

Hand Me the Envelope, Please: Russia's Golden Mask Winners Announced

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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"Oh. Late Love" staged at the Moscow School of Dramatic Art took the best small production award.

Another season of the Golden Mask Festival wraps up this month. The sprawling celebration of Russia's best theater dominates Russian cultural life in March and April and spans all genres: drama, opera, ballet, modern dance, opera, musicals and puppet theater. Gargantuan in reach and influence, the festival shines a spotlight on the top productions Russia has to offer both at home and abroad.

Decisions were made by two boards of experts: one for drama and one for musical theater. The final awards ceremony took place at the star-studded Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theater on Saturday.

Ivan Popovsky's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" took the award for best large-scale production, while best small production went to the unusual production "Oh. Late Love" by the Moscow School of Dramatic Art. Maria Smolnikova, who starred in the latter

performance, also took home the award for best actress. Sergei Volkov, of the Lensoviet Theater in St. Petersburg, won the award for best actor for his performance in "Cabaret Brecht."

The Innovation award is always a lively area for discussion, and this year it was given to the acoustic theater production named "Soundscapes," by the School of Dramatic Art. The majestic Bolshoi Theater won the award for the best ballet, Russian classic "A Hero of our Time," while the best contemporary ballet went to the visually arresting "Cafe Idiot," based on the Dostoevsky novel "The Idiot."

In the opera category, "Khovanshchina," from the award ceremony's own stage, took the top spot while best musical went to "Hollywood Diva," by the Musical Comedy Theater in St. Petersburg. Awards for best director in drama and opera went to Andrei Moguchy for "Drunk" and Alexander Tiel for "Medea."

Twenty two years on and still going strong, this year's festival showed that the Golden Mask continues to be a cultural institution in Russia.

For information on performance schedules, see Calendar Picks on [our home page](#).

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