

1992/93

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Alexander
Tordze



ALEXANDER TORADZE, Piano

A presentation of
INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND
Division of the Arts
Daniel Cohen, Chancellor
Robert W. Demaree, Jr., Dean of the Arts

Eight o'clock
Saturday, March 6, 1993
Campus Auditorium
Twenty-third Program, 1992-93 Season

Mr. Toradze graduated in 1978 from the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and following post-graduate studies became a professor at the Moscow Conservatory. He came to worldwide prominence through his triumphs in numerous international contests, including the Van Cliburn Competition. He has since appeared with virtually every major European and North American orchestra. Mr. Toradze has also collaborated with such leading conductors as Ashkenazy, Dutoit, Eschenbach, Masur, Ozawa, and Tennstedt.

In 1992 Alexander Toradze was appointed to the Martin Endowed Professorship in Piano at Indiana University South Bend.

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Program

Sonata in G minor (Hoboken XVI:44) Haydn
Moderato
Allegretto

Gaspard de la nuit -- Three Poemes pour piano d'apres Aloysius Bertrand Ravel
Ondine
Le Gibet
Scarbo

Intermission

Variations on the theme of Bach Liszt
from the cantata *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*
and *Crucifixus from B minor Mass*

Three Movements from the ballet *Petrouchka* Stravinsky
Russian Dance
In Petrouchka's Room
Shrovetide Fair

The piano versions were completed by the author at Anglet, France in August of 1921.

Alexander Toradze

Alexander Toradze is internationally recognized by musicians, critics, and audiences alike as a masterful keyboard virtuoso in the grand Romantic tradition. Distinguished above all for the highly emotional intensity of his playing, he has enriched the great Russian pianistic heritage with his own boldly unorthodox interpretative conceptions, deeply poetic lyricism, and visceral excitement.

In the summer of 1992, Mr. Toradze joined Valery Gergiev and the Kirov Orchestra in a triumphant European tour. This tour started in St. Petersburg with a performance of Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Third Piano Concerto* and continued in Spain, Italy and Germany. It culminated at the highly acclaimed opening concert of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival in Hamburg. This performance was broadcast throughout Europe.

Another memorable concert of the 1992 season was the performance of Sergei Prokofiev's *Second Piano Concerto* with the Rotterdam Philharmonic under the direction of Mstislav Rostropovich. This performance was chosen by the Rotterdam critics as the Concert of the Year.

Mr. Toradze often collaborates with Esa-Pekka Salonen (with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Swedish Radio Orchestra) and Gerard Schwarz (at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York and the Seattle Symphony).

In his 1992-93 season Mr. Toradze will be performing with, among others, the Dallas and Detroit symphonies, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Bayerische Rundfunk in Munich and the Netherlands Radio Orchestra in Amsterdam with Mr. Gergiev conducting. He will be a soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra, Edo de Waart conducting, on its United States tour. In February of this year he again appeared in St. Petersburg with the Kirov Orchestra and Mr. Gergiev in the promenade concert at the Kirov Opera House.

Mr. Toradze will also be heard in a major recital series throughout the world including Russia, the United States, England, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Mr. Toradze will begin his 1993-94 season with Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Orchestra performing Rachmaninoff's *Third Piano Concerto* in London's Barbican Center and Birmingham's new Symphony Hall. In November he again joins the Kirov Orchestra, under Mr. Gergiev, in their tour to Japan. He also will be appearing with the Chicago, Baltimore and Seattle symphonies, the Finnish Radio Orchestra, the l'Orchestre de Paris, the Toronto Symphony, and the Orchestra de Santa Cecilia in Rome, among others.

Mr. Toradze records exclusively for Angel/EMI. Commenting on Mr. Toradze's premiere recording for Angel/EMI, which features Prokofiev's *Seventh Sonata*, Stravinsky's *Three Movements from Petrushka*, and Ravel's *Miroirs*, *Stereo Review* remarked: "His first release here may be the most impressive piano recording of the year."

