DOUBLE AGENTS
Newspaper claims Kremlin plans to create new mega-security ministry resembling the old KGB → Page 2

ELECTION HANGOVER
After United Russia’s landslide victory, does opposition have a future? → Pages 6, 11

TRETIAKOV RETURNS
Zelfira Tregulova has led a remarkable turnaround at a leading Moscow gallery → Pages 12-13

RUSSIAN STANDARDS

Are the morality police out of step with modern society? → Page 4
Looking Back

“The we’ve been here before — whether 1930s, Beria or Brezhnev’s era, when the KGB was a monster.” Gennady Gudkov, opposition politician and former KGB spy.

12.7% GDP Russia officially spends on security and police.

Dec. 20, 1917 Vladimir Lenin orders the founding of first Soviet secret police, the Cheka.

The KGB ceased to exist on Nov. 6, 1991. It was succeeded by the Federal Counterintelligence Service — later the FSB.

The Kommersant article was published just as the Duma elections results began to trickle in, and the Kremlin was an overachiever, selling an eye-catching report. The Kremlin was to embark on a major restructuring of its security agencies, it said. Plans were already afoot to create a “State Security Ministry,” essentially elevating the Federal Security Service (FSB) to the position it enjoyed in its Soviet heyday as the KGB.

According to the unverified report, several smaller agencies, including the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) and most of the Federal Protection Service (FSO) were to be folded up into the new security behemoth, and the Investigative Committee (SKR) was to return to its previous home in the General Prosecutor’s Office. All would be implemented in time for the 2018 presidential elections.

The idea of recreating an overarching security ministry is not new. Almost from the day President Boris Yeltsin moved to split the KGB up into constituent parts, the spooks have been pushing to regain their former status. Proposals to reconstitute old KGB functions were put forward in 2004 and 2012. In both cases, President Vladimir Putin reportedly acted as a bloc.

“He wanted to maintain competition within the intelligence community,” said Vladimir Frolen, a foreign policy expert.

Dynamic may have changed, and several experts told The Moscow Times they believed consolidation within the security bloc was plausible, essentially following the introduction of a new National Guard. Tellingly, the Kommersant leak has been reported in several loyal government media, and Putin’s spokesman has refused to deny the plans.

A source close to the government, who asked to remain anonymous, told The Moscow Times that he believes further security consolidation was imminent. It was, however, unlikely to be in the form suggested by Kommersant: “The boss is quite rational: Why would [Putin] push everyone into the same pool? They are supposed to sit on each other.”

Gennady Gudkov, an opposition politician who worked in the KGB’s counter-espionage section between 1982 and 1992, suggests the removal of mutual interagency control was the most important part of the proposal.

“We’ve been here before, in the 1930s during the Great Terror, after the war and the time of security chief Lavrentiy Beria, or during Brezhnev’s era, when the KGB was a monster,” he says. If imposed, the changes would result in "further politicization" of law enforcement and prosecuting bodies, "convoy justice" and "more repression of the opposition."

Gudkov does not discount the possibility that the Kommersant leak was an attempt to gauge a reaction. “The FSB is empire building, and trying to persuade Putin to impose the iron fist and expand their remit,” he says.

The proposals are likely to be met with resistance by both the FSO and SKR, which would be merged into the FSB and Prosecutor’s Office respectively. There would be many redundancies and much blood-letting; relations between prosecutors and officials of the Investigative Committee are, for example, already terrible.

According to the Kommersant report, the changes are being made to streamline government, and control government corruption. Author Mark Calvetti suggests the proposals instead indicated “elite paranoia,” and were likely to fail on both adversarial fronts. “No corruption case inside the Russian security services has ever been brought about internally; it is always about competing agencies,” he says. “If I were a corrupt security officer, I would think life is about to get just great.”

Peering Into the Crystal Ball: Russia After the Elections

By Nikolai Petrov, political analyst with the Higher School of Economics

In From the Cold

Newspaper suggests Kremlin plans to recreate the KGB.

Early in the morning of Sept. 19, just as the first landslide results of Russia’s parliamentary elections began to trickle in, The Moscow Times published an eye-catching report. The Kremlin was to embark on a major restructuring of its security agencies, it said. Plans were already afoot to create a “State Security Ministry,” essentially elevating the Federal Security Service (FSB) to the position it enjoyed in its Soviet heyday as the KGB.

According to the unverified report, several smaller agencies, including the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) and most of the Federal Protection Service (FSO) were to be folded up into the new security behemoth, and the Investigative Committee (SKR) was to return to its previous home in the General Prosecutor’s Office. All would be implemented in time for the 2018 presidential elections.

The idea of recreating an overarching security ministry is not new. Almost from the day President Boris Yeltsin moved to split the KGB up into constituent parts, the spooks have been pushing to regain their former status. Proposals to reconstitute old KGB functions were put forward in 2004 and 2012. In both cases, President Vladimir Putin reportedly acted as a bloc.

“He wanted to maintain competition within the intelligence community,” said Vladimir Frolen, a foreign policy expert.

Dynamic may have changed, and several experts told The Moscow Times they believed consolidation within the security bloc was plausible, essentially following the introduction of a new National Guard. Tellingly, the Kommersant leak has been reported in several loyal government media, and Putin’s spokesman has refused to deny the plans.

A source close to the government, who asked to remain anonymous, told The Moscow Times that he believes further security consolidation was imminent. It was, however, unlikely to be in the form suggested by Kommersant: “The boss is quite rational: Why would [Putin] push everyone into the same pool? They are supposed to sit on each other.”

Gennady Gudkov, an opposition politician who worked in the KGB’s counter-espionage section between 1982 and 1992, suggests the removal of mutual interagency control was the most important part of the proposal.

“We’ve been here before, in the 1930s during the Great Terror, after the war and the time of security chief Lavrentiy Beria, or during Brezhnev’s era, when the KGB was a monster,” he says. If imposed, the changes would result in “further politicization” of law enforcement and prosecuting bodies, “convoy justice” and “more repression of the opposition."

Gudkov does not discount the possibility that the Kommersant leak was an attempt to gauge a reaction. “The FSB is empire building, and trying to persuade Putin to impose the iron fist and expand their remit,” he says.

The proposals are likely to be met with resistance by both the FSO and SKR, which would be merged into the FSB and Prosecutor’s Office respectively. There would be many redundancies and much blood-letting; relations between prosecutors and officials of the Investigative Committee are, for example, already terrible.

According to the Kommersant report, the changes are being made to streamline government, and control government corruption. Author Mark Calvetti suggests the proposals instead indicated “elite paranoia,” and were likely to fail on both adversarial fronts. “No corruption case inside the Russian security services has ever been brought about internally; it is always about competing agencies,” he says. “If I were a corrupt security officer, I would think life is about to get just great.”

Peering Into the Crystal Ball: Russia After the Elections

By Nikolai Petrov, political analyst with the Higher School of Economics

Prior to the elections, everyone was talking about the imminent dismissal of Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Investigative Committee. Media reports said the decision had already been made, with the dismissal delayed until “after the elections.”

Bastrykin’s departure is in keeping with the major restructuring of security and law enforcement bodies that began in March. But his dismissal barely changes the larger picture: Both Bastrykin and his department were significantly weakened in the current restructuring process, and later by the high-profile arrests of senior investigators.

Bastrykin’s was not the only security structure to have been weakened. Some, such as the Federal Guard Service and the security services for the president and customs, saw a change in leadership. The Federal Security Service, Interior Ministry, and now the Investigative Committee, underwent a cleansing of second-tier management. The Federal Migration Service and Federal Drug Control Service were eliminated altogether.

