



Newsletter

Events

On October 29th Mikhail Lavrovsky, a legendary ballet artist, a ballet master, choreographer, pedagogue and a People's Artist of the USSR celebrated his 75th birthday. For 55 years out of these 75 he has been serving the Bolshoi Theatre. The Prime Minister of Russia Dmitry Medvedev congratulated him on this day. In spring 2017 the gala-concert marking the dancer's jubilee will take place at the Bolshoi Theatre.

The [telegram](#) from Dmitry Medvedev that has been published on the government's website reads: "Over the years you have spent at the Bolshoi Theatre you have created unforgettable characters, conquered the audience's hearts with your extraordinary plastique, virtuosity, special emotional intensity and temperament. Your active teaching career is worthy of great respect, as well as your involvement with the young generation of ballet artists that you share professional secrets with at the Moscow State Academy of Choreography and at the ballet school named after your father, the legendary Leonid Lavrovsky".



Mikhail Lavrovsky

In October 2015 prior to his birthday Mikhail L. Lavrovsky gave a large interview to the Bolshoi Theatre's spokeswoman Katerina Novikova. The video from the cycle "The Green Living Room" is available on the Bolshoi's [YouTube channel](#).

Transmission of the Bolshoi's ballet "[The Bright Stream](#)" choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Dmitry Shostakovich took place at Russian cinemas on November 6th. Recordings of the performance were broadcast.

The cast:

Zina – Svetlana Lunkina

Pyotr – Mikhail Lobukhin

Ballerina – Maria Alexandrova

Ballet dancer – Ruslan Skvortsov

Accordionist – Denis Savin

Old Dacha Dweller – Alexei Loparevich



Maria Alexandrova and Ruslan Skvortsov in the ballet "The Bright Stream"

Nominees for Russia's main theatre award "The Golden Mask", established in 1993, were announced on November 1st. The experts' council watched 939 productions in 130 cities and chose the best ones. The Bolshoi Theatre is the leader in terms of the number of nominations in music categories.

The Bolshoi received 28 nominations. In the main category "Opera/Best production" there is "La Damnation de Faust" by Peter Stein, "Rodelinda" by Richard Jones and "Katerina Izmailova" by Rimas Tuminas. The directors of the productions were also nominated. Christopher Moulds, the conductor of "Rodelinda", and Tugan Sokhiev, the conductor of "Katerina Izmailova", were included in the list of nominees as well.

In the category "Opera/Best male singer" the Bolshoi received 6 nominations: John Daszak for his role of Sergei in "Katerina Izmailo-

va”, Richard Burkhard, David Daniels and Paul Nilon that performed in “Rodelinda”, and Dmitry Beloselsky and Saimir Pirgu for their roles of Méphistophélès and Faust in “La Damnation de Faust”.

In the category “Opera/Best female singer” there are Ruxandra Donose (“Rodelinda”), Ksenia Dudnikova (“La Damnation de Faust”) and Nadja Michael (“Katerina Izmailova”).

The Bolshoi Theatre is nominated in the category “Ballet/Best production” for its productions of “Frank Bridge Variations”, “Short Time Together” and “Ondine”.

TASS reportss that the conductor Pavel Klinichev, the choreographer Vyacheslav Samodurov and the ballet company’s artists Ekaterina Krysanova and Igor Tsvirko (“Ondine”), Ekaterina Shipulina and Denis Rodkin (“Frank Bridge Variations”) and Denis Savin (“Short time together”) were nominated in different categories.



Ksenia Dudnikova as Marguerite, Saimir Pirgu as Faust
“La Damnation de Faust”. Photo courtesy: D. Yusupov

The full list of nominees is available on the Award’s [official page](#).

The opera “**Tosca**” by Giacomo Puccini was performed by the Buryat State Opera and Ballet Theatre at the Bolshoi’s New Stage on November 3rd. The performance was a part of the 1st Festival of Music Theatres of Russia “See the Music”. The music director – Leonid Korchmar. The stage director – Yuri Laptev.

“**Russian Seasons**” choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Leonid Desyatnikov is scheduled to be performed on the Bolshoi Theatre’s New Stage on November 8th and 9th. Together with this ballet, which was revived at the Bolshoi not long ago, the legendary “**Carmen Suite**” is going to be performed; both days the cast stars Svetlana Zakharova as Car-

men, Vladislav Lantratov as Jose and Mikhail Lobukhin as Torero. Conductor – Pavel Sorokin.

“Russian Seasons” casts:

Couple in Yellow (then in white) – Yulia Stepanova and Vladislav Lantratov (Nov. 8th)

Ekaterina Krysanova and Vyacheslav Lopatin (Nov. 9th)

Couple in Red: Ekaterina Krysanova and Denis Savin (Nov. 8th)

Yanina Parienko and Igor Tsvirko (Nov. 9th)

Couple in Green: Anna Nikilina and Alexander Vodopetov (Nov. 8th)

Ana Turazashvili and Anton Savichev (Nov.9th)

Couple in Blue: Nelli Kobakhidze and Vladislav Kozlov (Nov. 8th)

Elvina Ibraimova and Artur Mkrtchyan (Nov. 9th)

Couple in Violet: Victoria Litvinova and Alexei Matkhov (Nov. 8th)

Margarita Shrainer and Georgy Gusev (Nov. 9th)

Couple in Claret Red: Daria Bochkova and Maxim Surov (Nov. 8th)

Victoria Yakusheva and Mikhail Kochan (Nov. 9th)

Conductor: Igor Dronov

On November 12th the French TV channel Mezzo, which specializes in academic music, dance and jazz is going to broadcast live the opera by Dmitri Shostakovich “Katerina Izmailova”. There also will be several recorded transmissions. Stage director – Rimas Tuminas, music director – Tugan Sokhiev. The cast stars Nadja Michael. The production company Bel Air Media, the Bolshoi’s permanent partner, is a partner of this transmission as well.

The press conference about the Bolshoi Theatre’s cooperation with the TV channel Mezzo and the broadcast of the opera “Katerina Izmailova” on November 12th is going to take place at the Bolshoi Theatre’s press-center on Thursday, November 10th at 11 a.m.

The participants of the press conference: Vladimir Urin, the Bolshoi Theatre General Director, Tugan Sokhiev, the chief conductor and the music director of the Bolshoi Theatre and Christophe Winckel, the director of the TV channels MEZZO and MEZZO live HD.

