

PASSPORT



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SEPTEMBER 2009

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The State of Russian TV
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Zamoskvorechye

Post-Perestroika
Warrior –
Geoffrey Cox
Withdraws

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John Ortega
Owner and Publisher

Soviet Jews are arguably one of the longest suffering races of modern history. We all know that Jews were repressed by the Soviets, however it is a little known fact that the Nazis efficiently and ruthlessly eliminated a large number of Jews from Soviet territory they occupied. Phil Baillie investigates.

Geoffrey Cox OBE is somebody who many of us know. He is returning to England, although he will be visiting from time to time on business. His departure marks something of an end of an era of expat life here in Russia, as the original post-perestroika settlers gradually move on. In this month's 'Last Word', Geoffrey outlines some of the good and bad times in his career here.

Anth Ginn, a writer from England visited me for two weeks in August. This is the second time he has visited Russia, the first when he was cold-shouldered as a tourist not knowing anybody here; and the second when he came as a guest. His perceptions of Russia during these two visits couldn't have been more different, something that points out just how easy it is to misinterpret this country. Anth tells his story on page 26: Don't Listen to Dead Fish.

On the subject of visiting Russians, deputy editor Elena Krivoviyaz writes on how to behave yourself when visiting Russians socially. For example: never refuse food and drinks, and take the sign of the desert being put on the table as a subtle hint that you should leave soon, as no Russian will ever tell you that it is time to go.

Whenever one reads a decent book about Russia, the name of Professor William Brumfield; the world's expert on Russian architecture, comes up. But who is Professor William Brumfield? Does he actually exist? He does, and for this issue, *Passport* interviewed him and reviewed his classic work: *A History of Russian Architecture*. These are just some of the articles in this month's issue. I hope you enjoy it.



Portrait of Geoffrey Cox on cover by John Harrison

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Tuesday, 1st

National Russian Show (dance)

The show is an aesthetic journey into Russia's deep history. The program includes a varied mix of traditional national dance and contemporary ballet. The troupe consists of more than 50 artists with 300 unique costumes decorated with pearls, silver and gold all created and hand-embroidered especially for the show.

Kosmos Hotel Concert Hall, 19:30, also 7th, 8th, 10th



Summer Ballet Festival presents: Snow Maiden

Every year the Summer Ballet Festival in Moscow brings together different classic and modern ballet ensembles. All the performances take place at Natalia Satz Moscow State Academic Music Theater. The Snow Maiden is a ballet masterpiece based on the opera in four acts with a prologue by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, composed in 1880-1881. The Russian libretto, by the composer, is based on the like-named play by Alexandr Ostrovsky which premiered in 1873 with incidental music by Tchaikovsky.

Natalia Satz Moscow State Academic Music Theater, 19:00



Thursday, 3rd Keane (rock)

Keane's uplifting, piano-driven pop/rock is created by vocalist Tom Chaplin, drummer Richard Hughes and pianist Tim Rice-Oxley – three childhood friends from the small town of Battle in East Sussex, England. Formed in 1997, Keane initially started out as a college-aged cover band. Keane returned after

a long-lasting silence in 2008 with a slightly retooled sound – including the presence of electric guitar, musical saw, and synthesizer – for the band's third album, *Perfect Symmetry*.

B1 Maximum, 21:00



Dolphins' Show

This is a must-see event and an amazing show for all children and even the parents. Buying one adult ticket allows you to bring in a child under 6 years.

Moscow Dolphin Marine Park, 12:00, 16:00, also 3rd-6th, 9th-13th, 16th-20th, 23rd-27th



Moscow Yacht Show 2009

Probably the biggest Russian event dedicated to yachts and luxury life attributes. There will be a lively music line-up, a yacht brands exhibition and contests for yacht-owners.

Royal Yacht Club, 20:00, also 4th and 5th, 11.00



Organ Music Concert

Every Thursday St. Andrew's hosts a concert of classical music with professional musicians participating. This

concert features the Gregorian Quartet comprising 3rd/4th-year students of the Moscow Conservatoire. For more information, contact the chaplaincy's concert master, Nikolai Grigorian, by phone: 772-5842.

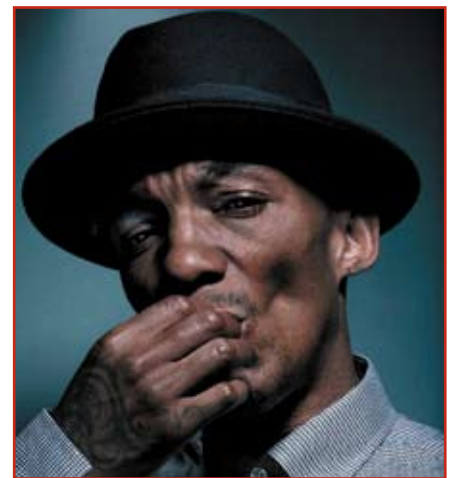
St. Andrew's Anglican Church, 19:30

Friday, 4th

Tricky (trip hop)

Knowle West Boy is the title of the eighth Tricky's album released in 2008. The "Council Estate" track is the first that features Tricky on vocals. The album has received rave reviews and is highly recommended by music lovers, many of whom say it's his best work since *Maxinquaye*.

Green Theater, 20:00



Saturday, 5th

Etepetete (club party)

Etepetete is an Austrian DJ/VJ collective, consisting of 3 girls living in Vienna, Graz and all over the world. The band was founded in 2007 at the Springseven Festival. Etepetete cross the borders, bridge gaps, deconstruct then reconstruct and still manage to look sharp. They have played at many clubs and festivals and their personal highlights include a tour in Switzerland, the Springfestival in Graz and the C/O Pop festival in Cologne. They continue to play electroclash, minimal, funk, new rave and the hottest new hits.

Sixteen Tons, 00:00



International Women's Club presents: Saturday Coffee Morning

Le Pain Quotidien, 10:00

Podmoskovye Classic Rally

This event, which unites retro car lovers and road racers will take place for the fifth time. More than 70 participants will take a ride through the Moscow region in their old-timers and then come back to join the ceremony of rewarding the winners.

Place and time to be confirmed



Tuesday, 8th

RBCC presents: Banking Dispute Resolution Seminar with Baker and McKenzie (business meeting)

Marriott Courtyard, time to be confirmed

Christmas Time/100 Days to New Year (exhibition)

In spite of the crisis, 100 producers of Christmas accessories will gather in one hall and demonstrate the achievements of the industry.

Central House of Artists, 10:00



Wednesday, 9th

Music for Harp and Organ (classical music)

Nina Gvamichava (harp) and Marianna Vysotskaya (organ) perform Handel, Mozart, Soler, Blanco, Pachelbel.

Roman Catholic Cathedral of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 19:30

International Women's Club presents: Newcomers' Coffee

Le Pain Quotidien, 10:00

Friday, 11th

Macy Gray (concert)

Macy Gray is an American R&B and soul singer-songwriter, record producer, and actress, famed for her distinctive raspy voice (it has been described as if someone who has just eaten 150 saltine crackers and is on the verge of death) and a singing style heavily influenced by Billie Holiday and Betty Davis.

B1 Maximum, 21:00



Tuesday, 15th

RBCC presents: Seminar on UK Visa Issues

British Embassy, time to be confirmed

Thursday, 17th

International Women's Club presents: General Meeting and Sign-Up

Spaso House, time to be confirmed

Saturday, 19th

Tatyana Zykina (rock concert)

This is new and promising rock singer originating from provincial Izhevsk. She

debuted just a year ago, but she has already been nominated as "The Rock Discovery Of The Year". This might be interesting for those who are interested in the Russian rock scene.

Ikra, 21:00



Sunday, 20th

De La Soul (hip-hop band)

De La Soul is an American hip hop group formed in 1987 in Long Island, New York. They are best known for their eclectic sampling, quirky lyrics, and their contributions to the evolution of jazz rap and alternative hip hop subgenres.

B1 Maximum, 21:00



Thursday, 24th

RBCC presents: Moscow Business Networking in German Style (business meeting)

Baltchug Kempinsky, time to be confirmed

Saturday, 26th

Papa Roach

Papa Roach is a four-piece hard rock band from Vacaville, California. They have released six albums in total and have sold more than 10 million albums worldwide.

Club Milk, time to be confirmed



September Holidays

text by Elena Rubinova

The Day of Knowledge **Tuesday, September 1**

The start of September heralds the beginning of the new school year in Russia, when millions of children across the country return to the classroom after the summer break.



Most universities and colleges also start the new academic year on this day. Regardless of what day of the week September 1 falls on each year, it is a Russian tradition to celebrate education on this day: the first day back to school is known as The Day of Knowledge (Den Znanii). Officially the holiday was set up in September 1984 and was a major event in the Soviet Union and continues to be so today. Russians still place great hope in education, so September 1 was inherited by the new Russia as an important date.

It's a very special time for the first-graders: streams of young children, accompanied by their parents, assemble in front of school for opening ceremonies. For a day schools all across Russia turn into botanic gardens: literally hundreds of pupils bring bundles of flowers for the teachers. The day involves speeches and ceremonies, with the new classes lining up for the first time, as well as the First Bell where a first-year girl is lifted on the shoulders of a final-year male pupil, and paraded around, ringing the first bell of the school year. In Soviet days the boys would have been wearing brand new military-styled uniforms. The girls would have worn white hair bows, blue dresses, and white pinafores. There are no longer uniforms in most Russian schools, but children as well as their parents traditionally dress up for this day.

It is now, sadly, also a day of remembrance. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the terrible events at School No. 1 in Beslan (Northern Ossetia) in 2004 when a group of armed terrorists, demanding an end to the war in break away Chechnya took 1,100 people hostage including more than 700 children.

Moscow's City Day **Saturday-Sunday, September 5-6**

As usual on the first weekend in September, Moscow celebrates its birthday within the framework of the annual City Day. The date was introduced by Boris Yeltsin (1931-2007) in 1986 when he was the Secretary of the Moscow City Committee. This year Moscow city authorities promise modest festivities for the 862nd anniversary of the Russian capital, taking into consideration the current financial situation. The celebrations begin on the Saturday with a series of parades and events including a procession of floats and city officials along Tverskaya Ulitsa finishing up at the Kremlin. Other celebratory events – there are about 500 this year including fairs, street entertainers, sports contests and live music; and there will be plenty of stalls selling food and drink lining the streets. Over 3.5 million people are expected to participate in the festivities.

International Day of Journalists' Solidarity **Tuesday, September 8**

This date was established as a professional holiday in 1958 by the International Union of Journalists and has achieved official recognition by the UN. The date has not been chosen randomly, and falls on the day of imprisoned Czech journalist and anti-fascist Julius Fuchik's tragic death. Fuchik wrote a book entitled *Notes From the Gallows* from prison.



Now the world scenario has changed. The political situation and developed technology seems to be in favor of journalists, but the threats to journalists have not diminished: journalism is still rated among the most dangerous professions and according to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) over the past 12 years more than 1,100 journalists and media staff have been killed in the line of duty. IFJ considers modern Russia to be one of the most risky places for journalists to work together with such countries as China, Belarus, Iran and others. The IFJ review shows that of the 313 journalists' deaths in Russia since 1993 up to 124 have died as a direct result of their profession. In recent years the trend has worsened for journalists who criticize the authorities. Every year there are on the average around 80 attacks on journalists in Russia.

Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) **Sunday, September 19**

The Russian Jewish Community all across the country celebrates the Jewish New Year that begins in the fall with the celebration of the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. These two holidays form the High Holiday period, arguably the most



significant time in the Jewish year, as it marks the chance for repentance and forgiveness in the eyes of God. During the High Holidays, Jews cleanse their souls and get the chance to make a fresh start with an unburdened conscience and the intention of doing better in the coming year. It is a time for cleansing and renewal, a chance to receive forgiveness and clear the slate. The importance of the holiday is reflected in its two-day observance; most Jewish holidays are celebrated for only one day. It is customary on Rosh Hashanah to set the dinner table with one's finest linen and china, and to wear new, special clothing to express the importance of the occasion. Apples and honey served for the holiday symbolize the hope for a good year.



September 13-19, 2009

text by Marina Lukanina

The first international master class festival organized by the Mstislav Rostropovich Fund will be held at the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Center on September 13-19, 2009. The festival will be devoted to the world famous musician Mstislav Rostropovich. The Russia Ministry of Culture and the Rostropovich Fund for Gifted Music Students are the founders of this festival. The Rostropovich Fund established in 1991 helps gifted young musicians enhance their arts' careers. The fund operates thanks to private and corporate donations.

Passport spoke about the Master Class Festival "Glory to the Maestro!" with the fund president and also the initiator of this project, Olga Rostropovich.

How did you come up with this idea of an international master class festival?

One day I was at the office and the idea of a master class festival simply dawned on me. I decided it should be an evening event in the format of a concert around three hours long for a week. There has never been a master class festival here before so that is why I thought it would be an interesting and original project.

What is the concept of the festival?

The concept is based on providing an opportunity for young musicians to learn some professional secrets from virtuoso musicians. It ensures an interactive dialogue between reputable famous musicians and young musicians and the audience. The program will run in the evenings.

There will be young musicians performing, and world-famous musicians, such as Yuri Bashmet or Van Cliburn will be talking to them, discussing their performances and sharing their perspective on music. The audience will

First International Master Class Festival "Glory to the Maestro!"



witness how each musician views one or another's piece of music. It will be impossible to continue listening to the music or playing a musical instrument in the same way after attending this master class.

How did you choose the program?

The program is a very comprehensive one and is full of real stars. I had to figure out who would be able to give a master class because this is not something any musician, even an experienced one can do. Being able to eloquently speak in public about music and the necessary skills to perform it is essential. So that's how I came up with the musicians' names that you see in the program.

The festival opens with David Gerin-gas, a cellist and conductor, one of Mstislav Rostropovich's favorite students. Sergey Krylov, a brilliant musician will be giving violin master classes and Yuri Bashmet will be offering an alto-master

class. Other members of the festival include Harri Maki (clarinet) and Arkady Shilkloper (French horn). The highlight of the program is the closing evening with Galina Vishnevskaya and her master class in singing.

I am proud that I was able to convince Van Cliburn to give his master class during the festival. It will be first time that he has given one in Russia and Europe. He truly is a legendary man who received the first prize at the first International Tchaikovsky Competition in 1958.

How expensive will the tickets to the festival be?

The entrance to the festival will be free. It was clear to me from the beginning that such events must be free for the public. For the past two years I have always thought: "how would my father do this?" I am sure he would have never charged anything for a master class; therefore I am making this event free of charge.

What other arts projects of the Rostropovich Fund are coming up?

Starting in September, we plan to organize a children's matinee on the last Sunday of every month. Our target audience will be primarily disadvantaged kids (disabled, orphans, etc). In an interactive and fun way, children will be told about world famous composers. Our fund scholarship recipients will be performing during these matinees. We will also offer children the chance to try to play musical instruments.

Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov has suggested that we organize a festival in Moscow called "Rostropovich Week" devoted to my father's birthday in March. It will be held from March 27 to April 2, 2010. The fund will organize this together with the Moscow government. For the opening night we'll have Yuri Temirkanov with his St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. Other Festival participants include the English Chamber Orchestra, Mikhail Pletnev with the Russian National Orchestra and, of course, Yuri Bashmet. **P**

Russian Victories in Medals and Engravings

To commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Poltava Battle on June 27, a numismatic collection that has not been on display for centuries will be held at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. The Poltava Battle was a significant victory of Peter the Great over Charles XII of Sweden in the Great Northern War that ended with the defeat of Sweden in 1721. Russia became the new major power in the Baltic Sea. The exhibition, "Great Russian Victories Imprinted in Medals and Engravings", shows about 250 medals from the 18th and 19th centuries dedicated to the Great Northern War of 1700-1721, cast by Russian craftsmen in bronze, silver or gold during Peter's reign and later. The medal exhibition is complemented with a related art – that of copper engraving. Several hand-colored and black-and-white engravings based on the drawings by the eminent painters of the 18th century, A. Shkhonebek, P. Pikart, A. Zubov are also on display.



Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
Until September 15
Open: 10:00-19:00
Open daily except Mondays

Biedermeier at Pushkin

The Pushkin Museum presents a new exhibition dedicated to the Biedermeier style, with exhibits from the collection of the Lichtenstein Museum in Vienna. The style emerged and developed in Europe after the devastating Napoleonic Wars, when people concentrated on home affairs and renovation after war. Whereas Romanticism painters were so good at tempests and military scenes, Biedermeier artists expressed their attitude comfortably depicting simple home joys. One of the jewels of the exhibition is a portrait of Marie Franziska — daughter of Prince Alois II von Liechtenstein who commissioned it to Friedrich von Amerling in 1836. This portrait of a sleeping child clutching a doll with sunlight falling across her hair is a kind of a symbol of a rather quiet epoch before the revolutions began in Europe in 1848. The term of Biedermeier has been used only since the 1900s, after the pseudonym of Gottlieb Biedermeier assumed by the country doctor Adolf Kussmaul and the lawyer Ludwig Eichrodt to sign poems they published in a Munich magazine of that time.



Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
September 15 – November 15
Open: 10:00-19:00
Open daily except Mondays

Sergey Maksimishin at Pobeda Gallery



If you take a look at GEO.ru, *The Washington Post* or *Der Profile* from time to time, the name of photographer Sergey Maksimishin will certainly be familiar to you. If not, his personal exhibition is highly recommended. As a press photographer he won the World Press Photo Award two times: in 2004 and 2006, meaning that twice in his career he was considered the best in his profession. The organizers promised that among the selected 45 works on display are his most recent photographs, taken all over the world from Portugal to Korea. But actually there are earlier works on display on the white-washed walls of the Pobeda Gallery – all in Maksimishin's characteristic style. As his photographs are more than simply photographed images, they are rather academic paintings made taking into consideration all the rules of light, contrast and composition. So looking at them, you can really wonder how this artist manages to catch so much of a view and everything in one tenth of a second.

Pobeda Gallery
Winzavod
Open: 12:00-20:00
Open daily except Mondays
www.pobedagallery.com

Third Biennale of Modern Art in Moscow

Since the first 'manifesto' of modern artists in 1895, a lot of contradicting styles have emerged, fought with each other, and sometimes merged. Be this as it may, the Biennale remains very trendy. It is almost a label, an evaluation, for describing contemporary art and its market. Reading the word itself in newspapers or on billboards almost begs you to have a look. The biennale take place every other year and many consider it important to attend and see what is going on. And besides it is interesting for everyone, including the artists, to find out what everybody else is doing.

The biennale's commissioner is Joseph Backstein and the curator of the main project is Jean Hubert Martin. The exhibition program will consist of one main project – with more than 60 artists from all continents including Oceania participating, and more than 39 special projects, as well as seven shows by special guests. The main venue will be the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, with special projects held also at the Contemporary Art Center Winzavod, and the National Center for Contemporary Arts.



September 25 – October 25
Garage Center for Contemporary Culture
For other venues and schedules see:
www.3rd.moscowbiennale.ru

Remembering Gayane from Tiflis

Dom Nashokina presents an exhibition in commemoration of a talented and mysterious artist of our era who died last spring – Gayane Khachatryan. From her first days at art school she demonstrated her own mythological style. As Gayane sometimes said to her friends: my style is based on folk fairy tales which my grandmother used to tell when I was a girl. Great masters of the Tiflis Arts School supported the young painter when she was only 20 years old! Alexander Bajbeuk-Melikov, Elena Ahvlediani and Martiros Saryan – well-known people known in Georgia mentored Gayane. Her art captivated not only her friends, but people such as Francoise Sagan, Yves-Saint Laurent and Yoko Ono. Gayane's works are found in private collections in France and Portugal. Andrei Tarkovsky often visited Gayane in Tiflis and her works 'for inspiration'. The best works in the artist's poetic style are displayed at the gallery this autumn.



Dom Naschokina Gallery
Open: 11:00-19:00
Open daily except Monday
From September 25 till November 15

Praising Plahta

'Plahta' as translated from Russian or Ukrainian is a piece of ornamental cloth – a piece of a Ukrainian folk costume. In the territory known as Ukraine, or much earlier in Kievan Russ, ornaments always played an extremely important role. Paleolithic bracelets and other artifacts made of mammoth bones are covered with peculiar cuts, all of which are ornamental. Kievan manuscripts are ornamented with Byzantine motifs, peasant ornaments with rhomboids symbolizing the sun according to some pre-Christian tradition. This traditional folk ornament found its way into the works of the Ukrainian avant-garde artists of the twentieth century. The Proun Gallery is exhibiting a collection of works from such artists as Maria Sinyakova, Vassily Ermilov, Boris Kosarev and Georgy Narbut who were all pivotal personages in 1920s avant-garde art, together with contemporary artist Nikolay Matsenko. Proun by the way is one of the few galleries in Moscow that is oriented to the avant-garde on a permanent basis. This exhibition, organized together with the Kiev Museum of Russian Art explores another facet of this huge wave of modern art which developed in pre-revolutionary and Soviet Russia and combined symbolism, neo-primitivism, suprematism, constructivism, and futurism.



Proun Gallery
(at Winzavod)
Open: 12:00-20:00
Open daily except
Monday
Till September 18

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Vladimir Spivakov Invites

'Vladimir Spivakov Invites' is an annual musical festival organized by the maestro himself. This is the way new musical seasons at the International House of Music are launched. In keeping with what has now become a tradition, Spivakov invites top musicians from different countries to play at the festival. Pianist Dennis Matsuev, baritone Nikolay Borchev, violinists Fen Nin and Yuki Manuela are quite young performers but are already well-known and anticipated in the musical world. The parade of stars is led by Ruggero Raimondi who will sing during the finale.

One feature of Spivakov's festival is the relaxing manner in which it combines styles and genres: from Handel to jazz. The festival is supported by the first-rated National Symphony Orchestra of Russia and the chamber orchestra, 'Virtuosi of Moscow'. Spivakov himself will conduct the orchestra and perform as a violin soloist. The Gershwin Gala starring Dennis Matsuev will open the festival. Fen Nin and Yuki Manuela will continue with a Paganini concert. A very well known baritone — Ruggero Raimondi, known for his performances of Scarpia from Puccini's *Tosca*, Don Juan, Escamillo from Bizet's *Carmen*, and Boris Godunov — will sing on the stage of the Moscow House of Music accompanied by soprano Hibla Gerzmava.

September 25 – October 7

For venues and schedule see www.mmdm.ru

Tricky

Behind the nickname Tricky hides Bristol musician Adrian Tose. He is said to have invented trip-hop, but he himself doesn't like to be referred to by any stylistic term, something that he reminds journalists about in an aggressive way. As a result, journalists don't interview him very much, but are in love with his music, which at the end of the 1990s created a real revolution in Europe. His solo projects and joint projects with DJ Paul Oakenfold set European hit lists upside down. We have not heard anything of him for five years except for his covers of Serge Gainsborough and a role in 'Girlfriends' and this caused suspicions. His latest album, number eight in his discography has finally been released and is named *Knowle West Boy*. After his previous discs, *Blowback* – clearly commercial and *Vulnerable* came his new compositions, a kind of self-revision. Uneven music and an uneven style; these are words that could be used to describe this disc words that could also be used to describe Tricky's own musical career.



September 4

Green Theater at Gorky Park

19:00

Classical Music Festivals

Two major classical music festivals are to take place in Moscow during September. The first one – the Grand Festival of the Russian National Orchestra – directed by Mikhail Pletnev, is to take place in the Bolshoi Theater. Seven concert nights are dedicated to Pyotr Tchaikovsky. His symphonies 5 and 6, Piano Concerto No. 1 and other compositions will be on the program. Besides this, the program features Mozart's Oeuvres, which Tchaikovsky adored. Mikhail Pletnev, who has recently completed several successful opera projects will present his interpretation of Mozart's 'Magic Flute' with German, English and Russian soloists. Another soiree, also on the new stage of the Bolshoi will be dedicated to Tchaikovsky's contemporary – Edvard Grieg. His 'Peer Gynt' will be accompanied with a narration of the play by Henrik Ibsen's, by a well-known Russian actor – Vassily Lanovoy. Among the premieres that are to be presented is a one-act ballet 'The Ancestor Suite' based on Gordon Getty's scores and choreographed by Vladimir Vassiliev.



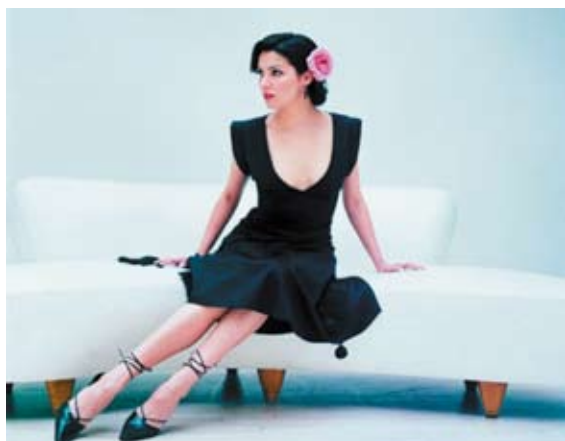
September 7 – 13

New Stage of the Bolshoi Theater

19:00

www.bolshoi.ru

Netrebko at the Kremlin



During the first weekend of autumn, Anna Netrebko will celebrate her birthday in Moscow. Free concerts and crowds in the streets aside, the best location to celebrate this occasion is at the Moscow Kremlin with its unprecedented opera gala in the open air. The Cathedral Square is one of the most attractive places in Moscow. For the first time this Kremlin location will host a gala concert starring world-famous opera stars such as Anna Netrebko, Paata Burchuladze, Olga Borodina and Sergey Skorokhodov accompanied by the National Russian Orchestra and the President's Orchestra. Russians are proud of Anna Netrebko's international success, but rarely see her perform live. This is a perfect birthday present to Moscow. Anna studied in Saint Petersburg and was lucky to find maestro Valery Gergiev as her vocal mentor under whose guidance she debuted at the Mariinsky theater and started an international career. She has been invited as a starring soloist at all world-renowned opera houses from New York to Vienna, where she now permanently resides. Together with distinguished bass Paata Burchuladze, she will perform pieces from M. Mussorgsky, M. Glinka, P. Tchaikovsky, S. Prokofiev, D. Shostakovich and G. Verdi.



Cathedral Square
Kremlin
19:00
September 6

HOW TO: buy tickets

On public transport:

Дайте, пожалуйста... Please can I have...

...билет на одну поездку. A single.

...билет на 20 поездок. A ticket valid for 20 journeys.

...проездной на месяц. A monthly pass.

...билет до станции «Ожерелье». A ticket to Ozherelye.

...билет до станции «Ленинская» и обратно. A return to Leninskaya.

For a movie:

Дайте, пожалуйста, 2 билета... Can I have 2 tickets please...

...на вечерний сеанс... for this evening's showing.

...на ближайший сеанс... for the next showing.

...на сегодня/завтра... for today/tomorrow.

...ближе к экрану/центру... nearer to the screen/the center.

...на последний ряд... in the last row.

For a play:

Дайте, пожалуйста, 2 билета... Can I have 2 tickets please...

...на вторник 25-ое сентября... for Tuesday, September 25.

...в партер/в амфитеатр/на балкон... in the stalls/circle/balcony.

For a concert:

Дайте, пожалуйста, 5 билетов... Please can I have 5 tickets...

...на концерт группы «Ленинград»... for the 'Leningrad' concert.

...на танцпол... in the dance area.

...в VIP зону... in the VIP area.

Ask for recommendations:

Что Вы можете порекомендовать? What can you recommend?

Какие есть премьеры? What new premieres are there?

Какой балет/спектакль сейчас идёт?

What ballet/play is on at the moment?

Какие у Вас самые дешёвые билеты?

What are the cheapest tickets available?

Check when tickets are available

Остались билеты на «Лебединое Озеро»?

Do you have tickets left for 'Swan Lake'?

На какие числа есть билеты? For which dates do you have tickets?

Какие места остались? What seats are left?

Когда ближайшая возможность попасть на «Пиковую Даму»?

When is the next chance I can get tickets for 'Queen of Spades'?

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Yevgeny Oks: Artist Rediscovered

text by Olga Slobodkina-von Brømssen

It's always thrilling to write about a forgotten artist. This time it is Yevgeny Oks (1899-1968). It's hard to say why the Soviet art world failed to recognize such an interesting art personality – maybe because he followed the then much frowned upon impressionistic traditions or for some other political rather than artistic reasons. Whatever the reason, from the beginning of the 1930s, Oks was never included in the list of exhibited artists and was rediscovered only in the 1990s when the art heritage of the 1920s-1950s was first staged in Moscow bringing to light many of the suppressed names of the 20th century in Russia.



"Construction site", 1934, (charcoal pencil on paper)

The creative life of Yevgeny Oks began during the complicated, revolutionary period of 1917-1918. Born in St. Petersburg in 1899, he was a student of the New Art Workshop created by Princess Gagarina on Vasilyevsky Island until 1917. During his studies at the New Art Workshop, Oks was tutored by such famous artists as Alexander Yakovlev, Vasily Shukhaev, Osip Braz and Mstislav Dobyzhinsky. The teachers at the workshop were primarily from the World of Art, a group of artists (1896-1924) whose aesthetic foundation was the idea of a synthesis of arts and a special kind of retrospectivism, which looked towards antiquity and diverse historical and cultural reminiscences.

In 1918, Oks moved to Odessa to continue his art studies at the Odessa Art School, as the October Revolution of 1917 had prevented him from returning home. In Odessa, the artist also participated in the creation of the Poet's Club. The club boasted such famous literary names as Eduard Bagritsky, Yuri Olesha, Ilya Ilf and Zinaida Shishova. The club's heady cultural environment influenced the formation of Yevgeny Oks's personal creativity and the artist wrote several poems and memoirs about that epoch.

Oks was a military artist in the town of Kronshtadt, then he moved on to Moscow where his professional and creative life began. We know that he participated in an exhibition of the NOZH group of artists in 1923. NOZH is an acronym for the New Society of Artists. Its manifesto declared the end of "the analytical period" in the arts and characterized realism not as "a faceless protocol portrayal of life, but as a creative reassessment of life and a deep personal attitude towards it". Some of his works have survived since that time: his self-portraits, a classical portrait of his wife dating back to 1923 as well as some city landscapes and still-lives.

At the same time Oks was elected to The Council of Art Schools and participated in the reorganization of the Academy of Arts. He also worked for the newspaper *Zor* whose editor was Osip Brik.

From 1922, Yevgeny Oks lived in Moscow where he concentrated on drawing: he was a commissioned drawer for many magazines and newspapers, including *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. His drawings "In the City Garden" and "Ploshchad Sverdlova" recreated the pre-war atmosphere of Moscow.

A true follower of Vlaminck and Cezanne, Yevgeny Oks worked out his own artistic language of coloristic painting, and created quite a number of works valuable both from an artistic and social point of view. He used that language



"Construction of an Embankment", 1934, (charcoal on paper)



"Self-Portrait", 1922, (oil on canvas)



"Winter. Skatertny Pereulok", 1922, (oil on canvas)



Portrait of the artist's daughter, 1940, (oil on canvas)

in every direction of his creativity, especially in the lyrical city and country landscapes. He was so highly individual that both the establishment and the art world could hardly stand together with him. He could only reveal his real talent at the beginning and at the end of his artistic career while during the 25 ripening years he was either silent or tried to fit himself into the clichés of the strict socialist realism tradition. The canvases and graphical works dating back to that time are also interesting and could have competed with those other artists who were displayed during the Soviet epoch.

At the beginning of the 1930s Oks created a number of worthy impressionistic paintings: "Skatertny Pereulok", "A Silver Jug", "Merzlyakovsky Pereulok", "Bolshoy Rzhnevsky Pereulok", a number of self-portraits as well as two masterpieces "The New Year of 1932" and "The Red Tram" (which is now part of the Tretyakov Gallery's collection). The ar-

tistic language of Oks's work "The Red Tram" is extremely laconic: a house, some trees, a patch of sky. The colors are restrained. The cultural tradition is evident and it goes back to painter Alexander Shevchenko and actually derives from the French painter Andre Derain.

Some of Oks's Moscow city landscapes, such as "Merzlyakovsky Pereulok", for example, are stylistically close to The Group of 13 – a group of Russian painters of the Silver Age (first quarter of the 20th century) who continued the traditions of impressionism, but with solid foundations in realism. Oks's moody city landscapes with their streets receding into the distance are not only works of high-quality art, but are also interesting from an ethnographic point of view, giving a good idea of the 1930s metropolis.

