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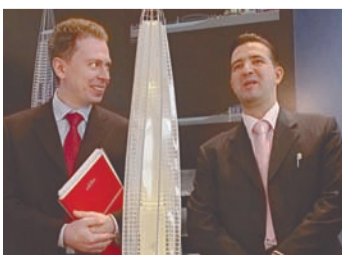
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## Seeing Red

Builders work on the demolition of the historic Literary House on the corner of Nevsky Prospekt and the Fontanka River last week. The director of the Hermitage, Mikhail Piotrovsky, and film director Alexander Sokurov have added their voices to a campaign to halt the demolition of the building. See story, page 3.

ALEXANDER BELENKY / SPT



### BUSINESS

## City to Lose Millions?

Gazprom Neft taxes may go the way of the tower. **Page 6**

### THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

## A Bumper 24-Page Issue!

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### ARTS & CULTURE

## Netrebko's Love Potion

Diva premieres opera at the Mariinsky. **Page 15**



## Boy's Death Poses Tough Questions for City Government

By Irina Titova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The death last week of a six-year-old boy, killed by falling ice, has caused wide resonance in St. Petersburg and provoked intense criticism of City Hall regarding the clearing of snow and ice, with some holding St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko herself responsible for the tragedy.

On the morning of Thursday, Jan. 13, Ivan Zavyalov was being accompanied to kindergarten by his grandmother when a chunk of ice fell on him from the roof of the apartment building at 28 Prospekt Stachek, in the south of the city. A passerby carried Zavyalov to a nearby pediatric clinic, but the boy was pronounced dead from head injuries soon after.

Amid widespread public outrage, Oksana Dmitriyeva, deputy leader of the A Just Russia party in the State Duma, has appealed to the St. Petersburg Prosecutor's Office with a request to open criminal proceedings against Matviyenko and Deputy Governor Alexei Sergeev for inaction and negligence.

Matviyenko in turn addressed elderly city residents and parents with children, asking them "not to go outside unless absolutely necessary" after heavy snowfalls and steep drops in temperature, amid a spate of reports of ice-related injuries sustained by children, including the hospitalization of a 10-year-old girl and 11-year-old boy, the latter in a serious condition.

On the city administration's web site, Matviyenko offered her condolences to Zavyalov's relatives and others who have suffered from severe weather conditions this winter, but said the city had not faced such heavy snow for the last 130 years.

"It's no exaggeration. In almost 130 years of meteorological records in our city we have never had as much snow



Flowers placed at the site on Prospekt Stachek where Ivan Zavyalov was killed on Jan. 13 by falling ice.

by the middle of January. Despite constant work to clear the roofs, abrupt drops in temperature during non-stop snowfall create the threat of rapidly forming ice crust," she said.

At the same time, Matviyenko noted that not only extreme weather conditions were to blame for the child's death, but also the inefficient work of the company responsible for clearing snow and ice from the roof.

According to the governor, an ongoing criminal investigation into the incident has revealed that the roof had been cleared ineffectively and that ice

built up on the roof immediately following a blizzard.

Vladimir Markin, official representative of the Russian Investigative Committee, said the investigation should "institute criminal proceedings against all people guilty of these crimes, including government officials responsible for the work of the city's communal services," according to Interfax.

Markin said the heads of management companies and other commercial structures contracted to carry out essential public work would also be held accountable for the incidents.

Meanwhile, City Hall's press service revealed that the head of Zhilkomservis No. 2, a private company responsible for the buildings in the area of the incident, has already faced a criminal case for faking residents' signatures. Young Guard, the youth wing of Matviyenko's party, United Russia, immediately opened another front of attack on Zhilkomservis No. 2, organizing a picket outside the company's offices on Friday.

Matviyenko also announced that the city authorities will ask the State Duma to introduce amendments to the law that regulate the relationship be-

tween regional authorities and management companies, giving governors the right to dismiss negligent firms.

"As governor, I should dismiss a company like this, but I have no authority to do so... Currently only the Prosecutor's Office can," she said.

But Boris Vishnevsky, a political analyst, said responsibility for the child's death should rest not only with the company that was in charge of clearing the roof in question, but also with those who contracted such a dubious company in the first place.

"In general, to save people from negligence of this kind, we need to have authorities that depend on the electoral will of the citizens, to make them worry about that will," Vishnevsky said.

The governor said the city had significantly increased the number of workers clearing roofs in the city, with six times as many employed in the city's central district alone. These workers are often themselves the victims of inadequate safety precautions. On Sunday, during a rapidly organized ice-clearing operation on roofs in the area where Zavyalov was killed, a migrant worker of Uzbek origin fell to his death. His name has not been released by the authorities.

Another Uzbek migrant worker was hospitalized after falling from a roof on Ulitsa Dekabristov on Monday.

In the Russian blogosphere, the reaction to Zavyalov's death has been one more of anger than of sorrow, with blame assigned to everyone from the management company to the entire capitalist system. Meanwhile, the last few days have seen a constant stream of mourners paying their respects at the site on Prospekt Stachek where Zavyalov was killed, creating a spontaneous memorial of flowers, toys and candles.

### THE WEEK IN REVIEW

## The Hazards of Living in St. Petersburg

By Irina Titova and Philip Parker  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Falling ice and its tragic consequences dominated the headlines in St. Petersburg this week (see article above), but a quick flick past the front pages revealed that it was only one in an almost apocalyptic cocktail of risks facing the city's residents.

While many residents scurry along the streets with a nervous eye on the rooftops for falling ice, snow, or migrant workers, it's as well to remember what lies beneath — in this case, the city's rickety hot water supply. In the past, burst pipes have caused whole sections of sidewalk to collapse, plunging pedestrians — sometimes fatally — into boiling subterranean pools. Last week, burst mains in several districts of the city caused damage to foundations, flooded basements with boiling water and hospitalized two men with severe burns.

That may be enough to keep people indoors — and indeed, St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko recommends that elderly people and young children stay at home unless absolutely necessary — but if not, they would be well advised to find space between a thick scarf and wooly hat for a mask. That's the advice of Russia's top public health official, Gennady Onishchenko, who announced Tuesday that the number of people infected with the type B flu virus has reached epidemic levels in 14 regions of Russia, including St. Petersburg. Onishchenko also recommended taking vitamins and avoiding contact with the infected.

Sadly, his advice came too late for more than 1,700 pigs in St. Petersburg

and the Leningrad Oblast, who were killed at the end of last week in a cull to prevent a spread in the outbreak of African swine fever in the village of Volodarsky to the southwest of the city. The cull covered Krasnoye Selo, Pushkin and the Petrodvorets districts, and was pronounced a success by the Veterinary Administration of St. Petersburg, according to Interfax reports. Despite initial reservations concerning the cull of uninfected animals, pig-owners began to actively assist government officials once compensation was announced to the tune of 75 rubles (\$2.50) per kilo of carcass. Less popular was the decision by City Hall to destroy all stray animals, including cats and dogs, in Volodarsky.

Meanwhile, Russia's Agriculture Ministry decided to introduce a ban on keeping pigs at all kinds of farms within St. Petersburg city limits, citing the spe-



Governor Valentina Matviyenko.

cial status of the city as a border, port and major transit hub, Interfax reported. The ASF virus has only been known outside Africa in the last sixty years, with the latest outbreak beginning in Georgia in 2007. Yury Andreyev, the city's top veterinary official, said the spread of the virus could be due to waste products.

Waste products surfaced elsewhere in the news after Governor Valentina Matviyenko announced that by 2012, the waters of the Neva River and the Gulf of Finland would be clean enough to swim in. Matviyenko made her announcement at the opening of a new stage of the city's main sewer last week. The local office of Greenpeace immediately issued a press release inviting the governor to lead by example and bathe publicly in the river next year.

According to the charity, either Matviyenko does not have full information about the state of the city's water supply, or is misleading the city's residents intentionally. In a warning to citizens, the press release goes on to explode a series of myths about the effectiveness of water treatment in the city.

Among Greenpeace's concerns are the fact that St. Petersburg's municipal water company, Vodokanal, is not responsible for all waste water dumped into local rivers, with private enterprises accounting for around 20 percent of official waste, as well as ongoing illegal dumping. The charity also calls into question the ability of the city's purification facilities to filter the numerous toxic substances produced by industry in the city and highlighted the lack of corporate responsibility, saying local companies were



The Agriculture Ministry has introduced new restrictions on the keeping of pigs.

not motivated to deal with their own waste, and "can either dump the waste into rivers without punishment or into Vodokanal's systems for little money."

Matviyenko did not deign to respond to the challenge, and if she had, she would not have used Twitter. Unlike several of her colleagues, including President Dmitry Medvedev, the governor has yet to take the plunge into world of social networking, despite the

widely reported opening of a Twitter account in her name at the weekend. Her press service rushed on Sunday to announce that the messages appearing under the name Valentina Matviyenko — which had sadly been confined to banal but accurate details from her diary — were in no way connected to the governor. Her opponents, meanwhile, were actively microblogging for her resignation.

# Eminent Figures Lend Voices to Demolition Protests

By Sergey Chernov  
STAFF WRITER

Film director Alexander Sokurov wrote an open letter to St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko on Tuesday protesting the ongoing demolition of the historic Literary House on Nevsky Prospekt, calling for a halt to the demolition, while Mikhail Piotrovsky, director of the State Hermitage Museum, expressed concern about the building during a press conference on the same day.

However, preservationists concede that due to vast damage inflicted by the developer during and after the New Year holidays, the building, located on the corner of Nevsky Prospekt and the Fontanka River, is most likely now beyond repair. A hotel is due to be built on the location of the Literary House.

In their open letter to Matviyenko, Sokurov and a group of residents including Alexander Kononov of the Russian Association for the Protection of Monuments (VOOPIK) and the Yabloko Democratic Party's Maxim Reznik criticize the authorities for violating a law forbidding the demolition of buildings in St. Petersburg's protected central area. The signatories demand that the portion of the building that can still be preserved should be saved.

Developer Avtokombalt started demolishing the building, located on 68 Nevsky Prospekt, on Jan. 6, in the middle of the New Year holidays. It obtained a construction permit as late as on Dec. 30.

The timing added to preservationists' suspicions that the work is not entirely legal. The letter says that the demolition is the result of what the authors describe as a "fraud scheme."

"The owner brings a historic building to a poor state through negligent maintenance or other, often deliberate



Laborers work on the roof of the Literary House on the corner of Nevsky Prospekt and the Fontanka last week.

actions," they wrote, "then gets a report from an expert construction commission about the economic inexpediency of bringing the building out of its poor state via 'reconstruction with demolition,' which is then approved by the Construction Expertise Department."

Avtokombalt claims the building was in a poor state, but preservationists say that its condition was no worse than many other buildings on Nevsky, and that it could have been repaired and renovated rather than demolished.

Hermitage director Piotrovsky said Tuesday that the World Wide Club of Petersburgers over which he presides is

preparing an address to the city's authorities, Interfax reported.

"68 Nevsky Prospekt is one of the most discussed topics in our club," Piotrovsky was quoted as saying. "I think we will express our position regarding this issue in the near future." The World Wide Club of Petersburgers was established in 1991 to revive St. Petersburg as a spiritual, intellectual, scientific and cultural center, and includes a number of eminent figures connected with St. Petersburg as well as international admirers of the city.

The building was originally built in the late 18th to early 19th centuries and is known as the Literary House because

a number of Russian authors lived there at different periods. It was damaged by a Nazi air bomb in 1941 and rebuilt with a new Stalinist-style facade in 1950.

On the hotel project's web site, launched Jan. 4, the developer justifies the demolition by claiming that the building was totally rebuilt in 1950, and describes it as "hastily built" in conditions of "the post-war lack of resources."

But preservationists argue that a substantial portion of the building remained intact after the bombing, including the courtyard side and the side facing the Fontanka River.

Avtokombalt is not considering stopping the building's demolition, according to press officer Inna Karpushina.

"It is impossible to preserve the structural elements of the building now, because they are in such a poor state that they may collapse spontaneously and kill somebody," Karpushina said by phone on Tuesday.

Alexander Kononov, the deputy chair of the St. Petersburg branch of VOOPIK, said Tuesday that the process of demolition had "gone too far."

"We had to get involved in direct negotiations with the developer, because the city administration is not controlling the situation and is not capable of solving the conflict," Kononov said.

"We attempted to protect at least a fragment of the authentic building at first in order to preserve it in memory of the place, as part of the future hotel complex."

According to Kononov, legal action will be taken against City Hall over the demolition.

"By law, this historic building in a protected area could only be demolished if it was impossible to improve its condition, otherwise any demolition is illegal," he said.

"We have no doubts that all the permits were issued in violation of the law. So further contacts with the administration over this building will be conducted via the prosecutor's office and courts, and so on."

If demolition is not halted, the Literary House will be the sixth historic building on Nevsky Prospekt to be demolished since Matviyenko took office in 2003.

On Tuesday, Living City called on concerned residents to come to the building to protest its demolition at 6 p.m. Wednesday.

## I N B R I E F

### Finnish Visa Center

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — The Finnish Consulate is to open a new visa center in St. Petersburg on February 11.

The new center will enable Russians to apply for Finnish visas without standing in long lines, according to the General Consulate of Finland. The visa-processing office will be located in the center of the city, in the Olympic Plaza shopping center at Ulitsa Stremyanaya 21/5.

The center will have 83 service counters staffed by more than 200 employees. The consulate itself will not however reduce its staff, because the center will only take over the technical function of receiving and giving out documents. The decision-making will remain the responsibility of the consulate.

The number of visa applications at the Finnish Consulate in St. Petersburg grows every year. In 2010 it reviewed almost 750,000 applications. At the new visa center, the waiting time will be no more than 15 minutes, according to the consulate.

### Twittering Museum

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — The State Museum at Pavlovsk has opened a Twitter account to share its news, such as messages about new exhibitions, changes in existing expositions, concerts and festivals, the museum's press service announced this week.

The museum will also keep readers informed about restoration work in the museum, the museum said.

News about the Pavlovsk park-and-palace ensemble can be found

at <http://twitter.com/pavlovskmuseum>

The museum already has accounts on FaceBook and LiveJournal.

### Zhuk Leaves Russia

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — The Russian writer Olga Zhuk, who was detained in St. Petersburg's airport in possession of the painkiller tramadol at the end of December, has returned to Germany, where she lives. The criminal case against her has not however been closed, Interfax reported.

The investigation can be closed after an answer is received from the German side regarding the requirement to declare tramadol in Germany, and after the drug has been analyzed.

Customs officials at Pulkovo Airport in charge of combatting drugs smuggling confiscated a bottle containing more than 100 grams of tramadol from Zhuk on Dec. 22.

Tramadol is a strong substance that is limited for import to Russia and requires written declaration upon bringing it into the country. Zhuk had not declared it when leaving Germany, however, and an investigation into smuggling was opened against Zhuk.

The writer said that under German law, the medicine did not require a declaration.

Zhuk is an arts specialist and writes both books and screenplays. One of her books is dedicated to the study of drugs, their history and culture, while another book was devoted to the lesbian subculture in Russia in the 20th century.

The author permanently resides in Germany.

## ПЕРВАЯ В САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГЕ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ О МОБИЛЬНЫХ ПРИЛОЖЕНИЯХ ДЛЯ СОВРЕМЕННОГО БИЗНЕСА

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**The St. Petersburg Times**

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РЕКЛАМА

# Kvachkov in Jail for Alleged Crossbow Coup

By Alexander Bratersky  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — The Moscow City Court on Monday approved the arrest of retired colonel and ultranationalist icon Vladimir Kvachkov, 62, held on suspicion of preparing an armed coup with crossbows.

Kvachkov's lawyer Andrei Pershin said by telephone that he believed that the arrest of his client was revenge from Rusnano chief Anatoly Chubais, whom Kvachkov was twice acquitted of trying to kill.

"Considering the fact that he was already in pretrial detention, we expected this to happen," Pershin said about Monday's ruling to keep Kvachkov in pretrial detention for two months.

He said he planned to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

Chubais was not available for comment Monday, but he said after Kvachkov's second acquittal in September that he believed the defendant was behind the 2005 attack on him. Chubais also said he supported Kvachkov's release from prison because keeping him behind bars would make him a martyr for nationalists.

Kvachkov and three other suspects were charged with attacking Chubais' car with gunfire and an explosion, allegedly in retaliation for his work as Russia's privatization architect in the 1990s, which nationalists say undermined the country's might. But they were acquitted by juries in two separate trials in 2008 and 2010, with the Supreme Court upholding the verdict in December.

Kvachkov was detained on new charges the day after the Supreme Court ruling. Prosecutors have classified the case as secret. But Kvachkov said the charges are linked to the activities of his group, the People's Front for Liberation of Russia, whose mem-



Kvachkov (l) attending a nationalist march on Nov. 4, 2008. He is accused of plotting an uprising with crossbows.

bers in Tolyatti are accused of training with crossbows in a plot to overthrow the government.

The retired intelligence colonel faces decades behind bars on charges of assisting terrorists and planning an armed uprising. Terrorism-related charges mean he cannot be tried by jury this time, which implies that there will be a greater possibility of a guilty verdict.

Kvachkov, who has maintained his innocence, is known to have repeatedly criticized the authorities in the past and

called for them to be replaced violently if need be.

Alexei Mukhin, head of the Center for Political Information, speculated that new charges might stem from a desire from law enforcement officials to prove that they are working hard to protect the ruling elite from ultranationalists, who are believed to be a growing threat.

"They want to show that they are effective," he said by telephone.

But Alexei Makarkin, a political analyst with the Center for Political

Technologies, said Kvachkov brought his legal troubles upon himself. "He spoke a lot about rising up against authorities, which is a violation of the Constitution," Makarkin said.

He said the authorities did not want to create a fuss over Kvachkov and appeared to have unsuccessfully tried to convince him to leave public life. "It is important for authorities to try to stop his possible activity but at the same time avoid bringing more attention to him," Makarkin said.

## Belarus Accuses Poland, Germany of Plot

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MINSK — Newspapers linked to Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's administration have accused Poland and Germany of trying to overthrow the authoritarian leader.

Both countries denied the claim, and Germany's human rights commissioner said Saturday that Belarus must repeat its presidential election if it is to avoid political sanctions from the European Union over last month's con-

tentious vote that saw Lukashenko stay in power.

The newspaper reports come less than a month after Dec. 19 protests over an allegedly fraudulent election were harshly dispersed by police, who beat and detained hundreds of demonstrators, including seven men who ran against Lukashenko.

Sovietskaya Belorussia, the official organ of Lukashenko's administration, published Friday what it said were ex-

tracts of intercepted conversations and seized documents that purportedly prove that the demonstrators were supported by Polish and German special services.

The authenticity of the excerpts could not immediately be confirmed, and there appeared to be no direct evidence in the excerpts showing the involvement of foreign security services.

Nonetheless, "there can be no doubts that the hands of first of all the Polish and German special services were on the events of Dec. 19," the newspaper said. "The training ground for organizing the formation of forces capable of changing the legal power in Belarus was Poland," it said. "Special training camps were constructed there for 'activists,' the future ruling class was prepared there."

More of the same claims were printed in Saturday's print media, with diplomats also being singled out from Britain, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia and Sweden.

Polish Foreign Ministry spokesman Marcin Bosacki called the claims "dramatic propaganda attempts touching on the absurd," according to a report by the Polish news agency PAP.

German Foreign Ministry spokesman Andreas Peschke said, "Those allegations are completely absurd and totally unfounded."

Germany's human rights commissioner, Markus Loening, said Saturday that a new election must be held and all political prisoners, including opposition candidates, be released if sanctions are to be averted.

"This regime is isolating Belarus from friends and neighbors," Loening said at a news conference in Minsk.

The Dec. 19 vote, in which Lukashenko was credited with nearly 80 percent support, was widely regarded as fraudulent and criticized by international observers.

