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18+



"The decision to disqualify our Paralympians is beyond law, morals and humanism. It is simply cynical." President **Vladimir Putin**.

266

Paralympic athletes on the Russian team.

>100

Paralympic athletes filed individual applications to the IPC to contest the ban.



Athletes representing team sports — sitting volleyball, goalball and five and seven a side football — have not appealed.

Last Call for Rio

By **Daria Litvinova** d.litvinova@imedia.ru, Twitter: @dashalitvinovv

Russian athletes attempt last-ditch appeal to the International Paralympic Committee for the right to compete.

Alexei Obydyonov, a two-time world champion in cycle racing, is visibly annoyed when asked about his chances participating in the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. "It doesn't really depend on any of us," he told The Moscow Times. "It is all in their hands now."

Obydyonov, 40, is one of more than 100 athletes who have appealed to the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) to be allowed to compete in the upcoming Games.

In August the entire team was banned amid evidence of widespread state-sponsored doping in Russian sport. The Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) moved to contest the ban in the Court of Arbitration for Sports (CAS), but failed: The CAS upheld the ban. RPC unsuccessfully appealed the ruling in the Swiss Federal Court and 266 Paralympic athletes were left with little, if any, hope of competing in Rio.

But the athletes have refused to give up. After CAS announced its ruling, they filed individual applications to the IPC. They hope to follow in the footsteps of banned Russian athletes, who achieved a last-gasp reprieve ahead of August's Olympic Games.

There is no straightforward parallel to be made between the two situations, says sports lawyer Artyom Patsev, who is helping 34 Paralympic athletes file appeals. Unlike the International Olympic Committee,



Alexei Obydyonov continues to train in the hope that IPC will repeal his Paralympic ban.

the IPC revealed neither the conditions on which individual applications could be approved, nor the criteria that applying athletes must meet.

"We were basically going in blind," Patsev told The Moscow Times. "We looked at the experience of our Olympic athletes and

at recent CAS practice. Our main goal was to show that these athletes have nothing to do with transgressions of the system."

Patsev says the athletes he helped received confirmation from the IPC that the applications were being considered as early as Aug. 26. On Aug. 30, another 100 athletes were reported to have filed their applications with the help of the RPC.

By Aug. 31, some athletes had already received official confirmations that their appeals have been unsuccessful. Of the 34 athletes represented by Patsev, 12 received such letters, sports agent Andrei Mitkov told the allsportinfo.ru website.

At the time of going to print, it remained unclear if any athletes would be allowed to compete. Top members of the RPC were unavailable for comment; the IPC didn't respond to a request for comment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has promised not to leave Paralympians without a chance to compete. "We will support you and organize special competitions for you to demonstrate your skills," he said on Aug. 25. "Winners and runner-ups [of these competitions] will receive the same awards they would have received for winning the Paralympic Games."

The 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio start on Sept. 7. The dates for Russia's alternative Games have yet to be announced. **TMT**



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CIVIC ACTIVISM

The Russian Protest Movement: Not Dead, Not Alive, Just Different

By **Yekaterina Schulmann**
Political scientist, associate professor at the Institute of Social Sciences



There are two widespread misconceptions about protest activity in Russia. The first is that, for some mysterious reason, Russia is exempt from the general rule where the popularity of the ruling regime declines in tandem with the economy. The second is that the authorities have managed to muzzle political protest, and that the only disgruntled voices heard are not really protests at all, but local appeals or personal grievances.

Both views are based on mistaken assumptions. First, they consider that because millions of people are not currently taking to the streets, they obviously will not do so in the near future. They also assume that a "political" protest is only when protesters complain about purely political issues.

Such views are incapable of explaining the current protest movement in Russia, or of predicting how it will develop. They simultaneously anticipate what is not and ostensibly cannot happen — mass protests — while they denigrate what actually is happening as unworthy of attention.

The public mood viewed through Russia's flawed sociology is a vague reflection in a murky mirror. The fact that Russians have no legal way to run for public office makes citizens uninterested in even going to the trouble of voting against those who are in power. Elections are infrequent, the choice of candidates is unattractive, and there is no discernible connection between election results and changes in real life. In line with Russian law, parliamentary elections have no bearing on the composition of the ruling regime.

For the most part, Russians have no desire to take part in violent "pitchfork and axes" unauthorized rallies, riots, mob gatherings and the like. There are two reasons for this. First, the state's repressive machinery puts too high a price on such activity. The second reason is largely social and demographic in nature. The majority of Russia's active citizens are not youth, as in some countries, but those over 40, who are less likely to take to the streets or engage in violent behavior, and who are yet perfectly willing to protest through legal means.

How does this look in practice? Citizens are unhappy when decisions that directly affect their lives are made without their direct or even indirect participation. Aside from such "global" issues as the Kremlin's decision to annex Crimea, this dissatisfaction primarily concerns decisions by local authorities to, say, tear down a building, demolish a park, shutter a local business, raise utilities fees or introduce a new tax. Such causes prompted all of the most recent significant protests by truckers, farmers, mortgage holders and opponents of unwanted government construction, paid parking, illegal renovation and so on. Each case demonstrates the same political phenomenon — citizens reacting angrily to decisions made without concern for their interests.

Whereas so-called "horizontal protests" by truckers or farmers and targeted protests focused on a particular yard, park or business are relatively straightforward, the situation

becomes more complicated at the regional level. Because the federal authorities try to avoid unpleasant protest themes and prefer that regional authorities deal with those problems, the resolution of this or that protest depends largely on the attitude of the regional officials.

Despite all the talk of uniformity, rules in the regions differ widely. The people of the North Caucasus adhere to their own severe laws and the situation is little better for the citizens of the southern regions of Rostov and Krasnodar. In the major cities of Central Russia and Siberia, the authorities bear some accountability to the public and are not as free to use repressive measures, and Russia's northwestern cities are traditionally the most opposition-minded.

Civil awareness might blossom in Russia with the collapse of the paternalistic economic model in which every citizen feels entitled to some form of government handout. People are already starting to realize that, not only is no one going to give them anything for free, they are doing all of the paying. What's more, citizens are constantly paying on all fronts — for high taxes, numerous fees and expensive housing, utilities, parking and toll roads. The government is taking money from citizens at every turn. When that realization finally settles in and replaces the Soviet notion of the citizen as a child who receives sweets from his kind father, the state, it will provide a firm foundation for true civic awareness.

After all, civic awareness goes hand in hand with being a taxpayer. **TMT**



"Instability in Uzbekistan could destabilize the whole region." **Paul Stronski**, Central Asia expert and former U.S. government adviser.

27 years

Islam Karimov's rule over Uzbekistan



Uzbekistan is Central Asia's most populous country with a population of about 30 million.

1.75 million

Latest official figure for the number Uzbek migrant workers in Russia

The Late Dictator

By **Howard Amos** and **Matthew Kupfer** newsreporter@imedia.ru

Islam Karimov's suspected end presents challenges for the Kremlin.

Officials, experts and observers across the world have been transfixed by the recent rumors, counter-rumors and half-truths swirling around the ill health and possible death of Uzbek President Islam Karimov.

But the fate of the dictator is being particularly closely monitored by the Kremlin, which was the colonial master of Central Asia for most of the 20th century.

Since coming to power in 1989, Karimov has ruled Uzbekistan with an iron fist and helped ensure regional stability. He has also largely rebuffed Russia in its efforts to draw Uzbekistan into post-Soviet economic and security groupings dominated by Moscow.

A change of leadership in Tashkent could herald a shift in Uzbekistan's foreign policy, and any upheavals during the battle to succeed Karimov would have consequences for the entire region. Many believe that Uzbek Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyayev, backed by security services head Rustam Inoyatov, will succeed Karimov.

Stability First

The priority for Moscow amid a power transfer in Uzbekistan is to prevent a major confrontation or outbreak of violence that would endanger the regional status quo, according to experts and analysts contacted by The Moscow Times.

"Uzbekistan is the strongest [Central Asian] state, it has the strongest military and the strongest security services. It also has the largest population at around 30 million people. Any instability there would be a huge vacuum in the region," says Paul Stronski, a Central Asia expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former adviser to the U.S. government. "Given the country's difficult ties with its neighbors Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, I bet that's Russia's biggest concern."

A weakened state could allow space for Islamic militant groups — a much disputed threat in Central Asia — to gain a foothold in the country, according to some experts.

"It's a very repressive country and I don't think we know how much discontent there is," says Stronski.

There are also economic interests at play. The closed nature of Uzbek politics means that Tashkent's foreign ties are limited, but Russia is one of the country's most significant external economic partners. Russian firms including state-owned gas giant Gazprom and the country's second largest oil company, LUKoil, have major projects in Uzbekistan.

The trade turnover between the two countries in the first half of 2016 was \$1.27 billion and Uzbekistan is Russia's fourth-largest trading partner among former Soviet bloc countries, according to figures from the RBC news website.

Russia and Uzbekistan are also bound together by migrant labor flows. In April, there were 1.75 million Uzbeks working in Russia, according to official data cited by RBC. The remittances sent back by Uzbeks in Russia in 2015 reportedly amounted to 5 percent of Uzbekistan's gross domestic product.

Closer Ties?

A transition in Uzbekistan could offer potential benefits for Russia. The Kremlin would like to see a leader more amenable to closer ties with Russia emerge as Karimov's replacement.

"Moscow would prefer someone less antagonistic than Karimov," says Deirdre Tynan, the Central Asia project director for the non-profit International Crisis Group. These sentiments have been echoed in the Russian press.

"It would be nice if this person [Karimov's successor] was more dynamic and less liable to play political games behind Russia's back," columnist Mikhail Rostovsky wrote in the Aug. 31 edition of the Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper. "But in the Uzbek political bazaar, or more accurately, in the corridors of the Tashkent palace, Moscow's wishes will not necessarily be taken into account."

