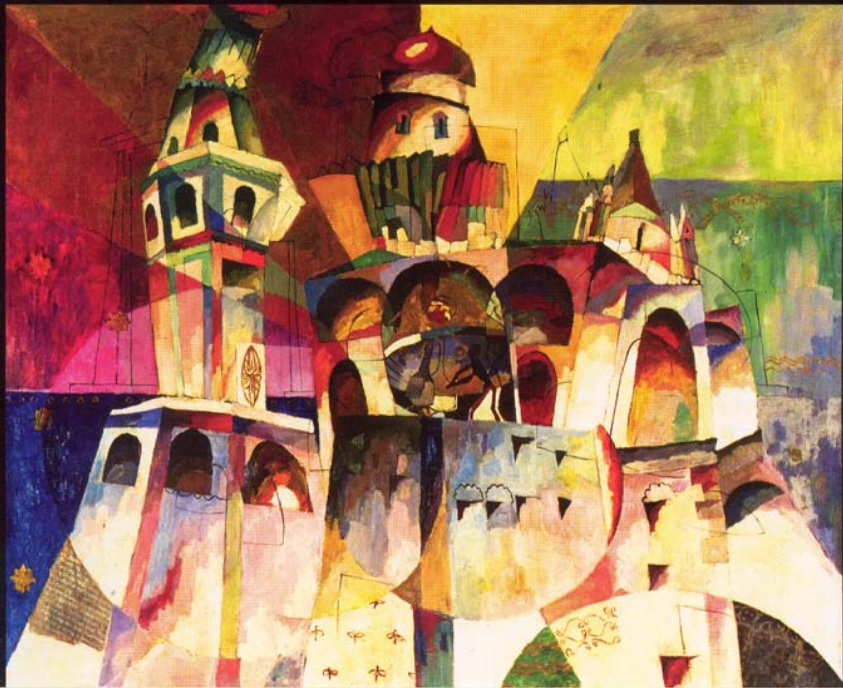


ALEXANDER LEVINE

# KOLOKOLÀ

BBC SINGERS

JAMES MORGAN, CONDUCTOR



**Alexander Levine** was born in Moscow and studied piano from the age of six at the Gnessin Music School (Moscow), and later he took up the clarinet. Upon graduation he was offered a place at the Moscow Gnessin Music Academy. During his college years he also held the position of Principal Guitar in the Orchestra of Russian National Radio and Television.

In the years that followed he established himself as a composer working in collaboration with a variety of highly acclaimed performers in Russia. His compositions won prestigious awards from the Russian National Radio and Television in 1989, 1990 and 1991.

Since 1992 **Alexander Levine** has lived in the United Kingdom.

In 1993 he was awarded the honored Wingate Foundation Scholarship to study in the Postgraduate Composition course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama under Prof. Gary Carpenter. In that year many of his compositions received awards and won prizes at various composers' competitions.

In 1994, in recognition of his achievements, he was awarded the GSMD Bursary to continue his studies in the Advanced Postgraduate Composition Course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He also completed his Master Degree (MA) in Composition at the GSMD in 1995, studying under Prof. Simon Bainbridge.

In 1994 he was commissioned to write music for the Barbican production of *War and*

*Peace*, which was performed by The GSMD Symphony Orchestra on stage. *The Times* wrote about this work: "It is not often you go to the theatre and get an orchestra thrown in: not providing cues for numbers but underscoring dialogue with a grand swell, like a soundtrack for the big screen."

His collaboration with the GSMD Theatre continued, and in 1995 he was engaged as music director for the restoration of *The Beggar's Opera*. In 1996 **Alexander Levine** composed the incidental music for the GSMD production of *Love's Labour's Lost*, directed by Di Trevis.

Currently **Alexander Levine** works mainly in the field of contemporary music. His music is performed, recorded and broadcast in the UK and worldwide.

### **Kolokola**

The title *Kolokola* translates into English as church bells or rather the toll of the bells. A great deal can be said about the religious, historical, and philosophical aspects of bell ringing, and in Russian culture it had always been a particularly powerful, almost archetypal image. This image of church bells prevails throughout the whole cycle, which was conceived as a projection of various aspects of human existence with a wide range of historical, religious and Russian folklore cross-references. Thus, *And The Line Was Drawn* alludes to the theme of the 20th century wars, with the focus on human emotional and existential

The piece begins with a *tremolando* section with a descending glissando of divided sopranos and altos, singing *Ko-Lo-Ko-La*. The image of the lonely birch tree highlights the climax of the piece. The descending melodic line and rhythmic pattern draw from the Russian folk song *Во поле берёза стояла*. In the Russian folklore the birch tree represents the image of a virgin longing for the unity with the loved one.

#### What Will You Do With All My Sorrows

This is an emotional monologue of an Eternal Traveler, an "Old Salt" — a somewhat archetypal romantic character. There is no particular reference to the time and place: just one of those tiny Godforsaken European ports of those bygone centuries, and those Stivenson novels aptly come to one's mind to complete the picture.

