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SEASON 1941-1942

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Third Program

October seventeenth and eighteenth

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Forty-Second Season, 1941-1942

THIRD PROGRAM

Friday Afternoon, October 17, at Two-thirty

Saturday Evening, October 18, at Eight-thirty

EUGENE ORMANDY *Conducting*

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF, *Pianist*

ALL RACHMANINOFF

Symphony No. 2, in E minor, Op. 27

- I. Largo; allegro moderato
- II. Allegro molto
- III. Adagio
- IV. Allegro vivace

INTERMISSION

Concerto No. 4, in G minor, Op. 40, for Piano and Orchestra

- I. Allegro vivace
- II. Largo
- III. Allegro vivace

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

BY R. L. F. McCOMBS

SERGEI VASSILIEVICH RACHMANINOFF

NO OTHER musician comes to mind whose career has fallen so definitely, not to say so dramatically, into two chapters as has that of Sergei Rachmaninoff. Native gifts, congenial associations and good fortune had combined, by 1916, to make him a personage of high distinction in the world of music. In 1918 he was an almost penniless exile in a strange land. Now, in the dual role of composer and pianist, he has again, and in that strange land, made himself a commanding figure.

He was born on a country estate in the province of Novgorod in central Russia on April 2, 1873, into a comfortably established, patriarchally ordered society which is now completely irrecoverable. His unusual musical talent made itself known at an early age, and he spent three years in the St. Petersburg Conservatory, a longer and more profitable term in the Conservatory at Moscow. For graduation and a "Grand Gold Medal" in 1892, he composed a one-act opera, *Aleko*, in the space of seventeen days. Among his teachers were Nicolai Sverev, Arensky, Taneiev, and his own cousin, Alexander Siloti. Tchaikovsky was his musical ideal, and the influence of Anton Rubinstein was strong.

He embarked upon a professional career in his twenties as composer and conductor, in far less degree as pianist. Growing popularity so encroached upon his leisure that, from 1906 to 1909, he devoted a period of self-exile in Dresden to composition. In the fall of 1909 he made a brief concert tour of the United States, whence his fame had preceded him largely on the wings of the C sharp minor Prelude which he had written in 1892.

Apart from concert-giving excursions, his musical activities in the next few years were largely confined to Russia. Although he at first thought that the 1917 revolution might lead to great good, events of those first fateful months disillusioned him. In November of that year he accepted an offer for a concert tour in Scandinavia. His wife (he had married his cousin, Natalie Satin, in 1902) and their two daughters accompanied him. They have not since returned to Russia, and his estate, his fortune and his manuscripts have been confiscated by a government with whose social theories he does not agree.

Although he had not been known as an exceptional pianist, he was now

entirely dependent on his two hands for a livelihood. Will-power and industry built up a tremendous piano technic as the expressive instrument of his deep musical feeling. The United States, in those years after the war, seemed to hold the most promise, and Rachmaninoff and his little family arrived in New York on the day the Armistice was declared. Since then he has become more and more closely identified with the musical life of this country, of which he is in process of becoming a citizen.

Mr. Rachmaninoff's first appearance in the United States was as a pianist, in a recital at Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, November 4, 1909. He played with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (then directed by Max Fiedler) on a tour which began in Philadelphia on November 8, and on which he played his own Second Concerto. In the week-end concerts of November 26 and 27, Mr. Rachmaninoff conducted The Philadelphia Orchestra in Philadelphia in his own Second Symphony and in Musorgsky's "A Night on Bald Mountain". For interlude he played three piano solos, the Preludes in D major, G minor and C sharp minor.

Various Rachmaninoff premières are associated with The Philadelphia Orchestra. January 3, 1941, was the first hearing of his "Symphonic Dances", Op. 45, a work dedicated to Eugene Ormandy and the musicians of The Philadelphia Orchestra. His Fourth Concerto had its first performance anywhere in Philadelphia, March 18, 1927. His Third Symphony had its world première under Leopold Stokowski's direction, November 6, 1936. The "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini" was heard for the first time anywhere in Baltimore, November 7, 1934, with Mr. Rachmaninoff, Mr. Stokowski and The Philadelphia Orchestra collaborating. The Choral Symphony, "The Bells", had been given its first hearing in the United States, February 6, 1920, in Philadelphia.

