

Programme note

This Caprice for violin is the first in a series of 18-19 century light and virtuosic concert pieces I have named in response to various countries and locations. Titled in Caprice-Russia, its reference to the city of Kazan, which I discovered when my mother took me there in my first holiday. There is no score programme behind this title, merely a placeholder. It follows my tradition of freely composing after – the Russian title Caprice/Russia/Russie by Frédéric Chopin and his later in Violin-Russia – now inspired by the instrument by which the music is performed.

Caprice-Russia is written for a large orchestra which serves as if my hand fully usually played in chords. I have done for their own distinctive sound that no other orchestra instrument can produce. There is also a small tubular bells, occasionally played by one musician like hand.

The piece starts slowly and quietly (Adagio movement), giving the impression of the city awakening, with some bells playing in the distance in a distant language to Paganini's beginning of Violin's first III. The music gradually and becomes a fast (Allegro vivace) vibrant movement to the end with various textures, on top of which all the instruments flourish like the woodwind, then the strings, finally the brass will play "to-top" – like various choruses.

I have used a recurring harmonic motif, $E_4 = E_3 + 2E_3 = E_4$, which represents the unique structure of the Russian Populistic harmonic, "the tones and heights of home" that are not tied completely to the six or seven, octaves, seven pitches etc. At one moment, the music will seem to rise slowly, with chord-like chords on this first note motif in the lower brass. There follows a cadence-like chord between the brass, strings and solo flautist horn, accompanied by a pulse from the Flute and Saxophone. The music will accelerate again and become more and more frantic. Just after a powerful climax, it will suddenly return to the Adagio of the beginning and the bells will ring, returning with "bellies" in the strings, where ornaments on open strings and harmonics perhaps evoking the Russian's bells. A final and fast end will encourage the bells and conclude this caprice with flourish.

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