
Contents

O! This Learning, What a Thing It Is!	1
SCRSS News	2
Soviet Memorial Trust Fund News	3
Book Reviews	3
From the Russian Press	5
Listings	7

Feature

O! This Learning, What a Thing It Is!

James Muckle, Special Professor in Comparative Education at the University of Nottingham, looks at education in Russia today

How are we to judge the quality of a nation's schooling? It is far from a simple matter. We may ask the public and the teachers what they feel about the way things are going. We may look at comparative surveys of the achievement of pupils in a range of countries.

Two recent (1998 and 2004) countrywide surveys in the Russian Federation produced the lamentable finding that only 20–25% of the population still take pride in the education system. Concern about its condition did not emerge *after* the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second half of the 1980s was a time when many progressive figures expressed grave reservations about what was happening in the schools. Their views were countered by conservative insistence that there was nothing to worry about: were we not the first nation to put a man in space? But that was 35 years before; and how many Nobel Prizes had been won by the USSR? Not very many by comparison with the USA or even with Britain, it was argued.

Most recently Russia has had to contend with the Programme for International Student Assessment, or PISA, as it is known for short. PISA has carried out two comparative surveys of 15-year-olds in 30 or more developed countries in 2000 and 2003. The findings in 2000 were devastating for several European nations, not least Russia, which came near the bottom of the class in both literacy and mathematical skills. The Russians did not dispute these findings: no, even surveys carried out by the government of the Russian Federation confirmed that attainment in the country left

much to be desired. A spokesman expressed the hope that 'as modernisation in education develops, the system may move away – to its advantage – from the authoritarian imposition of "unmeetable standards" to a "gentle, sensitive pedagogical approach".'

PISA 2003 looked particularly at mathematics. Russia was still low down the list, though Russian pupils beat their American counterparts on problem-solving ability – by a hair's breadth.

Now, many of us have admired the achievements of the Soviet school, whatever we thought of the ideology behind it. What are we to make of all this? In a time of transition and great social upheaval, I believe we must accept that schools – which, of all institutions, need stability as well as injections of new life – will show the effects of uncertainty and self-doubt among educators. Leaving aside the vital fact that for several years teachers' salaries, if paid at all, were being paid in arrears, there were debates about aims, competing philosophies and methods. In the 1990s the system was faced with dilemmas of all sorts: should schools be uniform or differentiated in the curriculum they offer? Should pupils be selected in any way? What ethical and social values should they impart? Which agencies – central, local, regional – should control them? How can schools be financed and teachers paid? Most important of all, how is education to be carried on in the classroom – not just *what* is to be taught (though that is important) but *how* is it to be conveyed to the learners?

The trouble was that in the old days rote-learning was all too common in some subjects. It was not universal, but 'stuffing a goose with nuts', as one *Pravda* correspondent called it, would not be any use in a truly democratic society. The way teachers conducted lessons was only the most obvious symptom of the basis of the system. One deputy education minister declared: 'It is impossible to build a new society without changing the philosophy, content and methods of education.' And the new Russia *is* a new society; reformers seek to make the education system more 'humanised', more democratic, and more oriented to the individual rather than the service of the state.

'Oh, get on with it,' you may be thinking. 'When is he going to tell us what is actually happening?' I wish I *could* give a clear picture in a few words. When you go to Russian schools now, you must bear all the above factors in mind, each of which may help to explain what you observe there and some of the following. Pre-school education, a jewel in the crown of the Soviet system, is in a state of collapse (finance is the problem). You will find a wide variety of primary-

secondary schools. Some very swish establishments are able to charge fees to the rich which 98% of the population could not begin to contemplate. Some universities do not know if they are coming or going, and have sought to charge fees to many of their students. (Corruption in higher education is a recurring feature in Russian newspaper reports.) The media, business and the Church compete to establish the values to which they believe society should subscribe; meanwhile a huge majority of the population wishes the government would step in and tell teachers what sort of moral education to instil.

