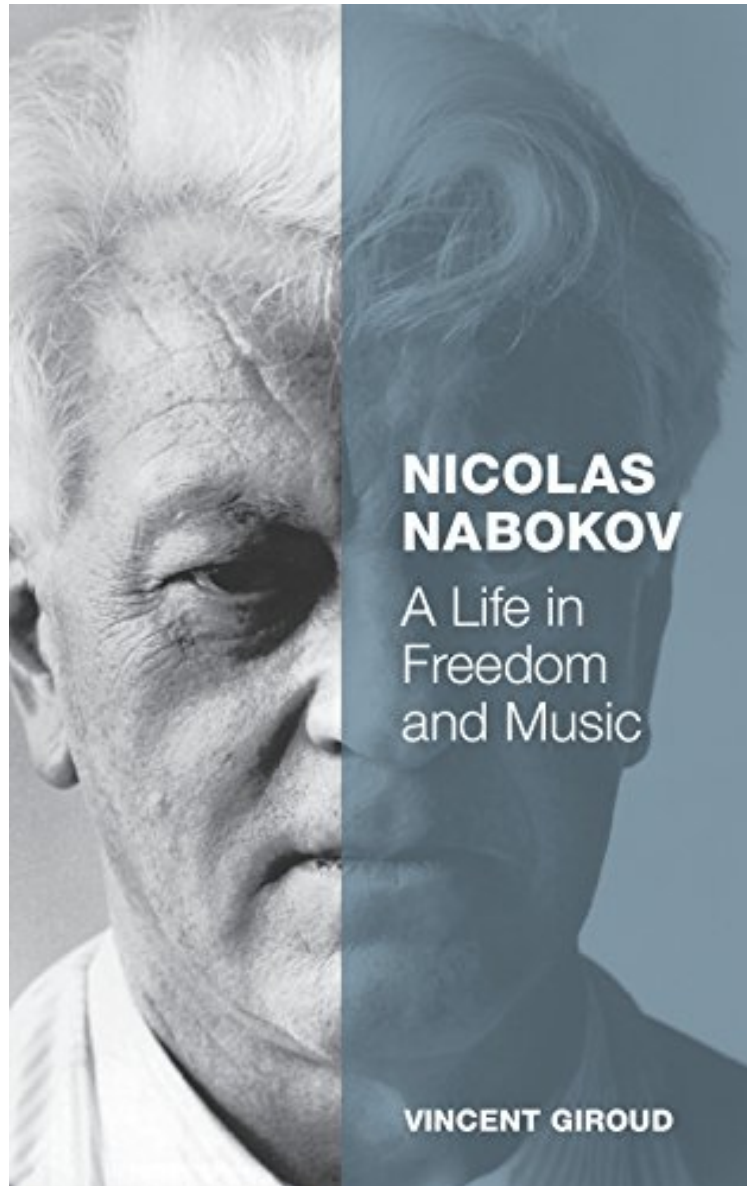


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## Nicolas Nabokov: A Life in Freedom and Music

*Vincent Giroud*

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**Vincent Giroud : Nicolas Nabokov: A Life in Freedom and Music** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nicolas Nabokov: A Life in Freedom and Music:

Composer, cultural diplomat, and man about town, Nicolas Nabokov (1903-78) counted among his intimate friends

everyone from Igor Stravinsky to George Kennan. While today he is overshadowed by his more famous cousin Vladimir, Nicolas Nabokov was during his lifetime an outstanding and far-sighted player in international cultural exchanges during the Cold War and admired by some of the most distinguished minds of his century for his political acumen and his talents as a composer. This first-ever biography of Nabokov follows the fascinating stages of his life: a privileged childhood before the Revolution; the beginnings of a promising musical career launched under the aegis of Diaghilev; his involvement in anti-Stalinist causes in the first years of the Cold War; his participation in the Congress for Cultural Freedom; his role as cultural advisor to the Mayor of Berlin and director of the Berlin Festival in the early 1960s; his American academic and musical career in the late 1960s and 1970s. Nabokov is unique not only in that he was involved on a high level in international cultural politics, but also in that his life intersected at all times with a vast array of people within - and also well beyond - the confines of classical music. Drawing on a vast array of primary sources, Vincent Giroud's biography opens a window into history for readers interested in twentieth-century music, Russian emigration, and the Cold War, particularly in its cultural aspects. Musicians and musicologists interested in Nabokov as a composer, or in twentieth century Russian composers in general, will find in this book information not available anywhere else.

"Conductor, author, translator, multi-lingual cosmopolite, Nicolas Nabokov was one of the most versatile intellectuals of the past century. Vincent Giroud, a brilliant musicologist and Nabokov's very first biographer, narrates his subject's multi-faceted life with unusual clarity and vigor." -- Francine du Plessix Gray "They just don't make cultured, quadrilingual, cosmopolitans of this sort anymore. Nicolas Nabokov managed to hit every artistic and intellectual high note of the 20th century, missing no one, from Auden and Balanchine to Virgil Thomson and Edmund Wilson. The genius went equally into the life and the music; Vincent Giroud elegantly captures both in his joyous, star-studded, beautifully modulated biography." - Stacy Schiff, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Vra: (Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov)* "Nicolas Nabokov is our most famous unknown composer. At last there is a book that sheds light on this extraordinary composer's life and work." - Ned Rorem, composer and author *About the Author* Born in France and educated at Oxford, Vincent Giroud is a cultural historian who has taught in French, British, and American institutions. He served for many years as curator of modern books and manuscripts at Yale and is currently Professor of English and Comparative Literature at The University of Franche-Comté.