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Orchestral Repertoire in the St. Petersburg Conservatory's Conductor Training 1979–2019

This article examines the orchestral repertoire used in the conductor training programme at the St. Petersburg (Leningrad) Conservatory from 1979 to 2019, based on the experiences of Finnish alumni of the conservatory. The data for the study consists of interviews with five conductors and the author's own notes from his student days, which are used to investigate the pedagogical nature of the orchestral repertoire and its relationship to the canon of orchestral music, as well as to compare Finnish alumni's study and learning experiences. Even though the interviewees studied at the conservatory at different times and with different teachers, similarities are found in both the repertoire and experiences. The significance of Beethoven's and Tchaikovsky's works in the repertoire, the relatively large proportion of Russian repertoire and the scarcity of modern works are highlighted. However, the repertoire correlates well with the works favoured by Finnish orchestras, while also providing a good foundation for the development of individual conducting technique.