

An Analysis of Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2 in  
C Minor, Op. 18: Aids Towards Performance

D.M.A. Document

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by

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\* \* \* \* \*

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To My Parents

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## PERFORMANCES

Graduate Student Recital Series  
Wednesday, March 28, 1984. 6:00 P.M.  
Weigel Auditorium

So-Ham Kim Chung, Piano

### Program

Sonata, A Minor  
Allegro  
Andante  
Allegro di molto

C.P.E. Bach

Sonate in B<sup>b</sup>, D. 960  
Molto moderato  
Andante sostenuto  
Scherzo  
Allegro, ma non troppo

Schubert

### Intermission

Etude - Tableau Op. 39 No. 3, F<sup>#</sup> Minor  
Etude - Tableau Op. 33 No. 7, E<sup>b</sup>  
Etude - Tableau Op. 33 No. 8, G Minor

Rachmaninoff  
Rachmaninoff  
Rachmaninoff

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2, C<sup>#</sup> Minor

Liszt

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts for Ms. Chung.

Graduate Student Recital Series  
Friday, April 12, 1985. 3:00 P.M.  
Weigel Auditorium

So-Ham Kim Chung, Piano  
John Fry, Piano

Program

Vier Letzte Lieder (four last songs) Strauss  
Frühling (Spring)  
September (September)

assisted by  
Cynthia Britts, Voice

Ms. Chung

Sonata for Piano and Violoncello in F Major, Op. 99 Brahms  
Allegro vivace  
Adagio affettuoso  
Allegro passionato  
Allegro molto

assisted by  
Kelly DeWeese, Cello

Mr. Fry

Sonata for Oboe and Piano Poulenc  
I. Élégie  
II. Scherzo  
III. Déploration

assisted by  
John Yount, Oboe

Ms. Chung

Hermit Songs

Barber

St. Ita's Vision  
The Monk and His Cat  
The Praises of God  
The Desire for Hermitage

assisted by  
Susan Foster, Voice

Mr. Fry

Intermission

Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion

Bartók

Assai Lento - Allegro molto  
Lento, ma non troppo  
Allegro non troppo

assisted by  
Jeffery Long and Cary Dachtyl, Percussion

Ms. Chung and Mr. Fry

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree Doctor of Musical Arts for both Ms. Chung and Mr. Fry.



Graduate Student Recital Series  
Wednesday, June 11, 1986. 4:00 P.M.  
Weigel Auditorium

So-Ham Kim Chung, Piano

Program

Chaconne, D Minor

Bach-Busoni

Preludes Op. 11

Scriabin

No. 1

No. 10

No. 14

No. 15

L'isle joyeuse

Debussy

Intermission

Sonata, B Minor

Liszt

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts for Ms. Chung.

Graduate Student Recital Series  
Thursday, February 5, 1987. 3:00 P.M.  
Weigel Auditorium

So-Ham Kim Chung, Piano  
Assisted by John Fry, Piano

Program

Sonata I, B <sup>b</sup> Major, for Two Pianos	Clementi
Allegro assai	
Larghetto espressivo	
Presto	

Introduction and Rondo alla Burlesca	Britten
for Two Pianos, Op. 23, No. 1	

Intermission

Concerto No. 2, C Minor, Op. 18	Rachmaninoff
Moderato	
Adagio sostenuto	
Allegro scherzando	

This recital is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts for Ms. Chung.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Two strong currents of ultra-traditional conservatism and radical innovation co-existed in Russia from the late nineteenth century until Stalinist anti-modern campaigns of the 1930's.<sup>1</sup> The older Romantic tradition can be represented by Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943). His music continued the tradition of Tchaikovsky (1840-93) who was an outstanding representative of the European romantic tradition in Russia. Although vernacular elements and innovations appear in his music, Rachmaninoff was considered more conservative and non-national than Tchaikovsky.<sup>2</sup>

Among Rachmaninoff's many compositions, his most familiar works include a symphonic poem, The Isle of the Dead; his four piano concertos, preludes, and other short piano works; and Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, a set of twenty four variations for piano and orchestra. Like Tchaikovsky's music, Rachmaninoff's works are highly melodic and often give melancholic mood with mostly minor keys, but his writing for piano is technically on the Chopin-Liszt framework of singing melodies and rich sonorities, decorated by elaborate embellishments.<sup>3</sup>

Among the Rachmaninoff's five piano and orchestra works, the Second Piano Concerto in c minor, op. 18, composed in 1900-1901, is probably



the most popular one. The concerto consists of three movements: Moderato, Adagio sostenuto, and Allegro scherzando. Based on fatalism and pessimism, it is filled with an impassioned melancholia, a Russian coloration combined with a brilliant solo part thrown in relief against a sonorous orchestration.<sup>4</sup>

A limited number of analyses exist for Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, and most of them are quite brief. Culshaw offers a brief formal analysis of the three movements.<sup>5</sup> Coolidge offers a very detailed thematic and tonal analysis of the three movements.<sup>6</sup> The Boosey & Hawkes edition contains a very brief analysis with the orchestral score.<sup>7</sup> Anderson offers a brief sketch of the three movements.<sup>8</sup> Tsukkerman offers a harmonic and melodic analysis of the second movement in his article, "Pearls of Russian Lyricism,"<sup>9</sup> which is in Russian.

When I performed this concerto, I found it necessary to analyze the music in detail in order to express the music more accurately. Thus, the purpose of this document is to analyze Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 from my viewpoint as a performer, including a survey, comparison, verification, summary of previous works, and some additions and different interpretations.

In Chapter 2, a historical and social background of the composer is described. This background was believed necessary for understanding and appreciating common characteristics residing consistently in Rachmaninoff's works, and it also proved helpful in classifying Rachmaninoff's position and role as an important Romantic composer. Chapter 3 provides a detailed analysis of the concerto, including

orchestration, structure, key relationships, thematic material, phrasing, harmony, and performance problems. Chapter 4 contains this writer's summary and conclusions.

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## CHAPTER II

### BACKGROUND OF THE CONCERTO

#### HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF RUSSIAN MUSIC

The term "Russian music", and especially the best nineteenth-century Russian music, is strongly marked by national features which make it something special and apart. A number of purely musical features that are outside the tradition and usage of the music of Western civilization exist in Russian music. Many of these features, at first particular to Russian music, are now merged in the universal vocabulary and technique of music art.<sup>1</sup> In order to better understand the background of Rachmaninoff's era and his second piano concerto, the reader is provided with a brief summary of Russian music in the following pages. More detailed information can be obtained by referring to the literature listed at the end of this chapter.

The art of composition in Russia was born under highly particular circumstances. Prior to 1700 musical activity in Russia, aside from folk music, was restricted to the church. Until well into the nineteenth century "art" music in Russia was exclusively in the hands of imported Italian, French, or German composers. The Russian people had nothing to do with what is called "art" music, but they had their native music, an enormous variety of folk songs and dance tunes constituting a live and flourishing tradition.<sup>2</sup> This folk music always had a hold upon

the educated classes as well as upon the illiterate masses. Thus, Russian music owes much to the influence of native folk music and also to Eastern music.

Nationalism was a widespread movement of the nineteenth century that emphasized national features among the folk arts of the common people and particular national means of expression different from the cultural norms of the dominant group.<sup>3</sup> The trend was associated with the political nationalism of nineteenth-century Europe. The earliest development of nationalism in Russia took place, where music played an important role in the cultural change. The opposite side of musical nationalism was exoticism, a search for new effects from the folk music of other lands and peoples, generally those considered to be less spoiled by civilization.<sup>4</sup> By 1900 virtually every ethnic group in Europe from countries such as Russia, Bohemia, Scandinavia, Hungary, and England had developed its own national art music.

