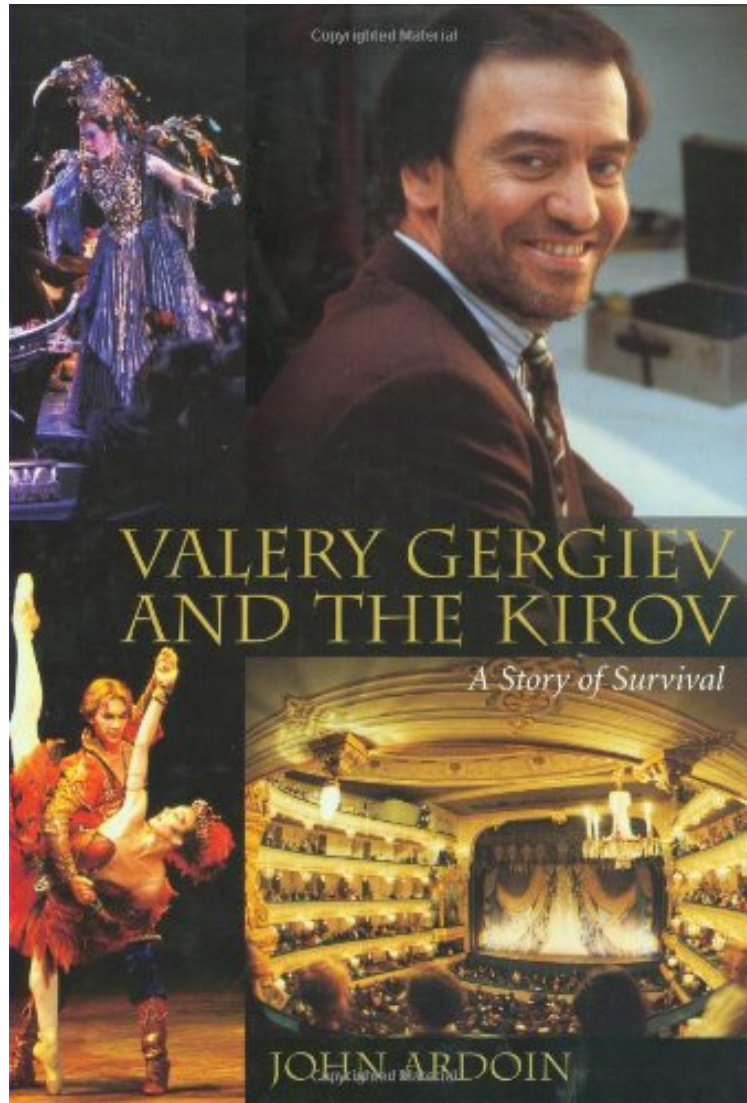


(Ebook pdf) Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival

Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival

John Ardoin

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#2757435 in Books Amadeus Press 2003-03-01 2003-03-01Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.75 x 1.11 x 7.60l, 2.54 #File Name: 1574670646352 pagesValery Gergiev and the Kirov (A Story of Survival) Amadeus Series Hardcover Written by John ArdoinAcclaimed music journalist John Ardoin focuses on the inspired directorship of Valery Gergiev in his eloquent celebration of the Kirov theater and its heroic survivalIn the 1990s this great artistic institution regained its original name, the Mariinsky Theater, and thanks to Gergiev's efforts won back its status as Russia's premier opera theatreHARDCOVERAcclaimed music journalist John Ardoin focuses on the inspired directorship of Valery Gergiev in his eloquent celebration of the Kirov theater and its heroic survival | File size: 53.Mb

John Ardoin : Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival before purchasing it in order to gage whether or

not it would be worth my time, and all praised Valery Gergiev and the Kirov: A Story of Survival:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book will change your lifeBy Mark Twain "MT" This book is like taking a trip to St. Petersburg and attending concerts and ballets beginning in the late 1800s. It is like meeting stars of ballet throughout the last two centuries. It is like taking a college class with people who know what they are teaching. I have only read fragments of this delicious book, and have fallen in love with not only the author, John Ardoin, a writer and interviewer of high caliber, but also Valery Gergiev, the title character, as well as Igor Zelensky and others worth a book about each one. The ballerinas of old, especially Kshessinskaya and Galina Ulanova, are treasures I am so grateful to have discovered. The ballets themselves are stories we should all learn from, as the lessons they teach can seem like art imitating life to an eeriness that will keep you awake at night. The Soviet period could not destroy what God had wrought, either through black listing or defection. The greats almost always returned home! The copy I purchased had been a library book, with protective jacket and in pristine condition. Why had it been "withdrawn" ??? Lucky for me, and I bought it for a pittance - PURE JOY!!!

