

Roman Totenberg Queen Elizabeth Hall Richard Maylan

An Old Master: the term is used of painters, why not for the other arts too? Among violinists Roman Totenberg surely earns the title. His recital last night had the authority of decades of experience, nowhere more so than in the Bach G minor solo sonata with which he began. Such firmness of melodic line, of rhythmic pulse comes only from someone who is totally sure both of his bowing technique and of his musical purpose. In the prelude he ornamented the returning theme sumptuously, in the following fugue he savoured the

full resonances of the multiple stops and stoked up a majestic climax.

And in Debussy's Sonata too he projected a sense of inner growth right through the first movement, yet was equally at home in the impulsive, wispy fantasy of the second.

To Webern's *Four Pieces* op 7 he brought fine gradations of tone, making these brief morsels convincing. And if some landmarks passed unnoticed early in Brahms' D minor sonata op 108, there was much in the rest that younger, more flamboyant fiddlers could learn from him about projection of passion. Here Brian Lamport, who had sometimes been detached and reticent at the piano, entered into true spiritual partnership.

The Daily Telegraph,
Friday, June 4, 1971

Authority of Totenberg's playing

THE authority and distinction of Roman Totenberg's violin playing at the Queen Elizabeth Hall last night was allied to a breadth of taste and stylistic scope that produced a programme of attractively extended range.

In the centre of the recital were three works by key 20th century composers, Ives's Fourth Sonata, the Debussy Sonata and Webern's "Four Pieces" and each was played with the love and understanding that produces a living artistic experience whatever the smaller blemishes.

The extreme poignancy of Debussy's withdrawn moments was classically controlled while the miniature world of Webern was shown to be capable of the most intense and also expanded feeling.

In closing these works were Bach's solo Sonata in G minor and Brahms's Third Sonata. Mr Totenberg brought to each a vigour of expression and bigness of phrase that ideally integrated the classical and romantic principles. Brian Lamport was his sympathetic keyboard partner.

A. E. P.

Programme at the Queen Elizabeth Hall 3 June 1971.

Sonata in G minor for solo violin, BWV 1001	J. S. BACH
Adagio	1685-1750
Fuga (allegro)	
Siciliano	
Presto	
Sonata no. 4 for violin and piano (<i>A Day at a Children's Camp</i>)	CHARLES IVES
Allegro	1874-1954
Largo	
Allegro	
Sonata in G minor for violin and piano (1917)	DEBUSSY
Allegro vivo	1862-1918
Intermède (fantasque et léger)	
Finale (très animé)	
Four Pieces for violin and piano, Opus 7	WEBERN
	1883-1945
Sonata no. 3 in D minor, Opus 108	BRAHMS
Allegro	1833-1897
Adagio	
Un poco presto e con sentimento	