

The Music Salon in Russia in the First Half of the 19th Century

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For citation: Ogarkova, Natalia. “The Music Salon in Russia in the First Half of the 19th Century”. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Arts* 10, no. 1 (2020): 17–40. <https://doi.org/10.21638/spbu15.2020.102>

The article deals with the issues of music functioning in the culture of Russian salons of the first half of the 19th century. The salon is regarded as a significant socio-cultural institution structured in accordance with chronology and time, the composition of guests and modes of communication, concert and theatrical practices, and the administrative and artistic strategy mapped out by salon hosts. The paper analyses the social composition of salons, which allows for two types of salons to be distinguished: the aristocratic (hosted by Z. A. Volkonskaia, Mikhail Yu. Vielgorskii, and A. F. Lvov) and the artistic (founded by A. S. Dargomyzhskii). The author identifies the principles that comprise the salon space, irrespective of its type, and the main components of which are concert-theatrical and game-entertainment modes of communication. The primary focus is given to the phenomenon of the salon concert, which is analyzed in detail. The article touches upon the issue of the stylistic specifics of salons from sentimental to pre-romantic and romantic with an emphasis on the order of priorities set for the music to be performed, thereby mythologizing and de-mythologizing the creator composer — ‘the artist.’ A special section of the article is devoted to communicative functions of music in the salon culture.

Keywords: salon, socio-cultural institution, Russia, 19th century, salon concert, musical genres, music as communication.

Russian salons in the first half of the 19th century were the centers of musical culture where the music-playing and the art of professional composition thrived and the institution of patronage was in the making. The information about music performed in the salons is scattered across various memoirs, letters and albums, music manuscripts and printed music — the random sources requiring assemblage and verification. Comprehensive works on the music in the Russian salon-music culture of the first half of the 19th century are scarce, practically none at all¹. T. A. Shcherbakova [6], I. V. Kantarovich [7], the author of this article [8; 9], G. E. Luneva [10; 11], M. G. Dolgushina [12; 13] examined certain subjects of the salon-music culture. Some aspects of music life in European salons are externalized in works written by foreign scholars: A. Martin-Fugier [14], D. Tunley [15], and M. A. Smart [16]. International conferences of the recent years [17; 18] testify to the feasibility of this topic. The phenomenon of the Russian salon-music culture undoubt-

¹ Stories of European and Russian salons as a phenomenon of culture are treated in a number of domestic and foreign works: P. Wilhelmy-Dollinger [1; 2], S. Kale [3], E. N. Paliu [4], I. P. Azernikova [5].

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edly needs to be studied: the necessary material must be compiled and guidelines should be provided to determine the course of research. What are the specifics of temporal parameters, the social environment, and the structure of the salon space? Were ladies' and gentlemen's salons different in music predilections? Were the salons music tastemakers, did the atmosphere trigger new music genres? Did music perform a communicative function in the salon culture? The answers to these and other questions provide an impetus to creating a more detailed picture of the Russian music salons of the 19th century.

The high-society salon as a social institution was formed in Russia in the 1820s–30s. As early as the late 18th — early 19th centuries, coteries of 'intellectuals' started gathering in various circles, or 'assemblies,' as the contemporaries referred to them². These circles were noticeably different from the salons, and, cliquish as they were, they had a fixed circle of guests congregating in the intimate space of a home, the attendees being related through family ties, common interests, pursuits, and literary and musical preferences. These circles can be classed among the "literary gatherings" grouped around well-known writers (M. M. Kheraskov, N. I. Novikov, G. R. Derzhavin), who gave themselves a task to "test if a noble man can, one evening a week, do without a game of whist, omber, and practice literature instead" [19, p. 43]. These vocationally oriented circles gave rise to such literary corporations as "The Colloquy of Lovers of the Russian Word" hosted by Derzhavin. Music often was played to add to the atmosphere of literary salons.

Ladies' and gentlemen's salons in society, contrary to circles, welcomed a wider range of guests from outside the family, a quiet friendly social club, and a literary gathering. The guests of the salons encompassed people from various professions of all ages and from all walks of life. Yet, "homoness" and social and friendly ties had remained a specifically Russian feature of St. Petersburg and Moscow salons. P. A. Viazemskii, frequenting the salon of Z. A. Volkonskaia³, noted that the hostess was agile, artistic and had a versatile personality endowed with various creative gifts, "she could welcome a guest, show much kindness and introduce him into the milieu — moral, physical and social — that he needed for his work and his inspiration" [20, p. 328–9]. S. S. Uvarov, with regard to A. N. Olenin's salon⁴, noted "the easy-going, frank and friendly manners of its hosts," which imparted something "patriarchal" and "homely" into the life of the salon [21, p. 40]. E. A. Karamzina⁵, the hostess of the salon where famous and emerging poets flocked in search of the limelight, would pour out tea from a large samovar, thereby creating "the atmosphere of friendliness and hospitality." Enhancing the atmosphere of domesticity were the usual refreshments: strong tea "with very rich cream" and bread, sliced very thin, and "very fresh butter" to make "extraordinarily small tartines" [19, p. 178–80]. In the Petersburg literary and music

² On literary circles, see: [19, p. 15–83].

³ Volkonskaia Zinaida Aleksandrovna (née Princess Beloselskaia; 3 December 1789, Dresden — 24 January 1862, Rome), Countess, writer, amateur singer. Dates of the literary and musical salons: 2 May 1825 — January 1829. On the salon dating, see [7].

⁴ Olenin Alexei Nikolaevich (28 November 1763, Moscow — 17 April 1843, St. Petersburg), of an old noble family, active state councillor, President of the Academy of Fine Arts, Director of the Imperial Public Library. Dates of the salon: the 1820s — the early 1830s.

⁵ Karamzina Ekaterina Andreevna (née Kolyvanova; 16 November 1780, Revel — 1 September 1851, St. Petersburg), second wife of N. M. Karamzin. Karamzina's salon was active from 1826 to 1851. See [19, p. 177].

salon of V. F. Odoevskii, his wife⁶, majestically concealing herself behind a large silver samovar, also poured out tea, <...>” [19, p. 188].

The time and social composition of salons are important details in their lives. The Salon, as A. Martin-Fugier remarked, is “a person, more often than not, a woman, and an address. The scale of the space changes with the time of the day and the week. A woman who in the early afternoon would see no one except her closest friends, from 4 p. m. to 6 p. m. receives dozens of people and in the evening may get up to dance for hundreds of guests” [14, p. 96]. Thus, guests would gather in E. A. Karamzina’s salon every evening: on weekdays from eight to fifteen people, on Sundays up to sixty [19, p. 178–9]. In A. P. Elagina’s Moscow salon⁷, the reception of guests coming to converse began in the evening and lasted long into the night — three or four and sometimes even five or six in the morning [19, p. 175]. About sixty guests would arrive at Princess Volkonskaia’s salon at six or eight o’clock in the evening. Some evenings lasted almost till the morning⁸. Gentlemen’s salons followed their own pattern. The Petersburg salon hosted by Odoevskii welcomed guests on late Saturday evenings [19, p. 187–9]. Gatherings at the Petersburg music salon of Count M. Iu. Vielgorskii ended after midnight.⁹ At the same time guests would leave the salon of A. F. L’vov, which was on Tuesdays¹⁰, A. S. Dargomyzhskii’s salons functioned on Mondays and Thursdays¹¹. Fixed days and running late into the evening and night are characteristics of salon culture. The high life presupposed and even prescribed, first, a strict schedule to fit in balls, receptions, the opera, and, second, night time, which was free from service, everyday chores and obligations to allow for rest, discussions of burning issues of the day, entertainment, and pleasure.

Undoubtedly, the invitations to the evening sent to a guest came from hosts and were determined by their status at the Court, their status in society, their office, lifestyle, tastes, preferences, amateur or professional musical skills (in singing, playing musical instru-

⁶ Odoevskii Vladimir Fedorovich (3 July 1804, Moscow — 27 February 1869, Moscow), Count, chief master of the His Majesty’s Imperial Court, active state councillor, senator, scholar, writer, music theorist, critic, amateur composer. From the 1840s served at the Court, earning court ranks and titles. Odoevskii’s Petersburg salon was active from 1833 to the 1840s.

Odoevskaia Olga Stepanovna (née Lanskaia, 11 January 1787 — 18 May 1872), wife of V. F. Odoevskii, before marriage she was a lady-in-waiting to Empress Elizaveta Alekseevna, wife of Alexander I.

⁷ Elagina Avdotia Petrovna (née Yushkova; 11 January 1789 — 1 June 1877), hostess of the literary salon from the 1830s — 1840s.

