

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MUSIC

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS
FOR CELLO AND ORCHESTRA BY BULGARIAN COMPOSERS
WRITTEN BETWEEN 1925 AND 2000

by

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Dedicated to Professor Lubomir Georgiev

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ABSTRACT

There have been a significant number of works for cello and orchestra written by Bulgarian composers between 1925 and 2000. Because most of these pieces are relatively unknown, the purpose of this document is to familiarize musicians with these works and promote their performance. These concerti offer diverse compositional styles and interesting technical challenges and often draw on Bulgarian folk music for their inspiration. Most of the published and unpublished works for cello and orchestra are included, along with a brief history of Bulgarian music. After a short introduction, the first section is a brief history of Bulgarian concert music. The second section describes the careers of the most notable Bulgarian cellists and their contributions to the repertoire. The final chapter is the annotated bibliography, arranged alphabetically by composer. Each entry includes a brief biography of the composer, description of his style, and other pertinent information including the year of composition, first performance, dedication (if available), recordings, publication, and unusual compositional tools. Finally, there is a commentary on the musical and technical aspects of each composition.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the richness and diversity of the literature that features the cello as a solo instrument with orchestral accompaniment, there are still very few contemporary concerti regularly performed in the modern concert hall. This is unfortunate, as there were many outstanding works for cello and orchestra written during the Cold War by Eastern European composers. Among these little-known works is a significant number of important concerti written by Bulgarian composers.

With few exceptions, Bulgarian composers at the beginning of the twentieth century did not explore the concerto as a genre. Possible reasons for this may have been the paucity of professional education for instrumentalists or the prevailing tendency for composers of the time to strive to create a Bulgarian national musical language. By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, however, composers were beginning to confront the genre, and since 1925, there have been approximately forty works written for cello and orchestra by well-known Bulgarian composers. Inspired by increasingly high levels of cello performance in Bulgaria, many of these works were written for and dedicated to the nation's best performers and pedagogues.

During the period 1920-1940, there was an impressive group of talented Bulgarian composers whose works utilized many of the traditional musical genres, including the concerto. The members of this group that wrote concerti for cello and orchestra include Marin Goleminov (1908-2000), Lubomir Pipkov (1904-1974), Pancho Vladigerov (1899-1978), and Vesselin Stoyanov (1902-1969). Though not officially recognized as the first Bulgarian cello concerto, there is evidence of a work written in 1925 by Georgi Shagunov. A careful review of Shagunov's works and arrangements show that he wrote no other concertos or concertinos, thereby making it difficult to know if the composer had patterned this concerto after an already existing example. The first officially accepted cello concerto by a Bulgarian composer was written by Marin Goleminov around 1950.

By the end of the 1960's, composers in Bulgaria had begun to apply the compositional principles of dodecaphony, serialism, aleatorics, electro-acoustic music,

and experimentation with structurally unusual elements of national music folklore. Their influences included the composers of the Second Viennese School, as well as Prokofiev, Hindemith, Bartok, Shostakovich, Honegger, Britten, and others. There are numerous works for cello and orchestra from this period, with outstanding examples by composers such as Lazar Nikolov (b. 1922), Dimitar Hristov (b. 1933), Ivan Spassov (1934-1996), Simeon Pironkov (1927-2000), and Georgi Mintchev (b. 1939). Among the many examples by younger composers are Lubomir Georgiev's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Lubomir Denev's Symphonic Variations for Cello and Orchestra *Homo Ludens*, and Lubomir Mitzev's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra. Vladimir Pantchev wrote Sinfonia Concertante for Cello and Orchestra, Chamber Symphony for Cello and Orchestra, and Concerto for Cello and Orchestra *Badi Neveroyaten*, however, little information is available concerning these works.

Many of these more recent composers live and work in Europe, contributing to the popularization of existing and newly composed Bulgarian cello concertos. Despite the efforts of native Bulgarian as well as foreign musicians to record and edit some of these works, most of the concertos are still not very well known. One possible reason might be that the majority of the compositions are not officially published and exist only in a manuscript copy. Other works, like the two cello concertos by Petar Hristoskov, *Concerto-Poem* and *Concerto-Improvisation*, are recorded and released by Balkanton but the music is not available for study. Although there is some information in the recent book *The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays* by Vesselin Emanuilov, there is no single source that provides exhaustive biographical and bibliographical information in English about these works.

CHAPTER 1

BRIEF HISTORY OF BULGARIAN MUSIC

The development of Bulgarian music as a profession started when the country emerged as an independent kingdom from the Ottoman Empire in 1878. Though liberated with the help of the Russian empire, Bulgaria was influenced culturally and politically by Germany and Austria. Education was among the first priorities of the new country, and by the end of the nineteenth century Bulgaria became a leader among its neighbors in terms of the national literacy rate. The idea to include music as a required subject in schools emerged in 1885. Most of the teachers had some musical education either in Europe or in Bulgaria, assisted by hundreds of professional Czech and Russian musicians that settled in the country during this period. Gradually the music classes developed into more specialized lessons as teachers started to establish piano, violin, and vocal courses. The foundation of string orchestras, bands and choirs followed the publication of collections of school songs and melodies. At first many of the popular European melodies were given Bulgarian texts while composers were creating original songs.

The prevailing genre from this period was the song for either solo voice or choir that was an arrangement of a folk song or a composed melody with folk elements. Of particular importance are the song collections, called *kitkas* in Bulgaria, by Emanuil Manolov (1860-1902), Panaiot Pipkov (1871-1942), Alexander Krastev (1879-1945), and Alexander Morfov (1880-1934).¹ This original group of Bulgarian composers created national works for the first time and developed a style inspired by Bulgarian folklore that was preserved orally throughout the Turkish occupation.

The first major figure in the relatively new Bulgarian musical culture was Dobri Hristov (1875-1941), a composer of mainly choral and solo songs who also wrote religious works, orchestra overtures, and suites that built the foundation of Bulgarian symphonism. He was also one of the first theorists that studied and classified the peculiarities of rhythm and meter of the national folklore. Of particular importance are

¹Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 82-83.

his essays “Rhythmical Foundations of Our Folklore” (1913) and “Technical Organization of Bulgarian Folklore” (1928).²

Despite the increasing popularity of choirs in Bulgaria and the expansion of the repertoire, other genres were also being developed for the first time in the country’s history. Nikola Atanassov (1886-1969) wrote the first symphony in Bulgaria in 1912 while Emanuil Manolov (1860-1902) composed the first opera, *Siromahkinya* (Poor Woman), in 1899-1900. Influenced by the Italian *verismo* opera, Georgi Atanassov (1881-1931) was the first prominent opera composer whose works had a wide popularity in Bulgaria, especially the operas *Gergana* (1916) and *Tsveta* (1924). Although these works were very simple in their structure and harmonic language the impact they had on younger composers was enormous. Other prominent names include Dimitar Nenov, who composed masterful examples of the symphony and other instrumental genres, and Petko Staynov, mainly known for his choral and symphonic works.

The permanent establishment of the National Opera in 1908, and the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra in 1924, helped the development of the performing arts. The opera singers Konstantin Mihaylov-Stoyan, Ivan Vulpe, Bogdana Gyuzeleva, Zlatka Kurteva, Panayot Dimitrov and many others participated in the first opera productions. The first prominent instrumentalists were the violinists Sasha Popov and Petko Naumov, pianists Ivan Torchanov and Velichka Savova, and singers Hristina Morfova, Peter Raychev and Stefan Makedonski.³ These developments also encouraged the establishment of the specialized music press, which included the first musical periodicals, *Kaval* in 1891 and *Musical Paper* in 1904.

After 1920 a second group of Bulgarian composers emerged, contributing masterful examples to many genres including the symphony, chamber and solo instrumental music, and new symphonic genres such as the suite, poem and rhapsody. This company of composers includes Petko Staynov (1896-1977), Pancho Vladigerov (1899-1978), Lubomir Pipkov (1904-1974), Vesselin Stoyanov (1902-1969) and Marin Goleminov (1908-2000). They received a solid musical education in the newly established State Academy of Music in Sofia (1921) as well as in other institutions in

²Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istorija na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 321.

³Ibid, 106, 112, 113.

Czechoslovakia, Germany, and France. The urgent need for specialized music education led to the founding of music high schools in Plovdiv (established in 1920), Burgas (1921), Varna, and Ruse (1922). Unlike the organizations that existed in the earlier years and were created for amateur musicians, the professional orchestras formed in the period between the First and the Second World Wars offered a high quality of musicianship and presented new repertoire. Chamber music was also gaining popularity as the formation of numerous quartets gave opportunities for composers to contribute to the genre. With the financial help of the monarchist institution, opera houses were also established in Plovdiv (1920), Sofia (1921), Varna (1929) and Lovech (1931), and eventually earned international acclaim.⁴

The organization *Contemporary Music*, later renamed the Union of Bulgarian composers, was founded in 1933, representing the creative goal of the second group of composers to bring the level of Bulgarian music to a higher standard and to establish its place in the European musical life. The works of Vladigerov, Pipkov, Nenov, Goleminov, and Stoyanov established the importance of an individual style, influenced by the European tradition that still preserved the Bulgarian folk heritage and reflected the ongoing discussion in the press about Bulgarian national musical style. Today Vladigerov's Bulgarian Rhapsody *Vardar* (piano version in 1922 and orchestra version in 1928), Staynov's *Thracian Dances* (1925-1926), Stoyanov's opera *Bay Ganyo* (1941), Pipkov's opera *Yana's Nine Brothers* (1929-1932), and Goleminov's dance drama *The Fire Dancer* (1940) are among the works valued as pieces of national music.⁵

On the ninth of September 1944 Bulgaria was forced to accept the communist ideology established by the Russian Revolution in 1917. The cataclysmic event permanently changed the economic and cultural development of the country. The new government denied past achievements because of their connection with the monarchy, and quickly established new regulations for all aspects of Bulgarian cultural life. In the arts this development was devastating for musicians and composers. Most of the composers remained silent for the first decade of the period and tried to adjust to a new

⁴Ibid, 163, 164.

⁵Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 86.

life and follow the rules determined by the authorities. These rules included the idea that the newly composed music should be simpler and more accessible to all people. In the years after 1950 a number of works were written and dedicated to the communist party. Titles like *October 1917*, *Heroic Overture*, and *The Ninth of September Overture* represented composers' efforts to adapt to the new requirements. Still the most influential group of Bulgarian composers did not change its style drastically but instead they turned to heroic and epic characters from ancient legends of Bulgarian history as the subject for their operas and oratorios.⁶

Folklore remained popular because it was believed to be closer to the real virtues of the communist party, and as a result the state sponsored the creation of numerous folk ensembles.⁷ Among the first groups were the Ensemble of Folk Songs at Radio Sofia and the National Ensemble of Folk Songs and Dances, both directed by the composer Philip Kutev who harmonized numbers of traditional folk songs for the ensemble and popularized the arranged folk song genre. The interest in Bulgarian folklore resulted in the extensive collection of the repertoire that had previously existed mainly in the oral tradition.

By the beginning of 1960 the communist party had already established full control on the cultural life, dividing musicians and composers according to their beliefs and thus limiting the careers of those not faithful to the party's ideology. In 1959 at the Fourth Festival for New Bulgarian Music, the *Oratorio for Our Time* by Lubomir Pipkov used more sophisticated chromatic harmony and strong dramatic expressions; it received mixed reviews from the press despite the audience's approval. This work set off a period in Bulgarian music characterized by experimentation and a search for different forms of expressing musical ideas, exemplified by Marin Goleminov's Concerto for String Quartet and String Orchestra. These qualities were especially present in the output of the younger generation that began its creative career in the 1950s. Lazar Nikolov, Konstantin Ilyev, and Georgi Tutev began to embrace the avant-garde and move away from the previously dominant influence of folk idioms and the romantic tradition, tendencies that were not

⁶Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 210-215.

⁷Timothy Rice, *May it Fill Your Soul*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 27.

accepted by the socialist esthetic known as socialist realism. Although their works were strongly criticized and rarely performed, they were an inspiration for the Bulgarian composers born around or after 1950. The style of this group of musicians was strictly individual and did not follow any models. Among the most accomplished composers are Georgi Mintchev, Vladimir Pantchev, Stefan Dragostinov, Bojidar Spassov, and Georgi Arnaudov.

After the fall of the totalitarian system in 1989 there were substantial changes in the organization of Bulgarian music, and the prospects for performance of new music increased. The *Association for New Music* was founded in 1990 and since 1993 it has been the initiator of *Muzika Nova*, an International Festival of New Music. Today, compact disc collections of contemporary Bulgarian music are readily available and reflect this growing interest as the creative influence of Bulgarian composers is recognized both at home and abroad. Their works have seen increasingly frequent performances at numerous international festivals for contemporary music (especially those in Warsaw, Zagreb, Berlin, Havana, Prague, Bratislava, and St. Petersburg) and have been included in concert programs throughout Europe, Russia, Canada, and the United States. Compositions by Mintchev, Pironkov, Spassov and Tutev have been written on commissions from Western European, American and Japanese musical institutions, and have helped to continue the popularization of modern Bulgarian music.

Bulgarian folk music also gained popularity at home and abroad and recordings such as *The Mystery of Bulgarian Voices* placed at the top of the charts of many record companies. Prominent ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice examined Bulgaria's folk music and shared his fascination of the culture. "As I listened to this music, these songs and these commentaries, my soul was filled not just with fascinating rhythms, catchy tunes and vigorous dances, but with a world of ancestors who suffered at the hands of Turks, of girls mistreated by boys, of fear and loneliness in fields and pastures far from the village, of terror of building a new society, of joys of long evenings with good friends and good music, of the excitement and satisfaction of creating something new for modern tastes, of frustration and anger at having to play someone else's tradition and being prevented from playing your own".⁸

⁸Ibid, 309.

CHAPTER 2

NOTABLE BULGARIAN CELLISTS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE REPERTOIRE

The origins of a national instrumental tradition lay in the contributions to the repertoire by performers, composers and pedagogues and through their high levels of music making. The Bulgarian cello school, despite its relatively late development at the beginning of the twentieth century, has established a strong reputation, due to the presence of Bulgarian cellists on world podiums and institutions, and has been internationally recognized, especially in the past twenty years. The growing interest of musicians around the world in obtaining education at the Academy of Music in Sofia has helped Bulgaria further establish its name and bridge the gap created by past years of isolation. These factors have inspired and motivated the Bulgarian composers to create new concertos, sonatas and other pieces for the cello. Numerous competitions in Bulgaria that require a Bulgarian piece or an entire program of Bulgarian works on the program, such as the competition “Svetoslav Obretenov” held in Provadia, Bulgaria, have also played an important role in enriching the instrument’s repertoire.

