Valery GAVRILIN (1939–1999)

The Russian Notebook
Anyuta (excerpts)

Mila Shkirtil, Mezzo-soprano
St Petersburg Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra
Yuri Serov
Valery Gavrilin (1939–1999)

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Valery Alexandrovich Gavrilin was one of the brightest stars within Russian music of the second half of the 20th century. His compositional style is immediately identifiable: he displays individualist creative aesthetics, and his compositions are amazingly beautiful, winningly appealing, and full of bright ethnic colour. In composing The Russian Notebook, the 25-year-old made a daring leap into the history books, bursting onto the musical scene of the time and astounding all with his profound and powerful talent, mastery and sincerity.

Gavrilin was born in ancient Vologda. The austere but beautiful nature of the Russian North, and his proximity to provincial surroundings, had a serious impact on his entire creative life. At a very young age he lost his father, who joined the Second World War efforts as a volunteer and was killed in the vicinity of Leningrad in 1942. In 1950 his mother was imprisoned, and Valery found himself in a children’s home in the village of Koyvino near Vologda. He entered a specialist music school in 1951, and it was there that I.M. Belozemtsev, a teacher at Leningrad Conservatory, heard him and suggested that the talented boy should move to Leningrad. From 1953 to 1958 Gavrilin attended Leningrad Conservatory’s Special Music School, studying clarinet, piano, and composition. In 1964 he graduated, majoring in two fields, composition (with O.A. Yevlakhov) and musicology (with F.A. Rubtsov).

After graduation, Valery Alexandrovich was connected with Leningrad his whole life. He taught at the Conservatory’s College of Music, worked as an editor for Sovetsky Kompositor publishers, and composed a great deal for Leningrad’s theatres and the Lenfilm studio. He gave the actors an opportunity to express themselves dramatically. The so-called ‘edit choreography’ enabled the plot to be selected from his early opuses. The unexpected harmonies, acute modulations, unexpected artistic reincarnations as well as a diversity of sounds in the piano accompaniment. Gavrilin expresses every strong human emotion in a musical way, finding the perfect technical solution for any artistic concept every time. He does not use direct musical quotations from folk music, but his deep understanding of folk music intonations enables an artful stylisation of traditional peasant tunes combined with urban melodies.

The composer’s virtuosic handling of traditional texts is also impressive. He uses vocal accents freely, repeating particular words or syllables, and plays with colloquial expressions, but always stays within the boundaries of classical composition. Gavrilin’s knowledge of folk art is organic and genuine, and he handles this musical implementation with the greatest care and respect.

Valery Gavrilin’s mature understanding of compositional techniques is clear in The Machinery of Government. The expected harmonies, acute modulations, polyrhythms and polyphony, and the detailed polyphonic processing of the material in the cycle, presented a daring and original step forward for Russian music during the 1960s.

The orchestral version of the cycle was created by St Petersburg composer Leonid Rezetdinov. He was guided by the principles of Gavrilin’s orchestration, and the configuration of his orchestra. The idea of orchestrating The Russian Notebook was born from an understanding of the scale of the cycle itself, its unique place in Russian vocal culture and Gavrilin’s own unrealised desire to orchestrate his work.

The ballet Anyuta is a rare case in history when the choreographic staging was specifically tailored for the screen before being brought to the theatrical stage. The television ballet film Anyuta, produced by scriptwriter and director Alexander Belinsky and ballet master Vladimir Vasilev in 1982, was based on Chekhov’s story Anna on the Neck. The director’s long-held dream was to combine one of Chekhov’s plots with ballet. This was to change, however, as the great Russian ballerina Ekaterina Maximova, who performed the main role in the ballet, recollected: Belinsky ‘heard a Waltz by Valery Gavrilin and realised that it was a real “Chekhovian Waltz”’. Thus, the film’s concept originated not from literature but from music. Underlying the plot is several stories by Chekhov, and primarily Anna on the Neck.

Valery Gavrilin, whose attitude towards ballet was rather lukewarm, suggested that the accompaniment for the new production be selected from his early opuses. The main theme emerged from the orchestral composition The Machinery of Government, and the famous Tarantella often performed in concerts, is an orchestration of the piece French Song from Piano Album: indeed most of the other numbers are orchestrations of Gavrilin’s popular piano pieces, or fragments of his orchestral Theatre Divertimento. The ballet Anyuta is assembled from different works like a patchwork quilt, which is why the choreography is so diversified. The heartfelt sincerity and expression of Ekaterina Maximova, became a choreographic embodiment of the steadfast ‘Chekhovian’ spotlight on the characters’ emotional distress.

