

FAMOUS PIANIST IN SPLENDID PROGRAM

Rachmaninoff Shows His Individual Genius and Proves His Right to Highest Honors as Master in His Art and as Virtuoso of Finest Technique

By LEO SOMERS.

RACHMANINOFF, who holds a secure place in the affections of Washington music lovers, was the artist yesterday afternoon at the President Theater in the first concert of the Philharmonic course, given under the auspices of Mrs. William Greene. The auditorium, large as it is, was far from adequate to accommodate the many who wished to hear him, and many were disappointed.

Rachmaninoff occupies a unique place among the great figures in contemporary music. His conservatism is almost proverbial, yet above all else Rachmaninoff is individual. It is impossible to classify him, except as a master of craftsmanship in his art and a virtuoso of the highest rank.

As a composer, he is suave, polished, excelling in unusual technical figures; as an interpreter, suave, polished, the consummate master, yet without a trace of affectation in his manner.

His program was not particularly inspiring—conservative, with Moszkowsky's delightful "La Jongleuse" the most vivid feature. The principal work performed, however, was Chopin's famous "Opus 35," the sonata of the Marche Funebre.

One does not wish to appear too enthusiastic, yet it seems incredible that Washington or any other city could ever have heard this familiar composition, the march itself, played better.

The tremendous impressiveness of the marching minor chords, conveying the idea of the irresistible and the inexorable, was brought out in superlative degree, indeed with almost unbelievable power.

This was by far the moment supreme of the afternoon, and the applause which followed the finale was thunderous. It was after this number that Rachmaninoff gave his only encore, the Chopin "Minuet Walts," so much in favor for exhibitions of pianistic gymnastics and so large a part of the success, incidentally, of one of the most lucrative of modern musical comedies. Fortunately, Rachmaninoff did not attempt to play the waltz in a minute, and thus to sacrifice beauty to exhibitionist tactics.

Naturally, the program would not be complete without some of the artist's own work. Rachmaninoff played his "Melodie" from one of his earlier compositions, and the beautiful "Serenade."

The other numbers included "Improvisation," Medtner; Sonata Appassionata, Beethoven; a Chopin nocturne and waltz, and "Beautiful Blue Danube," Strauss-Schulz-Evier. All told, a pleasing but not exceptionally brilliant program, presented with a technical excellence approaching perfection.