Natalia Andreeva
plays
PRELUDES & FUGUES

J. S. Bach
Prelude and Fugue in C sharp minor, BWV 849

Bach-Liszt
Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor, S.462 No. 1

Franck
Prelude, Chorale and Fugue in B minor, Op. 21

Shostakovich
Prelude and Fugue in C minor, Op. 87 No. 20

Bonus tracks:
Rachmaninoff
Etude-Tableaux, Op. 33 - Nos 7 & 8
PRELUDES & FUGUES

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Prelude and Fugue in C sharp minor, BWV849 7:30
1  I.  Prelude  2:56
2  II. Fugue  4:33

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
transcribed by Franz Liszt (1811-1886)
Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor, S. 462 No. 1 10:38
3  I.  Prelude  3:42
4  II. Fugue  6:57

César Franck (1822-1890)
Prélude, choral et fugue 21:32
5  I.  Prélude  5:35
6  II. Choral  7:18
7  III. Fugue  8:39

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)
Prelude and Fugue in C minor, Op. 87 No. 20 10:53
8  I.  Prelude  4:50
9  II. Fugue  6:02

bonus tracks:
Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
10  Étude-Tableau in G minor, Op. 33 No. 7  3:41
11  Étude-Tableau in C sharp minor, Op. 33 No. 8  3:10

total playing time: 57:25

NATALIA ANDREEVA piano
The Music

This CD includes piano works — Preludes and Fugues and two of Rachmaninoff’s Étude-Tableaux — which were learned and performed at different stages of my life: in St. Petersburg (Russia), in Chicago and in Sydney.

They were all recorded in the former Melodiya recording studio in St. Petersburg (located at the St. Catherine Lutheran Church) — the same studio where I recorded the complete piano works by the Russian composer Galina Ustvolskaya, released by Divine Art in 2015.

Here, in these program notes, my aim is not to make an analysis of these piano works (so many great books have been written and much research has been done!). This is more an attempt to share briefly what I have personally discovered in the music and what has helped me to create my ‘artistic images’ in these Preludes and Fugues.

In my program notes for Ustvolskaya’s Piano Works I have written about the “religious spirit” in the composer’s music. Again, in my interpretation of these Preludes and Fugues, the most important aspect is religious.

There are various connections between all these composers and their works:

- Liszt, Franck and Shostakovich were influenced by Bach’s work;
- Liszt had a great interest in Fugue. According to Paul Merrick, “Fugal sections occur in 14 of Liszt works”;¹
- Franck, like Bach, worked as a church organist;
- Liszt and Franck started their careers as young virtuosos;
- Franck always admired Liszt. “Liszt has the richest musical imagination of our time. His works, whether for piano or for orchestra, are a mine of melodic and harmonic treasures.”² According to Vallas there are some influences from Liszt’s Weinen Klagen in Franck’s Prelude, Chorale and Fugue;
- The “Cross” motive appears in Bach’s Fugue, in Shostakovich’s Prelude and Fugue and in Franck’s Prelude.
Example 1 Bach: Fugue in C sharp Minor WTC Book 1

Example 2 Shostakovich: Prelude in C Minor, Op. 87 No. 20

Example 3 Shostakovich: Fugue in C Minor, Op. 87 No. 20
In my interpretation I emphasise the bell-like effects in all these piano works. The destiny of each piece was dramatic: Bach’s compositions had been neglected, Shostakovich was accused of formalism and Saint-Saëns declared Franck’s work to be “awkwardly written ... The chorale is not a chorale ... the fugue not a fugue.”

Further, Liszt declared that “One may say, that music is religious in essence and, like the human soul, Christian by nature.”


One of the most fascinating studies of Bach’s “Well-Tempered Clavier” (which, in Book 1, includes this Prelude and Fugue) was made by Timothy A. Smith. He claims that: “In this unusual work Bach has used musical and mathematical symbols to express religious belief.” The mathematical symbol (in the Fugue) is five. “Why ... does this fugue ... have five voices? ... There was no rule against five voices. But five-voice fugues are somewhat of a rarity; of 48, only this and the fugue in B flat minor (BWV 867) are in five voices.”

The first subject (the Fugue has three subjects) of the Fugue is short. It consists of five notes. “No other fugue has a five-note subject.” According to Smith: “Lutherans of Bach’s day associated five with the wounds that were inflicted upon Jesus by the nails in his hands and feet, and a soldier having thrust a spear into his side.”

