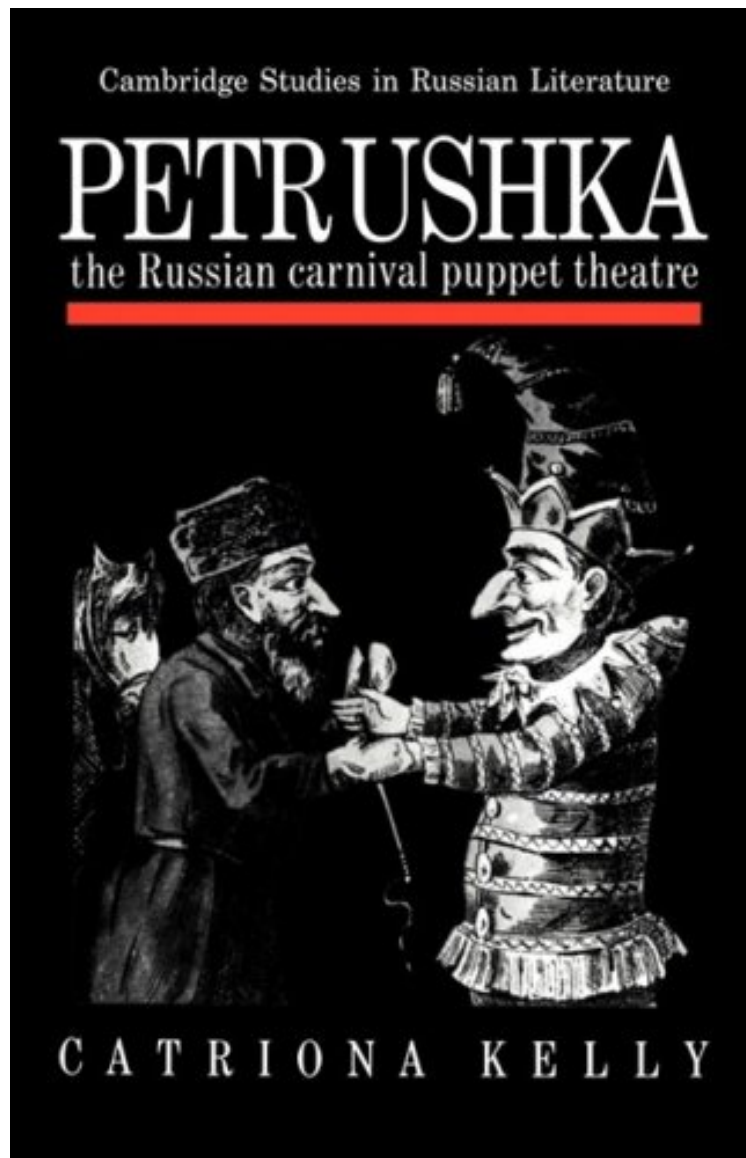


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***Petrushka: The Russian Carnival Puppet Theatre* (Cambridge Studies in Russian Literature)**

Catriona Kelly

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Essential Puppet History By Alice4447
Catriona Kelly provides vital information about Russian puppet history. If you are a person looking for help recreating antique puppet traditions, this book belongs in your library. Despite the Soviet Union's attempt to quash or sanitize the Petrushka tradition, what little evidence remains has been gathered and presented by the author along with portions of remaining scripts. The book is full of revelations and surprises.

Petrushka, the Russian equivalent of Punch and Judy, was one of the most popular spectacles at fairgrounds and in city courtyards for over a century. Catriona Kelly's study, the first to appear in English, traces the history of Petrushka, illustrating how it reflected the tensions of Russian urban life both before and after the Revolution. Written from a standpoint informed by literary theory, her book at the same time breaks open the categories traditionally applied, both in the Soviet Union and in the West, to the study of Russian literature and popular culture. Contemporary interpretations of Petrushka on the street, high-cultural appropriations of it for a bourgeois and intellectual readership (notably the famous ballet by Benois and Stravinsky), and adaptations made for agit-prop purposes are all analysed. Based on a wide range of unusual materials, this lively and very readable account will appeal not only to literary specialists, but also to those interested in cultural politics, folklore, women's studies and popular theatre.