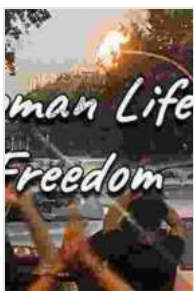


Nicolas Nabokov: A Life in Freedom and Music



Nicolas Nabokov: A Life in Freedom and Music

by Vincent Giroud

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Nicolas Nabokov was a Russian-American composer, conductor, and pianist who lived a life of freedom and adventure. He was born into a wealthy family in Saint Petersburg, Russia, in 1903, and his early life was filled with music and travel. He studied composition with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov, and he made his debut as a conductor at the age of 19.

In the 1920s, Nabokov left Russia and settled in Paris, where he became a fixture on the city's vibrant music scene. He conducted the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and he premiered works by some of the most important composers of the 20th century, including Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Prokofiev, and Darius Milhaud.

In 1933, Nabokov married the American singer Kitty Carlisle, and the couple moved to the United States. Nabokov continued to compose and conduct, and he became a naturalized American citizen in 1941. He died in New York City in 1978.

Nabokov was a gifted musician and a passionate advocate for new music. He was also a man of great independence and spirit, and he lived his life on his own terms. He was a true citizen of the world, and his music reflects the many cultures that he encountered throughout his life.

Early life and education

Nicolas Nabokov was born into a wealthy family in Saint Petersburg, Russia, on April 17, 1903. His father, Vladimir Nabokov, was a prominent lawyer and politician, and his mother, Elena Nabokov, was a pianist. Nabokov's early life was filled with music and travel. He began studying piano at the age of five, and he soon showed a talent for composition. He also traveled extensively with his family, visiting Europe, the United States, and the Middle East.

In 1919, Nabokov entered the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, where he studied composition with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov. He graduated from the conservatory in 1922, and he made his debut as a conductor at the age of 19.

Career in Russia

In the early 1920s, Nabokov began his career as a conductor in Russia. He conducted the Petrograd Philharmonic Orchestra, the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Leningrad Symphony Orchestra. He also premiered works by some of the most important Russian composers of the time, including Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Prokofiev, and Dmitri Shostakovich.

In 1925, Nabokov was appointed music director of the Bolshoi Theatre. He held this position for two years, and he conducted many important productions, including the premiere of Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet*.

Emigration to Paris

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Musical style

Nabokov's music is characterized by its eclecticism and its blend of traditional and modern elements. He was influenced by a wide range of composers, including Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev. He was also interested in jazz and popular music, and he incorporated elements of these styles into his own compositions.

Nabokov's music is often described as being "neo-classical." He was drawn to the clarity and order of classical music, but he also embraced the innovations of the 20th century. His music is often characterized by its use of clear melodies, rich harmonies, and complex rhythms.

Legacy

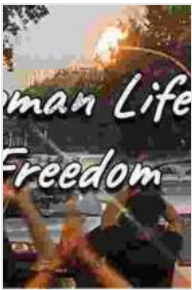
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Nabokov's music continues to be performed and recorded today. He is remembered as one of the most important composers of the 20th century, and his music continues to inspire and delight audiences around the world.

Works

Nabokov composed a wide range of works, including symphonies, concertos, ballets, operas, and chamber music. Some of his most famous works include:

* Symphony No. 1 (1927) * Symphony No. 2 (1931) * Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (1931) * Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (1938) * Ballet "Ode" (1941) * Opera "The Holy Devil" (1955)



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