⁸ I. Belza cites Franciszek Malewskii, an habitu  of Volkonskii’s salon, “<...> I was at her party one evening and I admit that I had stayed almost to the early hours because I listened to music unknown to me, psalms sung beautifully (Benedetto. — N. O.) [22, p. 79].

⁹ Vielgorskii Mikhail Iurevich (11 November 1788, St. Petersburg — 9 September 1856, Moscow), Count, master of the court, chief cup-bearer of the Court of His Majesty, active state councillor, amateur composer, host of Petersburg musical salon in the 1820s — 1840s. Thus, R. Schumann, having visited the party at Vielgorskii on Thursday 24 February 1844, noted in his diary, “We came home at half past one in the morning” [23, p. 166]. And after the “symphonic recital” on Saturday 18 March, which lasted long into the night, the Schumanns, according to the note in the diary, turned in for the night “at 3 o’clock in the morning” [23, p. 177].

¹⁰ L’vov Alexei Fedorovich (5 June 1789, Revel — 28 December, 1870, Kaunas), descendant of a very aristocratic family, chief master of the Court of His Imperial Majesty, privy councillor, director of the Court chapel, virtuoso violinist, composer, host of the musical salon from 1835 to the 1850s. On the salon dating, see: [24, p. 122, 127].

¹¹ Dargomyzhskii Alexandr Sergeevich (2 February 1815, Troitskoe, Belevskii uезд Tula governorate — 17 January 1860, St. Petersburg), titular councillor, composer, host of the musical salon from 1840 to 1869. On the salon dating, see: [10, p. 322].

ments, composing). Guests in literary-music and music salons were people of various ages, professions, and social milieus. Viazemskii, who visited Volkonskaia's salon, remarked on its 'mixed' social, age and occupational composition. "Here assembled members of high society, noblemen and dandies, the young and the elderly, intellectuals, writers, journalists, poets, and artists" [20, p.328]. Among them were: A. Ia. Bulgakov, diplomat, senator, Moscow postmaster; Viazemskii, privy councillor, chief cup-bearer, member of the Academy of Sciences, poet and historian; Prince Odoevskii, Lord Chamberlain of the Household, scientist and writer; poets D. V. Venetinov, A. S. Pushkin, F. I. Tiutchev; amateur singers Count M. Ricci and his wife E. P. Ricci (née Lunina), the Italian professional singer M. Barbieri, composer I. I. Genishta; in October — December 1826 M. I. Glinka; in November 1827 M. Shimanovskaia and others.

Vielgorskii's salon invited Count K. F. Nesselrode, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Duke Peter of Oldenburg, Lvov, virtuoso violinist, Chief Master of the Court, musicians and composers Iu. Arnold, G. Berlioz, A. Vieuxtemps, P. Viardot, A. Henselt, Glinka, F. Liszt, C. Meyer, G. Pasta, C. and R. Schumann, and others.

Lvov's salon was also visited by Emperor Nicolas II and his family (Grand Duchesses Elena Pavlovna, Aleksandra Nikolaevna, Olga Nikolaevna, and Elizeveta Mikhailovna), members of aristocratic families of Oldenburg, Nesselrode, and Counts Vielgorskii¹², A. F. Orlov, V. F. Adlerberg, Prince Odoevskii, musician instrumentalists, singers, composers — Arnold, Berlioz, F. Böhm, G. Vilde, Glinka, I. I. Seifert, L. Lablache, A. C. Lagrange, H. Leonard, A. G. Rubinshtein, C. and R. Schumann, G. V. Ernst, literary figures and critics N. V. Kukolnik and W. von Lenz.

Dargomyzhskii's salon brought together amateur musicians such as Prince V. G. Kasrioto-Skanderbek, Baron B. Vietinghoff-Schell, V. P. Engelhardt (member of the famous Engelhardt family), rear-admiral V. P. Opochinin, official of the Ministry of the Imperial Court V. F. Purgold, physician V. T. Sokolov, professional opera singers O. A. Petrov, A. Ia. Petrova-Vorobeva, Iu. F. Platonova, composers — Glinka, M. A. Balakirev, M. P. Musorgskii, A. P. Borodin, music critics — V. V. Stasov, A. N. Serov, artists — N. A. Stepanov, "Kukolnik's brethren" K. P. Briullov, Ia. F. Ianenko, Kukolnik. The ladies' coterie consisted largely of Dargomyzhskii's disciples, professional, and amateur singers.

Thus, the circle of visitors of music salons was rather variegated from the social point of view: aristocracy and high-ranking officials, literary figures, critics, famous composers and touring musicians of European fame, virtuoso violinists engaged by the Directorate of Imperial Theatres, composers of "the Russian school," amateur musicians, and artistic Bohemians. The list of salon guests, their social status, and professional orientation speaks volumes. The society salons of N. I. Kurakina¹³, E. F. Dolgorukova¹⁴, Volkonskaia,

¹² Vielgorskii Matvei Iurevich (15 April 1794, St. Petersburg — 21 February 1866, Nice), Mikhail Iu. Vielgorskii's brother, master of the Court of his Imperial Majesty, amateur cellist.

¹³ Kurakina Natalia Ivanovna (née Golovina; 16 August 1768 — 2 June 1831), Countess, clavichinist, harpist, amateur singer, composer of songs and romances. Wife of A. B. Kurakin (1759–1829), active state councillor, minister of internal affairs under Alexander I. Kurakina's Petersburg salon was open from the late 1790s to early 1800s. At the beginning of the 1820s her salon was famous in Paris, where she received Angelica Catalani, F.-A. Boieldieu, G. Rossini and others.

¹⁴ Dolgorukova Ekaterina Fedorovna (née Bariatinskaia; 1769–1849), countess, amateur singer, lady-in-waiting at Nicolas I's court. Wife of V. V. Dolgorukov (1752–1812), active state councillor. Dolgorukova's Petersburg salon was open at the end of the 1790s at 21 Bolshaia Morskaia St., then from 1807, frequented by the diplomatic figures of the capital.

Vielgorskii, and L'vov entertained members of well-known aristocratic families and the Imperial family since the hostesses and hosts of these salons were men and women of significance belonging to upper society. Among musicians were European celebrities: outstanding singers, virtuoso instrumentalists, composers who introduced fashionable pieces of music. The union of aristocracy and renowned musicians were a characteristic of the space of the *aristocratic salon*¹⁵.

“Grand nobility” did not visit *the artistic salon* hosted by Dargomyzhskii, nor did famous touring virtuosos. The composition of the salon, irrespective of the different social status of its visitors but at the bidding of the heart of its host, a professional composer, was largely made up of compatriot musicians, amateurs and professionals, teachers and pupils, and like-minded comrades in the composer’s guild. For Dargomyzhskii, who was free from any service, positioning himself as a free-lance ‘artist,’ the salon was, first and foremost, a laboratory meant to create new Russian music.

A host or a hostess arranged the salon time in the following way: conversations and interlocution, a concert, an opera or drama performance (or particular scenes), entertaining communication, and parlour games. Even such a conventional form of communication as small talk was orchestrated. For example, many of the ladies, as organizers of their evenings, were endowed with the talent of directing, seating guests appropriately (according to their interests), taking control whenever the situation required and so forth. One hostess, S. N. Karamzina¹⁶ was a fine “director” of her evenings. A. F. Tiutcheva, an attendee of her salon, provided a brilliant description of the personality and behaviour of Karamzina, the hostess. “Before the evening, Sophie, like an experienced general on the battle field and a learned strategist, arranged big armchairs with light straw chairs perched between them, thereby creating cosy groups for interlocutors; she could arrange it in such a way that every guest found himself or herself in a certain group or near the neighbour best suited for him or her. She was absolutely ingenious about this. I can vividly visualize her flying from one group to another, now joining some, now parting others, listening to a witticism, a joke, now noting a lovely dress, now organizing a game of cards for the elderly and *jeux d’esprit* for the young, now engaging in a conversation with a mother, now encouraging a debutante — in a word, perfecting the skill of behaving in public to the height of art and almost a virtue” [19, p. 178–9].

Hosts, planning to arrange a concert or a performance, would invite professional or amateur musicians, and, if need be, an orchestra. As a rule, prior to the concert / performance, rehearsals were held, programmes were carefully composed, which testify to the competence and skills their initiators excelled at. Thus, at the end of April 1826, Volkonskaia’s cantata “In Memory of Alexander I” was rehearsed in her salon, to be performed on 6th May. Immediately before the concert to commemorate Alexander I on 19th May, amateur musicians, including Volkonskaia, spent long hours rehearsing Cherubini’s Requiem c-moll to the “accompaniment of two cellos, two violas, a double bass and two hunting horns” and the piano [7, p. 189]¹⁷. On 25th January 1827 Volkonskaia opened G. Rossini’s

¹⁵ On the role and status of professional musicians in Paris salons, see [14, p. 332–7].

