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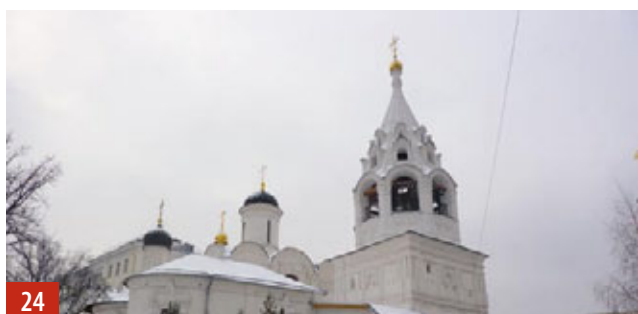
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**John Ortega**  
Owner and Publisher

This year I planned my vacation 1 month in advance and decided to go to Dubai where you can see the sun every day. We were due to fly on Sunday December 26, the day after Christmas.

We booked flights on Emirate Airlines out of Domodedovo Airport in South East of Moscow leaving at 4:55pm which means getting to the airport by 1:00pm. Emirates runs a first class operation and has new planes and great entertainment system so we opt for \$1400 coach tickets.

We woke up early on Sunday December 26th maybe 5 am to find out our house in Moscow was dark, no electricity again! After 10 min. of searching for flashlights and lighting numerous candles on the first and second floors, we decided to pack for our trip, not so easy in the dark. I cannot move in the morning without my Starbucks cup of coffee.

Buy alas my Krups coffee maker won't work without electricity. OK grind the beans and boil them. Oh I forgot, I have an electric grinder. No problem I found a jar of Nescafe instant. Oh my God I cannot light my gas stove because the electric lighter won't spark, where are the matches!! So the coffee is on, but there is no water pressure as the pump works on electricity! Ok who needs a shower? We can't flush the toilets, we will do that when we get back. It's 9:30am and I can see outside that it has been snowing all night. I don't know what's going on outside of my Letovo Village because TV, Radio and internet is out, yes it all runs on electricity.

We get ready to leave by 12 noon, but I cannot open my garage door because of no power! Manually we detach the motor and heave up the garage door by hand. But how do I open my outside gates, they only weight one ton! After 30 minutes pulling open the gate we are off to Domodedovo Airport, usually 45 minutes away. We turn on the radio and listen to Russian news, this is when we find out that 450 power stations in Moscow were down because of snow weighing down on power lines. We try to call Emirates Airline main office at Pavletskaya but no answer, well it's Sunday. Next we call their office at Domodedovo to find out no one answering there either. Halfway to the airport we hear on the news that the airport is closed due to loss of electricity! How can an international airport lose its electricity? Well it's Russia. Police are stopping all cars and forcing them to turn around. At 2pm we get a sms from Emirates. Flights are transferred to fly from Sheremetyevo, and we have to get there before dark. We get there at 9pm. We unload the car, park, walk to the main terminal.

Nobody knows where the flight is, since it's the first time an Emirates flight has taken off from Sheremetyevo. Finally we find the Emirates ground crew with three small laptops that they are trying to hook up to the local WiFi. They need to get into their system to issue tickets but they had no machine to produce boarding passes! Well two flights have now been cancelled, and we have over 400 stranded passengers at the Sheremetyevo International Airport. I find out that the airport won't let business passengers use the private lounges, maybe competition? They finally get personal laptops to work maybe one hour later but they run out of power. Passengers offer their laptops which Emirates gladly accept. We have 400 passengers tired, hungry and grumpy. Its 11 pm we find out that a new Boeing 777 has just left Dubai for Moscow, a minimum of 5 hours away! Flight started boarding procedures at 7:00am and took off at 8:30am arriving 1:30 pm one and a half days late! Welcome 2011.



## Lamb at Shafran

The last month of winter in Shafran is a wonderful chance to eat well! We will serve lamb prepared in the most delicious way, hot soup, several kinds of kebab, delicate chops, succulent tongue and even lamb salads. But the main February delicacy in Shafran is a big and spicy leg of lamb. Definitely there is one more reason to celebrate in February. Come and join us at the restaurant of Lebanese cuisine: Shafran

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## Dance for life

The Moiseyev Dance Company creates a vivid reflection of the life of dance schools in Russia. Its leader Igor Moiseyev, who passed away three years ago at the age of one hundred and one, was decisive in setting up the very high standards, from the 1930s, that were set for admissions into the school. Moiseyev himself was a student at the Bolshoi theatre ballet school, he then staged and directed parades and ballets for the Bolshoi as well. "With ballet technique as a base, one can do everything," he always said in interviews, but he always insisted that his students should be trained in acrobatics. That is how the troupe's world-known repertoire emerged. After WW II, along with Russian and Caucasian dances, dances from Europe and Asia appeared. The Moiseyev Dance Company was one of the few dance troupes to be allowed to tour the UK, France and the USA. During every trip Moiseyev found time to have a look at a local dance performance and absorbed every movement and gesture. Intuition, talent and hard work made it possible to Moiseyev to create a dance encyclopaedia of the world—a tradition which is respectfully maintained in honour of the Maestro.



**February 8, 9, 17, 19:00**

*Tchaikovsky Concert Hall*

[www.meloman.ru](http://www.meloman.ru)



**February 6, 19:00**

*Moscow House of Music*

[www.mmdm.ru](http://www.mmdm.ru)

## Star-violin

For lovers of violin music, the Moscow House of Music has a present for you—a concert by Zakhar Bron, a brilliant violinist and teacher. In theatrical circles they say that during his career Bron has educated musicians for more than one symphony orchestra. And here are the names of some of his better known pupils: Maxim Vengerov, Denis Goldfeld, Daishin Kashimoto, Tamaki Kawakubo, Nikolai Madoyev and many others prominent in leading orchestras the world over. Many of his pupils started their careers in Novosibirsk. Bron has also taught at the Royal Academy of Music in London, the Conservatory of Rotterdam, the Musikhochschule, Lübeck, and since 1997 has been professor at the Cologne Musikhochschule. For his concert, Bron will be performing both solo and together with some of his pupils; playing some rare orchestral works accompanied by the Virtuoso Moskv Orchestra, conducted by the invited conductor Saulius Sondeckis (Lithuania).

## A winter festival of orchids

Orchids are one of the most beautiful flowers in the world. There are innumerable species, so many shapes. It is a miracle that even in the darkest part of the year they can bloom in this city. The Apothecaries' Garden on Prospekt Mira invites for the second time flower-lovers to its orangeries to see those capricious beauties during its second international orchid festival. Apothecaries' gardens were a common thing in 18th century Europe. In Moscow the first one appeared early in the early 18th century, under Peter the Great, and since then it has not changed its location. Today it remains a cozy outdoor garden with tropical plants carefully looked after in a heated glass building. Keepers understand that each different plant needs its own specific amount of water each day, and they do their best to make those Southern beauties feel at ease in the centre of Moscow and in the middle of winter with its short, dark days. Pink corydalis and white lilies, golden anemones and blue hyacinths grow in a place where there is now a skating rink. But the weather is tropical inside the huge glass greenhouse where the orchid festival is held, even when it is minus 25 degrees outside. Over two hundred species of orchids from different parts of the world are on display.



*26, Prospekt Mira, every day except Mondays  
Apothecaries' Garden (near Metro Prospekt Mira)*

*Open: 12:00 – 19:00*

[www.hortus.ru](http://www.hortus.ru)



## Family photo album. Bygone atelier of photography



Photography was one of the most important inventions of the 19th century, and it had a great effect on the impressionists and futurists. But apart from critical appraisal during sophisticated conversations held among painters and prejudiced people about its role and use in visual art, photography—portrait photography in particular—soon became an accepted part of life for all sorts of people. At the beginning of the 20th century, an album of photographs was already found in every home. Photo ateliers were found in every city and town. The present exhibition at the Historical Museum puts the accent not only on artistic features of photographs themselves, but on the very notion of a family album as it emerged at the beginning of the last century. In a time when we store all kinds of images in computers, smart phones and digital frames, it is a warm memory to see our grand and grandparents' photographs in cardboard frames, lithographically produced, with the name of photographer in capital letters. This is already a part of history.

*[Editor's note: A month ago, the last ever roll of Kodachrome film was processed by the Kodak laboratories in the USA]*

**February 1-April 4, 10:00-19:00,  
every day except Monday**  
**State Historical Museum**  
[www.shm.ru](http://www.shm.ru)



## Gothic and Renaissance Art

The current exhibition at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts is a rare opportunity chance to see art dating back to the Renaissance. One part is dedicated to German painters and features paintings by Lucas Cranach der Jüngere, such as a portrait of John Frederick I of Saxony and others. Among Dutch painters are Jean Bellegambe with his New Testament Trinity, and a real gem: a small panorama depicting the flight of Mary and Joseph into Egypt by a painter from Joachim Patinir's circle. Another component of the exhibition is dedicated to coloured polychrome sculpture from the Netherlands, Slovakia, France, Spain, Germany and Austria. Those sculptures were usually placed in the altars of churches thus creating interior ensembles.

**February 1-March 13, 10:00-19:00,  
every day except Mondays**  
**Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, 12, Volkhonka street**



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## Grande Parade, Fellini

It is difficult to hold an exhibition on Fellini's work using conventional techniques. This exhibition was brought to Moscow from Paris. Sam Stourd  puts it in a Felliniesque way: a grotesque parade of video, photography, sound bites and drawings. Fellini started in the 1940s together with Roberto Rossellini (Rome, Open City 1945), then wrote scripts and directed his own films (Il Miracolo, La Strada, La Dolce Vita). Working seemingly independently from any styles, he eventually created his own. This exhibition covers the creation of the 20th century myth in cinema—Federico Fellini. Stourd  has collected material from numerous sources: photographs, drawings, and sketches never

shown or published before from Fellini's friends, assistants and collaborators. The main concept is to approach Fellini via different images: the inspiring Maestro and through personalities he created in films. This is performed in the form of a juxtaposition of still images and video. The middle of the 20th century was not only a peak time for cinema but for the media and advertising. The epoch and artistic circumstances in which Fellini lived and worked are reflected in the following sections of the exhibition: "Fellini and Popular Culture"; "Fellini at Work"; "City of Women... and Man's Role"; and "Fellini and the Invention of a Biography".



**February 22-April 24, 11:00-20:00, open every day except Mondays**  
Multimedia Art Museum Moscow  
16, Ostozhenka street  
[www.mdf.ru](http://www.mdf.ru)

## Unbelievable St Petersburg by Alexander Kitaev



Alexander Kitaev is not only a photographer, he is a historian in photography. Alexander lives in St Petersburg and clearly adores it. Through his wide-angle Leica he takes geometrically and compositionally interesting shots. He composes odes to the bridges and mists, white nights and stone statues living in the parks. As an artist, he draws our attention not to what is in fashion but to what is in style and taste. He is also one of the few contemporary photographers still using film, not digital

cameras. With his experiments in hand-printing he achieves atmospheric views of this northern city without rush, as if depicting the city outside the context of time. Early morning lighting or night city lighting creates a special atmosphere of Peter the Great's city supported by an ideal composition strengthening each of the details. One look at his works is enough to see the author's immense literacy in visual arts and his "photographic eye". For the Lumiere brothers gallery this exhibition is

a chance to acquaint Muscovites with the St. Petersburg school of photography. Alexander Kitaev is also a curator, author of books on the theory of photography and a working author.

**Until February 27, 12:00 — 20:00, open Tuesdays-Sundays**  
The Lumiere Brothers Gallery  
Building 1, 3 Bolotnaya embankment  
(Red October territory)  
[www.lumiere.ru](http://www.lumiere.ru)

## A dedication to Tatlin

One of the biggest collections ever of Constructivist art is being mounted at the Tretyakov gallery, starting this month. The exhibition coincides with Tatlin's 125th jubilee. The gallery has announced a huge retrospective of his works, using those created from 1910 to 1930. Vladimir Tatlin was born in the eastern Ukraine to a family of an engineer and a poet. His arts career began in Moscow where he studied icon painting. But he was destined to become more famous in a different genre: together with Kazimir Malevich they played a pivotal role in the development of the Russian avant-garde and

later the constructivist style. Travelling to Europe as early as the early 1910s and getting acquainted with Pablo Picasso there, he absorbed current trends in the arts there which he used to strengthen the spirit of Russian futurism and cultivate what would be described as constructivism. Architect, painter, inventor. Vladimir Tatlin contributed much to abstract art. His paintings, installations, "counter-reliefs"—independent three-dimensional constructions depicting the "instincts of materials"—are actually a manual of the principles of constructivism and are on display for you.



**February 7-May 15, 10:00-19:00, open every day except Mondays**  
The Tretyakov Gallery, 10, Krymsky Val





## The Czech film, *Protector*, at the International Film Festival in Volokolamsk



by Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen

The film, *Protector*, directed by Marek Najbrt was screened at the International Volokolamsk Film Festival in December 2010.

It's 1938 and the Nazis are just one step away from invading and occupying Czechoslovakia. Hana is a young Czech film actress, Jewish by origin. She's just appeared in her first feature film with an older Jewish star actor, who warns her that her career is over and that their film will not see the light of day since the Nazis will never allow its release. He hands her a forged passport and papers to get out of the country but she throws them away, not believing what he says about the imminent German invasion.

As the filming of the "film within a film" is on the verge of completion, we see the two actors riding stationery bicycles with a moving image in the background. As was the usual practice in film-making at the time, the illusion of motion is created when the moving image flickers in the background but the object in the foreground is static. Thus, the cyclist becomes a symbol of a man who is pedalling furiously but is actually going nowhere. That man is the Czech everyman of 1938 who desperately wishes to escape his tragic circumstances but in reality remains motionless, trapped by tyrannical forces. Throughout the film, we catch glimpses of the film's protagonist, Emil, pedaling furiously, superimposed over the screen's larger canvas. The film actually begins with a quote from Hitler: "A Czech is a cyclist who hunches his back when he pedals."

Hana is married to Emil, a journalist, who is conscripted by collaborating Czech officials to serve as a radio announcer for

the occupying German forces. A colleague at the radio station, Franta, won't keep quiet and he's taken away—presumably by the Gestapo—and later executed. Emil chooses to accept a job working as the mouthpiece for the Nazis in order to save his wife from being deported to the death camps. Emil's boss at the radio station is a Nazi sympathizer who offers him a job with the agreement that no one will bother him about his wife as long as she remains holed up in their apartment.

Emil is on the verge of being fired for a "transgression" when Reich Protector, Reinhard Heydrich, is murdered by Czech partisans. Nazi soldiers do a house-to-house search and discover Hana is in the apartment. When they realize who Emil is, they take no action against Hana, despite the fact that the soldiers know she's Jewish. Later the Nazis broadcast a description of a bicycle used by one of the partisans who had killed Heydrich. Emil has an affair with a gossip columnist and takes her family's bicycle back to his apartment and attempts to hide it. This leads Hana to believe that Emil is now helping the partisans.

Now Emil's boss orders him to prove his loyalty by reading a loyalty oath over the airwaves after the Heydrich assassination places all Czech citizens in jeopardy. Meanwhile, Hana has come down to earth after she escapes arrest during the house-to-house search. She packs her belongings and turns herself into the authorities. Emil decides not to show up at the radio station to read the loyalty oath and goes looking for Hana.

In the final scene, Emil finds her in a crowd of Jews being marched to the death transports. As he stands impassively, preventing the group from marching forward, Nazi soldiers club him in the head, pushing him off to the side of the road. **P**

# Russian Avant-Guard Art of the 1910-1930s

Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen

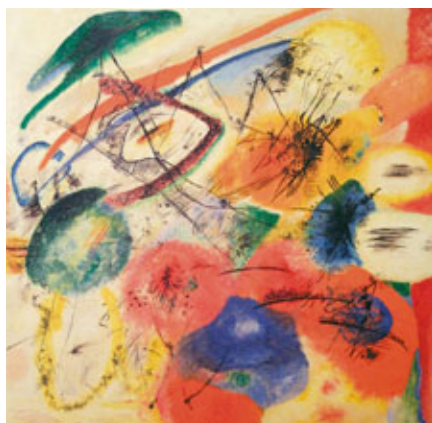
In discussing the art of the 1930s, I am confronted with a dilemma: how can one write about the 1930s without the 1920s and the 1910s? One grew from the other. Another dilemma is not to let my reader get lost in the numerous directions and groups of that period, now called The Silver Age of Russian Arts and Literature, let alone the endless lists of names, which have been supplemented by new ones rediscovered after the fall of the Soviet Union, especially in the middle and at the end of the 1990s. Then I decided to make one big topic—Russian avant-guard art.

The way the arts developed in the 20th century was very contradictory. The avant-garde aimed for a radical reorganization of the human mind by means of the arts. They planned an aesthetic revolution, which would disturb the spiritual sluggishness of society of that time. The strategy in the first three decades of the 20th century was anarchic and rebellious.

The avant-guard introduced the images of the street side of life: street poetry, the chaotic rhythms of the cities, nature that has both creative and destructive powers. Artists empathized with the anti-art principle, thus challenging not only traditional styles, but also accepted notions of art in general.

The range of artistic directions was enormous. The masters of post-impressionism, of fauvism and cubism became predominant in setting the scene. Futurism strengthened the international contacts of the avant-guard and introduced new principles of communications between the fine arts, literature, music, theatre, photography and cinematography.

From 1900-1910, new directions were born one after another and not only in Russia. Avant-guard was very international, its geographical range was huge: from Russia to the United States with Moscow, Berlin, New York and other centers, each of which wanted to be the trendsetter. Expressionism, Dadaism, surrealism with their sensitivity to the



*Black lines Vasily kandinsky*

subconscious defined the irrational in avant-guard art. Constructivism, on the contrary, revealed its rational and structural nature.

During the wars and revolutions of the 1910s, politics and the avant-guard were actively inter-reacting. Left-wing forces tried to use the avant-guard for propaganda purposes. Later on the totalitarian regimes (first of all in Germany and in the USSR) successfully suppressed it by strict censorship, driving it underground. Under the political liberalism since the 1920s, avant-guard lost its former aura of resistance and made an alliance with Art Nouveau, bringing it into contact with mass culture.

One of the brightest representatives of the avant-guard art, Vasily Kandinsky (1866-1944), is attributed with discovering a new art language of the 20th century. Not only due to the fact that he "discovered" abstract art, but because he managed to endow it with standards, explanation and exemplary quality.

Another star was Kazimir Malevich (1878-1935), the founder of suprematism, one of the few artists in Russia who worked in the style of cubism and futurism. He participated in the famous exhibitions of the art groups: "The Jack of Diamonds" (1910) and "The Donkey's Tail" (1912).

