

= Dmitri Shostakovich =

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (Russian : Дмитрий Дмитриевич Шостакович , tr . Dmitriy Dmitrievich Shostakovich , pronounced [ʲdʲmʲitrʲʲ ʲdʲmʲitrʲʲvʲʲtʲ ʲʂʲtʲʲkʲʲvʲʲtʲ] ; 25 September 1906 ? 9 August 1975) was a Soviet composer and pianist , and a prominent figure of 20th @-@ century music .

Shostakovich achieved fame in the Soviet Union under the patronage of Soviet chief of staff Mikhail Tukhachevsky , but later had a complex and difficult relationship with the government . Nevertheless , he received accolades and state awards and served in the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (1947 ? 1962) and the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union (from 1962 until his death) .

A poly @-@ stylist , Shostakovich developed a hybrid voice , combining a variety of different musical techniques into his music . Shostakovich 's music is characterized by sharp contrasts , elements of the grotesque , and ambivalent tonality ; the composer was also heavily influenced by the neo @-@ classical style pioneered by Igor Stravinsky , and (especially in his symphonies) by the post @-@ Romanticism associated with Gustav Mahler .

Shostakovich 's orchestral works include 15 symphonies and six concerti . His chamber output includes 15 string quartets , a piano quintet , two piano trios , and two pieces for string octet . His piano works include two solo sonatas , an early set of preludes , and a later set of 24 preludes and fugues . Other works include three operas , several song cycles , ballets , and a substantial quantity of film music ; especially well known is The Second Waltz , Op. 99 , music to the film The First Echelon (1955 ? 1956) , as well as the Suites composed for The Gadfly .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Born at Podolskaya street in Saint Petersburg , Russia , Shostakovich was the second of three children of Dmitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich and Sofiya Vasilievna Kokoulina . Shostakovich 's paternal grandfather , originally surnamed Szostakowicz , was of Polish Roman Catholic descent (his family roots trace to the region of the town of Vileyka in today 's Belarus) , but his immediate forebears came from Siberia . A Polish revolutionary in the January Uprising of 1863 ? 4 , Bolesław Szostakowicz would be exiled to Narym (near Tomsk) in 1866 in the crackdown that followed Dmitri Karakozov 's assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander II . When his term of exile ended , Szostakowicz decided to remain in Siberia . He eventually became a successful banker in Irkutsk and raised a large family . His son , Dmitri Boleslavovich Shostakovich , the composer 's father , was born in exile in Narim in 1875 and studied physics and mathematics in Saint Petersburg University , graduating in 1899 . He then went to work as an engineer under Dmitri Mendeleev at the Bureau of Weights and Measures in Saint Petersburg . In 1903 , he married another Siberian transplant to the capital , Sofiya Vasilievna Kokoulina , one of six children born to a Russian Siberian native .

Their son , Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich , displayed significant musical talent after he began piano lessons with his mother at the age of nine . On several occasions , he displayed a remarkable ability to remember what his mother had played at the previous lesson , and would get " caught in the act " of playing the previous lesson 's music while pretending to read different music placed in front of him . In 1918 , he wrote a funeral march in memory of two leaders of the Kadet party , murdered by Bolshevik sailors .

In 1919 , at the age of thirteen , he was allowed to enter the Petrograd Conservatory , then headed by Alexander Glazunov , who monitored Shostakovich 's progress closely and promoted him . Shostakovich studied piano with Leonid Nikolayev after a year in the class of Elena Rozanova , composition with Maximilian Steinberg , and counterpoint and fugue with Nikolay Sokolov , with whom he became friends . Shostakovich also attended Alexander Ossovsky 's history of music classes . Steinberg tried to guide Shostakovich in the path of the great Russian composers , but was

disappointed to see him 'wasting' his talent and imitating Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Prokofiev. He also suffered for his perceived lack of political zeal, and initially failed his exam in Marxist methodology in 1926. His first major musical achievement was the First Symphony (premiered 1926), written as his graduation piece at the age of nineteen.

=== Early career ===

After graduation, Shostakovich initially embarked on a dual career as concert pianist and composer, but his dry style of playing was often unappreciated (his American biographer, Laurel Fay, comments on his "emotional restraint" and "riveting rhythmic drive"). He nevertheless won an "honorable mention" at the First International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw in 1927. He explained the disappointment at the competition to suffering from appendicitis and the jury being all @-@ Polish. He later had his appendix removed in April 1927. After the competition Shostakovich met the conductor Bruno Walter, who was so impressed by the composer's First Symphony that he conducted it at its Berlin premiere later that year. Leopold Stokowski was equally impressed and gave the work its U.S. premiere the following year in Philadelphia and also made the work's first recording.

Thereafter, Shostakovich concentrated on composition and soon limited his performances primarily to those of his own works. In 1927 he wrote his Second Symphony (subtitled To October), a patriotic piece with a great pro @-@ Soviet choral finale. Due to its experimental nature, as with the subsequent Third Symphony, the pieces were not critically acclaimed with the enthusiasm granted to the First.

