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Ukrainian Identity in Modern Chamber Music: A Performer's Perspective on Valentyn Silvestrov's Violin Sonata "Post Scriptum" and its Interpretation in the Context of Ukrainian Chamber Works.

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Ukrainian Identity in Modern Chamber Music: A Performer's Perspective on Valentyn Silvestrov's Violin Sonata "Post Scriptum" and its Interpretation in the Context of Ukrainian Chamber Works

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
Of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Musical Arts

By

Myroslava Khomik

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Ukrainian Identity in Modern Chamber Music:
A Performer's Perspective on Valentyn Silvestrov's Violin Sonata "Post Scriptum" and its Interpretation in the Context of Ukrainian Chamber Works.

by

Myroslava Khomik

Doctor of Musical Arts
University of California, Los Angeles, 2015
Professor Movses Pogossian, Chair

Ukrainian cultural expression has gone through many years of inertia due to decades of Soviet repression and censorship. In the post-Soviet period, since the late 80s and early 90s, a number of composers have explored new directions in creative styles thanks to new political and cultural freedoms.

This study focuses on Valentyn Silvestrov's unique Sonata for Violin and Piano "Post Scriptum" (1990), investigating its musical details and their meaning in its post-Soviet compositional context. The purpose is to contribute to a broader overview of Ukraine's classical music tradition, especially as it relates to national identity and the

current cultural and political state of the country. It proposes Silvestrov as an example of a new direction in Ukrainian music that stands on its own, even as it has a strong connection to deep traditions and historic events.

The first and second chapters present an examination of the Sonata's conceptual elements, its distinctive features, and a performer's analysis of the practical aspects of its interpretation. Chapter 3 takes a broader view of Ukrainian classical music culture and history, while highlighting select composers and their chamber works that richly deserve a place in the world classical music scene.

The Dissertation of Myroslava Khomik is approved.

Elisabeth Le Guin

Guillaume Sutre

Vladimir Chernov

Movses Pogossian, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

DEDICATION

To my loving parents Volodymyr and Galyna Khomik

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I would like to thank my teacher and committee chair, Professor Movses Pogossian for his support, guidance and inspiration throughout my years at UCLA. I am also grateful to Professor Guillaume Sutre, who had a great influence on my musical and professional growth by introducing me to unique artistic and musical perspectives.

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Sincere thanks to my family and to my husband Dean- for constant love, support and encouragement during this journey. I also would like to thank my friends and colleagues who shared these moments with me and gave me their support.

VITA

Ukrainian-American violinist **Mira Khomik** is a top-prize winner of international competitions including *Remember Enescu Competition* in Romania (2001), *Ugzhorod Silver Bells* (2002) in Ukraine, and the *New Names of Ukraine* (1998). She has appeared as a soloist with orchestras in Ukraine, US, Hong Kong, Thailand and Vietnam and her performances were broadcast on National TV and Radio in Ukraine and in the US.

Ms. Khomik has performed in recitals, concert series and music festivals throughout the US, Europe and Asia. Among those are *Incontri in Terra di Sienna Music Festival, Académie de Musique de Lausanne, Aurora Music Festival, LACMA Sundays Live Series, HEAR NOW New Music Festival of Los Angeles.*

Ms. Khomik is a member of Divan Consort, a Los Angeles-based ensemble with whom she released a debut CD in 2013 published by Albany Records, which won the Gold Medal at the Global Music Awards in August 2014. She is also a founding member of the Royce String Quartet, which won top prizes at several chamber music competitions in 2013 and 2014.

Ms. Khomik received a performance diploma from Lviv Krushelnytska School of Music in Ukraine in 2002, and was invited on full scholarship to continue her music studies in the US where she earned her Bachelor of Music degree in 2006 from Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music (Chapman University, California) and Master of Music degree in 2011 from California State University, Fullerton.

Ms. Khomik was a recipient of the Music Fellowship Award in 2011-2012, Mimi Alpert Graduate Scholarship Grant in 2013-2014, and served as a Chamber Music Teaching Associate in 2012-2014, while pursuing her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of California, Los Angeles. Currently Ms. Khomik holds a string faculty position at Fullerton College.

Introduction

Since before starting my studies at UCLA I have been interested in exploring and researching the music of Ukrainian composers, and more specifically, their chamber works, as well as pieces written for or involving violin. It became an inspiration to develop this interest into my final project of the graduate program here. The highly motivating modern music environment at UCLA where I had many chances to work on new music, prompted my further focus on living Ukrainian composers' post-Soviet era work. I became interested in the subject of Ukrainian artistic identity and its expression through new musical language.

In my research on modern Ukrainian composers, the names of Valentyn Silvestrov, Myroslav Skoryk, and Evhen Stankovych were among the most prominent figures due to their dedication to promoting modern music in Ukraine and abroad. Their chamber works stand out because of their unique and interesting musical features, and deserve a deeper evaluation and attention in the context of a better international understanding of Ukrainian national identity.

In light of recent and ongoing turbulent political events in the nation, this underlying theme became very current and has given me even more inspiration to research this topic in depth, defining the key elements in and possible connections among Ukrainian new musical tendencies, using the specific examples of string chamber music works.

Chapter I

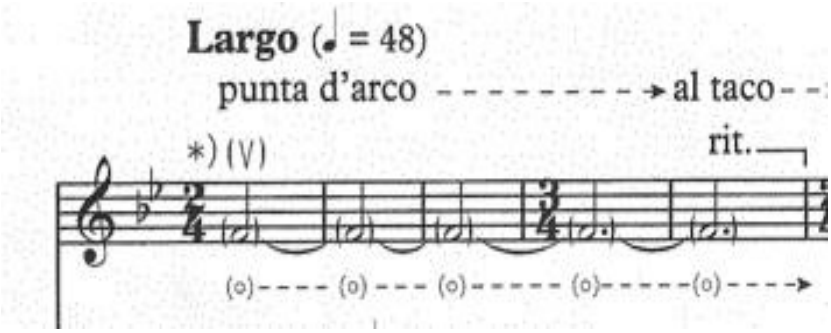
The Edge of Sound and Silence

Music begins with silence. Just as in effective public speaking, silences and pauses are the essential part of bringing a musical thought to life and makes music more expressive. In some cases the most impressive culminations are preceded with silences and make the impact so much more striking. The well-known *Messiah* (1740) of Georg Frideric Handel would be one of the first examples that come to mind: the "Halleluiah Chorus" is filled with lively rhythm patterns until the end, where before the last iteration of the word "hallelujah," there is a grand pause that really enhances this powerful moment. Jean Sibelius implements a quite unusual and surprising series of multiple pauses in a row into the end of his Symphony No. 5. After a dramatically powerful coda in the third and the Symphony's third and last movement, the composer uses six short chords with what seems like extremely long pauses in between. This creates an unexpected effect and adds even more drama and questions at the end. In another contrasting example, a deeply meditative character is portrayed in the second movement of the String Quartet No. 1, Op. 18 by Ludwig van Beethoven. The four chords in the middle of the movement in a slow adagio tempo are spaced apart with unusually long pauses, making this work particularly unique and memorable.

But how often does a composer make both performer and audience listen to the actual silence in the very beginning of a piece? This is one of the key points that make Silvestrov's Sonata "Post Scriptum" for violin and piano (1990) truly one of a kind. He manages to bring to our attention the exact moment that few of us ever think of: an instant between a complete silence and the first sound breaking that silent vacuum. How

would it feel if we were able to freeze that moment, or put it in slow motion? Silvestrov managed to do just that with the help of some basic compositional combinations and sensory manipulation (Fig. 1):

Figure 1. Movement I, MM. 1-5



* "*Soundlessly and smoothly playing F with an up-bow, carefully cross from the imaginary to the real music, which begins with a down-bow in bar 6: before starting the real bowing, the bow is smoothly led to the normal (central) position of it".*

Besides an unusual visual- auditory effect, it presents a great psychological experiment: listen to the sound that physically isn't there. This entire composition emphasizes a state of auditory equilibrium, suspension between the two worlds: silence and sound.

Silvestrov uses these aspects as building blocks of the Sonata. He makes us listen to something so familiar that has been said in the past, where the obvious is part of our imagination, which is what makes it real. This obvious element does not need to be repeated, as it is engraved in us. Therefore the silences in reality are the continuous music in our subconscious mind, where our imagination fills in the gaps. Tetiana Tuchynska in her article "Established Themes in Silvestrov's Compositions of the 70s-80s," discusses the presence of a number of particular characteristic types of compositional forms and

"individualized themes" that Silvestrov uses in his works during this period. On the examples of some of his most prominent works of that period (Symphony No. 5, String Quartet No. 1, Piano Sonata No 2, etc.) she shows the way Silvestrov develops a figurative musical language through rhythm, or harmonic or melodic "formulas" which become his references and homage to the music of the past, whether Romantic, or Classic in style. They are combined with the overall texture of the music material that he often develops based on this principle, and this becomes his musical signature expression. Tuchynska makes a reference to the Silvestrov's own definition of his creative process: "The author's text blends into the world, which is always sounding. Therefore, I think that in a developed artistic mind there is less and less possibility for material that starts "form the beginning". That is why I wanted to write something that not quite "begins", but rather answers to something that had been said already".[1]

Sonata Context and Highlights

"Post Scriptum" was created in 1990, during the period that also saw compositions such as "Widmung" ("Dedication"). Symphony for Violin and Orchestra (1990-1991), "Meta-Music," Symphony for Violin and Orchestra (1992), "Intermezzo" for Chamber Orchestra (1993). It also reflects some of his earlier creations such as "Quiet Songs," based on poetry by J. Mandelstam (1982), and "Postlude" for Piano and Orchestra (1984). "Dedication" in particular resembles the Sonata very closely in its nature and motivic structure; it was written after the death of his beloved wife Larysa, to whom he dedicated several of his important works. Its formal dedication is to Gidon

[1] Tuchynska, in "Problems of Interpretation", Kyiv Musicology No 2, pp. 111-116

Kremer, a brilliant Latvian violinist, who premiered it, as well as a number of other works by Silvestrov. One may even consider that the Sonata may have started as a "sketch" work for the "Dedication".

The main highlights of this chamber music work are the emphasis on melody, diatonic clarity, and lyricism. Behind its general simplicity there is a great depth and a kind of philosophical subtext. In the context of the name of the piece ("Post Scriptum") it is important to take into account its retrospective look into the past, which I will be discussing further below.

To fully acknowledge its importance in the violin and piano sonata repertoire it is imperative to understand this work's duality of classicism and modernism. It presents an eternal example of beauty and perfection on one hand, and edgy, innovative combinations of compositional concepts on the other.

The Sonata's Conceptual Elements

In the analysis of the Sonata it is essential to investigate its conceptual component. This music is not written in the traditional manner of a concert piece. For both performer and the audience it presents a number of challenges requiring an adjustment in the perception and understanding of this type of music. Even though all the elements of composition and drama are here, they are all combined in an unusual manner and present a highly introspective form of music. These elements are driven by the same notion mentioned previously, and based on the composer's fascination with references to the past, can be referred to as "post opus". The composer starts a stylistic dialogue with the music of the past, Romanticism in particular, and therefore the key idea of the

musical “post scriptum” derives from a new neo-romantic style. Silvestrov is looking into what has already received the status of “the ideal” in the past. In this piece particularly he takes the cues from his inspirations by Romantic composers, such as F. Schubert, F. Mendelssohn, and R. Schumann.

Silvestrov soaks “Post Scriptum” with allusions to the old traditions. At a first glance it is easy to track Silvestrov’s tribute to the early Austrian and German Romantics. It is apparent through such musical elements as major-minor relations, a variety of traditional Romantic melodic figures, a clear definition of a lyrical opening, and emphasis on a particular thematic style in various places of the piece. More particularly, the composer offers these elements through clear, light polyphonic piano writing, staying close to Romantic harmonic and melodic language, clarity in musical expression, and the usage of many violin and piano techniques that were discovered particularly in the Romantic period (sophisticated pedal for piano, dramatic dynamic exchanges, new bowing techniques for violin such as flying *spiccato*, left-hand *pizzicato*, *col legno battuto* etc).

All the above-described elements form an immediate subconscious connection to the familiar music of the Romantic period, which is so firmly established into the modern listener’s ear, that it evokes an intuitive feeling of relation and accessibility for the listener. For the performer it also presents an opportunity for an intuitive interpretation of the piece, based on the knowledge firmly embedded into our Western musical sub-consciousness through generations of specific training practice.

Why "Post Scriptum"?

The term "Post Scriptum" is generally known as a literary term.[2] It refers to something added to a text that formerly might have been thought to be complete. In its literal use it can take a form of a correction, a re-thinking, or an addition. Silvestrov chooses this term with an impeccable precision to define exactly his intention: not to invent, but rather to add, to re-think, and to reflect on the music and the traditions of the past that had been expressed already. In one of his interviews with Ukrainian violinist Bogdana Pivnenko he mentions: "I do not write new music. My music is a response to, and an echo of what already exists.."[3]

Formal Aspects of the Sonata

It is important to note the balance and the harmonious structure of the piece, and the composer's goal to achieve an overall symmetry of form. Even though there is a definite feel of freedom and improvised nature in the sonata throughout, the musical expression is strictly controlled and follows a plan from the beginning to the end.

This piece is gravitating toward, but definitely not limited to, a stylistic homage to the previous era. In its own way, it evolves into a unique and nostalgic approach to the "new" by reusing the "old". In every phrase of the "Post Scriptum" the composer's voice is quite apparent.

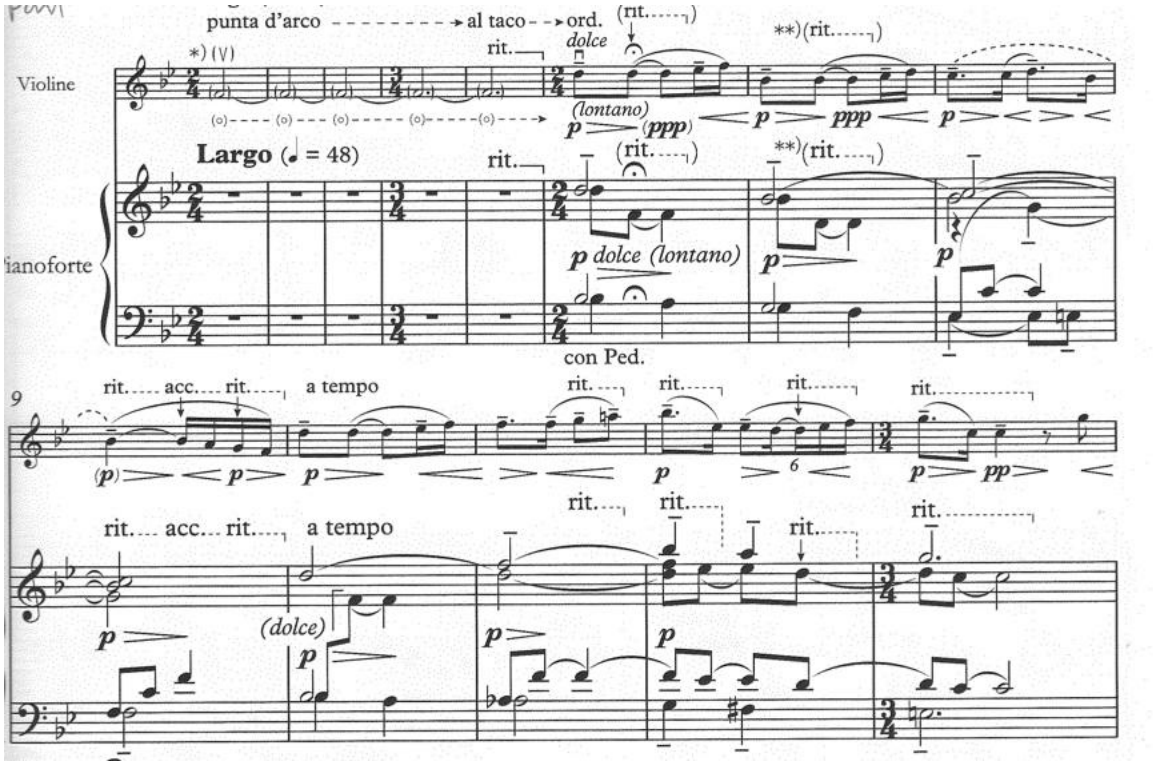
Silvestrov's style evolves from the re-invention, and re-working of the familiar "common practice" style (which theoretically can be a reference to any post-1700

