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Feature

SCR Architects and Planners Group 1945 – 1991

By Jean Turner, Honorary Secretary of the SCRSS

Since its establishment in 1924, the SCRSS has shown a constant interest in the architecture and planning of the USSR and Russia. A large amount of visual and written material on these subjects is held in the archives of the photographic and architecture sections of the Society's library. From post-revolutionary avant-garde designs to socialist realist architecture, from new industrial towns built under the Five Year Plans of the 1930s to the Moscow and Leningrad plans, from post-WWII reconstruction to *perestroika* and the development of national town planning initiatives in the newly independent post-Soviet states, the library retains invaluable records of all these periods.

At times leading architect members of the Society have come together to hold symposiums, arrange exhibitions and organise exchanges. There have been two high points in these activities. The first was immediately at the end of the war in 1945 when Britain and the USSR were both tackling post-war reconstruction. The second was during the period of *glasnost* and *perestroika* that followed Mikhail Gorbachev's appointment as General Secretary of the CPSU.

The SCR* Architects and Planners Group was formed on 10 May 1945 and included such illustrious names as Sir Patrick Abercrombie, Wells Coates, Erno Goldfinger, Arthur Ling, Berthold Lubetkin and Sir Charles Reilly. The group had the support of many local authorities that were happy to exchange their

post-war town plans for similar plans of the reconstruction of cities in the USSR. The group's first major event was in March 1948 when an *Exhibition of the Architecture of the USSR* was opened at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) by the Soviet Ambassador and the President of the RIBA, Sir Lancelot Keay. 4,000 people attended the exhibition over 17 days. The group continued to organise visits to the USSR and host groups of Soviet architects and planners in the UK until the 1960s, when its records cease.

In October 1985 Professor Arthur Ling wrote to the Society, saying that he felt a renewal of friendly relations on both sides would be helpful. *Perestroika* had led to a reassessment of architecture and planning in the USSR, taking on environmental, conservation and national concerns. Architects were looking to exchange ideas with Western architects and institutions. Therefore the time was ripe for the SCR to re-establish its architectural section and encourage exchanges.

While Dr Catherine Cooke arranged exhibitions of student work from the Moscow Architectural Institute at the RIBA, the SCR selected a Soviet exhibition entitled *The Mission of the Architect to Build for the People: Contemporary Architecture in the USSR*. This opened in June 1986 at the Polytechnic of Central London's Marylebone Road Gallery. It was followed by *The Restoration of Town Centres in the USSR* which opened in the same gallery in November 1986 before transferring in January 1987 to the Huntingdon Centre in Bath, home of the Bath Preservation Trust. During the exhibition's run in London, a group of Soviet architects participated in a seminar at the Polytechnic of Central London on *The City as a Cultural Phenomenon*, with invited British architects from the public and private sector.

As a result of these contacts, a major weekend seminar, *Perestroika, the Individual and the Environment*, took place in February 1989 at the Beechen Cliff School, Bath. Organised by the SCR, the seminar received the best wishes of HRH the Prince of Wales, Environment Ministers Virginia Bottomly and Lord Caithness, MPs Robert Key, Tony Benn and Joan Whalley, and RIBA President Rod Hackney. Many local architecture and planning organisations and individual professionals attended, as well as a visiting group of Soviet lawyers.

In the workshop on conservation and ecology, chaired by Jo Bossanyi and David Dixon, leading
Continued on page 2

Soviet expert on ecology and the law Professor Oleg Kolbasov was a guest speaker. He was concerned by the imbalance between economic and social developments, and talked of the difficulties of drafting laws to protect the environment while recognising the necessity of developing industry and agriculture and improving the economy. This workshop's green conclusions have a strong resonance today, concerned as they were with pollution, water supply, sources of energy, transport solutions and the operation of the profit-oriented market economy.

Community planner Alan Spence chaired the workshop on empowering the soviets. New developments in the USSR aimed at de-centralising the state structure were compared with the opposite trend in the UK, where local authorities' power was being transferred to a centralised state bureaucracy. Co-operative movements at local level were discussed and the garden city principle embodied in Letchworth Garden City was studied.

