

# **“Shostakovich” Fights the Cold War: Reflections from Great to Small**

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*This article explores “Shostakovich” and the relationships surrounding his image in the West during the Cold War from several angles. It focuses on selected Cold War encounters between the United States and the Soviet Union involving Shostakovich’s music, and especially the 1959 New York Philharmonic tour to the USSR, while developing three perspectives on Shostakovich symphonies in the Cold War: 1) the direct, 2) the implicit, and 3) the micro/intimate. This heuristic hones our understanding of the various types of relationships cultivated with music during the Cold War while also widening the discussion of Shostakovich’s symbolic presentation during the conflict.*

“Perhaps music can tell us some surprising things that we can’t find out from books and newspapers. The first thing of all to be said is that Americans and Russians simply love each others’ music.”

—Leonard Bernstein, Moscow Conservatory, 11 September 1959.

“The Iron Curtain is both an external fact of electrically wired fences and minefields and an internal attitude. The attitude engenders the dividing frontier and the Curtain, the Curtain then reinforces the attitude.”

Michael Tippett<sup>1</sup>

“I’m dashing off to Springfield & Boston with that goddamn Shosty #5!”

Leonard Bernstein<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Tippett, “Too Many Choices,” in *Moving into Aquarius* [1959] (St. Albans: Paladin, 1974), 130.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Bernstein to David Diamond, October 19, 1959, in *The Leonard Bernstein Letters*, ed. Nigel Simeone (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 420.

In 1975 RCA released an LP containing a recording of Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra performing Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 (see Figure 1). The cover illustration by John Thompson is striking, very much of its time and place—"Boogie Nights" meets Socialist Realism. What might this image of a Burt Reynolds of the steppe and his friend tell us about Shostakovich in the Cold War, and about music in the Cold War more generally?

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**Figure 1. *Shostakovich Symphony No. 5*, Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, RCA Red Seal LP, ARL 1-1149 (1975); John Thompson, cover illustration.**

Thompson, at the time a young free-lance illustrator, was asked by RCA art director Acy Lehman to "treat the cover like a Russian propaganda poster."<sup>3</sup> Thompson recalled that, in response, he

Listened to the symphony and researched as much as I could about Shostakovich and his music. I knew that Shostakovich was at a difficult period in his career when he composed this symphony. Stalin was at the height of his reign of terror, and, if not successful, Shostakovich would likely have been sent to the Gulag or worse. This piece included patriotic marches, pleasing qualities. The symphony apparently saved his life. So I made the people proud and heroic, incorporating my own interpretation of what patriotic Russians (at this time) might have looked like.<sup>4</sup>

Thompson responded to both the symphony's musical rhetoric and to his research on its historical significance, drawing upon standard socialist realist iconography: familiar images of robust laborers, as in Vera Mukhina's iconic sculpture "The Worker and the Kolkhoz Woman" (1937), or countless other canvases and posters. The hip 1970s updates (most obviously the hirsute, mustachioed man) apparently were unintentional by-products. The RCA design team further bolstered the "socialist realist" inflection of the Ormandy LP with faux Cyrillic (and faux

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<sup>3</sup> Acy R. Lehman was the cover designer for the *Velvet Underground and Nico* album (Polydor CD, 31453 1250 2, 1998; originally released on LP in 1967 as Verve V/V6-5008).

<sup>4</sup> John Thompson, email to author, October 4, 2014. Other early paintings by Thompson, with similar aesthetic features, may be found on his website: <http://www.johnthompsonpaintings.com/gallery/early/>; accessed October 4, 2014).

Scandinavian) lettering in the title, often still employed on CDs and promotional materials in Europe and America to connote exotic Russianness.

The bold cover deviates from LP iconography devoted to Shostakovich, standing out from Ormandy's other recordings released by RCA and Columbia around this time, as well as departing from the humdrum imagery on contemporaneous recordings on other labels: see, for example, the 1981 Fedoseyev recording of the Fifth Symphony on Deutsche Gramophon (Figure 2a); an earlier Ormandy recording of the Fifth Symphony from 1969, featuring the iconic Red Square landmark of St. Basil's Cathedral (recorded 1964, released 1969 as CBS MS 7279, shown as Figure 2b); and the equine cover of Constantin Silvestri's recording of the symphony from 1962 (see Figure 2c).<sup>5</sup> It also rejects the somber Shostakovich found on the Grammy-Award winning cover by Joseph Hirsch (1910–81) for the 1959 RCA Howard Mitchell National Symphony Orchestra recording. *Billboard* named this "Album of the Week" in late March 1959, describing it as "an album cover of great force. Patterns of various colors depict an intense expression that will attract the buyer and encourage sales."<sup>6</sup>

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**Figure 2. Cover art for contemporaneous recordings of Dmitri Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony.**

- a) *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5*, Vladimir Fedoseyev, USSR Radio and Television Orchestra, Deutsche Grammophon LP 2531 361 (1981); N. Göran Algård, cover photo.
- b) *Shostakovich, Fifth Symphony*, Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, Columbia LP, MS7279 (1970).
- c) *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5*, Constantin Silvestri, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Angel LP 35760 (1962).

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<sup>5</sup> The source of the painting on the Silvestri cover is unidentified. St. Basil's Cathedral frequently appears on Shostakovich LP covers: for example, *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5*, Kiril Kondrashin, Moscow Philharmonic, Melodiya/Angel LP, SR 40004 (1967).

<sup>6</sup> "Album Cover of the Week," *Billboard*, March 23, 1959, 35. The original painting reportedly was given to Shostakovich during his autumn 1959 visit to the United States.

**Figure 3. Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 5*, Howard Mitchell, National Symphony Orchestra, RCA Victor LM-2261 (1959); Joseph Hirsch, cover illustration.**

The Ormandy cover amplifies the house style of other RCA LPs from this period, including a 1968 Morton Gould recording of Shostakovich's Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3 (see Figure 4a); a 1972 Liechtenstein/Warhol-inspired "Great Tchaikovsky" LP set (Figure 4b); the cartoonish (à la Monty Python) 1976 release of Holst's *The Planets* (Figure 4c); and several psychedelically packaged favorites, among them a 1970 release of Saint-Saëns and Falla (Figure 4d). The "Boogie Nights" cover stands out even from this largely pop-inflected group.

**[insert files Schmelz.Fig4a.pdf; Schmelz.Fig4b.pdf; Schmelz.Fig4c.pdf; Schmelz.Fig4d]**

Figure 4. Examples of RCA's contemporaneous house style of cover art:

- a) *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 2, Symphony No. 3*, Morton Gould, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus, RCA Red Seal LP, LSC-3044 (1968); Lorraine Fox, cover illustration.
- b) *The Great Tchaikovsky*, Ormandy, Fiedler, Reiner, et al., RCA Red Seal LP, VCS-7100 (1972).
- c) *Falla, Nights in the Gardens of Spain/Saint-Saëns, Piano Concerto No. 2*, Ormandy, Rubinstein, Philadelphia Orchestra, RCA Red Seal LP, LSC 3165 (1970); Frederic Marvin, cover illustration.
- d) *Holst, The Planets*, Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, RCA Red Seal LP, AGL1-3885 (1976); François Colos, cover illustration.

The 1975 Ormandy LP cover by Thompson might loosely be compared to the Sots Art images of "unofficial" Soviet artists such as Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid—a style from the 1970s and 1980s that appropriated and twisted official contemporary socialist realist iconography, as in a well-known painting called "Yalta Conference from a History Textbook, 1984" (1982), featuring Stalin with Hitler and Steven Spielberg's E.T. Like this image, the Ormandy 1975 LP cover (intentionally or not) offers a sly warping of Soviet orthodoxy, and, by extension, of the symphony it contains—the Fifth Symphony, arguably Shostakovich's best-known work. The ambiguous, charged cover seems to match the ambiguous, charged Fifth Symphony, even then recognized as both great and confounding. In his notes on the LP's back

cover, Royal S. Brown remarked that the finale's "deus-ex-machina heroics are perhaps less than convincing." Nevertheless, he deemed the symphony's "musical language" to be "stunning[ly] original."

These and other LP covers serve as a launching point for exploring from a number of angles "Shostakovich" and the relationships and encounters surrounding his popular image and his music in the West during the Cold War. Even as the Cold War—and specifically the US-Soviet bipolar conflict—can tell us much about Shostakovich, "Shostakovich"—operating as a symbolic brand with "great force" and influence—can tell us much about the Cold War.<sup>7</sup> The topic thus raises issues—both direct and implicit—that deal with politics, economics, aesthetics, ideology, and music as a "weapon" in international conflicts or international relations.

Like the LPs we have been surveying, much of the Cold War branding and reception of Shostakovich's symphonies was "unofficial," separate from governmental channels. Yet, like official efforts at cultural propaganda, these LPs reflected and shaped popular attitudes toward the composer and his music. As with all recordings, the material presence of LPs, and specifically their external iconography, fueled diverse interpretations of Shostakovich. As Richard Osborne writes, "The LP cover became an essential and entwined part of the listening experience."<sup>8</sup> "Record sleeves transcend their origins in packaging and become part of the product," Nicholas Cook observes. "They function as agents in the cultural process, sites where

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<sup>7</sup> For a related example of the "branding" of another Soviet composer, see Peter Schmelz, "Selling Schnittke: Late Soviet Censorship in the Cold War Marketplace," in *The Oxford Handbook of Musical Censorship*, ed. Patricia Hall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2015). I investigate the domestic reception of Shostakovich during the late Soviet period in "What was 'Shostakovich,' and What Came Next?" *Journal of Musicology* 24/3 (2007), 297–338.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Osborne, *Vinyl: A History of the Analogue Record* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2012), 176.

meaning is negotiated through the act of consumption.”<sup>9</sup> Whether their agency is interpreted as weak or illusory, records and record covers clearly perform—or rather are *used* to perform—important cultural work.<sup>10</sup> They act as fluid markers, used by record companies to move merchandise (to “attract the buyer and encourage sales”) and read by listeners in myriad ways, both public and private.<sup>11</sup> Shostakovich’s representation on LP covers thus begins pointing to how music was packaged and mediated on its way to the Western (and especially American) Cold War consumer, fabricating and fomenting encounters and relationships ranging from large to small. As we will see below, these connections had very real effects on the Cold War as imagined, preached, and practiced.

As a further preamble to this broader consideration of the Cold War connections propelled by Shostakovich’s symphonies, let us contrast the “Boogie Nights” cover with another Ormandy LP from five years previous—a recording of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 13, “Babi Yar,” a work famously revised to eliminate the accusations of anti-Semitism originally lodged against the USSR by Yevgeniy Yevtushenko’s poem, used in its first movement (see Figure 5). No hip overtones here. Instead, the cover proclaims “Banned in Russia! First

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<sup>9</sup> Nicholas Cook, “The Domestic *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or Record Sleeves and Reception,” in *Composition—Performance—Reception: Studies in the Creative Process in Music*, ed. Wyndham Thomas (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998), 140.

<sup>10</sup> The agency of material objects has become a focus for debate due to the claims of Actor-Network Theory. For a lucid discussion of the central claims of that theory, see Benjamin Piekut, “Actor-Networks in Music History: Clarifications and Critiques,” *twentieth-century music* 11/2 (2014), 194–99.

<sup>11</sup> See also Colin Symes, *Setting the Record Straight: A Material History of Classical Recording* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), esp. 112 on humor and classical album covers; and Osborne, *Vinyl: A History of the Analogue Record*, 164–166 and 175–81. Several collections of album cover art exist, most devoted exclusively to popular genres (including jazz): see for example, Storm Thorgerson and Roger Dean, ed., *Album Cover Album* (New York: A & W Visual Library, 1977) (includes classical LPs on 46, 79, 118, and 120); and Storm Thorgerson, Roger Dean, and David Howells, *Album Cover Album: The Second Volume* (New York: A & W Visual Library, 1982), 9 and 20–22; Michael Ochs, *1000 Record Covers* (Köln: Taschen, 1996); and Richard Evans, *The Art of the Album Cover* (New York: Chartwell Books, 2010). Useful exceptions are Horst Scherg and Robert Klanten, *Classique: Cover Art for Classical Music* (Berlin: Gestalten, 2008); Jaco Van Witteloostuyn, *The Classical Long Playing Record: Design, Production and Reproduction: A Comprehensive Survey*, trans. Antoon Hurkmans, Evelyn van Kaam, et al., Second Revised Edition (Heemstede, Netherlands: Polyphon, 2007), esp. chapter 7, “Cover culture,” 87–179; and Stefan Böhle, “Classical Music,” in *Record Covers: The evolution of graphics reflected in record packaging*, ed. Walter Herdeg (Zürich: Graphis Press, 1974), 40–59.

Recording in the Western World.” (A 1965 “bootleg” recording of the revised version conducted by Kiril Kondrashin had been the first released in the West, as we shall see.) The cover text of Ormandy’s LP continues: “The courageous ‘Symphony of Protest’ by two of the Soviet Union’s most important angry men. A major work, of and for our time.”<sup>12</sup> Aside from these hyperbolic—largely false—characterizations, the cover is considerably more harrowing than the 1975 Fifth Symphony recording. Here, surrounding the enraptured Ormandy in the act of conducting, we have in the upper left corner Shostakovich contemplating a score, with a smaller cropped photo of Yevtushenko in the lower left. In the bottom right corner we see images of corpses and a wailing woman set below massed women in peasant garb, their backs to us. Slightly higher on the right, a somber man reads—a common representation of Jewishness in the visual arts. The representation of Shostakovich’s image as a torn photo, the bodies, and the wailing woman all suggest violent acts.

