

1732

H. Piano Recital

by

Anu Borg

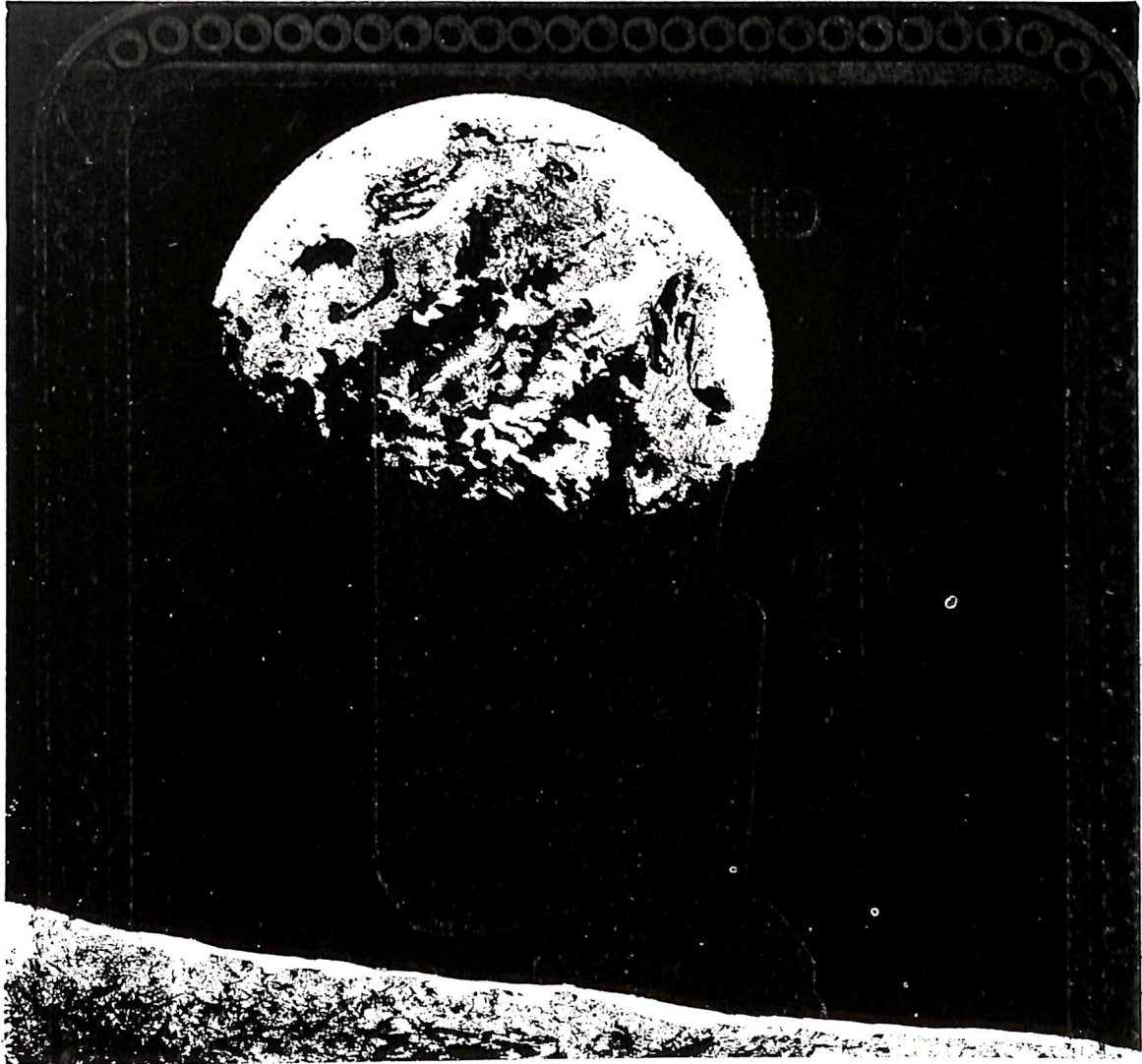
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by

ANNE BORG

at the

MANOEL THEATRE

Tuesday, 12th April 1977

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Anne Borg, born in 1949, studied the piano under the tuition of Miss A. Parnis England and Miss A. Hare.

In 1967 she won the prize in the piano competition organised by the Malta Song Festival Board and, through the German Embassy, was awarded a year's scholarship which enabled her to study under Walter Blankenheim at the Music Academy in Saarbrücken. She next obtained a scholarship through the German Academic Exchange Service, subsequently extended for a further three years, eventually continuing her studies under Robert Leonardy. Gained her Teacher's Diploma in 1974 and the Performer's Diploma in 1976. Has also attended in 1974 a Master Course under the Russian Professor Naumow and is currently on Master classes under Vitalij Margulis of Leningrad and Freiburg Music Academies.