Many of the cellists who worked toward the establishment of a performing tradition in Bulgaria also collaborated with composers in the creative process of many new cello works. In 1950, Marin Goleminov wrote one of the first concertos for cello and orchestra, for Konstantin Popov, a leading pedagogue in Bulgaria’s cello school and one of the first cello professors at the Academy of Music in Sofia. Konstantin Popov (1904-1991) was born in Ruse where he studied cello with Aleksander Yorganjiev before continuing his work abroad, in Vienna with Hugo Beker and in Leipzig with Julius Klengel. Educated in the German tradition of cello playing, Popov also admired the French school and its most eminent representatives: Pierre Fournier, Andre Navarra, Gaspar Cassado and Enrico Mainardi. In Europe, Popov toured with the piano trio “Amati,” continuing his concert career in Bulgaria in 1934 as a soloist and chamber musician. He was the first cellist to present to Bulgarian audiences works for cello by

Max Reger, Richard Strauss, Claude Debussy, and Paul Hindemith as well as the sextet *Verklärte Nacht* by Arnold Schoenberg.⁹ Many other Bulgarian composers dedicated works to Popov: Marin Goleminov, *Prelude* for cello and piano and a solo cello sonata; Philip Kutev, *Song* for cello and piano; and Lazar Nikolov, *Sonata* for cello and piano.¹⁰

In the period between 1950 and 1960 the interest toward contemporary works increased substantially as Bulgaria's most prominent performers mastered the challenges of interpreting new music. Bulgarian composers continued to work closely with musicians, and many new concertos, sonatas and pieces written by already established names were dedicated to the most prominent cellists. The most distinguished name among the advocates for new music was Zdravko Yordanov (1931-2004), professor of cello at the Bulgarian Academy of Music since 1975. Yordanov studied with Konstantin Popov at the Academy of Music and with Mstislav Rostropovich at the Moscow Conservatory. After returning to Bulgaria he was appointed as a professor at the Academy of Music in 1967, where he developed a strong cello studio and was a renowned pedagogue. Among his former students are Lubomir Georgiev, cello professor at Florida State University; Stanimir Todorov, principal cellist of the Danish Radio Orchestra; Hristo Lalev, principal cellist of the Bulgarian National Opera Orchestra and the Sofia Philharmonic; and Marietta Ivanova, cello teacher at the Sofia High School of Music and assistant professor of cello at the Academy of Music and many others.¹¹

Along with his pedagogical work, Yordanov devoted himself to the advancement of Bulgarian music, refusing to perform anything other than newly written works for cello. Known as a remarkable interpreter of new music, Yordanov had close professional relationships with many composers who wrote works for him. He premiered concertos for cello and orchestra by Lubomir Pipkov, Peter Hristoskov, Dimitar Hristov, Lazar Nikolov, Ivan Spassov, Lilcho Borisov, Michail Pekov, and Marin Goleminov. Other compositions include sonatas and pieces for solo cello, and works for cello and piano.¹²

⁹Svetoslav Manolov, "Bulgarska Violoncelova Shkola" (Bulgarian Cello School), *Muzikalni Horizonti* (1978), 126.

¹⁰Nikola Chakalov, "Bulgarskoto Violoncelovo Izkuvstvo—Izpalniteli, Pedagozi, Tvorzi" (The Bulgarian Art of Cello Playing: Performers, Pedagogues, Musicians), *Muzikalni Horizonti* (1974), 78-79.

¹¹Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i Nastoiashite* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays), 27.

¹²Svetoslav Manolov, "Bulgarska Violoncelova Shkola" (Bulgarian Cello School), *Muzikalni Horizonti* (1978), 127.

Most of these works are dedicated to professor Yordanov who in 1986, together with his students from the Academy of Music, created an ensemble of twelve cellos that was strictly oriented toward performance and recording of works originally composed or transcribed for this group. Among the composers who wrote for the ensemble are Dimitar Hristov, Lazar Nikolov, Vasil Kazandjiev, Ivan Spassov, Bojidar Abrashev and Velislav Zaimov. Zdravko Yordanov also edited, collected and published numbers of etudes, pieces, and caprices for the cello as well as his three volumes of *Cello Technique* for left hand.¹³

Following the example of Yordanov, the younger generation of cellists who began their careers in the 1970s continued to premiere and record works by Bulgarian composers. Anatoli Krustev (1947) is among the most celebrated of these cellists and is currently a cello professor at the Academy of Music. He is a graduate of the Tunisian Conservatory and the Bulgarian Academy of Music and had also studied with Andre Navarra in France and with Janos Starker in the United States of America. President of the Academy for Education of Young Musicians in Marceilles, France, Professor Krastev has given master classes in Belgium, Greece, Brazil and France¹⁴. He has recorded more than twenty albums for Bulgarian and foreign labels and has premiered the following cello works: Petar Hristoskov's *Concerto-Poem*, Lubomir Denev's *Symphonic Variations for Cello and Orchestra Homo Ludens*, Lubomir Mitzev's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*, Vladimir Pantchev's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra Badi Neveroyaten* and Todor Popov's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*¹⁵. Most of these works are composed for and dedicated to Krastev, who like Yordanov has worked closely with composers, giving suggestions and editing the solo cello parts.

Other important cellists who have performed and recorded works for cello by Bulgarian composers include Bogomil Karakonov, Venzislav Nikolov and the American cellist Geoffrey Dean. Currently a cello professor at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia and principal cellist of Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, Karakonov (1940) has premiered Krasimir Kyurkchiiski's *Sonata for Cello and Piano* and Konstantin Iliev's

¹³Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i nastoiashite* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays), 28.

¹⁴Ibid, 49.

¹⁵Svetoslav Manolov, "Bulgarska Violoncelova Shkola" (Bulgarian Cello School), *Muzikalni Horizonti* (1978), 125.

Discussions for cello and piano as well as his Solo Sonata¹⁶. Venzislav Nikolov (1943), professor of chamber music at the Academy of Music, has performed a wide variety of contemporary works including pieces by Bulgarian composers. Among the most important compositions, which Nikolov premiered are the Solo Sonatas by Konstantin Illiev and Vasil Kazandjiev.¹⁷

The American cellist Geoffrey Dean has popularized Bulgarian music through his articles, collections and performances. Based in Sofia, Bulgaria since 1992, Dean is currently Fine Arts Program Coordinator and music faculty member at the American University in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria and has also served as guest instructor at the Bulgarian Academy of Music. He has given lectures and master classes at New Bulgarian University in Sofia, Union of Bulgarian composers, the American College of Thessaloniki, Greece, Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey, Florida International University, and the Universities of South Florida and North Carolina. His publications include articles on Bulgarian culture and music in several Bulgarian periodicals, *Strings* magazine and the Cello Music Society; transcriptions for cello of folk-inspired works by early twentieth-century Bulgarian composers; Three Bulgarian Dances for solo cello and Bulgarian *Miniatures* for cello and piano. All of these transcribed works are available from Shar Publishing. Dean is also a member of the Dimov and Sofia String Quartets and the Artistic Director of the American Music Week in Bulgaria, a festival that presents new works by American and Bulgarian composers. The list of Bulgarian works that Geoffrey Dean has premiered and those that have been dedicated to him is long: it includes solo pieces, pieces for cello and piano, and concertos for cello.¹⁸

The efforts and contributions of these and many other talented cellists have resulted in an overwhelming repertoire of newly composed Bulgarian music and has established a tradition of presenting and valuing these works that have enriched the national culture.

¹⁶Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i nastoiashte* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays), 36.

¹⁷Venzislav Nikolov, Jan. 2005. <<http://www.venzicello.hit.bg/>

¹⁸Geoffrey Dean, Feb. 2005 <<http://www.vivacellissimo.com>

CHAPTER 3
ANNOTATIONS

Stoyan Babekov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Stoyan Babekov, born in 1936, is a Bulgarian composer and conductor mainly known for his efforts to promote and popularize the national church orthodox music. He studied piano with Jeni Zhaharieva at the Sofia High School, and later, composition with Vesselin Stoyanov and Alexander Raychev, and choral conducting with Lazar Maximov and Georgi Dimitrov at the Bulgarian State Academy of Music. After graduating in 1962, Babekov was appointed conductor of “Petko Stoyanov,” the world’s first professional choir for people with poor eyesight. He also conducted the chamber choir “Alleluia,” founded in 1991, in performances and recordings of orthodox church music, giving over three thousand concerts in Bulgaria, Germany, Columbia, Hungary, and Poland. Winner of numerous prizes from choral competitions and festivals, Babekov is also the initiator of the first Balkan region competition for newly composed orthodox chants, “Let’s Be Better” (1994), resulting in more than a hundred new chants created by Bulgarian composers.

Most of Babekov’s works are in the song genre, including over four hundred choral, solo and children’s songs, as well as ritual and religious music. He is also the composer of three liturgies and the collection *Orthodox Traditional Chants*, Volume One. His instrumental works include three string quartets, concertos for cello, trumpet and piano, concertino for piano and small orchestra, sonatas for piano and a sonatina for flute and piano entitled *Thracian*. Babekov has also contributed reviews, articles on vocal works by Bulgarian composers, a brochure *How to Listen to Music*, and a monograph of the Bulgarian Instrumental Concerto.¹⁹

¹⁹Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>

Babekov composed the Concerto for Cello and Orchestra in 1989, but it was not until 1995 that the work was premiered in the Festival for New Bulgarian Music in Sofia with soloist Ivan Lalev. This short but vibrant work is in a rondo-like form with a recurring refrain that appears in a different key toward the end of the piece. After a brief orchestra introduction, the cello is featured in a solo cadenza, structured on the thematic material that provides the foundation of the concerto. The orchestra and solo cello are set in a dialogue, exchanging motives and lines throughout the work. Bulgarian folklore characteristics are present mainly in the rhythmic and melodic structure of the refrain, particularly expressed by the groupings of duple and triple meters and a narrower range of the melody. The *Meno mosso* sections embellish and further develop the main idea that consists of four ascending or descending eighth notes, rhythmically altered to bring contrast to the concerto. Despite the number of double stops and chromatic sixteenth-note passages, the cello part never goes too high on the fingerboard and it is very accessible both technically and musically. Carefully orchestrated, the orchestra part has strictly an accompanying role, leaving room for the solo cello to be heard throughout.

Both a piano reduction and a manuscript copy of the score can be obtained from the Library at the Union of Bulgarian Composers. No commercial recording has been released.

Lilcho Borisov: Concerto-Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra

Lilcho Borisov, born in 1925, was a composer and clarinetist who held positions in several orchestras. He studied composition and clarinet at the Milan Conservatory “Giuseppe Verdi” in Italy, graduating in 1952. In Milan Borisov played in the “La Scala” Opera Orchestra, where he worked with conductors such as Victor de Sabata, Antonio Voto, Leonard Bernstein, Arturo Toscanini and many others. Upon his return to Bulgaria Borisov was appointed as a clarinetist for the Sofia Opera Orchestra in 1952 and for the Sofia Philharmonic in 1961. In addition, he was named an honorary member of the Union

of Italian composers and his works have been performed in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Russia, Cuba, and Austria.²⁰

Despite Borisov's numerous engagements as a clarinetist, he managed to establish his name as a composer and stood behind his creative ideas. Influenced by his performing background, Borisov's compositions include works mainly in the instrumental solo and ensemble genres. The more important works include sonata for violin and piano (1965), woodwind quartet *Kosmicheski Szeni* (Cosmic Scenes) (1968), trio for clarinet, bassoon and piano, scherzo for clarinet and jazz orchestra (1971), concerto for violin and chamber orchestra (1972) and concerto for wind orchestra *Sofiiski Szeni* (Scenes from Sofia) (1974).²¹ Borisov's music combines romantic expression, long melodies that mark most of the lyrical sections, and optimistic and lively rhythms borrowed from jazz. The use of Bulgarian folklore is subtle and his use of characteristic meters and intervals identify the national sound in his works.

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written for professor Zdravko Yordanov, following Borisov's practice of conceiving his works with a specific performer in mind. According to the composer, "remarkable performers are those who give an impulse to the creative process." While composing the concerto, Borisov found the nature of the instrument problematic for the realization of his ideas because "the sound is not strong in all registers and that creates difficulties with orchestration."²² As a result, the work is masterfully orchestrated and the solo part is almost always either left alone or with very little support by the orchestra. A substantial and tonal work in three movements, the concerto opens with a lilting movement marked *Allegro molto* that employs both lower and upper registers of the cello. The character changes between the swinging rhythm of the jazzy opening theme and the lyrical, long second theme in both solo and orchestra parts. The cadenza at the end of the movement is challenging but very effective, and shows the use of fast ascending sixteenth-note passages and a longer succession of double stops. The slow middle movement, *Molto lento*, is meditative with interesting gestures imitated by the orchestra to enhance the cello line. Different timbres

²⁰Ekaterina Docheva, "Lilcho Borisov—Shesdeset Godini" (LilchoBorisov: Sixty Years), *Bulgarska Muzika* no.10, (1984): 23-26.

²¹Kler Levi, "Lilcho Borisov," *Bulgarska muzika* no.10, (1975): 44-46.

²²Ekaterina Docheva, "Lilcho Borisov—Shesdeset Godini" (LilchoBorisov: Sixty Years), *Bulgarska Muzika* no.10, (1984): 24.

and dynamics are used for contrast. The third and final movement is a lively and optimistic *Allegro*, interrupted for a short time by a solo cello recitative in the middle, marked *Lento*.²³

The Concerto-Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra is technically demanding and rhythmically challenging. The solo part calls for double stops, big leaps, and fast chromatic passages that are not very idiomatic for the instrument. The complex rhythms need careful attention since the majority of the concerto is very much based on rhythmic variety and play. Tempo fluctuations and dynamic nuances require sensitive playing and immediate response to the character changes from both soloist and orchestra.

The premiere of the Concerto took place in Sofia in 1986 and was performed by cellist Zdravko Yordanov with the Sofia Radio Orchestra and Vasil Kazandjiev conducting. Still unpublished, this work can be obtained from the Union of Bulgarian Composers Library in Sofia. A Dutch company is preparing the collected works of Borisov, along with the Concerto-Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra for publication. No recording has been released.

Lubomir Denev: Symphonic Variations for Cello and Orchestra *Homo Ludens*

Born in Vidin, Bulgaria in 1951, Lubomir Denev belongs to the younger generation of Bulgarian composers. He studied percussion instruments at the Sofia High School of Music with Dobri Paliev and conducting and composition at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia with Tzvetan Zvetanov, Konstantin Illiev, and Parashkev Hadjiev. While studying at the Academy of Music, Denev was an active jazz musician and a founder of a jazz trio that took part in numerous international festivals. Between 1977 and 1986, he was a conductor at the State Musical Theatre “*Stefan Makedonski*” in Sofia. Since 1986, Denev has worked as a freelance composer and conductor and has also participated in many international festivals as a jazz pianist. His compositions have been performed in Europe, Mexico, China, India, and Russia. Denev has received awards for pop-music and children’s music from the Bulgarian National Radio, Bulgarian National

²³Lilcho Boriskov, “Concerto-Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra,” score, 1986, private collections Boris Borisov, Sofia.

