

# *Piano Recital*

*by Robert Prins*



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Anticipation was high for the thousand teenagers packed into the auditorium for the variety night. On the second-to-last night of the conference, all the young people were hyped up – especially following the combined praise of 1000 voices singing in unison, after the hilarious skits that had been practiced to (almost) perfection, the musical items, and laughter they had all enjoyed.

The applause from the previous act died down and the MC took the microphone again. “And now,” he announced, “we are privileged to hear the one and only Simon Steven and his piano recital.”

Applause, cheers and whistles rang out as Simon took his seat at the piano. He paused with his hands placed over the keys, then looked up, brought his hands back down to his sides, and slowly stood up again. “Today I am playing the Piano Sonata in B-Flat Major by Franz Schubert,” he declared. He took his seat again and spread his hands over the piano keys and paused as the audience waited in suspense.

Then it happened. Simon’s hands flew over the keys in a whirlwind of musical talent. The piano keys danced to the classical music while

anticipatory silence in the hall was filled with the swing of one note to another, the twists of scales running from the bottom to the top of the piano keyboard, the boom of the deep base notes and the tinkle of treble, combining with magnificence of the composition.

Simon played with feeling. Light and dark were felt in the quality of his music, emotions charged around the room with the tones of his playing. The audience was captivated and the music went on ... and on ... and on ...

Simon played on. The audience began to shuffle in their seats. Eyes glazed over. Some people looked at their watches. The odd yawn escaped and quickly spread around the auditorium like a Mexican wave. One young man whispered to his neighbour, "Are we nearly there yet?" To which the reply came, "I hope so!" And the music went on.

It seemed like hours to the thousand teenagers in the hall, but it was probably only ten minutes, as Simon's rendition of the Piano Sonata in B-Flat Major neared its finale. But before the final chords and the classic resolution of the famous composition were played, the music abruptly stopped. The audience jolted awake. What had they missed? What happened? Simon's hands lifted from the keyboard as if he'd been burnt.

The audience began to stir but before anyone could begin a round of applause after such an unexpected ending, Simon stood up at his seat. "I'm sorry," he said, "I lost my place. I'll have to start again."

Jaws dropped; eyes filled with dismay. Surely he couldn't be serious? Pleading looks were flashed at the MC. But before anyone could react, Simon had taken his seat at the piano stool and the music began again ... from the very beginning.

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