

THE SEAGULL

The world premiere of the ballet *The Seagull* to the music by Ilya Demutsky took place on July 1 at the New Stage of the Bolshoi Theatre.

Again, the tandem of choreographer [Yuri Possokhov](#) and composer [Ilya Demutsky](#), created the new production commissioned by the Bolshoi, having invited director [Alexander Molochinkov](#) to also cooperate this time. Choreographer Yuri Possokhov always prefers to work with a director. Thus, it was with Yuri Borisov that he staged Prokofiev's *Cinderella* (2006) at the Bolshoi, Kirill Serebrennikov, who also acted as a set designer, that he worked with for the ballets *A Hero of Our Time* (2015) and *Nureyev* (2017), and Alexei Frandetti for *Gabriel Chanel* to the music by Demutsky (2019) a special project for Svetlana Zakharova.

One of the most famous contemporary set designers, the Englishman [Tom Pye](#), worked on the design for *The Seagull*. He had previously collaborated with Possokhov on

the production of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* at the Atlanta Ballet (2018) and *Anna Karenina* to the music by Demutsky at Joffrey Ballet, Chicago (2019); he also designed productions of Chekhov's *Platonov/The Fatherless*, *Ivanov* and *The Seagull* directed by David Hare at the National Theatre in London (2015-16).



The Bolshoi Theatre presents the world premiere of *The Seagull* ballet on July 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the New Stage.
 Photo by Batyr Annadurdyev and Elena Fetisova

Costumes by [Emma Ryott](#). This season she also made her debut as a costume designer in the ballet *Orlando* at the Bolshoi New Stage, choreography



by Christian Spuck; she was nominated for the *Dora Moore Best Costume Design Prize*, the award of the Toronto Theatre Union, for designing the season of Young Chekhov: *Platonov/The Fatherless, Ivanov, The Seagull* at the National Theatre in London in 2016. Lighting design by [David Finn](#). He was a staff lighting designer for Mikhail Baryshnikov's *White Oak Dance Project*, and has collaborated with the San Francisco Ballet, the Twyla Tharp Company, the Hubbard Street Contemporary Dance Company in Chicago, and has repeatedly worked with Yuri Possokhov. He has received worldwide recognition for his work on productions of operas at the leading stages of the world - the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, the State Operas of Berlin and Stuttgart, Berlin Deutsche Oper, the Salzburg Festival. He also collaborated with the Circus du Soleil, and in cinema, with Martin Scorsese in *The Age of Innocence*.

Video Designer - [Sergei Rylko](#). He collaborates with La Scala, Paris Opera, Staatsoper Berlin and has worked on productions with Dmitri Tcherniakov, Yevgeny Arye, Semyon Pastukh and other famous directors and designers.

Libretto by Alexander Molochnikov and [Olga Khenkina](#).

The Bolshoi did not designate the plot when offering new work to the authors. The idea of a ballet based on Chekhov's most famous play came to Yuri Possokhov's mind. Alexander Molochnikov latched onto the idea immediately, because his staging of a drama performance based on this play



Yuri Possokhov, Ilya Demutsky, Alexander Molochnikov, Svetlana Zakharova, Artem Ovcharenko, Maria Vinogradova, Artemy Belyakov at the press briefing before the dress rehearsal of *The Seagull*, June 30. Photo by Katerina Novikova

at the Moscow Art Theatre had just been cancelled, due to a change in administration. Creative discussions began. Then Alexander Molochnikov together with Olga Khenkina wrote the libretto. After that, Ilya Demutsky started composing the music. Meanwhile, Yuri Possokhov had almost simultaneously realised the ballets *The Nutcracker* and *Anna Karenina* in the United States, together with the outstanding set designer Tom Pye. And for Pye it was his debut in ballet. Prior to that, he worked in drama, film and opera. The experience was very successful. Knowing that several years ago Tom Pye designed the sets for a drama play based on *The Seagull* in London, Yuri Possokhov immediately invited him to work on the production in Moscow. Tom Pye admits that at first he wanted to refuse - how can an Englishman make *The Seagull* in Russia? Yet in the end he agreed and involved Emma Ryott, who also made the costumes for his previous project based on Chekhov in England. David Finn came onboard as the lighting designer.

Thus the international team was formed to prepare the premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre in the tough times of covid.

The performance also runs at the New Stage on July 2, 3 and 4.

The main roles at the premiere on July 1 were performed by Svetlana Zakharova (Arkadina), Artem Ovcharenko (Trephev), Maria Vinogradova (Nina), Artemy Belyakov (Trigorin), and others. These dancers also performed on July 3 at 19:00.

July 2: Ekaterina Krysanova (Arkadina), Igor Tsvirko (Trephev), Anastasia Stashkevich (Nina), Vladislav Lantratov (Trigorin), and others. These dancers also performed on July 4 at 14:00.

July 3 (12:00) - Alexei Putintsev (Trephev), Kristina Kretova (Arkadina), Elizaveta Kokoreva, (Nina), Igor Tsvirko (Trigorin), and others.

A dress rehearsal of the [performance](#) and a press briefing with the dancers and the production team took place in the evening of June 30.

Music Director of the production [Anton Grishanin](#) - all days at the pulpit.

"I am looking for a language to express my idea. I am trying to achieve this in an organic way. I tried to go avant-garde, but it turned sour. It is better to avoid straightforwardness, I decided. And then I stopped being afraid to be what I am," says Yuri Possokhov.

Composer Ilya Demutsky: "The main thing here is the atmosphere: the strange Chekhovian world, the special intonation characteristic of his plays, are reflected in the musical solution ... I try to convey that latent impression the play leaves, to immerse in the disturbing atmosphere of the Russian province, where there is an endless search for oneself and all the questions posed lack answers. ..." "The main image that Possokhov and I came up with and which inspired me is seagulls over the sea, beating against a high rocky shore."

According to the director Alexander Molochnikov: "It is difficult to find a place in the choreography for the nuances of Chekhov's remarks, so we focused on the state of the characters, the imagery of events and, of course, the main theme. This is a confrontation in art, first of all. "

Svetlana Zakharova "The production is completely different from other *Seagulls*. This ballet was specially staged for the Bolshoi Theatre, for the dancers of the Bolshoi. Therefore, initially, of course, the ballet was scaled to fit the capabilities of the company, the music was written ... completely differently and the sets and choreography, maybe even some other story is present ... Not only in terms of choreography - Arkadina's part is very emotionally different from those female roles that I am used to dancing. Somehow I have had roles where passionate love and sacrifice prevail, something that is not present in the modern world ... Yet Arkadina looks pretty much contemporary. Her attitude towards life, her attitude towards others, her attitude towards herself - that is, she is a fairly independent and at the same time a subordinate woman ..."



