NEWS OF THE TH

Rubinstein's Masterful Artistry Wins Praise

An ingratiating, dynamic and thoroly exciting program of piano music is the ever-recurring promise whenever Artur Rubinstein is billed for a concert appearance. If he has ever played a better concert than he offered Saturday night in the city auditorium, this reviewer didn't hear it and can't believe it.

During the intermission backstage, a member of the audience besought Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" as an encore, but Rubinstein explained a concert is arranged like a formal dinner, from the heavy courses to the dessert. Beethoven, he maintained, is strictly an entree—good solid roast beef au jus on the musical menu—and should never follow such desserts as Chopin.

But it was the dessert of Chopin which Rubinstein's audience found most delightful. The nocturne was a moody, melodic poem—but Rubinstein gave it a new clarity by avoiding muddy pianistic sentiment. The ballad was a rewarding song without words; the two etudes bright, carefully embroidered charm.

The C sharp waltz—everyone knew it and greeted its lilting melancholy with emotional recognition.

And for sheer dynamism and peak excitement, the Polish pianist chose to play the A flat Polonaise, restoring its sonorous brilliance and heavily underscored tempo to its rightful strength and affirmation. If some went out from the concert and threw rocks at barroom jukeboxes—nearly all of which offer the nasty little swing version of the Polonaise created by Carmen Cavallero to torture musical ears—surely it was a justifiable breach of the peace.

The concert opened with the nobility of Cesar Franck's prelude, chorale and fugue. The melody is carried in single emphasized notes or marching chords with an intricate and delicate background of arpeggio figures. It is complicated music which takes more than one hearing for full enjoyment.

For his biggest number, Rubinstein chose to play the whole of Schumann's "Carnaval" suite—an episodic composition of brief melodies describing the people of carnival time: Pierrot, Arlequin, Coquette, Pantalon and Colombine interspersed with gay Paganini and Chopin themes and swaying provocative waltzes. It's a fascinating musical creation offering material for a dozen sonatas.

The encores, lavishly offered, included the weeping sadness of the schmaltzy Brahms' valse, a more kinetic and gay Chopin waltz and the crashing, wild rhythms of De-Falla's "Fire Dance," played with unbelievable verve.—A. M.