A Comparative Study Based on the Author’s Collection of Classical Music Masterpieces and Other Similar Classical Collections

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ABSTRACT

This paper will present and discuss a collection of ten audio discs, compiled by its author with the aim of familiarizing the students of the Music Departments in the Universities of Jordan with the musical culture of Western Europe. The selection of the music pieces has been subordinated to the idea of presenting some of the most outstanding works of classical music, whereby at the same time this paper turns out to be a theoretical confirmation of and substantiation why these music pieces have been selected. As well as, this paper discusses a selection of other similar collections, that will be listed, mentioned or analyzed.

Keywords: Collection, Classical, Music.

Introduction

Aim of the Study

In this study the author of this paper has tried to select, compare and show to the students attending the Jordanian Universities in the Arts, and the Music Departments, in particular, a rich collection of pieces of music, as examples of different styles and composers, which are part of the rich European culture. The guiding idea has been to present to the students, uninitiated in the sphere of West-European musical culture, a general idea and a panorama of the works of the most outstanding composers and their best achievements, also showing some of the best performances of those musical achievements.

The researcher has been guided by the idea of not just giving some sketchy knowledge to the students about the peak achievements of West-European classical music, but of also helping in the formation of an aesthetic ideal – a picture of world classical music, since music has not been experienced only as an art, built out of sounds forms, but has rather been a method of presenting socially important contents, thoughts, images and even philosophical doctrines, encoded into sounds. Therefore the students learn, naturally, a variety of musical types: medieval, romantic, contemporary and other genres. Music in itself is history, and each piece has its own background and storyline that can further help in the knowing and mastering of other similar masterpieces. This idea has been achieved through the compilation of a collection of discs including the most outstanding pieces of the West-European art of music, brought to the fore by way of a personal selection, which has been the author’s purely personal idea and initiative.

Purpose of the Study

The author of the study has compiled a collection of 10 discs, each one featuring 10 pieces of music, or a total of 100 music pieces. The author has chosen as the optimal number, 100 pieces. The option is not fortuitous, because most of the collections in international literature present the same number of pieces. This is based on the fact that in case someone wants to present a comprehensive work, distinguished by different cultures, styles and genres, the author should succeed to provide sufficient works to cover the full-bodied range of knowledge, while not missing or overexposing certain composers or styles. of course, good knowledge of classical music requires much deeper knowledge, which is why the author of the article commemorating repeatedly, intends to continue with the presentation of

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the next collection of another 100 works. The works included have not been arbitrarily chosen but have rather been the aftereffect of long years of efforts and familiarization with a great number of similar collections known in world discography, as well as of listening to numerous performances and the selection of the best suited from an academic point of view. This is an author’s selection and has naturally been based on personal preferences both as regards composers and music pieces, as well as music performers. But it has been the result of the author’s 30-year long experiences as a teacher and a performer. The selection of the music pieces has been prompted by painstaking academic research: extensive presentation of the best known music pieces, produced by music composers from the Baroque period to our days, which are to be played to students beginning their studies of West-European music.

In this paper the author will review a great number of similar collections as justification of this selection, and will base his work on numerous bibliographical links to different books, which are to explain and bear out his selection.

The researcher is clearly aware that it is practically impossible to fully encompass all the music pieces and composers of genius in the West-European treasure house, but knowing this important specificity, the author reaffirms the paradigm of personal preference, based on knowledge and long years of experience.

Methodology of the Study

The author has opted for the comparative method, whereby he will present different similar collections he knows about, which are to reaffirm or bring out the correctness of his choice. The choice of comparative method is based on the idea of collateral analysis between this collection and other known collections. Thus gives a theoretical platform for building the theoretical aspect of the purpose of the article, and proper explanation and support of the choice of mentioned pieces. He has likewise used a purely methodological approach to the search for examples suitable for presentation, since the ultimate purpose of this paper is purely pragmatic and methodological: viz. familiarization of the students of the Jordanian Music Colleges with the worldwide music heritage through presenting its most outstanding examples.

Limitation of the Study

This paper is to bring out one hundred pieces of music; it cannot possibly include all the achievements of the musical treasure store of classical West-European culture. Naturally, 100 works cannot possibly cover all the achievements of musical culture, or the peak achievements of the best known and most popular composers as their works, either. The paper’s author is bound to take into consideration the absence of academic studies, dedicated to the subject chosen, which naturally restricts the possibility of drawing on similar theoretical approaches likewise restricting the theoretical substantiation of the present elaboration.

In the present-day world – the age of globalization and worldwide access to information – music is becoming an invariable component of human life. By the contrivance of various gadgets for listening to music at every point of time and space, it has become an active part of the life in the present day Homo sapiens, turning into a background in his life. The way and principle, whereby certain pieces of music, composers and styles have been selected and how they affect our music-oriented preferences and aesthetic taste, have been the aftereffect of individual emotional acceptance and experiencing.

