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Booklet essays by Anastasia Belina-Johnson (incorporating information from Jakob Fichert) and Nico de Villiers

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# André TCHAIKOWSKY

**Volume One:**  
**Music for Piano**  
**Piano Concerto, Op. 4**  
**Inventions, Op. 2**  
**Sonata for Piano**

**Maciej Grzybowski, piano**  
**Vienna Symphony Orchestra**  
**Paul Daniel, conductor**  
**Jakob Fichert, piano**  
**Nico de Villiers, piano**

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## ANDRÉ TCHAIKOWSKY: A LIFE WITH THE PIANO

by Anastasia Belina-Johnson

André Tchaikowsky was born on 1 November 1935, in Warsaw, and named Robert Andrzej Krauthammer. His parents separated, after a short marriage, before he was born, and he was brought up by his mother Felicja and grandmother Celina.

As a child, the young Krauthammer was energetic and talkative; he absorbed languages and ideas at lightning speed, and enjoyed the attention of adults. By the age of three-and-a-half, he could read in Polish, German and Russian, and at the age of four his mother began to teach him piano. He was fascinated by the idea that one could read music in the same way as one reads written words, and his mother showed him the relationship between printed notes and piano keys. His grandmother immediately began to plan for his future, announcing that he would become the best and most famous pianist in the world.

Just over a month before his fourth birthday, at the end of September 1939, the invading Germans occupied Warsaw. The Jews living there were ordered to relocate into a single neighbourhood in the centre, which was sealed by a wall in November 1940. When Celina's apartment was enclosed into the ghetto area, she defiantly moved out, claiming to be a Christian, while Felicja decided to remain with her son. For the next two years, Celina singlehandedly supported her family by bringing food and other necessary provisions.

In later years Tchaikowsky<sup>1</sup> did not like to talk about the life in the ghetto, and his friends could glean only a few details here and there. It is possible that he witnessed a death of a child, shot by a German soldier, and also had a gun pointed at him. Nevertheless, his family concealed reality from him so well that not until decades later did he realise he had not really known what was going on in the ghetto.

In the early summer of 1942 it became apparent that Felicja and Andrzej must try to escape. By that time Felicja was married to Albert Rozenbaum, a dentist with a good position in the hospital and a member of the Jewish police. Celina arranged false documents for herself, Felicja and Andrzej, but Felicja decided to

<sup>1</sup> To help ensure his survival, Robert Andrzej Krauthammer became Andrzej Robert Jan Czajkowski in 1942. He used the westernised spelling of Tchaikowsky when he began his career of concert pianist. Later he grew to abhor his surname, believing that it was a terrible handicap; he wanted to make his mark as a composer, but he felt overshadowed by his Russian near-namesake.

**Jakob Fichert** has an active career as piano soloist and chamber recitalist in the UK, Germany and other European countries. He has performed in many prestigious venues such as the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Wigmore Hall and Kings Place. Some of his concerts have been broadcast live by various radio stations and he has recorded for Toccata Classics (Shostakovich on TOCC 0034 and Gál on TOCC 0043) and Naxos.

He studied at the Musikhochschule Karlsruhe with Wolfgang Manz before undertaking a postgraduate course at the Royal College of Music in London under the tutelage of Yonty Solomon. He also obtained a Masters Degree in Chamber Music and was a RCM Junior Fellow from 2001 to 2003.

He has been involved in various projects such as lecture-recitals on Max Reger and a conference on music written in the concentration camp Terezín as well as numerous educational concerts and workshops.

Jakob has won numerous prizes at international competitions both as a soloist and chamber musician. These include the Valentino Bucchi International Piano Competition for twentieth-century music in Rome, the Lisa Fuchsova Memorial Prize at the Royal Over-Seas League (as 'best chamber-music pianist'), and the International Taneyev Chamber Music Competition in Kaluga and Moscow.

Chamber music and Lied repertoire has been at the heart of his performing career. He has collaborated on concert stage and in recording studio with musicians such as Janet Hilton, Alfia Nakipbekova, Diana Galvydyté, Oliver Coates and Helen-Jane Howells.

Much in demand as a pedagogue, Jakob has given numerous master-classes for specialist music schools and other musical organisations. He also works as an examiner and consultant for the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music and holds the position of Senior Lecturer for Piano at Leeds College of Music.

His website can be found at [www.jakobfichert.com](http://www.jakobfichert.com).

