



Newsletter

Events

The President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin has supported the idea of the Ministry of Culture to renew the contract with the Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin. At the meeting with the Russian President, Mr. Urin and the head of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky, the Minister said that his department was going to address this proposal to the government.

Mr. Medinsky addressed Mr. Putin and said: “We do hope for your support (regarding the proposal – [TASS](#) note) of the renewal the contract of the Bolshoi Theatre General Director with Vladimir Urin”.

“Naturally. I will do it with pleasure; of course, I do support it”, – the President answered.

Mr. Medinsky mentioned that Urin had been one of the youngest theatre directors in the USSR; as for his current work, he considers it to be successful. The Minister of Culture mentioned that the Bolshoi Theatre demonstrated great results both in terms of creative process and in terms of economic indicators.

Mr. Putin told Mr. Urin: “I know that you are also planning to take part in the events dedicated to the opening ceremony of the FIFA World Cup”. The Bolshoi Theatre General Director confirmed: “There is such an idea”. According to Mr. Urin if everything goes as planned, on July 14, 2018, before the beginning of the final match, “the Bolshoi Theatre will present a gala concert, dedicated to this remarkable event.” *./.* “Leading soloists, both world-renowned Russian musicians and our foreign colleagues, have given consent to take part in the show”, Mr. Urin said, stressing that many of them had already agreed to take part in the concert.

Speaking of international cooperation, the General Director talked about the Bolshoi Theatre’s important projects with foreign partners. “We are now hav-

ing very important negotiations with the Paris Opera regarding two major productions; we have almost settled everything regarding one of them. This will be “War and Peace” by Prokofiev; I mean, this is going to be a co-production”, – Mr. Urin said and explained that first the Paris Opera would come to Russia for guest performances, and in 2018 the Bolshoi Theatre would make a return visit. Besides, the General Director said an agreement with the Metropolitan Opera regarding three productions had been reached and the protocol of intent was going to be signed in March.

Mr. Urin also said there were interesting projects with La Scala and guest performances in Japan, as well as in Finland, etc. The Bolshoi Theatre General Director concluded: “The year will finish with our guest performances in New York”.

As for the creative process in general, according to Vladimir Urin, the Bolshoi Theatre is now functioning in a regular working regime. The General Director stressed: “We stage eight premieres per year. Almost 100% of the seats in the Bolshoi Theatre audience hall are sold; the average occupancy is 87.4% which means that the house is full every evening”. He also mentioned that the theatre could have been satisfied with performing only those productions that had been performed for dozens of years, but this would not have been very good for the company that “always has to have some new job to do”. Mr. Urin also mentioned that the Bolshoi Theatre presented about 500 performances per year in Moscow.



The President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin is talking to the Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin and the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky
Photo from the portal Kremlin.ru

Mr. Putin asked Mr. Urin to talk about the “Russian Seasons” that the Bolshoi Theatre is planning to have in Japan. The General Director said this year the company was going to open “Russian Seasons” in the Land of the Rising Sun in the beginning of June. “We go to Japan on a regular basis; the audience there loves the Bolshoi Theatre and is looking forward to seeing us again. This time we will

bring three productions”, – Mr. Urin said. He also mentioned that, according to the information provided by Japanese colleagues, almost all tickets had already been sold.

tass.ru

tass.ru

The full script of the meeting is available on the official portal of the President’s Administration Kremlin.ru.

The performances of the operas “The Idiot” and “The Passenger” took 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.

The programme of the conference includes a wide range of events, connected with performing the music by Mieczysław Weinberg, as well as studying his biography and creative legacy. Honourary guests of the Forum: Zofia Posmysz, the author of the radio play and the novel “Passenger from Cabin Number 45” that the libretto of the opera “The Passenger” is based on, and the English director David Pountney, a promoter of Weinberg’s creative works all over the world and the organiser of festivals of his music (February 19th, 10 a.m., the Bolshoi Theatre). It was the Pountney’s production of “The Passenger” in 2010 at the festival in Bregenz (Austria) that stirred worldwide interest in the composer’s creative works. Weinberg’s widow Olga Rakhalskaya, Shostakovich’s widow Irina Shostakovich and Weinberg’s daughter Anna took part in the final session.

On February 17th the meeting with Zofia Posmysz took place at the Bolshoi Theatre; the writer, who survived Auschwitz, talked to journalists and researchers of Weinberg’s works. On the evening of the same day the audience at the Novaya Opera, where “The Passenger” is being performed as well, greeted her with a standing ovation. Zofia Posmysz addressed the audience in Polish and said she was very excited about the fact that “The Passenger” made such an impressive return to the Russian stage and added she was absolutely taken aback by the grandeur and the beauty of Weinberg’s music.