“Emotion is a specific form of mental reflection which, by way of direct experiencing, reflects a subjective attitude to objective phenomena, rather than the objective attitude to them. Emotion is something experienced as a feeling, motivating, organizing and directing perception, thinking and actions”.

The emotional experiencing of the music processes is no doubt individual and is the result of the recipient’s temperament depending on the individual’s temporal psychological state. Nevertheless, each piece of music proves to be a bearer of its own immanent realm of emotions and feelings, leaving their imprint in the consciousness. As such, every work of music is a carrier of specific emotions, knowledge, empirical experience and aesthetic trends characterizing it. The main idea, guiding the author of this collection, has not been just the simple, direct emotional impact, but rather the methodological stand or the cultivation of an aesthetic taste, the acquiring of knowledge about different composers, styles and genres as part of the experience of
future musicians. This has been achieved by the presentation of different composers from Pachelbel to Piazzola, covering an enormous volume of music literature from the historical point of view. In this way it becomes a contribution to the creation of a streamlined system for telling apart different styles and genres. The author is clearly aware that the individual preference for a certain kind of music piece is often based on the current state of mind, as well as on the recipient’s temperament. Yet nevertheless there are music pieces from among the world classics, which are distinguished by incredible emotional saturation of the music lines, beauty of the melodies, characteristic rhythm or timbres, which have not by chance been hallmarks of best loved, most often listened to or “masterpieces” in the musical kaleidoscope of composers and music pieces. It is precisely these works that will be the purpose and the basis of this paper.

The objective emotional contents of certain pieces of music as well as their subjective perception by the recipient are often interconnected. “At the same time from among all the other arts music stands out by its extraordinary power of direct emotional impact, by the ability of not only describing the situation and feelings, but by somehow reproducing it ‘from the inside’ (2). Listeners have understood the work which was heard as a function of wish and fulfillment, of question and answer, of problem and solution, even though the understanding is based on the wishes and questions which the listeners contributed, they are then ready for the next step in the process of appreciating the music. In the same line - the composer causes the music and the listener causes the effect of the music. In between lays the experience of the listener, consisting of a mental activity, which is searching for pleasure. This attitude of listening to music, diligently active between cause and effect, is neither the analysis of the composition nor the criticism of its effect. To listen in such a way to music requires neither a professional musical terminology nor an aptitude for sociological diagnosis.

The art, and more particularly, the depth of our knowledge about music in its form of a multiplicity of a sum total of styles and composers, turns out to be the main organizer of our musical conduct, of experience, showing the musician’s cultural wealth. The requirement for proper familiarization with a great number of music works and composers is the basis, built onto which is the overall knowledge of the future professional. This knowledge provides a background, a push forward and a requirement, mandatory for the musical education. What is necessary for the truly deep understanding of music as an art is thorough knowledge of concepts related to styles, different in temperament and in philosophically holistic interpretation, as well as distinguishing the great number and variety of genres and techniques of composing. To come to a similar empathetic result, what is required is a wide-ranging idea and this collection proves to be precisely such a one, aiming to cover most diverse and differing composers, music pieces and instruments.

As this can be noted, the paper’s author uses the definition of “classical music”, which has been often challenged, from an academic point of view.

“It is referred to as now ‘classical’, now ‘academic’ or ‘an operatic and symphonic school’, now ‘serious music’, now ‘professional art’. Each one of these terms contains part of the truth but not a single one exhausts the substance of the layer of interest to us, nor does it convey its inherently specific features. Particularly vulnerable is the term “classical music” most frequently used. Of course, Europe’s professional music art, having endured the trials and tribulations of time for more than one thousand years, has come down to us with its top examples, perfectly embodying the concept of “classical music”. Its external forms have been polished over the ages and its contents essentially encompass all aspects of the people’s spiritual life. It has long turned into a supreme expression of human genius.”(3)

Regardless of all the variety of studies dealing with the classical European music culture, the concept of “classical music” has remained watered down and for that matter its limits have to be defined. The understanding of classical music in this study goes beyond the confines of the narrowly specialized definition in its meaning of a specific historical period (the Enlightenment) or style (Classicism), although it is limited within the frameworks of composers’ music associated with the West-European tradition. This paper’s author has deliberately stuck at one and the same time to broad chronological boundaries and to siding with the encyclopedic interpretation, referring to classical music and to music pieces created both in the distant past and in our own times. Let remind that
classical music has several basic elements: notation, tempered order, strict organization of connectivity of melody, rhythm, harmony and outstanding conceptions related to the music form (cf. B. D. Konen, refer to “The third layer”, 1994 and “Essay over foreign music”, 1998). These are naturally uniform common principles manifest in the individual world outlook, in the striving to achieve an artistically embodied spiritual world view. Elevation of personal experiences has remained a basic characteristic of the so-called “classical music”, reflected in the musical material; lofty, sophisticated professionalism creating it and the unique features setting apart each music piece from other similar pieces of music.

