



The Music of Sergei Prokofiev (Composers of the Twentieth Century Serie)

Dr. Neil Minturn

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This work is a comprehensive analytical study of the music of Sergei Prokofiev. Neil Minturn sets the Russian composer's work in historical, cultural, and autobiographical context and examines a representative sampling of his compositions from a theoretical point of view. Minturn finds a central theme of Prokofiev's oeuvre to be the interplay between tradition and innovation. He discusses the composer's diverse compositional procedures (tonal versus "modern" devices), as well as the political and cultural influences on Prokofiev's works. Minturn shows how the contents and structure of individual pieces and movements took shape, how Prokofiev developed the notion of five musical lines, and how the idea of the "wrong note" in his music plays out. A constant harmonic and rhythmic sense permeates Prokofiev's evolving style, as measured by relatively "harmonic" or "contrapuntal" emphasis. Minturn analyses works for piano, orchestra, various chamber ensembles, and voice (including the opera, "The Gambler") and considers works in each category from various periods in Prokofiev's career. For readers with an interest in a particular work, the analyses stand alone and need not be read sequentially.

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