Slavic Review was, of course, only one part of her life, which was filled with quilting and community, languages and music, travel and family, and we are grateful to have shared in it in this small way. As an assistant-turned-friend stated, Jane had an inquisitive mind and spirit "turned outward, toward the world and toward us. She listened to our stories and she told us her own. She humbled us and she encouraged us. We are better because of her."

Jane is survived by her husband, Mark D. Steinberg, and her son, Sasha Steinberg. It was an honor to work alongside her.

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August 2015

Catharine Theimer Nepomnyashchy, 1951–2015

When Catharine Nepomnyashchy passed away following a relatively brief illness in March of this year, the loss was so devastating that it was hard to know what to say. Our field suddenly found itself without one of its best-known and most beloved figures, a scholar in the prime of her life and at the height of her professional abilities, who still had so much she wanted to do and write and who, as many knew, had been raising a sixteen-year-old daughter as a single parent. Cathy's friends and colleagues were heartbroken and, in many cases, ill-prepared for the news: Cathy had chosen to keep the seriousness of her illness private until the very end of her life. Tributes and condolences poured in to Cathy's Facebook page, but other, more public forums, including, most notably, the Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures list (SEELANGS), remained strangely silent, as those in Slavic studies struggled to process the news.

Cathy was a remarkable scholar, distinguished by her broad education, intellectual adventurousness, and her facility with interdisciplinary approaches. After finishing a BA in Russian and a combined BA and MA in French literature at Brown University in 1973, she went on to complete a PhD program at Columbia University in the Department of Slavic Languages. Hired as an assistant professor at Barnard College in 1987 amid the excitement of glasnost and perestroika, Cathy quickly acquired a reputation as one of the world's leading specialists on contemporary Russian literature and popular culture. Her first two books and many of her early articles focused on the work of the renowned dissident writer Andrei Siniavskii (Abram Tertz). Along with Slava Yastremski, Cathy completed a translation of Tertz's scandalous *Strolls with Pushkin* (Yale University Press), which won the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL) Translation Prize in 1994. A year later, she published the first monograph on the writer's work, *Abram Tertz and the Poetics of Crime* (Yale University Press), setting a high standard for all later work on the author. Other projects included *Under the Sky of My Africa: Alexander Pushkin and Blackness* (Northwestern University Press, 2006), an edited volume completed with Ludmilla Trigos and Nicole Svobodny; *Mapping the Feminine: Russian Women and Cultural Difference* (Slavica, 2008), which Cathy coedited with Hilde Hoogenboom and Irina Reyfman; and a first-person account of the 1991 coup titled *Tri dnia v avguste* (MediaMir), which was written together with Nadezda Azhgikhina and appeared in 2014. Cathy wrote articles on an even more diverse array of topics: the reception of

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Jane Austen in Russian culture, post-Soviet miniseries and detective novels, the Putin cult, Aleksandr Pushkin, Vladimir Nabokov, Valentin Kataev, Tat'iana Tolstaia, and the role of creative unions in glasnost, in each case approaching her topic with steely insight, literary flare, and, as often as not, good humor.

Cathy's warmth, boundless energy, and outstanding organizational abilities allowed her to play an outsized role in our field for a period of several decades. Particularly during the eight years in which she served as the first female director of the Harriman Institute (2001–09), Cathy seemed constantly in motion. She organized conferences on an astonishingly broad range of topics, invited current and former world leaders, journalists, writers, and artists to speak and engage with the Columbia University community, and traveled the globe to build ties with cultural and political leaders in the new nations of eastern Europe and Eurasia. Somehow, she even managed to find the time to study Georgian.

Cathy was a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations and served both as president of AATSEEL and on the Board of Directors of AAASS (now ASEEES). Her zest for life and her enthusiasm for travel and new experiences never faded. She looked forward to international conferences and to speaking and teaching engagements in far-flung locations, in part because they gave her a chance to see new parts of the world. Less than a year before her death, she took what she described as "the trip of a lifetime" with a group of Columbia University students on the Trans-Siberian Railway through Russia, Mongolia, and China, blogging about her experiences along the way. The eclectic collection of books and art that Cathy acquired during her travels filled her New York apartment. On every visit, friends would find new treasures to admire: exquisite early lacquer boxes, original constructivist china, puppets made by staff at some of the world's best children's theaters, rare editions of the Russian classics, and icons that were hundreds of years old.

Cathy was the glue that held many social circles together. A tireless mentor and colleague, she had an unusually broad circle of acquaintances and delighted in helping people make connections. Mention a new research project, interest, or career aspiration to Cathy, and she would immediately list five people you should meet. Cathy was generous with her time to a fault. In nail parlors, restaurants, and at home over bottles of champagne and boxes of take-out food, she nudged generations of Barnard undergraduates, Columbia graduate students, and Harriman Institute postdocs to dream bigger and think more broadly and ambitiously. Always encouraging, she led her students through theses, dissertations, first conference presentations, and monograph projects, offering perceptive critiques of works in progress and gently challenging intellectual assumptions. Often students left Cathy's home or office with armloads of books, each a potentially useful source for current research projects.

In 2003, Cathy's outstanding achievements in research, teaching, and professional service were recognized when she became Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Russian Literature at Barnard College. Other awards followed, including the AATSEEL Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Profession (2010) and the Harriman Institute's Alumna of the Year (2013).

Cathy spent the last months of her life surrounded by friends and family. Colleagues and former students travelled across the country and around the globe to say goodbyes and express how much her friendship had meant to them. Those who lived in and around New York City cooked for Cathy, took her to medical appointments, ran errands, and tried to comfort and distract her daughter, Olga. But Cathy's devastating diagnosis and rapid decline were a tragedy of such proportions that it was hard to feel anything but helpless.

Even at the very end of her life, Cathy continued working. In the months before her death, in between radiation treatments and chemotherapy, she finished an article

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on the Ballets Russes, worked on the manuscript of her book on Nabokov, planned a lecture series at Columbia, and did everything she could to care for Olga. In a moving tribute written immediately after her mother's death, Olga Nepomnyashchy described Cathy as "admirable, awe-inspiring," and "amazing," "not only the strongest person I knew, but . . . also the kindest" (www.cathynepomnyashchy.com/tributes-and-stories-about-cathy.html [last accessed June 1, 2015]). As Cathy's colleagues and former students, we share these sentiments and miss her warm presence in our lives.

Cathy was preceded in death by her husband, Vyacheslav (Slava) Nepomnyashchy, whom she met at a Black Sea resort in 1970 and to whom she was married for thirty-four years. She is survived by her daughter, Olga Nepomnyashchy; her brother, James Theimer; her sister-in-law Sunnie Noellert; her mother, Jo-Anne Theimer; her brother- and sister-in-law, Vladimir and Anna Nepomnyashchy; her nephew, Lev Oborin; and by her scholarly legacy: the five books and dozens of articles that she wrote over her career and the many students and colleagues whom she inspired.

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