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### President's Piano Series

Alexander Toradze  
*Chapman University*

Vakhtang Kodanashvili  
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UNIVERSITY | PERFORMING ARTS

# President's Piano Series

Alexander Toradze and Vakhtang Kodanashvili

February 6, 2014  
Grace Fong, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



COLLEGE OF PERFORMING ARTS  
**theatre music dance**

**2014**



# SPRING 2014 calendar highlights

## february

February 6

### **President's Piano Series**

Alexander Toradze and Vakhtang  
Kodanashvili, duo piano concert

February 7

### **University Singers Post-Tour Concert**

Stephen Coker, Conductor  
Carol Neblett, Associate Director

February 8

### **Guest Artists in Recital**

Bruce Sledge, tenor with Cheryl Fielding, pianist

February 13-15, 20-22

### **A Night of Noh Theatre**

Conceived and Directed by Tamiko  
Washington

## march

March 2

### **Guest Artists in Recital - Third Wheel Trio**

Adrienne Geffen, clarinet; Kantenwein Fabiero,  
flute; and Rebecca Rivera, bassoon

March 6

### **President's Piano Series**

Jeffrey Siegel, piano

## april

April 3

### **President's Piano Series**

Christina and Michelle Naughton, piano

April 4

### **University Choir & University Singers in Concert**

Stephen Coker, Conductor

April 5

### **Artist-in-Residence in Recital**

Milena Kitic, mezzo-soprano with Vivian Liu, pianist

April 9-12

### **Concert Intime**

Directed by Alicia Guy

April 10-12, 17-19

### **Machinal by Sophie Treadwell**

Directed by Matthew McCray

April 11

### **Chapman University Wind Symphony**

Christopher Nicholas, Music Director & Conductor

April 25-27

### **Opera Chapman: Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro)**

In collaboration with the Chapman Orchestra  
Peter Atherton, Artistic Director  
Carol Neblett & David Alt, Associate Directors  
Daniel Alfred Wachs, Conductor

## may

May 7-10

### **Spring Dance Concert**

Directed by Nancy Dickson-Lewis and  
Jennifer Backhaus

May 10

### **Sholund Scholarship Concert**

Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music  
Showcase Performance

May 15

### **Beethoven: The Finale**

The Chapman Orchestra partners with The  
Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra  
Daniel Alfred Wachs, Conductor

## CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY *College of Performing Arts*

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## Duo Piano Recital

Alexander Toradze  
and  
Vakhtang Kodanashvili

*The College of Performing Arts would like to thank the sponsors of the  
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**KAWAI**  
THE FUTURE OF THE PIANO

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February 6, 2014 ■ 7:30 P.M.  
Salmon Recital Hall

Program

Piano Sonata No. 6, Op. 82  
Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891-1953)

Vakhtang Kodanashvili

~Intermission~

Concertino for Two Pianos, Op. 94  
Dmitri Shostakovich  
(1906-1975)

Alexander Toradze  
Vakhtang Kodanashvili

Visions Fugitives, Op. 22  
Sergei Prokofiev  
Vakhtang Kodanashvili

Piano Sonata No. 7, Op. 83  
Sergei Prokofiev  
Alexander Toradze

*Following this evening's performance, please join us for a brief discussion and Q & A  
with the artists, Alexander Toradze, Vakhtang Kodanashvili  
and Joseph Horowitz, Pacific Symphony Artistic Advisor.*

Program Notes

INTERPRETING PROKOFIEV

by Joseph Horowitz, Pacific Symphony Artistic Advisor

Russia produced four 20<sup>th</sup> century composer/pianists of genius whose different responses to the Revolution, and to Stalinist terror, shaped their creative odysseys.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, born in 1873, and Igor Stravinsky, born in 1882, fled the Bolsheviks and wound up settling in the United States. Dmitri Shostakovich, born in 1906, never left the Soviet Union.

Sergei Prokofiev, born in 1891, left – and, singularly, in 1936 elected to return to a totalitarian state intent upon imposing patriotism and ideology on its creative artists. Why did he do it? What were the consequences?

