

Concert At Syria Mosque Featured By Rachmaninoff

Composer-Pianist Shares Honors With Conductor
Vladimir Bakaleinikoff, Symphony Society

By RALPH LEWANDO
Press Music Critic

Composer-Pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff, Conductor Vladimir Bakaleinikoff and the Pittsburgh Symphony Society last night in Syria Mosque shared distinguished honors in one of the most artistic triumphs in local concert annals.

The program comprised Schubert's "Unfinished" symphony, Schumann's A-minor concerto for piano and orchestra, Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on theme from Paganini's 24th violin caprice for piano and orchestra, and Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite.

The orchestra was in brilliant form, Mr. Rachmaninoff's pianism revealed the sterling qualities that long have stamped him as one of the great keyboard masters, and Dr. Bakaleinikoff's conducting capacity and interpretative ability fathomed every vestige of the score with amazing results.



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Dr. Bakaleinikoff Conducts

Each year Dr. Bakaleinikoff assumes the baton for a pair of concerts midway in the season. His appearance is awaited eagerly, for in addition to being the orchestra's able first viola player, he is a conductor of wide experience and superb musicianship. Dedicated to musical service, he is a man of

artistic loyalty. Beloved, respected and appreciated by his fellow musicians and the public, Dr. Bakaleinikoff is a power in our midst. On him Dr. Reiner and the Symphony Society can rely. He always fulfills his mission as associate conductor.

Responding to the conductor in fullest measure, the orchestra played the Schubert symphony with unusual freshness. This ever-welcome work was revealed in all its purity of form and style with captivating tonal resonance that warmed the hearts of a capacity audience. It is an alluring work, especially when its hidden facets of innate inspiration are uncovered and polished by a glowing reading as that bestowed upon it on this occasion. The stirring lyricism and vigorous harmonic and melodic fiber of the opening movement were beautifully re-created and the closing Andante con moto, so poetic and ravishing in content and contour, was consummated effectively, despite a few lapses of certain wind instruments in following the definitive beat of their leader.

One feels privileged to live in a generation that produces a Rachmaninoff—a musician whose creative gifts are matched so marvelously by piano mastery—and to have the unusual opportunity of listening to him play one of his important works and that of another composer.

Plays Own Composition

The Schumann concerto fared well under the spell of his fingers. It was the first time, we are told, that Mr. Rachmaninoff has played this work in this country, and he has been coming here for many years. Demand for his appearance as soloist in his own works explains the reason. At any rate, the performance of this highly romantic piece received an ovation, which the soloist shared with the orchestra and leader, Dr. Bakaleinikoff conducting without score as in the case of the remainder of the program.

Following intermission Mr. Rachmaninoff came out to solo in his Rhapsody. This is a grandiose composition, skillfully employing every instrument of the modern orchestra and plumbing the full gamut of moods in their application. The piano and orchestra are integral, with ample opportunity for both to come to the fore in the 19 parts that comprise this fluent and impelling work. Mr. Rachmaninoff played his solos in superlative style with the orchestra and conductor collaborating magnificently. A tremendous outbreak of applause followed playing of this number.

For the final Stravinsky piece, Mr. Rachmaninoff quietly came out and sat in the left corner of the stage—a ring-side seat, as it were—to listen to its performance. And what a presentation! Dr. Bakaleinikoff rose to great heights in evoking from the five sections that constitute this number the utmost in refinement, delicacy, power and appeal which elicited another ovational response from the audience.

The program will be repeated tomorrow at 3 p. m.

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