



Pushkin and the Genres of Madness: The Masterpieces of 1833 (Wisconsin Center for Pushkin Studies)

Gary Rosenshield

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In 1833 Alexander Pushkin began to explore the topic of madness, a subject little explored in Russian literature before his time. The works he produced on the theme are three of his greatest masterpieces: the prose novella *The Queen of Spades*, the narrative poem *The Bronze Horseman*, and the lyric "God Grant That I Not Lose My Mind." Gary Rosenshield presents a new interpretation of Pushkin's genius through an examination of his various representations of madness.

Pushkin brilliantly explored both the destructive and creative sides of madness, a strange fusion of violence and insight. In this study, Rosenshield illustrates the surprising valorization of madness in *The Queen of Spades* and "God Grant That I Not Lose My Mind" and analyzes *The Bronze Horseman's* confrontation with the legacy of Peter the Great, a cornerstone figure of Russian history. Drawing on themes of madness in western literature, Rosenshield situates Pushkin in a greater framework with such luminaries as Shakespeare, Sophocles, Cervantes, and Dostoevsky providing an insightful and absorbing study of Russia's greatest writer.

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