

PRAIRIE UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY

February 26, 1984

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH: MUSIC, REVOLUTION, AND TYRANNY

Coordinated by Warren Hagstrom

Order of Service

1. Prelude: from the First Symphony, 1925 (recorded)
2. Music composed for the film, "The Gadfly" --- Susan Hagstrom, piano
3. "Song of Greeting" --- the Congregation, Aileen Nettleton at the piano
4. Russian revolutionary art of the 1920's --- slides, discussion by Lois Hagstrom
5. Percussion Interlude from "The Nose," an opera based on Gogol, 1928 (recorded)
6. Nocturne, from Aphorisms for the Piano, Op. 13 (1920's) --- Susan Hagstrom
7. Conclusion to Act I of "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District," 1932 (recorded)
8. "The Poet and the Czar," 1974 --- sung by Doleta Chapru, Michael Briggs
at the piano
9. Fugue, arranged for woodwinds --- The Prairie Winds
10. Excerpts from the Ninth Symphony, 1st movement, 1945 (recorded)
11. "To Anna Akhmatova," 1974 --- sung by Doleta Chapru, Michael Briggs
at the piano
12. Polka, from a ballet --- Joe Lawrence, piano

Dmitri Shostakovich, chronology

- 1906 Born in Petersburg
- 1917 Revolution in Russia
- 1919 Enters Petrograd Conservatory
- 1922 His father dies; he plays piano at a cinema, accompanying silent films
- 1925 First symphony composed as conservatory graduation exercise; brings him fame when first performed in 1926.
- 1920's and early 1930's Collaborates with Vsevolod Meyerhold and others in experimental theater, opera, ballet
- 1929-1935 Forced collectivization of Russian agriculture
- 1936, January Stalin sees "Lady Macbeth" and leaves theater enraged; Pravda publishes editorial "Muddle Instead of Music." "Formalism" denounced.
- 1935-1940 Purges, many of his friends arrested and executed, including Meyerhold, Shostakovich's patron Marshall Tukachevsky, playwrights and musicians
- 1937 Fifth symphony officially well received
- 1945 Ninth symphony officially criticized
- 1962 13th symphony, including music to Yevtushenko's "Babi Yar," a memorial to Ukrainian Jews killed by the Nazi's
- 1962 Thaw in Russia, Solzhenitzyn's One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich published
- 1966-68 Increased repression of the arts
- 1974 "The Nose" performed again in Moscow after a lapse of 45 years
- 1975 Dies in the Kremlin Hospital, Moscow

SONG OF GREETING

The morning greets us with its coolness,
The river greets us with a breeze.
And life opens up in its fullness,
And singing is heard o'er the trees.
Don't sleep, arise, you curly head,
The mill sings gay.
The land arises from its bed
To greet the day.

And joy sings a song for a greeting,
A song without end in the air.
And people laugh as they are meeting,
The morning is sunny and fair.
 The sun shines brightly overhead,
 We'll make our hay.
 The land arises from its bed
 To greet the day.

The workers with labor shall greet us,
As you to your friends cast a smile.
The whole city comes out to meet us,
It makes life seem doubly worthwhile.
 Beyond the city gates, 'tis said
 In every way,
 The land arises from its bed
 To greet the day.

Brigada nas vstretit rabotoi,
I ty ulybnesh'sia druz'iam,
S kotorymi trud i zabota,
I vstrechnyi, i zhizn' -- popolam.
 Za Narvskoiu zastavoiu,
 V gromach, v ogniakh,
 Strana vstaet so slavoiu
 Na vstrechu dnia.

music by D. Shostakovitch
words by B. Kornilov

THE POET AND THE CZAR

Here in this might hall of the Czars...
Well carved in marble, who can this be,
Uncompromising and in kingly garb?

The ruthless guardian of Pushkin's fame...
Cursing the author, slashing his work.
Horrible waste of Poland, his land.

Look at the marble!
Do not forget:
Who brought the poet's doom,
Nicholas the First!

TO ANNA AKHMATOVA

O muse of weeping,
O you most beautiful muse!
O you, most haunting of visions in palest evening!
You send to us, to all Russia, wild storms of snow,
And then do your shouts plunge into our hearts, like arrows.

And we recoil from the blows,
With deep silence:
Oh! To you we are sworn,
To you we are faithful.
Anna Akhmatova!

Name that echoes enormous sighs,
Yet falls so quietly,
And seems to be somehow nameless.

Crowned have we been by the fact that we walked together in this country,
And under the same blue heaven!
Yet you, the victim of your sad and deadly fate,
Lie here and linger,
For you is this rest eternal.

In this my city, the cupolas gleam and shine,
And here a blind man delights in the Holy Festival.

And I present to you peals of resounding bells,
Akhmatova!

And also my heart I give you.

Two poems by Marina Ivanovna Tsvetayeva (1892-1941)
Set to music by D. Shostakovich, 1974