PROKOFIEV'S VISIONS FUGITIVES: A PERFORMANCE GUIDE

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Purpose

This research aims to provide a performance guide to Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22, based on an analysis of Prokofiev's own recordings of the piece and recordings by prominent pianists. While 18th- and 19th-century keyboard composers primarily left the notated scores as modern pianists' primary source in interpreting their works, many 20th- and 21st-century keyboard composers recorded performances of their works, in addition to publishing their written works. These recordings occasionally diverge from the notated scores. Based on Nicholas Cook's idea that a "work" exists in the relation between its notation and the field of its performances, this research will mediate the different factors in creating a convincing and scholarly performance of Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22.[1]

Scope of Research

The scope of this research is limited to Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22. In 1935, Prokofiev recorded *Suggestion Diabolique* from Four Pieces, Op. 4; *Visions Fugitives,* Op. 22; Sonatine Pastorale, Op. 59, No. 3; and Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26. These are the only audio recordings Prokofiev did in his lifetime. Since an analysis of the Piano Concerto will intersect with the orchestral performance, this research will not include that work. Instead, I will solely analyze and provide performance guides for *Visions Fugitives*. My research will also exclude Prokofiev's recordings made on piano rolls for Duo-Art in New York in 1926. I also will limit my research to recordings by the following pianists: Boris Berman, Sviatoslav Richter, and Emil

[1] Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Gilels. I chose Berman due to his prominence as a performer of Prokofiev's works. Richter's proximity to Prokofiev led me to choose him. In his later years, Prokofiev dedicated his piano sonatas to Richter and thus knew Prokofiev's true intention intimately. Similar to Richter, Gilels was also quite close to Prokofiev. Indeed, Gilels premiered Prokofiev's Piano Sonata No. 8 in 1944.

This research will limit the scores used in the study to the Dover edition (a reprint of the Soviet edition), Kalmus edition, and several Soviet editions (namely Sovyetsky Kompozitor/Soviet Composer Union and Muzgig/Muzïka), freely available from IMSLP. The Dover edition is an original compilation of works published by P. Jürgenson, Leipzig, and A. Gutheil, Moscow.[2] Prokofiev originally published his early works under the Jürgenson publishing house. In 1916 he switched to Gutheil after Koussevitsky bought Gutheil in 1914.[3] Muzïka is the successor of Jürgenson, following Lenin's decree in 1918 to nationalize all Soviet music publishers.[4] As the Dover edition uses Jürgenson and Gutheil as their sources, it is safe to assume that their edition is accurate unless there are any unintentional mistakes during the copyediting process. Similar to Dover, the Kalmus edition is also a reprint of the Russian edition.[5]

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[2] I found this information on Dover's website, https://store.doverpublications.com/0486410919.html.

[3] Geoffrey Norris, "Gutheil," in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.12055.

[4] Geoffrey Norris and Stuart Campbell, "Muzïka," in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Root, Deane (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.19485.

[5] "Selected Works Vol 1 (Piano) by PROKOFIEV, S / LU | J.W. Pepper Sheet Music," JW Pepper (JW Pepper), accessed May 6, 2022, https://www.jwpepper.com/Selected-Works-Vol-1/5876321.item#.Y2iJnezMKjB .

Preliminary Review of Literature

Prokofiev's Biography

Before the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, there were several biographies about Prokofeiv, such as Nestyev's *Prokofiev, His Musical Life* (1946), Claude Samuel's *Prokofiev* (1971), and Victor Seroff's *Sergei Prokofiev: A Soviet Tragedy* (1968). Some of these biographies, however, were often smeared with Soviet propaganda, rendering them questionable. Another problem with these biographies is the lack of access to source materials, as specific collections remain closed at the request of the Prokofiev estate due to their sensitive personal contents.[6]

David Nice's biography of Prokofiev, *Prokofiev: from Russia to the West 1891-1935*, differs from these previous biographies as it was the first biography written about Prokofiev after the fall of the Soviet Union. Written with the goal of restoring the composer's reputation, Nice traveled to Russia, researched Prokofiev's personal documents, and interviewed the remaining members of Prokofiev's family. In addition to discussing Prokofiev's life and reputation, Nice also addressed the innovations in the composer's music and style, discussing how Prokofiev combined the strong roots of Russian music and the modern elements that were popular during Prokofiev's life, especially in Europe at the time. As such, Nice's biography of Prokofiev provides a more realistic view of the composer without traces of Soviet propaganda.

Simon Alexander Morrison, a scholar specializing in Prokofiev's music, also wrote a biography of Prokofiev-–*The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years*. This biography provides a detailed chronicle of Prokofiev's career and decision to relocate to Stalin's Russia in 1936. It

[6] "Sergey Prokofiev". In *obo* in Music, https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199757824/obo-9780199757824-0069.xml (accessed 2 Nov. 2019).

examines Prokofiev's aesthetic and spiritual views based on exclusive and extensive research conducted at several Russian archives.

Harlow Robinson wrote two books: *Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography* (1987) and *Selected Letters of Sergei Prokofiev* (1998). Although Robinson wrote his biography of Prokofiev prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Robinson used Russian-language sources previously unavailable to non-Russian readers. He consulted then-surviving members of Prokofiev's immediate family: Lina Prokofiev, Oleg Prokofiev, and Sviatoslav Prokofiev (Prokofiev's first wife and two sons, respectively). Robinson organized Prokofiev's letters in *Selected Letters of Prokofiev* based on the letters' recipients instead of chronologically.

Prokofiev himself wrote an autobiography, *Prokofiev by Prokofiev: A Composer's Memoir*, which covers his earliest years to his graduation from the composition department of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Encouraged from a young age by his mother to write diaries, Prokofiev wrote quite sporadically, with a hiatus before his admittance to St. Petersburg Conservatory.

Prokofiev's Recordings of His Own Works

Prokofiev's life span (1891–1953) intersects with the rapid development of recording technology. As a composer-pianist in his early years, he recorded some of his own piano works: namely *Suggestion Diabolique*, from Four Pieces, Op. 4*;* selections from *Visions Fugitives*, Op. 22; Sonatine Pastorale, Op. 59, No. 3; and Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26. Recorded in 1932–1935, a few years before his return to Russia, these recordings were made in the electric era of recording, which allowed for better sound quality (a fuller, richer, and more detailed and balanced sound on record) compared to the acoustic era. Prokofiev did not record all twenty

pieces from the *Visions Fugitives*; he only recorded nine: *"*Allegretto" (3), *"*Molto giocoso" (5), "Con eleganza" (6), "Allegro tranquillo" (9), "Ridiculosamente" (10), "Con vivacita" (11), "Dolente" (16), "Poeticco" (17), and "Con una dolce lentezza"(18). Prokofiev did not only make recordings on the piano. He also recorded several pieces on piano rolls for Duo-Art in New York in 1926: Ten Pieces, Op. 12, and *Tales of an Old Grandmother*. The other recordings he made in his lifetime are his arrangement of Rimsky Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and short pieces by Glazunov, Myaskovsky, and Scriabin. After his return to the Soviet Union in 1936, Prokofiev did not make recordings of his piano works.

Few scholars have discussed Prokofiev's performances of his pieces in these recordings. Steven Moellering's lecture document, *Visions Fugitives: Insights into Prokofiev's Compositional Vision*, is one of the few works that analyze Prokofiev's recorded performance.[7] In his lecture document, Moellering provides background information regarding Prokofiev's recordings, compares *Visions Fugitives* with other works by Prokofiev, and analyzes the recordings using Prokofiev's five compositional styles and ten characteristics he developed.[8] He concludes that Prokofiev did not always follow his own directions in his recording and that Prokofiev was a sensitive and highly polished pianist.

Laryssa Davis' doctoral document, *Visions Fugitives: Glimpses into Prokofiev's Compositional Development From 1915 – 1917*, examines *Visions Fugitives* from a chronological viewpoint and shows the transformation of Prokofiev's compositional language

[7] Steven Edward Moellering, "Visions Fugitives: Insights into Prokofiev's Compositional Vision" (DMA Lecture Document, Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska, 2007), 58..

[8] The ten characteristics that Mollering developed are: (1) dissipating endings, (2) sharp dynamic contrasts, (3) disjunct melody, (4) chromatic melody and free counterpoint, (5) homophonic accompanimental figures, (6) structures based on the tritone, (7) frequent use of the 3rd, (8) use of the 7th, (9) ternary form, and (10) abrupt shifts to distant tonalities. Moellering, ii.

throughout the set.[9] Davis posits that while the early pieces are often tonal, the later pieces contain elements of atonality and have more chromaticism.

Gary O'Shea's thesis, *Prokofiev's Early Solo Piano Music: Context, Influences, Forms, Performance*, briefly discusses Prokofiev's performance of *Visions Fugitives* and compares Prokofiev's performances with contemporary performers (Boris Berman, Sviatoslav Richter, Emil Gilels, and Michel Béroff).[10] O'Shea also evaluates the principal influences on Prokofiev and his piano music. His assessment shows how Prokofiev's formal process in his early piano sonatas was entrenched in and yet diverged from the sonata form tradition.

Recordings of Prokofiev's Works by Other Pianists

Among the pianists I chose for this project, Boris Berman (b. 1948) is the only pianist who recorded all selections from the *Visions Fugitives*. A leading interpreter of Prokofiev's piano works and the current head of the Piano Department at Yale School of Music, Berman is also the first pianist to record Prokofiev's entire oeuvre for piano.

In addition to using Berman's recordings, I will also utilize *Visions Fugitives* recordings by Sviatoslav Richter (1915 – 1997) and Emil Gilels (1916 – 1985). While Berman recorded all pieces in the *Visions Fugitives*, these two prominent pianists did not. Instead, they performed and recorded selections from the *Visions Fugitives*. Richter had selections from *Visions Fugitives* in his concert repertoire: "Allegretto" (3), "Animato" (4), "Molto giocoso" (5), "Con eleganza" (6), "Commodo" (8), "Allegro tranquillo" (9), "Con vivacità" (11), "Feroce" (14), "Inquieto" (15),

[9] Laryssa Davis, "'Visions Fugitives': Glimpses into Prokofiev's Compositional Development From 1915–1917," *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses* (D.M.A., Ann Arbor, The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 2011), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I (882863439).

[10] Gary O'Shea, "Prokofiev's Early Solo Piano Music: Context, Influences, Forms, Performance" (PhD Thesis, Sheffield, UK, University of Sheffield, 2013), https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/21843/1/632817.pdf.

and “Con una dolce lentezza” (18). There are two recordings of Richter performing these selections; he recorded live at Carnegie Hall in 1960 and in Japan in 1980-81. Similar to Richter, Gilels also only performed and recorded selections from the set. He had nine pieces from *Visions Fugitives* in his concert repertoire: “Lentamente” (1), “Allegretto” (3), “Molto giocoso” (5), “Pittoresco” (7), “Commodo” (8), “Allegro tranquillo” (9), “Ridicolosamente” (10), “Con vivacità” (11), and “Poetico” (17).

Prokofiev’s Scores

There is yet to be a critical edition of the complete works of Prokofiev. However, there are several critical editions of his operas – *The Love for Three Oranges* and *The Fiery Angel* – and various reprints of his nine piano sonatas. A critical situation in terms of scholarship is the lack of critical editions, for most editions, such as Sikorski, Boosey & Hawkes, and G. Schirmer, are often filled with mistakes. Even worse, the 1962 Soviet edition is incomplete. In my studies, I have found discrepancies and errors in the Dover edition, which is a reprint of the Soviet edition. The Kalmus edition is deemed editor-free, but one cannot guarantee that the edition is error-free.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prokofiev's Early Life

Sergey Sergeyevich Prokofiev was born on 27 April 1891 in Sonsovtka, part of the Bakhmut district of Ukraine (then part of Russia). His father, Sergey Alexeyevich Prokofiev, was an agronomist. Maria Grigoryevna Zhitkova, his mother, was an accomplished pianist and instilled the love of music in Seryozha, as his mother called him. Sergey Alexevich, a Muscovite by birth, only inherited a small fortune from his parents. With his background in agriculture, he worked as a soil engineer in Sonstsovka. Sergey Alexeyvich and Maria Zhitkova remained in Sonstsovka for the rest of their married life.[11]

In Sonstsovka, Prokofiev's childhood musical education began under the tutelage of his mother and later Reinhold Glière, his first composition tutor. Maria treated Prokofiev to "six hours of piano music a day," and Prokofiev often "fell asleep to the sounds of Beethoven, Schubert, or Chopin."[12] As Sergey's first piano teacher, Maria gave the seven-year-old daily 20-minute piano lessons and increased the lesson length to an hour by the time he was nine. Realizing that Sergey exhibited musical talents, the Prokofievs went to St. Petersburg in December 1901 and met Sergei Taneyev, a composer and professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. After listening to Prokofiev's *Na pustïnnïkh ostrovakh* (On Desert Islands), Taneyev was impressed with the young boy's natural talent and artistic poise. He recommended that Sergey receive professional instructions in harmony, theory, and composition.[13] His parents

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[11] I have chosen to use popularly accepted spellings of Russian names (Prokofiev instead of Prokof'ev) as well as using the Western calendar instead of the Old Style/Russian calendar, which USSR adopted in 1818 and lagged behind the Western calendar by twelve days. In this document, dates marked with N.S. denote dates under the New Style, while dates with O.S. denotes dates under the Old Style.

[12] David Nice, *Prokofiev: From Russia to the West, 1891-1935* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 7.

[13] Harlow Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography* (New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Viking, 1987), 17.

took this advice seriously, and thus Sergey embarked upon his first composition lessons under Reinhold Glière in the summer of 1902. These compositional lessons yielded impressive results: Prokofiev produced a series of six *pesensky* (little songs) for the piano, a symphony, and a violin sonata.

Although the Prokofievs had made connections with members of the Moscow Conservatory, Maria preferred to send 12-year-old Sergey to St. Petersburg, as her family lived there.[14] Prior to his admission to the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1904, Sergey continued his musical education and prepared for the conservatory entrance exam under Mikhail Chernov. During his conservatory years, Prokofiev took lessons with prominent pedagogues and musicians: Anatoly Lyadov (harmony and counterpoint), Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (orchestration), and Nikolai Tcherepnin (conducting).

After he graduated from the composition program in 1909, honed his pianistic skills by entering the Moscow Conservatory's piano program. He studied with Alexander Winkler and later Anna Yesipova, a prominent Russian pedagogue.[15] In the spring of 1914, he performed his own First Piano Concerto, Op. 10, for the piano examination, a highly unusual feat. Using the same piano concerto, Prokofiev won the 'battle of the pianos,' a competition between the best five piano students.[16] This achievement exemplified his excellence in piano playing.

Prokofiev reworked various pieces he wrote during his conservatory years into published works. Among these works are *Toccata*, Op. 11; the first and second Piano Concertos; and some character pieces in *Sarcasms*, Op. 17 (1912). Three of Prokofiev's early piano sonatas were also

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[14] Prokofiev stated in his autobiography that he was glad that he did not attend a high school as he "wasn't very strong and didn't know how to fight". Sergey Prokofiev, *Prokofiev by Prokofiev: A Composer's Memoir* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1979), 89.

[15] Anna Yesipova was one of Theodor Leschetizky's pupils and trained other prominent Russian musicians. Among her students are Artur Schnabel, Maria Yudina, Isabelle Vengerova, and Leo Ornstein.

[16] Dorothea Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey," in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root (Oxford University Press, 2001), https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.22402.

connected to his conservatory years: First Piano Sonata, Op. 1 (1909), Third Piano Sonata, Op. 28 (1917), and Fourth Piano Sonata, Op. 29 (1917). The Second Piano Sonata, Op. 4 (1912) stems from his conservatory sonatina.

Post Conservatory Before Leaving Russia

During Prokofiev's further study in piano and conducting, he also advanced his compositional career. In December 1908, a year before his graduation from the composition program, he made his debut as a composer in St. Petersburg's "Evenings of Contemporary Music." Among the pieces he performed for his debut are *Fairy Tale* (later included in Op. 3) and *Suggestion diabolique* (later included in Op. 4).[17] His introduction to the Moscow audiences occurred two years later, in 1910. He performed his own First Piano Sonata, Op. 1, at the 13th "Musical Exhibition" organized by the soprano Maria Deisha-Sionitskaya.[18] He also played three of the four *Etudes* from his Op. 2. Following the footsteps of other pianist-composers of his time, Prokofiev performed his works extensively in 1912 and 1913. He performed his First Piano Concerto and Second Piano Concerto in 1912 and 1913, respectively.[19] During these years, Prokofiev started a publishing contract with Jurgenson. This publishing contract remained in place until 1916, when he moved to the Gütheil publishing company.

The beginning of the First World War (1914 – 1918) changed Prokofiev's life. Unlike his close friend Myaskovsky, who had to serve as a military field engineer, Prokofiev was exempt from military service as a widow's only son.[20] With Tsar Nicholas II ordering immediate

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[17] Prokofiev, *Prokofiev by Prokofiev*, 281.

[18] Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev*, 69.

[19] Prokofiev played a somewhat different version of the Second Piano Concerto during the 1913 premiere. The manuscript was left behind in Petrograd following Prokofiev's move in 1918 and was lost in a fire after the February Revolution. Prokofiev wrote a new version with "less foursquare and slightly more complex in its contrapuntal fabric but with the thematic material entirely preserved" for a Paris performance. Nice, *Prokofiev*, 94.

[20] Nice, 103.

mobilization, Prokofiev's 1913 – 1914 trip to England ended abruptly. He returned to Russia in August, a month after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand of Austria. The trip was short yet significant. He attended performances of the Ballet Russes—including Igor Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and *Petrushka*—and met with Sergei Diaghilev. In this meeting, Diaghilev was impressed by Prokofiev's Second Concerto and commissioned Prokofiev to write an independent ballet. While the ballet commission eventually fell through—Diaghilev rejected the score before its completion—Prokofiev later incorporated the music into *Scythian Suite* (1915), an orchestral suite. 1915 also marked Prokofiev's European debut, performing his Second Piano Concerto in Rome with the Augusteo Orchestra on 7 March.[21] Diaghilev funded this trip and introduced him to prestigious musicians in Rome, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Sorrento, and Pompeii.[22] On this trip, Prokofiev finally met Stravinsky. (During the previous trip, Stravinsky was in Russia while Prokofiev was in Europe.) While Prokofiev managed to travel to Europe during the First World War, events such as the sinking of the *Lusitania* in May 1915 did affect his ability to travel. His mother, worried about his safety, cautioned him against leaving Russia. Prokofiev thus stayed in Russia in 1915.

Many social upheavals marred the three years leading to Prokofiev's departure from Russia. The February Revolution, which led to Tsar Nicholas II's abdication and the rise of the Bolsheviks, took place on 8 – 16 March 1917 (23 February – 3 March 1917 Old Style). The Bolsheviks rose to power eight months later, in the October 1917 Revolution (7 November 1917 N.S., 25 October 1917 O.S.). During these months, Prokofiev lived outside the center of the revolutions—he did not return to Moscow or Petrograd until March 1918. (The Imperial government renamed St. Petersburg to Petrograd in 1914 after the outbreak of the First World

[21] Nice, 108.
[22] Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev*, 109..

War due to nationalistic sentiment.) Prokofiev avoided any active political part in the revolutionary events and stayed far away from Petrograd in the Caucasus.

Despite these social upheavals, Prokofiev continued to compose and build his reputation. Indeed, Prokofiev's music was performed more often than before. He maintained the enfant terrible status he garnered from his conservatory days. He played his *Sarcasms* as well as his *Five Poems of Anna Akhmatova*, Op. 27 (with Zinadia Artemyeva as the singer) on 5 February 1917, in Moscow, with "an outraged Medtner and a stony [Rachmaninoff]" in the audience.[23] Besides writing the *Five Poems*, Prokofiev also wrote several well-known compositions: The First Symphony ("Classical"), the First Violin Concerto, *Visions Fugitives*, the Third Piano Sonata, and the Fourth Piano Sonata. 1917 was one of the most productive years of his life.

Prokofiev returned to Moscow and Petrograd in March 1918, intending to leave Russia and try his luck in America. The political instability had led Prokofiev, and other Russian artists, to realize that it would be challenging to work seriously in Russia in the foreseeable future. Russian artists at the time viewed America as the best choice because traveling to Europe had become dangerous due to the War and because traveling to America was achievable through the momentarily peaceful Siberia.[24] Prokofiev's stay in Petrograd was short; he only spent a month there. However, during his short stay, Prokofiev gave four world premieres of his works: Piano Sonata No. 3, Piano Sonata No. 4, *Visions Fugitives*, and his First Symphony, *"Classical."* Anatoly Lunacharsky, the newly appointed Commissar for Education (similar to the Minister of Culture), was in attendance for the premiere of the First Symphony. Prokofiev met with Lunacharsky in order to receive his blessing to leave for the United States. Lunacharsky told him, "You are a revolutionary in music, as we are in life. We should work together. But if you

[23] Nice, *Prokofiev*, 126.
[24] Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev*, 135.

want to go to America, I will not stand in your way."[25] With Lunacharsky's verbal blessing and written permission, Prokofiev procured the necessary foreign passport and documentation. In May 1918, Prokofiev left Russia with only a few of his works: the *Scythian Suite*, the *Classical Symphony*, the First Violin Concerto, and a few piano pieces.[26] He boarded the last Trans-Siberian Express and reached Vladivostok before the strategic route was blocked.[27]

Living Abroad

Prokofiev initially departed the Soviet Union with South America as his destination. However, during his stop in Japan, he could not make the necessary steamer connections heading to South America and changed his destination to the United States. Arriving in Tokyo on 1 June 1918, Prokofiev spent several months in Japan and gave several piano recitals in Tokyo and Yokohama, where he boarded a steamer bound for San Francisco. Prokofiev's departure from the newly merged Soviet Union parallels the departures of his Russian contemporaries such as Stravinsky and Sergey Rachmaninoff. By 1918, Stravinsky had lived in Switzerland after leaving Russia in 1914, while Rachmaninoff emigrated to the United States with his family in December 1917. With a short stop in Honolulu, Prokofiev eventually arrived in New York in early September 1918. (He was detained for three days on Angel Island while the *Grotius*, the Dutch liner he took, docked in San Francisco Harbor on 21 August 1918.)[28]

Prokofiev initially built his reputation as a virtuoso by performing his works in American concert halls. From 1918 to 1922, Prokofiev primarily resided in New York. His first American debut took place at the Brooklyn Museum on 29 October 1918, with him performing *Visions*

[25] Robinson, 137.
[26] Robinson, 138.
[27] Nice, *Prokofiev*, 142.
[28] Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev*, 149.

