



Newsletter

Events

On March 17th the Bolshoi Theatre closed its guest performances in France with a concert at the Philharmonie de Paris, Grande Salle. The Bolshoi Choir and Orchestra performed the concert version of the opera **“The Maid of Orleans”** by Tchaikovsky. The cast starred Anna Smirnova as Joan of Arc, Oleg Dolgov as King Charles VII, Stanislav Trofimov as The Archbishop, Andrei Gonyukov as Dunois, a French knight, Igor Golovatenko as Lionel, a Burgundian knight and Pyotr Migunov as Thibaut. On March 15th the opera was performed at Halle aux Grains in Toulouse. The guest performances in Switzerland took place at the Tonhalle Zurich (March 12th) and the Victoria Hall in Genève (March 13th). In the first part of the concert the Bolshoi Theatre leading soloists Agunda Kulaeva, Igor Golovatenko and Bogdan Volkov performed arias from operas by Tchaikovsky and **“The Tzar’s Bride”** by Rimsky-Korsakov. In the second part of the concert the Bolshoi Theatre orchestra presented the Nutcracker Suite. Conductor – the Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor and music director Tugan Sokhiev.



The concert performance of **“The Maid of Orleans”** by the Bolshoi Theatre soloists and orchestra under the baton of Tugan Sokhiev at the Philharmonie de Paris, Grande Salle. Photo courtesy: © C.d’Hérouville

On Sunday, March 19th, **the premiere** of several ballets took place on the New Stage. The Bolshoi’s repertoire now includes **“Etudes”** by Harald Lander (1948) and **“The Cage”** by Jerome Robbins (1951). The triple bill also includes **“Russian Seasons”** by Alexei Ratmansk. The premiere series of performances closed on March 24th. Conductor – Igor Dronov.



“The Cage”
Anastasia Stashkevich
as Novice
Photo courtesy:
Damir Yusupov/
Bolshoi Theatre



“Etudes”
Olga Smirnova as Ballerina,
Semyon Chudin
and Artem Ovcharenko
as Principal Dancers
Photo courtesy:
Damir Yusupov/
Bolshoi Theatre

The Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin said: **“There are no premieres at the theatre that are not important; each is significant. This time the ballet lovers have a chance to see three productions that are very different from one another and very interesting. There is **“The Cage”** by Robbins, **“Russian Seasons”** by Ratmansk and **“Etudes”** by Lander. It is interesting to note that when Makhar Vaziev just took the position of the Bolshoi Ballet artistic director and we discussed further plans with him, both of us mentioned **“Etudes”**. This is a wonderful ballet that demands from dancers impeccable technique; this is a serious exam for the Bolshoi Theatre”**.

“Etudes” is the most famous ballet of the Danish pedagogue and choreographer Harald Lander; it was choreographed in 1948 to the music by Carl Czerny, a famous composer of the 19th century. The production is basically the ballet alphabet; there is a succession of the easiest movements of the classical ballet that later evolve into complicated choreographic combinations. It was during the guest performances of the Paris Opera that the ballet **“Etudes”** was presented in Moscow for the first time; it enchanted the Russian audience with its elegance, the beauty of its lines and the virtuoso technique so much, that Asaf Messerer, inspired by the piece, later choreographed his famous **“Class Concert”**.

“The Cage” is a ballet about the life of insects such as mantis, whose females eat the males after their most important mission is completed. For this early work (1951) Jerome Robbins used a concerto by Stravinsky. This is what the choreographer said about his ballet:

"I did not have to limit myself to human movements. I could allow myself to see whatever I wanted to imagine in the way the dancers' fingers worked, their bodies twisted about and their hands attacked".

The programme also includes "Russian Seasons" by Alexei Ratmanský to the music by Leonid Desyatnikov. The ballet has been performed at the Bolshoi Theatre since 2008 and has always been a success.

On March 19th the ballets were broadcast live from the Bolshoi Theatre at various cinemas in Russia and across the world, as well as on the Bolshoi Theatre [official video channel](#) (available for viewers in Russia).

Live transmissions of the Bolshoi's ballet performances are carried out by the theatre's permanent partners Pathe Live and Bel Air Media together with the company CoolConnections. The list of the cinemas and the schedule of transmissions are available on our partners' [website](#).

The next broadcast is going to take place on April 9th; it will be the transmission of the ballet "A Hero of Our Time", staged by Kirill Serebrennikov.



The composer Leonid Desyatnikov, the author of the music for the ballet "Russian Seasons", is answering the questions of Katerina Novikova, the broadcast host and the Head of the Bolshoi Theatre's Press-Office.
Photo from Masha Fomina's Facebook page

On Sunday the General Director of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia and an Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation Vladimir Urin celebrated his [70th birthday](#).

On this day the Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev congratulated him as well. The text of the telegram was uploaded on the [official website](#) of the Russian Federation government on March 19th at 10 a.m.

It is mentioned in the telegram that Mr. Urin, a famous theatre worker and pedagogue, has made a significant contribution to the history of Russian culture. Moreover, the Prime Minister spoke very highly



Vladimir Urin. Photo courtesy: Ilya Pitalev. RIA Novosti

about the internet projects that are being implemented at the theatre that give each member of the audience a chance to learn about the theatre's rich history.

The President of Russia Vladimir Putin awarded [the Order of Honour](#) to Vladimir Urin. Irina Antonova, another legendary person, who also celebrated her jubilee, was awarded the order "For Benefaction" for her contribution to the development of Russian culture, outstanding public services and a long-term fruitful career. Alexei Borodin, the artistic director of the Russian Academic Youth Theatre was awarded the order "For Merit to the Fatherland", III degree.

On March 18th Yuri Grigorovich was awarded the first International professional award [BraVo](#); this prize marked the contribution of the outstanding choreographer to the development of the ballet art. The prize was awarded by the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky. The presentation of the BraVo award and the award ceremony itself took place on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage.



The Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation Vladimir Medinsky is presenting the BraVo award to Yuri Grigorovich on the Bolshoi Theatre stage.
Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov/ Bolshoi Theatre

The outstanding violinist and conductor Vladimir Spivakov, as well as the baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky were awarded the BraVo prize as well. The latter was not present at the award ceremony. The MCs said that the award would be handed over to Hvorostovsky's parents that were present at the audience hall.

Vladimir Spivakov received the prize from Sophia Loren. As she was giving the award to the conductor and the director of the Moscow International House of Music, she said: "Each of us wants to build a house, to bring up a child and make him happy and to leave a mark in this world! You have built your House of Music, you help thousands of gifted children find their way and realize their dreams. This is a great honour and a great joy to give this award to the Maestro, whose professional career always goes hand in hand with generosity and kindness. Bravo!"

This year the BraVo prize is awarded for the first time. According to the organisers, every year performing artists from various countries of Eurasia can become laureates of this award.

On Sunday the ballet master faculty of the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts (RATI-GITIS) celebrated its **70th anniversary** at the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage.