The set designer Tom Pye speaks about his work on the production in a video by Katerina Novikova - [Instagram](#)



Emma Ryott tells Maria Nikolaeva of the First Channel about the costumes of the *The Seagull* ballet.
Photo by Katerina Novikova



Anton Grishanin gives comments to the First Channel.
Photo by Katerina Novikova



Mazepa at the Historic Stage on June 23-27.
Photo by Damir Yusupov

Artem Ovcharenko: “The hero of the ballet and the hero of Chekhov, of course, are different persons ... Treplev, hiding behind these tattoos and make-up, is not, perhaps, close to me, but I did everything to make this character, an artist looking for new forms, expressive on stage.”

“And the seagull crashes against the high bank...” — the new ballet on the theatre [website](#)

June 23 — 27, the Historic Stage - the premiere of the opera *Mazepa* by [Pyotr Tchaikovsky](#).

The large-scale historical opera by Tchaikovsky, libretto by Viktor Burenin based on Pushkin’s poem *Poltava*, has returned to the repertoire of the Bolshoi Theatre.

Authors of the new production – chief conductor and music director of the Bolshoi [Tugan Sokhiev](#) and renowned theatre director [Evgeny Pisarev](#).

Set Designer — [Zinovy Margolin](#).



The premiere series of the opera *Mazepa* by Pyotr Tchaikovsky at the Historic Stage on June 23-27.
Photo/Instagram of Elchin Azizov, Anna Nechaeva, Katerina Novikova

Movement Director - [Alberts Alberts](#).

Costume Designer - [Olga Shaishmelashvili](#). Lighting Designer - [Damir Ismagilov](#).

Chief Chorus Master - [Valery Borisov](#). Choreographer - [Irina Kashuba](#).

The production was prepared with support of the VTB Bank.

Main roles performed by leading soloists of the opera company and guest singers.

Casts

The Bolshoi is preparing a premiere of *Ariodante* by [George Frideric Handel](#).

Production director David Alden and music director Gianluca Capuano, as well as guest singers, have come to Moscow. The premiere will be at the Bolshoi New Stage on July 22, 2021.

The Bolshoi turns to this masterpiece for the first time, continuing to introduce the Moscow audience to the work of Handel. In recent years, two operas by the composer have been shown at the Bolshoi New Stage: *Rodelinda*, a co-production with the English National Opera (2013) and *Alcina* (2017) with the Aix-en-Provence Opera Festival.

The opera series *Ariodante*, based on Ariosto's poem *Orlando Furioso*, was written by Handel in 1734.



David Alden and Gianluca Capuano have started rehearsing Handel's opera *Ariodante*. Photo by Damir Yusupov

The premiere at Covent Garden took place in January 1735. However, the opera was forgotten for almost 200 years and started to be performed again only in the 1960s.

Alden has previously staged Britten's *Billy Budd* (2016) at the Bolshoi. For music director Gianluca Capuano, this is his Bolshoi debut. The maestro is recognised throughout the world as an expert in the field of baroque music.

Set and Costume Designer - Ian McNeill, choreographer - Michael Keegan-Dolan, Lighting Designer - Ian Jackson-French.

Main roles prepared by: Luca Pisaroni, Renato Dolcini (King of Scots), Sarah Tynen, Albina Latipova (Guinevere), Bernard Richter, Konstantin Artemiev (Lurcanio), Mary Bevan, Ekaterina Morozova, Guzel Sharipova (Dalinda), Paula Murrhly, Ekaterina Vorontsova (Ariodante), Christophe Dumaux, Carlo Vistoli (Polinesso), Vasily Gafner (Odoardo).

There will be performances on July 23-27, 2021, as well.

EVENTS

June 30, July 1, 2, 4, the Historic Stage - [Il Viaggio A Reims](#) by Gioachino Rossini

Conductor - music director Tugan Sokhiev (all days.)

The opera is a co-production with Dutch National Opera (Amsterdam), Royal Danish Opera (Copenhagen) and Opera Australia (Sidney). The premiere of the production took place in Amsterdam on January 20, 2015, and at the Bolshoi Theatre on December 12, 2018.



Il Viaggio A Reims by Rossini at the Historic Stage on June 30, July 1-2 and 4. Photo by Damir Yusupov

[See more](#) about the opera and the production in *Coronation Will Be Held In Any Weather!*

[Read more](#) about the debut performances of guest stars - Pretty Yende (Countess de Folleville), Edgardo Rocha (Count Libenskoff) and Pietro Adaïni (Cavalier Belfiore)

[Casts](#)

Three performances of *Il Viaggio A Reims*. - July 1, 2 and 4 - were held within the Bolshoi to Youth programme with a special ticket price of 1000 roubles

July 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, the Historic Stage — *Anna Karenina*, the ballet by [John Neumeier](#) in two acts based on the novel



Svetlana Zakharova, Kristina Kretova, Olga Smirnova as Anna Karenina. — [the ballet](#) by John Neumeier at the Historic Stage — July 7-11

of the same name by Leo Tolstoy, to music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky Alfred Shnitke, Cat Stevens / Yusuf Islam, — a Hamburg Ballet and Bolshoi Theatre coproduction.

The Bolshoi premiere was on March 23, 2018. The world premiere at the Hamburg Ballet was on July 2, 2017.

The production's choreographer, set and costume designer (the heroine's costumes created by a Swiss company A-K-R-I-S) and the author of the lightning concept is the head of Hamburg Ballet John Neumeier.

[Casts](#)

Conductor — music director [Anton Grishanin](#).

July 7, 8, 9 and 10, the New Stage — *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini, Libretto by Cesare Sterbini after the comedy of the same name by Pierre-Augustin de Beaumarchais. The premiere of Evgeny Pisarev's production was on November 3, 2018.

Music Director - Pier Giorgio Morandi

Set Designer — Zinovy Margolin.

[Performance details](#)

[Casts](#)

All performances of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* will be held within the Bolshoi to Youth programme with a special ticket price of 600 roubles



Yaroslav Abaimov as Almaviva and Konstantin Shushakov as Figaro. Photo by Yuri Bogomaz

July 3, 4 and 6, the Chamber Stage – additional premiere series of Shostakovich's only comic opera *Moscow, Cheryomushki* staged by [Ivan Popovski](#).

Libretto by Vladimir Mass and Mikhail Chervinsky.

Music Director – Pavel Klinitchev.

The premiere took place on March 25, 2021.

Conductor - Ayrat Kashaev (all days)

[Casts](#)

June 30, Beethoven Hall - Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra Artists Concert *Jolly Pictures*

Vladimir Sergeev, Sergei Morozov (violin), Dmitri Usov (viola), Andrei Mustafaev (cello), Sergei Afanasiev (contrabass) took part in the concert.



