

CONCERT IS GIVEN BY RACHMANINOFF

**Pianist-Composer's Recital in
Carnegie Hall Presented
to Capacity House**

BACH-LISZT WORK PLAYED

**Beethoven Sonata, Scherzo
by Chopin and the 'Italian
Concerto' on Program**

By OLIN DOWNES

The piano recital given by Serge Rachmaninoff yesterday afternoon in Carnegie Hall became the occasion and the musical rite which it was logically expected to be. The man who shuns with abhorrence the suspicion of what is theatrical in his personal appearance is also the artist who shuns any unnecessary exaggeration or meretricious appeal to superficial taste.

Equipped with a gigantic technique and an immense experience, Mr. Rachmaninoff, as a pianist, could, if he chose, do all sorts of dazzling tricks, technical and interpretive. He could whirl over the keyboard and thunder out octaves in a way to impress the gallery, or he could adopt more subtle appeals to the mob by sentimentalizing or distorting the music for the sake of an effect that would be quickly grasped and rewarded by the salvos of applause too often bestowed upon the showmen and the artistically undeserving.

But Mr. Rachmaninoff needs to do none of these, and would not do them in any case. He hews to the line of his music. He is well content to expose the structure and the beauty of masterpieces, so far as he can decipher them, which is pretty far.

Audience Packs Hall

Thus the music, undistorted, unexaggerated, unpainted, makes its direct appeal to the listener; the gigantic simplicity of the presentation is one of the great attributes of this composer-pianist.

And so, yesterday afternoon, an audience that packed the hall to the rafters listened absorbed while Mr. Rachmaninoff played the Bach-Liszt—or Liszt-Bach-transcription of "Weinen, Plagen"; the Bach "Italian Concerto," the Beethoven sonata, opus 31, No. 2, in D minor, and the Chopin Scherzo in C sharp minor, for the first part of his program.

Interpreting this music, the composer-pianist was clear, sculptural, yet vigorous and highly expressive in the classic aspects. Then he played the Beethoven sonata for what it is—a romantic outpouring, especially in the first movement, which still adheres to classic mold.

Keeps to Style of Sonata

The "mold" was not removed for the sake of free "interpretation." In other words, Mr. Rachmaninoff recognized that Beethoven's form, an integral part of the musical thought is never to be ignored or misrepresented. Mr. Rachmaninoff kept to the form and style of the sonata, which became in the clarity and restraint of its statement intensely emotional and even highly personal with the composer.

The haunted scherzo of Chopin, taken at a breakneck pace, whirled by, the rhythm always more savage and insistent, the chorale-phrases broadly and poetically outlined against it and the final pages grand and wild. A reader of Bulwer's "Harold, the Last of the Barons" could well find in this music the mood evoked by the description of the Battle of Hastings. But each listener to this familiar scherzo, with its savage driving tempo, its chorales so strangely ornamented with musical frippery and its thrilling finale, will summon his own mental pictures as the notes storm by.

Mr. Rachmaninoff played this composition with the directness and intensity of feeling which characterize him as a musician, and this rule held through yesterday's recital. There was immense applause for him as the concert went on. The last half of the program embraced compositions by Debussy, Rachmaninoff and Liszt.