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## Nigel Kennedy

Life at 45 – “why my son comes first” says the BRIT nominee

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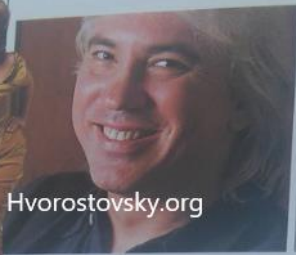
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# Feast from the EAST

Fêted as one of the world's great baritones, Dmitri Hvorostovsky is free to enjoy all the luxuries of the West. But, as he tells Henry Kelly, a part of him still misses his days as a boy in Communist Siberia **PHOTOGRAPHY BY BEN WRIGHT**



Hvorostovsky.org

*That ol' Irish charm breaks the ice with Siberian star Dmitri Hvorostovsky*

**W**hen Dmitri Hvorostovsky was growing up in his home town of Krasnoyarsk in Siberia, in the 'bad old days' of Soviet communism, his life and times were not as those of us in the West would have assumed.

Meeting him for lunch recently in Madrid, where he was Don Carlo at the Teatro Real, we talked of many things – musical, political, social, even family. But it was his reflection upon his early life that struck the biggest chord with me: "I grew up in what to me was a beautiful city with a loving family of parents and grandparents. My mother and father, who are, happily, still alive, were gifted amateur musicians, and when you people in the West were thinking one thing about us, I was actually having a totally different experience of life.

"It wasn't until I came to the West and learned to speak English that I began to realise certain things. To me, I grew up in a civilised city. I was lucky enough to be the youngest soloist at the city's opera house and given every possible opportunity. At 24 I was given my own apartment, free – free! – can you imagine that? In the old Soviet Union! And when I eventually ended up in Moscow, I had another apartment, also given free. I was an Honoured Citizen of the Union, I was being rewarded not because I was an athlete or a politician, but because I was a young singer who had entered competitions and had won most of them. That was what was valued in Siberia when I was young and that is what I remember still. Although,"

he pauses – and for the first time in our conversation looks sad – "although it seems to have changed out of recognition. These days I don't think Siberia rewards musicians as they used to.

"Back then, I got all the help I needed. I had a good life and now when I go back to Siberia I am a bit disappointed that, for example, they don't seem to give artists – particularly musicians – the same support. There seem to be hardly any competitions for young singers, and I don't know why."

It is a far cry from Siberia to the world stage, as one of the great baritones of all time. But that is what Hvorostovsky, now 39, has become. He is now wanted all over the world: in Madrid in Don Carlo; in Houston, Rigoletto; at La Scala he stars in *Queen of Spades*; in New York, Rome, San Francisco and London he is in demand from the star conductors – Rattle, Haitink, Zubin Mehta, Valery Gergiev...

And yet his earliest childhood memories are as fresh now as ever. "I remember perfectly when I first started performing. I was about three years old and my parents would let me get on a stool or a chair and I would start... well, just start performing – sometimes singing, sometimes reciting poetry. As I grew up it was competitions, competitions, competitions. I started them at home [he won the prestigious USSR National Song Competition in 1987], then there were opportunities to go abroad, and through all of these efforts I was coached and looked after by the first great Soviet star, the legendary Iryna Arkhipova."

As I sit in a restaurant in Madrid listening



to this hugely charismatic, larger-than-life character, I realise that he bridges a gulf of ignorance: our Cold War ignorance of what was going on culturally in the Soviet Union, and his lack of awareness of the world beyond competitions. Tempted to explain to Dmitri that in the West, his honoured coach and mentor is not the household name here that she is in the old USSR, I resist, realising it would only highlight the gulf between our two societies. Siberian salt mines? Chill winds from the East? Elderly women queuing at empty shop windows? Repression and deprivation? Not for Dmitri, who benefitted spectacularly from the system – as did those other musical Siberians, violin virtuosi Maxim Vengerov and Vadim Repin.