## Putin to Fire 5% of Staff Within Weeks

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — The federal government will trim its staff by 5 percent to 1,453 by late March to abide by presidential orders, a spokesman for Prime Minister Vladimir Putin told reporters Friday.

Another 5 percent of the staff will be dismissed next year, and 10 percent more will lose their jobs by 2013, said the spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, Interfax reported.

He did not elaborate on who will be shown the door.

The plans follow deadlines for dismissals outlined in an anti-bureaucracy, anti-corruption decree signed by Medvedev on Dec. 31. The decree calls for 20 percent of federal officials to be fired by April 2013.

Some 120,500 bureaucrats are expected to be sacked under the order. There were almost 880,000 federal officials nationwide in 2009, up from 522,500 in 2000, the State Statistics Service reported on its web site.

Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin said last fall that the move would save the budget up to 43 billion rubles (\$1.4 billion) a year. Medvedev's decree instructed the government to use half the money saved because of staff cuts to boost the salaries of officials who kept their jobs.

Putin tried to combat the swelling bureaucracy during his own presidency, slashing the number of federal ministries from 23 to 14 after his re-election to a second term as president in 2004. But the figure has since crept back to 17 as some newly created federal agencies were turned into ministries.

## EU Gives Visa Offer A Cool Welcome

By Nikolaus von Twickel  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — EU diplomats have poured cold water on an offer by the Foreign Ministry to ease visa rules for Europeans if the liberal visa practices of some European countries are expanded throughout the Schengen zone.

President Dmitry Medvedev has been pushing the European Union to lift visas for Russian citizens, and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said last week that he hoped that remaining hurdles to achieve visa-free travel would be removed by the end of this year.

The Russian government is ready to widen its definition of foreign specialists eligible for favorable work and visa conditions if European countries adopt an initiative by Spain to give two-year multiple-entry tourist visas to second-time applicants and five-year multiple-entry visas to third-time applicants from Russia, Vedomosti reported Friday, citing an unidentified Foreign Ministry official.

The official said France and Italy already support the initiative.

Calls to the Foreign Ministry went unanswered Friday.

But European diplomats were quick to dampen any hopes, noting that while some individual Schengen countries issue visas more freely than others, there was no consensus to adopt this more broadly among the 25 members of the open-border agreement.

"This is an issue being discussed and the current practice of some member states," said Denis Daniilidis, spokesman of the EU delegation to Moscow.

Daniilidis said consulates with Schengen member states can individually decide on the length and the type (single- or multi-entry) of visa granted.

Among the countries practicing a more liberal approach are those that profit from tourism from Russia, like Spain and Finland.

Spain put the visa issue at top of the agenda of EU-Russian relations a year ago when it started an initiative to lift all travel restrictions at an undefined future date. While this prompted a new round of talks called the "visa dialogue" last year, other EU members have been wary about opening borders with Russia quickly, some for overt political reasons.

Finland, which has the longest land border with the country of any EU member, holds the record of issuing almost 1 million visas to Russian travelers last year.

Finnish Ambassador Matti Anttonen told The St. Petersburg Times last fall that more than 80 percent of the visas were multi-entry.

Spain issued about 445,000 visas to Russians last year, almost 50 percent more than in 2009, when some 300,000 visas were issued, Spanish Embassy spokesman Fernando Villalba said Friday.

РЕКЛАМА

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# Huge Budget Overruns On Four State Highways

By Roland Oliphant

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — The state highway company Avtodor received 39.5 billion additional rubles (\$1.3 billion) for construction and redevelopment of four federal highways, up from 17.3 billion rubles (\$402 million) originally allocated in the 2010 budget, Kommersant reported last week.

Company representatives confirmed the figures and said they had requested the extra money, which was issued by government decree at the end of last year, for pre-construction activities — including work on the country's first toll road which will run between Moscow and St. Petersburg.

"We're talking about project preparation, and given the experience with the first section [which runs through the Khimki forest], we're talking first of all about environmental expertise," an Avtodor spokeswoman said last week.

Costs will include environmental surveys, planting new trees to compensate for those cleared, and relocating houses and associated infrastructure along the route, the representative said.

Work on the Moscow-St. Petersburg highway has been suspended since August, when anti-road demonstrations forced President Dmitry Medvedev to order an inquiry into the proposed route through the Khimki forest.

A government commission chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov approved the route in December, but recommended several compensatory measures, including the construction of sound shields alongside the road and planting new forests to compensate for the trees felled.

The Moscow-St. Petersburg highway is the first big infrastructure project being built with the participation of foreign investors, who will then receive a concession to collect tolls on the sections they build. The additional funding to Avtodor seems designed to shield concessionaires from the effect of Khimki-type controversies.

The French civil engineering firm Vinci, whose North West Investment subsidiary holds the concession for the 43-kilometer section through the Khimki forest, has not revealed how much it lost as a result of the stoppage.

# Study Slams Police Crime Figures

By Alexandra Odyanova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — The number of crimes in the country has grown drastically over the past decade, new research shows, debunking optimistic but unconvincing reports to the contrary favored by law enforcement agencies.

A total of 3 million crimes were registered nationwide in 2009, according to official statistics, but the real number of crimes committed that year — including unreported ones — stood at 26 million and will reach 30 million by 2020, according to a research group with the General Prosecutor's Office Academy.

The number of crimes has been growing by 2.4 percent a year, with millions of wrongdoings going unreported, the group said in a mammoth 840-page volume that took 10 years to produce and was published last week.

In contrast, Investigative Committee head Alexander Bastrykin reported in October that the number of crimes in 2010 had plummeted by 13 percent.

Official statistics show a drop in the number of murders — from 34,200 in

2001 to 18,200 in 2009 — but they only reflect the number of criminal cases that were opened, the study said.

Taking into account reported murders where no cases were opened, the figure would stand at 46,200 for 2009, the group said. But even this figure appears incomplete, considering there were 77,900 unidentified dead bodies found that year and another 48,500 people were reported missing.

Academy professor Sergei Inshakov, who headed the research group, declined to comment Friday, saying only that "everything can be found in the book."

Calls to the Interior Ministry's press service went unanswered.

Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika indirectly acknowledged the problem last year, telling the Federation Council in April that while the number of registered crimes had dropped by almost 7 percent from 2008 to 2009, the number of reported crimes that police had refused to register was growing, the judicial news agency Rapsi reported.

Vladimir Ovchinsky, an adviser to the Constitutional Court's chief justice,

said on Radio Liberty on Thursday that the large gap between official and actual statistics has been confirmed by numerous other research papers whose authors "came to roughly similar conclusions using different methods."

Viktor Ilyukhin, a Communist deputy on the State Duma's Security Committee, said the latest study "almost completely" reflects the current state of affairs in the country. "The level of unreported crimes is very high," Ilyukhin said by telephone. "Unreported crimes existed and will exist, while their quantity is an indicator of the work of law enforcement agencies."

The study echoes President Dmitry Medvedev's criticism of official statistics on crimes in the North Caucasus, which he called "nonsense" in November.

Medvedev has initiated an overhaul of the country's law enforcement system, widely viewed as corrupt and ineffective, by introducing bills to reform the police force and separate the Investigative Committee from the Prosecutor General's Office.

## I N B R I E F

### \$50 Million Heist

■ MOSCOW (SPT) — Assailants stole as much as \$50 million of luxury goods from businessman Alexander Tarantsev's home during a nighttime raid on his compound near Moscow, his holding company, Russian Gold, said Friday, Bloomberg reported.

The robbers took diamonds, antiques and paintings by Russian artists including Ilya Repin and Ivan Shishkin.

Four armed and masked men infiltrated the walled property early Thursday, while Tarantsev was abroad, after

tying up security guards, said Anna Zuyeva, a spokeswoman for the police in the Moscow region.

Investigators believe that about \$20,000 in cash was taken from a safe in the house, though they have no information about the stolen goods, Zuyeva said.

### No Bail for War

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — A St. Petersburg court has refused to grant bail to two activists with the radical art group Voina held on hooliganism charges for flipping over police cars as

part of a performance in September, Interfax reported.

Prominent British graffiti artist Banksy held a special sale of his works last month, donating proceeds to bail out Leonid Nikolayev and Oleg Vorotnikov, but the judge refused to free them from pretrial detention on bail of 2 million rubles (\$66,000) each, citing a lack of information about the person providing the money.

The judge also said Nikolayev might pressure witnesses in the case. No witnesses have been identified publicly, although some of the flipped police cars had officers in them.

## C O R R U P T I O N C O R N E R

# NGOs in Firing Line At Conference on Graft

By Galina Stolyarova

Speaking at a conference aimed at fighting corruption in December, a senior official in charge of St. Petersburg's anti-corruption strategy voiced a confession that his European counterparts would most likely regard as utterly embarrassing.

"The president has ordered us to cooperate with non-governmental groups," he said. "I can honestly say I am having problems with this order. The task is 'to join forces with NGOs in creating a climate of intolerance toward corruption in Russian society.' The thing is that I do not see any such work being done by pressure groups, and thus no results of such work."

His remarks astounded me. Corruption has been one of the central topics of all the Dissenters' Marches that have been held in Russia since December 2007. These demonstrations have been routinely banned on technical grounds. When protesters have found a way onto the streets they have often been violently dispersed by the police before most of the speakers can address the public. And yet one of the main aims of those taking part has been, as the official would have it, "creating a climate of intolerance against graft."

Materials published by the opposition coalition, The Other Russia, the democratic party Yabloko and other parties challenging the Kremlin routinely contains analysis of corruption in Russian government agencies. But this literature is often quickly confiscated before any planned protest on the pretext of examining it for any extremist content.

At the conference, the official continued to disparage groups claiming to fight corruption. "I only get to hear about their activities when I get phone calls from the city's traffic police who ask me if I have heard of a certain pressure group," he said. "The traffic police ring me because NGO members threaten officers, saying they'll use their connections to make them lose their jobs."

Remarkably enough, no voice was raised in defense of these groups at the meeting, perhaps because most of them had not been invited. Their absence was a symptom of the gulf between

government and civil society on the corruption issue.

"Everyone understands that corruption is a global evil, rather than a purely Russian plight for which we routinely reprimand ourselves and say that this illness is hardly, if ever, curable." This is one of the most recent statements on the fight against graft to come from President Dmitry Medvedev. The main point here was apparently that corruption is not unique to our country — yet he stopped short of reflecting on the reasons it has become so rife here. Indeed, such an effort would ultimately require the Russian leader to destroy the political system that allowed him to become a president.

During his presidency, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin made a strategic mistake with the great vertical of power that he has erected in Russia for the sake of what he calls stability. The very strong vertical has turned into an autonomous system that excludes any element of external control.

President Dmitry Medvedev has made a series of bold pledges to combat corruption. Fighting graft, he said, is a top priority for the Kremlin. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has also made such promises repeatedly. In 2006, Russia ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption and the Council of Europe's Criminal Law Convention on Corruption. The State Duma has since been incorporating these measures into Russian legislation.

Nevertheless, there is still no real sign of a coherent or effective anti-corruption policy. And perceptions of Russia abroad in this regard have gone from bad to worse, according to the campaign group Transparency International. In its Corruption Perceptions Index released in November, Russia ranks among the most corrupt countries in the world, tying for 154th place among the 180 nations listed.

As for the traffic police, allegedly the victims of disgruntled NGO activists, I would not like to estimate the ratio of honest to corrupt officers among them. According to a nationwide study by the popular web resource superjob.ru, in 2010, every fourth Russian driver admitted to bribing a traffic cop.

РЕКЛАМА

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## City Could Lose Gazprom Taxes

By Nadezhda Zaitseva and Anatoly Tyomkin  
VEDOMOSTI

The St. Petersburg budget could lose about 20 billion rubles in taxes from Gazprom Neft if the company selects a site for its office complex in another region of Russia after the controversial Okhta Center skyscraper plan was scrapped.

The subsidiary oil firm of state gas behemoth Gazprom pays about 25 billion rubles (\$836 million) every year in taxes to the city budget, said Sergei Kupriyanov, a representative of Gazprom. In 2008, the company's press service said it paid 21 billion rubles in taxes.

The company was registered as a taxpayer in St. Petersburg in the middle of 2006. Now the city could lose a major source of revenue, fears one senior City Hall official. At the beginning of December, St. Petersburg Governor Valentina Matviyenko reversed her earlier decision permitting the construction of a 400-meter tall business center across the Neva River from Smolny Cathedral that would house the company's headquarters.

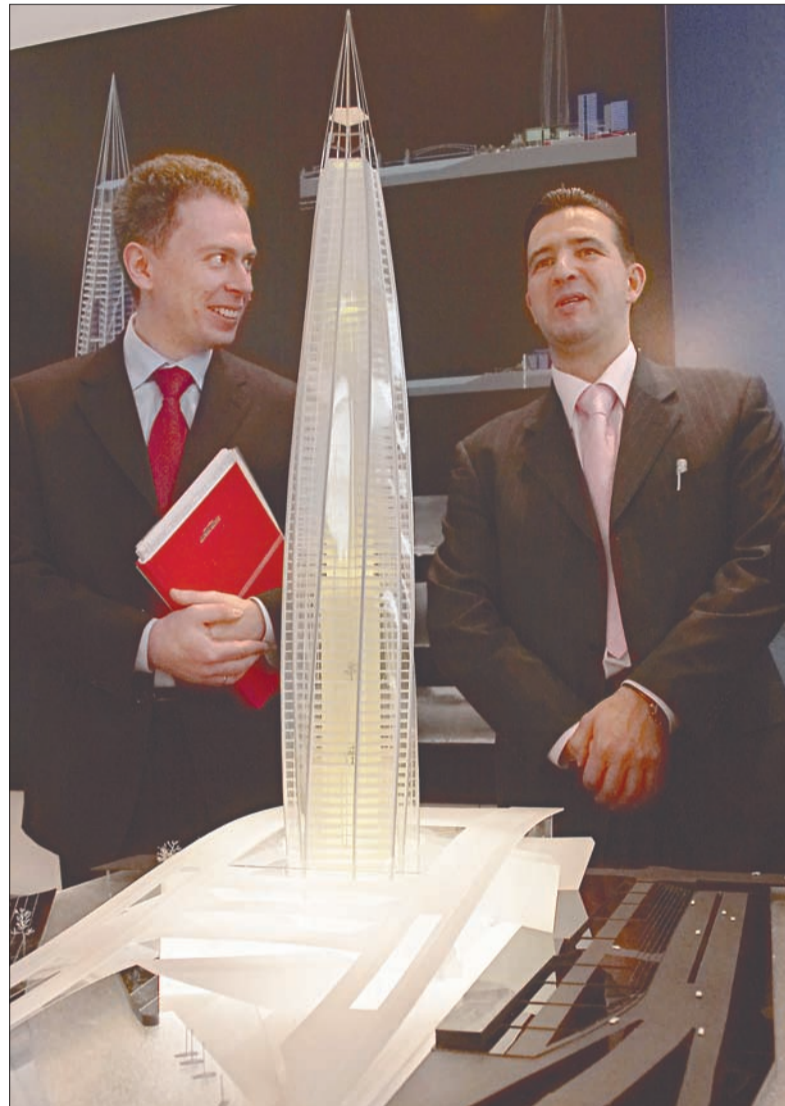
Gazprom Neft will pay taxes to the region in which its new office and business center is constructed, said Kupriyanov.

The administration of the Leningrad Oblast weighed into the fight for Gazprom Neft's tax contributions at the end of last year, offering the company four plots of land of 30 to 40 hectares for the construction of its office and business center. The plots are located in Utkina Zavod, Kudrovo, Veryovo (in the Gatchinsky district) and in Novoye Devyatino.

According to Gazprom's press service, the company is interested in the plot of land near Kudrovo at the intersection of the ring road and Murmanskoye Shosse. The location is convenient in terms of transport access and infrastructure, the company said via its press service, adding that it was too soon to speak of a final decision. The north of St. Petersburg, for example Uliitsa Savushkina, is potentially interesting for the company, but the company has not yet received any proposals from the city authorities, it said.

City Hall is in the process of selecting a plot, said the press secretary of Deputy Governor Roman Filimonov.

Kudrovo is not a bad location; it is removed from the business districts and city center, but the interchange



A model of the ill-fated Gazprom Tower, plans for which have been shelved.

with the ring road would make it possible for a fairly large business zone to exist there, said Zosya Zakharova, head of the projects and analytical research department at ARIN, the property research and development agency. Uliitsa Savushkina, on the other hand, is already plagued by traffic jams, and would grind to a complete standstill with the appearance of such a major project in its vicinity, the expert said.

There are many vacant land plots on the outskirts of St. Petersburg that could be redeveloped, but major preparatory work would be required, Zakharova added.

The arrival and departure of a major tax contributor cannot take place without the involvement of the federal

center and administrative resources, said Alexander Khodachek, branch director of the State Graduate School of Economics. Gazprom Neft re-registered in St. Petersburg not for the purpose of building the skyscraper, but in order to be nearer to the developing export points of raw hydrocarbon materials in Primorsk and Ust-Luga, he said.

The 2011 revenue of the LenOblast budget is 48 billion rubles (\$1.6 billion), while Petersburg has 351 billion rubles. "Easy" revenue — which comes from tax payments by large companies instead of from the creation of new production facilities — can be lost just as easily, and the city authorities should always be prepared for such a risk, said Khodachek.

## Labor Specialists Call For Amendment to Bill

By Olga Sharapova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Local recruitment experts are among those trying to bring about an amendment to a contested bill banning temporary contract work in Russia.

This model of labor is popular with many foreign and Russian companies because it allows them to use a number of people without taking them on as permanent staff.

"For instance, an ice-cream company needs to increase its output volume in a short space of time in the summer," said Yekaterina Gorokhova, vice president and general manager of Kelly Services CIS. "There is no need for such a large staff in the winter. The company goes to a recruitment agency, which provides it with seasonal workers."

Major recruitment agencies represented in St. Petersburg including Kelly Services, Manpower, Ancor and Adecco, have joined forces with prominent foreign companies such as DHL Express, Shell and Volkswagen Group Rus to lead a campaign calling for amendments to the bill outlawing temporary contracts. The participants of a round-table discussion held in Moscow and devoted to the issue emphasized that banning temporary contract work could spark capital outflows and growth in unemployment in Russia.

Volkswagen Group Rus says the rapid growth of its Kaluga assembly plant would have been impossible without the services of recruitment agencies providing temporary staff.

Globally, the company makes use of temporary contract workers at 175 of

the concern's enterprises, providing about 370,000 people with work.

But the problem is that though a trilateral employment agreement (between the company, recruitment agency and employee) works successfully in many countries, this type of labor is not yet legally regulated in Russia.

"This means that there are currently quite a lot of legal problems and abuses in the activities of some companies and agencies," said Svetlana Katayeva, managing director of Avrio Group Consulting. "It is no secret that some companies use temporary contract workers as full-time staff, but don't pay them a proper salary or pay taxes to the budget."

The problem of taxation is one of the biggest concerns for the authors of the bill.

"In this situation the Russian tax authorities have identified a way in which companies can evade paying taxes," says Nina Kutsova, a lawyer at the Rightmark group. "A company that uses temporary contract staff doesn't currently pay remuneration taxes to the budget, and therefore reduces its expenses."

Currently, people who find work through a recruitment agency sign a civil legal contract instead of a permanent labor contract with the ensuing rights guaranteed by the latter. This loophole in the law allows some unscrupulous companies and agencies to exploit employees and the law.

According to statistics gathered by Kelly Services CIS, there are about 100,000 people seeking temporary work contracts via recruitment agencies.

### I N B R I E F

#### Solaris Launched

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Rus has begun production of the Hyundai Solaris at its plant in St. Petersburg.

The sale of the new model produced at the plant is to begin in January, Interfax reported. It will cost from \$12,600 to \$21,205.

