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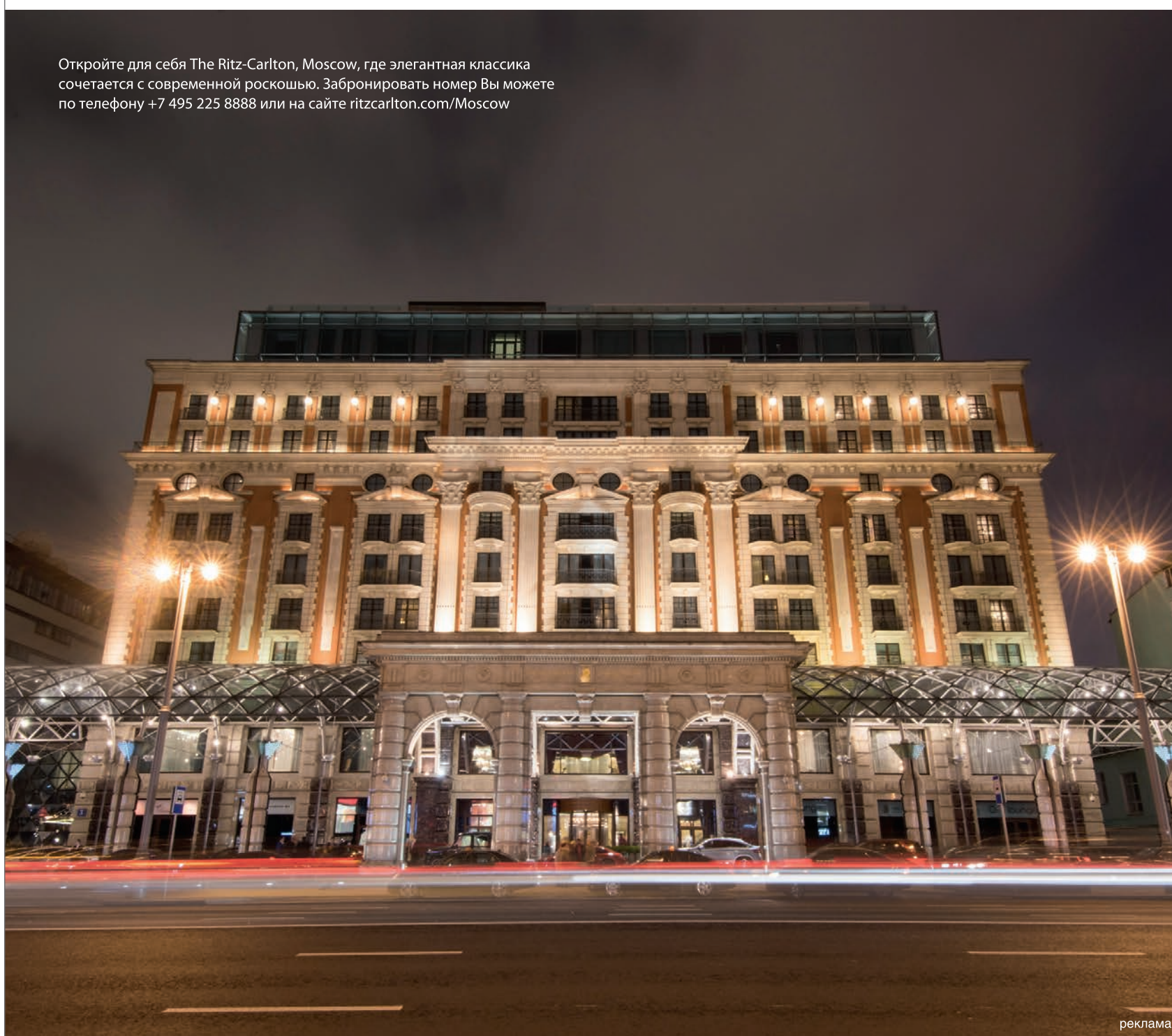
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реклама







# Time Flies

If you were beamed back in time to the start of The Moscow Times, you'd see a newsroom without cell phones, earphones, tiny computers or tablets. Instead, you'd see piles of paper, clippings, pencils, pens, and lots of photographs — printed photographs, that is. But what you'd always see no matter what the year — The Moscow Times clock with the red deadline taped in by a frustrated editor. Some things never change.



**“We wanted to do our best, but it turned out the way it always does.”**

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin about the monetary reforms, Aug. 6, 1993



**“There won't be any devaluation.”**

President Boris Yeltsin, three days before the debt default and ruble crash on Aug. 14, 1998

**Mesh bag:** The greatest invention known to humanity, an empty mesh bag was the size of the palm of your hand but could fill up with a week's worth of shopping. No one ever left home without one.



**Rotary phone:** You remember these, right? Great for breaking fingernails, so slow you could read a book while you dialed a number, and so light you constantly pulled them off the desk every time you turned around.

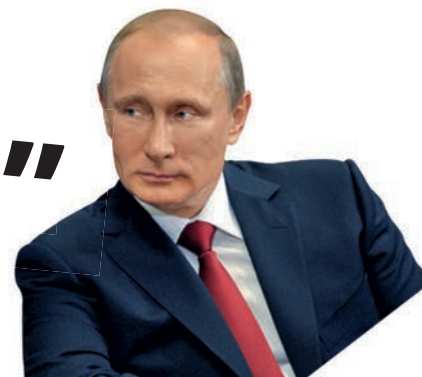


**Pager:** In the days before cell phones, when you needed to reach someone quickly, you used one of these things. The person paged then had to find a working pay phone and a special token to call you back.



**“IT SANK.”**

President Vladimir Putin answering Larry King's question about what happened to the Kursk submarine, on Sept. 8, 2000



1992

**Хозрасчёт**

For-profit — the totally revolutionary concept of making a profit from a company's business activities, introduced in the late Soviet period in either special divisions of large, otherwise loss-making companies or in independent businesses; in most cases, these profit-making entities were used as cash cows for the “red directors” at the top, starting a great new tradition of outrageous wealth disparity



Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to pensioners in Crimea, May 2016

**“There's no money, but you hang in there!”**





# Derk Sauer on Journalism, Russia and Being a Black Sheep

Interview by Michele A. Berdy

The founder of The Moscow Times looks back

I come from a standard middle-class family: my father was the director of a pension fund; my mother was a stay-at-home mom while we were young, but she had a law degree and went back to work later. I have two brothers and a twin sister. Everyone went to university.

I was the black sheep in the family. I barely made it through high school. I grew up in Amsterdam in the late 1960s, at the center of the student movement. When I was 14 I joined the Marxist-Leninist Center of the Netherlands, which turned into the Marxist-Leninist Dutch Communist Union Movement. I was a 14-year-old Maoist.

After graduating from high school at age 18, I decided to join the revolution. But the revolution was far away in Latin America and Africa. The only revolution close by was in Northern Ireland. I told my parents I was going there to study, but as soon as I landed, I took the train to Belfast and got very involved.

## Red Pen

There were no Dutch correspondents there, so I called Dutch radio and television stations and said “I’m here.” One small broadcasting company said, “Why not?” At age 19, I became a correspondent.

I wrote for the Red Tribune. It drove my parents crazy. My mother saw the humor in it, but my father definitely did not. He thought it was a disgrace.

By the time I came back to the Netherlands people knew me from radio and television. Then I was a war reporter for many years — Vietnam, Cambodia, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Beirut. After I met Ellen and we got married and had a son, I said, “Enough risky stuff.” But I didn’t want to stay in the Netherlands. It’s a great place, but it’s a bit boring and very small.

In 1988 when I was the editor of a magazine, some people visited from the Russian Union of Journalists. They were very nice and very excited about everything. They said, “Why don’t you come to Russia and start something with us — a magazine?” I called my wife and said, “Ellen, I want to go abroad.” “Where?” “Moscow.” Silence on the other end of the line. “Can’t we go to New York?” And that’s how it began.

## The Romance of Russia

I found a very small apartment, and Ellen came with our infant son. It was 1990 and there was nothing in the stores — no diapers, no milk. We quickly found the Beryozka hard currency store. But my wife is also an adventurous person with a great knack for languages. In the courtyard with our son she quickly learned Russian by talking to the other moms. Ellen was a cor-



For decades, every night a small fleet of Moscow Times trucks would pick up the latest edition and distribute it around the city, so subscribers could begin their day with coffee and the local newspaper.

respondent for another newspaper at the time, and one of the first interviews she did was with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — before he was Zhirinovskiy. I remember the photos she took in his small flat, sitting on the bed interviewing him.

Moscow Magazine was the joint venture. Everyone loved it, but it was losing money. My boss at home pulled out, and we could have left then. But the spirit in Moscow was one of hope and expectation. Everyone was making plans and thinking about the future — and everyone was so kind to us. We stayed.

## Newsletter to Newspaper

First we put out the Moscow Guardian — it was like a newsletter made on a copy machine, for the growing foreign community. It was a try-out for The Moscow Times. We thought: This might be something. It might work.

Ellen and I sold our house in Amsterdam and got a Dutch friend as our partner. We didn’t think about plans. We were young and excited to be making our own newspaper and reporting a story that became bigger and bigger. It was 1992, there had just been a coup — and to have your own newspaper reporting on this!

## Journalism

Societies with a free press are more successful than societies without one, because the media challenge the powers that be. That’s good. Good journalism keeps society sharp.

Today everyone can make fake news. I think journalists didn’t realize fast enough what the technology had created. They thought, “It’s only the internet. We have our newspaper and we’re authoritative.” They didn’t understand fast enough that technology is leading and journalism is running behind. It’s a huge problem.

The other problem is that journalism is getting more and more sensationalist to pull in readers. But I believe there is still room for serious journalism.

## Tighter, Looser, Tighter Again

When we were publishing Moscow Magazine at the Union of Journalists, there was a censor and a woman with the key to the copy machine. Then under Yeltsin, it was “anything goes.” You could walk into the KGB building and ask for anything. I went in and asked for the files on Dutch communists. They said, “Come on in and look for yourself.” That was probably the most unbri- dled period of freedom of the press in history.

This could not last. In any normal organized society you have to have a couple of rules, and for media, too. But even under Yeltsin real journalism in mainstream media never took hold. There was no market for investigative journalism. In the end the media quickly became a tool — one television station was used by the liberals, the other by the communists, and so on.



The Sauer boys went to Russian schools, speak to each other in Russian and feel at home in both Moscow and the Netherlands.

1993

## Подворовывать

To steal a little on the side, especially from your employer; may range from tucking a half-used roll of toilet paper in your briefcase to working with the bookkeepers to skim profits. Considered fair play at the bottom when asset-stripping at the top was rampant (see 1992: хозрасчёт)



1994

Aug. 2

War breaks out in Chechnya, the first volley in a conflict that would last for decades

On Oct. 17 journalist Dmitry Kholodov is killed by a bomb while investigating military corruption

In November NTV airs the satirical political show Kukly



Dec. 11

Russian troops invade Chechnya for the first time

Russian Cosmopolitan is published

But the whole idea of journalism is that it isn't anyone's tool. That's why Vedomosti became such a big success. It was the first Russian newspaper that was above it all, and not in anyone's hands. Everyone predicted that it would be a big flop, and in the first weeks people criticized it for being too dry and objective. But that was exactly what we wanted.

Now we're in a very difficult phase. I believe it was too wild, and now in my view it's too tight. But journalism will open up again.

### The Moscow Times Today

There aren't so many expats in Moscow now, and with modern technology, they don't need The Moscow Times as a lifeline. But the complexity that is Russia has remained. People are very curious about the context — what is going on and why — and that is where The Moscow Times still plays a crucial role. We're based here, we live here, we have a unique network, we understand the country better than most people and we can report stories that won't make it to other outlets. That's our job and our challenge.

### Looking Back: Gaffes and Triumphs

We got on the internet pretty early — in the late 1990s I spent millions on a Yahoo-like portal. But the market wasn't ready for it. And then a friend, Yuri Milner, called me and said, "Derk, I'm going to start a new company. You want to join?" The investment was about \$100,000-200,000. But I said, "Yuri, you're calling at a bad time. I just lost a couple of million. To be honest, I'm kind of fed up with the internet." That company became Mail.ru. Milner is one of the top ten internet investors in the world, the guru of digital and one of the richest people in the world. I could have been a billionaire by now!

I'm proud of two projects in particular. One is Vedomosti,



SAUER PERSONAL ARCHIVE

"Moscow is a great city to live in, with all kinds of art, good restaurants and wonderful parks."

because it added something to journalism in Russia. And Cosmopolitan is an amazing story. My wife Ellen was editor, so it was great to work on it together. Apart from its amazing commercial success, it really changed the lives of many women. We organized a lot of conferences and events, and women would come up to me and say, "You changed my life. I threw out my husband!" Cosmopolitan was the first publication to discuss sub-

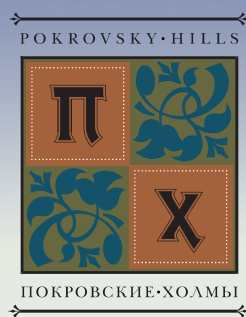
jects like abortions or domestic violence. It was emancipating.

I was an activist but I became a journalist. That is my mission here — not to judge, but to inform. "To inform and inspire" — that was the first slogan of Independent Media. It's more important to give the background, the context, the effects of something instead of judging it. I think that's the contribution I can make here. Through all the publications I was involved in — The Moscow Times, Vedomosti, Cosmopolitan and later RBC and many others — hundreds of journalists have worked for us and many have at least been touched by this philosophy of journalism. It's a drop in the bucket, but it's better than nothing.

1994

### Пирамида

A financial scheme in which people invest money for high returns, which are funded solely by new investments until the entire pyramid collapses. One of the favorite ways to bilk citizens in the 1990s; the most famous pyramid scheme, MMM, crashed in August 1994, contributing to the population's growing skepticism of capitalism



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1,500 people taken hostage in Budyonnovsk by Chechen rebels



Russia bans liquor ads on TV



JOEL VAN HOUTDT / FOR MT



The famous — or infamous — Intourist Hotel in 1995 (left) and its successor, the Ritz-Carlton, in 2017 (far left.) The National Hotel at the corner remains.

VLADIMIR FILONOV / MT

# A Work in Progress

Not since Josef Stalin's first General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow in 1935 has the Russian capital changed so radically and so quickly. Hotels came down and went up, streets were widened or narrowed, kiosks sprang up like mushrooms after a rain and then were cut down one night by a battery of bulldozers. Churches reopened their doors to worshippers, park fountains sparkled, and an entire new city appeared on the horizon. Through all of this, Muscovites wonder if they've lost more than they've gained.



WIKICOMMONS



After the original Christ the Savior Cathedral was blown up on Stalin's orders in 1931, the city architects discovered that the boggy land would not support a planned tower. They put in an outdoor pool (left) in 1969, until the church was recreated (shown right) in 2017.

DMITRY ERMAKOV / MOSKVA NEWS AGENCY



JOEL VAN HOUTDT / FOR MT

The hulking Rossiya Hotel, (in 2004 at right) was built over one of the oldest parts of the city. In 2017, the modernist Zaryadye Park was opened in its place (shown below).



WIKICOMMONS



WIKICOMMONS

Gorky Park lost its roller coaster and other attractions (above) and is now a serene and green space for relaxation and special events (top).



