

## Интервью



*Philip Ewell*  
*Филип Юэлл*

### **MUSIC THEORY À LA LENINGRAD: AN INTERVIEW WITH TATIANA BERSHADSKAYA**

Моя статья посвящена теоретической школе Ленинградской – Петербургской консерватории и ее создателям, замечательным музыкантам-мыслителям, композиторам, теоретикам – Борису Владимировичу Асафьеву, Юрию Николаевичу Тюлину и Христофору Степановичу Кушнарёву. Казалась бы, эти ученые работали в разных сферах музыковедения: Б. В. Асафьев – общие проблемы музыки; Ю. Н. Тюлин – гармония; Х. С. Кушнарёв – полифония. Но, тем не менее, их учения оказались внутренне настолько близкими (надеюсь, я смогу это показать), что им удалось слиться в единую школу, которой мы, теоретики сегодняшнего дня, придерживаемся и заветам которой следуем.

My article is dedicated to the theoretical school of the Leningrad–St. Petersburg Conservatory, and to this theoretical school’s founders, the wonderful musicians, composers, and theorists Boris Asafiev, Yuri Tiulin, and Christopher Kushnarev. It would seem that these scholars worked in different spheres of musicology: Asafiev on general problems in music; Tiulin on harmony; and Kushnarev on polyphony. Nevertheless, their studies turned out to be inherently so closely related (as I hope to show) that they successfully merged into a single integrated school, which we, today’s theorists, uphold, and whose legacies we follow<sup>1</sup> [7, 9].

So begins Tatiana Bershadskaya’s “Ленинградская–петербургская школа теории музыки” (The Leningrad–St. Petersburg school of music the-

---

I would like to thank Daniil Shutko for his help in setting up this interview, Maxim Krivosheyev for transcribing the audio version into Russian, and of course Bershadskaya herself, for her generosity, hospitality, and everything she has done for the field.

<sup>1</sup> All translations from Russian into English are mine unless otherwise indicated. I usually leave the Cyrillic version for quotations, terms, and titles, with English transliterations and/or translations added. When I transliterate I use the Library of Congress’s system. However, certain anglicized names—Asafiev, Bershadskaya, and Christopher, or Moscow and St. Petersburg, for example—appear throughout. I usually put the original Russian in the text, in a footnote, or in a column running side by side with my translations. However, in the interest of space, I do not include the original Russian text of the interview itself.

## *Интервью*

ory), an article that examines the nature and history of this significant branch of Russian music theory. An icon of the field, Bershadsкая was born on July 4, 1921 — when Vladimir Lenin ruled the country not yet called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — in Petrograd, a Russified “Petersburg,” the city that would soon change its name once again, to “Leningrad,” this time in honor of the communist revolutionary himself<sup>2</sup>. Her father, Sergei Bershadsky (1881–1942), a quite famous conductor and a composer of some repute, studied composition at the St. Petersburg conservatory with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov — yes, that Rimsky-Korsakov, who died in 1908<sup>3</sup>. The two schools of music theory, of Moscow and St. Petersburg, are known to any music theorist inside the former Soviet Union, but virtually unknown to those outside. In a sense, the “St. Petersburg school” is the only such school in Russia, since it arose primarily in contradistinction to the overwhelming influence of Moscow in the twentieth century. In other words, it is more common to hear St. Petersburg or Leningrad as a qualifier for music theory than it is to hear Moscow: whereas a concept from the former might be a “St. Petersburg music theory” concept, one from the latter will likely just be a “music theory” concept. They have swum against the Muscovite tide for many decades now in St. Petersburg, and it seems most everyone has made their peace with the situation. This did not stop Bershadsкая, however — with whom I sat down for an interview on February 15, 2018 — from raking Moscow and their music theorists over the coals in our discussion. She was particularly critical of Yuri

---

<sup>2</sup> In September 1991 this city once again, and one hopes for the last time, was renamed, going back to its original name, Saint Petersburg (*Санкт Петербург*). I use “Leningrad” and “St. Petersburg” interchangeably in this essay/interview.

<sup>3</sup> It is hard to judge Bershadsky’s compositions, since in the fall of 1941, at the beginning of the 900-day blockade of Leningrad by the Nazis, a bomb completely wiped out his entire archive, along with a grand piano and an Amati violin. What was more valuable, the Amati or the compositions, we will probably never know.

## *Интервью*

Kholopov (1932–2003), Moscow’s (and arguably Russia’s) most famous music theorist in the late twentieth century. And now, one could reasonably argue, Bershadskaya herself is Russia’s most famous living music theorist. Without question, she is the leading figure of the St. Petersburg school of music theory, as she studied with two — Tiulin and Kushnarev — of the three figures from the opening quotation of my essay.

Before I get to the interview I must contextualize the Moscow-Leningrad dichotomy and Bershadskaya’s role therein. The lineage of the Leningrad school can be traced directly to Boleslav Yavorsky (1877–1942) and his “theory of modal rhythm”<sup>4</sup>. This is ironic insofar as Yavorsky had very little to do with Russia’s “northern capital,” as St. Petersburg is sometimes called—he spent most of his career in Ukraine or in and around Moscow. But Yavorsky and his theories, on which Asafiev drew extensively, did not develop in a vacuum. Rather, they arose in significant part as a counterbalance to the encroaching harmonic functionalism of Hugo Riemann (1849–1919) in Russia in the early to mid-twentieth century.

Rimsky-Korsakov, with his *Учебник гармонии* (Harmony textbook, 1885: [22]), is sometimes cited as one of the originators of harmonic functionalism in Russia<sup>5</sup>. For instance, Rimsky-Korsakov explained: “The main triads of the major and minor mode—the tonic, on the first scale degree, the subdominant, on the fourth scale degree and the dominant, on the fifth scale

---

<sup>4</sup> For more on Yavorsky’s life and work in English, see: [36, 450–509 and 718–795]; [38, 2.1–2.16]; [40, 76–86]; or [41, 109–164]. For the same in Russian see: [1]; [32, 375–94]; or [34] and [33].

<sup>5</sup> In a 1950 review of a new edition of Rimsky-Korsakov’s textbook, one post-WWII Soviet author, Joseph Ryzhkin, went so far as to claim that it was a mistake to credit Riemann, a German, for functionalism and that Rimsky should be given credit for doing so [23, 108]. This view was ultimately understood as revisionist, and Riemann is generally given the same credit in Russia as elsewhere for his role in the history of harmonic functionalism. However, Bershadskaya, in our discussion, overstated Riemann’s role in Rimsky’s work—see the interview below.

## Интервью

degree—are the main basis of any harmonization, since in any tonality consisting of these three triads all notes of the scale are present”<sup>6</sup> [22, 15].

A discussion of the beginnings of harmonic functionalism in Russia is beyond the scope of my work here, but a few points are worth making. Riemann was certainly the first to use the term “function,” which he borrowed from mathematics, and his *Vereinfachte Harmonielehre oder die Lehre von den tonalen Funktionen der Akkorde*, from 1893, is far more important in the history of function theory than Rimsky-Korsakov’s harmony text. Still, Rimsky-Korsakov’s formulation, from eight years before Riemann’s *Vereinfachte*, is an important part of that history. Rimsky-Korsakov viewed the three triads not simply as three chords with tonic, subdominant, and dominant roots, but as representatives of families of chords that could fulfill one of the three functions, and he clearly spelled out these three families and called them “groups”: *тоническая группа* (tonic group), *субдоминантовая группа* (subdominant group), and *доминантовая группа* (dominant group) [21, 66]. Finally, in his textbook, he immediately focused on the harmonization of melodies using I–IV–V–I progressions, also a trademark of harmonic functionalism.

The first true proponent of Riemannian theory in Russia was Grigori Catoire (1861–1926) who, at the suggestion of Tchaikovsky, went to Berlin in 1885 to study piano and composition, ultimately with Otto Tiersch and Philipp Rüfer. After Catoire’s return to Russia in 1887 he studied with Rimsky-Korsakov, among others, so it was only natural that he combine his expe-

---

<sup>6</sup> «Главные трезвучия мажорного и минорного лада: тоническое — I ступени, субдоминантовое — IV ступени и доминантовое — V ступени — суть главная основа всякой гармонизации, так как в тонах, составляющих эти три трезвучия, заключаются все ступени гаммы».

## Интервью

rience in Germany with his studies under Rimsky-Korsakov.<sup>7</sup> About Catoire’s *Теоретический курс гармонии* (Theoretical course of harmony) (1924–1925), Ellon Carpenter writes: “The introduction to the theory of functional harmony in Catoire’s textbook was unique among Russian textbooks of this time. Although Catoire invented neither the idea nor the method of its presentation, his adaptation of the principles of Riemann’s theories... became a permanent part of the Soviet theory of harmony” [36, 603].

