

1: Project MUSE - A History of Russian Theatre (review)

After a sold-out run at The West End Theater, Mikhail Bulgakov's magnum opus The Master and Margarita returns for an encore run at The Russian Arts Theater and Studio in The Master and Margarita, Or, The Devil Comes To Moscow, a stage adaptation by Jean Claude Van Itallie, directed by Aleksey Burago.

Tsentralnyi akademicheskiy teatr Rossiyskoy armii or is one of the most visited and loved theatrical venues in Moscow. It consists of a large auditorium which seats 1, people and a small one seating It contains the largest stage in Europe, providing the theatre with the opportunity to stage dramatic performances, concerts and popular musicals. The building itself has a fascinating history and is also architecturally significant. The theatre has a diverse repertoire. Naturally, patriotic performances about war have been at its core since its opening. The theatre is still directly connected with the army; it is even the place where people in creative occupations who are subject to military service spend their period in the army. A lot of classical performances are staged at the Theatre of the Russian Army too: Chekhov, Lope de Vega, P. Moliere feature in the repertoire. For the last 20 years, the theatre director has been B. Morozov, and many performances have become associated with him. Khrustalnaya Turandot or , a prestigious prize. The repertoire also includes some more modern plays by A. Several honoured and much-loved actresses as L. Pokrovskaya star in these performances. The theatre company was formed during the first Soviet five-year plans a list of economic goals, created by General Secretary Joseph Stalin to tour military bases. In , it was decided to build a permanent building for the theatre in order to mark its 5th anniversary. After a competition held to decide on the design, K. Every detail of the building was in keeping with the spirit of the times from its luxurious interiors with marble staircases to its chandeliers and bespoke furniture. The mural in the crush-room as well as the auditoriums were made by the best artists of the time, such as A. Another interesting point about the Theatre of the Russian Army is its layout. If you look at the building from above, you will see that it is shaped like a huge five-pointed star. This architectural solution turned out to be an advantageous one in terms of city design in general – the building does not only give shape to Suvorovskaya Square Russian: However, this played a negative role during the Great Patriotic War of when the unique shape of the building allowed German aviators use it as a guide. Voroshilov; he took his star-shaped ashtray, drew its shape with his pencil and ordered the architect to build it in that design. This is unlikely to be a true story but the unusual layout did an element of ideology which ended up causing some difficulties with arranging the rooms inside. Nevertheless, the theatre turned out to be big, spacious, spectacular, and comfortable. The grand auditorium deserves particular attention. Its stage was planned for large-scale military themed performances, hence its enormous dimensions – horses and tanks could be brought onto the stage there is no exact proof to this fact but some have claimed that real tanks took part in some performances. At the same time, the stage itself carefully designed, which opened the door for various landscapes and interior stage settings as well as backdrops for staging large-scale scenes. In a new Soviet theatre, there was no place for stratifying seats based on visitor class or amount paid. For this reason, the theatre has no box seats, only has a capacious circle. The seats are designed to be comfortable for all visitors. Indeed, the stage can be seen quite clearly from nearly every row. However, the front row of the circle is at the same level as the stalls so it is very uncomfortable to sit in these particular spots.

2: About "Russian National Ballet Theatre"

The Moscow theater hostage crisis (also known as the Nord-Ost siege) was the seizure of a crowded Dubrovka Theater by 40 to 50 armed Chechens on 23 October that involved hostages and ended with the death of at least people.