[insert file Schmelz.Fig5.pdf]

**Figure 5. Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 13 (Babi Yar)*, Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, RCA Red Seal LP, LSC-3162 (1970).**

The 1970s Everest LP of Kiril Kondrashin conducting the revised version of the Thirteenth Symphony (recorded in 1965) carries a similarly brutal cover, blatant in its juxtaposition of a skull with the Star of David (see Figure 6). This symphony was sold in the West as an authentic outpouring of grief at Nazi atrocities and simultaneously as an example of “banned” Soviet music. Its complicated initial reception played perfectly into Cold War rhetoric that pitted Western and American freedoms against Soviet restraint. Western publicists,

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<sup>12</sup> Similar verbiage appeared on the front cover of Ormandy’s recording of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 4: the top reads “American Recording Première,” while at the bottom are eleven lines of small text detailing the work’s performance history, its withdrawal from rehearsals in 1936 following the uproar over the composer’s opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, and its 1961 revival in Moscow. *Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphony No. 4*, Eugene Ormandy, Philadelphia Orchestra, Columbia LP, MS 6459 (1963).

designers, and reviewers ran with it. Many heard it as more “authentic” than previous Shostakovich compositions. After tracing its troubled performance history, a U.S. critic called it the “most convincing artistic document of protest since Picasso’s *Guernica*.”<sup>13</sup> Edward Greenfield remarked in *Gramophone* in 1967, “This is passionate, bitter music that in the last resort is hard for any of us to take.” He held serious doubts about the quality of the symphony and especially its derivativeness (“much of the music might have been written by Mussorgsky”). Yet, Greenfield concluded, because of its message, “it is far more moving than any of the patriotic outbursts we have had from [Shostakovich].”<sup>14</sup>

**[insert file Schmelz.Fig6.pdf]**

**Figure 6. Shostakovich, *Symphony No. 13*, Kiril Kondrashin, Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, Everest LP, 3181 (197?).**

A number of LP covers from the 1960s and 1970s reflected these “patriotic outbursts,” countering the rebellious yet somber Shostakovich of the *Symphony No. 13* recordings. Consider the cover to a late 1960s Melodiya/Angel release of Mravinsky’s recording of the *Symphony No. 12*, “The Year 1917” (recorded in 1961, released in 1969/71). This LP features a 1928 painting by Alexander Deyneka (1899–1969) called the “Defense of Petrograd,” exactly the type of orthodox Soviet canvas that the Ormandy 1975 LP cover both models and winks at (see Figure 7a). Although more stylized, the cover for the recording’s original 1962 release on Melodiya conveyed a similar mood, with attacking revolutionaries silhouetted against an orange, flamelike cover (see Figure 7b). The slightly later (1971) Philips release of Ogan Durjan conducting the *Symphony No. 12* carries a stranger image: an apparently just-fired (still-smoking) tsarist-era

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<sup>13</sup> Lester Trimble, “Excellent New Recordings,” *New Republic* 163/1, July 4, 1970, 29.

<sup>14</sup> See Edward Greenfield, “Review of *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 13* (Kondrashin, cond.),” *Gramophone*, November 1967, 262–63. See also the unattributed “Review of *Shostakovich, Symphony no. 13* (Kondrashin, cond.),” *Atlantic* 221/2, February 1968, 132–33 (“its contents are of extraordinary interest, for [it] has been banned from further performances in Soviet Russia”). Compare this LP cover to that of Ormandy’s recording of Shostakovich’s *Symphony No. 14* (*A New 20th-Century Masterpiece*), released on RCA LP, LSC-3206 (1971). See Stefan Böhle, “Classical Music,” 55.

cannon aimed straight at the viewer (see Figure 7c); the cover amplifies the interpretation of the Twelfth Symphony by an East German orchestra as a rote—if not aggressive—celebration of the Russian revolution. The back cover features photos of both Lenin and, unexpectedly, Yuri Gagarin, putting the symphony’s inspiration alongside one of the central Cold War events of 1961, the year of its premiere: the first manned space flight.<sup>15</sup>

[insert files Schmelz.Fig7a.pdf; Schmelz.Fig7b.pdf; Schmelz.Fig7c.pdf]  
**Figure 7. LP covers for recordings of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 12 from the 1960s and 1970s:**

- a. *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 12, “1917,”* Yevgeny Mravinsky, Leningrad Philharmonic, Melodiya/Angel LP, SR 40128 (1971).
- b. *Shostakovich, Symphony no. 12,* Yevgeny Mravinsky, Leningrad Philharmonic, Melodiya LP, S 0245-246 (1962).
- c. *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 12, “The Year 1917,”* Ogan Durjan, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Philips LP 6580 012 (1971).

Several very different album covers, several divergent constructions of Shostakovich—from Shostakovich the “angry man” (Symphony No. 13) to Shostakovich the true believer (Symphony no. 12), with the Symphony No. 5 somewhere in between. Commentators and listeners in the West debated these perspectives with great interest, for as one American critic noted in 1954 about the Symphony No. 10: “A new Shostakovich symphony is always news.”<sup>16</sup> And by 1954 Shostakovich’s symphonies had already become embroiled in the Cold War, represented in the United States by McCarthy’s anti-communist witch hunt: a Colosseum LP with the Tenth Symphony pressed that year carried a reassuring disclaimer, “No part of the proceeds from this recording enures to the benefits of the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics, or to any of its agents or representatives (see Figures 8a and 8b).”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Shostakovich had intended the symphony to be finished in time for the ninetieth anniversary of Lenin’s birth in April 1960. See Laurel E. Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 221.

<sup>16</sup> “News and Notes,” *New York Times*, October 10, 1954, X11.

<sup>17</sup> This recording erroneously reports that Shostakovich is conducting; the actual conductor is Evgeniy Mravinsky.

[insert files Schmelz.Fig8a.pdf and Schmelz.Fig8b.pdf]

**Figure 8. Shostakovich, *Symphony no. 10*, [Evgeny Mravinsky], Colosseum LP, CRLP 173 (1954):**

- a. Cover.
- b. Detail.

But recordings form only one aspect of Shostakovich's Cold War presence. Although several scholars have investigated Shostakovich's reception in the West, none has extensively or exclusively addressed his relationship to the Cold War.<sup>18</sup> For instance, the index for Laurel Fay's 2000 biography of Shostakovich lacks even an entry for "Cold War."<sup>19</sup> An exception is Richard Taruskin's recent *Oxford History of Western Music*, in which he observes that the debates in the 1980s and 1990s surrounding Shostakovich's now discredited memoirs, *Testimony*, "were perhaps the last musical symptoms of the cold war."<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, commentators on the notorious 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York always highlight Shostakovich as a visible yet ambivalent, and fairly quiet, participant.<sup>21</sup> As a result, the topic feels familiar: Shostakovich and the Cold War are inextricably connected. Yet the familiar contours hide unsuspected features, suggestions for refining our investigations of Western art music from 1945 to 1991.

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<sup>18</sup> See Pauline Fairclough, "The 'Old Shostakovich': Reception in the British Press," *Music and Letters* 88/2 (2007), 266–96; Terry Klefstadt, "A Soviet Opera in America," in *Contemplating Shostakovich: Life, Music, and Film*, ed. Alexander Ivashkin and Andrew Kirkman (Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2012), 207–222; Christopher Gibbs, "'The Phenomenon of the Seventh': A Documentary Essay on Shostakovich's 'War' Symphony," in *Shostakovich and His World*, ed. Laurel E. Fay (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 59–113; and Erik Levi, "A Political Football: Shostakovich Reception in Germany," in *The Cambridge Companion to Shostakovich*, ed. Pauline Fairclough and David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 287–297.

<sup>19</sup> Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life*.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Late Twentieth Century, The Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 471. David Caute's survey of Shostakovich in his history of Cold War culture offers an apologist account of *Testimony*. See David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), esp. 435–40.

<sup>21</sup> See Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 1999), 50–51. Also see Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 406–11; Fay, *Shostakovich*, 171–73; and Phillip Deery, "Shostakovich, the Waldorf Conference and the Cold War," *American Communist History* 11/2 (2012), 161–180.

## SHOSTAKOVICH AS A SYMBOL OF THE COLD WAR EXPERIENCE

A comprehensive account of how Shostakovich's music participated in Cold War encounters between the United States and the Soviet Union is beyond the scope of this article, so I have omitted many important moments, including Shostakovich's own visits to the United States in 1949, 1959, and 1973. Instead, the intention is to widen the discussion of Shostakovich's symbolic presentation during the Cold War by selecting representative moments and representative works, especially the Symphony No. 5. For while we might view Shostakovich's Tenth through Fifteenth Symphonies as his "Cold War symphonies," counterparts to the "war symphonies" numbers 7 through 9, in many respects the Fifth was the Cold War symphony par excellence, standing at the heart of most of the encounters discussed below.

Our examination of these particular encounters involving Shostakovich symphonies in the Cold War allows us to consider three broad ways in which music participated in the conflict—or, more precisely, three ways by which music was made meaningful during, and because of, the Cold War: 1) the direct, 2) the implicit, and 3) the micro/intimate. This division admittedly is highly schematic, and the categories overlap in interesting ways, as we shall see. I intend for it to act as an heuristic, enabling us to hone our understanding of the various types of encounters and relationships enabled by music during the Cold War.

In particular, the category of micro- or intimate history offers new conceptual and methodological avenues for addressing some of the most potent but least discussed types of Cold War musical experiences: musical encounters taking place outside of—or at the margins of—official cultural exchanges, including private instances of listening and imagining such as those cultivated through LPs. Both relationships and the transformative powers of ideas drove the Cold

War, with relationships driving private responses and private responses driving relationships. Throughout, ideas likewise served as both cause and effect. My observations extend and build upon recent musicological research into the ongoing interactions of composers, performers, and listeners. As Christopher Small writes, “Music is not a thing at all but an activity, something people do.”<sup>22</sup> He calls this activity “musicking”: “[taking] part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing.”<sup>23</sup>

Looking at music making, or musicking, as a contingent, real-world activity has led musicologists in promising new theoretical and methodological directions. Musicologists such as Danielle Fosler-Lussier have been fruitfully delineating the manifold ways in which music participated in cultural diplomacy during the Cold War.<sup>24</sup> And musicologists such as Benjamin Piekut have begun building upon the idea of networks developed in the Actor-Network Theory of Bruno Latour and other theorists, tracing the interchanges of individual actors, while also demonstrating how material culture—including LPs, books, and journals—helps promulgate ideas within networks.<sup>25</sup>

Further attention to intimate connections and private moments of listening clarifies many of the lingering misapprehensions about discussing music in the Cold War, misapprehensions that persist despite the maturation of Cold War musicological studies. Among the more serious

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<sup>22</sup> Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 2.

<sup>23</sup> Small, *Musicking*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> See Danielle Fosler-Lussier, “Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization, and Imperialism,” *Diplomatic History* 36 (2012), 53–64; Danielle Fosler-Lussier, “Cultural Diplomacy as Cultural Globalization: The University of Michigan Jazz Band in Latin America,” *Journal of the Society for American Music* 4 (January 2010), 59–93; and Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

<sup>25</sup> See Benjamin Piekut, “Introduction: What Was Experimentalism?” in *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and Its Limits* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); and Piekut, “Actor-Networks in Music History: Clarifications and Critiques.”

of these misapprehensions is the idea that musicologists interested in the Cold War analyze only modernist music funded by the CIA and the US State Department.<sup>26</sup> (An apparent—but decidedly false—corollary is that musicologists studying the Cold War are anti-modernist.) Although noteworthy, direct interactions with the CIA or the State Department formed only one part of Cold War musicking. Just as frequently, and perhaps more so, personal associations developed and flourished across borders despite official controls, affecting a wide range of musics along the way.<sup>27</sup>

Other mistaken impressions cut to the heart of the Cold War musicological enterprise. In a parenthetical aside within a recent response to Richard Taruskin, Karol Berger states, “After all, there are much better, more direct ways to study and understand the Cold War than through the prism of Ligeti’s career.”<sup>28</sup> Yet, due to its psychological complexities, its symbolic dimensions, and its multiple layers of action—public, private, national, transnational, and everything in between—the Cold War yields only partial, surface details to “direct” studies. As Tony Shaw and Denise J. Youngblood note, the “Cold War was not fought solely between deskbound politicians and generals with their fingers on the nuclear triggers.”<sup>29</sup> As a result, pursuing connections between actors, institutions, and objects at all levels large and small, often tells us as much, if not more, than the external “big” events. The creation and reception of *On the Beach* (1959), *Dr. Strangelove* (1964), and *Fail Safe* (1964) make manifest the horrors and absurdities of life in the shadow of the mushroom cloud better than any “direct” recitation of the

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<sup>26</sup> Charles Rosen, “Music and the Cold War,” *New York Review of Books* 58/6, April 7, 2011.

<sup>27</sup> For another case study of such unofficial networks, in many ways a companion to the present article, see Peter Schmelz, “Intimate Histories of the Musical Cold War: Fred Prieberg and Igor Blazhkov’s Unofficial Diplomacy,” in *Music and International History*, ed. Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht (New York: Berghahn, 2015).

<sup>28</sup> Karol Berger, “Response to Richard Taruskin,” *Journal of Musicology* 31/2 (2014), 295.

<sup>29</sup> Tony Shaw and Denise J. Youngblood, *Cinematic Cold War: The American and Soviet Struggle for Hearts and Minds* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 5; see also 127–57 on *Fail-Safe* and a parallel Soviet film *Nine Days in One Year* (1962).

political machinations behind any single Cold War event, even one as central as the Cuban Missile Crisis. Therefore, like the lives of many other composers, performers, and listeners at the time, Ligeti's unconventional career, his stylistic twists and turns, provides a revealing prism through which to study Cold War cultural transformations.