Early in Catoire’s textbook, which he used for his classes at the Moscow Conservatory, he lays out the tripartite system for chords in a diatonic system.<sup>8</sup> Catoire’s was the first Russian text to clearly label that tripartite system as “T,” “S,” and “D,” using German letters (which do not exist in Cyrillic obviously — Rimsky-Korsakov’s textbook uses only roman numerals for the three functions). Significantly, Catoire had several students at the Moscow Conservatory who would go on to write the most important and enduring harmony textbook in Soviet Russia, the *Учебник гармонии* (Harmony textbook), usually called the *Бригадный учебник* (“Brigade” textbook). Its authors — Joseph Dubovsky (1892–1969), Sergei Evseev (1894–1956), Vladimir Sokolov (1897–1950), and Igor Sposobin (1900–1954) — who all studied with Catoire, essentially created the Moscow school of music theory with this book. Believe it or not, it is still the harmony textbook (in a revised and updated form of course) widely used in the Russian Federation today. It was first published in two volumes in 1934 and 1936 as *Практический курс гармонии* (A practical course of harmony), but the second edition [14], the *Учебник гармонии*, is what remained. It is currently in its fifth edition, published in 2016.

---

<sup>7</sup> Significantly, Catoire was also influenced by the Belgian François-Auguste Gevaert and his *Traité d’harmonie théorique et pratique*, from 1905–1907.

<sup>8</sup> See, specifically, chapter 2, *Образование аккордов диатонической системой* (The formation of chords in a diatonic system) [15, 14–34].

## *Интервью*

Yuri Kholopov, the clear leader of the Moscow school until his death in 2003, studied from the brigade textbook with Igor Sposobin at the Moscow Conservatory. In many ways one could draw a direct line from that textbook to Kholopov's magnum opus, his treatise on harmony, *Гармония: теоретический курс* (Harmony: A theoretical course) [31]), which is probably the finest exemplar of the Moscow school of music theory to this day<sup>9</sup>. A final point about the Moscow school: I began my discussion with Rimsky-Korsakov, who was a Petersburger through and through. In other words, all music theory in Russia can be traced back to St. Petersburg, and not to Moscow, since the former is where all significant nineteenth-century advances took place.

The Leningrad school is, in many ways, more interesting than the Moscow school, insofar as it is more extraordinary. Do they acknowledge functional theory there? Of course, in large part through Tiulin's works. He, for one, was a proponent of Riemann, but Tiulin worked within the confines of the Leningrad school, which began, as I said, with Yavorsky. It is hard to put into words Yavorsky's influence on music theory in Russia. His ideas — many of which survive to this day—were studied in conservatories across the country. Those who studied with Yavorsky or were otherwise directly influenced by him include Arnold Al'shchvang, Boris Asafiev, Leah Averbukh, Ber-shadskaya, Nadezhda Briusova, Lev Mazel', Dmitri Melkikh, Sergei Prokofiev, Sergei Protopopov, Isaac Rabinovich, Yuri Tiulin, and Victor Tsukkerman, for example. Yavorsky also held tremendous sway over the young Dmitri Shostakovich, whom he met in Moscow in March 1925, when the composer was just 19, at Shostakovich's first concert of his own works. It was this meeting that drew Shostakovich to Yavorsky and, importantly, to Moscow. They remained

---

<sup>9</sup> Though Kholopov calls it a textbook (*учебник*) in the Preface [31, 3], the book is really a treatise (*трактат*). His *Гармония: практический курс* (Harmony: A practical course) [30] is much more a textbook than the former.

## Интервью

close until Yavorsky's death in 1942. Vobykina's *Дмитрий Шостакович: в письмах и документах* (Dmitri Shostakovich: In letters and documents), for example, contains sixty-six letters from Shostakovich to Yavorsky [13, 9–132]. The connection between Yavorsky and Shostakovich, and any potential influence that Yavorsky's theories had on Shostakovich's composition style, is a topic ripe for exploration.

With respect to Yavorsky's overall impact, writing in 1927, noted musicologist Leonid Sabaneev said: "Whether for good or for evil, all musical Russia at present is divided into "Yavorians" and "Old-Believers," with the former inclining towards aggressive action along the whole musical front. Though still insufficiently verified, the new theory [the "theory of modal rhythm"] is being introduced into institutions of music learning, its half-mystical, half-cabalistic propositions taking the place of the simple recipes of old naïve theory which possessed the advantage of not requiring obedience" [42, 210].

To a significant extent, the "Old-Believers" came to represent the Moscow school, and the "Yavorians" the Leningrad<sup>10</sup>. Yavorsky significantly enlarged the Russian musical lexicon by coining musical terms: *тяготение* ("gravitation"), *сопряжение* ("conjunction"), *предыкт* ("retransition"), and *переменный* and *увеличенный* ("mutable" and "augmented") modes, for example. Yavorsky also introduced *интонация* ("intonatsiia" or, translated, "intonation"), a term Boris Asafiev would essentially stake his reputation on in his two-volume *Музыкальная форма как процесс* (Musical form as process), the second volume of which bears the title *Интонация* [2]<sup>11</sup>.

---

<sup>10</sup> "Old-Believers" (*старообрядцы*) are Eastern Orthodox Christians who do not adhere to certain mid-seventeenth-century liturgical reforms, so there is a bit of irony in Sabaneev's comments here.

<sup>11</sup> For an English translation of *Музыкальная форма как процесс* see Tull 1977.

## Интервью

Yavorsky made a big impression on Asafiev (1884–1949), the so-called “father of Soviet musicology”, when they met. On May 3, 1915, Asafiev wrote to Vladimir Derzhanovsky:

Сегодня познакомился с Яворским: это буквально неисчерпаемо интересный человек. Его слушать — одна радость... В его методе я обрел то, что так давно искал, — прочный научный фундамент теории музыки, ибо до сих пор я совершенно не удовлетворялся тем, что мне подносили в консерватории и учебниках, а сам не в силах был создать единую основу.

Today I met Yavorsky: this is literally an inexhaustibly interesting person. To listen to him is pure joy... In his method I have found that which I have long sought—a substantial scientific foundation for music theory, because I have been completely unsatisfied with that which the conservatory and textbooks have given me, nor do I myself have the strength to create a uniform basis for such a theory [34, 296–297].

Asafiev would go on to be, arguably, the most important Soviet musicologist in the twentieth century and, as Bershadskaya states, the founder of the Leningrad school of music theory<sup>12</sup>. Asafiev was clearly inspired by Yavorsky, while at the same time he took a hard line against the intruding harmonic functionalism represented by Riemann and his proponents in Russia:

Из теоретиков глубокий анализ “тритонности” и раскрытие значения этой интонационной сферы в современной музыке дал русский музыкант-мыслитель Б.Л. Яворский.

Наоборот, рабски подчинившая себе умы многих теоретиков римановская система «функциональной гармонии» закрепощает слух и сознание композиторов своей консервативной механической «предустановленностью». Эта система является печальным наследием так называемого «генерал-баса», цифрованного баса, т.е. учения о гармонии, рождавшегося из практики органного и клавирного сопровождения, своего рода аккомпаниаторства.

---

<sup>12</sup> As the reader is probably aware, a music theorist in Russia is, first and foremost, a musicologist (*музыковед*), as is the case in most European countries, which is to say that theory is a subfield of musicology in Russia.

## Интервью

Among theorists it was the Russian musician-thinker Boleslav Yavorsky who undertook a deep analysis of “tritonality” and discovered the meaning of its intonational purview in contemporary music.

On the other hand, Riemann’s system of “functional harmony,” which has slavishly subordinated the minds of many theorists, subjugates the composer’s hearing and consciousness with its conservative, mechanical “predetermination.” This system is the sad legacy of the so-called “general bass,” figured bass, i.e., the teaching of harmony born of the practice of organ and piano accompaniment, some kind of “accompaniment school.” [2, 243–244].

This quotation reveals the genesis of the Leningrad school of music theory. Asafiev goes on to further rebuke Riemann and his denial of the “physiological” and “intonational” aspect of music (245–246). As is well known, Asafiev continued Yavorsky’s legacy of “intonatsiia,” which moved away from a scientific acoustical view of music to one based on the human experience, music psychology and cognition, and musical emotions<sup>13</sup>. Intonatsiia is extremely difficult to define—you can read Bershadsкая’s definition below when I asked her—so I will not get into its intricacies, which I myself only half understand. There is even a famous joke in Russia about Asafiev and intonatsiia worth recounting: Two musicologists were talking at Asafiev’s funeral. One says to the other, “it’s a shame about Boris Vladimirovich,” to which the other replies, “yes...it’s also a shame he never explained what he meant by ‘intonatsiia’”!

This is worth recounting because, as Yuri Kholopov once told me, the joke was invented by Igor Sposobin. So already in the early 1950s — Sposobin died in 1954 — the Moscow school was ribbing the Leningrad school. Nevertheless, with Asafiev’s work a new music theory was born, one that was uniquely Soviet and, in an abstract sense at least, uniquely Russian.