¹⁶ Karamzina Sofia Nikolaevna (5 March 1802 — 4 July 1856), N. M. Karamsin’s daughter from the first marriage.

¹⁷ Apparently, Requiem, written for mixed choir and symphony orchestra, was executed in the salon as transcribed for chamber vocal and instrumental ensemble. One part of the piece must have been performed. It should be noted that the inclusion of “two hunting horn” was typical of the Russian performing culture of the 18th — early 19th centuries. For example, O. A. Kozlovskii included a horns orchestra in Req-

“Tancredi” (in 3 acts, libretto by G. Rossi), preparation for which had required many rehearsals. The primary aria was performed by the hostess¹⁸.

On 5th March 1844, prior to the concert in Vielgorskii’s salon, in the suite at the Coulomb hotel¹⁹ where R. and C. Schumann stayed upon arrival in St. Petersburg, the violinists L. V. and V. Maurer, the violist [?] Hager, the cellist I. B. Gross, C. Schumann rehearsed R. Schumann’s Piano quintet 44 Es-dur, with the author, Counts Vielgorskii, A. G. Rubinshtein and others in attendance as an audience²⁰. C. Schumann, when commenting on this event, spoke about a very positive response to the music of The Quintet, which prompted the Vielgorskii to invite the orchestra to perform Schumann’s Symphony B-dur op. 38 in their salon, “Everybody showed a great interest and enthusiasm, but the Vielgorskii were so delighted that they immediately arranged for the orchestra to perform at their place to listen to Robert’s symphony too, to which Robert was overly eager to agree” [23, p. 170, Note 91]. On 7th March, Tuesday, the Quintet was performed at L’vov’s²¹, it was then that C. Schumann played “Kreisleriana” [25, p. 279]. On Sunday 12th March, the Quintet that had been rehearsed in Schumann’s hotel suite and tested in L’vov’s salon sounded “well” in the public concert at the Hall of the Nobility [23, p. 174]. Schumann in his diary also mentions the rehearsal of his Symphony in Vielgorskii’s salon on Thursday morning of 9th March 1844 and the evening party (“une soirée”) on the same day in the count’s house, where the Symphony was performed [23, p. 172]. C. Schuman also recalls this Symphony and its successful execution, “I played Mendelson’s concert g-moll, and Robert conducted his Symphony and earned everyone’s approval. It all worked out very well, though with only one rehearsal” [23, p. 172, Note 100].

Dargomyzhskii had established special rehearsal days when he practiced before giving a concert. C. A. Kiui’s note addressed to A. N. Purgold, a regular participant of concerts at Dargomyzhskii’s house, on the occasion of the coming execution of fragments of the opera “William Ratcliff”, says, “Would you be so kind, Aleksandra Nikolaevna, as to look through Betsy’s part²² in the parcel and the soprano part in the chorus and bring this parcel tomorrow when you come to A. S. Dargomyzhskii” [26, p. 47].

Professionalism characterizing salon concerts showed itself not only in the scheduled rehearsal periods, but also in the pre-planned programmes consisting largely of multi-genre repertoire. For example, the structure of the evening in Volkonskaia’s salon on 25th January 1827, where the afore-mentioned performance of “Tancredi” by Rossini was put on, was a mix of various music and straight-play. According to contemporaries, “Tancredi” was performed in full, with a chorus (composed, apart from the amateurs, of “choristers from a Moscow theatre,” with an orchestra conducted by Genishta. Between the first

uiem es-moll, written for the interment of the Polish King Stanisław August Poniatowski. For more information see [8, p. 107–11].

¹⁸ For more on this subject, see. [7, p. 196–7].

¹⁹ G. K. Klee and J. C. Coulomb’ hotel was on Mikhailovskaia Street. In the 19th century sources, it went by the name of Coulomb. Now it is the place of Grand Hotel Europe.

²⁰ See note in R. Schumann’s diary of 5/17 March [23, p. 170].

²¹ See the note in R. Schumann’s diary of 7/19 March [23, p. 171]. C. Schumann, performing in the Quintet, bitterly noted that “the Quintet sounded ‘poorly’ because a ‘graduate from Paris Conservatoire, the cellist Berr (C. A. — N. O.) Beer played in a French excessively sentimental and melodramatic manner, though with masterly skill” [23, p. 171].

²² Betsy is a servant in a tavern, a character in Kiui’s opera “William Ratcliff”.

and the second acts there was an “amusing” entertaining play “Madame de Stahl,” a scene of a “lesson” from “The Bourgeois Gentleman” by J.-B. Molière [7, p. 196–7].

“Mixed” programmes of salon concerts in the house of Vielgorskii included: 23rd March 1849 — fragments of W. A. Mozart’s opera “Don Giovanni” (first part), Allegro from Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, Cavatina from G. Meyerbeer “Robert le Diable,” Andante from Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony, an aria from C. M. Weber’s “Der Freischütz,” “Scherzo” from Beethoven’s Third Symphony, the finale from V. Bellini’s opera “Norma” (second part) [I]; on 4th April 1842 — Overture to Weber’s opera “Euryanthe,” A. J. Blaes’s “Concerto Fantastique” for clarinet²³, Quartet with choir from Bellini’s opera “I Puritani,” Beethoven’s Overture to “Coriolan” (first part). Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony (a movement), septet with choir from G. Donizetti’s opera “Lucia di Lammermoor,” “Bolero” for violin by A. J. Artôt,²⁴ and Finale of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony [II].

At one of the afore-mentioned evenings in 1853 in L’vov’s salon in the presence of the Emperor and his family, the concert of two parts featured: a movement from Mendelssohn’s piano trio (op. 49 d-moll or op. 66 c-moll), several numbers from operas “sung” by A. C. Lagrange²⁵ and L. Lablache²⁶ (from “Il Barbiere di Siviglia”, Rossini), and a violin piece performed by H. Leonard²⁷. After the interval, during which the guests were “invited to the magnificently served buffet,” Lagrange and Lablache sang again, and Léonard and A. G. Rubinshtein played “one piece after another”²⁸.

There were also concerts where only instrumental music was played. For instance, one such concert given at Vielgorskii’s features Schumann’s Symphony, Mendelsohn’s Concert for piano and orchestra No. 1 op. 25 g-moll, W. B. Molique’s²⁹ Concert for violin and orchestra No. 4 op. 14, and Beethoven’s Leonore overture No. 1 [6, p. 44; 21, p. 172, Note 100]³⁰.

Dargomyzhskii arranged programmes in advance. In his salon, they predominantly featured his own works, numerous romances and songs he practiced with his pupils: “Wedding,” “The Old Corporal,” “Feeling Sad,” “You will soon forget me,” fragments of his operas “Esmeralda,” “Triumph of Bacchus,” “Rusalka (Mermaid),” and the unfinished “Rogdana.” Also, there were romances, arias, duets, vocal ensembles from Glinka’s operas “A Life for the Tsar,” “Ruslan and Liudmila”), N. A. Rimskii-Korsakov (“The Maid of Psk-

²³ Blaes Arnold Joseph (1 December 1814, Brussels — 11 January 1892, Brussels), Belgian virtuoso clarinet player, composer, pedagogue. Toured in St. Petersburg in the early February 1842.

²⁴ Artôt; real name — Montagney, Alexandre Joseph (25 January 1815, Brussels — 20 July 1845, Ville d’Avray near Paris), Belgian violinist. Toured in St. Petersburg in 1842.

²⁵ Lagrange Anna Caroline (4 July 1825, Paris — 1905), singer (coloratura soprano). On tour in the theatricals season of 1853/54 in St. Petersburg.

²⁶ Lablache Luigie (6 December 1794, Naples — 23 January 1858, *ibid.*), Italian singer (bass). Theatrical season of 1852/53. Soloist in the Italian opera company in St. Petersburg.

²⁷ Leonard Hubert (7 April 1819, Liege — 6 May 1890, Paris), Belgian violinist. On tour in St. Petersburg in the 1840s.

²⁸ The violinist J. Seifert, who participated in this concert, mentions the programme [24, p. 127–8].

²⁹ Molique Wilhelm Bernhard (1802–1869), German violinist, conductor, composer (pupil of Louis Spohr). Toured Russia when R. and C. Schuman were there: see [23, p. 324–5, name index].

