Russian Music and Russian Power
From Glinka to Putin
Fall 2019

“Lessons in drawing, music and singing will raise a student’s cultural level undoubtedly!”
Soviet poster, 1959

Prof. Emily Frey
eafrey@brandeis.edu

Office Hours: Th 11-1
Slosberg 216
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Russian music has always been intimately bound with Russian politics. This class surveys the long and strong relationship between music and state power in Russia, beginning in the tsarist period and continuing through the present day. We will consider operas and symphonies, popular songs and state anthems, aiming to understand how political factors (including censorship, official artistic policies, and propaganda) have influenced the composition and reception of music in Russia, as well as how music has been used to serve – and disturb – the Russian state.

Music 52b is designed for both music majors and non-majors; no previous coursework or musical training is required.

LEARNING GOALS

• To introduce you to major works of Russian music from the early nineteenth century to the present day.
• To teach you about the cultural and political context in which those works were created, performed, and received.
• To encourage you to think broadly and critically about the political uses of music, both in Russia and more generally.
• To sharpen your aural skills and give you practice putting your musical observations into words.
• To develop your communication skills through in-class discussions and critical writing assignments.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

My office hours are on Thursday from 11-1. This is time that I’ve set aside for face-to-face, individual contact with you, and it’s my preferred way of communicating with you outside of class time. (Meeting with you during office hours helps me get to know you better, and it also lets me respond to any questions or concerns you might have in greater detail than I can provide over email.) If you have questions about an upcoming assignment, if something wasn’t clear in class, if you want recommendations for further reading/listening, if you’re wondering about grad school, if you just want to introduce yourself and have a cup of tea (please do!):

`Not really: it’s Russian for “the truth.” Which is English for “the syllabus,” at least when it comes to this course!`
these are all good reasons to come to office hours. If you can’t make it on Thursday between 11 and 1, you can always email me to set up an appointment at a time that works for both of us.

For quick, concrete questions that aren’t answered in the syllabus, email is fine – but note that I get a lot of emails, so it may take me up to 48 hours to respond to you.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS**

No book purchases are required. All course materials, including articles, sound recordings, and video clips, are posted on LATTE.

I’ve also put the following reference materials on reserve at Goldfarb Library (ask for them at the Information and Borrowing Desk):

- Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music from Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar*
- Richard Taruskin and Christopher Gibbs, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (College Ed.)

If you have to miss a class, you’ll want to consult these reference works, as well as Oxford Music Online (linked on LATTE), for information on the composers and works we covered that day.

**ASSESSMENT**

Success in this 4 credit hour course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).
Your performance will be assessed as follows:

**Attendance, preparation, and participation**  
20% of final grade

This class depends on lively participation. Please come to each meeting ready to discuss the reading and listening assignments for that day. You are allowed two “freebie” absences during the semester; if you miss more than two class meetings without a compelling (and documented) medical reason, your semester grade will drop by three points per class.

**2 exams**  
15% each

The exams will encompass a variety of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Some questions will require you to respond to a piece of music that I play during the test.

**Essay**  
20%

Your essay should be 1500 words in length (that’s about 5-6 pages) and written in response to the prompt I’ve posted on LATTE. It is due on **Tuesday, September 24 at 5 pm**.

**Final project**  
30%

Toward the end of the semester you’ll have the chance to do some independent research on any topic relating to music in Putin’s Russia. I’ve posted a list of sample topics on LATTE, but please think of these as jumping-off points for your own interests! You’ll present your research in two forms: a public **poster session** on the last day of class and an **8-10-page paper**.

A one-page project proposal will be due on **Thursday, November 14**. Final materials are due on LATTE on **Thursday, December 19**.

**POLICIES**

**Late assignments** will be accepted with a 10-point penalty per day. Missed exams may be made up only with prior notice and documentation.

Brandeis seeks to welcome and include all students. If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to support you.

In order to provide test accommodations, I need the letter more than 48 hours in advance. I want to provide your accommodations, but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu.
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides.

