

A black and white portrait of a man with glasses, wearing a tuxedo and a white bow tie. He is looking slightly to the left of the camera. The background is a plain, light color.

21ST CENTURY MUSIC

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Sergei Prokofiev to 1918

MARK ALBURGER

Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev (April 23, 1891, Sontsovka [Krasne], Ukraine - March 5, 1953) was born on an isolated rural estate in the Yekaterinoslav Governorate of the Russian Empire. His father, originally from Moscow, was an agricultural engineer, while his mother was described by Reinhold Glière as: "a tall woman with magnificent, intelligent eyes . . . who knew how to create around herself a warm, natural atmosphere." Having lost two daughters she devoted her life to music and spent two months a year in Moscow or St. Petersburg taking piano lessons.

Prokofiev was inspired by hearing his mother practicing the piano in the evenings – mostly works by Chopin and Beethoven – and composed his first piano composition at the age of five, an F-Lydian Indian Gallop, written down by his mother, reflecting the young composer's "reluctance to tackle the black notes".

By seven, he had also learned to play chess, which became a passion alongside music. At nine, he composed his first opera, *The Giant*, as well as an overture and various other pieces.

In 1902, Prokofiev's mother met Sergei Taneyev, director of the Moscow Conservatory, who initially suggested that Prokofiev should start lessons in piano and composition with Alexander Goldenweiser. When Taneyev was unable to arrange this, he instead arranged for composer and pianist Reinhold Glière to spend the summer of 1902 in Sontsovka teaching Prokofiev. This first series of lessons culminated, at the 11-year-old Prokofiev's insistence, with the composer making his first attempt to write a symphony.

Glière subsequently revisited Sontsovka the following summer to give further tuition. When decades later Prokofiev wrote about his lessons with Glière, he gave due credit to Glière's sympathetic qualities as a teacher but complained that Glière had introduced him to "square" phrase structure and conventional modulations which he subsequently had to unlearn. Nonetheless, equipped with the necessary theoretical tools, Prokofiev started experimenting with dissonant harmonies and unusual time signatures in a series of short piano pieces which he called "ditties" in ternary form, laying the basis for his own style.

After a while, Prokofiev's mother felt that the isolation in Sontsovka was restricting his further musical development, yet his parents hesitated to start their son in a musical career at such an early age.

Then in 1904, Prokofiev and his mother visited Saint Petersburg to explore the possibility of their moving there for his education.

They were introduced to Alexander Glazunov, professor at the Conservatory, who asked to see Prokofiev and his music; Glazunov was so impressed that he urged Prokofiev's mother that her son apply. By this point Prokofiev had composed two more operas, *Desert Islands* and *The Feast during the Plague*, and was working on his fourth, *Undine*. He passed the introductory tests and entered the Conservatory that year.

Several years younger than most of his classmates, he was viewed as eccentric and arrogant, and he often expressed dissatisfaction with much of the education, which he found boring.

During this period he studied under, among others, Alexander Winkler, Anatoly Lyadov, Nikolai Tcherepnin, and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (though when Rimsky-Korsakov died in 1908, Prokofiev noted that he had only studied orchestration with him 'after a fashion' – that is, he was just one of many students in a heavily attended class—and regretted that he otherwise "never had the opportunity to study with him").

Prokofiev also shared classes with the composers Boris Asafyev and Nikolai Myaskovsky, the latter becoming a relatively close and lifelong friend.

As a member of the Saint Petersburg music scene, Prokofiev developed a reputation as a musical rebel, while getting praise for his original compositions, which he would perform on the piano.

In 1909, he graduated from his class in composition with unimpressive marks. He continued at the Conservatory, studying piano under Anna Yesipova and conducting under Nikolai Tcherepnin.

In 1910, Prokofiev's father died and Sergei's financial support ceased. Fortunately he had started making a name for himself as a composer, although he frequently caused scandals with his forward-looking works.

The pianistic Four Etudes, Op. 2 (1909) and Four Pieces, Op. 4 (1908) are highly chromatic and dissonant works.

In 1911, help arrived from renowned Russian musicologist and critic Alexander Ossovsky, who wrote a supportive letter to music publisher Boris P. Jurgenson, which resulted in a contract.

Sarcasms for piano, Op. 17, was produced the next year, making extensive use of polytonality,

Prokofiev composed his first two piano concertos in 1912 and 13, the latter of which caused a scandal at its premiere (August 23). According to one account, the audience left the hall with exclamations of "'To hell with this futuristic music! The cats on the roof make better music!'", but the modernists were in rapture.

The composer made his first foreign trip in 1913, travelling to Paris and London where he first encountered Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in the year of Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

In 1914, Prokofiev finished his career at the Conservatory by entering the "battle of the pianos," a competition open to the five best students for which the prize was a Schreder grand piano: Prokofiev won by performing his Piano Concerto No. 1.

Soon afterwards, he journeyed to London where he first contacted Diaghilev, who commissioned *Ala and Lolli*, but rejected the work-in-progress when the composer brought it to him in Italy in 1915. Diaghilev instead commissioned Prokofiev to compose *Chout*, Op. 21 (*The Fool*, originally *The Tale of the Buffoon who Outwits Seven Other Buffoons*). Under Diaghilev's guidance, the composer chose his subject from a collection of folktales by the ethnographer Alexander Afanasyev.

The story, concerning a clown and a series of confidence tricks, had been previously suggested to Diaghilev by Stravinsky as a possible subject for a ballet, and impresario and his choreographer Leonide Massine helped Prokofiev to shape the scenario.

Near the outbreak of World War I, Prokofiev defeated Jose Raul Capablanca in a simultaneous exhibition match and returned to the Conservatory. He studied organ in order to avoid conscription.