Respectively, the author’s choice has been to use the definition of “classical music” in its semiotic meaning of West-European musical culture.

The author wants to emphasize that the collection of pieces of music cannot teach students to understand music – something which is the consequence of acquiring thorough knowledge and making experiments - but it will be “a narrative” about the music masterpieces and will help the cultivation of a memory and an “ear for music”. On the basis of the socio-cultural approach, the paper’s author discusses the spiritual potential of classical music, which is presented as a sum total of styles and composers. In this case, making the students become familiar with the act of creation of classical music takes the form of understanding the classical music’s conventionality, meaning, universal human, traditional and liberal values. For instance, the relationship of man to God in Bach and Pachelbel, the relationship of man and society in Beethoven and Haydn, romanticism and national enlightenment in Schubert, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, patriotism in Rachmaninov and Borodin. In this natural and direct way classical music is shown as concentrating spiritual values, becoming at the same time a value by itself and a means of transference of spiritual pleasure and legacy, of communicative exchange between generations and peoples.

“Familiarizing students with the examples of musical creativity serves essentially the ideational and moral education through the media of art. The accumulation of musical impressions develops the music needs, interests and abilities. The cultivation of musical concepts is connected with becoming acquainted with the specificities of the musical language, the structure of the musical speech, its means of expression. Emotional responsiveness to Music is shaped and cultivated along with the development of special musical abilities, including music listening conceptions, an ear for music and the extensive development of musical memory. Familiarization with the right pieces of music not only in contents and artistic values but also in their accessibility in terms of age is the first condition for the development of these abilities in the process of music perception.”

The collection of music pieces presented is just an element of theoretical knowledge, since the scientific truths learned through it (genres, styles, composers) have been logically subordinated to the sensitive and emotional impact of live art, because it is actually impossible and moreover wrong to study art apart from the emotion. The synthesizing horizon here is presented in its complete functionality, the approach being not to go deep into an academic analysis but to make use of the most easily accessible medium of music, viz. its live and emotional experiencing. The accent and purpose of this article are not directed to the theoretical analysis or analytical presentation of selected works but on the general appreciation of the musical phenomena, introduction to selected composers and styles by hearing and building acoustic concepts, and sound - musical recognition of different eras and composers.

The paper’s author wants to emphasize that this collection can be listened to and used by non-professionals just for entertainment too. In the same way it may also prove helpful to students from the Art Colleges or to those attending courses on Music Appreciation.

Different Kinds of Collections: Classical Music Masterpieces

There are a great number of music collections in world music discography, some of them serving as the basis of and cause for the compiling of this collection. Some will be quoted in justification of the pieces selected, others will be simply listed.

The author of this paper has become familiarized with a great number of different collections of music masterpieces. The existence of a different principle has to
be definitely pointed out in their selection, depending on the various aspects or elements of classical music sought.

Mixed collections. Brought together in them have respectively been music pieces by composers from different periods and genres, like the one the paper’s author has compiled.

Such are the following:
The Essential Classics Collection (Deutsche Grammophon, Germany, 1999);  
Classical Favorites Collector’s Edition (Madacy, Canada, 2008);  
150 Favorite Melodies (Reader’s Digest, Russia, 2006);  
101 Classical Greats (Prism Leisure, UK, 2001);  
“Ultimate Classical Dreams”: - The Essential Masterpieces (Decca, UK, 2009);  
Hall of Fame - Gold (Classic FM Records, UK, 2002);  
Hall of Fame - The Great Composers (Classic FM Records, UK, 2004);  
Classical Top 100 (Column Classics, USA, 1996);  
The Top 100 Masterpieces of Classical Music 1685 - 1928 (Delta Music Inc., USA, 1991);  
100 Best Classics (EMI Classics, UK, 2004);  
Great Performances, 1903 - 1998 (Sony Music, USA, 1999);  
Sunday Morning Classics (St. Clair Music, Canada, 1997);  
Forever Classics (Prism Leisure, England, 2006);  
Diamond Classics (ZYX Music, Germany, 2003);  
Masters of Classical Music (Laserlight, USA, 2008);  
Music - The Universal Language (Deutsche Grammophon, Germany, 2005).

The author has taken the liberty of listing all collections he knows because they comply with his approach to the selection of music pieces, or with the presumption of extensive presentation of music works, both in terms of composers, styles and genres and as far as periods, instruments and performances.

By periods:
  100 Best Baroque;  
  100 Best Classics;  
  Music of 20th Century;  
  100 Best Romantic.

By genres:
  Symphonic Music;  
  100 Best Chamber;  
  The Great Violin Concertos.

For relaxation, i.e. dedicated to the new trend of Music Therapy:
  100 Best Relaxing Classics;  
  Ultimate Classical Relaxation.