The restructuring of the siloviki — loyal strongmen from the security services — is nearing an end, while the remaking of the political bloc has only begun. It is not so much that President Vladimir Putin has a grand plan for renewing the ruling elite, as much as he is responding to what the situation demands. Russia’s leaders badly need to drive themselves out of two traps. The first is the trap of political legitimacy. The Kremlin is running out of ways to maintain the military-autocratic legitimacy of the ruling authorities. It cannot play the “Crimea card” a second time, and opinion polls indicate that the people care little about Syria. They are concerned with the standard of living, and the public mood is becoming increasingly isolationist.

This means the Kremlin must somehow restore its legitimacy. But the only way the national leader can stand for elections without compromising his hold on power is if nearly 100 percent of the voters turn out and vote for him — as autocratic Central Asian leaders orchestrate their elections. Otherwise, Putin can’t boast a mandate from the people.

Unfortunately, Central Asian-like results are difficult to achieve in Russia. Both the people and their government remember the mass protests of 2011-2012. Furthermore, the political machines which might have achieved sky-high voter turnout and support have been largely dismantled in the regions.

There are two ways out of this dilemma: either Putin puts forward a hand-picked successor to run in the next presidential elections, or he turns the elections into a plebiscite, thus enabling him to combine autocratic with electoral legitimacy.

The second trap is the excessively long interval between the current Duma elections and the presidential elections in 2018. If leaders wait another 18 months before implementing essential but painful economic reforms, they will exhaust the government’s financial reserves — something they would like to avoid.

Here, too, the authorities have two options: hold early presidential elections or end the confrontation with the West and borrow money to buy time until 2018. In the first case, Putin would have to either carry out modernization in some form, even authoritarian. Or he could finish building his authoritarian system, replete with a cleansing of the elite.

Either option would ruin the status quo and provoke serious resistance from the ruling elite. The cleansing of the elite over the last several months is an attempt to break through to an empowered, insulated center of resistance to the course Putin ultimately chooses, giving him more room to maneuver.

The siloviki have undergone the most radical cleansing, but the cleansing process began with state-owned companies and government agencies, many of which saw their entire management replaced in 2014-2015. Before the year is out, we can expect to see a number of major changes take place as Putin tries to return to the very structure of the presidential administration, government and political bloc, including parliament and the party system.

The Duma elections are over. They are no longer a restraining factor, but a stimulus to change. The election results have significantly changed the political balance not only in the regions, where new, strong, and relatively independent political figures have entered office, but also in the center. The elections have given added political weight to the Duma itself and augmented its legitimacy, in fact, against the backdrop of the impending shake-ups, the Duma is looking like an island of stability.

And now no one and nothing can get in the way of the Krem- lin. If it wants to resurrect the Soviet Union, especially if it seri- ously wants to resurrect the Soviet Union, especially if it seri-
Bear Attack

Is Russia behind the Fancy Bears cyber-espionage group?

The Fancy Bears have struck again. This time, the reputedly Russian group of hackers released confidential medical information on star tennis player Rafael Nadal and 25 other athletes. Earlier leaks involved Serena and Venus Williams and gymnast Simone Biles.

The most recent leaks mostly concern Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs), recorded by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), which allow athletes to take certain substances that are otherwise banned. Though they have targeted athletes from various countries, including a Russian boxer, the hackers seem to have a particular axe to grind against Americans. “We’d like to tell you about the U.S. Olympic team and their dirty methods to win,” the group says on its website.

The hack follows a year in which Russia has been at the center of the biggest doping scandal in recent history, after WADA found evidence of widespread state-sponsored doping. Russia paid a high price for the affair: Its track-and-field team and multiple other athletes were barred from the Rio Games, and its Paralympic team faced a collective ban. The sanctions are still in place and are unlikely to be lifted any time soon. Is the Fancy Bears’ hack of WADA payback by Russia? The group certainly professes vengeance. “We do not forgive. We do not forget,” it says.

For WADA, the evidence points to Moscow. “Let it be known that these criminal acts are greatly compromising the effort by the global anti-doping community to re-establish trust in Russia,” it said in a statement earlier this month.

As in the doping scandal, many reports allege the involvement of Russian security services. The attacks have been traced back to the same group that hacked into the U.S. Democratic National Convention earlier this year. In both cases, the Kremlin has denied any state involvement, accusing the West of paranoia.

“If you add up all of these doubts, you get such an unusual story, that it’s theoretically possible but only if this concerns a group of idiots,” he says.

According to Sachkov, the speed with which fingers were pointed at Russia — it took one day — is also suspicious. Most complex crimes take months to resolve. “If you add up all of these doubts, you get such an unusual story, that it’s theoretically possible but only if this concerns a group of idiots,” he says.

Whether or not the hackers are Russian citizens, the leaks certainly play into a narrative: Sure, Russia has a doping problem, but it is not alone. “The hacks have neutralized the West’s accusations against Russia,” says Dmitry Trenin of the Carnegie Center think tank. “The narrative is: You showed us our flaws, and we’ve uncovered your flaws. No one’s better than anyone else. We’re all roughly the same.”

Russia is enjoying the moment. The satirical Pilorama program on Russia’s rabidly pro-Kremlin NTV channel has launched a petition to award the Fancy Bears with the Heidi Krieger Medical, an annual award for contributions to anti-doping efforts. “Because of Fancy Bears, the world is now aware of the ruthless treatment of American athletes who, not entirely accidentally, happen to belong to dark-skinned U.S. minority groups,” the petition, signed by almost 5,000, reads. “As we understand from alarming news reports, these groups are in a lamentable position, oppressed by U.S. law enforcement.”

The information war, it appears, is only just beginning.
looking forward

"Meet someone in real life." Media watchdog Roskomnadzor’s advice to Twitter users dismayed by its 2015 ban of 11 porn sites.

Last year, Yelena Rydkina was working in Moscow’s biotechnology industry when she decided to get several friends together to organize a popular science conference on sexuality.

“I saw that we have a lot of trouble with sex education here, that people aren’t open about sexuality, and I wanted to change that,” she said.

The conference — which covered topics ranging from the biology of sex to queer culture to kink — was a labor of love for Rydkina, and she doubted that there would be much public interest.

But over 350 people showed up, despite the fact that the conference had little advertising besides its website. Soon, Rydkina had quit her job in biotech.

Today, she works as a “sex evangelist” for Pure, a mobile app for “anonymous discreet dating” on the Russian market. She lectures on sex, writes blogs and articles, and records educational videos. Her most recent project, Pure.School, is a series of online lectures and practices not supported by the government.

For this reason, “information technology can be considered a threat to traditional values,” says Gregory Asmolov, a researcher on mass communications at the London School of Economics, who has lectured at a conference organized by Rydkina.

Sexual Revolution

Russia has a complicated history with sex and the media. From the Stalinist period onward, Soviet culture promoted social conservatism and the word “sex” was often synonymous with vulgarity. Open discussions or depictions of sex were largely absent from official Soviet culture, and pornography was a rarity.

But with the arrival of perestroika and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union, the restrictions disappeared. Foreign pornography streamed into Russia, where it was displayed and sold openly. Sexuality returned to popular culture, and sex scenes — often graphic and violent — became a hallmark of Russian filmmaking in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Homosexuality was decriminalized in 1993, but few truly progressive attitudes toward sex emerged.

For many Russians, the influx of pornography and garish sexuality was a trauma that went hand-in-hand with the social and economic upheavals of the 1990s, says Elliot Borenstein, a New York University professor who has extensively studied sexuality in modern Russia. “For years, the Soviets had presented a nightmarish vision of how low [American] culture was,” he says. For many, the wave of porn “showed how bad it really was.”