Among the pieces of the next years were Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 19 (1916), and *The Gambler*, Op. 24, after Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel, but rehearsals of the both were plagued by problems and their scheduled 1917 premieres had to be canceled because of the Russian Revolution. In the summer of that year, Prokofiev composed his Symphony No. 1 ("Classical"), Op. 25 --his own nickname, written in the style that, the composer speculated, Joseph Haydn would have used had he been alive at the time -- in a neoclassicism that predates Stravinsky's *Histoire* (1918) and *Pulcinella* (1920), but was not performed until three years after the latter.

The first performance of the Violin Concerto was given April 21, 1918, after which the composer stayed briefly with his mother in Kislovodsk in the Caucasus. Worried about the white forces capturing Saint Petersburg, Prokofiev returned to the city, but, by then, he was determined to leave Russia, at least temporarily. Seeing no room for his experimental music, he headed for the United States in May. Before leaving, Prokofiev developed acquaintances with senior Bolsheviks including Anatoly Lunacharsky, the People's Commissar for Education, who told him: "You are a revolutionary in music, we are revolutionaries in life. We ought to work together. But if you want to go to America I shall not stand in your way."



To Opus 50 for 13 Composers

PHILLIP GEORGE

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)

Two Songs, Op. 1 (1898)
Four Songs, Op. 2 (1899)
Six Songs, Op. 3 (1899)
Transfigured Night, Op. 4 (1899)
Peleas und Melisande, Op. 5 (1903)
Eight Songs, Op. 6 (1905)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7 (1905)
Six Orchestral Songs, Op. 8 (1905)
Chamber Symphony, Op. 9 (1906)
String Quartet No. 2, Op. 10 (1908)
Three Piano Pieces, Op. 11 (1909)
Two Ballads, Op. 12 (1907)
Peace on Earth, Op. 13 (1907)
Two Songs, Op. 14 (1908)
Hanging Gardens, Op. 15 (1909)
5 Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16 (1909)
Erwartung, Op. 17 (1909)
Die Gluckliche Hand, Op. 18 (1910)
6 Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19 (1911)
Foliage of the Heart, Op. 20 (1911)
Pierrot Lunaire, Op. 21 (1912)
Four Orchestral Songs, Op. 22 (1916)
5 Pieces for Piano, Op. 23 (1923)
Serenade, Op. 24 (1920/23)
Suite for Piano, Op. 25 (1923)
Wind Quintet, Op. 26 (1924)
4 Pieces, Op. 27 (1925)
3 Satires, Op. 28 (1926)
Suite for Septet, Op. 29 (1925)
String Quartet No. 3, Op. 30 (1927)
Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31 (1928)
From Today to Tomorrow, Op. 32 (1928)
2 Pieces for Piano, Op. 33 (1928)
Accompanying Music to a Film Scene], Op. 34
6 Pieces for Male Chorus, Op. 35 (1930)
Violin Concerto, Op. 36 (1936)
String Quartet No. 4, Op. 37 (1936)
Chamber Symphony No. 2, Op. 38 (1939)
Kol Nidre, Op. 39 (1938)
Variations on a Recitative, Op. 40 (1941)
Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte, Op. 41 (1942)
Piano Concerto, Op. 42 (1942)
Theme and variations for Orchestra, Op. 43 (1943)
Prelude to Genesis Suite, Op. 44 (1945)
String Trio, Op. 45 (1946)
A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46 (1947)
Phantasy for Violin and Piano, Op. 47 (1949)
3 Songs, Op. 48 (1933)
3 Folksongs, Op. 49 (1948)
Three Times a Thousand Years, Op. 50 (1949)

Bela Bartok (1881-1945)

Rhapsody for Piano, Op. 1 (1904)
Scherzo (Burlesque), Op. 2 (1904)
Orchestral Suite No. 1, Op. 3 (1905)
Orchestral Suite No. 2, Op. 4 (1907)
Two Portraits, Op. 5 (1908)
14 Bagatelles, Op. 6 (1908)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 7 (1909)
2 Romanian Folk Dances, Op. 8 (1910)
Four Dirges, Op. 9 (1910)
Two Images, Op. 10 (1910)
Duke Bluebeard's Castle, Op. 11 (1911)
Four Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 12 (1912)
The Wooden Prince, Op. 13 (1914)
Piano Suite, Op. 14 (1916)
Five Songs, Op. 15 (1916)
Five Songs, Op. 16 (1916)
String Quartet No. 2, Op. 17 (1917)
Etudes, Op. 18 (1918)
The Miraculous Mandarin, Op. 19 (1918)
Eight Improvisations, Op. 20 (1920)
Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1, Op. 21 (1921)



Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

Symphony in Eb, Op. 1 (1907)
Faun and Shepherdess, Op. 2 (1907)
Scherzo Fantastique, Op. 3, (1908)
Fireworks, Op. 4 (1908)
[Funeral Chant, Op. 5 (1908) (lost)]
Two Melodies, Op. 6 (1908)
Four Piano Etudes, Op. 7 (1908)
The Firebird (1909)
Two Verlaine Poems, Op. 9 (1910)



Anton Webern (1883-1945)

Passacaglia, Op. 1 (1908)
In Swift Light Vessels Gliding, Op. 2 (1908)
5 Songs from "Seventh Ring", Op. 3 (1908)
5 George Songs, Op. 4 (1909)
5 Pieces for Quartet, Op. 5 (1909)
Six Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 6 (1909)
4 Violin & Piano Pieces, Op. 7 (1909)
2 Songs of Rilke, Op. 8 (1910)
6 Bagatelles for Quartet, Op. 9 (1913)
Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 10 (1913)
Three Little Pieces for Cello and Piano, Op. 11 (1913)
Four Songs, Op. 12 (1917)
Four Orchestral Songs, Op. 13 (1918)
Six Trackl Songs, Op. 14 (1921)
Five Sacred Songs, Op. 15 (1922)
Five Canons, Op. 16 (1924)
Three Traditional Rhymes, Op. 17 (1925)
Three Songs, Op. 18 (1925)
Two Goethe Songs, Op. 19 (1926)
String Trio, Op. 20 (1927)
Symphony, Op. 21 (1928)
Quartet Op. 22 (1930)
Three Songs on Hildegard Jone, Op. 23 (1934)
Concerto for Nine Instruments, Op. 24 (1934)
Three Songs on Jone, Op. 25 (1935)
Das Augenlicht, Op. 26 (1935)
Variations for Piano, Op. 27 (1936)
String Quartet, Op. 28 (1938)
Cantata No. 1, Op. 29 (1939)
Variations for Orchestra, Op. 30 (1940)
Cantata No. 2, Op. 31 (1943)



