

PASSPORT

MOSCOW

MAY 2011

www.passportmagazine.ru

Drama and Art Classes in Moscow

Advertising in Russia

The death of the old Russian jury

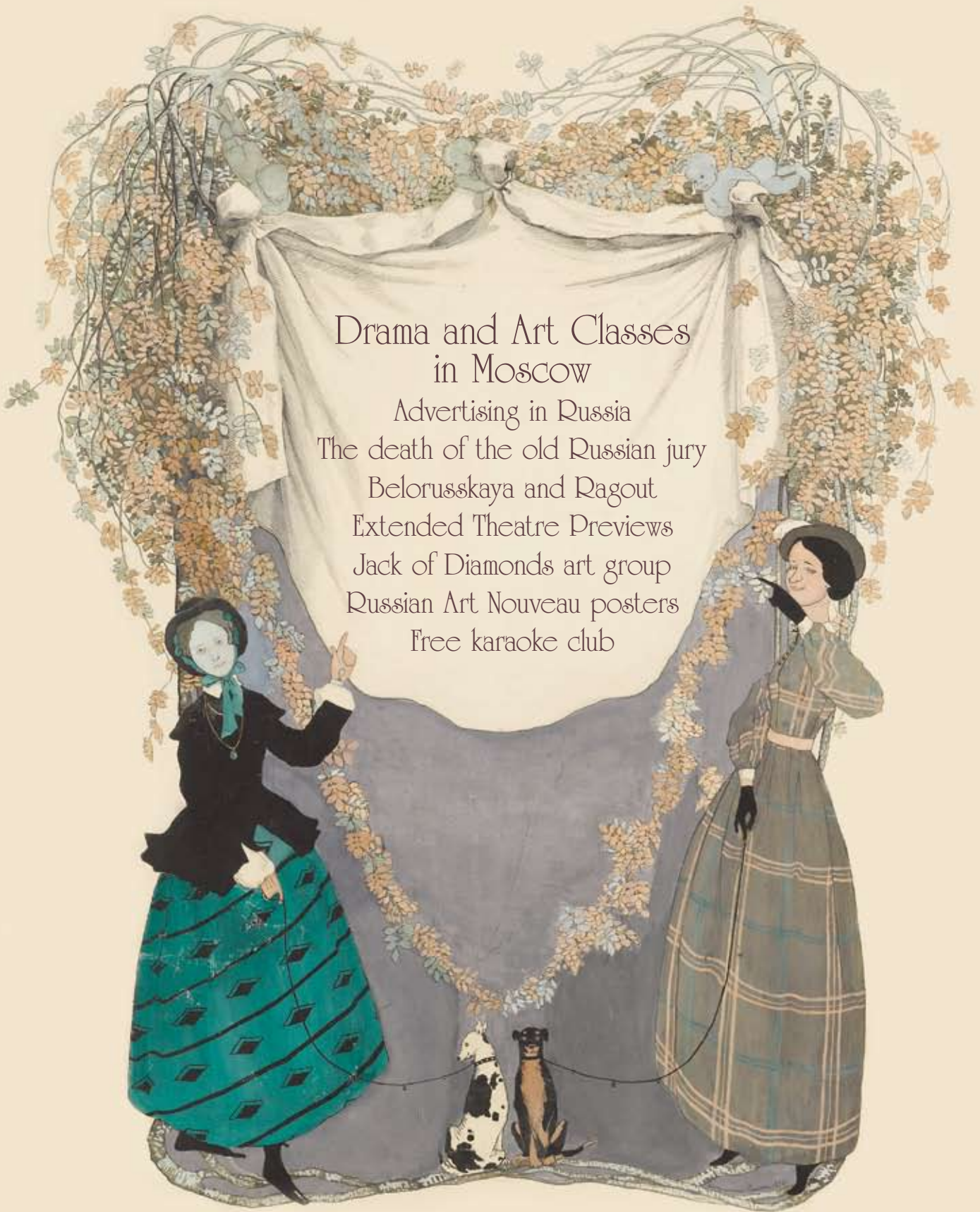
Belorusskaya and Ragout

Extended Theatre Previews

Jack of Diamonds art group

Russian Art Nouveau posters

Free karaoke club



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Pray for Japan

A special event was organised on the 27th of March, at the initiative of "Ichiban Bochi" & "Blooming Sakura" Japanese restaurant, with the help of the Embassy of Japan in Moscow, Japanese business club in Russia, and other organisations.

The event was opened by the General director of the "Blooming Sakura" restaurant, Vladimir A. Lyubomudrov, a former staff member of the United Nations for many years. He called on attendees to pay homage to the memory of numerous victims of the Japanese tragedy by a minute of silence, and then asked Julia Ponomareva, the host of national television channel "Russia 24" to take the floor. John Ortega, the publisher of PASSPORT magazine and others made speeches. \$5000 was raised, a drop in the ocean as this may be in comparison to what is needed, nevertheless the spirit of the ex-pat community in Moscow; a spirit of benevolence by those of us who support the Japanese in this, their hour of great tragedy, was shown.

The attention of the attendees was drawn by the statement of Archimandrite Father Zacchaeus, Representative of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in Russia who informed that the Primate and the Sacred Synod of the Orthodox Church in America had given instructions to all parishes to offer special prayers after divine services for people suffering in Japan and for fundraising for the victims.

The Embassy of Japan in Russia has opened an account for transfer of donations in favour of those who have suffered and are suffering from the effects of the earthquake and the tsunami. Money collected is being transferred to victims through the Japanese Red Cross.

Moscow International Choir

The Moscow International Choir is pleased to announce two concerts in celebration of its ten-year jubilee! The first will be on May 17, 2011, at St. Andrew's Anglican Church (8, Voznesensky Per.) at 7:30 pm. The second will be on May 24, 2011, at the Palace on The Yauza Theatre (1, Ploshad Zhuravlyova) at 8pm. Both concerts will include music by Mozart, Brahms, Faure, and Borodin. For more information and to reserve tickets please write to Moscow.international.choir@gmail.com or phone (985)9245581

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bmi unveils new look cabin

Leading airline, British Midland International (bmi), unveils a new Business Class and Economy cabin for its mid-haul routes. The major refurbishment of the A321 and A320 aircraft includes new leather interiors, new comfortable cushions, as well as a dynamic new lighting system.

Customers travelling to mid-haul destinations such as Addis Ababa, Amman, Beirut, Damascus, Cairo, Freetown, Khartoum, Moscow, Tbilisi, Tehran and Yerevan will see an ongoing refurbishment programme for the British airline set to be completed in May 2011.

Brown leather covers with black stitching have been fitted to all seats complementing the recently introduced new carpet and headrest covers. In addition, new multi density foam cushions will be onboard all of these aircraft providing increased customer comfort in both cabins. New lighting, bulkheads and curtains add to the spacious new look and feel to the cabin.

Wolfgang Prock-Schauer, chief executive officer, bmi, commented: "We are committed to offering the best service at the best price for our customers and look forward to welcoming them on board our newly refurbished aircraft."



7 KRASOK News

7 KRASOK has issued a new gift card: "7 KRASOK-MILLION" with a face value of one million roubles. To become the owner of such a card you pay 707,000 roubles, and 7 KRASOK will give you a bonus of 293,000 roubles. Period of validity is 2 years from the date of activation. The 7 KRASOK-MILLION card is accepted for payment in all THAI-SPA 7 KRASOK salons, for any SPA services chosen, all of which are performed by certified grand masters. Give your life a boost with a 7 KRASOK-MILLION card.



Asparagus season at the Hotel Baltschug Kempinski Moscow

In April and May all guests of the Baltschug can taste a seasonal asparagus menu. The traditional spring special offer includes dishes with white asparagus accompanied by various delicious garnishes.

Its most famous connoisseurs include Julius Caesar, Louis XIV and Thomas Jefferson, Eduard Manet who painted his famous Bunch of Asparagus, and of course Elmar Basziszta, Executive Chef of the Hotel Baltschug Kempinski Moscow, indulging his guests with a collection of asparagus masterpieces at the Restaurant Baltschug!



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Medici Treasures



Alevtina Kalinina

The Medici were a family of Florentine bankers who rose to power in the 14th and 15th centuries. They produced politicians, popes, princes in Italy, and Queens of France. The Medici were well-known patrons of the Arts, sometimes using them as a tool of diplomacy or power. The name of Medici is closely related to the development of the Renaissance in Italy: Fra Angelico, Botticelli and Raphael, Michelangelo, Benvenuto Cellini were all their protégés. "Medici Treasures" is an unprecedented exhibition organized by Italian and Russian curators in the Moscow Kremlin. It comprises masterpieces that were part of the famous Florentine dynasty's collection that was dispersed over time to several museums in Florence. The largest part now belongs to the Palazzo Pitti, also to the National Museum of Bargello, the Palatine Gallery, and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, and others.

The present exhibition, organized as part of the Italian Culture in Russia programme, has united the efforts of these museums and tries to give an idea of the full scope of the glamour of the Medici line. Their rise to political power started with Cosimo de Medici, or Cosimo the Elder, who was born in 1389. Cosimo had the best education available in 14th century Florence. His reign and that of his grandson Lorenzo are considered to be a golden century for Florence, one of the centres of the Renaissance. The art collection was started by Giovanni di Bicci, Cosimo the elder's father. All future generations inherited a passion for collecting. The Medicis realized that possessing refined and precious things strengthened their status and power. For several centuries, generation after generation of Medicis added to a multi-faceted collection comprising crystal cups, antique vessels and cameos, coins, medals, precious vases, bronze, various jewels and other items. This world famous collection was an example for those who would collect art systematically and actually was a kind of prototype for future arts museums.

The exhibition in the Kremlin is set up chronologically, it traces the evolution of the Medicis from earliest times and includes acquisitions by Lorenzo the Magnificent to Anna Maria Louise, who gave the family collection to the city of Florence as a gift, with the condition that it would never leave the city.

The first generation of Medici, for example, demonstrated special passion for antiquity which was in line with the Renaissance in general. Italian dynasties liked to see themselves as the successors to the Roman Republic, and the Medicis were no exception. Gems and intaglios are a special part of the exhibition, presenting the best examples of glyptics—the art of engraving or carving on precious stones, manufactured dur-



ing ancient times and also cameos carved during the Renaissance, depicting the Florentine nobility or numerous mythological intaglios. Under Cosimo's sons Francesco and Ferdinando, the collection was enriched with beautiful "pietre dure"—fine mosaics from precious and semiprecious stones. Francesco Medici started manufacturing precious items from crystal to even porcelain. Under Ferdinando I, the technique of mosaics would reach its climax and would be internationally attributed to as Florentine mosaics. Jewels related to the last Medici—Anna Maria Louise are of equal interest, too. Pendants, jewellery made from pearls and gold with enamel, are genuine sculptures in miniatures, depicting del' arte scenes, antique mythology, figurines of birds and animals. One of these sculptures—a present to Anna Maria from her husband is a tiny golden cradle with a pearl for a blanket and a tiny child beneath it. The child represented the dream of a successor; one which never came true. In 1743 the Grand Ducal line died with Anna Maria Louisa de Medici. **P**

May 20-August 1

Moscow Kremlin

Ivan the Great Bell-tower complex
Open: 10.00-17.00, except Thursday

Varvara Bubnova,

Russian artist with a Japanese soul, at the Tretyakov

by Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen

The Tretyakov Gallery opens a display of art works by Varvara Bubnova (1886-1983), a well-known Russian artist. She was born in St. Petersburg, into the noble family of Wolf, who were friends of the poet Alexander Pushkin. After graduating from the Emperor's Academy of Arts, Bubnova started her creative career in the circle of avant garde artists in St. Petersburg. In 1913 she became a member of "The Union of the Youth" art group and participated in exhibitions together with such famous artists as Vladimir Mayakovsky, David Burlyuk, Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova and Kazimir Malевич. She translated from French the "Manifesto of the Futurists." From 1919-1922 Bubnova lived in Moscow and worked for the Institute of Art Culture together with Vasily Kandinsky, Robert Falk, Lubov Popova, Varvara Stepanova and Alexander Rodchenko. In 1922 she went to Japan where she lived for 36 years. During that period she created mainly still-lives and lithographs, actively participating in the artistic and cultural life there. She is still considered one of the best lithographers of that country.

"It's hard to understand the arts of other countries. They are like foreign languages. One has to learn them to the same degree when one can understand foreign speech. The understanding of a foreign art is probably easier than learning a language, but then the learner should have a big heart and trust in the creative forces of another nation." These words belong to Varvara Bubnova and she was able to implement this philosophy in her life. Living in Japan, Bubnova taught Russian at universities and brought up quite a number of Russian language specialists whom she also taught to understand the spirit of the Russian culture. The most well-known contemporary professors of Russian and translators into Russian are among her students. In Japan, Bubnova was a real envoy of Russian culture. She wrote stories about Russian art for Japanese encyclopedias. From 1959-1979, Bubnova lived and worked in the town of Sukhumi and at the age of 72 moved back to Leningrad where she died at the age of almost 97. The artist lived a long and interesting life leaving a lot of pupils both in Russia and Japan. In 1982 the Japanese government awarded Bubnova with the order of the Precious Crown of the 4th degree for the development of the cultural ties between Japan and the USSR.

The current display is of the artist's black and white and colour lithographs, watercolors and paintings—all in all about



70 works—from the collection of the Tretyakov Gallery and the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. **P**

May 11-July 3.

Krymsky Val 10, exhibition rooms 21-22

Russian Posters of the 20th century



Alevtina Kalinina

The beginning of the 20th century in Russia, as in the rest of Europe in terms of art and design, can be called the era of Art Nouveau. The visual arts, applied arts, furniture, theatre scenery and clothes all came under the influence of Art Nouveau designers and artists. Advertising posters were no exception.

According to Nina Baburina, a historian of graphic art, the development of posters into a separate art form took place in Russia simultaneously with Western Europe—during the last decades of the 19th century. Thus, the first international exhibition of “artistic posters” took place in St. Petersburg in 1897 and presented works of foreign and Russian designers such as M. Vrubel, E. Lanceret (World of Art group), L. Bakst and others. Designers’ creations were divided into the following categories: industrial, socio-political and entertainment posters. Each class had its own visual vocabulary. Under the section of entertainment posters, for example, artists often used themes from antiquity, allegorical stylizations as in K. Somov’s billboards for the exhibitions of Russian and Finnish painters (1898).

The current exhibition at the Tretyakov Gallery presents graphics works from Fedor Fedorov’s collection that



form the basis of the museum’s collection, as well as unique billboards of theatrical and exhibition projects, which were donated to the Tretyakov Gallery as a part of the heritage of the outstanding Russian artist of Mikhail Larionov in 1989. “Subscribe to ‘Niva’ magazine and get a discount on a poetry collection.” “Don’t holiday in Nice—Russia has its own Côte d’Azur: Gagra.” These were the advertising realities of early 20th century Russia. Ad-

vertising, publishing materials and posters in particular reflect the tastes of the audiences and their preferences. And here we can see what was in fashion in pre-revolutionary Russia. **P**

April 29-September 11
State Tretyakov Gallery
10, Lavrushinsky lane
10.00-19.00, except Monday

Inspiration Dior

Alevtina Kalina

Inspiration Dior is an exhibition held at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts that is promising to become one of the most spectacular attractions of this season. The whole Dior universe—perfumes, leather goods, fine jewellery, watches, couture dresses—will be presented against a background of about one hundred works of visual art by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Gustav Klimt, Vincent van Gogh, Edouard Manet, Maurizio Cattelan and Vanessa Beecroft.

The world of Dior provides the opportunity to view René Gruau's strikingly modern illustrations and allows the Russian plastic artist, Olga Kisseleva to create an installation exploring the sensual and sensory universe of Dior perfumes. A mirror effect of deliberate similarities lays down the framework of this exceptional exhibition, in which the quest for ideal beauty creates the link between Christian Dior, genius couturier, and the impressive and unexpected gallery of great masters. Among the fashion highlights, there will be several recent acquisitions, among which there is Richard Avedon's photograph of "Dovima with elephants" which is considered to be one of the most recognisable fashion images of all times.

Christian Dior presented his first collection at Avenue Montaigne in February 1947. Unknown until that moment, the designer who revered the French way of life entered upon one triumphant decade after another, providing women with regal clothes and a sublime look. Skirts were longer, shoulder lines were softened and waists were pinched. Dior "flower-women" blossomed in the post-war era and soon conquered the world with their infinite grace.

New and highly innovative, the exhibition demonstrates how inspiration has nourished the heart of Dior for decades. This amazing journey guides the visitor

through Dior's creative sources of fashion and its links to history, nature, painting, sculpture, drawing, photography and film. It reveals how an idea, a feeling, an era, a garden, a perception or even a smell can instill an idea in the heart and mind, giving rise to a unique creation.

In this major exhibition, the Pushkin Museum showcases Dior magic and luxury while emphasizing the house's links with art. The key themes of the Dior legend, past and present on a grand scale in original fashion, are set against unique works of art. It is a journey of corresponding elements and magical synergies, where the New Look is echoed in works by Picasso, Modigliani, Renoir, Cezanne or even Gauguin. Nudes by Vanessa Beecroft, Maurizio Cattelan and Orlan emphasise the gloriously modern lines of the female body, accentuated by Christian Dior.

This waltz through time enchants the visitor with lush gardens and recollections of the 18th century and the *Belle Époque*. Marie-Antoinette meets Jeff Koons; Bonnard's landscapes celebrate Dior's "flower-women". The Dior grand balls are also celebrated in all their glory in an enchanted setting where Ingres' aristocrats admire breath-taking crinolines and haute couture gowns. The visitor is then transported around the world with Dior via Goya's Spain, Matisse's heady orient and, of course, Russia and Asia. Russia figures in the mix, from graphic, geometric dresses juxtaposed with paintings by Kazimir Malevich to black-and-white fashion photos of Dior models frolicking in Red Square. A 320-page catalogue is to be published, available in French, English and Russian. **P**

*Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
12, Volkhonka Street*

April 28 – July 24 Open: 10:00 – 19:00

Except Monday



Madeleine Dress - Fall Winter 2005-2006



Miss Dior Dress Spring Summer 1949



Malevich - Woman with a Rake

Alexander Labas

Alexander Labas (1900 - 1983) is often called the most romantic painter of Soviet times. Last year his 110th anniversary was celebrated, and the State Tretyakov Gallery has opened a retrospective exhibition dedicated to this talented master. His tutors were Ilya Mashkov, Peter Konchalovsky and David Shterenberg, and through these different schools Labas became a master of lyrical abstraction. He eventually developed his unique blurred style of drawing which is clearly demonstrated in his fantastic pictures of trains, airplanes and dirigibles, his so-called "cosmic fantasies". The 1920s and the 1930s were still full of joyful anticipation for Alexander Labas and that is clearly seen in his works, full of light and euphoria. The planes are silvery, the Metro is so multi-coloured, the people are all so fashionable and happy. The works for the current exhibition have been provided by the State Tretyakov gallery, the State Russian museum, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and from the collection of Olga Beskina-Labas. **P**



Till May 18

State Tretyakov Gallery

10, Krymsky Val

Open: 10.00 - 19.00

Except Monday

Arte Povera

Arte Povera is an important landmark for European contemporary art and is one of the best-known 20th century Italian art movements. The term itself appeared through the book *Arte Povera*, written by the art critic Germano Cel-

ant (1968). The group was made up of young, talented art students in Turin, as well as young artists from other Italian cities in the early 1960s who, to a certain extent, followed traditional techniques. But the late 1960s not being a quiet pe-

riod socially, the artists preferred a revolutionary path, questioning the values of the established institutions.