Russia will be looking to shore up its economic position in Central Asia against other regional players. China has made

Central Asia's Strongmen



Source: TMT

serious commercial inroads in recent years and is particularly keen to cultivate energy and transport ties. In 2014, Russia was the largest exporter to Uzbekistan but last year China claimed the top spot, according to statistics reported by RBC.

Karimov's death would also increase uncertainty for Russia. How Karimov's successor manages both security challenges and local nationalism will be a key litmus test for Russia, according to the influential Russian foreign policy commentator Fyodor Lukyanov.

Erica Marat, a professor at the National Defense University in Washington, agrees. "A new leader might be more nationalistic and might try to mobilize ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan," she says.

Uzbek Intractability

Karimov has stubbornly resisted attempts by Moscow to draw Uzbekistan closer to Russia over more than a quarter of a century in power.

Uzbekistan exited the Collective Security Treaty Organization, a military alliance of former Soviet states, in 2012 and has refused to join the Eurasian Economic Union, a Moscow-led economic bloc that includes Russia, Armenia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

Uzbekistan does not host Russian military bases, unlike neighboring Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and is the only Central Asian state — apart from Turkmenistan — that does not have Russian border guards on its territory.

"What Karimov has done — by being fairly closed to Russia while trying to strengthen military cooperation with the West — has worked for Uzbekistan," says Marat.

Even when relations have soured with the West — such as in 2005, when Uzbek security forces fired on protesters in the city of Andijan, killing over 100 people — Uzbekistan has still managed to chart its independent course. "Karimov's political choice was autarchy and isolation," says Lukyanov.

But Karimov has not shunned Russia. He met regularly with Russian President Vladimir Putin in recent months. The Uzbek president flew to Moscow in April for face-to-face talks, and the two men saw each other again in Tashkent for a June meeting of the regional Shanghai Cooperation Organization.


In his meeting with Putin in Moscow, Karimov made a point of stressing Russia's role in the region. "No one has forgotten geography and everyone knows that Central Asia has been closely linked with Russia for thousands of years," he said.

"You have to acknowledge reality otherwise it will catch you up and get its hands on you." TMT

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Russia won its bid for the **2018 FIFA World Cup** back in 2010. In 2015, evidence emerged that FIFA agreed to have Moscow host the World Cup before the football governing body's official vote.

2007

Construction on Zenit Stadium began

\$605M

Current estimated cost of Zenit Stadium, excluding related infrastructure



Government Resolution No. 689 — signed last week — funnels around \$40 million from schools and hospitals to the stadium project.

Digging a Hole

By **Matthew Bodner** m.bodner@imedia.ru, Twitter: @mattb0401

Corruption, delays and shoddy workmanship have undermined World Cup project finances, and they may be about to cost St. Petersburg's governor his job.



VLADIMIR ASTAPKOVICH / RIA NOVOSTI

What St. Petersburg really needs are not schools and hospitals, but a new football stadium. Or such was the message sent to the city's residents.

According to an order published on the administration's website, some 505 million rubles (\$7.8 million) reserved for the construction of six schools in St. Petersburg have been redirected into the city's new Zenit Arena, the flagship site for Russia's upcoming 2018 FIFA World Cup. Some 1 billion rubles, (\$15.3 million) allocated to seven hospitals and clinics, were also siphoned off.

The outrage didn't stop there. Already five times over budget, the stadium must be completed by December to qualify as a World Cup host, and requires extra cash if works are to be sped up. And so, the order, signed by St. Petersburg Governor Grigory Poltavchenko on Aug. 17, also diverted 313 million rubles (\$4.8 million) from the construction of seven kindergarten schools, 140 million rubles from a sports facility for the disabled, and 150 million rubles (\$2.3 million) from a community athletics center.

"The stadium, no matter what, needs to be finished," famous Russian actor and St. Petersburg native Mikhail Boyarsky told the Sport-Express.ru website. "But schools, hospitals, and kindergartens also need to be built."

The Kremlin has not, it seems, turned a blind eye to the problems plaguing the stadium and the decisions local authorities have made trying to fix it. On Aug. 31, the RBC news agency reported that Poltavchenko may be ousted following the September parliamentary elections as punishment for the project — which Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, as early as 2012, called "a disgrace."

An Old Story

The project to build Zenit Arena began in 2007, before Russia even bid to host the 2018 World Cup, as a new stadium for St. Petersburg's football club Zenit. It was supposed to be finished by the 2009 season, with a total estimated cost of 6.7 billion rubles (\$102.7 million). But when Russia won the World Cup bid, international football governing body FIFA demanded design changes

to meet World Cup standards.

So began a series of cost overruns, construction delays and corruption scandals. Subcontractors have been found to inflate cost estimates by millions of dollars, and a contractor was even sentenced to four years in jail for pilfering almost 150 million rubles (\$2.3 million) in state funds.

In June, the project's budget was increased by 4.3 billion rubles (\$68 million). But the stadium's primary contractor, Inzhtransstroi, asked for yet more money. The company claimed the city's constant changes to the stadium design were disrupting work flow, and that the city owed them 1 billion rubles (\$15.3 million) for already completed work. City authorities claimed to have given the company a 3.6 billion ruble (\$55.2) advance for still uncompleted work.

In mid-July, Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko tried to intervene. "Why can't they agree?" he told the R-Sport website. "If they are unable to agree, this situation will have to be resolved the hard way."

The idea of missing FIFA's December deadline was, Mutko said, "out of the question."

Cost Cutting

The World Cup is rivaled only by the Olympic Games in terms of visibility and infrastructure investment. In advance of the World Cup, Russia promised to build 12 stadiums across 11 cities in western Russia — from Kaliningrad in the west to Yekaterinburg in the east; from St. Petersburg in the north to Sochi in the south. The initial budget was set at around 664 billion rubles (\$22

Russia is scheduled to host the 2017 Confederations Cup final in St. Petersburg's Zenit Arena in July 2017. The football tournament is considered a warm-up tournament for the FIFA World Cup.

billion at the time), a World Cup record, but still short of the \$50 billion bill for Russia's 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

Beset with controversy from the outset, Russia's World Cup show was almost derailed last year. British newspapers detailed allegations that Moscow and FIFA had sealed an illicit agreement that Russia would host long before the organization's official vote on various national bids.

With preparations already well under way, however, Russia managed to hold onto the games.

Now, the biggest threat to Russia's hosting of the event are construction delays. Problems are mounting at several stadiums. In May, work was temporarily halted on a stadium in Samara over financial disputes between Russian authorities and the stadium contractor.

In the midst of economic crisis, the Kremlin is also cutting back on expenses. Taking into account the exchange rate and budget adjustments, the total dollar budget of the World Cup project now stands at less than half the original forecasts — a mere \$9.7 billion.

Desperate Times, Desperate Measures

The Samara labor dispute was resolved by expanding the budget for that stadium by 900 million rubles (\$14 million). But the situation in St. Petersburg, because of the looming deadline, is for the moment more serious. In the first of a series of increasingly desperate measures, city authorities in early August tore up their contract with Inzhtransstroi as the Zenit Arena primary contractor, and brought in another firm — Metrostroi.

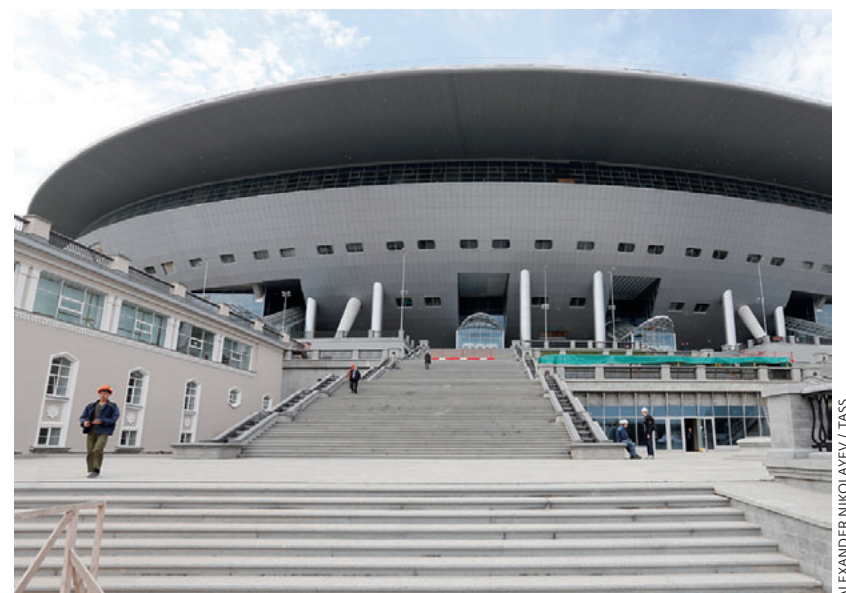
But Metrostroi needed more money to overcome the deficit left by Inzhtransstroi's 3.6 billion ruble advance. And so city authorities dipped into social works funding. As offensive as that may be to St. Petersburg residents, the contractor had an even more outrageous proposal to float at a press conference on Aug. 25.

"Don't you remember how great it used to be [in the Soviet Union]? Toward the end of a project, we used to get the whole city involved: the students, anyone at all," said Vadim Alexandrov, the company's chief.

Not to be outdone, St. Petersburg Vice Governor Igor Albin reportedly asked a paratrooper colonel if his boys could be deployed to help with finishing Zenit Arena on time. The colonel allegedly replied, "just get me the commander-in-chief's [Putin] order."

Whether or not the order comes, the paratroopers don't appear thrilled by the notion. An Aug. 25 press statement issued by their press office said simply: "Paratroopers have no time for construction work. Not even for stadiums." **TMT**

The Zenit Arena's new contractor Metrostroi has required additional funds to overcome the budget deficit left by the advance given to previous contractor Inzhtransstroi.