On Monday a concert of organ music, starring representatives of famous European schools, took place on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage. The Bolshoi Theatre press-office informed RIA Novosti about this event. “The concert was held in the format of a gala, which means, it was a real celebration. This is what the word “gala” basically means. The ensemble and the soloists performed on the background of a



Zofia Posmysz and David Pountney
Photo courtesy: Katerina Novikova

beautiful video sequence – there were unique Baroque facades of organs and interiors of famous European cathedrals. These pictures came to life and created a special atmosphere. We wanted the audience to forget about their troubles for two hours and to escape to the wonderful world of music”, – a participant of the concert, the famous organist and a professor of the Moscow Conservatory Evgenia Krivitskaya told RIA Novosti. Gianluca Libertucci, Jean-Baptiste Dupont, Evgenia Krivitskaya and Daniel Zaretsky took part in the concert. The programme of the gala included famous toccatas by Bach, Widor, Bossi and Boëllmann, elevated “Ave Maria” by Schubert, Gounod and Caccini, as well as romantic compositions to the themes of popular melodies by Mascagni, Liszt and Massenet. The Bolshoi Theatre soloists Ekaterina Shcherbachenko and Svetlana Shilova, the legendary Bolshoi Theatre Violin Ensemble and the Chamber Choir of the Moscow Conservatory took part in the concert as well. Pyotr Tataritsky, the MS of the evening, also presented a recital, which is a rare thing these days. The new organ was made for the Bolshoi Theatre by a leading German organ-making company Glatter-Gotz and brought to the theatre during the reconstruction in 2011; in 2013 the presentation of this acoustic organ took place. It has 31 ranks and about 2 thousand pipes.



Curtain call after the Organ Gala at the Bolshoi Theatre
Photo from Irina Vorontsova's Facebook page

ボリショイ劇場バレエ団 プログラム

指揮 ゲ・ロジェストヴェンスキー
管絃楽 東京交響楽団

第一幕
白鳥の湖 第二幕
オネーギン
王后
舞臺
白鳥
小鳥
白鳥

第二幕
オネーギン
王后
舞臺
白鳥
小鳥
白鳥

8月28日 新宿コマ劇場 午後7時

世界バレエ芸術の最高峰
ボリショイ劇場バレエ団来日記念豪華プログラム
(発売中)

The programme of the Bolshoi Theatre guest performance in Japan in 1957

On February 17th the press conference, marking the 60th anniversary of the Bolshoi Theatre's first guest tour of Japan and the coming guest performances of the ballet company and the orchestra took place at the Big Imperial Foyer of the Bolshoi Theatre. The participants: the Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev, the Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Russia Mr. Toehisa Kodzuki, Japan Arts representative Terasawa Mizuho, the Bolshoi Theatre primas Svetlana Zakharova and Yulia Stepannova, the Bolshoi Theatre principal Denis Rodkin and the Bolshoi Theatre leading soloist Igor Tsvirko. The Bolshoi Theatre guest performances are going to take place in Japan from May 31st till June 19th, 2017. The company is going to perform in Tokyo, Hiroshima, Ōtsu, Nagoya and Osaka. The programme includes the ballets "Swan Lake", "Giselle" and "The Flames of Paris".

February 16th – February 20th – the press-tour for the representatives of Japan Arts was organised at the Bolshoi Theatre. During this time there were meetings to discuss this year's guest performances with the Bolshoi management; interviews were recorded with the Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev and the dancers Evgenia Obraztsova, Artem Ovcharenko, Olga Smirnova, Yulia Stepanova, Semyon Chudin and others.

On February 16th and 19th the concerts from the cycle "[Anthology of Russian Classical Romances](#)" took place at the Beethoven Hall. Pieces by Nikolai Medtner and Igor Stravinsky were performed by the participants of the Young Artists Opera Program and the Bolshoi Opera company. More information about the concerts is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).

The performances of the concert programme "[Romanticism Belcanto](#)" took place on the New Stage on February 21st and 25th. The Bolshoi Theatre leading soloists and guest soloists, conducted by the young Italian maestro Giacomo Sagripanti, demonstrated the main achievements of the Italian belcanto with its most difficult virtuoso embellishments and tender songlike melodies.

The grand festival of Yuri Grigorovich's ballets, marking the 90th anniversary of the great choreographer, closed at the Bolshoi Theatre with the ballet "Ivan the Terrible". It was staged in 1975 and was given a new life in the new edition that dates back to 2012. Svetlana Zakharova made her debut in the role of Anastasia on February 24th.

"[Billy Budd](#)", the opera by Benjamin Britten staged by David Alden, is back on the Bolshoi Theatre's New Stage. According to many critics and music lovers, it has become a triumph of the first part of the season; they consider this to be the case largely due to the out-

standing job of maestro William Lacey and the Bolshoi Theatre choir. This austere “sea” story, based on the novel by Melville, has only male parts; it is back on the Bolshoi Theatre’s New stage on February 26th – March 2nd. The cast has been partially renewed. It is the first time the British bass Graeme Broadbent performs the part of Lieutenant Ratcliffe at the Bolshoi Theatre. The Dutch tenor Peter Gijbbertsen sings the part of The Novice.

On March 19th a triple bill is going to premiere on the Bolshoi New Stage. After a long break “Russian Seasons”, choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Leonid Desyatnikov, is back at the Bolshoi. This ballet was created by Ratmansky for New York City Ballet in 2006 and appeared on the Bolshoi stage for the first time in 2008; it is already considered to be a new classic. Many critics and ballet fans all over the world have been looking forward to its return.

The famous ballet by Jerome Robbins “The Cage” is going to premiere at the Bolshoi on the same night. It was created in 1951; however, it is still relevant today. This is the ballet to the music of Igor Stravinsky’s string quartet; it is a short and a rather extravagant story about the initiation of very young girls that are just discovering the capabilities of their bodies. “The Cage” is rarely presented on stages around the world; it is also almost impossible to find a recording of this performance, so to see it in the theatre is a rare treat indeed.