Nowadays, ironically, many of the initiators of this "revolutionary art", among whom are Giovanni Anselmo, Alighiero Boetti, Pier-Paolo Calzolari, Jannis Kounellis or Mario Merz are considered established artists, and their works are presented for retrospectives in European museums of modern art or in America. The Castle of Rivoli (former Residence of the Royal House of Savoy in Rivoli) housed the museum of contemporary art of Turin and nowadays, it is the biggest collection of Arte Povera. 2011 is the year of the cultural interchange between Russia and Italy. Multimedia Art Museum is the youngest institution for modern art in Russia and presents this exhibition to a Moscow audience. **P**



May 16-July 17

Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow

10.00-20.00, except Monday

American Jazz Jamboree

The concert by the Smithsonian Jazz Masterwork Orchestra and King's Singers coming up in May is an unprecedented event in Moscow. This is the first time that American jazz musicians have come to Russia thanks to US government support, proving that jazz is still one of the most important American cultural symbols. The orchestra's repertoire includes both classics and modern compositions. Critics have written that when the orchestra performs Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Dizzy Gillespie, Quincy Jones, it is not so difficult to close your eyes and remember the old masters themselves. For the 20 years of the band's existence, they have toured many American states, visited European countries, and participated in many festivals. David Baker, its artistic director is a well-known composer and conductor, has worked with many jazz stars from 1975, and recorded more than 60 albums.

The King's Singers is a celebrated vocal band. Their motto is "to sing everything that is possible and impossible to sing". The band started 40 years ago. Perfect intonation and ensemble of voices has gained them an international reputation.



Their repertoire is enormous: from Renaissance madrigals to Rossini's overtures; from early religious music to Beatles' songs. Almost every year the band records a disc. The latest has won a Grammy award. **P**

25th May
*Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra
 and the King's Singers*
*International House of Music,
 Svetlanovsky Hall*
19.00

Classical Music Extravaganza for Russia Day

The Moscow music season traditionally closes with the Symphony Orchestras Festival. For six years, June 12th (Russia Day) has been celebrated in Moscow to

the sounds of classical music. Valery Gerгиеv, Myung-Wun Chung, Riccardo Muti, Vladimir Spivakov have all conducted during these festivals over the years.



Famous symphony orchestras are invited to participate in the Festival; traditionally held in the Hall of Columns of the House of Unions on Bolshaya Dmistrovka street.

The festival has particular themes every year, but on the whole the concept is simple: the best orchestras, conductors and music fill the white marble hall at the beginning of summer.

This year's programme, for example, is related to Eastern Europe. The George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra (Romania), Czech Philharmonic Orchestra (Prague), Sinfonia Varsovia (Warsaw) will perform compositions by Dvořák, Beethoven, Rimsky-Korsakov and Rachmaninov. **P**

June 1-12
Column Hall of the House of Union
For schedule see
www.passportmagazine.ru

World Folk Dance Traditions



Charles Borden

The Kudrinka dance ensemble has carried on world folk dance traditions in Russia for almost forty years. These talented young dancers regularly perform exciting concerts in their bright costumes at city events: on Red Square on New Year's Eve, in Victory Park on

Victory Day, and in front of the Mayor's office on Tverskaya on May Day. In 2007 and 2008 they won top awards at national dance competitions in the United States. Kudrinka's dances draw upon folk traditions of Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and Spain, as well as tap, jazz and modern dance.

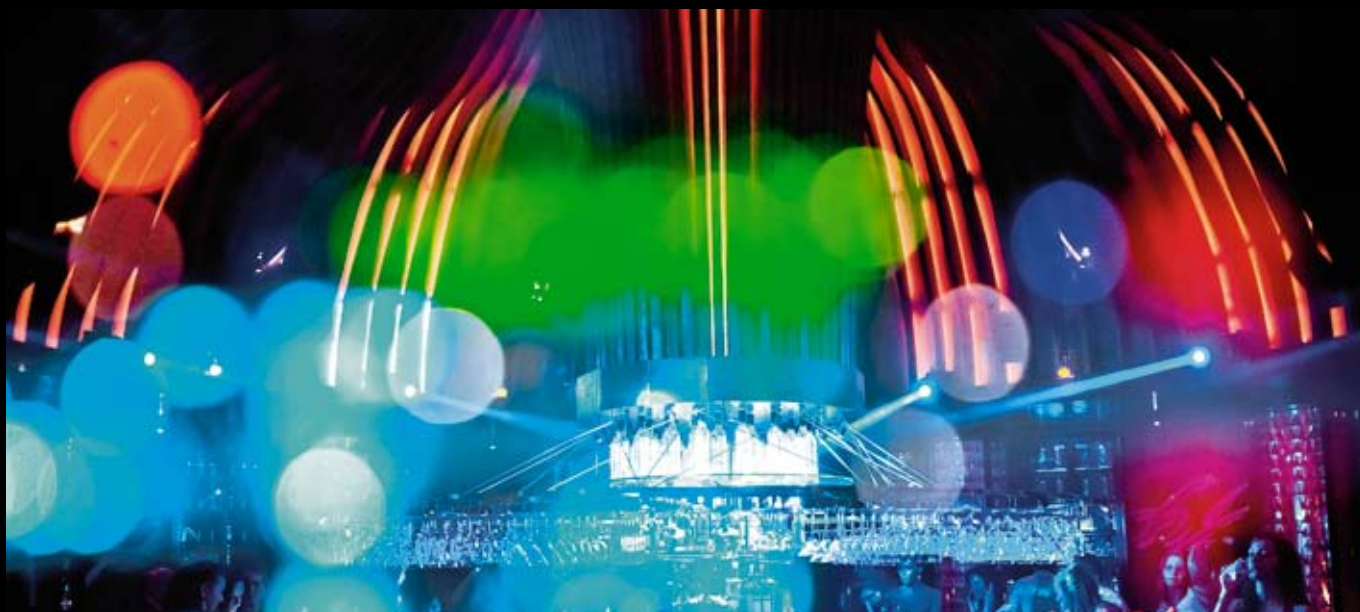
Kudrinka is a dedicated group of more than fifty ranging in age from seven to fifty that rehearse and perform solely for the love of dance. Although officially amateur, their performances are of professional standard, and they were recently awarded the title National Folk Ensemble of Russia.

Kudrinka's home base is a concert hall in the Dvoretz Kultura Mosmetrostoi not far from Kurskaya Metro station. The Dvoretz Kultura or Palace of Culture was founded for the workers that constructed Moscow's Metro stations. A visit to DK Mosmetrostoi is like a step back in time. Inside, little has changed in the past 40 years. The grand concert hall, though worse for the wear, still bears a large, colorful Soviet era ceiling mural.

The large marble entry displays plaques dedicated to the opening of each of Moscow's Metro stations.

Kudrinka has been invited back to the United States for a series of concerts this summer. They are now seeking sponsors that will help them carry world folk dance traditions to new frontiers. **P**





It's Spring Time in Moscow

Miguel Francis

We continue the update on Moscow's nightlife. It's springtime. Time to revive and rejuvenate yourself in order to rejoice with an icy glass of Chivas and apple juice. This time of year is always fun in Moscow. The nightlife picks up when the weather warms up and everyone crawls out of their wintery busy or sleepy state and flashes their face in the glamorous surroundings of Moscow's nightclubs.

Two boys from Moscow's ever-evolving nightlife scene, Sinisha Lazarevich and Misha Kozlov, did it again. Just after coming back to the scene helping out Ginza Project with one of their new restaurants called the RITZ Carlson, the two event-producers/party gurus have revived the infamous "We Are Family" nightclub in the heart of Moscow at Lubyansky Proezd 15/2 Metro Kitai Gorod. The logo stayed the same but the name has changed to "Home Sweet Home". The grand opening was in April and it wasn't too bad, the ex-pats were there, provided by Chiara Pascarella and generally everyone made a stop at the grand opening. Only one minus: it took us about 20 minutes to get our coats checked and about 10 to get them back, but I am sure the boys will sort that one out pretty soon.

What else is new? Well, the Boudoir Bar is alive and kicking, a new place which looks like it belongs as a part of Soho Rooms, located at Bolshaya Dmitrovka 32, makes for a great pre-party place. The crowd is definitely lavish and mature, so if you like that then this one is for you. For a more easy-going pre-party place filled with young and hip crowd there is another new spot called Bar Nebar, located on 2nd Tverskaya Yamskaya 6/7, reminiscent of the Garage Club. This place is definitely worth checking out.

A quick update on the Karaoke situation. Up until recently my best suggestion and personal favorite was Isterika Karaoke located on top of Evropeisky Mall next to La Terrasse. The songs were free, the menu was great, the atmosphere is still great, and the place itself provides you with a full on stage and a very "concert-hall-like" design. Even though the place is part of the same group that owns the infamous Prado Café & Karaoke, where they charge a whopping 300 roubles per song, Isterika was the group's marketing move which provided you with free songs. Whatever the reason was, Isterika now charges you for the songs, with was an unusual new introduction to the menu.

Not to worry, I present you with a new personal favorite of mine Nooning. A three story restaurant-bar-karaoke complex located on Savinskaya Naberzhanaya right next to Soho Rooms. This place is a wonderful night-out starter, the beige interior soothes the mind and soul after a long working week, the third-floor seating makes you feel like you're in an opera house and the basement-floor Karaoke is still designed grandly enough to make you want to sing your soul out. Here they don't charge you for the songs!

Coming up next month, an interview with Giorgio Paolucci and Chiara Pascarella, the secrets of event producing in Moscow nightlife! **P**



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Ross Hunter, MA (Cantab), Headmaster,
The English International School

After a short look at the UK in April, this month we look at the USA. Also, opportunities with the University of Hertfordshire, to do Art and Design here in Moscow. In July and the months to follow, we will print more detail on UK universities and the UCAS application procedure.

Some key elements are common throughout: you have far more choices than you realise; don't think only of school subjects; some courses are vocational (lead directly to particular job sectors), most are not, and teach wider, transferable skills. Above all: it is a long process, so start early; and you need good, expert advice at every stage.

Please get in touch. We welcome feedback and especially articles by specialists! ross_hunter@englishedmoscow.com, j.harrison@passportmagazine.ru

University in the USA

by Nancy Maxwell, M.Sc., LPC College Counselor

Students and families who are considering an American university education versus a British or European one should be aware of a few key differences. In general, American universities tend to be larger than American colleges, may in fact be comprised of several colleges devoted to different areas of study, and offer more graduate degrees. American colleges tend to be smaller with greater focus on undergraduate degrees. There are over two thousand

four-year institutions in the United States, and the majority of them offer a liberal arts education. Students do not matriculate (start at university) with a declared course of study, but instead take a number of courses distributed over various disciplines before declaring a major and fulfilling the requirements of that concentration. For students who are undecided about their interests and careers, the liberal arts system provides an opportunity to explore different fields, while gaining a broad education, before settling on one program completing their degree in four years.

American colleges evaluate international applicants based on their performance in secondary school, their final results on national tests such as the IBs or A-levels, and their scores on standardized tests such as the SAT or ACT. In addition evidence of English proficiency through TOEFL may be required. The admissions committees tend to look at applicants holistically; that is, they want to see the student in the context of his/her school environment, and to consider the candidates from an academic, extra-curricular, and social perspective. Admission to the most selective American colleges has become increasingly competitive over the last few years, with some accepting as little as eight per cent. On the other hand, because there are so many colleges, students who begin their college planning by casting a broad net and fully researching options can find excellent opportunities for higher education.

College costs vary according to the type of institution. The average cost of a year's tuition and fees at a state university is \$12,000; at a private college the average annual cost is \$27,000. There are additional charges, around \$7,000, for room, board, and books. Financial aid, based on assessed need, is sometimes available for international students, and varies from college to college. **P**

Contact: Nancy Maxwell at raypsychser@aol.com

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- 12 May** Teaching English to adult learners – at BC Moscow
- 19** **London Metropolitan University** (pre-departure briefing) at BC
- 19** Mistakes and correction – a seminar on improving English skills at BC
- 27-28** European Education Fair in Rostov-on-Don
- 9 June** **University of Westminster:** Media Management lecture – at BC

The Other Option

John Harrison

Studying for a degree in Britain is getting rather expensive. Fees for overseas students at the moment are hovering around the £11,500 mark, and then there is the cost of accommodation, living and transport, not to mention books and materials. None of these are cheap in the UK, so the final bill will not leave much change from £20,000 a year. This of course is no problem for those with very good jobs, and many have saved for many long years especially for this occasion. But not everybody is in such a fortunate position. Having a British passport as such does not necessarily mean you qualify as a home student as far as studying in a university goes; not that there is now such a disparity between fees levied from home students and those from international students. To qualify, parents need to have been a British taxpayer for at least three years, and prove that a major part of their assets are in the UK. The majority of ex-pats working here full-time do not qualify. There is some hope that tuition in Scotland will remain free, or low, but that loophole will no doubt be filled in one way or the other over the next few years.

There is an alternative, and one that may prove to be surprisingly popular. Some British universities have opened courses abroad, and are offering a 100% *bona fide* UK degree at low prices

(in comparison to fees charged in the UK), with teaching all by UK nationals. The University of Hertfordshire for example has opened an art school here in Moscow called the British Higher College of Art, which offers a whole spectrum of graphic design and fine art courses, for basically Russian university prices. This new concept is proving more and more popular both for Russians and ex-pats alike. The final year of the standard Foundation Year plus a three year degree course can be taken in the UK.

The advantages are clear to see: usable English, an access to the job market here, a British education in Russia, which certainly ensures a stimulating mix of cultural and pedagogic experience. The college is located right in the middle of the Winzavod arts complex in Moscow. The disadvantages are that the foundation year is not transferrable to other art colleges in the UK. Only one year in the UK may not provide an in-depth British cultural experience, and that the University of Hertfordshire does not pretend to be one of Britain's most prestigious High Art establishments. It certainly is practical though, and graduates will be multi-cultural and employable, both here and at home. The degree, like any UK degree, can be used to enter a postgraduate course, perhaps at one of the name places elsewhere in the outside world. **P**

For further details see the college's website:

<http://www.britishdesign.ru/>



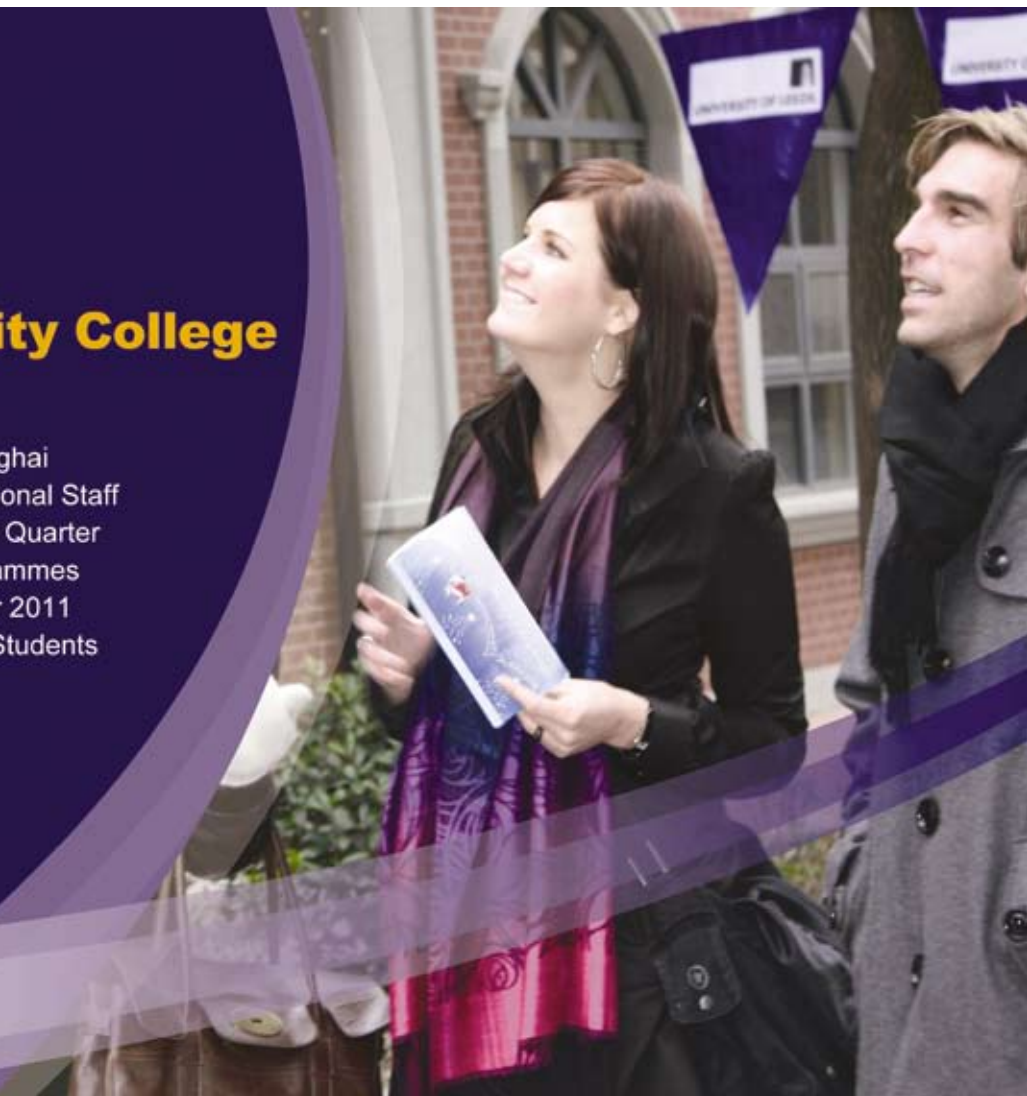
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Marina Lukanina

Pushkin Fairy Tales in Music and Dance

The Sats State Academic Children's Music Theatre

Photographer D. Kulikov

Pushkin's fairy tales have always been quite popular among composers, painters and theatre directors. An unusual opening night took place at the Sats Theatre. On March 18th there was the opening night of a performance, called Pushkin Fairy Tales in Music and Dance, which consists of two acts: the first is a symphonic fairy tale about Tsar Saltan based on Rimsky-Korsakov's music, and the second is the ballet "Blockhead" based on Shostakovich's music. During the first act the actors read the Tsar Saltan fairy tale accompanied by wonderful music. However, it is best to read this fairy tale prior to coming to this performance since a large part of it is "music only". You have to know the story to be able to figure out what is going on.

