

# PHILHARMONIC LED BY MITROPOULOS

Guest Conductor and Sergei  
Rachmaninoff, Soloist, Stir  
Carnegie Hall Throng

## PIANIST'S WORKS PLAYED

Second Concerto, and Third  
Symphony Featured, Program  
Opens With Beethoven

By HOWARD TAUBMAN

Dimitri Mitropoulos, who made an impressive series of appearances with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra last season, returned for a four-week stay as guest conductor last night. As his collaborator for the evening he had Sergei Rachmaninoff. The result was a program that was electric with excitement for the audience, and Carnegie Hall was sold out.

The thrill for the listeners was more in the performers and their performances than, for the most part, in the music performed. The evening began with Felix Weingartner's arrangement of Beethoven's Grand Fugue in B flat. The remainder was music by Mr. Rachmaninoff—the Second Piano Concerto, in which he was, of course, the soloist, and the Third symphony.

Mr. Mitropoulos quickly re-established himself as an authentic virtuoso leader. The orchestra played with precision and brilliance that have not been surpassed many times this season. The work of the string players in the Beethoven fugue was stirring in its clarity and crispness; the tone was rich and full; the balance of choirs was firmly and consistently laid out. The fugue is music of tremendous stature, and it is arguable whether Mr. Weingartner's arrangement is the best dress for it. But Mr. Mitropoulos made out a good case for it, and there is no question that in this arrangement he brings it to the attention of more listeners than a string quartet could bring to it.

Though this was a striking start, Mr. Rachmaninoff proceeded to take over for most of the evening, with Mr. Mitropoulos's consent and support. The distinguished Russian pianist may be presumed to be the authoritative interpreter for his concerto. It has been done by younger pianists with more sweep, fire and romantic glow. But Mr. Rachmaninoff's treatment was absorbing. He gave the opening phrases a majestic line, and he could make the piano hold its own with the orchestra. The slow movement was most memorable. Mr. Rachmaninoff took it a shade more briskly than some others, and it emerged more dignified and more searching. The pianist-composer received a tumultuous ovation at the end.

Mr. Mitropoulos led the orchestra in a sparkling performance in companioning the pianist. Then he gave the maturer Third symphony, with its undercurrent of melancholy and its richly sensuous orchestration, an illuminating interpretation. The Philharmonic-Symphony played like the great orchestra it is.

*The New York Times*

Published: December 19, 1941

Copyright © The New York Times