The programme also includes the ballet “Etudes”, staged by Harald Lander to the music by Czerny. “Etudes” represent everything the audience loves about ballet: female dancers in white tutus, male dancers in white leotards, lyrical pas-de-deux and bravura solos, incredible virtuosity of the dance, familiar music and powerful, reassuring final tutti. It is said that the choreographer Harald Lander, who based his ballet on everyday exercises and used the music of Czerny’s piano etudes, which are used to teach piano technique, did not lay any copyright claims on it. Still, the ballet is known as Lander’s Etudes; any ballet fan gets excited when this title appears on a playbill.

Not only those who come to the Bolshoi on the evening of the performance will have a chance to enjoy the premiere. The performance will be broadcast in cinemas around Russia and the world, as well as on the Bolshoi Theatre official YouTube channel. The broadcast is carried out by the Bolshoi’s permanent partners, Pathe Live and Bel Air Media, together with the company CoolConnections. The list of the cinemas and the schedule of broadcasts are available on the partners’ [website](#).

To watch the video about the coming premiere on the [Bolshoi official YouTube Channel](#) please visit.

Press analysis:

Russian mass media

The meeting of the Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky became one of the most important culture news items of the past weekend. The head of the country announced it was his pleasure to support the recommendation of the Ministry of Culture and to renew the contract with Vladimir Urin.

Numerous news stories and extended releases by federal information agencies were published after the meeting that was open for the press; short news releases about certain topics that appeared during the meeting came out as well. Most federal releases were republished by everyday newspapers, specialised mass media sources and various news aggregators.

TASS agency published two releases: the first one reported about the meeting itself and the renewal of the contract; the second one (<http://tass.ru/kultura/4032462>) dealt in more detail with such topics, as participation of the Bolshoi in the FIFA World Cup-2018, as well as joint projects and exchange programmes with the Paris Opera, La Scala and the Metropolitan Opera and coming guest performances in Japan.

TASS release republished by:

[RBC portal](#)

[Newspaper “Vzglyad”](#)

[Newspaper “Argumenty i Fakty”](#)

[TV channel MIR 24 portal](#)

[Newspaper “Komsomolskaya Pravda”](#)

The information agency RIA divided the news into two releases. **The first** one reported about the meeting in general and announced the renewal of the contract.

The second release is titled as follows: “The Bolshoi Theatre has negotiated the joint production of “War and Peace” with the Paris Opera”. It deals with the Bolshoi’s plans regarding new productions and guest performances that were discussed at the meeting.

The following sources quote RIA in their short news stories:

[Gazeta.ru](#) ([Moscow regional portal](#) [Mosregtoday](#) republishes the news story by [Gazeta.ru](#))

[Portal rewizor.ru](http://Portal.rewizor.ru)

[Portal Colta.ru](http://Portal.Colta.ru) makes reference to the full script of the talk on the portal Kremlin.ru

The portal of the newspaper "[Muzykalnoe Obozrenie](http://Muzykalnoe.Obozrenie.ru)" presents the full script of the talk.

The newspaper "[Nezavisimaya Gazeta](http://Nezavisimaya.Gazeta.ru)" publishes an article based on the same script; however, the article also includes news about other Moscow theatres and discusses issues of giving cultural objects to the Russian Orthodox Church.

The article on the news portal Lenta.ru refers to RIA releases as well.

The [First Channel](http://First.Channel.ru) presented the news story with video fragments of the talk.

Video fragments were also shown in the programme "Vesti" on the TV channel "[Russia-24](http://Russia-24.ru)", on the TV channel [TVC](http://TVC.ru) and on the TV channel "[Russia-Culture](http://Russia-Culture.ru)".

The second major news story that in many ways supplemented the story about the renewal of the contract with Vladimir Urin as the General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre and even competed with this latter story, so to speak, was the story about the Bolshoi Ballet's anniversary guest performances in Japan. Makhar Vaziev took part in the press conference. [RIA](http://RIA.ru) presented the press release that had the most detailed account of everything that was discussed at the press conference. "The Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev told the journalists at the press conference on Friday that the Bolshoi Ballet's anniversary guest performances would take place in Japan from May 31st till June 19th. These guest performances are going to open the festival "Russian Seasons"; the company is going to present "Swan Lake" and "Giselle" by Yuri Grigorovich, as well as "The Flames of Paris" choreographed by Alexei Ratmanský".

Sixty years ago, in August 1957, the Bolshoi Theatre presented guest performances in Japan for the first time. The cast included such stars, as Olga Lepeshinskaya, Irina Tikhomirova, Vladimir Preobrazhensky, Rimma Karelskaya, Nina Timofeeva, Vladimir Vasiliev – 50 people altogether. Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducted the performances and the concerts. During the one month that they spent in Japan, the company presented six different programmes that became a huge success in the Land of the Rising Sun. Since that time the Bolshoi Theatre has presented guest performances in Japan on a regular basis and has performed in various cities across the country.

The Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev said: "The coming guest performances are anniversary ones; therefore, they are special, festive and joyful. These guest performances are especially valuable, because we have developed an impressive history. Over 60 years the Bolshoi Ballet has been in Japan 18 times; the company has always brought there bright and talent-

ed artists of various generations. This proves our good, strong ties". Vaziev also mentioned that the coming guest performances were particularly important, because they opened "Russian Seasons" and introduced the cross-cultural year of Russia and Japan that starts in 2018.

The playbill of the guest performances this year includes three productions; two of them, "Swan Lake" and "Giselle", were created for the Bolshoi Theatre by the outstanding modern choreographer Yuri Grigorovich, who celebrated his 90th anniversary this year.

The article was republished by the specialised portal kino-teatr.ru.

The release of the information agency [Interfax](http://Interfax.ru) quotes Toehisa Kodzuki the Ambassador of Japan to the Russian Federation: "This year is special in terms of ballet exchanges between our countries. The first guest performances of the Bolshoi Theatre in Japan took place in 1957; this year marks the 60th anniversary of this event. The coming guest performances are going to open the festival of Russian culture in Japan "Russian Seasons". Theatre productions, exhibitions and a film festival are going to be organized as a part of this cultural event".

The Far Eastern portal Vladtime.ru republished the news story.

Another event that took place at the Bolshoi Theatre became the focus of attention for major Russian mass media sources. The Organ Gala that took place on Monday was the main topic of large news releases by information agencies RIA and TASS.

The Bolshoi Theatre press-office informed [TASS](http://TASS.ru): "The Organ Gala, starring an international cast, took place at the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia on Monday. The complicated instrument that was made for the Bolshoi Theatre by the famous German organ-making company Glatter-Gotz totally stole the show. It was installed on the Historic Stage in 2013 after the major reconstruction".

The Organ Gala starred the best representatives of European schools: Gianluca Libertucci (Vatican, Italy), Jean-Baptiste Dupont (France), Evgenia Krivitskaya and Daniel Zaretsky (Russia). The programme of the gala included pieces by Bach, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Faure, Widor, Mascagni, Grandjany and Lloyd-Webber.

Igor Tsinman (violin), Alexander Boldachev (harp), Sergei Lysenko (oboe), the Bolshoi Opera soloists Ekaterina Shcherbachenko (soprano) and Svetlana Shilova (mezzo-soprano), the Chamber Choir of Moscow Conservatory (conductor: Alexander Solovyev) performed together with "the king of instruments"; actor Pyotr Tataritsky was the MC.

The Bolshoi press-office informed: the first time the organ appeared at the Bolshoi Theatre was in 1883.

But the instrument was placed not in the most convenient way: the musician could not see the conductor, and it was necessary to have an assistant that would repeat his gestures. In order to get rid of such inconveniences, another organ was installed at the Bolshoi Theatre in 1913; the instrument was ordered from the world-famous company Walker. That instrument worked for more than half a century, but then wore out and was replaced with an electronic organ.

The pipe organ appeared on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage again after the major reconstruction in 2013. It is equipped with 1819 metal pipes, a hundred wooden pipes, 31 ranks and two keyboards. The total weight of the organ is 8 tonnes. It is made of oak, white keys are covered with ivory, and the covering for black keys is made of ebony.

TV channel “Culture” presents a news story, where the organisers and the participants of the concert share their impressions with the journalist: “There is neither a bright set, nor special light, nor an excited conductor – nothing a spectator is used to seeing on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage. Even the orchestra pit was closed. Instead of a dozen instruments there is the only one, but this is the king: the organ”.

The report of the TV channel “Moscow 24” focuses on the special features of the construction of the organ that was presented in March 2013; however, it has rarely been a solo instrument since that time.

The newspaper “Vechernaya Moskva” reported about the concert as well.

Mass media sources continue to publish reviews about the recent premiere of the opera “Idiot” by Weinberg, staged at the Bolshoi Theatre by Evgeny Arye. Svetlana Naborschikova in her review in the newspaper “Izvestia” mentions how important this premiere is in terms of bringing the name of the composer back to the world repertoire, however, she blames the production team for a certain “straightforwardness”. The critic writes by mistake that Zinovy Margolin is the set designer (actually, it is Simon Pastukh). “There is no place for “twinkling” and “ambiguity” in the stage version. The director Evgeny Arye stages a production that has a clear concept and unambiguous characters. The screen lights up and we see the imitation of an old film with “grainy” texture. The subtitles say: “Prince Myshkin was going back to St. Petersburg”. Below, in the train coupe, the quiet Myshkin (Bogdan Volkov), holding a bundle, and the brutal Rogozhin (Pyotr Migunov), sitting on the bench freely, are sitting opposite each other. Next to them Lebedev (Konstantin Shushakov)

puts his ear to the wall and the beautiful face of Nastassya Filippovna (Ekaterina Morozova) appears on the screen. Everyone is here – the righteous, the sinner, the watchman and the subject of the quarrel, who is also the Madonna, who is also Mary Magdalena. The conceptual disposition is presented in the very first scene; further on it only develops in the necessary direction. There are burning culminations on the way – in the scene at Nastassya Filippovna’s the image of the burning one hundred bills on the screen takes up all the space. There are lyrical oases (the romance and the appearance of Aglaya – Yulia Mazurova will be equally appreciated by the fans of the singing talent and the physical beauty). However, the course of events is predetermined and the finale is predictable: the rivals are at the point of losing their minds, and the lady of their dreams stays with neither. Nastassya Filippovna shows her tongue from the screen to both candidates. Fans of Weinberg, whose expectations were disappointed, can take this gesture personally. On the contrary, fans of bright melodramas, staged by a professional director, will be satisfied: this is a stylish and a beautiful production that is staged, sung and acted in a good way. The Bolshoi Theatre production will definitely find its audience. As for the fact that it does not correspond to the original very much..well, one does not go to the theatre to watch Dostoevsky. Good screen versions and stage versions motivate a thinking spectator to read the original, which is a victory by itself”.