The Bolshoi Theatre and the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre, the Kremlin Ballet Theatre and the St. Petersburg State Academic Ballet Theatre of Boris Eifman, Mari State Opera and Ballet Theatre named after Eric Sapaev and Moscow regional state theatre "Russian Ballet", Rostov State Musical Theater and Donetsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre named after A. Solovyanenko took part in the celebration. Igor Moiseyev State Academic Ensemble of Popular Dance, State Academic N.S. Nadezhdina Choreographic Ensemble "Berezka", Moscow State Academy of Choreography and the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet performed on the Bolshoi's Historic Stage as well. The following soloists took part in the jubilee concert: Maria Allash, Marianna Ryzhkina, Shiori Fukuda, Oleg Gabyshev, Dmitry Gudanov, Andrei Merkuriev, Mikhail Lobukhin and Denis Rodkin. The list of honorary guests of the celebration included such renowned pedagogues, as Svetlana Adyrkhaeva, Gyuzel Apanaeva, Margarita Drozdova, Natalia Kasatkina, Marina Kondratieva, Nadezhda Pavlova, Lyudmila Semenyaka, Nina Semizorova, Elena Tchaikovskaya, Boris Akimov, Victor Barykin, Mark Peretokin, Andrei Petrov, Vadim Pisarev and Nikolay Tsiskaridze. Vyacheslav Gordeev, the head of the GITIS choreography department, a People's Artist of the USSR and a professor, was the staging director of the gala.

On March 25th the performance of the opera "Don Carlo" at the Bolshoi was dedicated to the memory of

the People's Artist of USSR **Evgeni Raikov** (1937 – 2010). On this day the singer would have celebrated his 80th birthday. He devoted more than thirty years of his life to the Bolshoi Theatre; he went all the way from being an apprentice (1961) to becoming the leading soloist and the head of the opera company (1990-1994). His "first-class" voice was unique in terms of its power, timbre and range; it stunned and amazed fans both in his native country and abroad. E. Raikov's most famous roles were those in Russian operas: Sobinin in "A Life for the Tsar"/ "Ivan Susanin", Golitsin in "Khovanshchina", Lensky in "Eugene Onegin" and Pierre Bezukhov in "War and Peace". As for Italian repertoire, he was one of the best interpreters of such roles as Radames in "Aida" and Pinkerton in "Madama Butterfly".



Evgeni Raikov as the Pretender in the opera "Boris Godunov". Elena Obraztsova as Marina Mniszech.

Photo courtesy: Larisa Pedenchuk
(the Bolshoi Theatre Museum)

March 25th, the Bolshoi Theatre Beethoven Hall – the concert of the Bolshoi Opera soloist and a People's Artist of Russia **Elena Zelenskaya**.

The programme included Russian romance and German Lied that are often performed together to make it possible to find similarities or differences between two vocal traditions. In the first part of the concert the singer performed pieces by Robert Schumann and Richard Strauss; in the second part – music by Sergei Taneyev and Alexander Glazunov. Pianist: Evgenia Cheglakova. MC: Alexander Vodopyanov.

The Bolshoi Theatre and the social network "VKontakte" launch a joint project. On March 27th, the World Theatre Day, the project "The Bolshoi Theatre: closer than it seems" was launched with the help of the app VK Live. Online-excursions will enable the viewers to take a stroll down the theatre corridors and imperial foyers, visit dress rehearsals and run-throughs, visit workshops and dressing rooms.

Broadcasts are to take place twice a month on the [Bolshoi's official VK page](#). By the time the season closes, the Bolshoi Theatre is going to have 8 live broadcasts; the first two are scheduled for March 27th and April 6th.



The Bolshoi Theatre congratulated its colleagues and its audience on the World Theatre Day that is celebrated on March 27th. On this day congratulations were sent to the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia as well; one of them came from the Chairman of the Union of theatre workers of the Russian Federation Alexander Kalyagin. "Dear friends! Usually parents want their children to become doctors, teachers or someone else. It is like my mother used to say: "You need to have a regular job". But we chose theatre, and no one could get in our way. We are happy to come on stage, to see the audience hall that is packed. Why deny it, we like to hear the applause and get flowers... Each of us has one desire only - we want this happiness to last for a long, long time. My dear colleagues! I congratulate you on our professional holiday! I wish you to be healthy and happy. I wish you inspiration, endless creative energy and inexhaustible love of your audience!

Sincerely yours, Alexander Kalyagin".

On March 28th the Bolshoi Theatre celebrated its 241st birthday. On March 17th 1776 Prince Pyotr Urusov was granted the 'privilege' of organizing theatre performances, masquerades, balls and other forms of entertainment. You are welcome to visit the Bolshoi official pages in [Facebook](#) and V Kontakte where you can share your pleasant memories about the Bolshoi and congratulate your favourite performers, conductors, choreographers, directors and designers, as well as your friends and colleagues from the Bolshoi.

The French soprano Elizabeth Vidal gave master-classes for participants of the Bolshoi Theatre Young Artists Opera Program. The final class took place on March 27th. Eva Maria Visor is giving master-classes for the Young Artists Opera Program from March 27th till April 1st.

On March 28th rehearsals for the ballet "Nureyev", supervised by Yuri Possokhov, resumed. The ballet is scheduled to premiere on July 11th 2017 on the Historic Stage. The Bolshoi Theatre commissioned Ilya Demutsky to write the music for this full-length ballet. The director Kirill Serebrennikov is working on the production as well. This triumvirate of the director, the choreographer and the composer has already been a success, working on another Bolshoi Theatre project, the ballet "A Hero of Our Time". The music director – Anton Grishanin.

On March 17th 2017 the global group of companies "Shell" and the Bolshoi Theatre [signed the agreement](#) for the prolongation of cooperation until the year of 2020. Olivier Lazare, "Shell" Country Chair in Russia, stressed: "This year "Shell" celebrates the 125th year of its operations in Russia; therefore, the chance to strengthen partnership ties with the Bolshoi Theatre, the oldest cultural institution of the country, is of a special and rather symbolic importance to us. Over 13 years "Shell" and the Bolshoi Theatre have become not only reliable partners, but also true friends. We are united by a rich history, respect for traditions and an innovative approach to whatever we are doing; these are the key factors that secure our long-term friendship. I am convinced that there are many more important goals for us to reach, while the Bolshoi Theatre is going to be yet even more successful in what it is doing". The Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin mentioned: "First of all, I would like to congratulate the global group of companies "Shell" on their 125th anniversary of operating in Russia. The company has been developing and achieving success during this period of time that has been full of dramatic events and was not an easy time for our country. I also would like to express my gratitude to "Shell" for their devotion and long-term support of the Bolshoi Theatre. "Shell" has been the Bolshoi Theatre's official sponsor since 2004; we have now signed another 3-year contract until the year of 2020".



