

Albuquerque International Association
presents
The Alexei Navalny Memorial Lecture

**Democrats, Oligarchs, and Dictators:
Russia's Catastrophe as a Mirror of
Global Crisis**

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Botts Hall, Albuquerque Special Collections Library

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, hopes for the rise of democratic politics within the Russian Federation and an end to geopolitical conflict between Russia and Western states were widely shared. Now, three decades on, the Russian Federation is an authoritarian dictatorship belligerently disposed towards Eastern European neighbors and the West in general. How did this come to pass? The failure of Russia democracy is often viewed as a “Russia problem” — as evidence that Russians are prone to totalitarianism, or as the realization of Putin’s longstanding dictatorial ambitions. Complicating such views, this lecture will explain how Russia’s political path has been propelled by global political and economic transformations. Russia’s catastrophe, it will be argued, is our catastrophe, too.

Kevin M. F. Platt is a Professor of Russian and East European Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a specialist in Russian and East European literature, history, social memory, and culture. Platt is the author or editor of a number of books, including among others *Terror and Greatness: Ivan and Peter as Russian Myths* and *Global Russian Cultures*. His most recent book is *Border Conditions: Russian-Speaking Latvians Between World Orders*. Platt also translates contemporary Russian and East European poetry and is the founder and organizer of the periodic translation symposium *Your Language My Ear*.

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