JOEL VAN HOUTDT / FOR MT

1995

## Наличка

Cash, something the legislation did not permit companies to have much of; most of the 1990s were spent employing 10 bookkeepers whose entire job was to make up fake receipts so that cash could be withdrawn from company bank accounts



1996

June 10

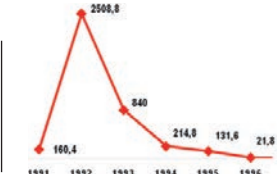
Gazprom buys stake in NTV

On July 3 Yeltsin wins highly contested presidential election



Nov. 3

U.S. businessman Paul Tatum is shot to death



The year's inflation rate is 21.8%, down from 131.6% in 1995



One of the most controversial changes was the razing of kiosks and shops outside metro stations. Chistiye Prudy (left) with shops and without (below).



# Progress



Manege Square (in 1994 at right) was a vast open square with two-way traffic and ample space for May Day and Revolution Day tanks. Today it is a pedestrian area over a shopping mall (as shown in 2017 above).



Moscow City, conceived as the capital's financial center, began with a few modest skyscrapers, (below in 2004) and has grown into a colorful and striking bevy of high-tech buildings, (left).



1996

Пальцевать

Show off, play the big shot; from палец (finger) and the gesture of extending index finger and little finger as a sign of being a tough guy and part of the criminal world

## Waking the Spirit Of Urbanism



By Sergei Kapkov

When the transformation of Gorky Park began in 2011, it was as if we let the proverbial cat out of the bag: never again would Russians be content with dull and uninspired public spaces. From that moment on, the nationwide drive to create congenial urban environments had begun.

Now everyone is an urbanist, humanist, and city activist. They've looked around and realized that Russian cities are not nearly as beautiful as they could be, and in addition to amusement park rides and shish kebab stands, they can build skate parks and dance floors. And the harsh Russian climate is no obstacle to developing urban cycling.

The Russian government has a program for "Creating a Comfortable Urban Environment," and each region is developing its own strategy. In just six years, the focus has shifted away from the usual plans for laying tiles and painting curbs to creating a congenial urban space, re-examining assumptions about the role a city plays, and expanding leisure space for its residents.

We were pioneers in this movement and often encountered resistance from both city residents and our co-workers. The effort it took to convince the authorities to turn Krymsky Val into a full-fledged pedestrian park! But we kept explaining, holding meetings, and persuading, all with the support and strong interest of the Moscow mayor.

It would be difficult to overestimate the role that Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin has played in Moscow's transformation. The "My Street" project he launched required huge reserves of courage and determination to overcome the political risks. It seemed everyone and his brother took him to task for digging up Moscow's streets this summer.

We faced similar criticism when we demolished Gorky Park's rusty amusement park rides, dilapidated cafés, and shady warehouses and parking lots. Soon no one will remember the traffic jams and other inconveniences associated with reconstruction. They will only see a completely renovated Moscow, one that hardly resembles the city it was just six short years ago. And, of course, Muscovites now have Zaryadye Park, the culmination of the policy of park and public space development that we began back in 2011. Whatever difficulties in park management remain, it is a major breakthrough in Russian park construction.

People's attitudes towards the city and its parks have changed dramatically. Young people were the early adapters, but now people of all ages are enjoying a new lifestyle and adopting new values. The city's new infrastructure has changed behavioral norms. The older generations are out on the dance floors, bike paths, and skating rinks. They have a completely different quality of life.

I travel around the country a lot and see how young people want change, how open they are to creativity and entrepreneurship. They are envious of Moscow's Gorky Park, VDNKh, and Zaryadye Park, and are ready to help transform their own cities. All they need is a chance.

The creation of a welcoming urban environment could become a creative project for the whole country, one that would unite both supporters and opponents. It might even be a kind of new doctrine of patriotism. After all, citizens judge the entire country by the place where they live.

We gave Muscovites the chance to love their city again. Now let's roll it out across the country.

Sergei Kapkov heads the Construction Ministry of the Moscow Government and headed the Moscow Culture Department 2011-2015.





An Economic Lost Chance



By Sergei Aleksashenko

In the fall of 1992, Russia was just starting on its path of economic transformation. For 75 years, the Soviet Union had built an economic system based on state ownership of production, central planning, and fixed prices. Changing the system through minor tweaking, as the Soviet leadership had wanted to do, was impossible. The system had to be destroyed. That was easy: “all” they had to do was release price controls and the ruble exchange rate. But the destruction was very painful. Hyperinflation took years to overcome – in fact, Russia got to “normal inflation” (under 5 percent) only in 2016.

At the end of the 1980s people thought that the main problem for the market economy would be the lack of specialists. Although working in a market environment did require different skills and knowledge, as so often happens, you just roll your sleeves up and get down to work – despite your fear. Free market prices and privatization quickly put everything and everyone in their place.

On the other hand, a task that seemed easy turned out to be the most difficult and is still not solved. The Soviet economy was guided by the ideological dogma that it could produce everything it needed. In the early 1990s, it seemed that the Soviet economy had enormous intellectual and technological potential. The doors to international cooperation would open and Russia would become a full-fledged member of the global economy. But that didn't happen.

At first the obstacle was the country's macro-economic instability – few people wanted to invest in a country with an inflation rate topping 10 percent a month. Then while Russia conducted long and substance-less negotiations over joining (or to be more precise, not joining) the World Trade Organization, Southeast Asia and then China became magnets for direct foreign investment. And then, just when the Russian economy entered a phase of rapid growth, the Kremlin decided to strictly limit access to foreign capital. Russia voluntarily stepped off the road to globalization: the share of raw and simply processed materials topped 80 percent of all Russian exports.

Finally, the crisis of 2008 hit, bringing down with it the price of oil – and Russian prosperity. When the country recovered, it turned out that the economy didn't have any drivers. Furthermore, the annexation of Crimea and presence of Russian troops in eastern Ukraine led to far-reaching economic sanctions against Russia. Oil prices fell even more. The Kremlin's response to this was, softly put, strange: It isolated the economy even more.

In the modern world, economic self-isolation cannot lead to positive results. Even if there are short-term gains, they cannot outweigh the long-term losses that inevitably occur. Today foreign investment is not so much an influx of financial resources as the spread of modern technology, access to modern equipment and – perhaps most important – access to human capital, to a highly qualified labor force that has managerial talent and skills. Economic globalization presupposes the free movement of labor and capital among countries. Not everyone likes globalization, but for developing countries it is essential for accelerated development and higher living standards.

As we look back at the last quarter of a century, we come to the sad realization that we weren't able to transform the Soviet economy. It may be a market system, but Russia's economy is no more integrated into the world economy than its Soviet predecessor.

Sergei Aleksashenko was Deputy Minister of Finance and Deputy Chairman of the Central Bank in the 1990s.

Things Ain't the Way They Used to Be

By Justin Lifflander

Business in Russia today may be more stable, but it is not as much fun for foreigners

I found my customer, Misha – a mountain of a Siberian man – standing in the tail section of the plane. It was 1994 and we had just completed a successful “reference visit” to one of Hewlett-Packard's oil industry customers in Canada. Misha was grasping a bag with dozens of mini-bottles of alcohol he had obtained from the stewardess. Now he was trying to secure a volume discount.

“Misha, we'll be in New York in three hours,” I told him. “I've got a barbecue planned at my parents' house. There will be plenty of beer and vodka.”

“Beer? Vodka?” he repeated. I nodded. “But, only in three hours?” he asked. I nodded again. He completed the transaction and consumed his booty before we landed.

Alcohol was a significant element of doing business in Russia in the early 1990s. Many features of the Russian commercial landscape have changed or disappeared since then. Some are missed: well-paid expat positions, limited government reach, the ability to get to across town within 30 minutes for a meeting, and even the need for face-to-face meetings.

Good riddance to others: the dilapidated telecoms infrastructure, mounds of paperwork on actual paper, mythological customer budgets and the need to have a *krisha* (a “roof”) to protect your business from banditry.

We'll all live longer without so much booze, but it accompanied adventures and relationships I cherish. Each industry had its preferred spirit. The oilmen loved their vodka. A midwinter business trip to Noyabrsk – where at minus 35 degrees Celsius hair freezes and cracks and spit solidifies before it hits the ground – would convince even a teetotaler to use personal anti-freeze. Telecoms executives mostly drank whiskey. Grain alcohol was available at their office parties – they used it to clean mechanical switches. Aerospace industry people liked cognac. I shared a bottle of 15-year-old Ararat with the IT manager of the Mission Control Center in Korolyov. We had just watched the fiery demise of the MIR space station, which had been orbiting the Earth for 15 years. Bankers? Well, they seemed to drink anything.



Hewlett Packard placed advertising worth millions of dollars at the foot of the control screen at the MIR space station in return for a couple of free computers.

The Arc of Adventure

It wasn't just about alcohol. When the 1990s got wild, the representation office was the standard organizational format for foreign companies. A position in such a firm gave Russian professionals benefits formerly only available to upper echelons of the Party elite: a few hundred dollars in hard currency monthly, a clothing allowance, a company car and business trips abroad.

“It was like a dream,” said one Russian businessman who has partnered with foreign firms for more than two decades. “Dealing with foreigners was very interesting. We all wanted some connection to the outside world.”

Some dreams turned into nightmares. “Some came with their 5, 10, or even 100 thousand dollars, lost it all, and left,” said a Russian entrepreneur. “Why did they lose it? Because it was a swamp here. No rules, no law enforcement. If your partner suddenly took a disliking to you, you were gone.”

Some foreign entrepreneurs mastered the relationship factor, like Peter Gerwe, who arrived from California and started a media empire, or Bernie Sucher, who turned his hankering for American-style food into the Starlite Diner. Courage, a nascent regulatory system and excessive enthusiasm all facilitated success.

Along the way, Russia got a large dose of the West. Foreigners brought their arsenal of tools and treats: business processes, philanthropy, transparency, corporate culture, and – when margins were fatter – extravagant corporate spending on events and gifts.

“We exposed our business partners and government interlocutors to all these lavish things and they began to adopt them,” said the head of an American multinational who has been in Russia since 1992. “Then, in Russian fashion, they went to extremes and continued these traditions long after the Sarbanes-Oxley Act inhibited us.”

The infection went both ways. Western firms Russified. A generation of young Russians gained experience and now run most

1997

Тусовка

Crowd, party, bash, get-together – both a group of friends and any kind of get-together; also тусоваться: what you do at a party, mingle, hang out, be seen; also тусовщик: someone who does the rounds of parties, a generally derogatory term for a party animal, socialite, a hanger-on; all of this was a new incarnation of the post-Soviet social scene, where money and flash counted more than party membership



1998

Jan. 1

Currency is re-denominated,  
lopping off three zeros

35

Age of Sergei  
Kiriyenko when  
he became prime  
minister



Aug. 17

Russia defaults on  
millions in foreign  
debt

In August the ruble  
falls by almost 50%  
against the dollar



The first detective  
novel by Boris  
Akunin (Grigory  
Chkhartishvili) is  
published

of those companies. The standard of living increased, people traveled abroad and the euphoria for all things foreign subsided. Business became routine.

That dynamic, combined with the current geopolitical situation, has led to an about-face in mindset. CoCom export controls and the Cold War have been replaced by sanctions, anti-sanctions and import substitution.

"In the 1990s, we were like a river of water seeking its path, picking up sediment from wherever, going with the flow, open..." the entrepreneur said. "Now, it's as if our state of matter has changed: We are ice. We say if you want to be friends with us, it's up to you to try harder, make the best offer, consider our needs."

### Bureaucratic Evolution

Meanwhile, bureaucrats have multiplied and gained competence. However, big and small businesses have different views on the state of corruption.

"It's out of control," said the Russian entrepreneur. "There are more inspections and certifications. People used to say: 'We'll create something and then get rich!' Now, there's little enthusiasm. We only have the appearance of change. Instead of bandits there are lawyers."

But the head of the American multinational feels more secure. "The '90s were scary," he said. "You had to have a krisha — or borrow your partner's — to defend yourself from racketeers... Now, with the state in control, things seem much safer."

"The bureaucrats are less corrupt, in part, because you hardly meet them anymore — obligatory reporting to ministries is mostly done online now," the American businessman added. "On the rare occasion that I do go to them, they are often smiling, chatty...maybe they miss the human interaction, too?"

### It Was Personal

In the '90s, you got customers through your relationship with the decision maker.

In 1996, Pepsi paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to have cosmonauts aboard the space station display a giant soda can. About the same time, my colleagues and I at HP gave the Russian Mission Control Center a few amortized demo computers. In exchange, we were allowed to place our logo banner under the

Over the decades Russian business has become increasingly indistinguishable from its foreign counterpart — good for everyone's bottom line, bad for everyone's love of adventure.



VLADIMIR FILONOV / MT

center's main control screen for many years.

I got good advice early on. The deputy general director at a state company told me: "If you come to a meeting with a pen and note pad listing your agenda, you're not likely to get what you want. If you come with some jokes, describe your philosophy of life, and tell stories about your family — saving the business for the end — you are bound to get what you need."

The banya epitomized customer intimacy. Sitting in a room naked and sweating together, you were bound to bond — even if your note pad got soggy.

Russia will always be a peculiar market. The high profit margins most foreign companies enjoy here ease the challenge of explaining "Russian reality" to headquarters. But the camaraderie of the banya is something that can't be explained. It has to be experienced.

*Justin Lifflander is a former business editor at The Moscow Times and the author of "How not to Become a Spy."*

1998

### Кинуть

Slang term used by Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais to describe what Russia did to the IMF when the country defaulted on its debt. The word, which meant an intentional scam in criminal slang, had come to mean unintentional failure to do something. Unfortunately, the change in meaning hadn't reached all the translators, and the U.S. Congress held hearings on why Russia "conned the IMF" out of several billion dollars

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By [The Unfair Observer](#) | Illustrations by [Ilya Kutoboi](#)

# That Was the

In Russia, 25 years is a long time. With diligence and care, you can squeeze in, say, a couple revolutions, a civil war, a purge, industrialization and a little world war in less time than that. You don't have to, but you can.

Now, we won't get carried away and call the past quarter of a century in Moscow a revolutionary period. But this big, 15-million-strong baby has certainly come a long way in the time since The Moscow Times first hit the newsstands. (Remember newsstands?)

Just in case you haven't been around for this whole time, let someone who has give you a brief recap of the most important — or just noticeable — things the Russian capital has done away with or added since 1992. If you've been here that long, first off, you're old, and second, get nostalgic. What better opportunity than an MT anniversary?

*The Unfair Observer is the pen name of a Russian journalist and native Muscovite writing for The Moscow Times.*



## Kiosks

Before the capitalist store came to Moscow, there was only the kiosk. Newbie Muscovites will only remember them from the Night of the Long Bulldozer Knives, during which the current mayor did away with the remaining ones in the style of invading Mongols. But at the onset of post-Soviet Moscow, the rows of small dirty stalls were where you'd get everything you needed.

Granted, "everything," as seen by the typical kiosk owner, was usually beer and chocolate bars, but the very fact that you could get a variety of stuff anytime — just pay and it's yours — was a shocker to the Soviet mind. They were ugly, cheap and convenient; they embodied the spirit of Wild Capitalism — and now they're gone.