But why is it necessary to choose one (and only one) prism? Ultimately, the Cold War sensorium ranged widely; it dominated the imagination. As Michael Tippett noted in 1959, during the Cold War “internal attitude” served as both cause and effect. In a conflict marked as “cold” (at least in the United States and Europe), the mind took most of the hits, envisaging threats and probing the surfaces for suggestions of the depths. The imagining both caused and was affected by a variety of encounters: some were active and reciprocal and took place across borders. Others were not, remaining passive, one-sided, or otherwise limited: private moments of (sometimes paranoid) reverie, imagined connections spurred by sound. The transnational manner by which ideas were shared remains crucial. Ideas circulated across the globe, moving officially and unofficially, both intentionally and through casual encounters or happenstance. Shostakovich and his symphonies—and particularly the Symphony No. 5—prove especially powerful as illustrations of the dynamic nature of Cold War cultural circulation, a topic that demands a more holistic, multi-tiered approach, using multiple prisms to bring out the full spectrum of Cold War correspondences—from “great” to “small,” direct to implicit.

Finally, while this article's title is intentionally hyperbolic, it also contains some truth: “Shostakovich” willy nilly fought in the Cold War (or, more accurately, was enlisted to fight in the Cold War as a brand), but “he” also resisted fighting—he fought the Cold War as both symbol and man. This tension between “Shostakovich” and his music, and between Shostakovich as man and Shostakovich as symbol, stokes the fundamental ambiguities that

continue to make his compositions so compelling to listeners. As we consider Shostakovich the symbol below, we must not forget the man who lurked, often powerlessly, in the shadows: a reticent Cold Warrior trotted out for diplomatic functions as perhaps the most famous face of Soviet cultural politics, spun this way and that by competing interests—public, private, and those in-between.<sup>30</sup>

#### DIRECT: BERNSTEIN'S SHOSTAKOVICH IN THE USSR

First, we turn not to Ormandy's various readings of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony but to Leonard Bernstein's performances of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony in the USSR in August and September 1959 as part of the New York Philharmonic Tour of Europe and the Near East. Although several scholars, including Jonathan Rosenberg, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, Emily Abrams Ansari, and Olga Manulkina, have addressed various key aspects of this important tour, the Russian response to Bernstein's interpretations has been comparatively neglected, and several illuminating archival documents pertaining to the trip have remained unexplored, especially the detailed letters sent to the Board of Directors of the New York Philharmonic by David M. Keiser, the New York Philharmonic President who accompanied the orchestra.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Deery offers a good case study of the "contradictions between his officially sanctioned role and his private doubts and misgivings." See Deery, "Shostakovich, the Waldorf Conference, and the Cold War," 162.

<sup>31</sup> Jonathan Rosenberg, "Fighting the Cold War with Violins and Trumpets: American Symphony Orchestras Abroad in the 1950s," in *Winter Kept Us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered*, ed. Sari Autio-Saraso and Brendan Humphreys, Aleksanteri Cold War Series 1/2010 (Jyväskylä, Finland: Aleksanteri Institute, 2010), 23–44; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "The World Is Ready to Listen: Symphony Orchestras and the Global Performance of America," *Diplomatic History* 36 (2012), 17–28; Emily Abrams Ansari, "Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in Moscow: Educational Television, Diplomacy, and the Politics of Tonal Music," Paper read at the American Musicological Society Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA, November 2012; and Olga Manulkina, "Leonard Bernstein's 1959 Triumph in the Soviet Union," in *Reassessing Stravinsky's Le Sacre du Printemps, 1913/2013*, ed. Severine Neff, Gretchen Horlacher, and Maureen Carr (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, forthcoming). See also Hartmut Hein, "'Showpieces'? Shostakowitsch, Leonard Bernstein und die USA," in *Schostakowitsch und die Symphonie: Referate des Bonner Symposions 2004*, ed. Hartmut Hein and Wolfram Steinbeck (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang, 2007), 225–39. Cate highlights only the controversies of the tour; see Cate, *The Dancer Defects*, 401. For more on the Russian response see

Looking at the tour from the perspective of Shostakovich in the Cold War helps revise our understanding of the effects and effectiveness of Cold War cultural diplomacy in general, and aids our understanding of the more direct relationships enveloping Shostakovich's symphonies during the conflict. "While profound rewards can be derived from performing and listening to the music of Mozart, Beethoven, or Tchaikovsky," Rosenberg writes, "the notion that such an experience might contribute to a more humane, less bellicose foreign policy or a more tranquil international order was a futile, if noble, aspiration. Leonard Bernstein's incandescent interpretation of a Shostakovich symphony before a fervent audience of Russian music lovers did little to ameliorate the challenges of the U.S.-Soviet relationship."<sup>32</sup> While perhaps true on a larger level, this assertion misses the more subtle effects of the tours and other similar interactions. Moreover, Rosenberg overly praises music, remaining beholden to a beatified, romantic notion of elevating art that does not bear scrutiny; ironically, by emphasizing music's "profound rewards" Rosenberg misses out on music's actual, albeit more diffuse, power and promise, such as the larger Cold War meanings the tour held for individual musicians and listeners, separate from yet dependent upon official American diplomatic goals. He also misses out on the public musical discussions sparked by these exchanges—discussions that, while ostensibly about music, often concerned larger questions of value and meaning beholden to Cold War categories of thought. These discussions also disclose shifts in perspective, particularly for Russian critics.

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<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/1/mode/1up>. See also Ol'ga Manulkina, *Ot Aivza do Adamsa: amerikanskaya muzika XX veka* (Saint Petersburg, Russia: Izdatel'stvo Ivana Limbakha, 2010), 529–32.

<sup>32</sup> Rosenberg, "Fighting the Cold War with Violins and Trumpets: American Symphony Orchestras Abroad in the 1950s," 43.

Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 was performed at the New York Philharmonic's very first concert in the USSR, in Moscow on August 22, 1959, in the Large Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. The program began with Samuel Barber's Essay for Orchestra,<sup>33</sup> continued with Mozart's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in G major, K. 453 (with Bernstein as soloist), and concluded with Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5. Keiser noted in his letter to the Directors of the New York Philharmonic that

The house was packed and an air of anticipation prevailed everywhere.... After intermission, the Shostakovich 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony—a brilliant climax, shouts of bis, rhythmic clapping, smiles and cheers. Two encores followed and people refused to leave their seats until the orchestra went out.<sup>34</sup>

The general Russian responses were glowing. Veronika Dudarova gushed in *Sovetskaya kul'tura* after the first concert:

A very vivid impression is created by his interpretation of the Shostakovich Fifth Symphony. The excitingly dramatic quality, philosophic depth, turbulent element of conflict, the very deeply lyrical quality—all were displayed by the conductor's talent. The climax of the first movement, the Scherzo, and the full drama of the third movement all sounded with stunning expressive force.<sup>35</sup>

Notably, Dudarova omitted the finale from her list of successful moments. Bernstein's idiosyncratic, overly quick interpretation of this pivotal moment in Shostakovich's symphony may have been rooted in a typographical error in the tempo markings for the finale in the first

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<sup>33</sup> The program indicates that this was to have been Walter Piston's Concerto for Orchestra, but both Kabalevsky and Keiser report that the Barber was performed.

<sup>34</sup> "European Tour, 1959: Correspondence David M. Keiser, Aug 11, 1959–Oct 11, 1959" (ID: 023-02-12) August 24, 1959, 15 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/e98415b7-34ae-4299-84ce-32cde0ead7ab/fullview#page/15/mode/1up>).

<sup>35</sup> Veronika Dudarova, "Sotsvetiye talantov," *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, August 27, 1959, pp. 14 and 22 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/14/mode/1up>), and <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/22/mode/1up>). The translation above emends the rendering in the New York Philharmonic press clippings from the tour. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

edition of the score (quarter note=188 instead of eighth note=184).<sup>36</sup> Not surprisingly, it roused controversy with Soviet musical commentators, particularly Dmitri Kabalevsky and David Rabinovich.<sup>37</sup> These Soviet responses add further layers to more recent debates over the tempo to that symphony's finale and its relationship to the purported dissident encoding of "forced rejoicing," a claim nourished by statements found in *Testimony*.<sup>38</sup>

Soviet music critics dutifully acknowledged the political importance of the New York Philharmonic visit—Kabalevsky paid lip service to it as "yet another serious step on the path to strengthening the friendship between our great peoples which is so important for the business of worldwide peace."<sup>39</sup> But critics quickly became consumed by the details of the unusual musical performance. Such musical scrutiny carried political overtones, and these direct encounters set off symbolic wrangling. The Soviet response concerned ownership of Shostakovich's music: who could speak authentically and authoritatively about Shostakovich and his intentions in this most complicated of compositions, fraught with connotations of a traumatic past (and present) for listeners in the USSR.

Rabinovich's response to the first performance of the Fifth Symphony by Bernstein appeared in the October 1959 issue of *Sovetskaya muzika*. Rabinovich began by disagreeing with the reaction of an anonymous listener (an unnamed "musician"), reported in Kabalevsky's earlier

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<sup>36</sup> See Fay, *Shostakovich*, 309, n83.

<sup>37</sup> Rabinovich authored a Shostakovich biography published in English in 1959: David Rabinovich, *Dmitry Shostakovich, Composer*, trans. George Hanna (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1959).

<sup>38</sup> See particularly the passage discussing the finale of the Symphony No. 5 on page 183 of Solomon Volkov, ed., *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich as Related to and Edited by Solomon Volkov*, trans. Antonina W. Bouis (New York: Limelight, 1984). See also Fairclough, "The Old Shostakovich," 282–83.

<sup>39</sup> Dm. [Dmitriy] Kabalevskiy, "Posle pervikh kontsertov," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, August 29, 1959.

review, who had criticized Bernstein's "deprivation of the finale's inherent festiveness and solemnity [pompeznost']."<sup>40</sup> Rabinovich countered:

It was not solemnity that Bernstein denied the reprise, but the majestic festiveness supporting the philosophical optimism of Shostakovich's symphonic conception (completing the "formation of a personality"!)). The conductor made the reprise the conclusion only of the final movement, and not of the entire symphony. But because of the rapid tempo in the coda, the finale became more effective and even gained something from the point of view of structural demands.<sup>41</sup>

Rabinovich's remarks reveal how torn Soviet listeners felt about Bernstein's bravura approach to the work, and especially its conclusion. Rabinovich heard it as a compelling close to the final movement, but not to the symphony as a whole. The majestic festiveness—or slow solemnity—was lost, but the conclusion nonetheless felt effective.

Kabalevsky himself acknowledged these disputes, but was won over completely. His observations emphasize the structural and interpretative complexities of the finale:

In this very case I am convinced that Bernstein disputed only the performance tradition of the symphony and not the author's intentions. His performance dispelled the pomposity of the conclusion, which in no way results from the whole development of the music. It simultaneously became completely clear that the "dynamic spring" within the main theme of the finale is so strong that it is capable of saturating with its energy all of this movement, and not just its exposition, as it always seems during a "traditional" performance. In exactly this way Bernstein's realization turns out to be closer to the tempo indicated by the author and printed in the score. In any case, in this interesting creative dispute I stand completely on the side of Bernstein, and, I am convinced, on the side of Shostakovich's music.<sup>42</sup>

Marina Sabinina was similarly overwhelmed, emphasizing the idea of rediscovering a familiar composition: "Bernstein was able to discover the symphony anew, possibly coming

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<sup>40</sup> Kabalevskiy, "Posle pervikh kontsertov."

<sup>41</sup> D. Rabinovich, "Kontserti N'yu-yorskogo orkestra," *Sovetskaya muzika* 10 (1959), 144.

<sup>42</sup> Kabalevskiy, "Posle pervikh kontsertov."

closer to the original than all other interpreters.” “Bernstein wonderfully senses the element of dancing in the music, the energy of motion, the plasticity of rhythm,” she further declared; he highlighted the “warlike onslaught of the march episode in the first movement” of the Symphony No. 5 (likely referring to RR. 27–29), and the “absorbing festive mass ‘dance’ in the scherzo.”<sup>43</sup> Shostakovich also approved of the reading, as he wrote in a 1960 letter to the conductor Mark Paverman.<sup>44</sup>

Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic performed the Fifth Symphony several other times on their tour, notably in Kiev on September 6, 1959, when one of the movements (the second) was performed as an encore. (Bernstein also had performed this movement as an encore at the first Leningrad concert.)<sup>45</sup> But the most significant of the subsequent performances of the work was the last. The final day of the tour in the USSR was a long one, described by Keiser as “really a momentous day.” On Friday, September 11, 1959, Bernstein and the Philharmonic recorded a special at the Bolshoi, to be broadcast on CBS television in America, featuring Shostakovich’s Symphony no. 7.<sup>46</sup> (For this performance, twelve Soviet wind and percussion players were added to the orchestra.)<sup>47</sup> That evening they played a concert that concluded with Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> M. Sabinina, “Radushnĭy priyom,” *Vecher Moskvĭ*, August 28, 1959 (in Philharmonic Press Clippings: “European Tour 1959: Moscow Reviews and Translations, Aug 1, 1959–Sep 17, 1959” (ID: 023-13-03); <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/25/mode/1up> p. 25).

<sup>44</sup> Fay, *Shostakovich*, 309, n83.

