

Busch, Serkin Triumph at Opera House

Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Busch, plus a gentleman disobligingly named Rudolph Serkin, provided a large audience with one of the most distinguished and satisfying recitals of the season yesterday afternoon at the Opera House. This was, if I am not mistaken, the first local appearance of the celebrated violinist Adolph Busch, although his pianistic son-in-law, Serkin, has been with us before.

Both artists are particularly celebrated for the aristocratic, intellectual quality of their playing, but, unlike some other aristocrats of the concert platform, they are also tremendous technicians. Few violinists can boast so big, rich and complete a tone as that Busch draws, and the brilliance of his performance was matched by the profound musicality of his interpretation, both in the D minor partita of Bach and the Schubert fantasy in C major.

Serkin played Beethoven's "Sonata Appassionata" with magnificent tempestuous spirit, illuminated by a great master's conception of form and dynamics, and driven forward with perfect technical command. We should hear both Busch and Serkin often again, both in sonatas and as soloists with the San Francisco Symphony.

I missed their performance of the Brahms D minor sonata because I stayed home to hear Leopold Stokowski and Eduard Steuermann give the world premiere of Schoenberg's new piano concerto via radio. This seemed to me one of Schoenberg's most important recent works. It is based entirely on the concept of music as a lyric and dramatic art, and its lyricism and drama are handled with size and sweep as befits one of the leading composers of the century. Schoenberg is frequently puzzling, but he did not seem so on this occasion.—A. F.

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