Each of the four composers was formidably harmed or empowered -- or both -- by political events. Not so long ago, the case of Stravinsky was simplistically understood in the West as a rescue operation: in Paris, in Los Angeles, he escaped the suffocations suffered by Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Today, we are not so sure. Stravinsky's polemics against Russia, his resort a Francophile aesthetic of impersonality, seem as much a study in the psychology of exile as a considered aesthetic strategy. When Stravinsky returned to Russia in 1962, these psychological defenses collapsed: to himself and to the world he admitted an immutable Russianness. At a Moscow banquet, he rose to say words that, at least for the moment, repudiated decades of denial: "A man has one birthplace, one fatherland, one country – he can have only one country – and the place of his birth is the most important factor in his life. I regret that circumstances separated me from my fatherland, that I did not give birth to my works there and, above all, that I was not there to help the new Soviet Union create its new music." In retrospect, who can say that the "neo-classical" symphonies and concertos of Stravinsky's exile eclipse the overtly "Russian" ballets of his youth?

Rachmaninoff, in the West, became a famous and popular concert pianist: an American trophy. But his creative output plummeted. He remained a permanent stranger in New York City and California. Shostakovich, in Leningrad, suffered world war and domestic terror. His mood blackened, his health declined. He was viciously patronized in Europe and America as a victim of ideological persecution. No one patronizes Shostakovich today.

What was Prokofiev thinking when he repatriated his family to Soviet Russia – foreseeing (as he confided to his émigré friend Vernon Duke) that he would never be permitted to travel abroad with his wife and two children? If there is a conventional wisdom, it is that he had tired of "competing" with Stravinsky's peerless Western reputation. Back in Russia, Soviet aesthetic strictures sweetened and softened Prokofiev's acerbic idiom. He was even

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forced to compose “by committee.” His life was unquestionably shortened by illness and anxiety. And – no less than with Shostakovich – the Soviet pressure-cooker catalyzed his most famous music: the Fifth Symphony, *Romeo and Juliet*, the Seventh Piano Sonata.

A central participant in our ongoing Shostakovich festival is the pianist Alexander Toradze, a torrential and subversive artist whose own Russian/American odyssey is anything but simple. Toradze was born in Tbilisi in 1952. His father was Soviet Georgia’s most eminent composer. He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory. He defected to the United States. Post-glasnost, his close association with Valery Gergiev’s Mariinsky Theatre vigorously renewed his Russian career. When I asked Toradze to assess Prokofiev’s fate, he paused a long minute before answering:

“The impact of politics on Prokofiev and Shostakovich – on their music – is so obvious any idiot can hear the difference. After interference from Stalin, a person changes entirely. OK, maybe you can say that the lesser the genius, the more drastic the change. Take the case of Khatchaturian, whose music is so sugary. His early music, as it turns out, is confrontational: avant-garde, constructivist, futurist, intent on demolishing everything. With Prokofiev and Shostakovich, the transformation is more organic. Even so, early Prokofiev works like *Sarcasms*, early Shostakovich works like the First Piano Sonata and *Aphorisms*, are enfant terrible *explosions*. But do we want a different Prokofiev, a different Shostakovich than what we have? Do we want Prokofiev without the Fifth Symphony and *War and Peace* – or without the Ninth Piano Sonata, which is even now dismissed as a ‘weak’ late work? Yes, you can argue that both Shostakovich and Prokofiev produced their best work under Stalin. This music comprises a rather sizable part of twentieth century music. Unfortunately, that’s the conclusion you have to make.”

Prokofiev’s copious diaries, published in 2002, have recently enhanced understanding of Prokofiev the man – as has Simon Morrison’s massive 2009 study *The People’s Artist: Prokofiev’s Soviet Years*. But the gain in information and nuance has not furnished clarity: in real life, decisions are rarely reducible to lists of reasons. Prokofiev remains an elusive personality, not especially prone to self-reflection or self-disclosure. Addressing the central topic of his book Morrison summarizes:

Though valued by the regime and supported by its institutions, [Prokofiev] suffered correction and censorship, the eventual result being a gradual sapping of his creative energies. He sought to influence Soviet cultural policy, but instead it influenced him. Prokofiev revised and re-revised his late ballets and operas in an effort to see them staged, but, more often than not, his labors went to waste.

Morrison reports that Prokofiev never intended to stay put in the Soviet Union. He was lured back by a government in need of international celebrities. He imagined, Morrison

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writes, “that Moscow would simply replace Paris as the center of his operations.” World War II and Stalinist repression intervened.