[2] From Latin *post* ("after, behind"); *scriptum* ("text", "something written")

[3] In my e-mail correspondence with Bogdana Pivnenko, she refers to the video of musical discussions after her recording sessions with the composer

Western European stylistic tradition). For example, the first theme starts off as a traditional periodic phrase structure (eight-measure phrase where the first four measures resemble the next four and fulfill the logic in a musical "sentence"). However, towards the end of the "sentence", Silvestrov inserts an abrupt silence and harmonic suspension in bar 13 as if stopping to think, and continues in a slightly different direction than initially expected (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Movement I, MM. 1-13

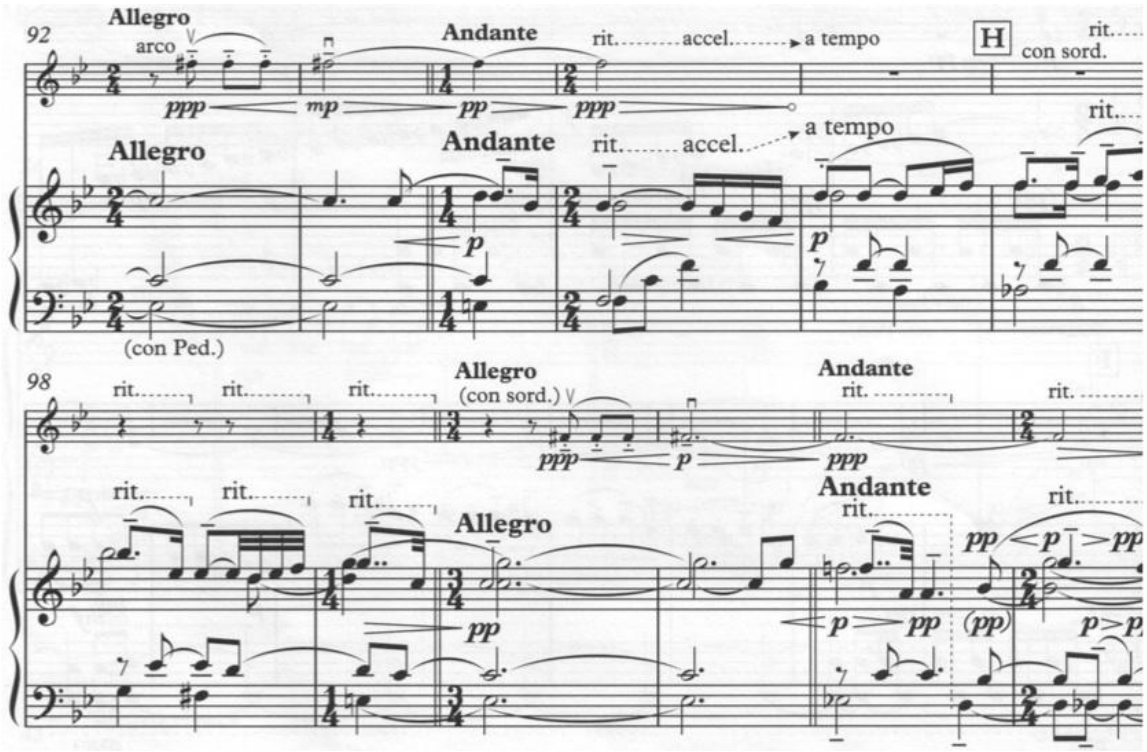


He researches the familiar material of "others" from the inside, reformulating and presenting it in a new light.

The philosophical meaning of "Post Scriptum" is formed through the composer's process of full immersion into a familiar musical style, only to read it in a new way.

Through this technique, tonal episodes transform through linear motion and interval relation into a more complex musical writing: from a wide range of major-minor changes to atonality (Fig. 3).

Figure 3. Movement I, MM. 100-103



It is possible to trace here two kinds of expression, which can be separated and symbolically defined as a fantasy (ideal) and actuality (reality). In general, Romanticism is characterized by a fascination with the lost past and a highly nostalgic way of thinking. In this piece, the metaphor of the "ideal" is the image of the reference to the past, Romantic ideal- expressed through the sound. The "reality" is represented by frequent silences and musical pauses, as well as his interpretation of modernism, and refer to the author's voice and his philosophical view. Referring back to the literal meaning of "Post

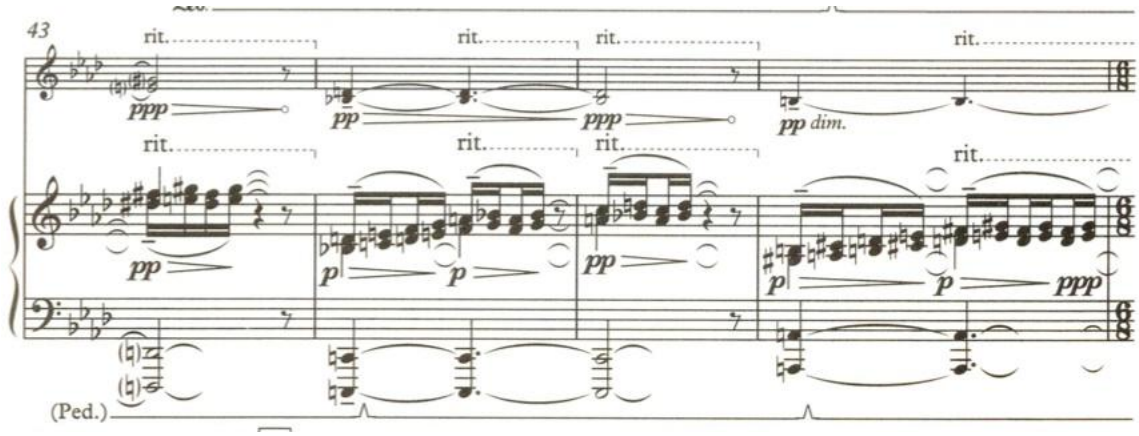
Scriptum", the "ideal" would represent the already expressed thoughts or earlier generations of artists, and the "reality" would be representative of the added meaning, a reflection.

Philosophy Behind the Musical Ideas

One more important idea implied in the score of the Sonata, is the notion of an "aftersound" (resonance, echo effect). It is expressed through a number of compositional effects. The composer amplifies the actual physical phenomenon of sound resonance into a musical and then a philosophical extension of the thematic purpose of the piece. It is achieved through the elements of ostinato, reverberation effect, arpeggiated harmonies, suspended sonorities, clustering of suspensions, and extensions of certain tones. In the piano part there are frequent markings of pedal to be held over measures after the chord is executed, while in the violin part the notes fade very slowly until the sound disappears, as well as multiple percussive elements to create an echo effect. These musical devices create the effect of resonance on a technical and physical level, which in the overall context enhance the philosophical interpretation of this unusual listening experience.

A significant role here belongs to tone colors, timbre and thus to sonorous changes. Silvestrov experiments with musical colors, creating dramatic emphasis by painting with all of the above mentioned methods and combining them in an unexpected manner. For example, the main dramatic points of the second movement are created specifically with these various musical color clusters (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Movement II, MM. 43-46



On a deeper level, the effect of the physical resonance widens into the general concept of the entire piece, so that acoustic resonance becomes a sonic metaphor for the memory- resonances of history.

This particular technique of "echoing the past" produces a unique artistic expression of time in the composition. A defining trait of Silvestrov as a composer is in his treatment of time, - both musically and philosophically, and in this musical example it is expressed through what I would call the style of "post music", music outside of time. This very notion requires further understanding of the Sonata's compositional and dramatic tendencies. It is important to focus here on the elements of observing and in-depth listening. These find reflection in unique musical structures within the sound material.

Meditation Elements and Musical Structure

A quality of musical meditation is achieved through stationary components. Alternation and contrast of the separate motives and phrases, along with the principle of

frequent repetition, are the key points in achieving this meditative element. In this type of writing where longer melodic shapes are almost constantly defeated, the harmonic texture takes over and serves as the formational function.

Silvestrov constructs this work with certain compositional blocks, building them by montage. However, no less importance should be given to the principle of musical expansion, typically realized through metamorphosing here with a certain musical idea into a completely new character and musical meaning. One such example would be the motive of three eighth-note pick-ups that first appear in measure 35 of the first movement, part of what I call the quasi-development section (Fig. 5a). They are repeated several times until measure 80, where these three notes become a motive (MM 80-88, Fig. 5b). This in its turn becomes the main building block of the entire third movement (Fig. 5c).

Figure 5a. Movement II, M. 35

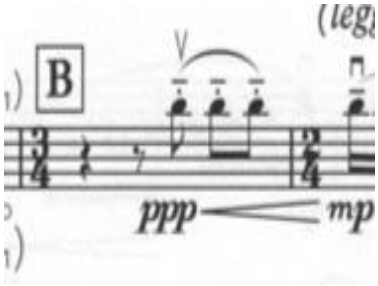


Figure 5b. Movement 1, MM. 80-83

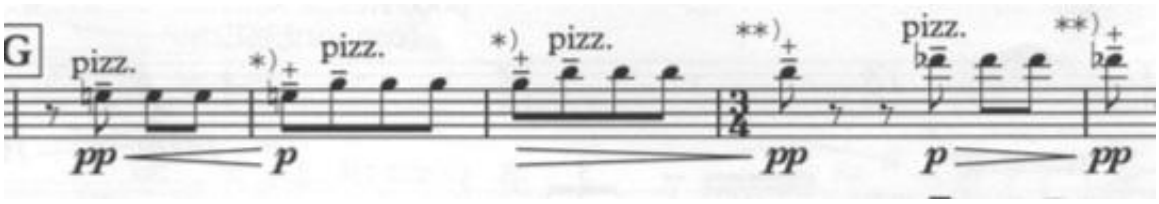
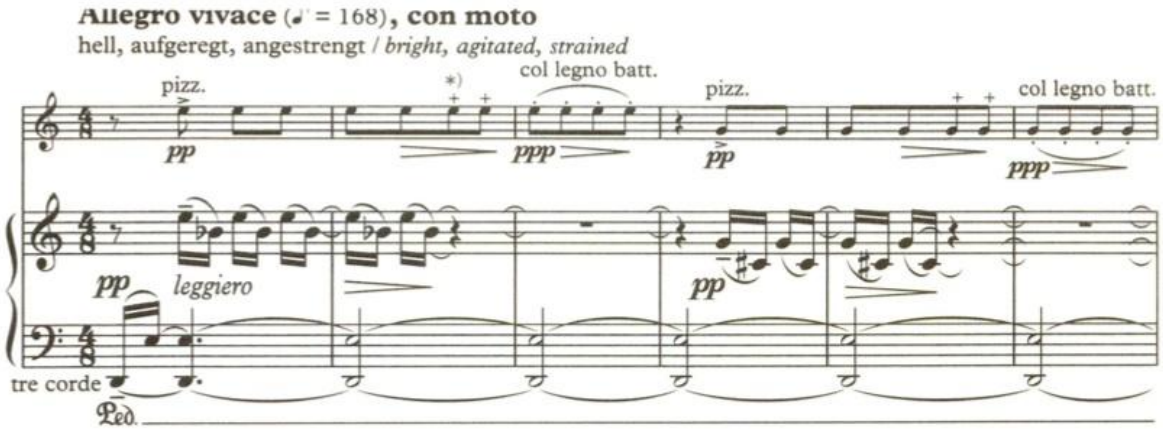


Figure 5c. Movement III, MM. 1-6



The Sonata's Structural Highlights

The composer reinterprets the genre and compositional model of the classic Romantic sonata cycle, typically committed to the formula of three movements "fast-slow-fast." The first movement, *Largo-Allegro-Allegretto,* is a distinctive re-interpretation of the sonata form typical for Romantic chamber music, and sonatas in particular. I further analyze its relation to this classic form, below.

The second movement, *Andantino,* plays a lyrical role of *intermezzo* with the corresponding traits of Romantic style. There is a clear lyrical melodic theme that develops into a more lively middle section, but towards the end we are reminded of "reality" again. The movement ends with multiple interruptions by silence and pauses. Movement three, *Allegro Vivace con moto,* develops the idea of a virtuoso rondo finale.

However, as I will show further on, the virtuoso part takes on a different meaning here, requiring focus on a less traditional aspect of technical skills from the performer.

Compositional Aspects

Thematic character and the logic of harmonic organization point to some Romantic tendencies in the composer's conception. The main key area of the first two movements (B-Major and Ab-Major in 1st and 2nd respectively), may point to a neo-romantic use of tonality, but the third movement, while gravitating toward E Minor, carries no clear definition of the key. Even though there are features that remind us of certain common practices, they remain gestures.

Every compositional detail of "Post Scriptum" carries a referential element. Clearly articulated themes, musical images and devices that become symbolic gestures, and their progress into independent meaningful motives become highly instrumental in transforming this piece into a representative of the composer's unique musical language.

For example, the highly idiomatic violin part of the ascending and faster paced passages in the *Allegro* section of the first movement, appears as a typical virtuosic element that is easily relatable to similar musical formulas of the Romantic period (Fig. 6a).

Figure 6a. Movement I, MM. 38-41

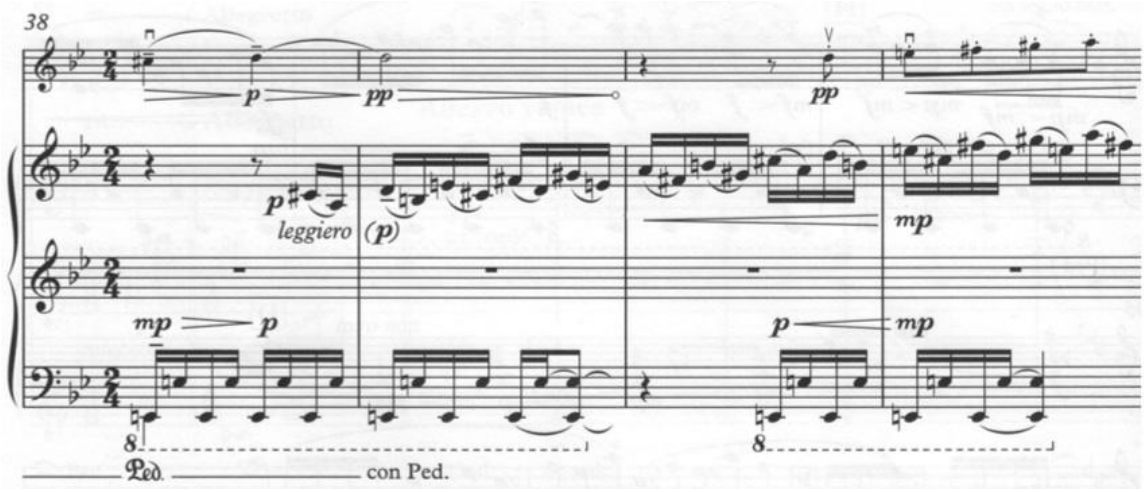
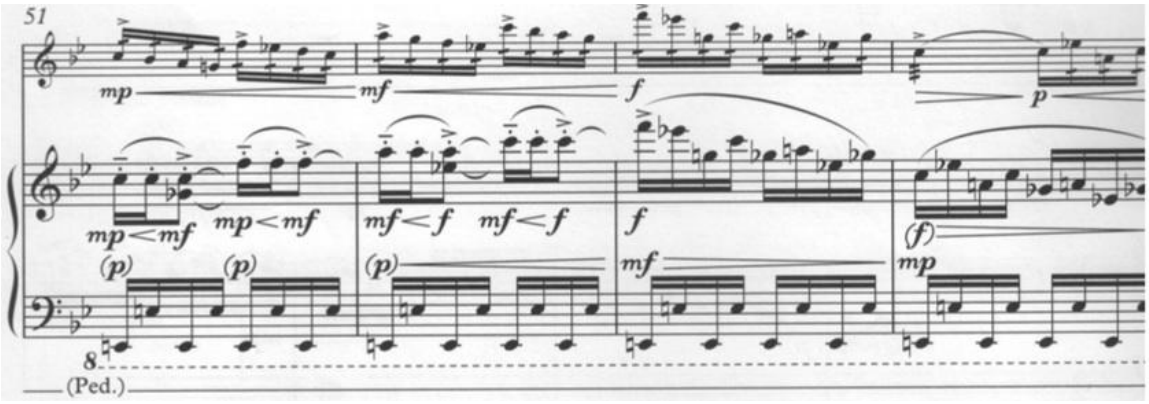


Figure 6b. Movement I, MM. 51-54



There are two elements here: general movement, and ostinato source with descending scale movement. The first one is characterized by melodic figures of thirds and ascending passages with hidden voice leading. The second element is based on the two characteristics of the romantic virtuoso writing of ostinato (in the piano part) and short scales (violin part), which are here transformed into a formula-like musical gesture (Fig. 6b). This idea partially drives the violin part later in the movement and becomes of the main elements in the finale theme. The virtuoso element here is compressed into a melodic violin ostinato, with the support of arpeggiated chords in the piano part.

