



'Looks like Nureyev,

sings like God'

Ann Cahill talks to Dmitri Hvorostovsky, the man whose voice even the Italians envy and who is at present on tour in this country for a series of concerts.

TWENTY-SEVEN-YEAR-OLD baritone, Dmitri Hvorostovsky, sees himself as one of the new generation, the 'Perestroika generation' of the Soviet Union. He has had a meteoric rise to fame both in the USSR and the west as one of the best classical voices to emerge for years — a voice that even the Italians envy.

But he has refused to join the ranks of the cultural élite in his native country, shocking a nation by turning down the "Noble Artist" award that would ensure the smooth development of his career.

"The award would humiliate me because the title is a reflection of the bureaucratic structure of our society," he explained through an interpreter during his first visit to Ireland this week.

He says he would then be no better than the Bolshoi Theatre which he sees as an extension of the "personality cult era of Stalin and the Brezhnev era" and the type of relationship that existed between the U.S.R. and the West.

"The main thing is that I must be honest for myself," he said and acknowledges that perestroika has allowed him to do this in public without suffering the consequences.

"Before perestroika I would have behaved the same way but I would not have been allowed to travel. But then I have nothing to lose now either. I have no privileges, no flat in Moscow," he laughs.

A PART from disagreeing with the policies of the Bolshoi set-up, he also disagrees with the state's policy on repertoire, what music is acceptable for a socialist state. He won the Voice of the World competition in Cardiff, last year, with a mainly Soviet selection of music but he is concentrating on Verdi now, spicing his concerts with the occasional piece by Tchaikovsky.

Another benefit of perestroika is that artists are free to choose their type of art. He was training as a conductor when his voice developed early, at 16 years of age. Having attended the special music schools from the age of 6 years for gifted children, he

was able to take advantage of the training for his voice.

His taller dancer wife of a few months is due to join him as he begins his first contracts in a grand tour of the renowned venues of the music world — Covent Garden, La Scala Milan, Paris, the Hague, New York and Washington.

BUT the young man, who was said by a critic to "look like Nureyev and sing like God," is also aware of the pitfalls for such fame coming so soon. "I am surprised by the swiftness of it all," he admits, though the fact that it is happening is almost taken for granted by him.

The son of an engineer who played the piano and sang superbly, Dmitri says he is now fulfilling his father's dream of him.

But the fate of many Soviet artists, despite perestroika, that of moving permanently to the west, still await him. "I may be forced to go. I love Russia and, like all Russians, I am homesick when I am away. But I want to work and be useful to myself and my public, he says.

And for Dmitri, perestroika



Off stage... Dmitri rejects the personality cult

has one major failing so far. This restructuring of Soviet society has not included culture and the arts. "They will never change the systems of the past unless they take the culture into account. The purges killed almost everyone with talent, we have got to get over that and at the moment perestroika is only dealing with the financial side of society, and that is not enough, he said.

Dmitri is singing with the Irish soprano, Virginia Kerr, and Welsh tenor, Arthur Davies, in the 'Great Operatic Voices of Today' series and will perform in the RDS on Saturday.

Knee scanner may prevent sports injury

A BELFAST-MADE device which could help injured sportsmen yesterday won an inventors' competition worth £15,000 in prize money.

An eight-man team at Queen's University has developed a computer technique using sound waves to diagnose torn knee cartilages.

Their Belfast Knee Screener, now undergoing clinical trials, won the top award in a contest backed by the British Design Council and sponsored by Japanese electronics firm Toshiba.

The team's leader, orthopaedic surgeon, Gavin Tait, said the system would be especially useful to sportsmen and women who often suffered cartilage injuries.

"Using the knee scanner, patients can be diagnosed more accurately and will not

face the risk of undergoing unnecessary operations."

British Energy Secretary John Wakeham, who presented the awards at London's Savoy Hotel, said: "We've always been pretty good at ideas in this country. What has been our great defect has been failure to turn those ideas into something practical and useful."

The competition's individual category was won by businessman Frederic Brown, of Stourbridge, West Midlands, who designed a flexible forklift truck.

