TWELVE RACHMANINOFF SONGS AS TRANSCRIBED FOR PIANO
BY EARL WILD: AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY

D.M.A. Document

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Musical Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

by

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University

1989

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Co-Advisers
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Sincere appreciation is expressed to my piano instructor, Mr. Earl Wild, for his valuable information concerning his biography, career, manuscripts of the twelve Rachmaninoff song transcriptions and his precious time for the interview.

To my husband, Charng-Yeong Ku, I express my special note of thanks for his constant support and help for not only teaching me the use of the computer for typing, but also for bearing extra responsibilities of the family, which enabled me to accomplish this document.
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INTRODUCTION

It has been three years since Earl Wild joined the faculty as Artist-in-Residence at The Ohio State University. The writer, being fortunate to have studied piano with him for these years, was very much inspired by his musical approach and his mastery of keyboard technique.

Oftentimes, Mr. Wild mentioned Rachmaninoff’s compositions and musicianship during the writer’s lessons, which aroused the writer’s interest in exploring more about the relationships between Rachmaninoff and Mr. Wild. His twelve Rachmaninoff song transcriptions provided the ideal vehicles for the writer to explore aspects of Rachmaninoff’s and Mr. Wild’s musical backgrounds, transcription procedures, and keyboard techniques. Both Rachmaninoff’s and Mr. Wild’s biographies will be briefly mentioned. In addition, Rachmaninoff’s songs background and Mr. Wild’s procedure of arranging them will be explored. Furthermore, the writer will analyze the twelve song transcriptions with detailed discussions of musical elements, such as key, form, melody, harmony, dynamics and rhythm. For the execution of his song transcriptions, Mr.
Wild's application of Rachmaninoff's compositional technique and piano skills along with Mr. Wild's own experience will be discussed in the final chapter.
CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY

Earl Wild, an internationally known pianist, was born in 1915 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was a child prodigy. He started playing the piano at the age of three and began his formal piano study at four. At that time he could play by ear and had already demonstrated his fine ability of improvisation. He later found out that this is a rare gift and that not every pianist has it.

At the age of six, Mr. Wild went to the Pittsburgh Musical Institute and studied with Alice Walker. The Institute had an artistic program in conjunction with the Carnegie Institute of Technology Music Department, now Carnegie-Mellon. Exceptionally talented students could study privately with the major teachers at Carnegie.¹

Mr. Wild was accepted by Selmar Jansen (student of Xaver Scharwenka and Eugene d’Albert), head of the Piano Department, and studied with him for five years, from 1928 to 1933. In Jansen’s personal library, there were many nineteenth century rarely-played compositions and

transcriptions, such as Balakirev's transcription of Glinka's "A Life for the Tsar". When interviewed in February 1986, Mr. Wild remarked that those compositions and transcriptions would later serve as an introduction for him to the recording industry. More recently, these works have been labeled as "Romantic Revival Music".\(^2\)

Mr. Wild began his professional career when he was about fifteen years old. From 1930 to 1935, he worked intermittently at KDKA radio in Pittsburgh (the first radio station in the world), and he was also engaged by Otto Klemperer as the staff pianist with the Pittsburgh Symphony from 1932 to 1936. After winning the Pittsburgh Arts Society prize for a two-page song that he had written, he went to New York in 1934 to study with the great Dutch pianist Egon Petri (student of Ferruccio Busoni and Teresa Carreño) and intermittently with the French pianist Paul Doguereau (a student of Maurice Ravel). Occasionally, Mr. Wild also studied with Madame Barrere (a good pianist and teacher who studied with Felix Blumenfeld in Russia) and Volga Cossack (a pupil of Isidore Philipp).

In the following seven years from 1937 to 1944, he joined the music staff of the NBC national radio network and worked as an accompanist and chamber musician and as both a pianist and celeste player in the NBC Symphony

\(^2\) Ibid., p.7.
under Arturo Toscanini. Later, Mr. Wild recalled the experience of working with Toscanini:

"I am amused to see so many large books about Toscanini by people who used to lie on the floor in the balcony during rehearsals because they weren't allowed in.... He was a difficult person, but I adored him, and on the days when he was on, he made the greatest music I've ever heard (only at the rehearsal though). The performances were never quite like the rehearsals. In rehearsal, he would really let himself go, he could totally abandon himself to the music, and the results would be colossal. In the concerts, though, he was always the essence of elegance." 3

In 1939, Mr. Wild gave the first piano recital on television, and three years later in 1942, he appeared as soloist with Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony orchestra; the work performed for the event was Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue. According to Mr. Wild, this was the Italian conductor's selection. Toscanini chose Gershwin's music because he felt that the Rhapsody in Blue would be the one piece that remained after the others were gone, because of its extreme energy. According to Mr. Wild, "He was the only conductor who really understood the almost Puerto Rican rhythms that run through it." 4 Of Earl Wild, Toscanini said that, "... beneath the quips and the sentimental piano playing and the charming anecdotes, there is within Wild an artist with uncompromising

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4. Ibid.
principles shaped by a lofty role model."⁵ Toscanini apparently held Mr. Wild's talent in high esteem. Howard Reich, writer, has said, "Here is a pianist whose remarkable gifts - perfect pitch, enormous hands, natural stage charisma and a fantastic ability to read music at sight - enable him to work under Otto Klemperer and Arturo Toscanini."⁶

During World War II, from 1942 to 1944, Mr. Wild was a member of the Official U.S. Navy Band, based in Washington D.C., as a flutist. He once recalled, "I played flute in the U.S. Navy Band. On one side of me was (violin soloist) Oscar Shumsky, who was playing the clarinet, and on the other side was (Beaux Arts Trio cellist) Bernard Greenhouse, who played oboe. I used to drive Bernie crazy by whispering comments through the flute - which you can do with all the keys down. He'd be shaking with laughter, and the conductor would invariably scream at him."⁷

At the same time, while in Washington, Mr. Wild was playing his own instrument, the piano, extensively with the Navy Orchestra. He played over 21 piano concertos with


⁶. Ibid.

the Navy Symphony Orchestra and many command performances for President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House. He also travelled extensively with Mrs. Roosevelt, playing the National Anthem (the "Star-Spangled Banner") as a prelude to her speeches.

Mr. Wild also was honored with invitations to perform personally for Presidents Hoover, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson. One of his interesting memories is his performance of Gershwin’s "Rhapsody in Blue" with the National Symphony Orchestra at President John F. Kennedy’s inauguration in 1961.

Mr. Wild has given many noteworthy performances and premieres throughout his career. In addition to giving the first piano recital on U.S. television in 1939 and performing Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue with Arturo Toscanini in 1942, Mr. Wild gave some other important premieres: 1944, American premiere, Shostakovich Piano Trio in e minor; 1949, world premiere and later the American premiere, Paul Creston’s Piano Concerto; 1950, World premiere, Martinu’s Cello Sonata No.2 (George Ricci, Cello); 1970, world premiere, Marvin David Levy’s Piano Concerto No.1 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, George Solti conducting (the work was written for Mr. Wild).

