



Newsletter

Events

The outstanding choreographer Yuri Grigorovich was awarded the **Order of St. Andrew the Apostle the First-Called** which is the highest award in the country “For his outstanding contribution to the development of Russian culture, world choreography and his long-term creative career”. The Decree of the President of the Russian Federation was published on the official portal of legal information.



Yuri Grigorovich also received one of the most highly honoured awards of the Republic of Bulgaria – the Samara Cross. On January 18th the Bulgarian ambassador to Russia Boyko Kotzev gave the choreographer the award as a sign of appreciation of his contribution to the culture of the country.

The Grigorovitch festival continues with the series of performances of “The Golden Age” on Bolshoi New Stage. It was originally created in 1982 to the music of Shostakovich with sets and costumes by

Simon Virsaladze. It has returned to the Bolshoi this season. This revival marks two important dates – the anniversary of the choreographer (90 years), who is the hero of the Bolshoi’s 241st season and who headed Bolshoi ballet for 30 years, and the 125th anniversary of Shostakovich, who composed the music for this ballet that has already become a classic. Today the main roles are performed by Nina Kaptsova, Ruslan Skvortsov, Mikhail Lobukhin, Ekaterina Krysanova, Vyacheslav Lopatin.

On Sunday, January 22nd, the live transmissions of the ballet “Sleeping Beauty” to the music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky took place at cinemas in 50 countries around the world. In Russia the broadcasts took place at 50 cinemas in 39 cities. This was the second transmission of the ballet “Sleeping Beauty” in the recent years. The production was staged in 2011 after the reconstruction. Grigorovich changed the 1973 version and made it a bit shorter; he also invited Ezio Frigerio and Franca Squarciapino, whom he had already worked with, to the set and costume designers. In the same year the live transmission in cinemas took place; the cast at that time starred Svetlana Zakharova and David Hallberg. When the Bolshoi Ballet presented this masterpiece on January 22nd the cast starred Olga Smirnova as Princess Aurora and Semyon Chudin as Prince Desire.



Olga Smirnova as Aurora in the ballet “Sleeping Beauty”
Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov/Bolshoi Theatre

During the intermission the Bolshoi’s spokeswoman Katerina Novikova interviewed Lyudmila Semenyaka, one of the best Auroras in the history of the Bolshoi Theatre.

The filming and the transmission were carried out by the Bolshoi Theatre’s permanent partners Bel Air Media, Pathé Live and CoolConnections. For the schedule of additional screenings and the

locations of the cinemas please visit www.theatrehd.ru.

[Pathé Live YouTube channel](#) presents the trailer for the transmission, starring Olga Smirnova and Artem Ovcharenko.

The online-transmission was available on the Bolshoi Theatre [official video channel](#).

The Internet broadcast is available on the territory of the Russian Federation only.

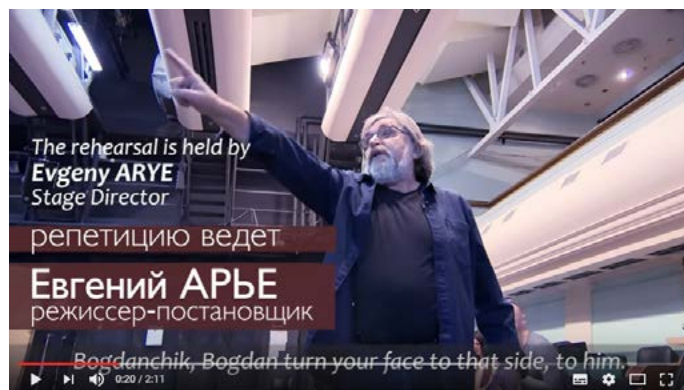
The next Bolshoi Ballet performance to be broadcast in cinemas is ["Swan Lake"](#); ballet fans are going to have the chance to see the recording, made on January 25th 2015. The cast stars Svetlana Zakharova and Denis Rodkin.

On January 27, 29th and 31 the Bolshoi presented a semi-staged version of ["Il viaggio a Reims"](#) by Gioachino Rossini. It is the first time in its history that the Bolshoi Theatre has presented this opera. The Bolshoi Theatre music director and chief conductor Tugan Sokhiev was the music director of the concert version that marked the composer's 225th anniversary. The series of premiere performances opened on January 27th at the new concert venue in the South-Western district of Moscow, in the concert hall [Philharmonia-2](#) and continued on January 29th and 31st on the Bolshoi Theatre [Historic stage](#), where the dress rehearsal and the media briefing took place on Thursday, January 26th.



