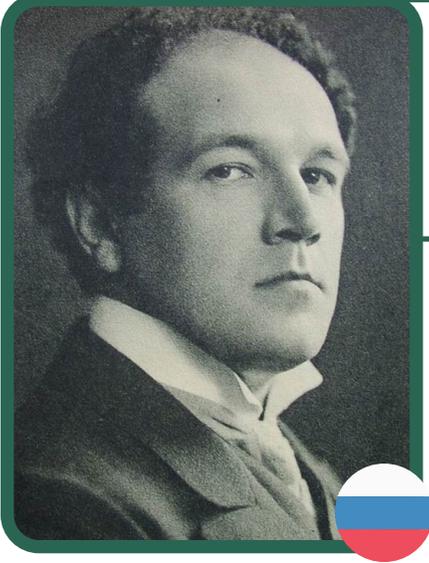




COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY

**NIKOLAI MEDTNER**

BORN: January 5, 1880

ERA/STYLE: Romantic / Neo-Classical

DIED: November 13, 1951

HOMETOWN: Moscow, Russia

Nikolai Medtner was a Russian pianist and composer who lived around the turn of the 20th century. Although his music was relatively unknown in the 25 years following his death, he is now one of the most often performed composers of music for the piano—all of his many works include the piano!

Born to a musical family in Moscow, Nikolai Medtner took his first piano lessons from his mother and uncle. In 1900, at age 20, he entered the famous Moscow Conservatory where he was well-respected by his peers and teachers for his skill and talent as both a performer and composer. It was here that Medtner fell in love with writing music, and, much to the disappointment of his family, rejected a career as a concert artist in order to pursue composing as his main profession.

However, like many composers of his time, Medtner continued performing his own works in order to share them with audiences and other musicians. He became good friends with many other famous pianists and composers, one of whom was Sergei Rachmaninov. Rachmaninov, who fled to the United States before the Russian Revolution took place in 1917, was able to secure a concert tour of the United States and Canada for Medtner in 1924. However, Nikolai never cared for the business of touring, and his concerts after that became more infrequent.

In 1936, Medtner settled in London with his wife, Anna, a concert violinist. He was well-respected there, and he and Anna enjoyed a daily routine of teaching, practice, and composing, but his health began to decline in the mid-1940s. In response, a close friend and supporter, the Maharajah of Mysore from India, founded the Medtner Society to record all of his works. Largely performed by the composer himself, they were able to record performances of his three piano concertos, several sonatas and chamber works, and a number of songs and shorter pieces before he passed away in 1951. In gratitude to his patron, Medtner dedicated his Third Piano Concerto to the Maharajah of Mysore.