

RACHMANINOFF AT THE PIANO

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Irem Temple was again honored last evening in the appearance of the distinguished Russian composer-pianist, Rachmaninoff, in an imposing concert that attracted a full-sized audience, such as we have not been accustomed to in most of the concerts of this season's series. The popularity and drawing power of the artist were fully attested by its liberal outpouring and keen interest of last night's audience, made up in large measure of the younger element who are musical devotees of the piano and acquainted with compositions of the master Russian, particularly the C sharp minor Prelude which has become a prime favorite. Perhaps no other piano selection at any time has enjoyed such widespread appreciation and its appeal is inevitable to hear it played in person by its creator. It was a whole program in itself to many who had come for the express purpose to hear the beloved Prelude.

The piano playing of Rachmaninoff seems to satisfy the musical taste of the average audience more than that of any pianist of the generation with the possible exception of Paderewski. The two artists have enjoyed world-wide recognition for succeeding years with never-failing success crowning their careers. Both are giants in the pianistic world of music and notable men of genius.

Rachmaninoff affords an interesting study of a creative mind interpreting its own language as well as the creation of others. Possessed of a powerful physique, capable of

grasping the keyboard with dynamic strength. Rachmaninoff, also has within him the intensive emotional gifts that make for the supreme utterance, whether tragic, grandiose, wistful or gay. The powers of expression are well nigh unlimited, the piano sounds different with each mood, variegated tonal effects are common, and never-changing tone coloring are among the outstanding points.

Rachmaninoff chose for his program last evening selections of the conventional classic type, with Beethoven and Chopin enlisting most of the attention. One C minor variations although beautifully done, served as a finger preparatory study for the big work of the evening, the Appassionata Sonata, which seemed a happy selection for the artist. The deep tragic notes of meaning of the first movement were brought out with full and complete understanding, contrasted with the wonderful slow singing movement, which was played with organ-like tone and expression. The sharp precision of the closing movement ended in dramatic chords of sudden strength and forceful climax. The "Artist's Life" arrangement from Straus by Godowski was carried through the various episodes with an astounding clarity and technical prowess that revealed the powers of Rachmaninoff to their fullest extent. Extra numbers were graciously added to the program by Rachmaninoff, who seemed pleased with his cordial reception and reciprocated with a ready response in adding to the program.