The Blockhead ballet tells a preachy story about the priest and his worker who was called "blockhead". It is a very colourful and dynamic ballet that is definitely interesting and entertaining for children. It is staged by the famous ballet dancer and theatre director, Vladimir Vasylyev. If you want a lovely family afternoon with exposure to one of the best aspects of the Russian culture, go for this performance. **P**



When: May 21 at 3pm

Where: The Sats State Academic Children's Music Theater

5 Prospect Vernadskogo

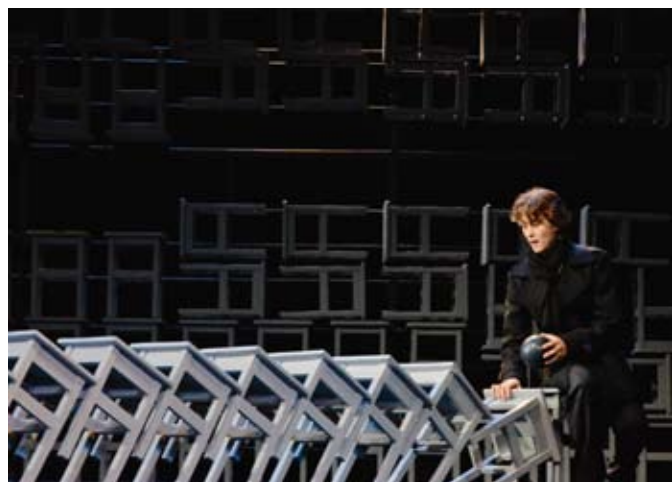
Tel: +7 964 595-21-30

<http://www.teatr-sats.ru>

The Demons

The Malaya Bronnaya Theater

Photographer V. Gumenuk



This theatre keeps launching more and more plays. The Demons, first shown in March, is called "the theater business card of a new actors' generation". This performance is a diploma production of recent graduates of Sergey Golomazov's workshop of the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts (Sergey is also the current Artistic Director of this theatre). Of course it was adapted and improved prior its opening night on the main stage.

Since it's next to impossible to stage the entire novel, the director took only one chapter, The Night, where the main character, Nikolai Stavrogin, meets with different people. That is why the full title of the play is: The Demons: Scenes from Nikolai Stavrogin's Life.

You can feel the young vibe and energy while watching the performance coming from all actors. It is uplifting to see the work of so many talented young actors, especially of Dmitry Serdyk who plays Peter Verkhovensky.



The set design consists of many backless stools that are also used to depict bridges, beds, columns, etc. Almost in every episode the actors build some new figure from them that is fragile and easily breaks by a subtle touch of the hand—probably a hint how fragile and unstable things are in this world.

This is an interesting interpretation of Dostoevsky, but be prepared to hear long and psychologically exhausting dialogues among actors. **P**

When: May 14, 29

Where: The Malaya Bronnaya Theater

4 Malaya Bronnaya str.

Tel: +7 (495) 690-67-31, +7 (495) 690-40-93

<http://mbronnaya.theatre.ru>

La Esmeralda

The Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theatre

I have to confess that this theatre is one of my favorites in Moscow. Their operas and ballets are not comparable with those of any other music theatre in Moscow. This is not just my personal opinion, rather it is proved by a lot of awards that theatre productions get nominated for, and receive.

La Esmeralda was originally staged in 1950 by a famous ballet director Vladimir Burgmeister. In November 2009 this ballet was fully restaged. Valery Levental served as a set designer.

The ballet plot is based on a famous novel by Victor Hugo, The Notre Dame de Paris, and tells a sad story of gipsy, Esmeralda, priest Floro, Captain Fed and of course the hunchback of Notre Dame, Quasimodo. They say that La Esmeralda ballet has the same significance for this theatre as Chekhov's plays have for Moscow Art Theatre.

I was particularly impressed by Quasimodo part (danced by Anton Domashev, Honored artist of Russia, award winner of Moscow). He managed to depict a cripple ugly man yet in a ballet style. Natalia Ledovskaya (People's Artist) dancing Esmeralda part is nominated for the Golden Mask Award as the "ballet best actress". The entire production is nominated for the Golden Mask Award in "ballet/best production" category. **P**

photographer Vadim Lapin



When: please check the repertoire

Where: The Stanislavsky Music Theater

17 B. Dmitrovka str.

Tel: +7 (495) 629-28-35

<http://www.stanmus.com>

Medea

The Moscow Young Generation Theatre (MTYuZ)

photographer Elena Lapina

This performance has one some of the best Golden Mask Award nominations: Drama/best large scale production, best director (Kama Ginkas), best female actress, best male actor, and best designer.

This is a fusion of Seneca's powerful tragic text and the contemporary language of Jean Anouih, the language of streets and kitchens coupled up with Brodsky's poems. At first the combination of these three completely different writers seemed impossible. Yet when I saw the performance it again became clear to me that classical works would always remain immortal and relevant no matter how long ago they were written. Through an ancient myth of the story about Medea and Yason and the tragedy that followed Yason's betrayal, one could very well notice the allusions to today's problems that exist in our society.

The scenography by Sergei Barkhin is somewhat eclectic: the mountain surrounded by dirty walls, the leaking wash stand that makes the whole swimming-pool where various kitchen and household appliances are floating—the awful living conditions of an extraordinary woman named Medea.

I was very happy there was no intermission so that the audience could be fully immersed in the story, from the beginning to the end, and feel the intensity of emotions.

It is a story of a real passion, self-sacrifice and renunciation. Ekaterina Karpushina plays Medea role very convincingly. She expends so much strength and emotion that you soon forget that you are watching a theatre performance and instead imagine you are a witness of a real woman's tragedy.

This is an extremely powerful performance that takes your breath away. **P**



When: May 13

Where: The Moscow Young Generation Theater (MTYuZ)

10 Mamonovsky per.

Tel: +7 (495) 699-5360

<http://www.moscowtyz.ru/eng>



Scene from *Pouple Kraft*

The Tenth Chekhov International Theatre Festival

Elena Rubinova

The *Tempest* staged by Declan Donnellan with Russian actors is to open the Festival on 25 May. It will be followed by the best of modern theatre from Italy and Spain as part of the cultural programme of the Italy–Russia and Spain–Russia year.



Scene from *Les Parachutes*

Scene from *Les Clones*

It's hard to say who knows the productions of Declan Donellan and theatre designer Nick Ormerod better: the international or the Russian public.

Earlier productions staged by the British Cheek by Jowl Theatre under the auspices of the Chekhov International Festival, with an internationally renowned Russian ensemble, have included *Twelfth Night*, *The Three Sisters* and *Boris Godunov*. They were highly popular both in Russia and in the West and in this regard, it seems a logical decision for a new stage version of *The Tempest* to be opening this year's Chekhov International Festival. The performance has already been an impressive success in Paris and London and it's almost guaranteed that the Moscow public will flock to see its favourite Russian actors, Igor Yasulovich and Alexander Feklistov. A forceful new production might also turn out to be especially appealing to the Russian audience because Donnellan's interpretation of Shakespeare's play concentrates on forgiveness rather than revenge, and can be seen to address Russia's tragic 20th century history.

The last Chekhov International Theatre Festival was solely dedicated to the legacy of Anton Chekhov because his 150th anniversary was widely celebrated around the globe. This year's summer theatrical marathon will be dominated by Italian and Spanish theatre. The crisis, which just won't leave, has forced festival organizers to exclude the most expensive and large scale performances. Be that as it may, Valeri Shadrin, General Manager of the festival, says, "We have done our best to keep the essential performances and thus give a full picture to our audience".

The Russian public will see the cream of modern Italian avant-garde theatre and the best of Spanish dance and ballet. The first name to be mentioned is the outstanding Italian director and theatre practitioner, Romeo Castellucci, who will bring his recent performance, *Velo Nero del Pastore*

(*Minister's Black Veil*), to Moscow. This is a theatre fantasy based on a story by Nathaniel Hawthorne about a minister who always faces his parish wearing a black veil. The director investigates the theme of darkness. For him "Moscow has always been a city with a lot of meanings and the image of Malevich's Black Square inspired some of his artistic ideas". Next on the Italian side is Sicilian director Emma Dante's *Trilogy of Glasses*. Emma is the founder of independent Theatre Sud Costa Occidentale, and has earned quite a reputation for herself for her symbolism and innovation.

However it is Spanish theatre that is probably going to make the biggest impression. The most notable performance is promised by the famous flamenco dancer, choreographer and director, Maria Pages. She claims her show called *Autorretrato* (Self-Portrait) was inspired by a meeting with Russian ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov in 2006, when he visited Madrid. The passionate language of flamenco is creatively fused with modern dance language by six dancers and nine musicians on stage. They say that in the end of June, Baryshnikov himself may visit the festival.

In July, the National Dance Theatre of Spain is likely to repeat its triumph last year in Moscow with two new programs of one-act ballets, *Gnawa*, *Flockwork*, *White Darkness* and *Noodles*, where the exceptional talent of Nacho Duato, the theatre's chief choreographer, is enhanced by his colleagues Alexander Ekman and Phillippe Blanchard. Theatre Comedians of Barcelona will present a production of *Persephone* directed by Juan Font.

The Chekhov Festival will run for two months (May 25-July 31) and is to be held at various venues across the city—at traditional places such as Mossovet Theatre and the Meyerhold Centre as well as on some new stages.

The full program of the festival in English can be found on its website <http://www.chekhovfest.ru> **P**.



Ilya Mashkov, *Winter Landscape* (1914)



Aristarkh Lentulov: *St. Basil's Cathedral* (1913)

The Jack of Diamonds

Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen

Jack of Diamonds was the name of an exhibition of artists that took place from December 1910 to January 1911, exactly a hundred years ago. The exhibition enjoyed scandalous success: many things in its organization and in the works themselves shocked and revolted the public. That kind of reaction was provoked by the artists themselves. In the opinion of the Jack of Diamonds members, their works ought to be perceived as a street show.

In 1911, the artists formed an eponymous art group, The Jack of Diamonds group. At first the group included mostly Moscow painters. Later on artists from St. Petersburg and other towns joined. Many artists from western Europe also participated in the exhibitions, for example Georges Braque, Kees van Dongen, Robert Delaunay, André Derain, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Henri Rousseau, Paul Signac and others.

The name of the first exhibition and the group itself is the result of two associations and is based on a pun: up until 1917, Jacks of Diamonds was a euphemism for state convicts, because they wore grey robes with a black diamond sewn on their backs, being their mark. The second association was semiotic as well: in old French card jargon, a valet (servant) combined with the diamonds (Carreau: squares in French) means "a swindler, a trickster". So such a name must have evinced a certain reaction from an ordinary philistine person, either humour, vexation or sanctimonious indignation. Aristarkh Lentulov recollected: "Artists created too many sophisticated, affected names at that time. So we thought: the worse, the better. Indeed, what can be more ridiculous than The Jack of Diamonds?"

The members of The Jack of Diamonds denied both the traditions of academism and realism of the 19th century. Their creativity inclined towards post-impressionism (like Cezanne's style), fauvism, cubism as well as some Russian folk

arts: lubok. Deformation and a generalization of form were characteristics of the group. Their artistic image was determined by the artists who considered themselves to be the followers of Cezanne. In the paintings of the great master they were mostly attracted by the deep inner energy of both the color and space, which can be felt in every object portrayed by him. The Jack of Diamonds members were also interested in the creative search of Henri Matisse and his cubist friends.

The nuclei of the group were Robert Falk, Aristarkh Lentulov, Ilya Mashkov, Alexander Kuprin and Pyotr Konchalovsky. Other members included Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova and Kazimir Malevich. It was Mikhail Larionov who invented the name for the group to counter-balance the pretentious and refined names of contemporary art groups which were characteristic of the world of art of that time.

The outlook of the group, which was close to futurism, was also a reaction to the lofty aesthetics of Art Nouveau and Symbolism, the major art trends of the first decade of the 20th century in Russia. The members of The Jack of Diamonds group thought that works of art were not only for sophisticated art connoisseurs and critics, but for everyone.

That's why their main genres were still-lifes that seemed as simple as the sign-boards in food stores, as well as landscapes, portraits and folk pictures. Everything was designed to oppose the academic genres: historical canvases, various allegorical and literary plots, as well as art works on social subjects.

The members of The Jack of Diamonds were in the news for a long time. When disputes broke out at the Polytechnic Museum about the new art and the group's members, so many people wanted to participate, that mounted police had to be brought in to keep order.

In the creativity of Petr Konchalovsky (1876-1956), the influence of Cezanne was combined with primitivism, which was



Mikhail Larionov, *Soldier at Rest* (1911)



Kazimir Malevich, *Bureau and Room* (1913)

seen in the most vivid manner in his portraits. In portraying a child (*Natasha on a Chair*, 1910) the deliberate simplification of the drawing and a somewhat rough combination of color spots makes the girl look like a doll.

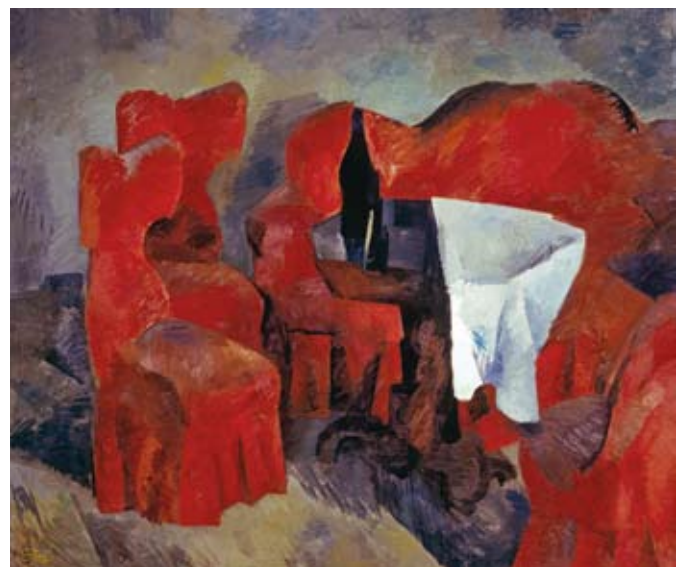
The art works of Ilya Mashkov (1881-1944) brightly demonstrates the peculiarities of "Russian Cezannism". In his still life, *The Blue Plums* (1910), the artist tried to reveal the sappy blue tint of the fruits and their elastic form. In another work, *Moscow Food* (1924), the master portrayed the delicious buns and loaves using a profusion of colours, dense and very bright. Their saturation draws the viewer in, and creates the impression of the fullness of life making this work close to the Flemish still-lives of the 17th century.

Aristarkh Lentulov (1882-1943) wanted to solve totally different problems in his works. He tried to imagine all the objects of the real world as constantly moving abstract forms. That's how he depicted the Moscow Kremlin and Red Square in his works *St. Basil's Cathedral* (1913) and *The Ringing of the Bells* (1915). It looks as if all the parts of the buildings have moved from their places and are circling in a swift dance. The paints are put onto the canvasses in tiny brush strokes or spots, like a mosaic.

Lentulov tried to decorate his paintings in whatever way he could—he glued gilded paper on them, and gold and silver stars. Notwithstanding the fact that the famous buildings are easily recognizable, the paintings are perceived not like architectural landscapes, but like kaleidoscopes of glittering and iridescent spots.

Very interesting are the landscapes of Robert Falk (1886—1958), which are close to Cezanne. In his composition, *The Old Ruza* (1913), the artist tried to make all the elements in the paintings—the houses, the Earth, the sky—as close to each other in texture as if they were made of the same matter. Like Mashkov, Falk was inclined to use dense colors. However the general tone of the canvas is somewhat hushed, and has deep shadows. This gives the whole landscape an intimacy and a deep inner lyricism.

The creative potential of the group was enormous. It gave birth to quite a number of art movements. For example, the



Robert Falk, *Red Furniture* (1920)

"luchism" (the "rayism") of Larionov, the abstractionism of Kandinsky and the suprematism of Malevich.

In 1912, a number of artists strong in primitivism, cubofuturism and abstractionism left The Jack of Diamonds and staged an exhibition called *The Donkey's Tail*. Amongst them were the Burlyuks, Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov, Kazimir Malevich and some others. In 1916-1917 Pyotr Konchalovsky, Ilya Mashkov, Lentulov, Falk and some others also left The Jack of Diamonds and formed The World of Art group.

In December 1917, the Jack of Diamonds group ceased to exist. In 1925 its ex-members formed a group called The Moscow Painters, which later became The Society of Moscow Artists. In March 1927 the Tretyakov gallery staged a retrospective exhibition of the Jack of Diamonds art works.

The Jack of Diamonds left a remarkable trace not only in the history of the Russian avant garde, but in the world art as a whole. **P**



Escape to the Tropics

Martine Self

In this overcrowded, superfast world of ours, one sometimes longs to take one's foot off the accelerator and escape far away from everyday problems and routines. A holiday in Thailand would seem to tick all the right boxes.

It's far away: 11 hours flying time from Moscow if you go with a stop via Dubai to stretch your legs. Alternatively, you could fly direct in just over seven hours.

It's totally different: the Thai culture's symbol is a gentle smile which makes for a change from grim-faced, stressed commuters in the Moscow Metro; its tropical vegetation is the very antithesis of Russia's pine and birch; and its food—if you like tasty, spicy offerings with inexhaustible supplies of seafood—is a gourmet tourist's delight.