The portrait of the artist's wife is a vivid example of Alexander Yakovlev's and Vasily Shukhaev's influence on Oks's work. Yakovlev and Shukhaev represented the so-called neoclassicism, which partly opposed the avant-garde tendencies in Russia abroad. Their style counterbalanced impressionism and constructivism, while employing classical composition.

During the 1930s, Oks was also experimenting with expressionism in his "Road to Davydково", "A Summer Afternoon", "A Portrait of Varvara Oks Against the Blue Background".

From the end of the 1930s, hard times bore down on the artist's life. He was criticized for being "formalistic". When WWII began, he went to the front and after the war his health was never the same. He was unable to work for a long time. Only in 1946-1947 did his many sketches come through into completed works – country landscapes in the village of Ismalkovo. In these works he became a realist in the full sense of the word, however such realism as the true portrayal of the post-war Russian village was not in demand. He portrayed the truth of poverty and not the boastful achievements of the socialist state.

In the middle of the 1950s Oks went out into the streets of Moscow again to paint his favorite corners of old Moscow. He did "Volkov Pereulok", "Sivtsev Vrazhek" and some other places that have changed beyond recognition.

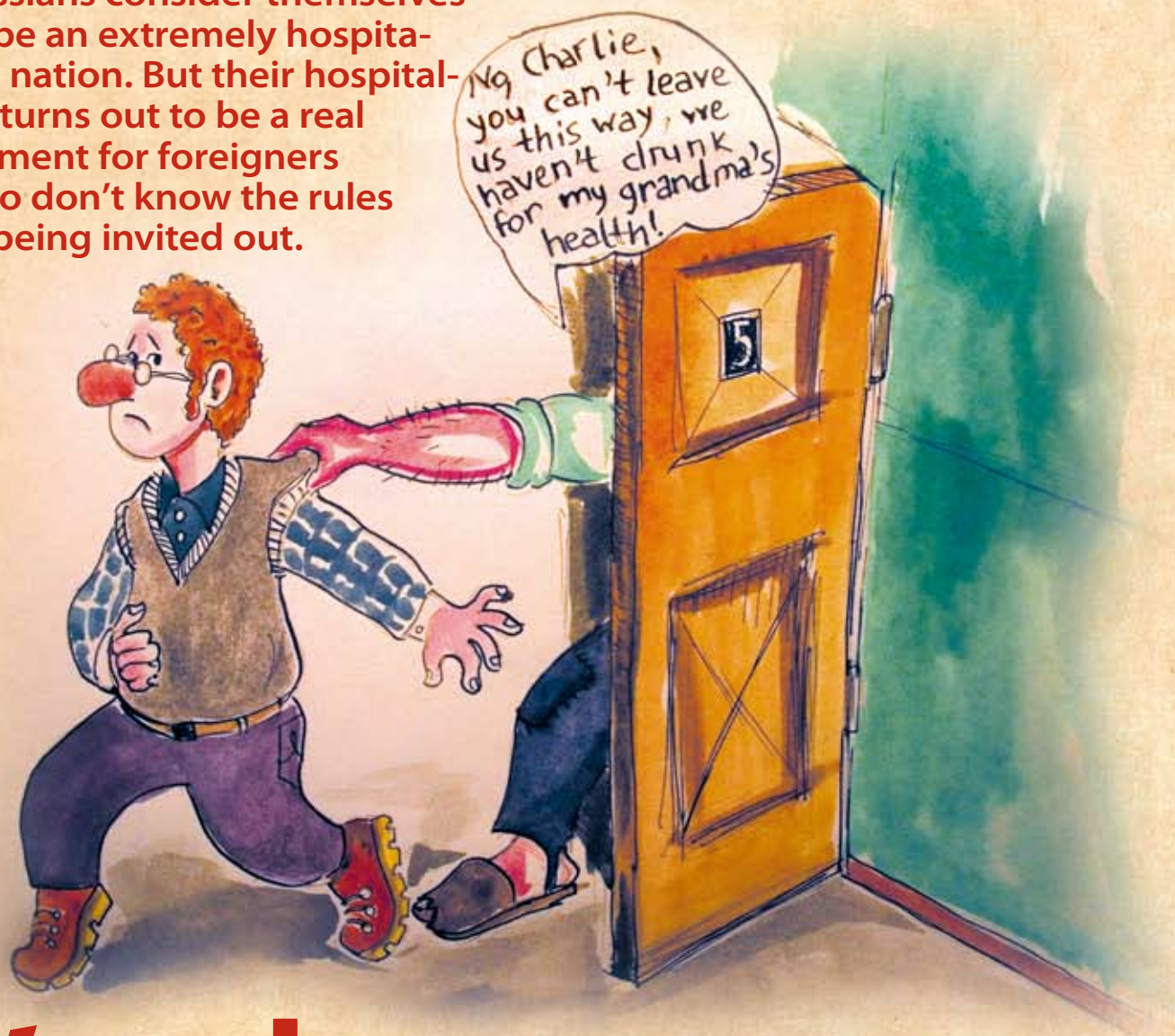
During the last years of his life the artist went abroad for the first time. In Italy he painted the lanes of ancient cities and the canals of Venice.

At the end of his life he started painting the newly built blocks in new areas of Moscow, which was a kind of hope to leave communal apartments and start a new life. And although his energy was already ebbing he managed to reveal that idea very brightly, for example in his sketch "The Road in Khoroshovo".

Yevgeny Oks died at the end of Khrushchev's thaw. He left for us a painted story of his life and the epoch. When he was rediscovered in the 1990s, his creativity attracted the attention of art critics and museums immediately. Now his works are part of the Tretyakov Gallery, The Art and Historical Museum in the town of New Jerusalem and the Museum of the Defense of Moscow. Many of his works are in private collections.

Tracing the evolution of Oks's work is quite interesting: from a pronounced neoclassicism through to his passion for Cezanne, to his Moscow landscapes and eventually his socialist realism works. **P**

Russians consider themselves to be an extremely hospitable nation. But their hospitality turns out to be a real torment for foreigners who don't know the rules of being invited out.



You're Invited!

text and illustrations by Elena Krivoviyaz

You might be embarrassed or flattered to be invited. You might not understand why it is you who has been invited, but there's no point in complaining or analyzing too deeply the motivations behind the invitation. The fact that you are being invited at all means that you are on the way to being accepted.

But before you get excited, there are a few basic rules of etiquette to digest, if you don't want to be perceived by your hosts as being rude, or ridiculous. Cardinal rule number one: never refuse food and drinks. The more you eat, the more you will show that you appreciate the cooking and being there. So don't eat any snacks on the way. Cardinal rule number two: you don't have to drink liters of wine or vodka, but if you don't drink at all ("To the health of party-holder!" or "To the happiness of all present!"), everybody will notice and ask why you aren't drinking. Protestations like: "I don't drink", "I don't like it" or "sorry, I feel bad after the previous party" are

not accepted. When you realize you can't drink anymore, just fill your glass with mineral water and go on clinking it with everyone according to the toasts.

It is not universally accepted to pool resources and buy food and drinks together in Russia. Your host or hostess has to cover all the expenses no matter how many guests there are; but not when you are invited to have 'shashlik', (meat or fish prepared on fire outdoor). Before going to this kind of party, members discuss what to buy and divide the expenses equally between themselves. Many Russians take fishing rods with them, but never use them (too drunk). In all other cases, you don't have to pay for food or even try to, or your hosts will take offence.

What time to leave? – That's not an easy question and the answer depends on each individual situation. As a general rule: Russians like to have parties and if it's a weekend they are often willing to have fun all night long. But if they start to wash dishes – it's a sign to leave immediately. No Russian

will ever actually say that he or she is tired and it's time for the guests to finish. There are other more delicate signs – the dessert is put on the table. This means that the party is almost over and all you have to do is to eat your piece of cake, thank the hosts effusively for such a lovely party and find the way out – something which might be a little bit difficult if you tried to do what everybody else did and drank for the last three hours.

The other rules of paying a visit are specific to the events. The most common of them are: a birthday party, a wedding, a housewarming party, or just an evening party without any particular cause.

When attending a birthday party you should obviously bring a present for the person whose birthday it is. If you're a close friend of theirs, you may ask what they want to receive beforehand. But if you are not, try to find something practical that Russians like (please, don't bring puppies, kittens, palm-trees and giant porcelain birds if you're not sure the person is expecting them): a tea service, multi-colored blanket or a CD of a favorite (not yours, but his or hers) group or singer. Finally if you have no idea what to bring as a present, just put some money into an envelope, sign it (from xx with love and/or best wishes) and hand it over (I wish I had more friends of this kind!).

Actually, Russians don't like people who come to their birthday party without a present at all, although they will never show it. When you are invited to a lady's birthday party you can bring a bunch of flowers and that will be enough. But, remember, there should be an odd number of flowers only in a bunch because even numbers of flowers are given in case of somebody's death.

Russian weddings are worthy of a separate article. Let's talk only about the major things. First of all, save up some money before visiting somebody's wedding in Russia. When attending, a much appreciated wedding gift is an envelope with money for the just-married. The sum of money depends on what you can afford. It is normal to bring 3,000 or 5,000 rubles in an envelope. Some guests come just with a lonely 1,000 banknote in an envelope and there are individuals who don't bring any money at all. Every envelope is signed by the giver, so if you don't present any money the married couple will probably know that. This is a long-standing tradition which comes from the Soviet past. In those days, weddings cost too much (but now they are even more expensive), that's why guests should bring money so the married couple can afford a honeymoon and pay all the wedding expenses if the parents can't. Weddings in Russia can commonly cost tens of thousands of dollars.

The tamada, or MC at a Russian wedding, is probably the first person one can meet at the celebration. Usually the MC is the center of the universe. Guests drink, eat, propose toasts at the command of the MC. Traditionally the Tamada announced every guest, who had to stand up (and instantly stop eating or drinking), congratulate the couple with a toast and then hand over the long-awaited envelope to them. The toasts are also a subject worth special attention. Russians like long-lasting (more than 5 minutes) and personal toasts. That's why you should come to a wedding well prepared and with a toast already worked out. The most important thing you should do at a Russian wedding is survive. You'll understand what I mean when you go to one.



Housewarming parties are quite easy stuff. The only thing you need to do is to bring a present. Not just any old present, but a useful one. That's because moving into a new apartment or a house in Moscow is rather expensive (like anywhere else) and the house- or flat-owners are expecting you to present something that they haven't bought yet for their housekeeping. Use your imagination and bring a present they'd probably like: nice wall pictures, pillows, blankets, dishes, domestic appliances and, say, a vacuum cleaner.

Parties without a cause are common here in Russia. They may not happen only on weekends, but even in the middle of work days. You don't have to bring any present but yourself to these parties. The time they usually last depends on how many guests, and the host can drink. These are usually pretty informal events, but you nevertheless need to buy something: a bottle of wine, some flowers; as a gesture of good will. **P**



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Parallels Can Be Drawn. Children's Television in Europe, the US and Russia

text by Marina Lukanina and Irina Gavrilov

Both European and American children are heavy users of television nowadays. They are growing up in much more media-diverse households than their parents. It is a known fact that children do not watch only programs intended specifically for them. Horst Stipp, director of social and development research at NBC, mentioned that US commercial television executives are fully aware that American children prefer situational to children's educational programs. He points out that most of the programs that US children watch are neither specially cre-

bies, the number of hours dedicated to children's programming broadcast in the UK was higher than ever – over 15 dedicated children's channels existed in the UK.

Children's Broadcasting in Russia

Russia experienced an intensive development of state television and radio broadcast in the 1970s-1980s; the number of programs for children as well as cartoons increased. However, during the early 1990s, children's TV programming was in a real crisis. According to Russian legislature, state TV channels



Tina Kandelaki – the host of Samy Umny (The Smartest One)

ated for children nor shown in what is known as children's TV time – Saturday mornings. No educational children's television show appears in the top-rated programs, with the exception of "Sesame Street", a very well known program for pre-schoolers. Looking at the listings of the top 10 programs for children in Great Britain, Switzerland, Germany, France and the Netherlands, it's clear that the most popular shows are comedies, game shows and soap operas.

Despite this, the number of kids' channels in Europe and the US keeps on growing, regardless of the number of tough competitors already on-air. Recent data indicates that, on average, children in the United States spend approximately three hours a day watching TV. In view of this, Congress determined that TV stations – both commercial and non-commercial – have an obligation to offer educational and informational children's programming. In addition, television licensees, cable operators, and satellite providers must limit the amount of commercials aired during children's programs.

The 1990 Children's Television Act (USA) was the first congressional act that specifically regulated children's television. Commercial television broadcasters are required by law to air a minimum of three hours per week of children's educational programming. The goal of the Children's Television Act is to increase the availability of high-quality educational programs.

In the UK, a dedicated children's television service began on the BBC in 1946, with the first regular slots appearing from 1948. In the 1980s and 1990s, new competition arrived in the form of Channel 4, Five and the commercial children's channels available on cable and satellite platforms. By 2002, with the launch of the BBC's children's channels, CBBC and CBee-



Ex-Miss World Oksana Fedorova with Philya and Stepashka

must dedicate 15% of their air time to children's programming. However, until recently, Russia was among only a few countries that did not have a separate children's channel. On September 1, 2007 a new children's TV service was created: "Bibigon" for ages 4-17. Bibigon does not have its own frequency, but produces programs for Sport TV, Culture Channel, Russia TV and NTV Plus. The name Bibigon is taken from a literary creation of Korney Chukovsky, a very famous children's writer who died in 1969. The annual channel budget last year was US\$39 million. Bibigon allocates plenty of time for educational programs. Almost half of the programs are locally produced.

There are different opinions on whether Bibigon actually lives up to the expectations of being a good children's TV producer. According to Anri Vartanov, professor of journalism at Moscow State University, the first thing that you notice about Bibigon is that the least "prime time" is allocated for kids' programming – early morning (from 7-9am) on Sport TV channel, after-lunch time (from 4-6pm) on the Culture Channel and sporadic broadcasts on Russia TV from 11.50-1.40pm and from 2.10-3.30pm). Sometimes the schedule is not really followed, specifically by Russia TV. Vartanov also comments on the fact that there is very little contemporary Russian animation available on Bibigon. The reason is probably a lack of finance for that type of entertainment programming.

Natalya Golub in her article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* mentions that the changes on the Culture Channel were not very visible when Bibigon appeared, because the channel traditionally showed carefully selected children's programs long before Bibigon. The fact that the Sports Channel allocates early morning hours for Bibigon programming is somehow distracting

for children who have to get ready for school and be there by 8.30-9am every weekday morning. It is pretty inconvenient for them to watch Bibigon programs on Sports Channel during the early morning hours. Russia TV usually repeats Bibigon programs broadcasted in the early morning on Sports Channel during the day and fills the rest of the time with different teleseries. Clearly, the main issue for Bibigon is not having its own separate channel for the children's programming and the complications of sharing the TV network with other channels.

Channel 1 launched TeleNanny channel a couple of years ago targeted for kids from 3-8 years old. The channel concept was developed together with child psychologists, parents and of course, children themselves. This has created what many say is a really interesting kids' channel. Telenanny is a separate 24-hr channel launched by Channel 2. However, it's

– Alexander Kurlyandski, Eduard Uspenski and Andrei Usachev – were pioneers in establishing the program concept. Various options for the program title were considered – 'Evening Fairy Tale', 'Fairy Tale for the Night', etc. Eventually it was decided to call it 'Good Night, Kids'. The program has kept this title ever since.

In the beginning, 'Good Night, Kids' was broadcast live since the necessary equipment for recording the program did not exist at that time. The first series were made of images and a voice-over. Later puppet shows and small plays were introduced. Various theater actors took part in the program as well as 4-6 year old children.

The program is intended for children aged 3-7. There are five main characters of the program: Khrusha the piglet, Stepashka the rabbit, Philya the dog, Karkusha the crow and Mishka the bear. In 1997, 2002 and 2003 the program received



The cast of Sesame Street

a cable channel and in order to have it at home, your cable operator has to have the rights to broadcast this channel and not every cable operator does.

The appearance of such 'children's windows' in the federal channel networks is the first serious step towards the development of children's TV in Russia. After studying various online forums one can notice pretty positive feedback about this new children's TV channel. In particular, viewers really enjoy children's TV programs of the 1990s that are being repeated on this channel 'Star Hour' (Звездный Час), 'Jungle Call' (Зов Джунглей), etc.

