

# RACHMANINOFF PLAYS EXACTING PROGRAM

Large Audience Hears  
Master Pianist

Sergei Rachmaninoff gave his first Boston recital of the season to a large and unusually applaudive audience at Symphony Hall yesterday afternoon. He was obliged to add generously to an already long and exacting program.

His first number was the second of the three sonatas in Beethoven's opus 31. This he played romantically, tempo robato, with sudden and violent contrasts, which made it sound nearer to Chopin than to Mozart. His interpretation is very carefully worked out and he always gets exactly the effect he desires. Yet one wonders a little whether it is quite what Beethoven, who, though irritable, was never febrile, intended.

With Mendelssohn's "Rondo Capriccioso," which followed, he was more successful. His playing added vigor and brilliance to music which needs just those qualities to quicken it.

And as for his Chopin group, it is sufficient to say that no one has ever played Chopin better in Symphony Hall than Rachmaninoff did yesterday. The audience, or at least the pianists in it, was dazzled by his amazing technique and by his marvelous interpretations. Nothing like his performance has been heard here since Paderewski forsook piano playing for politics.

Not many composers have been able to play their own piano pieces in public better than anyone else could possibly play them as Rachmaninoff can and does. Coming generations will applaud his compositions, as they will those of Chopin and Liszt, also virtuosi in their own day, but they can never hear them quite as we can.

It is to be regretted that the "Funeral March" by Alkan, which was announced in advance, had been withdrawn from yesterday's program. The concluding number was, as announced, Liszt's familiar transcription of the waltz from Gounod's "Faust." Rachmaninoff achieves in this a rare and admirable combination of delicate shading and phrasing with vigorous rhythm and impetuosity.