

## RACHMANINOFF IN VIVID RENDITION OF HIS OWN CONCERTO

**Famous Soloist-Composer Casts  
Spell Over Audience by Ani-  
mated Artistic Energy.**

ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA,  
Vladimir Golschmann conducting, with  
Sergei Rachmaninoff as soloist.  
1—Concerto de chiesa, Opus 2, No.  
9 (Revised by Rhene Baton, dall'Abaco  
(First American performance).)  
2—Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, for  
Piano and Orchestra, Op.  
3—Symphony No. 3 in A Minor,  
Opus 44

BY REED HYNDL.

Sergei Rachmaninoff was lion of the Symphony Orchestra's concert in the Municipal Auditorium yesterday. Appearing on the program both as soloist and as composer, he evoked the wildest sort of enthusiasm which was climaxed by a trumpet fanfare from the orchestra when he walked to the stage from the audience after hearing his new symphony.

The enthusiasm was about evenly divided between his role as pianist and as composer. If there were any difference in the favor shown him, it went to his playing of his Concerto in C Minor, if only for the reason that this necessitated his presence.

Rachmaninoff, it is obvious, casts a special spell on his audience. This is aside from his musicianship. It has to do with that leanness of figure and dignity of bearing; that enigmatic and saturnine look of his face. There is an unmistakable feeling of mystery attaching to him; of intense preoccupation, and of great moral strength. The audience feels all this and awaits him as it would a high priest of revelation.

**Master of Tonal Fading.**

It is seldom disappointed. As an interpreter of his own works, Rachmaninoff may be counted on. When he plays, his music does not suggest that sour exterior. It is on the rhapsodic order, pulsing with vitality and striking the emotions directly. It is rich in color, for Rachmaninoff is one of the masters of tonal shading. It is the apotheosis of the Slavic spirit—and is very exciting.

Rachmaninoff was in fine form as pianist yesterday. He has probably not been heard here to better advantage. Playing the most popular of his concertos, with the orchestra under Vladimir Golschmann giving him the best possible background, Rachmaninoff was consistently forceful and dynamic. Whether striking quick, bright chords; embroidering the more subtle patterns in tones of exquisite nuance, or giving ominous voice to those sombre stretches his music always contains. Rachmaninoff was impressive.

That fitful leaping—up and down the piano, in sharply accented rhythms; those occasional, flowing cantabiles, and all of it animated by an agitated artistic energy, gave the concerto such vividness as to rule out a consideration of its value as pure music. Rachmaninoff playing his own concerto prevents one's thinking of its limitations in imaginative scope or formal beauty. It definitely is fascinating to the hearer, and that is that.

The new symphony seemed to me to have more artistic impulses per bar than all of the concertos rolled together. It has its Tchaikowskian moments, but it is organically firm and a persuasive work of art from first bar to last. It is full of subtle orchestral effects. The thematic material is always interesting and equal to the burdens placed on it; originality of form adds to the symphony's effectiveness.

**Symphony Absorbing Score.**

The symphony, the orchestra revealed yesterday, has the ordinary requisites—largeness of conception and its attainment through technical finesse—but it had something more than this would imply. It had the power of great music to move the auditor.

Perhaps a few more hearings would have the effect of making it seem less grandiose, and a close examination of the score might reveal internal weaknesses, but when played yesterday under Mr. Golschmann's discerning direction the symphony was an arresting and absorbing piece of music.

The program was rounded out with a modern treatment of an early eighteenth century church cantata by Evaristo Felice dall'Abaco, an Italian composer, who was born in 1673 and died in 1742. In revising the work, Rhene Baton, contemporary Parisian, has provided a part for piano to take the place of the continuo used in the composer's time.

A great deal of supple strength and fluency of expression were revealed in this engaging work, which is terse, full of melodic beauty and musically sincere. It gave the strings the opportunity of making an excellent showing, and was expertly handled by Mr. Golschmann. The audience was enthusiastic about it, also, and that is not always true of "curtain-raisers."