Changing Values

Contradiction is central to Russian attitudes toward sex. Public opinion surveys regularly show that Russians support censorship of sexuality in media. But people’s sexual lives are hardly conservative.

Some might call this hypocrisy. But Marianna Muravyova, a sociologist at the Higher School of Economics, suggests that it is pragmatism, and that — with the exception of views on homosexuality, which remains taboo — the conservatism advocated by the Kremlin has a low following in Russia.

“People may claim they support traditional values,” Muravyova says, “but if you look at their attitudes toward sex outside marriage, living together outside of marriage, illegitimate children and abortion, a very liberal picture emerges.”

Even Rydkina, who says she has witnessed the effects of state television on her own parents, remains guardedly optimistic.

“I believe people in Russia are too constricted internally,” she says. “There’s a lot of pent-up kinky energy here.”
NATO and Russia feed off each other with new permanent deployments on Baltic borders.

For the past two years, the Russian military and the Western NATO military alliance have watched each other along the dividing lines of Eastern Europe. With each side suspicious of the other's intent, deployments have been matched by deployments. On Sept. 18, NATO took another step toward reinforcing its eastern flank.

Four NATO battalions, totaling about 4,000 troops, will be deployed to the Baltic region no later than May 2017, the alliance announced. Unlike previous temporary deployments, aimed at deterring Russia from a possible military adventure in the region, these troops will be permanently stationed in each of NATO's four regional member states: Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

While Moscow claims NATO has long been working to encircle Russia, troop deployments in Eastern Europe were only given significant consideration in 2014, following the Ukrainian crisis. It was a direct response to the concerns of eastern members, who remember life under Soviet rule rather differently than their big brother does.

Moreover, the NATO alliance is famously slow to move. It took nearly two years for them to create a temporary 13,000-troop man NATO rapid response force.

This was insufficient in the eyes of eastern members, as was its 48-hour deployment time. Various independent studies have suggested that Russia could overrun the region within such a window.

Only at the NATO summit in Warsaw on July 8 did movement begin on stationing permanent troops in the region. And the date for their creation was only determined at the next bureaucratic stop, at a follow-up meeting in Croatia on Sept. 18.

According to the plans, 1,000 U.S. soldiers will take up positions in the region, with German, Canadian and British soldiers covering the other countries.

Baltic Deterrent Force

With these four battle groups, we are not talking exclusively about a training presence," Petr Pavel, chairman of the NATO Military Committee, was quoted as saying by The Wall Street Journal. "This force is to serve as a deterrent and, if necessary, as a fighting force."

The new force will most likely be commanded from a regional headquarters in Poland, possibly the Suwalki Gap, a stretch of territory less than 100 kilometers wide, separating the Russian Baltic coast exclave of Kaliningrad and Belarus.

Military strategists believe control of this gap, which separates Poland from its Baltic NATO allies to the north, would be vital in any conflict with Russia. Even when the divisions move into position, they will be dwarfed by the potential Russian fighting force on the other side of the border. Russia's western forces have seen an unprecedented pace of exercise in the past two years, with available forces in the region in the tens of thousands. Not everyone is convinced NATO is doing enough to cover its eastern flank.

"Given the intensive nature and enormous scale of Russian preparations for war, if Russia did decide to mount a conventional armed attack, these new NATO deployments would provide little more than a speed bump," says Keir Giles, a Russian military expert at Chatham House. "But it is hoped that their presence will adjust the calculations in Moscow."

The Russian government response to NATO's new Baltic force has, so far, been muted. Responding to initial murmurings of the force, in July the Russian Defense Ministry announced the creation of more than four full new divisions in its western military district. Many on the Russian side say NATO is overreacting to Moscow's moves.

"Moscow is not going to war with NATO, and it does not plan to capture Poland or the Baltic States," Lieutenant General Valery Zaparenko, a former deputy chief of Russia's General Staff, told Gazeta.ru in response to the news. "Besides, from a purely military point of view, you can't deter much with a few battalions."

The activity of both sides in the region has been nonetheless dramatic. With dialogue giving way to tension across the region, even non-aligned states along the Baltic, such as Sweden and Finland, have begun to contemplate tighter relations with NATO. For the first time, public opinion in both countries is shifting toward the prospect of full membership.

Were that to happen, it would send shockwaves through Moscow — and ensure the cycle of escalation continues for many years to come. 
A

An hour after polling stations closed in Moscow on Sept. 18, Dmitry Gudkov, 36, still believed he could win, and somehow, miraculously, hang on to his seat in the State Duma.

Gudkov was running as a single-constituency candidate for liberal opposition party Yabloko in Tushino, northeastern Moscow. He was up against United Russia’s notorious Gennady Onishchenko, the Kremlin’s former uber-loyal sanitary chief.

“We are neck and neck,” Gudkov wrote on his Facebook page. “The outcome of the vote will be determined in the United States. Don’t let us down, friends.”

Gudkov was referring to Russian voters in Boston, Chicago, Miami and Washington. While the polls were closed in the motherland, the votes of Russians living in those U.S. cities could still be added to the Tushino count, and ensure Russia kept its single voice of opposition.

But the appeal to Russian voters across the Atlantic did not help. Victory soon retreated from sight, while his party was suffering an equally bad night. By 2 a.m., it became clear Yabloko was nowhere near the 5-percent threshold necessary to make it to the Duma. There would be no independent voice in this Russian parliament.

The final result, announced the next day, was overwhelming: United Russia took 343 out of the State Duma’s 450 seats, giving it a constitutional majority. Russia’s friendly “opposition” took the remaining seats: the Communist Party won 42 seats; nationalist-leaning LDPR won 39 seats and A Just Russia took 23 seats. Rodina and the Civic Platform won a seat each. The Duma’s only “independent” deputy is Vladimir Reznik, a man who once found himself on Interpol wanted lists and was for many years a United Russia lawmaker.

The following day, President Vladimir Putin declared his party victorious and congratulated them for the “good result.”

“Times are hard but people still voted for United Russia. I think it’s linked to growing political maturity,” Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“Winner Takes All

Apathy, fraud and opposition failure combined to secure an unprecedented super-majority for the ruling United Russia party

Dmitry Gudkov was the golden boy of the liberal opposition, employing an American-style campaign strategy. He lost to a stalwart of the regime, former sanitary chief Gennady Onishchenko.

“Winner Takes All” Continued on Page 11 →

Renowned physicist Sergei Shpilkin produced his own analysis of the election results, based on expected statistical distributions. His data suggested that almost 45 percent of all votes recorded for United Russia may have been falsified.

Reno

The liberal opposition did not win a single Duma seat. Duma seats were won by United Russia, giving it a constitutional majority.

In the parallel Chechen presidential election, strongman leader Ramzan Kadyrov won with 97 percent of the vote.

Lowest Turnout in History

With only 48 percent of Russians taking part in the vote, this parliamentary election saw the lowest turnout in the country’s post-Soviet history.

The Kremlin was counting on this, says political analyst Alexander Kynev. It believed protest voters were most likely to stay at home, and its strategists did everything to discourage Russians from voting. Earlier this year, it moved the election from December to early autumn, meaning Russia’s campaign season coincided with Russians holidaying at their dachas.

“It was a rigged game,” says Kynev.

The result was an incredibly dull show for the electorate. With nobody doubting who the winner would be, many Russians saw no reason to bother.

Changing the Rules

The Kremlin introduced a series of safety mechanisms to secure its victory.

First, it reverted to a mixed electoral system not used since 2003. In the previous parliamentary election, in 2011, all of the Duma’s 450 seats were chosen through party lists.

But this format proved ineffective for United Russia, which barely won a simple majority of 226 in 2011.