The art of musical composition in Russia began with Michael Glinka (1804-57), popularly known as "the father of Russian music" or "the father of Russian nationalists." He was the first composer who used the unusual melodic and rhythmic inflections of Russian folk songs.<sup>5</sup> Glinka's first opera, A Life for the Tsar was produced in 1836, an important work which introduced Russian music to the world. This historical opera was considered by Longyear to arouse strong national or patriotic feelings, featuring peasants or popular heroes as the central figures and expressing their music in the style of folk song and folk harmony.<sup>6</sup>

Glinka's tradition of national music was continued by Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-69), whose music contains a vein of lyricism lacking in Glinka's works and leads directly to the soaring melodies of Tchaikovsky.<sup>7</sup> Cesar Cui (1835-1918), Alexander Borodin (1833-87), Mily Balakiref (1837-1910), Modest Mussorgsky (1839-81), and Nicolas Rimsky-Korsakof (1844-1908), known as "the Five" or "Mighty Handful," followed and produced most of their best works about 40 years later. Their genius was oriented in the "thoroughly national direction."<sup>8</sup> Balakiref was acknowledged among them as the most important member and became guide and mentor to others. Balakiref's Oriental fantasy, Islamey, was the first and the most famous venture into the Lisztian field. Like Liszt's Tarantella, Islamey has a lyrical central episode based on a languorous melody.<sup>9</sup>

Other Russian composers turned to Western usage and even Western conventions.<sup>10</sup> One of these was Alexander Serov (1820-71), whose biblical opera Judith (1863) is in German oratorio style. Anton Rubinstein (1829-94), a famous virtuoso pianist and the founder of the St. Petersburg Conservatory (opened in 1862), brought much of Western standards of musical education to Russia.<sup>11</sup> His opera Demon (1875) is still popular in Russia.

Peter Tchaikovsky (1840-93) was far more oriented toward the West. His music was no less Russian in character than that of other composers, but he incorporated Russian folk music within an essentially Western framework in the first two of his six symphonies.<sup>12</sup> His lyricism is best seen in the slow movements of his symphonies, his operas (especially Eugene Onegin), and in his ballets. The melancholy tone of

his music, reflected in his wide use of minor keys, sharply contrasted to the vigorous national style of "the Five."<sup>13</sup>

Tchaikovsky's tradition was also continued by the piano virtuoso, Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943), one of the great Russian melodists of the lyric type after Tchaikovsky.<sup>14</sup> Minor followers of Tchaikovsky's include Anton Arensky (1861-1906) and Vassili Kalinnikov (1866-1901).

The national movement eventually declined, for there were no newcomers of genius to carry further a routine of composing on national lines. By 1900 musical nationalism in Europe had decreased in importance, and subsequent developments have generally ignored national or ethnic boundaries. Thus the character of Russian music continued to change gradually; the national element either became a matter of mere surface aspect and color or was entirely lacking, and a definitely non-national school came into being.<sup>15</sup>

The early modern school is represented by Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915) and Nicholai Medtner (1880-1951). Scriabin was a composer of the post-Romantic period, one whose music has no connection whatever with the nationalist movement.<sup>16</sup> His symphonic style stems from influences of Wagner and Liszt, while his sonatas, preludes, and piano etudes owe their inspiration to Chopin. However, his harmonic idiom is far more advanced than his models, and his melodic writing approaches atonality.

Shortly afterwards, Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) appeared and produced his first big work, The Fire Bird, in 1910. He revived the nationalist tradition for a while, afterwards proceeding, however, in very different directions.<sup>17</sup> In the 1920's he abandoned his national

style in favor of neoclassicism, and in the 1950's he adopted serial techniques.

After the 1917 advent of the Soviet revolution, an altogether new epoch began. Like all other human activities, composition had to comply with the dictates of Soviet ideology and policy instead of remaining governed by the composers' impulses and calculations, which compels the Soviet music to be regarded as something special and apart. The Party demanded more than simplicity of language, requiring an emphasis on folk song. One noteworthy consequence of this revolution was that nationalism not only came into favor again, but was also painstakingly fostered by the government, with far-reaching measures being taken to encourage composers to study and assimilate the native music of all the races within the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup>

Such is a brief history of Russian music. Not all of the composers or their works were mentioned here, oversimplifying the variety and amplifying the uniqueness of Russian music, but the general trends in nineteenth-century Russian music are outlined. Russian art music came into being on the line of nationalism, at a moment when, with the advent of Romanticism, new perspectives had opened to human thought. In the musical field Berlioz, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, and Wagner were at work, and the need to extend the vocabulary, technique, and range of the art made itself acutely felt.<sup>19</sup> During the growth of Romanticism, the development of music in Russia occurred within less than a century.



### HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF RACHMANINOFF

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born at Novgorod, Russia, on April 2, 1873 in a musical family. His grandfather studied piano with John Field, and his mother could play piano and taught him when he was young. His sister, Yelena Rachmaninoff, was a singer. His cousin Siloti was also a pianist, conductor, and a professor at Moscow Conservatory. When he was young, Rachmaninoff studied piano with his mother and then with Anna Ornatskaya, a graduate of St. Petersburg Conservatory. At the age of 10, he attended St. Petersburg Conservatory, founded by Anton Rubinstein in 1862, where he developed his skill as a pianist, although he did not accomplish the non-musical subjects very well.

At the age of 12 (1885) Rachmaninoff moved to Moscow Conservatory and became a pupil of Nikolai Zverev, who trained him to arrange symphonies for four hands in order to get the basic knowledge of music. At Moscow Conservatory Rachmaninoff studied harmony with Arensky, counterpoint with Taneyev and, later, piano with Siloti. He also met many famous musicians like Anton Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky at that time. His admiration of Tchaikovsky and his music strongly influenced his life and creative output.

In 1892 Rachmaninoff composed a one-act opera Aleko for his graduation, for which he won the Great Gold Medal of composition award. His world-famous piano piece, Prelude in c<sup>#</sup> minor, op. 3, no. 2, was written in the same year. When Tchaikovsky died in 1893, he composed a second Trio élégiaque, op. 9, and dedicated it to the memory of Tchaikovsky.

Rachmaninoff's Symphony no. 1 in d minor, composed in 1895, was first performed in 1897 by the conductor, Alexander Glazunov, but the work was harshly reviewed by several critics. Rachmaninoff was so disappointed that he lost self-confidence and suffered a severe mental breakdown. Thus, except for sketches for another symphony and ideas for an opera Francesca da Rimini, he was unable to produce any compositions for three years until he was cured by a psychologist, Dr. Nikolai Dahl, after which he composed works like the Second Piano Concerto (1901) and his Cello Sonata. During this silence as a composer, Rachmaninoff served as conductor for Mamontov's private opera, also giving a piano performance in London in 1899.

In 1902 Rachmaninoff married his first cousin Natalia Satina, a union which produced two daughters. Rachmaninoff worked as a conductor at the Bolshoi Theater between 1904 and 1906, a period when he finished two operas, The Miserly Knight and Francesca da Rimini. Both were first performed by Rachmaninoff in January, 1906, at the Bolshoi Theater. In 1906 he was forced to resign the conductor position because of political reasons during the first revolution in Russia, and he fled to Italy.

Rachmaninoff lived in Dresden during 1906-09, composing and making appearances throughout Europe. In 1909 he gave his first performance in the United States, the premiere of his Third Piano Concerto, which was dedicated to Josef Hofmann, performed with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch. Reviews for the new concerto were unfavorable.

In 1917 Rachmaninoff left his native country forever because of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution. He settled first in Stockholm, then in

Copenhagen, and finally moved to New York in 1918. After he left his country, he had to perform many concerts to earn his living, and he had no time to compose new works. Thus, he became recognized as a famous virtuoso pianist rather than a famous composer, creating most of his well-known compositions before leaving Russia in 1917.

In 1925 Rachmaninoff founded a publishing company, TAIR, in Paris in order to publish compositions of Russian composers. He wrote an article published in The New York Times (January 12, 1931), criticizing various Soviet policies. This criticism was countered in Russia by a ban on the performance and study of his works from 1931 to 1933.

In 1931 he revised his Second Sonata and composed the Variations on a Theme of Corelli, which is his last solo piano work. He composed the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini in 1934 and the Third Symphony in 1935-36. In 1940 he composed the Symphonic Dances, the last work which he wrote, and in 1941 he revised the Fourth Piano Concerto.

