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KONSTANTINE CHALABOV / © RIA NOVOSTI

CROWNING GLORY

A spectator at the Men's Biathlon event in Sochi on Monday ditches the official Olympic merchandise for his own extravagant headgear. Reaction to the games has so far been mostly positive, with athletes focusing on bringing home the gold. For more, see our coverage starting on page 8.



FEATURE

Swiss Perfumer Sniffs His Way To Success

Andy Tauer's scents find an appreciative audience in Russia. [Page 14.](#)

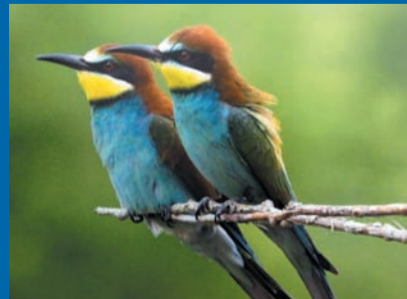
VALENTINE'S DAY

Hot Chocolates



St. Petersburg's sweet side in the spotlight. [Page 12.](#)

ARTS & CULTURE



Russians Take On The Wild

Photo exhibition shows best in country. [Page 18.](#)

Activist Handed 4-Year Prison Term in 'Warsaw Case'



Lyovkin's lawyer, Gleb Lavrentyev, and his mother, Olga Lyovkina, with pictures of Lyovkin at Monday's news conference.

By Sergey Chernov
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Denis Lyovkin, a 20-year-old activist held for more than one year in the so-called "Warsaw Case," was sentenced to four years in prison Tuesday by Judge Irina Eizhvertina for assaulting two police officers at a protest. On Feb. 4, the state prosecutor asked that Lyovkin be sentenced to 4 1/2 years behind bars.

Lyovkin took part in an attempt to save a historic warehouse belonging to the now-defunct Warsaw Railway Station from demolition on Feb. 4, 2013, which is believed to be St. Petersburg's first protest to result in criminal charges being brought.

The defense claimed that the indictment against Lyovkin is based purely on false evidence given by police officers.

The officers were allegedly injured when the police stormed the warehouse.

According to witnesses, police acted with force, knocking down and

beating the protesters. At a police station, Lyovkin was singled out of the 22 detained activists and charged with assaulting the policemen, before being transferred to Kresty prison. The remaining activists were charged with holding an illegal rally and disobeying police orders.

Testimony against Lyovkin was given by six police officers including the Admiralteisky District police chief Grigory Klebanov.

"That's when much became clear to me. I understood that the investigation was over before it had even started," Olga Lyovkina, the activist's mother, told a news conference on Monday.

"The testimony by the police took away any hope for a fair and competent investigation," Lyovkina said she had collected photographs to prove Lyovkin's innocence herself, but they were completely ignored by the investigators.

"I understood the reason," she said. "It's elementary; if they admit the

obvious — that Denis is not guilty — the testimony by the police officers headed by the Admiralteisky District police chief automatically become perjury, something that the system, that the investigators, could not let happen. The system short-circuited. Even the victims themselves are not interested in who assaulted them in reality. I did not expect that it would be so absurd.

"After what happened to my son, I lost respect for people in uniforms; they knew that Denis was innocent. They needed to quickly choose someone to be made responsible for this action.

"Both the investigator and the prosecutor are regular people, I think they see everything, but nevertheless the prosecutor is asking for 4 1/2 years in prison for my son. What for? How

could one be deaf not only to the truth, but to the law? How could one destroy the life of an absolutely innocent person, a young boy who has barely turned 20?"

The defense believes the police picked Lyovkin, a young man with blue hair and facial piercings, simply because of his easily recognizable appearance.

"The officers identified him with confidence, even if they had difficulty describing anyone who was nearby," said Lyovkin's lawyer, Gleb Lavrentyev.

"They all said it was a 'guy with blue hair and piercings.' It is clear where that came from, because all the officers are directly or indirectly subordinate to Klebanov."

According to Lavrentyev, Lyovkin's innocence was fully proven by photographic evidence and testimony from defense witnesses during the trial, which opened at the Leninsky District Court on Sept. 3, 2013.

The defense refers to Yevgeny Schyotov, an anarchist artist known under the alias Flor, as being the one who allegedly assaulted the policeman with a crowbar through a warehouse window. Schyotov failed to appear in court on Feb. 4, when summoned as a witness, and has not been available for comment since.

According to Lyovkin's lawyer, Gleb Lavrentyev, the defense first tried to prove the innocence of Lyovkin, but at one point changed tactics trying to expose Schyotov as the person allegedly responsible for assaulting the police officers, because "we could not stay silent anymore."

"The defense's position in this case is simple," Lavrentyev said.

"Unfortunately, the crime did take place. Indeed, the injuries were inflicted on two police officers with a metal object, but we believe that we proved convincingly during the trial that it was not Denis Lyovkin who did it."

Yelena Lyubimova, an activist with the Aid to the Detained group, said

initially that the police had stated that criminal charges would be pressed against both Lyovkin and Schyotov, but later the same day Schyotov was taken to a hospital due to injuries sustained during his arrest.

Schyotov took part in a number of self-styled "protest art performances," including the takeover of the historic Aurora Cruiser in 2011. Called "Memorable October, or the Resurrection of the Aurora," the event took place on Oct. 16 to mark the International Day to Eradicate Poverty.

According to Lavrentyev, Schyotov is currently in hiding from both the defense and prosecution.

Both the anarchists and the ERA architectural preservationist group that took part in the attempts to save the warehouse, condemned the defense's tactic of putting the blame on Schyotov as "unethical."

"We don't know who, in reality, injured the policemen. However, if we did know, we would never tell anyone about it," a group called the Anarchist Black Cross St. Petersburg said in a statement on Nov. 20, 2013.

"It does not fit the anarchist principles to surrender anyone to the cops, and shame on those who do. Moreover, if the one who injured the policemen is found, it won't make Lyovkin's life any easier. The case contains five identical testimonies by police officers who 'saw' that it was Lyovkin who inflicted the blows. The prosecutor and court cannot admit that they were lying. In this case, [the only thing that would change is that] there would be simply two people in the dock."

The anarchists squatted the neglected warehouse in late-December 2012, to turn it into an alternative cultural center and art gallery in the hopes of saving it from demolition.

The warehouse was demolished on March 30, despite protests. The developer, Adamant, is planning to build a luxury housing complex on the site.

ALL ABOUT TOWN

Wednesday, Feb. 12

SPIBA's weekly **English Club** will be held this evening from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in their office at 21 Nevsky Prospekt. Practice future conversations with English-speaking colleagues under the tutelage of native English speakers.

Thursday, Feb. 13

AmCham's Joint **IT and HR Committee** meeting starts this morning at 9 a.m. The practical aspects of remote employee regulation will be discussed this time.

Get philosophical during the British Book Center's **FORM Film Club** starting at 6 p.m. this evening in their office at 18 Izmailovsky Prospekt. The featured film is the BBC documentary "Philosophy: Guide to Happiness," an overview of the way some of history's greatest thinkers saw life.

Friday, Feb. 14

If you're involved in the automotive industry, don't miss the chance to ask Anatoly Kotov, chairman of the St. Petersburg Committee for Economic Policy and Strategic Planning, any pressing questions during AmCham's **Automotive Committee Meeting** this morning at 9 a.m.

Celebrate Valentine's Day with a group of wine lovers at the Denisov

and Nikolaev restaurant at 77 Kanal Griboyedova. This educational and convivial evening offers tastes of a variety of **Old World wines**, focusing on the Burgundy region of France, and nibbles. Call +7(921) 904 3563 to make a reservation.

Break into the travel business and learn the tools of the trade at **Intourfest Russia**, the largest exhibition in the world focusing on tourism in Russia. Find out not only about the intricacies of the domestic market but the international one as well. The event will be held at the Petrocongress Center at 5 Ulitsa Lodeynopolskaya.

Saturday, Feb. 15

The British Book Center will have their monthly **Reading Time** this afternoon starting at 4 p.m. This month's featured story is Oscar Wilde's "The Nightingale and the Rose," the Irish bard's tragic tale of young love.

Sunday, Feb. 16

History lovers shouldn't miss the **Romanov Exhibition** opening at LenExpo today and continuing through Mar. 2. Visitors will be able to experience interactive exhibits as well as see the belongings of Russia's once all-powerful royal family. Free Admission.

Monday, Feb. 17

If you haven't already, don't forget to visit Expocenter Eurasia's **Favorite Fancy Things** event, which began on Feb. 12 and ends today. Top-of-the-line products such as outerwear, home textiles and linens will all be on display.

Tuesday, Feb. 18

Get up to speed at AmCham's Investment and Legal Seminar this morning starting at 9 a.m. The topic of discussion will be "**Legislation and Legal Practice Update for 2013 and Outlook for 2014.**" The event will be held at the Paris Conference Hall of the Novotel St. Petersburg Center on Ulitsa Mayakovskovo.

Starting today, LenExpo will be hosting the **Fur Trade Fair**. Although the coldest season of the year may already be halfway done, those thinking ahead are encouraged to stock up for future winters.

The Corinthia Hotel will be the site of the **CIS Wealth Conference and Expo** over the next two days. Products and services related to banking, financial planning, asset management and tax consulting will be available to attendees hoping to gain an advantage in the modern business world of these emerging economies.

РЕКЛАМА

ВЕДОМОСТИ 27 ФЕВРАЛЯ 2014 САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГ

Конференция «Юридические итоги года. Курс на деофшоризацию: перспективы или угрозы для бизнеса?»

Конференция ориентирована на крупные и средние торговые и производственные предприятия, ведущие деятельность в Санкт-Петербурге и СЗФО.

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- Послание президента на 2014 год: деофшоризация и раскрытие бенефициаров, объединение судов, право следствия на возбуждение налоговых дел.
- Налоги: международный обмен информацией, деофшоризация, перенос фискального бремени на налоговых агентов, новая концепция налогообложения имущества.
- Реформа гражданского законодательства РФ: основные тренды.
- Уголовная ответственность: на что нужно обратить внимание бизнесу?
- Основные судебные прецеденты Высшего арбитражного суда и Верховного суда РФ в 2013 году.
- Антимонопольное законодательство: 4-й пакет, борьба с картелями, федеральная контрактная система.
- Экономическая стагнация: 7 советов бизнесу в преддверии ухудшения экономической конъюнктуры.

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16+

Russian Art Expert Held

RIA NOVOSTI

A prominent art expert was detained in Russia on accusations of misattributing a painting in a case that illuminates the murky complexities of Russia's art market.

Yelena Basner faces up to a decade in jail over a painting attributed to Russian pre-revolutionary avant-garde painter Boris Grigoryev that was sold for \$250,000.

The painting, allegedly appraised by Basner in 2009, was proven in 2011 to be a fake.

Basner, a former employee of the Bukowskis auction house as well as the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, was detained by the Investigative Committee last week.

The arrest of the 57-year-old expert on the Russian avant-garde movement, who has vehemently denied guilt, sparked outrage in the Russian museum community.

A petition drive to free her was launched and Hermitage Museum director Mikhail Piotrovsky called Bas-

ner's placement in custody "spitting on the intelligentsia."

Basner's supporters have claimed she could have been framed for research she has performed to expose fraud, not perpetrate it.

Basner was behind a study that proposed a method capable of irrefutably proving whether a painting was created before or after 1945, the start of the atomic age. According to the study, all paint created after 1945 contains microscopic amounts of radioactive isotopes, spread across the planet as a result of nuclear testing, that are absent in paint created before that date.

The study can have deep ramifications for the lucrative Russian art market, which deals primarily in artworks created in the 19th and early 20th century. Provenance of such artwork is often hard to establish due to the turmoil that followed the 1917 Revolution, which, coupled with the relative inexperience of many buyers, has led to a thriving market in fakes.



TEAM SPIRIT

St. Petersburg gets into the Olympic spirit with the launch of a Sochi 2014 decorated tram. The line along Ulitsa Sadovaya was inaugurated on Feb. 7 by Nina Baldecheva, a gold-medal winner for cross-country skiing in 1976.

Mendeleev Didn't Invent Vodka, Experts Reiterate

By Irina Titova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Dmitry Mendeleev, the Russian scientist known worldwide for the invention of the periodic table of elements and whose birthday was celebrated on Feb. 8, did not invent vodka, St. Petersburg scientists said last week.

"Mendeleev researched the theory of solutions and did not invent vodka," said Viktor Tupik, a vice-principal of St. Petersburg's Electric and Technical University at a press conference last Thursday to break the widely spread stereotype about the scientist, Interfax reported.

Academician Vladimir Shevchenko, director of the Grebenshikov Silicate Chemistry Institute of the Russian Academy of Science, said that Mendeleev did not test vodka but studied what volume it should be sold in.

"Mendeleev determined that the volume vodka is sold in now is the most profitable for sale," Shevchenko said.

Despite regular denials by historians and chemists, many people still be-

lieve the incorrect stereotype that Mendeleev was the one to have invented Russia's most famous alcoholic drink.

Mendeleev, who was the 17th child of a Siberian family, studied in St. Petersburg and later taught at St. Petersburg State University.

On Feb. 8 the traditional midday canon fired at the city's Peter and Paul Fortress was dedicated to the birthday of the scientist.

From Apr. 1 to 4, Mendeleev 2014, the eighth annual chemistry conference, will take place at the St. Petersburg State University.

Mendeleev was known for numerous achievements across the entire spectrum of sciences, such as chemistry, physics, meteorology and others. He formulated the Periodic Law, created his own version of the periodic table of elements and used it to adjust the properties of some previously discovered elements as well as to predict the properties of elements yet to be discovered.

City Population Increases

By Irina Titova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The population of St. Petersburg increased by 104,000 people in 2013 to a total of 5.13 million people, city officials announced last week.

That growth included a 59 percent increase in the birth rate but was somewhat dampened by a 41 percent increase in the death rate, according to Tatyana Bogdanova, head of the population statistics department of Petrostat, the St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast Federal Service of State Statistics, Interfax reported.

Migration contributed 100,000 new people to the population, 26,000 more than in 2012.

"At least 69 percent of migration growth consisted of migration from within Russia, while 31 percent of migrants came from CIS countries and abroad," Bogdanova said. "The majority of new residents came to St. Petersburg from Russia's northwestern regions, including the Leningrad Oblast, with 26 and 10 percent, respectively. Migrants from Uzbekistan made up 14 percent of new arrivals

and those from Tajikistan another 5 percent."

According to predictions, the population of St. Petersburg will near 5.5 million people by 2020.

Sociologists also marked a negative demographic tendency: St. Petersburg men live an average of ten years less than women.

The average life expectancy of men in St. Petersburg in 2012 was 68 years, while for women that figure was 78 years, sociologists said.

"Unfortunately we continue to see an obvious gender asymmetry. Our men die so young!" said Irina Yeliseyeva, director of Social Institute of the Russian Academy of Science.

"Currently the difference in life expectancy between men and women in St. Petersburg is 9.4 years and we are expecting that by 2020 that difference will be reduced to 8.8 years," Yeliseyeva said. "The average difference across Russia is 11 years. We are doing our best to decrease that difference, to make it no more than two or three years. For the moment we're facing an excessively high

death rate among men."

Yeliseyeva said life expectancy is affected by stress and lifestyle.

Meanwhile, the average age of the city's expectant mothers significantly increased over the past 20 years, Bogdanova said.

"There is a tendency for women to give birth at older ages. In the past, that age group was 20-24 years old; now it is 25-29 years old. The trend also reveals a delayed birth rate, when the percent of births of second, third, fourth and even fifth children increases," she said.

While in 1992 first children made up 67.6 percent of births, in 2012 their percentage dropped to 56.4 percent. At the same time the number of second children went up from 25.6 percent to 34 percent and the number of third children increased from 4.6 percent to 7.4 percent.

During the same 20-year period, the number of expectant mothers younger than 20 years old decreased significantly, from 11 to 2.1 percent, while the number of women giving birth after 35 years old doubled.

Pulkovo Airport Orders Survey

RIA NOVOSTI

St. Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport is commissioning an ornithological survey of the area in order to reduce the risk of bird strikes.

Northern Capital Gateway, the international consortium that manages Pulkovo Airport, announced a tender worth up to \$1.6 million rubles (\$46,000) for the research, according to a post on the state orders website.

The survey should monitor the area around the airport from April through October, covering the nesting season and seasonal migration periods, as well as identify popular nocturnal nesting spots and the routes of bird flight around Pulkovo.

Airport officials have previously said that Pulkovo, located about 20 kilometers (12 miles) to the south of the city center, lies in the flight path of migrating birds, increasing the risk of birds colliding with aircraft.

The research should also determine what sites — such as bodies of water, garbage dumps and marshland — affect birdlife in the area.

The airport has long complained that a large garbage dump several kilometers from the airport attracts numerous seagulls to the area.

In November, a plane flying to

Hamburg was forced to return to Pulkovo after takeoff when a flock of birds flew into one of its engines.

The plane landed safely, but the passengers had to transfer to another aircraft, resulting in a delay to the flight.

For the past decade, the airport has employed a squad of saker and peregrine falcons to scare off other birds, a tactic also employed by airports in the U.K. and U.S. It also has a bioacoustic system designed to deter other feathered visitors.

The consortium is accepting bids through Feb. 14 and is scheduled to choose a contractor for the survey by Feb. 19.

The consequences of midair collisions with birds and geese can be far more serious than delays, as bird strikes have been known to cause fatal crashes.

The most high-profile incident in recent years involving birds and aircraft took place in New York in 2009, when a US airliner was forced to make a dramatic emergency landing on the Hudson River after the plane collided with airborne geese shortly after taking off from LaGuardia Airport, causing both engines to lose thrust.

Court Merger

ST. PETERSBURG (SPT) — President Vladimir Putin has signed a law that will merge the country's two highest courts, a process that some observers say is aimed at strengthening presidential control over the judicial system.

The law, now available on a government website, will effectively abolish the Supreme Arbitration Court and pass its power to settle economic disputes to the Supreme Court over a six month period. The number of Supreme Court judges will increase from 25 to 170.

A 27-man panel that includes a representative of Putin will appoint the judges to the rebooted Supreme Court, which will be based in St. Petersburg, Interfax reported.

The amendment to the Constitution also means that Putin will be able to nominate the prosecutor general's deputies for approval by the Federation Council, Lenta.ru reported.

Previously, the prosecutor general nominated his deputies himself.

The bill passed through the State Duma in November and was approved by the Federation Council at the end of January.

ADVERTISING

St. Valentine's Day

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Russia Condemns WWII Criticism

Proton Rocket Deal Soon to Be Finalized



CNN, an American network, recently called the monument at Brest Fortress in Belarus one of the "world's ugliest."

By Lynn Berry
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW (AP) -- The Sochi Winter Olympics are making Russians beam with pride. But while the opening ceremony left out World War II at the behest of Olympic organizers, Russia's role in defeating Nazi Germany is still one of the nation's proudest moments, as some have found out the hard way.

Perceived slights to Russian pride caused an independent television station to be forced off the air and the Moscow correspondent of a U.S. network to be summoned to the Foreign Ministry for an official reprimand. In the latest display of Russian displeasure, a prominent anchor on state television insinuated that U.S. Marines depicted in the war memorial near Washington looked as if they were engaged in gay sex.

Here is a look at what caused Russians to react so strongly and how the Kremlin responded:

LENINGRAD LEGACY

The independent television station Dozhd, or TV Rain, came under attack after asking viewers in January whether the Soviet Union should have surren-

dered Leningrad, now St. Petersburg, to save the lives of the 1 million people who died during the nearly 900-day Nazi siege of the city during the war. The station quickly pulled the poll and apologized, but President Vladimir Putin's spokesman said the station had crossed a "red line." Russian cable providers lined up to drop Dozhd from their packages and prosecutors opened an investigation.

The poll struck a nerve with Russians for whom the resistance in Leningrad exemplified the suffering and heroism of the war. But the station's owner and editor have accused the Kremlin of using the poll to shut down Dozhd because of its critical reporting. The station has provided a platform for opposition leaders and reported on allegations of official corruption.

After major cable and satellite providers dropped Dozhd, its viewership has fallen from 17 million households to 2 million, according to station owner Nataliya Sindeyeva. While never able to compete with the state channels, Dozhd has been popular with urban middle-class Russians disturbed by the corruption and growing authoritarianism under Putin.

