

## Owen Daly Ventures into Saxon Territory

Owen Daly in Salem, Oregon, recently completed a clavichord based upon the large unfretted 1784 C. G. Hoffmann instrument in the U.K.'s Cobbe Collection at Hatchlands. He reports below.

Influenced by C.P. E. Bach's preference for the Saxon-type clavichord and by some technical considerations, I decided to build a copy of the Hatchlands Hoffmann. The Hatchlands Hoffmann is less well known here than the Hoffmann at Yale, but is in superior condition. In Peter Bavington's words, the Saxon clavichords "...are rich in musical possibilities, with a wide dynamic range, ringing trebles and solid, clear basses." With generously-



Clavichord after Hoffmann by Owen Daly

shared information from Bavington, who restored the Hatchlands instrument in 1998, I learned some new Saxon-school "tricks," including the details of a remarkable system of soundboard ribbing, and the use of an intricately-notched bridge.

It took several practice attempts on scraps to get the notching technique under control, as one slip and the bridge could be ruined. But it was worth it; by this means builders like Hoffmann and his Saxon colleague Friederici, and others, like Schiedmeyer, were able to couple strings to their bridges without the constraint of severe side- or down- bearing. The result is a

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## The Clavichord and Classical Russian Keyboard Repertoire

Henry Lebedinsky

Henry Lebedinsky is the organist and music director at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Davidson, North Carolina. He has performed widely on organ, clavichord and harpsichord.

**B**oris was shown into a large hall probably formerly used for dancing, but in which five beds now stood, and furniture of various kinds: a table, chairs, and a clavichord. One adjutant, nearest the door, was sitting at the table in a Persian dressing gown, writing. Another, the red, stout, Nesvitski, lay on a bed with his arms under his head, laughing with an officer who had sat down beside him. A third was playing a Viennese waltz on the clavichord, while a fourth, lying on the clavichord, sang the tune."<sup>1</sup>



Catherine the Great

In this quote from Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, was the author truly referring to our humble clavichord in that scene set in 1805? In fact, at that time the polonaise, not the Viennese waltz, was the most popular dance of the day and the dance most likely to be played on the clavichord. Furthermore, I doubt any clavichord I know would obligingly bear the weight of a drunken Russian soldier lying atop it.

We immediately encounter a linguistic hurdle. From the 1770s onward, the term clavichord (Rus. *klavikord* and increasingly in the plural, *klavikordi*) was used somewhat indiscriminately to describe clavichords, square pianos, and "organized" square pianos (*claviorgana*), in which the piano mechanism sat atop a rank of organ pipes, playable from the same keyboard.<sup>2</sup> This confusion persists to the present day, from photographs clearly depicting square pianos with the caption referring to a clavichord<sup>3</sup> to Russian publications of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* titled *The Well-Tempered Clavichord*. The 2007 translation of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* by Pevear and Volokhonsky substitutes the word *pianoforte* for *clavichord*.

While no indigenous Russian clavichords

are known to survive, a number of instruments by German and Swedish builders exist in Russian museums, and newspaper advertisements from St. Petersburg point to a healthy trade in new and used keyboard instruments, including a good number of clavichords.<sup>4</sup> Coupled with

evidence from art, organography and literature, it is clear that the instrument played a role in Russian upper-class society, if primarily as a teaching and practice instrument. While there are no extant Russian keyboard pieces explicitly written for clavichord, the number of pieces dating from 1780 – ca. 1810 that can be effectively performed

on the instrument suggest that while the fortepiano was certainly rising to prominence as the keyboard of choice among those who could afford one, there was still music being written that, for practical purposes, could sing through our instrument's gentle voice.

