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Feature

Reflections on the 60th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War

By Geoffrey Roberts, Professor of History at
University College Cork

The 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War has been marked by increasing recognition of the role of the Soviet Union in the defeat of Nazi Germany. The commemoration parade in Red Square in May, attended by many world leaders, was a major international event, notwithstanding the boycott of it by a small number of former Soviet republics. While there has been a continuing campaign by some conservative commentators to damn Stalin and Hitler and Communism and Nazism as moral and political equivalents, press coverage and media commentary on the Soviet sacrifice in winning the war on the Eastern Front has been generally positive. This reflects the trend in the western historiography of the Second World War towards a revision of the traditional, cold war narrative of the war, which sought to downplay the importance of the Soviet–German struggle and highlight the British and American contribution to the allied victory.

The statistics of the Eastern Front war tell their own story. During the course of the Great Patriotic War the Red Army destroyed over 600 enemy divisions (Italian, Hungarian, Rumanian, Croat, Slovak, Finnish and Spanish, as well as German). The Germans alone suffered 10 million casualties on the Eastern Front, 75% of their total wartime losses, including three million dead. Something like 80% of all the land combat in the Second World War took place on the Eastern Front. During the Stalingrad campaign in 1942–43 the Soviets lost a million people – more than Britain, the United States and the Commonwealth lost during the whole of the war. Another million died during the 1,000-day siege of

Leningrad. In total the Soviet armed forces suffered 16 million casualties, half of them fatalities. Civilian deaths on the Soviet side were about 16–17 million.

The devastation of the war was equally astonishing. Laid waste by the war were 70,000 Soviet cities, towns and villages. Destroyed were six million houses, 98,000 farms, 32,000 factories, 82,000 schools, 43,000 libraries and 6,000 hospitals, as well as thousands of miles of roads and railway track.

One of the defining events of the Second World War was the Holocaust – the Nazi mass murder of six million European Jews. But it is still not sufficiently appreciated that the Holocaust began on the Eastern Front with the execution by the Nazis of a million Soviet Jews in 1941–42. Their deaths, together with those of the three million Soviet POWs who died in German captivity, were part and parcel of Hitler's war of annihilation against 'judeobolshevik Russia'.

The Soviet Union was both the main victim and the chief victor of the Second World War. It was a war whose outcome was largely determined by the titanic battles of Leningrad, Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk. The great turning point of the war came at Stalingrad in November 1942 when a Soviet counter-offensive surrounded 300,000 troops of the German 6th Army fighting to take the city and destroyed the Hungarian, Italian and Rumanian armies guarding the Germans' flanks. Newsreel footage of the surrender of the 6th Army's commander, General Friedrich Paulus, remains one of the iconic images of the Second World War. The disaster at Stalingrad was a psychological and strategic blow from which the Germans never really recovered. The road to Berlin was now open and a little over two years later the city was captured by the triumphant Red Army.

At the same time, the contribution of the Soviet Union's partners in the grand alliance against Hitler should not be underestimated. Britain's decision to fight on after the fall of France in 1940 was of crucial strategic significance to the subsequent course of the war. It is doubtful that the Soviet Union could have survived the nearly successful German invasion of 1941 had it not been for the small but significant second front constituted by Britain. With the US entry into the war in December 1941 and the deployment of American industrial power, Hitler's fate was sealed – provided the Soviet Union could hold out on the Eastern Front. The western allies supplied massive aid to the USSR, supplying about 10% of total Soviet wartime economic needs. Included in the supplies was a third of the food that fed the Soviet population during the war.

(Continues page 2)

A major political theme of the 60th anniversary commemorations has been the lessons of wartime unity against a common enemy. The defeat of Hitler's attempt to impose a racist, genocidal empire on Europe was only possible because ideological differences were laid aside in the interests of a common struggle against a dire threat to human civilisation. One of the great tragedies of the Second World War was the postwar disintegration of that unity amid the acrimony of the cold war – a conflict that threatened the world with nuclear devastation for nearly four decades.