The booklet for the concert version of "Il viaggio a Reims"

Marianna Pizzolato, one of the best "Rossini" mezzo-sopranos of our time, stars in the role of La Marchesa Melibea. Svetlana Moskalenko, a soloist of the Mikhailovsky Theatre, performs the role of La Contessa di Folleville; in 2015 she performed successfully at the International Tchaikovsky Competition, where she received the 2nd prize, and in 2016 she performed the title role in the opera "Don Pasquale" by G. Donizetti (the concert version at the Mikhailovsky Theatre was conducted by Mikhail Tatarnikov). The part of Corinna is performed by Olga Kulchinskaya, one of the Bolshoi Theatre's leading young soloists, and the Bolshoi's young soloist Olga Seliverstova, who also performs the part of Norina ("Don Pasquale"), Fiordiligi ("Cosi fan tutte") and Susanna ("Le Nozze di Figaro"). Anastasia Kalagina, one of the leading soloists of the Mariinsky Theatre, performs the part of Madama Cortese. The American tenor John Osborn performs the part of Il Conte di Libenscof, the Russian general. Igor Golovatenko is his rival, Don Alvaro, a Spanish admiral. The Spanish baritone David Menéndez makes his debut at the Bolshoi Theatre with the part of Don Sidney; the cast also stars Giovanni Furlanetto, who performed the title part in the premiere performances of "Don Pasquale" at the Bolshoi last year, as Don Profondo, scholar and lover of antiquities, friend of Corinna. The cast of the concert version also stars Pyotr Migunov as Don Prudenzi, the doctor at the spa, Alexei Neklyudov as Il Cavaliere Belfiore, Andrii Goniukov as Il Barone di Trombonok, other opera company soloists and participants of the Bolshoi Young Artists Opera Program.



A shot from the video about rehearsals of the opera "The Idiot"

February 12th-17th – the premiere of the opera ["The Idiot"](#) by Mieczysław Weinberg at the Bolshoi Theatre New Stage. Music director – Michał Klauza. Set Designer: Semyon Pastukh. Stage Director: Evgeny Arye. Costume Designer: Galina Solovyova. Lighting Designer: Damir Ismagilov. Movement Director: Igor Kachaev. The cast stars Bogdan Volkov and Stanislav Mostovoy as Myshkin, Anna Nechaeva, Ekaterina Morozova and Maria Lobanova as Nastassya Filippovna, Pyotr Mi-

gunov, Nikolai Kazansky and Mikhail Guzhov as Rogozhin, Konstantin Shushakov and Konstantin Suchkov as Lebedjev. More information about the production is available on the Bolshoi's website.

The video, which is available on the [Bolshoi Theatre YouTube channel](#), tells about rehearsals of the opera "The Idiot" by Mieczysław Weinberg, staged by Evgeny Arye.

In recent years there has been a rising tide of interest in Weinberg's works and his operas in particular all over the world. On February 19th the opera "The Passenger", presented by the Ekaterinburg State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, will be performed on the Bolshoi's New Stage. Weinberg composed the opera "The Passenger", which was to be staged at the Bolshoi Theatre, in 1967-1968; however, it was performed for the first time only in 2006. This was the concert version of the opera, performed at the Moscow International House of Music by the soloists, choir and orchestra of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre.

In 2010 the triumphant journey of "The Passenger" around opera stages across the world started; this happened mainly thanks to an outstanding British director David Pountney, who considers Weinberg to be the most prominent Russian composer after Prokofiev and Shostakovich. The Ekaterinburg Theatre is the first theatre that took on the mission to present the stage version of "The Passenger" to the Russian audience.

On February 19th the opera "[The Passenger](#)", presented by the Ekaterinburg State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, will be performed on the Bolshoi's New Stage. Music director of the production Oliver von Dohnányi will conduct the orchestra. The performances of the operas "The Idiot" and "The Passenger" is taking place as a part of the international conference "Mieczysław Weinberg. 1919-1996. marking the 100th anniversary of his birth" that is taking place from February 16th till February 19th in the halls of the Bolshoi Theatre and the State Institute of Art Studies in Moscow. The national newspaper "Muzykalnoe Obozrenie" was the initiator of the project. More information about the event is available on the newspaper's [website](#).

The press conference of the international forum "Mieczysław Weinberg (1919-1996). The Return" is going to take place at the Bolshoi Theatre press centre on February 10th at 2 p.m. The speakers: Vladimir Urin, the Bolshoi Theatre, Andrey Ustinov, the newspaper "Muzykalnoe Obozrenie". Guest participants: the State Institute of Art Studies (Natalia Sipovskaya), the Moscow theatre "Novaya Opera" (Dmitry Sibirtsev), the Ekaterinburg State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre (Andrey Shishkin) and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Poland (Alexander Laskovsky).

Accreditation for the press conference about the international forum is available from the Bolshoi Theatre press office pr@bolshoi.ru

The concert of the Bolshoi Theatre Young Artists Opera Program soloists took place on January 25th at the [Theatre Chatelet in Paris](#). Nina Minasyan, Pavel Valuzhin, Ilya Kutukhin and Grigory Shkarupa took part in the concert accompanied by Sergei Konstantinov. The programme included romances, arias and duets by Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Dargomyzhsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rossini, Donizetti, Verdi, Bizet, Gounod and Duparc. The Paris audience was particularly excited to hear Nina Minasyan, who has recently performed at the National Opera, where she starred as Lucia in the opera "Lucia di Lammermoor" by Donizetti.

