The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

From Chekhov to Shakespeare

5 Performances Not To Miss at This Year's Golden Mask

By Andrei Muchnik

March 02, 2017



Danila Kozlovsky plays Hamlet in the St. Petersburg Maly Drama Theater's violent new production of Shakespeare's classic **Maly Dramatichesky Teatr**

Golden Mask is Moscow's largest festival devoted to theater, which plays an extremely important role in the cultural life of the city. While Golden Mask has been around since 1993, it really came into its own and rose to its current prominence under Eduard Boyakov, who is now the director of the cutting-edge Praktika theater.

Lately, the Ministry of Culture has even got involved in nominating the jury members, which led to some protests in 2015. For this reason, two of the directors considered among the most prominent on the Moscow theater scene — Kirill Serebrennikov and Konstantin Bogomolov — refused to participate in the 23rd edition of Golden Mask.

Nevertheless, the festival is still a rare opportunity to see the most interesting

productions⊠from all over Russia. The festival lasts almost⊠three months, but we have picked five must-see⊠performances to look out for. Get your tickets⊠well ahead.

The Voronezh Chamber Theater (Kamerny⊠Teatr), one of Russia's better-known regional⊠theaters, is often among the Golden Mask⊠nominees. Last year's production of Anton⊠Chekhov's beloved play
"Uncle Vanya" has⊠been nominated in seven different
categories.⊠Director Mikhail Bychkov's version is a classical⊠interpretation of Chekhov's work and faithful⊠to the original text. Nonetheless, there are a⊠few quirks — many of the scenes take place on⊠multi-level bunk beds.

March 30, 7 p.m.

"Three Sisters" by the **Krasny Fakel** (Red⊠Torch) theater from Novosibirsk is a recent⊠production by Timofei Kulyabin, the man behind⊠opera "Tannhäuser," banned for allegedly⊠"offending religious feelings." In this version of⊠Chekhov's play the actors communicate using⊠sign language — viewers can read the dialogues⊠as subtitles. This production has already been⊠presented at Vienna's Wiener Festwochen.

April 16-18, 7 p.m.

The **St. Petersburg Maly Drama Theater's**⊠staging of
"Hamlet" is a fresh look at⊠the classic.
Apart from Shakespeare, director⊠Lev Dodin used texts by two of his predecessors⊠— Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus and⊠English chronicler Raphael Holinshed. Danila⊠Kozlovsky, probably Russia's top film actor right⊠now, turns out to be a villain rather than a hero⊠in a production that becomes rather violent.

"The Storm" by the **St. Petersburg Tovstonogov⊠Bolshoi Drama Theater**
is a
collaboration⊠between director Andrei Moguchy,⊠Alexander Manotskov, one of the country's⊠leading new academic composers, and Vera⊠Matrynov, former artistic director at Gogol⊠Center, now art director of the New Space at the⊠Theater of Nations. Manotskov wrote the music⊠to Ostrovsky's play, while Martynov thought up⊠a unique stage design, including curtains featuring⊠Palekh miniature paintings. Moguchy's⊠production of "The Storm" tries to recreate⊠theater as it was "before Stanislavsky."

The aptly named **"Post"** theater from St. Petersburg will present its very post-modernist production **"Field,"** by arguably the most avant-garde director in Russian theater, Dmitry Volkostrelov. Based on a play by Pavel Pryazhko, who often collaborates with Volkostrelov, "Field" is both a series of scenes from the lives of combine harvester drivers in Belarus and a description of the world as seen by a theoretical physicist. If that's not "post-theater" enough for you, the order in which scenes follow each other is determined by using a random number generator

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/03/02/from-chekhov-to-shakespeare-a57314