Requests for accreditation are to be sent via fax (495) 692-3367 and email pr@bolshoi.ru.

For additional information please call 692-0818.

Entrance: starting from 2.30 p.m. via the Central entrance No. 12 of the Historic Stage (Theatre Square, 1).

The Bolshoi Theatre together with the company ABBYY (with the participation of KAMIS) has started a unique [volunteer project](#). With the help of modern technology and the participation of volunteers the collection of programmes of performances and photographs will be digitalised. This collection will then

become a part of the electronic database that is being created by the Bolshoi Theatre; there is going to be a special website, where the 240 years of the Bolshoi's history is going to be reflected.

The recordings of the opera "The Children of Rosenthal" by Leonid Desyatnikov (libretto by Vladimir Sorokin) are now available for purchase. This is the first opera in the last 20 years that has been commissioned by the Bolshoi Theatre. The production, staged by Eimuntas Nekrošius, remained in the theatre's repertoire for several years; it was also performed as a part of the guest performances' programme. A year ago, following the initiative of the Bolshoi Theatre, the opera, conducted by Alexander Vedernikov, was recorded. The theatre trusted its long-time partner "Melodiya" to record the CD. The audio recording will also be available via such [internet-services](#), as iTunes and Apple Music.

The exhibition marking the 90th anniversary of the outstanding singer and People's Artist of the USSR Galina Vishnevskaya (October 25th 1926 – December 11th 2012), opened at the Bolshoi Theatre Exhibition Hall. On November 8th the Bolshoi Theatre together with the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre is going to celebrate this anniversary on its Historic Stage. World opera stars are going to perform in the gala-concert in memory of Galina Vishnevskaya to the accompaniment of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, conducted by Tugan Sokhiev.

This month the Bolshoi Museum takes part in three events that are organized outside the theatre itself.

The exhibition "[Mikhail Bulgakov: two biographies](#)" opened at the exhibition hall "New Manege" on October 28th. The Bolshoi Theatre is represented by materials from the Museum's manuscript fund (the letter from M.A. Bulgakov to B.V. Asafyev about sending the first addition to the libretto of the opera "Minin and Pozharsky" and a note with M. A. Bulgakov's review of the summary of the heroic drama "Sikhote-Alin" by D. Scheglov).

The exhibition will run until January 9th 2017.

Address: Moscow, Georgievsky pereulok, 3 (metro stations "Teatralnaya" and "Okhotny ryad").

Opening hours: Tue – Sun, noon – 9 p.m., entrance until 8.30 p.m., Mon – day off.

On November 7th the exhibition "Battle for Moscow. The first victory" of the Central Museum of the Great Patriotic War opened at the Museum and Exhibition Association Manege. The Bolshoi Theatre provided

sketches of costumes, playbills of operas and the plan of the libretto of the opera "Moscow Campaign". The exhibition will run until May 15th 2017.

On November 11th the exhibition "Star Olympus of the Bolshoi Theatre" is going to open in Athens as a part of the cross-cultural year between Russia and Greece. The Bolshoi's Museum is going to present pointe shoes of legendary dancers, concerts, models of sets, claviers and many other exhibits.

Address: Megaron Mousikis Athinon, Vas. Sofias Ave., Athens, 115 21, the Hellenic Republic.

A [Ballet Gala](#) took place on the New Stage on October 22nd and 23rd.

The concert starred the Bolshoi Theatre's artists and permanent guest soloists, including Daria Khokhlova and Vyacheslav Lopatin, Anna Tikhomirova and Artem Ovcharenko, Diana Kosyreva and Igor Tsvirko, Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin, Anna Tikhomirova, Anna Nikulina, Ekaterina Krysanova, Marianna Ryzhkina, Denis Savin, Maria Vinogradova, Margarita Shrainer, Artemy Belyakov and Ana Turazashvili. Natalia Osipova took part in the Gala on October 22nd; she performed a pas de deux from "La Sylphide" and Grand Pas from "La fille mal gardee".

On October 23rd "Grand Pas Classique" by D. F. E. Auber was performed in memory of one of the greatest ballerinas of the 20th century Yvette Chauviré, who passed away on October 19th at the age of 99.



Rehearsals for "Billy Budd". Photo courtesy – Damir Yusupov

The Bolshoi Theatre is preparing the second opera premiere of the season. The opera "[Billy Budd](#)" by Benjamin Britten is to be presented on the New Stage on November 25th

This is a co-production with the English National Opera. The performance was staged three years ago by the famous British director [David Alden](#).

British and international critics praised the London premiere. The music director – [William Lacey](#), is also British, but the Russian audience already knows him rather well after his debut at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre (“A Midsummer Night’s Dream” by B. Britten) and “Le Nozze di Figaro” at the Bolshoi Theatre.

The Bolshoi Ballet has been nominated as Outstanding Company in the 2016 National Dance Awards (UK). It is one of five nominations in total for the company. The Awards Ceremony will be held on Monday, 6 February, 2017 from 12 noon to 3pm at a central London venue, to be announced shortly. The National Dance Awards are the only awards given by the body of professional dance critics in the UK. They are presented by the Dance Section of the Critics’ Circle, which brings together some 60 dance writers and critics.

Other nominations for the Bolshoi Ballet are for:

Jean-Christophe Maillot for Best Classical Choreography for Taming of the Shrew

Ekaterina Krysanova as Best Female Dancer

Ekaterina Krysanova for Outstanding Female Performance (Classical) as Katherina in Taming of the Shrew

Vladislav Lantratov for Outstanding Male Performance (Classical) as Petruchio in Taming of the Shrew.

Press analysis:

Russian mass media

On October 29th Mikhail Lavrovsky, a legendary ballet artist, ballet master, choreographer, pedagogue and a People’s Artist of the USSR celebrated his 75th birthday. For 55 years out of these 75 he has been serving the Bolshoi Theatre. He used to be a leading soloist, and now is a pedagogue-repetiteur. Olga Svistunova (TASS) reports: “Mikhail Lavrovsky achieved success during the “golden age” of the Bolshoi Theatre. He joined the renowned company in 1961 and became a representative of the brilliant generation of such ballet artists, as Vladimir Vasiliev, Ekaterina Maximova, Natalia Bessmertnova and Maris Liepa. They were his friends, colleagues and partners on the stage”.

