

Rachmaninoff Holds Spellbound Audience of 2000 Music-Lovers

Yells for His 'Prelude' Start
Demonstration for
the Artist.

By RICHARD SPAMER.

Changes in crowd or mass psychology as between a crush at the Paderewski and Rachmaninoff piano recital were made apparent at the Odeon last night where the great Russian master held sway in his solo appearance here this season.

In the never-to-be forgotten matinee and night of the great Pole there was always a more or less hysterical interval when the easily moved grew almost delirious and gave way frenetically to their pent-up emotions.

Since then recital audiences have grown calmer, by last night's presents, but demonstrative in a different way. One incident will suffice. The master had just given two of his own numbers, "Polichinelle," the famous clown dance, by way of contrast, and the "Barcarolle," or boat song, when a sturdy man of middle age arose near the stage and with much pectoral aplomb shouted, "Play your own 'Prelude'!"

Accordingly, the point in mass psychology here is this: Whereas, in Paderewski's day women mounted chairs and with suffused faces shrieked deliriously and sometimes indulged in antics of ecstasy mere masculinity now gets on its feet and is moved by common impulse to speak for all. Wherefore, it would seem that the piano wizard's public has not alone grown calmer, but knows more precisely what it wants.

Rachmaninoff's program was so arranged that this climax in mass psychology could not be delayed beyond the moment when it should manifest itself.

The most sensational keyboard expert now before the public began with Mozart's Sonata No. 9, in which the Tema con Variazione was outlined with metronomic accuracy, the Menuetto given with changes of tempo where there might have been alternate light and shade, and the number concluded with a most dextrous management of the Ronda alla Turca, in which there were echoes of the tinklings of the characteristically Turkish jingle-tree, a bell mechanism once upon a time quite the vogue in the imperial military bands that played before the Yildiz Kiosk and in the streets of Pera and Ispamboul. Trust a Russian to reveal the intricacies of Moslem music even if his government and countrymen were euchred out of Constantinople!

Generous with Encores.

The great audience permitted the artist to retire at the conclusion of the Mozart, but when, after a short pause, he began the Schumann "Papillons," a suite more difficult but not nearly so attractive as the German master's "Carnaval." Rachmaninoff's deep absorption in his work, his amazing skill and power, began to work their spell. He was not indulged for more than a few minutes' absence from the platform after that and thereupon began to respond to encores evidently with the intention of lessening demands for extras after the program had been finished. His first response consisted of two of Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Worte," beautifully played, and, like everything else during a memorable evening, with the unmistakable Rachmaninoff coloring. Even in the Chopin numbers, the Bahada, E-flat major Valse, Escarolle, G-flat major Valse and the encore, the Franco-Polish genius' F-major Valse, we noted the artist's penchant for staccato, cool as the glints of distant ice-fields, where, as in the Barcarolle, Paderewski's interpretation was like the "soft roughings of Sapphic song," as a disaffected listener once upon a time expressed it.

Rachmaninoff's own Clown Dance and Boat Song afforded the audience a good study in contrasted forms, but neither selection lacked the master's overwrought accuracy.

He closed with the tremendous "Spanish Rhapsody," by Franz Liszt, and it was here that Rachmaninoff evoked the big demonstration. He played his "Prelude" and caused us to hear the giant bells of the Kremlin and all the little ones in the ancient capital of all the Russians. And, by way of the happy ending, we just have to have the happy ending, Rachmaninoff sent upwards of 2000 of us homeward with the swirling motion of Chopin's C-sharp Valse ringing in our ears.