

# From Russia to the West: The Musical Memoirs and Reminiscences of Nathan Milstein

*By Nathan Milstein, Solomon Volkov*

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## **From Russia to the West: The Musical Memoirs and Reminiscences of Nathan Milstein Summary Details**

From Russia to the West: The Musical Memoirs and Reminiscences of Nathan Milstein by By Nathan Milstein, Solomon Volkov ebook read online.

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editorial:

From Publishers Weekly

At age 87 violinist Milstein is the last surviving member of an amazing group of emigre Russian musical personages--including Vladimir Horowitz, Jascha Heifetz, Gregor Piatigorsky, Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Rachmaninov and George Balanchinefair to call Mr. B. a musician?/no;see fix above.gs --who blazed across the world music scene for 50 years. His acerbic, highly opinionated memoir tells excellent stories about all of them as well as many others. It is also a revealing account of life in Odessa and Leningrad before, during and after the Revolution, and of the struggles even such phenomenally gifted people initially faced in making their way in the West. Milstein, as might be expected, is extremely sour about the Soviet regime, and his contempt extends to some of its most notable artists; a pity, because his views are otherwise fresh and winningused above in American Cassandra/see fix.gs , and unmarred by the excessive ego that often overcomes such memoirs. Coauthor Volkoff is the musicologist who created a dramatic book out of Dmitryper Web Shostakovich's Testament , and his skills are much in evidence here: Milstein's stories flow gracefully and are compulsively readable.

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From Library Journal

One of the greatest violinists of the 20th century, Milstein is at 87 possibly the last active representative of the important school of Russian violinists (Heifetz and Elman among them) taught by Leopold Auer before World War I. Milstein's memoirs begin with his student days in pre-revolutionary Russia and cover his still viable concert career. Keen of memory, sharp of perception, Milstein avoids the personal details of his life, instead devoting each chapter to an individual who was either close to or admired by him, e.g., Horowitz, Kreisler, Stravinsky, and Rachmaninov, among others. As topics, they serve as focal points for numerous asides and digressions--political as well as artistic. His writing style is informal, almost improvisatory, perhaps reflecting conversational sessions with coauthor Volkov; and Milstein's blunt, often acerbic opinions and judgments pepper his anecdotes, providing lively and stimulating reading.

- Susan Kagan, *Hunter Coll., CUNY*

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