

RACHMANINOFF PLAYS PROGRAM OF ETUDES

Sergei Rachmaninoff gave his second recital of the season yesterday afternoon at Symphony Hall. Every seat was taken, and numerous encores, including the inevitable "Prelude in C sharp minor," were demanded.

The pianist had chosen an unusual program, containing etudes by Chopin, Scriabin, Rubinstein and Liszt, and his own Etudes Tableaux, op 69, with Chopin's Sonata in B minor thrown in for good measure. He often seemed to regard these etudes as a "school of velocity," for he took most of them at an almost impossibly rapid tempo. Yet he seldom blurred the outlines of the music, and apparently never missed a note. Nor was delicate shading lost. His technique is almost incomparable.

His absolute mastery of every resource of his instrument leaves him unhampered in his interpretations by any technical obstacles. He is fond of sudden contrasts from staccato fortissimo to legato pianissimo, from strict time and vigorous rhythm to the most languorous rubato.

To these romantic outbursts he willingly sacrifices classic dignity and serenity. If his playing and his compositions did not express intense emotions Rachmaninoff would deserve all the reproaches hurled at Liszt for his bombast.

His next and final Boston recital of the season will come March 7.