



SERGEI PROKOFIEFF
TWO VIOLIN SONATAS
FIVE MELODIES

Bruno Monteiro *violin*
João Paulo Santos *piano*

TWO VIOLIN SONATAS FIVE MELODIES

SERGEI PROKOFIEFF [1891-1953]

Sonata no. 1 for Violin and Piano in F minor Op. 80

1] Andante assai	07:07	
2] Allegro brusco	07:12	
3] Andante	07:15	
4] Allegrissimo – Andante assai come prima	07:36	

Sonata no. 2 for Violin and Piano in D Major Op.94^a

5] Moderato	08:47	
6] Presto	05:31	
7] Andante	03:50	
8] Allegro con brio	07:43	

Five Melodies for Violin and Piano Op. 35bis

9] Andante	02:19	
10] Lento, ma non troppo	02:54	
11] Animato, ma non allegro	03:46	
12] Allegretto leggero e scherzando	01:32	
13] Andante non troppo	03:29	

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4 Written between 1938 and 1946, during a turbulent time in Prokofieff's life marked by the Second World War and Stalinist repression in the Soviet Union, the **Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1, in F minor, Op. 80**, was dedicated to the violinist David Oistrakh, a great friend of the composer, who premiered the work along with the pianist Lev Oborin on October 23, 1946 in Moscow. The sonata reflects the dark climate of the war and the introspection of the composer, who faced both political and personal pressures at the time. Prokofieff described the work as possessing a "severe" and "somber" character. The sonata is composed of four movements: the first, *Andante assai*, is introspective, with a melancholy melody in the violin accompanied by dense and chromatic harmonies in the piano. The use of quiet dynamics creates an ethereal atmosphere that Prokofieff compared to the "wind in a cemetery." The second, *Allegro brusco*, is vigorous and rhythmic, with dynamic contrasts and virtuoso passages where the interaction between violin and piano is intense, with an almost aggressive character. This is followed by a third movement of profound lyricism, *Andante*, with an expressive melody that explores

the low register of the violin, marking, it could be said, one of the most emotional moments of the work. The final *Allegro* – *Andante assai come prima*, is energetic, with rapid scales and rhythmic motives that reference the sarcastic and percussive elements of Prokofieff's style. This movement concludes with a re-exposition of the first movement's theme, creating a rounded close. The F minor tonality lends the work a sombre and introspective character, and frequent modulations create tension. The work combines Russian lyricism with Prokofieff's modernity, including controlled dissonances and asymmetrical rhythms. The instruments are highly interdependent: the piano is not simply accompaniment, rather, it frequently assumes a melodic role. The piece alternates between moments of introspection, drama and explosive energy, reflecting the emotional tumult of the epoch. Considered one of the masterworks of Prokofieff for violin and piano, the first sonata is frequently interpreted as a meditation on war and mortality due to its emotional depth and technical challenges.

The **Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano, in D Major, Op. 94a**, was originally composed as the Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op. 94, in 1943, when Prokofieff was evacuated to the Ural Mountains due to the Second World War. The version for violin (Op. 94a) was adapted in 1944 at the request of David Oistrakh, who saw potential for his own instrument in the work. The adaption for violin and piano was premiered by Oistrakh and Oborin on June 17, 1944, in Moscow. Written during the war, this sonata reflects a more optimistic and accessible tone in comparison with Sonata No. 1, possibly as a response to the need for music that would elevate morale among the Soviet public. The work is divided into four movements: an elegant and lyrical *Moderato*, sounding a fluid melody in the violin (adapted from the flute) and a rhythmically detailed accompaniment in the piano. Its D Major tonality confers a luminous character. The second movement, *Presto*, is playful and virtuosic, with rapid passages and rhythmic changes typical of Prokofieff's sarcastic style. This is followed by the *Andante*, radiating calmness and introspection, with a melody that explores the expressive sonority of the violin. The movement which

concludes the work, *Allegro con brio*, is energetic and optimistic, possessing vibrant themes and dynamic interaction between the instruments. Compared with Sonata No. 1, the D Major tonality contributes to the lighter and more pastoral character in this work. The transition from flute to violin demands certain adjustments, such as increases in dynamic and expressive range, but the melodic core remains intact. The work combines Prokofieff's Neo-classicism with elements of Russian folklore, evident in the dance-like and singing melodies. A more accessible piece for the public, with clear melodies and a classical formal structure, Sonata No. 2 is one of the most popular works for violin written by the composer. The adaptation for violin was so successful that Op. 94a is today better known than the original for flute.