The year 1927 also marked the beginning of Shostakovich's relationship with Ivan Sollertinsky, who remained his closest friend until the latter's death in 1944. Sollertinsky introduced the composer to the music of Gustav Mahler, which had a strong influence on his music from the Fourth Symphony onwards.

While writing the Second Symphony, Shostakovich also began work on his satirical opera The Nose, based on the story by Gogol. In June 1929, the opera was given a concert performance, against Shostakovich's own wishes, and was ferociously attacked by the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM). Its stage premiere on 18 January 1930 opened to generally poor reviews and widespread incomprehension amongst musicians.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Shostakovich worked at TRAM, a proletarian youth theatre. Although he did little work in this post, it shielded him from ideological attack. Much of this period was spent writing his opera, Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District, which was first performed in 1934. It was immediately successful, on both popular and official levels. It was described as "the result of the general success of Socialist construction, of the correct policy of the Party", and as an opera that "could have been written only by a Soviet composer brought up in the best tradition of Soviet culture".

Shostakovich married his first wife, Nina Varzar, in 1932. Initial difficulties led to a divorce in 1935, but the couple soon remarried when Nina became pregnant with their first child.

=== First denunciation ===

In 1936, Shostakovich fell from official favour. The year began with a series of attacks on him in Pravda, in particular an article entitled, "Muddle Instead of Music". Shostakovich was away on a concert tour in Arkhangelsk when he heard news of the first Pravda article. Two days before the article was published on the evening of 28 January, a friend had advised Shostakovich to attend the Bolshoi Theatre production of Lady Macbeth. When he arrived, he saw that Joseph Stalin and the Politburo were there. In letters written to his friend Ivan Sollertinsky, Shostakovich recounted the horror with which he watched as Stalin shuddered every time the brass and percussion played too loudly. Equally horrifying was the way Stalin and his companions laughed at the love @-@ making scene between Sergei and Katerina. Eyewitness accounts testify that Shostakovich was "white as a sheet" when he went to take his bow after the third act.

The article condemned Lady Macbeth as formalist , " coarse , primitive and vulgar " . Consequently , commissions began to fall off , and his income fell by about three quarters . Even Soviet music critics who had praised the opera were forced to recant in print , saying they " failed to detect the shortcomings of Lady Macbeth as pointed out by Pravda " . Shortly after the " Muddle Instead of Music " article , Pravda published another , " Ballet Falsehood , " that criticized Shostakovich 's ballet The Limpid Stream . Shostakovich did not expect this second article because the general public and press already accepted this music as " democratic " ? that is , tuneful and accessible . However , Pravda criticized The Limpid Stream for incorrectly displaying peasant life on the collective farm .

More widely , 1936 marked the beginning of the Great Terror , in which many of the composer 's friends and relatives were imprisoned or killed . These included his patron Marshal Tukhachevsky (shot months after his arrest) ; his brother @-@ in @-@ law Vsevolod Frederiks (a distinguished physicist , who was eventually released but died before he got home) ; his close friend Nikolai Zhilyayev (a musicologist who had taught Tukhachevsky ; shot shortly after his arrest) ; his mother @-@ in @-@ law , the astronomer Sofiya Mikhaylovna Varzar (sent to a camp in Karaganda) ; his friend the Marxist writer Galina Serebryakova (20 years in camps) ; his uncle Maxim Kostrykin (died) ; and his colleagues Boris Kornilov and Adrian Piotrovsky (executed) . His only consolation in this period was the birth of his daughter Galina in 1936 ; his son Maxim was born two years later .

= = = Withdrawal of the Fourth Symphony = = =

The publication of the Pravda editorials coincided with the composition of Shostakovich 's Fourth Symphony . The work marked a great shift in style for the composer due to the substantial influence of Gustav Mahler and a number of Western @-@ style elements . The symphony gave Shostakovich compositional trouble , as he attempted to reform his style into a new idiom . The composer was well into the work when the fatal articles appeared . Despite this , Shostakovich continued to compose the symphony and planned a premiere at the end of 1936 . Rehearsals began that December , but after a number of rehearsals Shostakovich , for reasons still debated today , decided to withdraw the symphony from the public . A number of his friends and colleagues , such as Isaak Glikman , have suggested that it was in fact an official ban which Shostakovich was persuaded to present as a voluntary withdrawal . Whatever the case , it seems possible that this action saved the composer 's life : during this time Shostakovich feared for himself and his family . Yet Shostakovich did not repudiate the work ; it retained its designation as his Fourth Symphony . A piano reduction was published in 1946 , and the work was finally premiered in 1961 , well after Stalin 's death .

During 1936 and 1937 , in order to maintain as low a profile as possible between the Fourth and Fifth symphonies , Shostakovich mainly composed film music , a genre favored by Stalin and lacking in dangerous personal expression .

