

“SOUVENIR FROM LVIV” BY VIKTOR KAMINSKY AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE AUTHOR’S EMBODIMENT OF THE CONCERT GENRE

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Summary

This article highlights the distinctive features of Kaminsky's individual style and musical language as realized in his Concerto "Souvenir from Lviv" four piano duet and orchestra, and determines the main interpretive aspects of the piece.

"Souvenir from Lviv" exemplifies Kaminsky's ability to merge postmodern eclecticism with neo-romantic emotionality. Kaminsky integrates elements of neo-styles, including neo-romanticism and neo-baroque, which add special depth and complexity to his work. These stylistic elements allow the composer to create a rich sound landscape, where traditional forms mix with contemporary harmonies. This highlights the connection between the past and the present, which is typical for Lviv as a city with a rich history. Kaminsky mixes neo-romanticism and modern music to create a special feel of an old city. He stays open to new experiences and emotions, which helps him express the spirit of the time and place through his music. The piece is notable for its instrumentation, featuring two pianos, percussion, and a string orchestra.

The four-part structure of the concerto, with programmatic titles such as Aria and Choral, as well as the subtitle *à la Partita*, allude to the Baroque suite. However, the selected movement order (fast-slow-slow-fast) and the thematic arch between the first movement and the finale suggest the composer's rethinking of the genre, merging the cyclic suite form with the virtuosity of the concerto.

Based on the stylistic approach of Viktor Kaminsky's Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra, we can formulate the performance and interpretive challenges that arise for the solo pianists. The performance and interpretation of a work are influenced by its figurative content and should align with the author's intentions in order to fully reveal the intended meaning.

Key words: concerto, piano duo, ukrainian music, ukrainian composer, composer's creativity, musical style, postmodernism, interpretation.

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1. Introduction

Viktor Kaminsky (b. 1953) is a Ukrainian composer, educator, and prominent figure in the musical community. His name is well-known both in Ukraine and internationally. His creative achievements have been recognized with numerous prestigious state awards, including the title of Honored Artist of Ukraine (1995) and the Shevchenko National Prize (2005). Throughout his career, Kaminsky's compositions have earned several significant awards, such as the O. Havryliuk Award (1981), the M. Lysenko Award (2000), and the S. Liudkevych Award (2004).

After receiving a thorough musical education at the Lviv Conservatory (1972-1977, under the composition class of Volodymyr Flys) and completing postgraduate studies at the Moscow

Conservatory (finished in 1986, supervised by Tikhon Khrennikov), Kaminsky developed his own compositional principles, which he continues to successfully pass on to his students. Among his notable pupils are I. Bilozyr, B. Vynnytska, V. Manyk, O. Manulyak, V. Pavenskyi, K. Stetsenko, and others. His fascination with modern compositional techniques culminated in the creation of the first Ukrainian textbook on electronic and computer music (2001).

2. Kaminsky's Creative Work in Musicological Studies

The composer's works have been the subject of numerous musicological studies. Scholars such as Levko Zakopets, Yuriy Korchynsky, Khrystyna Fleichuk, Ostap Manulyak, Viktoriya Sydorenko, and others have written on Kaminsky's work. The most in-depth research has been conducted by Dr. L. Kiyanovska, whose works focus on the national and stylistic aspects of Kaminsky's compositions.

However, Kaminsky's Concerto for Piano Duo and Orchestra ("Souvenir from Lviv") has yet to attract much attention from researchers. The aim of this article is to highlight the distinctive features of the composer's individual style and musical language as realized in this piece, to determine the main interpretive aspects.

The study employs several methods: general scientific (analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction), theoretical research methods (from generalized to concrete), interviewing method.

3. The Concerto Genre in Kaminsky's Work

In the context of the Concerto "Souvenir from Lviv", it is important to note that Kaminsky has explored the concerto genre throughout his career. His body of work includes the Violin Concerto (1979), Concerto for Oboe and Chamber Orchestra (1980), Concerto "In Memory of Vasyl Barvinsky" for Piano and Chamber Orchestra (1995), Concerto for Four Soloists, String Orchestra, Harpsichord, and Organ (1996), Violin Concerto No. 2 "Christmas" (2001), Superharmony in the Rhythms of the "Ocean" for Violin and Chamber Orchestra (2007, inspired by the band "Okean Elzy"), Berliner Concerto Grosso for Saxophone, Accordion, and Chamber Orchestra (2013), Souvenir ze Lwowa for Two Pianos, Percussion, and String Orchestra (2018), and Leopold Concerto Grosso for Organ and String Orchestra (2020).

The Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra ("Souvenir from Lviv" or "Souvenir ze Lwowa a la Partita") was commissioned by the Polish piano duo Robert Gavronski and Jakub Brawata. The work premiered in December 2018, performed by musicians from the Jan Długosz University Institute of Music, the piano duo R. Gavronski and J. Brawata, and the Czestochowa Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Y. Svoboda.

