Kareith Dyce

MUSI 2733 – DL4

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Concert Report 1

This concert was by Sarah Niedzwiecki, a senior as a part of her graduation requirements. Her concert consisted of many diverse songs including one jazz song and a Russian classical song many of which were not originally written for piano and had to get transcribed to piano later.

The Lark was originally written in 1840 by Russian Composer Mikhail Glinka as the tenth and most popular song in a group of twelve songs entitled “Farewell to St. Petersburg”. These songs expressed the popular themes of Romanticism with The Lark showcasing the beauty of the Russian landscape. The Lark was later transcribed by Mily Balakirev in 1864 for piano where he added the flowing figuration. The start of this piece has a slow somber feel that lets the listener feel as if they are remembering something beautiful that they will not see for a long time or ever again. This is helped by the pauses in the music which allow you to reflect building on how this a painful farewell. The song keeps this slow somber feel until it hits a trill about halfway thru the song when the tempo speeds up a little and instead of hearing chords and a melody you now hear a melody and a counter melody emphasizing on the somberness of the song makes the mood feel much more dreary like what is not only important but will be hard to regain. After another trill the song slows back down to a similar feel to the beginning. Finally, the song ends with a decrescendo with two repeating sections where each note is held out before the final chord is played out like a final painful goodbye where there is nothing more to say.

During this time Russia was in conflict with Poland which explains all the feeling discussed earlier. Going off to battle is a bittersweet moment as you are going off to defend your country however you have to leave your family and life behind. There also is a chance that you will not return so you have to take in to take the beauty of your country as you fight to protect it. In Russian music history,  Glinka is known of the father of classical music as he was the first composer to gain major fame to the point where he was working under the tsar and later influencing the next generation of Russian composers Balakirev included. So this piece is one of the backbones of Russian classical music.

Etude No. 7 “Fascinatin’ Rhythm”  was my favorite piece as it was the most upbeat song that had a cheerful catchy jazz melody. The song started with many repeated sections that repeated only parts of the section to give a swinging feeling or that something is coming. This helped by having the music crescendo and immediately go soft and then repeats. This continues for a few times and then the melody breaks out. The use of high pitch notes combined with the fast tempo allows for this cheerful mood. The melody is repeated throughout with song however with tweaks to both the octave and the notes played. In the middle repetitions the melody returns however it is accompanied by a “laughing sound” which was produced by the chords. Near the end the melody was broken up by mini chormatic scales and the melody’s pitch was increased each repetition and then after reaching the peak it started decreasing each time. This were the song ends. With the exception of the ending the mood of the song was cheerful and bouncy while the end implied the end of it.

This is a jazz song in that was written in 1924 in the middle of the “roaring twenties” which it definity feels like with the upbeat melody. It was written by George Gershwin who was a famous jazz composer at the time. It was later transcripted for piano by Earl Wild who did this to many jazz songs. While he did write some songs by himself he is mostly known for conscripting. Even though jazz was generally meant for instruments like the saxophone the jazz feel was not lost.

Overall I actually enjoyed the performance. It was much better than I expected and I was really impressed with the performance Especially the first song which lasted 20 minutes and was played extremely well from memory. It was interesting actually listening to a concert and trying to see all the effort that the composers, transcribers and, performers do to make each performance and piece great and unique.