**Passion for Sergei**

**He heard quiet horn sounds from the “white” steamboats, desperately striving to the West; - the Russian road to Calvary. The deafening shots of the “Reds” rifles, boldly interrupting the life of the empire, The Russian Golgotha. He heard everything, and wrote it all – in notes. The truth is, the most important part in music score of the evangelist of the XX century Sergei Rahmaninov became not the heavy Russian road to Calvary and not the terror of Golgotha – but the light premonition of the Russian resurrection. Even a century later, in the beginning of the XXI century, the music sounds like a wonderful prophecy. On 11th of March the concert of the Kostroma Gubernski Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pavel Gerstein, dedicated to the 140th anniversary of Rahmaninov, forced to believe in a happy future even the hardiest skeptics.**

We could have started reciting Lermontov’s “a little Golden cloud” or we could enjoy a recitation of Chekhov’s “on the way” – in the symphonic fantasy of Rahmaninov’s “Cliff”. That’s how the musicologists recommend it. General Director, the artistic Director, the Chief Conductor of the Gubernski Symphonic, Pavel Gerstein disregards the written suggestions from the theorists. Rohmaninov also defied:” Music cannot be expressed by words even if they are a hundred times more talented.” That’s why he didn’t write – he composed. Symphonies and concerts, romances and operas, sonatas and cantatas were composed as massive landscape canvases and laconic psychological portraits with convex strokes of rich colors. Sometimes, he used watercolors semi clear and light. But nevertheless, just as expressive and just as passionate as well.

The Kostroma Symphony Orchestra has the perfect feel for the artistic nature of the early Rahmaninov’s “cliff” and then quite literarily picks up the brush himself. There they are - the first strokes, solid and dense: from the weary, rumbling distance (above “the background” strings and bassoons work precisely) reaches the deep voice of cello. Now a few elegant strokes: frivolous flute flutters on the musical canvas, playfully confides. The plot of the future painting, it seems already clear – on the chest of the lonely and old cliff flies up the young and mischievous cloud…

Oh no. not about that. Gershtein hasn’t even thought about using the musical stencils. That’s why his “Cliff” is not about the Lermontov’s and Chekhov’s love of books, it’s about real, perceivable love of Russia. About the real Russia, it is like a huge river flowing through thousands of years. Descriptive metaphor is born at the beginning of the symphonic fantasy (iridescent flusters of the flutes-the origin of the crystal river – Russia). With every minute it gets bigger and more substantial. The river begins to flow faster, waves start to build up, and the river banks can no longer contain the water. There will be a storm. But something prevents it time and time again. And now on the peaceful water surface, there is a reflection of the clear sky. The last image of the passionate fantasy is the calm and clear depth. It’s dark but certainly leading to the light.

The premonition of happiness supersedes the melancholy in the second piano concert as well, which in 1901 became the resurrection of the composer Rahmaninov. The soloist, of the Moscow Academic concert hall, Filip Kopachevski can feel the Rohmninov’s restrained passion with the tips of his fingers. He leads a leisure and sad conversation with the orchestra. Possible only when all the pain has disappeared. However as it comes to light, not all the pain has lifted, the nostalgic conversation is suddenly reborn as anguishing groans.

The orchestra shudders as well- and comes down like an avalanche, in the finale of the third part, slowly changing into an optimistic anthem. The orchestra does not try to steal the spotlight, it is just a bit more powerful and massive than the soloist, or maybe, just a little bit more susceptible to the life-affirming beginning Rahmaninov’s music. It’s very distinct – even in the third part of the piano, which was written only eight years before the red October. A hundred years later, a young pianist from Paris, Remi Zheniye saturates the third concert with sentimental monologues and thoughts on the Kostroma stage.Evangelist Rahmaninov sounds prophetical. The Gubernski symphonic orchestra plays passion. For Sergei.