

# Rachmaninoff's Music Thrills Audience Here

By J. FRED LISSFELT

The first concert of the Art Society and its sixty-fifth year brought the largest audience in 10 years to Carnegie Music Hall last night. Rachmaninoff was the star and permitted some hundred to sit on the stage, a tribute which he seemed to enjoy.

Rachmaninoff was more pianistic than scholarly last night. His program was a conservative, sixth grade assortment of piano works, which, with but the exception of his own composition, had all been written more than 50 years ago.

None of the greater music for piano, no contemporary music, not a hint that we had ever left the romantic age was apparent during the entire evening.

In his playing there seems to be no weakening in the powers that make Rachmaninoff one of the best players of the age. Superlative clarity in his finger work as well as his conception of the composer's meaning are insistent characteristics of his music. Therefore, the Schubert Impromptu and Rondo were quite the finest playing of the evening.

His tone conception for the Rameau Variations is for the modern instrument and he leaves no impression of the delicious tone that Rameau must have evoked from his clavecin. The Bach E Minor Toccata was standard. There could be much difference of opinion about the Beethoven Sonata, "Les Adieux," whether to treat it as formal or program music. Rachmaninoff chose the former and kept within its style.

Many of the 12 Chopin Preludes had an original turn which was cheering. His own Prelude in G Major was unimpressive. The improvising of Liszt was generous in the Sonnet and the player fell into the mood. Of all the stupid paraphrases in the pianist's repertory, Liszt's arrangements of the Kermess scene from Gounod's "Faust" can find its place among the first. Only Rachmaninoff could have got away with that waltz, a real finale to the "Nineties" program.

Enthusiasm was loud and the ubiquitous Prelude in C Sharp Minor, with a Chopin Mazurka and the Moussorgsky "Hopak" were the responses.