


Хрестоматия для чтения
для студентов и аспирантов
музыкальных вузов

The image shows a grand, ornate concert hall with a grand piano on the stage. The background is a collage of various images, including architectural details, musical instruments, and people, all in a warm, golden-brown color palette. The text "The Art of Rachmaninoff" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font.

The Art of Rachmaninoff

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The Art of Rachmaninoff

Хрестоматия для чтения
для студентов и аспирантов музыкальных вузов

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В хрестоматии представлены тексты в рамках тематики музыкальных специальностей вузов искусств, а также упражнения, способствующие тренировке и закреплению лексического и грамматического материала в рамках специальности с целью формирования лексического максимума для чтения оригинальных текстов данной направленности, выработки способности чтения специальной литературы без словаря, а также развитию навыка устной речи. Тексты представляют собой аутентичный материал, посвященный жизни и творчеству С. В. Рахманинова, и могут быть полезны на всех курсах музыкального вуза, а также для аспирантов и ассистентов-стажеров.

The main aim of the textbook is to provide training in professional vocabulary and speaking practice for professional musicians. The texts included and the exercises are based on the authentic sources—books and related articles and can be used for practice work in class, or home reading, both under the teacher's supervision and for self-studies. The texts elucidate life and art of Sergey V. Rachmaninoff and are focused on building vocabulary, grammar revision and development of reading and speaking skills. The textbook is intended for students and post-graduates of musical institutions.

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ПРЕДИСЛОВИЕ

Хрестоматия предназначена для студентов высших музыкальных учебных заведений и вузов искусств. Цель – развить у студентов навыки, необходимые для чтения литературы по специальности в подлиннике, а также способствовать выработке навыка устной речи в сфере профессионального общения. Сборник состоит из 3-х частей и основан на аутентичном материале, богатом лексическими и лексико-грамматическими средствами, которые, безусловно, помогут расширить вокабуляр и знания структуры английского предложения и дискурса в целом.

Первая часть основана на материале и тексте книги A. Wehrmeyer “Rakhmaninov”¹ и состоит из 4 разделов, в каждый из которых входит по 2 текста, освещающих определенные периоды жизни композитора, а также упражнения на развитие словарного запаса и разговорных навыков студентов. Вторая часть включает воспоминания о композиторе и предназначена в качестве дополнительного материала для домашнего чтения; третья часть содержит статьи, посвященные оценке музыкального наследия Рахманинова и особенностям его композиторской техники.

Вся орфография, а также фактический материал, дается в соответствии с аутентичным материалом источников. Фамилия Рахманинов используется в хрестоматии в двух разных вариантах написания – “Rakhmaninov” и “Rachmaninoff” в соответствии с источниками. Тексты не адаптированы.

Материалы могут предлагаться студентам теоретических и исполнительских специальностей как для самостоятельной работы и домашнего чтения, так и в качестве дополнительного материала на уроках по иностранному языку в высших музыкальных учебных заведениях и вузах искусств.

¹ Wehrmeyer A. Rakhmaninov / transl. by A. Wyburd; preface by A. Short. London: Haus Publishing, 2004. 158 p.

PART I.

Andreas Wehrmeyer's monograph "Rakhmaninov"

Youth (1873–1897)

TEXT 1

Sergei Rakhmaninov was born on 20 March (old style) 1873 in Semyonovo, one of his parents' estates in the Staraya Russa region to the south of lake Ilmen. No description of the exact position and appearance of the estate survives. The family came from old Russian aristocratic roots which could be traced back to the 15th century. From the early 18th century they had lived on their country estates in the Tambov region. According to family tradition the composer's father, Vassily Arkadievich (1841–1916), served in the army as a young man, seeing action in the campaign against Jamil's Islamic resistance movement in the Caucasus from 1857 to 1859. Later, serving with a hussar regiment, he took part in the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1863. After his marriage to a wealthy general's daughter, Lyubov Petrovna Butakova (1848–1929), Vassily Arkadievich resigned his commission. He spent his time in social pleasures and neglected his business affairs. Like many other Russian nobles in the 19th century, he squandered his entire marriage settlement within just a few years. Soon after Sergei's birth he had to surrender Semyonovo, the last estate but one, and in 1882 the last one, Oneg, which lay on the Volkhov River not far from Novgorod, where Sergei spent his early childhood.

Sergei was the fourth of six children. With so many siblings one might expect a wealth of childhood memories, but in fact his recollections are limited to a few brief comments, more about his impressions of the countryside and the atmosphere of old Russia than about members of his family.

His parents seem to have been a strange couple. His mother was reserved, cool and strict, sometimes even frightening, while his father was the exact opposite. He never had a penny, was up to his ears in debt, but never got depressed about it. He was debauched, lovable and very gifted idler. As a result of financial ruin and the forced move to St. Petersburg in 1882, his parents' relationships deteriorated so much that shortly afterwards

they separated permanently. Rakhmaninov's mother managed to arrange for the children's education with relatives to secure their future.

Sergei's musical gifts came from his father's side. His grandfather Arkady Alexandrovich (1808–1881) was a talented amateur pianist and composer. He was a pupil of the Irish pianist, John Field. His father also played the piano enthusiastically and entertained his friends with salon pieces and improvisations. He played the piano for hours on end—no well-known pieces, goodness knows what they were but you could have listened to him for ever. A lot of the music, which he thought or said he had made up, he had picked up somewhere else—for instance the Polka VR, of which Sergei later made a virtuoso transcription in memory of his father.

Sergei had his first regular piano tuition from Anna Ornatskaya, a young graduate of the St. Petersburg Conservatory, who recognized the extent of his talent. She persuaded his parents that he must pursue a musical career and procured a place for him at the Conservatory. Sergei entered the bottom class to prepare for studying the piano, but also took lessons in theory and history of music and general subjects.