Sally Miller led the workshop on environmental education. Visiting academic Dr Boris Koreshkov, Rector of the Kolumna Pedagogical Institute, believed that ecology must be taught as an aspect of all technological and scientific studies. Prophetically, he felt that the global ecology bomb posed a greater threat than the nuclear bomb. The workshop's conclusion was education, education, education.



Ministry of Light Industry, Moscow, 1934 – Le Corbusier
(SCRSS Photo Library)

The workshop on designing for the city of the future was chaired by Professor Berthold Lubetkin and Jonathan Charley. Lubetkin, who had studied architecture in Russia under Malevich and Rodchenko, still had an unashamed commitment to the architect as servant of society. The basic theme of this stimulating workshop was the connection between architecture and the social system in which it functioned. Dr Andrei Bokov, Secretary of the USSR Union of Architects, brought material on the new Moscow City Soviet plan which was aimed at restoring and preserving its historic centre. His use of the term 'pluralism' provoked Lubetkin's comment "I am dead against pluralism, it is second cousin to opportunism. Pluralism means a diversity of

expressions and if art is a reflection of social conditions then this is precisely the reflection of disorder".

Following the seminar, an ad hoc group of architects and planners came together in 1990 with the aim of organising a joint British-Soviet Conference in Moscow on the subject of *Garden Cities and New Towns in the 21st Century*. Preliminary discussions resulted in a visit to London in May 1991 by eight councillors from the Moscow Oktyabrsky District, hosted by the Covent Garden Community Association, and a return visit by Hunt Thompson Associates to work on a community project in the Oktyabrsky District. At the same time a group of 12 architects and planners from the Urban Design Group participated in a workshop in the Moscow region of Pereslavl-Zalesky, supported by the Moscow Cultural Initiative Foundation. These exchanges were a great success and brought new understanding on both sides. However, the original idea of a conference in Moscow, planned for 1992, never materialised. It was replaced with joint British-Soviet seminars on the role of garden cities and new towns in the 21st century which took place in London and Letchworth in November 1991.

But there, sadly, the work of the revived SCR Architects and Planners Group ended, when the USSR collapsed in 1992.

This Society can be proud of its work twenty years ago to help create a joint British and Russian understanding of the dangers of uncontrolled development which can destroy the environment, the ecological balance of towns and countryside, and historic buildings. Subsequent events have proved how right we were to do so.

** Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR, since 1992 the Society for Co-operation in Russian and Soviet Studies*

SCRSS News

Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will take place on Saturday 20 May 2006 at 10.30am at the SCRSS premises in Brixton. Members' nominations for election to the next Council, seconded by another SCRSS member, should be sent to Head Office by 24 April. The AGM will be followed by a film show at 2pm.

Garegin Asatryan

In January the SCRSS received news of the tragic death of Mr Garegin Asatryan, First Secretary at the Russian Embassy, in a car crash in Moscow on 13 January 2006. Mr Asatryan had only recently replaced Mr Vladimir Molchanov in the post and was

the primary contact at the Russian Embassy for the Society and Soviet Memorial Trust Fund. Condolences were conveyed to the Russian Embassy and Mr Asatryan's family by the Secretary on behalf of both organisations.

Events

Friday 28 April 7pm

Film: A Mother's Loyalty

Directed by Mark Donskoi, Gorky Central Children and Youth Studios, Moscow. A sensitive account of Lenin's mother and the important part she played in his life, told with humour and charm. 82 mins, black/white, English sub-titles.

Friday 12 May 7pm (TBC)

Lecture: Russia's Relations with the West or The Last Empire: Russia's Relations with her Neighbours

By Professor Leonid Seleznev of St Petersburg University. We have been offered a choice of lectures: which would members prefer?

All lectures and film shows take place at the SCRSS premises in Brixton. Admission: £3.00 (members), £5.00 (non-members). Tea and coffee available.

