

Rachmaninoff, Gusikoff Win Applause at Concert

Pianist Plays Superbly—Pittsburgh Symphony Concert-Master Makes Initial Bow Here as Conductor

By RALPH LEWANDO
Press Music Critic

Making his initial bow locally as a conductor, Michel Gusikoff, concert-master of the Pittsburgh Symphony Society, last evening in Syria Mosque led his fellow musicians in the final evening concert of the first half of the Orchestra's season with Serge Rachmaninoff as piano soloist.

For this baton baptism Mr. Gusikoff chose as his program material the Handel-Elgar D-minor Overture; Tchaikowsky's Fourth Symphony, and Paul Dukas' scherzo, "L'Apprenti Sorcier."

Mr. Gusikoff entered upon his important assignment with veteran command, revealing thorough musicianship and skill as a leader throughout the playing of the entire program. Imbued with enthusiasm, his sincerity of purpose was evidenced at all times. That he was familiar with the scores was set forth advantageously, and he communicated their intent to the players with a definite beat that carried conviction. The success, personal and artistic, that accrued from his laudable efforts was therefore greatly merited.

Drew Applause

The orchestra, responsive to Mr. Gusikoff's conducting, matched his endeavors with a performance in which fullest co-operation was manifest.

Leader and orchestra were accorded hearty approbation.

The appearance of Mr. Rachmaninoff upon the stage to play the solo part of his Rhapsodie on a Paganini Theme, for piano and orchestra, opus 43, was a signal for an ovational welcome indicative of the public's great affection for this great personality of the music world and the appreciation of him as a foremost creative artist and admired executant of modern times—of all time.

Acknowledging the burst of applause of the vast audience which filled the auditorium to capacity, Mr. Rachmaninoff sat down at the piano, nodded to the conductor and began playing his remarkable composition. This composition is that of a master endowed with incredible inventive powers. What he does in transforming the 16-bar theme of Paganini's 24th solo violin caprice is a revelation of musical architectonics. Here is superb artifice yet without a trace of artificiality. The work is a massive structure, something to attract, to admire, to hold the attention, never to repel. It is diabolically difficult to perform for both soloist and orchestra, and yet in listening to his performance on this occasion one was aware of a musical message, not a mere theatrical display of virtuosity.

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With characteristic unostentation, with utter facility and clarity, with absolute technical command and surety, this marvelous Muscovite potently played his way into the hearts of his eager listeners and upon concluding was greeted with an unforgettable demonstration of applause that lasted for several minutes while he came out again and again to bow acceptance.

Notable in this performance was

the brilliant support accorded the composer-pianist by the orchestra under Mr. Gusikoff's skillful handling of the accompaniment. It was one of the finest exhibitions of orchestra support ever given a soloist in this city. That it greatly pleased Mr. Rachmaninoff was manifest at the close of his performance when he bowed his appreciation to the orchestra and insisted that Mr. Gusikoff share with him the thunderous approbation.

In Carnegie Music Hall this afternoon at 3:30 o'clock the same program, with Mr. Rachmaninoff again appearing in solo role, will be performed, and Olin Downes, music critic of the New York Times, will give a talk on the music to be played.

After today's performance no concerts will be given by the Pittsburgh Symphony until Dec. 30-31, on which occasion Eugene Goossens, conductor of the Cincinnati Orchestra, will begin a two-week guest leadership here. For the two concerts noted above the soloist will be Alexander Schuster, the orchestra's solo cellist.



Mr. Lewando

Shirley Excused As Suit Defendant

By The United Press

HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 3 — Shirley Temple, dimpled screen darling, was excused as a co-defendant with her parents in a half-million dollar breach of contract suit yesterday.

The Los Angeles District Court of Appeals upheld a lower court ruling that Shirley was not a party to the suit, which was filed by Jack Hays, theatrical agent, who demands commissions from an old agent's contract. The parents, Mr. and Mrs. George F. Temple, must file an answer to the action as remaining co-defendants.

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