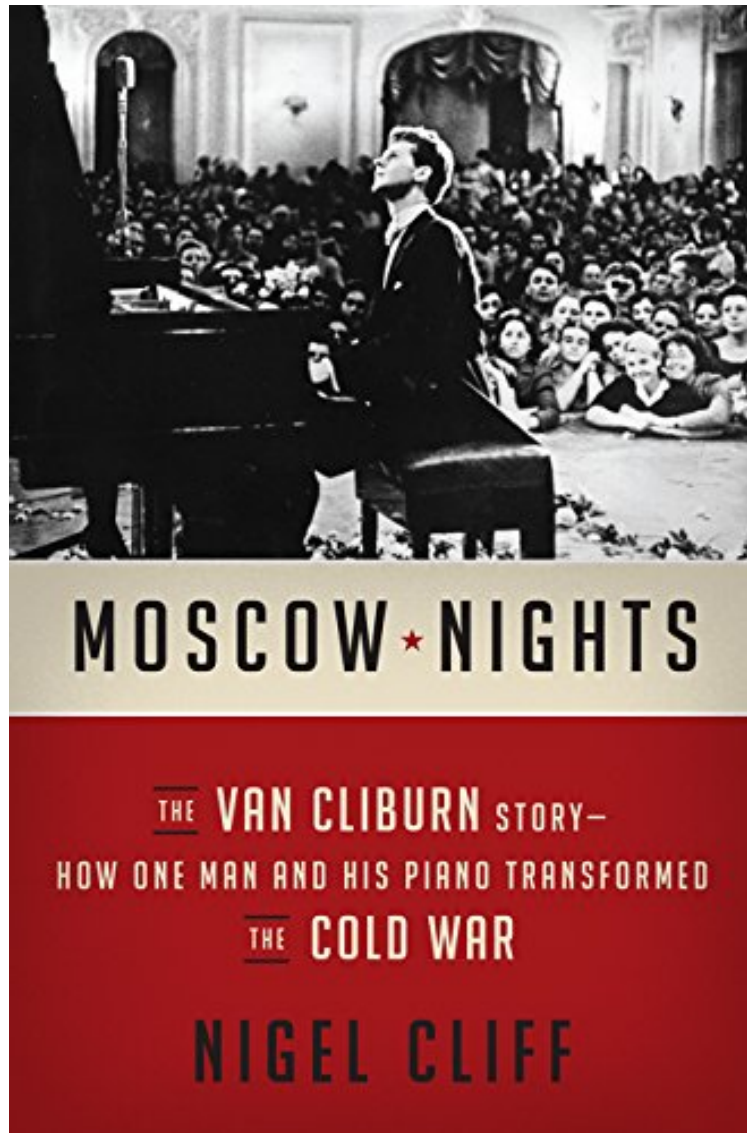


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Moscow Nights: The Van Cliburn Story-How One Man and His Piano Transformed the Cold War

Nigel Cliff

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#180956 in Books Cliff Nigel 2016-09-20 2016-09-20Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.44 x 6.001, .0 #File Name: 006233316X464 pagesMoscow Nights The Van Cliburn Story How One Man and His Piano Transformed the Cold War | File size: 62.Mb