The Bolshoi’s spokeswoman Katerina Novikova announced: “The gala-concert, marking the jubilee of Mikhail L. Lavrovsky, will take place at the Bolshoi Theatre in spring, at the end of the season”.

[TASS](#)

[RIA Novosti](#) published a similar message

[TV channel “Culture”](#) presented a news report, where Mikhail Lavrovsky says: “I tell my students that no matter how good a copy is, it is repetition. An original, individuality, a personality is always interesting for me personally, so they ought to find their face”. The host of “Culture news” Vladislav Flyarkovsky and reporter Svetlana Astretsova talk about the hero of the day.

A People’s Artist of the USSR Lydmila Semenyaka says: “He was such a skillful dancer; he had all expressive means in dance I could possibly imagine”.

This is what Grigorovich said about Lavrovsky: “He is a dancer that possesses a virtuoso technique, incredible charm and uncontrollable temperament”.

[TV channel “Culture”](#) dedicated Sunday evening to Mikhail Lavrovsky. On October 30th the programme “[Life Line](#)” went on air; it was followed by the Bolshoi Theatre’s film-ballet “Giselle” (recording of 1975). The tragic love story of Duke Albrecht and the peasant girl Giselle was brought to life by Natalia Bessmertnova and Mikhail Lavrovsky.

The portal “[Musical Seasons](#)” presents a large interview with Mikhail Lavrovsky, who answers Irina Shirinyan’s questions. The source also published congratulations from Lavrovsky’s colleagues, friends and students, including Vladimir Menshov, Andrei Eshpai, Evgenia Simonova, Valery Lagunov, Alexander Vetrov and Igor Tsvirko.

Dozens of sources, including [Gazeta.Ru](#), “[Komsomolskaya Pravda](#)”, “[Vechernaya Moskva](#)”, “[Radio Culture](#)”, [Russkiy Mir Portal](#), [RuNews24.ru](#), [Inter-monitor](#), etc. published congratulatory messages addressed to Mikhail Lavrovsky.

[TASS](#) reports that the Bolshoi Theatre has the biggest number of “The Golden Mask” nominations. The director of “The Golden Mask” Festival Marina Revyakina said at the press-conference: “The Bolshoi Theatre has the biggest number of nominations. There are six productions – three operas and three ballets – and 22 other nominations”.

This year “The Golden Mask” has a record number of nominees: the list includes 25 cities, 61 theatres and 213 nominees. The portal “[M24](#)”, the newspaper “[Vechernaya Moskva](#)”, [Agency Moscow](#) and other sources report that the Bolshoi Theatre holds the absolute record in the number of nomination. The Perm Tchaikovsky Opera and Ballet Theatre is another leader among music theatres; the opera “La Traviata” staged by Robert Wilson was nominated for the award

(conductor – Teodor Currentzis, best female part – Nadezhda Pavlovva, costume designer – YASHI).

Five years ago, on October 28th, the Historic Stage opened after reconstruction. [RIA Novosti](#) report about the Bolshoi Theatre's history. "The opening of the Bolshoi's Main Stage took place on October 28th 2011 and was marked with a gala-concert. Glinka's opera "Ruslan and Lyudmila", staged by an experimentalist director Dmitry Chernyakov, became the first premiere that took place on the Bolshoi's Main Stage after the reconstruction; the production premiered on November 2nd 2011".

The recording of the gala-concert marking the re-opening of the Bolshoi's Historic Stage is available on the Bolshoi Theatre's official [YouTube channel](#).



The gala-concert marking the re-opening of the Historic Stage. Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

Russian mass-media provide extensive coverage of the opening of the exhibition, devoted to Galina Vishnevskaya, that opened at the Bolshoi prior to the great singer's 90th birthday.

"Vishnevskaya's daughters opened family archives for this exhibition. There are many photographs that no one has ever seen before. When Vishnevskaya published the book "Galina", which was a tremendous success, many doubted that she wrote it herself. Olga Rostropovich says: manuscripts are the best proof.

An outstanding beauty. She possessed an incredible voice that was naturally trained. She was an actress that conquered the best stages of the world. ["TV Center"](#) reports: "Galina Vishnevskaya. Greatness and Simplicity", – her daughter Olga explained why this became the title of the exhibition.

"These are the two traits that Mark Chagall used to create mother's image after he heard her in Grand Opera and was astonished; she sang the role of Tatiana in "Eugene Onegin". He came to her backstage and said: "Galechka, you are so, there is so much greatness and simplicity in you!", – she said".

[TASS](#) published a photo report about the exhibition and announced the jubilee concert: "The exhibition features rare photographs and stage costumes of the Bolshoi Theatre's prima, the singer's numerous awards, including the medal "For the defense of Leningrad", which was "the most special for Galina Vishnevskaya", – a source from the theatre said.

The exhibition will run until December 11th, the opera diva's memorial day.

The concert of the singer's students is going to take place at the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Center. The Bolshoi Theatre's soloists Agunda Kulaeva, Elchin Azizov, Alexander Kasyanov and Stanislav Mostovoy, the "Novaya Opera" soloists Irina Moreva, Ekaterina Mironycheva and Sergei Polyakov, the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre's soloist Maria Pakhar and others are going to perform arias and scenes from operas that Galina Vishnevskaya starred in all over the world.

Students of the College of Music and Theatre Art named after Galina Vishnevskaya are going to take part in the concert as well. The conductor Alexander Solovyev is going to conduct the Opera Center orchestra.

The newspaper ["Kommersant"](#) and the portal [Rambler-News](#) mark the singer's jubilee by publishing historic photo galleries with numerous rare pictures and the singer's short bios.



1972, the Bolshoi Theatre, Galina Vishnevskaya as Tosca from the same name opera

The news agency [TASS](#) publishes a large article about the release of the recording of Leonid Desyatnikov's opera "The Children of Rosenthal"; this is a joint project of the Bolshoi Theatre and the company "Melodiya". Vladimir Urin announced: "I absolutely do not rule out the possibility that the opera "The Children of Rosenthal" can return to the Bolshoi Theatre's stage. One of those people that create a production, in this particular case, a director, has to get interested in this material. In terms of both the libretto and the music, this work is worth reviving it, creating a new stage version". However, the Bolshoi's General Director could not say when the opera could possibly be revived.