Fugitives and *Ten Pieces for Piano*, Op. 12. Adolf Bolm provided choreography and danced to these pieces.[29] Perhaps more important than his Brooklyn debut is Prokofiev's Aeolian Hall debut on 29 November 1918, with Rachmaninoff in the audience. Knowing that the American audience is familiar with Rachmaninoff's works, Prokofiev performed Rachmaninoff and Scriabin's works as well as his own Second Piano Sonata.[30] He performed two other concerts in New York with the 'Russian orchestra' and two concerts in Chicago, where he performed his own First Piano Concerto and the *Scythian Suite*.

With his performance career taking off, Prokofiev turned his attention back to composing and publishing. From 1918 to 1920, he published some works, including *Old Grandmother's Tales*, Op. 31 (1918); *4 Dances*, Op 32 (1918); and *The Love for Three Oranges*, Op. 33 (1919). Starting in 1920, Prokofiev divided his time between Europe and the United States; he primarily resided in Europe during the summer seasons and returned to the United States during the winter seasons. During this time, Prokofiev finished his Third Piano Concerto, Op. 26, with a premiere in Chicago (December 1921) and a further performance in New York (January 1922). In 1923, he decided to primarily reside in Europe, along with his new bride, Lina Ivanova Prokofiev (born Carolina Codina). Reunited with Balmont in Europe, he composed 5 Poems, Op. 21, his last setting of Balmont's works.

While Prokofiev resided in Europe from 1923 to 1936, he never severed his ties with Soviet musicians and communities during his stay in Europe. Indeed, when France granted the Soviet Union diplomatic recognition in 1924, Prokofiev registered himself as a Soviet citizen.[31]

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[29] Robinson, 145.

[30] Prokofiev also performed his *Four Etudes,* Op. 2 and Four Pieces, either Op. 3, Op. 4, or Op. 32. Moellering, "Visions Fugitives: Insights into Prokofiev's Compositional Vision," 58.

[31] Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey." The United States did not establish diplomatic relations with the USSR until 1933.

Thus, he was never an emigrant in the same legal sense as Stravinsky. Starting with his *Seven, They Are Seven*, Op. 30, written in 1917 for a large orchestra, chorus, and dramatic tenor soloist, Prokofiev regularly printed his music under the All Russian Music Publishing House (later renamed Muzgiz), He severed his publishing contract with Koussevitsky's Gutheil. His piano works, such as the *Prodigal Son*, Op. 46, and the *Three Piano Pieces*, Op. 35, were also performed regularly in USSR. In January 1927, Prokofiev returned for the first time to the USSR for a two-month concert tour. He then returned twice to the USSR: one failed performance tour in November 1929 and a trip to Moscow in November 1932 to secure a flat. (Prokofiev did not perform on his November 1929 trip because he injured himself in a car accident.) It is evident during this period that Prokofiev intently observed whether he should return to USSR or stay in the Western sphere. However, he kept his observation private in his diary. Some of his major piano works, such as the Fifth Piano Sonata (1923), the reworked Second Piano Concerto (1923), the Fourth Piano Concerto (1931), and the Fifth Piano Concerto (1932), were completed during this transitionary period.[32]

Return to the USSR

In the summer of 1936, Prokofiev took his wife, Lina, and two sons, Sviatoslav and Oleg, back to the USSR. His return coincided with the dawn of Stalin's Great Purges.[33] Prokofiev initially believed that he would be allowed privileges, primarily keeping his passport and permission to travel abroad, which let him stay permanently in the USSR. This privilege would later be revoked as Prokofiev was asked to turn in his passport for the transaction of a formality and

[32] The Fourth Piano Concerto, Op. 53 was originally written for Paul Wittgenstein, a concert piano who lost his right hand in the First World War. Wittgenstein rejected the concerto.

[33] The Great Purge (1936 – 1938) was Stalin's campaign of political repression in the Soviet Union. Imprisonment and arbitrary executions were common during this period.

never received his passport back.[34] Prokofiev would then stay on his native soil until his death on March 5 1953.

Prokofiev and his family evacuated to multiple locations outside Moscow (Nalchik, Tbilisi, Alma-Ata, and Perm') at the outbreak of the Second World War. The USSR officially entered the Second World War in June 1941, after Germany launched Operation Barbarossa and invaded the USSR, breaking the non-aggression pact both countries signed in 1939. During the devastating war, Sviatoslav Richter and Emil Gilels premiered the War Sonatas—the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Piano Sonatas. (Richter and Gilels would later record the *Visions Fugitives*.) While Prokofiev began the compositional process for all the War Sonatas in 1939, he completed them in different years. The Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Sonata were finished in 1940, 1942, and 1944, respectively.

The Allied countries renewed their interests in Prokofiev's music, especially his non-patriotic Soviet works, following the success of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony (1941) during the Second World War. While the Western spheres renewed their interest in Prokofiev's music, the Soviet sphere began to condemn his works. Under Andrey Zhdanov, the leading cultural idealogue of the Stalin period, the Soviet state started strict supervision of its musicians. The period colloquially referred to as 'Zhanovschnia,' began in 1946 with the release of Zhdanov's resolutions condemning the Leningrad literary journals (*Zvezda* and *Leningrad*), the theatrical repertoire, and the Soviet film industry. The third resolution damaged Prokofiev's post-Second World War career, for he had written the score for *Ivan the Terrible*, one of the main subjects of the third resolution. Zhdanov's 1948 resolution, 'On the Opera "The Great Friendship" by Vanmo Moredelli,' condemning multiple composers of the Soviet Union,

[34] Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey."

including Prokofiev by name, essentially banned Prokofiev's works from Soviet musical venues.[35] Although he wrote multiple letters of self-abasement, self-accusation, and justification to the Union of Composers, he never regained his previous social standing among the Soviet composers.

At the end of his life, Prokofiev's output diminished enormously, not just because of the condemnations by the Soviet state but also due to personal blows. The state arrested his first foreign-born wife, Lina, with the accusations of spying and treachery, condemning her to 20 years in a labor camp. Redepenning suggested that Prokofiev left his family and lived with Mira Mendelson to divert the state's attention from his family.[36] Additionally, Prokofiev suffered from medical issues—nervous headaches and heart attacks—which led his doctor to forbid him from working. The few late works he composed—'Soldiers' Marching Song' (1950), the suite *Winter Bonfire*, Op. 122 (1949), the oratorio *On Guard for Peace,* Op. 124 (1950), and the symphonic poem *The Meeting of the Volga and the Don*, Op. 130 (1951)—sounded distinctive from his earlier works and did not make a lasting impact on the canon.

Visions Fugitives

Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives* (*Mimoletnosti*), Op. 22, is a set of twenty short piano pieces/miniatures written between 1915 – 1917 and published in 1917. As stated before, Prokofiev sketched nos. 5, 6, 10, 16, and 17 in 1915; nos. 2, 3, 7, 12, 13, and 20 in 1916; and nos. 1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 18, and 19 in 1917. Instead of publishing the set in the chronological

[35] In this resolution, Zhdanov denounced these composers' works for 'formalistic distortions and anti-democratic tendencies', as a 'rejection of the principles of classical music' and for the 'dissemination of atonality'. Redepenning.

[36] Redepenning, "Prokofiev, Sergey."

compositional manner, Prokofiev organized them in the published set in a manner that maximizes "their inherent dramatic contrasts in performance."[37] Prokofiev himself gave the set's premiere in Kislovodsk on 14 October 1917.

The set's title, *Visions Fugitives*, came from 'I do not know wisdom,' a poem by Konstantin Balmont (1867 – 1942). In this poem, Balmont coined the "virtually untranslatable plural" word *mimloynotnosti* (literally 'transiences'). [38] *Visions Fugitives* is the French translation of this word. Prokofiev's relationship with Balmont's poetry extended beyond this piano setHe used Balmont's poetry in his pre-Akhmatova songs and later works such as *5 Poems*, Op. 21 (1921) and *Seven, They Are Seven*, Op. 30 (written in 1917 – 18, revised in 1933).[39]

In his 1927 autobiography, Prokofiev categorized and described his style into five categories: classical, modern, toccata, lyrical, and grotesque. While displeased with the word 'grotesque,' he acknowledged that others had described his music as grotesque. However, he preferred 'scherzo-ish' or other words associated with scherzo qualities—whimsicality, laughter, and mockery—to describe the fifth category. Prokofiev described his classical "line" or category as compositions that resemble neo-classical forms (sonatas, concertos) or imitate eighteenth-century works. His second category, the modern trend, includes works where Prokofiev searched for his own harmonic language, such as 'Suggestion diabolique' from his *4 Pieces for Piano*, Op. 4 and *Sarcasms*, op. 17. The third category, toccata, is marked by the repetitive movement in short note values, found in his works such as *Etudes*, op. 2; *Toccata*, op. 11; and the 'Scherzo'

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[37] Davis, "'Visions Fugitives': Glimpses into Prokofiev's Compositional Development From 1915–1917," ii.

[38] Nice, *Prokofiev*, 129. Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev*, 124..

[39] Prokofiev later used Balmont's poem, *Ancient Calls*—a poetic reworking of Chaldean cuneiform writings—as the text for *Seven, They Are Seven*, Op. 30, a cantata for large orchestra, chorus, and dramatic tenor soloist.

from his *10 Pieces for Piano*, Op. 12. Prokofiev described lyrical, his fourth category, as "thoughtful and meditative," although it is not always associated with a melody. Examples from this category include 'Fairy Tale' from *4 Pieces for Piano*, Op. 4 and 'Legend' from *10 Pieces for Piano*, Op. 12.[40]

Although *Visions Fugitives* originated from Prokofiev's early composition period, the collection contains all five elements of Prokofiev's compositional style. Davis remarked that the classical style exists in Nos. 1, 8, and 11, while the innovation style is copious in Nos. 14 and 20. The repetitive movement, the hallmark of Prokofiev's toccata style, can be found in Nos. 4, 5, and 19. Prokofeiv used the lyricism style extensively in this collection, and prime examples can be found in Nos. 16, 17, and 18. The grotesque or scherzo element exists throughout the collection. However, the scherzo character strongly permeates Nos. 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 11.[41] It is important to note that Prokofiev often uses more than one style in his works. For instance, *Visions Fugitives* No. 5, "Molto giocoso," has two elements: scherzo and toccata.

Prokofiev recorded selections from the *Visions Fugitives* in 1935, his final year living outside of Russia. *Prokofiev Performing Prokofiev*, the album used in this study, also includes Prokofiev's recording of the Third Piano Concerto. Although publishers grouped the two works, Prokofiev recorded the two sets separately. In 1932, Prokofiev recorded the Third Piano Concerto with London Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Piero Coppola. Prokofeiv recorded the entire second set in two paris recording studios: Pathé Studios and the Salle Rameau. The recording session began on 12 February 1935 on 78 RPM recordings, while the last

[40] Sergey Prokofiev, Oleg Prokofiev, and Christopher Palmer, *Soviet Diary 1927 and Other Writings* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 248–49.

[41] Davis, "'Visions Fugitives': Glimpses into Prokofiev's Compositional Development From 1915–1917," 25–26.

session took place on 5 March 1935.[42] Prokofiev recorded the selections of *Vision Fugitives* in the initial session. In this second set of the recording, Prokofiev also recorded "Gavotte" from the *Classical Symphony*, Op. 25; "Andante Assai" from the Fourth Sonata, Op. 29; *Conte de la virile grand-mére*, Op. 31 Nos. 2 and 3; *Gavotte*, Op. 32 No. 3; *Étude*, Op. 52; *Sonatina Pastorale*, Op. 59, No. 3; *Passage*, Op. 59, No. 2; and *Suggestion diabolique*, Op. 4, No. 4.

Although Prokofiev was happy with his performance, he was critical of the sound quality. In his letter to Fred Gaisberg, Prokofiev stated "I did my work with much attention and perseverance and I hope that the result from the standpoint of playing will be satisfactory."[43] However, his comments regarding the sound quality and the piano were not as generous. He found that the piano in his records sounded "comme une casserole" and that the Steinway piano used in this recording was "bad (dry) only in the upper octaves."[44] He deemed his recording's quality inferior to Rachmaninoff's or Horowitz's recordings. Gaisberg assured him that the Paris recording studios had the same level of quality as the Abbey Road studio, where he recorded the Third Concerto.

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[42] The term 78s (or "seventy-eights") were used after World War II when other newer disc record formats emerged. Prokofiev's recordings fell under the electrical era (1925-47). The acoustical era recordings were recorded with a horn, where the power of their sound directly vibrated the recording stylus and cut the wax of the master disc. Due to this process, the acoustical recording never yielded high fidelity and its dynamic range was limited. The electrical era recordings, however, were recorded with a microphone and amplifier. This method yielded a bigger dynamic range and allowed a wider range of sound to be recorded. https://web.library.yale.edu/cataloging/music/historyof78rpms

[43] Frederick William Gaisberg was an American musician, recording engineer, and one of the earliest classical music producers of rate gramophone. In 1935, he was a talent-scout for the newly invented Gramophone. Nice, *Prokofiev*, 325.

[44] Nice, 325. Based on a letter dated 5 March 1935.

Table 2.1: Prokofiev's recording order for *Visions Fugitives:*

Selections	Recording Length
No. 9: Allegro tranquillo	1:07
No. 3: Allegretto	0:55
No. 17: Poetico	0:52
No. 18: Con una dolce lentezza	1:17
No. 11: Con vivacità	0:55
No. 10: Ridicolosamente	0:52
No. 16: Dolente	1:32
No. 6: Con eleganza	0:20
No. 5: Molto giocosa	0:24

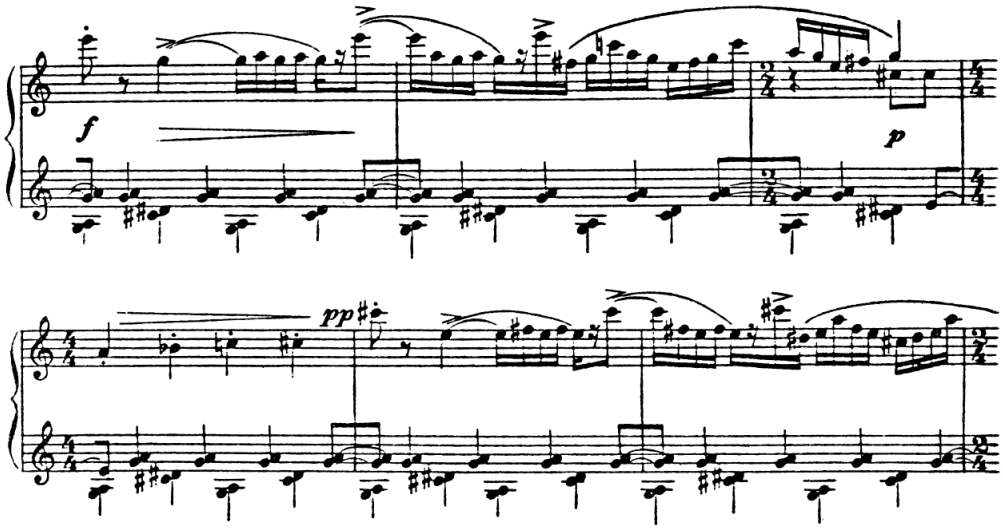
CHAPTER THREE

PROKOFIEV PERFORMING VISIONS FUGITIVES

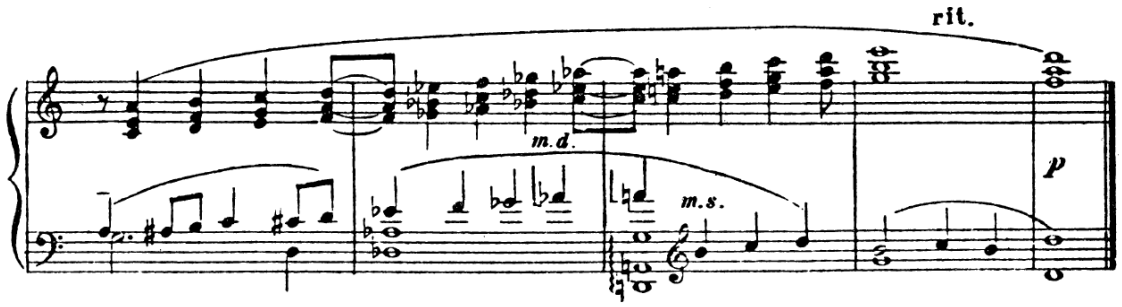
Visions Fugitives No. 3: Allegretto

In his 1935 recording, Prokofiev did not record excerpts from *Visions Fugitives* in the publication order. Instead, Prokofiev performed the third piece, "Allegretto," as the second piece, following "Allegro tranquillo," the ninth piece in the set. Prokofiev played at an overall brisk tempo (♩ = 130), resulting in a short recording of 55 seconds.

While Prokofiev's pacing in the A section (measures 1–12) was quite conservative, Prokofiev's pacing in the B section (measures 13–22) was improvisatory and scherzo-like. Prokofiev followed his own performance directions in the A section, except for a ritardando in measures 11–12 to mark the end of the A section. An example of Prokofiev's improvisatory nature in the B section is his accelerando on the sixteenth notes of measures 14 and 15 with a return to the original tempo in measure 17 (Ex 3.1). Prokofiev did not mark this accelerando on the score. On the last three measures starting with the left-hand stretch in the downbeat of measure 26, Prokofiev slowed down considerably (Ex 3.2).



Example 3.1: *Visions Fugitives* No. 3, measures 14–19



Example 3.2: *Visions Fugitives* No. 3, measures 24–28

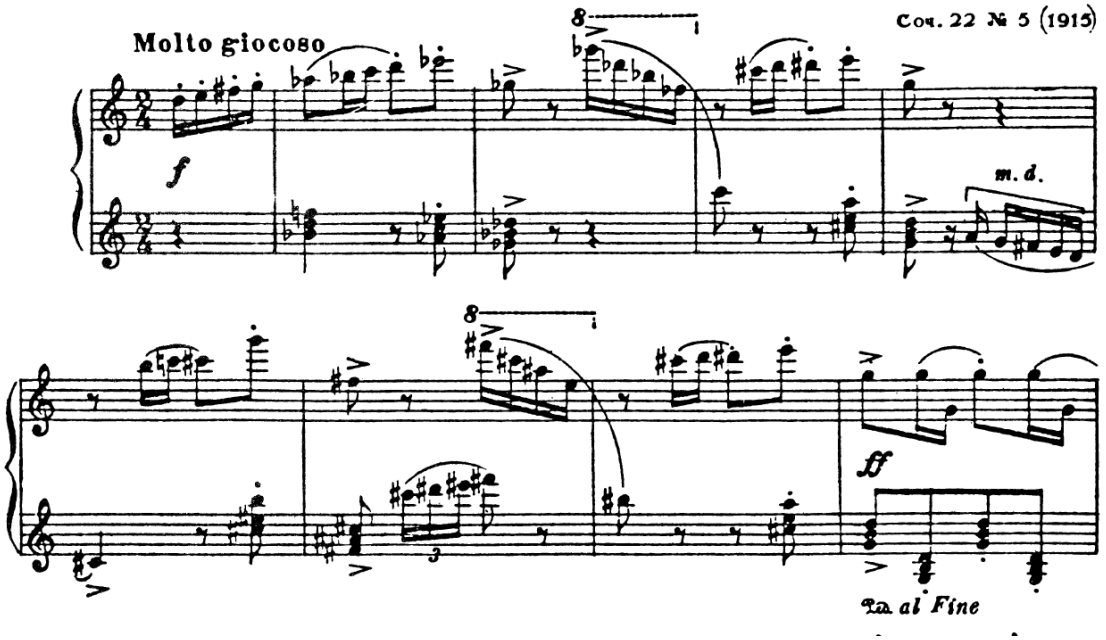
Visions Fugitives No. 5: Molto giocoso

Prokofiev recorded this short and playful piece as the ninth excerpt in his recording set. His recording lasted 24 seconds. This piece has two contrasting sections of unequal length: A (measures 1–7) and B (measures 8–19). While Prokofiev started the first section in a fast tempo (□ = 70), he slowed down considerably in the second section; his second section's tempo is ♩= 96.[45] Apart from having two contrasting tempi in the A and B sections, Prokofiev did not manipulate the pacing in the entire piece. Rather, he performed the piece quite metronomically.

In the A section (measures 1–7), Prokofiev maintained equal voicing between the right and left hand. The A section has a solo melodic line alternating between the two hands, as well as some light chords. Because of this light texture, the articulation changes become the section's highlight (Ex 3.3). Prokofiev created variation in sound by performing the staccatos shortly without changing the dynamic level and by playing the accents in a stronger dynamic than the staccatos. Prokofiev's treatment of the articulations in the B section, however, was difficult to

[45] In his dissertation, Gary O'Shea argued that Prokofiev's tempo for this piece is a quarter note equals 130. Although a quarter note equals 130 somewhat aligns with Prokofiev's recording, I disagree with O'Shea's statement as the pulse strongly resembles the feeling of 1. I also found in my aural analysis that half note equals 70 would align better with the recording due to Prokofiev's flexible rubato. Hence, I included the tempo as half note equals 70. In the second section, however, Prokofiev's slower tempo puts a stronger emphasis on the second beat of the measure. This guided my idea that his second section's marking is a quarter note equals 96. O'Shea, "Prokofiev's Early Solo Piano Music: Context, Influences, Forms, Performance," 126.

discern due to his loud dynamic level and usage of the sustain pedal. As such, the B section had no clear distinction between staccatos and accents.



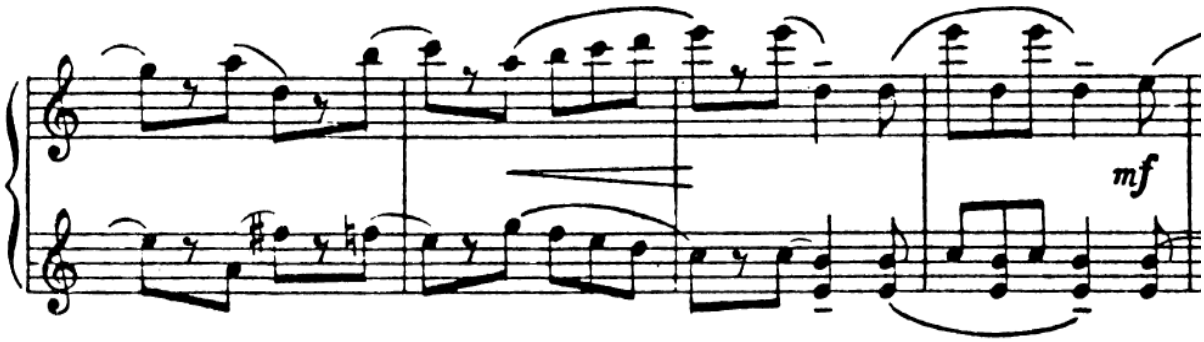
Example 3.3: *Visions Fugitives* No. 5, measures 1–8

Visions Fugitives 6: Con eleganza

Prokofiev recorded the sixth piece in the *Visions Fugitives*, "Con eleganza," as the seventh excerpt in his recording set. Similar to the fifth piece, "Molto giocoso," he recorded this piece in a lively tempo (dotted quarter note = 160). As a comparison, Sviatoslav Richter recorded this piece in dotted quarter note = 148 while Boris Berman performed this piece in dotted quarter = 140. Prokofiev's recording, lasting for merely 20 seconds, was much faster than the recordings of other pianists.

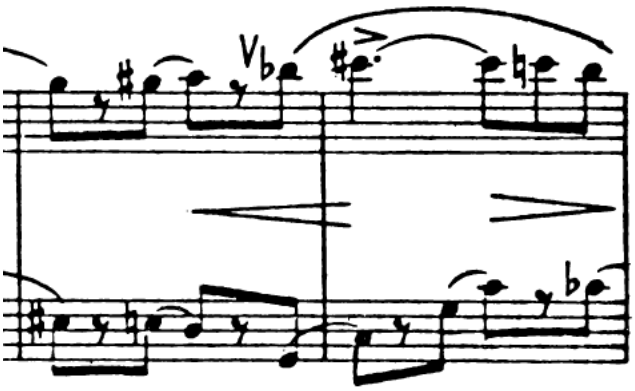
Although Prokofiev wrote *con eleganza* as the performance direction of the piece, his improvisatory performance style created a humorous and quirky feeling. In measure 6, for instance, he accelerated on the second beat (the contrary motion between the right and left hands)

and returned to the original tempo on the following measure (Ex 3.4). He repeated this treatment in measure 22. Prokofiev's lack of pause between phrases further compounded the quirky feeling. Indeed, in measure 16, he did not create a pause during the fermata.



Example 3.4: *Visions Fugitives* No. 6, measures 5-8

Prokofiev maintained a transparent texture and created sonic differences with various articulations throughout the piece. His texture generally consisted of louder voicing on the right hand and softer voicing on the left hand. However, in measures 7-8, Prokofiev voiced the left hand louder than the right hand in order to emphasize the dominant fifths. Prokofiev's minimal pedal on this piece also assisted him in creating a very transparent texture. This piece has multiple articulation markings: accents, legato, and staccato. Most interestingly, Prokofiev used a marking that resembles strings up-bow markings or a vocal breath mark (Ex 3.5). Although Prokofiev included this marking, there was no discernible sonic difference in his playing. Because the texture was very light, Prokofiev had few opportunities to create different sonorities in the piece.



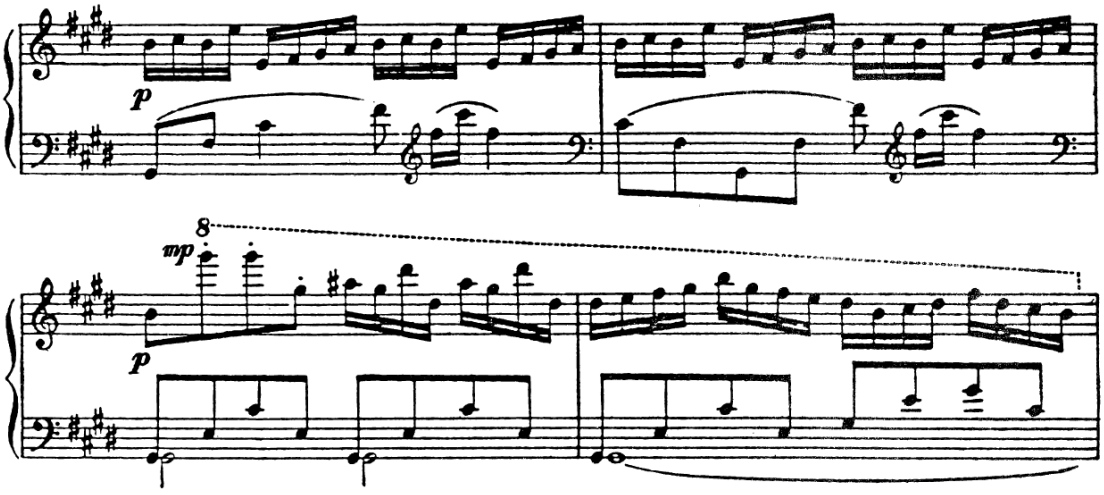
Example 3.5: *Visions Fugitives* No. 6, measures 18–19

Visions Fugitives 9: Allegretto tranquillo

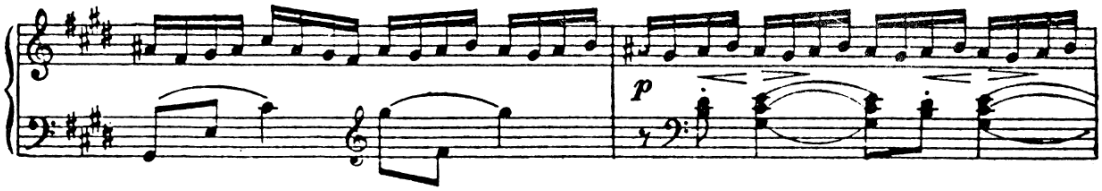
Prokofiev recorded the ninth piece, "Allegretto tranquillo," with his usual improvisatory trait. Although his pacing was quite flexible, his tempo was not too fast. He generally stayed around ♩= 128. Indeed, compared to Richter's tempo (♩= 144), Prokofiev's tempo was quite conservative. As such, his recording lasted for a minute and seven seconds. Prokofiev's flexible pacing in this piece created a splendorous quality. Throughout the piece, his tone was velvety except for measures 26-27, where Prokofiev wrote *leggiermente* for the parallel-sixth scalar passages in two keys. In these two measures, he played the scalar passages without the sustain pedal.

In general, Prokofiev's flexible pacing in this piece can be described as (1) accelerating on the sixteenth notes passages, (2) holding back on bell-like quarter and eighth notes, and (3) performing the crescendo and decrescendo (< >) as a sostenuto. Prokofiev exhibited very flexible pacing and changed his tempo twice. While he started the piece's tempo in ♩ = 100, he accelerated in the second measure to ♩ = 128. Here, he repeated his performance trait of speeding up on sixteenth-note passages, which he did in previous excerpts. Prokofiev returned to a slower

tempo in measure seven, where the right hand played a bell-like melody (Ex 3.6). What differs from his performance of previous pieces is how he used the sixteenth note passages to gain momentum, continuously speeding up. This treatment created a very flourishing atmosphere. Prokofiev repeated the sixteenth notes passages and returned to the original tempo in the second half (measures 16–19). Measure 12 is an example of Prokofiev's sostenuto—he slowed down at the end of measure 11 and created a sostenuto (akin to a tenuto marking) on beats two and four of measure 12 (Ex 3.7). Prokofiev repeated this sostenuto treatment on measure 24 where he also included the crescendo and decrescendo performance markings.

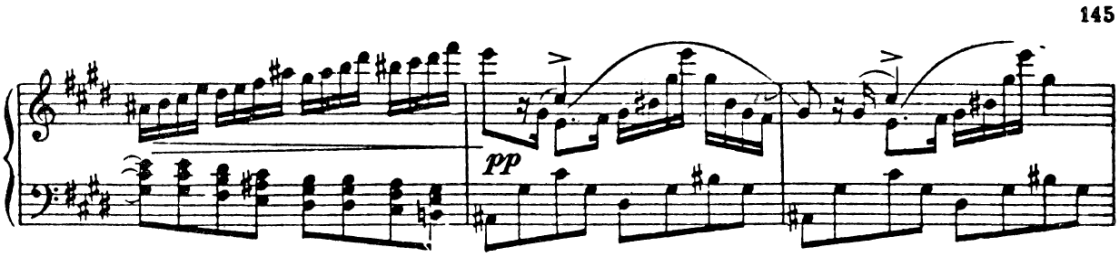


Example 3.6: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 5–8



Example 3.7: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 11–12

Prokofiev's flexible pacing did not only transpire on the sixteenth-note runs or the sostenuto markings but also at the end of a phrase or section. For instance, Prokofiev decelerated in measures 11 and 13. Both ritartandos marked the end of smaller phrase groups and the beginning of new melodic materials (Ex 3.8). At the end of the piece, Prokofiev played the last two measures very slowly, entirely away from the original tempo, creating a sense of finality.

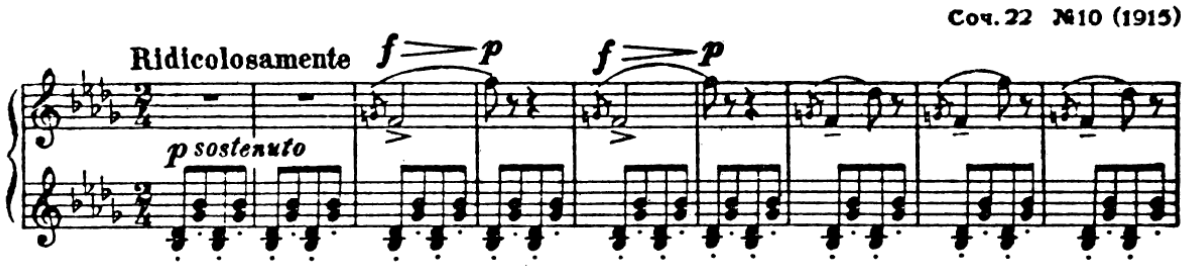


Example 3.8: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 13-15

Visions Fugitives 10: [Ridiculosamente]

The tenth piece in the set, marked *ridiculosamente* (ridiculous), is the sixth excerpt that Prokofiev performed in his 1935 recording. Various publishers printed the *ridiculosamente* marking insdie a parenthsis. The repeated dyads in major fifth intervals (a broken G-flat major chord), played by the left hand, exuded a quirky character throughout the piece (Ex 3.9). This mood is similar to Prokofiev's "Humorous Scherzo for Four Bassoons," from his Op. 12. While Prokofiev the composer achieved this through the constant bitonality in this piece, Prokofiev the pianist enhanced the trait with his spontaneous performance, primarily through his pacing. In this piece, Prokofiev began with a moderate tempo (♩ = 88), reached ♩ = 100 in measure 11, and played measures 15–16 in an even faster tempo. Just as he did in Visions Fugitives No. 9, Prokofiev accelerated on notes with shorter rhythmic values—faster on eighth and thirty-second

notes—and returned to his original tempo in the return of the A section (measure 31). His recording was 52 seconds, shorter than Gilels and Berman's recordings.

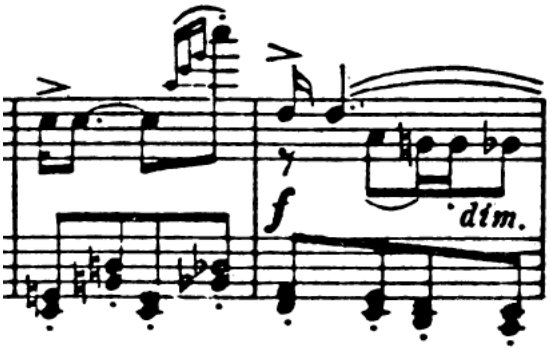


Example 3.9: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 1–9

Prokofiev primarily modified his pacing to create a quirky character without apparent dynamic or timbre changes. For instance, while Prokofiev wrote forte in measure 3 and piano in measure 7, there was no jarring dynamic differenc between the two measures. Throughout the piece, the dynamic directions mostly stayed at the piano level. Interestingly, Prokofiev did write forte in measure 3 with decrescendo to piano in measure 4. However, this diminuendo occurred as part of the piano's natural decay requiring no effort from the pianist. Although there were no macro-level dynamic changes, Prokofiev created a textural difference between the melody and harmony. Except for measures 31-34 where the left hand played the melody, Prokofiev voiced the right hand's melody on a higher dynamic level than the left hand's harmony.

Prokofiev placed high importance on performing the different types of articulations—staccatos, tenutos, accents, and legato. In measure 3, Prokofiev performed the F on the right hand with more emphasis than the non-accented F on the following measure. He also played the melodic line in measures 11-12 in a short and detaché manner. In measure 21, he observed the tenuto on the B-flat by playing it louder as part of the melodic line and holding the note to its full value (four beats). Some of his articulation markings enhanced this scherzo mood, while other

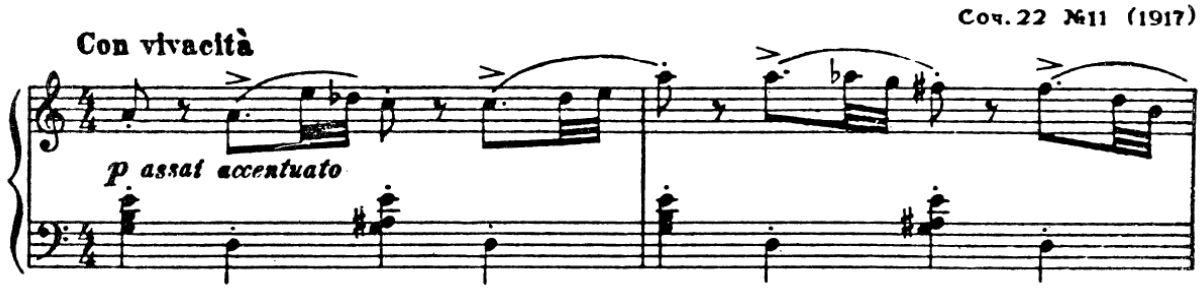
articulations informed the performers of a secondary melodic line. For instance, the melodic right-hand D-flat in measure 26 was marked as legato while the secondary melodic line was written with two-note slur marking and staccatos (Ex 3.10).



Example 3.10: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 25–26

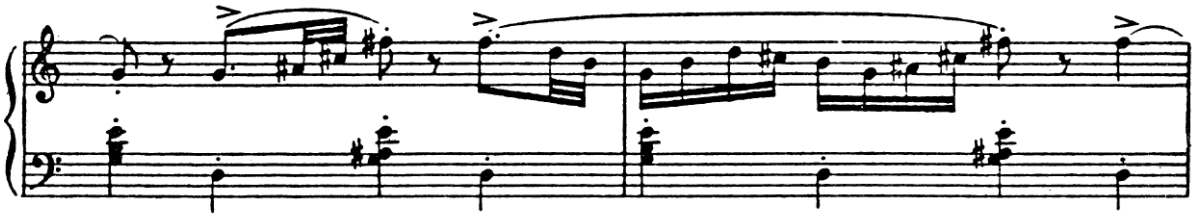
Visions Fugitives 11: Con vivacità

The eleventh piece in the set, "Con vivacità," has three sections (A-B-A) with different emotional qualities between the A and B sections. The A section is scherzo-like. In this section, the right hand plays short and accented phrases while the left hand plays a chord-bass pattern (Ex 3.11). It is important to note here that the left hand's pattern begins with a chord, instead of a bass note. This unusual pattern creates a humorous quality. The B section has a much more introverted quality. In this later section, both right and left hands play unison melody lines with interruptions in weak beats (beats 2 and 4). Prokofiev contrasted the two sections by performing them in two different tempos. In the A section, Prokofiev's tempo was ♩ = 176, while his tempo in the B section was ♩ = 116. By playing the B section in a slower tempo, Prokofiev replaced the excitement of the A section with a reflective quality. His performance of this piece lasted for 55 seconds.

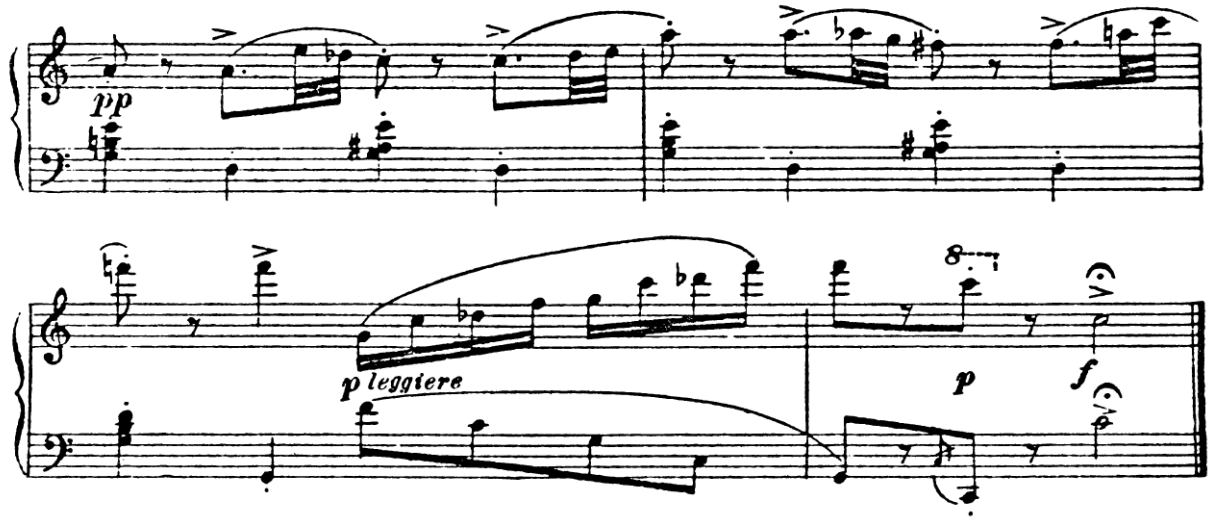


Example 3.11: *Visions Fugitives* No. 11, measures 1–2

Prokofiev created excitement in the A section by performing the section at a faster tempo and in a spontaneous manner. He did not treat all sixteenth notes equally. Instead, he sped up in several sixteenth-note passages. For example, in measure 4, Prokofiev rushed the first two beats (Ex 3.12). His dynamic nuances were also distinctive. He added an unwritten crescendo in measures 13–15, where the right hand has an ascending melody. In measures 29–32, which mirror measures 13–15, he accelerated to the end of the piece (Ex 3. 13). Although Prokofiev wrote pianissimo in measures 9 and 13, he did not play these two phrases equally. Instead, he played measures 13-15 louder than measures 9-10.

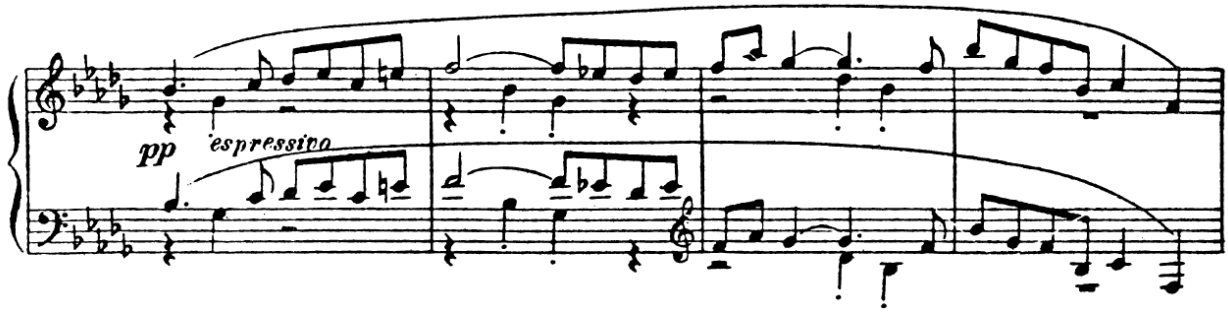


Example 3.12: *Visions Fugitives* No. 11, measures 3–4



Example 3.13: *Visions Fugitives* No. 11, measures 29-32

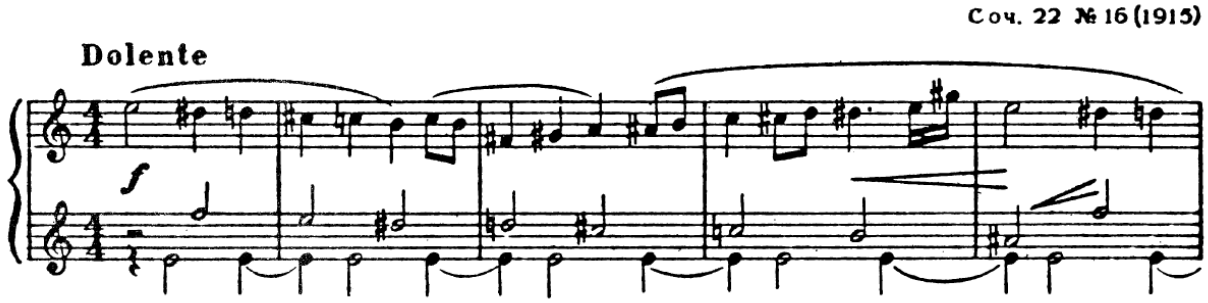
Prokofiev had two different tempos and used contrasting articulations and voicing in the A and B sections. Prokofiev voiced the right hand prominently in the A section, while in the B section, he did not. The detached and accented articulations in the A section were juxtaposed with the smooth legato articulations in the B section. Prokofiev only used detached articulations in the B section for the inner voices (Ex 3.14). The B section generally had a softer dynamic level than the A section.



Example 3.14: *Visions Fugitives* No. 11, measures 17-20

Visions Fugitives 16: Dolente

Prokofiev achieved the sixteenth piece's *dolente* (sorrowful) quality through his expressive yet subtle usage of rubato. Because Prokofiev's tempo fluctuated significantly even within a measure, it was hard to pinpoint his exact tempo. Although the time signature is 4/4, I would describe his tempo as half note = 47 because Prokofiev performed the pulse in two. Prokofiev tended to linger on the longer notes and push the phrase on the shorter note values in the A section (measures 1-8). For instance, the pacing of the downbeat E in measure 1 was slower than the D-sharp and D natural in the same measure. Indeed, Prokofiev pushed the tempo for the D-sharp and D-natural (the third and fourth beat of measure 1) (Ex 3.15). Prokofiev maintained the somber atmosphere by performing this section at a strict tempo in the B section, where the harmonic rhythm is faster than in the previous section. Prokofiev did not slow down or accelerate in any blatant way in this section. His grace notes were very short, and he used a harsh attack on the accents.



Example 3.15: *Visions Fugitive*s no. 16, measures 1-5

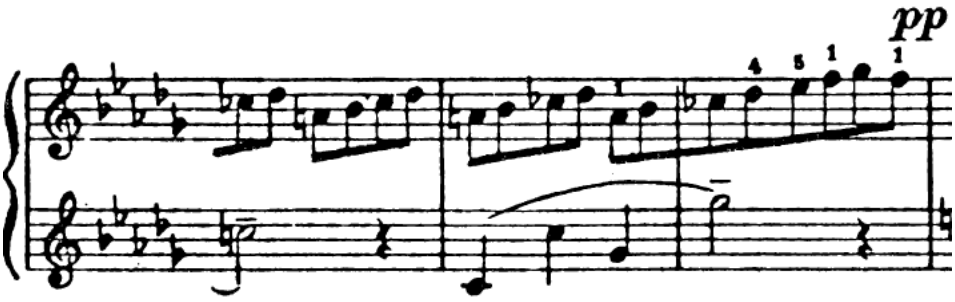
In this piece, Prokofiev repeated some of the performance habits he demonstrated in other pieces. For example, Prokofiev slowed down to mark the end of section A in measure 8 and the end of section B in measure 18. He also observed his accent markings closely. Although the

dynamic marking was pianissimo, he strongly placed the accents in measure 9. Occasionally, his accented notes, such as those in measures 13-14, obscured other notes. Additionally, he tended to disregard his own dynamic marking. The B section's overall dynamic level was pianissimo, yet he did not render this section too softly. Instead, Prokofiev maintained the melody's presence. He played the B section with pianissimo dynamic marking to highlight the importance of the left hand as a color.

Visions Fugitives 17: Poetico

In the seventeenth piece of the set, "Poetico," Prokofiev created a mysterious character, through his chromatic ostinato writing and his lyrical and poetic rubato in the right-hand's melody. His tempo fluctuated in the range of ♩= 152–160. Although he did not write any rubato on measures 35–44, Prokofiev accelerated and decelerated in this section, creating a sense of direction. He coupled this sense of direction with dynamic changes that mirrored the accelerando and ritardando—a louder dynamic level for accelerando and a softer dynamic level for ritardando.

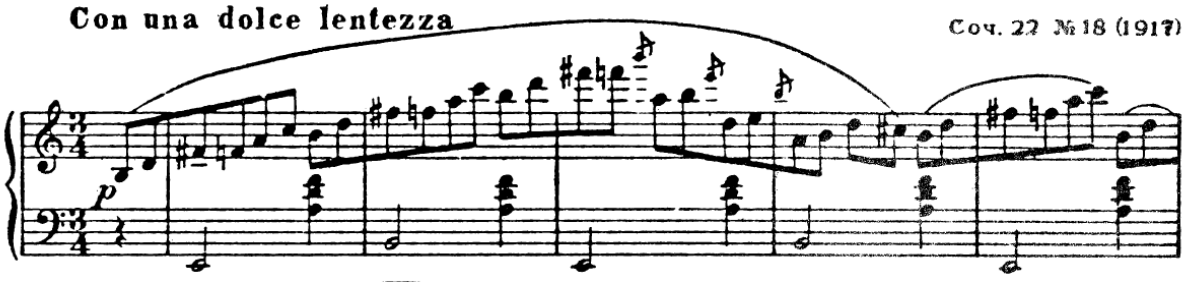
Throughout this piece, Prokofiev differentiated the melody and harmony. While the left hand played the melody for most of the piece, there were moments where the right hand had the melodic line. For example, he voiced the right hand (melody) louder than the left hand (harmony) in measures 15-19. He introduced a bell-like figure in the subsequent three measures that persisted until measure 33. Throughout this section, he maintained a clear distinction between the left hand (melody) and the right hand ("bell" and ostinato). Although Prokofiev's intention was clear, there were moments where the left-hand melody was murky due to the close distance between the melody and the right-hand's ostinato. Prime examples are measures 11 and 13, where the melodic C was very close to the ostinato's C-flat (Ex 3.16).



Example 3.16: *Visions Fugitives* No. 17, measures 12–14

Visions Fugitives 18: Con una dolce lentezza

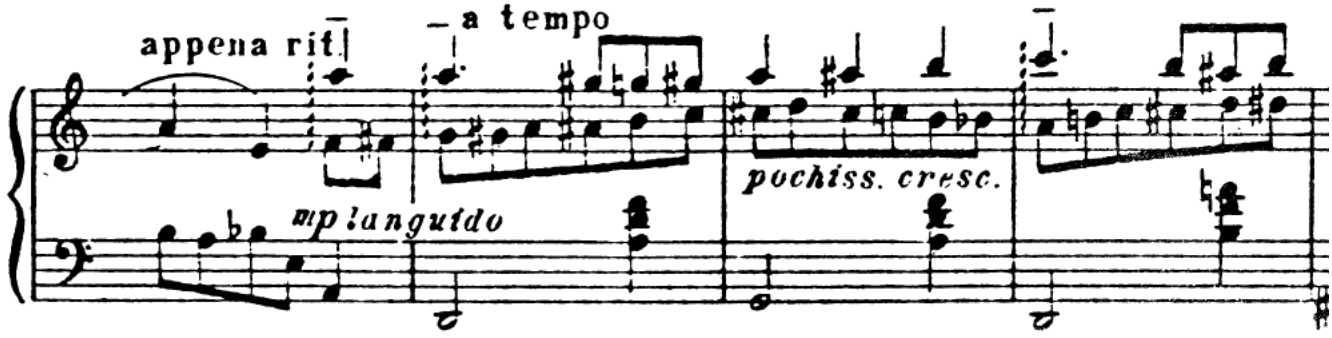
Prokofiev's performance of the eighteenth piece, "Con una dolce lentezza," had a dream-like quality not just from its chromatic and scalar passages, but also from Prokofiev's ample usage of rubato. While piece exhibited a waltz-like figure on the left hand, Prokofiev's playing removed any sense of dancing. Indeed, he avoided any sense of rigidity in his pacing (Ex 3.17). Due to Prokofiev's flexible pacing, I found it challenging to pinpoint Prokofiev's exact tempo. His tempo was close to ♩= 82.



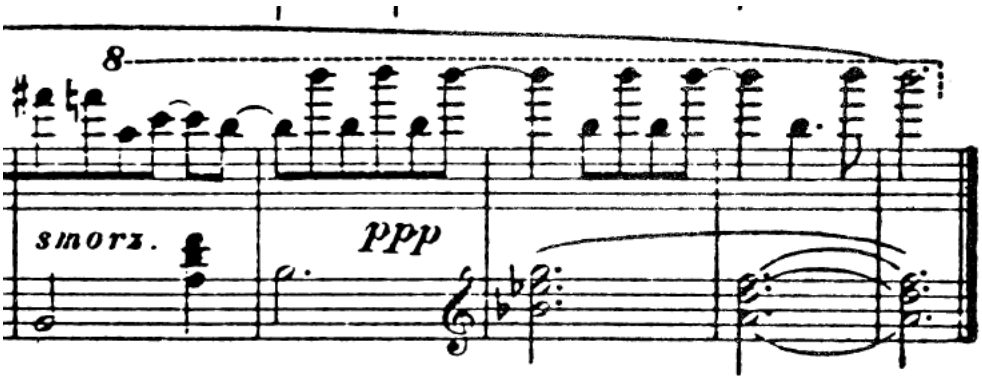
Example 3.17: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 1-5

Prokofiev also used subtler nuances and avoided any sudden attacks to achieve this dream-like quality. His overall dynamic level was quiet with no rash accents. Grace notes, the only articulation marking that may create a surprise, were played as part of a melody—smoothly

and slowly. In the *languido* section, Prokofiev made the pace feel more labored and sluggish to achieve the phrase's meek character (Ex 3.18). Unlike his performances on other pieces, Prokofiev did not slow down at the end of a section. The only moment where Prokofiev decelerated immensely is at the end of the piece, where he wrote smorzando (Ex 3.19).



Example 3.18: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 16–19



Example 3.19: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 28–32

CHAPTER FOUR

RICHTER, GILELS, AND BERMAN PERFORMING VISIONS FUGITIVES

Visions Fugitives No. 3: Allegretto

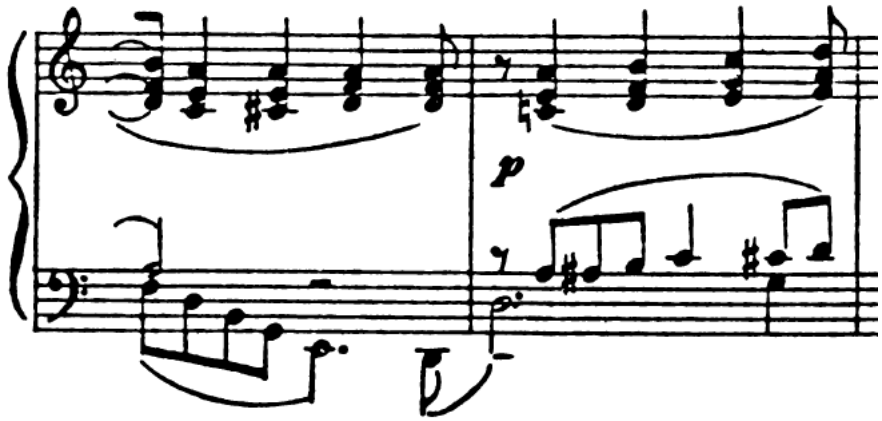
Most performers examined in this paper performed the third *Visions Fugitives* at a faster tempo. Sviatoslav Richter is the only performer who played this piece at a slower tempo; he recorded the A section in ♩= 96 and the B section in ♩= 120. Emil Gilels and Boris Berman both recorded this piece in faster tempos than Prokofiev. Gilels' tempo in the A and B section were ♩= 120, with a faster tempo in the A' section ♩= 136. Berman's tempo is the fastest among the four performers with ♩= 144, albeit with fluctuations. While Prokofiev's recording lasts 55 seconds, Richter, Gilels, and Berman's recordings' lengths are 1:14, 0:56, and 0:50, respectively.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 130	0:55
Richter	♩ = 96 (A section); ♩ = 120 (B section)	1:14
Gilels	♩ = 120 (A & B section); ♩ = 136 (A' section)	0:56
Berman	♩ = 144	0:50

Table 4.1: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 3

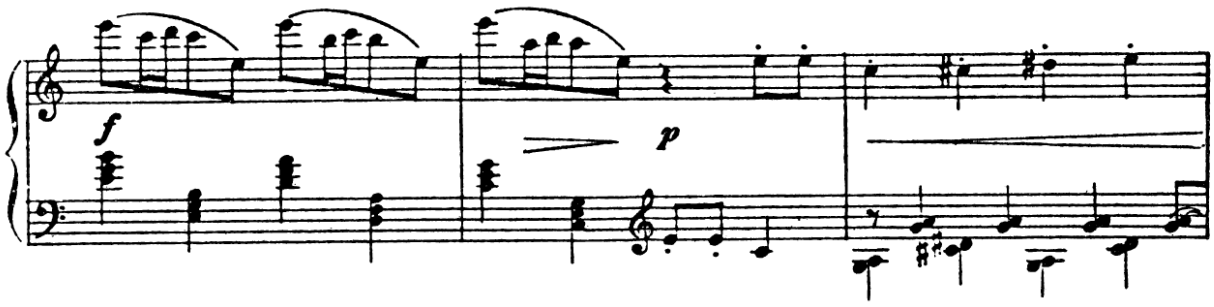
Richter's performance of the third piece in the *Visions Fugitives* was quite similar to Prokofiev's recording. Both performers exhibited improvisatory nature in the B section. However, Richter's A section had much more flexible pacing than Prokofiev's. Richter also used rubato conservatively in the B section. Unlike Prokofiev, he did not accelerate on the sixteenth notes aggressively (in measures 14–15, for example). Richter smoothly moved from one tempo to another. Indeed, Richter introduced gradual ritardando in measures 21–22 and deftly arrived at

a slower tempo (♩= 96) in measure 23. On the other hand, Prokofiev returned to the A section's tempo (♩= 130 in measure 23. Unlike Prokofiev, Richter created a clear space between phrases. In measures 4–5, Richter took a short sound break between the first and second phrases (Ex 4.1).



Example 4.1: *Visions Fugitives* No. 3, measures 4–5

The similarity in Richter and Prokofiev's performances extended beyond their improvisatory manners. Both performers had very clear voicing and articulation intents. For instance, Richter's voicing of the left hand in the A section was very clear. His right-hand chords created an echo-like effect (played softer), while his left hand played the top notes clearly. Richter prioritized the right-hand voicing when the melody moved to the right hand in measures 11-12. Prokofiev and Richter played the A section smoothly (legato), with some non-legato moments on the repeated Es of measure 12 (Ex 4.2). However, Richter's accents in the B section were slightly stronger than Prokofiev's. These aural differences could result either from better recording quality or simply interpretative choices. Berman and Gilels followed Richter's choice of powerful dynamic emphasis on accents. Richter's diligence on articulations was also prominent in his treatment of tenutos. Indeed, his tenutos in measures 23–24 were conspicuous.

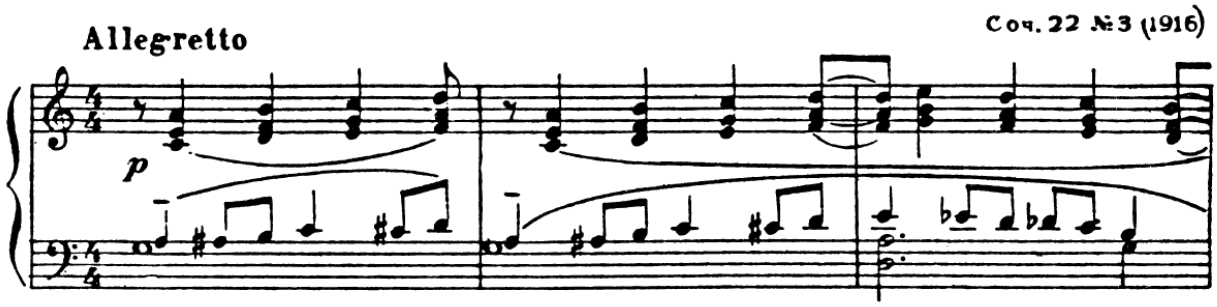


Example 4.2: *Visions Fugitives* No. 3, measures 11–13

Gilels' performance of this piece differed from Prokofiev and Richter's performances. While there were some similarities between the three performances, Gilels removed many improvisatory elements Prokofiev had introduced. Unlike Prokofiev and Richter's performances, Gilels played the sixteenth notes in measures 14-15 very metronomically. His treatment of ritardandos was similar to Prokofiev and Richter's. For example, Gilels added ritardandos to mark the end of a phrase or section. He slowed down in measures 4-5 to mark the end of the phrase and again in measures 21-22 to mark the end of the section. His ritardandos, however, were not as pronounced as Prokofiev and Richter's.

The articulations in Gilels' performance were almost crude, especially when compared to Richter's. He played the left-handd bass notes (G in measure 1 and D in measure 5) very percussively. Gilels' right-hand articulation in the A section was short and detached. (Richter's legato in the A section was much smoother than Gilels'.) Gilels sometimes coupled his forte with accents. For instance, his forte E in measure 14 sounded accented, although Prokofiev did not write any accents. Gilels' minimal sustain pedal usage throughout the piece exacerbated his harsh articulations. His nominal pedal usage was evident by the shortly decayed held notes, such as the bass G in measure 1 (Ex 4.3). Although Gilels used the pedal sparingly in the A section, he

used the pedal more frequently in the B section. His left-hand accompaniment in the B sections sounded full and lush.



Example 4.3: *Visions Fugitives* no. 3, measures 1–3

Berman's pacing in this piece resembled most modern recordings of Prokofiev's *Visions Fugitives*. He used rubato moderately and omitted Prokofiev's improvisatory style. Berman used ritardando to mark the end of the phrase and a much more elastic pacing. In measure 4, he accelerated toward the middle of the phrase and slowed down at the end of the phrase. His performance, thus, was somewhat similar to Richter and Gilels, with the end-of-the-phrase ritardando, and yet was different with his extensive rubato. Berman did not accelerate in the B section's sixteenth-note passages, such as those in measures 14-15. Rather, he played these passages metronomically. Although he eliminated the end-of-section ritardando in measure 12, he slowed down at the B section's end (measures 27-28). His ritardando in measures 27-28 followed the same pattern as Prokofiev, Richter, and Gilels. Berman, however, did not slow down as much as other performers.

Berman distinguished his performance from other performers by attentively adhering to the dynamic and articulation directions. Like others, he voiced his left hand in the A section and softly played the right-hand chords. He also followed the diminuendo marking in measure 17 and

performed the pianissimo in measure 18 much softer than in other sections of the piece. Berman's accents were louder than his staccatos. He also adapted the accents' dynamic level to the passage's general dynamic level. For example, his accents in measures 15-16 were softer than those in measure 14. Berman also treated the legato marking carefully. For example, he used the sustain pedal moderately in the A section to create the left-hand legato effect.

Visions Fugitives No. 5: Molto giocoso

All three performers (Richter, Gilels, and Berman) followed Prokofiev's decision to play the B section at a slower tempo than the A section. However, their tempo choices were very diverse. Prokofiev's tempos were half note = 70 in the A section and ♩= 96 in the B section. Compared to Prokofiev, Richter's tempos were faster in both sections—♩=152-54 in the A section and ♩=142 in the B section. In comparison, Gilels' tempos were much slower: ♩= 116 in the A section and ♩= 108 in the B section. Berman chose somewhat moderate tempos. His tempos in the A and B section were ♩=124 and 120, respectively. Their recording lengths were 17 seconds (Richter), 27 seconds (Gilels), and 22 seconds (Berman).

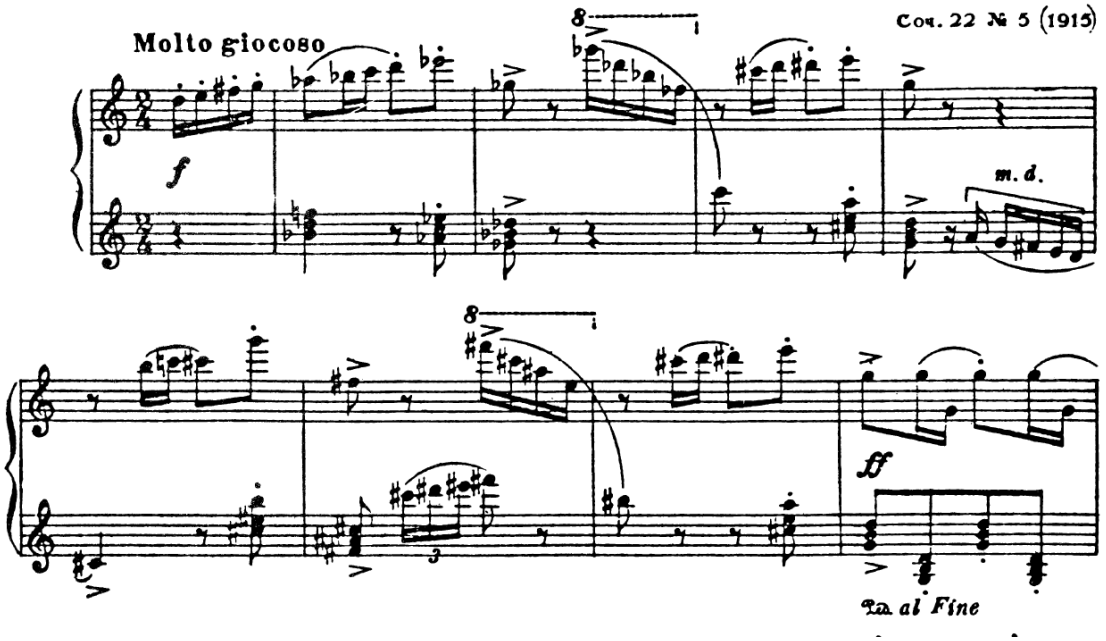
Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	Half note = 70 (A section);♩ = 96 (B section)	0:24
Richter	♩ = 152-54 (A section); ♩ = 142 (B section)	0:17
Gilels	♩ = 116 (A section); ♩ = 108 (B section)	0:27
Berman	♩ = 125 (A section); ♩ = 120 (B section)	0:22

Table 4.2: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 5

Richter's performance was quite similar to Prokofiev's performance. His accents were played metronomically (without delay before the accents), and his dynamic level was loud.

Similar to Prokofiev, Richter placed a firm emphasis on accents. Indeed, his left-hand accents in measures 12–18 were prominent and at the forefront of his voicing. Richter, however, employed a much harsher tone for the loud dynamics. While Prokofiev used the sustain pedal from measure 8 to the end of the piece, Richter changed his pedal in measures 18–19. Richter's pedal change created a cleaner sound in the last two measures of the piece.

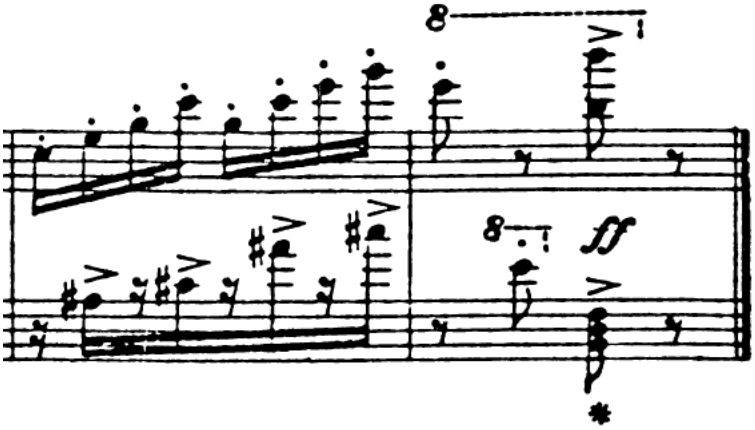
Compared to Prokofiev and Richter, Gilels took much more liberty with his pacing. He did not play the accents metronomically and often delayed them. For instance, Gilels took time before the G-flat accent in the second measure's first beat. His accent delays were even more prominent in measures 4 and 6 (Ex 4.4). As such, his tempo in the A section (measures 1–7) fluctuated.



Example 4.4: *Visions Fugitive*s No. 5, measures 1–8

Gilels' choices of voicing and articulation also differed from Prokofiev and Richter's choices. In measures 12–19, Gilels did not differentiate the voicing between right and left hands.

Conversely, Prokofiev and Richter played the left hand slightly louder in these measures. While Prokofiev and Richter played the accents differently from the staccatos, Gilels hardly played the accents differently. Indeed, the only way to discern Gilels' staccatos from his accents was by observing Gilels' delays before the accents. Gilels also did not observe the rest in the final measure's last beat (measure 19). Instead, he let the G chord on his left hand and the octave B on his right-hand ring until the strings stopped vibrating (Ex 4.5). While there were some stark differences between the three performers, Gilels did observe the sustain pedal direction in measures 10 to 19. He also voiced the right and left hands equally in the A section, similar to Prokofiev and Richter. Although their methods differed, all three performers played the B section as fortissimo.



Example 4.5: *Visions Fugitives* No. 5, measures 18–19

Similar to his performance in the third piece, Berman's performance in this fifth piece was relatively moderate. He played the A section quite metronomically, as Prokofiev and Richter did. He also changed his tempo in the B section immediately. As discussed before, Berman opted for a more conservative tempo change between the A and B sections; his B section was only one click slower than his A section. Berman's voicing in the A section was comparable to all four

performers—balanced between the left and right hands. In the B section, Berman voiced his right hand slightly louder than his left hand. Berman's voicing was somewhat different from Prokofiev and Richter, who voiced the left hand slightly louder. His overall timbre in this piece was percussive.

Visions Fugitives No. 6: Con eleganza

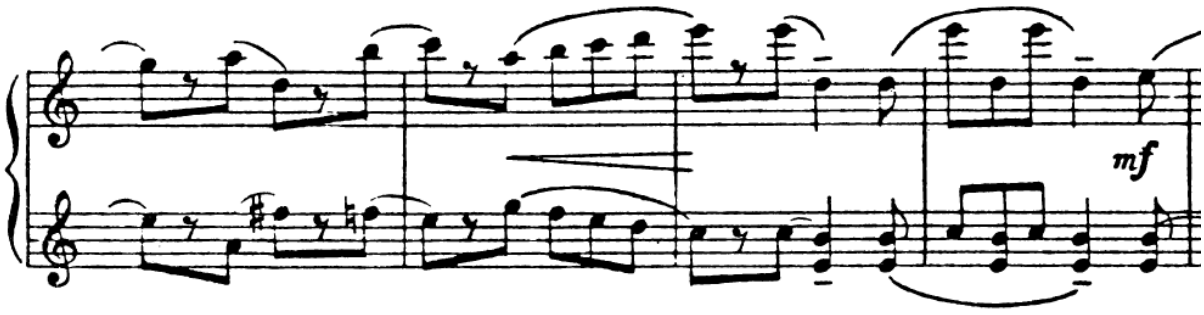
While Prokofiev opted for a brisk tempo (dotted quarter note = 160), Richter and Berman performed the sixth piece, "Con eleganza," in a much slower tempo. Richter's tempo was dotted quarter note = 148, while Berman's was dotted quarter note = 140. Because of their slower tempos, Richter and Berman's recordings (0:23 and 0:26) were slightly longer than Prokofiev's (0:20). Gilels never recorded this piece.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	Dotted quarter = 160	0:20
Richter	Dotted quarter = 148	0:23
Berman	Dotted quarter = 140	0:26

Table 4.3: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 6

Richter's rubato, dynamic, and articulation choices resembled Prokofiev's. For example, Prokofiev and Richter accelerated on the contrary motion in measure 6 (Ex 4.6). Richter, however, did not increase his tempo as much as Prokofiev did. Similar to Prokofiev, Richter consistently voiced his right hand. Richter created a dialogue between the right and left hands and small dynamic nuances that followed the melody contour. His softer dynamic in measure 15 was much more prominent than Prokofiev's. (This might result from better recording technology

in Richter's time.) Prokofiev and Richter's performances did not exhibit many of color changes. Their performances were dry and transparent.



Example 4.6: *Visions Fugitives* No. 6, measures 5–8

Berman followed some of Prokofiev's performance practices and added his own interpretative choices. Akin to Prokofiev and Richter, Berman accelerated in measure 6. Berman, however, did not speed up as much as Prokofiev. He also played the right-hand melody louder than the left-hand. For the fermata in measure 16, Berman not only held a longer pause (compared to Prokofiev) but also slowed his pacing tremendously in measures 15–16. At the end of the piece, Berman slowed down, albeit not too dramatically.

Perhaps due to better recording technology, Berman's subtle nuances were prominent. His subtle dynamic nuances differed from Prokofiev's, whose minor dynamic nuances were scarcely present. While Berman's voicing had a consistent dialogue between the two hands, his left hand's dynamic level never exceeded his right hand's. For example, his diminuendo in measures 15-16 and his crescendo in measures 6–7 and 22–23 were obvious. Berman also changed his tone color in measures 16 and 25, hinting at the usage of the una corda pedal. These una corda color changes created a distinctive contrast to his overall brilliant tone.

Visions Fugitives No. 9: Allegretto tranquillo

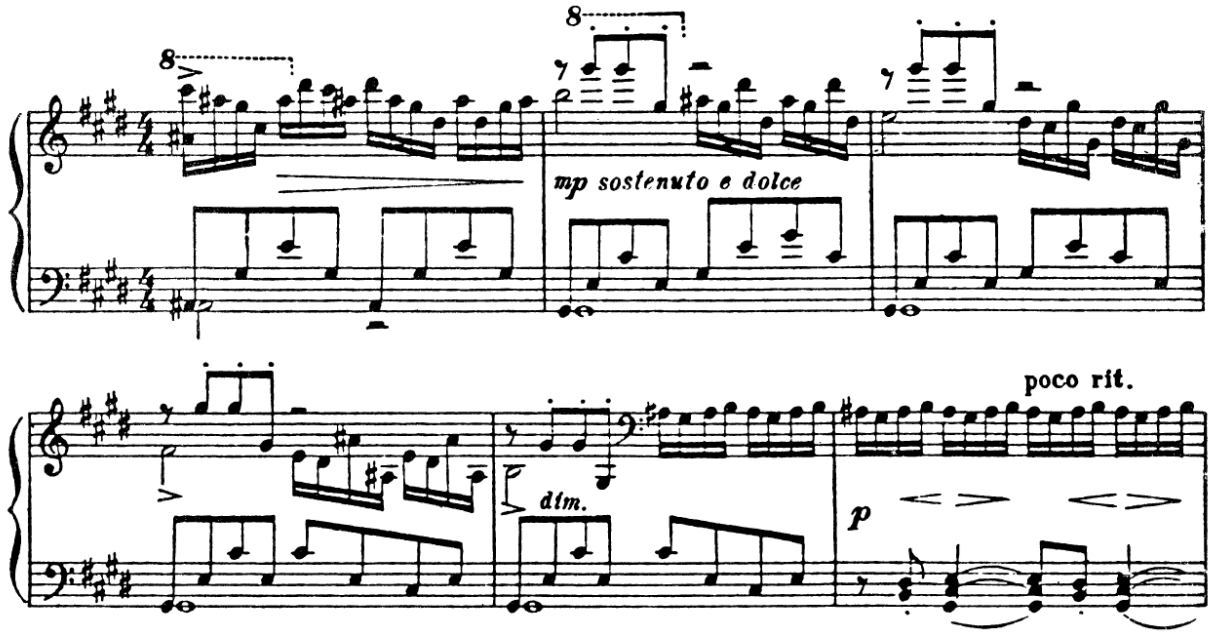
Compared to Prokofiev's constant changes of tempo, Richter and Berman's tempos did not change as rapidly. Richter's tempo was consistent (♩= 144) while Berman's was laden with rubato (an overall tempo of ♩= 120). Gilels did not record this piece in his life. Because Richter played this piece at a much faster tempo, his recording (0:52) was much shorter than Prokofiev's (1:07). Berman and Prokofiev shared the same recording length (1:07).

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 100; 128	1:07
Richter	♩ = 144	0:52
Berman	♩ = 120	1:07

Table 4.4: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 9

Richter's rendition of this piece was brilliant, with a short, gentle moment in the *sostenuto e dolce section* (measures 20–24). In the A section (measures 1–15), Richter played the right hand louder than the left hand. His right-hand voicing, fast tempo, and dry timbre created a brilliant character in the first section. Richter also created subtle dynamic changes on his left hand. Additionally, Richter made subtle dynamic nuances based on the left hand's harmonic progressions. Richter also used ritardandos at the end of phrases and sections. For example, Richter slowed down in measure 13 to mark the end of a phrase. However, his ritardando was much more moderate compared to Prokofiev's. Measures 14–15 were an exception to Richter's moderate pacing. Richter employed both accents and delayed pacing (on the accents) in these two measures to heighten the emotion. Richter minimally utilized the sustain pedal in the A section, creating a brilliant character. In measures 8–9, however, Richter used the sustain pedal to hold the left hand's G-sharp tied notes.

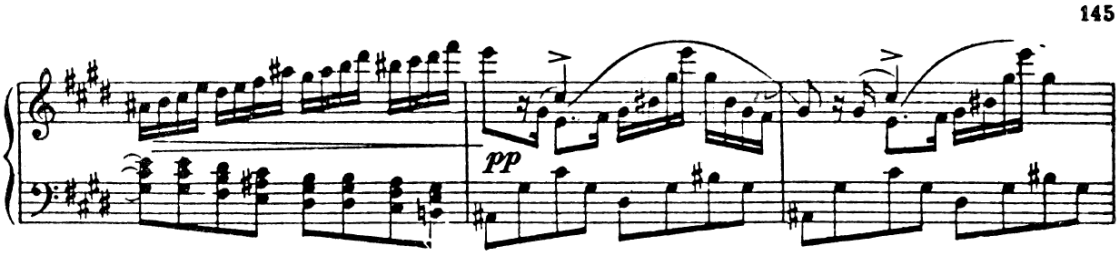
In the B section (measures 16–30), Richter used pacing and voicing as his expressive vehicles. He voiced the middle notes to bring the descending alto line to the forefront in measures 20-23 (Ex 4.7). By doing this, Richter created a bell-like moment amid the dense texture. Richter used ritardandos as Prokofiev did. He also rushed the sixteenth-note passages (in measure 19, for instance) and slowed down in measures 29–30. Richter's pacing, though, was much more conservative than Prokofiev's. In order to bring out the dream-like qualities in the last five measures, Richter also used the sustain pedal, which created a unique effect (shimmering color). This shift of color was especially prominent in measures 26–27.



Example 4.7: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 19–24

Analogous to Prokofiev, Berman used rubato tremendously in this piece. Berman, however, employed a much smoother pacing transition between the tempo and rubato changes. For example, Berman played measures 14-15 in a much slower tempo (♩= 108) than his original tempo (♩= 120). This slower tempo allowed him to not just transition smoothly to the slower

tempo in the B section but also to play the extended melody jumps more naturally and artistically (Ex 4.8). In measure 25, Berman follows Prokofiev's tempo direction by returning to his original tempo (♩= 120). He then introduced a new, slower tempo (♩= 96) in measures 28-30 with a delay prior to the final note in measure 30. Like Prokofiev, Berman's slower tempo in the final three measures of the piece created a feeling of stasis.



Example 4.8: *Visions Fugitives* 9, measures 13-15

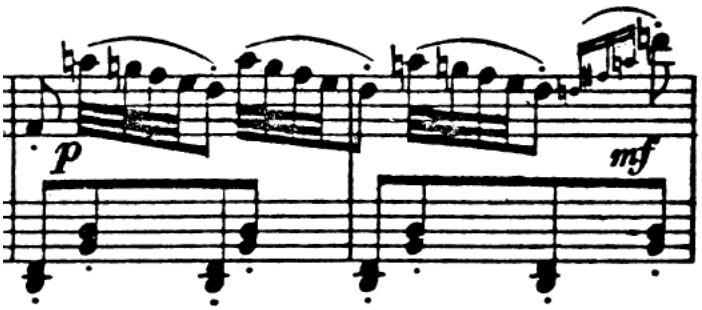
Visions Fugitives No. 10: [Ridiculosamento]

Gilels and Berman used pacing and tempo changes as expressive tools in the tenth piece of the *Visions Fugitives*. Their methods, however, differed from one another. Gilels employed a similar strategy to Prokofiev--different tempos for multiple phrases and sections. Gilels started the A section with ♩= 88, then gradually introduced a faster tempo in measures 7–9. He established a new, faster tempo in measure 11 and played the sixteenth-note passage very quickly in measure 15. Gilels' tempo in the B section (measures 23–30) remained relatively consistent (♩= 100). Berman's strategy was distinct from Gilels and Prokofiev's. He used rubato immensely, with an overarching tempo of ♩= 72. Gilels and Berman's recording lengths were 0:54 and 1:06, respectively. Richter never recorded this piece.

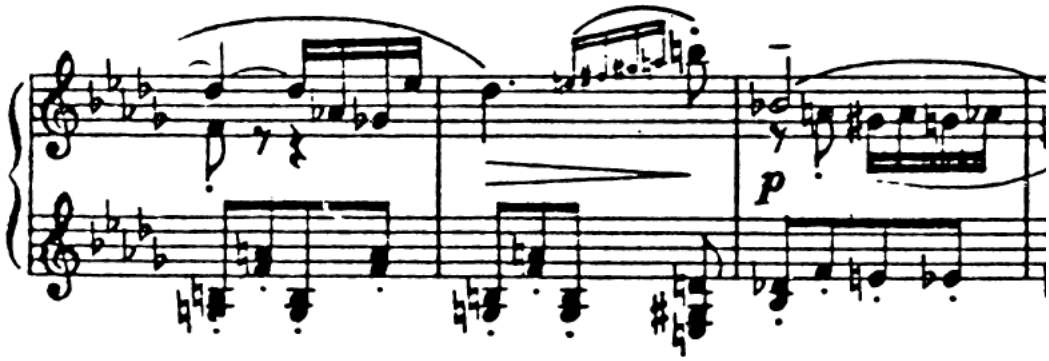
Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 88-100	0:52
Gilels	♩ = 88 (A section); ♩ = 100 (B section)	0:54
Berman	♩ = 72	1:06

Table 4.5: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 10

The similarity between Gilels and Prokofiev's performances did not end with their treatment of tempo changes; both also accelerated on sixteenth-note passages. This similarity was very striking in the descending right-hand pattern of measures 15–16 (Ex 4.9). Unlike Prokofiev, Gilels introduced a massive ritardando in measures 28–29 and delayed the entrance of the B-flat in measure 29 (Ex 4.10). By pausing the ascending chromatic line in the last beat of measure 28, Gilels made the following B-flat tenuto much more dramatic. He mirrored Prokofiev's scherzo quality in the piece's final five measures. Additionally, Gilels slowed down in measure 35 and returned to his original tempo in measures 39–40.



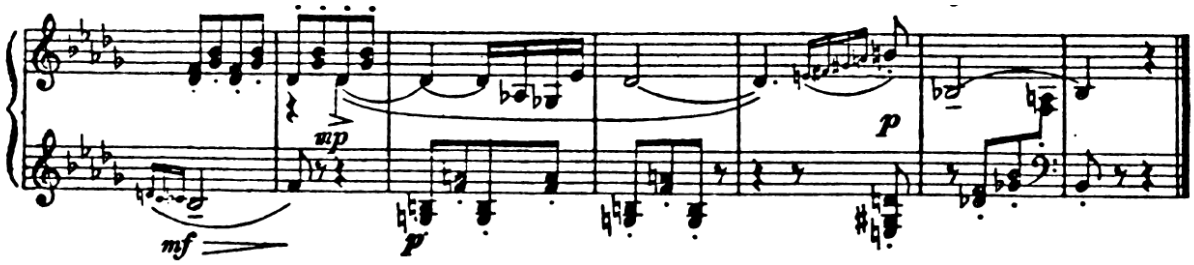
Example 4.9: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 15–16



Example 4.10: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 27–29

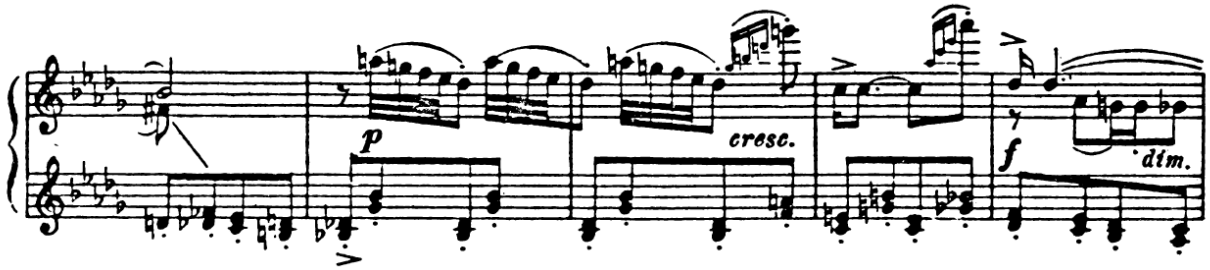
Gilels and Prokofiev's treatments of articulations and dynamics were fairly similar. They created crude and scherzo moods through harsh tones and loud dynamics. In measure 11, Prokofiev did not create a jarring subito piano, nor did Gilels. Both maintained short and crisp left-hand articulations throughout the piece. Their treatments of tenuto, however, were different. Prokofiev showed his tenutos by playing the full rhythmic values of the notes. Gilels, conversely, played the tenuto notes louder. Despite their different tenuto interpretations, their staccato treatments were alike—short and dry.

Berman's subtle nuances in pacing characterized his interpretation of this piece. As previously stated, Berman used ample rubato throughout the piece. He did not accelerate in the sixteenth-note passages as Prokofiev and Gilels did. Rather, Berman played longer notes (half notes and quarter notes) metronomically and pushed-and-pulled on the smaller rhythmic divisions (eighteen notes and sixteenth notes). This push-and-pull pacing created a whimsical character much more effective than Prokofiev's or Gilels' attempts of *ridiculosamente*. Berman also successfully maintained the scherzo quality throughout the piece. He slowed down in measures 35–36 and paused right before the entrance of the ascending E major passage in measure 37 (Ex 4.11).



Example 4.11: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 33–39

Besides his subtle rubato, Berman used dynamic contrast and articulations to enhance the piece's whimsical character. His contrast between forte and piano in measures 3–6 was apparent. He treated the tenuto F and the non-tenuto D-flat in measure 7 differently. He played softly when the melody range's changed, such as in measures 15-17. He repeated the softer dynamic in measures 23–24 and entered measure 25 with a louder dynamic (Ex 4.12). This interpretative choice created a lopsided feeling that augmented the piece's quirky character.



Example 4.12: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 22–26

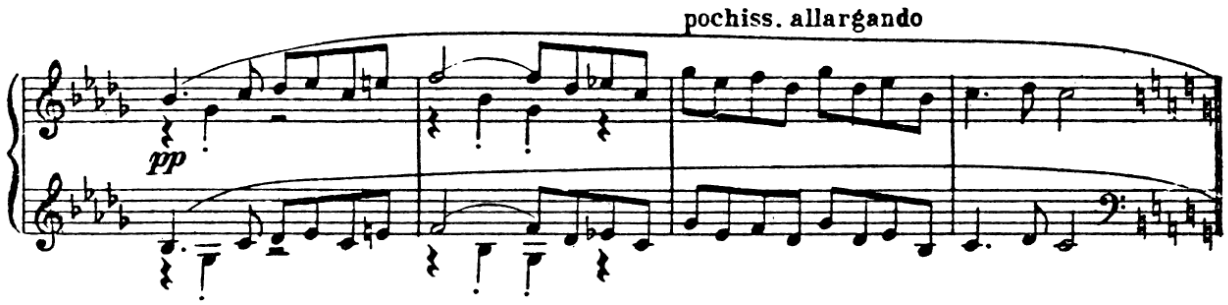
Visions Fugitives No. 11: Con vivacità

In this A-B-A piece, Richter, Gilels, and Berman used different tempos between the sections. While Prokofiev's tempos between the A and B sections differed significantly (♩= 176 and 116), Richter, Gilels, and Berman chose more conservative tempo changes. Richter began the A section in ♩= 172 and played the B section in ♩= 140–44. Compared to Prokofiev's tempo, Richter's tempo in the A section was alike, and his tempo in the B section was much faster. Gilels and Berman performed the A section in slower tempos than Prokofiev and Richter's tempos—♩= 142 and 140, respectively. Gilels performed the B section in ♩= 112, while Berman played the B section in ♩= 124. All three performers' recordings were longer than Prokofiev's. Richter's recording length was 0:54, Gilels' was 1:09, and Berman's was 1:04.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 176 (A section); ♩ = 116 (B section)	0:52
Richter	♩ = 172 (A section); ♩ = 140-44 (B section)	0:54
Gilels	♩ = 142 (A section); ♩ = 112 (B section)	1:09
Berman	♩ = 140 (A section); ♩ = 124 (B section)	1:04

Table 4.6: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 11

Apart from Prokofiev and Richter's distinct tempo choices, Richter's performance strongly resembled Prokofiev's. Both accelerated on sixteenth-note passages, albeit Richter did not accelerate as much as Prokofiev. Like Prokofiev, Richter did not extensively use crescendo or decrescendo in his performance. They used the sustain pedal for the *leggiere* section in measures 15 and 16. In the B section, both played the inner notes in a detached manner and maintained smooth legato articulation on both hands' melodic lines (Ex 4.13).



Example 4.13: *Vision Fugitives* No. 11, measures 21–24

Gilels offered some unique interpretation choices in this piece, especially in his treatment of pacing in the *leggiere* section and articulations throughout the A section. In measures 15-16, Gilels slowed down tremendously and used the una corda pedal to create a special moment. Other performers did not slow down in this *leggiere* section. While Gilels followed Prokofiev's tendency to accelerate on the sixteenth notes, his acceleration was much more moderate and subtle. Gilels maintained the brisk character of the piece without introducing any subtle dynamic

nuances (crescendo or decrescendo). Instead, he used staccatos and accents as his primary expressive tools. Gilels' accents in the A section were harsher and louder than the staccatos.

Visions Fugitives No. 16: Dolente

Compared to Prokofiev's performance of the sixteenth piece, "Dolente," Berman's performance was similar, albeit slightly faster. Prokofiev and Berman elicited plaintive emotions with their generous rubato. Berman, however, offered an original strategy for the last three phrases of the piece—three different tempos, with each following tempo slower than the preceding section. In measure 19, Berman started the phrase in ♩= 104, which was also his piece's overall tempo. In measure 24, Berman presented a new and slower tempo. Finally, in the last six measures of the piece, Berman introduced the slowest tempo. Due to these slower tempo changes at the end of the piece, Berman's recording length was longer (1:41) compared to Prokofiev's (1:32). Neither Richter nor Gilels recorded this piece.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	Half note = 47	1:32
Richter	♩ = 104	1:41

Table 4.7: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 16

In his performance, Berman carefully followed Prokofiev's performance directions and added his interpretation. Berman's dynamic nuances and astutely deployed rubato created a melancholic character. For example, Berman added a ritardando between the consequent and antecedent phrases (measure 4) and a prolonged ritardando in measures 6-8. Prokofiev did not write ritardando in measures 4 or 6-8. In the short B section (measures 9–18), Berman began with a pianissimo dynamic and gradually played louder, starting in measure 13. His pianissimo

and crescendo followed Prokofiev's directions. Berman also added an accelerando that corresponded with the crescendo in measure 9. This faster tempo allowed Berman to create a profound contrast of tempo and pacing in the molto ritardando of measure 18. As stated previously, Berman strategically deployed three different tempos for the final three phrases (measures 19–34). His slower tempos mirrored the three contrasting dynamic levels in these phrases (forte, piano, and pianissimo). Starting in measure 28, Berman used the una corda pedal to amplify the morose emotions. His pacing drove his overall expressivity in these measures; Berman did not change his voicing.

Visions Fugitives No. 17: Poetico

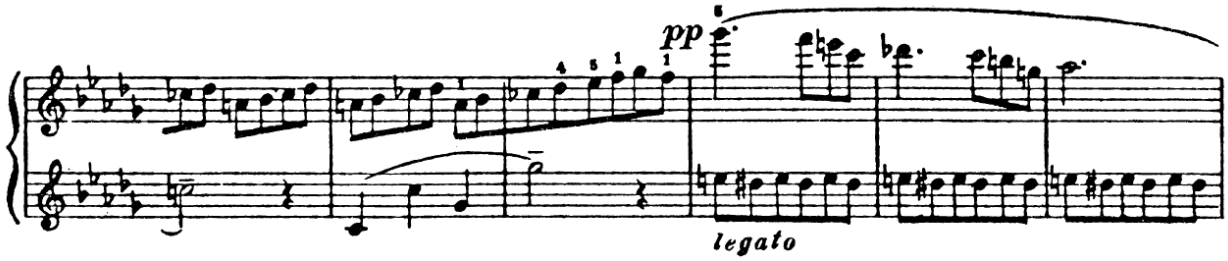
Compared to Prokofiev's performance, Gilels and Berman played this piece at slower tempos. Gilels performed this piece in ♩= 138, while Berman recorded this piece in ♩= 160. Both performers employed extensive rubato, which made their tempos somewhat unstable. Their recording lengths were longer than Prokofiev's. Gilels' recording lasted for 1:17, and Berman's recording length was short of one minute (0:57). Richter did not record this piece.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 152-160	0:52
Gilels	♩ = 138	1:17
Berman	♩ = 160	0:57

Table 4.8: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 17

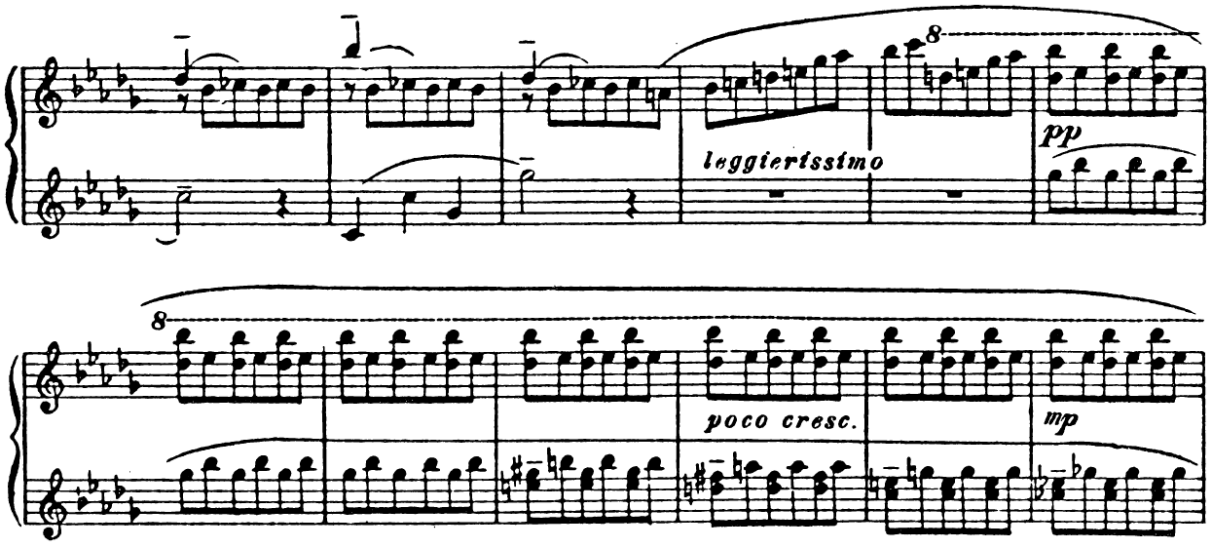
Gilels used rubato and dynamic nuances as his main expressive tools. His subtle rubato started as early as the first melody entrance (measure 5). His tempo fluctuations felt natural; I overlooked his rubato until I listened to his performance with the metronome. Gilels tended to

put slight dynamic emphasis on longer notes, even when Prokofiev did not notate tenuto on the longer notes. For example, Gilels played the G-flat and the D-flat louder than other notes in measures 15 and 16 (Ex 4.14). Gilels also occasionally introduced his dynamic nuances and ritardando in places where Prokofiev did not notate any dynamic or ritardando marking. In measures 33–34, Gilels employed both ritardando and crescendo for the *leggierissimo* whole-tone passage. He created a smoother transition into the piece's coda by using crescendo and ritardando in these two measures.



Example 4.14: *Visions Fugitives* No. 17, measures 12–17

In his rendition, Berman's rubato and attentiveness to harmony changes created a fairy-tale like feeling. While both Gilels and Berman used rubato frequently, Berman's overall tempo was more unstable than Gilels'. Berman also added unwritten ritardando in his performance. In measures 11–14, he performed the two short phrases slower than the preceding measures. Whereas Gilels used ritardando and crescendo in the *leggierissimo* section (measures 33–34), Berman utilized the una corda pedal. With the color change and softer dynamics, Berman arrived at pianissimo in measure 36. Berman's coda (measures 35-47) followed Prokofiev's interpretation and had a sense of nuance of direction. However, Berman highlighted each harmony changes with a slightly stronger dynamic level at each new chord's entrance (Ex 4.15).



Example 4.15: *Visions Fugitives* No. 17, measures 30–41

Visions Fugitives No. 18: Con una dolce lentezza

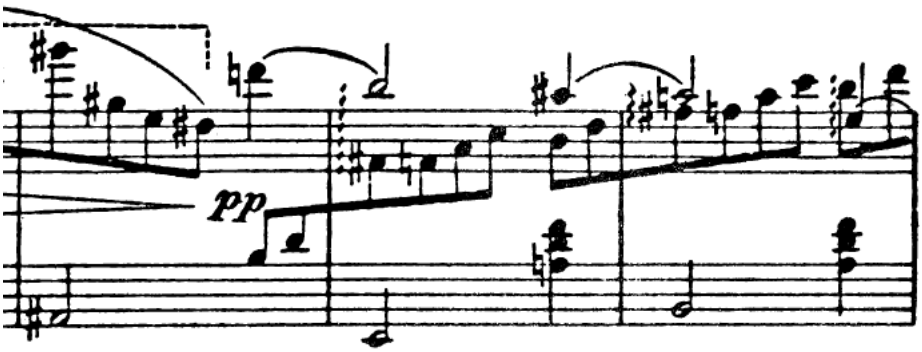
Richter and Berman played this piece with more deliberate rubato than Prokofiev. Although their tempos were similar to Prokofiev's (♩= 82), their recording lengths were considerably longer than Prokofiev's. Prokofiev's recording length was 1:17, while Richter and Berman's recording lengths were 1:36 and 1:27, respectively. Their recordings were longer because Richter began the piece at ♩= 78, and Berman started his recording at ♩= 82. Gilels never recorded this piece.

Performer	Tempo	Recording Length
Prokofiev	♩ = 82	0:17
Richter	♩ = 78	1:36
Berman	♩ = 82	1:27

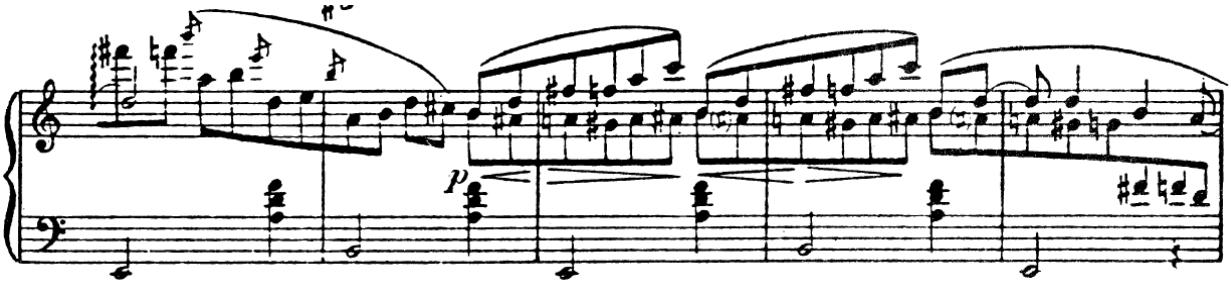
Table 4.9: Performers' Tempos and Recording Length in *Visions Fugitives* No. 18

In this piece, Richter demonstrated his dynamic and pacing control. He began the piece at ♩= 78 but soon introduced a slower tempo in the denser texture of measure 9. Measure 9 is the

first instance of a descant above the melodic line (Ex 4.16). Additionally, Richter decreased his tempo in the *languido* (measures 16-20) and the *smorzando* (measures 28-32) sections. While Richter generally prioritized the melodic line by playing it in a louder dynamic, he also variated the dynamic levels of his counterpoint. For example, Richter performed the right hand's two lines more evenly in measures 12-16. This stood in contrast to his treatment of counterpoint in measures 17-20, where he prioritized the top line over the inner line (Ex 4.17). Throughout the piece, Richter tended to use crescendo and accelerando concurrently.



Example 4.16: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 8–10

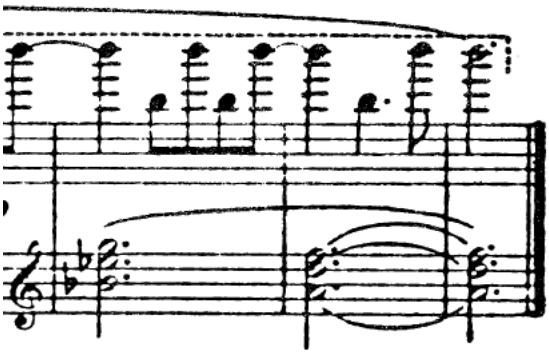


Example 4.17: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 11–15

Richter's treatment of the grace notes and his usage of pedaling were also notable. He stretched the tempo slightly for big rolls, such as in measures 16 and 21. He treated these rolls

for an expressive purpose. Additionally, he played the abundant grace notes in this piece gracefully. For example, he played the grace notes slowly as part of the melody in measures 11-12 (Ex 4.17). Richter did not shy away from blurring the melody with the sustain pedal. In the final two chords of the left hand (measures 30–32), he used the una corda pedal to achieve the pianississimo dynamic level and to create a different atmosphere.

Berman's rendition of this piece bore striking similarities with Richter's performance, especially with their treatments of the grace notes as melody and their usage of the una corda pedal. Both of them had a generally legato articulation throughout the piece, just as Prokofiev intended. For large intervals, such as the spread in measures 16 and 21, Berman slowed down considerably. He also played the grace notes slowly as part of the melodic line. In the final chord of the piece (measure 32), Berman used the una corda pedal. By using the pedal, he created contrasting colors between the E-flat and D-minor chords (Ex. 4.18).



Example 4.18: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 30–32

The major differences between Berman and Richter's performances were their interpretation of the pulse and voicing variations. While Prokofiev and Richter performed the piece in a pulse of three (three quarter notes per measure), Berman played this final piece in a pulse of one (one dotted half note per measure). Compared to Richter, Berman's voicing choices

were more moderate. For example, Berman played the counterpoint (top right-hand line) louder than Richter's in measure 9-11. While Richter played the two right-hand lines of measures 12–16 more evenly, Berman emphasized the top right-hand line (the melodic line). Finally, Berman shifted the dynamic level from the melody line to the counterpoint line in measures 15-16.

CHAPTER FIVE

PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO VISIONS FUGITIVES

Visions Fugitives No. 3: Allegretto

Creating two contrasting characters (lyrical and scherzo) between the sections (A-B-A) is essential in this piece. The pianist should portray a lyrical character in the A section without being overtly sentimental. Flexible pacing is crucial, but one should avoid using too much rubato. The A section's articulation should be smooth. The pianist should perform the B section with light articulation and little to no sustain pedal. The B section could also be played with an improvisatory character, especially in the sixteenth-note passages (measures 14 and 15). Based on the performances of Prokofiev, Richter, Gilels, and Berman, I suggest a brisk tempo (♩ = 120-144) throughout the piece.

In the A section, voice the melodic line (usually on the left hand) more than the harmonic line. The left hand could perform a crescendo towards the middle of measure 1 and a decrescendo towards the measure's end. Follow the melody's contour in measures 2-4: play a crescendo toward the E in measure 3, then taper the end of the phrase. Use the sustain pedal for the notes D-A in measure 3 and release the pedal on beat 3 in measure 4. The pianist could play the right hand's "echo" pattern with legato and alternating 4-5 fingers. In measures 5-8, follow Prokofiev's dynamic direction (crescendo in measure 6-7 and decrescendo in measure 8) and transition the dynamic level smoothly to piano in measure 9. Change the articulation to staccato (measures 11-12) immediately.

In the B section, the pianist should play the right hand louder than the left, as the right hand has a melodic line. Performers with small hands could move their hands laterally, i.e.,

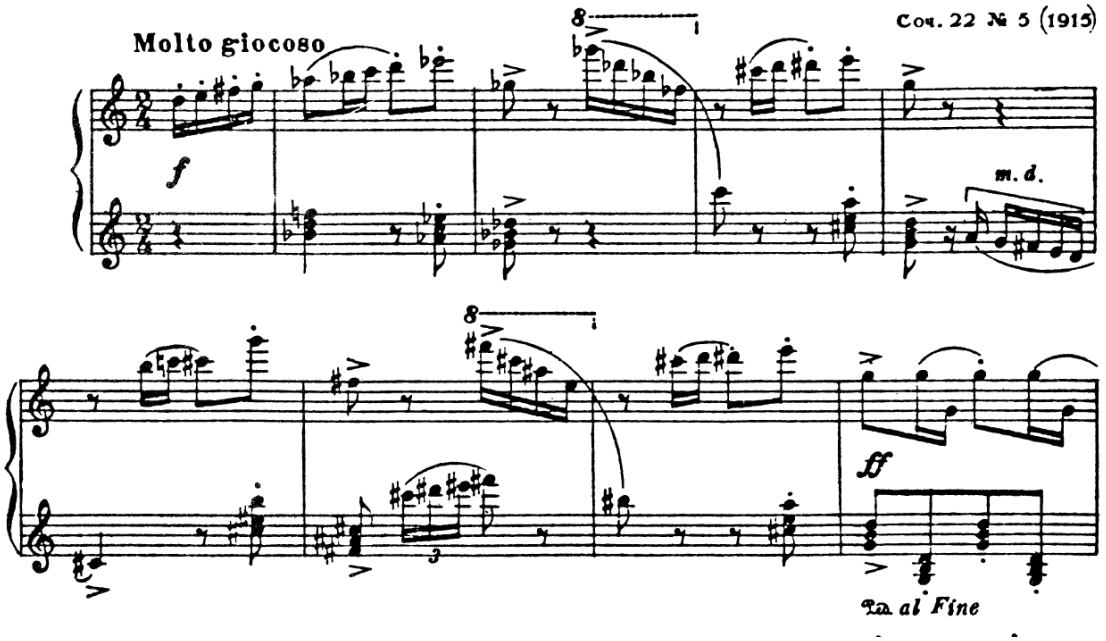
moving their wrists to the left and right, in order to adjust for the left-hand patterns. The major second intervals can also be performed with one finger instead of two. Avoid using the sustain pedal in order to create a dry scherzo quality. In measures 13–14, create a crescendo to E (measure 14). Although dynamic changes in this section are important, articulation changes also create the piece's witty character. Avoid using the una corda pedal for the diminuendo in measures 17-18 because using the pedal will diminish the brilliant tone. The performer could use the pedal at the end of the piece (measures 27-28) or on the final chord.

All four performers (Prokofiev, Richter, Gilels, and Berman) had different levels of rubato in this piece. It is up to the performer's discretion how much rubato they would like to use in the piece. However, should the pianist choose to be improvisatory, i.e., accelerating in smaller note values as Prokofiev did, the pianist must carefully return to the original tempo in new phrases and sections.

Visions Fugitives No. 5: Molto giocoso

The fifth piece of the *Visions Fugitives*, "Molto giocoso," exudes joyful and energetic characters and falls into Prokofiev's "scherzo" compositional line. The piece's texture is sparse, with its melody moving fluidly from right hand to left hand and vice versa. Many accents in this piece often disturb the flow of the line, strengthening the piece's whimsical character. Prokofiev further reinforces the character by placing accents at the end of the phrase, where performers naturally perform diminuendo. Appropriate tempo choices for this piece range from ♩ = 125-140 for the A section and ♩ = 100-120 for the B section. Although Prokofiev performed the B section at a much slower tempo (♩ = 96), his tempo changes between the A and B sections felt unnatural.

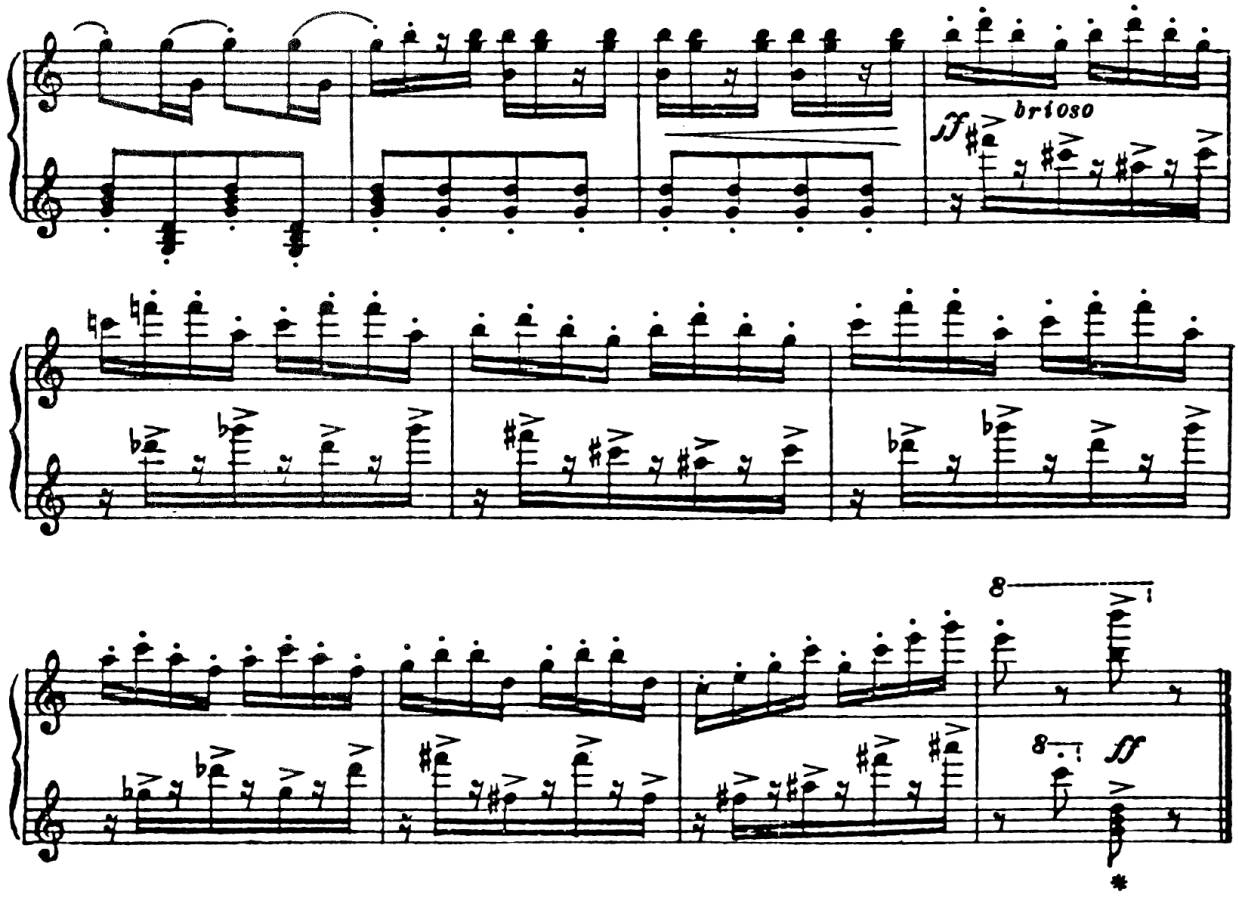
It is imperative to begin the piece with a strong dynamic level (forte). The pianist could bounce their wrists to create a loud dynamic with short articulations throughout the piece. Because the melody moves fluidly between the two hands, the pianist should maintain the line's tone by matching the dynamic level between the two in these passages. For example, the descending lines in measures 2–3 and 4–5 should sound as if they are played with one hand (see Ex 5.1). I suggest playing the accents in the A section metronomically without any delays in orer to maintain the piece's energetic character.



Example 5.1: *Visions Fugitives* No. 5, measures 1–8

All performers (Prokofiev, Richter, Gilels, and Berman) used the sustain pedal in the B section. Some of them, such as Richter and Gilels, released the sustain pedal in the last two measures or before the final chord, which allowed the G chord to ring cleanly. Achieving perfect accuracy is of utmost importance because the sustain pedal is used for a long duration of time.

This statement is especially true in measures 8–11, where the harmony consists of only the G chord. In measures 12–15, pianists have various options for voicing. Berman, Richter, and Gilels all performed these measures differently. Berman played the right hand slightly louder while Richter played the left hand slightly louder. Gilels' approach was straightforward: playing both left and right hands loudly. Similar to the A section, bouncing the right hand for staccatos can help the players create the fortissimo and staccatos. When the left hand is on top of the right hand (measures 12–23), try to bounce the left hand while staying close to the keys (Ex 5.2). Bouncing will help ensure left-hand accuracy.

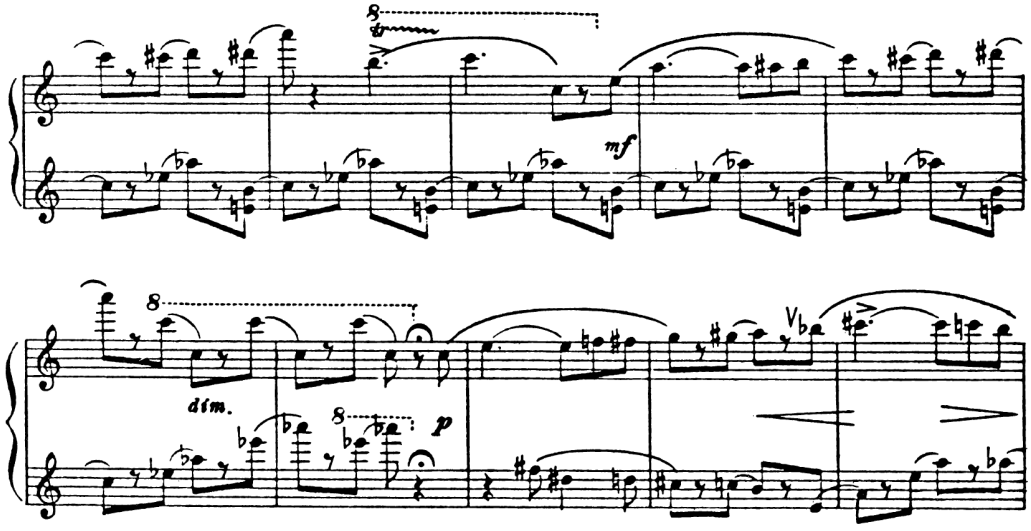


Example 5.2: *Visions Fugitives* No. 5, measures 9–19

Visions Fugitives No. 6: Con eleganza

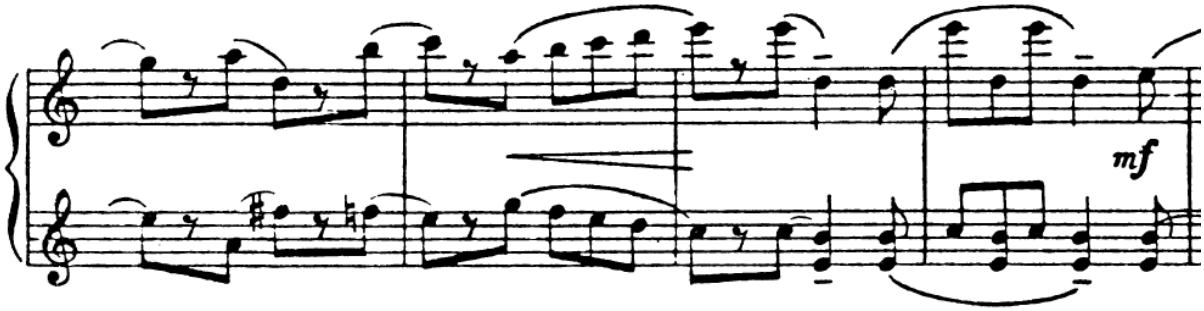
The sixth piece of the *Visions fugitives*, "Con eleganza," is a short dance-like piece in 6/8 meter. While the performance direction translates to "with elegance," the piece has a slightly sarcastic character. Although not pervaded with accents as in the previous piece, "Molto giocoso," the accents in this piece also disrupt the flow of the phrase. This disruption heightens the sarcastic character that Prokofiev has already created with chromaticism.

The pianist should maintain legato articulation throughout the piece except for places where Prokofiev included articulation markings. To create this legato sound, I suggest playing the piece with a flatter hand and close to the keys. My understanding of the "con eleganza" is that the pianist should emulate a more Romantic approach to the piece. For example, in measures 11–12, I suggest gradually getting louder towards the end of the high C trill (measure 12) and playing the low C softly (Ex 5.3). The pianist could gradually play louder towards the highest note (the A in measure 15) in measures 13-16. By doing a crescendo towards the peak in measure 15, the pianist will have a larger dynamic gamut for the diminuendo in the following two measures (Ex 5.3).



Example 5.3: *Visions Fugitives* No. 6, measures 10–19

In measure 4, the left-hand plays a higher pitch than the right hand. I suggest switching the pitches between the right and left hands as this fits the keyboard topography more naturally. Akin to previous pieces, Prokofiev rushed notes with smaller rhythmic duration, such as the group of five notes in measure 6 (Ex 5.4). Performers have the choice to accelerate and to become louder in this short passage gradually. If the performer accelerates in this passage, it is necessary to reset their pacing in measures 7–8. I strongly recommend a short silence break in measure 8 prior to starting the following phrase. Performers could also treat measures 22–23 as they do in measures 7–8.

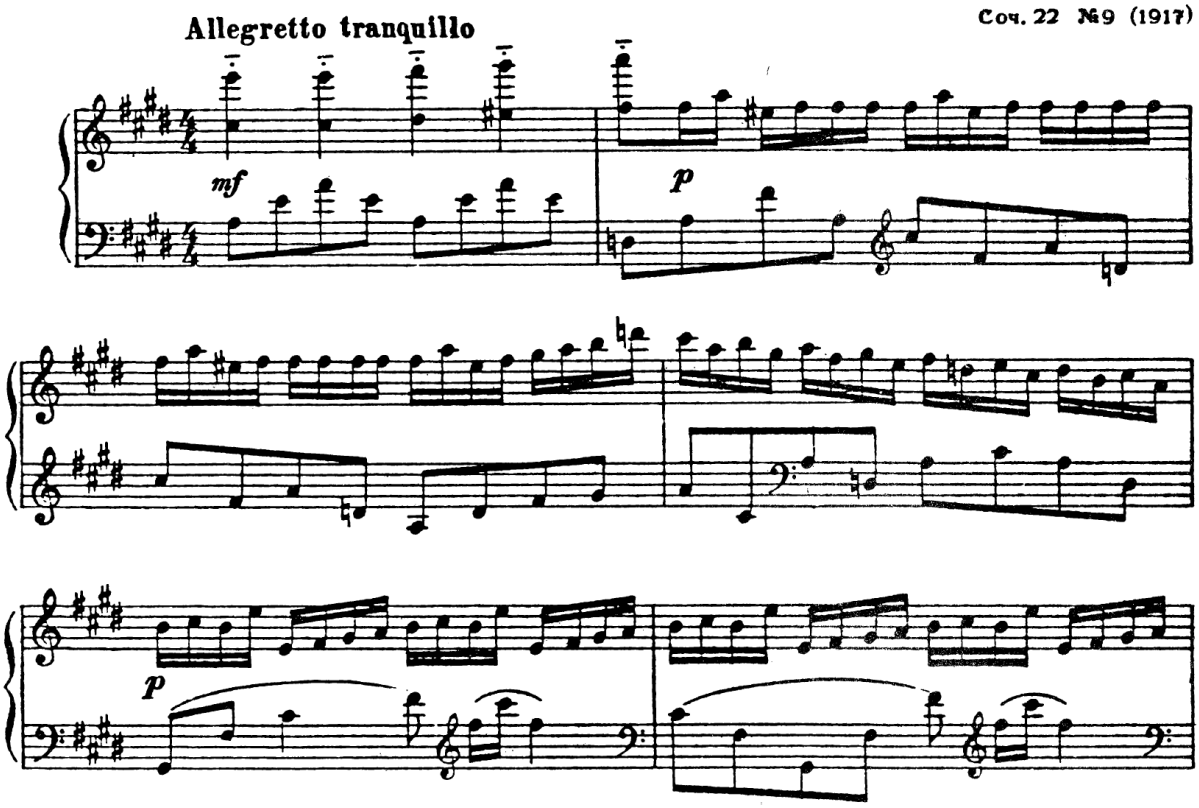


Example 5.4: *Visions Fugitives* No. 6, measures 5–8

Visions Fugitives No. 9: Allegretto tranquillo

"Allegretto tranquillo," the ninth piece of the set, is a fast and graceful etude. The piece is full of flourishing right-hand passages, such as one in measures 2–6 (Ex 5.5). The tranquillo direction signifies that performers should play these flourishing passages without sudden dynamic changes. Any dynamic nuances, such as crescendo or decrescendo that follows the dynamic contour should be performed subtly. Avoiding accentuation of the repeated F-sharp notes in these measures is also crucial. Pianists should avoid alternating their fingers for these repeated notes if their finger alternation results in poor dynamic control. A flatter hand could aid players

in creating smooth articulations. The appropriate tempo range for this piece is ♩ = 120–140. Performers could also choose to adjust their tempos between measures 1–2 and 7–8, as Prokofiev did. If the performers choose to do so, tempo ranges between ♩ = 100–112 and 128–140 are appropriate.

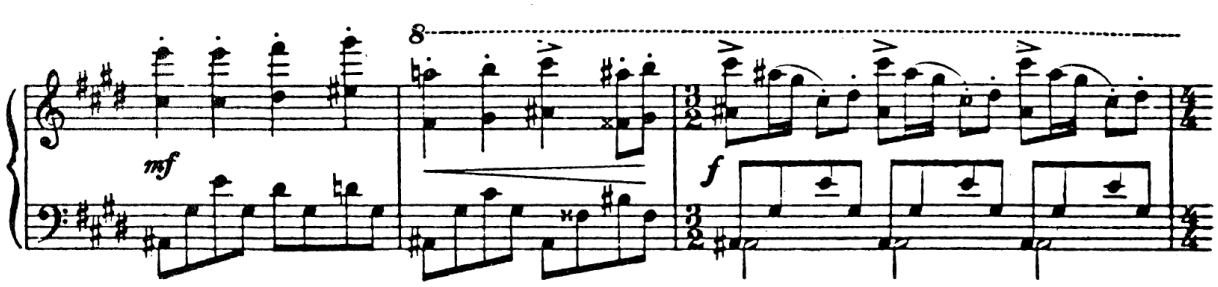


Example 5.5: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 1–6

Pianists should be cautious not only with repeated notes but also with repeated passages throughout the piece. Repeated passages, such as those found in measures 5–6 and 10–11, should not be performed identically. For instance, performers could play the second passage (measure 6) softer than the first passage (measure 5) (see Ex 5.3). Changing paces in these passages—using

rubato in measure 6 followed by a smooth return to the original tempo in measure 7—also helps create variations in these identical passages.

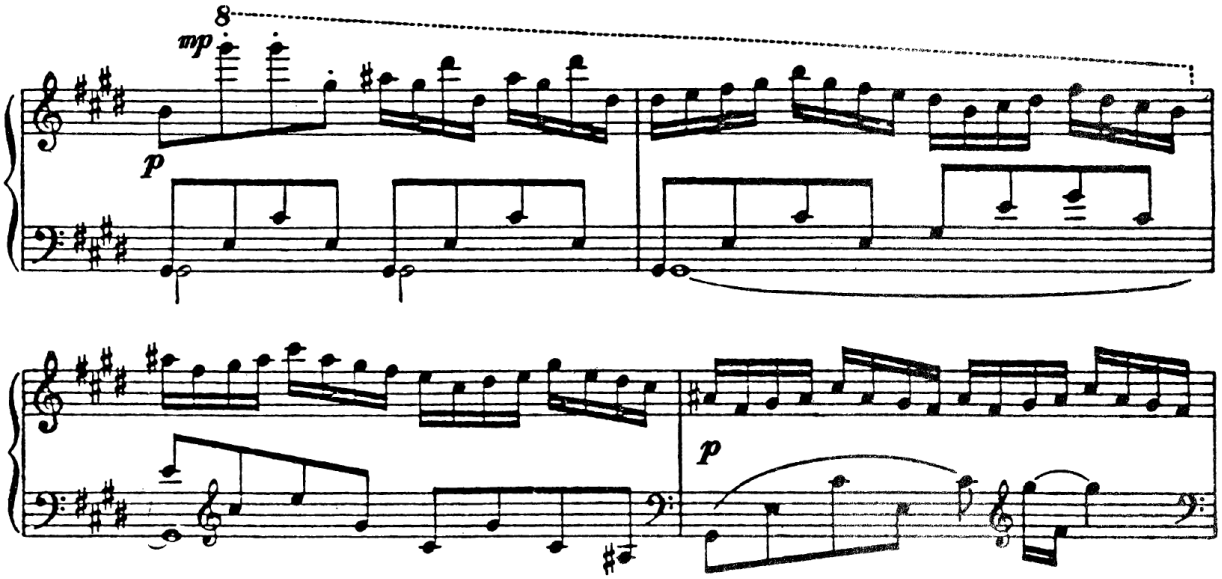
Besides the graceful and flourishing passages, this piece has melody lines with large intervals. Pianists have the option to stretch their pacing for these big intervals. In his performance, Prokofiev stretched the pacing of these intervals, such as those in measures 1-2, 7, and 16-17. I suggest that some passages with big intervals should be treated differently. In other words, it is best not to repeat identical rubato for all these stretches. For example, performers could stretch the pace between the large intervals in measure 7 (the interval between B and G-sharp). However, they should not excessively slow down or do rubato in measures 16–17. Slowing down or doing excessive rubato in these measures will disrupt the flow of the melody line. Instead, I recommend moving their torso laterally to their right to ease these jumps (see Ex 5.6).



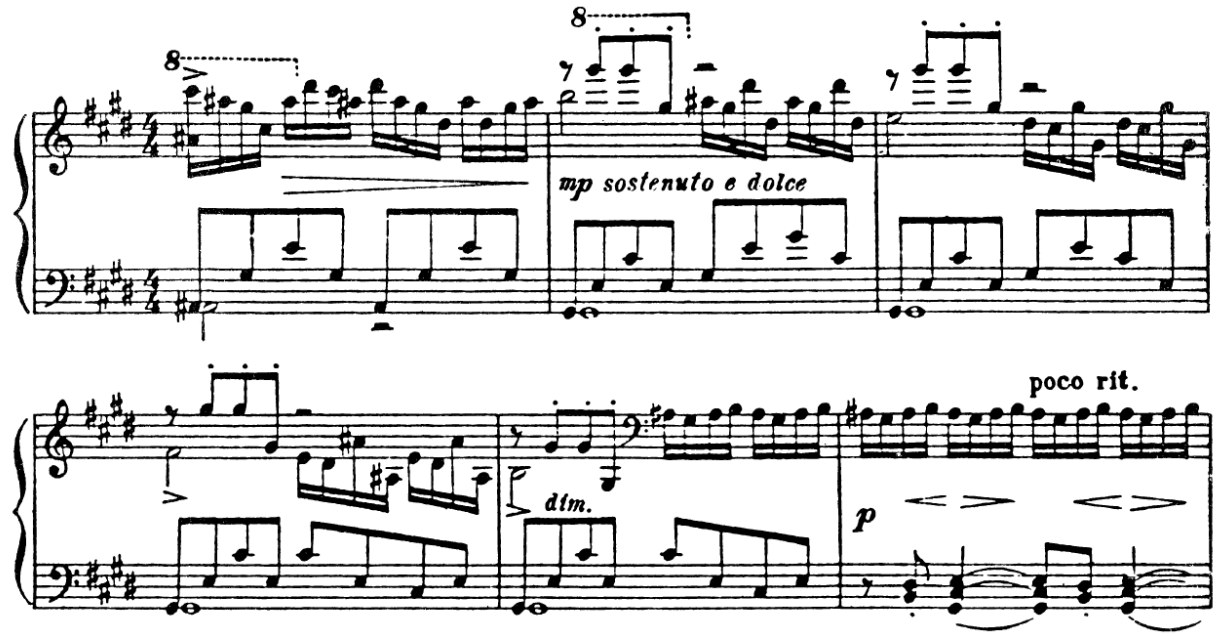
Example 5.6: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 16–17

Performers should be aware of the held notes in melodic and harmonic lines. There are several places where performers must utilize the sustain pedal to hold the bass note in their left hand. For example, one cannot hold the G-sharp note without using the pedal in measures 7-9 (Ex 5.7). Performers will also need to use the sustain pedal in measures 18–23. They should hold and emphasize the right hand's half notes in measures 20-23. (Ex 5.8). These half notes should

be bell-like and be in the foreground of the melodic line. If wanted, pianists could perform the final two measures of the piece at a different, i.e., slower tempo, for artistic purposes.



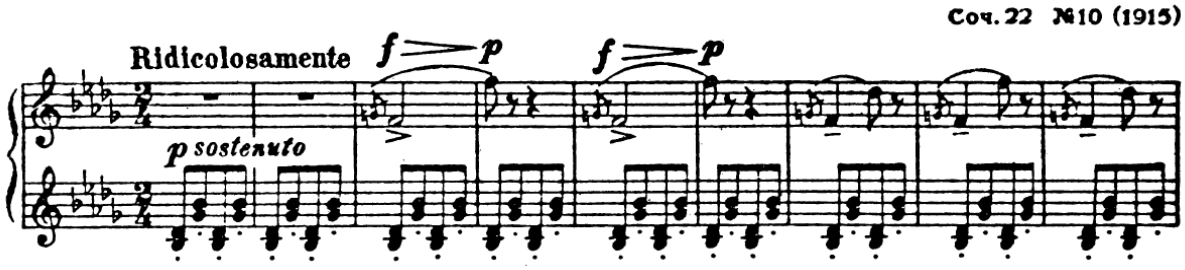
Example 5.7: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 7–10



Example 5.8: *Visions Fugitives* No. 9, measures 19–24

Visions Fugitives No. 10: [Ridiculosamente]

With the *ridiculosamente* direction, Prokofiev communicated that the piece needs to have a humorous character. Little to no pedal and dry articulation, especially on the left-hand staccato pattern, will assist performers in creating a whimsical character. This left-hand pattern could be awkward for performers; they can easily fail to create a uniform tone for the left-hand pattern. Adjusting the left hand's position would ease this difficulty. Additionally, Prokofiev included the *sostenuto* marking at the beginning of the piece. This marking likely applies to the right hand. However, do not use the right pedal to sustain the right hand in measures 3-6 (Ex. 5.9). Instead, hold the half-note F with the thumb and stretch the right hand to reach the following higher F. It is also crucial to follow the forte and piano directions in measures 3-6.

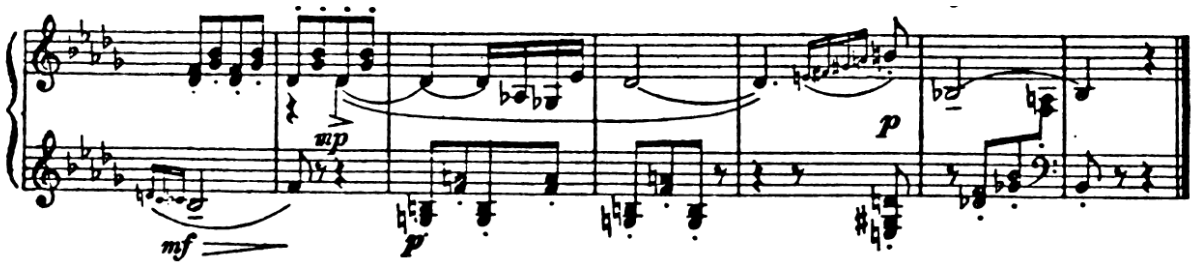


Example 5.9: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 1-9

Other articulation markings, such as tenuto and accents, enhance the piece's quirky character. These articulations create a whimsical character from their unexpected disruptions to the musical flow. In the first fifteen measures alone, Prokofiev used various articulation markings (tenuto, staccato, and accents) to variate each instance of F pitch. (There are 25 instances of the F notes in these measures alone.) Grace note passages, such as those found in measures 16 and 20, should sound crisp. Fast and firm fingertips will give vivacity to the grace notes. Performers can also ease their shift to the grace notes passages by using the sustain pedal

on the previous note (D-flat on measure 17) and preparing their fingers for the passage (broken D-major chord passage on the same measure).

While most of the melody lies on the left hand, it moves to the right hand in measures 31-34 (Ex. 5.10). Make sure that the left hand's tone is equal to the right hand's tone quality from the previous measures. In measure 34, immediately switch the right hand's tone quality and dynamic level to match the left hand's.



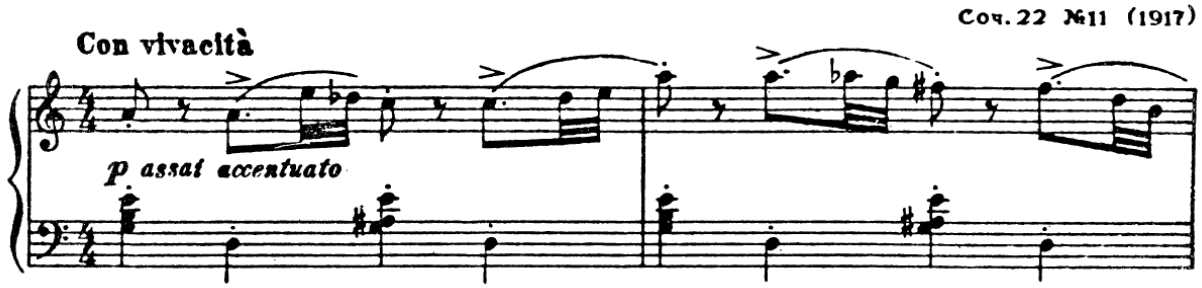
Example 5.10: *Visions Fugitives* No. 10, measures 33-39

Performers have several options for the piece's tempo and pacing. Pianists analyzed in this study themselves played the piece differently. Gilels and Prokofiev, for example, used contrasting tempos for multiple phrases and sections. Conversely, Berman had a steady tempo and used ample rubato. As such, pianists had various ways to perform this piece. They could extemporaneously play the sixteenth-note passage (measures 15-16) or change their tempo in the B section (measures 23-30). A tempo range between ♩= 72–100 is suitable for the piece.

Visions Fugitives No. 11: Con vivacità

Prokofiev wrote the performance direction *con vivacita* (fast and lively), which informed performers of the piece's scherzo quality. Analogous to the previous piece, the accents create a whimsical character. This character resulted from Prokofiev placing these accents in unexpected

beats of the measure (second and fourth beats), which disrupted the musical flow. As such, pianists should follow the accent markings to bring out the spirited and whimsical qualities. (Ex 5.11). Performers should also articulate and maintain bright tone quality for the thirty-second notes throughout the A section.



Example 5.11: *Visions Fugitives* No. 11, measures 1–2

Performers could enhance the piece's mischievous quality by applying rubato in specific measures. For example, they could accelerate in measure 7 towards the F in measure 8, then become slower after arriving at the note. Should they do the rubato in measures 7-8, they must return to the original tempo in measure 9. As Prokofiev and Richter did, pianists could also accelerate on sixteenth-note passages (measure 4). What they should not do, however, is to slow down in the sixteenth-note passages (measures 12, 15, 28, and 31).

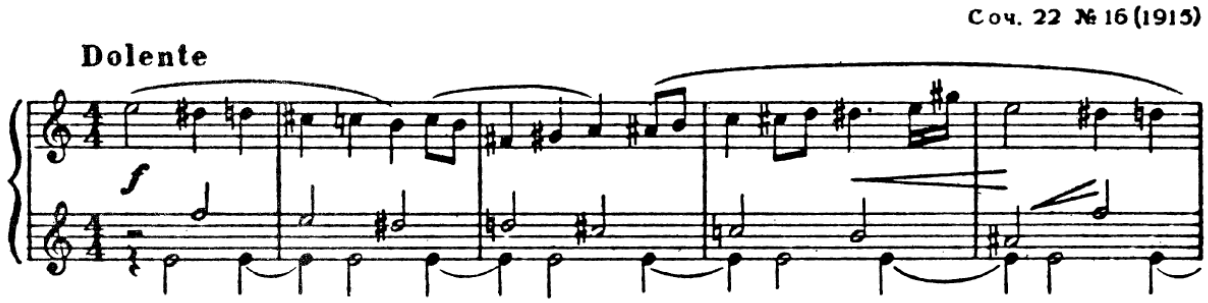
In the B section, performers could adapt their dynamic nuance and rubato based on the melodic contour's tension and release. For example, performers could slightly accelerate towards the melody's peak in measure 19, then do ritardando at the end of the phrase (measure 20). Although performers could use rubato to create the required expressive character, they should use it sparingly. They should, instead, use dynamic nuances (crescendos and decrescendos) to play expressively. For example, performers could play the left-hand melody in measures 21-24 slightly louder to create variety. They also could play the right-hand melody louder than the left-

hand melody. In measure 19, pianists could alternate their fingers on the G-flat (fingers 3 to 1, for example) to maintain legato articulation. Additionally, they could perform the inner notes short and detached.

Performers have two options for their tempos. First, they could opt for two distinct tempos in the A and B sections. In doing so, they would follow the performances of Richter, Gilels, and Berman as all three played the B section at a slower tempo than the A section. If the performers choose to accelerate in the eighteenth-note passages, they should begin the A section at a brisk tempo (♩= 160–176) and perform the B section at a much slower tempo (♩= 116–144). Second, as Berman did, players could choose not to accelerate in these passages. They could instead use similar tempos for the A and B sections (♩= 138–144).

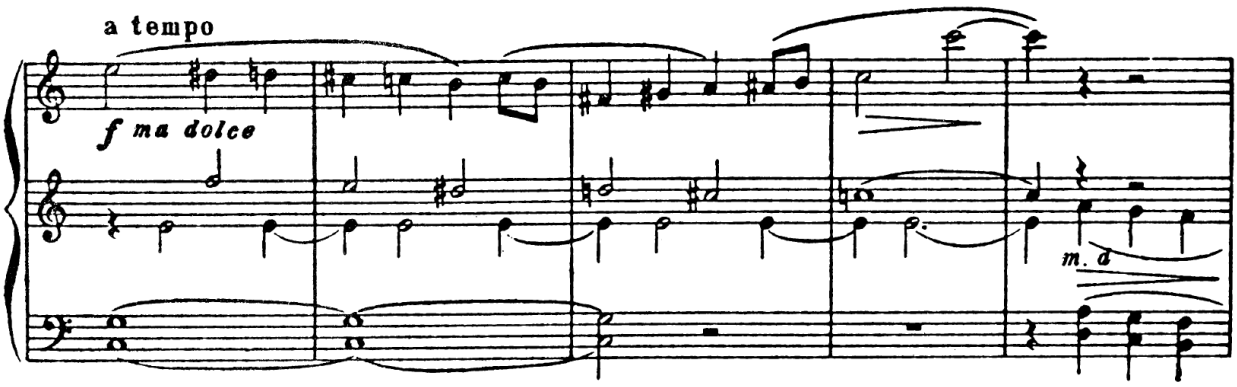
Visions Fugitives No. 16: Dolente

The E pedal tone and slow rhythmic movement in the sixteenth piece, "Dolente," induces a doleful and sorrowful quality. Because of this quality, performers should play this piece at a fairly slow tempo (♩ = 92–104). They could also employ different tempos in the last three phrases (measures 19-34). As previously stated, Berman introduced a new and slower tempo in each phrase's entrance (measures 25 and 29)—a compelling artistic choice. An astute usage of rubato can also assist performers in creating a flowing pace. In other words, they should avoid playing the left-hand pattern too metronomically or rigidly (see Ex. 5.12). Additionally, performers could lightly accelerate or decelerate on eighteenth notes, such as the C and B in measure 2.



Example 5.12: *Visions Fugitives* No. 16, measures 1–5

Performers should employ legato articulation throughout the A section and a slightly detached articulation in the B section. While performers could utilize the sustain pedal to achieve legato articulation, they should not use the sustain pedal to hold long notes (i.e., the E pedal notes and the descending line). Rather, performers should hold these notes with their fingers and play the descending notes (written for the left hand) with their right hand. Using the sustain pedal to hold long notes will make the harmony unclear. In the B section, the sound quality should be somewhat dryer: less sustained sound on the left hand's broken chord pattern and clear silence for the right hand's rests. Starting in measure 15, performers should create a more sustaining sound on the left hand without sacrificing the rests. The legato articulation in the A' section should be maintained, even with the descending fourth lines (measures 23 and 28). Pianists could opt to use the sustain pedal to achieve legato articulation. However, they should be careful not to blur the harmonic progression in this line (see Ex. 5.13).



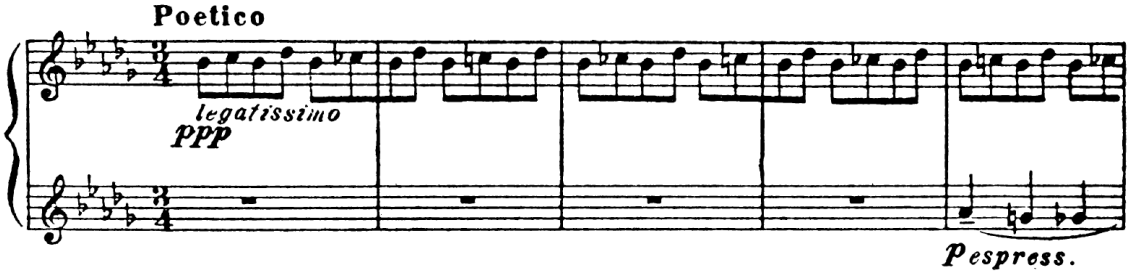
Example 5.13: *Visions Fugitives* No. 16, measures 19–23

Prokofiev wrote various dynamic directions in this piece, which create contrasting qualities for each phrase. The first phrase should begin loudly and end at the piano dynamic level. In the second phrase, begin the phrase with a pianissimo dynamic level and slowly become louder into measure 15. Although Prokofiev did not write a diminuendo in measure 18, performers should gradually become softer throughout measure 18. In measure 19, the phrase should begin with a forte dynamic level to create dynamic contrasts between the three repeated phrases. Players should gradually become softer in the last two phrases. The una corda pedal could be used for the final phrase if desired.

Visions Fugitives No. 17: Poetico

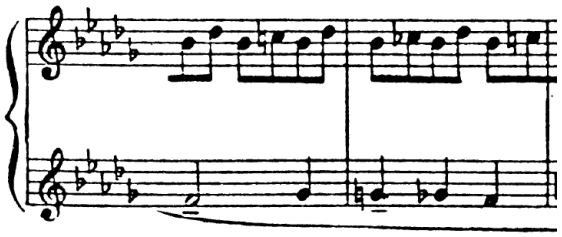
"Poetico," the seventeenth piece, begins with an ostinato on the right hand and a *poetico* (poetic, lyrical) performance direction. Performers should play the chromatic and close intervallic ostinato throughout the piece as a coloristic palette (Ex 5.14). They should also play the ostinato with flexible pacing and allow the melody, beginning on the left hand in measure 5, to lead the pacing. The *poetico* direction suggests that this piece falls under the lyrical style of Prokofiev's five compositional styles. This direction further strengthens the performers' need to avoid rigid

pacing. A tempo range of ♩= 132-160 is acceptable for this piece. (All three performers analyzed in this study have different tempo ranges.)



Example 5.14: *Visions Fugitives* No. 17, measures 1–5

Performers should pay close attention to the tenutos throughout the piece because Prokofiev used them to notate pitches that should be emphasized within a melodic line. For example, the G in measure 7 should be played slightly louder than the preceding G and the following G-flat (see Ex. 5.15). Prokofiev also wrote the tenutos on pitches commonly played softly. For example, players tend to become softer towards the C in measure 12. Prokofiev included a tenuto on the C to show performers that they should emphasize it. The tenutos also function as a performance marking for the bell-like figures. Performers should play the B-flat and D in measures 19–33 louder than the ostinato pattern. Prokofiev showed in his recording that one should voice the right hand ("bell" and ostinato) and the left hand (melody) differently.

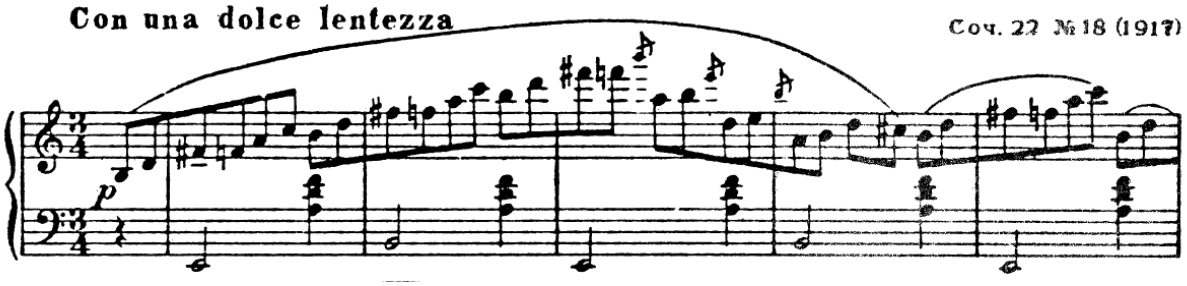


Example 5.15: *Visions Fugitives* No. 17, measures 6–7

Although the score has limited dynamic markings, performers still need to use dynamic nuances to create expressiveness. Gilels and Berman, for example, used both rubato and dynamic nuances in their performances. So did Prokofiev. He connected the louder dynamic level with accelerando and the softer one with ritardando. I strongly recommend that performers use Prokofiev's idea--connecting the dynamic nuances with the pace changes/rubato. Additionally, performers should pay attention to the harmonic progression, i.e., the tension and release, in measures 35-47. The harmonic progression should guide their dynamic nuances and pace changes.

Visions Fugitives No. 18: Con una dolce lentezza

The eighteenth piece, "Con una dolce lentezza," is a parody of a slow waltz and should be played with a flexible tempo. (The piece reminds me of Debussy's *La plus que lente*, written in 1910.) In this piece, the left hand has a waltz-like rhythm without the customary second beat's chord (see Ex. 5.16). This pattern persists throughout the piece, except for several measures in the middle (measures 16 and 25). All three performers (Prokofiev, Richter, and Berman) employed rubato extensively. Richter and Berman use rubato much more than Prokofiev. ♩= 76-84 is an acceptable tempo range for this piece.



Ex. 5.16: *Visions Fugitives* No. 18, measures 1–5

Performers should voice the melodic line for most of the piece, but there are places where performers could opt to bring the secondary line to the forefront. For example, they could increase the counterpoint's dynamic level in measures 9–11, 12–16, and 17–20. As a comparison, Richter highlighted the counterpoint line in measures 15–16, noticeably performing the counterpoint line louder than the melody line. Conversely, Prokofiev always placed the highest importance on the melody line. In short, performers could choose to variate their treatments of the melody and countermelody.

A comparison of the three pianists' recordings shows that they all treated the grace notes and the roll as parts of the melody lines. They did not play the grace notes quickly but rather slowly. I suggest that performers follow Prokofiev, Berman, and Richter's treatment of these. In measure 3, performers should match the tone quality and the pacing of the melodic line with the B and E grace notes (see Ex. 5.16). Measures 11-12 should be treated similarly. In addition to playing the grace notes slowly, pianists could stretch the pacing for the melody line's large interval jumps. Performers do not have to rush their D to F-sharp rolls in measure 11. They can make the delay sound more organic by preparing the big interval stretch with rubato.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

The 20th-century recording technology enabled composers, especially composer-pianists, to impart their intent in audio and visual mediums. In contrast, composers from previous centuries disseminated their intent solely through music scores and pedagogical lineage.

From analyzing Prokofiev's recording, we learn that Prokofiev did not follow his scores rigidly. Additionally, he played several pieces extemporaneously. We also discovered that Prokofiev's music is not metronomic. Thus, we should adapt our interpretation, especially our pacing choices, based on our analysis of Prokofiev's five compositional styles.

By examining modern pianists' interpretations and comparing their performances with Prokofiev's, we realize that performance styles have changed throughout time. Hearing a modern performer mimicking Prokofiev's improvisatory nature may be jarring to some listeners. Listeners may feel this way because they are not used to hearing modern performers using exorbitant rubato. Additionally, listeners might not have heard Prokofiev recordings as the recordings are not well-known.

As performers with access to all these recordings, we should bridge the different performance styles. Most importantly, performers should not perform Prokofiev's music metronomically. We must be aware of the current performance style so listeners can appreciate and enjoy Prokofiev's music.

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