MUSIC

SYMPHONY HALL

Artur Rubinstein

Artur Rubinstein, pianist, appeared yesterday afternoon in the Boston University Celebrity Series at Symphony Hall. The program included Toccata in C Major by Bach-Busoni; Two Impromptus from Op. 90 by Schubert; Sonata in B Minor, Op. 58 by Chopin; Carnaval, Opus 9 by Schumann; The maiden and the Nightingale, from 'Goyescas" by Granados; and Mephisto Waltz by Liszt.

By JULES WOLFFERS

We have waited quite a while here in Boston to hear Artur Rubinstein at his best. Yesterday afternoon the brilliant pianist gave a capacity audience at Symphony Hall the best in him and this comes pretty close to being the best there is.

If in the past there has often been a Jekyll and Hyde character to the recitalist's public displays, yesterday's program was all Jekyll from start to finish.

Perhaps the soloist is entering on a new phase in his long and distinguished career. If so all reservations one may have had must now disappear in the light of the superb renditions given yesterday.

There is every temptation for the pianist to tear the piano apart in Busoni's transcriptions of Bach's organ works. But Mr. Rubinstein exercised his new restraint so wisely and so well that the Toccata in C Major became a triumph of timbre and tone.

The two Impromptus from Schubert's Opus 90 were lightly sketched with chaste outline and beautiful singing tone. In the Chopin Sonata one felt that a little more urgency from time to time would not have come amiss but taken as a whole it was a notable achievement which found the pianist's restraint devoted to the more poetic elements in the four-movement work.

The high point of the afternoon was the Schumann Carnaval and here the recitalist gave nothing less than a definitive performance. All the wit, the charm, the contrast, the imagination, the surprises that Schumann poured into his score were captured and projected intact. Here Mr. Rubinstein brought his technical mastery into play not for its own sake, not to dazzle the audience, but to serve the music.

Charming Portrayal

Exactly the same can be said for his charming portrayal of the Cranados Maiden and the Nightingale and in the programmatic Mephisto Waltz by Liszt. The pianist might well have been forgiven if in the latter piece he had taken the opportunity Liszt provided to overwhelm the hearers. But even here Mr. Rubinstein concentrated on telling the music's story without losing a trace of his effectiveness.

One has always had cause to admire Rubinstein the virtuoso. Yesterday one had full cause to admire Rubinstein the great interpreter. If the audience did not yell, stamp and cheer as in previous years this was because the circus element was completely lacking.

By the length and sincerity of the applause the knowing audience showed its full understanding and appreciation of a notable and memorable musical event.