

## Music

By Herman Wise

### GEORGE GERSHWIN

One of the gayest music events of the season took place Sunday afternoon at Orchestra Hall when George Gershwin, composer-pianist; James Melton, lyric tenor, and the Reisman Symphonic Orchestra, Charles Previn conducting, presented a Gershwin festival. The auditorium was jammed, an obvious tribute to ability of this remarkable and near self-taught musician.

Detroit is one of 30 cities to be visited in as many days by this troupe. Everywhere the men have performed to sold-out houses; in each city there has been the utmost enthusiasm for the music of Mr. Gershwin. The tour is in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the composer's widely known "Rhapsody in Blue."

Apparently the name of Gershwin is a magnet. Hundreds of persons who never attended a concert were present Sunday. What is more important, they thoroughly enjoyed what they heard, both the more serious compositions and the lighter things with which they were more familiar.

Experienced concert-goers were equally pleased. Sergel Rachmaninoff, the great Russian composer-pianist who is to appear in recital Monday evening at Masonic Temple, joined in the applause with the rest. He is a staunch admirer of Gershwin's; in return for this, he has the envy of Mr. Gershwin himself. Members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and many other leading musicians in the City were profuse in their praises.

All of which is quite as it should be. No finer manifestation could have been given Mr. Gershwin here. It was a personal triumph in every way.

Of the nine groups, Mr. Gershwin appeared as soloist in four. He opened the concert with the Concerto in F, perhaps his most important work. It is a distinctly sane and upright composition, one in which the composer resorts to no musical trickery. If it may be called American, then Americans may be proud of their music. As a pianist, Mr. Gershwin revealed that he need not take a back seat for a good many of our concert artists.

The "Rhapsody in Blue" of course, was one of the most popular of the offerings. Here the composer was again at the keyboard. He played also his "I Got Rhythm Variations," a new number, and four shorter things—"Fascinating Rhythm," "Man I Love," "Liza," and "I Got Rhythm."

Mr. Melton, a former member of "The Revelers," actually was no less a success than Mr. Gershwin. His smooth and pleasing voice has never sounded better, and once more his personality captivated. He sang a group of songs of the plains and a group of Negro Spirituals, being forced to give encores at the conclusion of each group. The songs were "Hills of Home" of Oscar Fox; "Home on the Range" of David Gulon; Carson Robinson's "Carry Me Back to the Lone Prairie"; "Sometimes I Fell Like a Motherless Child," arranged by Frank Black, and two numbers of Jacques Wolfe—"G'wine to Hebb'n" and "Shortnin' Bread."

Mr. Previn was faultless in the direction of the orchestra. This organization of 35 men ranks, perhaps, with the best in the Country. Certainly it sounded so yesterday. The performances of "An American in Paris," "Wintergreen for President," from "Of Thee I Sing," and lesser works were met with applause that warmed the heart.

If concerts like this one are what the public wants to hear, why not have more of them?