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PASSPORT MOSCOW

MAY 2009

www.passportmagazine.ru

The Great Patriotic War
In Films and TV

Fred Flintstone
Pays the Bills

Mamo Mia!
The alternative universe of the
Eurovision Song Contest

Travel to:
The Kamchatka Peninsular,
Mongolia, the Russian North

Robert De Niro
at Nobu





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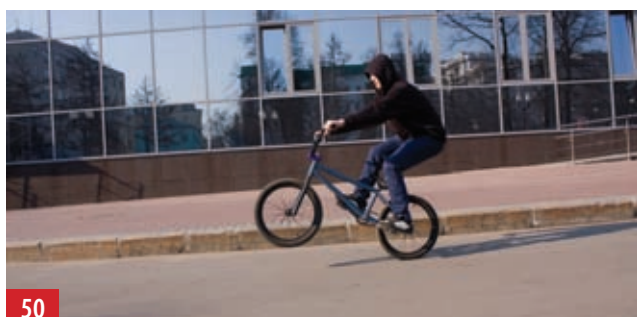
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ПОКРОВСКИЕ ХОЛМЫ

Letter from the Publisher



John Ortega
Owner and Publisher

The inclusion of an article about Soviet war films in this month's *Passport* is a reflection of the importance that the Great Patriotic War still plays in Russians' consciousness. There has been a resurgence in interest in war films and TV serials about the Great Patriotic War and viewing ratings have soared. This is hardly surprising given the sheer numbers of people who died during those terrible years. According to Michael Ellman in 'Deaths in the Great Patriotic War'; Europe Asia Studies, July 1994, an estimated 26.6 million people living in the USSR lost their lives because of this war (a figure that includes civilians as well as military).

This month, the intrepid Nick Rees takes up the baton on our sports page and introduces the 'Expat over 28s Football League'. Those of us (like me) who are in admiration but always have an excuse not to take active part in such sporting endeavors, now no longer have any excuses. For ballet lovers, Marina Lukanina reviews Napoli at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theater. On the Art History front, Olga Slobodkina treats us with the story of Bari-Aizenman and her intoxicating paintings. This is augmented by material created jointly with the Tretyakov Gallery Art magazine, this month on Anatoly Andreevich Bichukov.

With the summer coming up (at least that is what usually happens this time of year), we include three travel articles this month, on Kamchatka, where Jill Thomas interacts with a family of brown bears, on Mongolia, where Luc Jones discovers that he was journeying into another century as well as into another country, and to the stunningly beautiful, semi-pagan Russian North.

The editor sincerely apologizes for an error on page 18 of last month's Passport, where the photograph of the Novaya Opera was placed at the beginning of an article about the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater.

Expats Are Welcome

The New English Communication Club (NECC) meets twice a week at Cofemax cafe. Here you can make new international and local contacts and exchange culture and language over a wide range of food/drinks. 3 Novoslobodskaya Ul. Meetings are Thursdays from 8:00-10:30pm and Sundays 6:30-9:30pm. For more information, contact George on 8 916 3316862 or visit www.comclub.ru

Let's Have a Date

Speed Dating – Hello Party invites single professionals to join us for a wine degustation party, to meet new people. Hello Party guarantees a minimum of 10-15 mini-dates. Recommended age: female – 23-33; male – 30-45. To register you may use one of the following: 504-3139; or order@helloworldparty.ru; www.helloworldparty.ru

Quick lunches at the Mariott

Mariott Tverskaya Hotel launched a new concept of business express lunches, suggested by Chef Frederic Noyer. The main idea is that business people with limited time can step into the hotel and get a ready lunch within a few minutes. An express lunch can be purchased every working day from 11-4pm. Prices are very reasonable, ranging from 620 to 720 rubles. The selection of exquisite dishes is fixed, for instance borsch, sea bass with spinach and fruit salad, but differs every day. Noyer created six sets of express lunches, so people coming for a meeting every Monday will a different lunch each time.

Sammy is Man of The Year

Sammy Kotwani, the British-trained tailor and founder and CEO The Imperial Tailoring Co., has a new cause to celebrate his success as he was named Man Of The Year – 2008 in the nomination of Contribution to Development and Fortification of International Cooperation. *Passport* magazine congratulates Sammy on this significant award.

The British International School

This year our school celebrates 15 years of continued success in providing a stimulating learning environment for children from over 70 nationalities.



Illustration: Julia Nozdacheva

Owner and Publisher

John Ortega, +7 (985) 784-2834
jortega@passportmagazine.ru

Managing Director

George Voloshin
gv@passportmagazine.ru

Editor

John Harrison
j.harrison@passportmagazine.ru

Deputy Editor

Elena Krivoviyaz
e.krivoviyaz@passportmagazine.ru

Arts Editor

Alevtina Kalinina
alevtina@passportmagazine.ru

Advertising Manager

Elena Kuznetsova
ekuznetsova@passportmagazine.ru

Designer

Julia Nozdacheva
chiccone@yandex.ru

Webmaster

Alexey Timokhin
alexey@telemark-it.ru

Accounting and Legal Services

Vista Foreign Business Support
Trubnaya St. 25/1, Moscow +7 (495) 933-7822

Contributors

Charles Borden, Ross Hunter, Daniel Klein, Marina Lukanina, Elena Rubinova, Dominica Harrison, Olga Slobodkina-von Brömmesen, Peter Ellis, Nick Rees, Oleg Chernoukh, Vladimir Kozlov, Piers Gladstone, Ross Hunter, Jill Thomas, Luc Jones, Maria Savelieva, Michael Bartley, Matthew Partridge

Editorial Address:

42 Volgogradsky Prospekt, Bldg. 23
Office 013, 1st floor
109316 Moscow, Russia
Tel. +7 (495) 640 0508
Fax +7 (495) 620-0888
www.passportmagazine.ru

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Friday, 1st

The Seagull

The first of what is generally considered to be the four major plays by the Russian dramatist Anton Chekhov. The Seagull was written in 1895 and first produced in 1896. As with the rest of Chekhov's full-length plays, The Seagull relies upon an ensemble cast of diverse, fully-developed characters. MKht im. Chekhova, 19:00

Swan Lake

The scenario, initially in four acts was based on a Russian folk tale and an ancient German legend, which tells the story of Odette, a princess who turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer's curse. Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater, 19:00

Saturday, 2nd

International Women's Club of Moscow

Saturday Coffee at LPQ.
At Le Pain Quotidien at Novinsky Boulevard, 7, 10:00
lwcmoscow.ru

Grand Moscow Clubbing Vol. 1 (club music party)

DJs Ivan Rudyk, Mickelangelo, Shevtsov, Max Karavaev Tafa. All you need to do is dance all night long. Cicterna Hall, 22:00

Sunday, 3rd

Hip-Hop Dance Contest and Awards

All hip-hoppers are welcome! If you're not a professional hip-hop dancer, don't worry! This is a good opportunity to see a great dance show. Sokolniki Exhibition Center, 19:00



Monday, 4th

The Bat (opерetta in two acts)

This is the premiere of Strauss's operetta Die Fledermaus, produced by the popular stage director and set designer Michiel Dijkema (the Netherlands). The

production will be conducted by the theater's chief conductor Eri Klas. The costume designer is Claudia Damm (Germany). Novaya Opera, 18:00

Tuesday, 5th

The Bright Stream (comic ballet in two acts)

The ballet has an intricate plot. It has a Soviet theme based on a love story on a collective farm. Reading the synopsis in the program is advisable or you may miss the essential meaning of the scenario.

Bolshoi Theater, 19:00, also on the 6th

Thursday, 7th

Spartacus (ballet in three acts)

Bolshoi Theater, 19:00, also on the 8th

Friday, 8th

Viva, Cuba! (dance)

Caribbean Dance Evening...Rumba, salsa, cha-cha-cha...
Soyuz Kompozitorov Club, 20:30



Saturday, 9th

Paul Van Dyk World Tour (club music party)

A Grammy-award nominated artist, and one of the world's leading electronic dance music DJs and producers. Paul Van Dyk was named "World's No.1 DJ" by DJ Magazine in 2005, and in 2006. He has remained in the "Top 10" since 1998. As of 2007, he has sold over 3 million albums worldwide. Gaudi Arena, 22:00



Lavanda (pop)

Young Russian 'hooligans', who sing funny songs and play vigorous electro-pop. Very popular amongst youth here. Ikra, 20:00



Pavel Kashin (folk-music concert)

This angelic-looking man performs melancholic and philosophy-imbued songs. 16 tonn, 21:00



Mods Mayday (festival of dance music)

Mods Mayday festivals have been held in the UK, Germany and other countries. Russia now welcomes this event too. The festival features such bands as: White Trainers Community, Adam Rogowsky (UK) and others. 16 tonn, 23:30

Closure of the VIII Moscow Easter Festival (classical music concert)

The Moscow Easter Festival inaugurated in 2002 by Valery Gergiev, the artistic director of the Mariinsky Theater, and by the mayor of Moscow Yury Luzhkov, has quickly developed into one of the largest and most authoritative musical forums in Russia and Europe. MMDM, Svetlanov Hall, 19:00



Girugamesh (Japanese heavy metal)

This Japanese metal-band was formed in 2003. In 2008 the band toured in both Japan and Europe, under the tour title "Stupid Tour '08". In January, the band toured Europe for the first time, visiting Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland. Tochka Club, 20:00

Monday, 11th Eurovision Song Contest 2009

First evening concert of the first semi-final. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 20:00

Tuesday, 12th International Women's Club of Moscow

Newcomers' Coffee. At Le Pain Quotidien at Novinsky Boulevard, 7, 10:00 lwmoscow.ru

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

Second day concert of the first semi-final. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 17:00

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

First semifinal. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 22:30

Wednesday, 13th International Women's Club of Moscow

Cocktail Hour. Venue TBA, 19:00

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

First day concert of the second semi-final. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 16:00

Verka Serdutchka (pop)

The Queen Of Eurovision 2007 – this is the name of the party with Ukrainian star Andrei Danilko (Verka Serdutchka is his anonym) as a headliner. He took 2nd place at the 2007 song contest with his song "Lasha, Tumbai" (Russians immediately took this to mean "Russia, Goodbye"). Since that moment he became persona non grata in Russia. Barkhat night club, 23:00



Thursday, 14th International Women's Club of Moscow

General member meeting. GlavUpDk Cultural Center, Ulitsa Olofa Palme d.5, Building 2, closest metros: Kievskaya & Universitet, 10:00

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

The second semi-final. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 17:00 and 22:30

Junior Boys (DJ set)

Canadian guys, who play a delicious mix of techno, balearic house and electro music. Ikra, 23:00



Friday, 15th Scotland, Scotch and Scots Humour

A lecture by Ian Mitchell at the Chekhov Cultural Center. 6 Strastnoi Bulvar 50 rubles. www.ELEMoscow.net

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

The first day concert of the final session. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 14:00

Saturday, 16th Eurovision Song Contest 2009

The second day concert of the final session. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 16:00

Eurovision Song Contest 2009

Final concert. This is the concert when the new Eurovision winner will be announced. Olimpiisky Sportcomplex, 22:00

Tuesday, 19th RBCC Seminar + Business Networking

Evening: Investment in People. Swissotel, 16.00 Contact RBCC: 8 (495) 9612160.

Thursday, 21st Dance Forever!

Celtic dancing shows are very popular among Russians, who come to these events with their families. MMDM, Theater Hall, 19:00

Laima Vaikule (pop)

Well-known Russian singer of Latvian origin, who has been performing since the 1980s. MMDM, Svetlanov Hall, 19:00

Friday, 22nd A Nice Adventure of a Foreigner in Russia

Photo exhibition by Svetlana Privalova. An exhibition that will take you beyond social stereotypes and reveal things that we miss every day. Vinzavod

Saturday, 23rd Time Machine (rock)

Mashina Vremeni, originally captioned "Time Machine", which formed in Moscow in the late 1960s, is recognized as one of the two "patriarchs" of Russian

What's On in Moscow

rock music (the other one being Aquarium).
B1 Maximum, 21:00

Tuesday, 26th

The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and of the Maiden Fevronia (opera in four acts)

Premiere, presented with two intervals.
Bolshoi Theater, 19:00, also 27th

Thursday, 28th

Little Gems Of Orchestral Music series (classical)

Conducted by John Nelson (USA)
MMDM, Svetlanov Hall, 19:00

Saturday, 30th

Gala in Honor of Centenary of Dyagilev's Russian Seasons (classic music concert)

Bolshoi Theater, 19:00

Heaven and Hell (rock)

Musical collaboration featuring Black Sabbath members Tony Iommi and Geezer Butler along with former members Ronnie James Dio and Vinny Appice. The four members of Heaven and Hell recorded and toured together as Black Sabbath from 1980-1982 and again from 1991-1992. In 2006, the foursome reunited to record three new songs for the compilation album, Black Sabbath: The Dio Years
B1 Maximum, 21:00, also 31st

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The May Holidays

Elena Rubinova

Friday, May 1

International Workers' Day

In the past May 1 was officially termed International Workers' Solidarity Day. Since 1992 it has been called Spring and Labor Day. This holiday used to be a major holiday in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries and included large rallies, demonstrations and communist leaders greeting people from the rostrum of Lenin's tomb on Red Square. It is still celebrated as International Workers' Day, with trade unions playing a central role in organizing sanctioned demonstrations. Currently the date is marked in 142 countries across the globe, but ironically not in the US, where the holiday originated at the end of the 19th century. In modern-day Russia, with the decline of the political significance of this date, many people celebrate May 1 as a day of family fun and the beginning of the gardening season. Many take a short vacation, given the fact that the first few days of May are traditionally marked in red in the official Russian calendar. State authorities are aware that most people try to take time off work; even the State Duma is involved in a long-standing discussion on how much time off should be officially allowed. This year the country will enjoy two long weekends: from May 1-3 and then from May 9-11.



'Subbotniki' – a left-over from Soviet times

Saturday, May 9

Victory Day



Victory Day is the most sacred of all public holidays in Russia. The country celebrates victory over Nazi Germany 24 hours later than its World War II allies. Officially the war ended at midnight on May 8, 1945, however, by then it was the next day in Russia.

Russian historians point out that Russia mainly fought to defend itself during the war – hence the patriotic name. Almost all families in the Soviet Union had at least one member who took part in the war and the total number of casualties has still not been published. According to even the most conservative estimates, up to 30 million soldiers and civilians perished, the Soviet Union lost a third of its national wealth, cities such as Stalingrad were transformed into lunar landscapes, and an entire generation of males was wiped out. Those citizens who did not actually fight had to work in factories to make ammunitions and supplies, which was no holiday either. They too are honored on Victory Day. The few surviving veterans march, or are transported, along central Moscow streets proudly wearing their decorations. For decades, their traditional gathering place was the garden outside the Bolshoi Theater.

It would not be until June 24, 1945, that the USSR held a proper victory parade. Footage of old documentaries prove that it was raining torrentially when soldiers tossed the defeated German army's banners and standards, including Hitler's own personal standard, into a sodden mess at Stalin's feet beneath Lenin's tomb. The pompous and glorious parade through Red Square was held annually from 1945 to 1990, when Gorbachev cancelled such proceedings. In 1995 parades on Red Square were resumed to commemorate Victory Day, but without any military hardware. Full-scale, Soviet-style parades returned to Red Square on May 9, 2008 and coincided with the inauguration of the newly elected Russian president.



Who actually invented the radio is still under debate

Thursday, May 7

Radio Day

On May 7, 1895 Russian physicist Alexander Popov successfully demonstrated at St. Petersburg University what he claimed to be his new invention – the radio. His device used Sir Oliver Lodge's coherer; a primitive radio signal detector. Some 50 years later in 1945, Radio Day was first observed in the USSR to commemorate this significant event. Doubt exists, however, as

to who actually invented the radio. The Western world is convinced that it was the Italian engineer Marconi. Russians claim Alexander Popov invented the radio two years before the upstart Marconi. Some historians point out that original experiments in emission and reception of signals by means of electric oscillations were carried out in 1893 by the Serbian, and later American inventor Nikola Tesla, before either Marconi or Popov.

These days Radio Day (Den' Radio) is seen as a professional holiday for those who work in the communications industry. This year, a series of conferences about Popov's invention and even a parade of floats, each representing an amateur radio station, is to be held in St. Petersburg.

Monday, May 18

International Museum Day

Whether you're a regular museum visitor or someone who normally walks past a museum without even thinking of going in, International Museum Day and especially Museum Night can turn into a real adventure. International Museum Day was established in Russia in 1977 by the International Council of Museums and has, only recently, become popular. Admission to all museums is free and in 2007 the first Museum Night was held with the aim of attracting young people more used to clubbing. Each museum will decide individually how and when to run their events, so opening times and dates will vary, but all major Moscow and St. Petersburg museums are part of this cultural tradition.



The State Historical Museum

Eugene Kisin in Moscow

Eugene Kisin's concert on May 20 at the Moscow Conservatory is certainly a key event for the season. The pianist has dedicated this performance to his older friend Eugene Svetlanov. This concert is also to mark the celebration of the 80th anniversary of the great conductor, composer and pianist Svetlanov. Eugene Kisin is a Russian classical pianist and former child prodigy. His first appearances in Moscow on stage are still remembered. This was a time when remarks such as: "such pianists are born once in a hundred years" were flying around. Since childhood, Kisin has been known for his interpretations of the works of Chopin. He will be performing these at the Conservatory. The program features Polonaise Fantasy, Mazurkas and Etudes by Frédéric Chopin and also suites from his Romeo and Juliet ballet by Sergey Prokofiev. It is curious to mention that Kisin never took any exams or participated in any contests. He won international fame thanks to his enormous talent. He was lucky to have had the opportunity to work with such Maestros as Claudio Abbado, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Daniel Barenboim, Sir Colin Davis, Valery Gergiev, Carlo Maria Giulini, Mariss Jansons, Herbert von Karajan, James Levine, Sir Andrew Davis, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti, Seiji Ozawa, Sir Georg Solti, Evgeny Svetlanov and Yuri Temirkanov. Laureate of numerous musical awards, Eugene Kisin gives 40–50 concerts a year, now in Russia as well.



May 20
Grand Hall of the Conservatory
19:00

Naples, my Love!



May 26–27
Stanislavsky and
Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theater
19:00

Every spring, the Bosco di Ciliegi company brings a basket of blooming cherries to Moscow – it is holding a festival with a variety of arts programs in an attempt to revive the robust artistic salons that existed in 19th and early 20th century Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other European cities. Usually the best venues in Moscow host concerts, exhibitions and parties within the frames of the festival. One of this year's highlights is a synthesis of ballet and opera, in a production from the Real Teatro di San Carlo from Naples, Italy: "Naples, my love!" staged by Manlio Santanelli, choreographed by Amedeo Amodio is being flown to Moscow right after its Italian premiere. The Italian show, which draws on different theatrical forms; such as written texts, music, songs and dance, is a journey through Naples's most meaningful artistic expressions, which have brought it to the forefront of western culture throughout the ages. It is therefore a journey through time. The program starts in the XIII Century, when, under the domination of the Anjou Dynasty, Naples starts to emerge as a capital, and brings us up to today, when the city is striving to maintain; in spite of many difficulties, its role assigned by History. The performance, which starts with an orchestral overture, presents a series of rooms, representing centuries. These rooms are connected by a thread; a dramatic element which connects the scenes as if it were a string of pearls. The tour of the Naples Opera is a vivid and festive performance, uniting gaudy music, dance and drama from the South of Italy all in one show.

English Horse Racing at the Moscow Hippodrome

The tradition of English horse racing seems to have successfully taken roots in Moscow. Every spring the Monte Carlo radio station organizes this event, and it is becoming a Russian Ascot. The stakes are usually high, but the whole atmosphere is relaxing and quite fashionable, taking into consideration that the organizers keep to the tradition of a strict dress code practiced for centuries: suits are obligatory for men, dresses and hats for women. As at Ascot, the hats come in all shapes and sizes. As for the races, this year they plan twenty-three fixtures.