AN "UGLY" MONUMENT

U.S. television network CNN caused a firestorm when it included a war monument in Brest, a city in the former Soviet republic of Belarus, in an article on the "world's ugliest monuments" published last month. The piece said the Soviet soldier "emerging from a mountainous block of concrete looks as if he's about to thump the West into submission before hurling North America at the sun." It also noted that others think the soldier "simply looks constipated."

On Feb. 6, CNN edited the story and added a note apologizing for the offense it caused in Belarus and Russia.

The following day, the Russian Foreign Ministry took the unusual step of summoning CNN's Moscow correspondent for an official reprimand. The journalist was told that "mocking the memory of Soviet soldiers who gave their lives for the victory over fascism cannot be justified or forgiven," the ministry said in a statement on its website.

The U.S. network then withdrew the article entirely.

"CNN apologizes for the unintended offense caused by an article from a contributor that was intended to

be a humorous look at monumental architecture worldwide," it said in a statement. "We recognize that the Courage Monument carries deep and significant symbolism in honoring the soldiers who gave their lives defending their nation."

MARINES MOCKED

A controversial news anchor on Rossiya state television went after CNN during his weekly show, which aired Sunday night following the team skating competition in Sochi that gave Russia its first gold medal of the Winter Games.

As pictures of the monumental Brest sculpture filled the screen, Dmitry Kiselyov told viewers how the Americans had ridiculed the Soviet soldier depicted in the war memorial. He then showed a picture of the Marine Corps War Memorial sculpture shot from behind, so that the U.S. Marines raising the flag during the Battle of Iwo Jima were bent over one another.

"It's easy to mock," Kiselyov said with his trademark smirk. "A fevered subconscious could ascribe just about anything to it. Take a closer look: A very modern theme, is it not?"

Kiselyov has often led the attack on Americans, gays or other groups that top the Kremlin agenda. As international criticism over a Russian law banning gay "propaganda" reached a fever pitch last year, he said homosexuals' hearts should be buried or burned.

In December, Putin appointed Kiselyov the new head of the state news agency RIA Novosti, which after serving as the host agency during the Olympics will be restructured.

OPENING CEREMONIES

The producer of the opening ceremonies said he had planned to include a segment on World War II in the show, but the International Olympics Committee strongly advised against it. The IOC insisted the war was still too sensitive an issue and including the segment would set a bad precedent, Konstantin Ernst said in an interview Sunday on Ekho Moskvy radio.

Ernst said he found it extremely difficult and even painful to omit the segment, which he said could have been "the strongest moment of the whole ceremony."

Shooter Was 'laughing...mocking'

By Anna Dolgova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The man who opened fire in a Russian Orthodox church, killing two people, was a security guard who received his rifle as a duty weapon to accompany a cash-in-transit car, a news report said.

The suspected shooter, an employee of a private security firm who is about 25 years old, will undergo a psychiatric evaluation to determine whether he is fit to stand trial, Vesti FM radio reported Sunday.

The suspect is a former marine, who had passed a psychiatric evaluation before being hired as a security guard, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported Monday, without citing any sources for the information.

The shooter barged into the Cathedral of the Resurrection in the town of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, on the Sakhalin Island off Russia's Far Eastern coast, at the end of a Sunday morning service and opened fire, killing a nun and a churchgoer and injuring six other people.

Most of the wounded were hit

in their legs, and were not critically hurt.

"He started shooting not just at people, but also at icons, in what I would say was a very demonstrative execution," Sakhalin Archbishop Tikhon said in a video interview published on the regional Orthodox diocese website.

As churchgoers tried to escape, a man and a nun stopped and "tried to appeal to the his reason, and he shot them," a local priest, Viktor Gorbach, said in an interview to LifeNews television.

The attacker, who was seized at the scene, disclosed no motives to investigators, a spokeswoman for Sakhalin branch of the Investigative Committee, Natalya Makhonina, said, Interfax reported.

A medical examination showed that he was drunk at the time of the shooting, she said.

After receiving his duty weapon to accompany a cash-in-transit vehicle, the suspected shooter supposedly went home and changed from his guard uniform into a black jacket with a fascist

swastika on the back, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported Monday, without citing any sources.

The attacker "was laughing at [churchgoers], mocking, shooting at icons," Gorbach said, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported. "He told parishioners: 'pray,' in a mockery of faith."

Concerns about violence and gun control have flared up in Russia after a teenager armed with a rifle killed a teacher and a police officer at a Moscow school and held his classmates hostage earlier this month.

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill held a prayer service on Sunday for the victims of the Sakhalin shooting, Itar-Tass reported.

While the attack had no apparent connection to the threats of violence that clouded preparations for the Winter Olympics taking place in Sochi thousands of kilometers to the west, another service was also held in Black Sea resort, and Games volunteers and medics joined the prayers, the Moscow Orthodox Patriarchy said in an online statement.

РЕКЛАМА

ВЕДОМОСТИ 27 МАРТА 2014 САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГ

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Ryzhkov Quits RPR-Parnas Opposition Party

By Natalya Krainova

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

A leader of Russia's main liberal opposition party, RPR-Parnas, quit over the weekend with a group of senior supporters in a move that some say could be beneficial to the Kremlin and lead to the party's dismissal.

Vladimir Ryzhkov handed his membership cancellation letter to the other two party co-chairmen, Boris Nemtsov and Mikhail Kasyanov, at a meeting of the party's federal council on Feb. 8, and about 15 members of the political council followed him, media reports said.

Ryzhkov's move came after a stand-off with Nemtsov and Kasyanov that lasted several months over their reluctance to negotiate with the Kremlin and their support of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who is known for his links to nationalists.

Ryzhkov resigned after Nemtsov and Kasyanov decided to dismiss him as the party's official representative to the authorities and apply sanctions to nine party members for criticism of Nemtsov's and Kasyanov's vehement opposition to cooperating with authorities.

"This was a declaration of war, a crackdown on me and my supporters, there was no point in tolerating it anymore," Ryzhkov told Vedomosti in a story published Feb. 8.

Nemtsov told journalists on Feb. 8 that the Kremlin was "definitely a beneficiary in the whole story" but said Ryzhkov was "not an instrument in the hands of the authorities for destroying RPR-Parnas," Kommersant reported.

Nemtsov and Kasyanov fear that a number of the party's regional branches may withdraw their membership following Ryzhkov's departure.

"An apocalyptic scenario does exist: If too many regional branches leave the party, we may just as well liquidate it," Nemtsov said.

Kasyanov told journalists on Saturday that the party cannot hold on to its members by force.

"If someone wants to go after Ryzhkov, they can do it," he said, Interfax reported.

Calls to the cell phones of Ryzhkov, Nemtsov and Kasyanov on Sunday went unanswered.

Political analysts on Sunday seemed to shrug off the significance of Ryzhkov's departure, dismissing Nemtsov's statement that the Kremlin might benefit from the rift in RPR-Parnas and noting that the party's role in politics was a minor one.

"In real life, these are insignificant transpositions because the right-wing field [in politics] remains free, strictly speaking," former Kremlin spin doctor Gleb Pavlovsky said by phone. Kremlin First Deputy Chief of Staff Vyacheslav Volodin "is following it carefully," he added.

Lilia Shevtsova, a senior expert with the Carnegie Moscow Center, said by phone that liberal opposition "cannot play an important role due to its inactivity and because authorities have restricted its participation in elections."

The party's fate now depends on the ability of Nemtsov and Kasyanov to persuade Navalny to become the party's single leader, which was "the real reason" behind Ryzhkov's walkout, independent political analyst Stanislav Belkovsky said by phone.

The rift in the party began last summer, when Nemtsov and Kasyanov supported Navalny's bid for the Sept. 8 mayoral elections in Moscow, Ryzhkov told Gazeta.ru in an interview posted on his personal website Sunday.

Tensions in the party grew after Ryzhkov took part in President Vladimir Putin's meeting with political opposition leaders in November despite the objections of Nemtsov, Kasyanov and Ilya Yashin, a member of the party's political



Vladimir Ryzhkov cited RPR-Parnas' support for opposition leader Alexei Navalny as one reason for his departure.

council and a high-profile opposition leader, Ryzhkov told Gazeta.ru in a story published Saturday.

Yashin, in contrast to Nemtsov and Kasyanov, welcomed Ryzhkov's departure over the weekend, saying on Twitter that the party would "remain independent," apparently referring to the Kremlin's influence.

Kasyanov said he and Nemtsov were forced to strip Ryzhkov of his position as the party's official representative to the authorities because that position gave him the power to formally liquidate the party, which they feared he could do after 10 of his supporters registered another party — Republicans of Russia — with the Justice Ministry

in January, Kasyanov said in comments carried by Interfax.

According to Ryzhkov, however, his supporters canceled the registration of Republicans of Russia after he persuaded them to make concessions to Nemtsov and Kasyanov, but Ryzhkov was still fired as the party's representative, he told Gazeta.ru on Feb. 8.

I N B R I E F

Sausage Fest

■ KALININGRAD (RIA Novosti) — Russia's western exclave of Kaliningrad celebrated Long Sausage Day, complete with production of "the fattest sausage."

The sausage, made according to old Prussian recipes, was planned to be 3 meters long and 30 centimeters thick, a spokeswoman for a local museum said.

Kaliningrad resumed observation of Long Sausage Day last year after a 400-year-long break.

It first celebrated the holiday in 1520, when it was still known as Königsberg and was a German city.

The local butchers' guild paraded a 16-meter-long sausage through the streets that year. They strove to outdo themselves every year, peaking in 1601 with a sausage about 390 meters long and weighing 260 kilograms.

Beer consumption on Long Sausage Day was known to reach 40 tons.

On Holiday

■ MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) — Russia's working people enjoy among the longest paid vacations and the largest number of official holidays of those in the world's leading economies.

A survey by Russia's InterRating agency placed Russia fourth among the Group of 20 countries with a total of 40 guaranteed days off per year, behind Saudi Arabia (59), Brazil (41) and France (41).

Russian workers enjoy 29 days of paid vacation and 12 national holidays.

By comparison, employees in China have a five-day paid vacation, workers

in India and Indonesia get 12 days off, and South Koreans 15 days.

Counterfeit Whiskey

■ MOSCOW (RIA Novosti) — Russian retailers sold 9.9 million liters of whiskey more than the country imported in 2013, according to official statistics that indicate a lucrative market in counterfeit alcohol.

The State Statistics Service figures were reported Friday by business news agency RBC.

The counterfeit whiskey market may be worth at least 8 billion rubles (\$230 million), given Russian alcohol prices, the agency said.

The Russian segment of the Internet hosts numerous sites offering replicas of elite alcohol brands with prices starting at 100 rubles (\$2.90) per bottle.

Black Snow

■ MOSCOW — Black snow found on the streets of Omsk will be analyzed by the Federal Inspection Service for Natural Resources Use, RIA Novosti reported Sunday.

The snow's color is thought to be caused by emissions from the city's thermal and electrical power plant, which runs at maximum capacity during the year's coldest periods.

The process of replacing the plant's industrial filter is estimated at 150 million rubles (\$4.33 million).

Omsk is rated No. 8 on the rating of Russian cities with the most polluted air, according to State Statistics Service figures provided by RIA Novosti. Norilsk, Moscow and St. Petersburg top the list.

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ADVERTISING

Frunzensky to Become Office Building Government Agencies Could Move to Far East



Once a Soviet-era department store, Frunzensky's newest owners plan to renovate it into an office building.

By Olga Kalashnikova
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Soviet-era Frunzensky department store, closed since 1998, will be developed into an office building by the Senator business center network.

Built in 1938 at the intersection of Moskovsky Prospekt and Obvodny Kanal, the store is a listed historical building. In 1998, a fire destroyed part

of the building and the store was closed. Later, entrepreneur Ilya Baskin bought the building and began reconstruction. In 2000, the property was sold to Topaz, which operated the former department store as a shopping and entertainment complex. In 2004, the building was sold to the JFC group and closed down for good.

Various ideas for the building have

been floated over the years, including renovating it into a children's-goods shopping center, an educational center or simply demolishing it.

The city government never approved any of the plans, however, and the idea finally arose to create a new concert hall for the Mikhailovsky Theater in the former department store.

"All these ideas demanded financial investments that did not exist and the building was finally seized by Sberbank because of unpaid debts. The building was then offered on the open market, which led to the recently completed acquisition," said Kirill Akinshin, head of the consulting and evaluations department at Maris, part of the CBRE Affiliate Network.

The building was valued at 670 million rubles (\$19.3 million), reported Vedomosti.

"Senator, who bought the building, likes to choose buildings with richly decorated public spaces and facades. The Frunzensky building will fit well into the greater Senator chain," said Igor Kokorev, the Deputy Head of the Strategic Consulting Department at Knight Frank, St. Petersburg.

Real estate analysts consider the building's new purpose a logical choice since past attempts to use the building for commercial purposes failed so spectacularly. Senator is ready to adapt their plans to the space since they often face buildings demanding a creative approach, Knight Frank analysts believe.

"We think there may be problems due to the building's lay-out: An atrium, wide staircases, the distance

Real estate analysts consider the new plan a logical choice since past attempts failed so spectacularly.

between columns and dimly lit spaces. These aspects of the building do not make for an easy redesign," said Akinshin.

"After the renovation, the site will operate as an elite office building. In our opinion, an ideal designation is B+ class, but according to the announcement of the representatives of the new owner, it will be classified as an A-class business center," he said.

80 percent of the building will be given over to offices, according to the current plans. The plans also include a food court, restaurants and a limited number of shops. A parking lot for 150 cars is planned as well, in order to add value for prospective tenants.

Location is seen as another advantage of the new office center.

"Proximity to the historic city center, accessibility to a metro station and the popularity of Moskovsky prospect will increase the demand for space in the building," Maria Puzanova, the head of office real estate for Knight Frank, St. Petersburg, told The St. Petersburg Times.

"For the moment, the nearest A-class competitor is Renaissance Premium business center, near the Electrosila metro station," Puzanova said.

"The building's status as a 'historic site' does not have any impact on prospective tenants' interest since there are lots of historic buildings in St. Petersburg now used for office space," said Kokorev. "Interior decoration and facades can often become a deciding factor in increasing attractiveness of a building for its tenants."

The rental rate in such a location for luxury-class office buildings varies from 1,400 to 1,600 rubles (\$40 to \$46) per square meter, including all taxes.

Analysts from Maris estimate that the renovation will take from a 12 to 18 months to complete.

Government Agencies Could Move to Far East

By Anatoly Medetsky
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The Cabinet is considering further tax breaks for the Far East and moving some government agencies to the remote region in another bid to inject more vigor in the economically lagging area.

In addition, two new state companies could emerge to plow 170 billion rubles (\$4.8 billion) into preparing industrial sites and utility services for potential investors.

Deputy Prime Minister Yury Trutnev announced the proposals Feb. 5 after a meeting that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev held about the region.

The government is looking to the Far East, with its immense resources, as a major driver for the economic growth of the country as a whole. In order to tap those resources, businesses would incur equally enormous expenses for building access roads and connecting to electricity and water supply.

Trutnev said the rate of profit tax in the Far East could drop by half to 10 percent and income tax could slide to 7 percent from 13 percent.

"These proposals are based on best practices," said Trutnev, who is responsible for the region's development.

His team, including Far East Development Minister Alexander Galushka, studied the experience of countries like Japan and China, Trutnev said.

The tax proposals come on the heels of a law that went into effect last year to slash profit tax for large-scale investment projects in the Far East.

The move has not, however, brought about an inflow of capital to the region, prompting a search for other solutions to the existing economic problems.

As part of a change in the government's approach, former Far East Development Minister Viktor Ishayev stepped down last year. His successor Galushka has proposed setting up 'fast-track development' zones in the region. The areas would offer investors prepared sites for starting a business.

It was unclear on Feb. 5 whether the tax incentives would apply only to these zones, or to the entire Far East.

The government is considering creating a Far East Development Fund, worth 100 billion rubles, for lending to potential investors in the region, Trutnev said.

Another state investment vehicle, the Far East Development Company, could come into being and receive 70 billion rubles to build roads and utility services lines to the yet-to-be designated fast-track development zones.

Trutnev is proposing to start spending the money later this year.

The government is set to name the first such zones by June 15, Trutnev said. Far East regions had sent in proposals to pick from 400 land plots, he said.

Medvedev also ordered Trutnev to submit proposals about moving several government agencies to Far Eastern cities, Trutnev said. Along with the agencies, the proposals should include relocating the head offices of some state-owned companies to the region, together with their tax payments, he said.

He declined to elaborate, saying the proposals are due next month. The meeting on Feb. 6 was the first in a series of meetings dedicated to the fast-track development idea. From now on, Medvedev will hold them every month, Trutnev said.

РЕКЛАМА

The St. Petersburg Times

29-30 марта 2014 г.

Тренинг

«9 ЖИЗНЕЙ РУКОВОДИТЕЛЯ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ИНСТРУМЕНТЫ ЭКСПЛУАТАЦИИ ПОДЧИНЕННЫХ, КАК ДОБИВАТЬСЯ ВЫСОКИХ РЕЗУЛЬТАТОВ»

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Luis von Ahn: Taking Innovation to the Masses

By Olga Kalashnikova
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Luis von Ahn, a young Guatemalan scientist, is considered a pioneer in crowdsourcing. He is the inventor of CAPTCHA, the test used everyday by millions of computer users to determine whether they are dealing with humans or machines, as well as reCAPTCHA, which will help digitize books.

Luis von Ahn has been acknowledged as one of the 50 best brains in science, one of the 50 most influential people in technology, one of the most important young innovators under 35 and one of the 100 most innovative people in business.

The recipient of various fellowships and awards, including the MacArthur "Genius Grant," von Ahn believes there are many problems computers can't solve and tries to involve people in the process of fixing them. This idea is the basis of his new project Duolingo, a free language-learning website that has recently launched in Russia. In addition to giving everyone a chance to study, regardless of financial means, the project has a social mission. Website users double as translators, providing real-world translations that have never been seen before. Using this method, the Internet is being translated into various languages bit by bit.

Von Ahn talked to The St. Petersburg Times about how Duolingo works, its impact on the lives of millions, why Duolingo is an honest business model and what makes him happy.

Q: reCAPTCHA helps digitize books. Your new project Duolingo is aimed at translating the Internet. What is your motivation?

A: reCAPTCHA happened because I felt guilty about CAPTCHA, a system I'd invented to prevent spammers and bots from hacking into websites and emails, now used worldwide. I realized 200 million CAPTCHAs were being typed every day and so hu-

manity as a whole was wasting 500,000 hours every day because of me! So the idea came because I wanted to find a way to turn those hours into something useful for mankind.

Duolingo is a project that my co-founder, Severin Hacker, and I created because we wanted to do something to help diminish the large difference in terms of access to education between the rich and the poor. Language education — in particular English — can change someone's life by helping them get a job or enter a school, but learning a language has always been very expensive. Now, people who cannot afford top schools or private classes, or even software like Rosetta Stone [the computer-assisted language learning software], can learn languages very efficiently and have fun for free.

Q: Is it difficult to promote such projects? They could be seen as unrealistically optimistic.

A: So far we've been lucky because interest in the projects has been very high. CAPTCHA, reCAPTCHA and now Duolingo help to solve large problems that affect millions of people, so we haven't had to promote anything very much. We've actually grown to 20 million users in less than two years without spending a single cent on advertising because the product has been so well received — it has all been word of mouth.

Q: Is reCAPTCHA successful? Does it really help?

A: reCAPTCHA was bought by Google and now 2 million books are being digitized a year, giving everyone around the globe access to vast amounts of information.

Q: Does the Duolingo online course have the same efficiency as classroom-based education?

A: Yes, Duolingo has been found to be very effective. A recent indepen-



Von Ahn, seated, is the creator of CAPTCHA, reCAPTCHA and Duolingo.

dent study conducted by the City University of New York has shown that 34 hours of Duolingo is equivalent to one college semester of language education. This is major. Other online resources and software, such as Rosetta Stone, require at least 55-60 hours for the same amount of learning. Online studying is positive because it is accessible to a very high percentage of people — anyone with a computer or smartphone can study.

Q: With Duolingo, people are helping to translate the Internet. How can their translations be checked? Is there any danger that the Internet will be full of low-quality translations?

A: Our main feature is how effective [Duolingo] is as a learning tool. The fact is that our apps were named App of the Year by Apple and Best of the Best by Google, and we're the most popular way to learn a language online (and the number one education app, in general), with more people learning languages than in the entire U.S. public school system. Additionally, many of our users often Tweet that they prefer having fun while learn-

ing something fun rather than crushing candy for no purpose (in reference to the popular mobile game Candy Crush).