Vasiliev details the life story of Anyuta – a girl from a poor family who married a well-to-do official, Modest Alexeevich, and was dazzled by ‘high society splendour – with the aid of movie techniques. Focusing on close-ups, he gave the actors an opportunity to express themselves dramatically. The so-called ‘edit choreography’ enabled joining fragments of different dance numbers, building a parallel image.

The first time the ballet was presented on a theatrical stage was at the San Carlo Theatre in Naples in 1986. In the same year, it was presented by the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow and remained in its repertory until 1994. The

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ballet also ran in dozens of cities in the Soviet Union and Russia, and in many European countries.

This album presents ten of more than twenty musical numbers from the ballet, to give quite an ample impression of the music—lively, melodious, touching, and warm-hearted. Although Valery Gavrilin did not consider himself fully to be the composer of the ballet Anyuta, it was this opus that brought him broad public acclaim, and enabled him to implement many other creative ideas, for musical theatre in particular. —Yuri Serov

Русская тетрадь, слова народные (1965)

1
Над рекой стоит калина
по другой стоит малина,
ох, тошно, ох, куда мне.
Над рекой стоит калина,
колыхается малина,
во малине буду ждать парня,
ждать парня, ой, буду.

2
Страдальная
Ах, милый мой, пусти домой?
Пусти домой, смотри в окно: зорю видно.
Уже проснется мать и бу… зорю видно;
и будет спрашивать: «Где я? А где… зорю видно.
А где была, шальная дочь,
а где ты шлялась всю ночь? зорю видно…»
«В саду была, в саду… зорю видно.
Цветы рвала, цветы рвала… зорю видно.
Тебе, мать, розы принесла, цветочки алые,
а что на сердце у меня, узнала я,
а что на сердце у меня, да мука сладкая,
любовь твоя, мой миленький,
что для тебя рвала бы я, рвала бы я, мой
милый, розы, розы алый цвет, кого люблю, того здесь нет,
kого люблю,
того здесь нет, мамаша милая, того здесь нет,
мою дроли». А.

4
Зима
Ой, зима, зима моя! зима морозная.
Ты не трожь меня, я боюсь тебя, зима!

И я жена, я жена, жена мужняя,
Ох, спотешилась, распотешилась.

Я тоску свою свела в зелен сад
и на толстый сук там повесила. Ты виси, тоска, да проветрись,
в саду соловьев понаслушайся,
сладких яблочков понакушайся
и назад ко мне не ворочайся, не ворочайся!

Домой возвратилась с прогулки,
оделась в лучший наряд,
вплела в волоса алу ленту,
и села к окошку сама…

И начала думу я думать,
что снова осталась одна,
что нет у меня и милова,
то нет у меня тоски.

The Russian Notebook (1965)

Texts: traditional. English translations by Sergey Suslov

1
Cranberry O’er the River
There’s high cranberry o’er the river,
there’s raspberry along another,
oh I feel bad, oh I’m so sad.
Yes, cranberry o’er the river,
and that raspberry’s swaying,
in that raspberry for the guy I’ll be waiting,
I’ll be waiting, oh, I’ll be waiting.

2
Lament
Why girlies, why are you staring so?
See you don’t know a thing of my black pain and sorrow.
Now didn’t tell him, tell my sweetheart.
Don’t break my heart!
Yeah I said he didn’t ought to, and I told him ‘Wait awhile.’
My sweetheart’s gone far away, there’s a deep sore
on my heart.
Oh, oh how can I go on now girls?
Oh, oh can I go on now friends?
Oh! Pined away without my sweetheart, yes I did!

4
Winter
Hey you winter, winter! ah you frosty one.
Don’t come near, no, I fear you winter!
I – I’m a wife, wife, wife, I’m my husband’s wife,
Oh I had fun, did I have fun, oh so good.

Now I took my Sorrows to a green orchard,
Now I hung it there on a thickest branch.
Now do hang there Sorrow, hang and air yourself,
listen to birds singing in the orchard,
have a bite of sweetest apples there, a bite or two,
don’t come back to me, ne’er come back to me!

I’m back home from a walk,
I’ve put my best garments on,
I’ve plaited a scarlet ribbon into my hair,
and I sat down by the window …
And I started brooding, started thinking,
that I’m alone again,
that I have no lover boy,
that I have no sorrow, too.