The South African pianist **Nico de Villiers**, based in London, is in demand as soloist, accompanist and coach in the UK as well as abroad. He holds degrees from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Recent debuts include performances at the Barbican in London, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, Birmingham Symphony Hall and the Mozarteum Grosser Saal in Salzburg.

In 2011 Nico formed a duo partnership with soprano Marie Vassiliou and they regularly perform as The Melicus Duo. Other duo partners include Barbara Bonney, Caitlin Hulcup, Jane Irwin, Máire Flavin, Rebecca Afonwy-Jones, Gary Griffiths and William Berger.

Having a specific interest in unusual and neglected repertoire Nico has intensively studied the work of various composers including the chamber music of Ernő Dohnányi, the vocal repertoire of Richard Hageman and the solo, vocal and chamber music of André Tchaikowsky.

Nico is Lecturer in Piano at the Leeds College of Music and Junior Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London. He has worked as a coach for chamber musicians and singers across the UK, Sweden, Austria and South Africa.

His website can be found at [www.nicodevilliers.com](http://www.nicodevilliers.com).

Paul Daniel became Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra in Perth in 2009; in 2013 he took up the positions of Music Director of the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine and Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Galicia. He has appeared as a guest conductor with major orchestras and opera companies throughout the world as well as holding several permanent positions. From 1997 to 2005 he was Music Director of English National Opera; from 1990 to 1997 he was Music Director of Opera North and Principal Conductor of the English Northern Philharmonia; and from 1987 to 1990 he was Music Director of Opera Factory.

Operatic guest engagements have included the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, English National Opera, La Monnaie in Brussels, the Bayerische Staatsoper, Munich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Oper Frankfurt, Opéra National de Paris, the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Bregenz Festival.

Paul Daniel's orchestral engagements have included performances with the BBC Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia, Britten Sinfonia, London Philharmonic, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (with whom he recorded *Elijah* for Decca), City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Orchestre de Paris, Gürzenich-Orchester Köln, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Munich Rundfunkorchester, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Tampere Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, New York Philharmonic and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Paul Daniel received an Olivier Award for outstanding achievement in opera, and in 1999 he received a *Gramophone* award for his English music series on the Naxos label. He was awarded the CBE in the 2000 New Year's honours list.

As Vienna's cultural ambassador and premier concert orchestra, the **Vienna Symphony Orchestra** handles the lion's share of symphonic activity that makes up the musical life of the city. The preservation of the traditional, Viennese orchestral sound occupies a central role in the orchestra's many artistic pursuits. The Vienna Symphony Orchestra is one of Europe's most prestigious ensembles and boasts 128 members, making it the ideal vehicle for the great Romantic works of Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler and Richard Strauss that constitute its core repertoire.

The Vienna Musikverein and nearby Konzerthaus are the principal performing venues of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra has also been in residence at the Bregenzer Festspiele since 1946 and continues to maintain close ties to the festival. Beginning in 2006, the orchestra added another feather to its cap: the Vienna Symphony Orchestra now serves as resident opera orchestra for a whole host of stylistically diverse productions taking place at the Theater an der Wien. Periodic international tours to the most important music centers round out the extensive portfolio of this traditional, Viennese orchestra.

stay. It is possible that she thought that Celina would have a better chance of saving the seven-year-old Andrzej without herself in tow. In July 1942 the Germans began expelling the residents of the Warsaw ghetto, most of them to the death camp at Treblinka. By that stage it was almost impossible to get anyone out of the ghetto, but Celina brazenly led her grandson out dressed in girl's clothing, dyeing his hair, eyebrows and even eyelashes blond. It was thought that she either bribed one of the German soldiers at a check point, or escaped through the cellar of her house to the outside, as the house was just by the ghetto wall.

A month later, in August 1942, Felicja was transported to and murdered in Treblinka. Tchaikowsky idolised his mother and felt her loss acutely for the rest of his life. This tragedy caused the development of a complex set of emotional problems based on issues of abandonment, for Tchaikowsky believed that his mother had chosen her new husband over her son, and thus had not followed him and Celina to safety. Only when Tchaikowsky went to Israel in 1980, where he visited the Holocaust museum Yad Vashem and read, among other things, documents in the Emanuel Ringelblum Oneg Shabbat Archive<sup>2</sup> did he understand and forgive his mother.