"I was told by my parents, calmly, without fuss, that I had a gift. Actually, they told me I had an incredible gift and then my teachers repeated that. Between them, they persuaded me that I had not just a musical gift – which I probably knew – but I had a chance to have a professional career singing in Russian. But I just wanted to go further." >

'I WAS TOLD BY MY PARENTS, CALMLY, AND WITHOUT FUSS, THAT I HAD A GIFT'

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h e n r y   m e e t s

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The years of work and travel have calmed him, though also contributed to the break-up of his first marriage to the mother of his twins. He is what my female friends describe as "drop dead gorgeous", and there is no doubt that heads turn when he enters a room or strolls along a street with his new partner. An engaging lunch guest with strong, but courteous views on world affairs, he is a man who looks to me at ease with himself and his career.

"Now that I have achieved my aim to have an international career, I have come to understand that, in a way, I am a slave to this life – my diary is planned five years ahead. Recently, I tried to look back on what I had done 10 years ago. I could hardly remember a single thing because my life for those last 10 years was like a zoom – I was there, but

● NEW ON DISC



**Dmitri Hvorostovsky's latest album (our Best of the Month in June) is *From Russia with Love* on which he sings arias and traditional Russian folk songs, with the Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Ion Marin. Available on Philips (468 682-2)**

Hvorostovsky.org

● **DMITRI ON STAGE**

24, 28 May, *Queen of Spades*, Royal Opera House, London

Tchaikovsky's dark tale of obsessive love and double-dealing, based on a Pushkin novella

5 June, *La Traviata*, Royal Opera House

Verdi's tragic opera sees Dmitri starring as Germont – worth hearing just for his showpiece aria, *Di Provenza il Mar*, where he sings longingly of the family home back in Provence

Book seats for either on 020 7304 4000

'IN A WAY, I AM A SLAVE TO MY CAREER. MY LIFE IS PLANNED FIVE YEARS AHEAD. IT'S A CRAZY LIFE, BUT IT'S GREAT WHEN YOU'RE BUSY!'

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He has been branching out to new roles recently, and is intrigued by the world of film. He made a movie of *Don Giovanni* in Canada last year, in which he plays both the lecherous Don and his sidekick Leporello – called *Leporello's Revenge*, to be shown on Channel 4 in early summer. The story takes the form of a film within a film, and is set in 1930s Hollywood, with Leporello as the star. He admits he'd love to make more movies but that diary of his is looking pretty full. But I'd fancy his chances of success: as we'll see from his screen performance, his hair and good looks are no bar to success!

One final story sums up this man for me. As we were taking our leave, I asked him if it is true that he was once visited in his dressing room by the great Armenian baritone Pavel Litsitsyan, who simply looked at him, embraced him, kissed him on both cheeks and then left without a word.

"Yes, that is true. But then a few years after that, he came to me again when I was doing *Rigoletto* in a small theatre in Moscow – I mean a place you'd need to go out of the way to get to. After the first night, I was told Pavel had been there. Then he came to the second, and came to see me backstage, afterwards. Well, we talked and talked and talked and as we parted I was thinking to myself that here is a man who is 90 years old and he took the trouble to come and talk to me and to listen to me singing. I left the theatre that night with a new outlook. I felt, as I feel now, that I am gradually becoming more and more happy. And more and more I can hear my own voice. And now I know what I want to do with it." ■

● *The one-hour adaptation of Don Giovanni, Leporello's Revenge, will be screened on Channel 4 during May-June – check listings for exact transmission date*

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## ПЕРЕВОД

2001 Июль журнал Classic FM

### Праздник с Востока

Считающийся одним из величайших баритонов мира, Дмитрий Хворостовский может свободно наслаждаться всеми благами Запада. Но, как он рассказал Генри Келли, отчасти он всё ещё скучает по тем дням, когда был мальчиком в коммунистической Сибири.

