



Newsletter

Events

PREMIERE

February 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th, the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage – the first premiere of 2018, the opera *The Queen of Spades* by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, libretto by Modest Tchaikovsky after the novel of the same name by Alexander Pushkin.

The new stage version of the opera was created by the Bolshoi Theatre's chief conductor and music director Tugan Sokhiev and the stage director Rimas Tuminas.

Director, Choreographer: Anželika Cholina. Set Designer: Adomas Jacovskis. Costume Designer: Maria Danilova. Lightning Designer: Damir Ismagilov. Chief Chorus Master: Valery Borisov.

On February 15th and 17th the cast starred: Yusif Eyvazov as Herman, Anna Nechaeva as Liza, Igor Golovatenko as Prince Yeletsky, Roman Muravitsky as Chekalinsky and Vyacheslav Pochapsky as Surin.

On February 16th and 18th the cast starred: Oleg Dolgov as Herman, Evgenia Muravieva as Liza, Vasily Ladyuk as Prince Yeletsky, Marat Gali as Chekalinsky and Alexander Naumenko as Surin.

The cast also starred Larisa Diadkova as The Countess, Gevorg Hakobyan and Nikolai Kazankys as Count Tomsy / Zlatogor (February 18th), Ivan Maximeyko as Chaplitsky, Vladimir Komovich as Narumov, Igor Tsurcan as Master of Ceremonies, Olesya Petrova as Poulina/Milovzor, Elena Novak as Governess, Oxana Gorchakovskaya as Masha, Albina Latipova and Anastasia Sorokina as Prilepa (February 18th).

Conductor – Tugan Sokhiev.

The next performances are scheduled to take place on the Historic Stage on May 4th, 5th and 6th (matinee performance at 2 p.m.).

The stage director talks about the new production; the article *There Is No Use Trying to Convince Oneself One Is Not Guilty* was published on the Bolshoi's website prior to the premiere.

The video featuring the rehearsals is available on the Bolshoi's [official YouTube channel](#).



Igor Golovatenko as Yeletsky, Anna Nechaeva as Liza, Vyacheslav Pochapsky as Surin, Roman Muravitsky as Chekalinsky, Larisa Diadkova as The Countess, Gevorg Hakobyan as Tomsy and Yusif Eyvazov as Herman. Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov



Oleg Dolgov as Herman, Evgenia Muravieva as Liza. Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

The opera *The Queen of Spades* was composed in Florence in the spring of 1890 on commission from the director of the Imperial Theatres Ivan Vsevolozhsky. The world premiere took place on December 7th 1890 at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg. Conductor – Eduard Napravnik.

The Moscow premiere took place at the Bolshoi Theatre on November 4th 1891. Conductor – Ippolit Altani. The Bolshoi has since then

revised the stage version and the musical interpretation of this piece by Pushkin and Tchaikovsky numerous times. In the 21st century *The Queen of Spades* has been staged by Valery Fokin and the music director Mikhail Pletnev on the New Stage of the Bolshoi. The most recent version has been staged by Lev Dodin, Mikhail Jurowski and David Borovsky in 2015 to mark the 175th anniversary of the composer.

On February 13th prior to the dress rehearsal of the opera the press-briefing took place; there were 15 cameras present. Tugan Sokhiev, Rimas Tuminas and the singers – Anna Nechaeva, Larisa Diadkova, Igor Golovatenko, Roman Muravitsky and Gevorg Hakobyan – talked about the future production.



The press-briefing about the premiere of the opera *The Queen of Spades*. Photo courtesy: Natalia Zimyanina

February 21st and 22nd, the Historic Stage – performances of the ballet *Ivan the Terrible*, choreographed by Yuri Grigorovich to the music by Sergei Prokofiev.

Set design and costumes by Simon Virsaladze.

The revival of the new choreographic version was first presented on November 8th 2012.

The production uses excerpts from music by Sergei Prokofiev to the film *Ivan the Terrible*, Russian Overture, cantata *Alexander Nevsky*, *The Third Symphony*. Mikhail Chulaki's version and additional music excerpts. Libretto by Yuri Grigorovich.

The premiere of the production that was much spoken about took place at the Bolshoi Theatre on February 20th 1975. The cast starred: Yuri Vladimirov (Ivan IV), Natalia Bessmertnova (Anastasia) and Boris Akimov (Prince Kurbsky). Algis Žiūraitis conducted the orchestra. In the summer of the same year *Ivan the Terrible* became a sensation during the Bolshoi Ballet's guest tour in the USA; the press published an endless number of articles about the production. Next year the ballet became a success at the Paris Opera; it was also performed on a specially constructed stage in the Louvre during the summer season.

The production remained in the Bolshoi Theatre's repertoire from 1975 till 1990; it was performed for 99

times, and there were a little less than one hundred performances during guest tours in France, Czechoslovakia, Germany, England and other countries.

The article, in which Yuri Grigorovich talks about his ballet, is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).

The last performance took place on the Historic Stage in the final round of the festival of productions, marking the [90th birthday of Yuri Grigorovich](#) (the festival took place at the Bolshoi Theatre from January 2nd till February 26th 2017).

The main parts of *Ivan IV*, *Anastasia* and *Prince Kurbsky* were performed by Mikhail Lobukhin, Svetlana Zakharova and Denis Rodkin (February 21st) and Ivan Vasiliev, Olga Smirnova and Artem Ovcharenko (February 22nd).

Conductor – Pavel Klinichev.

The casts are available [here](#).

The [live transmission](#) of the production of *Ivan the Terrible* by the Bolshoi Ballet from the Historic Stage was available for audiences in Russia and around the world on April 19th 2015 (the cast starred Mikhail Lobukhin, Anna Nikulina and Denis Rodkin).

The film-ballet *Ivan the Terrible* starring the premiere cast of the production that was presented at the Bolshoi Theatre on February 20th 1975 (Yuri Vladimirov as *Ivan IV*, Natalia Bessmertnova as *Anastasia* and Boris Akimov as *Prince Kurbsky*) is available on [YouTube](#).

The recording of the production of 1977 starring Vladimir Vasiliev as *Ivan IV*, Lyudmila Semenyaka as *Anastasia* and Boris Akimov as *Prince Kurbsky* from the archive recording of the TV channel Culture (went on air on August 19th 2012) is also available on [YouTube](#).

The original recording of the performance starring Yuri Vladimirov as *Ivan IV*, Natalia Bessmertnova as *Anastasia* and Boris Akimov as *Prince Kurbsky* is available on the portal [Culture.ru](#).

The recording of the 1990 performance starring Irek Mukhamedov as *Ivan IV*, Natalia Bessmertnova as *Anastasia* and Gediminas Taranda as *Prince Kurbsky* is available for download in the internet library of classic music [Intermezzo](#) and is [available for viewing at](#).



Yuri Grigorovich at the curtain calls after the performance of the ballet *Ivan the Terrible* on February 26th 2017.

Photo courtesy: [Forum Ballet and Opera](#)

On February 25th the ballet [The Nutcracker](#) choreographed by Yuri Grigorovich to the music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky was performed on the Historic Stage in the afternoon. Set designer: Simon Virsaladze.

February 9th, the New Stage – the final performance of the programme of three one-act ballets, choreographic masterpieces of the 20th century.

The programme included the premiere of the 242nd season, [Forgotten Land by Jiří Kylián to the music of Sinfonia da requiem by Benjamin Britten](#) (music director: Anton Grishanin, set and costume design: John F. Macfarlane, lighting designer: Hans-Joachim Haas, lighting designer (adaptation): Kees Tjebbes). The first performances took place on November 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th 2017.

There were also one-act ballets [The Cage](#) by Jerome Robbins to the music by Igor Stravinsky and [Etudes](#) by Harald Lander to the music by Carl Czerny arranged and orchestrated by Knudage Riisager (the premiere took place on the New Stage on March 19th 2017; music director: Igor Dronov).

The report about one of the greatest ballets by Jerome Robbins [The Cage](#) (1951) is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#). When the ballet was first staged, it shocked the critics. There is also a report [A Metaphor of Ballet](#) about the ballet [Etudes](#) by Harald Lander.

For more information about the ballet [Forgotten Land](#) (1981) by Jiří Kylián please refer to the article [The Dance of Life at the Land's End](#).

Igor Dronov conducted the ballet [The Cage](#), Anton Grishanin conducted [Forgotten Land](#) and [Etudes](#).

The cast of the ballet [The Cage](#) is available [here](#). The cast of the ballet [Forgotten Land](#).

[The cast of the ballet Etudes](#)

(these are the casts that performed on the New Stage on February 7th and 8th as well).



Erick Swolkin as the Second Intruder and Anastasia Stashkevich as Novice after the performance of the ballet [The Cage](#) on February 9th. Photo courtesy: [facebook Peihua An](#)

February 10th, 11th and 13th, the New Stage – the ballet [The Bright Stream](#) choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Dmitry Shostakovich, libretto by Adrian Piotrovsky and Fyodor Lopukhov.

Designer: Boris Messerer. Music Director: Pavel Sorokin.

The production premiered on April 18th 2003.

The history of creation of the ballet [The Bright Stream](#) and information about the ballet's productions is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).

In February the casts starred: Anastasia Stashkevich, Nina Kaptsova and Ekaterina Krysanova as Zina, Semyon Chudin, Mikhail Lobukhin and Ivan Vasiliev as Pyotr, Ekaterina Shipulina, Maria Alexandrova and Xenia Zhiganshina as Ballerina, Vladislav Kozlov, Vladislav Lantratov and Ruslan Skvortsov as Ballet Dancer.