Between July 1942 and January 1945, Celina embarked on a dangerous and difficult journey of hidden existence. She arranged at least ten hiding-places for her grandson and herself. During these difficult years, Tchaikowsky began to develop a number of character traits present in his adult persona, one of which was the desire to cause sensation by saying controversial and often shocking things which on many occasions, particularly at the start of his concert career, alienated his agents and promoters. He also had a pathological need for acceptance and love, and punished those who he thought did not show it to the expected degree.

After the War Tchaikowsky's grandmother took him to study piano at the State Music Conservatoire in Łódź. His talent was immediately obvious. He had a tremendous facility for sight-reading, and learned his lessons quickly. He also began composing. In 1948 Tchaikowsky and his grandmother went to Paris, where, for the first time, he met his father. But there was no bond between them, and as time went on, they drifted further apart, finally having some kind of an argument that ended all contact between them until 1980, two years before Tchaikowsky's untimely death from cancer.

On 1 May 1948 he gave his first public performance at the Polish Embassy. The recital proved successful: the Embassy offered him a monthly stipend that enabled him to study at the Conservatoire National de Musique until 1950 with Lazare Lévy. At the end of his final year, he entered the competitions in piano performance and solfège and received gold medals in both disciplines. At fourteen years of age, Tchaikowsky was the youngest competitor, and one of the youngest graduates of the Paris Conservatoire with highest honours.

Because Tchaikowsky had received funding from the Polish Ministry of Culture, he was invited back to Poland, with promise of further financial assistance. He decided to accept the invitation and in July 1950 he

<sup>2</sup> Oneg Shabbat was the code name of a group of inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto, led by Jewish historian Dr Emanuel Ringelblum from 1939 to 1943. The group collected documents and testimonies of all ages, and hid them in milk cans. The collection contains about 6,000 documents, and is now kept at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

returned to Poland. As was to be the case for the rest of his life, his activity there was divided into composition and performance. He was granted membership of the Youth Circle of the Polish Composers' Union, was given a piano, took part in performances of his own and other composers' works, and actively sought commissions. He was treated as a promising composer, and all his requests were complied with almost immediately.

In September 1951 he enrolled at the State High Music School in Warsaw (today The Fryderyk Chopin University of Music), to study piano with Stanisław Szpinalski and composition with Kazimierz Sikorski. Szpinalski, at the time the Director of the School, immediately realised the enormity of Tchaikovsky's talent and all his written appraisals comment on his student's extraordinary musical ability, both as a pianist and composer.

Tchaikovsky took part in the Chopin Competition in 1955, where jury awarded him eighth place (out of 77 competitors from 25 countries). He was also given special awards as the youngest Polish pianist (he was nineteen at the time) in the competition: a piano, 10,000 zlotys,<sup>3</sup> and a concert tour in Poland and Bulgaria.

At the competition, Tchaikovsky met the famous Polish pianist Arthur Rubinstein (1887–1982), who took considerable interest in the young musician and recommended that he take part in the Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels in 1956. This time Tchaikovsky achieved more success, being awarded third prize, coming behind Vladimir Ashkenazy and John Browning. The Queen Elizabeth Competition brought international engagements, Rubinstein's support and further lessons with Stefan Askenase: a dream come true for anyone interested in the career of concert pianist. But Tchaikovsky was not dreaming of a concert career, and found the demands placed on him by this early success very difficult.

Rubinstein wanted to promote him as a pianist, giving him glowing references and even providing him with a room in his house in Paris. But Tchaikovsky found the responsibility of being a protégé of the famous pianist irksome and, combined with his nonchalant attitude, spiky personality and reluctance to do anything against his own will, problems followed almost immediately. Had Tchaikovsky wanted to promote himself as a pianist, he could not have found a better, more influential supporter, but he did not care for such promotion, and abandoned Rubinstein's protection without, it seems, any regrets.

Tchaikovsky left Poland in October 1956 and, although he returned to Warsaw briefly in 1957, he decided later that year to leave permanently. He lived in Brussels, Paris and London, moving from one friend's place to another's, spending a few weeks in Fontainebleau in 1957, where he took composition lessons with Nadia Boulanger.

