

Tracking Lev Dodin Across Europe

By [John Freedman](#)

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This is the third in a series of five blogs devoted to the work of British photographer Ken Reynolds.

The St. Petersburg director Lev Dodin holds a special place in the work of Ken Reynolds. It was at a performance of Dodin's "Gaudeamus" in Glasgow that Ken first began seeing theatrical action "as black-and-white photographs" in his mind's eye. Only later did he actually bring a camera to shoot Dodin's work, however. That was in 1995, when he captured stills of Dodin's staging of "The Cherry Orchard" in three different cities: Bobigny, Moscow and Amsterdam.

Of the Russian directors whose productions Ken has recorded on film (and, more recently, in digital files), Dodin is second only to Kama Ginkas. Between the years of 1995 and 2007, Ken shot 11 Dodin productions, often traveling all over Europe to catch up with Dodin's Maly Drama Theater on its frequent tours.

The monologue for this blog was filmed at the corner of Lazienna and Kielbasnicza Streets not

far from one of the many forks of the Odra River in Wroclaw, Poland. It turned out to be a busy thoroughfare that I originally worried might hamper Ken's narrative. I was intrigued later to find that the opposite was true. The chaotic activity and street noises surrounding us actually entered into a kind of symbiotic dialogue with Ken. When he talks of something being "etched in the memory," a motorcycle revs up as if placing an exclamation point to the statement.

Please note that the next blog in this space will be a second guest contribution by Noah Birksted-Breen, a British director and translator who specializes in Russian theater and drama. Part Four of the Ken Reynolds series will resume in approximately two weeks.

Click on the icon below to hear Ken's discussion of photographing the works of Lev Dodin.

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