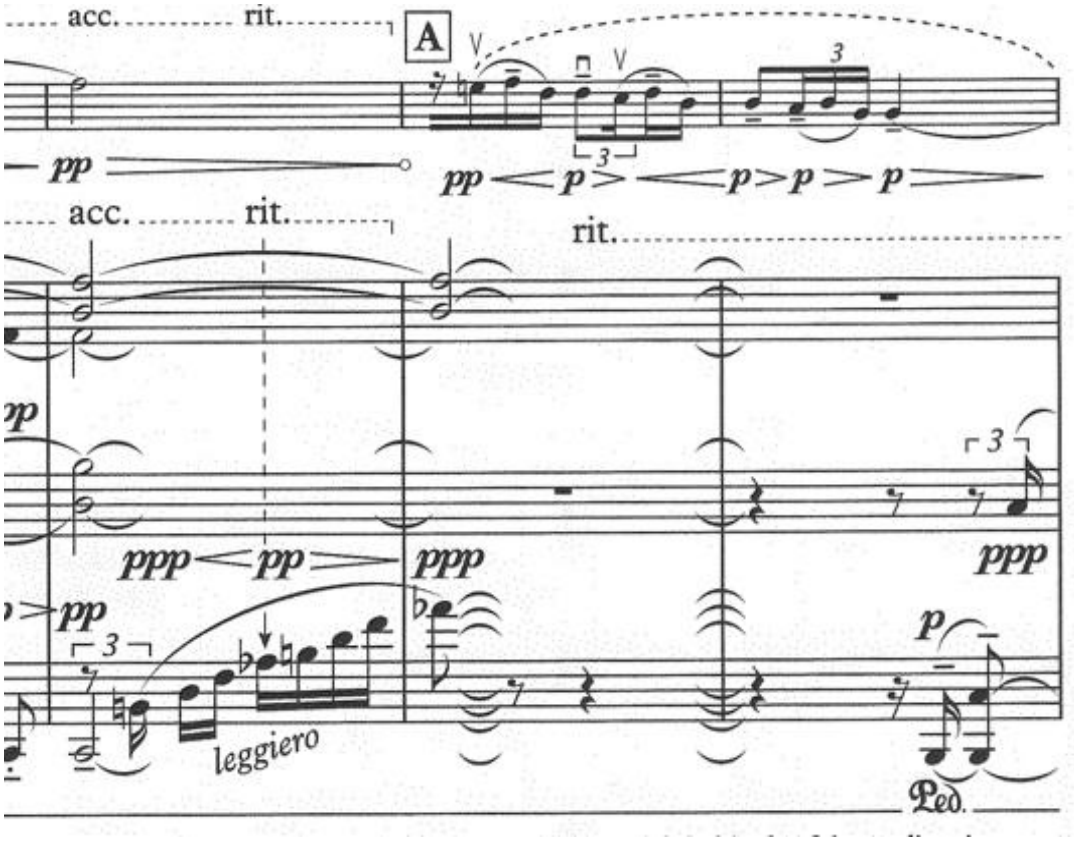
Representative Compositional Elements

The three key musical threads that appear throughout all of the movements of the Sonata also secure the melodic and dramatic unity of the entire cycle. They can be defined as: 1. Melodic and rhythmical ostinato, which appears for the first time in m. 72 in the piano part of the first movement, while in the Finale it becomes the basis of the theme in the violin part. It also serves as a tool for reducing the energy and musical movement. 2. A recitative-like figure, (MM. 17-24 in the first movement). In my observation, this may be a reference to a vocal style that Silvestrov works with quite often. Also, considering its stand-alone nature, this element can be interpreted as the representative voice of the composer himself. 3. The diminished seventh chord, which is introduced in M. 16 of movement I in its melodic form as a motive in the piano part. This part is directly related to the tritone motive of "Bb"-"E", which first appears in the violin part (Movement I, M. 43), and later becomes the constructive base of the piano theme in Movement III. It can also be qualified as a representation of the composer's personal vision. The inclusion of the "personal" voice of the composer and his interpretation of the music of the past becomes one of the most important points in the compositional construction of the entire piece.[4] It can be found in his treatment of the thematic material that creates a feeling of disruption to compositional shape. It results in reflective musical

[4] Many references to this feature in Silvestrov's compositional style can be found in following works: Anna Ilyina, "Conceptual and Music Language Features of V. Silvestrov Works in Connection with Postmodernist Art Paradigm,"; Anna Ilyina, *The Problems of Continuity in Music of V. Silvestrov*; Oksana Bilyk, "Space and Time Aspects of Shaping in the Chamber and Instrumental Music by Valentyn Silvestrov."

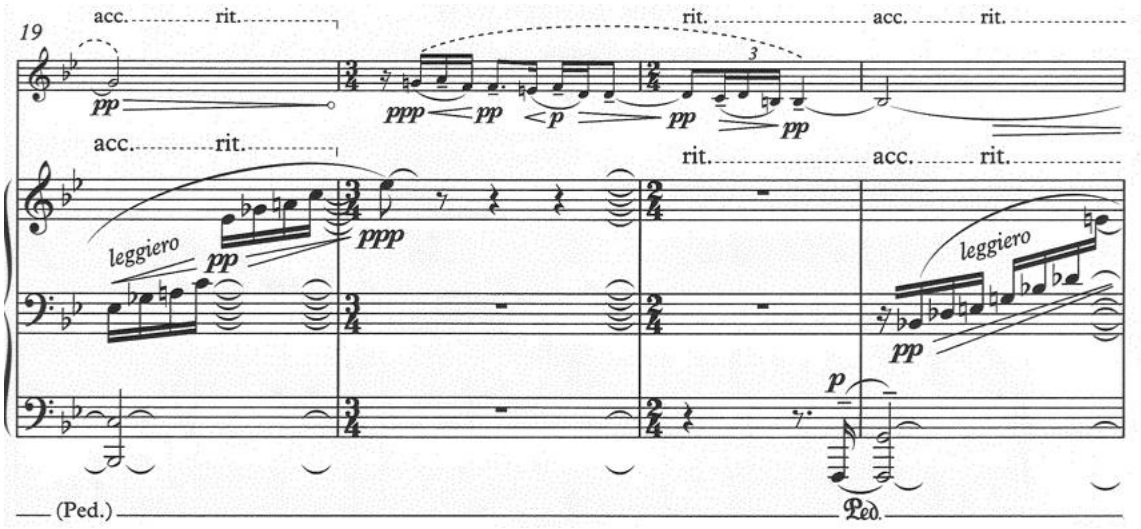
sub-phrases that successfully play a role of a transitional material. For example, in the First Movement:

Figure 7. Movement I, MM. 17-22



The violin part, divided into short phrases, presents a counter direction to the piano's ascending line and continues descending, as if the character immerses deeper into its meditative subjectivity and only to get interrupted by the "reality" of the piano part.

(Cont. Fig. 7)



Compositional Details

Movement I

Following traditions of the genre, Silvestrov leans toward the sonata form. But once again, it is merely the *idea* of the sonata form that he hints toward both structurally and musically, by bringing in two thematic layers. They comprise two different plans of development layered and interrelated with one another. The logic of the sonata form here is restructured: "main" and "second" themes have switched in terms of their traditional characteristics. If in the classic sonata form there is an obvious contrast of the virtuoso ("main") and lyrical ("second") themes, here the lyricism is the most important role and everything else is built around it.

The opening of the sonata is represented by a song-like theme in the spirit of the early Romantic era. In principle, since Silvestrov makes references to different eras of the music from the "past", it could even be identified as a "Mozartian theme" due to its

musical syntax: “square” phrase structure, the musical period of repeated and expanded form, the evidence of half cadence.

In its harmonic structure, this movement also carries certain elements of Silvestrov’s homage to Schubert’s *lieder,* and the lyrical themes of his piano sonatas. It is not surprising that Silvestrov turns to the German song genre so well polished by Schubert. Silvestrov’s style from this period revolves almost entirely around melodic elements, almost entirely revolves around melodic elements. In addition to its evocation of the German lied, this persistent ‘singing’ element in Silvestrov’s style is, in my opinion, one of the most important reasons to view and analyze his compositions in the context of Ukrainian folk singing, as I will do in Chapter Three.

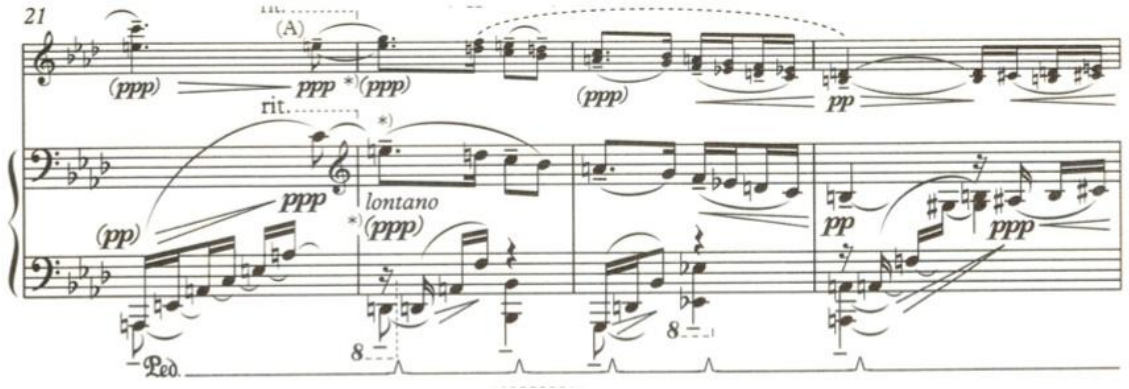
While drawing on Schubert’s example with German songs, it is also very possible that Silvestrov turns to some more familiar, Ukrainian motives as a base of the melody which becomes one of the main themes of the sonata (See Figure 2) This highly stylized and interpreted original material is presented here through a prism of inspiration from the “old masters”, whether from the Germanic canon or the Ukrainian one, and penetrating deep onto Silvestrov’s new ideal and harmony.

These references to the past can be heard through highly sophisticated and delicately placed frequent *fermatas, ritenutos,* and *ritardandos*. (See, for example, Figure 7) This establishes an extremely fragile “micro”-dynamic throughout the entire movement, which is very specifically and quite frequently described in the notation with additional remarks in prose (more detailed description and examples are presented in the next chapter).

Movement II

The second movement contrasts with the other movements of the Sonata due to the lyricism and continuity of its melodic lines; it can be compared to an *aria*. The freedom of expression and the elegy-like tone resemble many features of a Romantic style. The lyrical violin theme is highly song-like and melodious in its nature, achieved through extended phrasing (non-dividable musical periods). It is easy to identify various vocal references through continuity in phrasing, sophisticated melodic turns, and even in the violin double-stops of the middle section, which is written as a delicate two-part "vocal" duet.

Figure 8. Movement II, MM. 21-24



The basis for the piano part and accompaniment in general are the arpeggiated harmonies that imply melodic lines due to their continuity and independent nature. In the piano part this harmonic layering is continuous throughout the movement, and thus creates a sense of textural unity.

Following the logic of the "Post Scriptum", as I have suggested it above, the composer clearly transfers one set of musical expressions into the next- from the "ideal"

past into the current "reality", from the stylized interpretation of tradition into the composer's original voice.

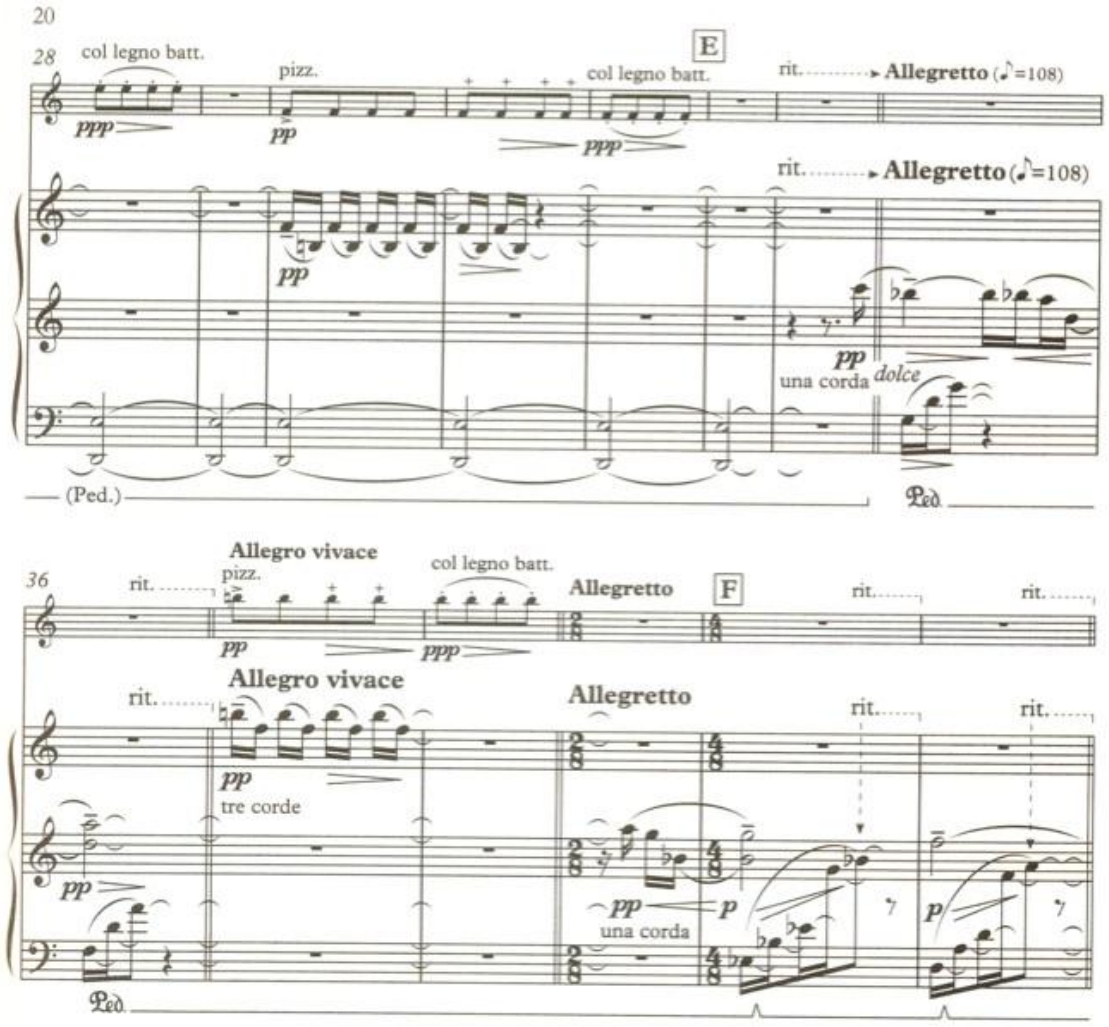
Movement III

The third movement is one of the most interesting movements of the Sonata. Despite the fact that it does not present an obvious musical development, it is unique and captivating. It is the only movement that really establishes a forward rhythmic propulsiveness- one of the main features to create this captivating element. The movement is built on juxtapositions of two thematic formations, which are essentially homages to the compositional techniques of *montage* and *ostinato* (Fig. 9).

The idea of a dialogue, both objective and reflective, is realized by switching between the short piano solo sections and the ensemble episodes. It is a peak of the whole work, where the elements of melody and silence that characterize the sonata as a whole are enhanced by the continuous *ostinato* element. These details become a central focus and a main feature of the movement.

Directly linked to the earlier presentation of the overall meditative character of the piece, this movement requires close attention to the listening process. The various *ostinato* parts are clearly organized in the piano part: the lower layer of the accompaniment is built on a pairing of the bass notes of "d" and "e", which is repeated throughout the entire first section of the Allegro. Its repetition later marks the beginning of the recapitulation in measure 92, and presents yet another example of how Silvestrov creates compositional drama by using textural elements.