SYMPHONY NO. 2, IN E MINOR, OP. 27

WHEN Mr. Rachmaninoff first visited the United States he was in his middle thirties, at the height of his renown as composer, conductor and—rather incidentally—as pianist. Three weeks after his arrival he was guest-conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra, which was then only nine years old, with Carl Pohlig its regular conductor. Rachmaninoff's vehicle for that performance was the Second Symphony which he had written three years before. It was the Russian musician's American debut as conductor (if not as pianist) but his Symphony had already been heard, the preceding January, at a New York concert of the Russian Symphony Society under its pioneering leader, Modest Altschuler.

As a rule nothing is more difficult or more futile than the attempt to describe in words the patterns and passions of a piece of music. Prose will be either too lush or too learned for such a task of translation. Exceptions, for taste, for accuracy, for provocative insight, were the essays which H. T. Parker wrote for the columns of the Boston Transcript. Both critic and journal are unhappily now no more, but the leisurely, finely intellectual spirit of both can be found in a paragraph of comment on a second hearing of Rachmaninoff's Symphony, played by the Boston Orchestra under Max Fiedler.

"Again the music, again the chief musical thought," wrote Mr. Parker, "seemed to emerge out of the tonal blackness in which Rachmaninoff begins. Again music and orchestra tossed in feverish and passionate agitation, or freed and soothed themselves in aspiring song. The scherzo ran as wildly and moodily as of old, and once more the strange and fugal chant seemed to mock its bodily revellings with things of the spirit. The adagio renewed the passion of its rising and falling song. The finale once more asserted the zest of living, of struggle, of victory, and bore the chief theme almost to apotheosis upon the passion of the preceding song. Then suddenly, as in all the other movements, it ended as though Fate had set an abrupt period to it, thrust the striving, the almost triumphant, mortal force back into the pit of darkness again. So it had cut the first movement and the scherzo; so it had summarily hushed the slow song. And the listener heard this drama played on the vivid and moving stage of contemporary music, with its glowing or biting harmonies, with its endless play of the light and shadows of orchestral coloring."

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"Success," Rachmaninoff has paradoxically complained, "dominates artistic life. It carries us away with it, and hardly leaves us time to gather new impressions." For an interviewer's scurrying pencil the composer once mused, "Human beings go on learning as long as they live. They gather experiences and impressions, from which they should draw conclusions to be utilized when they are getting old and have time to reflect on their memories. This, however, applies to those who have leisure wherein to assimilate impressions, and not to artists who rush about all the time giving concerts—at Amsterdam today and at Paris tomorrow, and who take the boat on the following day for New York or Buenos Aires, who spend their lives in sleeping-cars and hotel bedrooms and on concert platforms. It is a life that hardly allows them a minute for rest, and leaves them no time to observe the places they visit. In this terrible and continual rush they have little chance of talking to people they meet and whom they find interesting. They have no leisure to read a book they may have been wanting to read for years. They must always be on the move during the season. They are obsessed by catching trains and practicing. Almost every day brings another concert engagement which must be fulfilled."

In the light of these remarks it is not surprising to find that Rachmaninoff, more than once during his career, has turned his back on the blandishments and rewards of artistic success, and, to cultivate the fruits of leisure, has become a sort of temporary hermit. One such period was that of 1906-1909 which he spent in Dresden. There the concerts at the famous Gewandhaus were beyond compare, there the opera (especially the Wagnerian repertory) was magnificent, there was peace, which he intensified at first by keeping strictly incognito. Music from these Dresden years includes a collection of fifteen songs, the First Piano Sonata, the symphonic poem, "The Island of the Dead", the Third Piano Concerto, portions of an unfinished opera, *Monna Vanna*, and the Second Symphony.

The work is dedicated to Sergei Ivanovich Taneiev, to whom, as a boy of fourteen, Rachmaninoff had gone for lessons in counterpoint and composition. He had exercised a powerful influence on the lad's musical thought during those formative years. Taneiev was not one of the extremely nationalist group that centered about Rimsky-Korsakov at St. Petersburg. As a pupil of Tchaikovsky, he was rather one of the staunch supporters of western, or Germanic, tradition. His brilliant student was therefore, perhaps a little unwillingly, grounded in the strictest forms of counterpoint.

Rachmaninoff himself confesses to his youthful indifference to this branch of the art he was mastering. Neither the teacher's scoldings nor coaxings had much result. "When I removed to my relations, the Satins" (from the more rigid discipline of a "boarding pupil" at the home of his piano teacher,

Nikolai Sverev) "Taneiev invented a strange but entirely effective measure which was to bring me to my senses and get my lessons done. He wrote the theme on a piece of note paper and sent his cook to our house with it. The cook had strict injunctions not to leave until I had handed over to her the accomplished task. . . . The ruse had the desired success; if for no other reason I was persuaded by the beseeching requests of our own servants to do my lessons so that Taneiev's cook should be removed from their kitchen. But I am afraid that my teacher often had to wait for his supper."

