



Newsletter

245

2021

Issue No. 14 • March 27 – April 10



Photo by Sergei Pyatakov, Anatoly Sergeev-Vasiliev, Ramil Sitdikov, Ekaterina Chesnokova, Valeri Sharifulin (RIA Novosti and TASS)/[Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)

On March 28, 2021, the Bolshoi Theatre celebrated 245 years since its founding. On this very day in 1776 Empress Catherine II signed a “privilege” granting Prince Pyotr Urusov exclusive rights to hold performances and masquerades, provided that he build a special housing for

this in Moscow. Today, the world famous Bolshoi Theatre stands on that foundation. Nowadays, it is a colossal theatre institution with over 3,500 employees. The Bolshoi venues include the Historic Stage, the New Stage, the Chamber Stage, and the Beethoven Hall. Before the pandemic,



[Sadko](#) by Rimsky-Korsakov at the Historic Stage. Photo by Damir Yusupov

the Bolshoi gave more than 1000 performances a year, and, despite all the difficulties, has planned and released 17 opera and ballet premieres even this season. And of course the Bolshoi Theatre also has a great history with amazing names of outstanding performers. Today, the Bolshoi opera and ballet companies are rightfully considered to be among the best in the world.

The Bolshoi of Russia production — opera-legend [Sadko](#) staged by [Dmitri Tcherniakov](#) was honoured with the award *Highlight of the Season* by the Union of Theatre Professionals of Russia.

The 19th awards ceremony took place on **April 5**.

The award was received by the Head of the Perspective Planning and Special Projects Department of the Bolshoi [Irina Chernomurova](#), Actors and Extras Ensemble Manager [Ekaterina Mironova](#) and Chorus Manager [Elena Uzkaya](#).

[TASS](#).

The awards covered by:

[Rossia-Kultura](#)

[OTR TV channel](#)

[Moskovski Komsomolets](#)

[Teatral](#) (photo report)

and other media.

March 25, 26, 27, 28, the Historic Stage — [Sadko](#).

The performance of **March 26** took place within the festival *Golden Mask 2021*. The production was nominated for: The Best Production, the Best Director (Dmitri Tcherniakov), the Best Actress (Aida Garifullina as Volkhova, Ekaterina Semenchuk as Lyubava Buslaevna), the Best

Actor — Nazhmiddin Mavlyanov as Sadko, the Best Artist in Musical Theatre (Dmitri Tcherniakov).



“Soviet singer Evgeny Nesterenko, winner of the 1st Prize of the 4th International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow”, 1970 (photo by Alexander Makarov, RIA Novosti.)



Nazhmiddin Mavlyanov as Sadko (Singer of the Year) and Nadezhda Pavlova as Volkhova (Singer of the Year), prize Casta Diva 2020. Nikolay Didenko as the Sea Tsar. Photo by Damir Yusupov

Sadko on the Golden Mask 2021: [website](#)

The performance of **March 26** was dedicated to memory of the outstanding bass, a representative of the Bolshoi Golden Age — [Evgeny Nesterenko](#) (January 8, 1938, Moscow — March 20, 2021, Vienna)

The performers of the main roles in *Sadko* — guest soloists Nazhmiddin Mavlyanov (Sadko) and Nadezhda Pavlova (Volkhova) — were named the Singers of the Year by the decision of the jury of the Russian opera prize *Casta Diva 2020*.

The 2020 winners were announced on the *International Theatre Day*, March 27.

Also, *Sadko* was recognised as the Best Opera of the Year according to the *Bravo Prize* — the presentation of the [3rd International Professional Music Award Bravo](#) in classical art took place on April 2 at the Bolshoi Historic Stage.



There were many Bolshoi artists among the nominees:

The Discovery of the Year — the Bolshoi Young Artists Opera Programme soloist Maria Barakova (soprano)

The Best Classic Male Voice — the YOP graduate Bogdan Volkov (tenor)

The Best Classic Female Voice — the Bolshoi Opera guest soloist Albina Shagirmuratova (soprano)

The World Star — Placido Domingo.

Reported by [TASS](#), [Intermedia](#), etc. media.

After a seven-year break, one of the world's most favourite operas — *Tosca* by Giacomo Puccini will return to the Bolshoi. The premiere will be at the New Stage on April 21, 2021.

Director — [Stefano Poda](#), striving for aesthetic and conceptual unity of the performance, acts not only as a director, but also as set, costume and lighting designer.





Dinara Alieva and Elchin Azizov rehearsing *Tosca*.
Photo by Katerina Novikova

place in the world to have specialists of such a level who combine the highest artistic culture, knowledge, and unique skills — the skill of creating fabric textures, costumes, and decorations, practically lost today, which he needs to implement his idea. According to Stefano Poda, it is the workshops and studios that testify to the level of the theatre. And the very fact that the theatre employs such a high-class staff makes the Bolshoi great.



Music Director — [Italian Daniele Callegari](#)
Chief Chorus Master — [Valery Borisov](#).
Libretto by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica based on Victorien Sardou's play of the same name.

The director of *Tosca* Italian Stefano Poda is delighted with the Bolshoi workshops. In his opinion, this is the only



Photo by Katerina Novikova, Elena Voroshilova

A scene from *Don Carlo*.
Photo by Damir Yusupov



April 14–18, the Historic Stage — *Don Carlo*.

The large-scale opera based on a historical plot was staged for the bicentennial of the birth of Giuseppe Verdi by the renowned English director [Adrian Noble](#). The premiere took place on December 17, 2013. Music Directors — Robert Treviño, Giacomo Sagripanti. The production opened the current 245 season.

Gathering an exceptional star cast becomes a Bolshoi's tradition.

Plácido Domingo will appear in one of his best roles — Rodrigo — on **April 15 and 18**.

Ferruccio Furlanetto — as Philip II, also on April 15 and 18.

Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov as Elizabeth of Valois and Don Carlo (respectively) on **April 15 and 17**.

The leading soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus Andrei Valenty as a Monk on **April 14, 16 and 17**.

The Chinese bass Liang Li will appear as Philip II on **April 14, 16 and 17**.

Elena Zhidkova as Princess Eboli

Hibla Gerzmava as Elisabeth of Valois on **April 16 and 18**.

As well as Nazhmiddin Mavlyanov (Don Carlos, **April 14 and 16**), Vasily Ladyuk (Rodrigo, **April 17**) Anna Nechaeva (Elizabeth of Valois, **April 14**), Agunda Kulaeva (Princess Eboli, **April 15, 17 and 18**), Igor Golovatenko (Rodrigo, debut on **April 14 and 16**).

Maestro [Paolo Carignani](#), a renowned interpreter of the Italian music repertoire, will conduct this opera at the Bolshoi for the first time.

[Casts](#)



Anna Netrebko as Elizabeth of Valois. Agunda Kulaeva as Princess Eboli. — *Don Carlo*, at the opening of the 245th season.
Photo by Damir Yusupov

Makhar Vaziev in photos / [FB Lagunov](#)

Artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet [Makhar Vaziev](#) was awarded the honorary title of the National Artist of the Russian Federation for his Great Services In The Sphere Of Art, upon the decree of the President of Russia,

Makhar Vaziev became the head of the Bolshoi Ballet five years ago — in March 2016.

He was the head of Mariinsky Ballet in 1995-2008, And the head of La Scala Ballet in 2008–2016.

Covered by:

[TASS](#)

[RIA Novosti](#)

[Vesti FM](#)

[Govorit Moskva](#)

[Lenta.Ru](#)

[RBK](#)

[AiF](#) and other media.

CURRENT EVENTS IN THE THEATRE LIFE

In the end of March the Bolshoi presented premieres at the New and Chamber Stages.

March 24, the New Stage — the world premiere of *Orlando*, choreographer [Christian Spuck](#), to music by Edward Elgar, Philip Glass, Lera Auerbach and Elena Kats-Chernin.

The ballet *Orlando* staged by Christian Spuck at the New Stage.
Photo by Pavel Rychkov





Moscow, Cheryomuski staged by Ivan Popovski at the Chamber Stage.
Photo by Pavel Rychkov

Libretto by [Claus Spahn](#) (since 2012 — chief dramatist of Zurich Opera)

Set Designer — [Rufus Didwizsus](#)

Costume Designer — [Emma Ryott](#)

Lighting Designer — [Martin Gebhardt](#)

Music Director — [Alexei Bogorad](#)

Fragments of Virginia Wolf's novel recited by Marina Frenk (recorded voice)

[Casts](#)

The premiere series was on March 25, 26, 27 and 28.

[A detailed interview with the choreographer](#)

March 25, the Chamber Stage — the premiere of the only operetta by Shostakovich *Moscow, Cheryomushki* staged by [Ivan Popovski](#).

Music Director — Pavel Klinitchev (conductor — all days).

Set Designers — [Sergei Tchoban](#),

Alexandra Scheiner

Costume Designer — [Lyudmila Gainseva](#);

There were performances on March 26, 27, 28, and will be more on April 15, 16, 17, 18.

[Casts](#)

[Details](#)

"Shostakovich's music smiled, laughed, danced, mocked, was naughty, and sometimes a little sad..." said Ivan Popovski in an [interview](#) before the premiere

Photos by Pavel Rychkov — on the theatre [website](#).

March 30 and 31, the Historic Stage — *Giselle* by Adolfe Adam, choreography by Jean Coralli, Jules Perrot and Marius Petipa, chorographic version by Yuri Grigorovich (1987).

Giselle on the Russian stage — see more about the production

Conductor — Pavel Sorokin (March 30,) Pavel Klinichev (March 31)

[Casts](#)



Ekaterina Krysanova as Giselle, Denis Rodkin as Albrecht.
Photo by Elena Fetisova



Curtain calls after the performance of *Gabrielle Chanel* within *Modanse* programme. Photo /Instagram



Ekaterina Krysanova and Yulia Stepanova — as Raymonda. Photo by Damir Yusupov.

April 2 and 4, the Historic Stage — *Modanse*, the project by prima ballerina Svetlana Zakharova.

The programme consists of two one-act ballets — *Comme un respiro* to music by Georg Friedrich Händel, choreography by Mauro Bigonzetti, and *Gabrielle Chanel* to music by Ilya Demutsky, choreography by Yuri Possokhov. Curtain calls video (Instagram)

[April 3](#)

[April 4](#)

April 6 and 7, the Historic Stage — *Raymonda* by Glazunov. Libretto by Yuri Grigorovich after the scenario by Lidia Pashkova, based on medieval knights' legends.

Choreographer — Yuri Grigorovich (version of 2003.) Scenes from choreography by Marius Petipa and Alexander Gorsky used.

April 9, 10, 11 — *The Winter's Tale* by choreographer [Christopher Wheeldon](#) and composer [Joby Talbot](#) based on the namesake piece by William Shakespeare.

The premiere of April 4, 2019, the production was the winner of the [Golden Mask](#) award of the last year in the categories of the Best Conductor (Anton Grishanin — conductor all days), the Best Male Role (Artem Ovcharenko.)

[Performance details](#)

[Casts](#)

Christopher Wheeldon at the Green Salon of the Bolshoi ([a video 39' 57" on YouTube](#))

Christopher Wheeldon speaks about his ballet in a [video \(2'04"\)](#)

Creators and performers of the main roles speak about the ballet in a [video \(2'37"\)](#)

The Winter's Tale. Photo by Dmitry Yusupov





Rusalka by Dvořák at the New Stage. Photo by Pavel Rychkov

March 31 and April 1, 2, 3, 4, the New Stage — *Rusalka* by Antonín Dvořák, libretto by Jaroslav Kvapil, based on folk legends.

Music Director — [Ainars Rubikis](#) (all days)

Stage Director — [Timofei Kulyabin](#).

Set Designer — [Oleg Golovko](#),

Costume Designer — [Galya Solodovnikova](#).

Video Designer — [Alexander Lobanov](#)

The premiere took place on March 6, 2019.

The [Golden Mask](#) awards 2020 — the Best Conductor, the Best Costume Designer.

[Casts](#)

April 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, the New Stage — *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* by Gioacino Rossini, libretto by Cesare Sterbini after the comedy of the same name by Beaumarchais.

The Bolshoi Chief Conductor and Music Director [Tugan Sokhiev](#) — all days at the pulpit.

The premiere of [Evgeni Pisarev's](#) production was on November 3, 2019.

Set Designer — [Zinovy Margolin](#)

Costume Designer — [Olga Shaishmelashvili](#)

Music Director — [Pier Giorgio Morandi](#)

[Performance details](#)

[Guest performers](#) — see more about first appearances of Marina Viotti and Andrei Valenty at the New Stage in April.

[Casts](#)



Il Barbiere di Siviglia. Marina Viotti as Rosina. Curtain calls after the performance of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. April 9

March 28, Beethoven Hall — Bolshoi Orchestra artists concert *Mysteries of Paris*. The programme included works by Saint-Saëns, Albert Roussel, Jean Cras. See more on the [website](#)

April 7 — Bolshoi Orchestra artists and Nikita Galaktionov (piano) concert *Masterpieces of the 19th Century*.

April 9 — [Bolshoi Opera soloists and apprentices concert April](#).

[Singing Italy](#) — details of the concert programme.

March 31, the Chamber Stage — *The Nose* by Dmitri Shostakovich staged by [Boris Pokrovsky](#) and [Gennadi Rozhdestvensky](#), based on the novel of the same name by Nikolai Gogol.

[The Nose](#) — a trademark production of the Pokrovsky Theatre. — about the production.

[See more](#)

[Cast](#)



Boris Pokrovsky on a photo by Vladimir Polunin from a rehearsal of the opera *Nose* at the Chamber Musical Theatre; spring 1974 / RIA Novosti

April 2, 3, 4 — *Die Zauberflöte* by Mozart, production by Boris Pokrovsky. The premiere was on September 24, 2004.

