

Sochi Organizers Hire 3,000 Performers for Opening Ceremony

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The 2008 Beijing ceremony impressed viewers in the stands and throughout the world. **Shahajan Moidin**

As the February 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi draw closer, the pressure is increasing for Russia to define the games with an eye-catching and memorable opening ceremony.

In recent years Olympic opening ceremonies have become an arms race of pyrotechnics, massive casts and exorbitant budgets. The 2008 Beijing games are considered the pinnacle, when over 14,000 performers participated in a performance that chronicled the history and greatness of Chinese culture and cost over \$100 million.

Olympic tradition has designated the ceremony as an opportunity for the host country to display the strength and fortitude of its people, and Russia is determined to be no exception.

The Sochi 2014 organizing committee brought in talent from across the country to its audition

centers in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnodar, Novorossiysk and Armavir, ultimately selecting a group of 3,000 performers. The group represents Russia's higher educational institutions as well as the country's performance and circus troupes.

Their numbers swell the ranks of the 2,000 volunteers already recruited to assist and support the games.

The 2012 London Summer Olympics were able to make up for a smaller budget by focusing on the strength of the well-known British brands and incorporating characters like Mary Poppins and James Bond. Whether characters from Russian literature and art will make appearances when performers take the stage in Sochi on Feb. 7 remains unknown.

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