Even though he settled in America in 1918, Rachmaninoff and his family did not give up their Russian citizenship. On February 1, 1943, after 26 years of exile in America, Rachmaninoff and his wife received their final papers as United States citizens. Ironically, it seemed likely that the Soviet Government was ready to offer complete recognition to its musical son in exile. On March 28, 1943, Rachmaninoff died of cancer at his home in Beverly Hills.

Among numerous compositions by Rachmaninoff, some of his most famous works include a symphonic poem, The Isle of the Dead; his four piano concertos, preludes, and other short piano works; Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, a set of twenty four variations for piano and

orchestra; and many songs and transcriptions. Like Tchaikovsky's music, Rachmaninoff's works are highly melodic and often give melancholic mood with mostly minor keys, but his writing for piano is technically on the Chopin-Liszt framework of singing melodies and rich sonorities, decorated by elaborate embellishments.<sup>20</sup>

Rachmaninoff's concert manner was austere, contrasting sharply with a warm and generous personality revealed in the company of his family and close friends.<sup>21</sup> He possessed a formidable piano technique, and his playing (like his conducting) was marked by precision, rhythmic drive, a refined legato, and an ability for complete clarity in complex textures - qualities that he applied with sublime effect in his performances of Chopin, particularly the b<sup>b</sup> minor Sonata.<sup>22</sup>

Rachmaninoff gave advice to many but did not teach piano in the accepted meaning of the phrase, and so there is no Rachmaninoff school of playing.<sup>23</sup> Those to whom he gave advice included: Gina Bachauer, Hans Ebell, and Ruth Slenczynska. Bachauer wrote about Rachmaninoff in the article "My Study with Rachmaninoff"<sup>24</sup> which was reported by Dean Elder. Rachmaninoff wrote an article, "Essentials of Artistic Playing,"<sup>25</sup> for advice on piano playing.

### BACKGROUND OF THE SECOND CONCERTO

Rachmaninoff wrote five works for piano and orchestra, listed as follows:

- . Concerto No. 1 in F# minor, op. 1 in 1890-1 (revised in 1917)
- . Concerto No. 2 in C minor, op. 18 in 1900-1
- . Concerto No. 3 in D minor, op. 30 in 1909
- . Concerto No. 4 in G minor, op. 40 in 1926 (revised 1941)
- . Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini, op. 43 in 1934.<sup>26</sup>

According to Veinus, although Rachmaninoff belonged to the twentieth century, his works were composed with a conservatism that was intelligent and sincere.<sup>27</sup> He was capable of slow growth and retarded adaptation to newer idioms.<sup>28</sup> His orchestration technique was rich, and he employed various instruments properly in accordance with their individual properties.

Among Rachmaninoff's five works written for piano and orchestra, the Second Piano Concerto is probably the most popular. Based on fatalism and pessimism, it is filled with an impassioned melancholia and a Russian coloration combined with a brilliant solo part thrown in relief against a sonorous orchestration.<sup>29</sup> Sabaneyeff, who was a Russian critic in Rachmaninoff's era, said:

In Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto, the world of darkness seizes the hearer. This is no longer Tchaikovsky, it is far more gloomy and pessimistic than Tchaikovsky. In Rachmaninoff's darkness there is still more impenetrableness as well as more majesty and solemnity. The Moira or Fate which had confronted Beethoven as an object of struggle and subsequently victory, which had confronted Richard Wagner as a fellow-warrior and his equal, which had confronted Tchaikovsky as a spectacle of unspeakable terror and deathly lonesomeness, confronted Rachmaninoff as a terrifying and gloomy beauty, garbed in ineffable solemnity and sable majesty.<sup>30</sup>

The Second Concerto, composed in 1900-1901, was an important work in Rachmaninoff's life. The Secretary of the Philharmonic Society, Francesco Berger, invited Rachmaninoff to play in a London concert in 1899. While Berger and the composer discussed his First Concerto for this concert, he promised to compose a better one.<sup>31</sup> However, he could not compose the work during that year because he was suffering from severe mental depression. Rachmaninoff became a patient of psychologist Dr. Nikolai V. Dahl, who was also an amateur musician. For Rachmaninoff's treatment he used medical hypnosis: "You will begin to write your concerto... You will work with great facility... The concerto will be of an excellent quality..."<sup>32</sup> This hypnosis proved so successful that Rachmaninoff was able to write again, and the Second Piano Concerto, dedicated to Dr. Dahl, was the first composition after this treatment. Rachmaninoff recalled that "as the piece had had a great success in Moscow, everyone began to wonder what possible connection it could have with Dr. Dahl. The truth, however, was known only to Dahl, the Satins (his cousin's family), and myself."<sup>33</sup>

Rachmaninoff composed the second and third movements of the Second Piano Concerto in the autumn of 1900. These two movements, performed without the first movement, were premiered in a concert organized by Princess Lieven and Varvara Satina for the Ladies' Charity Prison Committee on December 2, 1900, at Nobility Hall, Moscow.<sup>34</sup> Rachmaninoff was the pianist, and the conductor was Siloti, who was also pianist, conductor, and Rachmaninoff's cousin and teacher.

This concert was successful. In Russkaya Muzykalnaya Gazeta, Lipayev, a Rachmaninoff well-wisher, wrote:

Siloti, Chaliapin, Rachmaninoff could not complain of an indifferent public. It's been very long since I've seen such a huge audience at a concert - not since Rubinstein's Historical Concerts; and it's been long since the walls of the Nobility Hall reverberated with such enthusiastic, storming applause as on that evening... Rachmaninoff appeared both as pianist and composer. Most interesting were two movements from an unfinished Second Piano Concerto. This work contains much poetry, beauty, warmth, rich orchestration, healthy and buoyant creative power. Rachmaninoff's talent is evident throughout.<sup>35</sup>

The concerto was completed on April 21, 1901. Although he was satisfied with the successful performance of the second and third movements, he still lacked self-confidence. On October 22, 1901, Rachmaninoff wrote frantically to one of his friends, Nikita Semyonovic Morozov:

You are right, Nikita Semyonovic! I've just played over the first movement of my concerto and only now it has become suddenly clear to me that the transition from the first theme to the second is not good, and that in this form the first theme is no more than an introduction - and that when I begin the second theme no fool would believe it to be a second theme. Everybody will think this the beginning of the concerto. I consider the whole movement ruined, and from this minute it has become positively hideous to me. I'm simply in despair! And why did you pester me with your analysis five days before the performance!<sup>36</sup>

All three movements of the concerto were first performed by Rachmaninoff on October 27, 1901, in Moscow, during a successful concert of the Moscow Philharmonic Society conducted by Siloti.<sup>37</sup> Almost another six months had passed before he finally believed in his abilities and in the quality of his work.<sup>38</sup> Rachmaninoff won the Glinka

Prize in 1904 for the Second Piano Concerto.<sup>39</sup> The orchestral score and the composer's arrangement for two pianos were published by Gutheil in October, 1901.<sup>40</sup>



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## CHAPTER III

### ANALYSIS

#### INTRODUCTION

The true value of music is not fully appreciated until it is interpreted by a performer, i.e., music has to come alive through performance. It is logically expected that the performer can express the music more accurately when the music to be performed is understood fully by the performer. One way of understanding a music composition is through analysis. Apel defined music analysis as follows:

With reference to music, the study of a composition with regard to form, structure, thematic material, harmony, melody, phrasing, orchestration, etc. Analysis of composition plays a predominant part in musical instruction (as a practical application of technical studies in harmony, counterpoint, orchestration) and in writing on music."<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this document is to analyze Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto from my viewpoint as a performer.