Conductors: Pavel Klinichev (February 10th) and Pavel Sorokin (February 11th and 13th).

More information about the casts is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).



Ruslan Skvortsov as Ballet Dancer in the ballet [The Bright Stream](#). Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

February 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th (matinee performance at 2 p.m.), the New Stage – performances of the ballet [A Hero of Our Time](#) by Ilya Demutsky.

The premiere of the ballet, based on the novel by Mikhail Lermontov, took place on July 22nd 2015; with this premiere and this production the Bolshoi marked the 200th anniversary of the great poet that was celebrated in 2014. Stage director: Kirill Serebrennikov, ballet master: Yuri Possokhov. The music was composed

by Ilya Demutsky on commission from the Bolshoi Theatre. *A Hero of Our Time* was awarded the national prize Golden Mask-2016 in the category Best Ballet Production; Yuri Possokhov received the award Benois de la Danse for his choreography.

Conductor: Anton Grishanin.

The casts are available [here](#).

[The article about the history of the ballet's creation](#)

The video that was made prior to the ballet's premiere is available on the [Bolshoi's official YouTube channel](#).

To take a look back and to remind yourself about the ballet's world premiere feel free to watch the programme [A Ticket to the Bolshoi](#) on the TV channel Russia-Culture (on air on September 25th 2015).

The video that was made in cooperation with Pathé Live and transmission of the production at the cinemas around the world on April 9th 2017 is available on the [Bolshoi's official YouTube channel](#).



Vladislav Lantratov as Pechorin,
Maria Alexandrova as Undine. *A Hero of Our Time* (Taman).
Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

February 21st, 23rd, 25th and 27th, the New Stage – last performances of the opera [Billy Budd](#) by Benjamin Britten staged by David Alden.

The production that was created by the Bolshoi in cooperation with the English National Opera and Deutsche Oper Berlin will now disappear from the repertoire. Prior to being staged at the Bolshoi (the premiere took place on November 25th 2016) the opera had never been performed in Moscow.

This “marine” story, based on Melville’s novel, is quite spartan and performed by males only. There is only one cast that starred John Daszak as Captain Vere, Iurii Samoilov as Billy Budd, Gidon Saks as John Claggart, Bogdan Volkov as The Novice, Robert Lloyd as Dansker and others. More information about the cast is available [here](#).

The critics admitted this performance was, without any doubt, a success for the Bolshoi. Music director: maestro William Lacey, stage director: David Alden, set designer: Paul Stainberg, costume designer: Constance Hoffman. They all were nominated for The Golden Mask; so was the production itself. This is what Pyotr Pospelov wrote about his impressions of the production: “It seems you have completed a great voyage and have come back to yourself, having gained so much experience as can be gained over a lifetime” (newspaper [Vedomosti](#), November 29th 2016).

More information about the production is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).



A scene from the production. Iurii Samoilov as Billy Budd.
Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

On March 4th there will be a live transmission of the ballet [The Flames of Paris](#) by Alexei Ratmansky to the music by Boris Asafiev from the New Stage. The ballet will be broadcast at the cinemas worldwide as a part of the 5th season of the project Bolshoi Ballet at the cinema. The Bolshoi Theatre carries out this project in collaboration with Pathé Live and Bel Air Media.

The performance is to start at 6 p.m. (Moscow time). It will simultaneously be broadcast on the [Bolshoi's channel](#) for the audience in Russia.

Choreography by Alexei Ratmansky with use of the original choreography by Vasily Vainonen. Music direc-

tor: Pavel Sorokin. Scenographers: Ilya Utkin and Evgeny Monakhov. Costume Designer: Elena Markovskaya. Lighting Designer: Damir Ismagilov.

[The Bolshoi Theatre together with Pathé Live has created a video announcing the broadcast](#)

[The Flames of Paris at the cinemas in Russia](#)



Margarita Shrainer as Jeanne in The Flames of Paris.

Photo courtesy: Elena Fetisova

February 22nd – the second Bolshoi Theatre Artists Concert [To the 220th Birth Anniversary of Franz Schubert](#) took place at the Beethoven Hall at 7:30 p.m.

[To the 220th Birth Anniversary of Franz Schubert. Concert One](#) took place at the Beethoven Hall on January 31st.

More information is available on the [Bolshoi's website](#).



Gustav Klimt. Schubert at the piano
1899; canvas, oil.
Lost in 1945

February 25th, 7 p.m., Beethoven Hall – the [Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra Artists Concert Representing Violas](#).

On February 15th the participants of the Bolshoi Theatre Young Artist Opera Program performed at the Amphithéâtre Bastille together with their colleagues, the young artists of the Académie d'Opéra de Paris. [The programme Bastille-Bolshoi](#) included chamber music by German composers: Robert Schumann, Franz Schubert and Richard Strauss. Piano part – Mikhail Korshunov.

The concert at the Opera Bastille was the final event of the internship that five young participants of the Bolshoi's Young Artist Opera Program had as a part of the joint project with the Académie d'Opéra de Paris. The project was carried out following the initiative of the artistic director of the Bolshoi's Young Artists Program Dmitry Vdovin. As a result, the Russian singers had a chance to spend three weeks studying with the best pedagogues, namely Margaret Singer (singing), Muriel Corradini (French and Italian pronunciation), Irène Kudela (German and Czech), Jean-Marc Bouget (working on the role) and Joseph Alfrod (stage movement).

The detailed programme of the concert is available [here](#).

[The playbill on the website of the Paris National Opera](#)



About the Young Artists Program of Opera de Paris
on the theatre's [website](#) (in English)

Mezzo continues its transmissions of the Bolshoi Theatre's productions. Over several months subscribers of Mezzo Live HD, Mezzo Live Hdworld and Mezzo SD, as well as Internet users, have a chance to watch the Bolshoi's opera and ballet productions as a part of the cycle that is dedicated to this particular theatre.

On February 13th the ballet [Marco Spada](#) choreographed by Pierre Lacotte to the music by Daniel-François-Esprit Auber was broadcast live on the [TV channel](#) (8:30 p.m. CET, -2 Moscow time, the broadcast was repeated on February 19th and 24th). The cast stars David Hallberg, Evgenia Obraztsova, Olga Smirnova, Semyon Chudin and Igor Tsvirko (the recording of the performances that took place on the Historic Stage on March 28th and 30th 2014). The ballet was/is also available to subscribers on February 16th, 26th and 28th, as well as on March 1st, 2nd and 9th.



[Marco Spada on the TV channel Mezzo](#)
on February 13th, 8:30 p.m.CET (-2 Moscow time)



[The Golden Age on the TV channel Mezzo](#)
on February 20th at 8:30 p.m. CET (-2 Moscow time)

February 24th (8:30 p.m. CET; -2 Moscow time, will be repeated on March 3rd and 12th) the opera [Katerina Izmailova](#) by Dmitry Shostakovich staged by Rimas Tuminas will be broadcast on the [TV channel](#) (the recording of the performances that took place on November 10th and 12th 2016). The cast stars Nadja Michael, John Daszak, Marat Gali, Taras Shtonda and Oxana Gorchakovskaya.



Nadja Mikhael as Katerina and John Daszak as Sergei in the opera Katerina Izmailova by Dmitry Shostakovich staged by Rimas Tuminas. Photo courtesy: Damir Yusupov

The subscribers Mezzo Live HD, Mezzo Live HD world, Mezzo SD had and will have a chance to watch the broadcasts of the ballet [The Golden Age](#) to the music by Dmitry Shostakovich (choreographic version by Yuri Grigorovich) on February 16th, 24th and 28th, as well as March 1st and 2nd (recording of the performances that took place on October 13th and 16th 2016). The cast stars Nina Kaptsova, Ekaterina Krysanova, Ruslan Skvortsov, Mikhail Lobukhin and Vyacheslav Lopatin.

Live transmission of the ballet The Golden Age were available on [Mezzo](#) (8:30 p.m. CET, -2 Moscow time) on February 20th and 26th; the live broadcasts will also be available at the same time on March 3rd and 16th.

March 27th, April 2nd, 7th and 20th – the ballet by Pyotr Tchaikovsky [The Swan Lake](#), choreographic version of Yuri Grigorovich. The cast stars Svetlana Zakharova, Denis Rodkin and Artemy Belyakov.

More detailed schedule of transmissions and timetable for each production is available on [Mezzo's web-site](#).



John Neumeier at the rehearsal of the ballet Anna Karenina with the Bolshoi Ballet dancers Denis Rodkin and Svetlana Zakharova, who are to perform the main parts.

February 20th. Photo courtesy: Katerina Novikova

The rehearsals for the ballet Anna Karenina, choreographed by John Neumeier to the music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Alfred Shnitke, Cat Stevens / Yusuf Islam are in full swing. The co-production of the Bolshoi Theatre, the Hamburg Ballet and the National Ballet of Canada is to premiere on the Historic Stage on March 23rd 2018.

The permanent artistic director of the Hamburg Ballet John Neumeier is not only the choreographer, but also the set and costume designer (the costumes for the main heroine were designed by the Swiss fashion house Akris). Video and graphics by Kiran West.

Music director – Anton Grishanin.

The cast at the Bolshoi will star Svetlana Zakharova, Olga Smirnova and Yulia Stepanova (Anna), Denis Rodkin and Artem Ovcharenko (Vronsky), Alexander Volchikov, Semyon Chudin and Andrei Merkuriev (Karenin), as well as other dancers.

music awards BraVo took place on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage on March 18th 2017 and was a huge success.