Figure 9. Movement III, MM. 28-35



As discussed earlier, the changes in the texture and switching between various types of thematic organization are the leading factor in establishing the form in the "Post Scriptum".

The upper voices of the piano part comprise one more recognizable element through the use of tritone configurations.

Chapter II

The Beginning and its Meaning

Silvestrov is very specific with his instructions in both violin and piano parts. Looking at the first line in the violin part, it is evident that the composer put a lot of thought into his dynamic and articulation markings: even before the first note the very first remark reads: *"Soundlessly and smoothly playing F with an up-bow, carefully cross from the imaginary to the real music, which begins with a down-bow in bar 6: before starting the real bowing, the bow is smoothly led to the normal (central) position of it".* (See Figure 1, Chapter I) Because of the unusual nature of this beginning, it is important to note that the tempo is quite slow- *Largo* (quarter note equals 48), and the metered measuring of the silent note is precise- the first three measures are written in 2/4 followed by the ¾, of which the second has a *ritenuto* marking. The note is a single up-bow held through all five measures (if one uses Silvestrov's tempo marking and observes the *ritenuto*, this is about 11-12 seconds in total, to make a single motion of about 29 inches), which requires an incredible physical attention- perhaps even more so then when making an actual sound, for there is no support of the bow weight by the string; thus the balancing of the bow weight falls entirely on the fingers of the right hand and the right hand muscles. In my personal experience, the technique of an extremely slow "air-bowing" is extremely demanding of physical control of the bow. In this case, it has to keep moving at a steady pace, stay just slightly above the string, and smoothly transform into a down-bow position, producing the first sound, marked "p", in M. 6. In addition, starting at the tip (up-bow) always requires more control, and especially when it is a "silent" bowing.

Here the composer chooses to start the piece on the note "F", which is "played" on (really over) the D string on the violin and is completely inaudible. The next note, the first audible one of the piece, requires a string crossing from the D to the A string. For this transition, the balance of the bow has to be absolutely perfect in order to not make any sound while changing strings with the "air-bow" movement to the "down-bow" position. In addition, there is a *ritenuto* marking at the end of the first silent "note", making it even more difficult to save the bow for the string crossing.

This peculiar beginning, even before a violinist makes the first sound, presents not only a physical challenge, but also an interesting puzzle: how is it possible to express the *ritenuto* with no sound, especially with no clear point of sound or time reference? Following through the entire movement, we discover an abundance of *ritenuto* markings (almost every 2-4 measures on average), as well as extremely soft dynamics: the composer uses four different levels of *piano,* as well as the marking of *piano diminuendo* to a *niente* (Italian-"nothing"). Some of the literal meanings of the Italian term *ritenuto* include "retain", "restrain", "believe", and "hold back".[5] All of these words would directly relate to the nature of this composition, and perhaps help reflect on the different aspects of the composer's purpose and use of these frequent *ritenuto* markings. Referencing back to the earlier discussion of stylistic concepts in the previous chapter, it is evident that the role of *ritenuto* in this work goes beyond one-dimensional tempo indication; it gains more of a metaphorical meaning. The composer expresses his subjective voice through "retaining" the information from the past, yet not fully engaging in reproducing it, thus "holding back" and "restraining" hidden thoughts and feelings

[5] Online Resource: https://www.dictionary.reverso.net/italian-english/ritenuto

from being expressed through obvious and familiar compositional means (such as phrase connection and continuity, traditional musical culminations and form developments). The combination of both *ritenuto* and *diminuendo* elements give the performer inspiration to interpret the sonata in an extremely intimate manner. The effect of frequent decay in sound and unfinished melodic lines that get interrupted by silences creates an improvised character, as if the artist stops to think and reflect on each new idea. Physically, the *ritenuto* idea also naturally enhances the theatrical element that will be further discussed in this chapter. Slowing down the arm motion through the air aids in a visual representation of holding back, of reflecting on one's thoughts in a pause.

Evidently, Silvestrov uses different kinds of *ritenuto* indications here. Besides a regular *"rit."* sign, there is also a *ritenuto* with the side note "imperceptible slackening of tempo" (M. 7). To be able to successfully follow through the time manipulation of this piece, it is essential to avoid falling into a steady tempo or even a fixed interpretation of an already ambiguous musical element such as *ritenuto.* To a modern-day performer it is always important to execute notation with the utmost precision; however, calculating the exact amounts and different natures of slowing down in this sonata is not always easy. It gets especially complicated to follow these instructions in the context of nearly every note being marked with additional *piano* dynamic, a "hairpin", a fermata and some extra articulation specifics. (Examples of the proliferation of such markings may be seen in Figures 4, 7 and 8, above)

Studying the score without playing it becomes a very important part of learning this unusual work, since the main technical challenges here are not necessarily in the complexity of the phrases, tempo, or the amount of notes, but in the abundance of

frequent and very subtle dynamic changes in combination with extremely sophisticated and detailed articulation. It was helpful for me to analyze isolated phrases of the score and intellectually process the composer's markings before getting into depth with practicing this piece. Identifying similar phrases and ideas throughout the piece pointed me to a better understanding of how these sections relate to one another, what their subtle differences are, and how they tie together in a large conceptual context. After contemplating all these details, a larger picture began to emerge, one that helped identify the composer's more global ideas as they are expressed through local features. These ideas include the relation of the two elements mentioned in the first chapter - the element of fantasy- nostalgia for the past, and the element of the meditative reflection on reality. The performer has a big responsibility for bringing these ideas to life, not only through making the sound and finding different colors in it, but also through smooth transitions from silence to sound and vice versa.

To fully express this ethereal character, it is essential for performers to learn and exercise an incredible physical balance of the bow hand (in the violin part). For the pianist the balance would be in the use of the both pedals and their seamless manipulation, in order to achieve the most delicate sound quality and changes of sound throughout the piece.

Dynamics

Just as with any other piece of music, and especially contemporary works, I found it effective to break down each movement into the sections that represent different characters, and compare the repetitions and the markings in those sections. Things like

tempo indications, articulation and dynamic instructions may vary across different sections in a very subtle manner, yet those are the hints for the performer to embrace the development of the musical thought from one section to another, and come up with a unique interpretation of it. For example, the theme in the first movement at the beginning of the Allegro section in MM. 32-34 (Fig. 10) has a *crescendo* from *pp* to *mp* and comes back down to *pp*, while in the recapitulation of the same exact phrase in MM. 123-126 (Fig. 11), even though at a first glance the markings are identical, the composer does emphasize the crescendo, now reaching *mf* instead of the *mp*. He also puts an accent on the B flat instead of just a *tenuto*, and the dynamic comes back down to a triple piano this time. It is very easy to miss, but considering the composer's extremely delicate relationship to the sound and silence, especially his constant gravitation to piano dynamics, this detail is quite significant.

Figure 10. Movement I, MM. 32-34

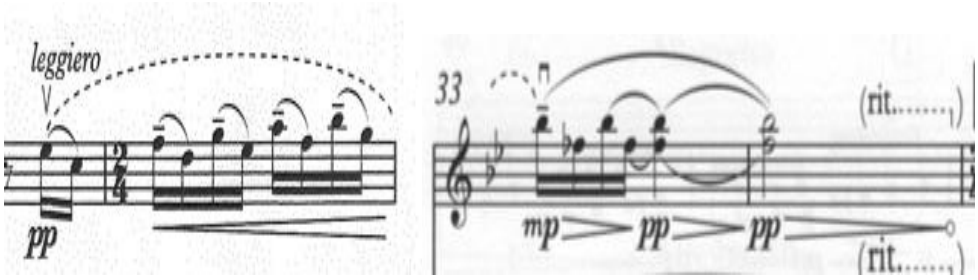
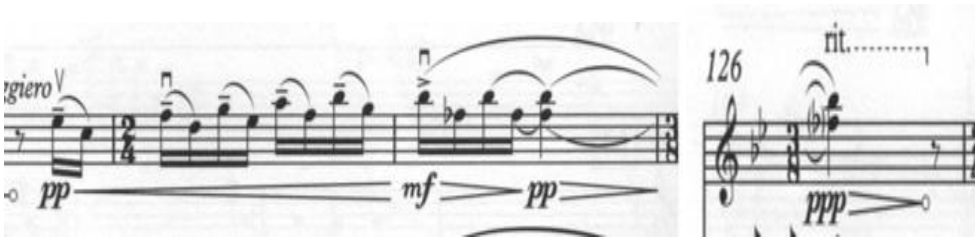


Figure 11. Movement I, MM. 123-126



As a performer, I see this as an encouragement to develop a more dramatic feel in the recapitulation section, playing with a more anxious feeling suggested by the wider dynamic range second time around, which in its turn would result in a slight "push and pull" in tempo. I would also emphasize the more sudden bursts of energy here that are hidden in these *mezzo forte*-to-different-levels-of-*piano* changes. The fact that the second section seems to be more dramatic and anxious than the exposition reverses the usual relationship of these events in a sonata movement, where the recapitulation section usually offers a resolution and a sense of confirmation in its return. Once again, this can serve as evidence of the composer's gravitation to meditative and improvisational elements. The movement starts off with a serene atmosphere, a simple idea that grows emotionally with its development as the movement progresses.

The Effect of the *Ritenuti*

The use of *ritenuto* markings by any composer is certainly an important detail to take into account when working on a piece and searching for meaningful interpretation ideas. In Silvestrov's Sonata, *ritenuto* is not just a hint toward an interpretational idea, but actually represents a separate constructional element tightly intertwined with the other motives. 'Ritenuto' is an independent representational factor in this work. These disruptions of a tempo pulse are the essential part of the meditative state of mind that is so close to Silvestrov's personal style, and their presence in the score not only urges the performer to instantly connect to this state of mind when performing this piece, but also has an immediate effect on the audience. Even if the effect of this relaxed state of mind is

clear to performers in the context of interpretation, they still need to balance their concentration on the technical challenges of this piece with an awareness of its theatrical elements, in order to communicate it to the audience. The latter, in their turn, have an opportunity to completely immerse into this world of sound-silence meditative experience, and become more sensitive to what seems to be so important to the composer: the moments of transition between silence and sound and vice-versa.

The constant interruption and suspension of phrases is intriguing and requires a special attention during performance. Even though the composer strives toward eliminating vagueness in terms of how long each of the pauses should last, some of the silences are still left to the moment of the performance and are interpretively subjective in their end result. However, most of the *ritenutos* and rests are impressively controlled by Silvestrov's clear demands: in the first audible measure (Fig. 12) the composer indicates a *fermata* on the second note together with a *ritenuto* marking right above, which ends precisely at the end of the pitch D. In the next measure the second note, a B flat, is marked with a *ritenuto* but without the *fermata* (only until the end of that pitch as well). What is the precise difference here? Which pause is longer, or perhaps more importantly, what is the difference in the quality of withholding?

In measure 9 we see the *ritenuto* marking immediately followed by the *accelerando* with the arrow pointing only down to two notes, and followed by the next two notes that are now marked *ritenuto* again (Fig. 13). The composer uses these specific arrows to identify exactly each group of notes that he wants to be free from the tempo pulse.

Figure 12. Movement I, MM. 6-8

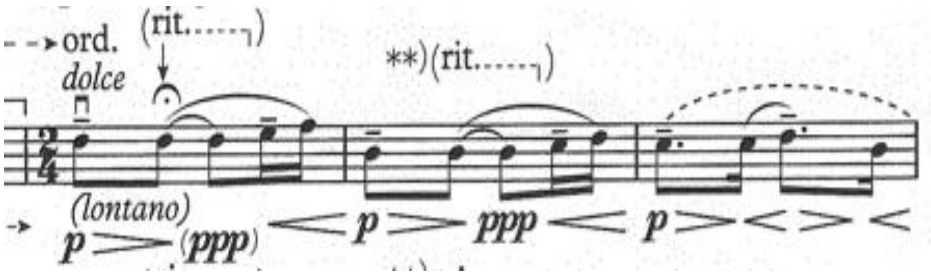
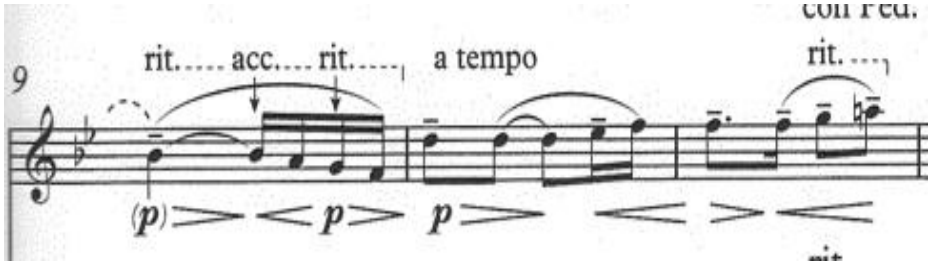


Figure 13. Movement I, MM. 9-11



On the other hand, even though it is so well thought through and marked with great attention, the end effect has an improvisational character, and an impression of constant spontaneity, as if the performers are in complete seclusion and at the same time in perfect communication with one another, are left with their most intimate thoughts.

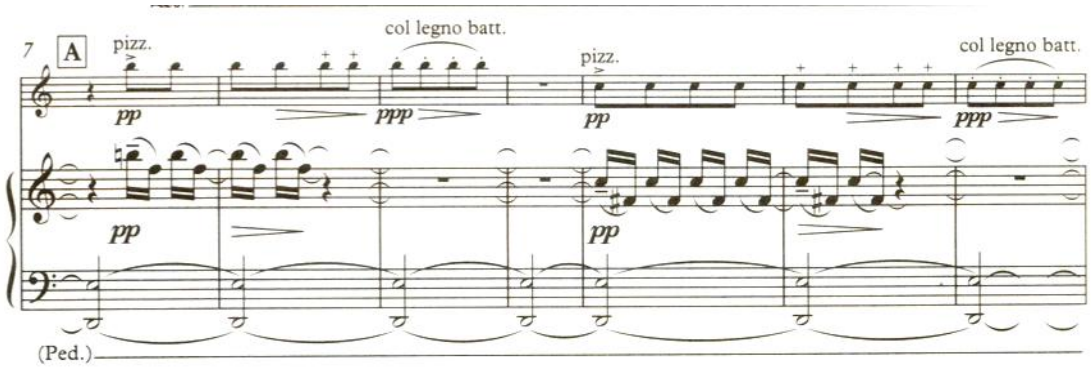
In most cases, the piano part and the violin part compliment each other and essentially work as one instrument with an extended combination of sounds and techniques. There is no counter drama, no opposition, but rather a mutual creation within the same concept. Many phrases are constructed so that one instrument continues what the other one started, or develops an idea that was hinted at earlier by the other. The idea of intimacy remains throughout the sonata, and therefore can create an experience of "eavesdropping" on a private conversation.

This is what essentially makes this piece a meditative and introverted self-expressive work. It is not a "concert piece" in the usual sense. This supports my idea that this Sonata is a continuation of Silvestrov's earlier, "silent" cycle of creations.

Pizzicato and the Echo Effect

The most impressive parts of this work to me personally are the composer's use of *pizzicato.* This technique had been used for centuries as a contrasting detail in string instrumentation. Silvestrov is not inventing any new *pizzicato* techniques, but he processes it though his reflective personality and presents it in a different light, with a rather simple combination of string instrument techniques: right hand and left hand pizzicato in combination with the technique of *arco col legno* (hitting a string with the wooden part of the bow). Alternating among all three percussive techniques, these sections produce an amazing effect of water droplets or an echo effect (in my personal imagery), and make the most effective meditative sounds. Together with continuous harmonic suspensions, which are mainly carried by the piano part, these elements create a powerful feeling of serenity and put both performer and listener in a state of reflection (Fig. 14).

Figure 14. Movement III, MM. 7-13



This evocative effect is enhanced by frequent descending dynamics, as well as articulations: starting louder and getting softer while changing from a more powerful plucking sound (right hand *pizzicato*) to a less clear one (with the left hand), and ending with the articulation that is physically just a touch instead of a string vibration (*col legno*). Silvestrov uses the combination of left-hand and right-hand *pizzicato* to highlight the different timbre of the plucking sound. Because of the different point of the string vibration in regard to the fingerboard and the angle of the plucking motion, the sounds vary from a more clear and resonant (at the end of the fingerboard, plucked with the right hand), to a more muted and muffled one (further over the fingerboard, plucked with the left hand).