Vladimir Sorokin, the author of the libretto for the opera "The Children of Rosenthal", also mentioned that the opera "should be staged in a different way, because quite a lot of time has passed, and our world has changed, the theatre and the opera world as well". The writer added: "I sometimes fantasize about this production and even see some things. I would like it to be powerful, bright and sophisticated". The composer Leonid Desyatnikov agreed with him.

Sergei Biryukov in his article, published in the newspaper "[Trud](#)", writes that this project is still a unique one in the history of the Russian opera; he also dwells on the idea of how people would cross swords over it today, in these much different times. He also is quite ironic as he thinks back to his own review, titled "An Elegant Bagatelle", which Leonid Desyatnikov reminded him about as he was signing the CD that has just come out.

News agencies and portals, as well as a number of daily newspapers and specialised mass media sources published news about the launch of the unique volunteer project "Discover the History of the Bolshoi" that is being carried out by the Bolshoi Theatre together with the company ABBYY.

[TASS](#) reports about the press conference and quotes the Bolshoi's General Director Vladimir Urin: "This is an absolutely great project that is being carried out together with the company ABBYY (with the participation of KAMIS) and a big army of volunteers, the people that decided to help digitalise and decode an enormous number of materials from the Bolshoi Theatre's archives without asking to be paid for doing this".

He also said that the history of the Bolshoi Theatre is reflected in 170,000 programmes, playbills and more than 100,000 photographs that are being stored at the Bolshoi's Museum. The collection is going to be digitalised and become a part of the electronic database that is being created by the Bolshoi Theatre; this is going to be a special web site that reflects 240 years of the Bolshoi's history.

Urin announced that the creation of the web site started in August and was carried out with the support of the sponsors, the Bolshoi Theatre Foundation and its trustees. "Then the company ABBYY came, offered its equipment and volunteers, and this speeded up the process", – the Bolshoi's General Director continued. According to him, the benefits are obvious. He believes: "On our own we would have been busy with this for several years, but now I hope we will finish over a much shorter period of time".

He explained that at first all information from the theatre's archives would be digitalised and uploaded to the database; then, as the Bolshoi Museum's specialists checked the information, it would be uploaded in blocks on the specially designed search section of the theatre's site. This project will enable everyone to find the first playbill with Maya Plisetskaya, to learn what opera and ballet productions were staged at the theatre more often than others, to see what the Bolshoi's repertoire was like during the Great Patriotic War and to learn much more.

["Novye Izvestia"](#)

["Vesti" news story](#)

["Komsomolskaya Pravda" reports](#)

Elena Fedorenko talked to Makhar Vaziev, who became the head of the Bolshoi Ballet seven months ago, and published a large interview with him in the newspaper "[Culture](#)". They talk about a number of issues, connected with the differences between Saint Petersburg and Moscow ballet schools, the problem of finding a balance between classical heritage and modern productions, the atmosphere at the theatre and the engagement of artists.

"Culture": The Bolshoi Theatre today has an extremely large repertoire, and many ballets that are expensive and that the audience loves are "on the sidelines". Given this context, is it necessary to stage new productions?

Vaziev: This is a good question. Yes, there are ballets that are not really a part of the current repertoire, we cannot manage to perform them regularly. Is there a point to stage new productions? Even my negative answer does not play any role here. This is the law of life: no matter how many productions there are in the repertoire, a theatre is always moving forward. This is the creative process that it is impossible to avoid. Such a company as the Bolshoi Theatre cannot limit itself to preserving its core heritage and performing the current repertoire well. Although it is important. The Bolshoi is famous for its classical productions, which are temperamental. For example, if a production is not performed often, it is hardly possible to perform it well. But do we need a company today that only gives great performances of classical production? Of course, not. This is suicide. We cannot just rest on our laurels. Every achievement becomes a thing of the past right away,

this is how the theatre works. It is necessary to move forward. How? To create new projects that stimulate development, and a never ending one. The system of showing ballet productions matters as well, and so does the principle of composing the playbill.

“Culture”: Still, how many modern productions should there be, compared to classical ones, and how do you understand the word “modern”?

Vaziev: It is a common practice to use this word for productions that are being created nowadays. I have a slightly different point of view. For me those are productions, created in a non-classical manner, where we are searching for a new style and plastique language. It is obvious that classical productions should account for 72-73 percent of the theatre’s repertoire; the rest goes for experimental productions.

“Culture”: It is obvious that the Bolshoi has several weaknesses. We have just talked about one – the ballets that are not being performed. The second one is that the character dance, which is important for Moscow, is losing its traditions.

Vaziev: I agree. The Bolshoi has always been famous for its bright character dances. I started working on this before my vacation: I invited Alla Boguslavskaya and she worked on some dances with the artists. I wanted to understand what exactly we lacked and to what extent.



Makhar Vaziev

The newspaper “[Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)” published an interview with Vladimir Urin about one of the most sensitive issues – the Bolshoi’s fight with ticket scalpers. The discussion started because of the line to the box office for tickets to the New Year’s performances of “The Nutcracker”; ticket scalpers started provocations that the law enforcement forces had to deal with.

“A lot has changed, including the structure of the ticket mafia. I only see agents of this mafia that are selling tickets near the theatre.”

– Are the bosses going to the Bolshoi Theatre and getting the best seats?

– They probably are. One can only fight the mafia using the laws of the market: the price should be such that people would buy the tickets. So that the same money that is obtained by the scalpers would end up in the theatre. I will say that once again: we can easily increase prices for tickets, but the Russian theatre has always been socially-oriented. We can sell tickets for 30-40 thousands of rubles, but can you imagine what kind of image the Bolshoi Theatre will then have for the public and for the mass media?

I would like to use this chance and to address the audience: my dears, do not buy tickets from the scalpers! Unless you understand you should not encourage these people and pay crazy amounts of money, the situation will not change.

– If they are so clever and inventive, maybe, they should be invited to work at the Bolshoi, and they will create a wonderful system?..

– The system is very simple, I can create it myself. There is no need to change the price policy 100 percent: there should be a small number of expensive tickets – approximately the same number that they are selling for this very price. It is more difficult to sell a cheap ticket for a high price.

Vladislav Flyarkovsky (“[Culture News](#)”) reports about the premiere performances of “Manon Lescaut” that have now finished at the Bolshoi.

