

UNKNOWN WORKS BY SOVIET COMPOSERS: MUSIC FOR VIOLA

*Performed by Netanel Pollak, viola
And Liliya Ugay, piano*



Program

Sonata for viola and piano op. 62, No.1 (1971)

Grigory Frid (1915-2012)

- I. Tranquillo e molto cantabile
- II. Allegro
- III. Lento

Suite for viola and piano op. 8 (possibly 1920s)

Varvara Gaigerova (1903-1944)

- I. Allegro agitato
- II. Andantino
- III. Scherzo / Presto
- IV. Moderato

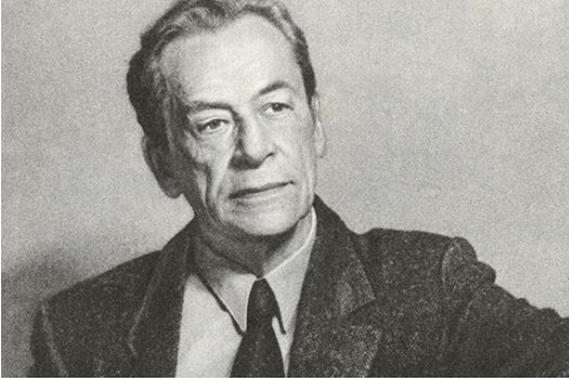
Intermission

Concerto for viola and orchestra (1953)
(transcribed for viola and piano by the composer)

Revol Bunin (1924-1976)

- I. Andantino sostenuto
- II. Adagio quasi andante
- III. Moderato

The Composers



Grigory Frid / Григорий Самуилович Фрид

(Born September 9 (22), 1915 in Petrograd;; died September 22, 2012 in Moscow)

Sonata for viola and piano op. 62, No. 1

Composed: 1971

Approximate duration: 14 minutes

Grigory Frid was a composer, an artist, and a music activist. His mother was a pianist, and his father, was a violinist and a main editor of Moscow magazine "Theater and Music." His father was first arrested for revolutionary activities and later repressed and deported by Soviet forces likely for his Jewish origins. Grigory Frid graduated from Moscow Conservatory in 1939 studying with V. Shebalin and G. Litinsky. During his student years he travelled to the Arctic, where he recorded songs of the Nentsy people of the Yamal region. During WWII Frid first served as a musician, and then fought at the frontline in Kalinin.

From 1947 to 1961 Frid taught composition at the Music College under Moscow Conservatory. In 1965 he founded and led the Moscow Music Club under the Union of Composers. Among the guests of Moscow Music Club were Mieczyslaw Weinberg, Alfred Schnittke, Maria Yudina, Lazar Berman, Gidon Kremer, Vladimir Spivakov, and many others. From 1965 Frid actively practiced painting. In 1976, 1982, and 1988 he presented personal exhibitions of his works. Frid also published four books about music.

For his long life Frid left a massive oeuvre of works in different genres: orchestral, vocal, chamber, concerti, music for children, music for films, and operas. One of his most prominent works - a monodrama "The diary of Anna Frank" received productions in Russia, USA (Siracuse), Israel (Tel-Aviv), as well as many European cities (Amsterdam, Vienna); in 1991 it was recorded by the orchestra of Bolshoi Theater.

Among Frid's film scores are such well-known movies as "Timur and his team" and "Lenin in Paris."

Varvara Gaigerova / Варвара Адриановна Гайгерова

(Born October 17, 1903 in Orekhovo-Zuyevo, Moscow Oblast; died April 6, 1944 in Moscow)

Suite for viola and piano, op. 8

Composed: unknown

Of the same time period: unknown

Approximate duration: 15 minutes



One of the first Soviet female composers Varvara Gaigerova is still a mystery for the audiences around the world. A daughter of a choir director and a pianist Varvara showed a significant musical talent appearing in her first piano recitals at the age of 10. At the age of 14 she was accepted to Moscow Conservatory as both a pianist and a composer. However, in the wake of the difficulties of the civil war in 1917 Varvara had to

stop her studies, which she was able to resume only several years later. She graduated from the Conservatory in 1927 as a composition student of Nikolai Myaskovsky and a piano student of Heinrich Neuhaus.

In 1937 she was repressed (the reason of the repression is unknown) and sent to Kazakhstan where she spent almost three years until she was rehabilitated. She returned to Moscow (she lived in town Khimki) in 1940, a year before the WWII. During WWII she performed in nearly 700 concerts: everyday, after her work of an accompanist at the Bolshoi Theater she would give a performance in one of the military bases. Shockingly, from Khimki to the Bolshoi theater Gaigerova walked by feet (~12.5mi). During this period of her life Gaigerova composed at nights. In her letters to her father in 1943 she was complaining that she is “spending her last strength on writing the suite [“The Diary of a Front-line Soldier”].” Such difficult conditions affected her life to end when she was only 39 years old, although the actual reason of here death yet remains undiscovered.