However, as was pointed out earlier, Silvestrov is very particular about differentiating small details, even between some passages that may look similar at first glance. His indications for the use of left hand pizzicato are slightly varied and are coordinated with the small dynamic changes. The first time left-hand *pizzicato* appears in the first movement, in M. 80, it is used for the increased emphases in phrasing. It is

accompanied by the composer's remark: *"pizz. with the left hand here sounds clearer than the preceding pizz. with the right hand".* Interestingly, this lasts for only two measures in the entire piece, after which the composer switches to using the left-hand *pizzicato* only for the more muffled effect, and reminds the performer of this change with additional text. To physically execute the actual difference in the left-hand *pizzicato*, in the first case, in MM. 81, 82 (more emphasized), the finger has to grab the string deeper to pull it further for more clear vibration, while in the second case (muted sound, MM. 83-87), the finger of the left hand will have to lightly touch and slide over the string in order to dampen the *pizzicato* effect.

Such special attention to this delicate technique and the importance of it is evident in the last movement, which is built entirely on a single-pitch "motive" in the violin part, as shown in Figure 5c, above. Because the motive has no melody at all, this configuration of articulation techniques takes on its own independent character, and just as in the case with the role of *ritenuto* in the sonata, it is one of the highlights of this work. The idea of this percussive motive is brought in toward the end of the first movement (Figure 5a, Movement I), and enhances the meditative feeling with its percussive, distant version of sound decay. Through occasional piano lines in the third movement, the sound becomes more real for a brief moment; then interrupted by the violin's percussive motive, the entire movement takes on a highly surreal feeling.

To a performer, understanding these intricacies is essential to finding the right approach when creating with a meaningful and coherent musical interpretation of this work. From the technical standpoint, just as with the careful and balanced right-hand approach to the execution of extreme piano dynamics and silent bowing, the physical

balancing between constant alternation of right- and left-hand *pizzicato* along with seamless and strictly timely transition to *col legno* must be achieved with physical grace.

The Use of Special Techniques in the Sonata's Context

Once again, the technical challenges presented here are not the ones a violinist would expect traditionally. The virtuosity of this piece lies not in a speed or intricacy of the passagework, but rather in a completely different set of physical demands, involving skills like being able to keep and connect long notes played with extremely quiet and yet varied dynamics, or transferring the bow silently from one point to another without any anxiety in the physical movement.

It is useful to practice these transitions and special techniques through exercises, for instance, by bow balancing repetitions from the position of *pizzicato* to the position of *col legno* at different speeds. In my initial learning stages of the piece, I found it challenging to smoothly connect the percussive motive and still observe the composer's markings while playing in tempo (in most cases in the third movement he asks for *ppp* at the start of each articulation group of notes within the same motive). To achieve a better connection, I practiced transferring the bow from the frog to the tip, gradually increasing the speed of the motion, without making any sounds at first, and then adding one element at a time (transition from right- to left- hand *pizzicato*; from left-hand *pizzicato* to *col legno,* etc.).

Another important detail that sometimes may present an unexpected challenge is connecting notes within a phrase during string crossings while staying within extremely soft dynamic range. For example, in the second movement in MM. 27-36 the connection

of the pick-up quarter note to the down-beat double stop marked *pppp* may benefit from the long note exercise on open strings, which consists on slow bowing on a string focusing on the quality of the sound at different volumes and speeds of the bow. Another useful exercise is the "up-down" short bow change exercise in various tempos at the frog and at the tip. Isolating the short up-down motion at these two points of the bow gives an opportunity to focus in on the bow changes and achieve the precision of the movement in order to help with the smooth transitions while keeping the soft dynamics.

The Performer's Stage Behavior; Physical Interpretation and Challenges; Theatrical Elements

Some of the most expressive musical moments in this Sonata are communicated to the audience through performer's visible, physical language. Theatrical communication through body language is what enhances phrasing and musical choices and makes live performance more engaging to a listener than a recording. For example, when a violinist wants to express melancholy or tragedy, it would result in a performer's gesture of bringing arms closer, being more still and focused in a space around them. On the other hand, during the moments of excitement, joyful or victorious character expressions, one may straighten up, lift the instrument higher, and use larger gestures. For many reasons, it is undeniably difficult to describe all the expressive possibilities in physical behavior of a performer. We are all unique not only in our body structure, but also in the way we use our physical traits to respond to emotional stimuli. The extra gestures and expressions that performers use in their musical interpretations are often not just a spontaneous response to music, but can also be a calculated effect, and "theatrical"

in the true sense of the word. The violin has long been a special site of performer theatrically. One of the best-known virtuoso violinists in history, Niccolò Paganini, used dramatic gestures to enhance his already extravagant performances, and it had an unforgettable effect on his audiences. Nowadays the idea of "choreographing" musical gestures is often a big part of preparing for a performance. It is not possible to define exactly which movements are planned and which are the musician's subconscious reactions driven by a certain musical character. Regardless, it is helpful if some gestures are planned in certain cases for some of the dramatic moments in music in order to reach a more effective presentation.

Silvestrov's writing can suggest a different kind of "theatricality" of gestures. When approaching a musical piece in which the state in between silence and sound is constantly at play, some theatrical details should be rehearsed and kept as an essential part of the work's interpretation. In my own experience with this sonata, I found it important to identify the most crucial and dramatic silence points, as well as the most abrupt changes in tempo and dynamics. Trying different things with body positioning and subtle and fluid movement during practice sessions and rehearsals help clarify the best choices for enhancement of certain moments in the sonata. For example, the beginning of the first movement prompts a very still posture and body alignment allowing better balance of the "silent" bowing. Especially because of the unusual nature of the opening of this piece, a performer should take into account and plan even the smallest subtleties of the physical movement in order to communicate the beginning of the music (or musical silence) to the audience. Not all silences are the same; therefore the gestures would vary one from another. In this sonata most of the silences indicate some kind of suspension,

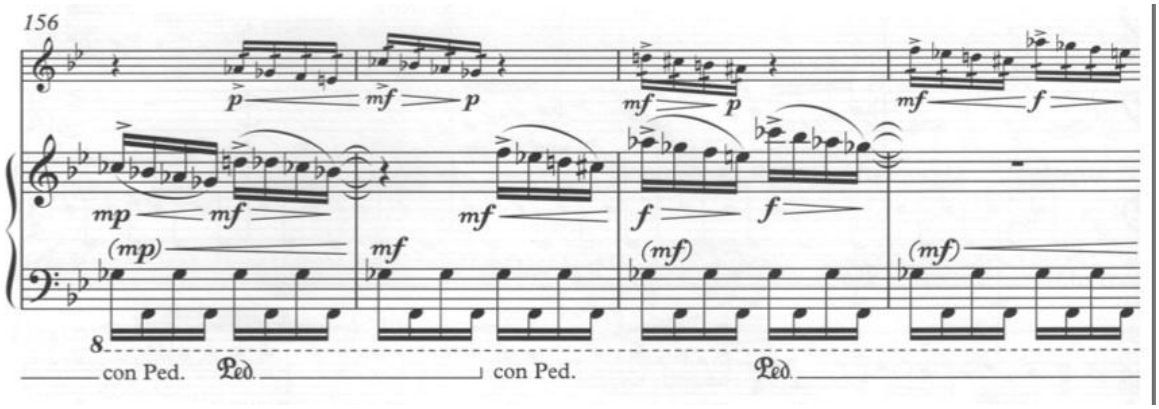
and most of the phrases end either on extreme piano dynamic or with *niente*[6]; therefore my choice would be to keep the arms up during rests, and use the "hovering" effect to portray a stage of thinking with the intent to continue. In the sections where the violin continues or joins in on the ongoing piano line, I would pay attention to my starting gesture being very subtle and making an impression that it's a continuation of what the piano is already doing.

In many parts of the Sonata, during general pauses it is helpful to come up with an conceptual image relative to the music's character, to help keep the body in a meditative position. It can be either looking up or down, having a right hand in a suspended position, or moving in slow motion in preparation for playing the next entrance. Together with the pianist, working out mutual cues for coming out of the general pauses is also a big part of keeping this music in its fragile equilibrium. Gestures should not suggest any concert virtuosic elements such as extravagance, display and extraversion, and remain introverted and private to the audience's eyes as well as to its ears. These are two voices conversing in privacy. Therefore, no big or sudden physical gestures would be appropriate in most of this work.

Even in the loudest parts of the first movement for example, Silvestrov uses tremolo articulation for the violin, which is powerful in comparison to the other parts of the sonata, but at the same time somewhat restrictive in physical gesture because of the fast tempo and the nature of the bowing technique. It gives an impression of a suppressed outcry:

[6] It. "nothing"

Figure 15. Movement I, MM. 156-159



It is evident how important it is for the composer to express the meditative character of the piece. In addition to the dynamic and articulation devices described here, he uses numerous ways of emphasizing it structurally, that I have analyzed in Chapter One. Performers, in their turn, have an ability to enhance this with adding a gestural element. In places like, measures 80-88 of the first movement (shown in Figure 5b in Chapter I), a violinist can physically show the upward motion, along with keeping the right hand up after the last pizzicato note during fermatas. In fact, this gesture is also a useful detail for the third movement, where *pizzicati* and *fermate* are in constant alternation in the violin part.

The meditative state of mind may not be easy to express through gestures in a performance setting, but general gestures that are natural for us to use in everyday life when we stop to think or ponder, are usually associated with slowing down. The composer here uses that familiar human element through his compositional medium, thus prompting a corresponding gestural reaction on a physical level of the artist's interpretation.

In addition, because most of the thematic material is very delicate in its nature, any increase of the musical texture and motion, such as *tremolo, staccato, pizzicato* and faster passages, will instantly signal to the listener the important points in character change. Meditative and peaceful states interchange with anxious feelings and emotional outbursts. These contrasts may also subconsciously direct a performer to finding the right interpretive image to convey these details clearly through musical choices, as well as the body movement.

Staccato* vs. *Tenuto

Silvestrov's highly detailed specifications of dynamics are tightly connected to articulation markings and texture choices, and make an essential part of his distinction of character changes throughout the piece. Some interesting examples include his use of *staccato*, *tenuto*, and dotted *tenuto* notes. In this case Silvestrov uses *staccato* for more brisk and anxious parts in the material, and requires a light, yet non-percussive bow stroke. In some cases these notes are also slurred in, or marked with a dotted line, which means a connected, "one-breath" line (Fig. 16a, 16b).

Figure 16a. Movement I, MM. 31, 32

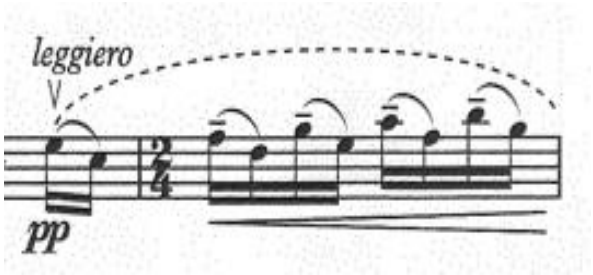
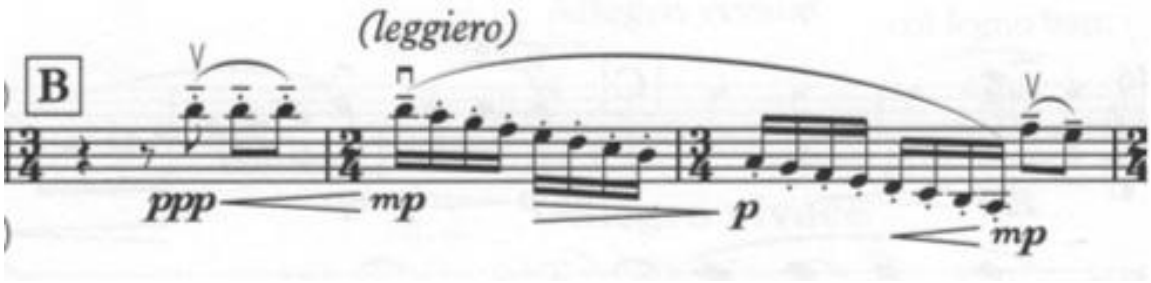


Figure 16b. Movement I, MM. 35-37



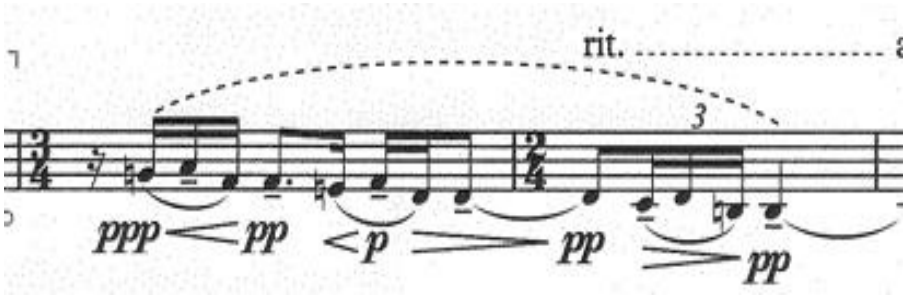
However, in the tempo of quarter note = 132, what looks like a "flying" *spiccato* at a first glance (sixteenth-note passage, MM. 36-37, Figure 16b) according to the suggested slurs and bowings may actually imply a *ricochet*[7] bowing. This bowing, with 16 notes under a single slur, is very difficult to achieve; the bow looses the momentum of bounce after a certain point, and especially when crossing strings. The composer also marks a *crescendo* on the last few notes, which is not possible to do when playing a down-bow *ricochet.* Therefore this bowing can be worked with several solutions that would either slightly modify the original slur, or "sacrifice" the crescendo marking at the end of the passage. My choice was to separate the last sixteenth note of M. 36 (2nd measure of the Figure 16b) in order to get a new subtle momentum for the next measure where the last sixteenths note of the passage would be played up-bow for the quick *crescendo* right before the last beat of M. 37 (third measure of Figure 16b). In the immediately following section of MM 40-42 (not shown in the Figure) the articulation is *spiccato*: the eighth notes are marked with the dot just as in the *ricochet* passage, but are

[7] Bowing technique where violinist uses the momentum of the bouncing bow usually achieved by the motion of "throwing" the bow in a (primarily) downward direction while moving it horizontally. The tension on the hair meets the tension on the string, producing a bouncing motion

not linked by a slur. Here they need to be longer, yet stand out and sound separate from one another. Here the bow will increase slightly with each note, and lift from the string.

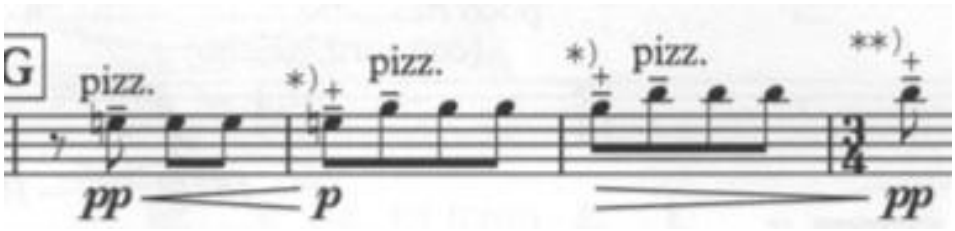
In the case of *tenuto* lines and dotted *tenuti*, it is evident from deeper studying of the score that Silvestrov marks most of the important notes and phrase highlights with a *tenuto* line. This is clear in examples where there is a connected legato sound; he marks each sixteen note with a *tenuto* to bring out in a sub-phrase:

Figure 17. Movement I, MM. 20, 21



He also uses these markings for a pizzicato line, again to emphasize direction of each phrase:

Figure 18. Movement I, MM. 80-82



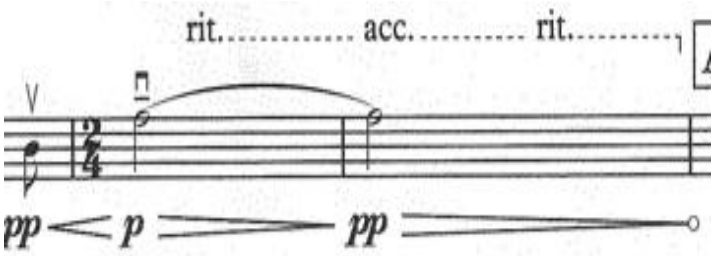
Sound and Color

The fragile nature of this sonata is seen through many reminders in the score, such as notes indicating "light and transparent", "*leggierissimo*", "*dolcissimo*", etc. Yet a violin player has to put this in perspective when making choices of a sound quality and sound color. In this case there are many ways to help achieve a continuous soft sound, and at the same time discover various sides of it. The parts where Silvestrov requires the use of the mute (*con sordino*) are already pre-determined and also serve as a reference point to achieving the difference in sound. To achieve a difference of timbre and to find the "right color" in each case is a highly subjective issue. However the common methods used by violinists often are the points of bow positioning in regard to the bridge; the amount of bow speed and pressure to give a certain "density" to the sound or vice versa; the choice of fingerings (for warmer or brighter versions of the same pitch); and even the choice of strings (which can play a more or less significant role, depending on the instrument). Each of these methods can be applied in various combinations and to certain sections of the piece as subjective interpretive choices, but all would be based on the composer's requirement to find the meaningful approach to the delicate nature of this work.

