

RACHMANINOFF PLAYS HERE**A Program of Chopin, Liszt and the Russians:**

When Rachmaninoff comes to Brooklyn his presence makes a piano festival as attractive, if not as sensational, as that in which a dozen or more pianists are about to appear at Carnegie Hall for a benefit. Last night every seat in the opera house, except those in the boxes, was taken. Pianists were as thick as blackberries in August, and they had a rich reward for their pains.

Rachmaninoff plays the piano "with a difference." He has, of course, an abundant technique, including a dazzling speed and a shimmering lightness which makes some of his passages seem like moonbeams gleaming over icicles, but he never allows you to feel—except, perhaps, when he plays Liszt—that he plays for the sake of the technique. There is always present a rich musical feeling which makes the technique fall into its properly subordinate place, and which would carry if the technique were not nearly so good. Perhaps his most obvious characteristic is a caressing touch, which coaxes a prevaillingly plaintive quality from the instrument which is not heard when other artists play the same things. Perhaps the quality was most obvious in his own Prelude in C, which he played as an encore and of which the audience joyously welcomed the opening bar. Siloti, who introduced this piece here more than 20 years ago, made those strange chords thrilling, and most pianists have followed the Siloti reading. Somehow, Rachmaninoff makes them tender. He played the slow parts very slowly, and he made the running passage incredibly swift, but the whole effect was of depth rather than brilliance.

His Chopin group was a pure joy. It included the Ballade No. 3, the Nocturne, opus 27; the little Waltz in D flat, and the Scherzo, opus 30, to which he added a familiar waltz and something characteristic but not familiar. In spite of the Russians, Chopin is still the most interesting writer for the piano, and the loving way in which Rachmaninoff hung over the keyboard in soft passages and coaxed from it marvels of delicacy and of exquisite taste made him doubly interesting last night.

The rest of the program was largely Russian; two unfamiliar but charming pieces of his own, an Etude Capriccio by Dohnanyi, the Kreisler Lied, arranged for his instrument by this pianist. For his final war horse he played the Liszt Tarantella in a way which made it sound musical as well as wonderful. Then, before the audience would let him go, he added his own Prelude and the Troika of Tschalkowsky. It was a great night for piano lovers.