---

<sup>13</sup> Sergei Protopopov’s *Элементы строения музыкальной речи* (Elements of the structure of musical speech), which he cowrote with Yavorsky, features an entire chapter on *интонация* [20, 117–155], which is likely where Asafiev drew inspiration for the second volume of *Музыкальная форма как процесс*, published fourteen years thereafter.

## *Интервью*

This brings up a final point about the Leningrad school's origins: it can also be linked to pressure on musicologists from the Soviet government to create a Marxist musical science devoid of Germanic underpinnings. On February 5, 1930, Soviet People's Commissar Anatoly Lunacharsky convened a conference on Yavorsky's Theory of Modal Rhythm. It was as if modal rhythm was put on trial by the Soviet government. The write-up in *Пролетарский музыкант* (Proletarian musician) states the aim of the conference clearly:

Главным вопросом, занявшим внимание конференции по теории ладового ритма в течение почти трех дней, был вопрос о том, насколько эта теория в основных своих предпосылках соответствует принципам диалектического материализма и может ли она явиться исходным моментом для марксистской науки о музыке.

The main question of the conference on the theory of modal rhythm, which took place over the course of almost three days, was to what extent this theory, within its fundamental premises, corresponds to the principles of dialectical materialism and whether it can be a starting point for a Marxist musical science. [16, 6].

So this was a serious matter indeed. Yavorsky opened and closed the conference, giving speeches of three to four hours each. Many — former students for instance, such as Al'shchvang, Averbukh, Briusova, Protopopov, Rabinovich, and Tsukkerman — spoke in favor of Yavorsky's theory. However, Nikolai Garbuzov attacked modal rhythm on an acoustical basis, and Mikhail Ivanov-Boretsky attacked it on a historical basis, stating that there was nothing new about tritone resolution (which was at the basis of the theory). Ivanov-Boretsky then linked Yavorsky's theory to "impressionism" and, with it, "bourgeois" ideals, which were of course antithetical to Marxism [16, 7]. Ultimately, Lunacharsky, who seems to have been a lifelong friend to Yavorsky, weighed in on Yavorsky's side:

Я не решился бы сказать, что теория ладового ритма есть марксистская теория в музыке, но я твердо убежден, что это есть теория, наиболее родственная марксизму и, вероятно, развитие марксистско-

## Интервью

го музыковедения будет идти [sic] именно по линии дальнейшего развития теории ладового ритма и дальнейшего проникновения ее началами диалектического материализма.

Though I would not call the theory of modal rhythm a Marxist theory of music, I am firmly convinced that it is the theory most closely related to Marxism. Likely, the development of Marxist musicology will move precisely along the lines of the further development of the theory of modal rhythm and the further adoption of dialectical materialism to its principles. [19, 13].

To be blunt, Yavorsky was a Slav — read here, not German — which likely made it easier to promote his novel ideas. As with all things Soviet, however, the pendulum soon swung to the other side and Yavorsky, by the mid 1930s, was out of favor. This did not stop others, primarily Asafiev, from taking up Yavorsky’s mantle and forming new related ideas.

Bershadskaya’s two teachers, Kushnarev (1890–1960) and Tiulin (1893–1978), are an important link between Asafiev and the present-day Leningrad school. The former, whose large portrait hangs in Bershadskaya’s living room, did not publish much, but what little he did publish addressed two topics: polyphony and Armenian monody (see Kushnarev 1971 and 1958, respectively). Bershadskaya often refers to “monody” in her writings, as she did in our discussion, which is a direct result of her studies with Kushnarev. Tiulin was far more prolific than Kushnarev and had a larger impact on the course of Soviet music theory. I have listed his main books in my bibliography, which I encourage the reader to examine. His career began with his *Учение о гармонии* (Study of harmony) [27]. Late in life he wrote a fascinating book called *Строение музыкальной речи* (The structure of musical speech) — the same title as Yavorsky’s 1908 monograph [35] — which gives Tiulin’s unique views on musical form, among other things. His *Учебник гармонии* (Harmony textbook), which he cowrote with Nikolai Privano [29],

## Интервью

represents Leningrad’s answer to the much more famous Muscovite brigade textbook. Tiulin and Privano’s textbook has a Riemannian angle — T, D, and S, are used prominently early on—but it is much more muted when compared to the brigade textbook. Strikingly, Tiulin and Privano’s harmonic analyses of excerpts are done entirely with roman numerals and not with the three Riemannian descriptors as they are in the brigade textbook, which shows the authors’ penchant for *Stufentheorie* over *Funktionstheorie*<sup>14</sup>. Tiulin’s ultimate achievement was to bring the Leningrad school into the mainstream so that they could continue the traditions of Yavorsky and Asafiev.

Bershadskaya continues this tradition to the present day. In her article on the Leningrad school she goes into detail about the underpinnings of “western” theory, and suggests that this is in line with the Moscow school to a large extent. She often mentions the “acoustical” basis for this line of thinking, and how the “human” element is left out. Though she mentions only Hindemith by name (in passing) in this part of the article, one thinks immediately of Heinrich Helmholtz, Heinrich Hertz, and Riemann as well. In short, western theory, and the Moscow school with it, has “ignored” the “psychological” and “human” element of sound and music. The following quotation sums up her beliefs about how the Leningrad school differs:

Наша школа исходит из принципиально других позиций. Первая позиция – музыка и человек, музыка и человеческое мышление, музыка и человеческий интеллект, его психология, законы восприятия. И своей задачей наша теория ставит не установление связей с акустикой, что, в общем, очевидно и не нуждается в подтверждениях, а раскрытие тайны того, как акустические явления, то есть явления материальной природы, становятся искусством, становятся средством выражения душевных переживаний человека, становятся *музыкой*. В этом мне видится принципиальное отличие нашей российской (и я бы сказала, прежде всего, *ленинградской*) концепции, сохраняющей свое значение до сих пор.

---

<sup>14</sup> Notably, there is no Schenkerian slant whatsoever in either textbook.

## Интервью

Our school comes from principally different positions [from those in the West]. The first position is that of music and the *human being*, music and human thought, music and human intellect, its psychology, the laws of perception. And the goal of our theory is not to establish connections with acoustics, which generally is clear and not in need of confirmation but, rather, to discover the secret of how acoustical phenomena — that is, phenomena of the material world—become art, become a means of expressing the internal experiences of the human being, become *music*. Herein lies the principal distinction of our Russian (and, I would say, first and foremost, *Leningrad*) conception, which has preserved its significance to this day [7, 10]; [italics original].

I have included Bershadskaya's main books in my bibliography. Her non-pedagogical output spans from *Основные композиционные закономерности многоголосия русской народной крестьянской песни* (Fundamental compositional rules in multi-voiced Russian folk-peasant songs) [9], a rewrite of her 1954 dissertation, to *В ладах с гармонией, в гармонии с ладами: очерки* (In modes with harmony, in harmony with modes: Essays) [3]. Her main theoretical work, however, is *Лекции по гармонии* (Lectures on harmony, [6]). In the same fashion that one could draw a direct line between the brigade textbook and Kholopov's *Гармония*, one could draw that same line from Tiulin's *Учение* to her *Лекции*. Among many awards, her most famous is that of "Distinguished Artist of the Russian Federation." She is currently working on a book on musical methodology for music school teachers.

In the interview that follows I worked chronologically, roughly, using the first 45 minutes to ask historical questions, largely outside of music, and the second 45 minutes to focus on music and music theory. Her stories of life in the early Soviet Union, and of living through the 900-day Nazi blockade of Leningrad during WWII, are at once fascinating and chilling. Her apartment, in which we met, is something of a Soviet time capsule — she has lived there since 1924 — with memorabilia from many decades of life and music making.

## *Интервью*

In this introductory essay I have likely raised as many questions as I have answered. A logical next step would be to examine the issues in more depth. For instance, what is the history of harmonic functionalism in Russia? What are the similarities and differences among the four key harmony texts—by the brigade, Kholopov, Tiulin, and Bershadskaya — which I cited above? What are some specific examples of concepts, not just “intonatsiia” but others as well, from the Leningrad school, and how does one use them in musical analysis? How does intonatsiia differ from voice leading (a topic we discussed in the interview)? And to what extent did Soviet pressure shape music theory in the twentieth century? Another fascinating theme, which I have not yet mentioned directly, would be the role that women played in the history of Russian music theory. If Bershadskaya is not currently the most famous music theorist in Russia, then that honor would likely fall to Yuri Kholopov’s sister, Valentina Kholopova, who is 83. But the topic of women music theorists in Russia begins long before these two figures. For example, Leah Averbukh, Nadezhda Briusova, Ekaterina Maltseva, Sofia Beliaeva-Eksempliarskaiia, Maria Medvedeva, and Anna Charnova were all active in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries and made important contributions to music theory. Beliaeva-Eksempliarskaiia coauthored, with Yavorsky, a fascinating monograph on music cognition, *Восприятие ладовых мелодических построений* (The perception of modal melodic structures), in 1926. Charnova actually went to Germany to study with Riemann, and published two articles on him and his theories, in 1897 and 1898, after her return to Russia [36, 358n5]. And currently, there are more women than men in music theory in Russia [37]. My essay is just an introduction to all of these issues, in which Bershadskaya has played a central role for the better part of a century. Here is the interview, condensed and edited for content, which I translated from the

## *Интервью*

original Russian. Occasionally I add Russian words (in italics) or other editorial commentary (in roman type) in square brackets, or footnotes, for clarity's sake.