After WWII, Mr. Wild started to work for the ABC-TV and Radio Network as pianist, conductor, composer and arranger throughout the 1950s and 1960s. During these two
decades, he conducted and performed many of his own compositions. For example, a large-scale oratorio for Easter "Revelations," was commissioned by ABC and televised in 1962 and 1964 with Earl Wild conducting. In addition, he composed and performed incidental music for television documentaries. In the early 1950s, Mr. Wild accompanied singers' auditions at the Metropolitan Opera House for ABC's "Met Auditions of the Air". Still with NBC from 1954 to 1957, he worked for Sid Caesar on NBC's "Caesar Hour", writing some of Sid Caesar's musical parodies. Critic Lon Tuck has mentioned that Earl Wild is certainly the world's only pianist to have composed for Sid Caesar, toured with Eleanor Roosevelt and been ranked in dexterity with Vladimir Horowitz. In 1960, Mr. Wild conducted G. Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" at Santa Fe Opera on a double bill with Stravinsky conducting his operatrorio "Oedipus".

During thirty years of performing, Mr. Wild has been associated with many schools of music. For example, he was at Eastman in 1964, and at the Pennsylvania State University from 1965 to 1968. One decade later, during 1976-77, Mr. Wild was music director of the Palm Springs (California) Desert Museum where he composed a choral work, "The Turquoise Horse", commissioned for the official

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opening and dedication ceremonies of the Palm Springs Desert Museum’s Annenbergy Theatre. From 1978-81, Mr. Wild became Artistic Director of the Wolftrap Chamber Group. Then he went to the Manhattan School of Music as a music faculty member from 1982 to 1983. After 1983, Mr. Wild travelled extensively, especially throughout the Asian countries of China, Korea and Japan, to perform and give master classes in their Music Conservatories. He taught at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, China in 1983; at the Sun Wha School in Seoul, Korea in 1983, 1985 and 1987; and at the Toho Conservatory of Music in Tokyo, Japan in 1985. In addition, Mr. Wild taught at the Juilliard School of Music for ten years from 1976 to 1986. In 1986, he became a visiting Artist-in-Residence at The Ohio State University in Columbus.

The most distinctive aspect of Mr. Wild’s piano performance is his irresistible calm and quiet at the piano. In the Minnesota Monthly, Mr. Wild recalled:

"As for facial expressions, I can remember that in my youth you just didn’t make them. Rachmaninoff was one of our gods, and he sat expressionless at the piano. We were raised to believe that if you made a face or displayed emotions, it was considered to be extremely vulgar and a sign of bad training. An excess of physical display while performing is usually an offspring of the Hollywood version of the great pianist."  

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At the Harrogate Festival held in Royal Hall, England on August, 1986, Mr. Wild gave a Liszt recital. Michael Kennedy in the Daily Telegraph wrote about him: "A virtuoso with less flamboyance it would be hard to find. He puts only his hand to work, the rest of him is still and calm. But the range of his playing, his command of color, his outstandingly fine control of dynamics, and the agility and eveness of his touch are those of a musician of the very first rank. This was not fire and brimstone Liszt, but Liszt the great singer of his instrument." 10

Mr. Wild is one of the most frequently recorded pianist of the century. His repertoire is enormous: he has recorded more than 31 concertos, 14 chamber works, and 275 solo piano pieces. In an interview after a recital at the City Hall Concert Hall, in Hong Kong, Mr. Wild told Vernon Ram two things:

"One, you can rely on the pieces that you played when you were very young that just fall out and you don’t have to work too hard. Or you can learn new things every year like I do. I have recorded 30 piano concertos. I think Horowitz has recorded only five[a very small repertoire. I have recorded almost 275 piano pieces. Many of them are out of print, but I keep working, trying to learn new things all the time. When I say new things, I mean pieces I haven’t played. Because I would hate the thought of ever getting bored playing the same pieces over and over again. So I keep

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changing my repertoire as often as I can."11

Mr. Wild has recorded for RCA, EMI, CBS/Columbia, Audiofon, Nonesuch, Vanguard, Stradavari, Heliodor, Odyssey, Choral, Chandors, Varsity, Whitehall, Fonitcetra, Quintessence, dell’Arte, Reader’s Digest, Chesky and Etcetera Records. He is also a Baldwin artist. In 1986, for the 100th anniversary of the death of Liszt, Mr. Wild performed three gigantic Liszt recitals (i.e. The Poet, The Transcriber, The Virtuoso), first at New York’s Carnegie Hall, and then in Chicago, London, Boston, Washington D.C. and other cities.

His control of technique, tone color, rhythms, dynamics, speed, octave passages and abundant imagination received superior reviews in all of those cities.

"Poet, abbé, revolutionary, preimpressionist, virtuoso, lover, hero- Mr. Wild donned each cloak with a totality of resource and identification."

--Chicago Tribune

"Wild has a technique that is simply without limitations. His control of dynamics and articulations, his Dionysian command of octave passages, his fluency and speed- all are marvels."

--Boston Globe

"There is no substitute for skill and experience, both of which Mr. Wild has in ample measure. He played as one born to play Liszt. It was the playing of a supreme virtuoso, a colorist, a romanticist."

--The New York Times

"The range of tone, the textual variety, the control of rhythms and the sensitivity of the design confirmed Wild as a natural inheritor of the Liszt tradition. And an outstanding one."
--Yorkshire Post

"The cheers rang to the rafters as Earl Wild concluded what was surely one of the most stunning piano recitals in the entire history of the Wigmore Hall."

--London Daily Telegraph

"Earl Wild comes close to crowning himself the absolute monarch among modern virtuosi. His playing is positively phenomenal."
--American Record Guide

"Among the numerous pianists who have been celebrating the Liszt heritage, probably none has been so comprehensive in his approach as Earl Wild, one of the chief Liszt exponents around."
--The Wall Street Journal

Mr. Wild has also recorded these three programs. Etcetera Records has released them in three volumes of compact discs under the titles of "Liszt the Virtuoso", including the Sonata, a Polonaise, some Transcendental Etudes, the Etudes de Concert, and Hungarian Rhapsodies; "Liszt the Poet", a program with Funerailles, Jeux d’eau à la Villa d’Este, 3 Sonetto del Petrarcas, Mephisto Waltz and some other poetic pieces; "Liszt the Transcriber", two
of his operatic paraphrases (Verdi’s Rigoletto and Wagner’s Flying Dutchman), and some arrangements of works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann and Paganini. These compact discs won the Liszt Medal from the People’s Republic of Hungary in 1986.

The documentary entitled "Wild about Liszt," filmed at the Marques of Londonderry’s estate, "Wynyard", in the north of England, was given the British Petroleum Award for best musical documentary of 1986. In 1988, Mr. Wild went to Australia for fourteen concerts sponsored by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation in conjunction with its Australian Bicentennial Celebration.

Over the years, Mr. Wild has devoted a great deal of time to transcriptions. He has played not only the transcriptions of other composers, such as Liszt, Rachmaninoff, J. Strauss, but he has also contributed his own transcriptions. Mr. Wild has a collection of his own transcriptions, about 34 of them altogether, that he has played in concert and issued on disc over the last few decades. He arranged some of Gershwin’s songs for solo piano, and put together a suite entitled "A Grand Fantasy On Airs From Porgy and Bess". Also, there is a setting of a "Pas de Quatre" from Tchaikovsky’s Swan Lake.