Because he had done so badly in general subjects, the Conservatory threatened to expel him in the spring of 1885. His mother was in despair but behaved sensibly and asked Alexander Ziloti for advice. Once he had heard Sergei play the piano he advised her to send the boy to Moscow to study with his own former teacher, the famous piano professor Nikolay Sergeyevich Zverev (1832–1893), who specialized in training young pianists.

In the autumn of 1885 Zverev accepted the twelve-year old Rakhmaninov into his class at the Moscow Conservatory. He had two or three talented pupils staying with him at any one time, so that he could concentrate on their education and training. Zverev demanded neither living expenses nor fees from his pupils, on the contrary, being a supreme idealist, he treated his pupils with exceptional generosity. For him their success was recognition and justification enough: "Meanwhile he spent his colossal fortune on us. Living at Zverev's we did not pay anything for accommodation or for food. Most of all, he took upon himself to provide for all our clothing requirements; he paid for tutors in all the subjects of a normal education and in French and German as well".

Wherever possible Zverev encouraged his students' artistic interests, trying to awaken their appreciation and develop their taste; he took them

to plays, ballets, operas and concerts. "As a consequence of his enormous dedication Zverev never paid any attention to the amount of time he devoted to his pupils. In all the years that I stayed in the class with Zverev I never once went home during summer holidays to visit my family. During the summer we would all go to the dacha outside Moscow... or once to the Crimea. Zverev always brought a piano with him to the dacha so that he could give us lessons and as a result expected us to work just as hard during the summer as we did in the winter. Something that has remained particularly memorable for me is the trip to the Crimea where we stayed with friends of Zverev's and a teacher from the Conservatory came too to give us theory lessons". Zverev regarded preparing his pupils for public performance and getting them used to it as an integral part of their training, he let them take part in student recitals at an early stage. Even Sergei, while he was still among the youngest in his class, often played at the Conservatory, where both Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) and Anton Rubinshtein (1829–1894) were among the audience. He was immediately noticed. Rakhmaninov's recollections of Sunday concerts in Zverev's house are illuminating. "Zverev turned his home from what might have been a musical prison into a musical paradise. From a very strict teacher, he completely changed on Sundays. That afternoon and evening he always kept open house for the greatest figures in the Moscow musical world. Tchaikovsky, Taneyev, Arensky, Safonov, Ziloti, as well as university professors, lawyers, actors, would drop in, and the hours passed in talk and music. For us boys the delightful feature of these Sundays was that Zverev would not permit any of the great musicians present to touch the piano, unless by way of some explanation or criticism. For we, not they, were the solo artists on these occasions. No matter what we played, his verdict was always "Fine! Well done! Excellent!" He let us play anything we felt like playing, and would call on his guests to bear him out in his opinion of us".

At the beginning of 1886 Anton Rubinstein mounted the first series of his Moscow Historical Concerts, which left a lasting impression on Rakhmaninov, for whom Rubinstein became the absolute ideal of piano playing. "He sat at the piano and played and explained. He included all the important composers from the oldest classics down to his own day, and the Russian School... He played everything inimitably".

EXERCISE 1. *Complete the sentences using the following vocabulary:*

prominent, to preserve, the district, to reveal, financial failure, to be guaranteed, to get education, to be fascinated, to be enchanted, to determine, the significance of talent, to be expelled from, to charge for any expenses, the learning process.

1. It is known that the birthplace of Rakhmaninov...
2. The description of the location...
3. The family originated from...
4. The aristocratic origin of the family...
5. His parents' marriage broke up due to...
6. Rakhmaninov's mother was able to cope with the situation, so that...
7. His father played the piano with inspiration and his friends...
8. His performance lasted for an unlimited period because...
9. His first piano teacher was able to...
10. His failure in basic subjects was the reason for...
11. Zverev provided accommodation and studies for his pupils but...
12. In Zverev's view students' recitals were...

EXERCISE 2. *Write down all the derivatives of the following words:*

description, education, fail, exact, significance, enthusiastically, financial, entertain, transcription, separate, persuade, threaten, despair, sensibly, concentrate, generosity, treat, expenses, exceptional.

EXERCISE 3. *Answer the following questions.*

1. When and where was Sergei Rakhmaninov born?
2. Why did his mother have to arrange for the children's education with relatives?
3. How did his father usually compose his pieces of music?
4. Which of his teachers was the first to recognize his talent?

5. In what Conservatory did Anna Ornatskaya procure a place for Rakhmaninov?
6. What was the reason for his being expelled from the Conservatory?
7. How did Zverev treat his pupils?
8. How was Zverev's generosity manifested?
9. What were the fundamental ideas that guided Zverev during his training?

EXERCISE 4. *Learn the following phrasal verbs and use them in your own sentences.*

1. Cut down on (reduce the amount of)
I've decided to cut down on asking for somebody's advice.
2. Come up against (meet)
We keep coming up against the same problem.
3. Face up to (accept, deal with)
It's hard to face up to things in yourself.
4. Feel up to (feel fit to do)
I don't feel up to taking risks.
5. Get along with (have good relations with)
He gets along with his new teacher.
6. Get round to (find time to do)
Get round to practicing more.
7. Get up to (do something)
What are you getting up to?
8. Look down on (feel superior to)
She doesn't look down on you.
9. Look up to (respect)
I really look up to my teacher.
10. Look forward to (think we will enjoy)
We are looking forward to our meeting.

