

Levinton ringtone: Artist's statement

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This ringtone is called *Levinton*. I composed it to celebrate academic achievements of Georgii Akhillovich Levinton, outstanding Russian philologist and folklorist. Based in Saint Petersburg, he is the author of numerous works on Russian literature. The idea of a ringtone came to me when I was involved in preparation of a collection of articles dedicated to Levinton. A few of us gathered together in Moscow 2007 to discuss planned submissions. As it was extremely hot, few innovative ideas were presented, instead we exchanged silly jokes. Someone suggested composing a poem; someone else – making a painting; and I said I would compose a ringtone. This is because the word ‘ringtone’ rhymes with the name of the scholar in Russian. And so it was. On the way to my lodgings in a street named after the Soviet pilot Kokkinaki, whose name sounds ridiculous yet musical, I stopped to enjoy a pint in one of the neighbourhood’s friendly courtyards, and within an hour or so the ringtone was born. I was wise enough not to include the ringtone into the volume – instead I submitted a co-authored article. (Since then I have not composed any other ringtone, and I will not in the future.) Later on the ringtone was lost to a gang of criminals who stole my telephone. At first I did not worry about it much. Later on, however, the mugger was caught (thanks to the telephone). The temporary owner of my telephone – dirty little bastard – deleted all my contacts from the phone but kept *Levinton*. So now every time I press the little button with a green handset on my phone I interrupt *Levinton*, this pretty boring primitive and otherwise horrible melody. It, however, reminds me the summer of 2007, intertextual studies, the awful taste of Russian beer *Saryi mel’nik iz bochonka*, and of the fast pace of frivolous life.

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