

# The Moscow Times

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## LOOKING FORWARD

### Netflix and Chill

The international streaming service has finally arrived in Russia but some glitches remain → **Page 4**

## RUSSIAN TALES

### Tireless Team 29

How a team of lawyers and journalists is tackling cases of high treason → **Pages 6, 11**

## FOREIGNERS' AFFAIRS

### Promoting Empathy

Spreading tolerance and understanding of the disabled in Russia → **Pages 12, 13**

# Running on Empty

The worst-case scenario for the Russian economy is just beginning as oil prices continue to plummet → **Pages 2, 3**

18+





"Our task now is to bring the budget in line with new realities. If we don't do that, we will see a repeat of what happened in 1998-99." **Anton Siluanov**

The Moscow Times  
No. 5737

−0.7%

World Bank's 2016 growth forecast for Russia

\$2.3 trillion

Value wiped off global stock exchanges in the first week of 2016.



"A rapid China devaluation scenario could lead to another round of commodity weakness and send oil into the \$20s." **Morgan Stanley**

# A Not So Happy Chinese New Year

By **Peter Hobson** p.hobson@imedia.ru

As Muscovites enjoyed the long vacation, chaos in the Chinese markets were a blow to Russia's hopes for economic recovery.

New fears over China's economy and sharp falls in the price of oil have worsened the outlook for Russia as it tries to emerge from recession.

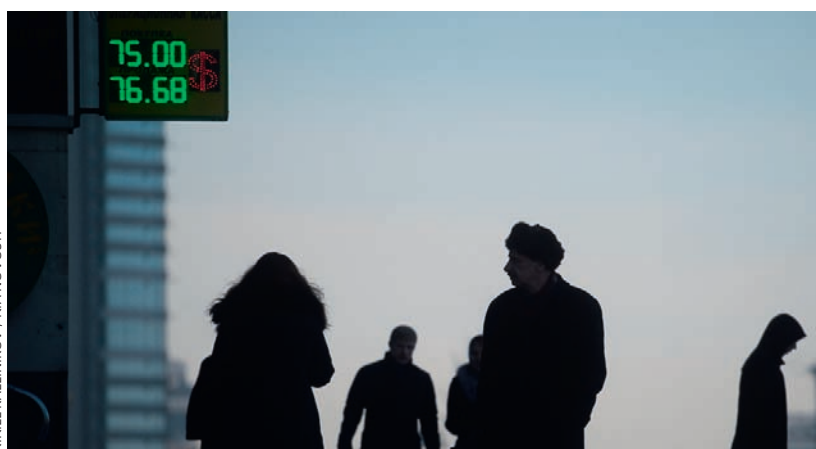
The price of crude, the linchpin of Russia's economy, fell almost 20 percent in the first two weeks of January to just above \$30 per barrel after Chinese stock indexes tumbled more than 10 percent in the first days of the year.

While the oil price falls threatened to derail hopes for an economic recovery in Russia, the turmoil on the stock markets deepened fears that Chinese economic growth, which has powered commodity prices and the global economy, could decline faster than expected. This may have serious consequences for Moscow — keeping the price of commodities lower for longer and weakening a strategic trade partner.

"For Russia, this is very unpleasant news," said Yevgeny Nadorshin, chief economist at AFK Sistema, a major Russian conglomerate.

## Worst Case

As the oil price plunged, Russia's worst case scenario appeared to be coming true. The ruble followed the oil price downward, weaken-



The ruble to U.S. dollar exchange rate looms over pedestrians on Jan. 11, 2016 with grey skies overhead.

ing 4 percent in the first two weeks of January to around 76.5 against the U.S. dollar — near its lowest since the crisis of 1998 and less than half its value two years ago.

Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said at the Gaidar Forum in Moscow that his budget, which receives around half its revenues from the energy industry, would balance only at \$82 per barrel, according to the Reuters news

agency. Predicting an average oil price of \$40 for the year, he said the budget must adapt to new realities or Russia would see a repeat of the disastrous financial crisis of 1998-99.

He also said government departments were drawing up 10 percent spending cuts in non-protected areas.

Already in its longest recession since the

*Continued on Page 3 →*

## UNCOMMON SENSE

# Bogged Down in the Middle East, Russia Loses Honest Broker Image

By **Vladimir Frolov**  
Political analyst



Saudi Arabia cut off diplomatic and trade ties with Iran in retaliation for the provocative ransacking of the Saudi Embassy in Tehran by what appeared to be a government-directed mob. The escalation follows the execution by Saudi Arabia on Jan. 2 of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, a prominent Shia cleric and a Saudi national, who was sentenced to death last year for leading peaceful protests among the Shia in the Saudi Eastern Province, the Kingdom's main oil-producing region.

This development threatens to unleash the most serious Saudi-Iran confrontation in the already destabilized Middle East, while inflaming the sectarian tensions between the region's Sunni and Shia to extreme levels of violence. Domestic considerations in both countries contributed to the escalation — a show of force by an insecure leadership in Riyadh to stamp out signs of domestic unrest; a coming parliamentary election in Iran in February where the hardliners are determined to upstage moderates led by President Hassan Rouhani. But it's the spiraling rivalry for regional dominance between the two powers in the Gulf that fuels the conflict.

While a direct military confrontation between Saudi Arabia and Iran appears unlikely, both having too much to lose from the war, and Iran, emerging from its international isolation, would be loath to scuttle this process, it is on the regional battlefields of Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, where Tehran and Riyadh are waging bloody wars by proxy, that the impact of the latest escalation will be felt. The oil market will be another battlefield with Russia as collateral damage.

Russia may not seem to be part of this confrontation, but in reality it is now pretty much ensnared in it. Riyadh's latest escalatory moves are as much a signal to Moscow as they are to Tehran. And the message is clear — stay neutral or stay out of the region. Unfortunately, Russia has not been neutral in the great Sunni-Shia divide.

By plunging into the civil war in Syria, Moscow has allowed itself to be entangled in the Shia alliance with Iran, Assad's regime in Syria, Lebanon's Hezbollah, the sectarian Shia government in Iraq and armed Shia militias on Iran's payroll. Russia, whose Muslim population is predominantly Sunni, now finds itself bombing Sunni Arabs and Turks in Syria while protecting foreign Shia militias who are no less extremist than the Sunni jihadists Russia is fighting.

This is not a good position to be in, given that the vast majority of Muslims in the Middle East are Sunni. That the Kremlin argues that it does not distinguish between Sunni and Shia in its "war on terror" in Syria speaks volumes about the quality of its decision-making.

Russia's strongest asset in the Middle East in the post-Soviet period has been its impartiality and its ability to stay on good terms with almost all players, while avoiding becoming beholden to their narrow agendas. This accorded Russia the enviable status of an honest broker with all the freedom of maneuver it wanted, while the United States had boxed itself into a rigid anti-Iran alliance with Saudi Arabia and Israel.

That changed in 2015. U.S. President Barack Obama's reluc-

tance to do "stupid sh..t" has now turned the United States into a free agent in the Middle East, while Russia is joined at the hip with Iran and Assad in a sectarian Shia alliance. While the United States is playing its own game in the Middle East to reduce its dependence and footprint, Russia is increasingly being played by others with no regard to Russia's national interests. It now owns Assad's bloody mess in Syria and is a target for Sunni jihadists to an extent that it was not a year ago.

The political talks between Assad's government and the Syrian opposition due to start in two weeks in Geneva could be the first casualty of the Saudi-Iranian confrontation. The Saudis are furious with the way Russia and Iran managed to steer the Vienna talks into broader international acceptance of Assad's prolonged stay in the transition process. They are intent on derailing Moscow's efforts to shape its outcome in Assad's favor by blocking the participation of armed Islamist groups like Ahrar al-Sham and Jaysh al-Islam whose leader Zahran Alloush, a Saudi ally, was killed in an air strike on Dec. 25.

Riyadh will be watching whether Moscow will deliver Assad's acceptance of the transition process in line with the Geneva Communiqué of 2013 with a complete transfer of power to the transitional authority. The Saudis need a settlement that would limit Iran's influence in Syria and give Syrian Sunnis their due share of power. Barring such an outcome — which Russian is unlikely to deliver — the Geneva talks will be blocked and Saudi Arabia and Turkey will proceed to bleed Russia and Iran in an endless proxy war in Syria. **TMT**

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# Looking Back

January 14 – 20, 2016

3



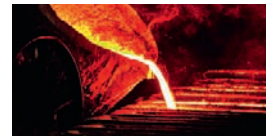
“When oil prices are high, it is very difficult for us to resist spending oil revenues to cover current expenses.” **Vladimir Putin**

## \$50

Average oil price written into 2016 Russian budget

## 80 Rubles

per U.S. dollar is the likely exchange rate if oil falls to \$25, says German Gref.



“Conditions remain in place for a protracted period of low commodity prices in coming years.” **World Bank**

← Continued from Page 2

1990s after shrinking an estimated 3.7 percent last year, the economy could contract by another 2-3 percent in 2016 if oil prices average \$35 per barrel, the Central Bank said in December, while the budget deficit would expand and currency reserves depleted.

A survey by state pollster VTsIOM published in early January found that more than half of Russians — 52 percent — thought the “hardest times” for the country were yet to come.

## Lower for Longer

Stock market volatility in China suggests that they could be right. China's economy has been the main driver of global demand for commodities, and a slowing of Chinese growth would exacerbate the price slump.

A World Bank report in early January said a one-percent fall in China's growth rate would reduce the value of commodities by around 6 percent over two years, and warned of a “protracted period of low commodity prices in coming years.”