Moscow Hippodrome
May 30
12:00
www.montecarlo.ru

European Days of Opera

European days of Opera is an international musical project, organized by a European company of theatres, Opera Europa, and actually is a marathon of opera that takes place in many European cities from Bordeaux to Moscow. Opera is a total art form which joins music, singing, drama, poetry, plastic arts and sometimes dance. In each work, all the components of opera combine their expressiveness and their beauty. This complex alchemy makes an opera performance an extraordinary show, monopolizing the sight, hearing, imagination and sensibility of the audience, where all human passions are at work. With this in mind, the principal organizers of the Moscow festival – TACT International Art Management (Netherlands) has prepared a special program – master classes by an eminent Russian singer Sergey Leyferkus and a concert by Combattimento Consort Amsterdam, which is a small orchestra from the Netherlands conducted by Jan Willem



Sergey Leyferkus

May 7–10

Stanislavsky

and Nemirovich-Danchenko

Musical Theater

for schedule see: www.stanmus.ru

de Vriend, and will perform a repertoire of baroque music including symphonies from the cantata: Am Abend Desselbigen Sabbats concerto in D minor for two violins and arias from G. F. Handel's operas, Messiah, Julius Caesar and Xerxes.



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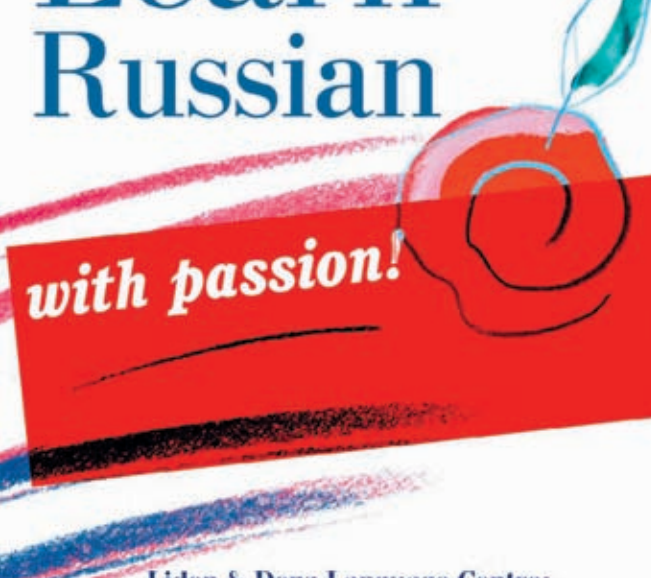
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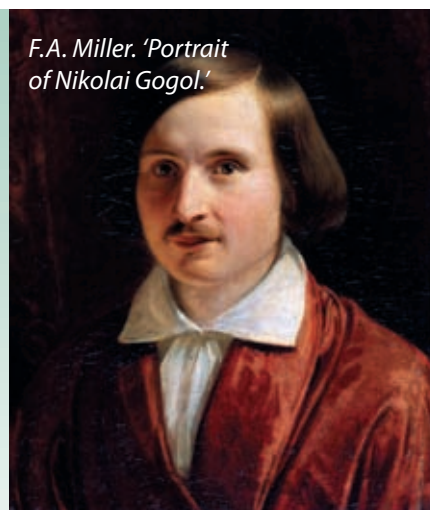
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Gogol's Anniversary at the Historical Museum

Exhibitions dedicated to Nikolai Gogol are themselves a traditional event in the Historical Museum. The museum is preparing a new exhibition in honour of the great Russian author, enriched with new materials and historical monuments. Thanks to the new documents, Gogol's relationship with the Ukraine, Italy and of course Russia is documented in great detail. The exhibition is as intricate as some of Gogol's famous stories and novels, and various exhibits provide links to the historical, mythical and every day worlds of Ukrainian villages where Gogol spent his childhood; this is from where the folk poetics of *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* or *The Fair at Sorochintsy* emerged. The image of the dandy St. Petersburg is consonant to the young Gogol's youth in the capital, whereas Rome is homeland to Gogol's soul and the place where he created the [Russian] national poem, *Dead Souls*. Moscow is Gogol's last home, the place where he tried to find the strength to continue his poem. Among the exhibits are a lot of curious things – from hand-made books from Gogol's childhood to *cherevichki* – shoes of Catherine the Great.



F.A. Miller. 'Portrait of Nikolai Gogol.'

State Historical Museum

Through July 4

10:00–18:00

Open every day except Tuesdays



F.P. Tolstoy. 'Bouquet of flowers, a butterfly and a bird.'

Flowers — the Residue of Paradise

John of Kronstadt, a Russian Orthodox saint, commented that flowers are a residue of paradise on earth. This dictum inspired curators from the Tretyakov Gallery to create an exhibition that presents a collection of flower art in Russian graphics, paintings and icons over five hundred years since the earliest icons on wooden plates to today's works. According to experts, this is the first attempt to track the role and significance of this popular theme in Russian art. Since ancient times people have greeted and said farewell with flowers, decorated their homes and dressed themselves with flowers. The meanings of flowers have differed in nations and epochs. Thus lilies grown in ancient Syria became an important symbol in Christianity, the symbol of the Annunciation and a vivid element of the Western art tradition. In Russia, a red rose, for example, since the 16th century has been the symbol of the mother Mary, and was consequently depicted in icons. In Russian, the words for "color" and "flower" are of the same root. That is why it will be even more exciting to pay a visit to this well-arranged exhibition featuring well-known masters works of folk art.

State Tretyakov Gallery

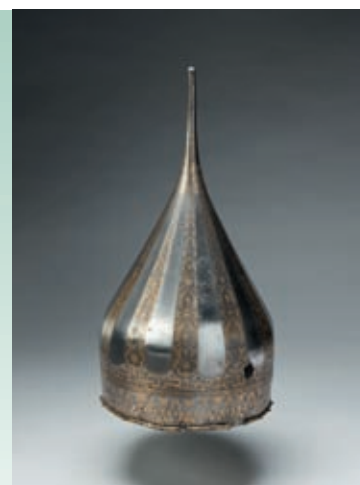
Through May 10

10:00–19:00

Open every day except Mondays

The Helmet of Ivan the Terrible in the Kremlin Museums

Ivan IV Vasilyevich, or Ivan the Terrible; a charismatic and controversial figure in Russian history was Grand Prince of Moscow from 1533, and actually transformed a localized medieval state into a small empire. He became the first Tsar of a new, more powerful nation. He was acknowledged as being the Tsar of All Russia from 1547. The Kremlin museum, The Armory Museum, a museum inside the Kremlin, contains many personal belongings of the Tsar. But one important item, namely his helmet, can be found only in the armory of a different state – in Sweden. The helmet disappeared from Russia during the Polish and Lithuanian invasion at the beginning of the 17th century and eventually ended up in Sweden. The Swedish and Russian armories organized a one-item exhibition in Moscow specially to display the helmet. The helmet is embossed with gold notches, and carries an inscription in Russian that assumes that it was made before 1547 – the year when Grand Prince Ivan assumed the title of Tsar. If you visit this exhibition, you might like to take the opportunity of strolling around the Kremlin itself. Quite apart from all the cathedrals that are museums now, there is also a gorgeous park in the very city with a view over the Moscow River from its southern walls.



The Armory at the Kremlin Museums

10:00–17:00

Open every day except Thursdays

Treasures of Thrace

The current exhibition at the Moscow Museum of Oriental Arts presents the treasures of Thrace, a historical and geographic area in southeast Europe that borders on three seas: the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara. It is evident from items on display at the exhibition that the Thracians were skilled craftsmen. The Thracians appear in Homer's Iliad as Trojan allies.

The collection has been assembled by Vasil Bozhkov, a Bulgarian businessman who is a well-known collector of Thracian treasures which he buys at auctions all over the world. Over several decades, he has managed to create a collection worthy of the National Bulgarian Historical Museum. Vasil's foundation, Thrace, also spends substantial resources on the restoration of historical monuments and organizes scientific research and publications. The chronological range of the 200 items presented is quite vast: from the 10th century BC, when Thracian craftsmen began using iron and gold, to the 2nd century AD, when Thrace became a province of the Roman Empire. On display are Thracian arms and weapons, jewelery and decorations illustrating Thracians as excellent warriors who during peace time liked to enjoy their lives and feasts.

A rython in the shape of a deer. Gold, silver. IV century BC. Rights: Thrace Foundation



Oriental Arts Museum

Through June 21

11:00–20:00

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Mamo Mia!

The mad musical alternative universe that is Eurovision has arrived in Moscow. Machiavelli would be a toe-tappin' lovin' it. Ding-ding-a-dong! Here's a challenge: how many Eurovision song hits can you hum the tune to? Half a dozen? A couple? Err ... one? Whatever your score, this month offers the unforgettable opportunity to sing-a-long and sha-la-la; live and with the 'Stars' – to the latest batch of melodies as everybody's favorite festival of musical bubblegum hits the capital.

text by Peter Ellis

A ringside spot is the hottest ticket in town to this, the fifty fourth rendition of the Eurovision Song Contest, when sentimental schmaltz collides with Russian realpolitik. Hundreds trudged through sleet and sludge as box offices opened, eager to get the hands on seats costing from 800 rubles (\$23) to 30,000 (\$865), or a 'golden ticket'

ceremony coincides with National Victory Day (May 9) and the closing bash is being held a stone's throw away from Putin's office.

Russia gets this honor because of Dima Bilan's win at last year's Eurovision. At the time, unsporting sorts cried foul and complained of block, or rather eastern block voting, as he received maxi-

sophobia should place them in an asylum rather than on ... stage," by a Russian Embassy official who added that he was "fairly certain it will reduce the number of votes [given] to the Swedish singer."

Russia's entry this year was a surprise. Anastasiya Prykhodko's song, Mamo, was first intended to represent Ukraine (mamo means mother in Ukrainian). Some think it



Anastasia Prykhodko
(Russia)



Yohanna
(Iceland)



Jane Ewen (UK)

priced at a cool 350,000 rubles (\$10,400). With black market prices double, triple, quadruple or more, the ticket touts must be singing all the way to the bank.

Surprisingly, Mayor Yuri Luzhkov is said to have been reluctant to host the show and there were doubts whether the venue – the Olimpiysky Indoor Arena – was up to the job. But local music lovers were relieved when Prime Minister Vladimir Putin stepped in to confirm that Moscow would hold the party, providing funds to the tune of 1 billion rubles (\$36.5 million) to make sure it goes with a swing. The opening

mum scores from six Eastern European countries as well as Israel, with its large Russian-speaking population.

Singing and political shenanigans go hand-in-hand at Eurovision. Georgia's entry was banned by Eurovision bosses because its title – We Don't Wanna Put In – was seen as a dig at Russia's Prime Minister (Put In; Putin ... get it?). Despite the bar on the Georgian group, Stephane and 3G, claim it's a big hit in Moscow's nightclubs. Sweden felt the Kremlin's wrath when the country's Eurovision TV final included an irreverent skit on Russia. It's performers were described as "lunatics whose Rus-

was rejected because it contained words in Russian as well as Ukrainian: the idea of making Russian an official language in Ukraine sticks in the throats of those in power, though a quarter of the country uses it. She then switched allegiances and came in at the last minute to sing for Russia.

This caused a cat fight. There were accusations of nepotism; insults were exchanged on the pages of Russia's tabloid press. Yet, most ordinary Russians are just plain bemused at the choice. Blogs, like those of Kremlin expert Carl Thomson, suggest that the song was shoed in as a way of strengthening the Krem-

lin's influence beyond Russia's borders. "Eurovision is seen as an opportunity to try and make a political statement. Large areas in the east [of Ukraine] have always been culturally closer to Moscow than to Kiev," he writes.

With an estimated world audience of over 100 million there's a lot of potential to influence. For songsmiths, the competition throws up a lot of dilemmas: do you produce something anonymously international, or try to conjure up the spirit of your country? Should the song be in English or in the mother tongue? Do you go for a sexy image or something more wholesome?

For many this year, the answer is 'to be cool': spandex and sequins have been eschewed in favor of an international, soulful and sexy mood; a string quartet, or at least a Cello or grand piano, is de rigueur. French singer, Patricia Kaas

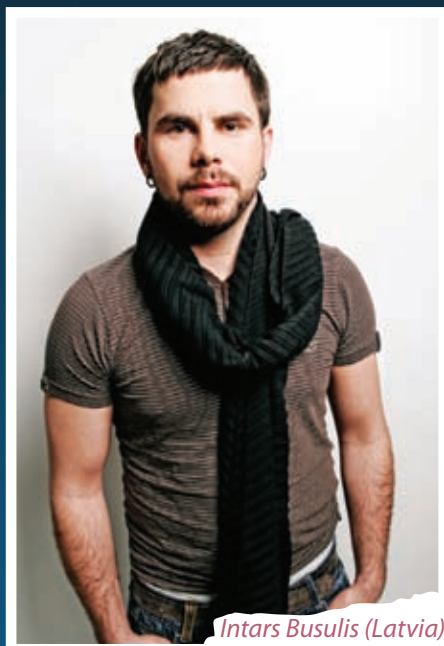
sored by the Moldovan Tourist Board, while the Czech Republic's Aven Romale sings an up-beat take on traditional gypsy violin melodies wearing a superman costume, mixing styles and languages in a high-energy musical schizophrenia. Azerbaijan has also combined traditional and modern in an appealing, racy tune.

The jury's out on who will be this year's Eurovision clown. Romale is certainly in the running but he's facing stiff competition from Serbia's Marko Kon, with his cotton wool hair, croaky voice and crowd pleasing stage presence. Whereas Belgium's choice of Copycat, an Elvis impersonator, is just plain odd: you begin to doubt if the nation is taking the competition entirely seriously.

As for the competition's social commentators, the author of Latvia's song, Probka (traffic jam), sung in Russian by Intars

why: starry-eyed Alexander Rybak, singing Fairytale with gusto while accompanying himself on the violin, evokes the innocence of early Eurovision contests. He's sure to be a hit with the mums. As for Eurovision's wooden spoon – 'nul point' – odds say it will be Germany with their song Mis s Kiss Kiss Bang.

Eurovision is pop history. Abba made it after their winning song, Waterloo, in 1974. It also catapulted Michael Flatley and Irish dancing center stage when Riverdance was performed during an interval at the 1994 contest in Dublin. But times are changing. Terry Wogan, the popular British commentator who has 35 Eurovision contests under his belt, has given up on it because he feels the competition has lost its way. "It has always been an event, but at least the voting used to be about the songs. Now it's really about national prejudices," he said.



Intars Busulis (Latvia)



Alexander Rybak (Norway)



Sakis Rouvas (Greece)

– already an established star – sings her heart-searching chanson 'Et S'll Fallait Le Faire' with aplomb.

For others, the electric guitar is the instrument of choice. Switzerland's Lovebugs reach 'The Highest Heights' with guitar, bass and drum, and Ireland's sexy all-girl punk band has produced an energetic, catchy tune. Macedonia has gone heavy metal, complete with leather, long hair and attitude.

Then there's the ethnic option. Moldova's promo video, sung impressively by Nelly Ciobanu, looks like it was spon-

Busulis, says: "traffic jams are a very painful but common event for every citizen of Moscow. And in a philosophical sense everyone will understand the song: the economy has stalled, we're deep in crisis, we cannot move, we're in a social jam." Ukraine's Svetlana Loboda has jumped on the topical bandwagon. Her song is entitled Be My Valentine (Anti-Crisis Girl), though it's difficult to see how lines like 'we're gonna do the bom bom, ain't that amazing – bom' can give any insight to the current world economic downturn.

British bookmakers are putting their money on Norway to win. You can see

Yet Eurovision has always been more than music. Music's easily trumped by politics and parties and the chance for the 'beautiful people' to strut their stuff. May in Moscow will be humming, with the bars, restaurants and hotels doing a brisk trade. They are well prepared: "we've stocked up on champagne and condoms," one hotel concierge confided. Boom-bang-a-bang, spread the love!

The two semi-finals of Eurovision 2009 will be performed on the 12th and 14th of May at the Olimpiysky Indoor Arena, with the final on the 16th. Full details are available at www.eurovision.tv. **P**

A Look into the Future



text by Elena Rubinova,
photos courtesy of Arch
Moscow

Arch Moscow 2009, the largest and most prestigious architectural event in Russia focuses on promoting young architects. The curator is Bart Goldhoorn and the name of the exhibition is Next Arch Moscow!

The end of May is a busy time for the Russian architect community. The Moscow Union of Architects announces the results of its Golden Section competition for the best architectural projects, and Arch Moscow is held. Arch Moscow, which has become a leading architectural event, opens in the Central House of Artists on May 27-31. Over several busy days, the exhibition sums up architectural achievements of the year, presents the best Russian and international architecture projects, and offers a variety of discussions and lectures by the most famous architectural gurus.

Starting from 1996, Arch Moscow has annually covered the main tendencies in contemporary architecture and urban planning in Moscow and to a certain extent in Russia. Largely due to the efforts of Bart Goldhoorn, the exhibition curator, Arch Moscow has gradually turned into a high-profile international gathering. Over the years, such celebrities as Zaha Hadid, a laureate of the Pritzker architectural prize, Dutch architect Erick van Egeraat and American Daniel Libeskind have been Arch Moscow guests and lecturers. "When Arch Moscow started 14 years ago, it was an alternative to official exhibitions. Today under the theme 'NEXT', the exhibition is reclaiming the position it once held as an independent platform for emerging architects: every second year it will present a new generation of architects," commented Bart Goldhoorn to *Passport Magazine*.

The exhibition has not only changed its format since it became part of the Moscow Architecture Biennale which was launched last year, but has also outgrown its strictly profes-

sional significance. It is now an integral part of the cultural process in Russia; the architectural development of the city has become a much broader issue, and has become a highly controversial subject. How and at what cost is it possible to raise the city's architectural standards? When will Moscow be able to offer a quality living environment?

Both the general public and the professional architectural community are divided over these issues. Imperial size shopping malls, Moscow's Manhattan – an ultramodern complex of office buildings called Moskva-City on Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya and new residential areas have been praised by proponents of Moscow's modernization. At the same time, many detest the ruthless demolition of major historic landmarks and buildings. "Moscow's architectural heritage is at a crisis point," says David Sarkisyan, head of the Schusev State Museum of Architecture in Moscow. Independent critics and experts such as Bart Goldhoorn look more globally: "There are some quite good individual buildings now in Moscow, but there is a lack of vision on how the city should develop. The city is not pro-active, but just reacts. Now architects are only starting to design when there is an investor, and logically, they serve in the first place the interest of the client. If we compare Moscow with other world capitals one could say that it misses a comprehensive policy on public spaces."



Moscow architectural authorities have recently unveiled a plan for the Russian capital called Moscow 2025. It promises a brand new life for its 15 million residents as a result of further modernization; when the capital, according to the plan's authors will become "a highly comfortable habitat," all the while retaining its unique historical look. Bart Goldhoorn is doubtful about such a perspective: "this plan reflects an outdated vision of urban design. It almost exclusively looks at the city as a whole instead of focusing on specific projects. It is too vague and will soon be outdated." Goldhoorn has more trust in the young Russian architectures that are going to display their projects at Arch Moscow. It's hard to say whether their projects will be realized, but they are all given a chance to take part in the vital discussion over Moscow's future. **P**

Exhibition ARCH MOSCOW 2009 will run from May 27-31 at the Central House of Artists and other locations.

**It's is being organized by Expo-Park LTD
www.expopark.ru**

Expat Over 28s Football League



text by
Nick Rees

May 2003 – just short of 6 years ago but in Moscow years, it's almost a lifetime.

That was the date that the Expat Over 28s Football League was invented when left-footed midfield dynamo, Darren Keane, and Moscow's Mr Recruitment, Nick Rees decided that they wanted more than just watching football in dodgy sports bars.

Fast-forward 6 years and we have 9 teams with over 300 players from 73 different countries represented in the league.

The two original teams were the Cloggs and Casinos (named after the heavy Dutch and casino influence on the team) and also the Moscow Flagons (a piss-take of the Moscow Dragons rugby team's name). Games usually were very one-sided as the organized and experienced Cloggs won heavily week after week.

Soon after, the teams were joined by the British Embassy and Expo Solutions but the British Embassy team pulled out after 15 minutes of their first ever match as someone cut their lip during a corner kick!

There are two rules for qualifying for the Expat Over 28s Football league – you must be an expat and 28 or over. Strange that!

In 2007, this team was re-branded and called Pasha by the new team manager, Levent Endam. They were named after the distinguished rank given to heads of the Ottoman Empire. Levent's team hasn't won anything yet but if this was an expat boxing league instead, they would have been champions by Christmas! With 39 yellow cards issued to their team this season, they have almost 3 times more than anyone else but Levent is one of the league's gentlemen and is addressing the problem as we write.

The Moscow Times team which started so weakly got sponsored by Lundbeck and under the guidance and organization of American gent Patrick Henry, they became a very strong and respected team that deserves to have won more than they have so far (which is absolutely nothing, actually!). They've respected the rules and followed them perfectly but unfortunately, this rarely wins you any trophies in any sport.