<sup>45</sup> See S. Khentova, “Vistupayet N’yu-yorkskiy orkestr,” *Vecherniy Leningrad*, September 1, 1959. Translation from: <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/dae029c6-567c-4f8b-b6d6-bdef2691ef0a/fullview#page/6/mode/1up>; original in: <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/dae029c6-567c-4f8b-b6d6-bdef2691ef0a/fullview#page/10/mode/1up> (p. 10). See also annotations at end of program booklet for the tour: <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/11aa59f9-2629-469a-b20d-315a61c1ed6b/fullview#page/38/mode/2up> (p. 39).

<sup>46</sup> See Ansari, “Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic in Moscow.”

<sup>47</sup> See “New York Orchestra Completed its Tour,” *Moscow News*, September 12, 1959, 4.

<sup>48</sup> Several of Bernstein’s notes for the television special are available online through the Library of Congress (Digital ID# bhp0194; Digital ID # bhp0193\_01; Digital ID # bhp0193\_02; Digital ID # bhp0194p1; and Digital ID

Keiser's excited reaction to the evening concert is worth quoting at length:

Without question this was the best of anything on tour and one of the finest concerts I have ever heard from the Philharmonic or anyone else. This after 3 hours of rehearsing, a very tedious television show under blinding lights and then this concert also under strong lights because it was televised over the Russian network. Well, Bernstein, with cold pills, antibiotics and whatnot else inside him, reached a new high in my estimation and the Orchestra responded as I have seldom if ever before experienced. The Beethoven [Seventh Symphony] was close if not better than any time this trip and the Shostakovich [Fifth Symphony] a real triumph. Its countless color effects were portrayed in marvelous fashion, its suspense very dramatic, the slow movement haunting in its simplicity and the finale a climax of world-shattering proportions—yet never noisy, but rich, full and intense. Shostakovich came to the stage and he and Bernstein embraced over and over again before a shouting, weeping and standing audience.

The Cold War context was first and foremost on Keiser's mind; he wrote:

I wish every one of you might have been there and that President Eisenhower might have seen it. If the two nations can be brought together, can there [be] any better way? At each side of the hall the two flags are hung together, the two national anthems are played in quick succession, then here we had the work of the Soviet's greatest composer (with him present) played by USA's best (!) Orchestra with its American born and trained outstanding conductor. He is particularly at home in this work too—what an occasion. The men were smiling at supper afterward, agreed it was a hard day, but one that will be with them as long as they live.<sup>49</sup>

Keiser further discussed the performance's other overt political aspects, most notably Boris Pasternak's visit to the evening concert, at Bernstein's invitation, which had aroused consternation among Soviet officials—and fascination from journalists worldwide.<sup>50</sup> Keiser

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# bhp0194p2); see "Leonard Bernstein in the Soviet Union" in <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/hope-for-america/cultural-diplomacy.html> (accessed 23 November 2013). The program for the evening concert can be found in the annotations pasted into the final pages of the tour program booklet: <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/11aa59f9-2629-469a-b20d-315a61c1ed6b/fullview#page/38/mode/2up> (accessed 6 February 2015). The other compositions on the evening program were Barber's Second Essay for Orchestra and Beethoven's Symphony no. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Keiser also reported asking Shostakovich to write a piece for Lincoln Center, a commission that went unfulfilled.

<sup>50</sup> See Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War*, 408; and the New York Philharmonic press clippings from the tour, especially pp. 39–41

wrote, “It seems this is the first time he has been out in public since the Nobel Prize incident. Many devoted eyes were upon him and we had the honor of meeting him during the intermission—a more sincere intelligent and kindly face and bearing one cannot imagine.”<sup>51</sup> Khrushchev did not attend.<sup>52</sup> A still-overwhelmed Pasternak wrote to Bernstein and his wife the following morning: “In the morning of the next day Saturday—Fatigue, yearning, exhaustedness, like after a sleepless night or a big command event, a great night fire in the town, a conflagration, having devoured [a] lot of houses, or a mighty storm with a powerful inundation. So must be art.”<sup>53</sup>

Russian responses confirm Keiser’s triumphant assessment of the final concert, although they ignored its political aspects. Writing in the November *Sovetskaya muzika*, Rabinovich seemed to momentarily forget his earlier vacillating about tempi:

The final concert of the New York Philharmonic left the strongest impression. Meeting for the final time with his beloved Moscow listeners, sensing the current of friendly sympathy coming from the hall, Bernstein conducted with unusual heft. He did not “transmit” the music, but literally created it right there on the stage. Some slight tempo changes, new barely noticed variations of phrasing—and his interpretation, already familiar to us, sounded afresh.

Rabinovich continued,

The performance of Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony in the concert on September 11 was truly stunning. Bernstein invested the symphony with all the scale of his interpretative thought, all the

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(<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/42/mode/1up>).

<sup>51</sup> September 12, 1959, 2 (p. 21 of folder); Rosenberg discusses Bernstein’s interactions with Pasternak in greater detail.

<sup>52</sup> Biographies of Pasternak in both Russian and English contain almost no mention of the Bernstein/Pasternak meeting. Apparently Pasternak was more valuable to Bernstein (and the foreign press) than vice versa. An exception is Yevgeniy Pasternak and Yelena Pasternak, *Zhizn' Borisa Pasternaka: Dokumental'noye povestvovaniye* (Saint Petersburg, Russia: Zvezda, 2004), 480, which relates a single anecdote from Bernstein’s visit to Pasternak’s dacha “at the beginning of September 1959” without mentioning his concert attendance at all. Another version of the same anecdote appears in Dmitriy Bikov, *Boris Pasternak* (Moscow: Molodaya gvardiya, 2006), 859.

<sup>53</sup> Boris Pasternak to Leonard and Felicia Bernstein, *The Leonard Bernstein Letters*, ed. Nigel Simeone (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 419.

strength of feeling and volcanic temperament. The symphony sounded both deep and grandiose, especially in such episodes as the *Largamente* of the first movement or the tragic climax of the *Largo* [the third movement].

Rabinovich wrestled with Bernstein's Shostakovich, reluctantly acknowledging his disagreement with some of Bernstein's interpretative choices, especially his belief that the "reprise of the finale demands a more restrained tempo." "But aside from all of this," Rabinovich admitted, "during the performance there were moments when my reason and feelings began to conflict: it was difficult to oppose the conductor: if not the logic of the performance, then, in any case, its direct influential strength subdued any opposition." "One way or another," he concluded, "precisely the repeat performance of the Fifth Symphony was judged to be, on an artistic level, the high point of Bernstein's Moscow tour."<sup>54</sup> In this case at least, the tour changed hearts, if not minds.

Note the absence of politics in this Soviet account of the event. While American reports (both private and public) celebrated the coming together of the two countries, Soviet critics and listeners seemed to care only about the novel, compelling reading of the music of their most celebrated contemporary composer. Regardless of questions about Bernstein's specific interpretative choices, Soviet musicians and listeners valued tours by American orchestras because of the high levels of musicianship they demonstrated. That this event, heavily politicized by the U.S. actors—Keiser, Bernstein, and the US State Department—, should be read in ostensibly apolitical terms in the USSR (aside from the disapproving muttering over Pasternak) appears a strange reversal, but it had a (perhaps unintentional) political effect: it denied the Americans a clear "victory" on their (politicized) terms.

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<sup>54</sup> All the quotations in this paragraph are from: David Rabinovich, "Zaklyuchitel'niye vistypleniya N'yuyorskogo orkestra," *Sovetskaya muzika* 11 (1959), 139.

Yet asking whether the tour scored a “victory” is too crude. This framing of the question misses its less overtly politicized consequences, among them Rabinovich’s apparent change of heart about Bernstein’s performance. Such direct encounters between Cold War agents produced multiple ripples, both literal and symbolic. Jonathan Rosenberg’s insistence on bluntly evaluating the foreign policy effectiveness of the Philharmonic’s Soviet tour—in many ways mirroring the rhetoric of the tour’s organizers, chief spokesmen, and American newspaper critics—overlooks the full range of its effects, from the direct, to the implicit, to the more intimate.<sup>55</sup>

#### IMPLICIT: THE COLD WAR AFFECTING TONALITY AND ATONALITY

Focused on concrete ends, Rosenberg misses out on the less tangible, smaller-scale results of diplomatic exchange, or other types of information transmission during the Cold War. But Rosenberg is not alone. A decade ago cultural historian David Caute claimed that “It is not the book, painting or symphony which counts in the last analysis, but who paid for the printer’s ink, the canvas and the orchestra’s travelling expenses. Scholars should therefore devote themselves to archival exposure of who paid the piper, and more or less forget about the tune, the big ideas which dominated Cold War culture in the 1950s and 1960s.”<sup>56</sup> Historians might like to focus on who paid the piper—the direct side of Cold War relations—, but musicologists know that both the tunes (including actual “tunes”) and who paid for them are inseparably linked. The big ideas—the symbols—that dominated Cold War musical culture warrant explication and

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<sup>55</sup> A prime example of American critics politicizing Soviet-American musical exchanges can be found in Howard Taubman’s review of performances in the US later in 1959, featuring Mstislav Rostropovich performing Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1 with Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Taubman praised the outcome, asking, “Friendship glowed everywhere. What’s holding back the summit?” Howard Taubman, “Music: U. S. and Soviet Composers Reach Summit,” *New York Times*, November 7, 1959, 28.

<sup>56</sup> David Caute, Foreword to *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945–1960*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Frank Cass, 2003), Unpaginated.

amplification, “Shostakovich” chief among them. Even though some prominent circumstances may have directly tied music and politics together, this does not mean that the effects of the linkage were always directly calculable. Nor do the direct connections rule out other types of effects carrying lasting impact. It just means we must turn elsewhere—to more implicit arenas.

By implicit I mean a level of meaning creation that, while not directly involved in Cold War cultural politics, including cultural diplomacy, was nonetheless deeply “entangled, entwined, folded or twisted together” and “involved” in those politics, as an obsolete definition of “implicit” has it.<sup>57</sup> To put it another way, employing the more familiar meaning of the word, Cold War cultural politics were implicit in many musical responses, and particularly in newspaper criticism or other writings for a general audience.

Although its outlines are known, the “implicit” coding and interpretations of Shostakovich as symbol during the Cold War deserve further scrutiny. The “implicit” Shostakovich further clarifies the musical politics of the Cold War, for throughout its course Shostakovich represented the ultimate bogeyman in the West, the perfect example of orthodox Soviet art. The synthetic account below incorporates both familiar and less familiar journalistic sources to investigate the attempts by American (and also British) critics to sanitize Shostakovich by stripping his ideological layers. It retells in a condensed fashion and with new details an accustomed story in order to clarify music’s “implicit” Cold War roles. Because of its pervasiveness, the “implicit” Cold War “Shostakovich” additionally offers a new vantage from which to read the larger stylistic shifts of postwar music history.

Already in a notorious review from 1942, Virgil Thomson belittled Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony as intended “for the slow-witted, the not very musical, and the distracted.”

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<sup>57</sup> “Implicit, 1.a,” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, Oxford University Press, December 2014; accessed February 01, 2015. <http://www.oed.com.libproxy.wustl.edu/view/Entry/92481?redirectedFrom=implicit>.

More damningly for Thomson, Shostakovich's apparent eagerness to appeal to such mass audiences threatened to "disqualify him for consideration as a serious composer."<sup>58</sup> The musical politics of the 1950s and 1960s amplified such condescending, implicitly politicized sentiments, as younger avant-garde composers in Europe and America rebelled against older standard bearers, particularly those connected in any way with the populist products of the USSR or Hitler's Germany. As much recent research has indicated, the newest music produced in the West during the Cold War was coded as "free" from the tainted messages embedded in Soviet music.<sup>59</sup> For many in the West, and especially the United States, Shostakovich's music consistently represented "propaganda-poster music," as *New York Times* critic Harold Schonberg called it in his 1979 review of *Testimony*.<sup>60</sup>

Most of Shostakovich's symphonies served as foils for atonal, purportedly ideologically-free compositions, chief among them those by the young avant-garde European composers associated with the Darmstadt summer courses. As Stockhausen noted in 1967,

Since 1951, I have attempted to compose neither known rhythms nor melodies nor harmonic combinations nor figures; in other words, to avoid everything which is familiar, generally known or reminiscent of music already composed. I wanted to quasi create a music ex nihilo: a completely non-figurative, extra-objective music which existed outside of the world of objects.<sup>61</sup>

Music carrying a message (like Shostakovich's) was directly countered by abstract music that pointedly rejected any message (like Stockhausen's). In a remarkable aside in his 1962 review of musicologist Edward Lowinsky's controversial book *Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth-Century*

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<sup>58</sup> Virgil Thomson, "Shostakovich's Seventh," in *The Musical Scene* (New York: A. Knopf, 1945), 101–104.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Anne C. Shreffler, "Ideologies of Serialism: Stravinsky's *Threni* and the Congress for Cultural Freedom," in *Music and the Aesthetics of Modernity*, edited by Karol Berger and Anthony Newcomb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 217–45; and Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music Divided: Bartók's Legacy in Cold War Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

<sup>60</sup> Harold C. Schonberg, "Words and Music under Stalin: *Testimony*," *New York Times*, October 21, 1979, BR1.

<sup>61</sup> Karlheinz Stockhausen, Liner notes to *Hymnen*, Stockhausen Gesamtausgabe CD no. 10 (1995), 130.

*Music*, Denis Stevens called attention to the “Cold War affecting tonality and atonality in our own age.”<sup>62</sup> By the early 1960s, the postwar era’s predominant musical stylistic divide had become highly politicized—another, implicit front in the global Cold War.