ALEXANDER NIKOLAYEV / TASS



"Strength and resolve were the only language Putin would understand," **Hillary Clinton** wrote about Putin in her memoir "Hard Choices"

Nov. 8

Scheduled date of the U.S. presidential election

"She set the tone for certain actors inside the country; she gave the signal." **Vladimir Putin** on Clinton's comments on Russia's 2011 parliamentary elections.



86%

Clinton's chance of winning the election, according to Aug. 30 live polls



KEVIN LAMARQUE / REUTERS

U.S. President Barack Obama is in the final months of his presidency. Russian President Vladimir Putin is hoping for productive meetings with the out-going president at the G20 summit in China. The summit runs from Sept. 4-5.

The Last Encounter

Anticipating Hillary Clinton's presidency, Vladimir Putin doesn't want to spoil his final chance with Barack Obama.



Op-Ed by **Vladimir Frolov**
Political analyst

Russian President Vladimir Putin heads to the G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, on Sept. 4 to lock in his geopolitical gains in a private meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama before the clock runs out for the Obama administration.

Moscow is traditionally averse to entering into strategic deals with lame-duck U.S. presidents, preferring to open a new page with the new U.S. leader. Thus, when President Bill Clinton made his final visit to Moscow in the summer of 2000 with a sweeping proposal to modify the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and make deep cuts in strategic nuclear weapons, Putin opted to wait it out, a decision he might have regretted later.

With Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump running on what looks like a Kremlin-sponsored foreign policy platform, Moscow might have even more incentive to procrastinate on serious diplomacy with the outgoing U.S. team. But the opposite is the case. The confluence of acute geopolitical crises, the need to cash in Russia's winning diplomatic chips in Syria and Ukraine, the strategic realignment of the Obama administration's policy in Syria with Moscow's goals and the fear of dealing with the Clinton administration in 2017 push Moscow to secure last-minute deals with Obama. The hope is to lock in certain political agreements on terms favorable to Russia and thus limit the policy options for the incoming administration.

With Trump trailing badly in the polls, Moscow is bracing itself for a Clinton presidency. Putin has a testy relationship with Clinton, who has always been more skeptical of Obama's "reset" with Russia, taking a darker view of Putin's intentions. Her public comments on Putin ("he has no soul" in 2008, or comparing him to Hitler in 2014) have not endeared her to the Kremlin ruler who once tried to impress her with personal tales of his family surviving the siege of Leningrad during World War II. The ultimate offense, in Putin's view, was Clinton's 2011 OSCE statement on the "undemocratic nature" of Russia's parliamentary elections that were followed by mass protests in Moscow.

Now Moscow views the future Clinton administration with poorly concealed dismay. The Kremlin expects her to be much more forceful in pushing back Russia's attempts to challenge and disrupt the U.S.-led world order and more willing to deploy military forces to advance U.S. interests and democratic regime change in Russia's neighborhood.

It is unclear whether this perception is true — Clinton has not expounded on her Russia policy choices other than challenging Trump's overly Putin-friendly views. She said that Putin appreciates "toughness and resolve" and pledged to push back against the Russian leader. But what specifically that means on issues like Syria, Ukraine and European security, she and her team have not spelled out. The Russian state media, in gross disregard for Russia's foreign policy interests, is running a character assassination campaign against Clinton, mouthing the most absurd and debunked conspiracy theories about her. Together with allegations of Russian hacking of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) emails and even voter registration systems in some states, this seems to be crudely designed to tell Clinton that Russia is not to be messed with.

For Putin, the G20 meeting with Obama is perhaps the last opportunity to personally clinch a deal on Syria and to advance Russia's vision for the Minsk-2 settlement with Ukraine. The Kremlin believes the Obama administration is eager to settle Ukraine and significantly advance on Syria before its time runs out. Moscow is making a last-ditch effort to negotiate directly with the West over the terms of the settlement that Ukraine needs to be pushed to implement, but its proposal for a trilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G20 with French and German leaders, instead of the Normandy Four format that includes Ukraine, fizzled out.

Thus, the meeting with Obama is considered crucial in pushing Kiev to accept Russia's demands for a federal state with the Donbass separatists. It is unclear whether Moscow is prepared to push for this by leveraging its cooperation in Syria or whether Obama would even be prepared to accept implicit linkages between the two issues.

On Syria, the United States has moved closer to the Russian position of keeping Syrian President Bashar Assad in power for the transitional period, provided Russia forces the regime to stop the indiscriminate bombings. But Moscow is still pushing against Washington demands for a virtual veto over Syria and Russia's air operations in a deal that otherwise would grant Moscow's wishes for a military alliance with Washington to combat terrorism.

Obama will probably use the encounter with Putin to warn the Russian leader of the imminent U.S. response to Russian cyber operations in the United States that go beyond legitimate intelligence collection.

It's a full plate for their last meeting, but still a chance to make history. **TMT**



"Alexander III brought stability, and his rule was the calmest and the best. The same goes for [Leonid] Brezhnev."
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

1989

year LDPR was registered.

4th

Place Zhirinovskiy came in the 2012 presidential election.



The Kremlin has given Zhirinovskiy several awards, including the prestigious order "For Service to the Fatherland."



MISHA JAPARIDZE/AP

By 2021, Russia will have transitioned to a two-party system, Zhirinovskiy predicts: "LDPR and United Russia. Let all other parties merge with those two."

Aging Rebel

By **Eva Hartog** e.hartog@imedia.ru, Twitter: @EvaHartog

Hidden behind rabble-rousing rhetoric, pragmatic conservatism is what really keeps Russia's political maverick in place.

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy runs his hand over a CD of 50 songs composed by a fan in his honor. He is clearly pleased. "All of humanity knows me," he says. "My name is in encyclopedias, in registers and databases. Books have been written, films recorded. I'm happy, I'm satisfied."

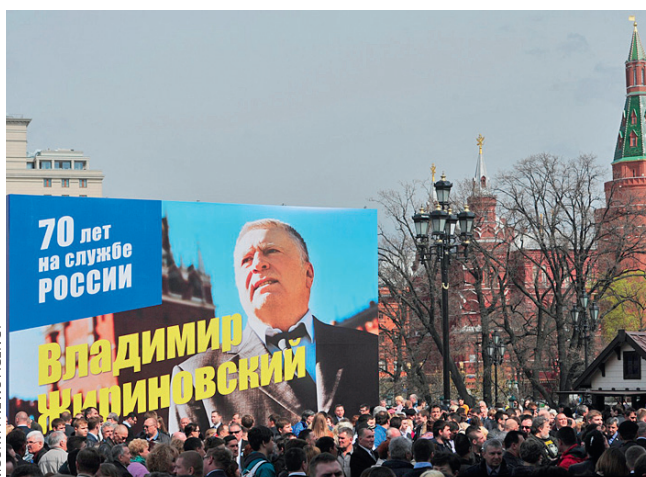
For better or worse, the boastful leader of Russia's ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party is right about one thing: With more than two decades at the helm of the first registered post-Soviet opposition party, Zhirinovskiy is an institution of Russian political life.

Young Vladimir Putin was still at the bottom of the political ladder in St. Petersburg's mayoral office when Zhirinovskiy's rabble-rousing rhetoric first burst onto television screens during presidential elections in 1991 (he came third).

With Zhirinovskiy now 70 years old, it cannot go on forever. Pundits have predicted his imminent resignation for years. But on the eve of parliamentary elections on Sept. 18, he's at it once more, lashing out against everyone and no one: foreign multinationals ("We don't need them!"), the wrong exports ("The best bread is being sent abroad!") and the right ones ("We should increase production so that the West chokes on our products!").

Behind the demagoguery, however, is a shrewd political strategist who knows his audience. Leaning back into his chair at the party's parliamentary office overlooking the Bolshoi Theater, he has turned the volume down a few notches.

"We don't want a revolution," he says.



МОСКВА NEWS AGENCY

Growing Pains

Visitors to his office are warned by a sign on the door: "Attention. No hugs, kisses or handshakes." Zhirinovskiy is not one to take life lightly.

The future politician grew up in Kazakhstan's Almaty, in a single-parent household — his father emigrated to Israel where he died in an accident, leaving the young Vladimir with little more than the Jewish patronymic, Volfovich. On her deathbed, his mother told him: "Volodya, there is noth-

ing to remember, not one joyful day." Zhirinovskiy celebrated his 70th birthday this April. Pundits have predicted his retirement for years, but he has shown no inclination to leave the arena.

"My mother had nothing. She worked in a canteen, her first husband [Zhirinovskiy's father] died, then there were more deaths or she was abandoned. There was absolutely nothing for her to be happy about," says Zhirinovskiy, with unusual softness. According to him, it ingrained in him a deep sense of compassion and understanding for the losers of the Soviet regime.

"They had a home, something to eat, clothes, but they weren't happy, they had nothing to be proud of," he says.

Restoring wounded pride was a prospect that appealed to millions of Russians after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Disillusioned with the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, reverting to communism was no longer an option. Zhirinovskiy's LDPR provided a third way: While liberal reformers were praising the West as an example to follow, Zhirinovskiy glorified Russia's imperial past and threatened the Baltic nations with nuclear annihilation in mediagenic sound bites.

That communication style resonates with Zhirinovskiy's core electorate, says Alexei Grazhdankin, deputy director of independent pollster the Levada Center.

Continued on Page 11 →

Out & About



Weekly round-up of all that's new, delicious and fun in Moscow.



GROOT



The outdoor terrace features several tables set under a canopy of trees. The covered veranda is complemented by a floral mural and brightly colored bean-bags.

Superhero Superfood at Groot

By **Rebecca Tivey** artsreporter@imedia.ru

A trendy new hub for vegetarians, vegans and raw food fanatics

Groot is named after the extraterrestrial, tree-like creature featured in the Marvel blockbuster "Guardians of the Galaxy." According to owner Ovanes Pogosyan, the name was chosen in homage to Groot's life-saving feats throughout the film. He hopes his new eatery will encourage diners to make similarly life-improving, nutritionally balanced choices.