[Photos from the premiere by Pavel Rychkov](#)

The programme takes its name from one of its numbers - Andrei Mustafayev's suite on themes from *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Mussorgsky.

Jolly Pictures of Bonquinton Ensemble — [concert details](#).



Bonquinton at Beethoven Hall, 2018

The third and closing round of [the Bolshoi YOP auditions](#) took place at the Bolshoi on June 27.

According to the results of the auditions, these persons have passed:

- Anna Akishina
- Zarina Bagaeva
- Nikita Volkov
- Juliana Grigoran
- Bohdan Guenok
- Lilit Davtian
- Danil Knyazev
- Alexey Kursanov
- Albina Tonkikh

[The Bolshoi Young Artists Ballet Programme](#), launched at the Bolshoi with support of its general sponsor Ingosstrakh, held the second qualifying round on June 24. Young dancers from Moscow, St Petersburg and Samara took part in it. The contestants demonstrated their skills in a classical dance lesson with the tutor of the Bolshoi Ballet - National Artist of Russia [Maria Allash](#). The work of the young dancers was evaluated by the artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet [Makhar Vaziev](#).

The competition winners will have an opportunity to undergo an internship with the Bolshoi Ballet, from three



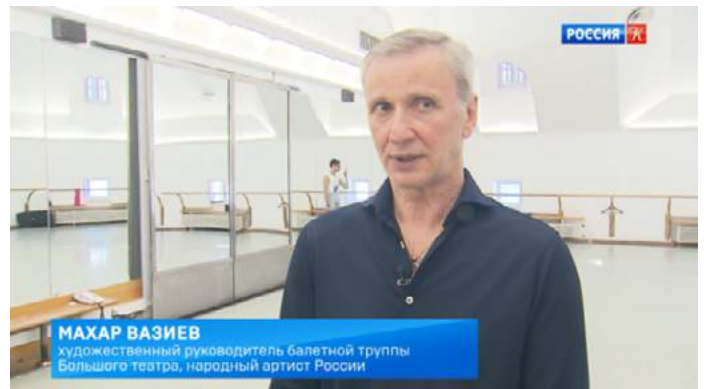
Karina Lisitsian, Ekaterina Vasheruk, Dmitry Vdovin, Lyubov Orfyonova, Makvala Kasrashvili at the Bolshoi Theatre Atrium on the day of the final round of auditions to the YOP, June 27. Photo / [Instagram of the National Artist of the USSR](#)

to nine months, depending on their training level and personal results. Ingosstrakh will provide participants with travel expenses to Moscow and they will receive a scholarship during their studies. Accommodation is provided by the Bolshoi Theatre.

The event covered by:

[Rossia-Kultura channel](#)

[Ingosstrakh website](#)



МАХАР ВАЗИЕВ
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A [video](#) on Novosti Kultury

Makhar Vaziev about the Bolshoi Young Artists Ballet Programme — an [interview](#) with Tatiana Kuznetsova in Kommersant.

The Bolshoi tour in Sochi is scheduled for July 23-24.

A gala of the Bolshoi Orchestra and Opera soloists will take place at the Grand Hall of the Art and Science Park Sirius.

[The programme](#)

RUSSIAN MEDIA

TV channels, news agencies, print and electronic media widely cover the world premiere of the ballet *The Seagull* at the Bolshoi Theatre.

The First Channel: [The Seagull](#) - Now at the Bolshoi! - Dobroye Utro programme



A [video](#) on the First Channel

The Seagull by Chekhov - at the Bolshoi New Stage. And that is a true challenge. Hundreds of performances run on various stages of the world. Production director Alexander Molochnikov, choreographer Yuri Possokhov, the Bolshoi prima Svetlana Zakharova and conductor Anton Grishanin talk about how they worked on the ballet.

Rossia-24 TV channel: The Bolshoi Theatre Presents the World Premiere of [The Seagull](#) by Chekhov.

[YouTube](#)

Kultura channel A New Ballet Reality: The Bolshoi Presented the Premiere of [The Seagull](#).

"Trees uprooted, haystacks scattered, a white square transforming into a theatre or a manor house. Set designer Tom Pye, a Broadway darling with eleven films and a long list of operas, is a newcomer to ballet. He has his debut at the Bolshoi .. /.../

Svetlana Zakharova is still in search of the image. She is not sure what her Arkadina is. "It seems to me that I am still studying her, I only begin to feel her/ Only when I put on my costume, did my hair, make-up, only when they started to appear on the stage - that was where the images started to manifest," the ballerina admitted. /.../

The composer Ilya Demutsky did not plunge into Chekhov's world fanatically. He did not illustrate the play, instead creating his own. The third joint production with Possokhov gave him free rein. A gong appeared on the stage. "Oddly enough, a gong always amazes and surprises you. It is impossible to make it sound the same every time," the composer noted.

Ilya Demutsky spoke about his work on the ballet and about why *The Seagull* is the most "balletable" one of all Chekhov's plays ([Novosti Kultury programme](#)).

Shortly before the ballet premiere, [Kultura channel](#) broadcast a video report from the dress rehearsal.

The Bolshoi Ballet prima Ekaterina Shipulina - the guest of the Main Role programme on [Kultura channel](#).

Shortly before the premiere, choreographer Yuri Possokhov speaks about the new *Seagull* in his interview with [Kommersant newspaper](#). "We do not speak of socialism or capitalism in our ballet."



[Ilya Demutsky](#) – the guest of Novosti Kultury studio



Ekaterina Shipulina in the Main Role programme at [Kultura channel](#)

“/... / You are doing a ballet again with Ilya Demutsky as a composer. Why? Why did Shchedrin’s *The Seagull* not please you?”

“We have already discussed it: Shchedrin’s ballet is about Nina Zarechnaya. And mine is about Treplev. And Demutsky I work with because I have never trusted any composer so much. Although I have commissioned ballets to others. Once I even had to give up the finished music. I could stage nothing. /... / It seems to me that his music for *The Seagull* is the most difficult of all the ballets he has written. Truly Chekhovian. And we listen to Ilya, try to understand him and follow him.” /.../

“How do you feel about a musical compilation, when choreographers choose their own music, as Neumeier, Eifman, Maillot like to do?”

“I feel bad about it, and it gets worse and worse over the years. I choreographed to the combined music a couple of times myself and it was a disappointing experience. I don’t understand the point of compiling. Choosing some comfortable music to express what you want? But the music had originally a different idea, it had its own logic, its own evolution. The result is that you ignore all this, adapting it to your own needs. /.../”

Yuri Possokhov, Alexander Molochnikov, Ilya Demutsky, Svetlana Zakharova, Artem Ovcharenko in a [video by Dozhd TV](#)

Also, Yuri Possokhov speaks about the world premiere of *The Seagull* at the Bolshoi in his interview with Forbes

“Moscow theatres are full of *Seagulls*. What is so topical about this play, in your opinion? How did it attract you?”