This divide arose during the New York Philharmonic’s tour to the USSR, when Bernstein was asked by a Russian interviewer to comment on “new tendencies” in “contemporary symphonic music in the United States.” Bernstein answered by speaking of two extremes: “tonality” and “atonal music and dodecaphony”; but, he added, “it seems to me that the most interesting phenomenon of our musical culture in recent years is the well-known *rapprochement* of these two extreme schools,” a reconciliation of styles that signaled the bridging of divergent approaches highlighted by the tour itself.<sup>63</sup> The Cold War between tonality and atonality further surfaced in the criticism lodged by Soviet critic Alexander Medvedev against Bernstein’s lecturing about and playing of Charles Ives’ *Unanswered Question*. Medvedev took umbrage at Bernstein’s interpretation of the composition as (in Medvedev’s words) “anticipating the work of the ‘ultra-left avant-gardists’ Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez, scandalous destroyers of musical culture.”<sup>64</sup> Like many such remarks from Soviet writers, these were intended largely for domestic consumption. They were meant to discourage the home-grown school of “ultra-left avant-gardists” just beginning to flex its muscles.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Denis Stevens, “Review of *Tonality and Atonality in Sixteenth-Century Music* by Edward E. Lowinsky,” *Musical Quarterly* 48/2 (1962), 252.

<sup>63</sup> “‘Tronutī tyoplīm priyomom’: Amerikanskiy dirizhor o kontsertakh v SSSR,” *Literaturnaya gazeta*, August 25, 1959. My emended translation is based on the one appearing in the New York Philharmonic press clippings from the tour: <http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/81152073-5970-44a4-bf04-1d3519142a72/fullview#page/8/mode/1up>.

<sup>64</sup> A. Medvedev, “Khorosho, no ne vsyo, Mister Bernstein!: Replika iz zala,” *Sovetskaya kul’tura*, August 27, 1959.

<sup>65</sup> See Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music during the Thaw* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Because of the ongoing stylistic Cold War, commentators in the West grappled with Shostakovich as they forcibly tried to separate the inextricably linked categories of music and politics. Representative is an article from the October 1964 issue of the popular American music periodical *High Fidelity*, in which British critic Peter Heyworth considers “Shostakovich without Ideology.”<sup>66</sup> Heyworth’s attitude toward Shostakovich was already clear from an earlier review of the Twelfth Symphony, in which he quipped: “The composer has often banged the big drum, but he has never done it so boringly.”<sup>67</sup> Heyworth takes “banged the big drum” both literally and figuratively—it conjures the symphony’s more bombastic moments as well as its drumming up of support for the Soviet regime. Ultimately, Heyworth’s objections were but another way of suggesting, as had Thomson, that Shostakovich was ideologically compromised, that his music used obvious gestures to reach substandard intellectuals. It was not difficult enough, not “modern” enough, and therefore not free enough.<sup>68</sup>

In the later *High Fidelity* article Heyworth fleshed out his “apolitical” Shostakovich. “Any attempt to interpret the extraordinary ups and down of Shostakovich’s career in terms of political pressures is too simple by far,” he declared.<sup>69</sup> Heyworth’s prime examples were the Twelfth and Fourth Symphonies, which marked the extremes of conformity and modernism, respectively, in Shostakovich’s career. “If Shostakovich’s weaknesses as a composer are to be attributed to the stultifying dogmas enforced by Zhdanov,” he now asked, “Why is his Symphony No. 12, written in the full flood of Khrushchev’s thaw, by so far his worst?” “Conversely,” Heyworth asked, “if the Party ‘rescued’ him from modernism, how is it that his

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<sup>66</sup> Peter Heyworth, “Shostakovich without Ideology,” *High Fidelity*, October 14, 1964, 96–100, 185.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Heyworth, “Old Shostakovich Shames New,” *New York Times*, September 16, 1962, 143. See also Peter Heyworth, “Music: Shostakovich 12<sup>th</sup>: Latest Symphony by Russian Performed at the Edinburgh Festival,” *New York Times*, September 6, 1962, 37.

<sup>68</sup> Donal Henahan, “Which Comes First, Life or Art?” *New York Times*, March 28, 1971, D32.

<sup>69</sup> Heyworth, “Shostakovich without Ideology,” 185.

Fourth Symphony, which was banned in 1934 during rehearsals for the first performance, didn't turn out to be particularly 'modern' when it was finally heard a couple of years ago?" His answer:

The fact of the matter is that Shostakovich's evolution as a composer has been too unpredictable to provide useful ammunition for political controversy. It will be many years before we know the full truth, but it certainly won't be as simple as ideological warriors would have us suppose.<sup>70</sup>

Heyworth's argument represents a peculiar outgrowth of the Western fascination with abstract music: Shostakovich must be interpreted without political considerations because these serve only to oversimplify matters. Politics are false; the real Shostakovich lies buried beneath the political claptrap—an attitude reflected by the obscured Shostakovich smoking pensively on the article's title page (see Figure 9). Therefore, the real Shostakovich is the Shostakovich without ideology. Although Heyworth's desire for a more complex understanding of Shostakovich is laudable, his framing here is ultimately nonsensical: during the Cold War rejecting ideology itself represented an ideological position. Shostakovich proved impossible to remove from his—and by extension the Cold War's—political circumstances.

**[insert file Schmelz.Fig9.pdf]**

**Figure 9. Title page for Peter Heyworth, "Shostakovich without Ideology," *High Fidelity*, October 14, 1964, p. 96; photograph by N. Tikhomirof.**

Nonetheless, the apolitical Shostakovich gained great currency in the West during the Cold War, and proved a necessary way of sanitizing him for Western consumption.<sup>71</sup> Royal S. Brown's liner notes for the 1975 RCA Ormandy recording of Symphony No. 5 similarly underscored its abstract musical language:

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<sup>70</sup> Heyworth, "Shostakovich without Ideology," 97.

<sup>71</sup> Fairclough addresses the "'apolitical' approach" to Shostakovich in the British press in the 1930s and 1940s and, again, at the end of the 1970s. See Fairclough, "The Old Shostakovich," 272–73, 280 ("the almost uniformly apolitical instincts of British music critics"), and 284–85.

The Fifth simply invites a cathartic reaction to a fabric of meaning that has no point of reference outside the symphony itself but that draws the listener inexorably into a series of dramatic tensions communicating all the more profoundly because they grow entirely from within. Emphatically, the Fifth Symphony is not programmatic.<sup>72</sup>

Certain of Shostakovich's compositions proved easier to extricate than others, as illustrated by *New York Times* critic Donal Henahan's grudging review of the Symphony No. 15. "With the death of Stravinsky," Henahan sighed, "Shostakovich may well be, alas, the World's Greatest Living Composer. And, again alas, his new Symphony No. 15, available in recordings from Moscow and Philadelphia, may well be one of Shostakovich's most significant works." Calling the work "a Liebestod with a Russian accent," Henahan wrote:

The 15<sup>th</sup> is a more universal work than Shostakovich has previously given us. This time, for instance, the composer does not include what one has come to think of as the de rigueur Shostakovich movement, the one in which Cossacks machine-gun a mob of peasants in march-time. Comment of the naïve old Socialist Realism sort is, in fact, hard to discover in the 15<sup>th</sup>. Instead, as in certain of the string quartets and other nonsymphonic works, the aim is inward.<sup>73</sup>

"Inward" was often equated with freedom. Here the results seem to have been more mixed. By the 1980s, Shostakovich's inwardness and his musical conservatism had become less contentious; musical styles shifted and the Cold War between tonality and atonality faded even as the Cold War between the USA and the USSR flared anew. In 1981, *New York Times* critic John Rockwell offered a more sympathetic assessment than either Heyworth or Henahan, asking

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<sup>72</sup> Another example of the apolitical Shostakovich appears in a 1968 review of Ormandy conducting the Symphony no. 5: "Shostakovich has been in and out of fashion so often in the past decades—mostly out, of late—that probably it is time for a fresh look at him. The Fifth Symphony, Op. 47, is of course not modern; it is in fact thirty-one years old, and time seems to be judging well of it. For it stands up comfortably in the concert hall, no longer as a novelty but simply as a symphony—in this case as the symphony of the evening." Patricia Ashley, "Philadelphia Orchestra (Ormandy)," *High Fidelity/Musical America*, October 1968 (MA-19).

<sup>73</sup> Donal Henahan, "A New Path for Shostakovich?" *New York Times*, January 21, 1973, A26. Compare with Norman Kay, "Shostakovich's 15<sup>th</sup> Symphony," *Tempo* 100 (1972), 39 (on the quotation of Wagner in this movement: "Is it meant to comment, as guardedly as possible, upon the evanescence of routine, poster-colored optimism? Perhaps. But ... Shostakovich points to a more personal significance").

“Could Shostakovich become the Mahler of the 1980s?”<sup>74</sup> Rockwell provides a helpful post-*Testimony* account of Shostakovich:

Shostakovich ... has become a potent symbol of the plight of Russian artists and intellectuals—both Jewish and non-Jewish—under the Soviets. And we seem now on the verge of a period of cold-war conservatism that will surely have its effect upon the arts and the shaping of artistic reputations.<sup>75</sup>

Rockwell’s reference to an impending “period of cold-war conservatism” conjures the intricate web of music and politics at the time: the recent election and inauguration of Ronald Reagan as US president coincided with a new cooling of relations between the superpowers. Yet it also reflects contemporary discussions of pastiche composition or minimalism as “conservative.”<sup>76</sup> In a 1987 dismissal of Philip Glass and other minimalists—a stunning failure of prognostication—the *Economist* wrote:

Others see in [minimalism] the musical equivalent of Ronald Reagan’s presidency and Margaret Thatcher’s matriarchy; a quest for easy, accessible, conservative music as an antidote to avantgarde complexity. Even Mr. Reagan, however, has found that simple answers rarely satisfy for long. Despite current fashion, the days of minimalism seem numbered.<sup>77</sup>

Rockwell’s earlier comments in his 1981 Shostakovich assessment must be read against this politically charged backdrop as a reaction to the dismissals of accessible minimalism as “conservative” music for a conservative time:

We seem to be living through a period in which the dogmatic complexity of recent decades of contemporary music is being replaced by a simpler, more open, more traditionally communicative

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<sup>74</sup> John Rockwell, “Music View: Could Shostakovich Become The Mahler of the ‘80’s?” *New York Times*, February 22, 1981, D19.

<sup>75</sup> Rockwell, “Music View: Could Shostakovich Become The Mahler of the ‘80’s?”

<sup>76</sup> Richard Taruskin, “*Et in Arcadia Ego*; or, I Didn’t Know I Was Such a Pessimist until I Wrote This Thing (a talk),” in *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 12.

<sup>77</sup> No author, “Songs from numbered days,” *Economist*, February 13, 1988, 94.

style. If that is true ... then Shostakovich could soon be looked upon as progressive, not retrogressive.<sup>78</sup>

Rockwell's loaded political labels ("progressive" and "retrogressive") recall similar terms from Soviet musical discourse, where progressive meant accessible, and retrogressive meant obtuse, dissonant fare: and where, ironically, "left" music meant ideologically incorrect, avant-garde approaches, as in Medvedev's rejoinder to Bernstein cited above. Before the early 1980s these labels carried different implications in the West, inflected according to modernist assumptions about musical "progress." The shifts in meaning during the final decade of the Cold War speak volumes about the implicit connections between music and politics at the time.

Rockwell concludes with his own argument for a "Shostakovich without ideology":

But in the end, of course, it will be Shostakovich's music and not the ephemera that surrounds it that will ensure his reputation. And that music, to judge from the recordings and ever-increasing performances we encounter today, should handily accomplish the task of entering him into the pantheon.<sup>79</sup>

Although undeniably correct as to effect, Rockwell miscalculated cause. Arguably, the "ephemera that surrounds" Shostakovich's music, and especially his symphonies, ultimately has vouchsafed his reputation. And one of the most powerful components of this ephemera was the cultural politics of the Cold War. Put another way, where music ends and ephemera begins ultimately remains impossible to distinguish. No privileged listening position—no innocent audio chamber—exists from which to judge musical quality absent biases or predispositions of one form or another, including one's entire formative background (education, class, nationality,

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<sup>78</sup> Rockwell also fervently argued on behalf of minimalism and popular music, as in his *All American Music: Composition in the Late Twentieth Century* [1983] (New York: Da Capo, 1997), see esp. xi, and the chapter on Philip Glass, 109–22.

<sup>79</sup> Rockwell, "Music View: Could Shostakovich Become The Mahler of the '80's?" For the British response see Fairclough, "The Old Shostakovich," 285.

and previous listening history). The perceived quality of Shostakovich's music is just that: a perception that both prodded and was supported by myriad other factors. Critical assessments were involved, as were actual performances of his music.

Concert programming suggests the intensifying interest in Shostakovich's output as a whole over time. To pick one prominent case, New York Philharmonic program records show that initially only a handful of familiar works received performances from the 1940s through 1970: the Symphony No. 5, Symphony No. 1, Symphony No. 9, Symphony No. 6, and the suite from *The Golden Age*, along with sporadic airings of the concerti (for piano, cello, and violin), and a rare performance of excerpts from *Katerina Izmailova* or the Symphony No. 7.<sup>80</sup> The Symphony No. 5 had its biggest boom in the 1950s thanks to its many performances on the 1959 tour; total performances of the work fell by about half in the 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s, although in the late 1960s it was featured in public New York Philharmonic performances in Central Park and at Lewisohn Stadium. In the 1970s, surprisingly, several of Shostakovich's symphonies receded from view, particularly the Symphonies Nos. 1 and 7. The Symphony No. 1 was not performed at all by the ensemble between 1971 and 1993, and the Symphony No. 7 languished between 1962 and 1990, aside from its reported performance at one of the concerts by striking members of the orchestra on their independent tour of Spain and Portugal in November 1973.<sup>81</sup> Despite the recent trend toward complete cycles of Shostakovich symphonies, the orchestra has never performed the Symphonies 2, 3, or 12, and it performed the Symphony No. 4 for the first time only in 1979 and the Symphony No. 11 for the first time in 1999. But interest in

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<sup>80</sup> Excerpts from Shostakovich's ballets, especially the Polka from *The Golden Age*, were often played at the summer Lewisohn Stadium concerts in the 1940s. Other rarer compositions were performed by Philharmonic musicians at separate events, as was the case with the Two Pieces for String Octet in February 1955 at the Plaza Hotel.