³⁰ Programmes of salon concerts at Mikhail Iu. Vielgorskii are repositied in The Manuscript Department at the Russian National Library [OR RGB]. File 48 of Venevitinov-Vielgorskii. It was T. Shcherbakova who pointed out this file, when working on the Vielgorskii brothers [6]. But the concert programmes contained there undoubtedly need further researching into. Same goes for the reconstruction of the entire functioning of Russian salon concerts.

ov”), Kiui (“The Captive in the Caucasus”, “William Ratcliff”, “The Neuhausen Castle”), A. N. Serov (“Judith”), and B. A. Vietinghoff-Schell (“Mazeppa”).

“The mixed” and variegated genre composition of salon concert programmes (arias, ensembles and scenes from operas, solo compositions for different instruments, concertos, symphonies, romances, songs, etc.) fully corresponded to the established practice of public (town) concerts. The “complex” genres (symphonies, instrumental concertos) were not performed, with rare exceptions, in the salons (the same as in public concerts). One or, at best, two movements of a musical piece, was executed in between familiar and popular vocal and instrumental numbers. Such a miscellany of numbers structuring a concert was attributed to the predilections of the audience — admirers of music. “Dilettantes <...> were advocating the works of their contemporaries <...>”. Their high public status was instrumental in shaping repertory trends in musical societies [27, p. 215]. Yet, here it may be noted that professional musicians did arrange concert programmes meant for “connoisseurs” and critics of music (for example, “quartet evenings” in the houses of Vielgorskii and L’vov³¹, where Beethoven’s quartets were executed in full and new pieces, hitherto unknown, were performed (for example, Schumann’s pieces in Vielgorskii’s salon).

Concerts and performances occupied much of the salon. A. Ia. Bulgakov, a passionate lover of music, a guest at Volkonskaia’s salon when “Tancredi” was executed, though delighted by Volkonskaia, who performed the leading part, remarked on the vast programme of the evening, “It is hard when admiration lasts for six hours” [7, p. 196]. According to the indicated programmes, concerts at Vielgorskii’s, L’vov’s and Dargomyzhskii’s houses took a long time, even more so since refreshments were served during long intervals between numbers. But the guests were not obliged to stay throughout the whole concert. Every person could choose to take leave and proceed to the guest quarters of the house to talk and discuss interesting topics or to take a rest. Only the true “lovers of music” and “connoisseurs” stayed to listen to the whole programme.

Play and leisure time is an indispensable attribute of salon culture. “Princess Volkonskaia’s evenings were diversified and jovial: the young entertained themselves with singing, dancing and all sorts of ingenious games, but the hostess categorically forbade cards, even the elderly were not exempt” [28, p. 341; quoted after: 7, p. 191]. The entertaining style of communication was externalized in theatrical festivities, “triumphs,” “tableaux”³², and scenes from comedy amateur performances. On various occasions (birthdays, name-days, etc.), poetic and musical improvisations were written; “charades”³³ were played, reflecting the impromptu atmosphere of the salon³⁴.

Such a focus on performing music affected the practice of salon music making. Thus, somebody’s request might well prompt spontaneous romances, arias from operas (frequently comedies), piano adaptations of various pieces (for piano duets, and not only).

³¹ This article does not touch upon professional “quartet recitals” in the salons of Vielgorskii and L’vov, for additional evidence and its thorough analysis is required.

³² On leisure activities — charades, parlour games, tableaux in the secular culture of Russia in the second half of the 18th–19th centuries, see: M. V. Iunisov [29]. I. Kantarovich’s article adduces much evidence of leisure pursuit in Volkonskaia’s salon [7].

³³ D. Venevitinov, on the occasion of Volkonskaia name-day party on 11 October 1826, mentions a parlour game, an entertaining charade based on D. Venevitinov’s French play “An Unexpected Feast” [7, p. 192–3].

³⁴ A. Martin-Fugier adduces illustrative examples of the popularity of theatrical “charade,” “tableaux” in Paris salons [14, p. 310–1].

Odoevskii refers to an episode that occurred during an evening at Vielgorskii's salon, which was not "intended for music," there was no sheet music and "just a couple of guests." But Servais³⁵ and Vieuxtemps³⁶ "happened to be there," and though they had not played together for a long time, they started to try out their duets written without an accompaniment. As a result, they played impromptu their Fantasy on themes from G. Meyerbeer "Robert le Diable," which "completely enchanted" Odoevskii. "They ensconced themselves in the middle of the hall, closed the doors to all other visitors; silence, so much needed for an artistic luxury and which is so hard to have in a public assembly, reigned supreme among the few listeners" [30, p. 196]. Also, under the conditions of salon music-making, vocal improvisations were executed and new renditions of familiar romances were born. For instance, comparative analysis of M. I. Glinka's romance "Pour un moment" from S. A. Zyбина's album [III]³⁷ and the composer's entry stored in his archive at the Manuscript Department at the Russian Public Library [IV] reveals metro-rhythmic and texture differences. The former version is characterized by frequent pauses, it is more "casual," as compared with the latter entry, in the articulation of the text, in introducing "plain-language" elements, "folklore" phrasing, significant rhythmic freedom. Differences between the album version and the final version of the romance, so typical for Glinka, arose from his "instantaneous" interpretation of the romance in the atmosphere of improvisational music making in salons. As is well known, at musical evenings Glinka sang his romances "from memory," and after singing a romance, he could immediately write it down in the corresponding phrasing in the hostess's album.

Dances were often part of the evening's entertainment. Dinner was an indispensable part of the salon space. It was served to guests, most frequently, after the concert. And at dinner music could also be played to entertain the guests. Thus, R. Schumann in his diary mentioned the dinner after the concert of 9th March 1844, where his Symphony had been executed, "After the concert there was dinner: songs were sung, including by Mikhail Vielgorskii" [23, p. 172]. C. Schumann specifies, "Mikhail Vielgorskii indulged us with the singing of his own original humorous table songs" [23, p. 172]. Songs sung at the table, this time by Beling, were a treat at Vielgorskii's house on Saturday 18th March 1844. As Schumann sceptically remarked, "[it sounded] like a crowded rural feast" [23, p. 176]. Dargomyzhskii always gave dinners during the entertainment portion of the evening.

Aristocratic salons while having common typological features differed in their own lifestyle dictated by the time, fashion, musical tastes, and preferences of their hosts.

The life of ladies' society salons was determined by special poetics of society behaviour, free from court ceremonial etiquette, the individuality of salons' hostesses — educated women well aware of their independence. Merry and frank demeanour, good taste, bright imagination, witty speeches, maturity and charm of their "refined minds" set the "tone" and determined the atmosphere in the salon. Women of the society, the founders of salons (many of them were excellent musicians), acted as bearers and patronesses of fine arts. This was noted, for example, by Viazemskii when visiting the house of Volkonskaia.

³⁵ Servais Adrien Francois (6 June 1807, Halle, near Brussels — 26 November 1866, Brussels), Belgian cellist. Gave concerts in St. Petersburg in 1839–1840, 1841, 1844, 1857, last time with his son in 1866.

³⁶ Vieuxtemps Henri (17 February 1820, Verviers, province of Liège — 6 June 1881, Mustapha, Alger), Belgian violinist, composer, pedagogue. On tour in St. Petersburg in 1837–1840, 1845–1852 and 1860.

³⁷ Zyбина Sofia Aleksandrovna (née Aledinskaia; ?–1897), pianist and amateur singer. Took singing lessons from Glinka. Salon hostess in St. Petersburg (exact dates are still unknown).

“Everything in the house bore a mark of presenting art and thought. The house has seen recitals, concerts, Italian operas performed by dilettantes and amateurs, yet among artists and at their head stood the hostess <...>” [20, p. 328].

The salons of the late 18th — early 19th centuries held by princesses N. I. Kurakina and E. F. Dolgorukova emerged in the age of sentimentalism, which permeated the musical life of the salons. In the aristocratic milieu Kurakina gained popularity as a fine harpsichordist, harpist, singer (who possessed, according to her contemporaries, “an expressive contralto”), composer of “Russian songs,” Italian arias, and French romances. The harp was then one of her most favourite and popular instruments, which answered the ideal of the woman of the pre-Romantic age, the woman as a concentration of the peculiar magic of the musical, the cordial, the confessional arising from the chamber music being played³⁸. It is not fortuitous that A. C. Ritt’s miniature of Kurakina shows her, in line with the spirit of sentimentalist aesthetics, as an embodiment of a child’s pureness, naiveté, and dressed in simple attire. Dolgorukova, famous for her artistic performance of parts of operas by N.-M. Dalayrac and A.-E.-M. Gretry, was painted by the French painter M.-L.-E. Vigée Le Brun, who at that time worked in St. Petersburg, as a Sybille, wearing a turban and fashionable dress, holding a music album, which signified not only her relationship to music, but also musicality as a special spirituality, a sign of “natural,” private culture.