Television, Union of Bulgarian composers and others. He is now Head of the Artistic Board of the Society for New Music, Bulgarian Section.²⁴

Denev's works include a broad spectrum of genres but the composer prefers to write mostly instrumental pieces. Some of the most important compositions are his string quartet (1980), sonata for piano (1983), *Concert Music* for percussion instruments and symphony orchestra (1986), and symphonic variations *Homo Ludens* for cello and orchestra. Outside of the classical genres Denev has also written film music and rock musicals such as *Naprazni Usilia na Lyubovta* (Love's Labours Lost) and *Zakonat na Djunglata* (The Law of the Jungle), which was premiered in 1993 in Paris, France.²⁵ Like other young composers who were raised and educated entirely under the communist regime, Denev has developed a strictly individual style. To a certain extent the road for experimentation and new ideas had already been established by the older generation of Bulgarian composers, such as Lazar Nikolov and Konstantin Illiev.

The Symphonic Variations for Cello and Orchestra *Homo Ludens* were written in 1996 and dedicated to Anatoli Krastev, a cello professor at the Bulgarian Academy of Music. A year later the National Radio Orchestra premiered the work with Krastev and the composer conducting. The title of the work comes from *Homo Ludens* (1938), *The Playful Human*, a study of the playful element in life by the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga. In *Homo Ludens* Huizinga called attention to play as an aspect of human culture, a culture that results from play and expresses itself in the form of play.²⁶

The Symphonic Variations are structured in sections that are played without a break. The orchestration is imaginative and colorful, with extensive use of percussion instruments. Expressive and free, the piece is divided into four parts using the following subtitles: *The Hunter of Spirits*, which includes the Introduction and Variation I; *The Magic String*, Variation II and Variation III; *Dance of the Forest Spirits*, Variation IV; and *Finale*, Variations V, VI, and VII. These names are very descriptive and reflect the character of each section. Connection with the playful element mentioned in the title of

²⁴Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 292.

²⁵Georg Kraev, *Koi Koi e v Bulgarskata Kultura* (Who's Who in Bulgarian Culture) (Sofia: Muzika, 1997), 27.

²⁶“Johan Huizinga.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. 2004. *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*. Sep. 28. 2004

the piece can be identified not only visually — the cello and orchestra writing is very graphic— but also musically in the use of big intervals, continuous slides in both directions and constant mood fluctuations. There are several motivic ideas that are presented in the Introduction and recur and develop throughout the work. The solo instrument is dominant in the texture most of the time and in some sections plays completely alone, usually to emphasize lyrical character. Rhythmically very free, the cello part is so complex that is written in two staves. Extended techniques such as *battuto*, alternations of fast and slow vibrato, harmonics, and *col legno* reinforce the variations' playful and mysterious character, demanding from both orchestra and soloist a solid technique and sensitive playing. Variation VI is a solo cadenza that further explores the possibilities of the cello. Detailed dynamic markings and effects that require playing behind the bridge of the instrument and using finger pressure on the tailpiece give the cadenza an even freer and more improvisatory feel.

The music has not been published, but is available from the composer. Contact information can be found on Denev's home page: [www. geocities.com/luboden/](http://www.geocities.com/luboden/). No official recording has been released.

Ilya Draganov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Although known primarily as a composer of more than three hundred choral, solo and popular songs, Ilya Draganov was also a cellist and a pedagogue who contributed a great deal to Bulgaria's cultural life. Born in 1913 in Svishtov, Draganov studied piano and music theory with his father, who was the conductor of the city's church choir. In 1933 Draganov graduated from the American College in Samokov, where he was appointed to teach music and English. Five years later he was accepted into the Bulgarian State Academy of Music, studying cello with Professor Ivan Tzibulka and composition with Professor Parashkev Hadjiev. Draganov also studied Economic Sciences at the Free University in Sofia, graduating in 1943. He was a member of the Royal Military Symphony Orchestra, which later became the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, and the

Sofia Opera Orchestra.²⁷ Along with his orchestral career, Draganov translated a number of books into English, including *Inside USA* by John Gunther, published in Bulgaria in 1948.

Among other compositions are Draganov's instrumental pieces for cello, violin, oboe, and trumpet with piano accompaniment, often performed at national contests and competitions, and a concerto for cello and orchestra. Professor Hadjiev shared his thoughts about Draganov's music: "The works by Ilya Draganov carry simple and accessible melody and clear harmony, a factor that explains the popularity of his works."²⁸ Professor Bogomil Karakonov, a former student of Ilya Draganov, premiered the Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, composed in 1975, but there is no published proof and therefore further research is needed to verify this claim. Strongly influenced by Bulgarian folk song, this work contains three movements. The opening *Allegro moderato* is a sonata form, with two lyrical themes. The next movement, *Adagio ma non troppo*, is in the style of a non-metrical harvest song from the Thrace region, located in southeast Bulgaria.²⁹ The characteristics of both instrumental music and songs from that region include rich ornamentation, melodies in higher range, and vibrato on held notes. All of these qualities can be identified in this movement that begins with orchestra and sets a serene atmosphere followed by an expressive cello melody. The movement builds in intensity, calling for forte in the *Agitato* section, and fading into a dreamy *calando* at the end. The final movement, *Allegro vivace*, is a vibrant *horos*, a generic name for line dances in Bulgaria that offers rhythmical and textual variety of the orchestra and solo parts.³⁰

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra has clear melodies, is less demanding than most of the works listed in this treatise, and is very idiomatic. The orchestration is sparse and serves strictly to accompany the solo instrument. Despite some passagework in the higher register of the cello, employing thumb position, this piece is lively and is a wonderful example of true Bulgarian folk music. The copy of the manuscript score is

²⁷Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>

²⁸Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i Nastoiashite* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays), 19.

²⁹Timothy Rice, "Bulgaria," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol.8: Europe, eds. Timothy Rice, James Porter and Chris Goertzen, Garland, 2000, 896.

³⁰*Ibid*, 897.

available at the Library of the Union of Bulgarian Composers in Sofia. No official recording has been released.

Lubomir Georgiev: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Born in Varna, Bulgaria in 1951, Lubomir Georgiev is currently an Associate Professor of Cello at the Florida State University. Georgiev graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music, where he studied cello with Zdravko Yordanov and composition with Alexander Raychev and Marin Goleminov. After graduating from the Academy of Music, Georgiev was appointed as principal cellist with the Sofia Philharmonic. As a soloist, he has appeared with almost all the major Bulgarian orchestras. Georgiev has won international awards as both a cellist and composer. Some of his most prestigious prizes include a diploma from the Johann Sebastian Bach Competition in Leipzig, Germany, an award from the Gaspar Cassado Competition in Florence, Italy, and a diploma from the Tchaikovsky International Cello Competition. In 1981, Georgiev won first prize in the Carl Maria von Weber Competition in Dresden for his string quartet *Musica Multiplici Mentis*. Five years later his double bass concerto was awarded the Grand Prix Valentino Bucci of Rome.³¹

While in Bulgaria Georgiev was a member of the Studio Concertante Chamber Orchestra, the Sofia String Quartet at the Bulgarian Radio, and the New Piano Quartet. In 1987, Georgiev attended Indiana University in Bloomington as a recipient of the Eva Janzer Memorial Scholarship, where he studied with the distinguished cello professor Janos Starker. Prior to his appointment at Florida State University, Georgiev served as principal cellist of the Sacramento Symphony. He was also the principal cellist of the Tallahassee Symphony and appeared as a soloist and chamber musician at the Varna Summer Festival in Bulgaria, Music in the Mountains and Bear Valley in California, and Desert Foothills in Arizona.³²

³¹American Music Week in Bulgaria program

³²Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i nastoiashte* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays) (Sofia: National Center for Music and Dance, 2000), 58,59.

Georgiev's works, which are composed almost exclusively for instrumental genres, include a string quartet, cello concerto, bass concerto, *Dialogues* for clarinet and cello, *Epitaph* for Lubomir Pipkov for cello and piano, and solo songs.³³ The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was completed in 1981, and premiered that same year at the Festival of New Bulgarian Music in Sofia. Georgiev played the solo part, accompanied by the Bulgarian Radio Orchestra with conductor Kamen Goleminov. The work consists of two movements, played without a break, each presenting a different character.³⁴ The opening *Andante largo* is based on the manipulation of two major seconds, intervals characteristic of Bulgarian folk music and the Shoppe region in particular. Colorful orchestration and large leaps, especially in the cello line, dominate the entire movement. The cadenza presents two contrasting ideas marked by long silences. The first idea is lyrical and melodic, while the second has a more explosive character, marked with accents and chords in the cello part. The second movement is an *Allegro vivo*, which offers metric variety, more defined melodies, and numerous *rubatos* and *meno mosso* sections that herald the appearance of a fugal section. The theme of this seven-part fugue explores some of the thematic material from the first movement and is presented initially by the solo cello. The build up in texture is suddenly interrupted by the solo instrument with a gesture that concludes the concerto.

This is a demanding work for both the soloist and the orchestra. The cello part is filled with double stops and successive shifts in both directions that require solid technique and intonation. Attention to dynamics and knowledge of the orchestral score is necessary for better interpretation of the solo line. Both the orchestral score and solo part can be obtained from the composer. No official recording has been released.

³³Ibid, 91.

³⁴The Festival New Bulgarian Music printed program, (Sofia: The Union of Bulgarian Composers, 1981), 2.

Marin Goleminov: Concerti for Cello and Orchestra Nos.1 and 2

One of the most influential and prolific Bulgarian composers and pedagogues, Marin Goleminov was also a performer, conductor, theorist, and author of numerous books and articles. He established an important place in the Bulgarian musical culture through his efforts to contribute to the foundation of the national musical style. Born in Kyustendil, Bulgaria, in 1908, Goleminov began to study violin with his father, who was an amateur musician. His first composition interests date from the time when he began music theory lessons with Nikola Atanassov in Sofia. From 1927 to 1931, Goleminov was a student at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, where he studied violin with professor Todor Torchanov and music theory with professor Dobri Hristov.

Soon after graduating from the Academy of Music, Goleminov continued his education in France at the Schola Cantorum, Paris, working with D'Indy, Lioncourt (composition), Labey (conducting), and Le Flem (theory). The desire for knowledge gave the young composer the determination to take advantage of the cultural and musical life in Paris. Goleminov enrolled in Paul Dukas' composition class at the Ecole Normale de Musique and he took music history, aesthetics, and literature classes at the Sorbonne. After returning to Bulgaria in 1934, Goleminov became involved in Bulgaria's musical life. He joined the Union of Bulgarian composers and in 1936 initiated the formation of a Bulgarian National Radio Chamber Orchestra that he conducted for three years. In 1938 Goleminov left for Munich, Germany to study composition with Joseph Haas and conducting with Carl Ehrenberg at the Akademie der Tonkunst.³⁵ The next year, the Bulgarian Academy of Music appointed him a professor of orchestration and conducting, and he took the Dean's position in 1956. From 1965 to 1967 he was director of the Sofia National Opera. Goleminov won the Herder Prize for his compositions in 1976.

Marin Goleminov's sizable output includes five symphonies, four symphonic poems, three operas, two ballets and eight string quartets in addition to many vocal, instrumental and chamber works. Goleminov's compositional style is diverse and closely aligned with his own different creative periods. Among the early works is the ballet

³⁵Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istorija na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 342-343.

Nestinarka (The Fire Dancer, 1938-40), one of Goleminov's most significant compositions; this work questions the connection between pagan ceremonies and the national folklore. Other works include the variations on a theme by Dobri Hristov (1942) and the string quartet No.3 *Starobulgarski* (Old Bulgarian, 1946). Later works written in the 1950s include the opera *Ivailo*, which adopts the requisite heroic themes of the totalitarian regime. The 1963 concerto for string quartet and strings marks the beginning of Goleminov's use of more sophisticated harmony and his experimentation with different combinations of sound and ensemble.³⁶

Many of Goleminov's compositions are in the instrumental genre partly because of his own experience with different instruments. At first he played the cello, later viola in the amateur Quartet in Gorna Djumaia, and finally clarinet in the local school orchestra.³⁷ Among his instrumental works are the concerto for cello and orchestra No.1 (1950), concerto for violin and orchestra (1968-1969), concerto for piano and orchestra (1975), concerto for oboe and orchestra (1984), and others. In 1947 Goleminov began work on the first cello concerto, a composition that would take a long time to complete. He was often distracted with social obligations and ideas for other works. From this period are the Prelude and Toccata for piano and orchestra, wind quintet No.2, Five Sketches for string quartet, and solo songs. In 1951 the score of Goleminov's first instrumental concerto was completed. He worked closely on the technical aspects of the cello part with a professor at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, Konstantin Popov, a practice the composer would adopt for most of his future instrumental works. The Concerto was dedicated to professor Popov, who first performed the piece.³⁸

Written in three movements, this Concerto for Cello and Orchestra conveys a romantic atmosphere enriched with Bulgarian folklore.³⁹ The opening *Allegro ma non troppo* is expansive and, despite the 4/4 tempo marking, the feeling of two beats per measure dominates throughout. The first theme is heroic with some dramatic effects such as *sforzatti*, accents and chords in both solo and orchestra parts; in contrast, the second

³⁶Ivan Hlebarov, "Marin Goleminov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

³⁷Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 342.

³⁸Rumiana Apostolova, *Marin Goleminov* (Sofia: Muzika, 1998), 88.

³⁹Rumiana Apostolova, *Marin Goleminov* (Sofia: Muzika, 1988), 94.

theme has a more sonorous quality. The second movement, *Larghetto*, unfolds with a short introduction played by muted strings and woodwind instruments to set a deeply philosophical tone for a poetic dialogue between the solo cello and orchestra. In this movement Goleminov develops a melody borrowed from the Bulgarian folk song “Hranila maika, gledala dor dvama sina” because it has an emotional connection for the composer, reminding him of his childhood. As Goleminov states, “This melody had stayed in my memory for a long time; I decided to use it because it gives you room for development and alternation”.⁴⁰ The third movement is a vibrant and rhythmical *Allegro assai* that calls for a range of cello techniques: rapid string changes, double stops and trills. Although the Concerto for Cello and Orchestra is not extremely demanding, there are some challenging sections that explore different techniques. Numerous dynamic nuances, fast sixteenth-note passages, double stops and different articulations make this piece quite virtuosic and worth playing. The orchestration is thick most of the time but carefully written and an inseparable part of the solo line. The piano reduction and solo part are published in Bulgaria by Nauka i Izkvustvo (Science and Arts) and can be obtained from the Library at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The idea for the second Cello Concerto came at the beginning of the year 1980. Goleminov began work on the score in 1984 and in three years the work, composed with the collaboration of Bulgarian cellist Zdravko Yordanov, was completed. The first performance took place in Sofia at the New Music Festival in 1988 with the Sofia Philharmonic, Yordanov as soloist and Goleminov conducting. This concerto, composed thirty-three years after the first cello work, carries traits of Goleminov’s later style. The dance qualities and strong expressions typical of works such as the symphony No.4 *Shopofonia* are not present in the concerto. As music critic Boyanka Arnaudova states, “there are no dramatic moments or clashes in this work, light and sincere feeling dominates throughout.”⁴¹ The Concerto for cello and orchestra No.2 is a philosophical work in which tensions are quickly softened by lyrical moments. The first movement, *Allegro comodo*, begins with an orchestral introduction leading the soloist to an unexpected, cadenza-like solo moment. Most of the musical material is structured around

⁴⁰Rumiana Apostolova, *Marin Goleminov* (Sofia: Muzika 1998), 88.