It sounds like chaos, but I have no doubt that in many schools things run much as they always did. One very interesting finding of recent research projects by foreign observers is that Russian teachers seem to set out to create a secure, peaceful environment in schools, an 'oasis' to protect the children from the harsh realities of a society in which – suddenly – competitiveness, 'market values', violence, acquisitiveness, and bad taste have all become dominant. We wish them well!

For further information, see:

PISA: www.pisa.oecd.org

Edward Dneprov, 'The last ten years of educational reform in Russia: an historical perspective', *Education in Russia, the Independent States and Eastern Europe*, Vol 21 No 1, 2003, pp 2–13.

James Muckle is author of *Portrait of a Soviet School Under Glasnost* (1990) and joint editor with W John Morgan of *Post-School Education and the Transition from State Socialism* (2001).

SCRSS News

Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will take place on Saturday 21 May 2005 at 10.30am at the SCRSS premises in Brixton. Members' nominations for election to the next Council, seconded by another SCRSS member, should be sent to Head Office by 16 April. Motions to raise at the AGM should also be nominated and seconded by SCRSS members and sent to the Head Office by 16 April. The AGM will be followed by a film show at 2pm.

SCRSS Charity Launch

The SCRSS Charity Launch took place on 29 November 2004. Moscow Narodny Bank kindly offered its Boardroom for the launch, which was aimed at the British-Russian business and cultural community. The reception, provided by Moscow Narodny Bank, was well attended and warm interest was shown in the SCRSS' work. Following the event, a number of attendees have joined the SCRSS, while

others have expressed interest in helping the SCRSS to preserve and digitise part of its collection.

Russian Winter Festival

London experienced its first Russian New Year's Day Festival on 15 January 2005. The Festival was sponsored by the Russian-British Cultural Association, RIA-Novosti and the Russian Ministry of Culture, with the co-operation of the Mayor of London and the Moscow City Government. From noon onwards, thousands of Russians and enthusiasts of Russian culture filled Trafalgar Square to listen to the Alexandrov Red Army Choir, folk and pop groups, and to sample Russian food. Thanks to RIA-Novosti, who made their stall available for the distribution of 1,000 SCRSS brochures, the Society was able to raise its profile at the event. Through the initiative of the SCRSS, the Soviet Memorial Trust also had a presence at the Festival. Leaflets about the Memorial, which commemorates the Soviet dead of WWII, were distributed to the many British navy and air force veterans of the Arctic convoys who were guests at the event.

Events

18 March 2005, 7pm

Lecture: The Huntly Carter Collection in the SCRSS Library

Jean Turner, Honorary Secretary of the SCRSS, discusses Huntly Carter's unique collection of photographs and memoirs covering Soviet theatre and architecture in the 1920s–30s. The lecture is given in memory of Catherine Cooke, architectural historian and former SCRSS Council member, who died in 2004.

22 April 2005, 7pm

Film: On the Way to Berlin

Directed by Mikhail Yershov, Lenfilm, 1969. The film is set in the spring of 1945, during the last days of WWII, as the Red Army advances towards Berlin. English sub-titles.

21 May 2005, 10.30am

SCRSS Annual General Meeting

Open to members only. The AGM will take place at the SCRSS premises.

21 May 2005, 2pm (after the AGM)

Film: Adventures in Bokhara

Directed by Y. Protozanov, Tashkent Film Studios. A light-hearted comedy, based on a story by L. Soloviev and V. Vitkovich, about a loveable rogue who goes to Bokhara and outwits the Emir. English sub-titles. Free to members who have attended the AGM, otherwise normal prices apply.

All lectures and film shows take place at the SCRSS premises in Brixton. Admission: £3.00 (members), £5.00 (non-members). Tea and coffee are available beforehand.

