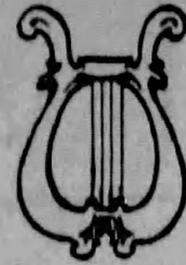


MUSIC IN BUFFALO



By EDWARD DURNEY

Rachmaninoff Recital.

Sergel Rachmaninoff, composer-pianist, gave his annual Buffalo recital last evening in Elmwood Music hall, playing, as usual, to a large audience and failing not to impress deeply, as he has heretofore, by his towering musicianship and his well nigh flawless performance at the keyboard.

Rachmaninoff's program was one of conventional build, but not without its high lights as presented by this generously gifted pianist. He began with the Liszt arrangement for piano of the Bach Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor, and, coupled with this as a group number was the lovely D minor Prelude from the Well Tempered Clavier. The Liszt B minor Sonata followed, then a Chopin group, a Rachmaninoff collection and the Strauss-Godowsky "Artist's Life" waltz.

His performance of the opening Bach was a stately publication of the music, admirably controlled, finely proportioned and built up to real majesty in its climaxes. The charming prelude which followed was delightfully uttered.

The Liszt sonata, a gaudily tinsel-work, was handled with great mastery by the performer who fully exhibited its brilliance and gave beautiful voice to its melodic fragments. The sonata presents more of instrumental display than of genuine musical interest and worth, and even a Rachmaninoff cannot add to its value.

In the Chopin group the pianist's

performance was one of shining good deeds and his rare artistry held his hearers spellbound. He offered the seldom heard E major Scherzo, No. 4, a delightful, will-o'-the-wisp, fragmentary composition truly bearing out its title. The pianist allowed none of its spirit to elude him, uttering its dainty measures with charming delicacy, its lyrical passages with great beauty of tone and its climaxes with brilliant effect.

The lovely E major Etude was sanely tempered and its melody was sung with golden tone. The hearing of the familiar A-flat Ballade seemed a new experience, so individual and so free from hackneyed touches was the pianist's presentation. Again, in the C minor Etude the artist was master, investing the study with all its elemental splendor.

The three Rachmaninoff compositions were Preludes G major and G-flat major, exquisite miniatures, and Etude Tableau, D major. The group was superbly played. The pianist closed his official program with the Strauss waltz as complicated by Leopold Godowsky and happily, he was able to preserve, for the most part, the grace and delicacy of the original waltz. The Godowsky arabesques were duly subordinated and with charming effect.

Enthusiastic applause was showered on the pianist after his several program numbers and again at the close. His few encores included a Chopin Waltz and Mazurka, a Gluck "Orpheus" excerpt and an unfamiliar number.