



The Phenomenon of Childhood in the Works of Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Stacy Olive Jarvis¹ 

¹ University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

ABSTRACT

The theme of childhood in contemporary musical art has evolved into a distinct and multifaceted cultural sphere. Despite its apparent simplicity and accessibility, the theme of childhood often arises in complex psychological and philosophical contexts, becoming an integral part of serious artistic concepts. In terms of content, the theme of childhood in art belongs to the category of ‘eternal’ themes. This article is dedicated to Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*, which reflects the philosophical, aesthetic, and social ideas of its time. The article analysed the definition of the concept of ‘modernity’ proposed by Jean-François Lyotard and Thierry de Duve. This definition defines modernity as a period that follows the postmodern stage of innovation, struggle, and contradictions. Using Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album* as an example, the article examined the transition from postmodernity to modernity. This analysis reveals a parallel between Ludwig Wittgenstein's ideas about language and the process of learning language practice through musical impressions.

Correspondence
Stacy Olive Jarvis
Email:
musician@sjarvis-violin.co.uk

Publication History
Received 15th September, 2023
Accepted 23rd October, 2023
Published online
10th November, 2023

Keywords: *Tchaikovsky, Wittgenstein, Language Practice, Modernity, Postmodernity, Interpretation.*

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a truly unique phase in a person's life, shaping their character, self-definition, perception of the world, and connections with it. As it absorbs the world, a child prepares to enter it as a creator, as an active force, and it is indeed childhood that determines what that beginning will be like.¹ Therefore, childhood images are endlessly diverse, as they are individual, yet always carry the imprint of childhood as a holistic philosophical reality. Childhood does not follow a single line; it lives in various directions, multi-dimensionally, eagerly touching everything that surrounds it. The dominance of the child's real ‘self,’ the weak authority of the empirical ‘self,’ leads to the fact that there is nothing artificial or intentional in children; a child follows all their inclinations and feelings directly, and it is precisely because of this that childhood is full of genuine spiritual freedom.² Carl Jung points out the strange inclination of children's imagination to transcend their own ‘realism’ and provide a ‘symbolic’ interpretation instead of a natural-scientific and rationalistic one.³

In terms of its content, the theme of childhood in art belongs to the category of ‘eternal.’ Art did not immediately discover the mysterious world of children. But by approximately the mid-nineteenth century, it began intuitively to explore the archipelago of childhood as a comprehensive phenomenon in all its infinite diversity. The theme of childhood in art belongs to the eternal category, but it was only in the nineteenth century that typical symbolic and substantive modes for children's music crystallised, establishing a genre system and

¹ Lee Vygotsky, “Play and Its Role in the Child’s Artistic Development,” *Problems of Psychology* 12 (1996): 62–76, 74.

² Yuliya Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917* (University of Washington, 2012), 6.

³ Carl Jung and John Beebe, *Psychological Types* (London: Routledge, 2016), 421.

musical poetics. Art was faced with the question of how to peer into the world of a child's soul.⁴ To unlock the sacred door to the world of a child's consciousness, composers gradually approached the comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of childhood by gazing into the world of the child.

In the musical art of the second half of the nineteenth century, this was particularly evident in the brilliant work of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. He focused on child psychology and, at the same time, idealised early life. The master's legacy includes music for children and about children.⁵ However, the differentiation of the child theme into music about children and for them, which is encountered by many musicologists remains unclear, as it is often difficult to identify the principles of their relationship. Thus, music for children (Sergei Prokofiev's *Music for Children* or Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*) conveys the rich palette of a child's emotions and is also music about children, while works with titles featuring children may be written for adults (Prokofiev's *Ballad of an Unknown Boy* or Gustav Mahler's *Songs on the Death of Children*).

In this work, the 'phenomenon of childhood' implies a comprehensive artistic reality. The individually coloured personality of a child is a living and organic unity, the foundation of which lies in the non-empirical sphere.⁶ The phenomenon of childhood is a universal and multifaceted phenomenon that manifests itself differently and uniquely in each specific case (in a child and later in an adult), preserving its typological features. Therefore, when it comes to specific characters, childhood images that are individual to each character and destiny come to the fore to be dealt with. The exploration of the phenomenon of childhood in art inevitably leads to the consideration of the theme of childhood in its various aspects, such as child portraits, music for children and about children, and the child's presence in adult characters, because at every turn of the theme lies the opportunity to reveal some, often new, facets of the phenomenon of childhood.⁷

Historical Preamble

The principle of approaching art as a phenomenon that can awaken a person's best qualities is particularly evident in the theme of childhood.⁸ A significant source of music for children was domestic music-making, where children often took part, giving rise to the tradition of children's performances for entertainment purposes.⁹ It is worth noting the emergence of a special musical repertoire, including *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach*, *Notebook for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach*, *Bach Short Preludes & Fugues*, *The Inventions and Sinfonias*, *Six organ three-voice Sonatas* by Johann Bach, some dance suites by Dieterich Buxtehude, Johann Kuhnau, Georg Muffat, Johann Sebastian Bach, and George Frideric Handel.

In the 18th century, with its reverence for reason and science, there was a special interest in creating various musical mechanisms: wind-up toys, children's organs, music boxes, and clocks with moving figures.¹⁰ Hence, the poetic notion of the 'childish' as something 'charming' and 'amusing' emerged. In this vein, one of the classic examples of the era is Joseph Haydn's *Toy Symphony*, in which various toys are introduced as musical instruments that children can play. Haydn's compositions often featured vividly expressed animalistic or whimsical imitative moments that have delighted children of all ages. Examples include symphonies like *The Bear*, *The Chicken*, and *The Hunt*, as well as quartets like *The Lark*, *The Bird*, and *The Frog*, and the hunting scene from the oratorio *The Seasons*.¹¹

Childhood, expressed in emotional-psychological, magical-fairy, and philosophical aspects, often captivated the artistic imagination of Wolfgang Mozart, who frequently turned to young characters. Examples include the characters of Cherubino and Barbarina in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Papageno and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. Beethoven, too, contributed to the instructional repertoire with works like his *Six Easy Variations*, and *Bagatelle in C Major* ('Lustig und Traurig').

In the music of the early 19th century, there was an abundance of newly emerging instructional literature: keyboard variations like Haydn's *Divertimento Il maestro e lo scolare*, Mozart's *Sonatinas*, Ludwig

⁴ Bina Ann John, "Music in Early Childhood and Consciousness: A Philosophical Analysis of Intersections" (University of Toronto, 2003), 16.

⁵ Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 20.

⁶ Shazly Savahl, "Ideological Constructions of Childhood" (University of the Western Cape, 2010), 106.

⁷ John H Plumb, "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past & Present*, no. 67(1975):64–95, 67.