= = = " A Soviet artist 's creative response to just criticism " = = =

The composer 's response to his denunciation was the Fifth Symphony of 1937 , which was musically more conservative than his earlier works . Premiered on 21 November 1937 in Leningrad , it was a phenomenal success . The Fifth drove many to tears and welling emotions . Later , Shostakovich 's purported memoir , Testimony , stated : " I 'll never believe that a man who understood nothing could feel the Fifth Symphony . Of course they understood , they understood what was happening around them and they understood what the Fifth was about . "

The success put Shostakovich in good standing once again . Music critics and the authorities alike , including those who had earlier accused Shostakovich of formalism , claimed that he had learned from his mistakes and had become a true Soviet artist . The composer Dmitry Kabalevsky , who had been among those who disassociated himself from Shostakovich when the Pravda article was published , praised the Fifth Symphony and congratulated Shostakovich for " not having given in to the seductive temptations of his previous ' erroneous ' ways . "

It was also at this time that Shostakovich composed the first of his string quartets . His chamber works allowed him to experiment and express ideas which would have been unacceptable in his more public symphonic pieces . In September 1937 , he began to teach composition at the Leningrad Conservatory , which provided some financial security but interfered with his own creative work .

= = = Second World War = = =

In 1939 , before the Soviet forces attempted to invade Finland , the Party Secretary of Leningrad Andrei Zhdanov commissioned a celebratory piece from Shostakovich , entitled Suite on Finnish Themes to be performed as the marching bands of the Red Army would be parading through the Finnish capital Helsinki . The Winter War was a bitter experience for the Red Army , the parade never happened , and Shostakovich would never lay claim to the authorship of this work . It was not performed until 2001 .

After the outbreak of war between the Soviet Union and Germany in 1941 , Shostakovich initially remained in Leningrad . He tried to enlist for the military but was turned away because of his poor eyesight . To compensate , Shostakovich became a volunteer for the Leningrad Conservatory ' s firefighter brigade and delivered a radio broadcast to the Soviet people listen . The photograph for which he posed was published in newspapers throughout the country .

However , his greatest and most famous wartime contribution was the Seventh Symphony . The composer wrote the first three movements in Leningrad and completed the work in Kuibyshev (now Samara) where he and his family had been evacuated . Whether or not Shostakovich really conceived the idea of the symphony with the siege of Leningrad in mind , it was officially claimed as a representation of the people of Leningrad ' s brave resistance to the German invaders and an authentic piece of patriotic art at a time when morale needed boosting . The symphony was first premiered by the Bolshoi Theatre orchestra in Kuibyshev and was soon performed abroad in London and the United States . However , the most compelling performance was the Leningrad premiere by the Radio Orchestra in the besieged city . The orchestra had only fourteen musicians left , so the conductor Karl Eliasberg had to recruit anyone who could play a musical instrument to perform the symphony .

In spring 1943 , the family moved to Moscow . At the time of the Eighth Symphony 's premiere , the tide had turned for the Red Army . Therefore , the public , and most importantly the authorities , wanted another triumphant piece from the composer . Instead , they got the Eighth Symphony , perhaps the ultimate in sombre and violent expression within Shostakovich 's output . In order to preserve the image of Shostakovich (a vital bridge to the people of the Union and to the West) , the government assigned the name " Stalingrad " to the symphony , giving it the appearance of a mourning of the dead in the bloody Battle of Stalingrad . However , the symphony did not escape criticism . Shostakovich is reported to have said : " When the Eighth was performed , it was openly declared counter @-@ revolutionary and anti @-@ Soviet . They said , ' Why did Shostakovich write an optimistic symphony at the beginning of the war and a tragic one now ? At the beginning we were retreating and now we 're attacking , destroying the Fascists . And Shostakovich is acting tragic , that means he 's on the side of the fascists . ' " The work was unofficially but effectively banned until 1956 .

The Ninth Symphony (1945) , in contrast , was much lighter in tone . Gavriil Popov wrote that it was " splendid in its joie de vivre , gaiety , brilliance , and pungency ! ! By 1946 , however , it was the subject of criticism . Israel Nestyev asked whether it was the right time for " a light and amusing interlude between Shostakovich 's significant creations , a temporary rejection of great , serious problems for the sake of playful , filigree @-@ trimmed trifles . " The New York World @-@ Telegram of 27 July 1946 was similarly dismissive : " The Russian composer should not have expressed his feelings about the defeat of Nazism in such a childish manner " . Shostakovich continued to compose chamber music , notably his Second Piano Trio (Op. 67) , dedicated to the memory of Sollertinsky , with a bittersweet , Jewish @-@ themed totentanz finale .

= = = Second denunciation = = =

In 1948 , Shostakovich , along with many other composers , was again denounced for formalism in the Zhdanov decree . Andrei Zhdanov , Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet , accused Shostakovich and other composers (such as Sergei Prokofiev and Aram Khachaturian) for writing inappropriate and formalist music . This was part of an ongoing anti @-@ formalism campaign intended to root out all Western compositional influence as well as any perceived " non @-@ Russian " output . The conference resulted in the publication of the Central Committee ' s Decree " On V. Muradeli ' s opera The Great Friendship , " which was targeted towards all Soviet composers and demanded that they only write " proletarian " music , or music for the masses . The accused composers , including Shostakovich , were summoned to make public apologies in front of the committee . Most of Shostakovich ' s works were banned , and his family had privileges withdrawn . Yuri Lyubimov says that at this time " he waited for his arrest at night out on the landing by the lift , so that at least his family wouldn ' t be disturbed . "

The consequences of the decree for composers were harsh . Shostakovich was among those who were dismissed from the Conservatoire altogether . For Shostakovich , the loss of money was perhaps the largest blow . Others still in the Conservatory experienced an atmosphere that was thick with suspicion . No one wanted their work to be understood as formalist , so many resorted to accusing their colleagues of writing or performing anti @-@ proletarian music .

