

VIITH FESTIVAL «S. RAHMANINOV AND UKRAINIAN CULTURE»

The International Festival, dedicated to the prominent Musician, as the organizers see it, is to witness the Slavonic cultures' friendship, to consolidate Kharkov's status as one of the biggest Ukrainian cultural centers and to help liven the process of Ukrainian culture's integration into the world's cultural space.

The International Festival «S. Rahmaninov and Ukrainian Culture» was founded in Kharkov, Ukraine, in 1998, which UNESCO announced the year of Sergey Rahmaninov in honor of the 125th anniversary of the brilliant composer, pianist and conductor's birthday.

The festival was organized by the Kharkov State Arts Institute named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky, the Charity Fund in Honor of the Alchevskys, the Center for Modern Art «New Stage».

The name of the Great Master, who won glory and recognition all over the world, is closely connected with the Slobozhanshtchina and with Ukraine in general and Kharkov in particular. Mr. Rahmaninov went on tours to Kiev, Odessa, Poltava, and Yekaterinoslav (now — Dniepropetrovsk), was one of the organizers of Kiev Conservatoire. In Lebedin, the Kharkov gubernia (now — the Scummy region), during the summer holidays of 1893 S. Rahmaninov composed the symphony poem «The Cliff», a fantasy for two pianos, the ecclesiastical choir concerto «A Prayer to the Holy Virgin», two pieces for a violin and a piano, six romances (two were composed to the poems by Taras Shevchenko), etc. During the period of 1892-1917, till his emigration from Russia, Rahmaninov visited Kharkov 13 times, giving concerts. He was acquainted to Ilya Slatin, director of the Kharkov department of the Imperial Russian Musical Society, a conductor, teacher, pianist, and also to the famous Kharkov family the Alchevskys, whose members took active part in the city's cultural life, were patrons of art and enlighteners. Everybody, who met Mr. Rahmaninov, spoke highly of him; his concerts in Kharkov received a lot of fascinating reviews in the *Kharkov Gubernskkiye Vedomosti*, the

Yuzhny Kray, and the *Utro*. The capital of the Slobozhanshtchina has dedicated seven International Festivals «S. Rahmaninov and Ukrainian Culture» to the strengthening and development of Russian-Ukrainian cultural relations, paying homage to the wonderful creative and personal relationships between the musician and the Kharkovites, Rahmaninov's love of the genius of the Ukrainian people and the beauty and sublimity of Ukrainian songs.

The festival annually gathers its friends and admirers, putting into practice the idea of spiritual and musical unity. The historic list of its participants contains a number of distinguished names of the music world. One of the first places in it undoubtedly belongs to the remarkable Russian pianist **Andrey Pisarev**. He is the winner of the First International Rahmaninov Pianist Contest (Moscow, Russia), W.A. Mozart International Contest (Salzburg, Austria) and F. Busoni International Contest (Bolzano, Italy) laureate. At the last one he was also awarded the Mozart Prize. Andrey Pisarev, accompanied by Kharkov Youth Symphony Orchestra (conductor — Honored Art Worker **Rashit Nigmatulin**), opened the Festival with the performance of Rahmaninov's Second Concerto, which became a «sound symbol» of the Festival, and finally won the hearts of his Kharkov listeners by a most difficult solo program. That is why the exacting Kharkov audience enjoyed another meeting with the musician during the opening of a second Festival, in the frames of which he presented us with a marvelous execution of Rahmaninov's Third Concerto and *Rhapsody to Paganini's Theme*, accompanied by Bjelgorod Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra (conductor — Alexander Shadrin). According to the Festival's conception, all Rahmaninov's piano concertos were executed more than once. The Second Concerto was also executed by a Kharkovite Sergey Yushkevitch (1999), Queen Elizabeth International Contest (Brussels) laureate and Dmytry Onisctchenko (2000), laureate to a number of international contests.