### **INTERVIEW WITH TATIANA BERSHADSKAYA**

**P. E: 1. I read that your father studied with Rimsky-Korsakov at the conservatory. What did he say about his studies with him?**

T. B: I only recently realized why he spoke so little with me about the conservatory. I remembered one phrase he said which, at the time, didn't really register. In the old building of the conservatory, as you entered, there were two large marble memorial plaques on which they etched the names of famous graduates. The list began with Tchaikovsky. In 1908, the year of Rimsky-Korsakov's death, they etched Maximilian Steinberg. And suddenly my dad said to me, "do you know that I was to have been on that plaque?" But it was the year of Rimsky-Korsakov's death, and in place of my father they etched Steinberg's name, since he was Rimsky-Korsakov's son-in-law. You know, I just remembered this phrase by chance and it suddenly all made sense to me. It seems he had some kind of bitterness or resentment.

**2. So he didn't say much about those times?**

Yes, he didn't say much about his conservatory days.

**3. That's too bad, since he surely knew Stravinsky, who also studied with Rimsky-Korsakov at the same time.**

We never discussed Stravinsky at all for some reason. My dad was more from the classical school.

## *Интервью*

**4. When we met last November you said that you were a “non-partisan” [беспартийный] Bolshevik. What did you mean by that?**

I’m happy to answer that, but I’d like to say a couple more things about my dad. He finished the conservatory not only as a composer, but also as a violinist, violist, and conductor. Practically speaking, he worked principally as a conductor, and his work as a composer was manifested more in orchestration and arranging. After I was born he no longer really wrote music.

**5. Where did he work?**

The last place he worked was the Regional Operetta of Leningrad. He was therefore always on business trips. We rarely saw him at home.

**6. Which compositions did he like to conduct?**

All operettas really. He had no symphonic practice or experience, so he didn’t know the symphonic literature. He orchestrated a lot. He often conducted Nikolai Strelnikov’s operettas. And I think, to this day, they are performed in his orchestrations. This was his work.

**7. And now about you being a non-partisan Bolshevik.**

This was a label for people who, with all their heart, were supportive of the direction of our country and government, but who did not join the communist party.

## *Интервью*

### **8. You were never a member of the communist party?**

Not only was I never a member of the party, I was not a Pioneer, which was strange for my age<sup>15</sup>. I was not a Komsomol<sup>16</sup>. Why was this so? The thing is, my family, in which I grew up and held so dear to my heart, was a family of “low-level dissidents,” as one might say now.

### **9. You have some noble bloodlines I’ve read.**

My grandfather had a noble estate himself, but this is not an old bloodline. But my family members were all monarchists. My grandmother suffered the 1917 revolution with unbelievably great pain. She kept a portrait of the Tsarevich for a long time, until 1937, when it became dangerous to have such things. She needed to get rid of it then. It was such an internal rejection for my family, what was going on in the country, but it became customary. And my mother was very religious. All my family was religious except for my father, who said about himself, “I’m a militant atheist.” And he said that his initials, S. V. B., stood for the “Union of militant atheists.” But he never objected to religion at home. I’ve had religious icons hanging in my home ever since. And you know, this is what has sustained me. I was also raised in the Christian faith and I’m still devoted to it. And therefore they didn’t allow me to become a Pioneer, nor did I want to.

### **10. You mentioned 1937. Were you living in this apartment?**

I’ve lived my whole life in this apartment, since I was three.

---

<sup>15</sup> The “Vladimir Lenin All-Union Pioneer Organization,” which existed from 1922 to 1991, was something of a mandatory boy/girl scout organization meant to indoctrinate children with communist ideals.

<sup>16</sup> The “All-Union Leninist Young Communist League,” or the “Komsomol,” was the next step in the communist indoctrination of youth, for teenagers.

## *Интервью*

### **11. They say the Great Terror was truly horrible<sup>17</sup>.**

It was horrible. My mom always worked. By education she was a French language teacher but, because she had problems with her legs, she couldn't work as a teacher and, instead, worked her whole life as a bookkeeper. As such, she rose through the ranks and ultimately was the senior accountant at some state bank. I don't remember which one exactly—I was still young—but she was working there. And on a form that she filled out...we all had to fill out very detailed forms all the time, answering “who's your father” and “who's your mother.” All relatives. And my mother wrote that her father was a private nobleman [*личный дворянин*]. This was my grandfather. He inherited a private noble estate, and my mother wrote this on a form.

### **12. And this was dangerous?**

It became dangerous. Our building superintendent — who was attracted to my mom... she was very beautiful and generally wonderful — said to her, “you know, Nina Grigorevna, I shouldn't tell you this, but they're coming soon to search your house.”

### **13. My God!**

This is how we lived. We burned a lot of stuff. Not only the portrait of the Tsarevich, but many books that were forbidden at that time. I remember burning a book of poetry by Igor Severyanin. In short, we burned and burned and burned. The search of our apartment never came, but my mother was fired from all jobs, in particular, as a bookkeeper. And she couldn't get hired

---

<sup>17</sup> The “Great Terror” [*Большой террор*] was a period of communist party purges in Stalinist Russia from 1936 to 1938. It is estimated that roughly 500,000 people died at the hands of Stalin's government.

## *Интервью*

anywhere. And then my mom — she was a very decisive woman and generally fabulous — wrote a long letter to Mikhail Kalinin<sup>18</sup>.

### **14. And he responded?**

Yes, can you imagine, he responded. And they gave her her job back. I myself went with her to Smolny for the answer. I wasn't able to go with her in the building, and I waited a long time for her outside, but they gave her Kalinin's answer with the demand that she be reinstated to all of her jobs. So things like this also happened. This was 1937.

### **15. You said that your mother was religious and your father an atheist. I've read that Rimsky-Korsakov was also an atheist. Perhaps your father learned that from Rimsky?**

Possibly, but I'm not sure that Rimsky-Korsakov was really an atheist. He was, so to speak, a pagan. Or he was more clearly a pantheist. Nevertheless, my mom and dad got married in a church despite the fact that he was a non-believer. And for a long time I had their wedding candle sticks, and her bridal veil, and some Brusselian lacework, which I was able to exchange for butter in 1943.

### **16. In one of your previous interviews I read how you said, "I lived a double life, hiding my sympathies for the Pioneers at home and, at school, the fact that I would attend services at St. Nicholas Cathedral."**

Absolutely true, a double life.

---

<sup>18</sup> Kalinin was the head of state for the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union, and a member of the Soviet Politburo. The Russian city Kaliningrad, formerly Königsberg, is named after him.

## *Интервью*

### **17. How long did that last?**

Psychologically it was very difficult. It lasted until the war. Because during the war my entire family died. St. Nicholas Cathedral never left my life, strictly speaking, and it would still be in my life were I able to get there now. Back then, such activity was severely persecuted. Pavel Serebriakov, the rector of the conservatory at that time, was very strict in monitoring his staff, making sure that no one was religious. For a long time I had to hide such things at work. But you know, religion is such an intimate thing that it never really influenced my work or my social life. Psychologically, especially during my school years, it was difficult for me. But still, one thing did not affect the other. It was simply another side of my life, which did not affect work or anything else. But in my heart of hearts I always identified with my country, my Soviet Union. I painfully lived through its demise and I still can't completely come to terms with the fact that it's gone. I simply want to add that this phrase, "non-partisan Bolshevik," at that time was a certain social status — there were such people who were outside of the communist party.

### **18. Were you invited to become a member of the party?**

Endlessly. I remember one discussion with the secretary of our party organization, Iudovin, who said, "Tatiana Sergeevna, please join the party. We so need decent people like you."

### **19. And how did you answer?**

I said that I'm not worthy. That was always my answer.

**20. That was a very wise answer. About the blockade. My mother was Norwegian, and she lived through the Nazi occupation**

## *Интервью*

**of Norway. I remember one interesting story my mom liked to tell about how, once, someone gave her and her friend a rutabaga. And they fried it in fish oil, and it was one of the best meals of her life.**

I understand her like no one else can.