The Ukrainian premiere took place on December 3, 2023, at the Myroslav Skoryk Lviv National Philharmonic, featuring the Lviv piano duo Oksana Rapita and Myroslav Dragan, accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra of the Vasyl Slipak Opera Studio of the Lviv National Music Academy under the direction of Yuriy Porokhovnyk.

4. Stylistic Features of Kaminsky's Compositional Handwriting

In pursuit of the article's goal, we attempt to identify the key traits of Kaminsky's compositional style as manifested in this concerto. Lyubov Kiyanovska asserts that Kaminsky's oeuvre aligns with certain postmodern aesthetics, including thematicism, dialogues with

various past epochs, and the fluidity of stylistic and genre transformations: from new folk music to neo-Baroque, and from canonical liturgical works to popular songs (Kiyanovska, 2013: 104). Kiyanovska also reveals the composer's personal worldview, emphasizing that the profound spiritual and semantic content of his works transcends postmodern stylistics and manifests in three core principles:

1) The search for a shared spiritual code between modern soundscapes and the cathartic insights of earlier great epochs, with Kaminsky's musical dialogues being intellectually profound and marked by creative independence;

2) A return to Ukrainian musical roots – both folk and professional – with the aim of uncovering an unbroken historical continuity;

3) The aspiration to harmoniously unite elite and popular art forms (Kiyanovska, 2013: 105).

Kaminsky's own artistic credo is expressed as follows: "The world is too diverse and changeable to limit oneself with rigid boundaries. True art is always open to new impressions and experiences. My ideal indeed exists: it is living nature. There is no absolute standard of beauty in it, but millions of manifestations of perfection, each enchanting in its own way... What's important is that every artistic work has its own internal logic, purpose, and is created with full spiritual and emotional conviction. And it's crucial that the artist feels the spirit of their time and environment" (Myroslav Skoryk Lviv National Philharmonic, 2023).

"Souvenir from Lviv" exemplifies Kaminsky's ability to merge postmodern eclecticism with neo-romantic emotionality. The piece is notable for its instrumentation, featuring two pianos, percussion, and a string orchestra. This combination allows Kaminsky to explore a wide range of timbres and textures, creating a rich and engaging soundscape. The use of two pianos introduces an element of dialogue and interplay, which is further enhanced by the rhythmic complexity provided by the percussion section. The postmodern aspect of "Souvenir from Lviv" is evident in its eclectic style. Kaminsky incorporates diverse musical influences, drawing from various traditions and genres. This approach challenges listeners to engage with the music on multiple levels, as unexpected juxtapositions and playful elements keep the audience intrigued. The piece's structure allows for a fluid exploration of different musical ideas, reflecting the postmodern tendency to blur boundaries between styles. At the same time, "Souvenir from Lviv" showcases neo-romantic qualities through its emotional depth and lyrical expressiveness. Kaminsky employs lush harmonies and sweeping melodies that evoke strong emotional responses. This emotionality is a defining feature of neo-romanticism, providing a counterbalance to the intellectual complexity of postmodern techniques. The piece invites listeners into an intimate and personal experience, where the music's emotive power resonates deeply. Cultural themes also play a significant role in "Souvenir ze Lwowa". The title references Lviv, a city with rich historical significance in Ukraine. This connection adds another layer of meaning to the work, inviting interpretations that consider both personal and collective memory by drawing on cultural and historical themes.

The four-part structure of the concerto, with programmatic titles such as Aria and Choral, as well as the subtitle *a la Partita*, allude to the Baroque suite. However, the selected movement order (fast-slow-slow-fast) and the thematic arch between the first movement and the finale suggest the composer's rethinking of the genre, merging the cyclic suite form with the virtuosity of the concerto. The solo instruments are not in competition but in constant dialogue, complementing each other. Ukrainian pianist Oksana Rapita notes the complementarity of the soloists and orchestra: "The solo instruments are organically intertwined, creating a shared texture that seems to flow from one instrument to the other, both horizontally and vertically."

Souvenir from Lviv is a true musical postcard, creatively capturing the rich soundscape of the historic city, with its church bells, bustling squares, grand polyphony of cathedrals, museums, and old and modern buildings, the rumble of trams, and street musicians singing bawdy songs. The sound imagery of Lviv is realized through a variety of percussion instruments, enriching the orchestral texture with additional colors.

5. Musical Expressiveness and the Main Interpretative Aspects in "Souvenir from Lviv"

Based on the stylistic approach of Viktor Kaminsky's Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra, we can formulate the performance and interpretive challenges that arise for the solo pianists. The interpretation of musical works is one of the most important problems of music performance. Since music requires the act of reproduction through the performer, a musical composition finds its real sound only in the process of performance. Artistic interpretation presupposes a deep penetration into the content of the musical work, an individual approach of the performer to it, and the presence of one's own creative concept. Music performance is considered within the context of objective and subjective factors related to the depth of revealing the composer's artistic intent and the degree of the performer's creative freedom. In particular, a significant part of the performers insists on complete adherence to the composer's intent. Others advocate for the interpreter's right to a creative approach, motivating their position by the nature of musical art and the specifics of music performance.

