

Rachmaninoff Wins Enthusiastic Ovation at Symphony Concert

Shares With Golschmann
Triumph in Playing New
Rhapsody.

By HARRY R. BURKE.

Sergei Rachmaninoff's astonishing "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, with the composer as soloist and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Vladimir Golschmann, last night at the Municipal Auditorium even aroused more enthusiasm than when first it was heard in the orchestra's Friday concert. Again and again Rachmaninoff was recalled to the platform. Again and again he gripped the young conductor and forced him forward to share honors that were fairly earned by a brilliant presentation of a complex and tricky work.

To this reviewer a second hearing but emphasized the impression of the first. In the old form of a theme with variations Rachmaninoff has developed his rhapsody. Only a great virtuoso could have conceived such a development as that worked out by the soloist and the orchestra, but only a great genius in musical structure could have created it. It has form that is fluid architecture, but which achieves a unity in an infinite variety of rhythms, accents, colorations, in the delicate perception of orchestral nuance, and which has sparkle and brilliance as well as architectonic.

To the service of that concept Rachmaninoff had brought his knowledge of the orchestra as well as his knowledge of form, and united with them in its presentation that astonishing virtuosity which is his as he sits at the keyboard. Always his piano sang, whether in clanging bell-figures or in the most dazzling of crystalline runs; always that amazing velocity; always that wonderful range of dynamics; always that clean-cut fingering with its singing tone.

Again last night Mr. Golschmann, who had led up to Rachmaninoff's appearance as soloist of an all-Russian program with the delightful lyric episodes of Liadoff's "Eight Russian Folk Songs," brought his concert to a conclusion with the Tchaikowsky Fifth Symphony. Familiar as it is in concert rooms—and in its danced version as the ballet, "Destiny"—it again had freshness, vitality, was filled with the spirit of wonder, rising to dramatic climaxes as he, too, built an edifice of tone; but molding as a sculptor, shaping each melodic line and developing his planes and masses into an integral and meaningful whole as the motto theme of ominous significance with which the work opens was transformed at the close into a brilliant climax of assertive triumph.