TEXT 2

In 1888 Rakhmaninov started in Ziloti's advanced piano class. Rakhmaninov was still living with Zverev and he felt bound to follow his wishes. Upon changing to Ziloti's class, Rakhmaninov also started studying counterpoint with Sergei Taneyev (1856–1915), plus fugue and free composition with Anton Arensky (1861–1906). Composing fulfilled his deepest needs. The essential and the only reason for him to move on from Zverev's was the utter impossibility of studying composition there. During the course of the day the playing of the grand piano didn't cease in Zverev's flat. It was impossible for Rakhmaninov to compose while someone was playing in the next room. Zverev didn't want to understand this, he was so offended, that he broke off all contact with Rakhmaninov. Fortunately, Varvara Arkadievna Satina, his father's sister who lived in Moscow, gave him a room in her house where he could study undisturbed. Her sons and daughters were the same age as him and welcomed him kindly. Rakhmaninov spent the summer of 1890 and many summers thereafter with the Satin family at Ivanovka, their country estate in Tambov province about 500 kilometers southwest of Moscow. This eventually became his property. Now it is a museum.

When Alexander Ziloti announced his resignation from the teaching staff of the Moscow Conservatory in protest against Vassily Safonov's appointment as director, Rakhmaninov strove to complete his piano studies. As there was no doubt about his ability, he was allowed to sit his examination early, in May 1891. His program consisted of Beethoven's Waldstein Sonata op. 53, Chopin's B-flat minor Sonata op. 35 and some smaller pieces. In the same year he also produced a mature composition: his First Piano Concerto in F-sharp minor, completed during the summer at Ivanovka. In March 1892 he played the first movement in a Conservatory concert, accompanied by the student orchestra under Safonov. He held the attention of the audience in a state of suspense through to the very end of the performance. Perhaps a hint of Tchaikovsky glimmers through some passages, but the work's monumental nature, the dramatic tension, the captivating lyricism, the commanding force of the rhythm, the shape of the melodic and harmonic ideas all pointed to the paths down which he was travelling.

That month Rakhmaninov also took his final composition examination. He was required to write a one-act opera "Aleko", based on Pushkin's poem

"The Gypsies". Rakhmaninov was fascinated with the subject matter and went to work with a will. In an incredibly short time, less than three weeks, he had almost completed the hour-long score. When he played it on the piano to the examination board the members were so enthusiastic that they awarded him the Great Gold Medal—an honor which had only been bestowed twice before in the history of the Conservatory. To Rakhmaninov's joy even Zverev congratulated him on his success, thus paving the way for the reconciliation he had long hoped for. From then on their relationship remained warm and untroubled until Zverev's death in 1893.

"Aleko" is the first of Rakhmaninov's works to be generally recognized and in the spring of 1893 the Bolshoi Theatre finally presented the premiere of "Aleko". The enormous acclaim from press and public brought Rakhmaninov outside invitations, including one to conduct the opera in Kiev. The critic Semyon Kruglikov wrote: "Rakhmaninov is a talented man, well versed and with excellent taste. He might become a good opera composer, because he has a feel for the stage. He has an almost infallible understanding of the human voice and is endowed with the lucky gift of the melodist... Not one of all our best composers made his debut at such an early age with an opera of the quality of "Aleko".

In the summer of 1893 Rakhmaninov completed a Fantasy for Two Pianos op. 5, dedicated to Tchaikovsky. Tchaikovsky had always treated Rakhmaninov generously and was complimentary about the young composer. He showed his interest in the Piano Pieces op. 3 and according to reliable sources he encouraged the generally favorable reviews which declared the works on the whole promising and in some respects even masterly.

Tchaikovsky's death came as a serious blow to Rakhmaninov. In his sorrow he wrote his Piano Trio op. 9, dedicated to the memory of a great artist, just as Tchaikovsky had dedicated his Piano Trio op. 50 to the memory of Nikolay Rubinstein (1835–1881), the founder of the Moscow Conservatory. In the Trio the piano is given not just a dominant but a virtuoso role—entirely in keeping with the genre of chamber music, which shows that the composer intended to follow that tradition and to emulate Tchaikovsky's Trio, which he does to the point of adopting a similar sequence of movements and alluding to it both in thematic material and in the detailed process of its development. As in Tchaikovsky's work, the first

movement is the core of the Trio and is based on a broadly constructed sonata form. Repeated falling chromatic scales supporting delicate, swirling motifs above them set the prevailing mood, while the second subject and the final theme are more energetic and build up quickly to an emotional climax. The development section is mainly based on the concise motifs of the opening, out of which Rakhmaninov draws a rich variety of harmony and rhythm. The finale is by comparison more concentrated and intensely expressive. The work ends with a sad and agitated epilogue which revisits the dynamic main theme of the first movement and so brings the work full circle, as the strains of the opening passage gradually die away.

The composer himself was unhappy with the work and when he first revised it in 1907 he made several cuts, simplified the piano part and in the middle movement rewrote the solo piano variation for the whole ensemble. Ten years later he cut away some more of the detail, but these alterations were not incorporated into the score until the Moscow edition of 1950. When Rakhmaninov first started to earn money, he was tempted to adopt an extravagant lifestyle which inevitably led him into difficulties. His cousin Sophia Satina remembers him at that time: “He was young, loved to play the dandy, to drive about in a smart carriage and to throw his money around. He wanted a life with fewer responsibilities but the wage he earned from composing, although Gutheil assiduously bought everything he wrote, was not enough for the life he led”.

Constant financial worries drove Rakhmaninov to giving private tuition, but he did it so reluctantly. Clearly he was not a good teacher and teaching was an obstacle to his phenomenal gifts as pianist and composer.