The General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia Vladimir Urin and "Shell" Country Chair in Russia Olivier Lazare. Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

Press analysis:

Russian mass media

[The First Channel](#) presented a substantial news coverage of the Bolshoi Theatre guest performances in France.

“Joan of Arc is back on the banks of Seine. The long-awaited performance of Tchaikovsky’s lesser-known opera by the Bolshoi Theatre took place at the Philharmonie de Paris. As maestro Tugan Sokhiev is rehearsing on this new stage of the concert hall that has been in use for only two years, he is paying special attention to the sound. Then he suddenly leaves the stage and continues to conduct from the audience hall.

Tugan Sokhiev, the Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor and music director, says: “It was important for me to understand what happens in this hall in terms of acoustics when there are so many people on the stage. We have 80 choir members, a huge orchestra and the soloists”.

This is an impressive Bolshoi cast. The woodwinds are next to the audience members. The whole musical “army” is used here; it demonstrates its power and strength. This is something Tchaikovsky’s music demands.

This is not only about a popular national story. Tchaikovsky composed his story about the Maid of Orleans in the genre of the French “grand opera”. This piece has everything: mass ensemble scenes, powerful choirs and even ballet music. The Bolshoi General Director Vladimir Urin says: “On one hand, this is a Russian opera composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. At the same time, the story that this opera is based on, is French; it is the story about their national heroine Joan of Arc. I hope that this story the Russians took a new look at will be of interest for the French”.

Federal news agencies, radio stations and TV channels paid a lot of attention to the ballet premieres on the Bolshoi Theatre New Stage.

[The TV Channel “Culture”](#) presented a detailed news story about the premiere.

“A triple bill premiered at the Bolshoi Theatre. Three one-act ballets are being presented on the New Stage; these are the works by famous choreographers – “Etudes” by Harald Lander, “The Cage” by Jerome Robbins and “Russian Seasons” by Alexei Ratmansk. These antipode ballets have already become examples and icons of the modern choreography. The audience first saw “Etudes” and “The Cage” in the end of 1940s and the beginning of 1950s; “Russian Seasons” is an

example of the dance experiment of the 21st century. Elena Voroshilova reports. “Russian Seasons” by Alexei Ratmansk has been migrating for almost a decade; this ballet disappears from the Bolshoi’s playbill and then appears there again. Now this ballet is presented together with “The Cage” by Jerome Robbins and “Etudes” by Harald Lander.

These might be ropes, or maybe a web, maybe canes; altogether these are “The Cage” by Robbins. The Bolshoi ballerinas immersed themselves into the life of insects. They forgot about fragile weightlessness and are now cultivating power and cruelty. There is the hunt that is taking place to the accompaniment of Stravinsky’s music. This is the way the mantis female disposes of its mate. In 1951 Robbins’s ballet stirred a scandal, since torn heads and bodies did not connect to ballet very well. Today this 14-minute horror is performed at the Bolshoi. The Bolshoi prima ballerina Anastasia Stashkevich says: “It is not easy, but it is very interesting. It is interesting to embody the plastique of an insect”. “Etudes” by Harald Lander: it seems that the whole evening was designed for the sake of this ballet only. This is a challenge for the corps de ballet and the soloists. Everything is plainly visible. Any inaccuracy not only ruins the pattern, but is also an insult to the ballet itself. The Bolshoi Ballet’s principal Artem Ovcharenko admits: “It seems that everything is simple, but, you know, sometimes you have this impression that the classical dance should be perfect, otherwise it is better not to come on the stage at all”. There is no set. The blue background is changed for a black one. Ballerinas are wearing tutus, male dancers are dressed in white leotards. It seems that the dancers are engaged in their everyday class. There are exercises at the bar, jumps and combinations. It seems that the movements are simple. But not every company is capable of performing them in sync, easily and precisely. The Bolshoi prima ballerina Olga Smirnova says: “It is interesting to see how mechanical movements at the bar suddenly become dance”.

News agencies [TASS](#) and [RIA](#) also published large announcements of this event; as usual, those announcements were republished by specialised mass media sources and [news aggregators](#).

First reviews of the productions have already come out. Tatiana Kuznetsova ([“Kommersant”](#)) did not miss a chance to reproach the corps de ballet for mistakes they made in the virtuoso “Etudes” and blamed the soloists for being unnecessarily reserved in “The Cage”. Still, she complimented Olga Smirnova and Semyon Chudin: “The prima ballerina Olga Smirnova did a good job with this hell of a main role; however, she did not demonstrate any extravagancies such as the leap on the supporting leg during the fouetté. Semyon

Chudin looked like a good boy who always gets good marks: his tours on both sides were precise, his leaps were soft, his poses in the air were frozen beautifully". However, the critic believes that the Bolshoi need more time to "grind away at *"Etudes"*.

Leila Guchmazova ("[Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)") gives a much more favorable review: "There were no problems with the short ballet *"The Cage"* to the music by Stravinsky: the Bolshoi's female corps de ballet feels much more confident when they understand what story they are dancing. The story about a tribe of the Amazons that are taking in a novice came in handy. The novice, who is supervised by the main Amazon, undergoes the initiation ceremony with a man that happened to be there and then kills the poor guy, as if this was some kind of twisted *"Giselle"*. A dozen and a half of dexterous she-devils with thatches of hair are seductive and know no mercy; they were the army, they penetrated the space with their elbows and stabbed with their point shoes. The first man that encountered them hardly managed to get away; the second intruder with soft arms and flowing plastique (Erick Svolkin) was doomed. The mating scene that was supposed to be quite provocative turned out to be very ideological: the Novice fell in love and then killed the guy, that was it. Here the main heroine, Anastasia Stashkevich, known to all as a doll-princess, became the main discovery: at some point her pedagogue Svetlana Adyrkhaeva transformed easily from Odette the swan into the cruel courtesan Aegina, and, as it would seem, Stashkevich has inherited this skill from her teacher".

["Nezavisimaya Gazeta"](#) publishes the review by Natalia Zvenigorodskaya. The ballet critic considers that the Bolshoi company has tackled *"The Cage"*. The ballet by Robbins has been brought to the Bolshoi stage by Jean-Pierre Frohlich and Glenn Keenan, who used to perform it. "Our dancers (Anastasia Stashkevich as the Novice, Yanina Parienko as the Queen and Erick Svolkin as the Second Intruder) have captured the style and irony of Robbins's late modernism. They did not try to demonstrate the cruel nature of spiders and flies on the stage; they rather demonstrated aristocratic carelessness and bodily sensitivity as they took on the roles of classical dancers that behave as sophisticates in somebody else's domain. Thus, even more disappointing is the fact that the Moscow company demonstrated weaker performances in *"Etudes"*, this ode to classical ballet".