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12. Earl Wild’s recital program notes, Sunday, April 2, 1989, at Weigel Auditorium at the Ohio State University.

most prominent transcriptions that Mr. Wild has arranged are his latest twelve Rachmaninoff song transcriptions (in 1981) and he made a recording of these transcriptions in 1982. In an interview, Mr. Wild said firmly:

"I love to play transcriptions because they give the pianist so much freedom. I can make my own interpretations. It's not like a Beethoven sonata, where there is a sort of rating system in which one cannot move outside of certain concepts. The pleasure in playing transcriptions comes from the projection of what they are."

Earl Wild has an established reputation as a pianist, composer, conductor, transcriber, teacher, and editor as well. Recently, he edited two volumes of performing editions of Liszt's piano music for Schirmer publications. He is also working on his autobiography and keeps concertizing. He now limits his performance to around forty concerts annually. Although Mr. Wild is now 74 years of age, he is still working hard and is fully devoted to music. As he himself says: "The music finally is what keeps you going. The ones who are inspired are the ones who make it."

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CHAPTER II

RACHMANINOFF’S SONGS

A. Rachmaninoff

Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian composer, pianist and conductor, was born in Semyonovo, Starorussky, on April 1, 1873.

He began piano lessons at a very early age with his mother, and then with Anna Ornatskaya. In 1882, he entered the St. Petersburg (now Leningrad) Conservatory to study with Gustav Kross. Then he went to the Moscow Conservatory to study with Nikolay Zverev and later with Siloti in 1885. In the following year, in 1886, he began to compose and study counterpoint with Taneyev, and to study harmony and composition with Arensky.

According to the musicologist Geoffrey Norris, Rachmaninoff might have developed a quite different musical character if he had remained in St. Petersburg, for he could hardly have failed to come under the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov.\(^1\) While Rachmaninoff was studying with

Zverev, his increasing interest in composition was not well received by Zverev, and once Zverev even ejected him from his house. He decided to stay in Moscow, but later he reflected to Alfred Swan that he was very sorry that he never became one of Rimsky-Korsakov's pupils.  

Rachmaninoff's own musical style was formed in Moscow, especially from Tchaikovsky and his teachers, Arensky and Taneyev. Rachmaninoff later wrote that Taneyev taught him "how to live, how to think, how to work, even how to speak, for he spoke in a particularly Taneyev way: concisely, clearly, and to the point." From Norris's view point, it was probably Arensky, as his actual composition teacher, who had the greater impact on what he wrote during his student years. Rachmaninoff's Symphonic poem "Knyaz' Rostislav" (Prince Rostislav, 1891), which he wrote before his graduation, contains certain of Arensky's ways of orchestral color and structure. The piece is dedicated to Arensky and is the most accomplished work in his orchestral pieces. Others such as the opera "Aleko", the symphonic poem "Vtyos" ("The Rock", 1893), and the "Russian  


Rhapsody" for 2 pianos (1891) are also under his influence.

Rachmaninoff passed the piano examination with honors in 1891. In 1892, he also graduated as a composer and received the Great Gold Medal, the highest honor, for his opera "Aleko". During his school years, nobody thought of him as a pianist but as a composer. ⁵ At that time, Josef Lhevinne (a magnificent pianist) and Alexander Scriabin were his classmates.

From 1897-1900, due to the bad review of his first symphony performance, Rachmaninoff became so depressed that he could not compose for about three years. ⁶ After medical treatment by Dr. Nikolay Dahl, Rachmaninoff gradually recovered his confidence, and tried to return to composing. The great success of his second piano concerto (1900-1) made him an internationally known composer and the piece has remained very popular.

Rachmaninoff first visited the U.S.A. in October 1909, and on November 28, 1909, he gave his American debut as a concert pianist in New York, playing his third concerto (d minor) with the New York Symphony Orchestra with Walter Damrosch conducting. Then he returned to live in Russian until the Russia Revolution of 1917. He decided to

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emigrate from Russia to America and to begin a new career in the United States.

Due to the economic needs for himself and his family, Rachmaninoff began giving concerts and recitals and became a professional pianist after settling down in America. He started to build up concert repertoires and to concertize throughout the United States. He also made a five number of recordings, most of them his own music, including his four Piano Concertos, Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Preludes (Op.3 No.2; Op.23, Nos.5 & 10; and Op.32, Nos.3,5,6,7,& 12), Etudes-Tableaux (Op.33, Nos.2 & 7; Op.39, No.6), Polka de V.R., Polka Italiene for piano duet (played with Natalia Rachmaninoff), Barcarolle in g minor, Serenade in B-flat, and his transcriptions of Bach Preludio; Gavotte; Rondo; Gigue (from Violin Partita No.3), Bizet Minuet (from "L'Arlésienne" Suite No.1), Kreisler "Liebesleid", Mendelssohn Scherzo (from "A Midsummer Night's Dream"), and Schubert "Wohin".

In 1942-3, Rachmaninoff had bad health and suffered from cancer. In February, 1943, after giving a concert in Knoxville, Tennessee, he was sent to a hospital in Los Angeles. According to Harold Schonberg, during the time when Rachmaninoff was in the hospital, he knew his end was near. He looked at his hands and said, "My dear hands. Farewell, my poor hands." Then, after a month, on March

28, 1943, he died in Beverly Hills, California.

B. **Song Background**

Rachmaninoff wrote seven sets of songs, containing over 70 pieces. They are Op.4 (6 songs), Op.8 (6 songs), Op.14 (12 songs), Op.21 (12 songs), Op.26 (15 songs), Op.34 (14 songs), and Op.38 (6 songs). These songs were written and published when he was a young man in his twenties and early thirties, from 1890 to 1916. When he left Russia in December 1917, he never wrote any more solo songs again. It is John Culshaw's opinion that Rachmaninoff gave up song-writing after 1916 because, with the Russian Revolution of the following year, he was driven into exile from his native land and was thus cut off from the wellspring of inspiration for his songs.\(^8\) Except for the earliest set, Op.4, which was more or less influenced by Schumann and Brahms, the rest of his songs were derived from Tchaikovsky.\(^9\)

Rachmaninoff learned Tchaikovsky's songs when he was a child accompanying his sister Elena, a mezzo-soprano. In addition, he was also influenced by the music of the Russian Orthodox church. According to Richard Dyer, "Rachmaninoff frequently, even in winter, got up at seven,

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and, taking a cab in the darkness, drove off to the Androniev monastery where he attended early liturgy, listening to the old chants sung in parallel fifths by the monks. It could well happen that in the evening of the same day he would go to a symphony concert and from there to the restaurant Yar or Strelna and stay there till after midnight listening to the music of the gypsies."

Another influence to his vocal writing came from his early experience in accompanying for the famous singers, Chaliapin and Sobinov.

Since his youth, Rachmaninoff was greatly inspired by fine Russian poets such as Pushkin, Lermontov, Tolstoy and Blok. He had incorporated their texts into his vocal compositions. Most of the texts that he employed are from important Russian Romantics. He less frequently used a foreign poem, unless the poem was translated into Russian, such as the translations of Heine, Goethe, Shelly and others. He always wrote with a careful ear for the independence of accents in the lyrics and in the music.\footnote{Ibid.}

Rachmaninoff's seven sets of songs were all published by Gutheil. His first collection, Op.4, was composed in his student days at the Moscow Conservatory, where his teacher was Arensky. Rachmaninoff once wrote that while

\footnote{Maria Kurenko, "Rachmaninoff songs", program note, from High Fidelity Records p. 8265, translated by Marcia Short.}
composing these songs, there were days when his hand could hardly keep pace with the ideas which bubbled up within him.12 Two of these early songs are often heard: No. 3, "In the Silence of the Night" and No.4 "O, Cease thy Singing". Both of the songs were introduced into the concert repertoire by the famous singer John McCormack. Rachmaninoff revised them for voice, violin and piano, and they were published by Fischer in 1922. The song "O, Cease thy Singing" was dedicated to Natalie Satina, who later became Rachmaninoff's wife.