Когда Дмитрий Хворостовский рос в своём родном городе Красноярске в Сибири, в "плохие старые времена" советского коммунизма, его жизнь и время отличались от того, как мы их представляем на Западе.

Встретившись с ним недавно за обедом в Мадриде, где он пел «Дон Карло» в театре Реал, мы говорили о многих вещах - музыкальных, политических, социальных, даже семейных. Но именно его размышления о детстве задели меня за живое: "Я вырос в городе, который считал прекрасным, в любящей семье родителей, с бабушками и дедушками. Мои родители, которые, к счастью, ещё живы, были одарёнными музыкантами-любителями, и представления людей на Западе о нас не совпадают с тем, что было на самом деле."

"Только когда я приехал на Запад и научился говорить по-английски, я начал понимать некоторые вещи. Я считаю, я вырос в культурном городе. Мне посчастливилось стать самым молодым солистом городского оперного театра, и мне предоставлялись все возможности. В 24 года я получил собственную квартиру, бесплатно - бесплатно! - вы можете себе это представить? В бывшем Советском Союзе! И когда я в конце концов оказался в Москве, я получил ещё одну квартиру, тоже бесплатно. Я получил звание Народного Артиста, меня награждали не потому, что я был спортсменом или политиком, а потому, что я был молодым певцом, который участвовал в конкурсах и выиграл большинство из них. Это было то, что ценилось в Сибири, когда я был молод, и это то, что я помню до сих пор. Хотя..."

Он делает паузу и впервые за весь наш разговор выглядит грустным - "Хотя, кажется, всё изменилось до неузнаваемости. Сейчас, я думаю, Сибирь не ценит музыкантов так, как раньше".

"Тогда я получал всю необходимую помощь, в которой нуждался. У меня была хорошая жизнь, и теперь, когда я возвращаюсь в Сибирь, я немного разочарован тем, что там, похоже, не оказывают артистам - особенно музыкантам - такой же поддержки. Кажется, почти нет конкурсов для молодых певцов, и я не знаю почему".

Путь от Сибири до одного из величайших баритонов мировой сцены всех времён очень далёк. Но именно таким стал Хворостовский, которому сейчас 39 лет. Сейчас он востребован по всему миру: в Мадриде в "Доне Карло"; в Хьюстоне в "Риголетто"; в "Ла Скала" он играет в "Пиковой даме"; в Нью-Йорке, Риме, Сан-Франциско и Лондоне с ним работают звёздные дирижёры - Рэттл, Хайтинк, Зубин Мета, Валерий Гергиев...

И сейчас его самые ранние детские воспоминания по-прежнему свежи. "Я прекрасно помню, когда я только начал выступать. Мне было около трёх лет, и мои родители ставили меня на табурет, и я начинал.. ну, просто начинал выступать - иногда пел, иногда читал стихи. Пока я рос, всё время были конкурсы, конкурсы, конкурсы. Я начал их дома [он победил на престижном Национальном конкурсе певцов СССР в 1987 году], затем появилась возможность поехать за границу, и во всём этом мной руководила и опекала первая великая советская звезда, легендарная Ирина Архипова".

Когда я сижу в ресторане в Мадриде, слушая этого чрезвычайно харизматичного, необыкновенного человека, я понимаю, что он преодолевает пропасть невежества: наше незнание времён холодной войны о том, что происходило в культурном плане в Советском Союзе, и его собственную неосведомленность о мире за пределами конкурсов. Я справился с искушением объяснить Дмитрию, что на Западе имя его заслуженного наставника не настолько известно, как в бывшем СССР, понимая, что это только подчеркнёт пропасть между нашими двумя обществами. Сибирские соляные копи? Холодные ветры с Востока? Пожилые женщины, стоящие в очереди у пустых прилавков магазинов? Репрессии и лишения? Не для Дмитрия, который получил очевидную пользу от советской системы - как и другие музыканты-сибиряки, скрипачи-виртуозы Максим Венгеров и Вадим Репин.