Alban Berg (1885-1935)

Piano Sonata, Op. 1 (1909)
Four Songs, Op. 2 (1910)
String Quartet, Op. 3 (1910)
Altenberg Lieder, Op. 4 (1912)
4 Clarinet & Piano Pieces, Op. 5 (1913)
3 Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 6 (1914)
Wozzeck, Op. 7 (1925)



Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Piano Sonata No. 1, Op. 1 (1909)
Four Etudes for Piano, Op. 2 (1909)
Four Pieces for Piano, Op. 3 (1908)
Four Pieces for Piano, Op. 4 (1908)
Sinfonietta, Op. 5 (1909)
Dreams, Op. 6 (1910)
Two Poems, Op. 7 (1910)
Autumnal, Op. 8 (1910)
Two Poems, Op. 9 (1911)
Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 10 (1912)
Toccata, Op. 11 (1912)
Ten Pieces for Piano, Op. 12 (1913)
Maddalena, Op. 13 (1913)
Piano Sonata No. 2, Op. 14 (1912)
Ballade in c, vc & pf, Op. 15 (1912)
Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 16 (1913)
Sarcasms, Op. 17 (1914)
The Ugly Duckling, Op. 18 (1914)
Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 19 (1916)
Scythian Suite, Op. 20 (1915)
Chout, Op. 21 (1915)
Visions Fugitives, Op. 22 (1917)
Five Poems, Op. 23 (1915)
The Gambler, Op. 24 (1917)
Symphony No. 1 ("Classical"), Op. 25 (1917)
Piano Concerto No. 3, Op. 26 (1921)
5 Akhmatova Poems, Op. 27 (1916)
Piano Sonata No. 3, Op. 28 (1917)
Piano Sonata No. 4, Op. 29 (1917)
Seven, They are Seven, Op. 30 (1918)
Old Grandmother Tales, Op. 31 (1918)
Four Pieces for Piano, Op. 32 (1918)
Love for 3 Oranges, Op. 33 (1919)
Overture on Hebrew Themes, Op. 34 (1919)
5 Songs without Words, Op. 35 (1920)
5 Balmont Poems, Op. 36 (1921)
The Fiery Angel, Op. 37 (1923)
Piano Sonata No. 5, Op. 38 (1923)
Quintet in G Minor, Op. 39 (1924)
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Things in Themselves, Op. 45 (1928)
The Prodigal Son, Op. 46 (1929)
Symphony No. 4, Op. 47 (1930)
Sinfonietta in A, Op. 48 (1929)
Gambler Suite, Op. 49 (1931)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 50 (1930)



Darius Milhaud (1892-1975)

Jammes Poems, Set 1-2, Op.1 (1912)
 3 Poems of Leo Latil, Op.2 (1916)
 Violin Sonata No. 1, Op. 3 (1911)
 The Lost Sheep, Op. 4 (1914)
 String Quartet No. 1, Op. 5 (1912)
 Jammes Poems, Set 3, Op.6 (1912)
 Eastern Knowledge, Op.7 (1913)
 Suite for Piano, Op. 8 (1910)
 Piano Suite, Op.9 (1913)
 3 Chateaubrian Poems, Op. 10 (1913)
 3 Romantic Poems, Set 1, Op.11 (1914)
 Symphonic Suite No.1, Op.12 (1914)
 Poem on Camargue, Op.13 (1913)
 Agamemnon, Op.14 (1914)
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 String Qt No.2, Op.16 (1914–1915)
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 4 Latil Poems, Op.20 (1914)
 Le Château, Op.21 (1914)
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 4 Poèmes de Claudel, Op.26 (1917)
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 Homme et Son Desire, Op 48 (1918)
 Chamber Sym No. 2, Op. 49 (1918)
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Paul Hindemith (1895-1963)

[Andante & Scherzo for Cl, Hn, and Pf (1914) (lost)]
 [String Quartet, Op. 2 (1915) (lost)]
 Cello Concerto, Op. 3 (1916)
 Funny Sinfonietta, Op. 4 (1916)
 Funny Songs in Aargauer, Op. 5 (1917)
 Eight Waltzes, Op. 6 (1916)
 [Piano Quintet, Op. 7 (1917) (lost)]
 3 Cello and Piano Pieces, Op. 8 (1917)
 Three Songs, Op. 9 (1917)
 String Quartet in f, Op. 10 (1918)
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 Murderer, Hope of Women, Op. 12 (1918)
 Melancholie, Op. 13 (1919)
 4 Whitman Hymns, Op. 14 (1919)
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 Eight Songs, Op. 18 (1920)
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 String Quartet No. 3, Op. 22 (1922)
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 Felix the Cat, Op. 44 (1926)
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 Konzertmusik, Op. 49 (1930)
 Konzertmusik, Op. 50 (1930)