Sounding a little far-fetched? The superhero-themed vegetarian cafe is out to prove that wholesome needn't mean humdrum. Head chef Alexei Malykhin ensures that each dish is not only nutritionally balanced, but flavorsome to

boot. The bulk of the menu features raw foods and dishes requiring little preparation, while processed and refined ingredients are banned from the kitchen.

Groot's design mirrors the natural, organic ethos of the menu. The interior decor is rich in earthy tones. Wood paneling is offset by exposed pipework, minimalist tiling and a forest of hanging plants.

For an Instagram-worthy breakfast, start your day with the acai bowl (390 rubles)—an antioxidant-packed blend of almond milk, banana, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries,

dates, acai berries, granola and chia seeds. For a light yet filling lunch, try the "El Macho" burrito (380 rubles). The wrap is filled to bursting with wholesome goodness: black beans, peppers, pineapple, mushrooms, guacamole and salsa.

Other highlights include the "Hempburger" (350 rubles), made from vegetables, sunflower seeds and hemp seeds, as well as the quinoa and broccoli salad drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with cashew nuts. The menu specifies whether a dish contains gluten, antioxidants or other healthful ingredients.

Groot also offers a wide selection of refresh-

ing soft drinks, ranging from lemonades to smoothies. Try the "Capitan A," a beautiful, bright orange concoction made from freshly squeezed carrot juice, mango and agave nectar, topped with coconut milk foam.

Whether you're a comic book lover or raw food fanatic, if you're looking to eat like a superhero, Groot is the place for you. **TMT**

+7 (926) 723 4123

facebook.com/Groot-кафе-лаб-1986507081574619

12-15 2nd Zvenigorodskaya Ulitsa Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda

NEWS & OPENINGS



ELEMENTS BY EDWARD KWON

Elements by Edward Kwon

A celebrity chef's Moscow outpost

This Korean eatery was established by chef Edward Kwon, a world-famous writer and television host, and merges classic Korean cuisine with Kwon's signature dishes. Start with the marinated beef bulgogi salad (650 rubles) and then move on to the deep-fried seabass with honeyed cucumbers (850 rubles). Pair your meal with an aloe vera lemonade (300 rubles).

+7 (495) 653 8453

elements.moscow
15/1 Rochdelskaya Ulitsa
Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda



RAMEN HOUSE

Ramen House

Innovative Asian takeout

Ramen House is the first pop-up cafe of the Mestnaya Yeda (Local Food) project. The Japanese take-out joint is located on the ground floor of the Rossiya concert hall, next to the flagship Chaikhona #1, a partner in this new venture. The main attraction is the sushirito—an innovative cross between sushi and—you guessed it—a burrito. The pork ramen is also pretty good (250 rubles).

facebook.com/RamenHouseMoscow
2 Pushkin Square
Metro Pushkinskaya, Chekhovskaya



ANTIKVARNY BOUTIQUE & BAR

Antikvarny Boutique & Bar

The best kept secret in town

Ring the doorbell of this discreet basement venue to discover the hybrid of an antique shop, private members' club and upscale eatery. Antikvarny's interior was designed by Natalya Belonogova, and all of the furnishings—mostly from the 1950s and 1960s—can be purchased by guests. The venue transitions seamlessly from coffee shop to cocktail bar to fancy restaurant depending on your mood.

facebook.com/antiquaryny
5 Zvonarsky Pereulok
Metro Trubnaya



CORNER BURGER

Corner Burger

For the carnivores of Moscow

In a city saturated with gourmet burger bars, Corner Burger stands out for its wide selection of dishes, creative taste combinations and drinks menu. Chow down on a burger with mango, cherries and goat's cheese (650 rubles), for a taste you won't find in McDonald's, or opt for the Slider Trio (700 rubles) for miniature bites of the restaurant's best burgers.

+7 (499) 250 0731

cornerburger.ru
20 Sadovaya-Kudrinskaya Ulitsa
Metro Barrikadnaya

Take it and go!

Four pages packed with the best places in Moscow to eat, drink, walk, shop, listen, watch, dance and sightsee. A new walking route and listings every week! **Take it, use it, save it!**

**6. Yeliseyev's Emporium**

Take the underpass to the opposite side of the street, and, with your nose in the air, walk past the upstart business and shopping center until you arrive at the pink confection of No. 14, Yeliseyev's Emporium. The famous store is in a manor house originally built in the 1780s and inhabited by a string of art- and literature-loving noble families. Most notably, in the 1820s Princess Zinaida Volkonskaya lived here in a house filled with art from her father's collection. Her literary salon was the "in" place of the decade. After passing through several more hands, in 1898 it was purchased by Grigory Yeliseyev, a fabulously wealthy merchant, who turned the first floor into the city's most luxurious grocery store with chandeliers, marble, richly polished wood and gilt. Nationalized in 1917, it was Gastronom #1 throughout the Soviet period, and in shabby elegance still carried goods not found anywhere else in the country. Now restored to its pre-Revolutionary glory, it is a combination corner shop, luxury food shop and tourist attraction.

14 Tverskaya Ulitsa

6

**5. House Under a Skirt**

The last building before Pushkin Square on the left side of the street was also built during the Stalin-era revamping of the Tverskaya, in 1940. The lower floors are rather severe in style, interrupted by a massive arch over Bolshoi Gnezdnikovsky Pereulok — not to mention to blacked-out windows of Night Flight, the city's oldest private nightclub. But the top of the building is decorated by five light and airy little towers. Until 1958 the round tower on the corner held the statue of a ballerina, which gave Moscow with the idea of calling the entire building "the house under a skirt." The house was residence to many celebrated musicians, scientists, generals and artists — and, of course, is famous for the "Armenia" store on the corner, which has been serving dolmas and fruit-flavored fizzy water to Muscovites for decades.

17 Tverskaya Ulitsa

5

Tverskaya Ulitsa



4

**4. Mayor's Office**

Continue up the street, past one of the classical Stalinist buildings that went up after Tverskaya Ulitsa was reconstructed in the 1930s. Today's paving stones and raised flower beds are mere window dressing compared to the street's reconstruction under Stalin: Buildings were torn down, the street was straightened, and some structures were moved to widen the street by almost 60 meters in some places. One of the buildings preserved was the cheery red Mayor's Office, built in 1782 by architect Mikhail Kazakov for the governor general's residence. Over the centuries it has endured reconstruction, expansion and even being shifted over 10 meters to accommodate the broader roadway. In the Soviet era it was the Mossoviet. Today, it's the Mayor's Office — or at least a portion of the offices that run Russia's capital. Some of the 18th-century interiors have been preserved in the reception halls.

13 Tverskaya Ulitsa

The Road to Tver

Explore Tverskaya From Manege to Pushkin Square

By Michele A. Berdy m.berdy@imedia.ru | Illustration by Maria Zaikina

Stroll along Moscow's main street where buildings move, huddle under skirts, and keep the world spinning.



7. Savvinskoye Residence

Continue down Tverskaya, past the Moskva bookstore and the small square with Moscow founder Yury Dolgoruky sitting rather imposingly across from the Mayor's Office, and past the reconstructed, reinvented and reopened Aragvi restaurant, which was, during the Soviet period, the only Georgian restaurant in the city. After trying to imagine a parallel universe in which Moscow has just one Georgian restaurant, wander down to No. 6, a traditional Stalinist-era apartment building. Go through the gates and prepare to gasp. Hiding inside is the Savvinskoye Residence, a hotel and office building built by the Savvino-Storozhevsky Monastery in 1907 in a whimsical and wonderful mix of Russian art nouveau and fairy-tale old Russian style, with particularly beautiful tile work. The building was originally right on the street, but when Tverskaya was reconstructed in the 1930s, the entire 23,000-ton building was lifted and moved back, all in one night and without evicting the residents. On that astonishing note, make your way down to Kamergersky Pereulok and have a strong drink.

6 Tverskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 6



7

3. Central Telegraph Building

The next building is the massive Central Telegraph, built from 1925-1927 in a style that crosses from modernism to constructivism, with one light decorative element: a revolving bright blue globe made of glass, surrounded by the seal of the Soviet Union. Inside was the main telegraph office, post office and telephone exchange, where you could order a call to Vladivostok or New Orleans and wait to dash into a booth when it was put through. In the 1930s the building housed a broadcast booth for the All-Union Radio, and it was here that Vyacheslav Molotov announced the start of the Great Patriotic War at noon on June 22, 1941. But it's not a communist communications center anymore. The space now houses a wide variety of organizations, shops and cafes, including the Mummy Troll Bar.

7 Tverskaya Ulitsa



3

2

1

1. Hotel National

This is a walk on which you can learn about the buildings you've passed countless times. Begin at the corner of Tverskaya and Mokhovaya, outside the Hotel "Natsionalnaya" — opened in 1903 as the city's finest hostelry. The architecture mixes Renaissance and classical styles with a bit of art nouveau to create a hotel luxurious enough for visiting aristocrats, diplomats and prominent businessmen. Nationalized in 1917, it housed the first Soviet government when the capital moved from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Renamed the First House of Soviets, it welcomed Vladimir Lenin and Nadezhda Krupskaya for a week in room 107. The Soviet government remodeled the hotel in the 1930s to something of its old glory, filling it with furniture expropriated from various palaces. After an unrelenting decline through the rest of the Soviet years — described and drawn perfectly in "Eloise in Moscow," published in 1951 — it has since been remodeled entirely. Sumptuous rooms with a view of Red Square and the Kremlin? Definitely da.