The salons of Kurakina and Dolgorukova were united by common interests, a constant circle of guests, friends and admirers, their love of music-making, amateur staging of operas, passion for musical and theatrical family feasts with congratulatory verses, romances, “tableaux,” charades, games, etc. This type of ladies’ sentimental salon is marked by an atmosphere where private, family-friendly, “simple” life was distinctly cultivated.

“The sentimental style” with its subtle nuancing is also typical of the music reigning in the salons. Of greatest demand were operas in the style of *comédie larmoyante* (“tearful comedies”): Gretry, Dalayrac, and G. Paisiello. For example, the most popular was the romance (“Quand le bien-aimé reviendra”) that Nina sings in the scene of the heroine’s madness in Daleyrac’s opera “Nina, ou La Folle par Amour” (libretto by B.-J. Marsollier). The character of Nina in that age was a personification of an ideal woman, virtue incarnate, and a symbol of “passionate and unrequited love.” It is not yet as sad as “poor Liza” because the opera ends in the traditional pastoral idyllic finale with a happy end (*lieto fine*), but it is a heroine who pines away for love and goes mad: like “the Russian Pamela” by P. Iu. Lvov, “a consummate genius opening up the sensibility of tender human hearts” [31, p. 15]. Light melancholy and sweet sorrow are the main tonalities of numerous French romance songs frequently sung to the accompaniment of a harp (for example, a collection of eight romances entitled “Huit romances, composées et arrangées pour la harpe par la princesse Natalie de Kourakin,” published in St. Petersburg by B.-T. Breitkopf in 1875).

Volkonskii’s salon flourished in the age of early romanticism. Artistic and talented as she was, the hostess, who had “sonorous contralto” and had been taught by F.-A. Boieldieu, who had composed a cantata “In Memory of Alexander I” (1826), an opera “Joan of Arc” (1821) and romances, filled the salon space with music. The idols for Volkonskaia, contrary to her predecessors, were no longer Daleyrac and Gretry. Priority was given to the Italians: Paisiello, D. Cimarosa, P. A. Guglielmi, F. Paer, and L. Cherubini. Rossini was acknowledged as the “greatest musical genius of the world.” The guests were captivated

³⁸ The harp was one of the most favourite instruments of Alexander I’s wife, Empress Elizaveta Alekseevna. According to the contemporaries, she had a good command of it.

by the then popular in the concert practice Tancred's recitative and cavatina "Oh patria! Di tanti palpiti" (Act 1), the scene and cavatina "Ah, che scordar non so" (Act 2), which were in line with the spirit of the romantic salon. Volkonskaia-Tancred wearing a suit of knight's armour in the scene of Act 2, tinged with melancholy, must have been the subject of F. A. Bruni's portrait executed in Rome³⁹, where the opera was staged by the singer for the first time. Tancred, sitting on a rock, wearing a helmet and corslet, is holding a sword, and propped against the rock by his feet is a shield with the motto "Fede e honore" ("Faith and Honour"). The posture of the hero is slightly relaxed and weary while the eyes are brooding and affectionate.

The ladies' sentimental and pre-Romantic salon cultivated and circulated mass amateur romance and opera production; feminine art and fashion — fashionable salon female or male artists working as commissioned, "à la carte", a fashionable dress, an image, a voguish French romance, and an Italian aria.

The gentlemen's salon of the Romantic age established by Odoevskii, Vielgorskii, L'vov, and Dargomyzhskii, in spite of the amateurism characteristic of salon culture, cultivated musical professionalism and popularized a new art. The salon space was a kind of stage to demonstrate the results of both his constant creative work, as a host-director, and his guests'. Having created and established in the performing practice the type of a salon concert (with programmes, administration, tickets, and fees) where the music of the classics and their brilliant contemporaries was performed, they showed music lovers the way to appreciate the values of the European music culture, "the way," according to Odoevskii, "the educated society must follow" [32, p. 87–8]. Salons frequently stimulated composers and musicians to create masterpieces, novel ideals were tested in this atmosphere, new performing schools were developed, new genres were born, and a new audience was formed.

In Vielgorskii's and L'vov's salons, as evidenced by concert programmes, "high" classical music was performed — Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, as well as new "fashionable" music of Romanticists — Weber, Mendelsohn, Chopin, Schumann, and Liszt⁴⁰. The genre of salon music, undoubtedly, encompasses variations, paraphrases, quodlibets on the themes from popular operas or string music⁴¹. Gradually, they moved beyond the salon space to be performed by renowned virtuosos. In the salon culture, these genres went in tune with the much-cherished style of improvisation and artistry.

New Russian music was budding in the salon space, which gave an impetus to its creators to establish their own names, new biographies. It is not fortuitous that the rehearsal of the first act of Glinka's "A Life for the Tsar" was held in March 1836 in the house of Vielgorskii, who later contributed to its creation. As is well known, the Count made "two appropriate remarks"; also, on the advice of Vielgorskii, Glinka "attached" a coda to the introduction of the opera [33, p. 114]. "The appropriate remarks" also came from Count Odoevskii [33, p. 114]. In Odoevskii's salon, frequented by Glinka, Liszt played several numbers from "Ruslan and Liudmila" for the first time, according to Glinka, "from his own, still unknown score, with no notes to everyone's surprise" [33, p. 172].

³⁹ Bruni F. A. Portrait of Z. A. Volkonskaia as Tancred (between 1820 and 1824).

⁴⁰ M. I. Glinka, praising Liszt performing mazurkas, nocturnes and etudes, called this music "fashionable and brilliant" [33, p. 172].

⁴¹ The phenomenon of salonmusik is a subject requiring special research. On the topicality of the matter, see, for example, [17].

With a keenness for testing and promoting new and hitherto unreleased opuses, Dargomyzhskii, with the help of his numerous pupils, performed, first and foremost, his own vocal works. This way he tested the effectiveness of his own pursuits as a composer and of his own vocal teaching methods. Dargomyzhskii's house opened up a socially interpreted "contemporaneity," most importantly, in the chamber-singing genre with novel subjects — humorous, satirical, and characteristic of the "Natural School" (for example, Dargomyzhskii's songs "A Titular Counsellor," "A Worm," and others). Concerts included opuses of both domestic professional and amateur composers. All of Dargomyzhskii's efforts and the participants' were aimed at the development of Russian national art.

Many musicians and composers who attended aristocratic salons were "famous personalities"; it was there that the mythology of an "artist," an inspirational "genius" was born. A "genius" — a renowned composer and musician, therefore claiming the status of selectness, — emerges in romantic mythology as a new hero holding a special noble title of an artist. This is how F. Liszt, G. Berlioz, virtuoso musicians H. Vieuxtemps, J. Guillou, L. Meyer, H. Wieniawski and others were perceived. Vielgorskii in his letter from Rome to his children speaks about his encounter with F. Liszt and of the pianist's new rendition of Beethoven's sonatas, he calls him "the king of pianists" and states "Liszt is the only one for me" [6, p. 101]. Odoevskii keeps writing about the genius and talent of the "artists," the indispensable attribute of whose art was "inspiration": about the artist's soul that could "translate into sounds" [34, p. 159], about "the powerful imperturbability" the artist needs to "express his inspiration" [35, p. 172], etc.

Yet, when inviting renowned musicians to salons, hosts wished not only to "hear" and "listen" to a familiar or fresh musical piece executed by professionals. It was prestigious for both the hosts and the professional musicians themselves, who craved for limelight and patronage. This practice was more characteristic of ladies' salons oriented towards everything that was fashionable in French salons. Directed by diva-hostesses, music and theatricals as part of the salon leisure enhanced the prestige of their salons. "The acknowledged celebrities served as bait, so hostesses were enthusiastic to transform into theatre directors. They added in the invitations they sent, "You will hear Monsieur so-and-so..." exactly like in theatre play bills [4, p. 334]. Princesses Kurakina and Dolgorukova did their utmost to have at their parties the tenor P. Mandini⁴², who was a sensation in Paris and Vienna and came to St. Petersburg with G. Astaritta's opera company.

