

**LISZT FERENC ACADEMY OF MUSIC
BUDAPEST**

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**PUSHKIN'S POETRY AND THE RUSSIAN ROMANCE
IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Doctoral School
for the Degree of Doctor of Liberal Arts

ABSTRACT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Historical, Social, Literary and Musical Preliminaries of Romances

- The definitions of beauty in the Slavish mythology, in the Old Russian literature and Russian folk music
- Social and literary renewal – Russian secular literature and poetry in the seventeenth - eighteenth century
- The Russian Renaissance in the nineteenth century
- Revolution in vocal music – the art song as genre of national identity

The Peculiarities of the Genre of Russian Romances

- Romance – an unique expression of the Russian sentiments
- Rhythms, motifs, tones
- Themes and musical peculiarities

Pushkin and Russian Music

- Music in Pushkin's poetry
- Pushkin's poetry and the history of Russian art songs
- Music as the synthesis of the reforms in Russian arts
- Pushkin and the Russian national opera

The Nature of Performing Romances

- Practice, concerts, interpretation
- Personal reflections – performing experiences

Conclusion

Bibliography

ABSTRACT

The dissertation explores Pushkin's contribution to the renewal of Russian literature and music in the nineteenth century through the analysis of the world of the Russian Romances (art songs). The motivation based on personal experiences: a work with Anatoil Vasiliev, the director of the Moscow School of Drama, the leading figure of nowadays world's progressive theatre and rehearsals of the adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Dream of Uncle*, in the Budapest Art Theatre in 1994. The romances as important dramaturgical stage elements got important emphasis in the theatrical adaptation of the novel.

The scope of the treatise does not expand to the domains of linguistics and musicology therefore objectives of the theme are not scientific researches in the classical sense. In course of the last twenty years tutors and a performing artists have faced with the linguistic and musical challenges of Russian vocal art. The challenge is multi-folded, not only because of the language barrier but due to the negative political-cultural stereotypes in this part of the post Soviet empire as well. However the Russian and Slavonic studies were reinterpreted after the fall of the Soviet Union, the methodology of researches got depoliticized. Nevertheless there is still lack of knowledge in Hungary concerning Russian vocal art. (The researches of Janos Bojti and Marta Papp are the very important exceptions.) The goal of the treatise is to survey of Russian art songs and romances and to give concise critical analyses of this very rich and peculiar part of the nineteenth century Russian culture and music.

Chapter One provides background on romances and focuses on their antecedents in Old Russian literature, folk art, folk music and liturgical music. The dissertation is to explain why Russian romances are organic parts of Russian romantic literature and poetry, and how these short, often folk-song-like creations became important, and were playing determinant rolls in the political-cultural changes of the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century..

Chapter Two outlines the characteristic of the romances, the most important and most typical forms, lyric elements, motifs and musical attributes. The genre is the determining

form of self-expression and inseparable from Russian identity and Russian literature. The Chapter provides comparative analyses illustrated by musical examples.

Chapter Three is to illustrate Pushkin's influence on the emergence of the romance genre. Pushkin's poetry inspired composers to create romances and art songs, with its motifs, forms, characterizations and his musically written language especially. A brief examination of his life and overview of his poetry is provided, concentrating on his „songs and music filled“ poetry and Russian national operas based on his works.

Chapter Four deals with the task of interpretation and is focusing on the diction, prosody and vocal expression. Finally a brief personal reflection concludes the treatise.

SELECTED WORKS RELATED TO THE SUBJECT MATTER

Concerts, Recitals, Performances

Soloist at the premiere of *Rachmaninoff's Vespers (All-Night Vigil)* Op. 37 (Budapest, 1987).

Soloist, performing Dargomizhsky's romances in *Dostoevsky – Vasiliev: Uncle's Dream* at the Artist Theatre in Budapest in 1994.

Romance recitals 1994-2008. (Budapest, Moscow, Petersburg, Alexandrov, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Rome, Bremen).

Recordings:

Contralto solo - *Rachmaninoff's Vespers (All-Night Vigil)* Op. 37, Tomkins Vocal Ensemble, conducted by János Dobra. (Hungaroton Classic, 2004).

Translations:

Mussorgsky Sunless - Hungarian translation of Golenichev-Kutozov's six poems. (2004).

Editions:

Editing the Hungarian version of the publication of the East European Research Institute at the University of Bremen: *Alternative Cultures in Eastern Europe* (co-editor G. Dalos, Budapest: Stencil- European Cultural Foundation, 2004).

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