“I’ve seen this trend many times. There comes a point when everyone starts staging the same piece. Apparently, the text comes to resonate with the time.

We can assume that we were the first to grasp this, having conceived our *Seagull* two years ago. In ballet, the process of creating a production takes much longer than in drama theatre. But the more we work on *The Seagull*, the more I am convinced: characters, situations, everything is very modern and recognisable. The characters are all lively, interesting. /.../”



Svetlana Zakharova in *Arkadina*.
Photo by Batyr Annadurdyev

Forbes magazine publishes an interview - An Independent Subordinate Woman: the Bolshoi Ballet Prima Svetlana Zakharova - About Her New Role and the Premiere of *The Seagull*.

“Svetlana, why are you *Arkadina*? What attracted you to this role?”

“When the choreographer Yuri Possokhov invited me to take part in his new work, the production of *The Seagull*, I, of course, agreed immediately. I love working with Possokhov, he has a special sense of dance, a unique choreographic style. His ballets are filled with deep meaning. Possokhov said right away, “You will be *Arkadina*.” I didn’t argue. Although, of course, while rereading the play before starting the work, I saw myself as Nina Zarechnaya. She has got hope, thirst for life, dreams, sincerity, spontaneity, beneficence, there are so many different emotions and so many colours in her. But Possokhov is always unpredictable in his distribution of roles. As a rule, he gives me difficult roles in which I look for an image for a long time and have



Artem Ovcharenko as Treplev. Photo by Elena Fetisova

to get used to it. I remember that during the production of *A Hero of Our Time*, I saw myself as Bela or Undina, and received Princess Mary, which was a complete surprise to me. /.../”

The principal dancer Artem Ovcharenko speaks about *The Seagull* premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre, love for oneself and his character Konstantin Treplev, in his interview with GQ.

“I play Konstantin Treplev. It is clear that I am a writer and I want to stage a play, that I have a difficult relationship with my mother and that this had affected my character. Konstantin has love that he will not get along with in the future, he has rather difficult relationships with people, with Masha, who is in love with Treplev, and he does not reciprocate this girl’s love. There are a lot of inter-weavings of other destinies with the life of my hero. And what is being staged now, those scenes that both Possokhov and Molochnikov create, they dictate my image. It is not a spitting image of Chekhov’s play, this is some other Treplev. And he is only looming now. But I can say for sure that he will be a revolutionary or something. So far, Konstantin is taking shape as a complex figure.” /.../”

[TASS news](#) agency speaks about *The Seagull* premiere in detail.

[RIA Novosti](#): “This is the third joint work of Possokhov and Demutsky at the Bolshoi. Before that they worked together on *A Hero of Our Time* and *Nureyev*, both of which won the Golden Mask. The idea to stage *The Seagull* belongs to Yuri Possokhov, who loves to work with Russian literature. Once, being a ballet dancer at the Bolshoi Theatre, he admired this production by Rodion Shchedrin and Maya Plisetskaya. It was then, according to Possokhov, that he developed a desire to become a choreographer.”

- [NA Teletcenter](#)
- [Teatr Magazine](#)
- [Classicalmusicnews.ru \(republication\)](#)

Central media widely covered the Bolshoi’s new opera production, *Mazepa* by Tchaikovsky.

A video report by [VGTRK \(Rossia-1, Vesti-Moskva, Rossia-24\)](#) — video from the press briefing and dress rehearsal — on the air on June 23:



A Premiere at the Bolshoi: the Opera *Mazepa* Will Be Performed at the Historic Stage Again — a video report by [VGTRK](#)

“The premiere of Tchaikovsky’s opera *Mazepa* at the Bolshoi is a striking event in Moscow cultural life. It was first staged at the theatre in the end of the 19th century, there have been several versions since then. And now a director who calls himself a comic will present his interpretation to the audience.”

An episode by Guli Baltaeva, shows, in particular, the impressive work carried out by the workshops of the Bolshoi together with the authors of the production and tells about the work of the choir ...”

The video (03’31”) on [YouTube](#)

An Opera Blockbuster: the Premiere of *Mazepa* at the Bolshoi - video report of the [Rossia-Kultura TV channel](#)

“They call the new *Mazepa* at the Bolshoi a blockbuster. Almost four hours of history, with real heroes and events.”

The chief conductor and music director of the Bolshoi Theatre, Merited Artist of Russia Tugan Sokhiev: “Today we tried to tell this story so that, as it seems to us, today’s viewer could see, first of all, the story that Pyotr Ilyich learned from Pushkin, in a contemporary and very sympathetic way.”

Director Evgeny Pisarev did not cut Tchaikovsky’s score, he played with time. He moved characters from the 18th century into the 20th. He led them through the Battle of Poltava, the First World War, the Civil War, the Great Patriotic War.

“No matter how well the artists played and sang in the costumes of 1709, for us it remains an ornamental story . It seems to me that both the theme of the opera itself and the plot that unfolds in it, I wanted to bring

closer to myself. To tell more about the people I know about," the director confessed.

The artists Zinovy Margolin and Olga Shaishmelashvili helped Pisarev to tell about the people they know about. She made five hundred suits - from dresses, greatcoats, chokhas to military ammunition. "Everything has been studied in detail and almost a historical reconstruction has been made. Moreover, things are of museum quality."

Gunsmith Maxim Gorbatov prepares sabers, pistols, machine guns. /.../"

Elchin Azizov will lead his character through the ages. He will change into three costumes to create three looks. "Each costume is Mazeppa, just in a different time, in different conditions, in a different attitude," said the soloist of the Bolshoi Opera..."

The Bolshoi Had the PREMIERE of the New Version of Tchaikovsky's Opera *Mazeppa* — a video by [OTR](#).



An Opera Blockbuster: the Premiere of *Mazeppa* at the Bolshoi /[Rossia-K](#)

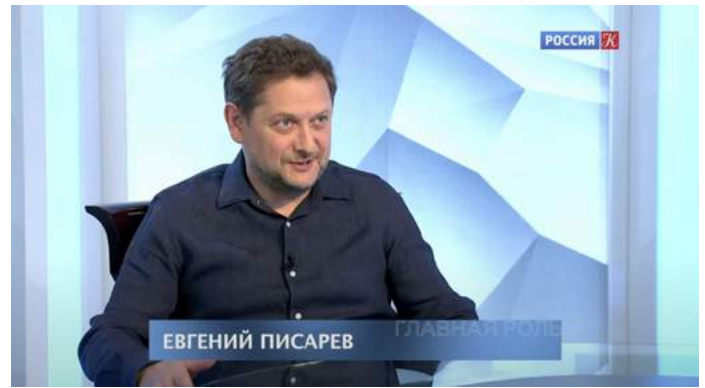
The production director was the hero of the programme on [Rossia-K](#) TV channel the Main Role. [Evgeny Pisarev](#).