*Geoffrey Roberts' many books include **Victory at Stalingrad: The Battle That Changed History**, published by Longman in 2002.*

SCRSS News

Annual General Meeting

The SCRSS AGM took place at Head Office on 21 May 2005. In his opening remarks the SCRSS Chair, John Riley, highlighted the Society's achievement of charitable status since the last AGM and the well-supported launch event held in November 2004, sponsored by Moscow Narodny Bank. He called on all members to support the Gift Aid scheme, which benefits the Society by 28 pence per £1.00 donation.

In her address the Honorary Secretary, Jean Turner, also emphasised the achievement of charitable status – due in particular to the untiring efforts of the Society's President, Jack Gaster – and highlighted the Society's successful 80th anniversary celebration at the Russian Embassy in July 2004. Over the past year the Society had developed a new logo and improved its publications – from a new brochure to the re-designed Digest. However, the Society's financial situation required renewed attention in the coming year, including fundraising to support key projects outlined in the revised SCRSS Statement and Strategy agreed by the Council in March 2005. The Secretary paid thanks to the Society's volunteers whose contribution enhanced the work of the Society and who played a vital role in supporting the sole full-time member of staff, John Cunningham.

Philip Matthews, Chairman of the Soviet Memorial Trust Fund, reported on the Soviet Memorial ceremony to commemorate the 60th anniversary of VE Day (see **Soviet Memorial Trust Fund News**). The Honorary Secretary was thanked for her key contribution to the success of that event. The 2004 accounts were presented by the Honorary Treasurer, Jane Rosen, who pointed out that for the first time in some years the Society had made a modest profit.

At the AGM John Riley, Philip Matthews and Ralph Gibson were re-elected unanimously to the SCRSS Council. Jill Cunningham was subsequently co-opted

to the Council, having accepted nomination after the AGM. The full list of elected officers is:

Honorary Officers: Jack Gaster (President), Professor William Bowring, Professor R. Davies, Sir Edward Downes, Stanley Forman, Dr Rachel O'Higgins, Alan Sapper (Vice Presidents).

Executive Committee: John Riley (Chair), Ralph Gibson (Vice Chair), Kate Hudson (Vice Chair), Jean Turner (Hon. Secretary), Jane Rosen (Hon. Treasurer & Librarian), Eileen Bradshaw, Philip Matthews.

Council: Wendy Ansley, Christopher Barlow, Jill Cunningham, Barbara Ellis, Natalia Grant-Ross, Andrew Jameson, Diana Turner, Albert Williams.

Any member wishing to receive a copy of the Annual Report should send an A4 or A5 stamped addressed envelope to Head Office.

SCRSS Russian Information Guide

The new *SCRSS Russian Information Guide 2005–2006* will be published in mid-August. This invaluable, pocket-sized reference guide will include sections on learning Russian in the UK and Russia, Russian translation and interpreting services, publishers and the media, websites, embassies, libraries and archives, cultural societies, charities, arts and culture, food and drink, travel, and business. It will also contain a feature article by John Riley, film historian, on keeping up to date with Russian cinema.

Publication date: 15 August 2005.

Price: £4.95 (discounted rate to SCRSS members £4.50), plus 40p p&p.

Available from SCRSS Head Office (please make cheques payable to 'SCRSS').

Events

Saturday 20 August, 11am–4pm

SCRSS Book Sale

Summer sale of new and surplus books, souvenirs, and other items at SCRSS Head Office.

Saturday 24 or Sunday 25 September

European Day of Languages

A Russian language and culture 'taster' day is planned to support this year's European Day of Languages. Full details and date will be available from Head Office and the website in late August.

Friday 30 September, 7pm

Film: My Daughter

Directed by Victor Zhilin, 1956. Abandoned by her husband, who is later reported killed during the war, Natasha remarries. Her first husband eventually returns to claim his daughter who, until now, has had no idea of his existence. 95 mins, black/white, English sub-titles.