The first subject is the “Cross” motive (Example 1).
Smith calls the second subject (Example 5) the “Brook” motive: “This melody reminds me of the gentle music that water makes when it flows between the stepping-stones of a brook”. Smith suggests that the second subject represents Bach himself, and the third subject (Example 6) he calls the “Tolling” motive: “After the fluidness of the Brook motive these repeating pitches seem like the tolling of bells or the gonging of a clock in the town square.”

**Example 5** Bach: *Fugue in C sharp Minor WTC Book 1 (second subject)*

![Example 5 Image]

**Example 6** Bach: *Fugue in C sharp Minor WTC Book 1 (third subject)*

![Example 6 Image]

As I am a little obsessed with the bell sound effects in piano music, this idea is very close to me.

Smith also writes about “Bach’s Name (the signature motive) (b flat, a, c, b-natural: BACH and HCAB) and — most importantly — about Bach’s Monogram
(Example 7). The monogram contains ‘JSB’ in florid calligraphy. Its superimposed mirror image, ‘BSJ’ creates numerous crosses.

**Example 7 Bach’s Monogram**

Smith believes that “this fugue is a musical representation of Bach’s monogram, which expresses a core doctrine of Lutheran belief, ‘theology of the cross’, which can be encapsulated in the words of Jesus himself: If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.”

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Liszt’s transcriptions from Berlioz, Schubert, Paganini, Beethoven, Mozart and Wagner are very well known and widely performed. In 1842 he made transcriptions of six Bach’s organ preludes and fugues. This year marked “the beginning of the cult for Bach who had just begun to be recognised.”

“His edition of these preludes and fugues has never been improved upon to its principles. They are transferred from one instrument to the other with most telling effect and are magnificent in their splendour and sobriety.”

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[5-7] César Franck: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue in B Minor, op. 21

One of the greatest Russian pianists of the 20th century, Svyatoslav Richter, said that for him Franck was the most religious composer. “Not Bach, but Franck!”

Franck had neglected piano since the days of his youth. However, “his love for the works of Bach led him to adopt the formula of ‘prelude and fugue’ familiar from the 48 works in the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Having in mind, perhaps, the practice
of the German master in one of his organ works, he sought to enlarge the form, linking the two traditional movements by introducing a new intermediary element - a chorale; ushered in by a bold modulation from B minor to E flat major, this chorale was developed on broad lines and treated, as were the two other parts, in full cyclical form.”

I think that the theme of the Chorale was the most important for Franck. It appears in the Fugue and it is the last theme which sounds in the Coda. Norman Demuth in his book “César Franck” said: “Like so many of Franck’s works the weak moment is the coda … the closing bars are cheap and vulgar to our ears …” As a pianist, I disagree with this statement. In my interpretation I imitate the sound of the church bells in the Coda with an echo effect. The acoustic of the Lutheran Church of St. Catherine in St. Petersburg was ideal for this recording.

[8-9] Dmitri Shostakovich: Prelude and Fugue No. 20 in C Minor

Examples 2 and 3 above are from Shostakovich’s C minor Prelude and Fugue. The first theme in the Prelude and the subject of the Fugue are based on the “Cross” motive. Indeed, Bach’s Well-Tempered Clavier was an important inspiration for Shostakovich’s Op. 87. In 1950 Shostakovich went to East Germany (as a head of Soviet delegation) for a “celebration of the bicentenary of J. S. Bach’s death ... In Leipzig he heard the pianist Tatyana Nikolaeva play at the International Bach Competition. Nikolaeva’s understanding of Bach’s music was a direct inspiration for Shostakovich, and on his return to Moscow ... he started his cycle of Twenty Four Preludes and Fugues.” Shostakovich did not regard the Preludes and Fugues as a cycle. He called it “a collection of piano pieces”

“In the middle of May of 1951 ... at the Small Hall of the Union of Composers ... on two successive evenings Shostakovich played his latest work, the Twenty-Four Preludes and Fugues for piano.” That such an event should take place in the Soviet Union at that time was remarkable, happening, as it did, only three years after the Resolution of the Central Committee of All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of 10 February 1948 when Shostakovich’s music was accused of formalism and naturalism ... “No piece of music could be performed in public or published without being approved by a few authorised people”
The audience at the Small Hall of the Union of Composers included two great Russian pianists: Maria Yudina and Tatyana Nikolaeva. “But, occupying prominent places in the front rows were those colleagues of Shostakovich who, as it were, had been invested with the power of prosecution ... They had no hesitation in accusing Dmitri Dmitrievich of sinning against ‘surrounding reality’, and of ‘failing to reflect the images of his contemporaries’.”