When examining Russian keyboard music with an eye toward the clavichord, we must consider that fact that while Russia was in fairly close proximity to the two largest centers of clavichord production – Germany and Sweden – the instrument never rose to the prominence it had in those countries. Russia's uncomfortable

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## The Clavichord at the BEMF Keyboard Mini-Festival

On June 11, 2009, the Boston Early Music Festival held its first "Keyboard Mini-Festival," an event that featured performances on the fortepiano, harpsichord and clavichord. The capacity crowds for all the performances made it clear that this was a welcome event. The Mini-Festival was held in Boston's First Lutheran Church and was chaired by the BCS's own Peter Sykes. There were well over a hundred attendees. The large audience for the clavichord performances probably included many who were hearing the clavichord for the first time. Unfortunately the acoustics of the space were not likely to provide the best first impression, as a good deal of outdoor noise was audible. In a more appropriate room, Allan Winkler's 1995 copy of the five-octave 1796 Schiedmayer clavichord in the collection of Boston's Museum of Fine Arts would have been an ideal choice for the works that were performed, but its sound dissipated in these surroundings. One hopes that this will be the first of many Keyboard Mini-Festivals at BEMF and that subsequent venues will be friendlier to the clavichord.

Paul Rabin and Sylvia Berry, who wrote the following reviews, are both members of the Board of Directors of the BCS. Berry performs on the fortepiano and harpsichord. Rabin sings in Boston's Back Bay Chorale and is the current president of its board.

### Paul Rabin

The first clavichord performer was David Breitman. Breitman is director of the program in historical performance at Oberlin College, an historical piano specialist who has eagerly embraced the clavichord in recent years and integrated it into the Oberlin keyboard curriculum. His program included Haydn's Sonata in B minor, Hob. XVI/32, C. P. E. Bach's Fantasia in C and Rondo in G, Wq. 59, and J.S. Bach's English Suite No. 2 in A minor, BWV 807, highlights of the golden age of the clavichord.

Haydn's B minor sonata is from the second set of six keyboard sonatas, published

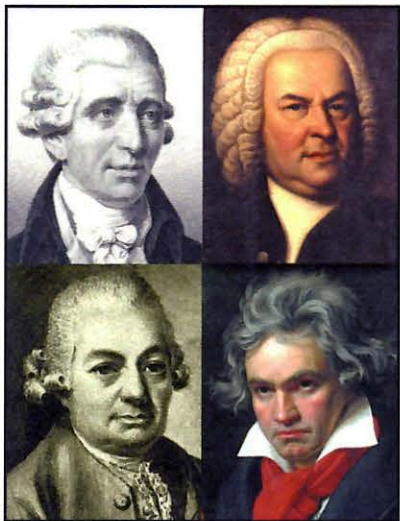
in 1776. The brooding, insistent mood is established from the start; not Haydn's usual charm and wit, but edgy, with a level of tension, only briefly relieved in the middle movement, that we associate more with Beethoven. The brilliant final Presto in particular, with its relentless pulse and forceful counterpoint, makes no concessions to prevailing tastes. In this difficult environment the music seemed somewhat forced with some resulting problems of tone in the treble.

The two pieces by C.P.E. Bach, which came from the fifth "Für Kenner und Liebhaber" collection, were decidedly for "Kenner," with advanced enharmonic modulations, and technically difficult passagework. The C major Fantasia, like many others by this composer, is a moderato sonata-like movement into which dramatically contrasting sections are

inserted. The extremes of volume, speed, and density of sound pushed the limits of the instrument, but also helped to focus the audience's attention.

The Rondo in G is a kaleidoscope of melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic dislocation. From the start of this piece, it was clear that performer, instrument, and audience had become well connected. More like a chaconne, it is a series of transformations of a basic, four-bar theme, without intervening episodes. Within a framework that looks like tender lyricism, the piece brilliantly combines a surface texture that appears to have lost its moorings with a satisfyingly organized underlying structure, ending with a triumphant return to earth.