15 Mokhovaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 1

2. Yermolova Theater (Postnikova's Passage)

Walk up Tverskaya and pass the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Slow down as you pass the next building, now the Yermolova Theater. It was originally built in the late 19th century as a "passage" — a shopping arcade — by Lidia Postnikova, the wife of a wealthy merchant. With its dome, columns and decorative façade, it was a fine example of Moscow eclectic architecture. After the Revolution, it housed various government offices, apartments on the upper levels, and a publishing house. In 1929 the first floor was remodeled as a theater. For several years the Meyerhold Theater was here, followed by a ballet troupe. In 1946 it became the Yermolova Theater, and so it has remained. Since 2012 the artistic director has been the award-winning actor and director Oleg Menshikov.

5 Tverskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 6





Giuseppe Stuppia, journalist

"My favorite restaurant in Moscow is Cafe Yunost on Trubnaya Ulitsa. The cozy restaurant has some of the best pastrami in town and a large selection of wines from all over the world."



GULAG HISTORY MUSEUM

Life Through a Different Lens: Multicultural Moscow

This week we've pounded the pavements in a bid to explore the city from a different perspective. Whether it's enjoying delicious food, discovering your natural dancing ability or remembering the past, here are some multicultural destinations where you can learn about the city's diverse inhabitants with a view to understanding and respecting their culture.



ROERICH MUSEUM

A Taste of Tibet

Experience "The Roof of the World"

Dreaming of mountain vistas, sweeping grasslands and stunning Buddhist temples, but finding Moscow a little, well, flat? First, head to the Nikolai Roerich Museum where you can learn more about the namesake anthropologist-painter-theosophist and his family. The Roerich family traveled extensively through Asia, and they were even detained in Tibet for five months by local authorities. Nikolai's experiences of this time are documented through his vibrant paintings of the mountains and lakes, correspondence with local Buddhist lamas and many ornaments and important relics that were collected on the way. Meanwhile, his linguist-son George published extensively on his expeditions and

Tibetan language acquisition. If you're hungry for more after the museum, head to the Tibet-Himalaya restaurant — there are two branches in the city — for some tasty treats prepared by native chefs.

tibethimalaya.ru
en.icr.su/museum
3/5 Znamensky Pereulok
Metro Arbatskaya, Kropotkinskaya



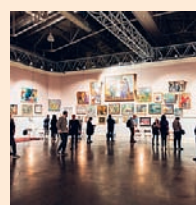
GEORGIAN MONUMENT

Georgia on Your Mind Monuments and dancing

Ever wonder what that monument of metal letters was on Tishinskaya Ploshchad? Put up in 1983 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Treaty of Georgievsk between Russia and Georgia, it is called — without a whiff of irony — Friendship Forever. It was designed

by Zurab Tsereteli and poet-architect Andrei Voznesensky. Called unofficially — with plenty of irony — the Giant Shashlik, it is in Moscow's old Georgian quarter, still identified by street names like Malaya Cruzinskaya Ulitsa (Little Georgia Street). If you don't want to pay your respects at the monument, you can celebrate Georgia at any one of hundreds of cafes and restaurants in the city, or by learning how to dance the lezginka and other Georgian dances. Men have to attempt the hard jumps; women have to learn how to float like a swan. After a hard night of rehearsing — hit your favorite Khinkalnaya.

Gordost Kavkaza
lezginka.biz/lezginka/gruz.html
5 Ulitsa 1905 Goda. Metro Ulitsa 1905 Goda



JEWISH MUSEUM

Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center

A panoramic view of Jewish history

Experience Russia through a different lens at Moscow's Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center. The cutting-edge cultural complex tells the story of the Jewish people in Russia from Catherine the Great to the present day, while the adjoining educational center aims to promote and facilitate a culture of peace and cooperation in society. At the museum learn about the origins of the Jewish faith through a 4D cinema experience. Then watch the history of Jews in Russia unfold through striking audiovisual installations, powerful witness testimonies and interactive displays. A large section of the museum is dedicated to the Holocaust and the treatment of Jews under Stalin. Part of the huge exhibition hall has been converted into a Jewish "shtetl" — a small town or borough — where you can visit a synagogue and take part in the Shabbat feast.

jewish-museum.ru
11 Ulitsa Obratzova, Bldg. 1A
Metro Savyolovskaya, Marina Roshcha



GULAG HISTORY MUSEUM

Gulag History Museum

Confronting the past

As you enter the museum on 1st Samotyochny Pereulok, the sound system projects the chilling clank of closing cell doors and loud footsteps on a concrete floor. The first room contains a simple but striking exhibit: heavy steel prison doors from gulags across the former Soviet Union. It's a powerful reminder of the fate suffered by the millions of people who fell aful of the state and found themselves in labor and detention camps, often hundreds of miles from civilization. The collection includes prisoner's personal belongings, letters and an overwhelming amount of rare archival footage in which survivors talk about life in the gulags. The museum is a reminder of Russia's painful past, and a call for greater tolerance between people of differing religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

gmig.ru
9 1st Samotyochny Pereulok, Bldg. 1
Metro Novoslobodskaya, Dostoevskaya



BUDDHIST CENTER

Lama Tsongkhapa Buddhist Center

For spiritual and cultural succor

Buddhism is one of Russia's four "traditional" religions, with three parts of the country — Kalmykia, Buryatia and Tuva — predominantly Buddhist. But Moscow does not yet have a Buddhist Temple, although two are under construction. In the meantime, the Lama Tsongkhapa Buddhist Center holds religious ceremonies and provides all kinds of assistance to anyone interested in learning more about Buddhism. There is a large library and Internet shop, a wealth of audio materials and films, and a variety of events, lectures and classes. Although most events and ceremonies are in Russian, all are welcome.

buddha.ru
23 Ulitsa Mytnaya, Bldg. 1. Metro Tulsckaya



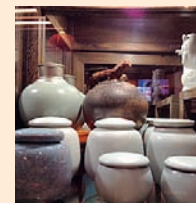
POLISH CENTER

Polish Cultural Center

Cutting-edge culture from a neighbor

One of the city's most vibrant cultural scenes in Moscow is at the Polish Cultural Center, part of the Polish diplomatic mission. It aims to conduct PR for contemporary Polish culture, including the most cutting-edge literary and artistic figures. Opened in 1988, it offers a plethora of mostly free events, from meetings with writers and prominent political and social figures, to films, concerts and exhibits. They currently have films in the SUBTITLE festival and are supporting the work of Polish artists taking part in the Street Art Biennale. The center also has Polish language courses. Be sure to check out their website for upcoming events.

kulturapolshi.ru
4 Ulitsa Klimashkina. Metro Belorusskaya



GREEN PHOENIX

A Trip Down the Silk Road

Peace, quiet and a cup of fragrant tea

Looking for a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the city or want to travel to China but can't afford the airfare? Head to the Green Phoenix tea club on Rozhdestvensky Bulvar. Tucked away in a residential courtyard, this tea-lovers paradise combines a speciality shop with a plush seating area where visitors can participate in traditional Chinese tea ceremonies. After learning how to identify the notes in different tea blends and mastering the art of the reverential pouring process, recline on the floor cushions, breathe in the incense and drift away to the Orient.

+7 (495) 721 8996
clubcha.ru
19 Rozhdestvensky Bulvar
Metro Trubnaya, Sretensky Bulvar

The Moscow Times

CONFERENCES

SEPTEMBER 13

MARRIOTT ROYAL AURORA

CIVIL CODE: RESTART. TRANSITION FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE PRIVAT

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Ruling of the Supreme Court on the recovery of damages.
- Changes in arbitration legal proceedings.
- The first legal disputes as a result of the changes in the Civil Code.
- Status and responsibilities of a legal entity.
- New developments in corporate law.
- Changes aimed at improving the law of obligations, transactions and contract law in view of Federal Law No. 42 dated March 8, 2015.
- Objects of intellectual property: An Analysis of Change.

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“Whenever there are international tensions, LDPR puts on its ‘revival of Russia’s greatness.’” **Alexei Grazhdankin**, Levada Center pollster.

70

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy’s current age.



Zhirinovskiy famously threw a glass of **orange juice** at murdered opposition leader Boris Nemtsov during a television debate. He also repeatedly splashed opponents with water during a brawl in the State Duma.

10%

LDPR rating in last Levada Center poll.



← Vladimir Zhirinovskiy’s massive support base in the 1993 parliamentary elections stunned the liberal establishment.

→ Zhirinovskiy has plenty of unsavory friends. German neo-fascist Gerhard Frei embraces Zhirinovskiy in 1994.



← Continued from Page 6

The LDPR appeals to “the marginalized voter from depressed regions,” he says — largely low-educated, middle-aged and living in Russia’s interior or smaller settlements. “These voters are not looking for long explanations or deliberations, they respond to light and sharp phrases,” he says.

At home, Zhirinovskiy’s brand of bizarre performance politics is unrivaled. Now, he’s found a kindred spirit in the country that is usually first on his hit list.

“I feel a certain sympathy toward Donald Trump, his manner, his position. He’s close to me in a way. He speaks freely and reacts instantly,” Zhirinovskiy recently told a press conference. As if to prove their shared over-the-top manner, he claimed he had sent a sample to a U.S. lab to test for possible familial ties with the Republican presidential candidate.

Even without common genes, the two share a talent for grabbing headlines — Zhirinovskiy is also a frequent name in the foreign media, who alternate between depicting him as a political buffoon and a guinea pig used by the Kremlin to gage the electoral pH with radical proposals.

The LDPR leader finds the attention from foreign media flattering. “Of course I like that I’m famous there [in the West]. It’s a plus,” he says. But he insists that his media success is his own doing, dismissing professional speechwriters. “I’d sooner tear their texts apart than look at them,” he says.