**21. And so my question. Do you have any stories of a similar meal during the 900-day blockade of Leningrad by the Nazis?**

You know, I don't remember that the word "meal" even existed for us, as such. There was simply no such thing as a meal. But not for all 900 days. There were different days. The most horrific from the point of view of starvation, unthinkable starvation, that was the winter of 1941–1942, because in 1943 there began to appear certain products, and I began working at the kindergarten and there the concept "meal" existed. There they had kasha, with no meat. This was 1943. It was a bit better.

**22. You must have thought about death during the blockade?**

I didn't think about death. You know, all my family, except my old aunt, died. But I myself... it was some kind of internal conviction, but I felt that I would survive. I don't know what to call it, but I saw for myself a post-war life. It was always on the horizon. And I think that it was like this not only for me. But for my mom it was different. From the very beginning she said, "we're all going to die." This was at the very beginning of the war, before there was even starvation. But I didn't share this feeling. I don't know, I just didn't think about it. When you ask me about it now I can tell you that I always had a sense of what will be after the war. Yet I saw death all around me. I still see visions of a headless body at the corner of Voznesensky Prospect and Isaakiyevsky Square. I was coming home from the conservatory and the bombard-

## *Интервью*

ment started. It was artillery fire and I hid. And as I emerged onto Voznesensky and began to turn to Isaakievsky Square, right there at the Mariinsky Palace a person without a head was lying there. I still see that image. Then on Maksimilianovsky Alley, near the gates that lead to Maksimilianovsky hospital, the corpses of a man and boy were lying there, for about two weeks. I saw them on my way to the conservatory. They had frozen. It was 40 degrees below zero Celsius. I didn't go to the conservatory every day, because of personnel mobilization rules on our team. But every time I did go for about two weeks those corpses were still there.

### **23. Were there any Germans in the city limits?**

No, none.

### **24. I understand that the blockade was around the city.**

Around the city, not that close. Around Pulkovo, near the airport. They would fire artillery from Pulkovo. November 6, 1941, I remember like today. I was on duty at the conservatory on the anti-aircraft defense team. They didn't allow us to go home, so we lived there for a while. They let us go out once every several days to wash up, when the water was still running, which soon ended. And then we returned and were on duty 24 hours a day. I remember November 6 because November 7 is Victory Day of the November communist revolution. There's a famous parade, which they still show on television. And on the eve of November 6 we were building barricades near the Gorky House of Culture. This is near the Narvsky Gates, downtown. And right over us, I remember it just like now, shells from the German artillery started flying, from Pulkovo to Vasilevsky Island. Then we arrived at the conservatory, and I was on duty in the rector's office. That's where I slept. And I remember the

## *Интервью*

solemn meeting of the Politburo on November 6, which they broadcast on the radio since there were not yet any televisions. Levinthan told us of how the Germans had been stopped in Moscow. This was the first time that they had been stopped. The next morning was the parade.

**25. In Norway it was horrible for my mom, but for the Germans and Hitler, Scandinavians were closely related, so Norwegians were not treated so awfully. Not so with Slavs. What the Germans did here was atrocious. What can you say about how you view the German people, then and now?**

It's a completely distinct treatment between the concept "German" as a nationality and "German" as an enemy, a fascist. I love German culture, music, and literature, as I always have. I grew up on Beethoven and Schubert. Here's my portrait of Beethoven [she points to the portrait on the wall], my most favorite composer. Musorgsky is right next to him. But I love Beethoven more than Musorgsky, for sure.

**26. Well he wrote quite a bit more music.**

True. But at any rate, I'm absolutely not a nationalist. I have no fascist underpinnings one way or the other. And therefore for me the concepts "enemy" and "German," even if we are speaking of "Germans," it was always just a word, not an essence. We always had many German friends. I grew up surrounded by German families. I began my education at a private German school. This school was founded by the Wissendorfs. My family was quite afraid of Soviet influence. After all, this was the 1920s. It was all new, and they were scared of the Soviets. Therefore when my cousin, who also grew up in this apartment, and I turned seven, they didn't put us in Soviet schools but,

## *Интервью*

rather, a private German school. My grandmother and I would travel to Vasilevsky Island to this school. It's not close. We would walk right over the Neva river in winter when it was frozen. The Wissendorfs lived in a very famous German house, near St. Catherine's Cathedral if I'm not mistaken, at the corner of the First Line and Grand Prospect. Their private school, which was in a different building, was closed down, so they opened up the new German school in their big apartment. We studied in that German school two years, and then they closed it. And then we had to go to a different school, this time Soviet. I loved my Soviet school with all my heart and I still love it to this day. I wouldn't have traded it for the world. I think we got an outstanding education. We had wonderful teachers.

**27. I remember telling you that my father was a communist.**

Wonderful!

**28. He, like you, suffered when the Soviet Union ended.**

Yes, I suffered, and still suffer.

**29. For my dad it was a real catastrophe, but I'm not so interested in asking you what was good about communism, since I knew that from my father. I would like to ask you...**

What was bad?

**30. Yes, think about that. Of course you know what people say generally, but in your opinion, what was bad about communism?**

## ***Интервью***

In terms of what was bad I would say, as I now understand it, there was some manifestation of historical laws. You see, communist ideas, these are the same as those from evangelical Christianity. And as with any such ideas they are beautiful as ideas, but as soon as real people begin to realize them in practice, then those same people, as earthly beings, begin to ruin those ideas. In my consideration, the impossibility to put into action these ideas as they were meant to be—ideal—doomed the system to failure. Because not all people, especially those striving for advancement, were capable of preserving the realization of these ideas in life. This is my conviction. So it's not so much that there was something bad, but that's how it all appeared. Also, there was a certain inflexibility in the realization of ideas, a demand for like-mindedness [*единомыслие*] in some sense. This was bad about communism, of course. And in essence? In my opinion there was nothing bad about communism.

**31. Let's return to music and the Leningrad school of music theory. Asafiev, Tiulin, Kushnarev — your teachers. Let's start with Moscow in opposition to Leningrad. What exactly is the “Moscow school” of music theory in your opinion?**

I have a lot of problems with it. The thing is, in my opinion we must first define the “Russian school” in contrast to the western-European school of music theory, insofar as I understand that school. Because, practically speaking, I know more about what went on in the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. The most recent new works from the West I simply don't know. But I can say that our Russian music-theory school—on the whole Moscow and St. Petersburg, since there really are no more, only those two — is distinguished by our search for the moment of human perception [*момент человеческого восприятия*].

## *Интервью*

### **32. And the Moscow school as well?**

Yes, Moscow as well. It essentially started there. The first person who conducted this search was Yavorsky. He was the first to say that a mode [лад] is gravitation [тяготение]. And what does gravitation mean? There's no "weight" in music. So this is an analysis of our perception. The moment of our psychological, human evaluation [оценка]. That is, we speak of mode as a manifestation of the human perception of that which sounds.

### **33. OK, but is this the entire Russian school of music theory?**

Yes, the entire Russian school.

### **34. Well then what exactly is the Moscow school?**

The Moscow school came later. And the Petersburg school came with Asafiev, Tiulin, and Kushnarev.

### **35. And Bershadskaya!**

Bershadskaya is just their successor. They were the founders. These were people with university degrees, all three. Tiulin finished both the mathematical and law faculties. Asafiev finished the history faculty, I think, but I can't remember precisely<sup>19</sup>. But what exactly does a university education mean? It's an education that always demanded a logical thought process. The Moscow school was founded by people who graduated Church-Slavonic schools, seminaries. That is, Moscow was of a more emotional-sensuous bent, but with us, we had strict logic. The first thing that Yuri Tiulin demanded of us in our discussions was that we had no errors in formal logic. That which

---

<sup>19</sup> Asafiev finished the history faculty of St. Petersburg University in 1908.

## *Интервью*

the Moscow school doesn't really demand. The Moscow school is more metaphorical.

**36. The first name that comes to my mind with the Moscow school is Igor Sposobin, right?**

Yes, if you like, he was among the very first.

**37. And also Grigori Catoire, who also promoted Riemann. This was very important to them.**

Here in Russia Rimsky-Korsakov emanated from Riemann. Rimsky's textbook is essentially Riemannian<sup>20</sup>. By the way Tiulin also relied quite a bit on Riemann. Riemann is at the basis of our school. You see, the entire school is essentially European insofar as it rests on the study, first and foremost, of the rules of the major-minor system. And because of the recognition of this system as a single inviolable system, this sometimes hinders the possibility of seeing different systems. Why, for example, does the western system differ so markedly from eastern systems? After all, eastern systems are also systems. But our western education, at least in part, does not allow for the consideration of other systems. If you recall the Moscow, even the European school of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, what did they teach? They taught how to form the major-minor system. The same as Riemann. They simply didn't allow for other schools of thought. If you'll allow, this began, first and foremost, with the Leningrad school. Thanks to Kushnarev, we began to

---

<sup>20</sup> Here Bershadskaya is mistaken. It is entirely likely that Rimsky-Korsakov consulted not a single source from Riemann in writing his textbook in the fall of 1884. Riemann's *Vereinfachte Harmonielehre* only appeared in 1893, and Riemann's earlier works would have been of little interest to Rimsky, if even available. Rimsky was far more influenced by the works of Heinrich Bellermand, Luigi Cherubini, Anatoly Liadov, and Tchaikovsky (see: [36, 309–325], and [39, 208–242]).