[Casts](#)

April 7 and 8, the Chamber Stage — opera by Vladimir Dashkevich *The Government Inspector*. Libretto by Yuli Kim and Vladimir Dashkevich based on works by Nikolai Gogol.

Stage Director — [Olga Ivanova](#)

Music Director — [Vladimir Agronsky](#).

Music Director — [Ayrat Kashaev](#)

From March 28 on, ballet *The Flames Of Paris* staged by Alexei Ratmansky within the project [Bolshoi In Cinema](#) in cinemas all over Russia and those countries where COVID cinema restrictions have been lifted.

[Cast](#)

[Tickets on Theatrehd.com](#)

The Bolshoi Ballet prima Olga Smirnova took part in a meeting between the President Vladimir Putin and laureates of awards for young culture professionals and those in the field of literature and art for works for children and youth.

“Thanks to your award, I can fulfil my long cherished dream of the 200th anniversary of the great Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky [celebrated this year — ed. note by TASS] — to stage a ballet based on his novel *The Idiot* and play the main female role in this production,” Smirnova said. The ballerina was quoted by [TASS](#).

The premiere of the film *The Return of Salome* took place on March 26 on Rossia-Kultura channel. The film is available on the [Bolshoi YouTube channel](#). The new film, a part of the *Ticket to the Bolshoi* project, speaks about the difficulties and the small discoveries and about the different approaches in working on a joint production with the Metropolitan Opera.



The premiere of *Salome* took place on February 25, 2021, at the Historic Stage. Jochanaan — Thomas Mayer, Salome — Asmik Grigorian. Photo by Monika Ritterhaus

Gazprom-Media Holding, the leading diversified media holding in Russia and Eastern Europe, has become an Official Opera Sponsor of the Bolshoi Theatre.

The signing ceremony of the sponsorship agreement took place on April 8 with the participation of Alexander Zharov, General Director of the Gazprom-Media Holding, and Vladimir Urin, General Director of the Bolshoi.



Gazprom-Media — official sponsor of the Bolshoi Opera.
Photo by Damir Yusupov



Vladimir Urin spoke at a meeting of the Federation Council of Federal Assembly of Russian Federation on March 31.

[Link to the video](#)

the world today. Vladimir Urin spoke about the policy of the theatre administration in choosing the repertoire, recruiting opera and ballet artists, about special programmes for spectators including those in the regions of the Russian Federation.

[Interfax](#)
[Vedomosti](#)
[Orpheus](#)

- Russian TV channels, news agencies, printed and electronic media widely covered the world premiere of the ballet *Orlando* at the Bolshoi New Stage.

There was coverage on [Rossia-1 channel \(Vesti programme\)](#) and [Rossia-24](#).

[Kultura channel](#)

"I would like to show, through poetry and mystical images on stage, that it does not matter whether the masculine or feminine element prevails in a person — it is important who you really are," says choreographer Christian Spuck.

"It is not so important if you are a man or a woman. Values change and remain the same, persist and leave with the arrival of new circumstances. That's the task," said the artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet Makhar Vaziev.

"Here we have stories and characters in which spectators can recognise themselves," —

Choreographer of *Orlando* Christian Spuck — the guest of the programme [Novosti Kultury](#) (25.03.21)

[TVC presented a report](#)
[RIA Novosti](#)

[DeutscheWelle in Russian](#): "I was really inspired by the book. It is full of both poetic and philosophical reflections," said Christian Spuck to DW. He sees the main idea of the writer in the fact that it is not so important for the inner self of Orlando that his gender changes — the society changes its attitude towards him, the external image of him changes, yet the hero himself keeps living and existing in exactly the same way as before ...

[Radio Svoboda](#): In his production, Spuck gave the part of Orlando to the ballerina, and we saw Orlando performed

RUSSIAN MEDIA

- A Big Anniversary — the Country's Main Theatre Turns 245 — congratulations from [RIA Novosti](#)

The Bolshoi Theatre turns 245 — [Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)

The Bolshoi Theatre turned 245 on March 28. For this date, as well as to the *International Theatre Day* celebrated a day before, the Bolshoi prepared a virtual gift to its world audience — the ballet [Swan Lake](#) on the of the theatre.

- The online publication [KM.RU](#) publishes an article timed to coincide with the Bolshoi's 245th anniversary: Bolshoi Theatre — the Main Theatre of Russia.

"The Moscow provincial prosecutor, Prince Pyotr Urusov, on **March 28, 1776**, was granted by Empress Catherine II the 'privilege' of organising performances, masquerades, balls and other entertainments" for a period of ten years. This date is considered the day of the foundation of the Bolshoi Theatre. Urusov's partner was the Englishman Michael Maddox, who arrived in Russia to teach mathematics to the future Emperor Paul I, but was carried away by the stage." [RusTeam media](#) and dozens of other media.

- Vladimir Urin, General Director of the Bolshoi, spoke in the Expert's Time section at a [meeting](#) of the Federation Council.

According to the director, the Bolshoi, soon to celebrate its 250th anniversary, is a cultural brand of Russia, the country's main national musical theatre, a team of colossal power. There are not so many living cultural institutions in



Orlando at the Bolshoi: How Will Artists Surprise Their Spectators — Vesti.ru

by Olga Smirnova, one of the Bolshoi Ballet principals. She managed to create the image of an intellectual, poet and diplomat, thoughtful and wary, for whom entertainment is a burden, but solitude is exhausting as well. First of all, Smirnova's character cautiously listens to herself: am I a man or a woman? Whose joys and weaknesses are more delightful? Can it be considered marriage when he travels? When you love him? When you love others? When you prefer art to everything else? The figure of Orlando is so multifaceted that the director transferred some of its functions to two "abstract" couples, among whom I should mention Alyona Kovalyova, the company's young talent." /.../

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

"Christian Spuck is known for his earnestness. He contemplated the idea of *Orlando* for two years, having discussed it with the director of the Bolshoi Ballet, Makhar Vaziev who expected poetry, not cheesecake, and the librettist Claus Spahn who turned the whimsical Bloomsbury novel into a coherent libretto. While still in Switzerland, Spuck even figured out the casting, deciding that Orlando-woman and Orlando-man would be performed by the same artist, and chose a woman as a being more fluid and capable of enduring circumstances. He already worked with a Russian company five years ago, transferring *Anna Karenina* to the stage of the MAMT."

Kommersant /Tatyana Kuznetsova. "/... / , As usual, Christian Spuck compiled the music personally in accordance with the needs of the production. He made

a cello Orlando's voice (as he gave *Anna Karenina* a piano in his time), and the cello concerto by Eduard Elgar became the basis of his dance episodes. For Orlando's entourage, he chose Philip Glass's music — minimalistic and neutral



Olga Smirnova and Jacopo Tissi — Christian Spuck's *Orlando* at the Bolshoi. Photo by Natalia Voronova



[Shots from Kultura](#)

and therefore suitable for all times. It is clear that the choice of the artist for the title role is essential for the production of such a novel as Orlando, half of which the hero is in a male body, and half in the female incarnation. Having entrusted the role of Orlando to Olga Smirnova — the main “lyric” dancer of the Bolshoi, an exemplary academic ballerina with beautiful lines, clear face not clouded by passions and a hermetically sealed temperament, — Christian Spuck explained his concept comprehensively: a person has neither sex nor age, sex and era do not matter to her.”

