The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Perestroika's 'Mir Caravan' Runs at Kolomenskoye

By The Moscow Times

August 30, 2010



Expect fiery orbs, balloons, people as butterflies, bouncing artists and drummers in Slava Polunin's "White Carnival," which plays Friday to Sunday.

For six months in 1989, at the height of perestroika, 20 theater artists from all over Europe traveled from Moscow to Paris, giving 400 performances.

The Berlin Wall was still intact, and the tour — titled "Mir Caravan" — was a feat of huge imagination and ingenuity. The performance in what was then Czechoslovakia was called a rehearsal for the Velvet Revolution by former president Vaclav Havel.

Twenty-one years later, "Mir Caravan" has embarked on a new journey across Europe with seven different theatrical troupes and Russia's most famous clown, Slava Polunin, again playing an integral part of the tour.

Polunin possesses an astounding ability to transform and manipulate urban space. Most

famously, he organized a carnival in Moscow's Hermitage garden for the World Theater Olympics in 2001. Gigantic clay eggs and fires placed on the lawns gave the park a different character and aura.

"Mir Caravan" will be on for free at Kolomenskoye park from Friday to Sunday. All events will take place in tents and marquees along the park's waterfront, with Polunin's "White Carnival" the undoubted highlight.

Polunin has invited choreographer Shusaku Takeuchi and artists from a number of different Russian theaters — acts such as Nedoslov and Gentleman Pezho's Wandering Puppets — to take part in the show. Organizers promise luminous bubbles in the grass, balloons in the air, people dressed up as butterflies, drummers and more.

All the other troupes are also worth looking out for. "The Ark," from Theater Osmego Dnia in Poznan, Poland, is the story of a small town's inhabitants whose homes are burned down in a fire. The heroes attempt to escape on a large sailboat, an ark that turns into a ghost ship commemorating all those who lost their homes because of catastrophes in the 20th century.

The Italian theater, Nucleo, a veteran of the street theater movement, will show "Furious Orlando" together with the German troupe, Antagon. The show features humorous scenes from the life of a stage group working on an adaptation of a poem by Renaissance Italian writer Ludovico Ariosto.

Meanwhile, French troupe Butchinger's Boot Marionettes have drawn inspiration from Russian fairytales and will perform "Ogon Yagi," a puppet show about an old witch who lives as the master of an enchanted forest where human skulls grow out of the ground.

"Mir Caravan" is on Friday at 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday at 2 and 7 p.m. at Kolomenskoye, 29 Prospekt Andropova. Metro Kolomenskaya. www.mircaravan2010.eu. Free Entrance.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/30/perestroikas-mir-caravan-runs-at-kolomenskoye-a1033