In Paris salons, according to Martin-Fugier, performances of renowned musicians were very expensive. Thus, N. Paganini's fee was 3,000 francs per evening, 500 francs was what a celebrated Italian singer would charge for each concert number [14, p. 333]. The question of what fees professional musicians received, if at all, remains open due to insufficient, as it were, "evidence". Undoubtedly, the participation of well-known touring musicians in Vielgorskii's salon concerts might well have been lucrative⁴³. Yet, in most cases, the very fact of performing in salons was the principal payment for their work, which symbolized their belonging to the "upper crust" adding to their prestige⁴⁴.

⁴² Paolo Mandini (1757, Arezzo — 25 January 1842, Bologna), Italian singer (baritone tenor). From 1799 performed in St. Petersburg.

⁴³ D. V. Grigorovich in "Literary memoirs" mentions that Vielgorskii "even received from the Royal Households a certain sum of money to extend protection and provide support to foreign artists in Petersburg" [6, p. 107]. Yet this fact, surely, requires confirmation by reliable sources.

⁴⁴ As to, for example, the singers from the Italian opera in the employment of the Directorate of Imperial Theatres, they collected fees under contracts, and when they performed at the Court, they were

As was already noted, Dargomyzhskii invited to his artistic salon neither famous virtuosos nor renowned Italian singers. A different atmosphere was cultivated there — the atmosphere of presenting the new Russian art. The romantic mythology of the genius composer, extensively declared in his letters⁴⁵, would frequently become the focus of irony and mockery. A telling example was “The Musical Album with Caricatures” (1848) compiled by the artists-caricaturists N. A. Stepanov and Dargomyzhskii, where they deliberately published sheet music only of “sentimental” romances by Glinka, A. E. Varlamov, F. M. Tolstoi, A. A. Aliabev, Dargomyzhskii, and others [VII]. Each romance on the pages of the album had a humouristic caption and a caricature. The span of the 1840s — 1850s was a kingdom of caricature, its distinguishing genre being the life of the artistic realm. Pictures from “The Musical Album” are executed in the spirit of morals and personalities of the “Natural School,” with its living characters and amusing scenes, with a shade of jest and sometimes of biting satire. For example, several caricatures and their captions make fun of Dargomyzhskii’s and Glinka’s amorousness; also the authors of the album had an ironic take on the fashion to compose numerous salon dilettante French romances of not high quality.

The drawing to Dargomyzhskii’s romance set to N. F. Pavlov’s “Don’t call her heavenly” is accompanied with the following dialogue between “The Composer, appreciator of talents” and “The Composer” [Dargomyzhskii]: “For goodness’ sake! You praise her singing, but she’s scandalously out of tune. — So what? She is the loveliest thing...” [VII, p. 53] (fig. 1).

The caricature of Glinka’s romance set to Iu. V. Zhadovskaia’s “You will soon forget me” draws upon the dialogue between Glinka and the young admirer of his talent: “What have you brought us from Spain?” — Composer [M. I. Glinka]: “The perpetual ability to love.” — “We would be content with a new opera” [VII, p. 13] (fig. 2).

N. A. Stepanov’s drawing to W. G. Kastrioto-Skanderbek’s song “L’Attente,” lyrics by M. Desbordes-Valmore (1848). W. G. Kastrioto-Skanderbek, sitting at the piano, asks, “How awful! Whose romance song is it?” and Dargomyzhskii answers, “Nobody’s but yours” [VII, p. 41] (fig. 3).

Music in the culture of society’s woman’s salon, while performing the communicative function, was becoming one of the practices of interlocution, a language of allusion. The established tradition of the etiquette behaviour of a lover dictated the means for expressing feelings in the ‘society parlance,’ which was what music stood for. For example, to express the feeling of love one could use only the ready-made genres of speech, which included poetry, music such as the romance songs, instrumental theatrical pieces, and arias from operas. Illustrative is the occasion related to A. S. Pushkin’s “The Daylight’s gone” that I. I. Genishta put to music. In the autumn of 1826, Pushkin visited Volkonskaia’s salon for the first time, and the hostess welcomed him with a song. The Princess’s choice was not fortuitous: the song was meant for Pushkin, “having become an enticement through subtle and artistic coquetry” [37, p. 25]⁴⁶.

rewarded with valuable gifts. The fee, for example, of Poline Viardot as the “first singer” of the Italian opera company in 1843/44 amounted to 50,000 roubles and half the benefit, and the next season 65,000 roubles (that is, 18,511 roubles 43 kopecks in silver) and full benefit [V]. The “first bass” Luigi Lablache in the season of 1856/57 got 15,000 silver roubles and full benefit [VI].

⁴⁵ About this, see: [36].

⁴⁶ See also the subjects of O. Kozlovskii’s French ‘chivalresque’ romance “Assis au pied d’un chêne” as a conventional language of love [8, p. 154–7].



Fig. 1. N. A. Stepanov's drawing to A. S. Dargomyzhskii's romances set to N. F. Pavlov's poem "Don't call her heavenly" [VII, p. 53]



Fig. 2. N. A. Stepanov's drawing to M. I. Glinka's romance to Iu. V. Zhadovskaia, "You will soon forget me" [VII, p. 13]



Fig. 3. N. A. Stepanov's drawing to W. G. Katrioto-Skanderbek, lyrics by Debord-Valmore "L'Attente" [VII, p. 41]

Music did play a communicative role in the salon culture, which was dramatically demonstrated by an episode when on 26th December 1826 Z. A. Volkonskaia held a farewell party in honour of M. N. Volkonskaia (née Raevskaia), who was going to Siberia to join her Decembrist husband S. G. Volkonskii. For M. N. Volkonskaia's special benefit, her favourite music pieces were performed. "The whole evening she was listening to the songs, and no sooner had one piece ended than she asked for another. Till midnight she had not entered the reception-room because Princess Zinaida was having many guests; and she stayed outside the door where the hostess, unable to get her out of her mind and eager to please her, kept approaching her" [38, p. 823–4, quoted after: 7, p. 194]. Z. A. Volkonskaia was singing a fragment from F. Paer's "Agnese"⁴⁷ and stopped "when she reached the moment where the poor daughter was beseeching her much poorer father's pardon. The involuntary allusion to the likeness between Agnese's, or her father's, misfortune and the actual state her inconspicuous relative was in (Maria Volkonskaia. — N. O.) enervated Princess Zinaida so much that she lost her voice... [39, p. 823–4, quoted after 7, p. 194]. It must have been Agnese's aria "Il padre o ciel mi rendi" (Largetto, F-dur) from Act 2 of the opera where the heroine, involuntarily having driven her father mad, beseeches his pardon. The singer definitely addressed the aria to M. N. Volkonskaia, who had been saying

⁴⁷ "Agnese", drama semiserio in 2 acts, libretto by L. Buonavogli, Parma, 1809. In the domestic literature since the 19th century the opera has been known as "Agnessa"; In St. Petersburg the opera was staged under the name of "Father and daughter".

good-bye to her father prior to visiting the salon⁴⁸. Moreover, for Z. A. Volkonskaia this aria served as a farewell message to her close friend: a message asking for forgiveness for not sharing her lot, for parting, possibly, forever.

It also should be noted that the woman's voice with its intimate and lyrical charm, its operatic and even pure acoustic quality had the male audience enthralled. Musical instruments performed the same function. For instance, the harp with its quiet, gentle, benign speech was also perceived by men not only as a nice instrument to play, but also as a *sotto voce*, as an instrument of gentle love message.

That music fulfils a communicative function is evident from various instances of its performance in Dargomyzhskii's salon. Thus, the composer had deliberately written a comic trio for male voices for his pupil L. F. Muller, who had a habit of rubbing her eyes in public. The performance of this trio was meant for a salon recital in the presence of the heroine who had prompted this musical jest: first, to attract her attention to this amusing habit, second, to entertain the guests. When V. T. Sokolov, an habitu  and a dilettante composer, a participant of concerts, asked what the music and lyrics were about, Dargomyzhskii replied, "The music is very simple, and the words are: "Don't rub your eyes," nothing else. I have composed it for Fr ulen M[ ller]. As soon as somebody notices her rubbing her eyes, I shall immediately get it going, and we shall sing this trio and you will be singing the bass part, Veliaminov the second and me the first tenor. K. N. Veliaminov arrived, practiced his part, and the trio was ready. L. F. M ller also came among others. Before long, one of us noticed her rubbing her eyes. Immediately Aleksandr Sergeevich took the matter into his own hands and we, turning to her, sang this trio *con gran espressione*. All the guests and the heroine of the trio had a good laugh about Dargomyzhskii's jest [40, p. 161–2].