“The press has already called the production the main opera premiere of the season. Mass media sources report that “Manon”, starring Anna Netrebko, is not only brilliant, but also unusual”. √ “Then the opinions start to differ: some consider the giant plastic doll to be too frightening, others believe that the idea of the mirror that reflects the splendor and misery of the mistress to be too straight-forward, and some say that the image of Manon being “a doll with a doll” is too intentional”.

The reporter quotes “[Kommersant](#)” and “[Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)”, as well as the director of the production Adolf Shapiro, who appeared in the programme “Glavnaya Rol” (“The main role”) as a

guest: “When there is a great artist of the stage, the mere fact of his/her presence is a phenomenon of art. It is like .he/she fills the whole stage, and the voice fills the audience hall”, – stressed Shapiro in his discussion with the programme host Yulian Makarov.

The reporter of “[Novaya Gazeta](#)” Maria Babalova praises Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov. “In the case when the production stars Anna Netrebko as Manon, it is not just a production based on the 18th century love story written by Abbé Prévost, who inspired not only the Italian composer Puccini, but also the French composer Massenet to write their operas. This is a unique work of art that changes the soul of every person present in the audience hall”.

The author of the article also announces the upcoming premieres at the Bolshoi. “The next premiere is scheduled for November; it is the rarely performed opera by Britten “Billy Budd”. This is a co-production with the English National Opera. There is going to be the premiere of another rarity – the opera “Idiot” by Mieczyslaw Weinberg, based on the same name novel by Dostoevsky. It is scheduled to take place on February 12th. The season will close with the premiere of Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera “The Snow Maiden” in June. Besides, participants of the Young Artists Opera Program, one of the Bolshoi’s most successful projects, are going to present the concert version of the opera “Il viaggio a Reims” by Rossini”. Maria Babalova also considers that the audience will be very much interested in Verdi’s “Don Carlo”, because “Hibla Gerzmava, Ildar Abdrazakov and Dmitri Hvorostovsky are making their debuts at the Bolshoi Theatre in two performances in December”.

The reporter of the portal [OperaNews](#) Maria Zhilkina provides a detailed analysis of the production that she saw on October 19th. She specially mentions not only the starring couple, but also the performance of Elchin Azizov. “I liked the Bolshoi’s soloist Elchini Azizov in the part of Lescaut, Manon’s empty-headed brother, a lot. Apart from the fact that it was good from the vocal point of view, the part was very well worked through, very precise, the artist created an incredibly holistic image, the one of a classical baritone-villain, a tempter and an agent provocateur”. // “The orchestra and the conductor did a good job as well; they have worked a lot at this most difficult score, which is new for the Bolshoi. It is easy to understand the reasons for which at some points the conductor was more concerned with creating a comfortable atmosphere for the leading couple of singers, but in general the orchestra coped well with this most difficult music by Puccini. One could feel a certain tension in mass scenes with the choir, especially in the first act (although nothing went really wrong), but the intermezzo before the third act was perfect”.

The portal “[Belcanto](#)” also reviews “Manon Lescaut”. The journalist Igor Koryabin absolutely does not agree with the idea of the stage director and the set designer; he considers that soloists Ainhwa Arteta and Riccardo Massi were a decent and serious alternative for the opening night cast. “The Spanish soprano Ainhwa Arteta (an experienced and skillful singer, who is very expressive from both the musical and the dramatic points of view) as Manon Lescaut and the Italian tenor Riccardo Massi as De Grieux (who possesses a passionate voice of lyrical texture, rich in timbre and very beautiful) were both precise in terms of style and expressive in terms of musicality. It is also worth mentioning that Massi’s career as an opera singer has started to develop quite recently”.



Ainhwa Arteta as Manon Lescaut
Photo courtesy: D. Yusupov

The informational internet-portal “[Revizor](#)” published a review by Elena Davydova. The reporter visited the performance, starring Arteta and Massi. “The final duet scene demands from the singers incredible concentration and strained of all their professional and personal qualities. It is all about talent and skill only. There is nothing to hold on to, nothing to hide

behind. In the final scene Puccini rises to the top of his composing genius in terms of the power of expression and the strength of the feeling. So do all participants of the production. I had a wonderful chance to see the opera performed by the second cast: Ainhoa Arteta as Manon Lescaut and Riccardo Massi as De Grieux. I guess it was due to this that I could see the “pure” product, created by Adolph Shapiro and his team, which is worth being admired and respected. The attention of the audience was not lost for a single second; until the last sound there was the pure curiosity of a theatre-goer and the great feeling of being a part of what was happening on the stage”.

The Ballet Gala took place on the New Stage on October 22nd and 23rd. The concert starred the Bolshoi Theatre’s artists and permanent guest soloists, including the former participants of the project “Big Ballet” ([TV channel “Culture”](#)) Olga Smirnova, Daria Khokhlova, Igor Tsvirko, Artem Ovcharenko and Anna Tikhomirova. Elena Voroshilova (“Culture news”) reports. The Bolshoi Ballet’s prima-ballerina Olga Smirnova says: “We are representing the generation that is on the screen quite often. There are transmissions and shootings at the theatre. For me “Big Ballet” was the first experience of having close shots while dancing. At first I was not really ready to see this”. The reporter mentions that Makhar Vaziev, the artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet, plans to organize such galas on a regular basis.

Tatiana Kuznetsova, the ballet critic of the newspaper [“Kommersant”](#), shares her impressions of the gala as well. She highlights the performances of Olga Smirnova, Semyon Chudin, and the Bolshoi’s guest soloist Natalia Osipova, “who has stopped by in Moscow for a couple of days before the dress-rehearsal of MacMillan’s ballet “Anastasia” in London”. *“I would say that Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin, who closed the concert with the Grand Pas classique to the music by D. F. E. Auber, choreographed in the middle of the previous century by an emigrant V. Gzovsky for French étoiles, were closer to perfection than the others, at least in terms of their technique. Both of them did not study ballet in Moscow, both of them work with a pedantry and precision that is not common for Moscow-raised dancers, and both of them are quite mature artists that have already passed their exam in academism”*. Kuznetsova also praises the performance of Natalia Osipova and Vyacheslav Lopatin in the Grand Pas from “La fille mal gardee”. She says this duet is an example of the harmonious. “It is not even about the precision of lifts and lightness of pirouettes; this Lise and Colas were incredibly quick to understand each other and enjoyed dancing, not trying to demonstrate proofs of their professionalism to either the audience or their bosses”.

