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# Rachmaninoff's Complete Songs: A Companion With Texts And Translations (Russian Music Studies)



## Synopsis

Sergei Rachmaninoff – the last great Russian romantic and arguably the finest pianist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries – wrote 83 songs, which are performed and beloved throughout the world. Like German Lieder and French mÃ©lodies, the songs were composed for one singer, accompanied by a piano. In this complete collection, Richard D. Sylvester provides English translations of the songs, along with accurate transliterations of the original texts and detailed commentary. Since Rachmaninoff viewed these "romances" primarily as performances and painstakingly annotated the scores, this volume will be especially valuable for students, scholars, and practitioners of voice and piano.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"It would be difficult to imagine a more comprehensive and thorough study of Rachmaninoff's vocal heritage. Richard Sylvester supplies us with all the information one would wish to have, and it is done not only with complete knowledge of Rachmaninoff's life and creative genius, but also with genuine affection for his type of expression and with inner understanding of Rachmaninoff's idiom. One can learn very much from this unique volume – every inspiring!" – Vladimir Ashkenazy, Conductor and Pianist "Richard D. Sylvester's companion to Rachmaninoff's songs is a perfect guide for performers and Rachmaninoff enthusiasts." – Russian Review "A treasure for the serious music reference library, Sylvester's work compiles art song data needed by

students, teachers, researchers, and performers.... This is a scholarly effort welcome in university, conservatory, and large public library collections as well as the home shelves of music lovers."

~ American Reference Books Annual "In his Companion, Richard D. Sylvester not only puts under careful factual scrutiny the entirety of Rachmaninoff's solo vocal output; he also invites his readers to consider the aesthetic and historical significance of Rachmaninoff's 26-year-long engagement with lyric poetry. This multi-functional volume offers much more than its meek title may suggest." ~ Canadian Slavonic Papers "All lovers of Russian music owe a great debt of gratitude to Professor Sylvester, whose latest book may be recommended without qualification." ~ Slavonic and East European Review "Sylvester... paints a rich, detailed, and variegated picture of Rachmaninoff's output as a song composer, the range and variety of his literary reading, and his many creative interactions with singers." ~ Music and Letters "The author... makes Russian songs accessible to those without previous language training. Multiple indexes make this a fine reference source for texts." ~ Choice "[T]he writer exposes the real-life practitioner of music, whether student, teacher, or seasoned performer, to an accessible source of rich, meticulously researched data so central for au fait artistic interpretation of classics, and often so hard to glean from routinely dry and difficult musicology texts. The robustness of research behind the book is in no way compromised by its accessibility, and is evident from an astounding bibliography section that spans ten pages and contains 289 references."

~ Journal of Singing "In the English-speaking world, Rachmaninoff's vast output of songs for voice and piano is still relatively unknown. Richard Sylvester is our perfect guide to this dazzling repertoire. Passionate about the music and the poetry, intensely sensitive to each song taken on its own merits, he is also fascinated by the way that even the slightest musical gesture can allow us to make rich connections with the rest of Rachmaninoff's work and, beyond, with the wider context of Russian culture in the years leading up to the 1917 Revolution. This book is a delight!"

~ Gerard Mcburney, composer, writer, and Artistic Programming Advisor at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Richard D. Sylvester is Professor Emeritus of Russian at Colgate University and author of Tchaikovsky's Complete Songs: A Companion with Texts and Translations (IUP, 2004).

Great source of history and invaluable as a companion to Rachmaninov's complete songs giving literal translations as well as transliterations of the cyrillic. NOTE: sheet music is not included in the book.

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