Paradoxically, the creation of children's TV is not profitable due to the State Duma's law banning commercials on children's programs, so money is scarce for this type of programming. There are some exceptions, such as the program 'The Smartest One' (Самый Умный), the program that has the highest rating on CTC channel; 'Smart Guys and Girls' (Умники и Умницы) on Channel 1 and 'Good Night, Kids' (Спокойной Ночи, Малыши).

Some of the best examples of TV children's programs from the 1990s are no longer easily available – 'In the World of Animals' (В Мире Животных) was moved to the Domestic (Домашний) channel which is not freely available to all viewers; as well as programs such as 'The Jungle Call' (Зов Джунглей) – the winner of a TEFI Award for "Best Children's Program". 'The Star Hour' (Звездный Час) simply disappeared from TV.

The most famous children's program 'Good Night, Kids' (Спокойной Ночи, Малыши) has been broadcast for 45 years. It first appeared on September 1, 1964. The program is an absolute winner in terms of the number of episodes produced and popularity among viewers. Well-known children's writers and poets



Russia's favorite TV friends – Philya and Stepashka

a TEFI Award in the Best Children's Program nomination. The program has a special theme song 'Tired Toys are Asleep' (Спят Усталые Игрушки) that became one of its main distinctions. A plasticine stop-animation that accompanied the theme song was created in 1981. It was changed a couple of times during the 1990s and finally in 2002 it became what we see on TV today. Children all over the country look forward to seeing their favorite heroes every evening. The program is a combination of entertainment mixed with an educational and mentoring aspect.

Various famous TV anchors have hosted the program, including the winner of the Miss World Competition, Oxana Fedorova and the famous actress and producer, Anna Mikhalkova. The plot of the program is usually built around educational and didactic stories where all the heroes take part. The host explains how to behave in certain situations. A cartoon illustrating the theme culminates the program. There is no such program like it in the world taking into account its 45 years of existence. It produces a monthly magazine called 'Good Night, Kids' – a nice supplement for the TV program. The program runs Monday through Friday on Russia TV from 8.45-9pm.

One would hope that the phrase 'the children are our future' is not just a nice phrase, but rather an accurate observation that the future requires careful nurturing and developing. Children's TV in Russia was at its peak in the 1980-90s when some of the best examples of children's programs appeared. The fact that more and more attention seems to be turning back to children's TV now is definitely an important step in the further development of children's programming in modern Russia. **P**

Russian TV

text by Vladimir Kozlov



In recent years, Russia's national television channels have offered viewers little original content, focusing primarily on the adaptation of successful imported formats. But, at least, until last fall, they generated huge advertising revenues, which allowed them to compensate for a lack of original ideas with expensive production. Now that the first "crisis" television season is beginning, viewers are to be subjected to a lot of reruns and very few new shows.

Many months after the global financial crisis hit Russia, TV audiences here still didn't feel it, as shows aired by the country's main national channels were commissioned and produced before most people began to realize that the crisis was "for real". But when the time came for TV channels to buy and commission new programs, all of them felt short for cash, facing a substantial decline in ad revenues.

Figures may be different for different TV stations, but the common understanding in the industry is that an average TV station lost close to one half of its ad revenues in the first half of 2009, year on year, and there is no sign of improvement in sight. As a result, channels are cutting back film and TV series production, as well as purchases of foreign content and formats.

Among the first to fall prey to the crisis are foreign movies and TV series. With the exception of a few popular shows, like *Lost*, which has a sizeable fan base here, most foreign movies and TV series generate poor ratings, because people who wanted to watch them had already done so, using pirated DVDs. Hence bad ratings and advertisers' declining interest in that kind of content.

Similarly uncertain is the fate of new domestic movies on television. Indirectly, financial problems of the main TV channels hit the domestic film industry, which in the pre-crisis years, heavily depended on cash from TV stations or selling TV rights, rather than box office performance. Channels that a year or two ago were actively investing in the production of theatrical movies, are now saying that they are no longer interested and would prefer to spend their depleted cash reserves on their main business, rather than pumping their cash into movie projects with unclear return prospects.

But that practice could backfire. In recent years, TV premiers of high-profile domestic theatrical releases generated decent ratings, and audiences got used to being able to see many new films just a few months within a theatrical release. As the number of domestic theatrical releases is dropping, and channels are becoming less and less interested in them, channels seem to have no choice other than re-running movies that people had already saw many times, with new films few and far between.

When it comes to in-house production, channels admit that they cancelled some of their projects in a bid to cut costs, providing little details of shows that would have been produced, had there been no crisis. Still, the pre-crisis trends clearly indicated that channels were more focused on attracting top-level "stars" as show hosts, luring them with exorbitant fees, and spending money on expensive productions, rather than looking for creative and innovative ideas that would improve the ultimate quality of the product.

One example of where the domestic television was moving before the crisis hit, and where it could have been still moving now, is one the most controversial projects on Russian TV in recent years: the release of a colored version of the popular Soviet black and white TV series 'Semnadsat Mgnoveniy Vesny' (Seventeen Moments of Spring), which was aired last May by the Rossiya channel.



The coloring of the 12-episode, 1973 series reportedly took several years, involving several hundred people, and cost several million dollars, still adding little to the original version's visual side but, at the same time, stirring quite a bit of controversy. Many among the older generation of TV audiences were enraged, claiming that the coloring "distorted" the original story about Maksim Isayev, a Soviet spy operating in Nazi Germany. Other opponents of the projects argued that the idea of coloring the series was just dumb in itself, a typical one in a situation when you have money to burn but no creativity. Still, the heated discussion about the project did its job for the channel, bringing the colored version good ratings.

Another highlight of the 2009-2010 TV season in Russia was last May's Eurovision Song Contest in Moscow. Again, the preparation of the show apparently involved huge amounts of money, making the event the most expensive Eurovision final ever, but there seemed to be much less creativity and innovation.

What are the main Russian channels' programming strategies in a crisis time? There hardly seem to be any that go beyond cutting costs by producing and commissioning less new content. And, as a result, the season of 2009-2010 is likely to become the most boring one on domestic television in years.

In a situation like that, it's vital for channels to keep audiences' interest in shows that have been running for years, as there is no way to replace them with something new and equally profitable under present conditions. Sometimes, outside forces came into play, like in the case of the notorious youth reality show Dom-2 on the TNT channel.

In July, a Moscow court ruled that the show, which has been running for more than five years, often having to fence off criticism for allegedly harming young people's moral grounds by promoting free love, ruled that Dom-2 is indeed harmful for young audiences and should therefore be only aired between 11pm and 4am. But while the channel is preparing an appeal, the show is where it used to be, and, thanks to the extensive media coverage of the controversy, its ratings were up again, and Dom-2 beat all the shows on other channels in the same 9-10pm time slot, according to data released by the TNS Russia TV audience research group. And despite rumors that the show will still be shut down for good this fall, most likely it'll stay, but another court case will be needed quite soon to help keep audiences' interested in the mundane day-to-day sex life of its participants.

Still, the crisis could also give channels new opportunities, as production costs of shows and TV series have also declined. Still, none of the main domestic TV channels seems to be willing to grab this opportunity of drastically changing their programming policies by giving room to less lavishly produced but more meaningful and interesting material. When asked about how they are dealing with the crisis situation and whether they have anything in mind to deal with it, other than "cost saving strategies," most national channels refuse to talk. That, probably, says more than enough. **P**



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The holocaust memorial in Berlin covers five and a half acres



Surviving the Holocaust: Post-Soviet Jews

text by Phil Baillie

Soviet Jews are arguably the most long suffering race of the modern age. Many Russian Jews fled the Russian Federation in the 1890s as pogroms against the race were already rife, but were further sparked by the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in St. Petersburg. Up to 2.3 million Jews, deeply affected by the events at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century fled the country. During the Communist regime from 1917, synagogues such as that on Bolshaya Bronnaya Ulitsa were closed and turned into Houses of Culture to promote party activities and values; an insult to worshipers and an abuse of their space. Of course religious repression was universal under the Bolsheviks, however, the Nazi master plan of the holocaust is an event that will be remembered as a crime against humanity that edged towards the total extinction

of Jews, many of whom had previously suffered heavily under Soviet rule. I had the sobering experience to take a journey through time and space, from Berlin back to Moscow to find out how Soviet

Jews have survived waves of repression over the last century up to the present day. The journey would take me through memorials in Berlin, Auschwitz near Krakow, to rebuilding Warsaw and a camp



Book burning in Opera Square, Berlin, May 10, 1933. Courtesy of U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum/NARA

of holocaust survivors in Northern Poland, to return to tense atmospheres in the Moscow synagogues.

Berlin — Engraving Survival in the Heart

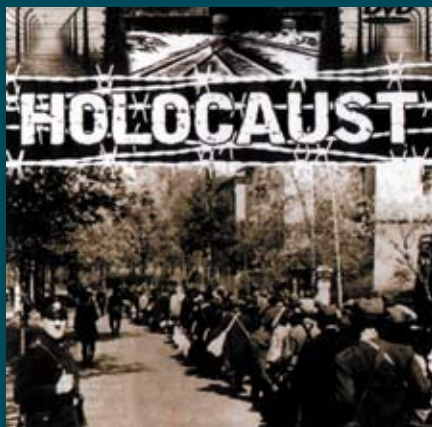
The holocaust memorial in Berlin consists of slabs of silent stone, arranged in a quadratic order, a monument which is strikingly unspectacular. One may notice the order, but remain confused without an explanation or reason for the columns of slab reducing the visual range of a visitor to horizontal or vertical planes. The position of the memorial is possibly just as significant as it is situated in the heart of Berlin, enclosed by embassies and a block away from the Brandenburg Gate. One way to remember the holocaust for Jews is to ensure that it stays alive in the consciousness of new generations as Primo Levi urged in his novel, *If This is a Man*,

'Never forget that this has happened, Remember these words, Engrave them in your hearts, When at home or in the street.'

The memorial stands in a prominent position in Berlin, crying out for people to remember the suffering of Jews, many of whom who were displaced from their lives in the Soviet Union. One monument which certainly remained in my consciousness was the 'void' room in the Jewish Museum. A long, towering 'void' of space is covered with thick face-shaped metallic pieces on the ground. An attendant indicated that it was permissible to cross the space. Every step, however, echoed the open-mouthed faces to emit a resonating clinking echo in the vertical tunnel, light protruding through thin slits from several floors above. It seemed as if every step was letting out a cry that had been suppressed during the atrocities at the concentration camps.

Poland — Remnants of Survival

Taking a ten hour train journey to Krakow, Poland, the next challenge was to try and face the reality of the crimes against Jews at Auschwitz. Krakow, which is a friendly pedestrian town crowded at night by performers and stag parties, does little to let on what occurred an hour's bus drive away from the buzzing town. Exhibitions at the compound conveyed the systematic nature of the 'work camps' by displaying the objects



The Holocaust: Liberation of Majdanek – the shocking Russian footage about one camp called Majdanek



A leaflet reminding us of one of the victims of the holocaust in Poland

left behind by the victims. Rooms full of suitcases, toys, shoes, wheelchairs and human hair highlighted the scale of the events. From reading the works of Levi and seeing such evidence I could hardly believe how anyone could have survived.

Pay tribute at the ghetto wall in Warsaw (a piece of which is kept in Yad Vashem, Israel) or visit the gestapo headquarters, hidden away in the basement of the Ministry of Education and the same sickly feeling will rise to the back of one's throat. It is the small detail of the stories that make surviving so difficult, rooms preserved as they were show methods of torture projected on the graffitied walls of the cells. Details provided by individual accounts are some of the most important but difficult testimonies to survival of Jews. I had the privilege to hear some at a Holocaust Survivors camp in Ostroda, Northern Poland.

Ostroda — Testaments of Survival

A peaceful lakeside town in the north of Poland hosts a yearly meeting for post-Soviet Jews, inviting elderly campers in groups from Warsaw, Minsk and Kaliningrad to spend time together and relate stories which have survived the

Holocaust. Many of the attendees are children of survivors, yet still suffer the inherited effects of distress, and carry the burden of passing on their story, whether witnessed or affected through their families. One account in particular touched the camp, holding the attention of the hall as an elderly lady wavered as she described how Nazi soldiers took children from a local school to the trains and inevitably off to the concentration camps. Kazek, a Russian-speaking Jew who has lived in Poland all of his life holds the aim of bringing Soviet Jews together to support those who have suffered and to provide a necessary opportunity for those who need to retell their stories – each a testament to survival.

St. Petersburg — Soviet Survival

In St. Petersburg, surprisingly the second largest synagogue in Europe was kept open during Communism, although it was overshadowed by a glass-fronted KGB office across the road. Today one can still see the synagogue reflected by the office windows, the building now a labyrinth of shops selling specialist cooking equipment.

Moscow — Survival Continuing

Back in Moscow, very few synagogues have survived severe repression during the last century. In Victory Park lies the Memorial Synagogue, where a visitor can learn about Jewish victims in Russia in the underground museum. Aside from the Jewish Autonomous region, many Jews fled to Europe, the US and Israel while it was still possible, before tight restrictions on movement out of the USSR in the 1960s were imposed. It was no surprise that my tour guide at the Memorial Synagogue was so intent on conveying the seriousness of continued repression of the Jewish race in Russia. While he explained that at the local circus monkeys had been mockingly dressed as Jews, more serious resonances of anti-semitism have been felt such as the knifing carnage at Bolshaya Bronnaya Ulitsa in 2006 where eight people were wounded. Survival has been built into the genes of the Jewish race and today is a testament to that characteristic, evident by the rebuilding of synagogues and youth initiatives. Those who survived the holocaust are retelling their stories and rebuilding their homes to ensure their survival today in post-Soviet Russia. **P**

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Holiday With a Difference

text and photos by John Harrison

If you are a frustrated artist, one who needs to brush up on your skills, or just simply somebody who wants to have a go at art, you might try going on an art summer school next year organized by art colleges all over the world. This July and August I went on such a course with my 16-year-old daughter who is keen on art. We attended courses at the Edinburgh College of Art (eca), and caught a bit of the yearly Fringe Festival towards the end of our stay.

Not wishing to spend, or having a lot of money to spend on accommodation, we booked into the eca halls of residence, conveniently located right across the street from the college. Each room comes complete with a one and a half size



was going to be a piece of cake. The only thing was that there were another four and a half days to go. I took my tutor's advice, to try something new: acrylics. Deep fear set in when it dawned on me what I had committed myself to. Acrylics dry quickly, in a couple of minutes. This means that you can't get away with mixing the colors on the canvas like you can with oils, and you can't re-work areas after you have painted them. In short, if you can't find a way of working with acrylics, you hate them. With horror I tried to apply these paints to my first portrait of Kevin, one of the super-models who didn't seem to move a single muscle move at all for his 20 minute stints.



eca lecturer Joan Smith teaching drawing



Portrait painting class

bed, large tables, internet connection and an in-suite loo and shower. Although the large kitchen was shared, it was clean and functional, and everything worked. The place is central; you can see the castle from the windows.

For both of us, the two weeks of courses were challenging and interesting for different reasons. My daughter, used to traditional painting and drawing classes in a children's art school back in Moscow was not familiar with drawing with rollers or trying new non-traditional drawing methods. I thought that the courses for her might be real disaster; I was wrong, she loved them. For older students like me it was challenging being told by Robbie Bushe, the 'Lifelong Learning Coordinator' in his introduction on the first Monday morning, words to the effect that the week can be a roller coaster, and students can feel a sinking feeling early on if they have not made a breakthrough. Personally, I experienced such a sinking feeling by the end of the second day. Monday morning started fine with a bold large charcoal drawing, one of my best ever, of which I was mighty proud. Having displayed this proudly on the wall, and having even achieved a nod of recognition from the charming tutor, I knew that the course



Summer school coordinator Robbie Bushe and director of the Center of Continuing Studies Geraldine Prince

Fortunately, some of the other students seemed to be going through the same thing. A couple of failed paintings and much frayed nerves a day or two later, I eventually seemed to get the hang of these plastic-based paints, at which point my tutor, who was far too nice to ever disagree with, suggested painting another portrait from across the other side of the room, at the same time as painting the one I had just started and was totally engrossed in. I looked at her quizzically. She nodded, charmingly. That was when the painting really took off. Released from the chains of trying to make sure that each brush stroke work in the traditional sense (there was no time for that), I was forced to hack away with household brushes. The result was quite amazing, for me at least. I broke free! Freedom it seems comes at a price. Suddenly flashes of inspiration; Lucian Freud stand aside, here I come! But how on earth do you handle that kind of realization? The tutor seemed to be able to push students just far enough to enable us to realize things we never thought we could do, at the same time didn't push us too far, which is no mean task if you consider that each student comes from a completely different background, and has completely different ex-

coming out of a an upside down plastic bottle to Scottish and English jazz bands to church music. It all depends how much money you want to spend and how energetic you are. You can easily spend two or three hundred pounds per person on tickets alone, or you can pay nothing at all by going to 'free fringe' shows, where paradoxically some of the best performers can be found. Eating out in Edinburgh is good, with hundreds of decent restaurants; however there is also a healthy supply of cheap and middle-priced eateries for the likes of budget travelers like me.

