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## ISSUES OF PERFORMING INTERPRETATION OF SONATA FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO BY G. MUSHEL

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### Abstract

One of the most popular in the concert-performing and educational spheres composition of the classical Uzbek music of the 20th century – Sonata for violin and piano (1950) by Honored Artist of Uzbekistan, professor, composer Georgy Mushel (1909–1989) is analysed in the article.

**The purpose of the article** is to reveal the idea, creative concept of the composer and its embodiment in the historical aspect, in projection on the problems of modern chamber-instrumental ensemble performance in Uzbekistan. During the analysis of the Sonata, issues of its performance interpretation are put forward based on personal performance and pedagogical experience, concerning the interpretation of the figurative-national essence, content, means of musical expressiveness, performance lines, playing techniques, dynamic breakthrough, performance fantasy, creative interaction of the violinist and pianist in a chamber ensemble.

**To implement the goal and objectives** the method of historicism, the theoretical and analytical methods, the method of emotional impact, the method of combining the artistic and creative process were used, contributing to the understanding of the musical language of the Sonata and the consonance of its artistic content with the humanistic ideas of our time.

**The novelty of the study** lies in the fact based on the personal performance and pedagogical experience of the author of the article. The national and social artistic values of the Sonata and the enriched spiritual world of a contemporary person were identified. The range of performing expressive means of chamber-instrumental ensemble art in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was determined.

**The scientific and practical significance** of the study lies in the fact that its materials are invaluable for musicians performing chamber instrumental ensembles in the field of nuances, new forms, sound embodiment of the sonata genre, understanding and comprehension and creation of sound images, the spectrum of emotionally growing impact on the listener.

**Keywords:** *chamber and instrumental music; ensemble sonata; sound image; form; style; lines; playing techniques; culmination; performing concept; listener*

### Introduction

Chamber-instrumental ensemble music is a vast area of multifaceted creativity of the Uzbek composer school of Georgy Mushel (1909–1989). Chamber-instrumental ensemble works are well-known in the educational process of all levels of musical education and in concert-performance practice. At the same time, many of his chamber-instrumental ensemble works have not been performed in musical practice until present days and have not been covered in educational-methodical literature. The sonata for violin and piano is one of the favourite sonatas in the concert-performance practice of many musicians.

The composition was written by Georgy Mushel in 1950. Dedicated to M. F. Gnëssin, his teacher, in the composition class. During this period, the composer actively turned to the chamber genre, when interest in chamber-ensemble music-making began to grow in Uzbekistan. 'Interest in ensemble music has grown so much that the question of creating a stable group in the republic arose.' (Golovyants T., 1990. 21). A chamber ensemble-string quartet was created under the radio committee, which influenced the development of chamber music. 'The creativity of composers of Uzbekistan also became significantly more active. They began to create pieces of music of various genres: operas, symphonies, chamber, vocal and instrumental music.' (Golovyants T., 1990. 20). It can be emphasized that during this period of creativity, the composer widely embraced the sonata genre and composed a large number of compositions in the chamber instrumental direction. Thus, a number of interesting pieces of music appeared, including the Sonata for Violin and Piano, which is very popular among musicians. It is the first piece of music in cyclic form for a stringed bowed instrument and piano. The sonata is based on Uzbek monody. 'In the formation of a new type of ensemble, as well as any genre of modern professional art, an important role was played by the entire monodic culture of the past, including folklore and professional music of the oral tradition in all the diversity of genre forms.' (Golovyants T., 1990. 8). Studied Uzbek traditional music in details, the composer became a deep connoisseur of Uzbek folklore, who carried out many ar-

rangements of Uzbek songs and instrumental melodies. The accumulated experience was reflected in the Sonata for Violin and Piano, Sonata for Cello and Piano and other chamber instrumental pieces of music. The idea of creating a violin sonata is contained in the fact that the composer set himself the goal for writing a sonata in the form of a three-part cycle. 'The Sonata by G.A. Mushel was the first composition in Uzbek music for a string instrument, written in cyclic form' (Pekker Ya., 1966. 83). The first performers were the violinist R. Sobolevsky and the pianist I. Aptekarev. To achieve the goal, an important task was the usage of Uzbek material subordinated to the composer's own thinking.

### The main part

The Sonata consists of three parts with a classical relationship of their functions. The first part is Allegretto passionato, the second part is Moderato con anima, the third part is Allegro moderato. The first part is Allegretto passionate, written in sonata form. The Sonata is opened by heroic calls to the listeners – powerful, passionate energy. The indication *ff marcato* requires from the ensemble players a clear marked articulation, a relief accent of musical speech. 'Articulation is diction. It changes with pronunciation clarity, primarily expressed in the degree of weight of the sound attack.' (Imkhanitsky M., 2018. 66). The variety of articulation energy allows the listener to be captivated by the figurative content of the music from the very first bars of the Sonata. The main theme, which was delegated to the violin, develops rapidly. The mobile tempo creates a dynamic and emotional contrast to the music. The theme develops from the perspective of various modifications, adding new musical elements and types of texture. An important aspect here is the dynamic and tempo contrasts. Mushel uses different gradations of volume to convey emotional changes and express the passionate tone of the piece. In Allegro passionato there are simple and complex figurations, both in the violin part and in the piano part. The ensemble players must be able to perform a variety of technical methods. The tempo of the first part of the cycle requires the performers to avoid bustling. As the theme of the main part develops, it gradually becomes richer, octaves and chord sounds appear in

