

## RACHMANINOFF SHOWS HIMSELF MUSIC MONARCH

Russian Pianist Enthralls Audience With Brilliance of His Work; Own Compositions Reveal Troubles and Strife of Musician's Native Land.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, whom musicians hail as one of the greatest of present day artists, Russia's most brilliant composer since Tchaikowski, and pianist whose skill may be compared with but one — Poland's Paderewski — charmed a big audience at the Auditorium Wednesday evening when he appeared on the Philharmonic course.

A monarch of the musical world was Rachmaninoff. A superb pianist, playing the compositions of others as they seldom have been played, he rose to supreme heights in the appallingly difficult passages of his own etudes, so trying a tax on the abilities of the artist that it is doubtful whether anyone else could play them even acceptably.

Rachmaninoff seemed a creature apart from the rest of humanity. In his face he reflected the centuries of sorrow and trouble and strife which have been his country's lot. He bore that expression which in the Mona Lisa has intrigued the artists of the world with its blusiveness. Sometimes Rachmaninoff looked sad and his audience grieved with him. And then would be a fleeting something about the corners of his mouth that tempted one to believe he was laughing at his admirers—at the world.

Rachmaninoff played a program that was unique in itself. Composed entirely of etudes, it represented the triumph of this form of musical composition over the limitations that once bound it. An etude was originally a study, but in the form which Chopin, Rubinstein, Liszt, Schumann, Paganini, and Rachmaninoff himself gave it, limitations were thrown to the winds and the one-time study became a transcendent work of art.

Nor was the great Russian's playing of the many less a masterpiece. Combining the sheer musical delightfulness of the compositions with the terrors of their technique, he produced an effect that was irresistible. Some of his numbers were heavy—works which a lifetime of study scarcely enables one to understand yet there was something in the magnetism of Rachmaninoff's personality, in the magic of his touch upon the instrument before him, that gripped his auditors and held them inflexibly in its sway.

And when, for an encore, he broke into the opening strains of his own famous C Sharp Minor Prelude his audience was unable to restrain its delight, threw propriety to the winds, and broke into enthusiastic applause.

Rachmaninoff's program was made up of a host of short numbers, all etudes. Two of them, written by Paganini and arranged for the piano by Schuman, opened the evening and were followed by eight of Chopin's etudes, played perhaps with even more than Rachmaninoff's usual brilliancy. Then followed five etudes written by Rachmaninoff himself, which were succeeded by one of Rubinstein's works, one by Scriabine, and a composition "Alkan—as the Wind." Three etudes by Liszt and Paganini-Liszt closed the program.