On January 18th Vladimir Vasiliev and Boris Akimov, outstanding ballet dancers and People's Artists of the USSR were awarded one of Japan's most [significant awards](#), the Order of the Rising Sun, the Golden Rays with Neck Ribbon. Olga Svistunova (TASS) reports that the award ceremony took place at the residence of the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow.



Boris Akimov and Vladimir Vasiliev
Photo courtesy: Katerina Novikova

The Order of the Rising Sun is awarded for the most significant contribution to the world's culture, science and sport, as well as for developing relations between one's native country and Japan. The government order and the list of the award winners were announced in Tokyo on November 3rd 2016, marking the national holiday – the Day of Culture.

Vladimir Vasiliev told TASS: “I have the warmest and the most pleasant memories associated with Japan. I mean our guest performances and, of course, working with the Tokyo ballet named after Tchaikovsky and its founder and permanent director Mr. Tadatsugu Sasaki. Unfortunately, he passed away last year, but his assistants and students continue the work that he started”. Vasiliev expressed his gratitude for having been awarded the Order, which he considers to be a reward for long years of cooperation. “I know from my friends in Japan that to receive an award from the Emperor means to receive the most significant assessment of your work. This is a great honour for me. I hope our creative ties will continue to develop and we will have a chance to create something interesting for the Japanese audience together”.

Boris Akimov said: “My ties with Japan originated a long time ago”. The first time he went to the Land of the Rising Sun was in 1973; he visited the country during the guest performance of the Bolshoi Ballet. “Then, starting from 1990 I went to Japan for the past 27 years 2-3 times every season to work in different theatres and schools. I am proud of the fact that I received the invitation to work at the National Opera Theatre in Tokyo from the legendary Asami Maki, the founder of the classical dance in Japan”.

The Bolshoi Theatre is about to announce the call for musicians to the symphony orchestra. The competition to fill the vacancies is taking place from January 30th till February 7th. The deadline for document submission was on January 25th. More information about the competition, the programmes and the sheet music are available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).

Press analysis:

Russian mass media

The TV channel “Russia-Culture” broadcast the documentary “Boris Pokrovsky. The Untold” to mark the 105th anniversary of the legendary opera reformer Boris Pokrovsky. The documentary was made by Tatiana Bodrova and Andrey Plakhov in 2006. Boris Pokrovsky was a patriarch of the opera; his name is associated with the best pages in the history of not only the Bolshoi Theatre or the famous Chamber Musical Theatre, but also the history of the world opera.



Boris Pokrovsky. A photo from the archives; featured at the exhibition marking his anniversary, at the “Helikon-Opera”

The documentary features Boris Pokrovsky talking about his creative victories, failures and mistakes, and also about his search for new forms of an opera production. This is a whole era of opera directing and the school of Pokrovsky, where several generations of singers and stage directors were nurtured. He appreciated the opera “above all other art forms” and was cooperating with great conductors at the Bolshoi for over 50 years; he created true masterpieces – productions of “Eugene Onegin”, “Aida”, “Tosca”, “Katerina Izmailova” and “Khovanshchina”. Unique archives of his rehearsals with Elena Obraztsova, Tamara Milashkina, Vladimir Atlantov and Tamara Sinyavskaya were preserved. The documentary also features interviews with Mstislav Rostropovich and Galina Vishnevskaya, who talk about their teacher, as well as interviews with singers and the maestro's students. The full version of the documentary is available on the TV channel [web-site](#).

On January 22nd, when “Sleeping Beauty” was broadcast from the Bolshoi Theatre at cinemas in Russia and across the globe, as well as online, the agency TASS published a large announcement about this event. Olga Svistunova reports about the dancers that perform the leading roles, partners of the project, and also mentions the exact number of the cities where the production was to be broadcast. She also mentions another ballet version of the same story, created by Jean-Christophe Maillot – the ballet “La Belle” that has just premiered in Monte-Carlo and starred the same soloists.

“Jean-Christophe Maillot admitted: “For me, “La Belle” was worn by Bernice Coppeters (the star of Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo – TASS note) and it was difficult

to rethink the ballet without her. But with Olga Smirnova, I felt, I can rewrite the thing with her. For me, it is a bit the same phenomenon as Bernice Coppieters, with 20 years and a generation of difference". According to the choreographer, there has been a wonderful transmission between the two ballerinas. "Olga Smirnova's physical intelligence is such that she has an ability to absorb the information she sees and that she hears. It's a sponge. There is a constant improvement in her work. For her, as well as for Semyon Chudin, the technique is out of the question, because they can dance anything. It is like driving a Ferrari", – Jean-Christophe Maillot said.

The choreographer also admitted that "both dancers are very honest and touching. There is nothing false or artificial about them, they are not capable of telling lies. Tenderness and moments of kindness that they share are very strong".

[TASS](#) was informed by the Bolshoi Theatre management that the ballet "La Belle" by Jean-Christophe Maillot is to be performed at the Bolshoi Theatre on October 4th and 5th as a part of the International Modern Dance Festival DanceInversion.