The Bolshoi's production of Manon Lescaut (stage director – Adolph Shapiro) became a laureate of the 16th Moscow Annual Theatre Award of the Union of Theatre Workers of Russia Gvozd Sezona (Nail of a Season). The website of the Union of Theatre Workers of Russia reports.



March 11th, the Historic Stage – the first award ceremony of the international professional music awards BraVo in classical art.

The BraVo award is given to the most popular Russian and foreign performers; its founders claim it aims to “strengthen the status of Russia being the centre of the Euro-Asian cultural environment”.

The following countries are mentioned as partners of the Award: Japan, China, UAE, India, Indonesia, Singapore, the Republic of Korea and member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The audience of the BraVo award is estimated to be over a billion of people.

Representatives of diplomatic missions from different countries, heads of Russian ministries and departments, people of art, popular culture and film stars from Russia and all over the world, producers, patrons of art and famous public figures are expected to attend the gala-concert, starring world famous celebrities.

The following world opera and ballet stars are going to take part in the BraVo award ceremony: Jose Carreras (Spain), Svetlana Zakharova, Anna Netrebko, Yusif Eyvazov, Sumi Jo (South Korea), Seiichi Furukawa (Japan) and many others.

Special guest of the Ceremony — British singer Rod Stewart.

[The official website of the award](#)

[Facebook page](#)

[The presentation](#) of the international professional

The main winner and the recipient of the Big Crystal Nail will be announced at the award ceremony that is to take place on March 5th 2018 at the Theatre Center “Na Strastnom”. Gvozd Sezona is an annual award that is given to the best productions, staged at Moscow theatres. Following the tradition, the list of the brightest Moscow premieres of 2016-2017 includes five productions. There are two stages of choosing the productions that are nominated for this award. The winner of the main prize, the Big Crystal Nail, will be chosen by the jury, headed by the Chairman of the Union of Theatre Workers of Russia Alexander Kalyagin. The production that is awarded the main prize is also announced to be the Gvozd Sezona.

On May 12th the gala-concert marking the jubilee of the People's Artist of the USSR Svetlana Adyrkhaeva will take place on the Bolshoi's Historic Stage. The programme of the concert is to be announced later.

On May 13th the performance of the ballet A Legend of Love, choreographed by Yuri Grigorovich to the music by Arif Melikov, will also be dedicated to the ballerina.

Svetlana Adyrkhaeva once was a guest at the Green Living Room: from 1960 till 1988 she was a prima-ballerina at the Bolshoi Theatre, and then remained at the theatre to work as a ballet master-repetiteur. In her interview dated 2013, which is now available on the Bolshoi's official YouTube channel, she also talked about working with Yuri Grigorovich.



Svetlana Adyrkhaeva as Mekhmene Banu
in *A Legend of Love* by Arif Melikov,
the Bolshoi Theatre of the USSR



Natalia Bessmertnova as Giselle,
Mikhail Lavrovsky as Albrecht

Ten years ago, on February 19th 2008, a great Russian ballerina Natalia Bessmertnova passed away (1941–2008). She first appeared on the Bolshoi Theatre's stage when she was still a student at the Moscow Choreographic Institute, where she was taught by Maria Kozhukhova, Lyudmila Cherkasova and Sofia Golovkina.

In 1961 she graduated from the Institute with honours and joined the company. Over thirty years of her

career at this theatre she performed various parts in different ballets: Giselle and Raymonda in the ballets of same name, Odette/Odile in *The Swan Lake*, Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, Shireen in *A Legend of Love*, Masha in *The Nutcracker*, Kitri in *Don Quixote*, Phrygia in *Spartacus*, Anastasia in *Ivan the Terrible*, Valentina in *Angara*, Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Rita in *The Golden Age*.

She also travelled with the company on guest tours to every continent; she performed as a guest star on many stages around the world. She received the most prestigious prizes in Russia. She finished her career in 1994 and became a pedagogue.

[The Bolshoi Theatre's website](#) published the memoirs of Mikhail Lavrovsky, who was her partner for 20 years, from the book *The Unforgettable* – Natalia Bessmertnova.

Press analysis:

Russian mass media

The premiere of the opera *The Queen of Spades* staged by Rimus Tuminas on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage has been the focus of attention for mass media that report culture news.

The final ovation lasted for over 10 minutes; the opera singers Anna Netrebko (her spouse Yusif Eyvazov performed the part of Herman) and Hibla Gerzmava together with the heads of theatres in Moscow and Saint Petersburg applauded the singers. In her interview to [TASS](#) Netrebko said that before the performance she "wished the husband luck, strength and inspiration". She also admitted she was not worried about him, since she was positive "everything will be OK". When asked when to expect the couple at the Bolshoi the next time, Netrebko mentioned November.

[Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#) and TASS mention: The Queen of Spades has received positive reviews from the heads of numerous theatres in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, including the director of the Vakhtangov Theatre Kirill Krok, the director of the theatre Moscow Operetta Vladimir Tartakovsky and the General Director of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Moscow Academic Music Theatre Anton Getman.

The widow of Alexander Solzhenitsyn Natalia Solzhenitsyna also came to the performance and shared her opinion with TASS. She said: "I am inspired by what I have seen".

The Special Presidential Envoy for International Cultural Cooperation Mikhail Shvydkoy told TASS: “The staging of *The Queen of Spades* at the Bolshoi Theatre has always been a very important event. When you understand that the director and the conductor are truly cooperating, the result is amazing”. He stressed: “The style and the understanding of music make one so grateful to the creators of this performance, as well as to the artists”.

The Bolshoi Theatre General Director Vladimir Urin congratulated the production team and the performers on the premiere. He said: “*The Queen of Spades* has been staged hundreds of times”. Urin also mentioned he “enjoyed the reaction of the audience to the new stage version of the classic score”.

News agencies and central mass media sources published lots of announcements prior to the premiere.

[The First Channel](#) (Good Morning programme) reports: “The director of the new production Rimas Tuminas says he decided to do this because there are no opera clichés, no deliberateness of naivete. Everything is very close to life and dynamic. Larisa Diadkova (*The Countess*) believes that the Moscow production is remarkable for its “restraint and very good style”. Yusif Eyvazov (*Herman*) admits he is still trying to figure out his hero’s character”.



Rimas Tuminas in the report by The First Channel

[Vesti.ru](#) quote the Bolshoi Theatre music director Tugan Sokhiev: “The score of this opera is absolutely genius, Tchaikovsky’s dramaturgy is impeccable, – says the music director of the opera *The Queen of Spades* and the Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor Tugan Sokhiev. – The question is, how well we will manage to convey everything to the audience today, to sing it and to act it. We shall see”.

Tugan Sokhiev appeared in the programme *Glavnaya Rol’/Main Role* on the [TV channel Culture](#) on Feb-

ruary 15th. The music director of *The Queen of Spades* talked about the unusual depth of this opera, the sincerity of Tchaikovsky’s music and working together with the stage director Rimas Tuminas.

TV channel Culture: “The much spoken about premiere took place at the Bolshoi Theatre. *The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky was brought to the Historic Stage by the artistic duo working in tandem of the conductor Tugan Sokhiev and the stage director Rimas Tuminas”.

The interview with the Bolshoi Theatre soloist Anna Nechaeva (Liza) was broadcast in the programme *Culture News*.



Anna Nechaeva in the TV channel Culture studio

Before the performance on February 15th Elena Voroshilova ([TV channel Culture](#)) managed to ask the Bolshoi General Director Vladimir Urin a few questions.

He stressed: “The material that Tchaikovsky has in this opera, his dramaturgy, his musical component are so profound that, it seems to me, this piece allows the creation of an endless number of interpretations. Each artist, if he truly is one, has his own understanding of this opera. We believe it is the time to take a look at what Rimas Tuminas and his colleagues have come up with”. The report also features opinions of members of the audience of the premiere performance.

TV channel [TVC](#) broadcast the story by Yulia Bogomanshina: “*The Queen of Spades* is back in the repertoire. Staging by Rimas Tuminas. As usual, the director interpreted the famous story in his own way, having discovered new and unusual traits in the well-known characters. The cast is star-studded”.

Major mass media sources publish a huge number of reviews of the new version of the opera *The Queen of Spades* staged by Rimas Tuminas on the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage.

A writer and a TV host Andrey Maximov states in his article [The Harmony of Disharmony](#) (Rossiiskaya



The news story by the TV channel TVC

Gazeta. Federal issue): “Rimas Tuminas is an audacious director. His style is not about shocking the audience with his own ideas (although there are always a number of those in every one of his productions, including this one), but rather about making us, the spectators, get a profound understanding of whatever he stages. In this particular case we are talking about Pushkin’s prose, the great music by Pyotr Tchaikovsky and the great libretto by his brother Modest. /.../ Of course, this interpretation of the opera still has it all – passions, love... They cannot disappear. But the idea of a person being lonely in the crowd seemed very important and relevant to me. /.../ Rimas Tuminas has staged a very beautiful and a very modern production”.

Irina Muravieva ([Your Game is Up](#), Rossiiskaya Gazeta) believes: “Tuminas has demonstrated a certain wisdom, and it was to stand away from Tchaikovsky and to create a usual production”. /.../ “Tuminas distanced himself from an individual director’s interpretation of Tchaikovsky’s score on purpose: “There is no concept, no interpretation, no verdict here. You will see none of these in this opera”.

