

WORLD'S GREATEST PIANIST PLEASURES LARGE AUDIENCE

Wonderful Performance by The Master, Rachmaninoff

Probably as notable a musical event as Portland will ever be privileged to attend took place at City Hall last evening.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, the renowned Russian musician, and generally acknowledged to be the most marvelous pianist in the world today, presented a wonderful program before a large and cultured audience.

He won a great ovation and besides the offering of works by the most brilliant masters in the world, this genius gave a large number of encores and, at the close of the evening, the audience refused to depart, calling him back innumerable times, while four or five additional numbers were played.

Artist of International Repute

Rachmaninoff has an international reputation as a pianist, composer and orchestral leader. He has conducted notable orchestral societies abroad and directed the Imperial Russian opera. Only recently, the master artist declined to become conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra owing to other duties and obligations. After exciting experience and the loss of his fortune in the Russian revolution, the pianist came to America for his present tour which is one of the distinguished musical happenings of the present era in this country. The celebrated musician is tall, slightly stooped, rather wan of face, but a striking figure in any assemblage. At the piano, his personality is forgotten in the contemplation of his genius and his artistry. Rachmaninoff has no mannerisms but his skill, technique and interpretative powers are nothing short of marvelous. He plays with absolute ease and authority, and tremendous and overpowering effect so that words seem powerless to aptly describe his genius or the impression made upon an audience.

The Russian School of Music is admittedly one of the greatest of the day and Rachmaninoff is its ideal exponent.

Splendid Program

Rachmaninoff's program embraced a Liszt Ballade, Ballade, opus 24, by Grieg; a Ballade, Nocturne, Valse and Scherzo, by Chopin; two of his own compositions, including his famous Prelude in C-sharp minor; his own arrangements of Kreisler's Liebesleid; Tarentella (Veneria E. Napoli) by Liszt.

The large audience in attendance completely filled the balconies and made a very good showing in the hall. The attendance was a distinguished one and absorbed attention was given to the beauties of the performance. Opening with the Liszt Ballade, the musical charm of the player's tone first impressed the hearers. The grandeur of Rachmaninoff's musicianship is indescribable. New beauties were unfolded step by step until the senses and the soul were almost overpowered with this mighty genius.

Then followed the Grieg Ballade with its appeal of the desolate North, interpreted with superb technique, clear tonal beauty in a lovely air appearing at intervals, and again with wondrous liquid facility or with rhythmic grace and charm. Again words fail to do justice to such supreme talent. A Schubert Impromptu was given for an encore—light, facile, charming.

Famous Interpreter of Chopin

Rachmaninoff's interpretations of Chopin have aroused the admiration of critics. Here his temperamental qualities are displayed, for the interpretations are all his own and differ from the renditions of other players. The Ballade was taken at a far slower tempo than is commonly heard. Also the Nocturne, although this feature was not so marked. During the performance of these familiar works, the audience was almost breathless in its earnest attention. The tempo of the well known Valse was accelerated, if anything. The Scherzo, less frequently heard on the recital stage, was a tour de force in musicianship. After this, the applause was wildly enthusiastic and two Chopin waltzes were given after insistent recalls.

His Great Composition

There was, of course, great interest in hearing the artist-composer perform his own great work, the Prelude in C Sharp Minor, so commonly heard in recital halls everywhere at the present time. The rendition was the ideal interpretation of a masterpiece and a great ovation was given after this, but the pianist declined to repeat the performance.

Josef Hofmann played the Prelude on his last appearance here in City Hall.

Mr. Rachmaninoff next played a work of the popular order, the Polka de W. R., giving this with abandon and much charm. More encores were played and then came the beautiful Liebesleid, by Kreisler. Rachmaninoff's arrangement of the piece is in waltz form with a lovely melody and lots of fascinating runs and trills. The Tarentella by Liszt was a brilliant work which brought the noteworthy recital to a grand climax.

The audience, however, was not contented to disperse until some half dozen more encores had been granted.