

Kalmus Masterworks Library

SHOSTAKOVICH

SYMPHONY NO. 1

Edited by Tom Myron

Op. 10

FULL SCORE

EDWIN F. KALMUS, CO.

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INSTRUMENTATION

3 Flutes (2-3 d. Piccolo)
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in A/B flat
(Alternate complete B flat parts provided)

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
3 Trumpets in C or B flat
3 Trombones
Tuba

Timpani Piano

Strings (9.8.7.6.5)

PROGRAM NOTES

The *Symphony No. 1 in F minor* (Opus 10) by Dmitri Shostakovich was written in 1924–1925, and first performed in Leningrad by the Leningrad Philharmonic under Nikolai Malko on May 12, 1926. Shostakovich wrote the work as his graduation piece at the Petrograd Conservatory, completing it at the age of 19.

While Shostakovich wrote this piece as his graduation exercise from Maximilian Steinberg's composition class, some of the material may have dated from considerably earlier. When the composer's aunt, Nadezhda Galli-Shohat, first heard the work at its American premiere by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, she recognized in it many fragments she had heard young Mitya play as a child. Some of these fragments were associated with La Fontaine's retelling of Aesop's fable of *The Ant and the Grasshopper* and Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*.

This symphony was a tremendous success from its premiere and is still considered today as one of Shostakovich's finest works. It displays an interesting and characteristic combination of liveliness and wit on the one hand, and drama and tragedy on the other. In some ways it is reminiscent of the works of Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Prokofiev. The transparent and chamber-like orchestration of the *First Symphony* is in quite a contrast to the complex and sophisticated Mahlerian orchestrations found in many of his later symphonies, and the assurance with which the composer imagines, then realizes large scale structure, is as impressive as his vigor and freshness of gesture.

The work has four movements (the last two being played without interruption) and is approximately half an hour in length.

MOVEMENTS

I. Allegretto — Allegro non troppo

The work begins with an introductory *Allegretto* section, which is developed from a duet between solo trumpet and bassoon. This leads into the first subject proper, a lively march-like *Allegro* reminiscent of the vaudeville and theatre music Shostakovich would have encountered during his time as a cinema pianist. The second subject is ostensibly a waltz, with the flute melody finding its way around several sections of the orchestra. The development section features a return to mock-comic grotesqueries, although the sonata form structure of this movement is entirely conventional.

II. Allegro — Meno mosso — Allegro — Meno mosso

In the second movement we are presented with a 'false start' in the cellos and basses before a frantic scherzo begins with the clarinet. The piano features for the first time with rapid scalar runs before a more somber mood develops in the *Meno mosso* section. Here, Shostakovich writes a triple-time passage in two, with melodies being passed through the flutes, clarinets, strings, oboes, piccolos, and the clarinets again, while the strings and triangle play in the background. The bassoon brings us back to the *Allegro* of the opening. The climax occurs with a combination of the two melodies presented earlier in the movement followed by a coda which is announced by widely spaced chords from the piano and violin harmonics.

III. Lento — Largo — Lento (attacca:)

The third movement begins with a dark oboe solo transferring to a cello solo, and proceeds to develop into a crescendo, featuring a quotation from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. There is also a *pianissimo* passage for the strings which anticipates the passacaglia from the *Eighth Symphony*.

IV. Allegro molto — Lento — Allegro molto — Meno mosso — Adagio

There is a drum roll *attacca* from the third movement into the fourth. After another somber passage, the music suddenly enters the *Allegro molto* section with a very fast melody on the clarinet and strings. This reaches a furious climax, after which calm descends and we hear another Wagner quotation. The following *Allegro* section culminates in a *fortissimo* timpani solo, a rhythmic motif which featured in the third movement. A passage for solo cello and muted strings cleverly uses this motif along with several other elements, leading into a coda section which ends the work with rousing fanfare-like figures from the brass.

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