Kultura newspaper “Magnificent Olga Smirnova as the long-lived Orlando. A subtle and intelligent ballerina again revealed herself as a wonderful actress who knows how to perceive the world with acute sensitivity, and convey the personal evolution of the hero/heroine without exaggerated gestures. Nervous outbursts are hidden behind external equanimity. /... / By the finale, Christian Spuck leads the artists to the huge grey side walls (Rufus Didwizus’ set design is straightforward and effective). They take chalks and write truisms about the time that comes and goes, catches up and delivers its judgment. Spuck, apparently, is afraid of being misunderstood: in the final scene, an inscription flashes on the backdrop: I am not what you think I am.

Moskovsky Komsomolets “Corps de ballet dance Orlando as if in a funnel of time by encircling him in a spiral, which is clearly inspired by the creativity of the now fashionable Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite. All the main people the title character meet as 350 years sweep by in front of him: Elizabeth — Shelmerdine, Princess Sasha

(Xenia Zhiganshina, Anna Balukova in the second cast,) writer Nicholas Green (Denis Savin, Vladislav Lantratov in the second cast.)

- The premiere of Shostakovich’s operetta *Moscow. Cheryomushki* at the Chamber Stage was received by Russian media warmly.

Kultura channel: “*Cheryomushki* will be populated by a wide variety of people — a fitter and a driver, an art critic and explosives technician, a professor and an official. The resettlement is accompanied by lyrical, dramatic and even fraudulent stories. The music is of the same kind — a motley mix of urban romance, gallop, NEP songs. Waltz coexists with tango, rock’n’roll, polka.

“It either turns you on and you are happy, you smile, you stomp, you dance, or you are somehow on the side. Here I want to smile. Here is a play about this, about hugs, about love, about the joy of life,” explained director Ivan Popovski.”

TVC — “A very funny, graceful story. It is that rare case when the housing issue did not spoil, but made Muscovites happy. The great metropolitan resettlement which happened almost 70 years ago — on stage. From dilapidated houses and communal apartments — to new buildings, to Cheryomushki! A real musical rarity has returned to the stage.”

“The production of the Macedonian director Ivan Popovski proves that this genre is not dusty or archaic. It is very much alive, one just needs the skill to work with it,” — **Kultura newspaper** “There are a lot of charming acting work in the production/.../»



Moscow, *Cheryomushki*. Photo by Pavel Rychkov

ArtMoskovia: “This work is an uplifting monument to the Soviet era. And the performance, with its sincerity and good nature, will capture not only adherents of the Soviet era, nostalgic for the bright past, but also everyone who dares to hear and see the new production.”

Kultura channel prepared a report about the work of the Bolshoi workshops on the upcoming premiere of the opera *Tosca*. Stefano Poda acts both as a stage director and as a set and lighting designer. “Eighteen major masterpieces are mounted on metal structures: the Renaissance with a slight shift to modernity. The director and designer of the production, Stefano Poda, who invented these papier-mâché and plaster sculptures for the opera *Tosca*, does not walk — he flies

between them. “This is Michelangelo’s *Pieta* — a symbol of the Vatican. But here the baby was torn out of the mother’s hands. As if it had been torn out of her belly. The traces of his mother’s hand are visible on the body of Christ. For me, it is also an image of our world deprived of humanity,” the director confessed. /... / Stefano Poda came up with about two hundred and fifty costumes. Each of them is a work of art.”

• On March 29, a meeting of the Director’s Box of Moscow theatres took place, where the heads of the metropolitan theatres and guests of honour took part. The main topic of another meeting was the preservation of the very opportunity to work, albeit with a 50% seating capacity. **Teatral reports:** “Everything that is happening to our colleagues in the West, frankly, is extremely upsetting,” added Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin. “They are generally in complete ignorance of when they will be able to start work. And we at the Bolshoi, like our colleagues in other theatres, release premieres. Despite the fact that for several months the theatres have been operating in conditions of 25% capacity, the work process has not been interrupted,” Urin pointed out.”

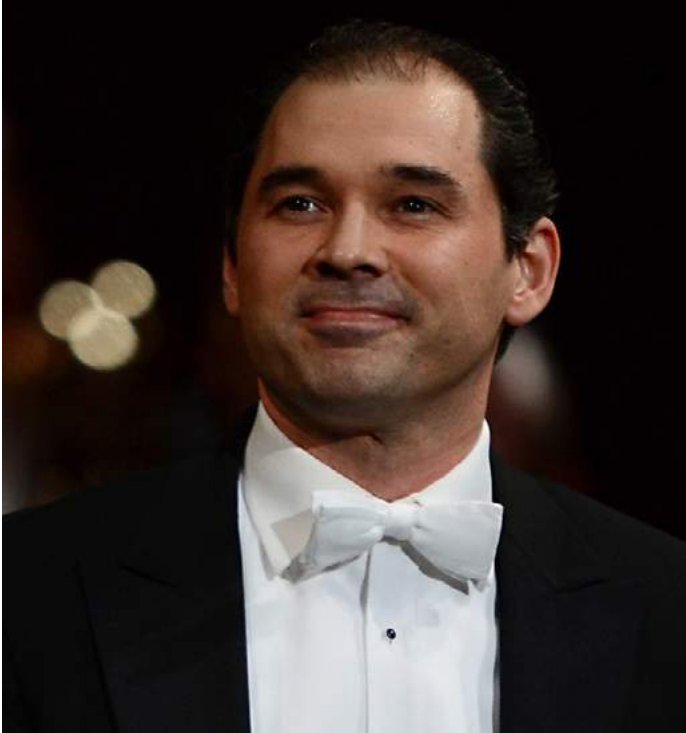
• The head of the festival *Les Musicales Franco-Russes*, the Bolshoi chief conductor Tugan Sokhiev said in his interview with **TASS** before the final concert in Toulouse, southern France. “France and Russia managed to hold *Les Musicales Franco-Russes Festival* in spite of the pandemic.” /.../



A shot from the video by **Kultura channel**

“Everything has been stopped, but we have not,” said the maestro. “This will be the fourth concert within this festival. We did it in spite of the pandemic, having decided not to succumb to pessimism.” /.../

Covered by [Russky Mir](#)
[Orpheus](#)
and other media.



Tugan Sokhiev. Photo /[Orpheus](#)

• Since March 22, [Rossia-Kultura](#) TV channel has been broadcasting the lectures History of Art. The cycle was recorded as part of the educational programmes of the *Moscow International Biennale of Contemporary Art*. The head of the Bolshoi press office Katerina Novikova is among the lecturers. The programme Bolshoi Theatre — 21st Century: «Orienteering and Positioning».

