

PAGE EIGHT

**Sergei Rachmaninoff
Presents Concert
at Auditorium**
Pianist Plays Own Pieces,
Schumann, Chopin and
List Also Heard

By Stanley Fletcher

The sixth annual Union concert, presenting Rachmaninoff, Thursday evening at Hill auditorium, was attended by a near-capacity audience that seemed as sincerely enthusiastic as any so far this season. The pianist played Schumann's Symphonic Studies, the Chopin in Flat Major Sonata, three Etudes Tableaux of his own, and a group of shorter pieces by Liszt.

It was honor to our mind throughout the program that here was a pianist of the Old School, and that means several things. It means, as in the case of Cabot, Owsch and Palewsky, to us of a more recent generation, a reputation made before our time, and due for a sort of final respect. Time and experience have given them a place of authority. It means perhaps a certain attitude toward music, a tradition which does not hesitate to preoccupy itself with a time for a time's sake, or for the audience's sake, as the case may be; or, on the other hand, to risk the possible boredom of the uninitiated by opening a concert with a work as "heavy" as the Symphonic Studies, or to close a program with a Liszt fantasia, which a younger artist, securing the "robustness" quality of that type, would never do. It means, in the case of Palewsky, that applause will continue until his finger is heard, in the case of Rachmaninoff, until the "Bells of Moscow."

It means also, that if at times we are bored in the program, we are more likely to lay it to our own possible lack of attention or fatigue, than to failure on the part of the artist.

Concert Appraised

When Rachmaninoff played here some years ago, that is the way we felt all through the program. We were disappointed, but not at all ready to blame the artist for the fact. Thursday evening, we felt the same way about the symphonic studies. They just failed to connect with our understanding.

There was no such failure during the remainder of the program, however. It was held, convincing and, at times, as in the end of the Sonata, and in the Rachmaninoff compositions, it carried one completely away. When the pianist played his own Etudes, one felt, here, at any rate, his style of playing was wholly in harmony with the music. The audience was quick to sense this, receiving the group with great enthusiasm.

Edvard Valse Impromptu (known in the Herovitz recording as Valse Opulente) and the Etude Op. 11 certainly left nothing to be desired. The Rhopody, one of the shorter and less frequently played of this series, ended the program with as effective a flourish as one might ask.

Four Encores Heard

Continued applause brought Tschalkowsky's "Troika" from "The Seasons," Op. 27; the pianist's own arrangement of "The Flight of the Bumble Bee" from Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera "Cossackian";

the well-known Prelude in C Sharp Minor, and Rachmaninoff's arrangement of the Hopak (Czopak) from Moussorgsky's opera "The Fair of Zorachinsk."

The inevitable appearance of the "Bells of Moscow" Prelude again brought home the fact that we had been repeating to ourselves throughout the Chopin Sonata "Here is a pianist of the Old School." This necessitates making certain adjustments in one's listening attitude. We come to demand of younger artists a certain commanding view of rhythm and vitality of phrase, a manner of positive musical statement. If, in listening to a pianist of the Old School play a melody, one gets one's ear in low gear, so to speak, and accepts entirely the player's judgment of tempo, submitting to his whim in the matter of rhythmic freedom, then one finds the music very beautiful, for there is spontaneity, a flash and flow of emotion in every turn. The music becomes an end and flow of emotion which seem to link one very close to the performer. Such was the experience of the List Sonata and the first movements of the Sonata.

List Sonata

Yet, during the performance of the Sonata (which was No. 184, by the way) I could not help recalling, rather questioningly, the

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beautiful they were, but by contrast insignificant.

But this again is a characteristic of the "Old School": when its representatives have attained something "beautiful" they do not

go further and run the risk of finding it by asking what it may mean. Music is an intangible matter at best, to set standards for and judgments may disagree. Rachmaninoff plays at times so

quantitatively that criticizing his judgment seems a bit ungrateful; perhaps, too, from one of the second generation after, rather than

in memory of Prof. Albert Lockwood, head for 32 years of the piano department of the University School of Music, who died last November. The audience showed its appreciation and respect by giving after the performance.

There were 23,236,666 motor vehicles registered in the United States in 1922.

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