Friday 28 October, 7pm

Film: The Bonus

Directed by Sergei Mikaelian, 1975. A team of construction workers refuses to accept its monthly bonus, but will not say why – except to the site's Communist Party Committee. The film is brutally critical in its approach to bureaucracy and corruption. 90 mins, colour, English sub-titles. Last shown by the SCRSS in 2001.

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

Soviet Memorial Trust Fund News

60th Anniversary of VE Day

The 60th anniversary of the victory over Fascism in Europe was celebrated on 9 May 2005 at the Soviet Memorial in London in the presence of HRH the Duke of Kent, President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Addresses were given by Philip Matthews, Chairman of the Soviet Memorial Trust Fund (SMTF); the Mayor of Southwark, Councillor Anne Yates; Rt Hon. Dr John Reid MP, Secretary of State for Defence; Andrei Chupin, Chargé d'Affaires at the Russian Embassy; and Cyril Herbert, Southwark Branch of the Royal British Legion.

In his speech, the newly appointed Defence Secretary John Reid praised 'the peoples of the former Soviet Union because of the sacrifices [...] and the heroic efforts they made in the defeat of Nazism'. He added: '27 million dead – it's unimaginable. It is therefore with a deep humility and respect that I am here on a day when, whatever our differences, we remember that period, that epoch, that struggle which brought us together in the highest of all human attainments – the preparedness of people to lay down their lives for others when they believe in a cause that is worthy and just.'

The Chairman of the SMTF reminded people that the Channel Islands had been the only part of the UK under Nazi occupation and that over 400 Soviet POWs had died there, worked to death as slave labour.

Following the speeches, wreaths were laid by the Duke of Kent, the Mayor of Southwark, the Defence Secretary, Members of Parliament, and Ambassadors of the Republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Poland. The Czech and US Embassies were also represented. Kira Ivanova, a veteran of the siege of Leningrad and invited guest of the SMTF, laid a wreath, followed by veterans associations, trade unions, political parties, and

others. The ceremony ended with the last post performed by the Alberti Brass Band and two minutes' silence.

The SMTF is grateful for the support of the SCRSS, Southwark Council, the Imperial War Museum, Moscow Narodny Bank, and RIA-Novosti, who all helped to make the event a success.

The Soviet Memorial, which honours the Soviet dead of the Second World War, is situated in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, Lambeth Road, Southwark, London, adjacent to the Imperial War Museum.



The Red Army on route to Berlin – drawing by Vladimir Bogatkin, April 1945 (SCRSS Library)

Book and DVD Reviews

The Cranes are Flying

Directed by Mikhail Kalatozov, 1957, 95 minutes, black/white (The Criterion Collection, No 146, ISBN 0-78002-568-7, www.criterionco.com/asp/)

The 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War reminds us just what a central event it still is in the Russian psyche. Artists have grappled with the subject, particularly in the cinema, and few years have gone by since 1945 without at least one film on the subject, although they vary in quality. One film that definitely qualifies as a masterpiece is *The Cranes are Flying*, Mikhail Kalatozov's elegiac study of the impact of the war on one family.

When war breaks out, Boris volunteers for the front. His cousin Mark takes the chance to move in on Boris's fiancée Veronika. But she rejects him and he forces himself upon her. Veronika keeps faith that Boris will return, despite the ominous cessation of

letters (we know he has been killed). Only when Boris does not return with his unit does Veronika finally accept the truth.

In his so-called secret speech, Khrushchev had made special reference to cinema as part of the cult of personality and *The Cranes are Flying*, made in 1957, takes advantage of the freedom of the Thaw. It plays down, even undercuts, simplistic patriotism, criticising the ne'er-do-well Mark for bribing his way out of army service – a previously inconceivable thought in Soviet film – and pointing to the failures of officialdom. Nevertheless, it is only petty officials who are criticised: it keeps faith with the system. But above all it is a deeply erotic film, going to the heart of the lovers' relationship – unlike many earlier Russian films.