The Five Melodies for Violin and Piano, Op. 35bis were originally composed as *Five Melodies for Voice without Words and Piano*, Op. 35, in 1920, during Prokofieff's exile in the United States. In 1925, Prokofieff adapted the work for violin and piano (Op. 35bis) at the request of the Polish violinist, Paul Kochanski. Written during a period

of experimentation, the melodies reflect Prokofiev's search for a lyrical and accessible style in contrast to his more modernist works of the time. The *Five Melodies* are short pieces, each with a distinct character: the first, *Andante*, is dulcet and fluid, with a minimalist piano accompaniment highlighting the violin's expressivity. The second, *Lento, ma non troppo*, is introspective with a melodic line that evokes a cradle song. The third, *Animato, ma non allegro*, has a lively character, with dancing rhythms and more involved interaction between violin and piano. The fourth piece, *Allegretto leggero e scherzando*, is a lighter and playful work, with Prokofiev's typical touches of humor. The set concludes with *Andante non troppo*, a lyrical piece offering a sense of calm and contemplative resolution. The melodies explore various tonalities but each maintains a diatonic and accessible character. The influence of lyrical singing is evident, with fluid melodic lines that imitate the human voice. The adaptation for violin takes advantage of the instrument's capacity to sustain long and expressive tones. The writing is simple and direct, with the piano serving as harmonic support to highlight the violin's melodies. Each piece is

short, making the collection ideal for recitals. In contrast to his complex and modernist works, the *Five Melodies* are an example of the more lyrical and accessible side of the composer. They are frequently heard in concert, and because of their brevity and melodic appeal, are popular among violinists.

Bruno Monteiro

Translation: Fredrick Gifford



Slender Woman with Vase, József Rippl-Rónai, 1894 - Art Institute of Chicago

Escrita entre 1938 e 1946, durante um período turbulento na vida de Prokofieff, marcado pela Segunda Guerra Mundial e pela repressão Stalinista na União Soviética, a **Sonata nº 1 para Violino e Piano em Fá Menor, Op. 80** foi dedicada ao violinista David Oistrakh, grande amigo do compositor, que a estreou a obra ao lado do pianista Lev Oborin a 23 de Outubro de 1946, em Moscovo. A Sonata reflecte o clima sombrio da guerra e a introspecção do compositor, que enfrentava pressões políticas e pessoais. Prokofieff descreveu a obra como tendo um carácter “severo” e “sombrio”. A Sonata é composta por quatro andamentos: o primeiro, *Andante assai*, andamento introspectivo, com uma melodia melancólica no violino, acompanhada por harmonias densas e cromáticas no piano. O uso de dinâmicas suaves cria uma atmosfera etérea, que Prokofieff comparou ao “vento num cemitério”. O segundo, *Allegro brusco*, é vigoroso e rítmico, com contrastes dinâmicos e passagens virtuosísticas e onde a interacção entre violino e piano é intensa, com um carácter quase agressivo, ao qual se segue um terceiro, *Andante*, de lirismo profundo, com uma melodia expressiva que explora o regis-

tro grave do violino e que se pode dizer que é um dos pontos mais emocionais da obra e o final *Allegrissimo – Andante assai come prima*, é enérgico, com escalas rápidas e motivos rítmicos que remetem ao estilo sarcástico e percussivo de Prokofieff. O andamento termina com uma reexposição do tema do primeiro andamento, criando uma sensação de circularidade. A tonalidade de Fá menor confere à obra um carácter sombrio e introspectivo, com modulações frequentes que criam tensão. Combina o lirismo russo com a modernidade de Prokofieff, incluindo dissonâncias controladas e ritmos assimétricos. A escrita para violino e piano é altamente interdependente, com o piano frequentemente assumindo um papel melódico, não apenas de acompanhante. A obra alterna entre momentos de introspecção, drama e energia explosiva, reflectindo o tumulto emocional da época. Considerada uma das obras-primas de Prokofieff para violino e piano, a Sonata nº 1 é frequentemente interpretada como uma meditação sobre a guerra e a mortalidade, devido à sua profundidade emocional e desafios técnicos.