In the next few years , he composed three categories of work : film music to pay the rent , official works aimed at securing official rehabilitation , and serious works " for the desk drawer " . The latter included the Violin Concerto No. 1 and the song cycle From Jewish Folk Poetry . The cycle was written at a time when the post @-@ war anti @-@ Semitic campaign was already under way , with widespread arrests including of I. Dobrushin and Yiditsky , the compilers of the book from which Shostakovich took his texts .

The restrictions on Shostakovich ' s music and living arrangements were eased in 1949 , when Stalin decided that the Soviets needed to send artistic representatives to the Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace in New York City , and that Shostakovich should be amongst them . For Shostakovich , it was a humiliating experience culminating in a New York press conference where he was expected to read a prepared speech . Nicolas Nabokov , who was present in the audience , witnessed Shostakovich starting to read " in a nervous and shaky voice " before he had to break off " and the speech was continued in English by a suave radio baritone " . Fully aware that Shostakovich was not free to speak his mind , Nabokov publicly asked the composer whether he supported the then recent denunciation of Stravinsky ' s music in the Soviet Union . Shostakovich , who was a great admirer of Stravinsky and had been influenced by his music , had no alternative but to answer in the affirmative . Nabokov did not hesitate to publish that this demonstrated that Shostakovich was " not a free man , but an obedient tool of his government . " Shostakovich never forgave Nabokov for this public humiliation . That same year Shostakovich was obliged to compose the cantata Song of the Forests , which praised Stalin as the " great gardener . " In 1951 the composer was made a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of RSFSR .

Stalin ' s death in 1953 was the biggest step towards Shostakovich ' s rehabilitation as a creative artist , which was marked by his Tenth Symphony . It features a number of musical quotations and codes (notably the DSCH and Elmira motifs , Elmira Nazirova being a pianist and composer who had studied under Shostakovich in the year prior to his dismissal from the Moscow Conservatoire) , the meaning of which is still debated , whilst the savage second movement , according to Testimony , is intended as a musical portrait of Stalin himself . The Symphony ranks alongside the Fifth and Seventh as one of his most popular works . 1953 also saw a stream of premieres of the " desk drawer " works .

During the forties and fifties , Shostakovich had close relationships with two of his pupils : Galina Ustvolskaya and Elmira Nazirova . In the background to all this remained Shostakovich ' s first , open marriage to Nina Varzar until her death in 1954 . He taught Ustvolskaya from 1937 to 1947 . The nature of their relationship is far from clear : Mstislav Rostropovich described it as " tender " . Ustvolskaya rejected a proposal of marriage from him after Nina ' s death . Shostakovich ' s daughter

, Galina , recalled her father consulting her and Maxim about the possibility of Ustvol'skaya becoming their stepmother . Ustvol'skaya 's friend , Viktor Suslin , said that she had been " deeply disappointed " in Shostakovich by the time of her graduation in 1947 . The relationship with Nazirova seems to have been one @-@ sided , expressed largely through his letters to her , and can be dated to around 1953 to 1956 . He married his second wife , Komsomol activist Margarita Kainova , in 1956 ; the couple proved ill @-@ matched , and divorced three years later .

In 1954 , Shostakovich wrote the Festive Overture , opus 96 , that was used as the theme music for the 1980 Summer Olympics . In addition his ' ' Theme from the film Pirogov , Opus 76a : Finale " was played as the cauldron was lit at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens , Greece .

In 1959 , Shostakovich appeared on stage in Moscow at the end of a concert performance of his Fifth Symphony , congratulating Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra for their performance (part of a concert tour of the Soviet Union) . Later that year , Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic recorded the symphony in Boston for Columbia Records .

= = = Joining the Party = = =

The year 1960 marked another turning point in Shostakovich 's life : he joined the Communist Party . The government wanted to appoint him General Secretary of the Composers ' Union , but in order to hold that position he was required to attain Party membership . It was understood that Nikita Khrushchev , the First Secretary of the Communist Party from 1958 to 1964 , was looking for support from the leading ranks of the intelligentsia in an effort to create a better relationship with the Soviet Union ' s artists . This event has been interpreted variously as a show of commitment , a mark of cowardice , the result of political pressure , or as his free decision . On the one hand , the apparat was undoubtedly less repressive than it had been before Stalin 's death . On the other , his son recalled that the event reduced Shostakovich to tears , and he later told his wife Irina that he had been blackmailed . Lev Lebedinsky has said that the composer was suicidal . Once he joined the Party , several articles denouncing individualism in music were published in Pravda under his name , though he did not actually write them . In addition , in joining the party , Shostakovich was also committing himself to finally writing the homage to Lenin that he had promised before . His Twelfth Symphony , which portrays the Bolshevik Revolution and was completed in 1961 , was dedicated to Vladimir Lenin and called " The Year 1917 . " Around this time , his health also began to deteriorate .

Shostakovich 's musical response to these personal crises was the Eighth String Quartet , composed in only three days . He subtitled the piece , " To the victims of fascism and war " , ostensibly in memory of the Dresden fire bombing that took place in 1945 . Yet , like the Tenth Symphony , this quartet incorporates quotations from several of his past works and his musical monogram : Shostakovich confessed to his friend Isaak Glikman " I started thinking that if some day I die , nobody is likely to write a work in memory of me , so I had better write one myself . " Several of Shostakovich 's colleagues , including Natalya Vovsi @-@ Mikhoels and the cellist Valentin Berlinsky , were also aware of the Eighth Quartet 's biographical intent .

In 1962 he married for the third time , to Irina Supinskaya . In a letter to Glikman , he wrote " her only defect is that she is 27 years old . In all other respects she is splendid : clever , cheerful , straightforward and very likeable . " According to Galina Vishnevskaya , who knew the Shostakoviches well , this marriage was a very happy one : " It was with her that Dmitri Dmitriyevich finally came to know domestic peace ... Surely , she prolonged his life by several years . " In November he made his only venture into conducting , conducting a couple of his own works in Gorky ; otherwise he declined to conduct , citing nerves and ill health as his reasons .

That year saw Shostakovich again turn to the subject of anti @-@ Semitism in his Thirteenth Symphony (subtitled Babi Yar) . The symphony sets a number of poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko , the first of which commemorates a massacre of Ukrainian Jews during the Second World War . Opinions are divided how great a risk this was : the poem had been published in Soviet media , and was not banned , but it remained controversial . After the symphony 's premiere , Yevtushenko was forced to add a stanza to his poem which said that Russians and Ukrainians had died alongside the

Jews at Babi Yar .

In 1965 Shostakovich raised his voice in defense of poet Joseph Brodsky , who was sentenced to five years of exile and hard labor . Shostakovich co @-@ signed protests together with Yevtushenko and fellow Soviet artists Kornei Chukovsky , Anna Akhmatova , Samuil Marshak , and the French philosopher Jean @-@ Paul Sartre . After the protests the sentence was commuted , and Brodsky returned to Leningrad .

= = = Later life = = =

In 1964 Shostakovich composed the music for the Russian film Hamlet , which was favourably reviewed by the New York Times : " But the lack of this aural stimulation ? of Shakespeare 's eloquent words ? is recompensed in some measure by a splendid and stirring musical score by Dmitri Shostakovich . This has great dignity and depth , and at times an appropriate wildness or becoming levity " .

In later life , Shostakovich suffered from chronic ill health , but he resisted giving up cigarettes and vodka . Beginning in 1958 he suffered from a debilitating condition that particularly affected his right hand , eventually forcing him to give up piano playing ; in 1965 it was diagnosed as poliomyelitis . He also suffered heart attacks the following year and again in 1971 , and several falls in which he broke both his legs ; in 1967 he wrote in a letter :

" Target achieved so far : 75 % (right leg broken , left leg broken , right hand defective) . All I need to do now is wreck the left hand and then 100 % of my extremities will be out of order . "

A preoccupation with his own mortality permeates Shostakovich 's later works , among them the later quartets and the Fourteenth Symphony of 1969 (a song cycle based on a number of poems on the theme of death) . This piece also finds Shostakovich at his most extreme with musical language , with twelve @-@ tone themes and dense polyphony used throughout . Shostakovich dedicated this score to his close friend Benjamin Britten , who conducted its Western premiere at the 1970 Aldeburgh Festival . The Fifteenth Symphony of 1971 is , by contrast , melodic and retrospective in nature , quoting Wagner , Rossini and the composer 's own Fourth Symphony .

Shostakovich died of lung cancer on 9 August 1975 and after a civic funeral was interred in the Novodevichy Cemetery , Moscow . Even before his death he had been commemorated with the naming of the Shostakovich Peninsula on Alexander Island , Antarctica .

He was survived by his third wife , Irina ; his daughter , Galina ; and his son , Maxim , a pianist and conductor who was the dedicatee and first performer of some of his father 's works . Shostakovich himself left behind several recordings of his own piano works , while other noted interpreters of his music include his friends Emil Gilels , Mstislav Rostropovich , Tatiana Nikolayeva , Maria Yudina , David Oistrakh , and members of the Beethoven Quartet .

His last work was his Viola Sonata , which was first performed on 28 December 1975 , four months after his death .

Shostakovich 's musical influence on later composers outside the former Soviet Union has been relatively slight , although Alfred Schnittke took up his eclecticism , and his contrasts between the dynamic and the static , and some of André Previn 's music shows clear links to Shostakovich 's style of orchestration . His influence can also be seen in some Nordic composers , such as Lars @-@ Erik Larsson . Many of his Russian contemporaries , and his pupils at the Leningrad Conservatory , however , were strongly influenced by his style (including German Okunev , Boris Tishchenko , whose 5th Symphony of 1978 is dedicated to Shostakovich 's memory , Sergei Slonimsky , and others) . Shostakovich 's conservative idiom has grown increasingly popular with audiences both within and beyond Russia , as the avant @-@ garde has declined in influence and debate about his political views has developed .