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Plunged in the Ossetian Terek as a Babe, All But His Heel?By Kelly L. Norman This summer, Valery Gergiev, chief conductor, director, and self-proclaimed "family" head of the Mariinsky theatre (known from about 1930-1992 as the Kirov) took a beating from London critics. Gergiev has of course earned accolades world round with his own orchestra and opera company, and with several others he conducts. Since he was first elected Kirov chief conductor in 1988, then appointed by President Yeltsin to the Whatever-He-Is-Now post in 1996, he has unarguably been the catalyst for changes that saved not only the Mariinsky, but perhaps the Russian classical music scene as a whole. Now, however, Gergiev has encountered not only flak from the press, but from the music field itself. For example, for a venue, he has had to play second fiddle to, of all companies, the Bolshoi, which looked to have been way back in second place all these years. Covent Garden has always been his for the taking, but when Gergiev stubbornly insisted on an all Shostakovich program, CG's management, ever in-tune with public taste, politely told him he could take his business elsewhere. They then brought in the Bolshoi's Swan Lake and other tried and true favorites. I don't think John Ardoin would be surprised at this. And of course I, along with Ardoin's hypothetical ghost, can expect it to blow over with the next Gergiev triumph, just as we can see how he might get himself in such a spot. And therein lies one of the strengths of this book: it eventually paints a relatively balanced picture of a man who tends to get either demonized or adored by whomever discusses him. John Ardoin wrote this book ten years ago, spending an entire year in St. Petersburg. He was there at Gergiev's request, to write not only about the Mariinsky, its history, and its day-to-day workings, but about the charismatic, non-stop conductor as well. And in the first pages the reader may squirm, fearing a Gergiev Love-Fest as Ardoin compares him to Peter the Great. Thankfully, the author does not shy away from painting a somewhat tarnished, and on one occasion, even bullying picture of the famous conductor, alongside the chronology of his demonstrable achievements and devotion to those he works with at the 146 year old theatre. He quotes Gergiev as finding criticism helpful, ("It [makes] me work harder,") but also wonders aloud if Gergiev is on the take when a wealthy friend (not a musician) who has donated to the Mariinsky is allowed to conduct during a concert. In short, Mr. Gergiev comes across as a great man, in the sense that he excels because he works hard. But we learn his fatal flaws have cost him some of the diamonds at which he's grasped; as well as a few friends. On the Mariinsky, itself, this book also fascinates. Of course the Mariinsky was where Pavlova, Nureyev and Barishnikov danced as neophytes. Here many of Tchaikovsky's works debuted, as did Prokofiev's and Rimsky-Korsakoff's. Ardoin's research allows us to explore some of the drama that went on behind the scenes, even before the symphonies and operas hit the stage. Choreographer Marius Petipa, impresario Sergei Diaghilev (to whom Gergiev, with his eye for new talent, is often compared), and dancers Vaslav Nijinski and Mathilde Kshessinskaya come to life. The pictures of composers, conductors, singers and dancers from days gone by are precious; I particularly like those of the young Baryshnikov. My one complaint about the book is that the history of the Mariinsky is separated into different chapters than those on Gergiev himself. A book threading Mariinsky history throughout the current and biographical parts might be less jarring; although I can appreciate it would have been more difficult to write. Mr. Ardoin sadly passed away shortly after this was written, and may have planned a more consolidated volume. Regardless, I found this book very helpful in getting to know Gergiev (whom I do adore unconditionally...but appreciate that in real life he has made a mistake or two!) and in getting to know a very important part of the culture of St. Petersburg and Russia.

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Seeing the forestBy LuelCanyon A smart, well-written, middlingly edited book on Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Theatre. A welcomed and useful historical perspective of the Mariinsky, and the theatre tradition of Petersburg in general, comes on strong the first third of the book. The book is surprisingly substantive given the quasi-coffee-table book guise. Interesting to read what's there on Gergiev, one of a handful of great living musicians, but nothing compares to experiencing his art live. I've been fortunate to hear him conduct around the world, each musical occasion nothing less than transfixing. He is as great an opera conductor as we have, fearlessly and justly serving as prophet to the West concerning Prokofiev's operas - experience Gergiev's War and Peace in the opera house and you'll know the ground he stands. Brilliant guy, always visionary, and always musically worth pursuing. Likewise this book, a valuable contribution blissfully abstemious with fluff photos. Another

reviewer's note re the layout of the book is an estimable criticism, but some people will never see the forest. Overall, this is a book well worth your time and money.