1999

## Бардак

Total mess, a brothel; how бардак began as a house of ill repute and came to mean a mess has been lost in the mists of time, but it is the ubiquitous description of anything disordered, from a bedroom and an analytical report up to a political leader's thinking processes



## Bombilas

Of Moscow's current car population, 50,000 are taxis. Once all the cars were taxis. Before Uber and Yandex Taxi, "to bomb" wasn't doing that thing in Syria, it meant working as a gypsy taxi driver, and anyone could be one. You didn't call a taxi, you hitchhiked, and the ride was a school of humility, haggling and, often, political studies — lessons offered by a talkative man in a trashy Lada who still remembered Brezhnev. Well, at least the "political studies" part is still around.



## The Vladimir the Great statue by the Kremlin

I mean, seriously?



## Subcultures

Youth today has gone downhill. They still have ridiculous styles and slang words, but gone are the days when each kid had their own pack, be they metalheads, rappers, ravers or Tolkienists, each loathing all the others and sporting a variety of rituals, habits and visual identifiers more reliable than biometric IDs. You truly haven't lived until you headbanged to a boombox, or sawed off a pair of gramps' skis to make a taped-up wooden sword fit for an Elf King. Much of 1990s Moscow is not missed, but bring back the Tolkienists! They were hilarious.



## Marshrutkas

Just to revisit the era of Wild Capitalism once more: if you didn't have the money to stick out a thumb at a passing Lada, you traveled in a shaking, surprisingly inconvenient metal box with seats designed for 15 Tyrion Lannisters filled out by such a variety of human types that a single ride was enough material for a novel, if not a series. It often had as much hate and strife as a Game of Thrones episode, too, but there was no beating the marshrutkas in getting from A to B fast and on the cheap.



2000

March 26

Vladimir Putin is elected president with over 50% of the vote

April

The Duma ratifies the new START II treaty with the U.S.

Aug. 12

The Kursk submarine sinks in the Barents Sea



In late August, the Ostankino television tower burns, cutting off broadcasting

Capital flight increased 30% over 1999 to \$24.6 billion

# Moscow That Was



## Moscow City

You can still recognize the Moscow of 25 years ago behind the new architecture, which has so far spread like acne, not the plague. But still, developers have been like busy beavers on amphetamines – sometimes with the same aesthetic acumen. When it’s all over and Moscow is a post-apocalyptic wasteland populated by coyotes, biker gangs and tumbleweed, the high-rises of the Moskva City district will be the one last tangible reminder of the petro-prosperity of the high Putin era.



## Fear and Crimson Jackets

Crimson jackets were the symbol of 1990s Russia: a gaudy status symbol for the busy, busy men who were always one step away from violence. Because let’s admit it – while now you laugh when your auntie in Arizona asks whether they are going to dismember you for organs at a pedestrian underpass by Red Square, during the period of Wild Capitalism you walked after dark with your head swiveling 360 degrees owl-like to scan the environment. Now business violence is limited to Igor Sechin jailing people he doesn’t like, and street violence at the Shcholkovskaya and Yuzhnoye Butovo metro stations. Maybe in 25 years we’ll write them up as legends of old, too.



## Food

You had to grow up on sausage-scrourging expeditions to really appreciate the immensity of gastronomic change in Moscow. This is a city that for years thrived on “feet of Bush,” meaning George H.W. Bush and the cheap American chicken exports that flooded Russian stores on his watch. A mere 15 years ago, most Muscovites had never seen a sushi roll, except maybe in a Jackie Chan movie, and coffee came from one-use packets and dissolved into brown water. If there has been a revolution in Moscow, it was a foodie one.



## Mayors

The corridors of power are one area where there has been surprisingly little change over the years. Moscow has had only two mayors in a quarter of a century, and, despite all their differences, they are alike in being sure they know what the city needs without ever asking its residents, and coming up with the most expensive way of doing it. It’s odd how Muscovites, for all the grumbling and insolence that only metropolitan denizens can emit, have not forcefully changed their rulers more often. But perhaps they were distracted by “feet of Bush” and later, skyscrapers and surprisingly good coffee.



## Youth

You should know – or remember – that grass was generally greener back in 1992, the girls (or boys) sexier, and bubblegum tastier. And the city itself was younger and more stupid then, same as yours truly, and, chances are, you too, gentle reader. But the baby has really come a long way, and at least, it’s still got The Moscow Times, so it can’t have been all bad.

2000

Замочить в сортире

To wipe ‘em out in the outhouse, what Putin said should be done to Chechen bandits. Uttered at a press conference, this was the first of Putin’s Russian Lessons, a series of helpful language learning classes he held during the first years in office





# The Evolution of Homo

By Lev Gudkov (adapted by Eva Hartog) | Illustration by Yevgeny Tonkonogy

## The tumultuous decades have left their mark on Russians’ inner life

Lev Gudkov remembers sitting in his Moscow office as a young sociologist, surrounded by stacks of letters. It was 1989, and for the first time after decades of hushed conversation around kitchen tables, Russians had been asked for their opinions on a range of economic and social issues. The response was so overwhelming that the nearby post office was instructed to stop deliveries so that the team would not be barricaded in, says Gudkov, head of the independent Levada Center polling agency. After almost 30 years of sociological research, The Moscow Times asked Gudkov to describe Russians’ changing attitudes and beliefs from perestroika up to today.

### Soviet Man 1992

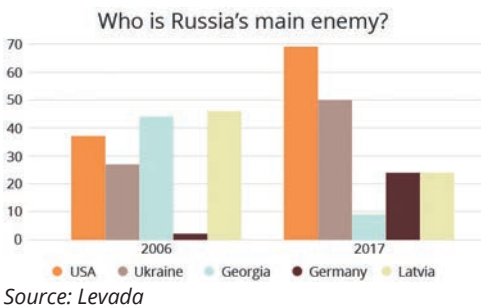
Sov'yetsky chelovek (Soviet man) is the archetype of a person born in and shaped by a totalitarian regime. Life in repressive conditions has made him crafty and skilled at doublethink. He knows how to bypass the authorities’ demands while simultaneously maintaining informal and corrupt relations with them. *They pretend to pay us, we pretend to work. They pretend to care for us, we pretend to respect them.* Soviet man demonstrates his loyalty to the authorities through collective symbolism and performance. But his real values and interests are in the private sphere – his home and family. He has few demands: he knows he has little to no power and deeply mistrusts everyone but those closest to him, expecting nothing good from anyone else. After living through countless restrictions – the traumas of war, collectivization, modernization, miniscule salaries, residence permits – he just wants one thing: to survive.

### Russia and the World

In the 1990s Russia was oriented towards the West and Europe, ready to follow their path. Then, 40 percent of Russians thought their country should join the EU and even NATO. Only 13 percent could name any adversaries: Islamists, the CIA, communists, democrats, and the mafia. Many more, 47 percent, said: Why are you looking for foes when all our problems are caused by us? This inferiority complex was, in a sense,

a condition for reform. People said they’d trade their status as an influential nation in return for calm and stability. For people accustomed to socialism, the 1990s were pure chaos, with hyperinflation, salaries not being paid on time and job insecurity. People lost their sense of self-respect and dignity. Then Vladimir Putin arrived on the scene and said: “There’s nothing to be ashamed of. Everyone has skeletons in their closet. Let’s turn a new page in our history.” With that came the conviction that Russia had a right to use force, especially on its borders. Russians’ pride was hurt when former Soviet republics changed alliances. When they had color revolutions or moved to integrate with the West, aggressive feelings spiked, fueled by

### Pointing the Finger



state propaganda. In November 2013, before the Maidan revolution, around 75 percent of Russians said that Ukraine’s integration into Europe was their own business and that Russia should stay out. Attitudes shifted sharply when media warned against a potential “genocide” of Russians in Donbass and Crimea by Ukrainian “fascists.” Today in polls, Russians describe the West as coldhearted, lacking in spiritual values, extremely formal and aggressive. Russians no longer believe the Western model is for them – their country has its own “special” path. A national inferiority complex and imperial arrogance – these are parts of the same mechanism that allows Russians to come to terms with their lowered status following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

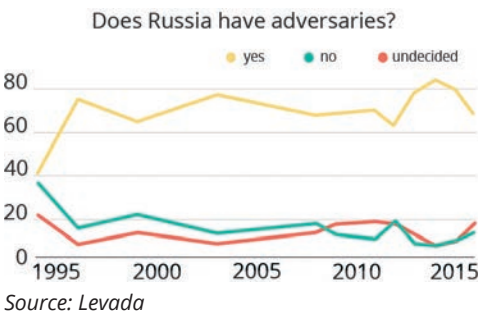
But while Putin’s foreign policy enjoys tacit support, it has serious limits. Only around 7 percent of Russians say they’re prepared to make a personal sacrifice to advance the country’s interests abroad. Because people feel they have no decision-making power, they don’t feel responsible for the outcome. **Individual vs. the State** Russians came out of the 1990s with an acquired taste for consumption. Buffered by the “golden rain” of high oil prices, the market economy finally appeared to be picking up after the 1998 crisis, bringing prosperity. Under Putin, the state has largely returned to its previous role as a paternalistic caretaker with the redistribution of resources as its main function. “Putin takes care of us” is a frequently-heard response in polls. Human rights and individual freedoms are just words for the majority of the population. At the same time, attitudes towards repression have softened. Josef Stalin, whose popularity is steadily rising even among those who suffered most under him, is seen as an effective manager who deserves respect. This return to the Soviet concept of governance is most common among the elderly who live in the countryside. People in cities are more educated, have a broader range of employers other than the state, and have access to several sources of in-

2001

### Вообще

Pronounced baáaaaaaщe: yowza, wow, golly gosh darn, i.e. any exclamatory phrase that expresses astonishment, either good or bad; of unclear provenance – how a word that means “in general” came to mean “can you believe it?” is at present unexplained. Conveniently used in the phrase ну ты вообще, which means either “you are great” or “you are horrible” and is therefore applicable to anything your spouse ever says or does

### A Hostile World





2002

May

NATO and Russia agree to a framework including Russia on some issues

June 14

Russia formally withdraws from the START II treaty



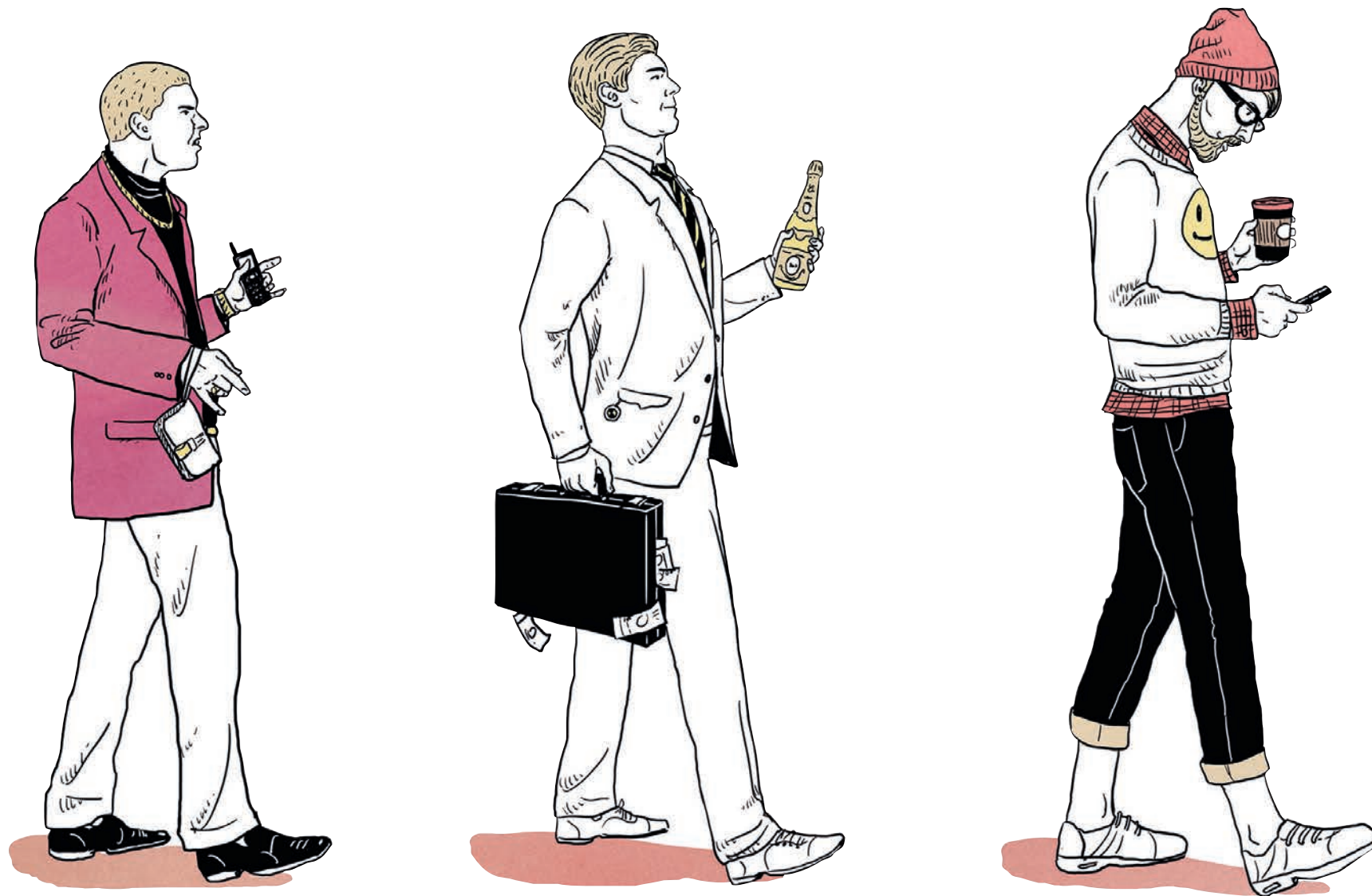
On Oct. 23 Chechen rebels seize Moscow theater with 700 hostages. Over 130 die

Mikhail Khodorkovsky launches his Open Russia foundation for democratic

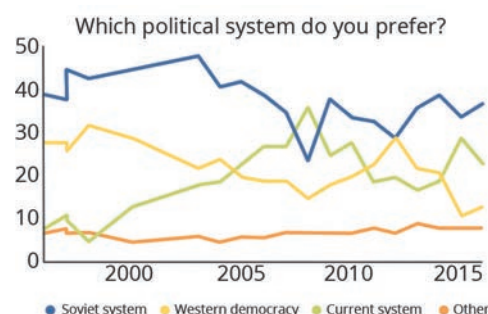
December

NTV's political satire show Kukly is taken off the air

# Sovieticus to Putin's Man



## Political Leanings



Source: Levada

formation. But politically active liberal democrats, hardcore conservatives, and communists only make up about 15 percent of the population. The vast majority is completely uninterested in political life. Asked whether they want to be more involved, 85 percent of people say no. Politics, they feel, has nothing to do with them.

## Conservatism

On the one hand, Russians describe their own society as brutish and uncivilized. On the other, they consider themselves to be open and warm, as opposed to the cold, closed, hypocritical people in the West.

Like Snow White's stepmother, they look in the mirror and ask, "Who is the nicest in the

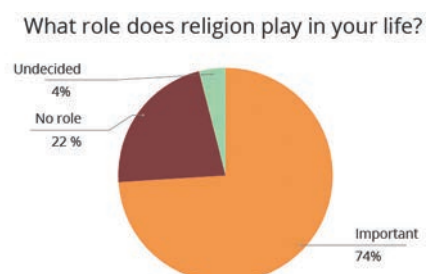
world?" and then answer, "We are!"

After the protests of 2011, religious conservatism was presented as a counterpoint to demand for reform and political opposition. Being Russian has become synonymous with being an Orthodox Christian.

As with most ideologies, this belief is superficial. Orthodox crosses and icons in cars and homes are more elements of superstition than deep religious feeling.

The number of people who describe themselves as religious has increased from 16 percent several decades ago to 77 percent today. But 40 percent out of those "religious people" say they don't believe in God. Many have never even heard of the pillars of Christian dogma.

## Attitude to Religion



Source: Levada

## Soviet Man 2017

Sovyet'sky chelovek has somewhat changed. He's been fed, he's changed his clothes, he's bought a car and owns a home. But he still feels insecure and vulnerable. And he's just as aggressive towards his neighbor because there are no institutions that have laid down rules that people follow.

Today the average Russian expects a minimum living standard — work, a home, and some social rights. Private property is valued, but no one expects any guarantees. People know that the government can take away everything they have at any moment and for any reason.

In polls, people say the government represents the interests of the security services, oligarchs and bureaucracy — but not the interests of ordinary people. And they believe this cannot be changed. So, in Soviet fashion, they adapt and make deals with the authorities. Corruption is perceived as both serious and commonplace.

The theory that Russians are somehow not prepared for a liberal democracy is false. Russians today simply reflect and respond to their circumstances. In a different situation they'd behave differently.

Now there is no desire for change. The idealism and romanticism of the perestroika era has evaporated.

The young people who participated in Alex-

ei Navalny's anti-corruption protests are an exception to this rule. But the narrative that a new generation will bring change is a false one. Today, Russia's Soviet-era institutions stamp out any idealism. It will take more than one generation to change that.

2002

Как бы

Kinda, a parasitic phrase that for several years was uttered constantly by everyone in every situation in Moscow, then St. Petersburg and for all we know — eventually every nook and cranny of this great, vast land. For several years, when it was at its peak use, it seemed that people did not do things, they kinda did things: they kinda read books, they kinda felt well, they kinda went to work — as if they lived in a virtual reality. In retrospect, they kinda did



Duma deputy  
Sergei Yushenkov  
is shot to death in  
front of his home

On May 31 the  
reconstructed  
Amber Room at the  
Catherine Palace  
opens



Oct. 27  
The FSB arrests  
Yukos CEO Mikhail  
Khodorkovsky

# Designing The Moscow Times

By Jaap van der Zwan

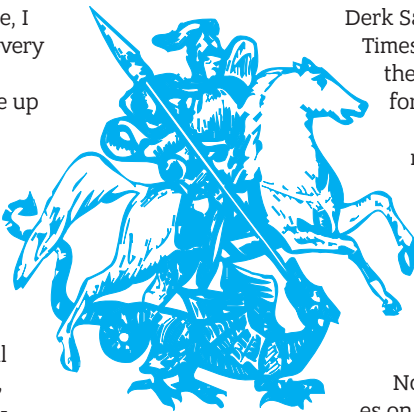
As the art director of Moscow Magazine, I spent about three weeks in Moscow every month.

Since I was around, Derk asked me to come up with the first design for a free, tabloid-format newspaper that would be reminiscent of the style of the New York newspaper The Village Voice.

We had a great time putting the paper together in a couple of hotel rooms close to Kievsky train station. By then, the chief editor had brought her own art director from Paris, and I was just assisting. It was a colorful collective of people from all around the world, many of whom were setting up their own businesses.

The Moscow Times was quite progressive for its time, especially by Moscow standards. But the production process itself was simple.

We used an A3 laser printer to produce the printing plates on clear film. A courier would then take the sheets over to the presses at the Soviet-era Pravda newspaper to be printed on paper.



Derk Sauer came up with the name “The Moscow Times.” I remember a brainstorm session over the phone, yelling a bunch of names back and forth.

You could say I stole the idea to incorporate an illustration in the logo from the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad. I thought it would work for The Moscow Times, too.

Because St. George is riding from left to right, it strengthens the dynamism of the paper’s logo. I’d read somewhere that St. George was the patron saint of Moscow and that he was on the city’s coat of arms.

Nowadays, you would start searching for images on the internet. But back then the internet didn’t really exist. So I found the image somewhere in a book, took a picture of the page, and later lifted the image of the emblem.

For the first font, I chose the condensed version of Plantin bold: it’s elegant but firm. It was later changed.

In the past 25 years, I’ve worked on hundreds of projects. But I am still happy that I had a hand in creating The Moscow Times.



Derk Sauer reading an early copy of The Moscow Times fresh off the Pravda press, which printed the newspaper every night.

## Moving Up, Moving On

Illustrations by Yevgeny Tonkonogy



The paper was first put together in several rooms of the Radisson Slavyanskaya Hotel, which made after-work drinks and snacks very convenient.



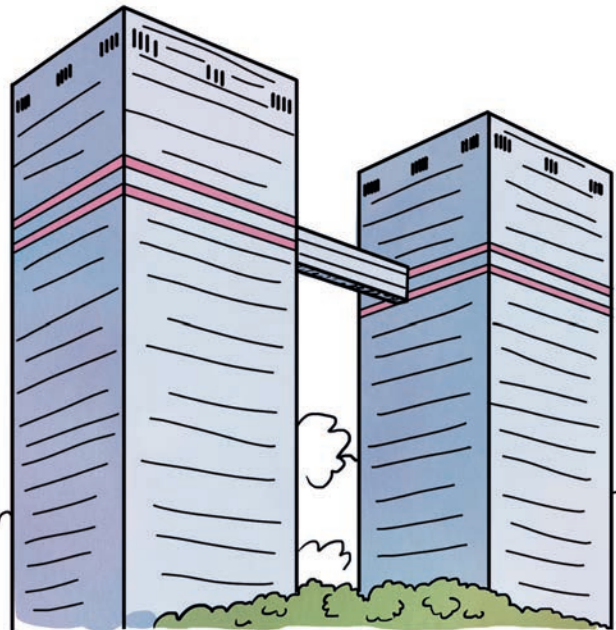
In 1993, the growing staff moved to the Pravda building with the printing press next door, which helped the team meet print deadlines (not really!)



When the staff outgrew their Ulitsa Pravdy digs, the offices moved to a bigger and cheaper space in the north of the city on Vyborgskaya Ulitsa.



In 2006, the paper moved to an old furniture factory on Polkovaya Ulitsa with space for 55 journalists and editors, plus 25 other staff.



In 2017, the paper moved to a top floor in a high-tech glass tower with 360-degree city views in northwestern Moscow.

2003

### Пофигист

Someone who doesn’t care about anything, especially elections, but also politics, economic indicators, climate change, clothing styles, or cleaning up the kitchen and changing the sheets; from the expression мне по фигу (I don’t give a hoot); the typical пофигист has good and bad qualities: he is hard to live with but very easy to rule





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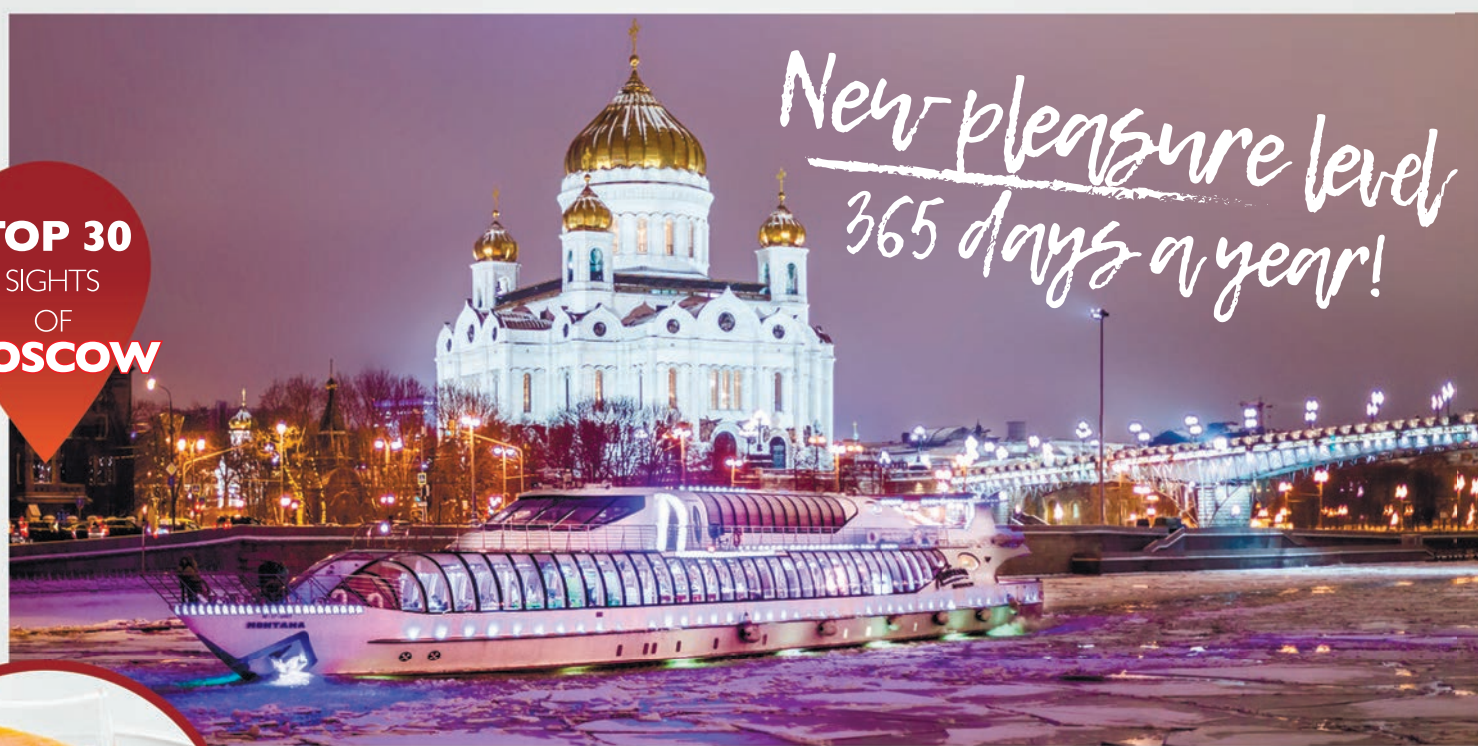


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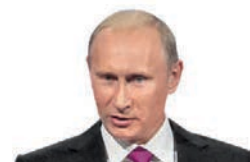
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# Monuments, Culture and Unbreakable Bonds

By **Rüdiger von Fritsch**

**M**y wife and I discovered the first monument during a Sunday stroll around our residence in the Arbat district. It was a monument to Marina Tsvetaeva on Borisoglebsky Pereulok. The great poet, one of the many victims of Stalinist repression, had lived across the street. We soon found out how many more poets and writers had lived in our neighborhood, many of whom are now commemorated by monuments or plaques – and how many of them were so closely linked with Germany. Tsvetaeva's German is said to have been impeccable (she lived in Freiburg for several years) and her – tragic – love of our country found expression in her poetry. She maintained an inspiring correspondence with Rainer Maria Rilke, and when he died she wrote a beautiful poem about him. Some say it is one of the greatest poems in Russian literature.

Rilke, in turn, visited Russia twice on extensive journeys and fell in love with the beauty of the country, the wealth of its culture and the great people he met. Among them was one of Russia's greatest portraitists of the time: Leonid Pasternak, who gave the world a wonderful painting, "Rilke in Moscow," which will be displayed here in Moscow at an exhibition called "Rilke and Russia" in early 2018. It was there, at his father's house, that the young Boris Pasternak met Rilke, about whom he later wrote in an essay. Boris certainly could have done so in German, as he had studied in Marburg. Another great Russian Rilke met was Leo Tolstoy, whose statue stands right next to our house in front of a palace he chose as the home of the Rostov family in "War and Peace." Tolstoy's work and thinking had a significant impact not only on Rilke, but also on other well-known German authors such as Thomas Mann and Bertolt Brecht. And, yes, Anton Chekhov – who spent the last part of his life in Germany and to this day remains the second most successful foreign author on German stages after William



ALBINA SHAMURATOVA

In strolls around the city center, the German ambassador and his wife see signs of the ties that unite Germany and Russia.

Shakespeare – lived just around the corner.

And then one day, we discovered the expressive installation honoring the great poet and singer Bulat Okudzhava. It was his beautiful songs and delightful, ironical novels ridiculing the KGB by pretending to depict the Okhrana of tsarist Russia that had lured me into my first attempts to learn the wonderful language spoken by Okudzhava (and Chekhov and Pasternak and ...) in the early 1970s.

Why does a diplomat reflect upon all this? Germany and Russia's ties are so deep, so rich, so substantial – be it in literature, trade or science, be it in the exchanges between civil society or in the fine arts. I am highly confident that the solid foundations of our relations, which were built over the course of centuries, cannot be de-

stroyed by current controversies and differences of opinion.

Wherever we see such things, we must address them. Wherever we feel that commitments, agreements or the law have been violated, we need to speak out and seek to redress them in accordance with the principles and rules we have all agreed on. The lessons of history and the correctness of these principles teach us never to say: "Oh, let's just forget about it!" However, we will always engage with the clear ambition in mind that we want to build good relations with Russia – and that we have both a great heritage and a great present that will help us to do so. Throughout the time I have spent in Moscow – not always easy – my feeling has been very clear: My fundamental affection for Russia will not be shaken.

*Rüdiger von Fritsch is the German Ambassador to Russia.*

2004

**Экзит-пол**

Exit poll, used in earlier elections to determine the outcome of the elections after people voted – I know, right? What a concept!; annoying term for Russian-speaking people in Russia who did not spend their youth working the primaries on the Jersey shore; not used in over a decade because: Why?



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Street art by Voina shocks and delights in St. Petersburg

# Russian Military Strategy, Stuck in the Past

By Pavel Felgenhauer



ANNA PAVICH

It's amazing how little has changed in the strategic outlook of the Russian military in the past few decades. On Sept. 7, General Alexander Shevchenko announced a major change in plans to scrap 10,000 old Soviet-made tanks still on the Defense Ministry's inventory. By 2020 only 4,000 tanks will be scrapped, while the rest will be modernized and put back into service or exported. "The changing international situation, the increased patriotism of Russian citizenry and the introduction of new modernization technologies have induced a change of plans," Shevchenko explained.

Up to a thousand new and modernized tanks are being delivered annually to army units. The military maintains that the modernized T-72B3 – with reinforced armor, a better gun, French-designed night-vision equipment and a computerized command and control system (all installed at the UralVagon-Zavod in Nizhny Tagil) – is as good as a new T-90A, but costs only a fraction of its price. This year T-72B3s have been supplied to front-line tank units in Crimea and in the Rostov region bordering Ukraine, as well as to units of the elite 1st Guards Tank Army in the Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod regions facing West.

These hordes of modernized Soviet tanks are backing up a Cold War-era defense strategy based on a threat assessment that seems to be



deliberately doctored to justify a massive rearmament. By 2020 it may cost the nation around \$1 trillion.