It's cheap: imagine what a change it would make to be able to fill your belly, drinks included, for an average of 140 rubles, or stay in a five star hotel such as the Amari Emerald Cove in Koh Chang for 5,300 roubles per room per night, or if you can't stretch to that, try a small rustic bungalow on the beach for 1,500 roubles per night or even less. There is a wide supply of accommodation with prices to match every taste.

There are dozens of islands to choose from, each offering something different depending on whether you prefer a faster or slower-paced way of life, or a younger or older crowd. Instead of committing to only one island, you could choose to island-hop and try out several different islands. Thailand is highly geared to transport: transfers are cheap and quick, and very efficient.

It's far more civilised than you probably imagine. If you haven't been before, you might think, like I did, that it would be difficult to communicate in a language which has no links with either Russian or English, but there is enough English spoken and signage in English to help you find your way. Thailand's Number 1 revenue-earner is tourism, so every effort is made to help you spend your tourist funds.

It has a warm climate: Thailand is never cold, making it a year-round destination, ideal if you have had enough of or want to take a break from the Russian winter. Lowest temperatures start at around 20C (with the exception of Northern Thailand destinations such as Chiang Mai) the coolest months being November – February (high season) rising to between 32 – 35C in the months between March to May. Thereafter getting cooler but only slightly so. Rainfall is lowest during the cooler months, rising to a maximum in October and November. You can travel lightly. Don't plan on bringing any warm clothes other than for your trip from home to Thailand and back.

No visas are required: Thailand is one of the few places that does not require visas either for Russians or other foreigners, subject to a maximum stay of 30 days.

Thailand for beginners

This was my first trip to Thailand and a friend and I decided to explore two islands only during a trip lasting seven days: Koh Samet and Koh Chang (the word "Koh" means "island"). There are dozens of other islands, some of the more well known being: Phuket, Krabi, Phi Phi, Koh Samui, Koh Kood and Koh Mac. Each has its own personality and charm and you could arguably spend several trips to Thailand exploring them all before deciding on your favourite.

Koh Samet

Smaller than Koh Chang it has much less to offer. A stunning white sand beach on the north-west coast, is lined with small resorts sitting cheek by jowl. There is plenty of activity in the evening, a particular favourite being dining on the beach seated on cushions, sampling tasty Thai food in the balmy night air under the stars. Live music from a talented international band was first class, and we were treated to an exceptional fire display by 13 agile young men with the tightest washboard stomachs I have ever seen. You'll be left gasping with



Koh Chang

About three hours away by car and ferry is Koh Chang (Elephant island), so called because of its shape. It is Thailand's second largest island. Most of the tourist activities take place on the western side which offers a multitude of accommodation options from a rustic Robinson Crusoe beach bungalow on stilts for about 1,000 roubles a night to the more upmarket resorts such as the elegant five star Amari Emerald Cove costing around 5,300 roubles per night including breakfast. The palm-fringed hotel, which is very popular with Russian tourists, is right next to the longest white sand beach on the island and boasts the Koh Chang's largest swimming pool, side by side with luxurious spa facilities.

Another enjoyable day trip by bike or taxi is to the south of the island to the fisherman's village of Bang Bao which is a quaint collection of wooden huts comprising souvenir shops, excellent seafood restaurants and accommodation built on stilts over the water. It's possible to take boats from here offering fishing, diving and cruising trips.

Satellite and telephone connections offer easy internet access at internet cafes everywhere and at most resorts.

Thailand's national newspaper, *The Nation*, recently reported that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) has initiated a programme that emphasises increased sustainability of the environment. To this end, Koh Chang has become a fore-runner in a community-based solid waste management and energy and resource efficiency programmes, all in a bid to promote more climate-friendly tourism.

Points to ponder

Tourist agencies are available everywhere and are efficient at meeting all your travel requirements from ferries, to taxis and flights and accommodation. On Koh Chang, the Explora Tour agency organised a superb transfer from the hotel to Bangkok via the exquisite Trat airport and good value airport hotel accommodation at The Great Residence for only 800 roubles per night including free pick up and drop off from the airport.

If your English is not fluent, you might find it difficult to understand the English that is spoken by the Thais. If this is the case, you might be better off travelling with a package group where all communication is sorted out for you. If it is your first trip to Thailand, likewise, you might be better off with a group.

If you are not used to warm temperatures, always plan your activities for the early and later parts of the day leaving the hours from 11.00 – 16.00 for siesta in your air-conditioned room or lounging under a shady tree or umbrella by the beach.

Peak months are August, November, December, February and March. Secondary peak months are January and July. Prices adjust accordingly.



Contacts:

- Amari Emerald Cove Hotel, Klong Prao Beach, Koh Chang, e-mail: emeraldcove@amari.com; www.amari.com
- Boonya Resort Koh Chang www.boonyaresort.net
- Explora Tour, 15.9/1 Klong Prao Beach, Koh Chang 23170 Trat; email: info@explorakohchang.com; www.explorakohchang.com (under construction)
- The Great Residence; tel 087-973-7352; e-mail: chalee_kkk@yahoo.com

Price sample (in roubles)

Litre of petrol: 30 – 40 per litre

Beer: 60 per small can

Thai massage: 250 per hour

Cigarettes: 75 per pack of 20

Restaurant meal: from 80 per dish

Motorbike rental: 500 per 24 hours

Bespoke tailoring in Thailand

With the advent of cheap Chinese clothing exports, tailors in Thailand have witnessed a diminishing trade, however, if you would like a bespoke (tailor-made) suit exactly to your dimensions, it is possible to do so without visiting Thailand, although for best results, it's always best to visit the tailor in person. He will keep your measurements for five years and you can simply order in future by internet. Suits start at a price of 4000 roubles and are made from local materials (ie 20% wool, the remainder being cotton polyester); median prices are 6000, 7000 and 8000 roubles with a higher content wool material. Top range suits cost around 12,000 roubles and are made from imported cashmere wool. To get a good idea of which fabric styles and colours you would like, browse the net looking at sites such as Gino Matteo, Zenzoni, Armani, or Hugo Bo. **P**

Contact:

De Moda Italia; Mr Barry, 15/11/4 Moo 4 Klong Prao Beach, Koh Chang 23170; tel: 087-4733505; 087-4733506; e-mail: demodaitalia@live.com; deitalano99@hotmail.com



Don't tell me, show me

Has anybody seen my motorbike?



Ruth Crome
Photos by Demian Fot

"I'm an actor and I work as an actor. Being an actor is easy: all you have to do is pretend to be other people—other people who can afford to buy shoes."

This is Martin Cooke, talking about his new project, The Queen's English Theatre Studio, which was officially launched on March 26th at the Culture Centre on Tverskaya (and as seen on TV!)

I was first introduced to Martin in the summer of 2005 as a film-maker and performance poet from London. He was a man who had fallen out of love with the degrading "English Art Council culture way of life" and in love with the idea of Russia: "Its wildness, its Metro stops named after anarchists." I was there when he gave up his flat in Hackney and packed as many books as he could into a trunk bound for Moscow.

It seemed a hard first few months in Moscow for Martin, the Rimbaud of Romford, who barely knew a word of Russian and appeared to be facing his first Russian winter alone in a flat with a terrible dose of Maldorian darkness about to descend on his psyche.

But then, slowly but surely, I'd get updates about a play he was putting on here, or a reading he was doing there, and somehow I knew Martin's tenacity was bearing some artistic fruit for him.

When the Anglo-Russian Theatre was started by Martin two years ago, he made some invaluable contacts from the world of Russian theatre. His efforts to form a truly multi-cultural theatre company have now come to fruition in the formation of Russia's first English Theatre Studio, dedicated to the teaching of theatre skills through



Martin Cooke

cultural exchange, with working actors and offering LAMDA's world renowned qualification; (LAMDA is the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art).

"The Studio is practically on Red Square... near the Mayor's residence. It's in the middle of everything! We've also got a theatre in Rublyovka, which we use for so called corporate team-building. Western HR managers applaud our efforts to give intelligent employees an experience beyond paint-balling and picnicking. It's not about presentation skills, it's about sanity and balance and the skills of emotional intelligence. We introduce people to themselves and to their colleagues who work in the same office, who seem to barely know or trust one another.

"More people go to the theatre in Russia than in England, but there seems to be no practical education available for interested artists among the mass of people, yearning to burst out of their conventional boxes, other than the

propaganda afforded by the Saint Stanislavski apologists." Sssshhh...

"We work with people who have a passion for drama. We work in corporate environments, schools and in the backwoods; which is how those who have missed out on any dramatic training and who love the theatre are now being offered the opportunity to take part in English-speaking improvisation classes by trained actors rather than English tutors who simply use drama as an additional teaching aid.

"What do people do outside work?" Martin asks rhetorically, "For some, life in front of a TV screen is too passive. What the Drama Studio can offer is a bespoke and genuine journey into a whole new world..."

Martin's passion for Drama and the fact that he's been stubborn enough to stay and turn his dream into a tangible reality can be seen in his own enigmatic and unique stage performances. He has been called the English Peter Mamonov. He now has a son, Arthur Tikhon Cooke, who'll be three in August this year, and a Russian wife, Natasha, who he married four years ago.

So what hopes does he have for the Studio?

I get a definitive answer, "To create an eclectic company with different flavours, who'll combine to cook up a new taste and style. Productions of Keats' Lamia in a strip club are planned, as well as De Fillipo's obscure masterpiece, The Inheritor, and we will then take the Made in Moscow productions on tour."

The English Theatre Studio's Company took part in a benefit concert on April 21st to raise money for the relief effort in Japan. Keats was on offer and the lost art of "Melodeclamation". It means a lot to Martin to be involved in serving the community through his art. He's taken Russia and its

people to his heart. He'd like to offer Russians the dramatic art they were not offered at school, while at the same time he means to enhance the experience of living in Russia for visitors from all countries.

"We aren't teachers; we're actors, interested in developing a company who actually do create productions—film as well as theatre. We're sharing what we know, not teaching but doing!"

"We're authentic and inviolate. Not Corporate but bespoke and genuine."

And bespoke also means that the Studio will be offering e-learning for interested 'Participants' outside the catchment area of Moscow as well as touring to the regions.

The Company are looking for funding from sympathetic sponsors. "We have brilliant supporters like Tri-co Cashmere and the venues we use, such as Shooters and Stariki Bar and the Library for Foreign Literature".

Children's drama sessions will be on offer too. The Salyut Children's Cinema group, have started to host such sessions and this is something Martin hopes to develop further, even offering free performances for children all over Moscow.

I wonder whether Martin can pin point the moment of inspiration for the School?



irene flaming - vocal coach

"I had a vision in McDonald's! It was this young student, Masha, who took part in a musical project I was involved with. I bumped into her in McDonald's months later and asked whether she'd taken her experience further. She just shrugged her shoulders and said, 'But there are no such drama schools in Moscow'. The heavens opened and I saw the footlight!"

Martin is actively encouraging actor contacts he has in the UK to join the company and add their experience to the mix, as well as grab an amazing chance to work

with students of all ages to create new theatre. I recently visited the Harold Pinter Drama Studio at the University of East Anglia, which is renowned for its creative writing courses and drama students (including alumni such as Ian McEwan and the current Dr Who, Matt Smith). I was putting a poster up for Martin and bumped into his old tutor. He remembered Martin fondly and wished him well. As he took the poster from me I felt proud to be part of Martin's vision and hoped that, like the Terminator, he'd be back. In case not, I'm looking at flights now and checking out my visa. I can't wait to see what's going on.

In May, Queen's English Theatre Studio will be appearing at:

Shooters: Novoslobodskaya - Tuesdays

Stariki Bar: Lubyanka - Sundays

Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare will be touring various schools and the Salyut cinema.

LAMIA, undress rehearsal in secret locations...

If you wish to arrange a free music and poetry concert for children or enquire about enrolling on summer school courses at Queen's English Theatre Studio. **P**

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Artist in Residence

John Harrison

On a busy weekday afternoon at the end of March, I took some time to visit artist Davina Garrido de Miguel in her studio. It is a short walk up behind the red brick wall monastery on Petrovka, past some old buildings which are being refurbished, into a beautiful, old part of Moscow. This is Davina's creative base, and where she holds art classes.

"Come up," Davina said cheerfully. Minutes later I was enjoying a nice "cuppa" in an extensive gallery/studio. Davina was in the middle of painting a large pop-art style picture of a Stalin block with a cartoon character from the Soviet era "Cherabarushka" on top of it. I asked her to carry on, saying I would ask some questions whilst she was painting.

How long have you been here, in Russia?

"Since 2009, about a year and a half."

You're an artist?

"Yes, all my life."

"And you're from London?"

"Yes, I'm half Spanish though. I think of my work as being a bit of a mix, I don't really think of myself as being British. My work is also quite Latin in temperament."

Do you manage to sell any work in Moscow?

"Yes, quite a lot. I sell a lot of my sketches of Moscow faces, mostly of people in the Metro." Davina shows me some

intriguing sketches which are half drawings, half paintings. "It is fun doing these, although sometimes it is difficult. One day I got on the Circle line, I like that line because you can go round and round on it. This guy stood right between me and the person I was drawing who was sitting opposite me. Then somebody else who saw my predicament, politely, but firmly nudged him along, gave me the thumbs up sign and let me carry on. Imagine that happening in London on the Underground! I sell a lot of these to ex-pats who want to know what Moscow is all about. These are reasonably priced, so they're good souvenirs."

Then Davina pointed to a large pop-art painting she was working on. "I've sold about four of these. The first one I did was for Moscow Museum of Modern Art. The word got out, and now people want one for themselves. They go for \$3000 to \$4000 each. In the summer I have very little to survive on, as all the ex-pats leave. Moscow becomes a ghost town, so I really need commissions like these. This one's going to Stockholm. So this is bread and butter stuff, and when I can, I do my own stuff, which is more abstract, like Moscow walls, paintings similar to icons, and more figurative work. So I go from one thing to another, depending on my mood actually. That's the problem with galleries actually: they like you to stick to one thing."

Do you have more than one main style?

Before answering this question, Davina showed me into a store room, and pulled out some fantastic, large figurative works.



"This was commissioned by a very nice man called Nikolai, who owns a gallery. He was great, but all he wanted me to do was things like this. Large scale works, very academic, well executed. But I don't want to do this every time! He said: well we can't put an exhibition on then, and I said fair enough. So I decided to do it on my own, which is what this is. A lot of artists nowadays move from one style to another. Why should you be fixed into just one way of looking at the world?"

We went back to the main room. Davina started painting again.

"Do you work in acrylics?" she asked. "Do you like them?" I answer, no, not a lot. Davina agreed. "The way they darken, I find them harder than oil, it drives me crazy." We talk about using acrylics in comparison to oils for a few minutes.

"The thing about Moscow is that it isn't a bright-colour place. Even in the summer, what did we have last year: the smog! I was staring at the sun, it was a dirty little orangey disk; it was amazing. I did a painting during that time which is in going to be exhibited in London, but it should have been a bright blue sky with sun that you couldn't look at."

So you manage to sell things on a regular basis?

"I sell one large painting once every couple of months or so, but I sell the sketches regularly, at least two a month. They go. It's only been the last three or four months that this has started to work out, where I can pay for the studio and pay for lots of other things. I have to say that the ex-pat community helps me a lot. They all know about me; they're all very friendly."

Who do you sell to?

"Mostly to ex-pats. But I'm getting some Russians coming in now, and more Russians to the classes too. They've mostly been taught very academically, so they're quite hard on you. It's really like the marriage of the two: the ability to use technique, but also the freedom. I remember when I went to art school, it was like: anything goes. They didn't have life models. I had to fight for one, they said: 'Oh, we don't do that anymore.' It was all about what are you thinking about in relationship to the universe. I mean what does the average 18 year old know about the meaning of life? What can you possibly say that is going to be meaningful to somebody of that age? All I wanted to do was learn how to look and draw. In the end, I did print making. I love print making. My next venture will be to set up a print making room. A proper press, etching, acid bath, and do some etchings, because they're great fun. Have you ever done any? They're lovely. You put it through the roller, you never know what you are going to end up with."

So how many students do you get, is it very seasonal?

"Yes, in the summer it is dead, there is nobody here. I hold an open studio then, when people can just come in. I keep the Saturday morning class going for children. I keep one of my classes open on Wednesday evenings. There are more Russians attending that class, people come in from work. I also keep a life drawing class going for teenagers, because it is really difficult trying to find places to do life drawing in Moscow. I'd like to do a summer workshop here for some of the schools. The rest of the year I hold classes for all ages, for people aged 4 to 65. We do drawing, painting, sculpture, and intensive courses, even for professional artists who don't want to be told what to do. We hold master classes and invite other artists in, it's great, and it's alive. Everybody is welcome. For the Russians, I am teaching art and also English. I explain things in English."

"The other big thing I do here is hold exhibitions. I really want to help artists get established. Galleries charge an awful lot here, sometimes 50%, I don't charge anything like that, so this means something to people who are starting out. The next big exhibition coming up here is at the end of May. There'll be all the students' work and some of my work."

"Artists command respect here, that is something that I find incredible. I mean it means something to be an artist. I am glad that I live here, and don't see myself going anywhere for a few years." **P**

You can find out more about Davina's classes on:
www.petrovka-art-studio.com
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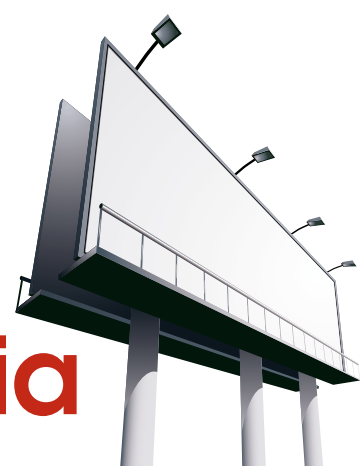
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The Less Secret Seducers: Advertising in Russia



Frank Ebbecke

In this “overmobiled” megapolis, one car bombed into the back of another one. One possible reason: the driver didn’t pay enough attention to the stop-and-go “probka” traffic. He was rather trying to absorb tempting buying advice waving at him from a huge banner hanging across the street.

There are far too many of them. Accidents and banners. They overlap. Some banners cover whole facades of huge buildings. Sometimes, they cleverly hide restoration work, but in most cases this is just another way for the property owners to make additional money. Big money. Who cares if the view of some of the city’s most beautiful architectural aspects is ruined. The biggest outdoor poster overpowers the site of the former Rossiya hotel. In this case, the hyper-dimensional exhibit (mostly booked by a German luxury car brand) adds a more aesthetic view than arguably the most ugly showpiece of monumental Soviet architecture ever did. Fortunately the Rossiya has been completely demolished. Only now, has the new Moscow city government announced plans to reduce the number of outdoor sites by 20% and to forbid outdoor advertising altogether in the nearer vicinity of the venerable Kremlin. In 2010, almost 15% of Russian total advertising expenditure went into outdoor advertising. An impressive sum of just over 23 billion rubles.

