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From Russia with Love, Part 1

Sherri Weiler



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I LOVE RUSSIAN VOCAL MUSIC. From my first exposure to it in the early 1980s—long before the Iron Curtain fell, before the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, before *glasnost* and *perestroika*—I knew I would one day, *had* to someday, sing it. Nearly all classically trained singers and their teachers have heard a few of the better known songs of Tchaikovsky or Rachmaninov; few know that Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, the entire membership of the Russian Five (better known as the “Mighty Handful” in Russia), Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and many others, also composed beautiful *romansy* for the voice.¹ Appendix 1 lists the last two centuries’ principal Russian vocal composers, arranged chronologically by birth date. Appendix 2 gives some excellent resources for singing in Russian, and Appendix 3 includes recommended songs of Glinka and Dargomyzhsky for beginning Russian-language singers. In this and the following two issues, I will provide a brief biography of these principal composers with a few suggestions for appropriate pieces for the novice Russian-singing performer, and show how interested singers can best approach these musical gems.

The Cyrillic alphabet proves to be a stumbling block for many of us, but those determined to tap the reservoir of this wonderful song output should not be totally deterred from learning enough of the Russian language to sing it well. There are a number of excellent resources both in print and online to help a singer learn the Russian diction basics. It is my personal opinion that a singer should study Russian diction as best as possible on one’s own; to truly make the leap into the language’s nuances, one must attend “diction finishing school” with a native speaker.

Russia came late to the flourishing of the arts that had been enjoyed in Western Europe for more than two centuries. The first, and perhaps most dominant reason, had to do with the fact that serfdom was not abolished in Russia until 1861 by Tsar Alexander II.² Another valid argument for this slow maturation has to do with the fact that what we in the West call Russia is actually a *continent*, not a country, despite whatever nomenclature is being used to describe today’s political boundaries. As such—and we see this in our own time—the various ethnic diversities that comprise modern Russian and the former Soviet Union are still vying (sometimes explosively) for autonomy and expression. Their cultural identities have been compromised for the past century under Soviet rule, and they are quick to tell you they are *not* Russian! They may have been politically Communist, but they are not culturally Russian, despite our Western propensity to simply call the states of the former Soviet Union “the new Russia.”

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Musically speaking, “the Romantic Age in the West, which witnessed the songs of Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, etc. found no parallel in Russia. The Russian song of that time belongs to the [folk-type] of song: its appeal is dramatic and direct, full of character and vivid in colour.”³ Though many studied in the capitals of Western Europe, Russian composers were seeking their own identities, pursuing a unifying factor; they found this in the “vast, illiterate masses” who were bound together “by centuries of oppression, suffering, and poverty,”⁴ which had in time become their standard condition. Having no cultural life similar to that found in the tsar’s court, they found plentiful expression in music, and in dance, with its varied hues and pulses. I noticed a very similar phenomenon when I visited Magadan, in Russia’s Far East, in 1992. Drab apartment buildings all looked the same in their uniform construction and architectural boredom. The buildings themselves were in ill repair, but once inside a unit, great personal expression was manifest in the decorations and the pride emanating from the individuals who occupied them. Much had been made from little, but genuine warmth and hospitality exuded from the people inside, who were delighted to share their culture. We learned their songs and sang to the strumming of guitars and danced around the dining table, with barely room to squeeze by. Two decades later, what I remember most is the depth of spirit and true joy that they shared wholeheartedly with me.

The French have their *romance*-turned-*mélodie*, the Germans their *lieder*. The term *romans* (plural, *romansy*) has been used in Russia for over 200 years to describe both vocal music and a balladic type of poetry; this is because in the Middle Ages of Western Europe, the poet and the composer (i.e., troubadours) were the same person. Early 19th century Russians used the term *romans* to depict songs with French words sung to Russian tunes. Differentiation between the literary *romans* and the musical *romans* in Russia did not occur until the end of the first quarter of the 19th century. As the 18th century ended, Russia’s literary output was enjoying the same burgeoning growth as her classical music creation, and it was all new; it is no wonder that the same terms would be used to describe both the poetic form and the musical product derived from it.

The chief characteristic of the musical *romans* is that the writer/poet describes not his own feelings, but the feelings of another person; it is this highly subjective slant that so appealed to the early Russian songwriters. The *romans* is distinguished from the *ballad* because the latter usually contains a description of a longer event, while the *romans* only tells about one salient part of that event, or at the very least the poet’s emotional reaction to it. Russian musicologist Nikolai Findeisen, writing in 1905, bemoaned the “false and unnecessary tradition of calling a Russian art song a *romans* . . . The simple word ‘song’ completely replaces the established foreign term ‘romans’ and fully represents the form and character of this work of art.”⁵ But the term *romans* has stuck, no doubt because so many 19th century Russian composers published collections of “Russian Romances and Songs,” as if there were indeed a difference.

The mutual attraction of the French and the Russians can be traced to the early 18th century, when Peter the Great’s second child, the Empress Elizabeth (1709–1762), became fascinated with all things French. Within a half-century of Elizabeth’s death, this libertarian fervor, with roots in the late 16th century Age of Enlightenment, had overtaken most of the Western world, including the newly founded United States. The French revolutionary ideals of “liberté, égalité, fraternité” went far beyond the boundaries of France, disseminated primarily in her literature and poetry. From the time of Peter the Great up to Napoleon’s disastrous 1812 campaign against Russia (as immortalized orchestrally by Tchaikovsky), Russian society was very interested in Western culture and cared little for its own native genius, which remained as yet unexplored. Richard Taruskin states unequivocally that “Russian national consciousness was an aspect of Westernization.”⁶ Music has always mirrored the culture of the day, and Russia was no different. It wasn’t until after the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), however, that cultured Russian society turned away from Western influences and started to look to its own native sources for musical inspiration.⁷ These sweeping changes in Western philosophy resulted in cultural reforms that paved the way for Glinka, who grasped this sudden shift in cultural awareness in the 1830s much in the way Mozart had some four decades earlier with *Le nozze di Figaro*: The common man became someone of interest and consideration, whether the nobles approved or not. Russia was ready to

take her place among Europe's cultural elite with a very strong voice of her own, and Glinka was the right man, at the right place, in the right time.

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka (1804–1857) has been called the founder of Russian classical music with good reason. He was “the first Russian composer to combine distinction in speaking the musical idiom of the day with a personal and strongly original voice.”⁸ He spent several years studying composition in Europe, leaving Russia for Italy in 1830, with tenor Nikolai Ivanov as a travelling companion. While there Glinka witnessed the premieres of both *Anna Bolena* and *La sonnambula*, became friends with Donizetti and Bellini and their librettist Felice Romani, and even met Mendelssohn, although this was a less than successful meeting. He also attracted the attention of Hector Berlioz through Ivanov's performance of some of Glinka's vocal compositions; Berlioz would prove to be of aid to him during a subsequent visit to France over a decade later.

Glinka grew disillusioned with Italy in August, 1833, and went to Berlin to visit his sister, who was living there at the time. He spent some six months studying with Siegfried Dehn, a noted music theorist and composition teacher who influenced Glinka greatly. If in Italy Glinka developed a fluency in the language of Italian opera, under Dehn's tutelage he became disciplined in the art of part-writing and fugues.

The death of Glinka's father caused him to return to Russia in early 1834, where Glinka was content to remain as he composed his first opera, *A Life for the Tsar*. This pivotal and decisively Russian opera was premiered in late 1836. Glinka's second opera, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, premiered in 1842, but was not as well received as his first. This disappointment caused Glinka to journey to Paris, where he stayed for ten months and befriended Berlioz. The Frenchman conducted several of Glinka's works before a Parisian audience to great success. Glinka left France in 1845 to spend the next two years in Spain, where he delighted in the colorful Spanish folklore idioms that left such a huge impression on him.

In his final decade, Glinka met Meyerbeer in Berlin in 1852, and was reunited with Dehn in Berlin in 1856, where he was introduced to the music of Palestrina and Lassus. He attended performances of several Bach pieces, including the *B-minor Mass*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and several operas by Mozart. Glinka wanted to return

to Russia in late 1856, but caught a cold before leaving Berlin, which weakened him greatly and resulted in his death there in February, 1857.⁹

Glinka wrote some 80 *romansy*. Their accompaniments are rather primitive and their Italianate melodies are banal, according to Cesar Cui, writing in 1896.¹⁰ Cui felt Glinka's songs were well written for the voice; words were properly accentuated for the most part, and words and music generally corresponded well. But Glinka was often negligent with the form of the poem, changing lines and repetitions with a generous hand. The music, while carried on Italian wings, nonetheless bore noticeable tracings of Russian and Ukrainian folk songs. This was especially evident in Glinka's use of a simple structure, a melancholy sentiment, and the use of alternating major and minor keys. An easy first song which follows this pattern is “Do Not Tempt Me Needlessly” (Nyezh iskushai menya byez nuzhdi/Искушай меня ъж нужды).

Since Glinka traveled to Western Europe so much, it is not surprising that he incorporated many of the national musical characteristics of the countries he visited. Most of his rhythmic and harmonic features mirrored dance forms: in tunes with a Spanish flavor, he used the bolero rhythm; from Italy he borrowed the barcarolle; and from Poland, the mazurka. He also employed the classical diminutive turn, syncopation, and frequently ended his phrases with somewhat weak conclusions. While mastering both French and Italian opera style, in his own compositions he never seemed to penetrate to the deeper essences of these styles. His songs became studies for the arias he wrote in his two Russian operas, *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila*.

Glinka's *romansy* have always seemed simple to me; they are beautifully melodic, sound very Italian, and the poetry is uncomplicated. Cui wrote, barely 40 years after Glinka's death, that Glinka's songs were “almost completely forgotten and almost never performed.”¹¹ This is likely due to the fact that the songs of Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, and Rachmaninov had supplanted Glinka's output by the end of the 19th century, and rightly so. But before we dismiss him as *passé*, it would serve us well to remember that it was upon the back of Glinka that all Russian classical music was built! He opened the doors for all who came after him by proving that Russia could have her own voice in musical matters; that she did not

need to rely on Western Europe for her own sense of style; that she should not fear using the elements she already had in such abundance: a keen Orientalism (Russia borders China) and a rich folk music that was uniquely Russian.

Another endearing quality that voice teachers will appreciate is that Glinka (like his friend Dargomyzhsky) truly loved the human voice. In fact, he wrote two treatises on vocalism, several vocal exercises, and some studies for voice and piano. Of these vocalises and treatises, most remained undiscovered and were not published formally until the 1950s and 1960s, more than a century after they were written. In addition, Glinka wrote several songs in Italian and French.¹²

Another native Russian composer making his mark at the same time was Aleksandr Sergeyevich Dargomyzhsky (1813–1869). Born to wealth and leisure, Dargomyzhsky had been trained in his youth as singer, pianist, and violinist. His friendship with Glinka, who encouraged him to compose, began in 1835, just after the latter's return from Italy and his early studies with Siegfried Dehn in Berlin. These Dehn-through-Glinka composition lessons constituted the only formal training Dargomyzhsky was to receive.¹³ Like Glinka, he made two trips to Europe, the first occurring in 1844–45. In Berlin, he met Meyerbeer; in Paris, Halévy and Auber; and in Vienna, Donizetti. He was becoming less enamored of Grand Opera, and upon his return to Russia sought to develop a more realistic style in his composition. It was during this period that “his vocal music began to show the influence of conversational speech contours and tempos.”¹⁴ He returned to Europe for another extended period in 1864–65, during which he was able to hear his own music performed in Brussels, including his opera *Rusalka*, based on the Pushkin poem.

Dargomyzhsky wrote more than 100 *romansy*, and began composing with the same core elements exhibited in Glinka's songs: common melodies written to elementary accompaniments, but an approach that satisfied the salon dilettante's tastes during the 1840s and 1850s. According to Cui, Dargomyzhsky managed to surpass Glinka in developing the Russian *romans* by treating the poetic text with “greater love and respect than did Glinka.”¹⁵ He selected his texts with a stricter standard, took great care in setting the words to the music, and created a more flexible and refined declamation. There is

less repetition of text as well, and Dargomyzhsky employs more musical economy than Glinka. His accompaniments are still simple, but they result in more variety of forms, including variations. “Lullaby and Good Night” (“Bayu, bayushki, bayu”), for instance, features four strophic stanzas, but each of the verses is accompanied differently. Dargomyzhsky's principal contribution to the development of the Russian *romans* was quite simply the intelligence he used in text setting coupled with the equal role the words play in informing the music itself.¹⁶

The prince of Russian poetry, Aleksandr Pushkin, served as chief poet for both Glinka and Dargomyzhsky, and continued in this capacity for the next century and a half for a host of Russian composers. He supplied the poetic bases for Glinka's *Rusalka and Lyudmila* and Dargomyzhsky's *The Stone Guest*. In fact, for *The Stone Guest* (a retelling of the Don Juan/Don Giovanni legend) Dargomyzhsky decided to set Pushkin's 1830 play of the same name word for word without first turning it into a musical libretto.¹⁷ (This caused much excitement among the musical elite.) Other favored poets of Glinka and Dargomyzhsky included the Romantic poet Vasily Andreyevich Zhukovsky (1783–1852), Konstantin Nikolaevich Batyushkov (1787–1855), Nestor Vasilyevich Kukolnik (1809–1868), and the “Poet of the Caucasus,” Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov (1814–1841).

Both Glinka and Dargomyzhsky were surrounded by poets who were greatly contributing to the advancement of Russian literature, and this time of exponential growth coincided with the development of a Russian national music, beginning first with song before it spread to opera, and then on to symphonic music. They both “created songs that were new, powerful, and deeply emotional, yet simple.”¹⁸ The early Russian art song, or *romans*, was modeled on the simpler structures of Western song, dressed up as it was in Russian folk style. Gradually, Russian vocal music becomes purer and more refined as the 19th century progresses through the musical lenses of Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky, and Rachmaninov.

NOTES

1. Thomas P. Hodge, *A Double Garland: Poetry and Art-Song in Early-Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2000), 7–14.

2. A. Y. Polunov, Thomas C. Owen, and L. G. Zakharova, *Russia in the Nineteenth Century: Autocracy, Reform, and Social Change, 1814–1914* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2005), 89.
3. Oda Slobodskaya, “An Approach to the Russian Art-Song,” *Tempo* 39 (1956): 7.
4. *Ibid.*, 6.
5. Nikolai Findeisen, *The Russian Art Song (Romance): An Essay on its Historical Development* (1905), translated by James Walker (Nerstrand, MN: James Walker, 1993), 5.
6. Richard Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 3.
7. Slobodskaya, 6.
8. Stuart Campbell, “Glinka, Mikhail Ivanovich,” *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press; <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/11279> (accessed March 19, 2014).
9. *Ibid.*
10. Cesar Cui, *The Russian Romance: An Outline of Its Development* (1896), translated by James Walker (Nerstrand, MN: James Walker, 1993), 4.
11. *Ibid.*, 10.
12. Campbell (accessed March 21, 2014).
13. Jennifer Spencer, et al., “Dargomyzhsky, Aleksandr Sergeyevich,” *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online; <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.fsu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/O901259#O716221> (accessed April 1, 2014).
14. *Ibid.*
15. Cui, 12.
16. *Ibid.*, 21.
17. Frances Maes, *A History of Russian Music from Karmainskaya to Babi Yar* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 46.
18. Findeisen, 98.

APPENDIX 1.

Principal Russian Vocal Composers

COMPOSER	DATES
Mikhail Glinka	1804–1857
Aleksandr Dargomyzhsky	1813–1869
Anton Rubinstein	1829–1894
Aleksandr Borodin	1933–1887
Cesar Cui	1835–1918
Mily Balakirev	1837–1910

Modest Mussorgsky	1839–1881
Piotr Tchaikovsky	1840–1893
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov	1844–1908
Anton Arensky	1861–1906
Aleksandr Gretchaninoff	1864–1956
Aleksandr Glazunov	1865–1936
Sergei Rachmaninov	1873–1943
Nikolai Medtner	1879–1951
Sergei Prokofiev	1891–1953
Dmitri Shostakovich	1906–1975
Rodion Shchedrin	1932-

APPENDIX 2.

Resources for Singing in Russian

Books (in descending date of publication)

- Olin, Emily. *Singing in Russian*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012.
- Richter, Laurence R. *Prokofiev’s Complete Song Texts: Russian Texts of the Complete Songs of Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2008.
- Richter, Laurence R. *Shostakovich’s Complete Song Texts: Russian Texts of the Complete Songs of Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2007.
- Elliott, Martha. *Singing in Style: A Guide to Vocal Performance Practices*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Belov, Anton. *The 19th-Century Russian Operatic Anthology: Twenty Arias for Baritone: With International Phonetic Alphabet Transcriptions and Word-for-Word Translations, Including a Guide to the IPA and Russian Lyric Diction*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2005.
- Belov, Anton. *The 19th-Century Russian Operatic Anthology: Twenty Arias for Soprano: With International Phonetic Alphabet Transcriptions and Word-for-Word Translations, Including a Guide to the IPA and Russian Lyric Diction*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2005.
- Richter, Laurence R. *Selected Nineteenth-Century Russian Song Texts: Russian Texts of Songs by Abaza, Aliabiev, Arensky, Balakirev, Borodin, Bulakhov, Cui, Dargomyzhsky, Dubuque, Glinka, Gurilyov, Kharito, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rubinstein, Varlamov, Verstovsky, and Yakovlev*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2005.
- Belov, Anton. *Libretti of Russian Operas: With International Phonetic Alphabet Transcriptions and Word-for-Word Translations, Including a Guide to the IPA and Russian Lyric Diction*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2004.

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Fralick, J. R., and Brian James Baer. *The 19th-Century Russian Operatic Anthology: Twenty Arias for Tenor*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2004.

Doscher, Barbara M., and John Nix. *From Studio to Stage: Repertoire for the Voice*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002.

Sylvester, Richard D. *Tchaikovsky's Complete Songs: A Companion with Texts and Translations*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002.

Richter, Laurence R. *Mussorgsky's Complete Song Texts: Russian Texts of the Complete Songs of Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2002.

Richter, Laurence R. *Rachmaninov's Complete Song Texts: Russian Texts of the Complete Songs of Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninov*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 2000.

Richter, Laurence R. *Tchaikovsky's Complete Song Texts: Russian Texts of the Complete Songs of Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky*. Geneseo, NY: Leyerle Publications, 1999.

Piatak, Jean, and Regina Avrashov. *Russian Songs & Arias: Phonetic readings, Word-by-Word Translations, and a Concise Guide to Russian Diction*. Dallas, TX: Pst...Inc., 1991.

Challis, Natalia. *The Singer's Rachmaninoff*. New York: Pelion Press, 1989.

Online Resources

Russian Art Song: <http://www.russianartsong.com>

The Diction Police: <http://www.thedictionpolice.com/category/russian-diction/>

RecMusic.org: <http://recmusic.org/lieder/>

Music

Russian vocal music is much easier to procure today than before or shortly after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Any online search should reveal several publishers, including Boosey & Hawkes and the Russian music house Muzyka in Moscow (difficult search engine). Many earlier (i.e., in public domain) pieces can be found at <http://ismip.org> and downloaded for free, but the search can be difficult and exhausting without a command of the Cyrillic alphabet. Glendower Jones at Classical Vocal Repertoire (www.classicalvocalrep.com) can find anything specific one could desire.

APPENDIX 3 Suggested First Songs In Russian

Mikhail Ivanovich Glinka

Title	Translation	Poet	Voice Type/Range	Mood	Tempo	Key
Жаваронок	Zhavar o nak (<i>The lark</i>)	Kukolnik	Lyric/E ₄ -F [#] ₅	Gentle, pretty	Moderato	e min
Не искушай меня ъж нужды	Nye ish kushai meny a byez nuzhdyi (<i>Do not tempt me needlessly</i>)	Baratinsky	Lyric/D ₄ -E ₅	Remorseful, sorrowful	Moderato	a min
К ней	K nyeh (<i>To her</i>)	Golitsyn	Dramatic/G [#] ₄ -F ₅	Fast, exciting	Tempo di Mazurka	G maj/ min
Я помню чудное мгновенье	Ya po mnyu chudnoe mgnov enye (<i>I remem- ber that wonderful moment</i>)	Pushkin	Lyric or Dramatic/E ₄ -F ₅	Uplifting, exciting	Allegro moderato	F maj/ min
Где наша роза	Gdye nasha roza (<i>Where is our rose</i>)	Pushkin	Lyric or Dra- matic/F ₄ -G ₅	High energy	Con moto	g min
Еврейская песня	Yevreiskaya pyecna (<i>Hebrew song</i>)	Kukolnik	Lyric or Dramatic/G ₄ -F ₅	Doleful, lovely	Allegro moderato	a min
Баркаропа	Barcarola (<i>Barcarole</i>)	Kukolnik	Lyric or Dramatic/D ₄ -F ₅	Soft, pretty	12/8, con moto	D maj/ min
Сомнение	Somn eniye (<i>Doubt</i>)	Kukolnik	Lyric or Dra- matic Mezzo or Baritone/A ₃ -D ₅	Intense, painful	Andante mosso	d min