⁸ Dong Xu, *Themes of Childhood: A Study of Robert Schumann's Piano Music for Children* (University of Cincinnati, 2006), 16.

⁹ Xu, *Themes of Childhood: A Study of Robert Schumann's Piano Music for Children*, 90.

¹⁰ Xu, *Themes of Childhood: A Study of Robert Schumann's Piano Music for Children*, 90.

¹¹ In 'Song of the Lark' from Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album* and in 'The Cuckoo' from his same vocal collection, birdsong is imitated through musical means.

Van Beethoven's *6 Variations on a Swiss song*, and Beethoven's sonatinas, as well as straightforward pieces by Mozart, Beethoven, Muzio Clementi, Friedrich Kuhlau, Carl Czerny, and many other composers. These compositions were characterised by musical vocabulary accessible to children and reflected the genres and forms of their era.

Interest in this theme also led to works directly addressed to children. Notably, there is the realistic and somewhat sentimental portrayal of the affectionate orphaned child Vanya, the adopted son of Ivan Susanin, in Michael Glinka's opera *A Life for the Tsar* (1836). His introduction into the opera contributes to a comprehensive depiction of the main character, adding depth to his portrayal by highlighting feelings of love, tenderness, care, and responsibility. On the other hand, the adolescent hero seamlessly fits into the opera's concept, making the part of the world that enemies could destroy particularly significant. This character brings domestic warmth to the resolution of the plot and simultaneously emphasises the fragility of childhood, thereby intensifying the conflict between the Russians and the invaders.

The image of the child becomes a part of the realm of fantasy as well. The character of Rusalka in Alexander Dargomyzhsky's opera opens an entirely new direction in the development of the theme of childhood in music. The composer underscores her belonging to a different world, distinct from real life, enveloping childhood in mystery and emphasising the heroine's mysticism through a specific technique - speech set to music.

In the 19th century, a fundamental shift occurred in the position of European and Russian musical art. Robert Schumann played a significant role in this transformation through his cycles: *Scenes from Childhood* (1838), *Album for the Young* (1845), *12 Pieces for Large and Small Children* (1849), *Children's Ball* (1853), and *Album for the Young* (1849). Through the device of personification, nature became the confidante of the Romantic hero. Alongside didacticism, the German master's focus turned toward the children themselves. This is especially evident in *Scenes from Childhood* where both the performer and the listener are not only children but also adults. The composer's embodiment of the world of childhood in music reflects the emotions, experiences, playfulness, and individual episodes of a child's life. Schumann, for the first time in music, created an independent layer that reflected the culture of other nations and was specifically directed towards children ('Of Foreign Lands and Peoples'), a concept that would later be adopted by Tchaikovsky in his *Children's Album*.¹²

In European music in the second half of the 19th century, due to the emphasis on grand philosophical concepts, the focus on childhood waned somewhat. Exceptions include Bizet's pieces from the collection *Children's Games*, the boys' choir from the opera *Carmen*, select miniatures by Brahms (*14 Children's Folk Songs*), and Grieg's (*23 Little Piano Pieces* and '*9 Children's Pieces*).

A renewed attention to the theme of childhood emerged in the 20th century. The first decades witnessed the creative output of composers such as Claude Debussy (the piano cycle *Children's Corner*, ballets *Games* and *The Toy-Box*), Francis Poulenc (vocal cycle *Petites Voix*), Maurice Ravel (opera-ballet *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*), Béla Bartók (piano cycles *Mikrokosmos* and *For Children*). In the latter half of the 20th century, children's music theatre took centre stage, with works by Friedrich Cerha, Hans Werner Henze, Isang Yun, Udo Zimmermann, György Kurtág, and Toshio Hosokawa.

The Theme of childhood in Tchaikovsky's Works for Children

In the 1881 edition of the journal *Children's Leisure*, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's 'Child's Song: My Lizochek', featuring lyrics by Konstantin Aksakov, made its debut appearance. The composition's distinct characteristics include the utilisation of a high vocal register, a lucid and transparent textural arrangement, a consistent and straightforward rhythmic structure, and the recurrent repetition of specific musical motifs. Collectively, these elements evoke an impression of childlike simplicity and a somewhat mechanical quality. Interestingly, these repetitive motifs also lend the piece a comedic dimension. For instance, in the final stanza, the vocal component is distilled to an ostinato repetition of a single note, reminiscent of the buffa tradition (Example 1).

¹² Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 16.

что на- ткать се-бе хол- сти- ны па- у- ку из па- у- ти- ны

mf *dim.* *p*

за- ка- зал, за- ка- зал, он на- ткать се-бе хол-

mf

Example 1: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Sixteen Songs for Children* (op.54), 'Child's Song: My Lizochek', 65-69.

The musical portrayal is deliberately exaggerated, akin to the characterisation of fairy tale characters, which is further intensified by the poetic text. Simultaneously, the exceptional lightness of sound and simplicity of presentation aligns perfectly with the poetics of the child's world. Thus, in Tchaikovsky's *Children's Song*, a highly intricate and multifaceted representation emerges, encompassing various sources of inspiration. Among all the songs in Tchaikovsky's collection, this miniature is especially beloved by children, who perceive it as a musical plaything.

The reason behind the focus on the world of childhood lies in the keen interest in human personality. The significance of the childhood world for Tchaikovsky as a composer is perhaps best evidenced by the fact that throughout his creative journey, he turned to compositions for children, portraits of kids, and childlike elements in works for adults in various genres. In his approach, there is always a portrayal of a child as an integral part of a complete world, with the child's perspective being the most promising.¹³

Among the compositions that explore the theme of childhood, it is noteworthy to mention specific instances, such as the recitative and boys' chorus found in the opera *The Oprichnik* referred to as the 'Chorus of Boys' (Example 2).

¹³ Idlin Arshinova, "Tchaikovsky's 'Childrens' Album': A Pedagogical Analysis of Its Musical and Performance Significance in the Piano Teaching Literature," (Yasar University, 2021), 86.

Со ба - ка, со ба - ка,
 кро-меш-на - я мет - ла.

Example 2: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *The Oprichnik*, Act 3 Scene 11, 'Chorus of the Boys'.

Furthermore, the children's choirs featured in the Summer Garden scene within the opera *The Queen of Spades* (referred to as the 'Chorus of Children, Nurses, and Others') deserve attention (Example 3).

1. Все мы, маль-чиш-ки, на от-цов сво-их по-хо - жи,
 Ког - да при-дёт по-ра!
 все мы, маль-чиш-ки, храб-ре-ца-ми ста-нем то-же, по - ра при - дёт! У-

Example 3: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *The Queen of Spades*, Act 1 Scene 1, 'Chorus of Children, Nurses, and Others'

Additionally, a partial exploration of this theme is evident in the March section from the opera. *The Maid of Orleans* referred to as the 'March', a mass scene where the children are not explicitly characterised but actively participate in the dramatic proceedings alongside other characters, including individuals from various societal strata such as commoners, courtiers, musicians, as well as central figures like Joan, Lionel, Dunois, the King, and the Archbishop.

