



A. RUBINSTEIN IS WIZARDLY AT THE PIANO

Magnificent Technique of Polish Artist Thrills Big Audience at Eaton Audi- torium

Artur Rubinstein, Polish pianist, played in Eaton Auditorium last evening before a capacity audience. Program included: D'Albert's arrangement of Bach's F Major Toccata; Liszt's B Minor Sonata; Villa Lobos' "O Prole do Bebe"; Granados' "La Maya y el Ruisenor"; Allegro Barbaro of Bela Bartok; A Flat Ballade; Three Preludes; Berceuse and Scherzo in B Flat of Chopin; and many encores.

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THE PLAYER.

Magnificent technique such as thrilled last evening's audience — technique to astonish and delight at the same moment—could easily discourage the music lover. It seemed so hopelessly efficient. It made scales and arpeggios and chords and decorative arabesques sound such awful detail stuff under less efficient hands. But before Artur Rubinstein has played three minutes all shadow of discouragement is gone. The piano takes on a new character of sunshine and singing joy. This is the miracle of temperament shining through astounding technique. The piano lover could listen for hours and never weary. Rubinstein at the piano is like Charles Dickens in the story-telling world. Dickens can exaggerate a street lamp into a flaming torch of infinite glory. Rubinstein can make scales sound like tonal hurricane, arpeggios like miniature Niagaras in reverse, and chords like all the wrangling talkers on earth singing a Bach Chorale of love in perfect harmony. He can do more than that. He can make diminished triads laugh and weep by turns, give dissonance a heart of merriment, and make octaves seem positively the noblest thing that music can achieve.

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PROGRAM

The trick of it? Ah! Chopin had it—so has Paderewski. It is the singing fire of Poland—for Poland would sing if she burned from boundary to boundary. Last evening's program jumped straight into the ecstatic singing mood. The Bach Toccata was greater than ever d'Albert himself made it. It was Bach-Rubinstein. Those tremendous chords and torrential finger passages—those long drawn crescendos that seemed to lift the listener from his seat — those counterpoints of never ending fire and ice and wrath and joy were Bach in Poland — just as Mendelssohn learnt something from Samuel Johnson's tour of the Hebrides so Artur Rubinstein showed Father Bach a thing or two in dynamics. Then came the Liszt. Strangest sonata ever written—mixture of tone poem, fantasia, lyric, drama, fugue, dance epic and romance in piano language. Three times repeated downward scale passage and answering panther leaps, velvety and steely by turns. Finest melody, like dewdrops to music in early morning sunshine. Liszt, the grand master, in his grandest style. Grand even in sentimental patches, so sweet and tuneful and so tenderly wistful. Rubinstein took Liszt to Poland, too—took him in the grandest of grand manner. It was a whole concert in itself this superb Liszt Sonata.

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CHOPIN

The Villa Lobos—and Granados—and Bartok numbers were enchantment of a different kind. More astonishment of technique—hands that rushed over the keyboard, that were flung high and low in bewildering ecstasy of efficiency, that couldn't hit the wrong note or chord or octave if they tried—more fire of beautiful song in whole tone and sometimes atonal form. Then came Chopin — and all was loveliness and light. That A Flat Ballade—strange mixture of psychic and physical—song and episode dream and doing — came and went like a flashing revelation. The lovely Berceuse was harpings and eolian whisperings, ripple of sparkling water and shimmer of dewy cobweb in moonlight, old world musical box tinkle and the ringing of a million astral bells. Not since Pachmann played him last in Toronto has Chopin come so clearly into his kingdom as he did last evening under Artur Rubinstein's wonderful hands.