Several editions were currently available for the concerto, including those available from Boosey & Hawkes (15209, 16674 for 2 pianos, and miniature score HPS 17); International Music Company; Schirmer; Leeds Music; and Broude Bros. The score used in the research for this document was the International Music Company edition, edited by Isidor Philipp. Rachmaninoff segmented his score into 39 rehearsal

units, indexed sequentially. For ease of referencing each measure, ordinal numbers are assigned sequentially on the measures in each rehearsal unit. With this provision each measure can be referenced by a rehearsal unit number and a measure offset number in the rehearsal unit. For example, r.8/m.1 means rehearsal unit 8, measure 1.

The orchestration of Rachmaninoff's five works for piano and orchestra contains a common set of instruments and some additional instruments for each work. The common instruments are 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 4 horns, 3 trombones, timpani, percussion, and strings. The extra instruments employed additionally to the common set are piccolo, English horn, tuba, and harp. These are compared for each work and listed in Table 1.

The orchestration of the Second Piano Concerto contains the common instruments listed above and a tuba. Rachmaninoff used horns, flutes and clarinets for solo instruments in this work. Flutes and clarinets are used effectively, especially in the second movement for melodic timbres. He also used a cymbal effectively. Piggott mentioned that ". . . one should not miss such a delicate touch as the soft cymbal clashes which add spice to the orchestral chords punctuating the piano's triplet melody in the meno mosso sections of the finale."<sup>2</sup>

Table 1  
 Comparison of Orchestrations of  
 Rachmaninoff's Five Works for Piano and Orchestra

Common Instruments					
2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 trumpets, 4 horns, 3 trombones, timpani, percussion, and strings.					
Extra instruments					
Title	Opus	Piccolo	English Horn	Tuba	Harp
Concerto No. 1	Op. 1	-	-	-	-
Concerto No. 2	Op. 18	-	-	1	-
Concerto No. 3	Op. 30	-	-	1	-
Concerto No. 4	Op. 40	1	1	1	-
Rhapsody	Op. 43	1	1	1	1

The Second Concerto consists of three movements: Moderato, Adagio sostenuto, and Allegro scherzando. The large tonal schemes of all three movements are c minor, E major, and c minor, respectively. The detailed tonal schemes will be discussed for each movement. The following sections will contain a formal analysis of each movement of the Second Concerto.

#### FIRST MOVEMENT: MODERATO

The first movement is in sonata-allegro form: Exposition, Development, Recapitulation, and Coda. Both the first themes in the Exposition and the Recapitulation of this movement are in the tonic key of c minor. Generally, the second theme in the Exposition is in the key of the dominant if the tonic is major, and it is in the relative key if the tonic is minor. The second theme in the Recapitulation is in the tonic key. In Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto, however, the key of the second theme in the Recapitulation does not follow this normal process. The second theme is in E<sup>b</sup> major in the Exposition and is in A<sup>b</sup> major instead of the generally expected c minor in the Recapitulation. Thus, the second theme in the Exposition is a third higher than the tonic, while it is a third lower than the tonic in the Recapitulation, forming a symmetric axis relationship about the tonic. The same axis relationship can be found in the third movement of Rachmaninoff's First Concerto.<sup>3</sup> The overall form of the first movement is presented in Table 2.

Table 2  
Form of the First Movement

Section	Label	Rehearsal Unit and Measure Numbers	Keys
Exposition	✓ Introduction	m.1*	f-c
	Theme I a	r.1/m.1	c
	b	r.2/m.1	c
	Transition 1	r.3/m.9	c
	Theme II	r.4/m.9	E <sup>b</sup>
	Transition 2	r.6/m.9	c-E <sup>b</sup>
Development	Section 1	r.7/m.9	c
	Section 2	r.8/m.1	g-B <sup>b</sup> -b <sup>b</sup> -c
	Section 3	r.8/m.17	
	Section 4	r.9/m.1	
	Section 5	r.9/m.9	
	Transition 3	r.10/m.1	c
Recapitulation	Theme I a	r.10/m.9	c
	b	r.11/m.1	c
	Transition 4	r.12/m.10	c
	Theme II	r.13/m.1	A <sup>b</sup> -c
	Transition 5	r.15/m.1	c
Coda		r.16/m.1	c

\* r.i/m.j denotes measure j in rehearsal unit i.



### Exposition

While many other concertos begin with orchestra, the first movement of Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto, like Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, is introduced by piano solo. Figure 1 shows the introduction of Rachmaninoff's Exposition. The introduction consists of 10 measures for piano solo. Before the introduction establishes the tonic key of c minor in measure 9, it begins with full chords moving over a pedal point of F (iv chord). The key modulation occurs in measure 8. Four notes in measures 8 and 9 are the basic motif of all three movements. Then the piano enters with arpeggios and accompanies the orchestra.

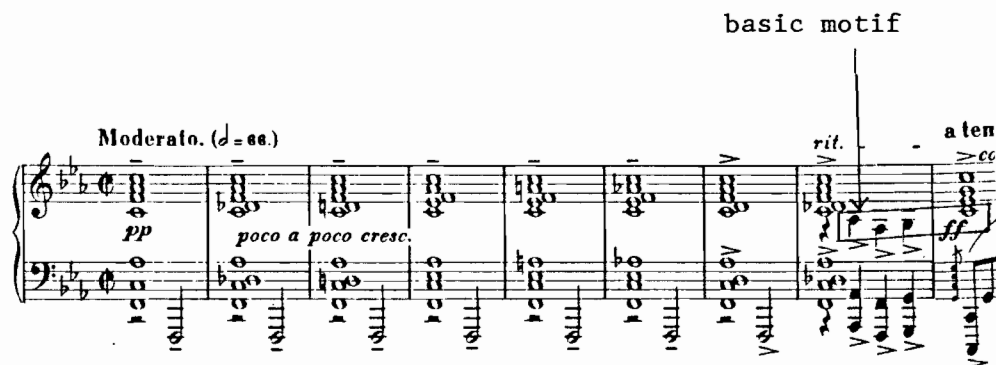


Figure 1. Introduction, 1st Movement

As shown in Figure 1, the beginning eight chords for piano have a gradual crescendo from pp to ff. Thus, these are recommended to be played without any breaks in order to give a magnificent feeling. However, each of the chords for the left hand is spaced so widely that a small hand can hardly reach the notes without a break. A possible suggestion is to skip some notes or to arpeggiate the chords. In actual

performance this compromise does not sacrifice too much. However, a more efficient solution was suggested by Slenczynska<sup>4</sup>:

(a) Gently push both hands inward toward the keyboard cover. With luck the thumb on A<sup>b</sup> will sound for the first chords. Emphasize top C, treble.

(b) Starting with this chord and continuing for all the succeeding ones, play the bottom left hand F with the right hand chord and then break the left hand chord as quickly as possible.

(c) The impact of landing on the thumb tip after the fast break will cause the left hand to fly in the air, wrist highest - a perfect position from which to plan the magnificent sound of lower F. Play this low note after the left hand describes an aerial arc: Three fingers play simultaneously. Left hand should be at a right angle to the keyboard.

The fingering for each of the above suggestions is given in Figure 2.

As shown in Figure 2 (a), using the third finger is much efficient than the second.



Figure 2. Fingering Suggestions for the Introduction Chords

The orchestra (violins, violas, clarinet) starts with the first theme at r.1 (Figure 3). The first theme (Theme I) has two different melodies (Theme a and Theme b). Theme a consists of a double period.

The violins, cellos, and violas play Theme b in r.2, and the piano still plays the arpeggio figurations for the accompaniment. The piano enters Theme b at r.3. Theme a of Theme I is very similar with the third movement, measure 1 of r.38 (Figure 4, bassoon part). Because the third movement was written earlier than the first movement, it is often stated that Theme a of the first theme of the first movement is derived from the third movement.



Theme a



Theme b

Figure 3. Theme I (Theme a and Theme b), 1st Movement



Figure 4. Measure 1 of r.38, 3rd Movement

Transition 1 leads to the second theme (Figure 5). The second theme is in  $E^b$  major, which is the relative major of the tonic key. Its structure consists of a 10-measure irregular period with an authentic cadence. Measures 12-13 of r.4 are in a type of chromatic twist. The same type appears again in measures 10-11 of r.17 of the second movement (Figure 6). The dynamic marking ' $\langle \rangle$ ' is subordinated to the melodic line of the second theme. This theme is a song-like, beautiful melody, which is a typical characteristic of Rachmaninoff.