The theme is examined in various musical compositions, including the 'Miniature March' featured in the *First Suite*, which exhibits a close thematic connection to the initial motif found in the Overture and the first March of the fourth movement of *The Nutcracker*. Furthermore, it is present in 'The Child's Dreams', a component of the fourth movement within the Second Orchestral Suite. Additionally, elements of this theme can be discerned in *Mozartiana*, notably in the first section, where a quotation from Mozart's instructional composition *Eine kleine Gigue fur Klavier* is incorporated.

The cornerstone of children's piano music is Pyotr Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*, composed in 1878. Closely linked to it are the *12 Pieces for Solo Piano*, op. 40, created nearly simultaneously with op. 39. Some of these pieces exhibit distinct characteristics of instructional literature, such as 'Sad Song' (No. 2), 'Song without Words' (No. 6), and others, all composed in 1878 by Pyotr Tchaikovsky. Furthermore, Tchaikovsky edited *Children's Songs* set to Russian and *Children's Songs on Russian and Ukrainian Tunes for voice and piano*, which were compiled by Maria Alexandrovna Mamontova between 1872 and 1877.

The childlike element is palpable when the composer delves into female characters and compositions rooted in the fairy tale genre.¹⁴ As is well-known, fairy tales often encompass not only the eternal concepts of the universe but also a comprehensive philosophical understanding of the world, intertwined with the perception of a child's world. Typically, this childlike perspective possesses its own, at times equally profound and unique philosophy. The enchanting characters from fairy tales permeate the master's works, finding their way into ballets, operas, music for dramatic productions, as well as piano and vocal miniatures. Many of these fairy tales are relatable to both adults and children alike. This dual appeal is most evident in the ballet *The Nutcracker*, where the central characters are children.

Children's Album (op. 39)

Tchaikovsky's oeuvre includes two major cyclical works that are directly devoted to the theme of childhood: *Children's Album for Piano* (1878), *Sixteen Songs for Children for Piano* (1878) and *Sixteen Songs for Children, for voice and piano* (1883). Both cycles are music for children, but in their different inclinations, the piano pieces are intended for primary school age.¹⁵ In a letter to Nadezhda von Meck dated April 30, 1878, Tchaikovsky wrote:

'Tomorrow I will start working on a collection of miniature pieces for children. I have long been thinking that it would not hurt to contribute to the enrichment of children's musical literature, which is very limited. I want to create a series of small excerpts of absolute simplicity with enticing titles for children, just like Schumann...'¹⁶

Anyone who has gazed into a calm child's face, even a newborn baby's face, has more than once noted in it a serious, deep, even wise questioning and, at the same time, a strange mysterious knowledge incomprehensible to an adult. The matter of children's psychology, children's emotions, moods, and characters requires a jeweller-fine analytical tool for its artistic comprehension and embodiment. Turning to this theme, Tchaikovsky, in any work or fragment of a work, gives serious psychological and philosophical thought to childhood.

The composer also spoke about the purpose of the *Children's Album* in a letter to Pyotr Jurgenson dated 22 August 1890: 'A person who does not know my compositions will think that I am seriously composing the funeral of a doll. After all, the whole point of these innocent and close to banality things is that they are meant

¹⁴ Arshinova, "Tchaikovsky's 'Children's Album': A Pedagogical Analysis of Its Musical and Performance Significance in the Piano Teaching Literature," 65.

¹⁵ While the means of musical poetics in both cycles are quite simple, the songs are more extended, and the *Children's Album* consists of miniatures (up to those arranged on three note lines – 'Morning Prayer', 'Russian Song', 'The Accordion Player'). They are similar to other pieces for beginners, in particular to the genre of turquoises in the work of various composers. They are typical of the purity of the genre's everyday origins and the classical form of the miniature without internal contrast.

¹⁶ Natalya Sinkovskaya, *P. I. Tchaikovsky. Selected Letters* (Moscow: Music, 2002), 234.

for children!!!¹⁷ One can imagine that the artist revealed the environment of his childhood, conveying partly his own moods and feelings.

When creating this cycle, Tchaikovsky took into consideration the particularities of children's hands. Throughout the entire collection, you won't find a single octave or chord that spans more than a seventh. In none of the pieces will we discover simultaneous combinations of the extreme keyboard registers, which would require a wide span between the hands. The lower register (contrabass and subcontrabass) is not used at all and sounds in the highest octaves are only encountered in *Song of the Lark*.

The author presents life events from two perspectives simultaneously - through the perception of a child (as if he transforms into the child, seeing the world through their eyes) and through their own understanding of the world. This dual perspective showcases timeless spiritual values such as nature, love, compassion, and faith. In both cycles, human life from birth to death is reflected in microcosm, the emotional world of the soul from joy to sorrow, and the eternal universal conflict between good and evil.

The time of composition for Op. 39 and Op. 54 (from 1878 to 1883) coincides with the first peak of the composer's creativity. Why did he turn to works for children during such a significant period of creative discoveries? Perhaps at the pinnacle of inspiration and mastery, the composer not only expanded the range of themes and images but also considered the theme of childhood as one of the most important in the expression of his worldview. It is in the *Children's Album*, as well as in the *Sixteen Songs for Children*, that the composer convincingly demonstrated that great artists do not have a separate 'children's art' detached from art in the broader sense.¹⁸

From the pen of the artist flowed a structurally sound cycle with rather complex content. The individual pieces themselves become a series of standalone miniatures, each of which can be performed separately. The change in the author's intent during the preparation for publication could be due to several reasons. For example, in the short cycle about the doll, there arises an association with human life: 'The New Doll' – 'The Sick Doll' – 'The Doll's Funeral' (No. 6 - 8).¹⁹

In each of these pieces, all the characteristics of 'adult' genres are preserved. For instance, in the miniature 'The Doll's Funeral', there's the use of the 'dark' key of C minor, a characteristic dotted rhythm typical of marches, chordal texture, and a quiet, subdued pianissimo. In the middle of this simple ternary form, there's a typical transition to the relative major, which is common in this genre. However, the choice of the register (predominance of brighter tones), simplified melodic patterns, and a somewhat mechanical repetition give the music a doll-like quality (it's noteworthy that such an interpretation of childlike characters with elements of puppetry is also characteristic of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*). Therefore, the genre of a funeral march in Tchaikovsky's piece appears in a transformed form.