In 2011 the company plans to sell up to 70,000 Solaris cars. The plant's production capacity for the model will reach 105,000 cars in 2011.

#### Local Rail Investment

■ ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — Oktyabrskaya Railways (OZhd), the regional train operator, is increasing its investment program by 18.7 percent compared to last year up to 49.4 billion rubles (\$1.65 billion), Viktor Stepov, the company's head, has announced.

Stepov said that the increase had become possible as a result of growth in cargo transport, among other factors, Vedomosti reported.

# BusinessLunchGuide

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## Greens Fear Arctic Repeat Of Ecological Catastrophe

## BP, Rosneft in Landmark Asset Swap

By Roland Oliphant

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — Russian environmentalists will appeal to BP and Rosneft shareholders to thwart the companies' plans to drill for oil in a remote part of the Arctic, amid concerns that a spill in the icebound sea could be unreachable for up to nine months.

"We will work with shareholders and the general public to make sure everyone understands how risky this is," said Sergei Knizhnikov, coordinator on environmental policy in the oil and gas sector at WWF Russia.

On Jan. 14, BP and Rosneft announced plans to explore and develop a 125,000 square kilometer area of the Kara Sea on Russia's continental shelf.

The three blocks the two companies will explore — EPNZ-1, 2 and 3 — are only navigable 100 days a year because of ice, and environmentalists fear that a spill at the end of the drilling period would be impossible to tackle until the spring thaw.

"There is no technology today that can clean up oil in ice conditions," Knizhnikov said.

"If there's a spill, we'll be able to see black ice from space," warned Ivan Blokov, campaign director at Greenpeace Russia.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin tried on Jan. 14 to make a virtue of BP's association with the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster last summer by saying the company had gained "valuable experience" cleaning up oil spills.

But the greens say there are still unanswered questions about BP's response to the Gulf spill, and point out that just last month Greenland refused BP a permit to drill in its Arctic waters. Rosneft's record is not untarnished either — it had 7,526 oil spills in 2009, Blokov said.

The remote Kara Sea is a refuge for polar bears, walrus and several commercial fish species.

Igor Sechin, Rosneft's chairman and a deputy prime minister, said that development would "comply with the highest standards of environmental protection" and that the two companies would set up a research center to develop new technology in St. Petersburg.

A spokesman for BP told The St. Petersburg Times on Jan. 17 that the company "is interested in developing the Arctic in an environmentally responsible manner and we believe that we can carry out this exploration program safely and responsibly."

By Howard Amos

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — Positive experience gathered by BP in the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon disaster, the largest oil leak in U.S. history, contributed to Rosneft's decision to strike an \$8 billion share-swap and wide-ranging cooperation agreement with the international oil giant Friday night.

Igor Sechin, Rosneft's chairman and a deputy prime minister, said in televised remarks Saturday that BP has "a great deal of experience, including in the Gulf of Mexico cleanup operation."

BP and Rosneft will work together in the exploration and development of a 125,000-square-kilometer area of the Kara Sea on Russia's Arctic continental shelf — one of the world's last remaining unexplored basins. This is the first time a foreign company has been granted such extensive access to Russia's Arctic resources.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said the area contains some 5 billion tons of crude oil, about one-tenth of Russia's Arctic zone's 51 billion tons, enough to fully meet global demand at current levels for about five months.

The two companies also announced plans to establish an Arctic technology center in St. Petersburg that will liaise with research institutes and develop specialized technologies.

To cement the agreement, BP will swap 5 percent of its shares, valued at \$7.8 billion, for 9.5 percent of Rosneft. BP will become the biggest nonstate equity holder in Rosneft, a company 75 percent controlled by the government, while Rosneft will have the second-largest stake in BP, after Blackrock Inc., with 5.93 percent. The shares are subject to mutual lock-in restrictions for a period of two years.

The swap confirms the close economic relationship that the companies hailed in an e-mailed statement as a "groundbreaking global strategic partnership." It is the first time an international oil company of BP's standing has formed an equity-linked venture with a national oil company like Rosneft.

But BP and Rosneft are unlikely to have representatives on each other's boards, said Konstantin Uminov, an analyst at Rye, Man & Gor Securities.

It is unclear whether the paperwork for the agreement will be finalized in



Cars fill up at a British Petroleum gas station in Moscow in a file photo.

time for Rosneft to receive BP's first dividend payout since pressure from the United States forced a suspension after the Deepwater Horizon explosion in April. Rosneft would be in line for a \$100 million dividend on its 988,694,683 ordinary BP shares.

The deal received strong support from Putin, who met with BP CEO Robert Dudley at his Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow on Friday before the deal was announced in London at midnight Moscow time.

The joint work of BP and Rosneft "has a real chance of acquiring a large-scale character and of having a noticeable impact on the world's oil and gas industry," Putin said.

Putin brushed off suggestions that BP has been tainted by the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, quoting the Russian proverb that "one man with experience

is better than two without." He also said the government intended to create "a very favorable tax regime for the realization of this project."

Britain's energy minister, Chris Huhne, said the deal was "good news for Europe, for the U.K.'s energy security and worldwide."

Reaction from the United States was less positive, with fears that Russian government control of BP shares might compromise U.S. economic security. "The details of this deal and its impacts on the operations of BP America need to be thoroughly examined," said Congressman Edward Markey, the top Democrat on the House Natural Resources Committee.

"BP once stood for British Petroleum. With this deal, it now stands for Bolshoi Petroleum," he said in a statement published on his web site.

## Mortgage Risk Weighed Up Russian-Style in Bank Sector

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — Being invited to a bank board member's barbecue is a better indicator of whether his institution will give you a mortgage than your actual credit history, according to a report released Monday by Penny Lane real estate agency.

The company has compiled a list of the most reliable professions in the eyes of mortgage lenders. It complements the list of least desirable professions the agency issued last month.

The list reflects a lot of common sense as well as a few less obvious aspects of local life.

Bankers themselves rank in second

place, for the more mundane reason that they know how to handle money well.

Besides other stable, well-paid categories, public figures and journalists are risk-worthy because of their concern for their reputation. Bankers may trust actors because they can persuade them to participate in advertising for the bank in exchange for a lower rate.

Finally, in sixth place for their desirability, members of the intelligence community are mentioned, "simply because no one wants to have problems with them," Penny Lane says. The report adds that spies also tend to be highly disciplined.

## \$700M Moskva-City Project Planned

By Irina Filatova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — Shalva Chigirinsky, the real estate and oil tycoon whose plans to build the tallest tower in Europe vanished with the 2008 crisis, wants to construct a building about half the size in the Moskva-City business district, officials said Monday.

Andrei Lukyanov, president of City, the company that manages construction in Moskva-City, said he was prepared to hammer out the details after being approached by representatives of Chigirinsky's company Russian Land.

"We are ready," he said by telephone. Lukyanov declined to provide details of the project, saying Russian Land had not provided any yet. He also said a date for a meeting had not been scheduled.

But Interfax, citing a source close to Chigirinsky, said Monday that the businessman intended build three towers covering 250,000 square meters in the business district. The cost of the project would be \$700 million.

Chigirinsky's 612-meter Russia Tower in Moskva-City would have covered 520,000 square meters and cost more than \$1.5 billion. But those plans,

which were signed in 2007 between City Hall and ST Tower, a unit of Russian Land, evaporated when Chigirinsky's finances fell into disarray amid the 2008 economic crisis.

If Chigirinsky decides to start the new project in Moskva-City, he will probably have to break the previous contract for the Russia Tower and sign a new one, Lukyanov said.

Russian Land officials were unavailable for immediate comment.

Russian Land plans to partly pay contractors working on the new building with floor space, Kommersant reported Monday, citing a source close to Russian Land.

One possible investor is Viktor Rashnikov, owner of Magnitogorsk Iron & Steel Works, or MMK, who paid \$300 million for 50 percent stakes in the Russia Tower and a project to construct a new hotel at the site of the demolished Hotel Rossiya near Red Square, the report said.

Chigirinsky, who lives abroad after fleeing Russia amid a now-closed tax investigation, lost the right to develop the hotel last year.

An MMK spokeswoman declined to comment Monday.

## Ministry Proposes Property Checks

VEDOMOSTI

MOSCOW — The Economic Development Ministry is proposing property inspections to increase tax collection rates, ministry department head Andrei Ivakin told Vedomosti.

The proposal was stimulated by a request from President Dmitry Medvedev to address causes of municipal budget deficits.

The land tax is now set and collected by local municipalities. By federal regulation for garden plots and dacha plots, it cannot exceed 0.3 percent of the value.

"Our task is not to raise taxes but to make those who don't pay start paying," Ivakin said.

Municipal land inspections would be authorized under a proposal to locate unrecorded real estate. A simple estimate would be made of the registry value of the formerly unaccounted-for land, and the owner would pay a higher land tax, Ivakin explained.

РЕКЛАМА

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ALEXANDER BELENKY / SPT

An Orthodox service is held at the city's Mariinsky Hospital before a charity concert for patients and staff of the hospital on Jan. 12.



ALEXANDER AKSAKOV / SPT

Strollers on Nevsky were surprised on Jan. 16 by the sight of Peter the Great in a coffin — part of the making of a new film about the city's legendary founder.



ALEXANDER AKSAKOV / SPT

A Cherokee Jeep is pictured in a spot of extreme parking atop a snow mound in central St. Petersburg.



ALEXANDER BELENKY / SPT

A woman holds a candle at an event held Jan. 15 in memory of murdered football fan Yegor Sviridov. Fears that the event would turn into nationalist rioting proved unfounded.



ALEXANDER BELENKY / SPT

Pedestrians shelter from a blizzard using umbrellas as snow continues to blanket the city.



ALEXANDER BELENKY / SPT

Icicles are smashed from a roof in the city center as clean-up efforts continue in the city.



DMITRY LOVETSKY / AP

Icicles hang from an Atlante figure on the Beloselsky-Belozersky Palace on Nevsky Prospekt.



## FISH

### Fish House

#### FISH HOUSE

4 Pereulok Grivtsova.  
Tel: +7 (812) 448-22-77, 956-84-38.  
Email: info@stroganoffsteakhouse.ru

The Fish House menu has been developed by the head chef of Russian Vodka Room No. 1, Igor Dashkevich. The range of fish and seafood at the restaurant includes traditional fish house dishes, such as salmon and tuna steaks, seabass and lobster, prawns and scallops, as well as delicacies rarely found on the menus of other restaurants in St. Petersburg, including fish from Siberian rivers – Siberian white salmon and muksun whitefish. The Fish House wine menu offers selections from almost every region in the world at affordable prices. For true connoisseurs, a wine cellar is being created that will comprise exclusive wines from the Top 100 list of Wine Spectator magazine. The restaurant's main room can seat 100, while the basement floor has been designed for hosting banquets and private events. Business lunch daily from midday to 4 p.m. Guests can choose from a selection of salads, soups and hot dishes, as well as non-alcoholic drinks.

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## INDIAN

### Tandoor



2 Voznesensky Pr., near St. Isaac's Cathedral, opposite the Admiralty.  
Tel.: 312-38-86, 312-53-10.

Popular city restaurant. Experience the tantalizing flavor of Indian cuisine. From kebabs to curries, with a wide range of vegetarian selections at reasonable prices. Business Lunch 450 rubles. Choice of soup. Choice of curry: chicken, lamb, fish, lentil or vegetable with rice, salad and bread, plus mineral water. Restaurant provides small to medium-sized outdoor catering services for parties and banquet functions. Open daily from noon to 11 p.m.

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## ITALIAN

### Restaurant Da Albertone



23 Millionnaya Ul.  
(100 m. from the Hermitage).  
Open daily from 11 a.m. till 2 a.m.  
To reserve a table call 315-86-73.

Chef Luca Pellino prepares immaculate authentic Italian dishes in this restaurant located next to the Hermitage. The menu here is like no other, featuring a wide variety of fish and seafood dishes, homemade desserts and pasta and charcoal grilled steaks. Pizzas here are cooked using patented Italian technology. The chef also offers weekly specials using the best seasonal products available. There is also an open kitchen and a spacious kids' room.

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### Gusto



142 Nevsky Prospekt  
+ 20 meters along Ul. Degtyarnaya.  
Tel: +7 (812)941 1744, www.probka.org

Gusto is an Italian restaurant whose Italian chef, Fabricio Fatucci, the last year had the honor of cooking for the Russian President, for which he received warm words of gratitude. The restaurant's wine card complements the menu harmoniously, and for every dish, the perfect accompanying wine is available. Gusto has the largest Enomatik wine storage system in St. Petersburg, allowing 48 wines to be served by the glass. We invite you to come and sample our chef's special menu. Menu highlights include: foie gras crème-brûlée, angus beef Carpaccio. Fresh seafood every weekend. The group Frukty will perform on Friday, Jan. 21 at 8 p.m.

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### Portobello



12 Zagorodny Prospekt. Vladimirskaaya or Dostoyevskaya metro. Tel.: 915-55-01.

Brand new Italian restaurant, bar and grill from chef Luca Pellino. Enjoy classic Italian dishes served in innovative ways or try nuovo Italiano cuisine prepared in our chef's inimitable style amid elegant Tuscan-style decor. Suitable for any occasion – lunch, drinks, dinner and romance. There are two rooms with multiple sections: guests can sit on a raised level and enjoy the view from the top, or settle on the cozy couches for two by the fireplace. The menu features homemade pasta, abundant fresh seafood dishes, high grade marble steaks and homemade ice cream and desserts. The wine menu boasts top wines from all over Italy and France to complement the dishes perfectly. Open 11 a.m. until the last customer leaves.

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## MEDITERRANEAN

### Côté Jardin



Hotel "Novotel St. Petersburg Centre"  
3a, ul. Mayakovskogo  
Tel: 335 1188, fax: 335 1180  
www.novotel.spb.ru

Novotel welcomes to taste grilled Japan Wagyu meat and grilled American rib-eye steak at its restaurant Côté Jardin from 11th of January until end of February. Our steaks are served with French mustard and sautéed potatoes grenailles. Enjoy savory hot cocktails, St. Petersburg traditional hot chocolate and our homemade Glühwein at lobby bar. We present this specialty until March 31st.

At the lounge bar Intermezzo guests find an extensive vodka list, beers, wines, cocktails, alcohol collection from all around the world. Mouthwatering homemade cakes from La Brioche Deli-Counter. Take away service. Open daily 06:30–23:00, breakfast 06:30–10:30, business lunch 12:00–16:00.

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## MEXICAN

### Tequila-Boom



57/127 Voznesensky Prospekt;  
Tel.: 310-15-34 or 050

We invite you to visit TEQUILA-BOOM restaurant – the finest Mexican restaurant in Russia! Our head chef will prepare a delectable array of Mexican cuisine for you: Fajitas Mixto, Burrito,

Gringa, flat cakes and steaks, while our barman will mix cocktails, such as Strawberry Margarita, Mexican flag, Mojito and Caipriina. From noon to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday a business lunch (250 rubles) is available at the restaurant. Every evening we have live music, and on Fridays and Saturdays there is a show program featuring the city's best musicians and Latin American dancers. The restaurant is located at: All major credit cards are accepted. We will be glad to see you!

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## RUSSIAN

### Dynasty



11 Ul. Gorokhovaya,  
Tel: 315 0704  
www.dinastia.spb.ru

Welcome to Dynasty restaurant. Our menu features traditional Russian, European, and seafood dishes. At our restaurant, you can breakfast, have a business meeting, or enjoy a dinner with caviar. On Fridays and Saturdays, enjoy live piano music from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. We're waiting for you and your family!

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### PALKIN restaurant



47 Nevsky Pr. Tel: (812) 703-53-71  
www.palkin.ru

PALKIN restaurant is located in the very heart of St. Petersburg. Our constant

search for new flavors, painstaking work with old cookery books, and strict standards regarding the use of ingredients make Palkin one of the few places in the world where diners can enjoy the finest dishes of aristocratic Russian cuisine in the elegant atmosphere of an upscale establishment. Open: noon to 11.30 p.m.

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### Russian Vodka Room No.1



4 Konnogvardeisky Boulevard.  
Open from midday to midnight.  
Museum open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Restaurant: 570-64-20,  
info@vodkaroom.ru.  
Museum: 570-64-22,  
info@vodkamuseum.ru

Russian Vodka Room No. 1 is the first place in St. Petersburg to present Russian cuisine from different historical periods. Here, you can try pre-Petrine dishes such as "oven-cooked buckwheat porridge with chicken hearts and porcini mushrooms"; dishes featuring cuisine of the merchant and aristocratic classes, such as "pike perch rissole with mashed potato"; and Soviet cuisine such as, "chicken Kiev" or "Russian salad." The restaurant's premises comprise two spacious rooms with a capacity of 160. In the neighboring rooms is housed the Museum of Russian Vodka which presents fascinating exhibits dating back to the appearance of vodka culture in Russia and running right through to the present day. The restaurant also has a "rumochnaya" (a "standing-room-only" café) decorated in the 20th-century style where you can sample a variety of vodkas with traditional Russian "zakuski" (snacks).

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## C O M M E N T

## 2010 Filled By Empty Words, Empty Dreams

By Konstantin Sonin

In all the years that I have been writing this column, I've never seen a year more lacking in economic developments than 2010.

While growth was slow in comparison with other BRIC countries, high oil prices and the lack of state debt meant that the authorities didn't have to worry too much over current budgetary problems. The government did not implement a single economic reform during the past 12 months, and all the hype over modernization remained empty words.

Tacitly underscoring the poor state of affairs, Central Bank officials made fewer official statements than usual about their strategies and goals. The utterances they did make, however, might lead listeners to conclude that they had forgotten that the primary cause of inflation is the government's monetary policy.

The news was not all bad. Entire industries such as construction, ferrous and nonferrous metals grew rapidly in 2010. The fact that Mail.ru and Wimm-Bill-Dann were sold for top dollar to foreign investors ranks proves that Russian businesses can achieve world-class standards.

What's more, Oleg Deripaska deserves credit for having kept RusAl intact as a single company, while Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin deserves some praise for fighting increases in budgetary expenditures.

There are both internal and external reasons for 2010 having been an "economically empty" year. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, the main political figure in the country, and his inner circle became tired and somewhat less edgy. Eleven years at the helm is a very long time for a leader — regardless of whether he is a democrat or dictator.

Most of the leadership's efforts were focused on waging an "image war" to win popularity at home and loyalty from the near abroad, with the result that neither time nor energy were left to conduct the business of managing the economy.

Now one question remains: How many such "empty" years must we endure before leaders realize that, economically speaking, no news is bad news?

Konstantin Sonin is a professor at the New Economic School in Moscow.

## Twice Burned, BP Not Shy

THE MOSCOW TIMES

First came Sidanco. Then TNK-BP rose its head. Now we have Rosneft.

BP's surprise deal to hand over a 5-percent stake worth \$8 billion to Rosneft in exchange for 9.5 percent of the state-owned oil company and the rights to exploit potentially enormous oil and gas deposits in Russia's Arctic shelf represents a bold move by BP CEO Robert Dudley and the first key endorsement by a foreign investor of the state's forced bankruptcy of Yukos.

If anyone can pull off this arrangement, it is the highly principled and humble Dudley, a savvy veteran of Russia's sometimes bellicose business environment.