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Scherzo in F# Minor, Op. 1 (1919)
Eight Preludes for Piano, Op. 2 (1920)
Theme and Variations, Op. 3 (1922)
Two Fables of Krylov, Op. 4 (1922)
Three Fantastic Dances, Op. 5 (1920)
Suite for Two Pianos, Op. 6 (1922)
Scherzo in Eb-Major, Op. 7 (1924)
Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 8 (1923)
3 Cello and Piano Pieces, Op. 9 (1924)
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Two Pieces for Octet, Op. 11 (1925)
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Two Pieces by Scarlatti, Op. 17 (1928)
New Babylon, Op. 18 (1929)
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Hypothetical Murder, Op. 31 (1931)
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The Human Comedy, Op. 37 (1934)
Love and Hate, Op. 38 (1934)
The Limpid Stream, Op. 39 (1935)
Cello Sonata in D Minor, Op. 40 (1934)
The Youth of Maxim, Op. 41 (1935)
Five Fragments, Op. 42 (1935)
Symphony No. 4, Op. 43 (1936)
Hail, Spain, Op. 44 (1936)
The Return of Maxim, Op. 45 (1937)
Four Pushkin Romances, Op. 46 (1937)
Symphony No. 5, Op. 47 (1937)
Volochayev Days, Op. 48 (1936–1937)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 49 (1938)
The Vyborg District, Op. 50 (1938)

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Serenade, Op. 1 (1926)
Three Songs, Op. 2 (1934)
Dover Beach, Op. 3 (1931)
[Violin Sonata, Op. 4 (1928) (lost)]
Overture to "The School for Scandal", Op. 5 (1931)
Cello Sonata, Op. 6 (1931)
Music for Shelley Scene, Op. 7 (1933)
Two Choruses, Op. 8 (1936)
Symphony [No. 1], Op. 9 (1936)
Three Joyce Songs, Op. 10 (1936)
String Quartet, Op. 11 (1936)
Essay for Orchestra, Op. 12 (1937)
4 Songs, Op. 13 (1940)
Violin Concerto, Op. 14 (1940)
Stopwatch & Ordnance, Op. 15 (1940)
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Second Essay for Orch, Op. 17 (1942)
2 Songs, Op. 18 (1943)
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Excursions, Op. 20 (1944)
Capricorn Concerto, Op. 21 (1944)
Cello Concerto, Op. 22 (1945)
Medea, Op. 23 (1946)
Knoxville: Sum of 1915, Op. 24 (1947)
Nuvoletta, Op. 25 (1947)
Piano Sonata, Op. 26 (1948)
Melodies Passageres, Op. 27 (1951)
Souvenirs, Op. 28 (1953)
Hermit Songs, Op. 29 (1953)
Prayers of Kierkegaard, Op. 30 (1954)
Summer Music, Op. 31 (1956)
Vanessa, Op. 32 (1958)
Nocturne, Op. 33 (1959)
"Wondrous Love" Variations, Op. 34 (1959)
A Hand Of Bridge, Op. 35 (1959)
Toccata Festiva, Op. 36 (1960)
Die Natali, Op. 37 (1960)
Piano Concerto, Op. 38 (1962)
Andromach's Farewell, Op. 39 (1962)
Anthony and Cleopatra, Op. 40 (1966)
Despite and Still, Op. 41 (1969)
2 Choral Pieces, Op. 42 (1968)
The Lovers, Op. 43 (1971)
Fadograph of Yestern Scene, Op. 44 (1971)
3 Songs, Op. 45 (1972)
Ballade, Op. 46 (1977)
Third Essay for Orch, Op. 47 (1978)

Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000)

Oror (Lullaby), Op. 1 (1926)
Storm on Mt. Wildcat, Op. 2 (1931)
Piano Trio No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 3 (1935)
Missa Brevis, Op. 4 (1936)
Three Odes of Solomon, Op. 5 (1937)
Toccata and Fugue, Op. 6 (1935)
How I Adore Thee, Op. 7 (1936)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 8 (1936)
Piano Quintet, Op. 9 (1926)
Three Preludes and Fugues, Op. 10 (1935)
Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 11 (1937)
Sonata Ricercare, Op. 12 (1935)
Prelude and Fugue in A Minor, Op. 13 (1935)
Tapor, Op. 14 (1948)
Suite for Band, Op. 15 (1948)
Fantasy for Piano, Op. 16 (1952)
Symphony No. 1, Op. 17 (1937)
Variations and Fugue, Op. 18 (1963)
Angelic Song, Op. 19 (1947)
Nocturne, Op. 20 (1937)
Suite in D Minor (1933)
Mystic Flute, Op. 22 (1937)
Suite for Oboe and Bassoon, Op. 23 (1949)
Yar Nazani, Op. 24 (1938)
Lament, Op. 25 (1935)
Behold, God Is My Help, Op. 26 (1935)
O Lord God of Hosts, Op. 27 (1935)
O Lord Rebuke Me Not, Op. 28 (1935)
Layla, Op. 29 (1935)
4 Bagatelles for String Quartet, Op. 30 (1966)
Two Shakespeare Sonnets, Op. 31 (1939)
Starlight at Noon, Op. 32 (1947)
Love Songs of Hafiz, Op. 33 (1936)
Watchman, Tell Us of the Night, Op. 34 (1927)
The Lord's Prayer, Op. 35 (1962)
Two Ghazals, Op. 36 (1933)
Vijag, Op. 37 (1946)
Mazert Nman Rehan, Op. 38 (1944)
Artinis, Op. 39 (1945)
Psalm and Fugue, Op. 40 (1940)
Protest and Prayer, Op. 41 (1967)
I Will Rejoice in the Lord, Op. 42 (1942)
12 Armenian Folk Songs, Op. 43 (1943)
Celestial Fantasy, Op. 44 (1935)
Armenian Rhapsody No. 1, Op. 45 (1944)
Let Us Love One Another, Op. 46 (1941)
Varak, Op. 47 (1944)
Lousadzak (Dawn), Op. 48 (1944)
Khrimian Hairig, Op. 49 (1944)
Elibris (God of Dawn), Op. 50 (1944)

Benjamin Britten (1913-1975)