## ***Интервью***

acknowledge that there exist other regulated systems outside of major and minor.

### **38. Here you're speaking of his work with Armenian monody?**

Exactly. Everyone knows that monody exists. Abroad and in Moscow, everyone knows. But somehow monody is not considered to be of equal value to the major-minor system. And, at the basis of all teachings, the chord is given as a unit. They search for the chord in systems where it simply doesn't act as such. Right up to Shostakovich, even. Take, for instance, Alexander Dolzhansky, who wrote about Shostakovich's early works. He immediately pulls everything in the direction of chords. This is the tendency to see music, first and foremost, as a succession of chords. Whether we judge its content or whether we judge what we call a "mode," ultimately we are always looking for the chord. Not understanding that there is another line, the horizontal. Thus the presentation into the system of different types of thinking, this is the hallmark of the Leningrad school. In Moscow they speak of "monodic things" but they miss the point. For example, Yuri Kholopov. As my teacher Yuri Tiu-  
lin said about Yuri Kholopov, "Kholopov has read so much that he can't even digest it." Kholopov's assertions are a complete mishmash [каша].

### **39. Are you speaking now of Kholopov's textbooks on harmony?**

His harmony textbooks, and his other works. His last work, *Music-Theoretical Systems* [see: [32]], is a total mess. Did I give you the little book I wrote not long ago?

## *Интервью*

### **40. *Harmony in Modes?***

Yes. In that book I have a rather clear criticism of what Kholopov does in his books. He lacks logic, and he doesn't follow the rules of formal logic. One definition does not follow another. For example, he says that, "a mode is a pitch-system of music" [*лад – это звуковысотная система музыки*]. "Harmony" is a pitch system of music, but not "mode."

### **41. *Were you acquainted with Kholopov?***

TB: Of course, he came up to St. Petersburg. He came to visit me here in my apartment. But the Moscow school is a real mess [*кавардак*]. Kholopov introduced a great confusion [*сумятица*] having excluded the concept of harmony as a material structure. He confused harmony with mode. This is his problem. They are different things.

### **42. *Does the Moscow school rely too heavily on German theorists, like Riemann, and the German school of theory?***

No. There have been no Germans in the Moscow school for quite some time. No Riemann. If we are talking about the major-minor system, then of course Riemann, but if about later developments, then no.

### **43. *I know that Asafiev really liked Yavorsky and didn't like Riemann.***

Well, Asafiev overstated that. Because Riemann conforms to the major-minor system. Generally, I have my own conception with respect to the positions from which we must approach musical systems. I consider a musical system to be a phenomenon that develops historically. And no system can pretend to be absolutely universal. That's the stranglehold [*засилье*] of the

## *Интервью*

major-minor system in the minds and, in part, the practice of European music and musicians. If we look at European music from, say, the end of the sixteenth century, then one could say that the major-minor system continues to be in effect. Because if we were to take film music or popular music, which is all current and exists as actual intoned music [*интонируемая музыка*], then that music is significantly more common than that of Schoenberg or others like him, if we speak generally about major-minor music. Is this by chance? No, it's not by chance but, rather, it happens because the laws of the major-minor system, like no others, were placed at the basis of the properties of the very material of the music. That is, the properties of sound, the acoustic materials. So they mixed together Riemann's ideas with ideas of others, etc. As we were taught, this is the Hegelian triad. his note negates this note as tonic, and this note reestablishes it. Which is to say thesis, antithesis, and a new whole [i.e., synthesis]. Take this note for example [Bershadskaya plays a repeated G#4 on the piano]. It certainly sounds like a tonic after a while. But if I put it in context [she plays it now as m. 5–6 of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*] it sounds different. These are the rules of the major-minor system, which even Rameau showed us. And ultimately Riemann built a system on this, and it's not going anywhere. But other nearby systems also exist. And this acknowledgement of other systems, with their own sets of laws, is what is gained by the logic of our Leningrad school of music theory. And, if you like, this is a generalization, because I had two teachers, Tiulin and Kushnarev and, to a certain extent, Asafiev. And, if I can say so, I've tried to generalize their thoughts. I came up with the concept of the "distinct unit of a musical system" [*разная единица системы в музыке*]. After all, any system has its own unit. Suppose I say, "the road from St. Petersburg to Moscow is some 600 kilometers." I'm not going to say that it's 600 square kilometers. No. Linear distanc-

## *Интервью*

es are so measured, correct? And about the square meterage of a room I'm not going to speak about simple linear meters, I'm going to speak about square meters. It's exactly like that with a musical system. There are distinct units of motion, of thought. Perhaps it's a chord, or perhaps a separate note. It's important not to confuse these two concepts. One can't gauge peasant folksongs with chords. The Ukrainian folksong "Shedrik, Shedrik" [*Ber-shadskaya plays this song on the piano*]. Here's every note, and here's the tonic. There are no chords. And it's wrong to analyze such things with chords. Just as it's wrong to analyze using only single notes that which happens in the music of Beethoven or Wagner. So this is the juxtaposition of distinct units, which I have not seen in any other theoretical school.

### **44. Only in St. Petersburg.**

Yes, only in St. Petersburg. Of course people speak about chords and tones. But to contrast them as two distinct systems of thought, you can't find that anywhere else. And that's how it begins. Someone plays Shostakovich and they find chords where there are none.

### **45. Now the most difficult question, what's the definition of intonatsiia?**

Sometimes it's understood too simplistically. That is, they say that intonatsiia is, say, melody. Melody is intonatsiia. And then that becomes all of intonatsiia. That is, they essentially equate the concept of "intonatsiia" with "motive." But Asafiev spoke of something completely different. And I think I've given a definition that's closer to the essence of what Asafiev had in mind. I said that intonatsiia is "the pitch result of the overwhelming demand of the human being to express its emotional state with the voice" [*звучковой*

## Интервью

результат неодолимой потребности человека голосом выразить свое душевное состояние].

**46. Because before Asafiev it was a lot simpler—intonatsiia came from Yavorsky.**

And Yavorsky, perhaps unwittingly, already had that in mind.

**47. PE: I've worked with a Yavorskian analysis of Chopin. It's an intonational analysis. It maps the horizontal position of all notes in the Chopin prelude. It shows how they are "intoned," horizontally speaking, do I have that right?**

Yes, horizontally.

**48. So it's very similar to voice leading [голосоведение], but it's not voice leading.**

No it's not voice leading.

**49. Voice leading is more mechanical?**

Voice leading can happen between structures that are, internally, not even connected to each other. For example, if speaking in your terms, here's one motive, and here's another [*Bershadskaya plays the first two bars of Mozart's A major Piano Sonata, KV 331*]. And between them you have voice leading. But the intonatsiia is divided completely differently. With respect to intonatsiia, there are two<sup>21</sup>. And there is also voice leading between them. That is, to reduce intonatsiia to voice leading is incorrect. Intonatsiia is that

---

<sup>21</sup> It was, and still is, unclear to me how these two intonatsiia differ from the idea of two motives in those first two bars of Mozart KV 331.

## ***Интервью***

which stands above the absolutely material structure. I'm currently writing an article on methodology for music school teachers. And there I begin one of the sections by asking what music is. It's an art and, as any art, it's a product of human spiritual activity, but any art also has its material side. Because the spiritual that we have in art can only be transferred through the material side. Beginning with such a phenomenon as our language and speech, because language is also spiritual, but it expresses itself in the material word. Painting is a spiritual art, but it is expressed through material. Paints, drawings. Music, of course, is a spiritual art, but it expresses itself through material, through notes. Anything spiritual can be perceived only through material.

### **50. You said that all music is tonal, correct?**

Yes, of course. And I consider tonality to be a category of pitch.

### **51. Of pitch?**

Yes, there must be pitches. Quite recently, this past June, I published a new article, "The Music of Noises: Is It Music?" And there I tried to prove that, if the entire composition is made up only of noises, then it's not music. It could be some different type of art. By the way, Kholopov offered the term "Timbral Music" [*тембрика*]. Timbre has a colossal expressive significance, but this is not music. Music must definitely have absolute pitches. And in this I cite classical thinkers, in particular, Herodotus, who wrote that a sound can be a musical sound only if it can be thoughtfully reproduced by the human voice. A most wise thought, which Asafiev then took, since he also speaks about this important vocal moment. And how I characterized intonatsiia to you earlier. It's "the pitch result of the overwhelming demand of the human

## *Интервью*

being to express its emotional state with the voice.” Do you understand? With the voice!