The city, like all British cities these days erupts into a loud sea of drunkenness, not all of it 'nice' on a Friday and Saturday night. In contrast to all that, Edinburgh is full of charming, leafy middle-class residential areas, shows like the highly successful 'military tattoo' which befit an anglicized capital city, in contrast to Glasgow which sometimes spouts anti-English vibes, but which some say surpasses Edinburgh as a cultural center and goes further than Edinburgh on the avant guard arts front.

In short, this arts study holiday was a tremendous learning experience for both myself and my daughter and I recom-



Student Dominica Harrison's work made during illustration class



Clay figure modelling and wood carving

pectations. The guidance in eca's handbook about beginners and intermediate level classes can be read as: how far do you want to go in one week?

Certainly the show each Friday evening displaying student's best work for the week confirmed Robbie Bushe's words that "it is truly amazing what can be done in one week". Here were expressive paintings, drawings, photographs, woodworks, hats, graphic designs, all truly imaginative and of a surprisingly high standard. To learn in the space of a week completely new techniques is in itself money well spent.

Edinburgh at this time of the year comes alive with an explosion of cultural activity. Personally I was too tired after art classes to wander around the score of the many theater and happening venues which appeared magically in the first few days of August. Not so my daughter who delighted in just about everything from comedy shows such as: Dustin Demri-Burns and Seb Carinal's 'Cardinal Burns', which exploits funny foreigners, which I for one have now almost become, to concerts which featured samples of just about any musical style you could possibly want; from rain music created by water

mend it to anybody with a true inclination to develop their talents.

For further information on courses at eca contact: continuing.studies@eca.ac.uk **P**

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Don't Listen to Dead Fish

text by Anth Ginn

photos by Alina Ganenko and John Harrison



My wife and I first visited Moscow in 2006. We had taken the overnight train from Warsaw at the start of a trip around the world. We didn't enjoy ourselves. We returned home, a year later, and when friends asked which were the best and which were the worst places we'd seen, Moscow always came up as one of the worst. I now know better, but looking back on that first visit, it's not surprising we didn't enjoy ourselves. Unlike most big European cities, Moscow isn't interested in its tourists. And as I discovered later, if you want to get beyond Red Square, Lenin's mausoleum and terrible soup you really need a Muscovite to show you around.

On that first morning, we stumbled out onto the street outside Belorussky Station, tired, nervous and confused. We couldn't speak Russian, we couldn't read Cyrillic script, we had no rubles, and we didn't know where we were or how to get to our hotel. Our guide book told us it would be difficult to find a place to change money. And everybody in the UK knew that Moscow had become the most expensive city in the world.

We stood on the street, like lost children, wondering how we would ever find a bank to change money. Then after about half an hour my wife noticed we were surrounded by little glass booths containing old women, displaying exchange rates in bright red lights on the tops of the booths. The guide book had lied. We began to see old women in glass boxes everywhere; outside every toilet, at the bottom of each escalator, there was even one outside St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square.

We changed our money, found our hotel then set out to explore the city. We took the metro to Red Square. Lenin's tomb was closed. The corpse had been sent to China for repairs and renovation. Maybe one day science will advance enough to bring him back to life. Then we can show him what happened to the revolution. My wife paid 200 rubles to a woman in a glass box, and wandered around St. Basil's Cathedral. I waited outside. Red Square was empty. We were the only tourists in town. It was the middle of October. The first snow of winter began to fall. I was cold and hungry. I should have swallowed my pride and paid to go into the cathedral.

We found a place displaying a sign with a knife and fork, and an English menu on the wall. We foolishly entered. The in-

terior was like a cheap, unsuccessful nightclub from the 1960s. We walked down a long, dark corridor into an empty, gaudy, orange room, with 'atmospheric lighting'. The waitress didn't speak English and wore a football shirt. We ordered tea by sign language, and I bravely pointed to octopus on the menu. By pointing to the clock and writing numbers on a scrap of paper, the waitress informed me it would take a long, long time. Better order something faster. Mushroom soup for example. Point to clock. Write down ten. Ten minutes. We order the soup. It arrives in three minutes. This was because they hadn't bothered to heat it. It was as thick as porridge, muddy brown and almost cold. Three waitresses and a cook stood at the back of the restaurant watching us. I think they were betting whether we would send it back, throw it on the floor or eat it. Being English, we politely paid the extortionate bill and left quietly, leaving the soup for the next customers.

We found a small shop near the hotel and bought a couple of boxes of mysterious salad, a tin of fish, bread and beer. Back in our room I discovered that the tin was actually a clear plastic container. It was filled with grey water. Small fish floated around inside. It was like a small, neglected aquarium where the fish had all died. One of the fish moved forwards, looked at me through the murky water and said, "Moscow isn't for you. Nobody is interested in tourists. Why do you think the hotels are so expensive? It's to keep you all away. Get out of here Englishman. Piss off. Go to China where they'll make a fuss of you."

When I returned to London and told friends how terrible it was in Moscow, where even the tinned fish insult you, I felt guilty, as if I was bad-mouthing somebody behind their back. I knew somewhere there must be another, more friendly Moscow. But we hadn't found it. I wanted to go back and try again. Then an old friend who had been working in Beijing returned to Moscow. He invited me for a holiday, and promised to show me another side of the city. This was my chance to give it a second try.

Almost everyone in Moscow lives in an apartment block. People who come and visit stay with friends or relatives. Ho-

Anth with Natalia and Tyetya Katya in Efanova village





Anth buying mushrooms at Akademicheskyy

tels are for tourists. When I stepped into the apartment for the first time, I felt I'd truly arrived. I'd finally discovered the place, where 15 million Muscovites lived.

The apartment was small. The walls were covered in original pictures, the shelves were overflowing with books and the fridge was full of good food and drink. The apartment was full of good, friendly hospitable people, all blowing the dust from their schoolbook English and seeing if it still worked.

The apartment I stayed at is on Akademicheskaya Ulitsa. The next morning I took a walk. The street, like so many around Moscow, is a broad, tree-lined avenue. Shops and kiosks form an orderly line along the pavement. They are filled with books, food, tobacco, drink, CDs and DVDs, newspapers, bread, dairy, clothes, flowers, chocolate, fruit and everything you'd expect to find in a big city. The pretty young girl in the bakers had a degree in English, and was happy to chat while I bought some bread. In the places where no English was spoken, sign language was a good substitute. I was always shown the price on a calculator and nobody tried to cheat me. And everything was cheaper than in London. I was baffled. Why does everyone say Moscow is the most expensive city in the world? It simply isn't true. The bright spark who came up with this gem, did nothing more than compare hotel prices. His conclusion was, because Moscow hotels are the most expensive in the world, everything else must be more expensive too. How wrong he was.

We visited places that weren't mentioned in the guide books. My friend took me to the university and we enjoyed the beautiful view of the city from up high. The balustrade overlooking the river cradled a row of souvenir stalls. The stalls had been invaded by an army of Russian dolls. They waited patiently, in rows, like children in an orphanage, for someone to provide a home for them. The sales people were friendly and not at all pushy. I'll go back there for my souvenir presents.

Behind the balustrade, down towards the river, stood a tree, covered in bright ribbons. A large rock stood in the shade beneath it. My friend explained that the rock had been there since pre-Christian times and had sacred significance. We have sacred prehistoric stones all over Britain, so this was a familiar concept. The ribbons had been tied to the tree by people who come to visit the rock. They recognize the significance of the stone and continuing the tradition of paying respect. It was exciting to discover this link with the city's pagan inhabitants. How could I have possibly found it without my friend?

The following evening, knowing I enjoy, and sometimes play the



blues, he took me to a popular jazz club, The Bluebird, on Malaya Dmitrovka Ulitsa. Wednesday night is jam night and there's no admission charge. Many of the country's best blues musicians show up to play for free. The drinks are not expensive, at least half the audience are musicians and there's a great atmosphere. The standard of music is excellent. I soon found myself on stage, blowing my heart out on the harmonica, and even though I was the worst harp player that night, I received a good reception and was invited back the next week. Muscovites are warm, friendly people.

I'd been in town about four days, and was finally relaxing when my friend showed me the most beautiful Moscow district of all, the dacha. It seems everybody has a dacha, or has a relative or friend with a dacha. Although the dachas are deep in the countryside, they are an extension of Moscow, where the residents escape the city and pressures of work. Russian forests are magnificent, unspoiled since the Ice Age. Such beautiful, wild countryside is a rarity in Western Europe. We don't have anything like it in England. The place is far too crowded.

As we drove back into the city I realized that the grey fish was right. Nobody is interested in tourists in Moscow. If you spend your life savings on a few nights in a hotel, and rely on a guide book you'll probably have a miserable time and end your holiday talking to dead fish. But if you know a Muscovite, you have the key to the kingdom, and you'll discover what a great place it is and what wonderful people live here. Otherwise the highlight of your trip could be a visit to an empty tomb in a windswept, desolate square. **P**

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Little

Lamb



text by Charles W. Borden

Baku native, and Los Angeles transplant Shiraz Mamedov issued our first invitation to Barashka, which he called his favorite Moscow Azeri restaurant, claiming that it does for Azeri cuisine what Pushkin Café has done for Russian.

Barashka has two locations, on Novy Arbat across from the Oktyabr cinema complex, and on Petrovka. Both fall under the Novikov umbrella, but like most Novikov restaurants there is a third party owner, in this case Rudolf Movsumov. A few weeks later, at the invitation of Georgian Timuri Lomsadze, we returned, this time to meet Rudolf in person.

The Novy Arbat location has a nice covered summer terrace and Shiraz secured a table on a nice summer evening. Barashka is stylishly decorated with pleasantly subtle Caucasus touches of color, texture and fabrics, in contrast with most other southern ethnic restaurants that overdo the decorative

flourishes and costumes to the point that they all appear alike. However, the Novikov design trademark is also apparent at Barashka – at Novikov's restaurants you will usually find masses of identical objects – large glass jars full of lemons, a huge basket of peppers or cinnamon sticks, or a wall constructed of simple uniform vases.

The Barashka menu has more than a dozen pages of Azeri dishes with descriptions appealing enough to invite as many visits to try them. The choice was difficult so we let Shiraz select his favorites for the table. A plate of sliced veal *basturma* was first out, quickly followed by a large tray of sprigs of fresh dark greens – purple basil, cilantro, mint, sorrel and others – with very fresh cucumbers and tomatoes (400r). The *basturma* was a deep, dark veal with a thick spice coating, semi-dried and cured with a resulting spicy, powerful taste. For starters, we had a selection of *qutabs*, thin, flat and filled pastries. In our case we

tried *qutabs* with cheese (300r), *qutabs* with greens (300r) and *qutabs* with meat (300r). The *qutabs* were surprisingly delicate, belying, and in this case complementing the strong tastes of Azeri and Caucasus cuisine – the *qutabs* with greens were an especially bit hit.

Barashka has a large selection of interesting sounding soups, and though I normally am not big on soups I tried two broth soups: Arushta Chicken Soup with noodles and meatballs (350r) and Dyushbara with small Azeri lamb dumplings (450r). The *dyshbara* consists of tiny

visit with Rudolf we shared a large plate of grilled meats and which included Chicken Lulya-Kebab (300r) and Lamb Lulya-Kebab (450r). Particularly interesting were the *semechki*, which is the word used for the sunflower seeds so popular in this region, however in this



dumplings in a broth made with onion, mint, cilantro and perhaps plums, a delightful combination of flavors.

Shiraz described Azeri cuisine as original yet diverse, using a rich assortment of herbs, vegetables, fruits, spices, meat and fish from the Caspian area. Spice and flavor are provided by anise, capicum, caraway, celery, dill, fennel, laurel, mint, parsley, saffron, sorrel, tarragon, thyme and other less familiar ingredients. Lemon, olives, plums, apricots and dried fruits are used extensively in cooking. Lamb, beef, chicken are principal meats and sturgeon is a local fish. Azerbaijan has strong cheeses typical of the Caucasus using fresh and sour milk and are used as a base for soups and sauces. The region might be best known for *plov* or rice pilaf, and Shiraz stated that there were scores of variants served in Azerbaijan.

On my first visit I took the Azeri Pasta with fried chicken and tomatoes (550r) – very satisfying and tasty. During our

case they were one-inch long sections of grilled lamb ribs (300r).

Barashka has a reasonable selection of wines but we were disappointed that they did not have any satisfactory wines from Azerbaijan. We hope this will change – we have heard from our friend, grapevine grower and exporter Henri Bernabe of Montpellier, that he is working to plant new vines in Azerbaijan, but we will have to wait a few years.

I was glad to visit Barashka, thanks to Shiraz and Timuri; these two locations definitely show the potential for cuisine from the region. Barashka shows a passion for cooking and presentation that has been sadly missing from most of the Caucasus region establishments I have visited over the years. **P**

Barashka
Ulitsa Petrovka 20/1
Tel.: 625-2892
Novy Arbat 21/1
Tel.: 228-3731, 228-3730



Friends Forever

Nina with her cuppa



text by Frank Ebbecke

'FRIENDS FOREVER' – surely not the most common name for a Moscow café but it fits. Just come in, swallow the atmosphere and you feel somewhat at home or with friends right away: a big sofa, deep, comfortable armchairs, little 'Kaffeehaus'-tables – like in typical European cafés, all in warm beige/brown colors, an open fireplace, plenty of black and white historical photographs of Manhattan/NYC scenery, nicely framed, covering the pink/purple painted walls. Even the soft level of jazz music and American/English ballades add to the homely ambience.

Not that easy to find, but you may



recognize the small place from Petrovka, looking up into Dmitrovsky Pereulok on the left side of the Marriott Royal Aurora Hotel: the only big window is overshadowed by a large sunshade and the light brown, wooden entrance door is always invitingly kept wide open.

And here Nina often greets you personally: a pretty young lady in jeans and a t-shirt or a flowery, free-floating long dress – more Spanish than Russian looking. Don't be confused: her hometown is Moscow but she spent her college years in the British-International School in Lanzarote/Canary Islands. However, her big love is New York City where she, funnily enough, has never lived yet. Subsequently while 'positioning' her little jewel she put in these words: 'Part of New York in the heart

fast at Any Hour of the Opening Hours' – and, for sure, many more tasty ideas are to be expected from her and her gang.

Another little thing may remind you more of strict US/European regulations for public places than Russian habits: it's a non-smoking establishment but if you can't resist, you can grab your coffee and sit on one of the two bar stools outside under the sunshade for a couple of minutes.