Remembering 1978 when I first travelled to the two Russian capitals, there were outdoor ads then too. The preferred colour was red, of course. People were often illustrated in “socialist” style. Healthily built farmers and workers. Headlines told us about the blessings of communism and the all-mighty

paternal role of the Party. The rest was more grey. The monumental houses. And the faces.

The only “advertising agency” back then was “Vneshtorgreklama” (which roughly translates as “Foreign Trade Advertising”). A department of the Ministry for Foreign Trade. Do I need to say how the ads looked? Then came Perestroika. The early days of empty markets and huge profits. Marketers didn’t care much about marketing and the quality of ads. People would buy just everything available. A couple of guys with a computer were enough to establish an agency. No appropriate professional skills needed. Anyway, how? From where, back then? Their ads just told people where to get what they couldn’t get before. For prices they barely couldn’t afford (unfortunately too many ads today are still made using this basic principle). And the clients? They bought it. It was like “the blind meeting the blind.”

And then almost all of the well-established western network agencies opened up shop in this big, promising new market. Quick and easy money. Often their global clients had encouraged them to. For them, creating advertising simply meant dubbing commercials from home into Russian. It worked back then. But today’s marketing practitioners find themselves in a much more complex, more difficult environment. Saturated markets. Tough competition. Demanding consumers with a different mentality. Simple adaptation is not an option. Generally, to a Russian, “the West” is not only a geographical term but an equivalent of some spirit. A way of life. A style of behaviour. A way of self-realisation. “Which is not necessarily ours,” many say.

Nowadays there are about 7000 agencies active in Russia. For advertising, promotion, events, media, production. And

everything else. Almost half of them work in Moscow. There are 16 international "Advertising Embassies", 174 Russian "Full Service" agencies, and 91 PR agencies. The bulk of the others are basically something like design shops. Delivering business cards, logos, stationery, give-aways.

The pioneer times when most of the leading agency people were "ex-pats on a mission" are over. Young Russians have taken over, which is the way it should be. And yes, some of them have a specialized foreign degree in marketing. Some of them have earned their spurs in the outside world. But there is still a tremendous lack of experience. The same goes for the creative workforce. Funnily enough, all the continuously more sophisticated fancy computer graphic programmes don't help in all aspects the so-called Art Directors and designers' work. They think that fresh ideas pop out of the screen. Very few have been trained to give birth to an idea using head and heart. Easier to just copy ideas from abroad. Copy-writing is a craft which also needs some urgent further development.

In Russia, there are not enough advertising educators with practical skills and experiences. Russia is a country with a great history of scientific inventions, cultural talent in music, literature and performing arts. In general, Russians are known for their ability to improvise. For their creativity to tackle problems, a result of shortages, deficiencies and bureaucratic regulation of everything for generations. Russian creatives haven't found a distinctive identity for their own national advertising yet, with the exception of those frequently used flowery, tendril-like graphic elements. But that's not a unique idea in itself. It's, just a decorative eye-catcher. The British use their special sense of humour to attract their audiences, and the Americans hammer their messages home with highly emotional mini-stories. Their commercials are like miniature feature films. The Germans persuade people with interesting information, surprisingly translated into pieces of ad art. Russian advertising lacks "Russification". With potential customers out there. With awards from one of the numerous global ad festivals. For more success, for the client's business. And for the agency's creators.

Probably all this is also a consequence of the lack of thinking regarding strategic brand development, which is vital for effective advertising. But this is often still perceived as a kind of "luxury" exercise. Only time and money, with no immediate return on investment. Admittedly, coming up with the right strategy is no easy task. Especially in a multi-cultural land-mass which spans over 11 time zones—from the Baltic Sea to the Japanese waters. From Europe to Asia. What sells like hot cakes to Muscovites might not be very appealing for northerners around St. Petersburg. And there are still no really reliable national statistics. Official data may be not always that official. This applies for income statistics as an example. Taxes and organized crime encourage people to hide the truth about their assets. And of course, things keep still changing in Russia rapidly. What might be hot news today, might be outdated tomorrow. Experience and intuition often prove to be more productive than quantitative methods.

Another reason this young industry is only very slowly developing is corruption, a disease Russia is universally infected with; everywhere and on all levels. Often, the best idea does not win the account. No, the agency which knows who to bribe wins the contract. Once the budget is in the can, "kick-backs" are regularly paid to the right people and money to

agency partners who prove that campaigns are working just fine thank you.

Advertising is a decisive, regulatory mean to steer sales and profit. It is one of the prime business instruments in a free economy. Advertising is designed to make people switch, to try something new. To rethink their preferences. Loyalty is not a wide-spread virtue of a "modern" Russian anyway. Advertising has to help build strong brands for the long-term, with honesty, common sense, passion, responsibility. Marketing and advertising are not really mysterious sciences. But they do require knowledge of certain skills and practices. How to make a product or service a personal, trustworthy friend of people. To make someone spend the money I want to earn.

The key is to engage people with a brand, product, service. This especially applies for the fastest growing communication channel: the internet. TV ads are still first in numbers reached from the west to the far east of Russia. But steadily attention is being directed to digital advertising. In 2010, it already made up 12% of media advertising. This is said to grow this year by up to 5-10% (TNS Gallup Media). Moscow internet penetration has reached 97% among 18-24 years old, and 93% in other Russia's big urban areas. And it keeps growing among older age groups, too. No less than 1 million comments are left on blogs each and every day in Russia.

It's only just over twenty years that the remainders of the Soviet Union and the "Planned Economy" discovered marketing and advertising. Western markets have some 150 years of experience. Like in so many other aspects regarding the development of the Russian Federation, it might take one or two generations to subside to a level where advertising in, from and for Russia will be truly competitive and unique. **P**

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The Jury's Out on Juries in Russia

Ian Mitchell

The lawyers, courts and juries of late-Tsarist Russia had two opponents of their ideal of the rule of law. One was the autocracy, which wanted to rule by decree, and the other was the revolutionaries, who wanted to abolish "bourgeois" justice and rule by diktat. The party of law, though, was supported by the new class of increasingly wealthy industrialists who wanted a society based on law. But is this a feasible aspiration when the government is under constant attack by terrorists?

The introduction of juries to Russia in 1866 had been part of an attempt to democratise the administration of justice. But this was in perpetual tension with the fact that the other two branches of government, the legislative and the executive, had remained completely under the control of the autocracy. This was a situation which could not continue indefinitely. The outbreak of terrorism in the late 1860s forced the government to act. The "Tsar-liberator" turned reactionary.

The first response of the autocracy to terrorism was to remove political cases from jury courts, and give them to military courts, which sat *in camera*. But that did not stop the terrorists. On 1 March 1881 (old style calendar) they succeeded in killing Alexander II, at the sixth attempt. The man who who had introduced juries to Russia, reformed the law and freed the serfs had his feet blown off by a bomb thrown at him in the street at the spot where the Church of the Spilt Blood stands today, *in memoriam*, on the Griboyedov Canal in St Petersburg.

The murdered Tsar was succeeded by his son, Alexander III, an unintel-



Konstantin Pobedonostsev, painted by Ilya Repin

ligent reactionary of massive physical strength, a certain amount of earthy charm, but precious little else. His most trusted advisor was the arch-conservative Ober-Procurator of the Orthodox Church, Konstantin Pobedonostsev (see Part 2). Pobedonostsev's view of law was as sophisticated as you might expect of a former professor of the subject at Moscow University who had written the standard work on Russian civil law.

Though an inspiring teacher who had fired the legal imagination of many students, including Anatoli Koni, the judge in the Vera Zasulich case (see part 3), Pobedonostsev was a gloomy character who believed that only the unrelenting use of force could preserve Tsarism in a changing and uncertain world. Reform was implicit treason against the tripod on which the state rested: autocracy, orthodoxy and nationalism. "It is impossible to live and work in Russia without knowing her," he once said. "But are there many of us who know her? Russia is an infinite world of diversity, a world homeless and patient, completely dark: and in this darkness wolves howl."

Pobedonostsev would have agreed with Count von Benckendorff's prescription (see part 2) that laws are made for subordinates and not the authorities. The rule of law was an alien concept. At his prompting, Alexander ordered a brutal crack-down on the



Count Muravyov

revolutionaries. For twenty years, Russia was largely free of terrorism, but at the price of making it even more lethal, and more widely accepted as the only feasible response to autocracy, when it resurfaced in the reign of Alexander's honest but weak son, Nicholas II.

But despite Pobedonostsev, Russia was changing. Between 1881 and 1914, the country's economy grew almost as fast as that of the United States. Literacy spread rapidly, and the legal profession expanded exponentially. Juries were central to this.

The best account we have of the post-reform courts from a Western observer is by Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, a Scot with a wide legal education, including a Doctorate of Laws from Heidelberg University, who alternated the Foreign Editor's chair at *The Times* with extensive travel in Russia. He studied the new court system in depth—he sat through the Vera Zasulich trial, for example—and concluded that it "works remarkably well" and was "extremely popular".

Ordinary criminal juries were genuinely free. "The peasants have little education, but they have a large fund of common sense," Wallace wrote. "A jury composed of peasants generally acts in a somewhat patriarchal fashion, and does not always confine its attention to the evidence and the arguments adduced at the trial." They

tended to judge property crimes harshly, like theft and arson, the latter possibly because most of them lived in wooden houses. But they treated fraud leniently because "many are convinced that trade cannot be successfully carried on without a little clever cheating."

Merchant juries in the larger towns took a similar view of fraud, but they differed from peasant ones on crimes of violence, being unwilling to tolerate the rough ways of the mass of the people, who saw little wrong in the physical resolution of disputes, including those between husband and wife. The opposite was the case with crimes of sacrilege and blasphemy, which peasant juries took seriously, while those composed of educated people treated as trivial. Though there were problems, in general the pessimists had been confounded by the new system.

International comparisons were not unfavourable either. Corruption was rife in the American courts the late nineteenth century, and racial segregation was the law there. Legal England was only half-way out of the Dickensian torpor and absurdity which was so effec-

tively satirised in *Bleak House*. Continental justice was more bureaucratic than Russian, though their courts did have better trained staff. Overall, Russia had little to be ashamed of.

But there was one major gap in the Russian system. This was where executive autocracy collided with legal democratism (if I may put it like that): namely in political cases.

Within six months of coming to the throne, Alexander III signed a law entitled "Measures for the Preservation of State Order and Public Tranquillity" which went much further than the *ad hoc* measures introduced in the wake of the Zasulich verdict.

The new law provided for any crimes that the authorities chose to be tried by courts martial, or *in camera*, and for people to be arrested merely on suspicion of belonging to unlawful associations. It allowed searches of dwellings without any specific suspicion. The law was supposed to be in force for three years, while the country quietened down politically after the as-

sassination of Alexander II, but these measures remained in force until the fall of the House of Romanov. The general approach of the autocracy can be inferred from the fact that until 1905 the public use the word "constitution" was a punishable offence.

That said, there were two aspects of the reformed legal system which gave the regime reasonable cause for complaint—at least, they are not tolerated in modern legal systems. The first was that Defence advocates were at liberty to adduce any argument in support of their clients, however far from the facts of the alleged crime. The result was a tremendous amount of political speechifying in court. Things were said there which would have landed the speaker in Siberia if uttered outside. Not only did the judge have no power to curtail this, newspapers were free to publish a full record of everything said in court, enabling them to by-pass the otherwise strict censorship.

The second problem was that juries were never told, and due to the complexity of the Criminal Code rarely knew, the level of punishment applicable to the crime they were trying. But



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everyone was aware that Russia had draconian laws. So, unless the offence was a particularly flagrant one, most juries preferred to acquit rather than see a person dealt with brutally for a minor offence, or for one committed in strongly mitigating circumstances.

Taken together, these problems enabled Pobedonostsev to echo widespread conservative sentiment when he said, "Russia was strong thanks to autocracy... Then new judicial institutions were opened, new talking-shops of lawyers, thanks to whom the most frightful crimes, unquestioned murders and other grave evil deeds, remain unpunished. Finally freedom was granted to the press, the worst talking-shop of all, [which] sows the seeds of discord and dissatisfaction among peaceful and honest people, enflaming passions and inciting people to the most frightful forms of lawlessness."

But the popularity of the new legal system amongst the mass of the people prevented the authorities from tampering with it in non-political cases. There the law was developing strongly, and Russian jurists began to acquire a high reputation internationally. The Bar Associations which were provided for in the 1864 Act proved a successful innovation as they created a real *esprit de corps* amongst lawyers, as well as providing a focus for pressure on the authorities in matters of legal administration.

The law attracted a high calibre of entrant, possibly because it was one arena where the middle class could make its views heard publicly without risking exile, or worse. In the universities, academic lawyers achieved considerable eminence, the best-known of them in the West being Sir Paul Vinogradoff who resigned his Chair at Moscow University in 1901 rather than accept police spies in his lecture theatres. He moved to Oxford where he became a celebrated scholar of medieval English law.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that the first attempt to formulate the Laws of War was on a Russian initiative. The original Hague conference (predecessor to the Geneva Conventions) was called by Tsar Nicholas II at the suggestion of his Foreign Minister, Count Muravyov, in 1899 and resulted in a general prohibition against, among other things, dum-dum bullets, chemical warfare and bombing from balloons.

As Europe marched towards the war which was to destroy the Romanov dynasty, Russian law, with juries at its heart, could be proud of the progress it had made in a comparatively short time. 1914 was only the 50th anniversary of the great reform. Half a century is not, in any society, a long time in which to establish a completely new legal tradition, especially amongst a people as diverse, scattered, poorly educated and culturally isolated as the Russians largely were in the mid-nineteenth century. Not only that, much of this progress had been made in the face of resolute opposition from the state.

On one major issue, the views of the autocracy coincided with an important strand of populist opinion: anti-Semitism. The first anti-Jewish pogroms erupted in April 1881, when extreme right-wing groups blamed the murder of Alexander II (ironically a liberal they despised) on the Jews—quite erroneously, in fact. A year later, the first of a series of ever-tightening restrictions on Jews was imposed. They were banned from living in the countryside or small towns, even within the pale of settlement. Quotas were placed in universities, within institutions like the Army medical services, and in cities like Moscow and Kiev. In 1893 criminal sanctions were imposed on Jews who tried to "Christianise" their names. By the early twentieth century pogroms carried out by the Black Hundreds were a regular feature of life in the Ukraine, provoking mass emigration to Germany and the United States.

Both Alexander III and Nicholas II were openly anti-Semitic, as were many of their senior ministers, like Pobedonostsev. In 1913, a Ukrainian Jew called Menachem Beillis was accused of the ritual murder of a Christian child in a case that caused a world-wide scandal. The best advocates of the Russian Bar, most of them non-Jews, defended Beillis. An all-Christian jury acquitted him of the patently trumped-up charges, but not before the Tsar had sent the judge a gold watch, hoping he could arrange a guilty verdict.

As in apartheid South Africa, Russia's majority of unprejudiced jurists had to face the problem of enforcing laws they detested. Worse was the fact that, starting in the late 1880s, Jews were prevented from becoming judges, prosecutors, investigating magistrates and officials

of the Ministry of Justice. Later on, admission to the Bar was restricted. Finally, in 1912 entry to the legal profession was completely closed to Jews, even those who had changed their names.

The forces of reason and toleration could not survive in an atmosphere as polarised as Tsarist Russia was becoming. In spite of all this, pre-Revolutionary Russia had an excellent court system which was quickly putting roots down deep into society in large part due to the popularity and perceived fairness of the jury system. But this excluded political cases and in Russia politics was increasingly polarised.

It was partly for that reason that so many of the men who made the February revolution were lawyers—Kerensky being only the best known. One of their first acts of the Provisional Government, in March 1917 was to abolish all racial and religious discrimination.

But this honourable tradition, of which Russia can be justifiably proud, was destroyed by the Bolsheviks. On 24 November 1917 Decree No 1 on the Courts of the Council of Peoples Commissars abolished all existing judicial institutions and independent bodies.

We have an account by the eminent lawyer, Boris Gerschun, of the meeting at which the most important of these independent bodies, the General Assembly of the Petrograd Bar, debated whether to accept the Bolsheviks' offer of entry into a new organisation under Soviet control, or to disband. Troops had already taken control of their building, and were poised to evict them from it if they did not decide as the Bolshevik demanded.

"When, in the General Assembly, which was attended by all the lawyers present in Petrograd at that time, I pronounced the words, 'The last hour of the guild has arrived', I saw many colleagues, especially the older ones, were sobbing silently. But we could not commit an act of treason against the principles of the Russian guild of lawyers by giving up the most holy traditions of independence and freedom of the guild. It was better to dissolve the guild. An honest death is preferable to a disgraceful life."

The terrorists had won. **P**

The final part of this series will tell the story of public involvement with justice in Soviet times, and then describe how juries were resurrected after 1991.



Vladimir Kozlov

Shortage of inexpensive rental apartments

The supply of cheap rental apartments in Moscow can currently satisfy only one fourth of the demand, while in March, the offers in that segment declined by 68%, according to analysts of MIEL-Arenda. "Cheap options are actively washed off the market", Maria Zhukova, deputy director of MIEL-Arenda, told Vedomosti. "The number of apartments with a rent under \$750 a month in Moscow and the [nearest towns of Moscow Oblast] that are offered for rent is very small, while demand remains strong because of potential leaseholders' low incomes." Meanwhile, in the other price segments, the number of apartments offered for rent has been on the rise. In March, the offer of apartments between 20,000 roubles and 30,000 roubles a month increased by 40% and those over 30,000 roubles a month by 50%, MIEL-Arenda said.

Residential construction slows down

The volumes of new residential construction completed in Moscow in the first quarter of 2011 declined by 41% to 200,200 sq. metres from the corresponding period of last year, Mosgorstat, the city's statistics agency reported. Meanwhile, the number of kindergartens built in the city over the same period declined by 500%, year on year.