### **52. The voice, that’s the key moment?**

Absolutely, the key moment.

**53. You said, in one of your interviews, that “one of my most important theses, which I can consider my own discovery, is the introduction of the transmitter [носитель] and informant [информатор] of modal function [ладовая функция].**

And that’s the unit of motion [*единица движения*]. That’s it, the informant. What does informant mean? In a monodic system, one note is sufficient. The note “informs” us. There is a note, it is the informant, it is the tonic. Or it is not the tonic. And in the harmonic system the informant—an entire complex — is the chord. That’s what I mean when I speak of a “unit of motion.”

**54. When we met last November you said that your favorite composers were Beethoven and Tchaikovsky, do I remember that correctly?**

Indeed.

**55. Do you have other favorite composers, perhaps more recent, say of the twentieth century?**

Well, I grew up on tonal music. Because tonality exists in any music. Tonicity [*тоникальность*] — this is not tonality — refers to music with the sense of a clear tonic. So I grew up on that type of music. I can name twentieth-century composers whom I listen to with pleasure. Shostakovich, Schnitt-

## *Интервью*

ke. They both have a sense of a gravitation toward the tonic. Music that is openly simply dissonant and not tonic-oriented, I can listen to it, but I don't really like it. I would never put it on and listen to it myself. Shostakovich and Schnittke I'd happily play. But ultimately my heart is there where Tiulin's heart was. He also preferred tonal major-minor music. I also like folk music. I studied folklore for many years. This is when I studied with Kushnarev and wrote a dissertation on multi-voiced Russian folk-peasant songs. I was likely the first to suggest that Russian folk songs are not monolithic, but that they have different areas and fields, which can in fact be completely different. The music of our northern peoples, for instance, vastly differs from music of the Donskoi region, and so on. It's generally considered that mine was the first work to suggest that. And in this I was able to work with music that was not from the major-minor system.

### **56. It opened up a different world for you?**

Yes, a different world. But more important, being a student of Kushnarev and Tiulin, I could unite and deduce those generalities that the juxtaposition of different systems allowed for. So I didn't consider monody to be some kind of impoverished system.

**57. Tatiana Sergeevna, thank you so much for talking with me today.**

You're most welcome.

## **Интервью**

### **ЛИТЕРАТУРА**

1. *Арановский М.Г.* Теоретическая концепция Б.Л. Яворского [Электронный ресурс] // Искусство музыки: теория и история. 2012. № 6. С. 41–60. URL: <http://imti.sias.ru/upload/iblock/a64/aranovskii.pdf>.
2. *Асафьев Б.В.* Музыкальная форма как процесс. 2-е изд. В 2 ч. Ч. 2. Л.: Музыка, 1971.
3. *Бершадская Т.С.* В ладах с гармонией, в гармонии с ладами: очерки. СПб.: Издательство Санкт-Петербургской консерватории, 2011.
4. *Бершадская Т.С.* Гармония как элемент музыкальной системы. СПб.: Ut, 1997.
5. *Бершадская Т.С.* Курс анализа музыкальных произведений: Программа для музыкальных училищ. Л.: Музыка, 1951.
6. *Бершадская Т.С.* Лекции по гармонии. СПб.: Композитор, 2003.
7. *Бершадская Т.С.* Ленинградская–петербургская школа теории музыки // Санкт-Петербургская консерватория в мировом музыкальном пространстве / ред. Н.И. Дегтярева. СПб.: Издательство политехнического института, 2013. С. 9–15.
8. *Бершадская Т.С.* Нетрадиционные формы письменных работ по гармонии в консерваториях. 2-е изд. СПб.: Композитор, 2001.
9. *Бершадская Т.С.* Основные композиционные закономерности многоголосия русской народной крестьянской песни. Л.: Музгиз, 1961.
10. *Бершадская Т.С.* Статьи разных лет. СПб.: Союз художников, 2004.
11. *Бершадская Т.С.* Функции гармонии в музыкальной системе. Л.: ЛОЛГК, 1989.

## Интервью

12. *Бершадская Т.С., Масленкова Л.М., Незванов Б.А. и др.* Курс теории музыки. Л.: Музыка, 1988.
13. *Дмитрий Шостакович: в письмах и документах / ред.-сост. И.А. Бобыкина.* М.: Государственный центральный музей музыкальной культуры им. М.И. Глинки, Рекламно-издательская фирма «Антиква», 2000.
14. *Дубовский И.И., Евсеев С.В., Способин И.В., Соколов В.В.* Учебник гармонии: в 2 ч. М.: Государственное издательство «Искусство», 1939.
15. *Катуар Г.Л.* Теоретический курс гармонии: в 2 ч. Ч. 1. М. Госмузиздат, 1924–1925.
16. Конференция по теории ладового ритма // Пролетарский музыкант 1930. № 2. С. 6–9.
17. *Кушнарёв Х.С.* Вопросы истории и теории армянской монодической музыки. Л.: Госмузиздат, 1958.
18. *Кушнарёв Х.С.* О полифонии: Сб. Статей. М.: Музыка, 1971.
19. *Луначарский А.В.* Несколько замечаний о теории ладового ритма // Пролетарский музыкант. 1930. № 2. С. 10–13.
20. *Протопопов С.В.* Элементы строения музыкальной речи: в 2 т. Т.1 / под ред. Б. Яворского. М.: Гос. Изд-во. Муз. сектор, 1930.
21. *Римский-Корсаков Н.А.* Полное собрание сочинений: Литературные произведения и переписка. Т. 4. Учебник гармонии. М.: Музгиз, 1960.
22. *Римский-Корсаков Н.А.* Учебник гармонии [Литогр. Изд]. СПб., 1885.
23. *Рыжкин И.Я.* Новое издание учебника гармонии // Советская музыка. 1950. № 2.

## Интервью

24. Тюлин Ю.Н. Искусство контрапункта. М.: Музыка, 1968.
25. Тюлин Ю.Н. Натуральные и альтерационные лады. М.: Музыка, 1971.
26. Тюлин Ю.Н. Строение музыкальной речи. Л.: Музгиз, 1969.
27. Тюлин Ю.Н. Учение о гармонии. 3-е изд. М.: Музыка, 1966.
28. Тюлин Ю.Н., Привано Н.Г. Теоретические основы гармонии. Л.: Музгиз, 1965.
29. Тюлин Ю.Н., Привано Н.Г. Учебник гармонии: в 2 ч. М.: Музгиз, 1964.
30. Холопов Ю.Н. Гармония: практический курс: в 2 ч. М.: Композитор, 2003.
31. Холопов Ю.Н. Гармония: теоретический курс. М.: Лань, 2003.
32. Холопов Ю.Н., Кириллина Л.В., Кюрегян Т.С., Лыжов Г.И., Поспелова Р.Л., Ценова В.С. Музыкально-теоретические системы. М.: Композитор, 2006.
33. Яворский Б.Л. Избранное: письма, воспоминания. М.: Композитор, 2008.
34. Яворский Б.Л. Статьи, воспоминания, переписка / ред. И. Рабинович и Д. Шостакович. М.: Советский композитор, 1972.
35. Яворский Б.Л. Строение музыкальной речи. Материалы и заметки. М, 1908.
36. Carpenter E. The Theory of Music in Russia and the Soviet Union, ca. 1650–1950. PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1988.
37. Ewell P. Conference Report: Inaugural Meeting of the Russian Society for Music Theory (OTM) [Electronic resource] // Music Theory Online. 2013. № 19 (4). URL: <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.13.19.4/mto.13.19.4.ewell.html>.

## ***Интервью***

38. *Ewell P.* Rethinking Octatonicism: Views from Stravinsky's Homeland [Electronic resource] // Music Theory Online. 2012. № 18 (4). URL: <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.4/mto.12.18.4.ewell.html>.

39. *Jackson L.* Modulation and Tonal Space in the Practical Manual Of Harmony: Rimsky-Korsakov's Harmonic Theory and Its Historical Antecedents. PhD diss., Columbia University, 1996.

40. *Lupishko M.* Konyus' 'Metrotechtonism' and Yavorsky's 'Modal Rhythm': Parallels Between Music and Architecture in Early Soviet Music Theory // Music and Figurative Arts in the Twentieth Century / ed. by R. Illiano. Turnhout: Brepols, 2016. P. 73–94

41. *McQuere G.* The Theories of Boleslav Yavorsky // Russian Theoretical Thought in Music / ed. by G. McQuere. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. Repr. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, (1983) 2009. P. 109–164.

42. *Sabaneev L.* Modern Russian Composers / trans. by J.A. Joffe. New York: International Publishers, 1927.

43. *Tull J. B.V.* Asafiev's "Music Form as a Process": Translation and Commentary. PhD diss. Ohio State University, 1977.