Op.8 (1893), including six songs, was chosen from German and Ukrainian poems (such as Heinrich Heine, Taras Shevchenks and Goethe's texts) translated by Alexei Pleshcheyev.

In 1896, due to financial pressure, Rachmaninoff had to produce pieces quickly. The twelve songs of Op.14 were produced under these circumstances. No.2 "The Little Island" and No.11 "Floods of Spring" ("Spring Water") of the Op.14 are well known pieces. "The Little Island" employed Konstantin Balmont's translation of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem and was composed for soprano or tenor. "Floods of Spring" was dedicated to his first piano teacher Anna Ornatzkaya.

After the second piano concerto was completed in 1901,

Rachmaninoff continued to compose eleven songs (to join the No.1 "Fate" which he composed in 1900) for Op.21. The eleven songs were started at the beginning of April, 1902. These songs were composed for a fee, three thousand rubbles, which was needed for his honeymoon. On April 29, 1902, Rachmaninoff married his cousin Natalia Satina. He still composed the songs during their honeymoon in Vienna, Venice, Rome, and Lucerne.

When Rachmaninoff spent a summer in Ivanovka (South-east of Moscow) in 1906, he composed a song set, Op.26, with fifteen songs. Not long after he arrived in Ivanovka, his friend, the Kerzins, sent him a volume of verses that Rachmaninoff thought suitable for using in his songs. In mid-September, a week before Rachmaninoff left Ivanovka, he wrote the fifteen songs of Op.26, including "To the Children" and "All thing's pass" the two most beloved songs. The Op.26 is dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. Kerzin. Later, the Kerzins had programmed his Op.26 in one of their Russian concerts in Moscow.

The entire Op.26 was first performed on February 12, 1907 at the Kerzin Concerts, Moscow. In March 1907, Rachmaninoff arranged the No.12 "The night is mournful" for cello and piano.

The fourteen songs of Op.34, were composed in 1912.

In 1912, Rachmaninoff wrote to his friend, Marietta Shaginian (a writer and poet), that he needed texts for the fourteen songs of Op.34 and requested her to send something more sad than gay. He said "Light colors do not come easily to me." 14 She quickly sent a proper choice of contemporary Russian poems to him. In a letter of June 19, 1912, Rachmaninoff wrote to Shaginian:

Dear Re, a few days ago I finished my new songs. Almost half of them were written on poems from your notebooks. I'll list them, if it's of any interest to you.

Pushkin - "The Storm", "Arion", and "The Muse".
   (this last I dedicate to you)

Tiutchev - "You know him well", "I remember that day".

Fet - "With holy banner firmly held", "What happiness".

Polonsky - "Music", "Dissonance".

Khomyakov - "The Raising of Lazarus"

Maikov - "It cannot be"

Korinsky - "In the soul of each of us"

Balmont - "The migrant wind"...

I can say that in general I am satisfied and infinitely happy with all these songs, for they came to me so easily, with no great pain. Please God that I may continue to work this way.... i5

The most famous song of Op.34 is No.14, "Vocalise", for soprano or tenor, composed on April, 1912 and revised on September 21, 1915. This song without words is dedicated to Antonina Nezhdanova. In January, 1913, this


piece was arranged by Rachmaninoff for violin, for cello, and for orchestra.\textsuperscript{16}

According to Philip G. Moores, who wrote a program note for dell’Arte Records on "Earl Wild Plays Rachmaninoff Songs", the song had its premiere in 1916 (performed by Antonia Nezhdanova to whom the song was dedicated, and accompanied by Rachmaninoff). It was sung in the middle of an orchestral concert conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. Koussevitzky loved the song so much that he asked Rachmaninoff to arrange an orchestral version. The orchestral version later became very well known and was often recorded. Both Rachmaninoff and Koussevitzky conducted the orchestral version for recordings.\textsuperscript{17}

Op.38, with six songs, was Rachmaninoff’s last set of songs. It was dedicated to Nina Koschetz, a famous singer whom Rachmaninoff highly esteemed. The Op.38 was first performed in Moscow, October 24, 1916, by Mme. Koschetz and Rachmaninoff. Rachmaninoff found Nina Koschetz the best interpreter of his lyricism, of sadness and passion. He selected entirely modern Russian poets (Russian symbolist poets such as Block, Bely, Severyanin, Bryusov, Sologub, and Balmont) for the Op.38. The Op.38 was published by the Russian Music Edition, 1916. The No.3, "Daisies", the most

\textsuperscript{16}. Ibid. p.415.

\textsuperscript{17}. The information is listed in dell’Arte Records compact disc of "Earl Wild plays Rachmaninoff Songs," (1982).
famous one, was transcribed by the composer for piano solo, published by Tair, 1924.18

C. Song Style

In Rachmaninoff's songs, the strong lyricism may be considered a continuation of Tchaikovsky's song lyricism. To Rachmaninoff, song was an important medium for his emotional expression. In the seven song sets of Rachmaninoff, Op.4, Op.8 and Op.14 were his early works. Victor Belaiev states that these songs are merely casually tragic and mostly concentrated on the elegiac mood. But the Op.21 and Op.26 are songs of tragedy.19

The Op.4 songs basically show his melodic invention in vocal writing.20 The accompaniments are very simple and have such a light texture that there is not much variety in them. Most of the figures in the accompaniment are triplets. In addition, simple key signatures (no more than two flats and two sharps), simple chords, arpeggios, and broken chords reveal the pure and light texture of the accompaniment. Only in No.4, "Oh, Cease thy Singing", does the piano part have more variety than the others. Instead of using triplets, he alternates eighth notes with

18. Ibid. p.416.


sixteenth notes. Also, he adds the ostinato effect in the bass, and the simple syncopation, repeated octaves and chords, and augmented interval scales make the song unique. Russian folk music materials are shown in the Op.4, such as the use of modality, frequent time-changes, vocal melismata, and augmented interval scales.²¹

Although the six songs of Op.8 are still early songs of Rachmaninoff, they begin to show the musical balance of the vocal line and piano accompaniment. Even though the triplets are still the major figures for the accompaniment, the texture of the piano part becomes heavier. Frequent change of tempo and time are special characteristics of this song set. At the beginning of No.1 "The Water Lily", the introduction is "vivo" in \( \frac{3}{4} \) for piano (which is very pianistic), then suddenly goes to "moderato" in \( \frac{9}{8} \) for the singer. Later, the vivo reappears for the piano to end the piece. A similar example is No.5, "A Dream", with the alternation of Allegretto and Lento. Syncopation is used occasionally between voice and piano in the Op.4 and more frequently and in a more complicated way in the Op.8.

