

AUDIENCE IN SPELL AS RACHMANINOFF PLAYS CONCERTO

Tschaikowsky Symphony Is Principal Orchestral Number on Russian Program.

BY ERNEST E. COLVIN.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, the Russian pianist, was the soloist at the final Friday concert of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra for the season yesterday afternoon, and in his own concerto in C minor, threw the audience under such a spell by the beauty of his playing that when he finished the second movement several seconds elapsed before a hand clap broke the silence.

The playing of Rachmaninoff was the climax of the all-Russian program. When he appeared on the stage, the orchestra members rose in tribute to the man who is frequently referred to as the dominant figure in the musical world.

From the opening measures he played with that careful searching out of each phrase that marks his interpretation in a recital. The concerto reached its climax of beauty in the slow second movement. Here Rachmaninoff put feeling into every phrase.

The arts of the technical master were manifest in the last movement, with its thundering measures that resounded above the full orchestra. Conductor Ganz gave the concerto a sympathetic orchestral accompaniment.

Repeated recalls failed to bring an encore, and finally the stage hands closed the piano to indicate that Rachmaninoff would play no more. It was explained later that he does not believe in encores at a symphony concert.

The program opened with Glinka's overture to "Russian and Lyudmila,"—lively and embellished with a fascinating cello melody.

The big orchestral number was the fifth, or "revolutionary" symphony of Tschaikowsky—in the interpretation of which conductor and orchestra reached monumental heights. The sadness of the first movement and the anguish of the second were played with somber eloquence. Then came the section in which gloom gives place to the lightheartedness of a dance. Finally the battle cry sounded, and the orchestra gave a stirring picture of conflict. Dominating the movement was the roll of the drums.

The work of the orchestra in this symphony was about the finest ever done under the direction of Conductor Ganz. Violins and violas played with the right degree of restraint to make the message of the symphony direct and personal.

The concert closed with the "1812 overture." The program will be repeated tonight, and the orchestra season will end with a Wagnerian concert tomorrow afternoon.