

# Rachmaninoff Makes New Success With Orchestra

*As Composer and Pianist Sensation Is Scored, Pittsburgh Symphony Aiding by Performing Latest Composition After Last-Minute Rehearsal.*

By Dr. Frederick Dorian

A very short time elapsed between the opening concert of the Pittsburgh Symphony and the second concert last night in Syria Mosque. But Antonio Modarelli, the conductor, used the time to good advantage and did his best in order to achieve a fine performance of the Leonore No. III Overture by Beethoven. Again it was clear that the Pittsburgh orchestra has sterling qualities and that it is unjust, indeed, neither to appreciate its ability nor to recognize that it is an organization of able and very musical men and women, capable of being developed into a first-rate orchestra.

The big sensation of the concert was the appearance of Serge Rachmaninoff in his double rôle of composer and pianist. The reader would perhaps be interested to know with what difficulty the music of Rachmaninoff's new symphony was obtained. Since the work is still in manuscript and was performed in St. Louis last Friday night, it was necessary for the Pittsburgh orchestra manager, Mr. Specter, to make a hurried trip to St. Louis and personally "escort" the precious document to Pittsburgh in time for last-minute rehearsals.

It would be unwise to discuss the standard of the Pittsburgh performance—we had better leave that to the composer himself. The very fact that the symphony could be performed under these conditions deserves high commendation. This last symphony of Rachmaninoff was given its first performance by Stokowski just a short time ago in Philadelphia. Between the concerto in C Minor—which was played by the composer on the same evening beautifully—and the symphony is a gap of no less than 35 years. Of course, Rachmaninoff's style has changed during this long time. But the composer's way of expressing himself is still quite different from almost everything that is known as modern in our time.

The melodic structure is rather conservative. However, the melodies became something modern through a very fine instrumentation, which makes use of the colors of the contemporary orchestra palette. The new symphony has three movements all of which displayed an admirable sense of form, a charming refinement of details—work of a great musician.

Rachmaninoff, the great Russian artist, who sought and found his second home in the United States was honored throughout the evening. When he first appeared on the platform, the orchestra rose in a body and the audience joined heartily in the welcome. After the performance of the piano-concerto in C Minor the applause was so pronounced that Rachmaninoff was forced to play an encore, the prelude in C sharp Minor—his most popular music.

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