Pinocchio Restaurant sponsored a new Italian based team but again, like the Blues Brothers, they fielded illegal play-

ers but still won nothing. They were re-formed by Ary-Peter Oosterling in 2009 and are now called the Young Spartans.

The league began taking real shape in around 2005 when Bordo and the Moscow Bhoys joined the league. Bordo are mainly a French team run by Yann Sotty who is one of the gentlemen of the league. The Moscow Bhoys, on the other hand were run by a naughty Scotsman who was also caught cheating and had their first league title taken off them after a 15 points deduction was enforced by the league management.

Over the years the league champions have been usually been split between the Moscow Flagons with 7 league titles and 4 cup victories or the Storming Cloggs (as they are now known) with 3 league titles and 1 cup victory.

The Moscow Bhoys managed to break into the top three and went unbeaten over the whole 21 game Winter 08/09 season to become champions for the second time with an impressive 14 point advantage over the Cloggs in second place.

Expo Solutions were the only exception to the rule so far with a magnificent cup win in 2007.

During the winter season, the league plays indoors in the massive Lokomotiv stadium on the best surface money can buy but in the summer season, we play outdoors on grass and make it more of a family day out. We provide four types of shashlik for free, free salads, free beer and soft drinks so that the families can come along and enjoy the fun.

The summer season started in April and a new 9th team was added – the Turkish Real Brothers.

In all honesty, the league is there for fun but the standard of football is high. Many ex-professionals have showed up expecting an easy run out but have been kicked into touch by their manager for simply not being good enough.

We're looking for team or league sponsors and, as always, new players so if you're interested, contact Nick Rees at nickrees99@yahoo.com

Updates of how the summer season are going to appear in this magazine. **So watch this space! P**

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Napoli

at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theater



text by Marina Lukanina,
photos by Oleg Chernous

The Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Music Theater celebrated the Day of Theater on March 27, 2009 with an opening night of the ballet *Napoli*. This is a classical Danish ballet created by August Bournonville, (1805-1879) – a famous Danish choreographer of the Royal Danish Ballet. Bournonville is considered to be the key figure of the golden age of Danish romanticism. He was a dancer and the Artistic Director of the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen. He traveled to Russia in 1874, visiting St. Petersburg and Moscow and meeting the well-known Marius Petipa. Bournonville was very inspired by this trip. In 1876 he created his last ballet, *From Siberia to Moscow*.

Napoli was first performed on March 29, 1842 in Denmark. The ballet represents the essence of August Bournonville's creativity, both in steps and ideas. It also demonstrates the concepts of a Bournonville tradition – something quite difficult to define. *Napoli* has now been danced for 150 years, clocking up over 700 performances. Over time, ballet professionals have re-arranged and re-choreographed it creating new scenic decor and offering new characterizations.

Napoli was drafted in a stagecoach between Paris and Dunkirk. The first and

third acts were inspired by Italian street scenes that Bournonville had witnessed in Italy: "From my window, in the course of an hour, I would witness more tableaux than I could use in ten ballets," Bournonville wrote in his memoirs.

Mime always played a significant role in Bournonville's ballets and the choreographer created his own style and form. Bournonville believed that gesture should be simple and natural like the movements that accompany and enhance everyday speech. He wanted the dancer to express inner feelings and thoughts through outer visible movements; feelings such as love, jealousy, devotion, happiness, tears, anger and despair through mime.

Frank Andersen, a famous Danish dancer and choreographer and keeper of the Bournonville tradition, staged the ballet with the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko troupe. Three years passed from the initial idea to the opening night. Andersen had a whole crew of choreographers assisting him with the production. One of the crew members was his wife Eva Kloborg, a former ballerina and now a teacher of classical dance training for the Royal Danish Ballet, which is currently under the patronage of Margrethe II, Queen of Denmark.

In Denmark, *Napoli* is given the same sort of respect as *Swan Lake* is in Russia. *Napoli*'s plot is based on a fairy tale love story about a fisherman named Gennaro and his fiancée, Teresina. Teresina drowns during a storm at sea, transforms into a Naiad, and finds herself in the Blue Grotto of the sea spirit Golfo. Gennaro arrives and saves her from the sea spirit. The entire third act is devoted to a joyful celebration of Teresina's happy return and her wedding with Gennaro.

Napoli is a real dancing extravaganza. Everyone joins in, particularly during the third act. The first act, with the exception of several scenes, is heavily based on pantomime. Sergei Filin, the Stanislavsky Ballet Artistic Director, mentioned during a press conference that it was worth staging this ballet just for the sake of reviving the style of mime and getting it back on the stage. The entire ballet is indeed filled with mime; the audience witnesses a real mime show from the very beginning – fishermen, town residents, peasants, monks, children and the main characters are in constant communication with each other on the stage.

Filin's words are echoed by Frank Andersen who said that to understand the pantomime [in the ballet] you have to understand and look at yourself from a



sian dancers are either dancing or telling a story – that a real synthesis of both is sometimes missing – and that's what he tried to reach in the Moscow production of *Napoli*. "Why *Napoli*?" "That question was also asked during the press conference. Because it's the most exciting, challenging and difficult ballet for a foreign dancer to dance," replied Andersen. "It's has wonderful music, wonderful choreography, and difficult dances."

The second act, when the action takes place under the sea in the Blue Grotto, is staged according to all the genres of romanticism, specifically in the part when Teresina transforms into a Naiad – her dress immediately changes into a Naiad costume. The same transformation is used when she is rescued by her fiancé and becomes human again. During Bournonville's times, the audience used to take a break and go to a nearby restaurant before the third act. The second act seemed somewhat boring for them in anticipation to a really dynamic and colorful third act. In the current production of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater the second act is staged beautifully, with very colorful costumes and choreography; it is highly unlikely that the Moscow audience would have felt like spending the second act elsewhere as

distance. It is crucial that when you tell a story, you explain it so thoroughly that everyone sitting in the audience understands everything without a translator or mime guide-book. Andersen insisted that his dancers looked at each other

even while dancing. He believed that you have to be an excellent story-teller as well as a dancer to be successful in Bournonville's ballets. One of his remarks during the press conference was that sometimes it seemed to him that Rus-

*Teresina – Olga
Sizikh,
Golfo – Dmitry
Romenko*





the Copenhagen audience used to do in the 19th century.

The costumes were designed by Dairdre Clancy, a British citizen, who has worked all over the world and received numerous awards. She created over 300 costumes for Napoli. It was a challenge for her to find specific fabrics in Moscow, such as silk, cotton and flax. They were also too expensive to import through cus-

toms. For over two months the costumes for Napoli were made in theatrical workshops. The Naiad costumes in the second act were made of transparent chiffon to create an association with seaweed.

The third act, set at the shrine of Monte Virgin near Naples, is often performed by the Royal Danish Ballet as a separate act during gala-concerts. It is considered to be the visiting card of this theater. In the

Moscow production, the third act is very picturesque and is filled with marvelous dancing and music. A festive celebratory atmosphere is felt throughout the performance. The act opens with pilgrims assembled around a picture of Madonna, mother of Jesus. Gennaro is blessed by the monk and the rescued Teresina appears; the festival begins, and the act closes with a series of dances: pas de six, solos, duets and trios, a tarantella and the finale.

Teresina – Olga Sizikh, Zhenaro – Georgy Smilevsky, Veronic – Natalia Trubnikova



Four composers created music for the score. Edvard Helsted and Holger Simon Paulli composed the first and third acts. Niels W. Gade created the blue subterranean grotto atmosphere for the second act - including a popular melody of the time: La Melancholie, composed by the violin virtuoso François Henri Prume. As a special trump card, Bournonville asked H.C. Lumbye, later to become the famous composer who conducted the orchestra in Tivoli Park in Copenhagen for its first 30 years, to provide the music for the catchy gallop that concludes the ballet, following on from Paulli's impressive tarantella.

Do not miss the opportunity to experience the joy and beauty of this ballet on May 28th at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater and watch out for Napoli in the future repertoire of the theater. **P**

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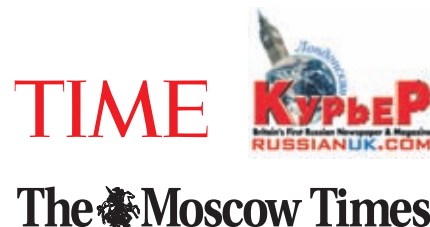
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Great Patriotic War

– in movies and in real life

text by Marina Lukanina

On May 9th and the week before and after that date, there are always plenty of films and programs on TV devoted to war themes. Many of them are shown every year. Among the most popular are the generic TV series: *Seventeen Moments of Spring* and films such as: *The Cranes are Flying* and *The Dawns are Quiet Here*.

of the German command were actually human beings and was given the Soviet State Award in 1976

The Cranes are Flying (1957), a film usually screened during the May 9 holidays directed by Mikhail Kalatozov, takes place in Moscow before and during the war. The plot starts with a love story be-

who together with their sergeant fight against a German saboteur group. At the cost of their lives they managed to thwart the Germans. This movie was the most popular film of 1973 – over 60 million people watched it and it has been talked about in terms of one of the best. Russian films ever made. It's a film that penetrates deep inside one's soul.



Seventeen Moments of Spring is a twelve-part serial released in 1973 and directed by Tatyana Liozonova. The serial has something of a cult following amongst older Russians at least, and its status in the younger generation of a prime example of black and white, high contrast Soviet TV, ensures that the series is re-broadcast at least once a year, making it one of the most popular series ever - anywhere. The story takes place in February-March 1945. The main character, the Soviet spy Shtirlitz, has to identify who of the Reich leadership is engaged in separate negotiations with the West. The movie has an original, suspense soundtrack composed by Mikael Tarivediev. The series was one of the first productions to indicate that members

tween Boris and Veronica who are separated by the war. Boris is killed by a stray bullet and the viewer is witness to very real, traumatic episodes of Veronica's war-time life. The most famous scene is of Boris's death and his last look up at the sky – at the birches and cranes. The movie won numerous prizes, including the Golden Palm Award.

Boris Vasilyev's story, *And the Dawns are Quiet Here*, was first published in 1969 in *Youth* magazine. It immediately became one of the most popular books about the Great Patriotic War. In 1971, Stanislav Rostotskiy, a Russian classical director, made a movie of the film. The action takes place in 1942 and tells the story of a group of young women



Efim Efremovich Vendrov



Those of us who were born after the war look at these films differently than those who actually saw action. *Passport* talked about war life reality with one veteran of the Great Patriotic War, an artilleryist and guard colonel, Efim Efremovich Vendrov.

What was your attitude towards War Movies?

I did see most of them. Even though I am not a big fan, they seemed to depict the war episodes quite accurately. Of course, I can only comment on the accuracy of the episodes that I took part in, such as battles, reconnaissance, life in the trenches, the hospitals, etc. I cannot tell whether the movies correctly portray high-level meetings between commanders, or, for example, dialogues between Stalin and Zhukov (Soviet military commander).

Where were you when the war began?

I was a cadet at the Leningrad Artillery School near Luga [a town in the Leningrad-sky region].

What are your memories of the first days of war?

During the first days of the war when I was still in Luga, a German plane flew over our camp. The plane must have dropped all of its bombs elsewhere, as it was out of munitions – so the pilot just threw all kinds of garbage on us. And then the plane flew closer to the ground and the pilot shook his fist at us.

War movies are usually full of songs and we owe the war for this flourishing military folklore. Did you have any exposure to that?

I did, when I was sent to the Sverdlovsk Hospital #354 with an arm wound. In that hospital we had a hall that we used as a place for dating. We used to gather in that hall and lock the door. That came to the attention of the hospital commissioner, and I was sent to explain to him why we locked the doors. I could not think of a better explanation other than to say that we were preparing a surprise concert for the Great October Revolution Anniversary. The commissioner was very pleased. So we had to prepare this concert, where I directed the choir and also I had to play Hitler in one of the sketches. We organized various amateur talent shows while staying in this hospital and even toured other hospitals with our shows.

Were there any odd episodes during the war?

One episode I remember was when the infantry complained to their commanders that the artillery was not providing enough support. Our artillery commander ordered us to fire all the shells we had so that there would be no more accusations. I was in charge of an artillery division headquarters back then. Later that night, I got a call from Lieutenant Olesinov. Apparently, the artillery commander told Olesinov that he was to be executed, because, contrary to the orders, he still had some shells leftover. However, the commander was a bit drunk at that point and he fell asleep. I told Olesinov to stay put. In the morning the Germans attacked, and no one except for Olesinov had any shells left. He repelled the attack and received the Order of the Red Star.

Is it true that there were "Hurray machines" used to strengthen the cheering during the battles?

In 1945 during the Oder Attack, throughout the front line there were loudspeakers called "Hurray machines" that broadcasted during attacks various shouts, such as "Hurray, for the Motherland, for Stalin!" Loudspeakers were commonly used for propaganda – both from the German and Russian sides. Eavesdropping was common and widely-used; at times the Germans, from their trenches, would broadcast congratulations to our commanding officers with various awards or new ranks.

Did you celebrate holidays during the War?

Yes, we did. For example, we most definitely celebrated the New Year. I will tell you more – during the war people fell in love, got jealous, played pranks on each other, etc. So there was a whole separate life going on apart from the battles.

How did you celebrate V-Day?

I was in Germany. The first time that we heard about Germany's surrender was on March 8th so we cheered for that. Then we were told it was a mistake. The following day – the same thing happened and we cheered again.

It was later decided to make May 9th an official holiday. We weren't celebrating specifically May 9th of 1945 – we were celebrating the victory and Germany's capitulation and that is the important thing. **P**

Animation Industry

in Trouble

text by Vladimir Kozlov

The Russian animation industry has recently suffered a major blow, as the economic downturn has hit the entire local entertainment sector. Producers are putting all their hopes on government support and have few expectations that the situation will allow the animation business to function as a self-sustainable enterprise.

As recently as a year ago, the outlook could not have looked more different and many in the industry predicted a rosy future for Russian animated films that were

beginning to attract audiences previously interested mostly in Hollywood releases.

By the mid-2000s the local animation industry, which in Soviet times turned out many good films, such as Yuri Norshteyn's *Yozhik v Tumane* (The Hedgehog in the Mist), Vyacheslav Kotyonochkin's mini-series *Nu Pogodi!* (I'll Get You!) and Fyodor Khitruk's *Vinni Pukh*, a loose adaptation of the Winnie the Pooh story, had survived the hardship of the 1990s and was beginning to successfully adapt to new economic conditions.



By then, Russian audiences had already seen many Disney and Pixar films, so local animators had to look for ways to make films that would not look blatantly inferior to those, and at the same time, would differ in some way from standard Hollywood fare. One strategy was to base films on Russian fairy tales, and it turned out to be successful.

In late 2007, the feature-length animated film *Ilya Muromets i Solovey Razboynik* which was produced on a budget of \$2 million by the St. Petersburg-based studio Melnitsa and directed by Vladimir Toropchin, grossed just under \$10 million in theaters, setting a record for an animated film at the domestic box office. Commenting on the success of the film, its producers noted that people here wanted to watch locally made feature-length animation just as much as American audiences do.

According to Melnitsa's head, Alexander Boyarsky, the film was released at a time when Russian audiences' interest in animated films was on the rise, and the prospects looked good, although there were no plans to dramatically raise budgets or step up production. The studio has kept its pace, releasing about one feature-length animated film a year, but its plans are now in jeopardy, as those of other local animation companies, as the economic and financial downturn has hit the industry hard.

"There has been quite a serious negative impact," says Alexander Gerasimov, general director of the Moscow-based company Masterfilm. "Most animated film projects are made with support from the government and over the last six months funding has dried up. Some projects were completed anyway, but some had to be suspended. The cancellation of some projects or entirely stopping production by a company is not uncommon for this industry."

Just a couple years ago, at a relatively prosperous time for the entire local film industry, producers of animated films

complained of a lack of properly trained talent and crew, saying that although local film schools annually produced dozens of screenwriters, very few were qualified enough to start working in the animation industry, while none of the Russian schools trained animation artists.

Now, with the crisis in full swing and projects falling apart, even those few qualified people who producers were once able to attract, are forced to be look elsewhere for a living. "There has been an outflow of people from the animation industry," says Gerasimov. "These are unique people and they are leaving to go to other industries. It will be extremely difficult to get them back once the crisis is over."

While producers of TV series and feature films may profit from the downturn, as fees demanded by talent and crew are now decreasing, this is not the case for the animation industry. "Unlike, say, the movie industry, fees in animation have never been inflated that much," Gerasimov explains. "So there's no chance of bringing them down. If someone is launching a project now, they would be most likely to hire personnel on the same wages as they did last year."

Industry insiders say that they hope the government's support will return, helping it to survive this difficult period. "The animation sector won't be able to bounce back that quickly," Gerasimov says. "Here, production takes much longer than with feature films or a TV series. You can spend three to four times more on production of an animated film than that of a feature film of the same length, and production costs are high here."

Gerasimov believes that the recovery should start with feature films and TV series, when television channels resume placing orders for those kinds of projects, after which the turn of animated films could come, but for the time being, only state support could keep the industry going. Meanwhile, Masterfilm hopes to be able to find funding for a new, three-dimensional feature-length animated film, *Bogi Zelenoy Planety* (Green Planet Gods), based on the sci-fi novel by Andrei Solomatov.

Among the few successful exceptions is the children's cartoon series *Smeshariki*, which has been produced by Masterfilm in cooperation with the St. Petersburg-

based animation studio Peterburg since 2003. Initially the series targeted 4 to 9 year olds. The name of the series is derived from the Russian words *smeshnye*, meaning funny and *shariki*, meaning little balls and features stylized round animals, consisting of 6 minute long episodes. To

date, more than 200 episodes have been produced and aired here.

Having won the hearts of Russian children, the *Smeshariki* project soon began its international expansion. Adaptation rights have been sold to several foreign countries and the English language version, *GoGoRiki*, has been broadcasted on a US channel since October 2008, while a German version was first aired in December 2008. *GoGoRiki* has become the first ever cartoon series adapted from a Russian original to be aired in the United States.

Sales of foreign rights, coupled with merchandising, are helping the series to be self-sufficient. "For this project, we've received no government funding," Gerasimov says. "But we've been able to keep it going, and that is important, as the brand's strength would decrease if we stopped producing new episodes."

Gerasimov adds that a feature length, three-dimensional animated film about *Smeshariki*, called *Smeshariki 3D*, is currently in production, with a budget of about \$7 million and is scheduled to be completed in spring or summer of 2010.

Another area that seems to be less affected by the economic crisis is the so-called *Auteur Animation*, or films produced almost entirely for festivals and hardly ever seen by mass audiences, as opposed to theatrically released, feature-length animated films.

In 2000, Russian director Alexander Petrov won an Oscar for Best Animated Short Film for his *Stariki More* (The Old Man and the Sea), based on the story by Ernest Hemingway. A year ago, he received another Oscar nomination for *Moya Lyubov* (My Love) and this year, *Ubornaya Istoriya – Lyubovnaya Istoriya* (Lavatory – Love Story) by Konstantin Bronzit was also nominated for an Oscar in the category of Animated Short Film, not to mention dozens of prizes collected by Russian animators for their short, non-commercial films at different international festivals. **P**



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Artist Olga Bari-Aizenman:

text by Olga Slobodkina-von Bromssen



A Pond. Bikovo. Oil on canvas, 1916

When the Russian art world threw off the obtrusive clichés of socialist realism, galleries and art critics began to focus on new names. One such name is Olga Bari-Aizenman.

A painter of extraordinary talent, Olga Bari was born into a highly educated and spiritual family. Her father Alexander Veniaminovich Bari, an engineer and enterpriser, was educated in Germany and Switzerland and finally found himself in the United States, where his brilliant career progressed rapidly and he became a millionaire. A talented industrialist, he became the chairman of the Philadelphia Engineering Society and designed all the pavilions for the 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition, displaying technical achievements worldwide.

At the exhibition, he met a delegation of Russian engineers, including the young engineer Vladimir Shukhov. That acquaintance marked the beginning of a most astounding Shukhov-Bari creative duo, which finally brought the Bari family back to Russia where the two worked together until Bari's death in 1913.

At first they provided all the engineering works for the Nobel brothers' oil undertaking in Baku. Then in 1880, Bari decided to set up his own firm. It is hard to put a figure on the amount of work that Bari and Shukhov did together.

