

Title: Whispering from the Wings: *Evgenii Onegin* and Katia Kapovich's *Sufler*
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In her novel in verse *Sufler*, Katia Kapovich uses both direct references to the text of *Evgenii Onegin* and similar formal devices found in Pushkin, but does not use the Onegin stanza. However, as Pushkin does in *Evgenii Onegin*, Kapovich creates a very stringent pattern, which allows her to imbue with significance any departures from it. In the first nine stanzas of *Sufler*, she bombards the reader with references, in terms of both form and content, to *Evgenii Onegin*, thereby establishing a basis for playing with reader expectations for a modern Pushkinian "roman v stikhakh." In a significant example of this playfulness, Kapovich includes poems written by her heroine, Olga, within the text. These asides are marked by a change in meter, like the Maidens' Song in *Evgenii Onegin*, but they recur frequently. Excerpts from Olga's dissertation, which are also included, suggest a certain discomfort with trusting a narrator and the need for another source of truth. I would like to suggest that this is the significance of Olga's poems; they provide an alternative truth from that of the narrator. In this way, Kapovich uses formal devices both to advance the plot of *Sufler* and to suggest directions for interpretation.