Short announcements and press releases about the transmission with reference to TASS were also published on the portals of the following sources:

[Radio Culture](#)

[TV Channel MIR24](#)

[The newspaper "Vechernaya Moskva"](#)

It is the first time in its history that the Bolshoi Theatre is working on the opera "Il viaggio a Reims" by Gioachino Rossini. The series of premiere performances opened on January 27th at the new concert venue, in the concert hall Philharmonia-2. Olga Svistunova ([TASS](#)) reports about this event. She also gives a detailed story of the opera's creation.

"The composer was writing this opera at the peak of his career, when he was in Paris. The opera was inspired by a historic event, when Charles X ascended to the throne of France. The coronation ceremony took place at the Reims Cathedral on May 28th 1825. The action takes place at the resort town of Plombières. It was there at the hotel "Golden Lily" that the aristocrats stayed on their way to Reims, where the coronation was to take place. Important guests that came from all over Europe, end up in unbelievably funny situations".

The Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor and music director Tugan Sokhiev was a guest of the programme "Glavnaya Rol" / "Main Part" on the TV Channel ["Culture"](#). The host Yulian Makarov talks to Tugan Sokhiev about working on the opera "Il viaggio a Reims".



Tugan Sokhiev/ Photo courtesy: Vadim Shults

"The Green Living Room" Bolshoi section present new programme – The recording of the conversation between Katerina Novikova and the unique representative of the Russian culture, the Prince Nikita Lobanov-Rostovsky, an outstanding collector of the Russian theatre and decorative art of the 1st third of the 20th century is now available on the Bolshoi Theatre [official YouTube channel](#) in the section "The Green Living Room". In this interview Nikita Lobanov-Rostovsky talks about his childhood in Bulgaria, about his first musical impressions from performances of Boris Christoff, Maria Callas and Tito Gobbi in Paris, and also explains how his unique collection started and was formed. This collection is mainly famous for its artefacts and pieces of art associated with Diaghilev's "Les Saisons Russes" and artists from Diaghilev's circle.



The Prince Nikita Lobanov-Rostovsky is the guest of the new episode of "The Green Living Room"
Photo courtesy: the portal Vesti.ru

The documentary in four parts "Azary Plisetsky. Life makes everything better than you have envisioned." about the world-famous ballet pedagogue and the brother of Maya Plisetskaya was broadcast on

the TV Channel “Russia Culture”. He cooperated with such ballet geniuses, as Maurice Bejart, Roland Petit and John Neumeier. He worked with Mikhail Baryshnikov at his Baryshnikov Art Center in New York, at George Balanchine’s School of American Ballet and at many other world-famous ballet companies. He is constantly cooperating with the famous company Bejart Ballet Lausanne. In the new documentary Azari Plisetsky talks about the gloomy and the triumphant pages of his life in a detailed and fascinating way. All parts of the documentary are available on the TV Channel “Russia Culture” [website](#).

To announce a programme from the series “[Life Line](#)”, the TV Channel “Russia Culture” presented a story marking the jubilee of the outstanding ballerina Lyudmila Semenyaka.

“Fragments of the rehearsal, where Galina Ulanova is working with Lyudmila Semenyaka: here the Bolshoi Theatre’s prima-ballerina is not even twenty years old. Today Lyudmila Semenyaka is a pedagogue herself. She shares commandments of the great teachers with her students. She works on the movements with her students until these are perfect: both graceful tips of the fingers and every centimeter of the back bend are important. But the most important is this: the audience should not only see a ballerina, but also hear her heart.

The Bolshoi Ballet’s soloist Victoria Yakusheva says: “She always tries to maintain our individuality and to develop it, but I absolutely love it when she shows something, because she is so incredibly harmonious, she is always so academic and unique. A simple attempt that I make to come near this beauty, grace and incredible sense of taste in dance makes me so happy”.

Lyudmila Semenyaka admits: “I miss coming on the stage; oh, if you only knew! So I dance together with my students, I breathe together with them, I move together with them. The movements of their souls are also shared with me”.

Lyudmila Semenyaka was dreaming of becoming a ballerina since her childhood. At the age of 10 she entered the Vaganova Ballet Academy. At the age of 12 she already performed the part of little Marie in the ballet “The Nutcracker”. She was incredibly light and possessed incredible musicality. The young ballerina was singled out; she said that her skills were ordinary, but she tried very hard and was very passionate about dancing. After the International Contest of the Ballet Artists in Moscow all great choreographers – Chichinadze, Yakobson, Eifman, and, finally, Grigorovich, meaning, the Bolshoi Theatre – wanted to see 17-year old Lyudmila Semenyaka in their productions.

Lyudmila Semenyaka says: “I was very lucky to have danced all ballets by Grigorovich. Actually, they shaped me as a personality and as a ballerina. My soul was maturing gradually, and it was gradually

absorbing this wonderful atmosphere of the Moscow stage – and I mean the Moscow stage, because it was Leningrad that educated me, but it was Moscow that brought the talent to life”.

