

*A Kalmus Classic Edition*

Sergei

# **RACHMANINOFF**

## **PIANO CONCERTO NO. I**

Opus 1

FOR TWO PIANOS/FOUR HANDS

K 03814





SERGEI VASILIEVICH RACHMANINOV was born on April 1, 1873 at the estate Oneg, Novgorod guberniya. Rachmaninov received his musical education in the Moscow Conservatoire, where he studied theory and composition under S. Taneyev and A. Arensky, and pianoforte—under N. Zverev and A. Siloti. Rachmaninov began his studying in the Conservatoire in 1885 and graduated in 1891 as a pianist, and in 1892—as a composer, with the highest prize—the Great Gold Medal. After that Rachmaninov started on his independent creative work as a composer, pianist and conductor. From 1918 on Rachmaninov lived in the U. S. A. and died there in 1943.

The great musician's artistic formation was decidedly influenced by Chaikovsky's music, and also by A. Chekhov, Tolstoy, Gorky with whom he was acquainted, and by Shaliapin, his close friend.

In his own way, Rachmaninov was artistically and expressively aware of the exalted spirit of Russian society on the eve of the 1905 Revolution, and, then, of the tragic mood of part of the intelligentsia during the following years of reaction.

Rachmaninov's creative work, based on Russian classical traditions and folk sources is deeply national. It is emotionally replete, combining elements of resolutely protesting passion and restrained dramatism with a light, poetic lyric quality.

Rachmaninov is the author of three operas ("Aleko", "The Miserly Knight", "Francesca da Rimini"); four symphonies (including the youth symphony), "Caprice Bohemien", "Symphonic Dances" for orchestra, programme symphonic works: "The Rock", "Prince Rostislav", "The Isle of the Dead", "The Bells", a poem for orchestra, chorus and soloists; four concertos and a Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini for piano and orchestra; cantatas, choruses; two piano trios, two string quartets (unfinished); the sonata for cello and piano, suites for two pianos, many original works and transcriptions for piano; eighty romances and a number of other compositions of various genres.

The First Concerto for Pianoforte and Orchestra, op. 1 was written in 1891, when Rachmaninov was only eighteen. It is not surprising that, along with the open, captivating ardour and sincere, lyrical imagery, there is, in some ways, an immaturity in thematic and textural development.

Being dissatisfied with the realization of his first large-scale project, Rachmaninov considerably reworked the concerto in 1917 and gave it more harmonic and orchestral colourfulness, at the same time perfecting the piano solo part. However, though the new version of the Concerto, more complex from the virtuosic standpoint, gained a firm foothold on the concert stage, the less difficult first version, hasn't up to now lost its pedagogical importance.

One should note that from the artistic point of view the first version has a particular charm, mainly in the openness of expression.

The Concerto consists of three movements. The first movement (*Vivace*), written in the traditional sonata allegro form, opens impressively with vivid and effective introduction of the piano solo. This introduction sets off the lyrical agitation of the main theme.

The secondary theme also expresses two thematically linked lyrical images, running in dialogue with the orchestra.

The second movement (*Andante*) is of a typical Russian lyrico-landscape character. The concentrated and restrained introduction precedes the somewhat elegiac principal subject.

The third movement (*Allegro vivace*) is written in a festive and dynamic form, here and there it is waltz-like. An inexhaustible energy and a feeling of gladness and joy are expressed in the brilliant Finale of the Concerto.

The First Concerto (the first movement) was premiered on March 17th, 1892, in Moscow with the composer as soloist and with the students' orchestra of the Moscow Conservatoire under the baton of V. Safonov.

Александрѣ Ильичу Зилоти  
To Alexander Siloti

КОНЦЕРТ  
1-я редакция

№ 1  
Op.1

CONCERTO  
First Version

Arranged for Two Pianos

С. РАХМАНИНОВ  
S. RACHMANINOV  
(1873-1943)

I

**Vivace**

PIANO I  
(Фортепьяно)

PIANO II  
(Оркестр)

The mistakes and inaccuracies of the previous editions have been corrected by the editor who also gives the fingerings. All other indications for the performer have been entered in brackets by the editor.

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