

# RUBINSTEIN DENIES RETIREMENT RUMOURS

By Brian Sumner



Since it was first announced some three months ago that the world's leading concert pianist, Arthur Rubinstein, would give a concert in Alicante, rumours have spread that the celebrity's services had been sought as soon as possible in view of his impending retirement.

The organisers of the concert, the "Sociedad de Conciertos de Alicante", publish a programme of winter activities every year, and Arthur Rubinstein's name didn't figure in the season about to end. This lent weight to the rumour that the reason why the society had gone out of its way to engage him was because he wished to retire soon and if they couldn't book him before this season ended, they would not be able to obtain him at all.

This arch-master of the piano was born in Lodz, Poland, in 1881 and gave his very first concert in Warsaw at the incredibly early age of four in a benefit concert. By the

time he was fifteen, his name was quite well known in Europe and his world tours that were to bring him fame and repute started shortly afterwards. This untiring lover of music, who derives pleasure out of giving pleasure to others has travelled all the corners of the earth, bringing pleasure to hundreds of thousands of music lovers at his personal appearances, and to many others through the numerous recordings of the melodious sounds produced by his magic fingers.

Against this background of such a long musical career, it's not surprising that retirement rumours should be heard and this question was uppermost in my mind when I was lucky enough to have a brief conversation with him during the interval of his concert in Alicante last Saturday. "Retire?" he replied with an amusing smile full of humour, "I shall retire when I go to my grave.", and there was no

doubt that he meant it. He quickly dismissed the morbid subject and instead enquired with an almost child-like apprehension if I thought the audience had enjoyed his Brahms Sonata in F. Assuring him that we all had enjoyed it enormously, he impishly declared "Nowadays I play more to please myself, but I hope the audience enjoy it too - I like Brahms".

The spirit behind his bright eyes and his unquestionable sense of humour, may not betray his advancing years, and although the enthusiasm and virility of his playing don't acknowledge them either, his body shows signs of weariness after these performances.

Clearly, Arthur Rubinstein has acquired all the fame and fortune he could wish and if he continues I feel sure, is because music is his life and because his magic hands bring so much pleasure to countless others.

(Photo Sumner)