Soviet Memorial Trust Fund News

Events

Friday 27 January

Holocaust Day Ceremony

The annual Holocaust Day ceremony took place at the Soviet Memorial on 27 January in the presence of the Worshipful Mayor of Southwark, Cllr Vicky Nash, ambassadors and representatives from the embassies of the former Soviet Union, ex-servicemen associations and members of the public. As has now become the custom, the wreath-laying ceremony was preceded by a brief service conducted by Rev Rabbi Alan Greenbat, after which Robert Wareing MP, Secretary of the All-Party British-Russian Parliamentary Group, addressed the ceremony. The ceremony was followed by the last post and reveille played by the Alberti Brass Band. Refreshments were kindly provided by the Imperial War Museum.

Tuesday 9 May, 11am

Victory Day Ceremony

The next event at the Soviet Memorial will be the annual Victory Day celebrations on 9 May at 11am. Please contact the Secretary of the SCRSS for further information.

The Soviet Memorial, which honours the Soviet dead of WWII, is situated in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth

Park, Lambeth Road, Southwark, London, adjacent to the Imperial War Museum.

Obituary

Terry Wade (1930–2005)

Britain's foremost Russian language specialist

Terence Wade was a quiet, modest man from Essex who became an internationally recognised linguist and holder of the Pushkin Medal, presented by the Russian Government for his services to Russian language teaching.

Wade went to Durham University to study German and French on a scholarship, gaining a first-class degree. But it was after he joined up for National Service in the early 1950s that his life's course was set. There was then a dearth of Russian linguists in the country and the order came from Downing Street that 5,000 men should be taught Russian in an emergency programme connected with the Cold War. Wade was one of the first wave of bright young servicemen who were drilled intensively in Russian at Cambridge University by the formidable and dynamic White Russian Professor Elizabeth Hill.

After passing the interpreter's exam, he was invited by the Joint Services School for Linguists (JSSL) to become a Russian instructor at military camps in Bodmin, Cornwall, and then Crail, Fife. Wade and other young intellectuals such as Alan Bennett, Michael Frayn and Dennis Potter enjoyed the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the JSSL, with its expatriate staff of Russians, Ukrainians, Estonians and others.

In 1963, from teaching for the military, he moved to the Scottish College of Commerce, in Glasgow, and helped set up a highly regarded postgraduate diploma in Russian. A year later, the college became part of the new University of Strathclyde for which Wade helped design the new BA in Russian. Returning to studies himself, he received a First in Russian and Polish from the University of London in 1968 and a PhD in Russian linguistics in 1977. At Strathclyde, he won promotion to senior lecturer in 1969, to reader in 1981, and was chairman of the federal five-language department from 1985 to 1993.

He served long years on the presidium of the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature and on the Committee of the old Association of Teachers of Russian, and its successor, the Russian Committee of the Association for Language Learning (ALL). He was also a member, fellow and avid promoter of the Institute of Linguists.

His *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar* (1992) has become the standard work in the English speaking world. This was accompanied by a *Russian Grammar*

Workbook. His later years after formal retirement in 1995 saw the appearance of three substantial works: a *Russian Etymological Dictionary*, a major survey: *The Russian Language Today* (with Larissa Ryazanova Clarke), and finally *Using Russian Synonyms* [see review below].

Terry Wade was a rare example of a scholar, teacher and administrator who did all three things equally well. His monuments are his publications, the students he inspired and the loyalty and love of his colleagues. May we all aspire to be like him.

Andrew Jameson

Book and DVD Reviews

Using Russian Synonyms

By Terence Wade and Nijole White
(Cambridge University Press, 2004,
Paperback, 633pp, ISBN: 0521794056)

When asked to review *Using Russian Synonyms*, I approached the task with great interest, having previously found Professor Wade's *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar* (Blackwell, 1992) to be an invaluable reference support while studying Russian at college.

