

Rachmaninoff Heard At Academy of Music, Big Audience Present

Famed Pianist-Composer Lives Up Fully to Dual Prestige

By PAUL J. BROWN

Sergi Rachmaninoff, eminent as a pianist and as contemporary composer, lived up fully to that dual prestige last night. He gave a recital in the opera house of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which was the sixth of the major concert series offered by the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, before an audience which occupied all seats in the auditorium and on the stage and filled considerable standing room as well.

Rachmaninoff was close to his best last night. As usual, he played with the full authority that always has been his. He played the most difficult passages in stride, and thus avoided completely what might be called the mannerisms of virtuosity. He clearly comprehended each of the works he played and transmitted that interpretation to the audience. Finally, he evoked from the keyboard not only clear-cut and exact notes and chords, but a quality of tone that, probably more than anything else for pianists, must be regarded as the mark of greatness.

The program offered by Rachmaninoff added to the success of the evening. The highlight of the recital undoubtedly was the F minor "Appassionata" Sonata of Beethoven, to which the pianist contributed its great measure of splendor and status. Two works by Schubert, the Impromptu in A flat minor and the Schubert-Siszt "The Trout" were well played; with the latter being one of the very best offerings of the recital. Rachmaninoff played a Chopin Nocturne and two Mazurkas with great ability in the first instance, and somewhat less than the requisite vitality in the latter. Two Liszt compositions, "Sonetto del Petrarca" and Rhapsody No. 2 were well given with the Rhapsody one of the pianist's most inspiring achievements.

But Rachmaninoff, the composer, was heard too. Three works, "Humoreque", "Daisies" and Oriental Sketch" were played and it may be said of Rachmaninoff that he has no limitations in the playing of his own work. The latter two were particularly well done.

The pianist was enthusiastically acclaimed by the audience, which he rewarded with several encores.