The programme on [YouTube](#)

The newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta publishes the director's [interview](#) with Maria Babalova:

"How did you manage to lay the path from the merry adventures of Figaro to the bloody revenge of Hetman Mazeppa?"

"Initially, I was simply frightened by the completely new world of Russian opera. This is absolutely not my mentality. It's hard when very few things fit in with your attitude and temperament. And I really depend on what I do. I choose



The Main Role. Evgeny Pisarev/[Rossia-K](#)

plays and characters as friends with whom I spend six months of my life. I want to do this with facile, ironic people who bring joy, hope and fun. Maybe that is because of my actor's past, and there are no former actors, I am not a cold director - not a mathematician. Therefore, I do not think that I will agree to work with such material again. I understand that this is a bad advertisement, but *Mazeppa* is too dark an opera, and its topic today is especially burning, extremely dangerous and politicised." ('We are waiting for *Mazeppa*': Evgeny Pisarev - about the Bolshoi Theatre premiere".)

The winner of *Grand Opera-2019* Anna Shapovalova took part in *Mazeppa* — [Rossia TV channel](#) mentions:

"The first viewers witnessed a four-hour opera with large-scale sets and incredible costumes.

Evgeny Pisarev was not afraid to present his own interpretation of the well-known plot. He led the characters through the Battle of Poltava, the First World War, the Civil War, the Great Patriotic War.

Željko Lučić appeared in this production as Mazeppa, Elena Manistina created the character of his wife Lyubov, and Anna Shapovalova played their daughter Maria. The audience of [Rossia-Kultura](#) channel knows her from the *Grand Opera* project. Shapovalova won the competition in 2019 having enthralled the jury with her voice and vivid



The winner of *Grand Opera-2019* Anna Shapovalova took part in *Mazeppa*. Anna Shapovalova as Maria, Dmytro Popov as Andrei. Photo by Damir Yusupov /[Rossia-K](#)

presence. Since April 2021, Shapovalova is a trainee in the Bolshoi Opera. Prior to that she worked at Rostov State Musical Theatre and performed at Magyar Állami Operaház as well.

[Also Literaturnaya Gazeta](#)
[7 Days](#)

The press continues to publish materials about the Bolshoi's qualifying round for the Young Artists Ballet Programme, supported by Ingosstrakh.

[News.ru](#)
[Ura](#)
[PrimaMedia](#)

A Belarussian online publication [FreeSML.by](#) tells the story of the dancer Alexander Godunov (November 28, 1949 - May 18, 1995), who asked for political asylum in the United States in the summer of 1979.



Alexander Godunov and Joseph Brodsky - photo / liveinternet.ru

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

Reuters news agency's story about the premiere of the ballet *The Seagull* choreographed by Yuri Possokhov on July 1-4

[Reuters report about the premiere of Seagull](#)
[Same report on Youtube](#)

Broadway World in an article by Alan Henry announces the premiere of *The Seagull*: "Cast: Svetlana Zakharova, Artem Ovcharenko, Ruslan Skvortsov, Maria Vinogradova, Alexander Vodopetov, Anna Tikhomirova, Anna Balukova, Artemy Belyakov, Vyacheslav Lopatin, Yakopo Tissi."

Composer Ilya Demutsky, Choreographer Yuri Possokhov, Director Alexander Molochnikov, Music Director Anton Grishanin, Designer Tom Pye, Costume Designer

Emma Ryott, Lighting Designer David Finn, and Video Designer Sergei Rylko.

Director Alexander Molochnikov, who worked at the Bolshoi Theatre before (two years ago he staged a performance, based on Menotti's operas at the Chamber Stage) but is working for the first time in collaboration with Possokhov-Demutsky, has his personal relationship with this play." ... "In any of the productions of *The Seagull* that I have seen, there was no answer to the questions, whether Arkadina is a successful artist or whether Treplev is talented. Might he be a young Serebrennikov or Dodin, who no one has ever listened to? Could Kostya be simply not talented? Of course, it is more interesting to think about talented people. For me, this ballet is the opportunity to contrast strong powers and totally different points of view. What is more important: the love of a mother for her son or a creative dispute? Should one sacrifice one's life for it?". As always, it is the audience who has to decide."



Svetlana Zakharova as Arkadina. Artemy Belyakov as Trigorin. Photo by elena Fetisova

The Japanese magazine Shinshokan publishes an article dedicated to composers and the ballets they have created. The article includes photographs of the Bolshoi Theatre performances of the ballets *The Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky,



The Nutcracker of the Bolshoi in Shinshokan magazine (June) - pp. 24-25.

The Golden Age by Shostakovich, *Don Quixote* by Minkus, *Coppelia* by Delibes. The new issue of *Shinshokan* also contains an interview with conductor Pavel Sorokin by Anna Gordeeva.

Printed and scanned versions of the article are available to consult upon request at the press office of the theatre.

The Brazilian news portal [NSC Total](#) publishes a report by Lucas Paraizo announcing the online concert of the Bolshoi School in Joinville (took place on June 27): "The Bolshoi School will return to the stage at Teatro Juarez Machado, in Joinville, next Sunday (27 June). Still without the possibility of an audience because of the pandemic, the show *When the Curtains Open* will be broadcast over the internet, on the Bolshoi Brazil channel on YouTube. ... "The show brings together classical, contemporary dance and premieres, and will have in its repertoire the participation of special guest dancers, such as Jovani Furlan, Soloist of the New York City Ballet and who was a student at the Bolshoi in Joinville." "Luana Gondim and Maitê Nunes, Soloists of the Perm Opera and Bruno Miranda, dancer of the Joburg Ballet, are also special guests at the Sunday show, alongside the dancers of Cia Jovem Bolshoi Brasil."

The Polish newspaper [Gazeta Wyborcza](#) publishes an article by Alicja Gardulska announcing the new 2021-2022 season of Poland's Wielki Theatre which will include a new production of the opera *Boris Godunov* by production director Mariusz Treliński. The comments on the article mention the Bolshoi of Russia's *Boris Godunov*: "My favourite opera in terms of music, drama, in which the people are not represented by the choir as in Italian operas, but by the individual voices of people in the crowd." "Recently, Tugan Sokhiev brilliantly conducted this opera at the Bolshoi."