This year, Russians elected only half of the Duma deputies through party lists. The other half was elected via single-constituencies, which means a district is represented by
Huang He: Dim Sum and a Diminutive Pig

By Andrei Muchnik artreporter@imedia.ru

Farm fresh food inspired by the Orient

A life-sized cutout of Dmitry Nagiyev dressed in traditional Chinese clothing greets you on entry to this oriental eatery. The odd life/hyphen.capsized cutout of Dmitry Nagiyev dressed in traditional Chinese clothing greets you in the restaurant — Husha the miniature pig. Utterly huggable, Husha is not that easy to catch, but totally worth it for the wealth of Instagram opportunities a four/hyphen.caphoofed friend can afford you.

Natalya Bekirovna — the mind behind Mendelev’s interior — is responsible for the design. This is immediately apparent from her trademark concrete and iron minimalism, with huge metal lamps hanging from the ceiling.

Heading up the kitchen is Yevgeny Kuznetsov, who spent two months in Hong Kong perfecting the dim sum and dumplings are the masterful in the restaurant. Accordingly several items on the menu will be off the cards at any one time.

Start your culinary travels by snacking on some century eggs, a Chinese delicacy in which eggs are preserved for several weeks or longer through a complex procedure traditionally involving salt, lime and ash (390 rubles). Alternatively try the more conventional but nevertheless excellent veal in oyster sauce (650 rubles). Other highlights include Taipei-style shrimps (690 rubles) and the sweet and sour carp (750 rubles).

The dim sum and dumplings are the masterful handiwork of An Yaya, previously of the upmarket Turandot restaurant. Flavor combinations include duck and leek (420 rubles) or eggplant and shrimp (430 rubles).

The tea menu is bound to impress any connoisseur. Sample the fragrant smoked red tea (410 rubles) or order a traditional tea ceremony to your table. For desert tuck into the ubiquitous cara/hyphen.cap Sergio Radonezhskogo
Metro Rimskaya, Ploshchad Ilyicha

Metro Ulitsa /one.pln/nine.pln/zero.pln/five.pln Goda

Metro Park Kultury /one.pln/three.pln Komsomolsky Prospekt

Metro Ulitsa /one.pln/hyphen.cap/two.pln/three.pln Pokrovka

Metro Kurskaya

Okhota Myasa

A burger joint founded by farmers

Okhota Myasa can be roughly translated as “hungry for meat.” The eatery was founded by the eco-farm Melbard, located in the Penza region. The distinguishing feature of Okhota is the farm fresh food inspired by the Orient.

A new walking route and listings every week!

PhoBo

Fast, flavorful Vietnamese

PhoBo is located in the former Arma factory complex, which makes it the perfect pit stop on your way from the Winzavod gallery to the Gogol Center theater. The eponymous pho bo soup is excellent (310 rubles), as are the other noodle dishes, like pho chon with stewed beef and vegetables (320 rubles). Indulge in a traditional Vietnamese coffee with condensed milk to end your meal on a sweet note (150 rubles).

facebook.com/phobocafe

Metro Chistiye Prudy, Kitai/hyphen.cap Gorod /two.pln/one.pln/hyphen.cap/two.pln/three.pln Ulitsa Pokrovka

Metro Ulitsa /nine.pln/seven.pln six.pln/seven.pln/parenright.cap

Metro Rimskaya, Ploshchad Ilyicha
Shopping Day at GUM
Visit Russia’s Most Famous Arcade

Illustration by Yevgeny Tonkonogy

From open stalls to high-tech stores, this spot on Red Square has been the place to shop for over a millennium.

Three facts about GUM
1. On May 9, 1945, a radio announcer announced the joyful news from GUM that World War II was over.
2. The very first advertisement for the new Soviet department store was coined by none other than poet Vladimir Mayakovsky: “In GUM you’ll find goods of every kind, to meet the needs of heart, soul and mind!”
3. In the 1930s, there were communal apartments on the second and third floors.

Children’s GUM
With your bag of delicacies under your arm, slip out the door onto Vetoshny Pereulok and cross over to Children’s GUM — more than 15,000 square feet of fun for parents, their children and anyone who is young at heart. You can find clothes for every occasion, toys, bicycles, scooters, footwear, books and school supplies, and furniture for kids’ rooms. Childhood dreams come true in the enormous space of Bosco di Ciliegi, where the stylish younger set can be dressed by Dolce & Gabbana, Baby Dior, Burberry, Armani Junior, Kenzo, La Perla, Moncler, and MI.MI.SOL. When you come back outside, you’ll see GUM glowing, lit with more than 40,000 lights on the façade and another 8,000 inside. All these are cared for by 16 lamplighters, whose job is to make sure the GUM is always bright and welcoming, whatever the weather.

Gastronom №1
Gastronom №1 opened in 1953 and faced Red Square. Now this food store, opened in 2008, is on the other side of the building. Stop in for a dose of stage-managed nostalgia and some truly fabulous food. This is the place to buy black and red caviar, vodka and the best of Soviet-era products, as well delicious homemade snacks, fresh produce and delicacies from Russia and around the world.

Restoratives
To replenish your shopping energy, stop into one of GUM’s eateries for a relaxing and delicious restorative meal. For a quick cup of coffee and fresh berry tart, stop at Bosco’s Cafeteria by the Fountain. For a full menu of Russian and international dishes, try the Festivalnoye Café on the third floor right under the famous glass ceiling designed by engineer Vladimir Shukhov, which looks light and airy, despite a metal skeleton weighing more than 800 tons. But for something more festive, head toward the first line of GUM on Red Square. Today you enjoy a celebratory meal of exquisitely prepared and served Italian cuisine at the Bosco Café or Bosco Bar. Great food and drinks with a view of Red Square — is there a better place to take a break?
In and Around GUM

5-hour walk
In partnership with GUM

Bosco Sport
Take your cone and walk along the middle line toward Ulitsa Ilyinka to Bosco Sport. Bosco Sport created the first national Olympic clothing line, earning a place in the hearts of Russian and international consumers as the most successful Russian brand on the world market. Inspired by the work of Russian constructivists like Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, the Bosco designers created a new collection of sportswear for the Russian athletes and their fans at the 193 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Stop in a picked-up everything that a serious and seriously fashionable athlete needs: windbreakers, parkas, T-shirts, polo shirts, bags, sports shoes and the full range of accessories. This is also the place for your Moscow souvenirs, like a “Russia” T-shirt or baseball cap.

Sublime by Bosco
Now that your sporting needs have been taken care of, walk across the hall to the jewelry and watch boutique Sublime by Bosco, part of the gallery of Bosco di Ciliegi in GUM. This is heaven for anyone who loves fine jewelry and watches. You can browse timepieces by the world’s finest watchmakers: Omega, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Vacheron Constantin, IWC, Blancpain, Jaquet Droz, Longines, Glashütte Original, Radio and many others. Here you’ll find both everyday watches and exclusive, limited edition and collector’s watches — the perfect place to find that special gift for close friends, colleagues, and family. All you need to do is choose. Then your gift will be wrapped in a special box while you enjoy a cup of coffee or a flute of champagne. These aren’t the only purveyors of fine timepieces at GUM. You can also shop at such world famous brands as Tiffany, Cartier, Van Cleef, Bulgari, Breguet, Audemars Piguet and Pomellato.

Articoli by Bosco
After a moment of quiet at the fountain, step into Articoli by Bosco — the best place to shop for cosmetics and perfumes in Moscow. The spacious shop carries more than 200 premium brands, including favorites such as Chanel, Dior, La Mer, Gucci Cosmetics, Tom Ford, YSL, Jo Malone, Givenchy and Lancome. Articoli by Bosco on Red Square in GUM opened back in 1999, and since then has become one of the top stops for high quality cosmetics, skilled and talented consultants, and always a plethora of special offers.