Malevich was one of the pillars of the Russian and then of the Soviet avant-guard. Unfortunately, Malevich seems to be only associated with The Black Square, although he was in fact quite



*Black square by Kazimir Malevich*

a versatile artist. In the 1920s -1930s he created a peasant series, and not long before his death began to paint in the style of old masters as well as landscapes in the spirit of impressionism. During the Soviet period he was unjustly forgotten, although his creativity is one the most significant pages in the world art of the 20th century.

The works of the Russian avant-guard artists of the beginning of the 20th century was created by an artistic vision. At the same time, Malevich's suprematism came as a natural stage in the development of Russian and world art. Malevich himself thought suprematism—which is based on combining the simplest geometric figures of contrasting colors on the surface of a canvas—was created in cubism. The Black Square (1913) became a manifesto of non-subject non-figurative art and the turning point for abstract art.

1919 saw the 10th State Exhibition called "Non-Subject Creativity and Suprematism" and in December 1919-January 1920, the 16th State Exhibition was staged with a retrospective "Kazimir Malevich. His journey from impressionism to suprematism."

The exhibitions showed conceptual frames of blank canvases and a series of paintings, White on the White and The White Square on the White. Malevich thought that the development of world art as such was crowned by the art of geometric abstraction. But there was a whole lot more in the avant-guard than Malevich. **P**



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# Fur is a girl's best friend



Alexandra Vorontsova

Fur has always been dubbed Russia's soft gold. Try and find a Russian girl whose face doesn't brighten up at the sight of a new fluffy fur coat, regardless of numerous wildlife conservation campaigns. It is fur that most fashion designers have been highlighting in their latest collections.

Russia is the home of fur. American businessmen used to buy tons of it in the Russian north. And they paid quite handsomely, as shown in an old Soviet comedy, *The Chief of Chukotka*, who picked up only first-class fur. In 1910, the American fur trader Olaf Swenson paid

7 to 12 roubles for spotted and white young reindeer, from 25 roubles for first-class wolverines, 12 to 18 roubles for white Arctic foxes and 70 roubles or more for polar bears. In the US, the hides sold for a lot more. Where is fur found nowadays? How much does it cost? And how are skins turned into pieces of art?

I asked these and other questions to Izeta Gadzhieva, one of the biggest Russian names in luxury fur fashion and haute couture styles. Her Moscow-based fashion house and boutiques are well known for presenting first-class quality clothes.

## **Why fur? How did you start your career as a fashion designer?**

Why fur? Maybe because Russia has always been known for its fur and high demand for it due to the severe climate as well as the mindset of Russian people who prefer smart and expensive clothes. And since my designer career started with fur, it is now my forte which has brought me fame and success—I like this material. As a fashion designer I, fortunately or unfortunately, incline to European city styles with no shade of traditional Russian elements.

As a child I enjoyed playing with paper dolls, I used to draw clothes for them, I also embroidered, sewed and knitted but never thought this could grow into my main occupation. At the time I considered it quite a usual sort of thing for a





girl to do, and did not think it was in any way significant. I was a good student at school, and I planned on a serious career path, without even knowing what I wanted to do. So I went to university, completed a degree in economics, did a postgraduate course and found a job in banking. It was exciting and I was successful, but as a creative person I felt limited by all kinds of rules and instructions. So I started my own business, which was quite interesting and profitable but again far from being creative. Later, when I was designing my flat, I realised that this was the field that interested me and that I should take up design. At the time my husband already ran a business selling leather and fur to manufacturers, so it was he who convinced me to try and open a factory producing items made of leather and tanned sheepskin. I designed items myself and later started making fur coats, dresses, men's suits and home ware too. I became a permanent fashion week participant and opened a boutique at Crocus City Mall.

#### **How long does it take on average to complete one coat?**

The making of a good fur coat is a very complicated and lengthy process with very strict technological requirements. On average it takes from 10 to 15 days to complete a mink coat and 15-25 days for a sable coat. You normally start with buying skins at the best fur auctions from the world's best producers of fur. Then you design the coat and put it together in numerous stages with only assiduous manual labour involved.

#### **How is fur bought in large scale today?**

The best place to buy and sell large quantities of fur is at a large international auction. The most renowned auctions are:

Kopenhagen Fur, Finnish Fur, where you can purchase high quality skins of mink, fox, sable, chinchilla; the North American Fur Auctions (NAFA) in Canada; the American Legend Cooperative in the US, where we buy Blackglama mink. The best Russian sable is still sold at Soyuzpushnina auction at St. Petersburg. Of course, there is always an option to buy from fur farms. These skins will be cheaper, but not pre-selected in terms of quality and colour. Therefore we prefer to buy fur from auctions.

#### **Is fur getting more expensive on the international market?**

Usually annual prices for natural fur goods increase by the average of 10% at the start of the winter season. This is the way producers try to protect themselves against all the risks related to the opening of a new season, i.e. inflation, demand instability, changes of purchase prices for fur on international auctions. This year the International fur auction demonstrated that the price of fur has risen significantly; from 5%-30%, that has resulted in price jumps in the shops. However, disregarding this trend we have not increased our prices and are currently holding them down.

#### **What fur is in vogue this season?**

I would not say that any particular fur is in fashion now. Much depends on what one needs and wants. If we take Russia, topping the list are Barguzin sables, which are elegant and delicate broadtails, North American velvet minks, strikingly chic chinchillas, lynx cats and fluffy foxes.

#### **If I want a custom-made fur coat, how do I tell if the skins are of high quality?**

Basically you can tell the quality of fur by sight. Good fur has a bright colour and sheen, its hairs do not stick together.

Its down should be even and thick. The reverse side of the hide should be soft.

#### **Tell us about your latest collection.**

2010 was the year of France in Russia. I love France, particularly Paris. Paris inspires me and gives me power to create. I love absolutely everything about it—the architecture, lifestyle, the aroma and music of summer cafes. So I have dedicated my latest collection to Paris and called it "Esprit de Paris..."

#### **Have tastes among Russian women changed over the past decade?**

I can say for sure that tastes have become more refined. The time is gone when Russian women preferred flashy styles with abundant finish, when various kinds of fur were combined, when fur was roughly processed for design purposes, cut or laser plucked. Today fur is valued for its wholeness and natural beauty, slightly improved by delicate toning or dying. Styles have become more mature, intellectual and it is not only about taking pleasure in the true beauty of fur but also about celebrating its practicality. If before there could be just one fur coat for all occasions, now there are clear lines between daily business styles, sporty styles and fancy evening styles. This also applies to accessories. There are different styles for warm weather, for severe Russian winters and even those suited for summer.

#### **How long does fur last?**

It depends. Otters, beavers, sables and raccoons last the longest. Arctic foxes and mink are more sensitive. But if you wear your fur carefully, follow the care instructions and store it properly, it will last for years.

#### **Give us your tips on fur care.**

Good fur does not need much. It is quite enough to just dry your coat and put a breathable cover over it. Avoid hangers which can deform or damage the fur. We always give our clients complimentary covers and hangers as well as help them refresh their fur coats after several years of wearing by combing through the fur, volumising the fur by means of blowing air through it etc. In the near future we are planning to install fur fridges so that our clients can store their fur clothes in it. It is becoming an issue with all the abrupt changes in weather we are now facing. If fur is worn and stored properly, it can last for decades. **P**







# Kyrgyzstan

*The Burana Tower*

Luc Jones

Apart from appearing in pub quizzes as one of four countries in the world to only contain one vowel (you have until you reach the end of this article to think of the other three), Kyrgyzstan rarely makes the international headlines, unless they happen to have a coup—and there have been two of them in the past 5 years. Lacking the mineral wealth of its northern neighbour Kazakhstan, the history and beautiful buildings of Uzbekistan to the west and the populous might of China to the east, the only surrounding country Kyrgyzstan could lay claim to be ahead of in Central Asia's bragging stakes is Tajikistan to the south.

And if your idea of a dream holiday is prancing around a Med holiday resort wearing the latest Gucci or Hermes then most likely Kyrgyzstan is the wrong destination for you. So why go, and what is there to actually see and do there? The fact that "Kyrgyzstan" roughly translates as "the land of forty women" does it for me. Legend has it that after a battle, just forty of the fairer sex remained and thus rebuilt the nation. I'll leave the rest to your imagination, but with mountains covering 94% of the country, expect some exceptional scenery.

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan's capital city isn't exact a charmer at first glance and there aren't a huge number of "must sees" to

tick off the check list, but it's a pleasant enough place to spend a day before heading out and exploring the rest of the country. Beginning its life as Pishpek, and later renamed Frunze shortly after the revolution, Bishkek's Alatau Square and the Presidential Palace on Chui, the main drag, are good places to start, and Osh Bazar is walkable from the centre. This a good place to get a taste of local life and the mix of cultures. Sure, most of the Russians have fled north since the fall of communism but many remain, and as well as the Kyrgyz majority you will see Uyghurs, Dungans and also Uzbeks, although most of the latter reside in the south. You will hear as much Russian spoken on the streets of Bishkek as Kyrgyz and pretty much everyone in the country speaks it, a legacy of the Soviet education system.

Lake Issyk-kul is where the majority of tourists head for, not only from Bishkek but from further afield in particular Kazakhstan and Russia. Sure Issyk-kul (which unoriginally means "warm lake" in Kyrgyz, due to the fact that, despite being the second highest fresh water lake in the world and being surrounded by snow capped mountains, it never freezes) may have withered since its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s when it's cool waters and nearby hot spas were favoured by holidaymakers from across the USSR, but

it is definitely one of Kyrgyzstan's highlights. On the way from Bishkek, make a quick stop to climb up the Burana Tower just outside the town of Kant before continuing on the upgraded road which winds through valleys of coloured rocks to Rybachy (Balykchy in Kyrgyz), at the western point of the lake. Most tourists stay in and around Cholpon-Ata which has the largest collection of hotels and home stays and gives easy access to the nearby 2,500-year old petroglyphs and the scenic Grigoriev gorge.

Looping around to the far end of Issyk-kul is Karakol, often still referred to by its old name of Przhevalsk after the epic Polish explorer, Nikolay Przhevalsky, who discovered the wild horses of the same name. If you ever dreamed of buying a two-humped camel, be sure to arrive on a Sunday morning at the famous animal market just before you reach Karakol.

In town, the beautiful green-domed Russian Orthodox Church is the main sight in town and the Dungan mosque is worth a visit although you might want to give the depressing local zoo a miss. Karakol is best used as a base for trekking up into the Tian Shen mountains, and climbing the mystical Khan Tengry peak which stands an impressive 6,995m high, right on the border with Kazakhstan. If that sounds too energetic, opt for a more leisurely stroll past the "bro-





ken heart" rock formation, as well as the resort of Jeti Oguz (Seven Bulls), close to the main road with the yurt-shaped bus stop! Despite being one of the largest towns on the map around Issyk-kul, there's nothing whatsoever worth seeing in Bokonbayevo so carry on to the breath-taking Song-Kol lake and stay in a yurt by the shore.

Kyrgyzstan is very much a divided country, with high mountains separating the Russified north where the bulk of the population resides, from the less developed south which has a more Uzbek feel to it—a legacy of the Soviet days when borders were put in place with little or no consideration given to what peoples actually lives where.

Osh is Kyrgyzstan's second largest city and is around 3,000 years old, even though this isn't entirely obvious from the largely Soviet-style architecture. Nevertheless, the Sulayman mountain offers exceptional panoramic views across the city.

The road from Bishkek to Osh is an arduous 12 hour journey through the mountains and isn't for the faint-hearted although a propeller plane does the trip several times a day in just 40 minutes. And just to remind you of how you arrived, a Yak-40 is mounted in the main park. Rumour has it that it used to be a cinema. Central Asia's larg-

est covered market is the Jayma Bazar with just about everything on sale from scrap metal to pomegranates, although once you've chosen a kalpak (a Kyrgyz felt hat) that matches your outfit, retire to a cafe at the back for a tasty samsa (Kyrgyzstan's equivalent of a pasty) and a bowl of tea.

Nearby sights include the walnut forest of Arslanbob in the Jalal-Abad region and the Karakhanid mausoleum and tower in Uzgen, although many travelers are simply on their way through to China's western Xingjiang province, or for the real hardcore over Tajikistan's "Roof of the World" Pamir mountains to Dushanbe.

### Getting there and getting in:

Compared to the hassle tourists face in trying to visit Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan comes as a revelation. Western passport holders can buy a 1-month single entry visa upon arrival at Bishkek's Manas airport with a minimum of fuss for \$70 (double entry, also 1 month, is \$100). Russians and other CIS citizens don't need a visa at all. However, visas are NOT currently available at land borders, so if you're in Almaty and fancy a side trip, you'll need to get one in advance from a Kyrgyz Embassy.

From Moscow, your best bet is the daily overnight Aeroflot flight which ar-

rives early in the morning. In the summer months, there is a second Aeroflot flight which leaves in the morning, arriving late afternoon. Turkish Airlines fly from Istanbul daily, and BMI make the journey from London Heathrow three times a week with a quick stop in Almaty to drop passengers off.

There is a regular Moscow-Bishkek train but it takes 3 days and you'll need a separate Kazakh transit visa and it's not a great deal cheaper than the plane, so unless you desperately want to see mile upon mile of steppe...

### Tour operators:

For a country of its size, Kyrgyzstan has a surprising number of tour agencies catering to anyone from the adventurous trekker to the lazy sanatorium relaxer and can put together just about any trip for you, tailor-made. Additionally Kyrgyzstan is not an expensive country to travel around. I used NoviNomad who were reasonably priced and extremely efficient ([www.novinomad.com](http://www.novinomad.com), or ring +996 312 62 23 81). You can certainly try to 'do it yourself' but the remoter parts of the country require 4x4 transport, and crossing land borders into Uzbekistan, China or Tajikistan with the bureaucracy involved is not most people's idea of fun. This is where the agencies really earn their spurs! **P**

# 1993

John Harrison

During 1993 Russians' incomes started to rise against inflation, a little. Food and consumer products began to appear in the shops and eternal queuing became a thing of the past. The standard of living, in monetary terms at least, improved. Politically, the country was on a huge roller coaster which frightened the world and filled those Russians not directly involved with disgust. Russia's new leaders were faced with the impossible task of changing the course of a country using democratic methods when parliamentarians were still used to the autocratic command system. Yeltsin himself was not much of negotiator. If in 1991 events led to the introduction of a more democratic Russian leadership, then 1993 was the year in which the unreformed machinery of state fought long and hard for survival. It eventually surrendered but not without shells being fired directly into Moscow's White House in October.

On one side of Russia's political split-personality were Westernising, democrats -- President Yeltsin, Yegor Gaidar, Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, who headed the privatisation programmes, the mayors of Moscow and St. Petersburg, Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and others. On the other side were powerful groups around Vice-President Rutskoi and Ruslan Khasbulatov, who was Speaker and Chairman of the Congress of People's Deputies. Public opinion polls showed abysmally low ratings for the conservative (non-democratic) majority of the Congress. The power ministries tried hard to retain their neutrality.

Hardliners, relishing their success at the seventh Congress of People's Deputies in December 1992, when Prime Minister Gaidar was replaced by Viktor Chernomyrdin, organised a four-day eighth Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies from March 10-13. The number one goal was to cancel the scheduled April referendum, which would give Yeltsin a

chance to hold parliamentary elections, move towards the establishment of a presidential republic and ask the population whether they favoured private ownership of land. The crisis deepened.

On its third day, Yeltsin was stripped of the emergency powers that the fifth Congress had granted him in November 1991. To all intents and purposes, Yeltsin's ability to operate without the approval of Parliament was now severely limited, which would have been fine in a mature democracy but not much use in Russia in 1993. On March 13, the April referendum was cancelled by a vote of 422-286. The longer such a poll could be put off, the better it was for Khasbulatov, as with every day of political paralysis, Yeltsin's charisma faded.

On the same day the Congress moved to assert control over the media and requested the Supreme Soviet to evaluate the work of Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev and deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais. As Galina Starovoitova said, the March congress was "a constitutional coup, a silent creeping coup, which has de facto deprived the President of power".

Outside parliament's gates not everybody watched apathetically. Yegor Gaidar's Party, Democratic Russia, rallied 20,000 Muscovites at St. Basil's Cathedral in the President's support. Kuzbass miners assailed the Congress for "ignoring the will of the people" as manifest by 2.5 million signatures that had been gathered in favour of a referendum on the private ownership of land. The new Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin turned out to be a Yeltsin loyalist, which in 1993 simply meant he didn't join the fight against his boss. Chernomyrdin emphasised "strong presidential power that is a guarantor of reforms". Chernomyrdin, former chief of Gazprom, a communist turned capitalist, continued to implement Gaidar's reform programme and accepted Gaidar's associate Boris Fedorov as Minister of Finance. The cabinet was compelled, at Yeltsin's command,



to adhere to Chubais's programme of privatization.

Eventually realising that a Russia with Yeltsin would be considerably better for their interests than what the opposition had to offer, Western countries, thanks to the newly-elected Bill Clinton, now came charging forward with an aid programme of billions of dollars. Even the IMF changed its tune but this was all rather late.

Russian regional bosses, flushed with a growing sense of importance, showed increasing disgust in the struggle occurring in the Congress. One deputy in the autonomous republic of Kalmykia was quoted as saying that the country's 88 republics, oblasts and krais "will simply go their own way if Moscow cannot end their debilitating feud". As head of the legislature, Ruslan Khasbulatov stood at the hub of a network of soviets or councils, which extended from Moscow to the smallest village; the same network which gave the USSR its name and which theoretically engaged the politicians with the people. Khasbulatov had no qualms about engaging this network against his own president, helping to make the country un-manageable.

Exceeding his constitutional powers, on March 20th Yeltsin announced on national television that he had signed a decree introducing "special rule," a term that was carefully left undefined but meant that parliament would no longer be able to obstruct his work. The Supreme Soviet convened immediately to discuss impeachment and two days later the Constitutional Court declared Yeltsin's decree had violated the constitution. The start of impeachment proceedings against Yeltsin only served to stir patriotic feelings of loyalty to a leader clearly in trouble and his popularity ratings soared. On March 21, Yeltsin's mother died and this served to increase public sympathy. Yeltsin himself, a fighter who came out best in a struggle, was spurred on by the results of polls which showed





mass disapproval of the activities of yet another emergency Congress held on March 26-29.

On March 28, 617 deputies voted in favour of Yeltsin's impeachment, narrowly missing the 689 needed for the initiative to pass. A huge and noisy crowd of 60,000 had been organised by Democratic Russia outside on the street and it may be that they influenced a few of the voters' minds. The April 25 referendum was reinstated. Things seemed to be going Yeltsin's way until Vice President Rutskoi on April 25th made a speech to the Supreme Soviet in which he accused a number of high ranking government figures of large-scale corruption. Emotionally, he claimed possession of eleven suitcases full of compromising material and his slur campaign went a long way to neutralise Yeltsin's political gains in the April referendum.

