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Rachmaninoff Recital, Carnegie Music Hall.

You might have thought that Thanksgiving, turkey, and what Pitt did to State—or failed to do—would have sated the most grateful of souls, but not at all. Nota-tall? Along came Sergei Vassilievich Rachmaninoff, superior of all recent Serges, and he drew more persons last night at Carnegie hall than there were raisins in the day's mince pies. It was a holiday audience in holiday mood that turned out for the second of the Ellis concerts, and the result was resounding applause and a plethora of encores.

Rachmaninoff played as he always plays; brittle, vitreous, but ever brilliant and vital. Everything he touched became a coda, an epilogue, a Sursum Corda, to a day already replete with vitamins and calories. He wore the same saturnine expression, sans smile, that leaves you wondering what manner of man he is, and leaves you spell-bound in admiration. He and William H. Hart share the same facade.

The program was a thin affair, played in an extraordinary fashion. Opening with the Liszt "Ballads," written in the soggy register of the keyboard, and followed by two others, it was not until we arrived at that aristocrat of the piano, Chopin, that the program really began. The Grieg "Ballads" was Grieg again carving a rosary of cherry stones; showing us another bridal procession. It was interesting, but not impressive. For an encore to this he rhythmized the Mozart "Al la Turca" in a way that must have delighted the piano student.

It was in the Chopin group, the genius who could—and did—compose bars that were worth all the modern baggage, that Rachmaninoff evinced his versatility and many-sided power. In the "Scherzo" 29, he was superb. It was the most stimulating reading we have had of this work in years. The "Ballade" was infectuous; the "Nocturne" had a certain amount of poetry; the "Waltz" was rippled, but it was the "Scherzo" that was staggering.

The pianist's own two compositions were deadly affairs. The "Elegie" was mere pianistic vamping, and the "Polkade W. R." by the way, who is W. R.? Is he Wally Reid? It sounded movie-ish.) was an exciting piece of piffle.

In the Magyar Dohnanyi "Etude" there was an evanescent charm, but in the "Liebeslied" of Kreisler, which Rachmaninoff transcribed, no one knew how much he hated Kreisler. Fritz ought to enter suit for assault and battery. It was a mean thing to do to a man, just because he is a fiddler.

Of all the personalities who play piano, Serge Rachmaninoff is the most outstanding. Thin program, or rich, it is to be hoped he will return every Thanksgiving day.

And now, appetite, wait upon digestion.

HARVEY B. GAUL.