Between 1957 and 1960 Tchaikovsky gave close to 500 concerts around the world. He was represented by the world's best-known impresario, Sol Hurok, Rubinstein's agent, who took Tchaikovsky on Rubinstein's recommendation. During his first tour of the USA in 1957–58, he already displayed the characteristics of his later years: extreme nervousness before performances, dislike of practising, frequent disregard for social etiquette

<sup>3</sup> The equivalent today of about €6,000, £5,000 or US\$8,000.

sensual second movement, *Largo* [18]. A two-part invention creates a transparent middle section, which is followed by the return of the original extended homophonic melody and accompaniment. The latter section is embellished with a quasi improvisatory descent.

The third movement, *Piano e veloce* [19], is built around a perpetual semiquaver figure, which unconstant metamorphosis throughout. The obscure theme is transferred between the hands and punctuated with accented beats. The thematic material is further obscured through displacing the notes by various octaves. Throughout the movement there is a growing tension that is never released; instead, the mulling character of this movement creates an ominous undercurrent, which tapers out and brings the sonata to an abrupt end.

**Maciej Grzybowski** was born in Warsaw. Between 1991 and 1992 he collaborated with Sinfonia Varsovia conducted by such figures as Jan Krenz, Witold Lutosławski and Krzysztof Penderecki. After winning the First Prize and the Special Prize at the first 20th-Century Music Competition for Young Performers in Warsaw in 1992, he made numerous radio, television and CD recordings as a soloist and chamber musician.

From 1996 to 2000 Maciej Grzybowski was a co-director of the 'Nonstrom Presents' concert cycle in Warsaw. It was as a member of the Nonstrom Ensemble that he won the Special Prize at the 4th International Music Competition in Düsseldorf (1998).

Maciej Grzybowski has taken part in numerous music festivals in Poland, among them the Warsaw Autumn, Musica Polonica Nova, The Witold Lutosławski Forum, Warsaw Musical Encounters, the Polish Radio Music Festival (sharing the stage with Nelson Goerner and Piotr Anderszewski) as well as several foreign ones, including the Biennale of Contemporary Music in Zagreb, Hofkonzerte im Podewil, Berlin, and festivals in Lwów, Kiev and Odessa.

In 2003 and 2004, with the assistance of Michał Bristiger, Grzybowski organised a number of performances of music by Andrzej Tchaikovsky, and in March 2005, playing for the first time at the Mozart Hall in Bologna, he presented a recital of Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Mykietyń and a composition of his own. His US debut recitals followed in October 2005, and in August 2006 EMI Classics released his second solo album, with works by Paweł Szymanowski. In February 2008 he gave the Polish premiere of Andrzej Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto. April 2008 brought his British debut (at the Sounds New Festival in Canterbury), where he shared the stage with the Arditti String Quartet, the London Sinfonietta and Ensemble Intercontemporain.

<sup>3</sup> Tchaikovsky arranged the Mazurka for piano duet and presented it to the Crommelynck Duo while he was at the Crommelynck home in Paris recovering from his cancer operation in January 1982

the ballroom was once again empty.

As a rule Tchaikovsky was reluctant to perform his own compositions, but decided to test the audience and critical reaction to his new piece and so programmed it in a recital programme in Chicago on 19 April 1959 under the pseudonym Uyu Dal. The press reaction was diverse, from condemning the work (Roger Dettmer in *The Chicago American* announced that 'Mr. Dal will never again be heard in Chicago') to praising it for its 'brilliant pianistic idiom' (Seymore Raven in *The Chicago Daily Tribune*). The most perceptive review was Donal Henahan's in *The Chicago Daily News*, where he referred to work as 'youthful in sound, with occasional "shocking" explosions but hardly a fully developed idea throughout'. Throughout the three movements, Tchaikovsky constantly experiments with various ideas, which give the sonata momentary schizophrenic episodes.

The first movement, *Non troppo presto* [17], opens with two contrapuntal voices, which through their sinuous movement create a searching atmosphere. It is never clear whether the music is about to settle into a diatonic tonality or explode into real atonality. The exposition is followed by a development section, which elaborates all the thematic material in a fugal section. At the dramatic climax of the fugue the violence is suddenly interrupted with a momentary lyrical lament, which leads to a recapitulation.

An extended melody, which rises and falls over a steady chordal accompaniment makes up the first part of the

The first page of the manuscript of the 1958 Piano Sonata

and abhorrence of social functions and receptions after concerts. He shocked the patrons of American concerts by saying rude things to the very people who subsidised his tours, he did not forge good relationships with conductors and orchestras, and seemingly enjoyed the reactions he elicited.