Oversupply has already sharply lowered the cost of oil, gas and metals, of which Russia is also a major producer. Energy prices fell by 41 percent last year and industrial metals by 24 percent, according to the S&P Goldman Sachs Commodity Index.

Another threat to prices is if China moves to stimulate its economy. Morgan Stanley said in a January report that a rapid devaluation of the Chinese currency designed to boost its exports “could send oil into the \$20s [per barrel]” — its lowest in 15 years.

On top of that, a strengthening U.S. dollar is pushing down

prices by making it more expensive for those using other currencies to buy dollar-traded commodities.

The movement of these two currencies is mutually reinforcing, Morgan Stanley said — a weaker Chinese economy encourages flight to the dollar, while a stronger dollar increases the temptation for Chinese policymakers to devalue.

## Weathering the Storm

President Vladimir Putin in an interview with Germany's Bild newspaper in early January tried to cast commodities' low prices as a blessing in disguise, saying that when oil prices were high it was “very difficult for us to resist spending oil revenues to cover current expenses,” and the new reality would be an incentive to rebalance the economy.

But a lack of available investment capital has stifled diversification. And amid a slump in incomes and consumer spending, Russia's commodities sector is one of the few major industries to be faring relatively well, analysts said.

The weak ruble has allowed energy, metals and mining companies, which earn export revenues in dollars, to maintain incomes in ruble terms. Meanwhile, Russian producers have become much more competitive on global markets thanks to huge falls in the cost of labor that have lowered production costs.

The cost of labor in Russia has fallen to rival that of China, said Valery Mironov, deputy director of the Center of Development at the Higher School of Economics, a Moscow university.

However, new investment in production has been limited by sanctions and the recession at home. And if prices remain low

for an extended period of time, even Russian companies will be forced to retrench, analysts said.

## Eastern Promises

In the longer term, worries over Chinese growth also strike Russian interests in a deeper way, knocking confidence in China as a financial ally for Moscow.

Following a breakdown in relations with the West following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 — and more recently with Turkey over the shooting down of a Russian warplane on the Turkish-Syrian border — Moscow has looked to build relations with dynamic emerging markets, particularly with China.

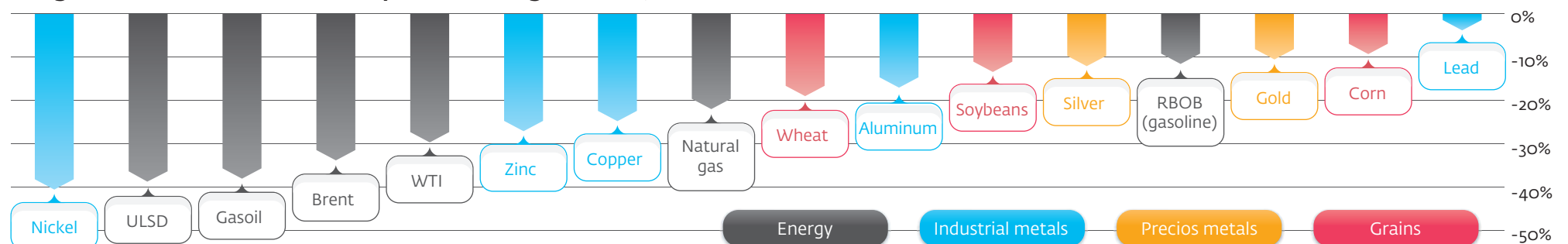
Hopes of a flood of Chinese capital into Russia failed to materialize following the Ukraine crisis, but the longer-term aim of hitching Russia to east-Asian growth remained.

That decision now looks increasingly flawed, said Neil Shearing, chief emerging markets economist at Capital Economics. Russia's “pivot” to the east and hope that developing nations would become the engine of global growth have been undermined by recent events, he said.

A full-blown crisis is unlikely thanks to China's massive foreign exchange reserves. But increasing fears of lower Chinese growth are coming as the United States begins to lift interest rates, fueling a massive reallocation of capital from emerging markets to developed ones and sapping strength from emerging economies, many of which are heavily indebted.

This is not proceeding as Russia planned. “All bets were on China,” said Sistema's Nadorshin. **TMT**

## Long-Term Decline: Commodity Price Changes From Jan. 2 to Dec. 31, 2015



These commodities are included in the S&P GSCI Energy, Grains, Industrial Metals, and Precious Metals indexes. All price changes reflect changes in front month futures contract price. ULSD is ultra-low sulfur diesel, WTI is West Texas Intermediate oil, RBOB is reformulated gasoline blendstock for oxygenate blending.

Source: Bloomberg L.P.



# Event Schedule 2016

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advertising 16+

## February

Date	Title	Participation Cost
5	Personal Assistant Day	30,000 rubles
11	Personal data — new realities	30,000 rubles
18	Legal issues in HR	30,000 rubles
19	Corporate culture: new horizons in communications and education	30,000 rubles
26	Forum for purchasing directors	30,000 rubles

## March

Date	Title	Participation Cost
16	Russian market of CRE (MIPIM Cannes)	N/A
17	The future of the telecommunications industry in Russia	30,000 rubles
22	Effective management of medical institutions	30,000 rubles
24	GR school	30,000 rubles
30	Civil Code 2016	30,000 rubles

## April

Date	Title	Participation Cost
14	Successful recruiter school	15,000 rubles
21	Customs and business	30,000 rubles
22	Collection of distressed debt of organizations	30,000 rubles
27	Top 10 HR trends - 2016	30,000 rubles





*"Let's make our own Netflix."*  
**Sergei Spiridonov**, head of film  
distribution company "Volga," in an  
interview with Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

**74M**

The number of Netflix  
subscribers

**More than 84M**

The number of Internet  
users in Russia, the largest  
Internet market in Europe



*"The Russian youth can't live  
without House of Cards."*  
**Susanna Alperina**, TV critic

# Look Out for Netflix

By **Eva Hartog** e.hartog@imedia.ru

Netflix's move into Russia, along with 129 other countries at the start of the year, was heralded by its CEO as the "birth of a global TV network."

China, the world's most populous country, might have slipped through its fingers, but with Russia Netflix pocketed the largest country by landmass and the promise of tapping into a booming online market.

Netflix's formula of offering subscribers online access to box office hit films and series has already taken the United States and much of Europe by storm, where it has more than 70 million users. Its core strategy is simple: First, offer people content they want to watch. Then, make them pay to watch it online.

Netflix's prospects in Russia are promising: The country has a culture of television watching and boasts one of the fastest growing Internet audiences in the world.

## Subscriber Disappointment

The announcement of the Russia launch was widely met with enthusiasm both among locals and foreigners living in Russia, with one American expat on Twitter comparing it to "eating flatbread pizza after fasting for a week."

But the euphoria was short-lived and comments on forums and Russian social media websites quickly turned sour. As in many other countries, the interface of the Russian Netflix website — its buttons, directory and messages — are all in English. The service is "uncomfortable" for Russians, said television critic and Rossiiskaya Gazeta journalist Susanna Alperina.

More importantly, many of the series available do not offer Russian-language subtitles or dubbing. Even for tech-savvy youth, the language barrier is a major obstacle likely to turn away many of Russia's 84 million Internet users.

Netflix's practice of having separate licensing agreements in every country also means it offers much less content on the Russian website than on its U.S. counterpart. Whereas the U.S. version has roughly 5,700 movies and television series, Rus-

sian Netflix only offers around 720, the Unofficial Netflix Online Global Search website shows.

And then there's the price tag. A monthly Netflix subscription will cost Russians at least 8 euros, or 660 rubles — more than the average Internet bill. It is pricier than Netflix's main Russian rival, ivi.ru, which costs 399 rubles a month and offers free content.

With the ruble devaluation and more economic turmoil expected this year, the cost could discourage subscribers.

In fact, the only Russia-specific adaptation Netflix appears to have made is to block access to users in Crimea — the peninsula annexed by Russia in March 2014 — in compliance with U.S. regulations restricting American business there.

Netflix is selling Russians less content, much of it in a language they don't speak and at a prohibitive price. Hardly a great buy, according to many disappointed Russian fans. "No one wants Netflix the way it is now," programmer Dmitry Alexeyev, 25, said.

## One Size Fits All?

Part of the reason is structural. Having recently added 130 countries — including Russia — to its already existing global network of 60 countries, Netflix's global strategy is to offer users across the world the same content, rather than narrowly catering to national specificities.

But it is too early for Netflix's Russian rivals to breathe a sigh of relief, media experts said. Russian users report that since Netflix's launch, more films and series have been equipped with Russian-language subtitles. And in comments to Sputnik news agency, Netflix said it could add Russian language support "over time."

Netflix also plans to increase its in-house content, such as the hit series House of Cards, which it can globally promote on its own platform, including in Russia. That spells trouble for

other companies on Russia's fledgling video streaming market.

There were about 20 players on Russia's on-demand streaming market, which was worth 2.6 billion rubles (\$34 million) in 2014. Half of the market share was held by websites ivi.ru, with 28 percent, and Okko, with 22 percent, according to TMT Consulting data. Players Tvigle and Megogo had a 9 percent market share.

Much of their success has come on the back of Russian-language versions of foreign box-office hits, including House of Cards — which, incidentally, features a character based on Russian President Vladimir Putin.

But Netflix could also provide competitors with an incentive to innovate. Inspired by Netflix's business model, ivi.ru has also announced plans to produce its own in-house content.

The arrival of Netflix will most likely consolidate Russia's legal streaming market into only a handful of strong players, the head of film distribution "Volga," Sergei Spiridonov, told the Rossiiskaya Gazeta newspaper.