Figure 5. Theme II, 1st Movement



(a)



(b)

Figure 6. (a) Measures 12-13 of r.4, 1st Movement;  
 (b) Measures 10-11 of r.17, 2nd Movement

The 10-measure extension is added at measure 1 of r.5. Rachmaninoff shows the short contrapuntal treatment between cellos and piano at measures 1-4 of r.5 (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Measures 1-4 of r.5: Contrapuntal Treatment in 1st Movement

The second theme has a variation (Figure 8) in measures 11-18 of r.5. The melody of the variation is in octaves, and it has the inner voice in the right-hand part of the piano. The extended four measures after the variation canonically repeats at the octave (played by the oboe and clarinet) while the piano continues the canon at the 4th (Figure 9).<sup>5</sup>

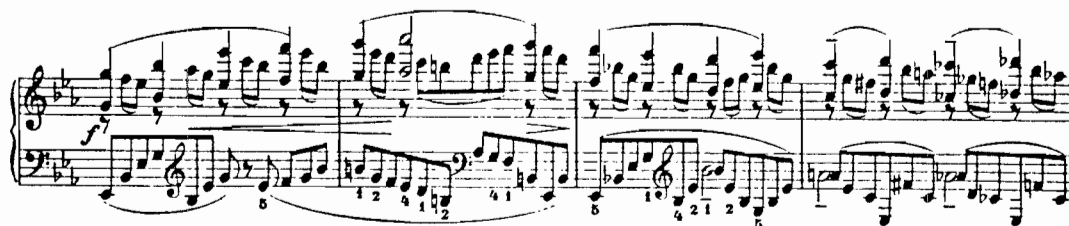


Figure 8. Variation of the Theme II, 1st Movement



Figure 9. Measure 19 of r.5 and Measures 1-2 of r.6: Canon in 1st Movement

Transition 2 (Figure 10) is based on the rising figurations in piano, first violins, and clarinet. The figuration in the treble of the piano part is in broken-chord form.



Figure 10. Transition 2, 1st Movement

The exposition ends with the figurations of 16th notes in arpeggiated form and a 'pianissimo' dynamic mark. The "Un poco piu mosso" section begins in  $E^b$  major, but it modulates to the key of c minor.

### Development

The development can be divided into five sections. The phrase structure is 8+8 at the beginning, and later becomes 4+4 at Section 3 to Section 5. The elements of the Development are derived from the first and second theme (Figure 11).



(a)



(b)

Figure 11. (a) Development, Measures 9-11 of r.7, 1st Movement;  
 (b) Development, Measures 1-2 of r.9, 1st Movement

Section 1 consists of the fragments of the first theme and the basic motif. The Development begins in c minor. Section 2 opens in g minor and later modulates to B<sup>b</sup> major and b<sup>b</sup> minor. The material of this section is based on the first theme. The treble of the piano part contains the basic motif, and the phrase structure is 8+8.

Section 4 contains elements of both the first and the second themes. The element of the first theme (from Theme b) appears in the flute and oboe parts in diminution. The element of the second theme is played by the clarinet, horn, and violas.



Section 5 is in fragmented tonalities mostly with B<sup>b</sup> major, g minor, and c minor. The clarinets and first violins play the melodic lines which are derived from the second theme. The massive chords in this section require great strength from the piano soloist. Since the source of strength is not a stroke of fingers but wrist control, the latter may be efficient in keeping energetic strength. The wrist-down motion is adequate for producing the larger sound, while the wrist-up motion is more adequate for the smaller and softer sound. After the wrist-down motion the hand should be relaxed immediately in order to avoid being tightened. Figure 12 shows a possible suggestion of wrist-up or -down motion in playing measures 9-13 in r.9. Notice that all the accent marks can be played with the wrist-down motion.

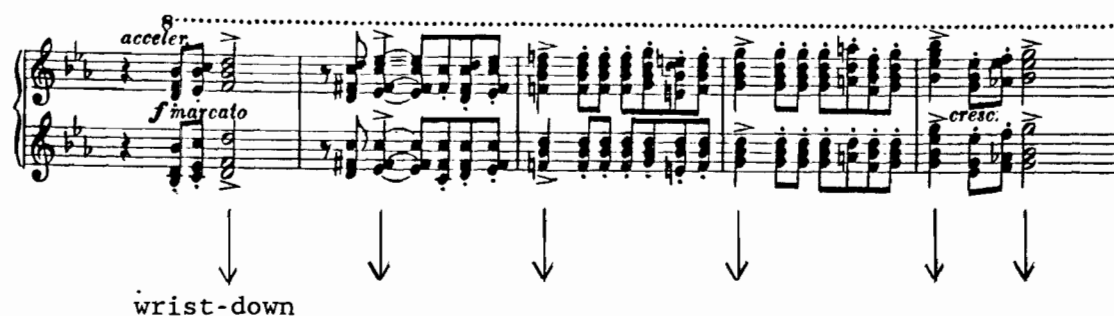


Figure 12. Use of wrist control for Measures 9-13 in r.9

The tempo is changed several times in the Development: 'Moto precedente' at the beginning, then 'Piu vivo' ( $\text{♩}=76$ ), 'piu vivo' ( $\text{♩}=80$ ), and 'allegro' at the end.

The recapitulation is reached after Transition 3 (Figure 13). The orchestra plays the basic motif while the piano adds triplet-chord passages in c minor in this transition.



Figure 13. Transition 3, 1st Movement

### Recapitulation

The sections of the Recapitulation are: Theme I (Theme a and Theme b), Transition 4, Theme II, and Transition 5. Theme a is stated by the strings, and the piano part accompanies with massive chords which carry the basic motif. Theme b of Theme I appears at r.11, played by the piano, and Theme I is in the tonic key.

The second theme is now presented in A<sup>b</sup> major which is a third lower than the tonic key, while the second theme of the Exposition is a third higher than the tonic key. The theme, an augmentation of Theme II from the Exposition, is played by the solo horn, accompanied by tremolo strings, clarinets, and bassoons.

Theme II is extended from r.14, in which the woodwinds and the piano carry the basic motif and the piano presents the theme in augmentation. The key of this extension is in c minor. This section,

which Anderson calls 'interlude,'<sup>6</sup> leads to Transition 5 which has the nature of a free rhapsody.<sup>7</sup>

A cadenza appears regularly in the first movement of many concertos for the solo instrument to allow the performer to exhibit his or her technical mastery and virtuosity. It usually appears near the end of the Recapitulation but sometimes less elaborately in the other movements, as well. However, this is not the case in this concerto, for there is no cadenza for the piano.

### Coda

A coda commences softly from r.16 with the dynamic level of 'pp' in the key of c minor (Figure 14). The piano plays 16th-note passages while the orchestra accompanies the piano with light staccato chords, and the tempo is increased slightly. Confirming the impression of finality, the Coda concludes with triplet chords at the dynamic level of 'ff' in c minor.



Figure 14. Coda, 1st Movement

## SECOND MOVEMENT: ADAGIO SOSTENUTO

The second movement of the Second Concerto is nocturne-like in form and character. The melody of the theme is distinguished by Rachmaninoff's typical profile of laziness and slumber.<sup>8</sup> This movement is similar to one of Rachmaninoff's earlier works, namely, Romance, arranged for six hands at one keyboard, which Rachmaninoff composed for the three Skalon sisters in 1891. Thus, the second movement of the Second Concerto has the same accompaniment figuration as found in Romance.<sup>9</sup> The differences between them are key and melody. For comparison of their similarities and differences, the beginning passage of Romance is shown in Figure 15.



Figure 15. Romance

The second movement is in the monothematic first rondo form (ternary form ABA ) and includes a coda.<sup>10</sup> The rondo form has often been used for the final movement of sonatas and concertos for a joyful conclusion. The first and the third section corresponding to the

Exposition and the Recapitulation, respectively, uses the same material, which carries the principal theme of the second movement of the Second Concerto. The middle section is based on the principal theme and is elaborated in the style of a development. An outline of the second movement is presented in Table 3.