With regards to the translations, students can take free language courses on Duolingo without ever translating any texts, as this part is completely optional. However, many choose to translate because it helps them practice skills with exciting, real-world content.

The way it works is that users not only translate phrases but also edit each other's phrases and vote on the best translations. This iterative process guarantees high-quality translations — similar to how Wikipedia works. This verified quality has allowed us to provide translations for very high-caliber, international media corporations such as CNN.

Q: Are there webpages and articles translated by Duolingo students?

A: Yes — CNN and BuzzFeed, two large media platforms, have already been publishing content translated by Duolingo students for months. Many Wikipedia articles have also been translated by our community.

Q: Do you think Duolingo will be popular among Russians?

A: We think it will be, due to the demand for language education — especially English — for professional purposes, as well as upcoming international events to be hosted in Russia. German for Russians will be also available in about two months. We hope millions of Russians will be using Duolingo by the end of 2014.

Q: Why have you called Duolingo an "honest business model"?

A: In theory, Duolingo provides free education to millions of people by allowing them to "pay" not with money but with time — time they spend on their own education. Of course the translations are optional, which is why I say students "pay" in quotations. The fact is that everyone who learns a language has to translate sentences as a part of the course. Normally, these are fictional sentences such as "the cat is white." We make use of the work that is already being put into education — these translations — in order to finance the project.

Q: Why is this project important to you?

A: I grew up in Guatemala, a very poor country where most people who are born poor will continue to live in poverty throughout their lives. I'd always thought about how education further divided people in terms of opportunity because money allows access to good education, which leads to good jobs, while no money means access to very basic education.

As I said earlier, I decided to work with language education because the field of education is vast and I felt it was one area that could really make a large impact on the lives of millions. The fact that 20 million people are now learning languages for free, and that this number is growing quickly, makes me very happy.

Education & Job Opportunities

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TASTE TEST Russia got its first taste of gold at the Sochi Games on Feb. 9 when it won the team figure skating event in front of a packed house, which included President Vladimir Putin.

Sochi Security Gets High Marks as Games Begin

By Yekaterina Kravtsova and Ivan Nechepurenko
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Security concerns over terrorist attacks have declined since the Sochi Winter Olympics kicked off over the weekend, and visitors say they have not been inconvenienced by security measures despite the presence of thousands of law enforcement officers.

The issue of security dominated international headlines in the run-up to the Games, and the U.S. offered assistance from its own security services, citing the threat of attacks by Islamist militants from the turbulent North Caucasus region that borders Sochi as reason to be extra vigilant.

The U.S. officials attending the Games said they were satisfied with the security provided by Russian authorities, however.

"The level of security is quite appropriate and it is very good and I hope the attention of the media and the world turns now more to what the athletes are going to do instead of the threats that are being made,"

Janet Napolitano, the head of the U.S. delegation and former homeland security secretary, told CNN on Sunday.

Tourists seemed equally pleased, saying the expectations that had been built up by Western media were false.

"I have been to London and Vancouver and the way everything is organized here is way better," said Tyler Post from Sacramento, California.

"Our media in the U.S. is a mess, what I see here is very different from the picture they have portrayed," he said.

Another U.S. tourist echoed that sentiment, saying the U.S. media had "made it look as though the police would be very pervasive."

"The media in the U.S. has obviously blown [the security issue] out of proportion," said Branton Terry from Oklahoma.

Even if not an eyesore for tourists, however, security was still clearly present at the Games. Little white tents were scattered around the alpine roads in the mountains, with police personnel monitoring the situation from the inside.

Security personnel were dressed in outfits that were indistinguishable from the volunteers' uniforms, a fact which perhaps ensured that visitors would not feel too nervous.

Despite earlier reports of U.S. officials complaining about cooperation with Russian security services, U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Michael McFaul said in an interview with NBC on Sunday that the U.S. had coordinated "very closely" with the Russians in sharing information on possible threats.

"We are quite satisfied with the level of cooperation we have now," McFaul said.

On the eve of the opening ceremony on Feb. 7, International Olympic Committee head Thomas Bach told reporters in Sochi he was sure the games would be completely secure and laughed off a remark about these games being the first facing a direct threat.

"I am really sorry but you cannot forget how many threats there were at each of the Olympic Games before," he said. "We had threats on Sydney, we had threats on Athens. Maybe you remember the situation in Salt Lake City. There were many so you cannot single out these Games in this way."

Sochi police were unable to comment immediately on whether there were new threats in Sochi since the beginning of the Olympics, but no additional security measures were visible in the city during the first days of the Games.

Crowds of people had to wait to pass a security check only at one venue in central Sochi where spectators gathered to watch a live broadcast of the events.

On trains that run from Sochi to Krasnaya Polyana and other Olympic venues, security remained the same as it was before the Olympics. All the bags were scanned but security officers operated quickly and there were usually no lines at the security checkpoints.

The train station in Sochi was the only place where spectators heading to the Olympic Park or alpine venues had to pass a security check.

The number of police officers on Sochi streets remained the same as it was on the eve of the Olympics.

Police officers on 24-hour patrol could be seen every few hundred meters in central Sochi. Russian authorities had said earlier that some 40,000 police officers would be present in the city during the Games.

Another Olympic visitor from the U.S., Barbara Ganong, said that her visit to Sochi had proven earlier media reports wrong.

"They did a good job, security is not excessive and it definitely makes me feel safe," she said, standing in front of the entrance to the Krasnaya Polyana railway station.

Yet while media reports of terrorist threats and construction blunders were drowned out by feel-good stories about athletes taking gold during the first few days of the Games, there was one sobering reminder on Monday about Russia's ongoing battle against an insurgency in the neighboring North Caucasus.

Police killed five suspected militants and took one into custody in a raid on a house in Dagestan's capital, Makhachkala, located some 600 kilometers from Sochi.

Some observers and U.S. authorities had earlier warned that terrorist attacks during the Games were more likely in regions beyond Sochi, particularly in Dagestan.

Kommersant reported Monday that the alleged militants were part of an extremist group that had organized the twin bombings in Volgograd in December that killed 34 people. According to the report, one of the militants, Alexei Pashentsev, was an ethnic Russian who had recently converted to Islam.

The report also said police believed the group had moved to Makhachkala recently because they may have been planning a terrorist attack there while the Olympics were going on in Sochi.

Sport Trumps Political Issues

By Ivan Nechepurenko
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Sports largely overshadowed politics the first weekend of the Sochi Olympic Games, with Sunday's most talked-about protest centering on swaying skiers rather than human rights or corruption scandals.

The Russian cross-country skiing team lodged an unsuccessful protest against the results of the men's 30 kilometer race after its skier Maxim Vylegzhanin missed out on the country's first medal of the Games. The skier was one-tenth of a second behind bronze medal winner, Norwegian Martin Sundby, who allegedly swerved into the Russian's lane while a quartet of racers sprinted to the finish line. The International Ski Federation later rejected the results protest, though it did give Sundby a written reprimand for the move, The Associated Press reported.

The gratification of Russia's first medal at Sochi would come later in the

day when skater Olga Graf won bronze in the women's 3000 meter race and celebrated to fans' tripartite Russia, or Russia, chants.

Dutch skater Ireen Wust's victory in the event continued a fast start for the Netherlands' speed skating team, who captured the whole podium at the men's 5000 meter event on Saturday. The Adler Arena Skating Center that witnessed the sweep was full of the Netherlands' orange, a color that spilled out to the rest of the Olympic park as well.

Carrying themselves with a certain sense of professionalism, the Dutch fans were clad in their country's gear and were always well-organized in their chants.

"This is our first time in Russia and we like it," said Maasten de Boen, while his countrymen were singing Queen's "We are the Champions."

The overall mood of the Games was fairly animated and visitors gaped

at Sochi's venues, which have been widely discussed and written about since Russia was granted the Olympics in 2007, but now they have become tangible objects.

"What surprised me the most is the scale of the new shining facilities," de Boen said.

Many visitors to Sochi, including a large number of foreign journalists, have complained about construction defects, dirty hotel water and stray dogs, though the Dutch fan said he had not noticed any.

Visitors' attention may have been distracted by a near-endless array of kiosks selling hot dogs, soda, pancakes and lamb shashliks scattered in the middle of the Sochi Olympic Park, which has attracted thousands of people and turned the area into something like a fair.

A volunteer that was calling people to join the line for entry into the souvenir shop for Bosco di Ciliegi, the sportswear sponsor of the Russian team, said that the waiting time would be from 1 1/2 to two hours.

Observing the influx of people, at 4 p.m. on Feb. 8 the organizers had to stop selling entry tickets into the park.

During a Sunday news conference, organizing committee president Dmitry Chernyshenko said he did not expect that there would be empty seats in the venues.

"We were lucky to have a huge demand for tickets. We faced incredible demand here with long lines. We are increasing the number of cashiers," he said.

In the Olympic Park, many people popped out of the line and just walked around the grounds. Pavilions, some of them plain, some glitzy, some chic, sold merchandise or acted as small ministries for the teams of major winter sports powers, like the U.S. and Canada.

Michael Vigil came to Sochi from Florida and said he planned to stay ten days before visiting Moscow. He said he saw no difficulty in his hotel situation and that the thing that surprised him the most was how nice Russian people were.

"You know, our presidents might not get along, but the people will always find common language here," he said.

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Opening Ceremony a Momentous Day for Russia



Spectacular theatrics defined the opening ceremony of the XXII Winter Olympic Games in Sochi on Friday, Feb. 7.

By Array
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

President Vladimir Putin declared the 2014 Sochi Olympics officially open on Feb. 7 after a grandiose 2 1/2-hour show that told the history of modern Russia with dazzling lights, giant installations and hundreds of dancers, in an event that marked the end of more than six years of fevered preparations by the Russian government.

In the midst of an economic downturn and largely negative international media attention on Russia, the Olympics were envisioned by the Kremlin as a demonstration to the world of the country's transformation into an advanced nation.

The opening ceremony, viewed by tens of thousands of spectators in Fisht Olympic Stadium and millions more around the world, showed that transformation in song and dance numbers that featured enormous inflatable samovars, a ballet scene from Leo Tolstoy's iconic "War and Peace," machines illustrating the start of the Soviet era, and cosmonauts and hipster dancers from the hopeful period after the death of Josef Stalin. Classical music by famed Russian composers from Tchaikovsky to Stravinsky provided the soundtrack.

Viewers were on the alert for political symbolism in the proceedings. Social media users noted the fact that World War II, a watershed moment in Russian history, was not depicted in detail, and some saw significance in the playing of a mash-up song by faux-lesbian duo t.A.T.u. and the band Queen, whose lead singer was gay, when the Russian Olympians filed into the stadium, arguing that it could be a pro-gay gesture amid international criticism of Russia's anti-gay propaganda law.

Many found fault with the choice of one of the final Olympic torch bearers, Irina Rodnina, a former Olympic figure skating champion and current State Duma Deputy, who jogged with Soviet hockey legend Vladislav Tretiyak to light the main torch and conclude the ceremony. Rodnina became embroiled in scandal last year when she tweeted an allegedly racist photo of U.S. President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle with a banana.

The appearance of former Olympic champion gymnast Alina Kabayeva, who has been widely rumored to be Putin's lover, as a torch bearer provoked shock among Internet commentators.

But many quickly declared the ceremony a booming success — even prominent detractors of the Olympic project, such as opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who has accused the government

of wasting billions of dollars to host the Games.

"Well I don't know. I like everything. And the music too," Navalny tweeted.

The only major glitch noticed in the ceremony came when one of five snowflakes that appeared above the central field did not transform with the other snowflakes into the Olympic Rings. On the television broadcast, footage from one of the rehearsals was used to cover the mistake.

Putin played a minor role in the ceremony compared to his oversized part in bringing the Olympics to Russia. His arrival to a seat next to International Olympic Committee head Thomas Bach was shown at the start of the event, and he appeared to be nervous, fidgeting with his hands. His only participation in the ceremony was later to declare the Games officially open.

Seated nearby the president was Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who was caught by television cameras apparently dozing off, to the great amusement of online commentators.

The opening was also attended by over 40 heads of state and international delegations, although Obama and some European leaders skipped the event, in some cases citing Russia's human and LGBT rights record as the reason for their absence. Chinese President Xi Jinping, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and embattled Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich were among those on hand for Friday's ceremony.

Speaking to a reporter afterwards, attendees gave largely positive reviews of the event. Timofei Krasnoshtan, who has been involved in organizing the Games, said the ceremony was like a rock concert.

"The drive and the energy was immense," he said.

Ksenia Ponomaryova, a Sochi resident who also attended, called the show captivating. "I came with my two-year-old child and he did not cry and could not fall asleep right until the lighting of the flame," she said.

The ceremony kicked off what both critics and government supporters have described as a pivotal moment in Russia's post-Soviet history, with critics predicting that economic problems and a tightening of the political screws will follow and Kremlin supporters viewing Russia's hosting of the Olympics as a sign of Russia's economic and political resurgence on the world arena.

Russian opposition leaders have said the Games cost more than \$50 billion and that much of that money was siphoned off in acts of theft and corruption. Government officials, led by Dep-

uty Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, have dismissed that claim, saying the state spent only \$3 billion on Olympic venues, with the rest invested in Sochi's overall infrastructure.

The ceremony definitely marked a turning point for Sochi residents, whose everyday lives have been dominated by Olympic preparations for the last 6 1/2 years. Over this period, the city has been transformed by numerous new high-rise apartment buildings and hotels, as well as roads and other infrastructure.

Locals and visitors poured into sunny and warm central Sochi in the afternoon of Feb. 7, cheering and enjoying the last few hours of the pre-Olympic period, some with sighs of relief and some with glee and joy. Increased security measures were enforced with a police officer always in sight and manhole covers glued with special protective plastic to prevent a bomb from being placed in the sewage system.

Dozens of motorcades with top government officials, foreign dignitaries and IOC members cruised down Kurortny Prospekt, Sochi's main thoroughfare, over the course of the day. Two hours before the event, the street was closed for regular drivers to let a long motorcade of

buses and cars drive toward Adler, the district of Sochi where the majority of Olympic facilities are located.

Those without a coveted ticket to the ceremony had the option of watching it on screens at a venue in central Sochi, although problems at the entrance due to tight security ruined the experience for some. Only three metal detectors were installed, creating a bottleneck as thousands of people attempted to make their way in.

"This is horrible," many people in the crowd could be heard saying, along with complaints that the security had spoiled the celebration for them. Some said they regretted that they hadn't stayed home to watch the ceremony on TV, and some abandoned the line.

"I'm not sure if my clothes have been torn, but I will definitely not be able to wear my shoes again after that," said Nikita Anufriyev, a 24-year-old Sochi resident. "I don't know what to expect from the opening ceremony after this, but this is Russia, nothing is made for people here," he said.

The ceremony marked the first public use of Fisht Olympic Stadium, which was built specially for the Games and experienced chronic delays, having to be redesigned at the last minute.

The roof was a key element of the ceremony, with numerous ceiling racks carrying heavy decorations, such as a gargantuan locomotive that apparently represented the boisterous movement of Russian history at the beginning of the 20th century, from one pavilion to the other.

The ceremony was produced by Konstantin Ernst, head of state-owned Channel One television and one of Russia's most prominent media executives, who acknowledged the importance of the event. "We realized that the opening ceremony carries the name of the country," he said at a news conference on Feb. 7. "This is why, as the main motif for the ceremony, we selected our message on behalf of the country, how we see the country, what Russia is all about."

Judging by the content and style of the ceremony, the message was to emphasize Russia's conservative values while reminding the world of the country's famed cultural heritage and hinting at its technological inventiveness.

An opening video montage took viewers through the Russian alphabet,

listing the names of significant Russian artists (Kandinsky, Malevich, Chagall), writers (Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekhov), technology (the periodic table, sputnik) and more. Various parts of the vast Russian landscape, from a wooden village to a Kamchatka volcano, were then depicted in the stadium, with a young actress floating above them.

The athletes from each country filed in from a ramp in the center of the stadium near the beginning of the ceremony, after which animatronic versions of the Olympic mascots — a bear, rabbit and leopard — glided in, waving and bowing to spectators. Following that came the historical episodes, which skipped over huge periods, including most of the 19th century and the fall of the Soviet Union.

Sochi Organizing Committee head Dmitry Chernyshenko welcomed the crowd with a speech on a stage shaped like Russia. "Our city [Sochi] is unique, just as Russia is, the biggest country in the world...a country of great accomplishments," he said in Russian. "We are proud to host the Olympic Games."

"The Games in Sochi is our chance to show the whole world the best Russia has to offer," he said, proceeding to make other comments in both English and French. IOC head Bach then spoke, thanking organizers and congratulating the athletes, and Putin followed him, declaring the Games open. The Olympic anthem was sung by Anna Netrebko, Russia's famous opera diva who is also a native of Krasnodar, near Sochi.

Critics noted that many participants in the ceremony were outspoken Kremlin backers, such as boxer and United Russia Duma Deputy Nikolai Valuyev, Mariinsky Theater artistic director Valery Gergiyev, and film director Nikita Mikhalkov.

The event concluded with the Olympic flame being run into the stadium by Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova, who passed the torch to pole vaulter and former Olympic champion Yelena Isinbayeva. Other torch bearers included wrestler Alexander Karelin and Kabayeva.

Soviet-era Olympians Rodnina and Tretiyak took the flame its final few dozen meters to a spot just outside the stadium, where they lit a gas jet that carried the flame to the top of the main torch, after which celebratory fireworks exploded across the sky above the Black Sea.

Games Begin With Cheers and Jeers From Locals

By Yekaterina Kravtsova
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

The opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics on Feb. 7 marked a particularly special occasion for Sochi residents, who have spent the past 6 1/2 years experiencing the excitement and upheaval of preparations for the Games. But not everyone in the city was able to celebrate the evening as they had hoped.

On the night, thousands of Sochi residents and visitors went to a venue in the city center to watch a broadcast of the ceremony, but security was tight and many people could not get in. Only three metal detectors stood at the entrance and a bottleneck formed, pushing people into a tight crowd.

"It's hot like in summer, so they've chosen the right slogan for the Olympics," a young man said, referring to the official Sochi 2014 slogan: "Hot. Cool. Yours."

Some people had Russian flags with them and some had the Russian flag painted on their cheeks. But shouts of "Go Russia" were addressed not so much to Russian athletes but to the security guards who worked slowly to help people enter the venue.

The procession did not go without

a fight in the crowd. People had to stand so close to each other that one man thought another man standing near his wife had tried to harass her. He attacked the man and police had to intervene to stop the fight.

Once inside, the mood was little improved. After standing for more than 40 minutes to get in, one could see that the venue was mostly empty and that those in attendance were not thrilled with the setup.

"I expected there would be free Russian flags distributed here, but you have to pay for everything," said Nikita Anufriyev, an unemployed 24-year old Sochi resident. "And what excitement could I feel after all the Sochi residents had to go through during these years of construction? We are breathing construction dust here and so many people have been ousted from their homes due to the need for land for Olympic construction."

His friend, 26-year old Yevgeny Kuznetsov, said that he worked as a technical specialist at Fisht Olympic Stadium, where the ceremony was taking place, but that he was not able to attend since not all the employees were given tickets.

"I came here because I thought the organization would be better, but it

is horrible," Kuznetsov said. He added that he was not satisfied with his work at Fisht stadium, but he declined to elaborate.

At the nearby Bankir cafe, the atmosphere was more festive, with people watching the ceremony with glasses of beer. They shouted "hoorah" and "Russia" after the Russian national anthem was sung and applauded loudly when the Russian Olympic team appeared on the screen.

After the Olympic flame was lit, the atmosphere elsewhere in the city also seemed to change. Whistles and shouts of "Russia" and "Sochi" rang out, and people interviewed while leaving the outdoor broadcast site were energized, saying they were fully satisfied with the ceremony and proud of Russia.

"Finally it has happened," said Irina Zuyeva, 30, a Sochi resident and a police officer who was not on duty.

Alina, 52, an engineer who came to Sochi from Pyatigorsk to support the Russian athletes, agreed with Zuyeva.

"I have never seen anything like that before," she said. "It exceeded all my expectations. I am so proud of my country."

Germany Offers Blueprint for Energy Use

Single-Industry Towns Nearing Extinction



Russia has the potential to provide up to a third of its total energy consumption from renewable resources.

By Christoph Burger and Jens Weinmann

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

As Russia seeks new ways of stimulating economic growth, the Economic Development Ministry under Alexei Ulyukayev in late January issued a plan to foster competition in the non-natural resource sectors, support investment by Russian companies and promote the development of human capital. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev promised more than 21 billion rubles (\$597 million) to help small and medium enterprises, plus tax breaks and a Federal Guarantee Fund that facilitates credit financing for businesses.

