КОМИТАС

ПЕСНИ

КОМИТАС

SONGS

PIANO ARRANGEMENT

Вилли Саркисяна

Villy Sargsyan

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A strong and insistent desire to expand the sphere of Komitas' piano-represented music has motivated us to create the present collection. The piano heritage of the brilliant Armenian composer, though exceptional in its national distinction and unique in its instrumental expressiveness, unfortunately, is not large. Trying to some extent to make up for this quantitative “gap” we have initiated to transcribe Komitas’ marvelous songs for the piano.

In the past, such remarkable Armenian musicians as Robert Andriasyan, Sergey Balasanyan and Georgi Saradjev took up expanding the sphere of the piano representation of Komitas’ works. Their skillfully made adaptations were highly appreciated by both performers and musical world.

For the piano reproduction of Komitas' songs we have chosen the genre of transcription. This approach gave us a chance to preserve the most essential and significant part of Komitas’ works, that is his modal-intonational system. Formed as a result of profound perception of the Armenian melos, through selection of typical melodic turn and last but not least, unprecedented polyphonization of folk songs, this system served as foundation of a truly national musical language of the composer and his style as a whole.

Our faithfulness to the genius of Komitas could be the most vivid expression of our deep gratitude to the composer for his self-sacrificing creative mission. This faithfulness served as a guideline in our work. So, the “self-restraint” in our work became our conscious choice in order to achieve the main goal - a true representation of musical images by means of piano. In our piano adaptation of Komitas’ songs, the priority was to find such a vocal/piano balance which would guarantee their organic unity. To achieve the same goal we had to optimize the pitch register including a few textural transformations. As a consequence of the combination of various harmonic functions, the segmentation of Komitas’ prolonged pedal note into a number of shorter ones became necessary. Though, it should be noted that the performer himself might also change the pedal note at his discretion.

The problem of repetition of musical passages connected with the sequence of verses demanded special attention. It was necessary to preserve in musical pieces the artistic effect of lyrics achieved by refrains. The specific development of musical images in songs occurs due to the new performing shades prompted by the poetic idea of each new verse. In our musical pieces variations of musical expressiveness occurring in repetitions correspond to “verse” developments of musical images. It is gained by means of enrichment of the repeated part with new compositional means. The number of repetitions is minimal.

The instances of distribution of the melody between two hands are not rare. In these cases the melody movement is marked by dashes for convenience.
1869 was the year of my birth. I was born on July 26th, 1869, in Tavush province. I was the second child of my parents. My father was a farmer and my mother was a housewife. My childhood was spent in the countryside, surrounded by nature.

In my autobiography, I reflect on my early years and the influence of my environment on my development. I share stories of my family, my education, and my first musical experiences.

The following pages contain excerpts from my autobiography that provide insights into my life and work. I hope that these reflections will offer a glimpse into the world of an early 20th-century composer and his journey towards achieving his musical vision.
Именный шрифт Иосифа Иосифовича Иосифянца (Иосифа Иосифовича Иосифянца, 1894)
Соломон протодиакон Соломонов (один из автографов Комитаса, С. Эчмиадзин, 1894)
Soghomon Protodeacon Soghomonyanc (one of autographs of Komitas, Holy Etchmiadzin, 1894)

Цыганский диалект Армянских «Урарту» иранских "песен"
Песня "Небо заволокло", записанная армянскими музыкальными знаками
Recorded the song "The sky was cloudy" by Armenian symbols
The program of the charitable concert in Geneva for the starving people of Van sponsored by Leopold Favre, June 1, 1907

Designed by Edgar Chahine
Spiridon Melikian and Komitas (Berlin, September, 1907)

The cover of the book "Armenian Village Songs" (Leipzig, 1912)

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In Gevorg Bashinjaghian's studio (Tiflis, December 10, 1908)
From left: Avetik Isahakian, Hovhannes Tumanian, Gevorg Bashinjaghian, Ghazaros Aghayan, Vrtanes Papazian, Komitas, Arshak Chaparian
Chishefs, July 1911
Kair, July 1911
Cairo, June 1911
In June 1-15, 1914, Komitas took part in the Fifth Congress of the International Musical Society held in Paris.
"Largo melancolique"

Страница рукописи песни "Кран/Журавль"

Page of the manuscript of the song "The Crane"