Should Prokofiev have known better? Visiting Russia in 1927, he learned of detentions, disappearances, and suicides. And yet following a second such trip two years later, he wrote in his diary: “It’s a shame to part from the USSR. The goal of the trip was obtained: I have certainly, definitely become stronger.” Like Shostakovich (or, for that matter, Aaron Copland in the US), Prokofiev was far from immune to the goal of a simplified and patriotic people’s art. A 1933 diary entry reads: “Several hints that my music is too complicated for the masses gave me the idea that what is needed now is to create for the masses in a manner that allows the music to remain good. My previous melodic pieces and my search for a ‘new simplicity’ have prepared me well for this task.”

The diaries also document that in 1924, while in the West, Prokofiev converted to Christian Science. Its emphasis on positive thought serendipitously resonated with Soviet aesthetics. Prokofiev absorbed a mission to elevate Russian musical culture in service to the Russian people. In wartime works such as the Fifth Symphony and Seventh Piano Sonata, he memorably succeeded.

### Prokofiev, Piano Sonata No. 6 in A, Op. 82

Composed during his evacuation from Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union, Prokofiev’s Sixth Piano Sonata, Op. 82, is grouped with Sonatas No. 7 and 8 as the “War Sonatas.” While not one of his better-known piano works, it was composed during his mature years and reflects Prokofiev’s many quintessential elements of compositional style. Sviatoslav Richter and Emil Gilels first performed the piece along with Sonatas No. 7 and 8 in 1940.

The first movement is notable for its opening motive’s use of parallel major and minor thirds, blurring the mode between A major and A minor. In addition, the tritone between A and D# accompanies much of the main theme, creating strong dissonances that are only exacerbated by frequent modulation. At the same time, Prokofiev is conservative in his form, emulating early Beethoven with his use of the traditional sonata form. The second movement has a march-like quality and includes some radical melodic intervals that are standard in Prokofiev. The third movement is a grand waltz, slow and romantic. The fourth movement refers back in terms of dissonance to the first, but in a 2/4 time signature in rondo form.

### Works Cited

- Davis, Laryssa. “‘Visions Fugitives’: Glimpses into Prokofiev’s Compositional Development From 1915—1917.” January 1, 2011. *ETD collection for University of Nebraska - Lincoln*. Paper AAI3465165. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/dissertations/AAI3465165>

## Program Notes

•Friskin, James and Irwin Freundlich. *Music For The Piano*. 1954, Dover Reissue 2011. Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Web. 7 Jan. 2014. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22402>>.

*Program note by Daniel Fister, Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music, Chapman University, Class of 2014, Bachelor of Arts in Music*

### Shostakovich, Concertino for Two Pianos, Op. 94 (1953)

This piano duet comes from early in an era in Soviet history often referred to as the "Thaw." Artists' works came under less governmental scrutiny, more contact was allowed with the west, and Shostakovich received awards and accolades within the USSR and abroad. The composer seems to have hoped for a more calm, cheerful life and working environment, and his works reflect this shift from rebellion and angst toward accessibility and lightheartedness. The Concertino for Two Pianos shares this mood; it was composed for his teenaged son, Maxim, a talented but still developing pianist, as a piece meant both to educate and to entertain.

Maxim premiered the piece with a fellow young player in 1954, then went on to record the piece with his father in 1956. Although Shostakovich had young performers in mind, the piece is far from simple and – as biographer Laurel Fay notes – "allowances for age were not conspicuous" (Fay 193). Despite an underlying structure based on the traditional sonata form, numerous tempo and mood changes give the piece a changeable personality, shifting from slow and dramatic, to lyrically hymn-like, to breathlessly ebullient (including a sudden sprint to the end).

#### Works Cited

- Fanning, David and Laurel Fay. "Shostakovich, Dmitry." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed January 17, 2014, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/52560pg4>.
- Fay, Laurel. *Shostakovich: A Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Moshevich, Sofia. *Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist*. Canada: McGill-Queens University Press, 2004.