CONCERTO No. 4, IN G MINOR, OP. 40, FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

THE original version of this Fourth Concerto was completed in the summer of 1926 at Rachmaninoff's chateau at Courbevoie, not far from Paris. It came to performance the following March 18 at a Philadelphia concert of The Philadelphia Orchestra, with the composer as soloist and Leopold Stokowski conducting. It was repeated at the Saturday concert, March 19, and again in New York the next Tuesday. In the composer's "Recollections" there is ref-

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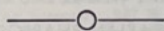
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Emma Feldman
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erence to a performance with the Berlin Philharmonic under Bruno Walter on December 8, 1931. But at those performances, apparently, the Concerto was weighed and found wanting, for Rachmaninoff allowed it to remain in manuscript and to go without further hearing.

During the past summer, at his home in Huntington, Long Island, the composer has made extensive revision of the work. The Philadelphia performance of Friday afternoon, October 17, therefore, may be set down as a sort of secondary première. The score (as this is written) is not available for inspection, but the composer has let it be known that changes in the first two movements have largely been changes in orchestration, and that he has completely re-written the elaborate and brilliant finale.

For the performances of 1927, the late Lawrence Gilman described in his revealing program commentary the chief theme, which enters after a brief orchestral introduction—"a typically Rachmaninovian subject of broad arch and spacious melodic design which sweeps upward through an octave and a half and downward through two octaves, accompanied by reiterated wind chords and accented by *sforzandi* of the strings." The tempo moderates and the piano, unaccompanied, presents a songful second theme. This material, with derivatives therefrom, is elaborated and varied to fill out, with the maximum of suspense and excitement, the generously proportioned first movement. The slow movement is a Largo of dolorous expressiveness, dark-hued and brooding, with episodic relief which only deepens its melancholy. The Finale was then (and presumably still is) a long and virtuoso movement in which themes previously heard make new appearance.




His Fourth is not the only one of his concertos which Rachmaninoff has thus revised. The First, which is his Opus 1, was the work of student years when he was less than twenty. In October, 1917, with bloody fighting in the

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Moscow streets outside his study windows, he revised the youthful work. The revision was so drastic that little more than the fresh and charming themes of the earlier concerto could be traced.

Between those two versions had come, in 1900, the Second (best known of the group) and the Third, written just before Rachmaninoff's visit to the United States in 1909, and first played in New York in that November. Thus, if the revised Fourth is accounted a new work, the four Concertos cover a period of more than fifty years.

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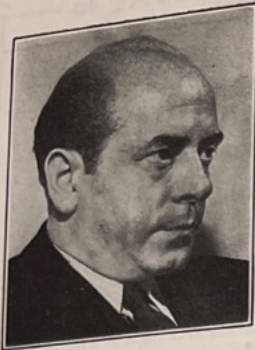
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SCHEDULE OF CONCERTS

IN PHILADELPHIA

Date	Conductor	Date	Conductor
October 3, 4, 6	Ormandy	January 9, 10	Ormandy
October 10, 11	Ormandy	January 16, 17	<i>Fritz Kreisler, violinist</i>
October 15 (Youth)	Ormandy	February 6, 7	Ormandy
October 17, 18	Ormandy	February 9	Ormandy
October 24, 25	Ormandy	February 13, 14	<i>Fritz Kreisler, violinist</i>
November 3	Ormandy	February 16 (Youth)	MacMillan
November 7, 8	Ormandy	February 20, 21, 23	MacMillan
November 14, 15	Ormandy	February 27, 28	Ormandy
November 17	Ormandy	March 6, 7, 9	<i>Efrem Zimbalist, violinist</i>
November 19 (Children's)	Ormandy	March 11 (Youth)	<i>Emanuel Feuermann, cellist</i>
November 21, 22	Caston	March 13, 14	Ormandy
November 28, 29	Beecham	March 20, 21, 23	Ormandy
December 5, 6	Beecham	March 26 (Children's)	Ormandy
December 10 (Youth)	Ormandy	March 27, 28 (<i>Verdi Requiem</i>)	Ormandy
December 12, 13, 15	Ormandy	March 30 (Youth—Recital)	Ormandy
December 19, 20	Ormandy	April 4, 6	Ormandy
December 26, 27	Ormandy	April 10, 11, 13	Ormandy
December 29 (Children's)	Ormandy	April 17, 18	<i>Edward Kilenyi, pianist</i>
January 2, 3, 5	Ormandy	April 24, 25	Ormandy
	<i>Artur Rubinstein, pianist</i>	April 29 (Youth)	Ormandy
		May 1, 2	Ormandy

