

Sergei Rachmaninoff Enthralls Ottawa Audience

Lovers and students of the piano worshipped at the shrine of one of the greatest of contemporary pianists and composers on Tuesday evening when Sergei Rachmaninoff played at Glebe Collegiate hall. Every available seat was taken weeks in advance, and hundreds eager to hear the great virtuoso were doomed to disappointment.

Applause of extraordinary proportions greeted Rachmaninoff's interpretations of classic and romance composers, and the greatest tribute of all was the breathless stillness of 1,200 people during the playing or between movements of a concerto or sonata.

Given Enthusiastic Applause.

Rachmaninoff, whose reserve and almost grim mien is a tradition of two continents, relaxed from his austerity on two occasions. One was in response to the frantic applause with hands and feet, after he presented the "Suite Bergamasque" of Debussy. The second was when equal enthusiasm burst forth on the conclusion of four etudes of Chopin.

To the delight of his listeners, he brought the concert to a close with his own C Sharp Minor Prelude, most widely played, known and admired of his many piano works.

The march of years appear to have little or no effect on Rachmaninoff's amazing mastery of the keyboard. Indeed it is doubtful if ever he possessed more fire, grace and interpretive power than today. Even the program, (a major element in any concert), dwindles to minor importance. Whatever music he might choose would bear the stamp of his genius in the playing.

Under the virtuoso's lightning fingers, the Debussy suite consisting of Prelude, Menuet, Clair de Lune, and Passepied, was as remarkable in harmony as it was technically. Rhythm of the menuet was a delight, and charming color was infused in his "Clair de Lune".

Of universal appeal to the audience was Rachmaninoff's interpre-

tation of Chopin. It would be difficult to conceive of more radiance and luxuriance of tone than was attained by him in the opening Etude in D-flat major.

A Stirring Climax.

Two other etudes in somewhat quieter vein followed, and the group was brought to a stirring climax with the ever-changing pattern of brilliant harmonies of the C minor etude.

Possibly the pianist's power of interpretation reached a peak in one of the later sonatas of Beethoven, Opus III. The splendor of Beethoven contrasts was etched in highlights in the allegro con brio movement, and quiet grace and beauty were brought out in the lovely melodies of the arietta and adagio molto. The sonata, more than any other work on the program evidenced Rachmaninoff's power of tone construction, shading, and giving each note its precise value.

The executant's own work was represented in his Etude Tableau, which is rich in color and variety. His super-technique found full sway in a group of Liszt including the D flat major etude, "Voices in the Woods", and "Dance of the Gnomes", the latter delightful in its programmatic effects.

Rachmaninoff's mastery of rhythm was nowhere more clearly emphasized than in "The Mill" (Schubert), which he played as an encore. For sheer beauty and clear-cut grace, this all too brief number could scarcely be equalled.

Musical Ottawa was afforded the opportunity of hearing Sergei Rachmaninoff through the initiative of the Tremblay management. A. S.

Duplessis' Party Faces Largest Opposition Yet

QUEBEC, Jan. 17.—(CP)—Largest opposition—by one—in the 29-