The authors of *Using Russian Synonyms* have set out to overcome the limitations of earlier dictionaries of synonyms. They assert that "most Russian synonym dictionaries are in Russian and designed for Russians, and can be used as thesauri", as a native speaker will instinctively select the most appropriate word for their purposes, having an innate familiarity with the shades of meaning of each option listed. This work aims to help non-native students build vocabulary and consolidate their use of words in context. It comprises around 950 'frames' or word groups, with a list of synonyms classified on a five-point scale of register from least to most formal: R1 – demotic, R2 – colloquial, R3 – neutral, R4 – bookish, R5 – elevated.

For example, the действительно (really) frame reads as follows:

воистину (R5)
in truth, indeed

вправду (R1)
really, in reality

в самом деле (R2)
really, indeed

действительно (R2)
really

поистине (R3)
truly, indeed, in truth

Each of these words or phrases is accompanied by supporting examples of its use in sentences.

This book is an excellent vocabulary builder for serious students of Russian and will also serve as a useful tool for professional linguists such as teachers and translators.

Reviewed by Wendy Ansley

Films by Alexander Sokurov:

Spiritual Voices and A Soldier's Dream
2 discs, Ideale audience DVD9DS04

Confession
2 discs, Ideale audience DVD9DS03

Sonata for Viola
1 disc, Ideale audience DVD5DS14

In 1979 student director Alexander Sokurov was ejected from the state film school for Formalism but, with help from Andrei Tarkovsky, got a job at Lenfilm. However, all his films were withheld until *glasnost*, when the 'unshelving commission' released a flood of banned material.

The reasons for the bans were sometimes difficult to comprehend, but were not always politically inspired, although in retrospect some people took the opportunity to mythologise their suffering. In Sokurov's case, the problem seems to have been the introspective style and concentration on suffering. He is usually seen as the spiritual heir of Tarkovsky but, though the older director praised his work, Sokurov distances himself. Nevertheless, his spiritual outlook, leisurely pace, painterly images and richly layered soundtracks are obviously indebted to his predecessor.

One of the banned films was the 75-minute *Dmitri Shostakovich: Viola Sonata* (1980), named after the composer's last composition. Using only archive footage and recordings, Sokurov follows the composer's life but, rather than stressing the political problems, he concentrates on Shostakovich's physical frailty, at one point even having the very film disintegrate to underline the point. One of the most touching moments is a telephone conversation with David Oistrakh about the Second Violin Concerto. The film was only saved by giving up the negative while keeping a print, cut up and hidden in three different places.

After *glasnost* Sokurov became more prolific and the melancholy introspection increased. *Spiritual Voices* (*Dukhovnye golosa*, 1995) is particularly radical. At 340 minutes, it is rarely shown, but its challenge is not simply its length: it opens with an unmoving 30-minute shot of the light changing over a snowy landscape, whilst the narrator (Sokurov) contemplates art and the artist, and specifically the composers Mozart, Messaien and Beethoven. This

turns out to be a soldier's dream as the rest of the film, set on an isolated military outpost on the Afghan-Tadjikistan border, follows the soldiers' sometimes desultory conversations about their hopes and fears, punctuated by occasional activity.

Confession (Povinnost', 1998) has a similar plan but follows the ruminations of a ship's captain on a starlit wintry night. Long shots of falling snow or sleeping sailors are accompanied by contemplations of work, the weather, companionship, responsibility. Yet for all the apparent banality, the film has a strange atmosphere of aching nostalgia.

These descriptions may make the films seem boring but they are often very beautiful to look at and once your metabolism has slowed, you begin to empathise with these young men in painful and difficult situations and with the narrator's attempts to make artistic and spiritual sense of the world.

All the films are Region 0, NTSC discs and have English, French, German, Italian and Spanish subtitles, as well as the option to have none. There are also DVD-Rom extras with background information on the director and his films, and *Spiritual Voices* comes with the 11-minute film *A Soldier's Dream (Soldatskii son, 1993)*, similar in style to its partner.