Newcomer Tatiana Samoilova, as Veronika, was propelled to stardom, winning several prizes, although she never found another role that suited her so well. Alexei Batalov (Boris) was better established and this is one of a series of strong portrayals, although he is a little old for the part. The rest of the cast is equally reliable, but the film has an unusual star: the breathtakingly fluid photography of Sergei Urusevsky. In his hands, the camera dissolves, so that we feel completely part of the action as it seamlessly follows Veronika through war-torn streets and even, in a dizzying sequence, up a spiral staircase. As she runs up another set of stairs, the abstract flashing close-up of rushing feet on steps parallels her frantic state of mind. In the almost unbearably poignant end of the film, the camera sweeps over and through milling crowds, perfectly melding the general feeling with those of Veronika herself, accepting Boris's death, even as she shares the joy for other soldiers' return. In short, the photography tells us as much as any of the actors. A word also for Mieczeslaw Weinberg's music: touching in Veronika and Boris's gentle love, and providing the composer Mark's Rachmaninovian piano music.

The Cranes are Flying is a central film of the Thaw, breaking through many of Stalinist cinema's bonds and heralding a Soviet 'new wave' that included Tarkovsky's *Ivan's Childhood* (1962).

The Criterion Collection's DVD is excellent, although it does not include any extras. It is available from a variety of online sources.

Reviewed by John Riley

Comrade Pavlik: The Rise and Fall of a Soviet Boy Hero
By Catriona Kelly (Granta, 2005, £17.99, ISBN 1-86207-747-9)

Pavel Morozov was a pioneer hero, who denounced his father for engaging in kulak activities and was murdered by relatives, together with his younger brother, in revenge for his denunciation.

In this book Catriona Kelly sets out to investigate the murder and the legend. She has had access to the original case evidence and has also assessed the mythology surrounding the story. She describes the period and the area in which the events took place, raises questions as to the organisation of the investigation, and highlights weaknesses in the evidence and the conduct of the trial of the accused.

Much of the book is an investigation of the making of the myth, and its existence and development throughout the Soviet period. Kelly analyses the material relating to Morozov in the literature and children's magazines of the time, and compares it with other heroes of the Soviet period, both historical and fictional. In particular, she contrasts Morozov to the warmth with which Gaidar's Timur was greeted by his readership. She also cites Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, stating in the notes that Zoya is not now thought to be the same person as the partisan 'Tanya', whose execution was photographed. Unfortunately, Kelly omits the sources for this new angle on the execution and does not clarify whether Zoya herself was also executed.

In Kelly's analysis of the myth and its background, she could, perhaps, have made more of other literature available. There is no mention of Makarenko and his commune, although his students were involved in the de-kulakisation and pioneer movement that she attempts to describe. Neither does she mention Anatoly Rybakov's *The Dagger* or *The Bronze Bird*, both of which deal with homeless street children and their adventures through their pioneer detachment. *The Bronze Bird* specifically deals with the children's struggle against the kulaks and the superstition of the Russian peasantry. Both of these are motifs that Kelly tries to analyse.

The use of the case evidence is good and there is interesting criticism of the myth. Kelly's notes are thorough and there is a great deal of oral evidence to provide food for thought, although much may be perceived as 20/20 hindsight. There is a very personal feel to the book, the reader is always aware of the narrator and this can be intrusive, whilst her writing can be a little slack on occasion. The personal nature of the narration may contribute to the book being an easy read.

Catriona Kelly provides an evocative description of the poverty and harshness of the life, village and times in which Pavel Morozov lived and died. She is less successful in describing the belief that people had in the new future they were building and in the necessity for change, hard and violent as it might have to be.

Reviewed by Jane Rosen

From the Russian Press

60th Anniversary Celebrations in Moscow

Following the 9 May celebrations in Moscow, *Kommersant-Vlast'* reviewed the day's events, the roll call of dignitaries and the anniversary honours list ('Dva dnya pobedy', No 19 [622], 16.5.05, www.kommersant.ru/k-vlast/). Leaders of 57 states had been invited officially to the anniversary celebrations, of which 52 had accepted. Absentees included the President of Georgia – because of disagreements with Moscow over withdrawal of Russian military bases from Georgian territory, the President of Lithuania – because of the former Soviet Union's occupation of Lithuania, and the President of Estonia – because of differences with Russia over its border agreement.