During the referendum on April 25, 58% of Russians showed their support for Yeltsin. More than two thirds – 67.2% -- were in favour of early elections to a new parliament, while slightly less than half supported early elections for the Russian presidency. Voicing public opinion, Mikhail Poltoranin, then head of the Russian Federal Information Agency, said that the "Congress of People's Deputies should dissolve itself and Khasbulatov and Rutskoi should also do the honourable thing and resign". Winning popular support, however, did not necessarily mean that the population wanted to continue down the Westernising road, something that Yeltsin was to discover before the year was out.

On April 29th, the draft of a new constitution to replace the discredited Brezhnev-era basic law was released to the press. Like the Constitution of the French Fifth Republic which gave President Charles De Gaulle broad powers such as the right to dissolve parliament and to circumnavigate the French National Assembly through the vehicle of referenda, this new Russian constitution would



give Yeltsin tremendous powers. Russian regional bosses joined parliament in the opposition; after all, their rights and privileges would come under attack as well as those of Russia's parliamentarians. Five working groups were organised to thrash out the final details but the President's hopes were dashed when in August provincial leaders rejected the final draft. Yeltsin's answer was to open a session of the new Federation Council which was to become the upper chamber under the new constitution, as if it had already been adopted. The Council was to be appointed by the president. Few of the provincial representatives signed the founding documents while a number of others refused to participate.

On May 1st the streets of Moscow turned the colour of blood, when a boisterous crowd of between 5000 and 7000 gathered with red flags in front of the massive statue of Lenin in Moscow's October Square, summoned by the National Salvation Front, the Workers' Moscow movement and the Russian Communist Party. Among the honoured guests were GKChP leaders Kryuchkov, Yanaev, Lukin, Baklanov and Shenin, all recently released from prison. Violence broke out when the demonstrators attempted to leave their approved parade route and they came face to face with a wall of police and OMON. Altogether 374 demonstrators and 205 policemen were injured. One OMON sergeant, Vladimir Tolokneev, later died of his injuries.

On September 18th, Yeltsin took the kid gloves off and reappointed Yegor Gaidar as First deputy Prime Minister. By this time, he had formulated a plan of disposing of the Supreme Soviet once and for all. He planned to simply lock the Supreme Soviet deputies out of the White House.

On the evening of September 21, Yeltsin announced that he had signed presidential decree No. 1400, whereby he dissolved both houses of parliament and fixed new parliamentary elections

for December 12. Rutskoi and Khasbulatov were savvy to Yeltsin's plan and had already encamped themselves inside the White House along with hundreds of Supreme Soviet deputies. Vice President Rutskoi was promptly appointed Acting President of Russia and an emergency 10th Congress of People's deputies was convened. The Constitutional Court ruled Yeltsin's decree unconstitutional, thereby creating grounds for removing him from the Presidency. Acting President Rutskoi appointed his own "ministers". Viktor Barrannikov was appointed security minister and Vladislav Achalov defense minister. It seemed not to have occurred to Rutskoi that these appointments would have the effect of throwing the real ministers into Yeltsin's arms. Yeltsin ordered his Defense Minister Grachev, hero of the August 1991 coup, to lay siege to the same building that a little over two years ago he had heroically defended.

A poll taken by VTsIOM throughout the Russian republic during the period September 24-28 found that 44% of urban dwellers supported the president and 15% were in favour of Rutskoi, Khasbulatov and the Supreme Soviet. 32% were undecided. People thought, perhaps mistakenly, that backing Yeltsin would bring about a crack-down on corruption. Amazing revelations were printed in the press, such as the fact that at least one-third of oil deliveries by Russia to Ukraine in 1992 had been illegally diverted.

Meanwhile, Rutskoi and the Supreme Soviet made a series of attempts to split the military and the police and bring the regions over to their side. The military and police, having learnt from 1991, stuck to their "wait and see" policy. Union leaders supported the Supreme Soviet whilst rank and file members tended either to support Yeltsin or no one. Regional bosses backed Rutskoi.

Following an unsuccessful attempt by parliament to take over the communications centre of the CIS on Leninsky Prospekt, the White House was cordoned off by police and OMON. As the impasse continued, Constitutional Court chairman Valery Zorkin retracted his earlier assertion that Yeltsin should be impeached and began to press for the adoption of a so-called "zero-zero" option which would set the clock back to the state of the game before Yeltsin issued decree 1400. The potential for serious violence was significant. The Parliamentary Guard had access to 1,600

automatic weapons, over 2000 pistols, 20 machine guns and several grenade launchers. More weapons were being smuggled into the White House daily through a labyrinth of underground tunnels underneath the building. General Rutskoi had three battalions of Moscow reservists, about 100 spetsnaz soldiers and various forces from groups as different as the Cossacks to the neo-Nazi stormtroopers of Aleksander Barkashov at his disposal.

On the afternoon of October 3rd, a combined crowd of between 5,000 and 10,000 pro-Supreme Soviet demonstrators broke through a heavy police cordon and swarmed up to the White House. Rutskoi, convinced that victory was close at hand, came out on a balcony and shouted: "We have won! Thank you, dear Muscovites!" He instructed the crowd to form up detachments and seize the Mayor's office, then move on to Ostankino television broadcasting centre. An intoxicated mob burst into the nearby mayor's office and the adjacent MIR hotel which was at that time the temporary police headquarters. At 5pm a detachment set off for Ostankino. It seemed briefly that a Bolshevik-style revolution was unfolding, with the fate of a nuclear-armed giant with 150 million people being decided by a few thousand people.

Nobody stopped to ask why the demonstrators had been let through to the White House, and why vehicles had been left by fleeing police with their keys in them. Just what a heavily armed mob needed to travel north through Moscow to the Ostankino TV centre, where a detachment of the Vityaz unit, a semi-secret section of the Dzerzhinsky Division whose 'normal job was to suppress prison mutinies or race riots in Central Asia, (without too many questions being asked' (An Empire's new Clothes, Bruce Clark) was waiting for them. The result was a killing field where 60 rebels, passers-by and journalists lost their lives. If the rebels had set off for the unguarded Kremlin, that would have been a different matter, but they didn't, and one can only presume that Yeltsin had all the sophistication of Russian intelligence services at his disposal to inform him of this. The rebels did, however, take control of several other key buildings in Moscow, including the ITAR-TASS building.

All of this enabled Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin to persuade the military to abandon its stance of neutrality and agree to a phased storming of the White House the



following morning. We will never know at what price the military's agreement came. A gaping hole was blasted in the White House before Rutskoi, Khasbulatov and their supporters would concede.

Dvoevlastie or dual power ended abruptly. Valery Zorkin, chairman of the Constitutional Court, resigned as chief justice several days after the taking of the White House. Yeltsin moved quickly against the regions. The existing soviets of all levels were disbanded, and the status of the autonomous republics were downgraded in the new constitution.

It seemed as though Yeltsin had scored the ultimate victory. However the electorate was somewhat shocked by the methods that Yeltsin used to rout his opponents. Rumours circulated around Moscow that thousands and not hundreds of people had been killed inside the White House as result of the shelling and consequent storming of the building. Yeltsin showed an over keen attitude to manipulate the press by making sure that Gaidar's Russia's choice was given more air time than any other party, and any criticism to the Draft Constitution was banned on air.

The four democratic parties that competed in the December elections for the State Duma, the new lower house, fared far worse than was expected, whilst Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party took 66 seats, the born-again Communist Party took 62, and the Agrarians took 49. Yegor Gaidar's "Russia's Choice" took 103 seats, and could easily be outvoted.

Many believed the results were a result of Yeltsin's heavy handedness, but the dissatisfaction went deeper than that. Although Gaidar's reforms were beginning to work, many thought they had failed. But things were only getting better in Moscow. Whole sections of the economy such as agriculture were as yet unreformed and dependant on dwindling state subsidies. Ministers held back from implementing the long



awaited land reform law and there were persistent constraints upon entrepreneurial activity. The rule of law was very arbitrary and businessmen did not have a predictable environment to operate in. The country appeared to be rudderless and drifting.

As Russians increasingly rejected their Soviet identity, they sought to return to national roots. Euroasian politics that had been espoused by writers such as Solzhenitsyn, and before him by Lev Gumilyov became more appealing. A wide spectrum of opposition parties espoused policies that were at least partly Euroasian. Nobody was actually quite sure what Gumilyov's ethnos really was but there was a general assumption that Orthodox Russia had more in common with the traditional authoritative values of Central Asia than the individualistic values of the humanist West. Coupled to all this was anger at the separatist sentiment in the non-Russian regions and a sinking feeling that Russia had ceased to be a great power. Furthermore, many Russians were concerned for their fellow co-ethnics in the "near abroad".

Gaidar was not a very good communicator. His pudgy face had never endeared itself to most voters and his language was as incomprehensible as ever. Zhirinovskiy appeared dynamic and could speak the language of the man and woman in the street. Zyuganov was an unprepossessing speaker, yet the communists offered somewhere to go if you felt dis-inherited by Russia's casting off of its Soviet identity.

For Yeltsin, the December elections offered mixed results. Communists and neo-fascists would henceforth enjoy strong representation in the State Duma, but the upper chamber, the Federation Council, promised to be more tractable. After 58% of the population endorsed the new constitution, Yeltsin once again had virtually unrestricted authority to appoint his prime minister, to prorogue parliament and rule by decree. **P**



# “Oh Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Moscow”

1993



Helen Womack

Handel's *Messiah*, with its uplifting Hallelujah Chorus, must be one of the best-known works of classical music in the West. As a child, I heard it often because my uncle was a singer and he would take the bass solo part in performances of the oratorio in churches and chapels all over Yorkshire. I loved it when he rumbled dramatically: "I will shake all nations, all nations I'll shaaake." I myself inherited something of the singing gene and joined choirs wherever I went.

It came as a surprise to me, when I arrived in Russia, with its great musical traditions, to learn that the Russians had never heard of Handel's *Messiah*. I don't mean the peasants and workers; even my singing teacher, a Moscow Conservatory-educated pianist, had never heard of it. The reason was that in Communist times, atheist ideology prevailed and only the secular works of composers like Bach and Handel were studied. Their enormous religious output was not promoted.

In the summer of 1993, I was at a party with other Westerners, where I happened to meet a man called Andrew Sparke, who was then working for the BBC. We got talking about music and he confided to me that his great dream was to conduct a performance of *Messiah*. "And I would love to sing the contralto solo," I said. There and then, we cooked

up a plan to put on a performance of the oratorio and raise money for charity.

We advertised among the ex-pat community and by early autumn, had gathered a choir of enthusiastic amateurs, mainly from Britain and America, many of whom knew the oratorio pretty well, if not by heart. What were we going to call ourselves? I came up with the idea of Moscow Oratorio and the name stuck. We needed a professional choir master or mistress, though, so soprano Tatyana Gridneva from the Moscow Philharmonic stepped into that role. She brought with her two Russian pianists, who drilled the choir until they were note-perfect.

Irish businessman Colm Fitzsimons, manager of the Irish Garden Ring supermarket, agreed to sponsor us. His generosity allowed us to hire professional Russian string players and pay the airfare for a student from the London Guildhall to fly out and take the tenor solo role. Ms Gridneva was the soprano soloist. A diplomat from the American embassy sang the bass solo. And yours truly was the fat contralto in a velvet dress.

The tickets sold like hot cakes. Over two evenings in St. Andrew's Anglican Church, then still used as the Melodia recording studios, we performed to a packed audience and raised hundreds of dollars for soup kitchens for the homeless. Conductor Sparke took a well deserved bow.



*The Moscow Oratorio choir. Spring Concert 2010*

After the event, I forgot all about Moscow Oratorio but to my astonishment, learnt recently that the choir is still going—indeed it has divided into two international choirs, with ex-pat and Russian members and in both cases Russian conductors. They don't merely sing the *Messiah* now but have a much wider repertoire.

Just as the Russians took over the Irish supermarkets, so they have made the choirs their own. But that is at it should be, for nobody has a monopoly on music. **P**

*Moscow Oratorio*  
[www.moscoworatorio.com/eng.html](http://www.moscoworatorio.com/eng.html)  
*Moscow International Choir*  
[www.micrussia.tripod.com/](http://www.micrussia.tripod.com/)

# Shock Troops (part2)

1993

## Art Franczek

After an arduous three-month training period, the Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) were assigned to such military-industrial cities as Volgograd, Samara, Nizhni Novgorod, and Rostov. All of the cities had been closed until 1992. My adopted city was Togliatti which was founded in 1737 as Stavropol and renamed in 1964 in memory of the leading Italian Communist (the old city of Stavropol was drowned in the 1950's when a hydroelectric dam was built). The centrepiece of Togliatti's industrial base was Avtovaz which was built by the Italians and produced 80% of Russia's cars. Togliatti was always an open city.

I was immediately impressed by city officials who had already organized a Department of Economic Development and had requested PCVs to develop investments and organize Inter Volga Business Conferences (Russia's first business conferences). One of my assignments was to persuade both international and local companies to participate in these conferences. I met with many local businesses and very quickly learned that Russian businessmen based their decisions on instinct and relied heavily on their relationships with partners to make deals. These methods conflicted with the rational economic principles I had been taught for so many years. My lessons in Russian business were usually accompanied by a couple bottles of vodka followed by time in the banya.

In 1993 inflation was 20% per month (annual rate of 840%) while the rouble was devaluing at an annual rate of 67% and the Central Bank interest rate was 140%. Many banks made money simply by holding dollars and taking advantage of these disparities. I remember that a million rouble transfer from one Togliatti bank to another took two weeks. By the time it was received in our city account the value was 900,000 rubles. In these days banking was a dangerous business and in 1994 more than one hundred bankers were killed. In that year I can recall a special banking holiday to honour departed bankers.

Speculators could also make huge profits by buying aluminum, timber or oil at low domestic prices and exporting these commodities at the much higher world prices. The proceeds from these transactions were paid to offshore bank accounts. In 1993 a young Khodorkovsky said, "Many people don't understand that you can make big money from nothing here in Russia—only here, because this is a turning point. Those who get in on time can do it."

Each time I visited the Avtovaz plant I could not ignore the incessant noise of workers hammering doors, pistons or gaskets into place. It took 30 times the man hours to produce one Lada than for a comparable US auto worker. In spite of the poor quality there was a huge demand for Avtovaz cars. Especially since the Soviet days when there was a 10-year wait to buy a car. In the early 1990s most Lada cars were sold through its network of distributorships. The distributor could buy a car from Avtovaz for \$3,500 on credit (usually 6 months) and sell it for \$7000 cash. In early 1993 I introduced a reporter from the BBC to one of the auto distributors and he described a scheme called re-export in which the contracts typically stipulated a lower price for Ladas for domestic contracts and an even longer grace period for payments. The cars were actually sold in



Russia, but their "export" status (under Customs rules) allowed the distributor to receive foreign currency. The cars remained in the country but their documentation showed them to be exported then imported back into Russia. I knew many auto brokers in Togliatti who made huge amounts of money with this scheme. In fact Boris Berezovsky made a fortune doing this. The BBC reporter heard this story, threw up his hands and he said, "I think we have a bit of economic lunacy here."

In the aftermath of the Cold War, goodwill between the US and Russia was at its all-time high. It didn't last long. In our Business Centre we could feel Russian euphoria for anything American. Everyday Russians would come in search of US partners for their business ventures. We helped Vladimir Dvogan (Doka Pizza, Doka Khleb) import the first donut-making machine into Russia. I helped organize a military resettlement program in which USAID purchased 100 apartments from a local construction company that were given to Russian officers. The most popular programs were the ones that sent Russians to the US. We sent over 200.

Cultural activities are always important to Russians. We organized the Russian-American Cultural Centre with support from General Motors and the city of Togliatti. In the days before the internet, Togliatti's sister city of Flint, Michigan, collected and sent more than 6000 books to Russia. I personally sent another 1000 from Chicago. We created the largest English language library in the provinces and a centre for all sorts of cultural and exchange activities. To my surprise this centre lasted until 2007.

Russia is not only an enigma, as Churchill, said but also an addiction. **P**



# Beria's mistress comes out of the closet

1993

By Helen Womack

Nina Alexeva was pursued by the press in 1993 after a researcher working in Soviet-era archives found her name in the address book of Lavrenty Beria, Stalin's secret police chief. It turned out that Ms Alexeva had been Beria's lover —and lived to tell the tale. Many others didn't, as Beria was notorious for luring young women to his mansion on Nikitsky Pereulok in Moscow and killing them after having sex.

I met Ms Alexeva, by then an old lady, in her carpet-strewn apartment in a nondescript tower block. She wore a scarlet silk dressing gown and dark glasses and coquettishly pretended she didn't want to be photographed. I had the impression the pensioner was loving all the attention she was getting from the media.

"One Western journalist promised to make me a millionaire if I would say that I

had French sex with Beria," she said. "Russian journalists have twisted my story to make out that Beria was more brutal than he really was, for political ends."

The truth, she said, was that while Beria had sent countless numbers of innocent people to their deaths and while she had been his "unwilling victim", he was not a monster to her. "He was gallant and affectionate. Why should I sin by speaking ill of the dead?"

Beria, who was responsible for the mass deportation of the Baltic people to Siberia, among other crimes, spotted Ms Alexeva when she was singing in the NKVD (later called the KGB and now the FSB) choir in the late 1940s. He sent a black limousine to fetch her but she told the driver: "My husband is meeting me." She got away that time.

But a year later, Beria sent his bodyguards for her and this time she knew she couldn't refuse.

She was shown into an elegant dining room, where a table was laid with zakuski (hors d'oeuvres) and wines from the cellars of Tsar Nicholas II. After dinner, Beria took her to bed.

"I was trembling all over. I didn't want this to happen," she said, although she refused to use the word "rape".

Every two or three days for the next 18 months, the car was sent for her and she spent the night with the secret policeman. "I was not Beria's mistress, I was his victim," she said. "I had fallen into his net."

She was confined to the dining room and the bedroom and never saw any of his other victims. "I didn't know about his bloody business then," she said. "Nobody did really. We could only guess."

Amazingly, at the end of this ordeal, Beria agreed to let Ms Alexeva go, perhaps because she reminded him of his Georgian wife, who was also called Nina.

Other women were not so lucky and their skeletons were found buried near the house of horror. As for Beria himself, when Stalin died in 1953, his successors had the police chief shot on the absurd charge that he was a "British spy". **P**

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# The Jury's Out on Juries in Russia (part1)

1993



Ian Mitchell

Of all the issues that separate Russia from the rest of the developed world, the question of the rule of law is the most intractable. From the point of view of the long-term development of Russian society, it is also the most serious. The ultimate problem is that the supremacy of the courts over all outside influences is not taken for granted, either by foreigners doing business here or by Russians themselves. It is widely suspected that judges can be "bought", or at least influenced, by powerful members of the hierarchy which largely monopolises power in Russia.