For the engineering constructions for 40 units in Moscow and the surrounding area, including the Metropol Hotel and the State Department Store (GUM) in Red Square, Shukhov designed all the complicated metal constructions while Bari financed the projects and brought them to life. Together they built over 450 railway bridges in Russia, modernized the water pipes in the largest cities and built



Interior. Raiki. Pastels on paper, 1913

the first tram station in Moscow and the School of Sculpture and Architecture.

Bari was also a great patron of the arts. He paid for the education of his employee's children and helped the poor. During the First Russian Revolution of 1905 his Dinamo factory saw no strikes because he had created civilized conditions for the workers.

Bari married a German baroness, Zinaida Yakovlevna Grunberg, and they had several children, one of whom was Olga Alexandrovna. Olga Alexandrovna was born on February 7, 1879 in St. Petersburg.

Besides getting a good education at home, Olga Bari became a student on higher women's courses and went to Italy every summer. She was going to be a historian, but her experience in Italy made such an impression on her that when she came back in 1903 she started to take private lessons from artist Leonid Pasternak, father of the famous poet Boris Pasternak.

Her talent was evident at once and from 1907 she began exhibiting her artwork with the World of Art group, the Union of Russian Artists and the Moscow Salon.

Olga Bari-Aizenman wrote a note summing up her memoirs of being a student at Leonid Pasternak's studio: Pasternak wanted his students to be able to see the image – he never gave them assignments to draw from plaster casts, he never taught them how to construct a form. The image was the goal.

In Pasternak's studio, Olga Bari mostly painted portraits, but later changed to landscapes. When she left Pasternak's studio,



Beach at Gelendzhik. Pastels on paper, 1928



By the river Pakra. Pastels on paper, 1916

Story of an Outstanding Family

they remained friends until the end of their lives. They continued to write letters to each other after the Pasternaks had emigrated to Berlin.

Despite her success in the art world, after 1918 her works were displayed only twice: in 1947 during the celebration of the 800th anniversary of Moscow – to decorate some shop windows on Ulitsa Gorkovo and in 1980 – at an event in the Painters' Club on Kuznetsky Most.

At the age of 34, Olga Bari married lawyer Semyon Aizenman and they had two children. Their son Alexei Aizenman (profiled in a 2008 issue of *Passport*) became a brilliant painter while his sister was a well-known folk art critic.

Olga Bari-Aizenman's main occupation was teaching painting. She herself could only afford to paint during the summer months. The creative potential and necessity was so strong in her that despite all the hardships of Soviet life – the Aizenmans always lived in a communal apartment in the center of Moscow – she was still painting several months before her death when she was already virtually blind. Her last drawings are not detailed, but the color is very powerful.

The artistic language of her works is very close to the World of Art group in its conditional and decorative qualities. It is easy to guess that she adored the artist Borisov-Musatov.

Olga Bari-Aizenman was very fond of the Italian Renaissance, studying it at depth. It is hard to say what is more important about her paintings and drawings: their decorative qualities or the catching of the elusive – snow, flowers or clouds, which

faded in as the viewer steps back – but their high level of culture and mastership is certain.

Olga Bari-Aizenman died on March 31, 1954.

In the 1990s, when galleries and art critics were summing up 20th century Russian art, Olga Bari-Aizenman emerged from the family archive. However, the main keeper of her works is not a gallery or a museum, but her grand-daughter Olga Velchinskaya. In her book about the family history Velchinskaya describes the acquaintance of her grandparents Olga Bari and Semyon Aizenman. "My grandparents met in 1896 in a famous market in Nizhny Novgorod. The engineering company of Alexander Veniaminovich Bari, an American citizen and a successful Russian entrepreneur, commissioned the market pavilions. The author of the brilliant engineering projects was Vladimir Grigoryevich Shukhov and the organizer of the works was Alexander Bari. The employees of his company came to Nizhny with their families. Alexander Bari came with his elder children, among whom was Olga Alexandrovna. "When my 17 year-old grandfather, Semyon Aizenman, met my 17 year-old grandmother, Olga Bari, he fell in love with her at once. For the next 17 years he sought her love and only on September 15, 1913, they wed in the Archangel Gabriel church in Arkhangelsky Pereulok. I think that my grandfather had converted to Russian Orthodoxy from Judaism to continue his education. I have no idea under what circumstances my granny converted to Russian Orthodoxy from the Lutheran faith, but when she was baptized she was given 3 names - Vera-Olga-Amalia. During her lifetime everyone called her Olga and she celebrated her name day on St. Olga's Day, July 24." P

Anatoly Bichukov

“Is there a joy more sublime than the joy of creation?”

Nikolai Gogol



*Portrait of a Girl
With a Plait, 1993
Bronze
Height: 50 cm*



The art of one of the most remarkable and brilliant Russian sculptors, Anatoly Andreevich Bichukov, is an example of spiritual self-sacrifice, selfless devotion to art, and the epitome of the good and the beautiful. For nearly 50 years he has been putting his talent and sense of purpose in the high service of art. A graduate of the Moscow State Art Institute, now the Surikov Art Institute (MGAKhI), where he became a dean several years ago, Bichukov, as early as his college days, won a reputation as a singular personality passionately dedicated to his art. A student of the outstanding sculptor, teacher and intellectual Matvei Manizer, he familiarized himself with the great traditions of Russian and international sculpture. Bichukov became a worthy successor to his instructors and mentors, thanks to whom he entered the world of monumental art as a mature artist with an original imagination and a perfect mastery of the sculptor's craft. Shortly after graduation from the Surikov Institute the young artist started to exhibit at all the important shows – in Moscow, regional and Soviet national exhibitions. His works are highly engaging, thanks to their mastery in the handling of the form, depth of imagery, and heart-felt sincerity.

Bichukov works with various media, creating indoor sculptures and large-size statues. The breadth of themes covered, his artistic cogency and historical veracity strike the viewer. When he started his career, the young artist modeled statues in clay and gypsum, hewed objects out of granite and marble, and worked with iron, copper and bronze. Very soon he became a leading figure on the Russian cultural scene, on a level with already established masters such as Pavel Bondarenko, Iulian Rukavishnikov, Yury Orekhov, Mikhail Baburin, and Dmitry Ryabichev. Bichukov received commissions from government agencies and non-governmental organizations, participated in competitive bids to create monuments and large-scale memorials in different cities of the USSR; his works were purchased by the Artists' Union of the USSR, and the Ministry of Culture and museums. It was then that Bichukov produced his first important monumental statues. His skills, talent and principled stance won him respect and a position of influence in the late 1960s early 1970s. His sculptures are marked by a magnitude and depth of his artistic vision. In 1974 Bichukov became a head of the Artists' Studio affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior of the USSR, which he has been directing for 35 years; today this studio bears the name of Vasily Vereshchagin, the prominent Russian artist who specialized in battle pieces.

The varied and original art of the sculptor, his innate understanding of the truth of life and the truth of art, his spirituality and loyalty to tradition – all this is underpinned by the outstanding personality of a truly creative spirit.

Bichukov's early pieces are marked by their harmony, mastery of form and sublime sensuality, emotional depth and verve. The vivid movements of the forms, the expressive molding, compositional structure and light-and-dark modeling of form conveys the wealth of the sculptor's visual concepts, his distinct ideas about

his models' characters. These qualities are evident both in Bichukov's portraits and multi-figured, narrative compositions. Bichukov whole-heartedly empathizes with his sitters, and becomes involved with their lives. His imagery is historically determined within the context of a certain time, a certain age. His trademark is the rare faculty to see more and to sense more keenly that which is hidden in the depth of time.

*Monument to
Sergei Yesenin, 1995
Bronze, granite
Height: 7 meters
Moscow*



His most noteworthy pieces created in the 1960s include a memorial composition cast in bronze, In Memory of the Victims of the 1930s Purges, and a granite monument to the poet Boris Kornilov – both were created in 1968 and grace the town of Semenov near present-day Nizhny Novgorod; a marble statue of Sergei Yesenin (1964); a marble bust named Youth (1965); Bronze Head of a Woman (1967), and some other works from the same period. The pieces are marked by compositional coherence, psychological insights, and historical veracity. At the same time, every work has unique qualities, and is rich with meaning. In these statues, the dramatic and heroic past seems to resonate with a lyrical interpretation of 1960s characters — a decade of public optimism and confidence in the future. Bichukov's artwork, regardless of its theme or narrative line, or whether the model is a contemporary or a historical figure, has been greatly influenced, since the artist's youth, by the poems of Sergei Yesenin, whose verse seems to convey the wealth of sentiment overwhelming the artist:

**Oh, my life! Have I been sleeping fast?
It feels like early in the morning,
On a rosy horse I've galloped past.**

A versatile artist, Bichukov approaches the facts and events of history and modernity, its cast of characters, its notables and commoners with equal interest. The present, for him, is a continuation of the past, a history of the people's spirit where nothing vanishes without a trace, and everything is passed down from one generation to another. This is the most essential component of the Bichukov's work – the creator of epic, monumental, heroic and dramatic images, and also of intimate and lyrical ones.

His memorial monuments include, In Memory of the Heroic Civil Aviators Killed during the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945, in Vnukovo, Moscow region (1984), and a monument, From a Grateful Russia – to the Warriors of Law Enforcement Killed in the Line of Duty (1995), on Trubnaya Ploshchad in the Rus-

sian capital. Portrait memorials include a bronze image of the great Russian artist Arkady Plastov in Ulyanovsk, the painter's home town (2002), a bust of Ivan Kozhedub in the Hall of Fame on Poklonnaya Hills in Moscow (2001), and a statue of Georgy Zhukov in Odintsovo, Moscow region (2001), and, of course, a bronze model of the sculptor's favorite poet Sergei Yesenin on Tverskoi Boulevard in Moscow (1995); there is another Yesenin statue in the village of Konstantinovo near Ryazan (2007). These works also include sculpted images of the great poet Alexander Pushkin in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and Santiago, Chile, from 1999, which mark the poet's anniversary.

Other special pieces by Bichukov include full-length bronze figures of the monarchs Peter I, Catherine II, Nicholas I and Alexander II – all commissioned by the federal government and made in 2002, for the Oval Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace.

Symbols of Russian statehood, these monumental pieces are a tribute to the historical deeds of the wielders of royal power over the country's destiny; the Kremlin's Yekaterininsky (Catherine's) hall displays Bichukov's allegorical Russia and Justice statues.

Bichukov's works show his love for Russian history and culture, admiration for the national traditions of the Russian people, the greatness of their spirit and their moral valor. He is also a proponent figure of the academic school of Realist art, and the range of his works includes numerous portraits, compositions, memorial plaques and monumental compositions, and accomplished drawings. Bichukov is a public figure and a teacher, a vice president of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, dean of the Surikov Art Institute and head of the Vasily Vereshchagin Artists Studio affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior. Having educated an accomplished group of first-rate sculptors, he helps to maintain their creative energy and takes care of young artists – the future of Russian culture.

His work as an artist, teacher and mentor, and public figure have been duly appreciated: Anatoly Bichukov is a People's Artist of Russia, an academician and a winner of numerous national and international prizes. His artwork, which became his life mission, has gained universal recognition.

Editor's note: This article was prepared with the kind cooperation of the Tretyakov Gallery Magazine, which also made available the images printed here. **P**



Izmailovsky

text and photos by Piers Gladstone



Moscow's Izmailovsky Park market is for many expatriates a regular weekend activity, a perfect place to browse for gifts or curios for their apartments. It is a living, breathing museum of Russian history and culture. The likes of religious icons, silver samovars, original Soviet propaganda posters and memorabilia, Russian and German military uniforms and equipment, pre-revolution antiques and traditional weaving, to name but a few, are laid out on stalls and blankets every Saturday and Sunday for the discerning shopper.

What makes this place truly fascinating is, while visited by tourists and expatriates, the majority of those buying are Russian, and over the last few years the numbers buying Soviet memorabilia have been noticeably increasing. "The further we get from the collapse of the Soviet Union, the more interest there is in that time," says Genia of USSR Posters. Many of Genia's Russian customers were born after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Some she says buy the posters because they find them kitsch and amusing, especially those ad-

vocating abstinence – an alien concept for most consumer and consumption driven young Muscovites. One of the most often bought posters depicts a man saying "Niet" as he is offered a glass of vodka.

According to Slava, another poster seller, the reasons for this newfound interest are darker. "Recent political pronouncements and propaganda about the Soviet times by our leaders have fuelled a new interest. We sell them to old people nostalgic for their childhood or what they see as a golden time, but also to youngsters who want to believe in this idea of our country being the most powerful in the world." This nostalgia can be seen in the number of men over the age of forty pouring over the collections of badges from their youth, while the recent resurgence in Russia and Russian pride can be seen in the number of people looking at and buying posters from a period when this country was one of the world's two super powers.

Many of the Russian shoppers however, are not interested in the political



Park Park



wares. Natasha, a 40 year old art critic, is currently decorating her dacha in the Russian Moderne (Art Nouveau) style. "I am here to find blue crystal door handles. They were very popular once, but are extremely hard to find nowadays." Others, such as Katia who works in marketing in the fashion industry, have professional reasons; "I am looking for Soviet posters of textiles to see how they were promoted and depicted back then." And some of the younger generation, like 22 year old

student Natalya, have found an interest in the pre-revolution period; "I am looking for jewelry from before the Soviet times. Vintage is becoming very fashionable," she explains.

And for foreigners visiting, or those living in Moscow like Martin from Germany, Izmailovsky Market offers an opportunity to buy and to learn something of Russian history. "I come because I am trying to find all the best bits from Russian cul-

ture like nice glass artwork. I am also buying old and cool Russian uniforms. They are great for parties. I wore one in public once, but everyone was turning around and staring at me! The traditional weaving is also very interesting. The patterns are graphically very interesting. It takes a long time to find what I want though."

The nearest metro station is known by two names – Izmailovsky Park and Partizanskaya. P

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text and photos by Ross Hunter



Street Level Capitalism in the Capital

After the ex-Soviet ex-Union abandoned the planned economy we are lucky to witness the growth of a new and distinctively Russian economic system. Under the old regime, the foot soldiers of the revolution were celebrated all over Moscow: Proletarskaya Ploshchad, Shosse Entusiastiv, Youth Volunteers' this, Collective Farm Workers' that. With capitalism's big shots being pushed off their pedestals or jumping off penthouse ledges, saluting your favorite oligarch doesn't seem so fashionable anymore.

So let's cheer the real entrepreneurs of the age: the heroes of the street market: the industrious and indefatigable 'Kioskim'! Their monument may be small, temporary and built at night with old materials but worthy all the same.

Kiosks are not new to Russian retailing. The vastness of Red Square used to be so packed with wooden kiosks that inevitably fire ravaged them again and again. See FY Alexeyev's 'Red Square' (1801) in the Tretyakov Gallery for a picturesque depiction of them around St. Basil's. The adjacent trading rows were retail right to the river, until replaced by the magnificent GUM building, which keeps the shape and layout of the old market streets.

During the Bolshevik era, nascent individualism was frowned upon and the cult of bigness reigned. When the communist system collapsed, so went its two guiding principles: 'you pretend to work, and we pretend to pay you', and 'they give us everything we need and nothing we want'. An unpromising foundation for a new economy. While the super rich were helping themselves to the billions, grappling ever upwards, down at street level the people's wealth creation reappeared. The kiosk explosion hit 12,000 in the early 1990s, and as many as 18,000 recently: the peak of a business now in decline?

Kiosk retailing is certainly not an easy life. Selling on the street side is unforgiving: exposed to the elements, traffic, pollution and plagues of profiteers extorting their slice. For many, especially newcomers to the city, there is no alternative with shop rents out of reach. But it is a start. With family support and shared endeavour, the ladder of progress inches up the hierarchy into the high street, and eventually off it into a permanent shop.

Stage one is just to get selling: a cardboard carpet, a shopping trolley and the ubiquitous striped woven plastic bags,

mostly holding first class vegetables or pickles from home. Next, a folding table with an awning against sun, rain and snow, and more variety of goods on display. Astonishingly, all these stalls are mobile, and may be seen in transit, being lugged up and down Metro steps.

With a bit of luck and a lot of hard work a formal booth is next, with a steel frame and bright yellow sides: you are marking Ya Marka! Then a solid kiosk: portaloo or car parking hut, perhaps. Or a self built box, sometimes self propelled, in a handy spot next to a Metro station or bus stop. Block the pavement so passing trade

top of the evolutionary greasy pole.

What to sell? Look around for clues to the competition and to admire the variety. What cannot be bought in a kiosk is a short list. It is easy to find almost everything edible,



homemade pickles or a barrow mounted magazine screen. 'Best before' dates may not be strictly adhered to, so despite glaring screens to shield the sun, checking provenance by the degree of fade on the printed labels may be helpful. And beware of fake money, fake tickets, fake fashions, fake (hopefully) furs ... caveat emptor applies in Russia as well any classical plaza. Don't be agoraphobic, just be careful.

DIY Kiosk Starter Kit

Cut out and fold up model – a flat-pack instant classic

Dengi – all the paperwork you need (see photo)

Molotok and Allen key – not supplied

Wiring diagram – at your own risk (see photo)

Signage: hand painted, professional or illuminated

drinkable, smokable, wearable, adornable, readable, windupable, smelly, spicy or racy. Not to mention the superabundance of flower stalls. Then there are collections of tools like magnifying glasses and leather goods, an umbrella for an emergency, and second hand books, household goods, blue china and very well used toys. Tram tickets, theater tickets, passport holders, souvenir dolls or postcards, anyone?

There may be a relaxed relationship with copyright on DVDs, handbags and perfumes. It is a bit of a shock to see lingerie draped over a table in the open, blowing in the breeze. It can be hard to get out of a Metro exit barricaded by

Kiosks have a long and vital heritage in Moscow. But do they have a future? The economic boom has filled the horizon with steel and blue glass towers and the streets with black glassed and blue lighted foreign cars, crammed to a standstill. The upwardly mobile looking down on the nouveau richly immobile. Moscow's brave new world of surface smoothness, shading its rough edges and even rougher foundations.

Two years ago, City leaders declared war on the kiosks, with grand plans and target dates to rid the limo views of inconvenient eyesores. An echo of third world capitals bulldozing shanty towns out of sight of the elite, without actually offering a solution to the cause of their existence. Is this tomorrow's Moscow? Recent financial troubles have put the skyscrapers on hold, but retail rents have hardly fallen to the point of affordable. If high finance and elite boutiques are not making wealth, and still less sharing it, can the humble keep the economy ticking along? I hope so. Support your local kiosks! **P**



is obliged to look in. Maybe with electricity, but best not to ask from there the wire has been spliced. Lashings of fresh grey ship-grade paint proudly embalm the whole thing: it has taken a lot of work to get here. Homemade signs embellish the roof line, showing off the produce or the opening hours. Eventually, a franchise – an official licensed site, fully manufactured advertisements – fame at last. The family chain beckons: watch out Walmart, here we come! The kiosk has reached the

St. Catherine Stretches Her Wings



text by Elena Kryvovyz,
photos by Alina Ganenko

There are temples of worship for numerous faiths and confessions in Moscow. The Church of St. Catherine in Moscow is the only representation of the American Orthodox Church in Russia, and is led by its Dean, Archimandrite Zacchaeus.

The legacy of wars

The full name of the church is quite long and it takes a secular person to make an ef-

fort to remember it: Church of St. Catherine the Great Martyr in-the-fields. The story of the church itself is intriguing. The building survived the fire during the 1812 war (with Napoleon), and the October Revolution of 1917. Then it was closed by the Bolsheviks in 1931 and converted into a car factory and a *kommunalka* (a block of flats for workers or communal housing). From the early 1980s onwards, the buildings of the former church were used as a art restoration center.

The entire church complex was only returned to the parish in the 2000s because of Archimandrite Zacchaeus's efforts. Recent years have turned out to be calm and beneficial for the temple. Restoration works were carried out and the church became the Representation of the American Orthodox church in 1994. Part of the congregation of St. Catherine, in addition to Muscovites, is made up of ambassadors and diplomats from all over the world. It has been estimated that there are about 3,000 or even more Orthodox native English-speaking believers in Moscow and many of them visit the church from time to time. Some services are held in English, others are in Church Slavonic and translation is provided. The Archimandrite commented that there are no real major differences between the traditions of the American and Russian Orthodox Churches, with the exception that the official language of the Russian Orthodox Church is Church Slavonic and for the American Church – English.