The title of the piece is repeated in the main line of the chorus, which reappears throughout the piece in a manner of *ritornello*, as a message, unconsciously perceived by the Man and the Woman. The Man hears it as an unwelcome *leitmotif* that contradicts his aspirations. Whereas to the Woman, it sounds like a warning. The words *From God knows where — straight to Hell* sung by sopranos as a soaring line over the first verse, are colliding with each other, as they come from opposite directions, emulating the effect of cross phasing so characteristic to the sound of the toll.

Chanting *Stradania* has always been a popular pastime in a Russian village especially with young people who used it as a courtship strategy: either to get oneself noticed or to convey a message. Traditionally it was accompanied by a balalaika that was playing non-stop in a naïve and detached manner whilst anybody could join in and either improvise or perform some traditional numbers that used to be very versatile and existed in hundreds of variations.

The material is solely based on a synthetic modal scale, whereas the *balalaika ostinato* presents itself as a succession of tonic and subdominant chords and subsequently inverts basic intervallic pitches.

#### And the Line Was Drawn...

This piece alludes to the theme of 20th century wars, with focus on emotional and existential experience. This is a story of two people, a Man and a Woman, caught in the midst of the war. The intuition is unmistakable: they feel the power of the fate that is going to tear their lives apart. But still they don't give up on trying to change or at least to challenge the fate at this very last moment.

The piece starts with this emotional upsurge. Later, in almost a ritual way the Woman urges the Man to vow that he won't be killed — as if the words would have a power to change the future. This line is based on a B-flat chord with a dissonant B-natural in the tenors. It symbolically echoes the opening of *Novaja Radost*, but here it sounds mysterious

## NOVAIA RADOST' (THE HYMN OF JOY)

Радость!  
Радуется Радость!  
Радуется Радость – радуйся!  
Радуйся Радость!  
Радуется Радость!  
Будет радости!  
В Светлый День будет Радость,  
Радость Встречи Новая  
Новая Радость  
В День Светлой Радости  
Встрече – Радуйся!  
Радуется Радость – радуйся!  
В Светлый День Радости – Радуйся!  
Здравствуй День Новая Радость  
Радость Новая  
Новая Радость

## TZAREVICH

Колокола...  
    Ко-ло-ко-ла...  
                    Ко-ло-ко-ла...

По всей земле – Колокола!  
Колокола! Колокола!  
Царица сына родила!  
Царица сына родила! Какое счастье!  
По всей земле – Колокола!  
Царица сына родила!  
Душа – на части!  
Царица сына родила – и в одночасье  
Запели Сорок Сороков  
Проснулся Город Городов  
И все – от мала до велика – ликовали!  
Царица сына родила!  
По всей земле – Колокола!  
Царица сына родила!  
Враги отпрянули  
И замерли  
И ждали

Rejoice!  
Oh, Joy rejoices!  
Joy rejoices – rejoice!  
The Holy Day brings Light and Joy –  
Rejoice!  
Welcome the Joy, let it in –  
Rejoice!  
The Joy of the New Day  
The Pure Joy  
Rejoice!  
Bless the New Day and the New Joy!  
Welcome the day with a new joy  
New Joy welcome

*Ko-lo-ko-la...*  
    *Ko-lo-ko-la...*  
                    *Ko-lo-ko-la...*

The peal of bells all round the world,  
All round the world – the peal of bells:  
It has been done, it has been done!  
The Tzarina has borne a son!  
The Tzarina has borne a son –  
And in an instant  
All bells went mad, and triumph swept  
The land that grieved, the land that slept  
And everyone –  
The young, the old – were celebrating  
The Tzarina has borne a son!  
The Tzarina has borne a son!  
The foes recoiled and did not move:  
They were waiting.  
As time went by, the Day did come,  
That day the toll of bells was failing:

*Из ниоткуда в никуда...*

Пить за любовь, хохотать и корчиться,  
И ненавидеть весь белый свет —  
Мария, я знаю, чем это кончится,  
Я много видел за много лет.

*Зачем тебе его тревоги  
Зачем тебе его беда  
Зачем тебе его дороги —  
Из ниоткуда в никуда...*

Мария, послушай, ты редкая женщина,  
Ты королева, ты не для них,  
Они же подонки, козлы, деревенщина!  
Что ты? Опомнись, какой жених?!  
Видел я тут твоего приятеля —  
Не с ним ли ты думаешь к алтарю?  
Гони его к чёртовой матери!  
Мария, я знаю, что говорю.  
Мария, поедем со мной, Мария,  
Ну хочешь, мы двинемся в Новый Свет?  
Мария, послушай меня, Мария,  
Ты только сразу не говори «нет»,  
Скажи: я подумаю, я подумаю...  
Потом... когда-нибудь... может быть...

Мария, мы завтра кончаем с трюмами:  
С утра загрузим — и можно плыть...

*Печаль в конце, печаль в начале —  
На всём лежит одна печаль.  
Зачем тебе мои печали,  
Когда тебе их не поднять....*

Мария, ты слышишь меня, Мария,  
Я не спешу, но я жду ответ.  
А ты подумай. Подумай, подумай —  
Ты только сразу не говори «нет».