Breitman's elegant performance of J.S. Bach's English Suite No. 2 demonstrated why this piece should be performed on the clavichord more often. In the Prelude, the two-voice writing allowed unrestrained attention to the physical quality of the lines. The Allemande was all grace and transparency. In the Courante, Breitman moderated the tempo somewhat, but still brought out the vitality of its rhythms. The dense chords of the Sarabande were accommodat-



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Editor: Beverly Woodward  
P.O. Box 540515,  
Waltham MA 02454  
Phone: 781 891-0814

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ed with discreet rolling. Breitman handled the chords in the second Bourée without harshness, and executed the treacherous leaps in the Gigue with élan.

This program presented some of the most advanced work from the composers who treated the clavichord most seriously, and convincingly demonstrated the value of the new BEMF Keyboard Mini-Festival in showcasing this instrument to a broader audience.

### Sylvia Berry

By the time that Peter Sykes took the stage for the second clavichord performance, listeners had become more accustomed to the dynamic range and silvery tone of the Winkler/Schiedmayer clavichord. In an obvious nod to "Haydn Year 2009," the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Haydn's death, Sykes's recital was practically an all-Haydn affair. This was especially appropriate, as Haydn had a life-long relationship with the clavichord. The only surviving instrument definitively known to have been owned by Haydn is a five-octave clavichord from 1794 built by Johann Bohak,



## Maximilian Fleischman performs for the BCS at BEMF

Christa Rakich

Christa Rakich performs on the organ, harpsichord and clavichord and is a member of the Board of Directors of the BCS.

Maximilian Fleischman was selected by the BCS to perform at the 2009 Boston Early Music Festival. His concert took place on June 12, 2009, at the Hale Chapel in the First Church in Boston. He played on a clavichord by Dolmetsch/Chickering (after Hoffmann), 1908., No. 31. His program included:



Maximilian Fleischman

- Beethoven – Variations in F, op. 34
- Scarlatti – Sonata in D minor, K9, L 413
- C.P.E. Bach – Rondo in D minor, Wq 61/4
- Scarlatti – Sonata in D major, K 96, L 465
- Haydn – Sonata in G minor, Hob. XVI/44
- J.S. Bach – Partita in G, BWV 829
- Haydn – Variations in G, from Finale to the String Quartet, op. 33 no. 5, Hob. III/41 (Fleischman, continued on p.6)

(Mini-Festival, continued from p.2) now housed at the Royal College of Music in London.<sup>1</sup> Haydn is said to have composed *The Creation* on this instrument.

Sykes chose pieces from three different decades of Haydn's composing career. He opened with the genial sonata in A major, Hob. XVI/26, from 1773, alerting the audience to the whimsical "Menuet al Rovescio" in which the repeats are heard "in reverse." Sykes followed this work with a fascinating interloper, the second movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3. This allowed the audience to hear the thread that ties Haydn and Beethoven to C.P.E. Bach, since Breitman had earlier played two works by Bach. But Sykes was after something more. He noted that in the "early music" field one of our main concerns is using the "right" instrument for a given piece, but then asked "What if we didn't care?" He noted that the clavichord was ubiquitous in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and that it was the preferred instrument for many composers, partly be-

## The Oleskiewicz-Schulenberg Duo: Flute and Clavichord

Margaret Irwin-Brandon

Margaret Irwin-Brandon performs on many keyboards and is on the BCS Board of Artistic Advisors.

There is none, among keyboard instruments, so revealing as the clavichord – where there is no concealing the relative skill of the builder. Nor does any keyboard offer a more difficult test for a composer and provide so little forgiveness for the player. But then, add a Baroque flute to the mix, and *voilà!* The difficulties pale under the artistry of The Oleskiewicz-Schulenberg Duo, David Schulenberg, clavichord, and Mary Oleskiewicz, flute. The pair were presented in concert by the Boston Clavichord Society in a program entitled, "Sounds of Frederick the Great a Royal Flute" on Sunday, April 19, 2009 in the Hastings Room, First Church in Cambridge, MA.

Opening with an instrumental recitative, the Sonata in A minor for flute and continuo, Sp. 21, by King Frederick II ("the Great") of Prussia, the sonata unfolded in two more movements - the *allegro non molto*, a "vocal" aria, and the final *allegro assai*, a courtly dance. With that it was clear

cause it was less expensive. Therefore it seems likely that many works that we do not associate with the clavichord were played on it.

