

Rachmaninoff Thrills Crowd With Magic

Russian Pianist Opens All-Star Concert Series Here.

By EUGENIA BRIDGES HARTY.

All-Star subscribers heard the great Russian pianist and composer, Sergei Rachmaninoff, last night in the municipal auditorium—filling it to capacity for an evening of superb music they had anticipated in vain twice last season.

First a fire, badly damaging the auditorium building, and then the pianist's illness, caused a postponement of his appearance on the 1940-41 series. But local music lovers were rewarded on the opening concert of this season's schedule, to see the famous artist walk across the stage, bow his stiff, curt nod—which he knew well—and, paradoxically, begin his beautiful, romantic interpretations of some of the world's greatest compositions.

Opening his program with the Bach "Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor," arranged by Liszt, Rachmaninoff immediately substantiated and recreated the legends of his magic touch and the unique genius of his interpretations.

Following with Beethoven's "Sonata in D Major, Opus 10"—the Preludio, Largo e Mesto, Minuetto and Rondello—he played, next, two of John Field's lovely Nocturnes. The G Major (Moonlight), and the E Major Nocturnes yielded up all their potential importance under an inimitable touch. He ended the first half of his program with Schumann's "Novelletten," which he played unbelievably beautifully.

The last part of the program was used to offer a lighter variety of subject matter, which the audience enthusiastically acclaimed, requiring three encores at the finish. The pianist's own composition, "Lilacs," which he originally arranged as a song, opened the after-intermission music.

There followed "The Trout," Schubert-Liszt; "Serenade," Schubert-Liszt; "Contrabandiste," Schumann-Tausig; "Maiden Wish," Chopin-Liszt; "The Return Home," Chopin-Liszt; "Lullaby," Tchaikovsky - Rachmaninoff, and "Liebesfreud," Kreisler-Rachmaninoff.

The next number on the All-Star Series, November 10, brings the American soprano, Helen Traubel, whom the Metropolitan wishes had fewer concerts this season. She is slated to fill Flagstad's roles.