We would also like to mention the first execution of S. Rahmaninov's Fourth Concerto (in a little known author's wording) by a prominent Russian musician Alexander Gindin. Five days later A. Gindin executed the same concerto in the Carnegie Hall with London Symphony Orchestra (conductor — Vladimir Ashkenasy, the World's Rahmaninov Society President) and gained a stunning success.

The series *All Rahmaninov's Piano Concertos* became a great occasion for music lovers, a creative godsend of the Festival. This unique project was carried out by Alexey Koltakov, Alexey Yemzov, Yevgeny Uhanov and Alexander Gavrilyuk, pupils of Kharkov Specialized Music Boarding Secondary School (KSMBSS), laureates and special prizes holders, under the supervision of a

famous teacher Prof. Victor Makarov, Honored Art Worker. Unfortunately, that was their last performance in the native city before they left for Australia for good.

The Third Festival introduced a wonderful French pianist Sebastian Cornue, laureate to various international contests, who strongly desired to take part in the Festival with a Klavierabend. Mr. Cornue impressed the audience by an impressionist understanding of the works of K. Debussy, M. Ravel and S. Rahmaninov and returned to Paris with piano works of Ukrainian composers, in which he got interested during his stay.

The tradition of solo concerts — A. Pisarev, S. Cornue — was carried on at the Fifth Festival by the following laureates to international contests: a famous Ukrainian pianist Irina Denisenko, who executed works by J.S. Bach, A. Skryabin and S. Rahmaninov, and A. Lyachovitch, the Fifth Gorovitz International Pianist Contest laureate, whose program comprised works by S. Rahmaninov and F. Liszt.

An attractive feature of the Festival's creative aspect is the obligatory invitation to participation of young talents, alongside with masters of art of standing reputation. Every Festival has traditional executions of laureates and prize winners of international contests — pupils of KSMBSS (director — Vitaliy Altuchov, Honored Art Worker of Ukraine, head of the piano department — Svetlana Zaharova, Honored Art Worker of Ukraine).

The Festival values its creative cooperation with the school. That is why the inauguration of the Fifth Festival (2003) was dedicated to the school's 60th anniversary. Former pupils took part in the concert: *Vladimir Nickonov*, laureate to numerous international contests (violoncello, Moscow), executed P. Tchaikovsky's *Variations on the Rococo Theme*, and **Anton Lubchenko** (piano, St.-Petesburg) dedicated to this occasion the first night of his *Second Concerto for a Piano and Orchestra*. By the way, Anton has dedicated his fourth piano concert to the VIth Festival. The anniversary festival was crowned by **Alexey Nabiulin**'s enchanting execution of S. Prokofjev's *Second Concerto for a Piano and Orchestra* (Mr. Nabiulin is the 12th Tchaikovsky Contest laureate). In the VIth Rachmaninov competition Nabiulin brilliantly performed the Second fortepiano with orchestra concert of S. Rachmaninov despite solo concert with the program consisting of the F. Shubert, F. List, S. Rachmaninov works. The Kharkovites will long remember the young KSMBSS virtuosos' concerts, executed in honor of the great musicians: Vladimir and Regina Gorovitz, Mariya Yeshtchenko and others. Let's cite the names of the young musicians: D. Dashutina, H. Levchenko, D. Onishtchenko, E. Gasanov,

A. Lubchenko, A. Korshakov, G. Sotnikova, N. Voyt, V. Gaiduk, M. Golovach, O. Yepaneshnikova, N. Zimina, N. Kalyuzhnaya, A. Naplekova, Y. Olhovskaya, D. Pashthcenko, V. Slativ, O. Fyodorova, O. Feigina, R. Chernichko, A. Genkin, A. Yaroshinsky and others.

