

Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff
Сергей Васильевич Рахманинов

(April,1,1873 - March,28,1943)

Russian Pianist, Composer, and Conductor of the Late Romantic Period [9][13]

- **Born into a musical family, Started the piano at the age of four**
 - a family of the Russian aristocracy in the Russian Empire
 - regularly taking Rachmaninoff to Russian Orthodox Church services
 - in 1885, Rachmaninoff suffered loss for his sister Yelena
 - highly talented on piano performing and can memorize a piece quickly
 - had a very large hand which can easily reach more than 12 intervals on a piano

- **until 1888, transferred to the Moscow Conservatory**
 - strictly trained under Nikolai Zverev
 - prefer a quiet place to work and live
 - piano Concerto No. 1 dedicated to Siloti in July 1891
 - final year of Conservatory, premiered Trio élégiaque No. 1 in Feb 1892
 - engagement at the Moscow Electrical Exhibition in September 1892
 - premiered his landmark Prelude in C-sharp minor from his five-part piano composition piece Morceaux de fantaisie (Op. 3)
 - during Summer 1893, composed Fantaisie-Tableaux and Morceaux de salon
 - Tchaikovsky agreed to him to conduct The Rock for an upcoming European tour

- **1894 - 1900 Symphony No. 1**
 - based on chants he had heard in Russian Orthodox church services
 - conducted by Alexander Glazunov, who did not prepare well
 - brutally panned by critic and nationalist composer César Cui
 - fell into a depression that lasted for three years

- **1900 - 1906 received treatment from physician and amateur musician Dr. Nikolai Dahl**
 - recovered after four months of Dahl's hypnosis of "you will work with great facility"
 - composed piano concerto No. 2 in April 1901 dedicated to Dahl
 - with Rachmaninoff as the soloist earned a Glinka Award, the first of five awarded to him throughout his life
 - married his cousin Natalia Satina on 12 May 1902
 - resumed work as a music teacher
 - February 1903 composed Variations on a Theme of Chopin
 - 1904, mixed reputation as the conductor at the Bolshoi Theatre for two seasons
 - Russian Revolution of 1905 created a wave of mass political and social unrest

· **1906 - 1917 Move to Dresden, Germany**

- During a visit to Leipzig, he entered an art gallery which housed The Isle of the Dead by Arnold Böcklin served as the inspiration for Rachmaninoff's orchestral work of Isle of the Dead, Op. 29.
- under occasional periods of depression, apathy, and little faith in any of his work - in 1906 started on his Symphony No. 2 (Op. 27)
- in May 1907. His performance as the soloist in his Piano Concerto No. 2 regained his sense of self-worth
- in early 1908 enthusiastic reaction to the premiere of his Symphony No. 2, which earned him his second Glinka Award
- start US tour and written Piano Concerto No.3
- Later 1910, finished choral work Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (Op. 31)
- 1914 due to Russian Politics, began a concert tour of England.

· **1917-1925 leaving Russia**

- Because of the 1917 Revolution in Saint Petersburg and the October Revolution, he sensed the political tension and went to Finland.
- During the Scandinavian tour, he received three offers from the US but declined them all.
- however, because of financial issues, he went to New York City on Nov 1 1918.
- performing artists under Steinway - Then, he started the 1918-1919 concert season with 36 performances.
- in 1920, signed a recording contract with the Victor Talking Machine Company.

· **1926-1943 final compositions**

- because of the heavy performance schedules, he did not have many compositions done after went to the US.
- During 1930, he bought a land in Switzerland.
- in 1931, published an article in New York Times to criticize Soviet government that made his work being banned under the Soviet Union for two years. - Spending several summers in Switzerland, he finished Rhapsody on a theme of Paganini in 1934 and Symphony No. 3 in 1936.
- Around 1939, he donated concert benefits to Soviet Red Army for against Nazi Germany throughout the world war II.
- After return to the US in November 1939, he performed several concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra.
- Around 1942, Rachmaninoff suffered multiple illness and moved to Beverly Hills. Though wish to continue with touring, he was diagnosed with melanoma.
- his the last appearance was a concerto soloist with Beethoven's First Piano Concerto and his Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with Chicago Symphony Orchestra and last recital given on February 17 in Tennessee included the Piano Sonata No.2 by Chopin.

Major Composition Works [13]

- **1891** Piano Concerto No.1
- **1892** Morceaux de fantaisie, one-act opera: Aleko
- **1893** The Rock, Caprice bohémien
- **1895** Symphony No.1
- **1896** Six moments musicaux
- **1901** Piano Concerto No.2
- **1902** Variations on a Theme of Chopin, Cantata: Spring
- **1903** one-act opera: The Miserly Knight
- **1904** one-act opera: Francesca da Rimini
- **1907** Symphony No.2
- **1909** Piano Concerto No.3, The Isle of the Dead
- **1911** Études-Tableaux Op.33
- **1913** choral symphony, the bells
- **1926** Piano Concerto No.4, Three Russian Songs
- **1931** Variations on a Theme of Corelli
- **1935** Symphony No.3, Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Symphonic Dances