Fountain
For over a century, the fountain in the center of the arcade has been everyone’s favorite place to meet their friends and take a break from shopping. Originally built in 1906 as a round fountain, it was changed to an octagon made of red quartzite during reconstruction in 1953. Wander over and pause to watch the dancing water. The sprays of water seem to be choreographed, and every half hour the water flies up over 20 meters (65 feet). The trajectory and strength can also be changed. There is nothing like the pleasant sound of flowing water to refresh a tired shopper.

Ice Cream
To finish your day, treat yourself to ice cream. GUM began to sell its own in-house made ice cream on July 3, 1954, first only vanilla and crème brûlée. Sold in sugary sweet waffle cones by ladies wearing white uniforms and caps, the creamy ice cream quickly became a favorite of the public and symbol of GUM. Today you find vendors throughout the arcade selling traditional flavors as well as chocolate, strawberry, blueberry, lemon and others. It’s a great way to end the day.
The Exhibitions of the Autumn

Galleries and museums across the capital have officially awoken from their summer slumber. Whether you want to soak in the tranquil beauty of Raphael's portraits or be mesmerized by the stunning ink paintings of China's most illustrious contemporary artist, there's a veritable tide of extraordinary exhibitions for art-lovers to embrace this autumn. Here's our “must-see” list.

**Stephan Balkenhol: Sculptures and Reliefs**
A visionary and a creator

The major retrospective of Alexander Rodchenko at the Multimedia Art Museum is devoted to the 125th anniversary of the artist’s birth. Today, Rodchenko is thought to be one of the most important figures in Russian avant-garde movement, and as a man who lived before his time. His photography was socially-engaged, experimental and groundbreaking from an aesthetic perspective. The exhibition features more than 100 photographs from the MAMM collection, as well as famous posters, paintings and art objects from Russian museums such as the Tretyakov Gallery, the Pushkin Museum and the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg.

Multimedia Art Museum Moscow (MAMM)
mamm-mdf.ru
16 Ulitsa Ostozhenka
Metro Park Kultury, Oktjabrskaya
Through Nov. 13

**Kyoto Costume Institute: Elegance and Splendor of the Art Deco**
A glimpse inside the sacred walls

The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow is hosting a landmark monographic exhibition of the artist’s works — the first ever in Russia dedicated solely to Raphael. Following an agreement between the Pushkin Museum and the Florentine Uffizi galleries, 11 paintings and drawings of inestimable worth have traveled to the capital, some leaving Italian soil for the first time. Among the masterpieces on display, guests can admire Raphael’s famous 1505 self-portrait, as well as the dual portraits of “Agnolo Doni” and his wife “Maddalena Strozzi.” Renowned for the harmonious composition and striking beauty of his artworks, the current Raphael exhibition is being held under the patronage of the Italian Embassy in Russia.

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
arts-museum.ru
16 Ulitsa Volkhonka. Metro Kropotkinskaya
Through Dec. 11

**Gerhard Richter: Abstraction and Appearance**
Between abstraction and realism

Gerhard Richter is one of the most prominent abstract painters alive today, yet he is also highly praised for his photorealist portraits. Perhaps most famous for his technique of painting real photographs, the artist uses images from magazines and family albums and turns them into unrecognizable painted portraits, landscapes, and still lifes. The exhibition at the Jewish Museum in November covers Richter’s works from 1973 to 2016, including major works from different stages of his career. The centerpiece is “Birkenau (2014),” a series of reworked photographs taken by a prisoner at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in August 1944.

Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center
jewish-museum.ru
1/1A Ulitsa Obraztsova
Metro Tretyakovsky, Oktjabrskaya
Nov. 9 — Feb. 5, 2017

**Roma Aeterna. Masterpieces of the Vatican Pinacoteca**
A glimpse inside the sacred walls

The Vatican museums hold some of the world’s most highly treasured artworks. Items from the immense collection rarely leave the walls of the sacred city. But this autumn some of them will. On loan from the Vatican Pinacoteca, paintings of staggering importance by Caravaggio, Raphael and Bellini will travel to Moscow for the landmark exhibition. While many of the works relate — unsurprisingly — to biblical scenes, others shed light on the influence of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. It’s a golden opportunity for art lovers not only in Russia, but throughout Europe, to see the paintings for the first time.

Tretyakov Gallery
tretyakovgallery.ru
12 Lavrushinsky Pereulok
Metro Tretyakovsky
Nov. 23 — Feb. 19, 2017

**Cui Ruzhuo: Glossiness of Unincarved Jade**
Ink paintings from a modern master

Cui Ruzhuo’s landmark exhibition at the Manege brings the Asian artist’s exquisite ink paintings to Moscow audiences for the first time. Consistently ranked as one of the most successful and highly paid artists of his generation in his native China, Cui Ruzhuo is best known for his large-scale images of flowers, birds and landscapes. The exhibition, “Glossiness of Unincarved Jade,” is currently on show at the St. Petersburg Manege and will arrive at its Moscow counterpart on Oct. 7. The collection features around 200 works, including several polyptychs reaching over 6 meters in length. Combining the expressive Western art with ancient Eastern practice and technique, Cui Ruzhuo’s artworks often feature monochromatic landscapes contrasted with striking flashes of color.

Moscow Manege
moscowmange.ru
1 Manege Square
Metro Okhotny Ryad
Oct. 7-28

**A glimpse inside the sacred walls**

The Moscow museums hold some of the world’s most highly treasured artworks. Items from the immense collection rarely leave the walls of the sacred city. But this autumn some of them will. On loan from the Vatican Pinacoteca, paintings of staggering importance by Caravaggio, Raphael and Bellini will travel to Moscow for the landmark exhibition. While many of the works relate — unsurprisingly — to biblical scenes, others shed light on the influence of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. It’s a golden opportunity for art lovers not only in Russia, but throughout Europe, to see the paintings for the first time.

Tretyakov Gallery
tretyakovgallery.ru
12 Lavrushinsky Pereulok
Metro Tretyakovsky
Nov. 23 — Feb. 19, 2017

**Gerhard Richter: Abstraction and Appearance**
Between abstraction and realism

Gerhard Richter is one of the most prominent abstract painters alive today, yet he is also highly praised for his photorealist portraits. Perhaps most famous for his technique of painting real photographs, the artist uses images from magazines and family albums and turns them into unrecognizable painted portraits, landscapes, and still lifes. The exhibition at the Jewish Museum in November covers Richter’s works from 1973 to 2016, including major works from different stages of his career. The centerpiece is “Birkenau (2014),” a series of reworked photographs taken by a prisoner at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in August 1944.

Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center
jewish-museum.ru
1/1A Ulitsa Obraztsova
Metro Tretyakovsky, Oktjabrskaya
Nov. 9 — Feb. 5, 2017

**Roma Aeterna. Masterpieces of the Vatican Pinacoteca**
A glimpse inside the sacred walls

The Vatican museums hold some of the world’s most highly treasured artworks. Items from the immense collection rarely leave the walls of the sacred city. But this autumn some of them will. On loan from the Vatican Pinacoteca, paintings of staggering importance by Caravaggio, Raphael and Bellini will travel to Moscow for the landmark exhibition. While many of the works relate — unsurprisingly — to biblical scenes, others shed light on the influence of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. It’s a golden opportunity for art lovers not only in Russia, but throughout Europe, to see the paintings for the first time.