Main parts in all classical ballets, dancing at almost all theatres across the Soviet Union, invitations to travel abroad, a hundred of stage partners. For the sake of her profession Lyudmila Semenyaka even changed her appearance dramatically – for example, she bleached her hair with hydrogen peroxide for the part of Valentina in the ballet “Angara”.

The ballerina says: “The stage always was the main thing for me, I was always rushing there. It started long in advance, I was preparing for the performance long in advance. This is an intimate process for every actor, each has his or her own soul’s secrets and I was taught to bring human feelings to the stage in the first place”.

[RIA Novosti](#) publishes the photo report “One day in the life of the Bolshoi Theatre prima ballerina Svetlana Zakharova”.



Photo courtesy: Ramil Sitdikov/RIA Novosti

The news agency [InterMedia](#) reports: on March 14th and 15th 2017 Svetlana Zakharova is going to present her solo programme “Amore” at the Bolshoi Theatre. The programme premiered in 2016, first in Italy (Modena and Parma), and on May 24th and 25th – on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage. There are three one-act ballets: “Francesca da Rimini” to the music by Tchaikovsky, choreographed by Yuri Possokhov, “Rain Before It Falls” to the music by Bach, Respighi and Carlos Pino Quintana, choreographed by Patrick de Bana, and “Strokes Through The Tail” to the music by Mozart, choreographed by the Irish ballet master Marguerite Donlon. The cast stars Svetlana Zakharova, Denis Rodkin, Mikhail Lobukhin and other dancers of the company.

The news agency RIA published a press release about the celebration of “Swan Lake’s” 140th anniversary at the Bolshoi Theatre. The performance on January 12th marked this date.

It was the version of “Swan Lake” staged by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg that is considered to be a choreographic masterpiece and that actually went down in history. However, the very first production of the ballet was performed at the Bolshoi. It was on a commission from the Moscow office of the Imperial theatre that Pyotr Tchaikovsky wrote his famous score of “Swan Lake”. The premiere took place on February 20th (March 4th new style) 1877; the ballet was choreographed by Vaclav Reisinger. Polina Karpakova was the first to dance the part of Odette-Odile.

The Bolshoi Ballet principal Ekaterina Krysanova performed the part of Odette-Odile in the performance, marking the ballet’s 140th anniversary. “I have been dancing this part for quite a long time, but every performance of “Swan Lake” is an important event for me, and every performance is special. This ballet is the high-water mark of the classical heritage. Every ballerina aims to perform the part of Odette-Odile. The part of the “Swan Queen” is very difficult, it demands a lot of commitment and not everyone can do it. Not all famous ballerinas dance it; sometimes they dance it just one time and then never do it again”, – Krysanova told [RIA Novosti](#).

The portal “[Music Seasons](#)” published a large interview with one of the most famous Russian theatre light designers Damir Ismagilov, who has been the Bolshoi Theatre chief lighting designer since 2002. In the interview Damir Ismagilov talks about the start of his career and explains how the attitude towards the light and lighting designers has changed in the modern theatre. “We lived in the city of Korolyov in Moscow Oblast. People in the neighbourhood were doing sport and drinking a bit. I did not feel like studying after I finished 8th grade. And then my Mom brought home the appendix for the newspaper “Vechernaya Moskva”. It was titled “Where to Study”. For some reason I chose the Theatre Arts and Technical College. The name itself seemed interesting. Although I did not go to a real theatre once in my childhood. My parents were both children of peasants. My children also chose professions that have nothing to do with the theatre. They are future doctors and pharmacists. It is tough in all spheres. But at the theatre in particular. There are many factors that influence this job. Here you are particularly dependant on desires, circumstances and moods of different people. Besides, our job demands great preparation and dedication, both physical and spiritual. What does it take to keep up with such artists, as Valery Levental, David Borovsky, Sergei Barkhin. Just so that they would simply hear you! I am happy

I have managed to make myself heard to them. I met Valery Levental in 1990s. In 1998 I defended my final project at the staging faculty of the Moscow Art Theatre Studio-School. My final project was the production of “Pearl Zinaida”, based on the play by Mikhail Roshchin, staged by Oleg Efremov. This was the first time I had a chance to work together with Levental. Since then we would do something together with him at least once a year, sometimes in Moscow, sometimes in other cities. In order to provide for one’s family in the 1990s, one had to travel a lot with little ballet theatres and work abroad”.



Damir Ismagilov. Photo courtesy: A. Ivanishin

The magazine “[Baku](#)” publishes an article about the production of the opera “Manon Lescaut” at the Bolshoi Theatre, starring Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov; there are also many illustrations of this article by Elena Golovanova. The premiere performances of the opera took place on the Historic Stage on October 16th-23rd, 2016. The opera was staged by the drama theatre director Adolf Shapiro and the theatre designer Maria Tregubova. The Italian maestro Jader Bignamini conducted the orchestra.

The printed version of the magazine “Baku” (issue No.1 Jan-Feb 2017) is available from the Bolshoi press office upon request.