The reaction of spectators inside the theater to the news that the theater was under terrorist attack was not uniform: Some performers who had been resting backstage escaped through an open window and called the police; in all, some 90 people managed to flee the building or hide. The militant leader told the hostages that the attackers who identified themselves as a suicide squad from "the 29th Division" [10] had no grudge against foreign nationals about 75 in number from 14 countries, including Australia, Germany, the Netherlands, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States and promised to release anyone who showed a foreign passport. Demands[edit] The gunmen were led by Movsar Barayev , nephew of slain Chechen rebel militia commander Arbi Barayev , and threatened to kill the hostages unless Russian forces were immediately and unconditionally withdrawn from Chechnya. They said the deadline was one week, after which they would start killing the hostages. The statement contained the following text: Russia has taken away this right from the Chechens and today we want to reclaim these rights, which Allah has given us, in the same way he has given it to other nations. Allah has given us the right of freedom and the right to choose our destiny. And we have longed for a just solution. People are unaware of the innocent who are dying in Chechnya: And therefore, we have chosen this approach. This approach is for the freedom of the Chechen people and there is no difference in where we die, and therefore we have decided to die here, in Moscow. And we will take with us the lives of hundreds of sinners. Our nationalists have died but people have said that they, the nationalists, are terrorists and criminals. But the truth is Russia is the true criminal. By the time of the hostage-taking, the conflict in the embattled republic was killing an average of three federal troops daily. The pro-Moscow Islamic leader of Chechnya also condemned the attack. Any kind of misinformation caused hopelessness among the hostages and new aggression among their captors, who would threaten to shoot hostages and blow up the building, but no major disasters took place during the siege. The gunmen let members of the audience make phone calls. Two women managed to escape one of them was injured while escaping. There was considerable confusion in the auditorium. The terrorists believed she was a Federal Security Service FSB agent and she was shot and killed several seconds later. Because of the crisis, Putin canceled an overseas trip that would have included meetings with U. Bush and other world leaders. Four people, including a man waving some white fabric like a flag, entered the building about 1: Shortly thereafter, a man in his 60s, appearing feeble and distraught, left the theatre. The Interfax news agency identified him as a British citizen, but did not provide details. A woman and three children, believed to be Russians, were let out a few minutes later. Ex-President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev also announced his willingness to act as an intermediary in the course of negotiations. FSB Colonel Konstantin Vasilyev attempted to enter the patio of the theater, but was shot at while approaching the building and forced to retreat. According to the FSB, 39 hostages were set free by the terrorists on 24 October , but they repeated via one of the hostages an earlier threat to start shooting their captives if Russia failed to take their demands seriously. A hot water pipe had burst overnight and was flooding the ground floor. The hostage-takers called the flooding a "provocation" and no agreement had been reached on having the pipe repaired, the FSB spokesman said. The terrorists demanded negotiation with an official representative of Vladimir Putin. Relatives of the hostages staged anti-war demonstrations outside the theater and in central Moscow. The guerrillas agreed to release 75 foreign citizens in the presence of diplomatic representatives of their states. After a meeting with Putin, the FSB head Nikolai Patrushev offered to spare the lives of the Chechens if they released the remaining hostages unharmed. Leonid Roshal , head of the Medical Center for Catastrophes, entered the theater to bring medicine for the hostages and said the terrorists were not beating or threatening their captives. He said most of the hostages were calm and that only "two or three" of the hostages were hysterical. Some hot food, warm clothes, and medicine had also been taken in by the Red Cross. We have nothing to lose. We have already covered 2, kilometres by coming here. There is no way back We have come to die. Our motto is freedom and paradise. Now we want to be in

paradise. M, four hostages citizens of Azerbaijan were released, bringing the total number of hostages that were set free on this day to Gennady Vlach[edit] After dusk, a man identified as Gennady Vlach ran across the square and gained entry to the theater. He said that his son was among the hostages, but his son did not seem to be present and the man was led away and shot by the Chechens. Gribkov was removed from the auditorium and later found dead from gunshot wounds. During the night, Akhmed Zakayev , a Chechen envoy and associate of the separatist President Aslan Maskhadov , appealed to the extremists and asked them to "refrain from rash steps". The Chechens told the BBC that a special representative of President Putin planned to come to the theater for talks the next day. The Chechen fighters were on their guard. They began shooting, but there was no raid. And at 5 a. Deputy Interior Minister Vladimir Vasilyev stated that the raid was prompted by a panic among the captives due to the execution of two female hostages. The raid was planned shortly after the hostages were initially seized and the shooting cited as a proximate cause had occurred about three hours before the operation began. Moscow hostage crisis chemical agent Early in the morning before dawn, at around 5: M Moscow time, the searchlights that had been illuminating the main entrance to the theater went out. Inside, although many hostages at first took the gas aerosol to be smoke from a fire, [34] it soon became apparent to gunmen and hostages alike that a mysterious gas had been pumped into the building. The security services pumped an aerosol anaesthetic , later stated by Russian Health Minister Yuri Shevchenko to be based on fentanyl , [36] into the theater through the air conditioning system. The discovery caused panic in the auditorium. Hostage Anna Andrianova, a correspondent for Moskovskaya Pravda , called Echo of Moscow radio studio and told on-air in a live broadcast interview that the government forces had begun an operation by pumping gas into the hall: It seems to us that the Russians have started something. Please, give us a chance. If you can do anything, please do! We see it, we feel it, we are breathing through our clothes. It began from outside. After thirty minutes, when the gas had taken effect, a physical assault on the building commenced. The combined forces entered through numerous building openings, including the roof, the basement, and finally the front door. As the terrorists and hostages alike began to fall unconscious, several of the female terrorists made a dash for the balcony but passed out before they reached the stairs. They were later found shot dead. Two of the Alpha Group were also overcome by the gas. In a fierce firefight, the federals killed most of the guerrillas, both those still awake and those who had succumbed to the gas. Initial reports stated that three terrorists were captured alive the BBC reported that a "handful of surviving fighters were led away in handcuffs " [25] and two of them managed to escape. Later, the government claimed that all hostage-takers had been killed in the storming. Alpha team troops said that "this is our first successful operation for years". Evacuation[edit] At 7: Bodies were laid in rows on the foyer and the pavement at the main entrance to the TC, unprotected from falling rain and snow. None of the bodies witnessed by The Guardian correspondent Nick Paton Walsh had bullet wounds or showed signs of bleeding, but "their faces were waxy, white and drawn, their eyes open and blank. Ambulances were standing by and ordinary city buses were brought in. Medical workers were expecting to treat victims of explosions and gunfire but not a secret chemical agent. Initial reports said nothing about casualties among the hostages. The crisis HQ representatives went to the college hall, where relatives of the hostages had been waiting, and told them that allegedly there were no fatalities among the hostages. The first official report of fatalities among the hostages came at about 9: They spoke of health problems that were exacerbated by the three-day ordeal with very little food or water, or indeed, medical attention. Casualties[edit] The number of estimated casualties varies significantly because many hostages remained unaccounted and were not included in the official list see below.

3: Russian Theatre, Tallinn - Wikipedia

History of Russian Theatre April 3, Looking back for the roots of theatre in Russia we find that the first theatricals were pagan shows with dramatic recitations of fables, tales and proverbs, and singing and dances, performed by skomorokhi, traveling minstrels.

The approach of training actors developed by K. Stanislavsky is known everywhere in the world, theatre plays have been always written by the best writers, and hot performances express the tension of the epoch. Russian people have always gone to the theatre not so much for the entertainment but for revelation, for the truth. There are many outrageous performances the meaning of which is evident only to their authors. Nevertheless, some theatres keep the great actory traditions, create timely but at the same time high-quality performances, and tickets to good theatres are sold months ahead. Due to its nature, the opera art has stayed faithful to classics. Beside popular foreign operas there are many original works in Russia. Often they were created by the best composers of their times. They are still popular, both in classical and new interpretations, as the themes risen in these performances are still relevant: Opera scene also considerably enriched itself in the XIXth century. At that period M. Mussorgsky composed historical operas, and N. Rimsky-Korsakov composed operas based on fairy-tales. The beginning of the XXth century has become the time of experiments for the Russian theatre. Performances on social themes telling about the problems of various society levels also became very popular. Almost all plays by M. Gorky are about that. At the same time there appeared the profession of the theatre director. The director could easily interpret the play, make the action completely conventional and fill it with most incredible metaphors. This tendency is still actual. In the Soviet Union the theatre was strictly controlled by the state. Vampilov have returned to the stage. Their plays are worth visiting to understand what Soviet people thought and felt. As to the opera, the best works were created by composers S. The late Soviet epoch with its political defrosting and consequent stagnation became the cradle of new tendencies. The plot has become even more psychological and themes hot. The musical component of plays has got the new meaning, and the new for Russian genre of rock opera appeared on the stage. One of the best plays is *Juno and Avos* at the Moscow theatre Lenkom – this performance is still on and all the tickets are always sold out. In those years the stage got a galaxy of talented actors, many of which now manage their own theatres. After the collapse of the USSR theatres had faced hard times. Lack of prohibitions opened way not only to talented people but also to those looking for easy popularity due to disgraceful behavior. However several directions have gradually crystallized from the Chaos. Some theatres develop classical tendencies G. Tovstonogov Bolshoi Drama Theatre in St. Petersburg , some are in search for new forms Globus Theatre in Novosibirsk , and some try to show the tension of modern life in documental Teatr. And practically all the theatres try to combine time proved old plays or staging of classics with contemporary works by modern playwrights. At the beginning of the s the genre of musical came to Russia and quickly became very popular. As to modern opera, it is still in search for its own identity. Favorite actors The theatre stage of Russia has both many young and already enjoying deserved popularity actors. Most of them in parallel to their work at the theatre act in the cinema, which brings additional popularity but makes their schedule subhuman. The best actors and actresses: Popular theatres Moscow and St. Petersburg have always been the acknowledged flagmen of the dramatic art, however in recent years there have appeared very powerful theatres in provincial cities, especially in the Urals and Siberia. Petersburg the most popular theatres are G. Volkov Drama Theatre in Yaroslavl deserves attention. The best opera performances are offered at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. It is also worth listening to opera performances in the theatres of Perm, Kazan, Yekaterinburg, and Novosibirsk.

4: The Russian Arts Theater and Studio W 86th St New York, NY Performing Arts - MapQuest

seat theater. Lighting system. Projector and projection screen. Microphone. Please note the theater is not wheel-chair accessible.

Photo by Sergei Pivovarov. Ru On May 14, , Oleg Sentsov went on an indefinite hunger strike in a penal colony located north of the Arctic Circle. His only demand is the release of all Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia. In August , Sentsov was sentenced to twenty years for organizing a terrorist community and planning terrorist attacks. The second defendant in the case, Alexander Kolchenko, was sentenced to ten years in prison. Mediazona has published transcripts of the hearings in their trial. Around three hundred people have read them over the last three years. Before his arrest, Sentsov was an Automaidan activist. I would have liked to have seen more. Unfortunately, most of the armchair revolutionaries who were invited were afraid to go. The traffic cops and regular police also showed up at the starting line, insisting we not leave for our own safety. We told them our protest was peaceful. The arson took place at night. It was meant to cause physical damage while avoiding injuring anyone. Gennady Afanasyev, the second witness on whose testimony the charges against the two men were based, claimed he had been tortured and coerced into testifying against them. The Russian authorities wanted to stage a quick, one-off event to intimidate and crack down on anti-Russian forces. But two circumstances prevented the repressive apparatus from working smoothly. The second was that Automaidan activist Oleg Sentsov unexpectedly turned out to be a filmmaker, provoking a series of public reactions ranging from protests by the European Film Academy to questions about whether cultural producers would be capable of blowing up cultural landmarks. Segments of the Russian film community reacted to the situation with cold irritation. According to them, Sentsov was a Ukrainian filmmaker, not a Russian filmmaker, and he was not a major filmmaker. The owner of a computer club in Simferopol, his semi-amateur debut film, *Gamer* , had been screened at the festivals in Rotterdam and Khanty-Mansiysk, while release of his second picture, *Rhino*, had been postponed due to Euromaidan. The Ukrainian intelligentsia have equated Sentsov with other political prisoners of the empire, such as the poet Vasyl Stus , who spent most of his life in Soviet prisons and died in Perm in the autumn of , a week after he had gone on yet another hunger strike. The Ukrainian authorities see Sentsov, a Crimean who was made a Russian national against his will and is thus not eligible for prisoner exchanges, as inconvenient, since he smashes the stereotype of the treacherous peninsula, a part of Ukraine bereft of righteous patriots. Sentsov is an annoyance to nearly everyone, but he is a particular annoyance to those people who, while part of the Russian establishment, have openly defended him, although they have tried with all their might to avoid noticing what an inconvenient figure he has been. Although he was not a terrorist when he was arrested, he has become a terrorist of sorts in prison, because his trial and his hunger strike have been a slowly ticking time bomb planted under the entire four-year-long post-Crimean consensus, during which some have been on cloud nine, others have put down stakes, and still others have kept their mouths shut. Yet everyone reports on the success of their new endeavors on Facebook while ignoring wars abroad and torture on the home front. Sentsov represents a rebellion against hybrid reality and utter compromise, a world in which Google Maps tells you Crimea is Russian and Ukrainian depending on your preferences. The success of *Gamer* on the film festival circuit, which made Sentsov part of the international film world, and his current address in a prison north of the Arctic Circle beg three questions. What stances do cultural producers take when they produce culture? There are several possible answers. Culture is a tool for reflection, a means for individuals and societies to achieve self-awareness and define themselves. It is not necessarily a matter of high culture. In this case, we could also be talking about pop music, fashion, and rap. See, for example, the recent documentary film *Fonko* , which shows how spontaneous music making has gradually been transformed into a political force in post-colonial Africa. On the contrary, culture can be a means of spending leisure time for people with sufficient income, short work days, and long weekends. Doc have both recently died, while Artdocfest has finally been forced to relocate to Riga. Crimea is an enormous blank spot in Russian culture. Donbass and the rest of Ukraine, with which Russia still enjoyed vast and all-pervasive ties only five years ago, are blank spots. But cultural producers have to keep on making

culture, and it is easier to say no one is interested in painful subjects and shoot a film about the complicated family life of a doctor with a drinking problem and a teetotaling nurse. So, in a country whose population is approaching million people, there is a single international film festival staged by a local team for its hometown, Pacific Meridian in Vladivostok. It matters not a whit that one of them ordered a brutal assault on a journalist, nor that another was in cahoots with the companies responsible for safety at the Sayano-Shushenskaya Dam, where 75 people perished in . What matters is that the festival movement should go on. There is no room in this model for local cultural progress. There can be no free discussion generated by works of art when everyone is engaged in total self-censorship. After I went to Festival 86 in Slavutych, whose curators have been conceptually reassessing the post-Soviet individual and the post-Soviet space, I found it painful to think about Russian film festivals. This sort of focused conceptualization is impossible in Russia. It is of no interest to anyone. There are two more possible answers to the question of what culture is. It is no wonder the public has an increasingly hostile reaction to cultural producers and their work. Post-Soviet infantilism is total. It affects the so-called intelligentsia no less than the so-called ordinary folk. If you want to be a dissident, start down the hard road of doing jail time for misdemeanor charges, facing insuperable difficulties in renting performance and exhibition spaces, becoming an outsider, and experiencing despair. If you want a big theater in downtown Moscow, play by the rules. Like your average late-Soviet philistine, Putin regarded the creative intelligentsia with respect at the outset of his presidential career. See, for example, footage from his visit to Mosfilm Studios in . However, a few years later, he was convinced the creative intelligentsia was a rampantly conformist social group who would never move even a millimeter out of its comfort zone and would make one concession after another. A lack of self-respect always generates disrespect in counterparts. No one takes seriously the words of people who lack agency. Agency is acquired only by taking action, including voluntarily turning down benefits for the sake of loftier goals. I will say it again: At very least, it generates different stances from which to negotiate. Sentsov has made the choice between sixteen years of slow decay in a penal colony and defiant suicide in order to draw attention not to his own plight, but to the plight of other political prisoners. It is an personal matter whether we apply the scale or not, but now it is impossible to ignore. Thanks to Valery Dymshits for the heads-up. Translated by the Russian Reader.

After a sold-out run at Pushkin Hall, The Russian Arts Theater and Studio is pleased to present two encore performances of Enemies Of The People: Poetry and Music Under Stalinist Regime.

Map Is your child ready to see some more grown-up theatre productions? This theatrical company focuses on performances for young audiences. For decades, the theatre has remained a favourite for young Muscovites and visitors to the capital alike. The theatre is easy to find – it is located in the very heart of Moscow 2, Teatralnaya SquareRussian: and the MalyRussian: Such honourable neighbours demonstrate the popularity and prestige of RAMT. Tsentralnyi detskiy teatr or . Since , it has been called the Russian Academic Youth Theatre. The change of name was prompted by the extension of its repertoire when the theatrical company began staging productions for adults too. Updated classics as well as insightful contemporary drama productions feature at RAMT. This premiere laid the foundation of the Moscow Theatre for ChildrenRussian: At the time of its foundation, Sats was an year old aspiring actress, not yet an internationally recognised director. She worked in collaboration with directors N. Alexandrov the author of the Soviet Union and the current Russian anthem , and D. Kabalevsky – an ensemble of talented artists and scriptwriters. In the s, the theatre collaborated with famous writers E. Each performance targeted a specific age group. The founders intended to create a theatre which would engage its audience and be capable of having a positive impact on children. There was a museum affiliated with the theatre with both artistic and pedagogical resources. Leisure with children in Moscow – it is not only visiting the great Moscow circus or walking in the amusement parks. There are beautiful puppet theaters, water attractions, cognitive museums and masterclasses in Moscow. You can learn more about them on our website. It was built in to the design of F. Shestakov with the participation of O. Bovean Italian-Russian neoclassical architect who supervised reconstruction of Moscow after the Fire of The house was connected with theatrical life from the start, as A. Ostrovsky, a classic Russian playwright, gathered his famous Artistic circleRussian: Imperatorskiy novyi teatr or opened its doors here. At the beginning of the 20th century, the building housed S. The hall design in RAMT allows actors to perform at almost the same level as the audience. Theatre connoisseurs recommend buying tickets in the third row stalls to get the best view, but the first row of the circle is also a good option. Following this, most of the old team left the theatre. This was the start of a whole new period in theatre history, which intertwined with the lives of other generations. Since , the artistic director has been Alexei Borodin. Many of these productions can still be viewed at the theatre. Today, the RAMT directors are focussed not only on performances for children, but also on what is popular with the youth in general, while the names of contemporary authors stand side by side with those of Russian classics on theatre posters. The theatre goes on tour a lot and interacts with many of its colleagues abroad. Among its artistic partners are the Berlin theatre Freundschaft, a theatre for children from Minneapolis, Bosko Buha theatre from Belgrade, and a production group from Japan. Klub iskusstv or set up in , the Family SocietyRussian: Semeynyi klub or , the Theatre DictionaryRussian: Teatrovedcheskaya sektsiya or .

6: The Emergence of Russian Drama and the Theatre – History of Russian Literature

The theater scholar Mikhail Shvydkoi () was Russian minister of culture from to , when he became director of the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography.

Author Despite early governmental prohibitions against Jewish participation in the theater, the period of the late nineteenth to early twentieth century saw strong and even leading Jewish contributions to all aspects of theatrical production, as performers, writers, and directors. This degree of involvement, as well as the changing depiction of Jews on stage over time, in many ways mirrors the history of relations between Russians and Jews and, later, of the Soviet government stance toward Jews. Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich r. Then the characters Judith, Daniel, and Solomon appeared on the stage. Plays with biblical themes remained in the repertoire of subsequent court, seminary, and town theaters into the eighteenth century. Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century, however, the church prohibited secular representations of biblical stories. Tsetsiliia Mansurova as Beatrice and R. Vakhtangov Theater, Moscow, Most other classical Russian plays were unsympathetic or even overtly hostile in their attitudes toward Jews. Jewish characters were brought to the nineteenth century Russian stage through plays translated from other languages. The finest contemporary tragic actors played Acosta, including Konstantin Stanislavsky. When, in , Aleksandr Ostuzhev assumed the title role, the Stalinist context made the play a notable cultural event. When antisemitic tendencies intensified in the late nineteenth century, Jewish bankers and entrepreneurs were stigmatized in Russian society. Pavel Veinberg – , an actor from the Imperial Theater, became famous for depicting scenes from Jewish everyday life, most of which he wrote himself. His performances, in which he emphasized Jewish speech patterns, were sometimes called antisemitic. Plays by Jewish authors became an important part of his repertoire. A notorious theatrical event was the staging, in , of the intensely antisemitic Kontrabandisty Smugglers, initially entitled Syny Izrailevy [Sons of Israel] written by Savelii Litvin Efron and Viktor Krylov. Shtetl Jews, caricatured for their lifestyles and religious faith, are depicted as smugglers who kill the young daughter of their leader because she might disclose their criminal activities to the authorities. The play provoked sharp protests from broad sectors of Russian society. Its heroes, the son and daughter of a shtetl watchmaker, have been expelled from the university for participating in student protests. Back with their father, they befriend young revolutionaries, with whom they discuss Zionism and the Jewish question; the play ends with a pogrom. Because of censorship , the premiere was performed with Russian actors, but in Berlin. It was performed in Russia in , when censorship was eased. From Habimah by R. V gorode In the City by Semen Iushkevich – introduced the Russian audience to Jewish small-town poverty, which brings out the finest qualities in some characters and deprives others of their humanity. With the end of the NEP, Jewish characters began to be portrayed in the same manner as other Soviet citizens, with only minimal ethnic traits to distinguish them. The major exception involved plays about antisemitism, a phenomenon associated either with the prerevolutionary world or with enemies of the Soviet Union. In the s, Jews were often depicted as victims of Nazi persecution. The play was staged in many theaters in Moscow, Leningrad, and the provinces. Plays with Jewish references disappeared at the end of the s. The antic cosmopolitan campaign of the late s was too brief to result in antisemitic theater. From the s through the s, the covert antisemitism of Soviet policy was expressed in the absence of Jewish themes. Jewish figures returned to Russian theater only in connection with the growing efforts of Soviet Jews to leave the country. Among the hackneyed ideological works that appeared, Ulitsa Sholom-Aleikhema 40 Sholem Aleichem Street 40 by Arkadii Stavitskii was distinguished by a more complex dramatic view of the situation. The Russian actress Rimma Bykova played the Jewish mother with such drama, humor, and tenderness that her performance became legendary in Moscow theatrical life. The play Kot domashnii srednei pushistosti House Cat of Average Fluffiness; by Viktor Voinovich – and Grigorii Gorin Ofshtein; – satirized the antisemitism displayed by Soviet writers and bureaucrats. At the same time, the Broadway musical Fiddler on the Roof also began to be staged throughout Russia. A number of self-identified Jews who might have written such works took advantage of the possibility of emigration and left Russia. Jews on the Russian Stage For a long time, it was illegal for Jews to appear on the Russian stage; performance was

permitted only to baptized Jews or those with higher education who had the right to live outside the Pale of Settlement. The situation began to change toward the end of the nineteenth century, as Jews, particularly those involved in musical theater, found ways of getting around these restrictions. The blossoming of experimental theater in the second half of the 1800s and beginning of the 1900s also involved Jews, most notably Aleksandr Tairov, who created the Moscow Chamber Theater in 1898 and served as executive director until its closing in 1917. Among the Jewish representatives of the Moscow school of acting was virtuoso Tsetsilia Mansurova Vollershtein; she was the favorite pupil of Evgenii Vakhtangov, who held a leading position at the Vakhtangov Theater for the entirety of her career. Lev Sverdlin was one of the most talented students of Meyerhold, whose ideas he continued to implement. But a special place belonged to Mikhail Chekhov's mother: Mikhail Vodianoï was a huge presence in Odessa, known particularly for his role as Tevye. Among those who achieved success in cabaret theater were Iakov Iuzhnyi and David Gutman. Utesov brought to the Moscow stage a new hedonism and an indomitable temperament. His performances in operetta and cabaret during the 1920s made him an idol of the fast-living, risk-taking public brought to life during the capitalist interlude of NEP. During the same period, he gave readings of Jewish literature, particularly the stories of Babel and the poetry of Iosif Utkin, and sang Yiddish songs translated into Russian. Utesov later became a variety show and film star. Arkadii Raikin brought to cabaret theater a combination of satire, lyricism, and sharp intellect. A master of transformation who relied on an entire studio of mostly Jewish comedy writers, he created thousands of characters who constitute an encyclopedia of Soviet life. Evgenii Shvarts was the author of fairy-tale plays, in which the fantastic coexisted with elements of real life. The plays of Aleksandr Volodin Lifshits, written during the 1930s, became the foundation of Russian neorealism. Suggested Reading Viktoriia Levitina, *Russkii teatr i evrei*, 2 vols. Jerusalem, ; Viktoriia Levitina, *I evrei*:

7: 3 Russian contributions to theater that changed the world - Russia Beyond

Russia is deservedly proud of its theatre art. The approach of training actors developed by K.S. Stanislavsky is known everywhere in the world, theatre plays have been always written by the best writers, and hot performances express the tension of the epoch.