The Italian online regional news publication [Primocanale](#) publishes an article by Silvia Isola who reports on the *Nervi Music and Ballet Festival* near Genova with a programme that includes: "There are several events not to be missed: from Saturday July 3 with the State Academic Ensemble of Popular Dance Igor Moiseev with choreography presented for the first time in Italy, *Tango del Plata*, a homage to Stravinsky's love, scheduled for July 8 in a dialogue between music and ballet 50 years after the death of the famous Russian musician, the stars of the *Youth America Grand Prix* will see the stars of today and the stars of tomorrow together from all over the world, while to finish the étoile



The Glory of the Bolshoi: Galina Ulanova and Vladimir Preobrazhensky (*Chopiniana*, 1952); Ekaterina Geltser and Vasily Tikhomirov (*A Musical Moment*, 1913); Maya Plisetskaya (debut *Swan Lake*, 1947); Asaf Messerer (*The Ribbon Dance*, 1940)



Jacopo Tissi at the celebration of Carla Fracci (August 20, 1936 — May 27, 2021) - the Bolshoi leading soloist will be awarded the *Novara Dance Experience-2021* prize at Teatro Coccia - June 26

Svetlana Zakharova will be engaged on 20 July in a particular pas de deux with the violinist Vadim Repin."

German international broadcaster Deutsche Welle and the classical music [radio station DWClassicalMusic](#) published a video collection on their official YouTube channel (duration: 01:25:19) *The Glory of the Bolshoi: Historical Moments of the World Famous Ballet Company of Russia*.

"This is a collection of fragments from the history of the now legendary ballet company from the productions that made them a worldwide sensation. The records date from 1913 to 1968, covering the pre-communist quiet era up to the late Soviet period. They focus on what can be considered the classic style of the Bolshoi Theatre, the rapture of breathtaking athleticism, without the slightest neglect of the basic beauty of dance."

The Italian online entertainment news publication [Spettacolo Periodico Daily publishes](#) an article by Loredana Carena who reports: "*Novara Dance Experience* returns from Wednesday 23 June after the suspension of 2020 due to the health emergency. The third edition will take place in the historic Coccia Theatre in Novara and will be dedicated to the great Carla Fracci, who would have been one of the guests of honour of the event." ... "The closing Gala evening will be held on Saturday 26 June at 8.30 pm at the Coccia Theatre, during which the career prizes will be awarded." Lorella Cuccarini and Anna Maria Prina. Jacopo Tissi, soloist and only Italian dancer at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, will receive the 2021 talent award."

BRIEFLY

A new book of the writings by the dance critic *Clement Crisp Reviews: Six Decades of Dance* has been finalised for publication (hardback) with print expected on July 12



Clement Crisp Reviews: Six Decades of Dance
(Clement with Natalia Makarova - Photo by Dina Makarova)

(*Clement Crisp Reviews: Six Decades of Dance* /Editor: Gerald Dowler; Project Co-ordinator: David Wardrop. London: The International Dance Writing Foundation, 2021. — 320 p.: ill. — ISBN 9781527287747) 160 reviews, 130 photographs, 320 pages.

Book note:

"Reviews of classical productions, premieres and unusual moments, criticism of stars and choreographers. Some of them are really hilarious because, after all, 'someone had to say that!' The book also provides more detailed assessments of key dance phenomena, accompanied by photographs gathered from collections around the world."

Publisher: The International Dance Writing Foundation
The book contains a big section dedicated to Russian ballet and its dancers.

Presented (with pages indicated)

Russians:

- Altynai Asylmuratova 105
- Alexandra Balashova 106
- Mikhail Baryshnikov 108-110
- Natalia Makarova 112 and Mikhail Baryshnikov
- Natalia Makarova 114
- Irek Mukhamedov 116
- Rudolf Nureyev 117
- Evgeniya Obraztsova 118
- Natalia Osipova and Ivan Vasiliev 119
- Lyudmila Semenyaka 120
- Sergei Polunin 122
- Olga Smirnova 123

"What his friends and fans say" — statements about Clement Crisp, collected on the [website of The International Dance Writing Foundation](#), supporting the book's publication:

Sir Robert Cohan, choreographer and director of London Contemporary Dance Theatre:

"Clement Crisp is one of the few critics that I consistently read to see what is actually happening in the world of dance. I look forward to reading his 50 year "history" of the Art."

Lillian Hochhauser, impresario:

"Clement Crisp is undoubtedly the most eminent ballet expert in the world. Long may he continue to delight us with his great intellect, wit, knowledge and perception."

Deborah, Lady MacMillan, the keeper of Kenneth MacMillan's choreographic heritage:

"What a splendid idea to bring together the best of Clement Crisp's ballet criticism, his knowledge, understanding, wit and insight to be enjoyed all over again."

Natalia Makarova, ballerina and choreographer:

"I love Clement as a person, his loyalty, truthfulness and generosity. Full of charm, he is a treasure. Clement has the deepest love and profound knowledge of the art of ballet. There is nobody like him, never has been and probably never will be."

Dame Monica Mason, ballerina and former head of the Royal Ballet:

"What a treat to have this collection of reviews and articles to remind us of Clement's unending passion for classical dance, his rapier wit and his discerning and penetrating eye."

Katerina Novikova, head of the Bolshoi press office:

"I remember the surprise of Russian journalists at the premiere of the new production of *Coppelia* at the Bolshoi, when Clement Crisp told them that he first saw this ballet in London in the mid-forties. Clement Crisp is the true guru of ballet criticism. His deep knowledge, appreciation and indeed love of the art of classic dance makes him stand out from his colleagues. None should ignore his writing; so vivid, so refined, sincere and passionate."

Élisabeth Platel, ballerina, l'étoile of Paris Opera Ballet:

"Comment rendre hommage à Clement Crisp avec autant de talent que celui de son écriture. Merci de sa fidélité, de sa grande connaissance, de notre art." ("How to pay homage to Clement Crisp with as much talent as that of his writing. Thank you for his loyalty, his great knowledge of our art.")

Dame Antoinette Sibley, ballerina, the Royal Ballet:

"Clement's experience of watching dance all over the world is unrivalled - it was always his judgement that meant the most to me."

Paul Taylor, dancer and choreographer of The Paul Taylor Dance Company [1930-2018]:

"I am unable to praise Clement Crisp enough. His knowing eyes, wry humour and astute insights make him the ultimate dance critic of the present day."

Clement Crisp New Book — the publication is discussed at the [UK ballet fans' forum Balletcoforum](#)

Ordering the book from a [UK retailer Waterstones](#)

The Bolshoi Ballet principal Denis Rodkin and leading soloist Alyona Kovalyova performed in *Raymonda* at

Krasnoyarsk Opera Ballet on July 1, - see [Kultura channel](#) report for details.

[INA Krasnoyarsk](#) "Alyona Kovalyova and Denis Rodkin at Krasnoyarsk Opera Ballet; the ballet *Raymonda* runs with support of Ingosstrakh company. After that the dancers will tour in Samara, Nizhny Novgorod and Rostov. Each city will have its own programme..."