Table 3  
Form of the Second Movement

Section	Label	Rehearsal Unit and Measure Numbers	Keys
Introduction		m.1-8*	c-E(I)
A	Principal Theme	r.17/m.1 r.18/m.1	E(I) E
Transition 1		r.19/m.1	B(V)
Development	Segment 1	r.19/m.9	f <sup>#</sup> -c <sup>#</sup> -d-e
	Segment 2	r.21/m.1	e-b-c-G
	Segment 3	r.22/m.7	G-E-A-f <sup>#</sup>
Transition 2		r.23/m.1	f <sup>#</sup> -e-E
Cadenza		r.25/m.1	
A	Principal Theme	r.25/m.12	E(I)
Coda		r.27/m.1	E

\* r.i/m.j denotes measure j in rehearsal unit i.

The second movement is introduced by the orchestra in c minor, which is the same key used in the first movement. A modulation to E major (Figure 16) is effected through Rachmaninoff's use of an enharmonic change. The expected  $A^b$  - submediant of c minor - on the third beat of bar 3 appears as  $G^\sharp$ , thereby forming, with the  $F^\sharp$ , the dominant seventh of the key of  $C^\sharp$ , into which the music appears to be going until it sinks quietly into E major on the first beat of bar 5.<sup>11</sup>



Figure 16. Introduction, 2nd Movement

With the established key of E major in measure 5 the piano begins softly with triplet arpeggio figurations. The flute plays the first part of the principal theme from measure 1 of r.17 with the piano providing accompaniment (Figure 17). The clarinet enters at measure 5 in r.17, playing the second part of the principal theme (Figure 18). The roles between the piano and the orchestra are reversed in r.18 as the piano plays the principal theme while the orchestra provides descending arpeggio figurations for the accompaniment.



Figure 17. The first part of the Principal Theme, 2nd Movement



Figure 18. The second part of the Principal Theme, 2nd Movement

In alternation of roles between the piano and orchestra, it is important to maintain the balance between them. When the piano plays the theme, the orchestra provides an accompaniment and must play quieter than the piano, and the situation should be reversed when the orchestra plays the theme. A careful treatment is also required in playing the triplet arpeggio passages (see Figure 19). It is difficult to keep the



triplet rhythms while still following the melodic lines. If the player is stuck on the melody, then the rhythm may be off, and vice versa.

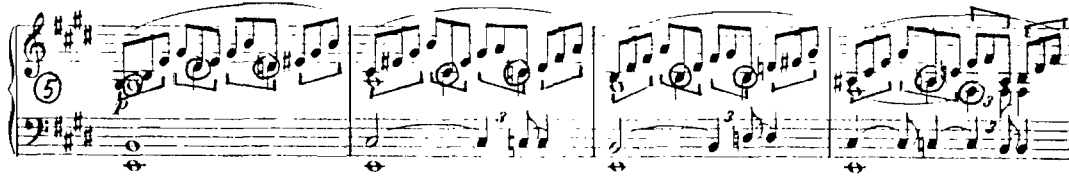


Figure 19. Triplet Arpeggio Passage, Measures 5-8, 2nd Movement

Transition 1, which intervenes between the first section and the middle section of the rondo form, begins at r.19. This transition also carries the first part of the principal theme; however the piano and the orchestra again switch roles, as the orchestra plays the principal theme with the piano accompaniment. The piano plays triplet arpeggio passages in B major, which is the dominant key of the tonic.

The middle section of the ternary rondo begins at measure 9 of r.19 in the key of  $f^{\#}$  minor, containing no new material which is completely different from the first section of the rondo. Rather this section is in the style of a development. Measures 9-12 of r.19 and measures 9-12 of r.20 (Figure 20) are variant figurations developed from the second part of the principal theme.

19 *Un poco più animato.*

(a)

20 *a tempo*

(b)

Figure 20. (a) Measures 9-12 of r.19, 2nd Movement;  
 (b) Measures 9-12 of r.20, 2nd Movement

The phrase structure of the beginning part of the Development is 4+4, and it changes to 3+3 in measures 1-6 of r.22. The rest of the section is in irregular structure.

The development can be divided into three segments. Segment 1 is from measure 9 of r.19, and Segment 2 starts at measure 1 of r.21. Although Segment 2 is basically a repetition of Segment 1, there are slight differences between the two. The key of Segment 2 is in e minor, which is a major second lower than that of Segment 1. The orchestra part has been changed slightly, and the rhythm for the piano part changes from triplets to 16ths in measure 9 of r.21. Segment 3 (Figure 21) commences at measure 7 of r.22. It is in G major, then changes to E major, A major, and f# minor. The basic motif of the first movement is contained in this segment and written in the treble of the piano part.



Figure 21. Measures 7-10 of r.22, 2nd Movement

Transition 2 appears at r.23 just before the Cadenza. It is in f# minor, the continuing key of Segment 3, before shifting to e minor and E major. It consists of scales, arpeggios, chromatics, and trills. All

of these elements are technically difficult to play, especially as the tempo accelerates. This difficulty in performance allows the soloist to exhibit his or her technical skills, as the piano assumes a commanding role. Thus, this section may be considered a cadenza itself even though the orchestra accompanies the piano. Ward calls this section a cadenza with orchestral accompaniment.<sup>12</sup> A dramatic conclusion is reached with a forte-sforzando chord before reaching the short cadenza, which begins at measure 1 of r.25 (Figure 22). Cadenzas are usually based on the themes of the movement, but this is not the case in this work, as Rachmaninoff introduces new material.



Figure 22. Cadenza, 2nd Movement

The third section of the ABA ternary rondo form begins at measure 8 of r.25 with the return of arpeggio passages for piano. Four measures later the principal theme appears again in the tonic key of E major. At this time the violins play the principal theme which was played by the flute and clarinet at the beginning of the movement.

The Coda begins at r.27 in E major with melodious descending chords for the right hand and arpeggio passages for the left hand of the piano part (Figure 23). At the same time the flutes and clarinets play

staccato chords with triplet rhythm, and the strings play long-line phrases. The movement ends beautifully, as the piano projects a quiet mood.



Figure 23. Coda, 2nd Movement

### THIRD MOVEMENT: ALLEGRO SCHERZANDO

The third movement of the Second Concerto is in a playful and lively mood. It is in sonatina form without a development section, and is referred to by Coolidge as "Enlarged Sonatina Form."<sup>13</sup> It has only three sections: Exposition, Recapitulation, and Coda. However, the first theme which appears again in the Recapitulation is not exactly the same as that found in the Exposition. It has been developed from the Exposition theme, with added figurations. Thus, it can be considered that the development section has been merged into the Recapitulation. The overall form of the third movement is presented in Table 4.

Table 4  
Form of the Third Movement

Section	Label	Rehearsal Unit and Measure Numbers	Keys
Exposition	Introduction	m.1*	E-c
	Cadenza	m.21	c
	Theme I	r.28/m.1	c
	a	r.28/m.1	c
	b	r.28/m.11	c
	a	r.29/m.1	c
	c	r.29/m.11	E <sup>b</sup> -C-A <sup>b</sup>
	a	r.30/m.8	c
	Transition 1	r.30/m.16	B <sup>b</sup>
	Theme II	r.30/m.24	B <sup>b</sup>
	Closing Theme	r.32/m.1	E <sup>b</sup> -c
	Transition 2	r.32/m.13	c
Recapitulation	Theme I	r.32/m.21	c
	a'	r.32/m.21	c
	c	r.33/m.1	A <sup>b</sup> -f
	a"	r.33/m.9	c-G-f- E <sup>b</sup> -g-c
	Transition 3	r.36/m.1	c-D <sup>b</sup>
	Theme II	r.36/m.23	D <sup>b</sup>
	Closing Theme	r.37/m.31	b <sup>b</sup> -D <sup>b</sup> -c
Coda		r.38/m.1	c-d-G-C
	Cadenza	r.39/m.37	C

\* r.i/m.j denotes measure j in rehearsal unit i.