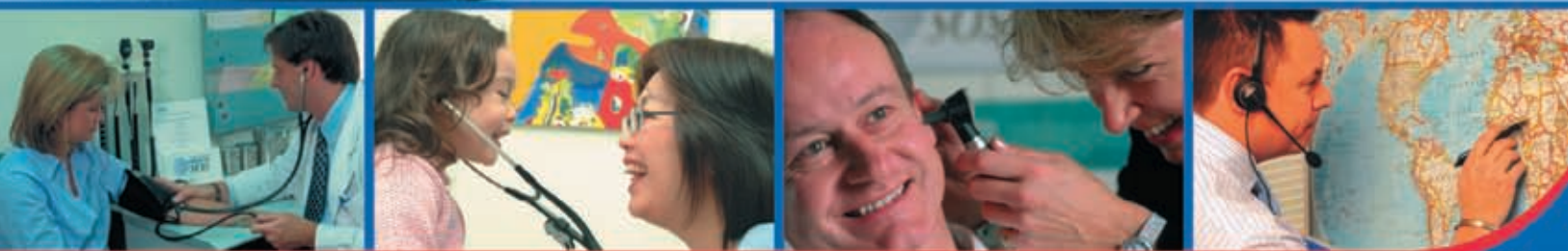
English-speaking parishioners can request a weddings, baptisms or other services in English. "We can hold weddings

and other sacred ceremonies here in English as well as in Church Slavonic. Our parishioners are Russian, French, English and American. It's a kind of uniting Orthodox action for everyone. According to Archimandrite Zacchaeus, baptisms present no great ecclesiastic problem, but weddings can present challenges: "The priests and I talk to them [the couple] before the ceremony to make sure they are getting married because of their true feelings and not just due to the English-language service. If we have doubts about whether they are taking full responsibility for what they are doing, we ask them to wait for a while until their decision becomes strong enough. The problem is that people are used to changing their minds very often. We try to explain that this sacred ceremony is once and for all."

An American style "coffee hour" is held for the clergy and parishioners after every Sunday Liturgy. "Why is this important? The priest is a confessor for parishioners, and he must be available for them not only during the service but in informal settings as well," explained Father Zacchaeus.

Archimandrite Zacchaeus was born and educated in America. Despite being American himself, the dean says that Moscow and the St. Catherine Church is his real home. "If the Church decides to send me back to America, I will go, though it would be difficult for me. So I pray it doesn't happen to me and I can stay here in this parish more. You know, it's like my own family for me and I really make no difference between them." **P**





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Walk on the Wild Side



text and photos by Jill Thomas

After an ungodly predawn start and seven leg-numbing hours of climbing, we scrambled up to the Avachinsky volcanic crater to be greeted by a view of – nothing. A massive cloud had chosen that same hour to park itself there, leaving us with a whipping wind, barely enough visibility to see our own feet, and the overwhelming sulfurous stench of fumaroles. Who knew that the odor of rotten eggs could be at once so foul yet so tempting?

Yet, strangely, none of it mattered, for the journey to this point had been adventure enough. It was our last day in Kamchatka, home to 400,000 people and abundant wildlife. The Kamchatka Peninsula is as far eastern Russia as east can get, opening out to the Bering Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Its appeal is simple: unbridled wilderness. In the summer, the peninsula's 29 active volcanoes offer walkers and climbers otherworldly vistas, while daredevil heliskiers swoosh down their slopes in the winter. Rafting, fishing, dogsledding, hunting – this place has it all.

Brown bears have free rein of the lakes and forests. The best place to see them in all their savage glory is at Lake Kurile, a crater lake and spawning ground for salmon on the southern tip of the peninsula. The area is a state-protected nature sanctuary, only accessible by helicopter with visitor numbers tightly controlled.

In fact, there's only one place to stay: in a picturesque lake side wooden guesthouse surrounded by an electric fence.

There is an elevated platform about half a mile from the lodge, strategically placed to watch bears gorging themselves on hapless salmon from a safe distance. But we had a closer encounter in store. Local warden and guide Vasily Vasilevich, resplendent in his everyday outfit of faded combats, knee-high waders and rifle slung casually across his back, took us to the tundra further inland. And there they were: in groups of two or three, mothers with cubs, leisurely grazing on the abundant buffet of berries.

Meeting a bear close-up is disconcerting. Face-on, you see your childhood teddy's shiny black eyes and furry half-moon ears; he's sweet and almost cuddly. Then, as he slowly turns

his head, his elongated muzzle and ferocious set of teeth betray him as the bloodthirsty predator he really is, and you inadvertently shrink back. "They won't bother with us unless they're threatened," Vasily Vasilevich said. And they were staggeringly tolerant of our presence, shambling around with the quiet confidence of knowing we were guests on their turf.

On our return to the lodge, a fellow guest who had left some beer in the lake to cool was dismayed to discover that a mysterious furry and fanged visitor had developed a taste for his brew, leaving behind three mangled plastic bottles as thanks. The bear certainly had the right idea, as the capricious weather over the next couple of days left us grounded and we followed his guzzling example in the hotel bar back in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, the peninsula's tiny capital.



Like many small towns across Russia, Petropavlovsk is a strenuously unremarkable city dominated by Soviet-era concrete apartment blocks and a few basic cafes. But its squat, charmless architecture does serve as a reminder of the temptations that await. As Russia's only volcanic zone, with frequent earth tremors, the buildings have strict height restrictions. And a relatively accessible spot to see this tectonic activity up close is Mutnovsky, a 2,300-meter-high volcano, 70 kilometers south of the capital.

Still unable to fly, we were carted in a hefty six-wheel drive to base camp. The terrain was stark, its grey and silver rock

than make up for the stench. There are pockets of rock in every imaginable color — blue, crimson, yellow, purple and an impressively rancid green. To a city dweller, meeting raw nature at such close range is both humbling and exhilarating.

We returned to base camp through rapidly deteriorating weather to find that the toilet tent and one of the kitchen tents had fallen victim to the elements, with everything else flapping askew. Yet amidst the smell of damp clothing and miserable pelting rain, there was a sense of fulfillment that night. And, of course, numerous vodka toasts.



broken by huge black boulders and occasional scrub. Despite assurances from the crew that our tents were as sturdy as they came, the wind was getting more ferocious by the hour. "Either wind or rain is okay, but not both," said Oleg, our guide for this leg of the trip. Spoken too soon. A light drizzle started up that evening, picking up pace through the night.

Although weather conditions were only marginally better the next day, Oleg deemed it safe enough to climb Mutnovsky anyway. It starts getting whiffy close to the crater, but the pulsating fumaroles and bubbling mud pots more

Over the next few days, we managed to fit in a restorative soak in the thermal springs at Paratunka, a small village halfway back towards Petropavlovsk, a boat cruise of Avacha Bay back in the capital and a trip to the Valley of Geysers. The latter, despite suffering a devastating mudslide in 2007, still retains a serious wow factor with geysers of all different sizes and shapes whooshing and spurting away.

But we wanted one last adventure before we left, and decided that Avachinsky Volcano, one of the most active on the peninsula, would be it. Our guide, Sergei, collected us in his 20-year-old Subaru. Its

coat of grime belied its fully pimped-out inside, with customized dials, tubes snaking everywhere and a booming audiovisual system with a 5-inch screen, which, as we were rattling through the crepuscular volcanic terrain, treated us to the best-forgotten grooves of early Rick Astley.

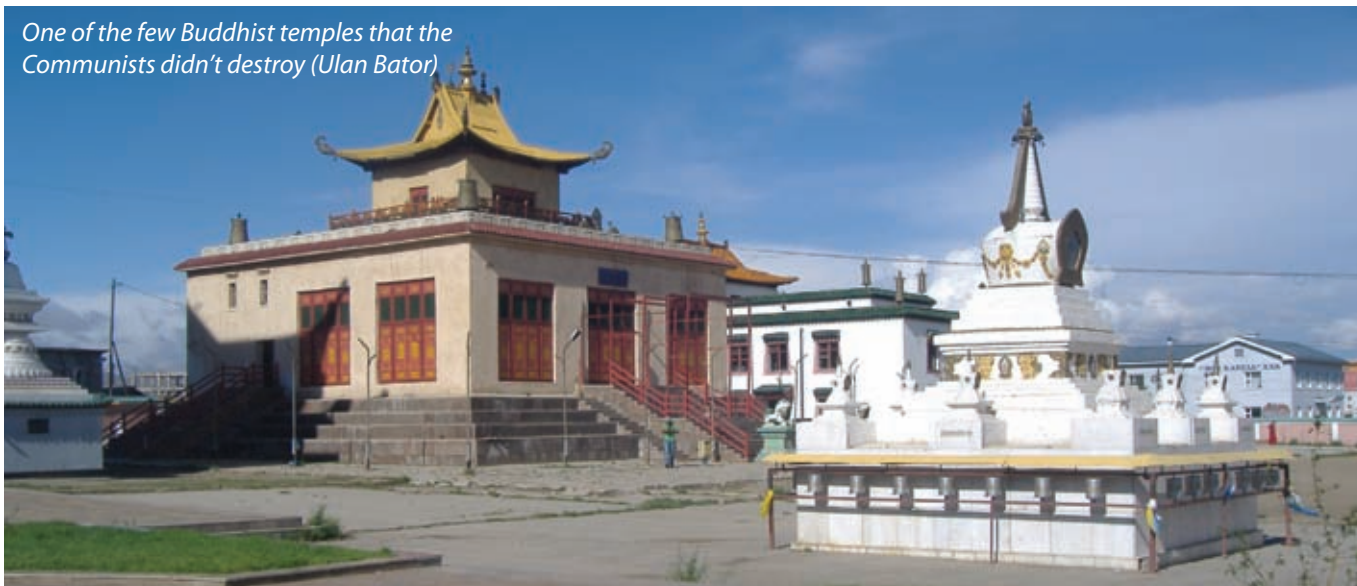
From base camp, Avachinsky is daunting to say the least — a flat-topped cone rising over 2,700 meters, reddish-black with a stripe of white snow. Although not technically difficult to climb, there are several slippery patches of snow and areas of unconsolidated rock that can make navigation tricky. Once you start, though, you don't want to turn back. Windburnt, with frozen ears and throbbing legs, I finally understood that trite saying about travel being the journey rather than the destination. Kamchatka isn't a place that you 'do'. It's just too untamed, too unpredictable. Rather, you take whatever is thrown your way and simply live the moment. And that's how we wound up on Avachinsky Volcano, without the panorama we'd hoped for but as far as I was concerned, on top of the world. **P**



Aeroflot flies daily from Sheremetyevo Airport to Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, while Transaero flies from Domodedovo Airport four times a week. Flights take approximately 8.5 hours. Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky is nine hours ahead of Russia. Independent travel is possible, but booking a tour with a reliable local agency is worth considering as having a set itinerary cuts down on costs and waiting time. Be warned, though, that due to the fickle weather, even in the height of summer, travel plans can and will change from day to day so you'll need to be flexible. Most tour agencies build one or two extra days into their itinerary to accommodate this. We used Kamchatka Lost World Tours (www.travelkamchatka.ru). If you've chosen not to go on a prearranged tour, you can pick up day and overnight trips once you're there. Exploring on your own without a local guide is foolhardy and not recommended — you could get mauled by a bear or barbecued by a volcano. There are several hotels to choose from in the capital, including the adequately pleasant Hotel Petropavlovsk (address: Pr. Karla Marxa 31; tel: (41522) 50374. Outside of Petropavlovsk, you're likely to be camping or staying in log cabins.

Kuritsa nie ptitsa,

One of the few Buddhist temples that the Communists didn't destroy (Ulan Bator)



Mongolia nie za granitsa

text and photos by Luc Jones

Kuritsa nie ptitsa, Mongolia nie za granitsa was a popular saying in Soviet times, referring to the fact that Mongolia may lie outside of the Soviet Union's borders, but there wasn't a great deal of difference from what lay inside. In fact, had it not been for the dogged resistance of the pro-Stalin, yet Mongolian nationalist General Choibalsan shortly after the Second World War, the Soviet Union could easily have acquired a 16th republic. Closed to much of the world for the majority of the 20th century, Mongolia's doors are now open to tourists of all descriptions.

Arriving in Mongolia isn't so much as visiting a different country, but rather a different century. Sure, the capital Ulan Bator, built with considerable help from its northern neighbor is relatively developed but the remainder of the country appears to be stuck in a nomadic time warp. Not that this seems to bother your average Mongolian, who contentedly goes about his everyday business in the same way as his ancestors have for generations, yet after the fall of communism foreign consultants immediately stepped in and declared the coun-

try one of the world's poorest. In GDP terms they might be right, but this is no Calcutta.

Ulan Bator, which means Red Hero in Mongolian, has a Soviet/Central Asian feel to it, welcoming yet rough around the edges – commercially developing but at the same time not being able to decide whether it should stick to the cultural traditions of centuries gone by or make the complete leap into the modern world. UB, as expatriate residents and cool, English-speaking locals refer to it, is often quoted in pub quizzes as being the world's coldest capital and having more bars per capita than anywhere else on the planet. Yet given that temperatures can drop to -30C in winter months for weeks on end, I'll personally give the beer gardens a miss!

Too many tourists arriving into Mongolia by air are so keen to hit the steppes that they overlook UB altogether which is a shame – there's plenty to occupy almost all tastes for a couple of days, despite the Communists' best efforts to destroy all traces of the underlying Buddhist culture. But you'll only see the real Mongolia once you leave UB's concrete jungle and get out into the open.



Ancient Mongolian statue, Ulan Bator



Mongolian Soviet war memorial, just outside Ulan Bator

Three times the size of France with a population of under 2 million, stating that Mongolia is sparse is a bit like saying that China is populous. You can drive for hours through the countryside without seeing any sign of human activity, until somewhere in the distance you spot a *ger* or two, a white blob on the horizon. Around half of all Mongolians live in gers, their term for a yurt – the main difference being that the Kazakh/Kyrgyz variety of a yurt tends to be a much more temporary (i.e. summer) dwelling, whereas out here, a ger is a home.

Half a day's drive southwest from the centrally located UB is the ancient capital of Kharkhorin, built back in the days when Genghis Khan ran a kingdom that at its peak was larger than the entire British Empire. Nothing remains of it, but the nearby Erdene Zuu monastery – Mongolia's oldest – has been rebuilt

and whilst it may not rival Lhasa, it is a welcome break from the nothingness of the steppe. Another of Mongolia's boasts is that you can travel from one end of the country to the other without ever seeing a fence!

Another worthwhile visit is to the Khustain Nuruu National Park which proudly displays the only wild horses in the world, the Takhi, or Przewalski's horse, named after the Polish soldier in the Russian army who discovered them back in the 1880s. It's a bit of a trek, again into the middle of nowhere, (Mongolians aren't big on signposts) but impressive to see these animals in their natural habitat, although we were warned not to get too close – after all, they are wild!

Overnight accommodation is in a ger camp (hotels on the steppe? –

dream on!) which despite being built for tourists are definitely a step up from a *kommunalka*. To 'do' Mongolia properly you need several months, not a pitiful few days, although do expect to bump into numerous alternative types from your homeland who have come to weave carpets and try to blend in and become Mongolian. But fortunately there's no shortage of space to create your own itinerary and do your own thing – make Mongolia whatever you want it to be for you and be ready for something you won't experience anywhere else. **P**



Genghis Khan statue, on Suukhbaatar Square, in central Ulan Bator



The author at Eerdene Zuu's main temple (near Khorkharim, the capital under Ghengis Khan)

Getting there: Aeroflot flies 3 times a week from Moscow to Ulan Bator, leaving in the evening and arriving early the following morning. Apparently MIAT also covers this route twice a week, and then on to Berlin, although the Mongolian state airline hasn't been nicknamed 'Maybe I Arrive Today' for nothing – although I can't speak from experience. Both airlines also fly from Irkutsk to Ulan Bator in case you're interested. If you don't trust these two carriers with their aging fleet then book yourself on the Trans-Mongolian train; it's a mere five days from Moscow to Ulan Bator, but the scenery is great, and you can then carry on to Beijing.

Getting in: Everyone needs a visa, but they can now be obtained with a minimum of fuss. A letter from any accredited tour agency will do, (I booked mine through Skyland Tour – www.mongolievoyage.com and they were extremely efficient with organizing everything). I got my visa in a day from the Mongolian Embassy near metro station Smolenskaya and it cost me \$25. Call them on +7 495 290 67 92 – Borisoglebsky Pereulok 11.

Language: Mongolian – the official language – is written in Cyrillic (with three additional letters) so if you know Russian you can at least read it but that doesn't mean you'll actually understand anything. However, in Ulan Bator many young people, thanks to a plethora of NGOs, missionary groups and travelers, can speak English. Some of the older generation (i.e. taxi drivers & airport staff) know Russian. Once outside the city boundaries you can either learn the local lingo or point & smile.

In The Russian North

text and photos by
John Harrison

The Russian North has always held an attraction for those who harbor a desire to get away from it all, and discover the Real Russia. This was not the first time I had travelled within a few hundred kilometers of the Arctic Circle. Twenty two years ago I hitchhiked, illegally at the time, to the Solovetsky Islands whose terrible 20th century history and religious resilience encouraged me to make a pilgrimage there; sleeping in trains, railway stations, even barges on the way. This time, on my second journey to the Russian north, my status was different – I was now a tourist, and glad to be able to sleep in proper beds. My destination was some 400 kilometers to the south east of those islands, to a little-known area in the southwest of the Arkhangelsk region, to a place little known to the outside world: Kargopolye. This is an area of 10,000 square kilometers surrounding the small town of Kargopol, not far from Lake Lacha, where the Onega River commences its 420-kilometer journey to the sea.

Kargopol, which has a population of only 10,000, is reached by overnight train from Moscow to Nyandoma, which means 'rich land' in Finnish-Gorsky, then a 90-kilometer drive west to Kargopol. AST travel organised my trip and provided my guide; Radik Adnobaev, who met me in Nyandoma. Although already well into April, snow was piled up over a meter high along the sides of the road. After a heavy overnight snowfall on the night before our journey, even the rugged, yet bumpy road handling abilities of Radik's new Patriot (UAZ) vehicle were tested. Unlike the Moscow region,

there were no habitations every few kilometers, just endless flat-lying forests stretching from the side of the road to the horizon.

Radik, who like all good guides was extremely informative without seeming to try, explained that many of the older, smaller villages were abandoned after the collapse of Soviet agriculture. For locals in Kargopolye, indeed in the whole of Russia's North, today's crisis has to be seen in the context of that total crisis which destroyed the people's livelihood in the 1980s. "We thought that it would recover, but it kept on falling throughout the 1990s and here we are still waiting for things to pick up again," said Radik, as we drove by countless hectares of young pine trees growing in previously cultivated fields. "You say that the crisis is bad: look, the fields are being returned to nature." I was not sure that the locals share his optimism.

On arriving in Kargopol, I was taken directly to my home-stay location, a charming cottage overlooking the Onega River. The housekeeper, Margarita Lyzachova was ready to welcome me with tea and buns. Walking around near Margarita's house, I bumped into Mikhail, an Old Believer who advised me to come and live in Kargopol and "unload from all the rubbish that modern society presents," such as in the Internet, which he described as being: "complete garbage and the devil's work." With this, and other thought-provoking statements that I shall remember as I spend half my normal working day on the net, I set off on a tour around Kargopol accompanied by Valery Sivtsov, a retired, English-speaking Kargopol secondary school headmaster. Valery explained



Church of Ionna Zlatousta, nr. Saumina village

Old Believer Mikhail



Pagan /Church Orthodox crosses at Poldeshova

that Kargopol's modern story is one of isolation. The nearest railway station is at Nyandoma, and the nearest north-south federal highway is a few hundred kilometers away. Local Old Believer merchants protested against the progress of what they saw as the satanic railway, and the line was diverted away from their town. As a result, Nyandoma developed quickly, and Kargopol stagnated. Kargopol has an oldy-worldy feeling about it. The majority of the buildings are wood, still inhabited and are thus in fairly good condition. This is a town trapped in the past, a working museum. As normal for Russian nineteenth century towns, there is as yet no running water, sewage or mains gas supply in the majority of Kargopol homes.

As we strolled around the center, studied with sixteenth and seventeenth century churches, each one of them steeped in history, Valery summarized the history of the town. "Kargopol was founded in 1146 by Novgorodian prince Richeslav who was sent to fight 'strange local people with large eyes' who attacked Novgorodian caravans on their way to the White Sea. Historians say that Slavs settled in the area in the 9th century. This makes Kargopol, which in Old Russian is derived from two words: Kargo meaning crows and pol meaning field, one of the earliest Russian towns." A flock of crows passed overhead as if to endorse Valery's words, and we both chuckled. "Ivan the Terrible gave Kargopol a monopoly for trading in salt from the White Sea," Valery continued. "Merchants from Vologda, Yaroslavl and Novgorod came to Kargopol to trade. In 1585, the British ambassador to Russia Giles Fletcher listed the town as the 16th wealthiest in Russia. After Russian and foreign ships started using Arkhangelsk as a trading post, this wealth gradually declined.

