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Autor: MG
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HISTORICAL SETTING FOR HIS 'DEBUT'

Fenton House, in Hampstead, belongs to the National Trust. It is one of the earliest and largest houses in that part of North London, dating back to 1693, a beautiful architectural product of the William and Mary period. It is surrounded by a lovely garden. Fenton House contains a fine collection of early keyboard instruments and also valuable china. One of the harpsichords, the largest model made in 18th-century England, was made by Burkat Shudi, a Swiss, and his son-in-law, John Broadwood, in 1770. This instrument was used at a concert held there on 24th June, 1976. It was under the patronage of the London Group of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, in conjunction with the International Liszt Centre for 19th-Century Music in London.

The setting was perfect on that lovely summer's evening, and the recital room filled with an eager audience. The President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique, Mrs. Mariann Meier, welcomed members and friends of both organisations, as well as of the Swiss Churches, to whom the surplus of receipts was donated. She also expressed gratitude to the three artists, Shuna Wilson (cello), Uli Stefan (recorder and flute) and Lennart Rabes (harpsichord), who were giving their services free.

The programme began with Handel's Sonata in A minor, Op. 1, No. 4 for recorder and continuo. The recorder blended beautifully with continuo and harpsichord in a pleasant rendering of an old favourite. Bach's Sonata No. 2 in D

for cello and harpsichord was pleasing in tone, played with musical feeling and accompanied with great sensitivity.

The solo Suite No. 2 in D minor for cello was a difficult work, neither easy to play nor to digest. It had great musicality, and was played with expert skill, but there were perhaps not enough differences in character and tonal colour between the movements, no doubt due to the unusually hot evening.

Scarlatti's two sonatas in D minor and C major for harpsichord were a delight in their delicate nuances.

The great surprise of the evening was the first performance in England of the Sonata Op. 2, No. 4 in E minor by the Swiss baroque composer, Gaspard Fritz, born in Geneva in 1716 (died in 1782). He was a distinguished violinist. One of his many works, six solos for cello and harpsichord, is to be found at the British Museum. The sonata played at Fenton House carries a note "Réalisation de la basse chiffrée par Frank Martin", the famous Swiss composer. In this work, all three artists were in complete harmony, and the performance was as expert as it was charming.

Great applause showed the artists how much their fine musical presentation of beautiful compositions had been appreciated.

MG

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

27th to 29th August, ASSEMBLY OF THE SWISS ABROAD at Morat. All Swiss warmly welcome to this gathering. Please apply to Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, 3000 Berne.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY. Monthly Meeting, Wednesday, 15th September at 7 p.m. at 34 Fitzroy Square, W.1.

Saturday, 6th November, Central Hall, Westminster, BAZAAR of the Swiss Churches in London.

LONDON SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY, Wednesday, 29th September, monthly meeting followed by auction. Wednesday, 27th October, monthly meeting followed by members' display Letter "E". Wednesday, 24th November, Cup Competition.

CITY SWISS CLUB - 21st September, Card Evening at St. Moritz Club Restaurant - 7 for 7.30 p.m.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

The following readers will be celebrating birthdays and anniversaries during the next few weeks.

Mr. C. Fairweather will be 86 on 7th September, and Mr. J. G. Michel 68 on the 8th of the month. Mrs. C. Burren will have her birthday on 9th September, and Mr. E. Ulmann will be 73 on the same day. Mrs. N. Towers will be 78 on 10th September and Mr. Marcel Ney, Director of the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad in Berne, will have his birthday on 19th September.

Mr. W. Bernhard Sigerist, of Rue de Chillon, 1, Apt. 23, 1842 Territet, Vaud, will be 85 on 23rd September.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Humbel will have their wedding anniversary on 24th September (1938), and Mr. M. Rothlisberger will have his 77th anniversary on 25th September.

Congratulations and many happy returns to these and any other readers who will have celebrations in September.



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