

RUSSIAN PIANIST CHARMS AUDIENCE

Torrents Of Melody Pour
From Tips Of Rach-
maninoff's Fingers.

By N. K. HART.

Torrents of melody that were spun in fine and stately measures like etchings of sound, disclosing at once the characteristic verve and powerful touch of a genius and master, poured from the instrument of Sergei Rachmaninoff last night at the Lyric theatre, and the Russian composer-pianist completely captivated the rather small audience with the strength of his playing.

Rachmaninoff has an imposing appearance on the stage, tall and unbending in body and stern and unyielding in countenance. When he marched with stately tread across the stage and bending quite low over the keys, his fingers of steel began to produce music and melody as sharp and distinct as the graven cut lines of his face, and as awe-inspiring as his manner. The compositions of the world's greatest musicians and the piece of his own composition became things of life, and color and the audience was swayed by the intensity of tone and suppleness of rhythm and the variation of touch.

The bold energy he gave to the outlines of everything he played and the steel-like manner of negotiating the keys he displayed, lent all his numbers the majesty and ring that could not be sufficiently applauded.

The program for the evening was well varied in that it gave the artist opportunity to give expression to the full scope of his powers. He produced all that is beautiful and exquisite from the treble notes of a piano, all that is majestic and solemn from the deeper notes. His digital technique he proved to be all that has been said of it and more, by producing all the poetry and color from the compositions he played that they possess, he proved that his genius is not only that of technique but that of imaginative interpretation as well. He maintained a studied dignity throughout the entire evening that was in keeping with the calmness of his execution, but which nevertheless was more in keeping with his marvelous musical ability than any display of temperament and acrobatics would have been with his superb renditions.

The program included six numbers and so enthusiastic was the applause and so determined were these present not to leave the theatre at the conclusion of the last number, Rachmaninoff played two encores. The "Sonata Appassionata," from Beethoven, with its inspiring transitions from the delicately engraved passages to thunderous measures; the Etude Tableau number of Rachmaninoff's own composition; and the "Spanish Rhapsody," from Liszt, were the outstanding renditions of the recital. The piece by Liszt was perhaps the best, but the artist's own number received the heartiest applause. Chopin's two waltzes as encores were received with delight.

Rachmaninoff was brought to Knoxville by Malcolm Miller. The attendance was surprisingly small, and he stated last night that he suffered a comparatively heavy financial loss.