

Rachmaninoff Gives Recital At Lyric Theater

Russian Pianist Plays Compositions By Bach, Chopin, Liszt And Others And Two Of His Own.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian pianist, appeared last evening at the Lyric in recital and presented a program which included compositions by Bach, Chopin and Liszt, and the modern Russians—Tanejew, Scriabine and Medtner. He also played two of his own compositions.

Rachmaninoff is a veritable giant of the keyboard, both as to physical and musical stature. There is hardly a pianistic feat of strength or agility which he cannot accomplish easily, and he does them as though they were the merest trifles. In his mastery of every technical device his tone runs the gamut of gradations.

The Bach Busoni Chorals, which opened the program, showed how hymns may be presented earnestly and bravely whilst endless melodies are being woven about them. "The Fairy Tales," by Medtner, bears evidence of deep feeling and a regard for beauty of form. The spirit of his music is that of the past, but reinforced, as it were, by modern thought and aims and ideas, and he has sought and found musical expression for his own emotions, for his own experience in life, which has resulted in his own idiom. This fairy tale is one in which there are good as well as bad fairies, gnomes as well as brownies.

The touch and tone of Rachmaninoff are a poised and perfect medium. There is the perfect balance of the technical and the intellectual in whatever he does. The tonal content of the composer's measure is flawlessly complete. He misses no modulation; no ornament, unfolding of melody, the play of motives—none of them evades him.

The Chopin of his program included a Nocturne, Scherzo and two Etudes, and it was here that Rachmaninoff roused his audience to its greatest enthusiasm. His Chopin interpretations were both poignant and appealing, as well as brilliant. The two Etudes of his own which the pianist played were nationalistic in character, vivid and colorful.

There is a fluidity of utterance and a freedom of movement in whatever Rachmaninoff plays that is simply astounding. His artistic and subtle use of dynamics, as in his playing of Liszt, and the clarity of his tone which remains, even when mastering some stupendous technical feat, as in the Scriabine Sonata—all these qualities are hardly approached by any other pianist.

He does not appeal to his hearers through an insinuating and illusive

beauty of tone, but through a crystalline perfection which is never marred by any effort to obtain an emotional effect. Evenly and exactly, coolly and detachedly, he does what the composer bids.

He will not do more; he never does less.
V. P. H.

Maryland Trip His Topic.

A meeting of the St. Martin's Council of Catholic Men will be held Sunday evening. The Rev. John LaFarge, S. J., sponsor of the movement to erect a shrine at St. Mary's on the spot where the first mass was celebrated in Maryland, will talk on "A Trip Through Maryland, Land of Sanctuary."

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