Guide to the Sasha Sokolov Collection

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Guide to the Sasha Sokolov Collection, ca. 1975-1991

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Sasha Sokolov Collection
Dates: ca. 1975-1991
Collection number: Mss 117
Creator: Sokolov, Sasha, 1943-
Collection Size: 3.6 linear feet (9 document boxes and 13 audiocassettes)
Repository: University of California, Santa Barbara. Library. Dept. of Special Collections
Santa Barbara, CA 93106
Abstract: Collection contains biographical and bibliographical information, writings, interviews, speeches, lectures, photographs, and tapes relating to the writer Sasha Sokolov.
Physical location: Del Sur.
Languages: English, Russian
Access Restrictions
None.
Publication Rights
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Acquisition Information
Donation from multiple sources, including Sasha Sokolov, Ardis, Donald B. Johnson, and others, 1986-early 1990s.
Biography
Aleksandr Vsevolodovich Sokolov, émigré novelist, poet, and essayist, was born in Ottawa, Canada in 1943. Both parents were, inter alia, intelligence agents at the war-time Soviet embassy there. Exposed after the war, they returned to Moscow where the father became a senior figure in military intelligence circles. Sasha spent a troubled youth. At one time his parents considered placing him in a special school for disturbed adolescents. Nonetheless, he succeeded in entering the Military Institute for Foreign Languages in 1962. Detesting military life, he and a friend attempted to cross the Turmen-Iranian border while AWOL. The authorities apparently failed to realize that he was defecting and merely sentenced him for being absent without leave. Feigning madness to gain a discharge, he spent three months in a mental hospital. Discharged from the hospital and the army in early 1965, Sokolov became a fringe member of Moscow's flourishing literary bohemia, particularly the avant-garde group SMOG (the acronymic Society of Youngest Geniuses). In 1966 the aspiring writer entered the Journalism School of Moscow State University and soon began to publish stories and articles. He also
married a fellow student, Taisiia Suvorova. Bored with school, he took a job with a newspaper in the remote middle Volga area. Returning to Moscow in 1969 he worked for Literaturnaia Rossiia, the prestigious paper of the Russian branch of the Writer's Union.

Meanwhile his stories were attracting attention and he decided to settle in a remote area and write. Sokolov soon found a sinecure as a game warden on a hunting preserve. He spent most of 1972-73 there among the rough hunting and fishing folk who populated the area. It was here that he completed his first novel, the experimental School for Fools in which a schizophrenic adolescent depicts his world. Knowing the novel could not be published in the Soviet Union, he arranged for it to be smuggled out by an Austrian girl. Sokolov wished to emigrate and marriage to a foreign national was one of the few ways to make this possible. This plan met with numerous official obstacles until the lovers staged simultaneous hunger strikes in the town squares of Moscow and Vienna, eventually attracting world press coverage. Sokolov's desire to emigrate had become even stronger since he had learned that A School for Fools had been accepted by Ardis Publishers, a small press founded by Carl and Ellendea Proffer in Ann Arbor Michigan for the promotion of Russian literature.

Sokolov arrived in Vienna in October 1975. The marriage was short-lived and Sokolov, who was soon to establish his right to Canadian citizenship, emigrated to the U.S., partially to promote his novella which appeared first in Russian and then English (1977) to impressive reviews. He continued work on a new book, Between Dog and Wolf (1980), a phantasmagoric murder mystery set in the deep provinces of the Volga.

Sokolov sees himself as a wanderer and has constantly moved from place to place about the U.S. and Canada although he has a marked fondness for northern Vermont and adjacent Canada, the region in which he completed his satiric third novel, Palisandria (1985), known in English as Astrophobia (1989). Sokolov spent much of 1988 in Greece before returning to glasnost Russia where he was lionized during a year-long visit. Seeking a quiet atmosphere, the increasingly reclusive writer returned to Canada, spending time in Newfoundland, as well as Vermont.

All three of his novels have now been published in Russia, as well as an essay collection entitled Vozhidanii Nobelia ili abschaya tetr [Waiting for the Nobel, or a Common Notebook (1993)]. Critical study of his work, once limited to the West, now flourishes in the writer's homeland. In 1996, Sokolov was awarded the prestigious Pushkin Prize for his contributions to literature.

