Fantasia for Domra

Composer: Avner Dorman

Year: 2024

Duration: 8 minutes

Publisher: Lyric Row Press

Commission: Commissioned by Astral Artists through its Commissioning Program for Ekaterina Skliar

Program Note

When I first heard the Domra, played by Ekaterina Skliar, I was immediately captivated by its expressive range and sonic possibilities. This encounter, facilitated by Astral Artists through its Commissioning Program, was an introduction to the instrument itself and its remarkable capability for harmonic depth and emotive expression. The Domra's compact size belies its vast potential, which became a source of inspiration for the composition of this piece. Drawing from the Baroque Fantasias and Toccatas, known for their improvisatory freedom and fluidity, I sought to explore the Domra's capabilities within a similar framework. The piece is structured around thematic material featuring a rising scale and an ornamented melody, employing various techniques to explore the instrument's polyphonic potential and range of effects. Fantasia unfolds in four sections, performed without breaks: 1. Andante a piacere: This opening section introduces listeners to the Domra's unique sound palette in a quasi-improvisational manner. 2. Presto: A vibrant dance that showcases the performer's virtuosity and the instrument's agility. 3. Andante, più tranquillo: A contemplative section that meditates on the initial thematic material over a repeated note. 4. Presto: a folk-inspired dance that revisits the energetic themes, leading to a compelling conclusion. Through Fantasia, I aimed to bridge my own musical heritage with the Domra's folk origins and its capacity for Baroque-style expression. This composition explores the Domra's technical and expressive breadth and also reflects my fascination with its sound and the possibilities it holds. I am grateful to Ekaterina and Astral Artists for the opportunity to get to know this wonderful instrument and write a for a great virtuoso.

Avner Dorman

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