Op.14 with twelve songs is considered by Norris to be a song set which is uneven in both style and quality. Almost all of the songs are passionate expressions of love or grief. No.6, "How everyone loves thee" and No.8, "Oh, do not grieve" are reminiscent of Tchaikovsky. The last two

²¹. Ibid.
songs "Spring Waters" and "Tis Time" reveal a more individual style. No.9, "She is as lovely as the noon", and No.10, "In my soul", contain Oriental elements. In this song set, the melody becomes more important and the vocal line not only carries the words in short and stepwise phrases, but also with more variety. At the same time, the piano accompaniments are more powerful. They often are so strong for the vocal line that the dimensions of the piano part are as heavy as orchestral writing.

In Op.21 (twelve songs), the piano part is more subtle and virtuosic than in Op.14. Rachmaninoff started to create a special role for the accompaniment in the expression of the sentiments of the text. Technically, running passages with arpeggios, broken chords, and trills occupy most portions of this song set. They require a certain level of technical facility to play the accompaniment, especially the wide stretches of the left hand, which are frequently seen. No.5, "Lilacs", No.8, "On the death of a linnet", and No.7, "Where beauty dwells", are considered the most mature songs of op.21.

Few pieces in the Op.26 (fifteen songs) are purely lyrical. Many of them are declamatory such as No.3, "Let us rest", No.15, "All things pass by", and No.6, "Christ is risen". Several songs are concerned with various aspects

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22. Ibid.

23. Norris, Rakhmaninov, p.150.
of spring like No.5, "Beloved let us fly", No.8, "I beg for mercy", and No.9 "Again I am alone".24

The music of Op.26 has more diversity. Changes of key signatures and meters frequently take place. Melodies are treated with more rigorous rhythmical figures. Tempos become more flexible and the frequent changes of tempo markings exhibit more emotional variety in the music. In the accompaniment, simple syncopation and broken chords are often used. The accompaniment successfully develops from the vocal melody to an independent accompanying style.

When setting a text for vocal purposes, Rachmaninoff preferred to write music that is more in the nature of an accompaniment to his vocal line rather than a complement or amplification of the poet’s words.25 As Brewerton says, "Rachmaninoff usually makes his song climax with high notes. His climaxes do not carry the words with them and give each syllable of them an added incisiveness. The music triumphs fatally. The words drop out or fade away."26

The Op.34 and Op.38 are considered Rachmaninoff’s mature sets of songs. They reveal virtuosic singing with virtuosic piano accompaniments. The accompaniment is


26. Brewerton, "Rachmaninoff’s Songs," p.34
considered to have the same weight as his piano preludes.

In the fourteen songs of Op.34, the characteristic style includes: a) simple melodic lines with intervals rarely larger than a fifth; b) reflections of the moods of the texts in the piano accompaniments; c) great freedom of rhythm; d) a striking use of colorful harmonies; e) various tempo markings; and f) constant changes of keys and meters. In addition, chords (especially large chords) and octaves for the piano part are added more than in the previous song sets. The piano technique of rolling chords is commonly used for many chords, especially in those using intervals of a ninth, tenth or more. According to Mr. Wild, Rachmaninoff's large hands were a blessing of sorts, but also a great problem. In octave playing, an oversized hand is a hindrance. That is the real reason we find so few octave passages in his music. But for interpretative reason, he preferred to play a tenth chord in the left hand with a slight roll.  

In the Op.38, Rachmaninoff developed an almost impressionistic musical language to match the "art for art's sake" ideals of the Russian symbolists.  In this last song set, many new styles are employed: a) contrasts of colors and texture are now more important than the


melody; b) rhythms are frequently changed; c) harmonies become more ambiguous and strange; and d) the accompaniments are very close to impressionism, containing shimmering and picture-painting effects. These new stylistic features can be easily found in the No.5, "The Dream".

Rachmaninoff’s songs are usually in binary or ternary form with introductions and postludes for piano accompaniment. In this form, there are no suprising innovations. Most of his songs are in minor keys. Melodies are often long and progress by intervals of thirds. His songs are characterized by frequent use of triplets, syncopations, change of meters, keys and tempos, and especially very demanding piano parts requiring fine levels of piano skills. Although his songs are ranked second compared to his piano music, he nevertheless remains at the forefront of Russian vocal writing in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.
CHAPTER III
EARL WILD'S RACHMANINOFF SONG TRANSCRIPTIONS

A. Purpose

Sergei Rachmaninoff has been the most important musical influence of Mr. Wild's life, ever since the time he was a child. When he heard Rachmaninoff the first time, he was only six years old. From then on, he began regularly to attend Rachmaninoff's concerts throughout the country, whenever it was possible, for the next twenty-two years, until Rachmaninoff's death in 1943.¹ In an interview with writer Allan Kozinn, Mr. Wild says:

"I used to hear him every year, sometimes twice. I heard almost everything he played—not only his own music, which I adored, but works like the Beethoven First Piano Concerto, which he played wonderfully, and faster than most pianists.... But the thing that most impressed me about Rachmaninoff's playing was its beautiful, lyrical quality, and its wonderful flexibility."²

The great inspiration that made Mr. Wild write the

¹Program notes by Earl Wild in the dell'Arte compact disc, "Earl Wild plays Rachmaninoff Songs", 1982.

Rachmaninoff song transcriptions was the beauty of the songs. He has loved Rachmaninoff’s songs all of his life. The first two songs he heard were "To the Children" (Op.26 No.7) and "The Muse" (Op.34 No.1) when he was about sixteen or seventeen and first accompanied a student singing these two songs. Mr. Wild was greatly moved by their simple beauty. Later, he had a chance to meet a great singer, Maria Kurenko, and became her friend. Madame Kurenko had sung Rachmaninoff’s songs in a performance with Rachmaninoff accompanying her. Her singing and approach were so authentic and authoritative that it provided an impact on Mr. Wild to transcribe the songs for piano solos and to share them with friends and people.

Madame Kurenko had taught Mr. Wild very much about the interpretation of Rachmaninoff’s songs. He found her assistance so valuable for his transcriptions that he deliberately arranged the songs in the Rachmaninoff style.3

In 1981, Mr. Wild spent an entire summer at Santa Fe, New Mexico writing the transcriptions. He transcribed twelve Rachmaninoff songs (which he loves the most) and revised them twice during the year. The twelve songs are "In the Silent Night"(Op.4 No.3), "O, Cease thy Singing" Op.4 No.4), "The Little Island" (Op.14, No.2),"Midsummer Eve" (Op.14, No.5), "Floods of Spring" (Op.14 No.11),

3. From the writer’s interview with Mr. Wild at May 9, 1989.
"Where Beauty Dwells" (Op.21 No.7), "On the Death of a Linnet" (Op.21 No.8), "Sorrow in Springtime" (Op.21 No.12), "To the Children" (Op.26 No.7), "The Muse" (Op.34 No.1), "Vocalise" (Op.34 No.14), "Dreams" (Op.38 No.5). In 1982, Mr. Wild recorded these twelve song transcriptions for dell'Arte Records and these have been released as a compact disc for dell'Arte (DBS 7001).

B. Transcriptional Technique

Texts

Besides the original Russian texts of Rachmaninoff's songs, there are three other editions in German, French and English translations. According to Mr. Wild, the reason he revised his transcriptions after the first draft was because of the reference in the texts to the translations of English and French. When using the Russian texts, the phrasings were greatly improved. In the writer's interview with Mr. Wild, he mentioned, "To transcribe a song, different languages in the texts make different effects. Breathing spots are more important than the meaning of the text. The commas at the end of each sentence are not always the same, so that the phrasings become very

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different (see Fig. 1, 2 and 3).

Figure 1. Rachmaninoff, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op. 4, No. 4, mm. 30-33. (Russian and English texts)

The interpretations of phrasing are different between Russian and English texts.

Phrasing of the Russian text:

Phrasing of the English text:
Figure 2. Rachmaninoff, "Dreams", Op.38, No.5, mm.3-6

(texts in Russian, French, English and German).

The Russian and French texts receive one long phrase from measure 3 to measure 6. However, the English and German texts divide the music into two smaller phrases.

Russian and French texts:

English and German texts:
Mr. Wild's song transcriptions basically keep within the range of Rachmaninoff's style. He did not try to modernize them but maintained the original idea of Rachmaninoff's songs. In the interview with Dean Elder, Mr. Wild says:

"I made an agreement with myself that I wouldn't write anything on the page that wasn't somewhere in Rachmaninoff's works, either in his decorations or chordal structures. I change none of the rhythms or the melodies."  

Mr. Wild combines the vocal melody and the accompaniment part with appropriate decorations into his transcriptions. The way he arranges elements, such as key, form, melody, time and tempo, harmony, rhythm and dynamics from the original songs will be discussed.

**Key**

Mr. Wild did not change keys from the original Rachmaninoff songs except for, "In the Silent Night", Op. 4 No. 3. He transcribed the key to F-sharp major from the original key of D major. According to Mr. Wild, the reason he employed the key transposition is simply for the sonoric consideration of better resonance.  

The range of D major in the song is suitable for a singer. But it does not sound well for the keyboard. Because the melody from keyboard

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5. ibid.

sounds low, he raises the key two degrees higher to F-sharp major for the transcription and there is a difference in the feeling. Similar examples, such as Chopin's Etude Op.10 No.3 and Op.25 No.1 use the same considerations. Mr. Wild suggests that the Op.10 No.3 in E major is better placed in D major, because the key of E major sounds too bright. However, the D major receives a much warmer effect (Fig.3).

a) The original key: E major

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig3a.png}
\caption{Chopin Etude, Op.10, No.3, mm.1-2.}
\end{figure}

b) The suggested key: D major

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig3b.png}
\caption{Chopin Etude, Op.10, No.3, mm.1-2.}
\end{figure}
The other one, Chopin Etude Op.25 No.1, is a little too high and too sharp in A-flat major. The best key for it is G-flat major which produces a rounder and more passionate sound (Fig.4).

a) The original key: A-flat major

b) The suggested key: G-flat major

Figure 4. Chopin Etude, Op.25, No.1, mm.1-2
Form

In the twelve Rachmaninoff song transcriptions, five receive formal expansion. They are "In the Silent Night", "Midsummer Eve", "Floods of Spring", "Where Beauty Dwells", and "Sorrow in Springtime". The remaining seven retain the original formats. Due to the brevity of the five songs, Mr. Wild expands them by repetition. At the beginning of "Where Beauty Dwells" and "Sorrow in Spring", a few measures of introduction are added, which do not appear in the original songs (As Fig. 5 and 6).


Introduction:

Figure 5.


Introduction: (mm.1-3)

Figure 5.

In the repetition of the five pieces, two are transposed to other keys (D major [the original key] for "In the Silent Night" in F-sharp, and G-flat major for the "Floods of Springs" in E-flat) (Fig. 7 and 8).
a) Rachmaninoff, "In the Silent Night", Op.4, No.3, mm.5-7.

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op.4, No.3, mm.5-7 and 36-38.

Measures 5-7 (main theme):

Measures 36-38 (key transposition in the repetition):

Figure 7.
a) main theme (mm.3-4):

[Musical notation image]

b) the repetition (mm.39-40):

[Musical notation image]

Figure 8. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Floods of Spring", Op.14, No.11.

A special example is shown in "Midsummer Eve", which is in A-B-A ternary form. Mr. Wild transposed only in the middle B section from the original key E major to g minor for the repetition of his transcription (as Fig.9)


Figure 9.
Melody

In addition to showing melodies on the top line of the treble clef, there are various other ways that Mr. Wild frequently uses for the melodies:

1) An octave lower:

This is employed when variety is needed in the piece. It usually takes place in the repetition of the song (Fig.10 and 11).

a) main theme (mm.4-6):

![Musical notation]

b) repetition of the main theme (mm.38-40).

![Musical notation]

a) main theme (mm.1-2):

b) repetition of the main theme (mm.11-12).

Figure 11. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "To the Children", Op.26, No.7.

or it may be placed for the necessity of the connection from the previous passage (Fig.12).

a) Rachmaninoff original song score (mm.4-5):

Figure 12. Rachmaninoff, "Where Beauty Dwells", Op.21, No.7.

2) An octave higher:

For making more contrast in the musical effect, this procedure is used, as in an orchestra, after the strings play the first part of melody, the oboe follows with the remainder of the melody (Fig.13).


Figure 13.
There is a special example which shows a typical effect of the orchestration in that it combines the regular melody range, changes to the register an octave lower, then suddenly is followed by a passage an octave higher, and finally returns to the normal register (Fig.14).


(the original music score)

Figure 14.

3) Middle register of the keyboard:

When the melody of the accompaniment is very close to the vocal melody, placing the vocal line into the middle register of the keyboard is the best treatment for solving this problem (see Fig.15).
a) Rachmaninoff, "On the Death of a Linnet", Op.21, No.8, mm.1-5.

![Musical notation image]


![Musical notation image]

Figure 15.
4) Chordal octave and octave:

These are the most frequent figures that Rachmaninoff uses in his compositions. Most often, the octave and the chordal octave are integrated. Usually, the main melody is in the octave, and sometimes inner voices are added to the octave, so that the music has wider voicing.

Mr. Wild applies this technique in his transcriptions, just as Rachmaninoff does in his original works (Fig.16).

a) Rachmaninoff Prelude, Op.23, No.6 in c minor, mm.11-12.

![MIDI浓浓的欢快](image)


![MIDI浓浓的欢快](image)

Figure 16.
Occasionally, Mr. Wild adds one or more notes between each octave and executes them as broken chords. It is also found in Rachmaninoff’s music (see Fig.17).


![Image of music notation]

b) Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No.2, Op.18, Ist movement, mm.113-114.

![Image of music notation]

Figure 17.
The chordal octave can often be seen when the climax and the full sonority of the melody are performed. The example is shown below (Fig. 18):

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 18. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op.4, No 3, mm.24-27.

There are two ways that Mr. Wild indicates when the texture of the transcriptions makes the melody difficult to discern. One is using a circle [○] and the other is an accent mark [—] (see Fig. 19).

a) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Dreams", Op.38, No.5, mm.9-10. (melody indicated by ○).
b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op.4, No.3, mm.7-9. (melody indicated by —).

Figure 19.

Sometimes both signs are employed. In addition to the main melody (marked with ○ or —), Mr. Wild gives an extra mark with one of the other two signs, which is not the main melody, and this is done to bring out more of the second melody (or inner voice) for sonority and also to vary the interest of the music (as Fig.20).

