

## Brunswickan Interviews:

## MARGARET ANN IRELAND

Last weekend the Brunswickan conducted an interview with Margaret Ann Ireland, the widely acclaimed Canadian pianist, who will be giving a concert in Memorial Hall, Tuesday, October 17 at 8:30.

Our informal interview, which took place at the Carter home in Fairvale, outside Saint John, opened with a discussion of the early years of Miss Ireland's career.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel as nervous before a performance as you did in your early years?

**Miss I.:** Yes. I would feel that something was wrong if I did not. However, the nervousness leaves as soon as I sit down at the piano. It is part of the agony one must go through and I doubt that it will ever be any better.

Miss Ireland later explained that she feels an association with one's audience is essential to a performance and that because of this awareness of one's audience, nervousness is to be expected.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel complete satisfaction when you have played well or do you ever experience any dissatisfaction?

**Miss I.:** I often feel dissatisfied with my performance and after it is over, I always go to my room and analyze my playing carefully and mercilessly, considering what could be improved so that I will give a better performance the next time. This is part of growing in public. I feel that when one ceases to analyze and criticize one's own playing, one might as well close up shop.

**Interviewer:** Do you have a certain practice schedule with a specific number of hours allotted for it each day?

**Miss I.:** Practice is like a disease. The more you practice, the more you want to do it. I try to get in two, two-hour periods each day, and when working for a concert, three two-hour periods.

While on tour it is difficult to maintain a schedule and often only brief rehearsals in empty halls can be managed. Also, as the mother of two children, I lead a dual life, where proportioning of time and energy are important.



**Interviewer:** The fact that you have made many European tours raises a point which many contend — that a Canadian artist must achieve fame abroad before he is acclaimed in his own country. Do you agree?

**Miss I.:** You know the saying about a prophet without honour in his own country — there is something in it. In my own case, I feel that my first tour triggered others. These in turn helped me in the concert field in Canada.

**Interviewer:** The most notable and at least the most recent of your tours was the one you made to Russia and Western Europe early last year. Who invited you to go to Russia?

**Miss I.:** The Soviet Ministry of Culture extended the invitation to me to play in Russia during April of 1960.

**Interviewer:** Throughout your tour of the Soviet Union you received marvellous ovations and extremely warm responses from your audiences. Do you think that Russian audiences are more enthusiastic and appreciative than others, such as Canadian audiences?

**Miss I.:** The Russians have different ways of showing their enthusiasm. For example, there is this rhythmic clapping which, when done by 2,000 people, is overwhelming. They also shout: "Bis! Bis!", which is like the French "Encore!" But the applause, which may seem more appreciative, is the same in kind.

**Interviewer:** Would you say there was a wide interest in the cultural aspects of life in Russia?

**Miss I.:** Definitely yes. With them it is a matter of pride. They are determined to better themselves. Russians are very art conscious. I noticed in all the museums and art galleries long queues day after day, waiting to see the displays.

**Interviewer:** The fact that it was the Soviet Ministry of Culture which invited you to Russia would indicate that culture, too, was state controlled. Was there any evidence of the state's influence shown to you as an artist, or any political overtones at all?

**Miss I.:** There was no political overtones. All the arrangements were made by the State Concert Agency which looks after such exchange programmes.

**Interviewer:** Are those interested in music, art and literature encouraged in Russia, just as good technicians and professional men are urged to continue?

**Miss I.:** Yes. Every encouragement is given. Here I must mention one basic difference I noticed. Children are channelled into fields best suited to their aptitudes. Thus specialization be-

gins at a very early age.

In summing up her impression of Russia, Miss Ireland felt that it was generally one of friendliness to her, as a tourist, but especially as an artist. She is convinced that these exchange tours are an excellent way for east to meet west on a common level and that they should be continued. She would like very much to return to Russia and at present negotiations are under way for a second tour.

**Interviewer:** Do you feel there are enough opportunities for Canadian artists in Canada?

**Miss I.:** At the present time, a Canadian artist, in order to get engagements must enter Canada through the American door, that

is, through one of the U. S. concert agencies. There is a crying need for large Canadian agencies to manage Canadian talent and arrange for exchange artists. As it stands now the American agencies have the complete monopoly on talent coming into Canada and until we have our own agencies there is no alternative for the artist but to submit to American management.

## NOTICE

The first Sunday evening musical will be held this Sunday, October 15th at 8.30 in the Art Center. Records will feature pieces from Margaret Ann Ireland's forthcoming performance.

## For Sale

UNB Christmas Shoppers: Don't battle the snow and crowds on December 24th — Come to Treasure Van on October 16, 17, 18, and 19 at 10:30-12:30, 2:30-5:30 and 7:00-10:00 o'clock.

This year's very special feature is the introduction of articles from the West Indies. The theme and certain "extras" will also be West Indian. Such articles as steel drums, machettes, and EVEN "Wife-Leaders" are to be sold. (The first to discover what the latter is or are, will receive a prize. Our West Indian students confess ignorance on the subject.)

The Honourable H. G. Irwin, Minister of Education, will open Treasure Van. Also at the opening, a group of West Indian students will display their native talents in calypso dances and songs.

Throughout each day of the sale, travelogues and films on foreign countries will be shown in the rear of the Ping-Pong Room.

Other first-time features include Calabushes from Ghana, Korean Nyout Games and Botus (the ever popular wine skin, of course) from Spain. You may also purchase delicate Swedish carvings and beautiful Israeli jewelry.

Prices, Treasure Van admits, are often high, but where else could you get such unusual gifts, and most important, how many people are you helping by creating this market for their goods?

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endeavours in which he might wish to participate", "Good luck", "Bonne Chance", or "All the best, Joe".

The photos are to be taken at either Harvey's Studio on Queen, or Joe Stone's, also on Queen Street. The studios will supply gowns, shirt fronts, and bow ties.



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Read these and other stimulating articles in the October 21st issue of



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