Another proven method for finding different colors in sound, and especially with piano dynamics, is in varying the rate and amplitude of *vibrato*, up to and including *non-vibrato*. By combining a slow bow with the thick sound produced when not vibrating, one can achieve a feeling of tension, and release it with a slight warm vibrato at the end. For example, my choice to execute the long note in such a manner would be in MM. 15-16

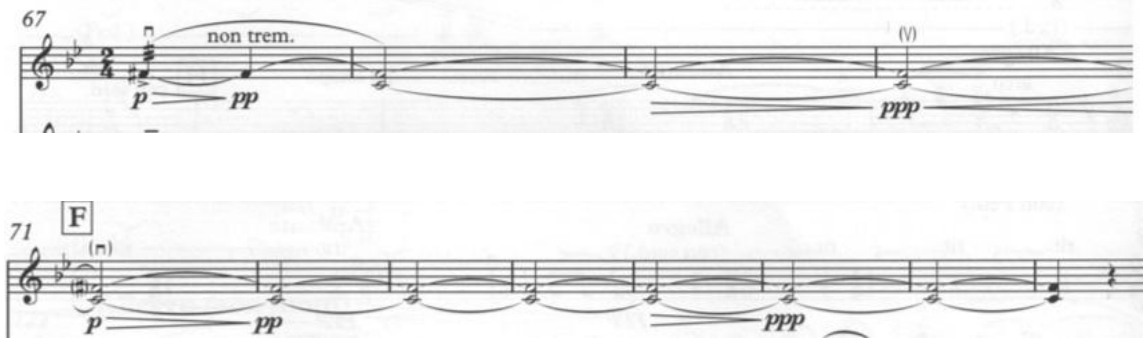
(Movement I), to bring out the *tenuto* at the top of the "hairpin", and use the warmer sound in the following measure, marked "pp":

Figure 19. Movement I, MM. 15, 16



And in quite an opposite approach, to show more emotional peak in a phrase, it's possible to start off with no vibrato and increase the speed and intensity of it to the top of the phrase: MM. 67-78 (Fig. 20).

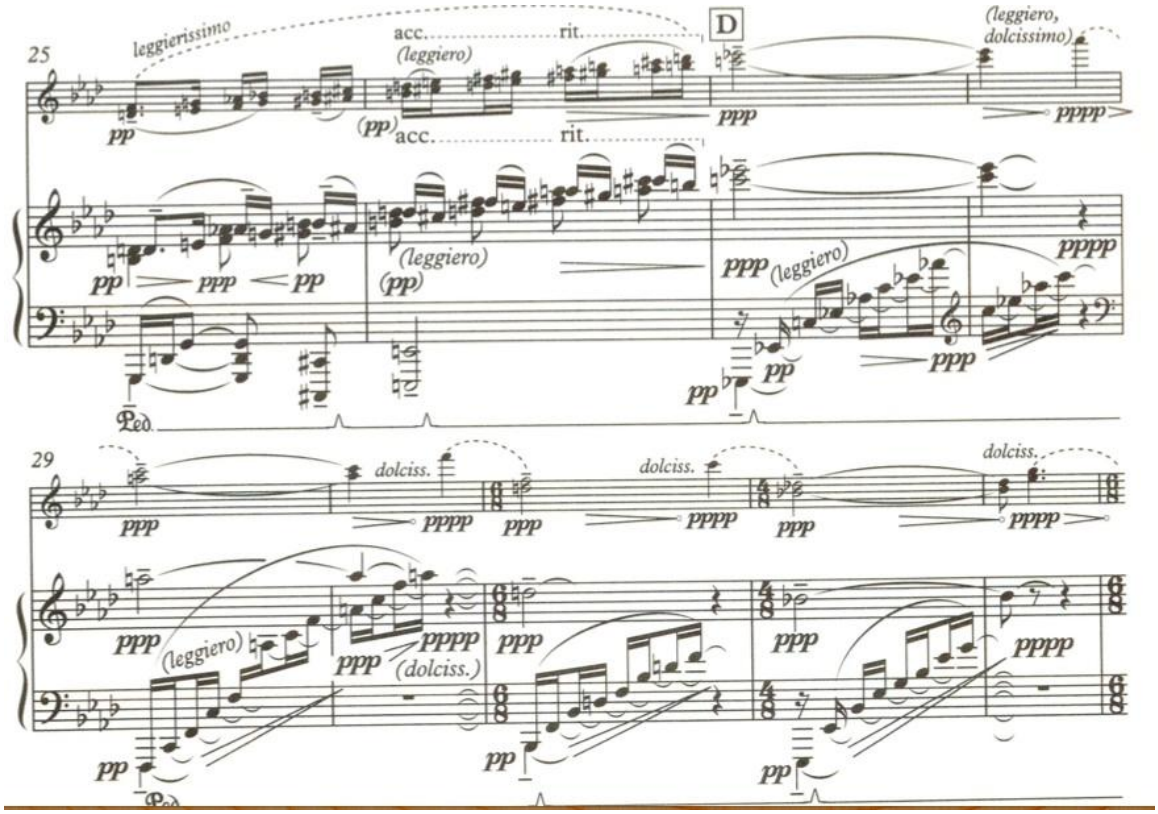
Figure 20. Movement I, MM. 67-78



However, sometimes the physical execution of a continuously fragile approach to sound can get in the way of bringing the notes and musical lines to life. For example, in the second movement, besides the use of mute and an abundance of soft-themed instructions, Silvestrov uses double stops in a sixteenth-note passage, indicating a long

phrase, "*leggierissimo*", and "*lontano*". The dynamics here represent the narrow spectrum of "pp" (the loudest in the passage), to "pppp," to *niente*. This combination may present one of the more technically challenging parts of the entire piece: to produce a double stop, it is necessary to have a certain amount of string vibration, while these dynamics are certainly pushing the limit of extreme softness in volume. One of the ways to get around this challenge is to use more bow, and less weight into it, in order to allow to cover both strings, yet stay as soft as possible (Fig. 21).

Figure 21. Movement II, MM. 25-34



Interpretational Choices and the Question of Freedom in Reading the Sonata

Drawing from many of the above-mentioned examples in dynamic, tempo, articulation and character indications, a performer essentially has a rich palette of musical tools with which to create a unique artistic approach to the Sonata. But how much freedom does Silvestrov allow? The performer's task at hand is to make the audience believe in this piece's spontaneity, and to bring out the Sonata's meditative feeling to the surface. In order to achieve this, there has to be a certain artistic freedom, which may allow the meaning of this music come through in a natural manner.

By making different choices in the length of fermatas, the rate of *ritenuto* sections, and slight variations in tempo, the piece as a whole can take on different personalities. For example, in the recording by Gidon Kremer (violin) and Vadim Sacharov (piano) released by Arcadia Kyiv (year unknown) there is an obvious use of a narrow vibrato, long pauses, and quite lengthy *ritenuti*, along with a fast tempo in the very beginning. Kremer uses an extremely light sound and bow strokes, resulting in almost *quasi ponticello* style. The piano phrases are very connected with the obvious use of pedal and are not overly articulated. The second movement's double stops are hardly audible, so delicately executed that they create an effect of disappearance into nowhere. The third movement is very well paced and observes the composer's tempo markings quite closely. Its interpretation has a calmer character, and it comes across as a lot more relaxed than the first movement. The piano part is played very freely; the phrases are given a lot of *rubato* and thus help portray a meditative character. The artists make the third movement sound as a long conclusion to the earlier themes in the first two

movements. The last few measures are especially drawn out and dissolve into silence with a great deal of ritenuto and diminuendo.

In the recording by Cornelius Duffallo (violin) and Jenny Lin (piano) of 2007, on the Koch International Classics label, a set of contrasting elements is brought to the listener's attention. They use a slightly calmer tempo in the first movement than do Kremer and Sacharov. Even though both recordings are within the composer's tempo markings, the first one (Kremer/Sacharov) tends to be more forward moving in tempo, while the Duffallo and Lin are is more evenly paced throughout the movement. The quality of the sound is quite soft, yet very clear in comparison to Kremer's more airy approach to the sound. Here the gestures of the *spiccato* and *tremolo* are louder overall, while the piano part is covered with heavy pedal and a very "present" sound in comparison to Sacharov's.

The quality of each of the two recordings seems very clear and well balanced, with what sounds like an optimal placement of the microphones for this sonata's fragile moments to come through. The details like an obvious sound clarity and some louder elements of the Duffallo/Lin recording, make the music come across in a more controlled character, and much less improvisational. However, the slower tempo choice for the first movement makes up for the robustness of the previous details, and manages to paint a reflective and delicate character in a different way. In the Kremer/Sacharov recording there are more instances of unpredictable movement forward in some phrases. In the Duffallo/Lin version, almost every phrase starts very clearly, and consequently sounds more planned and rehearsed. Some high points of phrases and rhythmic arrivals are greatly emphasized in comparison to an overall context of the sonata, and are insistent in

their effect, which results in a less mysterious-sounding interpretation than Kremer's/Sacharov's version. The main theme in this case, especially at the recapitulation, is executed with good musical sensitivity, as well as a rubato appropriate to the character.

Duffallo and Lin approach second movement in a very traditional Romantic manner, using an abundance of vibrato, slides and a rich sound. However, in the section of double stops sounds almost forced, exposing the difficulty of performing these at an extremely soft dynamic level. Here the artists interpret ritenutos and pauses in a more compressed style, which makes phrases more connected throughout the movement. In the recording by Kremer and Sacharov, in contrast, the sound quality for the second movement is quieter and more distant, with less obvious vibrato and longer pauses in the end, which in my opinion adds more mystery and expresses the character more precisely.

Duffallo and Lin's choice for the third movement's tempo choice is much faster than the composer's marking (eighth note =168), and therefore takes on a more dynamic sense of development, and a very different character meaning, than the more measured version by Kremer and Sacharov. There is much more direction in all the phrases; they don't sound spontaneous, but are presented in a unified and noticeably more "structured" manner. This makes the third movement sound as a more separate movement, standing aside from the Sonata as a whole and taking on a more independent meaning, in comparison to Kremer's and Sacharov's more unified interpretation.

Overall Dufallo's and Lin's interpretation paints the Sonata as a work of three separate movements. It sounds less improvisatory in comparison to the more deep and meditative approach taken by Kremer and Sacharov. Kremer's and Sacharov's recording

in its turn helps us to perceive this work as a piece that even though written in three movements, carries a through-composed quality and a serene character throughout.

Recording vs. Live Performance

Due to its very unusual beginning, this Sonata strongly suggests that it is meant to be seen live rather than heard as a recording. The long pauses in each of the movements suggest an obligatory physical, visible element of an interpretive body movement, including deliberate lack of motion. There is an abundance of examples in this work where the music is interrupted by silence and to a first time listener to a recording it most likely would be very unclear whether each silence is an ending, or a pause in the middle of the movement.

On the other hand, listening to a recording allows the listener to bring the sound physically very close, and through this possibility presents the intimate experience – what I conceive to be the composer's main goal. In fact, the listener can literally put the sound at the closest proximity possible (if listening through headphones, etc.). At the same time this results in ultimate loss of control over the amount of the overall volume of this work, which only the composer and the performer set when the piece is performed live. Because of the technological possibilities, listening to a recorded music allows us to turn the volume up or down depending on our subjective need and taste, while in a piece such as this, the amount of sound caries a crucial part of the character of the work. Therefore, in listening to a recording, immediately the element of extreme silent points may get lost.

This brings us to the question of the performance space: can this music be categorized as concert music? Given its nature and the constant composer's reminders,

ideally this piece is not created for large spaces. The sound and overall quality would be immediately lost. Therefore, the preservation of an intimate atmosphere when performing live may be one of the key points in making this Sonata's performance successful.

In my own experience, performing this Sonata in a relatively small size space, helped me convey my interpretation of the work to the audience. A more intimate setting allowed for the sound, even at its most quiet points, to be clear and carry the subtle changes of its timbre. In addition, I came to realization that (in this case) the absence of a formal (most often, raised) stage, where the performers are on the same level with the listeners, also played a significant role in creating a deeper connection with the audience and allowing for better expression of the musical details in the subtlest ways. At the same time, I was able to feel the audience's attention to the music and its expressive elements throughout the entire work, which in its turn created a perfect atmosphere of everyone participating in this meditative musical experience.

Chapter III

Silvestrov in Perspective

There is no doubt that Silvestrov was greatly influenced and shaped as an artist by the cultural and political environment around him.

His artistic journey was not easy. Soviet aesthetics were established to praise the Party, while Silvestrov's creativity was driven by ultimate beauty in its highest form, the opposite of any propaganda restrictions.[8] Coming from a well-educated background (his father was an engineer, and his mother a German language teacher), Silvestrov began serious music studies late at the age of fifteen. Studying in Kyiv Conservatory with one of the most influential music figures of the time, Borys Lyatoshynskyi, the young composer displayed his fearless and curious nature with his ability to combine music with new experimentations that were not even accessible practically at the time. Silvestrov experimented with the limits of compositional traditions and established standards. One of his early major works was his Symphony No. 2 (1965) for flute, percussion, piano and strings, written with various elements of musical expression most closely resembling an avant-garde style. Among Silvestrov's compositions are six symphonies, several choral works, chamber and instrumental pieces, and according to the composer himself, many of them are representative of a particular stage in his musical journey. A list of compositions that Silvestrov offers as a trace of his "journey" is: Symphony No. 2 (1965) for flute, piano and strings; "Cantata" (1973) for voice and orchestra; "Serenade" (1978) for string

[8] In "Dogzdatsja Muzyki" ("Waiting for Music"), the book based on the interviews with the composer, - in one of the remarks on his early composing years, Silvestrov mentions: "I lived in a different period, in the 60ies, when many possibilities were cut off. I liked a certain type of music, and I responded just to it... …I was not thinking of any kind of a particular style of mine..." (p. 17)

orchestra; "Autumn Serenade" (1980) for soprano and chamber orchestra; "Intermezzo" (1993) for chamber orchestra; "Epitaphiya" (1999) for piano and string orchestra; "Hymn" (2001) for string orchestra[9]. Despite the tendency in musicological circles to categorize Silvestrov's composing periods into two main phases (avant-garde, and post-modernism), the composer mentions here that each composition in the above-mentioned list evolved stylistically and served rather as a form of continuity in his creative changes.

Silvestrov wrote a number of chamber music pieces, both vocal and instrumental, and many of those works serve as some of the best reflections of his evolving style. The composer considers some of these highlights to include pieces like his unique "Drama" piano trio (1970-1971)- one of his earlier avant-garde compositions filled with theatrical elements; "Quiet Songs" for voice and piano (1974-1977)- from a transitional period during which he went into artistic seclusion trying to escape the pressure of conforming into social realism and fashionable modernism; String Quartets No 1 (1974) and No 2 (1988)- the latter is especially cherished by the composer because of its dramatic content and unofficial dedication to the memory of his parents[10]. One of the most recent works is his "Fleeting Melodies" (2004-2005) - twenty-two pieces for violin and piano, organized into seven sets and lasting about 70 minutes. This work is unique in its delicate, deeply reflective nature.

In his compositions overall, Silvestrov rarely (if ever) makes any clear references to folk music or traditional elements in his compositions. However, by staying faithful to beautiful melodic material through his dedication to song and vocal writing, which

[9] "Dogzdatsja Muzyki" (pp.16-17)

[10] "Dogzdatsja Muzyki" (p. 164)

always serve as a leading element in his compositions, in my opinion Silvestrov stays right by his roots of deep Ukrainian tradition of a sung melody.

