

Record Crowd Hears Rachmaninoff Concert

The largest audience ever to attend the opening of the Evansville Musicians' Club concert series heard Sergei Rachmaninoff play the piano Friday night at the Coliseum.

It was his first program here in 16 years of concert work in this country, and over 2500 attended, several coming a distance of 200 miles.

Rachmaninoff's program showed consideration for all types of listeners, from music students to those attracted mainly to see a celebrity perform.

The familiar strains of Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" opened the evening's performance.

Two Scarlatti sonatas, lighter in vein, followed the Beethoven number and then came a group from Debussy's "Children's Corner Suite," including the rollicking "Golliwogg's Cake-Walk."

A tall, austere figure, the great Russian strode onto the stage and seated himself at the piano bench after a slight bow to the audience.

The formal black and white of his long-tailed evening clothes contrasted oddly with his close-cropped prison haircut.

He played as if in private and for his own entertainment, his only acknowledgment of the presence of an audience being brief bows to the storms of applause and deepening frowns at noises made by late comers as they tiptoed to their seats after his first number.

After Chopin's "Ballade" the audience broke into clamorous applause and Rachmaninoff responded with a curtain call.

He played his well-known "Pre-

lude in C. Sharp Minor," in opening the second half of the program.

Rachmaninoff doesn't like to play this at concerts, having composed it as an etude for students, but usually includes it in response to popular demand.

"Prehude in D Flat" followed and then he played his own interpretation of Mendelssohn's "Midsummer Night Scherzo."

Perhaps the gem of the entire program was the etude by Liszt, followed by "Valse Impromptu" and the familiar "Dance of the Gnomes" by the same composer.

An energetic presentation of Tausig's arrangement of Strauss' "One Lives But Once," in which the speed and limberness of his fingers were displayed, closed his program.

Due to shortness of time before leaving for Winnipeg for his next concert, he played but one encore, the well-known "Minute Waltz" and retired backstage to autograph programs for admirers who crowded about him.

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By United Press