Encouragingly, Ideale audience hopes to release further Sokurov titles on DVD. In the meantime, these discs are an excellent way to get to grips with some of Sokurov's less well-known and previously difficult-to-see work.

Reviewed by John Riley

Vernost' dolgu i lyudyam

By KM Koroleva (Ukraine, 2003, 156pp)

These are the memoirs of Ukrainian doctor and WWII veteran Kseniya Koroleva, kindly donated by the author through Valma Welch, a long-time SCRSS member.

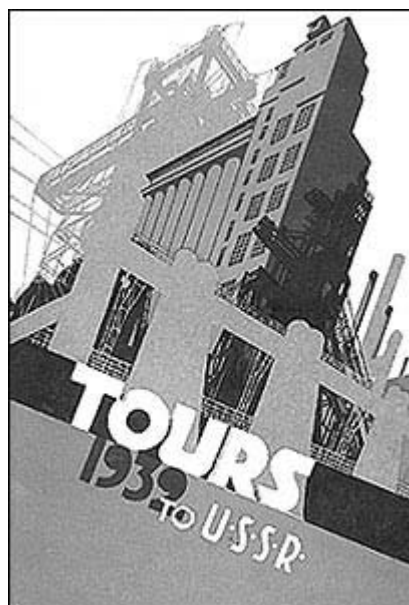
The book covers Kseniya's life from medical school, through WWII, to her post-war professional life as head of the Udarnik Sanatorium in Yevpatoriya. Born in the Ukraine, she finished medical school in Odessa in 1939 and was already working as a junior doctor at one of the Black Sea Fleet airbases near Sevastopol when the Germans invaded the USSR in June 1941. The period 1941–42 is the primary focus of these memoirs, recording the heroic work of the Soviet pilots operating on the Black Sea front line and the nitty-gritty of life at an airbase in wartime.

There are insights into life as a frontline doctor: efforts to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among servicemen, accompanying pilots with stress disorders on assessment flights following treatment, working around the clock in the operating room as scores of wounded were brought in during the Nazis' third assault on Sevastopol in June 1942.

However, Kseniya's memoirs focus on the bravery of individual Soviet pilots. This is a roll call of her colleagues: their names and personal histories, details of reconnaissance flights and bombing raids, of selfless actions and tragic deaths, all recorded as an act of 'duty' (as suggested by the book's title). Those deaths included her husband, Captain Ivan Chebanik, in whose unit she served. When he was killed in June 1942, Kseniya was expecting their first child and, once her daughter was born and moved to her relatives for safety, she declined the offer to demobilise and continued working at the front line until the evacuation from Sevastopol in early 1943.

This is a brief but interesting account of one woman's wartime experiences and of the servicemen alongside whom she worked. A signed copy of the book, which is in Russian, is available in the SCRSS Library.

Reviewed by Diana Turner



Intourist poster, 1939 (SCRSS Library)

Gems from the SCRSS Library

In this new series, the SCRSS's Honorary Librarian Jane Rosen selects and reviews gems from the Society's library collection.

Moskva Rekonstruiyuetsya [Moscow under Reconstruction]

Moskva Rekonstruiyuetsya was published in Moscow in 1938. Its subject matter – the reconstruction of Moscow in the 1930s – is an interesting one and the book is a wonderful typographical and artistic reflection of the theme. The editor is VM Gorfunkl, the text is by Viktor Shklovsky and the book is designed by Rodchenko and Stepanova.

Those last two names will give you some idea of what to expect. The book is full of beautifully executed photographs by some of the best photographers and artists of the day, such as G Petrusov and E Langman. Although there is no acknowledgement, some of the photographs must be Rodchenko's, snapped with his eye for detail and angle. There is text, but the book is designed to help people to understand the reconstruction. There are foldouts, cutaways and panoramic views of regions of Moscow. There are devices that show the reader how an area or building used to be and, on opening a flap, reveal the scene as it is now or will be. It is an extravaganza of photographs, pull-outs and cross sections, a miracle of paper engineering. The innovation in the design of the reconstruction of Moscow is reflected in the physical make-up of the book.