Medvedev's stimulus package focuses on businesses in manufacturing, services and research. However, economic development could also be promoted by initiatives that establish a decentralized energy supply.

The Russian prime minister's strategy could benefit from looking to Germany's 'Energiewende,' an energy pol-

icy used as an economic stimulus, as a framework for jumpstarting Russia's stagnant economy. The central European nation's approach includes phasing out nuclear energy, decarbonizing the energy supply and promoting decentralized, renewable energy. These decentralized energy provisions contributed 10.7 billion euros to the German economy in 2011, according to estimates from the Institute for Ecological Economy Research. The installation, operation and maintenance of these energy facilities have been seen to be important drivers of local employment.

In Germany, these communal energy services are organized as co-operatives. Between 2001 and 2012, their number increased from 66 to 656, spread throughout the country. The German Renewable Energies Agency estimates that these energy co-operatives have invested around 1.2 billion euros in so-called "citizens' power plants," including solar power, wind, and biomass.

By all accounts, Russia's power sup-

ply structure needs a fundamental overhaul. Until 2030, the total capital investment required in generation capacity and grid infrastructure could well exceed 500 billion euros, according to official estimates in "Russia's Energy Strategy to 2030," which was approved by the government of the Russian Federation in 2009. Initiatives like promoting energy co-operatives could also help stabilize Russia's ailing transmission and distribution network, because they are the first step to creating largely autonomous island systems that need less energy from outside their boundaries.

A second feature of the rapidly changing German energy market may be particularly interesting to fostering economic growth in Russia's rural areas: More than 130 bioenergy villages were active or in the process of setting up their local energy supply system by mid-2013. These communities produce power and heat by burning organic material like agricultural waste and often combine it with electricity generated from solar and wind. Local businesses and employees of the co-operative take charge of operating the plant and managing its finances. The use of biomass also provides secure and stable returns for farmers in the community.

Almost 40 million Russian citizens currently live in rural areas, so these are ideas that Russia could realistically adopt and promote. With wind power along the coasts, in the steppes and mountainous regions, solar energy in the south, and biomass in the vast agricultural areas of the country, Russia has the potential to produce a third of its total energy consumption from renewable resources, according to the International Energy Agency in its 2001 report "Renewables in Russia - From Opportunity to Reality." After substantial cost reductions in all renewable energy technologies in recent years, the economic potential is likely to be much higher nowadays than when the International Energy Agency published its assessment more than a decade ago.

Indeed, the Russian government has set ambitious goals for renewable energies. Decree 449, "Renewable Energy Source Development Measures," released in May 2013, requests that by 2020 the share of renewables, excluding hydropower, in the energy mix will have increased from 0.8 to 2.5 percent. In comparison, Germany raised electricity production based on renewable

energy from 3 to 25 percent within the last two decades, with almost half of all installations owned by private residents and farmers. Until 2050, renewable energy resources are estimated to provide 60 percent of all German energy consumption - including 80 percent of its electricity supply.

This might have serious implications for Russia's energy exports. Today, Germany's energy supply depends heavily on Russian natural gas imports. The German government considers natural gas the ideal complement to intermittent renewable energy resources like solar power or wind. But the average annual operating time of German natural gas plants has declined - dropping from 3,400 hours in 2010 down to 2,640 hours in 2012. The underlying reason for that development is that gas-fired plants are being crowded out of the electricity wholesale market by lignite and hard coal plants, which have lower operating costs. Representatives of energy utilities are complaining that new gas-fired plants aren't worth the investment.

Companies like E.ON, which is also active in Russia with its subsidiary E.ON Russia - privatized in 2007 under the name OGG-4 - have even threatened to mothball some of their assets. Still, if Germany introduces so-called capacity markets, which serve as a backup supply if renewable generation is unable to satisfy demand, investments in gas-fired plants are likely to go ahead.

On the retail side, there isn't yet an immediate threat to Russian natural gas sales. According to the German Association of Energy and Water Industries, almost half of Germany's 38.2 million homes are heated with natural gas. But many projects to extend the gas distribution grid in rural areas have been abandoned. Instead, solar panels and heat pumps fuelled by a combination of electricity and thermal energy from the ground and the air are on the rise. In 2012, heat pumps accounted for around a quarter of new heating installations, totaling more than 70,000.

The German government's support of solar panels has led to substantial cost reductions. According to representatives of the EU's Joint Research Council, the overall cost of producing a kilowatt-hour with solar panels has decreased to 12 euro cents. With average residential electricity prices of around 30 euro cents per kilowatt hour, solar power is likely to further erode the market share of gas boilers in years to come.

Despite these challenges for its gas exports, Russia could immediately benefit from Germany's renewable energy transition by cherry-picking and copying elements that may revitalize the stagnant Russian economy. The path towards more decentralized supply would not only enhance local employment and provide a stimulus to the economy, but it would also create new business opportunities for established energy utilities and other enterprises across Russia. Like in Germany, Russian utilities could start offering services such as management and operation of local, autonomous energy systems to communities.

Russia has the opportunity to follow in Germany's footsteps and start planning a supply system for tomorrow.

Christoph Burger and Jens Weinmann are both Professors at The European School of Management and Technology, Berlin. They co-authored the book 'The Decentralized Energy Revolution - Business Strategies for a New Paradigm,' published by Palgrave Macmillan.

By Alexander Panin

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Billionaire Oleg Deripaska's Basic Element, a diverse industrial group with assets in energy, mining, agriculture and more, has outlined ways to breathe new life into hundreds of single-industry towns teetering on the edge of economic collapse.

A holdover from the Soviet Union, 16 million Russians live in 340 single-industry towns across the country, according to the Economic Development Ministry. Their degeneration has long been a headache both for Basic Element and the government as they try to hold the line between their frequent insolvency and the social consequences of allowing them to fail.

In 2009, workers in Pikalyovo in the Leningrad region near St. Petersburg blocked a major highway because the local cement factory, owned by Basic Element, was on the verge of closing.

The situation was diffused only when then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin flew in to offer a packet of state bank loans to fund overdue salary payments.

Not all single-industry towns have the same grave outlook as Pikalyovo. Provided government help is applied in the right places, more than half are economically robust, said Sergei Lomanov of the Center for Strategic Research, a nongovernmental think tank commissioned by Basic Element to conduct research into these towns.

"There is no need to drag investors into many of these towns. Usually they already have small and medium-sized businesses running that need only baseline support from local authorities and, possibly, limited additional benefits," Lomanov said.

The last government support program for single-industry towns ended in 2011 and aimed to subsidize the diversification and re-profiling of existing production.

However, this approach is often a dead end. If a region has a depleted coal mine and no other basis for industry, then nothing can be done, Lomanov said.

The research advocates a more flexible strategy. Studying 18 towns across the country, it breaks down single industry towns into four categories based on the potential of the industry they were built around and on what other production could be developed, said Vadim Geraskin, deputy head of Basic Element.

Towns in the worst category - when both the town and its core industry are declining - should undergo "controlled squeezing," the research concludes, meaning that their population, civil facilities and utility services would be gradually cut down to economically viable levels.

Such towns would require extensive government support to keep their basic services running while subsidizing people to move to other regions. In regions with more potential, specialized industrial parks may be created to promote new production.

Andrei Sokolov, the head of the department that oversees special economic zones at the Economic Development Ministry, said that the research will serve as a basis for a new government program to support single-industry towns that is to take shape in the next three months.

About 50 billion rubles (\$1.4 billion) will have to be thrown at the issue in the next few years, according to the ministry.

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Sunday is officially family day at Tony's, when creative workshops and competitions for children are held.



JAPANESE

Dve Palochki



www.dvepalochki.ru
16 Sredny Prospekt V.O
Dve Palochki (Two Sticks) at 16 Sredny Prospekt on Vasilevsky Island has refurbished its interior and concept to celebrate the restaurant chain's 10th anniversary. With the new homely space incorporating soft lighting with surround sound, a large library to suit every taste as well as evening DJ sets, the new renovation has created a more eccentric bohemian-style feel for the space. In addition to its already famous Japanese and Pan-Asian dishes, both Italian and American cuisine options will also soon be added. European and Asian lunches are available from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. with prices starting at 295 rubles.



INTERNATIONAL

Beerstube Restaurant



57 Nevsky Prospekt
Corinthia Hotel St Petersburg
Ground floor
The cozy pub-style Beerstube restaurant invites fans of winter sports to enjoy the Olympic Games in Sochi from 7 to 23 February. Live broadcasts of the Games on plasma screens, a special menu from the hotel chef, large choice of drinks and a great atmosphere will fill you with true Olympic spirit and allow you to experience the thrill of the season's major sporting event from the comfort of our restaurant. Daily, from 9 a.m. till 10 p.m.



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MEDITERRANEAN

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PAN-ASIAN

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St. Petersburg Indulges in Culture of Chocolate



A 1950s vintage chocolate wrapper of the beloved Mishka na Severe sweet by iconic local brand Krupskaya.

By Lana Matafonov
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Petersburgers have a reputation for enjoying the sweeter things in life. Famous for its arts, culture and architecture, it is also known for another indulgence — chocolate. Even during the Siege of Leningrad from 1941-44, chocolate production at the city's iconic Krupskaya factory did not stop, producing three tons of its popular Mishka na Severe (Bear in the North) chocolate in 1943. While over the years chocolate preferences in St. Petersburg may have changed, the city's sweet-tooth still remains firmly in place, especially leading up to Valentine's Day.

"Fifteen to 20 years ago, Russians preferred bitter or dark chocolate," Olga Agafonova of the Krupskaya chocolate factory told The St. Petersburg Times. "However, milk chocolate is now in the highest demand."

Availability has also been another change the market has experienced. "Chocolate was scarce during the Soviet period and only appeared on the table on the eve of an important holiday. Today, you can now buy chocolate anywhere at any time," said Agafonova. "Along with the general increase

in prosperity in society, we see that people are buying more premium-class boxed chocolates."

Named after Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, the Krupskaya brand has gone on to become synonymous with the city of St. Petersburg. Having celebrated its 75th birthday last year, the factory has been listed in the city's Book of Honor as well as been identified as a "heroic" local brand in the region.

"Krupskaya has always stood together with the citizens of this city that lies on the Neva River," said Agafonova — a fact made especially evident only few years after the brand was established in 1938.

"The Siege of Leningrad started in 1941, and during this period, the factory continued to operate and supply the army at the front, as well as support locals, with products based on available ingredients at that time. Products produced by the factory in those days helped people to survive, and in 1944 the Krupskaya factory name was included into the city's Honor Book," she said.

"St. Petersburg has always been famous for its chocolate because we have Krupskaya chocolate here," said Irina Khlopova, Public Relations Director at Grand Hotel Europe. Speaking to

The St. Petersburg Times, she adds: "Here in St. Petersburg, we are brought up with beautiful architecture, art, culture and music, and this all sharpens your taste and perhaps that's why Petersburgers also have a refined taste in chocolate."

While most five-star hotels have their own chocolate, Grand Hotel Europe is the only one with its own chocolate factory tucked away inside the hotel. Officially opening in 2005, the factory now has three full-time employees and, with the help of its imported French chocolate making machine, can produce up to five tons of chocolate a month.

"Chocolate is always sort of an indicator of the economic wealth of a society. The taste of Petersburgers is getting more sophisticated, which is evident in the increase of demand for our high quality handmade chocolate," said Khlopova.

With over 35 chocolate varieties available, the hotel's French pastry chef, Pascal Galette, has been busy preparing an additional limited edition Valentine's Day chocolate — a special rose truffle. The original recipe, which he created, involves infusing the ganache filling with rose petals before being dipped into white chocolate. "They are not just any roses," said Galette to The St. Petersburg Times. "These are roses imported from the same region as the Chanel roses in France."

Up to 48 hours is needed to create these chocolates, starting from the time it takes to extract the rose petals, infuse the ganache then set the final white chocolate coating. As well as being available to buy at the hotel for a limited time, an additional 400 pieces are also being prepared as gifts for each of the hotel's guests.

Unique ganache infusions are nothing new for Grand Hotel Europe. Its popular vodka-infused chocolates mixed with flavors such as pepper, cranberry, mandarin and blackberry are exclusive to St. Petersburg. In fact, in the past, the hotel has even offered chocolate with a cigar infusion for men. However, this has not been the most unusual flavor created by the factory. "Once, one of our guests ordered a special chocolate for a man who was a fan of wasabi," said Khlopova. "So



Krupskaya has been churning out the sweets since it opened in 1938.

our team proceeded to create a wasabi-infused chocolate. We tried it and the taste was incredible," she said.

"The thing with chocolate is that you can't stop creating — it is always evolving," said Galette, who has 18 years of experience behind him. "Chocolate can also be added to meals and goes well with seafood and even meat."

Adding to the appeal of chocolate on Valentine's Day is its reported aphrodisiac effect. "Very strong chocolate, like that with 65 to 75 percent cocoa acts as an aphrodisiac," said Galette. "Also, I can't say whether it has been scientifically proven, but it is thought to be believed that the cocoa in such strong chocolate can also assist in helping a woman become pregnant."

Agafonova agrees with the effect chocolate can have on one's emotions. "Ancient Indians called chocolate 'God's food'. In addition to its perfect flavor, chocolate also has various health benefits which include increasing levels of serotonin, which in turn improves mood," she said before adding that Krupskaya's dark aerated chocolate is a good option as a mood enhancer this Valentine's Day. "When you bite it and put on your tongue, the aerated bubbles begin to melt and it feels like chocolate is giving you hundreds of tiny kisses," she said.

Galette also advises on giving dark chocolate to women for Valentine's Day. "Generally women like something not too strong and not too sweet.

So I recommend a dark chocolate with coconut — that is always very nice," he said. He also adds that champagne works well with chocolates with a fruit-flavored filling such as peach or raspberry, however, advises milk chocolate with nuts as a better option for red and white wine. "The flavor and texture usually complements the wine well," he said.

As for Galette's personal preference, he admits that he can't go a day without his daily dose of dark chocolate. "When I don't have my chocolate, I feel like something is missing. It is a like a drug," he said.

"When you work with chocolate,

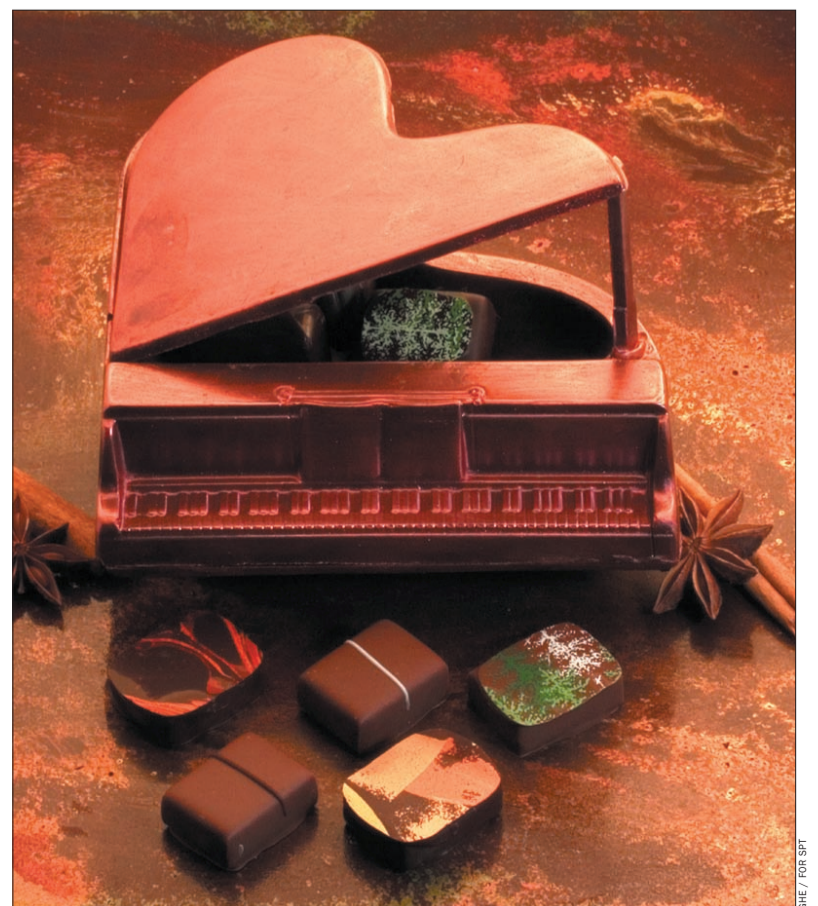


The Krupskaya factory in the 1940s.

it's like working with passion, you cannot work with chocolate and treat it like you're doing an everyday task," he adds. "You simply cannot. When you work with chocolate, you need to work with your heart and have a true passion for what you're doing." And if the growing demand for his chocolate creations are anything to go by, it seems Petersburgers, in turn, have a true passion for his sweet delights.



The art of crafting delicate handmade chocolate can take up to 48 hours.



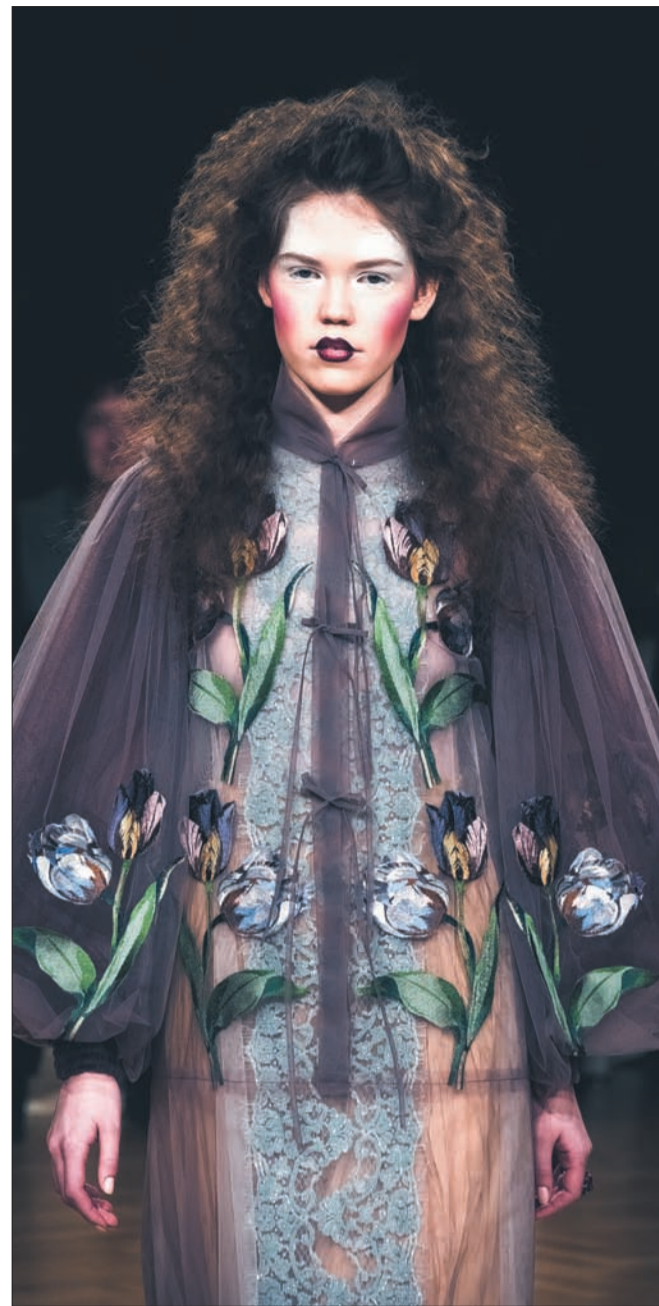
At Grand Hotel Europe, a chocolate piano hits all the right notes.



Pansies adorn one of Parfionova's subtly risqué pieces.



Pre-Raphaelite in effect, the designer's use of tulle elicited gasps.



Variiegated tulips lend an air of mystery to one of the standout designs.

Tatyana Parfionova's Garden of Earthly Delights

Spring arrived early with a fashion show that brought out the romantic in those lucky enough to attend.

By Chris Gordon

THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

With an unseasonably early thaw in progress, thoughts of spring and summer were on the minds of those gathered at the Winter Garden of the Astoria Hotel on Sunday for the presentation of beloved local fashion designer Tatyana Parfionova's latest collection. While the temperatures outside may have been hovering near freezing,

Parfionova presented an eclectic show titled "I Was Born a Gardener" that included influences of the renaissance and the 19th century in a romantic bouquet that was nonetheless resolutely modern in its attitude. Set to the strains of Okean Elzy's "Vesna" (Spring) and the sounds of chirping birds and thunderstorms, the runway show transported those to a wonderland of color and imagination.

