

NOTED PIANIST PLEASES LARGE S. D. AUDIENCE

Rachmaninoff's Technique
Fine; Never Misses Nuance
During Performance

By FLORENCE PORTERFIELD

A rare musical treat was offered San Diegans last night at the Russ auditorium when the Amphion club presented Sergel Rachmaninoff, world famous pianist.

It is not often that one is privileged to listen to pure music, marvelously played, and last night was such an experience. Rachmaninoff is a great artist. Not only does he possess astonishing technique, but he is also a poet at the piano, and never misses a nuance or phrase in its fullest significance.

The program opened with the Organ Choral in A major, by Bach, arranged by Tausig, and it was a fine vehicle for the pianist. The number was played in fine style and rich tone. One of the high points in the evening was the Beethoven Sonata opus 31, No. 2. This sonata has not the majesty and scope of some of the later works of Beethoven, but it is a beautiful thing in the hands of Rachmaninoff. Simplicity and dignity of style were evident throughout, and especially beautiful was the delicate Allegretto.

Then came a group of Chopin numbers, each offering a different problem to the player. The F sharp minor Polonaise was stirring in its rhythm and precision. Then came two of the delicate works of the Polish poet-composer, the mazurka in A flat major, and the valse in the same key. Both were as crisp and clear as crystal, and were charming in their delicacy and simplicity. The well known Scherzo in C sharp minor was another unforgettable performance. The marvelous octave passages in the beginning were played with accuracy and power, and the chorale-like middle part was inspiring in its waves of deep tone, complemented by exquisite descending chord passages.

The second part of the program opened with three numbers by Liszt, all played with poetry and feeling. Especially noteworthy was the poignant "Valse Oubliee." The "Fairy Tale" in B minor of Medtner was full of humor and crashing chords. Next came the melodious Prelude in G flat major by Rachmaninoff, which was received with enthusiasm by the audience. The program closed with the brilliant "Islamee" of Balakireff. The audience was not satisfied until the pianist had played his well loved Prelude in C sharp minor, and it was interesting to compare the composer's rendition of the same number played by another great artist only last week. Rachmaninoff played the first part softly, thus giving more than ever the effect of great bells and their overtones.

Altogether it was an evening never to be forgotten. Rachmaninoff combines a stupendous execution with a rare feeling for all of the finest points of any composition.