His second recording was released in the summer of 1991 and features Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit*. *Dallas Morning News* music critic John Ardoin wrote, "We have a compact disc of rampant imagination, color and pianistic prowess. The result is as orchestral as a single piano could hope to be... such a rare and theatrical listening experience."

Summer Festivals where Mr. Toradze frequently appears include the Hollywood Bowl, Mann's Music Center, Saratoga Blossom Music Center, Waterloo, Concertgebouw and Schleswig-Holstein.



Program Notes

Sonata in G minor, (Hoboken XVI:44) Haydn (1732-1809)

It is curious that Haydn, who was not a pianist, would come to compose more than fifty piano sonatas as well as numerous shorter pieces for the instrument. Throughout his life he experimented a great deal with the genre of the piano sonata, far more than Mozart did, for example. Before Haydn, it was Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach who systematized the work of their predecessors in establishing a more structured solo keyboard sonata form through his 150 sonatas. Bach's efforts, in turn, exerted a definite influence upon Haydn, in whose hands the form gradually grew to larger proportions.

Haydn's first keyboard works were generally entitled "divertimento" or "partita" and were written for his harpsichord pupils. They were simple, spirited compositions, usually in three short movements. Subsequently, over a thirty-year period of sonata-writing, Haydn transformed this graceful and courtly conception of the form into works more expressive of his individual temperament. He modified the structure, varied the number of movements and arranged them in diverse order. Particularly in his later sonatas, the keyboard writing is highly imaginative and effective, heightened by a more far-ranging harmonic usage and an animated contrapuntal style.

It is not known when Haydn wrote the *Sonata in G minor, Hob. XVI:44*; musicologists believed that it was composed between 1771 and 1773. The present sonata is unusual in that it contains only two movements, a graceful *Moderato*, followed by a robust and joyful *Allegretto*.

Gaspard de la nuit Ravel (1875-1937)

Maurice Ravel was born in the Basque region of France, but three months later his family moved to Paris. At the age of seven

he began to study the piano, and in 1889 he entered the Paris Conservatoire, where he spent fifteen years, proving himself an exceptional student. He wrote his first composition, a piece for the piano, in 1893; his first success came with the *Pavane pour une infante defunte*, written in 1889.

The suite *Gaspard de la nuit*, composed in 1909, is based on three strange and lugubrious poems by Aloysius Bertrand. "These three poems," according to Alfred Cortot, "enrich the piano repertoire of our epoch with one of the most extraordinary examples of instrumental ingenuity which the industry of composers has ever produced." The translation of the poems that follows was made by Paul Goodman.

Ondine

"Listen - listen! - it's I, Ondine
brushing these waterdrops against the
sounding diamond-panes of your window,
gleaming in the moon's wan rays; and see how,
in watered silk, the lady of the castle from her
balcony watches the lovely starry night and
the lovely lake asleep.

"Each wave is a spirit swimming on the
streaming, each current a path snaking to my
palace, and my palace is built of liquid, deep
in the lake, in the triangle of fire, of earth, and
of air.

"Listen! - listen - my father is whipping
the creaking water with a green alder-branch,
and my sisters' arms are stroking the foam on
the fresh isles of weeds, of lilies, of flags; mock-
ing the toppled hairy willow who's fishing with
a line.

Having murmured her song, she begged
me take her ring upon my finger, to be the
spouse of an Ondine, and to go to her palace
with her, to be the king of lakes.

And when I told her that I loved a mortal,
sulky and spiteful she wept a tear or two; she
laughed out loud and sped away in showers
that trickled white long down my windows
blue.

Le Gibet

"What's stirring round this gibbet...

-Faust

Ah, what do I hear - could it be the
night-blast yelping, or the hanged man heaving
a sigh on the gallows' fork? Could it be a fly
a-hunting, blowing round these deaf ears his
fanfare of tallyhos? Or else a spider weaving
half a yard of muslin as an ascot for this
strangled neck? It's the bell tolling at the
city-walls, below the horizon; and the corpse
of a hanged man, red in the setting sun.

Scarbo

"He looked under the bed, up the chimney, the closet: - no one. He couldn't understand where he had come in, where he had gotten away."