In Ukrainian traditional cultures every event is reflected in a folk song through a new melodic expression and is often very distinctive rhythmically, harmonically and modally. Silvestrov's works are directly relatable to this tradition: his compositions after 1974 are each presented with a new, distinctive melody; these melodies are recognizable because of the composer's original writing style, yet always new and fresh. His style is unique, and does not resemble that of any other composers.

Even though Silvestrov uses referential idioms to the music of the past as his way of reflecting on what had been said already, as we saw on the example of the Violin Sonata, he does not work in any conventionally defined style (i.e. modernism, minimalism, neo-Romantism, etc). According to the composer himself, he "waits for music" to come to him, instead of trying to carve it out. He hears it first, and then follows it wherever it takes the composition. He also emphasizes the importance of not defining a clear beginning or end, and of melting away into silence. He is mainly driven by the melody- poetry of the already sounding music. [11] Silvestrov further explains that many of his creations, especially the more intimate ones, such as chamber works, represent "meta-music"- a musical concept that cannot be restricted by a certain style. He defines the modern musical language in his own way: "I want to show that the modern language does not necessarily need to be modern in its literal meaning. There is nothing modern here on

[11] "..There is more of an evolution of the music itself: when it changes in its nature, the style changes consequently little by little.. ..I am more in the zone of observation. And observation gravitates toward not loosing touch with a subject.. ..It is important to me that the piece does not end, but instead melts away and gets defined when it is out of its own boundaries already." "Dogzdatsja Muzyki" (pp. 199-202)

the outside at first glance, but in reality the language of songs becomes relative. Therefore, it is rather relative than modern."[12]

In addition to this, I believe that Silvestrov puts his personal experience of rebelling against musical oppression into his compositions, and thereby brings his nationalistic feelings onto a larger philosophical scale, representing the long-suffering composers of the previous generations. Because Soviet musical regulations were extremely limiting, composers in particular suffered from this form of cultural dictatorship, resulting in obligatory compositional "formulas" such as standard and often simplified use of harmonies, melodies and techniques that would be "accessible to all". Instead of triumphant and system-praising formulas geared toward the proletariat, however, Silvestrov shows the inner depth of individualism, inviting the listener and the performer to an independent analysis. His compositional approach puts a listener into a meditative atmosphere, letting everyone involved in this musical experience reflect on their own state of mind within the surrounding environment and the historical perspective. Even in his larger works he manages to express himself on the same level of "meta-music". One of the great examples is this is the "Post Scriptum" written for just two instruments; but even in his larger works he manages to express himself on the same level of "meta-music". "Widmung"- a symphonic piece for violin and orchestra, closely resembles the Sonata with its extreme melodic sensitivity and intimacy. One of the ways Silvestrov achieves this is by creating a dialogue between orchestra and violin, rather than the "competition" relationship so typical of the *concerto* genre.

[12] In this part of the interview Silvestrov discusses his compositional techniques in "Widmung", "Metamusic", "Bagatells", and "The Three Songs" ("Dogzdatsja Muzyki", pp. 198-201)

In my opinion Silvestrov's frequent attention to reflective states of mind also represents the disguised musical voice of the oppressed. On the example of his Sonata, it is evident how he finds his own musical language and specific techniques and combines simple elements such as traditionally idiomatic melodic and harmonic turns with unusual suspensions or phrase structures, which in their well thought-through interpretive implications, can speak to the very depth of Ukrainian soul and resonate with Ukrainian identity of their deep appreciation for historical heritage, freedom and beauty. Unarguably music is a universal language; therefore it is very possible for this style of philosophical depth and reflection to resonate with other cultures, historical events and backgrounds of other nations. Silvestrov may draw on personal experiences, but he communicates these feelings in the most understandable language and translates it into musical meditation.

Post-Soviet Recovery and the New Tendencies in Ukrainian Music Scene

There is no doubt that the Soviet Era ruling regime destroyed much of Ukrainian culture, and it served as a destructive force from within for decades. Its toxic ideology seeped through all musical institutions and therefore produced generations of artists with little choice in self-expression. As Caroline Brooke points out in her article "Soviet Musicians and the Great Terror", the worst repressions fell onto non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union. Because of the Kremlin's great paranoia about any activity geared toward raising a national spirit in any of the Soviet member countries, any non-conformist music movement was immediately labeled as "bourgeois nationalism", and any individuals suspected in promoting such movement, as "enemies of the people".

> The years of the Terror saw a great many accusations of bourgeois nationalism leveled at members of the arts bureaucracies in the non-Russian republics and, if the Arts Committee reports on the subject were to be believed, regional and republican arts administrations and music institutions were almost totally saturated by enemies of the people.[13]

A sudden turnaround in Soviet cultural ideology in 1953 led to significant changes in artistic tendencies. With Kruschev's denouncement of Stalin's cult[14], newly found freedoms pushed artists to explore their self-expression and their artistic limits. In Ukrainian cultural circles great intellectuals such as poets Lina Kostenko, Ivan Drach, fine artists Lubomyr Medved, Ivan Marchuk, cinematographers Serhiy Parajanov, Juliy Illenko, and composers Valentyn Silvestrov, Yevhen Stankovych, and Leonid Hrabovsky emerged. (Many of them are still influential in shaping the current cultural scene, and inspiring the new generations.) These key personalities were among those that defined the direction of Ukrainian cultural life in the early1960s and served as leading figures for rebuilding national culture independently from the Soviet ideology.

This period of political and ideological changes resulted in many of the Soviet composers exploring numerous experimental creative styles already known in the Western world. These composers (along with Silvestrov, we might mention Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaidulina, Edison Denisov, Arvo Pärt, among others) are often referred to as "shestidesyatniki" (composers of the 1960's)[15].

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[13] Brooke, Caroline "Soviet Musicians and the Great Terror", pp. 402-406.

[14] On February 25, 1953, in his speech "The Personality Cult and its Consequences" at the closing of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Party, First Secretary of the Party Nikita Kruschev, condemning Stalin's terrorization of the masses. This later lead to "Perestroika" movement.

[15] A term that was given to a group of Soviet composers by Soviet Era musicologists and mostly refers to former composers of social realism that broke away into experimental

In its essence it was a rebellion. In breaking away from many years of ideological oppression, the artistic community craved radical transformations. Particularly in music, dodecaphony, avant-gardism, modernism, minimalism, serialism- gained a great appeal among composers. However, because of extreme complexities on one hand, or overly emphasized simplicity on the other, these styles were not popular with wider audiences. Some of the composers channeled their experimentation into styles that did not mirror the extremes of experimentation in the Western music world. Coming out from the long oppression and continuous restrictions of the Soviet era, and at the same time being interested in the new Western tendencies, a handful found their way to rethink both concepts and at the same time take into account their national roots and traditions.[16]

Ukrainian Contemporary Composers

In Ukraine, Valentyn Silvestrov, Myroslav Skoryk, Yevhen Stankovych, Vitaliy Hubarenko, Leonid Hrabovskyi, Lesia Dychko, among a few others, stand out in this post- 1953context of seeking a new direction and personal expression. Because of long years of repressions of Ukrainian identity, often these new directions would lead to exploring national roots of history and tradition.

When analyzing these composers' works more closely, it is important to note the inspirations that guided their compositional development.

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styles. The term is still actively used by many musicologists of the former Soviet countries.

[16] Lubov Kyanovska in her book "Ukrainian Music Culture" emphasizes the significance of the 1960's when the artists finally felt the freedom to explore many directions in music, particularly folklorism.

Beginnings of Ukrainian Musical Nationalism

The key representatives of Ukrainian compositional tradition starting with Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912), the "father" of Ukrainian music, and a brilliant folklorist and ethnomusicologist comparable to a giant like Béla Bartók (who was his close friend and colleague); and continuing with Stanislav Lyudkevych (1879-1979) and Borys Liatoshynsky (1895-1968) among others. Stanislav Lyudkevych was one of the most prominent students of Lysenko and dedicated his life to promoting his work (most of it had been forbidden by the Russian ruling regime), and following in his footsteps as a composer. In their comprehensive work on Lysenko, Taras Filenko and Tamara Bulat present one of the rare documents of correspondence between Lyudkevych and Lysenko where Lyudkevych discusses his progress on work with folklore, as well as the first ideas for establishment of the Lviv[17] Conservatory, and the department of folklore studies.[18] Lyatoshynsky, even though having a position of the professor of composition at the Kyiv Conservatory, and for a period of time, at the Moscow Conservatory, was not quite free to express freely his interest in folk style and modern tendencies. As an avid proponent of modernism in his early years, and later a sympathizer of Dmitri Shostakovich, many of his compositions were banned during his life. Nevertheless, the harsh creative conditions for this generation of Ukraine's artistic elite inspired the newcomers to explore the potential of developing Ukrainian identity through their work.

[17] Lviv is the center of geographical, historical and cultural region of Galicia ("Halychyna") in Western Ukraine, roughly including the modern territories of Ternopil, Lviv, and Ivano-Frankivsk regions.

[18] "The World of Mykola Lysenko", p. 279

New Developments

Ukrainian cultural expression has been going through many years of inertia in its slow recovery from decades of repressions and censorship. After the fall of Soviet regime many native artists were searching for their new identity, either consciously or instinctively. Despite all the obstacles, Ukrainian culture remains consistent in its continuous gravitation to expression through music and spoken word. The country's unique geographical position and the ethnic background of the early musical and cultural traditions and education have forever left their imprint on Ukrainian artistic tendencies that found many ways of expression throughout the nation's turbulent history.[19]

The above-mentioned early pioneers of folk music and nationalism inspired the following generations such as Silvestrov, Skoryk and Stankovych to develop their interest in Ukrainian heritage further in their musical compositions. Besides studying with Ukrainian masters, each of these three men received additional training in Europe and in Russia to perfect their skills. They therefore were drawing on musical experiences from Western and Russian composers. On a larger scale, it is evident that while they worked within Western classical traditions and were inspired by certain Russian composers, each one of them found a perfect fusion of the two worlds in their own compositional languages. Furthermore, each of the composers developed a unique way to incorporate their Ukrainian heritage into their music by exploring specific modes and harmonies that

[19] 1. Folk melody traditions of many regions of Ukraine each with their own special characteristics and differences are mixed with Western musical traditions established throughout the years. 2. Highly sensitive to cultural aesthetics, Ukrainian artists gravitate toward more delicate and harmonious interpretations in all expressive areas, and often are inspired by the natural phenomena around them: i.e. nature references in visual arts, sung melodies in music, highly lyrical and descriptive expression in literary works.

resemble aspects traditionally found in folk music, and combining these components with international and personal styles.

Myroslav Skoryk

Deeply captivated by many new opportunities in music in early 1960s, Myroslav Skoryk (b. 1938) incorporated the appealing folkloric "wave" along with his love for jazz and rock music into his early compositions. He grew up in Lviv[20], and from the age of 9, in Siberia, in exile with his family. He had a great musical inspiration in his family: his grandfather was a folklorist, and his great aunt, Solomiya Krushelnytska, was a world famous opera diva of the 19th century, favored by G. Puccini for his leading opera roles[21]. All this was instrumental in Skoryk's artistic development, and even though he experienced first hand and early on the struggles and oppressions imposed by the Soviet regime, he never lost his passion for his native Western Ukraine and its rich musical heritage. He became one of the leading composers in the nation, continuing to inspire further development of modern Ukrainian classical music after returning to Ukraine upon Stalin's death in 1953.[22]

Some of Skoryk's most well-known compositions include music to films by Sergey Parajanov; the cantata "Vesna" (Spring); and, countless solo instrumental and orchestral works. The majority of them display his skill at incorporating Ukrainian traditional sounds and rhythms. The way Skoryk uses folk ideas and transforms them to

[20] At the time this region of Ukraine was occupied by Poland

[21] "The World of Mykola Lysenko", p. 301

[22] Online Resource: http://www.anm.odessa.ua/mic/mic-cbase.html

idiomatic implementation in his works is unique. His infamous "Melody" (from one of Parajanov's films) became almost as recognizable as any traditional Ukrainian melody[23].

Skoryk does not quote, yet he knows the melodious nature of the folk material and the relevance of modal and melodic detail to the point where the result is populist, and especially easily connected to the Ukrainian musical traditions characteristic in specific regions. For example, in his Violin Sonata No.1 (1963) Skoryk implements 5/4 changing accents in the third movement throughout both violin and piano parts, and often deviates to the feel of polyrhythm. This gesture is a very clear reminder of the many variations of *Hutsul* dance rhythms.[24]

Another example from the same Sonata would be the beginning of the first movement. The movement starts with what sounds like a familiar melody (although it is merely an idiomatic reference to a folk melody) that has a feeling of continuation and not the beginning. However it takes on unpredictable turns instead of the expected cadences, and with the dissonant harmonies in the piano part sets an unsettling and intriguing tone that is reminiscent at times of Prokofiev's first violin concerto.

Interestingly, one of Skoryk's first students in the Kyiv Conservatory was Evhen Stankovych. He however, found a different way of interpreting the folkloric element in his compositions and developing his style.

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[23] One of the numerous arrangements of the Melody can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaiznwDq6iA Performed by Szymanowski String Quartet; arrangement by M. Skoryk (based of the information from the personal correspondence with the members of the Quartet).

[24] *Hutsuls* are an ethno-cultural group in Western Ukraine, historically settled in the Carpathian Mountains region. They have distinct cultural traditions that also can be noticed in music (unique modes, irregular meters and polyrhythms).

Yevhen Stankovych

Coming from Zakarpatska region of Ukraine, Stankovych followed in the footsteps of the Ukrainian music legends of previous generations, and was able to attend both Lviv and later Kyiv Conservatories. He developed a unique style and paid special attention to combining Ukrainian folk elements with new and highly modernist harmonies, and other compositional elements. In comparison to Skoryk, Stankovych's musical approach is less populist. The drama that he does express comes through the clashing of the easily recognizable folkloric elements and more self-consciously complex compositional techniques. An example would be Stakovych's incorporation of traditional elements into polyphonic procedures. On one level his music is simple to understand and define melodically- it is not excessive in any way, allowing easy accessibility and engaging nature[25].

Stankovych worked extensively in many genres, such as chamber works, orchestral music, opera, ballet and theater music. Because of his special interest in ballet and theater, his works are often programmatic, and their names frequently carry a certain cultural or historical reference. Reflecting on numerous tragic events of the century and particularly the ones that happened in Ukraine, he wrote pieces commemorative of Holodomor[26], "Babi Yar"[27], among other significant compositions.

[25] A. Gurenko, " Structural Specifics of Polyphonic Themes in Instrumental Chamber works by Ukrainian Soviet Composers," pp.36-44.

[26] Artificial famine instigated by J. Stalin as part of Ukrainian nation genocide plan, leaving an estimate of 7-10 million death toll.

[27] Location in Kyiv where German Nazis carried out a series of mass murders and massacres in September of 1941

Stankovych also experiments with symphonic forms, unusual combinations of instruments (in both large and small ensembles), and with different ways of developing thematic material, allowing for new approach to expressing his visions of musical image and concept.[28] In his String Quartet (1973) for example, Stankovych presents several melodic themes at the very beginning, one after another. After they are independently established, he adds further voice layering. This forms a new pitch row polyphonically, creating new independent thematic material that now serves as basis for the development of larger sections.

Reference to Ukrainian Music Education in Context of History and Traditions

Each of the above-mentioned composers attended at least one of Ukraine's conservatories (primarily Lviv and the Kyiv). To gain a better understanding of the importance of Ukrainian culture and the development of its own educational system within the Western historical context, it is important to briefly trace Ukraine's early history of education.

There is a clear scientific evidence of a highly developed civilization thriving on the present territories of the Western Ukraine as far back as 8000-5000 B.C., whose visual art and an undeniable indication of greatly developed culture directly relates to Ukrainian cultural traditions nowadays. Of course it is hard to establish clear links of musical tradition; but the archeological artifacts point to people of that area being active in their artistic expression through many art forms that stood the test of time, nourishing

[28] Zinkevych, "Symphonic Hyperbolas," p. 93

into the roots of Ukrainian national heritage.[29]

Ukrainian written history provides early records of formal higher education that included extensive musical training. The oldest establishment, the Ostroh Academy, was one of the first and most developed in Eastern Slavic territories, and indeed in all Eastern Europe; it dates back to 1576. Other significant Ukrainian universities at the time were the Hlukhiv Academy (North East of Ukraine), which was the central music training academy of the entire Russian Empire throughout the 18th century, and the Kyiv Mohylan Academy, which is now one of the oldest Universities in Eastern Europe.

