

## RACHMANINOFF IN A NOTABLE RECITAL

Russian Pianist Plays a  
Cosmopolitan Program  
for Forum Audience

By LINTON MARTIN

IT WAS the eloquence of understatement, the art of the introspective, which created a special and particular spell when Sergei Rachmaninoff, noted Russian pianist and composer, made his first appearance of the season here in a recital for the Philadelphia Forum in the Academy last night. A cosmopolitan program, and a compelling performance, were hailed by an audience which virtually taxed the capacity of the auditorium itself, while chairs for several hundred additional auditors were placed upon the stage, although some of these, unoccupied before the recitalist appeared, were removed by stage hands before he appeared at 8.30 o'clock.

Not at any recital given here in recent years has Rachmaninoff played a program more diversified in emotional moods, more contrasting in quality, more composite in character. Individual as was each offering, the entire performance was strongly colored by the personality of the artist, which gave austerity to romanticism, color to classicism and a certain outstanding strength to every number. There was no floridity of effect in any offering, no eccentricity of interpretation; yet the recital, viewed in retrospect, was a musical occasion outstanding in exceptional interest, dominated by utter originality of idea.

Rachmaninoff presented his own transcription of the Bach E-major Sonata for violin alone, as the opening number. Considering the fact that this work was written for unaccompanied stringed instrument, it is a remarkably resourceful and thoroughly musicianly version that Rachmaninoff has prepared. Indeed, so pianistic is its quality in the present version that it is difficult to conceive of the work as written in any other form, and Rachmaninoff made it thoroughly his own in his performance.

This was followed by the D-major Rondo of Schubert. It was Russian-romanticism, perhaps, that Rachmaninoff achieved in his presentation of this work. But it infused new values and vitality into an offering all too often made rubber-stamp and routine on amateur occasions, and the entire performance was characterized by spontaneity and sparkle.

Schumann's "Carnaval," a work not lightly to be tackled by the tyro, was given vivid pictorial quality as played by Rachmaninoff. Each episode of the considerable composition was deftly differentiated in mood and manner, and each was clearly recognized in program as it progressed.

After the intermission came a Debussy Suite: Prelude, Sarabande and Toccata; two of Rachmaninoff's own Preludes; a Scherzo of Borodin, and the Tausig florid but effective version of Weber's "Invitation to the Dance," which was originally a piano piece anyway. All of these were played with Rachmaninoff's individual ideas of tone and interpretation, which are certainly not those of the romantic matinee musical idol, but memorable.

In response to continued applause, Rachmaninoff gave several encores, the first of which, evidently a concession to popular taste, since he has omitted it in recent seasons, was the C-sharp minor Prelude, and, by way of final salutation, a Chopin waltz.