⁴¹Boyanka Arnaudova, “Edinstvoto na Stila v Dvijenie,” *Bulgarska Muzika* 6, (1988): 220.

a few chromatic motives carrying rhythmic and melodic characteristics in the manner of Bulgarian instrumental folk pieces. Those characteristics are identified by the use of long notes followed by very short patterns in minor seconds, decorating the melody and giving it a specific flavor. Quick transitions from one state to another and dissonant melodies interrupted by changing rhythms and registers make the interpretation of the solo line a special challenge. Much calmer and meditative is the second movement, *Passacaglia*. At the very opening the solo instrument presents the ostinato theme, joined by the orchestra in imitative accompaniment. The *Passacaglia* is temporarily interrupted by contrasting material before its restoration at the close of the movement. The middle section is notable because it features a return of the four-note theme from the opening *Allegro comodo*. A livelier *Giocoso* in ABA form that is musically straightforward and colored with folk rhythms and melodies concludes the work.

Despite the dense orchestration the cello part is supported very lightly, enabling the solo line to stand out. The composer himself had addressed the delicate nature of the solo instrument and had preferred to double the woodwinds and not to use the brass section in the orchestra. Technically the work is difficult, particularly because of the chromatic writing and virtuosic nature of the solo part, which contains chords, double stops, fast sixteenth-note passages, and articulations.

Though unpublished, the piano reduction and the solo part of this concerto can be found at the Library of the Union of Bulgarian composers in Sofia. No commercial recording has been released.

Dimitar Hristov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Dimitar Hristov, composer and theorist, was born in Sofia in 1933. He studied composition with professor Marin Goleminov at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, graduating in 1956. Two years later, he received a UNESCO scholarship, and as a result he spent six months in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and the United States of America where he observed and took part in the musical life of the various countries. From 1951 to 1960, Hristov was conductor of the Ensemble for Folk Song and Dance, accepting the position of assistant professor of counterpoint at the Academy of Music in

1960. He worked at the Institute of Music of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences as department head and served as a secretary general of the International Music Council. Vice-president of the Union of Bulgarian composers from 1972 to 1985, Hristov was also a chief editor of the *Bulgarsko Muzikoznanie* (Bulgarian Musicology) journal and a founder of the magazine *Muzika: Vcera—Dnes* (Music: Yesterday—Today).⁴²

Hristov's compositions demonstrate his preference for large-scale symphonic genres and chamber music. His first works *Sinfonietta* (1955), concerto for piano and orchestra (1956) and first symphony (1958) establish characteristics of his style that are further developed in his mature years. At the beginning of the 1960s, Hristov, along with other Bulgarian composers, was searching for new means of composition for contemporary music. His works are based on elements and tonal systems from Bulgarian folklore without directly quoting themes or folk melodies. He explored elements of peasant folk music from the Shoppe region in west-central Bulgaria, near Sofia. The singing from that region is characterized by a second voice moving between the tonic and subtonic, which creates a dissonant harmony when combined with the narrow-range melodies.⁴³ Hristov uses modern compositional techniques while basing his style on the specific characteristics of folk music, namely diaphonic writing, improvisation and musical development through motoric rhythms. His search for new means of composition for contemporary music reflected the ideas of other Bulgarian composers. Among the most important works are his second and third symphonies, sonata for piano, sonata for solo cello, string quartet, *Miniatures* for string orchestra and symphony orchestra, and concerti for violin and orchestra, piano and orchestra and cello and orchestra.⁴⁴

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was composed in 1970 and dedicated to Zdravko Yordanov. This two-movement piece shows colorful orchestration, effects such as harmonics, tremolos, use of seconds and their inversions that are typical of Bulgarian folklore, and numerous improvisatory cadenzas in the solo cello. The first movement, *Allegro ardito*, contains two distinct musical ideas: the first is rustic, chromatic, and

⁴²Andi Palieva, "Dimitar Hristov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁴³Timothy Rice, "Bulgaria" in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol.8: Europe, eds. Timothy Rice, James Porter and Chris Goertzen, Garland, 2000, 895.

⁴⁴Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 442.

rhythmic, while the second has a lyrical character depicted by sustained harmony in the orchestra and the long melody of the cello part. The composer toward the end of the movement skillfully develops the play of both ideas. The second movement, *L'istesso tempo ma nobile*, opens with an improvisatory cadenza in the cello based on chromatic scales, trills, and long repeated notes. Overall the character of this movement does not change but remains strongly chromatic and playful. The only strong contrast is brought by another cadenza in the solo cello that has a singing quality, almost entirely in double stops. After a short fermata, a new fast section, *Allegro ma comodo*, concludes the concerto.⁴⁵ The overall character of the Concerto reveals peasant characteristics with its rustic nature and folklore moments.

The work is extremely challenging and requires players with strong technique and knowledge of contemporary music. The solo part consists almost entirely of double stops, using intervals of sixths, sevenths, and octaves. Fast chromatic scales and difficult leaps make intonation even more difficult. Even though Hristov had orchestrated the piece with the nature of the solo instrument in mind, the sustained melodies require excellent sound production and the ability to react to the quick dynamic changes.

The solo part and the piano reduction of the score have been published in Sofia by Nauka i Izkuvstvo. An official recording has been released by Balkanton (BCA 1544) and can be obtained in the United States from the Library at the University of Oregon.

Krassimir Kyurkchiiski: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Born in 1936, Krassimir Kyurkchiiski is a composer and conductor currently living in Bojenzi Village, Bulgaria. A graduate of the Bulgarian Academy of Music, he was a composition student of professor Pancho Vladigerov. In 1960, Kyurkchiiski continued his education with Dmitri Shostakovich at the Moscow Conservatory. After returning to Bulgaria, Kyurkchiiski was appointed conductor of the Folk Ensemble at the Bulgarian Radio. This position had an enormous impact on the composer for it triggered his interest in national folklore that led to a sizable collection of folk song arrangements.

⁴⁵Dimitar Hristov, *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*, editor Zdravko Yordanov, (Sofia: Nauka i Izkuvstvo, 1974).

To a certain extent Kyurkchiiski continues the tradition of what the Bulgarians called “arranged folklore,” largely developed by Philip Kutev at the beginning of the 1930s. Kyurkchiiski enriched the genre with his own perception of the role of the folk song in contemporary music.⁴⁶ Among the most popular songs by the composer are *Pilentze Pee*, *Dilmano Dilbero*, *Lepa Jana*, and *Bre Petrunko*. Kyurkchiiski has also been a professor of score reading at the Academy of Music. Top prizewinner at the Paris Music Weeks Composition Competition for his string quartet in 1966, Kyurkchiiski has had works performed in Italy, France, Russia, Germany, and Australia.

Kyurkchiiski’s harmonic language is contemporary yet accessible because his music is tonal, communicative, and expressive. The composer’s use of elements from different styles has become a distinctive trait and characterizes his music as polystylistic.⁴⁷ His works cover a broad range of genres that include two piano concertos, a violin concerto and a cello concerto; two operas; Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel; concerto for orchestra; symphony-requiem; the ballet *Koziyat Rog*; *Prikazka za stalbata* for choir, orchestra and three actors; and other works. In his compositions Kyurkchiiski quotes folk tunes and combines intonations and rhythmic figures typical of the musical texture of Bulgarian folklore.⁴⁸

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was composed in 1976; unfortunately there is no other credible information about this work. Scored for a large orchestra, this piece is composed in three movements, each of which has a distinctive character. The first movement, *Moderato*, employs two thematic ideas: the first is structured around a motif that uses fourths, separated by a half step, while the second is more like a drone with a second voice moving upward. Both themes are masterfully incorporated into different variations and motivic fragments of the long epic melodies presented by solo cello and orchestra. This movement is followed by an *Andante doloroso* movement that begins with a solo cello in a long soliloquy. A sudden brass chord brings the orchestra back as it plays sustained long notes that create a mysterious atmosphere remaining until the end of

⁴⁶Timothy Rice, *May it Fill Your Soul*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 28.

⁴⁷Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 361.

⁴⁸Magdalena Manolova, “Krasimir Kyurkchiiski” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

this movement. Driving rhythms in 12/8 enhance the dance character of the third movement, *Allegro vivo*, which lines are lost in heavily ornamented melodies. The cadenza at the end of this movement is short but rich in mood changes.

Flavored with Bulgarian folklore, especially present in the epic character of the first movement, this concerto is an engaging work that is not tremendously demanding for experienced soloists. However, dynamic nuances, sustained melodies, and awkward shifts could present a technical challenge. Careful attention to fast passages and immediate reaction to rhythm peculiarities is required. This concerto is musically straightforward and the colorful orchestration makes the piece more attractive and accessible.

The orchestra score can be obtained from the Library at the Union of Bulgarian Composers in Sofia and no official recording has been released.

Georgi Mintchev: *SentiMetal* Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Georgi Mintchev, born in 1939, is among the most prominent Bulgarian composers who created a very distinct compositional style and achieved a significant national and international music career. Born in Sofia, Bulgaria, Mintchev graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music in 1964 in Professor Marin Goleminov's composition class. Between 1968 and 1970 he continued his education at the Moscow Conservatory of Music where he studied composition with Rodion Schedrin. In 1972, Mintchev received a UNESCO scholarship to continue his studies in the USA, England, and France. In Paris he worked with Olivier Messiaen.⁴⁹

Mintchev had worked as an editor-in-chief of music productions at the Bulgarian National Radio, the Director of Balkanton Records, the Deputy Chairman and Secretary General of the Union of Bulgarian Composers and as the Artistic Director at the Bulgarian National Radio. Winner of national and international prizes, Mintchev won the US International Critics Award in 1979 and the First Prize at the International Composers

⁴⁹Georg Kraev, *Koi Koi e v Bulgarskata Kultura* (Who's Who in Bulgarian Culture) (Sofia: Muzika, 1997), 74.

Rostrum in Paris in 1982 for his Piano Concerto. In 1989 he was awarded the European Prize Lorenzo Magnifico at the International Academy Medici in Florence for his oeuvre.⁵⁰

Mintchev's works have the ability to command the audience's attention from the beginning to the very last note, due to his strictly individual compositional style. He achieves this effect through thickening or lightening the texture and varying the rhythm, timbre, and the vertical or horizontal exposition of the musical material, thus creating intensity in the sound. His music is very emotional, revealing a certain theatrical quality to it that makes the structure and form of his compositions less important.⁵¹

Among Mintchev's most important works are his *Intermezzo* and *Watercolor* for two flutes, harpsichord and strings (1970), the oratorio *Old Bulgarian Chronicles* for soloists, reader, mixed choir, women's choir and symphony orchestra (1971), *Concert Music* for orchestra (1976), concerto for piano and orchestra (1978), *Three Poems* for soprano, strings and percussion (1983), *Concerto Breve I* for ten wind instruments (1984) and *Concerto Breve II: ContempoRetro* for brass quintet (1993), symphonic suite *Fahrenheit 451* from the ballet *Fahrenheit 451* (1999).⁵²

The instrumental concerto is a preferred genre of the composer. The idea for writing a work for cello came when Mintchev heard Witold Lutoslavski's Cello Concerto and was inspired by the composition. Mintchev dedicated the concerto to the prominent Polish composer. Remaining true to his nature to challenge the listener by including a message in his works, in 1993 Mintchev composed a cello concerto entitled *SentiMetal* – one of the composer's favorite play on words. When asked why he had chosen this title for his cello concerto the composer explained, "I suppose I am a very sentimental person who does not want to reveal his feelings and by adding a little metal I believe I can cover my emotions."⁵³

⁵⁰Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar), 2001, 362.

⁵¹Ibid, 265.

⁵²Georgi Mintchev, "*SentiMetal*" *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (Bulle, Switzerland: Bim, 1994), 84.

⁵³Georgi Mintchev, *Compositions*, The Dutch Radio Orchestra and The Bulgarian National Radio, GD 204.

The Cello Concerto offers many very interesting effects that reinforce the explosive character interrupted by sentimental moments of the work. Pizzicatos, double-stops, long lyrical melodies with big leaps, and fast *secco* passages make the concerto very challenging but exciting to perform. The composition requires good sound production, dynamic nuances, quick sound transformation as well as flexibility for the constant alternation between lyrical and marcato sections. The orchestra and solo cello are equally balanced, set in a dialogue that creates an illusion that there is no soloist. The concerto is performed without a break, as one movement. The introduction presents the main ideas of the work while the middle section offers a variety of timbres with considerable stress on quiet moments. The concluding section ends with a lonely cello narration, *al morendo*, to mark the idea of loneliness and dissatisfaction.⁵⁴

SentiMetal Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1993 on commission by the Dutch Radio, and was first performed in 1996 by the Dutch Radio Symphony Orchestra with cellist Michael Muller and conductor Micha Hamel.⁵⁵ The Bulgarian premiere was a year later in Sofia with the Sofia Philharmonic and Anatoli Krastev, cello. Since 1993 Georgi Mintchev's works have been exclusively published by Bim Editions in Switzerland.⁵⁶ The score and the solo cello part are available from Bim Editions, and there is a CD recording of the work, recorded by Gega New Ltd (Bulgaria) in 1999.⁵⁷

Lubomir Mitzev: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Lubomir Mitzev, violist and composer, born in 1948, is currently a member of one of the most prominent chamber ensembles in Bulgaria, *Sofia Soloists*. In 1967 he graduated from the Varna School of Music and was admitted to the State Academy of Music *Pancho Vladigerov*, where he studied viola and also showed interest in

⁵⁴Georgi Mintchev, "*SentiMetal*" *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (Bulle, Switzerland: Bim, 1994).

⁵⁵Georgi Mintchev, *Compositions*, Gega New Ltd. GD204, 1999, CD.

⁵⁶Georgi Mintchev, "*SentiMetal*" *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra* (Bulle, Switzerland: Bim, 1994).

⁵⁷Georgi Mintchev, *Compositions*, Gega New Ltd. GD204, 1999, CD.

composition and conducting. From 1979 to 1985 Mitzev played in the Dobrich Chamber Orchestra and the Sofia National Opera Orchestra. Since 1993 Mitzev has worked in the sphere of electronic and computer music and is in charge of the computer graphic design of musical scores for the Music Publishing House in Sofia. Mitzev is a member of the Bulgarian section of ISCM and a member of the Union of Bulgarian Composers.⁵⁸ Every year he participates in the Computer and Electronic Music Section of the *Computer Space* Forum in Sofia. In 1999, his work *Synthyphonie* for Computer was selected for performance at the ISCM World Music Days in Romania and in 2001 his *Kaleidoscope* for viola and computer was performed at the ISCM World Music Days in Yokohama, Japan.