In the autumn of 1895 Rakhmaninov embarked on his first extensive concert tour, as duet partner to the violinist Teresina Tua. This was supposed to last for three months, with performances in a large number of Russian cities, but it ended earlier than anyone concerned had expected. Rakhmaninov thoroughly disliked travelling and found long journeys in coaches particularly wearisome, so he made an excuse about a delayed payment from his agent and without warning returned to Moscow.

Rakhmaninov’s First Symphony in D minor—on which he lavished a great deal of time and effort and had high hopes—was not destined for success. The premiere in St. Petersburg on March the 15th, 1897 under the baton of Alexander Glazunov was icily rejected. One explanation of the

indifference and lack of interest which it encountered in St. Petersburg was the latent antagonism between the two rival musical capitals of Russia.

A survey of the works Rakhmaninov wrote before 1897 reveals the development of a growing artistic personality, with an individual style and means of expression. Tchaikovsky's influence on him is always emphasized and as a student under Arensky and Taneyev he could hardly escape it.

Rakhmaninov wrote his piano works under the influence of Chopin and Liszt, the two most important and historically significant composers for that instrument in the late 19th century, partly, of course, because they had already been accepted in Russian piano music. Through Ziloti, who was one of the keenest propagandists of Liszt in Russia, he came into contact with his musical innovations.

The First Piano Concerto is in many respects less reminiscent of Chopin, Liszt or Russian models than of Grieg's A minor Concerto op. 16, which the composer learned when studying with Ziloti. The soloists effective opening cascade of octaves, the first theme, the expansive cadenza at the end of the first movement—are all enough to indicate that he took the Grieg Concerto as a model. The pianistic structure of this First Concerto is also reminiscent of Grieg, particularly in its original version though less so in the generally known revision of 1917.

Rakhmaninov's training under Arensky and Taneyev at the Moscow Conservatory was thorough, but even for that period decidedly conservative. Both teachers followed Tchaikovsky's compositional principles, although with different emphasis and different results, so in that sense Rakhmaninov passed through a Tchaikovsky-style school of composition—which viewed both the "New German school" of Liszt and Wagner and contemporary French composers with similar scepticism. His training followed a particular Germanic model, as the Rubinstein brothers, who founded the Moscow and St. Petersburg Conservatories. It was this Austro-Germanic contrapuntal tradition which Taneyev imparted most enduringly to Rakhmaninov. With him he studied the strict style of counterpoint—a discipline which did not initially attract him but eventually awakened his interest, thanks to his teacher's motivation. Above all, however, he learnt to appreciate Taneyev's masterly musical understanding and unchallenged critical judgment. After he left the Conservatory he kept in contact with him, sought his advice and showed him his latest works before presenting them before the public.

Arensky exerted an equal influence on Rakhmaninov. Among his compositions Arensky wrote several suites for two pianos—a genre which impressed Rakhmaninov and on which he evidently based his Suites op. 5 and op. 17.

It is all too easy to dismiss Rakhmaninov as merely a composer for the piano, which he never was. His ability to produce a great range of moods with confidence and variety is noticeable in his early orchestral works. His marked sensitivity for orchestral colour is not only reminiscent of Tchaikovsky, but also of Rimsky-Korsakov and Arensky, who had been Tchaikovsky's pupil. Among the Songs of op. 4, op. 8, op. 14 the restrained numbers are particularly captivating: in them Rakhmaninov succeeds in illustrating the poetic material with a sure feeling for mood. In both the vocal parts and the piano accompaniment the influence of Arensky is clearly audible. Admittedly, the poetry reflects contemporary taste but the quality of much of it is questionable today. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the standard of the songs, because the texts primarily serve as a stimulus for musical transformation, which gives them a completely fresh impact.

EXERCISE 1. *Complete the sentences using the following vocabulary:*

to be obliged, to satisfy one's wishes, to prevent from, to make a decision, to keep in touch, to be keen to complete, to capture the audience with tension, magnificence, dramatic power, unique lyricism, peculiar trends of the melody, passionately, to gain an honor, to spoil one's relationship, to intervene in composing, to fail, to be revealed, to be overwhelmed with a variety of moods, ideas and melodies.

1. As long as Rakhmaninov was staying with Zverev, he was...
2. Only composing satisfied his wishes, but unbearable conditions...
3. The sound of the piano didn't stop for a minute and...
4. Zverev was so humiliated, that he stopped...
5. When Safonov was appointed as director of the Moscow Conservatory, Rakhmaninov...
6. While playing the first movement of his First Piano Concerto, Rakhmaninov...

7. Some passages reminded of Tchaikovsky, but...
8. Rakhmaninov was greatly involved in the subject matter, so...
9. He was the third person in the history of the Conservatory who...
10. Zverev reconciled with Rakhmaninov and for the rest of their lives...
11. Rakhmaninov took up teaching unwillingly, because tuition...
12. Rakhmaninov plunged into composing with great desire, but...
13. Rakhmaninov faced innovations of Chopin and Liszt, but in his First Piano Concerto...
14. Rakhmaninov is recognized not only as a composer for piano, but his orchestral works...

EXERCISE 2. *Write down all the derivatives of the following words:*

essential, offend, disturb, province, property, announce, resignation, suspense, captivate, fascinate, reconciliation, treat, dedicate, reluctantly, rival, reminiscent, evidently.

EXERCISE 3. *Answer the following questions.*

1. What was the reason for moving on from Zverev's?
2. Where was his property located?
3. What did his program for the final exam consist of?
4. How long did it take him to complete his one-act opera "Aleko"?
5. What reward did he get for his one-act opera "Aleko"?
6. What was his attitude to giving private tuition?
7. Why did he end up making an excuse after his first extensive concert tour?
8. Why did his premiere of the First Symphony fail in St. Petersburg?
9. What composers influenced Rakhmaninov's creativity?
10. What characteristics are revealed in his piano pieces and orchestral works?

