The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Dutch Days Festival Brings Netherlands Culture to Moscow

By D. Garrison Golubock

September 09, 2013



Since the days of Peter the Great, the Netherlands have had a close relationship with Russia, with exchange of ideas both in cultural and economic spheres. The Netherlands-Russia Year or NLRF2013, which has been ongoing since January, is intended to further strengthen these bonds and will be culminating this week with the start of a five-day-long festival of Dutch culture, the Dutch Days in Moscow.

"The Dutch Days festival is set up for the Moscow audience to experience icons of Dutch Culture ... yet at the same time we want to surprise the public with projects by a new generation of Dutch artists, musicians, theater makers," said Sjeng Scheijen, artistic director of NLRF2013. Over the course of the festival, venues throughout the city will offer Muscovites a slew of events in all genres related to Dutch culture.

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Artistic Director

Among the headlining events is the exhibit of Modernist painter Piet Mondrian that will open in the State Tretyakov Gallery on Sept. 13 and is sure to attract large crowds. Mondrian will be accompanied by other artists such as Andrei Roiter, a Russian artist who lives and works in Amsterdam, whose works are on display at the Moscow Museum of Contemporary Art. Dutch photography will also be represented by Jeroen Toirkens' project "Solitude. In the Wake of Willem Barentsz," a collection of photographs from the Russian and Scandinavian north that track the path of Dutch explorer Willem Barentsz.

Apart from visual arts, theatrical and musical groups will perform in open public places like Gorky Park, such as a concert on Friday by Dutch group The Kyteman Orchestra and the Don Cossack Choir. "The Kyteman Orchestra is a unique musical phenomenon, and they mix hip hop, jazz, funk and even classical music into a new sound that is both authentic and natural. The members of the orchestra are young, but their performance is ambitious and mature," said Scheijen. A concert by Dutch pop music groups will also be held in Gorky Park on Sept. 14.

The Dutch Days festival will also include a retrospective of Paul Verhoeven films at the open-air Pioner theater in Gorky park. For younger Muscovites, a series of Dutch performances will be included in the Gavroche festival of children's theater, which will be going on contemporaneously. The Dutch Days will include a rich mix of arts and events, and every Muscovite will surely find something interesting.

The Dutch Days Festival will take place from Sept. 11 to 15. For more events, venue locations, and information see the website of the Netherlands-Russia Year at nlrf2013.nl.

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Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/09/09/dutch-days-festival-brings-netherlands-culture-to-moscow-a27501