*Program note by Dr. Jessica Sternfeld, musicologist, Assistant Professor and Director of the Bachelor of Arts in Music, Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music, Chapman University*

## Program Notes

### Prokofiev, Visions Fugitives, Op. 22

This set of short piano pieces is titled *Mimolyotnosti* in Prokofiev's native Russian, quoting a line from poet Konstantin Balmont: "*In every fleeting vision I see worlds/Filled with the fickle play of rainbows.*" The work was composed over the years before he emigrated to the United States in 1918 and is classified as part of his "juvenile works." The set was premiered by Prokofiev in Kislovodsk on October 14, 1917. Similar to Robert Schumann's *Carnaval*, Op. 9, each movement reflects a specific character or image.

Most of the twenty movements are slow and highly expressive, with various levels of dissonance and tonality based on the time of composition. Many of the miniatures can be viewed as impressionistic, reminiscent of Debussy. This lens gives the piece a general feeling of wandering and experimentation that one would expect with a young composer. The movements are rarely performed all together and Prokofiev himself rarely performed more than a handful of them, as an encore to a recital.

#### Works Cited

- Davis, Laryssa. "Visions Fugitives': Glimpses into Prokofiev's Compositional Development From 1915—1917." January 1, 2011. *ETD collection for University of Nebraska - Lincoln*. Paper AAI3465165.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/dissertations/AAI3465165>
- Friskin, James and Irwin Freundlich. *Music For The Piano*. 1954, Dover Reissue 2011. Redepenning, Dorothea. "Prokofiev, Sergey." *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press. Web. 7 Jan. 2014. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22402>>.

*Program note by Daniel Fister, Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music, Chapman University, Class of 2014, Bachelor of Arts in Music*

### Prokofiev, Piano Sonata No. 7, Op. 83

The **Seventh Piano Sonata** (1942) is Prokofiev's best known. With the Sixth (1940) and Eighth (1944), it comprises one of three "war" sonatas whose turbulence bears suggestive witness to turbulent times. For Sviatoslav Richter, the sonata's first movement plunges the listener "into the anxiously threatening atmosphere of a world that has lost its balance. . . . In the tremendous struggle that this involves, we find the strength to affirm the irrepressible life-force." Richter's premiere performance of the piece (Moscow, Jan. 18, 1943) was one of the signature Russian musical events of the war years. The applause was torrential. After the hall emptied, Richter repeated the entire work for David Oistrakh and other musicians who craved an encore.

The sonata's signature movement is a toccata-like finale (*precipitato*). Alexander Toradze

# Program Notes

correlates the unusual 7/8 meter of this music to his native Tbilisi -- where the sonata, too, was born (Prokofiev having been evacuated from Moscow). “As with many of his other compositions, Prokofiev absorbed the music of the places he visited. It is still not well known in Russia, for instance, that the finale of the Third Piano Concerto is ‘Japanese.’ Once you realize Prokofiev finished it after having visited Japan, the ‘oriental’ flavor of this music is suddenly very obvious. In the case of the Seventh Sonata, the 7/8 rhythm of the finale owes something to a Georgian male dance in 5/8 time -- the *keborumi*, which is danced in preparation for battle.”

Toradze continues: “Not only was this sonata composed in wartime -- Prokofiev lived the war, he was basically on the run. The first movement, ‘allegro inquieto,’ is unsettling, alarming; the music of *panic*. In the second, lyric theme [espressivo e dolente], I hear a singing female voice. The melody begins with an insistent crying -- a note repeated four times in agony and pain, not willing to give up hope that this disaster will end. This song of a mother or wife is counterpointed with gloomy snake-like movement in the other voices - - which I try to bring out, especially in the recapitulation. The middle section of the movement is where the actual war noises and catastrophes are happening. It’s almost cinematographic -- you can say that about most of Prokofiev’s music.”

If, in Toradze’s view, the first movement’s second theme is personal -- “a lyricism of alarm, agony, hope” -- the lyricism of the second movement “paints a landscape: the beauty and vastness of Russia as such—the enormity of the country, the enormity of the sky. We know how, especially after his return to the Soviet Union, Prokofiev loved to spend time away from Moscow. In the middle of this second movement, however, loud bells begin to toll. And there is a ‘crying’ middle voice: sobbing, like the fool in *Boris Godunov*. This suffering intonation, with repetitive small intervals, is highly typical of Russian music; you hear this also in Rachmaninoff. This sobbing and the surrounding bells are a direct illustration of the tragedies of war.”