EXERCISE 4. *Learn the following phrasal verbs and use them in your own sentences.*

1. Call on (visit)
I called on some friends.
2. Come across (find by chance)
He came across this old painting in the attic.
3. Come into (inherit)
She came into a large sum of money.
4. Count on (depend on)
I am counting on you to help me.
5. Do without (manage without)
We'll have to do without a holiday this year.
6. Get at (suggest)
What are you getting at?
7. Get over (recover from)
Barry has got over his illness now.
8. Look round (look at everything)
Let's look round the town today.
9. Pick on (choose a person to punish)
My teacher is always picking on me.
10. Run into (meet by chance)
I ran into Steve in the supermarket yesterday.

EXERCISE 1. *Read the extract and answer the questions.*

1. What directions did Scriabin's and Rachmaninoff's careers take?
2. Who was Belaiev and what role did he play in Scriabin's life?
3. Why was 1897 unsuccessful for Rachmaninoff? How did it influence the composer?
4. When did the Second Piano Concerto by Rachmaninoff appear?
5. What was Rachmaninoff's reaction to the Russian revolution?
6. How long did his performing career continue?
7. What was the difference in both musicians' approach to music?

EXERCISE 2. *Render the main content of the article.*

Gary Woodrow Cobb. A Descriptive Analysis of the Piano Concertos of Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff

(Texas Tech University: requirements for the Degree of Master of Music, 1975)¹¹

His Professional Career (p. 6–9)

Rachmaninoff was on his own after his graduation. In 1893 he composed his Prelude in C-sharp minor, "a piece that was to equal Ignacy Jan Paderewski's Menuet in its wide popularity and was so intimately associated with Rachmaninoff's person that he was sometimes called „Mr. C-sharp minor“.

A rich merchant of Saint Petersburg named Belayav offered to help produce the first performance of Rachmaninoff's first symphony in Saint Petersburg. Given at Saint Petersburg in the autumn of 1897, the performance was inadequate. Rachmaninoff was put through a great mental strain by both the performance and the comments from the critics. Cesar Cui wrote:

“If there was a conservatory in Hell and if one of the talented pupils there was commissioned to compose a symphony based on the story of the „Seven Egyptian Executions“, and if he composed one

¹¹ URL: <https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0e55e216-739a-4352-ac7b-19689adb480f/content> (дата обращения: 13.02.2024).

resembling that of Rachmaninoff's, he would have brought ecstasy to the inhabitants of Hell".

Rachmaninoff, in order to divert his mind from the symphony, accepted a job as second conductor with A. M. Mamontov's opera company, but he resigned this post in 1898. While visiting London during the 1898–1899 season, Rachmaninoff conducted his tone poem "The Rock" and played his C-sharp minor prelude. The second piano concerto was completed during these years in 1901.

On April 29, 1902, Rachmaninoff married Natalie Satin, his cousin. His music improved, in the eyes of the critics, after the marriage. He accepted a short-term contract to conduct the Grand Theater but relinquished this post in 1906 to devote more time to composition. He was also in constant demand as a conductor and soloist.

In the autumn of 1906, the Rachmaninoffs moved to Dresden. During this period, he wrote "The Isle of the Dead" (inspired by Böcklin's painting of the same name), his second symphony, the first piano sonata, and an unpublished opera called "Monna Vanna" on a libretto by Maeterlinck. In 1908, Rachmaninoff received an invitation to visit America where he gave twenty concerts as a soloist or conductor. His orchestra was the Boston Symphony Orchestra, whose conductor was Max Fiedler. The third piano concerto was written for the American tour in the summer of 1909.

Upon his return to Russia in February of 1910, Rachmaninoff was offered and accepted the post of Vice-President of the Imperial Music Society. While in this position, he developed the Russian musical system to a much more elaborate scale. He took his family to Switzerland in 1913. It was during this stay that he wrote "The Bells", based on the poem by Edgar Allen Poe.

The great revolution began in March of 1917¹². Rachmaninoff and his family managed to leave Russia on a visa to Scandinavia. In November of 1918, they left for New York. Rachmaninoff began the fourth piano concerto while in New York in 1927. After a tour of Europe in 1931, Rachmaninoff bought a house at Lake Lucerne in Switzerland. He called it "Senar". In such a setting, Rachmaninoff composed such works as the Rhapsody on a

¹² Ошибка в источнике.

Theme by Paganini. He also found time for such hobbies as his automobile and motorboat, skating, and playing tennis. In 1932, he was awarded the gold medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society in England. Along with Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, Ernest Ansermet, Vladimir Horowitz, and Pablo Casals, Rachmaninoff appeared at the International Musical Festival in Lucerne in 1939. In December of 1939, a special Carnegie Hall concert was held to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Rachmaninoff's American debut. A recital tour during the 1942–1943 season, ending with a recital in Knoxville, Tennessee, was Rachmaninoff's last. He died at his Beverly Hills, California home on March 28, 1943.

In 1931 Russian authorities had banned his music in the Soviet Union because it "...represented the decadent attitude of the lower middle classes and especially dangerous on the musical front in the present class war". However, the ban was relaxed in 1939.

Shortly before he died, a cable, signed by eleven of Russia's most significant musicians, arrived from Moscow, which he was never able to read:

Dear Sergei Vasilyevich!