Today France and Germany have about 250 tanks each. Britain has a couple of main battle tank hussar regiments but has completely ceased tank production. The U.S.' heavy ar-

mored and mechanized divisions that during the Cold War were facing the Soviets in the Fulda Gap in central Germany left at the end of 1990 to attack Saddam Hussein and never came back, reducing U.S. armor in Europe to one permanently based heavy brigade (that is, before Crimea and Donbass).

The massive tank fist that Russia is building up today seems to be a wasteful investment – but the same thing happened during the Cold War as the Soviet Union secretly amassed 100,000 tanks to face NATO's 30,000. Most of that armor never saw any real action like the grand battleship "dreadnaught" fleets, built before World War I and scrapped after.

During the 1990s, as the great Red Army disintegrated, the strategic focus of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff never wandered away from its Cold War objective of presenting the Kremlin with the absolute worst case scenario of external threat assessment. In June 1999, before Vladimir Putin was appointed President Boris Yeltsin's successor, the Russian military held joint Russia-Belarus strategic military exercises called Zapad-99 with a scenario not much different from this year's Zapad-2017: Western forces invade Russia and Belarus, but are eventually repelled and defeated. Both Zapad-99 and Zapad-2017 featured a local confrontation that escalates into a large regional (all-European) war. Russia comes out the victor by delivering a limited nuclear strike, assumed to have destroyed a couple of cities in Europe and North America, scaring the West into withdrawal and submission.

After Zapad-99 such a "preventive" strike has been known as "nuclear de-escalation." In 1999 this "de-escalation" was imitated by bombers flying over the Atlantic and the Arctic to designated points where they could fire long-range cruise missiles at the U.S. In 2017 an RC-24 "Yars" ICBM was test-fired on Sept. 20, and bombers flew over the Atlantic, Baltic and Norwegian Seas.

Competing with other power groups in Putin's entourage for increasingly scant national resources, the Russian military is peddling a mounting threat of war with the West, while at the same time investing in a defense perimeter in the Arctic and the Pacific. Of course, the true main opponent of our generals isn't in Washington, but in Moscow – the Finance Ministry and the so-called economic liberal block in government – aka the "party of peace" – that wants to trim defense spending.

Real bloody wars are being fought on Russia's strategic periphery, and the threat of them escalating is just as real, while national resources are being squandered and threaten to send Russia into an economic nosedive, just like 25 years ago.

Dr. Pavel Felgenhauer is a defense analyst and columnist in Novaya Gazeta, and a Jamestown Foundation Senior Fellow.





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Реклама

**Maison DELLOS**  
MOSCOW - PARIS

2005

Пробка

Cork, traffic jam; in Moscow the kind of traffic jam where you turn off the engine, do your taxes, give yourself a manicure, and finish an audio book to the accompaniment of 659 drivers hysterically honking their horns; пробки are worse in summer and when it rains or snows – that is, they are almost always worse than yesterday but not as bad as tomorrow



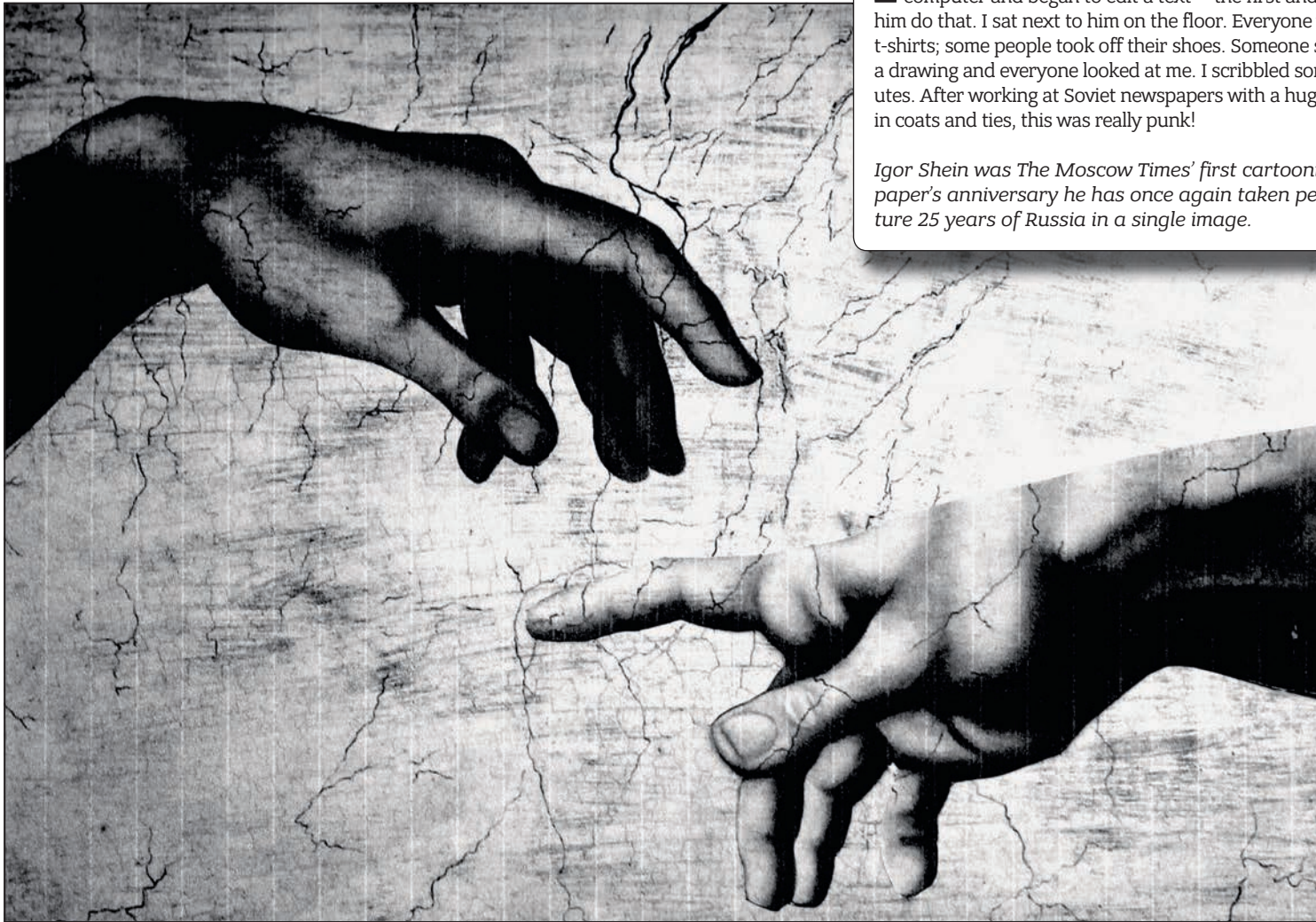
2006

January

Russia cuts gas exports to  
and through Ukraine in price  
dispute

 The Moscow Times  
launches its new  
website
On Oct. 7 Anna  
Politkovskaya, a  
journalist critical of  
the Chechen war, is  
murderedOn Nov. 23  
Alexander  
Litvinenko is killed  
with polonium in  
London

## 'The Miracle Didn't Happen'



By Igor Shein

**I**t was in a room at the Radisson Slavyanskaya hotel which had been stripped of the bed and nightstands. Derk came in, sat down at the computer and began to edit a text – the first and last time I ever saw him do that. I sat next to him on the floor. Everyone was in jeans and t-shirts; some people took off their shoes. Someone said that we needed a drawing and everyone looked at me. I scribbled something in five minutes. After working at Soviet newspapers with a huge staff and everyone in coats and ties, this was really punk!

*Igor Shein was The Moscow Times' first cartoonist. In honor of the paper's anniversary he has once again taken pen to paper to capture 25 years of Russia in a single image.*

IGOR SHEIN

## Neighbors and Principles: Estonia and Russia



ANNA PAVICH

By Marina Kaljurand

**W**hen I arrived to Russia in 2005, relations were not at their best. There was no chance of concluding the border treaty because Russia had withdrawn its signature. But the real problems began in 2007 when the city of Tallinn decided to relocate a Soviet war monument to the Tallinn Military Cemetery. In Tallinn there were riots, and in Moscow members of the Nashi movement blockaded the Estonian Embassy. Estonia was the first country to be subjected to cyberattacks. I was physically attacked. That was the most difficult time – just to keep things running, to represent my country, to do it with dignity, respect and all the while trying to explain the position of my government.

International agreements oblige us to create normal working conditions and protect the safety of diplomats and their families. It was definitely not a normal period, when the embassy couldn't function because the ambassador couldn't work. But that was just one week.

But when official relations with the Foreign Ministry and the Kremlin were difficult, I felt enormous support from the Russian people. I am Russian, a fourth-generation Russian living in Estonia. My mother is Russian and I speak Russian with her, so I could communicate with Russian people in their own language. I had many unforgettable conversations – in the streets, in the Bolshoi Theater, in the shops. I never ever felt any hostility. On the contrary, even if Russians did not agree with official Estonian positions, they would still always say something nice about Estonian people, culture, cities, or language.

Today as members of the European Union (EU) and NATO, our

position with regard to Russia is very much aligned with the other NATO and EU member states. What makes our relationship different is that we are neighbors with Russia. Our people have been close for centuries. Before our independence, Estonian doctors, military men and lawyers were educated in St. Petersburg and other Russian universities. People don't hate each other. People visit each other and participate in many citizen and cultural exchanges. This is very important.

We're neighbors. We would like good cultural, political, and economic relations with Russia. But the key to that today is not in Tallinn. The key to that is in Moscow. After the military operations in eastern Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea, the political situation has been difficult. We share a common history with Ukraine and Georgia. Whether we wanted it or not, for 50 years we were in the same union. We will support Ukraine and Georgia in their efforts to restore territorial integrity. We will never recognize their occupation, in the same way as many countries did not recognize the occupation of Estonia in 1940. We will not act outside the principles on which our country has been built. Given that, Estonian-Russian, EU-Russian, and NATO-Russian relations can only improve when Russia changes its behavior.

I admire Russian history, culture and people. It's so unfortunate that they are not uniting for something, they are uniting against something. They are looking for enemies and think NATO is an enemy. When I was ambassador to Russia, for some time Estonia was Russia's enemy number one. That was not true then and is not true today. It is regrettable that so many Russians believe false infor-

mation and propaganda. But we will continue telling our story and hope that Russian people will see the benefits of democracy for themselves. They can see the differences in social well-being, shops, prices and salaries across the Narva River in Estonia. We can show that with democratic reforms you can achieve much more, and give much more to the people and society.

In the end, it is in our best interests to have good relations with Russia – but with a democratic Russia. We cannot compromise on principles.

*Marina Kaljurand was the Estonian Ambassador to Russia 2007-2011, and Minister of Foreign Affairs 2015-2016.*

2006

Гламурный

Any vulgar display of high fashion and wealth, often with sexual innuendo; also used to describe anything expensive and "in" among the rich and anonymous crowd; improbably used to describe anything attractive or fun, from kitchen tile to pre-Lenten Fast parties



On April 23 Boris Yeltsin dies. A state funeral is held in Christ the Savior Cathedral

Ethnic Russians riot in Estonia to protest the removal of a Soviet monument



Throughout 2006 and 2007, a Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute causes shortages in Europe



October 1993. The tanks loyal to President Boris Yeltsin open fire on the White House, home of the Supreme Soviet during the constitutional crisis.



May 9, 2005. Amid the dignitaries and guests attending Victory Day celebrations, a man wearing traditional Cossack military dress presents a marked contrast.



1994. A young boy injured in the First Chechen War winces as he bandages his mangled limbs.



Apr 6, 2010. Mikhail Khodorkovsky in court during his second trial.



Celebrating National Paratroopers' Day with music and song in Moscow's Gorky Park.



A woman attends a rally in support of Boris Yeltsin in the '90s.



March 2014: Tatars protest the annexation of Crimea on a highway outside Simferopol, a few days before a referendum is held to join Russia.



1992. From 1958 to 1995, Moscow boasted the largest open-air swimming pool, built in place of the Christ the Savior Cathedral.

2007

Олбанский

Olbanian, aka Albanian, but actually an incredibly annoying form of writing in online forums that uses exaggerated phonetic spelling so that автор (author) is the barely recognizable аффтар and гыыыыыыы means LOL which is sometimes also ЛОЛ; not practiced or understood by most people over the age of puberty (physical or emotional)



Sep. 24, 2011. Vladimir Putin announces that he and his successor Dmitry Medvedev had previously arranged to trade places.



# 2008

## March

Dmitry Medvedev is elected president and makes Putin prime minister

In August war breaks out between Russia and Georgia over South Ossetia and Abkhazia's secession



In September Russian stock markets lose more than 50% of their peak value in May



Russia supplies 28% of Europe's natural gas



## My Favorite Photograph

I began working for The Moscow Times before there was a Moscow Times. That is, I began to work with Derk in 1991 when he had a magazine. On a trip around the country with some friends, the car broke down and we had to stop. We put up tents, spent the night, and in the morning we started fixing the car. Across the road were three ramshackle houses. Two old ladies came out of their houses and went to the third house. They knocked on the door. I went over and asked what was wrong. They said that their neighbor hadn't come out — they thought she might have died. But then she came outside — a withered old lady in her 80s. She came out of that tumbledown house and sat on the porch. Her neighbors had brought her some tomatoes. She had a son who lived 16 kilometers away and didn't visit. The house was falling apart. She sat like Baba Yaga by that hovel.

I think about that, and I think about an old people's home — or waking up outside of Kostroma once on a misty morning. I went outside into all that damp fog, it was unreal. There was a sense of ecstasy when you have no thoughts, you just dissolve into the world around you. You can't even think about the f-stop or aperture — or, that is, you try to think at first and then you stop thinking and it all happens anyway.

Vladimir Filonov, photographer, 1991-2015



A beggar leans against a wall scribbled with the text "For Russia."



Sept. 8, 2000. Rescue workers rest in an underpass at Pushkinskaya metro station, after a bomb hidden in a briefcase and a plastic bag exploded, killing 13.

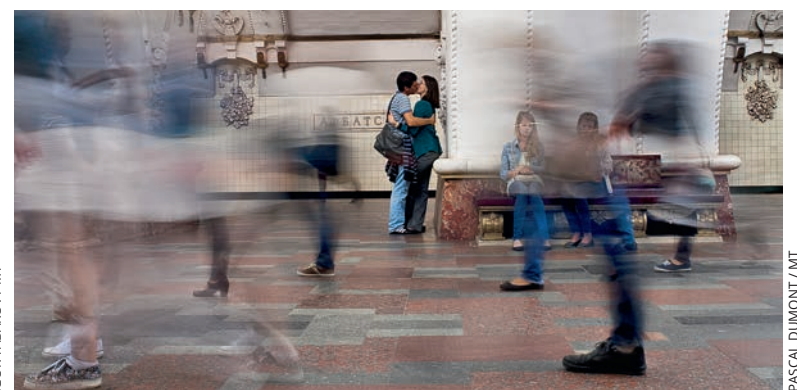
# In Pictures



November 2014. Mikhail Gorbachev, first and last president of the Soviet Union, here aged 83.



January 1990. Then- Moscow Mayor Yury Luzhkov opens McDonald's first Russian branch on Pushkin Square.



