

RACHMANINOFF'S GENIUS THRILLS

Fingers of steel, flitting, crashing, drawing forth harmonies of soulful quality—those gifted fingers of Serge Rachmaninoff, the world-famous Russian pianist and composer, thrilled a capacity audience headed by Mrs. Herbert Hooyer, in Constitution Hall yesterday.

Rachmaninoff, the technician, the impressionist, gave of his matchless genius at the only concert he is scheduled to give Washington this season. Once again he impressed listeners with his mastery of the keyboard.

In awe of his seemingly limitless capacity for extracting hitherto untried chords from the instrument of his virtuosity, the great gathering responded heartily to each of his half dozen offerings.

But at no time, save in the encores which included his own work, "Prelude in F Sharp Minor" did the renowned one swerve from vehicles that were less than magnificent exhibitions of technique.

The nearest approach to coursing melodies were the difficult Schumann "Etudes Symphoniques" and Liszt's "Etude Transcendante." The first of these, a theme in 12 variations, is cited as the composer's greatest composition for piano. Its subtle changes were brilliant. The second number mentioned was not significantly different although its melody was more clearly defined.

A strange atmosphere of uncertainty seemed to fill the auditorium as the artist presented, for the first time, his variations on a theme by the Italian composer, Corelli.

Keen interest was manifested in the work as in all Rachmaninoff efforts because of its unique treatment. Its reception was a dignified tribute to a superb musician and composer. There was lacking the spontaneous plaudits that result when a song has touched the heart instead of the mind.

This appearance of Rachmaninoff, under the local management of Mrs. Wilson-Greene will be remembered by music lovers as a momentous event, for they heard and saw a most unusual demonstration of pianistic achievement.

In recalling the event later there will be many who will remark that the program would have been more enjoyable had it contained just one number possessing beauty of melody to relieve the tension of the afternoon's recital.

MADELINE ENSIGN.