet Union, in Latin America, and in the United States -- they too have felt that "unbearable excitement" from this man.

Finally, I would say this about the Arthur Rubinstein legend. Here in the United States we feel a special affection and bond with him because in 1946 -- some 30 years ago -- he chose to make America his home.

Arthur Rubinstein has been decorated and celebrated in almost every land, but it is said that above all else he values the document that made him an American.

All of us who have been touched by his grace and kindness, his love, his generosity and his warmth of humor will always be grateful that he chose to share our citizenship.

I know that many of you here today have long looked forward to this moment, and I feel proud that on this 200th anniversary of our nation, I have the privilege to present this



medal to one of our greatest national treasures:

Mr. Arthur Rubinstein.

And now, Mr. Rubinstein, if you will please step forward,
I will read the citation and present the Medal of Freedom.

