



SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

... he was spirited away after Friday's concert

Rachmaninoff Concert a Revelation In Pianism for Enthralled Audience

Sergei Rachmaninoff gave Corpus Christi such pianism as it had never heard before in a brilliant concert Friday night at Corpus Christi Senior High School auditorium in the Civic Music Association series. For sheer beauty, for sheer majesty, for sheer power, there is no living pianist or composer who can equal Rachmaninoff.

Never, either, had a Corpus Christi audience been more attentive, more courteous, more enthralled. From beginning to end there was a perfect harmony between the listeners and the artist that made the memorable concert one of great dignity.

The delicacy and clarity with which Rachmaninoff treated Tausig's "Variations on a Theme of Schubert" was a sedative that settled the audience to a quiet, receptive mood for the brilliance which followed.

The Bach transcription "Prelude and Fugue in A Minor," an extraordinary example of the virtuosic and polyphonic writing manner, found a perfect interpreter for this severely conscientious composer in an equally conscientious and infallible performer. Only such an artist as Rachmaninoff can bring us Bach as Bach himself would have desired.

Even more must be said for his

performance of the Beethoven "Appassionata Sonata." His magnificent playing of this composer was a breath-taking revelation. Other interpretations of the immortal Beethoven forever will be inadequate for those who heard Rachmaninoff. His bony hands struck, challenging harmonies from the piano with incredible power; he played with tremendous breadth and freedom; and it is here that we realize the great strength of his personality. Here is a fierce vehemence and power; here is a passionate pleading, fluent and flexible as a stream, yet fitted together as perfectly and as wonderfully as the angular and refractory fragments of a mosaic. Superb climaxes develop under the master's touch and we hear an expression of the most fundamental joys of life in wonderfully vigorous and elastic rhythms, rugged gaiety and sustained exuberance.

In contrast to this powerful music, Rachmaninoff gave Chopin in ethereal delicacy of tones infinitely gentle, pensive, yet still touched by joy. All this was heard in one of the most difficult of Chopin's nocturnes, the D flat major. Equally as effective were

the "Two Mazurkas," with their rhythm of the dance and the harmonic lights and shades of Rachmaninoff's performance.

A highlight of the evening was Rachmaninoff's playing of his own compositions, two newly revised numbers, "Humoresque" and "Moment Musical," both of which have profited in color and brilliance under revision. The "Etude-Tableau in E flat major" was another example of the brilliant writing of the Russian pianist-composer.

Two taxing compositions of Liszt, "Sonetto del Petrarca" and "Rhapsody No. 11," were played with exuberance and amazing perfection. Technical difficulties, for which Liszt is noted, are so unknown to this artist that one is scarcely aware of the means employed.

Rachmaninoff gave the audience an added thrill when he polished off the evening with his most celebrated prelude, the C Sharp Minor. The first notes drew a new storm of applause and Rachmaninoff gave his one brief smile of the entire concert. The other encore selection of his conventional two was a Chopin waltz. (By K. P. and H. H.)

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