The show got underway with a bit of audience participation as various supporters stood to deliver lines of poetry in English, Russian and Italian as a trio of "gardeners" appeared and began passing out bouquets of flowers.

Emerging from between a pair of potted palm trees, the models in their china-doll makeup did their best to blend the glamour of the catwalk with the labor of love that is gardening.

Adorned in luxurious jewelry from the house of Boucheron, the clothing layered Parfionova's signature embroidered and painted motifs on sheer silk taffeta over full length skirts.

Critics are already saying that this is the designer's best collection yet. Parfionova, who opened her fashion house in 1995 and has shown her collections on the runways of Paris, Milan, New York and Beijing, is one of the

few St. Petersburg designers known outside of the country.

Inspired by the approach of Valentine's Day and the lush romanticism of the collection, The St. Petersburg Times took the opportunity to ask some of those in attendance what they thought were the most romantic spots in St. Petersburg.

All photos Alexander Shatsky.

Jennes de Mol, General Consul of the Netherlands in St. Petersburg



"The most romantic place in St. Petersburg is the roof of our residence with a view of the Neva. It is astonishingly beautiful, you have the sun and the excitement of a very exciting place and you are alone, which is important, but you have the most beautiful view of the town. You see the Neva but you also see the courtyards and the roofs — you see another world. You see St. Petersburg from another angle, which is very nice."

Marianna Zeynalova, White Nights International Music Festival



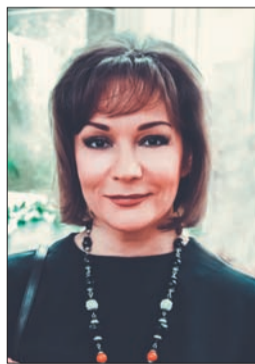
"I think the most romantic places in St. Petersburg are in the suburbs, where you can find amazing palaces and parks to spend time with your partner. There are a lot of small romantic places where you can propose. I also love the terraces in St. Petersburg. You can find a lot of very fashionable terraces in St. Petersburg, like at W hotel. It's also a great idea to spend a romantic weekend at one of the romantic hotels in St. Petersburg."

Christian Courbois, Owner and CEO, Westpost



"The bridges! Any bridge in St. Petersburg is the most romantic place in the city. In fact, the Russians have a tradition of putting padlocks on bridges. There is something about them that is pure romance — it doesn't matter which one. The other is Chizhik-Pizhik, which is a very romantic spot — and it's right next to a bridge, so you have both of them in one place."

Tatyana Bulanova, Singer



"For me the most romantic places in St. Petersburg are the embankments. It's especially beautiful when the bridges open during the White Nights, and an incredible show for those who visit Petersburg for the first time. You need to float by under the bridges on a boat or pass them when these behemoths rise up into the air, its incredibly beautiful and gives an astonishing sense of romanticism."

Nikolai Tsiskaridze, Acting Rector, Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet



"The Mariinsky Theater, and my home, are both part of Dostoyevsky's Petersburg. I spent the most significant part of my life at the theater, so for me it's the most precious and treasured place in the city. There is a bridge near the St. Nicholas Cathedral from which you can see seven churches at the same time. If you walk there during the White Nights, it's the most romantic place in the city. Of course, all of St. Petersburg is fantastic but this place is also extremely mystical."

Andy Tauer's Fragrant Vision

'A good perfume is a drop of sensual joy, to be experienced with your own values and memories...'

By Chris Gordon
VEDOMOSTI

For nearly a decade, perfumer Andy Tauer has been creating fragrances of unrivaled sensuality in a small workshop located in Switzerland. Working in an abstract mode that stands in opposition to the clean, anodyne scents that fill most of the shelves at perfume counters and duty-free shops around the world, Tauer creates sophisticated, European scents that are unrivaled in the world of contemporary perfumery for the passion of the vision behind them.

The fragrances that come out of Tauer's studio offer the wearer emotional states in a bottle and function as "immersive sculptures" that explore the intimate bond between a scent and the person who wears it. They are light years away from commercial scents that try to seduce a buyer within seconds only to settle down into something forgettable and pedestrian. His perfumes appeal to those in search of the unusual while still remaining utterly charming and wearable.

In a global industry valued by some at \$28 billion annually, big business dominates the market and the number of independent perfumers, while growing, can be counted on a few hands. Tauer is unique in that he is self-taught and creates everything by himself. From the initial research and formulation of a new scent to the design of the packaging and filling of the bottles, Tauer is an industry unto himself; one which focuses on quality and tradition while remaining resolutely modern and embracing a DIY, even punk, aesthetic. Each bottle of his perfume comes with a hand-signed card exhorting the wearer to 'Enjoy!'

Gregarious, humorous and personable, Tauer combines precious natural oils with judiciously applied scent molecules to create distinctive perfumes that allow the wearer to step into another world and inhabit an augmented reality.

Tauer Perfumes are today produced in four collections: Classics, which include the first fragrances that captured the public's attention — Le Maroc Pour Elle (2005), L'Air du Desert Marocain (2005) and Lonestar Memories (2006); Homages, in which the fragrances feature exclusive ingredients and a high concentration of natural oils; Penta-Chords, which emphasizes a "less is more" philosophy; and Collectibles, a low-volume line featuring precious raw materials whose availability fluctuates from year to year. His latest creation, Phi — Une rose de Kandahar, is a limited edition scent that uses a precious rose oil from Afghanistan that is out of reach of most perfumers because of its limited quantities.

Like music, perfume is an invisible art that is capable of the highest degree of aesthetic expression. Its raw materials are the essences that people have used since ancient times for pleasure and ritual. Tauer is well aware of this and takes his place in the procession of history with an appealing combination of playfulness and sincerity.

Tauer's creations, because of their exclusivity, are available in a small number of boutiques worldwide, including St. Petersburg.

Q: You visited Russia recently, what brought you here?

A: My distribution partner (smiles...). I was in Moscow and St. Petersburg about 2 years ago and it was a great experience. My business partner, who is responsible in Russia for my fragrances, wanted me to experience the world of niche in two different places this time:



Perfumer Andy Tauer takes a radically personal approach to scent creation in his Zurich workshop.

Kazan and Yekaterinburg. For me, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet perfume lovers and share the joy of smelling and explaining niche and artisanal perfumery.

Q: Did you enjoy yourself?

A: Absolutely! I was blown away and sometimes ashamed by the hospitality of my Russian friends. You do not experience this where I come from. I was so often invited for wonderful dinners, it was amazing! I also met many fans which was very touching. And I had the opportunity to see a bit of Kazan and Yekaterinburg and learn while visiting. And I had a fantastic train ride from Kazan to Yekaterinburg. What a great experience! So you see: Chances are good that I will be coming back!

Q: How did you find Russian perfume lovers?

A: In my experience, they are very passionate, and knowledgeable, knowing the classics and following what is happening in the world of fragrances. I was actually amazed about how many perfume lovers I met during my short journey, and I was baffled that people there knew me and my creations. I was hugging a lot of perfume lovers!

Q: When did you first realize that you wanted to become a perfumer?

A: When I started playing with fragrant raw materials — about 10, 11 years ago — I just wanted to play. I enjoyed smelling the natural raw materials, came under their spell and enjoyed the long path towards mixing a "perfume." I did not consider becoming a perfumer back then. Creating fragrances, simple mixtures of nine ingredients initially, trying to find a form for something I had in mind, vaguely, hidden in a fog of naivety, was a game and nothing serious enough that would allow me to say: "I want to become a perfumer." I guess I wanted to play, still do, and am privileged enough to have been given the chance to do so.

Q: Was it daunting to go into it with only a background in chemistry and no formal training in scent creation?

A: I think this venture has been very rewarding. I was naive, and clueless about perfume creation, about perfume markets, about legislation and expectations raised by consumers of perfumes. I was just trying to create nice scented pictures and understand what I was doing. In the course of doing so, I learned that not having had formal training was actually helpful. I started working with only all-natural materials and learned to un-

derstand these precious treasures. When I later, about 2 years after mixing and exploring, added synthetic molecules to my formula — and learned how powerful their influence and effect can be — overlaid them on top of a core structure built with naturals. I still work this way. Hence my compositions are quite often extremely rich in naturals. I have never visited a perfumery school and cannot judge what you learn there. We can all smell, however, what perfumery tends to be these days. It is rather different; different to what I do, different to how perfumes used to be created.

So, going into the field of perfume composition was not daunting. Entering the market and learning the names of the game there was, however, quite often a challenging experience and a sometimes depressing encounter.

Q: What was your inspiration to do so?

A: I started buying raw materials: Roses, jasmynes, sandalwoods, labdanums, incenses — you name it. Collecting became a passion. I remember smelling cistus ladaniferus essential oil for the first time. It was a "wow!" experience. The intense, dark, woody, animalic, leathery scent of this natural extract hit me, like so many other fragrant liquids, and would not let me go. It is almost a perfume by itself. Using it, this brown golden liquid, putting drops in to a little glass flask, mixing it following a formula that I wrote on a piece of paper, experiencing how it is transformed into something new, something larger maybe than the sum of all the ingredients — that's inspiring and motivating. Feeling how the final mixture falls apart after a few minutes when applied on the skin, experiencing how the heart, head and base notes of a scent do not fit and do not talk to each other, this is utterly frustrating and maddening. But it is a motivation, too.

In the end, I guess, it is this creative venture, this fluid state between pain and misery, intuition, fascination, and rare moments of hope, that gave a wonderful balance to a rather boring office job, with its mechanic routines and mindless exercises.

Q: What are some of the challenges you face as a 'cottage industry'?

A: I face a lot of challenges and, at the same time, have a lot of privileges due to my being a "cottage industry." It is not always easy, for instance, to get the raw materials in the right quantity. On the other hand, I can use — due to my small production numbers — raw materials that others can't, simply because

there is not enough of it on the market; specialties like a rose oil produced in the region of Kandahar, for instance, that I have used for a special edition this year. Then, running a small venture, doing a lot myself, it is a challenge to be seen and heard in this very competitive market. Thus, I have to be innovative, use the new media, maybe also in ways others don't or can't.

But overall, I do not want to complain. Being small and cottage-style comes with a lot of advantages in an environment where perfume lovers seek novel and authentic products.

Q: Where do you start with the concept for a new fragrance?

A: This is easy: I look into myself. I do not listen to markets or trends. Usually, an idea just happens. It can be triggered by a raw material that I smell and that comes with a unique story, like the rose oil from Afghanistan that I mentioned. Or it is an idea for a new scent that is based on a story that forms in my head, like "sotto la luna," a line of scents where I imagine wonderful intense white flowers blooming under a bright moon. Once such an idea forms, it might take a while until it turns into a real project. I have many ideas that are lingering around, sitting there, waiting for the right moment in time. Often, while working on a scent based on a particular idea, the idea itself gets transformed and different aspects become more prominent. I always say that creative moments are fluid moments; it's hard to say where the liquid flows, where the stream will bring you. In a sense, in order to be creative, you have to let go and give yourself to this stream and see where it takes you.

Q: What does a perfume 'mean' to you? Is it about a memory, a story, attraction?

A: Quite often it means pain and misery. When composing a scent, when trying to find the right, the perfect form, you go through phases of failure. These failures, uncounted trials of mixtures that just won't work properly, bring you forward, you learn, but at the same time, it is frustrating and worrying as I discover how little I know. Working with naturals is especially difficult as naturals are complex and tend to develop in mixtures in ways that you do not expect. In perfumery, we do not have a clean-cutting scalpel that would allow you to cut out the perfect form easily. I often feel like I am working with a big hammer on a piece of rock and while trying to bring out the right form, the stone breaks in

the middle. And then you start again.

Q: How long does it take you to work out a perfume once you have decided on the concept?

A: With a new scent, everything I have created so far goes in — experiments with formulas, but a good piece of myself also goes into it: What I find beautiful, a particular twist that I want to see there, a little bit of provocation. We all have our scented memories and I am no different. Hence, each creation is a little mirror of these memories, too. I am convinced, though, that most of the creative process is subconscious and I always feel that my perfume-loving friends know more about my creations than I do. But, and I think this is very important, perfumes are made to be enjoyed independent of the pictures and visions that might be behind them. A good perfume is a drop of sensual joy, to be experienced with your own values and memories, independent of what its creator had in mind. Perfume is a very personal experience and I always recommend to smell first and find out more later.

Q: Who do you think are some of the more exciting perfumers working today?

A: I feel that there is an evolution taking place these days. Thanks to technology, it has become easier to start a perfume venture in the last ten or 20 years. The Internet, for instance, is quite democratic — at least it allows you to let the world know that you create perfumes. Whether this voice is heard depends then on many factors. But you have the chance to reach out. And with the mass market — the luxury segment as well as the commodity segment — growing rapidly, there is a growing interest in specialty houses, small artisanal houses, that are hard to find, that follow a different approach, that might not use Swarovski crystals on their bottles but that put good, luxurious stuff inside them. Thus, there is a lot happening at the edges and corners of this industry. Brands and perfumers that I follow and love for their passion and courage and impressive creativity are, just to name a few: Vera Kern, Olivier from Oliver & Co, there was Mona di Orio whom I loved and who left us far too soon last year, there is a wild guy in the U.S. doing great scents, called Kerosene and there is Olivier Durbano with a brand that he manages all by himself. Actually, there are many of us these days, changing the world a bit, perfume after perfume.

I also follow Bertrand DuChaufour's work, especially when he is working with Neela Vermeire and her lovely brand, or Mark Buxton, or Pierre Guillaume who is super creative and one of the few in the industry, like myself, who is still doing things himself. Ah, and yes, I love Patricia de Nicolai's approach, too.

Q: What are your thoughts, hopes or fears for the future of fine fragrances?

A: Perfumes will always be here. We humans need them. I am very optimistic about the future, especially for artisanal, haute perfumery. For me, haute perfumery does not mean "high price." It means the high quality of what goes inside a bottle; an authenticity that more widely distributed brands cannot provide. People get everything everywhere these days. Whether you are in Los Angeles, Paris, Moscow or Beijing, you will see the same brands, the same ads, the same pictures. For many this is fine and quite enough. For some, this is not enough. Fine fragrances find their niche there, for the growing few who care where a product comes from, its context, whether it has a real history and where and why it was produced.

WEDNESDAY, **FEBRUARY 12, 2014**

ARTS & CULTURE

PAGE 16

Dva Samolyota Benefit

PAGE 16

The Dish: Kroo Cafe

PAGE 17

Musical Hermitage Festival

PAGE 20-21

Listings



IMAGES OF RUSSIAN WILDLIFE
GO ON DISPLAY AT A NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION.

SEE PAGE 18

Musicians Plan Benefit Concert for Lazovsky

Friends and fans rally around Alexei Lazovsky, an original member of local ska legends Dva Samolyota.

By Sergey Chernov
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

St. Petersburg ska band Dva Samolyota will headline a line-up of musicians and DJs at a benefit concert to raise funds for the band's ailing member Alexei Lazovsky this week.

Due to be held at Griboyedov club, the night-long event called Airplanes First, will also feature rapper Mister Maloy and electronic band PCP as well as DJ sets from DJ Boomer, Lena Popova, Kitt Whale, Zemine, Re-Disco, Lovesky and Kirill Matras. The acts will perform both in the former bunker that is the club's main concert hall and in the restaurant on the top of the hill above.

The collected funds will go toward the medical treatment of one of Dva Samolyota's original members, Lazovsky, who has been bed-ridden for six years due to a spinal infection.

Lazovsky completed the first stage of his rehabilitation treatment and took his first steps with the aid of a walking frame in late December 2013.

Lazovsky's physical therapy had to be held at a private clinic because the four specialized, state-owned clinics that Lazovsky was sent to by his primary physician refused to treat him for various reasons.

According to Lazovsky, one facility said that he might not be admitted for treatment until autumn 2016 due to the length of the current waiting list but, after some reflection, concluded that this would be too late and not make sense. Another simply said, "Lie quietly, don't make a fuss."

In Feb. 2008, Lazovsky contracted vertebral osteomyelitis, a spinal infection of the vertebral column. He was operated on eight times, mostly unsuccessfully, but hope of rehabilitation appeared in November 2013.

A new examination and the second stage of rehabilitation have been scheduled for March.

"First and foremost, we are doing this to encourage him. So he knows that he is remembered, loved and wanted on stage as soon as possible," Dva Samolyota's bassist and singer Anton Belyankin told The St. Petersburg Times on Friday.

"Whenever we recorded something during the last few years, we took the studio to him."

Lazovsky was featured in Dva Samolyota's most recent video, released in early 2012.

Filmed by television and video director Pyotr Troitsky, "Wind of Free-



Dva Samolyota in 1992. Vadim Pokrovsky (front), back row left to right: Alexei Lazovsky, Mikhail Sindalovsky, Denis Medvedev and Anton Belyankin.

dom" (Veter Svobody) — a song from 2004 — included footage of Lazovsky at home.

According to Belyankin, the acts taking part in the benefit are old friends of the band, and of Lazovsky.

"We and the DJs decided to get together and hold a benefit party," he said.

"For this occasion, we will even be joined by Denis Medvedev, also known as DJ Re-Disco. During the past few years he played with Pep-Sec. Hopefully, this will not be our last concert with him and I hope [Lazovsky] will get better, and that everything will be fine."

Formed in 1990 by Belyankin and the late vocalist Vadim Pokrovsky, Dva Samolyota ("Two Airplanes") are a legendary example of a newer music scene that emerged when the perestroika-era rock bands of the 1980s were in decline. A departure from the older, lyric-conscious scene, they sang in a nonsensical quasi-African language and drew inspiration from ska and world music.

In addition to Belyankin and Pokrovsky, Dva Samolyota originally featured Lazovsky on tenor horn and background vocals, Medvedev on keyboards and saxophone, and Mikhail Sindalovsky on drums.

"In our band, Lazovsky's role was always to create those remarkable melodies on brass instruments; the horn section was what he was in charge of," Belyankin said.

"What's good about him is that he can effectively play any brass instrument. Maybe not with too much virtu-

osity, but after some time he can play it very well. All of Dva Samolyota's melodies in fact belong to him. And, of course, he sang brilliantly."

According to Belyankin, he invited Lazovsky, who had played guitar with a band called Total Jazz, to join Dva Samolyota in 1990.

"We had no guitarist at the time and so I invited him [to join us]," Belyankin said.

"Actually, Vadik [Pokrovsky] played rhythm guitar, but we thought that we might need a lead guitarist to play some crazy solos as well. Instead, we got Lazovsky playing his crooked horn."

"He studied guitar at a jazz school, but somehow failed as a guitarist [in a band]. I was working as a student club's house manager at the Leningrad Institute of Railway Engineers at the time and we had lots of music instruments lying around."

"I told him, 'Lekha, if it doesn't work with the guitar, choose some other instrument,' and he picked that crooked tenor horn that he has played ever since... No, wait, it was a trombone in the beginning. But the trombone got broken during a brawl right there in the stockroom and Lekha took the tenor horn. So he played that peculiar horn."

Apart from Belyankin and Medvedev, Dva Samolyota will include guitarist Andrei Gradovich, Armen "Mon" Chikunov on keyboards and Andrei "Dron" Orlov on drums, all members of various local bands from the 1990s.

"We have found it difficult to work with young people lately. We tried

some young horn players but nothing good came of it," Belyankin said.

For a good portion of the 1990s, the band was the ultimate face of St. Petersburg's new, post-Soviet independent music scene. Alongside indie-pop groups Pep-Sec and Kolibri, the band was present at the birth of an underground dance culture performing both at concerts and dance parties.

After a brief involvement with the now-defunct basement club Nora (Burrow), Dva Samolyota moved to a former Cold War bunker, which they turned into a trendy underground venue with concerts, parties, exhibitions, contests and many other types of events.

Alongside Belyankin, Lazovsky co-hosted programs on underground music on local television and radio.

Originally, the idea for the benefit event came from DJ Lena Popova, who is a friend of Lazovsky's, and his band Dva Samolyota, from the early 1990s. Her initiative found support from both the band and the Griboyedov bunker club that Lazovsky was closely associated with. She said she was initially motivated by a message Lazovsky posted on the VKontakte social network asking for help.