Mitzev's works may generally be classified into two groups: compositions written for instruments or voices and music that employs live-electronics and computer. Among the first group are his cello concerto, two *Impressions* for mezzo soprano, strings and vibraphone, piano sonata, *Poem* for mezzo soprano, clarinet, piano and percussion, his chamber opera for children *Apple Home*, and finally his *Meditations* for women's choir, strings, and percussion. The live-electronics and computer music include four pieces for computer and videotape *Black and White Photos*, music for computer *Synthyphonie*, music for computer *The Way in the Afternoon* and others.⁵⁹

Mitzev's music is experimental and demonstrates improvisational qualities through frequent use of aleatory techniques. Quickly changing states, repeating models with slight alternation, and lots of different effects and extended techniques bring contrast and variety to his works. A distinct example of the composer's style is his concerto for cello and orchestra, a very interesting work that was written in 1979 and awarded the 1980 Young Composer's prize by the Union of Bulgarian composers. Mitzev considers this piece one of his favorite works, written specifically for his wife Krassimira Mitzeva, a cellist, as a present for their wedding. The Cello Concerto was premiered on November

⁵⁸The Festival "Mlada Bulgarska Muzika" printed program, Teater i Muzika (Theater and Music), 1980.

⁵⁹Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>

12, 1980 during the Festival of Young Bulgarian Music in the Bulgaria Hall in Sofia by the Vratza Philharmonic with soloist Anatoli Krastev and conductor Petar Ganev.⁶⁰

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra follows the classical concerto scheme of three movements, fast-slow-fast. Thematic material from earlier works is used to comprise what Mitzev thinks “is a concerto that summarizes my life as a composer and a person.” The first movement titled *Metamorphoses* opens with a solo cello *ad libitum* structured around a five-note motive that is developed throughout a short but very impressive cello introduction. Both orchestra and solo parts are equally important in this movement that uses polyphonic and aleatory techniques. Lyrical and to a certain extent melancholic, the second section, *Largo*, is a cello monologue enhanced by the orchestra especially in moments of stronger dramatic expression. The third movement, composed in sonata-allegro form, is a wild dance in 2/4 that carries certain characteristics of Bulgarian folk music. Accents on weaker beats combined with different groupings of the meter gives the illusion of the asymmetrical 5/8 and 7/8 meters that are very typical of Bulgarian folklore. The first theme is an ostinato pattern that provides the base for the exposition and the development of the second theme. The work concludes with the motive from the first movement.

The Cello Concerto is very demanding both technically and musically and would require security in the higher positions of the instrument. The solo part is brilliant and virtuosic, filled with double stops and fast sixteenth-note passages while also displaying effects such as *sul ponticello*, pizzicato chords and glissandi. The orchestral accompaniment explores timbres and textures that not only support but also enhance the cello line. Sudden mood and tempo changes present a challenge for both orchestra and soloist in a work that is otherwise very exciting and fresh.

Both orchestral score and solo part are available through the composer, who can be reached via e-mail address: l_mitzev@hotmail.com. No official recording has been released.

⁶⁰The Festival “Mlada Bulgarska Muzika” printed program, Teater i Muzika (Theater and Music), 1980.

Lazar Nikolov: Concertino for Cello and Orchestra

Considered one of the founders of Bulgaria's postwar avant-garde community, Lazar Nikolov takes a crucial spot in the national musical scheme. Born in 1922, in Burgas, Nikolov was first exposed to music by his family; his father was an amateur violinist and strong supporter of classical music. In 1946 Nikolov completed his education at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, where he studied composition and piano with professor Dimitar Nenov, and briefly, composition with Pancho Vladigerov. After his graduation, the young composer was appointed teacher of chamber music at the Sofia High School of Music. In 1961 he became a professor of score reading at the Academy of Music. Author of numerous articles in magazines *Bulgarska Muzika* (Bulgarian Music) and *Muzikalni Horizonti* (Musical Horizons), Nikolov also served as a secretary of the Union of Bulgarian Composers, becoming its chairman in 1992.⁶¹ Throughout his career, the composer has received prestigious awards, including prizes from the Union of Composers, the title People's Artist and recognition from the International Academy of the Arts in Paris.⁶²

Lazar Nikolov's creative compositional aesthetic went against the communist regime, which followed the Soviet example to limit Bulgarian music to a simpler musical language and structure that accessed a larger group of listeners. Like Konstantin Illiev and Alexander Raychev, Nikolov rejected the folk music sources and late romantic style dominant at that time, instead seeking smaller forms and efficient means of expression.

His style is particularly influenced by the Second Viennese School.⁶³ One of his first works, the Concerto for String Orchestra (1949), marks a new period in Bulgarian music, showing Nikolov's interest in the tendencies of contemporary music, such as the use of Classical forms, polyphony, atonality, aleatory, and dodecaphonic. Because of this his works were harshly criticized by the authorities and were not very often performed.

⁶¹Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 345.

⁶²Ann Levy, Gregory Myers, "Lazar Nikolov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁶³Lazar Nikolov, *Moiat Sviat* (My World) (Sofia: Izdatelstvo Litche, 1998), 89.

Nikolov prefers the instrumental genre for expression of his abstract musical ideas. He has composed six symphonies, two piano concertos, a concertino for piano and orchestra, a violin concerto, concertino for cello and orchestra, *Lento* for symphony orchestra, about twenty sonatas for a solo instrument with piano accompaniment, three string quartets, two operas, *Prikovaniat Prometei* (Prometheus Chained) and *Chichovtsi* (Uncles), and other works.⁶⁴ Nikolov's compositions have been performed at the Warsaw Autumn, the Zagreb Biennial, the Berlin Biennial and the Prague Spring festivals.⁶⁵

The Concertino for Cello and Orchestra, written in 1973 and commissioned for the *Svetoslav Obretenov* National Competition for Bulgarian Music, was created with younger performers and listeners in mind. Nikolov worked on the solo part together with professor Zdravko Yordanov, to whom the Concertino was dedicated. Yordanov gave the first performance of the work in Sofia with the Bulgarian National Radio Orchestra and Vassil Stefanov conducting.⁶⁶

Despite the origin of the Concertino, the work is technically very demanding. The first movement, an energetic *Animato*, is particularly challenging because of its sudden mood changes and virtuoso sections. Register changes in the solo part and flexible lines in the orchestra combined with numerous dynamic nuances require an excellent control of the bow and the ability to transform sound quickly. The lines exchanged between different instruments are increasingly complex while searching for their logical development. The second movement is an *Allegretto* that shows some use of folk music, particularly in the fast 2/4 sections. The rhythm is very complex but it is worth the effort because it creates a play between soloist and orchestra that makes this movement lively, fun to play and accessible to the listener. The final movement is a static *Andante* that features the cello in a sincere and naïve recitative. An unexpected tempo change reestablishes a more playful character that contrasts with the stagnant *Andante*. Big leaps and double stops make this movement very difficult to perform. The orchestra has more

⁶⁴Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), p.345.

⁶⁵Ann Levy, Gregory Myers, "Lazar Nikolov," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁶⁶Lazar Nikolov, *Orchestra Works of J.S.Bach and Lazar Nikolov*, Plovdiv Philharmonic Orchestra, PC Mania.

of an accompanying role in relation to the solo cello, an approach not seen in the other two movements.

The record company PC Mania recorded the concertino in 1999. American cellist Geoffrey Dean played the solo cello with the Plovdiv Philharmonic Orchestra, Georgi Dimitrov conducting. The music is published by the Union of Bulgarian composers.

Michail Pekov: Concerto for Cello and Chamber Ensemble

Michail Pekov, born in 1941 in Vidin, is currently professor of theory and composition at the Academy of Music in Sofia and Dean of the theory and composition department. Pekov graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music in 1967, where he studied composition with Vesselin Stoyanov. He continued his composition studies with Vadim Salmanov at the Conservatory of St. Petersburg, Russia, and later with Emil Petrovich at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary. His music has been performed in Russia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Poland, Greece, Hungary, Germany, and France. Among his most important awards, Pekov won the Grand Prix of Sofia in 1989.

Pekov's music follows elements of the twentieth century tradition that can be observed in its laconic expression and quick transformation of the thematic material. The composer prefers classical forms such as the sonata form and the concerto, which he considers the most suitable for "interesting but still accessible music."⁶⁷ His works are mainly in the orchestral and chamber genres and include nine symphonies, a concertino for orchestra, a sonata for string orchestra, variations for string orchestra, concerto for organ and orchestra, *New Sinfonia Concertante* for violin, viola and orchestra, a concertino for piano, a concerto for two violins and orchestra, two concertos for cello and orchestra, twelve string quartets, the opera *At the Foot of Mount Vitosha* (1977), and others.⁶⁸

Although there are two cello concertos composed by Pekov, only copies of the piano score and the solo part of the first one are available from the Library at the Union

⁶⁷Boyanka Arnaudova, "Dialogi" (Dialogues), *Bulgarska Muzika* 1985, vol.6, 24-34.

⁶⁸Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>>

of Bulgarian composers. The second work was composed in 1987 and there is no other information about it. The Concerto No.1 for Cello and Chamber Orchestra, written in 1975, is in one movement, consisting of numerous sections that vary in length and character with a structure that is difficult to define.⁶⁹ Very chromatic and mostly atonal, the concerto opens with a slow introduction that is played only by the solo instrument. Sustained notes and huge intervals make the beginning, especially for the solo cello, difficult to control and bring out an intact melodic line. Playful and fast sections are contrasted with slow and quiet moments set in a dialogue between the solo cello and orchestra. Intervals from the introduction are used in other sections of the piece in different diversions and rhythms. This work requires freedom and intonation security in the higher positions of the instrument, good articulation for the chromatic passages, and control of the bow for the slow sections. Keeping the continuous musical line often exchanged from soloist to orchestra presents another difficulty in the interpretation of this concerto. The orchestration is colorful but carefully written, leaving room for the solo instrument.

The Concerto was premiered in 1976, in Sofia by Anatoli Krastev with the Collegium for Chamber Music and conductor Vassil Lolov. No official recording has been released.

Lubomir Pipkov: Sinfonia Concertante for Cello and Orchestra

Lubomir Pipkov, a noted Bulgarian composer, was born in Lovech, Bulgaria in 1904, and died in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1974. He studied piano and composition with his father Panayot Pipkov and piano with Ivan Torchanov. From 1919 to 1923, Pipkov was a piano student in Henryk Wiesner's studio at the Sofia High School of Music. After spending couple of years at the Bulgarian Academy of Music, in 1926 Pipkov continued his education in Paris at the Ecole Normale de Musique, where he studied composition with Paul Dukas and Nadia Boulanger and piano with Yvonne Lefebure. In 1932 Pipkov

⁶⁹Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i Nastoiashte* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays) (Sofia: National Center for Music and Dance, 2000), 97.

returned to Bulgaria and began to establish his reputation as a composer, author, and conductor. He was the founder of the Bulgarian Music Magazine and his article “The Bulgarian Musical Style” gained popularity around the country. During this period, he worked as a choirmaster, then an accompanist and finally as a director at the National Opera in Sofia. Co-founder of the society Contemporary Music (1933), Pipkov later founded the Union of Bulgarian Composers, where he served as president from 1945 to 1954. In 1948 he was appointed as a professor of vocal ensemble and opera at the State Academy of Music in Sofia.⁷⁰

Described by his former teacher Paul Dukas as “one of the most interesting artists of our age,” Pipkov established himself as one of the most important Bulgarian composers during a long career that lasted over fifty years.⁷¹ His compositions cover all genres: chamber and symphonic music, operas, choral and solo songs, film music and instrumental concertos, and can be divided into three stylistic periods. His early period began in the 1920’s when he made his compositional debut with piano pieces heavily influenced by Debussy, Ravel, Chopin and Schumann. Incorporating themes and ideas from Bulgarian folk music, he wrote his first string quartet in 1928, notably the first quartet in Bulgaria. Other important works of his early period include the opera *Janinite Devet Bratia* (Jana’s Nine Brothers), the vocal-instrumental work *Svadba* (Wedding), and his symphony No.1, Op.22.

The second period of Pipkov’s compositions includes works between the 1940s and 1950s. His epic, dramatic style reflected his own views on the changing political developments in postwar Bulgaria. Notable works from this period are the opera *Momchil*, second string quartet, variations for string orchestra *Journey Through Albania*, violin concerto, piano concerto, and symphony No. 2. The beginning of Pipkov’s third compositional period was marked with *Oratoria za Nasheto Vreme* (Oratorio for Our Time). This antiwar work reveals the composer’s growing interest in exploiting themes of the evil side of human nature through the use of music with a sarcastic and grotesque character. Other works in this style are the opera *Antigona 43*, third and fourth

⁷⁰Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, (London: Macmillan, 2001), 773.

⁷¹Lubomir Pipkov, *Sinfonia-Concertante*, The Bulgarian Radio Orchestra, Ventsislav Nikolov, cellist, BCA 2023.

symphonies, concerto for clarinet and chamber orchestra, third string quartet and the choir cycle *Muted Songs*.

Pipkov had considered the idea of writing a massive cello work since the beginning of 1949 when he visited the Soviet Union and met with Russian musicians. Following the example of Prokofiev and Britten, who called their works Symphony Concerto or just Symphony, to enhance their symphonic character, Pipkov began work on his concerto for cello and orchestra. The piano reduction of the Sinfonia Concertante for cello and orchestra was completed in 1957, the full score in 1959. The first performance of the work was planned for the Fourth Festival of Bulgarian New Music in Plovdiv in December 1959. However, after attending the dress rehearsal and not being satisfied with his own composition, Pipkov cancelled the premiere of the work, disappointing the audience. It was not until 1963 that the premiere took place, ironically not in Bulgaria but in Moscow, where it was performed by and dedicated to the noted cellist Mstislav Rostropovich.⁷² The Bulgarian premiere was not until 1966 at the Ruse March Days Festival with cellist Zdravko Yordanov.⁷³

The Sinfonia Concertante falls into Pipkov's third compositional period and so combines dramatic and often grotesque expressions with lyric and folk trends. As a result of Pipkov's conviction that the development of a national style should have its roots in folk music, the work is strongly flavored with folk themes and ideas. The concerto itself comprises three movements where the first movement, *Moderato*, is a sonata form with lyrical song-like character. Of particular interest is the cadenza toward the end of the movement that expresses a different character. Added to the concerto in its final version, this cadenza not only lacks the virtuosic characteristics of the classical cadenza but also plays an entirely different role. It consists of the solo cello playing a recitative-like, improvisatory passage over a constant rhythmic accompaniment in 8/8 meter in the timpani. This dramatic conversation between soloist and accompanying instrument reflects Pipkov's idea of the juxtaposition of good and evil.

⁷²Ivan Veznev, "Ot Simfonia do Simfonia-Konzert" (From Symphony to Symphony-Concerto), *Bulgarska Muzika*, vol.8, 1984, 30.

