

MUSICAL LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG

Textbook

COMPILED BY L. Y. MILCHAKOVA

Third edition, stereotyped

МУЗЫКАЛЬНАЯ ЖИЗНЬ В САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГЕ

Учебное пособие

СОСТАВИТЕЛЬ — Л. Я. МИЛЬЧАКОВА

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Данное учебное пособие предназначено для студентов I–II курсов всех факультетов консерватории. Пособие ставит своей целью познакомить студентов с разнообразными музыкальными событиями Санкт-Петербурга.

На материале текстов из периодической печати на английском языке, из брошюр конкурсов и фестивалей, а также интернет-сайтов студенты получают навыки чтения, перевода и пересказа, приобретут необходимую профессиональную лексику. В учебных целях некоторые тексты подвергнуты необходимым сокращениям.

Пособие рекомендуется использовать как на занятиях при прохождении соответствующей темы, так и для самостоятельной работы студентов.

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This textbook is intended for students of I–II years of all faculties of the Conservatory. The textbook's aim is to let students know about various musical events in St. Petersburg.

Using the texts from periodicals in English, from booklets of competitions and festivals, and also from Internet sites, students will gain the skills of reading, translating and retelling, and will acquire the necessary vocabulary. Some texts have been reduced in the sake of the studying purposes.

The textbook is recommended for use both in the classroom during the studying of a certain topic, and for the independent work of students.

Рецензенты: Е. П. Прошкина — профессор, кандидат филологических наук кафедры иностранных языков СПбГК;

М. Я. Бич — доцент, кандидат филологических наук кафедры делового иностранного языка СПбГУ
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Обложка
А. Ю. ЛАПШИН

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Dear students, welcome to the world of music in St. Petersburg, which is well known as the capital of culture in Russia. We will talk about music education, famous music theatres, beautiful concert halls, numerous musical festivals and museums dedicated to music in the city. We would like to show that many of the St. Petersburg conservatory graduates working now in the city are leaders of almost all musical events which are held here. You can see the year of their graduation from the conservatory in brackets after their names.

PART 1. MUSICAL EDUCATION

I. READ THE TEXT AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

The City History of Music

Part I

The city's music history begins with its visionary creator, Peter the Great (reign 1682 – 1725). According to early accounts, Peter possessed a fine tenor voice. In 1705 he issued an order to “act comedies in the Russian and German languages and let the musicians play various instruments at these comedies... and let the people of different ranks both among the Russian folk and the foreigners visit them willingly and without any fear?” His friend Duke Menshikov established the first court orchestra and chorus and many concerts were held in the presence of Peter at his palace on the banks of the Neva.

Peter the Great's successors ensured that music was an integral part of court life. Empress Anna's (1730 – 1740) agreement with Jean-Baptiste Lande, the court ballet master, to subsidize payments to young ballet students was the beginning of the Russian ballet school, and many Italian and German musicians and composers came to work in the city. The very first Russian opera, “Cepahlus and Prokris”¹ by Francesco Araja, was performed under the auspices of Empress Anna.

Empress Elizabeth (1741–1762), the daughter of Peter the Great, was as interested in music as she

¹ “Cephalus and Procris” — «Кефал и Прокрида». По мифу, Кефал застрелил свою жену Прокриду на охоте, приняв её за лань.

was in dresses. The opera “La Clemenza di Tito”¹ by Hasse was performed at her coronation. She commissioned more operas from the court composer Araja, and established the Russian theatre with salaried actors. Visitors to St. Petersburg were amazed by the beautiful music heard in churches. One 18th century listener wrote “I came to mass at the church to listen to the glorious Russian music... imagine the whole choir, consisting of twelve basses, thirteen tenors, thirteen altos and fifteen discants, i. e., more than fifty singers in general?” Bells from the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul and the church at the Alexander Nevsky Monastery reverberated throughout the city.

Catherine the Great (1762–1796) brought music to the Winter Palace with the construction of the Hermitage Theatre, described by its architect Giacomo Quarenghi as being “for private, home usage of Her Imperial Majesty and the highest court.” Catherine surrounded herself with the best and brightest, reflected in her love of theatre, music and the arts. Opera, especially comic opera, became a mainstay of the Smolny Institute, which Catherine created in 1764 for the education of young girls. In 1792, the St. Petersburg Music Club was formed, where the rules stated “Music is the main object of our society” that members were allowed to bring their wives once a week. At least six operas were composed to libretti by the Empress. Music was everywhere in the city. Duke Nikolai Lvov compiled a collection of Russian folk songs and the noble houses collected instruments and scores. Italian, French, Czech and German musicians often came to perform for the empress and at new music venues. Catherine’s ambassador to Vienna, Count Andrei Razumovsky, had a passion for music and wrote to Catherine

¹ “La Clemenza di Tito” — «Милосердие Тита»

about Mozart, asking if she wished to engage him. At the end of her life, opera in St. Petersburg was considered by contemporary journals to be “the most glorious”.