### Exposition

The introduction of the third movement commences with orchestra, giving a hint of the rhythm of the first theme (Figure 24).<sup>14</sup> It begins in E major, the key of the second movement, before modulating to c minor for the finale. The modulation occurs in measures 12-13 of the introduction (Figure 25). Rachmaninoff used the basic motif in diminution in measures 14-15. The figuration of these measures is the same as that of measures 9-10 of r.7 at the first movement (Figure 26). Because the third movement was written earlier than the first movement, it may be concluded that the basic motif of measures 9-10 in the first movement was derived from measures 14-15 of the third movement.

A cadenza, which usually appears toward the end of a movement, appears at measure 21 in the introduction in the key of c minor. This cadenza also appears again before the 'Maestoso' section of the Recapitulation, written this time in the key of C major.



Figure 24. Introduction, 3rd Movement



Figure 25. Measures 12-13 of the Introduction, 3rd Movement



Figure 26. Comparison of Measures 9-10 of r.7, 1st Movement and Measures 14-15 in the Introduction, 3rd Movement

The first theme (Figure 27) begins with a piano solo at measure 1 of r.28. The mood of this theme is quite light. Culshaw writes, "This is something in the nature of a dance, and is about the closest Rachmaninoff gets in this work to an expression of the lighter emotions."<sup>15</sup> The form of the first theme is close to the five-part song form, i.e., a-b-a-c-a.<sup>16</sup> Theme a appears three times, and the key is in c minor for every occurrence.





Figure 27. Theme 1, 3rd Movement

A potential difficulty in performing the first theme is to express the light, lively dance rhythms and also to keep the proper tempo. As shown in Figure 28 there are two accents in this theme, and these could be controlled with the wrist-down motions explained earlier. However, they are so close together that it is difficult to keep the tempo if the wrist-down motions are used for both accents. To solve this difficulty the pianist may get rid of the first accent and use the wrist-up motion (high position of the wrist) to produce a light sound. The second accent may still be played by the wrist-down motion, as shown in Figure 28:

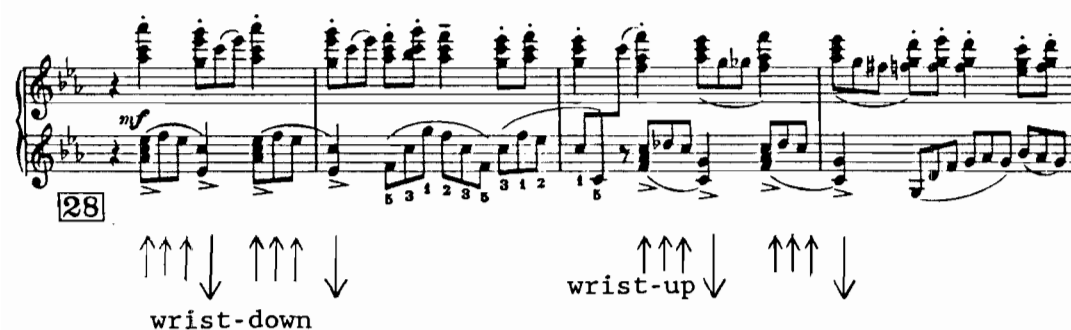


Figure 28. Measures 1-4 in r.28, 3rd Movement

Transition 1 starts at measure 16 of r.30 (Figure 29) in the key of Bb major. The same key is used for Theme II which follows Transition 1, and the elements of Transition 1 are based on those of Theme I.

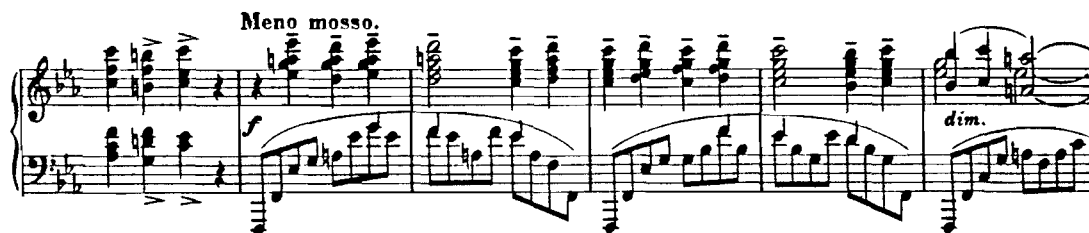


Figure 29. Transition 1, 3rd Movement

The second theme (Figure 30) is in B<sup>b</sup> major, the interval of a second below that of the tonic key. Theme II in the Recapitulation is in Db major, which is a second above the tonic key, resulting in an axis relationship. The second theme is a lengthy one, played first by an oboe and violas. Then the piano takes over and repeats the melody with some extension. It has been claimed that the well-known melody is not a Rachmaninoff original. Seroff writes that:

On his return to Russia (from Italy, 1900), Sergei wrote the last two movements of his future Second Piano Concerto. Incidentally, Sabaneyeff, who had known both Rachmaninoff and Morozov, told me that the second theme in the last movement came from Nikita Morozov. Sergei heard this melody which Morozov composed, and remarked: "Oh, that is a melody I should have composed." Morozov, who worshipped his friend, said calmly: "Well, why don't you take it?"<sup>17</sup>



Figure 30. Theme II, 3rd Movement

After the second theme ends deceptively on a sub-dominant chord ( $IV_2^6$ ), a closing theme (Figure 31) follows at measure 1 of r.32 in the key of  $E^b$  major. It consists of three phrases which end with trill marks. The piano plays a theme with triplet rhythms, and the orchestra plays light chords with the dynamic level of pianissimo. It is quite unusual to use the cymbal clashes with the  $B^b$  pedal point in a quiet mood. After the closing theme, Transition 2 leads to the Recapitulation.

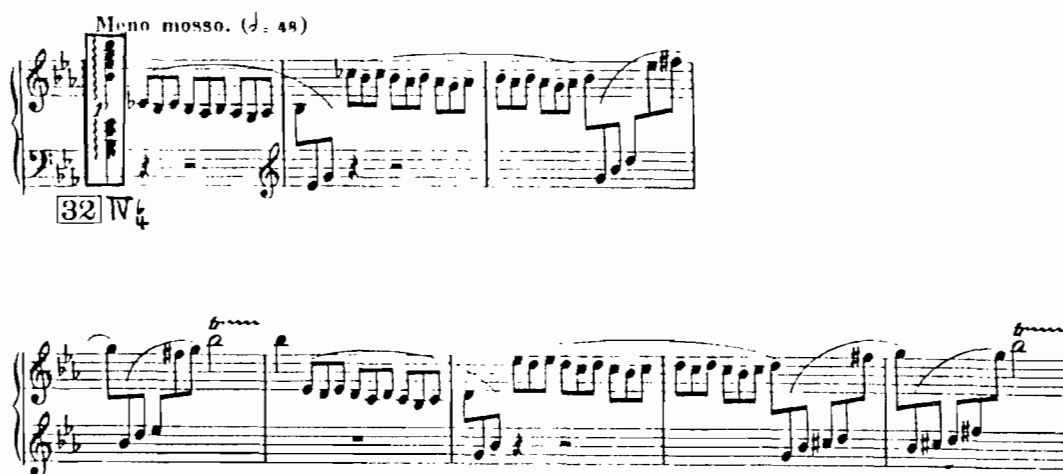


Figure 31. Closing Theme, 3rd Movement

### Recapitulation

After eight measures of Transition 2, the first theme returns in the tonic key of c minor. It is developed from Theme I of the Exposition, as shown in Figure 32. The tempo accelerates, moving from "allegro scherzando," then "piu mosso," to "presto." The "presto" section is based on Theme a of the first theme and is a dialogue between the piano and the orchestra. It contains a fugato treatment (Figure 33), in which the orchestra has more weight than the piano. The "presto" section does not require pianistically difficult skills, but it does require an absolute rhythmic security between the piano and the orchestra, especially for the fugato.