On the day of your seventieth anniversary the Union of Soviet Composers sends you warm congratulations and hearty wishes for good spirits, strength, and health for many years to come. We greet you as a composer of whom Russian musical culture is proud, the greatest pianist of our time, a brilliant conductor and public man who in these times has shown patriotic feelings that have found a response in the heart of every Russian. We greet you as a creator of musical works penetrating in their depth and expressiveness. Your piano concertos and symphonies, your chamber works, songs, and other compositions are often played in the Soviet Union, and the public here watches with close attention your creative activity and is proud of your triumphs.

EXERCISE 1. *Read the extract and answer the questions.*

1. What did C. Cui write about Rachmaninoff's First Symphony?
2. How did Rachmaninoff try to divert his mind from the failure?
3. How productive was the period 1906–1909?

4. What was the Carnegie Hall concert in 1939 devoted to?
5. How did Russian authorities explain their ban on Rachmaninoff's music? How long did it last?
6. What did the letter from Moscow say?

EXERCISE 2. *Render the main content of the article.*

Keenan A. Reesor. Rachmaninoff in Music Lexicons, 1900–2013: Toward a History of the Composer's Reception

(The University of Southern California: Dissertation. 2016, August)¹³

Rachmaninoff's Legacy Affirmed (p. 124–128)

Music lexicons have served broadly to affirm Rachmaninoff's legacy as a composer. The very fact of his continuous inclusion in music lexicons is itself important evidence of his sustained prominence in Western musical life. He has appeared in virtually every general music lexicon published since his international career began in the early-twentieth century. At first, while his career was still unfolding, entries tended to be brief and journalistic, concerned primarily with reporting basic biographical and stylistic information. By the end of his career, when his music was consolidating a place in the repertoire and inspiring a budding secondary literature, entries had begun to grow in length and detail. At that point, his music also began to elicit criticism in music lexicons. In retrospect, it should come as no surprise that, at the very moment when he seemed poised to achieve canonical status, critical voices arose to question his worthiness. That is the very *raison d'être* of music criticism in any form. While many mid-century assessments, especially European ones, bear witness to this spontaneous process, few commentators adopted a truly dismissive attitude toward him, and even fewer went so far as to negate his legacy as a composer as Scholes, Blom, and Abraham did. Between 1938 and 1972, the only really negative assessments to appear were those by the

¹³ URL: file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Rachmaninoff_in_Music_Lexicons_1900_2013.pdf (дата обращения: 14.02.2024).

latter three, De Vries, and Seeger. A similarly small but more concentrated number of negative assessments appeared in Europe during the 1970s and early 1980s, but by then a deliberate reappraisal had already begun. By the early twenty-first century, a new international consensus had emerged, signaled by affirmative assessments in numerous music lexicons of all sizes.

Rachmaninoff's reception in music lexicons has varied not nearly so much in the terms in which it has been conceived as in the relative importance attached to those terms by the individual commentator. As mentioned in the introduction, these conceptual parameters are rooted in the three ideologies of classicism, modernism, and nationalism, prompting evaluation in terms of depth of thought or feeling, compositional technique, individuality, Russianness, and stylistic contemporaneity. All of these concepts existed in some form before Rachmaninoff was born but none were used to criticize his music in music lexicons until late in his career, in some cases until after his death. Rachmaninoff's national musical identity elicited comment as early as 1908, in *Grove's*, but his Moscow heritage was not interpreted as cosmopolitanism until 1938, in *The Oxford Companion*, as it was by some as late as 1983, for example *La nuova enciclopedia Garzanti*. Similarly, Rachmaninoff's conservatism did not elicit comment until 1939, in Leonard's assessment, and though it was noted by Blom and even lamented by Candé, the only commentator to dismiss Rachmaninoff unequivocally on this basis was Rattalino, in 1972. Leonard was also the first to imply any shortcoming on Rachmaninoff's part in terms of traditional classical criteria, when he wrote that the composer's works for solo piano "lack the depth and subtlety of Chopin's greater works". Thereafter superficiality would prove the most recurring criticism of Rachmaninoff's music, being cited repeatedly during mid-century by commentators of varying national origins and all ideological perspectives. Rachmaninoff's compositional technique also met with universal approbation until Blom suggested otherwise in 1954, followed by Abraham and others. All of the foregoing criticisms of Rachmaninoff's music enjoyed limited circulation and had virtually disappeared from the genre by the early-twenty-first century.

It follows from all this that the historical controversy surrounding Rachmaninoff's music cannot be ascribed to any single ideology or rationale, even one so tempting as modernism. Although the negative assess-

ments of Scholes, Blom, and Abraham appeared during a period of modernism, they were motivated by nationalism and classicism. Just as importantly, many who have maintained open appreciation of modernistic music have not ipso facto disliked Rachmaninoff, including Kolodin, Ewen, Slonimsky, and even Candé. Thus, the coincidence of Rachmaninoff's English reappraisal with the emergence of post-modernism in the West may simply be coincidence plain and simple.

Nor can dismissive attitudes toward Rachmaninoff be ascribed to any single category of commentator as Schonberg's comment about "so-called „serious“ critics" suggests. As shown in chapter three, the current international consensus itself is signified in part by affirmative assessments in scholarly music lexicons. Authoritative commentators have both praised and criticized Rachmaninoff in equally authoritative music lexicons, their opposing assessments sometimes appearing at roughly the same time. Blom's assessment was followed closely by Slonimsky's, and Abraham's assessment appeared in the same year as the one in Gurlitt's *Riemann*, to name but two of many possible examples.

