

## MUSIC

# Rachmaninoff Hailed in Recital

Sergei Rachmaninoff, one of the few remaining artists who combine phenomenal musicianship with the public's nostalgic memories of a golden past, again drew a capacity house to Constitution Hall last night.

As box-office bait, the noble austere Russian is in a class by himself among pianists. It is strange that such a personality should arouse sentimental associations. Lean and dour looking, reticent in interviews, he still has managed for several generations to win widespread adoration. Many a younger pianist with firmer fingers and actually more dazzling showmanship would give a season's proceeds to know the magic which a figure like Rachmaninoff's commands simply by walking slowly and with apparent self-absorption across the stage.

### OLD AND YOUNG

Yesterday's audience, like all Rachmaninoff audiences, was held in almost breathless thrall by every note he played. Some of the listeners were pretty young students wearing concert finery and awed by the mysterious-looking personage whose reputation seems to have existed for all time. Others were oldsters who have been his faithful admirers since he and they and the music he plays were very much younger. It was they who made clucking sounds of appreciation that broke the final resonant pianissimos as they died away from the masterful fingers of the artist.

### POETIC PAST

Rachmaninoff does not need to vary his programs from the traditional, nor would audiences wish him to. A Liszt version of Bach (A-minor prelude and Fugue), a Beethoven sonata ("Appassionata"), a Chopin group, some of the composer's own music—this might have been any Rachmaninoff program.

Actually not in top form at yesterday's concert so far as clarity of technique is concerned, these deviations have little effect now at the atmosphere of a fragrant, poetic musical past (always idealized when it is dead and gone) which his playing creates. The silken pianissimos, the sudden bursts of resounding volume, the curving phrases were intact and will likely remain so until Rachmaninoff plays no more.