

# RACHMANINOFF GIVES PROGRAM AT AUDITORIUM

Russian Pianist Greeted  
Enthusiastically by Big  
Audience in Oakland

By RONALD D. SCOFIELD.

Sergei Rachmaninoff came to Oakland last night, to the vast delight of an audience that nearly filled the Auditorium Theater. He came, not as the austere exponent of the profundities and grandeurs of piano literature, but more as the interpreter of the simpler works with which every one who loves the piano is familiar. For this reason there may have been some who were disappointed—not with his art, but with his program.

Those who were willing to accept his selections for what they were, however, enjoyed an evening of rare beauty. It has been said often that the simplest works are the supreme test for the virtuoso. If there ever had been any doubt of Rachmaninoff's superb artistry, it would have been dispelled by last night's concert. Compositions which sometimes seem banal at the hands of a mediocre pianist, were revealed in all their pristine clarity, their glowing but unpretentious beauty. Never once did he sink into into sentimentality. Even his Liszt was restrained in its flamboyance to the point of good taste. And the qualities which have made Rachmaninoff the world figure that he is, the liquid, singing clarity of tone, the meticulous technical skill, the fine sensitiveness of his phrasing and dynamics, were revealed to their full extent.

There was just a taste of Beethoven, to start with, the Variations in C Minor, played with brilliance and masterly command. Then followed the glowing warmth of Schumann's Nachstück, opus 23; the singing melody of Schubert's Impromptu in F Minor; the elaborated Weber-Tausig arrangement of "Invitation to the Dance," and the artist's own transcription of the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night's Dream."

The last half of the program consisted of two of his own delightful Preludes, Chopin's Nocturne and Ballade, and Liszt's Sonnetto del Petrarca and Rhapsodie. There may be greater interpreters of Chopin than Rachmaninoff, and there may be more beautiful Chopin works than the Nocturne, but as he played it last night it was as near to ultimate perfection of pure melody as one can hope to hear.

The encores came, in response to thunderous demand; first a Mazurka, then a Waltz, by Chopin; then the artist's own famous and favorite C sharp minor Prelude; the Liszt arrangement of the "Spinning Song" from "The Flying Dutchman," and finally the Schumann-Tausig "Smugglers."