

# 1,500 Hear Consummate Skill of Rachmaninoff

By FRITZ STRENGE  
[Capital Times Music Editor]

**D**ESPITE the chilling effect of university stock pavilion, Sergi Rachmaninoff, Russian pianist, gave a concert in that barn-like structure Tuesday night that was marked by consummate skill and a somewhat cold interpretation throughout. About 1,500 were present.

For the second time in a year a world-renowned pianist has played to a Madison audience in this building. And for the second time in a year a concert that would have been rich with the wonder of music's greatest creations has been marred by the creak of barn-door hinges, the clatter of collapsible chairs, the sneezing of an audience sitting in draughty corners, and the roar of passing locomotives.

#### Artist Dislikes Hall

Rachmaninoff is not, never has been, the fiery genius the world came to know Paderewski as; but if he were colder than usual in his interpretations of the finest fantasy that has ever been composed, there was only one reason for it. His attitude toward his hall last night was quite plainly expressed in the sardonic glance with which he surveyed it as he came upon the platform for his initial bow.

But on to the concert itself. It was, as may be seen at a single glance of the program, a concert built around the theme of fantasy as it has been treated and developed by the masters of different eras, from Haydn to Scriabine.

It was, in a sense, an intellectual concert. For in more ways than one Rachmaninoff is more the intellectual than the man of visible emotion. Not that he lacks feeling; his entire attitude at the keyboard is one of intense concentration, of emotion that never quite breaks loose but seeks emergence through his fingertips.

He plays with a constant reserve, almost a suppression, as contrasted to the flash and fire of his (may we call him "contemporary?") at any rate, that magnificent pianist, Paderewski. His touch ranges from the liquidescence glide of the Chopin "Fantasie," to the thunderous grandeur of the presto agitato third movement of Beethoven's "Moonlight sonata."

#### Concert Highlight

One of the greatest delights of the entire concert was his exquisite interpretation of Haydn's Fantasie in C major. There is something eternally new and delightful in the variations of the themes of this composition, woven

with fairy-like delicacy and expressive of inimitable lightness and charm.

Only in his encores did Rachmaninoff depart from the established theme of his program. He was especially liberal, playing five including his own "Prelude." The other were Tschaiakowski's "Troika," a folksong "Hopak," arranged by the pianist himself, Rimsky-Korsakob's "Bumble-Bee," and a Chopin waltz.



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