A scene from the opera “The Idiot” Evgenia Segenyuk as Epanchina. Valery Gilmanov as General Epanchin. Olga Seliverstova as Alexandra. Yulia Mazurova as Aglaya. Yulia Smirnova as Adelaida.

Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov/Bolshoi Theatre

The hostess of the programme “Music in Events” Olga Rusanova speaks about the premiere of “The Idiot” on “Radio Rossii” in the report “Prince Myshkin is a Genius”. The programme went on air on February 17th at 00.24. In the end of the programme there was a short announcement of the international concert

“Organ Gala” that took place at the Bolshoi Theatre on February 20th. Other topics: “Stravinsky is always in good graces”. Vladimir Jurowski opened “The Year of Stravinsky” at the Moscow Conservatory. “Little Prince” is about to start. Yuri Bashmet 10th Winter International Arts Festival opened in Sochi. “From Christmas to Crepe Week”. The new programme of the Astrakhan ensemble of song and dance.

The Israeli TV channel [9TV](#) reports: “The Idiot”, is, in fact, a double premiere: Evgeny Arye, who is a renowned drama director, has never worked at the music theatre before. After the premiere Evgeny Arye said: “I do not have a musical education, but I have always dreamed of staging an opera, and finally this dream has come true, moreover, at such a great theatre, as the Bolshoi. First of all, I tried to understand the music and to interpret it on the stage, which was not easy at all. I staged Dostoevsky to the music by Weinberg, based on the novel by Dostoevsky. I cannot separate these two”.

The magazine “[Ogonyok](#)” publishes a short playbill of events that also includes the opera “The Idiot” at the Bolshoi Theatre New Stage.

Denis Rodkin became the main hero of the December issue of the [magazine “Snob”](#). He explains what makes ballet a special kind of art and also explains what his career means to him. The dancer is quite ironic when he says that one should probably not aim to achieve the fame of “Tsiskaridze and Volochkova”, especially if in order to achieve this you have to inform the fans in the social networks about what you have eaten for breakfast and whether you have slept well.. The full story is available for those, who have paid subscription to “Snob” project.

The portal [RIA](#) announces the main opera and ballet premieres that are going to take place in Moscow this March. Number one is the Bolshoi Theatre premiere that is going to present the concert version of the opera “The Maid of Orleans” by Tchaikovsky and Svetlana Zakharova’s project Amore: “In March the Bolshoi Theatre continues to present concert versions of famous operas. After the huge success of “Il viaggio a Reims” by Rossini the audience will be presented with the opera “The Maid of Orleans” by Tchaikovsky. The Bolshoi Theatre soloists, choir and orchestra, conducted by the Bolshoi’s music director and chief conductor Tugan Sokhiev, are going to perform this opera masterpiece by Tchaikovsky at the Philharmonia-2. The libretto was written by the composer himself, based on the same-name tragedy by Friedrich Schiller, trans-

lated by Vasily Zhukovsky. Following several bright opera premieres, the Bolshoi Ballet is going to present the premiere of the ballet “Etudes” to the music Carl Czerny arranged and orchestrated by Knudage Riisager. The choreographer Harald Lander is also the set designer and the lighting designer. This ballet exercise, where dancers “pronounce” the letters-movements of the ballet alphabet and then put them together to make words and phrases is famous in the ballet world as Etudes by Harald Lander. The premiere is scheduled to take place on the New Stage on March 19th.

The Bolshoi Theatre prima and world-famous dancer Svetlana Zakharova will make her numerous fans very happy when she presents her programme Amore again on March 14th and 15th. The world premiere took place on May 12th 2016 in Italy; on May 24th Zakharova presented Amore in Moscow on the Bolshoi Theatre’s Historic Stage. This year after performances at the Bolshoi the programme will be presented to the British audience as well. In the end of March the ballerina is going to have her traditional dance festival for children “Svetlana” that will bring together 500 young participants, members of 17 dance groups from all over the country. This celebration of dance is going to take place on March 28th at the State Central Concert Hall Rossia in Luzhniki.