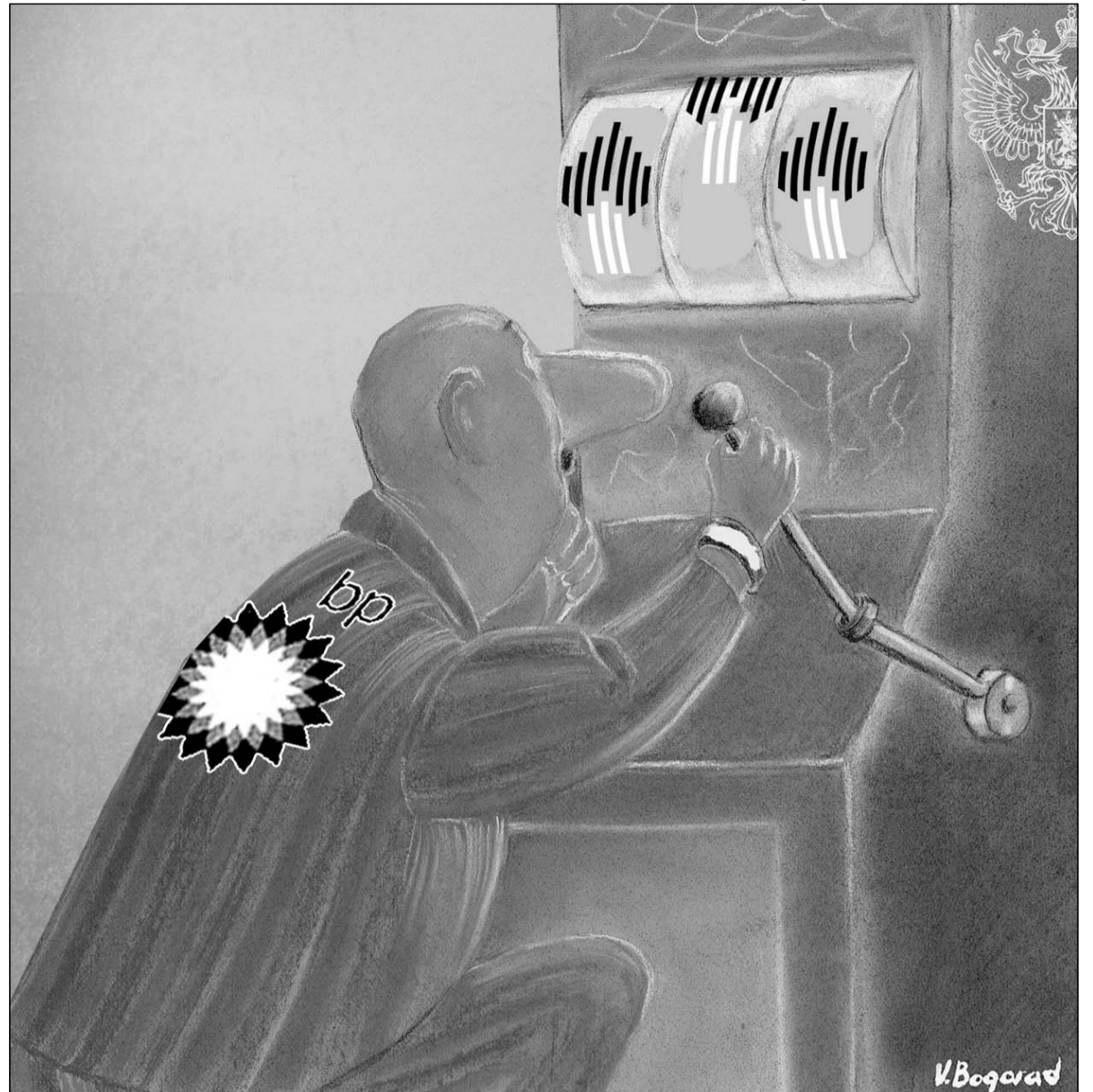
Just two years ago, Dudley fled Russia amid accusations that he had broken Russian law. But then Dudley emerged as BP's chief last year after the Gulf of Mexico disaster left the oil company struggling to salvage its reputation and market value.

Friday's deal is win-win for BP and Rosneft. BP wants to tap new frontiers to expand its reserves, a quarter of which are already in Russia. Rosneft, in turn, desperately needs the expertise that BP can provide. Even more important for the government, the deal essentially means that BP has endorsed the legality of the Yukos bankruptcy and its subsequent takeover of Yukos assets. Questions about the legality of the 2006 bankruptcy, still under challenge in international courts, have spooked other international energy companies from working with Rosneft.

But BP has always been at the forefront of testing the waters for foreign investors in Russia — whether it wanted to or not.

In a major test for foreign investors in post-Soviet Russia, BP in 1998 and 1999 fought bitterly over its first major investment, a 10 percent stake in Vladimir Potanin's Sidanco that it acquired for \$571 million in 1997. A contentious bankruptcy lawsuit saw the entire value of Sidanco — which, curiously, was itself created by the privatization of a Rosneft stake — plunge to about \$1.5 billion. Potanin eventually bowed out, and BP, still clinging to its 10 percent stake, made peace with the new majority owner, TNK.

In 2003, BP pooled its Russian and Ukrainian assets with those of the owners of TNK to create TNK-BP, a trail-



blazing effort hailed as an illustration of how foreign and Russian partners can work together. Burned once by Russian partners, BP took the extra step of winning the Kremlin's blessing on the merger. Dudley took the helm as CEO.

It was here that Dudley gained crucial experience working with state-run companies, dealing with Gazprom in a headline-grabbing battle for control of TNK-BP's Kovykta gas field.

Meanwhile, a power struggle broke out between BP and the TNK partners that saw staff accused of espionage, BP's

foreign employees lose their visas, and Dudley leave the country after the Russian partners claimed that he had broken the law. The warring sides buried the hatchet in late 2008, with BP keeping the 50-50 split but making concessions that allowed the Russians to increase managerial control over the company.

One of the things that TNK's owners wanted — but failed to secure — was a stake in BP. That's exactly what Rosneft got in Friday's agreement. After dealing with oligarchs, with and without the Kremlin's blessing, BP ap-

parently has decided that the safest way to protect its interests in Russia is to work directly with the state. The Rosneft agreement, BP's first major deal since the Gulf of Mexico disaster, will be closely watched by foreign investors as a possible bellwether.

In life, there is no such thing as failure, just the realization of which methods do not work. In this spirit, Dudley clearly hopes that the third time is the charm.

This article first appeared as an editorial in *The Moscow Times*.

## R U S S I A N U N O R T H O D O X

## Inventing the Facts

By Galina Stolyarova

An old, typically fatalistic Russian saying advises, "Never say you won't go broke or go to prison."

For 15 St. Petersburg lawyers who went public in December with an astonishing statement of protest, that saying has become more than just a wry comment on the vagaries of life.

The lawyers are between them handling more than 10 cases in which their clients are accused of economic crimes. They claim that investigators from the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Investigative Committee systematically use falsification and intimidation as their main techniques of solving crimes. The committee, a branch of the General Prosecutor's Office, plays a key role in investigating and prosecuting high-profile crimes, including financial offenses.

The lawyers' message is simple: No one is safe these days. As long as there is someone willing to testify against a defendant, the truthfulness of that testimony is secondary. Then, beating a confession out of the defendant is a technicality, they say.

Lawyer Oleg Filippenko said he and his colleagues were prompted to join forces, mount a public protest and

send a petition to President Dmitry Medvedev only after legal methods had been exhausted.

"After discussing the different cases that we handle, we have established what we see as a corrupt scheme of 'solving' crimes by threatening witnesses and defendants and forcing them to testify in a certain way," Filippenko said.

The lawyers accuse investigators of employing a standard scenario. It's alleged these investigators tend to use a criminal, already in prison, or someone against whom they have genuine evidence. A deal will then be struck with this person to testify against the target. In return, the witness gets a suspended sentence or a reduced prison term.

"We find it alarming that in more than a dozen financial cases, the charges are based solely on the written testimonies of three or four people. And, importantly, these are the very same witnesses in every case," Filippenko said. "Miraculously, those same three or four people appear to have been involved in myriad alleged crimi-

nal deals in the city, if, of course, their evidence is to be believed."

The lawyers said the climate of fear and intimidation has made their work a nightmare. Lawyer Nadezhda Zhirnova at one point sent her child out of the city because of the threats she was receiving.

"We have decided to speak to the media out of desperation," lawyer Vsevolod Yesakov said.

As Yesakov explained, many protests have been made to the General Prosecutor's Office, which oversees the Investigative Committee and its work in the regions. But he says these complaints have gone unanswered.

This is in spite of a law requiring the General Prosecutor's Office to conduct an investigation within 30 days of receiving the complaint and establish whether there are grounds to bring a criminal case against those accused of trying to falsify evidence.

"The fact that all our complaints get shelved is most disturbing," Yesakov said. "It leads me to believe that the prosecutors approve of the corrupt methods of the investigators and do not want to create opportunities for these methods to be openly investigated."

Even if all of the lawyers' claims were false, why have they not been investigated? Neither the Investigative Committee nor the Prosecutor's Office has responded to media queries on the matter.

When added together these complaints reveal a dangerous pattern which, if proved, could lead to the Investigative Committee being completely discredited. The lawyers have drawn attention to their case by appealing directly to the president and insisting they are ready to be held to account for every statement they have made.

The lawyers' protest is a serious test for the country's system of conducting investigations. Faced with such strong public accusations, the General Prosecutor's Office should mount a broad inquiry. After all, the methods described by the lawyers are only a short step from the infamously short and sharp "troika trials" of the Stalin era, rigged courts in which the victims were sent to their deaths, or to the gulags, on evidence no less concocted or phony than that described here in 2010.

A full version of this commentary is available at *Transitions Online*, an award-winning analytical online magazine covering Eastern Europe and CIS countries, at [www.tol.org](http://www.tol.org)



Galina Stolyarova

## The St. Petersburg Times

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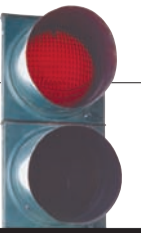
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## Russian New Car Sales Approach Pre-Crisis Levels

By Roland Oliphant  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — The auto market grew by 30 percent last year to 1.91 million units, rebounding after an initial slump and leaving it poised to reach pre-crisis sales levels by 2012.

Earlier gloomy forecasts for 2010 foresaw sales of only 1.5 million units, said the Association of European Businesses' Automobile Manufacturers Committee at its annual news conference on Jan. 13.

"The recovery has been driven by general consumer confidence, a stable currency and availability of credit as the year went forward," said Volvo Russia president and committee chairman David Thomas.

The committee, which represents 25 auto companies making 40 car brands for the Russian market, calculated that 1.47 million cars and light commercial vehicles were sold in 2009.

Sales fell by 7 percent in the first quarter, but returned to growth and steadily increased in the last three quarters of 2010. Growth for December amounted to 60 percent versus the same period a year earlier. Russia could soon overtake Germany as Europe's largest auto market.

Nine out of the 10 bestselling cars were models produced in Russia, with AvtoVAZ's Lada brand leading the way. The Tolyatti-based carmaker sold 517,147 units in 2010, and four of its models — the 2105/2107, Priora, Kalina and Samara, in descending order — were the top sellers.

Sales of the 2105/2107 more than doubled on the back of a cash-for-clunkers scheme the government introduced to support domestic car manufacturers in the midst of the economic crisis.



A traffic jam in central St. Petersburg. Carmakers enjoyed unexpectedly sunny sales results for Russia in 2010.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said in December that the government will spend about 17 billion rubles (\$555 million) in 2011 supporting the domestic auto industry, including 3.5 billion rubles for the cash-for-clunkers program and 2.8 billion rubles to subsidize car loans.

The Ford Focus was the most popular foreign-branded model, with 67,041 sold. General Motors' Chevrolet remained the most popular foreign brand, with 116,233 vehicles of various models sold in 2010.

Korean brand Kia took third place, selling 29,165 units of its mid-range Rio — nearly three times more than in 2009.

The unexpected burst of growth puts the Russian market well on its way to its pre-crisis sales figures. Thomas cautiously guessed that sales would return to 2008 levels of 2.8 million to 2.9 million units "probably in 2012," but asked journalists "not to write that in blood."

"Continued growth will depend on a stable currency, low interest rates

and continued consumer confidence," he said. Those factors, in turn, will largely depend on the global economic environment, because of sensitivity to commodities prices, he added.

On the back of this year's growth the committee predicts sales of 2.24 million units in 2011, just over 2 million of which will be cars.

The predictions jibe with forecasts by the Avtostat analytical agency of 2.5 million cars and light commercial vehi-

cles in 2011, including up to 2.35 million cars.

Auto executives are planning accordingly. "Toyota sold just over 79,000 last year, and this year we're expecting about 115,000," said Dirk De Man, senior director for Toyota and Lexus brands at Toyota Motor Russia.

Many manufacturers are focusing on smaller categories of cars, like Class C (small family cars) and Class B (small cars). "We're expecting growth in all sectors, perhaps with a predominance in Class C and B," said Sergei Lepnukhov, director of communications at General Motors. Lepnukhov expects much of GM's future success to come from two new C-segment models, the Opel Astra and the Chevrolet Cruze. "Demand for these is so high we do not have the capacity to meet it."

Earlier this month, AvtoVAZ, and its partners Renault and Nissan, announced plans to develop a Class C Lada. The new car, which will be based on the Nissan Almera Classic, is expected to be brought to market in 2015 to 2016, Vedmosti reported.

Car manufacturers are bracing themselves for an explosion of used car dealerships, as a glut of cars sold in the 2005-08 boom years return to the market as second hand models.

"Generally Russian consumers change cars every three years. So there's this bulge of used vehicles ready to come back into the market," Thomas told The St. Petersburg Times. A change in VAT law, which was until recently based on the whole value of a used vehicle rather than the profit margin, has made second-hand car dealerships financially viable, he added.

## Bureaucrats Given 9 Years to Improve Foreign Language Skills

By Alexander Bratersky  
and Alexandra Odyanova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

MOSCOW — "Let me speak from my heart in English," begged sports minister Vitaly Mutko at the December ceremony where Russia won the right to host the 2018 World Cup.

His stilted, thickly accented speech prompted enough snickers to turn a video of his remarks into a YouTube hit with more than 1 million views.

But thousands of bureaucrats may soon follow him on the thorny road to multilingualism, if not YouTube fame.

The government wants at least 20 percent of federal officials to be fluent in a foreign language by 2020, and is even prepared to send them abroad to study according to a report unveiled by the Economic Development Ministry on Dec. 31 and scheduled to be submitted to the government by late February, ministry spokesman Pavel Katkov said on Jan. 12.

The 124-page report gives little detail and does not elaborate on the cost of the project, but the task is monumental. While no official data on how many civil servants speak foreign languages is available, politicians and observers agreed that the figure is small.

Although President Dmitry Medvedev has approved plans to cut the number of federal officials by 20 percent by April 2013, that still implies that some 140,000 officials will be required to master a foreign language by the end of the decade.

The ministry's plan specifies that fluent English will become a requirement for newly hired civil servants starting in 2012.

Plenty of senior officials, including Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, his deputy Igor Sechin and Foreign Minis-

ter Sergei Lavrov, have used apparently fluent English before the cameras during meetings with foreign colleagues. Putin also speaks German after living in Dresden as a KGB spy in the 1980s.

Medvedev, a fairly fluent English speaker, took the spotlight during a trip to Silicon Valley last summer when he promised then-California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger: "I'll be back."

Zhanna Lypunova, a spokeswoman for Tver Governor Dmitry Zelenin, himself an English-language teacher by education, said local officials who dealt with "business and investment topics" were able to speak fluent English.

But some federal ministers, like Mutko and Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin, who has been the lone speaker on panel discussions at international conferences like the World Economic Forum to not speak in English, find it a struggle to communicate in a language other than Russian.

The foreign-language skills of bottom-tier officials are believed to be equally unimpressive, even though many of them have higher education diplomas, which imply completing language courses.

Dozens of federal officials enroll for language classes every semester at the presidential Academy of Civil Service, said Alexander Dolgenko, head of the academy's linguistic department, which provides training for many career bureaucrats.

Dolgenko said tough measures might be needed to boost the number of foreign-language speakers because many officials do not have the time — or the drive — to sit through the 20-hour language courses his academy provides.



English-language newspapers are used as props in a Moscow menswear store.

"If studying English were made part of the official job description, then we could achieve something," he added.

In Soviet times, the government handed out bonuses to bureaucrats, KGB staffers and scientists with the Academy of Sciences who could speak other languages: 10 percent for English, French or German, and 15 percent for Asian languages like Japanese.

Sergei Filatov, who headed the presidential administration under Boris Yeltsin in the 1990s, said that he and his subordinates "have suffered a lot" because of their inability to speak foreign languages.

"Despite the fact that we used professional interpreters from the Foreign Ministry, we had a feeling that some of our ideas were lost in translation," he said.

The Economic Development Ministry suggests that state officials be sent abroad on paid leave for up to two years to attend postgraduate programs and language schools.

Only 0.1 percent of officials currently study abroad each year, and a meager 0.5 percent of senior bureaucrats have graduated from foreign schools and colleges, but the numbers will grow to 3 percent and 12 percent, respectively, by 2020, the ministry said, without elaborating on how much the proposal will cost.

Murad Sofizade, head of the Russian club of Harvard graduates and co-leader of a Kremlin-backed project called "Global Education for Russians" said the plans would have a positive effect for the government.

But he said it would be more productive to organize foreign-language courses taught by native speakers in Russia and only send those who successfully complete them abroad.

WEDNESDAY, **JANUARY 19, 2011**

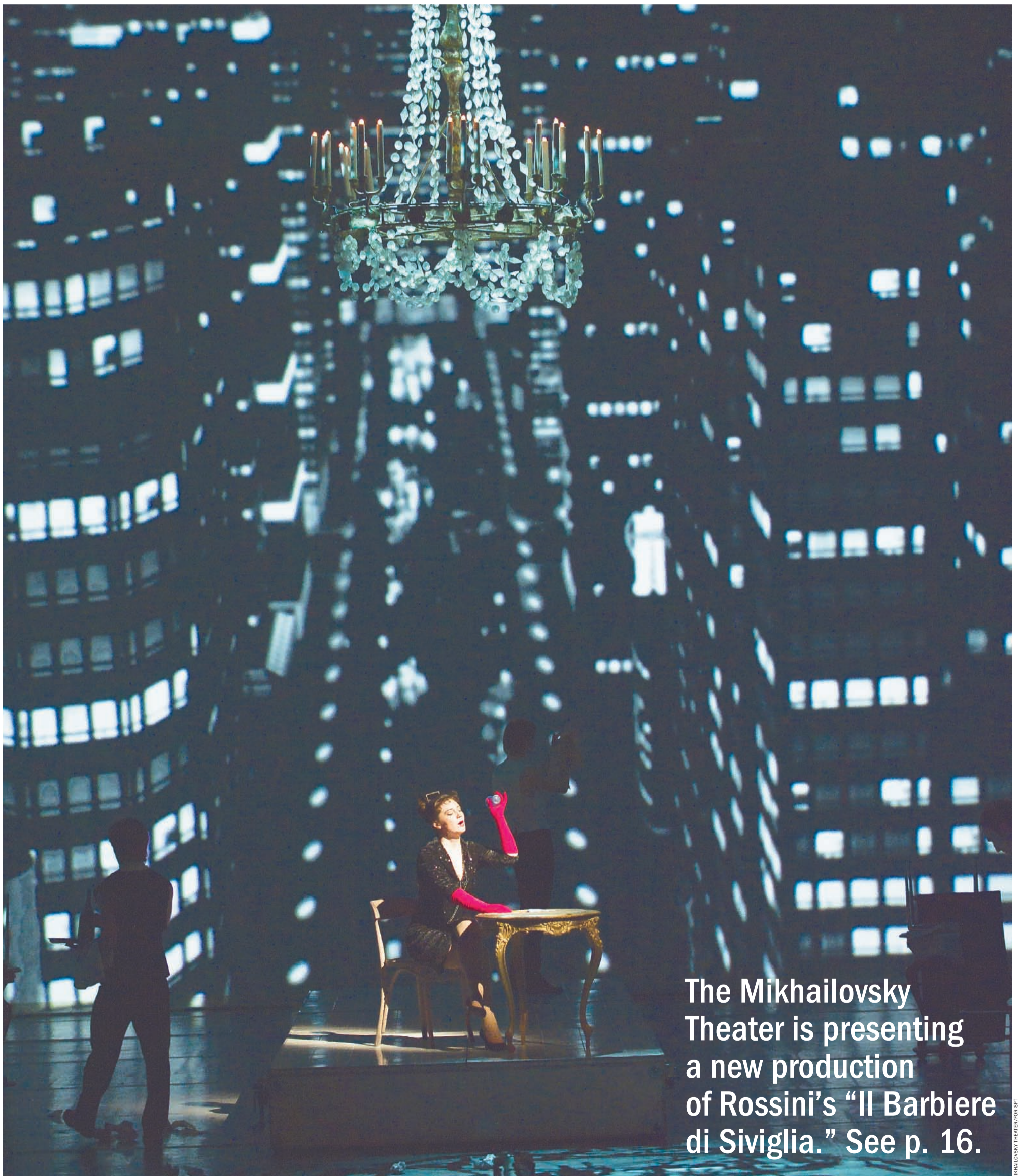
# ARTS & CULTURE

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The Mikhailovsky Theater is presenting a new production of Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia." See p. 16.