Alyona Kovalyova and Denis Rodkin in *Raymonda* at Krasnoyarsk Opera Ballet on July 1



St Petersburg Philharmonic turned 100 in 2021

Igor Stupnikov of [St Petersburg Vedomosti](#) reports about the 279th graduation of the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet. "Last year all traditional elements of the occasion were cancelled due to the pandemic: there were no student concerts, diplomas were awarded in the modest interior of the academy museum. Today everything is back to normal, and future dancers demonstrated their talents on the stage of the Mariinsky Theatre within the *White Nights Festival*."

[Orpheus](#) announces the premiere of the video installation featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov to be presented at the Venice Biennale, in a report based on Gramilano.com. The *15th International Festival of Contemporary Dance* will begin with the demonstration of the new work on 23 July. Baryshnikov himself calls the *NotOnce* project a challenge.



(c) The Mariinsky Theatre. Photo by Natasha Razina. 2021

"I have always been open to different artistic pursuits," said the 73-year-old dancer in an interview with the Italian newspaper *Corriere della Sera*. "Since I left the ballet scene, I have multiplied my experience in the field of theatre. I present a new project every year." In the current one, Baryshnikov appears as a museum exhibit with a mask of white clay on his face. That is how the master of experimental fantasy Ian Fabre and the British filmmaker Phil Griffin saw the legendary dancer."



[Mikhail Baryshnikov](#) will present the *NotOnce* project

The German broadcaster [3Sat](#) announces: "3sat presents the opening premiere of the *Bayreuth Festival* with Wagner's romantic opera *The Flying Dutchman*. For the first time in the history of the festival, a woman is responsible for a new production: Oksana Lyniv. ARD Date: 07/31/2021 at 20:15-22:35 CET" "Soprano Asmik Grigorian, who has been in

demand around the world since her *Salome* in Salzburg, also makes her Bayreuth debut in the role of Senta. The third newcomer to Bayreuth is Dmitri Tcherniakov, one of the most sought-after directors in the world for several years already."

The Australian newspaper [The Age](#) publishes an article by Nick Miller who reports: "Melbourne will get a brand new cultural festival. *DanceX*, the brainchild of the Australian Ballet's new artistic director (David Hallberg), will this September bring together eight of the country's most prestigious dance companies in four nights featuring Australian and world premiere work."



David Hallberg prepares a new ballet festival *DanceX* in Australia. Photo / the dancer's Instagram

On June 30, the *Summer Music Festival* in Aix-en-Provence opened with a new production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The Dutchwoman Lotta de Behr is responsible for the direction, the conductor Thomas Hengelbrock for the musical part. [Orpheus Radio](#) reports: A total of eight projects have been prepared for the new festival season, including *Tristan and Isolde* directed by Simon Rattle, *Falstaff* conducted by Daniele Rustioni, the new opera by Finnish director Kaia Saariaho *Innocence*. Music by Russian composers will also be presented. This is *The Golden Cockerel* staged by Barry Koski, featuring Russian artists: Dmitry Ulyanov, Nina Minasian, Andrei Popov, Andrey Zhilikhovskiy, Vasily Efimov. The production was first shown in Lyon, the festival premiere will be on July 22. The performance will also close the festival on July 25.

DEBUTS

Il Viaggio A Reims

June 30

Pretty Yende - a soprano from South Africa, the 1st prize winner of the *International Competition Operalia* and the recipient of the most prestigious music awards, who has conquered the world's best venues (the diva has already performed at the Bolshoi Historic Stage, taking part in the *Placido Domingo Gala*), - makes her debut in the Bolshoi production as Countess de Folleville.

Edgardo Rocha — a Uruguayan tenor who has won a number of high-profile awards at international vocal competitions in Latin America and Italy, where he improved his belcanto technique and gained fame as one of the best Rossinian singers, debuts at the Bolshoi as Count Libenskoff. He sings this role at Dresden Semperoper, and also performs as Chevalier Belfiore with equal success at the Zurich Opera.

The Chamber Stage soloist **Marianna Asvoynova** (soprano) – Delia.

July 1

Pietro Adaini made his debut as Cavalier Belfiore (he will also perform on the afternoon of July 4). Last month the renowned Rossinian singer debuted at our stage as Count Libenskof and Count Almaviva *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.

Maria Barakova the Bolshoi UYOP member, 1st prize in the *16th Tchaikovsky International Competition*, mezzo — Maddalena

The Chamber Stage soloist **Valery Makarov** — Don Luigino

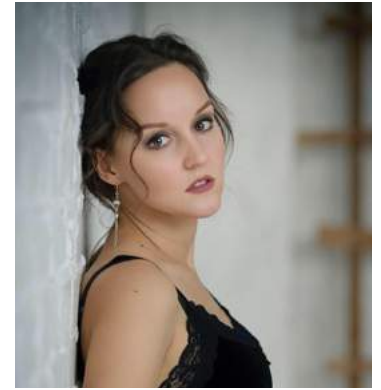
July 4

Dmitry Cheblykov, the Bolshoi YOP member (baritone), — debuted as Don Alvaro

Alexei Kulagin, the Bolshoi YOP member (bass), — Antonio



Pretty Yende (the photo taken before her performance in *La Sonnambula*, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, June 22 /FB)



Marianna Asvoynova (photo / FB)



Pietro Adaini (photo/Instagram)



Edgardo Rocha (photo / FB)



Maria Barakova, Dmitry Cheblykov, Valery Makarov and Alexei Kulagin debuted in the opera *Il Viaggio A Reims*

SOCIAL MEDIA

“The premiere block of the ballet *The Seagull* has just ended,” writes [Ilya Demutsky](#). — “Time to bow and say thanks. Thank you, my beloved and dear Yura Possokhov and daring, wonderful Sasha Molochnikov! Thanks for the beauty and aesthetics to Tom Pye, David Finn and Emma Ryott. Thank you, brilliant ballet dancers! You are magnificent birds, it is happiness to watch you

[Ekaterina Besedina](#) (photo of the number *Birds*): “Now that we have learned to fly through the air like birds, to swim under water like fish, we are missing only one thing: to learn to live on earth like people. #bolshoitheatre #ballet #bolshoiballet #premiere #seagull



The Seagull premiere in posts by [Ilya Demutsky](#), [Alexander Molochnikov](#), [Emma Ryott](#), [Louise Flanagan](#), [Tom Pye](#)...

flying! Thanks to the whole huge team behind the scenes. It is impossible to list them all.

My special gratitude for the sensitivity and experience of maestro Anton Grishanin/ This is our third ballet together!! And the musicians of the Bolshoi Orchestra - for wisdom, patience, interest and the result that makes me genuinely happy! Hurray!"