Well-known composers that were among leading names during the 18th and 19th centuries in Ukraine, also represented a Ukrainian classical music tradition abroad. They include Dmytro Bortnyansky, Maksym Berezovsky and Artemiy Vedel[30]; Semen Hulak Artemovsky, Myhailo Verbytsky, Mykola Lysenko, during the 19th century through early 20th century- the period of the Russian Empire's rule over Ukraine; Filaret Kolessa, Rinhold Gliere, Mykola Leontovych, Viktor Kosenko, in the late 19th century through WWI, the Revolutions of 1905 and 1917, and the establishment of Soviet Ukraine; and during the Soviet Period, Lev Revutsky, Sergei Prokofiev, Borys Lyatoshynskyi, Stanislav Lyudkevych, Platon Mayboroda.

However, because of constant repressions toward Ukrainian identity in all spheres

[29] I am referring to the Trypillian Culture that was discovered in 1897 in the heart of Ukraine (south of Kyiv). While it has not yet been thoroughly studied, it is now considered among the oldest civilizations known to archeologists. www.trypillia.com

[30] D. Bortnyansky (1751-1825)- studied in Ukraine, St. Petersburg, Italy, had a great success in the Russian Imperial Court; M. Berezovsky (1745-1777)- first Ukrainian composer to compose a symphony and a violin sonata, internationally recognized during his life. Artemiy Vedel (1767-1808)- distinguished in his sacred musical compositions. These composers are representative of the Kyiv Rus' and its strong political period.

of art it is difficult to trace a consistent and accurate music history of Ukraine in all the years of its continuous political instability (mentioned above). Most of the talent was either executed or escaped to the West, or was forced to conform to the Russian oppressive standards.

Though the Kyiv and the Odesa conservatories were formally initiated by the Russian music elite (including P. Tchaikovsky and others) in early 1900's, they quickly gathered the musical elite of Ukraine and carried on as leading musical establishments for Ukrainian and Russian talents. The Lviv Conservatory traditionally had closer ties with the deeply rooted music circles to the West of Ukraine, such as Vienna, Germany, Hungary, and Poland. Its most influential early representatives, like Soltys, Kolessa, and other composers and artists of Halychyna (Galicia region mentioned earlier), established musical traditions that were more open to exploration of national elements and regional musical tendencies of the folk tradition.

Along with many changes in the politics of Ukraine, the establishments underwent continuous ideological pressure: yet they always strived to stay true to the high ideals in art as much as possible. However, the debris of the Soviet ruling ideology, which often remained formalized through institutions, has slowed down the "recovery" period even after the formal proclamation of Independence in Ukraine in 1991[31].

The post- Soviet tendencies in music of Ukraine are usually directly dependent on the political dynamics of the regions and their historic context, largely because musical

[31] It is important to note here that due to the Holodomor ("Death by Hunger") tragedy of the 1932-33 and the forceful deportation of the Crimean Tatars in 1944, some of these Ukrainian lands were artificially repopulated with ethnic Russians to impose rapid "russification".

institutions are financially dependent on the government and the state (region). The passion for keeping Ukrainian cultural heritage and developing it further remains on a level of individual awareness and mentorship, as well as in following traditions of individuals that once were an important part of these institutions. Unfortunately they are not always expressed in a practical policy of the formal institution as a whole, especially in the regions of Ukraine that remain under the old system of former ideological oppression.[32]

As seen on the map, the Lviv and Kyiv Conservatories are geographically positioned in the Western and North Central parts of Ukraine, which aids in their easier integration into the West, and therefore historically these two institutions were more musically diverse.

The other two conservatories of Ukraine, Kharkiv and Odessa are very important musical establishments, and each has a long history, but they present slightly different atmosphere in their overall tendencies. Odessa Conservatory especially, has a unique artistic heritage. The city's well-rooted artistic community is of one-of-a-kind in its nature, where numerous former Soviet musicians established their traditions, passing them through generations[33].

[32] See the map of Ukraine provided below: the *ethnic* division (*not linguistic*) often coincides approximately with certain ideological sympathies in the mentality of Ukrainians on its territories.

[33] "Music Education", Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine, http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/

Why Search for Ukrainian Identity in Former Soviet Composer's Works?

When it comes to discussing nationalistic or folkloric elements in interpreting any creative piece, it is impossible to find one distinctive answer. Art is not a science, but it is possible to analyze it for a better understanding and interpretation. In his work on this subject, Joe Ryan reflects that:

> Music does not require to be revisited in order to fit its environment. It is rather that music emerges within a context; and that context shapes the music that emerges. To be sensitive to the ambience is better for understanding the music and perhaps, more importantly, such as informed approach may supply a greater appreciation of how this and future generations might fashion a more vibrant musical life.[34]

In the nineteenth century, political tendencies in Western Europe, and later in the countries like Ukraine, prompted rapid new developments in music, art and literature. In addition to constant political turbulence, a new understanding of linguistic and thus cultural and spiritual mobilization was set in motion for several decades.

> These ideas put an entirely new complexion on the whole concept of folklore. Until the late eighteenth century, folklore, or local vernacular culture, was associated chiefly with the peasantry, and was therefore assigned a low cultural or intellectual prestige. Now folklore was seen as embodying the essential authentic wisdom of a language community or *nation.*[35]

Although this was true in the West, the process of expression through native cultural idioms was greatly delayed in former Soviet countries, particularly in Ukraine, because of many decades of political oppression. With arrival of many freedoms in the 1960 and after Ukrainian proclamation of Independence in 1991, this expression came to

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[34] Ryan. "The Tone of Defiance." In White, Harry and Michael Murphy. *Musical Constructions of Nationalism: Essays on the History and Ideology of European Musical, p.*199

[35] Taruskin. *The Oxford History of Western Music: The Early Twentieth Century, Volume 4*, p. 122

a long-awaited realization and was combined and developed simultaneously with other modern musical directions.

Though countless compositions were written during the Soviet regime, and many of these composers had been labeled as either “Russian” or “Soviet”, in reality, many of them were forced to disguise their true voice behind a mask of certain conforming ideas and gestures. In this, Shostakovich served to many composers as the moving force and inspiration for continuing on the path of staying true to oneself while surviving the Regime. To composers like Silvestrov however, Shostakovich was an inspiration for artistic resistance, rather than a musical model in any specific ways. Early on Silvestrov was looking for various mediums to find his voice, just like Shostakovich did in establishing his signature style.

Only recently were former “Soviet” composers like Silvestrov, Skoryk and Stankovych, given the freedom for expression of their true compositional interests. Therefore their earlier works and the stylistic elements they employed while working under Soviet dominion now deserve an examination in a different light- through a retrospective historical prism. With a closer look, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of elements such as extended pauses, sighing musical gestures, sudden interruptions of the melodic material, or unsettling harmonies underneath an unassuming melodic line. These elements resemble some of the characteristics of Shostakovich’s style. The use of what may seem like an innocent and serene melody in combination with haunting harmonies can subconsciously remind us of the symbolism of the oppressive regime: mundane on the outside but treacherous and disruptive in its nature. Suddenly

every element such as this gains a significant weight and points to more meaningful discoveries as to how one may understand a melodic line or a harmonic progression.

What makes such music "Ukrainian" will to a large degree remain subjective. Once again, it is the subtleties that make certain creations relatable to one group of people or another. However, understanding the inner world of the composer, and putting it against a broader context, is the key to balancing macro- and micro- perspectives in order to gain a full picture.

Conclusion

As Larissa Onyshkevych notices in her article on Ukrainian National identity, "[...] it is particularly striking that current Ukrainian literature, and especially drama, does not feature earlier Soviet-era negative stereotypes, the xenophobia toward the West and even towards Central Europe […]"[36] It is true that even though Ukrainian lands were under long periods of Russian and Soviet ideological oppression, the nation stood firm in their European roots, and had developed an invaluable power to synthesize a unique perspective on both East and West from its own middle ground.

Ukrainian heritage and abilities for musical interpretation are just as unique as the geo-political situation of the country itself: we have a great knowledge and natural understanding of the Eastern European traditions, and on the other hand, the Western traditions are just as accessible, understandable and influential historically and ethnically. Ukrainians have inherited a great cultural fusion, which produces a unique creative outlook on music and art.

[36] Onyshkevych, "Contemporary Ukrainian literature and National Identity," pp. 415-416

For many decades and even centuries, Ukrainian classical art was deliberately repressed in continuous attempts to rid of Ukrainian identity altogether. As a result, even twenty years after the official proclamation of its Independence, Ukrainian classical music flies under the radar of international awareness. Since the beginning of the "Revolution of Dignity" (starting in November 2013), the Ukrainian nation rose once again, and continues to stand up for its rightful freedom to choose the direction of its future.

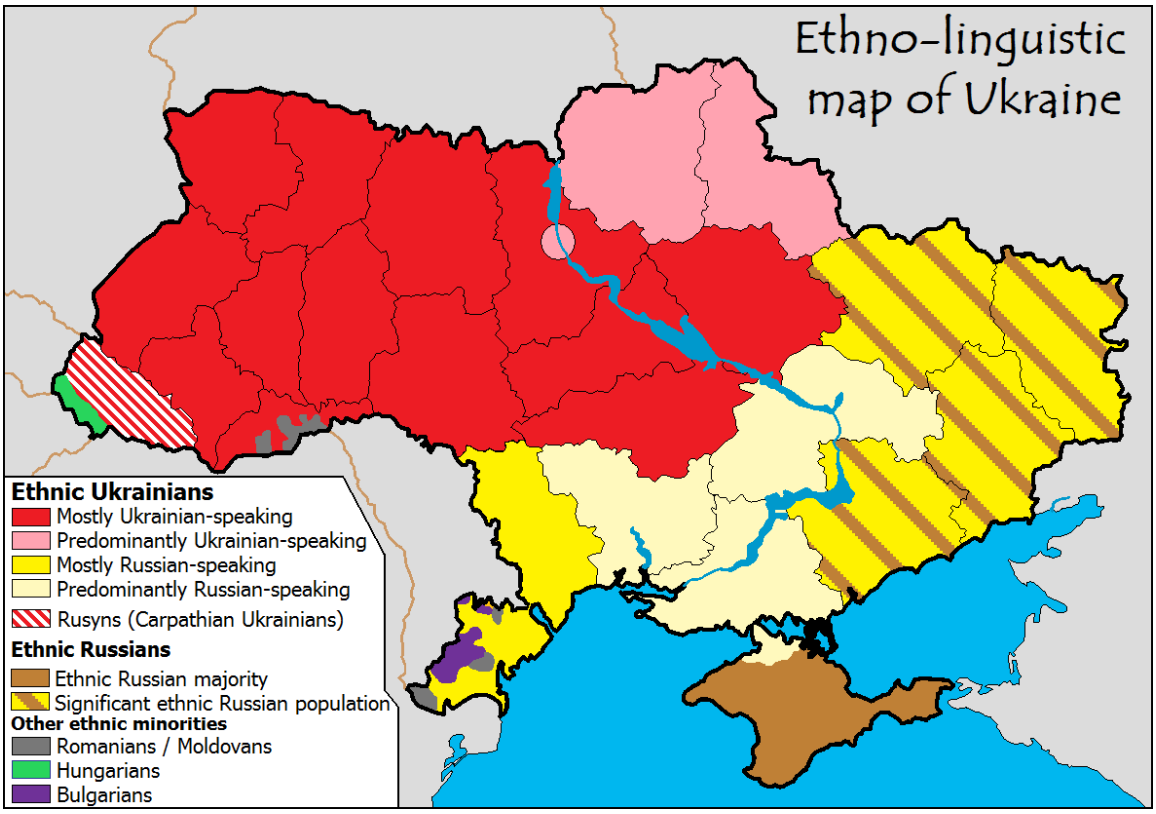
The recent events of violence and invasions in Ukraine outraged the majority of Ukrainian intellectuals and artists, as well as many in the international community. A number of them are expressing their emotions and support through new creations. Among those is Valentyn Silvestrov, who takes a firm stand against foreign aggression. In his support and search for comfort during these continuing struggles of Ukrainians, the composer most recently wrote his new "Dyptykh", two memorial songs after the death of the first victims of protests in Kyiv (February 2014). The first is set to the words of the Ukrainian National Anthem, and the second, to the words of the Lord's Prayer. Both songs closely resemble the style of his earlier "Quiet Songs", and are directly relatable to his Violin Sonata as well[37]. This music is very current to the emotional state of many Ukrainians, and echoes the most inner feelings where words are often powerless.

Despite the informational war and propaganda that continues to stir up violence and heartbreak, the majority of Ukrainians around the world unite in standing together against yet another oppressive historic event. A vitally important part of this fight is to

[37] "Duh i Litera" ("Spirit and Letter") published the author's own "sketch" recording of the "Dyptykh" which can be found here: http://ru.duh-i-litera.com/novyiy-diptih-valentina-silvestrova/

finally bring to the attention of the world community the awareness of Ukrainian truthful history, along with its rich culture, promoting its further developments and integration in the world scene.

Appendix 1


Ethno-linguistic map of Ukraine
Ethnic Ukrainians
Mostly Ukrainian-speaking
Predominantly Ukrainian-speaking
Mostly Russian-speaking
Predominantly Russian-speaking
Rusyns (Carpathian Ukrainians)
Ethnic Russians
Ethnic Russian majority
Significant ethnic Russian population
Other ethnic minorities
Romanians / Moldovans
Hungarians
Bulgarians

Appendix 2

E-mail Correspondence with Bogdana Pivnenko, Violinist, Honored Artist of Ukraine

1. Dear Ms. Pivnenko, you are one of the most sought-after violinists in Ukraine and abroad. As to my knowledge, you often include works of Ukrainian composers in your repertoire. Based on your experience, do you consider Ukrainian composers to have enough exposure in the West?

I think no- definitely not enough!! We as a nation are very strong and can fully compete culturally on the international arena, and should definitely dedicate more effort into promoting our music and culture!

2. You often work closely with Ukrainian modern composers, such as Valentyn Silvestrov, Myroslav Skoryk, and Yevhen Stankovych. Have you had a chance to work on any particular pieces with Mr. Silvestrov? What were your impressions, and how would you describe his artistic approach to his own music (especially in the concert and recording setting)?

Yes, I worked with Silvestrov on "Fleeting Melodies" most recently; we traveled together to various festivals in Ukraine and Europe. Very often in our concerts I would perform with [pianist] Matiukhin at the beginning, and then with Silvestrov at the piano we would do his "Dedication to Bach", after which he would perform his solo piano pieces.
It was very memorable. Also we worked together on the recording of the "Fleeting Melodies": he would sit in during the recording, often trying to monitor the process very closely. Sometimes he would forget about the recording being in progress and make a loud comment "Oh, very good!"- and we would have to start again..
He was very concerned with the quality of the recorded sound, so he listened to it countless times before he was satisfied. He would often emphasize that this music is "the

music of silence", therefore it should sound like an improvisation, depending on the state of your soul and mind at the time of the performance.
It is always very important to him that the music sounds as though coming from far away, that's why he marks almost each note in his scores, and gives the dynamics range starting at five pianos..
He can be extremely picky, but he enjoys my interpretations: I try to express *him*, and not myself. He dedicated two cycles of pieces to me: "Songs with no Words" and "Musical Moment". "Songs with no Words" are included in my new album "Fleeting Melodies".

3. Do you use different approach to interpreting music by Silvestrov, Stankovych and Skoryk? What would be these differences?

Skoryk stays very close to Ukrainian melody, his music fits our instincts very organically. His strength is in instrumental concertos. I enjoyed performing with him as both a conductor and a pianist in Cambridge, Paris, London, (and in native Kyiv and Lviv of course) many times. He has a very dynamic personality, and it somehow reflects and is quite noticeable in his music- his style is often bright, effective and virtuosic.
Silvestrov is very cosmopolitan in his musical philosophy, a big soul, kind, but picky with performances of his works, therefore requires a careful and detailed approach.
Stankovych is also very broad in his musical style, but stays closer to the Ukrainian idioms, working with large ideas. At the same time he is easy to work with when interpreting his music. His works are deeply philosophical and filled with metaphors, and that is why many of his most-known works are dedicated to historic and tragic events.

For more information on our work together, you can also refer to our interview with Silvestrov at the following link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir-j8F3wsIE

Best wishes,

Bogdana

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