A military parade, speeches by President Putin and a review of the battalions formed the centrepiece of the Moscow celebrations on Red Square. Some 20,000 people took part in the parade, including 3,600 veterans. 8,000 people, of which 1,000 veterans, were seated in the guest stands, whilst 2,600 front-line soldiers were driven across the square in lorries. In commemoration of the 60th anniversary, Aleksei II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, gave his blessing for the bells of 300 Russian Orthodox churches in the capital to ring continuously from 12.00 to 12.30.

Across Russia as a whole, 4,300 official Victory Day events took place with the participation of some 10 million people, including 3.5 million Muscovites and guests in the capital. However, the biggest crowds were seen in Moscow on Poklonnaya Gora – the memorial park dedicated to the Great Patriotic War – where a million people gathered in the evening to end the day's celebrations with a concert and firework display. The whole country observed a minute's silence at 20.00, Moscow time, to remember those who had died during the war.

In commemoration of the 60th anniversary, the Russian authorities had been generous in honouring foreign citizens who had fought in the war. 30,000 veterans living abroad had received personal messages of congratulations, whilst 100,000 foreign veterans had been presented with commemorative medals for their contribution to the victory. These latter included the Presidents of Albania, Greece and Croatia, and former King Michael I of Romania.

Head of Russian General Staff Reflects on the Lessons of the Second World War

Krasnaya Zvezda, the official newspaper of the Russian armed forces, published a lengthy interview with General Baluyevsky, Head of the General Staff and First Deputy Minister of Defence, on the lessons to be drawn on Victory Day ('My spasli mir', 7.5.05, www.redstar.ru).

General Baluyevsky emphasised the enduring significance of the Soviet Union's defeat of Fascist Germany and its liberation of Europe from Nazi enslavement. He repudiated current attempts to belittle the Soviet Union's contribution to the victory and ascribe the Soviet armed forces' military successes to secondary or chance factors. He quoted the Soviet writer Bykov: '... to lie about the Great Patriotic War is not only immoral but criminal, both with regard to the millions of victims and to the future. The people of the world should know from what danger they were delivered and at what cost.'



A. Titov, 17-year old Soviet volunteer and participant of the Oder operation – drawing by Ilya Krichevsky, 1945 (SCRSS Library)

Reflecting on the military lessons of the Second World War, General Baluyevsky said that the formation of the State Defence Committee and General HQ had provided united and centralised strategic leadership throughout the war years, facilitating both effective management of the economy and military planning and operations. Important advances in the art of war had also been made, which were still relevant today.

Nonetheless, he did not underestimate Soviet military deficiencies at the start of the war. In the early pre-war period, a fundamental reorganisation of the armed forces had taken place. A new theory on the conduct of military actions had been developed, based on deployment of mass, well equipped armies that could attack rapidly to break through the enemy defence. However, in the late 1930s the focus had shifted to training in local conflicts and wars, such as the war in Spain. This had had a negative impact on the organisation of the armed forces, the provision of modern technical equipment and military education. Soviet military strategy had not been ready for war. The onset of war, as well as the scale of enemy forces unleashed along the entire front from the Black Sea to the Arctic Ocean, had caught the Soviet Union by surprise. Arms production had had to be re-launched rapidly – in the unfavourable conditions of war – to supply basic weaponry. Further, Marshall

Zhukov had had little time to settle in his post as head of the General Staff before the war began. However, the Soviet Union's defeat of Germany proved that it had been able to overcome these serious drawbacks and, ultimately, it had fought a superior military campaign to that of the German army.

