

## Arias and Encores

3,800 Hear Rachmaninoff at County Center, in Third Westchester Appearance — Master of Piano Wins Hearty Acclaim

By JOHN D. CHEQUER

Sergei Rachmaninoff, world-famous composer-pianist, returned to the County Center last night to be hailed once more by a packed house as a ranking artist among virtuosos of the present day.

His appearance as the second artist attraction on this, the eighth season of concerts presented by Mrs. Julian Olney, was his third in Westchester during the past four years.

As always, Rachmaninoff displayed immense technical resourcefulness which his listeners dismiss almost too glibly, for his is an amazing proficiency which is ever the means, and never the end.

The outstanding quality of Rachmaninoff's playing was not, however, only digital facility. His program represented five distinct schools and required a deep and comprehensive sensitivity to each, in order that the true character of the works might be delineated. It was this quality of being able to capture the background and concept of each composer and project it to the emotions of his listeners that marked this recital as one to be long remembered.

The program opened with "Weeping, Plaints, Sorrows, Fears", a prelude by Franz Liszt, based upon "Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen", a church-cantata by Bach, which was followed by Bach's "Italian Concerto."

The peculiar harpsichordal percussiveness, uniquely Bachian, was meticulously represented in these two works—without embellishment in the first instance, and in boldness of outline and clarity and fluency of motion, after the Italian style, in the second.

Beethoven's "Sonata, Opus 31, No. 2, in D-minor" and Chopin's "Scherzo in C-sharp minor" concluded the first half of the program.

The Sonata, written in 1803, and representing, as it does, a change in Beethoven's style, was portrayed in all the vigorous passion typical of its composer, yet the adagio, in contrast to the first and third movements, was a tranquil, almost passive reflection of Beethoven's resignation to imminent deafness. The Scherzo, one of the most brilliant examples of the work of the great Polish poet of the piano, was executed in a magnificently virile manner. Yet the grandeur of the interpretation never submerged the subtle details of the score, and a warm, singing tone was sustained throughout.

The "Suite Bergamasque" by Claude Debussy, opened the second section. The interplay of color, and the exquisite imagery conjured by the work of this great French impressionist, were delightfully delineated in a kaleidoscope of changing nuance. The suite included "Prelude", "Menuet", the popular "Clair de Lune", and the joyous "Passepied."

Two works of the performer followed—"Prelude", a happy mel-

ody over swaying arpeggios, typically modern in concept; and "Oriental Sketch", a descriptive novelette. These two works undoubtedly will find their places on the programs of many contemporary pianists.

The formal program closed with two short works by Liszt—"Voices of the Woods" and "Dance of the Gnomes."

As encores Rachmaninoff played a waltz by Chopin, Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Flight of the Bumblebee" and his own famous "Prelude in C-sharp minor."

If, as is Rachmaninoff's opinion, the audience never makes a mistake in its judgment of an artist's performance, then last night he was signally honored, for his every appearance and interpretation was vigorously applauded by about 3,800 listeners.

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