The secretary of the Union of Composers asked questions: “What sort of images is he presenting us? Are they the images ... of Soviet reality? ... This work does not correspond to the strict criterion of today’s Soviet art.”

Yudina first made the point that she was “speaking on behalf of all pianists”... She gave her evaluation of the new work as “a real heroic exploit!” In conclusion she asked that those who were concerned with the real meaning of Shostakovich’s music should allow performers to play it for a wide audience.

Lyubov Rudneva in her article “How It Happened” writes: “Shostakovich sat right at the very edge of the front row. His pose was incredible - no artist would take upon himself to depict it! His head hung towards the floor, and at certain moments it slumped so very low that it dangled between his widely spread-out knees. No doubt this explosion of abuse seemed so agonizing and obtusely academic that he was possessed by an irrepressible desire to shake off all this filth from his person ...”

One year later Tatiana Nikolaeva performed the Preludes and Fugues in Moscow for the Committee for the Arts. In her recorded telephone interview with Elizabeth Wilson (1993) she said: “The audience was largely the same as the previous year ... – all of whom had previously torn the work to shreds - now praised it to the skies. My aim was achieved as the work authorized for publication ... he (Shostakovich) dedicated the Preludes and Fugues to me, but this was a secret between us; the dedication was not printed in the published editions.”

Natalia Andreeva

Two of Rachmaninoff’s Etude-Tableaux from Op. 33 are included here as ‘bonus tracks’. They were composed at Rachmaninoff’s Ivanovka estate in August and September 1911. Nine pieces were written but only six were included in the first publication in 1914. One, in A minor, was revised and transferred to Op. 39, and the remaining two were published posthumously in Op. 33. The track list gives the new numbers defined by the International Music Score Library Project; as originally written, the G minor piece (track 10) was No. 8 (and originally published as No. 5) and the C sharp minor (track 11, originally published as No. 6) was No. 9.
The pianist

The Russian pianist and researcher Natalia Andreeva was born in St. Petersburg. She started learning piano at the age of five. She graduated from the Rimsky-Korsakov Musical College and the State Conservatorium of Music. Natalia continued her musical education in Chicago as the Fulbright scholar. In 2007 she performed Galina Ustvolskaya’s piano Sonata No. 5 at the Ganz Recital Hall in Chicago.

In 2013 she completed her PhD in Piano Performance in Australia, at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She studied under the Russian pianist, Professor Viktor Abramov and the international concert pianist Andrej Hoteev (an assistant to the legendary Lev Naumov).

Natalia performs as a solo pianist and with a number of different chamber groups in Russia and Australia. She also makes recordings for Russian and Australian broadcasters including ABC classic FM, Sydney. She has recorded several piano solo CDs at the former recording studio “Melodiya” in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Natalia currently holds the position of the Lecturer in Piano at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Australia.

Natalia started her ‘Ustvolskaya project’ in 2006 in Chicago. Since then, she has regularly included Ustvolskaya’s solo piano and chamber works into her recitals. In 2012 she completed a recording of all Ustvolskaya’s piano works, released on Divine Art in 2015 as well as an album of mainstream piano sonatas.

Recorded at St. Catherine Lutheran Church, St. Petersburg, Russia between 2011 and 2013
Sound engineer: Kira Malevskaya
Producer: Andrej Hoteev
Piano by Steinway
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References

1. Paul Merrick: *Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt*
2. Letter from Franck, quoted in Leon Vallas: *César Franck*, p.184
3. Laurence Davies: *Franck*, p.67
4. Letter from Franz Liszt to his friend Joseph d’Ortigue
5. Timothy A. Smith: *Fugue No. 4* <http://www2.nau.edu/tas3/wtc/i04.html>
7. Smith, *ibid.*
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12. Norman Demuth: *César Franck*, p.149
15. Wilson, *ibid.*, p.283
16. Solomon Volkov: *When opera was a matter of life or death*, The Telegraph (UK), 8 March 2004
17. Wilson, *ibid.*, p.284
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Other Recordings by Natalia Andreeva

**PIANO SONATAS**
Beethoven: No. 27, Op. 90
Prokofiev: No. 2, Op. 14
Scriabin: No. 10, Op. 70
Debussy: Estampes
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