Despite such a short life span Varvara Gaigerova left a significant oeuvre. Among her works are three symphonies, six symphonic suites, an opera, two string quartets, various chamber music works, and a huge number of art songs. Her love to the poetry transforms into her music with a natural lyricism and rich melodic content that characterizes her music of any genre.



Revol Bunin / Револь Самойлович Бунин

(Born April 6, 1924 in Moscow; died July 3, 1976 in Moscow)

Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

Composed: 1953

Approximate duration: 31 minutes

Revol Samoilovich Bunin (originally Shor), was born in Moscow, and lived there for most of his life. His father was a Communist activist, and named his son “Revol” after the 1917 October Revolution. Bunin started his composition training at the Moscow Conservatory very early, in 1938, but had to serve in the army during the war (1941-2). In 1943 he returned to the Conservatory and became one of Shostakovich’s first students (causing the conflict between Shostakovich and Vissarion Shebalin), and later his assistant at the Leningrad Conservatory. During his residency in Leningrad Yevgeny Mravinsky premiered Bunin’s second symphony. From 1948 he moved back to Moscow, where he taught as well as worked as an editor at the State Music Publishing.

Bunin’s output includes 10 symphonies, concerti for many instruments (violin, viola, piano, organ), 2 operas, chamber music (quartets, trios, instrumental sonatas), piano music, and more than 50 film scores. During his lifetime he was highly appreciated by his colleagues, and was well accepted by the wide audiences. A prominent Soviet conductor and violist, Rudolf Barshai, was one of the most dedicated promoters of his music. However, as many other composers, Bunin struggled with the Soviet cultural authorities, and became forgotten after his death.

There are several possible reasons for the negative treatment Bunin suffered from: he never joined the Communist Party (probably as a protest against his father who was unfaithful to his sick mother), and was a great supporter and follower of Shostakovich, during the times when it was almost considered a crime. He died in 1976 surrounded by his wife, friends, and many students.

The Performers

Netanel Pollak

Israeli Violist **Netanel Pollak** started his music studies in the Jerusalem Academy of Music Conservatory. In 2014 he graduated from the Jerusalem Academy, and in 2016 from the Masters program at Juilliard, where he studied with Heidi Castleman and Cynthia Roberts. As an early music performer, Mr. Pollak has been principal violist for Juilliard 415 ensemble, and the Jerusalem Baroque Orchestra. He is a member of the Perlman Music Program, Heifetz Institute (USA), Tafelmusik Baroque Institute (Canada) and Aurora (Sweden). From 2009-2012, he served in the Israeli Defense Forces under the status of an "Outstanding Musician." Mr. Pollak is a scholarship recipient of the America-Israel Culture Foundation since 2007.

Mr. Pollak plays on a 1800 Lupot viola, loaned to him by Yehuda Zisapel.

Liliya Ugay

Described both as "assertive and steely," and "lovely, subtle writing" (*Wall Street Journal*) the music by the composer and pianist **Liliya Ugay** has been performed in many countries around the globe. Recipient of a 2016 Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a 2017 Horatio Parker Memorial prize from the Yale School of Music, Ugay has collaborated with the Nashville and Albany Symphonies, New England Philharmonic, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Molinari Quartet, and Paul Neubauer among others. Her music has been featured at the Aspen, American Composers, and Darmstadt New Music festivals, as well as the 52nd Venice Biennale. Originally from Uzbekistan, Liliya is a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at the YSM studying with David Lang and Hannah Lash. In addition, she is a composer in residence at the American Lyric Theater in New York, working on a new opera.

In 2008 Ugay, a prizewinner of many international competitions, received the second prize at the 3rd International piano competition "Ostracized music" (Germany) that required to perform the repertoire of composers struggled during the Nazi regime and to participate in prizewinners' concert tour visiting European cities mostly affected by it. These ideas impacted Liliya to found **Silenced Voices** – a concert series that promotes music by neglected and oppressed music of Soviet era. Silenced Voices is grateful for the support of the Yale faculty, especially to Mark Bauer and Boris Berman.



Our special gratitude for this event to:

Knar Abrahamyan
Mark Bauer
Heidi Castleman
Julia Clancy
Duncan Coke
Agata Sorotokin

Whitney Humanities Center