

THEATER MUSIC

The work of Serge Rachmaninoff, who was the Concert Society's guest at an extra concert on Monday, is the embodiment of precision; therein lies the secret of his effectiveness both as a pianist and composer. His extraordinarily distinct and clear touches that could only ever be lighter, softer, more dreamy make quite simple runs sound effective, difficult, brilliant; in the same way as his sure design, flowing periodicity, clear-cut episodes, lively rhythm lend enjoyment, freshness and pleasure to relatively ordinary tonal connections. In addition, he has a developed sense of timbre and brilliance and a great ability to make the whole thing seem entertaining and full of contrast without any notable novelties, boldness or harshness.

Building extensively on Chopin, especially in the harmonics, with eclectic additions from Schumann, Liszt, Russian folk music, etc., he thus creates a salon music elevated to monumentality - in this word, in the social and cultural-historical sense, not as it is used by a certain knowledge-free coterie criticism. This music lacks an inaccessible, rather impersonal beauty, which one can enjoy in the right mood much like certain types of natural beauty, smiling landscapes, drifting clouds, a moonlit night. But it leaves no mark on one's soul unless one happens to get engaged in the meantime or experience something else important besides the music.

Two piano concertos were performed, the familiar one from last year in C minor (No. 2) and one in D minor (No. 3). The former is probably more even in tone and concept, the latter has more piquant, more profound and pathetically meant scales. Both end in the same way, with a large, dense orchestral melody, accompanied by the piano's massive chord work. These similarities and the general lack of harmony weakened the overall impression and underlined the inner emptiness of this elegant superficial art, which is so often addressed to sophisticated people of feeling, or to those who long to feel so, for example Americans. (The New World is also said to be Mr. Rachmaninoff's immediate goal.) But it is not for Soviet Russians!

The audience in the Auditorium was very numerous and as anti-Bolshevik as it was enthusiastic.

P.B.

[Translation: Google]