

RACHMANINOFF AT LYRIC

Noted Pianist And Composer Presents
Works By Beethoven, Schumann,
Liszt, Brahms And Chopin In Recital.

By W. G. OWST.

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF'S appearance in recital at the Lyric last evening was hailed as an exceedingly important event in the musical season. Interest in the concert was enhanced by the fact that one of his compositions of high standing received a most engaging presentation at the concert of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra given recently. Last night's program included works by Beethoven, Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Chopin, Medtner and Rachmaninoff.

The pianist has gained for himself, and deservedly so, a great reputation as an artist, a master of technique, a tone painter and a composer. Executive ability he possesses to an almost unlimited degree, but that factor should hold but second place. It is simply a necessary aid to interpretation.

The main feature, and that which appeals most strongly to a musical-loving audience is interpretation, the direct outcome of imagination and musical temperament. But in this characteristic Rachmaninoff did not excel to any great degree last evening. On the contrary, especially during the Beethoven and Schumann compositions, the pianist appeared to lay more stress upon his technical facility.

The presentation of the Beethoven Sonata was certainly not an inspiration and the technique not quite infallible. Nevertheless, there were some interest-

ing moments, but not of sufficient value to elicit from the audience any great response.

The Schumann Etudes Symphoniques presented the pianist more in the light of a technician than as a temperamental interpreter. The work was given a somewhat academic reading and seemed to indicate the artist as not in a particularly happy mood.

It was, however, in the playing of Chopin's works that the artist assumed his real importance as a great artist. Chopin demands the exhibition of the qualities of freshness, delicacy and poetic tone coloring, together with vitality. And these qualities Rachmaninoff not only showed that he possessed but that he knew how to apply them. In the performance of these works the artist's imaginative faculties came well to the fore. The result was an entire change of feeling on the part of the hearers and the expression of real pleasure and satisfaction that they were listening to a great interpreter.

In the Medtner "Fairy Tales" much warmth of temperament was noticeable.

The composer's own "Prelude" was delightfully played, but the Liszt "Rakoczy March" afforded the opportunity for the display of consummate technical skill and was so much appreciated that several encores were demanded and given. The inevitable C Sharp Minor Prelude was played as a final encore.