Anne Borg has been teaching piano at the Conservatory since 1972. She started playing chamber music in 1971 and together with Helmut Haag formed a "Duo Concertante". She has also given performances on radio, besides piano recitals, chamber music and orchestral concerts.

PROGRAMME

French Suite No. 5 in G Major

J.S. BACH

Allemande — Courante — Sarabande — Gavotte — Bourree — Loure — Gigue

Bach wrote the six piano Suites in Köthen, he called them "Suites for the Harpsichord." The title "French Suites" was given them only later, perhaps because of his more elegantly taut, dance like treatment here as compared with the more musically extended "English Suites". "Suite" at that time was the musical term for a set of dance tunes linked together by being in the same key and frequently also with common thematic material.

The opening Allemande is the old German processional dance in 4/4 time. This is followed by the Courante, originally a French ballroom dance but now a dance tune in graceful, flowing 3/4 time. The Sarabande, a Spanish dance, with its slower triple time 3/4 has two "Steps" of different length, the first on the first beat of the measure and the second taking up the second and third beats. The Gavotte is a gay, sprightly ballroom dance and the Bourree has something of the gay country dance in its accents and brisk rhythm. The 6/4 time of the sensitively melodic Loure is also in duple time, but with all its grace, it is "slow and grave" though by no means ponderous. Finally the English Gigue begins the two sections with thematic imitation and inversion, forming an extremely light and jolly end to the suite.

Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel Op. 24

J. BRAHMS

The twenty-five Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel were written in 1861. The theme is from the first of three "Lessons" for the harpsichord which Handel wrote for the children of his royal patron, the Prince of Wales and Brahms' treatment of it is itself a masterly lesson in the infinite artistic possibilities which accompany a truly great variation technique. The result is a work of incredible spiritual as well as technical vigour, with an emotional grandour which is far removed from the rather formal and essentially simple character of the theme which Brahms chose to explore.

The first variation cheerfully promises a sequence of baroque-style melodic variations, but in the second Brahms at once asserts his own style with a chromatic and rich harmonic sequence. All the first five variations follow the original melody remarkably closely, and the sixth is itself a variation of the fifth in canon.

The next two variations are lively and insistent, the eighth is written wholly on the tonic and dominant of the home key, so that the chromaticism of the following variation emerges in beautiful contrast. By now the melodic connection with the theme is becoming increasingly remote, although the basic harmonic scheme is still only slightly modified, as in the humorous tenth variation which intermittently exchanges minor for major harmonies. More harmonic exploration edges the eleventh further afield, and the twelfth gives a new outline of the theme to the left hand.

The solemn thirteenth variation is once more in the minor. This melancholy mood is rudely shattered by the liveliness of the next four variations

which melt gradually into a sequence of horn calls which are to form the foundation of the warm released variation which follows. The brisk siciliana gives way to the chromatic harmonies of the twentieth. Variation 21 leaves the basic melody in its home key in the form of grace notes, preparing the way for the charming "musical box". The final three variations form a closely knit and increasingly thrilling climax in preparation for the magnificent and superbly written fugue with which Brahms crowned what is surely among his very greatest works.

INTERVAL

Sonata in F Minor Op. 57 "Appassionata"

L. VAN BEETHOVEN

Allegro Assai — Andante Con Moto — Allegro Ma Non Troppo — Presto

This sonata (the title "Appassionata" was not conferred by Beethoven) was written in the years 1804/05 and is dedicated to Count Franz von Brunswick. Like the Waldstein Sonata and the Eroica Symphony it contains many features of Beethoven's "new" style, the impact of which comes from the objectivity of the presentation as much as from the perfection of the architectural structure. And structurally, the first movement has much in common with the Waldstein Sonata, especially in the lay-out of the principal subject. The exposition is not repeated, as it normally is; instead the development section goes over the ground of the exposition to restore the proper proportion. The way the recapitulation is ushered in over a pedal-point of C shows how the passion of the development spills over into the recapitulation. The codas of both the first and last movements are marked "più allegro" and "presto" respectively, which makes for an intensification of the musical thought as well as of the tempo. The middle movement in variation form reverts to its original function of a slow movement. It contains a number of extremely abrupt contrasts, the figuration is tenuous, and the form compact.