Playing the piano supported Tchaikovsky financially and enabled him to dedicate his summers to composition. He was an outstanding pianist. His technical ability was extraordinary, his sight-reading skills legendary, and his interpretations of Bach, Mozart and Bartók are remembered to this day. Tchaikovsky's phenomenal memory meant that his repertoire was bigger than that of many of his contemporaries. During his two-month stint as an artist-in-residence in Perth in 1975 he played a cycle of all 27 Mozart concertos: three every night for nine evenings, all from memory. He could look at the music and play it from memory after only one reading. This ability made him something of a legend, and audiences flocked to hear him. But they had to pay dearly for his affection: if the applause was not an ovation, if people did not listen attentively, or if late-comers did not enter the hall quietly, he would unleash his wrath. One of many such 'revenge' stories comes from Spain, where the applause after one of Tchaikovsky's recitals was modest, and the punishment he chose was the entire 'Goldberg' Variations as an encore.

As part of his professional activities, Tchaikovsky recorded for RCA Victor and Columbia Marconi, and performed with many leading orchestras and many eminent conductors in the world.

It is said that Tchaikovsky decided to settle in England after reading *The Diary of a Nobody* (1888–89) by the brothers George and Weedon Grossmith. He was delighted with the book, and believed that people really did live and think in the way the protagonist – the celebrated Charles Pooter – described. England provided a longed-for stability, even if it took him some years to settle there properly. Eventually he lived in a detached house in Cumnor, near Oxford, where he composed and practised the piano in preparation for his concerts. He had a rich inner life: he had imagination and spent his free time reading, listening to music, going to the theatre, or walking in Cumnor.

In his diary in late 1981 Tchaikovsky complained of intestinal problems in late 1981, and in early 1982 his doctor mistakenly diagnosed colitis. Tchaikovsky documented the progressing illness and treatment in his diaries in 1982,<sup>4</sup> presenting a bleak account of the last six months of his life. He died on 26 June 1982 in the Sir Michael Sobell Hospice in Oxford, with one of his closest friends, Eve Harrison, at his bedside.

Three years before his death, on 10 October 1979, Tchaikovsky made a final will in which he left his skull to the Royal Shakespeare Company 'for use in theatrical performances' – he said that he wanted to know that after his death there would be a part of him left, still performing. He also said that, if Shakespeare had indeed been an anti-Semite, 'it would give me a great pleasure to have a Jewish skull wandering around Shakespeare's *Hamlet*'.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The diaries are published as *A Musician Divided: André Tchaikovsky in his Own Words*, ed. Anastasia Belina-Johnson, Toccata Press, London, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Recollection by Terry Harrison, Tchaikovsky's agent, in an interview with David Ferré on 25 June 1985, London.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Fortier interviewed by David Ferré on 28 December 1985, Paris.

When the bequest was made public, there were two reactions: surprise – and lack thereof: those who knew him found the gesture entirely in character.

Composition fulfilled Tchaikovsky, and it was the one area of his profession where he never procrastinated: on the contrary, he had to force himself not to compose when on tour or when preparing for concerts because composition entirely took hold of him.

Because he could not dedicate himself to composition full-time, his legacy is small. But that does not mean that it is unimportant. Apart from two piano concertos, two string quartets and a number of compositions for voice, piano, and other instruments, his opera *The Merchant of Venice* is a profound and monumental work that makes a significant contribution to the twentieth-century operatic repertoire, and in which it deserves a place of honour. Its first production took place at the Bregenz Festival in July 2013.

#### Piano Concerto, Op. 4 (1966–71)

This piano concerto is Tchaikovsky's second work in the genre, the first having been composed in 1957 and premiered by the composer in the same year; it has not been heard on the concert stage again.

Tchaikovsky began the composition of his Op. 4 sporadically in 1966; only in 1970 did he start working on it systematically, completing it in December 1971. Radu Lupu agreed to perform the work before it was finished, recalling meeting Tchaikovsky in the offices of their joint agent Harrison Parrott in London, where Tchaikovsky appeared carrying the manuscript under his arm. He recounted their conversation:

Lupu: What are these papers?

Tchaikovsky: My piano concerto.

Lupu: Oh, I will play it.

Tchaikovsky: You do not know it.

Lupu: Tell me then.

Tchaikovsky: It has a slow introduction...

Lupu: I adore slow introductions.<sup>6</sup>

The premiere took place four years after its completion, on 28 October 1975, at the Royal Festival Hall, with Radu Lupu as soloist and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Uri Segal.