"Sure, I sent him as much [money] as I could, but money will be needed constantly for him to be treated at a private clinic, so I thought why not," Popova told The St. Petersburg Times on Friday.

"[Lazovsky] is directly associated with Griboyedov and I thought that everybody would be interested in helping a comrade. Maybe some have no funds to help Lyosha personally, but everybody can play for a couple of hours and pass on the money collected on the door. There's nothing exceptional about it, it's a simple story."

"We have all played at Griboyedov from its very beginning, both musicians and DJs, and I called people who are directly related to Griboyedov and know Lyosha personally. Everybody was happy to take part. But I think we'll hold one more event a bit later, because a lot of money is needed, and needed constantly."

Popova said she called both an older generation of musicians and DJs who personally know Lazovsky and the younger artists who now perform at Griboyedov.

"For instance, I will be performing with Kitt Whale, a breaks DJ — we'll be playing 'back-to-back,' she said.

"Obviously Dva Samolyota will play. There's no question about it because Lyosha has spent half of his life

with them," she said.

"Everybody that we started and continue to rave with in the early 1990s and continue [will also be there]. I knew Lyosha even before I became a DJ. We met at the Pushkinskaya 10 squat and often had drinking parties together."

"They had rehearsal rooms there and I had a workshop where I also lived. We were friends then, and we are still friends now. But you know, life pulls everyone in different directions. Everyone grows up, has families and children but in any case, everyone who is still making music is happy to take part."

Popova said she started to perform as a DJ in 1994. In 1995, Dva Samolyota started to art-direct the Nora club, before moving to Griboyedov.

"We had many things which connected us; at Pushkinskaya we lived together," she said.

"I remember I did provocative exhibitions on Pushkinskaya Ulitsa and, because there were not so many DJs at the time, we danced to bands like Pep-Sec, Kolibri and Dva Samolyota. There was an exhibition opening in the evening, and then it turned into celebrating and dancing."

"We have no oil millionaires among us, how much can each of us send? But [at the benefit event] we'll probably be able to collect a bigger sum."

According to the manager of Griboyedov Mikhail Yegorov, who played guitar with the 1990s alternative rock band Kolybel, Popova came to him with the idea.

"We were speaking about how people on the current scene don't care much about each other; look at what happened to Lyokha," Yegorov said.

"I said why don't you go ahead with it, and I will help you with anything I can. So she called the DJs, wrote a few press releases and started spreading the word about the event. Of course, everybody knows Lekha and accepted the invitation."

Yegorov said that all the club's membership cards would still work for the event, but encouraged the holders to buy tickets so that there would be more money for Lazovsky's treatment.

"Anyone who wants to donate [to the cause] will be able to," he said. He added that more bands and DJs have expressed a desire to contribute.

Airplanes First, a benefit concert and party for Alexei Lazovsky, will be held at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 15 at Griboyedov, 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 764 4355, 973 7273. M: Vladimirs-kaya/Dostoyevskaya.

THE DISH

Kroo Cafe: French Twist

Kroo Cafe

27 Suvorovsky Prospekt
Tel. (906) 273 1111
Open daily, 8.30 a.m. until midnight
Brunch for two without alcohol 1,200 rubles (\$34.50)

By Chris Gordon

Brunch in St. Petersburg falls between the nonexistent and the extravagant — between catch-as-catch-can and the full on splendor of hotel offerings like the champagne brunch at Grand Hotel Europe. A new cafe near Smolny, however, is set to change all that.

Kroo Cafe is owned by Franco-ophile Violetta Kroo with a French ex-

pat chef in the kitchen, and offers weekend brunch from 8:30 a.m. until the respectable hour of 4 p.m. — a godsend for those waking late on the weekend and in need of eggy sustenance.

Divided into two dining rooms separated by a display of baked goods, the cafe is decorated in calming blues and grays with a pop of color provided by red velvet covered banquettes in the more casual of the two rooms. Rustic yet sophisticated, the vibe is relaxed and welcoming.

The selection of brunch items on offer veers perilously close to the sweet end of the spectrum but there were enough savory items to keep us from turning to the full menu, which

features French cuisine with a Russian twist and is available all day long.

Since the chef is French we decided to put his omelet- and quiche-making skills to the test with a feta and farmer's sausage omelet (190 rubles, \$5.46), and a quiche filled with salmon and spinach (190 rubles, \$5.46). The diminutive quiche was first out of the kitchen and sat — as everything everywhere seems to do these days — perched atop a round, wooden cutting board covered in butcher's paper. The tender flaky crust was held together with just enough custard to satisfy, although the portion size left a bit to be desired. A small accompanying dish of

mustardy, herbed mayonnaise was a nice touch that added depth to what veered a bit too much toward the bland. The omelet the platonic ideal of a dish that is, more often than not, served overcooked in most places. While the filling was also on the tame side, it was nonetheless a satisfying bite.

The croissants we had ordered at the start of the meal — one plain, one hazelnut filled — appeared as a separate course after the egg dishes despite our asking that they be delivered with our drinks. Served with a flourish atop an oval metal plate with a change of silverware we, of course, dug in with our hands. The sheen of butter left on our fingertips and the

shards of flaky pastry scattered across our laps were the perfect testament to the chef's mastery of this simple, yet miraculous invention. The slightly salty caramel and hazelnut praline that filled one of the croissants was so good we considered having a second.

We washed the meal down with a latte and a velvety smooth teacup half filled with hot chocolate (150 rubles, \$4.31 each), which also arrived atop a sliver oval tray accompanied by a butter cookie and a shot of water. The presentation at Kroo Cafe veers towards the precious, but despite the twee touches, a morning spent here was a gentle awakening after an indulgent night out that helped smooth the edges off the rest of the day.

State Hermitage Museum Celebrates 250 Years in Song

By Alexei Moskin
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Dedicated to the 250th anniversary of the State Hermitage Museum, the 11th Musical Hermitage festival kicks off this week with performances by the U.K.'s Lighthouse Trio and the Dutch Yuri Honing Quartet in a program entitled "Dueling Saxophones." The festival is set to run from Sunday, Feb. 16 through Tuesday, Feb. 25 at various locations around the city.

"The traditional week of European music at the end of winter is dedicated this year to the 250th anniversary of the State Hermitage," composer Sergei Yevtushenko, the festival's artistic director, told The St. Petersburg Times. "As always, the festival program takes the variety of the museum collection as a starting point and includes both classic and contemporary jazz alongside medieval and world music performed by acknowledged masters of the genre. Most of the performer will appear in Russia for the first time, so almost every concert can be called a premiere," he said.

With performances scheduled by artists from the Netherlands, France, Italy, Sweden, Norway and, of course, Russia, the program this year is an eclectic mix of jazz and classical music.

"Two of the festival's concerts this year are included in the official program of the The UK-Russia Year of Culture "Dueling Saxophones" and "Bilingual Shakespeare," said Yevtushenko. "The French ethno-jazz pioneers Hadouk Trio will perform in three cities — Moscow, St. Petersburg and Pskov."

The opening concert will take place at the State Academic Capella with performances by Yuri Honing Quartet and Tim Garland's Lighthouse Trio. Honing is known as being "one of

the most creative and fearless saxophonists today," according to The Times of London, on account of his tackling styles as diverse as Schubert, ABBA and Bjork. Honing, who received an Edison Award — the Dutch equivalent of the Grammy — for his album "Seven," which was recorded in New York with Paul Bley, Gary Peacock and Paul Motion has also performed with such legendary musicians as Herbie Hancock and Pat Metheny.

A 2009 Grammy winner, Tim Garland is a virtuoso multi-instrumentalist, who also plays a variety of styles. His frequent creative partners include such stars of modern jazz as Chick Corea and Bill Bruford. As part of Lighthouse Trio, pianist Gwilym Simcock is recognized as one of the most interesting composers of the U.K. in both jazz and classical music. Percussionist Asaf Sikrisa brings Eastern and Latin American flavors to the sound of the group, putting it on a par with the some of the strongest jazz ensembles currently in existence.

The festival continues with "Bilingual Shakespeare" on Feb. 19 at the Erarta Museum. Dedicated to the bard's 450th birthday, the event will include jazz and sonnets performed by artists from St. Petersburg, the Netherlands and the U.K. Hadouk Trio are due to perform on Feb. 21 in the atrium of the Hermitage's General Staff building, with an evening of Bel Canto singing by the winners of the Spoleto opera festival appearing at the Capella on Feb. 23. The festival comes to a close on Feb. 25 with a performance by Norwegian jazz musician and composer Arve Henriksen and Trio Mediaeval in the atrium of the Hermitage's General Staff Building.

For more information, visit www.hermitagemusic.ru and follow *The St. Petersburg Times* on Facebook and VKontakte for a chance to win tickets.



Arve Henriksen and Trio Mediaeval will perform at the Hermitage on Feb. 25.



Partly filmed in St. Petersburg, 'Stalingrad' has been attracting significant attention abroad.

Stalingrad Lands in U.S.

Sony is banking on European and Asian success to help sell war film.

By Ali Sar
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

HOLLYWOOD — As the buzz surrounding the motion picture "Stalingrad" continues, Sony Entertainment is hoping that it will pick up more steam as its U.S. release date of Feb. 28 approaches.

Although the \$30 million budgeted battle epic was unveiled throughout the world some weeks ago, Sony held up the American introduction, counting on more positive recognition during the awards season. However, the movie failed to garner either Golden Globe or Oscar nods in the form of best foreign film nominations.

Now, Sony is betting on the blockbuster business "Stalingrad" is enjoying around the world, especially in Russia and China where it has grossed nearly \$100 million.

A Sony marketing executive told The St. Petersburg Times that the studio is very excited about the prospects of this production as it possesses an unusual appeal for American audiences.

Frequently cited is the story line. Even though the movie tells the story of one of the greatest and bloodiest battles of World War II, it focuses on a poignant love story involving a German commanding officer and a Soviet woman.

Ilya Tilkin's script reportedly came in



Russian critics have faulted the film for focusing too much on romance.

for criticism from Russian film buffs for its concentration on the romantic aspects of the story at the expense of paying proper tribute to Russian sacrifices.

"Stalingrad" director Fyodor Bondarchuk sidestepped the negative comments preferring instead to compare the film to Steven Spielberg's battlefield epic "Saving Private Ryan."

Technically, "Stalingrad" brings to mind other epic productions. St. Petersburg plays a pivotal role here since the huge sets were constructed at the former Krasny Triugolnik factory at a cost in excess of 100 million rubles (\$2.87 million) for the picture's key sequences.

Another plus for international audiences has been the IMAX 3D technology used for the first time in a Russian film, an aspect Sony attributes to the success of the film.

For emphasis, studio publicists point to the film's opening four-day receipts of \$8.5 million in China, which make it the highest grossing non-U.S. film in that market.

When the picture opened in Europe, the New York Times headlined "Russia's 'Stalingrad' is a hit on screen." Sony is hoping for an encore in the states as well as in other remaining territories.

the word's worth

A Little Bit of This, a Little Bit of That

By Michele A. Berdy

Купи сыру: buy some cheese

We'll pause in our round-the-clock coverage of the Olympic Games for a small commercial break. That means you get off the couch, stretch and head for the kitchen. *Что ты хочешь?* (What do you want?), you ask your significant other. *Чаю? Коньяку? Шоколаду?* (Some tea? Some cognac? Some chocolate?)

How charming to offer to get your companion something to eat. How clever of you to use the partitive case.

The what?

You'll be forgiven if you missed this in your Russian language lessons. Called in Russian *родительный час-*

тичный падеж (the genitive partitive case), it is a nifty way of indicating some or part of something. With most nouns it is just the standard genitive case endings and means some, a little, part of whatever is being discussed. For example, a teenager heading to the mall to buy a pair of glasses might approach a parent with a hand extended and the phrase: *Дай денег за очки!* (Give me some money to buy glasses). That is the partitive case. But if said teenager has already ordered the glasses and knows the exact price, the request would be: *Дай деньги за очки* (give me the money for the glasses).

This might be one of those arcane bits of Russian grammar that you file away and figure no one will notice if

you get it wrong. That is fine. Except for a list of about a hundred Russian words — all masculine gender — that have a special partitive ending: *-у* or *-ю* in the singular. Recognizing them is important. Using them makes you sound less like you just got off the boat clutching your Russian-English dictionary. The *-у/-ю* partitive forms are a little like Dr. Who's bowties: a little old-fashioned, a little dorky, but cool.

Besides, you probably hear or use these forms every day in the kitchen: *чаю* (some tea); *шоколаду* (some chocolate); *сыру* (some cheese); *сахару* (some sugar); *супу* (some soup); *чесноку* (some garlic); and *жиру* (some fat, grease). Or you might use them when you are knocking back some cold ones: *коньяку* (a little cognac); *самогону* (a

bit of moonshine); *спирту* (some grain alcohol).

Я не прочь съесть горячего супу (I wouldn't say no to some hot soup). *С утра принесли печеной картошки и даже сыру* (This morning they brought some baked potatoes and even some cheese.) *Я заказал шампанского, самого дорогого французского коньяку, каких-то неведомых блюд, ананасов, шоколаду.* (I ordered some champagne, some of the most expensive French cognac, some dishes I've never heard of, and some pineapple and chocolate.)

Other nouns of this list you've used a thousand times in the partitive case, perhaps without noticing. Were there a lot of people at the rally? *Народу в тот раз было меньше, чем обычно.* (There were less people than usual this

time.) *Народу было очень много.* (There were a lot of people.)

You've forgotten your lighter at a party, so you ask the guy next to you: *Огоньку не найдётся?* (Do you have a light, literally "some fire.") You've stopped at a gas station and tell the attendant: *Налейте бензину* (Give me some gas.) You've just woken up and turned on the weather report: *За ночь снова навалило снегу* (During the night we got a lot of snow again)

The best thing about this? It's optional. If you say *навалило снегу* instead of *навалило снега*, no one will mind. You just won't be as cool. Michele A. Berdy, a Moscow-based translator and interpreter, is the author of "The Russian Word's Worth" (Glas), a collection of her columns.



A photograph encompassing both the stunning scenery of the Caucasus Mountains and some of its curious inhabitants was crowned the overall winner of the 2013 'Wildlife of Russia' competition.

Exposing Russia's Wild Side

By Lana Matafonov
THE ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

Play a word association game with the word "Russia" at the moment and the answers are bound to be along the themes of corruption, homophobia, terrorism and alcohol consumption.

So it was a breath of fresh air to walk into National Geographic's latest exhibition, "Wildlife of Russia," be greeted with photographs of playful bear cubs, tranquil lakes and picturesque mountains, and be reminded once again that there is much more to Russia than unfinished hotel rooms, bare-chested Putin portraits and twin toilets.

Officially opening in Moscow on Dec. 25 and viewed by over 40,000 people, National Geographic's latest exhibition has arrived at Loft Project Etagi for the month of February.

Run as an annual competition, "Wildlife of Russia" is now in its third year and aims to showcase the best that Russia's vast natural beauty has to offer over its impressive nine time zones.

Open to both amateur and professional photographers, the 2013 competition received more than 45,000 entries for categories including: Mammals, Landscape, Mothers and Their Young, Russia's Nature Reserves, Birds, Close-Up, Plants, From Dusk 'Till Dawn, Nature in Black and White, Underwater Photography, Young Talent as well as Social Media Choice.

Sifting through the photos and choosing winners for each category was a jury made up of representa-

tives from National Geographic Russia, the Russian Geographical Society and industry professionals.

An overall competition winner was also selected and this year's winner was Denis Bogomolov for his photograph titled "Family of Foxes." Capturing the small furry family in a backdrop of lush greenery in the Caucasus Mountains also earned the photographer 300,000 rubles (\$9,189) in prize money.

"When I took the picture, I could not have even imagined that the jury would evaluate my work so highly. I am very grateful to National Geographic Russia magazine for giving me the opportunity to take part in such a large-scale competition and exhibition," Bogomolov said upon accepting his award at the exhibition's opening in Moscow.

While the First Floor Gallery temporary exhibition space at Loft Project Etagi is basic to say the least, it at thankfully does not distract from the beauty captured in the images on display. In fact, the long room is a good representation of how big Russia is and how much lies within its borders.

Displaying images from all the categories, the country's diversity is fully exposed from its curious underwater world to the tops of its mountainous glory and right across through to the beautiful white cliffs that line Iturup, the largest island of the South Kuril archipelago located in Russia's Far East.

St. Petersburg is also represented by a few photographs this year; one featuring a rabbit hiding on a grassy plain by Sergey Kuznitsov, while another, by Constantine Shatenev, fea-

tures a cheeky baby black bear climbing up a tree.

While images of bears, deer, owls and foxes were to be expected, viewers were also given an opportunity to glimpse Russia's tiny insect world thanks to the Close-Up category. With their alien-like features blown up to larger-than-life-size proportions, these insects are fierce and demand the viewer's attention.

Dusk 'Till Dawn is another interesting category due to the lighting at these times of the day that photogra-

phers are able to play with. The unique nature captured in the images make you feel like you are peering into Russia's true soul, seeing what has inspired and mystified the country's writers and poets over the centuries.

Now if only these same images could also inspire airlines to drop their domestic flight prices so as to allow such beauty to be more readily accessible for the rest of us to experience Russia beyond the photographs.

"Wildlife of Russia" is on view until Feb. 27 at First Floor Gallery, Loft Project Etagi. Entry is free from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. daily, and 290 rubles (\$8.35) from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, visit: www.loftprojectetagi.ru

V A mother with her bear cubs by the Kurile Lake, Kamchatka took third place in the Mothers and Their Young category.

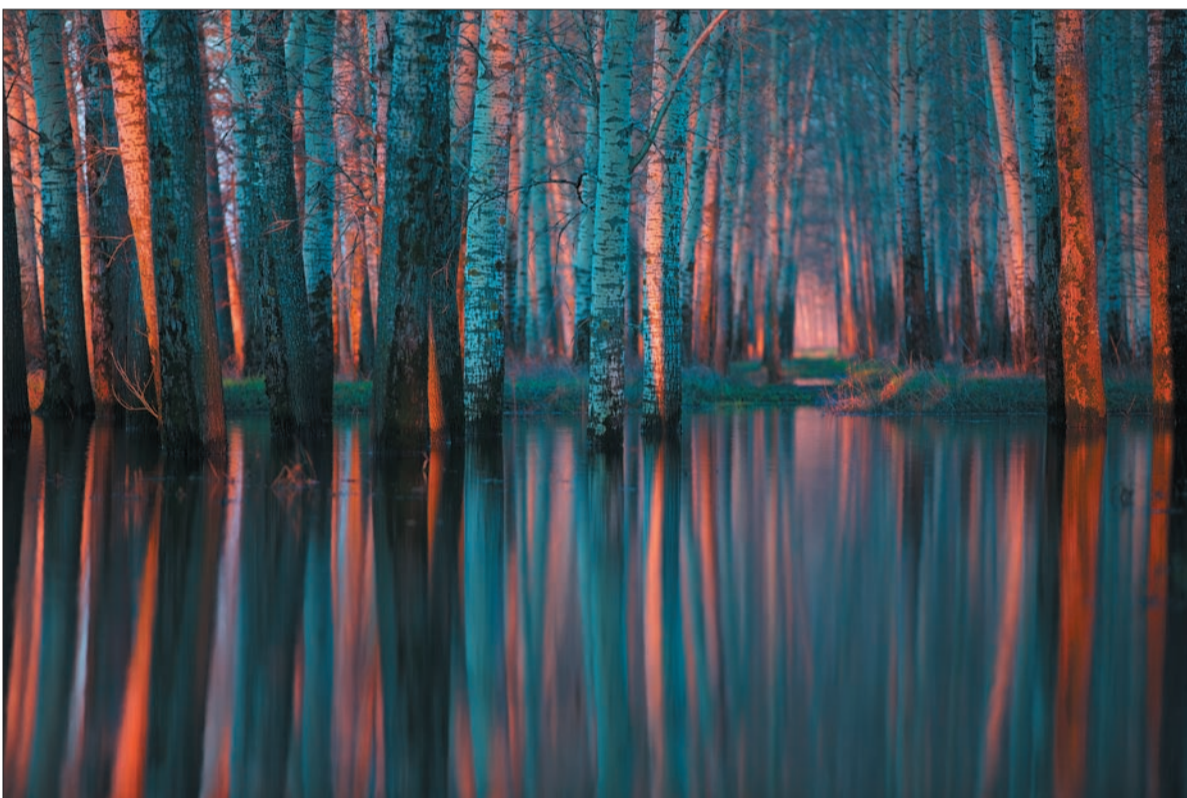




◀ A picture of an unhappy young grey heron, seen here after falling into a swamp following a violent storm, took third place in the Birds category.