Dmitri Hvorostovsky, an opera singer and a People’s Artist of Russia, in his interview for the newspaper [“Argumenty i Fakty”](#) talked about his upcoming performance in “Don Carlo” at the Bolshoi Theatre that is scheduled to take place in December.

— Why is it that you are invited to perform at the best theatres of the world, but have not yet participated in a single production at the Bolshoi Theatre?

— Well, I have already performed at the Bolshoi Theatre’s concerts, and I continue to do so. But I have never participated in any production. “Don Carlo” this December is going to be the first opera at the Bolshoi in my entire career. But better late, than never (laughs).

— But how come?!

— I guess I am not the one to ask this question. I have always wanted to sing at the Bolshoi, since the very first time I went to this theatre after the Glinka competition in 1987. I was even invited to the Bolshoi Theater’s apprentice group. But I refused, because at that time I already was a leading soloist at the Krasnoyarsk State Opera and Ballet Theatre. Still, they promised to invite me to take part in some productions. I am still waiting for this invitation (laughs). I would love to sing in “Rigoletto”, to sing the part of Iago in “Otello”. I would love to dance, but I cannot (laughs).. Well, if to be serious, today I feel connected with the Bolshoi in many ways. I was happy to sing at the opening ceremony, and to take part in Elena Obraztsova’s gala-concert. This was the last time she appeared in public. And I am happy that I had a chance to express my attitude to this outstanding Person, Woman and Artist. *././*

Press analysis:

international mass media

[Russia Beynoud the Headlines](#) the global media project of Rossiskaya Gazeta published an article by Anna Galayda with 9 facts about the dramatic life of Russian opera diva Galina Vishnevskaya. “On Oct. 25 Galina Vishnevskaya, legendary Russian opera singer and wife and muse of the great Mstislav Rostropovich, would have turned 90. In honor of Vishnevskaya’s anniversary, RBTH has selected 9 facts about her amazing life.” “Vishnevskaya came to the Bolshoi by chance. In 1951, on a street in Leningrad, she saw an announcement inviting young singers to audition for the Bolshoi Theater’s apprentice group. She not only made it to the second round in Moscow, but she left the judges speechless. She was the only one to be accepted into the Bolshoi troupe and several months later she performed the role of Tatyana in the famous

opera “Eugene Onegin”. Her repertoire at the Bolshoi was vast and heterogeneous. It included Leonora from *Fidelio* and Katarina from *The Taming of the Shrew*, Cherubino from *The Marriage of Figaro* and Cio-Cio-san from *Madame Butterfly*, and Verdi’s *Aida* and Marguerite from *Faust*. Among her best roles were Violetta from *La Traviata*, *Tosca*, and Natasha Rostova from *War and Peace*.”

Diapason d’or (France) the monthly magazine about classical music publishes a review by Stephane Grant of the CD of *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. “The Diapason d’Or ARTE is a recommendation of outstanding classical music recordings given by reviewers of Diapason magazine in France. The French classical music magazine selects the CD of the Bolshoi’s recording of Dmitri Tcherniakov’s production of *Ruslan and Lyudmila* at the Bolshoi Theatre for the renowned distinction of Diapason d’Or ARTE and publishes a very positive review of the CD.

The online specialised classical music and dance publication **Bachtracks** publishes a review by Ekaterina Krysanova (Ondine) in the leading role and giving the performance two stars out of five. “Underwhelming Ondine from the Bolshoi Ballet” “The novel Ondine (1811) – the story of a water nymph – by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué inspired several ballet productions; notably Jules Perrot’s with music by Pugni in 1843 (revived by Pierre Lacotte in 2006 at the Mariinsky) and Sir Frederick Ashton’s with a score by Hans Werner Henze as a vehicle for Margot Fonteyn in 1958. The Bolshoi Ballet’s production, choreographed by Vyacheslav Samodurov on the Henze score, premiered in June of this year.” “Given the absence of a narrative or a coherent emotional structure, the music and choreography alone must engage the audience for 90 minutes – a formidable task. Because Samodurov opted for abstraction, his choice of the Henze score – relentlessly melodramatic and tediously repetitive – is a mystery. Hewing closely to the score, the choreography has the same deficiencies.” “Given this, the lack of narrative and meaningful choreography, the dancers perform heroically, moving with precision, intensity and energy throughout the entire ballet.”

The New York Times publishes its Global arts guide for fall for Opera, Ballet and other arts compiled by Christopher D Shea. Included is the Bolshoi Theatre. “Bolshoi, bolshoi.ru Productions of opera and ballet classics like “Carmen,” “Manon Lescaut” and “La Bayadère” anchor the main stage season at the Bolshoi this fall. But there are also some newer additions to the canon. On Nov. 25, the company will show the premiere of a new production of Benjamin Britten’s opera “Billy Budd” – a 1951 adaptation of Herman Melville’s

unfinished novel about a sailor accused of staging a mutiny. David Alden, an American who works primarily in Europe, will direct.”

The Times (UK) publishes a review of the book “Bolshoi Confidential” by Simon Morrison by dance critic Debra Craine who writes “Bolshoi Confidential, an incredibly well-researched and meticulously detailed history of Russia’s cultural behemoth.” “This is a scholarly text and there is no doubting the scale of the task undertaken”.

The Russian international newswire **Sputnik International** reports: “British Airways Hosts First Ever In-Flight Bolshoi Ballet. “We are honored to be part of this very first flight to Moscow and unite the heart and soul of classical Russian culture with an iconic British brand such as British Airways in this performance on board,” Artemy Beyakov, leading soloist from the Bolshoi Theater said. «We loved the creative challenge of using the new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner as our stage, and the experience was as memorable for us as it was for the audience.»

The Welsh online English language news publication Wales Online also reports the event.

In brief

Alexander Kalyagin, who has been the head of the Union of theatre workers for 20 years, is going to remain in this position for another 5 years. “**Culture**” journalist Yulia Kazyukova reports about the meeting of the Union of theatre workers that the Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin took part in.