The concerto was difficult and took Lupu nearly six months to learn, requiring an enormous amount of hard work. Perhaps that is why Tchaikovsky, who originally dedicated the concerto to the memory of George A. Lyward,<sup>7</sup> changed the dedication to Radu Lupu in the published version. Writing in *The Times*, Joan Chissell commented:

<sup>6</sup> Radu Lupu, interviewed by David Ferré, 6 September 1986, London.

<sup>7</sup> George Aubrey Lyward OBE (1894–1973) was a British educationist and psychotherapist who founded and led Finchden Manor, a house for underprivileged boys in Tenterden, Kent.

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## TCHAIKOWSKY'S PIANO SONATA

by Nico de Villiers

André Tchaikowsky's style of writing for the piano presents itself in a complicated network of sounds, which employs counterpoint as well as the horizontal mirroring of ideas akin to that of the Second Viennese school. The musical language is intricate, and the material is challenging to play. But it is clear that, as Tchaikowsky was a concert pianist himself, he understood the geography of the keyboard and the physicality of pianistic composition well. One of his signature intervals used is the augmented octave, perhaps in an attempt to avoid conventional tonality. Even though he makes use of consecutive intervals that are wider than the octave, these various gestures fall relatively comfortably under the hands.

The only sonata Tchaikowsky composed as an adult<sup>1</sup> was begun while he was on holiday in Madrid with his cousin, Charles Fortier, who recalled the event:

We were in a Madrid hotel, where I was having a vacation with my family and André. I decided that we should all go to a bull fight together, but André hated that idea. So everyone else went to the bull fight and André stayed behind at the hotel. Well, he was composing a piano sonata and had finished the first movement, or something. He decided that Rubinstein should hear it. The hotel had a piano, so André could play it over the telephone for him. André telephoned Australia, and tracked down Rubinstein who was there on tour. Then André played the piano over the telephone so Rubinstein could make comments. The cost was enormous, which André put on my hotel bill!<sup>2</sup>

Tchaikowsky later told friends that as he was practising on the hotel piano, which was located in the ballroom, people started to come in and listen. He then switched from Bach to his new sonata, and everyone filed out until

<sup>1</sup> He composed at least three sonatas in his adolescence: two in 1948, in F minor and C sharp minor, and one in 1949, in G major. A list Tchaikowsky compiled in 1950 mentions two sonatas, one in F minor (probably that from 1948) and another in A major – both by then already lost.

1. *Allegretto tranquillo*; to Peter Feuchtwanger
2. *Adagio serio*; to Fou Ts'ong and Zamira Fou (Fou Ts'ong)
3. *Leggiero e vivace*; to Ilona Kabos
4. *Velocissimo*; to Robert Cornford
- 5a. *Semplice*; to Charles and Lydia Napper (omitted from published version)
- 5b. *Placido*; to Patrick Crommelynck (not in original manuscript)
6. *Con umore*; to Stefan and Anny Askenase (Stefan Askenase<sup>13</sup>)
7. *Allegretto scherzando*; to Tamás Vásáry
8. *Vivacissimo*; to Sheldon and Alicia Rich
9. *Brusco*; "To Wendy – or Beatrice? – Harthan"<sup>14</sup>
10. *Lento trasparente*; to Michael Riddall.

The *Inventions* are short and concise pieces. Each of them, like each of the dedicatees, has an independent musical character, and the entire cycle displays Tchaikovsky's own, unique musical language. He constructed these short pieces from distinctive motifs that are linked together contrapuntally, his melodic and motivic lines intertwined within the harmonic and rhythmic textures, intervals and ostinato patterns. Even when some obvious (but fleeting) influences are heard, particularly those of the Second Viennese School (chiefly Schoenberg), Shostakovich and Bartók, Tchaikovsky still manages to maintain in his own distinctive style. Rhythmic and melodic influences of Shostakovich – not least the Op. 34 Preludes and Op. 87 Preludes and Fugues – are present in the inventions Nos. 1 [4], 7 [11] and 10 [14], and the listener might hear similarities with his Prelude in C sharp minor, Op. 34, No. 10, particularly in the mood and harmonic language of the dreamy *Invention* No 1. No. 7 may also contain an echo of middle-period Stravinsky. Bartók's influences in harmony, texture, sudden leaps and a 'perpetuum mobile' idea can be heard in in the *Inventions* Nos. 2 [5], 5b [9] and 9 [13], with an obvious relationship to the *Suite*, Op. 14, and the first movement of his Piano Sonata (1926). Schoenbergian influences are heard in Nos. 2, 5b and 10, in the harmonic language and the expressiveness of the melodic lines. The elegant No. 8 [12] shows Tchaikovsky's own musical language and style, as does No. 10, dedicated to his former lover Michael Riddall.