Soviet Memorial Trust Fund News

Events

9 May 2005

60th Anniversary of VE-Day

A ceremony to commemorate this important anniversary will take place at the Soviet Memorial in London. The London Borough of Southwark will play a leading part in the ceremony, alongside the Soviet Memorial Trust. British Government Ministers, Members of Parliament from Britain and Russia, and other important dignitaries will be present to honour the Allied victory over fascism and the tremendous part played in this by the armed forces and citizens of the former Soviet Union. The ceremony at the Memorial and the reception that follows in the Imperial War Museum will be by invitation ticket only. SCRSS members who have contributed financially to the Memorial, either personally or through their organisations, will receive an invitation and a reply form next month.

The Soviet Memorial, which honours the Soviet dead of WWII, is situated in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Lambeth Road, Southwark, London, adjacent to the Imperial War Museum.

Book Reviews

Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film
by John Riley (*KINOfiles Filmmakers' Companion Series*, IB Tauris, 2004, £14.00 Pbk, £20.00 Hbk, ISBN 1850434840)

In this recently published book, John Riley's enthusiasm for the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, added to his encyclopaedic knowledge of Soviet films, has enabled him to introduce to a wider audience the film music that Shostakovich wrote from the 1920s onwards. These film scores are not just incidental music but form an integral part of the direction and production of the films.

Shostakovich's favourite film director, Grigori Kozintsev, grasped the importance of integrated film scores and collaborated closely with the composer on several successful films. These include *The Maxim Trilogy* about a Soviet 'everyman' who begins his political education in prison in 1910, returns as a Bolshevik agent in 1914, and in 1918 heads the National Bank. In his last years, Shostakovich collaborated with Kozintsev on two memorable Shakespeare films, *Hamlet* and *King Lear*.

What is so important about this book is that it provides a chronological history of every film on which Shostakovich worked – some 40 films with 21

directors. It is delightful to know that, whilst a postgraduate student at the Petrograd Academy, this great composer started his working life as a cinema pianist accompanying silent films not only from the Soviet Union but also from America, Germany and other countries. He had to perform at least three times a day – an exhausting prospect, given that he had suffered from tuberculosis – but the income helped his impoverished family after the death of his father. It also gave him a grounding in producing light-hearted and joyful music – his favourite films were comedies – as well as serious compositions.



Kukryniksy cartoon of Shostakovich, 1942 (SCRSS Library)

Throughout Shostakovich's 45 years of producing film music, his sense of humour, his ability to produce popular songs to accompany films about the building of socialism, and his profound reflections on the sad years of political criticism of his work and the horrors of the Nazi invasion helped to make him the finest composer of the 20th century. His film scores also provided him with a steady income when other sources failed. His friend Lev Atovmian compiled his film music into suites, which are still performed, in some cases long after the films have been consigned to the archives.

It is to be hoped that John Riley's excellent book will not only popularise Shostakovich's film music but also bring about a revival of interest in the films themselves, many of which are brilliant examples of the contribution made to world cinema by the film studios in the former Soviet Union.

Reviewed by Jean Turner

Music to accompany the book:

Shostakovich: New Babylon & From Jewish Folk Poetry

Russian State Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Valeri Polyansky (Chandos CHAN 9600)

The Film Music of Dmitri Shostakovich, Volume 1
BBC Philharmonic, conducted by Vassily Sinaisky
Music from *Alone, The Maxim Trilogy, The Man with a Gun* and *King Lear* (Chandos CHAN 10023)

The Film Music of Dmitri Shostakovich, Volume 2
BBC Philharmonic, conducted by Vassily Sinaisky
Music from *The Golden Mountains, The Gadfly* and *Volochayev Days* (Chandos CHAN 10183)

Shostakovich - Manuscripts of Different Years
Symphony Orchestra of the USSR, conducted by Gennadi Rozhdestvensky
Music from *Alone, The Adventures of Korzinkina*, and other works (Olympia OCD 194)

Shostakovich: The Fall Of Berlin & The Unforgettable Year 1919
Moscow Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Adriano (Marco Polo 8.223897)

Shostakovich: The Film Album
Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, conducted by Riccardo Chailly
Music from *Alone, The Counterplan, The Great Citizen, The Story of the Silly Little Mouse, Pirogov, The Gadfly, Hamlet*, and *Sofia Perovskaia* (Decca 460 792-2)