The Festival actively cooperates with **Vladimir Kraynev** Young Pianists International Contest and **Vladimir Gorovitz** Young Pianists International Contest. Pianists, the winners of these prestigious music competitions, have produced Klavierabends and were accompanied by the symphony orchestra. In fact, the Third Vladimir Gorovitz Young Pianists International Contest laureates' concert can be justly considered a real adornment of the musical evenings «parade» at the Second Festival (1999). The Third S. Rahmaninov Festival was opened by **Dmitry Onishtchenko**, the Fifth Kraynev Contest laureate, the Fourth Gorovitz Contest winner (2001), the 5th prize holder at Tchaikovsky Contest; and **Igor Chetuyev** (Germany), the Third Kraynev Contest Grand-Pris winner, who brilliantly executed D. Shostakovitch's *First Concerto for a Piano with Orchestra*. **Andrey Yaroshinsky**, laureate to numerous international contests, performed at the Fourth Festival and surprised everyone with his magnificent execution of M. Ravel's *First Concerto for a Piano and Orchestra*.

Another good tradition is carrying out various contests in the frames of the festival: for the best execution of one of Rahmaninov's piano pieces (1998) and for the best execution of a Ukrainian composers' piano miniature (1999), both of which were held on the grounds of the Chair for the Piano as Major at Kharkov State Arts Institute named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky (chairperson — Prof. **Natalya Melnikova**, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine); for the best execution of S. Rahmaninov's vocal pieces (2000) and the competitions «**Alchevsky-debut**» starting 2003 year - annually, held on the grounds of the Chair for Solo Singing (chairperson — Prof. **Lyudmila Zurkan**).

In the frames of S. Rahmaninov Festival (1999), according to the program, the First Ivan Alchevsky Vocalists International Contest (FIAVIC) was realized (the patentee, as well as the author of the idea and conception — **L.N. Trubnikova**). This contest took place in the singer's native city — Kharkov. It returned to the culture of Ukraine a magnificent, but forgotten page of its history and had an enormous international response. The organizers asked outstanding musicians of the present to form the jury: the chairman — **Prof. Maty Palm** (Dean of the Vocal Department at the National Academy of

Music, Estonia), the USSR State Prize laureate, People's artist of Estonia; vice-chairman of the jury — **Prof. Nickolay Ogrenitch** (Ukraine), People's artist of Ukraine, corresponding member of the Academy of Arts of Ukraine, President of Odessa Conservatoire; **Prof. Yury Grigoryev** (Moscow Conservatoire, Russia), Ph.D. in Art Criticism, People's artist of Russia, the Bolshoi Theater soloist and the opera artistic instructor; **Prof. Michay Muntyan** (Moldova), People's artist of the USSR, the State Prize laureate, chairman of the Chair for Solo Singing and Opera Art at the Academy of Arts of Moldova, a soloist at the Moldavsky Opera and Ballet Theatre; **Prof. Bronislav Yatich** (the Academy of Music of Serbia, Yugoslavia) — opera soloist at the Serbian People's Theatre in the town of Novo-Sad; **Prof. Zoya Hristitch** (National Academy of Music) — People's Artist of Ukraine, President of Solomiya Krushelnitzkaya Fund; **Prof. Tamara Veske** (Kharkov State Arts Institute) — Honored Arts Worker, a distinguished teacher; **Prof. Vasilii Navrotsky** — Honored Artist of Ukraine, Odessa Opera Theatre soloist, chairman of the Chair for Opera Singers Preparation at Odessa Conservatoire; **Lyudmila Kolos** — Honored Artist of Byelarus, a soloist at the National Opera Theatre, Assistant Professor at the National Academy of Music; **Prof. Valentina Arkanova** (Kharkov State Arts Institute); **Vladimir Boldyrev** — Honored Artist of Ukraine, Assistant Professor at the Kharkov State Arts Institute.

Vocal workshops, given by the foreign members of the jury, usually gain great success and have become traditional. The second FIAVIC, held in the town of Alchevsk (mayor — **N.E. Kirichenko**), has confirmed the high professional level of its participants. Since then vocal intonation has become dominating in the sounding of Rahmaninov's Festivals.