Sinfonietta, Op. 1 (1935)
Phantasy Oboe Quartet, Op. 2 (1935)
A Boy Was Born, Op. 3 (1933)
Simple Symphony, Op. 4 (1934)
Holiday Diary, Op. 5 (1934)
Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 6
Friday Afternoons, Op. 7 (1935)
Our Hunting Fathers, Op. 8 (1936)
Soirees Musicales, Op. 9 (1936)
Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge, Op. 10 (1937)
On This Island (Auden), Op. 11 (1937)
Mont Juic (with Berkeley), Op. 12 (1937)
Piano Concerto, Op. 13 (1938)
Ballad of Heroes, Op. 14 (1939)
Violin Concerto, Op. 15 (1939)
Young Apollo, Op. 16 (1939)
Paul Bunyan, Op. 17 (1941)
Les Illuminations, Op. 18 (1939)
Canadian Carnival Overture, Op. 19 (1939)
Sinfonia da Requiem, Op. 20 (1940)
Diversions for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21 (1940)
Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo, Op. 22 (1940)
Introduction and Rondo, Op. 23 (1940)
Matinées Musicales (Rossini), Op. 24 (1941)
String Quartet No. 1, Op. 25 (1941)
Scottish Ballad, Op. 26 (1941)
Hymn to St. Cecilia, Op. 27 (1942)
A Ceremony of Carols, Op. 28 (1942)
Prelude and Fugue, Op. 29 (1943)
Rejoice in the Lamb, Op. 30 (1943)
Serenade, Tenor, Horn, Strings, Op. 31 (1943)
Festival Te Deum, Op. 32 (1945)
Peter Grimes, Op. 33 (1945)
Variations and Fugue on Purcell, Op. 34 (1946)
Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Op. 35 (1945)
String Quartet No. 2, Op. 36 (1945)
The Rape of Lucretia, Op. 37 (1946)
Occasional Overture, Op. 38 (1946)
Albert Herring, Op. 39 (1947)
My Beloved Is Mine, Op. 40 (1947)
A Charm of Lullabies, Op. 41 (1947)
Saint Nicolas, Op. 42 (1948)
The Beggar's Opera, Op. 43 (1948)
Spring Symphony, Op. 44 (1949)
The Little Sweep, Op. 45 (1949)
Amo Ergo Sum, Op. 46 (1949)
Five Flower Songs, Op. 47 (1950)
Lachrymae for viola and piano, Op. 48 (1950)
6 Metamorphoses after Ovid, Op. 49 (1951)
Billy Budd, Op. 50 (1951)

Mark Alburger (b. 1957)

Psalm 6, Op. 1 (1974)
Suite ("Sol[ar]"), Op. 2 (1975)
Ecclesiastes, or The Preacher, Op. 3 (1975)
Poems on Crane, Op. 4 (1975)
The Lord's Prayer, Op. 5 (1975)
Variations and Theme, Op. 6 (1976)
Interrupted Interludes, Op. 7 (1976)
The Twelve Fingers, Op. 8 (1975)
Psalm 92, Op. 9 (1977)
Nocturnes for Insomniacs, Op. 10 (1978)
Portraits of Three (Flute) Players, Op. 11 (1978)
Four Processions, Op. 12 (1978)
Three Places in America, Op. 13 (1978)
Seasons' Eves, Op. 14 (1978)
Book (Prehistoric Atlas), Op. 15 (1979)
Some Stuff, Op. 16 (1979)
Two and a Half Pieces, Op. 17 (1979)
Yellow River Concerto II, Op. 18 (1979)
Academic Endeavors, Op. 19 (1970)
Embedded Inventions, Op. 20 (1979)
Missa "The a deux", Op. 21 (1980)
Duo Sonata No. 1 ("Hyphenated"), Op. 22 (1981)
Sequence Music for a Trio, Op. 23 (1982)
Orpheus Cycle, Op. 24 (1982)
Stolen Students, Op. 25 (1983)
Sinfonietta, Op. 26 (1984)
Aerial Requiem, Op. 27 (1985)
Mary Variations, Op. 28 (1985)
Street Songs, Op. 29 (1985)
Merton Songs, Op. 30 (1986)
Duo Sonata No. 2 ("Wasatch"), Op. 31 (1986)
Crystal Series, Op. 32 (1987)
San Timoteo Can[yon]tats, Op. 33 (1988)
Songs for Rebecca, Op. 34 (1988)
Missa California, Op. 35 (1988)
Lot in Life, Op. 36 (1988)
At a Photo Shop, Op. 37 (1989)
Spectral Preludes, Op. 38 (1989)
Big Beat, Op. 39 (1990)
Trumpet Concerto ("Macho Concertino"), Op. 40 (1990)
Mice Suite No. 1, Op. 41 (1991)
Westminster Tropes, Op. 42 (1991)
Deploration Passacaglias, Op. 43 (1992)
Helena Suite, Op. 44 (1992)
Mice and Men, Op. 45 (1992)
Iliad Songs, Op. 46 (1992)
Babel, Op. 47 (1992)
San Fernando Hub, Op. 48 (1993)
Business As Usual, Op. 49 (1993)
L.A. Stories, Op. 50 (1994)

Opus 2 at Berkeley Arts Festival

ADAM BRONER

Mark Alburger, a San Francisco composer of note, has long cut a colorful figure in the Bay Area's music and opera scene. In his latest experiment, *The Opus Project*, he takes a decidedly different format than his usual, or from most concerts for that matter.

Rather than pose a concert around a genre or theme, Alburger decided to create a series of monthly concerts around opus numbers, focusing on 20th- and 21st-century composers, performed as a timeline. Their first concert, on January 26, consisted of the first catalogued works of these composers -- Opus 1.

February 23's concert, held at Berkeley Arts Festival was *Opus 2*. Though these pieces were diverse, the program did evolve along two themes: a sense of music history as a living continuum, and widely differing works by composers at the beginning of their careers. There was a sense of youthful art, of possibilities and the pregnant presence, of wrestling with similar issues.

Alburger, musical director of Goat Hall Productions / San Francisco Cabaret Opera, has had a number of his operas premiered by that company, which he runs with his partner, artistic director Harriet March Page. His pop/tragic *Of Mice and Men*, post-apocalyptic *Antigone*, and his recent *Sex and the Bible* all displayed a creative command of "tropes," memes snatched without regard from the entire musical repertoire.