While there are undoubtedly many judges with an independent cast of mind, especially younger ones, and there are many stories of cases being correctly decided (even if usually by the winning side), it does seem to be true that the closer an issue gets to the interests of the centres of power, the less confidence the general public has that it will be resolved purely according to law.

This is a profoundly unhealthy state of affairs. But it is neither new nor unique to Russia. And there is one important exception to this generalisation: namely the jury trials which have been held since the early 1990s in serious criminal cases. Might the humble jury be the lever that cracks open the path to justice in Russia?

This is not so absurd a hope as it might seem. It nearly happened a century ago. But the Russian government recently passed laws restricting the types of case in which jury trials are available. Allegations have been made of jury-rigging by the state security services. Is the "power vertical" necessarily on a collision course with the principles of "street" justice? These articles will describe the background to this clash of ideas about how states should be run.

Since there is such a widespread ignorance of what juries have really done over the centuries, both within Russia and in the West, I will start by sketching in the general history of the institution which most British subjects and American citizens believe is their strongest defence against state tyranny. We cannot assess how far Russia has deviated from the norm unless we are clear about what the norm is. Most people derive their ideas about juries from modern American court-room dramas, possibly augmented by books like John Grisham's *The Runaway Jury*. These are not the norm, even in America today.

\*

Juries first emerged in twelfth-century England where a group of men were sworn (*juré* in French) to tell the truth about the facts of a dispute which was before the king's court. Jurors were witnesses, not adjudicators. They were people who were

chosen to decide issues (usually connected with the ownership of land) because they knew the history of the dispute and the parties involved. This, of course, is the opposite of modern juries who are expected to come to court without any prior knowledge of the issues or parties.

Two types of jury evolved very early on: the grand jury and the petty jury. The grand jury was commissioned not to try a case but to investigate a dispute to see if there was enough evidence to put someone on trial. This system survives now only in the United States, but it has a big role there.

Its most visible triumph in modern times was achieved by the Federal Grand Jury of the District of Columbia which empanelled twenty-three ordinary citizens on a sweaty June day in 1972 to decide who, if anyone, should be sent for trial in connection with the recent break-in at the Watergate building near the White House.

No power in the land could have prevented those jurors from concluding, if they thought the evidence warranted it, that the President of the United States had been involved. Twenty months later, this is what they did, vindicating John Adams's words in the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 that there should be "government of laws not men". Five months after that, Nixon was forced to resign the



Presidency. No other country has such a ruthlessly disinterested system of potential prosecution at the very highest levels of the state. Russia lacks it altogether.

In England, grand juries were progressively enfeebled during the nineteenth century, and formally abolished in 1933. Prosecution decisions were put mainly in the hands of the police. Being citizens in uniform, and not a gendarmerie under the control of the state as they are in most European countries including Russia, the police were thought to provide adequate safeguards against abuse of power by government. But perhaps because they lacked the ethos associated with an officer corps, or perhaps because the same policeman might be acting as investigator and prosecutor, some high-profile miscarriages of justice resulted, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s in connection with the IRA terror campaign.

The resulting public outcry eventually forced a change. Surprisingly it was only in 1986 that the current system of an independent Crown Prosecution Service started operating in England. Scotland, by contrast, has had an independent state prosecution service, under the Lord Advocate, since the sixteenth century.

The petty (or petit) jury is a completely different body from the grand jury. It replaced a system which usually involved trial by battle, in which the accused fought the victim of his alleged crime. Contrary to the popular conceit in modern England, this was not a universally popular change. At the time of the baronial wars, more people appear to have trusted their strong right arm than black-gowned lawyers speaking dog Latin. The right to jury trial is encrusted by self-congratulatory myth as one of the immemorial liberties of freeborn Englishmen. This is very far from historical truth.

But in law myths are important because a legal system can work only when the public has confidence in it. Legal fictions are necessary, like "the Crown" or "the Queen's peace" in Britain or, in the United States, the words "Equal Justice Under Law" which were carved above the entrance to the newly-opened Supreme Court building in 1935, at a time when racial segregation was still part of the law of the land.

The right to jury trial in criminal cases appears to go back at least to Magna Carta, England's great founding legal "treaty" signed in 1215 by King John (who was illiterate) and his barons. One of the key features was that all free men (a term which is in dispute today but is thought to have

included about half the population) were entitled to trial by their "peers". The meaning of that term is also in dispute today, but the essence of it seems to have been that serious criminal trials must have private citizens rather than the king's men deciding guilt or innocence.

This is what we think of as the natural jury function today, and in one of the more authoritative studies of Magna Carta (by J.C. Holt) the reasons for its introduction are described in terms that could be applied to Russia today, where for the most part there is government of men not laws:

"Despite feudal custom, kings behaved on occasion in as arbitrary a manner as convention and immediate political circumstances would allow. The English records of the twelfth century bear frequent witness to the operations of the king's will, to actions stemming from his wrath which were exercised by force and violence. To be in the king's mercy, to have to purchase his good will, was one of the more likely fates which might befall an active, ambitious vassal. All this stemmed from the fact that for all its increasing refinement, government was still very personal... All kings used the threat or fact of imprisonment as a potential deterrent... Kings enjoyed an ill-defined capacity to direct, suspend or withhold justice. [They were ready] to ensure that judgment inclined favorably towards the king's friends and ministers and away from those who were out of favour or distrusted."

In Magna Carta, King John famously accepted that "to no one will we sell, to no

one deny or delay right or justice." Though this commitment was observed as much in the breach as in the observance over succeeding centuries—especially under Henry VIII when a near-Stalinist system operated—the ideals expressed in the document animated the world of English law, and eventually American law.

It should not be forgotten that the American War of Independence arose in part because the Crown would not abandon in the colonies prerogatives which many there considered abuses of the principles of Magna Carta, and which it had long been forced to abandon at home. Many soldiers in the Continental Army, including George Washington, thought of themselves as fighting the King for their rights as *Englishmen*. To this day, Magna Carta features at the heart of much American legal education.

\*

For all its grounding in the highest ideals of medieval justice, and despite its ability to bring the likes of President Nixon to trial, the American jury system has seen abuses as naked as anything which happens in Russia today. If I may take an example which, though extreme, is relevant in that it took place in the middle of the so-called "Red Scare" of 1919, and because it exhibited some of the symptoms that typically disfigure Russian justice today.

That year in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the longest trial in the state's history took place after a Dutch-born "Red" agitator called Kreiger allegedly bombed the house of an employee of Standard Oil. The case was described by the journalist and author



Eugene Lyons who later came to Russia and wrote about the Stalinist show trials of the 1930s. His point was that American justice may not have been as bad as its Soviet counterpart, but it was hardly free from taint. Today, the Khodorkovsky trials look reasonable by comparison.

Before the hearings began, Standard Oil hired an assistant to the public prosecutor, and he seems to have taken charge of the case. The defence lawyers would have been run out of town altogether, Lyons wrote, but for the presence in court of "the picturesque 300lb dictator of a nearby town". He happened to be the last independent oil operator in the vicinity, and therefore "hated Standard Oil as much as Standard Oil hated the Reds". This man gave Lyons and Krieger's lawyers "the sharp-eyed protection of a little army of private gunmen who sat in court, under orders to shoot down the first man who touched us."

The oilman had recruited his gang "from the prisons of the Southwest under laws permitting the parole of prisoners who could show respectable jobs waiting for them." He gave automatic support to anyone "accused of an at-

tempt to erase a Standard Oil official." His only regret, expressed after the trial, was that Krieger had pleaded innocent because that implied that "private terror was not part of [his] code".

Lyons continued: "The judge puffed a big cigar under the No Smoking sign. Spectators with revolvers in their holsters threw 'Howdy!' to their friends in the jury box... and clergymen who sat in court preached sermons to the jury on Sundays, since jurors could not be denied the solace of spiritual uplift, on themes as remote from the case as patriotism and foreign agitators."

At the end of the case, Lyons wrote: "The jury reported eleven to one for conviction. The only recalcitrant juror emerged [from the jury room] with visible proofs that the arguments used on him were the kind that left marks on the body. We learned later that he had a personal grudge against Standard Oil in some matter connected with a pipeline on his farm. His insistence on Krieger's innocence apparently had no more to do with the evidence than the others' insistence on his guilt."

In this context, the recent reports in, for example, the *New York Times* to the effect that elderly ladies on the jury in the Paul

Klebnikov murder trial in Moscow were "monolithic", and that they had tried to use personal arguments on a fellow juror to persuade him to vote for acquittal of the two Chechen accused, sound more disappointing than scandalous.

Could it be that, for all their failings, Russian juries are not so uniquely ineffective as some sections of the media seem to think they are? Could it be that Russians idealise foreign legal systems, and assume their own to be inferior and corrupt?

If legal systems, like banks, depend to a large extent on public confidence, then it is doubly important that an unblinking assessment is made of the way Russian juries work and have worked. We need to understand to what extent a state apparently committed to centralised power has been prepared for a degree of popular involvement in the process of administering criminal justice. **P**

*Next month: Ian Mitchell will trace the history of Russian state justice up to the introduction of juries in 1864, shortly after the abolition of serfdom, and assess the quality of popular justice after that, until the Revolution.*



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# Taganka: The Haunts of Intelligentsia and Blue-Collar Grit

Text and Photos by Katrina Marie

A stone's throw southeast of the Kremlin, the Taganka district possesses quite a character quite distinct from that of the city centre. Hilly and sprawled haphazardly between the Moskva and Yauza rivers, Taganka is a convergence of blue-collar grit, Russian orthodoxy, and the haunts of intellectualism pooled with political dissidence. It was also the stomping grounds of the Tsar's elite, who built massive country estates there that are now obscured within a concrete jungle.

This complex mood is perfectly preserved in Taganka's walls. A turn off its busy main streets and one can amble along for hours in hushed alleys of architectural curiosities, an impressive mixing of Soviet grandiosity and the hallmarks of the Russian church. Flanked by massive monasteries, such as the 14th century Andronikov and Novospasskiy, the district gave birth to craftsmen and merchants who later populated Taganskaya square.

The 20th century transformed Taganka into one of Moscow's largest industrial areas. The neighborhood is also dominated by Stalin's first of the "Seven Sister" buildings—the massive apartment house on Kotelnicheskaya Naberezhnaya.

While the Taganka district is extensive, the below highlights are all walkable from the Taganskaya metro station.

## Taganskaya Square

Taganskaya square's chaotic traffic web of 8 major roads and the Garden Ring is dominated by the Taganskaya Metro station. Arriving by way of the Circle Line, one is greeted to a lavish display of post-war worship of Soviet military might. Opened in 1950, the station is embellished with nearly 50 powder-blue Majolica panels dedicated to the Soviet Air Force, Army and Navy; each panel showcases a particular grouping, such as artillery.

The station's escalator ascent and descent were split into two portions during construction to preserve a nearby building and in view of the fact that the station was built on a hill. Instead of a straight shot up or down, one traverses a short passage adorned with a beautifully frescoed dome.

Upon exiting the Circle Line station, look left for a view of the pretty St. Nikolas church on Bolvanovke, built in the early



1700s. While the interior is unimpressive, the blood-red exterior and earthy green onion domes transform into an eerie specter at dark.

Across the street from the station at the corner of Verchnaya Radishevskaya and Zemlyanoy Val is the renowned Taganka Theatre. Founded in 1964 by Yuri Lyubimov, the theatre was extremely popular for its subtly subversive criticisms of the Soviet system; though censored, it was never closed. The productions and memorable acting talent of Vladimir Vysotsky and others drew an almost cult-like following. Soviet authorities also held it up to the West as an example of cultural freedom in the USSR.

Lyubimov focused on so-termed “epic theatre”, incorporating music, acrobatics and dance, and often staging scenes off-stage, in the audience or in the lobby. Popular but controversial plays were shown, such as *The House on the Embankment*, Boris Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago* and Mikhail Bulgakov’s *Master and Margarita*, which remains on the theatre’s repertoire. (For further background on Bulgakov’s *Master and Margarita*, see PASSPORT’s December 2010 issue).

Lyubimov’s productions were regularly banned by Soviet authorities. The situation intensified in 1984; while traveling abroad, Lyubimov was stripped of his Soviet citizenship and forcibly exiled. Communist Party-friendly alternates were brought in to replace Lyubimov, but were boycotted by the troupe and theatre-goers, at least initially. When in 1989 Lyubimov made an illustrious return to run the theatre, the troupe split, dealing a serious blow to the theatre. Though Lyubimov remains at the helm (at age 93), the theatre has never recovered its famed status. This is also arguably due to the

entrance of glasnost; the theatre had made its mark by censoring the censors.

Nevertheless, the Taganka Theatre remains a cherished landmark—if not for its history and continued solid performances then for the theatre’s outstanding and unusual architecture. One feature is a retractable wall that provides a view of the city skyline as backdrop. Additionally, the back wall of the center stage is a brick façade of an already existing building. Near-by is the Vsyotsky House Museum on Nizhny Tagansky tupik. The museum features memorabilia and photos from Vsyotsky’s life. More information at <http://www.visotsky.cea.ru>

It did not escape the acting troupe that near the theatre, but no longer in existence, had been the infamous Taganka Prison, notorious for persecution of political prisoners, both in tsarist and Soviet times. Built by Aleksandr I in 1804, the prison was referred to in a number of pre-revolutionary ballads and poems. Post-revolution until its destruction in the 1950s, the Soviets actively used the prison to persecute “enemies of the people”. Vysotsky referred to the prison in one of his ballads, and several prison songs passed down through time are now entwined in Moscow folklore, such as:

*Taganka, night full of fire.*

*Taganka, why have they ruined me?*

*Taganka, I am your permanent prisoner*

*Killing the youth and talent in your walls*

## Taganka Bunker/Cold War Museum

Farbeneath Taganka’s streets is a former secret underground bunker, now the Cold War Museum (Bunker-42). Opened to the public in 2006, the bunker comprises numerous tunnels and spaces formerly designed to accommodate 2,500 Soviet leaders, communications specialists, and military planners for 90 days in the event of war. The bunker had its own supplies of oxygen, electricity, water and food. Tours arranged ahead of time are highly recommended. For additional information, see the official website at: <http://www.bunker42.com/>

## Goncharnaya Street to Stalin’s Sister

A pleasant architectural walk begins at Goncharnaya Street, tucked behind Taganskaya Metro station, and ending at the Church of St. Nikita Beyond the Yauza and the Stalinist “Sister” apartment house on Kotelnicheskaya Naberezhnaya.

Potters’ Street, Goncharnaya, begins like a calming whisper after Taganskaya square’s frenzy. One of Moscow’s older streets, in the 16th century it was lined with pottery manufacturers. The fire of 1812 destroyed much of the original architecture, but later 19th century buildings and Soviet-era construction provide an interesting mix.

At No 36/38 is a massive WWII-era residential building that previously housed a defense commissariat. Reportedly finished by German POWs, the building sports Corinthian columns, a soaring archway, a shock of royal blue at top, and lofty statues dedicated to peace.

Further along, at No 29, is the lovely 17th century Potters’ Church of the Assumption, built in 1654. The charming tile-work and starry gold and blue domes grab the attention of passers-by. The bell tower was added in 1790.

Adjacent, at No 26, is a colossal building home to military scientists during the Soviet period. The contrasting lower and upper stories are particularly unusual; the lower stories bear





a row of high decorative arches while the upper boasts bay windows.

Goncharnaya street boasts several immense country estates originally belonging the Tsarist elite. No 18 was built during the 18th and 19th centuries. No 16/14 is an expansive 19th century estate built on 17th century foundations. The 19th century estate at No 12 has been "remonted" several times, with a northern wing added in the early 1900s.

At No 7, this 19th century faded beauty bears the intricate fretwork and ornately carved shutters of classic Russian wooden homes of yesteryear.

At No 6, the snow-white Church of St. Nikita Beyond the Yauza, features additions from multiple centuries, beginning with foundations dating from the 1500s. The exterior walls are 16th century, while the inner chapel is 17th century. A bell tower was added in the 18th century.

The street's grand dame, however, is the dominating gothic-style Kotelnicheskaya apartment block—the first of Stalin's Seven Sisters—located at the junction of the Moskva and Yauza rivers. Originally built to house Communist Party elite, the well-built apartment buildings featured hardwood floors, marble, and breathtaking views of the Kremlin. The apartment block also housed a movie theatre that was the only cinema, in Soviet times, to feature undubbed foreign films.

## Andronikov Monastery

Just over 1 km northeast of Taganskaya square is the Andronikov Monastery, an important site of the Old Believers. Dating from 1360 and founded by Metropolitan Aleksey, this striking monastery on the banks of the Yauza river is named after its first abbot, Andronikus, though is also known for its most famous monk, legendary icon artist Andrei Rublev. Rublev lived at the monastery and is believed to have been buried here upon his death in 1430; the location of Rublev's grave is unknown.

While the monastery houses an icon museum dedicated to Rublev, none of his icons are actually here, but are preserved at the Tretyakov Gallery. However, one can get a glimpse of his work inside the gentle single-domed Cathedral of the Saviour. Built in the late 1300s, it is Moscow's oldest stone building.

After the Bolshevik revolution, the monastery was used as a prison camp. It was actually scheduled for demolition, but Khrushchev's "thaw" allowed this sacred site to remain. In 1960, it formally opened as the Rublev Museum.

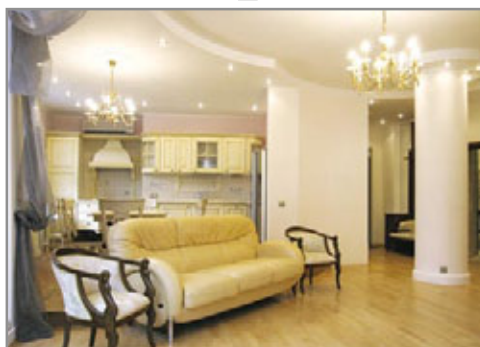
## Novospasskiy Monastery

Roughly 1 km south of Taganskaya metro station is the marvelous Novospassky Monastery, which was initially located on the Kremlin grounds in the 1300s before being moved to its current location. Magnificent exterior walls guard inner treasures, including a stunning 5-domed frescoed church built in the mid-1600s. The monastery's original buildings, however, had no such protection and were destroyed during the Tatar invasion.