Tretyakov Gallery
tretyakovgallery.ru
12 Lavrushinsky Pereulok
Metro Tretyakovsky
Nov. 23 — Feb. 19, 2017

**Cui Ruzhuo: Glossiness of Unincarved Jade**
Ink paintings from a modern master

Cui Ruzhuo’s landmark exhibition at the Manege brings the Asian artist’s exquisite ink paintings to Moscow audiences for the first time. Consistently ranked as one of the most successful and highly paid artists of his generation in his native China, Cui Ruzhuo is best known for his large-scale images of flowers, birds and landscapes. The exhibition, “Glossiness of Unincarved Jade,” is currently on show at the St. Petersburg Manege and will arrive at its Moscow counterpart on Oct. 7. The collection features around 200 works, including several polyptychs reaching over 6 meters in length. Combining the expressive Western art with ancient Eastern practice and technique, Cui Ruzhuo’s artworks often feature monochromatic landscapes contrasted with striking flashes of color.

Moscow Manege
moscowmange.ru
1 Manege Square
Metro Okhotny Ryad
Oct. 7-28

**A glimpse inside the sacred walls**

The Moscow museums hold some of the world’s most highly treasured artworks. Items from the immense collection rarely leave the walls of the sacred city. But this autumn some of them will. On loan from the Vatican Pinacoteca, paintings of staggering importance by Caravaggio, Raphael and Bellini will travel to Moscow for the landmark exhibition. While many of the works relate — unsurprisingly — to biblical scenes, others shed light on the influence of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. It’s a golden opportunity for art lovers not only in Russia, but throughout Europe, to see the paintings for the first time.

Tretyakov Gallery
tretyakovgallery.ru
12 Lavrushinsky Pereulok
Metro Tretyakovsky
Nov. 23 — Feb. 19, 2017

**Cui Ruzhuo: Glossiness of Unincarved Jade**
Ink paintings from a modern master

Cui Ruzhuo’s landmark exhibition at the Manege brings the Asian artist’s exquisite ink paintings to Moscow audiences for the first time. Consistently ranked as one of the most successful and highly paid artists of his generation in his native China, Cui Ruzhuo is best known for his large-scale images of flowers, birds and landscapes. The exhibition, “Glossiness of Unincarved Jade,” is currently on show at the St. Petersburg Manege and will arrive at its Moscow counterpart on Oct. 7. The collection features around 200 works, including several polyptychs reaching over 6 meters in length. Combining the expressive Western art with ancient Eastern practice and technique, Cui Ruzhuo’s artworks often feature monochromatic landscapes contrasted with striking flashes of color.

Moscow Manege
moscowmange.ru
1 Manege Square
Metro Okhotny Ryad
Oct. 7-28
Russian Tales

September 22 – 28, 2016

47.8% Election turnout, the lowest in modern Russian history

“A turnout like any turnout.” Ella Pamfilova, head of Russia’s Central Election Commission.

35.2% Turnout in Moscow in the 2016 election, compared to 66 percent in 2011.

Percentage of votes cast for United Russia — highest and lowest regions

Duma newcomer Vitaly Milonov is a former St. Petersburg lawmaker known for his anti-LGBT campaigns. A member of United Russia, he lobbied for the first “gay propaganda law” in Russia. It was passed by the St. Petersburg parliament in 2012 and approved by the State Duma the following year. Among his other infamous initiatives, Milonov has attempted to ban abortion, create a “moral police” and rid Russian schools of Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Another flamboyant new deputy is Cernady Onishchenko, the former head of consumer rights watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, who won the race against Gudkov. He rose to fame for his vigilant guard of Russians’ health, which more often than not coincided with Russia’s foreign policy interests; there were import bans on Moldovan and Georgian wine, and later Belorussian and Lithuanian dairy. Onishchenko even proposed to ban condoms and cigarettes, but, luckily for many Russians, to no avail.

The new Duma’s conservative warriors will count a woman, Natalya Poklonskaya, amongst their ranks. She is famous for her good looks and infamous for her idiosyncratic nationalism and role in Russia’s annexation of Crimea. Russia’s youngest female general is the subject of numerous anime cartoons, as well as songs and online games.

Subordinate Democracy

In a column for the liberal Sxe magazine, political analyst Grigory Golosov wrote that the Kremlin’s strategy was to widen the gap between those Russians who are relatively independent from the government — and, therefore, could vote for the opposition — and the elections.

“For these social groups, the strategy was to make sure that going to the dacha [instead of voting] was the priority,” Golosov wrote.

The new Duma is the last brick in the construction of a new political system, which has changed dramatically from the so-called “managed democracy” in the last four years. With the Duma now wholly subordinate, the Kremlin can do as it pleases.

But the substance of that last brick, the nation’s indifference toward politics, which the Kremlin tried so hard to achieve, may well turn into a problem as Putin starts to prepare for his own re-election in 2018.
Russia’s Blockbuster Museum: The Tretyakov Reborn

By Anna Mongayt newsreporter@imedia.ru

Director Zelfira Tregulova has breathed new life into the state museum of Russian art, toppling art’s ivory tower and attracting record-breaking crowds.

People waited in line for up to four hours in temperatures of minus 20 degrees Celsius. There were ambulances and rescue workers on hand, just in case. Volunteers handed out porridge cooked up in nearby field kitchens. Alexei Ananyev, a billionaire whom Forbes lists as one of the 10 wealthiest people in Russia, stood without bodyguards alongside Anton Belov, the director of the Garage Museum of Modern Art, a nearby complex built with money donated by another billionaire, Roman Abramovich. This spectacular crowd was waiting to enter the Tretyakov Gallery on Krymsky Val, where the overenthusiastic mob had already broken the front door.

It was January 2016, and the newly appointed director of the Tretyakov Gallery, Zelfira Tregulova, was watching with surprise. The show was an obvious success — for her and for Valentin Serov, the portrait artist of the late tsarist period. However, even Tregulova had never imagined that displaying Serov’s well-known “Girl with Peaches” and “Ida Rubinstein” would draw so many visitors to the museum.

Tregulova was made director of the Tretyakov Gallery in 2015. Within a year, the expression “the line for Serov” had become a cultural meme in Russia. The government evaluates the work of state museums based on attendance: long lines equal success, and no lines are tantamount to failure. When attendance is high, museums get more government funding, not to mention a benevolent smile from Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky.

People have visited in the 39 days since the [Ivan] Aivazovsky exhibition opened. That’s approximately as many as visited in all of 2014,” she says.

So what has made this museum of Russian art a sudden blockbuster? The droves of people now visiting say they love “beauty” above all else, gushing about the salon painters of the 19th century, like the seascape painter Aivazovsky, and 20th-century itinerants like Vasily Surikov, whose work mimicked French paintings.

Works like these were also in high demand a decade ago, when the Russian art market ballooned, and staff at the Tretyakov earned money on the side, working as private consultants.

It is customary to speak condescendingly about the tastes of Russian audiences. After all, the argument goes, all of those artists learned their craft from grade-school textbooks, and the old Russian masters merely emulated the European innovators.

But Tregulova decided to combat professional snobbery. Like a Hollywood director fighting for an Oscar, she works to bring together collections of Russian classics, promoting each museum project with a teaser exhibit, like the “Girl with Peaches” by Serov or “Oil Workers” by Tahir Salakhov.

It was this approach that brought the Internet-savvy public into the museum’s nearly empty halls. Under Tregulova, even a...
showing of the painting “Black Square” by Kazimir Malevich revealed something new and unexpected. Restorers discovered that under the layers of paint lay the original title of the painting: “Battle of Negroes in a Dark Cave.” The discovery made headlines around the world.

Examining Forwards

Hosting major exhibitions of old masters gives the Tretyakov a certain freedom to experiment with new ones. For example, next year the museum will feature an exhibition titled “Thaw.” Who would have thought that the title of an exhibition of artworks created in the 1960s would, 50 years later, sound the least bit provocative?

