

Jucholing letters to Sergei Diagbilev Vernon Duke Jascha Heifetz Serge Koussevitsky Sergei Eisenstein

Edited Stronslated by Harlow Robinson

# **Selected Letters Of Sergei Prokofiev**

**Stephen Walsh** 

## **Selected Letters Of Sergei Prokofiev:**

Selected Letters of Sergei Prokofiev Sergey Prokofiev, 1998 This volume collects for the first time in English the most representative and enlightening of Prokofiev's letters including some previously suppressed missives that have never before been published Expertly translated and annotated by Harlow Robinson the correspondence presented here covers Prokofiev s earliest years at St Petersburg Conservatory his extensive worldwide travels and his return to Moscow Among the correspondents are childhood friend Vera Alpers harpist Eleonora Damskaya ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev theatrical director Vsevolod Meyerhold Soviet critic Boris Asafiev composers Vernon Duke and Nikolai Miaskovsky soprano Nina Koshetz musicologist Nicolas Slonimsky violinist Jascha Heifetz conductor Serge Koussevitsky and film director Sergei Eisenstein Prokofiev vividly describes often with dramatic flair and a quirky sense of humor concerts performances his compositions political events and meetings with other musicians and composers His observations are peppered with musical gossip as well as eccentric original and disarmingly apolitical insights Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography Harlow Robinson, 2019-07-31 Sergei Prokofiev A Biography traces the career of one of the most significant and most popular composers of the twentieth century Using materials from previously closed archives in the USSR from archives in Paris and London and interviews with family members and musicians who knew and worked with Prokofiev the biography illuminates the life and music of the prolific creator of such classics as Peter and the Wolf Romeo and Juliet Cinderella the Classical Symphony the Alexander NevskyCantata and the Lieutenant Kizhe Suite Prokofiev 1891 1953 lived a life complicated and enriched by the momentous political and social transformation of his homeland in the aftermath of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution Born to a middle class family in rural Ukraine he demonstrated amazing music talent at a very early age In 1904 he began serious musical study at St Petersburg Conservatory For graduation he composed and performed his audacious Piano Concerto No 1 which helped to make his name as the Bad Boy of Russian Music As one of the most accomplished pianists of his time Prokofiev composed many works for the instrument which remain today an important fixture of the concert repertory Prokofiev fled the chaos following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution for the United States where he lived and worked for several years producing his comic opera The Love for Three Oranges and his very popular Third Piano Concerto But he found American taste too underdeveloped and moved to Paris in 1923 where he collaborated on ballets with Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes including Prodigal Son and wrote several more operas The Gambler The Fiery Angel Prokofiev also toured widely as a concert pianist reaching nearly all major European capitals and returning several times to the United States where his music was promoted by Serge Koussevitsky conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra During his Paris years he began returning regularly on tours to the USSR greeted with ecstatic enthusiasm Dissatisfied with his music s reception in Paris and homesick for Russia Prokofiev in 1936 made the controversial decision to move with his wife and two sons to Moscow just as Josef Stalin's purges were intensifying Until 1938 he continued to tour abroad In Moscow and