Numerous album productions also performed the communicative function of music in the salon culture.

The album, an indispensable attribute of the salon culture, was its trademark. This specific type of musical, poetic, figurative, and calligraphic creative endeavours clearly reflects the atmosphere of the salon life. Some albums were meant for "private use" and were kept at home; others invited friends to leave their notes, some bearing the autographs of celebrities were put on display. Albums containing music can be broken down into the following categories: 1) the music album; 2) the literary and musical album; 3) the album featuring autographic writings.

All albums are a "medley" of professional and amateur texts, languages, genres, and arts. Pushkin and Lermontov go side by side with a Horse-Guard officer and romantic songs composed by Glinka go hand-in-hand with those by A. I. Pashkov. The names of professionals and amateurs are on par and mixed up in a most peculiar way since both are very dear to the owner of the album. The album is part of the owner's world, memorable leafs of his life.

We cannot help but notice, while looking through these albums, how fond society was of amateur works. Much value was attached to extempore pieces, complimentary verses

⁴⁸ On 21 December 1826, M. N. Volkonskaia received a permission to go to Siberia and she said good-bye to her father. From M. N. Volkonskaia's memoirs: "I showed him [her father, N. N. Raevskii. — N. O.] the letter from His Majesty [the response to the appeal]; then my poor father, losing control, raised his fists over my head and cried out, "I shall damn you if you do not come back in a year!" I did not say anything, threw myself on a settee and put my head under the cushion" [39, p. 18].

and romantic songs, singing talents and music-playing ability. The album, a prized possession of almost every hostess, enticed guests into demonstrating their various creative skills. The performance of extempore pieces was not expected to be highly professional. All that was needed was to blend into the game played at the gathering and do one's best in playing up to it. Yet, as often as not, in the motley of the album, the vividness of expression and rich imagination translated into texts written by professionals is amazing.

The album notes, as a rule, were spontaneous and direct. This was the peculiarity of not only common and cherished extempore pieces, but also various verses and music written "on the occasion" or "for the occasion," on a name-day, for someone's departure and such album occurrences related to particular current events. So the album as a product of mass culture, like no other source, provides vivid demonstrations of the type of an amateur artist who was more a disseminator of the general spirit of art, of cultural and aesthetic novelties and period mind-set, than a creator of his own language. For a professional, the album writing with its immediate communicative allusion to a particular person and a reflection of a certain game situation was a creative act, a chance to produce something novel.

In the 1820s luxuriously ornamental "showy" music albums with calligraphically executed copies of popular pieces or music dear to the owners were coming into fashion. The "showy" albums used as "objects" of beauty to brighten up the interior were meant to impress the visitors. A "parlour album" was frequently an autograph collection-album showing the circle of outward cultural connections of its owner. As was already noted, being acquainted with well-known literary figures, artists, composers, and musicians was prestigious for the salon culture of the first half of the 19th century.

The "musical" and the "visual" in the structure of the album is a channel of communication for both the owners of albums and their addressees, a means to express individuality ("information about oneself"), a reminiscence text or a reminder ("enciphered letter") and an offering of the works by musicians to the composer in the form of "a remembrance."

Dargomyzhskii as a society man was not immune to the latest trend of album collecting, either. He, undoubtedly, was proud of his magnificent "showy" album, which encompassed the autograph writings of the celebrities of the literary and music realm — the composers G. Berlioz, F. Halévy, M. I. Glinka, G. Donizetti, F. Liszt, G. Meyerbeer, S. Moniuszko, D.-F.-E. Ober, the performers H. Vieuxtemps, P. Viardot, F. Liszt, G. Pasta, G. Rubini, A. F. Servais, the artists I. K. Aivazovskii, C. P. Briullov, N. A. Stepanov, the men of letters P. A. Viazemskii, V. Hugo, V. A. Zhukovskii, N. V. Kukul'nik, the ballet dancers F. Elssler, M. Taglioni [VIII]⁴⁹. He had been filling the album with autograph writings from celebrities for almost 17 years in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, and Brussels. The album was displayed as telling evidence of cultural and professional music ties of the composer. Let us pay attention to the communicative function of certain autographed notes. The autograph albums may feature fragments of musicians' works as a "remembrance," information about themselves as professional musicians and "offerings" to the owner of the album who was a composer and a connoisseur of music.

Thus, Berlioz who in 1845 met the composer in Paris, wrote down in his album a short monophonic waltz theme from the ballet "Dance of the Sylphs" "La Damnation de Faust,"

⁴⁹ On the attribution of the album, see [10; 41].

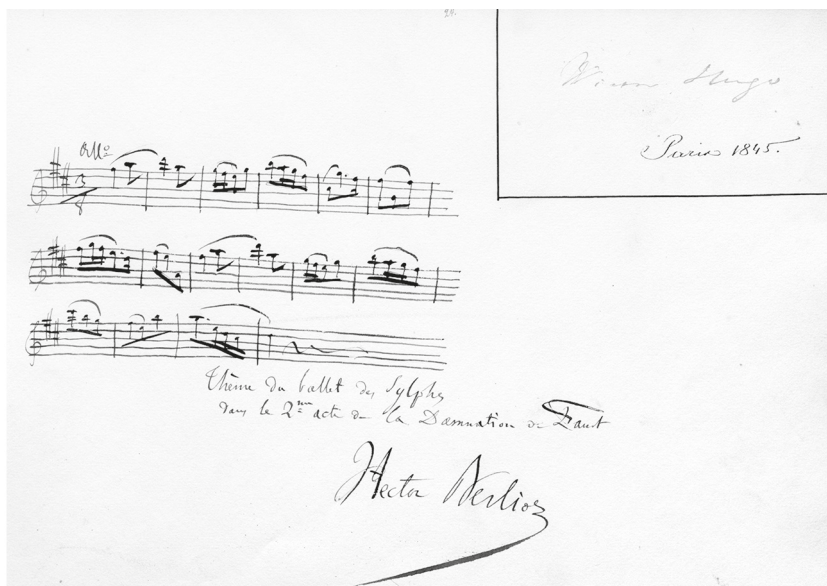


Fig. 4. G. Berlioz's autograph. The theme of the Sylphs from the dramatic legend "La Damnation de Faust" [1845] [VIII, sheet 24]

thereby paying tribute to the album tradition — a “remembrance.” He also demonstrated to the album owner, the composer, a fragment of a piece he was working on⁵⁰ (fig. 4).

The autographs of musicians include “information about themselves” demonstrating their virtuosity to the owner of the album. Such is the note Ch. O. Bériot made in Brussels on 13th November 1844, when Dargomyzhskii was there on his visit, which features the passaggio technique the virtuoso violinist had mastered. E. Frezzolini, engaged for the 1847/48, 1848/49, 1849/50 seasons and famed for the part of Beatrice in V. Bellini's opera “Beatrice di Tenda,” scribbled on the same leaf of the album on 10th May 1848 the first note line of the final aria from the last act: “Ah! se un'urna è a me concessa. Senza un fior non la Lasciate” as a musical message to the composer to remind him of herself as a singer and actress [VIII, sheet 32] (fig. 5).

Short, spontaneous autographed “remembrance” notes and “information about oneself” appear in the form of graphic images aimed at producing a visual effect. Such notes are a kind of music both to the ear and the eye. Here, the notation serves as a universal language. For instance, H. Vieuxtemps' note entitled “Preludio” written in Dargomyzhskii's album in Brussels on 14th November 1844 is featured on the top line of the staff as an ascending A-major scale of three and a half octaves and a scale descending to the initial position. Graphically, this scale looks like a triangle. On the bottom line, the chords are arranged in the form of a diamond, which Vieuxtemps repeated below. There are no grounds to assert that the violinist was referring to the symbolism of geometric figures established in the occult sciences and wished to encrypt something secret. However, it is obvious that such an impromptu entry

⁵⁰ Caption under the autograph: “Theme du ballet des Sylphes dans le 2-me acte de “La Damnation de Faust” (The theme of the ballet The Sylphs from the second act of “The damnation of Faust”). In the top right-hand corner is the autograph by V. Hugo (Paris, 1845) [VIII, sheet 24].)

