

THE HIDDEN CIRCLE GAZETTE

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MUSIC

Russians

BY CURT ROSEWOOD — 2024-07-12



This is the first entry in a series of articles that will explore the connection between modern pop, rock and metal songs with the world of classical music. Many musicians drew inspiration from or downright copied classical pieces. In these articles we will introduce some notable examples.

At the start of 1985 the cold war was still in full swing. Like two boxers in a ring, the Soviet Union under the leadership of Konstantin Chernenko¹ and the United States under the leadership of Ronald Reagan² were locked in the deadly embrace of a doctrine called mutual assured destruction³. Both superpowers possessing enough nuclear fire to burn the world several times over, it was a time of pessimism and fear. It was in this atmosphere that Sting⁴ on his debut record released the song *Russians*. A song that is sadly relevant again almost 40 years later.

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konstantin_Chernenko

²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan

³https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_assured_destruction

⁴[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sting_\(musician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sting_(musician))

⁵[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lieutenant_Kljé_\(Prokofiev\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lieutenant_Kljé_(Prokofiev))

⁶https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergei_Prokofiev

Fittingly, Sting used the Romance theme from the Lieutenant Kijé Suite⁵ by Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev⁶. This music was originally written to accompany the film of the same name⁷, produced by the Belgoskino film studios⁸ in Leningrad in 1933–34. It was Prokofiev's first attempt at film music, and his first commission. The film tells the story of *Lieutenant Kijé*, a phantom officer born from a clerical error. When the nonexistent soldier comes to the attention of the Tsar, the terrified court officials are forced to keep up the charade.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHylQRVN2Qs>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1scluzlPz0>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYyQxf2lHr8>

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⁷<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nbb539QZZXo>

⁸<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belarusfilm>