Sykes argued that we should be open to trying things on a variety of instruments and then demonstrated the exciting results of his own experiment. His reading of this Beethoven movement, marked "Largo e mesto," was convincing because he exquisitely handled every gesture of mournfulness found in this dark and brooding work.

He continued with an amiable work by Haydn, the Sonata in B-flat, Hob. XVI/41, published in 1784. This comes from the first set of sonatas by Haydn that were designated explicitly for the fortepiano. Sykes delighted with his comic timing and subtle dynamic shadings.

The closing piece, Haydn's Andante and Variations in F minor, Hob. XVII/6, seems indisputably for the fortepiano, yet Sykes gave it a compelling and moving reading at the clavichord.<sup>2</sup> Written in 1793, it is perhaps Haydn's darkest essay in pathos,

that this program would reflect Frederick's fascination with the opera in the context of sonatas for clavichord and flute as well as solo works for both instruments.

Two keyboard works by two great sons of J.S. Bach, the Fantasia in E minor, F.21, by Wilhelm Friedemann, and the "Württemberg" Sonata no. 1 in A minor, W. 49/1, by Carl Philipp Emanuel, performed on



Frederick the Great

solo clavichord, gave entry to the exceptionally quiet, intense world of the clavichord. Friedemann's fantasia with its frenzied opening and somewhat worried recitative resolves happily into a sparkling, unencumbered fantasy with clouds of harmonies, snippets of homophony and echoes of the solo cantata in fiery recitatives and short reflective responses. Schulenberg proved his mettle in the waves of arpeggi, scales and octaves which culminated in the heightened drama of a wild (composed) improvisation – and a quiet, almost whispered, ending.

The Württemberg sonata, itself a test of imagination and skill for the performer, was enhanced by the ornaments in the repeats (Duo, continued on p.6)

and interestingly, its richly detailed articulation markings resemble those found in the Beethoven work, written three years later. Of course, both refer back to Emanuel Bach in many ways, and Sykes's performances of these works served to further remind us of the roots of much of this music. Ω

<sup>1</sup> Haydn's clavichords will be discussed by Peter Bavington in the next issue of *Tangents*, issue no. 28.

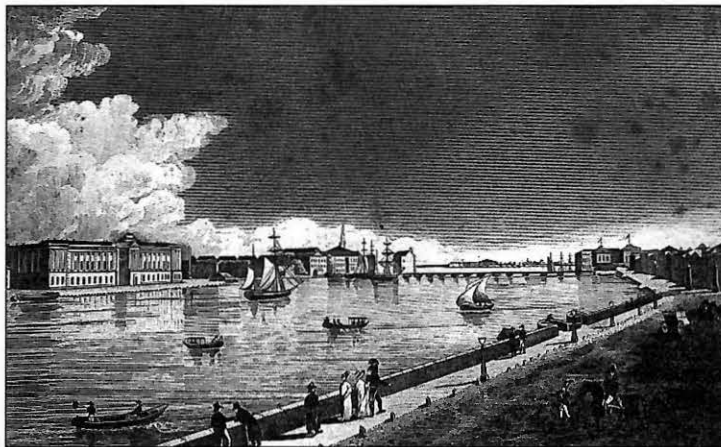
<sup>2</sup> David Breitman performed the Haydn Andante and Variations in F minor at a recital for the Boston Clavichord Society in September 2007. Sykes reviewed the recital and wrote: "The Haydn variations explored the full expressive range of the Dolmetsch-Chickering clavichord, and were moving in the true *Empfindsamer* style." After two compelling performances, we can conclude that the suitability of this piece for the clavichord has been demonstrated. Editor Ω



(*Russian Clavichord, continued from p.1*) relationship with instrumental music, thanks in large part to the negative attitude of the Russian Orthodox Church towards instrumental performance and particularly to the Russian folk minstrels known as *skhomorokhi*, worked against the cultivation of a sacred instrumental tradition as found in Catholic and Protestant countries. While rich and complex bodies of unaccompanied chant and eventually polyphony developed within the realm of Russian and Ukrainian church music, they were never mirrored in the instrumental realm. In addition, Russia's geographical and cultural isolation from the West hindered the type of cultural exchange that enriched most of Western Europe during the 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, particularly with respect to the export of Italian and German music, musicians, and musical thought.

At the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Tsar Peter I "the Great" (1672-1725) began to turn Russia, often kicking and screaming, towards the rest of Europe. His new capital, St. Petersburg, was to be a window to the West, and to that end, Peter brought Germans, Czechs, Italians, and others to Russia in his quest to modernize and ultimately, civilize, his native land. Unfortunately, Peter preferred soldiery to the arts. Peter's successors, notably the Empresses Anna Ivanovna (1693-1740) and Catherine the Great (1729-1796) were more favorably disposed towards the arts, and during their reigns both secular vocal music (especially Italian-style opera) and instrumental music grew and flourished. The German merchants, builders, and intellectuals who came to St. Petersburg in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century brought with them their own musical instruments, music teachers, and sheet music. Peter the Great's vision of the new Russian nobility also included the introduction of music lessons for the children of the aristocracy. Young noblemen and noblewomen studied instruments, including the clavichord, at the hands of mainly foreign musicians, including Italians Vincenzo Manfredini, clavichord tutor to the future Tsar Paul I,<sup>5</sup> Baltassare Galuppi, and the Czech Jan Bohumir Práček.

Russian folk songs from the city and country are inexorably tied to Russian music as a whole, from sacred Church music to the height of the symphonic repertoire. Whether simply out of pride in an important national heritage or as a rebellion against the Westernization begun by Peter the Great, folk music has been at the center of what makes Russian music sound Russian. The first known keyboard music by a native Russian composer was two sets of variations on Russian folk songs, published in 1780 by Vasily Fyodorovich Trutovsky (ca. 1740-1810). The son of a



St. Petersburg in 1830

Ukrainian priest, Trutovsky was a virtuoso on the *gusli*, a Ukrainian folk instrument derived from the five-string lyre which had, by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, evolved into a 55-66 string model that stood on legs and was plucked by both hands<sup>6</sup> – essentially a Russian hand-plucked "clavichord" on which a capable musician could play music intended for keyboard.<sup>7</sup> Trutovsky was brought to the court of Catherine the Great by Prince Potyomkin<sup>8</sup> as part of the German-born Catherine's efforts to Russianize herself and her court. Coupled with political pressures, this led to the Russian nobility's embrace of folk music as a form of nationalism, a trend that has continued through the Romantic period to the present day.

Folk song variations make up the majority of published Russian keyboard and string music through the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The variation sets of Trutovsky, Vasily Semyonovich Karaïlov (1787) and Ivan Yevstafievich Khandoshkin (1747-1804) are fine examples of this tradition, and all lend themselves admirably to the clavichord. What all the pieces of this

period have in common is the uneasy marriage of Russian folk music's wild untamed modality with 18<sup>th</sup> century Western harmony. Add the rhythm and cadence of the Russian language inherent in the folk songs themselves, and the results are definitely worth exploring. Trutovsky's athletic twelve variations on the song "The strapping young fellow with the thick curly hair" are the least idiomatic of the bunch, perhaps being better suited to the *gusli* than the keyboard. Variations on Karaïlov's wistful tune "You poor little orphan" are set in C minor with rich harmonies, expressive chromaticism, and detailed dynamic and phrasing indications reminiscent of the *empfindsamer stil*.

Khandoshkin, a serf violinist who rose up to become one of Catherine the Great's most prominent musicians and a fixture of the St. Petersburg concert scene, wrote almost no music for keyboard. His variations on the song "Shall I step out on the bank of the little river?" is one of the exceptions, clever, tender, and effectively capturing

the wandering modal quality of the song without trying overly hard to reconcile it to Western tonality. Like other works from this period, there are no clearly pianistic passages requiring the use of a sustaining mechanism.