Vladimir Urin stresses: “In order for the theatre to be competitive today, it has to be a theatre that people would like to come to, a theatre that is comfortable and cozy to be in. The theatre also needs to have adequate infrastructure”.

The Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky stresses: “We are always talking about optimisation, liquidation of theatres. We put emotions aside. Look at the figures. From 1991 the number of theatres that are funded from budgets of different levels has increased by 70 percent throughout the country”.

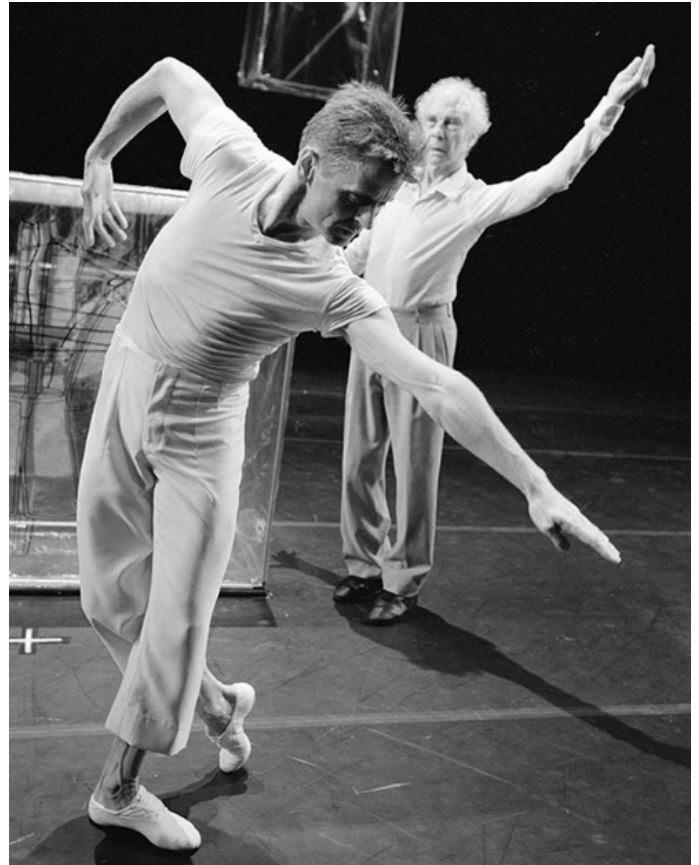
The speech of the artistic director of Satyricon Theatre Konstantin Raikin at the meeting of the Union of theatre workers drew a response. The portal

“Teatral” published the script of Raikin’s speech and reported: “In his 10-minute speech that was interrupted by applause several times Konstantin Raikin talked about things that worry him today; in fact, he said he was against even such a kind of censorship as the officials’ fight for morality in art”.

Raikin said: “It seems to me that we are very isolated. We take rather little interest in each other. But this is not the most serious problem. The main thing is that there is this nasty habit of telling tales about each other”. He also encouraged his colleagues to demonstrate more professional solidarity. Besides, he said he was worried about the fact that the government distances itself from those who demand that certain exhibitions be closed and certain performances be cancelled.

The exhibition “Mikhail Baryshnikov. Metaphysics of the Body” by the renowned American photographer Robert Whitman is now open at the Lumiere Brothers Centre for Photography. This is the first time that nearly sixty photographs of the Soviet-American ballet dancer and choreographer, who has been acknowledged as one of the greatest ballet dancers of the 20th century, are exhibited in Moscow. **“Nezavisimaya Gazeta”** reports. Educational activities are organised as a part of the exhibition. On October 29th at 3 p.m. Varvara Vyazovkina, ballet critic and the chief editor of the Bolshoi Theatre’s literature and publishing office gave a lecture “Baryshnikov as a cultural phenomenon and his role in the world ballet”. She presented a detailed record about the dancer’s life and creative career; besides, participants of the lecture tried to find answers to some of the questions about his life. What did Brodsky mean when he was talking about “metaphysics of the body” of his friend? How did the young Russian artist manage to fit into the American culture? Why did famous choreographers, stage and film directors want to work with him? What is the mystery of the man that has lived the most part of his life in America and is acting Russian prose today?

The Fourth international festival of modern choreography **Context** under the direction of Diana Vishneva is going to take place in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg from November 14th till November 19th 2016. The programme features performances of leading companies from France, Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Canada and the USA, a contest of young choreographers, a movie programme from the Center of Documentary Cinema, as well as workshops, master-classes and meetings. The artistic director of the festival Diana Vishneva says: “This year Context expands in terms of its geography; the events of the festival are going to take place not only in Moscow, but also in my native city, on the Historic



Mikhail Baryshnikov

Stage of the Mariinsky Theatre. I have long planned to bring the festival to St. Petersburg, so I am very happy that we have managed to do it; it has become possible largely due to the support of Valery Gergiev. The visit of Mats Ek and Ana Laguna is going to become one of the highlights of the festival. The outstanding choreographer has recently announced that he plans to finish his career, so the fact that he has agreed to bring his most recent production that his wife and muse Ana Laguna is going to present is a special honour for us”. This will be the first time that the opening ceremony will take place at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre; its stage remembers productions by Jiří Kylián, John Neumeier and Nacho Duato. Gogol-center and Electrotheatre “Stanislavsky” remain the festival’s permanent venues. Moscow audiences will have a chance to see the retrospective of Bejart Ballet Lausanne. The company is going to perform the ballet “Im Chambre Séparée” by its founder Maurice Bejart; there also will be Russian premieres of two performances by Gil Roman, the maestro’s successor. The Luzerner Theater (Switzerland) is going to present the miniature “Solo”, created especially for Context, at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre. This will be the first time that the company Introdans (the Netherlands), which has already participated in Context twice, comes to Saint

Petersburg. The company will bring two productions, “Cantata” and “In Memoriam”. A young company Canada Ballet School is going to present the ballet “Come In” that was initially created by Aszure Barton for Mikhail Baryshnikov. Diana Vishneva herself will also present a special performance for audiences in both cities.

“[Le Château de Barbe-Bleue/Senza Sanque](#)” by Bartók/Eötvös, staged by Dmitry Chernyakov, is going to premiere at the Hamburg State Opera on November 6th.