Moskva Rekonstruiyuetsya is available to view in the SCRSS Library under supervision. It is supported by a collection of other important architecture and planning titles.

Jane Rosen

From the Russian Press

Fears for Moscow's Historic Buildings

Pravda published an interview with Yuri Aleksandrov, a well-known academic, writer on Moscow history and architecture, and member of the Moscow City Architecture commission of experts ("Nekhoroshiye" kvartiry Moskvy: vzglyad spetsialista', 14.12.05, www.pravda.ru). Among other topics, he reflected on the dangers facing Moscow's historic buildings.

He was highly critical of the current trend in Moscow for demolishing historic buildings and replacing them with modern copies. He asserted that no one would dream of taking a painting by a famous artist and, instead of restoring it, wipe it clean and paint it afresh: the painting would lose its market value and become merely a worthless copy. The same applied to historic buildings, a point demonstrated by comparing the current house at number 23, Bolshaya Polyanka with illustrations of the original in Volume 4 of *Pamyatniki arkhitektury Moskvy* [Architectural Monuments of Moscow]: the two had nothing in common.

This trend in architecture was driven ostensibly by the high cost of restoring and maintaining historic buildings, making it more profitable to demolish and replace them. However, for Mr Aleksandrov, this was not a tenable argument: after WWII, Russia had been far poorer than today, yet painstaking efforts had been made to restore historic buildings and towns across the country. There had been a common will to do something and resources had been found.

The current law on the preservation of ancient monuments had come into force in the 1970s, but current events showed that it was easy to circumvent. In the Soviet period only a handful of prosecutions had been brought in this area; in the post-Soviet period there had not been a single case.

Nonetheless, in Mr Aleksandrov's view the main problem was that public opinion was largely indifferent to the fate of Moscow's cultural heritage and many buildings had been lost as a result. The population of Moscow had grown rapidly over the last few years and newly arrived residents were often uninterested in their surroundings. However, he warned that it was precisely Moscow's historic buildings and monuments that attracted visitors from all over the world. The city risked losing its status as a top tourist destination if all that were to remain were concrete mansions.

It was up to architectural specialists to raise the Government's cultural awareness and educate it on what constituted true value. It was wrong, he asserted, that the Church of Christ the Saviour, which had been rebuilt in concrete and differed from its historic predecessor, was being recommended for inclusion in the UNESCO list of world heritage sites – at the same time as dozens of genuine historic buildings designed by great Russian architects such as Kazakov, Bazhenov and Shekhtel' were being demolished.

Apartment Building Boom Reaches Outer Moscow

Kommersant'-Dom reported on how accelerated construction of private apartment blocks in outer Moscow had now reached the desirable Rublyovo-Uspenskoye Highway ('Mnogoetazhnaya Rublyoka', 21.2.06, www.kommersant.ru). While many private estates and detached houses had been built along the Rublyovka in recent years, the move to multi-storey construction was due to reduced availability of building plots, as well as high land and utility costs. There was no interest among investors and buyers in existing Soviet-era apartments in the area.

Some existing owners of private houses along the Rublyovka were buying new apartments for relatives or domestic staff, rather than sharing their own home. Others, moving out from the Moscow suburbs, were choosing to buy apartments in luxury low-rise blocks as an intermediate stage between city living and quiet rural comfort.

Currently, the tendency was for five to seven-storey blocks. Prices for new apartments under construction ranged from \$2,000 – \$7,000 per square metre, depending on location and floor (higher floors being more expensive). However, the high density of building along the Rublyovka was putting enormous strain on local utilities (water, electricity, etc), with a knock-on effect on connecting both new apartment blocks and detached houses. Developers had two options: either organise and pay themselves for

bringing in utilities from some distance or use existing utilities following the demolition of old buildings.

