

MUSIC

RACHMANINOFF'S RECITAL.

Sergei Rachmaninoff gave his annual recital at Poli's Theater yesterday afternoon. His usual large audience, reaching the standing-room limit in size, greeted him with applause and grew enthusiastic as he proceeded through the scheduled program. At the end he played two encores in response to persistent request. The first was his own "Troika." The second was a truly marvelous interpretation of Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Bumble Bee."

Throughout the program Mr. Rachmaninoff showed his usual poised refinement in artistic reading of every note and the taste in phrasing and tonal shading which have contributed so markedly toward establishing him as one of the truly great artists of this instrument. The wonderful Rachmaninoff command of technique showed immediately in the Mozart sonata, which was given delightful reading. The pianist turned his phrases so neatly and struck each tone with the precise confidence that only long, intelligent practice brings to even the greatest genius. The Mozart and Scarlatti fairly sang their lilting melodies under his agile, gifted fingers. The occasional trills in both left and right hand passages were wonderfully light and balanced.

The lengthy "Carnaval" of Schumann was at its most colorful and human best as Mr. Rachmaninoff played it. Its kaleidoscopic beauties bore no trace of the monotonous quality in which they so often are shrouded and from which few pianists successfully pluck them.

The Chopin group was charmingly done. The poetry of the "Nocturne in D Flat," the varied grace that illumined the "Waltz in A Flat" (opus 64, No. 3), and the virile brilliancy of the familiar "Ballade in G Minor" all were beautifully expressed.

In the last group was a clever "Moment Musical" by Mr. Rachmaninoff, with most intricate writing for the left hand. It should prove an addition to the repertoire of particularly able pianists. There also was the pianist's arrangement of Mr. Kreisler's "Liebesfreud." This work, while obviously skillfully written and of virtuoso caliber seemed, to one listener, at least to have lost its innate charm of spontaneity and buoyant simplicity in this transcription. The frequent use of minor-keyed chords, so truly Russian, yet so foreign to the Viennese spirit of the melody, clothed it too heavily, giving leaden anchors to the joyous, leaping themes.

The only regret of the afternoon was due to the fact that there was a total absence of any really new music, which so great an artist could present to advantage. Not even Scriabin appeared upon this program. The famous "Prelude in C Sharp Minor" also was among those missing.

H. P.