We have noted instances when commentators with opposing views of Rachmaninoff seem to agree on the nature of his music but disagree concerning its value. Indeed, as Glen Carruthers has noted, "what Rachmaninoff's advocates applaud, and what his detractors decry, is frequently one and the same thing". Just as often, however, critical opinions have strayed so far from each other as to suggest a lack of consensus at the level of perception itself—commentators seem sometimes to be describing not the same phenomenon differently but different phenomena altogether. How can Rachmaninoff's music be "Russian to its very core", possess "a clearly defined and attractive personality", and at the same be "inspired by no very strong national or personal feeling"? Do his themes "possess extraordinary melodic beauty" or are they "artificial and gushing tunes"? Do his compositions possess "nobility" or do they "stand occasionally in the vicinity of salon music"? Does the virtuosity of his piano works "explore fully the expressive possibilities of the instrument", or is it "wholly superficial"? Was his orchestration "among the soundest" of the early-twentieth century, or do his symphonic works "seem as though they were basically conceived for the piano"? Was he "a twentieth-century artist

keenly responding to the demands of his time” or “a typical secondary-reactionary character, by nature not very open to new impressions”?

Questions such as these fall outside the scope of this study. We can observe by way of conclusion, however, that assessments of Rachmaninoff's music have generally grown more favorable as his music has grown more familiar. Some of the most pointed assessments, for example those by Blom and De Vries, appear to have been formed without a thorough knowledge of his oeuvre, judging from the incompleteness of their appended work lists. Other negative assessments were clearly derived from Abraham by way of deference. All of the affirmative assessments in recent scholarly music lexicons, by contrast, feature detailed commentary on the whole oeuvre. A significant characteristic of reassessments in music lexicons is the emphasis on Rachmaninoff's traditionally lesser-known works, in particular those for unaccompanied choir and those that he composed after leaving Russia. Performers unquestionably played a crucial role in strengthening and furthering knowledge of his music, but we have observed that scholars have also done so in a way that has directly contributed to the improvement of his critical standing in music lexicons. The favorable assessments in *The New Grove* and the recent *MGG*, by Norris and Flamm respectively, rest on a foundation of scholarly studies to which the former contributed personally and to which the latter referred in overturning certain entrenched criticisms.

We can conclude that the tendency to deduce the historical trajectory of Rachmaninoff's international critical reception from his treatment in *Grove's* has contributed to general misunderstanding. Blom's assessment in the fifth edition of *Grove's* was not typical of lexicographical assessments of the 1950s and 1960s. Nor was it typical of assessments published during the composer's lifetime or during any other period generally. What Blom's assessment typifies is the negative opinion of a very small but very authoritative echelon of mid-century English commentators whose assessments were not typical but *atypical* for the period. Ultimately, it is the atypicality of Blom's assessment that makes it so remarkable: traversing the whole range of conceptual parameters for Rachmaninoff's music, he dismissed it on each point. Similarly, Norris's assessment in *The New Grove* must be seen, like Blom's before it, as part of a regional shift in opinion

that anticipated and perhaps contributed to—but did not culminate—an international one. Nevertheless, this shift of opinion has occurred in music lexicons. No current assessments describe Rachmaninoff’s music as cosmopolitan, old-fashioned, superficial, or technically inept. Quite the opposite. They describe Rachmaninoff as “one of the finest pianists of his day and, as a composer, the last great representative of Russian late romanticism”, “one of the most comprehensive musicians of the twentieth century, equally outstanding as a performer and a creator of music”; these yield a “new image [of Rachmaninoff that] is as levelheaded and multilayered as the composer himself was”.

EXERCISE 1. *Read the extract and answer the questions.*

1. When did Rachmaninoff start to appear in virtually every general music lexicon?
2. How did the entries change from the beginning to the end of his career?
3. What could the critics possibly accuse Rachmaninoff of?
4. What could criticism of Rachmaninoff’s music be possibly induced by?
5. Prove the controversy of the criticism towards Rachmaninoff’s music.
6. What assessments have occurred in the music lexicon now and how do they characterize the composer?

EXERCISE 2. *Render the main content of the article.*

Tegan G. E. Niziol. Progressive Chromatic Processes in Rachmaninoff’s *Étude-Tableau* op. 33, no. 8

(Nota Bene: Canadian Undergraduate Journal of Musicology. 2014. Vol. 7. Issue 1. P. 61–75)¹⁴

In the nineteenth century, many composers expanded the function and implementation of **chromaticism** within the context of tonality. Sergei

¹⁴ URL: <https://ojs.lib.uwo.ca/index.php/notabene/article/view/6594/5318> (дата обращения: 14.02.2024).

Rachmaninoff greatly contributed to this development, as is evident in his *Étude-Tableau* op. 33, no. 8. Rachmaninoff composed the *Études-Tableau* op. 33 in 1911 during his most productive years as a composer. They are considered an example of his mature style of piano composition. As suggested by the title, the *Études-Tableau* are studies, each presenting a specific technical challenge; however, in them Rachmaninoff includes a great **sense of artistry**. In addition, the term “tableau” implies they are studies of tone painting, as exemplified through his use of **colourful sonorities**. In *Rachmaninoff: Life, Works, Recordings*, Max Harrison states that “while exploring a variety of themes, the *Études-Tableau* investigate the transformation of rather specific climates of feeling via **piano textures** and sonorities”. A thorough analysis of this work reveals how expanded **chromatic** processes infuse the music and create a varied palette of tone colours.