Press analysis:

international mass media

Local newspapers and online publications announced screenings of the Bolshoi Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty* in local cinemas on 22 January. For example the local newspaper [The Daily Courier](#) (Arizona, USA) wrote: "The cast's lead dancers are Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin accompanied by the corps de ballet from the Bolshoi, according to an event news release. The Bolshoi dancers capture the splendor of this classic tale through a dream-like journey with jewel fairies and magical kingdoms. The Bolshoi uses elaborate staging with luxurious sets and costumes".

The online specialised music publication [France Musique](#) publishes an article by Sofia Anastasio about the programme at the Aix-en-Provence festival which includes "Another awaited rendezvous, the great return of *Carmen*. The work of Bizet was played only once in Aix-en-Provence, in 1957, and this year, it is a metamorphosed *Carmen* that one risks to find, transposed

into the universe of Dmitri Tcherniakov. The heroine will be performed by Stéphanie d'Oustrac, alongside Michael Fabiano in the role of Don José, and Elsa Dreisig in that of Micaela." "The musicians of the Bolshoi Theatre will perform a concert version of the opera *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky under the baton of Tugan Sokhiev."

The online specialised dance publication [Dance Tabs](#) publishes a review by Graham Watts of Jean-Christophe Maillot's *La Belle* at the Grimaldi Forum in Monte Carlo with Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin in the leading roles as guest artists with Les Ballets de Monte Carlo giving the performance four stars out of five. "Perhaps unsurprisingly, for such a different version of a very familiar story, I struggled to keep up with the varied narrative of the first act, whilst nonetheless appreciating both the spectacle and Maillot's adventurous and attractive choreography. The first act begins in the world of the Prince, portrayed by Guest Artist, Semyon Chudin (of Bolshoi Ballet fame)" "As Beauty, Olga Smirnova – also a star of the Bolshoi – makes her first appearance, memorably, cocooned within a large, diaphanous bubble (think of a huge, transparent beach ball): a simple visual cipher to denote her protective environment at the palace. Meanwhile, a group of seven male dancers perform athletically around her "bubble" in this unique and fascinating version of the *Rose Adagio*. With tiny steps, pressing on the incline of the plastic ball, the encased Smirnova moved smoothly down the slope. It's a particular skill that I feel sure was not covered in her training at the Vaganova Academy!" Maillot retains Tchaikovsky's score for *The Sleeping Beauty*, although not in its most familiar structure, and he also appends the same composer's beautiful *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy-overture as the love theme for the romantic pas de deux between *La Belle* (in a revealing gold-patterned nude unitard) and the Prince, here danced with elegant, sensual passion by Smirnova and Chudin."



Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin in the ballet "La Belle" by Jean-Christophe Maillot. Photo courtesy: Alice Blangero

“Smirnova’s floating arms and the alluring sentiment of Maillot’s flowing choreography, invests the duet with an absorbing tenderness.”

The French online specialised dance news publication [Danses avec la Plume](#) publishes a review by Amélie Bertrand about Jean-Christophe Maillot’s *La Belle* at the Grimaldi Forum in Monte Carlo with Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin in the leading roles as guest artists with Les Ballets de Monte Carlo performed on 3 January 2017. “Les Ballets de Monte Carlo are plunged into delight in this ballet created 15 years ago, danced by the two Bolshoi Stars who came for the occasion: Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin. He is still shy with this new gesture, which makes him a prince of touching restraint. She radiates a thousand lights, bringing life to this character created by Bernice Coppitiers.”

The online entertainment news publication [Broadway World](#) publishes a detailed announcement of the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence Announces 2017 Season. This includes “New productions this season include Stravinsky’s *The Rakes’ Progress* – embraced by the Festival’s three-year Stravinsky Cycle – with conductor Daniel Harding leading the Orchestre de Paris and direction by Simon McBurney; Bizet’s *Carmen* directed by award-winning Russian director Dmitri Tcherniakov and conducted by Pablo Heras-Casado with the Orchestre de Paris; and Francesco Cavalli’s seminal Venetian opera, the rarely-performed *Erismena*, conducted by Baroque music specialist Leonardo Garcia Alarcón.” “Additional highlights in the season line-up will offer a concert version of Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* with Tugan Sokhiev, music director and chief conductor of Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre, leading the musicians of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia”

The online entertainment news publication [Broadway World](#) announces “Award-winning Russian composer Ilya Demutsky will be holding his first ever concert in New York City hosted by New Opera NYC. An international success, Demutsky is a composer for orchestra, chorus, chamber ensemble, piano, voice, as well film music. The legendary Bolshoi Theatre of Moscow commissioned Demutsky to compose a new full-length ballet, *A Hero of Our Time*, which won the Golden Mask Russian National Theatre Award for Best Ballet Production for 2015/2016, as well as the award for Best Composer in Musical Theatre for Demutsky. Two new ballets composed by Demutsky will be premiered in 2017: a new work commissioned by the San Francisco Ballet, and the full-length ballet *Nureyev* commissioned by the Bolshoi.”