Песнь Маргариты	Русен Margaritiy (<i>Marguerite's Song</i>)	Fyets, from Goethe's <i>Faust</i>	Dramatic/D [#] ₄ -G ₅	Varying, but intense	Andante	b min/ B ^b maj
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Aleksandr Sergeyeovich Dargomyzhsky

Title	Translation	Poet	Voice Type/Range	Mood	Tempo	Key
Я всё ещё его, ъезумная, люблю	Ya vsyo yesho yevo, byez um naya, lyublyu (I still love him mind- lessly)	Zhadovsky	Lyric or Dramatic, C [#] ₄ -F ₅	Sad, remem- bering a past love	Moderato assai	d min
Ты и вы	Tiy [informal] i viy [formal] (<i>You and you</i>)	Pushkin	Lyric or Dramatic/F ₄ -F ₅	Happy, rejoic- ing	Moderato assai	B ^b maj
Мне грустно	Mnye grus na (<i>I am sad</i>)	Lermontov	Lyric or Dra- matic Mezzo or Baritone/D ₄ -E ₅	Sad, remem- bering	Moderato	d min
Я вас любил	Ya vas lyubil	Pushkin	Lyric or Dra- matic Mezzo or Baritone/A ₃ -D ₅	Remembering and forgiving	Moderato assai	G maj
Тучки небесные	Tuch ki nye byes niyeh	Lermontov	High voice, coloratura/D [#] ₄ -A ₅	Loneliness, banishment	Andante	e min

All of these songs can be downloaded free at <http://imslp.org>.

Search for the composer, download the score, and print the pages you desire. The Glinka books have a table of contents after the description (in Russian) of each song. The Dargomyzhsky will require scrolling through the score, as no table of contents was provided. Boldface syllables are the accented, or stressed, ones.

Dr. Sherri Weiler was Associate Professor of Music at Shorter University in Rome, GA, teaching voice and voice pedagogy from 2004–2012. She received both the BA and MEd degrees from Clemson University, the MM degree from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, and the DM degree from Florida State University. Dr. Weiler has taught voice at Alaska Pacific University, University of Alaska Anchorage, Florida A&M University, and most recently at Florida State University. Her professional publications include two articles for the *Journal of Singing* on the songs of Berlioz and Wagner; professional presentations include a lecture recital on Russian art song performed for both the Southern chapter and the 47th national conference of the College Music Society. Dr. Weiler was a featured chamber music performer at the 2004 national conference of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and has served in the Alaska and Georgia chapters as president, membership chair, registrar, and secretary. She was selected to present a poster

paper on the development of 19th century Russian art song at the 2006 NATS national conference in Minneapolis, and currently serves on the Editorial Board for the *Journal of Singing*, a post she has held since 2008. Dr. Weiler has also written several articles for *Classical Singer* magazine.

In 1992 Weiler represented the Municipality of Anchorage on a cultural exchange to Magadan, Russia, and was subsequently selected by Mstislav Rostropovich to sing the mezzo soprano solo in Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* with the National Symphony later that year. The singer coached Russian language and song literature for twelve years with Svetlana Velichko, a graduate of and former piano professor at the Moscow Conservatory; the two have a CD of 19th century Russian vocal literature on the Centaur label, *Russia: Golden Century of Song*. Weiler's website is www.sherriweiler.com, and she can be contacted at afsmw516@yahoo.com.