

Rachmaninoff Casts a Spell of Beauty

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Sergei Rachmaninoff played the Schumann Piano Concerto in A minor Thursday night with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra before a capacity audience in Masonic Auditorium, with Victor Kolar on the podium.

Thus did the Russian artist display his command of a form utterly different from that of the strong masculinity of his own compositions. For there was no doubt in the collective mind of the audience when Rachmaninoff arose from the bench that they had heard one of the noblest of concertos played most nobly.

Throughout, the performance was one of those occasions of untrammelled beauty which comes all too infrequently in this troubled life. The audience was enmeshed in the spell of Rachmaninoff's playing, and it was not until he had returned for the third time in response to thunderous applause that his hearers rose to their feet in the homage which he and the orchestra so richly deserved.

For the orchestra and Kolar added much luster to their already great reputations as the finest among present-day orchestral accompanists. The performance was, without doubt, the first this year in which real excitement attended a Detroit Symphony concert.

Previously, Kolar had led the orchestra in a truly gorgeous reading of the Brahms First Symphony, a work of tremendous contrasts. The reading won Kolar a minor ovation on his own account. The only other work on the program was the Respighi orchestration of the Bach Passacaglia in C minor. It was an orchestration which we did not particularly fancy, the bold statements of Bach seemingly having been lost in too great a body of sound. One thought also, that the work was not particularly fancied by the orchestra, for certainly it did not appear at its best in the reading.