A **Sonata nº 2 para Violino e Piano em Ré Maior, Op. 94^a** foi originalmente composta como Sonata para Flauta e Piano, Op. 94, em 1943, durante a evacuação de Prokofieff para os Urais devido à Segunda Guerra Mundial. A versão para violino (Op. 94a) foi adaptada em 1944 a pedido de David Oistrakh, que viu potencial na obra para o seu instrumento. A versão para violino foi estreada por Oistrakh e Oborin em 17 de Junho de 1944, em Moscovo. Escrita durante a guerra, a Sonata reflecte um tom mais optimista e acessível em comparação com a Sonata nº 1, possivelmente como uma resposta à necessidade de música que elevasse o moral do público soviético. É dividida em quatro andamentos: *Moderato*, elegante e lírico, com uma melodia fluida no violino (adaptada da flauta) e um acompanhamento rítmico delicado do piano. A tonalidade de Ré Maior confere um carácter luminoso. O segundo, *Presto*, brincalhão e virtuosístico, com passagens rápidas e mudanças rítmicas típicas do estilo sarcástico de Prokofieff, ao qual se segue o *Andante* que irradia calma e introspecção, com uma melodia cantabile que explora a sonoridade expressiva do violino. O *Allegro con brio*, o andamento

que conclui a obra é enérgico e optimista, com temas vibrantes e uma interacção dinâmica entre os instrumentos. Escrita em Ré maior, contribui para um carácter mais leve e pastoral em comparação com a Sonata nº 1. A transição da flauta para o violino exigiu ajustes, como a ampliação do alcance dinâmico e expressivo, mas a essência melódica permaneceu intacta. A obra combina o neoclassicismo de Prokofieff com elementos do folclore russo, evidentes nos ritmos dançantes e melodias cantantes. É uma peça mais acessível para o público, com melodias claras e uma estrutura formal clássica. A Sonata nº 2 é uma das obras mais populares de autor para violino, frequentemente executada. A adaptação para violino foi tão bem-sucedida que a versão Op. 94a é, hoje, mais conhecida que a original para flauta.

As **Cinco Melodias para Violino e Piano, Op. 35bis** foram originalmente compostas como *Cinco Melodias para Voz sem Palavras e Piano, Op. 35*, em 1920, durante o exílio de Prokofieff nos Estados Unidos. Em 1925, ele adaptou a obra para violino e piano (Op. 35bis) a pedido do violinista polaco Paul Kochanski. Escrita

durante um período de experimentação, as melodias reflectem a busca de Prokofieff por um estilo lírico e acessível, contrastando com suas obras mais modernistas da época. As Cinco Melodias são peças curtas, cada uma com carácter distinto: a primeira, *Andante*, doce e fluida, com um acompanhamento minimalista do piano que destaca a expressividade do violino, a segunda, *Lento, ma non troppo*, introspectiva, com uma linha melódica que evoca uma canção de embalar, a terceira, *Animato, ma non allegro*, de carácter mais animado, com ritmos dançantes e uma interacção mais activa entre violino e piano, passando depois para a quarta, *Allegretto leggero e scherzando*, uma peça leve e brincalhona, com toques de humor típicos de Prokofieff e a última, *Andante non troppo*, lírica, com uma sensação de resolução calma e contemplativa. As Melodias exploram tonalidades variadas, mas mantêm um carácter diatónico e acessível. A influência do canto lírico é evidente, com linhas melódicas fluidas que imitam a voz humana. A adaptação para violino aproveita a capacidade do instrumento de sustentar notas longas e expressivas. A escrita é simples e directa, com o piano servindo como

apoio harmónico para destacar as melodias do violino. Cada peça é breve, tornando a colecção ideal para recitais. As Cinco Melodias são um exemplo do lado mais lírico e acessível do compositor, contrastando com as suas obras mais complexas e modernistas. São frequentemente usadas como peças de recital, devido à sua brevidade e apelo melódico, sendo populares entre violinistas. Bruno Monteiro