Alexander Medvedkin
by Emma Widdis (ISBN 1850434050)
Kira Muratova
by Jane Taubman (ISBN 1850434093)
Nikita Mikhalkov
by Birgit Beumers (ISBN 1860647855)
(All KINOfiles Filmmakers' Companion Series, IB Tauris)

IB Tauris' Soviet cinema list is already impressive and three new KINOfiles look at the notable and sometimes controversial directors Alexander Medvedkin, Nikita Mikhalkov and Kira Muratova.

Medvedkin (1900–89) saw satire as a powerful political tool, though it often got him into trouble. Many of his early films are lost, but Emma Widdis discusses them using secondary sources before examining three brilliant comedies: *Happiness* (1934), *The Miracle Worker* (1936) and *New Moscow* (1939). She also traces unrealised plans including, most importantly, *The Accursed Force*, which Medvedkin repeatedly tried to make from the mid-1930s onwards. Using unpublished scripts and diaries, Widdis follows Medvedkin's efforts to reflect party policy as he understood it and shows that the unmade films are at least as important as the completed ones. She ends by looking at his rediscovery in the 1960s by radical French filmmakers, particularly Chris Marker.

Muratova (born 1931) also had a troubled career, perhaps because of her sometimes puzzling balance of comedy and tragedy. Starting in 1961, her first seven films were altered without her permission,

given very limited distribution or simply banned altogether. It was only after the ground-breaking and apocalyptic *perestroika* classic *Aesthetic Syndrome* (1989) that things became easier and she has become more prolific. Drawing on extensive interviews with the director, Jane Taubman looks in depth at all of Muratova's 15 films. As well as the difficulties she has faced as a director – in common with many others, she has eschewed the qualifying 'woman' – the book also deals with Muratova's sometimes troubled personal life.

Mikhalkov (born 1945) is the best known of the three, working on over 50 films as actor, screenwriter, producer or director, and combining all four roles in the Oscar-winning *Burnt by the Sun* (1994). Nevertheless, he and his work remain controversial: popular with audiences but sometimes seen as kitsch by critics in both East and West, and personally adored or reviled by various colleagues. As well as covering his films, Birgit Beumers looks at his political manoeuvring, seeing a consistent thread of personal determination – his work has often examined very controlling figures, perhaps in an unconscious reflection of his own character – and national pride, though this sometimes descends into sentimental mythologisation.

These are the first book-length studies of the directors in English and discuss films that are little known – if at all – in the West – and sometimes in Russia as well. They combine an academic approach with readability and will be the first port of call for many readers. The next batch is eagerly awaited.

Reviewed by John Riley

Selected Poems of Yevgeny Abramovitch Baratynsky
translated by Jill Higgs (Hub Editions, 2004, £5.50, ISBN 1903746418)

Having enjoyed the lectures on Pushkin and Tvardovsky given by Jill Higgs at the SCRSS, I approached her new translation of verses by Yevgeny Baratynsky with pleasurable anticipation.

Baratynsky's verse is perhaps not as accessible as Pushkin or Tvardovsky, but it is worth pursuing. The poems are arranged chronologically and it is possible to see the development of the poet's style and content over the period of his short life. The poems written in the last years of his life are the most profound.

The collection is supported by a short and useful introduction by Professor ADP Briggs that explains the background to the poet's work and puts it in a literary context. I enjoyed the poems but missed Jill's quirky, informative and amusing commentaries on the poems that make her lectures such a delight.

Reviewed by Jane Rosen

From the Russian Press

Education and Health Service Reforms

Argumenty i Fakty (No 01–02, 12.1.05, www.aif.ru – online version) looked at planned reform of education and the health service in Russia.

In education, a new wave of reforms was planned from 2008 and would affect primary, secondary and higher education.