Leningrad Prokofiev worked with brilliant artists including film director Sergei Eisenstein for whom he wrote the scores to Alexander Nevsky and Ivan the Terrible pianist Sviatoslav Richter cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and ballerina Galina Ulanova who danced the role of Juliet in Romeo and Juliet But life was difficult during World War II Prokofiev and his second wife were evacuated to Central Asia Even so he managed to compose his gigantic opera War and Peace his epic Fifth Symphony and many other seminal works of Soviet and world music After suffering a stroke in 1945 Prokofiev's health worsened At the same time his music was attacked as formalist by Stalin's cultural officials in 1948 when his first wife was arrested and sent to a labor camp Ironically Prokofiev died on the very same day as Stalin March 5 1953 One is grateful for Harlow Robinson's Sergei Prokofiev A Biography which is about as good as a musical biography gets Robinson illuminates the artist's character penetrates the human significance of the music demonstrates an easy command of Russian political and cultural history and writes with clarity and vigor Anyone thinking about Prokofiev is deeply in his debt Algis Valiunas The Weekly Standard Harlow Robinson's biography of the composer is the fullest account to date a thoughtful study of a puzzling personality in and out of music and a comprehensive history of the East West cultural curtain as it constrained the life and work of the one major artist who had been active on both of its sides The biographer is fair minded generous to Prokofiev but by no means an apologist the best written biography of a modern composer Robert Craft The Washington Post An indefatigably productive composer who achieved considerable success during his lifetime Prokofiev seldom seemed satisfied as he restlessly sought ever greater recognition Mr Robinson explores the darkest corners of this labyrinthine life and brings clarity to some of its more puzzling twists and turns he skillfully relates Prokofiev s life to greater political and cultural currents Carol J Oja The New York Times Robinson tells us more than anyone hitherto about the composer's life as well as much about the origins and qualities of the music The first full biography published in English to avoid the pitfalls of cold war politics A book of many virtues Robinson gives us more facts about Prokofiev's life than any previous biographer and he weaves them into a story of politics art and romance that marvelously gathers momentum Robinson writes with the skill of a novelist but the story in this instance is true George Martin The Opera Quarterly A splendid life by a Slavic studies specialist who is also a musician of one of our century s most popular composers Mr Robinson s account of the musical development of his monomaniacal hero is first rate The New Yorker A well written scholarly and very detailed book April FitzLyon The Times Literary Supplement Certainly there is nothing in English to rival Robinson's book in scope and detail Richard Dyer The Boston Globe Prokofiev has long been in need of the full impressively researched congenially written study that Robinson gives us Gary Schmidgall Opera News A fluent readable and detailed biography of Prokofiev from the perspective of a musically informed cultural historian Robinson has made a complicated and contradictory life accessible to the western reader Robinson has performed the important first step of chronicling for the general reader one of the twentieth century s major musical personalities and his biography will stitch music into the Russian cultural scene for many professional Slavists

as well Caryl Emerson The Russian Review The manner in which Stravinsky and Prokofiev pursued their careers in tandem for a while is one of the subjects generously described by Harlow Robinson with his flair for interesting and relevant information in his absorbing new biography of Prokofiev Arthur Berger The New York Review of Books More detailed and comprehensive and less politically partisan than previous biographies this readable account deals objectively but compassionately with the life and work of a major Russian composer Publishers Weekly This is the best biography in English to date on Prokofiev Robinson candidly exposes Prokofiev's flaws from his musical capriciousness and opportunism to his unpardonable social tactlessness Throughout the writing is intended for the lay reader crisp fast paced and unencumbered by technical jargon Highly recommended Library Journal Sergey Prokofiev and His World Simon Morrison, 2018-06-26 Sergev Prokofiev 1891 1953 arguably the most popular composer of the twentieth century led a life of triumph and tragedy The story of his prodigious childhood in tsarist Russia maturation in the West and rise and fall as a Stalinist era composer is filled with unresolved questions Sergey Prokofiev and His World probes beneath the surface of his career and contextualizes his contributions to music on both sides of the nascent Cold War divide The book contains previously unknown documents from the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art in Moscow and the Prokofiev Estate in Paris The literary notebook of the composer's mother Mariya Grigoryevna illuminates her involvement in his education and is translated in full as are ninety eight letters between the composer and his business partner Levon Atovmyan The collection also includes a translation of Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky s unperformed stage adaptation of Eugene Onegin for which Prokofiev composed incidental music in 1936 The essays in the book range in focus from musical sketches to Kremlin decrees The contributors explore Prokofiev s time in America evaluate his working methods in the mid 1930s document the creation of his score for the film Lieutenant Kizhe tackle how and why Prokofiev rewrote his 1930 Fourth Symphony in 1947 detail his immortalization by Soviet bureaucrats composers and scholars and examine Prokofiev's interest in Christian Science and the paths it opened for his music The contributors are Mark Aranovsky Kevin Bartig Elizabeth Bergman Leon Botstein Pamela Davidson Caryl Emerson Marina Frolova Walker Nelly Kravetz Leonid Maximenkov Stephen Press and Peter Schmelz American-Soviet Cultural Diplomacy Cadra Peterson McDaniel, 2014-11-18 American Soviet Cultural Diplomacy The Bolshoi Ballet's American Premiere is the first full length examination of a Soviet cultural diplomatic effort Following the signing of an American Soviet cultural exchange agreement in the late 1950s Soviet officials resolved to utilize the Bolshoi Ballet's planned 1959 American tour to awe audiences with Soviet choreographers great accomplishments and Soviet performers superb abilities Relying on extensive research Cadra Peterson McDaniel examines whether the objectives behind Soviet cultural exchange and the specific aims of the Bolshoi Ballet s 1959 American tour provided evidence of a thaw in American Soviet relations Interwoven throughout this study is an examination of the Soviets competing efforts to create ballets encapsulating Communist ideas while simultaneously reinterpreting pre revolutionary ballets so that these works were ideologically acceptable McDaniel