The first production, *The Comedy of Artaxerxes*, was performed here on 17 October. The Tsarina Natalia together with the royal children watched the performance from a special box behind a lattice partition. *The Comedy of Artaxerxes* was performed several times. In February a new play was shown, *Judith The Comedy of Holofernes*, about the Biblical heroine who kills the pagan Holofernes, leader of the army that besieges her native town. Alongside the plays on Biblical and hagiographical themes it included an historical drama about Tamerlane who conquered the Sultan Bayazid *The Comedy of Temir-Aksak*, a play which has not survived about Bacchus and Venus and the ballet *Orpheus*, about which we have only some very scanty information. The actors included not only foreigners from the German settlement, but also Russian youths, mainly young scribes from the Ambassadorial Chancery. The new royal entertainment was provided for most lavishly. There was instrumental music in the theatre in Old Russia only singing was officially recognised, musical instruments being regarded as attributes of the wandering minstrels. There was singing and dancing on the stage. The most expensive materials and fabrics were obtained from the treasury or specially purchased for props and costumes, Persian silk, Hamburg cloth and Turkish satin. All the plays of the first Russian theatre were based on historical subjects. But they were no longer the stories about the past so familiar to readers of the Holy Scriptures, chronicles, vitae and tales. This was a showing, a visual portrayal, a kind of resurrection of the past. It turned out that one could not only narrate the past, but also bring it to life, portray it as the present. The theatre created the artistic illusion of reality, divorcing the spectator, as it were, from reality and carrying him into a special world, the world of art, the world of history come to life. From this it is clear that *The Comedy of Artaxerxes* was performed without intervals, although the play was divided into seven acts and a large number of scenes. It was not easy to get used to theatrical convention. This can be seen albeit from information about the costumes and props. The author of the play found it necessary to mention this in the foreword which was addressed directly to the tsar: Mamurza addresses the most important member of the audience, Tsar Alexis, and explains the artistic essence of the new entertainment to him: Clearly and intelligibly he explains to Tsar Alexis that his glory too will remain forever, like the glory of many historical heroes. In order to help the tsar perceive people of the past as being alive, the author makes these people feel that they have been resurrected. Not only do the audience see historical figures before them but the figures themselves see the audience, marvel at how they got there, and admire the tsar and his realm. In his brief explanation of the content of the play, Mamurza does his best to draw the audience into the unfamiliar atmosphere of the theatre and stress the marvellous nature of the repetition of past events in the present. But what kind of life did the Russian spectator see before him? What sort of people did he see on the stage? The characters were in perpetual motion. They were remarkably active and energetic. They were not meditative. Their life was packed to the full. It was in the latter half of the seventeenth century that the word *kosnost* acquired a pejorative meaning. Tsar Alexis chose efficient men and demanded constant diligence from them: The life that the visitors to the court theatre watched on the stage was certainly not conducive to repose. It was a motley, changeable life, in which transitions from grief to joy, merriment to tears, hope to despair and vice versa were quick and sudden. The theatre was a mirror in which the spectator recognised and understood himself. Many ideas of European Baroque were reflected in this mirror, first and foremost, its favourite postulate that life is a stage and people are the actors. In the mirror one could also see a certain reflection of Russia in the process of Europeanisation, as with extraordinary energy she joined in concert with the great European powers on equal terms. This explains why Russian art of this period, in drawing on the experience of European Baroque, took mainly that which was positive and optimistic. The world of court poetry and court drama is a fickle world, full of conflicts and contradictions. But in the final analysis good and justice triumph, harmony is restored and peoples and countries rejoice and prosper. The type of professional writer and

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