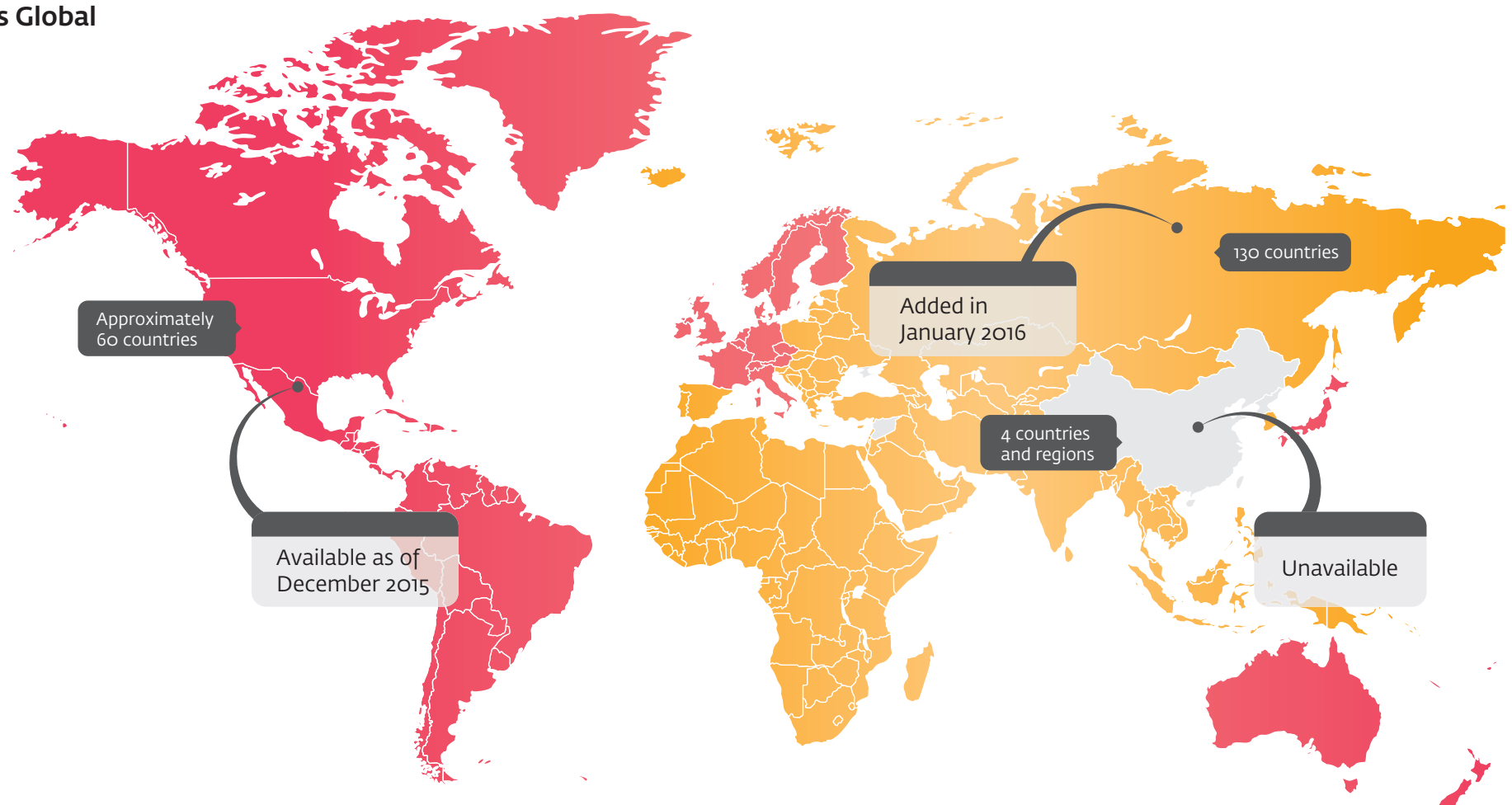
But beating their U.S. frontrunner to the game will prove a tough challenge for Russian companies, which are relatively inexperienced, Alperina said. "They are still probing the future," she said. "In the United States, Netflix broke the existing model [of watching television]. There is a possibility the same will happen in Russia," she said.

By 2020, the streaming market is expected to grow to 9.5 billion rubles (\$125 million), TMT Consulting said, helped by an expected crackdown on illegal torrent websites and video sharing on social media — both hugely popular in Russia.

Netflix does not offer national breakdowns of targets, but as Netflix increases its trendy in-house content, it could drag that growing audience into its net, especially young Russians, who prefer U.S. series over Russian content, Alperina said.

"The older generation of Russians doesn't care whether House of Cards is on. The youth can't live without it," she said. **TMT**

## Netflix Goes Global





*“It’s useless to invest in the training of IT specialists in Russia, as they will worship Western companies.”* Internet ombudsman **Dmitry Marinichev**

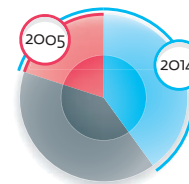


**49%**

of Russians think the Internet should be censored

**58%**

of Russians support the complete shutdown of the Internet in emergencies



The percentage of Internet users among Russian nationals grew from less than 20% in 2005 to more than 60% in 2014, according to research released by Yandex in April 2015.



# RuNet 2016: Pressure Shifts From Companies to Citizens

By **Andrei Soldatov** [newsreporter@imedia.ru](mailto:newsreporter@imedia.ru) | Illustration by **Ilya Kutoboy**

The stakes are getting higher in the battle between the state and the Internet giants.

As space beyond governmental control, the Internet has long been a thorn in the Kremlin’s side. The search for a solution began in 2012. Various tricks have been tried, from the introduction of internet filters and the updating of a national system of online surveillance known as SORM to the direct intimidation of Internet giants both domestic and international.

By 2014 the Kremlin had come up with something akin to a strategy.

Accustomed to dealing with a defined hierarchy and organizations that can be coerced by targeting bosses, the Kremlin has been inclined to pressure companies rather than users. Every pretext has been used to lure Internet giants into dialogue with the authorities. Top-level officials of companies like Yandex and Google have rushed to the Kremlin to talk behind closed doors about the repressive Internet legislation, constantly updated by the State Duma.

New legislation that governmental authorities and international content companies must grapple with in the coming year is Russia’s version of “Right to be forgotten,” that came into effect on Jan. 1. It fails to provide the crucial safeguards for the protection of right to freedom of expression, according to the legal analysis of Article 19, a British human rights organization with a focus on the defense and promotion of freedom of expression.

A working group within the administration of the president, regular gatherings in the Communications Ministry and meetings within state media watchdog Roskomnadzor were convened to exert the Kremlin’s will on Internet companies.

Meanwhile, the Internet industry’s public lobbying institutions were taken over. The Regional Public Center of Internet Technologies (ROTsIT), Russia’s oldest Internet civic body founded in 1996, being the most notorious example when Leonid Levin, a Duma official, was elected chairman of its board in December 2014.

A new organization, Institut Razvitiya Interneta (the Institute of the development of the Internet, or IRI), was founded and presented as a civic research organization to lobby on behalf of Internet businesses. In fact it was another front organization for the Kremlin.

Plenty of effort was expended in 2015 to co-opt reputed public figures, businessmen and activists into the IRI. Elaborate online elections to the institute’s council of experts were arranged, but the Institute’s leadership was unshakably in the hands of

two people — Kirill Varlamov, a former Uralmash engineer, Putin’s representative during the 2012 presidential elections and a top-level official of the All-Russia People’s Front, and German Klimenko, an Internet entrepreneur best known as an owner of Internet statistics service LiveInternet.ru.

Putin made the final move on Dec. 22 when he invited Klimenko to join his administration as adviser on Internet development. Upon accepting the position, he threatened messenger services: “Telegram will either cooperate with the authorities, or will be shut down,” Klimenko said in an interview for Dozhd television. Telegram remains one of the few messenger services that refuses to comply with the government’s data localization law.

## Data Servers on Russian Soil

The law has been employed by the authorities since 2014 to force international Internet companies to move their servers within Russia’s borders — under the pretext of protecting users’ data.

Their motives were, in fact, twofold — they hoped to establish direct and private lines of communication between the Kremlin and the Internet giants’ headquarters to better exert their influence, and they wished to provide the Russian secret services with access to the companies’ data. Once servers landed on Russian soil, they will be easily connected to SORM (System of Operative-Research Measures), one of the most ambitious and intrusive surveillance programs in the world that provides security agents with direct and unrestricted access to all communications data.

This strategy of pressuring companies rather than users appeared effective until it became clear in January that some Internet companies — such as Facebook, a main target — are undermining governmental authority through inaction.

This is the challenge facing the government authorities in the coming year. They must either acquiesce to the status quo or progress to the next stage — such as banning Facebook in Russia.

The authorities appear resolute. Klimenko said in a radio interview with RSN on Jan. 12 that all foreign social networks must cooperate with Russia’s law enforcement authorities.

## The Stalemate Breaks

With such entrenched stances, the confrontation will inevitably escalate, leading to the government engaging directly with Internet users.

It already began in November 2015 when the government blocked Rutracker.org, the world’s largest Russian-language torrents website. Consequently, Russia now ranks second in the number users of the Tor network, which allows both the bypassing of blocks and anonymous communication.

Authorities must also face the challenge of regulating Internet companies that lack a controllable infrastructure. With no way to pressure company headquarters, Roskomnadzor will be forced to obtain technological means of blocking messenger services for users.

