

## Rachmaninoff P Audience On A

BY VIRGINIA D. STURM

THE appearance of Serge Rachmaninoff, one of the great of the world's pianists, on the stage of Memorial Hall, Monday night marked the third concert in the current season's artist series.

Playing a program, formally chosen from the world's great, yet simplest compositions, this eminent artist had the many pianists of Dayton agog, and sitting on the edge of the chair.

Dayton is famous for its many pianists, hundreds of whom dotted the large audience, but of those many hundreds there must have been dozens who were very much disappointed with the type of formal program which Rachmaninoff selected. Ever the protagonist of lyric-classic piano literature, this famous Russian plays such things usually as the Liszt transcription of J. Bach's Prelude, "Weeping Plaints, Sorrows, Fears" as an opener, the J. Bach "Italian Concerto" (Allegro, Andante, Presto) and Beethoven Sonata, Opus 31, No. 2; (Allegro, Adagio, Allegretto) and the Chopin "Scherzo," in C-sharp minor.

Debussy's "Suite Bergamasque" (Prelude, Minuet, Clair de Lune, Passepied); two of his own compositions, the ever welcome Prelude, and "Oriental Sketch," and two Liszt beauties, "Voice of the Woods" and "Dance of the Gnomes," completed the formal program.

Strange, but when Rachmaninoff sounds off the three deep announcement notes of the "Prelude," he usually is obliged to wait for the waves of applause to subside, but not so Monday night. He hesitated, and there was breathless silence, and then on he went. No Rachmaninoff concert is complete without the "Prelude," and we do thrill to it!

Highlights of the program were the Chopin "Scherzo" and the two final Liszt numbers. These had more of the enthusiasm and fiery soulfulness. The poetic grandeur for which Rachmaninoff is famous seemed to be lacking throughout the whole of the concert. With such a technique as he possesses I felt that his concert on the whole was a great disappointment. The numbers chosen were evidently selected to please the piano students in the audience, and seemed played in a pedantic manner.

I wanted to hear some tremendous number, something commensurate with his gigantic pianistic attainments. But, nothing like that was programed nor presented for encore.

In fact the encores were scarce. A small Chopin waltz, Liszt's "Liebestraum" and Schubert's "The Mill" with a Rachmaninoff transcription, comprised the group.

The audience was numerous, enthusiastic, and happy to hear the performer-composer play.

The final concert of the Artist Series will be given on Dec. 8. It will bring Erica Morini, violinist, and Helen Gahagan, soprano.

Of Mme. Morini there is much to be said. Of Miss Gahagan we will have to reserve our opinions until she sings in Memorial Hall, Dayton on Dec. 8. Some shift in Metropolitan schedule takes Kirsten Thorberg, and Herman Thuman deemed it best to change the whole program, eliminating the Kolisch quartet also.