⁷³Svetoslav Manolov, "Bulgarska Violoncelova Shkola" (Bulgarian Cello School), *Muzikalni Horizonti* (1978), 127.

The second movement, *Presto*, is a Scherzo whose initial theme is borrowed from the film score written for the 1950 movie *Trevoga* (Warning).⁷⁴ The sarcastic character of the Scherzo resembles the theme that portrays an antagonistic character in the film. The fast, relentless tempo and the extended use of percussion instruments create a sense of tension and conflict not resolved until the final movement. The third movement, a Theme and Variations, brings another contrast in character and tempo. The theme, as well as the first, third, and fifth variations, are slow, conveying greater philosophical depth than the previous movements. Characteristics of Bulgarian folk music are present in the second variation for its repetitive pattern of major and minor seconds is often found accompanying the *horos*, a very common dance in which dancers form a circle while holding hands. The dramatic expressions of the earlier parts of the piece are brought back at the end of the Finale. The work closes quietly in a slower, more improvisatory tempo, reminiscent of the first theme in the opening movement.

Technically demanding, especially for the solo cello, the *Sinfonia Concertante* offers a variety of challenges. Big leaps, double stops, pizzicato chords, and the frequent use of the higher tessitura require from the performer excellent bow control and solid intonation. The orchestra part plays primarily an accompanying role and sometimes imitates melodic lines from the solo part. The Bulgarian Radio Orchestra recorded the *Sinfonia Concertante* with cellist Venzislav Nikolov. The piano reduction and the solo part have been published by *Nauka i Izkuvstvo* (Art and Science) and can be obtained from the Public Library Cyril and Methodius in Sofia, Bulgaria. Balkanton(BCA 2023) has released an official recording of the work

Simeon Pironkov: *Concerto Rustico* for Cello and Orchestra

Simeon Pironkov was a composer and conductor who in 1985 won the Gottfried von Herder award from the Vienna University for his overall output. Born in Lom, Bulgaria, he studied composition with Parashkev Hadjiev and conducting with Asen

⁷⁴Juliana Aleksieva, “Sinfonia-Konzert za Violoncelo i Orkestar i Tvotcheskata Evolutzia na Pipkov” (Symphony-Concerto and the Creative Evolution of Lubomir Pipkov), *Bulgarska Muzika*, 1979, vol.8, 33.

Dimitrov at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia. In 1952 Pironkov completed his degree and continued to work as a violinist and conductor at the Sofia Musical Theatre. From 1964 to 1968 Pironkov was appointed sound producer at the Bulgarian Cinema studio. He became an associate professor at the Higher Institute of Theatrical Arts and in 1990 Pironkov spent three months in California where he gave a series of lectures at the University of California at Los Angeles. He was also the vice-president of the Union of Bulgarian Composers, later becoming a founder and a director of the organization of contemporary music, *Musica Nova*.⁷⁵

Pironkov's collection of film and theater music influenced his style, which shows laconic and clear musical expression. His esthetic could be found in the nineteenth century romantic ideal expressed in the emotional character of his works, though its realization is achieved with contemporary means. Most of the composer's works are based on the idea that contrast could be achieved by changing musical sections or episodes. An example of this technique is one of his first works, *Movement* for thirteen instruments, a one-movement piece that consists of thirty-seven different sections. Another approach used in Pironlov's compositions is aleatory and cluster harmony to enhance musical image and emotional experience.⁷⁶

A prolific composer, Pironkov has written for most genres, including vocal, chamber, and orchestral music. He is the author of three quartets, *Night Music* for symphony orchestra, *Requiem for One Unknown Young Person* for thirteen string instruments, *Music* for two pianos and orchestra, symphony for eleven soloists, *Passacaglia* for symphony orchestra, concerto for flute and orchestra, concerto for violin and orchestra, *Concerto Rustico* for cello and orchestra, and others. The foregoing works demonstrate Pironkov's style of breaking away from the traditional genres, as in the instrumental *Requiem* that employs a chamber ensemble for stronger expression.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Magdalena Manolova, "Simeon Pironkov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁷⁶Rozalija Biks, "Kogato Sredstvata ne Predreshavat" (When Media Do Not Predetermine), *Bulgarska Muzika*, 1968, vol.19, 8.

⁷⁷Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istorija na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 352-353.

The Concerto *Rustico* for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1982 and dedicated to professor Zdravko Yordanov, who premiered it in the same year in Sofia with the Bulgarian Radio Orchestra and conductor Plamen Jurov. As the title suggests, Pironkov based the work on Bulgarian folklore rhythms and transformed the melodies into his own contemporary idiom. The Concerto is in one movement but six different sections can be identified. The first is an *Adagio*, which serves as an introduction with the cello having an accompanying role to the orchestra. Moods change quickly in the next three sections, where the solo instrument takes over in a restless dialogue with the orchestra. The slower parts of the piece carry a more melancholic and philosophical tone featuring mostly the cello with very little orchestra accompaniment. Especially noteworthy is the solo cadenza with its quickly changing states and numerous effects such as *sul ponticello*, and the use of pizzicati to accompany simultaneously a line that combines arco and glissando techniques.

This work is demanding both technically and musically and requires a player with knowledge of contemporary music. Fast sixteenth-note passages and big leaps combined with drastic tempo and character changes make this concerto quite challenging. Because of the intellectual nature of the piece, some melodies are hidden and difficult to identify, thus careful examination of the orchestra score is advisable for better understanding of the melodic line.

The music has not been published but the manuscript score and solo part are currently available from the Union of Bulgarian Composers Library in Sofia. Balkanton has released a recording of the Concerto *Rustico* with soloist Zdravko Yordanov and the Bulgarian Radio Symphony Orchestra with conductor Plamen Jurov that could be obtained from the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.

Todor Popov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Todor Popov is primarily known as a composer of mass songs, children songs, and light music. Born in Drianovo, Bulgaria in 1921, Popov showed interest in music at an early age. He played the guitar and mandolin and taught himself music theory and harmony. In Sofia, at the high school of music, he studied violin with Kamen

Popdimitrov and music theory with Nikola Atanasov. In 1944 Popov entered the Theory and Composition Department at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, where he was a student of some of the most prominent names in Bulgarian music, such as Parashkev Hadjiev, Vesselyn Stoyanov, Marin Goleminov, and Pancho Vladigerov. From 1946 to 1949, Popov was a composer for the Folksong and Dance Ensemble in Sofia, and Musical Director of children's broadcasting at Radio Sofia. In 1952, the composer left for Russia to continue his education at the Moscow Conservatory where he studied composition, orchestration, and counterpoint.⁷⁸ After returning to Bulgaria in 1957, Popov was appointed Secretary of the Union of Bulgarian Composers and in 1968 he began working as a composer for the army.⁷⁹ Establishing close relations with numbers of choirs and ensembles, he continued to compose marches and mass songs that were particularly popular at a time when Bulgaria was under a communist regime and had tied relations with the Soviet Union. Popov is a holder of the Order of St. Cyril and Methodius, 1959 and 1963, and has been awarded numerous prizes at national and international composition competitions.

Although Popov has written two string quartets, instrumental pieces, *Passacaglia* for string orchestra, the symphonic poem *Rojen* and the oratorio *Svetal Praznik*, the bulk of his output remains in the song genre.⁸⁰ Long melodies and simple structure characterize a compositional style that carries national traits derived mainly from folk music. The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra is the composer's only instrumental work. The manuscript title page bears Popov's dedication of the concerto to Anatoli Krastev, a professor of cello at the Bulgarian Academy of Music who had helped the composer with the solo part. Krastev premiered the piece but there is no other information listing the exact date of the first performance, the orchestra or the conductor involved in the process.⁸¹

⁷⁸Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 362.

⁷⁹Lada Brashovanova, "Todor Popov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁸⁰Georg Kraev, *Koi Koi e v Bulgarskata Kultura* (Who's Who in Bulgarian Culture) (Sofia: Muzika, 1997), 93.

⁸¹Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>>

The Cello Concerto, composed in 1988, is a one-movement work that can be divided into four main sections. Very nationalistic in character, this work portrays rural Bulgaria and suggests that its folklore and its historic past are inseparable from the country's present. The opening *Allegro moderato* introduces a delicate and simple melody in the solo instrument that expands and transforms in the later parts of the work. The second section, *Andante cantabile*, has a similar song character that shares thematic material presented earlier in the piece. Popov brings contrast through use of minor seconds, typical of Bulgarian folklore in the Shoppe region, and varied rhythms. A poetic, expressive, and much faster transition leads the cello to a solo cadenza that is in the center of the concerto. This cadenza is virtuosic, composed in the style of the classical tradition, and calls for a range of cello techniques: pizzicato chords, chromatic passages, double stops, crossings of all four strings in arpeggiated figures, and self-accompanying melodies. The following *Adagio* section resembles the Bulgarian unmeasured songs with its long notes and embellished melodies. A simple and energetic Finale in 2/4, a meter that is characteristic of the folk dance *horo*, concludes the work.

The orchestra's role in the concerto is primarily to accompany the cello, add colors and reinforce the transition sections. Carefully orchestrated, this piece allows the soloist to play with a wide variety of dynamics and, although challenging, the solo part is manageable because the writing is idiomatic for the cello. Articulation and solid bow technique is necessary for the faster transitions and the cadenza. Different kinds of vibrato and nuances are required for interpretation of the slow folk melodies that are similar in thematic material and character.

The orchestral score and a solo part of the concerto are available from the Library at the Union of Bulgarian Composers in Sofia. No official recording has been released.

Artin Poturlyan: Concerto for Cello and Chamber Orchestra

A Bulgarian composer of Armenian descent, Artin Poturlyan, born in 1943, is currently an Associate Professor of Polyphony at the State Academy of Music "Pancho Vladigerov" in Sofia. In 1967 Poturlyan graduated from the Academy of Music where he studied music pedagogy and composition with Pencho Stoyanov and Pancho Vladigerov.

From 1969 to 1974 he was a composition student of Lazar Saryan at the Komitas Conservatory in Yerevan, Armenia. Prior to his appointment as a professor at the Academy of Music, Poturlyan worked as a music editor for National Bulgarian Television and as an instructor of polyphony, harmony, and instrumentation at the “Lubomir Pipkov” High School of Music.⁸² Twice he has been a recipient of the composition prize given by the Union of Bulgarian composers, first in 1983 for the piano work *Arabesques* and in 1989 for his violin concerto. In 1985 Poturlyan won first prize at the Winter Music Evenings Competition in Pazardjik, Bulgaria. His works have been performed in Armenia, Austria, France, Georgia, Germany, Rumania, Russia, and Slovakia, as well as at the Bulgarian festivals Varna Summer, Musica Nova, and American Music Week in Bulgaria among others.⁸³

Poturlyan’s compositions encompass a wide range of genres including opera, orchestral works, opuses for chamber ensembles, piano works, songs, and choral works. His piano quintet, composed in 1989, and the piano pieces *Ispovedi* (Confessions) and *Svetove* (Worlds) are considered his greatest accomplishments. In the instrumental concerto genre are his concerto for violin and orchestra, concerto for piano and chamber orchestra, *Fantasy* for piano and orchestra, and the concerto for cello and chamber orchestra.

The compositional style of Poturlyan is a fusion of dodecaphonic and aleatory music enriched with new tonalities, modalities, and rhythmic techniques.⁸⁴ The concerto for cello and chamber orchestra was composed in 2000 to mark the 1700-year anniversary of Armenia’s acceptance of Christianity. Initially conceived as a viola work, the solo part was later assigned to the cello. Poturlyan was not satisfied with the dark timbre of the viola and decided he needed a stronger sound more suitable for the interpretation of the Armenian medieval themes that dominate this work. Written in three movements, this concerto uses dense atonal counterpoint that utilizes elements of Armenian music. The opening *Moderato* has a polyphonic texture that enhances the dark

⁸²American Music Week in Bulgaria, program booklet from the festival.

⁸³Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>

⁸⁴Tomi Kurklisijski, “Artin Poturlyan” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

and mysterious character of this movement. A wide range of dynamics and effects, such as *pizzicati* and *sul ponticello* sections in both orchestra and cello parts, brings out the important melody lines. The second movement, *Lento*, begins with an ancient Armenian melody set against an open fifth pedal in the orchestra. This rhythmically free and heavily ornamented solo line is first introduced by a bassoon, and later continued by the cello. The final *Animato* movement ends unusually quietly, unlike most solo concertos.

The concerto for cello and orchestra is challenging on both technical and musical levels. The cello part traverses three clefs, changes registers, and has many double stops that demand solid intonation and bow control. Despite the chamber scoring, the imitative counterpoint presents another obstacle in a solo line that is very melismatic and in a register similar to the orchestra accompaniment.

The score of the concerto for cello is available in the Library of the Union of Bulgarian composers in Sofia. No official recording has been released.

Stefan Remenkov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Born in 1923, Stefan Remenkov began piano lessons when he was ten years old. In 1946 he entered the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia where he studied piano with Dimitar Nenov and composition with Pancho Vladigerov and Vesselin Stoyanov. Remenkov graduated the Academy of Music in 1950 and continued to work there as an assistant professor of musical analysis. Later he attended the Moscow Conservatory specializing in composition with Aram Khachaturian. Primarily an instrumental composer, Remenkov wrote music notable for its rhythmic complexity, clear melodic structure, dynamic variety and inventiveness, and often derived from folk sources.⁸⁵ Remenkov's impressive list of works includes over eighty compositions; among them are six symphonies, two concertos and a concert rhapsody for piano and orchestra, a concerto-fantasy for violin and orchestra, concerto for cello and orchestra, chamber music, choral and children's songs, and film scores.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Andi Palieva, "Stefan Remenkov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

⁸⁶Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia, Bulgaria. Aug. 2004. <<http://www.ubc-bg.com/composers/>>

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was composed in 1964 and premiered by professor Zdravko Yordanov.⁸⁷ Unfortunately there is no other historical information regarding the premiere and creation of the work. The published solo part and the orchestra reduction of the score will provide details in evaluating the concerto's musical and technical aspects. Scored for a full symphony orchestra, the work is in three movements. The first movement, *Allegro giusto*, is a sonata form that presents two clearly defined themes. The opening theme is structured around a short recurring motif, introduced for the first time by the solo cello, and reappearing throughout the movement. Repetitive eighth notes, accents and dynamic contrasts could be interpreted as sarcasm when contrasted with the lyrical mood of the second theme. Variety in this initial movement is achieved through augmentation or diminution of rhythm and inversion of intervals. The second movement, *Lento*, is short but very emotional, suggestive of a solo song. Folklore characteristics can be identified in the ornamentation of the melody, especially when a line is repeated, and in the use of minor seconds, typical of Bulgarian music. The third and final movement, *Allegro moderato*, is a restless dance, filled with repetitive patterns presented each time in a different octave of the solo instrument.

In spite of the rich orchestration the cello part is left with little support. The concerto is of moderate difficulty for the soloist, presenting some demands on the fast sixteenth-note passages, chromatic lines and sudden octave changes. Careful attention to dynamic nuances and rhythmic variety is necessary for this work that is very attractive and accessible. Published by the editor *Naika i Izkuvstvo* both the piano score and the solo cello part are available from the Sofia Public Library Cyril and Methodius. No official recording has been released.

