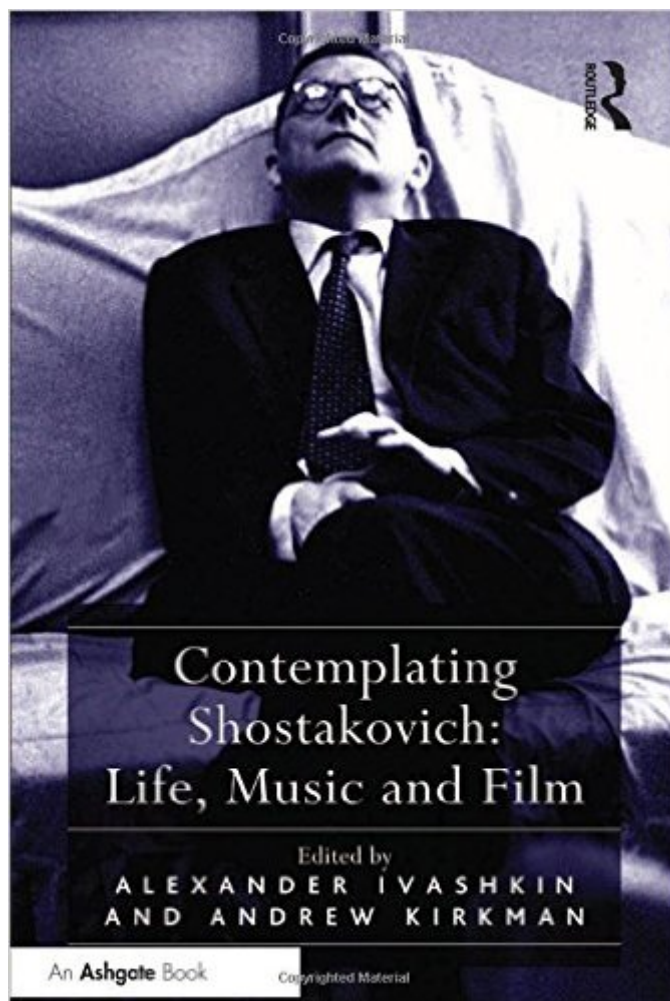


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Contemplating Shostakovich: Life, Music And Film



Synopsis

Contemplating Shostakovich marks an important new stage in the understanding of Shostakovich and his working environment. Each chapter covers aspects of the composer's output in the context of his life and cultural milieu. The contributions uncover 'outside' stimuli behind Shostakovich's works, allowing the reader to perceive the motivations behind his artistic choices; at the same time, the nature of those choices offers insights into the workings of the larger world - cultural, social, political - that he inhabited. Thus his often ostensibly quirky choices are revealed as responses - by turns sentimental, moving, sardonic and angry - to the particular conditions, with all their absurdities and contradictions, that he had to negotiate. Here we see the composer emerging from the role of tortured loner of older narratives into that of the gregarious and engaged member of his society that, for better and worse, characterized the everyday reality of his life. This invaluable collection offers remarkable new insight, in both depth and range, into the nature of Shostakovich's working circumstances and of his response to them. The collection contains the seeds for a wide range of new directions in the study of Shostakovich's works and the larger contexts of their creation and reception.

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