It was intended that compulsory education would now begin at five years with a programme of 'early development classes', based on three–four hours tuition a day, to prepare children for primary school. Whilst this would ensure that all children started school at the same level, some psychologists were concerned at the potential adverse effect on children's health.



Schoolroom scene in the Soviet Union (SCRSS Library)

In secondary education, the school timetable would be reduced by 25%, with payment required for any child wishing to study subjects outside the compulsory 'standard'. The Ministry of Education and Science claimed that Russian schoolchildren had a much heavier timetable than their European counterparts and that this move would rectify the situation. However, the Chairman of the Duma Committee on Education and Science, Oleg Smolin, saw this as a smoke screen to divert attention from the introduction of private education into schools; parents wishing their children to learn more than the minimum standard would be forced to pay tuition fees. Children from low-income families had been promised subsidies to cover any additional tuition, but there was not likely to be sufficient budget to meet the expected demand.

The reforms would also introduce a modular system of education with students choosing courses from one of 13 subject 'profiles' (physics–mathematics, socio-humanities, etc). If a school did not offer a

particular subject profile, students could apply to a neighbouring institution where it was available, although there were doubts that this would work in practice.

Finally, it was planned to extend take-up of the single state examination for entry to higher education. The examination benefited schoolchildren in rural areas who could sit the examination at home and receive a certificate recognised, in principle, by any higher education institution. However, prestigious institutions such as Moscow and St Petersburg State Universities were categorically opposed to the scheme and had retained their traditional entrance examinations.

In higher education, study would be divided into two stages: four years' general study for a bachelor's degree and a further two years for a master's. The reform was intended to bring higher education in Russia into line with the system in the West, as stipulated in the Bologna agreements to which Russia was a signatory. However, figures such as the Rector of Moscow State University, Viktor Sadovnichy, were sceptical, believing four years' study was insufficient to train a specialist.

In addition, the reform would end free higher education, except for certain key specialists essential to the economy. However, even these would have to pay back their fees within three–five years after graduation, either in cash or by working for a fixed period in a job designated by the state. Fifty six per cent of students already paid some level of tuition fees, but there were fears that the introduction of compulsory tuition fees would make higher education inaccessible to all but a minority.

One key issue that the education reform failed to address was teachers' salaries. The Rector of the Higher School of Economics, Yaroslav Kuz'minov, claimed that university lecturers' salaries were worth a quarter of those in the private sector. He recommended that by 2010 salaries should rise to US\$500 per month for schoolteachers, \$1,000 for senior lecturers in standard higher education institutions, and \$2,500 for research staff in prestigious institutions.

For a personal view on the new health service reforms, *Argumenty i Fakty* interviewed Dr Leonid Roshal', a leading medical figure in Russia. Dr Roshal' was incensed that doctors had been excluded from the reform process. Instead, decisions were being taken by economists who had no experience of the professional issues involved in running a medical institution, nor an appreciation of how head doctors had fought to keep the health service going in very difficult conditions over the past 10 years.

Polyclinics and local hospitals were the backbone of the health service, with local hospitals operating at the frontline in the provision of accident and emergency treatment, as well as supporting

specialist paediatric, surgical, and obstetrics and gynaecological departments. Current draft legislation cast doubt over the continuing provision of such free healthcare and proposed compulsory medical insurance. Dr Roshal' asserted that private healthcare was only an option for 10–15% of the population; for the rest, the right to free healthcare needed reinforcing in law. Yet the new legislation would allow hospitals to use beds for private patients; with no limit on the number that could be used in this way, the pressure on self-financing hospitals to reduce free beds to the minimum was inevitable.

Doctors and nurses' salaries were also a key issue in the debate on health service reform. The Government's proposal to raise salaries by 20% was woefully inadequate, given the chronic shortage of general practitioners and hospital nurses; only a 200–300% increase would attract healthcare workers back. Dr Roshal' pleaded with the Government to put health service reforms on hold for five years and focus, instead, on increasing healthcare spending. In 1997 the Government had agreed that 6% of GDP should be spent on healthcare, yet spending was currently half that level and compared poorly with an average 27.5% spent on social provision across Europe.

Museums in Russia Today

Novoye Vremya (No 1, January 2005, www.newtimes.ru/ – online version) published an interview with Mikhail Piotkovsky, director of the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. Piotkovsky had taken up his post in 1992 at a difficult time for culture in Russia, but under his guardianship the museum had been preserved and continued to flourish. He believed that museums were the most democratic of all cultural institutions because they represented the material heritage of a nation, its 'national idea'. Today, in a virtual world of television, computers and the Internet, they were particularly significant, because they contained real objects that stimulated intellectual enquiry.

However, museums in Russia did not operate in a political or economic vacuum. In the early 1990s museums had been left to sink or swim, with many forced to seek financial support from private companies and rich patrons. In many cases, nonetheless, this had proved a positive experience, stimulating museum activity. More recently, the reform of the social benefits system, replacing benefits in kind by cash payments, had had an unexpected knock-on effect on museums. As the new legislation came into force, a key clause guaranteeing direct state funding of cultural institutions had disappeared off the statute book. Another clause that prevented reductions in state subsidies to cultural institutions where these generated income from other sources had also been rescinded. Piotkovsky agreed that an appropriate balance between state funding and self-financing was necessary, but there was a 'moral limit' to how much income a museum could generate and he

firmly believed that the state had an obligation to support and protect culture. In his capacity as director of the Hermitage and deputy chair of the Russian president's Committee on Culture, Piotkovsky had fought – successfully – for the museum sector to be consulted in the drafting of new laws that affected cultural institutions. Most recently, museum staff had contributed to the debate on continued state ownership of historic monuments.

The Hermitage, which had celebrated its 240th anniversary in December 2004, was an outstanding example of Russian and world culture. Piotkovsky saw its mission as to make world culture accessible to all, both by attracting visitors to the museum in St Petersburg and by taking its collections out to the world. It had recently shown an exhibition of Islamic art in London – as part of its 'ideological' role to educate about world culture – and was also developing a network of cultural exchanges with major museums worldwide. Asked what he saw as his personal legacy to the Hermitage, Piotkovsky cited the abolition of admission fees for children and an end to the tradition by which previous directors of the museum were forced to leave the institution.

Nursery Crisis in Moscow

Argumenty i Fakty (No 05, 2.2.05, www.aif.ru – online version) raised the issue of an unforeseen baby boom in Moscow and the ensuing problems with insufficient nursery places. As the economic situation changed, parents were putting their children into nurseries and rushing back to work as soon as they were able. There were even tales of pregnant women queuing up to try to reserve places for their unborn children on nursery waiting lists – often in vain. Many of Moscow's nurseries were already full, with the crisis expected to peak in 2006.

No one had foreseen the crisis 10 years previously. At that time, some 1800 state nurseries and a similar number of workplace nurseries existed. Today only 140-odd workplace nurseries survived. It was illegal, in principle, to re-designate nursery premises for other purposes, but the law was being broken regularly as companies saw the commercial potential of prime-site buildings. Town planning regulations in the capital required developers to build social infrastructure, including nurseries, as part of any new housing development. This regulation was widely ignored, yet to date not one developer had been taken to court.

Around 20 new state nurseries were built each year in Moscow, but this was insufficient to solve the problem: a minimum of 100 new nurseries would be needed to meet soaring demand. In some districts, existing nurseries were already over-subscribed, breaching health and safety regulations. At the same time, many workplace nursery premises stood empty, as companies waited to sell them off quietly as commercial office or conference hall space. There had even been cases of state nurseries being sold off on the sly.

Teenage Substance Abuse in Moscow

Izvestiya (21.1.05, www.izvestiya.ru – online version) reported on research by the Russian Ministry of Health on tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse among Moscow teenagers. Carried out in 2003 under the auspices of a Europe-wide ESPAD project, a random sample of 160 secondary schools, 22 vocational technical schools and 10 technical colleges had taken part in the research.