Bruno Monteiro, Violin

Bruno Monteiro, one of Portugal's leading classical musicians and an internationally acclaimed violinist and recording artist, has established, over more than 25 years, an intense concertizing career as recitalist, concerto soloist and chamber musician. He has performed in the most important music festivals and concert halls of Portugal and internationally; he has appeared throughout Europe, in the United States, Middle-East, Africa and Asia, performing in prestigious venues such as the Palácio Cibeles and Casa de America in Madrid, Vienna's Musikverein, Bucharest's Cultural Center, Rome's Vatican, Sofia's Bulgaria Hall and Pancho Vladigerov's Great Hall, Kiev's

Philharmonic Hall, the Felicja Blumenthal International Music Festival in Tel Aviv, Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center and New York's Carnegie Hall, among many others. In recital, he has performed with João Paulo Santos for over 20 years. He has also been a guest soloist with major orchestras, including the English Chamber Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfónica de Palma de Mallorca, Orquestra Sinfónica Portuguesa, Orquestra Clássica da Madeira, Orquestra do Norte and Orquestra Filarmonia das Beiras. His discography includes more than a dozen albums, all of which have been praised and awarded distinctions from the international classical music press, including a 2025 Nomination from the International Classical Music Awards (ICMA).

Bruno Monteiro attended the Manhattan School of Music in New York at an early age and later completed his training in Chicago under the celebrated violinist Shmuel Ashkenasi.



João Paulo Santos, Piano

For more than four decades, João Paulo Santos has been associated with Teatro Nacional de São Carlos (the Lisbon Opera House), first as Principal Chorus Conductor, and currently as Director of Musical and Stage Studies as well as Artistic Director of the same organization.

Artistically, he has distinguished himself as an opera conductor, concert pianist and researcher of lesser-known and forgotten works by Portuguese composers.

He has conducted operas ranging from Menotti to Sondheim, receiving the Acarte 2000 Prize for his musical direction of Henze's The English

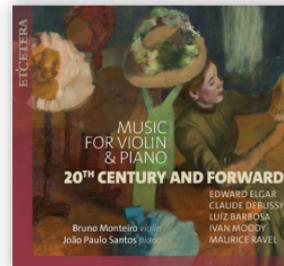
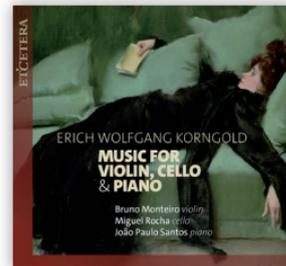
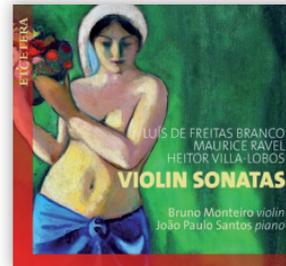
Cat. He has conducted first performances of both orchestral and operatic works by Eurico Carrapatoso, António Chagas Rosa, Clotilde Rosa and António Pinho Vargas. He has also discovered and revised the operatic scores for performances of the following Portuguese operas: Serrana and Dona Branca by Alfredo Keil, and Lauriane and O Espadachim do Outeiro by Augusto Machado.

As a pianist, he performs as a soloist, in chamber groups, with major singers and with both the violinist Bruno Monteiro and the cellist Irene Lima.

His discography includes repertoire ranging from 'Chat Noir' songs to classical works by Liszt, Martinů, Poulenc, Saint-Saëns, Satie, Schulhoff and Szymanowski, with António Frago, Freitas Branco and Jorge Peixinho numbering among the Portuguese composers.

After graduating from the Lisbon National Conservatory, Santos completed his piano studies in Paris with Aldo Ciccolini, with sponsorship from the Gulbenkian Foundation.

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