= = Music = =

= = = Overview = = =

Shostakovich 's works are broadly tonal and in the Romantic tradition , but with elements of atonality and chromaticism . In some of his later works (e.g. , the Twelfth Quartet) , he made use of tone rows . His output is dominated by his cycles of symphonies and string quartets , each totaling fifteen works . The symphonies are distributed fairly evenly throughout his career , while the quartets are concentrated towards the latter part . Among the most popular are the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies and the Eighth and Fifteenth Quartets . Other works include the operas Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk , The Nose and the unfinished The Gamblers based on the comedy of Nikolai Gogol ; six concertos (two each for piano , violin and cello) ; two piano trios ; and a large quantity of film music .

Shostakovich 's music shows the influence of many of the composers he most admired : Bach in his fugues and passacaglias ; Beethoven in the late quartets ; Mahler in the symphonies and Berg in his use of musical codes and quotations . Among Russian composers , he particularly admired Modest Mussorgsky , whose operas Boris Godunov and Khovanshchina he re @-@ orchestrated ; Mussorgsky 's influence is most prominent in the wintry scenes of Lady Macbeth and the Eleventh Symphony , as well as in his satirical works such as " Rayok " . Prokofiev 's influence is most apparent in the earlier piano works , such as the first sonata and first concerto . The influence of Russian church and folk music is very evident in his works for unaccompanied choir of the 1950s .

Shostakovich 's relationship with Stravinsky was profoundly ambivalent ; as he wrote to Glikman , " Stravinsky the composer I worship . Stravinsky the thinker I despise . " He was particularly enamoured of the Symphony of Psalms , presenting a copy of his own piano version of it to Stravinsky when the latter visited the USSR in 1962 . (The meeting of the two composers was not very successful , however ; observers commented on Shostakovich 's extreme nervousness and Stravinsky 's " cruelty " to him .)

Many commentators have noted the disjunction between the experimental works before the 1936 denunciation and the more conservative ones that followed ; the composer told Flora Litvinova , " without ' Party guidance ' ... I would have displayed more brilliance , used more sarcasm , I could have revealed my ideas openly instead of having to resort to camouflage . " Articles published by Shostakovich in 1934 and 1935 cited Berg , Schoenberg , Krenek , Hindemith , " and especially Stravinsky " among his influences . Key works of the earlier period are the First Symphony , which combined the academicism of the conservatory with his progressive inclinations ; The Nose (" The most uncompromisingly modernist of all his stage @-@ works ") ; Lady Macbeth. which precipitated the denunciation ; and the Fourth Symphony , described in Grove 's Dictionary as " a colossal synthesis of Shostakovich 's musical development to date " . The Fourth Symphony was also the first in which the influence of Mahler came to the fore , prefiguring the route Shostakovich was to take to secure his rehabilitation , while he himself admitted that the preceding two were his least successful .

In the years after 1936 , Shostakovich 's symphonic works were outwardly musically conservative , regardless of any subversive political content . During this time he turned increasingly to chamber works , a field that permitted the composer to explore different and often darker ideas without inviting external scrutiny . While his chamber works were largely tonal , they gave Shostakovich an outlet for sombre reflection not welcomed in his more public works . This is most apparent in the late chamber works , which portray what is described in Grove 's Dictionary as a " world of purgatorial numbness " ; in some of these he included the use of tone rows , although he treated these as melodic themes rather than serially . Vocal works are also a prominent feature of his late output , setting texts often concerned with love , death and art .

= = = Jewish themes = = =

Even before the Stalinist anti @-@ Semitic campaigns in the late 1940s and early 1950s , Shostakovich showed an interest in Jewish themes . He was intrigued by Jewish music ? s " ability to build a jolly melody on sad intonations " . Examples of works that included Jewish themes are the Fourth String Quartet (1949) , the First Violin Concerto (1948) , and the Four Monologues on

Pushkin Poems (1952) , as well as the Piano Trio in E minor (1944) . He was further inspired to write with Jewish themes when he examined Moisei Beregovski ' s thesis on the theme of Jewish folk music in 1946 .

In 1948 , Shostakovich acquired a book of Jewish folk songs , and from this he composed the song cycle From Jewish Poetry . He initially wrote eight songs that were meant to represent the hardships of being Jewish in the Soviet Union . However in order to disguise this , Shostakovich ended up adding three more songs meant to demonstrate the great life Jews had under the Soviet regime . Despite his efforts to hide the real meaning in the work , the Union of Composers refused to approve his music in 1949 under the pressure of the anti @-@ Semitism that gripped the country . From Jewish Poetry could not be performed until after Stalin ' s death in March 1953 , along with all the other works that were forbidden .

= = = Posthumous publications = = =

In 2004 , the musicologist Olga Digonskaya discovered a trove of Shostakovich manuscripts at the Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture , Moscow . In a cardboard file were some " 300 pages of musical sketches , pieces and scores " in the hand of Shostakovich . " A composer friend bribed Shostakovich ' s housemaid to regularly deliver the contents of Shostakovich ' s office waste bin to him , instead of taking it to the garbage . Some of those cast @-@ offs eventually found their way into the Glinka The Glinka archive ' contained a huge number of pieces and compositions which were completely unknown or could be traced quite indirectly , ' Digonskaya said . "

Among these were Shostakovich ' s piano and vocal sketches for a prologue to an opera , Orango (1932) . They have been orchestrated by the British composer Gerard McBurney and this work was premiered in December 2011 by the Los Angeles Philharmonic .

