



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

Svetlana Eminova, piano

Thursday, May 11th, 2023

7pm

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

Program

Prelude and Fugue in F Minor, WTC Book 1, BWV 857 J.S Bach (1685-1750)

Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 7 L.van Beethoven (1770-1827)

I. Allegro molto e con brio

II. Largo, con gran espressione

III. Allegro

IV. Rondo: Poco allegretto e grazioso

Intermission

“Forgotten Melodies II”, op.39, No.5: N. Medtner (1880-1951)

Sonata “Tragica” in C minor (Allegro risoluto)

Piano Concerto No.2 in C Minor, Op. 50

1. Toccata. Allegro risoluto

2. Romanza. Andante con moto

3. Divertimento. Allegro risoluto e molto vivace

Second piano – Igor Parshin

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an Artist Diploma in Piano Performance

Svetlana Eminova is a student of Dr. Tamás Ungár .

The use of recording equipment or taking photographs is prohibited.

Please silence all electronic devices including watches, pagers, and phones.

"I repeat what I said to you back in Russia: you are, in my opinion, the greatest composer of our time." – Sergei Rachmaninoff (1921)

Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951) - Russian pianist, composer, and teacher.

Born in 1880, Nikolai Medtner was a few years younger than Rachmaninoff and Scriabin. Medtner was also a professor at the Moscow Conservatory but chose to leave the Soviet Union in 1921. He lived in the United States, then in Paris, and then he lived his last years in London.

The creative heritage of the composer is significant - it contains over sixty opuses. Medtner composed three piano concertos, a piano quintet, three cycles of characteristic pieces "Forgotten Melodies", fourteen piano sonatas, three violin sonatas, about 40 "Fairy tales", around a hundred songs, and a number of small pieces for violin and piano, among others..

Medtner was a student of Safonov, Taneyev, and Arensky. After graduating from the Moscow Conservatory, he participated in the 3rd Rubinstein International Competition. He was a wonderful pianist, and Safonov greatly desired a pianist career for him, but Taneyev saw in him a future composer. Fortunately, we have a large number of the composer's recordings, mostly his own compositions.

The end of the 19th century and first half of the 20th century is considered to be the period of the brilliant Russian piano concerto. Following Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff creates his outstanding piano concertos. So does Medtner. Scriabin likewise composed his concerto and soon after, Prokofiev wrote several wonderful concertos as well.

Medtner composed three piano concertos. In 1926, both Medtner and Rachmaninoff were working in parallel on their concertos: Medtner was composing his second concerto, while Rachmaninoff was working on his fourth concerto. They were good friends, and from their letters it is known that Rachmaninoff gave advices to Medtner about orchestration, since Medtner was not very confident in writing orchestral parts. Rachmaninoff dedicated his fourth concerto to Medtner and Medtner dedicated his second concerto to Rachmaninoff. Rachmaninoff also highly appreciated Medtner, calling him "the most brilliant of all modern musicians" and repeatedly emphasized that the works of this truly great composer are amazingly

fresh and modern. Rachmaninoff tried to promote Medtner's music, including his works in the programs of his concerts in Russia and abroad. Medtner included works by Rachmaninoff in his program. It was an amazing friendship between two geniuses!

Medtner gives genre titles to all of his three movements: "Toccata", "Romance", and "Divertimento". The first movement in C Minor sounds tragic, followed by a romantic and vocal second movement in A-flat Major, and ending with a joyful finale in C Major for the final movement. At the end of the second movement, like in Beethoven's fifth concerto, the intonations of the finale begin to appear, making the line between the two movements almost imperceptible. Medtner includes the leading themes of the previous movements in the reprise of the finale, which makes this movement a recapitulation of the entire concerto. Taneyev always said that "Medtner was born with sonata form".

One of the most important features of Medtner's concertos is the main role of the piano. In the comments to the third concerto, Medtner directly writes about the relationship between the orchestral and piano parts: "an orchestra, like a choir in a tragedy, a piano, like a storyteller."

Sonata Tragica is part of the "Forgotten Melodies" (or Motives) cycle. There are 3 such cycles in total, and this is the 2nd cycle of them. The cycle ends with a sonata and is preceded by the following pieces: "Meditazione", "Romanza", "Primavera", "Canzona Matinata". Medtner always performed "Canzona Matinata" before performing Sonata.

The first cycle, op.38, includes 7 pieces and probably the most famous sonata by Medtner: "Sonata-Reminiscenza". All cycles are in the nature of memories of the revolution of 1917.

The 14 Medtner's piano Sonatas are the peak of the great Russian piano romanticism. Musically, technically and intellectually his works are very difficult.

Many of those sonatas have titles. Some of them are just one movement sonatas, but some are really long, like Sonata "Romantica" op.53 No.1 or Sonata "Minacciosa" op.52 No.2, or the "Night Wind" op. 25 No.2, which is 5 movements sonata and is extremely difficult to perform.