

Title: Edgar Allan Poe-zia in the Work of Ludmilla Petrushevskaya
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Abstract:

Many of the most recent English-language translations and reviews of Ludmilla Petrushevskaya's stories have advertised Petrushevskaya as carrying on the tradition of the American writer Edgar Allan Poe, "Petrushevskaya's favorite author," according to Anna Summers. This characterization immediately suggests a way of reading Petrushevskaya's tales through the lens of Poe, especially for an English-language audience that is likely more familiar with the works of Poe than with the Russian literary tradition. This paper explores some general ways in which Petrushevskaya's stories take cues from Poe—from the combination of horror with humor, to the confusion of dreams with reality. It then moves from the general to the specific, analyzing how Petrushevskaya pays homage to Poe through direct echoes in a number of individual stories. Finally, this paper begins a conversation about how marketing Petrushevskaya as influenced by Poe shapes the way her English-language audience reads and understands her work in significantly different ways than it is understood by her Russian-language audience.