= = = Criticism = = =

According to Shostakovich scholar Gerard McBurney , opinion is divided on whether his music is " of visionary power and originality , as some maintain , or , as others think , derivative , trashy , empty and second @-@ hand " . William Walton , his British contemporary , described him as " the greatest composer of the 20th century " . Musicologist David Fanning concludes in Grove ' s Dictionary that , " Amid the conflicting pressures of official requirements , the mass suffering of his fellow countrymen , and his personal ideals of humanitarian and public service , he succeeded in forging a musical language of colossal emotional power . "

Some modern composers have been critical . Pierre Boulez dismissed Shostakovich ' s music as " the second , or even third pressing of Mahler " . The Romanian composer and Webern disciple Philip Gershkovich called Shostakovich " a hack in a trance " . A related complaint is that Shostakovich ' s style is vulgar and strident : Stravinsky wrote of Lady Macbeth : " brutally hammering ... and monotonous " . English composer and musicologist Robin Holloway described his music as " battleship @-@ grey in melody and harmony , factory @-@ functional in structure ; in content all rhetoric and coercion . "

In the 1980s , the Finnish conductor and composer Esa @-@ Pekka Salonen was critical of Shostakovich and refused to conduct his music . For instance , he said in 1987 :

Shostakovich is in many ways a polar counter @-@ force for Stravinsky . [...] When I have said that the 7th symphony of Shostakovich is a dull and unpleasant composition , people have responded : " Yes , yes , but think of the background of that symphony . " Such an attitude does no good to anyone .

However , Salonen has since performed and recorded several of Shostakovich ' s works , including the Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2 (1999) , the Violin Concerto No. 1 (2010) , the Prologue to " Orango " and the Symphony No. 4 (2012) .

It is certainly true that Shostakovich borrows extensively from the material and styles both of earlier composers and of popular music ; the vulgarity of " low " music is a notable influence on this " greatest of eclectics " . McBurney traces this to the avant @-@ garde artistic circles of the early

Soviet period in which Shostakovich moved early in his career , and argues that these borrowings were a deliberate technique to allow him to create " patterns of contrast , repetition , exaggeration " that gave his music the large @-@ scale structure it required .

= = Personality = =

Shostakovich was in many ways an obsessive man : according to his daughter he was " obsessed with cleanliness " ; he synchronised the clocks in his apartment ; he regularly sent cards to himself to test how well the postal service was working . Elizabeth Wilson 's *Shostakovich : A Life Remembered* (1994 edition) indexes 26 references to his nervousness . Mikhail Druskin remembers that even as a young man the composer was " fragile and nervously agile " . Yuri Lyubimov comments , " The fact that he was more vulnerable and receptive than other people was no doubt an important feature of his genius " . In later life , Krzysztof Meyer recalled , " his face was a bag of tics and grimaces " .

In his lighter moods , sport was one of his main recreations , although he preferred spectating or umpiring to participating (he was a qualified football referee) . His favourite football club was Zenit Leningrad , which he would watch regularly . He also enjoyed playing card games , particularly patience . He was fond of satirical writers such as Gogol , Chekhov and Mikhail Zoshchenko . The influence of the latter in particular is evident in his letters , which include wry parodies of Soviet officialese . Zoshchenko himself noted the contradictions in the composer 's character : " he is ... frail , fragile , withdrawn , an infinitely direct , pure child ... [but he is also] hard , acid , extremely intelligent , strong perhaps , despotic and not altogether good @-@ natured (although cerebrally good @-@ natured) " .

He was diffident by nature : Flora Litvinova has said he was " completely incapable of saying ' No ' to anybody . " This meant he was easily persuaded to sign official statements , including a denunciation of Andrei Sakharov in 1973 ; on the other hand he was willing to try to help constituents in his capacities as chairman of the Composers ' Union and Deputy to the Supreme Soviet . Oleg Prokofiev commented that " he tried to help so many people that ... less and less attention was paid to his pleas . " When asked if he believed in God , Shostakovich said " No , and I am very sorry about it . "

= = Orthodoxy and revisionism = =

Shostakovich 's response to official criticism and , what is more important , the question of whether he used music as a kind of covert dissidence is a matter of dispute . He outwardly conformed to government policies and positions , reading speeches and putting his name to articles expressing the government line . But it is evident he disliked many aspects of the regime , as confirmed by his family , his letters to Isaak Glikman , and the satirical cantata " Rayok " , which ridiculed the " anti @-@ formalist " campaign and was kept hidden until after his death . He was a close friend of Marshal of the Soviet Union Mikhail Tukhachevsky , who was executed in 1937 during the Great Purge .

