

## Between the Lands.

### Alexander Ivashkin: Ambassador for Contemporary Music \*

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Alexander Vasilyevich Ivashkin (1948-2014) was one of internationally eminent musicians and academic researchers at the turn of the most recent century. Soviet by birth, he was at home not only in his native Russia and London, where he made his home for the last fifteen years of his life, but also in many renowned concert halls, festivals, conservatories and international conferences around the globe.

The author and editor of twenty books published in Russian, English, German, Italian and Japanese, Ivashkin left an extensive legacy which includes notable monographs on the composers Krzysztof Penderecki, Charles Ives and Alfred Schnittke, two books of studies on the life and music of Dmitrii Shostakovich, as well as biographical monographs on the cellists Sviatoslav Knushevitskii, Daniel Shafran and Mstislav Rostropovich. As the biographer of Schnittke, his close friend for many years, Ivashkin produced books, catalogues and publications on the composer which are based on many personal conversations and professional collaborations with him; they are regarded as the best in-depth sources and studies with their unique inner penetration, understanding and assessment of Schnittke's life and work. Among them are *Besedy s Alfredom Shnittke* [Conversations with Alfred Schnittke] first published in 1994 in Moscow, then revised and republished five times with its most recent publications being in 2015 in Russian, in Japanese in 2002 and in German in 1998 as *Alfred Schnittke über das Leben und die Musik* [Alfred Schnittke on Life and Music].<sup>1</sup> The fundamental English monograph *Alfred Schnittke: A Biography*, published in 1996, is another profoundly insightful study of the composer, containing a detailed treatment of his formation and life, spiritual beliefs, musical output and stylistic individuality that developed and flourished despite the many obstacles and impediments placed in his way by

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Alexander Ivashkin, *Besedy s Alfredom Shnittke* (Moscow: Klassika XXI, 2003, 2005, 2015); (Tokyo, 2002); (Moscow: Kultura, 1994, 1998). 2. Alexander Iwaschkin, *Alfred Schnittke über das Leben und die Musik* (Dusseldorf-München: Econ Verlag, 1998).

the Soviet officials.<sup>2</sup> *A Schnittke Reader* and *Shnittke o muzyke* [Schnittke on Music]<sup>3</sup> are valuable collections of Schnittke's previously published and unpublished essays in Russian and in English translation that show the composer as an incredibly talented writer and essayist with a sharp analytical mind and a profound knowledge of the music of others. Moreover, from 2007, Ivashkin was the chief editor, primary investigator and project leader of the *Collected Works of Alfred Schnittke*, a critical edition based on the composer's archival materials, in partnership with the Kompozitor Publishing House, Russia, and the Alfred Schnittke Archive founded by Ivashkin in 1999 at Goldsmiths College, University of London. The Alfred Schnittke Archive is a unique collection in the West of facsimile copies of Schnittke's scores, original manuscripts, sketches, documents on performances and commissions of his works, rare photos, published materials on Schnittke, and many video and audio files. The main purpose of the *Collected Works* publication is to provide performers, scholars and music lovers with the finest urtext editions of Schnittke's music scores, which are not otherwise available in Russia or the Commonwealth Nations. This project is still continuing today and to date has produced fifteen published volumes.<sup>4</sup>

Ivashkin's outstanding monograph *Charl'z Aivz i muzyka XX veka* [Charles Ives and Twentieth-Century Music]<sup>5</sup>, completed in the Summer of 1987 and published in 1991, gives an exceptional insight not only into the composer's life and works, but also his influence on such notable American composers as Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, John Cage and George Crumb, and the pianist and scholar of his music John Kirkpatrick, as well as many other important figures of the time. The author offers a comprehensive exploration of North American history and culture, popular, folk and church music traditions, philosophical tendencies of the time and the influences of the American transcendentalists, especially of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau and Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the writers Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman and Herman Melville. This broad research approach provides a thorough justification of Ives' artistic intentions, likes and dislikes; they naturally led to the musical experimentations that foreshadowed many musical innovations of the

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<sup>2</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke: A Biography* (London: Phaidon Press, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, ed., *Shnittke o muzyke* (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2004). Alexander Ivashkin, ed., *A Schnittke Reader* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> For further information see the online catalogue of the Kompozitor Publishing House, St Petersburg, Russia: [http://www.kompozitor.spb.ru/collected\\_works/schnittke/](http://www.kompozitor.spb.ru/collected_works/schnittke/) (accessed 14 May 2016).

