

# RACHMANINOFF CASTS HIS SPELL OVER AUDIENCE

Master Pianist Thrills Listeners With Uncomparable Art and Great Personality

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Looking more than ever like a benevolent Chinese sage, Sergei Rachmaninoff, the great gaunt Russian, cast his potent spell last night over an audience at Masonic Hall that thrilled to this great artist's incomparable art, and revelled in the charm of a great personality that is both alluring and inscrutable.

On the evidence of his playing, Rachmaninoff's soul still reeks with beauty. Unblemished with the slightest suggestion of ennui or a perfunctoriness, noticeable now and then in the performance of more than one virtuoso of world fame, Rachmaninoff gives the impression of being at the top of his form.

In his devotion to the classics as also to the masterpieces of the great romantic composers there is an aristocratic fidelity in Rachmaninoff's art; it holds no traffick with extreme modernism but manifests the highest interpretative kinship with the great ones of the past.

## Greater Pianist

So potent is this great interpretative art, than one must perforce, adjudge Rachmaninoff greater as a pianist than composer.

Beginning his program with a flawless performance of the Sonata No. 14 of Mozart, one was immediately impressed with an incomparably beautiful tone; pellucid phrasing and unaffected simplicity.

In the two short Scarlatti Sonatas which followed, there was no attempt to minimize the sonority of the modern concert-grand piano nor to make it emulate its grandmother, Harpsichord; there was, rather, the joyous projection of the fascinating and brisk arabesques of the 18th Century master whose charm and vitality never fail as was well evinced in the burst of applause at the conclusion of these little masterpieces.

There is hope for the development of musical taste hereabouts when such manifestations occur.

## Superb Performance of Schumann

That masterpiece of musical whimsy of Robert Schumann that he entitled "Carnival" was played con amore. Never since the Paderewski of 20 years ago, have I heard a performance of this work that even approximated this one.

Here was renewed evidence of Rachmaninoff's deep affinity for the Romantic spirit.

A detail of this performance that must have struck those familiar with the work was the inclusion of the Ninth Number, entitled "Sphinxes," which is usually omitted. In this case the composer-pianist exercised his creative fancy to the solving of the riddle. The result was at once ingenious and effective even tho it sounded very un-Schumannesque.

The astounding virtuosity of the great pianist was fully revealed in the group of Chopin pieces and the two numbers from Rachmaninoff's own pen, concluding with his prodigious metamorphosis of Kreisler's "Liebestreu."