Biography by D. Barton Johnson, October 29, 1997

Arrangement

The collection contains the following series:

Biographical/Bibliographical Files. Includes articles and essays about Sokolov, bibliographies and lists of writings, and documents dealing mainly with his emigration from Russia and subsequent residence and visa issues, ca. 1975-1984.

Ardis (Sokolov's publisher). Includes correspondence and financial documents by and relating to Sokolov and his publisher, ca. 1975-1986.

Writings by Sokolov

Monographs, including corrected typescript drafts and proofs for Shkola dl'a durakov (School for Fools), Mezhdu sobakoi i volkom (Between Dog and Wolf), and Palisandria (Astrophobia).


Published Interviews with Sokolov, ca. 1981-1985.

Speeches/Lectures by Sokolov.

Photographs and Drawings of Sokolov, including a small number of b/w prints.

Miscellany, including copy of "Balada o tret' em semestre," notes and clippings re Sokolov and Ardis, and reviews and essays on other contemporary Russian authors.

Tapes. Includes interviews of Sokolov, by Donald Barton Johnson.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Sokolov, Sasha, 1943-

Authors, Russian -- Canada.

Authors, Russian -- United States.

Authors, Russian -- 20th century.

Related Material
The Department of Special Collections has first editions and translations in several languages, of Sokolov's work, as well as Ardis publications, all of which are cataloged separately. Titles can be searched on Pegasus (the UCSB online catalog), Melvyl (the University of California online catalog), as well as OCLC and RLIN.

Biographical/Bibliographical Files

Box 1: 1  
Articles/Essays about Sokolov, in English and Russian (including essay by Donald B. Johnson), ca. 1975-1984

Box 1: 2  
Bibliographies and lists of Sokolov's writing

Box 1: 3  
Documents, including passport, ca. 1975-1977

Box 1: 4  
Documents and correspondence, mostly regarding Sokolov's emigration from Russia to his marriage to Johanna Steindl, and residence and visa issues, 1975-1977

Ardis

Box 1: 5-6  
Correspondence from Sokolov and Johanna Steindl to Ardis (Carl and Ellendea Proffer, Raya and Ronald Meyer, 1975-1986)

Box 1: 7  
Correspondence from Carl and Ellendea Proffer to and about Sokolov, 1975-1984

Box 1: 8  
Correspondence about Sokolov and to Ardis, 1975-1985

Box 1: 9  
Correspondence from university faculty to Carl Proffer re Sokolov, 1975-1986

Box 1: 10  
Financial documents mainly dealing with School for Fools, 1975-1985

Box 1: 11  
Correspondence between publishing companies and Ardis about School for Fools, 1975-1984

Box 1: 12  
British Broadcasting Corporation - correspondence re transmission of Sokolov's books on BBC, 1985

Box 1: 13  
Articles about Ardis, ca. 1986

Writings by Sokolov

Monographs

Shkola dl'a durakov (School For Fools) [Sokolov's 1st novel]

Russian Language

Box 2: 1  
Original typescript draft, with corrections

Box 2: 2  
Original typescript draft - uncorrected photocopy

Box 2: 3  
Typescript draft - photocopy sent from Austria by Johanna Steindl, to Carl Proffer, 1976

Box 2: 4  
Original page proofs, with SS’s corrections - photocopy

English Language

Box 3: 1  
Typescript, with corrections

Box 3: 2  
Typescript, with C. Proffer’s corrections

Box 3: 3  
Typescript, with handwritten corrections

Box 3: 4  
Proffer typescript and page proofs, with corrections

Box 3: 5  
Page proofs and corrections by Nina Berberova, of Proffer's translation

Box 3: 6  
Page proofs, with author’s handwritten correction

Box 3: 7  
Printed excerpts from the Twentieth Century Russian Reader - photocopy, 1985

Box 4: 1-2  
Page proofs, uncorrected, with "Reviews of and comments on the Russian edition and advance copies of the English translation" (photocopies - two sets)

Box 4: 3-5  
Reviews and essays (about Sokolov and School for Fools), arranged alphabetically by author

Box 4: 6-7  
Correspondence (mostly to Carl Proffer at Ardis) and other material relating to publication and reviews of School for Fools