Nigel Cliff : Moscow Nights: The Van Cliburn Story-How One Man and His Piano Transformed the Cold War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Moscow Nights: The Van Cliburn Story-How One Man and His Piano Transformed the Cold War:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Places Cliburn in the history of the cold war...fascinating !!By J. BevanI guess I've been a Cliburn fan since about age 14. I was one of the originals who got into classical music through his Tchaikovsky concerto recording. During the last decade, I lived in Ft. Worth, Texas -- where he is a favorite son. I never heard him play during those years, but I did hear him speak on a couple of occasions. He had a great heart and was, from my seat, a Texas gentleman. I bought the Kindle version of this book (suggested to me by my musician sister) and have found it to be a fascinating read. It places Cliburn in the political turmoil of the times. I had no idea that Krushchev loved him so dearly...like a son. Van did for musical diplomacy what Rubinstein, Horowitz, Janis and others could not do because he was virtually owned by the hearts of the Soviet people. He was a good guy who kept his dignity through trying circumstances. It's all very interesting. If you are interested in the most unique chapter of the Cold War...read this book.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Stylish Verbal SonataBy KKAA treasure trove of information about both Cliburn and Russia. Impeccably researched and propulsively readable. Wait until you read about Stalin's death! I will be reading other books by this author.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great historical biography of a great pianist and his times.By Marise E. PetryI really enjoyed this biography. Van Cliburn is one of my heroes. What was a delightful surprise was the in-depth inclusion of history of the USSR, Khrushchev, the politics of the time and between the USA and USSR. It gave a deeper understanding of Van Cliburn's being caught between two cultures and his love for Russian music and the people there. He did his best to be apolitical, although he was often used for political purposes on both sides. This was a great read.

Gripping narrative nonfiction that tells the dramatic story of a remarkable young Texan pianist, Van Cliburn, who played his way through the wall of fear built by the Cold War, won the hearts of the American and Russian people, and eased tensions between two superpowers on the brink of nuclear war. In 1958, an unheralded twenty-three-year-old piano prodigy from Texas named Van Cliburn traveled to Moscow to compete in the First International Tchaikovsky Competition. The Soviets had no intention of bestowing their coveted prize on an unknown American; a Russian pianist had already been chosen to win. Yet when the gangly Texan with the shy grin took the stage and began to play, he instantly captivated an entire nation. The Soviet people were charmed by Van Cliburn's extraordinary talent, passion, and fresh-faced innocence, but it was his palpable love for the music that earned their devotion; for many, he played more like a Russian than their own musicians. As enraptured crowds mobbed Cliburn's performances, pressure mounted to award him the competition prize. "Is he the best?" Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev demanded of the judges. "In that case . . . give him the prize!" Adored by millions in the USSR, Cliburn returned to a thunderous hero's welcome in the USA and became, for a time, an ambassador of hope for two dangerously hostile superpowers. In this thrilling, impeccably researched account, Nigel Cliff recreates the drama and tension of the Cold War era, and brings into focus the gifted musician and deeply compelling figure whose music would temporarily bridge the divide between two dangerously hostile powers.

"With his gold-medal performance in Moscow, Van Cliburn added a human face to the Cold War...A nuanced account." (New York Times Book) "Nigel Cliff... has written a freshly sourced account of these momentous Moscow nights. He places them aptly at the heart of the nuclear conflict and poignantly in the personal odyssey of a lanky, gay pianist from a small prairie town who never wanted to do much except play Russian music." (Economist) "Absorbing...Cliff is at home in Texan, American, Russian, political and piano cultures. . . . a solid history of a most remarkable young man caught at a most remarkable time. (Dallas Morning News) "An elegant, insightful and ultimately definitive account of one of the 20th century's most compelling events, and the extraordinary artist and person at the heart of it." (Houston Chronicle) "[Cliff's] fresh perspective, combined with deep research and a genuine gift for narrative, restores a neglected chapter of American musical and political history to vivid—and contemporaneously relevant life." (Madison Searle, Texas Music) "Brings to life Van Cliburn's unexpected triumph and its continuing implications for Soviet-American relations through the end of the Cold War... an engaging account of an extraordinary historical moment." (Shelf Awareness) "Cliburn in Russia offers a fascinating perspective on a decade of nuclear tests, espionage schemes and efforts to close the missile gap. This story is to the Cold War what ping-pong diplomacy was to President Nixon's opening to China. It is both entertaining and illuminating, and Cliff tells it beautifully." (Wall Street Journal) "A beautifully done biography of one of the Cold War's most famous and unlikely characters..." (Boston Globe "Best Book of 2016") "The newest biography on the life of Van Cliburn is a masterpiece ...As an account of the political climate and cultural events that the genius musician found himself in as a young man, MOSCOW NIGHTS may long stand as an enthralling resource for historians, audiophiles, and the general public alike." (Fort Worth Weekly) "An elegant, insightful and ultimately definitive account of one of the 20th century's most compelling events, and the extraordinary artist and person at the heart of it." (Fort Worth Star-Telegram; Houston Chronicle) "Nigel Cliff... has written a freshly sourced account of these momentous Moscow nights. He places them aptly at the heart of the nuclear conflict and poignantly in the personal odyssey of a lanky, gay pianist from a small prairie town who never wanted to do much except play Russian music." (The Economist) "Cliff... successfully evokes Cliburn's intuitive musicianship."