Like the Andronikov Monastery, it was used as a prison camp during the Soviet era before being returned to the church in 1991. Today's setting is subdued and tranquil; despite claims that Novospassky is Moscow's oldest monastery, it attracts fewer tourists than one might expect. Another draw is the monastery's superb male choir, recognized throughout Russia. **P**

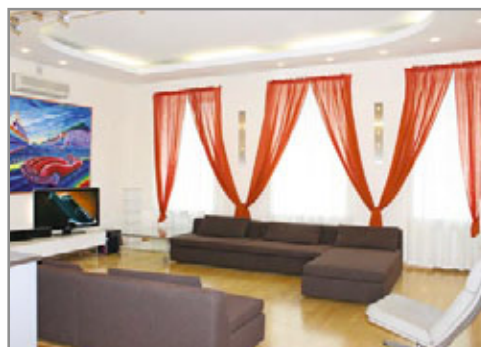


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## A Literary Walk around Moscow. Part I

# Chekhov House-Museum



### Marina Kashpar

A small bright-red cottage has taken shelter not far from Kudrinskaya square, on the outer side of Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya street. It stands out unexpectedly among its bigger but colourless neighbours. This is the famous Chekhov House-Museum.

Chekhov rented this house in August 1886 when he was 26 and lived there up to April 1890, when he left for his long journey to Sakhalin island. While in this house the writer created works that have become a part of Russian classic literature: "Steppe", "A Dull Story", the drama "Ivanov", plus a hundred brilliant short stories and a few vaudevilles. "I live in Kudrino at Sadovaya," Chekhov writes in one of his letters, "the place

is clean, quiet and not too far from anything." His mother Evgeniya Yakovlevna, his sister Maria and his younger brother Mikhail shared the house with him.

The two-storeyed brick structure was built in 1874 by architect V.A. Afanasev. Two bay-windows decorate the façade, and the same type of bay-window crowns the exit. The writer's friends used to say that the building "resembled a castle" and that it was as original as Chekhov's stories. The most fitting comparison, "The Comode House", that is still used today, in Russian, belongs to Chekhov himself. He noted in one of his letters: "I live in Kudrino in the Korneev's house, it resembles a Comode, opposite the Gymnasium number 4. The colour of the house is liberal. That is red." In Chekhov's time the house did not look as small as today. In the 19th century, it was surrounded by trees and almost sank into a green sea of orchards spread along the street.

After the fire of 1812 a large number of stone houses, most of them one or two storey constructions were built, although many wood buildings were still standing on Sadovaya Kudrinskaya.

By a decree of the Emperor Alexander I, the street was widened. It was difficult in those days to maintain such a wide street, so house owners organised large gardens in the front of their properties, and planted trees. This is why most streets have been given two names: Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya, Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya etc., the "Sadovaya" part meaning "garden"...

In the second part of the 19th century, most of the wooden houses along the street and inside the gardens were replaced by brick buildings. The four-storey buildings of the Gymnasium No. 4 (house No. 3) and the Technical School (house No. 9) appeared here at the end of 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century. Sofia's children's hospital (called today Filatov's city hospital for children No. 13) occupied the premises of Prince Scherbatov's house (house 15). All other houses were sold to merchants, only four small houses belonged to the nobility.

Externally, house number 6 in Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya; Chekhov's House-Museum looks almost exactly as it did at the end of the 19th century.

The memorial rooms of the museum look just the same as they did when Chekhov lived there. The writer's study and bedroom, his brother and sister's living rooms, the front room have all been reconstructed in accordance with the drawings and descriptions by Chekhov's relatives. One can tangibly feel the atmosphere that Chekhov lived and worked in. The inkpot with the bronze figure of the horse in Chekhov's study draws the visitors' attention. This inkpot was a present to Dr Chekhov by a poor woman patient from whom he refused to take fee. Moreover, he then gave her money to buy medicine.

There is an autographed photograph on the desk of Tchaikovsky. Chekhov was a great admirer of the composer. He was going to dedicate his collection of stories *Gloomy People* to him. He was pleasantly shocked when Tchaikovsky visited him at his Kudrino home. On the walls of the front room one can see many pictures by Nikolay Chekhov, the writer's brother who died young. Three halls of the house and the annex are occupied by historical and literary exhibitions dedicated to the writer's life and work from 1879 to 1904. There are portraits of Anton Chekhov by Serov and Nikolai Chekhov, original editions of his works, a collection of rare photographs of Chekhov, his relatives and friends, and theatre posters. **P**

### Address

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Vladimir Kozlov

## Realtor points out decline in demand in upscale rental market

In 2010, demand for business class rented apartments declined by 15%, and that for elite class property by 10%, Penny Lane Realty said in an analytical report on Moscow's rental market. The company's analysts also pointed out the return of corporate customers to the market and renewed interest in renting apartments within city limits by people permanently living in residential compounds outside the capital. The proportion of companies renting residential property for its employees increased by 15%-75% from the previous year, Penny Lane Realty said, also noting that the proportion of Russian renters exceeded that of foreign nationals for the first time since 2008. Rental budgets by British and US nationals went down, while those of French, Japanese and Swiss lease-holders increased. Foreign leaseholders of Moscow residential property mostly fall into the \$3,000 to \$8,000 a month category. Moscow's Central Administrative District remained the most popular part of the city with renters, accounting for about 40 per cent of all requests from prospective tenants.

## Moscow authorities continue crackdown on street kiosks

About 1,300 street kiosks in the city are operating in violation of the existing regulations and are to be demolished, Moscow's Mayor Sergei Sobyenin was quoted as saying on the wire service RIA Novosti. The crackdown on street kiosks, primarily those selling food, flowers and cigarettes near Metro stations, began last November, following Sobyenin's visit to the neighborhood of the Metro station Ulitsa 1905 Goda. "In November and December, we conducted a serious inspection of street retail outlets," Sobyenin was quoted as saying. "We are talking about significant violation of sanitary norms, illegal connect-

ing to the electricity grid, failure to observe labor regulations, while some kiosks look absolutely ugly." According to the Mayor, a new scheme regulating street kiosks in the city is currently being developed and is expected to be adopted later in the year.

## Landmark restaurant to be shut down

One of the symbols of the Soviet era, the restaurant Praga, located on Stary Arbat in the heart of Moscow, is to be closed down, the wire service ITAR-TASS reported. According to the report, the building which hosts the restaurant, was sold by its current owner, the group AST, to well-known Italian designer Roberto Cavalli. The new owner is reportedly going to replace Praga with a restaurant under his brand Just Cavalli. Meanwhile, over the last two years, Praga, which in Soviet times was considered one of the few classy places in Moscow and was hard to get into, has been opened only for organized parties in addition to selling food to take out. AST group, owned by Telman Ismailov, was the owner of the outdoor market Cherkizovskiy, shut down by the authorities in 2009.

## New rules for land tenure and development expected in Q1

New regulations governing land tenure and development in Moscow may be adopted by the city duma in the first quarter of 2011, Alexander Krutov, head of the duma's procedural committee, told reporters. The new regulations, commissioned by Mayor Sergei Sobyenin, are expected to formulate a consistent approach to land and development policies in the city, which under previous Mayor Yuri Luzhkov were widely believed to be chaotic and created opportunities for corruption. The new regulations are also expected to introduce such concepts as the maximum number of stores in buildings to be erected in a specific neighbourhood and the proportion of land that can be occupied by buildings. **P**

# Get ready for February in Russia:

**Defenders of the Fatherland Day – the holiday that lingers from Soviet times on the 23<sup>rd</sup>; and a new holiday imported from the West – Valentine's Day on the 14<sup>th</sup>.**

## Congratulating the men:

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Happy Defenders of the Fatherland day!  
С праздником, дорогие мужчины! Happy holiday, dear men!  
Поздравляю! Congratulations!

## Congratulating the lover:

С Днем всех влюбленных!  
Happy Valentine's Day!  
Я тебя люблю! I love you!  
Ты моя валентинка!  
You're my valentine!

## Or the wannabe lover:

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I really like you! And you like me?  
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Will you be my sweetheart?  
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Let's celebrate Valentine's day together!

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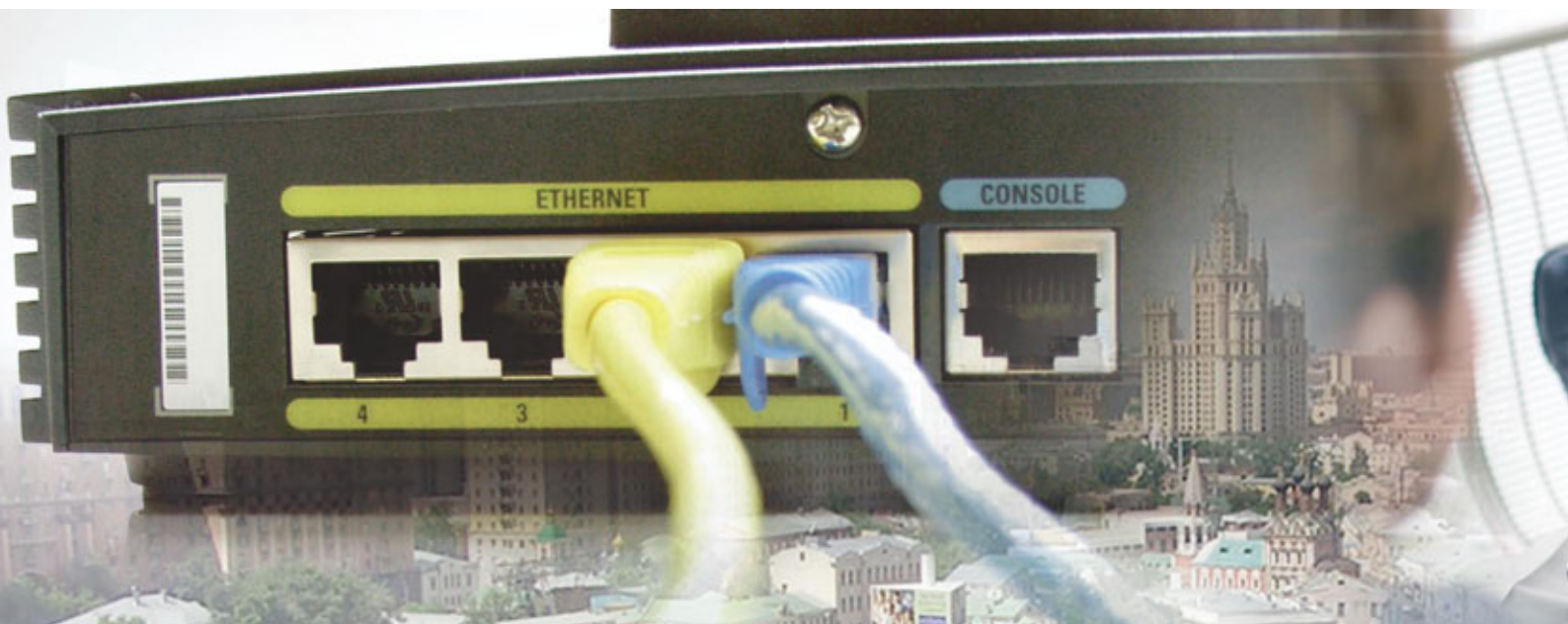


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# Internet Services at Home



Vladimir Kozlov

It is hard to imagine a contemporary home without satellite or cable television and high-speed internet connection. And although these services are available in the vast majority of apartments put up for rent in Moscow, it is always a good idea to make sure that the speed of the internet connection is high enough and particular TV channels are available via satellite or cable.

The higher the category of the residential building is—and, consequently, the rent—the higher is the probability that a leaseholder won't have to deal with getting connected to the internet or satellite/cable television.

"Basically, all elite apartments have internet access and satellite television," Georgy Dzagurov, general director of Penny Lane Realty, told PASSPORT. "Services of this kind are normally included in the rent, and their impact on the total rent is insignificant."

Other players in the segment agree that these days internet connection and satellite/cable television are considered basic services and don't add anything to the total rent for a property.

"Based on our experience, the availability of internet and satellite television in an apartment doesn't have an impact on the rent, as those are considered essential services," Polina Ivanchenko, a senior relocation consultant at Four Squares, told PASSPORT.

Meanwhile, according to Galina Tkach, director of the rental department at IntermarkSavills, the availability of high-speed internet connection may sometimes be one of the decisive factors for a prospective leaseholder considering renting a property. "Situations when customers refuse to rent a property because it is not possible to establish an internet connection or they are not satisfied with the speed of the connection offered by the existing provider, take place quite often," she told PASSPORT. "Normally, this is the case with country houses."

According to Dzagurov, what often makes a difference for leaseholders, are the specifics regarding the internet connection and

television, such as the speed of connection and the availability of particular TV channels. "For instance, foreigners require that TV channels in their native language should be available," he noted.

These days, times when people had to access the internet using a dial-up modem and a phone landline, seem to be remote past. And perhaps all residential buildings within city limits have an ADSL internet connection—or a dedicated line that is different from a phone landline. And just about any apartment could be connected to the service. There are several main providers, such as the "big three" mobile phone operator Beeline or NetByNet.

They normally offer similar packages, and a basic plan with a fixed monthly fee of around 450 roubles (\$15) would give you access to unlimited traffic at a speed that is sufficient for what a regular internet user normally does: surfing the web, watching videos or using Skype.

Those uploading or downloading huge amounts of data could switch to a more expensive plan with a higher connection speed. Unlike some other internet options, including a service that has been recently promoted by the city's main landline telephone operator, MGTS, a regular ADSL connection doesn't require any extra equipment, only a cable that goes directly to your computer, and the procedure of getting connected is short and simple.

Another option is wireless internet, or wi-fi. All you need is a wi-fi adapter, which is installed on all contemporary desktops and laptops. However, the area where your apartment or house is has to be within a zone of coverage by a provider of the service. Wi-fi internet may be the only option for residents or country houses in residential compounds where broadband connection would be uneconomical. Most higher-class residential compounds in Moscow Oblast have a wireless internet connections.





When it comes to television, foreign leaseholders are primarily interested in channels in foreign languages that in Moscow are available only via cable or satellite. One of the country's main satellite operators, Cosmos TV, offers a range of channels in English, from Animal Planet, BBC World and CNN to Eurosport and Discovery Civilization. German speakers have fewer options, just Deutsche Welle and Euronews. The French channels available are TV5, MCM, AB Moteurs, Mezzo and Euronews. Some channels in other languages are also available.

Foreign-language channels are included in either the Basic package with a monthly subscription fee of 585 roubles (\$19) or the Elite package (1075 roubles/\$35 a month). To receive Cosmos TV channels, one needs a decoder that could be purchased or rented from the provider.

According to Tkach, satellite TV packages from Cosmos TV are the most popular among foreign leaseholders, as the provider offers the widest choice of channels in foreign languages, while Russians normally opt for NTV+.

NTV+ also offers some foreign-language channels in its Basic Plus package with a subscription fee of 750 roubles (\$25) a month, but the selection is not that wide.

Meanwhile, those who would like to receive channels not included in the providers' packages could try installing a satellite dish that would receive a signal from satellites such as Astra. However this is more complicated.

"Certainly, there could be a case when a leaseholder would want to have satellite television from a particular provider—for instance, one that could receive channels from a particular part of the world in a particular language," Yekaterina Batynkova, director of the elite property department at Est-a-Tet, told PASSPORT. "That would certainly require the installation of extra equipment."

Batynkova went on to explain that the installation of an extra satellite dish may be a problem in case it would have to face a particular direction for better reception. She added that the installation of satellite dishes on some buildings or their particular areas may be prohibited by municipal authorities. There are a number of companies in the market offering this kind of satellite dishes. Still, to be able to receive a signal from a particular satellite, a dish will have to be installed on a building's roof rather than its side, and it is sometimes prohibited as well.

In any case, if it happens that an apartment doesn't have an internet or satellite connection, or the leaseholder would

want to have a higher speed internet connection or extra TV channels, the first person they should address is landlord. The latter should then figure out what options are available for a particular building and upon discussion with the leaseholder, sign an agreement with a provider.

It is a normal practice that all costs pertaining to connecting an apartment to the internet, cable or satellite are covered by the landlord, while the leaseholder is responsible for monthly payments, Dzagurov said.

Technically, a tenant could get connected to the internet or satellite television even without consulting the landlord. "There are no restrictions on connecting satellite television or internet," Tkach said. "This could even be done by the leaseholder without any help from the landlord. All they need to do is to sign an agreement with a provider and purchase required equipment. But, as a rule, the landlord signs an agreement to their name, and the leaseholder pays the subscription fee."

However, it is always advisable to discuss issues like that with the landlord first. "It is better to get approval for any changes in the apartment from the landlord," Batynkova said. "In most cases, landlords react to such situations with understanding. As a rule, problems that may arise have to do with a technology solution."

Problems may only arise if the landlord is out of town, but in such a case the estate agent could step in and take care of the situation.

"Based on our company's experience, there are few issues that cannot be resolved, and in the end, interested parties always come to mutual agreement," Batynkova concluded. **P**



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# Vinodelnya Vedernikoff: genuine Russian wine



Eleonora Scholes

That November morning was unkind. The milky white fog that had descended upon the river Don was thick and impenetrable. We were promised a magnificent view from the high right bank, but could hardly see beyond arm's reach. Below us, an invisible river was quietly flowing past, taking its mighty waters westwards to the Azov Sea. The river, the trees and the vast flatlands stretching to the horizon—all concealed by the caprice of the autumn weather. Nonetheless, a sense of wonder prevailed over our disappointment.

Instead of admiring another great Russian landscape—a customary occupation across the broad expanses of this country—our attention shifted to smaller things, both natural and man-made, which made the place special. Or, rather, it was more a surreal mystical blur, enveloped as we were by the heavy fog.

A lonely bull-calf was grazing in the vicinity of a tall wooden cross—a traditional sign to indicate the boundary of a Cossack settlement. A massive boulder perched on a dirt mound was another important local landmark, prompting our host to recount fascinating legends about the infamous 17th century rebel, Stepan Razin.

A steep river bank exposed crumbly white limestone, a source of construction material that was once excavated right here from an open pit. The pit has since been abandoned, and its floor is now covered by a carpet of wild herbs.



Their unmistakable scent of southern Russian steppe, which could be detected even in the chilly autumn air, was at once reminiscent of local wine and filled the mind with brighter thoughts.

Indeed, it was wine that had brought my American colleague and I to the khutor, or village, Vedernikov. I had tasted the local wines before. They were surprisingly original and begged for a proper discovery. I wished I had come earlier, but had previously been hampered by the sheer remoteness of the place.

The pool of quality Russian producers is concentrated close to the Black Sea, and it takes a 7 hour eastward drive from the coast to reach Vedernikov. A better way to get there, as I did this time, is to fly to Rostov-on-Don. The city is an important gateway to the Russian south and a “mere” 160-kilometre drive to the final destination.

In the distant past, the river signified an important border between different religions and peoples. The division had strong implications for winemaking. The right bank, to the north, practiced the Orthodox faith, encouraging the production of wine. It is probable that wine culture and ancient vines arrived there from the Caucasus, the cradle of winemaking, which would explain the origin of a number of local grape varieties.

