

Rachmaninoff Returns To Play With Symphony

Seventh Concert Under Baton of Gusikoff Draws Applause of Audience.

By Dr. Frederick Dorian

The seventh evening of the Pittsburgh Symphony series offered the first appearance of Michel Gusikoff, concertmaster of the orchestra, as conductor and the reappearance of Sergei Rachmaninoff as soloist. This was another in this week's chain of three important concerts featuring world famous instrumentalists. The great Russian artist played his "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini," accompanied by the orchestra. Like Brahms, in his "Paganini Variations," Rachmaninoff embellishes on the keyboard a given motif by the classic wizard of the bow. Like Paganini, who mystified his hearers with his un-

canny brilliance one century ago the composer-pianist amazed the audience last night with his virtuosity. But Rachmaninoff's "Rhapsody," along with its bizarre form, combines warmth and pathos of melody. Again we are reminded that the author of the score is Slavic: There are some transformations of the theme which makes one think of Russia—the Russia of the Czar and bygone days.

Sergei Rachmaninoff as performer was doubtlessly superlative. Just before Giesecking came to Pittsburgh, we heard him broadcast Rachmaninoff's music, and that achievement seemed un-

surpassable. However, after the master came and conquered, we realized the secret of his appeal. His playing is more than constructive—it is creative.

Besides the rhapsody the evening's program embraced another Russian work of immense popularity—Tschaikowsky's "Fourth." Mr. Gusikoff, gave impetus to the interpretation of this work. His familiarity with the score was apparent, as was the co-operation of the musicians with the very man who usually leads them from another important post. Obviously, the Symphony's first violinist is a very versatile man. We now know him not only as concertmaster and soloist, but also as conductor, and we understand at the same time that his abilities run to composing and that, according to a note in the program, his "violin concerto is in the hands of Jascha Heifetz." Besides the Tschaikowsky score Mr. Gusikoff conducted Dukas' "Sorcerer's Apprentice" and Elgar's arrangement of an Overture by Handel. He received warm applause, which he shared with the orchestra and with Milton Lomask, acting concertmaster.