Therefore, based on the defined concepts, let us try to outline the main tasks that arise for the interpreters of Viktor Kaminsky's "Souvenir from Lviv." Having analyzed the score of the work, we come to the conclusion that the musical canvas is quite transparent, and the combination of the parts of the solo instruments with the orchestral voices appears graphically balanced and precise. This necessitates the selection of necessary performance techniques and means to preserve the author's intent. After all, as the name of the work implies, a souvenir is something small but pleasant, capable of evoking and sustaining pleasant emotions as a reminder of a place, event, or people we have met in our lives. The four movements of the cycle – I. Perpetuum mobile, II. Aria, III. Choral, IV. Finale – reproduces a full-blooded picture of the life of a multinational city with an ancient history.

Movement I, Perpetuum mobile, plays the role of a kind of introductory prelude, introducing the listener into the sound aura of an ancient city. Written in the form of a rondo with two contrasting episodes: Allegro moderato, Meno mosso, Allegro moderato, Più mosso, Allegro moderato. The refrains have a clearly defined tonality of C major, while the episodes lose their tonal support. The part has a through-composed structure with a culmination in the second episode, Più mosso. In the refrains, the composer uses the imitative type of development.

Perpetuum mobile is a transparent-sounding part, light and joyful, filled with shimmering ripples of scale-like and arpeggiated passages, posing the task of unwavering metrical-rhythmic stability for both the soloists and the orchestra. To preserve the lightness and airiness of the refrain, the use of pedaling is extremely refined: half and quarter pedals are used, alternating with episodes without pedaling. The contrasting virtuoso technical episodes require a well-organized pianistic apparatus. It is necessary to use the "toccata" technique of playing to reproduce the sharpness of the intonational turns. This part is characterized by a fairly balanced dynamic palette: within the range of *p* – *f*.

Movement II, *Aria*, is a lyrical oasis of the Concerto, has an internal division into seven sections that have received a through-composed development: *Andante sostenuto*, *Più mosso*, *Andante sostenuto*, *Maestoso*, *Meno mosso*, *Più mosso*, *Andante sostenuto*. This part as a whole is marked by strong dramatic tension, which is achieved by comparing contrasting themes, tonal and atonal episodes, dynamic drops, contrasting intimate lyrics and expressive dramatic outbursts.

It begins with evenly marching quarter chords in the piano part, which should be performed with a soft touch. The melodic line requires soft legato, singing sound production of long phrase lines, reproduction of a balanced and in-depth character of the main theme. Of exceptional importance is the performer's ability to reproduce the entire spectrum of psychological states – from self-absorbed meditateness to expressive expressiveness.

Part III, *Choral*, introduces the listener into the philosophical-meditative imaginative sphere, is a direct allusion to the spiritual hymns of the Eastern rite, which are manifested in the polyphonic chordal conduction of the melodic line. The part is the most integral in terms of thematicism. First of all, *Choral* sets the task of ensemble for the soloists – maintaining the vertical in chords, which is achieved through a soft touch. Important is the planning of culminating points and the determination of the dramatic climax.

In the *Finale*, the main theme is the famous Lviv hit song called "Tylko we Lwowie" ("Only in Lviv"). The song, which became a kind of symbol of the city of Lviv, "Only in Lemberg," was written in 1939 by the authors Emanuel Schlechter (poetic text) and Henryk Wars (music). Kaminsky introduces the first motive of the famous batyarsky song to emphasize the peculiarity and beauty of the sound palette of this Ukrainian city. Reminiscences in the *Finale* pass themes from parts I and II of the concerto, forming a kind of unifying thematic arc of the work.

In the *Finale*, it is important to prominently conduct the motive of the song "Only in Lviv," contrasting the bright and carefree theme of the first part of the concerto and the self-absorbed lyrical theme of the second part in precisely maintained metro-rhythm.

6. Conclusions

Through the example of the Concerto "Souvenir from Lviv," we can observe the characteristics of Viktor Kaminsky's compositional style. He contrasts meditative introspection and intellectual spirituality with moments of explosive expressiveness and virtuosity. His lyrical style is delicate and intimate, while the use of polyphony underscores the intellectual nature of his writing. Kaminsky's musical language is built on contrasts between tonal and atonal elements and psychological states. He employs quotation, polyphonic techniques, and rich harmonies, enhancing the expressive potential of his compositions.

Kaminsky integrates elements of neo-styles, including neo-romanticism and neo-baroque, which add special depth and complexity to his work. These stylistic elements allow the composer to create a rich sound landscape, where traditional forms mix with contemporary harmonies. This highlights the connection between the past and the present, which is typical for Lviv as a city with a rich history. Kaminsky mixes neo-romanticism and modern music to create a special feel of an old city. He stays open to new experiences and emotions, which helps him express the spirit of the time and place through his music.

The performance and interpretation of a work are influenced by its figurative content and should align with the author's intentions in order to fully reveal the intended meaning.

The Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra stands out as a unique and innovative realization of the composer's ideas, likely to become a repertoire favorite for many piano duos.

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