

The Dumka, Op. 59, composed in 1886, has the subtitle *Scene rustique russe*. A “Dumka” is a type of Moravian or Polish folk song and two folk tunes form the basis of this attractive composition. The dumka embraces the range of expression that is almost symphonic in thought and is one of Tchaikowsky’s most successful works for piano solo.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Rachmaninoff was a pianist of genius whose works for piano were composed as vehicles for his own performances. His early influences were the classical and Russian nationalist schools; his teachers Sverov, Arensky and Siloti; his friend and benefactor Tchaikowsky; and, especially in his works for solo piano, Chopin and Liszt.

Three Preludes

C minor – a perpetual motion. The music races along turbulently and restlessly, not resolving itself until its final five measures.

G Major – Rachmaninoff is at his lyrical best. This prelude has the character of a barcarole, with the hauntingly beautiful theme set over a gently arpeggiated bass figure with an undulating rhythm. The sumptuous melody is ornamented characteristically in Rachmaninoff’s piano style.

The prelude in *B Flat Major* is a virtuosic tour-de-force, with sweeping left hand arpeggios supporting highly dramatic chordal figures of its martial tune. The middle section is a full of dramatic sweeping gestures and glorious melody.

Rodion Shchedrin (1932-)

Leading Russian composer whose many works for both the stage and concert hall have earned him worldwide acclaim. His music is eclectic, charismatic, ebullient and usually taxes both the performer and the audience with its extravagant originality.

defined by exotic chords using augmented seconds (hiatus), tritons and other harmonic structures which are unusual to Western ears.

Perpetual Mobile is based on swirling and driving motives that galvanizes the listener with brilliant and mercurial passagework.

The *Prelude* mesmerizes the listener with its incredible tonal beauty and profoundly noble sentiment. In this piece, Vladigerov is at his apex in the use of complex, outlandish harmonic structures and melodies.

Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)

Seemingly unknown to most, the vast majority of Smetana's compositional output was for solo piano and the Polka was a form whose limitations fascinated and challenged the composer throughout his life. Indeed, it was Smetana's ambition to elevate the lowly Polka into an art form and with Volume Two of the *Czech Dances* (1879) he finally achieved this lifelong dream.

The thematic material for the *Czech Dances* fall into two categories: Five dances are inspired by actual dances and five are based on folk melodies. The two chosen for this recording give an example of each. *Dupák* (Stamping Dance) is a whirling dance whose first episode is marked by "stamping" on the ground and contrasted by the secondary episodes which imitate a bagpipe. The virtuosity required to bring off this piece rivals anything found in the Hungarian Rhapsodies of Liszt. *Obkročák* (Circling or Striding Dance) employs a folk melody that Haydn also used in the final movement of *Symphony No. 104*.

George DeForest

Born in Varna, Bulgaria, of Russian and Bulgarian parents, Krassimira Jordan studied in Sofia, Vienna and Moscow, where she was a pupil of Stanislav Neuhaus and Emil Gilels. During her years of study, a series of prestigious international prizes were awarded to Ms. Jordan, including the International Piano Competitions "Alfredo Casella," the "Alessandro Casagrande," and the Mozart "Clara Haskil" Prize. As a representative of Austria, she was the Gold Medal Winner at the 1981 Rio de Janeiro International Piano Competition.

Krassimira Jordan has performed with much acclaim as recitalist and orchestral soloist in major European cities in Austria, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Russia, Hungary, Poland, the Scandinavian countries, Mexico, South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, China, Brazil, and the United States. She has appeared as soloist with the Wiener Symphoniker and the Tonkünstler-Orchester in Vienna. Highly regarded as a teacher, her students come from all parts of the world and have won top prizes at numerous international piano competitions in the USA, Europe, and Asia.

Krassimira Jordan has recorded a series entitled *Franz Liszt-Berühmte Klavierwerke* (Famous Piano Works). She has also committed to disc a group of Johann Strauss waltzes, as transcribed for piano by Leopold Godowsky, Karl Tausig, and György Cziffra. Among her other recordings are piano concertos and solo pieces by Heitor Villa Lobos and other Brazilian composers.

A naturalized citizen of Austria, Krassimira Jordan was Professor of Piano at the world-renowned Vienna Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts from 1979-1989. After her Carnegie Hall debut in 1989, she joined the faculty of the Baylor University School of Music as Artist-in-Residence and Professor of Piano.