The analogy with death is unbearable for a child.²⁰ The composer, feeling the acute pain of the tragic and irreversible nature of the event and sympathising with the child, concludes the micro-cycle about the doll like a benevolent wizard from a kind fairy tale by introducing 'The New Doll' (No. 9). Here, he intentionally separates this piece, emphasising its independence from the old story, by inserting a neutral 'Waltz' (No. 8) between them.

The arrangement of the pieces based on their content creates a distinct cyclic structure. In the world that surrounds a person from infancy, everything necessary for the formation of their personality is ingrained: relationships with loved ones, nature, dreams, prayer, games, and fairy tales. *The Album* presents the art of different nations through foreign songs. They can be interpreted as journeys to distant lands, dreams of them, or as books read 'about foreign lands and people'. Without all of this, the education of an enlightened person is unthinkable.

All layers of content are united by a well-structured concentric composition. The form of the whole piece focuses attention on the narrative: the child's day begins with the 'Morning Prayer' (No. 1, G major) and concludes with the 'Evening Prayer' (No. 23, E minor). In these miniatures, various musical techniques are employed to recreate the polyphonic singing characteristic of church music.²¹ These techniques include chordal

¹⁷ Davydova Ksenia and Galina Labutina (eds.), *Tchaikovsky P.I., Complete Works* (Moscow: Music, 1977), 246.

¹⁸ Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 19.

¹⁹ In modern musical practice, Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album* is performed in various versions and the order of the cycle's numbers does not always coincide with the author's intention.

²⁰ Arshinova, "Tchaikovsky's 'Children's Album': A Pedagogical Analysis of Its Musical and Performance Significance in the Piano Teaching Literature," 82.

²¹ Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 56.

texture, a narrow range resembling actual vocal lines, choral elements, gradual melodic movement converging towards a singular tonal centre, and the use of modal elements in harmonic development.²²

The compositional elements form the concentric circles of meaning in Op. 39 are systematically delineated, progressing from the periphery to the core. As the child awakens and falls asleep, they often gaze out of the window, observing the eternal yet ever-changing scenery that elicits distinct emotional states. Through direct interaction and personal connection with nature, which leads to its own independent existence, the child gradually unveils the world around them.²³

Pieces 'Winter Morning' (B minor), and No. 22, 'The Skylark' (G major), are dedicated precisely to nature.²⁴ In 'Mama' (G major)²⁵ and 'Sweet Dream' (C major), the focus is on what is particularly and tenderly loved, what provides heartfelt warmth, fullness of emotions, and, ultimately, self-assurance because it pours onto the child the much-needed boundless, unconditional love that requires nothing in return. The dramatic direction of these pieces is quite substantial: from the present ('Mama') to the future – to what is only dreamed of ('Sweet Dream').²⁶

In this way, the composer has shown that the good and spiritually enriching foundation laid in early childhood through the mutual love of mother and child, uniting them as one in a beautiful haven amidst the sometimes hostile surrounding world, shapes the purest ideals that a person dreams of realising from the beginning of life. It is no coincidence that the intonations of 'Sweet Dream' resonate with one of the most elevated and delicate love confessions in Russian music – Tchaikovsky's romance set to the verses of Aleksei Tolstoy, *Amidst the Noisy Ball* written in 1878 (Examples 4 and 5).

According to the storyline of the cycle the day filled with various activities of a child is coming to its conclusion. Now it's time to relax lie down in a cosy bed, and dream, immersing oneself in magical reveries. The tender and soothing piece 'Sweet Dream' composed by Tchaikovsky in the genre of lyrical romance, conveys a pleasant, relaxed state of a child's soul.

In Tchaikovsky's romance *Amidst the Noisy Ball* the waves of memories of the lyrical hero rise and fall. The dynamic nuances of the romance do not exceed mezzo forte (moderate strength of sound). Everything seems subdued, like the dreams of the hero transitioning into a reverie. The words of the poem only hint at the hero's feelings, which are not fully defined and have matured in his soul. They are hidden and awaken in 'lonely hours of the night' in 'unknown dreams'. They are akin to flowers that only bloom at night, and then the hero's heart 'blooms'.

The piece 'Sweet Dream' like the other pieces in the cycle, is written in a three-part form in the key of C major and with the tempo indication Andante. It begins with a beautiful melody, to which the hidden waltz-like quality of the triple meter adds a special charm. The composer has selected the expressive elements very subtly and precisely: a tranquil triple meter, pauses between chords in the accompaniment (in the left hand), conveying a slightly quickened breath, as if one's breath is taken away from beholding something extraordinarily beautiful and sublime. The composer's note indicates the performance style: molto espressivo.

In the romance *Amidst the Noisy Ball*, the image of the beloved woman emerges in the hero's memory against the backdrop of a waltz. However, this waltz is not a dance waltz. The waltz tempo and rhythm merely allude to the circumstances of the encounter with her 'amidst the noisy ball'. But the music does not depict either the noise of the ball or the 'worldly hustle and bustle'. It is passive and melancholic, much like the feelings that fill the hero's soul. The composer's remark 'con tristezza' (with sadness) imparts a seal of sadness to the

²² Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 56.

²³ Aleksandr Alekseev, "Istoriya Fortepiannogo Iskusstva (The History of Piano Art)(Vol. II)," *Moscow:Muzyka*, 1967, 376.

²⁴ It is characteristic that Glinka's 'Song of the Skylark' from Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album* can be considered a direct continuation of Glinka's 'Skylark', where a similar image appears in a piano version and is already directly addressed to a children's audience.

²⁵ In 'Mama', the portrayal of the most intimate figure in a child's life is manifested. From the perspective of musical pedagogy, this piece accentuates the melodic dimension while addressing the aspects of sound production and phrasing. Simultaneously, it delves into the emotional ambiance connected with the maternal image, invoking sentiments of affection and tenderness. This, in turn, aids young performers in attaining a distinctive gentleness in their sound rendition.

²⁶ In terms of semantic dramaturgy, *the Album* is close to Mussorgsky's *The Nursery*, where the child's day concludes with a whole series of events and ends with the evening prayer. Mussorgsky has similar characters in *The Nursery* and *At the Dacha*. Unlike his contemporaries, Tchaikovsky introduced vividly national songs, dances, sketches of nature and a final word from the author ('The Organ-Grinder Sings').

entire romance, to all the hero's memories, as well as to the image of the woman he loves. The hero's feelings are so passive that his phrases are frequently interrupted by pauses in their logical flow.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for 'Sweet Dream'. The first system is marked *p con anima* and features a melody in the right hand with a slur over the first four measures and a fermata over the fifth. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth notes. The second system is marked *poco più f* and continues the melody with a slur over the first four measures and a fermata over the fifth. The left hand continues with eighth notes, including a triplet in the fifth measure.