However, all recent attempts to provide a technological solution to enact Internet censorship have been ineffective. The Interior Ministry’s contract to crack Tor was canceled, and the blocking of websites can be easily bypassed. Alexander Zharov, the cheerful chief of Roskomnadzor, has been soothing the Kremlin for years with claims that only handful of users know how or care to use such circumvention tools.

This belief will be tested in 2016, as the ban of torrents has already demonstrated.

And that paints only part of the picture. While the Kremlin busied itself dictating to Internet companies, users had begun to organize and push back.

A petition calling on global platforms to refrain from handing over their data to Russia was launched on the change.org website in December, gathering more than 40,000 signatures. In the same month 7,000 users — mobilized by Roskomsvoboda, an organization that advocates free Internet in Russia — filed a lawsuit against the blocking of Rutracker.org.

Leonid Volkov, a chief lieutenant of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, just launched A Society for the Protection of the Internet, an NGO that aims to “protect the Internet from attacks of the Russian authorities.”

Whatever the Russian authorities chose to do with international social networks and messenger services, it is abundantly clear that RuNet users will not give up Facebook and Twitter in 2016 — no governmental blocking will stop them using the services they trust. **TMT**

*Andrei Soldatov is a co-author, with Irina Borogan, of The Red Web: The Struggle Between Russia’s Digital Dictators and the New Online Revolutionaries (PublicAffairs, New York 2015).*





In 2012 Russian President **Vladimir Putin** signed a decree making information about military losses occurring during special operations during peacetime a state secret.

20

treason cases reported in 2015 by the Russian media.

14 years

Prison term given to Gennady Kravtsov for sending his resume abroad.



In 2012 the law defining treason was amended — financial, technological or other help to foreign countries or companies endangering Russian security was added to it.



DARYA KORYAGINA

The core of Team 29 consists of lawyers and journalists. From left to right: Nikolai Ovchinikov, Darya Sukhikh, Ivan Pavlov, Asya Suvorova, Daryana Gryaznova, Alexander Tsygankov, Olga Dmitriyevskaya, Yevgeny Smirnov, Nikita Anfyorov.

# Know What to Do If They've Come for You

By **Daria Litvinova** [d.litvinova@imedia.ru](mailto:d.litvinova@imedia.ru)

A team of St. Petersburg lawyers and journalists take on high treason cases and continue the crusade against the abuse of freedom of information in Russia

“Every year the FSB, Russia’s Federal Security Service, opens more and more cases of high treason. The processing of these cases is hidden from public view and fraught with arbitrariness. Lawyers of ‘Team 29’ will tell you what to do if the security services take an interest in you,” reads the web page titled “If They’ve Come for You.”

The preamble and advice that follows was posted in November and immediately garnered broad attention, quickly receiving more than 100,000 unique hits.

The instructions were written by Team 29 — an informal association of St. Petersburg-based lawyers and journalists devoted to protecting freedom of information in Russia. They take their name from Article 29 of the country’s constitution, which specifies citizens’ rights to information.

Continuing an 11-year history of crusading for such rights, the group has added the “If They’ve Come for You” project to its roster and found itself fighting on one of the most controversial and murky battlefronts of Russian law — defending people accused of high treason — as more and more such cases emerge.

With Russia’s international isolation deepening over the Ukraine crisis, the country’s authorities have declared information a new type of weapon — and have begun actively persecuting those who, in the state’s opinion, use it to help foreign countries harm Russia.

According to Supreme Court data, the number of high treason cases tripled in 2014: 15 people were convicted on this charge, compared to four in 2013 and six in 2012. During the first six months of 2015, Supreme Court statistics show only three convictions but Russian media outlets report otherwise.

“Last year the media have reported there were at least 20 cases,” Ivan Pavlov, “captain” of Team 29 and a lawyer specializing in treason and espionage cases, told The Moscow Times.

In 2015 Team 29 worked on a handful of notorious cases. Pavlov and his colleagues defended Svetlana Davydova, the mother of seven who was arrested on treason charges for calling the Ukrainian Embassy and reporting that she believed Russian

armed forces were being deployed to Ukraine. Another client was Gennady Kravtsov, a former military radio engineer charged with treason for sending a job application letter to a Swedish defense company.

Team 29 also challenged in the Supreme Court a decree signed by President Vladimir Putin that declared peacetime military casualties to be a state secret. They lost two out of three of these battles — charges against Davydova were dropped a month after Pavlov took on the case — but remain optimistic and plan to continue their work despite the odds.

“The work that we do may seem hopeless on the surface,” said Pavlov, 44. “Sometimes the way our courts function these days can lead to professional depression, but we don’t have any other courts — so we need to work in the given conditions. Pessimism won’t help,” he said.

## From Foreign Agents to Defending Traitors

Team 29 consists of lawyers, journalists and activists who used to work at the Free Information Foundation, an NGO devoted to freedom of information issues. After the foundation was declared a foreign agent, it shut down in 2014, but its staff decided it was too early to throw in the towel.

The NGO was created in 2004 and never concealed that it was receiving grants from abroad, said Team 29 lawyer Yevgeny Smirnov. After a series of inspections, court hearings and reviews by the Prosecutor’s Office, it landed on the foreign agent list.

“We were not ready to continue our work under this label, so we decided to suspend the foundation’s activity and create an informal association,” Smirnov said.

“We realized that we would be consumed by fighting against the foreign agent label — constant inspections and fines — and would have to abandon our main cause,” Pavlov said.

Lawyers from the foundation began working as Team 29 in January 2015. Since they are not a formal organization, they believe they can avoid sanctions or crackdowns. “As an informal group of activists who are concerned by the issues our work is

devoted to and know how to act upon them, we are invulnerable,” Pavlov added.

The core of the team consists of nine lawyers and journalists who work together on a number of projects related to different aspects of information freedom in Russia. For most of them it is a full-time job, with an office and donors to fund their work, supplementing legal fees. Lawyers take cases from all over Russia — including those that involve high treason charges.

## Treason Turns Trendy

The surge of treason cases is related to the “war climate” in the country, Pavlov said. “The war mentality drives the authorities to look for and fight enemies inside the country. Now they like to label them — organizations get the ‘foreign agent’ label, and individuals get the ‘high treason’ label,” he said.

A request by The Moscow Times to the FSB for comment on the rapid growth of treason cases went unanswered by the time this article went to press.

Treason charges are always connected to information issues, Pavlov said. The mere act of treason, as it is defined in the law, consists of revealing information to foreign countries, and that is why treason cases fit perfectly into Team 29’s self-declared mandate. Yet defending a person accused of treason is becoming harder, if not impossible, because when it comes to politically motivated cases that are tried behind closed doors, courts do not play fair, Pavlov said.

During Kravtsov’s trial, the defense made 30 motions, all of which were denied. “They didn’t allow us to question experts who concluded that Kravtsov revealed classified information [by sending his resume to Sweden] — and that was the crucial point of the charge! We basically weren’t allowed to argue our case,” he said.

Political motives behind treason charges are plainly visible, Smirnov said. “The nature of these cases changes depending on the geopolitical situation. At first people connected with Ukraine

*Continued on Page 11 →*



# Out & About



January 14 – 20, 2016

7

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



B.I.G.G.I.E.



The menu at B.I.G.G.I.E. features the finest Russian ingredients and diners can enjoy traditional Russian dishes prepared in a new and exciting way.

## B.I.G.G.I.E. Is Big on Flavor

By **Maria Naum** [artsreporter@imedia.ru](mailto:artsreporter@imedia.ru)

*Russian cuisine with an avant-garde sense of style*

In place of the Beefbar Junior restaurant in the Hotel Ukraina, Restaurant Syndicate has opened a new Russian restaurant called B.I.G.G.I.E. Here Chef Ilya Blagoveshchensky — whose nickname is apparently Biggie — presents a vision of contemporary Russian cuisine that is much more daring than he showed diners in his native Rostov-on-Don. The raw materials are Russian, and the chef loves and knows how to work with them. He gets his beef and duck from his native Rostov region along with mullet and perch; halibut and salmon come from Murmansk, pike perch comes from the Black Sea; and

succulent chicken, seasonal root vegetables, fragrant Antonovka apples and farm-fresh cream are sourced outside Moscow.

Blagoveshchensky uses these fresh local products with his chef's arsenal of modern technology to transform regional and traditional dishes into something delicate and light, with flavors both familiar and striking. This is his special version of the new Russian cuisine, which combines the natural taste of foods, unusual cooking techniques and the aesthetics of presentation.

And it must be said that the presentation is spectacular. Most of the dishes served so dra-

matically that you begin to suspect that Blagoveshchensky didn't just attend culinary school but has a degree in art as well. For example, barley is served in a round of celeriac on a bed of hay. The hay is set alight, which proves a bit messy while leaving a light smoky fragrance.

Must-try: terrine of duck with apple and crispy rolls; sea conch with wild mushrooms and cauliflower prepared three ways; pate of beef with sea buckthorn glaze, duck heart pate with a black current glaze, and liver pate served in a sauce of creamy tonka beans. Another taste sensation is a dish of apples pickled under high

pressure, with the marinade then sweetened with sugar syrup and flavored with chili, ginger, cinnamon and anise. This unique way of preparation leaves the apples with a crispy texture and spicy pickled flavor.

The only shortcoming of this innovative restaurant is the exceedingly high cost of a meal. But everyone deserves to splurge occasionally and experience exquisite Russian cuisine. Nothing else like it exists in Moscow. **TMT**

**+7 (495) 229 8337**

[facebook.com/biggiemoscow](https://facebook.com/biggiemoscow)

2/1 Kutuzovskiy Prospekt. Metro Kievskaya

### NEWS & OPENINGS



MOVIDA

#### Movida

##### **Spanish food to die for**

Movida has just opened, but it is surely already one of the best restaurants in the city. Located in a loft space with subdued lighting and comfortable seating, its waiters are efficient and helpful. The menu offers a nice variety of tapas, adding an experimental touch to familiar appetizers, main dishes and desserts. The must-tries here are beef cheeks with lentils, tangerine lemonade with rosemary and mind-blowing desserts.