# Cherry Orchard reimagined as opera

A contemporary opera written by Frenchman Philippe Fenelon premiered at the Philharmonic in December.

By Galina Stolyarova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

A new opera created by a contemporary French composer and loosely based on Anton Chekhov's classic drama "The Cherry Orchard" invokes the sense of sadness felt by the Russian intelligentsia of today about the younger generation seemingly sacrificing soulfulness for pragmatism and materialism.

"Russia's intelligentsia is dying out," says Alexei Parin, a prominent Moscow poet and novelist who created the libretto for Philippe Fenelon's opera "The Cherry Orchard," which saw its local premiere on Dec. 22 in the Shostakovich Hall of the Philharmonic, when a concert performance of the opera was given by soloists from Moscow's Bolshoi Theater Symphony Orchestra under the baton of the Italian conductor Tito Ceccherini.

"Our sons and daughters are the Lopakhins of today," Parin continues, referring to Chekhov's pushy entrepreneur, devoid of sentimentality, who buys the Ranevsky family estate with plans to cut down its charming orchard and use the vacant land to make the purchase economically justified.

"I do not see how their generation can recover the ability to experience compassion, to see beyond practical concerns... The only hope is that our grandchildren will find such a philosophy suffocating and embark on their own spiritual journey. Hopefully, at least some of them will opt for creativity rather than for materialism. Otherwise, this country is doomed."

The opera, which is loosely based on Chekhov's classic play of the same name and is dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the writer's birth, enjoyed its premiere — albeit in concert version — in Moscow on Dec. 3 and 4. The opera was born out of a joint initiative between the Paris Opera and the Bolshoi Theater. Fenelon was commissioned to write the score, and the li-



The performers in 'The Cherry Orchard' are applauded at the Philharmonic following the local premiere.

bretto was written by Parin. A stage version is set to be performed this year in Paris and then in Moscow.

Fenelon's opera focuses exclusively on the final act of "The Cherry Orchard," which revolves around a farewell party organized by the owners of a manor house before they move out after selling their beloved property, complete with its pretty garden, to a dishonorable man who has no regard or sentimental feelings about its beauty and no personal connection with it.

In 2011 and 2012, the Bolshoi looks set to develop the Russian-French theme further by producing a ballet rendition of Honore de Balzac's novel "Lost Illusions," with music commissioned from the St. Petersburg composer Leonid Desyatnikov.

Fenelon is a prolific and busy composer, with over 100 titles under his belt, including seven operas. Although his works are performed on the stages of the most prestigious venues in his home country — some of his operas have even made it to the respected Opera Bastille — the composer is virtually unknown to Russian audiences.

A graduate of the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Olivier Messiaen, Fenelon made a spontaneous and emotional decision when he chose a career in classical music. In 1970, he made a pilgrimage to the world-renowned Bayreuth festival. But it was not one of the mystical Wagnerian epics that influenced his mind. Rather, it was Igor Stravinsky's "Les Noces" — an unlikely work to see the light of day

in Bayreuth, which was played there as part of the event's youth program.

"I left the concert completely shaken in the most positive sense of the word; the performance threw me into a state of ecstasy," Fenelon recalls. "I was completely overwhelmed. It was at that moment that I made the decision to become a composer."

The composer first read Chekhov's famous drama back in his early youth, and had since toying with the idea of writing an opera inspired by the story. Yet it was not until Fenelon began chatting with Parin at a ballet evening at the Bolshoi Theater that the idea suddenly began to take a real shape.

"It was bizarre, actually: I was at the Bolshoi with a friend of mine, and during the interval we just happened to

see this guy whom my friend happened to know... We started chatting, and I mentioned my fascination with 'The Cherry Orchard' — and Parin simply looked me in the eye with the most earnest expression and said, 'Well, I will write a libretto for you,'" Fenelon recounts.

Parin originally produced a straightforward libretto that closely followed Chekhov's narrative, but soon realized that a more sophisticated approach was essential. "In Russia, most people know the story almost by heart, so my task was to convey the drama, yet choose a specific angle," Parin explains. "So I chose to get straight to the point and begin with the moment when the entrepreneur Lopakhin announces that the Cherry Orchard has been sold, and declares himself as the new owner."

Parin made the last ball in Ranevskaya's house — essentially a heart-breaking farewell party — central to the opera. The opera is divided into 12 parts, named after the 10 main characters (Ranevskaya gets two additional parts) and effectively intended to present their life philosophy through their recollections of and personal connection to the cherry orchard.

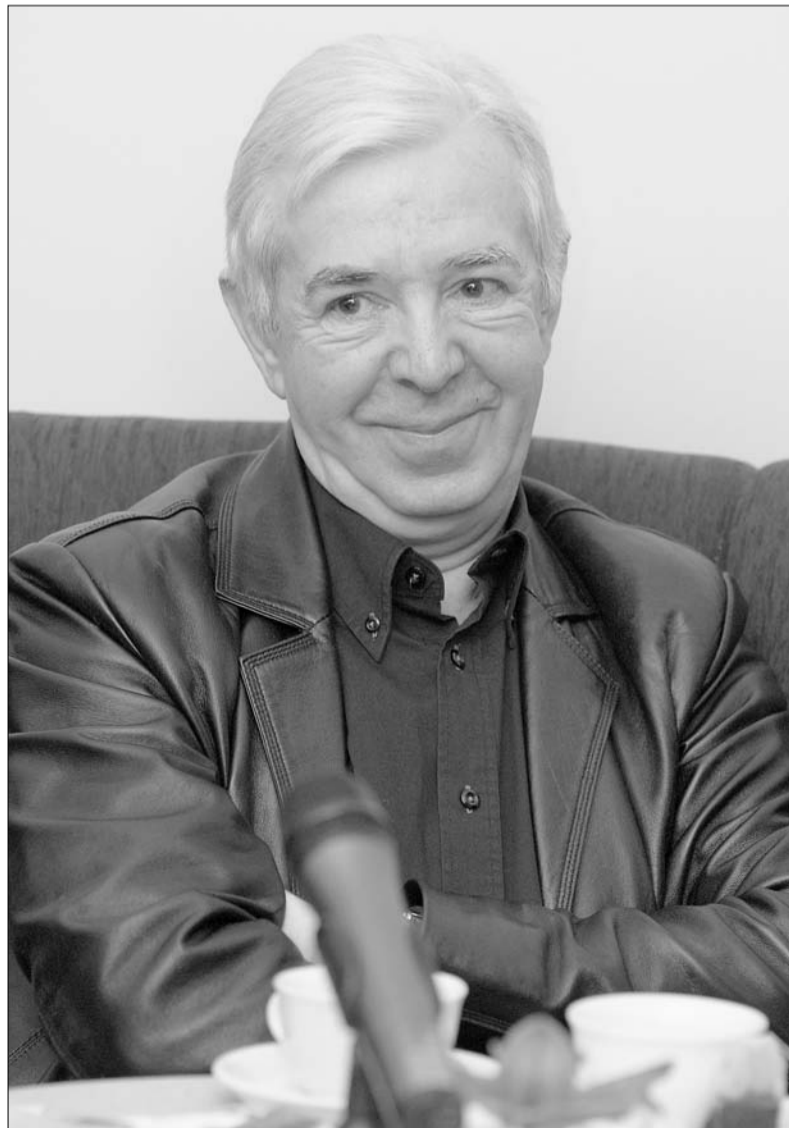
Fenelon teases the audience with provocative timbre choices: Firs, the estate's faithful caretaker, is a mezzo-soprano role, with the intention being "to make the caretaker a sort of guardian angel of the orchard, a sexless, somewhat ethereal creature." To underline the grotesque element of Ranevsky's prim governess Charlotte, who was brought up by a German family, Fenelon wrote the role for a bass, making Charlotte a classic opera-buffa character. Nostalgia is key to the opera, which ends with a sentimental scene of Ranevskaya wistfully recalling memories of her son Grisha playing in the garden as a little boy.

The opera will clearly be a challenge to stage. With all its parts resembling confessions, each of them introducing a particular character, the opera implies a rather static visual element, and turning it into a lively, dynamic performance will present a Herculean task. In this respect, "The Cherry Orchard" is in the same boat as "Il Viaggio a Reims," Gioachino Rossini's magnificent 1825 "party piece" originally created for an army of belcanto singers. In Rossini's work, glamorous guests are traveling to the coronation of the French king Charles X, emanating excitement and anticipation as they hurry to the Golden Lily Hotel. In the opera, the characters are waiting for the carriage to be repaired, meaning that no actual action ever takes place, apart from the occasional quarrel between impatient members of the motley crew of characters.

A major difference is that while Rossini's opera created some of the most vocally challenging and original roles, Fenelon does not offer anything close to such wealth and diversity. By contrast, every character, while telling their own unique story, transmits a similar sense of decadence, sadness and farewell mood, thus contributing to the piece's general sense of nostalgia.

Fenelon, in turn, aims to infuse this quintessentially Russian story with a global resonance.

"You can call my opera a postmodernist work if you like; one can easily trace the influence of an array of Russian composers, from Borodin to Shostakovich," Fenelon said. "These influences are allusions, rather than quotations. What is important is that Chekhov's story, which the Russian people have regarded for so many years as their property, is actually universal. It tells of coping with a loss and different ways of moving on from that loss."



Alexei Parin, author of the libretto for the new opera.



Philippe Fenelon, composer of 'The Cherry Orchard' opera.



Anna Netrebko rehearsing at the Mariinsky Theater on Tuesday.



Netrebko has performed the role before, but never at the Mariinsky.



Anna Netrebko.

# Diva Netrebko prepares love potion

Opera star Anna Netrebko returns to the Mariinsky for a new production of Donizetti's 'L'Elisir d'amore.'

By Galina Stolyarova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

**G**lamorous opera diva Anna Netrebko comes to her alma mater this week for two performances in the role of Adina in a new production of Gaetano Donizetti's "L'Elisir d'amore" on Jan. 24 and 27.

Netrebko, who has already sung Adina to great international acclaim and even recorded a DVD of the opera, partnered by the popular Mexican tenor Rolando Villazon, will be making her debut in the role on home soil. The new production of this comic melodrama — a favorite with opera houses across the globe — also marks the Mariinsky Theater's first ever interpretation of the work.

The opera, set in a Tuscan village, revolves around a love triangle between a sheepish peasant, Nemorino, a flirtatious beauty, Adina, and Sergeant Belcore. The lively, light-hearted heroine appears to choose Belcore, which prompts Nemorino to seek the service of quack doctor Dulcamare who concocts a love potion for the forlorn fellow. In the end, however, it is his uncle's large inheritance that wins Nemorino popularity with the village girls, and it is his decision to join the army that appeals to Adina, although everyone, Nemorino included, prefers to believe in the magic of the dubious concoction.

Staging the belcanto masterpiece will be renowned French director Laurent Pelly, one of the world's most successful directors both in drama theater and opera, whose work frequents some of the world's most prestigious stages, including L'Opera National de Paris, New York's Metropolitan opera, the Lyon Opera

Theater and Milan's Teatro alla Scala. Pelly has won international critical praise for his "detailed, satirical, often surreal, exquisite in taste and wonderfully imaginative productions, in terms of both the concept and execution.

Netrebko's appearance is eagerly anticipated.

In Jan 2009, the singer, who in September of that year gave birth to her first child, son Tiago, fathered by Uruguayan bass-baritone Erwin Schrott, made a triumphant comeback on stage singing Lucia in John Doyle's production of Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor."

The role of Lucia in Doyle's ascetic and elegant production, which became a favorite with both critics and audiences after it premiered at the Scottish Opera in 2007, came naturally to Netrebko and was imported specifically for the striking soprano. The diva mesmerized audiences with her performance, demonstrating a fluid, soaring style in the upper range.

Netrebko came to St. Petersburg from her hometown of Krasnodar at the age of 16 to enroll at the Rimsky-Korsakov Music College, and then the Conservatory, dreaming of becoming an operetta singer. A few visits to the Mariinsky convinced her that she was moving in the wrong direction. Netrebko joined the world-famous company at the age of 22, simultaneously dropping out of the Conservatory in her fourth year there.

There was little glamour in Anna Netrebko's first years on the banks of the Neva River. She lived in a notoriously horrible dormitory belonging to the St. Petersburg Conservatory on Ulitsa Doblesti and worked as a floor cleaner at the Mariinsky Theater where she dreamed of performing.



Netrebko has previously recorded Donizetti's 'L'Elisir d'amore.'

The turning point in Netrebko's career came after she was a tremendous success as Donna Anna in "Don Giovanni" directed by Nikolaus Harnoncour at the opening of the prestigious Salzburg Festival in the summer of 2002.

"Neither I nor anybody around me had envisaged a big success, apart from the director who had great faith in me as Donna Anna," Netrebko remembers. "Basically, I learnt my lines and score and went on stage without particularly high expectations."

But the performance won her an array of flattering reviews, a list of plum contracts with the world's major operatic companies and a welcome place at every Salzburg Festival ever since and at least until 2010.

Salzburg Festspiele, a magazine for friends and patrons of the festival, called Netrebko "the miracle of Salzburg."

"Salzburg was not prepared for this: no CD, no poster, no limousine," wrote

Festspiele. "And yet she and her voice are the sensation of Salzburg."

The admiration is mutual.

"I adore Salzburg, it is galvanizing to be there during the festival," Netrebko said. "I am thrilled to be there. Every day the most distinguished musicians perform in front of the snobbiest, most sophisticated audiences, and you can just see all the snobbery melting down or the opposite, manifesting itself in a revolt — sometimes both during the same show!"

Netrebko is excited by the Salzburg's atmosphere, with "boos" and "bravos" overlapping in controversial productions.

The captivating soprano, a rare opera singer who is gifted with not only a stunning voice — pure in tone, rich in color and velvety in timbre — but also with charismatic artistic talent, obviously enjoys the effects that her performances have on people.

"Of course, it is exciting to feel power

over the audience," she admits, adding that at the peak of her operatic career she still dreams of being able to hold even more of the viewers' attention. "I need to feel that I am professional and strong enough to make [the public] happy and desperate for the show to go on. When I am able to do such things, giving new energy to the people, I am happy."

In 2004, Salzburg's Festspiele placed Netrebko second in a list of divas possessing prima donna criteria such as charm, style, manners, social habits, appearance and dress, after Angela Georgiu, Renee Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, Karita Mattila and Deborah Voigt were placed lower down in the ranking.

The glamour rating may have been flattering but with public appetite for details about her life both on stage and behind the scenes becoming voracious, Netrebko feels she needs to assert her independence.

"It is not only that everyone discusses what I do, people start reaching their own — questionable and speculative — conclusions, and spread them around," she said.

Rehearsing the role of Nemorino are Sergei Skorokhodov, Dmitry Voropayev and Yevgeny Akimov, who has already sung the role to great acclaim in a fascinating rendition of the opera at the Zazerkalye Theater at the start of his career in opera. It was, in fact, the role of Nemorino in Alexander Petrov's stylish production, inspired by Felliniesque aesthetics, that put the singer in the spotlight, got him an engagement with the Mariinsky Theater and ultimately led to an enviable international career.

"L'Elisir d'amore" will play at the Mariinsky Theater on Jan. 24, 25 and 27, and then on Feb. 8. [www.mariinsky.ru](http://www.mariinsky.ru)

word's worth

## PERFECTING THE DEFECTIVE

By Michele A. Berdy

**Брак:** defective product, reject

**W**elcome back from vacation! A few of you put on some weight, it seems. Nothing like 10 days of nonstop eating and drinking to ruin the waistline. But a few of you look well-rested. Oh right, you were at the dacha with no electricity for two weeks. I also see some bandaged hands. Fireworks are a bit tricky after a liter of vodka, huh?

Well, let's get down to work, shall we? We'll start the year with a one-question pop quiz — and no moaning! This is a fun one: What do marriage and defective products have in common?

Oddly enough, they share the same Russian word: *брак*. But before you race to a divorce lawyer claiming that your

sacred bond is a factory reject, you ought to know that the words are etymologically unrelated. Marriage *брак* is related to the verb *взять* (to take, as in "do you take this man ..."), while defective product *брак* was borrowed from German.

The German-import *брак* also produced *браковать* (to reject a defective product); *бракованный* (defective); and *браковка* (the process of rejecting a defective product). *Браковка* is also the general process of sorting and quality control done by the *браковщик* (quality control inspector), although what could the *браковщик* find while doing *браковка* other than *брак*?

We all have plenty of occasions to use these words. An Internet site has this lead sentence: *Вы купили компьютер, а он оказался с браком* (You bought a computer, and it turned out to have a defect). Another site responds to a query

about a skin rash: *Может быть вам достался крем для рук из бракованной партии?* (Maybe your hand cream came from a defective batch?)

All these *брак*-related words can have colloquial meanings. For example, in the early Soviet period *браковка* and *бракованный* described someone whose poor health kept them from military service. *Быть бракованным, то есть не призванным в армию по состоянию здоровья, считалось позором* (Being "defective" — that is, not drafted because of poor health — was considered shameful.)

But *браковать* isn't just a matter of picking out bent widgets or weeding out weak conscripts. It can mean vetoing someone or something. In the Soviet era, this was often for political reasons: *Она три раза переделывала статью для газеты, и её три раза браковали* (She redid the article for the newspaper

three times, and it was rejected three times). Today — what a surprise — it can also be for political reasons: *Докладных фальшивок в подписных листах Касьянова немного, в основном подписи браковали из-за технических ошибок* (There were few proven fake signatures in Kasyanov's lists, and so most of the signatures were rejected because of technical errors). But rejection might be for reasons of taste or standards: *Начальник забраковал наш бизнес-план* (The boss nixed our business plan).

If your boss nixed your end-of-the-year business plan just before the board of directors considered your promotion, your raise might be rejected by ballot: *забаллотировать* (to vote down). *Забаллотировали порядочного человека, испортили ему всё будущее* (They voted down a decent man and ruined his entire career). Or rejection can come in a

different form: *прокатить на вороньих* (to blackball someone), in which *вороньих*, today most commonly a black horse, referred to the color of the balls: *Во время очередного переизбрания членов президиума академии его прокатили на вороньих* (When members of the academy presidium were up for reelection, he was blackballed).

If you are an actor or a public figure, rejection can come in the form of hissing or booing you off the stage or public arena. A sad composer wrote: *В Вене и Париже мою увертюру оищкали* (In Vienna and Paris, my overture was booted.)

Whether by booing, ballot, ball or boss — rejection is tough. But then *брак* of all kinds is tough.

Michele A. Berdy is a Moscow-based translator and interpreter, whose collection of columns, "The Russian Word's Worth," has been published by Glas.

# Opera's most popular lovable rogue

The indefatigable Figaro returns to the stage of the Mikhailovsky Theater in a new staging of 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia.'