*(From God knows where — straight to Hell)*

Drinking to love, squirming,  
Roaring with laughter...  
Hating the world and betraying God...  
Trust me, I know what they all are after —  
I've been around and I've seen a lot

*...What will you do with all his sorrows  
How can you break this evil spell  
Where will you be if you go his way:  
From God knows where — straight to Hell*

— Maria, you listen to me, Maria,  
You are a jewel — too good for them,  
These men — they are the scum of the earth, Maria!  
What did you say? Fiancee?! Oh, no!  
God, I have seen him, I wish I had not —  
Is he the one who you chose to wed?  
Maria, you just stay away from him, darling  
Maria, I mean it, just do as I've said.  
Maria, you'd rather come with me, Maria,  
We'll move to the New World,  
We'll find our land,  
Maria, you listen to me, Maria,  
And don't say "No" — it will be the end,  
Just say: "I will think... I am not quite ready...  
May be... One day...When the time is right..."  
Maria, the ship will be gone tomorrow —  
But you have time, you have all this night...

*It starts with grief and ends in anguish —  
But could you ever understand?  
What will you do with all my sorrows,  
You can't just hold them in your hand.*

Maria, you heard what I said, Maria,  
There's no rush, but — yes, time is short.  
You think about it. You mull it over —  
Just don't say "No" if you think "Why not?"

Растворившись в защитно-зелёном...

Но вагоны уже уплывали,  
И колёса всё громче стучали,  
И солдаты платформе кричали,  
Что обратно с победой придут...  
А потом они долго молчали.  
А потом табачок доставали.  
И колёса им всем обещали:  
Не убьют,

Не убьют,

Не убьют...

## THE LAST DREAM

Полудрёма... Поле... Пуля...  
Полежите полчаса...  
Даже если Вы уснули,  
Вас разбудят голоса:  
Полудевы – полуптицы  
К Вам любиться прилетят,  
И жена придёт проститься,  
И пропавший младший брат...  
И тогда Вы вдруг поймёте,  
Как прощаться нелегко...  
Отвернётесь и заснёте,  
А проснётесь далеко.

And then the command swept  
over the platform:

"All aboard!"  
And he could not stop waving her goodbye  
From the train, almost indistinguishable  
Blending into the khaki military background  
As the carriages began to move  
And the clattering of the train  
was getting louder

And the soldiers shouted  
To those left on the platform  
That they would return with victory soon.  
Then they all were silent for a while  
Then they began to smoke in silence  
While the clattering of the train  
Promised them all:  
"You... Won't get killed

Won't get killed

Won't get killed...."

Half awake and half asleep,  
Desert. Bullet.  
Just lie down and close your eyes  
for a minute

Even if you fall asleep  
You'll be wakened by the voices:  
They will be half birds — half women  
Swooping down to seek your love...  
And your wife will come with her farewell  
And so will your little brother,  
Gone and vanished long ago...  
Then you'll grasp the pain of parting  
You will turn and drift to sleep  
And you will wake up in due course  
But you will be far away...

time professional chamber choir and a group with an international reputation. Established in 1924, the versatility of this virtuoso 24-voice ensemble is second-to-none, and this flexibility makes the Singers both an important resource in the broadcast music-making of the BBC and a significant presence in British musical life. The **BBC Singers'** breadth of repertoire is unsurpassed by any other choral group, singing everything from Renaissance music to the latest contemporary scores, and their unrivalled expertise with the latter has brought about creative relationships with some of the most important composers and conductors of the 20th and 21st centuries. At home on the concert platform as much as in the recording studio, the **BBC**

ALEXANDER LEVINE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

*BBC Singers, Michael Emery, Stephen Ashley-King, James Morgan, Piers Burton-Page, Michael Bacon, Dave Foster, Jens Hills & Co., Ludmila Drevitt, Yuri N. Kharlamov, Ekaterina Gorbousova*

own orchestras, a wide range of period instrumentation and contemporary music ensembles, and with a host of internationally renowned conductors. The group's rapidly expanding education programme now embraces regular outreach work with school children, youth choirs, the amateur choral community, and young professional composers, singers and conductors. The **BBC Singers** have a unique place on the British concert scene: a world-class choral ensemble committed to sharing their enthusiasm and creative expertise with audiences and performers, amateurs and professionals, young and old, across the nation and throughout the whole spectrum of the choral community.

Sponsored by:



Welcome Change Project  
[www.welcomechange.eu.com](http://www.welcomechange.eu.com)

TROY736

ALBANY RECORDS U.S.  
915 BROADWAY, ALBANY, NY 12207  
TEL: 518.436.8814 FAX: 518.436.0643 [WWW.ALBANYRECORDS.COM](http://WWW.ALBANYRECORDS.COM)



ALBANY RECORDS U.K.  
BOX 137, KENDAL, CUMBRIA LA8 0XD  
TEL: 01539 824008

WARNING: COPYRIGHT SUBSISTS IN ALL RECORDINGS ISSUED UNDER THIS LABEL.

MADE IN THE USA

© 2005 ALEXANDER LEVINE