**+7 (926) 595 3617**

[facebook.com/movidamoscow](https://facebook.com/movidamoscow)

24 Tverskoiy Bulvar. Metro Pushkinskaya



VETKA

#### Vetka

##### **Trendy, understated cider bar**

This hipster hangout is the ideal spot to kick back with friends. Tucked away in southeast Moscow, Vetka offers both local and imported ciders. Let the tattooed barman pick your poison, then relax. The interior is deliberately understated. Think: Bare walls and industrial chic seating. The bar also offers a selection of beers and a small menu of tasty bar snacks.

**+7 (495) 722 1401**

[facebook.com/vetkabar](https://facebook.com/vetkabar)

44 Ulitsa Alexandra Solzhenitsyna, Bldg. 10. Metro Ploshchad Ilich



PIT BREAD

#### Pit Bread

##### **Fabulous fresh street food**

Pit Bread — not Pita Bread, but Pit Bread, a play on the name Brad Pitt — may have a funny name, but it is terrific new café serving Mediterranean salads and delicious steaks in a cozy space just south of the Moscow River. Chalk-white brick walls with hints of green are the dominant colors. Everything is fresh and of the highest quality, from homemade hummus to takeaway coffee — and those in-house made pies!

**+7 (925) 463 7747**

[facebook.com/Pit-Bread-1522122014770999](https://facebook.com/Pit-Bread-1522122014770999)

8 Polyansky Pereulok. Metro Polyanka



HAVE A NICE DAY

#### Have a Nice Day

##### **Health food with a view**

On the fifth floor of the Tsvetnoi Market is H.A.N.D. (Have a Nice Day), a light and spacious café overlooking the boulevard. The menu is divided into three parts: vegetarian, pescatarian and raw, and includes dishes without sugar and gluten. Chef Said Fadli is Moroccan, so the cafe has notes of Middle Eastern cuisine. Must-tries: salmon burger with mango and avocado, and tiramisu made of coconut milk, dates and semolina.

**+7 (495) 636 2950**

[tsvetnoy.com](https://tsvetnoy.com)

15 Tsvetnoi Bulvar, Bldg. 1. Metro Tsvetnoi Bulvar

## Take it and go!

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



**Kirill, 10**

My favorite place here is the skating rink. Most of all I like the **churches** — they're so beautiful! I advise you to go around the park and visit each building. It's really worth it!

# Royal Getaway Winter Wonderland In Kolomenskoye

By **Michele A. Berdy** m.berdy@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Evgeny Tonkonogy**

## Centuries of history and outdoor fun on the banks of the Moscow River

Kolomenskoye Estate, named after the refugees from the town of Kolomna who escaped the Tatar-Mongol attack and settled here, has been a summer residence of the grand princes and later tsars, emperors and empresses since the 14th century. Starting in the 1920s, preservationists began to move ancient wooden architecture here from other parts of the country. Now the estate has dozens of buildings and monuments from every era of Russian and even pre-Russian history, plus cafes, fairs and markets, holiday festivals, troika rides, concerts and other events.

### 8. Stones in the Golosov Ravine

After visiting the wooden structures, head down the ravine that runs along the left (with your back to the river) of the estate. There you'll find two odd boulders: one that looks like frozen bubbles called the Maiden and another that vaguely looks like a Goose. Legend — as in urban legend — has it that sitting on the Maiden Stone brings women fertility, while men get a boost to their virility on the Goose Stone. There are also rumors of people disappearing in the ravine and showing up decades later with stories of large furry captors.



### 7. Peter the Great's Cabin

With your back to the river, follow the path on the left towards the many wooden buildings. All are fascinating, but be sure to stop in to see Peter the Great's cabin. Built in 1702 near the building site of a fortress that would protect the northern city of Arkhangelsk, it was brought here in 1936 and is the only "little wooden house" of the emperor in Moscow. Note the mark showing the monarch's height in this cozy and rustic little cabin.



### 4. The Stone Maiden

To the right of the Gates beyond another part of the museum is a stocky stone figure. Dated to the 11th or 12th century, it was a Polovt-sian burial stone marker brought here in the 1930s from the south of Russia. Even though it's called баба (woman), the name comes from the Turkic language and means a man or grandfather. Near the stone are magnificent ancient oak trees, said to have been planted by Peter the Great, who spent part of his youth here.



### 6. Water Tower

As you walk back from the river, notice the strangely shaped tall building on the far left. This is the Water Tower, built in the 1770s to pump water from reservoirs into the estate by a clever mechanism. After falling into disrepair when the royal court moved to St. Petersburg, it was fixed up a century later when the Empress Catherine the Great came for a royal visit. Now it's a museum.



### 9. The Palace of Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich

If you follow one of the paths up the far side of the ravine, you'll eventually see what was once the Eighth Wonder of the World — the fairy-tale palace of the last tsar of Muscovy, Alexei Mikhailovich. Originally located behind the front gates, this whimsical structure made of wood eventually fell into total disrepair and had to be taken down by the Empress Catherine the Great. But before she did, she had an exact model made. And in 2010 it was recreated with a fabulously gaudy faux medieval interior. Tours are available in several languages; check the site mgomz.ru for information about tickets to this site and other events, museums, churches and tours at Kolomenskoye.





# Kolomenskoye Estate

All-day walk



**Vadim, 38**

We love everything here, but especially the Dyakov Orchards and stable yard complex. I highly recommend visiting **Golosov Ravine**. ●



**Lidia, 73**

I love the gorgeous park and apiary. My family always comes for church holidays and Maslenitsa. My favorite place is the big stage where we watch concerts, as well as the beautiful **bell tower** and **Peter the Great's cabin**. ●

## 1. Church of the Icon of the Kazan Mother of God

Right inside today's main entrance to the complex to the left is a brilliantly white church with five azure-blue cupolas with golden stars, built over several decades and completed in the 1660s. Named after the miracle-working Kazan Mother of God icon, it also holds another miraculous icon called the Reigning Mother of God. This icon appeared to a pious local woman in a dream who found it in the church basement on the day in March 1917 when the last tsar, Nicholas II, abdicated the throne. Believed to be sent to protect Russia, the icon of a rather stern Mary with the scepter and orb of power and Christ Child can be seen in a side chapel.



## 2. Petition Stone

After the church, walk toward the second decorative white gates to the estate. In front of them you'll see an odd round white stone bearing a sundial. This stone dates back to the 17th century and is believed to be the place where subjects brought their petitions to the monarch and the monarch left declarations and decrees. It's called the "brow-beating stone" because petitioners used to bow down to the ground before the tsar. The sundial was attached centuries later.



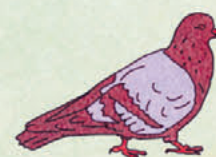
## 3. Main Gates

Ahead are the formal main gates to the estate, built in 1672-73 by Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. When they were built, guests came through them from the river side and were greeted by a little tsarist joke: four mechanical lions made of wood and covered with fur rolled their eyes and roared. Now the gate building holds an excellent museum of the history of Kolomenskoye.



## 5. Church of the Ascension

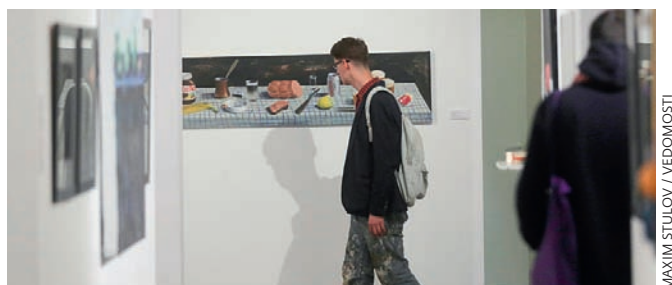
By now you can't take your eyes away from the magnificent white church overlooking the river. The oldest building in the estate, the Church was built in 1532 to celebrate the birth of an heir to the throne — the Ivan who would be called Terrible. This church was a stunning break with Byzantine architecture: a steeple like a stone fir tree rising 62 meters (204 feet) over the river. The interior of the church is tiny, meant for just the tsar and his immediate family. Outside is a stone bench on the gallery, where legend says Ivan the Terrible liked to sit and enjoy the river.







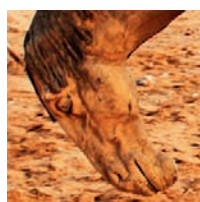
**Michael Green**, managing partner, Action Group  
“**Nikuda Ne Edem** (We're Not Going Anywhere) at the Trekhgornaya Manufaktura. Supreme cocktails, an adventurous menu (the best crab hot dog in Moscow) — and you can text message the DJ song requests, and he actually plays them!”



MAXIM STULOV / VEDEMOSTI

## Start the Year With Contemporary Art

If the long holiday break has left you exhausted from over-consumption of everything from presents to champagne and rich desserts, here is a good way to start the new year on the right foot: Go see some cutting-edge art. Here are our top six choices for exhibitions of modern and contemporary art that you must not miss. And with entrance fees ranging from zero to 500 rubles (\$7), these cultural excursions are easy on the post-holiday pocketbook, too.



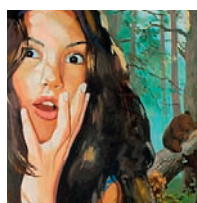
PETLURA

### 50 Meters

#### Art inspired by protest

GROUND Khodynka might be closer to the city's outskirts, but it is definitely at the forefront of the cutting-edge art scene. After taking part in the Vienna contemporary art fair, GROUND, led by its curator Katya Bochavar, presents “50 Meters” – documentation of one-man protests by 32 contemporary artists. The performance took place in October as a part of the 6th Moscow Biennale on Khodynskoye Pole. Participants stood 50 meters apart, which is the legal definition of a one-man protest. Performances varied from dancing and reading poetry to walking around with a huge stuffed horse or literally digging oneself into the ground. All 32 performances were recorded and are now on

view at the GROUND Khodynka gallery. Tickets 100 rubles (\$1.30). Exhibition runs until Jan. 31. [groundmoscow.com](http://groundmoscow.com)  
2 Ulitsa Iriny Levchenko. Metro Oktyabrskoye Pole



MAMM-MDF

### Pierre Brochet's Puzzle

#### A great private collection

Three floors of the Multimedia Art Museum have been stacked with one masterpiece after another from Pierre Brochet's private collection. Pierre Brochet is a French publisher and entrepreneur who became an avid collector of Russian contemporary art. There are works by deceased artists, like Timur Novikov or Vladislav Mamyshev-Monro; there are works by established artists, like Pavel Pepperstein, Konstantin Zvezdochetov or the famous duo

Dubosarsky & Vinogradov; and there are works by artists living in the Russian provinces, like Ivan Gorshkov from Voronezh. It is a veritable treasure trove, put together by someone who truly loves art. Tickets 500 rubles (\$7). Exhibition runs until Jan. 31.

[mamm-mdf.ru](http://mamm-mdf.ru)

16 Ulitsa Ostozhenka. Metro Kropotkinskaya



ARTS-MUSEUM.RU

### Ilyazd. Ilya Zdanevich's 20th Century Beautiful books and more

Ilya Zdanevich is a name familiar to anyone who has studied the history of 20th century avant-garde art. He was a poet, a designer, an anthropologist, but first and foremost, a publisher. Part of the exhibition is devoted to Zdanevich's life in Tbilisi, where he and his brother first discovered the artist Niko Pirosmani, and his early Paris years, where he worked with Coco Chanel designing fabrics. But most of the exhibition is about Zdanevich as a publisher and the many “livres d'artiste” — the beautifully illustrated books he worked on with such eminent 20th century artists as Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst and Fernand Leger. Tickets 300 rubles (\$4). Exhibition runs until Feb. 14.

[arts-museum.ru](http://arts-museum.ru)

16 Ulitsa Volkhonka. Metro Kropotkinskaya

### Hooray, Sculpture!

#### Contemporary sculpture retrospective

Winter seems to be the season for group exhibitions. There's one now open at Winzavod, and as you can tell from its name, it's devoted to sculpture — specifically, the latest achievements of contemporary Russian sculpture. Here you have veterans of the Moscow art scene, such as Oleg Kulik, who became famous for his man-dog performances of the 1990s, and Anatoly Osmolovsky, who also curated the exhibition, along with the younger generation of artists who have already made names for themselves: Arseniy Zhiliaev, Alexander Povzner, Yevgeniy Antufiev and CrocodilePOWER. Tickets 250 rubles (\$3.40). Exhibition runs until Jan. 24.

[winzavod.ru](http://winzavod.ru)

1/6 4th Syromyatnichesky Pereulok.

Metro Kurskaya, Chkalovskaya



VLADIMIR DUBOSARSKY

### Vladimir Dubosarsky. 7 Minutes for Melancholy

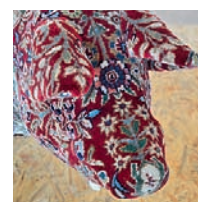
#### Short and sad, but fascinating

We are used to hearing the name Dubosarsky in tandem with Vinogradov, who together make up a successful art team known for using Soviet-era socialist realism to point out its irrelevancy. This solo exhibition features various works, from a painting of the famous tea glass holder with Soviet insignia to the half-bird goddess of Slavic pagan beliefs and a humorous take on traditional Soviet holiday cards. Seven minutes is about what it takes to see the whole exhibition. Entrance free. Exhibition runs until Jan. 19.

[triumph-gallery.ru](http://triumph-gallery.ru)

3/8 Ulitsa Ilyinka, Bldg. 5.

Metro Teatralnaya, Lubyanka, Kitai-Gorod



MUTATED REALITY

### Mutated Reality

#### Must-see exhibit

The hit exhibition of the winter season, Mutated Reality at the Gary Tatintsian Gallery gathers works of world-famous artists rarely seen in Moscow. It's just two rooms, but it's worth going all the way to the former industrial area-turned-art quarter on the Moscow River embankment. There are masterpieces everywhere you look — from such big names as Francis Bacon and George Condo, to Wim Delvoye, who showed his works at the Pushkin Museum in 2014, and the ubiquitous Tony Matelli with his hyper-realistic sculptures. Expect nothing less from Gary Tatintsian, who opened his first gallery in Berlin, then moved to New York and now is bringing the best of both worlds to Moscow. Entrance free. Exhibition runs until March 1.

[tatintsian.com](http://tatintsian.com)

19 Serebryanicheskaya Naberezhnaya.

Metro Taganskaya, Kitai-Gorod

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*“Amendments leave authorities the opportunity to persecute their political opponents by using this charge.”* **Lev Ponomarev**, human rights activist

**12–20**

years jail term is provided for by Russian law for treason.



“If They’ve Come for You” explains that neither the person arrested by the FSB, nor their relatives are obligated to testify or sign documents until they receive a competent lawyer.

**62,812**

people petitioned in support of Svetlana Davydova — charged with treason in 2015.

← Continued from Page 6

were targeted. Now it’s very popular [to target those] related to NATO or the United States,” he added. Soon we’ll probably see spies connected to Turkey, Smirnov said.

## Other Battlefronts

Team 29 lawyers are currently working on Kravtsov’s appeal and another high treason case. They are defending Yevgeny Petrin, a former Russian Orthodox Church official accused of spying for the United States. Details of the case are classified — the only known fact is that Petrin claims he worked within the Church as an undercover FSB officer.

Pavlov and his team also help those charged with extremism — like Natalya Sharina, director of the Ukrainian Literature Library in Moscow. She was arrested in late October and accused of distributing extremist materials. The accusations were based on a search law enforcement officers conducted in the library prior to her arrest in which they found several books, written by Ukrainian radicals, that are banned in Russia.

Involvement in high-profile cases this year has overshadowed another important part of Team 29’s work — fighting in courts to help Russians access government information to which they are legally entitled and de-classifying documents from Soviet times.

“It is very important, because often academics — historians, for one — can’t access the documents they need for their research and governmental bodies ignore their requests or stall them for months,” said Darya Sukhikh, a lawyer on Team 29.

One of the most recent cases undertaken was a class action suit filed in the Supreme Court, arguing that Putin’s decree classifying military casualties incurred during special operations in peacetime does not comply with the law defining a state secret.

“Federal law defines what can be a state secret and what can’t,” said Pavlov. “We argued that military losses are in no way covered by the definition. Yet the court concluded it could be considered information about the number of troops [involved in an operation], which is a state secret,” he added.

Team 29 appealed the ruling and invited linguistic experts who testified that the number of casualties does not necessarily reveal the number of troops, but the court sustained its ruling.

It is very hard to win a case like this, Sukhikh said. “In general, we lose 9 cases out of 10,” she added with a sigh. “Still, it’s another form of progress — people become more aware of their rights, and realize freedom of information is not just an abstract, vague notion — it is an issue that has now become a part of their lives.”

They now run several web projects aimed at raising society’s awareness and legal literacy — like RosOtvét or I Have the Right

Team 29 “captain” Ivan Pavlov has dedicated his career to defending people accused of treason in Russia. He remembers when treason cases in Russia were winnable.



IVAN PAVLOV / FACEBOOK

according to the website, anytime, anywhere and to, almost, anyone, “whether you published an article in a foreign media outlet, met with a foreigner you know or emailed your relatives abroad.”

A person can be approached casually by FSB officers and invited to have an off the record conversation, which can later become the basis for a criminal case and lead to an unexpected arrest and interrogation. Authorities try to convince the person they arrest to cooperate and spill all information, according to the website.

The key is not to say anything and make sure your relatives do the same — even during the first official interrogation after arrest. “You have the right to do so under articles 46 and 47 of the Criminal Code,” the website advises.

“You [also] need to warn your relatives not to testify and not to sign any confidentiality orders [that would then facilitate secrecy in the matter].” Article 51 of the Constitution gives everyone the right not to incriminate their relatives,” it adds.

It is crucial not to testify and not to sign any documents until you obtain a competent lawyer, said Smirnov. “Most [treason] cases I dealt with were built on the testimony the arrested person gives during his first interrogation. A person dragged from home in the morning and thrown into prison is usually intimidated and scared enough to confess or sign anything.”

## Work That Matters

In October 2015, an investigation by The Moscow Times revealed at least one person was standing trial for high treason, three people were in pretrial detention facilities facing the same charge, four people were convicted in 2015 and already serving their sentences and only two people had charges against them dropped.

Despite the fact that a treason case is almost impossible to win, the work that Team 29 does — and there are few lawyers who take on cases like these — is very important, said Zoya Svetova, a journalist, human rights activist and a member of the Public Watch Commission who has gone to Lefortovo prison to visit many of those accused of treason.

“In the Russian legal system the work that a defense lawyer does might seem useless from the outside, but in fact it’s not,” Svetova said in an interview with The Moscow Times.

“It is important that a person arrested by the FSB has a lawyer with him to explain what to do, how to behave, what is he or she is accused of. And for a person who has spent a year or more behind bars, a lawyer is the only friend and sometimes the only connection to the real world. Months in prison can drive a person insane,” she added.

Svetova confirmed Smirnov’s statement about the role of statements people make during the first hours after arrest. “That’s why [Team 29] deserve a monument for creating their [“If They’ve Come for You”] instructions, which were so popular on social networks,” she said.

Their lawyers are not afraid of showing society that legal proceedings in Russia are, basically, inquisitions, especially the ones that involve high treason charges, Svetova added. “[Team 29 lawyers] take on these cases and, even they don’t win them, they show how these cases work,” she said.

Pavlov has defended people accused of treason in the past and he remembers when these cases were winnable. Hence, he remains keen to carry out this difficult work, Svetova said.

“It’s a heroic effort. They’re defending those who no one else will defend,” she added.

When asked if the team plans to expand the “If They’ve Come for You” project further, team lawyer Smirnov said with a sad chuckle: “I wish we didn’t have to develop it at all — I wish the problem didn’t exist. But the circumstances dictate otherwise.” **TMT**

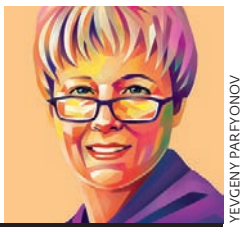
## THE WORD’S WORTH

# The Last Man Standing

*Последний: last, latter, latest*

By **Michele A. Berdy**

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



YEVGENY PARYONOV

The holidays are over, and you are hoping that the price of vegetables has fallen from their are-you-out-of-your-flipping-mind peak on Dec. 31, when eggplants hovered around the 1000-ruble per kilo mark and cucumbers cost as much as platinum. You stop in a grocery shop. The prices have indeed fallen, and that means there’s a line — well, not exactly a line, but a lot of people milling about in a loose formation that might, if you squint, approximate a shaggy oblong. You want to know who you are standing behind. So what do you say: Кто последний? (Who’s last?) or Кто крайний? (Who’s at the end?)

If you want to start a fight, ask that question at a party after everyone has had a few drinks. Half the crowd will insist that “кто крайний” is low-brow and ungrammatical: Это дико режет слух, так как это грубое нарушение правил русского языка (It sounds terrible since it’s a gross violation of the rules of the Russian language.) The other half will insist that you should never call someone последний in any context — it’s insulting, like you’re calling them the last in the class or a loser. And a few will simply say the word is taboo — apparently pilots, mountain climbers, firemen and people in other high-risk professions avoid the word. They don’t want to talk about the last anything without knocking on wood and spitting three times over their left shoulder.

So what’s the difference between последний and крайний? Who’s right?

Последний means the last in any kind of series — последний шанс (last chance), последний день на работе (last day at work), последний раз (last time) and yes: последний в очереди (last in line). It can also mean the end of something: Я отдал свои последние деньги за машину (I paid the last of my money for a car). Or it can mean final: Больше не буду обсуждать этот вопрос. Это моё последнее слово. (I’m not going to discuss that issue anymore. That’s my final word.)

In literary contexts, it means “the latter”: Пришли Иванов и Сидоров, последний со своей женой (Ivanov and Sidorov came, the latter with his wife.) Or it can mean the last bit of something: Я готова делиться с ними из последнего (I’m ready to share my last crust of bread with them.)

And in yet other contexts it has the connotation of bad: Он последний негодяй (He’s the worst scoundrel). And it can mean a loser: последний парень на деревне (the last guy in the village) means the least successful, least popular, least handsome guy around.

Of course, Russian being Russian, последний can also mean just the opposite: the very latest, most chic, or newest model of something. Я только что купила последнюю модель туфель от Гуччи (I just bought the latest Gucci shoes.)

Крайний, on the other hand, means the end or edge of something. Sometimes this is “far” in English: Крайний Север (the Far North); крайняя комната — детская (the farthest room is the nursery). Or it means something extreme, like крайнее возмущение (extreme indignation). Or something radical, like крайний правый (radical right-wing). Or it means the endpoint to something: крайний срок is the final, absolute last, not-a-second-more deadline.

So what do you say in the store? The phrase “Кто последний?” is perfectly correct, but to avoid insulting, spooking, or jinxing anyone, I’m going to say: За кем я буду? (Whom am I behind?) **TMT**



Lawyers Yevgeny Smirnov and Ivan Pavlov speaking with Gennady Kravtsov, the radio engineer convicted of treason after sending his resume to a Swedish company.

to Know, which gives citizens the opportunity to send their legal questions to Team 29 and receive answers from lawyers and government officials, said Asya Suvorova, Team 29’s editor.

Another project, Municipal Combat, is designed to make local officials more transparent about their incomes and the policies they are implementing. A project called Open Utility Services educates Russians on various issues related to paying for utilities and dealing with companies that manage buildings. Finally, the “My Home is Being Searched. What should I do?” online instructions explain how a person can defend oneself from arbitrariness during a search.

## If They’re at the Door

Yet, the most popular web project Team 29 has initiated is the one related to high treason charges. The “If They’ve Come for You” online instructions contain legal advice on how to handle the FSB if it suddenly appears in your life.

The domestic intelligence and security service can show up,





*"An issue that needs to be addressed is how we achieve equality for children with disabilities."* **Natalia Vodianova**, supermodel and philanthropist

## 129

Russia's rank in the World Giving Index-2015.

## 40%

of people with Down Syndrome in Russia lack pre-school education.



In 2013 the "Dima Yakovlev law" was passed by Russian parliament. It banned the U.S. nationals from adopting Russian orphans, sparking outcry among human rights advocates.



Choreographer Margarita Rebetskaya has been working on her Cinderella dance project for over a year. Her performers, from the Open Art Theater, all have Down Syndrome. They are able to socialize through dance during their weekly rehearsals.

# Agents of Change: Promoting Tolerance and Acceptance in Russia

By **Vasily Kolotilov** v.kolotilov@imedia.ru | Photos by **Andrei Lyubimov**

Foreigners in Russia have advocated empathy toward people with special needs for over two decades — their work continues to improve public understanding of the disabled.

A rehearsal is being held in a large hall — light streaming in through floor-to-ceiling windows onto the performers. Some dance, some sit sprawled across the floor watching their compatriots. "Kostik, stand up, you're going to get cold," the choreographer scolds. A young man slouched on the wooden parquet rises, shooting another performer with imaginary pistols before goading him into wrestling — they are ignored. After grappling briefly, they embrace before returning their attention to the proceedings.

Choreographer Margarita Rebetskaya is conducting a weekly rehearsal of Cinderella: her personal project for over a year with the Open Art Theater troupe. This theater company is made up entirely of performers with Down Syndrome. Gently, she coaxes and encourages each performer across the stage. When the lights go up, she hopes they won't just be judged as people with Down Syndrome — but the dedicated dancers they are.

It is this emotion and progress that Alexandra Dalsbaek, 28, is desperate to catch on film. With Margarita, she wants to showcase the team's Cinderella performance to the world.

"I first came to the rehearsals last winter just to take some photos, and I enjoyed the positive atmosphere here very much," says Dalsbaek. Born to French and Russian parents, she had lived in France for most of her life with only the occasional visit to Russia before moving to Moscow about 18 months ago.

She has been working with the troupe for a year — shooting a documentary about the theater, the performance and the performers. Since starting as an observer, she has become a pseudo-volunteer, and considers her film project a tool to promote tolerance in Russia, where society does not yet treat people with disabilities as normal people — at least not to the extent the West does.

Dalsbaek believes that society's tolerance of people with

disabilities can be changed with the help of public campaigns that incorporate cinema, inclusive schools, theater programs like Open Art or dance projects like Rebetskaya's Cinderella.

"I'm not trying to pretend that I can change the whole society of course, but I want to participate," she said.

## Progress Through Art

The Open Art Theater was founded in 2001 by professional musician Oksana Tereshchenko. Theaters that engage people with Down Syndrome are rare in Russia — Tereshchenko knows of only a couple comparable theaters in the country.

A music conservatory graduate, Tereshchenko started off teaching flute at the Down Syndrome Association Art

Center. The class eventually grew into a theater dedicated to involving those with Down Syndrome in the arts.

After several years of self-sponsoring the theater, she turned to foreign friends for funding assistance and was introduced to the Britain-based charity Action For Russian Children (ARC). The ARC, alongside the British Women's Club and private donors, has been the theater's primary sponsor ever since.

Recently, theater director Tereshchenko has struggled maintain funding for her theater — it is difficult for the ARC to continue working in Russia as financial aid volumes have shrunk significantly. "It's hard to say why, but I believe it's because of the crisis and all the changes in the Russian legal system," she said.

While Russia remains well behind others nations in their treatment of people with disabilities, conditions have changed rapidly over the last few years. State funding for special treatment programs has tripled since 2006, and charities began flourishing in Russia in the mid-2000s — on the corporate as well as the personal level.

Western charitable organizations served as role models, says Maria Chertok of the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). They introduced the culture of collecting and distributing funds, as well as charitable values, principles and approaches — this Western influence was of great importance.

## Long-Term Charity

A longtime advocate for persons with disabilities, Denise Roza has worked in Russia for over two decades. "The role of foreigners in promoting an inclusive and equal rights approach for people with disabilities (PWDs) has



Alexandra Dalsbaek first visited the Cinderella rehearsals to photograph the performers. She is a friend of the group's choreographer.



