



Schnittke and his influences. I would not expect someone to purchase this for the wonderful Mozart Adagio or Webern's dodecaphonic Variations. This will appeal most to people with an interest in or curiosity about the prolific Soviet composer, Alfred Schnittke (1934–98).

He made his living producing nearly 70 film scores, but also composed a large amount of more traditional classical forms (8 symphonies, concertos for an array of instruments, choral, chamber, and solo instrumental works). He had a maverick reputation that did not please the musical establishment and was prohibited from leaving the Soviet Union for many years. He survived a serious stroke in 1985, but never really regained good health. His compositional style changed to more introverted and bleak music, and he settled in Hamburg. He died at age 63 following several more strokes and was buried with state honors in Moscow.

Building on Schnittke's first musical education in Vienna and his early compositional effort in serialism, the Mozart and Webern were chosen for this program. Scriabin and Shostakovich were his strongest Russian influences. Schnittke once wrote "The goal of my life is to unify serious music and light music, even if I break my neck in doing so." His unique "polystylistic" compositional technique grew out of this, and his Variations on a Chord (1965) is a good example of this style. Much later in life, the Piano Sonata 2 (1990) exemplifies his stylistic changes in his last decade or so.

Wonderful booklet notes by Eric Salzman are a bonus to the great recorded sound and production values. Pianist Gadeliya was born in Soviet Georgia where she began her musical education, which continued in Ukraine before she moved to the US in 1990. After meeting Schnittke's wife and biographer, she has become an ardent advocate for one whose "music became the voice for Russian society". Schnittke could have wished for no better or a more committed pianist to champion his music.

—James Harrington, *American Record Guide*