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Musical Chronicle

WORKS OF THE ARTISTS

The Rachmaninoff Recital

Rachmaninoff is certainly a name, a proper name that fills, or nearly fills, the Conservatory hall in times of crisis. But this name is inseparable from a certain Prelude. This Rachmaninoff Prelude, who hasn't played it, who hasn't heard it? The artist, however, hadn't included it in the program of his recital. Nevertheless, he had to resign himself to performing it. It was expected, it was wanted. It was demanded.

Let's admit that, to a certain extent, we share the public's opinion. Rachmaninoff was first and foremost his Prelude. But Rachmaninoff is also a pianist. It was him that the E. des A. presented to its audience on Tuesday evening.

During the entire first part of the concert, the audience remained rather reserved. And what was the point? A pianist had been promised. Wasn't he one? It had been said that his playing was nuanced, intentional, sensitive, a tad mannered, not without dryness and roughness, unconventional, but not lacking in verve? But all of this was given to us, and without reservation.

The playing is all about layers of sound. It's all nuances. Ah! The virtuoso is nothing like a wild beast. The performer distils the sonic material and serves the music drop by drop? Understood. From this alembic, treated with this luxury of nuances, come a Mozart, a Beethoven that have little flavour. But then comes a certain Mazurka, a certain Chopin Nocturne, Debussy's Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum. They will be all aroma. It's a compensation. It wasn't the only one. The end of Chopin's Ballade, Rachmaninoff's Preludes, the Liszt Rhapsody were magnificent. In his element, the pianist had found the path to his public and was applauded. L. L.

[Translation: Google]