

# Rachmaninoff Applauded as Orchestra Soloist

Dominates Platform; Time  
Shows No Damage to  
Sensitive Touch

By ARTHUR LOESSER

Music Editor

The gaunt, melancholy, nostalgic, glamorous figure of Sergei Rachmaninoff dominated the platform of Severance Hall as he appeared last night with the Cleveland Orchestra in his usual dual role of pianist and composer.

Rachmaninoff continues a marvelous pianist; the totem years have not yet succeeded in inflicting any damage on the limber nimbleness of his fingers nor on the exquisite sensitiveness of his touch.

Unfortunately the concerto which he offered us, No. 1 in F sharp minor, is one of his earliest works, a product of his salad days.

An adolescent crush on Tchaikovsky is plainly discernible in it. The composer is said to have treated it to a renovizing job as late as 20 years ago, but that seems only to have affected the figuration, leaving the melodic material as corny as it was originally.

### Regrets Hiatus in Composing

These strictures, however, would hardly apply to the other Rachmaninoff work on the program, five Picture Studies, orchestrated from piano pieces by Respighi. They speak an individual harmonic idiom and are not devoid of power, especially the one called "Funeral March." They make us regret that the long hiatus in Rachmaninoff's creative life came shortly after their completion.

Enthusiastic applause, as always, greeted Mr. Rachmaninoff, both after his playing and when he appeared on the stage with Dr. Rodzinski after the latter had conducted the Picture Studies.

Before the intermission Dr. Rodzinski and the orchestra gave the Second Symphony of Schumann. We have heard this work several times at Severance Hall during the last few years, but surely never as clearly as last night.

### Praises Scherzo Movement

The scintillating Scherzo, in particular, was a triumph of rapid precision for the orchestra's violins, a tour de force. For once I regretted the well-mannered custom of not applauding between symphony movements.

The program opened with a Serenata Notturna of Mozart for four solo string instruments and double string quartet. The solo strings were Josef Fuchs and Hyman Schandler, violins; Tom Brennan, viola, and Jacques Posell, bass. The little group played without a conductor, save for an occasional nod from Mr. Fuchs.

The piece is light and euphonious, pleasant to hear even though it be only Grade B Mozart. It was played with great charm.