

## GRIGORIEV'S BALLETS RUSSES ARCHIVE TO BE SOLD AT SOTHEBY'S IN LONDON

THE most important archive of material relating to the Ballets Russes to be offered at auction in recent years, highlights Sotheby's sale of Fine Printed and Manuscript Music on Friday, May 21, 1999. The archive of Serge Grigoriev includes photographs, contracts, notebooks, letters and accounts and is expected to fetch a total £80,000.

Serge Grigoriev, the manager and régisseur of the Ballets Russes in its years of greatness under Diaghilev, and in the later company under Colonel W. de Basil, was at the very centre of the Ballets Russes. With his wife Lubov Tchernicheva, Grigoriev played a major role in both the artistic as well as the purely business side of the two companies.

Arguably the most important elements of the archive are the autograph manuscripts of Grigoriev's works, "The Diaghilev Ballet 1909-1929" and "The Original Ballet Russe under the management of Colonel W. de Basil 1932-1952", which include a collection of loose working notes relating to Grigoriev's books. These documents are important as they record the history of Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes between 1897 and 1952, much of which remains unpublished. The manuscripts are estimated at £30,000-40,000.

Grigoriev's notebooks containing details of the choreography for many performances offer a new insight into the history of the Ballets Russes and its successors. Details are given of the dancers and designs in schematic patterns, including for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Swan Lake*, *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* and many others (estimate £15,000-20,000).

A collection of nearly 3,000 of Grigoriev's photographs of ballet dancers and colleagues in the Ballets Russes, some signed and many unpublished, include portraits of Diaghilev, Nijinsky, Tchernicheva, as well as many 'behind-the-scenes' glimpses of the court of Diaghilev and the ballet company in locations around the world. The archive of photographs is estimated at £12,000-15,000.

Elsewhere in the sale is a series of 29 letters from Sir Arthur Sullivan to Sybil Seligman about his love for her sister, Violet Beddington, which offers a unique insight into the composer's emotional life. The letters describe the impossible situation that Sullivan has placed himself in with Violet and his fears of taking advantage of her. They are expected to fetch £6,000-8,000.

A remarkable and poignant autograph letter written by Gaetano Donizetti is one of the last written by him six weeks before he entered a lunatic asylum. Donizetti appears forthright and ambitious in the letter in which he refers to his taking up an opera contract in Madrid that his young rival, Verdi, had turned down. There are however, clear signs of his mental collapse in his wild handwriting and chronological confusions (estimate £1,500-2,000).

A first edition of *Die Kunst der Fuge (The Art of Fugue)* by Johann Sebastian Bach is one of the rarest and most beautiful examples of printed music of the 18th century. Only a tiny proportion of Bach's works were published before the 19th century, and all of these editions are exceptionally rare. *Die Kunst der Fuge* is the last testament of arguably the greatest master and even unfinished, it retains a special significance for modern musicians. The engraved music is decorated elaborately with illustrations of trees, flowers, and foliage and is expected to fetch £25,000-30,000.

Of great interest to musicians are previously unknown pieces found in a set of 17th century English part-books for violin and bass. Among some 40 dances by Lully, Robert Smith and others are many that are apparently unrecorded in the few other sources for this repertory. They are estimated to fetch £25,000-30,000.

The autograph manuscript of one of Johann Strauss's famous and much-loved works, *Frühlingsstimmen (Voices of Spring)* is estimated at £25,000-30,000. This is the manuscript of Strauss's original vocal version of his Waltz-Song and was published as his Opus 410 in March 1883. It is worked intensively and colourfully with layers of the composition written in red, blue, black and grey. The composer has written a draft of the vocal line in pencil, then added the orchestral accompaniment in blue crayon, while the librettist, Genée, has written the text in red ink.

By Robert Schumann is an autograph sketchleaf for an unfinished symphony in C minor and four songs. Both previously unpublished, they contain hitherto unknown sketches for no fewer than five works from arguably the most significant period of his career (estimate £20,000-25,000).

Other works by Schumann include the autograph working manuscript of the unpublished *Die Lehre vom Contrapunct*, his treatise on counterpoint and fugue based on *Cherubini's Cours de contrepoint et de fugue*, a work that the composer did not intend for publication. The treatise is not recorded in his diaries nor described by any important writer on Schumann. It represents a major work on the theory of music and composition and is an important addition to the writings of Schumann, arguably the most literary of all German composers (estimate £40,000-50,000).

From Schumann's early years are some important autograph sketches for several works, including the *Impromptus über ein Thema von Clara Wieck* Opus 5. This manuscript was written at the time Schumann met and fell in love with Clara Wieck and her presence dominates the sketches. The sketches are estimated to fetch £40,000-50,000.

PHOTOGRAPHS AVAILABLE