

Tin Pui Tang - Master of Arts Final Recital

Date: 4th September, 2020

Time: 9:15am

Venue: Dukes Hall, Royal Academy of Music

Programme:

C.P.E Bach - Keyboard Sonata in A, W.55 No. 4

Robert Schumann - "Humoreske", Op. 20

Sergei Prokofiev - Piano Sonata No.2 in D minor, Op. 14

C.P.E Bach Keyboard Sonata in A, W.55 No.4

C.P. E Bach (1714-1788)

Allegro assai

Poco adagio

Allegro

C .P. E Bach, one of J.S Bach sons was a huge influencer during the ‘Rococo’ transition period. C. P. E Bach’s *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instrument* was a treatise that had influenced many Rococo and Classical performers, composers and pedagogues. It was one of the first important keyboard treatises, and was available for study by all and was widely popular. Learners benefited from his practical discussions and logical thinking towards the music of his time. C. P. E Bach’s discussion and examples of all ornaments and their interpretation is one of the most complete and thorough to date, still useful and influential in keyboard pedagogy today. In comparison with his father J.S. Bach, C.P.E’s musical style became simpler, more accessible, and often featuring immediately appealing, ‘singable’ melodies and recognizable emotions.

His keyboard sonata A major is one of his most famous keyboard works which encompassed all his musical styles, including the elegant ‘Galant’ style in contrast to the ‘old’ baroque style. Galant melodies contain fewer notes and more rests, with clear motives in shorter gestures and more repetitive patterns. The style of “Sturm und Drang” (Storm and Stress/Urge) also appears rapidly in the first movement, thus creating some very cinematic *affect* of surprise and humor. Through these idioms, C.P.E Bach tried to paint, in sound, images of storms with dangerous crashing waves, violent winds, dark clouds, flashes of lightening, rolling thunder, and sharp cliffs.

The “Empfindsamkeit (Sensitive) Style” happens in the slow movement. Marked with tempo *Poco adagio*, a sensibly understood, heightened emotional experience is being portrayed. Positive emotions, such as gratitude, hope, inspiration, and relief may occur in contrast with more negative feelings, including sadness, anxiety, loneliness, and especially melancholy.

"Humoreske" , Op.20

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

"Einfach" (Simple)

"Hastig" (Hastily)

"Einfach und zart" (Simple and delicate)

"Innig" (Heartfelt)

"Sehr lebhaft" (Very lively)

"Mit einigem Pomp" (With some pomp)

"Zum Beschluss" (To the resolution)

Written in 1839, consisting seven sections, "Humoreske" is composed following the success of 'Kreisleriana'. Schumann, undoubtedly one of the romantic giants who has exerted great influence in his period, has contributed the same kind of innovative musical ideas with lots of unexpected changes in terms of characteristics and emotions. He is an ardent admirer of novelist Jean Paul, who excels in humorous novels and stories. His work 'Adolescent Years' is the one that captivates Schumann the most. It is believed that his two contrasting personalities "Florestan" and "Eusebius" are inspired by a pair of twins in the story, Vult and Walt, who were also having very different personalities.

With the concept of Romantic poetry, the humor of Jean Paul often involved a mixture of laughter and pain, in which Schumann could connect to with his childhood memories. The life of Schumann was tragic and filled with difficulties. His father and sister passed away within one year when he was fifteen. The loss of his father and sister disrupted his personal growth which had led him to a great agitation and rumination.

The beautiful and dreamy beginning opens the whole narrative journey. It is followed by a lively and naughty character, appearing in the key of B-flat. It is interesting to find that the inner voice in the "Hastig" is taken from the tunes of Clara's her own composition, Romance in G minor. It is intended as Clara's own singing and is not planned to be played out. In contrast to the bright and happy side of Schumann, the dark and sorrow aspect can be reflected in the Einfach und Zart. It starts with the key of G minor, followed by a bell ringing

intermezzo in between. The journey of soul searching continues with “Innig” (heartfelt) and proceeds furiously in “Sehr lebhaft”. A climax is reached and it is followed by a “grand pomp”, a traditional German dance party. The “Zum Beschluss” carries out a long reflection and lonely moment. A summarizing passage signals the end of the journey and it concludes with a grand resolution.

~Music is moonlight in the gloomy night of life.~

By Jean Paul

Piano Sonata No.2 in D minor Op.14

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Allegro ma non troppo

Scherzo. Allegro marcato

Andante

Vivace

Sergei Prokofiev's first sonata was composed at the age of eighteen. Although the one-movement work was a good attempt and still in an early developing stage, it has already shown Prokofiev's amazing abilities as a young composer. His second sonata was composed in 1912, with a complete four-movements structure. From romantic lyricism to stormy brutality, his second sonata has shown much maturity, in terms of creating his own unique style and musical language. In this work, he explored his musical canvas with a wide range of tonality and character changes.

The first movement begins with three against two rhythmic pattern and aggressive entrance, which showcased his stylistic traits effectively. The toccata-like scherzo features demanding cross hand techniques and short ostinatos with a very playful puppet dance in the middle. It has a very stable of staccato rhythmic pattern throughout the movement. A very dark atmosphere imitating a Russian folk song melodies *Skazka*, appears in the third movement which he marked *Andante*, brings out a very haunted and mysterious feelings. The materials have been repeating throughout the third movement with different rhythmic patterns as well as intervallic patterns such

as tritone and minor second. The last movement is very similar to a big carnival with lots of humor and an exciting “tarantella like” dance throughout the movement. It is considered to be the most technical demanding movement in the whole piece with lots of cross hands jumps and arpeggios. The last movements also bring out his musical language effectively by using a lot of motoric and percussive gestures. A repeated intermezzo borrowed from the first movement can also be heard in the middle before turning into a can-can dance.