As the director himself talks about “almost concert version” of the opera, he mentions: “The aria of Yeletsky I Love You that was wonderfully performed by Igor Golovatenko, the arioso of Herman [Yusif Eyvazov] Forgive Me, Celestial Creature and his If Your Heart Has Ever Known the Feeling of Love that in Tchaikovsky’s opera is sung to The Countess – all of these were sung not to a particular character on the stage, but rather to the audience hall. /.../ Meanwhile, the mysticism, the emotional pathos and the feverish tension that are all present in this opera, which Tchaikovsky composed at a crazy speed, in just over 44 days, were the responsibility of the orchestra and the singers”.

The music director of the production Tugan Sokhiev demonstrated his signature qualities with this score: the transparency and clarity of the orchestra texture, precise dynamics, calm tempos, beautiful and humble sound of the orchestra”. /.../

Ekaterina Kretova attended the premiere on February 15th and gave the production a very positive review (the article [Rimas Tuminas Has Staged Tchaikovsky’s Opera](#) According to the Text was published by [Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)): “The most awaited opera premiere of the season, The Queen of Spades at the Bolshoi, has not disappointed the expectations. The music, full of pain and suffering, turned out to be the main character of this production staged by the director that does not have heavenly peace and blessed euphoria in his soul. Neither had the author of the opera. /.../ No cuts have been made to the score. /.../ All artists are impeccable. Anna Nechaeva (Liza) is, perhaps, one of the best in this part out of all singers we have heard in this endless number of The Queen of Spades productions. She is lyrical and ecstatic, sincere and passionate. Larisa Diadkova (The Countess) is unparalleled. Age nuances of her voice that is a bit shaky and the timbre that is a bit unsteady once the positions are changed all become parts of her character that is very classical: a majestic, tyrannical, still beautiful and stately old lady that terrifies and bewilders at the same time. Yeletsky (wonderful Igor Golovatenko) is just as traditional a character. /.../ One more detail. Lately Rimas Tuminas has been accused of being “not Russian”, which, in turn, resulted in not careful enough treatment of the Russian culture, so to speak. Tell you what. This Queen of Spades is, perhaps, the evidence of the deepest and most reverent immersion into the truly Russian material that we have had a chance to see and hear at a musical theatre in recent years”.

Svetlana Naborschikova in her article [Rimas and The Queen](#) ([Izvestia](#)) writes: “This interpretation of the opera by Tchaikovsky, presented at the Bolshoi Theatre, focuses on the music. As for the singers, the absence of special effects in terms of staging makes them more responsible. When the director comes up with lots of ideas, the singer can sort of hide behind them, but when this is not the case, the artist is on his own with the music and his character. To the credit of the singers that performed the leading roles (Anna Nechaeva as Liza, Larisa Diadkova as The Countess, Igor Golovatenko as Yeletsky and Gevorg Hakobyan as Tomsy), none of them backed down. Yusif Eyvazov (Herman) deserves a special mention. In Russia he is more famous not as a talented singer (although many remember his Chevalier des Grieux in *Manon Lescaut*), but as the husband of Anna Netrebko. I believe, Herman will restore artistic justice and help the singer become a master with self-worth. It is not even about the beauty of his voice (no one can be surprised with this at the Bolshoi), but rather about his ability to pronounce the musical phrase and to convey its smallest details to the audience, which is quite a rare skill today.

The orchestra, conducted by Tugan Sokhiev, was equally attentive to the details. /.../”

Yulia Bederova in her review Theatre on Request ([Kommersant](#)) praises the artistic skills of the creators of The Queen of Spades, although she has a lot of conceptual comments concerning the aesthetics of the new production: “Still, what we hear is also important. /.../ The orchestra comes clear and is almost illustrative, the singing, both solo and choir, is precise, detailed and always facilitated. /.../ Given such conditions, the vocal presentation of Yusif Eyvazov, who performs the extremely difficult and important part of Herman, goes well. His Herman is rather lyrical than expressively scary. Anna Nechaeva (Liza) is respectable, neat and prosaic, The Countess (Larisa Diadkova) brings with her the sound of the previous production without ruining this one. Tomskey (Gevorg Hakobyan) is abstract and comic, Yeletsky (Igor Golovatenko) poses a bit, but he has every reason to do so: his voice is amazing. Polina (Olesya Petrova) is a leader in terms of the smooth beauty of vocal volume and organic phrasing; the male ensemble, led by Roman Muravitsky and Vyacheslav Pochapsky, are decent representatives of the old guard acting style”.

Central mass media sources continued to report about the premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre on all performance dates:

[The First Channel](#) (February 18th, 12:16, report by Kristina Levieva): “The Bolshoi Theatre presents: the opera The Queen of Spades by Pyotr Tchaikovsky staged by Rimas Tuminas”.



Tugan Sokhiev, the Bolshoi Theatre chief conductor and music director: “In The Queen of Spades one has not only to sing, but also to act, it demands great acting skills” / [The First Channel](#)

[Russia-Culture](#) (Culture news with Vladislav Flyarkovsky, on air on February 18th at 7:30 p.m.): “The new Queen of Spades at the Bolshoi Theatre”.

On February 17th the programme Music in Events. The Choice of Olga Rusanova (No. 245) went on air on [Radio Rossii](#). The new version of The Queen of Spades was one of the events, discussed in the programme (Herman in Search of the Truth).

All publications are available from the Press Office upon request.

Mass media also report that the production of the opera Manon Lescaut by Giacomo Puccini at the Bolshoi Theatre has been nominated for the award Gvozd Sezona.

TASS announces (February 16th, 09:05 a.m., report by Olga Svistunova):

“The annual Moscow award of the Union of Theatre Workers of Russia Gvozd Sezona has announced the laureates of 2018. These are the five best productions that were staged in the theatres of the capital last season. /.../ Following the tradition, the five best productions of Moscow theatres are chosen by the council of experts and nominated for the award. Here is the list for this year: Manon Lescaut (Bolshoi Theatre, staged by Adolph Shapiro), Revizor. Version (Et Cetera directed by Alexander Kalyagin, staged by Robert Sturua), Turandot (Helikon Opera, staged by Dmitry Bertman), Tzar Oedipus (Vakhtangov Theatre, staged by Rimas Tuminas) and Anna Karenina (Moscow Operetta, staged by Alina Chebvik). Each of these productions will receive a Small Crystal Nail...

The winner of the main prize, Big Crystal Nail, will be announced at the award ceremony. The jury, headed by the chairman of the Union of Theatre Workers of Russia and a People’s Artist of Russia Alexander Kalyagin, will choose the winner from five finalists.

The following sources report about the event:

[RIA Novosti](#)

[Russia-K](#)

[Kulturomania](#)

[Gazeta.Ru](#)

[iReactor](#)

[Rewizor.ru](#)

[Vlad Time](#)

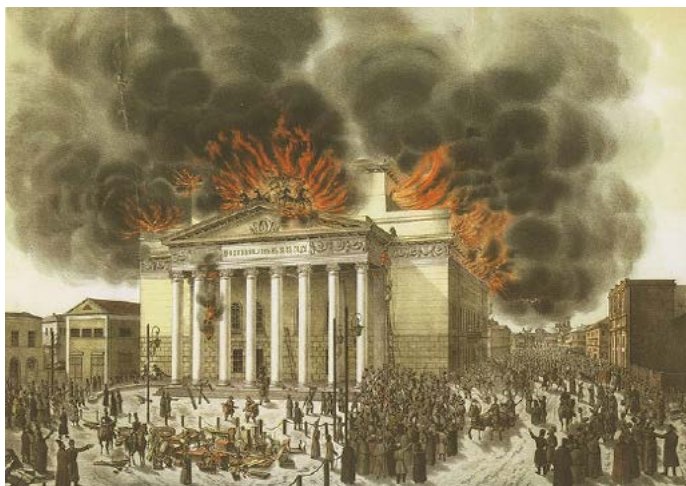
and other sources.

The portal [Culture. Ru](#) continues the series of joint publications together with the portal History. Ru and publishes an article about the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia titled Through the Fire and Destruction:

“The Bolshoi Theatre is a theatre with a troubled history. In her interview the director of the Bolshoi Theatre Museum Lidia Kharina talks about the founding the Bolshoi and explains where it was located, how many fires and other disasters it has survived, which productions have been staged there and what rules have existed there for the artists”.

The article by Ekaterina Solovyova is available on the portal [History. Ru](#).

In his interview with Marina Raikina and Pavel Yaschenkov (Moskovsky Komsomolets) La Scala prin-



The fire at the Imperial Bolshoi Theatre, March 11th 1853.

Lithography from the picture by E.Lillie.

Photo courtesy: [Culture. Ru](#)

incipal refers to the professional influence and reputation of the Bolshoi Ballet artistic director.

— Roberto, could you please go back in time a bit and remember your first meeting with Rudolph Nureyev? It looks like his cult is being revived in Russia today. /.../ Do you ever wish you had worked with Nureyev?

— You know, back then I really worried a lot, it was almost a tragedy for me. But now I understand: even though it did not happen, it turned out to be better for me, because otherwise I could have simply burnt out. I know it was very difficult to work with Rudolph, and I was just a child, who was not ready for this neither emotionally, nor physically. /.../

— When Makhar Vaziev worked in La Scala, he used to tell me: “Roberto, you have to take my place when I leave”. So I am going to take the place of Makhar Vaziev. Unfortunately, he left too early, so I cannot finish my career just now, but sooner or later I am going to take his place”.



Roberto Bolle.

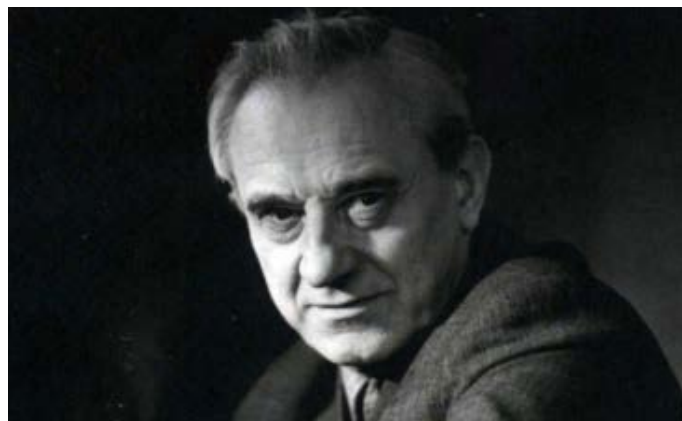
Photo courtesy:

Alejandro Lopez/ [Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)

Roberto Bolle performed at the Mikhailovsky Theatre in the gala-concert, marking the 85th anniversary of the ballet company. He danced together with Melissa Hamilton from the Royal Ballet. The gala also starred dancers from Saint Petersburg, Moscow and Europe, as well as stars from the Bolshoi Ballet. Various sources, including [Izvestia](#), reviewed the gala. Varvara Svintsova writes in her article Birthday of the Ballet: “The party from the Bolshoi Theatre was the most numerous. Pas de deux from The Flames of Paris, performed by Ekaterina Krysanova and Igor Tsvirko, was an ode to virtuosity. They filled it with all the necessary special effects. The duet from Lady of the Camellias provoked a very emotional response from the audience. The sophisticated silhouette of Olga Smirnova reminded us of the legendary Olga Spesivtseva, as if her surreal heroines appeared on the stage again. The feeling of doom and the lust for life filled the dancing and could be read on the beautiful yet gloomy face. Denis Rodkin was her ideal partner”.

Ekaterina Kretova and Pavel Yaschenkov ([Moskovsky Komsomolets](#)) report about the performance of Artem Ovcharenko at the gala.

Productions staged by Boris Pokrovsky at the Bolshoi Theatre have been made available for free on the portal [Culture. Ru](#)



Boris Pokrovsky. Photo courtesy/ [Culture. Ru](#)

The internet resource offers five productions in order to “popularise the cultural heritage of Russia” in the section “Boris Pokrovsky: an opera legend”. There are three Bolshoi Theatre productions:

[Sadko](#) (1980, 168’)

[Prince Igor](#) (1992, 137’)

[Pagliacci](#) (1985, 73’)

There are two more productions available: Mususi (The Chamber Music Theatre) and War and Peace (the Mariinsky Theatre).

The portal [Culture. Ru](#) writes about the director: “He was the first to stage the opera War and Peace; he

founded the theatre that has no analogue in Russia. In the opera laboratory (this is what critics often call his theatre) rare and not well-known pieces of world dramaturgy are staged. Georgy Tovstonogov, Galina Vishnevskaya and Pavel Lisitsian admired the genius of Boris Pokrovsky. The Russian conductor Yevgeny Svetlanov suggested including the name of the director into the Guinness World Records Book for his incredible industriousness, great talent and being faithful to art”.

On February 11th 1902 the Soviet theatre and film actress and singer Lyubov Orlova was born.

To mark the birthday of the People's Artist of USSR the newspaper [Kommersant](#) published the article My Art Is Known to Everyone, My Life Is No One's Business and a series of photographs.



People's Artists of the USSR,
the Bolshoi Theatre soloist Sergei Lemeshev
and an actress Lyubov Orlova.

Photo courtesy: A. Gostev/[Kommersant](#)

Press analysis:

international mass media

The well-known German magazine *Tanz* publishes the huge article by the Moscow critic Leila Guchmazova (translated from English) about the ballet *Nureyev* by the Bolshoi Theatre; the front cover of the February issue features Artem Ovcharenko in the main role.

The article is available on the [website](#) of the German source about theatre Der Theaterverlag – Friedrich Berlin Verlag. Quote: “Rarely has a premiere in the run-up has caused so much commotion. Ovations, for almost half an hour. On the floor: Representatives of the economy, politics, the righteousness of Russia. Finally, the production team bows, their T-shirts feature a portrait of Kirill Serebrennikov and the slogan “Freedom for the Director”. Thus ends a memorable evening at the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre, the highly anticipated premiere of *Nureyev*. “Serebrennikov has created a synthetic opus with *Nureyev* which, in addition to genuine ballet choreography, also unites acting, visual art, solo and choral singing as well as violin and harp playing on stage. More than 200 artists were involved in the production and, under the clever overall management of the director, who while remaining under house arrest, was responsible for the libretto and stage equipment, he clearly pulled it together. As a result, no less than an all-encompassing, profound and visually spectacular overall work of art took place in Moscow.”

The online specialised dance publication [Landgraf on Dance](#) publishes a review by Ilona Landgraf of *The Bright Stream* at the Bolshoi Theatre on February 10 and 11, 2018. “Ratmanský’s choreography drew from a broad spectrum of styles to characterise the figures.” “Since its premiere in 2003, “*The Bright Stream*” has received more than one-hundred performances. I saw two consecutive shows – numbers 117 and 118 – with different casts, in which each dancer coloured their character differently.

On the first night, Anastasia Stashkevich’s Zina was extrovert, feisty and kind-hearted. Semyon Chudin portrayed her Pyotr.” “Chudin, blessed with a natural elegance, portrayed Pyotr as a helter-skelter loves-truck poser.” “On the following evening, Nina Kaptsova danced Zina. Zina’s prospects for a ballet career must have been excellent given the skilfulness with which she revived them. She seemed to be less angry about Pyotr than she was determined to teach him a lesson. Mikhail Lobukhin’s Pyotr had a fine figure, suitable for farm work. He was not overly sophisticated, but sure of him-

self. The ballerina (Maria Alexandrova) was dauntless and world-wise, refined but grounded. In a man's clothing, she acted – and looked – snappy. However, Vladislav Lantratov took the cake as the male sylph. No matter what he was doing – be it dashing through the diagonals, blowing kisses, looking plaintively into the air, or demanding to be married by the dacha-dweller – he was side-splitting funny. Lantratov is amazingly talented on pointe, and if he tucks in the ribbons of his pointe shoes he could apply for La Sylphide, which will be in the repertoire in March.”

The French newspaper [La Depeche](#) publishes reports “On the 9th and 10th of March, the isdaT Fine Arts Toulouse” carried out professional higher education courses in music and dance that are supervised by a teaching team composed of high-level teaching artists, notably from the Conservatoire de Toulouse, the CRDs of the region and the National Orchestra of Capitole, the music department of the Jean Jaurès University. Tugan Sokhiev is the patron of the conducting programme.”

[The Financial Times](#) publishes an article by dance critic Laura Chappelle who reviews John Cranko's Onegin at the Palais Garnier, Paris giving the show four stars out of five.

“In the hands of the Paris Opera Ballet, this is a story of mismatched temperaments and grief with Ludmila Pagliero with Florian Magnenet in Onegin. “John Cranko's Onegin is one of ballet's sleeper hits. Made in Stuttgart in 1965, and reworked into its definitive version in 1967, it suddenly became a hot property in the 21st century: nearly every major company, from the Royal Ballet to the Bolshoi and American Ballet Theatre, now has it in its repertoire.”

Local newspapers and online publications announce upcoming screenings of Bolshoi Ballet productions in local cinemas.

The online community news publication [Central Maine](#) (USA) announces the upcoming screening of the Bolshoi's Lady of Camellias in local cinemas. “The Bolshoi brings choreographer John Neumeier's work of rare beauty and tragic depth to new emotional heights, accompanied by Chopin's romantic piano score.”

The newspaper [Battleboro Reformer](#) (Vermont, USA) announces the screening of the Bolshoi's Romeo and Juliet in local cinemas.

The online news publication [The Province](#) (British Columbia Canada) announces “This year and next, Silversea is offering a host of opera and ballet-themed

sailings aboard its flagship, Silver Muse.” “Enriched Voyages that feature classical ballet performances from Russia's State Academic Bolshoi Theatre and moving operatic performances from artists from the renowned Accademia Teatro alla Scala in Milan.” “We are thrilled and honoured to welcome such extraordinary talent from the performing arts,” said Barbara Muckermann, Silversea's chief marketing officer. “I know our guests on these exclusive voyages will be both enriched and inspired by the exceptional onboard entertainment experience.”

The English language Japanese news publication [The Japan Times](#) publishes a report by James D.J. Brown who writes about Russian Japanese relations. He mentions “Abe (the Japanese Prime Minister) is set to visit Russia in May, where he will attend both the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum and the formal opening of the Year of Japan and Russia at the Bolshoi Theatre.”



Galina Vishnevskaya and Mstislav Rostropovich.
The record by Melodiya

[NPR](#) (National Public Radio) USA publishes a report and broadcasts a radio report by Rachel Martin and Miles Hoffman about Classical Music's Greatest Love Stories, On And Offstage. These include Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya with her husband, Russian cellist, conductor and composer Mstislav Rostropovich. “The great Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and soprano Galina Vishnevskaya met in 1955 when Vishnevskaya was a star with the Bolshoi Theatre, which was the top company in the Soviet Union. Four days af-

ter they met, they got married. Vishnevskaya said that Rostropovich tried to seduce her for four days endlessly and that he was successful. [Laughs] They stayed married for 52 years and during that time had two children. Rostropovich died in 2007. I can tell you from personal observation that it wasn't always the calmest or the most peaceful of marriages, but I don't think they could live without each other."

Local newspapers and online publications announce upcoming screenings of Bolshoi Ballet productions in local cinemas.

[Cyprus Mail](#) (Cyprus) announces the upcoming screening of the Bolshoi's *Romeo and Juliet* in local cinemas.

The local UK newspaper [Gainsborough Standard](#) (UK) announces "Win! Tickets to live streaming of Bolshoi Ballet's *The Flames of Paris* in Gainsborough. The ballet will be broadcast live from Moscow".

The online French classical music publication [Olyrix](#) (France) publishes a review by Damien Dutilleul of a performance of the academies of the Bolshoi and the l'Opéra de Paris in a performance of Lied repertoire at the Amphitheater de Bastille. "This recital is an opportunity for the Parisian public to discover the future stars of Bolshoi and the Paris Opera." The journalist provides a detailed analysis of the performances that the participants of the Bolshoi Young Artist Opera Program gave. He writes about Evgenia Asanova (and mentions that the singer performed the part of Olga in the concert version of *Eugene Onegin* that took place in Aix-en-Provence on 19th of July 2017), Anastasia Barun, Marta Danusevich, Rauf Timergazin and Mikhail Korshunov (piano). According to the reviewer, all of them gave quite positive performances. "All the artists involved in this recital reaped the public's satisfaction: definitely, tonight, future great voices have been discovered!"

[The New York Times](#) writes about the Moscow State Academy of Choreography; the source publishes an article by Gia Kourlas about Indiana Woodward is making her debut as Juliet in Peter Martins's "*Romeo and Juliet*." The article mentions "Indiana Woodward has had two life-changing moments in her relatively young career. One was a summer spent at the Bolshoi Ballet Academy in Moscow when she was 15."

The Bolshoi Theatre's ballerinas continue to inspire those who write stories about spies.

The online entertainment news publication [Broadway World](#) publishes a roundup of reviews of the new



Mikhail Korshunov (at the piano), Evgenia Asanova and Anastasia Barun at the concert at the Amphitheater de Bastille, February 15th
Photo courtesy: Julien Benhamou / Olyrix

film *Red Sparrow* which is due to be released in cinemas on 2 March. The spy thriller "Jennifer Lawrence stars in *Red Sparrow* as Dominika Egorova, a celebrated Russian ballerina whose career is cut tragically short when she suffers a terrible injury during a performance. Facing an uncertain future and determined to continue providing care for her sickly mother Nina (Joely Richardson), Dominika is manipulated by her shady uncle Ivan Dimitrevich Egorov (Matthias Schoenaerts) — the First Deputy Director of the SVR — into performing a dubious task... one that leads to a person being murdered, with Dominika the only witness to the Russian government's secret crime." Egorova is supposed to be a ballerina of the Bolshoi Theatre in the story.



The poster of the spy thriller *Red Sparrow*, where the action centers around a fictional former Bolshoi Theatre ballerina

The Presidential Council for Culture and Art supports the idea of excluding culture from the service sector. A member of the Council, a professor of GITIS and the head of a sector at the Arts Institute Dmitry Trubochkin made a statement to [Izvestia](#).

It has been mentioned that according to the new law “On Culture” there might be new legal rules and regulations for organisations; it is also possible that the latter will not be subjects to the procurement law. Such an approach will allow us to avoid the situations, similar to the case of the director Kirill Serebrennikov that is accused of embezzlement. Lilia Gumerova, the first deputy chairperson of the Federation Council Committee on Science, Education and Culture, told Izvestia: “To perceive culture as a kind of a service is to make its meaning shallow and reduce the incredible functionality of goals that the state has set for culture”.

The main aim of the new law is to change the approach for financing industry organisations.

In brief

The online-magazine about music theatre [Voci dell'Opera](#) reviews the opera *Manon Lescaut*, staged at the Bolshoi Theatre. The reporter Elizaveta Kotova hopes the production “will receive those prizes it well deserves”. Quote: “The opera *Manon Lescaut* staged by Adolph Shapiro has been nominated for The Golden Mask award in the categories, Best Director, Opera/Best Actress and Opera/Best Actor”.

Voci dell'Opera also published an interview with Anna Netrebko, who performed the main role in the opera *Manon Lescaut*. The full version of the interview is available [here](#).



Vladislav Lantranov as Nureyev and Maria Alexandrova as Margot at the world premiere of the ballet *Nureyev*, the Bolshoi Theatre Historic Stage, December 9th 2017.

Photo courtesy: Pavel Rychkov/the Bolshoi Theatre

On February 25th Vladislav Lantranov and Maria Alexandrova presented the pas de deux from the Bolshoi's

ballet [Nureyev](#) at the gala-concert Icons of the Russian Ballet on the stage of Coliseum Theatre in London (the gala has been held since 2006).

Other stars of the Bolshoi Ballet also took part in the gala. The concert starred Ekaterina Krysanova, Artem Ovcharenko and Anna Tikhomirova, as well as dancers from the most prominent ballet theatres of Russia, the UK, Germany, France, Spain and Italy.

The orchestra of the English National Ballet, conductor – Valery Ovsyanikov

[The playbill of the event](#)

The programme Life Line. Remembering Alexander Vedernikov was broadcast by the [TV channel Culture](#) in the afternoon on February 15th. The legendary bass singer, a People's Artist of the USSR and the Bolshoi Opera's soloist (1958-1990) Alexander Vedernikov talks about his native Vyatka, his big and friendly family, his dear friend, the composer Georgy Sviridov, Italy and, of course, the Bolshoi Theatre, where he worked for several decades. Alexander Vedernikov passed away on January 9th 2018 at the age of 90.

On February 11th the premiere of the opera *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner, staged by Dmitri Tcherniakov, took place at the Berlin State Opera. Conductor – Daniel Barenboim. Costume designer: Elena Zaitseva, lightning designer: Gleb Filshtinsky, playwrights: Tatiana Vereshchagina and Detlef Giese, chorus preparation: Raymond Hughes, video: Tieni Burkhalter. Reviews continue to appear in various sources.

The German daily newspaper [Suddeutsche Zeitung](#) publishes a review by Reinhard J. Brembeck who writes “Andreas Schager shines as Tristan in the new staging of Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* at the Staatsoper Berlin under Daniel Barenboim. Dimitri Tcherniakov consistently brings history into today.”

On March 3rd the channel [Mezzo](#) will have a live transmission of the opera *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner staged by Dmitri Tcherniakov from Berlin State Opera.

The next performances are scheduled to take place on March 11th and March 18th.

The cast stars Andreas Schager as Tristan, Stephen Milling as King Marke, Anja Kampe as Isolde, Boaz Daniel as Kurwenal, Stephan Rügamer as Melot and Ekaterina Gubanova as Brangane.

[The playbill of the production](#)

The exhibition, dedicated to Marius Petipa, at [Un centre D'art pour la danse](#) at Pantin Cedex closed on February 23rd ; it marked the 200th anniversary of the great dancer and ballet master.

More exhibitions will soon take place at the Bakhrushin Museum in Moscow and at the Theatre Museum in Saint Petersburg. [The website of the exhibition](#)

Information about the exhibition on [myra.fr](#) webiste.

[Maison des Sciences de L'Homme d'Aquitaine](#) (Bordeaux, France) has also come up with Journal du maître de ballet des Théâtres Impériaux Marius Ivanovitch Petipa/The Journal of the Ballet Master of the Imperial Theatre Marius Petipa.



On February 27th and 28th Svetlana Zakharova and Vadim Repin presented their programme Pas de deux for Toes and Fingers at the [46th Hong Kong Arts Festival](#) that is taking place at the special administrative region of China from February 23rd till March 24th.



Svetlana Zakharova and Vadim Repin.

Photo courtesy: Sasha Gusov/ [Hong Kong Arts Festival](#)

The performances star the Bolshoi Theatre's principals Mikhail Lobukhin and Vyacheslav Lopatin, as well as a dancer and a choreographer Vladimir Varnava. [The playbill of the performance](#) (in English).

On February 16th the prima of the Royal Ballet Natalia Osipova made her debut with the part of Mekhmene Bany in the ballet A Legend of Love on the Mariinsky Theatre's Historic Stage.

Interessant.ru reports: "Ballet fans of Saint Petersburg and Moscow alike are very enthusiastic about the sudden performance of the world ballet star Natalia Osipova in the production of A Legend of Love at the Mariinsky Theatre. The performance of the star split the audience in two parts. The fans of the ballerina discovered yet another side of her talent, while others were eager to share opinions about the failure of the debutante, compared to the impeccable performance of Ekaterina Osmolkina, who performed the part of her "rival", Princess Shireen. There is no doubt that Natalia Osipova is now one of the major figures in the world ballet". More information is available [here](#).



"Konstantin Zverev (Vizier) has become a reliable partner for Natalia Osipova, who has made her debut with the part of Mekhmene Banu".

