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## Kuriokhin's music uses vacuum cleaners, dogs

By Margo Miller  
Globe Staff

When Sergei Kuriokhin gives a concert, he doesn't just play the piano. As a leading practitioner — in fact, the leading practitioner — of "Pop Mechanics," he is likely to incorporate a nightclub orchestra, opera and pop singers, the "industrial" section of a junkyard, farm animals, snake charmers and musicians from the Soviet Army. This goes over big at home, now that "unofficial art" can be performed in public in the Soviet Union, and a Kuriokhin concert is SRO at Soviet sports arenas.

Some music writers think Kuriokhin is the Soviet John Cage. Fans of Gerald Hoffnung or P. D. Q. Bach, who elevated the humble vacuum cleaner to a virtuosic concert instrument, also claim him. The word from Oberlin College, where Kuriokhin concertized last week, is that he sits squarely within the tradition of 1910s and 1920s avant-garde industrialized art. In short, he harks back to the Italian Futurists.

Kuriokhin "is one of the leading exponents of an international movement that challenges boundaries between classical and pop music," says Conrad Cummings, who directs Oberlin's program in technology in music and related arts. At Oberlin, town and gown collaborated on his concert. Ham-

mers rang and saws whined. Computers whirred. Dogs barked. Choirs hymned and bands boomed. Coeds danced the can-can. There was reggae. And, yes, a vacuum cleaner hummed.

"The object," says Kuriokhin, "is to make a musical whole out of complex and contradictory elements."

When Kuriokhin performs in Boston, he will do a program of popular contemporary Soviet music. The Wang Center, where this will take place on Wednesday beginning at 7:30 p.m., merely says he will play "keyboard." Oberlin's Cummings recommends it. "When he plays, you have the full sense of the piano as an orchestral instrument. Within its scope are all the timbres and nuances of the orchestra combined with the spontaneity and spark of jazz."

The only industrial noise at the Wang will come from the popping of champagne corks at a post-concert reception for Kuriokhin.

Then Kuriokhin will head for the Willow Jazz Club at 699 Broadway, Ball Square, Somerville, where he will sit in with the avant-garde trio, The Fringe.

Kuriokhin is on an American tour. His first stop in Massachusetts will be tomorrow in Worcester, where he will play at Tuckerman Hall, 10 Tuckerman St. The program will begin at 8 p.m. when the Soviet music critic, Alex Kan, will speak on contemporary jazz and folk music in the Soviet Union.

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