(New Yorker)“Astonishing... an engaging, richly detailed account of a remarkable man.” (Christian Science Monitor)“Cliff’s authentic depiction of life during the cold war transports us into a sinister bygone age, while insightful descriptions provide a rare glimpse of [Cliburn’s] sometimes fragile mindset...Cliff’s vivid retelling of the dramatic story and its aftermath will have readers perched on the edge of their seat.” (The Lady)“Part musical biography, part nostalgic look at the hula-hoop era and part Cold War history, MOSCOW NIGHTS strikes the right chord in all respects.” (BookPage)“Essential reading for anyone interested in Cliburn-or in the cultural history of the Cold War.” (Terry Teachout, Commentary)“A thrilling delight...compulsively readable...It’s Vanya all the way in a biography for music lovers, Cold War devotees, and all readers seeking a true feel-great story.” (Booklist (starred review))“Cliff brilliantly weaves together the politics, personalities, and pianism...A well-researched, fascinating look at a special relationship between Van Cliburn and the U.S.S.R.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))“A sympathetic yet rounded portrait of the pianist...Highly recommended for readers interested in music (especially classical music and the piano) and the history of the Cold War.” (Library Journal (starred review))“A rousing, well-researched biography... Throughout the author vividly reprises major historical events...Sweeping history combines with a sensitive rendering of Cliburn’s extraordinary passion.” (Kirkus, Starred)

From the Back Cover
In 1958, an unheralded twenty-three-year-old piano prodigy from Texas named Van Cliburn traveled to Moscow to compete in the first International Tchaikovsky Competition. The Soviets had no intention of bestowing their coveted prize on an unknown American; a Soviet pianist had already been chosen to win. Yet when the gangly Texan with the shy grin took the stage and began to play, he instantly captivated an entire nation. The Soviet people were charmed by Cliburn’s extraordinary talent, passion, and fresh-faced innocence, but it was his palpable love for the music that earned their devotion; for many, he played more like a Russian than their own musicians. As enraptured crowds mobbed Cliburn’s performances, pressure mounted to award him the competition prize. “Is he the best?” Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev demanded of the judges. “In that case . . . give him the prize!” Adored by millions in the USSR, Cliburn returned to a thunderous hero’s welcome in the United States and became, for a time, an ambassador of hope and peace. In this thrilling, impeccably researched account, Nigel Cliff recreates the drama and tension of the Cold War era, and brings into focus the gifted musician and deeply compelling figure whose music would temporarily bridge the divide between two dangerously hostile powers.

About the Author
Nigel Cliff is a historian, biographer, and translator. His first book, *The Shakespeare Riots*, was a finalist for the National Award for Arts Writing and was chosen as one of the *Washington Post*’s best books of the year. His second book, *The Last Crusade: The Epic Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book. His most recent book is a translation and edition of *The Travels by Marco Polo*. A former film and theater critic for the *London Times* and contributor to *The Economist*, he writes for a range of publications, including the *New York Times Book Review*. A Fellow of Harris Manchester College, Oxford, he lives in London.