Figure 32. Developed Figuration of Theme I in Recapitulation, 3rd Movement



Figure 33. Fugato in Theme I of Recapitulation, 3rd Movement

After Transition 3, the second theme of the Recapitulation is presented by the first violins and a flute. It is in D<sup>b</sup> major, which is a second above the tonic, just as B<sup>b</sup> major was the key a second below in the Exposition (axis relationship).<sup>18</sup> The form of Theme II is also the same as that of Theme II of the Exposition except that two measures are added just before a closing theme, which contains again piano passages in triplets and soft cymbal clashes with orchestral chords as in the Closing Theme of the Exposition.

#### Coda

A coda begins in the tonic key at measure 1 of r.38. The main material of the Coda is a diminution and fragmentation of the first theme. In this section, Rachmaninoff's characteristic elements are presented by broken chord figurations, arpeggios, and massive chords. A cadenza appears again after a short four-measure phrase of tutti. The second theme is once again played 'Maestoso' by the orchestra in the key of C major. The piano takes a role of an accompaniment while playing a fragment of the first theme, and the concerto concludes in C major with massive chords.

#### COMPARISON OF THEMATIC ELEMENTS OF THE THREE MOVEMENTS

It cannot be said that the Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto has a cyclical thematic binding, but there are several places in the concerto which are related thematically or which have similar rhythmic patterns. Fragments which are thematically similar appear occasionally through all of the three movements, whether Rachmaninoff used them consciously or

not. All the fragments which are similar will be grouped and listed for the purpose of comparison.

Rachmaninoff used a diminution of the basic motif (measures 8-9) at the measure 10 of r. 7, 1st Movement and an augmentation of the basic motif at the measures 19-20 of r.35, 3rd Movement. As shown in Figure 34, the orchestra parts have the same intervals.



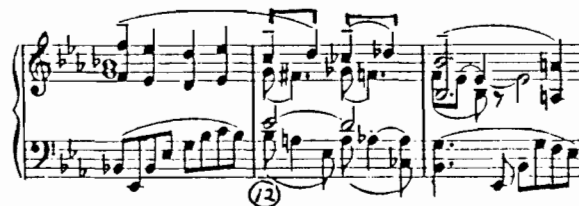
(a)



(b)

Figure 34. (a) Measure 10 of r.7, 1st Movement  
(b) Measures 19-20 of r.35, 3rd Movement

The treble parts of both measures 12-13 of r.4, 1st Movement and measures 10-11 of r.17, 2nd Movement are quite similar (see Figure 35).



(a)



(b)

Figure 35. (a) Measures 12-13 of r.4, 1st Movement;  
(b) Measures 10-11 of r.17, 2nd Movement

The rising and falling figuration of Theme II of the third movement is similar to that of the first movement as shown in Figure 36. According to Coolidge, "Theme II of the 1st movement may be cyclically patterned after the Theme II of the 3rd movement, having a similar rise and fall from and to certain fixed pitches as well as an aesthetic similarity."<sup>19</sup>





(a)



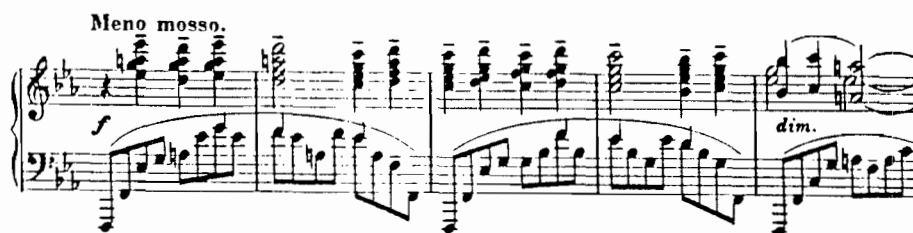
(b)

Figure 36. (a) Theme II of the 1st Movement;  
(b) Theme II of the 3rd Movement

A similarity in the rhythmic pattern can be found between measures 19-23 of r.5, 1st Movement and measures 27-31 of r.30, 3rd Movement (see Figure 37).



(a)



(b)

Figure 37. (a) Measures 19-23 of r.5, 1st Movement;  
 (b) Measures 27-31 of r.30, 3rd Movement

A diminution of the basic motif which Rachmaninoff used in the beginning of the first movement (measures 8-9, 1st Movement) appears in measures 9-11 of r.7, 1st Movement, measures 7-10 of r.22, 2nd Movement, and measures 14-15, 3rd Movement (Figure 38).



(a)



(b)



(c)

Figure 38. (a) Measures 9-11 of r.7, 1st Movement;  
 (b) Measures 7-10 of r.22, 2nd Movement;  
 (c) Measures 14-15, 3rd Movement

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## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The era of great musical composition in Russia began on the base of nationalism with Glinka (1804-57) in the early nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, however, two strong currents of ultra-traditional conservatism and radical innovation co-existed. The older Romantic tradition can be represented by Sergei Rachmaninoff. Although national features appear also in his music, Rachmaninoff continued the tradition of Tchaikovsky (1840-93), who was an outstanding Russian representative of the European romantic tradition. Rachmaninoff's music consists of opulent melodies, flexible rhythms, powerful sound, and rich orchestration. Like Tchaikovsky's music, Rachmaninoff's works are highly melodic and often give melancholic mood with mostly minor keys, but his writing for piano is technically as brilliant as that of Liszt.

Among Rachmaninoff's songs and piano pieces, the Second Piano Concerto in c minor, op. 18, composed in 1900-1901, is probably one of his most popular works. The concerto consists of three movements: Moderato, Adagio sostenuto, and Allegro scherzando. The large tonal scheme of all three movements is c minor, E major, and c minor, respectively. This work contains poetic, melancholy melodies, rich orchestration, and blend of power and variety of touches with Russian

coloration. It is also well-balanced between piano and orchestra, requiring a careful rhythmic coordination between them.

The true value of music is not fully appreciated until it is interpreted by a performer, i.e., music has to come alive through performance. The writer of this document performed Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 after a study of the background of this music and a detailed analysis of the musical score. Finding a limited amount of analysis for this work, I proposed to analyze this music from my viewpoint as a performer. The aspects of this analysis included orchestration, structure, key relationships, thematic material, phrasing, harmony, and performance problems. Also included were a survey and summary of the historical and social background of Russian music and of the composer.

While learning the concerto, I encountered performance problems including memorization, technical requirements, physical strength, and ensemble.

Memorization. The concerto requires approximately 35 minutes for performance. The beginning of the first movement contains arpeggiated figurations, which initially caused numerous memory errors. After analysis of this section, I solved the potential problem by "blocking" (reducing arpeggiations to block chords). This method was also adopted in memorization of the second movement.

Technical requirements. The concerto contains large stretches with complex inner parts, massive chords, rapid scale passages, and chromatics, all which are pianistically quite difficult to perform. Physical adaptation to large stretches was accomplished by first

performing the incomplete chord outlined for each hand before adding the inner notes of the chord. Because the third movement contains fast triplet rhythms, I found it difficult to maintain a steady tempo. This problem was eventually solved by selecting a slow tempo, checking tempo with a metronome, and gradually increasing speed until an appropriate performance tempo could be maintained.

Physical strength. A great amount of physical strength was needed to produce the loud, sonorous textures, especially required in the first and third movements. Prior to the final recital, it was found necessary to practice in sections and to relax at frequent intervals. Down-up wrist movements were utilized to take advantage of momentary opportunities for relaxation.

Two-piano ensemble. I found subtle differences between the performance of my teacher and the graduate student who performed the orchestral reduction for my final recital. The acoustical difference between piano studio and auditorium required careful listening. Visual cues were essential during the performance, as peripheral vision was utilized while achieving accurate rhythmic attacks and releases.

In summary, I found that careful analysis of the music was beneficial in realizing and compromising the technical difficulties required in performance. I believe that my comprehension of the composer's intentions and expression of the music was enhanced by a clear understanding of sections, key relationships, and harmonic/melodic patterns.



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