David Furber (16), of Nantwich, Cheshire, won the schools' section with a device for handling bales of silage.

A new timber building system was civil engineer Dr. Ibrahim Al-Khatat first prize in the small business category.

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“Выглядит, как Нуреев, поёт, как Бог”

Энн Кэхилл беседует с Дмитрием Хворостовским, чьему голосу завидуют даже итальянцы, и который в настоящее время гастролирует в нашей стране с серией концертов.

Двадцатисемилетний баритон Дмитрий Хворостовский считает себя представителем нового поколения, поколения перестройки в Советском Союзе. Он стремительно прославился как в СССР, так и на западе как один из лучших классических голосов, появившихся за последние годы, – голос, которому завидуют даже итальянцы.

Но он отказался войти в число культурной элиты своей родной страны, шокировав нацию отказом от награды “Заслуженный артист”, которая обеспечила бы плавное развитие его карьеры.

“Эта награда унизила бы меня, потому что это звание отражает бюрократическую структуру нашего общества”, - объяснил он через переводчика во время своего первого визита в Ирландию на прошлой неделе.

Он говорит, что тогда он был бы ничем не лучше Большого театра, который он рассматривает как продолжение “эпохи культов личности, эпохи Сталина и Брежнева” и того типа отношений, которые существовали между СССР и Западом.

“Главное, что я должен быть честен перед самим собой”, - сказал он и признал, что перестройка позволила ему сделать это публично, не страдая от последствий.

“До перестройки я бы вёл себя точно так же, но мне бы не разрешили путешествовать. Но и тогда, и сейчас мне нечего терять. У меня нет ни привилегий, ни квартиры в Москве”, - смеётся он.

Кроме несогласия с политикой Большого театра он также не согласен с политикой государства в отношении репертуара, с тем, какая музыка приемлема для социалистического государства. В прошлом году он выиграл конкурс “Голос мира” в Кардиффе с преимущественно советской подборкой музыки, но сейчас он сосредоточен на Верди, время от времени приправляя свои концерты произведениями Чайковского.

Ещё одним преимуществом перестройки является то, что художники свободны в выборе своего вида искусства. Он учился на дирижёра, когда рано, в 16 лет, оформился его голос. Посещая с 6 лет специальную музыкальную школу для одарённых детей, он смог воспользоваться преимуществами обучения своему голосу.

Его жена – балерина, с которой они женаты несколько месяцев, должна присоединиться к нему, когда он начнёт свои первые контракты в грандиозном туре по известным местам музыкального мира - Ковент-Гарден, Миланский Ла Скала, Париж, Гаага, Нью-Йорк и Вашингтон.

Но молодой человек, который, по словам критика, “выглядит как Нуреев и поёт как Бог”, также осознаёт грядущие подводные камни славы, которая приходит очень скоро. “Я удивлён стремительностью всего этого”, - признаётся он, хотя сам факт, что это происходит, для него почти само собой разумеющееся.

Сын инженера, который великолепно играл на пианино и пел, Дмитрий говорит, что сейчас он исполняет мечту отца о нём.

Но, возможно, его ждёт судьба многих советских художников, несмотря на перестройку, - переезд на запад. “Возможно, я буду вынужден уехать. Я люблю Россию, как все русские. Я скучаю вдаль по дому. Но я хочу работать и быть полезным для себя и для своей публики”, - говорит он.

И для Дмитрия у перестройки пока есть один серьёзный недостаток. Перестройка советского общества не затронула культуру и искусство. “Никогда не изменить системы прошлого, если не принимать во внимание культуру. Репрессии уничтожили почти всех талантливых людей, мы должны преодолеть это, и в данный момент перестройка касается только финансовой стороны общества, а этого недостаточно”, - сказал он.

Дмитрий поёт с ирландской сопрано Вирджинией Керр и валлийским тенором Артуром Дэвисом в серии “Великие оперные голоса современности” и даст сольный концерт в Королевском Обществе Дублина в субботу.

Перевод с английского Н.Тимофеевой