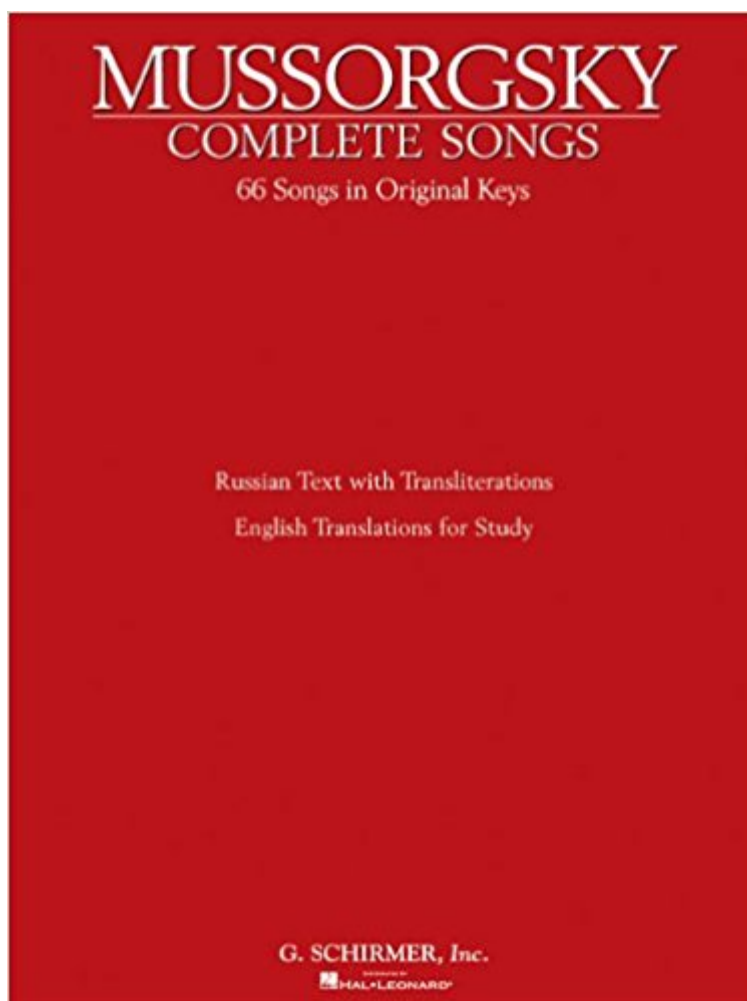


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Complete Songs: Voice And Piano (Vocal Collection)



Synopsis

(Vocal Collection). A major edition of 67 songs, all in the original keys, which covers a variety of voice types. Cyrillic and transliteration are included with each song, as are line by line English translations for study. Mussorgsky's rich imagination as a composer of song is not well-known. The style is unique, the music directly emotional. There are four complete song cycles in this edition. The first, "Youthful Years," is an unconventional song grouping, not written for the same voice type, a "song cycle" that's more a convenience of collecting early work. It would better be viewed as 17 individual songs. The other three cycles are "The Nursery" (for mezzo-soprano), "Sunless" (for mezzo-soprano or baritone), and "Songs and Dances of Death" (mezzo-soprano or soprano). There are also 32 individual songs not in cycles. Mussorgsky wrote substantial revisions of 11 songs; both the original version and the second version are included for these.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Here is a invaluable resource for one of the world's most original and idiosyncratic composers, a composer who wrote for singers to impact on the listener; for singers of all ranges. Mussorgsky's songs are dramatic and comic but they are operas, musical dramas, within their short spans, as all songs should be, and are never boring. They put themselves over ... almost. The Complete Songs of Mussorgsky is a beautiful volume just to look at and to hold. It looks great on the shelves but there is an impediment to using it to show the world that there is a rival to Schubert in the world of song, an impediment to dismantling the unfortunate belief that the Art Song is a crashing bore. The

impediment is that, although the text is the Cyrillic original with a transliteration below it, there is no singing translation matching the music note for note. Mussorgsky's music is wedded to Russian speech patterns and is therefore difficult to translate syllable for syllable. A poetic translation is at the back of the book so a student of the songs could set to and work out a singing translation, needed if Mussorgsky's satiric punch is to hit home in songs like The Peep Show, and The Seminarian. For those unschooled in Russian but who claim to prefer the original language in performance, I recommend they hear Chaliapin sing The Song of the Flea in Russian, then listen to Peter Dawson in English then come back to Chaliapin's to appreciate his and Mussorgsky's genius. However, The Winds are Howling, Sunless, Songs and Dances of Death and The Nursery are all here at one's fingertips, as is an aria from Mussorgsky's abandoned opera Salammbo, The Song of the Balearic Islander. So how could I complain? Many years ago Boris Christoff recorded Mussorgsky's complete songs. When I find a copy I'll be listening with this treasure of a book, although I'll be flipping the pages back and forth from the music to the translated text.

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