

LIDOVE NOVINY (BRNO) 1903-01-20 (orig.: Czech)

Russian symphony concert in Prague.

Prague, Rudolfinum, concert date: January 14

On January 14, the Russian conductor V. J. Safonov, director of the Moscow Conservatory, conducted the Czech Philharmonic at the Rudolfinum. Mostly Russian compositions were performed, especially A. Scriabin's Symphony in E major, the highlight of the evening. The work is not narrow in the ordinary sense of the word, one can observe Wagnerian influences - and yet it is great Russian writers, for instance Turgenev with his romance of deep human hearts, with the sweet mingling of nature, that one has to think of in Scriabin's Symphony. In this way he succeeds in capturing the atmospheric power of this composition, which formally has hardly anything in common with the established symphony type.

Unfortunately, the same does not apply to the other compositions: Glazunov's Serenade for orchestra in A major and music pictures for orchestra to the fairy tale of Tsar Saltan: these definitely have no place in a serious concert. A.K. Lyadov's musical joke, "Une tabatière à musique", is a superficial dance. The best performance was Scriabin's symphony, which also showed the Russian conductor's temperament. The concert was accompanied by the Russian pianist S.V. Rachmaninoff, who played his Second Piano Concerto in C minor. Neither the thing itself nor the playing of the virtuoso can be described as excellent. The Prelude, which Rachmaninoff added, is far more indicative of the composer's talent. The audience received everything with great applause, the greatest for the Lyadov piece which had to be repeated. If Lyadov's taste is what counts in Russia, it is not surprising that Smetana did not succeed there.

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