To sum up what you can expect from visiting FRIENDS FOREVER, just read a personal quote of a frequent customer. (Nina had the neat idea to place a little guestbook on the big sofa table which is heavily used every day): "I come to your place and I forget about all my problems and I feel at home." **P**

FRIENDS FOREVER
7 days, 10am-midnight
11 Dmitrovsky Pereulok
Tel.: 287-0741
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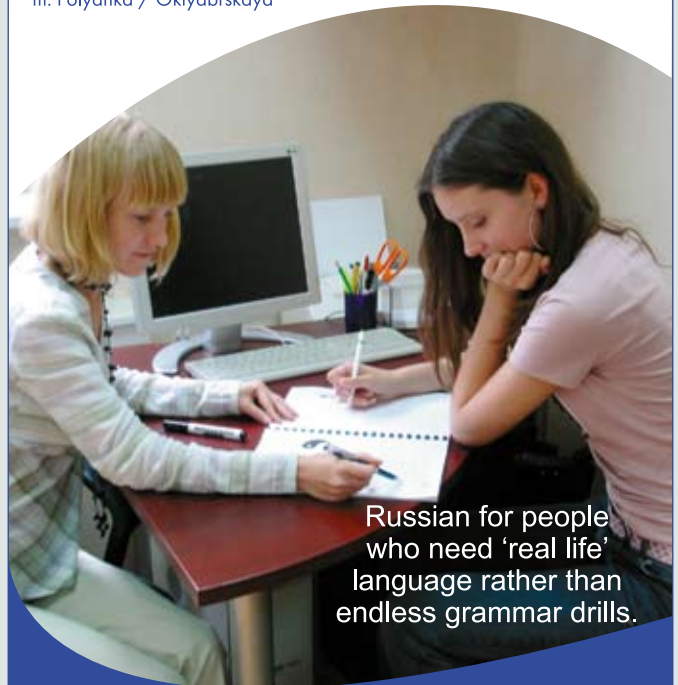
of Moscow'. However, NYC has not been her sole inspiration when creating her own café idea: frequent visits to Vienna, most probably the global heart of 'Kaffeehaus' culture, left her quite obviously with lasting impressions.

The very young Vicky (the 18-year-old manager) and easy going guys with big smiles on their faces bring the goodies to tables which can accommodate a maximum of 30 customers at any one time. Choose one of the delicious, healthy salads, soups or other snacks, accompanied by a great selection of fresh juices, light cocktails or the variety of coffees and teas from a comprehensive menu. There are also freshly made desserts and cakes, often with fresh berries of all kinds which are really tasty, even if not that healthy (... and the prices are well below 'normal' ones in comparison to other places in the area). Nina herself is the gifted chef, reigning her own place from the open kitchen in the back. She continuously keeps thinking of fresh ideas: 'Cooking with Children', American-type pizzas (take-away or house delivery: www.friendlypizza.ru), 'Spanish/Italian Specialities Months', 'Enjoy your Break-



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Bargain wines were the immediate effect of the current crisis for dollar or euro wine shoppers since the ruble shelf prices changed little if at all. A bottle of Barton & Guestier Sauvignon Blanc from my local convenience shop stood at 360 rubles for months, just over \$15 before the crisis started, but \$10 afterwards. No more – inventories that were bought last fall for the holiday season have cleared and the current price for the new B&G Sauvignon Blanc is 490 rubles, matching the previous dollar price.

Shoppers for wines that are priced \$20 or more will probably not notice or care that they are priced forty percent higher in ruble terms. But for the ruble shopper whose income was not indexed in dollars, the market has changed. I was surprised recently at the decline of the wine selection at my nearby Sedmoi Kontinent. Gone are many reasonable quality wines that must now be priced forty percent more in rubles, so they do not find a place on the shelves.

This is not good news for our readers. It has always been irksome to pay two or three times European or US prices for wines, and that will certainly continue. And unfortunately, the financial crisis will likely firm the hold that importers have on the market. But let's forget those ruble prices and hit that "reset button" – Hillary Clinton had it right, we're in for some "peregruzka".

We have been taking a new look at the wines in our "every day" price range, which is now 450+ rubles and other ways to economize. At the end of this article we have a list of some very good wines that we have found in this range, some new on the market. It's also time to take another look at domestic wines, but we'll leave that for another issue.

Crisis Wine Buying

text by Charles W. Borden

I remember buying a warm Russian beer in Moscow in the summer of 1998, sold in a scratched recycled bottle which cost six rubles. I also had to find an empty bottle to turn in to qualify to buy it. A bottle of real Dutch imported Heineken cost eight rubles. No wonder that, even in the regions, most beer was imported. Within weeks after the Russian debt default in the fall, the Heineken was 38 rubles but the Russian beer just eight. These days, Russia's Heineken is brewed in-country, though most likely with some of the better malts now being made from Russian barley, and though the local brew doesn't compare with the real Dutch version, it benefits from the fact that its brand is better known than some local ones.

There has been nothing like Russian financial crises for observation of economic behavior of consumer businesses. The 1998 economic crisis spurred investment in domestic food production, and the current crisis should have the same effect if the Russian Central Bank doesn't step too hard on the ruble to maintain a low exchange rate. In the summer of 1998, Russia was almost completely import dependent and farmers and food companies had difficulties competing. They were saddled with very low quality processing tools and poor or non-existent packaging. In retrospect, the transformation of the food industry has been marvelous, but there is still a lot more work to do.

A couple of final buying tips:

Azbuka Vkusa still has one of the best wine selections among Moscow supermarkets, though the selection is also thinner than before. They also have better in-shop storage conditions than other supermarkets.

Get a Metro card if you can. Metro has a decent wine selection and prices beat others by 20% or so.

There are a few, but very few, very good wines at the boutiques (Magnum, Kaufman, Kolleksiya Vin, Grand Cru) at less than \$20. For the wines they carry, buy at the boutique shops. Prices are likely to be the lowest since they are owned by importer companies. By comparison, Globus Gourmet prices are much higher for the same wines.

Warning: I still see wines on sale that have been here since 2007. How to tell – they have the old customs tax stamp wrapped over the top of the capsule. I would be very cautious about any such wine given the difficult situation that wines face in storage in Moscow.

The following are some "finds" from the past few months. Any wine that we score 4 or higher is well worth seeking out and we would not hesitate to recommend it or buy it again at the current price. These wines are likely to retail currently above 500 rubles but less than 750 rubles. **P**



Wine and Description	Retailer	Passport Score
Kleine Parys Classic Red 2005 (Western Cape, South Africa) <i>Fruity, dark, great value</i>	Sedmoi Kontinent	4+
Emiliana Novas Chardonnay 2006 (Casablanca Valley, Chile) <i>Organic grapes. Very rich and complex Chardonnay that shows the grape off well without being oaky</i>	Azbuka Vkusa	4+
Alto Almanzora Este de Bodegas 2004 (Spain) <i>A Steve Tanzer score of 88 (Monastrell and Garnacha grapes)</i>	Azbuka Vkusa	4
Heartland Stickleback Red 2006 (South Australia) <i>Very nice fruity red (Cabernet Sauvignon-Shiraz-Grenache)</i>	Sedmoi Kontinent	4+
Bigi Vipra Rossa 2007 (Umbria, Italy) <i>Concentrated flavors, aged in oak (70% Merlot, 20% Sangiovese and 10% Montepulciano)</i>	Metro	4+
Stellar Organic Winery Firefly Organic Red 2007 (Western Cape, South Africa) <i>Dark, peppery and a bargain (Shiraz)</i>	Metro	4
Alamos Syrah 2006 (Argentina) <i>A rich and earthy wine (Syrah)</i>	Magnum	4+
Flagstaff Noon Gun 2007 (South Africa) <i>Fruity, complex and pleasant white wine. (45% Chenin Blanc, 35% Viognier, 20% Sauvignon Blanc)</i>	Kauffman	4
Flagstaff Dragon Tree 2006 (South Africa) <i>A very rich and luscious red equal or better to many at far higher prices (49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 21% Pinotage, 10% Cabernet Franc, 9.5% Merlot, 6% Shiraz, 4.5% Petit Verdot)</i>	Kauffman	4+
Qvinto Arrio Tinto 2007 (Rioja, Spain) <i>Excellent deep red Spanish wine (Tempranillo, Garnacha)</i>	Globus Gourmet	4+
Chateau Bel Air Perponcher Bordeaux 2007 Reserve (France) <i>An excellent Bordeaux from a progressive winery. A discovery in our recent review of Bordeaux wines</i>	Kauffman	4

Interview with Professor William Craft Brumfield – Architectural Historian Extraordinaire

text by Ian Mitchell

Did you know that St Basil's Cathedral on Red Square was built without the onion domes that we associate with almost all old Russian church architecture?

Did you know that the domes you see today were the first such cupolas of which we have any documented records? Before then, the towers in Russian churches were topped with flat helmet-like domes. The most potent modern symbol of old Russia, which is reproduced in thousands of tourist brochures, is in fact a comparatively recent invention.

This is the sort of astonishing fact you learn if you spend an hour chatting with William Brumfield, professor of Slavic studies at Tulane University in New Orleans, who was recently in Moscow for an extended visit. After all, he is the world's most widely-acknowledged expert on Russian architectural history.

Professor Brumfield comes from the deep South. He grew up in a world where the loss of built heritage – in his case plantation-based, antebellum mansions – was widely felt to be a tragedy which art had to suffer in the name of social and political progress. He admits to having been disturbed as a teenager by the fact that so much beauty was based on a system of what he calls “unmitigated evil”, namely slavery.

“I lived through the period when desegregation was on high boil,” he says. “I started reading Russian novels and discovered that here was another culture which has endured similar agonies. They asked the existential question: if our life is based on a fundamental injustice, how do we seek redemption? That is how I got into the literature. The language followed, and then the history.”

However, the architecture came by accident, when the young graduate student came to Russia for the first time, in 1970, to do literary research. As it seemed such an unusual opportunity, he thought he ought to take a few snaps.

“I bought a camera and a couple of rolls of slow Kodachrome film,” Profes-

sor Brumfield recalls. “When I got here, I was so astounded by what I saw that the film soon ran out. I bought some Russian film in Leningrad, which turned to purple in six months. But that was the start. I couldn't get enough of it. In 1974 I went to Harvard as an assistant professor, and it was there that I learned about photography.”

The transformation of the Slavic generalist into the architectural historian was completed in 1983 when he published his first book about Russian architecture, *Gold and Azure*. Later on he produced *Lost Russia* for which he set off into the countryside in search of the crumbling mansions of the gentry, reminding him of his



initial interest in the decaying heritage of the American South.

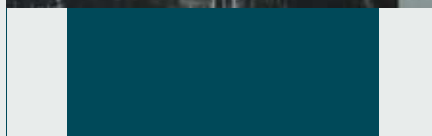
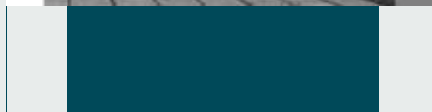
The academic world cold-shouldered him. Most of the western experts on Russian architecture were originally art historians, and they tended not to be interested in why buildings were as they were, preferring to concentrate on elucidating their aesthetic pedigree from a cosy academic perspective. Professor Brumfield's ability to contextualise his subjects politically, and explain their construction practically, was helped by his command of the Russian language and his willingness to travel widely, even while being followed by the security organs at the height of late-Soviet paranoia in the early 1980s.

"For the art historians, this was an issue of culture and culture, as everyone knows, is confined to the main centers of European Russia," Professor Brumfield says, shaking his head sadly.

"The Russian experts were just as bad, but in a different way," he adds. "They would not be told about their own culture by anyone from abroad. I was not Russian and therefore not to be taken seriously. They were very parochial in a political sense, just as the western experts were parochial in an academic sense. My attitude is: a plague on both your houses! The fact is the public likes my books and buys them, which is all that matters."

... Getting back to St. Basil's, I asked as we sat together in a chaotically book-strewn room in his publisher's old-fashioned offices near metro station Aeroport. Where did the idea for all the crazy colourful cupolas come from?

"We do not know, but what we do know is that the church was not built like that. First, they were not cupolas in the modern sense of being onion domes – they were not flared as they are today. Secondly, they were not colorful. They were made of what was called white iron, a sort of tin metal. They were helmet-shaped. As far as the visual evidence is concerned, St. Basil's is the first place we know of that has the flared domes. No-one knows why. Tatars will say it comes from a mosque that was destroyed in the storming of Kazan. For some people there seems to be an Islamic element to the flare. There is a fascinating theory that it represents the shape of the dome over the Holy Sepulchre in medieval Jerusalem. But we really don't know."



When were the helmet domes replaced by the cupolas we see today?

"After a fire in 1588. Boris Godunov, who was fascinated with idea of Jerusalem and wanted to rebuild the Kremlin as a recreation of the Holy City, was involved in putting up something like what you see today. The separate Church of St. Basil's was added by him as well. Also, a lot of the other exterior color was introduced only when they roofed the terrace in the reign of Alexei Mikhailovich in the late seventeenth century. What you see today is very different from what Ivan the Terrible saw when the building was completed in 1561."

Where did the inspiration for the mad, asymmetrical design come from?

"It may look like asymmetry but in fact there is a very compelling geometric logic to St. Basil's," Professor Brumfield says. "The overall impression you get is of variety, an ever-changing perspective as you walk round the building. But look at the plan and you will see that there are four towers, four self-sufficient churches, on four points of the compass, and four others on the diagonals, plus the main tower, which is not exactly in the middle but off-set slightly to the west. Each stands for something different. The symbolism is remarkable in its cohesion, yet you get this sense of an explosion of colour and form. In fact it is all grounded on a strong geometric logic. That is not the same thing as symmetry. But it's not chaos either."

Lastly, I asked if it was true, as is so often said, that Ivan the Terrible was so pleased with the building that he had the two architects blinded and their hands cut off so they could never again build anything to compete with his beautiful new cathedral.

"No, not at all. There is no evidence for that. It is purely a Westerner's account and Westerners often like to 'dramatize' Russian history for their own purposes. It is true that blinding was an accepted form of punishment among the Russian elite in the fifteenth century. Two Tsars were blinded but were left to live. One actually came back to exact his vengeance. But a hundred years later, when St. Basil's was designed, that had all stopped. The legend of the blinding seems to have come from a German traveller nearly a century after the alleged event. We are not even sure there were two architects." **P**

A History of Russian Architecture

Professor William Brumfield

University of Washington Press

ISBN 0295983930

664 pages, GBP 35.00; US\$ 50.00

by Ian Mitchell

William Brumfield has written nearly twenty books on Russian architectural history. By far the best-known of them is the one simply entitled *A History of Russian Architecture*. It was first published by Cambridge University Press in 1993 and is still in print, though the publisher is now the University of Washington Press, who have added a chapter on the wooden architecture of the far north. This is the benchmark in its field. No other single book has the same combination of comprehensive scope, scholarly authority, readable narrative and lavish production values.

Its subject is an important one, especially to foreigners in this country. Few who have seen it will forget the sight of Red Square at night, with St. Basil's illuminated like Ali Baba's dream in front of the grim severity of the Kremlin walls. Nothing in Paris, London or even Rome compares with the drama and colour of the scene. Russian exceptionalism may be over-played in many fields, but not in architecture.

So where does the style come from? Many people claim origins in the East; others say it was western architects who gave form to Russian buildings. Both are right in a sense. The tent roofs hark back to a life on the nomad steppe, while the Kremlin walls were designed by two Italians, who brought new techniques to Moscow at the request of Ivan the Great in the late fourteenth century. Such examples could be multiplied endlessly.

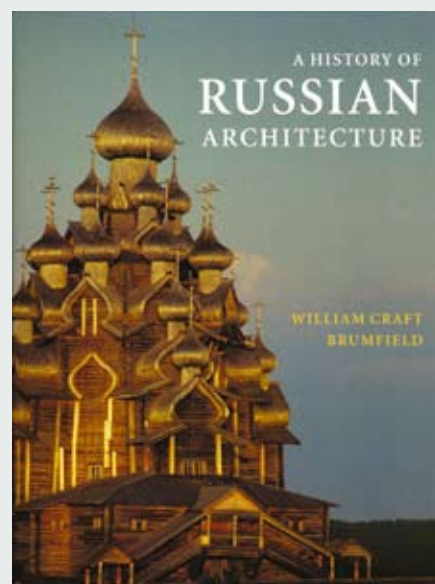
All culture is eclectic to a certain extent. Outside inspiration and foreign contributions should not detract from the fact that the Russian architectural genius comes essentially from the Russian mind. And this is as true of Stalinist Gothic, which owed a lot to the New York skyscrapers of the 1920s, as it is of St. Basil's Cathedral or the Summer Palace which Peter the Great built on the Gulf of Finland with Versailles in mind. Each is very different from the supposed model.

For any artistic style to be both original and relevant, these foreign influences have to be refracted through the prism of local conditions and culture. Professor Brumfield's great strength is that he is not an art historian. He does not confine himself to describing how one style influenced another. His view is much broader. His Doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Berkeley, focussed on Dostoyevsky, and took literature as a reflection of history and history as the context for literature.

"Architecture," Professor Brumfield says, "is both culture and history in concrete form. Architectural history is not part of the mainstream of art history. It is more practical than that, and also more photogenic. To the extent that my publisher's initial interest in my ideas was provoked by my photographs, I have benefited from that."

