Dmitri Shostakovich

Dmitri Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (Russian: Дмитрий Дмитриевич Шостакович; 25 September 1906 – 9 August 1975) was a Soviet Russian composer and pianist and was one of the most celebrated composers of the 20th century.

Shostakovich achieved fame in the Soviet Union under the patronage of Leon Trotsky's chief of staff Mikhail Tukhachevsky, but later had a complex and difficult relationship with the government. Nevertheless, he received accolades and state awards and served in the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (1947–1962) and the USSR (from 1962 until death).

After a period influenced by Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky, Shostakovich developed a hybrid style, as exemplified by Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District (1934). This single work juxtaposed a wide variety of trends, including the neo-classical style (showing the influence of Stravinsky) and post-Romanticism (after Gustav Mahler). Sharp contrasts and elements of the grotesque characterize much of his music.

Shostakovich's orchestral works include 15 symphonies and six concerti. Music for chamber ensembles includes 15 string quartets, a piano quintet, two pieces for a string octet, and two piano trios. His piano works include two solo sonatas, an early set of preludes, and a later set of 24 preludes and fugues. Other works include three operas, and a substantial quantity of film music.

Waltz 2 (in C minor and E-flat major)

The Suite for Variety Orchestra (post-1956) is a suite in eight movements by Dmitri Shostakovich. The work consists of a collection of movements which derive from other works by the composer.

For many years the Suite for Variety Orchestra was misidentified as the "lost" Suite for Jazz Orchestra No. 2 (1938), a different work in three movements that was lost during World War II, the piano score of which was rediscovered in 1999 by Manashir Yakubov, and orchestrated the following year by Gerard McBurney.

Shostakovich actually labelled the work as "No. 1", but no "No. 2" is known to exist. (However, Shostakovich biographer Derek Hulme announced in 2000 the discovery of a Suite for Variety Orchestra No. 2 in four movements.)

According to a note by the composer, any number of the pieces may be played, and in any order. The order of movements given in the New Collected Works of Dmitri Shostakovich series is as follows:
1. March
2. Dance 1
3. Dance 2
4. Little Polka
5. Lyric Waltz (in C minor and E-flat major)
6. Waltz 1 (in B-flat major and A major)
7. Waltz 2 (in C minor and E-flat major)
8. Finale

The Suite was first performed in a Western country on 1 December 1988 in Barbican Hall, London, conducted by Mstislav Rostropovich, under the title Suite for Jazz Orchestra No. 2.

The work was recorded by Riccardo Chailly conducting the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in 1991, (also erroneously identified as the Jazz Suite No. 2) and released on a disc entitled Shostakovich: The Jazz Album (Decca 33702). The movements on that recording were ordered 1, 5, 2, 6, 4, 7, 3, 8. Chailly's recording of the Waltz 2 movement was used on the soundtrack to the 1999 Stanley Kubrick film Eyes Wide Shut, as the opening title and closing credit theme, as well as in the A&E Network series A Nero Wolfe Mystery (the episode "Champagne for One"). The Waltz 2 has also been used in advertisements for Sprint Nextel and Heineken.

It is thought that the Suite for Variety Orchestra must have been assembled by Shostakovich at least post-1956, because of the use of material from that year's music to the film The First Echelon. In fact, the greater part of the Suite for Variety Orchestra is recycled material:

- The opening and closing movements (March and Finale) are based on the "March" from Korzinkina's Adventures, Op. 59 (1940).

- The second movement (Dance 1) was adapted from "The Market Place" (No.16) from the film score for The Gadfly, Op. 97 (1955).

- The third movement (Dance 2) goes back to "Invitation to a Rendezvous" (No.20), from The Limpid Stream, Op. 39 (1934-35) [which itself was taken from "Mime and Dance of the Pope" (No.19) from The Bolt, Op.27 (1930-31)].

- The seventh movement (Waltz 2) was adapted from the "Waltz" from the Suite from The First Echelon, Op. 99a (1956).

The Suite for Jazz Orchestra No. 2 is a Suite by Dmitri Shostakovich. It was written in 1938 for the newly-founded State Jazz Orchestra of Victor Knushevitsky, and was premiered on 28 November 1938 in Moscow (Moscow Radio) by the State Jazz Orchestra. The score was lost during World War II, but a piano score of the work was rediscovered in 1999 by Manashir Yakubov. Three movements of the suite were reconstructed and orchestrated by Gerard McBurney, and were premiered at a London Promenade Concert in 2000.

The Suite, in its reconstructed form, consists of the following movements:

1. Scherzo
2. Lullaby
3. Serenade

Until recently, another eight-movement Suite by Shostakovich had been misidentified and recorded as the second Jazz Suite. This work is now correctly known as the Suite for Variety Orchestra (post-1956), from which the "Waltz No. 2" was made famous by the soundtrack to Stanley Kubrick's Eyes Wide Shut, and which now seems irrevocably erroneously associated with the Jazz Suite No. 2.