# Foreigners' Affairs

January 14 – 20, 2016

13

*"They are children too... They are just different." Irina Khakamada, prominent politician and mother of a girl with Down syndrome.*



1,391

NGO projects funded by presidential grants in 2015.



In October 2015 a scandal has sparked in a Moscow school after parents demanded to eliminate a photo of a girl with Down syndrome from the yearbook.

1 in 4

of the children who live in Russia's orphanages suffer from a disability.

changed over the past 20 years," she told The Moscow Times.

An American, Roza studied Russian in the Soviet Union in the mid-80s, returning to the country in 1989 to become the resident director of a language study program for three years. She found her calling when she joined the Moscow office of the U.S.-based World Institute on Disability (WID) in 1994.

When the WID closed in February 1997, Roza established her own non-profit organization Perspektiva, and in 2009 Oerspektiva founded Best Buddies Russia. Perspektiva aims to improve the quality of life of all persons with disabilities in Russia through various programs: inclusive education, legal advocacy, inclusive employment, youth leadership, universal design, access to sports and raising awareness campaigns.

Roza recalls speaking with a government official about 15 years ago regarding the launch of an accessible bus for the disabled: "The bus route included three stops: a person's home, the local hospital and pharmacy. I asked him: 'So what about schools, the workplace, a café, movie theater, the local park, or other places one wants to go to?' People thought a pharmacy and a clinic were all a disabled person needed in his life. The stereotypes were very strong at the time. Fortunately, most people do not think like that anymore."

Her two organizations now boast a team of 64 people — the majority of whom have a disability of some kind. Their participation is a crucial part of the NGO's work and social or equal rights approach to disability wherein PWDs themselves are making decisions, serving as experts, changing attitudes and, as role models, empowering other people with disabilities.

"Today, there are many local experts, including PWDs themselves, who know about a wide range of disability issues and advocate for disability rights. This situation was very different when I started my work in the field. For example, disability rights activists traveled to Moscow from the United States, they served as role models and spoke about youth empowerment and employment, but now my disabled colleagues, with their many years of experience, can do the same in Russian," she said.

Perspektiva has been successfully cooperating with state institutions and receives government grants, in addition to corporate donations, which have allowed them to continue their work despite a recent drop in foreign funding.

Foreign funding has decreased for various reasons, the CAF's Chertok said. Charities have felt the effect of political events — to some extent. Many charitable foundations in Russia simply stopped accepting financial aid from the West, assuming the foreign agent legislation that was enacted in 2012 would



hinder their work. The so-called "foreign-agents" law requires NGOs to register as foreign agents, an undesirable epithet, if they receive foreign funding and engage in vaguely defined political activities.

But the decrease in Western involvement in Russian charities primarily results from the improvement of the Russian economy. When Russia's appearance ceased to be that of a poor, needy nation, international charitable foundations moved their funding elsewhere.

## Humanitarian Clowns

Justin Lifflander began supporting the charity Maria's Children about 15 years ago. The charity helps orphans and disabled children socialize through rehabilitation programs and art therapy. He first supported the charity financially, but wound up volunteering his time at Maria's Children's art studio.

"I began to meet the people in her organization and the people they were helping and realized I could do more than just support them financially — that by giving [my] time and sharing my experience and skills, I could directly help others and see the ef-

fect. And in the process, I myself was growing as a person," Lifflander said.

Last year he started regularly participating in the charity's humanitarian clowning initiative, joining a group of clowns on visits to orphanages, mental institutions and nursing homes.

"How we treat our children is a direct reflection of the moral health of our society. So by interacting with and supporting children who do not have parents, or who have physical and mental handicaps, we are fulfilling a moral imperative and at the same time making their lives brighter, and the world a bit fairer. I think that a passion for fairness and giving is a common thread for all humanitarian clowns," he says.

The clowns, in particular, have captured Lifflander's interest with their unique energy and infectious enthusiasm. He says that the experience has even improved his ability to love.

Foreigners have been the driving force behind improving Russian society's tolerance and understanding of those with disabilities. Over the past two decades, their advocacy for educational programs and rights initiatives has transformed Russian society's approach towards people with special needs. **TMT**

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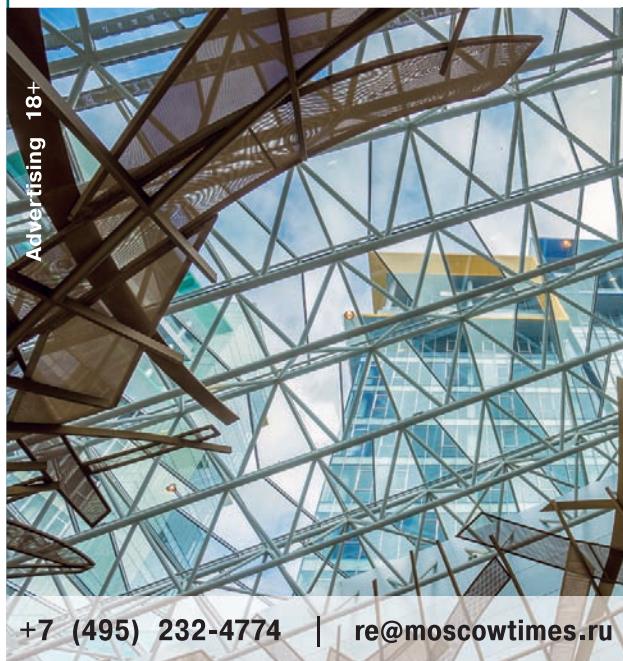
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for more listings.

## Classical Concerts



FREDDY KEMPF

### CONCERT Freddy Kempf

#### Fabulous pianist performs favorite works

Award-winning pianist Freddy Kempf performs Beethoven's Sonata No. 15; Chopin's Sonata No. 3, his Polonaises in C minor and in F sharp minor. Kempf, who was awarded third prize in the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1998 — a decision greeted by outrage by the Russian audience and media — has returned to perform SRO concerts ever since. Saturday's concert is expected to be a great start to a new year of classical music.

#### Conservatory Great Hall

13 Bolshaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa.

Metro Pushkinskaya

Sat. at 7 p.m.



NIKOLAI LUGANSKY

### CONCERT Nikolai Lugansky

#### Brilliant pianist plays Brahms

The virtuosic Nikolai Lugansky will be performing Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Fedoseyev.

#### Conservatory Great Hall

13 Bolshaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa.

Metro Pushkinskaya

Sun. at 7 p.m.



INTRADA

### CONCERT Intrada Vocal Ensemble

#### Young choir performs early music

Founded in 2006 and led by artistic director Yekaterina Antonenko, the Intrada Vocal Ensemble performs early music and has been acclaimed for their perfectly blended voices and brilliant style. On Jan. 19, they are singing Vivaldi, Praetorius, Palestrina and Allegri with the Chamber Orchestra of Russia.

#### Tchaikovsky Concert Hall

4/31 Triumfalnaya Plushchad.

Metro Mayakovskaya

Tues. at 7 p.m.



ALEXANDER VUSTIN

### CONCERT Homage to Tchaikovsky

#### Vustin world premiere

The celebrated young conductor Vladimir Jurowski, principal conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra since the 2007-2008 season, conducts the Svetlanov Symphony Orchestra in a program of old and new music: Tchaikovsky's Suite for Orchestra No. 2, Stravinsky's The Fairy's Kiss ballet music and the world premiere of Alexander Vustin's Songs of Lukerya.

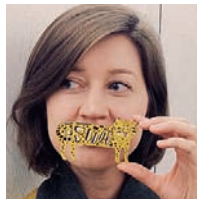
#### Tchaikovsky Concert Hall

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Metro Mayakovskaya

Wed. at 7 p.m.

## Live Music



NAADIA

### CONCERT NAADIA

#### Russia's best indie group

The queen of Russian indie-pop will perform Thursday night. Founded by Nadya Gritskovich, leader of the electro and trip-hop band More-money, Naadia has become a staple at summer music festivals in Russia and abroad. Her deeply emotional lyrics and complex melodies make her music really stand out.

#### Mumiy Troll Music Bar

7 Tverskaya Ulitsa. Metro Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya

Thurs. at 9 p.m.



AFSHATIGRU

### CONCERT Pompeya

#### Back in the U.S.S.R.

Pioneers of Russian indie-rock and synth-pop Pompeya will perform their new album, Real, as well as hits from previous albums at 16 Tons. The program is called Back in U.S.S.R., which refers to Pompeya's success abroad. This is one of the few English-language bands in Russia that can organize a full-blown world tour.

#### 16 Tons

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Fri. at 11 p.m.



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### CONCERT Chicherina

#### Upbeat Urals rock

Chicherina, a Yekaterinburg band whose only permanent member is Yuliya Chicherina, is famous for the songs TuLuLa and Zhara (Heat), a couple of pop-rock hits from the early 2000s. She has been keeping busy lately, replacing her entire band and releasing a new album last year. She will perform both her new material and old hits at Yotaspaces on Saturday.

#### Yotaspaces

11 Ulitsa Ordzhonikidze.

Metro Leninsky Prospekt

Sat. at 8 p.m.



MEYDELEH

### CONCERT Meydeleh

#### Rock and performance

Meydeleh means "girls" in Yiddish, and aptly enough Meydeleh is a band with three female singers. Their music ranges from covers of Irina Allegrova to Blondie to Alexander Vertinsky to bands you have probably never heard of. Their concerts sometimes resemble a theatre performance and it's no wonder — all three vocalists are actresses.

#### 16 Tons

6/1 Ulitsa Presnensky Val. Metro 1905 Goda

Sun. at 8 p.m.

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