investigates the rationale behind the creation of the Bolshoi's repertoire and the Soviet leadership's objectives and interpretation of the tour s success as well as American response to the tour The repertoire included the four ballets Romeo and Juliet Swan Lake Giselle and The Stone Flower and two Highlights Programs which included excerpts from various pre and post revolutionary ballets operas and dance suites How the Americans and the Soviets understood the Bolshoi's success provides insight into how each side conceptualized the role of the arts in society and in political transformation American Soviet Cultural Diplomacy The Bolshoi Ballet's American Premiere demonstrates the ballet's role in Soviet foreign policy a shift to artful warfare and thus emphasizes the significance of studying cultural exchange as a key aspect of Soviet foreign policy and analyzes the continued importance of the arts in twenty first century Russian politics The Classical Music Lover's Companion to Orchestral Music Robert Philip, 2018-01-01 An invaluable guide for lovers of classical music designed to enhance their enjoyment of the core orchestral repertoire from 1700 to 1950 Robert Philip scholar broadcaster and musician has compiled an essential handbook for lovers of classical music designed to enhance their listening experience to the full Covering four hundred works by sixty eight composers from Corelli to Shostakovich this engaging companion explores and unpacks the most frequently performed works including symphonies concertos overtures suites and ballet scores It offers intriguing details about each piece while avoiding technical terminology that might frustrate the non specialist reader Philip identifies key features in each work as well as subtleties and surprises that await the attentive listener and he includes enough background and biographical information to illuminate the composer's intentions Organized alphabetically from Bach to Webern this compendium will be indispensable for classical music enthusiasts whether in the concert hall or enjoying recordings at home Sergei Prokofiev's Alexander Nevsky Kevin Bartig, 2017 Audiences have long enjoyed Sergei Prokofiev s musical score for Alexander Nevsky a historical film that cast a thirteenth century Russian victory over invading Teutonic Knights as an allegory of contemporary Soviet strength in the face of Nazi warmongering The cantata that Prokofiev derived from the score has proven even more popular and remains one of his most performed works This critical companion explores this music and the ways in which it has engaged listeners performers and artists throughout the twentieth and twenty first centuries tracing its path from state propaganda to repertory classic Rethinking Prokofiev Rita McAllister, Christina Guillaumier, 2020-01-23 Among major 20th century composers whose music is poorly understood Sergei Prokofiev stands out conspicuously The turbulent times in which Prokofiev lived and the chronology of his travels he left Russia in the wake of Revolution and returned at the height of the Stalinist purges have caused unusually polarized appraisals of his music While individual distinctive and instantly recognizable Prokofiev's music was also idiosyncratically tonal in an age when tonality was largely pass Prokofiev s output therefore has been largely elusive and difficult to assess against contemporary trends More than sixty years after the composer's death editors Rita McAllister and Christina Guillaumier offer Rethinking Prokofiev as an assessment that redresses this enigmatic composer's legacy Often more political