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Русская тетрадь, слова народные (1965)

1
Над рекой стоит калина
по другой стоит малина,
oh, toshno, oh, kudo men.
Над рекой стоит калина,
kolyshitsya maliina,
vo maliine budu jdati parnya,
jdati parnya, oh, budu.

2
Страдальная
Ах, milyj moy, pusiti domoj?
Pusiti domoj, smotri v okno: zorju vidno.
Uzhe prosnjasja mat’ i b… zorju vidno;
i byud sprasivat’: ‘Gde ja? A gde… zorju vidno.
A gde byla, shaal’ja donja,
a gde ty shlyasja vse nocht’? zorju vidno…’
‘V sadu byla, v sadu… zorju vidno.
Cvetcy rvala, cvetcy rvala… zorju vidno.
Tebja, maja, cvetcy prinjesla, cvetcy al’ye,
a chto na serdce u menja on uznala ja,
a chto na serdce u menja, da meka spadja,
lovob’ tvoj, moy milen’kyi,
chto dlia tebyj rvala bi ja, rvala bi ja, moy
milyj, rzy, rzy al’yj cvet, kogo lubyu, togo zdej net,
ko gley,
togo zdej net, mamoj milya, togo zdej net,
mov dojli’. A.

4
Зима
Oj, zima, zima moya! zima moroznaja.
Tye ne trozhi menja, ja bozhi tebyja, zima!
Ja, ja menja, menja, menja muzhnya,
o, spotejshiesja, raspotesjiesja.
Ja tebyu svoju skenu v zelen sad,
ena tolstyj sok tam poviesilja.
Ty vjesi, toska, da provetrisja,
in sadu solovjevoj poniesja,
sladkih yablok v aboutka
i na sadu v visi, toska, da provetrisja,
in sadu solovjevoj poniesja,
sladkih yablok v aboutka
i na sadu v visi, toska, da provetrisja.

Домой возвратилась с прогулки,
Ох, спотешилась, распотешилась.
Я тоску свою свела в зелен сад
И на толстый сук там повесила.
Ты виси, тоска, да проветришься,
В саду соловьев понаслушайся,
Сладких яблочек понакушайся
и назад ко мне не ворочайся, не ворочайся!

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и назад ко мне не ворочайся, не ворочайся!

И начала думу я думать,
Что снова осталась одна,
Что нет у меня и милова,
Того здесь нет, мамаша милая, то го здесь нет,
Мою дроли». А.

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Yes, cranberry o’er the river,
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See you don’t know a thing of my black pain and sorrow.
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Don’t break my heart!
Yeah I said he didn’t ought to, and I told him ‘Wait awhile.’
My sweetheart’s gone far away, there’s a deep sore
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Hey you winter, winter! ah you frosty one.
Don’t come near, no, I fear you winter!
I – I’m a wife, wife, wife, I’m my husband’s wife,
Oh I had fun, did I have fun, oh so good.

Now I took my Sorrows to a green orchard,
Now I hung it there on a thickest branch.
Now do hang there Sorrow, hang and air yourself,
listen to birds singing in the orchard,
have a bite of sweetest apples there, a bite or two,
don’t come back to me, ne’er come back to me!