## **REFERENCES**

1. *Aranovsky M.G.* Teoreticheskaya koncepciya B.L. Yavorskogo [The theoretical conception of Boleslav Yavorsky] [Electronic resource] // *Iskusstvo muzyki: teoriya i istoriya* [The art of music: Theory and history]. 2012. № 6. P. 41–60. URL: <http://imti.sias.ru/upload/iblock/a64/aranovskii.pdf>.

## **Интервью**

2. *Asafiev B.V.* Muzykal'naya forma kak process [Musical form as process]. Second edition. 2 vols. Vol. 2. В 2 ч. Ч. 2. Leningrad: Muzyka [Music], 1971.

3. *Bershadskaya T.S.* V ladah s garmoniej, v garmonii s ladami: ocherki [In modes with harmony, in harmony with modes: Essays]. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg Conservatory, 2011.

4. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Garmoniya kak element muzykal'noj sistemy [Harmony as an element of a musical system]. St. Petersburg: UT, 1997.

5. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Kurs analiza muzykal'nyh proizvedenij: Programma dlya muzykal'nyh uchilishch [Course in the analysis of musical compositions: A program for specialized music schools]. Leningrad: Muzyka [Music], 1951.

6. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Lekcii po garmonii [Lectures in harmony]. St. Petersburg: Kompozitor [Composer], 2003.

7. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Leningradskaya–peterburgskaya shkola teorii muzyki [The Leningrad-St. Petersburg school of music theory] // Sankt-Peterburgskaya konservatoriya v mirovom muzykal'nom prostranstve [St. Petersburg conservatory in a world-wide musical context] / ed. by N.I. Degtiareva. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Politekhničeskogo Instituta, 2013. P. 9–15.

8. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Netradicionnye formy pis'mennyh rabot po garmonii v konservatoriyah [Non-traditional forms of written harmony work in conservatories]. Second edition. St. Petersburg: Kompozitor [Composer], 2001.

9. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Osnovnye kompozicionnye zakonomernosti mnogogolosiya russkoj narodnoj krest'yanskoj pesni [Fundamental composi-

## *Интервью*

tional rules in multi-voiced Russian folk-peasant songs]. Leningrad: Muzgiz [Music Publisher], 1961.

10. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Stat'i raznyh let [Articles from various years]. St. Petersburg: Soiuz Khudozhnikov [Union of Artist], 2004.

11. *Bershadskaya T.S.* Funkcii garmonii v muzykal'noj sisteme [Functional harmony in a musical system]. Leningrad: LOLGK [Leningrad Order of Lenin State Conservatory], 1989.

12. *Bershadskaya T.S. Maslenkova L.M., Nezvanov B.A. et al.* Kurs teorii muzyki [Course in music theory]. Leningrad: Muzyka, 1988.

13. Dmitriy SHostakovich: v pis'mah i dokumentah [Dmitri Shostakovich: In letter and documents] / ed. by I.A. Bobykina. Moscow: M.: Gosudarstvennyj central'nyj muzej muzykal'noj kul'tury im. M.I. Glinki [State Central Museum of Musical Culture named after M.I. Glinka], Reklamno-izdatel'skaya firma «Antikva» [Advertising and publishing company “Antikva”], 2000.

14. *Dubovsky J.I., Evseev S.V., Methodin I.V., Sokolov V.V.* Uchebnik garmonii [Harmony textbook]: 2 vols. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo “Iskusstvo” [State Publishing House “Art”], 1939.

15. Catoire G.L. Teoreticheskij kurs garmonii [Theoretical course of harmony]. 2 Vols. Vol. 1. Moscow: Gosmuzizdat [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1924–1925.

16. Konferenciya po teorii ladovogo ritma [Conference on the theory of modal rhythm] // Proletarskij muzykant [Proletarian musician]. 1930. № 2. P. 6–9.

17. *Kushnarev Ch.S.* Voprosy istorii i teorii armyanskoj monodicheskoy muzyki [Questions on the history and theory of Armenian mo-

## *Интервью*

nodic music]. Leningrad: Gosmuzizdat [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1958.

18. *Kushnarev Ch.S.* O polifonii: Sb. Statej [On polyphony, collected articles]. Moscow: Muzyka [Music], 1971.

19. *Lunacharsky A.V.* Neskol'ko zamechanij o teorii ladovogo ritma [Several observations on the theory of modal rhythm] // Proletarskij muzykant [Proletarian musician]. 1930. № 2. P. 10–13.

20. *Protopopov S.V.* Elementy stroeniya muzykal'noj rechi. 2 vols. Vol.1 / ed. by B. Yavorsky. Moscow: Gosmuzizdat [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1930.

21. *Rimsky-Korsakov N.A.* Polnoe sobranie sochinenij: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska [Complete collected works: Literary works and correspondence]. Vol. 4. Uchebnik garmonii [Harmony textbook]. Moscow: Muzgiz [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1960.

22. *Rimsky-Korsakov N.A.* Uchebnik garmonii [Harmony textbook]. Lithograph printing. St. Petersburg, 1885.

23. *Ryzhkin J.Ja.* Novoe izdanie uchebnika garmonii [New edition of the harmony textbook] // Sovetskaya muzyka [Soviet music]. 1950. № 2.

24. *Tiulin Yu.N.* Iskusstvo kontrapunkta [The art of counterpoint]. Moscow: Muzyka [Music], 1968.

25. *Tiulin Yu.N.* Natural'nye i al'teracionnye lady [Natural and alternating modes]. Moscow: Muzyka [Music], 1971.

26. *Tiulin Yu.N.* Stroenie muzykal'noj rechi [The structure of musical speech]. Leningrad: Muzgiz [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1969.

27. *Tiulin Yu.N.* Uchenie o garmonii [Studies in harmony]. Third edition. Moscow: Muzyka [Music], 1966.

## Интервью

28. *Tiulin Yu.N., Privano N.G.* Teoreticheskie osnovy garmonii [ The theoretical bases of harmony]. Leningrad: Muzgiz [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1965.

29. *Tiulin Yu.N., Privano N.G.* Uchebnik garmonii [Harmony textbook]. 2 vols. Moscow: Muzgiz [State Publishing House Music Sector], 1964.

30. *Kholopov Yu.N.* Garmoniya: prakticheskij kurs [(Harmony: A practical course)]. 2 vols. Moscow: Kompozitor [Composer], 2003.

31. *Kholopov Yu.N.* Garmoniya: teoreticheskij kurs [Harmony: a theoretical course]. Moscow: Lan' [Doe], 2003.

32. *Kholopov Yu.N., Kirillina L.V., Kyuregyan T.S., Lyzhov G.I., Pospelova R.L., Tsenova V.S.* Muzykal'no-teoreticheskie sistemy [Music-theoretical systems]. Moscow: Kompozitor [Composer], 2006.

33. *Yavorsky B.L.* Izbrannoe: pis'ma, vospominaniya [Favorites: Letters, recollections]. Moscow: Kompozitor [Composer], 2008.

34. *Yavorsky B.L.* Stat'i, vospominaniya, perepiska [Articles, remembrances, correspondence] / ed. by I. Rabinovich and D. Shostakovich. Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor [Soviet composer], 1972.

35. *Yavorsky B.L.* Stroenie muzykal'noj rechi. Materialy i zametki [ The structure of musical speech. Materials and notes]. Moscow, 1908.

36. *Carpenter E.* The Theory of Music in Russia and the Soviet Union, ca. 1650–1950. PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1988.

37. *Ewell P.* Conference Report: Inaugural Meeting of the Russian Society for Music Theory (OTM) [Electronic resource] // Music Theory Online. 2013. № 19 (4). URL: <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.13.19.4/mto.13.19.4.ewell.html>.

## *Интервью*

38. *Ewell P.* Rethinking Octatonicism: Views from Stravinsky's Homeland [Electronic resource] // Music Theory Online. 2012. № 18 (4). URL: <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.4/mto.12.18.4.ewell.html>.

39. *Jackson L.* Modulation and Tonal Space in the Practical Manual Of Harmony: Rimsky-Korsakov's Harmonic Theory and Its Historical Antecedents. PhD diss., Columbia University, 1996.

40. *Lupishko M.* Konyus' 'Metrotechtonism' and Yavorsky's 'Modal Rhythm': Parallels Between Music and Architecture in Early Soviet Music Theory // Music and Figurative Arts in the Twentieth Century / ed. by R. Illiano. Turnhout: Brepols, 2016. P. 73–94

41. *McQuere G.* The Theories of Boleslav Yavorsky // Russian Theoretical Thought in Music / ed. by G. McQuere. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. Repr. Rochester: University of Rochester Press, (1983) 2009. P. 109–164.

42. *Sabaneev L.* Modern Russian Composers / trans. by J.A. Joffe. New York: International Publishers, 1927.

43. *Tull J. B.V.* Asafiev's "Music Form as a Process": Translation and Commentary. PhD diss. Ohio State University, 1977.

