

# Rachmaninoff Scores in a Spectacular Triumph Here

Sergel Rachmaninoff has come and gone. He has given his long-anticipated recital in Poughkeepsie and now that it is over, what mere words can describe the event? Only those who heard him play, who fell under the influence of his remarkable personality and who saw the ovation that was given him can realize that a musical event was given at the high school on Friday evening that will be long remembered by those who attended it. After hearing him, one can no longer doubt that the critics who hailed him as the world's greatest pianist now on the concert stage have indeed spoken with truth, and that he even overshadows the great Paderewski, because he never attempts the dynamics with which Paderewski often interpreted a composition.

About the time that the concert was to begin on Friday night a man strolled casually upon the stage and walked to the piano. He had reached the instrument before the audience suddenly awoke to the fact that Rachmaninoff was before them, and then the applause broke forth. It was nothing, however, to the applause that was to follow and that was to grow greater as the recital went on. But throughout, Rachmaninoff preserved an unaffected manner that made his playing seem something informal rather than a recital by one of the world's most famous men. He is least of anything a poseur. When he sat down to the piano it was to run his fingers along the keys, wait until the hall grew quiet and then begin the number quite as if some one had just suggested that he "play something," and he was wondering what it should be. He is a pianist, too, without mannerisms, and at times, even in the most difficult passages, his hands seemed scarcely to move, but to call forth music from the piano by brooding over the keys.

In some of the florid passages, his hearers watched with a feeling that soon a flaw must be evidenced in his playing—that no pianist could go on much longer with such perfection, but it never came.

His playing is marked by contrasts of such subtle shadings as have never been heard here before. He is a

master of contrast, and a phrase played with virility was followed by one of such lacy delicacy as to make one fancy that the pianist's fingers had scarce touched the keys.

His first number, the Haendel "Aria con Variazioni," was a marvel of execution, while of an entirely different type was Beethoven's "Pathetique Sonata" which followed. It was in this song of sighs, where even the brightest bits of playing are in a minor strain, that one began to anticipate what Rachmaninoff would do with Chopin. Then, as a bright contrast came the Weber-Tausig "Invitation to the Dance," where again the delicate touch of the pianist was evidenced. His encore was the Mozart "Turkish Patrol," with the marching men well brought out in the left hand.

Thinking of Rachmaninoff, one connects him with music like that of his own preludes,—music that is masculine and virile, but no one could have played the tone-poems of Chopin with a better understanding of what the composer's mood had been, and a greater ability to translate that mood to the audience. Chopin's "Ballade," "Nocturne," "Valse" and "Scherzo" were followed by the Chopin "Valse in A flat, Op. 64, No. 3."

In the next group, Rachmaninoff played his own "Prelude in C sharp minor." Those who had seen the program in advance had rather hoped for a less hackneyed prelude, but they had never heard its maker play it. Another of his own compositions, a polka, followed, and he went on to his next groups, the Bizet minuet, arranged by him, and the second Liszt-rhapsodie. Marvelous was the evolution of the well known rhapsodie under his fingers and his audience fairly shook the house with a demand for encores as he ceased.

A characteristic of the great pianist is his graciousness in the granting of encores. With eleven numbers upon the program, he yet granted five encores. Three of these were at the close of the program, when his audience remained standing, applauding and applauding, until he returned to play again and again. At this time he played "Troika en traineaux," by Tschalkowsky, a transcription of an old Viennese waltz by Kreisler, and a Dohnanyi etude.