General Baluyevsky recalled how, on the 10th anniversary of the victory, when asked to identify the greatest military operation of the war, the Soviet General Staff had chosen the Vistula–Oder operation. At the beginning of 1945 the Germans had established a deep defence between the Vistula and the Oder, turning cities such as Warsaw, Breslau and Poznan into fortresses. However, over 22 days from 12 January Soviet forces advanced 500 km, liberating western and southern Poland, pushing into Germany and reaching the Oder some 60–70 km from Berlin. Marshall Zhukov, then Soviet Minister of Defence, had supported the General Staff's assessment of the operation from the point of view of scale, effective management of troops and achievement of military-political objectives. However, he had also underlined the significance of the battle for Moscow in October 1941 when, despite superior forces and supplies, the German army had suffered its first defeat of strategic importance and been thrown back some 100–250 km by the Red Army.

General Baluyevsky also acknowledged the important military contribution to the victory made by the Allies, singling out Operation Overlord as a particularly instructive military operation.

General Baluyevsky drew one final lesson from the Soviet Union's experience of the Second World War – it had confirmed the importance of military strength to protect Russia's territorial integrity and its national and social stability. It was essential to maintain the armed forces at an adequate level of technical supply, professional training and combat readiness.

Front-line Soviet Diary, 1941

Izvestiya published an abridged version of a unique front-line diary covering the defence of Bryansk in 1941 ('Chornye dni 50-y armii', 21.4.05, www.izvestiya.ru). Written by Ivan Shabalin, a Soviet officer of the 50th Army and NKVD major, the diary was a rarity as front-line diaries had usually been prohibited for fear that they might fall into enemy hands. This had been the fate of Shabalin's diary, which had been recovered by the Germans following his death in October 1941, translated and distributed to local German commanders as instruction in the demoralised state of the Soviet forces. After the war the diary had been translated back into Russian, handed over to the Soviet archives and was now held in the State Archive of the Russian Federation.

The diary began with Shabalin's arrival in a village close to Bryansk in southwest Russia in late August 1941. Thrown into the thick of a sustained aerial assault by the enemy, Shabalin's diary recorded his

concerns at the state of the Soviet army in September. '(6.9.41) There are enormous shortcomings [...] The situation with my personal staff is very difficult. They are almost all people whose homeland is occupied by the Germans. They want to go home. Inactivity and sitting around in the trenches demoralises the Red Army men. There are cases of drunkenness amongst the commanders and political staff. Sometimes people don't come back from reconnaissance.' By October the Germans were launching a ferocious attack along the entire front. Shabalin acknowledged that his soldiers were mounting fierce resistance to the attack: '(5.10.41) The division is in excellent fighting form; the Red Army men are courageous.' However, other divisions along the front were in a terrible situation: the 217th division had been routed, its command lost and the Red Army men left to an uncertain fate.

On 7 October the Germans took Bryansk and the Soviet army was ordered to retreat, also abandoning Orel. '(7.10.41) History has seen nothing to compare with the defeat of the Bryansk Front. The enemy came up behind and surrounded almost three armies, i.e. at least 240,000 men. The order has come from Moscow: "The whole front must retreat." [...] We surrendered the town almost without a fight. The front commanders lost their leadership from the first days of the German invasion. They say those idiots have already been withdrawn and sent to Moscow.'

The remaining entries in the diary recorded the hardship of the Soviet retreat in conditions of extreme cold, virtually impassable roads, and constant bombardment of men and vehicles. '(15.10.41) This is terrible! My head's spinning. Corpses, the horror of war, we're continually under fire. I'm hungry and haven't slept again... I went into the forest on reconnaissance. We're completely destroyed. I'm writing by the fire in the forest. This morning I lost all my officers, I'm now alone among strangers. The army has collapsed.' The diary ended on 19 October 1941 as Shabalin, exhausted and barely able to walk, recorded that he and a small group of men were to set out across open ground.

Berlin Graffiti

On a lighter note, the government newspaper *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* reported how, many years after the fall of Berlin, one Russian soldier's memory of those May 1945 days had been suddenly revived ('Berlin – Ves'yegonsk', 18.5.05, www.rg.ru). As a victorious young soldier in 1945, Valentin Adrianov had scrawled his name and home town on the walls of the Reichstag – 'Ves'yegonsk. Adrianov'. He had all but forgotten until his grandson Sergei – a young ophthalmologist on a sabbatical in Berlin – had found the signature miraculously preserved, photographed it and sent it to his grandfather as a souvenir.