I’m back home from a walk,
I’ve put my best garments on,
I’ve plaited a scarlet ribbon into my hair,
and I sat down by the window …
And I started brooding, started thinking,
that I’m alone again,
that I have no lover boy,
that I have no sorrow, too.
Так, ах, что мне, девчонке, боязно гулять.
Ой, почему, да зачем, поле чистое,
ведь я красивая така…
меня с собою увезути –
Приедут завтра ямщики,
а я красивая така…
Приедут завтра ямщики –
а я красивая така!
Приедут завтра ямщики –
у меня защитник есть, я жена мужняя!
А я красивая така!
я за ним ходила, поливала,
Я его садила, я его растила,
Ты не трожь меня, я боюсь тебя, зима моя морозная!
Ой, зима, зима моя! зима морозная!
Дам тебе веночек, шелковый платочек,
а на нем цветочек-стебелечек,
Вышла на крыльцо, холодно мне.
Девки, девки идут, цветы несут…
и буду одна там гулять…
Пойду я в прекрасное поле
опять мое сердце горит.
Now I feel happy once again,
once again, my heart’s a-burning.
I’ll go out to the lovely field,
and take a stroll there alone ...
Now that I’m out on the porch, I feel cold.
See those girls, girls walking by, and carrying flowers ...
I feel cold, cold, I feel oh so cold.
Oh, you winter, winter! ah you frosty one!
Don’t you touch me, I fear you, you my frosty one!
Don’t you freeze me dead, you biting frost,
Don’t you spare my sorrow, bitter sorrow, whip it up, up, up …
Try to cheer me up, up, up, up,
do not you spare my sorrow, bitter sorrow, whip it up, up, up …
Now why did I have, why did I have,
for what reason did I have to fall in love?
Ah, if I knew, if I could only guess,
I’d better spend my time with Mother.
I’ll go dancing, sing, sing, sing, sing,
Breaking my heels off, off, off, off,
drive my nagging sorrow away, away, way,
shake my grief up, move it out,
wipe my grief off of my soul!
Now my heel go chok, chok, chok, chok,
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В прекраснейшем месяце мае, когда соловьи в рощах поют, цветы на лугах, расцветают у нас и на всей земле. С тобой по лугам мы гуляли, там наша любовь цвела. Когда-нибудь теплым денем, как солнце зайдет, месяц взойдет, сберутся ребята гурьбою, пойдут во луга гулять. Найдут там красивы цветочки, и вспомнят, и вспомнят нас: как с миленком сидели, чего молчим, не знаю, и чего молчим, не знает он, не знаю я. Лишь на реку глядим, все на быстре, там ребята гуляли, там хороводы завели больши. Прощай, мой милый, мой дружочек, Прощай, мой милый, мой дружочек... ты напиши мне письмецо.

When you're left alone, child, without your lover boy, like an poor little orphan. There were days I was a happy lass ... a happy lassie I was too.
The St Petersburg Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra (also known as the St Petersburg Academic Symphony Orchestra) is one of the two symphony orchestras belonging to the St Petersburg Philharmonia Society, the other being the St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. The orchestra was founded in 1931 as the Leningrad Radio Orchestra and for more than two decades its activity was linked with the radio station, first as a concert orchestra then as a large symphony orchestra. During the Second World War, the Leningrad Radio Orchestra was the only orchestra that remained in the besieged city. In August 1942, despite the limited number and poor health of the musicians, it performed the Leningrad premiere of Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 7* led by Karl Eliasberg. In 1953 the orchestra came under the umbrella of the Saint Petersburg Philharmonia Society. Its conductors have included Nikolay Rabinovich and Arvīds Jansons, who took the orchestra on its first foreign tours, and Yuri Termikanov, who expanded the orchestra's repertoire. Alexander Dmitriev was principal conductor from April 1977 to June 2018, succeeded by Nikolai Alekseev. Guest artists have included Lorin Maazel, Evgeny Svetlanov, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Van Cliburn, Yehudi Menuhin, David Oistrakh and Mstislav Rostropovich. The orchestra has taken part in prestigious international festivals, and has toured Europe, Asia and America. It participates in unique concerts including the commemoration of the reburial of Empress Maria Feodorovna in 2006. It also premieres new works by contemporary St Petersburg composers.
Yuri Serov graduated from the Rimsky-Korsakov St Petersburg State Conservatory as a pianist in 1993, also studying in Salzburg and Weimar. As a conductor, Serov graduated from the Russian Gnessin’s Academy of Music in Moscow. As both a conductor and a pianist, he has toured across over 35 countries, and has recorded more than 70 albums for a number of labels in Russia, Belgium, Japan and the US. Serov is chief conductor of the Volgograd Philharmonic Orchestra and the St Petersburg Mussorgsky Youth Symphony Orchestra, and is the author of many articles and essays on music. He is artistic director of the Northern Flowers International Chamber Music Festival, and founder and editor of the St Petersburg Musical Archive album series.
Valery Gavrilin was one of the most colourful and significant Russian composers of the second half of the 20th century. He was only 25 when he composed *The Russian Notebook*, a ‘poem of love and death’ crafted in a new musical language that doesn’t employ folk melodies but does use folkloric texts, and with a virtuosic vocal part. These stylised tunes are combined with rich melodies to form a haunting cycle heard here in a 2018 orchestration. The ten numbers from the ballet *Anyuta* are lively, melodious and touchingly beautiful.

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Mila Shkirtil, Mezzo-soprano ¹–⁸
St Petersburg Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra
Yuri Serov

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Recorded: 5–7 September 2018 at St Petersburg Radio Studio, Russia
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