

Utro Russii. 1915, November 19, p. 7.

Утро России. 1915, 19 ноября, с. 7.

Rachmaninoff's Evenings.

For the second of Rachmaninoff's evenings, the audience moved from the Nezlobin Theater to a new, "lecture-hall" setting—the large auditorium of the Polytechnic Museum, which resembled a vast, deep well with the pianist positioned far above. Yet, surely, it is not the setting that defines the artist!

Rachmaninoff's immense interpretive talent transformed this modest lecture hall—with its worn, prison-like benches—into a temple of sonic enchantment, a space where a kind of theurgic rite unfolded.

Even if Rachmaninoff stripped these works of their radiant "poison" and their ethereal, otherworldly aspiration, he succeeded in making them intimate and dear to the crowd. In this lies his great achievement—a touching, comradely tribute to the memory of an artist taken too soon; a love for that artist's creative legacy, blossoming with such intensity in a man who had long been labelled a bastion of forces hostile to that very genius. There is something so lofty, so profoundly self-sacrificing in this artistic endeavour of Rachmaninoff's—all the more so given that he is well aware that many are, on principle, opposed to the mission he has taken upon himself—that one cannot help but bow before him with the deepest sense of respect. As for Scriabin—the purity of his artistic vision and the integrity of his works—there is nothing to fear: they are imperishable and incorruptible; they live on within artists who share his spirit, and they will be carefully passed down from generation to generation.

The works that Rachmaninoff fashions from Scriabin's inspired revelations serve as a stepping stone toward their true, primordial essence. And this stepping stone is not always far from the mountain peak—a peak toward which the artist travels along a rugged path, leading an uninitiated public in his wake. This can be said, in part, of the "Satanic Poem", and even more so of the exceptionally challenging Fifth Sonata, which was performed with nervous intensity and a rare, crystalline perfection. In this sonata-fantasy, Rachmaninoff departs significantly from the composer's own interpretation in the "andante" section; he imbues it with a slow, languid quality and delineates the melodic contours with such vivid, bold relief that the music loses its intimate, tenderly dreamlike character. Conversely, the "presto" is delivered with a tempestuous, rebellious surge that utterly captivates the listener. There were some highly successful touches—"additions" to the composer's original intent—in the preludes and etudes, which were arranged with great taste; and in the "D-sharp minor" etude, played as an encore, he unleashed a wave of immense, powerful pathos. In the rarely performed "Fantasy," Op. 28, the pianist revealed its purely pianistic beauties with astonishing mastery.

Ultimately, the performance was highly interesting and always full of substance, yet it frequently stood in direct conflict with the composer's intentions. And yet—let Rachmaninoff play Scriabin. He will draw a large audience to his music. And that is by no means insignificant—on the contrary, it is very important.

Rachmaninoff's success was immense.

Florestan.

[Translation: Google]

Вечера Рахманинова.

Изъ Незлобинскаго театра на второй рахманиновскій вечеръ публика перекочевала въ новюютную, «лекціонную» обстановку, большой аудиторій Политехническаго музея,

являвшей видъ какого-то громаднаго колодца съ піанистомъ надъ нѣмъ. Впрочемъ, вотъ ужъ поистинѣ не мѣсто красить артиста!

Великій исполнительскій талантъ Рахманинова преобразилъ скромный лекціонный залъ, съ его затертыми, тюремными скамьями въ храмъ звуковыхъ волхвованій, гдѣ происходило нѣкое теургическое дѣйство.

Пусть Рахманиновъ лишилъ эти пфони ихъ лучистой «отравы», надземной устремленности. Но онъ сумѣлъ сдѣлать ихъ близкими и дорогими толиѣ. Въ этомъ его громадная заслуга, трогательная товарищеская дань памяти безвременно ушедшаго художника, любовь къ творчеству котораго вспыхнула, съ такой силой въ томъ, кого всегда нарекали оплотомъ враждебныхъ теней силъ. Въ нынѣшнемъ артистическомъ подвигѣ Рахманинова есть нѣчто столь высокое, столь само-отверженное (ибо, вѣдь знаетъ артистъ, что многіе принципиально враждебны взятой имъ на себя миссіи), что передъ нимъ нельзя не склониться съ чувствомъ глубочайшаго уваженія.

За Скрябина же, за чистоту его замысловъ, за сохранность его произведеній - бояться нечего: они нетлѣнны, неизвратимы, они живутъ въ близкихъ ему по духу артистахъ и бережно будутъ переданы отъ поколѣнія къ поколѣнію.

Тѣ, другія, произведенія, что творитъ Рахманиновъ изъ гениальныхъ откровеній Скрябина, ступень къ ихъ истинному, первозданному лику. И не всегда эта ступень далека, отъ горной вершины, куда идетъ по кремнистой дорогѣ артистъ, ведя за собой неискушенную публику. Это можно сказать отчасти о «Сатанической поэмѣ», главнымъ же образомъ о труднѣйшей пятой сонатѣ, сыгранной съ нервнымъ подъемомъ и рѣдкимъ ціанистическимъ совершенствомъ. Въ сонатѣ-фантазій Рахманиновъ значительно удаляется отъ авторскаго толкованія въ *andante*, придавъ ему медленно тягучій оттѣнокъ, слишкомъ ярко и выпукло рисуя мелодическіе контуры и лишая его, тѣмъ самымъ, интимнаго и нѣжно мечтательнаго очерка. Зато *presto* ведется имъ съ бурнымъ и мятежнымъ порывомъ, положительно увлекаая слушателя. Кое-что очень удачное («дополненіе до автора») было въ прелюдіяхъ и этюдахъ, очень удачно, со вкусомъ расположенныхъ, а въ сыгранномъ на *bis* этюдѣ *Dis-moll* была дана колоссальная по напряженности волна мощнаго патетизма. Въ рѣдко исполняемой «Фантазій», ор, 28, піанистъ съ изумительнымъ мастерствомъ растопырилъ ея чисто піанистическія красоты.

Въ конце концовъ исполненіе все же въ высшей степени интересное всегда содержательное, но нерѣдко находящееся въ прямомъ конфликтѣ съ замыслами автора. А все-таки-пусть Рахманиновъ играетъ Скрябина. Онъ привлечетъ къ нему большую публику. А это вовсе не такъ маловажно. Нѣтъ, это очень важно.

Устъхъ Рахманинова былъ громадный.

Флорестанъ.