St. Petersburg quickly became the center for music publishing in Russia. The firms of Gerstenberg and Breitkopf (son of the Leipzig Breitkopf) published hundreds of variation sets, catering to the steep rise in popularity of the form, especially among young noblewomen.<sup>9</sup> Among the foreign composers who took advantage of this publishing boom was Johann Gottfried Wilhelm Palschau (ca. 1742-1813). A child prodigy, Palschau toured Europe, including a stint in London a decade before Mozart. Before settling in Russia, Palschau studied in Riga with Johann Sebastian Bach's student Johann Gottfried Mützel. By 1771, he was in St. Petersburg, where he spent the rest of his life. His fine variation set on "Ah, I'm so lonely" is written in a light, spacious style. Among his other surviving works, two sonatas and a man-

uscript copy of a variation set on a French air survive in the Weyse collection in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. All of the pieces, with their plentiful dynamic indications, abundant bold musical contrasts and lack of need for a sustaining mechanism make performance on the clavichord highly rewarding.

Next to folk song variations, dance music made up the largest body of Russian keyboard works from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. By 1780, the polonaise surpassed the minuet as the “in” dance among the upper classes, and several members of the nobility, including Princess Ekaterina Likoschin (ca. 1780–ca. 1840) and the Lithuanian Peter Biron, Prince of Courland (1742-1800), published collections of their own.

The earliest polonaises in Russian sources come from the pen of Osip Antonevich Kozlovsky (1757-1831), a native of Warsaw who, through his friendship with Prince Grigory Potyomkin, was introduced to the court of Catherine the Great, moving to Russia in 1786. Kozlovsky wrote operas, large-scale sacred music, cantatas, and ballet music for court and the private theaters of Russian nobility. His keyboard music consists mostly of polonaises, some based on patriotic songs, others on folk songs from Ukraine, Russia and his native Poland. The Ukrainian-based works are particularly interesting, incorporating into their melodies the Lydian mode frequently used in Ukrainian folk music. Like the works of Palschau, Kozlovsky’s pieces are quite effective on the clavichord, having clear, lucid textures and being devoid of heavy pianism.

As a young man, Kozlovsky worked in Trakai at the Ogiński estate, where he was music tutor to the young Michał Kleofas Ogiński (1765-1833), the Polish-Lithuanian nobleman who would become known as a statesman, ambassador, author, and composer in his own right. Ogiński is best remembered today for his famous polonaise known as “Farewell to the Homeland,” most probably written around the turn of the century and published in 1817. While a number of his mazurkas, marches, waltzes, and polonaises, including his most well known, are quite happily playable on the clavichord, others clearly demand effects only possible on the piano. On either instrument, however, they are highly grati-

fying to both performer and audience, as Ogiński’s well-crafted and often exquisitely melancholy melodies are some of the finest of this period.

Another foreign musician who called St. Petersburg home was the Czech Silesian Jan Bohumir Práč (c. 1750-1818), also known as Ivan Prach. With Nikolai Alexandrovich Lvov, he published in 1790 the first printed volume of Russian folk songs arranged for voice with keyboard accompaniment. While groundbreaking in that one respect, Prach’s harmonizations often dealt poorly with the modality of Russian folk songs, trying to “civilize” their wild nature with rather conventional harmony, much as was the case with contemporary treatments of Celtic folk music, including Bunting’s Irish melodies and the Scottish songs of Geminiani, J.C. Bach, and Haydn. Prach’s chamber and keyboard music was more successful, including a sonata and several one-movement works in the style of Galuppi.

