

CONCERT GIVEN BY RACHMANINOFF IS PERSONAL TRIUMPH

Language Seems Inadequate When Trying to Describe Recital.

Great pianists come and go in the annals of a concert season. Some create favorable impressions and are forgotten; others become pleasurable memories, while still others leave such wonderful impressions that the mere mention of the name of the artist is sufficient to bring to memory the entire concert in all the glowing details of its beauty and artistry.

Such was the concert given at the Murat yesterday afternoon by Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian pianist and composer.

Never does our language seem so inadequate as when trying to speak or write of such an occasion as Mr. Rachmaninoff's recital. All we can do is say he is a genius, for that most nearly conveys what he means in the world of art. His is a personal triumph, a blending of beauty, intelligence, technique, balance, poise and fluency of expression. He is first of all an individualist. Every number that he plays becomes his own. He violates all the cut and dried rules of technique and of interpretation. He makes attacks that in the hands of another would be bad, but under his wonderful fingers they become the greatest artistry. He has a way of playing a melody tone that no one could imitate and achieve anything. For his playing it is perfection. He takes a lot of hackneyed "war horses" of the concert platform and recreates them into something entirely different from their original intent. But you like it. It gives you a thrill that few musicians can give to you. And surely if there is a God-given gift it is to play upon humanity as he plays upon it.

Rachmaninoff Virile.

Mr. Rachmaninoff is a virile performer, he is seldom a poet. He plays even the funeral march from the Chopin Sonata (Op. 35) vigorously, with sharp contrasts, with a blare of trumpets that would hardly be really descriptive of a funeral march, but you like it. It is inspirational, it almost pulls you out of your seat, and you never stop to think of what a funeral march should be like. The Jugglers (Moszkowski), that lovely study in light balanced rhythmic effects, he tears through and gives a big retard at the end, just exactly the opposite of the way every other artist plays it. It is not really the "Jugglers," but it is the most charming performance imaginable, and one that will be copied by all the amateurs. And, so on to the end of the performance. It is all Rachmaninoff. It is perfect, and you will not hear his equal in many a season.

Most poetic of his performances was his own simple composition "Melody." In it he gave his most singing tone and most delicate exposition. His Serenade a new number to at least one of his audience, was another of the delights of the program. His Liszt Etude A flat, was glowingly played, not as we usually hear it, but it was very effective. The finale to the program was the ever lovely Strauss-Schulz-Evler "Beautiful Blue Danube." If there was one soul in the audience who did not warm to the wonderful charm of this number, he did not belong at a concert.

Chopin Group Delightful.

The entire Chopin group were delightfully given, "Nocturne, Valse," and the entire sonata (Op. 35). To this group he added the Minute waltz as an encore.

Weber's "Rondo Brillante" became a new number under his supple fingers, and an "Improvisation" (Medtner) served to open the program. To this list of programmed numbers he added a Valse (Tschalkowski), "Romance," called the "Smugglers" (Schumann-Tausig), and his own "Polchinello," and left the audience shouting for the "Prelude," seen backstage, he said he had forgotten the "Prelude" and hoped never to hear it again! By this he means the C sharp minor Prelude, for while he has composed many others, that is the one audiences always clamor for.

All honor and glory to Mr. Rachmaninoff. May he come again and again to play for us.
G. H.