

THE CHICAGO

Only the Time Tried Works Heard at the Rachmaninoff Recital

BY W. L. HUBBARD.

Had Sergei Rachmaninoff's piano recital at the Auditorium yesterday afternoon possessed no other merits it would have been worth while simply because it showed Chicago concert goers how his prevalent C-sharp minor Prelude should be played. The wish was instant that every piano student in this broad land of ours might be there to hear, and hearing, learn.

For every student plays it or attempts it somewhere along his upward climb to Parnassus, and now that it is even successfully "ragged," the knowing how is of value. Its composer made it a thing of tonal beauty and compelling power. He had the whole first part of it literally swim in tone. The notes of the theme were sustained and given real song value while the chords were played over and around them merely as accompaniment, while the lyric utterance was uninterrupted. It made the hackneyed composition a poetic message not soon to be forgotten.

The program the Russian composer pianist offered was one which no beginner in recital work would have dared present. It contained nothing save time-tried and old established friends—the Beethoven Sonata op. 31, the Rondo Capriccioso of Mendelssohn, a ballade, a waltz, the Impromptu op. 29, and the Scherzo op. 31 of Chopin, two of the pianist's own works, and the Liszt transcription of the "Faust" waltz. Every student works on the majority of these, and the curriculum of the average conservatory would be bodiless were they blotted from existence. This being the case no "real" artist would put them on a program. Only the unfamiliar, the exotic, and the weird have place there at the present time.

And yet, how good they sounded, how melodious, how clear, and how well worth while, when played as they were played yesterday with loving appreciation of their beauty, with fine attention to delicate and interesting nuances, yet with direct, straightforward musicianship and sane sentiment, and with a technic that was supreme.

They were in the hands of a master musician and they glowed in beauty and lasting charm because of it. They endure the maltreatment of the studio just because they are as near immortal as is any creation of humanity. It was joy to hear them in their rightful place and under skilled hands again. The audience was as large as the Auditorium, and applause was ovational throughout the afternoon.

"Poison Ordeal Too"

19191117 SR Chicago Recital Hubbard Review

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Fri, Nov 9, 2018