[Trud newspaper](#) quotes an expert opinion of the Bolshoi Young Artists Opera Program, Dmitry Vdovin — on impossibility of distant education in humanities: “Without any exaggeration, it brought suffering to both me and my colleagues who were forced to teach their students online. My colleague from New York, who works at the Kaufman Music Centre there /... /, is simply desperate. A whole year of such work — and the results are deplorable.

I experienced this bitterness myself when I gave master classes at *Wexford Opera Festival* in Ireland. /... /... This became the most terrible ordeal in my life: I cannot hear any nuances or changes that I ask the student to make in his singing, breathing, position. You work blindly, into the void — no matter how perfect the electronics are.”

The Bolshoi prima ballerina Svetlana Zakharova, opera stars Hibla Gerzmava and Bogdan Volkov, violinist Vadim Repin, ballet dancer Sergei Polunin and other famous artists

took part in a concert at Baikonur dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the first man’s — Yuri Gagarin’s — flight into space. Programme [Vesti Nedeli](#) broadcast on Rossia-1 TV channel on April 12.

• On May 25 and 26 the Bolshoi will present a premiere of a new ballet programme *Postscript* — [Lenta.Ru](#) reports. MuzArts will present an evening of contemporary choreography featuring works by ballet masters such as Alexei Ratmansky (*Memories of a Dear Place*), Wayne McGregor (*McGregor + Mugler*), Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui (*The Faun*), Paul Lightfoot and Sol León (*Postscript*). The Bolshoi prima ballerina Olga Smirnova, whom viewers will see in three of the four productions included in the programme, is at the centre of the premiere. “The main premiere of the evening will be the ballet *McGregor + Mugler*, a collaboration of two art visionaries from the world of dance and haute couture. Choreographer Wayne McGregor and couturier Manfred Thierry Mugler created a duet especially for Olga Smirnova. Bolshoi Ballet premier Denis Savin will be her partner.”

[Muzykalnaya Zhizn](#) magazine writes about the upcoming *Olga Smirnova’s Special* at the Bolshoi.

Alexandra Durseneva was the guest of the programme Tavor in Major on Orpheus Radio:

“The Bolshoi Opera soloist, mezzo Alexandra Durseneva surprises music lovers with unusual projects. This time it is the performance *Mahler. On the Edge of Eternity* combining music with drama theatre and ballet art.”

[The audio recording of the programme \(19’55’\)](#)

[The Soviet Television](#). Gosteleradiofond of Russia YouTube channel presented a video fragment with Evgeny Nesterenko. Opera Stars — on the Meaning of the Bolshoi Theatre in Their Lives. Evgeny Nesterenko, Tamara Sinyavskaya, Makvala Kasrashvili, Zurab Sotkilava and Elena Obraztsova — behind the Bolshoi Historic Stage (1993), a video from Gosteleradiofond.



Evgeny Nesterenko and Tamara Sinyavskaya — in a shot from the [Gosteleradiofond video](#)

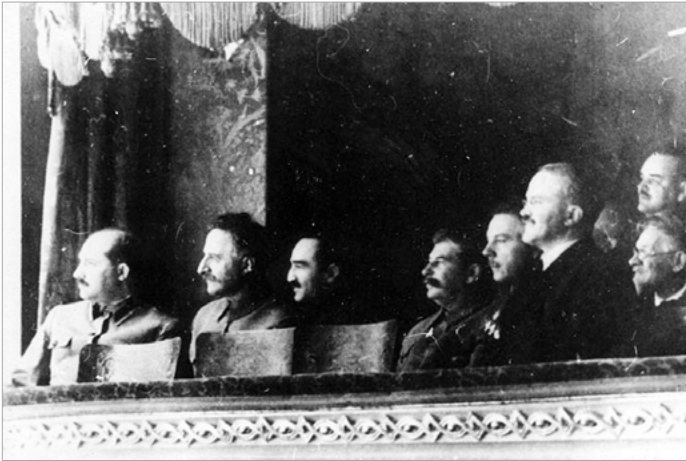
[Kultura newspaper](#) published an article The Generous Voice of Evgeny Nesterenko by Solomon Volkov. "It was a sheer pleasure to talk with him: to discuss a sensational publication in the Foreign Literature magazine, to savour Pasternak's tricky verse, or to admire Shostakovich's courage in his satirical opus."

[Moskovski Komsomolets](#)

[Komsomolskaya Pravda](#) publishes an interview with the author of the book *Daily Life of the Bolshoi Theatre: from Fyodor Chalyapin to Maya Plisetskaya* Alexander Vaskin.

"The Bolshoi has a Royal Box. Did tsars appear there often?"

"Not so much. It was a tradition to visit the Bolshoi Theatre after coronations held in Moscow. For example, in 1856 Alexander II and his wife watched Donizetti's *Love Potion*, and in 1883 Alexander III watched *A Life for the Tsar*. Nicholas II was a fairly frequent guest in this box, during



[Stalin usually sat in a side box](#)

intermissions, he invited Chaliapin and other stars there. /... / But Stalin did not really like the Royal Box despite his regular visits to the Bolshoi. There was no need for him to demonstrate power — it was already absolute. In addition, he feared becoming the target for a sniper — the Royal Box is in plain sight. So Stalin usually sat in a side box and looked very attentively at the stage, as if through the eyes of a director, and considered himself entitled to make any corrections to the productions. / ... /"

- March 24 was the birthday of the lyric tenor Ivan Kozlovsky.

[Vesti — Vladimir](#): "The voice that was called the national property. The tenor of Ivan Kozlovsky had a hypnotic effect on the audience. For many years, researchers have been talking about the phenomenon of this singer. Ivan Kozlovsky was born at the time of a change of an era. And at the age of seven he had already begun to sing in the choir of the Mikhailovsky Monastery. His career was brilliant. From the Poltava Mobile Music and Drama Theatre to the main one — the Bolshoi Theatre where he was invited in 1926."

[Ukraina.Ru](#): "Russian Nightingale" from Kiev Province: Bright Facts from the Life of Ivan Kozlovsky.

Gazprom-Media Holding has become the official sponsor of the Bolshoi Opera, reports [NTV](#). The agreement was signed by the general director of the holding, Alexander Zharov, and the head of the theatre, Vladimir Urin, within the walls of the Bolshoi.

Vladimir Urin, Director General of the Bolshoi Theatre: "As for the Bolshoi Theatre, I can say that we will try to ensure that the content, in modern terms, the saturation of the information field and those programmes about what opera or performances are today is of the highest

Ivan Kozlovsky was born on March 24, 1900
© RIA Novosti, Yuri Somov



professional level.” Urin emphasised that Gazprom-Media and the Bolshoi Theatre are united by the desire to educate the audience, to instil love for music and opera, and the desire to help the development of young talents. The theatre and the holding are developing a joint programme to support talented performers.

Press-release at the Advertology [website](#):

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

[Deutsche Welle](#) broadcasts a video report about the premiere of Spuck’s *Orlando* at the Bolshoi Theatre that includes interviews with Christian Spuck and Bolshoi ballerina Olga Smirnova.

[The Swiss online news](#) publication Suedostschweiz republishes the DPA report “The German choreographer Christian Spuck is staging Virginia Woolf’s classic *Orlando* as a ballet in the middle of the COVID crisis at the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.”

The German tabloid newspaper [Bild](#) publishes an article about the premiere of the new ballet at the Bolshoi Theatre. “In the middle of the Corona crisis, the German choreographer Christian Spuck staged the classic *Orlando* by the feminist writer Virginia Woolf at the world-famous Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.” “Spuck praised Serebrennikov’s ballet (*Nureyev* ed note)... as a “wonderful performance”.



Maria Vinogradova as Orlando and Artemy Belyakov as Shelmerdine [Photo by Dmitri Starshinov](#)

The German broadcaster [Deutsche Welt](#) (Germany) publishes an article and a video report (3:01 minutes) about the Bolshoi Ballet continuing to dance despite the pandemic. The report contains sound bytes of the General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre Vladimir Urin, Vladislav Lantratov, Ekaterina Krysanova and choreographer Martin Chaix as well as clips from rehearsals and the ballet *Four Characters in Search of a Plot*. The article is about the premiere of the new ballet *Orlando* choreographed by Christian Spuck. Christian Spuck: “My language always comes from classical ballet. That means, I respect the tradition of the Bolshoi on all levels. I am a great admirer of the company and this house too.”

The French language [Lebanese news](#) publication l’Orient — Le Jour publishes an article based on the Agence France Presse newswire: “The Russian Bolshoi Theatre premiered the new ballet *Orlando* four years after the controversy surrounding Kirill Serebrennikov’s ballet *Nureyev*.”

[The Dance Tabs](#) (UK) publishes an article by Oksana Khadarina who interviews choreographer Christian Spuck. Spuck said, “The Bolshoi is a huge company, and the dancers here perform almost every evening.” “It’s quite challenging to make a creation here: time is always an issue at the Bolshoi because everyone is incredibly busy. But the dancers are amazing, and the Bolshoi has been incredibly helpful.” “They all have very impressive technique, and they are great artists. It’s fascinating to witness how fast they work here. I think the company has nearly 300 ballet performances a year, and they change the programme every 4-5 days. So the dancers are very adaptable and versatile at the Bolshoi and I have enjoyed working with them tremendously. They have been very involved in the creative process, giving their best. It’s been an amazing journey.”

A Bulgarian online publication [Impressio](#) publishes article about the premiere of the ballet *Orlando* together with a lot of photos: “The only message is that men and women are absolutely equal and this equality is sometimes undermined by the society,” the publication quotes Spuck.

The French newspaper [Le Monde](#) publishes a review by Marie-Aude Roux. “Les Musicales franco-russes, a festival created by conductor Tugan Sokhiev, was held in digital format in Toulouse. An event available on platforms and social networks.” “Although Russian cultural venues are open to the public with half-capacity audiences allowed — the Bolshoi presented, Thursday, February 25, a production of *Salomé*, by Richard Strauss, with international distribution, said the maestro — the artists of the prestigious Moscow theatre had to give up coming to France. However, French music and Russian music continued to be heard together, as on this closing evening which notably convened, between Messiaen and Tchaikovsky, the French pianist Bertrand Chamayou in *Liszt’s Premier Concerto*.”

[Culture 31](#) publishes an article about Tugan Sokhiev and the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse. “Tugan Sokhiev admirably accompanied by the whole municipality and his dear Orchestra never gives up. At this new Orchestra Academy 2021, he shared his passion for conducting with young conductors. Medici TV has put in its cameras and the result is exciting.” “It is absolutely irresistible courage for young people, patience and passionate professionalism for musicians and teaching genius for Tugan Sokhiev who generously offers young applicants to dare a lot of freedom in order to seek music from the heart.”

The French newspaper [La Depeche](#) (France) publishes an article by Jean-Marc Le Scouarnec who reports: The 3rd edition of *Les Musicales franco-russes Festival* was presented in Toulouse 13 March to April 1. Despite the pitfalls (including those sown by a damn virus), the festival was a big success on the Internet, its main distribution channel. “Without counting the audience of Medici TV’s recording of the last of the four concerts given at the Halle aux grains, we have so far recorded 200,000 views on our social networks,” said Thierry d’Argoubet, general delegate of the Capitol Orchestra. This “demonstrates to what extent the

Les Musicales franco-russes has become an essential meeting point for cultural dialogue between the two peoples.” Two people were particularly delighted with this new edition, Pierre Morel and Alexandre Orlov, who above all represent the Trianon Dialogue, an official body implementing all the initiatives linking France and Russia.”

The UK newspaper [The Times](#) publishes an article by David Sanderson and Neil Fisher who report “Plácido Domingo, the Spanish tenor whose career was all but ended when he was accused of sexual harassment two years ago, could be set for a return to the Royal Opera House.” “In an interview in Times2 today (23 March) Oliver Mears, director of opera at Covent Garden, said: “Plácido has a long-standing and rich association with the opera house going back many decades and we’re currently discussing what form any future collaboration might take either next season or beyond that.” “Domingo has effectively been boycotted in the United States and his home country after dozens of women accused him of sexual harassment but he recently performed at Vienna State Opera and Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre, and has dates at other European venues lined up.”

BRIEFLY

- **On April 2, 3 and 4**, Stanislavsky Musical Theatre presented a new premiere for this year — a new programme of one-act ballets composed of the revival of George Balanchine’s *Concerto Barocco* and Russian premieres of Sharon Eyal’s *Autodance* and Akram Khan’s *Kaash* — [Radio Orpheus reports](#).

[Kultura channel](#) reports on the evening of one-act ballets on the stage of the Stanislavsky Musical Theatre.