2014. A young couple embracing in the central Arbatskaya metro station just after rush hour on a Friday evening.



October 2005. Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) Vladimir Zhirinovskiy leans back to watch Vladimir Putin at his Duma office.



A newlywed couple celebrates their marriage at Vorobyovy Gory in Moscow.

2008

## Пиндос

An American in derogatory slang of obscure origins; originally a hearty Greek pony, пиндос was once used to describe the Greek settlers in the Black Sea region, but the sound of the word — half comical and half obscene — made it an insult looking for a subject. One story has it that the Russian soldiers in Kosovo started using пиндос to describe the American soldiers bristling with equipment, packs, and weaponry because they looked like overburdened trail ponies; in any case, now пиндосы live in Пиндостан (Pindostan, aka U.S.A.)





Try at Your Own Peril



By Artemy Troitsky

A quarter of a century ago – it sounds rather lofty, but it feels like yesterday, only in a completely different country, or maybe even another world.

I have a vivid memory of October 1992, the short peaceful interval between the barricades around Yeltsin’s White House HQ in 1991 and the tanks shelling the very same building in 1993. The Moscow Times office was just around the corner, in the Radisson Slavyanskaya Hotel (we called it Radisson-Chechen). Meg Bortin was the passionate editor-in-chief, and we – a small but noisy and over-enthusiastic Dutch-American-Russian-British crowd – worked on Issue Zero. My city life column, entitled “Metro Diary,” got started with a piece called “Moscow Says: Hello Dalai!” about the privately sponsored visit of the Dalai Lama to the Russian capital. I remember boasting that at the end of a VIP tea party I was invited to, I secretly drank the tea left at the bottom of His Holiness’ cup. I have no idea why I did it, but it was fun.

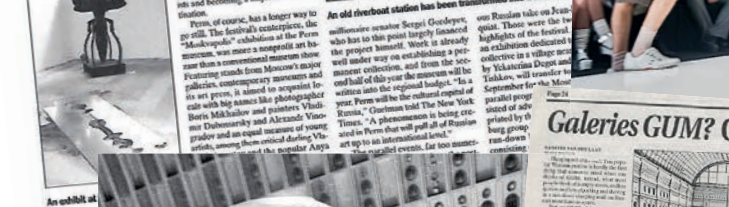
Now, nothing – literally nothing, except for some of us human beings – is left from that era. The White House now houses the Prime Minister, not Parliament, and is defended by a tall iron fence. The American co-owner of the Radisson Slavyanskaya, Paul Tatum, was shot in the back while walking down the stairs to the underpass by the hotel, and our office moved to Ulitsa Pravdy (Truth Street). Ivan Kivelidi, the banker who organized and financed the Dalai Lama’s tour of Russia, was killed by a secret hi-tech substance in 1995, along with his secretary Zara who touched his poisoned phone. His Holiness Dalai Lama was last granted a Russian visa in 2004. I traded the metro for a car and driver, but kept the “Metro Diary” running for the whole decade.

The freewheeling ‘90s stormed Russia like hurricane Boris, leaving behind the Chechen war, shock therapy, hundreds of thousands of dead bodies belonging to bandits, businessmen, homeless people and passers-by – and tens of thousands of millionaires. If you want to see what a big, truly anarchic country is like – look no further than Yeltsin’s Russia. I called it “the land of unlimited impossibilities”: people were free to do whatever they wanted, take chances and try their luck – but at their own peril.

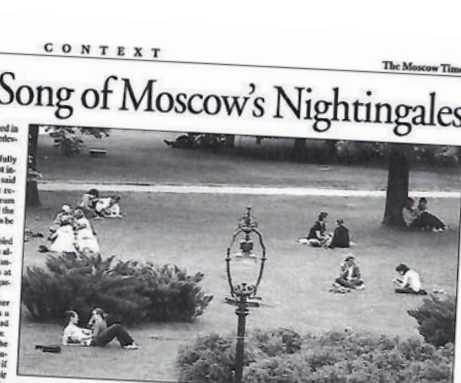
In today’s Russia, when people try to scare you with the horrors of too much freedom, all they say about those years is crime, crime and more crime. This is not exactly true. There was much less corruption than now, because the role of the state was much smaller and social mobility was much more effective. Fewer journalists were killed and attacked because there was real freedom of speech. There was more courage and experimentation in arts and culture because there was absolutely no censorship. As for everyday life in the city – it was ugly, in bad taste, over the top, dynamic, dirty, violent, cosmopolitan – and never boring.

The decade’s last surprise, Mr. Putin, has turned the tide and revived some familiar old values, like patriotism, isolationism, militarism and the Orthodox faith. These values are overwhelming on television and in political statements, but they haven’t yet exerted total control over lifestyle and culture, like in Iran. Moscow today isn’t ideologically and aesthetically sterile or boring: there still are innovative events at galleries and theaters, rap battles and post-punk gigs at underground clubs, concept stores and hipster eateries. If you’re twenty-something and you speak Russian and English, you can always find something worthwhile and entertaining. Of course, no one knows how long this will last. In the meantime, I personally miss one thing in today’s Moscow – the atmosphere of adventure and optimism.

Artemy Troitsky is a journalist and writer, now teaching in Tallinn, Estonia.



Not reset; what some poor soul with poor Russian skills stuck on a button so that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov could push it, smile, and welcome in new era of cordial cooperation. Unfortunately, the button should have been labeled перезагрузка (reboot) and перезагрузка means an overload of the system; very unfortunately, Clinton and Lavrov pushed the перезагрузка button anyway, causing relations to completely short-circuit and giving the alt-right another thing to blame Hillary for





2010

March

In March 40 people are killed on the Moscow metro by two women suicide bombers

September

Mayor Yury Luzhkov is fired for failure to aid citizens during heat wave



55,736

Number of deaths from summer heat and fire



Russia begins building the high-tech city of Skolkovo



## 1990s: Territory Of Freedom

By Irina Prokhorova



ANNA PAVICH

Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika and Boris Yeltsin's reforms seem almost as distant as the 1917 Revolution. The decade of the 1990s has been mythologized, intentionally defamed by Putin's regime and represented superficially in the international media. The first post-Soviet decade has a firm reputation as the Wild '90s, ruled by the mafia and oligarchs, a time of chaos and destruction of all the pillars of society.

The end of the Soviet imperial project did indeed make life extraordinarily difficult when people were tossed into an unknown future where they had to find new strategies for survival. There were outbreaks of violence, a temporary paralysis of many branches of industry, and a crisis in the value system. Much has already been written about this.

But in spite of the economic collapse and political instability, this was the happiest time of my life. For most of my generation the 1990s remain a territory of freedom: freedom of action, choice, conviction and expression. This was a decade unprecedented in Russian history, when people who were socially or creatively active could realize their aspirations.

In 2007 I did a special research project for the journal Russian Literary Observer on the last year of the U.S.S.R. — 1990. I sought to answer the questions: Was the break-up of the Soviet Union unavoidable, and was it caused by a "conspiracy on high" or "a revolution from below?" After a detailed analysis of the transformational processes in various spheres of society, it's clear that the changes unleashed by perestroika had emerged from deep within society and were irreversible.

In 1990 the infamous 6th Article of the Constitution giving the Communist Party a monopoly on power was abolished under public pressure. A multi-party state developed in leaps and bounds as an epidemic of ethnic conflict flew across the country and the parade of sovereign republics began. It was a year of firsts: the first independent media, book publishers, private art galleries, private banks, commodity and stock exchanges. The Warsaw bloc dissolved, and Germany was reunited. Soviet people traveled abroad. The economy completely collapsed, causing severe deficits.

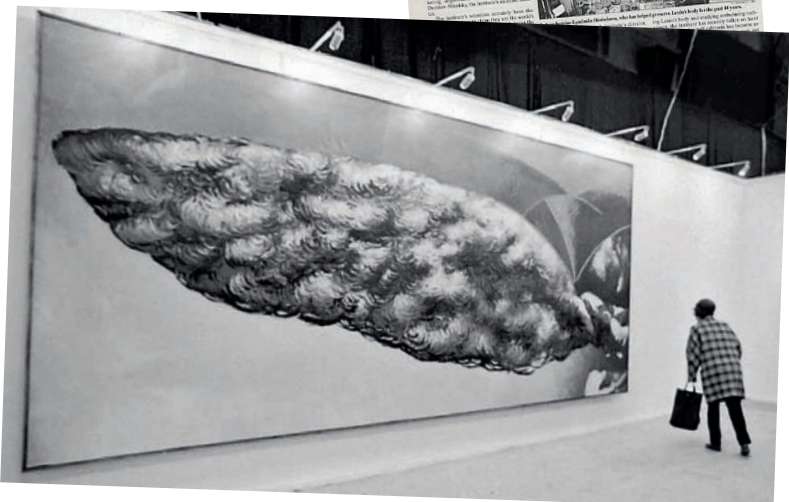
After the failure of the revanchist coup in August 1991, the modernizing processes began to accelerate, as if all the stored-up creative energy had finally burst through to freedom. A new democratic government was formed. Critics might object that the new social construct was weak and of short duration, but I would disagree. Over the last 17 years the forces of reaction have been persistently and aggressively tearing down democratic institutions, trampling on the Constitution, strangling freedom of speech, persecuting independent education and culture. And yet they still have not succeeded.

Why couldn't we maintain and defend these many achievements? Perhaps we did not fully comprehend the essence of our newly acquired freedom, which is of great value in and of itself, and is not a coin to be spent when negotiating with the authorities over stability and prosperity.

The best lesson for the future might be taken from history. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Duke of Savoy wanted to bring Geneva and other parts of French Switzerland under his rule, by promising higher living standards under his protectorate. The response of the proud Swiss was: We prefer to live in poverty under the canopy of freedom than grow fat in slavery. Comment is superfluous.

Irina Prokhorova is a literary critic and cultural historian. She heads the New Literary Observer publishing house.

## Renaissance



2010

Полиция

Police, the new name of the vast law enforcement agency once called Полиция in pre-Revolutionary Russia, then called Милиция (militia) in Soviet Russia to distinguish it from the Полиция, and now once again called Полиция to distinguish it from the Милиция — a process, perhaps endless, that entails changing every station name, every stamp, every bit of stationary, every badge, every uniform, every vehicle marking and so on in 89 regions across 11 time zones; that is, a very profitable endeavor





# With IKEA, ‘Later’ Finally Arrived

By **Anna Anufrieva**, landscape designer

I had visited the IKEA in Prague, so when IKEA came to Moscow, I went on opening day. There were huge crowds – just enormous numbers of people. The lines to check out started way back in the flower section and the cashiers were working so hard, people brought them bottles of water so they didn’t faint. It took two hours to check out, but no one minded. There was music playing and it was like a holiday.

There was nothing like this in Russia at all – nothing like the IKEA designs, colors, or styles, not to mention the service and design tools.

In the Soviet period, if you weren’t a bureaucrat or someone with “pull,” you had no access to imported or well-made and attractive Soviet goods. The only way to buy them was on the black market for double the price. Household goods weren’t accessible or affordable.

When IKEA opened, our dreams came true – nice things that were both accessible and affordable for just about everyone. As one of my friends said, “We always used to say, ‘I’ll buy that later.’ Sometime later I’ll get that.” And with IKEA, that ‘later’ finally arrived.”

When we redid our kitchen and part of our apartment, we bought almost everything at IKEA. It was easy and convenient, especially with their planning tools. And the designs are really pleasing to the eye and practical.

Even now the kids and I go just to buy, say, lightbulbs. The joke in the family is that we go to buy lightbulbs and end up with four lightbulbs and 5,000 rubles worth of “accessories” – and frozen Swedish meatballs. The kids always want them – in fact I’m convinced that there isn’t a family in Moscow who doesn’t have IKEA frozen meatballs in the freezer.

It’s just a fun place to be. When my son was small, he used to say after a trip to the mall, “I want to live there!”



2011

## Рокировка

Castling, job swap at the top, in particular, the decision announced at the United Russia party convention in September 2011 for Prime Minister Vladimir Putin to run for president and President Dmitry Medvedev to revert to the role of prime minister. If instituted as part of the system, the Medvedev-Putin and Putin-Medvedev tandem may rule Russia until the end of time



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2012

March

Putin is re-elected president and Medvedev becomes prime minister

June

Tens of thousands of people protest election falsification

August

Members of Pussy Riot are jailed for singing in church

Aug. 22

Russia joins the World Trade Organization



## Undeterred Innovation

By **Jennifer Eremeeva**

**M**ore bad news this week came from Delta Airlines, an organization I relied upon to whisk me away to safety should the need ever arise, which announced it was canceling all of its Moscow flights. The fact that they simultaneously announced the opening of routes to Lagos I put firmly out of my head, as I headed over to my neighborhood watering hole to drown my sorrows in a strong cocktail.

Solace came during the agonizing deliberation between a vodka gimlet with blackberry shrub or a muddled cucumber and thyme fizz with Hedrick's gin. Times may indeed be tense and the future a little bleak, but the local food scene in Moscow continues on its seemingly unstoppable upward trajectory.

Once upon a time, ordering "a martini" in Russia would have yielded either one of those annoying Slavic shrugs or (far worse) 75-ml of that lurid red or insipid green Italian liqueur that is made in Italy and should stay there. These days, however, any Moscow barman worth his cocktail onions can shake you up one of those perfect martinis: the kind that just sort of floats, like an ice-cold mist.

In the two decades I've called Moscow home, I've watched long lines of old women waiting nervously for rationed food staples like sugar morph into even longer lines of bearded hipsters queuing up for a bowl of Pho at Danilovsky Market's chic food outlet gallery.

Moscow's culinary renaissance began with a perestroika-era rejection of domestic dishes for a wholehearted embrace of international cuisines: Italian, Mexican, African, Middle Eastern, and, of course, the ubiquitous Japanese sushi (still incomprehensible to me), which assures that any 7-year-old Muscovite can adroitly wield a pair of chopsticks.

Mayonnaise out, lemongrass in.

Everything in Russia goes in cycles, and food trends are no exception. On the strength of the burgeoning Russian economy in the "oughts" came a heightened awareness of the origin and quality of raw ingredients, which in turn gave rise to an exciting locavore movement. Small organic food cooperatives and companies such as LavkaLavka, Farmers' Bazaar, and Bio Market ex-



This is not your babushki's cabbage soup, but an elegant start to a mid-day meal.

panded rapidly, keeping pace with an expanding and increasingly discerning customer base.

This locavore movement was a prelude to what I consider the most exciting development since Count Stroganoff's chef experimented with sour cream and beef: the return of interest in Russia's own rich culinary traditions. The resulting Federal cuisine fuses all of the traditions of its predecessors: the hearty "low and slow" braises of traditional Russian peasant fare; the imported French, Italian and Belgian flavors of the complex Imperial cuisine, and the comfort food of the more practical Soviet cuisine. Modern Moscow chefs have reintroduced updated versions of Russia's time-honored pickles, preserves, offal, stews, marinated and salted fish, and endless riffs on Russia's delectable dairy using modern methods of preparation and innovative flavor pairings such as horseradish-spiked berry syrup or caraway-seed infused egg white foam.

