



Theater and Art News.

(Rachmaninoff Piano Recital.) Piano recital -- one has the immediate conviction that the obscurity of this common term does not capture the essence of the matter and in no way approaches a performance in which feeling, affinity, and the creative power of expression were manifested with elemental force. Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff is sufficiently recognized as a symphonist, and as the author of smaller piano works, sonatas, and preludes, he is an undisputed figure. However, whatever fantastical qualities legend attributed to the pianist Rachmaninoff, we see surpassed by reality. Out of a peculiar instinct that seeks out the human element and cannot grasp humanity without weaknesses, one resists this excess of perfection. One looks for counterarguments and finds none. Rachmaninoff's technique is brilliant; It is extraordinary how this technique is made subservient to the creative spirit in the process of re-creation. Discrete pioneers toil for detail, stringing together stylistic flourishes. But in art, which reflects life, it is, according to a true saying by Busoni, important to hear larger passages as parts of an even larger whole. With Rachmaninoff, the danger of confusing feeling on a grand scale with a lack of sensation is not readily apparent. Among German pianists, perhaps the young d'Albert came closest to him. Yet Rachmaninoff possesses more of a sound-binding and refining softness, which, without d'Albert's demonic tendencies, creates an atmosphere of poetic enchantment. Even the note plucked out with a finger (Rachmaninoff's libretto) has its expression and its individual beauty. The dynamic and tonal gradation of the piano also borders on the miraculous. The brown Steinway seems to contain an organ and an Aeolian harp—and an entire orchestra as well. What basses, what plasticity in Bach and Liszt, what freedom and chivalric grace in the interpretation of Chopin's rhythms! And Chopin's melodies glow, as it were, in their original form, as if surrounded by magical lights. True storms of enthusiasm erupt when Rachmaninoff played his own preludes. Iron willpower triumphs over the frail body of a man. The head is interesting. A sharply chiselled Gulbrauson head. Beneath a stony mask, the nerves of a modern artist vibrate; a heart speaks audibly. After Rachmaninoff, it was, not only for the pianists, an experience of the rarest kind.

[Translation: Google]