Tatiana Kuznetsova ([“Kommersant”](#)) reviews the performance of “Romeo and Juliet” by Vyacheslav Samodurov from Yekaterinburg, presented as a part of the “Golden Mask” festival; she is also trying to put together the list of future laureates and thinks back about the premieres of modern choreographers at the Bolshoi Theatre. “The boring three-act “Ondine”, staged by the same Samodurov at the Bolshoi Theatre (“Kommersant” issue, June 27th 2016) cannot compete with this “Romeo and Juliet” from the Urals in terms of lightness and clarity. The 84-year old Dutch classic Hans van Manen, whose piece the Bolshoi Theatre is going to present on March 1st, can hardly withstand the young vigor of “Romeo and Juliet”. “Frank Bridge Variations” to the music by Britten (“Kommersant” issue, March 21st 2016) is not the best production by this neoclassic, who manages to find pretty impressive suspense in the most sterile arabesques and other traditional movements. The most avant-garde production of the programme, the ballet “Short Time Together” (“Kommersant” issue March 21st 2016), is a part of the same Dutch programme at the Bolshoi Theatre. This ballet about life, burnt by the theatre, was staged by the choreographers Paul Lightfoot and Sol León; they demonstrated their expertise in this field, which is quite exciting. Two men and a woman in the proscenium are trying to figure out what to do with their broken hearts, while happy virtuoso mummies have fun on the stage”.

The ballerina Maria Alexandrova appeared in Sati Spivakova's talk-show "[Sati. The Not Boring Classics](#)". Maria talks about her creative career and the career of a ballerina in general.

Press analysis:

international mass media

The online news aggregator [Europe BreakingNews.com](#) offers a republication of the [Deutsche Welle story](#) and the DW video report with an interview with Makhar Vaziev. "Makhar Vaziev, the new ballet director, spoke to Emma Burrows about the theater's future. "The main criterion is talent," says Makhar Vaziev, the new director of the Bolshoi Ballet, when talking about what it takes to become a top dancer."

The freelance dance critic [Ismene Brown](#) announces in her Blog based on translations of Russian media the renewal of Vladimir Urin's contract as head of the Bolshoi Theatre. "In welcoming Urin, Putin commented on the Bolshoi Theatre's great successes in artistic matters under his leadership" Great news for lovers of order, peace and light within the Bolshoi. It's announced today that the genial Bolshoi Theatre chief Vladimir Urin is to stay on for a further term after his contract comes up next year.

[The New York Times](#) publishes an article by Roslyn Sulcas who reports that Vladimir Urin's contract as director of the Bolshoi Theatre has been extended. "Vladimir Urin, the general director of the Bolshoi Theatre since 2013, will remain in his position for an unspecified further term, according to the Russian news agency RIA Novosti. The announcement came after a meeting between Mr. Urin and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia, which was reported on Mr. Putin's website on Friday."

The online specialised classical music publication [Slipped Disc](#) publishes an article by Norman Lebrecht on the same topic. "Vladimir Putin personally renews Bolshoi chief. In a conversation reminiscent of the darker years of Stalin's rule, the Russian president has ordered a contract renewal for the Bolshoi boss, Vladimir Urin. Here's the text of the conversation, carried on Putin's official website: (The article translates the whole text of the meeting from President Putin's official website.)

The English language version of the Russian news-wire [TASS](#) reports that the Bolshoi Theatre will tour Japan from May 31 through June 19 and will cover five Japanese cities: Tokyo, Hiroshima, Otsu, Nagoya and Osaka. "The Bolshoi Theatre will open the Russian Seasons festival in Japan this spring, its General Director Vladimir Urin told TASS. "It is an honour for the Bolshoi Theater to open the Russian Seasons in Japan," Urin stated, emphasising that there are very few groups in the world that have earned the right to open such a prestigious festival. "And the Bolshoi Ballet is undoubtedly, one of them", the general director said. The Bolshoi Ballet first performed in Japan in 1957, exactly 60 years ago. Since then, according to Urin, the group has been there 21 times.

[TASS](#) in another article reports that Bolshoi Theatre is to put on a gala concert for opening of 2018 FIFA World Cup Final. Vladimir Urin said at a meeting with President Vladimir Putin "if everything goes as planned, on July 14, 2018, before the beginning of the final match, "The Bolshoi Theatre will present a gala concert, dedicated to this remarkable event." Leading soloists, both world-renowned Russian musicians and our foreign colleagues, have given consent to take part in the show", Urin said, stressing that many of them had already agreed to take part in the concert."

Local newspapers and online publications continue to announce screenings of Bolshoi Ballet performances in local cinemas. The local newspaper [The Hudson Reporter](#) (New Jersey, USA) announces *Sleeping Beauty* "In this resplendent and magical classic, the Bolshoi dancers take us on a dream-like journey through this classic fairytale complete with jewel fairies, a magical kingdom, a youthful princess and a handsome prince in this purest style of classical ballet. The Bolshoi's sumptuous staging with its luxurious sets and costumes gives life to Perrault's fairy tale unlike any other. A must-see!"

The local English language Cyprus newspaper the [Cyprus Mail](#) announces *Swan Lake* in an article by Annette Chrysostomou "In the dual role of the white swan Odette and her rival black swan Odile, prima ballerina Svetlana Zakharova exudes both vulnerability and cunning through superb technical mastery, alongside Denis Rodkin, the company's youngest male principal dancer, as a powerful and emotional Siegfried. Including breath taking scenes with the Bolshoi's corps de ballet, this is classical ballet at its finest. The ballet has been restaged by Yuri Grigorovich, the Bolshoi's legendary ballet master who celebrated his 90th birthday on January 2, 2017. Since the 1960s, the Russian choreographer has staged a great number of ballets

for the Bolshoi, repertoire classics along with modern creations, and has given the company some of its most celebrated productions to this day.”

