

Music Review

A world renowned pianist, Sergei Rachmaninoff, was presented in Elmwood Music Hall last night by Zorah B. Berry. The veteran pianist left little to be desired by a capacity audience which applauded his superb artistry.

Mr. Rachmaninoff is one of the few master artists whose versatile abilities, including brilliant technique and boundless interpretation, make every opportunity of hearing him a privilege of inestimable value. It is to be hoped that he will share his art with the public for many a year to come.

Mr. Rachmaninoff opened the program by rendering the Toccata and Fugue in D minor by Bach-Tausig. As mentioned in the review in this paper of the Bruce Simmonds concert, the D minor Toccata is the first toccata written by Bach, and does not approach in content his compositions of the same form written at a later date. However, as portrayed by the artist of the evening, the first movement with its alternating florid passages and sustained four-part harmonies projected a diversity of nuances fascinating to the ear.

His rendition of the final double-fugue, a rather monotonous composition, was intense and at the same time so delicate that he succeeded in conveying to the audience the breadth of style characteristic of Bach, and the clarity of action necessitated by this number originally composed for the harpsichord. Mr. Rachmaninoff retained the character of the composition while projecting it through the improved sphere of the modern piano. Incidentally, quoting Mr. Rachmaninoff, "of the four pianos which I own and which I have selected with great care I take only two on the road for my concerts. The one I used tonight is my number one piano."

The heroic interpretation of the Sonata in D major, Opus 10, No. 3, by Beethoven, will linger long in the memory of those who heard it. The Largo e mesto, perhaps the expression of Beethoven's inner battle with his physical affliction, was presented with a majestic pathos which stirred the soul. The subtlety of the Minuetto and the brilliance of the concluding Rondo were most effective.

The program included also the beautiful Ballade by Brahms, and the scintillating Tarantelle, Mazurka and Scherzo by Chopin. Mr. Rachmaninoff acted in a rather unprecedented manner by leaving the platform only during intermission.

The latter portion of the program comprised the artist's own Prelude, and Oriental Sketch as well as a group of compositions by Liszt; the dramatically sombre Funerailles, the tremendously taxing Dance of the Gnomes which was played in a breath-taking tempo, and the fantastic Rhapsodie No. 11. In this final group of Liszt numbers Mr. Rachmaninoff seemed to create a world of his own, made up entirely of tone, rhythm and drama.

At the end of the program the audience rushed to the platform to enjoy a generous number of encores: Wondering by Schubert, Liebesleid by Kreisler, Flight of the Bumble Bee by Rimsky-Korsakoff, and Prelude in C sharp minor by Rachmaninoff.

In the next concert of the Zorah B. Berry Series, January 14th, Richard Crooks and Rosa Tentoni will be presented.

E. M. E.