Example 4: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Children's Album*, 'Sweet Dream', bb. 1-9.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for 'Amidst the Noisy Ball'. The first system is marked *Moderato* and includes a vocal line with the Russian lyrics 'шум-но-го ба-ла слу-чай-но в тре-во-ге мир-ской су-е-ты те-'. The piano accompaniment is marked *p* and features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand and a melody in the right hand. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment, with the word *tristezza* written above the vocal line.

Example 5: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Amidst the Noisy Ball*, bb.1-16.

In this rather extensive figurative realm (comprising 7 pieces), Tchaikovsky revealed himself as a genuine child psychologist: the land of games and fairy tales serves not only as a source of pleasure but also as a means of understanding the world. While playing with dolls or toy soldiers, riding on a wooden horse, or listening to the nanny's stories, children experience genuine emotions of pain, separation, fear, compassion, love, and tenderness. Their feelings at times can be sharper and more vivid than those of adults. In the boys' games, united by the bright tonality of D major, the opposite pole of perception is depicted – joy, energy, and the play of life forces.

The autonomous line, forming a narrative arc and reflecting life, is delineated through the juxtaposition of two marches: the spirited one in 'Toy Soldiers' (D major) and the mournful one in 'The Doll's Funeral' (C minor). Likewise, two types of scherzos are juxtaposed: the brisk and lively ('Playing Hobby Horses', D major)²⁷ and the anxious and sinister ('Nanny's Tale', 'Baba Yaga the Witch'; C major-E minor).

The portrayal of the character of Baba Yaga is hauntingly sinister and unexpectedly malevolent: within the composition's thematic context, intonations reminiscent of those found in the opening of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony and the orchestral introduction to Lisa's aria in *The Queen of Spades* are employed. The closed plagal cadences and the insistent staccato rhythm serve to craft a repulsive image evoking death.

In the 'March of the Wooden Soldiers', two contrasting genres, namely the march and the scherzo, are amalgamated. On one hand, characteristics typical of a march are utilised, such as the binary meter and dotted rhythms, while on the other hand, articulative contrasts are employed (playfully combining sharp staccato and gentle legato articulation). The alternation between minimally articulated measures (in the high register, pianissimo, with pauses and staccato) and accentuated ones (in denser textures, legato, with dotted rhythms and emphasised strong beats) creates a sense of textural play (Example 6).



Example 6: Pyotr Tchaikovsky, *Children's Album*, 'March of the Wooden Soldiers', bb. 1-9.

The most extensive section of the cycle, with a 'foreign-Russian' theme, is connected to the sphere of culture (10 pieces, from No. 9 to No. 18; partially joined by No. 24, 'The Organ-Grinder Sings'), where a child from an educated environment immerses himself during his upbringing. This figurative layer is expressed through songs and dances (both ancient and contemporary) and is structured into a logically coherent three-part composition: European dances constitute the first section (No. 9, 'Waltz' in E-flat major; No. 10, 'Mazurka' in D minor; No. 11, 'Polka' in B-flat major); Russian folk songs and dances serve as the middle part (No. 12, 'Russian Song', F major; No. 13, 'The Peasant Plays his Harmonica' in B-flat major; No. 14, 'Kamarinskaya' in D major); European songs act as a reprise (No. 15, 'Italian Song' in D major; No. 16, 'Old French Song' in G minor; No. 17, 'German Song' in E-flat major; No. 18, 'Neapolitan Song' in E-flat major).

²⁷ The piece is characterised by a fast tempo, triple meter with division into quavers, staccato, and ostinato repetition of rhythmic, harmonic and intonational formulas. At the heart of the work is a clearly formed thesis-aphorism, followed by multiple repetition-affirmation.

A typical poetic epilogue, a reflection from the author, is encapsulated in No. 24, 'The Organ-Grinder Sings'. This piece, with its special, mysterious significance, conveys a similarity to many ambiguous conclusions in Schumann's cycles. In the *Album for the Young*, there is a solemn and quietly dedicated composition to Niels Gade, in which the monogram of the Scandinavian composer is encrypted (Northern Song), and in *Scenes from Childhood* there is 'The Poet Speaks' filled with heartfelt intonations of confiding address. Analogues appear in the code of *Fantasy Pieces* with its lyrical transformation of the main theme in the finale, the fading 'chiming of clocks' in the finale of *Butterflies*, and the subtle euphemism of the piano postlude in *The Poet's Love*.

Also reminiscent is the Barrel-Organ-Grinder, concluding *Winter Journey* and practically Schubert's oeuvre. In the image of the street musician, both Schubert and Tchaikovsky exhibit autobiographical traits, reflecting the composers' worldviews of the time – the tragic for Schubert and the enlightened and dreamy for Tchaikovsky. It is not coincidental that 'The Barrel-Organ-Grinder Sings' is written in the waltz genre, the most prevalent lyrical dance of the 19th century. Its theme is based on a genuine Italian song that the composer heard in 1878 in a Venetian hotel, where the musician with his little daughter visited daily.

Thus, everything in Tchaikovsky's conception of Op. 39 is presented simultaneously from two perspectives – that of a child and his own standpoint, philosophically contemplating seemingly uncomplicated events, impressions, and emotions. The author demonstrates that within the microcosm of a child, the macrocosm of human life is encapsulated.²⁸

One of the researchers of the master's composition, Sergei Eisenstadt, discerns two parallel, independently developing narrative threads. The first is 'A Child's Day': morning, games and dances, a stroll in the village, dreams of travels and distant lands, evening, and night, awakening to the song of the lark, evening again, prayers, repentance for childish transgressions, and bright thoughts before sleep. The second is 'A Person's Life': the awakening of one's identity, reflections on religion, a premonition of the dangers of the surrounding world, the joys of youth and initial losses, years of wandering, returning home, life's conflicts, moral renewal, thoughts of death, repentance, and the final acceptance of life.²⁹

These narratives can be interpreted in various ways since the author genuinely portrays a symbolic day in the life of a child, reflecting the cyclical nature of human existence. The concept of cycles and, more specifically, circles, is embodied in the *Children's Album* on various levels: in composition (concentric), genre (the recurring waltz as a leitmotif), thematic content (emulating the distant tolling of church bells in the code sections of No. 1 'Morning Prayer' and No. 23 'In Church'), and even the tonal plan.³⁰

The tonic key of the cycle, recurrent in both the expository sections and the recapitulative segments of the formal structure, consistently resolves to G major (Nos. 1, 3, 22, 24). D major, functioning as the dominant to the principal tonality, manifests at the outset and midpoint of the cycle, signifying the exuberant children's amusements (Nos. 4, 5), the vivacious Russian dance, and the Italian waltz (Nos. 14, 15). C major, positioned as the subdominant to G major, emerges nearer to the composition's denouement (in alignment with established structural norms), imbuing contrasting passages with distinctive harmonic hues, thereby accentuating the dialectic of good ('Sweet Dream,' No. 21) and evil ('Nanny's Tale,' No. 19). The kindred major keys, distinguished by sharps, underscore the cyclical arrangement of tonalities (No. 2 - B minor, No. 23 - E minor), simultaneously serving to heighten the harmonic tension that delineates moments of conflict (No. 2, 'Winter Morning'; No. 23, 'In Church') and dissonance (No. 20, 'Baba Yaga' in E minor). Conversely, the distinctly contrastive flat keys operate autonomously within the overarching structure, isolating discrete narrative elements within the miniature compositions dedicated to the doll (Nos. 6-8), European dances (Nos. 9-11), Russian themes (Nos. 12, 13), and international vignettes (Nos. 16-18). Additionally, it is essential to underscore that, in accordance with the pedagogical ethos of the *Children's Album*, the key signatures of each miniature refrain from employing more than three accidentals.

