

Elizabeth Kirschenman's response

I have visited both Russia and Ukraine twice within the last couple of years and would certainly go back to St. Petersburg now. In my opinion, a boycott is like taking our ball and going home when the play isn't going our way, in which case, it is game over. I think "having the discussion" is extremely important, even crucial when it comes to the differing and opposing positions in major issues, and too often a boycott destroys that opportunity. Doesn't/shouldn't art transcend the economic, political, sexual orientation, climate change, and "activism of all sorts" agendas? I don't believe we should allow ourselves to be so narrowly defined by these sorts of issues. Surely there better ways of expressing opposition than running and pouting. Consider the circumstances surrounding Tchaikovsky, Moussorgsky, Scriabin, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Akhmatova, and more recently, Solzhenitsyn. Their art was their response, outlasting the regimes of the day.