Photo courtesy: Natasha Razina/ [Interessant](#)

Irina Muravieva ([Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)) writes: "The Perm Opera and Teodor Currentzis visited The Golden Mask in Moscow; it turned out to be a week-long attack of modern art. Apart from the ballet Cinderella by Sergei Prokofiev that features a new libretto and choreography and the radical opera Cantos by Alexei Syumak to the lyrics by Ezra Pound (for solo violin, choir and percussion), the programme of avant-garde musci of the 20th and the 21st centuries was performed at the Moscow Conservatory Great Hall, and the Laboratory of the Modern Viewer was organised at the Hyundai motor studio on New Arbat".

The online source about opera and ballet [Voci dell'Opera](#) published an interview with Mikhail Messerer. He was once a Soviet and a British dancer, and today he is the artistic director of the ballet company and the chief ballet master at the Mikhailovsky Theatre. Mikhail Messerer talked about the premiere of the season, the ballet Cinderella, his creative plans and the general state of the Russian ballet.

February 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th 2018d – the first premiere of the season took place at the [Yekaterinburg Opera and Ballet Theatre](#). It was the ballet Paquita. Libretto by Paul Fouché and Joseph Mazilier (1846), music by Édouard Deldevez (1846) and Ludwig Minkus (1881), transcription by Yuri Krasavin (2017).

Music director – Fedor Lednyov. Choreography by Marius Petipa (1881). Ballet masters: Sergei Vikharev and Vyacheslav Samodurov. Set by Alyona Pikalova (2017), costumes by Elena Zaitseva (2017). Idea by Sergei Vikharev and Pavel Gershenson.



[The playbill of the ballet Paquita](#)

of the Yekaterinburg State Opera and Ballet Theatre,
staged by Sergei Vikharev
and Vyacheslav Samodurov

The Bolshoi Theatre prima-ballerina Olga Smirnova took part in the advertising campaign of the on-line-magazine about ballet [La Personne](#), – the video starring Smirnova is on the “cover” of the edition on [Facebook](#).

[The video on YouTube](#)

Starting from February 17th the opera by Giuseppe Verdi Il Trovatore staged by David McVicar is shown at the cinemas as a part of the project [The Met](#): Live in HD. The cast stars Dmitri Hvorostovsky and Anna Netrebko. Conductor – Marco Armiliato. The recording was made in 2015.



Olga Smirnova in the project [Golden Mirage](#)



On February 12th an outstanding ballet dancer and a People's Artist of the USSR congratulated the director Franco Zeffirelli on his 95th birthday. Vasiliev talked about his friend and his partner on many projects in the programme Glavnaya Rol' / Main Role on the [TV channel Culture](#). The host – Yulian Makarov.

On February 24th another live transmission from [the Met](#) took place in the cinemas worldwide. The audiences were presented with the opera La Boheme by Giacomo Puccini; stage director and set designer – Franco Zeffirelli.

The part of Schaunard is performed by a former soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre Young Artist Opera Program baritone [Alexei Lavrov](#) (participant of the Young Artists Opera Program since September 2010 till August 2012; made his debut at the Bolshoi Theatre in January 2011 with the role of Morales in the opera Carmen by Georges Bizet).

The cast also stars Sonya Yoncheva as Mimi, Susanna Phillips as Musetta, Michael Fabiano as Rodolfo, Lucas Meachem as Marcello, Matthew Rose as Colline and Paul Plishka as Benoit/Alcindoro.

[The playbill of the production](#)

On March 2nd the gala-concert Opera Ball of Elena Obraztsova is going to take place at [the Grand Hall of the State Kremlin Palace](#); the gala will mark the 95th birthday of Franco Zeffirelli. Vladimir Vasiliev, Maria Guleghina, Yusif Eyvazov, Veronika Dzhioeva, Ksenia Dudnikova, Vladimir Sulimsky and others are

going to take part in the gala that is organised as a part of the International Festival Russian Season with the support of the Elena Obraztsova Charitable Foundation. The programme includes fragments from such productions, as *Il Trovatore*, *Aida*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *Don Carlos*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Carmen*.

[The playbill of the production](#)



The director Franco Zeffirelli

On February 13th the performance-concert [Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow](#), marking the 40th anniversary of the Boris Eifman Theatre, took place at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg. Boris Eifman says: "These 40 years are unforgettable. On the other hand, there is a lot I would like to forget, because there were enormous difficulties and obstacles I had to overcome constantly. I started everything from a blank page... It was a unique situation both in terms of time and opportunity, because it was necessary to create a new company and a new repertoire. But we were lucky when it came to the main thing: the soloists Alla Osipenko and John Markovsky came to the company, and then other interesting artists followed". //

The following sources reported about the performance-concert Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow:

[The First Channel](#)

[The TV Channel Culture](#)

[The TV Channel Saint Petersburg](#)

[NTV](#)

[TASS](#)

[Interfax-Russia](#)

Mass media sources report about the Russian national theatre award The Golden Mask and remind us that the award ceremony is going to take place on April 15th on the Bolshoi Theatre's New Stage. Vedomosti report: What to watch at The Golden Mask.

[The First Channel](#) reports: "The main theatre marathon of the year, The Golden Mask Festival, has started (February 11th, 10:15 a.m.):

News agency [Interfax](#): "The Perm Theatre has

brought the production of the opera *Cantos* to The Golden Mask in Moscow; the opera has been nominated in seven categories" (February 10th).

[vedomosti.ru](#)

Other mass media sources also report about The Golden Mask.

On Monday, February 19th, the community Bolshoi Ballet Friends organised the 6th (205th) evening of the season 2017/18 Absolute Pitch of Gennady Yanin at the Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum venue. The Bolshoi Theatre's soloist and the host of the TV Channel Russia-Culture Gennady Yanin presented the ballets by Alexei Ratmanský *The Bright Stream*, *Bolt*, *Le Corsaire* and *Old Ladies Falling Out*, as well as new productions by Yuri Possokhov at the Bolshoi Theatre (*Cinderella* and *A Hero of Our Time*, *Princess Mary*) and *Coppelia* by Sergei Vikharev.

[The Bolshoi Ballet Friends Facebook page](#)



A People's Artist of Russia Gennady Yanin in the programme Absolute Pitch of Gennady Yanin

[The Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre](#) named after Pyotr Tchaikovsky presented the production of the opera *Cantos* by Alexei Syumak based on pieces by Ezra Pound at The Golden Mask. The newspaper [Moskovsky Komsomolets](#) published the review by Ekaterina Kretova. The production has been nominated for Opera/Best Production. All members of the production team have been nominated for the prize as well.

As the 145th anniversary of Feodor Chaliapin is being marked (the singer was born on February 13th 1873), [Literaturnaya Gazeta](#) reports about the musical historical and cultural museum Chaliapin Dacha in Kislovodsk, the Caucasus. “There are many places that are associated with the creative career of the great bass singer, but, as Feodor Chaliapin used to say himself, he was born for life in Kazan, but born for the stage in the Caucasus. Even today his voice moves the walls of this ancient mansion, where the memory of Russia’s great son is carefully preserved. It was here that one of the most wonderful and long-term traditions was born: these were Chaliapin Seasons”.

On June 13th an evening with the composer Leonid Desyatnikov will take place as a part of the 8th International Platonov Festival. [RIA Voronezh](#) reports that the programme of the Festival, that is to take place in Voronezh from June 6th till June 17th, was announced on February 13th. The pianist Alexei Goribol, the violinist Alexander Trostiansky, singers from the Bolshoi Theatre and from the Voronezh opera and ballet theatre will take part in the concert. During the Festival musicians from 10 countries will present 12 concerts. Following tradition, the programme of the Festival will consist of two parts: one will be dedicated to academic music pieces, the second — to music from around the world.

The following sources report about the Platonov Festival:

[TV Gubernia](#)
[Rossiiskaya Gazeta](#)
and other mass media.



Leonid Desyatnikov

The meeting of the organising committee of the 5th Trans-Siberian Art Festival took place in Moscow.

The Festival opens on March 9th; the concerts will take place in various cities of Russia, the USA and Japan. The opening will take place in Novosibirsk. [Culture News](#) report that the Bolshoi Theatre is going to bring to Novosibirsk the ballet Lady of the Camellias by John Neumeier starring Svetlana Zakharova.

The programme of the Festival includes four premieres that have been created on commission from the organisers. The Novosibirsk Symphony Orchestra is going to open the event. Conductor – Kent Nagano (the USA). Gidon Kremer, Clara-Jumi Kang and Konstantin Lifschitz will take part in the concert.

The competition for the initial design of the monument to the outstanding singer and People’s Artist of Russia Dmitry Hvorostovsky opened in Krasnoyarsk region. The portal [Music Klondike](#) reports that the applications can be submitted till April 6th. Design companies, creative teams, qualified architects, designers, artists and sculptors can take part in the competition. The jury will have selected the winner by April 20th.

The monument will be erected at the Krasnoyarsk State Institute of Arts. Earlier it was announced that the Krasnoyarsk State Opera and Ballet Theatre would be named after the world-famous singer.

The 11th Winter International Arts Festival (artistic director — Yuri Bashmet) took place in Sochi from February 16th till February 25th. [Argumenty Nedeli](#) report: “...there was a great programme, starring the leading Russian and foreign artists and teams. Olga Kulchinskaya (soprano), Valeria Abramova (violin), Konstanze von Gutzeit (cello, Germany), Anna Aglatova (soprano), Mikhail Dzudze (double bass balalaika), Jens Peter Maintz (cello, Germany), Tatiana Samouil (violin, Russia-Belgium), Jovan Zivkovic (marimba, Serbia) and other musicians took part in the Festival”.

