

APPLAUSE FORCES POPULAR CLASSIC

Rachmaninoff played his "Prelude in C Sharp Minor" on the Spokane concert stage, after all.

This vigorous composition of his own was not included on the regular program, and his manager said in an interview Thursday that the great Russian master would not play it if he could get out of it.

But the near-capacity audience that came from far and near to hear the greatest living composer-pianist give his first concert in Spokane at the Fox theater Thursday evening would not let him go. And Rachmaninoff seemed to sense the determined applause following each encore meant the crowd would stay until he gave his own interpretation of the popular classic.

After he struck the first two notes, spontaneous applause broke forth but quickly died as it was realized it was virtually unheard-of to break in upon the musician. The huge auditorium might have been deserted except for Rachmaninoff and his piano, so quiet was it while this number was played.

The "Prelude in C Sharp Minor" appeared to be the audience favorite, followed by Liszt's "Liebestraum" and "Valse," by Gounod-Liszt.

The tall, gaunt Rachmaninoff plays effortlessly but with amazing speed, richness of tone and delicacy of touch. His performance was at once simple yet grand.