The high density of building also impacted in other ways. On the one hand, the higher the residential population, the lower the service and utility charges. On the other hand, residents who had moved to the country for peace and quiet did not take kindly to being surrounded by large number of neighbours, while others were finding it difficult to cope with the stress of endless traffic jams. Finally, although there were concerns that building plots were now in short supply, the president of the Russian Guild of Estate Agents was optimistic: if every scrap of land along the entire length of the Rublyovka were to be built on, construction could still continue actively for another 20 years.

Articles selected, summarised and translated by Diana Turner

Listings

Art

Hermitage Rooms

Somerset House, London WC2, Tel: 020 7845 4600, www.hermitagerooms.com

30 March – 3 September: *The Road to Byzantium: Luxury Arts of Antiquity*. This major exhibition brings to London for the first time an extraordinary collection of classical Greek, Roman and Byzantine luxury artworks from the State Hermitage Museum.

Charity Fundraising

ChildAid

20 April 5.30pm, Soho Curzon Cinema, London
ChildAid hosts the London premiere of the new, highly acclaimed documentary film *Ballets Russes*, attended by the producers / directors Dan Geller and Dayne Goldfine, and Freddie Franklin, former dancer with the Ballets Russes. Comic writer Tony Hawks presents the new ChildAid publicity film followed by the main feature. Champagne reception, performance by classical star Alex Prior and celebration party with Russian food. Raffle of Ballets Russes memorabilia. Tickets available from Christine at ChildAid: Email: development@childaidrr.org.uk, Tel: 020 8460 6046. Ticket price: £50 (includes all the above entertainment and raffle ticket).

Dance

Bolshoi Ballet

UK Spring Tour 2006:

Repertoire: *Spartacus, Swan Lake, Giselle*, Gala Programme. Telephone venues for repertoire.

4–8 April: Salford, The Lowry, Box Office: 0870 787 5793, www.thelowry.com

10–15 April: Nottingham Royal Concert Hall, Box Office: 0115 989 5555, www.royalcentrenottingham.co.uk

18–22 April: Southampton, The Mayflower, Box Office: 023 8071 1811, www.the-mayflower.com

Summer Season at the Royal Opera House:

Royal Opera House, Bow Street, Covent Garden, London WC2

31 July – 19 August. Repertoire: *The Pharaoh's Daughter, Swan Lake, Cinderella, The Bright Stream, Go For Broke, Pique Dame, Symphony In C, Don Quixote*. Booking opens 10 May – see www.victorhochhauser.co.uk for details / dates.

Mariinsky (Kirov) Ballet

ENO, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2, Box Office: 0870 145 0200, www.eno.org

Shostakovich on Stage: Centenary Festival of Opera and Ballet. Artistic Director: Valery Gergiev.

25, 26 & 27 July 7.30pm: Mixed programme including *Leningrad Symphony* and *The Bedbug*

28 July 7.30pm & 29 July 2.30pm & 7.30pm: *The Golden Age*

Film

National Film Theatre

South Bank London SE1, Box Office: 020 7928 3232

18 April 8.15pm (NFT2) & 29 April 3.20pm (NFT1): *Aelita* directed by Yakov Protazanov, USSR, 1924. A tongue-in-cheek expedition to Mars.

30 April 3pm (NFT2): *The General Line* (AKA *The Old and the New*) directed by Sergei Eisenstein, USSR, 1929. About the changes in the Soviet countryside and collectivisation.

Riverside Studios Cinema

Crisp Road, Hammersmith, London W6, Box Office: 020 8237 1111, www.riversidestudios.co.uk

9 April 2pm: *Children from Leningradsky* directed by Hanna Polak / Andrzej Celinski, Poland, 2004, subtitles. Nominated for a Best Short Documentary Oscar, this shocking film explores the reality of homeless children living in Russia today.

SCRSS

320 Brixton Road, London, SW9, Tel: 020 7274 2282, www.scrss.org.uk

28 April 7pm: *A Mother's Loyalty*. [See page 3.]

Language Courses

Essex University Residential Summer Russian Course

Essex University, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ, Contact: Larissa Wymer, Department of Language and Linguistics, Tel: 01206 872196 (Secretary), Email: wymere@essex.ac.uk. 17–28 July (one or two weeks). Four levels of tuition. Tuition fees: £190 (one week), £360 (two weeks). Self-catering accommodation available.

Lectures

Pushkin Club

www.pushkinclub.org.uk

25 April 7.30pm: *Chagall's illustrations to Gogol's 'Dead Souls'* by Stanley Mitchell

9 May 7.30pm: *Contemporary Russian Theatre* by Sasha Dugdale

23 May 7.30pm: Hamid Ismailov and Robert Chandler read from and talk about Hamid Ismailov's *The Railway Line*, translated by Robert Chandler

6 June 7.30pm: *Campaign against Psychiatric Abuse in the 1970's USSR*

SCOLA Russian Circle

Sutton College of Learning for Adults, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, Tel: 01403 256593

5 April 7pm: Special Russian meal – 15th annual 'Candlelight' dinner

5 May 7pm: *Paintings of Socialist Realism in the former Soviet Union* by Tamara Demidenko

9 June 7pm: Live concert: *Russian Composers' Pieces for Children* by Valentina Koval

SCRSS

320 Brixton Road, London, SW9, Tel: 020 7274 2282, www.scrss.org.uk

12 May 7pm (TBC): Professor Leonid Seleznev of St Petersburg University talks on Russian history – title to be finalised. [See page 3.]

Music

BBC Proms

www.bbc.co.uk/proms/

14 July – 9 September. The Proms will include many Shostakovich performances in his centenary year. The Proms Guide is published at the end of April – see the BBC Proms website for details.

Bolshoi Opera

Royal Opera House, Bow Street, Covent Garden, London WC2

Booking opens 10 May – see www.victorhochhauser.co.uk/ for details.

25–26 July: Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel*. UK premiere of Francesca Zambello's production

27–29 July: Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* in Rimsky-Korsakov's version.

Mariinsky (Kirov) Opera

ENO, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2, Box Office: 0870 145 0200, www.eno.org

Shostakovich on Stage: Centenary Festival of Opera and Ballet. Artistic Director and Conductor: Valery Gergiev.

20 & 21 July 7.30pm: *The Nose*

22 July 7.30pm: *Moscow, Cheryomushki* (semi-staged)

23 & 24 July 7.30pm: *Katerina Izmaylova*

Publications

Russian Language and People

By Roy Bivon and Terry Culhane, BBC Active, 2006, £10.99, Paperback, ISBN: 0563519746, www.bbcactive.com/language

New edition of this introduction to Russian language and culture, based on the original series by Terry Doyle. Two accompanying CDs are available separately.

Saving the Tsars' Palaces

By Christopher Morgan and Irina Orlova, £9.95, Polperro Heritage Press, Tel: 018868 12304, Email: polperro.press@virgin.net

New publication about the restoration of St Petersburg's palaces after the Russian Revolution and WWII.

Russian UK: Online Bookshop

www.russianuk.co.uk

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Theatre

Birmingham Repertory Theatre Company

Touring production of Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. This new adaptation by Mustapha Matura sets the play in colonial Trinidad in 1941. Three sisters live a privileged life in Port of Spain occupying their lives with empty marriages and indiscreet liaisons. Their dream is to return home to their adopted country, England, but their ambitions crumble as WWII escalates and the Trinidadian army is called upon to serve King, Country and Empire.

4–8 April: New Wolsey, Ipswich, Tel: 01473 295900

11–15 April: Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne, Tel: 01323 412000

19–22 April: Bristol Old Vic, Tel: 0117 987 7877

2–6 May: Nottingham Playhouse, Tel: 0115 941 9419

9–13 May: Hall for Cornwall, Truro, Tel: 01877 262 466

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Tel: 020 7274 2282, Fax: 020 7274 3230

Email: ruslibrary@scrss.org.uk

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Editor: Diana Turner