Describing himself as "an eclectic composer of postminimal, postpopular and postcomedic sensibilities," he is also the music director of the San Francisco Composers Chamber Orchestra.

But his other hat, as a lecturer in composition and music history, is what was most noticeable about *The Opus Project*: his analytical and humorous introductions lent themselves to a learning environment.

Alburger's pickup orchestra was a nice leveling of the "playing: field. Their concert opened with a piano work, Alexander Scriabin's *Three Pieces*, Op. 2 (of course) from 1889, with pianist Jerry Kuderna relating: "Scriabin was a 17-year-old influenced by Chopin with a generous dose of Russians . . . [in] a collection of three interesting keys." Indeed, Kuderna delivered the dreaminess of Chopin with yearning phrases plowing their way up a steep hill.

The *Prelude* was more optimistic, but with the restrained simplicity of a child. He ended with the dance-like weighting of a *Mazurka*.

Soprano Sarita Cannon joined Kuderna for Arnold Schoenberg's *Erwartung* from *Four Songs*, Op. 2 (1899), "...a tonal departure, but still tonal, and he has a way to go before we get to atonal," according to Alburger.

A high point of the concert, Cannon's voice was high and supple, crooning the complex and sweetened vowels of German with dry heights and thick lip-licking consonants. From the yearning of Scriabin we had evolved to a dreaminess that paralleled Debussy's haunting sensuality.

We soon arrived at Anton Webern's Opus 2, *In Swift Light Vessels Gliding* (1908), played instrumentally for the occasion. "In the recording I had with heavily vibrato-ing voices, the music just sounded weird, but I've found a revelation revealed orchestrally in pure lines. You can hear Webern's studies of renaissance polyphony, translated into the chromatic and atonal." And yes, it was weird; finger popping bounces with atonal lines, a curious fish-fowl creature flopping out of fin de siecle waters and onto the shores of the 20th Century. But the motifs, as heard in flute duets and combinations from other winds and strings, were sumptuous.

Alburger took the piano for a duet with mezzo-soprano Harriet Page in Alban Berg's melancholy *Aus Dem Schmerz* from *Four Songs*, Op. 2. Page inhabited the anguish beneath the symbolist poetry of slumber, dwelling on strange intervals as the piano added slow dissonances.

A video followed, Prokofiev's *Etude in D Minor*, which Alburger described as a reverse-channeling of Philip Glass. Another enfant terrible, Prokofiev showed a huge arc and complexity in his 1909 etude, but with a rolling understructure that may have indeed been part of the inspiration for minimalism.

A short, bittersweet Shostakovich led into a lovely rendition of *Three Songs* by Barber, again sung by Sarita Cannon, and we had finally arrived at our living composers.

Pianist Allan Crossman wrote *Influences* in 1955. "This is music that I wasn't hearing, and so I made it up," said Allan, simply, as he sat at the piano. Each phrase had a playful lift to it, and there was a sense of wonder that he played with nostalgia. Now 71, he was 13 when he wrote this Opus 2. Of its day in the fifties, it is still jaunty as it breaks across tonal and rhythmic boundaries.

Michael Kimbell performed *Dialogues for Two Clarinets* (1968) with the help of Peter Brown. "I was 22 and a grad student, and my teacher asked me to write something "colorful."" The five short duets were quick-witted and imagistic, partners chasing and tripping each other with sharp trills and nymphic panpipes.

Alburger included a movement of his *Suite ("Sol[ar]") for Oboe, Piano and Percussion*, in video form. I would have dearly loved to hear this pop / classical fusion live. Then Sheli Nan took the piano for her 1978 *Bach Boogie Blues*, which she described as combining elements "...from the ridiculous to the sublime." And yes, it was a boogie-woogie version of Bach, balancing elegance with light-hearted jazz.

The program closed with *Sine Waves*, a flute duet by Bruce Salvisberg that sharply recalled three moods.

This was an energetic and visceral way to experience artistic evolution, and the experiment continues with Opus 3 on March 30 at 2133 University Ave, in Berkeley. If this is typical, one envies Alburger's students.



Calendar

April 5

Gamelan Galak Tika, Gamelan ElektriKA, Hauschka, Pamela Z, and Rambax. MIT Kresge, Cambridge, MA.

April 20

Goat Hall Productions presents Anywhere But Here: Mozart - Weill - Menotti... Strange Bedfellows. Community Music Center, San Francisco, CA. Repeated April 21.

April 27

The Opus Project presents Opus 4, a Multi-Media Event, with Harriet March Page, Patti Deuter, Shani Aviram, Crystal Pascucci, and The Opus Project Ensemble in Arnold Schoenberg's Transfigured Night, Op. 4 (1899), Bela Bartok's Orchestral Suite No. 2, Op. 4, No. 2 (1907), Igor Stravinsky's Fireworks, Op. 4 (1908), Anton Webern's Song on a Text by George, Op. 4, No. 1 (1909), Alban Berg's Song on an Altenberg Postcard, Op. 4, No. 1 (1912), Sergei Prokofiev's Suggestion Diabolique, Op. 4, No. 4 (1911), Darius Milhaud's The Lost Sheep, Op. 4 (1914), Paul Hindemith's Funny Sinfonietta, Op. 4, No. 1 (1916), Dmitri Shostakovich's Fable of Krylov, Op. 4, No. 1 (1922), John Cage's The Seasons, Part I (1947), Benjamin Britten's Simple Symphony, Op. 4, No. 2 (1934), Jim Ryan's Improvisation on "Danny Boy" (2013), Arvo Part's Fratres, for Cello and Piano (1989), Mark Alburger's Poem on Crane, Op. 4, No. 2 (1975); and Feona Lee Jones's Morning Mist / You (2013). Arts Festival, Berkeley, CA.