Russia's cheapest residential property

Penny Lane Realty has compiled a rating of Russia's regional centres with the lowest residential property price. Grozny, the capital of the Chechen Republic, tops the list. The average price of the residential property's sq. metre

in the city is 22,300 roubles. The city is followed by Biribidzhan, the capital of the Jewish Autonomous Region, (24,600 roubles), the Ingush town Magas (25,800 roubles), Dagestan's capital Makhachkala (28,900 roubles) and North Ossetia's capital Vladikavkaz (29,700 roubles). According to Alexei Ziminski, director of elite property sales department at Penny Lane Realty, all the places on the list, except for Biribidzhan, have potential to be turned into major tourist centers. "The nature has given those places everything that it takes to create ski and SPA resorts," he said. "Of course, turning Russia's North Caucasus into a second Courchevel is unrealistic, but making those towns popular tourist centers for youth is quite possible."

"Individual approach" to courtyard parking

The Moscow city government has promised individual approach to building parking lots in the city's apartment buildings' court yards. "Our task is now to find space for parking lots in the capital's court yards and also within the street network," Marat Khusnullin, deputy mayor for urban development policy and construction, told reporters last month. "Basically, we want to pick spaces where people park their cars anyway and develop them [into proper parking lots]. According to Khusnullin, projects will be developed individually for each court yard. "We will be drafting plans for developing court yards and see if there is space for parking lots," he said. "Certainly, we are not going to sacrifice children's playgrounds or trees to make parking spaces." The city official added that the city authorities have already found space for parking lots for 43,000 vehicles within the city's street network. **P**

How to ... make plans for the May holidays.

На дачу *Going to the dacha*

Что вы делаете на майские праздники? *What are you doing for the May holidays?*

Вы едете на дачу? Можно с вами? *Are you going to the dacha? Can I join you?*

Мы собираемся на шашлыки. Поехали? *We're going for shashlik. Are you coming?*

Я хочу с вами на шашлыки. Что взять с собой? *I want to come with you for shashlik. What should I bring?*

Поездка *A little trip*

Куда едете на майские праздники? *Where are you going for the May holidays?*

Я хочу в Суздаль. Вы там были? Вам понравилось? *I want to go to Susdal. Have you been? Did you like it?*

Как лучше доехать в Суздаль? *What's the best way to get to Susdal?*

Кострома – красивый город? Там есть, что посмотреть? *Is Kostroma a pretty town? Is there much to see there?*

Сколько стоит билет до Ярославля? *How much is a ticket to Yaroslavl?*

Сколько туда ехать? *How long does it take to get there?*

Где жить *Where to stay*

Вы знаете хорошую гостиницу во Владимире? *Do you know a good hotel in Vladimir?*

Эта гостиница в центре города? *Is the hotel in the centre of town?*

Сколько стоит номер? Так дорого?! *How much is the room? So much?!*

У вас есть горячая вода? *Do you have hot running water?*

Цена включает завтрак? *Does that price include breakfast?*

Courtesy of RUSLINGUA
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Ruslingua



Getta dacha quick!

By Vladimir Kozlov

As summer approaches, Moscow residents who don't own dachas, begin thinking about renting one for a few months, a tradition that has been going for at least a couple hundred years. But this year, Muscovites might be more eager to get out of the city for the summer months, remembering the hell which reigned here last August when heavy smog from peat-bog fires in the vicinity invaded the city.

But those who want to escape from the city to the countryside for the summer period have to be prepared to see higher prices than last year, as crisis-time deep discounts become history.

"In the wake of the extremely hot weather last summer, the demand for summer cottages increased by roughly 15 per cent [this year]," Irina Yulmetieva, Head of Relocation Services at Four

Squares, told Passport. "The dacha season in Moscow Oblast begins in May and ends in late September. The first requests for renting dachas are normally filed in late January. By mid-April, the most attractive offers find their leaseholders."

And as the recent financial meltdown is further and further behind, prices go up, making people consider options located further away from the city.

"In 2010, the demand shifted towards property located in more remote parts of Moscow Oblast," Dmitry Tsvetkov, director of the countryside property department at Penny Lane Realty, told Passport. "This was explained by price hikes, which prompted potential leaseholders to consider options located further away [from Moscow]. This year, this trend has continued."

"In February 2011, demand for countryside houses continued to go up, with

an increase amounting to 43 per cent from the January figure," Maria Zhukova, first deputy director of MIEL-Arenda, told Passport. "The number of offers also went up, by 64 per cent. This leads us to the conclusion that the activity in the market is increasing due to the beginning of the summer season."

Zhukova added that in March, activity in the countryside rental market continued to step up, with the total supply increasing by 72 per cent, month on month, and the demand increasing twofold from the previous month.

According to Tsvetkov, the most popular budget requested by potential leaseholders is about \$10,000 a month, which would allow them to rent a furnished cottage in a top-quality residential compound with a guarded territory and developed infrastructure, located no further than 30 km from the Moscow Ring Road



(MKAD) in any requested direction. The total area of a cottage of this kind would be between 300 sq. m. and 400 sq. m.

Tsvetkov added that houses located between 15 km and 30 km away from Moscow are in the highest demand.

"The most wanted directions are Rublyovskoye, Mozhayskoye, Minskoye and Dmitrovskoye Shosses," Yulmetieva said. "Old cottage compounds in Moscow's vicinity, which were built in the late 19th and early 20th century for summer recreation of governmental, scientific and artistic elites, are also in demand. Many of those are located close to a river or lake. But the downside of those offers is the insufficient security level."

"The West and South West directions traditionally remain the most expensive in the range under 30 km from MKAD," Zhukova said. "There is an interesting situation in the East and South East directions, where not a single property is on the offer in the range between 30 km and 50 km away from Moscow."

Although there are people who prefer living in the countryside to the urban life-style and rent countryside houses permanently, as opposed to moving out of town just for the summer months, the majority of potential leaseholders of out-of-town property are still looking to spend the year's warmest part there.

According to Tsvetkov, 60% of customers' requests for countryside property come from those looking to rent a house only for the summer. Certainly, prices are likely to be higher for them, but, the difference is normally within the 10-15% range.

"The highest activity in the market is normally in the spring months as leaseholders want to move in before the beginning of the summer," Tsvetkov said, adding that the March through May period normally sees a twofold to threefold increase in demand for countryside property rental.

At MIEL-Arenda, the highest demand is for the price range between \$1,000 and \$3,000 a month, which accounted for two thirds of all countryside rental requests. The lowest segment, below \$1,000 a month, accounted for eight per cent, the \$3,000-\$5,000 range for 12 per cent, and the highest end \$5,000-\$10,000 and above \$10,000 segments accounted for 5.5% and just over one per cent, respectively.

As the real estate market rebounds from the crisis, interest in the most expensive offers returns. "One important trend this year in the countryside rental market is customers' renewed interest in



expensive, but adequately priced offers," Tsvetkov said. "One of the examples of such options is a house in the cottage compound Nikolskaya Sloboda, located 12 km away from MKAD on Novorizhskoye Shosse. The monthly rent is \$50,000. The offer features a one-hectare plot of land with landscape design and an artificial pond with a summer pavilion. In addition to the 650 sq. meter main house, there are a garage for four cars and an apartments for domestic personnel, a spa-complex with two banyas, a kitchen, a dining room, a mantelpiece room, a recreation room and guest bedroom, and a barbecue place."

The highest price offer in the Rublyovo-Uspenskoye Shosse area would set the leaseholder back \$70,000 a month, featuring a 900 sq. meter house with top-quality interior decoration and furniture in Zhukovka, nine kilometers from MKAD. The house features a swimming pool, a gym, a billiard room, and a 0.4 hectare wood territory is attached to it.

Meanwhile, those looking for a really inexpensive summerhouse option potentially have a lot to choose from, but the offers in the lowest price range are unlikely to satisfy most customers. "Demand for inexpensive cottages with a rent under 30,000 roubles a month is small, it is three times lower than the supply," Zhukova said. "Potential leaseholders probably realize that it is difficult to find a property that would satisfy a customer's demands is difficult. The demand could go up as the season approaches and less demanding customers begin to express interest." She added that as the summer season approaches, demand for summer houses in the range between 30,000 roubles and 90,000 roubles a month, increased by 84%.

Realtors predict that prices in the countryside rental market are set to go up, but gradually. "If the prices go up, that is going to happen slowly," Tsvetkov said, adding that last year's heat and peatbog fires in Moscow's vicinity, which resulted in heavy smog over Moscow, could prompt potential leaseholders to be more active this year.

According to Yulmetieva, among the key reasons why people choose to rent a dacha for the summer are their desire to have a rest from the poor environmental conditions in the big city and to spend summer with the family in a comfortable environment.

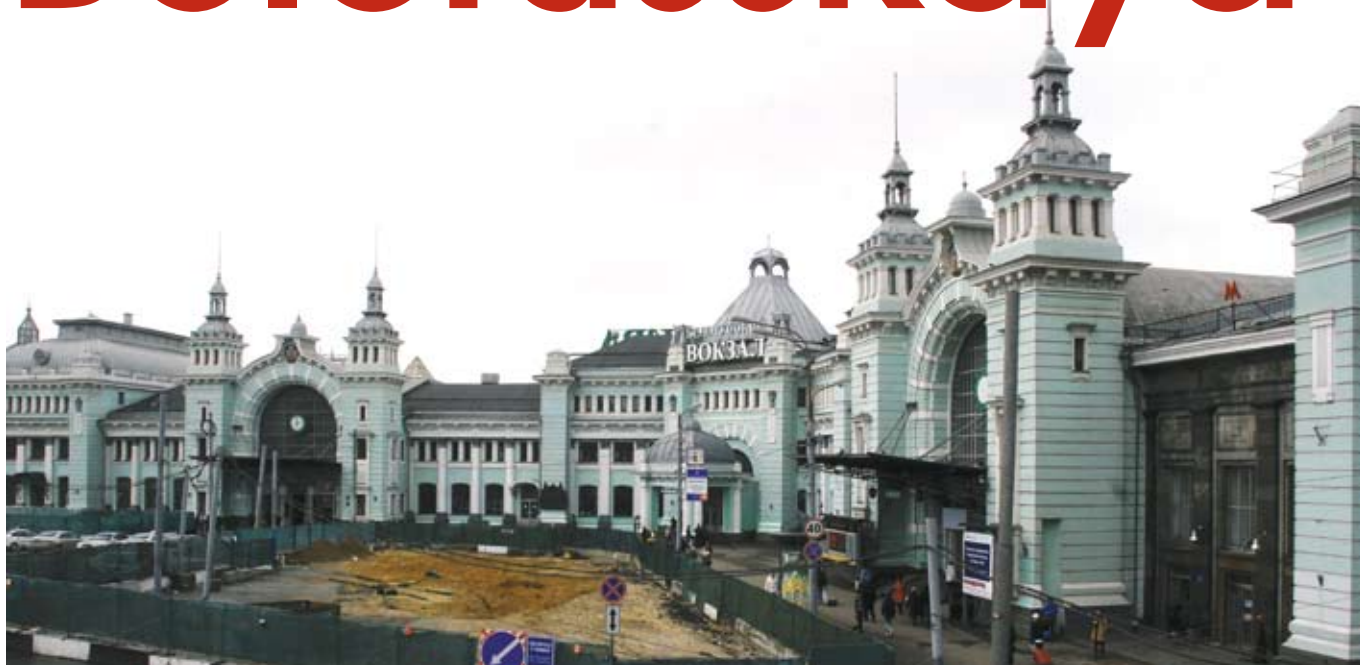
Yulmetieva said that people looking to rent a summer house are normally concerned with the transport situation, preferring options no further away than 10 km from MKAD and security, with guarded-territory compounds having an upper hand over other options. Potential leaseholders also want woods and a river or lake to be located in walking distance and the house's territory to include parking spaces, a children's playground and a barbecue place.

There are several factors that potential leaseholders of summer houses should watch out for to avoid problems. "Demand from your agency the most comprehensive offer that includes all the details," Yulmetieva said. "[Also demand] the inspection of the landlord's documents and a visit at a time when the transport situation is best."

"While choosing a countryside house, one has to pay attention to what is located in the vicinity and, in case you plan to commute to work in the city, to the transport accessibility," Tsvetkov suggested. **P**

Belorusskaya

Belorussky Vokzal



Katrina Marie
Photos by John Harrison

"Belorusskaya: this lively corner of Moscow," writes Vladimir Gilyarovskiy in *Moscow and the Muscovites*. A junction of modern yet vintage, sleek yet chaotic, and foreign yet familial, Belorusskaya is a true duality; a place where one can explore dilapidated Soviet factories with a Starbucks caramel macchiato in hand. Millions of Moscow drivers curse this messy construction-laden intersection, but an afternoon meander amongst its backstreets soothes the senses.

We begin at the Belorusskaya Metro station on the Koltsevaya (Ring) line. Opened in 1952, this airy homage to Belarusian folk features ornate overhead mosaics and red and cream tiles underfoot resembling a Belorussian quilt.

Follow exit signs to Lesnaya ulitsa. The aptly named "Forest street" was home to a lumberyard and market up until the 20th century, which is still echoed in the neighboring streets of Novolesnoy. With the invention of the tram and the trolleybus, the area became a central depot. You'll see them tucked here and there, lining side streets and filling parking lots.

Turn right at Aleksandra Nevskovo ulitsa. At left, the neighborhood Miuskaya park is popular with grannies pushing prams, no matter the time of year. Fathers bustle and holler at football while children tackle the looming monument of Soviet author Aleksandr Fadeyev.

The area retains its historical contrast between blue-collar factory workers (who initially lived in cheap wooden cabins) and the scientific and educational institutes that rose up in the late 1890s.

Round the corner left onto Chayanova ulitsa, named in honor of scientist and economist Aleksandr Chayanov (1888-1937), an expert of Russian agrarian economics. For his service to the state, like so many, Chayanov was swept up in the purges of the 1930s and executed in 1937.

At #15, say hello to the pillared beauty of the Russian State Humanitarian University, a charming example of neoclassic

style. Just left of the university entrance is the lovely Tsvetaev Museum, which features an impressive collection of treasures from Ancient Egypt to Medieval times. The museum is open Tuesday - Saturday. More information may be found at <http://museum.rsuh.ru/tsvetaev/museum.htm>

Continuing on, turn left onto 1-Miuskaya ulitsa, passing the noteworthy buildings of the Russian University of Chemical Technology named after Mendeleyev at left, and Institute of Applied Mathematics at right.

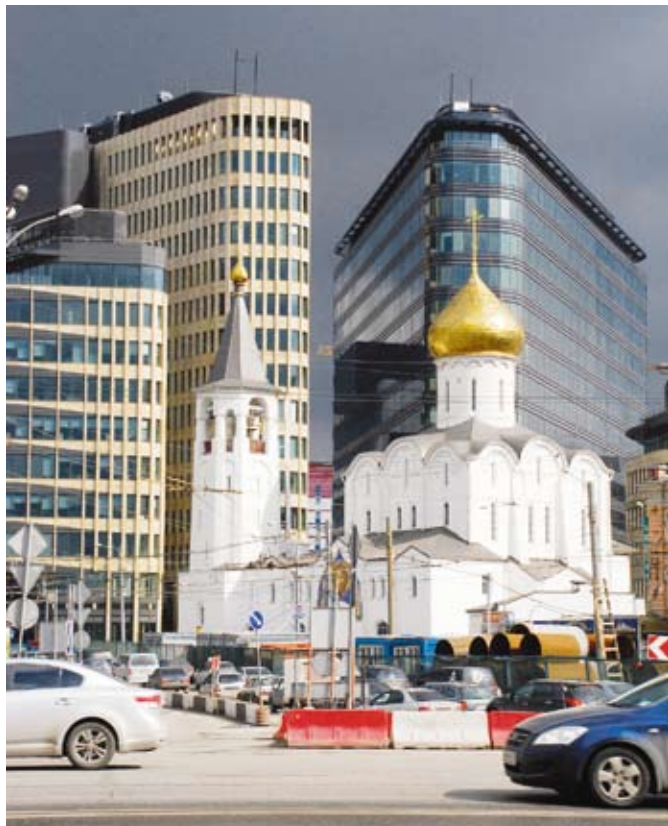
At Lesnaya ulitsa, turn left to return toward the Metro, noticing immediately at #20, the sprawling masonry of the trolleybus park. Part of the building is now a furniture and design store, but it still retains an old-school *stolovaya*. From this depot, during World War I, special "sanitary" trams were used to transport the wounded from major train stations, such as Belorusskaya, to local hospitals.

At #18, the notable Zuyev House of Culture, initially created as a club for local tram workers, was built in 1928 by architect Ilya Golosov. Architectural lovers are drawn to this perfect example of Moscow constructivism. Its main dramatic feature, a pedestal-like cylinder of glistening glass blocks, plunges into an impervious concrete rectangle.

Continuing on, one passes the gloomy apartment house at #8, the infamous location of the death of journalist Anna Politkovskaya. Flowers are sometimes left at its entrance in her memory.

Ahead at right lies the new business center White Square. The remains of Moscow history fall away like dust as the vestiges of new Moscow become visible: Starbucks, Le Pain Quotidien, Cofeemania, Toro Grille, and even an organic Bio Market, to name a few. Built of polished stone in neutrals and sleek glass, for a moment, one could be in any American downtown.

Not to be ignored, the distinctive cathedral of St. Nicholas in Tverskaya Zastava appears to bristle at its current state, sandwiched between the busy metro entrance and Starbucks, flanked by unrelenting traffic and earsplitting construction.



The gleaming gold onion dome, stark white exterior, and dramatic belfry of this Old Believer church makes this one of Moscow's landmark buildings. Completed in 1921 in ancient Novgorod style, St. Nicholas in Tverskaya Zastava beautifully captures a former time. The church's doors didn't remain open long, however; in 1935, the church was closed and used as an air defense storehouse during World War II, and later a sculptors' studio. But perhaps it was just happy to survive intact; two neighboring churches completed in a similar style were destroyed.

Today's sprawling Tverskaya Zastava square bears no resemblance to its former self. Indeed, it feels less like a square than a giant jumble of streets, construction digs and awkward pedestrian-packed wooden "sidewalks". The impressive Be-

lorusskaya train station even appears to draw back from the maddening mayhem.

From the 1800s to the mid-1900s, the square was dominated by a Triumphal Arch, first erected in 1814 to commemorate Russia's victory over Napoleon (removed in the 1960s). Now the square is perpetually torn up, with hopes that a new interchange will eventually improve the nightmarish traffic situation. Underground, the architects plan a large shopping mall with grocery stores, movie theaters and restaurants. But of course, nearly six years later, construction timetables have slipped, and the chaos continues.

Heading east, Butyrskiy Val bears the name of the infamous near-by Butyrskaya prison (Novoslobodskaya ulitsa 45). Founded by Catherine the Great, the prison was the starting point for the harsh forced march to Siberia exile that so vividly captured the empathy of fellow citizens.