Ilya Demutsky. Photo courtesy: Anna Ivantsova

The specialised dance magazine [Pointe Magazine](#) publishes an article by Nicole Loeffler-Gladstone who reports about David Hallberg returning to dance after his injury. “After a successful return to the stage with the Australian Ballet, not to mention his debut as Franz in *Coppélia*, international star David Hallberg is officially back with one of his two home companies. He will join American Ballet Theatre for its Spring 2017 season. No word yet regarding when he’ll return to the Bolshoi Ballet.”

In brief

The premiere of the ballet “*Spartacus*” to the music by Aram Khachaturian, choreographed by Yuri Grigorovich, took place in Antwerp on January 27th. The part of *Spartacus* is performed by the Bolshoi Theatre guest artist Ivan Vasiliev (January 27th and 29th) and the Bolshoi Ballet principal Denis Rodkin (January 28th, February 2nd and 4th). The cast also stars the Bolshoi Ballet principal Alexander Volchikov as *Crasus* (January 28th, February 3rd and 5th).

[Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui](#), the artistic director of Royal Ballet Flanders, speaks about the production: «The first time I saw this ballet was during the Bolshoi Ballet’s guest performances in Paris. The cast starred Carlos Acosta as *Spartacus*; I was amazed by his performance and by the production itself. So, when I became the director of the ballet company in Antwerp, I decided I wanted to stage this ballet right away. Everyone told me the ballet was too sophisticated and too grand; they said it could not be staged at our theatre. I am a very ambitious person, so I did not give up this idea and went to Moscow, where I met with Yuri Grigorovich. His great experience, his endless love for art and for ballet, as well as my conversations with him made me even

more certain I wanted to do it. We managed to carry out this project, because many theatres joined their efforts – I mean, the Munich Ballet, the ballet company in Toulouse, and the Bolshoi – to help us with the dancers. I am very proud of the fact that the premiere cast of our «Spartacus» stars Ivan Vasiliev, whom I admire both as a dancer and as a person. I am very happy that these days, when his jubilee is being celebrated, Yuri Grigorovich has come to watch our premiere. All 7 performances have been sold out; our audience hall seats 2000 people. I am very excited about the premiere and I am looking forward to it».

[Gazet van Antwerpen](#) announces the premiere.

The Mikhailovsky Theatre principal Ivan Vasiliev celebrated the 10th anniversary of his creative career on the theatre stage in Saint Petersburg. Alexander Berezhnoy ([“MIR24”](#)) reports: in the gala-concert, marking this anniversary, he made his appearance as both a virtuoso dancer and a choreographer. Ivan Vasiliev has never danced in corps de ballet; he does not like second parts either. In 2006 he came to the Bolshoi Theatre and caught the eye of the audience right away. Only four years later he became a principle; today he is an acknowledged maestro, one of the outstanding Russian dancers. Vasiliev said: “I already have several homes. I started at the Bolshoi Theatre. I love it very much. But now the Mikhailovsky Theatre is my home as well. Here is my company, I have already staged several productions here as well”.

On January 26th [Stanislavsky Electrotheatre](#) celebrated its second birthday; on the same day the exhibition of the famous British director Katie Mitchell “Five Truths” opened in Russia for the first time. This exhibition was created in cooperation with the London Royal National Theatre and “59 Productions” specially for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The installation has already been presented in Paris, London, Vienna, Washington, D.C. and Amsterdam. The exhibition is on at the Stanislavsky Electrotheatre foyer for three months, from January 26th till April 26th 2017; the closing ceremony is going to take place on the day of William Shakespeare’s birthday (christening). The multimedia installation features 10 screens of different sizes, where the video recording of Ophelia’s mad scene from the tragedy “Hamlet” by Shakespeare is projected; this scene is performed by the actress Michelle Thierry in accordance with directing styles of five key practitioners of the world theatre: Constantin Stanislavski, Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski and Peter Brook.

In April 2017 two scandalous productions by Katie Mitchell are going to be presented at the Bolshoi Theatre as a part of the exchange of guest performances with Aix-en-Provence Festival; these will be “Written on

Skin” (April 22nd and 23rd) and “Trauernacht” (April 25th and 26th).

Katie Mitchell, director: “It is rarely that theatre practitioners have a chance to explore this profession outside the busy production schedule. For me it was the great honour to work with the Victoria and Albert Museum and to immerse myself into the world of exhibitions and installations. This project has become a challenge for me and for my colleagues; we had to express everything we know about the most important directors of the 20th century in a crystal clear way. We hope that our project will speak the language of theatre with those, who love theatre, and with those, who never go to the theatre in an equally easy and understandable way”.



A fragment of the video installation by Katie Mitchell
Photo courtesy: Stanislavski Electrotheatre website

The opera [“Prince Igor”](#) by Borodin, staged by Dmitri Tcherniakov, is going to premiere at the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam February 6th – March 8th. This is a co-production with the Metropolitan Opera that was broadcast at cinemas around the world as a part of the project MET:LiveHD. Just like in the American version, the cast stars Ildar Abdrazakov and Oksana Dyka as Igor and Yaroslavna. However, the cast of the Dutch premiere stars the Bolshoi soloist Agunda Kulaeva as Konchakovna and the Moscow Academic Music Theatre soloist and the Bolshoi’s guest soloist Dmitry Ulyanov as Galitsky. The conductor Gianandrea Noseda is the co-author of the musical score; however, the orchestra will be conducted by Stanislav Kochanovsky, a graduate of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory.