For all the beautiful illustrations in Brumfield's book, it is the text which sets it apart from other books on the same subject. The author gives a fascinating description of how the wider world of politics, power, war, spiritual conflict and technological innovation influenced the development of Russian architecture. There are over a hundred pages of notes and bibliography, stuffed with references which will enable any reader with scholarly inclinations to get as much out of the book as the lay reader who simply wants to follow the narrative.

It is not surprising that there is no equivalent book in English. What is astonishing is that there is not one in Russian either. Due partly to professional jealousies, partly to the vagaries of Soviet publishing and, later, the problems of the book market in post-Soviet times, Russians cannot buy an authoritative, single-volume history of the architecture of their country. An official history of Russian art and architecture is in preparation, but it is projected to run to more than twenty volumes and will be completely inaccessible to the ordinary reader, if only on cost grounds. As ever,



ordinary Russians suffer from the elitist attitudes of their rulers.

Professor Brumfield is dead set against this. His main project today (see illustrations on page 35) is aimed at bringing the smaller cities of Russia into the foreground of both Russian and international attention in accessible books for the general public. Provincial towns are, separately, the subjects of individual paperback books that have parallel texts in English and Russian. They are A4 format, and printed on art paper so they carry their photographs well. They are 100 pages or so, and still cost under 400 rubles. Most pictures are in black and white, but there is a colour section in each, and full documentation giving, for example, the dates on which each picture was taken. This is important in a world which is changing as rapidly as Russia.

The publisher is a specialist Moscow house, called Tri Kvadrata, and the books are widely sold in the towns they cover, as well as in Moscow and other main centers. Places already covered include Irkutsk, Tobolsk, Solikamsk, Chita, Suzdal and Solovki, the island settlement in the White Sea where the first concentration camp was established by the Bolsheviks in 1923 in an expropriated monastery.

Professor Brumfield's main hope in doing this is that he will stimulate interest amongst ordinary Russians in their unique architectural heritage and that this interest will help bring pressure to bear on the authorities to reduce the speed with which the country's unique buildings are being destroyed, sometimes due to understandable problems like lack of funds to restore them, but often for reasons as trivial as profit. **P**

A Picnic on the Football Field



text by Elena Krivovvaz
photos by Marina Kanischeva

Saturday, July 25 saw the annual Expat Football League Summer Tournament. It was aimed at providing an amazing day out for football lovers, their wives, children and friends, managers and everyone involved in the Expat Football league.



Two footballers from Moscow Bhoys (left) and Expo Solutions (right)



The Turkish Real Brothers training a future player



CEO of Allianz Rosno, Hannes Chopra

The event was held at league's traditional summer location – a playing field behind MGIMO (Moscow Institute of Foreign Affairs). Although the weather was not exactly friendly, it cleared up by 2pm when proceedings began. As the players donned their kit and warmed up, visitors relaxed on the grass and picnicked with free Pepsis (Pepsi was one of the sponsors of the event), beer and other drinks. There were also loads of shashlik and tasty salads, so the 500 plus people who attended the event had no excuse but to indulge.

Children could enjoy jumping around in a bouncy castle and playing with clowns, while their fathers were playing football on the field, or at least watching others play. During half-time special football games were held with prizes of up to \$750.

"We hold this event every year, but it was always a rather small event, until we found a new sponsor – Allianz Rosno – who came along to support the league. We thought it would be a good idea to have a launch party for the sponsorship," said Nick Rees who was one of the founders of the league six years ago. Nick also plays for Moscow Flagons which is one of the members of the league.

The other founder of the league – Darren Keane was also there. "We have always had a winter and a summer event during the six years of the league's existence," he commented. "It's midway through the season and that's why we are holding a tournament for the cup as an award."



Nick Rees announcing the teams

Before the games, Nick had showed the cup to everyone. "This is our summer cup and this is what you play for today," he laughed. Then he introduced Hannes Chopra, the CEO of Allianz Rosno, who made a speech. "I warned everyone I would just stay and drink beer and watch, but not play," said Chopra. "We're happy to be the sponsor of such a great event."

There was a marquis area where guests could take a break from the heat and also find out more about Allianz Rosno whose strong support and kind sponsorship made the event totally free for everyone attending. **P**



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Across the River:

Zamoskvorechye, Tretyakovskaya & Paveletskaya

text and photos by Ross Hunter
original art by John Harrison

*The third of an essential guide to
favorite residential areas*



*Looking down Bolshaya Ordinka Ulitsa
from Moskvoretsky bridge*

One of Moscow's more enigmatic curiosities is the area beyond the Moscow River – literally Za-Moskvo-Rechye – which Stalin could see from his bedroom window in the Kremlin, but nevertheless escaped his obsession for grandiose redevelopment. Before the modern age, it also escaped the regular disasters by fire that razed many city center areas, maybe because development was limited by regular flooding, at least until 1786. As a result, just one bridge away from Red Square, we have a charming old town with a delightfully random street pattern, lots of old buildings and remarkably few high-rise

landmarks. This is Moscow for people not machines: pavement cafes abound, many roads are car-free and within the bend of the river there are no underpasses – cars wait for walkers, the way it should be. With it having no straight thoroughfares, views are intimate and varied, and every few steps suddenly opens, then closes another charming vista or undiscovered building.

This is a place for living in, not showcasing. If it is not at the top of the card with newcomers, it is certainly popular with the long-term adoptive expats: the old stagers who know Moscow best have bought their pads here.

Where?

The area south of the river, bounded by the Garden Ring that crosses from Park Kultury to Paveletskaya by way of Oktyabrskaya and Dobryninskaya. Famous avenues and overblown skyscrapers are agreeable by their absence.

Zamoskvorechye is best explored on foot, and not just because traffic is often very sticky. Once you are out of the Metro or over the bridge, even the main streets are narrow and irregular, and with cafes and a whole variety of historic buildings, this is the best part of Moscow for feeling as if you are in an old European city – one that has missed reconstruction forced by fire, Stalin or (so far) the current blue-glass craze. There are abundant pedestrian zones, of which two strolls are particular favorites. From Novokuznetskaya metro station, go west to the old Tretyakov building and north along Lavrushinsky Pereulok towards the Kremlin, over the footbridge to be welcomed by a statue of Ilya Repin himself. Or start at the sculpture gardens, and follow Krymsky Val past the new Tretyakov along an embankment adorned with street artists selling their works, and to or past Gorky Park. Only the bustling Garden Ring disturbs the peace but even that can be missed thanks to an art-embellished underpass.

The Special Bits:

The two **Tretyakov Galleries** have between them an astonishing collection of wonderful Russian art, and also serve as a history of the Russian people and their culture.

After that, the great thing about Zamoskvorechye is its old city charm, without flash or tourist spectacles – it is a walker's area, full of street life, perfect for people watching.

Streets: Polyanka, Yakimanka, Pyatnitskaya and Ordinka are the main streets, replete with shops and every retail need. One side street behind and you can be looking for your ideal apartment. A view over the river, or better, a building on one of the embankments is a bonus. Supermarkets, specialist shops and street markets are all within easy reach. There is an endless variety of cafes, bars and eating places, indoors and on the pavement, with a particular concentration of ethnic restaurants to suit every taste and budget.

Buildings & Statues: tick them off as you go: the original Tretyakov Gallery (with statue), the Church of St. Clements



Metro station Novokuznetskaya



Statue of Pavel Tretyakov



– being restored, the statue of Repin, the largest statue of Lenin in Moscow at Oktyabrskaya, the sculpture park in the grounds of the Central House of Artists, the statue of Peter the Great (if you like that sort of thing), the concert hall at Krasnye Holmy. The newly-weds bridge over the canal, decorated with love trees and bedecked in ceremonial padlocks is best at the weekend, when it is frequently full of wedding parties as they tour the city.

The Best Metro Stations: Tretyakovskaya/Novokuznetskaya and Paveletskaya are without doubt the most imposing and attractive, and all four of the local Brown line stations were completed in the early 1950s, so are in post-war celebratory style.

Nearby? If you like this area but can't find what you want... keep asking your favorite estate agents! Otherwise, go a bit further south, perhaps Shabolovskaya (near Shukhov's wonderful radio tower); or along Leninsky Prospekt – this is popular with expats from various countries, all the way down SW to Yugo-Zapadnaya. But be warned, the traffic past Gagarin can be ghastly, by Moscow standards, that is!

Verdicts:

"The best expat residential area" – by many who have lived here longest
 "The most historic and handy part of Moscow"
 "Unbeatable, especially with a river view"

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Apartments For Rent

One of several pedestrian bridges across the Yauza




Fountain at gallery



Lavrushinsky Pereulok

Top 10 +/- The list of all that matters most

1. Old, haphazard, non-Stalinized streets: the people's part of the city...
2. ... but traffic can get very sticky at rush hours;
3. The river and the Vodootvodny Canal – always nearby;
4. Lots of local play areas and green spaces...
5. ... but they are small, apart from Gorky Park and the sculpture gardens;
6. Handy for the center and for trams and trains – especially the Domodedovo airport express from nearby Paveletsky Station;
7. More sensible prices for shopping, eating and drinking, and maybe for rent;
8. Charming views, that change every few paces...
9. ... with no skyscrapers or underpasses;
10. Unmissable: The Tretyakov Galleries and a stroll along the canal.

Thanks! I am indebted to the following, and more, for their expert and local insights: Elena Marguleva, Anna at www.eolia-relocation.ru, Iben at www.howdoyoudomoscow.com and EIS parents at www.englishedmoscow.com 

Great New Offers



Lot 62166

The apartment with a secured territory is refurbished in modern style. Built-in kitchen and appliances, comfortable furniture is all included in this apartment. Parking.



Lot 61736

The apartment with a panoramic view renovated in «Classic» style. Imported Western furniture. Bathrooms have high - quality European equipment. Parking. Playground.



Lot 62069

New residential complex in one of the most prestigious areas of Moscow. Author designed apartment in «Modern» style. Concierge. Security. Protected territory.

To Buy or Not to Buy?

text by Alexander Ziminsky,
Director, Elite Real Estate
Department, Penny Lane Realty

The summer of 2009 was marked by a noticeable upward trend of buyer activity. June and July became the most active months, which was never a characteristic for the summer season in previous years. I explain this partially by the fact that postponed demand played its role, demand which has built up since the beginning of the financial crisis. People were afraid to commit, waiting to see if prices would fall any further. These expectations were not fulfilled due to the fact that the majority of sellers of elite real estate, especially on the secondary market, did not experience particularly serious financial difficulties, and thus did not see any serious reasons for reducing prices more than a usual market reduction, which was normally reached in the course of negotiations.

The lowering of the cost of certain elite properties did not exceed 8-10% in US dollars from pre-crisis levels, however these kind of reductions were being made before the crisis. As a rule, this occurs when the owners of these properties need free cash because of financial difficulties, or if clients decide to take their profits and move into another segment of the market, and also for other reasons. Also, during the summer period many new attractive, elite

apartments appeared on the market. Many of them have already found buyers, but demand is weak for those that are left, especially those which have just been repaired. Such apartments today mostly interest those who purchase property as an investment. But owners are not so keen to lower prices as they were a few months ago. Owners, who in February – March willingly offered to lower prices and apply different additional marketing steps to speed up the sale of their apartments, are today changing sale conditions and tactics. They do not experience the need for an urgent sale anymore.

If we examined globally the affect of the crisis on the elite real estate market, then it is possible to note that the elite end of the market has separated itself from the rest of the market, including “pseudo-elite” properties, to a greater degree. In essence this is manifested by the absence of additional discounts for the given properties. Therefore they will always be an attractive investment. As far as owners of less prestigious properties are concerned, not everybody got their money back. This is due to the fact that prices in buildings of various non-elite apartments have started to adjust to fit existing economic conditions. Because of the decline in demand and transformation of the market from seller to buyer



domination, owners can no longer sell their business-class apartments, for a price equal to that of say an apartment in a ‘club house’ in the center of Moscow. Subsequently, sharp upward price changes will not take place in the near future, and much will depend on the development of macroeconomic factors.

I recommend clients to look for their desired apartments now and not to wait. GREAT properties that are being offered now are also disappearing from the market with the same GREAT speed. Future hope for lower prices will be canceled out by a simple lack of offers, which will keep apartments of lower quality at the same price level as they are now, simply because there will be less options to choose from. **P**

The Moscow publishing house **Tri Quadrata** offers a wide selection of books on Russian history, literature and the fine arts. It also publishes the “**Discovering Russia**” series of illustrated books, with texts in both English and Russian, on the rich architectural heritage of Russia’s regions. Recent titles in this series include **Solovki, Suzdal, Kolomna and Kargopol**

These books are available in Moscow’s major bookstores



White Glove Environment – The Art of Handling Fine Arts

by Sherman Pereira
Crown Relocations, Regional
Director – Central and Eastern
Europe

After handling numerous masterpieces from the “Who is Who” of great artists, such as Picasso, Chagall, Dali, Miro and Gauguin, Crown Fine Arts (Relocations) can confirm that the actual handling of fine artworks is

ed for the duration of the journey and delivered safely to its destination.

Careful Handling During Transport

For ground transport, many customers rely on specially secured vehicles, which also vary in terms of size and capability. In Russia, temperature-controlled vehicles are used frequently.



of crucial importance. Crown handled the transportation of the sculpture “Le Christ Mort” and the paintings “Le Sacre de Napoleon” and “Mona Lisa” for the Louvre in Paris. There are a few things which stand-out as being very important for anyone to remember when planning transportation of objects d’art.

Preparation and Packing

Obvious as it may seem, handling fine artwork is a specialized process because of the need for appropriate protection, confidentiality and security. It first requires a visit by a consultant to determine the work’s specifications (e.g. weight, size, shape and value) and the client’s budget and time constraints. Transportation options are then discussed.

Tailored crating service is usually required for shipments. Full customization provides maximum flexibility to accommodate the characteristics of the artwork.

Crates for paintings range from museum quality, which are designed to transport individual items, to divider crates that are designed to transport several pieces together. Climate-controlled crates are often used to further protect artwork that is being transported internationally or through changing climates.

This extensive preparation ensures that the precious work of art is protect-

Close supervision of air transportation is of the utmost importance; whether before, during or after the flights. Supervision at customs clearance is also crucially important as is arrangement of any necessary storage. The artwork will be safely stored at a bonded warehouse.

Some clients choose to have heavy artwork shipped by sea – a lower-cost option if there is flexibility in the timing of the delivery.

Customs Services and Insurance

Fine arts handling also requires customs documentation for import and export license applications, and advice on controlled shipping to individual countries. A professional fine arts service provider will normally handle these formalities on its client’s behalf.

In most cases, clients insure their own artworks. When this is not the case, the transporting company can arrange insurance for the client. A trusted fine arts shipper would not allow any work of art to be transported without insurance.

Exhibition and Storage Services

Travelling exhibitions are surely the most challenging fine arts services. They require much more than the basic transporting of artwork from one muse-

um to another. Careful planning, seamless coordination, flexible delivery and experience are a must.

In addition to packing and transportation services, museums frequently ask for expertise services that refer to the entire coordination of an exhibition including storage, installation and hanging services.

Storage facilities with state-of-the-art security features and climate-control are generally a must. Ideally these facilities may also feature vaults and safes, to further safeguard high-value artwork.

Experienced, Dedicated Staff is Key

The foregoing services are redundant without a well-trained and dedicated staff. For high-value artworks it is imperative to ensure a safe transition while maintaining the highest possible level of confidentiality.

Experience has also shown that having a project manager assigned as the single point of coordination among dedicated staff members is generally useful for any project. This person will manage the process from the initial planning phase to the client feedback process, and this dynamic ensures a direct, clearly delineated line of communication for the client. **P**



text and photos by Nick Rees

The Moscow Bhoys



The Moscow Bhoys team was started initially in 2006 by Rikki Ferguson who had a reputation as a strong player and as having an equally strong opinion. He was joined by Kelvin Pang (owner of Buddies Café) and the two former-Flags set about starting a team.

After not scoring a single point in their first 15 games (nearly a whole season), the Bhoys eventually beat Expo Solutions to register their first win during a season in which they conceded almost 100 goals.

Nevertheless, the Moscow Bhoys management of Rikki and Kelvin were as inseparable as Bonnie and Clyde, Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, Miss Piggy and Kermit or even Posh and Becks. This helped create the team spirit from which the future success was to be built on.