<sup>5</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, *Charl'z Aivz i muzyka XX veka* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991).

twentieth century, in particular polystylism, tone clusters, polytonality, polyrhythm and aleatoric elements. Numerous unique documents and materials from Ives' archive held at Yale University and Ives' houses in Connecticut, personal correspondence and Ivashkin's research interviews – he travelled to the USA for his research – as well as musical scores and manuscripts used as primary sources in the preparation of this book all bear witness to its depth and originality. The admiration of Ives' music expressed by Arnold Schoenberg and Gustav Mahler – among the first performers of Ives' music in Europe – is one of many valuable features and findings of the author. Up until now this has been the most definitive monograph on the composer published in Russian. However, being so musically informative, this book appeals not only to musicians. The author identified and analysed the links of Ives' unconventional, revolutionary musical language with the poetry of Russian Futurist poets such as Velemir Khlebnikov and Andrei Belyi in their search for new symbolic linguistics, and in the experimentations with colour, abstract compositions and spiritual meaning in the modernist works of artists like Vasilii Kandinskii, Pablo Picasso and Marc Chagall.<sup>6</sup> The stylistic innovations of the film directors Sergei Eisenstein, Federico Fellini and Michelangelo Antonioni in their new approach to film montage, narrative and image, as well as the philosophy of intuition, nature and mind of Pavel Florenskii and the semiotics of culture of Yuri Lotman also have associations with the rhetoric of Ives. In other words, Ivashkin considers the unity and interaction of traditional and non-traditional features, the layering of different texts, words and idioms, colours and timbres, asymmetry and symmetry of forms and structures, ethics and creativity as universal tendencies in the cultural innovations of the twentieth century amalgamated and put into new contexts, thus forming a meta-music and meta-culture, the latter definition broadly explored by Lotman. It is more than just a book on a composer. It is thought-provoking and captivating reading for those who are interested in the cultural history, cross-influences, polystylism and crossover of the arts in the twentieth century across continents.

Ivashkin was the author of over 300 scholarly articles, papers, concert reviews and CD booklets on topics ranging from the composers Igor Stravinskii, Sergei Rachmaninov, Alexander Glazunov, Alexander Tcherepnin, Charles Ives, Dmitrii Shostakovich, Sergei Prokofiev, John Cage, Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaidulina, George Crumb, Sergei

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<sup>6</sup> Ivashkin, *Charl'z Aivz i muzyka XX veka*, pp. 19-24. All quotations and extracts from Russian archival sources and publications used in the text have been translated by the author of this paper.

Slonimskii, Rodion Shchedrin, Alexander Knaifel, Faradzh Karaev, Alexander Raskatov and Vytautas Barkauskas to *Symbol in New Russian Culture, 50 Years after Stalin, Symbols, Metaphors and Irrationalities in Twentieth-Century Music, Maturity of Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, On Mstislav Rostropovich, Sunflower* and many other publications in Dutch, English, German, Italian, Polish, Russian and Swedish. Their distinguishing features are: a profound knowledge of the subject and the research publications of others, contemporary analysis, historical traditions and philosophical concepts together with an objective assessment and a rare ability to combine everything in retrospect and provide his own conclusion. His literary style is very engaging; it captivates and easily guides the reader through different stylistic contexts. Ivashkin emphasised in one of his interviews that vocal music, due to its verbal expression and direct dependence on the sound of speech, is a fine example for instrumentalists in their search for stylistic interpretation, emotional intensity and temperament in a musical work.<sup>7</sup> Similarly to this vocalized form of expression, the phonology of languages, and the meaning and sound of words were, perhaps sometimes unconsciously, also influential features in his writing. Ivashkin was a sincere and observant writer, his penetrating vision saw things down to their roots and components, every little detail mattered to him and he was able to reflect on the constant changes and transformations of the '*dukh vremeni*' [spirit of the time] as he used to call it. This constant thirst and inner demand for learning of new artistic trends, cultures and their intellectual landmarks, and the discovery of new impulses and impressions, sometimes very unpredictable, were the driving forces behind his advancement, not only in writing, but also in teaching and performing activities.