The program [“Modern Masters”](#) was presented at the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center on January 26th. The programme featured the world premiere of the ballet “Optimistic Tragedy” by Yuri Possokhov to the music by Ilya Demutsky, the ballet “Seven Sonatas” by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Domenico Scarlatti and “Pas/Parts” by William Forsythe to the music by Thom Willems.

The composer [Ilya Demutsky](#) shared the video of the curtain calls on his Instagram page.

On February 22nd the concert “[Confession](#)”, featuring the choreography of the Bolshoi Theatre soloist Andrei Merkuriev, is going to take place at the “Novaya Opera”. The Bolshoi Theatre soloists Ekaterina Krysanova, Kristina Kretova, Semyon Chudin and Andrei Merkuriev himself are going to dance in the concert.

Social networks

Photographs from two ballet jubilees, one of [Lyudmila Semenyaka](#) and one of [Yuliana Malkhasyants](#), were uploaded to the Bolshoi Theatre Facebook page.

Friends and colleagues congratulate the soprano [Ekaterina Scherbachenko](#) on Facebook. The singer herself reposted the card from the Bolshoi Theatre’s official page and said she was glad to be in the company of birthday boys, the conductor Igor Dronov and the ballet company principal Ruslan Skvortsov.

The famous series “Dancing for a Bear” by the artist and photographer Gregory Mayofis, as well as his other works, will be exhibited at the Art Fair “Works on Paper” that is going to take place at the Royal Geographical Society in London on February 12th. Marina Shtager, the former spokeswoman of the Mariinsky Theatre, writes about it on her [Facebook page](#).



[JR](#), one of the most famous and sought-after street art artists, whose exhibitions will take place in 2018 at the Bolshoi and at the Small Manege simultaneously, visited the Bolshoi Theatre. He announced to his [Instagram](#) followers about it and also uploaded several pictures.



Artists of the Paris Opera on the roof of the theatre

Marat Gali shared the photo, featuring the official Letter of Acknowledgement from the Ministry of Culture “for the great contribution to the development of culture and long-term fruitful work”, signed by Vladimir Medinsky, on his [Facebook page](#).



Oksana Dyka shares a [photo](#) from Amsterdam with Prince Igor production team including Dmitry Tscherniakov, Oksana Dyka, Agunda Kulaeva, Stanislaw Kochanowski, Dmitry Ulyanov, Ildar Abdrazakov and others. The premiere takes place on the 7th of February at the Dutch National Opera

Birthdays

January 23rd – an opera director, a pedagogue, a professor and a People's Artist of the USSR Boris Pokrovsky, who staged 41 productions at the Bolshoi Theatre (1912-2009) – 105th anniversary

January 27th – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

January 27th – an outstanding ballet dancer, a ballet master and an actor Mikhail Baryshnikov

January 28th – an outstanding theatre set designer Karl Valts, an Honoured Artist of the Republic, who worked at the Bolshoi Theatre for 65 years (1946-1929)

January 28th – the Bolshoi Ballet leading soloist Kristina Kretova

January 30th – an opera singer (lyrical tenor) and a pedagogue, the Bolshoi Theatre's soloist and a People's Artist of the RSFSR Anton Grigoryev (1926-2001)

January 31st – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Ekaterina Shcherbachenko

January 31st – the Bolshoi Ballet principal, an Honoured Artist of Russia Ruslan Skvortsov

Debuts

"La Bayadere"

January 26th

Bruna Cantanhede Gaglianone – Scene "Shadows" First Variation

Yanina Parienko – Scene "Shadows" Second Variation

January 27th

Tamara Mironova as Manu

Margarita Shraimer – Scene "Shadows" First Variation

"The Stone Guest"

January 26th

The Young Artists Opera Program participant Andrei Kimach as Don Carlos

Yuri Syrov as Laura's guest

"La Traviata"

It is the first time that the Italian tenor Ivan Magri is going to perform the role of Alfredo Germont at the Bolshoi Theatre. He is taking part in the performance on February 2nd, February 4th (matinee performance) and February 5th. In the evening performances on February 3rd and 4th the soloist of the Tbilisi State Opera and Ballet Theatre Otar Jorjikia is going to make his debut at the Bolshoi Theatre with the part of Alfredo. Hibla Gerzmava is performing the part of Violetta for the first time at the Bolshoi in the evening performances on February 2nd and 4th.

February 2nd

Irina Rubtsova as Annina

Goderdzi Janelidze as Doctor Grenvil

Giorgi Sturua as Gastone

Vladimir Komovich as Marquis D'obigny

February 3rd

Vadim Babichuk as Gastone