Pavel Yaschenkov ("[Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)") shares his impressions about *"The Cage"* as well. "It needs to be said that the Bolshoi Theatre demonstrates to its audience a completely new aspect of the famous



"The Cage". Anastasia Stashkevich as the Novice,
Erick Svolkin as the Second Intruder
Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

American's creative legacy. Earlier his ballets were performed at the Mariinsky, the Bolshoi and the Perm theatre; today his works are staged at the Stanislavsky Theatre; we have seen the romantic side of Robbins (*"In the Nights"*, *"Other Dances"*) and the comic side of him (*"The Concert"*). This time we have seen a rather dark side of Robbins". The reviewer also talks about challenges that the Bolshoi artists encountered in *"Etudes"*. The study of these French and Danish intricacies that the Bolshoi dancers are not particularly familiar with is, without any doubt, very useful; it helps the company evolve and achieve a completely new level. This was the point of the whole project. It looks like we are going to see this in the next performances of *"Etudes"*.

This is the first time that the Bolshoi Theatre has performed *"Etudes"* by Lander, one of the 20th century's key ballets. This is the first independent project of Makhar Vaziev as the artistic director of the Bolshoi Theatre. Sofia Dymova ([Colta.ru](#)) explains why it is so necessary to dance and to watch *"Etudes"*. She writes in her review: "The main point of Lander's masterpiece can remain unclear even after one has watched the ballet: it is worth watching again some time later and, possibly, being compared with the recent recording from the Paris Opera (the link to the video is provided – editor's note). In case *"Etudes"* still remains a mystery, the Bolshoi Theatre has revived *"Russian Seasons"* by Alexei Ratmansky and has included it in the premiere programme. Here the choreography lacks distinct pathos and the spectator is pleased to think that as six couples are dancing to the music by Leonid Desyatnikov they are not trying to share the philosophy of some sophisticated profession, but rather aiming to express the idea of simple happiness".

The 70th birthday of the Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin became another important news topic for the Russian mass media sources.

The portal of [TASS](#) agency published an article that features his biography and includes greetings and congratulations. “Vladimir Urin was born in Kirov into the family with four children supported by a single mother. When he grew up and received an education, he became the director of the Theatre for Youth in Kirov; he was the youngest theatre director in the USSR. At that time Urin was 26 years old.

Urin considers his work at the All-Union Theater Society (now the Theater Union of Russia) to be an important period in his life. In his interview with TASS Urin said: “It happened at the convention in 1986, when Mikhail Ulyanov was chosen to be the head of our Union. He offered me the chance to become his vice. We worked together for ten years, and this was one of the main “universities” in my life”.

He then became the head of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre; he has now been the General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, the main theatre of the country, for almost four years.

TASS also published a large [interview](#) with Vladimir Urin:

“Many talented and gifted people are working at the theatre; they want to have a career. That is for sure. But there are always those, who are not satisfied. The question is, how many of these there are. If there are 100 hundred unsatisfied people for three thousand employees, this is one thing. If there are a thousand and a half or two thousand who are unsatisfied, it means something is going wrong in this “state”.

I believe that mass media sources make mountains out of molehills when it comes to many conflicts, associated with the Bolshoi Theatre. I understand that the Bolshoi is the only theatre in our country that attracts such close attention from the media.

Absolutely everything is of interest. Why did a dancer not perform this role? Why this or that ballerina left the Bolshoi Theatre of her own free will? Journalists are surprised, they think something must be wrong here and start public discussions that at times lack any competence whatsoever.

I am convinced that only in case the theatre administration is as open to the press as possible can such speculations be eradicated. It is necessary to answer any questions apart from really stupid ones, and this needs to be done as quickly as possible. Very often rumours, gossip and conflicts appear if there is a lack of information and a desire to hide something. We make honest decisions and we have nothing to hide; we tell the press about it as well. Whatever happens to the story afterwards is on a mass media source’s conscience”.

The Bolshoi Theatre General Director was surprised when the shooting crew of the [First Channel](#) congratulated him. The journalists report about his jubilee: “Today Vladimir Urin, the General Director of the main theatre of Russia, celebrates his jubilee. He is valued and respected in the theatre community not only because of his professionalism, but also because of his ability to emerge the winner from any situation. His colleagues admit: it was Urin who restored the Bolshoi’s reputation after a difficult period. This greeting was kept secret from him; when he came to the Bolshoi Theatre in the morning, Vladimir Urin did not guess that such a show would start at his office several minutes later. An unforgettable excursion followed. This is a person who knows the Bolshoi Theatre better than anyone else. He is the only one who can take you to the Director’s box that has possibly the most breathtaking view of the Bolshoi Theatre’s stage. He usually spends 12 to 14 hours a day at the Bolshoi. He speaks about his favourite job in simple words: no other position in the theatre world is more difficult or demands greater responsibility. “This is a feeling that we are working at the theatre that is famous all over the world and that all of us, working at the Bolshoi Theatre, need to do everything possible and everything impossible for this brand to preserve its reputation. The General Director of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia and an Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation Vladimir Urin says: “When people say: “Yes, I have been at the Bolshoi Theatre”, I feel that we have managed to do something”.

[“Moskovsky Komsomolets”](#) reports that the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev congratulated Vladimir Urin, and the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin awarded him the Order of Honour.

The news agency RIA congratulated the Bolshoi Theatre General Director and published not only a large [article](#) that features his creative biography and the impressive list of his achievements, but also the most interesting photo album entitled [“One day backstage with the Bolshoi Theatre director”](#).

[The portal of the radio station “Business FM”](#)
[Kirov portal «Progorod»](#)
[The portal of the TV channel “Culture”](#)

The newspaper [“Muzykalnoe Obozrenie”](#) published a large interview with Vladimir Urin: “One has to understand that working at the theatre with such great history, it is much more demanding than working at any other theatre. You know the story of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre very well. When I came to this theatre, it was not the best

period of its life and it was not one of the most favourite theatres with the Moscow audience. Nevertheless, all members of our team (I mean Dmitry Alexandrovich Bryantsev, Alexander Borisovich Titel, Vladimir Anatol'yevich Arefiev and conductors – Wolf Gorelik, Vladimir Ponkin and then Felix Korobov) were doing their job. We carried out the reconstruction, put together the company and staged performances. Suddenly we saw that this work, which was carried out in no rush, brought some results: there was a surge of interest in the theatre and both the audience and the professionals suddenly loved it. But this was a process we did have time for. Here at the Bolshoi nobody gives you time. From the very first step you make you are a subject for unbiased evaluation. If you make the slightest mistake, global conclusions follow. Of course, on one hand the change of management should be based on the principles of succession. But no matter if you want it or not, the arrival of any new director to the theatre – any director, I would like to stress it – still opens a new page in the history of this theatre, because from this moment on the theatre starts to live according to the rules, set by this new director. Setting any rules or making sure the company is following those rules is an extremely complicated process. This is an issue of forming your company. Forming your repertoire. And, without any doubt, there is a separate issue – forming your team”.

The head of the Bolshoi Ballet Makhar Vaziev gave an interview to [“Kommersant”](#) reporter Tatiana Kuznetsova.