the piano part, emphasizing the energy of the movement. Mushel was an excellent pianist, he studied in Oborin's class and this influenced his technique of playing the piano, and his deep knowledge of the specific nature of this instrument. A small connecting part leads to the sphere of the lyrical secondary part, the move to which should be smooth on a *diminuendo*. The smoothness of the transition lies in the ascending passages of sixteenth notes in the violin part and in the appearance of a syncopated accompaniment. Colourful harmonies allow performers to show modulation very effectively and expressively.

The theme of the secondary part sounds in the piano. It is quite developed in comparison with the main one. First of all, there is an emotional calming of the tempo in accordance with the remark *tranquillo meno mosso*. The secondary part is characterized by dialogue of violin and piano. The ensemble players need to look for timbre colours of instrumental sounds. 'In a number of compositions, the play of timbres acquires a huge role' (Milman M., 1979. 62). In this regard, skilful knowledge of the sound palette will allow the violinist and pianist to find artistic expressiveness of the lyrical dialogue. The melodious secondary part, in the process of development, reaches the level of the culmination of lyrical feelings and thoughts. At the same time, the presence of a dotted rhythm here gives this theme a connection with the heroic imagery of the music. Rounded phrases, colourful harmonies, ascending legato movements, melodiousness, create a multifaceted image, the development of which leads to the interaction of the piano and violin in the lyrical dialogue of the ensemble players. The role of the violinist and their perfect mastery of the stroke technique are especially important here. 'At the present stage, musical practice requires from the violinist-performer high-quality universal mastery of the stroke technique not only in solo, ensemble, but also in orchestral performance' (Shirinsky A., 1983. 4). In the sphere of ensemble performance, the role of strokes and playing techniques is even more significant, since the conditions of ensemble playing require the finest detail. The next stage of musical development is the transition from *accelerando* to development, where the thematic material of

the main and secondary parts is used. Active development, emotional inspiration occurs, where a strong initiative dramaturgy of dynamic contrasts from *ppp* to *fff* functions intensively. This is an example of the brightest contrast in sonata form. Virtuoso ascending passages appear. The texture is updated, enriched with arpeggios, the character of the movement, designated by the indication *con moto*, is enlivened. The development achieves a virtuoso character of the music, a wide coverage of all registers. The influence of the symphonies on which Mushel worked before creating the sonata is felt. The composer widely uses the techniques of symphonic development in writing music, in particular – *thematics*, which acquires the form of a through character, a large-scale coverage of all registers, achieving the effect of orchestral sonority. In addition, the development reveals many innovations, which were noted by the researcher of Mushel's work, musicologist Jan Pecker: 'The suddenly intruding development, based on a sharp dynamic contrast (*ppp-fff*), is strongly dramatized. The reprise is simultaneously a *coda*' (Pecker J., 1966. 80). The completion of the first part of the Sonata with a heroic major apotheosis is deeply symbolic and perceived as hymnic. The glorification of the joy of life is similar to the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

The second part of the cycle *Moderato con anima* is a spiritual lyrical poem. It has a reflective character, a 5/4 time signature, a three-part form, and a waltz-like feel. The musical expressive means in this part of the cycle are distinguished by their refinement, sophistication, and tonal colour. The harmonic language is complicated by tonal fluctuations and tonal shifts (Pecker Ya., 1966. 81). The second part creates a vivid contrast in the cyclic structure of the composition. The main theme is developed in the violin part, where the lyrical melodiousness of the movement prevails. This is also indicated by the strokes, the middle register, and the cantilena of the melody. All these characteristics indicate the principle of contrast, which comes from the structure of the sonata composition. Relying on the principles of world music, the composer Mushel always sought to enrich his compositional style with individual features. 'The desire to enrich the sound palette with new timbres brings

G. A. Mushel closer to artistic searches of musicians of different generations' (Kuznetsova G., 1973. 211). This part is very integral. If in the first part there is a change of tempo, a change of dynamics, the calmness comes in the second part, which should be taken into account by the ensemble members. The modal-tonal organization of the music is interesting, where the major and minor of the same name are used, which gives a modal colouring. In terms of texture, it is very integral. The playing techniques are different. The form is divided into three parts, in the middle part there is a renewal and revitalization of the musical material. The ascending theme of the movement is taken from the theme of the secondary part of the first part, it has common features with ascending wave-like movements. The melodiousness of the melody evokes associations of the general type of movement, which makes a parallel with the secondary part from the first part. In the first section of the second part of the sonata Mushel uses the Uzbek folk melody *Gazhagim*, 'My curls'. Musicologist researcher Yu. Kon, noting the fact of using this melody in the sonata, emphasized: 'Much earlier it was harmonized by the composer as one of the 55 mentioned songs.' (Kon Yu., 1979. 89). A lyrical dialogue is used, without contrasts, an emotional upsurge of the climax after which there is a return to the reprise. The original tonality is resumed. The *usul* structure, beloved by Mushel, is very important in the piano part. The reprise is slightly transformed, enriched with expressive colours and a harmonic presentation of the language. Second chords appear as cluster chords – bringing them closer to modern works. The composer uses a three-part form, in which all parts perform lyrical melodiousness, a lyrical function and reflect the general lyrical character in various emotional manifestations. The reprise dynamizes the development, complicates the polyphony, texturally enriches the image with coloristic colours and harmonies. In revealing the lyrical figurative sphere of the second part of the Sonata, the psychological factor plays an important role. 'The study of ensemble performance culture also requires a psychological research method.' (Ganieva L., 2024. 11). This is, first of all, mutual understanding and sensitive relationship with a partner, mutual sensation of the performing intentions of the