Dimitar Sagaev: Concerto for Cello and Chamber Orchestra, Op.138

Known for his contributions as a pedagogue and the author of volumes of music theory and music history books, Dimitar Sagaev is also a composer with an established reputation. Born in Plovdiv in 1915, Sagaev was raised in a family that appreciated the

⁸⁷Veselin Emanuilov, *Violonceloto v Bulgaria: Istoria i Nastoiashte* (The Violoncello in Bulgaria: History and Nowadays), 97.

arts. His father, Konstantin Sagaev, was a playwright and a founder of the first theater school in Bulgaria. In 1940 Dimitar Sagaev graduated from the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia, where he studied composition and theory with Pancho Vladigerov and Vesselin Stoyanov, and piano with Tamara Yankova and Panka Pelishek. He worked as a music teacher at the Plovdiv men's high school and as a music director for the National Radio in Sofia. In 1948 he was appointed as an assistant professor at the Bulgarian Academy of Music and later became the Dean of the Theory and Composition Department. Sagaev also wrote the textbooks *Musical Instruments, Practical Course of Orchestration* in two volumes, and *A Guide to Band Orchestration*, all of which are still used today by the Academy of Music. His other important books include the two volumes *Galeria ot Obrazi: Muzikalni Tvorzi na Nasheto Vreme* (Gallery of Impressions: Musicians of Our Time), outlining the biographies of some of the most prominent Bulgarian composers.⁸⁸

Sagaev has written for most genres, including orchestral, chamber music, opera, choir and children songs, and film music. While his earlier works explore the rhythmic and intonation peculiarities of Bulgarian folk music, his later compositions show more of Sagaev's individuality and freer use of folk melodies and elements. His music is inspired by the ancient Orthodox chant and the melodies of Ioan Kukuzel, one of the most famous musical figures who lived at the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries.⁸⁹ Fascinated with Bulgarian history, Sagaev has written a number of programmatic compositions based on specific literary works.

The instrumental concerto is a preferred genre by the composer as he has contributed to the genre with about twenty-four works for different instruments. For the cello Sagaev has composed two concertos, written in 1977 and 1998, and one double concerto for cello and harp, written in 1999. There is limited information about these works and the only orchestral score available through the Library at the Union of Bulgarian composers is of the Cello Concerto No.2. The first concerto was premiered in

⁸⁸Stoyan Angelov, "Dimitar Sagaev—Sedemdeset Godini" (Dimitar Sagaev: Seventy Year Anniversary), *Bulgarska Muzika*, vol.2, 1985, 28-29.

⁸⁹Andi Palieva, "Dimitar Sagaev" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

Sofia with cellist Venzislav Nikolov and the Bulgarian Radio Orchestra.⁹⁰ The double concerto for harp, cello, and chamber orchestra was dedicated to American cellist Geoffrey Dean and his wife, harpist Anna-Maria Ravnopolska-Dean, who performed it in 2000.⁹¹

The Concerto for Cello and Chamber Orchestra No.2 is a three-movement work that is composed according to the musical traditions established by the older generation of Bulgarian composers such as Vesselin Stoyanov and Lubomir Pipkov. Long lines, colorful orchestration, and folk melodies characterize the thematic material that all three movements share. The first movement has a short introduction to a pastoral *Allegro* that is followed by the second movement, *Andante*, depicting a serene, rural mood noticeable especially in the orchestration. Strings in tremolo and woodwind sustained chords provide a nice accompaniment to a long cello melody. A solo oboe plays ornamented folk melodies throughout, accompanied by a clay whistle filled with water to imitate a bird song. A rustic dance, *Allegro*, concludes the concerto. Although not very demanding, this work requires beauty of tone and excellent bow control for the sustained melodies. Scored for small string orchestra with additional wind instruments, this concerto has a certain chamber quality that allows the solo instrument to be expressive without having to overcome a huge orchestra.

The first performance of the Concerto for Cello and Chamber Orchestra No.2 took place in Sofia during the New Bulgarian Music Festival in 1999 by the chamber ensemble Sofia Soloists with conductor Plamen Jurov and cellist Geoffrey Dean.⁹² No official recording of the work has been released.

Georgi Shagunov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

One of the first Bulgarians to graduate from an overseas institution, Georgi Shagunov was a composer, pedagogue and conductor. Born in 1895 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Shagunov studied at the French College in his home city. After completing his degree at

⁹⁰Venzislav Nikolov, Jan. 2005. <<http://www.venzicello.hit.bg/>

⁹¹Dimitar Sagaev, pamphlet published by the Union of Bulgarian Composers.

⁹²Geoffrey Dean, Feb. 2005 <<http://www.vivacellissimo.com>

the Lyon Conservatory of Music in France, Shagunov returned to Bulgaria to assume the post of Director of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry Division Band, in Burgas, for which he worked until the end of his life. His compositions include one opera, two operettas, six symphonies, two ballets, and approximately seven hundred marches and other works for wind orchestra. Shagunov played an important role in the social and musical life in Burgas.⁹³

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1925. This work is another early example of the instrumental concerto in Bulgaria, along with the compositions of Pancho Vladigerov: the Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.1 (1918) and the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No.1 (1921), and Dimitar Nenov: Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra (1921). The title page of Shagunov's score reads: "For the Macedonian youth concert on July eleventh." There is no information about the premiere of the work or who played it. Because of the composer's interest in the revolutionary movements of Bulgarians fighting in Macedonia and Odrin, Shagunov might have had a social motive to create the concerto.⁹⁴

There is only one cello part in the score, the solo instrument. A possible reason for that may be the fact that there were few cellists in Burgas at that time. The solo part is clearly distinct despite sharing most of the tutti material. The concerto is composed in one movement divided into three different sections. The theme of the first section, *Allegro maestoso*, has a dramatic character supported by the use of dynamic contrasts, tremolo, and syncopations. The next section, *Piu lento*, is marked by introducing a new theme, a lyrical, song-like melody in the lower register of the cello. This section ends with a small cadenza that leads to the *Allegro con brio*, an energetic and contrasting final part to the concerto, which changes keys frequently. A new theme is introduced in syncopated rhythm. The solo cello is not strongly present in the Coda of the concerto; instead all instruments play together in a block structure, concluding the work in the spirit of the band tradition.⁹⁵

⁹³Veliko Penev, "Ot Kogo e 'Pokoinitzi'"(Who Wrote 'Pokoinitzi'), *Bulgarska Muzika*, no. 3, (1988): 12.

⁹⁴Biserka Gramatikova, "Edin Zabraven Violoncelov Kontzert" (One Forgotten Cello Concerto), *Muzikalni Horizonti*, no.1 (1986): 59-62.

⁹⁵Georgi Shagunov, "Konzert for Cello i Orkester," score, 1925, Special Collections, Burgas National Archive, Burgas, Bulgaria.

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra does not offer many technical challenges, and is probably the least difficult of all works discussed in this treatise. The solo part contains some chromatic passages and long melodies, but intermediate to advanced level students can certainly play it. The manuscript score is available from the Special Collections of the Burgas National Archive of Shagunov's works. No recording has been released.

Ivan Spassov: Concerto No.1 and Concerto No.2 for Cello and Orchestra

Ivan Spassov, composer and conductor, was born in Sofia, Bulgaria into a family of professional musicians. He received his first music lessons from his grandfather Ivan Kyulev, who was a composer. In 1951 Ivan Spassov began his studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia where he studied choral conducting with Professor Georgi Dimitrov and composition with Professor Pancho Vladigerov. After graduating, Spassov continued his studies in composition and conducting with Kazimierz Sikorski and Stanislaw Wislocki at the Warsaw Conservatory.⁹⁶

On his return to Bulgaria in 1962, the young composer was appointed to conduct the Plovdiv State Philharmonic Orchestra. After six seasons in the position he was dismissed for challenging the authority of the Communist Party with his introduction of modern music and ideas. In 1964, Spassov founded the Plovdiv Chamber Orchestra and the Plovdivska Muzikalna Mladej Society (Plovdiv Musical Youth). At their concerts he programmed works of Lutoslawski, Penderecki, Baird, and Milhaud, works that had never before been performed in Bulgaria. In the same year he became a member of the Union of Bulgarian Composers and was appointed professor of conducting, score reading, and later Dean at the National Academy for Music and Dance, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. From 1970 to 1991 he was the music director of the Pazardjik Symphony Orchestra, an orchestra that rose to national prominence under his influence.⁹⁷

⁹⁶Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 357.

⁹⁷Anna Levy and Gregory Myers, "Ivan Spassov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

Author of an impressive number of works covering all musical genres, Spassov was the first to experiment with aleatory music in Bulgaria when he wrote the musical score to the film *Kustche Nebe Za Trima* of 1964 (Morsel of the Sky for Three). Later he employed graphic notation for the first time in the 1965 *Epizodi za Chetiri Grupi Tembri* (“Episodes for Four Timbral Groups”) and established the beginning of instrumental theatre with *Muzika Za Priатели* (“Music for Friends”) composed in 1967 for a string quartet and a jazz quintet. He is also one of the first composers to write a liturgical mass when he composed a mass for soloists, choir and orchestra in 1993. Spassov’s compositions in the genre of the instrumental concerto include his concerto for cello and orchestra No.1 (1974) and No.2 (1984), a concerto for piano and orchestra (1976), and a concerto for violin and orchestra (1980).

In the 1970s Spassov gained popularity as a composer of choral music. In fact musical critics used the term neo-folk to describe his choral style, which incorporated folk elements such as ornamentation, tremolo, and the use of *ison* or *bourdon* (a drone usually performed by several women's voices), a style typical for the folk song of the southeastern Bulgarian region. His development and application of folk techniques was not limited to the composer’s choral music; a similar approach can be observed in the concerto for cello and orchestra No.1 and No.2.

The First Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1974 and dedicated to the eminent Bulgarian cellist and pedagogue Zdravko Yordanov. The premiere took place in Sofia at the 1975 Festival *Nova Bulgarska Muzica* (New Bulgarian Music), performed by Zdravko Yordanov, cellist, with the Sofia Philharmonic and conductor Dimitar Manolov.⁹⁸

The work combines folk and modern elements representing Spassov’s idea that the aleatory techniques could be found in the Bulgarian *bezmenzurni*, or unmeasured folksongs. Both soloist and orchestra imitate the folk vocal style, alternating between presenting the melody (Element A), usually in a higher register and very active, or the lower, static drone voice (Element B). Both Elements A and B play an important role in

⁹⁸Ivan Spassov, *Jivotat mi: Opit za Rezonstrukzia na Edna Razpiliiana Mozaika* (My life: An Attempt at Reconstruction of a Scattered Mosaic) (Plovdiv: Polygraph, 1993), 171.

the concerto's form. Enriched with different timbres and extended techniques such as *col legno*, *pizzicato*, *con sordino*, and *sul ponticello*, the concerto offers interesting variety.

The first movement, *Comodo*, can be identified as a sonata form, despite the complicated treatment and rotation of both Elements A and B. The rhythmical structure is complex because of the use of motoric patterns and the alternation of two and three groups, imitating the combined seven, nine, and eleven meters. The second movement, *Lento*, has a lyrical and improvisatory character featuring mainly the solo instrument. A dynamic *Allegro* concludes the work.⁹⁹ There are many technical difficulties such as chromatic passages, higher shifts and double stops, but the biggest challenge of performing the concerto is to capture the spirit of the Bulgarian improvisational folk song character.

The Second Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was written in 1984 and also dedicated to professor Zdravko Yordanov. The first performance was in Sofia in 1986, with the Pazardjic Symphony Orchestra and the composer conducting. Later the work was recorded for the *Balkanton* label: BCA 11950. The American premiere was in 1989 when the composer conducted the Garden Grove Symphony Orchestra near Los Angeles, with cellist Vickie Aniline.¹⁰⁰

Though similar to the first cello concerto with its use of folk material and treatment of the orchestra and solo instrument, the second work is more mature and presents much drama through more sudden mood changes. The opening *Passacaglia*, *Lento ma stricto*, has a dark character expressed in the four bar sustained *ostinato*, played by the cello and bass sections in the orchestra. The solo cello part sings a long melody, disturbed by sudden interruptions with a more active rhythm. An aleatoric solo cadenza, accompanied by the strings, takes a central part in this movement and explores several different textures. The second movement is a lively *Rustico*, *Allegro energico*, which offers rhythmic and dynamic variety in both orchestra and solo parts. Very demanding, the second cello concerto requires good technique and excellent bow control. The sudden leaps and compound melodies with numerous multiple stop passages present a real

⁹⁹Angel Angelov, *Ivan Spassov — 60 Stapki po Patia na Hrama* (Ivan Spassov: Sixty Steps on the Road to the Temple) (Plovdiv: Hermes, 1994), 76.

¹⁰⁰Ivan Spassov, *Jivotat mi: Opit za Rezonstrukzia na Edna Razpilianata Mozaika* (My Life: An Attempt at Reconstruction of a Scattered Mosaic) (Plovdiv: Polygraph 1993), 146.

challenge in preserving an intact solo line. The extensive use of the instrument's high register requires stability and accurate intonation. The orchestral score is in graphic notation, therefore an experience with contemporary music is necessary for correct understanding of the solo part.

The music for both cello concertos can be obtained from the Professor Ivan Spassov Foundation in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

Vesselin Stoyanov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Vesselin Stoyanov was a composer and pianist, a representative of the contemporary classicism in Bulgaria. In the 1930s Stoyanov along with a group of young composers created the first Bulgarian works that had a great artistic success and established the characteristics of a national style. Born in Shumen, Bulgaria, Stoyanov began piano and music theory lessons at the age of six. His first teachers were his father and older brother, Andrei Stoyanov, who became one of the most prominent piano pedagogues in Bulgaria and with whom Vesselin Stoyanov studied piano at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia. After graduating from the Academy of Music, in 1926 Stoyanov continued his education at the Vienna Hochschule für Musik with composer Franz Schmidt. In 1930 Stoyanov returned to Bulgaria, where he worked as a concert pianist, conductor of the Sofia Opera Theater and a professor of theory and composition at the Academy of Music, assuming the Dean position in 1956. In addition Stoyanov took a very active role in the Union of Bulgarian composers, giving lectures and publishing articles on Bulgarian music.¹⁰¹

Vesselin Stoyanov's compositional style combines characteristics of the late Romantic period and Bulgarian folk music. The leitmotif technique and preference for instrumental genres such as the symphonic poem and suite connect Stoyanov to the Romantic tradition. The combined rhythms, melismas, and Balkan modes containing an augmented second interval stamp the composer's music with a Bulgarian identity. Also

¹⁰¹Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 407-410.

tonality, giving preference to seventh and ninth chords, lyricism, and colorful orchestration appear in most of Stoyanov's works.¹⁰²

Among the most notable works of Stoyanov are the operas: *Zhensko Tsarstvo* (The Kingdom of Women), *Salambo*, and *Khitar Petar* (Cunning Peter); orchestral suite *Bay Ganyu*; symphonic poem *Karvava Pesen* (Bloody Song); *Praznichna Overtura* (Festival Overture), and the First and Second symphonies. Author of three piano concertos, one concerto for violin, and one concerto for cello, Stoyanov contributed to the development of the instrumental concerto in Bulgarian music, enriching this classical genre with his own interpretation of Bulgarian folk music.¹⁰³

Composed in 1960, the Concerto for cello and orchestra consists of three movements performed without a break. The solo part is virtuosic, taking advantage of the instrument's range, and is supported by a romantically thick texture in the orchestra. The main theme of the first movement, *Allegro moderato*, is declamatory and very expressive. The contrast of texture and mood develops during the tranquil and improvisatory second theme, which appears just after the exposition to mark the second movement, *Largamente*. The development and recapitulation are based on thematic material from the first movement. A short cadenza leads to a vigorous *Allegro* that is the final movement of the work. This movement is composed in rondo form and is built on Bulgarian dance themes.