The *Étude-Tableau* op. 33, no. 8 in G minor has an essentially **tonal and diatonic construct**, but with highly chromatic sonorities to create **tension** in the music. Rachmaninoff initially stabilizes the home key through **tonic prolongations** and **functional harmonic progressions** before interlacing small chromatic sections to introduce tension. Progressively increasing the occurrence of chromaticism, he culminates in an intense climax before returning to the **tonal solidity** that characterizes the opening. Dissimilar to the stabilizing progressions that tonally anchor the piece, many of Rachmaninoff’s chromatic harmonies cannot be given traditional functional labels. This poses a problem for an analysis of chromaticism within a tonal idiom because, as Dmitri Tymoczko indicates, our tendency is “to depict chromatic harmony as a series of disconnected idioms, often presented in a „one-chord per chapter“ format”. This structure defines numerous music theory texts and often results in a general understanding of chromaticism in terms of **chordal objects** as opposed to function or process. The chromaticism in the *Étude-Tableau* op. 33, no. 8 instead requires a method of analysis that focuses on processes such as **efficient voice leading** and parallel motion, in addition to the harmonic function of individual chords. Evidently, the focus on voice leading in combination with harmonic function creates a balance of tradition and progress that contributes to the expressive sonorities infusing the *Étude-Tableau* op. 33, no. 8.

The first appearance of chromatic harmony functions within a tonal context in order to provide a contrasting colour while maintaining the

initial tonal stability. The melody enters on the second **beat of measure 2** supported by G **minor arpeggios**. After repeating the third of the **chord, the melody descends** in stepwise motion, introducing **flat scale degree 2 (A \flat)**. Rachmaninoff harmonizes this chromatic tone with the familiar Neapolitan chord. While harmonizing the second phrase, Rachmaninoff slightly alters the progression used in the first phrase to incorporate greater chromaticism, and hence initiates the process of undermining the stability of the **home key**. He moves by whole step from a B \flat **major chord** in the second half of measure 7 to a tonicized **Neapolitan chord**. The E \flat dominant seventh chord that directly precedes the Neapolitan chord harmonizes the B \flat at the top of the stepwise descent, replacing the C minor-minor seventh chord used to harmonize the melodic B \flat in the first phrase.

The tonicization of the Neapolitan chord exemplifies a new harmonic trend that gained popularity in the nineteenth century. As Roland Jackson discusses in his article, “The ‘Neapolitan Progression’ in the Nineteenth Century”, Neapolitan chords were traditionally used in cadential patterns; later composers expanded this limited treatment to exploit the tritone root movement between the lowered scale degree 2 and the dominant, as well as the melodic “sighing” figure created by the descent from lowered scale degree 2 to 1 to 7. The *Étude-Tableau* contains these features. The “sighing” motive forms an integral part of the melodic descent in the first and second phrases. At measure 16, it is again present in the top voice. <...>

In addition to the expansion of Neapolitan harmonies, the nineteenth century also witnessed the development of progressions structured around process rather than chordal objects. At measure 9, Rachmaninoff’s chromaticism can be viewed as a product of efficient voice leading, a process in which all voices move by the smallest distance possible to arrive at the next harmony. Dmitri Tymoczko explains that nineteenth-century composers began developing the potential of efficient voice leading as a process-based enhancement or replacement of functional harmonic progressions. Whereas object-based chromatic harmony identifies each chromatic chord through its construction, process-based harmony identifies the transformations and voice leading patterns between adjacent chords within a process. Rachmaninoff uses the concept of process-based harmony in both his functional and chromatic phrases.

Although in the passage examined above Rachmaninoff creates a functional harmonic progression, efficient voice leading guides the movement from one chord to the next. In particular, the chords that support the “sighing” motive maintain common tones and resolve voices by **whole-tone or semitone motion**. In the areas that incorporate greater chromaticism, process-based analysis is often more applicable than functional analysis. For example, in the second half of measure 9, Rachmaninoff introduces a series of descending second inversion triads in the treble that are not related to one another by means of functional harmony. They are constructed diatonically, using the adjacent scale degrees 8, 7, 6, and 5 as the root of each triad, respectively. Although functional labels can identify each chord, the chords progress in a manner that addresses voice leading concerns rather than the function of their labels. Each transformation exclusively involves **semitone, whole tone** or common tone relationships, which is indicative of a process-based progression. These voice-leading relationships distinguish the individual layers that constitute the three voices present in each chord. Each layer contains a stepwise scale pattern that descends in parallel motion with the remaining two layers.

Rachmaninoff uses an **ascending harmonic foundation**, harmonized with non-functional planning towards the climax. This causes a loss of the sense of tonal centre, as an array of tonal colours unfamiliar in the key of G minor are introduced. The efficient voice leading prolongs and increases the tension by delaying resolution. The symmetry in the harmonic foundation and employed planning in this section create tonal ambiguity in the escalation to the climax. The final climax is achieved through a *fortissimo* C# minor chord followed by a rapid C# minor-major seventh arpeggio. <...>

Pamela Wright Wilder states that a thorough analysis of the *Étude-Tableau op. 33* can facilitate “a better comprehension of Rachmaninoff’s piano music as a whole”. This analysis of *Étude-Tableau* no. 8 reveals that Rachmaninoff’s mature harmonic language is largely tonal, with the use of prolonged sections of chromatic harmony to create and build tension. Although he employed chromatic objects, such as Neapolitan and **applied chords**, his chromatic language was also highly process-based, giving great consideration to intervallic structures, efficient voice leading, and parallel

motion. As expressed by Tymoczko, the chromaticism in this work as well as many of the works of other nineteenth-century composers can be viewed as an “orderly phenomenon rather than an unsystematic exercise in compositional rulebreaking”. Focusing on an approach that analyses chromatic harmonies as a series of unconventional chord constructions can cloud and mystify the larger processes at work, such as efficient voice leading. An understanding of these progressive chromatic processes reveals Rachmaninoff’s technical expertise as a tone painter. <...>

EXERCISE 1. *Answer the questions.*

1. How did Rachmaninoff contribute to implementation of chromaticism?
2. Find Russian equivalents to the words and expressions in bold.

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The Art of Rachmaninoff

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