In the Russian Empire, wine was certainly made by Cossacks, military people who defended the country's southern confines. Their most successful product was sparkling red Tsimlianskoye. It reached the aristocratic courts of St. Petersburg and Moscow and earned high praise from the great Russian poet, Pushkin, in the 19th century.

Under the Soviet regime, the Rostov region became a major wine producing area, boasting 36 large producers





and over 20,000 hectares of vineyards. Like elsewhere in Russia, the local wine industry was devastated following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and a slow recovery started only a few years ago.

Today, there are perhaps three main producers in the Rostov region whose wines are worth speaking about. One of them is Vinodelnya Vedernikoff, a winery that has a good chance to become a standard bearer not only for the region, but for the Russian wine industry as a whole. Vinodelnya Vedernikoff top wines, under the same brand, already offer distinctive flavour profiles and are likely to impress even more in future. It was this winery that finally persuaded me to travel down there.

There are several things which set Vinodelnya Vedernikoff and its wines apart from the others. For one, it is the sense of place, so preciously valued today in the world of wine. Vedernikoff wines, through their aromas and flavours, are able to tell a story of the river Don and its limestone soils, of fragrant steppe herbs and rare grapes, of harsh climate and tenderly cared for vineyards.

Local grapes, some of them truly unique, provide another point of difference. Several varieties, like Rkatsiteli, Aligote and Riesling, were brought from elsewhere, but have a long history of growing in this place, while others are indigenous to the area. Two grapes in particular—Sibirkovy and Krasnostop—are believed to have their origin in khutor Vedernikov, and are the winery's greatest treasure.

White Sibirkovy may suggest a possible connection with Siberia, but in

fact the name is misleading. It is named after a local bush, sibiryok, used for making brooms. Cossacks noticed that sibiryok's bright yellow flowers exude aromas, similar to those in wine. This prompted them to call the grape Sibirkovy.

Mikhail Pakhalyuk, in charge of Vedernikoff's vineyards, explains that this is a particularly delicate variety. It grows very slowly and yields grapes with thin skin and a creamy taste, not dissimilar to that of the curiously named but popular Russian soufflé sweets "Bird's Milk". Despite its delicate nature, Sibirkovy is difficult to vinify. It presents new challenges with each harvest and is not produced every year.

The 2010 vintage features an aromatic wine with a lovely perfume of flowers, steppe herbs and citrus, full flavours, appealing minerality, ginger spiciness and a lingering taste. Vinodelnya Vedernikoff is the only winery making commercial quantities of Sibirkovy, albeit limited. There are only 13 hectares under cultivation, and a maximum 25,000 bottles of this wine will be made for the 2010 vintage.

Vedernikoff red flagship variety is Krasnostop. Grape berries are attached to a red stem, or stopa, hence the name. The grape was brought from a nearby village, but was put to wider cultivation in khutor Vedernikov. The name of the original village is still mentioned in the grape's extended name, Krasnostop Zolotovskiy. Unlike Sibirkovy, Krasnostop has a very robust vine—tough as reinforced concrete, says Mikhail Pakhalyuk. The

winery pays double rates to prune it. Vinodelnya Vedernikoff makes a varietal wine that shows typical plumminess, spiciness and strong tannic structure and also uses Krasnostop for blending with other grapes for Pravoberezhnoye, or Right Bank, wine.

From the 2010 vintage onwards some Krasnostop will be aged in small oak barrels, to tame the grape's powerful tannins and give it an extra layer of complexity. This is the most promising Russian red variety, capable of producing wines with depth, structure and potential for aging. Vinodelnya Vedernikoff has already achieved good results. Hopefully, it will continue to improve, and one day will present Krasnostop at its greatest.

The limits of space prevent me from discussing other wines under the Vinodelnya Vedernikoff label, all worth tasting. But there is something else that I must mention. Have you ever heard of a vineyard that is covered with soil for winter and uncovered again every spring? The practice exists in some places in Northern America and China, but—to the best of my knowledge—nobody does this in Europe.

But the climate here is too harsh on vines in winter, thus they have to be protected with a thick blanket of earth from November to April. It's odd walking the vineyards when vines cannot really be seen.

I will be off again to Vinodelnya Vedernikoff in the summer—to explore the vineyards and hopefully enjoy a glorious view of the Don. **P**



# Vinzavod

Charles Borden

Vinzavod, literal translation “wine factory,” was the term used in the former Soviet Union and now in Russia for the plant and facilities that manufacture a grape-flavored alcoholic beverage called vino (wine). Many of the Soviet Union’s largest vinzavods were located and continue to operate in the big cities far north of the grape growing areas of southern Russia. Three of the biggest are in Moscow. Another in Moscow has been converted to a trendy modern art district.

In Soviet Russia, except in parts of the south, vino production for the masses became a technical process divorced from the messy, fussy, expensive, capital-intensive and weather-dependent nurture and growth of wine grapes. Missing was the romance of “terroir,” the relationship between grape, climate, sun and soil so valued by Old World winemakers for centuries and New World winemakers for generations. Although winemaking thrived along the Black Sea coast in Greek villages 2,500 years ago, Russia’s first wineries opened there only towards the end of the 19th century. The development of the art of winemaking, the winemaker’s link between the vineyard and the process of vinification, was stunted after the Revolution.

In the Russian vinzavod of today, vino-material (fermented grape juice) is the principal ingredient. It comes from one or a combination of sources: bulk wine imported by container or grape concentrate shipped by the barrel from countries such as Tunisia, Spain or Chile, or from grapes produced in southern Russia in the regions between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The vineyards of southern Russia do not produce nearly enough grapes to meet domestic consumer demand, and they are neither cost- nor quality-competitive with large western grape producers. Other ingredients of Russian vino could include sugar, alcohol, and essences and aromatics produced in Eastern and Central Europe such as “essence of Riesling.”

Southern Russia inherited about two dozen vinzavods from the Soviet Union, mostly state farms that produced wine from



their own grapes. I first visited one of these wineries on the Black Sea in 1992, and visited many others in the following ten years. I met many dedicated winemakers. What they lacked in modern winemaking knowledge and technology, they made up for with affection, and they developed their own style and techniques. When the Soviet Union fell, these wineries were privatized. South Russia’s winemakers soon faced a daunting task on several fronts: the vagaries of grape production, the legacy of antiquated Soviet-era equipment and focus on production of sweet wines, and pressure of economic competition to produce cheap wine even if this meant using imported vino-material, concentrate and aromatics.

Some of southern Russia’s wineries of 1992 did not survive and a few conceded to economic pressure. Vineyards were converted to supply and blend with imported vino-material in modernized vinzavods. In my travels I heard that one of these wine factories that made sixteen types of Russian wine from one type of imported Spanish bulk wine.

Only handful of southern Russia’s old vinzavods remained essentially wineries, and there is just one significant newcomer. These few produce wines from their own grapes, have planted new vineyards with Russian and imported varieties, purchased modern equipment and invited in western wine-





makers as advisors. They are well deserving of the name “winery” rather than wine factory moniker.

Last month we covered one of those wineries, Russia’s national treasure and sparkling wine producer, Abrau Durso, originally founded in 1870. Some of the more interesting and colorful, and developing wineries of southern Russia include Chateau Le Grand Vostock (the newcomer), Fanagoria Winery and Myskhako Winery.

Chateau Le Grand Vostock (Krimsk district, Krasnodar), the newcomer, was built in 2003 with French equipment and technology and under the constant stewardship of Frank Duseigneur and his wife Gael Brullon. CGV has almost 300 hectares of vineyards with both French varieties and Russian/Georgian wine grapes. In the French tradition, they produce coupege (blended) wines at several levels of aging and quality.

For the past few years, fly-in Australian winemaker John Worontschak has helped Myskhako Winery (Novorossiysk district, Krasnodar) improve its wines, and more recently started work at Fanagoria Estate Winery (Temruk district, Krasnodar).

Fanagoria, with over 2300 hectares of grapes, is Russia’s largest winery. Fanagoria’s Cru Lermont line is produced from French varietal grapes that were imported and planted in 1997. New European crushing equipment has been installed.

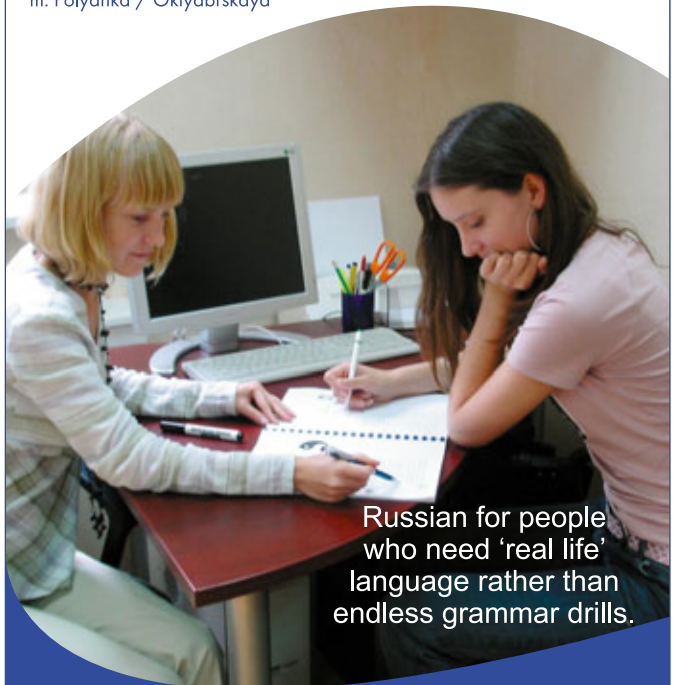
Myskhako is located on Wizard Mountain overlooking Russia’s main Black Sea port. It was a favorite of Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, who fought in the Battle of Novorossiysk during the Second World War. Myskhako has a small tasting room incorporating the table used by the Politburo during visits with Brezhnev to the winery. Some of Myskhako’s better wines are its crisp, white Aligote and Chardonnay wines.

Today’s Russian wineries face a newer threat, the tarnish on the name Russian wine from the vinzavods. By permitting wines to be sold as Russian with little or no Russian grape content, Russia is unique among wine producing nations. Every modern winemaking country protects winemakers with an appellation or name control system such as France’s Appellation d’origine contrôlée (AOC) or Italy’s Denominazione di origine controllata. Southern Russia, which lies at the same latitude as northern Italy and southern France, has the potential to produce great wines but that potential will never be achieved unless the consumer knows what a real Russian wine is.

Also, Russia as yet has no small winery and winemaking industry because of the great hurdles that all small Russian businesses face, even larger due to the necessity to obtain various alcohol licenses. The reduction of these barriers for small winemakers, and a true appellation system could give southern Russia the opportunity to develop the potential that French winemakers recognized in the region in the 19th century. Perhaps before the 2014 Olympics or 2018 World Cup. **P**

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# Get Kinki

## Charles Borden

Sorry, Kinki is not a Gentlemen's Club—it's a fish, or for our purpose a restaurant in the Krylatskaya suburbs of northwestern Moscow. It's located not far off Rublovskoye Shosse in an

unassuming location on the first floor of a small office building, which also houses the headquarters of the Coffeemaniya chain, Kinki's creators.

We seldom venture far outside the Garden Ring for a review, but Kinki has become a PASSPORT favorite. For creative sushi and Japanese fare, PASSPORT Publisher, John Ortega, ranks it right up with Nobu and Megu. Unfortunately, Kinki has audience-thinning prices to match as well.

Kinki, the fish, is a bright red, bony seasonal rockfish from around Hokkaido island, which is also the origin of robata, the beachside style of oak-fired grilling used by local fisherman. At Moscow's Kinki, a long Robata grill is the centerpiece, wrapped by a large, heavy granite sushi bar. By the time you open these pages, Kinki Chef, Aaron Stott, should be tending his Robata grill, back from a holiday visit home to New Zealand.

Aaron grew up near Gisborne on the east coast of New Zealand's north island where he learned cooking at home and gained respect for fresh and natural products, but his formal training came later in London. After honing his skills with some of London's masters, he moved on to Dubai and then to Moscow to open Kinki's about a year ago.

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The Tokyo firm Super Potato executed Kinki's pan-Asian, stainless and natural material design, which is reminiscent of the work they did for Nedalny Vostok. At first glance, Kinki appears to be a Novikov restaurant, but this is due to the Super Potato design devices that have become a Novikov trademark: walls, floor to ceiling, covered with identical glass containers, and large tubs of produce placed around the kitchen: lemons, sheets of kelp, dried mushrooms.

The cuisine is essentially Japanese, but Aaron told us the emphasis at Kinki is on the Robata grill, apparently the only one in Moscow. The Robata grill has a shallow, high temperature ceramic lined firebox that is designed to provide even oak-fired cooking platform.

We started with a snack of lightly steamed Edamame whole-pod soybeans (270r) and a bottle of Australian Triple Overtime Game 7 Viognier at 3000 rubles. The Triple Overtime label is Igor Larionov's, the Russian star of the Detroit Red Wings who turned wine-marketer in retirement. The Kinki wine list is short, with about ten white wines and about twenty reds covering most major world wine regions. There's a good selection of wines by the glass, which range from 500 rubles and up, as does a small decanter of one of Kinki's premium sakes. I found the Antinori Cervaro della Sala that I use as a wine price index listed at 7500 rubles, a markup index of 3.5.

We tested the nigari sushi and sashimi: Dorado (430r), Scottish Salmon (470r), Bluefin (650r) and Yellowtail (950r). We added three of Aaron's new-style presentations: Spicy Tuna Roll prepared with pickled daikon, rolled inside out, and topped with a square of tuna and slice of jalapeno, Gyoza Dumplings (700r) prepared with foie gras, shitake mushrooms and balsamic vinegar and served with a truffle sauce, and King Crab Hurumaki,

a fat roll with tempura Kamchatka crab with tobiko (flying fish roe) and a dab of wasabi mayo (900r). For freshness, Kinki's fish matches any place in town, and Aaron's specialties prompted me to agree with JO that his kitchen skills are a match for Moscow's two big names in creative Japanese cuisine.

Aaron set up a grill selection for us: New Zealand Ribeye (1500r), Zuke Lamb Rack with Wasabi potato puree (1500r), Waygu Tenderloin (2800r), Baramundi—an Australian seabass (2100r), and Mixed Vegetables with Goma Dressing (1300r). The results from the robata were impressive, particularly with the very tender lamb rack, perhaps the best I've tried in Moscow.

Aaron sent out a sumptuous dessert tray: fresh tropical fruits with Idzumi (750r), which are crispy triangular apple spring rolls; Macao (750r), a creamy meringue with mango-passion fruit sauce; and Chocolate Fondant (850r) oozing with rich dark chocolate, all tied together with vanilla and pistachio ice cream. Another tip of the hat to the chef.

We topped this off with a tumbler of Kinki's delicious home-brewed cherry shochu (500r) brought down from one of the dozens of large jars of shochu that line a wall near the entry. Each with its own hue of seasonal fruits and berries for its home-brewing.

Kinki proved itself one of very few Moscow "destination" restaurants, worth a trip to the outskirts, and certainly a good stopover out Rublovka way. **P**

**Kinki**  
**Ulitsa Ocennaya 11**  
**+7 495 781 1697**  
**[www.kinkigrill.ru](http://www.kinkigrill.ru)**

# An Interview with Campbell Bethwaite: Secrets of Moscow's Nightlife



## Miguel Francis

Did you know that some of the keys to a successful nightlife project, aside from an intricate design of the club, may also include a circular amphitheatre bar along with an elevated Go-Go dance-floor? The reason behind these details answers the question: why do people go to Moscow's nightclubs? Campbell

Bethwaite proposes a solid answer: people go clubbing only to see everybody and be seen by everyone. I completely concur, that's one of the quintessential reasons behind Moscow's nightlife, that's exactly what the creative minds behind these projects here in Moscow do best, show you for show and show for sure. Imagine kissing your Valentine

and knowing for sure that no matter where in the club the kiss takes place, chances are everyone will be looking. Clubs that uphold these key elements seem to be the most successful in this luxurious sector.

Good old Dyagilev and First Clubs were some of the pioneers of this design element, then came Opera, We Are Family, Famous, and now we have Posh Friends, Playhouse & Imperia Lounge carrying the flag, encircling their club with a natural flow of exposure. It's February in Moscow and the city still feels empty. Slowly everyone is returning from their vacations and getting into the first working quarter of 2011. Nightlife is kicking in after a pretty bland winter holiday session, it's as if during the holidays nightlife wasn't needed much. Perhaps that's why everyone went to Dubai, Bali or the Maldives to enjoy a perfect vacation and peace from the hectic Moscow and its nightlife. Nothing major is opening up on the horizon, but as spring swings around be sure to find something new and exciting within the luscious nightlife of this city.

I had a chance to interview an exceptionally creative mind, an ex-pat nightlife veteran and true hard-working entrepreneur, one of the main partners and creators behind the Garage Club, Campbell Bethwaite. Garage is a unique place with roots dating back to Moscow's nightlife beginnings. The place is comfortably situated on Brotnikov Per. 8 near Metro Polyanka. It has a good friend of mine on face-control, Mark-Vahtang (ex Pacha, Rolling Stone), and a really creamy crowd. Garage has all the western touches and divides its night into House Music nights and R'n'B & Hip-Hop nights, almost always functioning as a perfect after-hour party spot. Without further ado, let's dive right in.

## **Miguel Francis: What brought you to Moscow and were you involved in the nightlife sector before?**

Campbell Bethwaite: I arrived in Moscow in 2006 with an investment bank from New York. It was one of those chance opportunities, and I jumped at it. After a year or so of banking in Moscow I realized there was more opportunity in Russia than simply finance. And yes, previously I had extensive background in restaurants, nightclubs and hospitality and so when I had the chance to join with the previous owners of the legendary Garage Club, and





this happened right about when they lost their original premises on Pushkinskaya in 2009, I seized the opportunity in opening the new Garage Club.

**MF: How did you start in the nightlife industry?**

CB: I always had a passion for the hospitality industry. From flipping burgers in McDonalds at age 14, then later an undergraduate degree in tourism and hospitality after which I worked and managed bars and restaurants in Australia, the US, Canada and Russia. Moscow has the most dynamic and over-the-top nightlife scene in the world, so it suggested an obvious return to this industry. Besides, my other major business is hospitality-related: Moscow's Suites Service Department.