ensemble members, forming a unity of aspirations and feeling in the transmission of unified movements, refined emotions to each other. In this sonata, the second part is the lyrical centre of the cycle and this lyricism should be sensitively and meaningfully realized by the performers. 'A musical work excites us when it arouses our feelings, emotions, moods, passion and makes us worry.' (Kadyrov R., 2014. 39). These psychological facts should be in the field of vision of the ensemble members. At the same time, emotional impulses should always be under the strict control of a sense of proportion and artistic taste. 'In modern music production, a person cannot rely on only inspiration and their own taste.' (Lavrov A., 2018. 18). It is important to take into account the aesthetic principles and stylistic features of the author of the work.

The third part of *Allegro moderato* echoes the first part. Firstly, by festive character, and secondly, by very active energy. At the same time, it reveals a similarity with the second part. The introduction is very large-scale and concert-like virtuoso. The use of a voluminous form, octave textures, and a wide range of registers create the scale of the finale. Rhythm has an important form-generating significance in the finale, based on the rhythmic formula – *usul*, elements of which appear in the first and second parts of the sonata. The energy of the rhythm is very active. Performing this part of the cycle, the ensemble members must master the art of embodying the rhythm that generalizes the heroic imagery of the music. The character of the festive procession, the *ostinato* rhythms, the enrichment of the texture and the polyphonic techniques of performance give special significance. The finale repeats the composition of the first part in a compressed form. Performing the culmination in the finale, it is necessary to show it more voluminously, brighter and on a larger scale than in the first part of the sonata. The understanding and development of the performing concept of the Sonata for Violin and Piano by Georgy Mushel is based on the principle of historicism. 'The historical destinies of bowed and keyboard instruments are similar to each other' (Stupel A., 1970. 17). In the process of historical development, chamber instrumental ensembles of stringed and bowed instruments and

piano were formed. The most optimal form of studying the specifics of chamber music is the ensemble sonata, the image of which is the Sonata for Violin and Piano by G. Mushel that we have revealed.

### Conclusion

Performance of this sonata provides musicians with very interesting material for developing thinking, professionalism, and ensemble mastery technology. In mastering the sonata, it is advisable to rely on the methodology of the process of studying the composition, analysed by musicologist, cellist, and teacher L. Ginzburg: 'Work on a piece of music can be conditionally divided into three main stages./ (Ginzburg L., 1981. 27). The use of a three-phase algorithm has undoubted value and can be enriched with individual nuances of innovative solutions. In this composition, the composer offers dynamic dramaturgy, which allows performers to achieve logic, purposeful development of their thoughts, aimed at the implementation of a heroic-optimistic life-affirming understanding of the world, a humanistic worldview. For performers, this piece of music contains very rich material for developing a technique. Teachers and performers should pay attention to the technical side of abilities and development. 'The problem of developing motor-technical skills and abilities is complex and diverse.' (Tsy-pin G., 2024. 11). The composition is also interesting from the point of view of de-

veloping a sense of contrast. This contrast in the sonata manifests itself at different levels. It manifests itself here at the level of parts, because the first and third parts are related to each other in a figuratively dynamic way. The second part of the sonata *Moderato con anima* forms a bright contrast, the integrity of the structure and the creation of a single lyrical image. Mushel reveals various aspects of lyricism here. Studying the sonata, ensemble members should comprehend the lyrical sphere. In the extreme parts, the lyrics are transformed, acquire a heroic pathos and connect with the main lyric-heroic theme.

The specific features of the dramaturgy allow us to draw a conclusion about the elements of a symphonic poem. We can conditionally say that this is a sonata-poem, because it reveals a very wide range of emotions, passions, thoughts. Along with this, the violin and piano parts are very effective, which allows us to talk about the concert nature of this work, a bright manifestation of the concert genre. Summarizing the creation of this work, it should be understood that this is the first sonata of a cyclic structure in Uzbekistan. It is inseparable from a larger instrumental work, inseparable from the symphony, poem, piano concert, which Mushel worked on before creating this sonata, which influenced the musical language, texture. The sonata is one of the crowning achievements of the chamber instrumental ensemble in the music of Uzbekistan.

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