

MARCH OF THE LIVING BENEFIT CONCERT

(1997)

The "1939" Club and the Lodzer Organization jointly sponsored a benefit concert for the March of the Living at UCLA's Schonberg Hall on Saturday evening, September 20, 1997.

The concert was held in cooperation with the UCLA Center for the Performing Arts. Hershey Felder was the performing artist. His repertoire includes Hebrew, Yiddish and English songs. He is also a Steinway Artist concert pianist performing classical, modern and show tunes. (See accompanying story).

William Elperin, President of The "1939" Club and Harry Eisen, President of the Lodzer Organization, appointed four members each to serve on a steering committee to organize the event. Mr. Elperin expressed his hope that this would be the first of many joint efforts by the two survivor organizations. Mr. Eisen echoed those sentiments.

Proceeds for the concert went for grants and partial scholarships to send teenagers and young adults to the March of the Living.

The March of the Living is a bi-annual journey where thousands of primarily Jewish teens from around the world gather in Poland and Israel to mark two of the most significant dates on the modern calendar: Holocaust Remembrance Day and Israel Independence Day. The purpose of this trip is to give students a first-hand look at history and the evils of mankind. Last year 7,000 attended. During the first leg of the trip, they visit Poland where they tour various cities like Warsaw, Krakow and Lublin which were vibrant Jewish communities before World War II. After seeing and trying to picture the life that was, the youths visit concentration camps like Majdanek, Trenlinka and the infamous Auschwitz-Birenau complex. The youngsters participate in a March from Auschwitz to Birkenau on Holocaust Memorial Day. This symbolic march retraces the steps which countless numbers of innocent civilians were forced to take on the way to their annihilation.

The second leg of the trip takes the students to Israel. There they take part in Remembrance Day and Independence Day celebrations. They also confront many difficulties facing the Middle East and the peace process through lectures, discussions and visits.

Performer Profile

Hershey Felder is a Steinway Concert Artist. He entered Montreal's McGill Faculty of Music at the age of thirteen and began performing on the concert stage and in the theater at the age of eleven years old. He toured as a young actor as well as a pianist, having appeared with

Montreal's Yiddish Theater, and on CBC television. At the age of eighteen, he began studies with Julliard's Jerome Lowenthal in New York, and continued his work in both Opera and Musical Theater.

In 1989, Mr. Felder made his concert debut in Great Britain with Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* which he has since performed over 300 times in different world centers. Mr. Felder was invited to become a Baldwin Concert Artist in 1991. In 1993, he made his compositional debut with a concert presentation of *Fairytale*, starring Tovah Feldsuh and The Philharmonic on the Palisades. That season, he starred as Stempenyu in the Folksbiene's Off-Broadway production of *STEMPENYU!*

Mr. Felder continues to perform concerts in Europe, the UK, North America and Israel.