Moscow's culinary renaissance is all the more impressive when you consider that for the past three years, domestic cooks have had no official access to imported foodstuffs from the U.S., Canada, the EU, Japan, and the Antipodes thanks to sanctions imposed on their import by Russia in 2014. Despite this — or, as I believe, because of it — Moscow's foodies continue to innovate. Food markets such as Danilovsky and Dorogomilovsky showcase the growing number of local artisan cheesemakers, organic Angus beef farmers, and craft beer brewers. Fine dining grows unchecked, with White Rabbit earning a coveted mention in the Michelin guide. Who knows what stars may be on the horizon for Moscow's resilient foodies?

And that calls for another martini!

*Jennifer Eremeeva is an American writer based in Moscow, who writes about Russian history, cuisine, and culture.*

2012

### Оккупай

Occupy! what a few hundred protesters did in Moscow after a series of demonstrations against electoral falsification and for President Putin's resignation, first near the monument to the Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbayev — giving the world the melodious slogan Occupy Abai! — and then in various spots around the city; after a few arrests and the unlikelihood of any demands being met — as well as the oncoming cold weather — the movement activists quietly went home to occupy their warm apartments

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реклама

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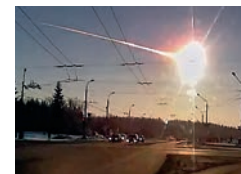
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реклама



The Dima Yakovlev Law comes into effect, banning Americans from adopting Russians

A meteor lights up the sky in Chelyabinsk, injuring more than 1,000 people



In December Putin pardons Mikhail Khodorkovsky, who leaves Russia

Now that there is less knowledge about Russia overseas than in the past, having a reliable English-language paper in Moscow is very important. I'm very glad that Derk has returned, because he built the best Russian media — particularly, Vedomosti, which I read for many years when it was headed by him. Derk is a very deep person, a Westerner but one who has lived all his life in Russia and really understands both sides. He's unique. With Derk in charge, it will be an honest newspaper.

*Pyotr Aven*  
Chairman of the Board of Directors of ABH Holdings and member of the Board of Directors of Alfa-Bank

The Moscow Times has been a compelling source of information since I first joined Renaissance Capital in 1997. Congratulations on reaching 25 years and wishing you many more!

*Christophe Charlier*  
Chairman of the Board of Directors Renaissance Capital

The Moscow Times has existed for 25 years, and in those 25 years the paper's role has changed. When it was founded, there were lots of foreigners in Moscow who knew nothing about Russia. The paper helped integrate Westerners into the country.

Later this function became less important. Foreigners integrated themselves and the situation changed. The Moscow Times is still one of the oldest Russian newspapers, and one of only a handful not afraid to publish different points of view, including those that differ from the views published by state media. This is a role that shouldn't be underestimated in today's Russia. I hope the newspaper continues to exist, develop and, perhaps, one day there'll be less need for the paper to play this critical role.

*Yelena Myasnikova*  
Former director, Independent Media; former Vice President, RBC holding

I appreciated the concept of The Moscow Times from the very first days of its existence in the early 1990s: a condensed version of what you needed to know about what was happening in the city and country with a unique inter-cultural approach that managed not to copy either the local or the foreign press.

*Dmitry Yakushkin*  
Former press-secretary to Boris Yeltsin

I was always a big fan of The Moscow Times and remain one. It has not been easy for any print medium in the U.S.S.R./Russia over the past quarter of a century, what with being buffeted by political winds and storms. But The Moscow Times never capsized, never took down its flag, remained an important, accurate and truthful source of information for foreigners in and about Russia. In fact, not a few local people, myself included, regularly perused and peruse its pages. Congratulations on your 25th anniversary! Keep up the good work.

*Vladimir Pozner, journalist*

The Moscow Times was one of the first sources of reliable and independent information in the new Russia. Welcome back. We missed you.

*Rostislav Ordovsky-Tanaevsky Blanco*  
Founder and President Rostik Group Corporation

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# Legal support for investment projects in Russia



**Andrey Goltsblat**  
Managing Partner, Goltsblat BLP\*

By Emily Erken

The Moscow Times sat down with Andrey Goltsblat, managing partner of Goltsblat BLP, to learn more about the current investment climate in Russia.

## Please tell me a little bit about yourself: How long have you worked in law?

I graduated as a lawyer in 1987, and I did my PhD under Professor Valerii Zorkin, who is now the Head of the Constitutional Court of Russia. My legal career began at the Russian Parliament, called at that time the Supreme Soviet of Russia. I was the Chief of Staff of the Constitutional Commission for three years (1990-1993). And in fact it was us who prepared the draft document that was finally passed in the referendum in 1993.

## You founded the law firm Legal Practice in the early 1990s as one of the first law firms in Russia to advise major international companies entering the Russian market. How has the company grown over the years?

In 1994, I started my commercial career as a lawyer. Mars, Inc. needed a good commercial lawyer, and it seemed like I was a good guy, and my career began. I set up a law firm consisting of myself, an interpreter, and a secretary.

By 2002, we had about 22 lawyers and we merged with Pepeliaev's group of tax lawyers from the Russian audit firm FBK. Pepeliaev, Goltsblat & Partners was the first truly commercial business-oriented law firm in this market. In 2008, I realized that we needed global ties with international firms. We separated from [Pepeliaev] and merged with Berwin Leighton Paisner in January 2009. We are happy now, different deals, different laws – we work a lot in different jurisdictions (Hong Kong, Singapore, etc.).

## Goltsblat BLP seems to work in practically every area of corporate law. What advantage does this provide your clients?

The whole strategy when we merged with BLP was to combine our deep understanding of Russian law and at the same time apply an institutional understanding of corporate law because we have a large group of UK lawyers in London. The largest office is in London, the second largest is ours, then it's Asia, then Germany. What we offer is a

language to understand corporate law, and at the same time we offer the realities of Russian law and Russian practices. We know how things work when it comes to a dispute. It depends on where the enforcement might happen. Very often, law firms that don't have an understanding of how the law works in Russia may do a standard UK governed SPA or SGA agreement in Cyprus. But if you need to enforce it in Russia because you have assets in Russia, then it might be difficult if you forget something or don't use the right wording.

[Furthermore], the large Russian corporations want lawyers who understand UK law, not just Russian law. That's why it works.

## What are some of the changes in the investment climate in Russia and challenges for foreign business?

Well, there is perception and reality. There is the perception that there is the Ukrainian issue, oil prices going down, and there are sanctions, which worry those who are looking to invest. But the realities are that foreign investors are welcome here now even more than before. This is the paradox of the current environment. From the political point of view, the country wants to demonstrate that we are welcoming to investors, and that's true. The [regional] governors desperately need investments to support their regions, to create jobs, to get taxes to fill the budgets. And because of that, no one bothers if it's an investor from Japan, or the US or Europe. And the governors are more sophisticated now. They are more investment-business oriented, not like old Communist governors. They are truly modern people and they know what investors need and they support them by all the means they have in their regions. I believe this is a great opportunity for investors to come in.

The issue is the economic situation—the falling oil prices and the sanctions. That is a different factor. But politically, it's good to be here.

## Which sectors and industries have been more stable and attractive for foreign direct investment so far and why? What are the best sectors with the highest potential for development?

There are some industries like agriculture and chemicals. Retail and food continue growing, too. There are a lot of Japanese and heavy industry, by the way, because steel prices went up. Construction is doing very well. I think the only difficulty is oil.

When the economic consequences of the things I mentioned happened in 2014, I thought that this would be a political crisis that would continue for some time. But in reality, it's really a cycle. And we noticed at the end of last year that our workload started growing, and it's continuing at quite a good speed. It's not because we're getting better, but because business is growing. And of course, we get better too—don't forget to mention it. We're hiring new people, looking for new talents, and we are growing.

## What are some of the difficulties for foreign investors in Russia? Are there specific industries that are off limits to foreign companies?

Of course, there are specific industries called "strategic industries." They have to go through a special foreign investments commission [Government Commission on Monitoring Foreign Investment] under the Prime Minister of Russia, for oil, military, etc. Otherwise, the main job for a foreign investor is to understand local realities.

The classic mistake they make is to try to apply the practices they use in their country of origin, and when that doesn't work, they believe that it is not their fault, it's the country's. But those who are smart enough – most of the multinational companies understand what they need to do. Of course, corruption is an issue, but it is getting much better. A number of enforcement cases have been made recently over the past three years. We still have a lot to do, but the environment's getting better and better. The budget deficit creates a situation where fiscal motivation does sometimes prevail – tax officials, for instance, they are more aggressive. But at the same time they are implementing wider practices now – they are learning too. You just need to be smart, but the business opportunities are tremendous.

I recently went to Stavropol, where an [agricultural] company is looking at an IPO in London. You can't believe the size of the fields there, they are just enormous. When you fly out of Stavropol heading north, you can see the fields for an hour.

## Have there been any recent changes in Russian law?

Positive changes, particularly in corporate law. Corporate law has recently changed to make it more business-friendly, basically trying to reinstall the corporate major UK law institutions in the Russian corporate world. Because Russian corporate law was quite restrictive in the past. You couldn't make an option, you couldn't make a liability shareholder for a business, etc. You couldn't do warranties in the past. Now institutions like reps and warranties are fully incorporated into Russian corporate law, which makes Russian corporate law adaptive and [it] can be used for transactions. That's a great achievement for Russian law for investors. We can use Russian law in corporate governance.

## How does Goltsblat BLP support cross-border transactions? Do you have offices in the CIS or in other countries with strong economic ties to Russia?

We usually do it ourselves with our own lawyers from other jurisdictions. But because UK law is still widely used in some local jurisdictions, we use either our local branch or some of the local firms we have had strong relationships with. They support us in our deals; we support them when they need Russian lawyers.

We don't have offices there [in the CIS] because, economically, we can't justify opening

our own office. There are good local lawyers and we use them when needed. They provide us with great advice and we incorporate this into ours.

We're thinking about Kazakhstan, but not setting up our own office; if we go to Kazakhstan, we will identify a local firm and merge with them.

## Russia is actively promoting the Far East. To what extent can this region be attractive for international investors?

The region in itself is huge. Plus, all the major global players are there: China, Japan, Korea. This is why it's quite an attractive territory to invest in and develop. When we opened an Asian practice here recently, we hired a partner from K&L Gates. He is fluent in Japanese, as well as Russian and English, obviously. We offer support for deals with the Japanese, and we deal with the Japanese Embassy here. We provide advice to Japanese businesses on a regular basis pro bono, and if they decide to invest in a large project, then we would very much like to see them as our clients. I have visited Japan a number of times, and we see great opportunities. I think that sooner or later there will be a peace treaty between Russia and Japan. That's what business in Japan is waiting for. Prime Minister Abe has urged them to invest.

China is a bit different. They invest in a lot here too, but they are a specific culture, they need to be understood well. We work with China Development Bank, Geely International Corporation, and others, and try to develop them. We have a lawyer who is Chinese and has worked in China. We target in China too. It is the one of the largest economies in the world. But they are not as easy as the Japanese to do business with.

## How are international businesses adjusting to the recession in Russia? How are they going to do business in Russia in a period of political tension and a great deal of uncertainty?

I think they have realized that the situation was not the worst it could have been, even though the ruble depreciated twice against the dollar.

All of our clients have already adjusted quite well. Operations after the crash of the ruble obviously required a different model, and I think they all understand, especially those who have been here for a while, for more than 20 years.

## What is your vision for supporting investment projects in Russia?

We are thinking about growing. We have almost grown out of our niche in the Russian market, in the current setup. We can wait and continue to mature organically, and we'll become more attractive to other nations; but we can also expand geographically and go further into the CIS – probably Kazakhstan, as I said. I'm headed to Ukraine this weekend, and have a portfolio of ideas about how to get into that market as well. And probably Central Europe. But it's not the right time yet.



Goltsblat BLP is the Russian practice of Berwin Leighton Paisner (BLP)

\* Goltsblat BLP is the Russian practice of Berwin Leighton Paisner (BLP), a leading international law firm headquartered in London, with its offices operating in major commercial and financial centres throughout the world – Moscow, Abu Dhabi, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Paris, Singapore, Tel Aviv and Yangon.

The firm has a team of over 100 Russian, English and US law qualified lawyers based in Moscow and over 800 lawyers in the other international offices.


Goltsblat BLP currently has over 1700 clients among the major international investors operating in Russia, including 130 Forbes Global clients.

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## How Well Do You Know Post-Soviet Russia?



- 1** Which Russian official was called the Kinder Surprise?
- 2** In what year was beer classified as an alcoholic beverage?
- 3** What did Mayor Luzhkov evacuate during the heat wave and fires of 2010?
- 4** What was the highest number of rubles per dollar in this century?
- 5** What do Gorbachev, Pushkin and Khrushchev all have in common?
- 6** What was Vladimir Putin's first job in Moscow?
- 7** What is the only Russian film to win an Oscar for best foreign language film since 1991?
- 8** How many times has Vladimir Zhirinovskiy run for president since 1991?
- 9** How many medals did Russia win during the 2014 Olympics in Sochi?
- 10** What is the population of Moscow in 2017?

2013

**Чмо**

Schmuck, weirdo, bum, jerk; of highly debated origins, this word is an all-purpose insult that can refer to stupidly gullible neighbors, smelly drunk people by the metro station, dorky science majors at institutes and, apparently, every American president in history, but especially Barack Obama, who has been declared a чмо on thousands of Russian cars, fences and toilet stalls

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**Answers:**

1. Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko (for his age — 35 — and unexpected appointment).
2. 2011.
3. His bees.
4. On Jan. 21, 2016, the ruble hit 85.09.
5. Their patronymic: Sergeyevich.
6. In June 1996 he came to Moscow as Deputy Chief of the Presidential Property Management Department.
7. "Burnt By the Sun," Nikita Mikhalkov, 1994.
8. Five times — all but in 2004.
9. 33: 13 gold, 11 silver and 9 bronze.
10. 12.3 million.



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# 2015

## Feb. 27

Boris Nemtsov is assassinated on the bridge by the Kremlin

In June the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art moves to new venue in refurbished Gorky Park



## August

Oil prices fall below \$40 a barrel for first time since 2009



In Sept. Russia begins a bombing campaign in Syria to defend Assad's regime



In 1992, I went from zero knowledge of journalism to the center of the world's biggest story: Russia's crash course in capitalism and democracy. When my beat, parliament, became a real-life battleground, I was in the middle of an even bigger story. One time, a prominent writer at a world-famous newspaper

*David Hoffman, reporter and editor, 1992-1994*

In the photo from left to right: Hoffman, Karen Dukess, Gary Smith, Carey Scott (partially obscured by Steve Liesman), Michael Hetzer

ripped off one of my quotes. A TMT colleague said, "Now you know they need you." That was The Moscow Times: the first source of the news, needed by everyone working here, including other foreign journalists. But the most fun I had was as the charter Word's Worth Columnist. Nice idea, Meg Bortin.

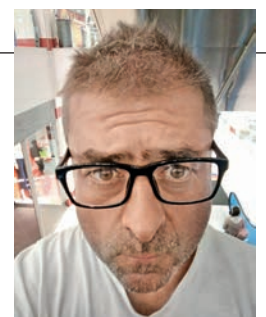
I came to The Moscow Times still a novice reporter with many things to learn and unlearn. What followed was a rocky ride – from covering the Olympics in Sochi (we joked that this was The Moscow Times' only bureau outside Moscow ever), to Crimea, Donetsk and Kiev. Shortly after, I moved to The New York Times, changing the names of the cities but keeping the good spirit that I got at TMT, which is that regardless of the paper's size you have to question EVEN more.