That more Italianate and Germanic music by Russian composers was not written – given the number of Italian and German teachers, composers, and performers who worked at the Russian court – is a testament to the power native Russian music held and still holds over its people. Of all the keyboard music from Russian-controlled lands composed before 1820, only a handful of works seek to emulate Western art music, and almost all of it was written by foreign-born composers. The exception was Dmitro Stepanovich Bortniansky (1751-1825). A Ukrainian by birth, he traveled to St. Petersburg at the age of seven to sing in the Imperial Chapel Choir, which was at the time directed by Baldassare Galuppi. When Galuppi returned to Italy in 1769, Bortniansky accompanied him. In Italy, the young Ukrainian gained a reputation as an opera composer, and upon his return to Russia in 1779, continued to write operas as well as the liturgical music that was to become his lasting legacy. In 1796, he was appointed Director of the Imperial Chapel Choir, the first native of the Russian Empire to hold that post. Bortniansky’s output for keyboard includes a harpsichord concerto, three sonatas, and a handful of sonata movements. The sonatas, which clearly show the influence of his teacher Galuppi, suit the clavichord well, and his slower movements contain moments of

serene beauty. His Larghetto in F is particularly fine, reminiscent of early Mozart.

Prince Dmitri Saltykov (1767-1826) was a member of an old Russian aristocratic family, the son of field marshal Nikolai Ivanovich Saltykov, who was the tutor of the future tsars Paul I and Alexander I. Nikolai Kopchevsky<sup>10</sup> suggests that Dmitri was blind, although whether from birth or due to illness at a later date is unclear. He is presumably one of the children in J.F.A. Tischbein’s portrait of N.I. Saltykov and his family, currently on display at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.<sup>11</sup> Seated at the right at what is clearly a clavichord is the family’s music tutor. A few of his pieces, including a lovely *Siciliana*, lend themselves quite well to the clavichord. Most of the others, like the later polonaises of Ogiński and the works of Peter Biron, are among the first Russian works that can only be performed convincingly on the fortepiano.

Falling in the category of early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century music that, while conceived at a time when the clavichord had fallen out of vogue in Russia, is still effective on the instrument, are the Bach-inspired contrapuntal works of Lev Stepanovich Gurilyov (1770-1844), the first and third of the Three Fugues (1833) of Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (1804-1857), and the Three Fugues, Op. 12, of Alexander Alexandrovich Kopyloff (1854-1911).

There is much more work to be done in uncovering the world of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Russian music, and there are probably more historical instruments waiting to be rediscovered as well. Many pieces of keyboard music from the St. Petersburg publishing houses have yet to be made available in a modern edition. Remediating this is a project to which I hope to contribute over the next few years.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Tolstoy, Lev, *War and Peace*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1966, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> Dorothea Demel, “The clavichord in the *Encyclopaedia: Eighteenth-century Musical St. Petersburg* (Volumes I-III and VII),” *de Clavichordio VIII*, 2007, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110-112.

<sup>5</sup> From the diary of S. Poroshin: “Kapellmeister Manfredini is teaching him to play the clavichord,” cited in Demel., p. 109.

(*Russian clavichords, continued on p.6*)



(Fleischman, continued from p.3)

The day before this concert, I heard a clavichord recital by David Breitman, which he prefaced with remarks on teaching fortepiano to players who had come to that instrument from the harpsichord. It seemed a natural progression: harpsichord to fortepiano, the path builders had traveled, yet results were often mixed. This led Breitman to realize that eighteenth-century fortepianists had come to that instrument not only from the harpsichord, but also, and likely more naturally, from the clavichord.

What happens, then, when a modern pianist migrates to the fortepiano, then to the clavichord? The result, on a very good day, might be Max Fleischman. Here is a fearless performer who pushes the instrument to its limits. He relies on strong finger independence, in contrast to organists, who rely more on the weight of the hand. With fierceness and virtuosic tools he extracted a panoply of color, from a nazard-like lyricism to blunt force that sounded like plucking. (Is it *legal* to make notes that short?) This was extreme clavichord playing, from Jimi Hendrix about to break his guitar to the sweetest, most tender *Bebungen* Haydn could ever have intended.