Pragmatism

Zhirinovskiy’s direct talk and promises of Russia’s revival as a great power proved a huge success. During the LDPR’s first parliamentary election in 1993, they won 23 percent of the vote. The liberal establishment was caught completely off guard by what it saw as the fledgling democracy’s swerve towards ultranationalism, bordering on fascism. “Russia, you’ve lost your mind!” the prominent literary critic Yury Karyakin famously said.

For the LDPR, however, things went downhill from there. After its initial success, the party has never garnered more than 12 percent of votes.

Zhirinovskiy has his own explanation as to why.

“They started marking us down,” he said. “The results were already being fixed during Yeltsin’s time — the elections in 1995, 1999. We left behind the Soviet system but failed to create a new, competitive democracy.”

It is a deadpan acknowledgement of widespread vote rigging. But despite the opposition talk and unsalted criticism of government officials, the LDPR has consistently backed the Kremlin on all major issues, most significantly in the early 2000s when Putin’s Kremlin needed support from smaller parties in parliament.

Conformism seems to be in the party’s DNA. In an interview with journalist Vladimir Pozner in 2010, Zhirinovskiy said he believed it was the LDPR’s “moderateness” that convinced the Communist authorities to register it as a party in the first place.

“The LDPR doesn’t act against the country, we don’t say: something’s wrong with this country,” says Zhirinovskiy. “We say: Our country has problems. Whereas they [the liberal opposition] want an ‘orange revolution.’”

Behind his self-proclaimed “flexible approach” appears to be pure pragmatism. “Democrats in Russia have three paths open

to them: the grave, emigration or prison,” he told journalist Ksenia Sobchak matter-of-factly during a recent interview.

The fourth path, according to the LDPR, is realism and patience. Lots of it.

Zhirinovskiy’s nightmare scenarios are the uprising of 1917 and the Soviet Union’s collapse, both “revolutions” with disastrous effects, he says. “We destroyed everything too briskly, too harshly,” he says.

“There is no ideal system just as there are no ideal persons, ideal families or ideal cities, we have to get away from ideals.”

The upcoming parliamentary elections will be “better” than those in 2011, predicts Zhirinovskiy, adding he doesn’t expect any “major” vote rigging.



MOSKVA NEWS AGENCY

Russia’s ruling party, United Russia, has a real rating of 25 percent, according to Zhirinovskiy, who predicts they will bring it up to 40 percent in the final vote. “But that’s already better than 70,” he concludes.

‘Second Choice’

For his own party, Zhirinovskiy sees a result of 22 to 25 percent. Polls are less sanguine, putting the LDPR at 10 to 15 percent several weeks before the election. But, unlike other parliamentary opposition parties, the Communist Party and A Just Russia, the LDPR stands a good chance of increasing its number of Duma seats, currently at 56 out of 450.

From the very start, Zhirinovskiy’s career has been a series of headline-grabbing episodes.



DMITRY DONSKOI / RIA NOVOSTI

Courter of Controversy

- During his 1990s presidential campaign, he promised free vodka and cheap lingerie to all citizens should he be elected, adding that **all single women would be provided with husbands** from his party ranks.
- Zhirinovskiy proposed that **bird flu** be eradicated in 2006 by arming the populace and ordering them to shoot migratory birds.
- In 2008 he suggested **dropping nuclear bombs** in the Atlantic to flood Great Britain.

After Western sanctions imposed on Russia over its role in the Ukraine crisis and annexation of Crimea, Zhirinovskiy’s once outlandish statements about the existence of a foreign threat no longer seem so outlandish to many Russians.

“To many voters he now looks like a more serious politician who for years spoke the truth,” says Alexander Pozhalov, research director at the Moscow-based Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Research.

The LDPR stands a good chance of ousting the Communist Party as the so-called “second-choice party” for undecided voters. With patriotism and anti-Western rhetoric having become government policy in recent years, the LDPR is a viable alternative for those who support Putin generally, but are unhappy about socio-economic conditions. “It’s a safe vote,” says Pozhalov.

An economic crisis caused by low oil prices and Western sanctions is also playing into their hands.

“Their old slogan: ‘We’re for the poor! We’re for Russians!’ is still applicable today,” says Konstantin Kostin, a former Kremlin aide who is now head of the Civil Society Development Foundation.

The biggest threat to the party is Vladimir Zhirinovskiy himself. Though still active on the campaign trail, the veteran politician cannot hide his age. The slightly overweight belly has grown, and his eyes are narrow slits above pale, puffy cheeks. In debates, he looks to take increasingly greater effort to wind himself up.

For Zhirinovskiy, retirement is unlikely to be the end of his political career. He’s already been promised a Kremlin-appointed seat as senator in the Federation Council. But for his party, it could spell the end.

“The Communists may still get people voting for their ideas, but, with the LDPR, it’s mostly about Zhirinovskiy himself,” says Levada’s Grazhdankin.

Zhirinovskiy’s more measured son Igor Lebedev, deputy chairman of the LDPR’s faction in the Duma, would seem his most likely successor.

But his father suggests that option is off the table. “The moment someone appears who’s better than me, or at least someone who will be as good, that person will get a chance,” he says.

Undoubtedly, in Zhirinovskiy’s eyes, those shoes will be difficult to fill. **TMT**



European Commission President **Jean-Claude Juncker** became the first senior EU figure to visit Russia in more than two years in June.

1995

Year the AEB was established

500

Approximate number of members of the AEB



"Whether Russia is wrong or not does not appear on your company's balance sheet." **Philippe Pegorier**, former AEB chairman.



OLEG BORODIN

A Very German Coup

By **Howard Amos** newsreporter@imedia.ru

Boardroom squabble in European business association blamed on disagreements over Ukrainian crisis and sanctions policy.

For Philippe Pegorier, it was vindication. Three months after he narrowly lost a vote to be re-elected chairman of the Association of European Businesses, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree awarding Pegorier the Order of People's Friendship, the highest honor that can be bestowed on foreigners.

"The Russians voted after the elections. They made a very clear choice," says Pegorier, who is also the Russian head of French transport equipment manufacturing company Alstom.

The former French diplomat received the most votes in a vigorously contested April ballot among the AEB's approximately 500 members to select a nine-member board. But Pegorier was out-manuevered at the subsequent meeting of the board, which chose Thomas Staertzel, the Russian head of German car manufacturer Porsche and a relatively unknown figure in AEB circles, as chairman by five votes to four.

The tussle for control of the AEB, the most influential foreign business association in Russia, is part of an ongoing debate within Europe over how to interact with Russia following the Ukraine crisis. Pegorier was seen by many Europeans in Moscow as too loud in his criticism of Western sanctions on Russia.

Four people with knowledge of the AEB's elections, including current and former board members, suggested to The Moscow Times that Pegorier's ouster was a result of pressure from European embassies.

'An Internal Move'

The winner of the AEB's elections to select the board would normally be automatically chosen as chairman at the first board meeting. So when the incumbent Pegorier received 28 votes, in joint first place with Alexander Liberov, the chief financial officer at German equipment manufacturer Siemens, he assumed the chairmanship would be his.

But a decision was taken by a group within the board to deny him the position. Staertzel, who came fourth in the AEB-wide ballot, became the figurehead for the anti-Pegorier faction.



SOFIA MIROYEVOVA

Philippe Pegorier

A member of the board of the Association of European Businesses and the head of French equipment manufacturer Alstom in Russia, Pegorier has spent most of his career working in Russia and Ukraine. Before joining Alstom, he was a French diplomat.

"There was an internal move," says the Russia head of one European company familiar with the situation.

The announcement of Staertzel's victory provoked surprise, and some anger, within the Moscow community. "There was a bit of an emotional reaction," says a different head of a European company in Russia.

Unlike Pegorier, who is well-known in AEB circles, Staertzel's only interaction with the AEB during his seven years in Moscow was as a member of the Automobile Manufacturers Committee.

Staertzel met with a Moscow Times reporter but refused to allow material from the two-hour interview to be used in print. "My job is to unite, to respect different positions within the board, and to ensure an open, transparent and valued exchange of ideas for constructive solutions and decisions in the interest of our members," he said in written comments.

There are no allegations any rules were broken in the election process, but the perception of an anti-democratic decision has left some members with an unpleasant after-taste.

"This was a palace coup, not a revolution," says the deputy head of one AEB committee.

External Pressure?

Pegorier declines to name those he accuses of masterminding his removal, but says he was under pressure from both European ambassadors in Moscow and the EU delegation to Russia over his stance on sanctions.

"Of course some EU ambassadors tried to influence me and tried to influence members of the board," he says. At least three other people familiar with the situation at the AEB said political pressure was exerted from the outside.

But the charge is vigorously rejected by Frank Schauff, the AEB's chief executive. "Any attempt to push in a certain direction by the embassies would lead to a severe conflict — but it's never happened," he says.

The official EU delegation to Russia maintained that it respects AEB independence. "The EU delegation has no role in the formulation of positions by the AEB," the delegation said in a statement sent to The Moscow Times.

Two people with knowledge of the situation said the campaign to install Staertzel was coordinated by German equipment manufacturer Siemens, a competitor of Pegorier's firm, Alstom. Alexander Liberov, chief financial officer of Siemens in Russia, is now the AEB's first deputy chairman, the second most powerful position on the board.

Siemens did not respond to multiple phone calls and a written request seeking comment.



German Chancellor **Angela Merkel** said Aug. 19 that there was no reason to lift economic sanctions on Russia

3

waves of sanctions were imposed by the EU in 2014.



Over the last two years, the AEB has lost approximately 100 of its company-members as a result of the Ukraine crisis and Russia's economic recession.

Jan. 1, 2017

Expiration date for current EU sanctions against Russia



SOFA MIROYEDOVA

Frank Schauff

The chief executive of the Association of European Businesses, Schauff was originally proposed for the job by former chairman Reiner Hartmann in 2007. He worked previously as a foreign policy adviser to Germany's Social Democratic Party.