The Third Festival *S. Rahmaninov and Ukrainian Culture*, which was held under the motto: *The Millenniums' Meeting. The Masterpieces of the XXth century*, - presented vocal art lovers an unforgettable musical evening, dedicated to the memory of People's Artist of Ukraine **Nickolay Ogrenitch. Maty Palm**, chairman of the First FIAVIC, made a marvelous duet with accompanist **Yevgeniya Nikitskaya**, laureate to many international contests. And the winners of the contest **Taras Shtonda, Sergey Magera** and **Alexander Zymbalyuk** in the frames of the same Festival realized a wonderful project «Three Basses». Taras Zymbalyuk's concerts have excited great interest ever since, especially — in Kharkov. Mr. Zymbalyuk is an Honored Artist of Ukraine, soloist of the National Opera and Ballet Theatre (Kiev), soloist of the Bolshoi theatre (Moscow), his accompanist is Svetlana Pronenko, laureate to many international contests.

The laureates and prize holders of the First and Second FIAVICs took part in the international festivals *Kharkov Assemblies, Summer Musical Evenings* (Kiev), *Visiting Ayvasovsky* (Feodosiya), gave numerous concerts in the towns and cities of Ukraine and abroad. Two concerts *The Golden Voices of Ukraine* (a chamber and a symphony ones) became the culmination of these tours and adorned the program of the Fourth Rahmaninov Festival (2001), dedicated the 125th anniversary of **Ivan Alchevsky's** birthday. The holders of these divine voices are: Inga Martynova, Lyliya Grevzova, Anzhelina Shvachka, Oksana Dikaya, Ling Vu Guo, Nickolay Shulyak, Dmitriy Popov, Victor Dudar, Stanislav Trifonov, Dmitriy Ageyev, Ivan Nosik, Valeriy Regrut, Vitaliy Ishutin, Dmitriy Grishin, Zhanna Nimenskaya, Anastasiya Kuzyurenko-Moskvina, Pyotr Morosov, Yelena Podus, Alla Posnyak, Yelena Starikova, etc. Finally, the Fifth Rahmaninov Festival realized another magnificent project — *All Rahmaninov's Romances* (the author of the project is **Yevgeniya Nikitskaya**, chairperson of the Chair for the Accompanist's Skill, laureate to numerous international contests). The three unforgettable concerts gave a chance to hear such brilliant Kharkov singers, Honored Artists of Ukraine, as L. Velichko, Y. Soboleva, V. Boldyryev; laureates to international contests — I. Sahno, L. Sidenko, T. Garmash, O. Gopka, Z. Nimenskaya, P. Bondarenko.

The vocal concerts of the Festival presented the following People's Artists of Ukraine: **Valentina Arkanova, Yelena Romanenko, Irina Yatzenko**; Honored Artists of Ukraine: **Vladimir Boldyryev, Yuriy Daniltchishin**; laureates to international contests: **Natalya Grebenyuk, Tamara Garmash, Igor Sahno**. One of the bright moments of the Festival was the performance of the People's Artist of the USSR **Nickolay Manoylo** and the People's Artist of Russia **Irina Zhurina**, soloist at the Bolshoi Theatre.

According to the Festival's conception, ecclesiastical choir music takes a considerable part of the concerts programs. The brilliant performance of the ancient-Russian company *Sirin* turned out to be a marked phenomenon of the *First Rahmaninov Festival*. The company, supervised by **Andrey Kotov**, was formed in 1989 by a group of young Moscow musicians and is consolidated by the idea of the rebirth of ancient Orthodox singing traditions. Giving its first performance in Ukraine, the company produced ancient-Russian ecclesiastic singings of the XIV-XVIIIth centuries in its program *A Verse about the Radiant Paradise*. The Fourth Festival acquainted Kharkovites with the chamber choir *Kiev* under the supervision of **Nickolay Gombitch**, Honored Arts Worker. The choir dedicated its performance to the 250th anniversary of D. Bortnyansky. This unique company actively plays on tour in European countries and makes

a huge contribution to the process of rebirth and development of the national choir culture.