I. Answer the questions:

1. What was the first Peter the Great's order on music?
2. Who established the first court orchestra and chorus?
3. Did Peter the First have good voice himself?
4. What were the Empress Anna's interests in music?
5. What was the first Russian opera by Araja performed under the auspices of Empress Anna?
6. What composition was performed at Empress Elizabeth's coronation?
7. Who was the court composer during the reign of Empress Elizabeth?
8. What impressed one 18th century listener while in Russia?
9. Whose initiative was it to build a theatre in the Winter Palace?
10. How many operas were composed to libretti by Catherine the Great?
11. What collection did Duke Nikolai Lvov compile?
12. Who was Catherine the Great's music adviser in Europe?

II. Tell what these people did to develop music in St. Petersburg:

Peter the Great, Menshikov, Jean-Baptiste Lande, Francesco Araja, Empress Elizabeth, Catherine the Great, Duke Nikolai Lvov, ambassador to Vienna Andrei Razumovsky.

III. FIND THE ITALIAN WORDS IN THE TEXT

Read the text and answer the questions:

The City History of Music Part II

The reign of Alexander I's brother Nicholas I (1825–1855) saw the burgeoning of Russian ballet and works by Mikhail Glinka (1804–1857). Glinka's most famous operas "A Life for the Tsar," premiered in 1836 and his second opera "Ruslan and Ludmila", set to a tale by Pushkin, were performed in St. Petersburg in 1842. It was the first time Russians heard operas with Russian themes and folk music motifs. Nicholas I also established the Mikhailovsky Theatre in 1833.

Alexander II (1855–1881) brought reform to Russia by liberating the serfs. Keenly interested in education, it was under his direction that the St. Petersburg Conservatory was founded in 1862. The Mariinsky Theatre, named for the Alexander's wife Marie, opened in October 1860s with Glinka's "A Life for the Tsar". Alexander commissioned Giuseppe Verdi to write «La Forza del Destino»¹ which had its premiere in 1862.

The 19th century saw a number of important European musicians make the arduous journey to St. Petersburg. In addition to Verdi, Clara and Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt, Hector Berlioz (who visited twice), and Richard Wagner all played or conducted in the city's venues to enthusiastic listeners.

During this time St. Petersburg became the epicenter of Russian music, in large part thanks to Mily Balakirev (1837–1910). Balakirev believed in creating music with a distinct Russian character, recognizably different from what was heard in concerts of the day. He

¹ "La Forza Del Destino" — «Сила Судьбы».

banded together with a group of young musicians who shared his love of all things Russian and together they formed "The Big Five." Rimsky Korsakov, Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Alexander Borodin and of course, Balakirev, were the super talents in this group.

1859 saw the formation of a new kind of musical organization, the Russian Musical Society. Founded by Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, the aunt of Alexander II, and Anton Rubenstein, the society not only presented concerts but provided music education. Born in Germany, the Grand Duchess was an advocate of the arts in her adopted city St. Petersburg. She was keenly interested in education and arranged for students to have classes in her home, the Mikhailovsky Palace, which later became the Russian Museum. The Russian Musical Society was the forerunner of the St Petersburg Conservatory. That year, Mily Balakirev conceived the Free School of Music. The school emphasized choral works and also offered free lessons for men and women.

The reign of Alexander III (1881–1894) saw music continue to flourish. Alexander was a keen horn player, emulating the tradition of Russian horn playing begun in St. Petersburg in the 18th century. His patronage of the arts led to the formation of the Russian Museum in the Mikhailovsky Palace. He was a constant visitor to the Mariinsky, where he enjoyed opera and ballet, particularly by his favorite composer Tchaikovsky. According to Count Sheremetev (whose palace would eventually house the Museum of Musical Instruments), Alexander "basically loved music, without any preconceived ideas ... he always knew of any new works." The tsar also formed the first "Court Musical Chorus," which in time grew to be the great St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Alexander III's son Nicholas II (1894–1918) took over the throne after his father's sudden death in 1894. Though the reign of Nicholas II was fraught with mass unrest, war and little peace, it was during his reign that music and the arts took an amazing journey to a new world. With the advent of such luminaries as impresario Sergei Diaghilev, Igor Stravinsky, Fyodor Chaliapin, Sergei Rachmaninov, Aleksandr Scriabin, and Sergei Prokofiev, ballet and music were never the same again. A galaxy of foreign stars including Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, Fritz Kreisler, Pablo Casals and Arnold Schoenberg came to the city and performed in the city's glittering halls.

