

The original documents are located in Box 27, “4/1/76 - Remarks for the Arthur Rubinstein Presentation” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID

REMARKS FOR ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN PRESENTATION

APRIL 1, 1976

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID

LET ME 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 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.

CRITICS HAVE ACCLAIMED HIM 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.

UROK

IT WAS HIS LATE AND VERY FINE FRIEND, SOL HUOK,
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.

HERE IN THE UNITED STATES WE FEEL A SPECIAL BOND
WITH ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN 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.

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.

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.

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