

Doing the Henry Miller in Moscow

By [John Freedman](#)

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It would be an exaggeration to call Moscow the new Paris. I can offer several reasons why that is so — but I'll let the obvious speak for itself.

On the other hand, like Paris drawing in the likes of Henry Miller, Ernest Hemingway and Gertrude Stein in the early 20th century, Moscow over the last 20 years has been one of those places where many an adventurous American has come to find themselves.

If you read the New York Times, the Boston Globe, Newsweek, Rolling Stone or almost any other major American news publication, chances are you are reading the work of men and women who started out in Moscow. If you go to the theater anywhere between New York and San Francisco, or if you watch television, you may well be seeing actors who have studied in Moscow.

[Caz Liske](#) is one of that number. Which is not at all to say that he doesn't stand out from the crowd. That is one of the nice things about audacious people — each is a universe apart.

Caz, for example, started out by studying Italian literature at Dartmouth College. He got into theater, found his way to Moscow, ended up enrolling in the Moscow Art Theater School and there you have it &mdash another American in Moscow.

Last summer Caz graduated from the four-year course at the Art Theater, having studied under the great actor Konstantin Raikin. "He's quite a professional," Caz said about Raikin with obvious admiration when we met last week in a cafe at the Chistiye Prudy metro station.

But even with a resume including Dartmouth and the Moscow Art Theater, life can be dicey at times. Displaying his healthy sense of self-deprecating humor and showing off his pedigree as a card-carrying member of the Henry Miller philosophy, Caz admits to scraping the bottom of the trash cans from time to time in search of something to eat.

Judging by his own description, however, I gathered that Caz would usually prefer rustling up street cuisine to having to teach English, as he does on occasion to make ends meet.

More often, however, he makes his living at his profession. He is currently rehearsing two theater productions with American colleague Odin Biron, doing odd parts in film and television (playing foreigners ranging from British producers to Estonian heavies), and doing voice-overs of rat mutants and aliens for videogames.

He is also a member of the band Doctor Lektor, and on Monday, March 8, he plays with the group at the Demokratiya club on Tsvetnoi Bulvar.

Click on the icon below to hear Caz tell his own story as he stands in front of the Alexander Griboyedov statue at Chistiye Prudy.

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