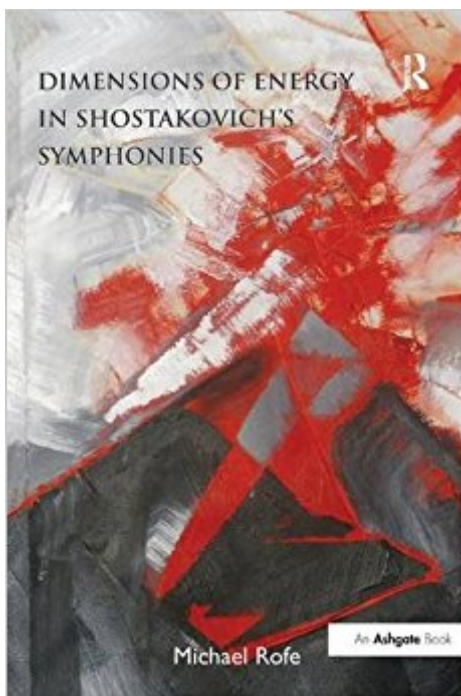


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Dimensions Of Energy In Shostakovich's Symphonies



Synopsis

Shostakovich's music is often described as being dynamic, energetic. But what is meant by 'energy' in music? After setting out a broad conceptual framework for approaching this question, Michael Rofe proposes various potential sources of the perceived energy in Shostakovich's symphonies, describing also the historical significance of energeticist thought in Soviet Russia during the composer's formative years. The book is in two parts. In Part I, examples are drawn from across the symphonies in order to demonstrate energy streams within various musical dimensions. Three broad approaches are adopted: first, the theories of Boleslav Yavorsky are used to consider melodic-harmonic motion; second, Boris Asafiev's work, with its echoes of Ernst Kurth, is used to describe form as a dynamic process; and third, proportional analysis reveals numerous symmetries and golden sections within local and large-scale temporal structures. In Part II, the multi-dimensionality of musical energy is considered through case studies of individual movements from the symphonies. This in turn gives rise to broader contextualised perspectives on Shostakovich's work. The book ends with a detailed examination of why a piece of music might contain golden sections.

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'Rofe's study is a welcome addition to Shostakovich scholarship and will certainly influence the analysis of his music.' Russian Review 'Clearly written, coherently argued and generous in its engagement with other scholars, Dimensions of Energy in Shostakovich's Symphonies is evidence

of a long-awaited and long wished for turn to detailed analytical work on the composer's scores themselves, and suggests that there are reasons to be optimistic, both about the future of Shostakovich studies, and about the fate of Shostakovich's music in the concert hall'. Philip Ross Bullock, Slavonic and East European Review

Michael Rofe's background is in music theory and analysis. He is particularly interested in contemporary music, musical energetics, Russian music, music and time, and temporal proportion in music; he has additional interests in popular music and music technology.

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