The questions were about the premiere of the triple bill that includes “The Cage”, “Etudes” and “Russian Seasons” and about plans for the coming season.

– This is your first project at the Bolshoi; so far the theatre has put into life plans that had been made prior to your arrival in Moscow. Why have you chosen these three ballet from the whole of the 20th century heritage?

– Let us start with “Etudes”. I believe that this amazing ballet, which is integral and very beautiful, is a necessary step that is very useful in terms of the company’s further development and advancement. It is a dangerous piece, as you know, but this is a different story.

– I see what you mean. This theatrical class-concert, which really is amazing and very difficult, was staged by the Danish choreographer Lander in 1948; it was first staged in Copenhagen and then the slightly modified version was presented at the Paris Opera. In my opinion, no other contrast is more striking than the one between the refined Paris school and the powerful Moscow school.

– The danger is such, that this purest classical ballet can easily demonstrate all our faults. But in general you are right. An enormous number of our dancers are taking part in this ballet. I have to admit that I worry a

lot. However, I hope that we will demonstrate a decent performance of “Etudes”. ././

– What shall we expect in the coming season?

– At this point I cannot tell, because this would be unfair in regard to your colleagues. We are going to announce our repertoire plans at the press conference on May 5th. But I can tell you the date of the first premiere – November 23rd. Next year we are going to have five ballets – three new ones and two revivals. We would like to bring back to the repertoire “Coppelia” and “The Pharaoh’s Daughter”.

Experts of [RIA agency](#) consider guest performances of two ballets by Katie Mitchell (“Written on Skin” and “Trauernacht”), presented at the Bolshoi as a part of the exchange project with the Opera Festival in Aix-en-Provence, to be one of the main theatrical events of spring 2017.

The Bolshoi Theatre prima ballerina and a People’s Artist of Russia Svetlana Zakharova appeared on the programme [“Vecherny Urgant”/ Urgant Evening Show](#). The ballerina talks about the diamond named in her honour, special features of ballet broadcasts at the cinemas, the programme Amore and the festival “Svetlana” that took place on March 28th at the Luzhniki.

Press analysis:

international mass media

The French newspaper [Le Monde](#) publishes an article by Rosita Boisseau on 18 March about the upcoming live transmission of the Bolshoi Ballet’s Contemporary Evening on Sunday 19 March. “The scandals pass, the Bolshoi remains straight in its slippers. Four years after the acid attack on the director of the ballet, Sergei Filin in January 2013, the prestigious Russian troupe of 250 dancers retains its aura. Since 2009, the worldwide success of the retransmissions of the cinema of performances interpreted by the company and presented by Pathé Live, did not decrease. On the contrary. The number of cinema screens involved increases. Today there are 1,700 in 60 countries, including Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, which have recently arrived in the loop.” There are also quotes from Vladimir Urin and Makhar Vaziev.

The online specialised classical music publication [Bachtracks](#) publishes a review by Janet Ward of

the Bolshoi Ballet's Contemporary Evening giving the show four stars out of five. "Two new ballets enter the Bolshoi Ballet repertoire this Spring: Jerome Robbins' *The Cage* and Harald Lander's *Etudes*. In *A Contemporary Evening*, they are performed together with Alexei Ratmanský's *The Russian Seasons*." Jerome Robbins ballet *The Cage* "Stashkevich was convincing and committed herself fully to the choreographic language so different from her usual dance vocabulary. Yanina Papienko as the Queen and the 12 female corps members danced with menace and malevolence. While the choreography still looks fresh, the ballet comes across as an oddity from another era. It neither repels nor engages." Alexei Ratmanský's *Russian Seasons* "The entire cast was exceptional, their dancing flowed seamlessly in the 12 scenes, and their emotional expressions were finely tuned to the music and the ballet's folk tales." Harald Lander's *Etudes* "Despite minor flaws, it was a bravura performance of a wonderful ballet that is a very welcome addition to the Bolshoi's repertoire."

The French online specialised opera publication [Opera Forum](#) publishes an article by Laurent Bury about the Bolshoi Orchestra and Choir performance of *La Pucelle d'Orléans* at the Paris (Philharmonie) conducted by Tugan Sokhiev on 17 March. "Thanks also to Tugan Sokhiev for believing so firmly in this music that he takes it in hand to emphasise both the inexhaustible melodic charm and violence or brutality in the evocation of combat, imposing a tension that does not fall at any moment. And what flavours in the Bolshoi orchestra, especially in the winds – we should be able to mention each of the soloists playing the flute, the oboe, and so on. The sound of the instrumentalists responds to the power of the choral mass, far from any caricatured vision: Moscow did not send any old or heavy voice on tour, but a choir that excels both in angelic sweetness and in vehemence. The inimitable hollow cavernous sound of the bass stands out in the most serious notes."

The online specialised dance publication [Dance Tabs](#) publishes a review of Russian Ballet Icons the 12 March in London by Jann Parry who gives the show four stars out of five. There is also a photo gallery. "Vassiliev opened proceedings with a naughty twinkle in his eye in the pas de deux from *Scéhérazade* (attributed to Fokine, as revised by Andris Liepa). A beefy boy these days, his ardour as the Golden Slave and his powerful leaps were indefatigable. His *Zobéide* was Bolshoi ballerina Kristina Kretova, relishing the lustful foreplay." "For a gala seductress, no-one better than Maria Alexandrova, who has recently left the Bolshoi for a freelance career. She danced *The Firebird* pas de deux, more woman than bird, with Vladislav Lantratov from the Bolshoi as the Tsarevitch." "Evgenia Obraztsova switched over to the Bolshoi in 2012. Performing the

grand pas de deux from *The Sleeping Beauty*, however, she seemed still a Mariinsky dancer, regal, refined and very feminine. Dmitry Gudanov (a Bolshoi principal) was calmly gallant as her prince. Obraztsova has the elegant épaulement and port de bras that mark a Vaganova-trained ballerina."

The online specialised dance publication [London Dance.com](#) also publishes a review of the show by Naomi Cockshutt.

The French online specialised music publication [Olyrix](#) (France) publishes a review by Damien Dutilleul of the Bolshoi Orchestra and Choir's performance of the *Maid of Orleans* at the Paris Philharmonie conducted by Tugan Sokhiev. "Tchaikovsky's *Maid of Orleans* resonates at the Philharmonic" reads the headline. "The Bolshoi troupe performed this Friday (17 March) the Philharmonie de Paris as part of its highly reputed international tour. The music director of the Bolshoi (and the National Capitoline Orchestra), Tugan Sokhiev, directs the instrumentalists, the choir and the soloists of his prestigious theatre. The prestigious ballet of the Russian theatre is missing, and we regret not seeing the second act illustrated. After having introduced *Iolanta* to the world thanks to a huge international tour, he continues his work of bringing recognition to the work of Tchaikovsky with this new series of concerts. Although the ensemble is not very nuanced, it offers, in any case, phenomenal power, like the last measures of the score that leave the audience panting: the choir deploys its voices with a great richness. The bass gives us a deep bass that is rarely heard in a choir, showing the exceptional quality of each artist who composes the ensemble."

The Russian online news publication [Sputnik](#) reports "On March 18th, the Bolshoi Theatre hosted the first awards ceremony of the BraVo International Professional Music Prize, which was created to pay tribute to the merits of classical and popular music. "Italian actress Sophia Loren participated on March 18 at the first ceremony of the BraVo International Professional Music Prize, which took place on the historic stage of the Bolshoi Theatre. The famous actress awarded a prize to Russian violinist and conductor Vladimir Spivakov." "Yuri Grigorovich, a Soviet and Russian dancer and choreographer, and Dmitry Khvorostovsky, Russian baritone, also received the BraVo Prize."

The English language portal [Vaganovatoday.com](#) presents an interview with the Bolshoi Ballet artistic director Makhar Vaziev. Katerina Pavlik talked to the head of the ballet company.



Makhar Vaziev at the rehearsal hall, surrounded by pedagogues and dancers



"Emeralds". Evgenia Obraztsova and Vladislav Lantratov

US newspapers and online entertainment publications announce the upcoming Lincoln Center Festival. [The New York Times](#) publishes an article by Michael Cooper who says that Trump's travel ban threatens the premiere of a work by the Syrian playwright Mohamad al-Attar if Trump's travel ban is upheld." The article also mentions "A previously announced highlight of the festival will be an unusual international performance of George Balanchine's "Jewels," with the Paris Opera Ballet, New York City Ballet and the Bolshoi Ballet trading acts of a work that evokes different national dance styles. The Bolshoi will also perform the American premiere of "The Taming of the Shrew," choreographed by Jean-Christophe Maillot and with music by Shostakovich."

Online specialised entertainment publication [The Playbill](#) also announces the festival in an article by Olivia Clement. "Lincoln Center has announced the lineup for its 2017 summer festival, which will run July 10–30. The 22nd annual Lincoln Center Festival will feature 20 international productions and 43 performances across dance, music, theatre, and film from around the U.S. and the world." "In the world of ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, New York City Ballet, and Paris Opera Ballet will come together onstage for a special 50th anniversary presentation of George Balanchine's 1967 masterpiece, Jewels; \$20 lottery tickets will be available with details to be announced at a later date. Performances will run July 20-23 in the David H. Koch Theater."

The online specialised entertainment publication [Broadway World](#) announces "A much-anticipated highlight of this year's Festival is the 50th anniversary presentation of George Balanchine's 1967 masterpiece, Jewels, featuring the Bolshoi Ballet, New York City Ballet, and Paris Opera Ballet on a single stage. "We are celebrating Balanchine, one of the singular creative art-

ists who founded Lincoln Center, in a way that reveals the roots of his ideas and training in Russia, France, and America," says Redden."

[The New York](#) entertainment publication Time Out announces the upcoming Lincoln Center Festival. The programme includes "Dance fans will kick up their heels upon hearing that the Bolshoi Ballet returns with a 50th-anniversary performance of George Balanchine's Jewels, a three-part dance inspired by, you guessed it, precious stones. Dmitri Shostakovich's driving, colorful music is the sonic backdrop to the Bolshoi's dance retelling of The Taming of the Shrew. The Festival runs July 10-30 at various venues."

A famous dance critic [Iiona Landgraf](#) published on her portal Landgraf on Dance the large interview with Boris Akimov. She also mentions the broadcast of Akimov's class that was presented on the World Ballet Day and stunned her: "You must remember the lean, white-haired man. The motivation he spread was contagious, his vigor stupendous". The interview with Boris Akimov follows; he talks about different periods of his biography: "Neither my dad nor my mum wanted me to become a dancer. Sure, being a dancer was an elite profession at that time, but my father's life was tough [he was a dancer in the ensemble of Moiseyev] and my mum wanted to prevent me from experiencing the same. She knew how hard this profession is. Moreover I had different interests in my life. I was constructing planes; I was trying wood carving; I was singing very, very well, but my voice changed later on. And I was studying at the music school playing the Bayan, a sort of accordion. And I was skating! Figure skating was

very popular back then. I achieved some really good results in solo and also in pair skating and became the Moscow champion in both categories”.

Dancing Times March 2017

The March 2017 edition of the UK monthly specialised dance magazine *Dancing Times* includes a number of interesting and mostly Russian related articles.

Sergei Polunin: Film Dancer

The front cover of DT is a photo of Sergei Polunin and there is a major article about the making of the documentary film by Steven Cantor about Polunin Dancer and also a review of the film by Jonathan Gray.

Memoirs of Nadia Nerina: Part Three

In the article Nerina recalls joining the Sadler's Wells Ballet in London and among other things mentions the beautiful ballerina Violetta Prokhorova who had come from the Bolshoi Ballet.

Review: Gala: Bavarian State Ballet: Munich 12 January 2017

Dance critic Jeannette Andersen reviews the gala staged by the company director Igor Zelensky “Zelensky is clearly laying out a new profile for BSB with a strong Russian flavour.” Dancers at the gala included Maria Shirinkina, Vladimir Shklyarov and Yuri Smekalov.

DVD review: Yuri Grigorovich: The Golden Age: The Life and Art of the Bolshoi's Controversial Choreographer. “BelAir Classics has released on DVD a documentary film by Denis Snegirev about Grigorovich. It's a fascinating portrait that gives a good overview of Grigorovich's career at both the Kirov and Bolshoi Ballets.”

Review: Spartacus: Royal Ballet Flanders: 27-28 January 2017.

In brief



VIII Mstislav Rostropovich International Festival opened on Monday, the day of maestro's 90th birthday, at the Moscow Conservatory Grand Hall. Olga Golodets said, as she opened the forum: “The Festival is a tribute to the great maestro. Olga Rostropovich (the artistic director of the Festival and the daughter of Mstislav Rostropovich and the opera singer Galina Vishnevskaya – TASS's note) is a worthy successor of her parents; Mstislav Rostropovich Festival is a unique contribution to the development of the modern music culture”. The Festival opened with the film dedicated to maestro; it featured documentary coverage, as well as interviews with Russian and foreign cultural luminaries about Rostropovich – a musician, a man, a citizen. Following that, the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Yuri Temirkanov performed pieces by Jean Sibelius and Maurice Ravel. Temirkanov

received a surprise at the concert – the rector of the Moscow Conservatory gave him the diploma and the gown of the honorary professor of this academic institution. Mr. Sokolov stressed: “The Moscow Conservatory celebrated its 150th anniversary, and Yuri Khatuevich Temirkanov changed his tradition for us. Although in Russia he performs only with his orchestra, the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, this time he performed with the student orchestra of the Moscow Conservatory; this event lingered in the memory of each student that was sitting in front of him”.

