

Rachmaninoff Thrills Throng in Recital Here

By Lillian Tyler Plogstedt

As the third attraction in the Artist Series we heard Tuesday evening in Emery Auditorium Rachmaninoff, by many considered the pianistic giant of the world.

Surely the Rachmaninoff technic has never been surpassed, and last night he fairly outshone himself technically. The program was extremely interesting. Five ballades—but what an infinite variety in those five: The Grieg, Op. 24, a composition that would pass for the work of any other composer, opened the program. The two Brahms ballades, with their strong contrast, the first in D Minor, so lugubrious; the other, the D Major, so gentle and lovely, were given a superb exposition. Then followed the B Major, Liszt, which we never hear, and small wonder it is, the technical demands are so stupendous. We could wish that it had been the closing one in the group rather than the hackneyed A Flat Major of Chopin. Rachmaninoff played this last with such tremendous latitude of tempi, such unusual phrasing that many teachers will have a difficult time of it with their pupils for a while, until this performance shall have faded from their memories.

After the intermission, instead of the Chopin group programmed, we were favored with the first performance outside of New York of two unpublished compositions, and another not heard here before, all works of the artist. The first, a magnificent set of variations upon a Theme of Corelli; next a Prelude in G-minor, then an Oriental Fantasie. The closing number was the Liszt Tarantella, Venezia e Napoli, to which Rachmaninoff gave the most breathtaking interpretation we have ever heard. Superlatives cannot be found to convey the impression left by it. Of course, as always, he was generosity itself in the matter of encores. Altho perceptibly fatigued, he gave the adorable "Troika" of Tschaikowsky, a glorious arrangement of the Menuet from Bizet's "L'Arlesienne," and Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Flight of the Bumble Bee." A capacity house, with seats occupied on the stage, paid tribute to this great artist.

* * *