

RACHMANINOFF AT QUEEN'S HALL TRANSCENDENT PLAYING

Sergei Rachmaninoff belongs to a type rare in the modern world—that of the composer-virtuoso—and his piano-playing has a generous height, depth, breadth and brilliance that seem to derive from the now legendary glories of Liszt and Rubinstein. Little wonder that his recital sold out Queen's Hall on Saturday afternoon, or that he held his audience in a silence that intensified almost to suffocation during Chopin's B flat minor Sonata.

His boldly-measured performance of Bach's D minor Toccata and Fugue had not been free from a few indistinct notes. His reading of Beethoven's D major Sonata, Op. 10, was over-light, bright and quick—somewhat out of sympathy with the symphonic basis. But in Chopin's Sonata player and music suddenly fused. In the stark contrasts of the Funeral March, in the dark whirlwinds of the finale, Rachmaninoff epitomised Slavonic temperament and history.

He remained at white heat. The solos by Scriabin, Medtner, Borodin, Rubinstein, Dohnanyi, and himself, each by its difficulty deserved the epithet "transcendent." The same word describes Rachmaninoff's playing. Borodin's Scherzo was the glittering climax.

M. M. S.