

## GERMAN GERMANOVICH GALYNIN

David C F Wright DMus

Life is cruel to some people. And it is usually other people who make life cruel to another individual.

A friend has told me that the human race is no longer human but inhuman. We have lost the care component and live for self which is encouraged by the vagaries of governments and authorities. If you are caring today you are regarded as strange or after something. Morals and manners are now rarities.

Such is German Germanovich Galynin, a case in point. He was born in Tula, Russia on 30 March 1922. He was an orphan and brought up in a children's home. How he became an orphan is not clear but it is not a good start for anyone. However, he taught himself the piano and some folk instrument and became a student at the Moscow Conservatory and, in 1941, joined the Russian Army as a volunteer which seems to be a courageous act or an act of extreme nationalism. He was not a coward like Britten and Pears.



During the war, and in his spare time, Galynin wrote songs and incidental music to dramas. After the war, he returned to the Moscow Conservatory and studied with Myaskovsky and Shostakovitch.. When Shostakovitch was accused of formalism in his music Galynin also came in for that criticism. The composer Khrennikov was assigned to be the overseer of music which had to be nationalistic. Galynin won the State Prize for his Epic Poem on Russian themes of 1951 whereas his Piano Concerto no 1 of 1946 was denounced as formalism. This is nonsense. The Piano Concerto no 1 is a good work and politics must not dictate to music.

The other matter is that music comes in and out of fashion.

However, Galynin graduated in 1950.

From about 1951, Galynin suffered with serious schizophrenia and spent a lot of time in hospitals and psychiatric clinics. He was an orphan, mentally damaged by the war, criticised by the government and now very ill.

Life can be very cruel.

But he was a talented composer and is still underestimated. I have only been able to look at his accomplished piano music.

He died in a Moscow mental hospital on 18 June 1966. He was 40

Works include

- Sonata Triad (sometimes called Sonata triptych) reworkings of his sonatas numbers 1 to 3 in B minor, E minor and B (1939-1941)
- Spanish Fantasy for piano (1939)
- Waltz for piano (1939)
- Scherzo for piano (1939)
- Four preludes for piano (1939)
- Variations for piano (1943) believed lost

Incidental music: The Tanner Tamed (1944)  
Piano Concerto no 1 (1946)  
Piano Sonata no 4 (1946 revised 1963)  
String Quartet (1947)  
Piano Trio (1949)  
Forzeil, opera in one act (1949)  
Suite for string orchestra (1949)  
Epic Poem on Russian Themes for orchestra (1950)  
Oratorio: Death and the Maiden (1950) (after Gorky's poem)  
Youth Festival Overture (1951)  
Aria for violin and string orchestra (1959)  
Piano Sonata no 5 (1963 revision)  
Song: The Motherland of Fortitude (1963)  
Concerto Grosso for solo piano (1964)  
in the Zoo, piano pieces for children (1965)  
Scherzo for violin and string orchestra (1966)

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