Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich (1865 - 1936)

Definition: Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich from The Columbia Encyclopedia

Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich (Глазунов, Александър Константинович), 1865–1936, Russian composer, director of the St. Petersburg Conservatory, 1906–30. He assisted his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov, in completing Borodin's unfinished opera Prince Igor. Glazunov's early works reflect the spirit of Russian nationalism, but Western influences are discernible in his later works. He wrote eight symphonies, two piano concertos and a violin concerto, ballets, chamber music, and orchestral tone poems.

Summary Article: Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich

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Russian composer. He achieved fame with his first symphony, which was written when he was only 17. He absorbed a range of influences, from his teacher Rimsky-Korsakov’s orchestral skill to Tchaikovsky’s lyricism. His own style fits between that of the Russian national school of The Five and that of the Western European ‘cosmopolitan’ composers. He made a significant impact as a teacher on the following generation of composers, including Prokofiev and Shostakovich.

Glazunov was born in St Petersburg. After being taught music at home as a child, he studied with Rimsky-Korsakov from 1880 and finished his course in 18 months, having a first symphony ready for performance early in 1882. Mitrofan Belaiev arranged a concert of his works in 1884 and began to publish them. He visited Western Europe in 1884, and his music thereafter reconciled current European musical trends with Russian influences from Tchaikovsky and Borodin. In 1897 he conducted the premiere of Rachmaninov’s 1st symphony, allegedly while drunk. He was appointed director of the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1905, and wrote little after that to augment his enormous earlier output. He completed several of Borodin’s unfinished works, notably the overture to Prince Igor. He left Russia in 1928 and settled in Paris, France.

Works

Stage ballets Raymonda (1897) and The Seasons (1899).

Orchestral eight symphonies (1881–1906), symphonic poem Stenka Razin (1885), violin concerto (1904), two piano concertos, concerto for saxophone.

Chamber seven string quartets (1881–1930), string quintet; many works for piano including two sonatas and Theme and Variations.

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