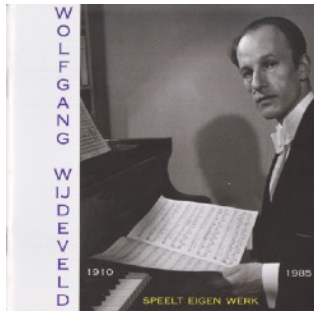




Wolfgang Wijdeveld

Homage to the initiative of Nota Bene in Enschede, that has put historical recordings by the virtuoso pianist Wijdeveld on cd

In my desk drawer is a tape with a recording of my father's voice. He is speaking on the radio and the preserved excerpt is about cultural politics. Rick van der Ploeg (Dutch Minister for Cultural Affairs at that time - JvB) will be startled to hear how many similarities exist between his ideas and the ones this politician of the KVP (Katholieke VolksPartij - the Catholic People's Party - JvB) held in 1947. Although I had no emotional bond

with my father, my heart beats a little bit faster each time I hear that voice. In this digital era it still is an amazing experience to listen to a voice that colours one's past so much.

I had to think about this when I heard on a cd not only the piano playing but also now and then the voice of Wolfgang (Wokke) Wijdeveld.

It must have been an emotional gathering, this year, a warm night in may in the small but cosy theater hall of the IJsbreker in Amsterdam. The still living children of pianist composer Wolfgang Wijdeveld saw each other back after numerous years. Wijdeveld (1910-1985) was married four times and had nine children from those relationships. In those circumstances people tend to drift apart sometimes. But during the presentation of a cd with piano pieces of his the music and the voice released nice emotions. Wijdeveld had recorded the music himself using inadequate equipment at the end of his life that he spent working hard, in spite of an exhausting disease, in the Rosa Spierhuis.

With a slightly cracking voice, but fully aware of working on a historical recording, he announces his own piano pieces: "On this side is the first sonate for piano" he proudly cries. One sees an old man sitting behind his grand piano in the large room of the retirement property for artists.

Looking through thick glasses to his own notes he composed during the first year of the war.

The dials of the tape recorder must have regularly gone into the red when he played crescendo, because there's a slight distortion coming from the speakers in those measures.

Wijdeveld was a virtuoso pianist, a great pedagogue, an associate professor at the Utrecht Conservatory, a reviewer for Het Vrije Volk (a Dutch national paper - JvB), a man of style and taste. He was somehow hindered in his potential because of the 'son of a well known father' complex. Father Wijdeveld, the famous architect, strongly influenced him; one sees the tight lines through the entire score, but the musical genes came from his grand mother, the Polish Jewish pianist Ruscha Schonfeld, who was an acquaintance of Brahms and Regers.

Indeed Reger can be heard in the cheerful, abstract piano pieces of Wijdeveld, as well as Bartók, but it is mainly the influence of his teacher Willem Pijper that puts the music of Wijdeveld in his place.

One gets somewhat merry by the music that sounds rigid but optimistic.

Not too modern, but past the late romanticism. These are precious compositions from a period when our country musically speaking did not mean much. Have the Netherlands produced any significant composers at all between Sweelinck, who died in 1621, and Louis Andriessen (still alive)?

Therefor it is good that these historical recordings by Wijdeveld are released on cd.

Homage to this initiative. Could there be found, hidden in the desk drawers of the Pijper, Andriessen sr., Strategier, Mul and others offspring, enough tapes to compile a cd?

It is almost a duty, given our meagre music history, to do something with that material.

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