During the Soviet regime, Kargopol attained a different kind of celebrity: as a transit camp for tens of thousands of prisoners on their way to the many prison camps in the Arkhangelsk area. In 1939-40 there was a large camp in the town itself.

Since then the town has benefited; like all of Russia, from increased federal budgets, however the town is too remote to attract cash spenders from St. Petersburg or other rich cities in the north and no new money has been invested here into industry. The only employment now, Valery lamented, is lumberjacking, where



Wooden houses abound in Kargopol



Banya 'po chernomy' in Oshevensk

a man can earn 15,000 rubles a month. Even this though is under threat as the present crisis undermines demand for furniture and new wooden houses. The town has become, in Valery's bitter humor: "a place for pioneers [a Soviet youth organization] and pensioners," like many others in north Russia. The town has huge tourist potential, precious little of which has been realized.

The town is very beautiful, if not rather sad. Now 11 stone churches and one bell tower adorn Kargopol, down from 26 churches in the town's 16th and 17th century heyday. The churches are decorated with localized Kargopol stone work.

Later that day I was whisked off by Radik to visit a private museum/clay dolls pottery workshop run by the Shevelev brothers, who are both skilled potters and artists. Their small museum; really a private house was cold, and I was about to think of an excuse to leave when I looked at the finished



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products. There were a few traditional Russian dolls of the highly-colored horses-drawn sleigh variety, but the majority were pagan. Naked women 'Bereginya' (protector) with protruding breasts, and the pagan image of the sun on their navels. Here were various people with animal heads, horses, odd looking samovars with what looked like bears' or wolves' heads erupting from the sides. I asked why they were so keen on animals. Valentin Shevelev replied that he didn't really know; this was just what they have always done. I asked if this was to do with Russia's pagan past, again a blank look and no clear reply.

The next day, Radik picked me up early, but not before Margarita Lyzachova had managed to serve me a delicious breakfast of porridge and pancakes. We travelled north to take in a collection of picturesque villages, each unique in its own way. Some of the churches and main buildings in each village had been partially restored, most had not. It is of course deeply disturbing that so many of Russia's treasures lie in a state of abandoned ruin, 300 year-old wooden churches lie guarded by one rusting lock, if anything. There is nothing left to steal inside most of them. At least the visitor, like me, feels a connection with the past. Here the majority of bridges, one of which is 117 meters long, are still constructed out of wood, not because they have been restored, but because nobody has restored them. Here you enter history where the past is still the present.

On the religious front, Kargopolians it seems are not quite sure about the difference between paganism and Christianity. This was confirmed by many comments made by people I was fortunate enough to meet. One of the astounding churches I visited was the Pokrova Vlativskaya church built during the reign of Catherine the Great who forbade the construction of such churches with 'shakhtrovi' roofs, which were used for Old Believer churches. This church was built at the exact time when Old Believers were being excommunicated and exiled. Lyubov Vikulova, the present-day guardian of the church, mentioned that up here, edicts from St. Petersburg were not heeded as fast as they could have been. In reference to these edicts, Lyubov Vikulova mentioned: "Da Boga Bisoko, Da Tsarya daleko," which translates roughly as: "God is in the heavens, the Tsar is far away."

I was astounded to see that in the nave of the church the two stout columns sup-



Views of the center of Kargopol

porting the roof were decorated in flowers and symbols befitting a pagan temple, not saints and characters from the bible as one would expect. Lyubov Vikulova mentioned that "Christianity and paganism are all mixed up in the north."

Radik showed me around various pagan sites between the villages we visited. One such site was at the entrance to a large wooded area, where three wooden crosses were placed, bedecked with garments. "This is typical symbiosis of Christianity and paganism," Radik explained. "When people used to enter the forest in pre-Christian times, they used to offer a piece of clothing, such as a handkerchief and asked for happiness and health." People still consider that it is good for one's health to make offerings here, on the site of an old pagan 'kapelshi'. Offering a piece of clothing from that part of your body which is ill, was apparently particularly popular during Soviet times. Now there are Russian Orthodox church

crosses on this site, and images of Christ and the Virgin Mary adorned to them, which completes the symbiosis.

In one village, Oshevensk, traditional black banyas have been preserved, or rather still is use. These are small huts which you enter through a low door. Instead of a stove, there is an open hearth covered with stones, and no chimney attached to it. Smoke rises to the ceiling, which is covered with soot and finds its way out through the roof which may have a small pipe going through it which serves as a chimney. As a consequence the air, when heated to 70 degrees or more, is dry. Locals swear by this kind of banya. It's more natural, they say; no modern materials are used, and better for one's health because of a certain balance between the degree of humidity and temperature in the air. Radik suggested we try one out, I was not sure that this was a good idea, however it took my intrepid guide about two minutes to arrange for us to use one of these huts in the snow, using somebody's banya is common practice apparently here. Five minutes later I was roasting on a small bench praying. The experience was indeed unique, and quite different from the expensive banyas I am used to in the "spoilt Muscovite South."

On my last day in Kargopolye I visited the Kenozerskii National Park. This is a mere 139,663 square hectare area of protected pristine forest lakes set in idyllic hills, in many ways similar to parts of Finland. New dwellings cannot be built here by "outsiders" and locals can only build with special permission from the park authorities. What the park authorities build (the journalist in me found out) is, judging by various small hotels and businesses located in prime locations throughout the park, up to them. I was treated to a hair-raising cross-country trek by bobsleigh to an incredibly beautiful small wooden church – the church of Alexander Svirskiy, built in 1854; on the highest point in the southern part of the park. Of course the church was built on the spot of an old pagan worship site.

One of the best parts of an organized tour like this was the opportunity to meet locals. It would have been difficult for me, not being an extrovert to have been able to have the conversations I had, and do and see what I managed to do in the space of a few days. I recommend the Russian North to anybody wanting to discover a bit of the "real" Russia, if you are prepared for a few surprises. **P**

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Bob Was Here

text by Charles W. Borden

He walked directly by our table, unmistakable, and joined a group of about 15 that had been trickling in over the previous hour. It was Robert De Niro, in town for the opening of the Moscow branch of the legendary Nobu, the 24th in the chain, on the fourth floor at the northeast corner of Bolshaya Dmitrovka and Stolesnikov Pereulok. They sat in the center of the outside curve of the large boomerang-shaped dining area with ample windows that paint a panorama facing south towards the Kremlin and up and down Bolshaya Dmitrovka.

The story goes that sometime after Matsuhisa Nobu opened his first LA restaurant in Beverly Hills in 1989, De Niro came in and asked Nobu to open in New York. Nobu refused saying that he was still getting his Los Angeles place set up – “come back in a few years and then let’s talk,” he said. It looks like De Niro came back because there are now three Nobu restaurants in partnership with him in the Big Apple, the first in 1994.

This Nobu was brought to Moscow by Aras Agalarov, the developer of Crocus City and the luxurious Agalarov Estates. In addition to De Niro, another Nobu New York partner came to Moscow, producer Meir Teper as well as De Niro’s son Raphael. And Matsuhisa himself was in town to supervise the kitchen and to prepare the signature Nobu dishes. The restaurant staff is heavy on Nobu veterans from all over the world.

The menu of the Moscow Nobu has a selection of the signature dishes and we tried many. Our first was a bowl of edam-



ame (400 rubles), the steamed soy bean pods with salt crystals that traditionally accompany beer, and a plate of Hot Miso Chips, Tuna and Scallop (780 rubles), five-ruble sized, tasty thin chips with a small section of topping that last just a pleasant second in the mouth. The plate of two servings disappeared almost as quickly. Next out was a plate of Yellowtail Sashimi with Jalapeno (630 rubles), thin sliced and fresher than any I have tried in Moscow, laid on a Yuzu Sauce and topped with a disk of jalapeno, just enough to add a little brightness. A large platter of “New Style” Sashimi of salmon (720 rubles) and scallops (700 rubles) followed, rectangular and finely sliced, topped with sesame and olive oil and yuzu – also very fresh.

For me the two brightest stars of a night of stars followed – first, a Lobster





Salad with Spicy Lemon Dressing (1110 rubles), a plate stacked high with greens and sizeable chunks of lobster claw and large fresh and fleshy shitake mushrooms. It has been a long time since I had such delicious lobster and a first for shitake like these. Then came several large, thick and tender chunks of Black Cod with Miso (1600 rubles), with a Sweet Miso Glaze, top-grilled light brown. We ended with a huge sushi serving: A California Roll (480 rubles), a Shrimp Tempura Roll (370 rubles) and Salmon Sushi (170 rubles) among many others.

The wine prices and selection were surprising. With seven bottles of white ranging from 1,400 rubles and eight reds from 1,700 rubles and topping out at 4,500 rubles virtually all are less than the lowest price at many Novikov



restaurants. There were some very nice selections: Mt. Nelson Sauvignon Blanc (New Zealand) at 1,900 rubles and St. Francis Old Vine Zinfandel (Sonoma) at 3,600 rubles. By the glass, most wines are 500 rubles. A Kirin Ichiban beer is listed at 300 rubles. Nobu has a large list of house cocktails like the Matsuhisa Martini (750 rubles) or the Champagne 95 (950 rubles).

Born and apprenticed in Japan, Nobu got his first sushi bar in Peru where he began to develop his style. He then moved on to Argentina, back to Japan and then to Alaska before he opened up in Beverly Hills. Nobu and his restaurants regularly appear in Best of City lists.

Nobu brings an important lesson to Russia about cooking – a common complaint at even some of the top restaurants in Moscow is that they lack any heart – even though the form and presentation are great, the food lacks the fullness that a dedicated chef and staff that cares about the food bring to the table. Nobu states, "Food is imbued with the feelings and personality of the cook. Even if you were to follow my instructions faithfully, using precise amounts of identical ingredients, I am quite sure that you would never be able to perfectly recreate the same flavors and textures that I make. For I always put something special in my food – my heart."

It was a thrill to see De Niro in person, but it won't take him to get me to go back, though I would be glad to have an invitation... **P**



Four Years of Wine Reports

text by Charles W. Borden,
photos by Maria Savelieva

After our recent visit to Paris, Knights of the Vine Russia (KOV) Commandeur Suprême John Ortega suggested we try French wines for our next wine tasting and then asked, "what about a first growth tasting – what are the five chateaux?" And then he named them, and within a day he called me from the wine shop to say he had purchased one bottle from each. What better way to celebrate the four years of *Passport* wine reviews but with what should have been some of the best wines from Moscow's overpriced shelves?

The first record of vineyards in Bordeaux dates back to 71 AD, though they were probably planted a few years earlier to provide wine for Roman soldiers. By the middle of the nineteenth century wine had become an important industry for France so Napoleon III asked for a system of classification for Bordeaux wines for the 1855 Exposition Universelle de Paris. Wines were ranked from first- to fifth-growth and only four chateaux made first growth, (though Château Mouton-Rothschild was raised from second to first in 1973).

Within a few years of the classification, from 1875 to 1892, virtually all of Bordeaux vineyards were destroyed by Phylloxera, a root-feeding pest. Fortunately the vineyards were restored with native vines grafted onto Phylloxera-resistant American rootstock. Bordeaux continues to be the best known of the world's wine regions, and it is now the world's second largest.

Visit a Moscow wine shop and it looks like Bordeaux wines represent ten per-



cent or more of the wines on the shelves. Russian appreciation of French culture and wine dates back to Peter the Great's trip to Paris in 1717 so when imported wines started to appear in Moscow shops in the 1990s, Bordeaux became the leader. Only recently have New World wines begun to take away market share.

Bordeaux red wines, also called claret, are primarily blends of Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, the ratio depending upon the terroir of the vineyards in one of the region's fifty-seven appellations (geographical areas with restrictive rules on types of grapes, alcohol level, and maximum grape yield). Ninety percent of Bordeaux wines are red; the whites are mostly made from Sauvignon Blanc grapes.

Bordeaux labels can be complicated to decipher. A basic Bordeaux wine made from grapes from anywhere in the region is simply labeled Red Bordeaux. A somewhat more restrictive label, Bordeaux Supérieur, should be of better quality. Wines that carry the name of particular areas or villages such as Graves, Médoc or Saint-Emilion have tighter production and quality requirements.

The first growth wines

This should have been a dream wine tasting, a once-in-a-lifetime treat for most wine lovers, but we were to learn some hard lessons about the Russian wine market.

The lineup for the night had Wine Spectator and Robert Parker scores of



Bruce Gardner

no less than 90 and an average of just over 93. The total bill after a discount came to just over 120,000 rubles or an average of \$600 per bottle.

The venue had to be French so we went back to a Moscow favorite, Carre Blanc. Chef Eric Le Provos prepared a wonderful wine matching menu:
Duck breast marinated in soft spices, pine nut grilled courgettes; Escalope of foie gras with pear and mango, rhubarb sauce; Roasted filet of doe, pears and figs, venison sauce; An assortment of cheeses; Hot chocolate fritters with passion fruit sorbet.

We arrived early to make sure the wines were decanted and had time to settle and breath before serving. KOVR Scott Perrelli, a professional wine buyer, inspected the setup including the glasses to ensure that they were appropriate



Elena Serebryakova

Scott Perrelli



to the wine. While we waited to start we refreshed ourselves with a 1991 red Dominus (Napanook Vineyard), a Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, and a white Gaja Gaia & Rey, a highly rated Italian Chardonnay. Both of these wines are highly rated and were excellent.

The room was quiet. The Carre Blanc sommelier carefully poured each of us a glass of the first wine, a 1999 Château Margaux, and we were well aware that each 75ml serving had an average cost of about \$60. By the time we tried the second wine, some concern had arisen. The wines were not corked – ruined by a bad cork – they were flat and lacked any distinction. The glowing adjectives of the Parker and Wine Spectator reviews, “tight and silky red, captivating aromas of currant, black licorice and spices, almost exotic fruit character on the finish,” or “seductive juice, gorgeous aromas of crushed berries” were just not applicable. By the time we finished all five, the Knights were one disappointed group. We consoled ourselves over a bottle of Hahn Cabernet Sauvignon (South Africa) off the Carre Blanc wine list that would have scored better with the KOVR than the first growths.

These Bordeaux were not too young or past their prime – based upon the reviews they should have been just right. We dismissed the idea that they might have been counterfeit, and finally concluded that transport and storage had to be the problem. Wine is a delicate substance, and some wines are known not to travel well. Wine should be transported between 13 and 18 degrees cen-

tigrade and the temperature should not fluctuate more than a few degrees. Humidity during transport should range from 50% to 80% and storage should be at about 70%. Excessive shaking and vibration should also be avoided. These poor high-strung first growth Bordeaux appear to have been sorely mistreated.

Since most of our readers probably will not, and probably should not (given the results of our tasting) buy a first-growth Bordeaux in Moscow, in a future issue we will provide a short list of the best-rated Bordeaux to assist with selection from the hundreds on the shelves. **P**



The Results	Wine Spectator	Parker	KOVR
Château Margaux, Margaux 1999	WS92	RP94	3.46
Château Haut-Brion, Pessac-Léognan 1999	WS91	RP93	3.34
Château Mouton-Rothschild, Pauillac 1999	WS90	RP93	3.06
Château Lafite Rothschild, Pauillac 2004	WS93	RP95	3.90
Château Latour, Pauillac 2004	WS95	RP95	3.54

Knights of the Vine Russia (KOVR)

John Ortega, Fashion Mart
Charles Borden, OnLine M&A
Shiraz Mamedov, SJS USA, Inc
Jean-Michel Brunie, Credit Suisse
Scott Perrelli, Metro
Bruce Gardner, PG Partners
Art Vartanian, Retail Solutions
Elena Serebryakova, Unicredit Bank
Julia Demidova, Legal Consultant

Ortega Easy Rating System

I love this wine! 5 pts.
I really like this wine! 4 pts.
This wine is good! 3 pts.
This wine is not that good! 2 pts.
I don't really care for this wine! 1 pt.

AMERICAN

AMERICAN BAR & GRILL

Hamburgers, steaks, bacon & eggs and more. Children's room on weekends. Open 24 hours.
2/1 1st Tverskaya-Yamskaya Ul., 250-9525.

M. Mayakovskaya
59 Ul. Zemlyanoi Val, 912-3621/3615.
M. Taganskaya

FLAT IRON BAR & ROADHOUSE

Located in the Courtyard Marriott. American-style pub with great cuisine and meat dishes.
7 Voznesensky Pereulok, 937-3077.
M. Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya

T.G.I. FRIDAY'S

American favorites in a cozy wood-paneled setting. Open noon-midnight.
18/2 Tverskaya Ul., 694-3921/2497.
M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya
1/2 Leninsky Prospekt, 238-3200.
M. Oktyabrskaya
33 Ul. Zemlyanoi Val (in Atrium Mall), 970-1187. See www.tgifridays.ru for additional locations.

STARLITE DINER

American '50s-style diner. Extensive menu with great breakfasts, cheeseburgers, milkshakes. Open 24 hours.
6 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 783-4037.
M. Universitet
16 Ul. Bolshaya Sadovaya, 650-0246.
M. Mayakovskaya
9a Ul. Korovy Val, 959-8919.
M. Oktyabrskaya

ASIAN

BELOYE SOLNTSE PUSTYNI

Named after White Desert Sun, one of the USSR's favorite films. An eclectic Asian menu that includes Azerbaijan and Uzbek cuisine. Open noon-midnight.
29 Ul. Plotnikova, 625-2596, 200-6836.
M. Kuznetsky Most, Teatralnaya

BLUE ELEPHANT

Thai cuisine with impeccable service. Try the Royal Thai Platter to sample a range of Thai specialties. Three-elephant rating means very spicy; no elephants means it's mild enough to serve the kids. Open noon-midnight.
31 Novinsky Bulvar, 580-7757.

M. Barrikadnaya

BUDDIES CAFE

M. Tverskaya/Pushkinskaya
12/8 Tverskaya Ul.
694-0229

Newly opened and advertising itself like crazy to the expat community. Menu can't decide if it's Szechuan, Thai, or Vietnamese and that's perfectly alright with us. We like to mix it up when we watch hockey games. A little kung pao chicken here, a little green curry there, something different for you and all your buddies.

INDUS

"Elitny" modern Indian restaurant with Chivas bar on the first floor. Open 24 hours.
15 Plotnikov Pereulok, (499) 252-7979.
M. Smolenskaya, Kropotkinskaya

TANDOOR

Upscale Indian. Open noon-midnight.
31 Tverskaya Ul., 699-8062, 699-8962.
M. Mayakovskaya

EUROPEAN

CAFE DES ARTISTES

Restaurant and bar offers fine European cuisine in a relaxed atmosphere, often with recent art on the walls of the upstairs room. Open 11:00-midnight.
5/6 Kamergersky Pereulok, 692-4042.
M. Teatralnaya

CAFE SWISS

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Located

on the 3rd floor of Swissotel Krasnye Holmy. European (including Swiss) cuisine and Russian dishes. Seafood buffet on Tuesdays, Russian buffet on Wednesdays. Open 7:00-22:30.
52/6 Kosmodamianskaya Nab., 787-9800/3202. **M.** Paveletskaya

CITY GRILL

Contemporary European cuisine, modern interior. Open noon-2:00.
2/30 Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya Ul., 699-0953.

M. Mayakovskaya

COFFEE MANIA

Good daytime business meeting venue next to Moscow Conservatory. Open 24 hours.
13 Ulitsa Bolshaya Nikitskaya
775-5188, 775-4310, www.coffeemania.ru

M. Arbatskaya, Biblioteka im. Lenina

CUTTY SARK

Restaurant made to look like a luxury yacht. Aquarium with live lobsters and crabs; oyster bar; over 40 varieties of fresh fish. Seasonal offerings from the chef. Extensive selection of wine, spirits, cigars. "Captain's Cabin" VIP room. Open 11:00-midnight.
12 Novinsky Bulvar, 691-3350, 691-3374.

M. Smolenskaya, Barrikadnaya

DANTES

Several dining halls. Menu consists of European and Soviet dishes. Dantes gives a master-class in style to Moscow's upmarket cocktail crowd. Open 24 hours.
13 Myasnitskaya Ul., Bldg. 1
Tel. 621-4688, **M.** Chistiye Prudy

GALEREYA

Trendy, lavish and expensive. The place to see and be seen. Open 24 hours.
27 Ul. Petrovka, 937-4544.

