

RACHMANINOFF HERO OF MATINEE CONCERT

Great Composer Gives Magnificent Rendition of His C Minor Concerto

Sergei Rachmaninoff, one of the greatest of living composers and pianists, repeated the triumph he always scores in Philadelphia when he appeared as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra yesterday afternoon in his C minor (second) concerto. The composition is one of the few modern works in the concerto form which improve with repeated hearings.

Modern in musical thought and filled with romanticism, the concerto in the hands of the composer proved to be one of the very best of his works. It is fairly strict in form, although it does not slavishly follow the architectural model of the older classic concertos. Mr. Rachmaninoff has played it here before, but never so finely as he interpreted it yesterday. The performance of the slow movement was a veritable tour de force of piano playing at its best, and the close of that movement was one of the finest things that has been heard in the Academy for a long time. In every way Mr. Rachmaninoff showed his ability as an interpreter. Technically the concerto is by no means easy, but these difficulties were overcome without apparent effort. It is heavily scored, but even with the entire orchestra playing the tone of the piano was always clearly heard and that, too, without an undue forcing of it.

Mr. Stokowski presented one novelty, Stravinsky's "Fireworks," a composition of the early period of that composer. As the name indicates, it is frankly a short piece of program music and illustrates tonally just what the title declares. It is interesting rather than beautiful, and, as is to be expected, depends for its success upon the orchestration more than upon the musical content. Fireworks of explosive character play a large part in the fantasy, which is effectively scored, but is, nevertheless, not altogether convincing.

The program opened with a fine rendition of the Mozart G minor symphony, a composition which stands as an eternal monument to what can be done musically with very small orchestral resources. The concluding number was a spirited performance of Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries."