

Questions of Eternity

The debut album of conductor Dmitry Matvienko



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At first glance, the choice of composers for this recording seems like an odd match: one cultivated a harsh, expressive musical language, while the other was a proponent of introspective soundscapes. One piece ends in an explosion, while the other offers us meditative contemplation.

We also have an apparent clash of nationalities: Prokofiev was Russian, (b. Sontsvika, Ukraine) Silvestrov is Ukrainian, and conductor Dmitry Matvienko is Belarusian. But through art and music, we can always meet in dialogue and mutual understanding.

What may first seem like madness has a clear logic. In Dmitry Matvienko's view, there are strong links between the two composers. Quoting Valentin Silvestrov's belief that "only melody makes music eternal," Matvienko explains why he chose *Quiet Music* for this recording. Despite very different musical languages, both composers were exceptional melodists who regarded melody as the foundation of all music, regardless of genre or 20th-century avant-garde trends.

Matvienko also sees both works as shaped by their historical realities. Prokofiev's symphony reflects the devastation of the post-war era and foreshadows future catastrophe, while Silvestrov's *Quiet Music*, written in 2002, predates but resonates deeply with later conflicts. Prokofiev could not have imagined the tragedy that would unfold decades after his death, yet history reveals the cyclical nature of evil. His work on Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* exposed a ruler's destructive paranoia - an allusion Stalin recognized. Today, Matvienko argues, history repeats itself in new forms. Against this, Silvestrov's *Quiet Music* offers consolation: a place of refuge open to anyone, beyond nationality or religion, where sorrow can briefly be set aside.

It was very important to Dmitry Matvienko to include this piece in this recording: "*Silvestrov said in one of his interviews*" - "I am so tired of the noise of this world",- "I understand that and feel it very deeply. More and more often I walk at night and listen to his music; not in headphones, but inside. And it gives me peace. I want this piece to be therapy and solace for our listeners as well."

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