**MF: What is your musical background? Do you play anything? What do you listen to?**

CB: While I love music and in Moscow I enjoy listening to both "crap whisky pop house" and R'n'B (Garage specialty) I generally try and stay out of the way of our musical director DJ Davlad. I can also bash away at the piano and clear a room pretty quickly, I'll sing enthusiastically but not particularly proficiently! (Laughs)

**MF: Do you think Moscow's nightlife is a bit polluted with this heavy glam and sometimes unnecessary posh?**

CB: You see, it really depends on your perspective. Moscow's nightlife has evolved considerably over the last five years. Back then the only real selection was between the Nuevo Russian glam and student grunge. These days there is a much greater diversity of venues, styles, musical tastes and prices. Given the concentration of wealth, the disparity of income, and the youth underemployment there will always be both the supply and demand for the glitzy clubs, over the top atmosphere and Barbie doll girls.

**MF: As a nightlife ex-pat veteran that you are, what place would you suggest for some of the less "experienced" ex-pats to visit over the weekend?**

CB: Well let's break it down. After a dinner there are some great pre-party places bars such as Luch, Sinatra, Strelka. And then if you want to hit the top glam clubs Imperia Lounge and Posh Friends are hard to beat, and of course there is Soho Rooms. After-party Moscow goes to Garage and for those who have access Krisha Mira. For a great night out without having to deal with the glamour, Rolling Stone, Solyanka, Arma 17 and Discotheque are all great places to find different music and a fun crowd.

**MF: As a Moscow club owner and an event producer, do you find it difficult to juggle between being a businessman, working within the nightlife scene as well as being an avid club-goer yourself?**

CB: The biggest challenge is having business that operate both during the day and the night. I don't get much sleep. Within the nightlife context, there is the perpetual challenge of being able to be at one place at one time, with so many events happening in Moscow and four great parties at the Garage.

**MF: Oh you have no idea I am all into quantum physics right now trying to figure out how to time travel, be at different places at one time and increase the time within your day by slowing down everything else around you. (Laughs) Aside from that what are some of the pluses and unique perspectives in being involved in Moscow's nightlife business sector for a foreigner/ex-pat?**

CB: It's a fascinating and dynamic, high-profile industry and it's a lot more complicated than most people believe. The ups and down of dealing with promoters, alcohol distributors, face control and the perpetual phone calls at 5 a.m.

with drunk friends trying to get into your club are all a part of the job, so it's not all beautiful women and unlimited cocktails and partying all night long. (Laughs)

**MF: In that case, do you feel you are a Muscovite by now?**

CB: I work every day at my understanding of the Russian culture, language and Moscow's unique idiosyncrasies, but many days it feels like I have a long way to go. Moscow is certainly already home.

**MF: It's been great talking to you Campbell, thanks for all the input and all the hidden secrets! One last question: I have a lot of friends from the West, asking me constantly before their experience of Moscow's nightlife if it's dangerous out there. Would you say that Moscow's nightlife is dangerous and what tips can you suggest to foreigners that have yet to experience the nightlife out here?**

CB: I would say that Moscow's nightlife is no more dangerous for your average club-goer, than any other major city. The same mix of alcohol, ego, and conflicting temptations are here in abundance. My advice to anyone is to keep your drinking under control, keep a smile on your face and don't get involved in situations that could become complicated. Moscow's nightlife is unique, vibrant and seriously happening, so I would encourage everyone to check it out. Thanks for having me Miguel, it was a pleasure. **P**



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**M. Oktyabrskaya**

9a Ul. Korovy Val,  
959-8919

**M. Universitet**

6 Prospekt Vernadskovo,  
783-4037

**M. Polyanka**

16/5 Bolotnaya Ploshchad,  
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[www.starlite.ru](http://www.starlite.ru)

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44 Stary Arbat, 205-8335

**M. Smolenskaya**

[www.hardrock.com](http://www.hardrock.com)

## ASIAN

### AROMA

Indian Restaurant  
Krizhizanovskovo Street 20/30,

**M. Profsayounaya**

[www.aromamoscow.ru](http://www.aromamoscow.ru)  
+7(495) 543-54-26

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Fabulous Asian food in a palatial and exquisite setting – the owners reportedly spent a mid-eight figure amount on the fitout including a two million dollar dim-sum kitchen. Try the Wasabi shrimp.

26/5 Tverskoi Bulvar, 739-0011

**M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya**

[www.turandotpallace.ru](http://www.turandotpallace.ru)

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**M. Kuznetsky Most**

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**M. Tverskaya**

<http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/>

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56 Leningradsky Prospekt, 742-3755

[www.coffeebean.ru](http://www.coffeebean.ru)

### COFFEE MANIA

The Coffee Mania next to the Moscow Conservatory is a popular daytime informal business venue. Open 24 hours. Several locations.

13 Ulitsa Bolshaya Nikitskaya, 775-5188, 775-4310

**M. Arbatskaya, Biblioteka im. Lenina**

[www.coffeemania.ru](http://www.coffeemania.ru)

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Now has 32 locations.

[www.starbuckscoffee.ru](http://www.starbuckscoffee.ru)

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2/46 Bolshoi Sadovaya

**M. Mayakovskaya**

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### \*\*CARRE BLANC

Moscow's top French restaurant. Try the bistro and weekend brunch.

9/2 Ul. Seleznevskaya, 258-4403

**M. Novoslobodskaya**

[www.carreblanc.ru](http://www.carreblanc.ru)

### BLACKBERRY

Elegant but comfortable with an eclectic international menu – Asian, Russian, Italian, sushi and other cuisines.

10 Academic Sakharov Prospekt

926-1640, 926-1645

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### CAFE DES ARTISTES

Restaurant and bar offers fine European cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere, often with recent artwork on the walls of the upstairs room.

5/6 Kamergersky Pereulok, 692-4042

**M. Teatralnaya**

[www.artistico.ru](http://www.artistico.ru)

### GALEREYA

Trendy, lavish and expensive. The place to see and be seen.

27 Ulitsa Petrovka, 937-4544

**M. Pushkinskaya**

[eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/](http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/)

### GRAND ALEXANDER

Named after poet Alexander Pushkin, this opulent restaurant at the Marriott Grand Hotel is one of Moscow's top French-European restaurants.

26 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 937-0000

**M. Tverskaya**

### JEROBOAM

Ritz-Carlton's Jeroboam, under the stewardship of celebrity German chef Heinz Winkler, offers "la Cuisine Vitale" in the new building that replaced the eyesore that was the Soviet-era Intourist Hotel.

3 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 225-8888

**M. Okhotny Ryad**

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52/6 Kosmodamianskaya Nab, 221-5358

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**M. Novoslobodskaya**

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The summer café is one of Moscow's main after work meeting venues. Excellent Scandinavian and continental menu.

19 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 937-5630

**M. Pushkinskaya**

[www.scandinavia.ru](http://www.scandinavia.ru)

### SKY LOUNGE

Dining on the roof of the Russian Academy of Sciences offers guests unparalleled views of the city.

32a Leninsky Prospekt, 915-1042, 938-5775

**M. Leninsky Prospekt**

[www.skylounge.ru](http://www.skylounge.ru)

### VANIL

Hip French and Japanese near the Cathedral of Christ the Savior.

1 Ulitsa Ostozhenka, 202-3341

**M. Kropotkinskaya**

[eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/](http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/)

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Elegant, trendy partnership with Vogue magazine.

7/9 Ul. Kuznetsky Most, 623-1701

**M. Kuznetsky Most**

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NOTE: \*\*Indicates Passport Magazine Top 10 Restaurants 2009.

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Spiridonievsky pereulok, 12/9, 737-95-00

[www.restoran-shafran.ru](http://www.restoran-shafran.ru)

## FUSION

### \*\*GQ BAR

A warm, active hang-out for the elite just up from the Kempinski Baltschug Hotel. Partnership with GQ magazine.

5 Ulitsa Baltschug, 956-7775

**M. Novokuznetskaya**

[eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/](http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/)

### SOHO ROOMS

Chef Laura Bridge mixes it up at this trendy restaurant-club along the embankment near Novodivichy Monastery.

12 Savinskaya Nab., 988-7474

**M. Sportivnaya**

[www.sohorooms.com](http://www.sohorooms.com)

## HEALTHY

### JAGGANNATH CAFE

A simple but excellent vegetarian buffet with an eclectic mix of Asian and other dishes.

11 Kuznetsky Most, 628-3580

**M. Kuznetsky Most**

[www.jagannath.ru](http://www.jagannath.ru)

### LE PAIN QUOTIDIEN

Simple and healthy food and bakery at the Moscow extension of an international chain. Delivery. Multiple locations.

5/6 Kamergersky Pereulok, 649-7050

[www.lpq.ru](http://www.lpq.ru)

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### \*\*NAVARRO'S BAR & GRILL

El Salvador born chef-owner Yuri Navarro excels at everything from tapas to eclectic Peruvian-Mediterranean fusion, seafood to grilled meat. One of Moscow's few chef-owned restaurants.

23 Shmitovskiy Proezd, 259-3791

**M. Mezhdunarodnaya**

[www.navarros.ru](http://www.navarros.ru)

### OLD HAVANA

An amazing place, with a stunning Brazilian table-side show nightly from Thursday to Saturday. The food is good, but the highlight is the unbelievable three-hour extravaganza with about two dozen dancers and capoeira performers.

28 Ulitsa Talalikhina, 723-1656

**M. Proletarskaya**

[www.old-havana.ru](http://www.old-havana.ru)

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Sicilian chef Nino Graziano dishes up the best of Sicily and the Mediterranean with the help of his personal grill out front. Huge Italian wine list.

2 Rossolimo Ulitsa, (499) 766-4646

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7 Soimonovskiy Proyezd, 695-2936, 695-2950

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## JAPANESE

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11, Osennaya Str., (495) 781-1697

**M. Krylatskoye**  
www.kinkigrill.ru

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The best Sushi in town is served here according to PASSPORT's publisher John Ortega. Funky Korean décor and ambience.

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**M. Smolenskaya**  
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**M. Okhotny Ryad**  
www.noburestaurants.ru

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**M. Krasnopresnenskaya**  
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www.ichiban.ru

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7 Ulitsa Krasina, 506-0033

**M. Mayakovskaya**  
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5/2 Komsomolsky Prospekt, 246-7624

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4 Neglinnaya Ulitsa, 783-1234

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Our Azerbaijanian friends swear it's the best Azeri restaurant in town.

20/1 Petrovka Ulitsa, 200-4714, **M. Kuznetsky Most**  
21/1 Novy Arbat, **M. Arbatskaya**

http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/

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29 Ul. Neglinnaya, 625-2596, 200-6836

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A Moscow classic serving upmarket Russian cuisine in a lavish, 19th century setting. Bustling, ground-floor dining hall and a more sophisticated (and pricier) experience upstairs. Reservation essential.

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5 Teatralnaya Plushchad, 698-5609

**M. Teatralnaya**

### NA MELNITSE

Homemade cuisine – kvas, mors, vodka, pickles. Russian style with plenty of wood. The food is far from cheap, but the portions are enormous: it's like being fed by an overzealous babushka.

7 Tverskoi Bulvar, 290-3737

**M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya**  
24 Sadovo-Spasskaya Ulitsa, 625-8890, 625-8753

**M. Krasniye Vorota**  
www.namelnitse.ru

### OBLMOV

Authentic Russian cuisine in a restored 19th century mansion.

5 Monetchikovskiy Pereulok, 953-6828

**M. Dobryninskaya**

### TSDL

The Central House of Writers' opulent Russian-French restaurant is located in the building with the same name. A memorable, top-notch meal in luxurious surroundings.

50 Povarskaya Ul, 290-1589

**M. Barrikadnaya**

### YOLKI-PALKI

A Russian chain that serves a great selection of typical Russian specialties at modest prices. Many locations.

23 Bolshaya Dmitrovka, 200-0965

**M. Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya**  
http://eng.novikovgroup.ru/restaurants/

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### FILIMONOVA & YANKEL

You will find an outlet near many of the Goodman steak houses. Very fresh fish and a straightforward menu. Several locations.

23 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 223-0707

**M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya**  
www.fishhouse.ru

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La Maree is Moscow's number one seafood restaurant, built by Tunisian Mehdi Douss, owner of Moscow's leading fresh seafood importer.

28/2 Ulitsa Petrovka, 694-0930

www.la-maree.ru

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### EL GAUCHO

True Argentine menu. THE place for charcoal-grilled meats and fish.

4 Ul. Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya, 699-7974

**M. Mayakovskaya**

6/13 Ul. Zatspeysky Val, 953-2876

**M. Paveletskaya**

3 Bolshoi Kozlovsky Pereulok, 623-1098

**M. Krasniye Vorota**

www.elgaucho.ru

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Ulitsa Petrovka 11/20, 937-1024

**M. Kuznetsky Most**

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**M. Universitet**

www.torrogrii.ru

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3 Pushechnaya Ulitsa, 624-5633

**M. Kuznetsky Most**

www.karma-bar.ru

### NIGHT FLIGHT

If you don't know about Night Flight – ask somebody. Open 18:00-05:00

17 Tverskaya Ulitsa, 629-4165

**M. Tverskaya**

www.nightflight.ru

### PYATNICA BAR

This is a nice city café with delicious and pretty cheap foods. They serve Indian, Thai, Japanese, Italian and Russian dishes here so it's good for having lunch on working days. On Friday night it turns into crazy bar with vibrant, relaxed atmosphere and large selection of cocktails and other drinks.

Pyantitskaya, 3/4, build 1. 953-69-32.

www.pyatnica-bar.ru

### PAPA'S

Master night spot host Doug Steele is back, at Papa's tucked in the basement below Johnny the Fat Boy Pizzeria, Papa features live music and lots of sweaty young bodies.

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**NOTE:** For restaurants with multiple locations the most popular location is given – see the website for others. All phone numbers have city code 495 unless otherwise indicated. Reservations suggested for most restaurants.



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# Dare to ask Dare



Photo by Maria Savelieva

Ex-pats and Russians alike ask celebrity columnist Deidre Dare questions about life in Moscow.

## Dear Deidre:

*I am a Kiwi boy who has been expatriated from New Zealand for about 15 years now in various places, lastly here in Moscow. My job is now forcing me to go back home, and I'm scared to death of repatriating: New Zealand seems so dull to me now. I'll die there. Do you have any words of encouragement for me?*

## Dear Dragooned:

No.

I believe that there are two major problems for long-term ex-pats who return home (both of which I've experienced when I spend any great amount of time back in the States).

The first is that, suddenly, you're nothing special. You're no longer an interesting foreigner, just another local. This alone can freak you out and drive you to search the Help Wanted ads in Afghanistan (I speak from experience, of course).

The second is that, for the most part, the other locals are boring. They get up in the morning, go to work, come home, make dinner and watch television. Day after day after day. They live what my friend Joe calls a "Groundhog Day" existence. Something we ex-pats have avoided like the plague.

A little anecdote might make this point clearer for you:

I was once in bed with an Australian in Sydney and I was explaining what a grand adventure living in Oz was for me. He laughed and said, "What are you talking about? You're living in the suburbs."

"No," I said to him. "You're living in the suburbs. I'm living abroad!"

See what I mean?

The only thing I can offer you is the following link. Though you probably don't realise it quite yet, you're going to be jonesing for this information pretty soon.

[www.alljobsinafghanistan.com/](http://www.alljobsinafghanistan.com/)

See you in Kabul,

xxoo DD

## Dear Deidre:

*How is your court case going against that law firm here in Moscow? Weren't you recently in London about it?*

## Dear Attuned:

Frankly, after that recent week at the Employment Tribunal in London, I'm not so sure anymore that litigation is the best way to actually get at the truth.

I think we should seriously consider going back to torture.

Xxoo DD

## Dear Deidre:

*Why are the Russians so glum and surly? Is it the weather that does it to them?*

## Dear Mistuned:

I recently had a revelation about how we view other cultures when we're on the outside, looking in.

I was on a dolphin sight-seeing cruise in Florida over Christmas and every time the dolphins jumped and played in our boat's wake, we all hung over the side and screamed in ecstatic delight.

I realised that dolphins must think human beings are the happiest species on Earth because they only ever see us laughing and cheering.

Dumb dolphins, no?

xxooDD

## Dear Deidre:

*I feel really lonely here and can't think of anything good about living in Moscow. What in God's name do you like about living here?*

## Dear Marooned:

That I can smoke wherever and whenever I please.

Buy yourself a pack of Marlboros and head to Vogue. You'll see what I mean.

Xxoo DD

## Dear Delicious Deidre:

*Can you kindly help me please? I am a Brit with a problem. For months now, I've been trying to persuade my Russian girlfriend Natasha to shave her privates. She shaves her shapely long legs and armpits, but refuses to "prune the bush." "Too cold," she says. So being a good sport, I shaved mine. But she STILL won't budge! What can I do to persuade her of the sensual benefits of shaven heavens? P.S. Do you shave "down there"?*

## Dear Pruned:

Natasha must be the only Russian gal who doesn't have a full Brazilian. At least from what I can tell from my experiences at Gentlemen's Clubs and in the locker room at World Class Fitness.

If it's that important to you, I suggest you just get another Russian girlfriend. That should be easy enough, but if you want, I can ask around at my gym for you.

Xxoo DD

P.S. Only on Valentine's Day.

## Dear Deidre:

*I've recently gained a lot of weight and often think about suicide. What do you think will help me?*

## Dear Ballooned:

I can assure you that no matter how often you think about suicide, I think about it much more frequently.

Killing oneself has always been, in my opinion, a valid life-style choice for those who find their situations intolerable.

However, there is something that always stops me dead in my tracks (no pun intended) whenever I have a knife to my wrist.

I once heard about a woman who interviewed everyone who had survived jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge.

Every single one of these survivors said the exact same thing: that two-thirds of the way down, they figured out all the solutions to their problems, save for the problem of having just thrown themselves off a bridge.

Here's your (what I call) "two-thirds down solution":

Get a full Brazilian and hit the gym.

xxoo DD

**Do you have a question for Deidre Dare? If so, please email her at [Deidre\\_Clark@hotmail.com](mailto:Deidre_Clark@hotmail.com).**



## Puzzle page:

Compiled by Ross Hunter

### Prize Quiz! Another PASSPORT innovation

This month's picture quiz has a prize: a week's free fun on the English International School Summer Club, in July

**Part 1.** Things are looking up! The days are getting longer, the sky is brighter. The sap is rising, in the spirit, if not yet the trees. Here are a collection of the tops of famous Moscow buildings, seen from the street. Can you name them?