By composers:
  100 Best Vivaldi;  
  Haydn – Complete Symphonies;  
  Chopin – The Complete Works;  
  Bach – Complete Organ Works.

By instruments:
  100 Best Piano Classics;  
  100 Best Violin;  
  100 Best Guitar.

By performers:
  The Perlman Edition;  
  Gulda Plays Beethoven;  
  Grumiaux – Historic Philips Recording;  
  100 Best Menuhin;  
  Yo-Yo-Ma - 30 Years Outside;  
  Richter Collection;  
  The Complete Caruso.

By conductors:
  Karajan - Symphony Edition;  
  100 Best Karajan;  
  Mravinsky Collection;  
  Bernstein – Composer and Conductor;  

By countries:
  The Romantic Russian Masters;  
  Russian Legends;  
  400 Years of Danish Organ Music;  
  Polish Collection of the Warsaw Autumn;
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By music recording companies:
Naxos 25th Anniversary;
111 Years of Deutsche Grammophon;
Casals – Complete EMI Recording.

Others:
New York Philharmonic – The Mahler Broadcasts;
100 Best Adagio Voices;
100 Best Encores;
100 Best Ballet;
100 Best Tenor Arias;
100 Best Carols;
100 Best Opera Classics;
100 Best Choirs.

In conclusion concerning these kinds of collections presented, the paper’s author would like to note that each one of the approaches taken has followed an academic or purely hedonistic line. In each one of the selections a different cognitive presentation of a chosen music style, composer, period, genre, national specificity or style of performance has been achieved. And, naturally, each one of them contributes to a large extent to the empirical accumulation of quality characteristics, which when taken all together develop the listeners’ knowledge and general culture. The author has not set himself the aim of analyzing which of the approaches chosen has been the most pragmatically correct or suitable since he reaffirms that in each one of them knowledge is accumulated within a strictly defined and fixed, or within a broader parameter. Familiarization with each one of the approaches listed has however helped the researcher of this paper to opt for the most wide-covering approach to the acquisition of general and extended knowledge about the different periods, styles and composers, which is the shortcut to familiarization with the cultural music heritage of Western Europe. This being the purpose of the work, viz. familiarization of the music students attending the Jordanian Musical Education Universities with select and most outstanding representatives of this heritage.

Structure of the Present Collection
This collection features 100 works of music, distributed in 10 discs with 10 pieces of music on each one of them.

Recorded on each one of the ten discs are works differing in style, by different composers; they are vocal, symphonic, instrumental, chamber. The author has tried not to repeat the same composers in each individual disk as well as to list works different in terms of genre, tempo and emotional charge. In this way each separate disc by itself, proves to be a source of sufficiently wide-ranging data about the classical West-European musical heritage of the world. Following below is the listing of the music pieces on each of the discs.

First disc:
1. Bach. Suite No. 2. Badinerie
2. Beethoven. Sonata No. 14 (Moonlight), 1st movement
3. Mozart. Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st movement
4. Albinoni. Adagio
5. Vivaldi. Four Seasons. Winter, 1st movement
6. Chopin. Nocturne C sharp minor
8. Tchaikovsky. Swan Lake. Scene
9. Piazzolla. Oblivion
10. Brahms. Hungarian Dance No. 5

Second disc:
1. Marcello. Adagio
2. Beethoven. Symphony No.5, 1st movement
3. Faure. Apres un Reve (After a Dream)
4. Bach. Prelude C minor
5. Donizetti. L’elisir D’amore. Una Furtive Lagrima
6. Brahms. Hungarian Dance No. 1
7. Mozart. Piano Concerto No. 21, 2nd movement
8. Massenet. Elegie
9. Rachmaninov. Prelude G minor
10. Saint-Saens. Introduction & Rondo Capriccioso