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "On the Death of a Linnet",
Op.21, No.8, m.9.

Figure 20.

Tempo

In many of Rachmaninoff’s songs, he often changes tempo markings. Mr. Wild did not follow them exactly. He either changes or eliminates the tempo markings from the original songs. This example can be found in "Dreams", and "Floods of Spring" (Fig.21 and 22).

a) Rachmaninoff, "Dreams", Op.38, No.5, m.38.

Figure 21.

a) Rachmaninoff, "Floods of Spring", Op.14, No.11, m.28.


Figure 22.
In several pieces, Mr. Wild eliminates some tempo markings from the original songs, without adding any new markings, for free execution (Fig. 23 and 24).


Figure 23.
a) Rachmaninoff, "The Muse", Op.34, No.1, mm.28-29.

Un poco più vive.


Figure 24.

Harmony

Mr. Wild adheres to Rachmaninoff's harmonies very closely. Occasionally, he adjusts them for the reason of sonority. When the original texture is too thin to transfer to the keyboard, he thickens Rachmaninoff's harmonic texture by using broken chords (Fig.25), adding decorated small notes (Fig.26), or adding passing chords (Fig. 27).
a) Rachmaninoff, "Where Beauty Dwells", Op.21, No.7, mm.3-4.


Figure 25.


Figure 26.
a) Rachmaninoff, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op.4, No.4, mm.31-32.

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op.4, No.4, mm.31-32.

Figure 27.

Rachmaninoff prefers using chromatic or diatonic descending harmonic progression for his compositions. In his song accompaniments and piano works, the examples can be found (Fig.28 and 29).
Figure 28. Rachmaninoff, "I Came to Her", Op.14, No.4, mm.10-11.

Figure 29. Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No.3, Op.30, 3rd movement, m.205.
Mr. Wild follows the technique of descending harmony for his transcription (see Fig. 30).


\[ \text{Figure 30.} \]

Rhythm

As has been mentioned, Mr. Wild does not change the melody and rhythm in his transcriptions. However, slight variations of rhythm are used. From "Vocalise", and "On the Death of Linnet", the variation of rhythm can be clearly found. In the "Vocalise", Mr. Wild employs rhythmic expansion for a passage, which he considers as a cadenza (Fig. 31).


![Musical notation image]

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Vocalise", Op.34, No.14, mm.46-47.

![Musical notation image]

Figure 31.
At the coda of "On the Death of A Linnet", instead of using $\frac{3}{4}$ as the original time signature, he keeps the $\frac{4}{4}$ from the previous passages so that there is a continuation of one long mood toward the end (Fig. 32).


![Musical notation]


![Musical notation]

Figure 32.
Dynamics

For dynamics, Mr. Wild supplies his own ideas to give the transcriptions more colors. He does follow some of the original dynamic markings. However, the arrangement of dynamics in his transcriptions shows much variety, an almost contrary interpretation from the original songs (see Fig.33 and 34).

a) Rachmaninoff, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op.4, No.4, mm.49-50.

![Image of musical notation for Rachmaninoff's piece]


![Image of musical notation for Rachmaninoff-Wild's piece]

Figure 33.
a) Rachmaninoff, "Sorrow in Springtime", Op. 21, No. 12, mm. 5-7.


Figure 34.
C. Keyboard Technique

Mr. Wild arranges his Rachmaninoff song transcriptions with reference to the typical keyboard technique of Rachmaninoff. Each of his transcriptions sounds just like Rachmaninoff’s original piano writing. He is very well acquainted with Rachmaninoff’s pianistic style. Usually, Mr. Wild bases his on Rachmaninoff’s original ideas and develops them with his abundant imagination, achieving a balance in the relationships between voice and piano. In this portion, several aspects of piano technique will be explored.

Chordal Technique

This is the most important technique that Rachmaninoff used throughout his piano compositions. It often takes place when a climax occurs in the music. Usually, large chords (such as 8th, 9th, 11th) are well represented for this purpose. In the twelve Rachmaninoff-Wild transcriptions, five kinds of chordal technique are employed by Mr. Wild.

1) Chordal interlocking:

For virtuosic display, the chordal interlocking is an excellent selection for the materials. In "Floods of Spring", which Mr. Wild considers as in the style of one of Rachmaninoff’s Etude-Tableaux, the chordal interlocking is so frequently used that the piece shows
great energy and excitement in performance. Particularly at the end of the "Floods of Spring", Mr. Wild uses descending chordal interlocking and makes it sound like Rachmaninoff's ending of the second piano concerto (see Fig. 35).

a) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Floods of Spring", Op. 14, No. 11, mm. 73-76.

b) Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No. 2, Op. 18, 3rd movement, mm. 488-490.

Figure 35.
2) Chordal repetition:

It is usually used to support a long note for sustaining the musical mood. In his famous piano work, Prelude Op.23 No.5 in g minor, Rachmaninoff employs this technique (Fig.36).

![Figure 36. Rachmaninoff Prelude, Op.23, No.5, mm.4-5.](image)

Mr. Wild applies the technique in his transcriptions for the same effect (Fig.37).

![Figure 37. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op.4, No.4, m.30.](image)
3) Chordal scale:

Generally, the chordal scale is placed in the accompanying part of either hand for building some extension of the sonority (as Fig. 38 and 39).

Figure 38. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op.4, No.3, mm.57-58.

Figure 39. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op.4, No.4, mm.31-32.
4) Chordal arpeggios:

As with the chordal repetitions, chordal arpeggios are also used for supporting a long note (Fig. 40).

Figure 40. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op. 4, No. 3, m. 60.

In Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3, a similar example can be found (Fig. 41).

Figure 41. Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No. 3, Op. 30, 1st movement, m. 392.
Sometimes a chordal arpeggic appears as an accompanying figuration (Fig. 42) or as melody (Fig. 43).

Figure 42. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "In the Silent Night", Op. 4, No. 3, m. 53.

Figure 43. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Floods of Spring", Op. 14, No. 11, m. 51-52.
5) Chordal sequence:

In the Rachmaninoff-Wild transcriptions, the chordal sequence is considered as a bravura decoration. Mr. Wild uses big chords for more virtuosic display (see Fig. 44).

a) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "On the Death of A Linnet", Op. 21, No. 8, m. 28.


Figure 44.
In Rachmaninoff's piano works, the chordal sequence is a frequently used technique (Fig. 45).

![Chordal Sequence](image)

Figure 45. Rachmaninoff Prelude, Op. 23, No. 2, mm. 52-53.

**Run Technique**

Run technique is used to describe those passages which contain both melodic scale passages and arpeggios which are usually displays of virtuosity. Since the Classical period, composers such as Mozart, Clementi, Czerny, and their contemporaries, have used the run technique. In Rachmaninoff's piano compositions, run techniques, especially single-note running passages, are frequently seen. He often shows his improvisational ability through the use of single-note runs (Fig. 46).
Figure 46. Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No.2, Op.18, 3rd movement, m.451.

In "Sorrow in Springtime", Mr. Wild employs the single-note run for the transcription (Fig.47).

Figure 47. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Sorrow in Springtime", Op.21, No.12, m.48.

The single-note run technique is often executed alternatively by two hands. Another kind of single-note run also played alternatively by two hands can be found in Rachmaninoff's Piano concerto No.3 and the Rachmaninoff-Wild transcription "Vocalise" (Fig.48).

