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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Get Your Book Bags Ready

Moscow's non/fictioNº20 book fair is about to begin

By Christy Monet

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A stand of children's books from last year's fair **Michele A. Berdy / MT**

Back for the 20th year running, Moscow's massive Non-Fiction Book Fair – officially called the International Book Fair for High-Quality Fiction and Non-Fiction -- will again invite thousands of book-lovers and hundreds of writers and publishers from around the world to present, discuss, and buy new books of every kind.

This year's book fair, also known as non/fictioNº20, will be held from Wed. Nov. 28 through Sun. Dec. 2 in Moscow's Central House of Artists. For five days, one of Russia's largest exhibition center will be home to scores of stalls filled with thousands of books to skim through, read, or purchase.

Special sections of the fair include not only fiction and non-fiction books, but also history, science-fiction, business, popular science, academic books, children's books, art books, antique books, cookbooks, and books from small publishers. Major publishers from more than

20 countries – including the U.K., Germany, the U.S., France, Norway, Spain, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Chile, Japan, and Taiwan – will be in attendance, selling books in dozens of foreign languages.

Each year the fair spotlights one country as its guest of honor, and this year's spotlight is on Italy. Numerous award-winning contemporary Italian writers, including Helena Janeczek, Francesco Piccolo, Sandrone Dazieri, and Rosella Postorino, will present new books and participate in seminars at the fair. At the close of the first day of the fair, there will be a discussion of the Italian literary giant Umberto Eco.

Several English-speaking writers are also on the non/fiction№20 program. Writer and translator Benjamin Balint will be in attendance on Dec. 1 at 1 p.m. to present to his new book on Franz Kafka's literary legacy. Later that day at 3 p.m. Rob Biddulph, British illustrator and author of a number of bestselling children's books, will be available for an autograph session. On Dec. 2 at 3 p.m. there will be a discussion of "Gorbachev: His Life and Times," the recent biography written by Pulitzer Prize-winning American author and political scientist William Taubman.

Of course, a number of beloved and highly influential Russian writers are also on the fair schedule. The Russian novelist, poet, and playwright Lyudmila Petrashevskaya, whose works have won several awards at home and abroad and have been translated into over 30 languages, will attend the fair on the evening of Nov. 29 to present her new book and sign autographs. On Nov. 30, Mikhail Zygar, editor-in-chief of the independent TV-channel Dozhd, will give a talk entitled "History of the Future," and the writer, literary critic, and political figure Dmitry Bykov will present his two new books.

Fiction writers Dina Rubina and Guzel Yakhina each will have books presented on the afternoon of Dec. 1. Finally, on the evening of Dec. 2, Andrei Kolesnikov, senior fellow and author at the Carnegie Moscow Center, will share his notes and commentary on the memoirs of his father, who was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.

On Fri. Nov 30 there will be special programming to observe Librarian Day and a Day of Norway, while, on Sat. Dec. 1, there will be special events for Baltics Day and the fair's Polish Program. Dec. 1 will also mark the opening of Oxford Russia Fund's "Horizons of Expectations" conference, which will take place as part of non/fiction№20.

Tickets are 400 rubles for one day and 850 rubles for a five-day pass. The fair will be open from 2 to 8 p.m. on Wed., 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thurs. and Sun., and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Fri. and Sat. The full program of book fair events in Russian and English is available on the website.

Central House of Artists. 10 Krymsky Val. Metro Oktyabrskaya, Park Kultury.

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