(Amadeus). Acclaimed music journalist John Ardoin focuses on the inspired directorship of Valery Gergiev in his eloquent celebration of the Kirov theater and its heroic survival. In the 1990s this great artistic institution regained its original name, the Mariinsky Theater, and thanks to Gergiev's efforts won back its status as Russia's premier opera theatre. HARDCOVER.

.com This is a big, handsome, fascinating book. Written at the suggestion, indeed the insistence, of its artistic director, Valery Gergiev, it chronicles the history, trials, tribulations, and triumphs of the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg from its opening in 1860 until today, in the context of the city's and the country's political and cultural history from Imperial through Soviet to post-Soviet times. The late John Ardoin spent the 1995-96 season in St. Petersburg, attending innumerable concerts, rehearsals, and performances of opera and ballet, and talking with countless people connected with the Theater. He tells the story of the Mariinsky's destructions and rebirths, its name change to Kirov and back again; the stories of its star singers and dancers, composers, conductors, choreographers, ballet masters, designers, architects, administrators, of the music and ballet schools it has generated, and its struggle to maintain its traditions while moving ahead. Ardoin describes the internal and external intrigues, scandals, and rivalries, the artistic, economic, and political problems that led to the defection of leading artists. He quotes from books and memoirs, such as Stravinsky's, whose father was a renowned bass. An excellent interviewer, the author lets his subjects speak for themselves in sections that are among the book's highlights. The most fascinating portrait is that of Valery Gergiev, who emerges as an inspired, charismatic conductor and a man of extraordinary, multifaceted gifts, inexhaustible energy, unshakable determination and self-confidence, high ideals, and unwavering dedication to his work. Ardoin clearly idolizes Gergiev and credits him with restoring the Mariinsky to its present greatness, yet he remains aware of the problems inherent in Gergiev's overextended lifestyle and compulsive work habits. Most of the chapters alternate between past and present, and readers may find the frequent references to people and events mentioned in much earlier chapters a bit bewildering. They may also be somewhat overwhelmed by Ardoin's admirably prodigious research and insistence on including everything he knows: he lists everyone who ever worked at the Theater, and gives a blow-by-blow account of every performance past and present--its date, cast, composer, conductor, designer, success or failure. Of the resulting multitude of names, many are totally unknown outside Russia, but the excellent pictures, arranged by periods, bring them to vibrant life. --Edith EislerFrom Library JournalIn 1988, at the age of 35, Valery Gergiev became principal conductor and artistic director of the Kirov Opera and Ballet at the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad). With origins that date to imperial Russia in 1860, the Kirov has had a long and rich history. Its post-Communist survival and growth have been spearheaded by the charismatic Gergiev, who has worked to preserve both the traditions and the repertory of the Mariinsky and to introduce innovations so that it can compete with the greatest Western theaters. He oversees hundreds of performers and support staff, plans a demanding schedule of performances, recruits exceptionally talented guest artists, and fund-raises tirelessly. Asked by Gergiev himself to write this book, music critic Ardoin spent 1995-96 in St. Petersburg doing research and attending the theater. By his own admission, he has written four books in one: a portrait of Gergiev, a history of the building and the artists, a personal journal of the theater as seen by a Westerner, and the story of this institution's struggle to survive. Ardoin's critical comments are astute if not in-depth. Opera and ballet fans will enjoy the rare, behind-the-scenes view of this venerable institution and its occupants. Recommended for larger public and academic libraries. Joan Stahl, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistThe Mariinsky Theater houses St. Petersburg's premier opera and ballet companies, and Valery Gergiev has directed both since 1988. Part of the Imperial Theaters launched by Catherine the Great, the original structure was built and inaugurated in 1783, and major Russian operas and ballets premiered there. Nationalized in 1917, it was renamed the Kirov Theater in 1937. Gergiev resumed the mission of building the Kirov Opera and Ballet into world-class performance companies and excellent schools for training new singers and dancers. Ardoin spent the 1995-96 Kirov season in St. Petersburg to research this book, which weaves together four strands: a history of performances and artists, the politics of the companies and state, the 1995-96 season, and Gergiev's story. Trained at the Leningrad Conservatory, Gergiev now conducts worldwide and tours with the Kirov to earn enough to support the large company back home. Furnishing lively reading on music and the intrigues behind more than two centuries of its performance, Ardoin brightly illuminates Russia's premier opera and ballet companies. Alan HirschCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved