

S e r g e i

R A C H M A N I N O V

P R E L U D E S

O p u s 3 2 N ° 5 G m a j o r



Piano Practical Editions

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Sergei RACHMANINOV

1873 - 1943

P R E L U D E Opus 32 N° 5 G major

The composition of 24 preludes covering all the major and minor keys is a huge challenge and Rachmaninov's contribution was spread over 20 years. In spite of the demands of an active and

successful stage career at the piano and on the podium, with limited time for composing, between August and September 1910 he rapidly completed thirteen for opus 32. These tone poems created in his middle years reveal an even more improvisatory style, often with a distinctive identity and no precise form. Unlike opus 23, they are without dedication. At the age of 19 his celebrated C# minor prelude gained so much success that his fans would not allow him to leave the stage unless he performed it, yet again, as an encore. He believed that any of the 23 preludes following this youthful first essay in



the genre were far superior, although one must admit that he had certainly hit upon a unique formula to enthuse his audiences. However, the "Bells of Moscow" would cause him intense irritation.

This prelude features a haunting ostinato and flowing melody, providing solace for a composer who often created music of more sombre hue. Little wonder that it has become one of his most popular, Rachmaninov himself blessing the work with frequent recital inclusion and recordings from which this edition features a few modifications not found in earlier publications. His tempo is very free, at a somewhat slow *moderato* except for the *leggiero* passages **7-8** etc. and the coda **36-39**, which are played more quickly.

Given that the composer was born in 1873, an age of great artistic individuality, it is not

surprising that he typically performed without wholly respecting the score. His choice of tempi is quite idiosyncratic and this edition reflects a few of the more effective deviations. Phrasing, dynamics and agogic markings have been occasionally modified and a zealous student will need to consult the original Russian Gutheil or Robert Threlfall's Boosey & Hawkes 1992 edition.

5 according to one of the composer's recordings, perhaps in error

6-8 in his recordings Rachmaninov plays these *leggiero* passages as quasi ornamental turns

8 modification of this harmony

9 to be played with the LH bass G, according to the original edition

16 modification of LH thumb B

22 presented as a continuation of **21**

35-38 modification of time-signatures and barlines

PRELUDE

Op 32 N° 5

moderato

dolce

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and contains a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' above it. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, with a '4' above the first measure and a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking below the first measure.

The second system continues the two-staff format. The upper staff features a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' above it. The lower staff continues the eighth-note accompaniment. A 'p' (piano) dynamic marking is present at the beginning of the system.

The third system shows a melodic phrase in the upper staff marked with an asterisk (*) and the instruction 'leggero'. The lower staff continues the accompaniment. A 'p' (piano) dynamic marking is at the start, and a 'pp' (pianissimo) dynamic marking appears later in the system.

The fourth system features a more complex rhythmic pattern in the upper staff, including a sixteenth-note triplet marked with a '2' above it. The lower staff continues the accompaniment. A 'p' (piano) dynamic marking is at the start, and an asterisk (*) is placed above a note in the lower staff towards the end of the system.

ppp

9

p

pp

m.d.

11

13

pp

15

*

p

17

3

3

19

pp

4

21

*

3

22

tr *f* *tr*

mf *m.s.*

3

24

perdendo

dolce

tr *pp*

p

m.d.

26

p

tr

pp

1

2

Detailed description: This system contains measures 26 and 27. The right-hand part (RH) features a melodic line starting with a fermata on a whole note, followed by a series of eighth notes. A trill is indicated by a wavy line and the abbreviation 'tr'. The left-hand part (LH) consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include piano (*p*) and pianissimo (*pp*). Fingerings 1 and 2 are shown in the bass clef.

28

rit

pp

a tempo

m.d.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 28 and 29. The RH has a melodic line with a fermata and a trill. The LH continues with eighth-note accompaniment. The tempo changes from 'rit' (ritardando) to 'a tempo'. Dynamics include pianissimo (*pp*) and mezzo-forte (*m.d.*).

30

Detailed description: This system contains measures 30 and 31. The RH features a melodic line with a fermata and a trill. The LH continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include pianissimo (*pp*).

32

pp

Detailed description: This system contains measures 32 and 33. The RH features a melodic line with a fermata and a trill. The LH continues with eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics include pianissimo (*pp*).



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P R E L U D E S

O p u s 3 2 N ° 5

p u b l i s h e d N o v e m b e r 2 0 2 0

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