

# 1404. Warsaw Concerto

Backgrounds Of S. Radic

**Warsaw Concerto** is a short work for piano and orchestra by Richard Addinsell (1904-1977), written for the British film *Dangerous Moonlight* (1941), which deals with the Polish struggle against the invasion of Nazi Germany in 1939. The performance usually lasts about ten minutes. The concerto is an example of programme music that depicts both the Warsaw struggle and the romanticism of the film's main characters. It became very popular in Great Britain during the Second World War. The concerto is written as an imitation of the style of Sergei Rachmaninoff. A trend began for similar short piano concertos in romantic style, called "boulevard concerts".

**Background.** The composer Richard Addinsell was born in London and studied law before embarking on a career in music. His time at the Royal College of Music was short, as he soon felt drawn to music theatre, and he also wrote for radio. His most notable contributions relate to a series of film scores recorded from 1936 onwards. He wrote the music for 1939 film *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, the original *Gaslight* (published in 1940, not to be confused with the later Hollywood version), *Scrooge* and *Dangerous Moonlight* (1941, also published in the USA as *Suicide Squadron*). With this last picture began the trend of "boulevard concerts", compositions in the classical style that were written for performance in films. John Huntley explored the reason for this concept: the associations that individual viewers may have with a particular piece of popular music are completely beyond the control of the director of the film in which they are used. With *Dangerous Moonlight*, it was rightly decided to have a specially written piece of music that could connect the audience with Poland, air raids in Warsaw and anything the director wanted to suggest. "The concerto was not part of the original plan. Roy Douglas, at that time orchestrator for all scores of Addinsell: "The director of the film originally wanted to use the second piano concerto by Sergei Rachmaninoff, but this idea was either forbidden by the copyright owners or far too expensive". So Addinsell wanted the piece to sound similar to Rachmaninoff, and Douglas recalls: "While I was orchestrating the Warsaw Concerto, I had the miniature scores of the Second and Third Piano Concerto and the Rhapsody for a Paganini theme.



"And although it lies in the heart of *Dangerous Moonlight*, the concerto is never completely performed, but revealed as a piecework. The themes are perceived as underlining throughout the film, and in this way a short concert piece receives a dramatic resonance that contradicts its small scale." "Popularity. The success of the film led to an immediate demand for the work, and a recording was dutifully delivered from the soundtrack of the film (at nine minutes it fit perfectly on two sides of a 12 inch disk playing at 78 rpm) and sheet music for a piano solo version. 5] This unexpected success had another consequence. The off-screen piano part was played by Louis Kentner, a good British musician known for his performances by Franz Liszt. However, he had insisted that there was no credit on the screen for fear that his participation in a popular entertainment might damage his classic's reputation. He lost his concerns when the record sold in millions, and Douglas notes that he even demanded royalties (they were granted). Ultimately, the Warsaw concerto was such a hit that it made the then unusual journey from the big screen to the concert hall.

*Ray Conniff His Orchestra And Chorus - Warsaw Concerto from 1962 - Genre: Pop - Style: Big Band*



Swing-Fox, T=120

Main 1 Main 2

The musical score is arranged in a system with five staves. The top staff is for Strings, the second for Guitar, the third for Bass, and the bottom two for Drums. The score is divided into two main sections: Main 1 (measures 1-4) and Main 2 (measures 5-8). In Main 1, the Strings play sustained chords, the Guitar plays chords, the Bass plays a simple bass line, and the Drums play a pattern with a Small-Crash 1 and a Bass Drum (BD). In Main 2, the Strings play sustained chords, the Guitar plays chords with some movement, the Bass plays a simple bass line, and the Drums play a pattern with a Small-Crash 2 and a Snare Drum (SD).

Programmier-Anweisung

Hier ist eine wirklich ungewöhnliche Programmierung zu schaffen: Ein Style mit „liegender“ Begleitung aller Parts im Main-1 und im Main-2 dann ein minimaler Swing-Fox mit Drums, Gitarre, Bass und Akkord-Pad! „Programmier-technisch“ musste ich den Main-1 irgendwie unterbringen, weil alle Style-Automaten nur zwei Main akzeptieren - auch wenn zum Spielen nur Main-2 nötig wäre! Man könnte die so genannte „Synchron-Schaltung“ dafür benutzen, wobei man dann mit dem UM den Akkord und Snareschlag erzeugt und mit dem Basspedal dann entsprechen den Fußbass mit einer Bassdrum. Die Begleitung erfolgt dann „statisch“ nach den Anweisungen im Notenblatt - also: es läuft gar kein Rhythmus ab sondern man spielt RUBATO (frei im Vortrag). Erst nach der furiosen freien Einleitung setzt mit dem Main2 dann die rhythmische Begleitung ein.