March edition of the Japanese Dance magazine has a picture of the People’s Artist of Russia Nina Ananiashvili on its cover. The edition also features a large article about the ballerina and numerous photographs.

The printed version of the magazine is available upon request from the Bolshoi Theatre press-office.



Nina Ananiashvili

The picture published by the Japanese Dance magazine

In brief

The 10th [Winter International Arts Festival](#) took place in Sochi from February 17th to February 26th. On Friday the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin visited the production “Don’t Leave Your Planet” that opened the Yuri Bashmet 10th Winter In-

ternational Arts Festival. The Festival opened with the gala-concert that, as usual, was dedicated to the music of the past. The audience was presented with a kind of a premiere – an international team of young musicians played the concert symphony for four wind instruments by Mozart, which is performed quite rarely.

The main premiere of the festival, “Il Barbiere di Siviglia”, based on the comedy by Beaumarchais and the opera by Rossini, took place on February 20th. The evening of ballet was dedicated to two opera themes – Madama Butterfly and Tristan and Isolde. Classical and modern came together on the stage. It was the first time that the Cuban trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, the winner of ten Grammys, a six-times laureate of the Billboard award, the winner of the Emmy and numerous other prizes performed in Sochi. The list of the festival’s participants included world stars of classical music, soloists of the Bolshoi and the Mariinsky theatres, stars of Russian theatre and cinema. The Winter International Arts Festival took place in Sochi from February 17th to February 26th.

The Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre held a ballet gala, marking the memory of its former chief ballet master, a People’s Artist of the RSFSR Dmitry Bryantsev (1947-2004). As Irina Gorbunova, the Theatre’s spokesperson, informed [TASS](#), the gala marked the 70th birth anniversary of the choreographer.

She also said that on February 18th Dmitry Bryantsev would have turned 70, but he died tragically at the age of 57. She said: “Up to his last days Dmitry Bryantsev remained the artistic director of the ballet company at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre; he was the head of the company for almost 20 years, from 1985 till 2004”.

The Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin, who was the head of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre at the time when Bryantsev was the artistic director of the ballet company, appeared on the screen. The artistic director of the Moscow Satire Theatre Alexander Shirvindt talked about his friend as well. The Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev and the famous dancer, a People’s Artist of the USSR Vladimir Vasiliev also shared their memories about their colleague. The artistic director of the opera company at the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre Alexander Titel appeared on the screen and gave a speech as well”.

The information agency [“Tatar-inform”](#) reports that XXXV International Opera Festival named after Fyodor Chaliapin closed at the Tatar Musa Jalil State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Kazan. This year is the anniversary year for the festival, and, as

usual, the event has gathered an unprecedented number of participants. Elena Maximova (Vienna State Opera), Mikhail Svetlov-Krutikov (the USA), Ronald Summ (the UK), Evez Abdulla (Germany), Oxana Kramareva, Sergei Kovnir (National Opera of Ukraine n.a. T. Shevchenko), Oxana Davydenko (Abai State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre), who are well-known to opera fans, took part in the festival. It was also the first time that the Turkish tenor Levent Gündüz performed at the Tatar Musa Jalil State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet. The programme included masterpieces of the world opera repertoire – “The Queen of Spades”, “Aida”, “Boris Godunov”, “Eugene Onegin”, “Turan-dot”, “Madama Butterfly”, “Il Trovatore”, “Il Barbiere di Siviglia”, etc. The festival opened with the overture to the opera “I vespri siciliani”, performed by the Theatre’s orchestra, conducted by the unrivaled Italian maestro Marco Boemi. The programme of the concert also included the prologue from the opera “Pagliacci”, performed by Vasily Ladyuk (The Novaya Opera Theatre). The audience gave a very warm welcome to Nurlan Bekmukhambetov. The singer performed the Duke’s song from the opera “Rigoletto” by Verdi. Anna Aglatova (the Bolshoi Theatre) created a furore with her outstanding soprano; she also performed a piece by Verdi, the bolero of Elena from the opera “I vespri siciliani”. Ronald Summ (UK), whom the Kazan audience is already fond of, presented the aria of Otello from the same name opera. Akhmed Agadi (the Mariinsky Theatre) brought some bright notes, having performed the aria of Turiddu from the opera “Cavalleria rusticana” by Mascagni.

The gala-concert «Fifty Five», marking the 55th birthday of the People’s Artist of Russia Andris Liepa, took place at the State Kremlin Palace on February 18th. World ballet stars, Andris Liepa’s legendary partners, friends and students came together on one of the main stages of the country to congratulate him. The list of participants included: Yulia Makhalina (Mariinsky Theatre), Vanessa Zahorian (San Francisco Ballet), Tatiana Melnik (Hungarian State Opera Theatre), Ekaterina Borchenko (Mikhailovsky Theatre), Alena Kovaleva (Bolshoi Theatre), Vadim Muntagirov (Royal Ballet), Patrick De Bana and Andrei Batalov (Mariinsky Theatre), Sergio Bernal (National Ballet of Spain), Yevgeny Ivanchenko (Mariinsky Theatre), Xander Parish (Mariinsky Theatre) and Jacopo Tissi (La Scala). The programme of the gala included the audience’s favourite ballet pieces, modern pieces, as well as scenes from ballet and opera productions, choreographed by Andris Liepa. The dancers performed to the accompaniment of the symphony orchestra of the Moscow State Academic Children’s Music Theatre Named After Natalya Sats, conducted by the theatre’s chief conductor, a laureate of international competitions Alevtina Ioffe. Moreover, Andris Liepa prepared some surprises for his audience.



