

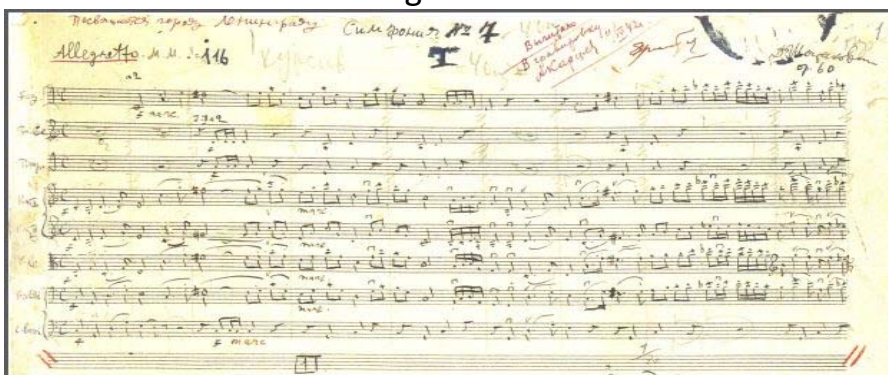


“American Musicians, Soviet Music, and Cultural Ties in the 1940s”

A lecture by

Kevin Bartig

Kluge Fellow



During the 1930s, many American musicians and critics became fascinated with Soviet Russia. Some had communist leanings, but others admired Soviet models for musical criticism, professionalization of composing, racial equality, and musical style. Soviet art music also attracted large American audiences, and the exchange of musical scores and recordings became big business by mid-decade. American musical Sovietophilia crested immediately after the Second World War, when two private groups—the American-Soviet Music Society and the Music Committee of the National Council on Soviet-American Friendship—endeavored to institutionalize musical exchange with the Soviet Union. Scholars have given these groups scant attention, often dismissing them as diplomatically expedient byproducts of the US-Soviet wartime alliance. Bartig instead shows how they sought to maintain cultural ties forged in the 1930s. Their ambitious plans and seemingly idealistic claims of universalism and sameness reveal much about the way American musicians viewed Soviet music before the advent of the Cold War, a time when difference and competition became the watchwords of an era.

Thursday, May 10, at 12:00 PM

Location: LJ-119, Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First St. S.E., Washington DC

For more information, contact the Kluge Center at (202) 707-3302. Request ASL and ADA accommodations five days in advance at 202-707-6362 or ADA@loc.gov