Scherzo No. 1 in B Minor Op. 20

F. CHOPIN

The self contained Scherzi which Chopin published between 1835 and 1843 are not jocular pieces, despite some capricious features; in particular the first three are full of impassioned animation, and their mood is varied by more than the contrast between the principal and middle sections. Chopin here fashioned a form compounded of elements of the Symphonic Scherzo and of a very free treatment of Sonata form with its two themes. All four Scherzi are in 3/4 time, and are marked Presto.

In this Scherzo, after two strong introductory chords the tempestuous quaver figuration of the opening theme dominates almost the whole of the principal section. Contrast is provided only by the Trio with its fervent melody in the middle voice, which is embedded in rocking accompanying figures and bell effects. A return of the introductory chords brings this lyrical Intermezzo to a sudden end.

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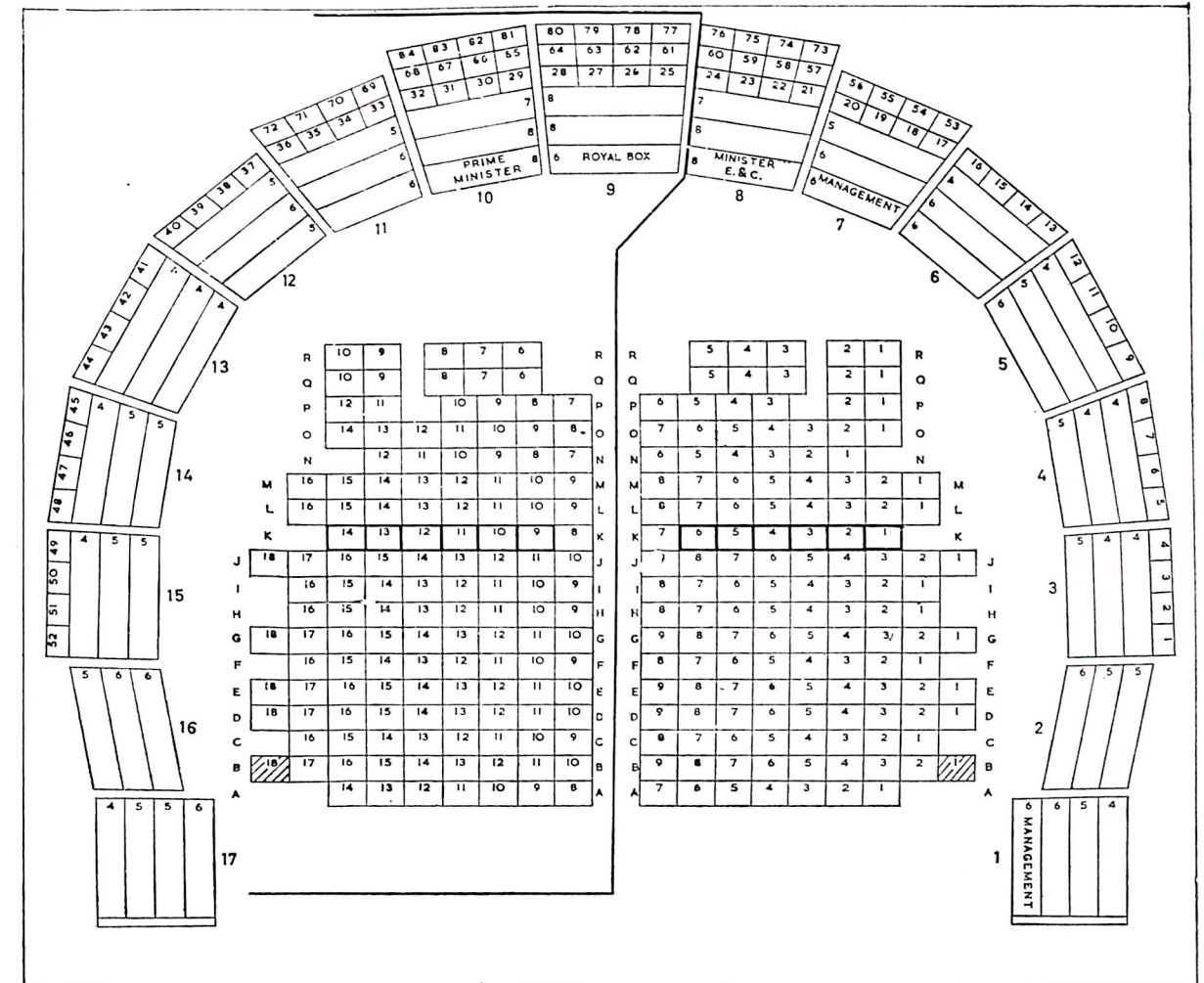
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Children even when accompanied by their parents, will be required to occupy a seat.

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