On the same evening the audience will be presented with the expressionist opera by Bela Bartók that has already become a 20th century classic (it was composed for a duet of mezzo and bass) and the world premiere of the opera by the famous composer and conductor Péter Eötvös “Senza Sangue” based on a famous novel by Baricco. The concert version of the opera was performed in 2015; the recording is available on [YouTube](#).

In the morning of November 3rd the first message about the death of Gennady Dadamyan appeared in social networks. A theatre historian and critic Pavel Rudnev writes: “The Russian theatre community grieves. Gennady G. Dadamyan, a theatre economist, a culture expert, a pedagogue, who created his own school, passed away. Everyone studied with him. I mean, everyone. The whole of the Russian theatre community. He was one of the smartest and the most intelligent people of our time, and he has just recently demonstrated it at the meeting of the Union of theatre workers of Russia. [His speech](#) was powerful, bright, straight to the point and one of the crucial ones.

Last year on April 1st the whole theatre community congratulated him on his 78th birthday. I will just repeat everything I wrote back then:

“This is a great person of a great Russian theatre. Number one is his huge multinational soul and his ability to fit the whole theatre world in his heart. He is everyone’s teacher. Everyone knows him, he knows everyone. This knowledge is based on love. There is some Eastern softness to him, combined with the crystal purity of expression and precise articulation: when Dadamyan gives speeches, he looks for words and finds them right as he speaks. I am sorry, but he reminds me of Merab Mamardashvili in terms of his behaviour, manner of speaking and thinking. His every speech is artistic, his every word is smart and precise, sweet, beautiful and dry, like an Armenian pomegranate. His books, especially historic ones, about the Soviet

cultural experience and the theatre in the times of the First World War, are a unique mixture of economy, cultural studies and sociology. If there are people that managed to combine two of these terms, Dadamyan is the only one that managed to combine the three of them. He is an apostle of freedom and free judgment. When it comes to the way of thinking, he is not even an economist, but rather a philosopher and a culture expert that uses hundreds of examples from different spheres of knowledge. His speech demonstrates not only the knowledge itself, but also the way of thinking, the composition of the thought that he pulls out of his imagination every time like a magician. Even if this is an old thought, it has been worded in a new way. Given all his twists of thought, Gennady Dadamyan is a practical man; he makes things clear even in those cases, where, as it usually happens with theatre, there is ideological chaos and overlapping. Logic is not the easiest subject for theatre workers. Damayan’s paradox goes like this: even though he is a practical man, he is not a materialistic and pragmatic one. He uses his knowledge to share with us theatre wisdom, but not calculations and organisational conclusions. He is obsessed with theatre ideas, those being ideas of aesthetics in the first place. It is so nice to realize that at his age (78 years old!) he is not only a patriarch, but also a wise man, and this suits his noble age so much. Not once have I heard from him any nasty things about the youth. He knows (and appreciates!) both the old and the new. Today this is of such value, and such a rarity!”.

Thank you, dear teacher! Thank you for your love for all people and for life!”.

[facebook](#)

Social networks

[Nina Minasyan](#) uploaded photos on her Facebook page from the Paris Opera, where she had her triumph with in the role of Lucia di Lammermoor.

[Kristina Mkhitaryan](#) shares backstage photos from rehearsals for Bellini’s opera “I Capuleti e i Montecchi” in Bremen.

The head of the Bolshoi’s Young Artists Opera Program [Dmitry Vdovin](#) makes his debut as a pedagogue of a similar program at the Metropolitan Opera; he informs his Facebook friends and subscribers about it and uploads his photo in front of the MET’s famous façade and fountain.

Colleagues and fans wish [Olga Kulchinskaya](#) success and congratulate her on the successful revival of the opera “I Capuleti e i Montecchi” staged by Christof Loy, where she had her triumph in the role of Juliet.

[Elvira Bairamova](#) announces the interview of Katerina Novikova with Nikita D. Lobanov-Rostovsky that has already been shot for “The Green Living Room” and will soon appear on the Bolshoi’s official YouTube channel.



Katerina Novikova interviews the prince Nikita D. Lobanov-Rostovsky at “The Green Living Room”.
Photo courtesy: Elvira Bairamova



Katerina Novikova interviews the prince Nikita D. Lobanov-Rostovsky at “The Green Living Room”.
Photo courtesy: Elvira Bairamova

Debuts

«La Bayadere»

October 28th

Xenia Kern – Grand Pas

October 29th (matinee performance)

Igor Tsvirko as Solor

Xenia Zhiganshina as Gamzatti

Alexander Smoliyaninov as Magedaveya

David Motta Soares as The Bronze Idol

Mariana Gomes as Manu

Ekaterina Zavadina and Nikita Kapustin – Dance with drum

Alyona Kovalyova – Grand Pas

Igor Tsvirko made his debut in the role of Solor.

Photo courtesy: Janet O’Keeffe

October 29th (evening performance)

Daria Bochkova – Second Variation

«La Boheme»

October 28th

Anna Nechaeva as Mimi

Vadim Babichuk as Parpignol

October 29th

Aluda Todua as Marcello

«Carmen»

November 2nd

Alexander Kireyev as Dancairo

November 3rd

Marc Heller, the American tenor, made his debut at the Bolshoi Theatre in the role of Don Jose.

The Bolshoi guest soloist Alexander Vinogradov made his debut in the role of Escamillo in the production by Alexei Borodin.

Olga Seliverstova as Frasquita

Alexander Utkin as Zuniga

Konstantin Suchkov as Morales

«La Sylphide»

November 5th (matinee performance)

Tamara Mironova as Effie

November 5th (evening performance)

Vladislav Lantratov made his debut in the role of
James

Vera Borisenkova as Madge, witch

November 6th

Mariana Gomes as Effie

«Russian seasons»

November 8th

Yulia Stepanova makes her debut in the solo part
in Couple in Yellow**«Carmen Suite»**

November 8th

Nikita Kapustin – Flamenco

Birthdays

**October 28th** – years ago the Bolshoi Theatre's Historic Stage re-opened after the reconstruction**October 29th** – the ballet artist, the Bolshoi Theatre's ballet master-repetiteur, a People's Artist of the USSR Mikhail Lavrovsky celebrated his jubilee (75 years old)**October 30th** – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Marat Gali**November 1st** – the Bolshoi Opera soloist, an Honoured Artist of Russia Vadim Tikhonov**November 6th** – the Bolshoi prima-ballerina Olga Smirnova