<sup>13</sup> Anny Ashkenase had died in the meantime.

<sup>14</sup> Beatrice Harthan was born in 1902 in England. She was trained as a musician and played the organ at her parish church. In 1925, she married a minister/missionary and moved to China. Her husband, observing her hard work with children, called her 'quite a Wendy-girl'. The nickname stuck and she was known as both Wendy and Beatrice. Beatrice was introduced to Tchaikovsky by Peter Feuchtwanger. If Stefan Askenase was Tchaikovsky's father-figure, then Beatrice was his mother-figure. She had a drill-sergeant personality but was supportive to struggling musicians. Tchaikovsky secretly harboured ambivalent feelings about her and the *Invention* is marked *Brusco* and *Grottesco*. Their relationship ended when one day he announced, 'I don't want to see you any more, Wendy.' When Harthan asked why, Tchaikovsky said: 'Because that is what I want, and if you go to my concerts, you must not go "round to see me afterwards".'

The work is in three continuous, interlinked movements lasting for about 27 minutes. No one but a virtuoso of the first order could tackle the solo part. Yet not a note is there for mere display. Piano and orchestra are as closely integrated in a disciplined, purposeful argument as in the concertos of Brahms. Although, in his introductory note, the composer let us into formal secrets (a *passacaglia* to begin with [1], followed by a scherzo-like *Capriccio* [2] and a *Finale* combining fugue and sonata [3]), there was little about underlying 'programme' [*sic*]. Yet the work is dramatic and intense enough, in an often strangely ominous, disquieting way, to suggest very strong extra-musical motivation. There are moments of melancholy just as deep and tortured as in Berg opus 1.<sup>8</sup> Not for nothing is the glinting central *Capriccio* headed *vivace con malizia*: it is a 'danse macabre' ending in catastrophic climax. Even the *Finale*, at first suggesting emotional order won by mental discipline, eventually explodes in vehemence before the sad, retrospective cadenza (picking up threads from the opening *Passacaglia*) and the hammered homecoming.

If nearer in spirit to composers of the Berg-Bartók era than the avant-garde, Tchaikovsky still speaks urgently enough in this work to make his idiom sound personal. Much of it is also strikingly conceived as sound, with telling contrasts of splintered glass and glassy calm in the keyboard part. The *Capriccio* is a spine-chilling tour de force for the orchestra too.<sup>9</sup>

Max Loppert, writing in *The Financial Times*, was only slightly less impressed:

It was, from the outset, rather impressive to encounter music of this kind concerned with 'strict construction' (the composer's phrase), made with clean-cut neo-classical materials purposeful and determined [...]. At best, in the central *Capriccio* movement, something of an individual personality, quicksilver, angular and hard-edged, can be detected through the Stravinskyian cut-and-thrust, the late-Prokofiev flourishes and moto perpetuo passagework. Elsewhere, in the *Introduction* and *Passacaglia*, but more so in the *Finale*, brandishing its fugue, sonata and toccata, a slight greyness threatens to seep out from the basic material, a want of burning organic energy to be revealed behind the formal gestures.<sup>10</sup>

In *The Guardian* Edward Greenfield noted the unusual forbearance of the opening:

'I made a determined effort not to write a prima donna's favourite', Mr. Tchaikovsky explained in his programme note, and, for the first five minutes, that seemed the understatement of the year. Like the B flat minor concerto [by Piotr Tchaikovsky], the new Tchaikovsky first starts with an introduction, but in the composer's own words, 'it is slow and austere', and the piano for three whole minutes never gets a look-in,

<sup>8</sup> Alban Berg's Piano Sonata, most probably composed in 1907–8, and published in 1910. It is Berg's only piano composition with an opus number.

<sup>9</sup> *The Times*, 29 October 1975.

