

Famous Russian Delights Crowd At L. A. Recital

By RACHEL RUBIN

The Romans had a word for it. For the walk of gods and goddesses, as opposed to the walk of ordinary mortals. "Incedere," if we remember our Aeneid. (Apologies to Latin scholars.) Anyway, it denoted majesty and dignity and all the other attributes of celestial inhabitants.

We have no intention of comparing Sergei Rachmaninoff with Juno or even Mars. But, as the famous musician made his way across the stage of Philharmonic auditorium last night and slowly sat upon the piano bench as though it were a throne, we could not help sharing the general awe that spread over the audience.

Proves Right To Throne

As the evening wore on, he proved again and again his rightful claim to that throne. Rachmaninoff, the composer, holds a high place in the world of music. Rachmaninoff, the pianist, commands adoration in his own right. Adoration is hardly the word, in the case of a genius so remote that he rewards his worshippers only on rare occasions with a smile.

The great pianist has lost none of his power of former years. With as deep understanding of the music of others as of his own, he plays with mastery that dwarfs description.

His program began with Andantino and Variations, by Schubert-Tausig. In Schumann's Davidsbundler (eighteen characteristic pieces), seldom heard because of its length and difficulty, he evoked an ephemeral mood of romance. In strong contrast were the Chopin numbers that followed, Scherzo in B Minor and Scherzo in B Flat Minor, which caught the popular fancy more completely than any other of the programmed pieces. He played them with zest and, as always, with infinite meaning.

Own Compositions

The second group included two of his own compositions, Prelude in G Major and Etude Tableau in C Minor; Liszt's Etude in D Flat Major, Valse Impromptu and "Carnaval de Pesth." All were well received, and he responded several times to the demand for encores.

On Saturday afternoon Rachmaninoff will give a second recital. Compositions by Scriabin, Medtner and Balakireff will add variation to his program on that occasion.