Third disc:
1. Pachelbel. Canon in D
2. Mozart. Requiem. Lacrimosa
3. Chopin. Fantasie-Impromptu
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<tr>
<th>Disc</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Work</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Tchaikovsky</td>
<td>Romance “None but the lonely heart”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bizet</td>
<td>Carmen suite No. 1. Aragonaise</td>
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<td>Rachmaninov</td>
<td>Elegie</td>
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<td>Strauss J.</td>
<td>The Blue Danube</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bach.</td>
<td>Concerto for 2 violins, 1st movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rossini.</td>
<td>Barber of Seville. Overture</td>
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<td>Brahms.</td>
<td>Symphony No. 3, 3rd movement</td>
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<td><strong>Seventh disc:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Mozart. Symphony No. 25, 1st movement</td>
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<td>2. Chopin. Nocturne E flat major</td>
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<td>3. Brahms. Hungarian Dance No. 2</td>
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<td>4. Bach. WTC 1. Prelude No. 1 C major</td>
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<td>5. Paganini. Concerto No. 4, 2nd movement</td>
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<td>7. Sibelius. Valse Triste</td>
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<td>8. Rachmaninov. Vocalise</td>
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<td>10. Schubert. Serenade</td>
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<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Brahms.</td>
<td>Hungarian Dance No. 4</td>
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<td>Puccini.</td>
<td>Tosca. E Lucevan le Stele</td>
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<td>Mendelssohn.</td>
<td>Violin Concerto E minor, 1st movement</td>
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<td><strong>Eighth disc:</strong></td>
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<td>1. Liszt. Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2</td>
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<td>2. Tchaikovsky. Valse Sentimentale</td>
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<td>3. Bach. Piano Concerto No. 1, 1st movement</td>
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<td>4. Beethoven. Symphony No. 7, 2nd movement</td>
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<td>5. Rachmaninov. Prelude C sharp minor</td>
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<td>6. Brahms. Waltz</td>
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<td>7. Puccini. Tosca. Vissi D’arte</td>
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<td>9. Chopin. Prelude E minor</td>
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<td>10. Dvorak. Slavonic Dance No. 2</td>
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<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Bach.</td>
<td>Toccata D minor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Beethoven.</td>
<td>Sonata No. 17 (The Tempest), 3rd movement</td>
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<td>Tchaikovsky.</td>
<td>Swan Lake. Adagio</td>
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<td>Grieg.</td>
<td>Peer Gynt Suite No. 1. Anitra’s Dance</td>
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<td>Rodrigo.</td>
<td>Guitar Concerto (Aranjuez), 2nd movement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chopin.</td>
<td>Valse C sharp minor</td>
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<td>Leoncavallo.</td>
<td>Pagliacci. Vesti la Giubba</td>
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<td>Mendelssohn.</td>
<td>Symphony No. 4 (Italian), 4th movement</td>
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<td>Kreisler.</td>
<td>Liebesleid</td>
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<td>Prokofiev.</td>
<td>Romeo &amp; Juliet. Dance of the Knight</td>
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<td><strong>Ninth disc:</strong></td>
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<td>1. Boccherini. Menuet</td>
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<td>2. Tchaikovsky. The Seasons. June</td>
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<td>3. Vivaldi. Four Seasons. Summer, 3rd movement</td>
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<td>4. Rimsky-Korsakov. Scheherazade, 4th movement</td>
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<td>5. Bach. Prelude D minor</td>
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<td>6. Barber. Adagio</td>
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<td>7. Rossini. Barber of Seville. Figaro’s Cavatina</td>
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<td>8. Oginski. Polonaise “Farewell to the Homeland”</td>
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<td>9. Gluck. Melodie</td>
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<td>10. Sviridov. Snowstorm. Waltz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Bach.</td>
<td>Suite No. 3. Aria</td>
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4. Tchaikovsky. Romance “None but the lonely heart”  
6. Rachmaninov. Elegie  
7. Strauss J. The Blue Danube  
8. Bach. Concerto for 2 violins, 1st movement  

Fifth disc:  
1. Bach. Toccata D minor  
2. Beethoven. Sonata No. 17 (The Tempest), 3rd movement  
3. Tchaikovsky. Swan Lake. Adagio  
5. Rodrigo. Guitar Concerto (Aranjuez), 2nd movement  
6. Chopin. Valse C sharp minor  
7. Leoncavallo. Pagliacci. Vesti la Giubba  
8. Mendelssohn. Symphony No. 4 (Italian), 4th movement  
9. Kreisler. Liebesleid  
10. Prokofiev. Romeo & Juliet. Dance of the Knight  

Sixth disc:  
1. Vivaldi. Four Seasons. Spring, 1st movement  
2. Mozart. Fantasy D minor  
3. Rimsky-Korsakov. Flight of the Bumblebee  
4. Tchaikovsky. Symphony No. 6, 4th movement  
5. Liszt. Liebestraum  
6. Bach. Siciliana  
7. Verdi. La Traviata. Gipsy Chorus  
8. Massenet. Meditation  
10. Debussy. Clair de Lune  

Seventh disc:  
1. Mozart. Symphony No. 25, 1st movement  
2. Chopin. Nocturne E flat major  
3. Brahms. Hungarian Dance No. 2  
4. Bach. WTC 1. Prelude No. 1 C major  
5. Paganini. Concerto No. 4, 2nd movement  
7. Sibelius. Valse Triste  
8. Rachmaninov. Vocalise  
10. Schubert. Serenade  

Eighth disc:  
1. Liszt. Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2  
2. Tchaikovsky. Valse Sentimentale  
3. Bach. Piano Concerto No. 1, 1st movement  
4. Beethoven. Symphony No. 7, 2nd movement  
5. Rachmaninov. Prelude C sharp minor  
6. Brahms. Waltz  
7. Puccini. Tosca. Vissi D’arte  
9. Chopin. Prelude E minor  
10. Dvorak. Slavonic Dance No. 2  