The Bolshoi Theatre soloists Daria Khokhlova and Artemy Belyakov conquered the Bulgarian audience at the Sofia National Opera and Ballet Theatre when they performed “Giselle”, the romantic ballet by Adolf Adam, staged by Leonid Lavrovsky (1905-1967), the People's Artist of the USSR and the renowned ballet master. The hall was packed; the audience gave the Russian artists a standing ovation.

Artemy Belyakov told TASS: “It is nice to work with the audience when you can have this kind of cooperation with them. You come on stage, you start putting a lot of effort into what you are doing and you feel that the audience feel your energy; due to this collaboration the performance is taken to a completely new level. Here we had wonderful collaboration with the audience, I mean, there even was some kind of a spark, there was a real fire of emotions and feeling”. Daria Khokhlova added: “We accepted the offer to perform in Sofia with the great pleasure; we are very happy with the fact that this event has taken place. Our Bulgarian colleagues were passionate and devoted; they had a chance to find new colors, and a lot of things were new for me as well”. The ballerina mentioned that in order to perform in Sofia she had had to learn Lavrovsky's version of the ballet and get used to the new stage. “Compared to the Bolshoi's stage, there was much less space at the [Sofia Opera and Ballet Theatre](#), so we had to change the pattern of the dance, as well as the diagonals; however, this did not spoil our positive impression from the performance”.

9th International classic ballet festival “[Sterkh](#)”, marking the 90th anniversary of the People's Artist of the USSR, the laureate of the Lenin Prize and the State Prizes of the USSR, the Hero of Socialist Labor Yuri Nikolaevich Grigorovich is going to bring together on one stage world ballet stars that are going to perform fragments from maestro's ballet masterpieces. The festival “Sterkh” unites leading masters of choreographic art from the best theatres of the world; over 15 years of its existence it has not only won recognition and love of the Yakutia audience, but also earned reputation and popularity among ballet professionals. On March 28th “Swan Lake”, choreographed by Yuri Grigorovich,

was performed at the State Opera and Ballet Theatre of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia); the cast starred the Bolshoi Theatre's stars Ekaterina Krysanova and Alexander Volchkov. On March 29th the audience was presented another ballet by maestro Yuri Grigorovich. The cast of "Romeo and Juliet" starred Saryal Afanasyev (Stanislavski and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theatre), Natalia Balakhnichenko (the Kremlin Ballet) and Mikhail Lobukhin (the Bolshoi Theatre).

The Russian composer and the music director of Stanislavsky Electrotheatre Dmitri Kourliandski has been honoured by Italy's National Association of Music Critics with the annual Franco Abbiati Prize-2016 in the category "[Best Italian Premiere](#)". In 2016 the following pieces by Dmitri Kourliandski had their premieres in Italy: "Maps of Non-existent Cities. Saint Petersburg" (2015), "Punctuation Marks" (2008) and "The Riot of Spring" (2013). Franco Abbiati Prize was established in 1980; it is awarded annually in eleven categories, including "Performance", "Director", "Conductor", "Soloist" and "Music Initiative". The following Russian artists have been awarded this prize in the 21st century: conductors Vladimir Jurowski and Yuri Temirkanov, the director Dmitri Tcherniakov, the singer Olga Peretyatko, the pianists Grigory Sokolov, Daniil Trifonov and Evgeny Kissin. Russian composers have not received the prize in the category "Italian Premiere" since 1991, when Franco Abbiati prize was awarded to Sofia Gubaidulina.

Ekaterina Biryukova ([Colta.ru](#)) reports about the concerts that took place at the Moscow State Conservatory Grand Hall on March 20th and 22nd; the Perm ensemble MusicAeterna, conducted by Teodor Currentzis, performed there on their way back from guest performances in Europe. The musicians played pieces by Mozart, Beethoven and Rameau. The critic does not hide her emotions about the concert: "The canons of a philharmonic concert are ruined. The distance between the stage and the audience hall is almost destroyed; Currentzis communicates with the audience as if they were sitting in his own kitchen. The audience applauds happily between the parts of a musical piece, and this violation of a taboo does not really seem to be particularly outrageous. I mean, why not to applaud every time you like something, really? // I am now going to say something terrible – I applauded myself. In particular after the second part of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3 that Currentzis has made into a self-sufficient story with a stunning density of events. While Mozart and Rameau are well-known pages in the biography of MusicAeterna, the era of Beethoven is something rather new (the orchestra is going to record all his symphonies next summer). Judging by this performance of the composer's "Heroic" symphony, this new era is quite promising and mind-blowing".

Teodor Currentzis was a guest of the programme "Enigma" ([TV channel "Culture"](#)). "In summer 2017 the Russian orchestra conducted by a Russian maestro will open the official programme of Salzburg Festival for the first time. This is going to be Currentzis and his chamber orchestra MusicAeterna, based in Perm, the city that this capricious Greek genius chose to be the starting point of his worldwide expansion. Salzburg has already surrendered. Whose turn is it now?". The author of the programme and the interviewer Irina Nikitina asks this question.

The legendary American choreographer [Trisha Brown](#) passed away at the age of 80 after a long illness. Representatives of her company Trisha Brown Dance, founded in 1970s, announced this sad event. Trisha Brown, whose theatrical language formed under the influence of Merce Cunningham and John Cage, was one of the reformers of the modern dance. When she staged her radical performances, she cooperated with leading modern artists (for example, Robert Rauschenberg), took away the music from the dance performance, experimented with unusual venues and extraordinary conditions on the stage, combined improvisation and markedly non-academic plastique. "Pure movement" was her ideal; she considered that it "did not have any purpose and did not represent anything". In the 1990s and the beginning of 2000s she created several performances to classical music pieces. These include "Winter's Journey" (2002, the choreographic interpretation of the same-name vocal cycle by Schubert), as well as productions of such operas, as "Luci mie traditrici" (Oh My Betraying Eyes) by Salvatore Sciarrino (2011) and "L'Orfeo" by Claudio Monteverdi (1998; acknowledged by critics as one of the most successful stage versions of the opera). Trisha Brown created her last production in 2011.

Irina Antonova, the President of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, celebrates her [95th birthday](#). Antonova started to work there in 1945. In 1961 she became the head of the museum. It was thanks to her efforts and influence that the Pushkin Museum held exhibitions that, as it would seem, were impossible to hold behind the "iron curtain": in 1950s there was the exhibition of Pablo Picasso's works, and in 1966 – the exhibition of the disgraced artist Tyshler. In 1974 the Mona Lisa was brought to Moscow from the Louvre in a special bullet-proof case. In order to exhibit one painting it was necessary to pay a significant sum for insurance, which cost several millions. Huge queues lined up in front of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts; those who wanted to take a look at the masterpiece, were ready to spend nights next to the museum. 1981 was marked by the sensational exhibition "Moscow-Paris", when works by avant-garde painters were exhibited at the museum.

Antonova herself later said that people had come to see not only French paintings, but also Russian paintings that had never been exhibited before.