M. Pushkinskaya

KAI RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE

Contemporary French cuisine with an Asian touch. 2nd floor of Swissotel Krasnye Holmy.
52/6 Kosmodamianskaya Nab.
221-5358.

M. Paveletskaya

OBSERVATOIRE

Excellent – and expensive European cuisine, with attentive service in a relaxed atmosphere. Valet parking available. Free wi-fi. Open noon-midnight.

22 Bolshaya Yakimanka, Bldg. 3
643-3606, 797-4333, www.observatoire.ru

M. Oktyabrskaya, Polyanka

THE SAVOY

Located inside the hotel of the same name, the restaurant offers lunch and dinner. Its magnificent interior and gourmet menu make it equally suited to corporate events and candlelit dinners. Open noon-last guest.
3 Ul. Rozhdvizhenka, 620-8600.

M. Kuznetsky Most

SHOKOLAD

Pan-European menu plus a selection of Japanese dishes. Cozy decor and live music. Open 24 hours.
5 Strastnoi Bulvar, 787-8866.

M. Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya, Tverskaya

SIMPLE PLEASURES

The large dining room accommodates 80 people, while the cozy Fireplace Hall doubles as a showroom for photographers. As always, a DJ entertains from 22:00. Enjoy the simple pleasures of life! Open noon-06:00
22/1 Sretenka Ul., 607-1521.

M. Sukharevskaya

SKY LOUNGE

This sushi bar on the roof of the luxury

hotel offers its guests unparalleled views of the Kremlin Palace and Red Square. Top-notch sushi. Open noon-midnight.

32a Leninsky Prospekt (In the Russian Academy of Sciences building), 915-1042, 938-5775.

M. Leninsky Prospekt

VANILLE

Hip French and Japanese near Christ the Savior Cathedral. Open noon-midnight.

1 Ul. Ostozhenka, 202-3341.

M. Kropotkinskaya

VOGUE CAFE

European food, top clientele. Hip and elegant partnership with Vogue magazine. Modern, continental menu. Open Mon.-Thurs., 20:30-01:00, Fri., 20:30-02:00, Sat., noon-02:00, Sun., noon-01:00.
7/9 Ul. Kuznetsky Most, 623-1701.

M. Kuznetsky Most

YU CAFE

DJ cafe with inexpensive but good-quality food, drinks and house music. Open weekdays 10:00-midnight.
4 Pushechnaya Ul., 271-8865.

M. Kuznetsky Most

WOKSTUDIO CAFE

Pan-Asian cuisine served 24/7. Moscow's only Philippine restaurant.
10 2nd Tverskaya-Yamskaya, 234-1953.

M. Mayakovskaya

5 RINGS RESTAURANT

European and Russian cuisine with cozy atmosphere, elegant interior. Open noon-last guest.
27 Dolgorukovskaya, 250-2551.
M. Novoslobodskaya

ITALIAN

ADRIATICO

Mediterranean and Italian food of all kinds.

Open noon-midnight.
3 Blagoveshchensky Pereulok, Bldg. 1
650-7914, 771-1545.

M. Mayakovskaya, Tverskaya, Pushkinskaya

BENVENUTO

Great variety of Italian cuisine. Most items run around or below 300 rubles. Open noon-23:00.
6 Velozavodskaya Ul., 675-0033.
M. Avtozavodskaya, Dubrovka

CASTA DIVA

Andrey Dellos latest venture. Excellent food and pizza to die for, Italian executive chef and pizza chef.
26 Tverskoi Bulvar
651-8181.

M. Pushkinskaya

CHIANTI

The feeling in the small dining room is cozy rather than cramped with an open kitchen at one end of the room. The walls have beautiful custom murals depicting a Florence landscape, framed by windowsills with a base hewn from Italian marble. A large variety of pizza and a wide choice of Italian cuisine.
48 Leningradsky Prospekt,
612-5612.

M. Dinamo

CIPOLLINO

Coffee-and cream-colored stylish Italian eatery a stone's throw from Christ the Savior Cathedral. Three halls with numerous divans make for cozy dining in this upmarket restaurant. Open noon-6:00.
7 Soimonovsky Proyezd, Bldg. 1,
695-2936, 695-2950.

M. Kropotkinskaya

DA GIACOMO

An exact copy of Da Giacomo in New York and Milan. This spacious two-lev-

el restaurant is heavy with authentic Italian furniture and bric-a-brac. Open noon-23:00.

25/20 Spiridonovka Ul., 746-6964.

M. Barrikadnaya, www.litelife.ru

MARIO

Delightful elegance and style with best-quality Italian dishes. Open noon-last guest.
17 Ul. Klimashkina, 253-6505.

M. Barrikadnaya

ROBERTO

Cozy, classy Italian. Open 11:00-midnight.
20 Rozhdesventkiy Bulvar,
628-1944.

M. Kuznetsky Most

SEMIFREDDO

A little bit of everything. Large selection of wines and spirits, including grappa and cognac. Open noon-23:00.
2 Rossolimo Ul., (499) 766-4646.

M. Park Kultury

SPAGO

Stylish restaurant with a wide range of pastas. Live music. Open noon-23:00.
1 Bolshoi Zlatoustinsky Pereulok,
921-3797. **M.** Lubyanka

JAPANESE

ICHIBAN BOSHI

High-quality, affordable Japanese with cool ambience.

22 Krasnaya Presnya Ul., (499)255-0909.

M. Krasnopresnenskaya

105 Prospekt Vernadskogo, k.1

M. Yugo-Zapadnaya

50 Ul. Bolshaya Yakimanka NEW

LOCATION!

M. Polyanka

Open 11:00-midnight. www.ichiban.ru

SAPPORO

105-1 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 433-9151.

M. Yugo-Zapadnaya Modern Japanese with extensive sushi and sashimi menu.

Open noon-23:00.

14 Prospekt Mira, 207-0198.

M. Prospekt Mira

TSVETENIYE SAKURY

Completely new restaurant concept in Moscow based on the combination of traditional and contemporary Japanese cuisine. Ancient recipes are joined by recent innovations. Open noon-midnight.
7 Krasina Ul., Bldg. 1, 506-0033.

M. Mayakovskaya

MISATO RESTAURANT

Japanese cuisine, great choice of alcoholic drinks, Japanese and non-Japanese
Address: 47, Myasnitskaya st.
Ten./Tel.: 725 0 333 www.misato.ru

MEDITERRANEAN

PANORAMA

Located on the 23rd floor of the Golden Ring Hotel, Panorama's service and food are also elevated far above the rest of the city. The Mediterranean cuisine is served on Versace tableware, and the Versace glasses make any drink taste better. Open 18:00-midnight.
5 Smolenskaya Ul., 725-0100.

M. Smolenskaya

ARARAT

A little corner of Armenia right in the center of Moscow. Cozy atmosphere and spicy Armenian fare. All ingredients are delivered straight from Armenia, and the wine list abounds with the finest Armenian cognacs.

Open noon-midnight.
4 Neglinnaya Ul. (Ararat Park Hyatt),
783-1234.
M. Teatralnaya, Kuznetsky Most

RUSSIAN

CAFE PUSHKIN

A Moscow classic serving upmarket Russian cuisine in a lavish, 19th-century setting. Bustling ground-floor dining hall, more sophisticated (and pricier) experience upstairs. Reservation essential.
Open 24 hours.
26a Tverskoi Bulvar, 739-0033.
M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya

FAT MO

Spirit Of the movie "Once Upon A Time in America", live jazz and blues concerts and...delicious European dishes and great assortment of beer.
Open 11 am-midnight
19, Ul. Stundcheskaya
(499) 249 16 50
M. Stundcheskaya

GODUNOV

For real lovers of all things Russian, including traditional Russian dancing, flowing rivers of vodka and plates stacked with food. For those who find it thrilling to dine in the Tsar's chambers, which were established during the time of Boris Godunov.
Open noon-midnight.
5 Teatralnaya Ploshchad, Bldg. 1,
698-5609.
M. Teatralnaya

GRAND ALEXANDER

Named after poet Alexander Pushkin, this restaurant is valued for its refined European cuisine with a wide choice of French delicacies that delight Muscovites and foreigners alike. Visitors who seek anonymity can dine in one of the private rooms.
Open Mon.-Fri., 18:00-23:00.
26 Tverskaya Ul. (in Marriott Grand Hotel), 937-0000.
M. Tverskaya

NA MELNITSE

Uber-Russian eatery. Homemade cuisine - kvas, mors, vodka, pickles. The interior is in Russian style with plenty of wood. The food is far from cheap, but the portions are enormous: it's like being fed by an overzealous babushka.
Open noon-last guest.
7 Tverskoi Bulvar, 290-3737.
M. Pushkinskaya, Tverskaya, Chekhovskaya
24 Sadovo-Spasskaya Ul., 625-8890/8753.
M. Krasniye Vorota www.namelnitse.ru

SENO

This inexpensive Russian restaurant is a good option for the budget- or time-conscious. Excellent self-service buffet offers a wide range of salads and hot meals. Open 9:00-midnight.
6 Kamergersky Pereulok, Bldg. 1, 692-0452. **M.** Tverskaya

SUDAR

Authentic Russian dishes prepared from traditional recipes. Located in a 19th-century mansion, Open noon-last guest.
36a Kutuzovsky Prospekt, (499)249-6965.
M. Park Pobedy, Kutuzovskaya

TSDL

(Central House of Writers)
This opulent Russian restaurant is located in the building with the same name, lavish decor, and opulent

atmosphere. A memorable, top-notch meal in luxurious surroundings. Open noon-midnight. 50 Povarskaya Ul., 290-1589.
M. Barrikadnaya

1 RED SQUARE

The menu features lavish, centuries-old recipes. Expect cream-laden meat dishes with fruit-based sauces and live folk music. Open noon-midnight. 1 Krasnaya Ploshchad, 625-3600; 692-1196.
M. Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya

STEAK

EL GAUCHO

True Argentine menu. THE place for charcoal-grilled meats and fish. Impressive selection of over 120 Argentine and Chilean wines. Open 11:30-midnight. www.elgauchoru
4 Ul. Sadovaya-Triumfalnaya, 699-7974.
M. Mayakovskaya
6/13 Ul. Zatsesky Val, 953-2876.
M. Paveletskaya
3 Bolshoi Kozlovsky Pereulok, 623-1098.
M. Krasniye Vorota

GOODMAN

Moscow's premium steak house chain. Open noon-midnight. 775-9888., 23 Ul. Tverskaya.
M. Tverskaya, Puahkinskaya
See www.goodman.ru for additional locations.

GUILLY'S

The oldest steakhouse in Moscow. Steaks from Australian and U.S. beef. Multinational culinary hits. Extensive choice of wines. Located in the basement of an historic mansion and named after Moscow writer Gilyarovskiy, the interior revives the spirit of 19th-century Moscow.
6 Stoleshnikov Pereulok, 933-5521.
M. Okhotny Ryad

JU-JU

Meat restaurant with hunting-lodge decor. Open kitchen with wood-burning stove and charrill. Huge selection of meat and fish dishes. Open noon-last guest.
15 Smolensky Bulvar, 720-3851.
M. Smolenskaya

LOUISIANA STEAKHOUSE

Big selection of Australian and Argentinian beef steaks. Grilled fish. Wines from France, Italy, Spain, New Zealand. VIP "Sheriff room." 20% menu discount weekdays from 12:00 to 16:00.
Open 11:00-01:00.
30 Ulitsa Pyatnitskaya, Bldg. 4, 951-4244, 959-5506.
M. Tretyakovskaya, Novokuznetskaya

STEAKS

There's a successful formula to steak-houses, and Steaks follows it almost to the letter with a meat heavy menu of pork, chicken, lamb, sausage and seafood.
21 Verkhnyaya Radishevskaya Ul., 915-1042.
M. Taganskaya

TORRO GRILL

The focus here is the best mid-priced meat in Moscow. Wine Bar.
6 Prospekt Vernadskogo, 775-4503.
M. Universitet

FUSION

NAVARRO'S BAR & GRILL

From tapas to eclectic Peruvian-Mediterranean fusion, seafood to grilled meat, from popular Moscow chef Yuri

Navarro. Open 8:30-3:30.
23 Shmitovskiy Proezd, Bldg. 4,
(499)259-3791.
M. Ulitsa 1905 Goda

POLLY SAD

The selection of dishes fuses different cuisines, rather than just alternating between them.
41 1st Brestskaya Ul., Bld. 2, 250-2530.
M. Belorusskaya

BARS AND CLUBS

BOOZE PUB

English-style pub with real British beer and original cocktails.
Daily from 5 a.m. to noon - English breakfast for only 100 rubles. Weekdays from 12:00 to 17:00. Business lunch from 140 rubles and 35% menu discount. Sport matches on the big screen.
5 Potapovsky Pereulok, Bldg. 2, 621-4717.
M. Chistiye Prudy www.boozebub.ru

KARMA BAR

One of the most popular night-clubs in town. Eastern-inspired interior, hookahs, and pan-Asian cuisine. Latin American dancing Thursday-Saturday, 21:00-midnight. Every Saturday, the amazing Show Girls night. Every Sunday 12:00-6:00 - R'n'B and hip-hop party night.
3 Pushchennaya Ul., 624-5633.
M. Kuznetsky Most www.karma-bar.ru

KRYSHA MIRA

The club has a reputation of being a most closed place. Rich clubbers and beauties can do anything just to get in, so every Friday and Saturday they stand in line all night long asking face control men to let them in.
Face control
Open 23:00-6 am
2/3 Tarasa Shevchenko Embankment (495)203-6008, 203-6556 **M.** Kievskaya

B2 CLUB

4 bars, sushi bar, concert hall for 800. Reasonable prices. Open daily noon-06:00.
8 Bolshaya Sadovaya Ul., 650-9918.
M. Marksistskaya, Tretyakovskaya

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www.nightflight.ru
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Design for All Seasons

At the beginning of April IKEA put on an exhibition called: Design for All Seasons. The designers of the Swedish furniture brand came to the opening and explained to guests and journalists where they found their inspiration for every item.



IKEA holds this kind of special exhibition every three years. IKEA designers express all their courageous and sometimes crazy ideas in the things they produce. The items can show us much

more about design and creativeness than just usability and functionality. Can you imagine, say, a lamp that looks like a dandelion, or a chair bearing resemblance to a mushroom? Or how would

you, for example, relate to a cup that is much like a plate? The designers explained that these and other ideas were taken from original Swedish traditions and nature.

Russian Fashion Week

Opening on March 29th inside Moscow's World Trade Center, provocative and influential European designers previewed their Fall '09/Winter '10 collection at the 18th Annual Russian Fashion Week (RFW). Founder of RFW, Slava Zaitsev opened and closed the week with shows on the first and last day of the event. Zaitsev, internationally known as Red Dior for his Soviet infused styles, celebrated the 100th anniversary of Diaghilev's Seasons in Paris. Diaghilev, himself, won over Europe when he founded Ballet Russes in France at the beginning of the 20th century.

Take a walk around Moscow and it is easy to see why Russia is the world's lead-

ing fashion consumer. People love to dress up and with influences from the West, East, retro, Soviet and post-Soviet eras, urban and the great outdoors – the options are limitless. Given the variety of trends on the streets, it is no surprise that year after year, Russia's Fashion Week is the biggest fashion event in Eastern Europe.



Joining the Italians were Toni Francese and Maria Lafuente of Spain, as well as France's Jean-Charles De Castelbajac who made his RFW debut.

While it was nice to see Russia's Western European counterparts, the week's main focus was on Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian designers. Arngold, Tatiana Parfionova, Julia Delakian, Elena Sonproun, BIRYUKOV, Poustovit, Sergei Teplov, Chistova & Endourova, TEGIN were just a few of the 50 collections on display. Highlighting the opening day was Masha Kravitsova, who is regarded as the It Girl of Russian fashion. Her high end, men's and women's clothing line offers a Russian take on the sophisticated London look and is sure to be seen on the streets in the seasons to come.



The 2009 RFW continued its ongoing collaboration with Italy's Camera Nazionale Della Moda Italiana, a partnership, which began during Milan's fashion week in 2005. Each year, organizations send their up and coming fashion designers to showcase works at each other's respective events. This year, Leitimotiv, BeeQueen and A.Ve highlighted Italy's take on next season's styles.

British Business Club

The regular British Business Club's March meeting was held at the new 4-star Park Inn Sadu Hotel, located on Bolshaya Polyanka Ulitsa.

As always, this BBC provided the opportunity for business people, mostly British, but also American, Russians and Europeans to network. Guests of the meeting were welcomed by the energetic and devoted

don of the BBC, Don Scot. Hot topics of discussion were the current critical state of the Russian economy, the ups and downs of financial and real estate markets, potential projects, new appointments and the latest news of those leaving the country. The British Business Club (BBC) started life back in 1998. The main goal of the BBC is to be an open and non-restricting place to meet and talk. The whole idea is to allow a free and uninhibited forum for business people



to meet, talk and find common ground.

Gaudeamus Igitur



One of the best things about living in Russia is that every so often you discover something new, quite incredible and unique. The Academic Choir of Moscow State University is such a phenomenon. On March 26 of the choir held a concert, called Gaudeamus Igi-

tur (Let Us Rejoice) in the Kamerny Zal of the Moscow Dom Muziki.

The choir that performed in March was made up of 69 choristers; 38 female and 31 male. Most of the singers are drawn from the current stock of students at Moscow University. There are also some postgraduates, professors, alumni and visiting professional performers. The choir is the oldest amateur choir in Russia and celebrated its 230th anniversary in 2005. The choir has participated in international competitions, such as in Riva del Garda in Italy in 1998, and the Choral Festival in London in 2001.

The choir is conducted by Dr. Mirza Askerov, who has been described as 'energetic and temperamental'; certainly his

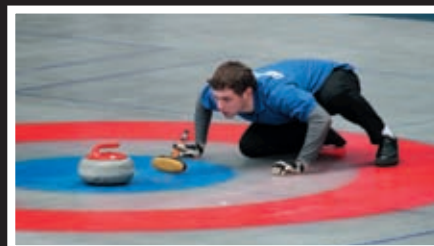
work over the past decade as the choir's artistic director has elevated the ensemble into an international phenomenon.

The Gaudeamus Igitur repertoire consisted of 33 items, during most of which the choir sang heart-rendering religious and traditional cappella music. The choir impressed the audience with the sheer variety of choral music which it was able to produce; from: Oh Shenandoah, to the Polish: Piosenka jest dobra na wszystko, to the sorrowful Russian, V echerny Zvon, to a resounding Kalinka."

The MGU choir is definitely well worth catching. A schedule of their performances can be found on: <http://choir.msu.ru/>

Curling Helps Disabled Children

The Non-professional Curling Cup in aid of disabled children took place in Moscow on April 4 at the Moskvich Ice Palace. The event was organized with the support of the Moscow City Department of Physical Culture and Sport, the Russia Curling Association, the Moscow Curling Association and the Moskvich higher sport school.



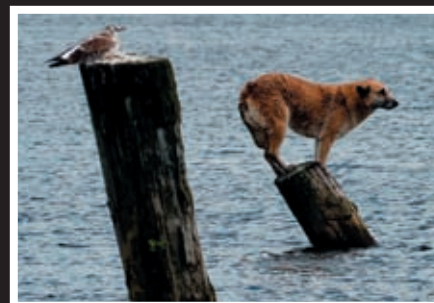
There were ten teams of both Russian and foreign companies participating, such as the International School of Moscow, Ital-

ian Design, ConocoPhillips, the British Embassy and some others. In order to become participants of the tournament companies were asked to charity donations to support programs for children with disabilities. "Our aim is to bring together all sectors of the community who care about disability issues, raise funds for rehabilitation programs to support disabled children and to generate some positive media coverage for all concerned, - said the organizers.

Moscow Warming to Global Warming

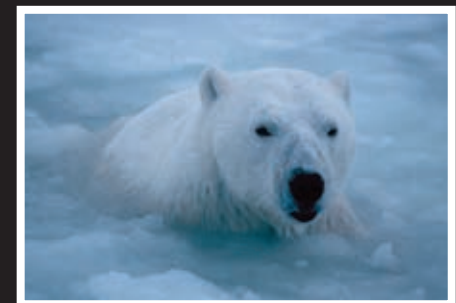
Global climate change is becoming more and more of a mainstream issue around the world. The photo exhibition held at Winzavod Contemporary Art Center from March 12 to April 2 was aimed to address and acknowledge this problem.

