

## Audience Hails Master of Piano

### Rachmaninoff Applauded For 20 Minutes at End Of Magnificent Concert

The sudden applause seemed to frighten him. He turned his face—almost craned his neck galleryward, sat himself cautiously before the piano, mused a moment or two, and improvised a while—then the thronged Playhouse last night heard a magnificent piano recital by Rachmaninoff.

A Rachmaninoff recital is more than a piano concert. It is an event, an experience. You may forget the program schedule, the concerti, the etudes, but not this master, who at 65 is a giant with undiminishing stature, personality, charm—and piano technique.

#### Applauded For 20 Minutes

For 20 minutes the stubborn audience last night applauded. He responded with three encores. But the gallery and balcony were insatiable. Even while the orchestra patrons were putting on wraps and filing out, the enthusiastic "higher ups" were calling for him.

And why not?

Seldom does one hear Chopin played with such force, clarity, and beauty. Or Liszt with such charm.

One might be smug and remark that Rachmaninoff revealed touches of concert fatigue, a slight stiffness—but one does not really become smug in the presence of masters. As our intermission companion remarked: "Here, there can be no equivocation."

#### Plays Chopin Etudes

For the record: Rachmaninoff opened with "Variations" by Rameau and followed with Bach's Italian Concerto and Debussy's "Suite Bergamasque."

The second half of the program began with his own Etude-Tableau, then four etudes of Chopin and finally an etude and two descriptive numbers of Liszt.

In passing, it might be pertinent to note that while Wilmington of late has become merely a flag station on the theatrical road—through no fault of the Playhouse management—the city has gone musical in a big way, what with the management and the Wilmington Community Concert Association lighting the stage with musical stars.

The turnouts have been encouraging; the enthusiasm even more so. Perhaps the Playhouse might still become a concert hall, if the theater continues to by-pass.—W. P. F.