Many Kharkov artists and companies participated in the *Rahmaninov days*. Among them — the Chamber choir of Kharkov Philharmonic Society, laureate to the First All-Ukrainian N. Leontovitch Choirs Contest (artistic instructor and conductor — **Prof. Vyacheslav Palkin**, People's Artist of Ukraine, laureate to the National Taras Shevchenko Prize of Ukraine). One of the Chamber choir's performances was rending Rahmaninov's cantata *Spring*, which was prepared specially for the Festival (1998) and was performed in Kharkov FOR THE FIRST TIME. A special treaty of the program was *The Choir Olympus* at the Fifth Festival (2003), which suggested, as usual, choir pieces by Ukrainian, Russian and foreign composers, masterpieces of ecclesiastical music.

The following choirs also participated in the Festival: the choir of Svyatopokrovskiy Monastery, laureate to the International Contest of Church Orthodox Music (precentor — **Vladimir Boyko**); the ecclesiastic musical company *Sretenye*, laureate to international festivals and the choir of Tryohsvyatitelskiy temple (artistic instructor — **Igor Sahno**); the children choir *Vesenniye Golosa* (artistic instructor — **Prof. Sergey Prokopov**, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine), laureate to the All-Ukraine N. Leontovitch Choir Contest; the students' choir of the Kharkov State Academy of Culture (artistic instructor and conductor — **Academician Vasily Irha**, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine); the women's choir of the Kharkov Musical College named after B. Lyatoshinsky (artistic instructor and conductor — **Alexey Koshman**, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine). We would like to give special attention to the performance of the students' choir of the Kharkov State Arts Institute named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky, who prepared beyond their curriculum and with inspiration performed Rahmaninov's *Vsenoshtchnoye Bdeniye* at the closing of the Fifth Festival (the choir supervisor — **Andrey Sirotenko**, laureate to an international contest, soloist — **Maxim Paster**, laureate to international contests, soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre (Moscow)).

We would like to express our gratitude to the orchestras and conductors, who constantly cooperate with the Festival: the symphony orchestra of Kharkov Regional Philharmonic Society (conductors: **Yury Yanko**, laureate to an international contest; **Anatoly Kalabuhin**, People's Artist of Ukraine; **Victoria Zhad'ko**; **Igor Palkin**, Honored Artist of Ukraine); Kharkov Youth Symphony Orchestra *Slobozhansky* (conductors: **Gabriel Heine** (USA); **Rashid Nigmatullin**, Honored Artist of Ukraine; **Shaliko Paltadzhyan**, Honored Arts

Worker of Ukraine); the chamber orchestra of KSAI (artistic instructor — **Prof. Suren Kacharyan**, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine); the symphony orchestra of Byelgorod Philharmonic Society (conductor — **Alexander Shadrin**). Each Festival presents its listeners a first night. In the light of the last fact we would like to express our deep gratitude to Herman Makarenko (Kiev), Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine, who greatly assisted organizing a concert, dedicated to the memory of a prominent Ukrainian composer **Vitaly Gubarenko**, People's Artist of Ukraine.

The annual *Rahmaninov Days* are a unique opportunity for new creative meetings and acquaintances, time to putting daring experiments and original ideas into life. For example, the audience heard brilliant concerts of the classes of **Natalya Myelnikova** (piano), Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine, and **Vladimir Dotzenko** (guitar), Honored Artist of Ukraine, who integrally presented their pedagogical skill. The International Scientific Symposium *S. V. Rahmaninov: At the Change of Centuries* (supervisor — **Prof. Lidiya Shubina**, chairperson of the Chair for the History of Music), and the Scientific Conference *The Alchevskys and the Rebirth of Ukrainian National Idea* (supervisor — Ass. Prof. **Larisa Trubnikova**) have become real enjoyment for researchers and admirers of the creative activity of the outstanding Russian composer and the brilliant Ukrainian singer. Starting VIth Rachmaninov festival it was held the musicological master-class for the first time. Master-class was held by professor from Moscow conservatoire, doctor of Arts **Valentina Holopova**. The staging of Rahmaninov's opera *A Thrifty Knight* at the Kharkov Puppet Theatre is marked with originality. The unusual «puppet» variant of the musical performance was carried out under the idea of the Festival's manager by the students of KSAI and under the supervision of **Leonid Popov**, Honored Arts Worker. We are pleased to mention that this performance has more than once received prizes at International Puppet Festivals. The audience also admired the evenings of piano improvisations *Rahmaninov and Jazz*, organized by Sergey Davydov, laureate to International Jazz Contests and Festivals. This fruitful project received a logical sequel at the Fifth Rahmaninov Festival in the concert *Volk. Rahmaninov. Jazz*, which was put into life by **Natalya Drozhzhina**, **Maxim Paster**, **Sergey Davydov**, the *Stozhary* company and the *Try plus Dva* company (supervisor — **Prof. Igor Snyedkov**). Starting with VIth festival an assantial member of jazz concert became the master of Ukrainian stage, People's artist of Ukraine, professor, academic Oleksandr Litvynov.

