

Muchnik's Picks: Hauschka, Skriptonit and More Music in Moscow on the Weekend

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Hauschka's "prepared" piano which he will play at the Sound Up concert this weekend.

Hauschka/Facebook

With the festive season within grasping distance this is the first time the piles of snow outside your window actually seem justified. And like everything else in Russia, the start of winter is just another reason to celebrate. Check out our picks of the best concerts this weekend, including Hauschka and Skriptonit, and decide whether you want to celebrate at home or at a gig with hundreds — or even thousands — of other people.

IOWA

is a band that originated from Mogilev in Belarus, but soon moved to St. Petersburg.

Katya Ivanchikova, the band's lead singer, also writes all of the group's songs. IOWA keeps

churning out one hit after another and you might not realize it, but you've definitely heard a few of their songs, like their ode to “marshrutka” with the ironic lyrics “Eto ne shutki, my vsretilis v marshrutke pod nomerom 1” (“it's no joke we met in a marshrutka #1). On Thursday IOWA will be presenting their second album, so expect the club to be packed.

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The eighth and final concert of the fantastic Sound Up series will take place this Thursday in one of the most unusual places in Moscow — the famous Pillar Hall of the House of the Unions (Dom Soyuzov). It was built as a classical music venue, but in the 20th century it also served as a funeral parlor for Soviet leaders including Lenin and Stalin. As usual, Sound Up will combine contemporary electronic and neoclassical music and Russian and foreign artists.

This time the headliner is **Hauschka**, who hails from Dusseldorf, Germany. His real name is Volker Bertelmann and he makes music that combines pop and academic elements. He usually plays on a “prepared piano,” outfitted with objects such as ping-pong balls, bells, scotch and Tic Tac boxes. The Russian side will be represented by Kirill Richter, a young composer known for his soundtracks and signature style that can be described as “expressive minimalism.”

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Skriptonit was called a “newcomer” or a “rising star” just a year ago, when he released his debut album. Known for his personal and R-rated lyrics, he's now a star in his own right and can easily sell out venues like Yotaspaces. His real name is Adil Zhalelov, and he hails from Pavlodar, Kazakhstan. He is now signed to the Gazgolder label, founded by Russian rap artist Basta and he spends most of his time in Moscow. Skriptonit is expected to release his second album soon and fans are hoping for some new songs at his December concert.

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Vasya Oblomov

from Rostov-on-Don is a very different kind of hip-hop artist. Each of his songs is a commentary on political and social issues in Russia. By listening to the lyrics and figuring out their context you can tell whether a track was written several years ago or just recently. Oblomov is supposed to release a new album before they year is out, so expect some brand new material.

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Paperny's TAM has been around since 1989. Known for a blend of mainstream rock and Balkan music, it was founded by Alexei Paperny, a theater actor and director. Through the years, it has undergone many changes with the one constant being Paperny himself. At the Sunday concert the band will present the first album in eight years, "Nikuda" (Nowhere).

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