than artistic these appraisals have depended not only upon the date of publication but also the geographical location of the writer Commissioned from some of the most distinguished and rising scholars in the field this collection highlights the background and context of Prokofiev's work Contributors delve into the composer's relationship to nineteenth century Russian traditions Silver Age and Symbolist composers and poets the culture of Paris in the 1920s and 30s and to his later Soviet colleagues and younger contemporaries They also investigate his reception in the West his return to Russia and the effect of his music on contemporary popular culture Still the main focus of the book is on the music itself his early experimental piano and vocal works as well as his piano concertos operas film scores early ballets and late symphonies Through an empirical examination of his characteristic harmonies melodies cadences and musical gestures and through an analysis of the newly uncovered contents of his sketch books contributors reveal much of what makes Prokofiev an idiosyncratic genius and his music intriguing often dramatic and almost always beguiling Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev StephenD. Press, 2017-07-05 Ballet impresario Sergey Pavlovich Diaghilev and composer Sergey Sergeyevich Prokofiev are eminent figures in twentieth century cultural history yet this is the first detailed account of their fifteen year collaboration The beginning was not trouble free but despite two false starts Ala i Lolli and the first version of its successor Chout Diaghilev maintained his confidence in the composer With his guidance and encouragement Prokofiev established his mature balletic style After some years of estrangement during which Prokofiev wrote for choreographer Boris Romanov and conductor publisher Serge Koussevitsky Diaghilev came to the composer's rescue at a low point in his Western career The impresario encouraged Prokofiev s turn towards a new simplicity and offered him a great opportunity for career renewal with a topical ballet on Soviet life Le Pas d acier Even as late as 1928 29 Diaghilev compelled Prokofiev to achieve new heights of expressivity in his characterizations L Enfant prodigue Although Western scholars have investigated Prokofiev s operas piano works and symphonies little attention has been paid to his early ballets written for Diaghilev s Ballets Russes Despite Prokofiev's devotion to opera it was his ballets for Diaghilev as much as his concertos and solo piano works that earned his renown in Western Europe in the 1920s Stephen D Press discusses the genesis of each ballet including the important contributions of the scenic designers Mikhail Larionov Georgy Yakulov and Georges Rouault and the choreographer dancers L id Massine Serge Lifar and George Balanchine and the special relationship between the ballets progenitors **Archaism** Irina Shevelenko, 2024-08-15 Russian Archaism considers the aesthetic quest of Russian modernism in relation to the nation building ideas that spread in the late imperial period Irina Shevelenko argues that the cultural milieu in Russia where the modernist movement began as an extension of Western trends at the end of the nineteenth century soon became captivated by nationalist indoctrination Members of artistic groups critics and theorists advanced new interpretations of the goals of aesthetic experimentation that would allow them to embed the nation building agenda within the aesthetic one Shevelenko's book focuses on the period from the formation of the World of Art group 1898 through the Great War and

encompasses visual arts literature music and performance As Shevelenko shows it was the rejection of the Russian westernized tradition informed by the revival of populist sensibilities across the educated class that played a formative role in the development of Russian modernist agendas particularly after the 1905 revolution Russian Archaism reveals the modernist artistic enterprise as a crucial source of insight into Russia's political and cultural transformation in the early twentieth **Opera in Postwar Venice** Harriet Boyd-Bennett, 2018-09-13 Beginning from the unlikely vantage point of Venice in the aftermath of fascism and World War II this book explores operatic production in the city's nascent postwar culture as a lens onto the relationship between opera and politics in the twentieth century Both opera and Venice in the middle of the century are often talked about in strikingly similar terms as museums locked in the past and blind to the future These clich's are here overturned perceptions of crisis were in fact remarkably productive for opera and despite being physically locked in the past Venice was undergoing a flourishing of avant garde activity Focusing on a local musical culture Harriet Boyd Bennett recasts some of the major composers works stylistic categories and narratives of twentieth century music The study provides fresh understandings of works by composers as diverse as Stravinsky Prokofiev Verdi Britten and Historical Dictionary of Russian Music Daniel Jaffé, 2012-03-08 Russian music today has a firm hold around the world in the repertoire of opera houses ballet companies and orchestras The music of Pyotr Tchaikovsky Nikolay Rimsky Korsakov Sergey Rachmaninov Sergey Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostakovich is very much today s lingua franca both in the concert hall and on the soundtracks of international blockbusters from Hollywood Meanwhile the innovations of Modest Mussorgsky Alexander Borodin and Igor Stravinsky have played their crucial role in the development of Western music in the last century influencing the work of virtually every notable composer of the last century The Historical Dictionary of Russian Music covers the history of Russian music starting from the earliest archaeological discoveries to the present including folk music sacred music and secular art music The book contains a chronology an introductory essay an extensive bibliography and over 500 cross referenced dictionary entries on every major composer in Russia's history as well as several leading composers of today such as Sofia Gubaidulina Rodion Shchedrin Leonid Desyatnikov Elena Firsova and Pavel Karmanov It also includes the patrons and institutions that commissioned works by those composers and the choreographers and dancers who helped shape the great ballet masterpieces This book is an excellent access point for students researchers and anyone Prokofiev David Nice, 2003-01-01 The book follows Prokofiev s personal and wanting to know more about Russian music musical journey from his childhood on a Ukrainian country estate to the years he spent travelling in America and Europe as an acclaimed interpreter of his own works Nice sheds new light on the striking compositions of Prokofiev's early years his training at the St Petersburg Conservatory and the circumstances of his departure from Russia in 1918 for what the composer thought would be a short tour of America Stravinsky's "Great Passacaglia" Donald G. Traut, 2016 Context and composition Concerto as catalyst Analytical tools and recurring elements Counterpoint and tonality in the first movement