<sup>10</sup> *The Financial Times*, 29 October 1975.

while the thematic material for the whole work is grittily outlined. After that, flamboyance still rejected utterly, the pianist enters with a long and ruminative solo, which sets the pattern of wrong-note romanticism in gently flowing lines.<sup>11</sup>

The concerto was performed by the composer with the Irish National Orchestra, conducted by Albert Rosen, in Dublin on 1 October 1978, and again in Cork the following evening. On 17 November 1981 Tchaikowsky gave his own final performance of the work in Hagen, Germany, when the conductor was Yoram David. A review in the *Westfälische Rundschau* reported:

André Tchaikowsky (age 46), especially appreciated as a Mozart virtuoso all over the world, played the piano part at the Hagen City Hall concert himself. Is the concerto calculated such that the piano part is dominant? André Tchaikowsky: 'This is what I've tried to avoid. The instruments are introduced in groups and separately. The work is so polyphonic as to make great demands on every member of the orchestra'. [...] Yoram David, the conductor of this event, says: 'This concerto for piano and orchestra is a phenomenally good work, tremendously crafted and is without a superfluous note'.<sup>12</sup>

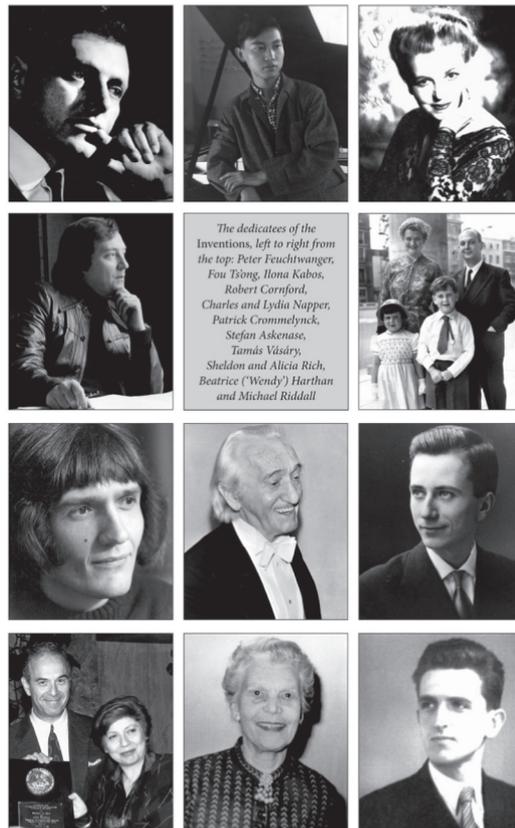
After Tchaikowsky's death, the concerto was performed in Copenhagen on 12 September 1986, with Norma Fisher as soloist and the Tivoli Summer Orchestra conducted by Uri Segal. It was also performed in Poland by the Polish pianist Maciej Grzybowski on 8 February 2008 in Kalisz and 15 February 2008 in Białystok, and on 17 August 2008 as part of the festival 'Chopin and his Europe' in Warsaw. Grzybowski performed it again on 22 July 2013 in Bregenz, with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Daniel – the performance preserved in this recording.

### *Inventions for Piano, Op. 2*

The set of ten *Inventions* was composed in London between 1961 and 1963. Each piece was dedicated to one of Tchaikowsky's friends, and the first performance was given to the ten dedicatees in a private performance at the home of Charles and Lydia Napper (dedicatees of the original fifth *Invention*) on 22 January 1963. Encouraged by their private success, Tchaikowsky performed the *Inventions* on 7 June 1968 on BBC Radio 3 (repeated on 22 July 1971). The pianist John Ogdon, a supporter of Tchaikowsky, heard both the 1968 and 1971 BBC broadcasts. At the time, he was associated with the music publisher Novello and was selecting contemporary piano compositions for publication. He contacted Tchaikowsky, and by 1975 the *Inventions* had been published by Novello. In the decade and more between composition and publication, Tchaikowsky made some changes in the dedications (the revised dedication is given in brackets) and substituted a new piece for the original *Invention* No. 5:

<sup>11</sup> *The Guardian*, 29 October 1975.

<sup>12</sup> Anon., 'Deutsch Uraufführung – Tschaiakowsky', *Westfälische Rundschau*, No. 270, 18 November 1981.



The dedicatees of the *Inventions*, left to right from the top: Peter Feuchtwanger, Fou Tsing, Hona Kabos, Robert Cornford, Charles and Lydia Napper, Patrick Crommelynk, Stefan Askenase, Tamás Vásáry, Sheldon and Alicia Rich, Beatrice ('Wendy') Harthan and Michael Riddall