Cast members rehearse at the Mikhailovsky Theater for a new production of Rossini's popular opera 'Il Barbiere di Siviglia' that premieres this weekend.

By Galina Stolyarova  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Giuseppe Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" (The Barber of Seville) is enjoying a new staging at the Mikhailovsky Theater that premieres on Jan. 21 and 23.

Responsible for the new interpretation of this international operatic best-seller is up-and-coming director Arkady Gevandov, who has already worked with the company on a children's entertainment program.

The director opted for a bold contemporary approach to the opera, with brightly colored plastic lamps decorating the interiors of the barber's shop, and "gilded youth" characters featured in the show.

Artist Vyacheslav Okunev has forged original designs fusing video art and deliberately old-fashioned machinery, such as a gigantic two-dimensional airplane and sliding plastic

"stones" bombarding the stage as if an earthquake is raging.

Rossini's masterpiece has a special significance for the Mikhailovsky: Back in 1918, the opera was the theater's first production which the former imperial theater reopened its doors after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. The company is taking on the work with the utmost enthusiasm. For Natalya Mironova, who is rehearsing the role of Rosina, taking part in the show is "great fun."

"Indeed, Rosina is thriving in what I would describe as a woman's wildest dream, getting changed into a dozen gorgeous dresses at lightning speed; and, well, that glamorous tight black retro dress and long red evening gloves could well become a fashionista's hit," Mironova jokes. "Joking aside, I really like the way Rosina's famous cavatina in Act 1 was rendered by the director, with men flying around and then falling at my feet."



Natalya Mironova (r) describes her role in the production as 'great fun.'

The singer feels the gilded youth concept will work well in the production.

"Tearful melodramas are much easier to stage than an opera-buffa," the singer said. "Depicting sorrow is gen-

erally much easier than making people laugh. Opera is a highly conventional art, so ultimately, in a traditional sentimental opera all you need to do is go on stage looking sad and fragile. In an

opera-buffa, you need to be much more creative and always invent something exciting and provocative."

Rossini's opera, based on Pierre Augustin de Beaumarchais' trilogy of Figaro plays, had its world premiere in Rome in 1816. The event was a major fiasco. Eventually, however, the opera's sparkling humor, boundless gaiety, abundance of comic episodes and dazzling melodic wealth earned the opera enormous global popularity. "The Barber of Seville" now features on the repertoire of any self-respecting opera theater.

The story revolves around the courtship of Count Almaviva — disguised as a poor student named Lindoro — and Rosina, the ward of an elderly doctor named Bartolo. The barber Figaro is only too happy to assist the count in sneaking into Rosina's house in various guises and to arrange their marriage.

The role of the witty and unfailingly resourceful rogue Figaro, who solves every puzzle that comes his way with enviable ease — if sometimes at the cost of compromising his own conscience — is a great test for any opera performer, as it provides the opportunity to demonstrate both vocal virtuosity and dramatic talent.

The master of intrigue, and cunning personified, Figaro is a darling of the French bohemian crowd and intellectuals. In 1826, the character's name became the title of a satirical weekly, which has gradually grown into the influential *Le Figaro* newspaper.

"Even in Russia, Figaro is enormously popular," Mironova said. "This barber is a genuine people's hero. His name is synonymous with fun. Musicians adore the opera, and so do audiences. It is perhaps staged even too often, so I am especially pleased to see that the director has chosen a fresh and modern approach. From my experience, I can say that a well-staged opera buffa has a long stage life, as it has great room for growth and improvisation — one just needs to make use of these precious opportunities."

Rehearsing the part are Yury Ivshin and Andrei Zhilikhovsky. The part of Count Almaviva will be sung by Sergei Romanovsky and Dmitry Karpov, while the role of Bartolo is being rehearsed by Yury Monchak and Karen Akopov.

## In the Spotlight

# PLANES THAT CATCH FIRE

By Anna Malpas

On New Year's Day, one of Russia's oldest pop groups, Na-Na, was preparing to fly back to Moscow in a creaky old plane after giving a concert in the oil town of Surgut in West Siberia. It was not the most auspicious start to the year, and things went from bad to worse.

The 27-year-old plane from the obscure airline KogalymAvia caught fire just before taking off from Surgut's airport, killing three people and injuring more than 40 others. Na-Na were traveling business class and managed to escape, even if their luggage, passports and, sadly, their wages in cash burned up.

In a surreal turn of events, Na-Na musicians became the main witnesses of the accident to the media, even getting quoted on the BBC.

In another uncharacteristically solemn move, they wrote a letter to President Dmitry Medvedev asking him to decorate the brave aircrew members who managed to open emergency exits in thick smoke and darkness, as people trampled on them in panic.

Na-Na has been around as a group since 1989, when they were big-haired



New Romantic types, experimenting with single gloves and ripped women's tights, and even singing live. The video to their greatest hit, "Faina," has guns, a simu-

lated orgy and people eating food off the naked body of singer Vladimir Politov.

Now they are cleaner-cut and wear hideous black-and-yellow shirts and

waistcoats to replay the old hits. You might not recognize many of the members, three of whom joined in 2008. The only original member is Politov, now 40, who has become quite an establishment figure, with Interior Ministry medals for performing in Chechnya.

The band probably wins the honors as the oldest Russian boy band, although it has tough competition from Ivanushki International, a manufactured pop group formed in 1994 that still clings onto its youth, even though the oldest member is 41.

More famous than the musicians is the band's eccentric impresario, Bari Alibasov, a tireless self-publicist who likes to be photographed with his collection of toilets, which he displays in his living room. This year, he held a public rehearsal of his funeral in a crematorium. He also sued a blogger for calling him a "Kazakh-Tatar gastarbeiter," arguing that he cannot be called a guest worker in his own country — and winning 1.1 million rubles (\$36,500) in damages.

Na-Na was innovative when it started out, experimenting with Western-style merchandising including Na-Na chewing gum and underwear, Alibasov told 7

Dnei magazine two years ago, reclining in his incredibly tasteless apartment with split-level floors covered with tufted carpet and a zebra-print bed.

The accident exposed the exhausting travel and incredibly unglamorous destinations that make up the daily life of a Russian pop star.

Na-Na said in their letter to Medvedev that they had flown to Surgut from Mineralniye Vody, a resort in the North Caucasus, the day before the air crash — a grueling round trip. You have to give it to the band: They are seasoned troopers. Amazingly, they went back to Surgut for another concert five days after the crash.

On their web site, you can see a video of them playing at a club and thanking the crew members, who look rather stiff and dressed up, sitting at a table loaded with bottles.

It wasn't the only news over the holidays that evoked the loneliness of the long-distance traveling pop stars. The singer of Boney M, Bobby Farrell, still inexplicably popular in Russia, was found dead from a heart attack in a hotel room in St. Petersburg. In a sad detail, he had just played at a party for a Gazprom affiliate.



## THE DISH



# Higher ground

**Moskva**  
6th floor of Nevsky Stockmann Center  
114 Nevsky Prospekt  
Tel: 937 6497  
Open 10 a.m. to midnight (till 1 a.m.  
Thursday to Saturday)  
Menu in English and Russian  
Dinner for two  
with wine 2,980 rubles (\$100)

By Shura Collinson  
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

We ended last year with a review of Ginza Project's panoramic restaurant on the top floor of the swanky Quattro Corti business center, and we begin 2011 by assessing the same restaurant group's panoramic restaurant on the top floor of the new Stockmann Nevsky Center mall.

This is not, alas, because The St. Petersburg Times is secretly sponsored by Ginza Project, but simply because Moskva opened during the festive period and is another example of the trend for panoramic restaurants that is sweeping the city and is impossible to ignore.

St. Petersburg was until recently home to another rooftop restaurant named after the capital and managed by the eminent local restaurateur Eduard Muradyan that closed last spring, and Ginza Project swiftly swooped in on both the defunct diner's name and logo to add to its ever-growing empire of upscale eateries, which seems to spawn a new restaurant every other week.

The Stockmann building has attracted criticism from some city preservationists. After historic buildings on the corner of Nevsky Prospekt and

Ulitsa Vosstaniya were demolished to make way for the Finnish department store and adjacent mall, the facades were reconstructed as promised. But just for good measure, a large glass extension was also built on the roof. While from Nevsky Prospekt itself, the glass protrusion appears relatively discreet, set back as it is from the facade, from the other side of the square, the architectural harmony of the ensemble has been destroyed, with the distinctive wedding-cake silhouette of Plushchad Vosstaniya metro station now dwarfed by the additional glass story.

It is precisely this controversial glass section that Moskva makes use of. Dissonant as it may appear from the exterior, from the inside, the extension is an enormous open-plan space decked out in warm woods, with raised sections of window seating. Beyond the strip of snowy roof, which is presently jazzed up with Christmas trees and flickering candle lanterns, the "Hero City of Leningrad" sign sits defiantly atop the Oktyabrskaya Hotel, faced by the clock tower of the Moscow Railway Station. Inside, Moskva's wait staff scurry between the tables and several raised open kitchen stations, wearing unforgivingly tight white T-shirts with quotes relating to the Russian capital on the back.

Moskva's fusion-themed menu is almost on the same scale as its premises, with dishes offered taking in soups (from miso to borsch), dumplings and pelmeni, salads (including a Chinese salad with pig's ears), pasta, pizza, and of course sushi.

If the vegetable salad with eggs Benedict (220 rubles, \$7.40) ordered out of resignation in the face of a lack

of alternative vegetarian starters (other than the inevitable salad Caprese) was a refreshingly appetizing surprise, then the reverse was true of an eagerly anticipated pizza with cep mushrooms and rucola (460 rubles, \$15.40).

The former was a mixture of crisp cucumber, tomato and radish slices tossed in smetana, crowned with a warm poached egg. For a simple salad, the result was surprisingly impressive, with quantities of dill and parsley kept refreshingly subtle.

The latter, while apparently baked in an authentic pizza oven, was spoiled by disappointingly strong cheese and strangely greasy mushrooms, resulting in a contradictory effect, whereby it managed to be overwhelming whilst also being bereft of any particular flavor.

A modest portion of beef Carpaccio (360 rubles, \$12) served with rucola was on the other hand fresh and tender, and showed no signs of having been brought out of the freezer, unlike in certain other local eateries, while there was little that was notable about the sashimi with red caviar (\$270 rubles, \$9), with the exception of the rather original nest of radish noodles on which they were served.

An equally moderately sized portion of rabbit stew (420 rubles, \$14) was more outstanding, boasting succulent meat with peas and baked jacket potatoes in an excellent creamy sauce.

Moskva's ample wine card is as varied as the food menu, ranging from 150 rubles (\$5) for a glass of house red or white, to bottles priced over the \$1,000-mark for the more well-heeled crowd that Ginza establishments invariably attract.

**Chamber Music** Glinka, Bellini, Glazunov, Arensky. Carpe Diem Chamber Orchestra. Art director Raisa Ulumbekova. Conductor Alexei Nyaga. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall Regina Kamenshikova Organ Recital* Bach, Buxtehude, Franck. *Maltiyskaya Cappella* 26 Sadovaya Ul. Tel. 498-0669

sunday, january 23

**ballet**  
**The Nutcracker** The classic Romantic ballet theater performs Tchaikovsky's Christmas favorite. *Hermitage Theater*

**opera**  
**Il barbiere di Siviglia** Stanislav Gaudasinsky stages Gioachino Rossini's classic two-act opera based on the comedy by Beaumarchais about

the adventures of the irrepressible barber Figaro and a host of other colorful characters. The role of the barber Figaro is played by Andrey Tolubeev. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

**concert**  
**"Musical Nurse" concert and lecture** Presented by Yelena Popova. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall, 3 p.m.*

**Vocal Recital** Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, Tchaikovsky, Medtner, Rachmaninov. Yana Ivanilova (soprano), Mikhail Nikeshichev (piano). *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall, 7 p.m.*

**Symphony Music** Brahms, Hindemith. St. Petersburg Academy State Orchestra. Conductor Alexander Titov. Soloists Vera Vasilyeva (violin), Vladimir Stopichev (alto), Julia Molchanova (cello). *Beloselsky-Belozersky Palace, Mirror Hall, 41 Nevsky Prospekt, tel. 319-9792, 4 p.m.*

**Boris Kazachkov Organ Recital** Praetorius, Weckmann, Pachelbel, Lubeck, Bach, Buxtehude. *St. Yekaterina Evangelical-Lutheran Cathedral, 1a Bolshoy Prospekt V.O. Tel. 323-1852, 4 p.m.*

**Symphony Music** Salieri, Rimsky-Korsakov. St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. Petersburg Chamber Choir. Conductor Arkady Steinlucht. Soloists Natalia Mironova (soprano), Galina Sidorenko (mezzo-soprano), Maxim Paster (tenor), Petr Migunov (bass). Narrator Samuil Lurie. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Grand Hall*

**Chamber Music** Vivaldi, Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev. The seasons of nature in the music of the great composers. *Cappella*

monday, january 24

**opera**  
**PREMIERE! L'Elisir d'Amore** Opera-buff by Gaetano Donizetti about a young peasant man who resorts to desperate measures to win the love of a beautiful landowner. Sets designed by Laurent Pelly for the Mariinsky Theater. Conductor Luciano Di Martino. *Mariinsky Theater*

**concert**  
**Piano Music** Okunev, Tsytoch, Liberman, Fontis, Burbudakis. St. Petersburg union of

piano duets. *House of Composers, 45 Bolshaya Morskaya Ul., tel. 312-2564*

tuesday, january 25

**opera**  
**PREMIERE! L'Elisir d'Amore** Opera-buff by Gaetano Donizetti about a young peasant man who resorts to desperate measures to win the love of a beautiful landowner. Sets designed by Laurent Pelly for the Mariinsky Theater. Conductor Luciano Di Martino. *Mariinsky Theater*

**concert**  
**... But Love is a Melody Itself** Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Wagner, Mahler. Mariinsky Theater Symphony Orchestra Conductor Pavel Smelkov. *Mariinsky Theater Concert Hall 37 Ul. Dekabristov*

**Pavel Raikerus Piano Recital** Liszt. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall*  
**The Laboratory of SimphoJazz** Ivanov. Soloists Jill Weddy (vocal, U.S.), Andrei Akulov (bayan, Ukraine), Vadim Eikenkrig (trumpet), Mikhail Ivanov (piano), Andrei Ivanov (contrabass). *Cappella*

wednesday, january 26

**ballet**  
**A Michel Fokine Evening** Fokine's ballets "Chopiniana" and "The Firebird". *Mariinsky Theater*  
**Spartak** Georgy Kovtun's spectacular new version of the story of the ancient Roman rebel Spartacus, based on the music of Aram Khachaturian. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

**opera**  
**Yevgeny Onegin** Yury Alexandrov directs Tchaikovsky's opera based on Pushkin's novel in verse. Conducted by Vadim Afanasyev. *St. Petersburg Opera*

**concert**  
**Choral Music** Rachmaninov. Singing Cappella. Conductor Vladislav Chernushenko. *Cappella*  
**Choral Music** Mendelssohn. Mariinsky Theater Choir and Symphony Orchestra. Choirmaster Andrei Petrenko. Conductor Luciano Di Martino. Soloists Marina Shaguch

### HOW TO USE THE LISTINGS:

Dates and times are correct at the time of publication, but last-minute changes are not infrequent, so it's best to check using the phone numbers at the end of each entry or consult local directories. Unless otherwise stated, stage events start at 7 p.m. All stage shows and films are in Russian unless noted.

## STAGES

wednesday, january 19

**concert**  
**Chamber music** Tartini, Stravinsky, Szymanowski, Brahms, Waxman. Soloists Graf Mourja (violin) and Natalia Gous (piano). *Mariinsky Theater Concert Hall 37 Ul. Dekabristov*  
**Grigory Varshavsky** Piano Recital Bach. *St. Yekaterina Evangelical-Lutheran Cathedral, 1a Bolshoy Prospekt V.O. Tel. 323-1852, 7.30 p.m.*

thursday, january 20

**ballet**  
**Walpurgisnacht. Carmen Suite** Choreography by Leonid Lavrovsky and Alberto Alonso. Music by Charles Gounod, Georges Bizet and Rodion Shchedrin. Conductor Mikhail Agrest. *Mariinsky Theater, Concert Hall*

**opera**  
**La Forza Del Destino** Elijah Moshinsky stages Giuseppe Verdi's tragic opera in two acts about a young man who accidentally kills his lover's father. Conductor Mikhail Sinkevich. *Mariinsky Theater*

**concert**  
**Symphony Music** Mozart. Dedicated to the 255th anniversary of Mozart's birth. St. Petersburg State Symphony Orchestra. St. Petersburg Chamber Choir. Artistic director and conductor - Nikolai Kornev. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Grand Hall*  
**Eduardo Fernandez Piano Recital (Spain)** Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, Albeniz, Schumann, Fernandez. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall*  
**Virtuosos of the Guitar** Closing of the 8th festival competition. The Grand Prix is a handmade guitar crafted by the Korean master "Brahman". *Cappella*

friday, january 21

**opera**  
**The Enchanted Wanderer** Rodion Shchedrin's opera for three solo voices, chorus

and orchestra (2002), based on the novel by Nikolai Leskov. Musical director Valery Gergiev. *Mariinsky Theater, Concert Hall*  
**Il barbiere di Siviglia** Stanislav Gaudasinsky stages Gioachino Rossini's classic two-act opera based on the comedy by Beaumarchais about the adventures of the irrepressible barber Figaro and a host of other colorful characters. The role of the barber Figaro is played by Andrey Tolubeev. *Mikhailovsky Theater*  
**Madame Butterfly** Yury Alexandrov directs Puccini's tragic opera about an American soldier who leaves his Japanese wife. *St. Petersburg Opera*

**concert**  
**Chamber Music** Scelsi, Igotti. Soloists Yelena Igotti (soprano), Dmitry Yalkin (electronic). *House of Composers, 45 Bolshaya Morskaya Ul., tel. 312-2564*  
**Symphony Music** Araja, Madoniz, Paisiello. The Catherine the Great Orchestra. Artistic director and conductor Andrei Reshetin. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall*  
**Symphony Music** Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, Yekimov, Artemyev, Stravinsky. St. Petersburg State Academic Symphony Orchestra. Artistic director and conductor Alexander Titov. Female Choir of the Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg Musical College. Artistic director Sergei Yekimov. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Grand Hall*  
**Daria Meyerkova Organ Recital** Bach, Mozart, Reger, Franck. *Smolny Cathedral, 3/1 Pl. Rastrelli, M. Chernyshevskaya, tel. 271-9182*  
**Concert** Khachatryan. St. Petersburg Cappella Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Alexander Chernushenko. Soloist Yevgeny Starodubtsev (piano). *Cappella*

saturday, january 22

**ballet**  
**Giselle** Nikita Dolgushin stages St. Petersburg's most popular and oft-performed ballet, Adolphe Adam's tale of a young peasant woman deceived in love by a young aristocrat. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

**opera**  
**Rigoletto** Yury Alexandrov stages Verdi's tragic opera about a court jester who plots to kill his master, the duke, after the duke's courtiers abduct his daughter. *Hermitage Theater*

**concert**  
**Symphony Music** Spohr, Bruckner. St. Petersburg Academic Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Vladimir Altschuler. Soloists Vladimir Gentzelt (violin), Andres Izmailov (harp). *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Grand Hall, 3 p.m.*  
**Grigory Varshavsky Organ Recital** Bach. *St. Maria Evangelical-Lutheran Cathedral, 8a Bolshaya Konyushennaya Ul. Tel. 314 7161, 6 p.m.*  
**Symphony Music** Rimsky-Korsakov, Kyuss, Shatrov, Vetj, Malygin, Rosas, Anisimov. Leningrad Admiralty Navy Base Orchestra. Conductors Alexei Karabanov and Valentin Lyachenko. *Mariinsky Theater Concert Hall 37 Ul. Dekabristov, 12 a.m.*  
**Choral Music** Mozart. Mariinsky Theater Choir and Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Andrei Petrenko. Soloists Marina Shaguch (soprano), Nadezhda Serdyuk (mezzo-soprano), Dmitry Voropaev (tenor), Alexander Morozov (bass). *Mariinsky Theater Concert Hall 37 Ul. Dekabristov, 7 p.m.*  
**Alexander Titov Organ Recital** Bach, Liszt, Gardonyi, Shtir, Dupre. *Cappella*



Spanish pianist Eduardo Fernandez will perform a program comprising Rachmaninov, Stravinsky, Schumann and Albeniz, as well as work of his own composition on Thursday, Jan. 20 in the Glinka hall of the Philharmonic.