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9. Gluck. Melodie  
10. Sviridov. Snowstorm. Waltz  

Tenth disc:  
1. Bach. Suite No. 3. Aria
In selecting the music pieces, the author has made efforts to study dozens of different performances and to offer the best of them. Some of the initially selected music pieces dropped out of the final list, because the right performances sought had not been found. The author’s initial list featured 300 music pieces, which were reduced to 100 after painstaking analysis. Naturally, a great number of major works have remained outside this collection, but the author hopes to continue his work along these lines in the future and to present a new selection of works featuring more extensively the classical West-European collection and filling in the gaps remaining in the current one. Listed in the selection presented have been works only in a simple form: parts of concertos, symphonies, operas, suites, this being a response to the need for a “panoramic” presentation of these works and reducing the volume of the collection for the sake of its academic purpose: presentation of a great number of music pieces and composers.

The method of selection of the presented musical works is subject of the empirical model that has been proved from the author's experience in different international orchestras as well as his teaching career. The selected works are distinguished by a strong emotional charge that will be proven through comparative analysis presented later in this article.

The layout of the discs has also been taken into consideration and the author has selected works of art conforming to the overall background of the music pieces, featuring in each individual disk. Selected in this way have been masterpieces by different artists complying with the general atmosphere of the music contained in the different discs. These include:

1. “Oak Grove” by Shishkin
2. “Branch of the Seine near Giverny” by Monet
3. “Birch Grove” by Levitan
4. “Lilac Bush” by Van Gogh
5. “Winter” by Shishkin
6. “Great Pine” by Cezanne
7. “Derelict Pond” by Serov
8. “The Garden at Montgeron” by Monet
9. “Ship Grove” by Shishkin
10. “Wheat Field with Cypresses” by Van Gogh

The author wants to repeat again that in the selection of the music pieces and artistic works he has been guided essentially by the aesthetic beauty of the music works presented. “Beauty and truthfulness – this is the contents of music. This was what Cesar Cui, a member of “Moguchaya Kuchka” [The Powerful Five], composer, music critic and promoter of the art of music, once claimed. “It is hard to formulate it more concisely or better: beauty and truthfulness. Imagine some music – not beautiful and not truthful and it will stop being music”.

Comparative Analysis of the Author’s Music Collection to Some Other Familiar Collections of a Mixed Kind.

At the beginning the author wants to emphasize that the most frequently quoted number in presenting a mixed collection is 100 pieces, because in such a number authors could claim to be successful in covering a significant volume of music pieces and composers and to respectively give a good idea about the various segments in the composition of music. Such collections are: 100 Best Classics (EMI Classics, 2004); The Top 100 Masterpieces of Classical Music 1685 – 1928 (Delta Music Inc., 1991); Classical Top 100 (Column Classics, 1996); 101 Classical Greats (Prism Leisure, 2001) and others. It is for this reason that the researcher has opted to present 100 music pieces.

The author wants to point out that having made his choice of works he had to check the objectivity of his own preference and respectively to compare it to some of the best known mixed collections in the world, to confirm the correctness of his choice. Therefore, the following comparative analysis has been made about the number of music works in the author’s selection coinciding with
music pieces in collections he has been familiar with:

100 Best Classics (EMI Classics, 2004) -------- 17
The Top 100 Masterpieces of Classical Music 1685 – 1928 (Delta Music Inc., 1991) -------- 26
Classical Top 100 (Column Classics, 1996) ---- 24
111 Years of Deutsche Grammophon (Deutsche Grammophon, 2009) ------------------- 17
101 Classical Great (Prism Leisure, 2001) ------ 20
Top 100 Der Klassik (TCM Classics, 2004) ---- 21
150 Favorite Melodies (Reader’s Digest, 2006)-27
The Essential Classics Collection (Deutsche Grammophone, 1999) -------- 20 out of 70 works
Classical Favorites Collector’s Edition (Madacy, 2008) ------------------------- 13 out of 45 works
Ultimate Classical Dreams (Decca, 2009) ---- 13 out of 66 works
Hall of Fame - The Great Composers (Classic FM Records, 2004) --------------- 9 out of 50 works
Great Performances, 1903 – 1998 (Sony Music, 1999) ----------------------- 5 out of 76 works

The average rate of music pieces coinciding with those in the major collections is 20.

Regarding the rate of pieces of music coinciding with works in major collections, the most frequently featuring works in the different collections coinciding with music pieces in his collection, the researcher will give several examples.