“I think people today should take a good look at that era and realize that it was really a renaissance, and at the same time an incredible upheaval and flourishing in all fields of artistic activity,” says Tregulova. “It was a new and incredible sense of inner freedom and individual values, feelings and thoughts. It was a turning point in collective consciousness. This was the main revolution of the time. As proof, consider the exhibition that opened at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2006, titled ‘You Say You Want a Revolution.’ The working title of our exhibition is ‘Thaw: Cultural Revolution or The Great Utopia.”

Tregulova is legendary for her diplomatic skills, without which it’s difficult to imagine how she—a woman who has worked in the United States—could be appointed to serve as the director of a national art gallery, instead of being treated like a foreign agent.

She trained for more than a year at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, where, as curator, she implemented a project introducing the world to Russian art. In 2003, Tregulova organized an exhibition in Germany of formerly banned totalitarian Soviet art from the 1930s, titled “Dream Factory Communism.” Those were pictures that did their utmost to promote Stalin’s personality cult. The Soviet Union never once displayed these images after the Communist Party’s 20th Congress in 1956.

Tregulova also organized the “Russia” exhibition at the Cuggenheim Museum that covered the full range of Russian art— it broke the museum’s attendance records from 2005 through 2013.

Having already introduced the world to Russian art, today she is reintroducing Russians to their own artists. Even President Vladimir Putin has expressed an interest in the long-lost works of Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid, former Moscow region chief architect Valentin Rodionov, served as penultimate director to Tregulova. His task was simply to restore the building on Lavrushinsky Pereulok.

Next year, a showing of works by Edvard Munch will make its first appearance. Tregulova also intends to introduce little-known Russian artists to the Western world, and is already in discussions for an exhibition devoted exclusively to the works of Dya Repin. Soon after that, it will be Serov’s turn.

“When Diaghilev staged a huge exhibition of Russian artists as part of his Fall salon in 1906, [Mikhail] Vrubel was very much in vogue, and witnesses reported several times seeing Pablo Picasso in the galleries where Vrubel’s works were hung. Serov was nowhere near as popular, and that whole situation was a disturbing drama for him. Just imagine,” Tregulova says, “his works attracted very little attention.”

“When some people hear where I work,” Tregulova says, “they tell me they’ve never set foot in a museum in their lives. At the same time, a colleague told me a remarkable story about a tow-truck driver who came for his stolen vehicle, and upon learning that she worked at the Tretyakov, suggested that Alivazovsky was a Russian version of the English painter J.M.W. Turner.

Soon, the two began seriously discussing whether Turner and Alivazovsky had ever met. That’s art for the masses.”

Living Here

Itinerants — Russian art movement at the end of the 19th century, inspired by the politico-cultural milieu and organized traveling exhibitions and believed in enlightenment.

Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky and Zel’fa Tregulova view a painting by Ivan Alivazovsky.

September 22 – 28, 2016

Nov. 20

Ivan Alivazovsky exhibition closes at the Tretyakov.

260,000 views of the trailer for the Serov exhibition, in which ‘Girl With Peaches’ comes to life.

out of money and failed to deliver 25 billion rubles of promised funding. In October, when the museum was unable to pay its bills, the authorities shut off its electricity, heating and gas, and blocked bank accounts. Line. The art collections went unprotected for a full day as museum guards staged a strike over wage arrears. Officials considered closing the gallery temporarily and sending workers home on unpaid leave.

Tregulova must now rebuild the museum as the country endures another economic crisis. Her only real fear is this potential lack of funding.

While working on such exhibitions as ‘The Great Utopia’ in 1991-1992, I also had to find a way to supply fuel for the trucks carrying the exhibition’s loads. I don’t mind getting my hands dirty. And, of course, my time working at the Kremlin Museum (in 2002-2013) also helped. While I was deputy director for exhibitions at the Kremlin Museum, we had two incredible projects: the restoration of the Ivan the Great Bell Tower and the restoration of the Cathedral of the Annunciation. I carefully observed how that whole process moved along,” she says.

The Tretyakov Gallery plans not only to construct a new building and renovate the old one, but also to begin exhibiting foreign artwork in addition to Russian work. An exhibition of masterpieces from the Vatican is set to open soon.

Valentin Serov’s “Girl Whiteh aces” proved a hit with Russian audiences. Tregulova commissioned a film for the exhibition in which the girl ‘comes to life.’

It’s probably not a good sign that the sole electoral excitement in Russia’s parliamentary elections was guessing where the next hidden camera evidence of voter fraud was going to come from. Will the Caucasian win the 2016 Vote Rigging Tournament, or will the winner be in the Far East?

There is no shortage of election commentary — although most of it is an attempt to avoid concluding that it was the most depressing election in Russian history. If you’re struggling with the texts, here’s a handy little primer.

Оподкуп избирателя: buying votes.

Ортодоксальный: selling votes by buying, although sometimes it is more straight-forward: В (adjective) is associated with voting under the Revolutionary Russian system, which typically involved a two-step process. Voters first voted for a party or candidate in a district. How’d that go for the liberals? Not so good: Одномандатники, поддержанные либеральными партиями, не смогли получить ни одного места (Single-seat district candidates supported by the liberal parties didn’t win even one seat in the State Duma.)

Вброс: ballot-stuffing. One of the reasons for the poor showing might have been the ballot stuffing done by the women running the polling places, who were caught on camera cramming dozens of ballots into boxes with shouts of “Jeannett Ploskate, blank ballot.” (Come on, girls, give me a hand, for crissake.)

Круизное голосование: Poll cruising. This is when you bring a city with a sticker or even a app (arcaide) on your passport, voting many times under various names. Sometimes the players buy changing districts, and “buying is also called карусель (carousel).

Одномандатник: deputy for single-seat district.

Одинокомандатный: single-seat area.

The word’s worth

Elections: To Rig Or Not to Rig...

By Michele A. Berdy

MOSCOW—An election year in Russia is like a foreign agent.

The Tretyakov Gallery plans not only to construct a new building and renovate the old one, but also to begin exhibiting foreign artwork in addition to Russian work. An exhibition of masterpieces from the Vatican is set to open soon.

Valentin Serov’s “Girl Whitehares” proved a hit with Russian audiences. Tregulova commissioned a film for the exhibition in which the girl ‘comes to life.’

Boris: ballot-stuffing. One of the reasons for the poor showing might have been the ballot stuffing done by the women running the polling places, who were caught on camera cramming dozens of ballots into boxes with shouts of “Jeannett Ploskate, blank ballot.” (Come on, girls, give me a hand, for crissake.)

Оподкуп избирателя: buying votes.

Вброс: ballot-stuffing. One of the reasons for the poor showing might have been the ballot stuffing done by the women running the polling places, who were caught on camera cramming dozens of ballots into boxes with shouts of “Jeannett Ploskate, blank ballot.” (Come on, girls, give me a hand, for crissake.)

Одномандатный: single-seat area.

Одномандатник: deputy for single-seat district.

By Michele A. Berdy

MOSCOW—An election year in Russia is like a foreign agent.
"Those who follow the light have only ever ended in darkness."
Robert Desnos, French surrealist poet

Krivil Serebrennikov was the first to stage Marius von Mayenburg's darkly brilliant play "Martyr" outside of Germany. The Russian writer-director's cinematic adaptation of the play, "The Student," opens in Russia on Oct. 13, having already picked up the Francois Chalais Prize and a nomination in the Un Certain Regard Award at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival this year. The film examines the extremes of dogmatic adolescent behavior and sheds an uncompromising light on the role of religion in modern Russia.

A Religious Awakening
The story of a disillusioned high school student who channels his teenage revolt into religious fanaticism used the original cart from the Gogol Center's performance which debuted in 2014, with the major exception of Veniamin, the main character.