IN NEW YORK

October 14	Ormandy	February 10	Ormandy
November 11	Ormandy	February 24	<i>Fritz Kreisler, violinist</i>
November 25	Beecham	March 10	Ormandy
December 16	Ormandy	March 24	<i>Emanuel Feuermann, cellist</i>
January 6	Ormandy	April 7	Ormandy
	<i>Sergei Rachmaninoff, pianist</i>		<i>Nathan Milstein, violinist</i>
	<i>Dorothy Maynor, soprano</i>		
	<i>Artur Rubinstein, pianist</i>		

IN WASHINGTON

October 21	Ormandy	March 3	Ormandy
December 2	Beecham	March 17	Ormandy
January 13	Ormandy	April 15	Ormandy
	<i>Sergei Rachmaninoff, pianist</i>		<i>Artur Rubinstein, pianist</i>
	<i>Courtlandt Palmer, pianist</i>		<i>Efrem Zimbalist, violinist</i>
	<i>Fritz Kreisler, violinist</i>		

IN BALTIMORE

October 22	Ormandy	March 4	Ormandy
December 3	Beecham	April 1	Ormandy
January 14	Ormandy	April 14	Ormandy
	<i>Sergei Rachmaninoff, pianist</i>		<i>Artur Rubinstein, pianist</i>
	<i>Courtlandt Palmer, pianist</i>		<i>Efrem Zimbalist, violinist</i>
	<i>Fritz Kreisler, violinist</i>		

TOURS

October 20, Richmond; October 26-November 1, Cleveland, Columbus, Chicago, Toledo, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Youngstown; November 5, Brooklyn; December 30, Harrisburg; January 12, Reading; January 19-February 1, Charleston, Huntington, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Birmingham, Shreveport, New Orleans (two concerts), Montgomery, Orlando, Rock Hill, Durham, Charlotte, Asheville; February 3, New Haven; March 16, Richmond; March 31, Harrisburg; April 21-23, Schenectady, Hartford, Worcester; May 3-10, Pittsburgh, Toronto (two concerts), Ann Arbor (six concerts), Saginaw.

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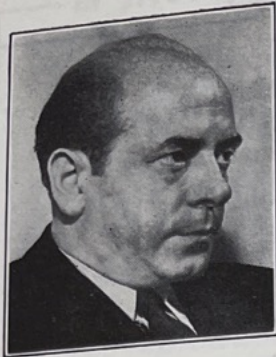
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HEINRICH WIEMANN
MAX STRASSENBERGER
M. PAULI
S. SIANI
WALDEMAR GIESE
CARL TORELLO
WILLIAM TORELLO

Harps

LYNNE WAINWRIGHT
Reba Robinson

Flutes

W. M. KINCAID
ALBERT TIPTON
HAROLD BENNETT
JOHN A. FISCHER

Oboes

MARCEL TABUTEAU
LOUIS DI FULVIO
Adrian Siegel

English Horn

JOHN MINSKER

Clarinets

BERNARD PORTNOY
JULES J. SERPENTINI
N. CERMINARA
LEON LESTER
WILLIAM GRUNER
Ermelindo Scarpa
Louis Morris

Bass Clarinet

LEON LESTER

Bassoons

SOL SCHOENBACH
JOHN FISNAR
F. DEL NEGRO
WILLIAM GRUNER

Horns

MASON JONES } *Solo*
CLARENCE MAYER }
HERBERT PIERSON }
THEODORE SEDER }
A. A. TOMEI }
ANTON HORNER }

Trumpets

SAUL CASTON
SIGMUND HERING
HAROLD W. REHRIG
MELVIN HEADMAN

Bass Trumpet

CHARLES GUSIKOFF

Trombones

CHARLES GUSIKOFF
GORDON M. PULIS
PAUL P. LOTZ
WILLIAM GIBSON
C. E. GERHARD
Fred C. Stoll
Paul V. Bogarde

Tubas

PHILIP A. DONATELLI
HEINRICH WIEMANN

Tympani

OSCAR SCHWAR
EMIL KRESSE

Battery

BENJAMIN PODEMSKI
JAMES VALERIO

Celesta and Piano

FREDERICK VOGELGESANG
GUSTAVE A. LOEBEN
Joseph S. Levine

Euphonium

CHARLES GUSIKOFF

Librarian

MARSHALL BETZ

Personnel Manager

PAUL P. LOTZ