Articles selected, summarised and translated by Diana Turner

Listings

Art and Photography

Hermitage Rooms

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

Extended until 30 September: *Circling the Square: Avant-garde Porcelain from Revolutionary Russia.*



'Total brutality: Fascism on the march...' – cartoon by Dmitri Moor, 1943 (SCRSS Library)

Dance

Chisenau National Ballet

3–4 October: *Nutcracker* (choreography: Grigorevich), Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7, Tel: 020 7589 8212 (Box Office)

17–19 October: *Nutcracker*, New Wimbledon Theatre, Tel: 0870 060 6646 (Box Office)

20–22 October: *Swan Lake* (choreography: Petipa), Richmond Theatre, Surrey, Tel: 0870 060 6651 (Box Office)

3–5 November: *Nutcracker*, Hackney Empire, Wilton Way, London E8, Tel: 020 8985 2424 (Box Office)

Edinburgh International Festival

The Hub, Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2NE, Tel: 0131 473 2000 (Box Office), www.eif.co.uk

15–19 August 7.30pm & 16 August 1.30pm, Edinburgh Festival Theatre: Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. A new production for Pennsylvania Ballet by British choreographer Christopher Wheeldon. Performed by the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio, conducted by Vladimir Fedoseyev.

Royal Opera House

Covent Garden, London WC2, Tel: 020 7304 4000 (Box Office)

18–30 July: The Kirov Ballet performs *Swan Lake*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *La Bayadere*, and works by Forsythe and Balanchine.

Film

SCRSS

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

30 September 7pm: *My Daughter*. See page 2 for details.

28 October 7pm: *The Bonus*. See page 3 for details.

Music

Barbican Centre

Barbican Hall, Silk Street, London EC2, Tel: 020 7638 8891 (Box Office), www.barbican.org.uk

27 September 7.30pm: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Julian Gallant with Alexander Chaushian, cello. A special concert in support of the Charities Aid Foundation Life Line Programme in Russia. Haydn: *Symphony Op. 91 in E Flat Major*, Richard Strauss: *Don Juan*, Dvorak: *Cello Concerto Op. 104 in B Minor*.

15 October 7.30pm: London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Valery Gergiev with Johannes Moser, cello. Schumann: *Cello Concerto No 1* (orch. Shostakovich), Shostakovich: *Symphony No 8*. Gergiev Shostakovich Cycle series.

16 October 7.30pm: London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Valery Gergiev. Mussorgsky: *Prelude* (orch. Shostakovich), Shostakovich: *Symphony No 7 'Leningrad'*. Gergiev Shostakovich Cycle series.

10 November 7.30pm: London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Tilson with Vadim Repin, violin. Tchaikovsky: *Overture: The Storm*, Tchaikovsky: *Violin Concerto*, Tchaikovsky: *Manfred Symphony*.

Chisenau National Opera

23 September: Verdi's *Nabucco*, Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7, Tel: 020 7589 8212 (Box Office)

25 September: Bizet's *Carmen*, Hackney Empire, Wilton Way, London E8, Tel: 020 8985 2424 (Box Office)

26 September: Bizet's *Carmen*, The Orchard, Dartford, Tel: 01322 220000 (Box Office)

7 December: Bizet's *Carmen*, Fairfield Halls Croydon, Croydon, Surrey, 020 8688 9291 (Box Office)

Edinburgh International Festival

The Hub, Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2NE, Tel: 0131 473 2000 (Box Office), www.eif.co.uk.
21 August 8.00pm, Usher Hall: Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio conducted by Vladimir Fedoseyev. Beethoven: *Symphony No 3 'Eroica'*, Prokofiev: *Suite 'War and Peace'*, Tchaikovsky: *Overture '1812'*.