*Program note by Joseph Horowitz, Pacific Symphony Artistic Advisor*

# Special Thanks

This recital is part of the 2014 Chapman Global Arts Festival, produced in partnership with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra. Special thanks to the following for making possible this year's Global Arts Festival—*Decoding Shostakovich: Russian Music, Art, Theater, Dance and Film 1930-1953*:

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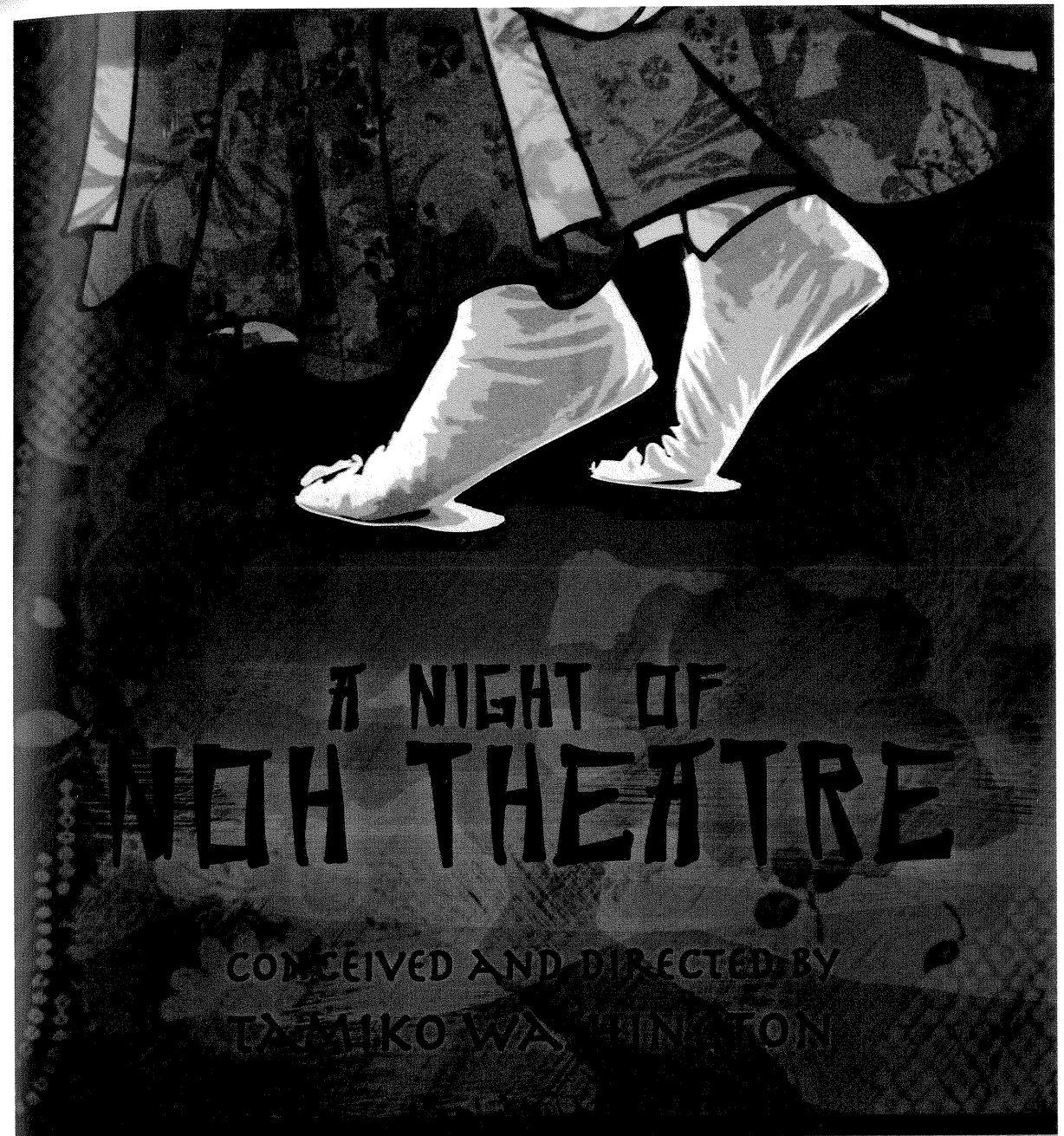
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