SOFA MIROYEDOVA

Thomas Staertzel

The chairman of the board of the Association of European Businesses and the head of German car manufacturer Porsche in Russia, Staertzel moved to Moscow in 2009 after working for Porsche in various countries across the world.

Kremlin Intervention

Putin's decision to recognize Pegorier's work is not the first time he has been honored by Russia. In May 2015, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov presented Pegorier with an award for his "contribution to international cooperation."

Pegorier maintains that both awards show the support he has among Russian officials.

The honors are particularly striking given that the AEB's long-serving previous chairman, Reiner Hartmann, never received any official Russian awards. Hartmann declined to comment for this article.

The Kremlin has long been seen as attempting to exploit differences between European countries to water down EU-wide enthusiasm for sanctions. Pegorier's criticism of the EU would have been music to the ears of Russian officials, according to one businessman in Moscow with an AEB position. "It's definitely what the Russians wanted to hear from European businesses in Russia," he says.

Pegorier's Reign

Pegorier was first elected chairman by the AEB's board in May 2014 as relations between the EU and Russia deteriorated to their worst level since the Cold War.

Russia annexed the Ukrainian region of the Crimean Peninsula in February of that year, and soon after began support for a separatist rebellion in eastern Ukraine. The EU responded with three waves of economic sanctions targeting Russian companies, banning certain high-technology exports to Russia and limiting Russia's ability to raise capital abroad.

The AEB offered little condemnation of sanctions in the final months of Hartmann's tenure, but under Pegorier, it became an outspoken opponent of the EU's position and issued regular press releases critical of the restrictive measures.

Pegorier himself often appeared on Russian state-owned television channels to condemn sanctions and he lobbied the governments of all 28 EU members to reconsider sanctions.

"Whether Russia is wrong or not doesn't appear on your company's balance sheet," says Pegorier. "The members are ready to pay for one thing: influence on the Russian authorities. If we don't have the confidence of the authorities, we can pack our bags and go home."

But his attacks on the EU began to raise eyebrows. "Pegorier had become too outspoken that sanctions were a bad thing," says the AEB committee deputy chairman. "He would get on his soapbox at the drop of a hat. And he didn't care who was listening."

Schauff points out that an AEB survey in 2015 showed less than 20 percent of the organization's members were affected by sanctions — many were more preoccupied with battling the effects of a ruble collapse and an economic recession.

Beyond the AEB

The AEB is not the only foreign business organization in Moscow to have seen a high-profile departure this year.

The Russo-British Chamber of Commerce announced in Au-

gust that its Russia director, Alan Thompson, was leaving. In March, the German-Russian Chamber of Commerce, replaced its long-serving chairman of the board, Michael Harms, with Matthias Schepp, a former Moscow bureau chief for newspaper Der Spiegel.

At least in Thompson's case, the same dynamics as at the AEB appear to have been in play, with a perception that he was too far from the official London line on Russia. "Alan was sacked by the new ambassador," says Pegorier, referring to Laurie Bristow, the British ambassador who took up his post in January.

"How is it that he [Thompson] became a problem? He has just been talking to people," says a person familiar with Thompson's departure.

A British Embassy spokesperson says: "This is a matter for the RBCC."

One member of the RBCC board says Thompson's departure was the result of a personal conflict. Former British ambassador to Moscow Anthony Brenton, also a board member at RBCC, says he was not aware of any acrimony but adds: "You can get into very hot water if you go beyond the line of what is commercially defensible."

'German Takeover'

The battle lines within Russia's foreign business associations often reflect the real political differences between European countries over the issue of sanctions.

The EU sanctions on Russia must be unanimously renewed by all member states every six months and a political struggle in Brussels is expected before they expire at the end of 2016.

Countries like Italy, Hungary, Slovenia and Greece are known to favor their cancellation while governments in the north and east of the bloc, particularly the United Kingdom, Poland and the Baltic states, support a harder line with Russia. Berlin's stance is seen as decisive.

Most of the voting in the AEB's elections is done along national lines, with, for example, French companies voting for French candidates. Germans who stand for office have the edge because German companies are the most numerous — French and British companies are the second and third most well-represented.

Alliances are formed along the same principle. The head of one foreign company in Moscow accuses Pegorier of seeking to pack the board with Italians — who are more likely to reflect the line from Rome and back a vocal anti-sanctions position.

One British businessman in Moscow describes the ouster of Pegorier as a "German takeover." All significant positions within the AEB are currently held by representatives of German companies: chairman, first deputy chairman and chief executive.

"German control of all the key positions in the AEB is unacceptable," says Pegorier, who draws a parallel between himself and Charles de Gaulle, the 20th-century statesman who dominated French politics for three decades.

"After World War II, De Gaulle was voted out of government. But he came back," says Pegorier. **ТМТ**

THE WORD'S WORTH

Caught in the Act

Засекать: to catch someone

By **Michele A. Berdy**

Moscow-based translator and interpreter, author of "The Russian Word's Worth" (Glas), a collection of her columns.



YEVGENY PARYONOV

Every December Russian linguists vote on their favorite word of the year — one that sums up the previous 12 months. This year I'm anticipating a slew of words all connected with accusation, blame and getting caught. It's not the Summer of Love, it's the Summer of J'accuse!

In the ladder of blame, you start with the verb pair обвинять/обвинить (to accuse). This pair can be used for everyday fights in the communal kitchen and official charges. Accusations have filled the sports pages every day this summer: Лучшую российскую биатлонистку обвиняют в применении допинга (Russia's best female biathlon athlete has been accused of doping.)

Then you blame someone — винить. This is what you do when your kid comes home from school with a bad mark on his exam: Родители в этой ситуации, как правило, винят педагогов (In this situation, parents usually blame the teachers.) But you might blame someone closer to home: Виновата я, одна я, сына не вините! (I'm to blame — just me! Don't blame my son!)

More colloquially, you can pile blame on someone: сваливать. While the other blaming and accusing verbs are neutral as to the truth of the claims, сваливать is used when the blame is unfair: Саша высказался в том, что не надо сваливать на Алёшу, Алёша здесь ни при чём (Sasha said that we shouldn't dump all the blame on Alyosha because Alyosha had nothing to do with it.) This is not a nice thing to do: Сваливать свою вину на других — это не трудно, но очень противно (Blaming others for what you did isn't hard to do, but it's disgusting.)

Next up is упрекать/упрекнуть (to rebuke, reproach). With these words, we're upping the accusatory ante. Упрекать generally means to scold someone, but it implies that you've already accused them, blamed them, and now have moved on to the first part of the punishment: a tongue-lashing. Я упрекал вас в конъюнктурности (I accused you of opportunism.) Sometimes it's hard to see the sin: Его упрекали за то, что он носит фрак, ходит на балы, знает иностранные языки, за то, что он обаятелен и красив (He was chided for wearing a tailcoat, attending balls, knowing foreign languages and being charming and handsome.) Какой позор (What a disgrace!)

This can also be expressed with the description of a gesture — тыкать пальцем (to point the finger). В нас, врагов, вечно будут тыкать пальцем (They are always going to point the finger at us, their enemies.)

The jig is up with поймать (to catch). Я поймала его на лжи (I caught him in a lie.) A slangy way of saying this is засекать (to catch someone out), often used to mean seeing someone doing something they shouldn't be doing. Я пару раз сына засекала на посещении порносайтов (A couple of times I caught my son on porn websites.)

But with уличить, you're really in trouble. This means being caught in the act. The porn-watching kid's friend might ask: Уличил тебя в чём-то? (Did you get caught doing something wrong?) But sometimes it's more serious: Уличённые в допинге российские легкоатлеты сдали олимпийские медали (The Russian track-and-field athletes who were caught doping turned in their Olympic medals.)

What do you do if accused? Take a lesson from the kid: Я отмазался (I talked my way out of it.) **ТМТ**



"At the Manege exhibition you can see the work of artists who are not usually exhibited in Russia." **Sabina Chagina**, Artmossphere cofounder.

10

Jury members will judge the entries.

11

International curators are collaborating with Artmossphere.



International artists such as Barcelona-based street artist Miss Van, Spanish street artist Spy, and the world-famous duo The London Police will take part in the biennale over the coming months.

Street Art Off the Streets

By **Andrei Muchnik** artsreporter@imedia.ru

The Moscow Street Art Biennale brings international talent to the Manege.

Brightly-colored, creative and often controversial, street art has historically received the cold shoulder by city authorities — making the arrival of the capital's second street art biennale all the more interesting. We sent our arts reporter to the Moscow Manege to find out more.

Entering the Manege Central Exhibition Hall, I notice the huge plaster head of a clown on the floor. Next to it stands a man in paint-splattered overalls, working on a smaller sculpture of a human head. His name is Mario Mankey, a Spanish street artist here to present his "Empires and Their Walls" project at the II Artmossphere Moscow Street Art Biennale, alongside 42 foreign artists and 26 Russian artists.

The hall is sensory overload, full of noise, color and artists chatting in foreign languages. Some are adding the final touches to their works, others are just starting to assemble them. Two girls trying to set up a tent in the middle of the hall are not disoriented campers, but artists from Baltimore. Jessie and Kate's installation — a tent featuring elaborate batik prints — is called "Waxing in the Honey-moon."

Further into the hall, Sepe from Poland is high up on a ladder, painting the faces of several puppet-like creatures that are beating up a member of their group while silhouettes on the walls around them look on. Sepe takes off his headphones when I approach. The piece is called "Invisible Walls," just like the theme of this year's biennale. "The puppets are us and the people in the walls are pulling our strings, manipulating us to do what we don't want to do," he says.

Amid the chaos of the final push to ready everything before the opening, I find one serene individual, Sabina Chagina, Artmossphere cofounder and the curator. I sit down with her to gain some perspective on the new biennale.

TMT: Sabina, how did you become involved with street art?