Box 4: 8  
Dustjackets and silverprint proofs

Mezhdu sobakoi i volkom (Between Dog and Wolf) [Sokolov's 2nd novel]
| Box 5: 1 | Revised typescript manuscript - uncorrected photocopy |
| Box 5: 2 | Next to last final typescript draft, with corrections |
| Box 5: 3 | Revised final version of the typescript manuscript - photocopy, with corrections |
| Box 5: 4 | Revised final, final version of the typescript manuscript - photocopy with corrections, 1979 |
| Box 5: 5 | Typescript fragments, with corrections |
| Box 6: 1 | Page proofs - photocopy, with corrections - author’s copy |
| Box 6: 3 | English Language - First typescript translation, - fragment, with corrections, 37 pages |
| Box 6: 4 | Reviews and essays (about Sokolov and *Between Dog and Wolf*), arranged by author |

*Palisandria (Astrophobia)* [Sokolov’s 3rd novel]

| Russian Language |
| Box 7: 1 | Typescript manuscript final version, with corrections |
| Box 7: 2 | Typescript manuscript final version - uncorrected photocopy, with handwritten acknowledgements |
| Box 8: 1 | Galley proofs, with author’s handwritten corrections |
| Box 8: 2 | Page proofs - photocopies, with author’s handwritten corrections |
| Box 8: 3 | Page proofs - photocopies, with Sergei’s penciled corrections |
| Box 8: 4 | Transcripts of BBC broadcasts featuring *Palisandria* |
| Box 8: 5 | Polish Language - Excerpt from *Palisandria*, appearing in *Zeszyty Literackie Magazine*, (Paris) vol.2, no.8 (Fall 1984): 20-31 - photocopy, 1984 |
| Box 8: 6 | Reviews and essays (about Sokolov and *Palisandria*), arranged by author, Sokolov’s writings about *Palisandria* - photocopies |
| Box 8: 7 | Dustjackets |
| Box 9: 1 | Essays and Articles by Sokolov (in Russian and English, mostly photocopies), ca. 1971-1991 |
| Box 9: 2 | Newspaper Articles by Sokolov - appearing in *Literaturnaya Rossia*, ca. 1969-1971 |
| Box 9: 3 | Poems by Sokolov - untitled, appearing in *Kovcheg Literature Journal* (Paris), no. 6 (photocopy) |
| Box 9: 4 | Arranged by author/interviewer, ca. 1981-1985 |
| Box 9: 5 | Speeches/Lectures by Sokolov |
| Box 9: 5 | “V Dome Poveshennogo” = “In the House of the Hung” - speech at Emory University (Atlanta, Georgia) at the conference of “Pereomslenie Prav Cheloveka - Rethinking Human Rights” |
| Box 9: 6 | Photographs and Drawings of Sokolov |
| Box 9: 6 | Includes 3 b/w prints and 1 b/w negative |

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Box 9: 7

“Balada o tret’em semestre - A Ballad of the Third Semester,” an anthology of articles and propaganda on the Five Year Plans about Russian agricultural and technological advancements

Box 9: 8

Notes, clippings, and miscellany re Sokolov and Ardis

Box 9: 9

Reviews and essays on other contemporary Russian authors

Tapes (audiocassettes)

A1843/CS  Poem “Ugodnik Nikolai” and “O Sobake i Volke” (“Of Dog and Wolf”)
A1844/CS  “Zabavnyi Balagan”

Donald Barton Johnson [DBJ] tapes (some tapes recorded on one side only), 1983

A13591-13593/CS  Sokolov interviewed by DBJ (3 tapes), June 20, 1983
A13594/CS  Sasha Sokolov I: Broadcast interview; Sokolov reads from Palisandria, Voice of America, Mar. 21, 1985
A13595/CS  Sasha Sokolov Interview and Palisandria Reading for Tanya Retivov/Russian Service, Voice of America, May 29, [1985?]
A13596/CS  Questions on Palisandria, Nov. 18, 1985
A13597/CS  Mathius interview with Sokolov, at UCSB and published (in part?) in Nexus, Nov. 1985
A13598/CS  Sokolov interviewed by DBJ re Palisandria, Dec. 2, 1985
A13599/CS  Sokolov interviewed by DBJ, Dec. 4, 1985
A13600/CS  Sokolov interviewed by DBJ (one side only), [Dec. 5, 1985?]
A13601/CS  Sokolov interviewed by DBJ, Craftsbury Sports Center in Vermont (where Sokolov was working as a handyman and ski instructor), June 1987