Research findings indicated that 16-year-olds in Moscow were not dissimilar to their European counterparts, except in their predilection for cigarettes, beer and wine. Whilst the media, police, MPs, and parents tended to focus their fears on drug addiction, alcohol abuse was shown to be of greater concern. Almost 40% of teenagers regularly drank alcohol – putting Moscow in seventh place in Europe – with beer at the top of the list. Worryingly, wine consumption among teenagers had also doubled over the past four years.

Moscow was one of the leading European cities for teenage smoking: 40% of teenagers smoked regularly, with 15% having started at 13 years or younger. Some 22% of Moscow teenagers had tried marijuana at least once; amphetamine, LSD and heroin abuse had decreased from 6% in 1999 to 0.3%; use of ecstasy had remained stable at 2.5%.

Overall, the research findings indicated that teenage drug abuse had fallen, but – conversely – alcoholism had increased.

Articles selected, summarised and translated by Diana Turner

Listings

Art and Photography

Chelsea Old Town Hall

Kings Road, London, SW3

22 March–2 April: Exhibition of student art from Russia and Britain. Admission free.

Guildhall Art Gallery

Guildhall Yard, London, EC2, Tel: 020 7332 3700

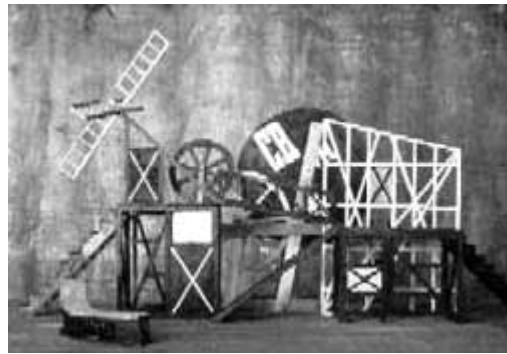
May 12–June 12: *Victory 1945: Cities at War*. Photographic exhibition to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE-Day with exhibits from the archives of Ria-Novosti (for more details, see under **History** below).

Manchester Central Library

April 7–May 11: *Victory 1945: From Leningrad to Berlin*. Photographic exhibition to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE-Day with exhibits from the archives of Ria-Novosti (for more details, see under **History** below).

Osterley Park House: Garden Gallery

22 June–3 July. Exhibition of student art from Russia and Britain (transfer from Chelsea Old Town Hall above). Admission free.



Meyerhold theatre set, Soviet Union (SCRSS Library)

Dance

Hackney Empire

London, E8, Tel: 020 8985 2424 (Box Office), www.hackneyempire.co.uk

13 March 7pm, 14 March 2.30pm and 7.30pm: Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* performed by the Chisinau National Ballet.

Film

National Film Theatre

South Bank, London, SE1, Tel: 020 7928 3232 (Box Office), www.bfi.org.uk/tarkovsky

To 30 March: *Andrei Tarkovsky Film Season*. Includes *Ivan's Childhood*, *Killers* and *There Will Be No Leave Today*, *Andrei Rublev*, *Mirror*, *Nostalgia*, *The Sacrifice*, *Tempo di Viaggio* and *Une journée d'Andrei Arsenevich*. Extended runs: *Stalker* to 30 March. Education events: 16 March 6pm–7.30pm – *Tarkovsky's Late Work: Emigration and Orthodoxy*, 23 March 6.20pm–7.50pm – *Tarkovsky, the World and Autobiography*.

SCRSS

320 Brixton Road, London SW9 6AB, Tel: 020 7274 2282, www.scrss.org.uk

22 April 7pm: *On the Way to Berlin*. Directed by Mikhail Yershov, Lenfilm, 1969. The film is set in the spring of 1945, during the last days of WWII, as the Red Army advances towards Berlin. English subtitles. Admission: £3.00 (members), £5.00 (non-members).

21 May 2pm: *Adventures in Bokhara*. Directed by Y. Protozanov, Tashkent Film Studios. A light-hearted comedy, based on a story by L. Soloviev and V. Vitkovich, about a loveable rogue who goes to Bokhara and outwits the Emir. English sub-titles. Admission: £3.00 (members), £5.00 (non-members).

