

Rachmaninoff Reaches High Level of Artistry In Appearance Here

Master of Piano Blends Intellect and Emotional Sensitiveness to Delight of Large Audience.

BY CORA BRYAN M'RAE.

Rhapsodic language in the face of such music as Sergei Rachmaninoff played to a packed house at the Scottish Rite Cathedral Tuesday night would be an affront. Superlatives, every one of which would be justified literally, seem just a frothy vulgarity now in writing.

With Mr. Rachmaninoff it is the intellect and emotional sensitiveness, delicately blended, justly proportioned—intangibly out of grasp for delineation.

It is this quality that stirs the ordinary music lover and at the same time leaves the genuine and most critical musicians satisfied.

His intellectual perception of subtle uses of form and structure, balanced phrasing, flowing line, is so penetrating that the thought of the composer is never obscure. Commencing his program with an organ prelude and fugue in A minor, he made even this an exciting musical experience to every single one in his audience.

Dramatic Instinct.

He has dramatic instinct and the delineative power for it. His long, thin fingers, so powerful, so quick and so co-ordinated with his mind, are still the supple fingers of youth, but trained from long years of experience to transmit the poetry conceived in the mind of the player.

In work that is so consistently beautiful, it is hard to select one rendition as outstanding. In the opinion of this reviewer, he could have played the Chopin etudes, one after the other, all evening, giving the C Minor a slight preference, and the evening would have been complete. In these that singing quality of tone, for which he never has been surpassed, was most evident. In the C Minor he simply rolled out a huge tone with no forcing. However, his program was perfectly balanced.

He makes the piano seem like an entirely new instrument. Even though one might be familiar with some of the numbers, for instance, the Schubert "Impromptu A Flat Minor," and the Schubert-Liszt, "The Trout," one is not familiar with the performance that Mr. Rachmaninoff gives them.

In Good Humor.

The artist was in good humor, as well he might be with such a warm, responsive audience that left no vacant seat in the hall.

As usual, back stage was crowded with admirers and autograph seekers and many wanting to

know his encores. (He played three, closing the program with his C Sharp Minor prelude, according to custom.) The crowd waited about 20 minutes before discovering he had slipped out with Mrs. Rachmaninoff before the applause had stopped for the final number.

It is four years since Mr. Rachmaninoff played in Houston. Mrs. Edna W. Saunders, under whose management he played, was besieged with entreaties to bring him back again next season. No finer music will be heard in Houston. Rachmaninoff is perhaps the last of the titans of the piano of his generation.

Others may come along. Vladimir Horowitz is booked for February 27.

COUNCIL APPROVES STREET CLOSING IN SHOW AREA

City Council Wednesday approved requests made by the Houston Fat Stock Show officials to facilitate staging of the show, which opens February 5.

Closing of streets around the Coliseum was approved. This will include Brazos and Bagby between Rusk and Walker and Walker along the south side of the Coliseum.

A permit for the parade to be held on Main Street at 10 a.m. the opening day was approved, as was the sale of tickets from eight downtown ticket booths.

Council also agreed for the show to operate a restaurant in the Coliseum during the show with no fee being paid to the city. Last year the show was charged 10 per cent of gross receipts.

Council, however, refused to abandon the policy under which the city operates the other food and drink concessions. Council decided it could not afford to lose this revenue, which amounted to \$2239 during the show last year. Show officials had asked for the right to operate the other concessions.

Abercrombie Home Is Damaged by Fire