"Мои родители спокойно, без пафоса сказали мне, что у меня есть дар. На самом деле, они сказали мне, что у меня невероятный дар, а потом мои учителя повторили это. Со своей стороны они убедили меня, что у меня не просто музыкальный дар – о котором я, вероятно, знал, - но у меня был шанс сделать профессиональную карьеру певца в России. Просто я хотел пойти дальше".

Его западная одиссея началась в 1988 году, с победы на конкурсе вокалистов в Тулузе, и завершилась в 1989 году, когда он выиграл конкурс "Кардиффский Певец Мира", победив местного фаворита Брина Терфеля. Всего 27, он был в ударе и наслаждался успехом. Узнаваемый везде благодаря копне серебристо-белых волос, и вернувшийся в Москву как Величайший Певец в мире, он внезапно обнаружил, что может делать всё, что хочет - петь, что хочет, где угодно. Это оказало на него огромное давление, он говорит: "Я хотел стать лучшим и ожидал, что люди будут любить и ценить меня. Я был молод и глуп".

Годы работы и странствий успокоили его, хотя и способствовали распаду его первого брака с матерью его близнецов. Он из тех, кого мои подруги описывают как

"потрясающе красивого", и нет сомнений, что головы поворачиваются, когда он входит в комнату или гуляет по улице со своей новой женой. Желанный гость на обеде с твёрдыми, но уважительными взглядами на мировые дела, он - человек, который, как мне кажется, чувствует себя легко с самим собой и своей карьерой.

"Теперь, когда я достиг своей цели сделать международную карьеру, я пришёл к пониманию, что, в некотором смысле, я раб этой жизни – в моём календаре планы на пять лет вперёд. Недавно я попытался оглянуться назад на то, что я сделал за 10 лет. Я с трудом мог припомнить хоть что-то, потому что моя жизнь за последние 10 лет была похожа на гонку - я был там, но я не почувствовал этого лично. Даже диски, которые я записал - всё в прошлом. Я даже не мог говорить по-английски, когда записывал некоторые из них! Это сумасшедшая жизнь, но это здорово, когда ты занят".

В последнее время он осваивает новые роли и заинтересован миром кино. В прошлом году он снялся в фильме о Дон Жуане в Канаде "Месть Лепорелло", в котором он играет как распутного Дона, так и его закадычного друга Лепорелло. Фильм будет показан на 4 канале в начале лета. История в форме фильма в фильме, разворачивается в Голливуде 1930-х годов с Лепорелло в качестве звезды. Дмитрий признаётся, что хотел бы больше сниматься, но его график плотно заполнен. Но я представляю его шансы на успех: как мы увидим его выступления на экране, его волосы и приятная внешность – нет никаких препятствий для успеха!

Эта заключительная история раскрыла мне всю сущность этого человека. Когда мы прощались, я спросил его, правда ли, что однажды в его гримёрке побывал великий армянский баритон Павел Лицициан, который просто посмотрел на него, обнял, поцеловал в обе щеки и затем ушёл, не сказав ни слова.

"Да, это правда. Но потом, через несколько лет, он снова пришёл ко мне, когда я пел "Риголетто" в небольшом театре в Москве – месте, куда трудно попасть. После первого представления мне сказали, что Павел был в зале. Потом он пришёл на второй спектакль, а после зашёл ко мне в гримёрку. Мы говорили, говорили и говорили, и когда мы расставались, я подумал про себя, что вот человек, которому 90 лет, и он взял на себя труд прийти и поговорить со мной и послушать, как я пою. В тот вечер я покинул театр с новым мировоззрением. Я до сих пор помню это чувство, как постепенно становлюсь всё более и более счастливым. И всё больше и больше слышу свой собственный голос. И теперь я знаю, что я хочу с ним делать".

Перевод с английского Натальи Тимофеевой