The day transitions into the evening, the evening prayer merges into the morning (with only sleep in between), and earthly life concludes with death, yet new life always emerges. Concluding the idea of a cycle, the album ends with an image of a musician turning the handle of a barrel organ, delivering a poetic song of happiness to the listener. Almost a full annual cycle has passed, and the seasons of nature inevitably alternate. In this regard, the *Album* resonates with the theme of the seasons, a theme that has been consistently associated

²⁸ Minina, *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*, 20.

²⁹ Sergei Eisenstadt, *Tchaikovsky's Children's Album* (Moscow: XXI Classics, 2006), 22.

³⁰ The intonational foundation of 'In Church' is comprised of an authentic chant widely used in church practice (specifically, the Orthodox chant of the sixth tone).

with reflecting the circle of human life throughout the history of culture, from Antonio Vivaldi and Joseph Haydn to Alexander Glazunov and Astor Piazzolla.

The movement of the natural cycle in the *Album* is not in the usual order, from spring to winter, but in reverse, from winter (*Winter Morning*) to spring and summer (*Song of the Lark*). This is highly symbolic (much like the absence of autumn) because the primary 'scene' is the child's soul. This is how a child perceives life. Everything lies ahead for them; they believe and hope for the return of warmth and light in nature and in people. They are oriented towards the future and are in the springtime of their lives.

Tchaikovsky in the Modern Dimension

By the second half of the 20th century, the biographical 'framework' had completely lost its functionality, as artists weren't just creating works of art; they were turning their lives into works of art. During this time, autobiographism understood as an artistic technique became the primary characteristic of postmodern art and took centre stage.

While examining the era of postmodernism, Jean-François Lyotard stated, 'A work can only be modern if it is already postmodern'.³¹ The renowned art historian Thierry de Duve commented on these words as follows: 'For a work to be recognised as contemporary, it must first be innovative, going against the grain of contemporaneity – against the taste or conventions of its time. Picasso was postmodern in 1907 and became contemporary by 1930'.³²

Agreeing with such a perspective, one can trace how the music from Tchaikovsky's *Children's Album*, composed in 1878, could have contained the seeds of the 'postmodern'. Considering de Duve's forecast, this allows one to infer that by approximately 1910-20, this musical cycle was indeed considered quite contemporary music, implying a direct connection with global events unfolding during that historical period. This raises the question: what specifically, during the composition of the *Children's Album*, later manifested in the early 20th century?

The 1920s and 30s marked a period of what is known as the 'linguistic turn' signifying that in virtually all fields of science and the arts, special interest and attention were directed towards language. Ludwig Wittgenstein, who lived and worked during this time, devoted his entire life to the study of the nature of language and even managed to become his own chief opponent, leading philosophers to traditionally divide his work into two periods – the early and the late.

The early period concluded with the writing of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* in 1918, in which the investigation of language's structure led the author to propose an entire program for an 'ideal' language. In this work, as the author himself noted, he attempted to solve all philosophical problems by examining them through the prism of the relationships between language and the world. The result is an understanding of philosophy as a critique of language.

The late period marked a transformation in the philosopher's views, expressing a different approach to language than in the early period, namely, viewing it as an everyday practical activity. The object of study became not the 'ideal' language but the ordinary language of human communication. Language itself was seen as a collection of so-called 'language games'.

The main difference in the ideas of these two periods in the philosopher's life was the rejection of the metaphor of depth and the idea of hidden essence, as he famously stated, 'there is nothing hidden'.³³

Wittgenstein argues in the thesis that there can be only an illusion of something hidden, which in turn gives rise to many philosophical questions. Thus, the philosopher is convinced that, firstly, once a clear understanding is achieved of how language works, misunderstandings will disappear, and along with them, the questions will vanish. Secondly, by engaging in philosophy and exploring the world, the metaphysical essence of the world is unveiled because there is a 'demonstration' of how language operates. 'Knowledge of how and for what purposes words are used will presuppose knowledge of the world'.³⁴ So the formula put forward by Wittgenstein back in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* works: 'The boundaries of my language mean the boundaries of my world'.³⁵

³¹ Thierry De Duve, *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity* (Moscow: Publishing House of the Higher School of Economics, 2014), 85.

³² De Duve, *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity*, 85.

³³ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part I* (Moscow: Gnosis, 1994), 213.

³⁴ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part II*, 200.

³⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part II*, 174.

Language should be learned not just to understand its grammatical structure. Besides grammar, there are other highly important aspects - what Wittgenstein referred to as agreement: "...it is decided by people's agreement what is true and what is false. Right and wrong is what people say, and the agreement of people pertains to language. This is an agreement not of opinions but of forms of life."³⁶ and what it means to experience sensations – How do words relate to sensations? – It seems that there is no problem with this. Don't people talk about sensations every day and name them? But how is the connection between the name and what is named established? This question is equivalent to another: how does a person internalise the meaning of names for sensations?³⁷

At the time of composing the *Children's Album* the ideas of Wittgenstein mentioned above could undoubtedly be considered postmodern. However, they were indeed 'in the air', especially when considering the societal context typical of that period. The future was already living in the present, and it was sensed as something that might be called the 'sensation of the postmodern.'

Paying attention to Tchaikovsky's music, one can see how the composer was consistent in striving to convey the typification of forms and their utmost recognisability in his music. However, this state of affairs implies one thing: Tchaikovsky does not go beyond the 'ideal' language as the 'early Wittgenstein' did. After all, Tchaikovsky attaches paramount importance to shaping - the distinct structure and crystalline clarity of the form of his works. In Wittgenstein's terms, it sounds like this: 'Clearly, whatever is the imaginary world, it must have something - a certain form - in common with the real world'.³⁸

Another intriguing question that requires clarification remains – it's the peculiar situation related to the existence of, on one hand, the original *Children's Album*, which by the way, has its own title, *Autograph* and on the other hand, the so-called *Publications* because there were several, including some released during Tchaikovsky's lifetime. The issue here is that in these *Publications*, certain numbers are mixed up. There is a theory regarding this:

'Perhaps, Tchaikovsky, after creating a cycle that far exceeded the initial intention to 'make a series of little excerpts,' decided to keep it for himself - in the manuscript he handed over to the archive of Peter Jurgenson. He then published a simplified, childlike edition of the 'Children's Album' to postpone engaging with children... with a deeply personal interpretation of a non-childish issue of life and death.'³⁹

That is less likely, of course...