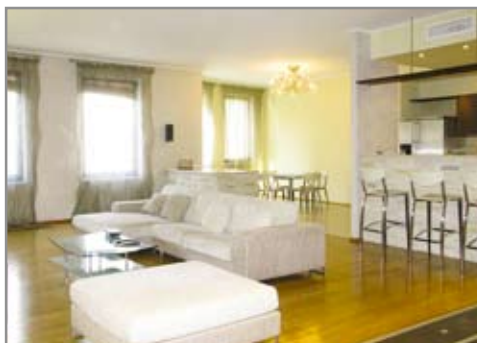
From the square, round St. Nicholas to re-enter the Koltsevaya line of Belorusskaya Metro. Follow signs to "Belorussky Vokzal" (upon exiting the station, head left). Featured briefly in the *Bourne Supremacy*, this beautiful neoclassic and gothic-style train station opened in 1870 and was later reconstructed in the early 1900s. It is the departure point for journeys westward, including Smolensk, Kaliningrad, Vilnius, Warsaw, Berlin, Minsk, and is also Sheremetyevo airport via the Aeroexpress.

More notably, Belorussky Vokzal served as the primary departure and return point for troops headed for the front in World War II, as evinced by the Russian 1970s psychological war drama "Belorussky Vokzal". The station was the scene of tearful sad good-byes, and later happy hurrahs as returning troops were greeted by cheering crowds. In 1945, the station temporarily took on the nickname "Victory Station". It is also the sister-station of the Berlin Hauptbahnhof.

Return to the Metro and transfer to the green Zamoskvoretskaya line. Opened in 1938 and designed by architects Ivan Taranov and Nadezhda Bykova, this pretty station is again decorated in Belarusian motives. Inviting pink marble is elegantly intermixed with contrasting black marble, leaving an impression that, much like this "lively corner of Moscow", is both disparate and fresh. **P**



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Restaurant Vesna



Every spring, the restaurant "Vesna" (Spring) opens an elegant summer veranda on Novy Arbat, which has become a favorite place for guests to plunge into the evening cool of a hot day. This summer you will find a light and fresh menu: Italian, Japanese and Mediterranean cuisine, new cool cocktails and a cozy atmosphere. In "Vesna" you can hold a business meeting, invite your relatives to a family dinner or relax before going to a party.

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Everyday Terrace



Due to its location in Krasnopresnensky Park and a sophisticated summer menu, Everyday Terrace has become a breath of fresh air during the hot Moscow summer. Brand chef Bruno Marino has developed a menu with an emphasis on Mediterranean cuisine—fresh fish, seafood and meat prepared over coals, and also a huge selection of snacks. An elegant veranda designed for the Moscow summer by designer Konstantin Matrosov, known for restaurant projects NOA, Maisoncafe and Soho Rooms provides guests with a relaxing environment. Everyday Terrace is for you. Everyday Terrace by Imperia Lounge.

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Ragout



Charles Borden

Chef Ilya Shalev

As I walked down 2nd Brestakaya Street from Belorusskaya station one evening, a mutely lit restaurant, full of smartly dressed young diners, beckoned from large street-side windows. The simple sign read Ragout. I'd heard good reports about Ragout, so a week later, when Joel Babb was in town from Paris, we stopped by for lunch. Ragout drew me back the next day for another lunch, and then I lured PASSPORT publisher John Ortega in for a tasting dinner.

There are so many reasons to return to Ragout; the food is exquisite and wonderfully presented, the service polite without hovering, the setting relaxed and cheerful, and the prices astoundingly reasonable.

There's a chef-artist at work at Ragout, Ilya Shalev, a Stavropol native who emigrated with his family twenty years ago. He returned to Russia after study at Cordon Bleu, and a stint with super chef and nouvelle cuisine pioneer Alain Senderens. It was Senderens who famously gave up his

three Michelin stars, closed his illustrious Lucas Carton in Paris and converted it to a relaxed urban casual, yet food-as-art venue.

Shalev apparently co-owns the Ragout with three partners, including Ekaterina Drozhdova. Ms. Drozhdova is former owner of Simple Things, a gastro-pub concept that drew a recommendation from *Food and Wine*. Shalev and Drozhdova are apparently Slow Food advocates.

Ragout's menu, a single page, reflects the nouvelle cuisine influence, with a few nods to Asian and Russian. The business lunch offers a selection of Starter&Salad plus Soup at 350 roubles, or 600 roubles with an added Main Dish. I took the *Sweet Beetroot, Hazelnut Puree and Beet Leaves with Walnut Dressing (250r)*, *Moroccan Style Tomato Soup with Ginger, Honey and Cumin (250r)*, and *Tortelloni with Corn, Truffle Essence and Thyme Sauce (350r)*. Despite the business lunch bargain price, the portions were full-size, not a crippled business version typical at other Moscow establishments.



I stabbed through the heap of very fresh beet leaves to the tender beets slices, being sure to pick up some of the thick hazelnut puree. Wow! The mildly spiced tomato soup was refreshing, accented with soft whole cumin and coriander seeds that provided small bursts of flavor. The hand-made thick-walled, al dente tortelloni contained whole sweet corn kernels and swam in a thick bright yellow, slightly sweet corn/truffle flavored sauce. Double wow!

The wine prices stunned me; there were excellent bottles at just 900 roubles, including a favorite, Chilean Montes Sauvignon Blanc. It was clear that someone at Ragout knew their wines, and cared about price/value when putting together the wine list. Bottle prices cluster around 1500-1800 roubles, for wines that would be twice that or more on other Moscow wine lists. I don't do wine with lunch so we settled for a simple litre of Arkhiz Caucasus mountain spring water, set on the table in a stoppered bottle at just 50 roubles.

When I returned with John Ortega, I sampled more selections: *Oriental Salad with Red Cabbage, Poached Chicken and Asian Peanut Butter Dressing* (450r), a sphere pressed from shredded chicken laid over a red cabbage in an Asian dressing, and topped with a generous layer of tasty peanut sauce; and *Marseilles Style Fish Soup* (300r), thick and spicy, served with cheese-topped, crisp bread slices and a Provencal style rouille sauce. For entrées we added *Flat Veal Chop with Celeriac Puree and Caramelized Fennel* (450r), the generous slice of veal pounded thin before cooking; very tender; *Chicken Leg Stuffed with Chicken Breast, with Mushroom Risotto and Sauce* (400r); and *Green Risotto with Prawns and Coquille St. Jacques* (600r), further attestations to the chef's skills.

The desserts looked equally intriguing. I went for *Steamed Pudding with Ginger and Crème Anglaise* (250r)—heavily! I hope I heard correctly that the pudding will be on Shalev's Spring menu, which should be out by the time you read this.

Here is my choice for a return dinner for two, here it is:

Borden's Dinner for Two at Ragout

Prawn Tempura with Avocado-Ginger-Tomato Salsa with Papaya Sauce and Curry Chips	350r
Sweet Beetroot, Hazelnut Puree and Beet Leaves with Walnut Dressing	250r
Tortelloni with Corn, Truffle Essence and Thyme Sauce	350r
Veal Chop with Celeriac Puree and Caramelized Fennel	450r
Steamed Pudding with Ginger and Crème Anglaise	250r
Montes Sauvignon Blanc (750ml)	900r
Arkhiz Caucasus Mountain Spring Water (liter)	50r
Total	2600r

Ragout was packed on each visit, understandably so. At the end of the evening, John declared Ragout among the very best of Moscow's restaurants; I certainly agree. From menu, to presentation, to taste, Shalev demonstrates remarkable care and skill. I hope Ragout's affordable-quality formula will not be ignored by many Moscow restaurateurs who have thought that raising prices and minimizing chef costs are solutions to filling empty tables. **P**

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PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREY K.



An Exhibition of Vivienne Westwood Shoes 1973-2011

Text by Valeria Astakhova

If there were no Vivienne, she would have to have been invented. Without her the world would be a greyer and more boring place. Born Vivienne Isabel Swire, and known to the world as Vivienne Westwood, this lady brightened up Moscow's late spring with a idea-radiating display of shoes. A well-known British designer, and one of the creators of the Punk style in fashion, she transported 133 unique pairs of shoes to Moscow with the help of DHL. The legendary sail-cloth shoes "Sahara," created in 1999, her Toile Print Boot created out of printed cloths, her Super Elevated Gillie shoes, which she demonstrated in 1993, and many others. Every pair of shoes which she creates is a unique mo-



ment in contemporary design. Looking at her boots with flopping tips or with clenched fingers, you are right there with Lewis Carol or Pamela Travers. Vivienne is saying that we ourselves are capable of adding magic to the world, and make it a better place.

Moscow was the opening night for grand international tour of this exhibition of Vivienne's shoes. DHL is about to take the exhibition to Beirut, Peking, Hong Kong and Tokyo. **P**



Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Russia

Marina Kashpar

Even if a child lives with his parents, he often dreams of having an elder brother or sister. This is even more important for children who live in nursery homes or in orphanages. How desperately sometimes they need an older friend! The International organization Big Brothers and Big Sisters tries to help lonely children to find such companions to fill in, at least partly, the lack of parents. People who can, at least partly, bring back joy and hope to lives, to inflame the light of love and trust.

This organization has been working since 2006 in Russia. The Russian chapter of Big Brothers Big Sisters is just one part of a large international volunteer program Big Brothers Big Sisters, one of the most effective international programmes of individual guidance for unfortunate children.

Nowadays this program is effectively acting in 13 countries of the world (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Netherlands, Island, Poland, Bulgaria, Israel, Bermuda, South Africa and Russia).

The mission of the Big Brothers Big Sisters guidance programme is to help children ("Juniors") to fulfil their life potential through communication with adult volunteer-tutors ("Seniors").

People who are participating in this programme are called volunteers. Everybody of full legal age and who has passed psychological tests which the charity stipulates may become a volunteer. In the West the Big Brothers Big Sisters is widely known and popular. The number of volunteers sometimes exceeds the number of children. In Russia the charity is still establishing itself.

At present, from the first day that Big Brothers Big Sisters in Russia started its work here, 136 junior-senior pairs have been organized. Of course, this number is not so impressive if you bear in mind we work with five Moscow nursery homes and orphanages. But, on the other hand, 136 girls and boys are not so lonely now, they have older friends, tutors, whom they can meet, and talk and communicate with every week. Once a month, Big Brothers Big Sisters in Russia holds so called mini holidays—joint tea-parties for such pairs.

On the 26th of March, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art played host to Big Brothers Big Sisters in Russia. The agenda included the following master-classes for children and adults: making model aeroplanes, sewing toys, learning photographic techniques, creating plasticine animated cartoons. Afterwards,



an excursion around the Museum exposition was held. The holiday finished with the tea and delicacies for all the guests.

Four times a year, Big Brothers Big Sisters in Russia gathers all participants of the programme to enjoy a bigger kind of holiday. The next one will be held in May, at the Spaso-Andronikov monastery. There will be a great festival of kites.

Those who are interested in more detailed information about Big Brothers Big Sisters in Russia program or wants to take part in it, please, contact : **P**

Maria Gorbyleva
Tel 8 903 961 27 39
www.nastavniki.org

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- Enrolment for September can also be done now as space is limited.

St Patrick's Day concert

This year, St Patrick's Day was celebrated differently from the way it has been in recent times. There was no parade, which the Moscow City authorities are said to have wanted to prevent. Instead, there was a packed concert in the Dom Muziki which showcased Irish talent of a variety of sorts. Perhaps most predictably, but nonetheless triumphantly, there were Irish dancers, hands firmly at their sides, clippety-clopping away like Michael Flatly to the sound of wonderful fiddle music. The surprise, on this occasion, was that the group were not Irish at all, they were Russian. This was the Iridan, or Irish Dance School, and they performed beautifully. Indeed, the whole effect was so authentic that the girls even had Irish-style legs—rather than the Russian variety which appear better adapted for an elegant heels-up, ballet-style, than a rousing knees-up, Irish style. Failte were a folk group who not only looked Irish but were, as of course is the Ambassador, Philip McDonagh, who graced the occasion with readings of his own poems, some of which he actually sang. ("Такой талантливый посол," someone muttered next to me.) In both cases he was accompanied by Lily Neil on Irish harp, surely one of the most beautiful of all instruments, and perfectly adapted to the role of accompanying sensitive poetry. (If you don't know her music, try to find a copy of her CD: *The Habit*



of a Foreign Sky.) But most unexpected, to me at any rate, was the piano recital, by Michael O'Rourke, of music by the Irish composer, John Field, who lived in St Petersburg in the early nineteenth century, and died in Moscow, where he is buried. Taken overall, this was a style of concert which ought to be repeated every year, irrespective of the issues which, some say, surround parades. Why not have both parade and concert? After all, only a few hundred were able to enjoy the concert, whereas the parade is free for anyone. Can it really be that the Russian authorities are so nervous these days that they fear a "Shamrock revolution"? If so, they should have a pint of Guinness and relax. *Ian Mitchell* **P**

AEB & World Bank Briefing

The UK Embassy and the Association of European Businesses hosted a top quality economic briefing by experts at the World Bank at the end of March. A surprisingly small audience was absorbed by a presentation packed with facts and thoughtful analysis, and then quizzed the speakers carefully. In a week when invited experts had vigorously slammed the Kremlin's economic performance, the timing was ideal. Pedro Alba, WB Country Director for Russia got us going. If 2010 was the bounceback year with 4% growth led by restocking, 2011 is the consolidation phase, with 4.5% growth, increasingly driven by consumer spending. The baton was taken up by Zeljko Bogetic, lead economist. Despite the several exogenous and unpredictable shocks from The Maghreb to Honshu, world growth remains solid this year. Russia sits, fittingly, between the OECD 2% and the NIC 6% averages. With the shrinkage of 2009 almost reversed, the figures for unemployment, real wages and industrial output have proved better than many expected.

But Russia has plenty of risks. Containing inflation below the critical 10% is vital, but by no means assured. The short term spike of food and utility prices, up 17% and 25% respectively has been a major blow for the majority of Russians for whom these represent half of disposable income. A "middle class" of 55 million led to some sharp queries, but this figure includes many who are only just above a meanly-defined poverty line. The budget deficit appears to be a respectable 4.2% of GDP, and falling, but without oil, this would be 14%, and the Bank believes the government plan to get this in line is too timid and too slow. Public investment needs to rise sharply, but be better spent, and tighter money is essential to prevent rampant inflation. But with the presidential vote next year, the temptation for a traditional pre-election blowout may be irresistible. And the dire state of much of the infrastructure, the need for reform of public sector health and education sectors and pervasive corruption overshadow all planning forecasts.

A straw poll of the audience found a diversity of opinion. Many listeners thought that the report was generously over-



optimistic on economic growth, certainly when compared to the evidence from their sectors, and made rather too light of the throttling constraints of corruption and creaking infrastructure. On the other hand, with several supposedly more mature EU economies already in hospital or waiting for the ambulance, Russia's performance looks healthy in comparison. Spanish and Portuguese listeners were especially circumspect, and the Irish unusually quiet.

And we ended with oil. Blessing or curse? The means to help the poor and the old in difficult times, against the risk of inertia in the modernisation drive. The cash for investment, but a distortion of the exchange rate. With the African risk premium pushing prices up \$20, now consolidated as a tight supply limit, Russia has increased output to its capacity constraints. There remains a risk of a further \$20+ hike if there is another confidence shock. And a sustained price above \$120 would trigger a relapse into global recession. On that distinctly equivocal note, our energetic host Caroline Wilson, Minister Counselor for Economic and Trade & Investment at the Embassy, bade us farewell, and immediately returned to the fray to chair the next seminar, on energy efficiency in the economy. A sign of the times, perhaps? An excellent session. *Ross Hunter* **P**

Australian Film Festival

On Wednesday 16th March the 9th annual Australian film festival opened at the Khudozhestvenny Theatre in Arbat square with a reception and the showing of the film *Lantana*, a psychological thriller that was critically acclaimed on release and heralded as one of Australia's best films of recent times. The Australian film industry has been on the rise since the 1970s and, alongside a clutch of modern films, the Festival aired one of the classics which put the country on the map in the first place: *Breaker Morant*. This is a still-relevant tale of an Australian volunteer who fought for the British Empire in the Boer War (South Africa, 1899-1902) and committed what were, technically, war crimes by killing Boer prisoners. But he had probably been ordered to do. But Morant showed no reluctance to obey an arguably illegal command. He was not a clear victim of British Army machinations. His defence went beyond the unwritten and never subsequently disclosed (nothing new there) orders, allegedly from Lord Kitchener himself, as there was clear provocation. After the Boers had killed



the brother of the woman Morant was engaged to be married to, they mutilated the body and went around wearing his uniform. The film explored, through the story of the subsequent court martial (and eventual execution) of Morant, the whole issue of war crimes and warfare against irregular "partisans" (today,

read: terrorists) who are not in uniform and do not always themselves observe the rules of warfare (such as they are). *Breaker Morant* was a thought-provoking film, as well as being beautifully made. The Russian I took to see it was still talking about it a week later.

Ian Mitchell **P**



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Old fart—lonely heart

Anth Ginn

As a bitter and twisted old fart, typical of my generation, I spend lots of time sitting in front of daytime TV, ranting and raving at the news. I'm oblivious of the fact that the faces on the screen can't hear me. Senility started sooner than I expected. Besides, even if they're deaf to my rants of wisdom, piercing questions, and general babble through the glass window, it's worth swearing out loud at the news, for the therapeutic effects alone.

One of the pieces of technology that has made it into my 1960s, warped, psychedelic, analogue world, is the digi-box. This wonderful, cheap, little machine is plugged between the TV and the aerial, and gives me access to a couple of dozen free TV channels, increasing the available channels from five to thirty. Every week or so sees another mysterious channel appears on the menu. Many of them do nothing but sell junk. After midnight, several channels show sleazy soft porn ads for expensive telephone lines offering comfort for the lonely. The little plastic box that provides access to this fascinating world, regularly updates itself, and automatically adds new channels when it feels like it.

A few weeks ago I noticed two new channels had nestled in next to Sky News, RT and Al Jazeera. RT is the acronym for Russia Today, Al Jazeera is a bloke who works in Rihad. RT is on air 24 hours a day, Al Jazeera didn't get home from work until 6 o'clock every evening, so I found myself watching RT most of the time.