Tetrachords and tritones in the largo Points of imitation in the finale Taking a Chance on Love George Harwood Phillips, 2019-09-19 When his friend George Gershwin persuaded Vladimir Dukelsky to change his name to Vernon Duke what the music world already knew became apparent to the public at large the man had two musical personas one as a composer the other as a tunesmith One wrote highbrow music the other lowbrow Yet the two sides complemented each other Neither could function without the other Born and classically trained in imperial Russia Vladimir Dukelsky 1903 1969 fled the Bolshevik Revolution with his family discovered American popular music in cosmopolitan Constantinople and pursued his budding interest to New York before his passion for classical music drew him to Paris where the impresario Serge Diaghilev hired him to compose a ballet for the Ballets Russes Taking a Chance on Love immerses us in Duke's dizzying globe hopping and genre swapping as financial concerns and musical passions drive him from composing symphonies to writing songs from brilliant successes to Broadway flops and from performing with classical performers to writing books and articles Throughout as he crisscrosses the landscape of American music collaborating with lyricists such as Howard Dietz Ira Gershwin and Sammy Cohn the incomparable Vernon Duke emerges clearly from these pages sometimes charming sometimes infuriating always entertaining Although Vernon Duke has entered the canon of American standards with such songs as Taking a Chance on Love I Can t Get Started and April in Paris little is known about the composer with two personas Taking a Chance on Love brings the intriguing double life of Dukelsky Duke back into the spotlight restoring a chapter to the history of the Great American Songbook and to the story of twentieth century music <u>Janacek</u> Mirka Zemanová, 2002 A compelling portrait of this enigmatic musical genius within the context of the cultural and political currents of his time Bruno Walter Erik Ryding, Rebecca Pechefsky, 2008-10-01 div Bruno Walter one of the greatest conductors in the twentieth century lived a fascinating life in difficult times This engrossing book is the first full length biography of Walter to appear in English Erik Ryding and Rebecca Pechefsky describe Walter's early years in Germany where his successes in provincial theaters led to positions at the Berlin State Opera and the Vienna State Opera They then tell of his decade long term as Bavarian music director and his romantic involvement with the soprano Delia Reinhardt his other positions in the musical community until he was ousted from Germany when the Nazi Party came to power in 1933 and his return to Vienna where he was artistic director of the Opera House until he was again forced out by the Nazis Finally they trace his career in the United States where he led the New York Philharmonic and other orchestras and in his last years made numerous recordings with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra an ensemble created especially for him Ryding and Pechefsky are the first biographers to make extensive use of the thousands of unpublished letters in the Bruno Walter Papers now in the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts In addition to interviewing more than sixty people who knew Walter they examined countless reviews to assess the popular and critical impact he had on his times Authoritative and even handed this biography sheds new light on Walter one of the great formative influences in musical interpretation DIV Stravinsky Stephen Walsh, 2020-07-15

