

# Concert Given By Rachmaninoff

## Pianist Heard In Varied Program

**BY MARJORIE K. JAMINET**  
Sergei Rachmaninoff, who appeared last night at the high school auditorium in a piano concert, presented a varied program, which proved not only his well established ability as a master of piano technique, but also displays his superiority as a composer and an interpreter of other artists' works. Mr. Rachmaninoff's concert opened the 27th annual series of the Dutchess County Musical association, for which he also appeared in 1935.

In retrospect, it is difficult to determine which division of Rachmaninoff's program was superior. It is, however, seldom that an audience has an opportunity to hear an artist interpret his own compositions as he has intended, and for this reason, Rachmaninoff's inclusion of original works on his program made an interesting study.

The first piece in his original group was the extremely modern "Humoresque," which depends, at the beginning, on the cross accents and dissonances to achieve the effect, and mounts, toward the end, to a flurry of notes. This selection especially pointed the artist's mastery of notes coming in rapid succession, yet played with clarity and precision.

As the second work in this group, the pianist played, "Daisies," a true "program music" selection, a musical impression. He closed the group with "Oriental Sketch," which he presented here also in 1935, a fiery piece, not at all reminiscent of the weird, exotic music usually inferred by "Oriental," but none the less intriguing.

### Classics Played

In the first-half of the program, Rachmaninoff devoted himself to the works of the classic and classic-romantic masters. His opening selection was "Organ Prelude and Fugue, A minor," Bach-Liszt, with a slow prelude which may lack the majesty of an organ, but gains in buoyancy and emphasis.

Beethoven's "Sonata Appassionata," the second part of the program, was a delightful experience for the audience, as played by Rachmaninoff. The first movement, "Allegro Assai," is typically 18th century Beethoven, with an austere melody entwined with passages of rhythmic padding. The second movement, "Andante con moto," a succession of mellow chords and modulations, not usually accorded to Beethoven, was played with romantic expression and was punctuated by the artist's elongated phrases. The last movement, "Allegro ma non troppo," containing delightful syncopation and counter-point, was played with finesse, and climaxed this sonata.

The playing of Schubert's "Im-



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promptly. A flat minor" and the Schubert-Liszt, "The Trout," served as a transition in the program from the classic to the romantic and impressionistic works. Both selections have beautiful melodies by this master of the song. The latter work is especially interesting as a theme with variations, which emphasized the versatility in touch and interpretation of Rachmaninoff. The melody here is carried by the bass and harmonized with and accented by the treble.

### Chopin Group Offered

A Chopin group is always well received, and the "Nocturne, D flat major," which opened the second half of the program, was saturated with a free romantic expression through Rachmaninoff. The two Chopin mazurkas, in contrast, which recall a rhythmic peasant dance, depend more on the accents and other piano techniques for their expression.

The final portion of the program was devoted to two Liszt selections, "Sonetto del Petrarca A flat Major," a dreamy, meditative theme which rises to a climax and then melts away, and "Tangopody No. 11," which may be remembered by his 1935 audience as a dynamic closing piece, allowing the artist a medium to flaunt his ability. Opening with an elaborate introduction of piano mechanics, the work swings into a Slavic melody and motives, which leave the audience, as well as the artist, breathless.

### Own Selection Played

As his first encore, Rachmaninoff played his own "Prelude in C sharp Minor," which was indeed a pleasure for the hopeful audience. He also played Tchaikowsky's "Hopac," a Russian dance, "and the whizzing "Flight of a Bumble Bee." After this exhausting finale, Rachmaninoff closed the keyboard, said "good-bye," and walked off the stage.

If anything can enhance the playing of such an artist, I might mention the piano, of exquisite tone, which was sent here especially for this concert.

As a stage personality, Rachmaninoff is sober, yet appreciative of his audience. He makes no play at exhibitionism on the stage, except through his brilliant playing. His work in interpretation is injected with understanding of other masters and his touch is remarkable in the varied moods and tones that he achieves with it.

The next concert, originally scheduled for Dec. 10, has been changed to 3:30 o'clock, Dec. 7 when Jan Peerce will be the guest artist.

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