

Condemned Cosmopolitanism

This lecture recital features art songs by the late 19th and early 20th century Russian composers who rebuked demands for nationalistic music with their enduring use of cosmopolitan sonorities. Through the arts, politics, and trade, Russia sought to define itself on a global scale after significant European influence and supremacy during the reign of Catherine the Great. As nationalistic sentiments were initially slow to take hold, consequences for these composers and artists varied wildly from harsh critiques in the newspapers during the 1850's to imprisonment, exile, and even death as the 20th century brought chaos and increased patriotism throughout Europe.

The recital begins with a set of songs by Mikhail Glinka, considered to be the father of the Russian Romance and Russian Opera. His structural harmony and dedication to prosody became the foundational cornerstones for what the Mighty Handful and many others promoted as the pinnacle of "Russian Music." What is ironic is that Glinka's three periods of composition correlate with his trips abroad and feature distinguishable elements of music from each excursion. In fact, one may argue that it was Glinka's cosmopolitanism that led to the development of his distinct style, consequently defining musical "Russian-ness" in the years to follow.

In the wake of Glinka's local and international success emerged two opposing factions. Those who sided with Mily Balakirev and his *Moguchaya Kuchka* (Mighty Handful), believed that Russia's rise to musical distinction could only be achieved by rejecting European sonorities and practices. Their influence was significant enough to have historically overshadowed composers like Anton Rubinstein who willingly embraced the music of his European colleagues. He also promoted traditional compositional training through the establishment of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Conservatories where Karl Davydov served as professor of cello.

The recital closes with a set of songs written by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov during a period in which he questioned the practices and aesthetics of his comrades in the *Moguchaya Kuchka*. Rimsky-Korsakov is unique among his colleagues in that he was the youngest and the only to serve as a Professor of Practical Composition at Rubinstein's conservatories and bridged the philosophical gap between the two coalitions.

The purpose of this recital is to share a few unfamiliar songs with a wider audience while exploring the role of nationalism in art song and defining musical "Russian-ness." This recital is the first in a series meant to be given as faculty recitals at Northeastern Illinois University. Subsequent recitals will feature works by Sergei Prokofiev, Boris Prozorovsky, Zinoviy Maiman and others.

Program

I

Barcarolle from *A Farewell to Saint Petersburg*
Tell Me Why
To the Zither from *Due canzonette italiane*

Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857)

II

Night
The Donkey and the Nightingale (op. 64 no. 2)
The Mariner (op. 8 no. 6)

Anton Rubinstein (1829-1894)

III

Op. 26
I Night, love and the moon
II Leave me!
III Stirring curtains

Karl Davydov (1838-1889)

IV

Crashes a wave (op. 46 no. 1)
I came to you (op. 42 no. 2)
Louder lark, sing (op. 43 no. 1)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)

Soprano Katherine Petersen specializes in the performance of 21st century music for voice/saxophone as well as Russian Art Song. Her doctoral dissertation “Russian Repertoire: Developmental Perspectives” investigates the paucity of Russian Song Repertoire in the American voice studio and recital hall. A Chicago based soprano, Katherine performs regularly with Folks Operetta, the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company, Chicago Opera Theater, and Transgressive Theatre-Opera. Roles from her 2018/2019 season include Bessie Throckmorton (Merrie England), Brigitta (Iolanta), Contessa (Marriage of Figaro), Counsel to the Plaintiff (Trial by Jury), Lady of the Lake (Masque at Kenilworth), and Sylva Varescu (Csardas Princess). Other favorite roles include Musetta (La bohème), Valencienne (Merry Widow), Francesca (Francesca di Rimini-Rachmaninoff), and Micaëla (Carmen). Katherine is the Director of Auditions for the Chicago Chapter of NATS and Assistant Professor of Voice at Northeastern Illinois University where she teaches Applied Voice, Diction, Voice Pedagogy, and Song Literature.