Defeats turned into draws and draws into victories as the Moscow Bhoys showed the rest of the league what you can do with a team with a lot of effort, a huge recruitment drive and a great deal of organization.

Within 12 months, they had a big team sponsor who provided new kits (and

soap-on-a-rope for some reason!). Suddenly the rest of the league watched as the Moscow Bhoys unexpectedly started winning and winning and winning!

The Bhoys had the league's best player in Hosein who dominated the midfield in a way no other player did. His pace, skill and talent saw him chopped by many a lesser-able player (me included!) but he was always a gentleman, never reacted and let his football do the talking. Sadly for the Moscow Bhoys and the whole of the league, he left Russia recently.

In the winter of 2006/7, the Moscow Bhoys came second in the league in a season where they could have actually won, had points not been deducted from their score for using illegal players.

Finally, in the summer of 2007, they won their first title. With Zhenya a strong goal keeper, big Alex the Greek in defence and Hosein in midfield/attack, they had a great spine to the team but also their other great weapon was and still is Momo! He's faster than an amphetamine fueled cheetah on turbo-propelled skates!

Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
1	Storming Cloggs	14	10	2	2	61	28	32
2	Moscow Bhoys	14	10	2	2	58	37	32
3	Lundbeck United	15	9	2	4	54	36	29
4	Moscow Flagons	14	7	1	6	43	43	22
5	Expo Solutions	15	7	0	8	38	50	21
6	Real Brothers	14	6	2	6	39	32	20
7	Pasha FC	14	2	4	8	40	53	10
8	Bordo	14	2	3	9	34	58	9
9	Young Spartans	14	2	2	10	22	52	8

David Denning is one of the few Americans in the world who can play football and has great talent, but ask him to shoot on target would be as pointless as inviting Michael Jackson to sing at your birthday! He's aided and abetted by his fellow Americans Mike Pryadilnikov and Scott Burns who both know where the back of the net is. One question: why do Americans say "shoot the ball?" Someone's going to bring a gun one day.

Finally, we have the Allianz Rosno twins – Stefan Schmid and Normal Uhde who have totally differing skills, but typify the unity of the Moscow Bhoys.

In the winter 2007 season, the Moscow Bhoys became the first team to go the whole season undefeated which,

considering the strength of the league now, is an amazing achievement.

The top of the league is extremely exciting at the moment with the Storming Cloggs and Moscow Bhoys locked at the top, Lundbeck just 3 points behind and the Flagons just hanging on 7 points behind.

We can't go an issue without mentioning Juan "Ka" Lopez – he's top of the scoring charts and his wife just gave birth to a lovely boy. Congratulations from everyone in the league.

The league's moving from strength-to-strength and thanks to the new sponsorship from Allianz Rosno, we're adding new teams and recruiting new players so please visit our new site, www.moscowfootball.com and click on the link!! **P**



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Always the Soldier

A mainstay of the expat community here, the underestimated Geoffrey Cox OBE is returning to England after 16 years in Russia. We shall regret his departure, and *Passport* has secured the rights on Geoffrey's blog of how to live in England after Russia.

What attracted you to Russia? Why did you come here in the first place?

Old age. I had been living in Paris having retired from the army in 1983, but in 1992 two things happened. First of all, I was 60, and at my birthday reception my boss at the Institute of Political Science where I was lecturing indicated that I would have to retire, as is the norm in France. We had Perestroika at the same time, which meant the end of many wars. I was at

the time the editor of the English language edition of *Defense International*, but the proprietors closed down the English edition, because of lack of advertising. So in one stroke I lost the two sources of my income in Paris. A friend suggested I go to Moscow that January. I did, and I'm still here.

In Moscow, while lunching with the Consul General, an old friend from Paris, he asked me if I knew anybody who could supply some apartments. I just happened to know another friend from Paris who was then in Moscow doing just that. As a result, I was instrumental in arranging five apartments for the embassy, which they are still leasing to this day. Such was my introduction to the world of real estate.

You are known to be one of the founding fathers of the expat community. How did that happen?

I don't exactly know. When I first arrived I went to the British Embassy drinks for businessmen in 1993, when only 20 or 30 people would attend. I get on well with people, I don't know quite why, but I do. I got on well with the British embassy, who phoned me up one day to attend a meeting at the French Embassy. The meeting was about forming a business club to strengthen the European business stance in Russia. At the end of the meeting, which led to the formation of the European Business Club, later to become the Association of European Businesses (AEB), the third secretary from the German Embassy said: It's a pity there are no Brits here! I replied in French that there are, and that's how it all started. I was selected to be on the board, and over 5 or 6 years I never missed a meeting. Eventually I was selected to be deputy chairman and met with economic councilors from the EU every month. I went on tours with them all over Russia; I was the only non-diplomat in the group. Last year I retired from the AEB because my job at Astera was taking up more and more of my limited time, and I was made Chairman of the Honorary Advisory Council, a role which has now been confirmed as one for life.

The British Business Club was born out of the fact that we had been holding meetings for years and years in the British Embassy club, then for some reason the British Embassy said we were not going to hold these meetings anymore. I had considerable discussions about this with the then economic councilor. We were a bit upset about this and a group of us decided to organize our own meetings, because we felt it was important to network amongst the British community. I remember one of the first meetings was held in the Zoo Bar because at that time many bars enthusiastically welcomed a bunch of Englishmen who would come along and drink free beer for an hour or so





On tour with the EU economic councilors in Astrakhan

and then stay on and drink more. Now it is not so easy to find such venues. Eventually we had a welcome rapprochement with the British Embassy, so that we could hold meetings once every quarter in the British Embassy.

Did Moscow turn out to be what you thought it was going to be?

I had been a soldier all my life, and the Russians were the enemy. I didn't really know what to expect. My first impression was that we had all been conned on both sides, because the Russians weren't really the enemy, and if they thought about it, we weren't really the enemy either. I was surprised how many poor people there were in Moscow; so many people had nothing, and it was terrible. It took some adjustments; I think there were about 6 restaurants that Europeans went to at that time, but people were very warm and friendly and I made a lot of real friends. I preferred Moscow when it was a little bit wilder than it is now; I think that Russia has become a little bit spoilt by becoming over-rich. All said and done, it's the relationships that I have in Russia which make living here for 16 years so worthwhile; I have lived longer here than I have lived anywhere else in the rest of the world.

What are the best and worst things that you have done here in Moscow?

If I look back at the time I spent here, I came here as a man who knew nobody. I am now well known and have friends. I am happy that I have played a part in the establishment of something that is becoming stronger all the time: the AEB. On the other side, the biggest disappointment is that I came with very little money and I am going away with none. Unlike so many people, I have not made a lot of money here, I have worked hard and been relatively successful in business, but not wildly successful on the financial front, maybe that's because all my life I was a soldier, then an academic, and I don't really understand the aggressive side of business life. In the end, it has been the financial crisis that has obliged me to leave; not the fact that I am 77 and walk with elbow crutches as a result of a parachute injury. Having stood down as chairman of Astera, I no longer have a work permit and so I can't

stay full-time here in Russia. However, I have been invited to become senior adviser at North Star Corporate Finance and this coupled with my being honorary chairman of the AEB, will enable me to maintain my interest in Russia.

Finally I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have befriended me during my time in this fascinating country. **P**

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Diary of a Tsar-in-Waiting

by Michael Romanov

If you missed Parachutists' Day in August, Tank Drivers' Day in July or Bus Mechanics' Day in June, don't worry. You still have time to attend Sulking Waitresses Day in September. I know because I have been invited to judge the main competition, to be held at the 40,000-seater Eurovision Stadium in Ostankino, where waitresses from all over Russia will parade their most wallet-shrivelling expressions in the hope of winning some of the generous prizes donated by our sponsors, the European Tourism Promotion Agency.

First prize is a Shestyorka with soot-black windows, a three-inch diameter exhaust pipe and a high-volume, dashboard-mounted combination ash-tray and deep-lung spittoon system. Second prize is two of these vehicles, plus a free spanner and socket set. Third is a coffin. To paraphrase Queen Victoria: there is no fourth.

Tickets for the event are in great demand, especially as only seven are actually going to be sold, in the commercial sense of the word. The other 39,993 are reserved for VIPS like me and the vast number of competitors who are to be bussed in from all over Russia.

For health and safety reasons, our sponsors have asked the coach drivers to avoid recognized accident black-spots, like the roads. But if September is reasonably dry, many of the buses should actually make it to Moscow without getting bogged in unmapped ponds. It should be quite an event.

An Australian friend of mine, Carleton Boardwalk, is the whine correspondent for *Excruciator*, an up-market, bezplatny magazine, and his job is to tell foreign visitors where to find the best sulk-shows in Moscow.

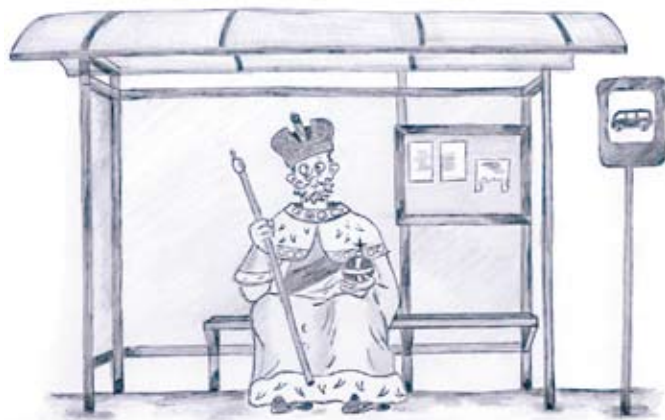
Recently, he was in the sushi bar at BUM, the Bolshoy Universalny Magazin, which he ranks as one of the top scowl-houses in the city, panting for a swift one. He wanted a drink too, so in order to provoke the barman to shout 'Gavaritil!' at him, he pretended to be concentrating on his newspaper. By chance, this featured a front-page photograph of our sushi-loving prime minister, Hercules Putin, flailing around in a mountain lake during his summer holidays, hands above his head as if in an attitude of drowning. He could have been waving, Carleton thought, but most likely it was a case of the fish trying to eat him, for once, rather than the more conventional obverse.

However, a better explanation presented itself when the fearless investigative journalist found himself involuntarily over-hearing two tipsy English businessmen at the other end of the bar discussing a related topic.

"You know how they say: 'You are what you eat?'" barked one of them, to the accompaniment of a sonorous Midlands belch. "That we should all be vegetarians in order to put an end to war and all?"

"Uh huh," said the other as he knocked back a family-sized thimble of saki.

"Well back in the hotel last night I was surfing the web, bored, and I found a list of all the Olympic medal winners from last year's Games."



"So?"

"Not a single one of the swimming medals was won by a Japanese."

"And your point is?"

"My point is, my friend, that the Japs eat more fish than all the rest of the world put together."

With my old mucker, Barak Obama, safely back in the real world after his visit to Moscow, and this year's test series with Georgia scratched for insecurity reasons, the main social pleasure I have to look forward to this month is the visit to Moscow of a band that I used to manage on an informal basis in my student days, Queen. They will be playing at the same Eurovision Olympic Song Stadium near Ostankino that will be hosting the restaurant ladies' schnarfest.

My role in the band's earlier success has rarely been acknowledged by the world's media, with their sad turf-jealousies and interminable clustering up at waist height to anyone they think might be famous next week. But I care not. It is a matter of record that Freddie Mercury and I were old chums in the days when Bohemian Rhapsody was considered technically advanced music, and the song Radio Ga-Ga had yet to acquire the ring of truth.

But of course dear Freddie—born Farrokh Bulsara in the Soviet republic of Zanzibar—is now dead, having succumbed in 1991 to a bout of Saturday Night Swine Fever. The band which will arrive in Moscow is just a rump, featuring only Brian May and Roger Taylor, plus a swarm of roadies and toadies.

Despite this, I will be there to welcome them, and will be waving college scarves in the aisles on concert night with the rest of the fans. And if invited for old-times' sake, I will happily go up and help the lads trash their hotel bedroom after the show, while engaging the usual pond of vodka in mortal combat.

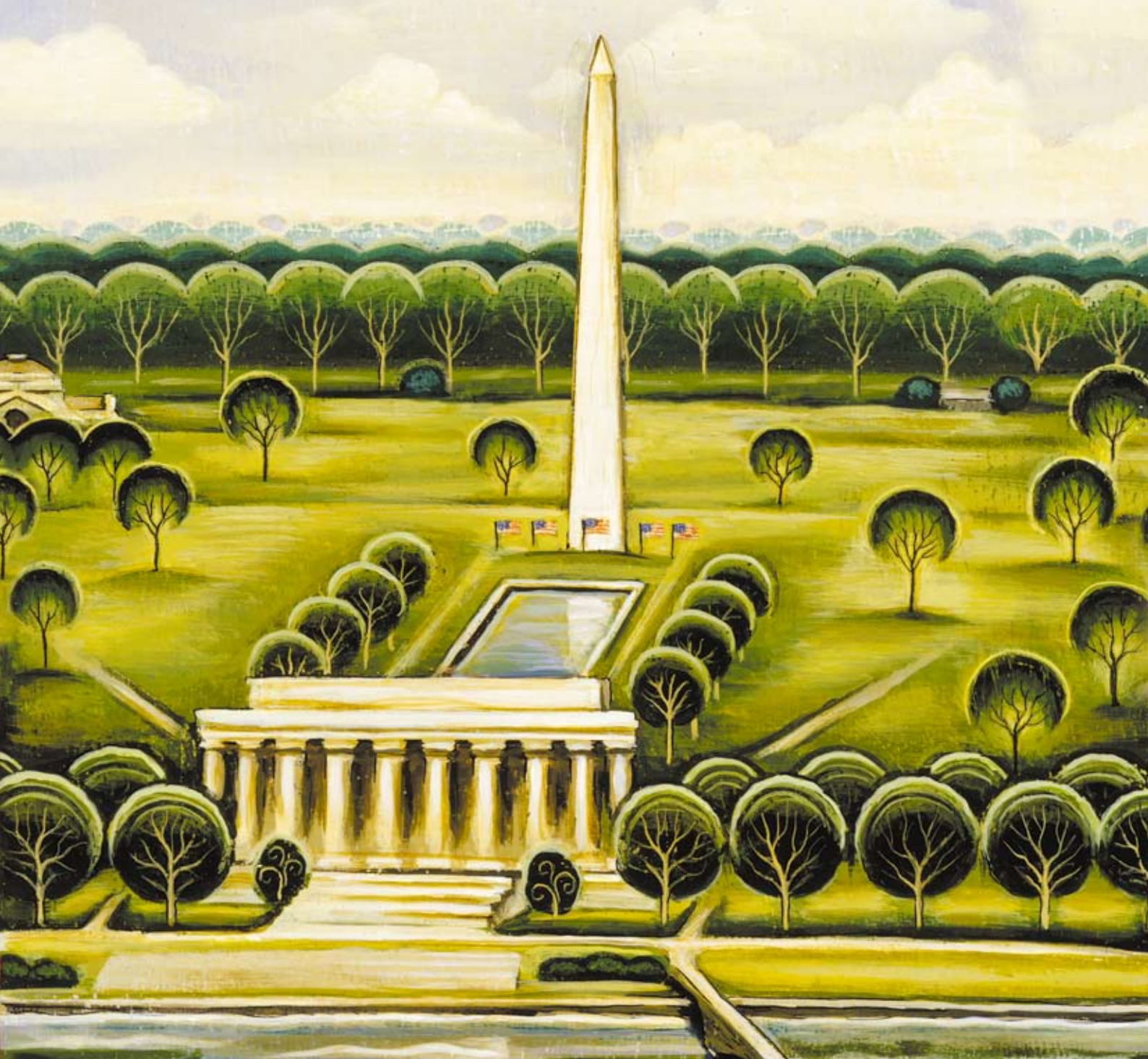
So let no-one say I am disloyal if I ask the question that is on Moscow's lips today: is this band really still, strictly speaking, Queen? Surely, without its star performer, it should now follow the Windsors' example and call itself the Royal Family.

When Carleton told me that story about the businessmen in BUM, I fell to thinking what it must be that the waitresses of Moscow eat that makes them so unhappy-looking. Not enough kolbasa, I concluded.

Then Carleton said, "Do you know why Freddie Mercury had teeth like that?"

"No," I said.

"He used to eat diggers!" **P**



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