

A WONDERFUL ARTIST

RACHMANINOFF, RUSSIAN PIANIST, ENRAPTURES AUDIENCE.

Recital at the Lyceum Theater Last Night Brilliant Affair—Played Some of His Own Compositions—A Treat of the Season.

The very word Russian, in the realm of art, is today an open sesame to public favor. Writers, dancers, actors, musicians, all share the widespread enviable prestige. In all their offerings a note is sounded different from the modern Western world, as distinctive as is the Slavic temperament itself. In this as in all other particulars Rachmaninoff, in recital at the Lyceum last night, fully lived up to expectations. His interpretations overthrew traditions and at the same time carried conviction.

In technic and brilliancy he ranks among the foremost pianists today and he has the additional qualification of his uniqueness. He is Rachmaninoff and like no one else. His supremacy may be said to lie in his poetic conception of his instrument. Under his hands the piano becomes poignantly expressive of the most tender sentiment.

Ease, Power and Clearness.

His consummate ease, his power and clearness, his capacity for delicate work, always clean and sure and of carrying quality, his marvelous nuances, fascinating beyond words, combined to captivate his hearers at the Lyceum last evening. The fair-sized audience was distinctly appreciative of his high type of musicianship.

His individuality of interpretation was nowhere more marked than in the Chopin ballade in A flat. In parts it was played more slowly than usual and where other eminent pianists have given passages in the lightest, airiest manner he played them with deep emotion. The Chopin mazurka was exquisite and the arabesques were like delicate silver filigree. The polonaise was big and inspiring and the two waltzes from the famous No. 64 suite of Chopin were charming. Especially the encore in D flat.

In the first group, Handel's "Aria con Variazioni," Schumann's "Novellette in F Sharp Minor" and Weber's Tausig's "Invitation to the Dance," the artist displayed a wide range of powers and he responded to the enthusiastic applause with Mozart's "Turkish March."

St. Joseph Especially Fortunate.

Of his familiar prelude in C sharp minor, which is played by every advanced piano student, a New York critic wrote:

"He didn't play it." In a lengthy plaint he harped on the theme that he didn't play it, never mentioning the composition, but describing at length the disappointment of those who had come from far and near to hear it. But St. Joseph was more fortunate and Rachmaninoff played it last evening, in a satisfying manner. His less familiar "Polka de W. R." is a fine composition with a marked rhythmic swing. His arrangement of Bizet's subject is graceful and picturesque. He gave Liszt's "Sonnetto No. 10 del Petrarca" and "Galen Chromatique" in a mastery manner and was forced to play two final encores, Tchaikowsky's "Slow Ride" (November) from "The Seasons" and his own arrangement of Kreisler's "Song of Sorrow," lovely in its sadness.

In all the program Rachmaninoff's clarity was an example and a source of inspiration. He used very little pedal and his runs were so clear as to seem staccato. In his chord passages and in staccato he is almost without a peer. His rhythm is invariably correct and with all its originality, it is never achieved by any liberties taken with tempo, but by infinitesimal gradations of shading. His appearance here was a treat for which St. Joseph is once more indebted to Mrs. Francis Henry Hill.