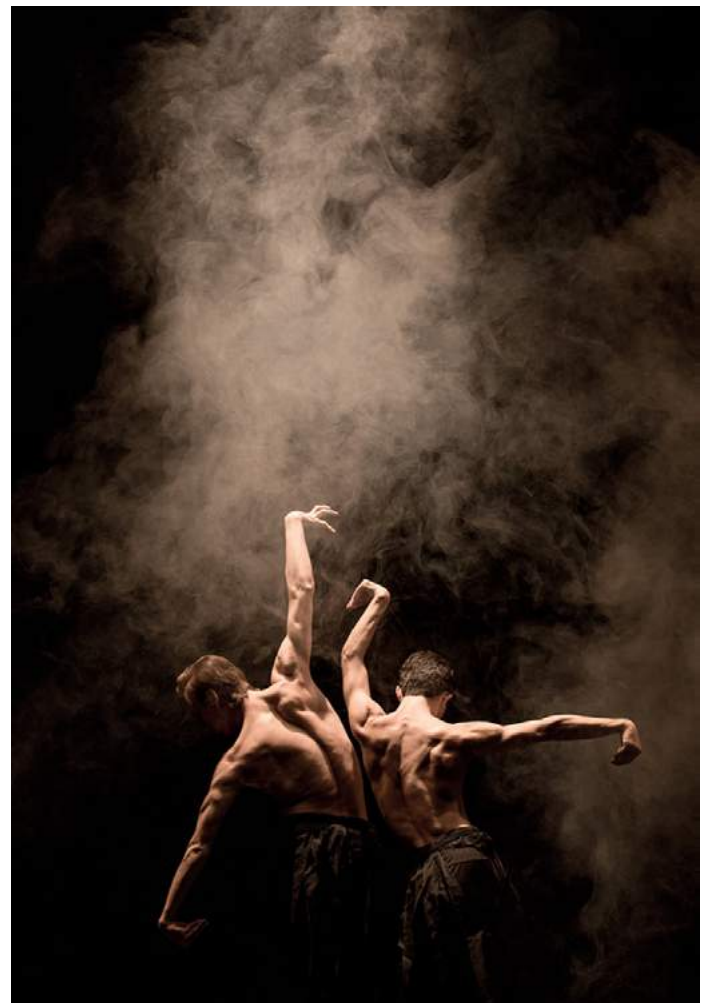
Shortly before the premiere, [Bazaar](#) asked Akram Khan about the conditions under which the performance was prepared and how Russian artists surprised him.

- A staging of the opera *Carmen* by Konstantin Bogomolov in Perm remains in the focus of mass media. A graduate of the Bolshoi Young Artists Opera Program Boris Rudak is a participant of the premiere.

[Kommersant](#):

“There are no guest singers in the entire first premiere cast: the ensemble is led by the heroic Natalya Lyaskova (Carmen), attentive to style and irresistible as an actress. José — the favorite of the Perm audience, Boris Rudak, who lately has had luck with ironically played roles of romantic heroes. Escamillo — the resonant and artistically responsive Enhbat Tuvshinzhargal. Even if they may be questioned on their own, their well-balanced vocal ensemble enriched the performance with a serious visual and musical artistry.”

[Rossiyskaya Gazeta](#)



Akram Khan’s ballet *KAASH*. Stanislavsky Musical Theatre presented a new programme of one-act ballets on April 2, 3 and 4. [Photo by Karina Zhitkova](#)

• On **June 8–9**, the *International Ballet Festival Benois de la Danse* will be presented for the 28th time on the Bolshoi Historic Stage, [Muzykalnoe Obozrenie](#) newspaper reports.

On June 8, the audience can expect a gala of the ballet stars — the nominees of the year 2020 for the *Benois de la Danse* prize — and the awards ceremony for the winners. Before the gala, the jury, represented by Yuri Grigorovich, will announce the names of the new winners.

On June 9 — a gala titled *Stars of Benois de La Danse* — winners of different years.

Amongst the participants there will be representatives of 11 leading classical and contemporary companies of the world.



Festival Benois de la Danse will take place on June 8 to 9 at the Bolshoi Historic Stage for the 28th time

• The exhibition of posters of the *Theatre on a Wall* at the theatre museum was extended until **April 11**. 100 posters and programmes from the end of the 19th century and until the first half of the 20th century from the collection of St Petersburg Museum of Theatrical and Musical Art were displayed. The exhibition includes banners by renowned artists, from Muha, Bakst and Cocteau to the Stenberg Brothers and Rodchenko, as well as performance programmes designed by Golovin, Somov and Bilibin.

The exhibition on the [Artefact platform](#), A digital catalogue of the exhibition can be found via [the link](#).

Russian National Museum of Music presents an exhibition project *The Victorious Voice of Music* dedicated to the chief conductor of the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR, musician and composer Nikolai Golovanov, and the musicians of Moscow during the years of the Great Patriotic War. See more in [Vechnyaya Moskva](#). The exhibition is available until June 1, reports [the museum's website](#). The three parts of the exhibition are — Repertoire of the War Years of Conductor Golovanov, War Memorials of a Musician, and Musical Compositions of Nikolai Golovanov During the Years of the Great Patriotic War.

• The exhibition *Flight as a Dream* opened at Bakhrushin Museum. [Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)

“Stage flight appeared as far back as ancient theatre. To accomplish this, ancient Greeks used a special mechanism. But stage flight flourished in baroque theatre, when flying over the stage was a necessary part of the performance. In Russian Imperial Theatre, stage effects were widely used throughout the 19th century. Large-scale and spectacular performances-extravaganzas were especially popular in the middle of the century. /.../It was impossible to imagine *Giselle* or *La Sylphide* without flying ballerinas. One of the masters of creating such effects was the artist-



The *Bolshoi Stars in Krasnoyarsk* gala opened the *8th Trans-Siberian Art Festival*
Photo / [KP](#)

decorator and machinist of the Imperial Bolshoi Theatre Karl Valtz. He was rightly called the magician of the stage.”/.../

[Kultura channel](#)
[Kultura newspaper](#)
[MK](#)

The Bolshoi Stars in Krasnoyarsk gala opened the 8th Trans-Siberian Art Festival.

The festival is held from March 25 to April 30 in Moscow, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk and other cities of Siberia. Artists from Japan, USA, France, Latvia, and famous Russian musicians participate. Its manager Vadim Repin answered [Rossiyskaya Gazeta's](#) questions.”

• On **April 4**, at the Beloselsky-Belozersky Palace in St Petersburg, a memorial concert was held in memory of the conductor Alexander Vedernikov (1964–2020.)

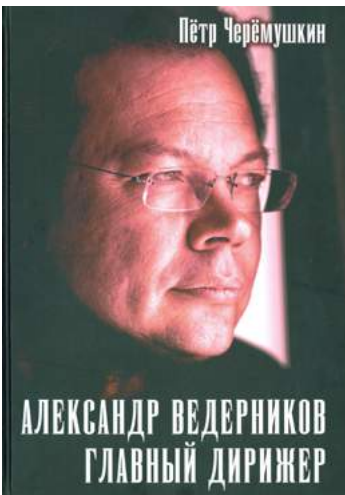
Artists of the St Petersburg State Academic Symphonic Orchestra under the baton of Alexander Titov performed Paul Hindemith's *Mourning Music* for altos and the string orchestra (1936), Richard Strauss' *Metamorphosen, study for 23 strings* (1944–1945) and Ludwig van Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* (1811–1812.)

Covered by:

[Muzykalnoye Obozrenie](#)
[Orpheus](#)



[Alexander Vedernikov](#) (1964—2020)



• The book *Alexander Vedernikov, Chief Conductor* arranged by Vedernikov's friend and classmate Pyotr Cheryomushkin, with help of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia, has come out in print. It is a compilation of unique photos, memories of the musicians, fragments from Vedernikov's interviews with Russian and foreign mass media.

• The State Shchusev Museum of Architecture invites the public to an exhibition of coloured diapositives of 1900–1910 — [Colourful Shards of the Empire](#).