*One of the Seven sisters!  
But which?*



*Not quite in the middle, but  
central to Russian history*



*One of Moscow's most historic  
churches. Which?*

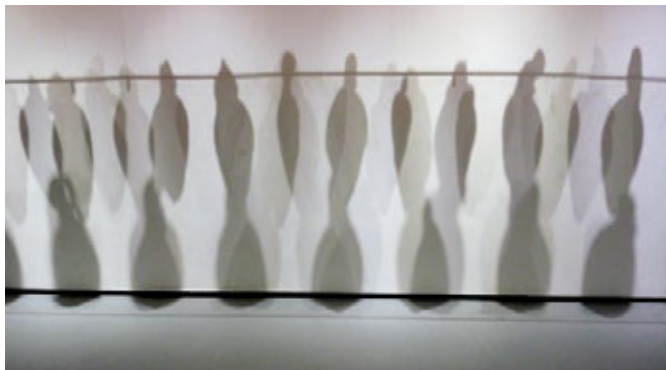
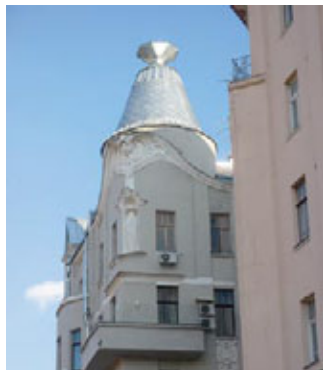


*Familiar to thousands.  
Including you?*

**Part 2.** Can you locate, name and explain these mystery photos.

One outdoor, one indoor, one old, one new.

But they are both close to each other.



**Part 3.** Tie break

What is this? How old is it?

Where can you find it?

### Good luck!

Answers to [ross\\_hunter@englishedmoscow.com](mailto:ross_hunter@englishedmoscow.com)

The sooner the better!

Answers in PASSPORT Magazine next month, and then at [www.englishedmoscow.com](http://www.englishedmoscow.com)

### Mini Sudoku

Usual rules: 1-6 in each row, column and box.

	6				4
4		5		6	
	2		6		
		3			1
	3		1		
5					6

### Answers to January puzzles

**Museums and contents:** left to right

A Gorky House – B Mayakovsky Museum – C Museum of the 20th century – D Tolstoy's House

**Insides:**

Avant Garde Star (C) – 'Sea' stairwell (A) – Tolstoy's bike (D) – travel tableau (B)

**Odd one out:**

A Kalininskaya is the Yellow line; the others are all stations

B Smolenskaya is named after a place, the others all after people

C Taganska serves three lines, all the others serve the Brown line and one more

D Of all these central stations, only Kitai Gorod sits on two lines

E All of these are at the ends of their lines, except Ryazanzy Prospekt

F The Yellow, Blue, Light Green and Purple lines are being extended, but not the Red.

**Mini Sudoku:** see [www.englishedmoscow.com](http://www.englishedmoscow.com)

# Pileloops' Festival

## Part III

Written by Natalie Kurtog,  
illustrations by Nika Harrison

### Chapter 12 A Tragedy

The boy stood in the middle of the field. He was stupefied, as if in the middle of a dream.

Pileloop flew up to him, he was happy and carefree.

"Thank goodness that everything turned out well, without any surprises," he said. Then he noticed that Peter was about to burst into tears. "Oh, did I miss something? I had to show Black Pileloop home, he lives such a long way away."

Only then did the old man look round.

"And where are the others? What exactly has happened here, Peter? You cannot cry! If you get your body wet you won't be able to fly! I know, you are upset because you had to part with Rose Pileloop?"

Peter frowned deeply and then opened his eyes. He always did that when he wanted to cry, but he needed to hold back his tears.

"He took her along with the others," he eventually blurted out.

"Who?" the old man flew closer to the boy.

"Some kind of dark cloud. I don't know who or what it was."

"So," Pileloop said, scratching his beard. "Looks bad. I'll take you home and then I'll come back and look for them."

"No no, I'm coming with you!"

"Impossible! If you don't go back by tomorrow, you'll stay a Pileloop for ever, and you will live in the attic of your grandmother's house."

"We still have time!" Peter insisted. "I lost a friend, I must save her! I am flying with you!"

"OK," the old man gave in and shook his head. "But this is going to be really dangerous; you are risking an awful lot."

Pileloop took off, the boy followed.

But then the heavens opened and rain poured down. Pileloop grabbed the boy and dragged him under an old bough of a tree, but the torrent of water was so strong that they both turned into mud. Peter had never felt so uncomfortable. He felt like a wet rag.

"The important thing is not to let hold of me, otherwise we can lose each other, and that will be really...!"

He didn't manage to finish his sentence because another surging stream surfaced and ran down the road, taking everything with it in its path. The stream of water picked up the friends and carried them a long way between the grass and bushes.

The boy felt that he couldn't control his body in the way that he was able to when he flew. He felt his strength running out of his body. He already found it difficult to keep on gripping on to his friend, who was also getting weaker. The friends held on to each other with all the strength they could muster, but the water weakened them.

"We need... find... somewhere dry... meet... field..." That was all that Peter could make out.

### Chapter 13 A Crow Flight

The boy was somehow tossed up onto the side of the stream. The water retreated and didn't seem so threatening. The ground and the sun was soaking it up.

Peter tried to pick himself up, but his body didn't listen to him and he remained stuck to the grass. It felt as though he would never be able to move again. He wanted to cry from helplessness, but





remembered that tears are harmful. And anyway, he is a man, and should be strong to find his Pink Pileloop. These thoughts gave the boy strength, and the sun helped him. He relaxed in the sun's rays and felt his strength returning.

At first he could move his arms, a few minutes later he could sit up. Then he felt his body become light and he could fly again.

Feeling the tree branches above him, Peter looked round, hoping to see Pileloop.

There was a flock of crows just above him. He moved the branches away and grabbed hold of one of their feet, hoping to maybe see where his friends were from a high vantage point. He had to use all his strength to hold onto the bird because it was flying so quickly, and the head winds were very strong.

Seeing a familiar clearing in the woods, Peter let go of the bird and flew down.

He looked round, and there was Pileloop, imitating being a crow.

"I didn't know that you fly like a crow!" Pileloop said.

"Pileloop! My dear friend! You are alive!" Peter shouted, flying over to his friend and hugging him.

"I saw how you grabbed hold of a crow and flew off. It was difficult for an old Pileloop like me to keep up with you."

"I thought you were dead".

"Didn't I tell you that we Pileloops are immortal? Wind can blow us, water can dampen us, but we always return to where we were driven away from. It's useless to fight with dust," the old man smiled cunningly.

"So Pink Pileloops can't die?"

"I wouldn't be so sure. Female Pileloops can. She's very tasty for bees, butterflies and even birds."

"So she can be eaten?" Peter was shocked.

"She can, but there's no danger of that now. Whilst I was drying out some Sand Dust told me who took away Pink Pileloop and the others."

"Who?" Peter jumped up.

"Cave Dust. Let's go, I'll fill you in on the way! They are waiting for us."

## Chapter 14

### Incarcerated by Cave Dust

The flower Pileloops, including Peter's friend were inside a tightly closed crystal sphere, inside a dark cave on a rocky ledge.

"What's he going to do with us?" Pink Pileloop asked Blue Pileloop.



"The same thing as he did with them," he answered pointing at the stalactites and stalagmites

"You can guess how Cave Dust painted the ice."

"Why did he paint the ice?" Pink Pileloop shook with fear.

She didn't manage to answer when in the darkness two glowing eyes appeared. Pink Pileloop sank back into the crystal sphere. A dark massive figure appeared behind the eyes, this was Cave Dust. He came up to the sphere and started to look closely at the flower Pileloops.

"I have already finished with the gold and silver paint," he squeaked. Now I'm going to chuck the flower dust into the water. One day scientists who discover some dust in underground lakes will think that they have made a great scientific discovery. People will come in crowds to my kingdom! I will frighten them and hear their fairy tales and legends, which they will tell their friends and tourists about me. I am so lonely, life is so boring!"

"Are you kidding, can he really be serious! NO!!" shouted Pink Pileloop.

"It's useless! He's deaf, he can't hear us," said Yellow Pileloop. "The only thing that can talk to him is an echo."

Suddenly they heard some voices:

"We are here! We will save you!"

"Peter!" The girl was overjoyed and looked up.

Cave Dust opened up the lid of the crystal sphere, thrust his hand down inside trying to grab hold of the flower dust.

"Sand Pileloops! Ahead!" shouted Pileloop.

Sand scattered onto Cave Dust's head.

"Who dares to disturb my peace?" he said indignantly, spitting out dust and wiping his eyes.

The prisoners flew out of the sphere, which had already half filled with dust.

Cave Dust lost his temper and fumed steam. The cave filled with humidity. The Pileloops, flying through the air, felt heavier and heavier and finally fell down.

A loud roar filled the cave. Peter looked round.

"The Sand Pileloops have got angry. Great!"

The old man pressed Peter closer to the wall. A real sand storm started.

Cave Dust gradually found it harder and harder to shield his head from Sand Dust. Covering his head with his hands, he retreated further and further away into the depths of the cave. But he hadn't given up! He threw a huge stone and water gushed into the cave.

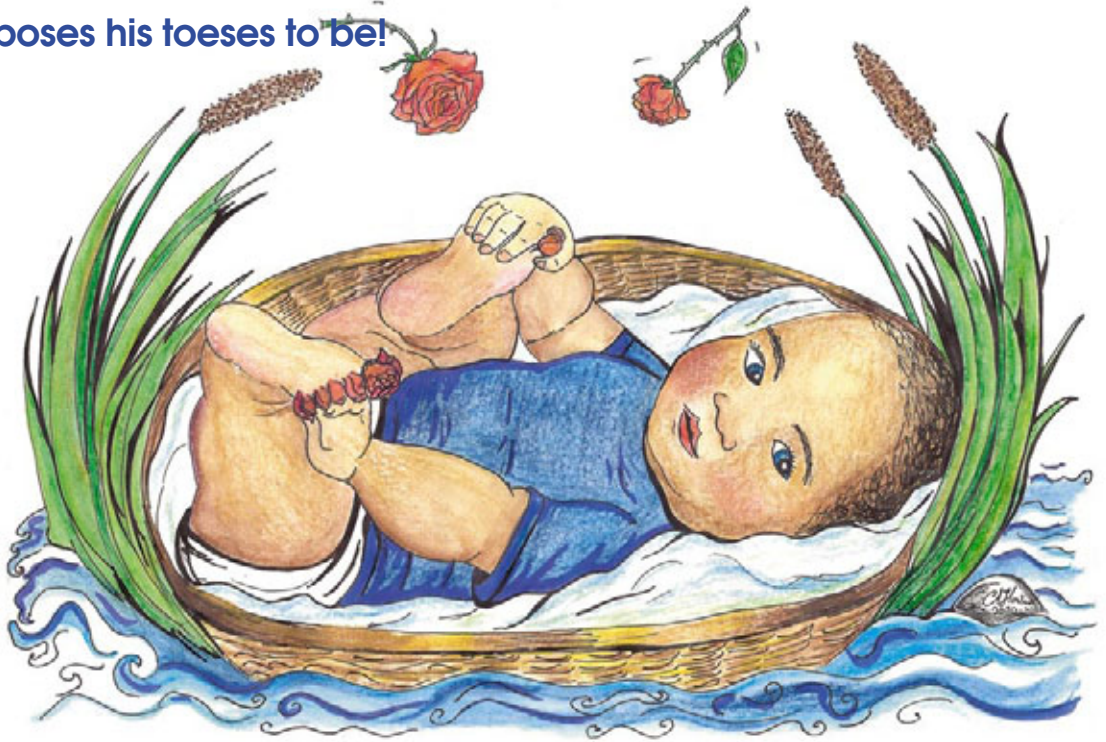
"A flood! Everybody out!" Pileloop shouted and made a bee-line for the exit.

"Pink Pileloop!" Peter shouted out, not expecting to hear a familiar voice.

"I'm here!" a voice called from the depths of the cave. **P**



Moses supposes his toeses are roses  
But Moses supposes erroneously  
For nobody's toeses are poesies of roses  
As Moses supposes his toeses to be!



*Illustrations by Catherine Hunter*



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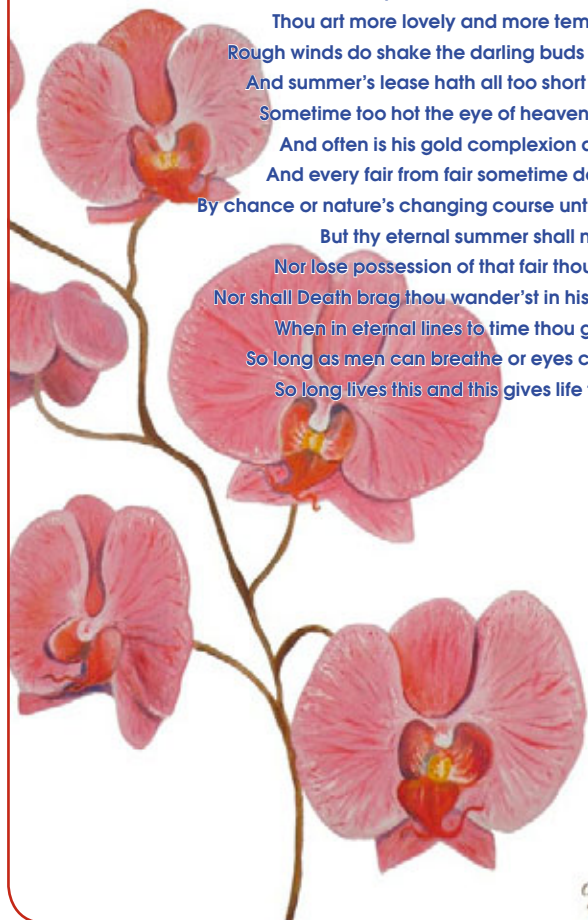
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## Sonnet 18, William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,  
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;  
And every fair from fair sometime declines,  
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;  
But thy eternal summer shall not fade  
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,  
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:  
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,  
So long lives this and this gives life to thee.



*C. Hunter  
2010*



# The Forsaken

Ian Mitchell

As the population of the United States passes 300 million due to a continual swarm of immigrants wanting to get a piece of the good-life action, and the population of Russia declines from less than half that due in part to the steady emigration of people with talent, it is worth considering a time when the situation was exactly the opposite. In the early 1930s Stalin turned the Soviet Union, which had a substantially larger population than the USA, into one of the most desirable destinations for Americans deprived of work by the Wall Street crash and the subsequent Depression to emigrate to. The book under review is the story of what happened to those who made the trip to the socialist Utopia. If you like weeping, the fate of these good-hearted idealists should be enough to keep your cheeks wet until long after lights-out.

The early 1930s was the only time in the history of the United States when the country had an excess of emigration over immigration. It was also the only period when the Soviet Union seemed like a place where leading-edge industrial action was happening. For a brief period until the Great Terror disillusioned all but the mentally tramlined unteachables, a planned economy seemed to make more sense to fair-minded observers than the wild excesses and catastrophes of capitalism. A shining new future was being built by people who, if the propaganda was to be believed, were advancing in lock-step towards a world from which the serpent greed had been banished forever.

On Christmas Eve 1934, Time Magazine ran a story about Robert Robinson, a black man who had once been a machinist in the Ford plant in Detroit, but who had just been elected to the Moscow City Soviet. Robinson had moved to Stalingrad in 1930 to work alongside three hundred other Americans in the Red October tractor factory. He had left his homeland after his wages had been halved due to the Depression. He was worried that he might be laid off completely. The Soviet

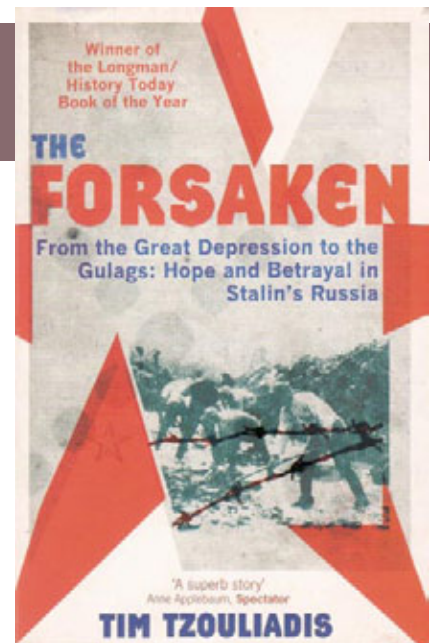
authorities offered him twice the pay that he was getting in Detroit, plus a maid, a car and month's paid leave every year. Life was rosy—at least until he was assaulted for being black.

His attackers were two of his fellow Americans, who objected having to eat their meals at the same table as a "nigger". A Russian witnessed the fight and reported it. The Stalingrad district court found Robinson's assailants guilty, but spared them ten years in Soviet jails because, in mitigation, it allowed that they had been "inoculated with racial enmity by the capitalistic system of exploitation of the lower races." Instead they were expelled from the USSR.

Robinson subsequently moved to Moscow where what Time Magazine called "Joseph Stalin's coal-black protégé" became something of a celebrity. He was given work in a ball-bearing factory and that seat on the city Soviet (along with Lenin, who had been dead for ten years, and a Communist who was incarcerated in a Nazi concentration camp at the time). Time quoted Robinson in surprisingly modern terms: "I am not interested in politics. In fact I have no idea what my duties will be as a Delegate in the Moscow Soviet."

What happened after the two Americans were sent home is also interesting. One of them, Herbert Lewis from Alabama, gave an interview to the Chicago Tribune in which he said that his fellow workers had emigrated only for the money and not out of any love for communism, and that they were being "held captive by the Reds". Unable to leave the country, they were paid miserable wages in worthless roubles, were overworked in dangerous, inefficiently-run factories, and often fell victim to serious diseases resulting from the unsanitary living conditions.

On these points at least, the nigger-hating Lewis was right. Even Robinson was not able to get out of the Soviet Union, despite desperate pleas to Paul Robeson, the Soviet-loving negro singer who was lionised in Moscow when he visited in the late 1930s. It was not until the 1970s



The Forsaken  
Tim Tzouliadis  
Abacus £10.99

that Robinson finally managed to escape. In 1988 he published a memoir in which he warned that the Soviet Union would never become a western-style democracy, and saying he thought Russians were incurable racists and chauvinists.

But Robinson was one of the lucky ones. Tzouliadis's book is full of stories of other Americans who never made it out of Russia, usually because they were sent to the Gulag where they were tortured, beaten, starved and worked to death. It is a fascinating, if deeply depressing, story. The Soviet Union was never able to acknowledge, much less appreciate and reciprocate, the help it was offered by people who genuinely wished it well. The endless nastiness, suspicion and dishonesty finally overwhelmed every one of these idealists who bravely stepped into the unknown in the early 1930s, thinking they could help make a better world. There is not a single tale of hope in this exhaustively-researched book.

Arguably the worst of it was that the American Embassy officials in Moscow, who should have known better and were themselves completely safe, refused to help. In the 1930s they said they did not believe their fellow-countrymen's stories of hardship and persecution. By the time of the Cold War, they worried that to try to help those they were told were still alive might cause diplomatic difficulties. **P**

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