

GUEST ARTIST RECITAL

ROBERTA RUST, Piano

*ALL-PROKOFIEV PROGRAM
IN HONOR OF
THE 1991 PROKOFIEV CENTENARY*

Thursday, January 24, 1991

8:00 p.m. in Hamman Hall

RICE UNIVERSITY

the
Shepherd
School
of Music

PROGRAM

Sonata No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 1
Allegro

Sergei Prokofiev
(1891-1953)

From Romeo and Juliet
The Young Juliet
The Montagues and the Capulets

Suggestion Diabolique, Op. 4 No. 4

Sonata No. 9 in C Major, Op. 103
Allegretto
Allegro strepitoso
Andante tranquillo
Allegro con brio, ma non troppo presto

INTERMISSION

From Visions Fugitives (Fleeting Visions), Op. 22
Nos. 2, 16, 11, 7, 6, 17

Sonata No. 7 in B^b Major, Op. 83
Allegro inquieto
Andante caloroso
Precipitato

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PROGRAM NOTES

For an ideal description of Prokofiev's music it is best to turn to the composer's own account of his style. He felt there were five principal features that defined his works: first, the Classical element; second, the search for innovation; third, the toccata or motor element; fourth, the lyrical; and fifth, the grotesque or the quality of "scherzo-ness" defined as jest, laughter, or mockery.

Tonight's program opens with the **Sonata No. 1 in F Minor** (1907-09), a one movement work in sonata-allegro form revealing the composer's Russian romantic roots. It is very much in the later nineteenth century romantic tradition against which Prokofiev soon rebelled, but even in this early sonata there is a touch of the dissonant turbulence that would become a distinguishing trait of his personal style.

In 1937, Prokofiev transcribed ten pieces from his ballet **Romeo and Juliet** for piano solo. The vibrancy in the scampering figuration and lyricism in **The Young Juliet** is dispelled by its foreboding coda, and the grotesque element in **The Montagues and the Capulets** shows the satirical side of the composer. **Suggestion Diabolique** is the fourth piece in a set called **Four Pieces, Op. 4** (1910-12). It represents a dramatic change in style from the first sonata, written only two years before. Based on the tritone, the devil's interval, it is a perpetuum mobile filled with riveting dissonance and percussive virtuosic display. The **Suggestion Diabolique** is a dynamic example of Prokofiev's new pianistic idiom.

Introspection, concern for classical balance, and a search for simpler expression, all elements of Prokofiev's later style, are evident in the **Sonata No. 9 in C Major** of 1947. The four movements follow an ingenious cyclical design. At the close of each movement the opening theme of the succeeding movement is presented. In the coda of the last movement a state of transcendence is attained as the first theme of the first movement returns in an illuminated setting, high in the soprano over murmuring trill figuration, reminiscent of the ending of Beethoven's last piano sonata, **Op. 111**.

Opening the second half of this evening's program are six pieces from **Visions Fugitives (Fleeting Visions), Op. 22** (1915-17), a set of twenty exquisitely crafted miniatures that disclose Prokofiev's imaginative use of sonority.

The **Sonata No. 7 in B^b** (1939-42) is one of a trilogy of piano sonatas (Nos. 6, 7, and 8) that are known as the **War Sonatas**. It is one of the most celebrated works in the twentieth century piano repertoire. The incisive first movement is followed by a second movement whose sentimental opening theme is almost popular in nature. The sonata concludes with a toccata of towering technical demands; its incessant 7/8 meter propels the work to a tumultuous close.

— Notes by Roberta Rust

BIOGRAPHY

ROBERTA RUST has captivated critics and audiences throughout the United States, Central and South America, Europe, and the Caribbean. She has appeared as soloist with several orchestras including the Houston Symphony and the Sinfónica Nacional of Santo Domingo; her numerous solo recitals include concerts at Carnegie Recital Hall and Merkin Concert Hall in New York City, the Corcoran Gallery of Art and the Hall of the Americas in Washington D.C., and Sala Cecilia Meireles in Rio de Janeiro. She has performed at the La Gesse Festival in France and the Friends of the Arts Beethoven Festival in New York. Her playing can be heard on Protone Records.

Because of her remarkable affinity for the music of Prokofiev, Roberta Rust has been awarded a major Solo Recitalist Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to present all-Prokofiev recitals throughout the United States during the 1991 Prokofiev Centenary.

After winning a highly selective national competition sponsored by the U.S. government, Roberta Rust was sent to concertize abroad as Artistic Ambassador for the United States. Ms. Rust studied at the Peabody Conservatory, the Manhattan School of Music, and the Mozarteum in Salzburg; her teachers included Phillip Evans, Artur Balsam, John Perry, and Ivan Davis. The artist was born in Houston, Texas and is a Sioux descendant. She currently resides in South Florida.

