

Rachmaninoff Gives Recital at Academy

Pianist Heard in Time-Honored Music
At Institute's Sixth Series Concert

By MILES KASTENDIECK

Something of classic completeness attended the recital of Sergei Rachmaninoff at the Academy of Music last night. It may have been just simplicity of manner and of performance together with a certain reserve and authoritative finish, but it cast a spell over an audience quick to recognize the consummate artistry of a great pianist. Rachmaninoff was in top form. From the first few measures one could tell that this was to be a recital when all the tenets of fine piano playing would be fulfilled.

The program was one of time-honored music, arranged perhaps involuntarily to include the great composers for the piano in an historical survey. It began with the Mozart Variations in A Major, proceeded to Beethoven's Sonata Opus 57, the "Appassionata," paid tribute to Schubert and to Chopin. An interpolation of three Rachmaninoff pieces injected a transitory contemporary note. Two works of Liszt ended the formal part of the recital.

That virile playing of sculptured texture which characterizes Rachmaninoff's playing asserted itself at once in the Mozart and carried through the remainder of the program. It brought to the Beethoven an inevitability in interpretation that was particularly impressive. The pianist paid due attention to matters of tempo wherein there was no sign of speeding up for the sake of display as may be noted in performances by lesser figures. One of the formidable qualities of this conception was its rhythmic power, a

special characteristic of Beethoven's music.

The detailed artistry of Rachmaninoff's playing endowed the Schubert Impromptu in A Flat Minor and Liszt arrangement of "The Trout" with beautiful tonal texture. The poet in him found utterance in Chopin's Nocturne in D Flat, a work of transcendent beauty. To have heard that was to experience one of the rare moments in this recital. Two Mazurkas, in A minor and G Major, respectively, completed this group.

Rachmaninoff's own Humoresque, Daises and Oriental Sketch were all worth the listening. It might be noted that the scherzo style of composition predominated. The Liszt Sonetto del Petrarca in A Flat and the Twelfth Rhapsody provided two sides of the composer; the songful and the tinsel aspect. The glitter of the Rhapsody appeared almost out of place in company with the rest of the music on this program.

The recital was the sixth in the Institute's major concert series. It attracted the largest crowd yet to attend one of these events, with stage seats in great demand.