

# GREAT RUSSIAN INTRODUCES PORTLAND TO NEW THRILLS

Concert, Largely of Seldom-Heard Works, Presented to Rose City Audience by Rachmaninoff, Pianist Extraordinary.

BY DAVID PIPER

**S**ERGEI RACHMANINOFF, one of the really great personages of the musical world, was the somewhat gaunt and forbidding gentleman who attracted a crowd of Portlanders to the public auditorium last night. A Rachmaninoff concert is something considerably more than merely an evening of excellent piano playing. It is, often as not, an exhibition of some of the finest music created during the present era, and created as well by this self-same gaunt and forbidding Russian.

It is difficult to think of Sergei Rachmaninoff as being first and foremost a virtuoso pianist. He is one of the few men who have saved this era from being an utterly barren age, musically speaking. His world-famed preludes, his three concertos for piano and orchestra, his second symphony are to be given a prominent place in the list of truly notable compositions brought forth during Rachmaninoff's generation.

He is not to be ranked with the outstanding technicians of the age. His playing lacks the daemonic fury which characterized the performances of some of his confreres. But his is an ample technique, capable of giving voice to his innermost feelings. One

never is inclined to regard Rachmaninoff as an infallible pianistic machine. There is great profundity and depth to his playing. There is enormous intensity, absolute sincerity.

Last night he gave a program in no wise burdened with pianistic clichés. Nearly every item was of the comparatively little-played variety. But the selection of numbers was not so extremely fastidious that the relatively untrained ear was incapable of conveying really pleasurable sensations to its owner. Rachmaninoff played the program straight through, with only the conventional pauses for bows, and for a single intermission.

In the first half of the evening he presented the Tausig transcription of Bach's G minor organ choral, the second of Beethoven's Op. 31 sonatas, and a group of Chopin. The second half contained a Liszt group, a Medtner fairytale, and two Rachmaninoff items. After the manner of Mr. Coolidge, the artist did not choose to play the last number listed, Balakirev's "Islamey."

All the encores were at the close of the concert. Among these were Tchaikovsky's "Troika en traneau," a transcription of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumble-Bee," and Rachmaninoff's own C-sharp minor prelude.