A renowned Professor and inspirational pedagogue, Ivashkin held respected positions as Chair of Performance and Postgraduate Studies, the Director of the Research Centre for Russian Music, and the Founder and Curator of the Alfred Schnittke Archive at Goldsmiths College, University of London, from 1999 until 2014. For eight years, in 1990-1999, he was Professor of Cello, Chamber Music and Chair of Postgraduate Studies at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, with previous appointments as Artist-in-Residence in Boswil, Switzerland, in 1989-90, and professorships of cello and chamber music at St. Mary's College of Maryland, the USA, in 1988-89 and at the Gnessin Specialist Music School in

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<sup>7</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, 'Dukh vremeni vazhnee razlichii stilei' [Spirit of the Time is More Important than the Difference of Styles], in conversation with Grigorii Kovalevskii, *Igraem s nachala* [Play from the Beginning] 10 (114), (October 2013).

Moscow, Russia, in 1985-88. A regular member of the jury at international competitions for performers and composers in the Czech Republic, Russia, the UK, the USA and New Zealand, he was the Artistic Director and Chairman of the VTB Capital Prize for Young Cellists held at Wigmore Hall in London in 2009 and of the Adam International Cello Competition and Festival in Christchurch, New Zealand, from the year of its foundation in 1995 (then in 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012) and also directed many international festivals in the UK and abroad, of which more below. Ivashkin taught and gave cello and chamber music masterclasses as a guest professor in 39 conservatoires and universities in Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, the USA and Uzbekistan. His students are successful performers, scholars, prize-winners at many international competitions and professors at conservatoires in Australia, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, the UK and the USA.

As both conductor and cellist, Ivashkin naturally combined his scholarly and teaching activities and interests with a well-established international career as a soloist, chamber musician and conductor. He started his performing career at the age of twenty two as a cellist of the orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre and soon made his solo debut in Tchaikovsky's *Pezzo Capriccioso* performed at the Moscow Kremlin Palace of Congresses on 25 May 1971. In 1978-91 Ivashkin was promoted to the position of co-principal cello of the Company, subsequently becoming the artistic director of the Bolshoi Soloists, the ensemble that he formed from some of the best soloists of the orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by Alexander Lazarev. This ensemble quickly became known as an active proponent for contemporary music in the USSR and abroad. Sofia Gubaidulina remembers: 'The soul of the ensemble was a cellist, Alexander Ivashkin, – an excellent musician, musicologist and, at the same time, a cellist full of enthusiasm. The ensemble, apart from other activities, commissioned composers to write for them.'<sup>8</sup> Their concerts were oversubscribed and sometimes unwelcomed by the authorities due to the modernistic content of their mainly avant-garde concert programmes, often showing a special interest in the theatrical and experimental side of musical performances, which were not supported by officials. Thus, in the *Novgorod Dance* for clarinet, trombone, cello, piano, percussions and magnetic tape, 1980, by Sergei Slonimskii, the score entitled performers to dance. Ivashkin took part in over 20 CD/LP recordings with this ensemble for the Melodia (Russia) and Mobile Fidelity (USA)

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<sup>8</sup> Valentina Kholopova, *Sofia Gubaidulina* (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2011), p. 69.

labels. The Bolshoi Soloists performed and gave world premieres of works by Hindemith, Wagner, Mehul, Stravinskii, Anton Rubinstein, Nikolai Medtner, Roslavets, Mosolov, Popov, Zhivotov, Schnittke, Denisov, Ligeti, Gubaidulina, Crumb (Ivashkin played the sitar), Kagel, Korndorf and Ives, including *Hallowe'en*, *Tone Roads No. 1*, *Over the Pavements* and many others.

A fine interpreter of baroque, classical, romantic and contemporary works, of both standard and less familiar repertoire, Ivashkin appeared as a soloist with many prominent conductors, including Mstislav Rostropovich, Seiji Ozawa, Rudolf Barshai, Lev Markiz, Riccardo Muti, Krzysztof Penderecki, Gennadi Rozhdestvenskii, Yuri Temirkanov, Valeri Polianskii, Alexander Lazarev, Valeri Gergiev, Vladimir Yurowski and János Fürst with orchestras such as Australian ABC, BBC Symphony, the Bolshoi Theatre, Cape Philharmonic, Hamburger Sinfoniker, London Philharmonic, Mariinskii Theatre, Montreal Soloists, the Moscow Studio for New Music, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Russian State, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the Ukrainian State and Berliner Symphoniker, among many others. As a chamber musician, he performed with such renowned soloists as pianists Dmitri Alexeev, Boris Berman, Vladimir Feltsman, Rustem Hayroudinoff, Piers Lane, Arturo Pizarro, Victoria Postnikova, Mikhail Rudy, Irina Schnittke and Alexander Slobodianik, violinists Tatiana Grindenko, Daniel Hope, Gidon Kremer, Isabelle van Keulen, Patricia Kopatchinskaia, Oleh Krysa, Mark Lubotskii, Shlomo Mintz, Alexander Rozhdestvenskii and Dmitri Sitkovetskii, violists Theodore Kuchar, Reiner Moog and Daniel Raiskin, cellists David Geringas, Natalia Pavlutskaia, Torleif Thedéen and Young-Chang Cho, accordionists Friedrich Lips and Elizabeth Moser, the Goldner Quartet and the BBC choir to name but a few. Ivashkin was a member of the Canterbury Trio, the Shostakovich Trio and the Trio with the Italian violinist Gabriele Pieranunzio and the Italian violist Francesco Fiore. As a guest conductor Ivashkin collaborated with the Armenian State Philharmonic Orchestra, the Australian National Academy Symphony Orchestra, the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra, the Canterbury Festival Orchestra, the Montreal Players, the Russian State Symphony Orchestras of Voronezh and Tambov, and others.

The geography of his highly acclaimed performing activities is incredible: Ivashkin performed on concert stages and appeared on numerous TV and Radio programmes in more than 40 countries on five continents, with the only exception of Antarctica, giving more than 50 premieres as a cellist and conductor. Among them were previously unknown works of

composers of the past, in which Ivashkin's broad experience and perceptiveness as a researcher went side-by-side with his proficiency of a cello soloist. Thus, in 1996, Ivashkin, together with the Russian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Valerii Polianskii, gave a world premiere and recorded the Concerto for cello and orchestra op. 8, 1895, by Alexander Grechaninov that had been left unperformed for a hundred years.<sup>9</sup> Ivashkin also published a performance edition of the score of this concerto based on Grechaninov's manuscript.<sup>10</sup> On 23/24 October 2004 he premiered the original version of the Cello Concerto by Johannes Brahms at the Hamburg Musikhalle with the Hamburger Sinfoniker and their Director Andrei Boreyko. This previously uncatalogued concerto, which is now published by Sikorski Verlag, was reconstructed by Cord Garben, the President of Brahms Gesellschaft in Hamburg, after Brahms's original sketches. Brahms started to write his cello concerto in the summer 1887 for his friend Robert Hausmann, the cellist of the Joachim Quartet, but then decided to add a violin part for his old friend Joseph Joachim, from whom he had been estranged for some years and wanted to reconcile by making his famous double concerto for violin and cello. Ivashkin's world premiere in Hamburg, was followed by premiers in Moscow (Russia) and Auckland (New Zealand) in 2005 and in St. Petersburg (Russia) in 2007.

Ivashkin, however, is especially renowned and praised today for his exceptional initiative, determination, willpower and wisdom in pioneering the music of his contemporaries as a cellist and conductor, many of whom dedicated their works to him. Among the works written especially for Ivashkin are *Hymn III* for cello, bassoon, harpsichord and bells or timpani (1974-79) and *Klingende Buchstaben* for cello solo (1988) by Alfred Schnittke, *Monogram* for cello solo (op. 58a, 1990) by Dmitrii Smirnov, *Kyrie Eleison* for cello solo (1992) by Alexander Raskatov, *Ist es Genug?* for cello, ensemble and magnetic tape (1993) by Faradzh Karaev, *Passacaglia* for cello solo (1998) by Nikolai Korndorf and *Black Icons* for cello solo and ensemble (2011) by Roger Redgate. Ivashkin also actively collaborated with Edison Denisov, John Cage, George Crumb, Mauricio Kagel, Krzysztof Penderecki, Peter Sculthorpe, Sofia Gubaidulina, Giya Kancheli, Arvo Pärt, Nikolai Korndorf, Rodion Shchedrin, Vladimir Tarnopolski, James MacMillan, Lyell Cresswell,

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<sup>9</sup> Alexander Grechaninov, *Cello Concerto*, op. 8, from *Grechaninov*. Alexander Ivashkin (cello), Liudmila Golub (organ), Russian State Symphonic Capella, Russian State Symphony Orchestra, Valeri Polyansky, Chandos, Chan 9559, 1996, compact disc.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Grechaninov. *Cello Concerto*. Performance edition from manuscript, ed. by Alexander Ivashkin (Moscow: State Symphony Capella, 1997).

Gillian Whitehead, Augusta Reid Thomas, Christopher Cree-Brown, Brigid Bisley, Dmitri Smirnov, Elena Firsova, Brett Dean, Alexander Vustin, Gabriel Prokofiev, Carl Vine, Peteris Vasks and others. His discography is substantial: over 40 award winning recordings for the Chandos, Melodia, BMG, Brilliant Classics, Alma Classics, Megadisc, Naxos and Toccata Classics labels with complete works for cello by Rachmaninov, Tcherepnin, Prokofiev, Roslavets, Schnittke, Korndorf and Britten as well as concertos and other works by Schumann, Schubert, Pergolesi, Boccherini, Boismortier, Mozart, Martinu, Grechaninov, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Miaskovskii, Tishchenko, Gubaidulina, Denisov, Shchedrin, Kancheli, Vustin, Raskatov, Smirnov, Tarnopolski and Redgate among others.<sup>11</sup> Ivashkin's fine playing was praised by the BBC Music Magazine awards 'Best CD of the Year' in 2001 and 'CD of the Month' in 1998 and 2001, Fanfare Magazine award 'Best CD in Last 5 Years' in 2000, Record Industry award of 1999, *Diapason D'Or* award (France) and Bronze Medal for 'Best Sound' at International Radio Competition in New York in 1994.

Ivashkin was not afraid of taking unknown and undiscovered paths in music. A great devotee of the poetry of Anna Akhmatova, he was among those who travelled to Leningrad to attend her burial service and funeral in March 1966. In 2008, Ivashkin took on a special project *Anna Akhmatova: Three Works* of recording her *Poem without a Hero*, *Midnight Verses* and *Requiem* read by Terence O'Neill-Joyce and accompanied by the voice of the cello.<sup>12</sup> Akhmatova's powerful lyrics and tragic suffering are reinforced and brought together with excerpts from both cello concertos of Shostakovich: *Moderato*, the second movement from cello concerto No. 1, op. 107, and *Largo*, the first movement from cello concerto No. 2, op. 126; also included are the *Passacaglia: Lento solenne* from Britten's cello suite, op. 87, and Prokofiev's *Adagio* from *Cinderella* op. 97-bis. The selection of music thoroughly echoes the poignant bitterness and emotional restraint of the poetic texts: Shostakovich and Akhmatova had known each other for a long time. Like Prokofiev they lived through tragedies of the Stalinists terror, were condemned and censored by the authorities. Akhmatova dedicated some of her works to Shostakovich and it is believed that Shostakovich started to compose his elegiac first movement of the second cello concerto as soon as he

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<sup>11</sup> For further information and a full list of recordings see: [www.alexanderivashkin.com](http://www.alexanderivashkin.com) (accessed 14 May 2016).

<sup>12</sup> *Anna Akhmatova: Three Works*. Ivashkin (cello), Tamas Vesmas (piano), Symphony Orchestra of Moscow, Valeri Polyansky, Ode Records, CDMANU5022, 2008, compact disc.



learned about the death of the great poet.<sup>13</sup> Britten's third cello suite, the last work dedicated to Rostropovich, was written when the composer was seriously ill. This suite is filled with references to Russian folk and church music, especially in its last movement *Passacaglia*.<sup>14</sup>

Ivashkin's collaboration – rather unusual for a classically trained musician – with the Fijian and Maori musicians Ora Barlow and Kim Halliday, who are well-known performers of traditional Polynesian and Melanesian folk music, resulted in improvisations on their native ritual and spiritual melodies of the Pacific along with standard classical and contemporary repertoire, including cello suites by J.S. Bach, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Flight of the Bumble-Bee* and the world premiere of Brett Dean's *Intimate Decisions*, the version for cello.<sup>15</sup> This unpredictable fusion of a western cello with a rich non-Western musical culture of microtonal singing with simultaneous playing the ukulele, percussion and Taonga Puoro, the collective term for the traditional wind, whirled and percussion instruments of the Maori people of New Zealand, produced some incredibly reflective, characteristic roaring and vibrant authentic sounds of nature blended with the expressive, elegiac, dynamic and intense colouring and timbre of the cello. The author of this paper was privileged to be at the concert that Ivashkin gave with these two musicians at the City of London Festival in June 2011. Proficiency and talent, indigenous vitality and originality, but also the impression of remarkable creativity, unpredictability and a collaborative improvisation in their music making that evening were striking. It was one of the finest live concerts for an audience to experience.

One of Ivashkin's last grand projects was dedicated to Prokofiev and took place in St. Petersburg (Russia) in May 2013. *The Prokofievs: Three Generations* included performances of Sergei Prokofiev's *Concertino* for cello and orchestra, 1953, edited by Vladimir Blok, *Poems* by Oleg Prokofiev and the world premiere of the *Concerto for cello and orchestra*, 2013, by Gabriel Prokofiev (grandson of Sergei Prokofiev) with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sabrie Bekirova. There is no need to add any more

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<sup>13</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, 'Shostakovich. Second Cello Concerto', in D.D. Shostakovich, *New Collected Works Critical Edition*, vol. 49 (Moscow: DSCH, 2012), pp. 83-124 (p. 83).

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, Liner notes, *Britten and Russia: the Cello Works*, pp. 4-9 (p. 8). In *Britten: Complete Music for Cello Solo and Cello and Piano*. Alexander Ivashkin (cello), Andrew Zolinsky (piano), Brilliant Classics 94729, 2013, compact disc.

<sup>15</sup> *Pacific Voyage*. Alexander Ivashkin (cello), Kim Halliday (ukulele), Ora Barlow (percussion, ukulele, Taonga Puoro, voice), Ode Records, MANU 5028, 2009, compact disc.

accounts to the following quotes that fully describe Ivashkin's qualities as a musician and soloist: Mstislav Rostropovich regarded him as 'an outstanding cellist', Daniel Shafran as 'a leader in the field of performance', John Cage as 'an excellent musician', George Crumb as 'a superb musician of rare abilities' and Krzysztof Penderecki as 'an outstanding person in present-day music activities'. However, the opinion of Mauricio Kagel emphasises Ivashkin's unique combination of an in-depth vision and the artistry of a performer-scholar: 'The concerts of Mr Ivashkin can be recognised as an essential step toward authentic interpretation. This means an intense amount of preparation both in the musicological field and in the exact knowledge of different styles.'<sup>16</sup>

Ivashkin's tireless activities initiated many publications on Schnittke in the Czech Republic, Russia, Japan and the USA, and resulted in several festivals and symposia, including *Orthodoxy, Music, Politics and Art in Contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe* held at Goldsmiths College (London) in March 2013; *(M)Other Russia: Evolution or Revolution?* and *Sergei Prokofiev: Man of the People* in London in January and April 2012; *Europe as Seen by Russians, Russia as Seen by Europeans* in Moscow in April 2011; *In the Labyrinth of Alfred Schnittke. Between Two Worlds* in collaboration with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Southbank Centre in November 2009; *Rostropovich Remembered* at Wigmore Hall, London, in May 2009; *Shostakovich 100* at Rutgers University, USA, and at Goldsmiths College in association with the Southbank Centre in April/September 2006; *A Day of Sofia Gubaidulina* at the Purcell Room (London) in March 2001; *Seeking the Soul: the Music of Alfred Schnittke* in collaboration with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Barbican Centre in January 2001; *Shostakovich: 25 Years On* in Glasgow in October 2000, and *Russian Avant-garde: Past, Present and Future* at the Purcell Room and Goldsmiths College (London) in April 2000. Ivashkin's devotion and creativity inspired many researchers from around the world to undertake research and performance work on Shostakovich, Russian and American minimalism, modern technique and aesthetics in the twentieth-century solo cello music, Galina Ustvolskaia, Benjamin Britten, Sergei Rachmaninov, Nikolai Roslavets, Sergei Prokofiev, Alexander Grechaninov, and Sergei Vasilenko.

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<sup>16</sup> For further details see: [www.alexanderivashkin.com](http://www.alexanderivashkin.com) (accessed 14 May 2016).

‘Ivashkin is the whole epoch in our contemporary music, the scale of which one still has to comprehend,’ as Vladimir Tarnopolski rightly emphasised.<sup>17</sup> Known among his friends and colleagues as Sasha, Ivashkin is remembered as a tactful, modest and empathetic person with a great sense of humour and generosity, a brilliant versatile musician and academic who was always perceptive and open to new discoveries. One may interpret the following words of Ivashkin that he regarded essential for himself, as his everlasting legacy: ‘We mature only thanks to intellectual obstacles. Without them a routine prevails. [...] We should always strive towards the new.’<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Vladimir Tarnopolski, ‘Pamiati Aleksandra Ivashkina’ [In Memory of Alexander Ivashkin], in *Alfredu Shnittke posviashchaetsia* [Dedicated to Alfred Schnittke], ed. Alla Bogdanova and Elena Dolinskaia, vol. 9 (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2014), pp. 274-77 (p. 277).

<sup>18</sup> Alexander Ivashkin, ‘My vse vremia dolzhny stremitsia k novomu...’ [We Should Always Strive Towards the New...], in conversation with Nataliia Vlasova, *Muzykalnaia Akademiia* [Music Academy] (2003-4), pp. 1-14 (p. 11).

Alexander Ivashkin was a Russian cellist and musical ambassador who refused to follow the KGB's score. Alexander Ivashkin, who has died of cancer aged 65, was a Russian cellist and energetic champion of his nation's contemporary music in London. Over the past 15 years he tirelessly promoted and performed countless works by Shostakovich and his successors, including Alfred Schnittke, Edison Denisov and Sofia Gubaidulina. Professor, performer, writer and lecturer, Ivashkin became the go-to man for all things related to Russian music. Alexander Ivashkin, who has died aged 65 of pancreatic cancer, promoted Russian music with energy and enthusiasm: performing it, writing about it, and encouraging others to do the same. He was active as an author, teacher, festival organiser, conductor and an outstanding cellist. His career as a recording artist started with a handful of recordings for the Melodiya label in Moscow, but really took off in the mid-1990s with a series of releases on Chandos. These included definitive recordings of the cello works of Alfred Schnittke, as well as complete surveys of the cello music of Rachmaninov. An international celebration of the legacy, musicological and performance interests of the late Professor Alexander Ivashkin. As part of the Department of Music's PureGold Festival, we present a two-day conference focusing on music and the other arts, the conference will bring together international renowned specialists and will include lunchtime and evening concerts as well as round table discussions. Registration from 9am in Deptford Town Hall. by Alexander Ivashkin. *Contemplating Shostakovich* marks an important new stage in the understanding of Shostakovich and his working environment. Each chapter covers aspects of the composer's output in the context of his life and cultural milieu. Contents: *Contemplating Shostakovich: life, music, films*, Alexander Ivashkin and Andrew Kirkman; Part I *Music and Style: Through the looking glass: reflections on the significance of words and symbols in Shostakovich's music*, Elizabeth Wilson; *Shostakovich, old believers and new minimalists*, Alexander Ivashkin; *Five Satires (Pictures of the Past) by Dmitrii Shostakovich* (op. Alexander Ivashkin, cellist, conductor, writer, festival director, performed in more than 40 countries, including over 50 world premieres. Professor of Music at Goldsmiths, University of London, he has published 18 books on Schnittke, Ives, Penderecki, Rostropovich, and more than 200 articles in Russia, Germany, Italy, the US, the UK and Japan. The Cello Concerto was commissioned by Alexander Ivashkin, and he was a first performer of this work on 18 May 2013 at St.Petersburg Philharmonic Hall. This CD recording is dedicated to the memory of Alexander Ivashkin (click the 2nd image). 18 May 2013, Great Hall, St. Petersburg Philharmonia (Russia) *The Prokofievs: Three Generations*.