

National Ballet of Canada. David Haber, who entertained hopes of becoming Canada's answer to Sol Hurok, made the mistake of taking on too many artists, leaving himself insufficient time to dedicate to our individual careers. He booked Canadian and American dates for me, plus a few international appearances, although most foreign offers came through contacts I had established on my own. Constantly writing letters, especially on planes, I spent hours corresponding with colleagues, agents, and music impresarios or penning articles for music magazines. There was so much more to a career, I was discovering, than just playing the guitar.

Eleanor Sniderman had had a falling out with Boot Records, so they suggested I produce a new album myself: *The Artistry of Liona Boyd*. I chose the music of Lauro, Pescetti, Cimarosa, Besard, and Mussorgsky — twelve previously unrecorded works for guitar, including my own "Cantarell" and three pieces written for me by a young Transylvanian composer, Robert Feuerstein. Through a contact established after a concert in Washington, D.C., I mailed President Jimmy Carter one of my albums. To my surprise, he responded, and over the next few years, I received three personal letters from the White House. He wrote, "I really enjoyed hearing you play, and thank you for affording me the privilege. . . . Rosalynn and I appreciate your kindness and send you our best wishes. . . . I particularly appreciate your thoughtful gesture of including 'Recuerdos de la Alhambra.' It's great! Sincerely, Jimmy."

Gordon Lightfoot decided he would present a concert at Maple Leaf Gardens to benefit our Canadian Olympic athletes in June 1976; he invited Sylvia Tyson, Murray McLauchlan, and his opening act from Minneapolis to share his stage and the national television broadcast. At first, I felt intimidated at the thought of playing my classical guitar in the middle of such a vast hockey arena, but Gordon assured me that I would have no trouble being heard. My music boomed out of speakers stacked like skyscrapers on either side of the stage. With millions of viewers, what a great way to expand my audience! Never before had I seen such lavish backstage provisions: