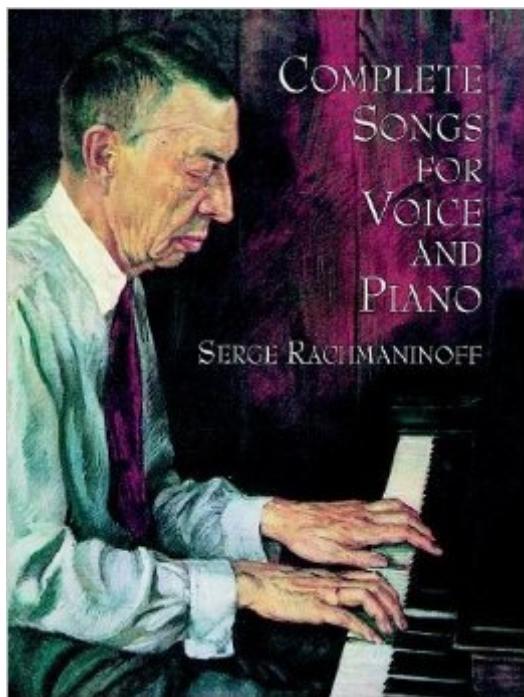


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Complete Songs For Voice And Piano (Dover Song Collections)



Synopsis

One of the legendary pianists of his day, Serge Rachmaninoff (1873â "1943) has taken his place in music history as a composer of distinction â " a commanding figure in late Russian Romanticism whose appealing works are known worldwide for their intense lyricism and dynamic vivacity. This complete collection of Rachmaninoff's songs for voice and piano comprises all of the music Opp. 4, 8, 14, 21, 26, 34, and 38 â " seventy-one songs in a variety of vocal ranges, containing some of the most hauntingly beautiful passages in the literature. The text underlay for most of the songs is in Russian (Cyrillic) and English; one is given with Russian, German, and French singing texts; and the complete Op. 38 (six songs) is published with singing texts in all four languages. Bold in his broad choice of poems to set to music, Rachmaninoff chose the words of no less than 36 esteemed poets â " from his fellow countrymen Chekhov, Pushkin, and Tolstoy to the international works of Goethe, Heine, Hugo, and Shelley. Here, the composer's lyrical gifts are matched and supported by his extraordinary sense of the keyboard as an equal partner in the making of an art song.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I generally can't stand Dover editions. The bindings make me crazy! BUT - unlike others, this one actually lays flat on the piano. Only pianists will appreciate how wonderful that is! It's an exact reprint of the Boosey & Hawkes 2 volume set, though significantly cheaper. I have the Boosey & Hawkes, but added this one just to have everything together and because it lays so nicely.

A somewhat carefully made edition, with texts in russian and translated to english and french. Rachmaninoff's songs are of unsurpassed beauty and richness; This "lieds" requires special skills for the performers; the piano parts are not mere accompaniments, but complex and difficult in essence. The problem is, although the title of this book says "complete", it is not: some songs, which don't have specific opus numbers, are not in this compilation. The maximum rate is given only because it's... Rachmaninoff.

Rachmaninoff has composed some of the most beautiful songs in existence, but these treasures are largely untouched, save for his Vocalise (Op.34 No.14), and maybe Op.4 No.4 and Op.21. No.7. This is a shame, considering that there are many treasures available in his collection of songs. Interestingly, the "cycles" or groups of songs are not the same cycles that we find in the works of other composers. Rachmaninoff has set up these Opus numbers to contain songs for each of the main voice types, and therefore, the cycles are either meant to be sung by multiple vocalists, or are not intended to be sung in a sequence. Any way that you choose to study and Perform Rachmaninoff song repertoire, you cannot go wrong. The challenges of this series goes beyond the difficulty of the rarely-sung Russian language. The ranges are often astonishingly challenging, with the climax being held for at least a value of a half-note. I would only improve this book by providing IPA or other phonetic aids to the text. And, of course, I always like to see accompaniment provided on CD with repertoire books, since I am a lousy pianist!

Yes, it's a pity that the 14 or so songs without opus-numbers aren't included. Presumably that's because they were published later than the others (after his death) and thus not allowed to be reprinted here (as not being part of the 2-volume Boosey & Hawkes edition printed earlier) - if the copyright period be 75 years after his death (it used to be 50 but has apparently been changed...), that would explain it... Otherwise, it's a thoroughly lovely book: not only is Rachmaninoff so outstanding as a lieder composer (and the accompaniments are no less gorgeous to play as the vocal-parts to sing!!); to boot, the book not only opens well, it's also a perfect size (too many vocal-scores and songbooks are of a reduced size compared to instrumental-only publications!)! Furthermore, the fonts and layout of the pages (unlike a few of Dover's other offerings, where the original engraving was a bit too ornate or less than pristine) both contribute to a stellar, easy-to-read product. It's an absolute MUST-BUY!!!

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