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Vocalise", Op. 34, No. 14, m. 60.

Figure 48.
In addition to the single-note run passages, runs in thirds or with 6th-5th and 4th-3rd integration show some of the technical difficulties (Fig.49 and 50).

Figure 49. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Sorrow in Springtime", Op.21, No.12, m.24 (scale runs in thirds).

Figure 50. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Where Beauty Dwells", Op.21, No.7, m.8 (6th-5th and 4th-3rd run passage).
A similar example of runs with 6th-5th and 4th-3rd integration is shown in Rachmaninoff's Etude-Tableaux Op.39 No.8 (Fig.51).

![Figure 51. Rachmaninoff Etude-Tableau, Op.39, No.8, m.56.](image)

**Arpeggios**

Arpeggios play a significant role in Rachmaninoff's compositions. At times, they are virtuosic. Sometimes, they help decorate a single note or accompany a long line melody. Accompanying arpeggiation, broken chord arpeggiated figures and arpeggiated figures beginning with a chord are devices Rachmaninoff frequently uses. In the Rachmaninoff-Wild transcriptions, these are essentially the techniques that Mr. Wild employs. For example, in "Midsummer Eve", Rachmaninoff uses accompanying arpeggiation for the interlude and postlude in the piano accompaniment. Mr. Wild not only keeps the accompanying arpeggiation, he also expands the technique for almost the entire piece (see Fig.52 and 53).
a) Rachmaninoff, "Midsummer Eve", Op. 14, No. 5, mm. 12-17. (interlude)

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Midsummer Eve", Op. 14, No. 5, mm. 13-18. (with the original figures)

Figure 52.
a) Rachmaninoff, "Midsummer Eve", Op.14, No.5, mm.1-5. (not with arpeggio accompaniment)

b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Midsummer Eve", Op.14, No.5, mm.1-5. (arranged with arpeggio accompaniment)

Figure 53.
Often, broken chord arpeggiated figurations play a role as accompaniment, and sometimes as decoration, in Mr. Wild's transcriptions (Fig. 54 and 55).

Figure 54. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op. 4, No. 4, mm. 40-41. (broken chord arpeggiated figurations as accompaniment)

Figure 55. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "To the Children", Op. 26, No. 7, mm. 22-23. (broken chord arpeggiated figurations as decoration)
Arpeggiated figures beginning with a chord are shown in many of Rachmaninoff's piano works and are also found in Mr. Wild's transcriptions (Fig. 56 and 57).

Figure 56. Rachmaninoff Prelude, Op. 23, No. 2, mm. 7-8.


b) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Floodes of Spring", Op. 14, No. 11, m. 5.

Figure 57.
Wide Leap Technique

Wide leaps are a special and common technique in Rachmaninoff’s piano compositions. It might be due to his large hands that wide leaps come naturally and easily into his music. Generally, his wide leaps can be achieved in three ways: 1) hand crossing, 2) stretching, and 3) rolling. These three manners are all applied in the Rachmaninoff-Wild transcriptions. In the Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Sorrow in Springtime", the technique of hand crossing imitates Rachmaninoff’s piano technique (Fig. 58 and 59).

Figure 58. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Sorrow in Springtime", Op. 21, No. 12, m. 48.
Figure 59. Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No.2, Op.18, 3rd movement, m.451.

The stretch is usually applied in both hands. Mr. Wild's transcription, "Dreams", represents a typical example of this genre (Fig.60).

Figure 60. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Dreams", Op.38, No.5, mm.31-32.

Although Rachmaninoff had big hands, his compositions for piano employ a great deal of roll technique. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Rachmaninoff rarely played a large chord without a slight roll. The technique
appears in Mr. Wild's transcriptions spontaneously (Fig. 61).

a) Rachmaninoff-Wild, "O, Cease thy Singing", Op. 4, No. 4, m. 7.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{rachmaninoff_wild_1.png}
\caption{Figure 61.}
\end{figure}

The following example shows Rachmaninoff's roll technique in his piano composition (Fig. 62).

![Musical notation](image)

**Figure 62. Rachmaninoff Prelude, Op. 23, No. 10, mm. 48-51.**

**Pedal Technique**

Not all of the Rachmaninoff-Wild song transcriptions contain pedal markings. They are occasionally included. The damper pedal plays the most important role in the performance of his song transcriptions. He marks the pedal with two signs: __ and Ped. ⊳. There are three pieces which contain no pedal markings: "To the Children", "Vocalise", and "The Muse". However, "Dreams" includes Mr. Wild's pedal marks throughout the whole piece. Although pedal markings are not listed in all of the twelve song transcriptions, the constant use of the pedal is indispensable.

Mr. Wild's pedaling in his song transcriptions is very personal. Basically, frequent change of damper pedal is essential when the chord changes. But for more sonority and color, Mr. Wild suggests holding the pedal for one long
measure, or even for several measures at one time (see Fig. 63).

Measures 1-8.

Measures 17-22.

Figure 63. Rachmaninoff-Wild, "Dreams", Op. 38, No. 5, mm. 1-8 and 17-22.
In the interview with Dean Elder about Rachmaninoff’s interpretation of pedaling, Mr. Wild said:

"Rachmaninoff’s concertos are usually performed in large halls and the pedaling should take this into account. In the opening of the Second Concerto, for instance, there should be no change of pedal from one chord to the next (see Fig.64). Sustaining the pedal through the first 7 bars holds the phrase and sound together. It makes the crescendo grow naturally. You may not notice this effect so much in a small hall, but under microphones in a large hall the result is obvious. Every chord has to have a little more tone so that you obliterate the previous chord. This type of pedaling, when properly used, lends an expressive quality seldom heard today."\(^7\)

![Figure 64. Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto, No.2, Op.18, mm.1-7.](image)

Quite often, Mr. Wild emphasizes that, in a piano performance, it is very necessary to project the musical sound to the listener seated in the last row. Pedaling is one of the most important considerations during performance. Playing with a full sound without changing the pedal often creates an excellent effect. Performers must be sensitive to adjust to this approach.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Wild combines Rachmaninoff's compositional technique and his own experience in his twelve song transcriptions. He keeps melodies and rhythms the same as in the original songs, but he likes to extend the harmony in a piece with improvisational passages or to vary the piece with transposition. He does not change keys for the twelve Rachmaninoff songs except once in "In the Silent Night", Op.4 No.3. Chord progressions basically follow the original songs, but he enriches the texture with harmonic complexities.

Formally, he extends the form of the songs in several important ways: by repetition; by the addition of material, either as an introduction or a conclusion; by the addition of improvisational passages; by using rather free variation techniques; and by the addition of counter-melodies.

The difference between the original songs and the transcriptions is in Mr. Wild's arrangement of the simple Rachmaninoff songs into works of considerable technical difficulty for piano solo. He uses Rachmaninoff's ideas with added decorations, thus making the song transcriptions sound similar to original works for solo piano by
Rachmaninoff.

The twelve Rachmaninoff-Wild song transcriptions represent Mr. Wild's personal efforts to bring his admiration and respect for Rachmaninoff to pianists and to the public. Those efforts not only give importance to Rachmaninoff's songs but also contribute significant new sets of pieces with technical difficulties to the repertoire.
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