*Ivan Nechepurenko, reporter*



As a former editor of the St. Petersburg Times, I have to admit that when working together with The Moscow Times, our colleagues from the "other capital" kept us well aware that, even if we were a sister paper, we were very much the poorer relatives. Nevertheless, it was a great privilege to work with such a great team of journalists. Whenever one of them would do us the honor of visiting we would get a real insight into how the other half live, how to cover stories and which monumental pitfalls to avoid. The Moscow Times did an incredible job covering Russia, and in a tough environment for the media it's doing an equally incredible job at adapting and continuing to provide excellent content. I wish it all the best for the future!

*Tobin Auber, editor, St. Petersburg Times, 2003-2010*



Twenty-five years ago the rent for office space in Moscow was already sky-high. Since we had little money, we had to be smart. Besides being the co-founder and COO of the company, I became a true "barter queen" in those early years.

With the Radisson Slavyanskaya Hotel I made a barter deal for an unoccupied wing in the hotel in exchange for a lot of advertising space in our as yet non-existent newspaper, The Moscow Times.

That is where it started: 14 hotel rooms on the third floor which doubled as offices, each with their own bath and shower.

To this day I still remember the launch party in the Kempinsky Hotel. The best party Moscow had ever seen with champagne and fine food for more than a thousand guests. What a blast – and all bartered, of course!

*Annemarie van Gaal, co-founder of The Moscow Times*



I was invited to be chief editor right after the paper was turned into a weekly and on the threshold of the website's relaunch. For us it was a real startup, and I am proud of what we achieved: we started reporting news, we wrote features – profound and elaborate; and we provided the best analysis about Russia's politics and social life – competent, smart, and concise. And we also had fun, enjoying and sharing every moment of our joint effort, which overall makes the year and a half of our teamwork at TMT one of the best professional experiences of my career. After years of state pressure and censorship, this kind of team spirit is a very rare thing in the Russian media industry, so I know what I am grateful for.

*Mikhail Fishman, editor, 2015-2017*



In the 1990s, traffic in Moscow was still light enough to allow for reading, as demonstrated here by an avid TMT reader at Triumfalnaya Ploshchad, with one of Stalin's Seven Sisters in the background.

## 2015

### Ватник

A good ole boy, Russian style – the kind of fellow who gets all his news from Russian television and believes it, thinks Ukrainians are fascists and Americans are the devil incarnate, and generally thinks that everything Russian is the best – except for his car, sneakers, jeans, cell phone, contact lenses, computer, computer programs and apps, which were all Made in the U.S.A. but don't count because the Americans stole them from someone anyway

## 2014

### Крымнаш

Crimea is Ours, turned into one word and a meme that means: We took back our land from the fascist junta and NATO and in the process showed the whole world that we're back in prime fighting form, up off our knees, and happy to push anyone out of the way of our national interests





One day in late 2000, shortly before I was to become editor, I went with publisher Stephan Grootenboer to the Kremlin to meet people in the press office. We had just handed over our winter coats and were heading upstairs when two men in civilian clothes greeted each other with a salute and “s prazdnikom.” It was Dec. 20, Chekist Day. Putin had been president less than a year and we were still assessing his intentions, but this sent a chill at the time and I often thought about it in the years ahead as we covered his consolidation of power.



*Lynn Berry, night editor, 1998-2000; editor, January 2001-June 2006*

When I think of The Moscow Times, I think of the alternative universe that it made possible. Had it never existed, I might never have known Russia, become a journalist, made some of my best friends or met my wife of 21 years. It has changed hundreds, maybe thousands of lives, all thanks to a Dutch guy who took a big risk. I hope the next generation will have something like it.

*Mark Whitehouse, reporter and editor*

**H**ow do you sum up 17 years? Easy: Teamwork. From the moment that I joined MT's copydesk in 1997 until the day that I left in 2014, I was mentored and guided by wise and seasoned coworkers. This is the MT spirit. Everyone helped one another to create a top-notch newspaper. Teamwork sustained the newspaper during my time as editor, and I'm deeply grateful to each person on the team.



Andrew McChesney, editor, 2006-2014



## The Moscow Times

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## 2016

## Русиано

Rusiano — what Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev thinks Americano coffee should be called in Russia and anywhere in the world except the U.S. Down with American-style coffee! Er, no, that should be: Up with American-style coffee, down with calling it American-style coffee



**A**s a chief editor, I appeared a modest number of times in the news media and propaganda outlets but never on the gossip pages. Thanks to The Moscow Times, I made my appearance there only once, when I was a rookie reporter in 2002 working on a story of Russian citizens detained by U.S. troops in Afghanistan and kept in a prison camp in Guantanamo. The largest newspaper in Naberezhniye Chelny, a Tatarstan city famous for its KamAZ truck factory, reported that a journalist from The Moscow Times, Nabi Abdullaev, had arrived in town. That was a separate piece of news with a headline. And there was no other information.

*Nabi Abdullaev, editor, 2014-2015; staff writer, news editor, managing editor, deputy chief editor, 2001-2011*

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2017

## March, June

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are held in more than  
150 cities

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experiences its  
coldest summer on  
record



## July

The Moscow Times  
puts out its 5811th  
print edition



141 opposition  
candidates win  
seats in the  
Moscow city  
council

## In Memoriam

The Moscow Times

Over the last 25 years, The Moscow Times, The St. Petersburg Times and Independent Media have welcomed hundreds of reporters, editors, photographers, and publishing specialists and sent them off with a big party when they moved on, or moved up, or took a break from work to raise a family or write that novel they had always been meaning to get down to.

But some people left us forever, and to this day we mourn their passing.

The newspaper lost two wonderful photographers, Mikhail Solovyanov and Valery Volkov, whose work brought Russia to life and who were both delightful to work with. The beloved IT specialist Anton Pleshkov passed away in 2006, carrying on with his work until the end despite a serious illness. And in the days before digital archives, Natalya Yevseyeva kept track of all our publications and a thousand other facts in the office library. She passed away before the turn of the century.

Sandor Thoenes, a reporter from the Netherlands who worked for The Moscow Times in its first years, was killed in 1999 in East Timor when covering a story. Kirill Koryukin, another fine reporter, passed away more recently, as did Nikolai Kachurin, who wrote auto review articles in the early days of the newspaper.

The commercial department of Independent Media lost Janna Janus and Natalya Karavayeva. Karavayeva was killed at the age of 27 when the Nevsky Express train hit a terrorist bomb on the tracks between Moscow and St. Petersburg in 2009. Kelly Leichenko, who had been the manager of corporate strategic marketing, passed away in 2013 in Vermont after living in Moscow for more than 20 years.

Felix Terentyev was the night watchman for The Moscow Times for many years — a warm, funny and much beloved member of the staff. He passed away in 2006.

Jay Ross, one of the first managing editors at The Moscow Times, was described by a former reporter as “the typical gruff uncle who kept us all late after school if our articles didn’t have the stuff. He was called back into service several times, including at The St. Petersburg Times in the late 1990s. A great guy who drove



Managing editor Jay Ross, right, taught a generation of young journalists how to write — and stay alive in war zones.

us all nuts!” Higher praise for an editor is hard to imagine.

The founder of what would become The St. Petersburg Times, Lloyd Donaldson, passed away in 2010. He arrived in St. Petersburg in 1993 and put his last \$300 into starting The St. Petersburg Press, later purchased by Independent Media. He is remembered as a passionate, demanding, uncompromising editor who held the journalists under him to the highest standard.

Melissa Akin was one of The Moscow Times’ business reporters, as well-known for her warmth as her nose for a good story. She and her husband Peter van Dyk, the web editor at the paper, expected to settle for a long time in Russia, and even built a little wooden house outside the city. She passed away in 2014.

Jo Durden-Smith, a documentary film maker, writer, photographer who fell in love with Russia and Russians in the 1990s, passed away at age 65 in 2007. For several years he wrote a col-

umn for The Moscow Times called “Fate of a Land,” which often featured his dacha in the writer’s community of Nikolina Gora on the Moscow River.

In 2016 at the age of 82, Raymond Stults, The Moscow Times’ classical music, dance and opera critic since 1994, passed away in Moscow, leaving a great hole in the newspaper that no one has yet been able to fill.

We remember all of our former colleagues with great fondness and gratitude. They are not forgotten.

2017

## Благоустройство

Beautification, as in outdoor urban beautification — the process of ripping up all the outdoor urban beautification done the previous year and spending the three summer months — the only time Muscovites can enjoy the beautified outdoor urban environment — on replacing it, typically with badly installed tile blocks (all the better to catch your high heel on), 40-meter-wide sidewalks (for strolling in bad weather), and specially imported trees that cost their weight in gold and die before ever sprouting a leaf; an urban project that has eliminated virtually all parking in the city center, caused daily 10-on-a-scale-of-10 traffic jams; and has the distinction of being the only urban project that has made Muscovites long for snow, slush, and freezing weather in which no благоустройство can be carried out

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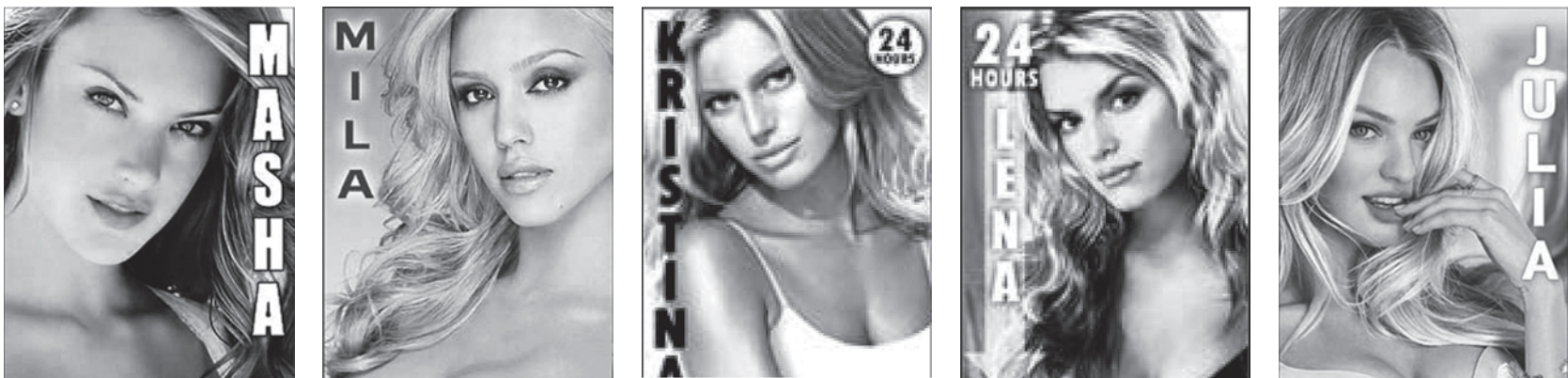
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# Where Are They Now?



Over the years The Moscow Times has sometimes been criticized for running ads for “escort services,” even after the editors added a legal notice (“If the services of your company are subject to obligatory licensing...the number of the license...should be mentioned...”) and despite efforts to place appropriate texts on those pages. But the escorts stayed – in fact, “Masha” ran an ad in the very first edition and the very last, with the same photo. Amazing how she never aged, isn’t it? We thought we’d find out how the real Mashas and Milas and Sonyas were doing, 25 years later.

“**MASHA**” (Irina Mikhailovna) invested her earnings in businesses that she learned about in “casual pillow talk” with her garrulous clients, who thought her questions were “cute.” She now owns and runs her own investment firm with holdings of more than US \$150 million.

“**MILA**” (Natalya Alexandrovna) used her earnings to put herself through university and get a degree in communications. She discovered that what made her great as an escort made her superb as a public spokesperson.

She now represents a highly ranked Russian official.

“**KRISTINA**” (Bella Veniaminovna) married one of her foreign clients and moved to Paris. Now divorced with children in boarding school, she provides confidential services during the school year at a 10 percent discount for all former Moscow clients. Password: “MT Classifieds.”

“**LENA**” (Marfa Stepanovna) left Moscow to take care of her sick mother in Nizhny Tag-

il. After her mother’s death, she repented her previous lifestyle and joined a convent. She is currently a speechwriter and spiritual adviser to a prominent and highly religious prosecutor.

“**JULIA**” (Alexandra Yurievna) left the business and Moscow and bought an apartment in Tula. Happily married to a car mechanic, she has three children, four dogs, and six cats – and no regrets. “You do what you got to do to survive. And then you walk away.”

## Special Feature

In partnership with  
Swissotel Krasnye Holmy Moscow

## The Meeting Point — Moscow



Swissotel Krasnye Holmy Moscow is the winner of 2017 World Travel Awards in the nominations Russia’s Leading Business Hotel and Russia’s Leading Luxury Business Hotel. The 140-meter tower of Swissotel Krasnye Holmy is one of the architectural sights of modern Moscow, and a convenient location both for work and leisure.

### Location

The elegant silhouette of the five-star Swissotel Krasnye Holmy is seen from all over the city. You have surely seen the high tower of the hotel, standing in a traffic jam on the Garden Ring, enjoying a boat trip along the Moscow River or going to a concert in the House of Music.

Thanks to its location on the Garden Ring, the hotel is a great place for business events. It is also the nearest five-star hotel to the international Domodedovo airport, connected by regular aero express trains with Paveletsky rail station.

### Conference and Meeting Rooms

Zurich hall, the largest hall-transformer of the hotel, is conveniently located on the first floor and can accommodate up to 100 people. It can also be divided into two

smaller halls, capable of accommodating up to 40 and 70 people in a theater-style seating. The correct geometry of the hall, natural lighting and the absence of columns allows taking into account all the organizers’ wishes for seating. Screens, projectors, microphones, booths for simultaneous interpretation - all this and other equipment is provided by the hotel business center, depending on the format of the event and the wishes of the organizers. The spacious foyer area is a convenient space for coffee breaks, interviews and informal communication of participants.

The Geneva, Lucerne, Lausanne and Basel meeting rooms with daylight are designed for 10 to 25 people and are very convenient for small meetings and negotiations. They can also be involved in organizing major events in the Zurich Hall, located nearby.

Swissotel Krasnye Holmy is one of the few hotels offering panoramic rooms and meeting rooms on a high floor. Semicircular hall-transformer Davos, located on the 29th floor, is convenient for banquets (70-80 persons) and presentations, when the expectations of the audience are high and the venue is

more important than ever. Panoramic windows with a view of the city, like a magnet, attract the eye, leaving an unforgettable impression of the event. On the same floor there are smaller panoramic meeting rooms - Boardroom (for 12-14 people) and Zermatt (10 people) created for meetings with a view of Moscow.

### Penthouse

The most luxurious suite of the hotel - Penthouse – has long established itself as a venue for small private events: private dinners, parties, presentations and shows. The suite of 272 square meters occupies almost entirely one of the floors of the hotel. The spacious living room opens onto a large open terrace overlooking the lights of the Garden Ring, the Moscow River embankment and the picturesque panorama of the Kremlin.

[www.swissotel.com/moscow](http://www.swissotel.com/moscow)

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