Widely regarded the greatest composer of the twentieth century Igor Stravinsky was central to the development of modernism in art Deeply influential and wonderfully productive he is remembered for dozens of masterworks from The Firebird and The Rite of Spring to The Rake's Progress but no dependable biography of him exists Previous studies have relied too heavily on his own unreliable memoirs and conversations and until now no biographer has possessed both the musical knowledge to evaluate his art and the linguistic proficiency needed to explore the documentary background of his life a life whose span extended from tsarist Russia to Switzerland France and ultimately the United States In this revealing volume the first of two Stephen Walsh follows Stravinsky from his birth in 1882 to 1934 He traces the composer's early Russian years in new and fascinating detail laying bare the complicated relationships within his family and showing how he first displayed his extraordinary talents within the provincial musical circle around his teacher Nikolay Rimsky Korsakov Stravinsky's brilliantly creative involvement with the Ballets Russes is illuminated by a sharp sense of the internal artistic politics that animated the group Portraying Stravinsky's circumstances as an migr in France trying to make his living as a conductor and pianist as well as a composer while beset by emotional and financial demands Walsh reveals the true roots of his notorious obsession with money during the 1920s and describes with sympathy the nature of his long affair with Vera Sudevkina While always respecting Stravinsky's own insistence that life and art be kept distinct Stravinsky makes clear precisely how the development of his music was connected to his life and to the intellectual environment in which he found himself But at the same time it demonstrates the composer's remarkably pragmatic psychology which led him to consider the welfare of his art to be of paramount importance before which everything else had to give way Hence for example his questionable attitude toward Hitler and Mussolini and his reputation as a touchy unpredictable man as famous for his enmities as for his friendships Stephen Walsh long established as an expert on Stravinsky's music has drawn upon a vast array of material much of it unpublished or unavailable in English to bring the man himself in all his color and genius to glowing life Written with elegance and energy comprehensive balanced and original Stravinsky is essential reading for anyone interested in the adventure of art in our time Praise from the British press for Stephen Walsh's The Music of Stravinsky One of the finest general studies of the composer Wilfrid Mellers composer Times Literary Supplement The beautiful prose of The Music of Stravinsky is itself a fund of arresting images For those who already love Stravinsky s music Walsh's essays on each work will bring a smile of recognition and joy at new kernels of insight For those unfamiliar with many of the works he discusses Walsh's commentaries are likely to whet appetites for performances of the works John Shepherd Notes This book sent me scurrying back to the scores and made me want to recommend it to other people Above all it is a good read Anthony Pople Music and Letters **Irony and Sound** Stephen Zank, 2009 An insightful and exquisitely written reconsideration of Ravel's modernity his teaching and his place in twentieth century music and culture What is it about Bol ro Gaspard de la nuit and Daphnis et Chlo that makes musicians and listeners alike love them so Stephen Zank

here illuminates these and other works of Maurice Ravel through several of the composer's fascinations dynamic intensification counterpoint orchestration exotic influences on Western music and an interest in multisensorial perception Connecting all these fascinations Zank argues is irony His book offers an appreciation of Ravel's musical irony that is grounded in the vocabularies and criticism of the time and in two early attempts at writing up a Ravel Aesthetic by intimates of Ravel Thomas Mann calledirony the phenomenon that is beyond compare the most profound and most alluring in the world Irony and Sound written with insight and flair provides a long needed reconsideration of Ravel's modernity his teaching and his place in twentieth century music and culture Musicologist Stephen Zank has taught at University of Illinois University of North Texas and University of Rochester He is the author of Maurice Ravel A Guideto Research Fandom, Authenticity, and Opera A. Fishzon, 2013-09-11 In Russia at the turn of the twentieth century printed literature and performances from celebrity narratives and opera fandom to revolutionary acts and political speeches frequently articulated extreme emotional states and passionate belief A uniquely intense approach to public life and private expression the melodramatic imagination is at the center of this study Previously scholars have only indirectly addressed the everyday appropriation of melodramatic aesthetics in Russia choosing to concentrate on canonical texts and producers of mass culture Collective fantasies and affects are daunting objects of study difficult to render and almost impossible to prove empirically Music and art historians with some notable exceptions have been reluctant to discuss reception for similar reasons By analyzing the artifacts and practices of a commercialized opera culture author Anna Fishzon provides a solution to these challenges Her focus on celebrity and fandom as features of the melodramatic imagination helps illuminate Russian modernity and provides the groundwork for comparative studies of fin de si cle European popular and high culture selfhood authenticity and political theater **People's Artist** Simon Morrison, 2010-10-25 Sergey Prokofiev was one of the twentieth century s greatest composers and one of its greatest mysteries Until now In The People's Artist Simon Morrison draws on groundbreaking research to illuminate the life of this major composer deftly analyzing Prokofiev's music in light of new archival discoveries Indeed Morrison was the first scholar to gain access to the composer's sealed files in the Russian State Archives where he uncovered a wealth of previously unknown scores writings correspondence and unopened journals and diaries The story he found in these documents is one of lofty hopes and disillusionment of personal and creative upheavals Morrison shows that Prokofiev seemed to thrive on uncertainty during his Paris years stashing scores in suitcases and ultimately stunning his fellow emigr s by returning to Stalin's Russia At first Stalin's regime treated him as a celebrity but Morrison details how the bureaucratic machine ground him down with corrections and censorship forcing rewrites of such major works as Romeo and Juliet until it finally censured him in 1948 ending his career and breaking his health

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