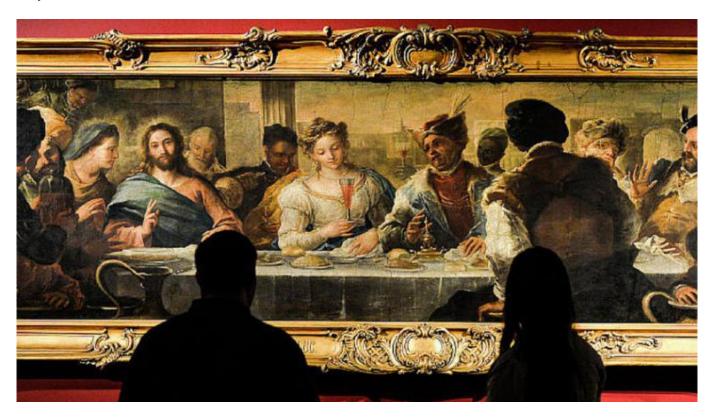


Museum Night: Moscow calls on culture to win 'battle of the sofa'

By Emily Erken

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Once celebrated as the city of 1,000 churches, ■ these days Moscow is a city of museums. On ■ the evening of May 20, over 200 museums, ■ galleries, and art schools will open their ■ doors to the public for the 11th annual citywide ■ "Museum Night" festival.

From 6 p.m. on, the festival offers a range⊠of special events in museum and art spaces: ☑interactive lectures, concerts, master classes, ☑historical reenactments and walking tours. ☑Most venues will be open until midnight.

The Russian Department of Culture sponsors ■ the festival, a large-scale attempt to connect ■ with youthful Muscovites and broaden ■ the audience of active museum-goers.

"One of the goals of cultural politics is to⊠form taste, to form habits and modes of consumption™of cultural content," says Vladimir™Filippov, deputy head of the Moscow

Department**v**of Culture.

The nocturnal art fest, which today is ■ among the largest cultural events in the ■ country, is one of a growing number of ■ similar "museum nights" around the world. ■ Moscow's Museum Night attracts a young ■ audiences, says Filippov, with the median age ■ at about 33 to 35.

"We are winning the battle with the sofa

for Muscovites' free time," he says.

"Sponsoring⊠this event develops the city's creative⊠economy."⊠Pioneered in the capital 11 years ago,⊠Museum Night is now a Russia-wide event,⊠taking place in cities and rural estate-museums⊠from Kaliningrad to Kamchatka.

The organizers hope to attract audiences

of all⊠ages and educational backgrounds with an⊠ambitious and varied program.

On Saturday, leading scholars and representatives of Moscow's major museums will give lectures at the Hermitage Garden on a variety of topics, from audiovisual art to the physiology of memory. Meanwhile, the Winzavod art space will host a series of theatrical sketches and performances in its courtyard on the theme of dreams. Its gallery spaces will also be open to the public.

For children and young people, however, ■Museum Night opens up potentially magical ■experiences.

Families with young children might enjoy ■a historical reenactment of the court of Tsar ■Alexei Mikhailovich (1629-1676) at the main ■palace in Kolomenskoye Park. The museum ■staff will play out a court scene in 17th-century ■costumes from 9:00-9:30 p.m. Children ■can also participate in master classes at the ■All-Russian Museum of Decorative, Applied ■and Folk Art.

Moscow's youth makes up an important ■part of this target market: To reach this ■group, the Department of Culture has hired ■minor celebrities—including cosmonauts, ■actors and other television personalities—to ■present their take on the museum's collections. ■Some of these tours will be videorecorded ■and available online.

For those who don't speak Russian, Museum Night will also offer musical concerts for a wide range of tastes. ■

At the M.C. Shepkina House-Museum, ■composer Misha Mishenko will perform live ■piano accompaniments to short films by the ■fashion designer Lesya Paramonova. For lovers ■of mid-century modern jazz, meanwhile, ■the Solo-Ts Jazz ensemble will play a concert ■in the style of Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan ■at the Tolstoy House Museum on Ulitsa ■Pyatnitskaya.

Meanwhile, the Moscow Museum of **⊠**Contemporary Art on Gogolevsky Bulvar will **⊠**present sets of live electronic music (dance **⊠**music, ambient and noise) all evening.

To facilitate transportation around the scity, the Tele2 telecommunications company has paid for a shuttle service between eight museums, including the Museum of Cosmonautics at VDNKh, the Jewish Museum of Tolerance, the Bulgakov Museum, the

State⊠Tretyakov Gallery's two branches and the⊠Darwin Museum. Attendees can pick up a⊠burger and coffee at the shuttle stops before⊠they commute to the next museum.

"It's great that in one day you can see the⊠best of the museums," says Yelena Sakharova,⊠a press representative for the TV channel⊠Moya Planeta, who attended in 2016. "After⊠Museum Night, I feel full of strength, energy⊠and creativity."

More information is available here

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