After years of BBC News 24 and Sky, RT is a breath of fresh air. It provides a much more balanced view of events both in the UK and around the world. For example, if you'd watched the coverage of the massive demonstration in London, on March 26th, RT would have told you there were about 250,000 people taking part. The BBC said the demonstration was attended by two old hippies with a dog on a string. Sky said the march consisted of a solitary dog with a piece of string around its neck, the owners having retired to the pub. Similarly, in Libya the BBC reports that the civilian damage consists of a broken teapot and spilt jug of milk, Sky tells us the teapot lid was merely cracked and the milk was spilt at least ten minutes before the cruise missile exploded. RT informs us of hundreds of civilian casualties.

As someone who grew up in the cold war, believing everything that came out of Russia was soviet propaganda, void of factual content, it's a surprise to see that the tables have been turned, and the news from Moscow is now more reliable than the news from London.

My shift in viewing habits has been noticed in Washington, where Hillary Clinton recently mentioned RT, "The Russians have

opened up an English language network. I've seen it a couple of times and it's quite instructive." She claims the US is losing the information war, adding that the private US media was not up to the job, and was being killed by stations like Al Jazeera and RT. "You may not agree with it, but you feel like you're getting real news around the clock instead of a million commercials ... the kind of stuff that we do on our news which, you know, is not particularly informative to us, let alone foreigners."

RT has also introduced us to the ex-stockbroker turned revolutionary of the airwaves, Max Keiser and his half hour news programme, "The Kaiser Report". Max is fast becoming a cult hero in the UK with his ascerbic attacks on the "criminal bankers", who are "counterfeiting billions of dollars and calling it quantitative easing". The BBC wouldn't even let Max in to use the bathroom, let alone broadcast his twice weekly TV programme.

RT has other benefits, besides its more balanced approach to the news, and Max's stock market tips, I'm learning about the new Russia. The tractor factories seem to have been replaced by gold and silver workshops, full of artisans creating delicate ornaments and jewelry. Most young men drive Mercedes, (or was it, "want to drive Mercedes"?) and most young women are models in expensive fur coats. The food looks much better than I ever imagined and I've discovered that Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky are the greatest writers in the world.

RT also has a strong presence on the web. One of the features of RT.com is the "Meet Friends", section, where, "you can meet smart, funny, educated, crazy and loveable Russians". You simply fill in your profile, upload some photos and state what kind of person you're looking for. Once you've found someone you're interested in, you get acquainted.

This is how I met Natasha, who works in a steel factory in Omsk. Now I know what you're thinking, "He's sixty one, she's twenty two. I know where this is going." In fact, this was my wife's reaction when I told her I was going on a cultural exchange to Omsk's Dostoyevsky Museum of Literature and the Vrubel Museum of Fine Arts. Natasha would merely be my cultural guide and interpreter.

Russia is such a romantic country, and after a few days going round the museums, and visiting the Pushkin state library, well, one thing led to another. To cut a long story short, I think my wife was glad to see the back of me. She's also been on RTs "Meet Friends" and is in touch with a young silversmith in Petersburg. RT has awakened a strong attraction to Mother Russia for her too. **P**



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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 an American woman who is having trouble meeting guys here. I noticed that there is a speed dating event here in Moscow each month. Do you think it's worth a try? Or do you think I should join some web-based dating services (which seem to have very few men based in Moscow).

Dear Speedy:

As much as you don't want to hear this, there are two types of people: those who need a dating service and those who don't. Everyone knows this basic truth, but no one ever says it aloud because it wouldn't be "PC" to do so.

It's all in the biology. The most mate-able have no trouble at all attracting the opposite sex in droves; the least, lead sad, lonely lives.

Whilst the proliferation of these dating websites and other services has done a great service for the unmate-able of this world by giving them a place to meet, it has the potential to be harmful for our species. After all, these people weren't supposed to reproduce.

I don't know you, so I can't say for certain which category you fall into, but it's looking pretty bad for you right now. On the other hand, ex-pats who live in Moscow are usually very mate-able in that they are adventurous, exciting and interesting.

Because of that, I suggest you leave it until the last possible moment to put that "L" on your forehead, my dear.

xxooDD

Dear Deidre:

I've always had one dream in life and that's to have kids and I want to get started, but my husband says that Moscow is nowhere to raise a child and we should wait until we go back to the UK. I don't think it would be a problem because of course I'd be a stay-at-home mom. What do you think?

Dear Needy:

I've never understood people whose dream is to have children. It's such an insipid and banal dream. You don't want to go into outer space? Live in Venice? Learn to fly a helicopter? Make an impact on the world? Be a little bi-curious and have a fling with a Russian woman?

My philosophy has always been that life is a vacation from nothingness: we were once nothing and we will return to being nothing. And all you can think to do with your vacation is reproduce? I guess you want to give another person this vacation from nothingness and that you hope they do more with it than you are clearly going to do. But being raised by you, I'm worried they won't.

You seem like one of those women who would have a picture of your child as your Facebook profile photo. Or who would send out holiday cards with only images of your kids. In other words, the kind of woman who erases herself completely and lives only to raise her children. To be fair, I just checked out my Facebook friends list and this seems to be the case with almost every mother.

Spooky stuff.

That all being said, I think it would be cool to be born in Russia and would give this kid some chance of growing up with remarkable dreams, so you should definitely start here. Tell your husband he is overruled.

xxooDD

PS: Perchance, did you meet your husband through E-Harmony?

Dear Deidre:

I've been drinking a lot since I came to Russia and am thinking of going to an AA meeting. Do you think I could be an alcoholic or is it just a Moscow thing and once I leave, I'll stop?

Dear Greedy:

I don't believe in alcoholism. I mean I literally don't believe it exists.

But I do believe in the philosophy of Rilke and live by his *Letters to a Young Poet*. Read these words of Rilke's:

"One must be so careful with names; it is so often the name of an offense that a life shatters upon, not the nameless and personal action itself, which was perhaps a quite definite necessity of that life and could have been absorbed by it without any trouble."

Don't dare walk into an AA meeting, for that will surely ruin your life. Drinking a lot is sometimes a necessity of life. Living in Moscow is a good example of a time when it's necessary.

I'm heading to LA this month for a bit. There's a town full of substance abuse. Perhaps I'll launch an organisation called "Addicts Anonymous", with the slogan "Maybe you don't have a problem", whilst I'm there. I could canvas AA meetings for recruits and turn them on to Rilke.

I think I might just do that because there's nothing better than having someone tell you you're okay.

So, mate, here it is: you're okay.

xxooDD

Dear Deidre:

Why are the men here so obsessed with the local women? I'm a Western guy and I just don't get it. I can see visiting a brothel here, but I just don't get the relationship stuff. It's really a mystery to me. Why? Why? Why?

Dear Seedy:

You think that's mysterious? There are far greater mysteries out there. Like, why does it rain methane on Titan? Or, who is the leader of Libya's opposition party? Or, why on Earth did they take the coke out of Coca-cola? And, is there any way to get it back in there???

And then there's the greatest mystery of them all: Why are women these days obsessed with vampires? Why? Why? Why?

xxooDD

Do you have a question for Deidre Dare? If so, please email her at ODeidre_Clark@hotmail.com.

Sputnik and Splatnik

Ian Mitchell

After the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's historic space flight in April, it is worth remembering that the event which really inaugurated the space age happened four years earlier, namely the launch, in October 1957, of Sputnik.

Matthew Brzezinski's fast-paced and fascinating book on the subject goes even further back, opening with a chilling description of the dawn of the rocket age with the German V-2. The world's first ballistic missile was a weapon of incredible technical sophistication by the standards of the time, which was why in 1945 the Americans seized not only all the unlaunched V-2s, but also their designer, Wernher von Braun.

The Soviets tried too but got much less. However, they made better use of their booty, giving their Germans everything they needed to work in comfort, and starting an ambitious programme of military rocket development. The Americans, by contrast, sent von Braun and his colleagues to Fort Bliss, a wired camp in the dusty, snake-infested west Texas desert. Once a week the aristocratic, cello-playing professor was allowed out, under supervision, to watch drunken roughnecks punching each other in the fly-blown bars of El Paso.

For five years von Braun bombarded everyone he could think of with ideas for new rockets, but was ignored. The only person who took him seriously was Walt Disney, who employed him to present a different kind of space programme on his new TV channel. Up to 1954, the total amount the US government had spent on satellite research was \$88,000.

By then, in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev was in charge and a gigantic rocket, the R-7, was on the drawing boards of Sergei Korolev and propulsion specialist Valentin Glushko (who gave his name to the Energomash rocket engine factory that still operates in Khimki). It was much bigger than anything under development in the United States for the simple reason that both nations intended their rockets to carry hydrogen bombs, and American ones were much

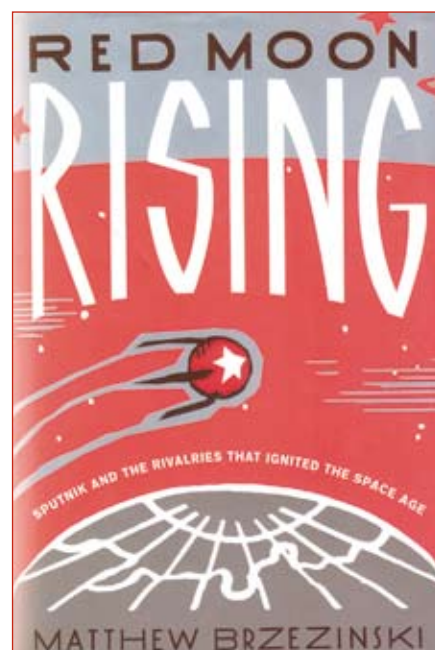
more compact than their Soviet counterparts.

With an economy in crisis, Khrushchev wanted to limit the defence budget by replacing armies, tanks and long-range bombers with ICBMs. He never thought about satellites. When Korolev suggested building an "artificial moon", he was given a grudging go-ahead, on condition that it did not interfere with the military rocket programme. Few wanted to divert scarce resources to such a "frivolous" project. It would take up a lot of time on the country's only large computer. One senior general objected because, though he could see why the Americans might want to spy from space on the Soviet Union, the reverse did not apply as Soviet intelligence agents could buy reliable maps at any gas-station in America.

In fact, since Korolev's huge rocket took nearly a day to erect, fuel and launch, it was useless as a weapon of war. American bombers could have destroyed it long before lift-off. The real significance lay in Sputnik, with its "nuclear" public relations impact, which both Khrushchev and Korolev missed—at least until their rivals inadvertently pointed it out to them.

The national panic—that is hardly too strong a word—which ensued after ordinary Americans realised that above their heads a Soviet space vehicle was passing by, and there was nothing their government could do about it, was so marked that even Khrushchev noticed. He noticed even more, when the USSR was suddenly seen abroad as a country to be admired, rather than feared as had been the aim of its ICBMs.

What was President Eisenhower doing to redress the imbalance? Playing golf, was the short answer. The press started referring to the White House as "the Tomb of the Well-known Soldier". When the United States launched the smaller Vanguard rocket by way of reply, it travelled just four feet before exploding spectacularly in a mushroom-shaped fireball. The press variously dubbed it Splatnik, Flopnik, Dudnik and Oopsnik. The Soviets jeered and offered technical assistance. America's humiliation was complete.



Red Moon Rising:
Sputnik and the Rivalries
that Ignited the Space Age
Matthew Brzezinski
Bloomsbury £8.99

But a great nation can stand defeat and mockery, and come back re-invigorated for a re-match. NASA was established shortly afterwards. The space budget tripled in two years and soon after Gagarin's flight, President Kennedy announced that America would put a man on the moon by 1970. Many in Washington felt it was a Rudyard Kipling moment. They recalled that after the fiasco of the Boer War, Kipling had written: "Let us admit it fairly, as a business people should: We have had no end of a lesson; it will do us no end of good."

After Sputnik and Gagarin, the Soviet Union leveraged its triumphs and was taken to be a scientific-technical super-power, which was only half true. Perhaps because they were not "business people", successive Soviet leaders refused to "admit fairly" that in the long run the space race was beyond the capacity of their economy to sustain.

In the 1980s, their nakedness was lethally exposed by the Star Wars project, which faced the Soviet Union with the apparent need to spend money it could never possibly find to counter a threat which, as we now know, never actually existed. That was America's best-kept secret. Ironically, the state which had lived by exploiting the gullibility of others, died as a result of its own gullibility, hoist by its secret petard. Kipling would surely have seen the poetic justice in that. **P**

ROOM

Anastasia Denisova

This remarkable novel was inspired by Josef Fritzl's incarceration of his daughter Elisabeth, however, we get to look at two people's imprisonment from a very unusual perspective. This book is not about agony, pain and despair of being trapped, it is about the bond that keeps Jack and his Ma safe and sane for years. This book is about a parent's love for their child, it is about surviving and discovering a brand new world.

We learn about Room (their 12ft-by-12ft domain) through Jack's eyes. He is a typical 5 years old boy who loves his five books, his few toys and crayons, and whose favourite past times are watching TV and playing with his Ma. There is only one thing that makes him different: he has never been outside Room.

The novel makes us explore very different Inside and Outside, compare the very unlike worlds of Jack and his Ma. We hear Jack's voice behind every word we read. We can only see what Jack sees and we can only feel what Jack feels, and throughout the first part of the novel we get to enjoy Jack's life with him and do "thousands of things" he gets to do every day. His language is coherent and clear and his thoughts are imaginative and naïve. Jack introduces us to every object that he is in contact with every day. For him they are his friends, for us they become characters called Plant, Rug, Sink, Skylight and Remote.

For Jack life is perfect. He is healthy and happy and Room is full of warmth, fun and undivided attention of his Ma. Jack's Ma, though trapped in the same space, finds herself in a very different world. She is a victim of a man we call Old Nick, who has detained her for seven years, who pays Room a visit every night to deliver food, take out the trash and rape her. He also is Jack's father.

The novel reaches its dramatic turning point when Jack and his Ma are freed. They suddenly find themselves having to learn to survive outside Room. They both struggle to get used to the Outer Space Jack assumed only existed on TV, having to star in it himself. Together with Jack, we are now facing a dilemma: is having one lollipop as a very special treat better than choosing from a jar of different flavours every day? Locked in a hospital, away from people and germs, hiding from paparazzi and relatives advising to get on with their lives we almost sympathise with their recurring craving of returning back to Room.

Emma Donoghue's Room is the kind of book you want to free up your day for. It is as if you become a part of it from the very first page and it ends leaving you with endless questions. If you were Ma, what would you miss the most from the outside world? What would you ask for a 'Sundaytreat' if you were Jack? How will Jack cope when he starts school? This is one of the most moving novels I've read in months. Room has been shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize 2010 and has had been awarded the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize amongst other awards. **P**



Room Emma Donoghue
Little, Brown and Company
ISBN: 978-0316098335

Buy in Moscow:

www.logobooks.ru from 369 rub

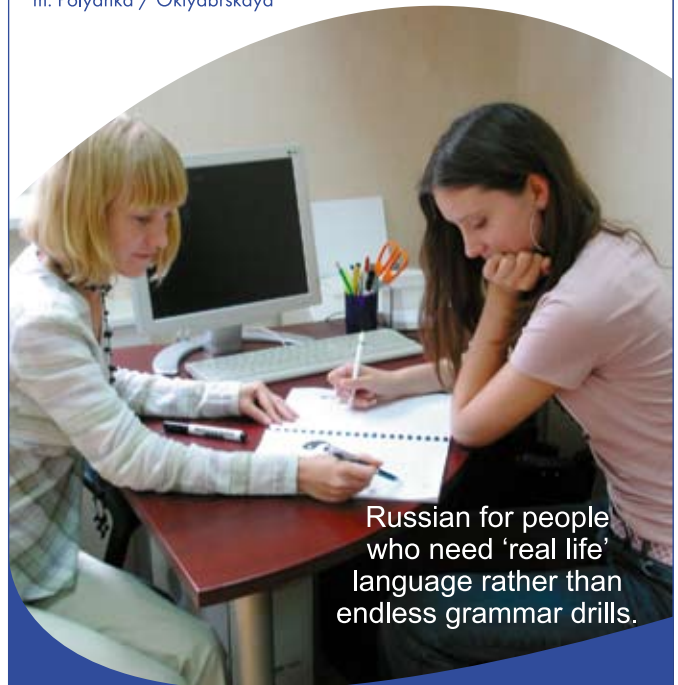
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Compiled by Ross Hunter

Looking Up! With the Darling Buds of May (W. Shakespeare, sonnet 18, published in PASSPORT, (February 2011) come better weather, and hopefully a warmer economic climate. So! Chin up, and lift your eyes. Here are three of Moscow's best roofs and ceilings, plus one from London to confuse you, above ground, and four of the best Metro concourse ceilings. As usual, they are mixed up. Can you match them up?



The ceiling of the Metropol Hotel (1901)



The British Museum (2000)



The roof of GUM (1897)



The roof of The Garage (1927)



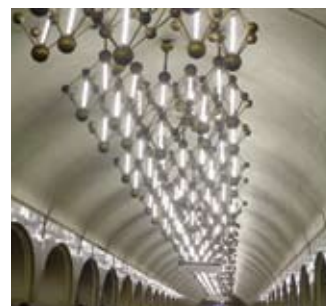
Mayakovskaya



Komsomolskaya



Mendelevskaya



Kropotkinskaya

Feeding Foxes

1 Meal times are hard with four hungry cubs, especially when they all want to be first. How many different ways can Lisa line up Dasha, Masha, Sasha and Boris at lunchtime?

2 To make her life easier, the twins, Dasha and Masha said 'Mum, feed us together, that will make the job twice as simple!' Were they right?

3 As their Easter treat, Lisa cooked them two helpings of goose, and two helpings of chicken. How many different ways could she serve the meals to the four cubs?

4 And if she had to give the twins the same, even if they didn't mind whether chicken or goose, that left her very few options. How many?



Mini Sudoku

Usual rules:

1-6 in each row, column and box.

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

Answers to April puzzles

Science in Sculpture: Left to right: Popov, the radio inventor; Mendelev the chemist; Pavlov the behaviourist and Lobachevski the mathematician.

Easter symbols (l-r) Orthodox cross, Celtic cross, Croix de Lorraine (Catholic); fish symbol "Christ the fisher of men", Chi-Ro the first two letters of Christ, in Greek and Alpha-Omega, "I am the beginning, I am the end" (symbolised in the Greek alphabet).

Fox cubs and eggs: The only way to achieve these shares is to divide 24 eggs: Boris 12, Sasha 6, Dasha 4 and Masha 2.

Mini Sudoku solutions: see www.englishedmoscow.com

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