SERGEY WHITE / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RUSSIA

▼ A chameleon blends in with the sand at the Dagestan State Reserve to take second place in Russia's Nature Reserve category.

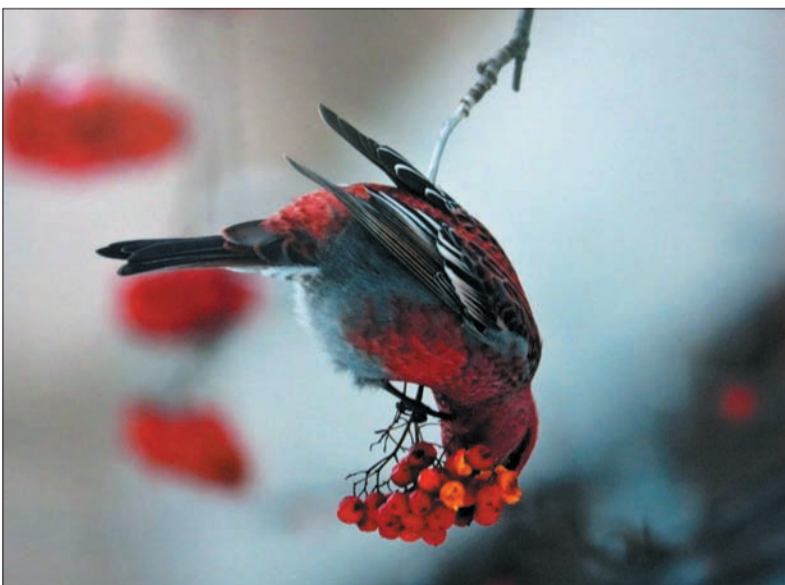


ALEXEY BIBIN / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RUSSIA

◀ First place winner in the Landscapes category shows the tranquil colors at dawn captured on the Nerl River, Bogolyubovo.

▶ White cliffs stretch for kilometers along the shore of Iturup island, located in Russia's Far East, took third place in the Landscapes category.

▼ One of the few local photographs at the exhibition captures red beauty during winter in Old Peterhof.



ALEXANDEKTEKLYANNIKOV / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RUSSIA



ALEXEY KHARTONOV / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC RUSSIA

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 by contacting the venue. **COMPLETE LISTINGS** can be found at www.sptimes.ru (or scan the QR code below).

Unless otherwise stated, stage events start at 7 p.m. All stage shows and films are in Russian unless noted.

**STAGES**

wednesday, february 12

ballet

Les Sylphides Michel Fokine's choreography, set to music by Chopin for Diaghilev's Ballet Russes. *Mariinsky Theater, 7.30 p.m.*

Giselle Adolphe Adam's ballet, staged by Nikolai Dolgushin, about the consequences of a peasant woman's love for a member of the aristocracy. *Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory Theater, 11 a.m.*

opera

Turandot Puccini's opera based on Carlo Gozzi's drama about a Chinese princess and a young man who is the first to answer her three riddles, thereby escaping execution. *Mariinsky II PREMIERE! Yevgeny Onegin* Andriy Zholdak stages Tchaikovsky's opera based on Pushkin's novel in verse. Conductor Mikhail Tatarnikov. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

Tosca Yuri Alexandrov stages a version of Puccini's passionate opera. Sergei Stadler conducts. *St. Petersburg Opera*

concert

Chamber Music Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Kreisler, Gershwin. *Museum of Music (Sheremetev Palace), 34 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 272 4441, 6.30 p.m.*

Chamber Music Bach, Weber, Fore, Sancan, Dutilleux, Poulenc. *Music House, 122 Lit A Nab. Reki Moiki. Tel. 702 6096*

Folk Music Metelitsa Russian folk orchestra. Conductor Igor Tonin. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Small Hall*

Choral Music Spirituals and Russian folk. Singing cappella. Conductor Vladislav Chernushenko. *Cappella*

Organ Recital Frescobaldi, Bruna, Clerambault, Bach, Mendelssohn, Huber. Juan Paradell (Italy). *Tavrishesky Palace, 47 Shpalernaya Ul. M. Chernyshevskaya*

Symphony Music De Falla, Rimsky-Korsakov. Central Concert Rimsky-Korsakov Orchestra. Conductor Alexei Karabanov. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Main Hall*

Jozsef Lendvay And Friends Weiner, Bartok, Hubay, Haydn, Sarasate, Kreisler, Brahms, Piazzolla and others. *Mariinsky Concert Hall*

thursday, february 13

ballet

Multiplicity. Forms of Silence and Emptiness A two-act ballet set to music by Bach. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

opera

Turandot Puccini's opera based on Carlo Gozzi's drama about a Chinese princess and a young man who is the first to answer her three riddles, thereby escaping execution. *Mariinsky II PREMIERE! Yevgeny Onegin* Andriy Zholdak stages Tchaikovsky's opera based on Pushkin's novel in verse. Conductor Mikhail Tatarnikov. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

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concert

Polina Osetinskaya Piano Recital Debussy, Vasks, Pelecis, Satie, Part, Mompou. *Mariinsky Concert Hall*
Chamber Music St. Petersburg Opera soloists. *St. Petersburg Opera*

friday, february 14

ballet

Le Corsaire Marius Petipa's ballet based on Byron's poem, set to music by Cesare Pugni, Leo Delibes, Richard Drigo and Adolphe Adam. *Mariinsky II*

Don Quixote Alexander Gorsky's version of the ballet based on Cervantes' novel, set to a score by Ludwig Minkus. *Mariinsky Theater, 7.30 p.m.*

opera

Don Giovanni Yuri Alexandrov directs Mozart's opera, staged by Klaus Wagner. *St. Petersburg Opera*

concert

Choral Music Mikhailovsky choir and orchestra. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

Choral Music Mozart. Mariinsky choir, symphony orchestra and soloists. *Mariinsky Concert Hall*

Chamber Music Paganini, Schumann, Vieuxtemps, Hindemith, Palashko. *Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory Theater, Small Hall*

Symphony Music Mahler. St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Main Hall*

My Funny Valentine Zazerkalye orchestra and soloists. Conductor Pavel Bubelnokov. *Zazerkalye Theater*

Choral Music Anerio, Palestrina, Lasso, Machault, Gesualdo, Reger, Poulenc. Lege Artis Chamber Choir. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Small Hall*

Philharmonic, Small Hall

saturday, february 15

ballet

Carmen Suite. Le Jeune Homme et la Mort Choreography by Alberto Alonso and Roland Petit set to music by Bizet and Shchedrin, Bach. *Mariinsky Theater*

opera

L'italiana in Algeri Alexander Petrov stages Rossini's comic opera about a young Italian girl in search of her lover. *Zazerkalye Theater*

Il barbiere di Siviglia Rossini's classic two-act opera in a concert performance. *Mariinsky Concert Hall*

The Maid of Pskov Rimsky-Korsakov's opera about Ivan the Terrible, who destroys Novgorod but spares nearby Pskov when he discovers that he has a daughter there. *Mariinsky Theater*

Mariinsky Theater

concert

Organ Recital Bach, Brahms, Schumann, Liszt. Marina Vyaizya. *St. Maria Evangelical-Lutheran Cathedral, 8a, Bolshaya Konushennaya Ul. Tel. 314 7161, 6 p.m.*

Viva Strauss. St. Petersburg Opera soloists. *St. Petersburg Opera*

Symphony Music Verdi, Gounod, Puccini, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov. Hermitage Orchestra. Conductor Fabio Mastrangelo (Italy). *Music Hall*

Symphony Music Dvorak, Tchaikovsky. Karelian Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor Anatoly Rybalko. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Main Hall*

Choral Music Debussy, Ravel, Berlioz. *Cappella, 7 p.m.*

Chamber Music Bird, Dowland, Elizabeth Tudor. Vox Magica ensemble. *Cappella, 7.30 p.m.*

sunday, february 16

ballet

Ballet Evening Intensio. Prodigal Son. Sacre. *Mariinsky II*

Swan Lake Tchaikovsky's ballet about the fate of a swan princess. *Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory Theater*

opera

PREMIERE! The Snow Maiden Rimsky-Korsakov's opera based on Ostrovsky's fairy tale. *Zazerkalye Theater*

Ruslan and Lyudmila Glinka's opera based on Pushkin's tale about a bride who is kidnapped by a magician. *Mariinsky Theater, 6 p.m.*

Un Ballo in Maschera Verdi's opera loosely based on the assassination of King Gustav III of Sweden at a ball. Conductor Peter Feranec. *Mikhailovsky Theater*

concert

Symphony Music Klassika Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Alexander Kantorov. Adam, Gounod, Ponchielli, Arensky, Asafyev, Glazunov, Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Khachaturian. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Main Hall*



The Miriads, an electronic, retrofuturistic disco-rock trio from St. Petersburg, will perform at More on Friday, Feb. 14.

thursday, february 13

rock, etc.

Schweinemaschinen Indie rock. *Dada, 47 Gorokhovaya Ulitsa. Tel. 983 7050, 8 p.m.*

Endsmouth Indie rock. *Dada (After), 47 Gorokhovaya Ulitsa. Tel. 983 7050, 8 p.m.*

Borisevichi and Comp / ORM Electronica, experimental. Free entrance. *Fish Fabrique, 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 4857, 9 p.m.*

FoN Rock. *Manhattan, 90 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 713 1945, 7 p.m.*

Kuuma Muusa / Blind Secrecy Rock, metal. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734, 8 p.m.*

Garou Pop. *Oktyabrsky Concert Hall, 6 Ligovsky Pr. Tel. 275 1300, 7 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Elvira Trafova and Pyotr Kornev Band Jazz classics. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843, 7 p.m.*

Close Connections Irma Seleman Trio, Laur Telliskivi Trio, Lo-Baa Band. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

friday, february 14

rock, etc.

Batmobile / Messer Chups / Looney Boppers Psychobilly. *A2, 3 Prospekt Medikov. Tel. 309 9922, 8 p.m.*

Ivan Ozhogin Pop rock, pop jazz. *Avrora Concert Hall, St. Petersburg Hotel, 5/2 Pirogovskaya Nab. Tel. 907 1917, 8 p.m.*

PTVP Punk rock, alternative rock. *Dada (After), 47 Gorokhovaya Ulitsa. Tel. 983 7050, 8 p.m.*

Singapur Electronica, pop rock. Free entrance. *Fish Fabrique, 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 4857, 9 p.m.*

Tres Muchachos y Companeros Latin. *Griboyedov Hill, 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 764 4355, 973 7273, 9 p.m.*

Ayo Folk, soul, reggae. *Kosmonavt, 24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 922 1300, 8 p.m.*

Umka and Borya K Acoustic. *Manhattan, 90 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 713 1945, 7 p.m.*

Fredro Starr Hip-hop. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734, 6 p.m.*

Kopegagen / Nas Net Pop rock. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734, 8 p.m.*

The Myriads Disco rock. *More, 20 Malaya Morskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 957 0820, 8 p.m.*

Kavabanga-Depo-Kolibri Hip-hop. *Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Nab. Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. 333 1069, 8 p.m.*

Krasniye Zvyozdy Acoustic. *Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 274 9467, 8 p.m.*

monday, february 17

opera

Il Trovatore Verdi's opera in four acts based on a libretto by Salvatore Cammarano. *Mariinsky II*

concert

Folk Music Russian Concert Orchestra. Conductor Vladimir Popov. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Small Hall*

Chamber Music Borodin, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov. *Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory Theater, Small Hall*

tuesday, february 18

ballet

La Bayadere A dancer in India is punished for her love of a warrior destined to marry the king's daughter. *Mariinsky Theater, 8 p.m.*

opera

Christmas Eve Olga Malikova directs Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's opera based on Gogol's tale. *Mariinsky Concert Hall*

Madame Butterfly Mariusz Trelinski's 2005 staging of Puccini's opera about an American soldier who leaves his Japanese wife. Conductor Valery Gergiev. *Mariinsky II*

concert

Rock and Baroque Bach, Purcell, Monteverdi and Buxtehude. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Small Hall*

Symphony Music Shostakovich, Gladkov. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. Conductor Alexei Bogorad. *Shostakovich Philharmonic, Main Hall*

Vocal Music Piazzolla, Ramirez. *Kochneva House, 41 Nab. Reki Fontanki, M. Gostiny Dvor. Tel. 710 4002*

GIGS

wednesday, february 12

rock, etc.

Emin Pop rock. *A2, 3 Prospekt Medikov. Tel. 309 9922, 8 p.m.*

Close Encounters Caroline Rose, On Que. *Fish Fabrique Nouvelle, 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 4857, 9 p.m.*

Lackband Nu-jazz, hip-hop, funk. *Griboyedov (Hill), 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 764 4355, 973 7273, 10 p.m.*

Nazareth Rock. *Lensoviet Palace of Culture, 42 Kamennostrovsky Prospekt. Tel. 346 0438, 8 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Konstantin Khazanovich Band Mainsteam. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843, 7 p.m.*

Gaivoronsky Volkov Sladkevich Art jazz. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Easy Winners Ragtime Band Early traditional jazz. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843, 7 p.m.*

Kondakov Volkov Bagdasaryan Original compositions. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

saturday, february 15

rock, etc.

Chicherina Pop rock. *Avrora Concert Hall, St. Petersburg Hotel, 5/2 Pirogovskaya Nab.. Tel. 907 1917, 8 p.m.*

The St. Petersburg Ska-Jazz Review Ska jazz. *Dada, 47 Gorokhovaya Ulitsa. Tel. 983 7050, 8 p.m.*

Bentley Sound Acoustic Fest Buddha Larin, VVS, Alexander Gumbart, Atmoravi, PodKablukom. Free entrance. *Fish Fabrique, 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 4857, 9 p.m.*

Benefit Concert for Alexei Lazovsky Dva Samolyota, Mister Maloy, PCP, DJ Boomer, Lena Popova, Kitt Whale, Zemine, Re-Disco, Lovesky and Kirill Matras. *Griboyedov, 2A Voronezhskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 764 4355, 973 7273, 11:59 p.m.*

Segodnyanochoyu Pop rock. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734, 7 p.m.*

Van Canto Heavy metal. *Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Nab. Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. 333 1069, 8 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Leningrad Dixieland Band Jazz dancing. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843, 7 p.m.*

Nikolai Popravko Band Jazz standards, original compositions. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

sunday, february 16

rock, etc.

Moralny Kodeks Pop rock. *A2, 3 Prospekt Medikov. Tel. 309 9922, 8 p.m.*

More Oblakov Indie rock. *Dada, 47 Gorokhovaya Ulitsa. Tel. 983 7050, 8 p.m.*

Frank & Funk Funk, disco. *Fish Fabrique Nouvelle, 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 4857, 9 p.m.*

Murakami Pop rock. *Kosmonavt, 24 Bronnitskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 922 1300, 8 p.m.*

DMTs Alternative rock. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734, 8 p.m.*

Alcest Shoegaze, post-metal. *Zal Ozhidaniya, 118 Nab. Obvodnogo Kanala. Tel. 333 1069, 8 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Alexander Latin Band Jazz dancing. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843, 7 p.m.*

Yevgeny Sokolov and Kirill Bubyakin Quintet Bebop. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

monday, february 17

rock, etc.

Valband Covers. *Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. 923 1292, 8:30 p.m.*

jazz & blues

The 19th International Guitar Jazz Festival The Break Orchestra. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850, 8 p.m.*

tuesday, february 18

rock, etc.

Dukhov Den Art folk. *GEZ-21 (Gallery of Experimental Sound), 53 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 764 52 58, 8 p.m.*



Nigerian-German folk-soul singer-songwriter Ayo, now on tour in support of her fourth album 'Ticket to the World,' will perform at Kosmonavt on Friday, Feb. 14.



Ivan Tarasyuk's exhibition at the Sheremetyev Palace will feature master classes led by the artist in decorating plates on Feb. 16 and 23.

Sarah Brightman Classical crossover. *Oktyabrsky Concert Hall, 6 Ligovsky Pr. Tel. 275 1300. 7 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Kvadrat Jazz Club Jam session. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall (Ellington Hall), 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843. 8 p.m.*

19th International Guitar Jazz Festival Andrei Makarevich and Ildar Kazakhanov. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850. 8 p.m.*

wednesday, february 19

rock, etc.

Antitela Pop rock. *Avrora Concert Hall, St. Petersburg Hotel, 5/2 Pirogovskaya Nab.. Tel. 907 1917. 8 p.m.*

Andrei Makarevich Pop jazz. *Jagger, 2 Ploshchad Konstitutsii. Tel. 923 1292. 8:30 p.m.*

Osebo World music. *Mod, 7 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 712 0734. 7 p.m.*

Kitaro Instrumental, electronica, New Age, folk. *Oktyabrsky Concert Hall, 6 Ligovsky Pr. Tel. 275 1300. 7 p.m.*

Do-Re-Mi Orchestra Instrumental, acoustic, minimalism. *Zoccolo, 2/3 3-ya Sovetskaya Ulitsa. Tel. 274 9467. 8 p.m.*

jazz & blues

Yulia Kasyan, Yulia Mikhailovskaya and David Goloshchokin Band Jazz vocal night. *Jazz Philharmonic Hall, 27 Zagorodny Prospekt. Tel. 764 8565, 764 9843. 7 p.m.*

19th International Guitar Jazz Festival Swing Couture. *JFC Jazz Club, 33 Shpalernaya Ulitsa. Tel. 272 9850. 8 p.m.*

MUSEUMS

ANNA AKHMATOVA MUSEUM AT THE FONTANKA HOUSE

NEW! **Vladimir Ionenko.** Painting. The aging painter presents his work from the past several years. *Open Feb. 13 through Feb. 25*

DERZHAVIN MUSEUM

118 Nab. Reki Fontanki. M: Tekhnologicheskoy Institut, Sennaya Ploshchad. Tel. 713 0717. Tuesday to Sunday, 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The 70th Anniversary of the Leningrad Blockade. A collection of Leningrad blockage memorabilia from the Pushkin Apartment Museum, State Russian Museum and Siege and Defense of Leningrad Museum. *Through Mar. 15*

Folk Pictures. Lubok from the Pushkin museum. *Through Feb. 28*

DOLL MUSEUM

8 Kamskaya Ulitsa, M: Vasileostrovskaya. Tel. 327 7224. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Master classes in making dolls are held on Saturdays at 10 a.m. www.museumdolls.ru

I Want to Be in Sochi! Decorative art, installation. A collection of winter sport-

themed dolls and souvenirs from St. Petersburg residents. *Through Mar. 9*

DOSTOEVSKY APARTMENT MUSEUM

5/2 Kuznechny Pereulok, M: Vladimirskaia. Tel. 571 4031. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday and the last Wednesday of each month. www.md.spb.ru.

NEW! **We: Zamyatin, Tsvetayeva and Mayakovsky.** Graphics. Russian artist Valery Mishin attempts to translate the works of famous poets and writers into three-dimensional space. *Open Feb. 17 through Mar. 7*

HISTORY OF RELIGION MUSEUM

14/5 Pochtamskaya Ulitsa. M: Nevsky Prospekt / Sennaya Ploshchad, Sadovaya. Tel. 571 0495, 314 5838. Daily 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Wednesday.

16th- 18th- Century Religion and Art in the Netherlands. Painting, graphics, installation. *Through Feb. 26*

HISTORY OF ST. PETERSBURG MUSEUM: RUMYANTSEV MANSION

44 Angliiskaya Nab. M: Vasileostrovskaya, Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 571 7544. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (5 p.m. Tuesday). Closed Wednesday and the last Tuesday of each month. www.spbmuseum.ru

Kingdom of Flora. 17th-Century Dutch and Flemish Still Lifes. Painting. *Through Mar. 8*

Leningrad Inhabitants. Painting. *Through Mar. 15*

MUSIC MUSEUM AT THE SHEREMETEV PALACE

34 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 272 4441. Open Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. **NEW!** **An "I" for Creativity: Ivan Tarasyuk.** Painting. An exhibition of the artist's musically thematic work. *Open Feb. 12 through Mar. 26*

POLITICAL HISTORY OF RUSSIA MUSEUM

2/4 Ulitsa Kuibysheva. M: Gorkovskaya. Tel. 233 7052. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Thursday and the last Monday of the month. www.polithistory.ru

Leningrad-44. Posters from WWII and during the Blockade. *Through Feb. 15*

PUSHKIN APARTMENT MUSEUM

12 Nab. Reki Moiki. Tel. 571 3801. Daily, 10:30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Closed Tuesday and the last Friday of each month.