Everything that is an unalienable part of any museum's life – classes for children, music concerts, lectures and meetings – appeared at the Pushkin Museum long before the current museum boom. Together with the greatest pianist of the 20th century Sviatoslav Richter, Antonova started the festival "December Evenings" that is now taking place annually. By the way, Antonova's and Richter's birthdays are celebrated on the same day.

Timofei Kulyabin is rehearsing "Rigoletto" at the [Opernhaus Wuppertal](#), the theatre that is also home to the famous Pina Bausch Dancetheatre. The cast stars the soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre Young Artists Opera Program Ruslana Koval as Gilda and the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet soloist who is also a Mariinsky guest soloist, Pavel Yankovsky, as Rigoletto. The action is set in the present day, as it usually is with the productions of this director. The premiere is scheduled for April 9th.

[Interfax](#) announces: the XXXVI International Music Festival named Sergei Rachmaninoff, opens on April 1st, the birthday of the composer. This year the festival will continue for two months; the events will take place at different venues, including the hall of the Tambov Drama Theatre, the Rachmaninoff Hall of the music and pedagogical institute, the Aseyev State Museum and Rachmaninoff museum-estate in Ivanovka.

Social networks

The ballet critic [Anna Galaida](#) uses her Facebook page to congratulate Nina Ananiashvili on her birthday; instead of a greeting card she uploaded a video with the pas de deux from "Raymonda". She also writes: "Nina Ananiashvili celebrates her birthday today. She is incredible. If my understanding is correct, she is now in Tokyo with the Georgian ballet; not only is she the director of the company, but also performs herself – pas de deux from "Don Quixote"! Today I have found on YT my favourite pas de deux that I have not seen since childhood. I have to admit, there have been a lot of wonderful Raymondas in my life since. But nothing compares to this one – it is one of my best memories".

Backstage [photos](#) from the series of performances of Verdi's "Don Carlo" on the Bolshoi Historic Stage ap-

peared on Facebook pages of Agunda Kulaeva, [Veronika Dzhioeva](#), Maria Guleghina, Igor Golovatenko and Yusif Eyvazov.



Two casts of "Don Carlo" at the Bolshoi at the same table.

Maria Guleghina, Igor Golovatenko, Agunda Kulaeva, Anna Nechaeva, Veronika Dzhioeva, Yusif Eyvazov and Elchin Azizov. The photo is taken from Maria Guleghina's Facebook page

[Bogdan Volkov](#) uploaded several photo- and video reports about the Bolshoi Theatre guest performances in Toulouse and Paris to his Facebook page.

[Venera Gimadieva](#) announced the launch of the special video blog #BackstageSecrets on her official Facebook page; she is going to share videos, featuring interesting episodes from rehearsals and preparation of productions in this blog. The first video has already been uploaded – it is a video report from the rehearsal of "Lucia" in China.

A series of impressive backstage art photographs that were taken at the Bolshoi during the broadcast of the premiere of the Evening of Contemporary Ballet appeared on the Facebook page of the photographer and stylist [Masha Fomina](#).

Debuts

"Jewels"

March 30th. Maria Vinogradova makes her debut in the main role in part I ("Emeralds"; the leading couple).

March 31st (special performance). Vladislav Kozlov makes his debut in the main role in part I ("Emeralds", the leading couple). Victoria Litvinova makes her debut in the main role in part II ("Rubies", the leading couple). Anna Nikulina and Klim Efimov make their debuts in the main roles in part III ("Diamonds", the leading couple).

April 1st. Jacopo Tissi performs the main role in part III for the first time (“Diamonds”, the leading couple).

April 2nd. Artem Ovcharenko makes his debut in the main role in part II (“Rubies”, the leading couple).

March 29th. Part I (“Emeralds”): Victoria Yakusheva – pas de trois. Part II (“Rubies”): Xenia Zhiganshina, Olga Ladina.

March 30th. Part II (“Rubies”): Victoria Litvinova

April 1st. Part II (“Rubies”): Modest Skorodumov

“Don Pasquale”

March 29th. Anna Aglatova makes her debut in the role of Norina.

March 30th. Ilya Kutuyukhin, a participant of the Young Artists Opera Program, makes his debut in the role of Malatesta. Earlier Konstantin Shushakov has been announced to perform this role; however, his performance has been cancelled.

March 30th and April 1st. Italian tenor Enea Scala performs the part of Ernesto for the first time at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Changes to the playbill

“Jewels”. March 30th, pas de trois in “Emeralds” – Vyacheslav Lopatin. Earlier Andrei Bolotin has been announced to perform this role; however, his performance has been cancelled.

Birthdays

March 18th – the former director of the Paris Opera Hugues Gall, who held his post for almost ten years (1995-2004). He played a huge role in establishing the close connections that the Bolshoi now has with the renowned French theatre.

March 19th – the Bolshoi Theatre General Director and an Honoured Artist of Russia Vladimir Urin – 70th birthday.

March 19th – a ballerina, a People’s Artist of Russia, the artistic director of Paliashvili Tbilisi Opera and Ballet State Theatre Nina Ananiashvili.

March 20th – one the 20th century most prominent pianists Sviatoslav Richter (1915 – 1997).

March 21st – a composer, an organist and a master of polyphony Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750).

March 22nd – the Bolshoi Theatre prima ballerina Ekaterina Krysanova.

March 22nd – a choreographer and the creator of the Kiev Modern Ballet Radu Poklitaru. At the Bolshoi he staged such ballets as “Romeo and Juliet” to the music by Prokofiev (2003) and “Hamlet” to the music by Shostakovich (2015, together with Declan Donnellan), as well as the one-act ballet “Ward No 6” to the music by Arvo Pärt (2004, as a part of the Evening of Young Choreographers project).

March 23rd – the Bolshoi Theatre prima ballerina Anna Nikulina.

March 23rd – a composer, a violinist and a conductor Ludwig Minkus (1826 – 1917), who lived and worked in Russia for many years; a Bolshoi Theatre orchestra soloist from 1861 till 1872, the author of music for the ballets «Don Quixote” and “La Bayadere”.

March 25th – a ballerina, a ballet pedagogue and an Honoured Artist of RSFSR Lyudmila Bogomolova, a Bolshoi Ballet soloist from 1951 to 1971, the Bolshoi Theatre ballet master-repetiteur from 1978 to 1980. 85th birthday.

March 25th – an opera singer and a People’s Artist of the USSR Evgeni Raikov (1937 – 2010), a Bolshoi Theatre soloist since 1961; 1990 – 1994 he was the head of the Bolshoi Opera. 80th birthday.

March 27th – a cellist, a pianist, a conductor and a People’s Artist of USSR Mstislav Rostropovich (1927-2007) – 90th birthday.

March 27th – World Theatre Day.

March 28th – the day of the establishment of the Bolshoi Theatre (1776).

March 31st – Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929), a theatre and art worker, one of the founders of the “World of Art” group, the founder of the Saisons Russes in Paris and “The Ballets Russes” company.