Played by relative newcomer Pyotr Skvortsov, Veniamin develops a deep, zealous belief with biblical scripture which begins a slow slide into outright zealotry. At first, Veniamin refuses to attend mixed swimming lessons, citing "religious feelings" as the reason. His mother — played brilliantly by Vilia Aug — shows little understanding of her son's motivations, blaming his behavior on drugs.

Veniamin wreaks havoc at one of the swimming lessons by jumping into the pool fully clothed and successfully calling for a ban on two-piece bathing suits for the girls.

His victory endows him and he goes on to challenge his teachers' sex education and evolutionary theory, provoking the school's liberal biology teacher Yelena Krasnova, played by Irmin-dable Viktoria Isakova.

Filming took place in Kaliningrad, with students from a local high school playing extras. This gives the film a somewhat documentary edge. "The most challenging thing for the actors was to mix with this group, to become a part of it and behave like real students without artistic embellishment. They spent time together, went out together, and became friends," said Serebrennikov.

Veniamin supports his views with a barrage of scriptural quotes, annotated on screen and meticulously referenced.

"He is not a zealot, but a guy who realizes that to achieve his objectives he needs to quote the Bible and that this will get people scared, because people in Russia are afraid of the Bible, afraid to say the wrong thing or something that might not align with official ideology," said Serebrennikov.

Two of his classmates fall under his spell: Grigory, who suffers from a debilitating limp, and one of the school's most popular girls, Lydia. The pair vie for Veniamin's attention, both emotional and sexual. Meanwhile, the uncritical endorsement of Veniamin's choke hold approach to scripture by the school administration demonstrates the conservative bias of the establishment.

Serebrennikov favored long, unbroken sequence shots in his filming. The resulting cinematography is intense and unrelenting, reflecting the grandiose themes Serebrennikov spotlights as the film spirals toward its denouement.

Wider Connotations
"The Student" is not the first time Serebrennikov has turned one of his theater performances into a film. Early in his career he filmed critically acclaimed "Izobrazhaya Zhertvu" (Playing the Victim) based on a play of the same name that he also directed.

The resulting cinematography is intense and unrelenting, reflecting the grandiose themes Serebrennikov spotlights as the film spirals toward its denouement.

Serebrennikov wanted "The Student" to be different from the original performance in more than the title. "The theater performance is actually more funny, there's more obviously comic scenes, while the film turned out more dramatic," said the director.

The story offers an obvious parallel in a country where the boundaries between state and church are increasingly blurred. Originally a realm of atheism, where religion was routinely described as "opium for the people," Russia has since become a country where "violating religious feelings" is a crime worthy of imprisonment.

When questioned about the context of the film in today's Russia at the premiere's press conference, Serebrennikov cited a recent case in Yekaterinburg, where a young man was arrested for video blogging himself playing Pokemon Go in a church.

"My Facebook feed was full of comments from Orthodox people who suggested that prison was the right place for him. He is an unpleasant type of guy — an instigator who is probably just plain stupid, but to send him to prison for five years? What about the Orthodox activists who put a pig's head at the fence? The Moscow Art Theater last year? This just goes to show what Orthodox Christians are capable of doing."
Classifieds

September 22 – 28, 2016

Advertising. To place an ad, please contact Viktoria Popova
Tel.: +7 (495) 232 4774, ext. 4259 v.popova@imedia.ru

FOR RENT

RENT VILLA in Sochi.
View details at www.sochnet.ru

SERVICED APARTMENTS

Adar, 11
Moscow
+7 (495) 951 5646
info@ruslanguage.ru

You never get a second chance to make first impression.

CB Barbers beauty salon is designed for foreign businessmen. In CB Barbers, there is a wide range of services: hairdressing, nail techniques, cosmetologist, massage therapists. All professionals speak English. Excellent transport access. Parking lot. VISA & MasterCard cards accepted. Our address: Vedroushkina, 10 +7 (495) 797-20-52 www.cbbarbers.ru

EDUCATION

LIKEN & DIZER MOSCOW
Gruzinsky per. 3-181
Tel.: +7 (495) 354 6491
www.likendizer.ru

Russian and English language training for the needs of business community.

MEDICAL CENTERS

US DENTAL CARE
Olimpiysky Prepekt. 16, 4, Moscow 123110
Tel.: +7 (495) 933 8486
www.usdentalcare.com

OPEN DAILY, WEEKENDS.


Health & Beauty

Antistress massage,
+7 (926) 138 1979
www.eksvity.ru

TAXI

+7 (495) 956 0800
angel-taxi@com/moscow-taxi
What does your Moscow sound like? The honk of angry car horns, the whir of the metro escalator, the scrape of spades clearing the snow in winter or the hit from the 1990s your taxi driver plays as you thread through the evening traffic? Mix the City, a global digital platform created by the British Council, has found a rather creative answer to the question.

The online project invites you to create your own musical cityscape by remixing recordings of contemporary Russian musicians playing in different locations around the capital. The performance samples are cut playing in different locations around the city 

Mix the City, The Sound of Moscow

Mix the City: The Sound of Moscow

By Ruth Moore  artreporter@media.ru, Twitter: @ruth_ski

“At the heart of the project is the idea of a resource with which you can not only be creative, but also open yourself up to other cultures,” says Emmanuel Witness, the creator of Mix the City, which originally launched in Tel Aviv before expanding to the Ballants, Istanbul, Mannheim and now Moscow.

There are some big names on board. The 2 Bears, a British musical duo comprised of Joe Goddard (of electronic band Hot Chip) and Raf Rundell, are curating the Moscow platform. Performing artists include Naadia—a indie-pop band fronted by Nadia Gritskovich —gusli player Olga Glazova, opera singer Mikhail Petrenko and beat maker RAVE Bears.

Performing artists include Naadia—a indie-pop band fronted by Nadia Gritskovich —gusli player Olga Glazova, opera singer Mikhail Petrenko and beat maker RAVE Bears. The eclectic mix of modern music styles with traditional Russian folk instruments and classical musicians is entirely deliberate.

“I think a really interesting way of getting an idea of how a city sounds. All the way up and down: from Pixieiro who’s working on a laptop and an abletton controller to Yuri Bashmet playing a Stradivarius viola,” says Raf Rundell.

Each of the musicians created their sample in a different landmark: some historical, others simply culturally significant. Mikhail Petrenko’s deep bass voice reverberates off the walls of Mayakovskiy metro station while Playtronica perform on the steps of VDNKh. From Soviet monuments to Orthodox churches and hip party-spots, the venues offer an interesting study of Moscow’s urban environment.

Peter Theremin, a thereminist, composer and the great-grandson of Leon Theremin, the creator of the eponymous electronic musical instrument, used the acoustics of the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art. “This wonderful project enables you to recreate the diverse characteristics of Moscow’s musical landscape,” says Theremin.

The musician, whose unusual instrument might be unfamiliar to some audiences, also saw the educational benefits of the program. “I believe that the theremin is perhaps the most original Russian instrument. And it is very interactive, responsive and modern despite the fact it was created nearly 100 years ago. Mix the City is a multifaceted platform and of course the educational element is very important.”

It be based on the hypnotic sounds of Naadia or the new-folk elements of Synecdoche. Montaou, once users have created their mix, they can share it with friends via social media or the neo-folk elements of Synecdoche. Montaou, once users have created their mix, they can share it with friends.

The Moscow Council in Russia.

To create your mix, visit mixthecity.com

I live here, and the diversity of the musicians, and the locations in which we recorded them, captures something of the soul of Moscow,” says Michael Bird, director of the British Council in Russia.

Why not try it for yourself? Create your own mix at mixthecity.com