It is also uncertain to what extent Shostakovich expressed his opposition to the state in his music . The revisionist view was put forth by Solomon Volkov in the 1979 book *Testimony* , which was claimed to be Shostakovich 's memoirs dictated to Volkov . The book alleged that many of the composer 's works contained coded anti @-@ government messages , that would place Shostakovich in a tradition of Russian artists outwitting censorship that goes back at least to the early 19th century poet Alexander Pushkin . It is known that he incorporated many quotations and motifs in his work , most notably his signature DSCH theme . His longtime collaborator Yevgeny Mravinsky said that " Shostakovich very often explained his intentions with very specific images and connotations . "

The revisionist perspective has subsequently been supported by his children , Maxim and Galina , and many Russian musicians . Volkov has further argued , both in *Testimony* and in *Shostakovich and Stalin* , that Shostakovich adopted the role of the yurodivy or holy fool in his relations with the

government . Other prominent revisionists are Ian MacDonald , whose book *The New Shostakovich* put forward further revisionist interpretations of his music , and Elizabeth Wilson , whose *Shostakovich : A Life Remembered* provides testimony from many of the composer 's acquaintances .

Musicians and scholars including Laurel Fay and Richard Taruskin contest the authenticity and debate the significance of *Testimony* , alleging that Volkov compiled it from a combination of recycled articles , gossip , and possibly some information direct from the composer . Fay documents these allegations in her 2002 article ' *Volkov 's Testimony reconsidered* ' , showing that the only pages of the original *Testimony* manuscript that Shostakovich had signed and verified are word @-@ for @-@ word reproductions of earlier interviews given by the composer , none of which are controversial . (Against this , it has been pointed out by Allan B. Ho and Dmitry Feofanov that at least two of the signed pages contain controversial material : for instance , " on the first page of chapter 3 , where [Shostakovich] notes that the plaque that reads ' In this house lived [Vsevolod] Meyerhold ' should also say ' And in this house his wife was brutally murdered ' . ")

= = Recorded legacy = =

In May 1958 , during a visit to Paris , Shostakovich recorded his two piano concertos with André Cluytens , as well as some short piano works . These were issued by EMI on an LP , reissued by Seraphim Records on LP , and eventually digitally remastered and released on CD . Shostakovich recorded the two concertos in stereo in Moscow for Melodiya . Shostakovich also played the piano solos in recordings of the Cello Sonata , Op. 40 with cellist Daniil Shafran and also with Mstislav Rostropovich ; the Violin Sonata , Op. 134 , with violinist David Oistrakh ; and the Piano Trio , Op. 67 with violinist David Oistrakh and cellist Miloš Sádlo . There is also a short sound film of Shostakovich as soloist in a 1930s concert performance of the closing moments of his first piano concerto . A colour film of Shostakovich supervising one of his operas , from his last year , was also made . A major achievement was the recording of the original , unexpurgated score for *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* by EMI . There was at least one recording of the cleaned up version , *Katerina Ismailova* that Shostakovich had made to satisfy Soviet censorship . But when conductor Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife , soprano Galina Vishnevskaya were finally allowed to emigrate to the West , the composer begged them to record the full original score , which they did in 1979 . It features Vishnevskaya as *Katerina* , Nicolai Gedda as *Sergei* , Dimitar Petkov as *Boris Ismailov* and a brilliant supporting cast under Rostropovich 's direction .

= = Awards = =

Soviet Union

Hero of Socialist Labor (1966)

Order of Lenin (1946 , 1956 , 1966)

Order of the October Revolution (1971)

Order of the Red Banner of Labour (1940)

Order of Friendship of Peoples (1972)

People 's Artist of the USSR (1954)

People 's Artist of the RSFSR (1948)

International Peace Prize (1954)

Lenin Prize (1958 ? for the 11th symphony " 1905 ")

Stalin Prize in arts (1941 ? 1st class , for Piano Quintet ; 1942 ? 1st class , for the 7th (" Leningrad ") Symphony ; 1946 ? 2nd class , for Trio ; 1950 ? 1st class , for the music for the film *Encounter at the Elbe* ; 1952 ? 2nd class , for 10 poems for chorus)

USSR State Prize (1968 ? for the poem " The Execution of Stepan Razin " for bass , chorus and orchestra)

Glinka State Prize of the RSFSR (1974 ? for the 14th string quartet and choral cycle " Fidelity ")

National Prize of Ukraine Taras Shevchenko (posthumously , 1976 ? USSR State Prize named

after Taras Shevchenko ? for the opera " Katerina Ismailov , " staged in KUGATOB Shevchenko)
United Kingdom
Gold Medal of the Royal Philharmonic Society (1966)
Finland
Sibelius Award (1958)
United States
Oscar nomination for Khovanshchina , Best Score (Musical) in 1961
Austria
Decoration for Services to the Republic of Austria in Silver (1967)
Denmark
Léonie Sonning Music Prize (1974)

= = In Fiction = =

In th 2015 movie Bridge of Spies , inspired by two real life events : the Abel v. United States process and the 1960 U @-@ 2 incident , the Soviet alleged spy Rudolf Abel appreciates Shostakovich 's music .

The Noise of Time by Julian Barnes (2016) is a fictionalised rendering of Shostakovich 's life , particularly centred on his survival of his first (1936 ? 37) denunciation .