**SCHEDULE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td>Th</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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| Sept 3 | T | The Beginnings of Russian Musical Nationalism  
Read: Marina Frolova-Walker, “Music of the Soul?”  
Francis Maes, “I’m Finished with Russian Music: Mikhail Glinka”  
Listen: Glinka, *A Life for the Tsar*, Antonida’s cavatina |
| 5 | Th | Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality: Music under Nikolai I  
Read: Richard Taruskin, “A Newcomer to the Tradition”  
Listen: Glinka, *A Life for the Tsar*, Act II (Polish dances), Act IV, epilogue |
| 10 | T | *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and the Russian Empire  
Listen: Glinka, *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Act III |
| 12 | Th | The Acorn and the Oak; Symphonic Nationalism  
Read: Richard Taruskin, excerpt from “Slavs as Subjects and Citizens”  
Listen: Glinka, *Kamarinskaya*; Balakirev, Second Overture on Russian Themes |
| 17 | T | The Present in the Past  
Read: Emily Frey, “*Boris Godunov* and the Terrorist”  
Listen: Musorgsky, *Boris Godunov*, excerpts from the Coronation Scene, Cell Scene, Inn Scene, and Polish Act |
| 19 | Th | Imperial Expansion  
Read: Richard Taruskin, excerpt from “Self and Other”  
Listen: Borodin, *In the Steppes of Central Asia*, excerpts from *Prince Igor* |
| 24 | T | Essay due  
Ivan the Terrible, Live Onstage  
Read: Kevin Platt, “Filicide”  
Listen: Rimsky-Korsakov, excerpts from *The Maid of Pskov*, *The Tsar’s Bride*; Tchaikovsky, excerpts from *The Oprichnik* |
26 Th  Tchaikovsky and the Court  
Read: Richard Wortman, “The Coronation of Alexander III”  
Listen: Tchaikovsky, Coronation March for Alexander III  
Tchaikovsky, Catherine the Great’s entrance from The Queen of Spades

Oct 1 T  NO CLASS – ROSH HASHANAH

3 Th  NO CLASS – BRANDEIS MONDAY

8 T  Rimsky-Korsakov, Reluctant Revolutionary  
Read: Lynn Sargeant, “Kashchei the Immortal: Liberal Politics, Cultural Memory, and the Rimsky-Korsakov Scandal of 1905”  
Listen: Rimsky-Korsakov, excerpts from Kashchei the Immortal and Coq d’Or

10 Th  Continuity and Rupture  
Read: Marina Frolova-Walker and Jonathan Walker, “1917-18: Out of Chaos”  
Richard Taruskin, “Mass Politics”

15 T  NO CLASS – BRANDEIS MONDAY

17 Th  EXAM 1

22 T  Defining Soviet Music  
Read: Marina Frolova-Walker, “The Glib, the Bland, and the Corny: An Aesthetic of Socialist Realism”  
Richard Taruskin, “Soviet Realism and the Socialist Avant-Garde”  
Listen: Myaskovsky, Symphony No. 12

24 Th  Selling It  
Read: Neil Edmunds, “‘Lenin Is Always with Us’: Soviet Musical Propaganda and Its Composers during the 1920s”  

29 T  Running Afoul  
Read: Anonymous, “Muddle instead of Music”  
Richard Taruskin, “Protagonist or Victim?” and “Readings”  
Listen: Shostakovich, excerpts from Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, Symphony No. 5

31 Th  Film Music during the Stalin Era  
Read: Kevin Bartig, “Alexander Nevsky and the Stalinist Museum”  
Listen: Prokofiev, Alexander Nevsky cantata
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Read</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Russian popular songs from WWII: “Katyusha,” “Zhuravli” [“The Cranes”], “Tyomnaya noch” [“Dark Night”]</td>
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<td>12 T</td>
<td>Zhdanovshchina</td>
<td>Richard Taruskin, “Denunciation and Contrition”</td>
<td>Prokofiev, Symphony No. 7</td>
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<td>Shostakovich, <em>Song of the Forests</em></td>
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<td>14 Th</td>
<td>Project proposals due</td>
<td>Kirill Tomoff, “Oistrakh on Tour, Richter at Home”</td>
<td>Richter’s live recording of <em>Pictures at an Exhibition</em>, Sofia, 1958</td>
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<td>19 T</td>
<td>Thaw</td>
<td>Peter Schmelz, “Unofficial Venues, Performers, and Audiences”</td>
<td>Vysotsky, “The Common Graves,” “The Thief”</td>
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<td>EXAM 2</td>
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<td>26 T</td>
<td>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING</td>
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<td>28 Th</td>
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<td>Stuart Jeffries, “Interview: Sofia Gubaidulina: Unchained Melodies”</td>
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<td>5 Th</td>
<td>Dry run for poster presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 T</td>
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**Final Project Due Thursday, December 19**