Food

Pogrebok

Owen & Son Ltd, Unit 35, Wharfside, Rosemont Road, Alperton, Middx HA0 4PE, Tel: 0870 2021425, www.pogrebok.com

Russian food products and wine, including confectionery, pickles, frozen pel'meni, and kvas.

History

Ria-Novosti

Tel: 020 7370 3002, Email: ria@novosti.co.uk

To mark the 60th Anniversary of VE-Day, the Russian news and photographic agency RIA-Novosti will be mounting a number of photographic exhibitions from its extensive archives.

April 7–May 11: *Victory 1945: From Leningrad to Berlin*, Manchester Central Library.

May 12–June 12: *Victory 1945: Cities at War*, Guildhall Art Gallery, London.

Lectures

National Film Theatre

South Bank, London, SE1, Tel: 020 7928 3232 (Box Office), www.bfi.org.uk/tarkovsky

To 30 March: *Andrei Tarkovsky Film Season* with education events (for full details, see under **Film** above).

SCOLA, Russian Circle

Sutton College of Learning for Adults, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Tel: 01403 256593

April (date TBA): *14th Annual Russian Candlelight Dinner*.

20 May: Professor Lindsey Hughes on *Peter the Great*.

24 June: David Brummell on *Nikolai Gumilyov – Brilliant Poet of the Silver Age*.

SCRSS

320 Brixton Road, London SW9 6AB, Tel: 020 7274 2282, www.scrss.org.uk

18 March 7pm: Jean Turner on *The Huntly Carter Collection in the SCRSS Library*. Huntly Carter's unique collection of photographs and memoirs covers Soviet theatre and architecture in the 1920s–30s. Admission: £3.00 (members), £5.00 (non-members).

Music

Fairfield Halls Croydon

Park Lane, Croydon, Surrey, Tel: 020 8688 9291 (Box Office), www.fairfield.co.uk

4 May 8pm: The Russian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mark Gorenstein with Nikolai

Demidenko, piano, performs Tchaikovsky's *Fantasy Overture*, *Romeo and Juliet*, Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No 4 in F Minor*.

25 May: The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Daniele Gatti with Freddy Kempf, piano, performs Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker Suite*, *Piano Concerto No 1* and *Symphony No 6 in B minor, Pathétique*.

Leeds International Concerts Season

Tel: 0113 224 3801 (Box Office), www.leedsconcertseason.com

14 May 7.30pm: The Russian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mark Gorenstein with Nikolai Demidenko, piano, performs Stravinsky's *Fire Bird Suite*, *Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No 2* and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No 4*.

Publications

2005 Russian Guide to London

For further information or to place an advertisement in the new edition, contact Victor Khrenikov, Fitz International Ltd, Lutomer House, 100 Prestons Road, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 9SB, Tel: 020 8752 1456, Email: britain4you@rambler.ru

Comrade Pavlik: The Rise and Fall of a Soviet Boy Hero

by Catriona Kelly. £16.99, Granta Books, 2/3 Hanover Yard, Noel Road, London, N1 8BE.

Using Russian Synonyms

by Terence Wade and Nijole White. Cambridge University Press.

Travel

The Russia House Ltd

Chapel Court, Borough High Street, London, SE1 1HH, Tel: 020 7403 9922, Email: russiahouse@btinternet.co.uk

Specialists in Russian visa procurement, travel, accommodation, events, trade missions, courier service.

The SCRSS cannot accept responsibility for incorrect information or unsatisfactory products. Always check with the organisation concerned before sending money. Reviews and articles are the opinions of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of the SCRSS. © SCRSS 2005

Printed and published by:

SCRSS, 320 Brixton Road, London, SW9 6AB

Tel: 020 7274 2282, Fax: 020 7274 3230

Email: ruslibrary@scrss.org.uk

Website: www.scrss.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1104012