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# NEWS & INFORMATION

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## **REDISCOVERED RUSSIAN PIANIST SENSITIVELY IN SYNC WITH CHOPIN**

Pianist Dmitry Paperno is delighted when an observer notes similarities between the disciplined power and passion of his playing and the music of Chopin. "It's my approach to music in general and Chopin in particular," he says.

A major pianist in Russia in the 1960s and 70s, Paperno has been a lifelong exponent of -- but not a specialist in -- Chopin's music. A new CD, *Paperno Plays Chopin* (Cedille CDR 90000 026), presents performances from the 1955 International Chopin Competition in Warsaw and his later years in Chicago. The CD, Paperno's fourth recording for Cedille, documents three decades in the evolution of his artistry -- all through the works of one composer in recordings of performances never released commercially.

A striking feature of the program is the contrast between the considerably faster playing that prevailed in 1955 and the slower (though hardly slow) tempos heard in Paperno's concerts recorded between 1977 and 1989 by radio station WFMT.

According to *Karp's Dictionary of Music*, "Chopin epitomized the Romantic concept of intimate art. He exhibited a remarkable control over dynamic nuances. Although his

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music contains many heroic moments, the heroism is an inner personal quality and not a pose to obtain the adulation of the crowd."

Paperno's pianism has been described in similar terms. *Stereo Review's* Richard Freed, in reviewing Paperno's first disc on Cedille, was struck by Paperno's "affectionate conviction" in what he plays and the "touch of poetry" in his playing. "That quality makes itself felt throughout the entire program, in fact, in the least aggressive way: You feel the pianist is really finding it in the music rather than imposing it from the outside," Freed wrote. *CD Review* noted, "Paperno avoids the twin traps of overinterpretation and repression of honest expression."

The International Chopin Competition still ranks among the world's most distinguished piano competitions. The Soviet entrants in 1955 felt incredible pressure to make a strong showing: winning an international honor was essential to securing state support as a concert artist. It was a defining moment for the young artists. Paperno's prize-winning performance at the event launched his concert career.

The CD booklet includes Paperno's first-hand, behind-the-scenes account of the 1955 competition, to be included in his forthcoming book, *Notes of a Moscow Pianist* (Amadeus Press), due in 1998.

Paperno went on to perform throughout the Soviet Union and Eastern-bloc countries and made numerous recordings for the Soviet Melodiya label. The introverted, self-effacing pianist was only occasionally permitted to concertize in the West, most notably as soloist with the U.S.S.R. State Orchestra at Expo in Brussels in 1958.

Born in Kiev on Feb. 18, 1929, Paperno studied at the Moscow Conservatory with legendary teacher Alexander Goldenweiser, whose personal contacts included Tchaikovsky,

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Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninov, Scriabin, and Medtner. In preparation for the 1955 competition, Paperno also took private lessons with Emil Gilels.

Since emigrating to the U.S. in 1976, Paperno has pursued a characteristically low-profile career as a professor at Chicago's DePaul University (since 1977), while maintaining a modest concert schedule. In 1989 Cedille Records coaxed Paperno into the recording studio after a long absence, and a new audience began noticing that Paperno is, as the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* says, "clearly a remarkable pianist."

Cedille CDs are distributed by Bayside Distribution and are available nationally at finer classical record stores. For a free catalog and the whereabouts of local retail outlets, consumers are invited to write to Cedille Records, 700 W. Barry Ave., Suite 3-E, Chicago, IL 60657-4587, or call (312) 404-0758.

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**PAPERNO PLAYS CHOPIN**

**Broadcast "concerts" for Chicago Fine Arts radio station WFMT**

Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20  
Impromptu No. 2 in F-sharp major, Op. 38  
Ballade No. 4 in F-minor, Op. 52  
Nocturne in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 1  
Fantasy in F-minor, Op. 49

**From the 1955 Fifth International Chopin Competition in Warsaw**

Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 45  
Etude in A minor, Op. 10, No. 2  
Etude in F major, Op. 10, No. 8  
Concerto in F minor, Op. 21, second movement  
Mazurka in F-sharp minor, Op. 59, No. 3  
Mazurka in A-flat major, Op. 41, No. 4  
Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54

Dmitry Paperno, piano  
Cedille Records CDR 90000 026