

Sergei Prokofiev and Ukraine: The Influence of the Ukrainian Musical Tradition

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Abstract : This research delves into the profound impact of Ukrainian musical traditions on the life and works of the renowned composer Sergei Prokofiev. Sergei Prokofiev's formative years in Ukraine, particularly in Sontsivka (Eastern Ukraine), allowed him to immerse himself in the local music. He encountered Ukrainian folk songs and dances, which left an indelible mark on his musical sensibilities. With a focus on the early 20th century, a period of significant cultural transformation in both Ukraine and Europe, this study examines how Prokofiev's exposure to Ukrainian folk music, its melodic motifs, and rhythmic patterns influenced his compositions. Prokofiev's works showcase his deliberate efforts to fuse Ukrainian elements with his distinctive modernist style. This study analyzes Prokofiev's engagement with Ukrainian themes in his music, such as the "Semen Kotko", "The Love of Three Oranges", "On the Dnieper", "Scythian Suite", "Sinfonia Concertante" for cello and orchestra, "Sonata No. 9", "Partisans in the steppes of Ukraine" (where Prokofiev uses texts in Ukrainian). The scientific work mentions his interactions and collaborations with Ukrainian musicians and cultural figures during Prokofiev's career. Notably, his association with Ukrainian pianist Sviatoslav Richter and conductor Kirill Karabits led to interpretations of his compositions with a Ukrainian perspective. This research illuminates the nuances of cross-cultural influences in Prokofiev's oeuvre, contributing to a deeper understanding of the interplay between national identities and artistic expression during a pivotal period in history, based on the fact that the composer himself considered Ukraine to be his homeland, calling himself "steppe boy".

Keywords : florida atlantic university, ukrainian music, ukrainian composer, sergei prokofiev

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