<sup>81</sup> The Symphony No. 5 was also performed two times on this tour.

the Symphony No. 10 picked up in the 1980s: not heard at all between 1955 and 1981, the complete work was performed two times in the 1980s, and has since become a frequent staple on Philharmonic concerts. In general, the range of Shostakovich's compositions (including chamber works) heard in New York Philharmonic concerts broadened from the 1970s to the 1990s. Given the intersections between Cold War culture and politics that we have been discussing, it should come as no surprise that the performances of Shostakovich's music intensified in both frequency and variety just before and just after the collapse of the Soviet Union.<sup>82</sup>

Shostakovich was the right composer at the right time. As the Cold War progressed, it assured Shostakovich—more than assured, it demanded—closer attention. The Cold War kept him at a slow burn; but as it developed, critics, concert programmers, and listeners became more attuned, and he only became hotter. Perhaps these are provocative (if not controversial) statements, but recent research in music and the sociology and economics of art insists that they be taken seriously and considered more fully.<sup>83</sup> By adhering too rigidly to our own aesthetic proclivities—that is, Shostakovich's music is “great” and therefore his critical and popular

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<sup>82</sup> All of the performance information in this paragraph can be found at: <http://nyphil.org/history/performance-history> (accessed November 23, 2013; and September 11, 2014). I have not counted performances of individual movements of the symphonies. Compare the data above with that found in Fairclough, “The ‘Old Shostakovich’: Reception in the British Press,” 287, Table 1, which lists Shostakovich performances in Britain from 1932 to 2002. A similar trend of increasing performances can be found here, specifically after 1962, although the details of the fortunes of individual works are missing.

<sup>83</sup> The role of the marketplace and other “external” forces in determining artistic reputations has been addressed by an increasing number of musicologists and sociologists over the past twenty years. See Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792–1803* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Paul Kildea, *Selling Britten: Music and the Market Place* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”: Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Lisa Jakelski, *The Changing Seasons of the Warsaw Autumn: Contemporary Music in Poland, 1960–1990* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2009), esp. Chapter 3, “The Economics of St. Luke”; and William Quillen, “Winning and Losing in Russian New Music Today,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 67/2 (2014), 487–542. See also James P. English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

acceptance was somehow necessary and inevitable, we risk losing the more complicated story his reception tells about the contingency and construction of institutional, cultural, and social taste.

#### INTIMATE ENCOUNTERS: A MUSICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE 1959 NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC TOUR, AND A CHANCE ENCOUNTER IN HAWAII

We conclude our appraisal of Shostakovich's symphonies in the Cold War by considering the types of meaning that are the most difficult to ascertain, but also potentially the most revelatory, especially for musicologists (and ethnomusicologists) attuned to more transient moments of music making. This type of micro-history focuses on the intimate aspects of music production and consumption in the Cold War, zooming in on actual Cold War musical experiences. As Swedish historian Peter Englund writes of his own "intimate history" of World War I, it concerns "not so much factors as people, not so much events and processes as feelings, impressions, experiences, and moods."<sup>84</sup>

Intimate history shares some attributes with what anthropologists and ethnomusicologists investigate as cultural intimacy. Cultural intimacy searches for the malleable, interdependent relationships between private and public, what anthropologist Michael Herzfeld calls the "presentation of individual selves within the intimacy of the national space."<sup>85</sup> The approach is interested in the "political forces that cause this strain between the creative presentation of the individual self ... and the formal image of a national or collective self."<sup>86</sup> As ethnomusicologist

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<sup>84</sup> Peter Englund, *The Beauty and the Sorrow: An Intimate History of The First World War*, trans. Peter Graves (London: Profile Books, 2011), ix.

<sup>85</sup> Michael Herzfeld, *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State* (New York: Routledge, 1997), ix. He also defines cultural intimacy as the "recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but that nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality, the familiarity with the bases of power that may at one moment assure the disenfranchised a degree of creative irreverence and at the next moment reinforce the effectiveness of intimidation" (3).

<sup>86</sup> See also Martin Stokes, *The Republic of Love: Cultural Intimacy in Turkish Popular Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 31–33.

Denise Gill writes in a recent review, “theories of cultural intimacy produce valuable studies because they attend to things felt but not readily articulated, ideals experienced but not officially represented.”<sup>87</sup>

The concept has disciplinary and methodological implications similar to those affecting intimate history and the Cold War in musicology. Herzfeld uses “cultural intimacy” to defend anthropologists from charges that they fixate on “mere anecdote, mere hearsay, mere minorities, mere marginals and eccentrics,” “irrelevant to the large concerns of the nation.” Rather than remaining “mere,” intimate spaces become, through cultural intimacy, wholly implicated in larger concerns and official representations; or stated more powerfully, larger concerns only achieve realization and meaning in the dynamic tug of war between public and private representation.

Intimate history captures a similar dynamism. Like cultural intimacy, intimate history considers the relationship of the “small” to the “great”; or more accurately, it looks at the small for evidence invisible from a larger vantage. Carlo Ginzburg compares microhistory to a close-up in film, the opposite of the extreme long shots of more familiar macrohistory. Like microhistory, intimate musical history rejects the serial—the traditional, often teleological, “history of events”—for the unique occurrence. The result becomes a specifically musical microhistory, focused on how musicking—or “musickers”—construct sociopolitical meaning.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Denise Gill, “Review of Martin Stokes, *The Republic Of Love: Cultural Intimacy In Turkish Popular Music*,” *Ethnomusicology* 58/2 (2014), 359.

<sup>88</sup> On microhistory see, for example, Carlo Ginzburg, “Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It,” in *Threads and Traces: True False Fictive*, trans. Anne C. Tedeschi and John Tedeschi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 193–214. An early, still effective example is Ginzburg’s classic *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980). A recent musicological example is Craig A. Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art & Arson in the Convents of Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010). Although it holds some characteristics in common, the type of microhistory I have in mind should be distinguished from the

The category of intimate history intersects the other two categories that I have discussed, especially cultural exchange programs such as the 1959 New York Philharmonic tour to the USSR. Up to now, the stories of the players from that tour have remained untold.<sup>89</sup> Although they may resemble and confirm other tales of musicians and tourists from behind the Iron Curtain, each account is valuable for its distinctive moments of insight.<sup>90</sup> The “small” is not valuable merely as part of an aggregate. Intimate history insists upon and affirms the value of individual recollection: it pays attention to both general and particular.

The New York Philharmonic musicians were encouraged to take an active part in the tour beyond their music playing. They were asked to reach out to individual Soviets, apparently both by the US State Department and by such private organizations as Arms of Friendship, which circulated brochures to travelers to the USSR, urging them to “Offer your friendship to the Russians you meet. This is a positive step toward peace.”<sup>91</sup> Other advice included: “Don’t just be a passive onlooker taking in the sights. Play an active part in winning peace.”<sup>92</sup> But against the lived reality of the tours, politics often receded to the background; at times the musicians were

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more theoretically freighted “minor history” espoused by Branden Joseph in his *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage (A “Minor” History)* (New York: Zone Books, 2008).

<sup>89</sup> Fosler-Lussier includes eyewitness accounts from other cultural exchanges in her forthcoming *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*.

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, Truman Capote, *The Muses are Heard: An Account* (New York: Random House, [1956]); and Kevin Bartig, “Aaron Copland’s Soviet Diary (1960),” *Notes* 70/4 (2014), 575–96. Particularly intriguing from the perspective of intimate history are Copland’s oblique descriptions of his unofficial encounters with young Soviet jazz enthusiasts in Leningrad; see the entry for April 5 on 592 (and Bartig’s commentary on 590–91).

<sup>91</sup> This organization seems to have comprised primarily retired military men. The President was James C. Fry, Major General, USA (Ret.). See the brochures titled “To Make Real Friends is To Make Real Peace” and “How You Can Help Win Peace,” and the letter from Fry to Carlos D. Moseley, June 24, 1959; both in “Tour of Europe and the Near East 1959: State Department Sponsorship and Publicity Material, March 3, 1959–July 29, 1959” (ID: 023-04-68), 10–17 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/c434f536-0135-468b-a7aa-72f06b4b5cad/fullview#page/10/mode/1up>).

<sup>92</sup> See letter from George E. Judd, Jr. to Fry, July 1, 1959. A “General Memorandum Re European Tour” includes a “Guide Book on Soviet Union” as part of the “highly important documents and literature” that will be provided the musicians. “Tour of Europe and the Near East 1959: State Department Sponsorship and Publicity Material, March 3, 1959–July 29, 1959” (ID: 023-04-68), 18 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/c434f536-0135-468b-a7aa-72f06b4b5cad/fullview#page/18/mode/1up>).

forced by on-the-ground dynamics to be relatively passive onlookers. Although participants in a “big” event, their experiences were often more mundane, and, thus, highly instructive.

Stanley Drucker (b. 1929), a young clarinetist with the New York Philharmonic at the time, and one of the few participants still alive, offers a unique, lucid perspective on the tour as a lived experience. Some 50 years later, his memory still remarkably vivid, Drucker recalls the tour being tightly organized. In Moscow the musicians stayed at a hotel somewhat “out of the center”—the “cavernous” and “grim” Hotel Ukraine—and as a result they needed to be driven everywhere. “Everything was done in a group. You couldn’t eat a breakfast or a lunch or anything by yourself. You had to be with your group....You couldn’t go anywhere.” The hotel’s location made exploration difficult: “From where we were put in this hotel ... it was out of the center, and really a place that could be controlled very easily because there was nothing around it. Barren streets. Barren.” Drucker noted that the “other cities were a lot better, actually, when we got to Leningrad and Kiev” because their hotels “were more in the center and you could walk around, especially in Leningrad you could really explore, in a way.”<sup>93</sup> In Moscow, in contrast, “you didn’t really venture off on your own,” Drucker recalled, “although you could walk to Red Square and walk through the GUM department store, where I guess the biggest product they had were carpet slippers.”<sup>94</sup> Drucker purchased a faux-fur hat, and, because the weather was still warm, he attracted attention whenever he put it on.

The Philharmonic musicians also attended the American Fair at Sokolniki Park, site of Nixon’s famous “kitchen debate” with Khrushchev a few months previously. They also heard

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<sup>93</sup> According to Keiser, not all the musicians were happy with their accommodations in Leningrad. See “European Tour, 1959: Correspondence David M. Keiser, Aug 11, 1959–Oct 11, 1959” (ID: 023-02-12), 18 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/e98415b7-34ae-4299-84ce-32cde0ead7ab/fullview#page/18/mode/1up>).

<sup>94</sup> All of the comments from Stanley Drucker quoted here and below are from: Stanley Drucker, telephone interview with author, digital recording, April 16, 2013.

other concerts and folkloric performances, and attended multiple receptions, including one at the U.S. Ambassador's residence, Spaso House, to which Russian dignitaries, composers, and performers were invited, including Kabalevsky, Oistrakh, and Gilels.<sup>95</sup> There was also a large reception at the Ministry of Culture where the Bolshoi ensemble played for the orchestra, and where Bernstein reciprocated with a jazz improvisation featuring Philharmonic percussionist Morris Lang and bassist Robert Gladstone. Drucker recalled this as "Really wonderful."<sup>96</sup>

Drucker went to a music store in Leningrad (*Noti*, "Notes" or "Sheet music") where he "bought all kinds of clarinet works, methods, study books, and solo pieces for very little money." Other players were able to arrange forays slightly farther off the official itinerary. New York Philharmonic President Keiser writes about a double bassist for the Philharmonic, Frederick Zimmermann (1906–67), who "is well versed in modern painting and somehow succeeded in getting some of us admitted to the closed top floor of the Russian Museum here [in Leningrad] where are stored dozens of Russian Impressionist paintings of the early years of the century and the 20's."<sup>97</sup>

According to Drucker, higher-level Philharmonic representatives, particularly Bernstein, received lots of pointed questions from Russians: "How much money do you earn?" or "Why do you dislike us?" Keiser noted of the American Fair at Sokolniki Park, "It is packed with visitors, who seem insatiable in their efforts to learn about us; to judge by the questions asked of the

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<sup>95</sup> Drucker recalls Shostakovich at the event, but apparently he did not attend.

<sup>96</sup> A photograph of this moment survives in the Philharmonic Archives: "1959 Tour of Europe and the Near East," ID: 800-077-01-011 and ID: 800-144-01-014. There is also a photo of Bernstein with David Oistrakh: "1959 Tour of Europe and the Near East," ID: 800-143-09-002.