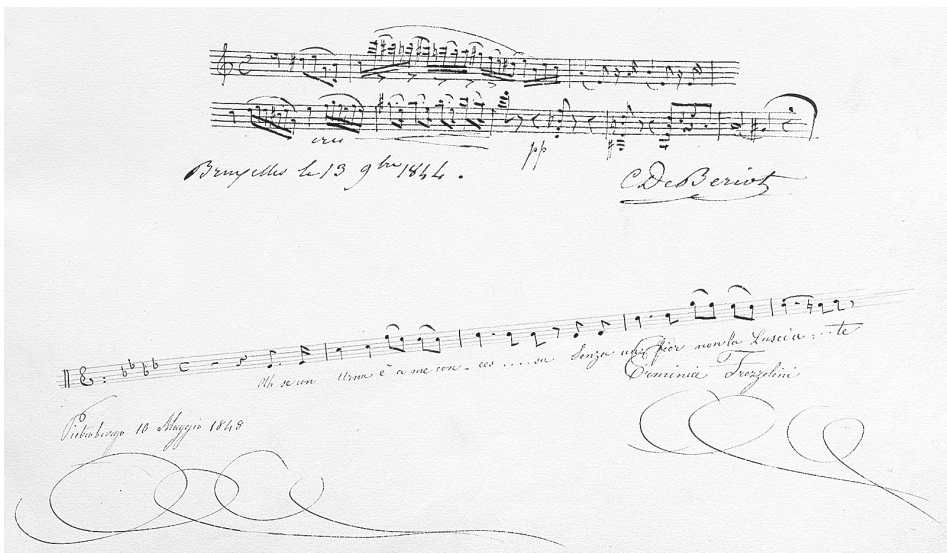


Fig. 5. Autographs of C. Bériot (Brussels, 13 November 1844) and E. Frezzolini (St. Petersburg, 10 May 1848) [VIII, sheet 32]

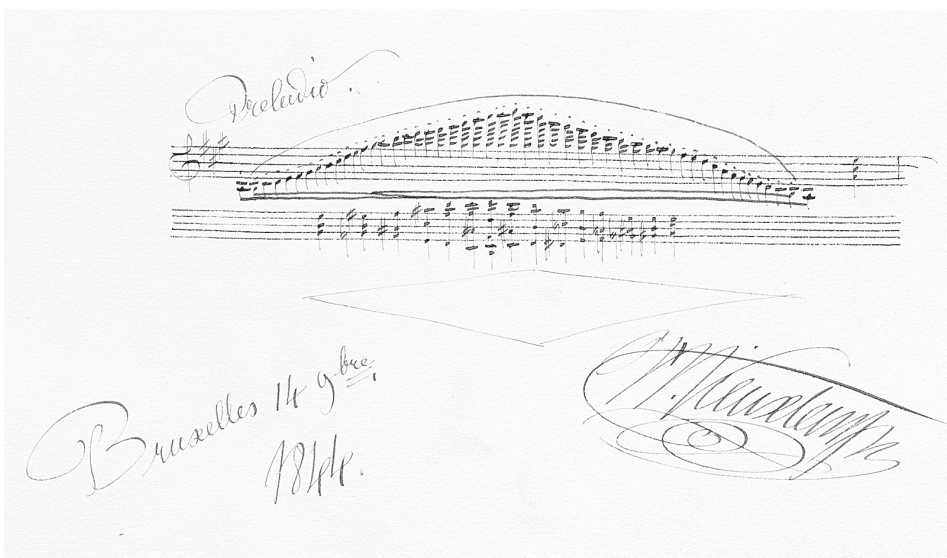


Fig. 6. Preludio. Autograph of A. Vieuxtemps. Brussels, 24 November 1844 [VIII, sheet 19]

refers to the virtuosity of the composer and violinist, who used in his works wavelike, scale-like, and other passaggios at the climactic and expressive moments of the form (for example, in violin concerts, Fantasia-Appassionata, Concert Etudes). The graphic geometrical representation purports to communicate volition [VIII, sheet 19]⁵¹ (fig. 6).

G. Donizetti's autograph written in Dargomyzhskii's album in Vienna on 31st March 1845 can be interpreted in the same manner; it is represented as a C-major scale running

⁵¹ Caption under the musical autograph: "Preludio. Bruxelles 14 9bre. H. Vieuxtemps".



Fig. 7. Autograph of G. Donizetti, Vienna, 31 March 1844 [VIII, sheet 43]

cornerwise in ascending and descending order, with a caption “Donizetti Gaetano” under each sign on the principle: a note — a letter. As if deliberately, the compositor places the simplest discipular rhythmic unarranged scale of half-notes, which immediately attracts one’s attention as a message producing a comic effect [VIII, sheet 43]⁵² (fig. 7).

Thus, salons in Russia in the first part of the 19th century are significant socio-cultural institutions structured in accordance with their regular hours of functioning (days of the week, evenings), composition of guests, forms of communication, and concert and scenic practice. Their typical span of functioning is noteworthy. For example, Vielgorskii’s, L’vov’s, and Dargomyzhskii’s Petersburg salons flourished for about 30 years and Odoevskii’s (before he moved to Moscow) approximately 20 years.

Salons were hosted by leaders who had unquestionable skills of organization, direction, performance, and composition. The “mixed” social composition of salons by considering only names without titles, public capacity, and amateur or professional interest in music (as is frequently occurs in literature), only at first can seem random and suggest unbelievable “openness” of the salons. Hosts and hostesses always compiled a list of guests, and without an invitation it was impossible to come round even for a cup of tea. While scrutinizing the names of salon guests, (a significant amount of work remains), we identify certain regularities of their choice conditioned by the type of the salon and whether it was “aristocratic” (for example, those of Volkonskaia, Vielgorskii or L’vov) or “artistic” (that of Dargomyzhskii).

The structured element of salons is confirmed by the “time-table” of evenings including conversations on various topics and concert-theatrical and entertaining forms of communication. The concert and scenic portion was carefully elaborated: as a rule there were

⁵² Caption under the musical autograph. “Donizetti. etc. etc. Vienna 31 mars. 1845”.

rehearsals and programmes with professional musicians always present. Entertainment and leisure time was filled with various “amusements” (theatrical charades, “tableaux”, etc.), amateur and professional playing of music, dinners, merry music, and dances. Some game forms of communication had been orchestrated well in advance (for example, “tableaux” performed to the music), others happened as the guests wanted, at the bidding of their heart and soul (for example, the spontaneous playing of music).

The concert and scenic programmes largely included multi-genre repertoire with fragments of operas, symphonies, etc., including pieces popular and new, hitherto unperformed (for example, Schumann’s opuses at Vielgorskii’s, or Dargomyzhskii’s romances). Yet, on the whole, the structure of the concert consisting of different numbers resulted from the salon host’s desire to satisfy the tastes of his “mixed” guests — amateurs and “connoisseurs” of music.

Salon concerts encouraged amateur and professional composers to create music (for example, Vielgorskii’s romances, Dargomyzhskii’s satirical songs). The entertainment and game culture of the salon with its characteristic impromptu and private music playing encouraged the development of genres of variations, paraphrases, medley, and new versions of vocal miniatures.

The music style of the salon was undoubtedly determined by the tastes of its organizers, the time, and the fashion. Themes referring to the dimension of the salon style of the sentimental and romantic ages are illustrated briefly, with selected examples. Nevertheless, we wished to trace the path from the sentimentalist to the romantic salon according to the music played there: from Dalayrac to Gretry, to Cherubini and Rossini, from Beethoven and Schumann to Glinka, Dargomyzhskii, and “The Mighty Handful.” Also, we cannot disregard the themes of mythologization and de-mythologization of the creator-composer, the genius artist.

Music as a form of communication is an indispensable attribute of salon culture. It is addressed to the listener expecting from him not only delight, admiration, and pleasure, but also a certain “work.” This “work” is the listener’s understanding of the language of allusion where the language of music frequently speaks. The aria, romance, instrumental piece, and album picture depicting musicians and even the music were an encrypted “script,” which did not cause difficulties in deciphering.

The salons in Russia of the first half of the 19th century were centres of musical culture fostering “amateurship,” the practice of making music and the art of professional composing. Thus, it can be claimed that the patronage of arts was in the making. The salons had become music tastemakers, patrons of the new names and initiators of the performance of new music. Music carried out an important cultural mission in salons, along with other communication practices, it gained a powerful impetus to establish its own “name.” Salons encouraged composition and masterly performance. Amateur and professional musicians drew their inspiration for artistry and self-promotion in the society. As a result, the salon was instrumental in generating new ideas for developing Russian art. The subjects of the life of the Russian salon music culture of the first half of the 19th century featured in this article cannot be regarded as complete. Not all questions have been fully answered. We need to meticulously seek additional sources and analyse the cultural context at the crossroads of traditions of European and Russian salons and the whole process of musical art development. This will afford an opportunity to explore new territories in the landscape of salon music culture.

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Received: April 17, 2019
Accepted: November 28, 2019

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