Repeated in 33 collections:
Pachelbel. Canon in D --------------------- 18 times
Beethoven. Fur Elise (Bagatel A minor)-- 17 times
Bach. Suite No. 3. Aria --------------------- 16 times
Liszt. Liebestraum ------------------------ 16
Mozart. Piano Concerto No. 21, 2nd movement- 15
Beethoven. Sonata No. 14 (Moonlight), 1st movement -------------------------- 15
Saint-Saens. The Swan --------------------- 14
Mozart. Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st movement 13
Massenet. Meditation ---------------------- 13
Tchaikovsky. Swan Lake. Scene ------------ 12
Albinoni. Adagio -------------------------- 12
Strauss J. The Blue Danube ------------- 12
Debussy. Clair de Lune --------------------- 11

R.-Korsakov. Flight of the Bumblebee -------- 10
Boccherini. Menuet -------------------------------- 9

Quite naturally there is no need to theorize why these music works have been repeatedly selected by various musicians in different countries, because their undisputed beauty defies any academic definition. “The idea of high music is to create through its structure an image of internal completeness, meaningfulness in time as well, as blissful existence, or using Beethoven’s words ‘a glorious instant’ ”.(6)

Naturally, there are music pieces which have been included in this collection, but others, familiar to the author, are absent, like:

Chopin. Nocturne C sharp minor;
Piazzolla. Oblivion;
Faure. After a Dream;
Bach. WTC. Prelude C minor;
Brahms. Hungarian Dance No. 1;
Massenet. Elegy;
Rachmaninov. Elegy;
Paganini-Liszt. La Campanella;
Beethoven. Piano Sonata No. 17, 3rd movement;
Mendelssohn. Symphony No. 4, 4th movement;
Mozart. Fantasy D minor;
Schubert. Serenade;
Rossini. Figaro’s Cavatina (Barber of Seville);
Bizet. Nadir’s Romance (The Pearl-Fishers), etc.

The author has chosen these works among many other options, after thorough analysis of both their specificity and the overall sound. The researcher also conducted a number of interviews with people, who are not musicians, but who highly appreciated the mentioned pieces, and as well advised with colleagues who confirmed the value of the mentioned masterpieces and defined them as higher models in the world classical music.

Here the author will take the liberty of quoting a few passages from the fundamental Music History, bringing out and reaffirming the correct meaning of his choice.

“Rachmaninov’s power and passionate protest against reality can also be felt in such chamber music pieces like the piano Elegy …. revealing the most delicate lyricism,
fine nuances, tender half-tones, intoxicating now for their dreamlike now for their tempestuous and passionate moods".\(^{(7)}\)

“In the history of keyboard polyphonic music The Well-Tempered Clavier has remained as the most outstanding monument of Bach’s imaginative and emotional thinking. In small-scale preludes and fugues Bach gave expression to profound thinking, intense drama and lyrical expression inherent in his major works.”\(^{(8)}\)

“Alongside the sonatas, variations and rondos, composed in the established forms, playing a great role in Mozart’s piano works are the freely composed fantasies with the character of improvisations. These works are closely associated with Mozart’s performing art of improvisation, as well as with the thorough study of Bach’s works in the style of improvisation. Standing out prominently among Mozart’s keyboard fantasies are the D minor and C minor fantasies.”\(^{(9)}\)

“Rossini’s melody is extremely lively, vivacious and alluring, being at the same time simple and accessible. What is amazing in The Barber of Seville is Rossini’s extraordinary inventiveness of melodies, as well as the cheerful and dance-like base (tarantella) in the cavatina of Figaro”.\(^{(10)}\)

“On the piano Liszt recreates the perfect technique of Italian violinist Paganini, without copying violin-playing methods, but recreating them through the medium of his instrument. Dedicated to this conception are Great Etudes after Paganini, most popular among them becoming No. 3 Campanella and No. 6, both composed in the form of variations.”\(^{(11)}\)

“Beethoven’s remarkable achievements are Sonatas 16, 17 and 18, which were composed in a turnaround moment and preceded the Eroica Symphony. Each one of these sonatas is highly individualized. Best known and most perfect for its tragic nature probably Sonata No. 17 in D minor (1802) … In its principles of formation its final is a precursor of the Fifth Symphony with its expressive sorrowful nature, composed according to the principles of the ostinato dancing rhythm, running through the development of the whole part and playing the role of its basic architectonic core.”\(^{(12)}\)

The main purpose of this paper has been to develop the students’ ear for music, musical memory and general musical culture. The collection compiled respectively follows precisely this Ariadne thread: musical education and the formation of aesthetic ideals in the perception of music pieces. Music teachers have always been faced with an important task: to help their students find their bearings in the multifaceted world of aesthetic values; to set apart real high art for its depth, emotional impact and multilayered meaning. In present-day culture it is very important to reckon with the factors of influence and impact of mass culture on the young generation. It is precisely that influence which often distorts or modifies the young people’s world outlook and aesthetic criteria. It is here in particular, that the influence and correct education through the selection of proper classical music works can change and enrich the cultivation of the students’ tastes for music.

