

Sergei Rachmaninoff's Piano Concert at Murat Theater Pleases Audience

BY CORBIN PATRICK.

Friends of music locally were somewhat compensated for the long wait for important piano music they have endured since the opening of the season when Sergei Rachmaninoff played yesterday afternoon at the Murat theater.

This artist, who ranks with the foremost pianists of our time, is also poet and philosopher, concludes one duly impressed with the ripe understanding of the letter and the spirit that he brought to compositions of Mozart, Scarlatti, Schumann and Chopin.

He was heard by a considerable audience that was well pleased with him, and could have been better satisfied, apparently, only had he consented to play his own prelude in C sharp minor, for which it clamored. That brilliant but insubstantial essay on the Moscow fire bears such an appeal to the popular imagination that it would assure Rachmaninoff of the public esteem had he done nothing else.

Mozart Sonata Introduction.

The Russian master choose as his introductory exercise a Mozart sonata, a beautiful piece to be distinguished by a mere number, 14. Thus warmed to his task, he revealed the exquisite charms cached in the Scarlatti sonatas in D minor and C major, then brought vividly before the inner eye the fanciful figures of Schumann's "Carnaval." It is the duty of every pianist to give

his audience Chopin, and this Rachmaninoff next fulfilled with a barcarolle, valse and ballade. The prepared program was concluded with the pianist's own "Moment Musical" and his transcription of Kreisler's "Leibesfreud."

The chief characteristic of this celebrated artist, it seems to this reviewer is his tremendous simplicity. It is impressive from the moment he enters unheralded onto the platform. It pervades and classicizes his music. There is a disarming directness to the man, a purposeful method in his presentation of every idea. Through the prism of his personality, in consequence, the conceptions of the composer come as stark and clear as the ringing of the bells in that famous prelude which he declined to play. There is no ornament, no bombast to the art of Rachmaninoff.

Mood, Keen and Authentic.

To a man of lean and sinewy mind, understanding comes as if by nature. Hence this pianist's perception and projection of mood and meaning are keen and authentic. Consider the recreation in tone he gave the varying episodes of the "Carnaval." There was sympathetic expression for each of the shaded conceits that Schumann put on paper. Rachmaninoff's temperament is as flexible as his technique. His technique speaks for itself.

The concert yesterday was under the local management of Henry Burton.