Rubinstein, Lively at 83, Visits D.M.

Review of Rubinstein's concert: PAGE 8.

By Florence Swibart

Artur Rubinstein, still one of the world's foremost concert pianists at 83, belies today's preoccupation with youth.

At an age when many retire to sun cities to play shuffleboard, the Polish-born naturalized American artist was in Des Moines Thursday night to play the fifth in the Civic Music Association's 1968-69 series of six concerts which ends with the Pittsburgh Symphony performance on Mar. 16.

Although many people his age are nursing arthritic joints, this vigorous man with the nimble fingers continues to perform the most challenging piano literature with the exuberance of youth and the virtuosity of experience.

Des Moines was only one stop on a concert tour which has taken Rubinstein to St. Louis, Mo., and Atlanta, Ga., within the last week and will continue to Minneapolis, Minn., today.

Fourteen concerts on the Pacific coast, from California to Washington, and three television appearances in New York City are on his itinerary before April, when he leaves for a concert tour of Europe.

Hand-Rolled Havanas

Nattily dressed in a dark suit, with maroon vest, tie and kerchief in a breast pocket which also held three hand-rolled Havana cigars, the short, stocky Rubinstein spent a few minutes on the stage of KRNT Theater Thursday afternoon testing the Steinway concert grand.

A nasty head cold had stopped up his ears so he checked with his manager and Harry Jensen, president of the Civic Music Association, on the sound of the instrument in the cavernous depths of the empty auditorium. The piano was new last fall and was tuned Thursday morning for the concert.

Rubinstein brings his own concert grand piano with him if necessary. He depends on the Steinway Piano Co. to tell him if he needs to. He did not bring it to Des Moines.

The Havanas are part of his "good reserve," stockpiled in anticipation of the present shortage, he explained.

"I have never smoked a cigarette," said the pianist, who lives with his wife, the former Nella Mynarski — daughter of the late Polish composer and conductor — at the Hotel Drake, Fifty-sixth street and Madison avenue in New York City.

Coffin's Father-in-Law

In Manhattan, too, are his four grown children, Paul, who works for a brokerage firm; Eva, the wife of the controversial Dr. William Sloane Coffin of Yale University; Lela, a writer, and Jehnnie, 22, actor and composer.

Although he often includes the two Schubert Impromptus (Op. 90) which he played Thursday night during his fifth concert appearance in Des Moines, Rubinstein varies his tour programs greatly.

"Otherwise, I'd get bored," declared the artist, who cherishes among his legion of memories the three months he spent with the late, great Ignace Jan Paderewski, Polish pianist and national hero, at the Paderewski home on Lake Geneva in Switzerland.

"My teacher, the late Joseph Joachim of Berlin, wanted Paderewski to hear me play," explained Rubinstein.

Artur Rubinstein
Sporty Vest, Havana Cigars

Condemnation of Land Opposed

An Omaha-based natural gas company is seeking to stop land condemnation proceedings by the Iowa State Highway Commission in a case filed in Federal Court here.

The Northern Natural Gas Co., which supplies Des Moines and other Iowa communities, is asking the court to declare land acquisition proceedings by the commission unconstitutional.

The company claims the highway commission is attempting to take property belonging to them "where there is no public necessity." The Omaha firm owns pipelines which run through eight properties recently acquired by the state for construction of highways.

The highway commission is attempting to regulate commerce by obliterating the rights of others who serve the public, the company charges. The company claims property is being taken without due process of law guaranteed in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution.