

RUSSIAN MUSIC SINCE 1917: REAPPRAISAL AND REDISCOVERY.
EDITED BY PATRICK ZUK AND MARINA FROLOVA-WALKER.
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The book *Russian Music since 1917: Reappraisal and Rediscovery* originates in the eponymous international conference held at the University of Durham over four days in July 2011. The conference was organized by one of the editors of the present volume, the Irish-born musicologist, composer and pianist Patrick Zuk. Back in 2011 I was one of the handful of young scholars fortunate enough to participate in this truly memorable conference that, for the first time, gathered together, on the one side, remarkable Anglophone scholars working in the field of Russian and Soviet music and, on the other hand, some equally remarkable Russian scholars, many of whom had never previously presented their research in the United Kingdom. Zuk's decision to allow conference participants to read their papers either in Russian or in English was highly unusual in the Anglocentric world of international academic conferences, allowing us not only to brush up on our Russian, but also to shift our perspectives and engage in passionate debates with Russia's homegrown scholars, who presented us with a great deal of information that could only have been known to them.

While it took six years for the conference proceedings to see the light of day, upon reading this hefty, 450 page-long volume, I can acknowledge that it was worth the wait. The editors have selected 18 papers to be expanded into book chapters that reassess music of the Soviet and post-Soviet eras in Russia and bring into focus the transformation of scholarship in this field since *glasnost*, whilst appraising the current state of research on the development of Russian art music since the 1917 Revolution. Just like the conference itself, the proceedings volume brings together two traditions of scholarship on Russian music and its contexts, with the native Russian contributors greatly outnumbering the Anglophone scholars. Aside from editors Patrick Zuk (University of Durham) and Marina Frolova-Walker (University of Cambridge; Fellow of the British Academy), the list of contributors includes Marina Rakhmanova, Marina Raku and Levon Hakobian (State Institute for the History of the Arts, Moscow), Yekaterina Vlasova (Moscow Conservatoire), Ol'ga Manulkina (St Petersburg Conservatory), Liudmila Kovnatskaya (Russian Institute for the History of the Arts, St Petersburg), Ol'ga Digonskaya (Glinka Museum of Musical Culture, Moscow), Lidia Ader (Rimsky-Korsakov Apartment-Museum, St Petersburg), Inna Klause (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany), Daniil Zavlunov (Skidmore College), Richard Taruskin (University of California Berkeley), Pauline Fairclough (University of Bristol), William Quillen (University of Cambridge), Elena Dubinets and Laurel Fay (independent scholars). As we can see, even the list of "Western" scholars includes a number of first- or second-generation Russian/Soviet expats — and, as their essays show, these authors are keenly aware of their crossbred identities and often forced to negotiate their position "between two worlds", on account of the

conflicting requirements of the academic environments on the either side of the East-West divide. The editors' goal in giving ample space to Russian writers was not only to introduce their work to Western readers, hitherto largely unfamiliar with contemporary Russian musicology, but also to present new material from Russian archival sources that challenges many Western preconceptions about music written in the Soviet era. In that sense, this book is less about music per se, and more about musicology, i.e. about contexts and discourses surrounding music, about musical life in Russia (and the Soviet Union) post-October Revolution and, last but not least, about the state of scholarship on Russian music on both sides of the former Iron Curtain. As proof of to his dedication to this project, Patrick Zuk translated eight chapters himself – one (by Klause) from German and seven (by Rakhmanova, Hakobian, Raku, Vlasova, Manulkina, Kovnatskaya and Digonskaya) from Russian.

In their extensive "Introduction", Zuk and Frolova-Walker examine the field and highlight their aim of providing an overview of the transformation that the study of Russian music of the past century has undergone during the last three decades, both in Russia itself and abroad. They remind the readers of the censorship issues (in the USSR) and the ideological constraints (on both sides of the East-West divide) that hindered an objective appraisal of many aspects of Soviet cultural life. The events of the last three decades have dismantled many of these obstacles and encouraged the development of the discipline of Russian music studies. Zuk and Frolova-Walker thus embarked on a mission to rectify problematic received ideological narratives from the previous decades and to place the twentieth- and twenty-first-century Russian music in appropriate historical contexts.

The book is divided into six thematic parts and eighteen chapters. After a comprehensive "Introduction", Part I, entitled *Russian Music History and Historiography Today*, consists of four essays by Marina Rakhmanova ("Russian Musicological Scholarship of the Last Two Decades: Achievements and Lacunae"), Patrick Zuk ("Soviet Music Studies Outside Russia: Glasnost' and After"), Levon Hakobian ("The Adventures of Soviet Music in the West: Historical Highlights") and Marina Frolova-Walker ("Soviet Music in Post-Soviet Musicology: The First Twenty Years and Beyond"). These essays explore changes in Russian music scholarship, providing a comprehensive critical overview of recent research, but also reminding us of the pre-*glasnost'* ideological strictures that continue to affect academia and hinder progress. The editors' decision not to obscure the fact that all essays have originated from conference papers read some six years earlier results in an interesting presentation of Marina Rakhmanova's keynote address, where the original paper is typeset in regular font, while the new additions which comment on the developments in the period between 2011 and 2017 are printed in italics. Such layered presentation is perhaps unnecessary, although it does remind readers of the passing of time and the slow but imminent progress.

The second part, *Reappraising the Soviet Past*, focuses on the music and musical life of the Stalinist era and comprises essays by Marina Raku ("The Phenomenon of 'Translation' in Russian Musical Culture of the 1920s and Early 1930s: The Quest for a Soviet Musical Identity"), Pauline Fairclough ("From Enlightened to Sublime:

PATRICK ZUK AND MARINA FROLOVA-WALKER
RUSSIAN MUSIC SINCE 1917: REAPPRAISAL AND REDISCOVERY

Musical Life under Stalin, 1930–1948”), Yekaterina Vlasova (“The Stalinist Opera Project”) and Inna Klause (“Composers in the Gulag: A Preliminary Survey”). It is interesting that here “Soviet” is more-or-less equated with “Stalinist”, since there are no discussions of the state of musical life under Soviet leaders such as Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev.

Part III *Soviet and Post-Soviet Musicology* explicitly deals with the state of the discipline and emphasizes the detrimental effect of the decades-long censorship on Soviet musicology (and, consequently, post-Soviet musicology as well); this issue is discussed comprehensively in Ol’ga Manulkina’s illuminating essay “‘Foreign’ versus ‘Russian’ in Soviet and Post-Soviet Musicology and Music Education”, while Daniil Zavlunov focuses on the landmark case of Mikhail Glinka in the essay “Glinka in Soviet and Post-Soviet Historiography: Myths, Realities and Ideologies”.

Two essays that comprise Part IV, aptly named *The Newest Shostakovich*, assess the state of scholarship after the infamous “Shostakovich Wars” which mired the area of Shostakovich studies in controversy from the 1979 publication of his alleged memoirs edited by Solomon Volkov – later expertly debunked by Laurel E. Fay as a forgery, but which have nevertheless inspired a host of populist publications such as Ian MacDonald’s *The New Shostakovich* (hence the pun in the subtitle of Part IV) and even very recent books such as Julian Barnes’s melodramatic 2016 novel *The Noise of Time*. Here, Liudmila Kovnatskaya focuses on Shostakovich’s early correspondence (“Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man: The Shostakovich–Bogdanov-Berezovsky Correspondence”), while Ol’ga Digonskaya writes about “Shostakovich’s ‘Lenin Project’: The ‘Pre-Twelfth’ Symphony”, thus putting the final nail in the coffin of the imaginary figure of “Shostakovich-the-dissident”.

The last two parts of the book focus on contemporary Russian music, both in Russia and in the rest of the world. Part V, entitled *Russian Music Abroad*, contains articles by American scholars Richard Taruskin and Elena Dubinets (herself an expat, working as the Vice President of Artistic Planning for the Seattle Symphony). In his response to the question “Is there a ‘Russia Abroad’ in Music?” Taruskin also overviews the state of Russian *musicology* abroad throughout the twentieth century. Dubinets’s essay “Defining Diaspora through Culture: Russian Émigré Composers in a Globalising World” complements Taruskin’s, as the author resumes her long-standing preoccupation with Russian composers who have left the matrix and attempted to pursue international careers, with mixed success. On the other hand, the final portion of the book, *1991 and After*, contains three essays by Laurel Fay (“Musical Uproar in Moscow (II)”), William Quillen (“The Idea of the 1920s in Russian Music Today”) and Lidia Ader (“Paradigms of Contemporary Music in Twenty-First-Century Russia”) dealing with the ways in which the difficult “transition” after the dissolution of the USSR has affected Russian composers who have remained in their homeland.

One of the defining features of this volume is that the editors did not attempt to impose their viewpoints on contributors, in order to tame some overzealous interpretations of newly-discovered primary sources, or to iron out obvious differences in academic style; this decision has resulted in a vibrant book that has preserved the spirit of the debates that I remember from the Durham conference. My sole objec-

tion is that the period of “stagnation” is hardly addressed, leaving a gap between the Stalinist years and the situation during and after *glasnost*. This lacuna will certainly be filled in the years to come by new publications that will perhaps offer a more unified approach, as well as a more careful engagement with the archival material. Nevertheless, *Russian Music since 1917: Reappraisal and Rediscovery* is an outstanding contribution to the field of Russian music studies and a vivid depiction of the present state of affairs. Since the authors do not engage with music analysis, this book will be accessible both to music specialists and to the general reader interested in Russian/Soviet intellectual and cultural life. As Zuk and Frolova-Walker remind us, “The overwhelming emphasis in much Western writing on Soviet music on the effects of censorship and bureaucratic controls risks distorting and oversimplifying our impressions of a cultural scene that remained stubbornly complex and diverse, in spite of all the pressures to conform.” The present book beautifully illustrates precisely this complexity and diversity.

Ivana Medić