<sup>97</sup> "European Tour, 1959: Correspondence David M. Keiser, Aug 11, 1959–Oct 11, 1959" (ID: 023-02-12), August 31, 1959, p. 19 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/e98415b7-34ae-4299-84ce-32cde0ead7ab/fullview#page/19/mode/1up>).

guides, and the rate books are examined and poured [sic] over.” “They say the most popular book of all is the Sears Roebuck Catalogue,” Keiser added.<sup>98</sup>

But Drucker and the other Philharmonic musicians received “more nuts and bolts” questions from the Russian musicians and composers they met: “With the players... they asked questions like that, but they were more interested in the details of the instruments you used, and the equipment, and the kinds of materials you studied and practiced.... not so many diplomatic background questions.” During the trip he heard performances by a few players, including conservatory students, and Soviet musicians also came to the Philharmonic rehearsals. Drucker even met the clarinetist who had provided reeds to his Philharmonic predecessor, the Russian émigré, Simeon Bellison (1881–1953). Official interpreters were provided, but the Russian-speaking members of the Philharmonic also gave “feedback” along the way. Drucker recalls some Russian émigré members of the Philharmonic bringing gifts for long-lost relatives: “Somebody saw a brother he hadn’t seen in forty years, and it was very emotional. I saw some of those meetings, they were very emotional.” Another player brought Hebrew prayer books and shawls which he distributed at the Great Synagogue in Moscow. But the interactions with Soviet citizens seem to have avoided political topics. Though the musicians had been briefed by the State Department beforehand, this briefing also apparently concerned primarily logistical issues. Drucker remembers that they probably suggested caution in photographing certain buildings or bridges. Higher ups had more contact with local dignitaries and diplomats, including U.S. diplomats.

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<sup>98</sup> “European Tour, 1959: Correspondence David M. Keiser, Aug 11, 1959–Oct 11, 1959” (ID: 023-02-12), p. 14 (<http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/e98415b7-34ae-4299-84ce-32cde0ead7ab/fullview#page/14/mode/1up>).

There was some apprehension among the Americans about being watched: “There were a lot of people milling about in the lobbies that looked like they might have been ... official [Soviet] people, with suits, and turning their heads towards any conversations in the area.” “You were aware of people looking at you, you were aware of that, especially in the lobby of the hotel...; it was obvious,” Drucker added. “We made jokes about it.” He also recalled “a lot of talk was about, ‘Oh, are they going to bug the rooms?’ ... But they wouldn’t have gotten too much information ... except maybe complaining about the food.”<sup>99</sup> In general, Drucker remembered, “Everybody was curious about what they would see and hear.”

What particularly struck Drucker was that “playing all those concerts in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev you really got to sample things”: “You walk down the street and you saw a water cooler, like you might see anywhere, but there would be a cup attached to the water cooler that everybody drank from, the same cup. It was the water fountain’s cup. That kind of thing.” He fondly recalled a “fabulous” performance of *Prince Igor* at the Bolshoi Theater, “where they had fire on stage and horses.” But he also was surprised, as were many, by Soviet inefficiency: “Everything, whatever you did, it took a lot longer than you thought.... Everything was made to take up time.” On a daily basis, “quality of life issues” most affected the musicians. (Remember that the players were separated from their families on an intense ten-week tour.) The food in particular was often of dubious quality (“Not Michelin star”), and there were issues with getting quality bottled water. “Things were hard to do. You couldn’t go off really and go to a restaurant on your own. ... There were some with extensive menus, but they had nothing that was on them.” Furthermore, the musicians had no communication with the outside world: “You couldn’t get a

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<sup>99</sup> See also Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*, chapter 7, “Cultural Relations between the U.S. and The U.S.S.R.: ‘Bug, are you listening?’”

call out.” They had to wait until they left the Soviet Union and arrived in the Netherlands to make phone calls to the United States.

But the overall impressions Drucker had of the 1959 New York Philharmonic Soviet concerts were extremely positive: “Musically it was terrific.” “The audiences were great, the concerts were fantastic,” he said. He also singled out the “passion of the orchestra and the commitment to what we were doing. There was tremendous spirit: proud to be there, proud to play, to show what we can do. Tremendous togetherness in that.” At the time, the Philharmonic musicians were a very “diverse group, from every country in Europe, with their own set of values, but when that concert started they played like a house on fire.” (Their diversity did not extend to race or gender: except for two harpists all the musicians on the tour were men.) That the orchestra featured a great deal of American music on the tour seemed to have been its most direct political aspect for Drucker. And, in general, thanks to the tours “everything opened up,” Drucker proposed.

Drucker’s first-hand testimony of the 1959 tour broadens our understanding of its effects and effectiveness. “For us it was the audience and the performance,” he summarized. Drucker’s account balances the perspectives of the State Department and Philharmonic administrators such as Keiser, allowing for a fuller understanding of the possibilities and accomplishments of musical diplomacy and musical experience during the Cold War. Drucker’s testimony in particular suggests a more concentrated viewpoint of the politicization of music at the time. He and his fellows felt a sense of responsibility—they “were proud to be there, proud to play, to show what we can do”—and confirmed Cold War stereotypes of KGB goons and the unusual constraints and discomforts of Soviet existence. Yet they also benefited from Soviet largesse as they were wined and dined at successive official receptions. Overall, Drucker’s version of these

experiences is significantly more muted than Keiser's effusive hopes about bringing the two countries—and Eisenhower and Khrushchev—together through music. Rather than being brought together, Drucker and Soviet musicians were held at arm's length, close enough to touch but not fully engage. While some important Cold War musicological research has begun incorporating these ground-level accounts of the lived conflict, much more can be said, especially related to events not scheduled as official state-level cultural exchanges.<sup>100</sup> Because of the pervasiveness of Cold War thinking, smaller, apparently apolitical events often became subsumed into the conflict's larger symbolic rhetoric.

A second example, again centered on Shostakovich, will help further flesh out this side of Cold War musical microhistory, pointing to the less familiar transnational dimensions of the Cold War and its strange, often accidental, points of contact. Drucker's experience on the 1959 New York Philharmonic tour suggests the value of looking at the small within the great—countering the traditional Bernstein-centric focus of that landmark tour from the bottom up. But more often, small events occur in almost complete obscurity; they are, to paraphrase Carlo Ginzburg, ostensibly but footnotes to larger historical narratives.<sup>101</sup> As Ginzburg (and others) make known, these seemingly small events nonetheless contain multitudes. Such is the case with Cliff Coleman.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Fosler-Lussier's *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* is a notable recent example, as are Jonathan Yaeger, "Music, Money and Power: The Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra on Tour," in *Music and Diplomacy from the Early Modern Era to the Present*, ed. Rebekah Ahrendt, Mark Ferraguto, and Damien Mahiet (London: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2014); and Jakelski, "The Changing Seasons of the Warsaw Autumn," chapter 2 (on audience responses to the Warsaw Autumn festival).

<sup>101</sup> Ginzburg, "Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I Know about It," 203.

<sup>102</sup> A fuller version of Cliff Coleman's relationship with Igor Blazhkov, alongside another exploration of the intimacies in Cold War musical life, can be found in Schmelz, "Intimate Histories of the Musical Cold War."

In February 1959, a Russian oceanographic vessel called the *Vityaz'* made a stop in Honolulu harbor in Hawaii.<sup>103</sup> Cliff Coleman, a Honolulu businessman and record aficionado with a local radio show, decided to pay it a visit. Coleman convinced a few of the scientists on the ship to take an impromptu tour of Honolulu in his car, a tour that ended with dinner at his home. There Coleman showed off his record collection for the visiting Soviets, playing for them his favorite recording of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5: Leopold Stokowski conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra.<sup>104</sup>

The Russians were astonished. One of the them, a woman named Pavlova, burst out (in English): "We heard you on the radio!" The scientists often listened to local radio stations on board the ship and had chanced upon Coleman's broadcast as they neared Hawaii. Pavlova, acting as the group's interpreter, declared, "We were so happy and surprised that they were playing Shostakovich on the radio." Shostakovich's music brought the Russians and Coleman closer together—they "found a common language," as Russians say. As a result, Coleman gave them several LPs, and they subsequently sent him LPs from Russia.

Coleman's story does not end there. In November 1959, the Soviet magazine *Muzikal'naya zhizn'* published Pavlova's recollections of her trip to Hawaii.<sup>105</sup> She discussed Coleman's radio programs, and recalled listening at his home to recordings of Stokowski

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<sup>103</sup> A picture of the *Vityaz'*, along with detailed specifications, can be found in N. N. Sysoyev, "Ekspeditsionnoye sudno 'Vityaz'," *Trudi instituta okeanologii* 16 (1959), 3–23.

<sup>104</sup> This has been reissued on compact disc: *Stokowski conducts Shostakovich, Symphonies Nos. 5, 6 & 7*, Music & Arts, CD-1232 (2009). The Stokowski recording has historical worth as the first commercial release of the symphony. In a 1976 *Gramophone* review of the Ormandy "Boogie Nights" LP mentioned above, the author compared it to the Stokowski recording, noting that Stokowski's "still casts a powerful spell." And the recording does astound. Unlike later recordings, Stokowski's exemplifies an older romantic performance tradition with frequently shifting tempi and abundant portamenti, most audible in the third movement, the symphony's weightiest episode.

<sup>105</sup> A. Pavlova, "Na Gavaiskikh ostrovakh," *Muzikal'naya zhizn'* 11 (1959), 16–17. All quotations in this paragraph are from this article.

conducting Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony and Gilels playing Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto.

A young Ukrainian conductor named Igor Blazhkov (b. 1936) read Pavlova's story and immediately penned a letter to "Clifford Coleman, Honolulu Radio." Blazhkov asked for records, because the intellectually hungry young Soviet lacked access to new Western music. Blazhkov's letter reached its mark, and he and Coleman initiated a correspondence that lasted for several years. Coleman sent him numerous records and tapes containing a range of modernist composers from the West, while Blazhkov sent him Russian recordings difficult to obtain in the United States. Blazhkov later moved to Leningrad and served during the mid- to late-1960s as Yevgeniy Mravinsky's assistant, conducting and recording works by Shostakovich, particularly his Second Symphony, "To October," until then neglected even in the USSR.<sup>106</sup>

An interesting anecdote, certainly. Yet the chain linking Coleman to Pavlova to Blazhkov carries greater significance: it more accurately represents the serendipity and breadth of relations across the Cold War divide. Similar unofficial ties bound West German music writer Fred K. Prieberg (1928–2010) to Blazhkov and other Russians. Thanks to their correspondence and exchange of scores and recordings, avant-garde Soviet music was heard for the first time in Western Europe, and eventually America.<sup>107</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky carried out a similar correspondence with Blazhkov, the two men trading scores, books, and information.<sup>108</sup> This

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<sup>106</sup> Igor Blazhkov, interview by author, telephone, digital recording, April 27, 2009; and emails from July 19, 2011, and October 22, 2010. Blazhkov's performance of the Symphony No. 2 with the Leningrad Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra, originally on a 1969 Melodiya LP (33CM 01883-84, also on Melodiya/Angel SR 40099 and Melodiya/His Master's Voice ASD 2747), was also released on CD as *Dmitri Shostakovich, Symphonies Nos. 2 and 10*, Russian Disc CD, RD CD 11 195 (1993).

<sup>107</sup> Schmelz, "Intimate Histories of the Musical Cold War."

<sup>108</sup> Most of Blazhkov's letters to Slonimsky are in the Nicolas Slonimsky Collection at the Library of Congress, Correspondence, 1920–1994, Box 131 ("Blatkov, I." [sic] and "Blazhkov, Igor"). I am extremely grateful to Igor Blazhkov for providing me copies of Slonimsky's side of the correspondence. Blazhkov and I are currently preparing these for publication in English.

unofficial relationship piggy-backed on Slonimsky's official 1962 visit to the USSR under the auspices of the U.S. State Department Office for Cultural Exchange. He toured Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev, where he met clandestinely with Blazhkov, Valentin Silvestrov (b. 1937), and other young Ukrainian composers at Blazhkov's apartment, perusing scores, playing music, and listening to recordings: "The scene was reminiscent of a conspiratorial chamber as depicted in Dostoyevsky's novel *The Demons*."<sup>109</sup> Intimate encounters such as those Blazhkov pursued with Coleman, Prieberg, and Slonimsky—all forms of unofficial diplomacy—arguably had as great an impact on ending the conflict as other more direct efforts by diplomats, cultural or otherwise. They worked "to ameliorate the challenges of the U.S.-Soviet relationship," to paraphrase Rosenberg. The unofficial, intimate exchange of ideas facilitated by prominent symbols such as Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony helped erode the facile images rigorously polished at multiple levels on both sides.<sup>110</sup>

#### AUDIOTOPIAS OF THE MUSICAL COLD WAR

In his conversation with me, Drucker recalled, "that was the era of recording; so everything we played was recorded, I'm talking commercial recordings, not just live recordings." The most famous recording to emerge from the 1959 Philharmonic tour was that of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, released on LP by Columbia early in 1960. The cover featured Shostakovich

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<sup>109</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky, *Perfect Pitch: An Autobiography*, New Expanded Edition, ed. Electra Slonimsky Yourke (New York: Schirmer Trade Books, 2002), 218. See also Nicolas Slonimsky, *Dear Dorothy: Letters from Nicolas Slonimsky to Dorothy Adlow*, ed. Electra Slonimsky Yourke (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2012), 241–242.

