

BELLS AND BELL-RINGING: THE UNIQUENESS OF RACHMANINOFF'S COMPOSITIONAL STYLE

MARTINA KAMENSKA

PhD Student in Musicology, Slovak Academy of Sciences

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1268-8853>

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Abstract

Bells hold a prominent place in Sergei Rachmaninoff's musical legacy. Throughout his career, bells grew from an inspirational source into one of the most distinctive characteristic features of his unique style, and largely defined his compositional thinking. From Rachmaninoff's student period pieces through the last opus of his oeuvre, bells and bell-ringing are present in various ways, in all components of his musical language, and to such an extent that it constitutes the fundamental essence of his creative identity. The main objective of this study is to introduce this specific phenomenon while pointing out its importance in the context of the composer's work. The article discusses specific examples of bell imitations in Rachmaninoff's compositions, outlines their contexts, and presents which components of the musical structure were most influenced by bell-ringing.

Keywords

Bells, bell-ringing, compositional thinking, musical legacy, Sergei Rachmaninoff

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