

American Work Offered By Pittsburgh Symphony

Randall Thompson's Number Acclaimed; Rachmaninoff Wins Laurels as Soloist at Mosque

By RALPH LEWANDO
Press Music Critic

Matchless conducting and notable performance, presence on the program of an important American work—Randall Thompson's 2nd symphony, and the appearance of Sergei Rachmaninoff as soloist in his own 2nd piano concerto, featured the concert of the Pittsburgh Symphony Society led by Fritz Reiner last night in Syria Mosque.

The occasion further emphasized the importance of the orchestra and its leader and the influence they are exerting in an artistic way in advertising this city.

The orchestra already is recognized as one of the six leading orchestras in the nation. Its achievements are known even in remote sections of the land where it is being asked: "Why don't we hear your fine orchestra and conductor on the air?" The answer reposes in our own community.

We listened intently to the performance of Dr. Thompson's 2nd symphony. The distinguished director of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia has contributed impressively to contemporary indigenous musical art with a large number of compositions in various forms.

Lauds Thompson's Symphony

The 2nd symphony belongs to his finest efforts. This work reveals



Mr. Lewando

the composer as a scholar who is master of his craft; of an authoritative musician with imagination. His ideas are coherent, logically expressed and intelligently modern.

In four movements, this symphony may be said to be American in its rhythmical style, which utilizes most admirably the idiom of modern syncopation.

However, the composer employs this idiom without ever transgressing bounds of artistic taste. Dr. Thompson's 2nd symphony, aside from the rhythmic considerations of the score, is rich in beauty of form, balance and harmonic color. It owns fascinating melodic charm which is cleverly and effectively disposed among the various orchestra choirs.

Rachmaninoff Acclaimed

Mr. Reiner gave a brilliant exposition of this work which evoked an ovation for the performers and Dr. Thompson, who came to the

stage to share the acclaim. He was recalled several times.

That marvelous Muscovite master, Rachmaninoff, whose genius as a creative musician and pianist has held the world stage for decades, added another laurel to his long string of successes in his performance last night. After his playing of the concerto, a storm of applause broke loose that necessitated his return to the stage several times to acknowledge it.

Mr. Reiner revealed the orchestra in its fullest accomplishment in the playing of Handel's Fireworks music, effectively revised by F. Wullner, and in the orchestral version by Mendelssohn of the Scherzo from his own Octet.

Y Group Offering 'The Gentle People'

Irwin Shaw's Group Theater success of last year, "The Gentle People," will be presented by the Y Playhouse tomorrow and Monday evenings in the Y auditoriums at 8:30 p. m.

"The Gentle People" which employed the talents of Sylvia Sidney, Franchot Tone and Sam Jaffe during its Broadway run will have Freda Cazen, Paul Fierst and Nat Elbaum in the leading roles. A cast of seasoned Y veterans will support the leads.

S. Don Moll directed the play, and Norman Rutkin designed and executed the five sets which include a pier, a bay and a Turkish bath.

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