
TOCCATA
CLASSICS
Fridrich BRUK
ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME ONE
SYMPHONY NO. 17, JOY OF LIFE
SYMPHONY NO. 18, DAUGAVPILS
Gertruda Jerjomenko, piano
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra
Māris Kupčs
FIRST RECORDINGS

THE SYMPHONIC NARRATIVES OF FRIDRICH BRUK
by Tish Kennedy Davenport[1]

Fridrich Bruk was born the son of Ada Bragilevsky-Bruk and Michael Bruk in Kharkov, Ukraine, on 18 September 1937. Michael Bruk (21 February 1913–14 July 2013) studied with the influential Soviet economist Evsei Grigorievich Liberman at the Kharkov Institute of Economics and Engineering and had a successful career as an engineer in the Soviet Union; he relocated to Israel in 1989, where he lived until his death at the age of 100. His wife, Ada Bragilevsky-Bruk (30 June 1916–21 September 1943), a well-known concert pianist in Ukraine, was not so long-lived: she died during World War II from what seems to have been malaria. Bruk explains the circumstances, in an unusual form of biological warfare:

> In June–July of 1942 (Ufa, Bashkiria, during the Evacuation in an Escape from the Nazis, who occupied a very important part of [the] Soviet Union and whole Ukraine), I felt such strong Hunger every moment, that my Health became very weak. Because of the terrible situation for a large number of evacuated children who died from hunger, officials had organized some kind of camp, as I remember, out from Ufa-city on the opposite bank of River Belaja. Then, after two or three whole weeks, Ufa-city knew that Nazi-terrorists had started an operation, which aimed to kill all little children who were in that big camp, where children got food three times a day. These German terrorists had passed an unknown number of tropical mosquitoes. At that time in the Soviet Union, which was really in a terrible situation, there wasn't any medicine against that and every person, which had gotten such infections, died after terrible torture. The Soviet Army immediately surrounded our camp, but my Mother with

[1] I am extremely grateful to the composer for his assistance in writing these notes.

two other Mothers also broke through the army and escaped with their children to some ship. On the way to Ufa-city, my Mother and I got bitten by mosquitoes; one year later my Dear Mother died, and I was terribly sick for five years (1942–1947). It was a terrible experience in my Life.[2]

Raised by his grandparents after his mother's death, Bruk attended the Kharkov Special Music School for Gifted Children, where he began playing piano at age eight, studying with A. I. Dubrovskaja and L. S. Pestrichenko, who had taught his mother piano as well. In 1956 he graduated with a silver medal and went on to study at the Leningrad Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatoire, where over the next five years he studied composition with Viktor Voloshinov and Boris Arapov and continued to hone his piano skills under the tutelage of the appropriately named V. V. Melodieva, a prominent teacher of the time who, according to Bruk, had known Rachmaninov and Prokofiev.

In September 1959, Bruk married Nadezhda Mislavsky, a music teacher and choral conductor. For several years they lived and worked in Karelia,[3] where the folk-culture created interests and inspirations that would later blossom in Bruk's music, in such compositions as the *Variations on the Karelian folksong Strawberry* for piano[4] and the Symphony No. 7, *Kalevala by Artist Axel Gallen-Kallela* (2006).[5] In 1964 the Bruks returned to Leningrad, where Fridrich became head of the music department at the Lennauchfilm studio. Ten years later, the Bruks moved to Finland, working together at the Conservatoire of Tampere for several years (1974–78), before Fridrich moved on to become a lecturer of piano and music theory at the Music Institute of Riihimäki (1980–86), and Nadezhda became a substitute teacher for choral conducting and vocal

[2] The comments from Fridrich Bruk quoted here were made in a series of e-mail exchanges in autumn 2017.

[3] Most of the erstwhile Finnish province of Karelia, a large area straddling the current Finnish-Russian border, was ceded to the Soviet Union in 1940, after the Winter War between the two countries (1939–40). Finland thereby lost its second-largest city, Viipuri (Vyborg), and its industrial heartland, and 400,000 Finns became refugees.

[4] Edition Hellas, Helsinki, 1985.

[5] In his booklet notes for the album *In the Finnish Mode* (F&NB CD-12, 2009), Bruk writes that 'in general my interest in Karelian folk-art, traditions and life arose in 1961 when I started my composer's career in Karelia. Ever since then, I have frequently used Karelian songs in my works'.

and piano lessons. In 1987 the Bruks established their own music college in Tampere, the Piano-Opisto Bruk, which they maintained until 1998, when Nadezhda fell seriously ill. Her health eventually stabilised and she now does some choral conducting on occasion. Their son, Alexander, is also musically gifted; he is an accomplished concert pianist who has recorded several of his father's compositions and is currently Headmaster of the Institute of Community Education in Pori, on the Finnish west coast.[6]

Although he has composed music for fifteen films and 30 theatrical performances, Bruk is more widely known for his popular songs, such as the tango *Soi maininki hiljainen*; 1984 ('Waves played quietly'; 1984), first recorded in 1987 by the famous Finnish popular singer Eino Grön (known as 'the Tango King').[7] This immensely popular song has been recorded countless times by various other artists, including Saija Varjus ('the Tango Queen') and another award-winning singer, Kaija Lustila.

Bruk has a reputation in a number of other musical domains. He has written instrumental folk-music, such as the Sonata for Kantele (which incorporates three Karelian folksongs; 1986), choral compositions and works for children, among them *The Hand of God* (2001–2), a Christmas oratorio with a libretto by Pertti Luumi.[8] He has also created two operas for children, *Shining Booksign* (1984–85) and *Cat's House* (2004–5). *Shining Booksign* was premiered at the Municipal Theatre of Riihimäki (1986–87) with Sointu Angervo as both librettist and producer; and *Cat's House* is a Jewish opera with a libretto written around 1927–28, as far as Bruk can recall, by the esteemed Jewish Russian poet and children's author, Samuil Marshak (1887–1964).[9] There are also works for young musicians, as well as a series of instrumental sonatas (for clarinet, viola, violoncello, two trumpets, etc.) and other chamber works. And Bruk is gaining international recognition for his symphonic repertoire, with eighteen

[6] For instance, Alexander is the pianist on several tracks of the CD *Compositions by Fridrich Bruk: From Kalevala*, published in Tampere by Fridrich Bruk himself (FBCD-199411, 1994).

[7] Recorded on the LP *Bandeon*, released by Fazer Finnlevy in 1987.

[8] *The Hand of God* was commissioned by the Nokia Lutheran Church in honour of the twentieth anniversary of the Nokia Childrens' School Choir and was recorded in 2008 through ERP (Estonian Record Productions).

[9] *Cat's House* was composed in 2004–5 for YLE (Finnish Radio), but has yet to be performed despite the two stipends Bruk received for its creation.

symphonies currently to his name.[10] This recording presents the two most recent in that cycle.

Symphony No. 17, *Joy of Life*

Symphony No. 17, *Joy of Life*, was conceived in spring 2016 when Timothy Jackson (a professor of theory at the University of North Texas (UNT) and the dedicatee of Bruk's Symphony No. 11, *The Universe*) suggested the idea of a piano concerto to Bruk; the intention was to procure a performance with Heejung Kang (Jackson's wife) as soloist, at UNT, where Kang is a senior lecturer in piano. When difficulties prevented the desired performance, conversations with the Latvian conductor Māris Kupčs prompted Bruk to re-examine the idea, and so, in the summer of 2016, the piano concerto evolved into a 'Concerto-Symphony for Orchestra and Piano'[11] where, as the composer put it, 'the piano solo is concealed inside the orchestra'. But the piano still maintains a strong solo presence, and it often helps delineate the form, as in more typical piano concertos.

In addition to an abstract autobiographical programme (I: 'Attempts'; II: 'Sorrow'; III: 'Strength'), this work, according to the composer, contains 'deeper psychological ideas than Piano-concertos usually have'. Bruk also refers to this composition as his 'newest Jewish symphony'. *Joy of Life* joins a handful of other Bruk symphonies which include Jewish themes: for instance, in the fourth movement of Symphony No. 16, *The Dnieper River* (2016), the Dnieper river storms and rages in its representation of Bruk's 'Soulscream' for the tragic fortune of the Jewish people in Ukraine.[12] A few others

[10] For an overview of Bruk's symphonic output and a closer look at several of his Jewish-themed symphonies, *cf.* my article 'Fridrich Bruk at 80: programmatic narratives and Jewish folk influences in Symphonies 3, 10 and 11', *The Musical Times*, Autumn 2017, pp. 19–36.

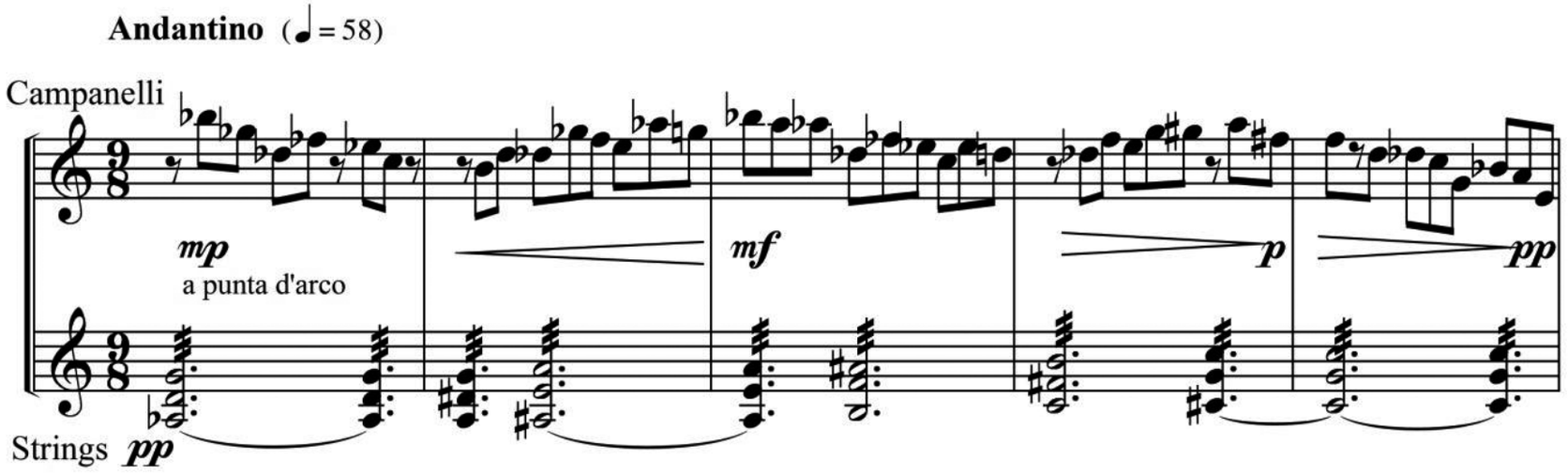
[11] This hybrid form features especially in the catalogues of Russian composers, the best-known example being Prokofiev's Symphony-Concerto for cello and orchestra, Op. 125 (1950–51). A sample group of works from the mid-1970s includes the Concerto-Symphony for piano and orchestra (1974) by Nikolai Peyko (1916–95), the Concerto-Symphony for piano and orchestra, Op. 102 (1974–75), by Anatoly Alexandrov (1888–1982) and the *Concerto-Symphony for Viola and Cello with Orchestra* (which is also his Symphony No. 1; 1976) by Andrei Golovin (b. 1950), released on Toccata Classics TOCC 0264 in 2015.

[12] As described by the composer in an e-mail (18 November 2016): 'Dnieper's Storm – what it is? Yes, yes! It is my Wrath! It is not only Nature as in Symphony N. 6: it is my Soulscream about [the] Fortune of Jewish Shtetl without any, even only One, Jewish Shade in this terrible place, [whose] Name is Chernobyl […]'.

which feature Jewish themes include Symphony No. 3, *Artist Chagall* (2000); Symphony No. 5, *In the Jewish Mode* (2002); Symphony No. 10, *Klezmorim II* (2010); Symphony No. 11, *The Universe* (2010); and Symphony No. 13, *Artist Malevich* (2014).

In the first movement, 'Attempts' [1], the campanelli (i.e., glockenspiel) introduces the opening melody (Ex. 1) in a moderate tempo and a $\frac{9}{8}$ metre, accompanied by a string-section sonority (initially A flat, D, G), which ascends by half-steps in the background. This melodic style of writing, an intentionally varying mixture of disjunct motion and linear, chromatic movement, perhaps programmatically depicts the tragic events experienced by the composer early in life. For, as Bruk explains, 'About [my] Symphony "Joy of Life". It is a programme, which I expressed in my names of every part of this composition. It is like my treatment to my Life [*sic*], which I expressed in the music of that Symphony'. Furthermore, as the music moves forward with subsequent variations, the effect of the continually changing patterns is to leave the listener rather disoriented in this ever-changing landscape of sound, as a young child on the run might be.

Ex. 1

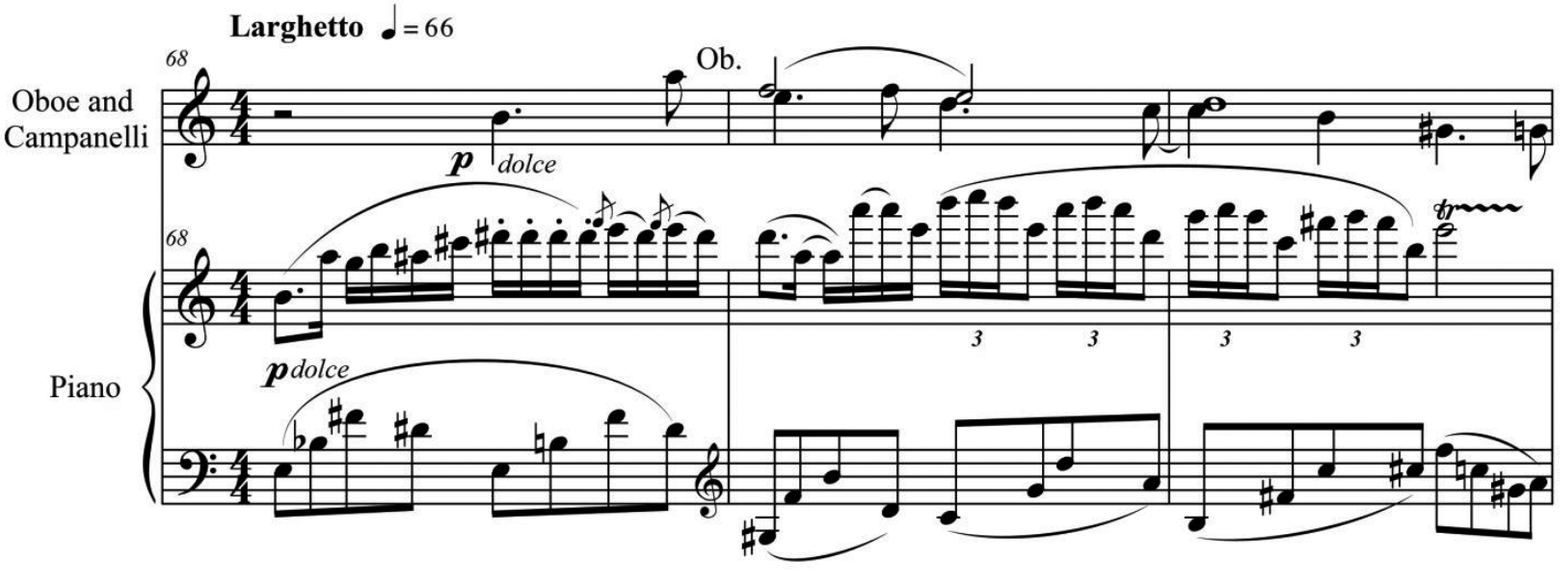


The thematic idea in Ex. 1 is carried onwards by the woodwinds and strings until the piano makes a dramatic solo entrance (*ff*), *Agitato*. This entrance marks the beginning of a new section, as if this moment could be the soloist's turn to present the material from

the orchestral opening, as is typically found in the first movement of a piano concerto. But rather than literally repeating Ex. 1 as at the opening, the piano instead presents another variation. In it, the first three quavers (eighth notes) in the left hand of the piano (E flat, C flat, G flat) are related in intervallic content to the opening three pitches in the glockenspiel (B flat, G flat, D flat), although presented here in ascending rather than descending order, as found in the beginning. These three pitches are followed by a series of descending semitones, instead of continuing with the original pattern of intervals. Additional phrases in this section continue to evolve in Bruk's characteristic style of variation.

A contrasting theme (Ex. 2) is introduced by the piano at bar 68 with a change of metre to common time and a counter-melody in the campanelli, a unique orchestral colouring which will distinguish the return of Ex. 2 at the end of this movement (despite the change of metre to $\frac{9}{8}$). The first bars of this lyrical theme contain characteristic touches of Jewish folk-melodies, such as expressive grace notes, a series of repeated notes (such as the four D sharps on the third beat in Ex. 2) and flourishes of triplets. Other accompaniment is sparse, with a tiny bit of colouring from the oboe and, subsequently, clarinet and upper strings.

Ex. 2



As if to reinforce the Jewish characteristics of this theme, a solo violin is added as an additional counter-melody, and the sustained dulcet tones of a clarinet also provide a touch of colour. Another variation begins *Cantabile*, with the melody in the flute, and winds and strings accompanying; it builds to an *Impetuoso* with strings playing an impassioned rhythmic augmentation of the varied melody in octaves, juxtaposed with the more active piano solo – which is still characterised by the Jewish folk-style of Ex. 2 through expressive slurs grouped into pairs with semitone descents.

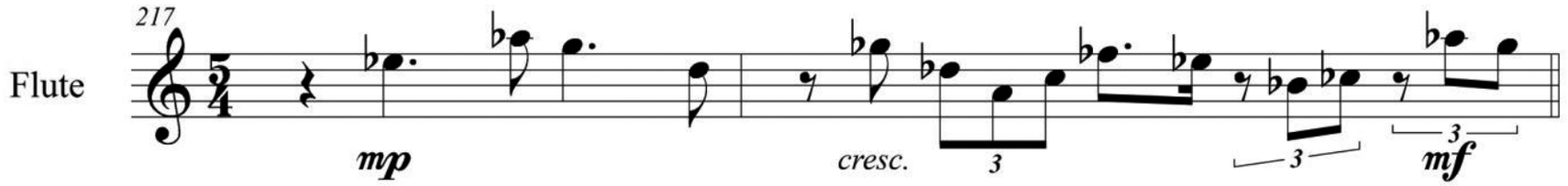
The material in Ex. 1 resurfaces with a return to the compound triple metre. One might argue for hearing this central section as a development of sorts, since it contains varied returns of Exx. 1 and 2. But since Bruk uses developing variation throughout the movement, I suggest that the development, so to speak, takes place programmatically (emotionally, if you will) rather than strictly thematically. This section is marked *Risoluto* and carries a much faster tempo indication than the opening. The material of Ex. 2, with its associated time-signature of $\frac{4}{4}$, reappears, *Andante cantabile*, and channels a touch of Rachmaninov as the chordal quaver triplets in the piano draw forth a heightened sense of Romanticism to accompany the octave melody in the strings. This section builds, evolving into another variation marked *Pesante*, as the emotional palette within the programmatic narrative develops and deepens.

To prepare for the recapitulation (the return of the opening thematic material), the metre shifts back to compound as it was in the opening of the movement. However, instead of the return of the campanelli and strings, which the listener might expect along with the return of the $\frac{9}{8}$ metre, the piano enters with a variation of the opening theme and is quickly joined by strings, woodwinds and percussion in a sparse chamber orchestration. A variation of Ex. 2, marked *Delicato*, is now presented, although appearing for the first time in the compound metre of Ex. 1. Bruk's retention of the compound metre of Ex. 1 is notable when seen in historical perspective. Whereas in symphonic sonata form or first-movement concerto form, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century composers would typically present the recapitulatory second-subject material in the tonic key, Bruk retains the original metre, perhaps as a nod toward this tradition, while still continuing the melodic variations which pervade the movement. Even without

its original metre ($\frac{4}{4}$) and despite continued variation, Ex. 2 is still recognisable thanks to its more lyrical manner, a freer improvisatory style in the piano and the inclusion of the campanelli (as when Ex. 2 first appeared) and solo violin.

The second movement, 'Sorrow' 2, is set in a complex metre ($\frac{5}{4}$), and the music unfolds through a series of contrasting sections which alternate between three primary thematic ideas, which are often varied when they reappear. The first thematic idea appears in the opening section, and is set with a series of free, improvisatory-sounding lines in the woodwinds, with a poignant theme introduced by the flute (Ex. 3).

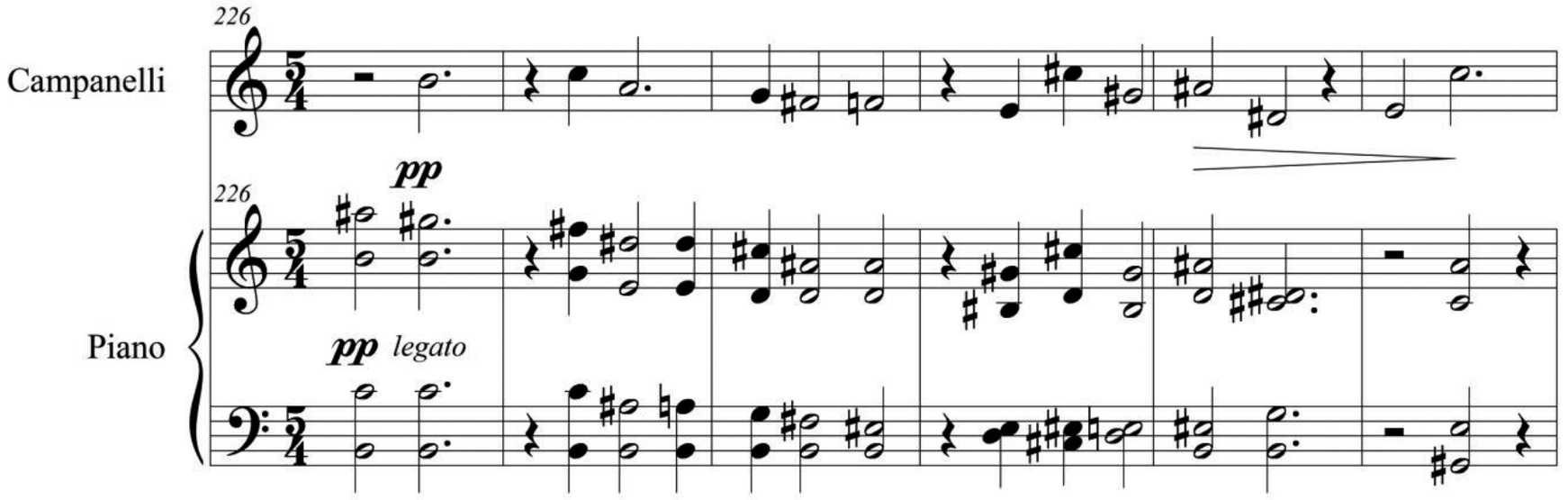
Ex. 3



Motivically, the intervals of the perfect fourth (E flat–A flat and G–D) and the half-step are both emphasised (they are prominent intervals in Ex. 1 as well); the half-step in its descending form, in particular, has often been associated with lament throughout the history of music. The second perfect fourth in the opening bar of the flute part is a half-step lower than the first, this descending semitonal relationship highlighting the intended emotion for this movement. Both of these motivic intervals recur in conjunction with this theme and its varied reappearances in the rest of the movement.

The second thematic idea in this movement arrives with the entrance of the piano. This chorale-like theme, six bars long, is accompanied by a countermelody in the campanelli (Ex. 4), which creates a distinct orchestral timbre that refers back to the first movement. Unlike a traditional chorale, this melody is pentatonic and has gaps in the melody, along with the inclusion of strategically placed rests, which makes the theme seem a bit 'broken' – an idea reinforced when the woodwind presentation of the chorale is suddenly appropriated by the trumpets and trombones. This chorale-like theme will recur throughout the movement, with differing degrees of variation, and will also return

Ex. 4

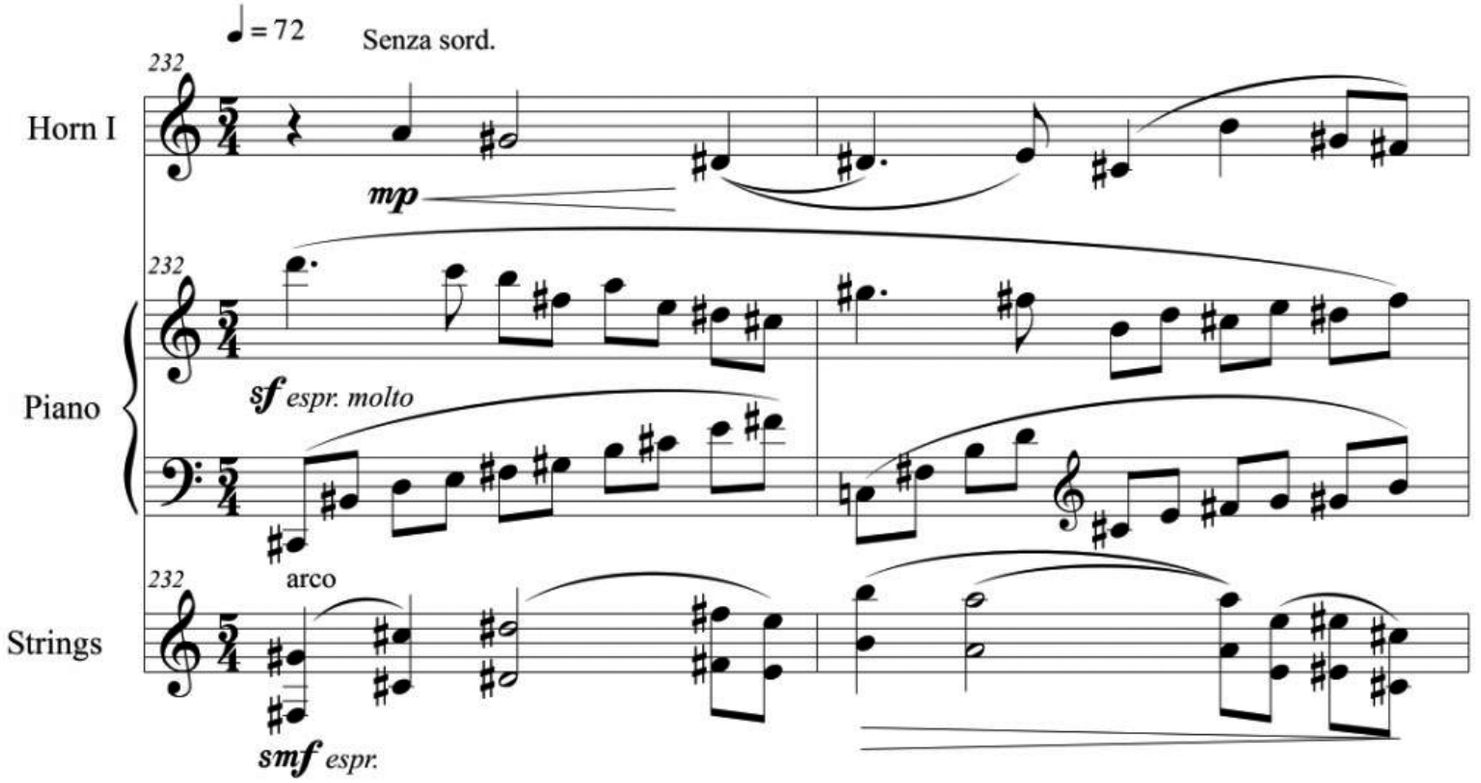


at the conclusion of the movement where the closing sonority is reaffirmed three times, in a quiet but confident nineteenth-century fashion, following a final presentation of the fractured chorale.

The third primary thematic idea in this movement is introduced by the piano and is motivically connected to Ex. 4, which was also first presented by the piano. The melodic descending third that began the chorale theme is carried forward as the piano enters with an *espr. molto* gesture, beginning with a descending minor third in the right hand and poignantly paired with a soaring melody in the upper strings, played in octaves. (In addition to the octave in the violins, shown in Ex. 5, the viola adds a third octave to the texture beginning on the D sharp.)

Much of the solo-piano material for this movement is set in this lyrical, expressive style which emulates late nineteenth-century Romantic gestures, though with 21st-century post-tonal harmonies prevalent. For instance, appoggiaturas are frequently emphasised on the strong beats of the bar with simpler harmonies at the opening of the bar to allow a dissonant interval to stand out and resolve as expected – but as the music moves forward, unexpected chromaticism creeps back in and prevents an unambiguous sense of key (or tonal centre) from taking hold.

Ex. 5

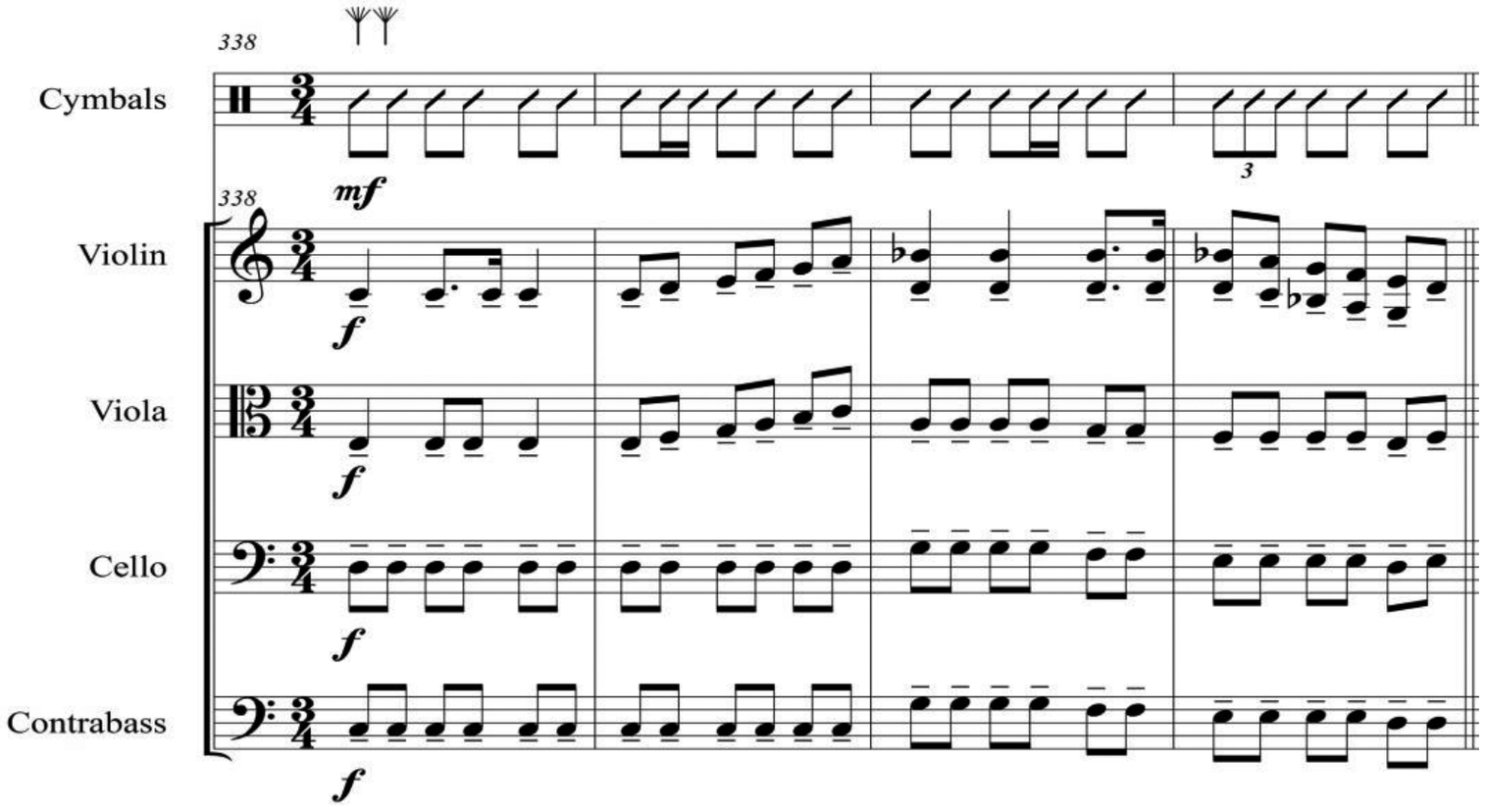


Throughout this movement, these three themes alternate in appearance and are sometimes interrupted by a militaristic brass-and-snare gesture that seems to point towards wartime conflict within the narrative. In general, the title 'Sorrow' is expressed through all three primary themes; the expressive Romantic gestures of the piano evoke the past, the 'broken' chorale theme could indicate the fractured world of today, and the opening theme with motivic fourths and expressive half-step – all set within an uneven complex metre – musically depict a sense of sadness about the events of the past and the fractured, conflict-filled world in which the composer has lived.

The *joie de vivre* in the spirited scalar theme in $\frac{3}{4}$ that opens 'Strength', the third and final movement [3], contrasts starkly with 'Sorrow'. A sense of whimsy is immediately evoked by the orchestration of the three-bar introduction (xylophone, woodblock, triangle) and the chromatic descent from C down to G in the woodwinds. In the fourth bar of the movement, the opening theme is launched first by the strings (its first four

bars are shown in Ex. 6); the melody is scalar and primarily diatonic, with counterpoint that clearly evokes functional tonic and dominant relationships in this first presentation, leaving room for increased chromaticism to decorate subsequent variations. The *tenuto* indications, along with the *f* dynamic marking, present a musical expression of strength and resilience of character within the narrative.

Ex. 6



The overall form of this movement is ternary: ABA' with coda. Within each A section, the theme is repeated with variations and sometimes expanded as well. In the first A section, all three variations are based on C, except for the second, which is centred on E flat and includes a surprising twist with a raised seventh at the top of the theme. The contrasting B section turns inwardly reflective, with a series of pianistic ruminations similar in style to the second movement; a *Meno mosso* passage sets up an entrance for the piano, marked *Sonoro*, which contains broken arpeggiation figurations in the left

hand and an expressive appoggiatura on the downbeat of the piano entrance (a ninth resolving down by whole-step to an octave above the lowest piano note), repeated a major third higher on the downbeat of the following bar as well. The joyful, upbeat exuberance from the opening A section then returns with a seven-bar introduction and three more variations of the opening theme. The introductory bars are new, and transitory in nature, creating a large-scale Phrygian motion in the bass (A flat–G) to begin Variation 4, the first variation (centred on G) in this A' section. Variation 5 returns to the opening tonic, C, creating a sense of tonal return – except that C functions not as the final tonic here but rather as the dominant of F, the key of the final variation (Variation 6), as confirmed in the coda. In retrospect, the B flat in the third bar of the theme takes on a new understanding; literally the minor third of G, it also hints linearly at the dominant-seventh status of the C 'tonic'. Finally, in a passage marked *Patetico*, the strings, piano, winds, brass and percussion join in a Mahlerian gesture (Mahler is one of Bruk's compositional influences) to affirm the F major ninth chord as tonic using a rhythmic derivation of the repeated-note motive from the first bar of Ex. 1 and the full orchestral crotchet (quarter-note) triplet (*ffff*) ends the work. Thus, mirroring the narrative of the 'Joy of Life', where the entire Concerto-Symphony is an emotional journey from the struggles of survival through sorrow to find personal strength, this individual movement is also a tonal journey which, as a large-scale auxiliary cadence, begins somewhere other than the tonic or home key but ultimately reaches the desired tonic destination, in this case F major.

Symphony No. 18, *Daugavpils*

In an article which explores official Russian policies toward Jewish civilians in World War I, the American historian Eric Lohr writes: 'Although the number of Jewish civilians singled out and forced from their homes within the borders of the Russian Empire between 1914 and 1917 remains speculative, estimates range from half a million to a million. This makes it one of the largest cases of forced migration up to World War II'.[13] Lohr goes on to explain that civilians were forced from their homes by the Russian

[13] Eric Lohr, 'The Russian Army and the Jews: Mass Deportation, Hostages, and Violence during World War I', *The Russian Review*, Vol. 60, No. 3, July 2001, p. 404.

army (which was granted astonishing autonomy of action under the War Statute of July 1914), with Jews, in particular, targeted probably for socio-economic reasons (their jobs and properties were considered significant assets) and because they were deemed a threat to the Russian state.[14] Therefore, given the Russian interests of wartime 'security and strategy', the Jews within the war zones were politically labelled 'unreliable elements' of the population and treated as threats.[15] In Bruk's opinion, 'at that time (1915) the mass deportation of Jewish people from their natural living places was some kind of rehearsal for the Holocaust'. This forced migration carries a deeply rooted significance for Bruk: his father's family was one of many forced to leave their home and travel to a new location with little or no money or possessions.

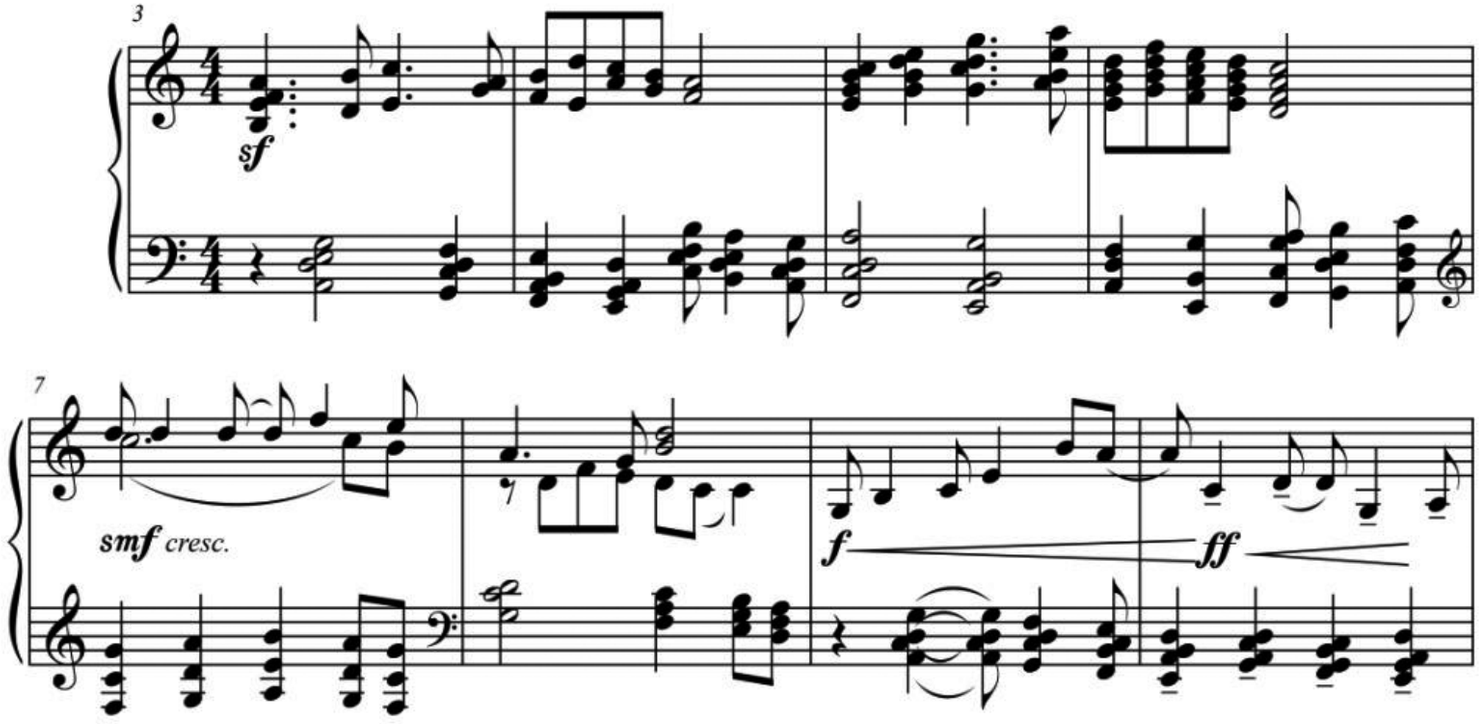
Bruk's father, Michael, was born in Daugavpils (formerly Dvinsk), which is located in the larger region of Latvia called Latgale. In 1915, when Michael was only two years old, the entire Bruk family (Leiba and Genja Bruk with their son Michael and his seven other siblings) was exiled and forcibly relocated to Kharkov in Ukraine. The narrative programme of Bruk's Symphony No. 18, *Daugavpils*, is based upon this violent stripping-away of home and homeland.

The first movement, 'Rūžeņa' ('Rose') 4, features a variation of the Latgalian folksong of that name. This particular folksong was recommended to Bruk by the Latvian conductor Māris Kupčs, because of its immense popularity and its potential for musical compatibility with the Jewish themes of the symphony. Kupčs writes: 'I was sure from the very beginning, Rūžēņa will be the right choice, it is really something, which now in all our people's minds instantly rings a bell – Latgale!'[16] Kupčs sent the composer a YouTube link to this melody as an example and, while listening, Bruk recognised it as an old Jewish melody which his displaced Latvian relatives had sung to him and his little brother in Yiddish on their birthdays in Kharkov. The music, naturally, brought back a flood of memories and in a sudden burst of inspiration Bruk immediately began composing; he completed the entire symphony in 41 days.

[14] *Ibid*., p. 407.
[15] *Ibid*., p. 406.
[16] E-mail dated 20 November 2017.

The form of this opening movement is organised around the presentation and repetition of this folk melody, which is played by the kokle, a Latvian folk instrument from the Baltic zither family (which, incidentally, includes the Finnish kantele). The opening kokle statement is given in Ex. 7, with the folk melody played primarily in the upper voice, beginning after a two-bar introduction in the timpani (on E as the dominant of A minor) and is accompanied initially by a simple counter-melody played in octaves (violins) and the campanelli (glockenspiel).

Ex. 7



The featuring of the kokle is particularly notable because, according to Kupčs, Bruk is the first composer in Latvian history to include the kokle in a symphonic composition. The folk melody, based in A minor, clearly articulates the form with its recognisable returns (despite variation), with a definitive tonal and melodic return to the opening material towards the end of the movement. Bruk presents variations of this folk melody as a way of representing the atmosphere of this area and of that time. He says: 'I only

suppose that in Jewish folk music it was some kind of lullaby song, but in Symphony "Daugavpils" it is some kind of Latgalian color in the first and third parts'.

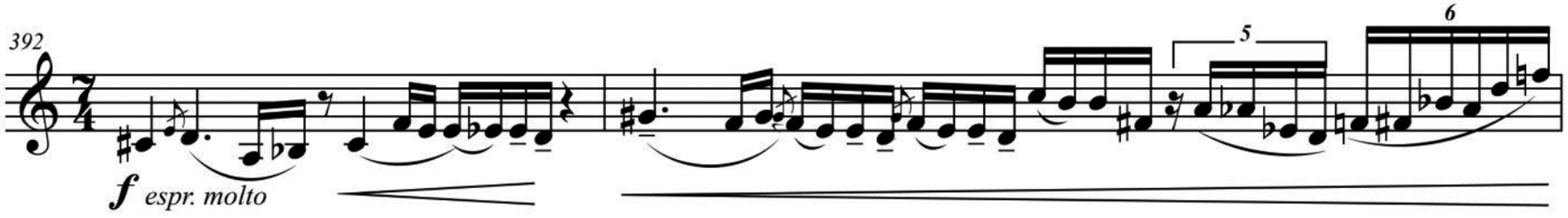
In addition to the kokle, Bruk employs clarinets, bassoons, four horns, percussion, piano and strings. This chamber orchestration allows unique combinations of orchestral colour, with the kokle functioning in several different roles; in addition to a soloistic one, at times the kokle also provides accompaniment (as when the violas have a variation of the folk melody), and engages in imitative contrapuntal dialogue with a solo violin. Following the opening kokle melody, a solo clarinet is the first of many more solo instrumental lines to emerge in this transparent texture. These lines 'speak out' as if representing individual voices from the Latvian population, people going about their day, engaging in dialogues with one another amidst an unsettling background atmosphere (before their deportation). And just as the kokle is unequivocally connected with 'Latgalian colour' in this symphony, listeners familiar with the programmatic content of Bruk's previous symphonies might be able to hear other solo instruments as representing characters or topics from past symphonic narratives. For instance, the prominent solo-piano moments in *Daugavpils* (and also in Symphony No. 17) could be heard in connection with the featured role of the piano in Symphony No. 2, where it represented Bruk's mother. Although not explicitly stated by the composer, it is possible that the inclusion of soloistic piano passages could represent the loss of his mother and, by extension, the idea of the Holocaust, particularly given his thoughts on this massive deportation as being 'a kind of rehearsal for the Holocaust'.

In the second movement ('Daugavpils 1915 – Banishment') 6, according to the composer, 'Jewish intonations become stronger and stronger in comparison with Russian military rudeness, which had pushed little children, women and men to the railway station. They were forced from their homeplace to Russia to experience new persecutions, even death'. As the musical representation of deportation begins in the second movement, the Latvian kokle disappears entirely from the orchestration, and militaristic trumpets and percussion force their way to the foreground with dotted rhythms (the dotted-quaver-semiquaver (eighth-sixteenth) figure in particular) and triplets quickly becoming prevalent throughout the texture.

A distressing sense of disturbance in the Latvian population is present at the outset of the movement, with the bassoons depicting a sudden flurry of activity and fear. At the entrance of the solo trumpet a few bars later, one can imagine a Russian soldier barking orders to these unwilling deportees. The military aggression builds to a first climax, with woodwinds and strings shrieking in protest against the forceful assaults of the Russian army (the trumpets and horns). The violence diminishes for a short time as a *Tranquillo* section takes over, ruminative in nature, but the moment of peace is short-lived. A second, bigger, climax follows, *Acuto*, with the jabs of the Russian army becoming sharper and more pointed (represented by an expanded tessitura and shorter note-values for the punctuated orchestral chords (quavers marked *sf*) against the emphatic brass parts. As this moment of violence fades, a new section brings a sorrowful dialogue between the woodwinds and strings.

With the increased presence of 'Jewish intonations' in this movement, the prominent solo violin a little later in this section brings to mind the role of the Jewish fiddler from Bruk's Third Symphony, *Artist Chagall*; the Jewish fiddler playing on a rooftop was a character Chagall painted often as a nostalgic remembrance of his home in Vitebsk. Ex. 8 gives the first two bars of this prominent violin solo in Symphony No. 18.

Ex. 8



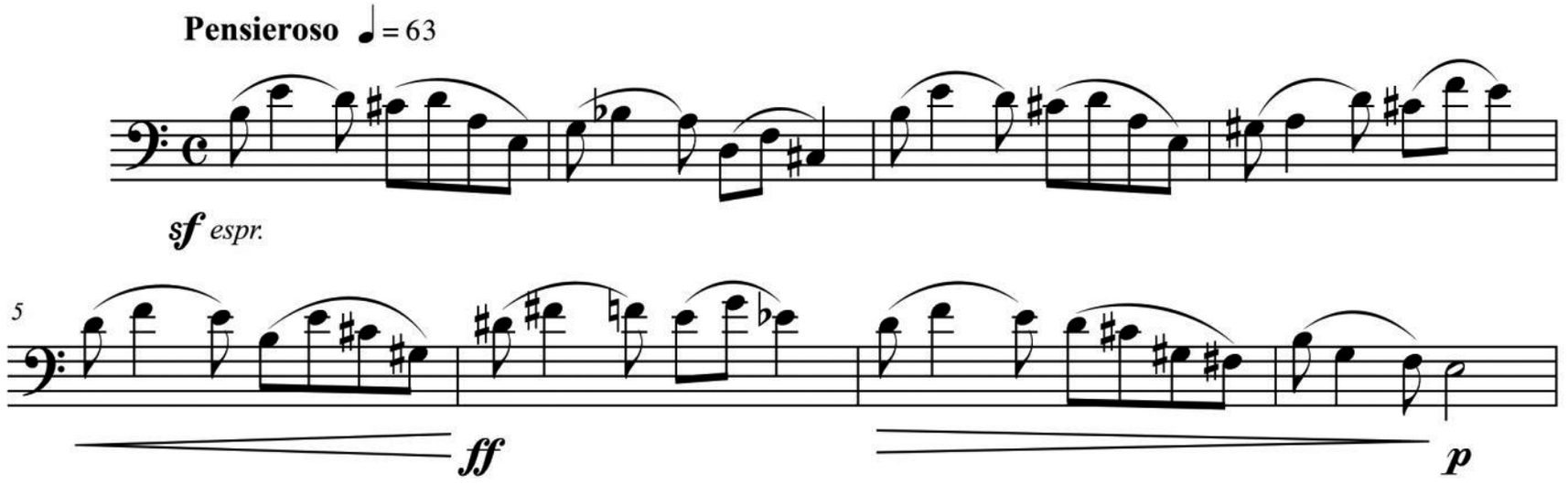
This solo appears after the *Acuto* section, where a more pensive and reflective style permeates, and is closely related, stylistically speaking, to a passage in the first movement of *Artist Chagall*. This Jewish instrumental folk-style was also discussed in relation to the piano melody shown in Ex. 2 in Symphony No. 17, and is also found in Bruk's setting of the Jewish folksong 'Ahavo rabo' in Symphony No. 10, *Klezmorim II*, written as a

tribute to the Jewish scholar Moshe Beregovsky, who notated, and went to enormous lengths to preserve, the Ukrainian folklore of the klezmers.

After the appearance of the mournful fiddler, the opening nine bars of the movement return without alteration, creating the sense of a recapitulation. But the music is altered in the tenth bar of the return, and quickly builds to the third and final climax of the movement with the dominating brass and striking orchestral chords at *fff* and building to *ffff*. After this aggressive outburst, the intense energy dissipates as the final section of the movement launches into a variation of the quiet, more pensive material from earlier in the movement, which sets the tone for the opening of the third movement.

The final movement is entitled 'Five Variations on an Own Theme'. For Bruk, 'the Third part of this Symphony is a reflection about Fate and the Way of my generation in this complicated World'. An unaccompanied solo cello (Ex. 9) wistfully introduces the E minor theme (with some chromatic elements derived from modal mixture) 6.

Ex. 9



This eight-bar theme is subdivided into two four-bar phrases which hint at an antecedent-consequent (question-answer) pairing through the contour of the lines; both phrases end with a Phrygian gesture of F–E. The four-bar phrases are further segmented into two-bar groupings based upon melodic repetition, reinforced aurally at the outset of Variation 1 7 as the presentation of this variation is divided equally between four solo

woodwinds (oboe, clarinet, flute and bassoon). The ubiquitous chromatic scalar figures which accompany this and subsequent variations are particularly reminiscent of the second movement, but are also present in the first movement.

With the onset of Variation 2 [8], mixed metres begin to appear (in place of the initially predictable phrase-segments) and create a sense of unpredictability. This feeling of uncertainty builds to a dramatic climax (*fff*) as a descending semitone in the strings and ascending chromatic line in the flutes converge on a C natural to end this variation (all instruments converge on the note C except for the horns, who play a full C major chord with an added sixth). Variation 3 [9] is initially soft and sentimental in tone and features the piano, possibly again as a connection to the idea of the Holocaust and Bruk's mother. Variation 4 [10] features the string section for the first nine bars as the intensity builds to a *ffff* climax, coinciding with the entrance of woodwinds and horns.

With the re-appearance of the kokle at the beginning of Variation 5 [11], one gets the sense that the Latgalian spirit is still present despite the horrifying reality of banishment and an uncertain future. In the final bars, there is an abrupt dramatic shift in style (*Maestoso*) as the full horn section majestically enters, along with the upper woodwinds. The sudden feeling of expansiveness in this moment, the sweeping grandeur and the prominent ascending major third in the horns are reminiscent of the opening of 'The Great Gate of Kiev,' the tenth and final section of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Although not an intentional reference on the part of the composer, who intended to emphasise the fortune and fate of the Jewish people specifically, the feeling of majesty and nobleness evoked by 'The Great Gate of Kiev' is certainly comparable with the final moments of this symphony. As frequently at the end of Bruk's symphonic narratives, the composer seeks to offer hope; as he says, the 'last sounds underline a decision to build our Life with all the Nations in the World, peacefully and respectably'.

Tish Kennedy Davenport is currently completing her Ph.D. in Music Theory with a specialisation in choral conducting at the University of North Texas, where she obtained her MM in Music Theory as well. She is also the music director at the First United Methodist Church in The Colony, Texas. She is the author of an article on Bruk, 'Fridrich Bruk at 80: programmatic narratives and Jewish folk influences in Symphonies 3, 10 and 11', published in The Musical Times*, Autumn 2017, pp. 19–36.*

Gertruda Jerjomenko (b. 1989) is a Latvian pianist and harpsichordist. She began playing the piano at the age of five and later attended The Emīls Dārziņš Music School in Riga. In 2012, as a student of Arnis Zandmanis in the piano performance department, she graduated from The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, also in Riga. She began playing the harpsichord as a secondary subject, but it soon became her passion. In 2014 she therefore began studies for a masters in harpsichord at The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music and graduated in summer 2016. Since then she has combined her two main interests, the piano repertoire and early music. Within the framework of the Erasmus exchange programme, she enriched her musical knowledge at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis with Jörg-Andreas Bötticher and at the Hochschule für Music in Freiburg with Robert Hill. Gertruda made her solo debut in a C. P. E. Bach concerto with the Baroque orchestra Collegium Musicum Riga under the guidance of Māris Kupčs and has since appeared at concerts and festivals as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician in Latvia and abroad.

Anda Eglīte, kokle, received her education at The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, graduating with a master's degree in 2004. She is currently active as a performer in Latvia and abroad both as a solo musician and as a member of several chamber orchestras, the most notable being the contemporary ensemble Altera Veritas. Performing with this group, Anda has collaborated with many distinguished Latvian artists and symphony orchestras, and earned the highest award in Latvian music, the Great Music Award (2003), as well as the Annual Award in Culture from the national daily newspaper *Diena* (2004), the Annual Folk Music Award (2007) and the Cultural Award of the Year (2004, 2014) given by Baltais Zvirbulis ('White Sparrow'), a civic and social association.

Anda is also actively involved with the creative life of the Latvian kokle community. She is the founder and artistic director of the kokle winter festival 'Kokle Sounds in Winter Sparkle' and the main conductor of Riga's award-winning regional kokle ensemble at many music festivals and concerts as well as the triennial General Latvian Song Festival. In addition to her creative activities, Anda divides her time between teaching kokle at The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, at the Pāvula Jurjāna School of Music in Riga and at the School of Music and Art of the city of Olaine, and serving as an artistic director of the kokle ensemble Cantata, which she founded.

Māris Kupčs started his musical career as a choral conductor, later focusing on orchestra and opera repertoire. As a founder of the Baroque orchestra Collegium Musicum Riga and the Baroque choir Collegium Choro Musici Riga, as well as the Early Music Department of The Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, he is one of the few conductors who can direct Baroque operas and other early-music works from the harpsichord, conduct more contemporary large-scale symphonic or opera repertoire with a baton and play chamber-music programmes as a sought-after continuo player.

Māris Kupčs is the winner of many contests as a conductor, often with Balsis, the choir he established: the BBC Grand Prix in 1991, and the Silver Rose Bowl and Grand Prix Neuchatel in the same year, first place in Cantonigros in 1995, as well as first places in the national conductors' contests in Riga and international conductors' contest at Vilnius in 1990.

He has been a regular guest conductor of the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra since 1999, when they recorded the album *Pūt, vējiņi* ('Blow, Wind'), which received the Annual Latvian Music Recording Award in 2000 and for more than five years was one of the best-selling CDs in Latvian history. Māris Kupčs has been music director and conductor of many operas and musicals, among them Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus* at The Latvian National Opera and *Wiener Waltz* at The Liepāja Theatre, Zigmārs Liepiņš' opera *Parīzes Dievmātes katedrāle* ('Notre Dame') at The Latvian National Theatre, and more than 25 Baroque and Classical operas, including Caccini's *Euridice*, Gluck's *Orfeo*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, *Deidamia* and *Serse*, Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Mitridate*, *re di Ponto*, Salieri's *Prima la Musica*, *poi le Parole* and Vivaldi's *Ottone in Villa*. He has conducted in Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden and the USA.

The **Liepāja Symphony Orchestra** – formerly also known as The Amber Sound Orchestra – is the oldest symphonic ensemble in the Baltic States: it was founded in 1881 by Hanss Hohapfel, who also served as its conductor. The orchestral strength in those early days was 37 musicians, joined in the summers by guest players from Germany and Poland. With time, both the structure and professionalism of the Orchestra grew, as did its standing in the eyes of the general public. After World War II the LSO recommenced its activities in 1947, under the aegis of the Liepāja Music School, and was conducted for the next 40 years by the director of the School, Valdis Vikmanis. A new chapter in the life of the Orchestra began at the end of 1986, when it was granted the status of a professional symphony orchestra, becoming only the second in Latvia. That formal recognition was made possible by the efforts of two conductors, Laimonis Trubs (who worked with the LSO from 1986 to 1996) and Jēkabs Ozoliņš (active with the LSO from 1987 to 2008). The first artistic director of the LSO, as well as its first chief conductor, was the Leningrad-born Mikhail Orehov, who took the ensemble to a higher level of professionalism during his years there (1988–91). Another important period for the LSO was 1992 to 2009, when Imants Resnis was artistic director and chief conductor. He expanded the range of activities considerably: in addition to regular concerts in Riga, Liepāja and other Latvian cities, the Orchestra also went on frequent tours abroad, playing in Germany, Great Britain, Malaysia, Spain, Sweden and elsewhere. During this period a number of important recordings were made, some of them during live appearances on Latvian radio and television. In the early days of the LSO Valdis Vikmanis began a series of summer concerts, which always sold out, and so, in 2010, the festival 'Liepāja Summer' was launched, to renew that tradition of a century before. As well as orchestral performances (some of them in the open air), the festival includes sacred and chamber music.

The Liepāja Symphony Orchestra holds a special place in the national cultural life of Latvia. It received the highest national music award, the 'Great Music Award', in 2006, as well as the Latvian Recordings Award in the years 1998, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2008. In 2010 the Liepāja Symphony Amber Sound Orchestra was granted the status of national orchestra. Atvars Lakstīgala, chief conductor from 2010 to 2017, made his debut with the LSO in 2010 and received the 'Great Music Award' at the end of the same year. This is the sixth of a series of recordings for Toccata Classics. The first featured Paul Mann conducting the orchestral music of the Norwegian composer Leif Solberg (TOCC 0260) and the next three brought Volumes One, Two and Three of the complete orchestral music of Charles O'Brien (TOCC 0262, 0263 and 0299). The fifth featured music by the Karlsruhe composer Josef Schelb (TOCC 0426).

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