On February 14th the programme Absolute Pitch was released on the [TV channel Culture](#); one of the topics covered in the programme was the life of the Paris Opera etoile Carlotta Zambelli. The programme’s host Gennady Yanin talked about “ballet dancers that were undeservedly forgotten”. Quote: “One of those dancers is the Italian Carlotta Zambelli (1875-1968), the Paris Opera etoile, who was quite famous at one point. In 1901 she was on a guest tour in Russia and even competed with the all-powerful Matilde Kshesinskaya. Zambelli’s brilliant career continued for four decades. She left the stage in 1930 and taught the advance training class at the Paris Opera School till extreme age. The stars of Paris Opera Ballet Yvette Chauviré, Liane Daydé and Claude Bessy were all her students”.



Carlotta Zambelli as Gourouli
(Les Deux Pigeons by André Messager). Paris Opera, 1912

Social networks

Participants of the forum [Ballet and Opera](#) write about the premiere of the opera by Pyotr Tchaikovsky at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Participants of [ClassicalForum.ru](#) also discuss The Queen of Spades.

A famous blogger Slava Shadronov ([arlekin](#)) wrote an entry about The Queen of Spades in his Live Journal after the dress rehearsal.

Anna Nechaeva tagged 56 friends in her [Facebook](#) post: "I congratulate everyone that took part in the creation of this production!!! Guys!!! This is happiness!!! We bow down before Pyotr Tchaikovsky, who gave the world this music!!!"

The journalist Olga Shantser watched A Hero of Our Time and wrote on her [Facebook page](#) late in the evening on February 17th: "I am injured by the ballet, both in the good and in the bad meaning of this word. I go to the theatre for the sake of technique: neat landings into the fifth position, precise coup de pied and high arabesques. But today something extraordinary has happened to me. Today I cried during the second adagio of Vera and Pechorin.

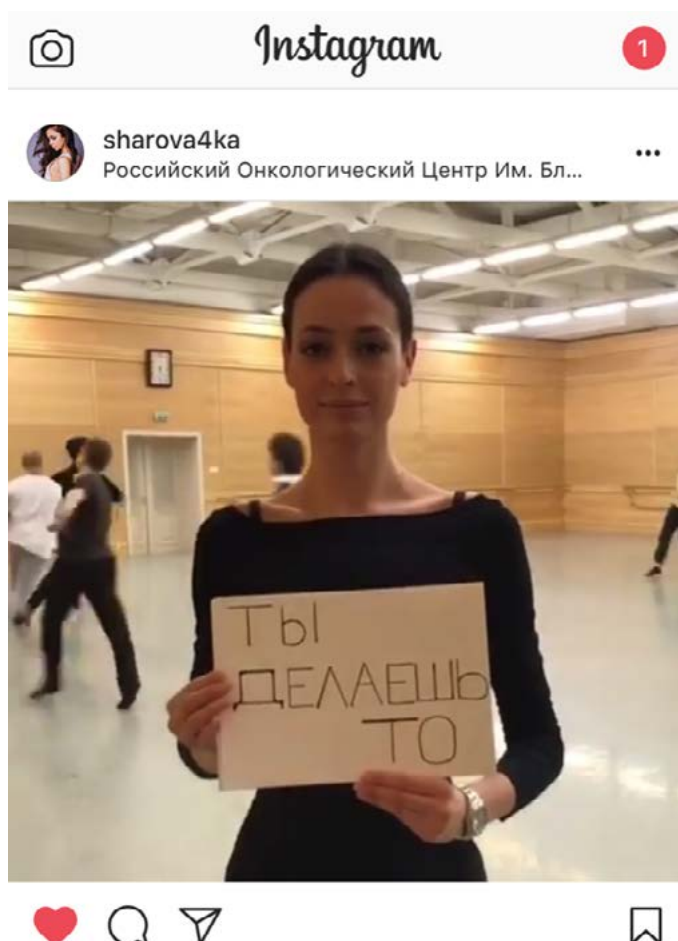
Thank you, Kristina [Kretova] and Ruslan [Skvortsov] for the moments of a simple spectator's happi-



Anna Netrebko (second on the right) with the members of the production team and the participants of the premiere performances of The Queen of Spades at the Bolshoi Theatre.

Photo courtesy: [Facebook Anželika Cholina](#)

ness, which are so rare and, thus, so precious to me; I watched the legs, as usual, but saw the story that you told, the story that not just touched me, but shocked me and reminded me of my most sacred feelings and treasured memories. Thank you so much for this".



Oxana Sharova on [Instagram](#)

Valery Logunov wrote on his [Facebook page](#): “On February 9th [January 28th old style] of 1874 a Russian and Soviet director, actor and pedagogue Vsevolod Meyerhold was born...”



Dmitry Shostakovich, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Vsevolod Meyerhold and Alexander Rodchenko are working on the production of *Bedbug*, 1929.

Photo courtesy: Boris Ignatovich

Ivan the Terrible

February 21st

Tatiana Lazareva as an Image of Death

Daria Bochkova, Elvina Ibraimova and Victoria Yakusheva as Victory Heralds

February 22nd

Nelli Kobakhidze as a Boyarynia

Changes in casts

A Hero of Our Time

On February 15th Alexander Smoliyaninov performed the part of Old Woman/Yanko (Taman)

On February 16th Alexander Volchkov performed the part of Pechorin (Princess Mary). The performance of Vyacheslav Lopatin was cancelled.

On February 17th Ruslan Skvortsov performed the part of Pechorin in Princess Mary instead of Alexander Volchkov.

On February 18th (2 p.m.) Denis Rodkin performed the part of Pechorin in *Bela*, Alexander Volchkov performed the part of Pechorin in Princess Mary.

Debuts

The Queen of Spades

February 15th and 17th – Yusif Eyvazov made his debut in the role of Herman

The Bright Stream

February 13th

Ivan Prazdnikov made his debut in the role of Gavrilch

A Hero of Our Time

February 15th

Ania Pudikova as A Mother

Elizaveta Khokhlova and Anastasia Ermolaeva as Nurses

Natalia Filina as A Young Lady

Olga Seliverstova as solo voice (soprano) in Princess Mary

February 16th

Ekaterina Barykina as Mary's Mother

Anastasia Zakharova as a Nurse

Irina Kostina as a solo voice (soprano) in Princess Mary

Anastasia Bibicheva as a solo voice (mezzo-soprano) in *Bela*

Birthdays

February 10th – a ballet dancer, a pedagogue-repetiteur and a People's Artist of Russia Shamil Yagudin (1932-2005)

February 10th – the German playwright, theatre worker and the founder of the theatre The Berliner Ensemble Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) – 120th anniversary

February 11th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist and a People's Artist of Russia Alexander Naumenko

February 12th – an opera singer (baritone), a music pedagogue and a People's Artist of RSFSR Yevgeny Kibkalo (1932-2003)

February 12th – the ballet dancer, one of the greatest ballerinas of the 20th century Anna Pavlova (1881-1931)

February 12th – the Italian artist, a theatre, opera and film director Franco Zeffirelli (Gianfranco Corsi) – 95th anniversary

February 13th – the famous Russian bass singer Feodor Chaliapin (1873-1938) – 145th birthday

February 13th – the Bolshoi Ballet soloist Kristina Karaseva

February 14th – the composer Alexander Dargomyzhsky (1813-1869) – 205th birthday



Alexander Dargomyzhsky.
The portrait by Konstantin Makovsky



Ballet master [Sergei Vikharev](#)

February 15th – the ballet master and répétiteur, an Honoured Artist of Russia Sergei Vikharev (1962-2017). Vikharev reconstructed the ballet Coppelius at the Bolshoi Theatre in 2009; he was going to revive this production in the current 242nd season.

February 15th – a theatre designer and the laureate of numerous Golden Mask award Zinovy Margolin

February 16th – the Bolshoi Ballet dancer Roman Simachev

February 17th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Evgenia Segenuk

February 18th – the Bolshoi Ballet principal Semyon Chudin

February 18th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Oxana Gorchakovskaya

February 18th – the Executive Director of the Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Cooperation of CIS member states and the Bolshoi Theatre General Director in 2000-2013 Anatoly Iksanov

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

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

February 21st – the Bolshoi Ballet soloist Karim Abdullin

February 22nd – the ballet company cast director Vsevolod Nemolyaev, who has been working at the Bolshoi Theatre for more than 60 years (since 1956). He was also a ballet dancer, an unforgettable Sancho Panza, and a performer of Russian dances

February 22nd – a ballet dancer Boris Khokhlov (1932-2000), who was the Bolshoi Theatre soloist in 1951-1972

February 24th – the ballet master, the director and the artistic director of the Hamburg Ballet John Neumeier

February 24th – the Bolshoi Theatre guest soloist John Daszak

February 26th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist and a People's Artist of Russia Alexandra Durseneva

February 27th – the Bolshoi Ballet leading soloist and an Honoured Artist of Russia Denis Savin

March 1st – the composer Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)

March 2nd – the Bolshoi Theatre guest soloist Robert Lloyd

March 3rd – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Svetlana Shilova

March 3rd – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Yulia Mazurova

March 4th – the Bolshoi Opera soloist Anna Aglatova

March 4th – the conductor, the artistic director of the Moscow Philharmonic Academic Symphony Orchestra and the Bolshoi Theatre Chief Conductor in 1970-1985 Yuri Simonov