

The opponent review

The theme of the thesis: **Frédéric Chopin as Pianist and Teacher**

Student: **Valentine Loizou**

Opponent: doc. MgA. Jana Palkovská

The author of the thesis **Frédéric Chopin as Pianist and Teacher**, Valentina Loizou, is a student of both Music Education and Instrumental Performance - Piano playing at the Faculty of Education, Charles University, Prague. She has chosen the topic of her thesis in accordance with her educational background, artistic interest and experience, professional aspirations, and personal enthusiasm. In the thesis she described a lot of aspects, which are very important from the view of the pianist – interpreter, future piano teacher, teacher of musical theory and history, and musical and piano enthusiast. Every chapter, sentence, every idea and analysis are carefully chosen and used accordingly to the sense of the topic and the content of the work.

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The Introduction and Epilogue (Conclusion. The interpretation of Chopin`s works) are very important. The author describes her motivation, aims, affection to the composer and his music, experiences while studying his work and writing this thesis. The first and second chapters are focused chronologically on Chopin`s life and work (complete list of compositions in Appendix II). These chapters are very accurate and systematically processed. Chapters three and four deal with Chopin as a piano interpreter and piano teacher. They bring his professional and personal relationships and connections into a new context; again, I found interestingly processed information (concerts in details, Appendix I: “genealogy” of students). Pedagogical aspects are fully implemented in chapters five (Chopin`s Project de Méthode), six (Chopin`s principles for playing the piano –analysis of the key facets of piano skills) and seven (comparative – Chopin and methods of Kalkbrenner, Hummel, Liszt).

At the state examination I would like to ask: Is there any connection between Chopin and Czech piano interpreters, composers and pedagogues (or ones with Czech roots), who lived in his time? Are there any connections among Chopin`s students and our piano interpreters and pedagogues?

Conclusion:

This thesis is a brilliantly constructed work. The topic of the thesis is fairly common, but this time it is treated from a new and very interesting point of view; it will be useful for V. Loizou`s pedagogical, artistic and possibly scientific future. The form is balanced and logical; the content corresponds with the form and with author`s aim. By a graphic and linguistic viewpoint the level of the thesis is excellent. Chosen and used literature (Chopin`s bibliography is particularly wide) points to a very conscientious preparation and facilitated fulfillment of her intentions and aims. Remarkable grasp of the topic makes this thesis one of the best diploma work I have ever read.

I recommend this thesis to be approved. I suggest the evaluation Excellent.

Prague, May 20th, 2011

Jana Palkovská