SC: Street art came from hip-hop, and I did as well. I was a bona fide b-girl. My future husband and I founded Flam-



Polish street artist Sepe puts the finishing touches to his colorful artwork. The piece, "Invisible Walls," explores how human behavior can be easily manipulated.

mable Beats in 2003 and we started spreading hip-hop culture at clubs, especially underground hip-hop. We used to DJ at so-called "graffiti jams" where several artists would gather and paint their own pieces. In 2008 I founded Street Kit, an online gallery of street art. In 2011 I opened an actual, offline gallery at Flakon, which existed for a year and a half.

TMT: How did you arrive at this point?

SC: The street art boom began in Moscow. The mayor said that the whole city should be painted with graffiti as part of the City Day holiday celebrations. I was invited to curate part of the effort and that was how I met Yulia Vasilenko, the co-founder of Artmossphere.

TMT: Why a biennale rather than a festival?

SC: We realized that we needed some sort of space to ex-

hibit the works rather than just paint walls out on the streets. The biennale gives small, independent projects an opportunity to be noticed, while the main project serves as the background.

TMT: So what will be the smaller projects this year?

SC: On Sept. 14 we will have an auction of some of the works exhibited at Manege at the RuArts Gallery, our longtime partner. On Sept. 15 an exhibition will open at Pavilion number 64 at VDNKh. The exhibition is entitled "In/dependence," and artists will explore the theme of hyper consumerism and the ways we can become independent of a consumerist world. We plan to open a workshop space and children's street art school in the back of Pavilion number 64 at the end of September.

TMT: Why do you think that street art in Moscow is more and more seen at galleries rather in its natural environment, i.e. on the streets?

SC: When street artists paint a canvas, it's just another way of expressing themselves. It's not street art anymore, but the canvas bears the same meaning, the same colors. And street art is still out there. But some of the artists will even refuse to paint a facade if it is officially allowed.

if it is officially allowed.

TMT: But why is the street art in Moscow's center being replaced with patriotic or commercial graffiti?

SC: When we painted all of those facades during "The Best City on Earth" festival we showed the marketing specialists and political scientists a useful tool. Now the rights to those facades are being bought by various companies and organizations and they put whatever they want there. Unfortunately, there is no law that will encourage real estate developers to support street art.

The II Artmossphere Moscow Street Art Biennale runs through Jan. 18, 2017, at various locations throughout the city. See artmossphere.ru for further information.

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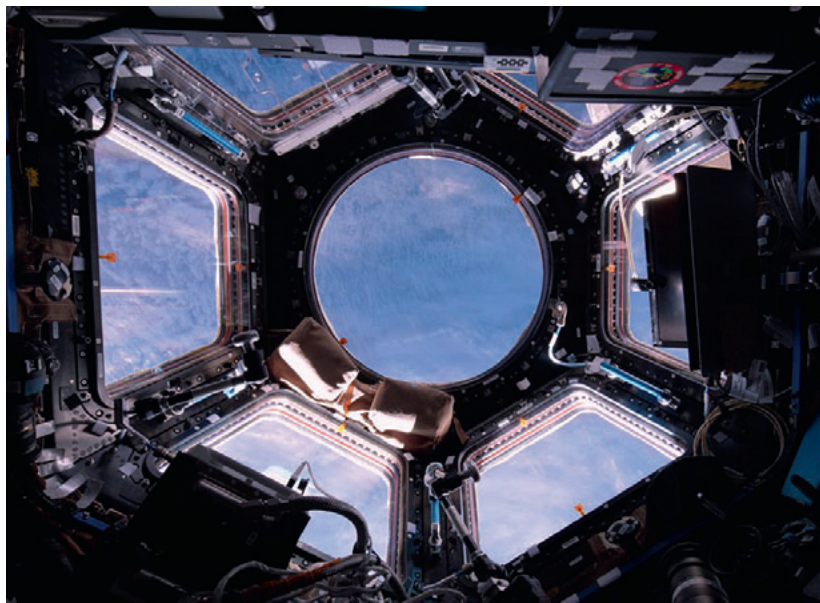
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"A Beautiful Planet" provides the ultimate cinema experience. Viewers are transported to the heights of space via the power of IMAX technology.

Sept. 1 – 7

EVENT Spasskaya Tower Festival Military bands and more

For the ninth year, Red Square is being occupied by all things military, musical and equestrian for a week. This is the Spasskaya Tower International Military Music Festival, where some of the best military bands, honor guards and other uniformed performing groups in the world gather to strut their stuff. This year there will be 22 groups from 13 countries performing, with events including equestrian shows and exciting activities guaranteed to give parents a heart attack — like sword spinning master classes for children. You can buy tickets online or at two special ticket-o-mats on Nikolskaya Ulitsa and Manege Square, near the Historical Museum.

kremlin-military-tattoo.ru
Through Sept. 4

FESTIVAL Israeli Film Festival A tradition that gets better

Another late-summer tradition in Moscow is the Israeli Film Festival, now into its 15th year. Organized by Pioneer Cinema and the Israeli Embassy, the program presents the full range of film genres and highlights works by Nadav Lapid, whose film, "From the Diary of a Wedding Photographer" will be shown on Saturday at the Pioneer Cinema and introduced by actor Ohad Knoller. The films, in Hebrew with Russian subtitles, will be shown at the Pioneer Kutuzovsky venue and other sites. See the Pioneer site for more information and ticket purchases.

Pioneer Cinema
pioneer-cinema.ru
21 Kutuzovsky Prospekt. Metro Kutuzovskaya
Through Sept. 4

EVENT 20-Ton Greek Salad on Red Square Olives, feta and feasting

Yes, you heard us right. To celebrate this year's Spasskaya Tower Festival and the Year of Greece in Russia, Mouzendis Travel will attempt on Saturday to break the Guinness World Record for the largest Greek salad. The Hellenic wonder will be prepared on Red Square, with Muscovites of all ages invited to lend a hand in chopping, dicing and mixing. Spectators will also have the chance to take part in competitions, win trips to Greece and — fingers crossed — literally taste victory once the salad is prepared.

Red Square
Metro Okhotny Ryad, Ploshchad Revolyutsii, Teatralnaya
Sept. 4

CONCERT Mosaic Music Julianna Barwick in concert

This coming week, the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art kicks off its new program of music events "Mosaic Music." Over the coming months, Garage will invite Russian and international artists who have had a significant influence on our understanding of contemporaneity to perform in its atrium. On Monday, Julianna Barwick, a renowned American ambient musician and singer, will treat Moscow audiences to her hypnotic compositions. Tickets cost 500 rubles on the museum website.

Garage Museum of Contemporary Art
garagemca.org/en/event/mosaic-music
9 Krymsky Val, Bldg. 32
Metro Oktyabrskaya, Park Kultury
Sept. 5

A Beautiful Planet: The Earth Like You've Never Seen It Before

By **Ruth Moore** r.moore@imedia.ru, Twitter: [ruth_skii](https://twitter.com/ruth_skii)

Every now and then the International Space Station (ISS) becomes visible in the night sky. But few realize that the rapidly orbiting spacecraft — which to the naked eye looks like a star — is also looking down at them. The breathtaking portrait of Earth captured from the ISS is at the heart of "A Beautiful Planet," an IMAX film which recently had its Russian premiere.

"The thematic idea was to compare the space station to spaceship Earth — the metaphor being that they are both closed loop life support systems outside of which humans cannot survive," said Canadian Toni Myers, the director of the film, in an interview with The Moscow Times. "The one big difference is that Earth doesn't get any resupply ships."

For over 15 months, crew members on the ISS shot footage of Earth, and, for the first time in an IMAX production, the cameras were digital. "The biggest difference of all was being able to film scenes of the Earth at night. The IMAX 75-millimeter film was far too slow for that — all you could see was black sky," said Myers.

Myers has previously worked on seven films about space, the first being "The Blue Planet" in 1990. Her trip to Moscow to promote A Beautiful Planet wasn't the first time the director has been to Russia — in 1987 she travelled to the Soviet Union hoping to fly IMAX cameras on the Mir space station. "It didn't happen on that trip, but we got there eventually. Glavkosmos and NASA embarked

on a series of joint flights where the shuttle would dock with Mir. Those flights were proof that the two countries could work together to build the international space station. And so NASA, in fact, asked us to document those historic dockings of the flight. We said, 'Sure.'" Now fully completed, the ISS cupola segment provided the perfect observation point for capturing images of planet Earth and other celestial objects.

Astronauts shot footage for the film in their free time, and they were given plenty of freedom by Myers and cinematographer James Neihouse.

The film details everything from making an espresso in space to the "Veggie" research project where the crew grew a crop of red romaine lettuces in orbit to investigate how life could be sustained away from Earth. The astronaut's unscripted conversations and observations make up much of the film's dialogue.

While the conditions for astronauts on board the space station provide fascinating viewing, it's the incredible images of planet Earth, shot from space, that really take your breath away, particularly when projected on the vast IMAX screen.

The remarkable high definition images Myers and her team captured reveal the devastating effect of human activity on the planet: from the gradual depletion of the Colorado River, to the melting of Greenland's glaciers and the deforestation of tropical rainforest regions. The message is clear — we only have one world, and we should look after it.

"It's not a film that intends to berate the audience for being bad stewards of the planet. The aim is to inspire young kids to try and come up with solutions to some of the problems that we face. To inspire them about what a unique and incredible planet we have and to tell them it's worth looking after," said Myers. While most of us will never make it to space, "A Beautiful Planet" will certainly provide viewers with a taste. It's a fascinating experience for obvious reasons.

"The spirit of exploration is in our genes. The lure of someplace that few people have ever been is natural," said Myers. **TMT**

"A Beautiful Planet" (Prekrasnaya Planeta) is currently showing at the IMAX cinema at Karo 11 Oktyabr. 24 Ulitsa Novy Arbat. Metro Arbatskaya. abeautifulplanet.imax.com



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