As an artistic phenomenon of our time, the Festival *S. Rahmaninov and Ukrainian Culture* not only contributes into the appearing of new creative

projects «in its own frames», but itself is a part of greater culture phenomena. For example, in 1999 it became one of the comprising parts of the *Festival of the Festivals* — a magnificent action, devoted to the memory of **A.S. Pushkin**, and it ran under the motto *The soul is in the sacred Lyre*. In 2001 the Fourth Rahmaninov Festival comprised a series of projects of a large-scale culture event, dedicated to the 10th anniversary of Ukraine's Independence — *The Elite of Ukraine: the Year of the Alchevskys*. The event united several anniversaries: the 125th anniversary of **Ivan Alchevsky's** birthday (I. Alchevsky was a world-known singer and glorified Ukrainian artist of singing); the 100th anniversary of his father's death — **Alexey Kirillovitch Alchevsky's** (a famous financier, banker, town builder, mines owner, patron of art, honorary citizen of St.-Petersburg); and the 160th anniversary of the birthday of the singer's mother — **Hristina Danilovna Alchevskaya**, a prominent enlightener and teacher, vice-president to the International Enlightenment League in Paris.

Year by year the Festival sets higher standards for its professional level, bringing strong benefit as a huge workshop. «Broadening its sounding world», the Festival broadens the circle of its admirers and friends, the geography of its participants. Only the First Rahmaninov Festival «brought» onto Kharkov stages more than 100 executors and performers in its 17 concerts. The official recognition of Rahmaninov's festive have become the attention, greetings and gratitude of **V. Ashkenasy** — President of the All-World Rahmaninov Society, and also Russian Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ukraine: **Y.V. Dubinin** (1998), **I.P. Aboimov** (1999-2000) and **V.S. Chernomyrdin** (2001-2003). A special sounding to the Third Festival gave a greeting telegram from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia **I.S. Ivanov** (2000). The organizers of the Festival *S. Rahmaninov and Ukrainian Culture* are especially grateful to the Consulate of Russia in Kharkov, and in particular — to its head Mr.

A.I. Yakovlev; also to the consuls **A.M. Korsun**, **G.F. Safonov**. It is quite interesting that the First Rahmaninov Festival took place at the same time as the opening of the Consulate General of Russia in Kharkov and in a way marked this event.

The Festival's organizers hope that in the new millennium the great S. Rahmaninov's brilliant music, as well as that of other prominent Russian and Ukrainian composers will gather its admirers on the grounds of Kharkov, uniting people by common Good and Humanism. And the deep roots,



connecting the history and culture of Ukraine and Russia, will continue inspiring the creativity of the present generation of these two countries.

Prof. Larisa Nikolayevna Trubnikova

(Kharkov State Arts Institute named after I.P. Kotlyarevsky)

M.A. in Art Criticism, Honored Arts Worker of Ukraine Manager
and Artistic Instructor of the Festival

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Содержание статей посвящено исследованию феномена личности и творчества С.В. Рахманинова, а также некоторым аспектам развития украинской музыкальной культуры.

Книга адресует музыкантам-профессионалам и широкому кругу почитателей музыкального искусства.



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