Answer the questions:

1. What very important events took place during the reign of Alexander the First?
2. What two interesting and important events happened in 1962 in the city?
3. Who was the Mariinsky Theatre named after?
4. Which of the great musicians visited St. Petersburg during the 19-th century?
5. What were the basic ideas of Mily Balakirev and the members of the "The Big Five"?
6. Which tsar was keen on horn music and performed himself and was the founder of the first "Court Musical Chorus"?
7. It was during whose reign that music and the arts took an amazing journey to a new world?

READ THE TEXT AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

The City History of Music Part III

The 1930s were the time of the Five Year Plans that saw the importation of American jazz, supposedly to make the worker happy. But proletarian themes

infused into jazz diluted it and it soon lost its allure. The 1930s witnessed the rise of Dmitri Shostakovich, a son of St. Petersburg to the core. His studies at the Leningrad Conservatory led him to become perhaps along with Sergei Prokofiev the Soviet Union's most famous composer. His love of the theatre, film and contemporary music influenced his work. His opera, "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk," premiered in Leningrad in 1934 and ran for over two years. In 1932 the Union of Leningrad composers was opened. Among the chairmen were: Isaak Dunaevsky, Vladimir Scherbachev, Mikhail Chulaki, Vasily Solovyev-Sedoi, and Andrei Petrov.

World War II brought a relaxation of government-imposed controls. Some of the most beautiful Russian songs were written during World War II. Although music certainly reflected patriotism, composers such as Prokofiev and Shostakovich somehow wrote music that eluded the prescribed controls. Leningrad was under siege and its two major orchestras, the Philharmonic and the Kirov (the former Mariinsky), were evacuated, leaving the Leningrad Radio Orchestra to perform when it was able despite the horrific conditions in the city. It was this orchestra that performed the world premiere of the Shostakovich's 7-th symphony. The company of the Musical Comedy Theatre performed throughout the entire siege, giving a miraculous gift to the city during the 900-day ordeal. When a performer didn't show up, it almost always meant they had died. Many musicians died during the siege, including several professors at the conservatory.

With the death of Stalin in 1953, the chokehold that had been placed on music and arts began to loosen. The Leningrad Philharmonic toured abroad as did the famed Kirov Ballet. In 1956 the Boston Symphony was the first United States orchestra to play in Leningrad,

shortly followed by the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. One of Canada's greatest gifts to the world, Glenn Gould, then a young man in his twenties, visited Moscow and Leningrad for two weeks in May 1957 and the Conservatory, where he lectured on such topics as Arnold Schoenberg and his 12-tone system.

Life was not easy but Leningraders never lost the chance going to a concert. The first jazz club, "Kvadrat", opened in 1956 and jazz quickly became a favorite with students. Recordings were hard to come by, and a technique was developed to put recordings on used X-ray film. "Jazz on bones" as it became known, quickly became an important part of the underground jazz scene. Rock and jazz grew in tandem and in the 1970s Boris Grebenshchikov founded his band "Aquarium." 1989 gave Leningrad another music venue- the Jazz Philharmonic due to world famous jazzman D. Goloschokin.

And visitors to the city were enchanted and surprised by the richness of music available to them. Entrepreneurs launched shows such as "Feel Yourself Russian," which were devoted to Russian folk music. Churches were open for worship and the sounds of choirs and bells were heard again after years of silence. The Kirov returned to its historic name Mariinsky and under the leadership of Valery Gergiev launched the "Stars of White Nights Festival." This was quickly followed by a number of classical, contemporary and jazz festivals. Many hotels featured a harpist, violinist or pianist, often students of the Conservatory, as a musical treat throughout the day. Russian composer Georgy Sviridov (1915-1998) became well known to western music lovers with compositions such as

“Petersburg: A Vocal Poem,” which tells the story of the “Silver Age” of the city through the words of poet Alexander Blok. Sviridov worked over 20 years on “Petersburg” and in 1995 Russian baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky premiered the work. Composers such as V. Gavrilin, V. Uspensky, A. Titchenko, A. Radvilovich, I. Rogalyov, S. Slonimsky, and G. Korchmar worked and work now in the city.

St. Petersburg continues to give the world and its residents the gift of music. Although classical music is the mainstay, the city is rich with contemporary, jazz, folk, and rock music. Twenty-first century St. Petersburg continues to draw performers of international renown. Thomas Hampson, the famous American baritone, says “St. Petersburg is one of the most enchanting, musical cities in the world. The St. Petersburg audience is world-renown for its knowledge and enthusiasm. It is always an honor to be invited to make music in this city.”

Answer the questions:

1. Was jazz popular in the 1930-s?
2. Who were among the most popular composers in the 1930-s?
3. Wich composers were among the chairmen of the Leningrad Union of composers?
4. What music groups worked in the city during the World War II?
5. What important changes happened in the 1950-s?
6. How can you prove that jazz appeared again in the city of 1960-s?
7. Which composers worked and work now in the city?
8. What music fests are held in the city now?