

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: A SURVEY OF A CENTURY OF RUSSIAN
MUSIC FOR PIANO: FROM GLINKA TO
SHOSTAKOVICH

Suk-Yi Hyun, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2010

Dissertation directed by: Professor Cleveland Page
School of Music

In the middle of the nineteenth century, several composers, especially represented by the “Mighty Five” began to espouse a conscious nationalism¹ in Russia. This movement was cultivated by Russian composers making use of their nationalistic folk music. The first example of this is Glinka’s opera *A Life for the Tsar*. Moreover, many accomplished pianists and composers, the so-called “Russian Piano School,” appeared and developed their own style. Russian piano music began to acquire international attention and soon after, it flourished not only in Russia, but also in Western Europe. During the twentieth century, Russian composers made even greater contributions to Western music despite political turmoil in their country.

I have selected for my performances a collection of works by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Russian composers who played a significant role in writing Russian music for piano, including Mikhail Glinka, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Sergei

¹ Stewart Gordon, *A History of Keyboard Literature* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 424.

Rachmaninov, Sergei Prokofiev, Dimitri Kabalevsky, and Dmitri Shostakovich.

Although my repertoire is comprised of various styles and genres between 1832 and 1951, it shares common sources of inspiration: nationalistic elements, including folk materials, profound melancholic melodies, bell-like sound derived from Russian orthodox church and emphasis on rhythm are all abundantly present in their scores. By using these elements in their compositions, the Russian composers developed a unique idiom utilizing various compositional techniques. These include a variety of dynamics, pronounced interest in orchestral color, use of exotic harmony, pentatonic and/or modal tunes, and a recurrence of short motifs. In other words, they pursued their own style as well, combining contemporary compositional trends with nationalistic elements. In addition, Russian political matters and their influence on composers were another important factor in Russian Music for piano.

Through this performance project, I was able to acquire not only a better appreciation of Russian piano music, but also an improvement of my own pianistic ability.

This performance dissertation consists of three recitals performed on May 13, 2008, on May 11, 2009 and on April 3, 2010 in Gildenhorn recital hall at the University of Maryland. These recitals are documented on compact disc recordings that are housed within the University of Maryland Library System.

A SURVEY OF A CENTURY OF RUSSIAN MUSIC FOR PIANO: FROM
GLINKA TO SHOSTAKOVICH

By

Suk-Yi Hyun

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
2010

Advisory Committee:
Professor Cleveland Page, Chair
Professor Larissa Dedova
Professor Mikhail Volchok
Professor Sung Won Lee
Professor Donald Manildi

Dedication

To my family,
for endless love, support, and encouragement.
None of this would be possible without you.

and

My wonderful teachers,
Professor Santiago Rodriguez and Cleveland Page.
Studying with you was one of the luckiest things in my life.

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Assisted by Sunha Yoon

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RECITAL I

May 13, 2008, AT 8:00 PM

JOSEPH & ALMA GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL

Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

University of Maryland, College Park

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891-1953)

Sonata No. 9 in C major, Op. 103

Allegretto

Allegro strepitoso

Andante tranquillo

Allegro con brio, ma non troppo presto

INTERMISSION

PYTOR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23

Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso

Andantino semplice

Allegro con fuoco

Assisted by Sunha Yoon

RECITAL II

May 11, 2009, AT 5:30 PM

JOSEPH & ALMA GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL

Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

University of Maryland, College Park

MIKHAIL GLINKA (1814-1857)

Trio "Pathétique" in D minor (arranged for violin, cello and piano)

Allegro moderato

Scherzo: Vivacissimo

Largo

Allegro con spirito

Yunjung Choi, violin

Juwon Moon, cello

DMITRI KABALEVSKY (1904-1987)

Sonata No. 3 in F major, Op. 46

Allegro con moto

Andante cantabile

Allegro giocoso

INTERMISSION

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43

Naoko Takao, 2nd piano

RECITAL III

April 3, 2010, AT 5:30 PM

JOSEPH & ALMA GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL

Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

University of Maryland, College Park

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Prelude & Fugue No. 1 in C major, Op. 87

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891-1953)

Sonata No. 7 in B-flat major, Op. 83

Allegro inquieto

Andante caloroso

Precipitato

INTERMISSION

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (1873-1943)

Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 28

Allegro moderato

Lento

Allegro molto

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