However, researchers take a rather credible cue, noting that 'perhaps, a deliberate, albeit disguised incongruity in the placement of several compositions – is it not the author's covert call to descendants to decipher and recreate the concept that remains in the manuscript?'⁴⁰ In the end, the authors of the article do not settle on any one assumption but waver, starting with the version that the numbers were accidentally shuffled in the edition, to their own authorial 'secret design', predictably forecasting a dual plot: supposedly Tchaikovsky, in his cycle, shows, on one hand, 'A Child's Day,' and on the other, 'Human Life.' However, such an assumption is nothing more than a childlike desire to find answers to posed questions, but in a special way – specifically in the context of clarity and visibility that a narrative line, supported by our associative ability to pick keys (or signs) to any secret doors, is always ready to provide. But for this, no research is needed – anyone is capable of such actions!

The author's own version is this: this single copy was not printed by chance, because Tchaikovsky, with its help, as it were, put his signature, i.e., this copy itself is the author's signature, as it is an autograph, i.e., an original. As is known, during the composer's lifetime, the *Children's Album* was reissued many times and, possibly, as Tchaikovsky supposed, it will also be reissued many times in the future – and all this should be considered a copy, an interpretation. With this gesture, the composer creates an understanding that the world depicted in the *Children's Album* is a world in which a child learns to live, it is a world of language, i.e., pure possibility, which gives people the right to make their own (and therefore any) choice, thereby allowing progression.

Recalling the statement Lyotard made about what it means to 'be contemporary,' where subsequently de Duve's comments refer to innovation. What does it mean to 'be innovative'? It means to be different, other

³⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part II*, 170.

³⁷ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part II*, 40.

³⁸ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part II*, 40.

³⁹ Alexei Kandinsky-Rybnikov and Marina Mesropova, "About the First Edition of Children's Album Not Published by P.I. Tchaikovsky," *Questions of Music Pedagogy* 11 (1997): 138–51, 150.

⁴⁰ Kandinsky-Rybnikov and Mesropova, "About the First Edition of Children's Album Not Published by P.I. Tchaikovsky," 150.

than what is customary. Such a transition from traditional to innovative seems to imply the negation of tradition, but it does not presuppose its destruction.⁴¹ On the contrary, presenting the historian's perspective as if it were the action of the 'historical angel,' de Duve notes: 'The historical angel flies after the wind of history but looks back.'⁴² In light of such a 'view' postmodernity is when the 'angel of history' compels the historian to reinterpret the past in their judgment of it. 'We are custodians of contemporary tradition, that tradition which, according to the proverb, is passed down and distorted simultaneously'.⁴³

When experiencing any work of art, the audience act like historians, and the most remarkable thing is that they cannot act otherwise because they do not choose in this case. In other words, the choice does not pertain to the desire to act in some way, because upon hearing or seeing a work of art, anything as a continuation can no longer be afforded (after all, something must be the consequence of our contemplation of the work of art or listening to it!), except one's own action, but performed in a special way – the work of art itself compels the audience to express an opinion about it. And they judge what they have heard or seen.

'In art, there is nothing but judgment. To create is to judge, to judge is to create, and this judgment entails a responsibility. Creating art means judging, and not about what belongs to art, but about what should be art, not about what is art, but about what art should be'.⁴⁴

Therefore, the deliberate or unbiased transformation of the structure of the *Children's Album*, and the reshuffling of the numbers, all testify that although Tchaikovsky paid special attention to the structure and the process of shaping in his cycle, nevertheless, since music allows not to 'talk about' selected things but to show them, recreating them directly, the music of the cycle itself becomes nothing other than a language practice, which corresponds precisely to 'late Wittgenstein', not 'early'.

In his *Philosophical Investigations* of the later period, Wittgenstein emphasises what he calls 'language games' which represent 'language and the actions with which it is interwoven'.⁴⁵ Already from the very beginning, he points this out, citing Augustine's words as an example:

'Observing how adults, by naming some object, turned towards it, I realised that the object is denoted by the sounds they uttered because they pointed to it. And I drew this conclusion from their gestures, this natural language of all peoples, a language that, through mimicry, eye movements, body language, and the sound of the voice, expresses the state of the soul - when they request something, receive, reject, or repel. Gradually, I began to understand which things are indicated by the words I heard repeatedly pronounced in specific places in various sentences. And when my mouth got used to these signs, I learned to express my desires with them'.⁴⁶

Accordingly, the third essential feature of postmodernity becomes the real process of action in language, making it no longer perceived as ideal but as a genuinely practical action.

By simply combining the three essential features of postmodernity, one arrives at a definition of the concept of 'modernity': it is the unfolding contemporaneity of a four-dimensional event, which includes the ability to contain and reveal its past as a singular, directly integrated into life (the autobiographical dimension), the present as a practical linguistic action (language experience), and the future as a copy and interpretation (judgment).

It can confidently be said that in this musical cycle, Tchaikovsky had the task of teaching children the language as a practical activity, doing so not in theory (like Wittgenstein, who could not do it any other way, although... maybe he was able to overcome this threshold of 'possibility,' because his philosophy (if one listens to it) - resonates!), but in the practical field of musical sound. While music itself is not a language, it creates an authentic field of experience - a language experience, and, along with it, all the possibilities for a child to learn language through the experience of specific sensations and impressions that evoke various events.

CONCLUSION

In the art of the 19th century, the range of the childhood theme is exceptionally broad, spanning from depictions of a naive, blissful childhood untouched by inner pain to one marked by humiliation, seemingly crucified by life's circumstances. The interest in artistic exploration, seemingly such a calm and bright theme, as is often represented by the world of childhood, increases most of all during the pivotal periods of society's history. And

⁴¹ As stated in the manifestos of the Italian and Russian Futurists - the very name implies the cult of the future and the discrimination of the past and present.

⁴² De Duve, *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity*, 180.

⁴³ De Duve, *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity*, 181.

⁴⁴ De Duve, *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity*, 165.

⁴⁵ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part I*, 83.

⁴⁶ Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Works. Part I*, 80.

this is not accidental, as it is precisely with children that hope for the future is associated, and in analysing their characters, it becomes most noticeable how the old gives way to the new.