From the opening measures of the Beethoven Variations in F, op. 34, it was evident that Fleischman possesses a virtu-

oso keyboard technique. This piece made for quite convincing clavichord repertoire in his hands, even though it is rare to hear music of this complexity attempted in performance on the clavichord.

Fleischman framed the C.P.E. Bach Ron-do in D minor (Wq 61/4) with two Scarlatti sonatas, first the sweet D minor (K9, L413), and finally the pyrotechnic D major (K96, L465), played at breakneck speed. The quick repeated notes in the closing Scarlatti were stunning. I've never heard a clavichord sound quite like that. The hand-crossings had people craning their necks for a better view, wondering, how does he do that?

Granted, there were moments in this recital when one wondered, *why* does he do that – especially as regards some extremely fast tempo choices. But there was a certain magic, evident in the hyperactive opening of the Bach Partita in G, when the movement ends on a low G, in octaves, and the listener was shocked into drawing breath. The Partita's last movement is a gigue, whose second half features successive trills; Fleischman's trills rolled and tumbled over one another, accumulating energy.

This was a well-balanced program, with the encore built in, just a trifle for dessert; after such an energetic program, a welcome treat indeed. Ω

(Duo, continued from p.3)

during the first movement, the cadenza in the *andante* and the pressured ferocity of the final *allegro assai*. These works displayed the many possibilities inherent in this particular instrument, built by Robert Goebel. Once a part of Howard Schott's collection, it is now owned by Peter Sykes.

It was appropriate that Frederick's musical soul-mate, teacher and collaborator, J.J. Quantz was featured with two works on this program. And it was fitting that they were played by scholar and performer, Mary Oleskiewicz, performing on a replica of the two-keyed flutes made by Quantz for King Frederick. Quantz's "Adagio in C, QV 1:7," which appears in his treatise on playing the flute, was given a fresh, gracefully ornamented performance.

The Sonata in G minor, QV 2:35, originally for flute, violin and basso continuo, performed from a contemporary manuscript in which the cello and violin parts are given to the keyboard,

while well-played, suffered somewhat from the relative quiet of the clavichord, especially in the treble range when it was in duet (as a violin) with the flute.

The continuo sonatas, the aforementioned Sp. 21 and QV 2:35, as well as Frederick's Sonata in F, Sp. 118, displayed the skill and ingenuity required of a continuo player, especially on an instrument that could be overshadowed by a much bolder flute. Schulenberg gave both harmonic and rhythmic substance to his realizations, which, in their most theatrical moments, employed lute-like broken chords and contrasting silences.

The Duo left no doubt that distinguished scholars can also be fine performers. Their artistry, imagination, intelligence and historically informed choices in repertoire and performance guaranteed an evening of music to savor at the Royal Court of Frederick the Great. Ω

(Russian clavichords, continued from p.5)

<sup>6</sup> Anne Mischakoff, *Khandoshkin and the Beginning of Russian String Music*. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1978, p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> Marina Ritzareva, *Eighteenth Century Russian Music*. London: Ashgate, 2006, p. 56.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Nikolai Kopchevsky, ed. *Russkaya fortepiannaya muzyka, I*. Moscow: Muzyka, 1986. p. 7

<sup>11</sup> Uta Henning, "Clavichord reception in Russia: with special reference to the Bach family," *de Clavicordio VII*, 2006, p. 12.

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Other references can be found in the endnotes above.

(Daly, continued from p.1)

degree of strength and "presence" we don't normally associate with late-18th-century unfretted instruments.

After delivering the instrument to a Seattle client in January, I "borrowed" it in late April to play a series of four concerts with acclaimed baroque flutist Jeffrey Cohan (<http://www.jeffreycohan.com/>) in Cohan's Concert Spirituel series. Balance between the flute and clavichord was an easy fit, due to the strength of the clavichord's voice, but equally as much to Jeffrey's command of his flute. In addition to solo pieces for each instrument by C.P.E. Bach, the program included pieces for flute and clavichord by Quantz, Mützel and W.F. Bach. Ω

