

RACHMANINOFF COMES AGAIN AND AFFORDS ENTHRALLING STUDY

Greater as Pianist Than Composer, Famous Russian Is Also Fascinating Personality

Iridescent and glittering were the tones that trembled on the breathless silence of the Auditorium last night when Springfield had the privilege of listening to Sergei Rachmaninoff, the brilliant Russian composer and pianist. The artist is not a stranger in Springfield, yet there must have been many in the audience who had not heard him. Rachmaninoff is a fascinating personality. He radiates a somber dignity; he commands respect, and in spite of his somewhat awkward gait and a certain froideur that clings about him, audiences immediately warm to him, though his aloofness seems proof against the most enthusiastic demonstration of admiration.

Rachmaninoff is in his personality and his art a man of contradictions, contraries and contrasts. Sober, unsmiling, he is yet suave; graceful in

his playing yet with a certain angularity in both style and technic; surrounded with an aura of dignity, yet evidently in sympathy with his audience. His compositions and his playing, especially last night, all bear evidence of these qualifications. He gave a marvelous exhibition of virtuoso playing, with a program chosen almost in its entirety for its technical requirements. It opened with the Bach English suite, including prelude, sarabande and bourree. Immediately one was aware of the technical agility of a master, yet the artist did not intrude his proficiency on the attention to the exclusion of the more important features of his playing. It required a definite mental effort to prescind from the utter beauty and infinite variety of his tone coloring. In order to focus the attention upon the demonstration of a brilliant and facile technic. Yet, in spite of the wonderfully colored tones, prismatic in their brilliance and coldness, there was little of poetry, little of sentiment in his passionless playing.

The second number, the Mendelssohn Variations Serieuses, was a surprise in that, owing to the stubbornness with which Rachmaninoff clings to the grand, pedantic, rather heavy style, one could not, without being familiar with the music, distinguish the Bach from the Mendelssohn. And

when Mendelssohn and Bach are difficult to distinguish there is something wrong. The Variations require great skill of a pianist; they have been done by other artists here, but never in a more masterly fashion than last night. Rachmaninoff, whose sang froid is the more irritating because tones of such exquisite beauty ought to be expressing feeling instead of ratiocination, is one of the few who can really make a piano sing. His use of the pedal is an art; he produces the most perfect legato and the most beautiful singing tone the writer has heard from any pianist. His pianissimo is audible throughout the hall, and is velvety and clear; he can shade it then through a thousand stages to a noble fortissimo explosive in its power.

A Chopin nocturne (E major) and the well known C sharp minor Scherzo, made up the third number. Both glittered with the coruscating tones of the first two numbers, and though in lighter vein and played at breathless speed they did not differ greatly in interpretation from the Bach and the Mendelssohn. The Tchaikowsky variations brought more brilliance. Then two of the artist's own compositions, Etudes Tableaux in B minor and G minor, written in the true Rachmaninoff style, the B minor showing in places echoes of the G minor prelude. The third number of this group, the artist's arrangement of Moussourgsky's "Hopak," is a wonderful little piece. It bristles with weird harmonies so dear to the Russian, opening with a prestissimo passage in fifths that gives a very strange effect; then in a series of fiercely crashing chords and a light, dance-like motif one hears the hurrying hoofs of horses and the stamping of boots. It is very Russian, very exotic, and very pretty too.

As his final number Rachmaninoff gave a tremendous performance of Liszt's Rhapsodie Espagnole. This is Liszt at his bombastic best; the piece was made to order for a player of Rachmaninoff's type, and indeed he made the most of it. It is pure virtuoso work; a poet would never weep over it, unless at the conviction of the utter hopelessness of anyone doing with it what Rachmaninoff did. Scale passages and arpeggios that fell upon the ear in a glittering shower; a tempo that almost ran away, chords that reverberated in the great hall like thunder—all delighted the Rachmaninoff heart and his audience as well. For encores during the evening the

Secrets of the M

Q.—What is the best way to judging to Mae Murray?

A.—"If you would judge the beauty of her form," says M. Feet? Arms?" the star asked. "part of the ensemble? You don't j Venus de Milo is none the less lov Perfect beauty is an ideal of physic sure it is beyond the reach of a should be satisfied to approach the

"Since the human body is the r why should we shun to expose it boudoir? There is nothing to be a patience with the type of person shock at the unveiled horrors of pious, affronted hands at the 'Foll ion Row.'"

Q.—Has Jane Novak a daughter?
A.—Yes; she is Little Micky,

Q.—With what picture star is boy, now working in a picture?

A.—Yakima Canutt is working Riddle Rider," soon to be exhibited

Q.—Where was Percy Marm A.—In England.

What moral does Mary Pic picture, "Rosita"? Answer (Copyright, 1924, Thompson



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