Artur Rubinstein

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN, the Polish pianist who has died, aged 95, was a leading figure in music for 40 years and was one of the most satisfying artists heard on the concert platform.

His poetical taste and the physical and intellectual strength of his playing, even when aged, captured the imagination.

He could bring a fresh and unforgettable approach to music of the widest range.

He performed all over the world, made scores of fine gramophone records and did not disdain making film sound tracks. His urbane disposition and fluency in eight languages made him many friends.

Rubinstein was born in Poland, one of seven children of a hand-loom factory owner. He began to study the piano at the age of three, played his first concert in Warsaw two years later and, at eight, was introduced in Berlin to the German violinist Joachim.

Impressed with his gifts, Joachim persuaded three wealthy friends to help him to obtain the best instruction. He studied the piano with K. H. Barth, a pupil of Liszt, and harmony and counterpoint with Robert Kahn, of the Berlin High School for Music, and Max Bruch, the composer.

At 11, he made his Berlin debut in a Mozart concerto with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra under Joachim and soon afterwards, played at Dresden, Hamburg and Warsaw.

When he was 15, he studied under Paderewski in Switzerland; in 1905, he gave six recitals in Paris and played with the Lamoureux Orchestra. He appeared for the first time in London with much success.

In 1906, he made a tour of 40 concerts in the United States.

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Wartime interpreter

At the beginning of the 1914-18 War, Rebenstein became an interpreter at Allied headquarters in London. In 1918, he appeared at a Royal Philharmonic concert with Sir Thomas Beecham, playing Saint Saëns Second Piano Concerto. Subsequently, he later made tours of Spain and South America.

After the war, his European tours were extensive and, in London, he performed at Queen's Hall with Sir Henry Wood and other conductors.

In the Thirties, Rubinstein spent a period in France reconsidering and redeveloping his playing in accordance with a movement away from the earlier romantic style; his declared aim was to reveal as fully as possible the composer's conception of the music. He found himself discovering new qualities in works that he had been performing for years.

He later became an American citizen, but continued to play a great deal in Europe and made frequent appearances in London. He was a regular visitor.

He was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold

Artur Rubinstein.

Medal in 1961. He paid visits to Warsaw in 1958, after an interval of 20 years, and 1963, and visited Russia in 1964, after an absence of 30 years.

He married Miss Aniela Mlynarska, daughter of Emil Mlynarski, a Warsaw conductor and had two sons and two daughters.

PIANISTIC LINE

Chopin interpretation

MARTIN COOPER writes: As a pupil of Paderewski, Artur Rubinstein could trace a direct pianistic line through Leschetizky back to his great Russian namesake, Anton Rubinstein.

Artur Rubenstein was incomparable as a player of Chopin's music, sharing with the composer a natural feeling for their native Polish music as well as an instinctive understanding of the refined atmosphere of the French salon.

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