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All That Jazz

By Daria Beletskaya

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This Sunday, get ready for smooth▣sounds and syncopated rhythms as Moscow's▣annual "All Colors of Moscow Jazz"▣Festival opens for the sixth time.

The festival is more than "just a▣line-up of artists," says Anatoly Kroll, its▣creator and a prominent Russian jazz▣performer and composer. Each year, "All▣Colors" has a unique theme. This year:▣classical music in jazz arrangements.

The theme and date are intentional.▣In 2012, UNESCO officially designated▣the last day of April as International Jazz▣Day, a worldwide musical holiday.

"Every year I receive thank you letters▣from [UNESCO], saying 'we are grateful▣to you for taking good care of our international▣jazz family,'" says Kroll.

The line-up for "All Colors of Moscow▣Jazz" is impressive. The Peter Vostokov▣Big Jazz Orchestra, considered to be one▣of the best in Moscow, will perform.▣Their repertoire includes both Russian▣and foreign classical music.

Kroll has known jazz pianists Daniel Kramer and Valery Grokhovsky, also performing, since his student years. Both have a serious classical music background. "Grokhovsky found a style based on a natural fusion of jazz and classical music. Since Kramer and Grokhovsky are both unpredictable, their performances are expected to be a surprise," says Kroll.

Alexei Chufarovsky and Vladimir Petrov are classical/multi-genre pianists, but their jazz performances make quite an impression too. For the festival, they have prepared "Carmen" — an opera by French composer Georges Bizet — interpreted by composer Alexander Rozenblat.

Jazz pianist David Gazarov has been living in Germany since 1990 and touring all around Europe. For the festival he has prepared pieces by Chopin in his own jazz arrangement. At least one of the Chopin pieces will be accompanied by an orchestra, and Gazarov will also perform a duet with Valery Grokhovsky.

Anatoly Kroll's very own Akademik Band will also headline. Kroll and his bandmates have prepared an extensive program based on pieces by worldrenowned greats like Mozart, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, Gershwin and others.

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