Yevgeny Chemodurov. Exhibition. A collection of posters, photos and private items from the famed Soviet actor's career. *Through Mar. 31*

RAZNOCHINNY PETERSBURG MUSEUM

7 Bolshoi Kazachy Pereulok. M: Pushkinskaya. Tel. 572 1932. Tuesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed last Thursday of the month.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV APARTMENT MUSEUM

28 Zagorodny Prospekt, Courtyard. M: Dostoyevskaya. Tel. 713 3208, 315 3975. Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6

p.m. Closed last Friday of each month.

Rimsky-Korsakov and Pushkin: Opera Masterpieces. Installation, graphics, painting. *Through Mar. 9*

NIKOLAI ROERICH APARTMENT MUSEUM

1 Line 18, V.O. Wednesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tel. 325 4413. www.roerich.spb.ru

Roerich School of Contemporary Art. Painting. *Through Mar. 30*

Nikolai Roerich and Estonia. Painting, installation. *Through Apr. 20*

STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

1 Palace Square. M: Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 571 3420, 571 3465. Daily, 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (9 p.m. Wednesday). Closed Monday. www.hermitagemuseum.org

Edgar Degas: Figure in Motion. Painting. *Through Feb. 16*

British Silver from the Victorian Age. Decorative art, installation. *Through Mar. 16*

STATE RUSSIAN MUSEUM: STROGANOV PALACE

17 Nevsky Prospekt. Tel. 571 2360. Open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (5 p.m. Monday). 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursdays. Closed Tuesday. A branch of the State Russian Museum.

Tourist Photographs of 19th-Century Italy. Photo. 115 pictures by famous Italian photographers as well as unknown professionals and foreign artists. *Through Feb. 28*

ST. PETERSBURG STATE MUSEUM OF THEATER AND MUSIC

8 Stremyannaya Ul. Tel. 764 1130. Daily 12 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Monday, Tuesday and last Friday of the month.

Theatrical Dynasties.

Komissarzhevskaya. Personal items, letters, costumes, posters, photo, decorations. *Through Apr. 12*

YUSUPOVSKY PALACE

94 Nab. Reki Moiki, M: Sennaya. Tel. 314 9883. Daily 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The World of Russian Nobility. Painting, installation. *Through Mar. 30*

GALLERIES

ARTISTS UNION OF RUSSIA EXHIBITION CENTER

38 Bolshaya Morskaya Ul. Tel. 314 3060. 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Monday. www.spb-uniart.ru

NEW! **St. Petersburg Secession.** Painting, graphics. Different artists present works that are testaments to both technique and tradition. *Open Feb. 12 through Mar. 1*

ERARTA MUSEUM

2, 29th Line, V.O. M: Vasileostrovskaya. Tel. 324 0809. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Tuesday. www.erarta.com

NEW! **After Comics.** Painting, media. Various artists incorporate American and French characters into a Russian cultural context. *Open Feb. 14 through Mar. 17*

NEW! **Measuring Silence: Diana Vouba.** Painting. An exploration into the spatial realms of our universe paired with sound installations. *Open Feb. 14 through Mar. 17*

NEW! **Number and Myth: Konstantin Khudyakov.** Painting, media. A presentation of new works including 3D paintings and digital mosaics. *Feb. 14 through Mar. 10*

MARINA GISICH GALLERY

121 Nab. Reki Fontanki. Tel. 314 4380. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Sunday. www.gisich.com

Terracotta Warriors: Dmitry Gretskey and Yevgenia Katz. Painting. An exhibition of 7-meter-tall oil paintings of schoolchildren wearing serious looks by the St. Petersburg artist. *Through Feb. 22*

LOFT-PROJECT ETAGI

74 Ligovsky Prospekt. Tel. 458 5005. Daily 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. **NEW!** **National Geographic. Wildlife in Russia.** Photo. *Through Feb. 27*

365 Days: Jonas Mekas. Video. *Through Feb. 25*

Animation, Covered With Snow. Animation, installation, video, installation, performance. *Through Feb. 20*

MART GALLERY

35 Ul. Marata. M: Vladimirskaia, Dostoyevskaya. Tel. 710 8835. 12 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Closed Sunday and Monday. www.martgallery.ru

Greis Darko (Ukraine). Photo, installation. Artwork that represents the phantoms, ghosts and shadows that surround the artist's life. *Through Feb. 22*

MOKHOVAYA 18 GALLERY

18 Mokhovaya Ul. M: Chernyshevskaya. Daily

11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Closed Sunday, Monday. Tel. 275 3383. www.gm18.ru

The Body: From Olympus to Olympiad. Painting. *Through Feb. 13*

NAME GALLERY

33 Nab. Kanala Griboyedova. Tel. 571 5517. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Sunday, Monday. www.namegallery.ru

Lubasha and Wolf: Viktor Kuznetsov.

Also known as Gipper Puper, the artist's work incorporates appropriated artwork made between 1988-2013. *Through Feb. 28*

RACHMANINOV GARDEN

5 Kazanskaya Ul. Tel. 312 9558. Tuesday - Saturday 12 p.m. to 8 p.m. www.fotorachmaninov.ru

Mobile Phone Photography Photo. *Through Feb. 22*

RIZZORDI ART FOUNDATION

49a Kurlyandskaya Ul. M: Baltiskaya. Tel. 702 9062. Tuesday through Friday 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., Sunday 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Monday. www.rizzordi.org

Invisible Cities Members of the Russian art collective will present work focusing on the theme of the future of cities. *Through Feb. 21*

ULTRAMARIN GALLERY

12 Zvenigorodskaya Ul. Tel. 404 6831. Thursday through Saturday 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. www.ultramarin-gallery.com/ru

Leningrad: Andrei Rudiev. A collection of artwork exhibiting the past and future of Leningrad from the artist's point of view. *Through Mar. 8*

SCREENS

Champions (Chempiony) (2014, Russia) A sports drama directed by Dmitry Dyuzhev, Artyom Aksenenko, Alexei Vakulov and Emil Nikogosyan. *Formula Kino Galereya, Khudozhestvenny, Mirage Cinema, Pik, Velikan Park.*

Inside Llewyn Davis (2013, U.S.-France) Ethan Coen and Joel Coen's music drama starring Oscar Isaac, Carey Mulligan and John Goodman. *Angleterre (in English with Russian subtitles), Avrora, Dom Kino, Formula Kino Galereya, Khudozhestvenny, Pik.*

Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit (2014, U.S.-Russia) Kenneth Branagh's action film starring Chris Pine, Kevin Costner and Keira Knightley. *Formula Kino Galereya, Khudozhestvenny, Mirage Cinema, Neva, Pik, Velikan Park.*

NEW! **The Physician** (2013, Germany) Philipp Stolzl's adventure drama starring Ben Kingsley, Stellan Skarsgard and Olivier Martinez. *Avrora, Mirage Cinema, Velikan Park.*

NEW! **That Awkward Moment** (2014, U.S.) Tom Gormican's comedy starring Zac Efron, Miles Teller and Michael B. Jordan. *Mirage Cinema, Velikan Park.*

NEW! **The Wolf of Wall Street** (2013, U.S.) Martin Scorsese's comedy starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Jonah Hill, Margot Robbie and Matthew McConaughey. *Avrora, Jam Hall, Mirage Cinema, Velikan Park.*



NEW! **American Hustle** (2013, U.S.) David O. Russell's crime drama starring Christian Bale, Bradley Cooper and Amy Adams. *Angleterre (in English with Russian Subtitles), Avrora, Jam Hall, Velikan Park. Starts Feb. 13.*



NEW! **Nymphomaniac: Volume I** (2013, Denmark-Germany-France-Belgium-U.K.) Lars von Trier's drama starring Charlotte Gainsbourg, Christian Slater and Uma Thurman. *Angleterre (in English with Russian subtitles).*



NEW! **RoboCop** (2014, U.S.) Jose Padilha's sci-fi thriller which is a remake of Paul Verhoeven's classic from 1984 starring Joel Kinnaman, Gary Oldman and Michael Keaton. *Velikan Park. Starts Feb. 13.*



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3-ROOM APARTMENT

20-min. walk from Gostiny Dvor. Eurostandard, author's design. Evgenia, +7-921-389-18-89.

25 Fontanka River. Second building from Nevsky prospect. 4th floor. Total area 115 sq.m.: two bedrooms, sitting room with a fire place, kitchen and 3 bathrooms. Splendid view of Fontanka river and Anichkov bridge from sitting room windows and balcony. Bedrooms overlook green courtyard. Fully furnished and equipped. Autonomous gas heating and hot water supply. Very beautiful staircase. Spacious modern elevator. Renovated entrance from the embankment. Concierge. Guarded parking. 145,000 rub./month. Photos on www.spb-estate.com. Low agency fee. Tel.: +7-921-992-1522, +7-921-957-0763, 325-3838, **NEVSKY PROSTOR AGENCY,** E-mail: rent@spb-estate.com, www.spb-estate.com

54 Fontanka. Newly renovated apartment of 200 sq. m. with 3 bedrooms, secure entrance, parking, fully fitted kitchen. For details contact Olga, tel. +7921 9637454; e-mail: olestate@gmail.com, olga@ctinvestments.ru

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4-ROOM APARTMENT

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Nothing to Stop the Pain

By Georgy Bovt

A few days ago, retired Rear Admiral Vyacheslav Apanasenko put an end to his own life. He earlier helped develop the Bulava missile but later struggled with terminal cancer. Although he had little hope of surviving, he could have spent his remaining days in the company of friends and relatives. Former Apple CEO Steve Jobs died from a similar illness, and he managed to continue working almost right up until the end. Apanasenko preferred shooting himself. In his case, euthanasia was preferable to the treatment provided by the medical system.

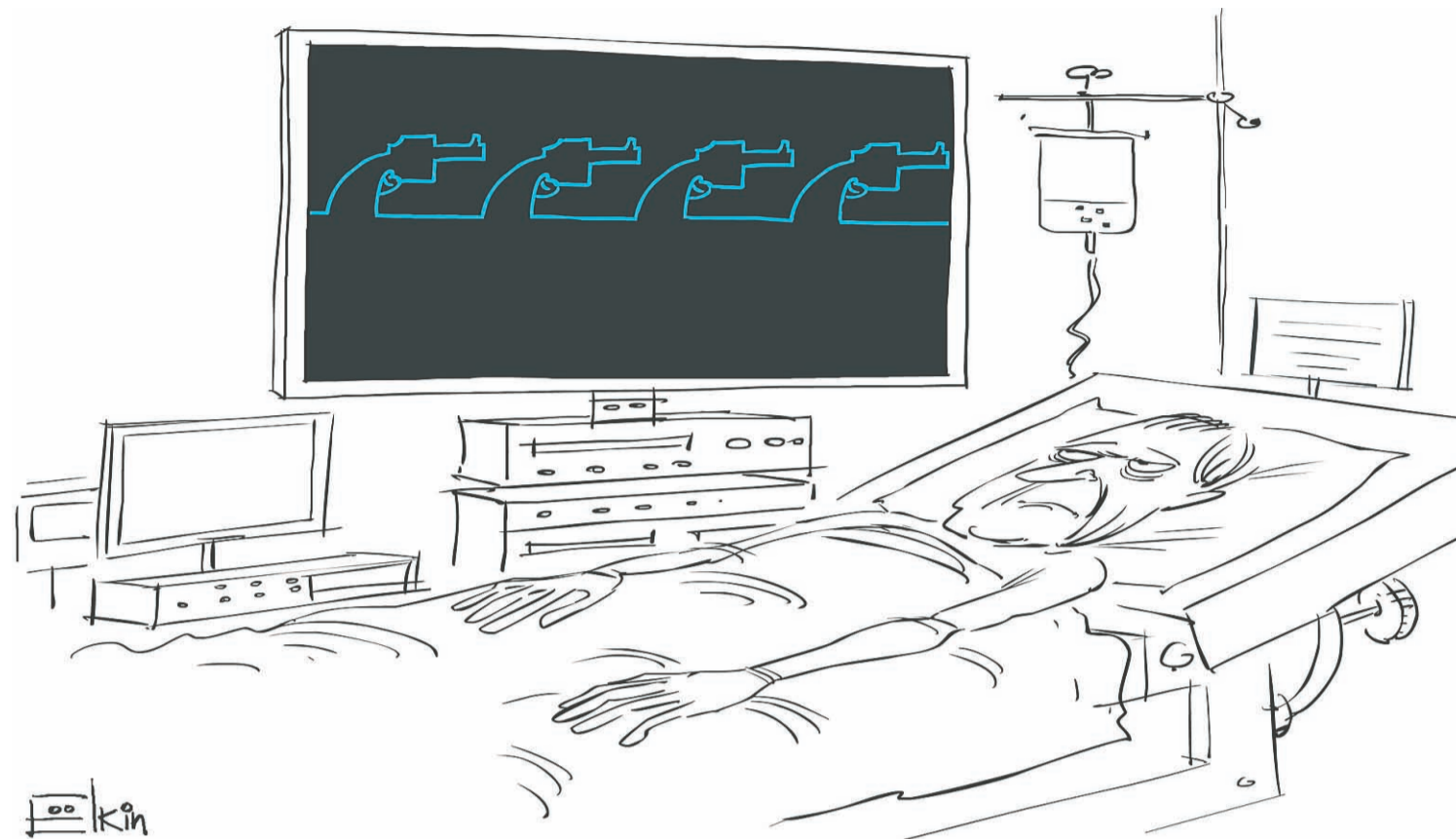
Euthanasia is illegal in Russia, but it remains common practice. Relatives kill their loved ones rather than watch them suffer in agony without painkillers. Patients commit suicide, and one patient even killed his doctor who was prolonging his torment before taking his own life.

News reports have been rather vague in explaining Apanasenko's cause of death. The newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported only that he had a "serious case of cancer" and experienced difficulty obtaining painkillers. But his daughter gave a more dramatic description of the situation in a Facebook post:

"Papa had late-stage pancreatic cancer," she wrote. "He courageously endured the pain. Mama tried to obtain the morphine he had been prescribed. To get a five-day supply of vials, for several days she had to run from office to office in the medical center for hours at a time. On the final day, she was short of one signature when the medical center closed. She came home completely burned out and without the anesthetics. Papa was outraged. This was the last straw. That night he got everything ready and left a note clearly stating his reasons. 'I ask that you not blame anyone except the Health Ministry and the government. I am prepared to suffer, but it is intolerable to see my loved ones suffer.' He wrote the time and date and signed it. Then he took his prized pistol. ... I think that with this act he wanted to draw attention to how cancer patients are treated in Russia."

The Federal Drug Control Service headed by Viktor Ivanov, a longtime associate of President Vladimir Putin, created this inhumane system for controlling the issuance of painkillers.

Terminally ill patients and those in severe pain must navigate a hellish bureaucracy to obtain even five vials of potent painkillers. Then, they must return the unused vials and bottle labels after the patient has died. Not only is it difficult and frustrating to get the clinic staff to sign off on the returned items, but the relatives are held



criminally responsible for failing to do so — even if they have accidentally lost them. Cancer patients are assigned to a single pharmacy that works with the medical center or cancer clinic in question. If that pharmacy does not have the medicines for whatever reason, the patient is left to scream in pain or die of shock. In some cases, individuals with late-stage cancer must personally appear to receive a prescription for the medicines that can relieve their suffering. Long weekends or holidays become a living nightmare for patients and their relatives because each prescription covers only a short period and regulations make it impossible to stock up in advance.

The incidence of cancer has doubled in Russia in the past 20 years, and although the U.S. has 1.5 times the number of cancer patients than Russia, the death rate from cancer is 1.5 times lower there. Of Russia's 3 million cancer patients, about 750,000 currently have late-stage cancer. These people are dying in agony, although the West has long made it possible for such patients to die with dignity by giving them up to 10 times the quantity of powerful painkillers than such patients receive in Russia. Some patients in the West are even pre-

scribed marijuana to ease their suffering. In this respect, Russia's laws resemble those in the backward countries of Africa and Asia, where it is also prohibited to give cancer patients powerful opiates or where access to them is cruelly limited. All of those countries effectively violate World Health Organization requirements that such patients have access to those medicines. And according to WHO research, Russian cancer patients have access to only five or six of the 20 to 25 effective painkilling medicines that exist — and only if their relatives are prepared to spend hours collecting signatures from an army of doctors. That is on a par with Ghana, where cancer patients are also tied to a single pharmacy and are forced to gather multiple signatures to receive needed medications.

The West now uses 40 times the number of strong painkillers — primarily opiates — than it did in the 1980s. In Russia, despite a significant increase in cancer rates, the use of such medicines remains unchanged. What's more, limiting access to those drugs has reached inhumane levels.

Doctors are themselves victimized by threats of criminal prosecution and avoid trouble by pre-

scribing such patients ordinary, weaker medications. In such cases, the best medicine patients can hope to receive is the weak Tramadol — and even then, only if the pharmacy happens to carry it. Ambulances often refuse to visit cancer patients, considering intense pain and even pain-induced shock insufficient grounds for treatment.

Russian doctors, who have taken the Hippocratic Oath, are not called to account for leaving patients to die an agonizing death. They carry no responsibility for failing to provide painkillers, but if they commit even the slightest error in filling out a prescription for powerful narcotics or happen to lose a vial of the medicine, they can be subjected to a criminal investigation.

Despite these draconian measures, drug addiction continues to rise in Russia as addicts easily find substitute drugs for those that have been banned or heavily regulated in recent years. Maybe it is time for Russia to consider legalizing euthanasia. That would be a more humane — and more honest — option for terminally ill people in agonizing pain.

Georgy Bovt is a political analyst.

COMMENT

Rain, Rain, Go Away

By Yulia Latynina

The authorities have effectively prohibited the Dozhd television channel from broadcasting on cable television. The ostensible reason for the ban was a survey that Dozhd conducted on Jan. 26 that asked: "Should the Soviet Union have surrendered Leningrad to save hundreds of thousands of lives?"

That ill-conceived and inappropriate question sparked a public defamation campaign similar to those during Stalinist purges. But the survey was really only a pretext. The authorities' displeasure with Dozhd probably began two months ago when the channel aired a program by anti-corruption whistleblower Alexei Navalny regarding luxurious dachas owned by high-ranking officials, including presidential administration First Deputy Chief of Staff Vyacheslav Volodin and Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Prikhodko.

Volodin was reportedly livid over the program and convened a special meeting of the presidential administration to discuss the matter. Even though Navalny produced the program, not Dozhd, it was important to go after the messenger so that there would be no more of these reports incriminating top officials.

Dozhd cannot survive financially without access to the cable networks and their viewership of 17 million households.

Does this mean that private broadcasters will simply cancel commercial contracts as a matter of policy?

These operators are not as "private" as you might think. Although private owners ostensibly control the companies that broadcast the signal to the cable networks, the government exerts direct control over them. For example, billionaire Viktor Vekselberg owns the Akado cable provider and billionaire Mikhail Fridman owns Beeline. And when the truly independent ER-Telecom cable provider attempted to buy Akado, the deal fell through after it was nixed by senior government officials.

Actually, the troubles for Dozhd began during the anti-government protests on Bolotnaya Ploshchad. The authorities applied a great deal of pressure on the channel, and media tycoon Alisher Usmanov stepped in for the kill with a buyout offer. But Dozhd CEO Natalya Sindeyeva and her business partners were strong enough to fend off the aggressive takeover bid.

That prompted the authorities to change tactics. They understood that it was easier to dis-

mantle the channel than to buy it out. Mikhail Lesin, the former head of the government agency overseeing the media who was linked to the state takeover of NTV in 2001, reportedly masterminded the attack on Dozhd.

The Kremlin's strategy to monopolize the media market consists of several main decisions: appointing Lesin to head Gazprom Media in October, dismantling RIA Novosti and creating Rosia Segodnya in its place with the odious Dmitry Kiselyov at its head in December, pushing Pavel Durov out of Vkontakte and now the attack on Dozhd. The goal is to erect a huge media wall to protect the authorities and isolate Russia from the free world. They are building that wall slowly but steadily.

The fate awaiting Dozhd is clear enough. It will be bought out — probably by the very same Usmanov who tried unsuccessfully to seize it earlier. Only now, with Dozhd barred from airing on cable networks, it is practically worthless. But by pushing the price down to next to nothing, it will make it easier — and cheaper — for the Kremlin and its frontman to eliminate the channel.

Yulia Latynina hosts a political talk show on Ekho Moskvy radio.

The St. Petersburg Times

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