Although this work is of moderate difficulty, the faster sections of the piece are quite challenging. The rhythmic complexity, dynamic contrasts, and sustained long melodies require a good technique and sensitive playing from the soloist. Like most of Stoyanov's works, the concerto sounds clearly nationalistic. Lavish ornamentation, long lyrical melodies, and the rhythmic character of the faster sections all present the charm of a truly Bulgarian piece.

There is no published information about the premiere of the Concerto. A few sources mention that the Bulgarian cellist Lubomir Dragov performed the concerto with the Bulgarian Radio Orchestra and Vassil Stefanov conducting. The cello part and a

¹⁰²Maria Kostakieva, "Veselin Stoyanov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

¹⁰³Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 338.

piano score are available through the *Muzika* publishing company, but no recording has been released.

Aleksander Yossifov: Sinfonia Concertante for Cello and Orchestra

Aleksander Yosifov belongs to the younger generation of Bulgarian composers who created a substantial number of their works under the communist regime. His output ranges from classical music to popular songs. Born in Sofia in 1940 to a family of musicians, Yosifov was exposed to music at a very early age. His father, Yosko Yosifov, was a composer and conductor, who occupied positions in Stara Zagora and Varna. In 1958 Aleksander Yosifov graduated from the Varna School of Music and by this time had already composed a number of choir songs, pieces for violin and piano, solo songs for voice and piano, and others. At the Bulgarian Academy of Music, Yosifov studied composition with Pancho Vladigerov and Konstantin Iliev. In 1969, he was appointed chief editor of the Music Section of Balkanton Records, later becoming a Chief Director.¹⁰⁴ He had also worked as an assistant chairman of the Radio and TV Committee and assistant director of the National Opera in Sofia. He is currently a Dean of the vocal department at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia. Yosifov has been awarded seventeen international prizes for his compositions, among the most important of which include four prizes from Japan and two honorary crosses from Poland.¹⁰⁵

Yosifov writes in almost all genres. Some of the more notable works include the fourth symphony *Aprilzi*, the fifth symphony *Prabulgari*, Sinfonietta for chamber orchestra, concerto for orchestra, and concerto for piano and orchestra, the oratorio *Rodina*. In addition he has contributed three cantatas, children songs and many popular songs. Yossifov's compositions reveal their folk music roots in their use of asymmetric rhythms and specific intervals such as seconds and fourths, typical for some two-part folk songs. Preference for classical forms, modes, and long lines define a style colored by nationalistic tones and a monumental sound.

¹⁰⁴Stoyan Angelov, "Kompositorat Aleksander Yossifov," *Bulgarska Muzika*, no.5 (1973): 14-24.

¹⁰⁵Georg Kraev, *Koi Koi e v Bulgarskata Kultura* (Who's Who in Bulgarian Culture) (Sofia: Muzika, 1997), 44.

The Sinfonia Concertante for cello and orchestra was composed in 1986 as a tribute to Yosifov's father, who also wrote a cello concerto. The Radio Symphony Orchestra in Sofia premiered the work with conductor Georgi Notev and cellist Anatoli Krastev. The Sinfonia Concertante is a massive work in three movements that carries traits of late romantic style enriched with a strong folklore flavor. After a slow Introduction, an epic *Allegretto* unfolds. The first section of this movement is an energetic dance, featuring both orchestra and soloist in a playful dialogue. A grand orchestra transition presents a second section composed of a folk tune that Yossifov develops through use of imitative counterpoint to further explore the thematic material. The second movement, *Adagio*, is quite improvisatory with an interesting cello line. The composer's instruction for the solo instrument is to imitate *gudulka*, a Bulgarian folk instrument, that resembles a pear-shaped lute with three or four metal strings, played with a horsehair bow.¹⁰⁶ The sound of *gudulka* is resonant and full and Yossifov marked the solo part *sul ponticello* to achieve a gentle movement that plays "like a lullaby."¹⁰⁷ The third movement, *Moderato*, brings an immediate contrast with its rustic dance character.

Written quite idiomatically for the cello, the Sinfonia Concertante is of moderate technical difficulty. The orchestration is very colorful and compact; often the approach is to alternate between strings, woodwinds and brass. With full orchestra scoring, the solo part accompaniment is less busy, giving possibilities for the solo cello. The repetition of themes could present a musical challenge to both performer and orchestra, making attention to detail and dynamic nuances strongly advisable.

The music for the piece has not been published, but an orchestral score can be obtained from the Library at the Union of Bulgarian Composers in Sofia. No official recording has been released.

¹⁰⁶Timothy Rice, "Bulgaria" in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol.8: Europe, eds. Timothy Rice, James Porter and Chris Goertzen, Garland, 2000, 893.

¹⁰⁷Aleksander Yossifov, "Sinfonia Concertante for Cello and Orchestra," score, 1986, Union of Bulgarian Composers, Sofia.

Yosko Yossifov: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra

Yosko Yossifov, father of the composer Aleksander Yossifov, was a conductor and composer, known especially for his efforts to promote classical music outside the larger Bulgarian cities. Born in Kazanlak, Bulgaria in 1911, he started piano lessons at the age of seven and later studied the flute. As a student at the Kazanlak pedagogical school, Yossifov founded and conducted a local symphony orchestra. After moving to Sofia, Yossifov was accepted into the Bulgarian Academy of Music, where he studied composition and piano with Pancho Vladigerov, and counterpoint with Dobri Hristov and Nikola Atanasov. In 1934 he graduated from the Academy and was appointed conductor of the choir *Rodna Pesen*, which premiered Joseph Haydn's oratorio *The Seasons* in Bulgaria with the orchestra and soloists from the Sofia National Opera. His other important posts include serving as conductor of the Stara Zagora Opera Orchestra, Varna Opera, and Symphony Orchestra.¹⁰⁸

His works include almost all musical genres, but Yossifov preferred the symphonic music. He composed two operas, *Biliana* and *King Samuil*, two children operettas, two symphonic poems, nine symphonies, the *Bulgarian Overture*, Symphonic dances, a Bassoon Concerto, a Cello Concerto, a Clarinet Concerto, and four string quartets. Most of Yossifov's compositions are based on the rhythmical structure and intonations of Bulgarian folk music, with cases of direct quotations. Other characteristics of his music include emphasis on lyricism, extensive development of the thematic material, and thick orchestration.¹⁰⁹

The Concerto for Cello and Orchestra was composed in 1950. Initially written as an oboe concerto, the composer decided to transcribe his concerto for the cello. Apparently, when Yossifov's friend, a doctor and amateur cellist, heard the main idea of the concerto played on the oboe exclaimed that the cello would be much more suitable to render the sonorous quality of that theme. The composer conducted the Varna Philharmonic at the first performance of his cello concerto in 1950. Svetoslav

¹⁰⁸Venelin Krustev, *Enziklopedia na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (Encyclopedia of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Bulgarska Academia na Naukite, 1967), 262.

¹⁰⁹Stoyan Angelov, "Neumoren Muzikalen Tvorez" (One Never-Resting Musician), *Bulgarska Muzika*, 1981, 25-30.

Marchinkov, the principal cellist of the Philharmonic, played the solo part. Later the concerto was performed by the Russian cellist Daniel Shafran.¹¹⁰

A massive, three-movement work, the Concerto for Cello and Orchestra opens with a theme that suits the qualities of the cello well. This theme is a folk tune, which has a very specific melodic and rhythmic contour that allows further development and variation of the material throughout the entire *Allegro moderato e maestoso*. The second movement, *Tranquillo*, has a lyrical character that relates to the thematic material of the previous movement. The third movement, *Allegro molto*, brings contrast with its vigorous main idea that is in the rhythm of the Bulgarian *Paydushko horo*, a dance that is associated with 5/8 meter.¹¹¹ Yossifov freely uses Bulgarian meters, a variety of 8/8, 10/8, and 12/8 rhythms dominate the movement.

This concerto is not very demanding for the soloist. Despite big leaps and melodies that employ the higher register of the cello, the idiomatic writing makes the solo part manageable and fun to play. The third movement could present a challenge because of the often-changing meters, but the folk character and the exploration of rhythms are certainly worth the effort.

The piano reduction and the solo parts are both available from the *Muzika* publishing company. The work has been recorded for the Balkanton label (BCA 1248), featuring soloist Venzislav Nikolov and the Varna Philharmonic with conductor Dobrin Petkov.

Pancho Vladigerov: Concert Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra

Pancho Vladigerov was one of the first Bulgarian composers to achieve wide international fame and present Bulgarian music in Europe between the two world wars. In fact, for many years his name was synonymous with Bulgarian music. Pancho Vladigerov and his twin brother Lyuben were born in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1899. However, both

¹¹⁰Yosko Yossifov, *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra and the Symphonic Poem "Tuja,"* Venzislav Nikolov, cello, Varna Philharmonic Orchestra, Dobrin Petkov, conductor, BCA 1248.

¹¹¹Timothy Rice, "Bulgaria," in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol.8: Europe, eds. Timothy Rice, James Porter and Chris Goertzen, Garland, 2000.

brothers grew up in Shumen, Bulgaria, a city that remained closer to Vladigerov's spirit. At the age of six Vladigerov was already learning to play the piano while his brother studied the violin.¹¹² After moving to Sofia in 1910, Vladigerov enrolled in the Sofia High School of Music, where he studied piano with Henrich Vizner. In addition, he was a private composition and theory student of Dobri Hristov. In 1912 both Lyuben and Pancho Vladigerov were awarded scholarships to continue their studies at the *Staat's Akademische Hochschule für Musik* in Berlin. Vladigerov's first compositions date from this period and include a piano trio, solo songs and his first Piano Concerto, which won the Mendelssohn prize for composition. Later he was presented a second Mendelssohn prize for the three orchestra pieces arranged from his ten *Impressions* for piano Op.9. In 1920 the producer and director of *Deutsches Theater*, Max Reinhardt, asked Vladigerov to work with him and compose music for his productions. The young composer wrote music for plays by Shakespeare, Shaw, Strindberg, Klabund, Werfel, and others. Vladigerov returned to Bulgaria in 1932 to become a professor of piano, chamber music, and composition at the Bulgarian Academy of Music in Sofia. Along with his pedagogical commitments, he maintained a career as a pianist, giving concerts throughout Europe. For his impressive works, Vladigerov was awarded the Gottfried Herder Prize in 1968.

Vladigerov is among the first Bulgarian composers to combine the national folk traditions with the European principles of music. He incorporated elements of the late romanticism, such as high expression and rich orchestration, and combined them with modified melodies from Bulgarian folklore. Influenced by German, Russian, Jewish, and Romanian music, Vladigerov's works reflect multiple aspects of twentieth century music.¹¹³

Vladigerov composed in all genres, but contributed a substantial part of his works to the piano literature. Credited for being the first composer to write an instrumental concerto in Bulgaria, Vladigerov is the author of five piano concertos, two violin concertos, and a concert fantasy for cello and orchestra. His works for symphony orchestra include the Scandinavian Suite *The Dance of Death* based on the composer's

¹¹²Dimitar Zenginov, *Bulgarian composers: Six Biographical Studies*, Sofia Press, 1977, 11-12.

¹¹³Ivan Hlebarov, "Pancho Vladigerov" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell, London: Macmillan, 2001.

music from a play by Strindberg, seven Bulgarian symphonic dances, two symphonies, two Romanian symphonic sketches, the Bulgarian Rhapsody *Vardar*, and many others. Vladigerov also wrote the opera *King Kaloyan* and the ballet *Legend of the Lake*.¹¹⁴

The Concert Fantasy for cello and orchestra was written and first performed in 1941 by the Polish cellist Meceslav Heuermann.¹¹⁵ Only limited information about the history of the Fantasy is available. Virtuosoic and very effective, this work was composed in the tradition of showpieces popular in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. Following the structure of these showpieces, the Fantasy is in one movement that has numerous sections of quickly changing character and tempo. The solo instrument is featured throughout the piece, which calls for a wide range of cello techniques: double stops, arpeggios, pizzicatos, crossings of all four strings, and chords. Solo sections and cadenzas emphasize the improvisatory character of the Concert Fantasy. Long phrases and folk melodies dominate the work, which has a thick orchestration. Masterfully crafted, this piece is demanding and requires advanced technique and good sound projection.

The music for the Concert Fantasy has been published by the *Nauka i Izkuvstvo* publishing company. A recording was released by the Balkanton record company with cellist Venzislav Nikolov and the Bulgarian Radio Orchestra, Aleksander Vladigerov conducting.

¹¹⁴Lili Kracheva, *Kratka Istoria na Bulgarskata Muzikalna Kultura* (A Short History of the Bulgarian Musical Culture) (Sofia: Abagar, 2001), 323-324.

¹¹⁵Nikola Chakalov, "Balgarkoto Violoncelovo Izkuvstvo—Izpalniteli, Pedagozi, Tvorzi" (The Bulgarian Art of Cello Playing: Performers, Pedagogues and Creators), *Muzikalni Horizonti*, 1974, vol.8, 78.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Marta Simidtchieva received the Doctor of Music degree in cello performance from the Florida State University in 2005 where she was a student of Lubomir Georgiev. She has been a member of the Eppes String Quartet and principal cellist of the University Symphony Orchestra, with whom she appeared as a soloist several times, most recently with Bobby McFerrin. Ms. Simidtchieva is a native of Bourgas, Bulgaria and a graduate of the Bulgarian State Academy of Music. She holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Central Arkansas where she was a student of Felice Farell and participated in numerous master classes with Distinguished Professor Janos Starker. The recipient of numerous awards and prizes, including the 2002 Florida State School of Music Doctoral Concerto Competition, Ms. Simidtchieva has been a member of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, the Columbus (GA) Symphony, the Orlando Philharmonic, the New Symphony Orchestra in Sofia, the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, the Wildwood Opera Festival, the Tulsa Opera, and a regular performer at the New Bulgarian Music Festival. She was also on the faculty of the 2004 Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro, North Carolina.