It is common knowledge that the curriculum of the educational process is continued in semesters, covering music pieces from the Baroque period to our time. The works from this collection can be selectively used in compliance with the material chosen for the respective year or semester, for familiarization with similar styles or genres, as well as with the presentation of some of the top performances of pieces from the period or composer in question. “The impact of the work depends not so much on the features of the score, but rather on the nature of its reception. The multiplicity of the different interpretations always raises acutely the question of the role of the objective and subjective factors in the process or artistic reception; how far the artistic fabric proves to be a source of meaningful definition and to what extent the recipient adds auxiliary meaning.”\(^{(13)}\)

The question would naturally and logically be asked: why the researcher has opted for precisely this approach, viz. the presentation of a collection of discs featuring pieces of music from the Baroque period to our time, instead of applying a purely theoretical approach.

Answering, the author will take the liberty of offering a quotation: “And, generally, what would music today have been without records and discs? Without this magnificent invention we could not have even imagined how music could have become accessible to so many people. Today almost everything that has ever been composed could be listened to from discs, moreover, in a huge quantity of innumerable different renditions!
Gigantic progress, is it not?! He, who had taken interest in music in the past, had been forced to possess music scores moreover provided that he could decipher them… therefore there is nothing we could possibly have against discs. They have opened up new horizons to us – musicians."(14)

The advantage of the present collection in comparison with a multitude of other collections is in the fact that the works listed have been drawn from various sources, viz.: from the personal collection of the author of the paper, from different collections of friends or colleagues, as well as from various sound recording companies, and the Internet, whereas most of the similar collections mentioned in the paper have been released by the respective sound recording companies, which limit themselves only to those works, which are part of their contracts and licensed copyright. Of course, in the selection of all masterpieces, the author has been led by his personal opinion, which is inevitable when working with live-sounding music samples. Furthermore this was the goal of the author - to give a new look and to set and select a different palette of music works.

It should be emphasized once again that the performance skills have been a priority for the author of the collection, this being leading in most of the cases. Therefore it has respectively taken more than two years for the compiler to collect and select the most valuable performances from an academic and performing point of view.

Music and the Internet, occupy top places in the young people’s leisure time. It is to be regretted that classical music with its characteristic inventory makes the understanding of its language more difficult to young people, which naturally reduces the possibility of interiorizing its spiritual potential. The author could state here that this has essentially been due to the insufficient musical literacy, which makes it impossible to comprehend the spiritual potential of classical music.

Systems for the musical education of non-musicians or for primary education of starting musicians (as is our case) have become widespread in the USA, Canada, France and Japan, bringing forward the platforms of the systems of Zoltan Kodaly and Carl Orff, which had proven their utility with the passage of time. What is essential for them is listening to different works and a strong emphasis on rhythm and movement in music. Concentrating precisely on musical literacy, the author of this paper has been presenting to beginning musicians a wide-ranging panorama of selected works, which are to enrich their world outlook in the attempt to overcome the indifference regarding various genres and styles. Because, in this case, the approach of “spiritualizing” knowledge has been used, through the application of technological progress and the rules in the development of modern culture. The paper’s author is clearly aware that exerting enormous influence on the formation of general human values and personal musical culture of students in Jordan is their independent interest in classical music, which subsequently develops into self-education. Precisely such a form, viz. self education and independent accumulation of knowledge, has been considered in this case: presentation of a collection of music pieces, which becomes realized as a jumping board in the self-education in music. The idea of the collection also helps students to improve their listening skills, which leads to a better understanding of what music actually contains. The present collection aims to provoke the interest of better understanding the various phenomena in music, starting with the easiest way - to hear, and to like a certain style or composer, the students will be encouraged to become acquainted in a deeper manner such as specific segments - historical, cultural, musical and theoretical. This will naturally, lead to comprehensive and deeper knowledge of the processes in the art of music and musicology in particular.

In conclusion, this paper should not be discussed as a separate piece of work, but rather as a further theoretical explanation of the collection of 10 discs offered, featuring 100 classical masterpieces of West-European music.
NOTES


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دراسة مقارنة لمجموعة اختارها الباحث من أهم الأعمال الموسيقية الكلاسيكية والمجموعات الكلاسيكية الأخرى

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ملخص

تقدم هذه الورقة لائحة لمادة سمعية من الأعمال الموسيقية الكلاسيكية المصنفة وفقاً لمؤلفيها والوضوعة في عشرة أفراس مفيدة بهدف تعرف طلاب المعاهد وأقسام الموسيقي في الجامعات الأردنية بالموروث الموسيقي الأوروبي. وأحترى هذه المجموعة تقدم أهم الأعمال الموسيقية وأكثرها تميزاً. كما وتقدم هذه الورقة تحليلًا نظريًا ووضعيًا لأسباب اختيار هذه الأعمال، كما وتطرح الورقة تحلل أعمالاً أخرى لها نفس أهمية ولم ترد في المجموعة.

الكلمات الدالة: المجموعة، الأعمال الموسيقية الكلاسيكية.