How important the world of childhood was to Tchaikovsky, the composer, can perhaps be primarily evidenced by the fact that he turned to compositions for children, to childlike portraits, and to the childlike element in works for adults in the most diverse genres throughout his creative journey. As composers explored the existence of a distinct childhood world, they delved deeper into the psychology of children, uncovering the connection between childhood and the spirituality of adults, and recognising the significance of childhood in society's social life. This led to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of childhood in its various manifestations.

The theme of childhood in Tchaikovsky's music is often emotionally muted, creating a paradoxical effect of both tragedy and detachment from it simultaneously. The composer seems to protect a child's psyche, gradually immersing them in complex 'adult' issues. The central aspect of his exploration of childhood is a bright, even idealistic beginning. This childlike beginning serves as a criterion of purity and moral elevation for him when creating portraits of young heroines.

Tchaikovsky's exploration of the childhood theme in music has revealed how important and intricate this theme is, demonstrating its diverse manifestations in terms of content and artistic expression. It allows his audience to deepen their understanding of the composer, providing insights into his worldview, aesthetics, style, and musical poetics. The research has revealed that the approach to childhood as a phenomenon opens the opportunity to discern the interaction with other ideas within the legacy of each master.

Tchaikovsky's attention to the world of children, their behaviours, concerns, and feelings is directly linked to a crucial feature of his compositional style: psychological depth. 'Tchaikovsky's characteristic is the desire to penetrate human psychology, to trace the emotional movements of his characters, to reveal their moral beauty, which forms the basis of his creative method'.⁴⁷

In the psychological portrayal of characters crafted by Tchaikovsky, emotions, inner experiences, and the development of feelings take precedence over theatrical gestures. This interpretation of emotional states aligns closely with Romantic aesthetics. Interestingly, Tchaikovsky draws inspiration from Alexander Dargomyzhsky's style, particularly in terms of melody. His focal point, however, is Dargomyzhsky's later style, notably exemplified in the opera *The Stone Guest*.

At the same time, Modest Mussorgsky and Pyotr Tchaikovsky continue the traditions of Romantic miniatures, characterised by intimacy, conciseness, and a focus on the personal and subjective. In the artistic resolution of these miniatures, several analogies can be drawn with Schumann's collections. Notably, there is a distinct Romantic emphasis on individual emotions, vivid imagery tinged with idealism and sentimentality, or extreme horror and hopelessness in certain situations.

These examined miniatures also manifest other manifestations of Romantic tendencies. This includes the embodiment of cyclic principles, programmatic elements, as well as the interaction of various art forms and genres, but rooted specifically in Russian aesthetics. Tchaikovsky's works are marked by a heightened sense of poetry, a certain shade of detached observation, as if from an external perspective. In the composer's miniatures, a realistic trend can be discerned, linked to the aspiration to depict not so much his personal feelings toward events but to truthfully portray specific scenes from real life, providing the listener with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the multifaceted and enigmatic world of childhood. Therefore, the image of the child often unfolds not within the confines of static, non-contrasting Romantic miniatures but rather within more dynamic, emotionally contrasting compositions.

Perhaps this portion of the composer's work encapsulated the serenity, confidence, and familial bonds that Tchaikovsky struggled to find in his own life. In this regard, it is noteworthy that he turned to the theme of childhood during moments of creative and personal crises, during challenging times, finding both creative and human support within it. It is during childhood that one often feels most secure, surrounded by love and care. Moreover, from a psychological perspective, adults frequently regress to a childlike state during life crises, which can influence behaviour and creative work. In psychoanalysis, there exists specialised terminology that defines material and physical parameters temporarily alleviating emotional discomfort. It is conceivable that, for Tchaikovsky, the embodiment of the childhood theme in his creative work served as such a 'transitional object' according to Donald Winnicott⁴⁸ or a 'linking phenomenon' according to Vamik Volkan.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Arnold Alshvang, *Pyotr Illich Tchaikovsky* (Moscow: Music, 1967).

⁴⁸ Donald Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1989), 6.

⁴⁹ Vamik D Volkan, "Nostalgia as a Linking Phenomenon," *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 1 (1999): 169–79, 71.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alekseev, Aleksandr. "Istoriya Fortepiannogo Iskustva (The History of Piano Art)(Vol. II)." *Moscow: Muzyka*, 1967.
- Alshvang, Arnold. *Pyotr Illich Tchaikovsky*. Moscow: Music, 1967.
- Arshinova, Idlin. "Tchaikovsky's' Childrens' Album': A Pedagogical Analysis of Its Musical and Performance Significance in the Piano Teaching Literature," 2021.
- Duve, Thierry De. *Towards an Archaeology of Modernity*. Moscow: Publishing House of the Higher School of Economics, 2014.
- Eisenstadt, Sergei. *Tchaikovsky's Children's Album*. Moscow: XXI Classics, 2006.
- John, Bina Ann. "Music in Early Childhood and Consciousness: A Philosophical Analysis of Intersections." University of Toronto, 2003.
- Jung, Carl, and John Beebe. *Psychological Types*. Routledge, 2016.
- Kandinsky-Rybnikov, Alexei, and Marina Mesropova. "About the First Edition of Children's Album Not Published by P.I. Tchaikovsky." *Questions of Music Pedagogy* 11 (1997): 138–51.
- Ksenia, Davydova, and Galina Labutina. *Tchaikovsky P.I., Complete Works*. Moscow: Music, 1977.
- Minina, Yuliya. *Russian Piano Music for Children Written from 1878 to 1917*. University of Washington, 2012.
- Plumb, John H. "The New World of Children in Eighteenth-Century England." *Past & Present*, no. 67 (1975): 64–95.
- Savahl, Shazly. "Ideological Constructions of Childhood." University of the Western Cape, 2010.
- Sinkovskaya, Natalya. *P. I. Tchaikovsky. Selected Letters*. Moscow: Music, 2002.
- Volkan, Vamik D. "Nostalgia as a Linking Phenomenon." *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies* 1 (1999): 169–79.
- Vygotsky, Lee. "Play and Its Role in the Child's Artistic Development." *Problems of Psychology* 12 (1996): 62–76.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Philosophical Works. Part I*. Moscow: Gnosis, 1994.
- Xu, Dong. *Themes of Childhood: A Study of Robert Schumann's Piano Music for Children*. University of Cincinnati, 2006.

ABOUT AUTHOR

Stacy Olive Jarvis is an internationally published musicologist, professional violin and piano teacher and an international competition winner located in Manchester, United Kingdom. Stacy then studied under Yuri Torchinsky (first violinist of the BBC Philharmonic) at the Royal Northern College of Music and graduated as a professional violinist in 2022. The following year Stacy successfully completed her Master's degree at the University of Manchester. Presently, she is pursuing her doctoral studies at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.