The exhibition, Warmer Still? - A look at the Effects of Global Climate Changes, featured professional photographers as well as winners of a January 2009 amateur photo competition, and was orga-



nized by the British Embassy in Moscow and National Geographic Russia.

Besides the exhibition, visitors were able to attend special events, such as

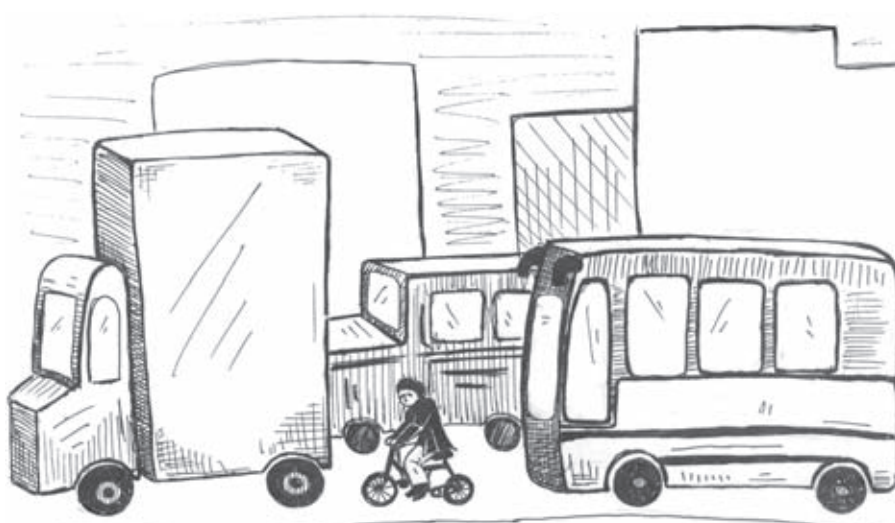


workshops by leading contemporary photographers - Andrey Rogozin, Riitta Ikonen and James Hills, and meet with famous Arctic explorer Sergei Pisarev and view video shows.



Two-Wheels vs. Traffic Jams

illustration: Dominica Harrison



text by Elena Krivovvaz

The numbers of cyclists and scooter-riders in Moscow has been increasing in recent years, however there are still far fewer than in most other European cities.

According to the official site of the Moscow city government, there are about three million cyclists in Moscow, however the capital of Russia boasts one cycle path of 2,5 kilometers in length near Luzhniki. That makes one inch of space for every Moscow cyclist. In comparison to Helsinki or Berlin, which each have about 350 kilometers each of cycle-paths, Moscow does not look exactly bike-friendly.

Things may be changing. Yuri Luzhkov announced recently during a press-conference that new routes for cyclists

will appear this year in the parks of Biryulevo, Tsaritsyno and in some other Moscow areas. This appears to be in response to the call for respect for cyclists from the growing number of people taking to two-wheels. The clogging up of Moscow roads is costing about three billion dollars a year according to a recent government report. Many city routes can now be cycled faster than driven by car, however there are four basic elements of Moscow life that remain firmly positioned against the cyclist: the weather, the juggernaut-heavy traffic in main roads outside the Garden Ring, the attitude of Russian drivers towards cyclists, the high theft rate of bicycles and scooters. If you wish to cycle this summer, and have somewhere safe to ride, without supplying spare parts for surgery, as some Russian doctors joke, the following information may be of some use to you:

Sokolniki Cycle-Market

M. Sokolniki

4, Sokolnicheskaya Ploshchad

One of the most popular bicycle markets in Moscow; not far from Sokolniki metro station. Here you can find a great variety of bicycles: roadsters, mountain-bikes, BMX and racing models not readily available elsewhere. There is also a permanent sale of last year's models with a 20-30% discount. The salesmen all seem to be cycling fanatics and most speak English. New models are quite expensive, but you might be able to ask for a 5 or 10 percent discount.

Velomir

53/12, Lyusinovskaya Ulitsa

M. Tuskaya, Dobrininskaya

www.velomir.ru

This is a large store with an impressive wide range of products. Here you can find bicycles produced by: Merida, Cannondale, Axo, SRAM, Ritchey, Sachs, RST, Alex, Suntour, Zoom, Formula, Race Race and other makes. There is a wide assortment of spare parts and accessories, but the sales personnel do not seem to be as knowledgeable as they perhaps could be about all the different products on sale. Prices are reasonable.

Velomarket CSKA

39, Leningradsky Prospekt

M. Dinamo

www.velomarket-cska.ru

This is a market to go to if you a cycling-pro. Volomarket has a large selection of mountain bikes and high road cycles such as those made by: Sintesi, Hawk, Wilier, Litech, Fondriest, Fatty, Merida, Giant. Special cycling shoes and clothing can also be bought here. The service is fast and friendly. Prices are high. The market has its own special service and repair center.

Velotrek

10, Krylatskaya Ulitsa

M. Molodezhnaya

www.velotour.ru

Velotrek is a large shop with three departments. There is a humorous monument of an old soviet bike, known as Pauk (Spider) outside. Here you can find a great collection of road and mountain bikes at reasonable prices. There is a second-hand department and not a bad selection of cycling clothes and accessories.



Scooters are OK. They are cheap, zippy and they need about the same amount of gas as a lawn mower.

Recommended places to buy mopeds:

Panavto – official Yamaha motorbikes and scooter distributors
MKAD, 50th km
www.panavto.ru

Active Motors – official Honda motorbike and scooter retailer
MKAD, 26th km, building 5/3
www.active-motors.ru

Bikeland – Suzuki bikes and scooter official dealer

They have three huge stores:

1) Mozhaiskoye Shosse, on the way out of Moscow from Kutuzovsky Prospekt

2) Near metro station Voikovskaya, 10, Kosmonavta Volkova Ulitsa

3) Near metro station Schelkovskaya, 100A, Schelkovskoye Shosse 666

www.bikeland.ru

Scooters Are Coming

Scooters are catching on in Moscow. There are two main sorts of scooters and they differ by their engine capacity. Small scooters are no more than 50cc, and maxi-scooters are more. You don't need a driving license to drive small scooters, and they have only two controls: gas and brake levers. Small scooters cost anything from \$500-\$1000. Maxi-scooters from \$3000-\$4000. All scooters are tanked with petrol, and small scooters use 2-3 liters per 100 kilometers, maxi-scooters 4-7.



scooters (Piaggio, Vespa, Aprilia) are speedy and elegant, but they're more expensive than Japanese scooters. Chinese scooters are cheaper, but sometimes fraught with mechanical troubles. Scooter owners recommend buying a well-known brand because it is easier to get a decent guarantee. Riding gear is essential: Helmet; \$100-\$200, protective suit; \$100-300\$ and gloves; \$50. **P**

What Model?

Japanese machines are very popular in Russia. It's not just because they are reliable, but because Japanese spare parts are readily available here. Italian



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Daniel Klein's Legal Line

Dear Daniel:

Can you briefly let me know how the tax code has changed this year?

Dear Taxpayer:

Corporate tax rates and deductibility

As I mentioned in my April column corporate profit taxes have dropped from 24% to 20% and can actually be lower in certain regions down to as low as 15.5%. I don't have the opportunity to go into too much detail, but there have been changes to the methods used to calculate: interest rates, board member expenses, and the deductibility of subsoil license payments. As a general matter there have been rather sweeping changes to the rules and methods on depreciation. For the most part these changes are generally business-friendly and should lead to a reduced tax burden especially for those companies that rely heavily on depreciation calculations and interest when calculating profits tax.

VAT

Several years prior to the crisis, in the days of ballooning government surpluses, there had been a lot of discussion within the Russian government concerning reducing VAT. However, as profit taxes and customs duties have both dropped there is not much hope of a drop in VAT at least in the next year or two. In terms of profit taxes not only have rates dropped but company profits have plummeted if they are even lucky enough to be in the black at all. Customs duties have suffered a double whammy due to lower consumption by businesses and con-

sumers as well as a devaluation which discourages imports. No surprise that in January 2009 profits taxes and customs duties represented 22% of tax income receipts as compared with 36% in January 2008. In the short term, this has led the government to become increasingly reliant on its VAT income.

One significant change in VAT law requires taxpayers to pay VAT monthly instead of quarterly. For those taxpayers that previously used VAT debts as a way to finance cyclical cash-flow shortages this may prove to be more difficult. It is also worth noting that as of this year, the tax office now needs to segregate the disputed amount of VAT from the non-disputed amount. In the past tax offices would just disallow on a wholesale level the full VAT amount even if only part of it was in dispute. Other changes relating to VAT on barter transactions and VAT on prepayments have been implemented as well.

In terms of getting VAT refunds it is well-known that the tax office has a policy not to do so even if such a decision flies directly in the face of the written law. In that regard, taxpayers are often left to no choice except to attack the tax office through the courts. While that may seem like a bad policy decision, these types of attacks are frequently successful and may have the impact of teaching the local tax inspector that the taxpayer will stand up for his or her legally-deserved refunds.

Daniel Klein is a partner at Hellevig, Klein & Usov. His column is intended as commentary and not as legal advice. **P**

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Some positive signs, but the overall picture remains bleak

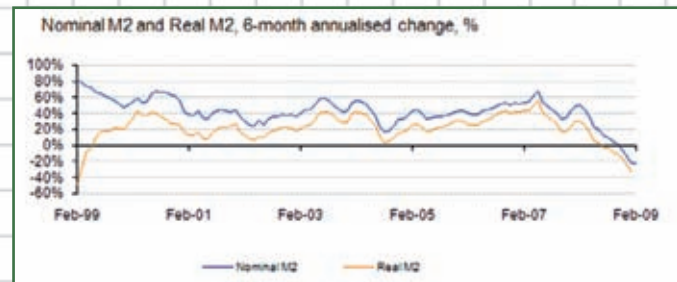
text by Matthew Partridge

There are several encouraging signs for the Russian economy. The seasonally-adjusted money supply (M2) increased in February, the first time it has grown since last August.

The stock market has increased, in both ruble and dollar terms, and the latest purchasing managers surveys for both manufacturing and services are at their strongest balance since October. Far from falling further, the ruble has held its ground in nominal terms against the dollar and euro basket, while inflation meant that the real effective exchange rate increased by 8.9% in March. Most importantly, the price of crude oil has broken through the psychologically important \$50 level.

The Russian government also seems to have recognized the need for a fiscal stimulus with the announced package tax cuts and increased spending expected to pump \$90bn into the Russian economy. The crackdown on tax havens and banking secrecy announced at the G-20 summit should also encourage citizens who had been holding money in countries like Switzerland to consider moving their money back into Russia. Russia's still substantial reserves of foreign exchange, and relatively low levels of external debt, mean that the chances of a repeat of 1998 are remote.

However, much more positive news is needed before a genuine recovery can be announced, especially since official estimates suggest that the Russian economy contracted at an annualized rate of 7% in the first quarter of this year. Although the increase in the nominal money supply is positive news, it still fell at a six-month annualized rate of 22.5%. This is far be-



low the 15% to 25% increase that is needed to be consistent with both the inflation target and trend growth. In any case the real money supply is still falling. This means that monetary stimulus is still desperately needed. Unfortunately officials at the Central Bank of Russia still seem paralyzed by inflationary fears, overlooking that producer price inflation has been falling. This means that in the short run there will be considerable resistance against the necessary cuts in interest rates.

The increase in the manufacturing and service sector PMIs hides the fact that the balances of both are still below 50, indicating that both sectors are still contracting. Industrial production figures also continue to take a hit, falling by 13.7% in March compared with a year ago. The upward momentum in oil prices is unlikely to be sustained. Indeed, given that the long-term real trend of oil prices is around \$50, and most of the world economy is still in recession, prices are more likely to fall back to the \$40-45 dollar level than increase beyond \$55.

So, what does this mean in terms of investment advice? I don't think that there have been enough signs of improvement to justify any changes to my pessimistic views on the Russian ruble. As noted above, I continue to believe that a devaluation and an easing of monetary policy is both necessary and inevitable. Therefore it would be prudent to minimize one's ruble holdings. However, when the government and monetary authorities start to loosen monetary policy, the stock market will become an extremely attractive investment. Given that sentiment may be improving already, particularly brave investors should consider immediate investment in the stock market.

The Evolution of Human Consciousness

On April 7 at ELE (English Language Evenings www.ele-moscow.net), Robert Stewart, a New Yorker teaching in Moscow at the Moscow Waldorf School gave a lecture entitled: The Evolution of Consciousness as Pictured in the History of Art. Robert's thesis is based on four points: i) that there is a revolution of consciousness represented in Art. ii) Art is a Western invention that did not exist before the 15th century, before which Art was a quintessential part of religion, not something separate, which can be sold or itemized. iii) The Renaissance is something that occurred in southern Italy only, and the term cannot be applied to artistic development throughout Europe at the time. iv) Using concepts and a philosophy connected with Rudolf Steiner, Stewart associated the Art of Paleolithic man with touch and vision. Egyptian and Greek Art, according to Stewart was predominantly concerned with movement and balance, Byzantine Art with smell and taste, Renaissance

Art with vision, warmth and hearing through Romanticism, language and concept through Modernism and Post-Modernism. In this final stage, Art is now concerned with ideas.

Perhaps less controversially, Stewart split the development of art into two main streams: Apollonian and Dionysian. Thus the accurate and geometric Art of Piero della Francesca, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, even the impressionists which Stewart links with 'the sunlight without', was contrasted with Dionysian 'soul light within' which Stewart links with movements such as Baroque, Romanticism, Expressionism and abstract expressionism.

The lecture was well attended, Stewart's fascinating thesis, illustrated with a slide show, can undoubtedly be challenged on many fronts, unfortunately there was little time left for discussion after the talk ended.



“Will I lose my security deposit if I leave the apartment before the end of the lease agreement?”

by Michael Barley,
General manager, Four Squares

Any tenant has the right to terminate a lease agreement; the civil code requires 3 months notice, but most lease agreements contain a clause requiring one-month's notice. If you have notified the landlord in writing, he has to return you the security deposit in full within a fixed period (in most contracts this is 10 banking days from the date of termination or expiry of the contract), provided that no damage has been done to the property. When you leave the property and hand back the keys it is important that you complete an Act of Transfer, which states that the property is in good order and the landlord has no claims for damage.

You should inspect the property, together with the landlord, before vacating it. If opinions differ you may want to hold on to the property keys until you can speak with a real estate professional. Russian law allows for normal wear and tear in an apartment and a real estate consultant can provide

valuable advice. At this stage, you may want to negotiate a settlement. If the landlord still refuses to sign the Act of Transfer, and keeps your security deposit, your only recourse is to take him to court. This takes time and money, and may not justify the effort. If the court rules in your favour it may still be difficult to enforce the courts ruling. This is your decision.

A new trend has emerged over the last twelve months, whereby landlords insist on inserting a penalty clause in the contract, stating that the tenant shall forfeit the security deposit if he/she terminates the lease early. Our advice is not to accept such a clause.

Finally, some contracts contain a clause that the tenant has the right to use the security deposit in lieu of the last month of rental payment. Although this goes against the very idea of a security deposit (the security deposit is to pay for damage made by the tenant after he/she has vacated the property), you should try to insert this into your lease agreement. It is the best protection possible. **P**

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The crisis?

by Fred Flintstone

\$↑↑
€↑↑

As Fred handed over the rubles to pay for Fred Jr.'s school, Fred asked Wilma if she thought the school would try to raise tuition. "Sure, everything costs more now – it's a crisis," was the answer. "What costs more Fred asks?" and stormed off after this further evidence of the curious logic relating to exchange rates that has accompanied the "krizis" in Bedrock and the fixation on foreign currencies. Even financial and business journalists have not been immune; statements appear in the media about increases or decreases prices without clarifying the currency. It now takes more rubles to buy US dollars and euros, but does that mean the cost of living is greater?

Certainly there is a crisis for anyone who has lost a job, and some of those who have kept jobs have had pay and benefit cuts. However, Fred doubts that any raises have been handed around to teachers, administrators or janitors at Fred Jr.'s school.

50%

With commercial rents down about 50% in US dollar terms, which translates to a 25% decline

in ruble terms, occupancy costs for the school should be less if anything. Fred's household bills for communal costs like electricity and gas have only slightly increased in ruble terms and it is unlikely the school would have significant increases particularly since oil prices have declined so steeply. Fuel costs are less – the price of 95 gasoline has fallen from 22.5 to 19.5 rubles per liter in the past few months, a 13% decline. From what Fred has seen he doubts that much imported produce is used for school lunches, and domestic food prices have been stable in recent months.

Fred had anticipated the crisis and kept receipts since his *Passport* article in late 2007 that compared grocery prices in the US with Bedrock. He was particularly interested in non-exotic staple foods, the kind that make up the menu of most Bedrock residents (and school lunches). Comparing prices between May-June 2008, October-November 2008, and March-April 2009, inflationary increases are indicated during the first period when commodity prices were rising but prices appear to have stabilized in the second. Mysteriously, some imported products like a 200-gram packet of Finnish Valio butter fell in price from about 65 rubles to 45 rubles and a bottle of French Barton & Guestier Chardonnay is the same 339 rubles that it was in late 2007.

Even some imported electronics prices have fallen in ruble terms. A 3G iPhone that cost 22,000 rubles before the crisis can be had now for about 18,000. There are big 20%-30% discounts on plasma TVs and other goods at M-Video and oth-

er electronics retailers. The lesson here is straight out of business school – a rational business prices goods according to the market and not based upon cost. During the last few years when money flowed like oil through Bedrock, importers, retailers and distributors were able to earn extremely high markups. Now they must determine whether to increase prices on imported goods and lose market share, or lower prices to maintain share. Some will decide to shift some production onshore – a boon for the country's economy.

Foreign travel has become more expensive, which means more vacations domestically, just as fewer Americans traveled to Europe when the dollar plunged against the euro in recent years. More domestic travel is another boost to the local economy.

The 1998 financial crisis seemed like the end of the world

20-30%

at the time. But the economy had been completely import dependent. The following period of investment in domestic production freed the country of some of this dependence, however the country later became hooked on high oil and resource prices. Fred thinks this new crisis will create a renewed interest in development of productive businesses, and in the future be seen as just another bump in the road to a modern economy. **P**

13%

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Soyuz
Sretenskaya
Swissotel Krasnye Holmy
Tiflis
Volga
Zavidovo
Zolotoye Koltso

Business Centers

American Center
Business Center Degtyarny
Business Center Mokhovaya
Dayev Plaza
Ducat Place 2

Dunaevsky 7
Gogolevsky 11
Iris Business Center
Japan House
Lotte Plaza
Meyerhold House
Morskoi Dom
Mosalarko Plaza
Mosbusiness Center
Moscow Business Center
Mosenka 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Novinsky Passage
Olympic Plaza
Romanov Dvor
Samsung Center
Sodexho

Embassies

Australia
Austria
Belgium
Brazil
Canada
China
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Delegation of EC
Egypt
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
Iceland
Indonesia
India
Israel
Italy
Japan
Kuwait
Luxembourg
Malaysia
Mauritius
Mexico
Netherlands
New Zealand
Norway
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
Slovenia
South Africa
South Korea
Spain
Sweden
Thailand
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United States

Medical Centers

American Clinic
American Dental Clinic
American Dental Center
American Medical Center
European Dental Center
European Medical Center

German Dental Center
International SOS
US Dental Care
MedinCentre

Others

American Chamber of Commerce
American Express
Anglo-American School
American Institute of Business and Economics
Astravel
Aviatransagentstvo
Baker Hughes
British International School
Cara & Co.
Citibank
Concept MR, ZAO
Dr. Loder's
DHL
English International School
Ernst & Young
Evans Property Services
Expat Salon
Foreign Ministry Press Center
General Electric
General Motors CIS
Gold's Gym
Halliburton International
Hinkson Christian Academy
Imperial Tailoring Co.
Indian Shop
Interpochta
Ital-Market
JAL
JCC
Jones Lang LaSalle
LG Electronics
Mega/IKEA
Moscow Voyage Bureau
Move One Relocations
NB Gallery
Park Place
Passport Office
PBN Company
Penny Lane Realty
Philips Russia
Pilates Yoga
Pokrovsky Hills
PriceWaterhouseCoopers
Procter & Gamble
Pulford
Reuters
Renaissance Capital
Respublika
Ruslingua
Russo-British Chamber of Commerce
St. Andrew's Anglican Church
Savant
Schwartzkopf & Henkel
Shishkin Gallery
Sport Line Club
Swiss International Airlines
TeamAllied
Tretiakov Gallery
Unilever
Uniastrum Bank
WimmBillDann