Chronicle

February 3

Glacier Invitational Concert, with Jim Ryan, Tom Nunn, Rent Romus, Doug Carroll, Michael Coleman, Jordan Glenn, Brian Day, Ron Heglin, and Eli Wallace. Arts Festival, Berkeley, CA.

February 4

Earplay in John Cage's Living Room Music (1940), José-Luis Hurtado's Intermezzo (2009), Shulamit Ran's East Wind (1987), Michael Zbyszynski's Daguerreotype (2002), Arnold Schoenberg: Chamber Symphony Op. 9, (1906, arr. Anton Webern, 1922), and Ken Ueno: 12.12.12 (2012). ODC, San Francisco, CA.

February 5

Virko Baley's Holodomor: Red Earth, Hunger, with John Duykers, Laura Bohn, and Melissa Weaver. Gerald W. Lynch Theatre, John Jay College, New York, NY.

February 6

Ecstatic Music Festival. Merkin Concert Hall, Kaufman Music Center, New York, NY.

February 10

Sergei Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf, narrated in English, Mandarin, Russian, and Hebrew. Schultz Cultural Center, Palo Alto, CA.

February 17

Pianist Stanley Wong in Victoria Bond's Sandburg Suite, Elisenda Fabregas's Mirage and Homenaje a Mompou, Carol Worthey's Romanza, Wong's Little Prelude and Fugue, David Liptak's Starlight, Yves Ramette's Variations sur un theme de Mozart, and Katherine Hoover's Dream Dances. Parsons Music Recital Hall, Hong Kong, China.

Kittly Brazelton's The Art of Memory. The Wild Project, New York, NY.

February 23

NACUSA presents Greg Bartholemew's In Seaspray, Barefoot and Ukiyo-e: Pictures of the Floating World, Anne Baldwin's Shadow Dances, Dale Victorine's Reflections, Sondra Clark's Three American Scenes, Vladimir Klibonov's Piano Trio, Karl Schmidt's Clarinet Sonatina, and Jay Lyon's Easter Prelude. Lucy Stern Ballroom, Palo Alto, CA.

February 26

Death of pianist Van Cliburn (b. Harvey Lavan Cliburn Jr., 7/12/34, Shreveport, LA), at 78. Fort Worth, TX. 'Cliburn was part of an exceptional American generation of pianists in promising stages of their own careers, among them Leon Fleisher, Byron Janis and Gary Graffman. And the Tchaikovsky competition came at a time when American morale had been shaken in 1957 by the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik, the world's first artificial satellite. . . . In his 1999 memoir, The Times of My Life and My Life With The Times, [Max] Frankel recalled his coverage of Mr. Cliburn's triumph in Moscow: 'The Soviet public celebrated Cliburn not only for his artistry but for his nationality; affection for him was a safe expression of affection for America. . . . We now know that [Nikita S.] Khrushchev . . . personally approved Cliburn's victory,' he wrote, "making Van a hero at home and a symbol of a new maturity in relations between the two societies." Mr. Cliburn was at first oblivious to the political ramifications of the prize. 'Oh, I never thought about all that,' Mr. Cliburn recalled in 2008 during an interview with The Times. 'I was just so involved with the sweet and friendly people who were so passionate about music.' The Russians, he added, 'reminded me of Texans.' . . . Cliburn was a naturally gifted pianist whose enormous hands had an uncommonly wide span. He developed a commanding technique, cultivated an exceptionally warm tone and manifested deep musical sensitivity. At its best his playing had a surging Romantic fervor, but one leavened by an unsentimental restraint that seemed peculiarly American. The towering Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter, a juror for the competition, described Mr. Cliburn as a genius -- a word, he added, 'I do not use lightly about performers.' His subsequent explorations of wider repertory grew increasingly insecure. During the 1960's he played less and less. By 1978 he had retired from the stage; he returned in 1989, but performed rarely. Ultimately, his promise and potential were never fulfilled, but his great talent was apparent early on. . . . His mother, Rildia Bee O'Bryan, a pianist who had studied in New York with Arthur Friedheim, a longtime student of Liszt, had hoped to have a career in music, but her mother forbade it.

