

RUSS PIANIST SCORES AGAIN

Rachmaninoff Plays Difficult Opus In Music Hall.

By ROBERT E. WOOD.

A breath-taking, epic performance of the very difficult "Fantasia, quasi Sonata," which Liszt wrote after reading Dante, featured the program of Sergei Rachmaninoff, the great Russian pianist, in Carnegie Music Hall last night.

This Liszt opus makes the utmost demands upon nimble fingers, strong wrists and memory. It begins with definite, heavy tones, but soon works into a frenzy, seething and surging with the use of many phases of piano technique. It is very hard to follow, and that Rachmaninoff can interest and hold his audience with such a work is a supreme tribute to his pianistic wizardry.

The first half of his program was devoted to fantasies. In addition to the Liszt, there were the Beethoven "Sonata, quasi una Fantasia," and a Chopin "Fantasia." The Beethoven is widely known, the first movement, "Adagio sostenuto" masquerading about under the title of "Moonlight Sonata." This movement, Rachmaninoff gave a precise, sombre reading, rather leaning toward the dirge, and then contrasted it with the fast, sparkling "Allegretto" and "Presto agitato." The Chopin varied through a stately old dance theme and a ballad theme, and gave opportunities for simple expression in addition to the masterful fingering of the swift passages.

More tricky and lightning fingering, crisp as iced lettuce, was brought out in the "Polonaise in E flat major" which was included with the much played "Scherzo" and the C minor "Polonaise," which starred his left hand, in a Chopin group. The Rachmaninoff "Prelude" (not the C sharp minor one) was full of well executed trill work.

Rachmaninoff played two encores, a soothing Chopin nocturne, and the "Valse Oubliee" or "Forgotten Waltz." The audience was still applauding for more, but a man came out and closed the piano.

Away from the piano, Rachmaninoff apparently was weary, with a slower and more unsteady walk, and a greater degree of gauntness to his figure, but at the keyboard he was supreme, even better than in former years, if that is possible.