Local favorites Markscheider Kunst will play at Kosmonavt on Friday, Jan. 21 at 8 p.m.

**Igor Timofeyev Band** Fusion. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.  
**Sergei Zolotov Band** Pop jazz. Street Life, 6 2-aya Krasnoarmeiskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 575 0545. 9 p.m.

**Traditional Music of India** Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**Art for Sale** Cover band. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.

saturday, january 22

**rock, etc.**  
**My Autumn/The Wheels of Sorrow/Genocide of Prescription** Metal, alternative. Arctica, 38 Ulitsa Beringa. Tel. +7 812 952 4696. 6 p.m.  
**Dmitry Panov** Singer/songwriter. Free entrance. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8:30 p.m.  
**Velvet Breasts** Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**Deep Inside** Rock. Fish Fabrique (Nouvelle), 53 Ligovskiy Prospekt. Tel. +7 (812) 764 4857. 10 p.m.  
**Volshhebniye Veshchi/Bardoseneticcube/Mira Drevo** Psychedelic rock, experimental. GEZ-21 (Gallery of Experimental Sound), 53 Ligovskiy Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 52 58. 8 p.m.  
**Alexander Lushin and Swing Couture** Pop. Griboyedov Hill, 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 764 4355, +7 812 973 7273. 9 p.m.  
**James Bond** Cover band. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.  
**Leonid Fyodorov** Art rock. Kosmonavt, 24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 922 1300. 8 p.m.  
**7Nebo** Rock. Money Honey, 28 Sadovaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 310 0549. 8 p.m.  
**The Pauki/Beerocephals/Batareya/Nitkie** Punk, alternative. Orlandina, 3 Instrumentalnaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 921 961 1911. 6 p.m.  
**Rasta Party feat. Botanic Project** Reggae. The Place, 47 Ul. Marshalova. Tel. +7 812 331 9631. 11 p.m.  
**Gender ID** Electro rock. Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Naberezhnaya Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. +7 812 333 1069. 8 p.m.  
**Tres Muchachos y Companeros** Latin. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

tuesday, january 25

**rock, etc.**  
**Vladimir Vysotsky Memorial** Acts t.b.c. Free entrance. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8 p.m.  
**Flynotes** Instrumental. Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**Ze Fish/Tramplin/Audio-Fax Zoccolo**, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.  
**jazz & blues**  
**Kirill Bubyakin/Sergei Bogdanov Jazz Philharmonic Big Band** Saxophone night. Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Kvadrat Jazz Club: Jam Session** Mainstream. Jazz Philharmonic Hall (Ellington Hall), 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 8 p.m.  
**Andrei Kondakov Band** Original compositions. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.

wednesday, january 26

**rock, etc.**  
**And So I Watch You From Afar** Post-rock, math rock. Arctica, 38 Ulitsa Beringa. Tel. +7 812 952 4696. 7 p.m.  
**Kim Jaejoong Birthday Party** Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 7 p.m.  
**Bomba-Piter Presents** Acts t.b.c. Money Honey, 28 Sadovaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 310 0549. 8 p.m.  
**Apri/Manifest/Double Art** Grunge, alternative. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

**jazz & blues**  
**Calypso Blues Band** "Jazz dancing." Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Swing\_outure** Gypsy jazz. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.

SCREENS

**Afterwards** (2009, Germany-France-Canada) Gilles Bourdos' thriller starring Romain Duris, John Malkovich and Evangeline Lilly. Crystal Palace, Khudozhestvenny, Pik.

**Boogie Woogie** (2009, U.K.) Duncan Ward's comedy starring Gillian Anderson, Alan Cumming and Heather Graham. Dom Kino.

**Christmas Trees (Yolki)** (2010, Russia) Timur Bekmambetov and Yaroslav Chevazhevsky's comedy starring Kristina Asmus and Vera Brezhneva. Aurora, Crystal Palace, Khudozhestvenny, Mirage Cinema, Pik.

**Exam** (2009, U.K.) Stuart Hazeldine's thriller starring Adar Beck, Gemma Chan and Nathalie Cox. Dom Kino.

**Fat People (Gordos)** (2009, Spain) Daniel Sanchez Arevalo's comedy starring Antonio de la Torre, Roberto Enriquez and Veronica Sanchez. Dom Kino.

**Gigola** (2010, France) Laure Charpentier's film starring Lou Doillon, Marie Kremer and Thierry Lhermitte. Dom Kino.

**Gulliver's Travels** (2010, U.S.) Rob Letterman's adventure comedy film starring Jack Black, Jason Segel and Emily Blunt. Crystal Palace, Jam Hall, Khudozhestvenny, Kolizei, Neva, Pik.

**Happy End (Les derniers jours du monde)** (2009, France-Spain-Taiwan) Arnaud Larrieu and Jean-Marie Larrieu's sci-fi drama starring Mathieu Amalric, Karin Viard and Catherine Frot. Dom Kino.

**Hideaway (Le refuge)** (2009, France) Francois Ozon's drama starring Isabelle Carre, Melvil Poupaud and Isabelle Carre. Dom Kino.

**Inadequate People (Nedekvatniye Lyudi)** (2011, Russia) Roman Karimov's comedy starring Ilya Lyubimov, Ingrid

**jazz & blues**  
**Leningrad Dixieland Band** "Jazz dancing." Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Alexei Cheremizov Trio** Piano night. Jazz Philharmonic Hall (Ellington Hall), 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 8 p.m.  
**Bart** Modern jazz. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.  
**Blues Clan** Blues. Street Life, 6 2-aya Krasnoarmeiskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 575 0545. 9 p.m.

sunday, january 23

**rock, etc.**  
**Chyorny Angel/Abordazh/Eksergiya/Epatazh** Metal. Arctica, 38 Ulitsa Beringa. Tel. +7 812 952 4696. 5:30 p.m.  
**Boskhi** Rock. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8:30 p.m.  
**Povidlo** Traditional jazz night. Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**EnerGetix Band** Pop jazz. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.  
**Pyotr Malakhovsky Birthday Party** Ulme, Surganova, Planeta VE, et al. Kosmonavt, 24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 922 1300. 7 p.m.  
**Rock Party** Acts t.b.c. Money Honey, 28 Sadovaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 310 0549. 8 p.m.  
**Simon Patterson** Acoustic. PirO.G.I. on Fontanka, 40 Fontanka Nab. Tel. +7 (812) 275 3558. 8 p.m.  
**Uniquetunes/Surtsey Sounds** Jazz, indie, experimental. Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Naberezhnaya Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. +7 812 333 1069. 8 p.m.  
**inVerse/The Cheshire Strangler/On-Moi** Alternative. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

**jazz & blues**  
**Alexander Latin Band** "Jazz dancing." Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Volkovtrio** Art rock. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.

monday, january 24

**rock, etc.**  
**CHK Fest** Acts t.b.c. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8 p.m.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

(1st soprano), Irina Mataeva (2nd soprano), Zlata Bulychева (mezzo-soprano), Alexander Timchenko (tenor), Vadim Kravets (bass). Mariinsky Theater Concert Hall 37 Ul. Dekabristov  
**Concert of School Leavers** "Tutti," the Secondary Music School for Gifted Children. Shostakovich Philharmonic, Maly Hall

GIGS

wednesday, january 19

**rock, etc.**  
**Viktor Sobolenko** Jazz, art rock, classical. Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**AK-47** Hip-hop. Glavclub, 2 Kremenchugskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 905 7555. 8 p.m.  
**Olga Ponomaryova Blues Band** Blues. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.  
**Sound Isolation: New Acts** Acts t.b.c. Free entrance. Shum, 45 5-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 946 8969. 8 p.m.  
**Alexander Daf/Iztumana** Ambient, downtempo, IDM. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

**jazz & blues**  
**Jonathan Levy and His Band** Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Kruglougolnik** Fusion. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.

thursday, january 20

**rock, etc.**  
**Severnoye Rodeo/Edo** Country, folk rock. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8 p.m.

**Chisty Band** Acoustic. Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**Easy Dizzy** AC/DC tribute band. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.  
**Rock Party** Acts t.b.c. Money Honey, 28 Sadovaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 310 0549. 8 p.m.  
**Yolochniye Igrushki/Milky Toad** Experimental electronica. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

**jazz & blues**  
**Hollywood and Broadway Melodies** Elvira Trafova, Tatyana Bubelnikova, Yulia Dalakova, Elmira Ilyasova, David Goloshchokin Band and Nikolai Sizov Band. Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 85 65, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.  
**Andrei Kondakov Electric Project** Fusion, jazz rock. JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 272 9850. 8 p.m.  
**Andrei Nikitin** Retro. Street Life, 6 2-aya Krasnoarmeiskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 575 0545. 9 p.m.

friday, january 21

**rock, etc.**  
**Sopor/-t de sangre/Milky Way** Metal, alternative. Arctica, 38 Ulitsa Beringa. Tel. +7 812 952 4696. 7 p.m.  
**That Zeppelin** Rock. Cheshire Cat, 9 Ulitsa Lva Tolstogo. Tel. +7 905 251 6774. 8:30 p.m.



Simon Patterson will play at PirO.G.I. on Sunday, Jan. 23.



Electro pop trio We Have Band will perform at Zoccolo club on Friday, Jan. 21 at 8 p.m.

**Kolibri** Indie pop. Chinese Pilot Jao Da, 7 Ulitsa Pestelya. Tel. +7 812 273 7487; +7 911 751 8339. 8 p.m.  
**Foma Yegorych Big Band** Rock. Fish Fabrique (Nouvelle), 53 Ligovskiy Prospekt. Tel. +7 (812) 764 4857. 10 p.m.  
**Eject** Experimental. GEZ-21 (Gallery of Experimental Sound), 53 Ligovskiy Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 52 58. 8 p.m.  
**Kim & Buran** Electronica. Griboyedov, 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 764 4355, +7 812 973 7273. 9 p.m.  
**Rock 'n' Girls** Cover band. Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. +7 812 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.  
**Markscheider Kunst** Latin, ska, rock. Kosmonavt, 24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 922 1300. 8 p.m.  
**Mlad I Star** Disco funk. Money Honey, 28 Sadovaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 310 0549. 8 p.m.  
**Kivimetsan Druidi** Folk metal from Finland. Orlandina, 3 Instrumentalnaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 921 961 1911. 7 p.m.  
**Razniye Lyudi** Rock. Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Naberezhnaya Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. +7 812 333 1069. 8 p.m.  
**We Have Band** Electro pop. Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. +7 812 274 9467. 8 p.m.

**jazz & blues**  
**Konstantin Maminov Quintet** Saxophone night. Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. +7 812 764 8565, +7 812 764 9843. 7 p.m.

Olerinskaya and Yevgeny Tsyanov. *Avrora*, *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Pik*.

**Last Night** (2010, U.S.-France) Massy Tadjedin's love drama starring Keira Knightley, Sam Worthington and Eva Mendes. *Avrora*, *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Kolizei*, *Pik*.

**Mr. Nobody** (2009, Canada-Belgium-France-Germany) Jaco Van Dormael's fantasy film starring Jared Leto, Diane Kruger and Sarah Polley. *Dom Kino*.

**Norwegian Wood (Noruwei no mori)** (2010, Japan) Anh Hung Tran's love drama starring Rinko Kikuchi, Ken'ichi Matsuyama and Kiko Mizuhara. *Avrora*, *Dom Kino*.

**The Nutcracker in 3D (Shchelkunchik i Krysiny Korol)** (2010, U.K.-Hungary) Andrei Konchalovsky fantasy film starring Elle Fanning, Nathan Lane and John Turturro. *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Neva*, *Pik*.

**The Master and Margarita** (2010, Russia) Yury Kara's screen adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's novel. Anastasia Vertinskaya, Viktor Rakov and Mikhail Ulyanov star. *Avrora*.

**The Misfortunates (De helaasheid der dingen)** (2009, Belgium-Netherlands) Felix Van Groeningen's drama starring Pauline Grossen, Kenneth Vanbaeden and Valentijn Dhaenens. *Dom Kino*.

**Morning Glory** (2010, U.S.) Roger Michell's comedy/drama starring Rachel McAdams, Noah Bean and Harrison Ford. *Avrora*, *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Kolizei*, *Neva*, *Pik*.

**Potiche** (2010, France) Francois Ozon's comedy starring Catherine Deneuve, Gerard Depardieu and Fabrice Luchini. *Avrora*, *Dom Kino*.

**R.T.T.** (2009, France) Frederic Berthe's romantic comedy starring Kad Merad, Melanie Doutey and Manu Payet. *Dom Kino*. Starts Jan. 20.

**Rabbit Hole** (2010, U.S.) John Cameron Mitchell's drama starring Nicole Kidman, Aaron Eckhart and Dianne Wiest. Based on a play by David Lindsay-Abaire. *Avrora*, *Crystal Palace*, *Jam Hall*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Rodina*, *Pik*. Starts Jan. 20.

**Satisfaction (Satisfaktsiya)** (2010, Russia) Anna Matison's love drama starring Denis Burgazlijev and Yevgeny Grishkovets. *Avrora*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Pik*.

**Season of the Witch** (2011, U.S.) Dominic Sena's adventure drama film starring Nicolas Cage, Ron Perlman and Stephen Campbell Moore. *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Kolizei*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Neva*, *Pik*.

**Tangled** (2010, U.S.) A Walt Disney animated musical film. *Pik*.

**Three Warriors and the Shamakhan Tzaritsa (Tri Bogatyrya i Shamakhanskaya Tzaritsa)** (2011, Russia) Sergei Glezin's animated fantasy film. *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Pik*, *Rodina*.

**TIMER** (2009, U.S.) Jac Schaeffer's comedy/drama starring Emma Caulfield, Michelle Borth and John Patrick Amedori. *Dom Kino*.

**The Tourist** (2010, U.S.-France) Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck starring Johnny Depp, Angelina Jolie and Paul Bettany. *Avrora*, *Crystal Palace*, *Jam Hall*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Kolizei*, *Neva*, *Pik*.

**TRON: Legacy** (2010, U.S.) Joseph Kosinski's sci-fi thriller starring Jeff Bridges, Garrett Hedlund and Olivia Wilde. *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Kolizei*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Pik*.

**The Very Best Movie 3D (Samy Luchshy Film 3DE)** (2010, Russia) Kirill Kuzin's comedy starring Garik Kharlamov, Yekaterina Kuznetsova and Alexander Baluyev. *Jam Hall*, *Kolizei*, *Mirage Cinema*, *Pik*. Starts Jan. 20.

**Yogi Bear** (2010, U.S.) Eric Brevig's live-action/CG animated adventure starring Dan Aykroyd, Justin Timberlake and Anna Faris. *Crystal Palace*, *Khudozhestvenny*, *Pik*.

## MUSEUMS

**ACADEMY OF ARTS MUSEUM**  
(The Scientific-Research Museum of the Academy of Arts) 17 Universitetskaya Nab. Tel. 323-6496, 323-3578  
M. Vasileostrovskaya. Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



A painting from Sergei Seregin's exhibition, 'China Village,' now showing at the Mansard of Artists.

**Pen Varlen.** Etchings and Drawings. Graphics. *December 9 through January 23*

**Pavel Shmarinov.** Painting, graphics. *December 9 through January 23*

**ANNA AKHMATOVA MUSEUM AT THE FOUNTAIN HOUSE**  
34 Fontanka River, entrance from 53 Liteiny Pr. M. Gostiny Dvor, Mayakovskaya. Tel. 272-2211. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday and the last Wednesday of every month. [www.akhmatoва.spb.ru](http://www.akhmatoва.spb.ru)

**NEW! Eighteen Views of St. Petersburg: Stanislav Basarab.** Graphics. *January 19 through February 6*

**Planet Earth, or Only Children Know What They Want.** Dedicated to 100 years of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Installation. *December 22 through January 30*

**ARTILLERY MUSEUM**  
(Military Historical Museum of Artillery and Engineers) 7 Alexandrovsky Park, M. Gorkovskaya, tel. 232-0296, 238-0704, Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed last Thursday of each Month

**Artillery – Not Only the Roar of the Gun, but Science Too.** Rare manuscripts from the 16th to first half of the 19th century. *November 19 – closing date to be confirmed.*

**ALEXANDER BLOK APARTMENT MUSEUM**  
57 Ul. Dekabristov Ul., M. Sadovaya, Sennaya. Tel. 713-8631. Daily 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Tuesday.

**ISAAK BRODSKY APARTMENT MUSEUM**  
3 Pl. Iskusstv. M. Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 314-3658. Daily 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday, Tuesday

**CITY SCULPTURE MUSEUM**  
Exhibition Hall 179/2a Nevsky Prospekt. Entrance through Chernoretskogo Pereulok. Tel. 274-2635, 274-2579, 274-3860. Daily, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Thursday, Friday.  
**New Year Strides around Europe.** Anatoly Zaslavsky, Aron Zinshtein, Olga Tobreluts, Andrei Kurmoyartsev, Zhenya Goland, Ludmila Belova and others. Painting. *December 23 through February 18*

**DOLL MUSEUM**  
8 Kamskaya Ulitsa, M. Vasileostrovskaya. Tel. 327-7224, 321-7869. Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturday 10.00 – master-class in making dolls.  
**NEW! Covered With Beads.** Fashion models of Barbie dolls: Galina Simonova. *January 17 through March 13*

**DOSTOEVSKY APARTMENT MUSEUM**  
5/2 Kuznechny Pereulok, M. Vladimirskaia. Tel. 571-4031. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday and last Wednesday of each month.

**KIROV APARTMENT MUSEUM**  
26/28 Kamennostrovsky Prospekt. M. Gorkovskaya, Petrogradskaya. Tel. 346-0217. Daily 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Wednesday

**KUNSTKAMERA**  
3 Universitetskaya Nab. Tel. 328-1412. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday and the last Thursday of each month. [www.kunstkamera.ru](http://www.kunstkamera.ru)

**HEROIC DEFENDERS OF LENINGRAD MUSEUM MONUMENT PLOSHCHAD POBEDY.**  
M. Moskovskaya. Tel. 371-2951, 373-6563. Daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed last Tuesday of each month.

**HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY MUSEUM**  
23 Professora Popova Ul. Tel. 346-1950. Daily 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Sunday, Monday.

**Magnificent St. Petersburg.** Photolithography. *December 24 through January 25*

**HISTORY OF THE POLITICAL POLICE MUSEUM.**  
6 Admiralteisky Prospekt. M. Gostiny Dvor, Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 312 2742. Daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Saturday, Sunday.

**HISTORY OF RELIGION MUSEUM**  
14/5 Pochtamskaya. M. Nevsky Prospekt, Sennaya, Sadovaya. Tel. 571-0495, 314-5838. Daily 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Wednesday  
**The Storm of the Sky.** Kukryniksy art group, Viktor Deni, Dmitry Moor and others. Soviet anticlerical graphics from 1910-1970s. *November 3 through February 27*

**HISTORY OF ST. PETERSBURG MUSEUM PETER & PAUL FORTRESS.**  
M. Gorkovskaya. Tel. 230 0329. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Wednesday. [www.spbkpost.ru](http://www.spbkpost.ru)

**Permanent Collection** The St. Peter and Paul Cathedral, housing the graves of most of the Romanov dynasty; History of the Mint; Museum of Old Petersburg; and more. Exhibits are housed in various locations in the Peter and Paul Fortress.