Instead she married Harvey Lavan Cliburn, a purchasing agent for an oil company, a laconic man of moderate income. An only child, Van started studying with his mother when he was 3. By 4 he was playing in student recitals. When he was 6 the family moved to Kilgore, Tex. (population 10,500). Although Van's father had hoped his son would become a medical missionary, he realized that the boy was destined for music, so he added a practice studio to the garage. As a plump 13-year-old Mr. Cliburn won a statewide competition to perform with the Houston Symphony and he played the Tchaikovsky concerto. Thinking her son should study with a more well-connected and advanced teacher, Mr. Cliburn's mother took him to New York, where he attended master classes at Juilliard and was offered a scholarship to the school's preparatory division. But Van adamantly refused to study with anyone but his mother, so they returned to Kilgore. He spoke with affecting respect for his mother's excellence as a teacher and attributed the lyrical elegance of his playing to her. 'My mother had a gorgeous singing voice,' he said. 'She always told me that the first instrument is the human voice. When you are playing the piano, it is not digital. You must find a singing sound -- the 'eye of the sound,' she called it.' By 16 he had shot up to 6 feet 4 inches. Excruciatingly self-conscious, he was excused from athletics out of fear that he might injure his hands. He later recalled his adolescence outside the family as 'a living hell.' On graduation at 17 he finally accepted a scholarship from Juilliard and moved to New York. Studying with the Russian-born piano pedagogue Rosina Lhevinne, he entered the diploma rather than the degree program to spare himself from having to take 60 semester hours of academic credits. Even his close friends said he displayed little intellectual curiosity outside of music. Winning the Leventritt award in 1954 was a major achievement. Though held annually, the competition had not given a prize in three years because the judges had not deemed any contestant worthy. But this panel, which included Rudolf Serkin, George Szell and Leonard Bernstein, was united in its assessment of Mr. Cliburn. That same year he graduated from Juilliard and was to have begun graduate-level studies. But performing commitments as a result of the Leventritt kept him on tour. In 1957 he was inducted into the Army but released after two days because he was found to be prone to nosebleeds. By this point, despite his success, his career was stagnating and he was \$7,000 in debt. His managers at Columbia Artists wanted him to undertake a European tour. But Ms. Lhevinne encouraged him instead to enter the first Tchaikovsky competition. A \$1,000 grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Aid to Music program made the journey to the Soviet Union possible. The contestants' Moscow expenses were paid by the Soviet government. The Russian people warmed to Mr. Cliburn from the preliminary rounds. There was something endearing about the contrast between his gawky boyishness and his complete absorption while performing. At the piano he bent far back from the keys, staring into space, his head tilted in a kind of pained ecstasy. During rapid-fire passages he would lean in close, almost scowling at his fingers. On the night of the final round, when Mr. Cliburn performed the Tchaikovsky Concerto No. 1, a solo work by Dmitry Kabalevsky (written as a test piece for the competition) and the Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 3, the audience broke into chants of "First prize! First prize!" Emil Gilels, one of the judges, went backstage to embrace him. The jury agreed with the public, and Moscow celebrated. At a Kremlin reception, Mr. Cliburn was bearhugged by Khrushchev. 'Why are you so tall?' Khrushchev asked. 'Because I am from Texas,' Mr. Cliburn answered. His prize consisted of 25,000 rubles (about \$2,500), though he was permitted to take only half of that out of the country. Immediately, concert offers for enormous fees engulfed him. . . . Yet as early as 1959 his attempts to broaden his repertory were not well received. That year, for a New York Philharmonic benefit concert at Carnegie Hall conducted by Bernstein, Mr. Cliburn played the Mozart Piano Concerto No. 25, the Schumann Concerto and the Prokofiev Concerto No. 3. Howard Taubman, reviewing the program in *The Times*, called the Mozart performance 'almost a total disappointment.'

Only the Prokofiev was successful, he wrote, praising the brashness, exuberance and crispness of the playing. . . . Despite the criticism, Mr. Cliburn tried to expand his repertory, playing concertos by MacDowell and Prokofiev and solo works by Samuel Barber (the demanding Piano Sonata), Chopin, Brahms, Beethoven and Liszt. But the artistic growth and maturity that were expected of him never fully came. Even as a personality, Mr. Cliburn began to seem out of step. In the late 1950's this baby-faced, teetotaling, churchgoing, wholesome Texan had fit the times. But to young Americans of the late 1960's he seemed a strained, stiff representative of the demonized establishment. In 1978, at 44, Mr. Cliburn, now a wealthy man, announced his withdrawal from concertizing. He moved with his mother into a magnificent home in the Fort Worth area, where he hosted frequent late-night dinner parties. As a young man Mr. Cliburn was briefly linked romantically with a soprano classmate from Juilliard. But even then he was discreet in his homosexuality. That discretion was relaxed considerably in 1966 when, at 32, he met Thomas E. Zaremba, who was 19. The details of their romantic relationship exploded into public view in 1996, when Mr. Zaremba filed a palimony suit against Mr. Cliburn seeking 'multiple millions,' according to *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. Mr. Zaremba, who had moved to Michigan and become a funeral director, claimed that during his 17-year relationship with Mr. Cliburn he had served as a business associate and promoter and that he had helped care for Mr. Cliburn's mother, who died in 1994 at 97. The suit was eventually dismissed. Mr. Cliburn returned to the concert stage in 1987, but his following performances were infrequent. The stress involved was almost palpable on May 21, 1998, when, to inaugurate a concert hall in Fort Worth, Mr. Cliburn played the Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2 with the Fort Worth Symphony, suffered a memory lapse in the final movement and collapsed onstage. He was given oxygen by a medical team backstage and taken to a hospital. 'It was a massive panic attack,' a friend, John Ardoin, who was a critic at *The Dallas Morning News*, said at the time. 'It was sheer exhaustion and nervousness. Van had given a solo recital two days earlier, a really first-class performance, a black-tie affair with all of the cultural and political officialdom of Texas in attendance, and he was overwhelmed by it all.' His last public appearance was in September, when he spoke at a concert, at Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Van Cliburn Foundation. He is survived by Thomas L. Smith, with whom he shared his home for many years" [Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*, 2/27/13].

February 27

The Opus Project presents Opus 2, a Multi-Media Event, with Kris Palmer, Peter Brown, Kate Bautch, Sarita Cannon, Harriet March Page, Allan Crossman, Jerry Kuderna, and The Opus Project Ensemble, in Alexander Scriabin's Three Pieces, Op. 2 (1889); Arnold Schoenberg's Erwartung, Op. 2, No. 1 (1899); Bela Bartok's Scherzo (Burlesque), Op. 2 (1904); Igor Stravinsky's The Shepherdess, Op. 2, No. 1; Anton Webern's In Swift Light Vessels Gliding, Op. 2 (1908); Alban Berg's Sleep, Op. 2, No. 1 (1910); Sergei Prokofiev's Etude in D Minor for Piano, Op. 2, No. 1 (1909); Dmitri Shostakovich's Prelude for Piano, Op. 2, No. 5 (1920); Samuel Barber's Three Songs, Op. 2 (1934); Alan Hovhaness's Storm on Mount Wildcat, Op. 2, No. 2 (1931); Benjamin Britten's Phantasy, Op. 2 (1935); Allan Crossman's Influences, Op. 2 (1955); Michael Kimbell's Dialogues for Two Clarinets (1968); John Bilotta's Chories, Op. 2 (1979); Mark Alburger's Suite ("Sol[ar]"), Op. 2 (1975); Sheli Nan's Three Pieces (1978); and Bruce Salvisberg's Transversal Three-Octave Sine Waves (1980). Arts Festival, Berkeley, CA.