

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Distinguished Russian Composer-Pianist Discloses
Fine Art in Performance of Piano Program.

By EDWARD DURNEY

Sergei Rachmaninoff's recital Monday evening, in Buffalo Consistory auditorium, goes on record as the first major musical event of the present season. The occasion found the famous Russian composer-pianist in fine fettle and his exceptionally beautiful performance of a highly interesting program must be regarded as a treat to linger in the memory.

Everything Rachmaninoff presented was finely chiseled and, in most respects, of ideal proportion. As ever the qualities of profound musicianship and sane calculation dominated his readings and many were the beauties of color and contrast revealed.

The pianist chose the Beethoven "program" sonata, opus 81, its three movements carrying the titles "The Departure," "The Exile," "The Return." The entire presentation was admirably suave and coherent, of fine dynamic effects and clarity of exposition. A generous contribution was the Schumann "Etudes Symphoniques," and here in performance was the art that conceals art—the power to reveal in turn the music's changing moods, its poetry, its color, its brilliance—all with an ease which made for concealment of the prodigious technical demands of the composition.

Honor as composer and performer came to the distinguished Russian with

his presentation (first performance) of his own Variations on a Corelli theme. The composer has selected a cantilene theme of warmth and appeal and with rare skill he has developed a fascinating set of variations. In this writing Rachmaninoff has eschewed startling novelty but he has woven a varicolored musical fabric which discloses no little invention and unerring pianistic sense. The work may be counted a distinguished contribution to the literature. The composition shone in the exquisite performance the composer brought to pass.

An interesting couplet comprised the Von Weber "Momento Capriccioso" and the lovely Gluck-Pauer "Gavotte," the same gavotte which is more familiar in its Brahms arrangement and which so often is played too slowly. Delightfully fresh and spirited was Rachmaninoff's treatment of the Gluck-Pauer opus.

The brilliant Liszt "Etude Transcendante" and "Tarantella Venezia e Napoli" completed the evening's official list of offerings, the artist reserving his encores for the close.

The audience was large and appreciative.

The Rachmaninoff recital was the first in the Philharmonic series under the local management of Mrs. Zorah Berry.