-Hoffman, *Night Tales*

Oh, how many times I've heard and seen him, Scarbo, when shines the midnight, moon in heaven like a silver dollar on an azure banner sown with bees of gold!

How many times I've heard his laughter buzzing in the darkness of my nook, and his fingernail scratching the silk curtains of the bed!

How many times I've seen him coming down from the ceiling, spinning on one foot, and rolling round the room like a bobbin dropped by a witch!

And then I thought he'd gone? The dwarf grew huge between the moon and me, like the steeple of a Gothic church, tossing a golden bell on his pointed hat!

But soon his body paled, transparent as candle-wax; face whitening like the wax of the candle-end - and suddenly snuffed out.

Variations on the theme of Bach

from the cantata *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, and *Crucifixus* from *B-minor Mass* Liszt (1811-1886)

In 1862 Franz Liszt wrote a prelude based on Bach's theme, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*. Three years later he expanded this composition into the set of variations heard in this performance. The melody comes from the passacaglia in *Bach's Cantata No. 12*; it can also be heard in the *Crucifixus* from the *B-minor Mass*. The words of the title ("To weep, complain, to sorrow, to be afraid, is the Christian's bread of tears") exemplify the strong religious feelings of both composers. The work is based largely on the diminished seventh chord, and exhibits an advanced use of chromaticism; both of these aspects collaborate in creating a severely strained sense of tonality throughout the piece, pointing to the influence of the composer's friend, Richard Wagner. This impressive composition ends with a moving quotation of Bach's chorale, "What God hath wrought is rightly done."

Three Movements from the ballet

Petrouchka
Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Stravinsky composed his second ballet, *Petrouchka* in 1910; it received its pre-

miere performance on June 13, 1911, when it was staged at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Ten years after the immense success of *Petrouchka*, the composer was asked by Artur Rubinstein to transcribe the music for piano, and he readily complied. The task was most likely not a hard one for Stravinsky. After all, the score had originally been conceived as a *Konzerstück for Piano and Orchestra* in which the piano would take the part of "a puppet suddenly endowed with life, exasperating the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggios."

"Petrouchka" is the Russian equivalent of "Punch," the familiar figure at carnivals, and it is during carnival time in St. Petersburg that the action of the ballet develops. The growing, gathering crowd at the Shrovetide Fair watches a puppet show which presents the three central characters of the ballet - "Petrouchka, the Ballerina and the Moor." At the end of the first scene, the three execute the wild *Danse russe*; the music fits perfectly with the brilliant, jerky movements of the marionettes.

The scene shifts to Petrouchka's room, where he is found engulfed by despair; he has fallen in love with the seductive Ballerina. Realizing his own grotesque countenance, the clown entertains little hope that his ardor will be returned. The Ballerina enters the scene and at first is amused, allowing Petrouchka's advances; but when the brawny, richly dressed Moor appears, it is evident where the fickle beauty's real interest lies. At the end of this scene *Chez Petrouchka*, our hero, is humiliated by the Moor, who kicks him out.

One of the most brilliant tone pictures ever painted by Stravinsky is the carnival scene, *Shrovetide Fair*, in which the fair (and the ballet) reaches its climax. In the midst of this rejoicing, the rivalry between Petrouchka and the Moor takes a tragic turn. The puppets escape the show and the Moor kills Petrouchka with a single blow of his sabre.

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"Mr. Toradze's two CDs for E.M.I. are not easily found, but they are well worth the hunt. The earlier album pairs a shattering *Petrouchka* by Stravinsky with a more shattering *Seventh Sonata* by Prokofiev, with Ravel's *Miroirs* for ravishing relief. The more recent CD is a triumph; a gripping *Pictures at an Exhibition*, in which Mr. Toradze demonstrates his mastery at Russian climate control, and a *Gaspard de la nuit* that burns like a comet traveling in slow motion against a black sky.

"...Prokofiev's second and third piano concertos with orchestras conducted by Valery Gergiev are, I feel safe in saying, the ultimate readings of these two kaleidoscopic masterpieces - at once devastating and transcendent."

Charles Michener, New York Observer



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