

## RUSSIAN PIANIST HEARD IN RECITAL

Sergei Rachmaninoff Gives  
Playhouse Program Which  
Is Varied and Artistic

Plays Some of His Own Com-  
positions During the Eve-  
ning

Wilmingtonians enjoyed a rare musical treat last night in the piano concert given by Sergei Rachmaninoff at the Playhouse. Enthusiastic applause greeted the appearance of a tall thin man, slightly stooped, who walked with a sliding step across the stage. One felt the potentially present, a dynamic force, controlled, yet ready to flash out from the bent figure through those long tapering fingers.

Seating himself, he adjusted the bench slightly, struck a few preliminary chords, looked his audience over, and then turned to play.

"Variations" by Mozart opened the program. It was followed by the well known Schumann composition "Les Papillons," a vivid picture of the gorgeously colored butterflies, flitting aimlessly from place to place. Its ending was unforgettable; the notes of the final chord changed to two and then to one and a last base note completed the picture.

Two gay Gavottes came next; the first a very familiar one by Gluck-Pauer, and the second, "Old French Gavotte," by Pauer. Both were very popular.

The fourth group was composed of three Chopin numbers: "Nocturne," "Rondo" and "Scherzo." Everyone knew and delighted in the Nocturne. The Rondo, with its rippling runs and graceful work of the left hand was very interesting. But the racing opening of the Scherzo, with its resolution into a sustained repetition of a simple melody, so characteristic of Chopin's music, and its mad rush to a dramatic finish, brought tumultuous applause, recalling the artist repeatedly.

In the same quiet fashion in which he first appeared, Mr. Rachmaninoff entered for the second half, played a few bars, and calmly looked out over the audience. Never has a person appeared on the stage of the Playhouse with more unconcern.

His own compositions, two preludes, were the first group of the second half of the program: one a charming, swinging rhythm, with a pronounced melody; the other, a wild, vigorous thing in the type more often associated with the name of the composer, Rachmaninoff.

The lovely opening bars of Liszt's "Valse Opulente" soon crashing into swift chords and crescendo, were quickly followed by a second Liszt piece, "Voices of the Wood." Again the pianist created a sweeping tone picture of beautiful foliage and flowers, deep throated trees, and sweet singing birds. Finally came a very tuneful display of finger gymnastics in the Strauss-Tausig "Valse Caprice."

At its conclusion a prolonged applause burst forth, demanding an encore. He chose his famous prelude and began the opening chords. The audience was thrilled. It was swept with spontaneous applause. Mr. Rachmaninoff nodded, smiled and began again.

In perfect stillness he played the masterpiece which became, under his fingers, a thing of unsurpassed beauty, haunting, exotic, exciting, dramatic. Its conclusion brought a thunder of clapping hands. He played two lovely little encores, but who cared about them. Rachmaninoff had played "The Prelude."

C. L. J.