

ity and refinement of the man. In his own circle he knew how to smile and to unbend. He was a gracious host and an intelligent talker. He believed, and his music and playing confirmed that belief, that music "should rehabilitate minds and souls." His music will continue to console and to refresh through the years.

RACHMANINOFF

Sergei Rachmaninoff was one of the towering figures of music in our time. He achieved this position entirely through his gifts as an interpreter and creator of music. He never sought to cut a figure in the world other than as a musician. He gave few interviews, issued fewer pronouncements and held himself aloof from the narrow disputes that trouble the world of music. He avoided every suggestion of sensationalism in his art, and his private life was strictly his own.

In later years, as he looked back on his life, he feared that he had ventured into too many fields. As composer, conductor and pianist he had "hunted three hares," and he asked himself, "Can I be sure that I have killed one of them?" The world could be sure. He was a brilliant conductor, and in Russia he directed the Imperial Opera and the Philharmonic Concerts of Moscow. Save for rare guest appearances, he did not conduct here, but he could have achieved distinction in this field had he not chosen to forego it in the latter part of his life. As a pianist he was one of the mightiest of the twentieth century. His technique was formidable, but those who heard him were not required to be conscious of it. For he subordinated everything to the message of the composer. His performances had matchless dignity and purity, simplicity and loftiness.

Because the art of the interpreter is ephemeral, Rachmaninoff will be remembered best for his music—the symphonies, tone poems, piano concertos, piano pieces and songs, even the C sharp minor Prelude which he tossed off as a young man, which, to his sorrow, he was always expected to play and which countless students will wrestle with through the years. His music was all of a piece, stemming from the romantic, nineteenth century tradition of Russia. He followed in the footsteps of Tchaikovsky, who encouraged him as a youngster. He was not afraid of spacious sentiment, and his melodies had the cast of the folksongs of his native land.

On the stage Rachmaninoff had a way of looking grim and foreboding. The close-cropped head, the lined face, the lean, tall, stooped figure gave the impression that he was dour. But his outward severity masked the sensitiv-