The series consists of more than 200 hand-painted diapositives with views of Moscow and other regions of the Russian Empire, made by Karl Elov Berggren — a Swedish military, officer of the General Staff. The collection is notable for its unusual technique of printing on glass and the personal view of the author.

[Moscow Major website informs](#)



[Colourful Shreds of Empire](#) at the Architecture Museum until May 16

• On **April 11**, Wiener Staatsoper has for the first time performed Wagner's *Parsifal* staged by Kirill Serebrennikov (without audience.)

A video version of the performance with Jonas Kaufmann and Elina Garancha in the main roles will be available in Russia and Europe from April 18, 15:00 MSC, on [ARTE Concert](#) website

The premiere covered by:

[TASS](#)
[Muzykalnoye Obozrenie](#)
[Teatr](#)

• The German online specialised classical music news website Concerti publishes its recommendations by Jakob Buhre of what to stream or watch online on the occasion of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the date Stravinsky died. His selection includes “Bolshoi Ballet: *Petrushka*. This recording of the ballet *Petrushka* was made in Moscow in 1993, but not on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre, but in the Mosfilm studios under the direction of Andris Liepa.

[Click here for the video](#)

• **April 6** — the memorial day of Igor Stravinsky (June 17, 1882 — April 6, 1971). The grand figure of the world music culture of the 20th century had passed away 50 years ago.

Igor Stravinsky



DEBUTS

Il Barbiere di Siviglia

April 7

Igor Golovatenko debuted as Figaro in the Bolshoi production.

The Best Young Singer of the London Opera Award 2019, Swiss mezzo Marina Viotti — debuted at the Bolshoi as Rosina (also on April 9 and 10)

April 8

Merited Artist of Belarus Andrei Valenty debuted as Basilio in the Bolshoi of Russia production (also April 10 и 11)

Raymonda

April 6

Mark Chino as Beranger

April 7

Eva Sergeenkova (MBA student) as Henriette

The Winter's Tale

April 10 (12:00)

Semyon Chudin debuted as Leontes and Margarita Shrayner — as Perdita

Don Carlo

April 15

Placido Domingo appears for the first time in the Bolshoi production in one of his best roles — Rodrigo, Marquis of Posa (April 15 and 18.)

Ferruccio Furlanetto appears for the first time at the Bolshoi as Philip II which has a special place in the singer's repertoire (April 15 and 18.)

Andrei Valenty the leading soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus appears for the first time at the Bolshoi of Russia as a Monk (he will sing on April 14–18.)



Margarita Shrayner as Perdita
Semyon Chudin as Leontes,
Anna Nikulina as Hermione

BIRTHDAYS

March 28 — the Day of the founding of the Bolshoi Theatre

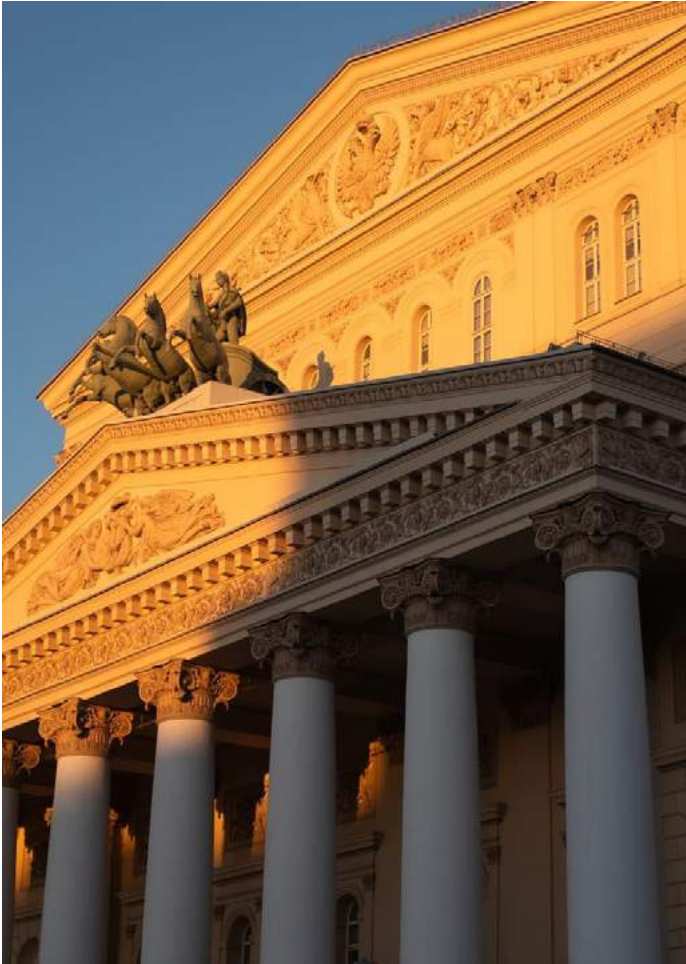


Photo by Batyr Annadurdyev

March 27 — the International Theatre Day

March 27 — cellist, conductor Mstislav Rostropovich (1927–2007)



Mstislav Rostropovich

March 29 — ballet dancer, choreographer Vasily Tikhomirov (Mikhailov) (1876–1956) 1900–1935 — ballet-master of the Bolshoi. 1925–1930 — director of the Bolshoi ballet — 145th anniversary of his birth

March 31 — great theatre and art impresario Sergei Diaghilev, one of the founders of the World of Art group, founder of Russian Seasons in Paris and Ballets Russes company (1872–1929)

March 31 — set designer, painter and graphic artist Sergei Bakhrin (1938–2020); 1995–2000 — chief designer of the Bolshoi.

April 1 — composer, pianist, conductor Sergei Rachmaninoff. (1873–1943). For two seasons (1904–1906) he conducted all Russian opera repertoire at the Bolshoi Theatre.



Sergei Rachmaninoff

April 2 — ballet-master of the Bolshoi, soloist working under contract Anna Antropova

April 2 — ballet dancer, ballet-master, dance theorist, founder of the Paris Choreograph University and the University of Dance Serge Lifar (1905–1986)

April 4 — outstanding choreographer Pierre Lacotte. In 2000 he staged the ballet *La Fille du Pharaon* especially for the Bolshoi Ballet. In 2013 Lacotte created a new version of the ballet *Marco Spada*.



Pierre Lacotte

April 8 — opera singer, lyrical mezzo soprano Maria Maksakova (1902–1974)



Maria Maksakova

April 4 — opera singer (baritone), singing coach of the Bolshoi Young Artists Opera Program Sergei Leiferkus — 75th birthday



Sergei Leiferkus

April 9 — a prominent impresario of the 20th century Sol Hurok (born Solomon Gurkov) (1888–1974) He organised many US tours of Russian artists such as Fyodor Chaliapin, Anna Pavlova, Irina Arkhipova, Maya Plisetskaya, Mstislav Rostropovich, Galina Vishnevskaya, and of course the Bolshoi Theatre.