

Moscow Celebrates a Night of the Arts

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The third annual Night of the Arts festival has Moscow's culture vultures gearing up for a long, delightful evening. Over 250 museums, theatres, galleries and other venues will be open until late on Tuesday, wooing visitors with special exhibitions, screenings, talks, meetings, and some surprise-filled trolleybus rides. There will be opportunities to see world-famous exhibitions in new settings, rub shoulders with the leading lights of the Moscow art scene, and even pick up some tricks of the trade.

“We want to give Muscovites a chance to meet the people who create culture,” said Ksenia Chudinova, the curator of the festival. “[Artists] may seem distant, and the event will allow the public to see them face to face and ask questions.”

Some of the festival's guests have decided to go further than that. Children of all ages may look forward to drawing and sculpture workshops with celebrity sculptors Zurab Tsereteli and Alexander Burganov, held, respectively, at Tsereteli's Art Gallery on Prechistenka, and the Burganov House Museum on Bolshoi Afanasyevskiy Pereulok.

In keeping with the motto of this year's festival — “transcending genres” — participants will be able to meet writers, filmmakers, visual artists, and actors, including Dmitry Kharatyan and the famously prolific Armen Dzhigarkhanyan. The performance artist Andrei Bartenev, known for his provocative stunts and eccentric headgear, will show visitors around his latest installation “Say: I love you!” at the Moscow Museum of Modern Art. The legendary animator Yuri Norstein, whose 1975 film “Hedgehog in the Fog” holds a special place in many a Russian's heart, will talk about the importance of fairytales in everyday life.

“Some of the speakers are known for their rare public appearances, and we are all the more grateful that they have agreed to join us,” Chudinova said.

The event is also an opportunity to catch up on Moscow's latest contemporary art offerings. Fans of the British-Indian sculptor Anish Kapoor will be sure to head to the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center, which is offering free guided tours of his new exhibition, “My Red Homeland.” The location is not accidental, given Kapoor's Baghdadi-Jewish heritage — and art lovers may want to combine a visit to see his sculptures with a visit to the acclaimed Last Folio exhibition, which tells the stories of Holocaust survivors one photo at a time.

Film buffs will want to go to the Kazan train station instead, where an unusual screening of Igor Ugolnikov's “Brest Fortress” will be held in the waiting hall. Others may opt for Anna Melikyan's “About Love,” which took the top prize at this year's Kinotavr film festival in Sochi.

Bookworms will enjoy prose readings by young Russian authors to be held “under a starlit sky” at the Moscow Planetarium. Another option is an open lecture by young Tatar writer Guzel Yakhina, who has been wowing book award juries with her debut “Zulekiha Opens Her Eyes.” Yakhina will be discussing her novel, which follows a Tatar peasant woman into the horrors of the Angara River camps. Suitably, the lecture will take place at the newly reopened GULAG Museum.

“We would encourage all participants to visit the new GULAG Museum,” said Alexander Kibovsky, the head of Moscow's Department of Culture. “Adapting the building that now houses the museum has been one of the finest renovation projects of this scope in the city.” For more information about the museum, see: www.gmig.ru.

Moscow's Contemporary History Museum also hopes to lure in audiences with its newly restored main site on Tverskaya. The palace, which once housed the city's English Club, is perhaps most famous for its sculptures immortalized in Pushkin's “Eugene Onegin.”

The Tretyakov Gallery, is also offering a range of exhibitions free of charge on Tuesday. The Krymsky Val site is set to be transformed into a late 19th century painter's studio — straight from the era of Valentin Serov, whose “Girl with Peaches” takes pride of place at his anniversary exhibition.

“Everyone is welcome,” said the gallery's director Zelfira Tregulova, “but please brace yourself for long lines!”

The Pushkin Museum is offering poetry readings with actors Natalia Arinbasarova, Yulian Makarov and others reciting their favorites and a screening of the documentary film “Genius

Loci.” The 2014 film by Alena Ivanova-Johanson will give the audience a glimpse of the city's informal art spaces and the independent-minded creative people who are their heart and soul. A Q&A with the protagonists will follow. The crowds here are likely to be daunting, but regulars need not despair. Winners of a quiz on the museum's history and current collections will be allowed to jump the line.

For a more contemplative atmosphere, go to the Peter and Paul Cathedral for a concert called “The Organ, the Duduk and the Saxophone.” Devotees of sacred music, contemporary and jazz will also be introduced to the Armenian duduk: an ancient woodwind flute which UNESCO recently proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. (Fans of the films “Gladiator ” and “The Russia House” will likely recognise its sound.)

The youngest Muscovites should also find something to their liking.

“One of the organisers' aim was to provide families with a wide range of choices,” Kibovsky said at a press conference. Those not practising life-drawing with Zurab Tsereteli or heading to Norstein's talk about fairy tales may enjoy a concert version of Tchaikovsky's “The Nutcracker” in the atrium of Detsky Mir, the Central Children's Store. And children of every age can jump on book-themed trolleybus tours of the Garden Ring, led by guides from Moscow's literature museums.

For information about events and registrations, see the Russian-language festival [website](#).

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