<sup>110</sup> These official images had a great deal of traction with the general populace, although this obviously changed, waxing and waning over time and varying according to demographics (including income and education level). Official narratives gripped American citizens during the first Cold War decades especially tightly. As historian Andrea Friedman reports, in a 1955 sociological study 95% of those surveyed "believed that it was impossible to be both a Communist and a loyal American." Friedman documents those who sought to push against such dominant sentiments in her *Citizenship in Cold War America: The National Security State and the Possibilities of Dissent* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014), 1–2.

and Bernstein together on the podium in the Large Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, with a caption at the top proclaiming: “An international triumph!” (see Figure 10). A caption in smaller type at the bottom of the front cover reads “Dimitri Shostakovich and Leonard Bernstein Share an Ovation at the Historic Concert in the Bolshoi Zal of the Moscow Conservatory.” The densely printed back cover (which again trumpets, “An international triumph!”) self-consciously presented itself as a scrapbook of this “historic” event; in *High Fidelity* Alfred Frankenstein called it “a kind of official souvenir of the triumphantly successful tour.”<sup>111</sup> This back cover featured a complete rundown of the tour itinerary alongside a description of the tour, replete with glowing testimonials about its rapturous audiences. Lest there be any doubt about the framing of the LP as a Cold War document, the back also prominently included excerpts from the Soviet press: from *Pravda*, *Izvestiya*, and *Vecherniy Leningrad*, as well as the Kabalevsky review discussed above.

[insert file Schmelz.10.pdf]

**Figure 10. *Shostakovich, Symphony No. 5, Leonard Bernstein, New York Philharmonic, Columbia Masterworks, LP MS 6115 (1959).***

Many American critics of the LP focused, like the Soviets, on Bernstein’s interpretation.

Alfred Kaine did so in terms strikingly similar to those we have already sampled:

Bernstein’s performance is like a huge wave that sweeps everything before it. Intensity is built upon intensity.... Whether or not this is what the composer had in mind is something else again.... For me, the greater animation [of the finale] robs this climactic movement of the somber dignity and drama it would otherwise have. Yet one cannot remain indifferent to the swell of brilliant sound, nor deny its impact.<sup>112</sup>

Other American critics heard it through a Cold War filter. Eric Salzman complained that such recorded traces of the Russian-American cultural exchanges, including the Bernstein recording,

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<sup>111</sup> A. F. [Alfred Frankenstein], untitled Review, *High Fidelity*, March 1960, 78.

<sup>112</sup> A. K. [Alfred Kaine], untitled Review, *The American Record Guide*, May 1960, 739.

were “represented (characteristically) by Russian music.”<sup>113</sup> Others fell in between. In *Hi-Fi Stereo Review*, John Thornton noted that this was the “hit of that historic trip,” before gushing about the conducting and the production: “Quite simply, Bernstein has made here his finest disc to date! ... Columbia’s engineering will make your hair stand on end, especially in those final bars, which make the walls bulge. The mono is good, but the stereo for sheer sonic weight and presence is *really* something!”<sup>114</sup> Thus public Cold War events shaded into private connoisseurship.

With this pivotal Shostakovich LP, then, we return to the start of our exploration of Shostakovich in the Cold War, and the mediation of the Cold War through recordings. When heard at home, the Bernstein LP recording of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 5 allowed Western consumers to imagine a variety of scenarios as they basked in its “sheer sonic weight and presence.” A direct participant in the Cold War, it opened more intimate paths. Along with the many other recordings of Shostakovich’s works then in circulation, it fueled the creation of an “imaginary East” in listeners’ own “audiotopias,” to borrow from anthropologist Alexei Yurchak and popular music scholar Josh Kun, respectively. Yurchak writes of the “Imaginary West” fostered among Soviet citizens by illegally (and occasionally legally) obtained recordings, books, and films.<sup>115</sup> But Americans were afflicted by similar dreams about life on the other side of the Iron Curtain, reflected most clearly in the willful, often surreal discussions of Soviet life based on hearing Shostakovich’s music, as we have seen in Anglo-American music criticism from the

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<sup>113</sup> Eric Salzman, “Records: From the Soviet Union,” *New York Times*, May 29, 1960, X13.

<sup>114</sup> J.T. [John Thornton], Untitled Review, *Hi-Fi/Stereo Review*, April 1960, 66. See also Martin Bookspan, “Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony,” *Hi-Fi/Stereo Review*, February 1964, 37-8.

<sup>115</sup> See especially chapter 5, “Imaginary West: The Elsewhere of Late Socialism,” in Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2006). Sergei Zhuk addresses similar concerns in his *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dniepropetrovsk, 1960–1985* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010).

1960s through the 1980s. Kun stresses “music’s utopian potential, its ability to show us how to move toward something better and transform the world we find ourselves in... Music gives us the feelings we need to get where we want to go.”<sup>116</sup> But often Western critics seemed to venture into a literal “utopia”: to go nowhere, escaping from reality, escaping from politics, as Heyworth, Henahan, and Rockwell did when they yearned for an apolitical Shostakovich.

The “audiotopias” inspired by Shostakovich’s music often were much less overtly activist than those that Kun wishes for popular music. Shostakovich’s music instead operated along more complex networks spanning self and other, real and imagined. Shostakovich’s music helped collapse barriers to understanding, but it also helped listeners erect barriers. Underscoring the connections it both fostered and inhibited were intimate moments of listening: moments prized (and overly idealized) by scholars of popular music, but not yet fully studied by scholars of Cold War music. Engaging with this aspect of Shostakovich reception requires acknowledging his compositions as a type of popular music, which is to say as a technologically mediated and widely distributed type of culture with a strong material presence.<sup>117</sup>

How widely such classical recordings were distributed remains a key question, difficult to answer definitively. As of 1965, classical recordings only accounted for approximately eighteen percent of total records produced.<sup>118</sup> Although Bernstein’s recording of Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony was featured soon after its release in the “Showcase of New and Outstanding LP’s” in the February 29, 1960, issue of *Billboard*, and received glowing reviews, it did not achieve the sales of, say, Van Cliburn’s recording of Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No. 3

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<sup>116</sup> Josh Kun, *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 17.

<sup>117</sup> For a careful consideration of the term “popular” see “I. Popular music in the West, 1. Definitions” in Richard Middleton and Peter Manuel, “Popular music,” *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed 4 May 2013, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/43179pg1>.

<sup>118</sup> Howard Klein, “Everything’s Coming Up Stereo,” *New York Times*, November 28, 1965, HF1.

(RCA Victor LSC 2355), itself a Cold War product which sat at No. 12 on *Billboard*'s chart of "Best Selling Stereophonic LP's" in the issue for April 25, 1960.<sup>119</sup> Nor could it match Van Cliburn's blockbuster recording of Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 (RCA Victor LSC 2252) which stayed on the charts for 50 weeks from mid-1959 through mid-1960, competing against recordings of *South Pacific*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, the "Peter Gunn Theme," and *Kingston Trio at Large*, to name but a few.<sup>120</sup> Yet, like those hits, the Bernstein recording circulated on LP, garnered widespread attention, and was listened to predominantly in private, bringing it closer to popular music patterns of circulation and reception.

## CONCLUSION

As the case of "Shostakovich" illustrates, the musical Cold War played out on many levels, among them the direct, the implicit, and the micro/intimate. More than a conflict between faceless opponents, it consistently involved relationships and encounters, both real and imagined.<sup>121</sup> On all sides, individuals communicated, miscommunicated, or did not communicate at all, their imaginations running rampant. As Tippett states, attitude both fueled and followed

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<sup>119</sup> "Showcase of New and Outstanding LP's," *Billboard*, February 29, 1960, 51; "Billboard Top LP's: Best Selling Stereophonic LP's: Stereo Action Albums," *Billboard*, April 25, 1960, 34. Also see the LPs in the "Best Selling Classical Albums" Charts in *Billboard* from February through June of 1960: for example, the issue from March 28, 1960 (p. 41), where the stereo charts saw (among others) Richard Rodgers' *Victory at Sea, Vol. 2* (Bennett and the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, RCA Victor LSC 2226); Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite* (Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, Columbia MS 6003); and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (Slatkin and the Hollywood Bowl Symphony, with Leonard Pennario, Capitol SP 8343); plus the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's *The Lord's Prayer* (Columbia MS 6068), and two Van Cliburn albums featuring Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky, respectively. The only Soviet composer to crack this chart was Khachaturyan, whose *Gayne Ballet Suite* (paired with Offenbach's *Gaité Parisienne*) on a Boston Pops album conducted by Fiedler (RCA Victor LSC 2267) appeared for several weeks in early 1960 (for example, at No. 5 in *Billboard* for February 29, 1960.). An excerpt from *Gayane* also appeared on another Boston Pops album on the chart at this time: *Song of India* (RCA Victor LSC 2320).

<sup>120</sup> "Billboard Top LP's: Best Selling Stereophonic LP's: Essential Inventory (Stereo Albums) (on the charts 30 weeks or more)," *Billboard*, June 6, 1960, 26.

<sup>121</sup> Fosler-Lussier presents a sophisticated reading of the role of relationships in cultural diplomacy and the globalized Cold War writ large in her *American Music, Global Messages: Cold War Cultural Diplomacy in Action*, chapter 8, "Mediation."

the Iron Curtain. People heard both themselves and the other side through music—whether based on a type of aesthetic delectation, on politicized grounds, or more often on some combination of the two, as in Kabalevsky’s (and, to a lesser degree, Rabinovich’s) response to Bernstein’s performance of Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony, or the Anglo-American critical responses to Shostakovich’s output *in toto*.

As Danielle Fosler-Lussier concludes, the “practice of musical diplomacy, at once fabricated and genuine, helped to create the personal experiences and the global sensibilities of the Cold War era.”<sup>122</sup> The real relationships and interactions fostered by cultural diplomacy carried important weight and involved official and unofficial levels, tours, letters, telegrams, and telephone conversations. The more implicit and intimate relationships and imaginings—separate from, but sometimes inspired by, cultural diplomacy—also fostered the global sensibilities of the Cold War. Yet, paradoxically, these implicit and intimate modalities often contributed to a greater sense of isolation, to cut-off audiotopias supposedly lacking ideology. Such audiotopias were spurred on by film and fiction, television and radio, and particularly by music, either on recordings or accompanying other media.

Historian Katalin Miklóssy observes of recent Cold War research,

Lately the study of the “great” has also been supplemented by turning attention to the phenomena of the “small”: small actors, grass-root level processes, peripheries, minorities, “soft issues”—that are now acknowledged as influencing the course of high politics or “heavy subjects” (like security issues, diplomacy or superpower relations) just as significantly.<sup>123</sup>

Although this formulation too quickly dismisses cultural exchanges as a “small” issue, attention may be devoted to even “smaller” subjects, mapping out still more intimate, private spaces of

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<sup>122</sup> Fosler-Lussier *American Music, Global Messages: Cold War Cultural Diplomacy in Action*, chapter 8, “Mediation.”

<sup>123</sup> Katalin Miklóssy, “Preface,” in *Winter Kept us Warm: Cold War Interactions Reconsidered*, 14.

transnational meaning creation during the Cold War. In this respect, the Cold War “Shostakovich” proved a powerfully multifaceted symbol: of Soviet conformity, of protest, of “conservatism,” and at the same time of “progressivism.” Thanks to the slipperiness of his signs, he could be both consoling marker (“We heard you on the radio!”) as well as coolly foreign (the cannon on the cover of the LP of Durjan conducting the 12<sup>th</sup> symphony, or the Ormandy “Boogie Nights” cover).

In their recent comparative study of American and Soviet Cold War films, Shaw and Youngblood compare “how cinema reflected and shaped everyday Cold War mentalities and values.”<sup>124</sup> Continuing to sketch out the full range of these “everyday Cold War mentalities and values” means following the full range of musical reception during the period, while paying attention to music’s powers to express and sustain ideas across, but also within, borders. It means exploring all the Cold War aspects of what Small describes as musicking, including composing, performing, and listening.<sup>125</sup>

This broader Cold War musicological project complements, overlaps with, and is informed by, scholarship on “who paid the piper.” But it also pushes in other directions, emphasizing the individual and unofficial. It focuses on listeners’ interactions with music, examining how tours, radio and television broadcasts, movies, news articles, and recordings shaped more private moments of audition, representation, and imagination. It thus considers “smaller” encounters, but also stresses their relationship to broader representational trends such as those found in literary scholar Daniel Grausam’s recent examination of “how the history of

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<sup>124</sup> Shaw and Youngblood, *Cinematic Cold War*, 6.

<sup>125</sup> Small, *Musicking*, 9.

narrative experimentation [in postmodern fiction] is intertwined with the history of the nuclear age.”<sup>126</sup>

There exists a specific disciplinary aim too. Although the best Cold War scholarship remains decidedly transdisciplinary, as musicology tilts toward history (and history incrementally tilts toward musicology) we do not want to forget the sonic experience of music. This does not require rekindling debates about history, hermeneutics, and “presence” in musicology.<sup>127</sup> Rather it entails a rebalancing of a historically oriented musicology, a shift in scale aiming to further capture the unique effects of music during the Cold War. In this way, a musicology addressing the full range of Cold War encounters—direct, implicit, and intimate—ultimately teases out further ways in which, as Bernstein told his Russian listeners in 1959, music may “tell us some surprising things that we can’t find out from books and newspapers.”

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<sup>126</sup> Daniel Grausam, *On Endings: American Postmodern Fiction and the Cold War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 7. See also Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), which exams several early Cold War stage and screen musicals, including *South Pacific*, *The King and I*, and *Flower Drum Song*; and the sprawling, paradoxically uncontained book by Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).

<sup>127</sup> Richard Taruskin, “Speed Bumps,” *19th-Century Music* 29 (2005), 185–207 (esp. 185, n3).

And for helping develop my thinking on many of the matters I discuss below (and for the term “intimate histories”), I am greatly indebted to the faculty reading group “Intimate Histories of the Cold War and Decolonization” at Washington University in St. Louis, particularly its conveners Jean Allman and Andrea Friedman. Many thanks are also due Lillian Blotkamp for research assistance.