Hallé Orchestra

The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester M1, Tel: 0161 907 9000 (Box Office), www.halle.co.uk/
20 October 7.30pm: Conducted by Mark Elder with Nikolai Demidenko, piano. Brahms: *Piano Concerto No 2 in B Flat*, Rachmaninov: *The Isle of the Dead*, Tchaikovsky: *Francesca da Rimini*. Pre-concert talk at 6.30pm in the auditorium.

Royal Opera House

Covent Garden, London WC2, Tel: 020 7304 4000 (Box Office)
1–6 August: The Kirov Opera performs *Boris Godunov*, *Khovanshchina*, and *Turandot*. The Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra is conducted by Valery Gergiev.

Wigmore Hall

36 Wigmore Street, London W1, Tel: 020 7935 2141 (Box Office), www.wigmore-hall.org.uk/

20 September 7.30pm: London showcase for the new generation of Russian singers from the Mariinsky Academy. Victoria Yastrebova (soprano), Olga Shurshina (soprano), Victoria Valuyshikh (mezzo soprano), Andrey Ilyushnikov (tenor), Vadim Kravets (bass), Larissa Gergieva (piano).

27 September 7.30pm: Matthew Barley (cello) and Stephen De Pledge (piano). Arvo Pärt: *Fratres for Cello and Piano*, Tigran Mansurian: *Sonata No 2*, Alfred Schnittke: *Musica Nostalgica* (1992) and *Cello Sonata No 1* (1978), Giya Kancheli: *With a Smile for Slava*, Franghiz Ali-Zadeh: *Gabil-Sajahy*, Shostakovich / Barley: *Suite from Cheryomushki Op. 105*.

Publications

Clarion 2004-2005

Newsletter of the Alan Bush Music Trust, including a personal exploration by Lewis Foreman of Alan Bush's *Symphonies 1 & 2* and a short biography. Available from: 7 Harding Way, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 9JH, Tel: 01223 232 659, Email: info@alanbushtrust.org.uk.

SCRSS Russian Information Guide 2005–2006

New edition of the invaluable reference guide to Russian language and culture. Publication date: 15 August 2005. Price: £4.95 (discounted price to SCRSS members £4.50), plus 40p p&p. Available from SCRSS Head Office (please make cheques payable to 'SCRSS'). **See page 2 for full details.**

SCRSS Summer Book Sale

20 August, 11am–4pm. **See page 2 for details.**

Tabitha Salmon

By Simon Gooch, hardback, £25 (£32 inc. p&p). Available from: Collier, 24 High Street, Fordingbridge, Hants SP6 1AX, Tel: 01425 656887, Email: post@collier-trading.com, www.tabitha-salmon.com. A fascinating insight into the artist's life and her work covering 20 years. Tabitha Salmon is a member of the SCRSS and well known to our members. She visited the Soviet Union on a number of occasions, sketching and painting everyday life in Russia and Georgia, and has the gift of capturing ordinary people going about their work in the beautiful surroundings of their towns and villages. Illustrated in full colour with each copy hand signed by the artist, this is essential reading for all collectors.

Theatre

Chichester Festival Theatre

Tel: 01243 781312 (Box Office)
Until 10 September: *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol in a new English version by Alistair Beaton. Stars Alistair McGowan.

National Theatre

South Bank, London SE1, Tel: 020-7452-3000 (Box Office), www.nationaltheatre.org.uk
Until 2 October: *The UN Inspector*. A comedy freely adapted by David Farr from Gogol's masterpiece *The Government Inspector*. Starring Michael Sheen, the new play explores human greed and immorality in high places.

Travel

Intourist Ltd

7, Princedale Road, London W11 4NW, Tel: 020 7792 5240, Email: info@intourist.co.uk, www.intourist.co.uk.

Intourist offers tours to Russia, Ukraine and the Baltics, including winter breaks in St Petersburg and Moscow, Siberian trips to Kamchatka and Tuvan Steppes, journeys on the Trans-Siberian and Trans-Mongolian, and river cruises.

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