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Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist



Synopsis

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) is recognized as one of the greatest composers of the twentieth century yet few people know that he was also an outstanding concert pianist who maintained a hectic performing schedule. In *Dmitri Shostakovich, Pianist* Sofia Moshevich offers a detailed examination of Shostakovich the pianist within the context of his life and work as a composer, through his correspondence with family and friends and his own and his contemporaries' memoirs, using material never before available in English. This biographical narrative is interwoven with analyses of Shostakovich's piano and chamber works, demonstrating how he interpreted his own music. For the first time, Shostakovich's own recordings are used as primary sources to discover what made his playing unique and to dispel commonly held myths about his style of interpretation. His recorded performances are analysed in detail, specifically his tempos, phrasing, dynamics, pedal, and tonal production. Some unpublished variants of musical texts are included and examples of his interpretations are provided and compared to various editions of his published scores.

Book Information

Hardcover: 256 pages

Publisher: McGill-Queen's University Press (March 19, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0773525815

ISBN-13: 978-0773525818

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #6,042,576 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #65 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Composers > Shostakovich](#) #2089 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Ethnic & International > Ethnomusicology](#) #2244 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Biographies > Classical](#)

Customer Reviews

"A valuable addition to Shostakovich scholarship by the best-placed author to produce such a work." Michael Mishra, Department of Music, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

Make no mistake == this is a fine book. But it's about Shostakovich's history, with a particular emphasis on his appearances as a pianist. What I felt was missing was criticism and analysis of the

piano works themselves. There should have been much more, for example, about the Sonata No. in B Minor. Why most of the great Soviet pianists -- with the notable exceptions of Gilels and Yudina -- shied away from it, and what the composer was after in this unremittingly grim (to my ears) and great work. There should also have been much more about the 24 Preludes and Fugues: how, for example, they comprise a cycle with a beginning, middle and end. It's nevertheless a fine biography of the man who may have been the last of the great pianist/composers and ought to be read by anyone interested in him.

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