Alexander Molochnikov: "Like another shift in the camp, the ballet marathon is over, I will miss everyone, a little more beautiful photos from the performance. In the foyer, Ros Lavrentyev, an actor from the Moscow Art Theatre, sadly said, "Did I choose wrong? Do we dramatic people have such powerful means of expression?" Thank you all again! See you next season ... #seagull #bolshoi

/.../ And one more thing to say. As you know, 'genius' is a terrible word, they all throw it at each other like a cigarette butt; personally I have met very few genius people in my life ... I was lucky to meet another one - Yuri Possokhov, choreographer of *The Seagull*. I saw rehearsals, I saw moments of his inspiration, it was not he who staged, but really something through him. A very acute feeling. I love you, Yura!"

Emma Ryott publishes a photo with Louise Flanagan: "My partner in crime - months at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. Two new productions - *Orlando* and *The Seagull*. It was a real explosion. Thank you!!!" #louiseflanagancostume #bolshoitheatre #seagull #orlando #moscowlife

"Thank you, Em, for inviting me with you!" Louise Flanagan answers. "What an adventure it was! We even managed to learn how to take a half-decent selfie ..."

Maria Barakova finishes studying with the Bolshoi YOP:

"Thank you. It is with this word that I would like to begin my story. /... / From the "height" of today, I can say that four years have flown by like an instant. During this time, two of the



Maria Barakova: "Thank you..."

most prestigious competitions were won, more than ten parts were sung in Russia and abroad. And this certainly makes me happy. But the people are the most important. The people I have met over these years. My dear classmates, colleagues, friends, teachers, administration, management, directors, conductors, make-up artists, costume designers, choir, orchestra, extras, stage hands, sound and light technicians, sceneshifters, decorators, assistants and many, many others! I am typing this with tears in my eyes...

I am immensely grateful to all of you for this wonderful time! Without all of you, there would not be the Masha that I am now. I'm not bidding you farewell, because we will definitely meet again. Just know that you are the best. And I love you all dearly.

Your Masha."

Participants of the opera premiere at the Bolshoi - spectators and artists - leave warm notes about the performance:

"Evgeny Pisarev, thank you very much," writes the Minister of Culture Olga Lyubimova. — "Amazing *Mazepa* at the Bolshoi. Such a complex material in all aspects. And you managed to create such an inventive and thoughtful, precise and delicate performance, a goldsmith work. Great joy for all those who are involved, who have walked this path with you. Once again, my heartfelt congratulations. To both you and the Bolshoi Theatre on the premiere!"



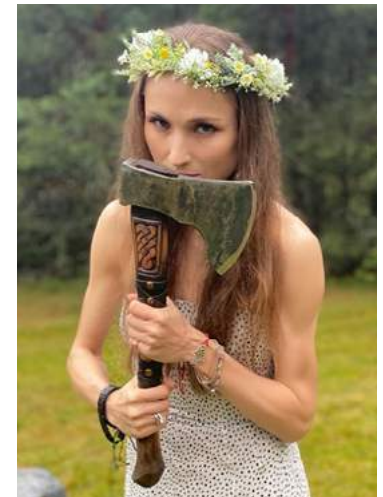
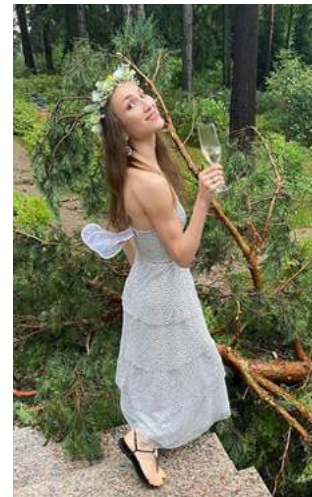
Sarah Sherman on [Instagram](#): We have started filming the new season of the Big and Small project on Rossia-K... We work personally with the show host, the irresistible Svetlana Zakharova."



[Kristina Kretova](#) with Igor Tsvirko: "Anniversary!"



[Elchin Azizov](#) with Gama Malikova: "23 years together!!"



[Ekaterina Shipulina](#): "A fairy differs from a witch only in her mood ... #moodoftheday #moodsummer #fairyfromwitch differsonlyinhermood #summertime /Instagram



[Anna Nechaeva](#): "My Maria... I miss you already. We have made an amazing performance. We will be glad to see everyone in the house, delight and surprise them, talk about the present, profound and indelible," — with [Agunda Kulaeva](#)



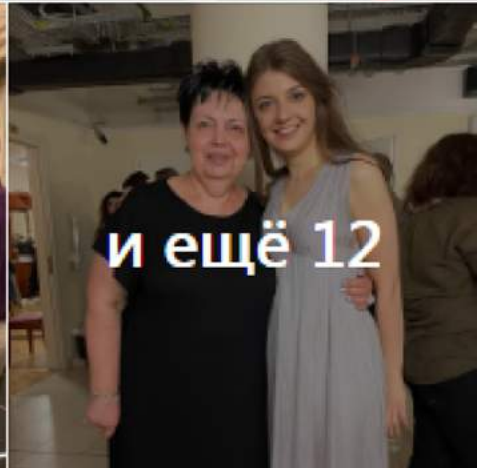


Elchin Azizov: “When her father told you ‘NO’...”

“Several days have passed, but I still lack the words to express my happiness!” writes Elizaveta Narsia. “On June 22 and 24, at my beloved Bolshoi Theatre, I played the role of Leah in the stunning, utterly beautiful piece by Debussy *The Prodigal Son*. Many thanks to all teachers, colleagues, directors, all the workshops of the Theatre! It was a wonderful experience. I really want to repeat it!!!!

Many thanks to my favourite teachers - Dmitry Vdovin, Makvala Kasrashvili, Lyubov Orfyonova, Ekaterina Vasheruk, Yulia Sinitsa, Yuri Papko and Irene Kudela, for such trust, support and love! Thanks to my talented directors - Sergey Karaban and Igor Titov, for the most interesting, deep, already so dear and beloved production ... I miss our rehearsals every day!!

Thanks to our amazing pianists, wonderful Anechka Denisova for incredible support; Mikhail Korshunov, Sergei Konstantinov. Our talents !!



Elizaveta Narsia: “Words of gratitude overwhelm me!”



Thanks to Tatyana Belova and Ilya Kukharenko, Viktor Zolotov and Anastasia Shchetinina, Alexey Ikonnikov...

Thanks to my amazing talented partners!! Nikolay Zemlyanskikh, David Posulikhin, Alexei Kursanov, Dmitry Cheblykov!

Thanks to Irina Aleksandrovna Chernomurova for this great project ! /.../

Thank you to all those who supported me, worried for me, for all your kind words!!

I am happy it was not a dream!!!! Words of gratitude overwhelm me! Hurraaaaay!"