**The History of the Trubetsky Bastion Prison 1872-1921** The Peter and Paul Fortress was Imperial St. Petersburg's main jail and this exhibition tells the story of the famous revolutionaries and opponents of the Tsar who were imprisoned there.

**The Peter and Paul Cathedral** and the Great Princely Necropolis of the House of Romanov The story of the last resting place of the Romanov Dynasty from Peter the Great to Nicholas II, who was finally reinterred here in 1998.

**Petersburg through the Eyes of Englishmen.** John Atkinson, Matthew Dubourg, John Clark, Josef Hirn and others. Engraved views of St. Petersburg in the 18th-19th centuries. *December 10 through February 27*

**Representing Time: Three Centuries of the Russian Calendar.** Editions from the 18th-21st centuries. *December 17 through March 1*

**HISTORY OF ST. PETERSBURG MUSEUM**  
7/9 Universitetskaya Naberezhnaya. Entrance from Mendeleyevskaya Liniya. Tel. 328-9683



An image from Savva Bogatyrev's exhibition, 'One For All,' on show at the PhotoDepartment gallery.

**Tatyana Glebova.** Painting, graphics. *October 8 through January 30*

**HISTORY OF ST. PETERSBURG MUSEUM: Rumyantsev Mansion 44 Angliiskaya Naberezhnaya.** M. Vasileostrovskaya, Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 571-7544. Daily, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Wednesday and the last Tuesday of each month.

**Old Petersburg.** Capital and Surroundings. Fyodor Alexeyev, Ivan Aivazovsky, Maxim Vorobyev, Benjamin Peterson (Sweden-Russia), Luigi Premazzi (Italy-Russia), Vasily Sadovnikov. Painting, graphics. *October 21 through February 27*

**MILITARY MEDICINE MUSEUM**  
2 Lazaretny Pereulok. M. Pushkinskaya. Tel. 315-5358, 315-7287. Daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Closed at weekends

**MUSIC MUSEUM in the Sheremetev Palace**  
34 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 272-4441. Wednesday through Sunday 12 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed last Wednesday of each month. By prior appointment only.



A work from 'Ghosts,' an exhibition of art by Yevgenia Fedina-Penkrat on display at the Nonconformist Art Museum at Pushkinskaya 10.



# CLUBS AND VENUES

## ROCK, ETC.

**ArcticA**  
A rock venue mostly featuring heavy metal concerts.  
38 Ulitsa Beringa. Metro Primorskaya  
+7 (812) 952 4696  
www.arctica-club.spb.ru

**Avrora**  
A new concert venue located at the St. Petersburg hotel.  
5/2 Pirogovskaya Naberezhnaya.  
Metro Plushchad Lenina  
+7 (812) 907 1917  
www.avrora-zal.ru

**Cheshire Cat**  
A new, third location for the underground club. Singers/songwriters and lesser known rock bands.  
32 Zagorodny Prospekt  
Metro Vladimirskaia/Dostoyevskaya  
+7 (812) 575 6151  
www.catartclub.ru

**Chinese Pilot Jao Da**  
A local branch of the notorious Moscow underground rock club, which also has a branch in Montenegro. Seva Gakkel of Akvarium rock band and TaMtAm club fame is the venue's art director. Live rock, jazz and electronic music.  
7 Ulitsa Pestelya  
Metro Gostiny Dvor/Chernyshevskaya  
+7 (812) 273 7487; +7 (911) 751 8339  
www.spb.jao-da.com

**Fish Fabrique**  
One of the oldest surviving local music clubs has expanded and now also has a larger room called Fabrique Nouvelle which hosts concerts and film screenings.  
53 Ligovsky Prospekt  
Metro Plushchad Vosstaniya  
+7 (812) 764-4857  
www.fishfabrique.spb.ru

**GEZ-21**  
Part of Pushkinskaya 10 alternative art center. Mostly experimental and improvised music, some rock and electronic acts. A very limited selection at the bar.  
53 Ligovsky Prospekt  
Metro Krasnoarmeiskaya  
+7 (812) 764-5258,  
+7 (812) 764-5263  
www.tac.spb.ru

**Glavclub**  
A larger venue for big Russian and international rock and hip-hop bands.  
2 Kremenchugskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Plushchad Vosstaniya  
+7 (812) 905 7555  
www.glavclub.com

**Griboyedov**  
Located in a former bomb shelter, Griboyedov is one of the oldest and most respected local clubs, with live concerts in the evenings and DJ sets at nights. Griboyedov Hill is a more recently opened restaurant on top of the bunker, where concerts are also held.  
2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Ligovsky Prospekt  
+7 (812) 764 4355,  
+7 (812) 973 7273  
www.griboedovclub.ru

**Jagger**  
A rock music club and a brewery. Mostly cover bands.  
2 Plushchad Konstitutsii  
Metro Moskovskaya  
Tel. +7 (812) 923 1292  
www.jaggerclub.ru

**Kosmonavt**  
A larger concert venue launched by the team behind the now-defunct A2. Pete Doherty played here.  
24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa  
+7 (812) 922 1300  
www.kosmonavt.ru

**Manhattan**  
A rock club with a restaurant and billiards.  
90 Naberezhnaya Reki Fontanki  
Metro Pushkinskaya/Zvenigorodskaya  
+7 (812) 713 1945  
www.manhattanclub.ru

**Mod**  
A new location for the popular youth-oriented bar. Live concerts and DJ sets. Enter through the courtyard.  
7 Naberezhnaya Kanala Griboyedova  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
+7 812 712 0734  
www.modclub.info

**Money Honey**  
A rockabilly club with a fixed schedule of cover bands. More diverse bands perform upstairs.  
28 Sadovaya Ulitsa  
Metro Gostiny Dvor  
+7 (812) 310 0549  
www.money-honey.ru

**Orlandina**  
Yet another new location for the rock club, five minutes from the old one. Metal, rock, alternative.  
3 Instrumentalnaya Ulitsa  
Metro Petrogradskaya  
+7 (812) 958 3888  
www.orlandina.ru

**PiR.O.G.I. on Fontanka**  
A branch of the hip Moscow network of restaurants with live concerts and art events launched last summer. A dining room and a bar with performances by bands and DJs.  
40 Naberezhnaya Reki Fontanki  
+7 (812) 275 3558  
www.piterogi.ru

**Shum**  
A new addition to the club scene, perfect for live rock concerts.  
45 5-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Plushchad Vosstaniya  
+7 (219) 46 8969  
http://shumclub.ru

**Zal Ozhidaniya**  
A rock and pop concert venue. Part of Varshavsky Express retail and entertainment complex located in the former railroad station building.  
118 Naberezhnaya Obvodnogo Kanala  
Metro Baltiiskaya  
+7 (812) 333 1069  
www.clubzal.com

**Zoccolo**  
An underground rock club managed by the people from the now-closed Moloko club. Punk, indie, alternative and some experimental electronica.  
2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Plushchad Vosstaniya  
+7 (812) 274 9467  
www.zoccolo.ru

**JAZZ**  
**Jazz Philharmonic Hall**  
The oldest local jazz venue directed by local jazz patriarch David Goloshchyokin. Ellington



Finnish folk-metal band Kivimetsa Druidi, which describes its music as 'extreme fantasy metal,' will perform at Orlandina on Friday. Orlandina has reopened in a new venue on Instrumentalnaya Ulitsa.

Hall is a bar located in the upstairs area with a stage used for smaller concerts. Mainstream, Latin jazz, blues.  
27 Zagorodny Prospekt  
Metro Vladimirskaia/Dostoyevskaya  
+7 (812) 764 8565  
www.jazz-hall.spb.ru

**JFC Jazz Club**  
A smaller jazz club that operates daily.  
33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa  
Metro Chernyshevskaya  
+7 (812) 272 9850  
www.jfc.sp.ru

**The Other Side**  
A bar and restaurant with jazz and blues concerts at weekends. A popular expat hangout.  
1 Bolshaya Konyushennaya Ulitsa  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
+7 (812) 312 9554

**Street Life**  
A pop-jazz club and restaurant.  
6 2-ya Krasnoarmeiskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Tekhnologicheskyy Institut  
+7 (812) 575 0545  
www.street-life.spb.ru

## DJ BARS

**Datscha**  
A notorious DJ bar, popular with students and expats.  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
9 Dumskaya Ulitsa

**Dusche**  
An art bar launched by several members of rock band Leningrad. DJs, fashion shows, occasional concerts.  
Metro Ligovsky Prospekt  
50 Ligovsky Prospekt (Korpus 6)  
+7 (812) 610 1990

**Fidel**  
A DJ bar next to Datscha.  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
9 Dumskaya Ulitsa

**Radiobaby**  
A DJ bar launched by the Achtung Baby team.  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
7 Kazanskaya Ulitsa, in the courtyard  
www.radiobaby.com

**Siny Pushkin**  
An art bar conceived by Sergei Shnurov and Ivan Ushkov. DJs, occasional concerts.  
43/12 Khersonskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Plushchad Aleksandra Nevskogo  
+7 (953) 347 6676  
www.spushkin.ru

**Stirka**  
A laundrette bar. DJs, small live concerts.  
26 Kazanskaya Ulitsa  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
+7 (812) 314 5371  
http://40gradusov.ru

## GAY

**Central Station**  
The city's premier gay club.  
1/28 Ulitsa Lomonosova  
Metro Nevsky Prospekt  
+7 (812) 312 36 00  
www.centralstation.ru

**The Club**  
A recently opened gay club.  
17 Shcherbakov Pereulok  
Metro Vladimirskaia  
+7 (812) 912 11 69  
www.the-club.fm

**Cabaret**  
The city's oldest gay bar, much loved for its shows.  
181 Naberezhnaya Obvodnogo Kanala  
Metro Baltiiskaya  
+7 (812) 575 4512  
www.cabarespb.ru

**Golubaya Ustritsa**  
A self-described "trash" gay club, close to Central Station.  
1 Lomonosova Ulitsa  
No phone.  
www.boyster.ru

## CONCERT HALLS & SPORT ARENAS

**Ice Palace**  
1A Prospekt Pyatiletok  
Metro Prospekt Bolshevikov  
+7 (812) 718 6620  
www.newarena.spb.ru

**Lensoviet Palace of Culture**  
42 Kamennooostrovsky Prospekt  
Metro Petrogradskaya  
+7 (812) 346 04 38  
www.lensoveta.ru/

**Music Hall**  
4 Alexandrovsky Sad  
Metro Chernyshevskaya  
+7 (812) 232 9201  
www.musichall.spb.ru

**Oktyabrsky Concert Hall**  
6 Ligovsky Prospekt  
Metro Plushchad Vosstaniya  
+7 (812) 275 1300  
www.bkz.sp.ru

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+7 (812) 378 1710  
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**Yubileiny Sports Complex**  
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Metro Sportivnaya  
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## Four Ministers Quit New Tunisian Government

By Hadeel Al-Shalchi and Bouazza Ben Bouazza

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TUNIS, Tunisia — Tunisia's day-old government was shaken by the resignation of four ministers on Tuesday, undermining its hopes of quelling simmering unrest by sharing power with members of the opposition to the old regime.

All four who resigned were opponents of deposed President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's iron-fisted 23-year rule, and protesters demanded that the new cabinet be purged of the old guard that served Ben Ali.

Clashes broke out in central Tunis around the same time the resignations were announced. Riot police in shielded helmets pummeled a protester to the ground with batons and boot kicks as other officers fired off tear gas grenades to disperse a crowd of several hundred demonstrators.

A month of unrest has devastated the Mediterranean nation's tourist industry. Thousands of tourists have been evacuated, and Germany's tour operator TUI AG said Tuesday it is cancelling all departures to Tunisia through Feb. 15.

Junior Minister for Transportation and Equipment Anouar Ben Gueddour said Tuesday that he had resigned along with Houssine Dimassi, the labor minister, and minister without portfolio Abdeljelil Bedoui.

The three ministers are all members of a top labor union, the UGTT, which is not a party but is a movement that acts like a lobby and has a big nationwide base to mobilize people around the country.

The group's supporters staged the protest in central Tunis on Tuesday, calling for a general strike, constitutional changes and the release of all imprisoned union leaders.

Health Minister Mustapha Ben Jaafar of the FDLT opposition party also resigned, party member Hedi Raddaoui said.

Tunisia's interim leaders have sought to stabilize the country after riots, looting and an apparent settling-of-scores after Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia on Friday.

It was not immediately clear if the resignations could bring down the gov-



Protesters demonstrate against the party of deposed President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in central Tunis on Tuesday.

ernment, which has 40 full and junior ministers. Ahmed Ibrahim, the new minister for higher education from the opposition Ettajdid party, denied reports he'd resigned.

On a back street off Avenue Bourguiba, a key thoroughfare where the clashes took place, about 50 UGTT members waved union flags and cheering. One sign read "RCD out" in English — a reference to the party of Ben Ali.

Mohamed Ghannouchi, who has been prime minister since 1999, claimed that his announcement Monday to include ministers from Ben Ali's guard in the new government was needed "because we need them in this phase."

Tunisia has entered "an era of liberty," Ghannouchi said in an interview with France's Europe-1 radio posted on its website. "Give us a chance so that we can put in place this ambitious program of reform."

He insisted the ministers chosen "have clean hands, in addition to great competence," suggesting that experi-

enced officials are needed along with opposition leaders in a caretaker government to guide the country before free elections are held in coming months.

Ghannouchi pledged Monday to free political prisoners and lift restrictions on a leading human rights group, the Tunisian League for the Defense of Human Rights. He said the government would create three state commissions to study political reform, investigate corruption and bribery, and examine abuses during the recent upheaval.

The protests that forced out Ben Ali began last month after an educated but unemployed 26-year-old man set himself on fire when police confiscated the fruit and vegetables he was selling without a permit. The desperate act hit a nerve, sparking copycat suicides and focused anger against the regime into a widespread revolt.

Public protests spread over years of state repression, corruption, and a shortage of jobs for many educated young adults. The government an-

nounced Monday that 78 civilians have died in the month of unrest.

Reports of self-immolations surfaced in Egypt, Mauritania and Algeria on Monday, in apparent imitation of the Tunisian events.

The downfall of the 74-year-old Ben Ali, who had taken power in a bloodless coup in 1987, served as a warning to other autocratic leaders in the Arab world. His Mediterranean nation, an ally in the U.S. fight against terrorism and a popular tourist destination known for its wide beaches, deserts and ancient ruins, had seemed more stable than many in the region.

British Foreign Minister William Hague warned that it would be wrong to expect events in Tunisia to spark similar protests against other authoritarian regimes in the region.

"It's important to avoid thinking that the circumstances of one country are automatically replicated in another, even neighboring, country," he told BBC radio, speaking Tuesday during a visit to Australia.

## 45 Police Recruits Killed In Iraq

By Lara Jakes and Saad Abdul-Kadir

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD — A suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd of police recruits on Tuesday, killing at least 45 people and undercutting Iraqi security efforts as the nation struggles to show it can protect itself without foreign help.

The death toll was still rising more than three hours after police said the bomber joined a crowd of more than 100 recruits and detonated his explosives-packed vest outside the police station in Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit, some 130 kilometers north of Baghdad.

The attack starkly displayed the Iraqi forces' failure to plug even the most obvious holes in their security as the U.S. military prepares to withdraw from Iraq at the year's end. One recruit who survived the blast said the jobseekers were frisked before they entered the station's yard.

"We were waiting in the line to enter the police station yard after being searched when a powerful explosion threw me to the ground," said recruit Quteiba Muhsin, whose legs were fractured in the blast. "I saw the dead bodies of two friends who were in the line. I am still in shock because of the explosion and the scene of my two dead friends."

Loudspeakers from the city's mosques were calling on people to donate blood for the wounded. An Iraqi television station broadcast footage from the scene that showed pools of blood, bits of clothing and shoes of the victims scattered near a concrete blast wall.

Tikrit police put the death toll at 45, with 140 wounded. Dr. Anas Abdul-Khalik of Tikrit hospital confirmed the casualty figures.

Tikrit is the capital of Sunni-dominated Salahuddin province, and the city sheltered some of al-Qaida's most fervent support after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion ousted Saddam.

Salahuddin provincial councilman Abdullah Jabara accused al-Qaida of being behind the attack.

"The aim of this terrorist attack carried out by al-Qaida operatives is to shake the security in the province and to bring back instability to Tikrit," Jabara said. "The security forces shoulder responsibility for this tragic incident."

Jabara said insurgents successfully exploited what he called "inefficiencies" and "breaches" in security measures, calling it "an indication that the terrorists are still on the job and all security forces should be on high alert all the time."

## Overflowing River Splits Australian Town in Two

By Rohan Sullivan

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MELBOURNE, Australia — Authorities with megaphones urged residents of more towns in southern Australia to flee Tuesday as swollen rivers carried deadly floodwaters deeper into another state and worsened a natural disaster the government says may be its costliest ever.

Victoria state is the latest region afflicted in a weekslong flooding crisis that has left 30 people dead and caused once-a-lifetime floods in many areas.

The city of Horsham resembled a lake after the Wimmera River overflowed its banks Tuesday and bisected the community before starting to recede in the afternoon. About 500 homes in the city of 14,000 people were surrounded by water in floods Mayor Michael Ryan said were worse than anything the area had seen in the last 200 years.

Officials sent three emergency alerts overnight to residents in the path of the high water.

"At 5 a.m. they were out on the

megaphone just yelling 'evacuate,'" West Horsham resident Brett Insall said, but he stayed at his home. "I'm not too worried about it. It's only water."

State Emergency Service Incident Controller Stephen Warren said the water would slowly recede through the day. "We may even be able to get the (Western) highway open late in the day and actually have some access later tonight," Warren told reporters.

Across north-central Victoria state, more than 3,500 people have evacuated their homes, with 51 towns and 1,500 properties already affected by rising waters.

The Wimmera River towns of Dimboola and Warracknabeal faced inundation over the coming 24 hours, Victoria officials said.

An evacuation warning was issued to residents of Kerang, who face isolation for at least three days when the Loddon River peaks. Emergency officials said any resident unable to cope without electricity, water, sewer and telephone connections should leave their homes.

Floodwaters have already left

1,000 households in Victoria's northwest without power, and thousands more homes are under threat of cuts as substations and low-lying power lines are submerged.

Energy supplier Powercor was building earthen barriers around the substation in Kerang, in a floodplain expected to be inundated by two meters of water.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard announced the formation of a business task force to assist with rebuilding devastated infrastructure in Queensland. She said a day earlier that the floods that ravaged Queensland could be the country's most expensive natural disaster ever.

Most of the 30 people who died in Queensland were killed a flash flood that hit towns west of the state capital, Brisbane. The state's flooding inundated 30,000 homes and businesses and left 12 people missing.

The price tag from the relentless floods was already at \$5 billion before muddy brown waters swamped Brisbane last week.

## U.K. Official: Blair Ignored Advice on War

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — Britain's former top legal official says Tony Blair insisted the U.K. could join the 2003 invasion of Iraq without additional backing from the United Nations, despite specific advice which told him that was untrue.

Peter Goldsmith, attorney general between 2001 and 2007, told an inquiry that he was uneasy with the then-prime minister's claim that a UN resolution specifically authorizing the U.S.-led invasion would not be necessary under certain circumstances.

Blair will appear for a second public evidence session at the inquiry on Friday when he will be questioned on the issue — and other apparent discrepancies raised following his defiant appearance before the five-member panel a year ago.

In partial transcripts of private inquiry hearings released late on Monday, Goldsmith is quoted as telling the five-member panel that he advised Blair a further resolution was needed — shortly before the leader made public statements to the contrary.