Alena Kovaleva and Jacopo Tissi (Bolshoi Theatre) at the gala-concert, marking the 55th birthday of Andris Liepa
Photo courtesy: BalletInsider

On February 22nd the evening of auteur choreography “[Confession](#)” by Andrey Merkuriev took place at the Novaya Opera. Ekaterina Krysanova, Kristina Kretova, Diana Kosyreva, Semyon Chudin and Andrey Merkuriev presented two premieres. In the first part of the performance the audience saw the one-act ballet «W.Oda» to the music of Double Concerto for Violin and Cello (2010) by the famous minimalist composer Philip Glass. The second premiere of the evening was a one-act ballet “Verklärte Nacht” to the music by Arnold Schoenberg.

Social networks

[Dmitry Abaulin](#) on his Facebook page writes about the Russian premiere of the concert version of the opera “The Passenger”, conducted by Wolf Gorelik; he also expresses his gratitude to all participants of the conference about Weinberg’s creative career at the Bolshoi Theatre.

“Yesterday at the press conference about Weinberg I spoke about the first performance of “The Passenger”. During the break I talked to colleagues a lot; we had a number of interesting conversations, and they thanked me for giving a special mention to the work of the conductor in my speech. So I focused on a simple thought that had never crossed my mind before: if Gorelik had treated “The Passenger” half-heartedly, perhaps, there would not have been so much enthusiasm about Weinberg’s music today. It would have been performed for sure, since this composer is too significant to be forgotten. But, most likely, there would not have been so much interest in his operas. This morning

on the escalator in the subway I have finally wrapped my mind around the fact that I had witnessed a historic event. Ten years later Wolf Gorelik's dream has come true; "The Passenger" is on. Without him. I cannot even tell Tamara about it.

This picture was taken more than ten years ago, in December 2006. Gorelik is rehearsing "The Passenger" at the orchestra hall on the 7th floor".



Bogdan Volkov and other participants of the premiere of the opera "The Idiot" upload to their Facebook pages photos from the curtain calls and behind the scenes shots, taken by Elena Koroleva-Volochkova.



Denis Rodkin's fans uploaded to his Facebook page the Japanese playbill of the Bolshoi's "Swan Lake" with the caption "coming soon".

A famous producer of international ballet projects **Sergei Danilian** announced on his Facebook page that he has become a teacher at the Vaganova Russian Ballet Academy; he is going to teach the course "Innovative Programmes in the Dance Art".

Debuts

"Iolanta"

February 21st

Svetlana Shilova as Marta

February 22nd (noon performance)

Vladimir Komovich as Bertrand

Anna Bondarevskaya as Laura

"Ivan the Terrible"

On February 24th Svetlana Zakharova made her debut in the role of Anastasia.

"Billy Budd". New cast.

It is the first time Graeme Broadbent performs the part of Lieutenant Ratcliffe at the Bolshoi Theatre. The Dutch tenor Peter Gijssbertsen sings the part of The Novice. Both singers made their appearance in this opera in the second premiere series of performances that took place on February 24th, 26th and 28th, as well as March 2nd.

Changes to the playbill

"Iolanta"

February 22nd

Vasily Ladyuk performed the part of Robert in the matinee performance. Konstantin Shushakov had been announced to perform this part earlier; however, his performance was cancelled. In the evening performance (7 p.m.) Konstantin Shushakov performed the part of Robert instead of Andrei Jilihovschi.



On February 19th Olga Smirnova made her debut
in the role of Giselle

Photo courtesy: Elena Fetisova/Bolshoi Theatre

Birthdays

February 14th – composer Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-1869)

February 15th – theatre designer Zinovy Margolin

February 16th – the Bolshoi Ballet artist Roman Simachev

February 18th – the Bolshoi Ballet premier Semyon Chudin

February 18th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Oxana Gorchakovskaya

February 18th – Anatoly Iksanov, the Bolshoi Theatre General Director (2000-2013)

February 19th – the Bolshoi Ballet soloist and an Honoured Artist of Russia Denis Medvedev

February 20th – the Bolshoi Ballet first soloist and an Honoured Artist of Russia Andrey Bolotin

February 21st – the Bolshoi Ballet soloist Karim Abdullin

February 22nd – the Bolshoi Ballet casting director Vsevolod Nemolyaev – 80 years old

February 22nd – ballet artist Boris Khokhlov (1932-2000), the Bolshoi Theatre soloist in 1951-1972 – 85 years old

February 24th – outstanding choreographer, director and the artistic director of the Hambrug Ballet John Neumeier – 75 years old

February 26th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist and an Honoured Artist of Russia Alexandra Durseneva

February 27th – the Bolshoi Ballet leading soloist Denis Savin

March 3rd – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Svetlana Shilova

March 4th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Anna Aglatova

March 4th – a conductor, the artistic director of the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic and the Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor (1970-1985) Yuri Simonov