

## ACADEMY JAMMED FOR RACHMANINOFF

Great Russian Pianist  
At Peak of Powers  
In Superb Recital

By LINTON MARTIN

Playing at the very peak of his pianistic prowess, Sergei Rachmaninoff gave his only recital of the season here in the Academy yesterday afternoon before an audience that fairly bulged the walls of the auditorium. Not only were all the extra seats placed in front of the parquet railing occupied, but the stage itself was filled with an overflow crowd of about 400.

It was the great Russian's first solo appearance in Philadelphia in several seasons. Gazing sadly at the enormous audience, and with just the ghost of a smile flicking his gaunt features, Rachmaninoff gave a program noteworthy for its diversity of style, range of mood and technical demands, the performance of which eloquently emphasized that he is not only one of the last of the giants of the keyboard—speaking artistically, not merely physically—but occupies a position apart among the stalwart romanticists of the piano.

### ROMANTIC MOODS BEST

It was in the essentially romantic music, and especially in his single Chopin number, the C-sharp minor Scherzo, Op. 39, that Rachmaninoff was at his best. Here his dazzling technique was irradiated by polished elegance, poetic warmth of expression, and the loveliest legato in the melodic line.

It was a romantic, rather than a classic, attitude that he took toward the immediately preceding Beethoven Sonata, Op. 31, No. 2. Only such a master as Rachmaninoff could infuse the concluding Allegretto with the singing beauty it possessed yesterday.

### PLAYS FOUR ENCORES

The recital opened with a somewhat inhibited performance of Liszt's "Weeping, Complaints, Sorrows, Fears," based on a Bach prelude, and continued with a clear cut and sturdy proclamation of Bach's "Italian" Concerto. Then came the Beethoven and Chopin numbers, and the time after the intermission was occupied with a piquant and persuasive presentation of Debussy's "Suite Bergamasque," two of Rachmaninoff's own short compositions, Prelude in G and an "Oriental Sketch," and two Liszt numbers, "Voices of the Woods," and "Dance of the Gnomes."

Four encores followed the regular program. These were the C sharp minor Mazurka of Chopin, Schumann's "Wandering," the pianist's world famous C sharp minor Prelude, and his own transcription of Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Flight of the Bumble Bee."

Before starting the familiar Prelude in C sharp minor, which some wag has termed the "Oh, My God!" Prelude, Rachmaninoff indulged in a mousey little grin and muttered something to himself. A nearby stage-sitter swore that what he said under his breath was, "A new composition by myself."