

RUSSIAN HERITAGE

VOLUME XI, ISSUE 2.

OCTOBER 2006

Susan Haig of the Florida Orchestra Fascinates Fall Meeting of *RH* with Reports from Russia

At the September 24 meeting of *Russian Heritage* Susan Haig, the Associate Conductor of the Florida Orchestra, reported on her experiences in Moscow and St. Petersburg. This past year she participated in two workshops for conductors to learn the Russian, and especially the St. Petersburg techniques, for leading the orchestra. She also talked about life in Russia and the musical traditions there. Susan also spoke briefly about the upcoming season of the Florida Orchestra, beginning with the Season opener with Van Cliburn. For related stories see pages 3-4.

Eckerd students Hayley Borck (our ambassador who studied Russian in St. Petersburg and Moscow this summer) and Harry Merrit (an Eckerd student who studied for a semester in Riga, Latvia) also gave short reports.

We want to welcome Gene Stenov as the new treasurer for Russian Heritage. He accepted the Board's invitation to fill the vacancy at that position. We also thank Mary Stenov for her delicious refreshments after the meeting.

Yevgeny Onegin: Discussion and Film on October 20

Yevgeny Onegin by Alexander Pushkin is considered to be the epic of Russian literature, written in verse by Russia's greatest poet. To understand Russian culture of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it is necessary to know the rather questionable hero of Yevgeny, and one of the ideal types of Russian women, Tatiana. The story of Yevgeny Onegin is best known to most Americans through the music of Tchaikovsky and his opera which shares Pushkin's title. On October 20 you will be able to see the story through the British film *ONEGIN*, starring Ralph Fiennes as the hero and directed by Martha Fiennes, the star's sister. Russians who know the story well will find this an interesting interpretation.

In Russia there are three official Pushkin holidays: the anniversary of his birth (June 6, 1799), the anniversary of his death (January 29, 1837); and the anniversary of the opening of the Lyceum where he studied (October 19, 1811). We want you to think about Pushkin on October 19, and to come to see the film *Onegin* at Eckerd College on Friday, October 20. The film will be shown in the Miller Auditorium at 6:00 pm. It is free and open to the public.

But so that you will enjoy the film as much as possible, we are suggesting that you read, or re-read this Russian classic in advance. AND we invite you to a discussion of Pushkin and his masterpiece at 4:00 pm in Miller 101, just around the corner from the Miller auditorium at Eckerd College. We will have a panel, including Professor Victor Peppard, from USF, and Bill Parsons, Professor Emeritus from Eckerd College. After this presentation you can get a bite to eat on campus, or at a restaurant near by, and enjoy the film at 6:00 pm.

Celebration Gala
Saturday, January 13, 2007
Trade Winds
5500 Gulf Boulevard, St. Pete Beach
Reception 6:00 Welcome 7:00
Dinner 7:30pm

The 11th *OLD RUSSIAN NEW YEAR*

Another spectacular event! We have a new location, but the same Russian spirit! Dance to music of the Dazzlers! Select Steak "Moskva" or Chicken "Petersburg" for your dining pleasure! Bid on spectacular prizes at our "Silent Auction"! We've kept the prices the same as last year, so plan to come and bring your friends. Your official invitation will arrive later this month, but why not join *Russian Heritage* this month, and be ready for your savings for January's gala.

SPIFFS International Ball Postponed

The SPIFFS (The St. Petersburg International Folk Festival Society) International Ball scheduled for Friday, October 27 has been postponed. At the September 27 meeting of the General Assembly of SPIFFS there were problems that led to the stepping down of the president and the executive committee. Plans for the International Ball have been postponed and the traditional spring Folk Festival is now questionable. It may be scheduled for the fall, or it may be that there will not be a Folk Festival this year. We will try to update the situation in a later newsletter.

Two Students Win the "Babushka Factor" Prize

In the July issue of "Russian Life" an interesting article called "The Babushka Factor" was published. We asked our newsletter readers to look for an error in this article, and if they found it, they could win a prize. Two students responded by identifying Arina Rodionovna as Pushkin's nanny and not his babushka. Jerry Elder, an alumnus of Eckerd College, and Brian Papenberg, a student at University of South Florida, were the two who caught the error and reported it. They each received a copy of *From Russian With Laughter* by Rinar and Borina Snadotdinov, and a Russian chocolate bar. Congratulations!

Board chair Bill Parsons also noticed the error and responded with a letter to the editors of "Russian Life". His letter and their response are reprinted here from the September issue.

Pushkin's Babushka

To the Editors:

You will undoubtedly receive an avalanche of responses to your "Survival Russian" article on the *Babushka Factor* (July/August 2006). How could Arina Rodionovna be mistaken for Pushkin's *Babushka*? It is true that Pushkin's *Babushka*, Maria Alexeyevna, had an important influence on the future poet, but it was far less than that of his *swampy* Arina Rodionovna. The influence is, of course, more appropriate for Leontov's *Babushka*.

I am impressed with the quality and variety of articles in your magazine. I suggest you consider featuring a full article on *Babushka*. In addition to their important social and economic role, they were a most significant factor for the spiritual life of the Russian Orthodox Christians throughout history, and especially in Soviet times. But even Prince Vladimir had his *Babushka*, Olga, who influenced him at one of the turning points in Russian history.

William Parsons
St. Petersburg, FL

Mr. Parsons,

Thank you for your letter. Actually, your letter was the only one we received on this grievous error. So congratulations on the "catch." Mikhail Ivanov was himself surprised that he made this error ("it must be simply that Pushkin's nanny was like a *Babushka* to him," he replied) and we are equally surprised it slipped through our net.

Thank you also for the story idea.

- The Editors

The Legendary Van Cliburn Plays Tchaikovsky

In the past six months St. Petersburg, Florida has hosted two icons of the cultural contacts between the United States and the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. In March, 2006 Yevgeny Yevtushenko recited his poetry and lectured on Russian poetry, and on September 25 Van Cliburn opened the season for the Florida Orchestra, playing Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No. 1", the piece that won him the gold medal at the First Tchaikovsky competition in Moscow in 1958.

Russian Heritage presented Van Cliburn with a proclamation and a gift of a small amber balalaika pin, to recognize his many accomplishments. Van Cliburn was animated in his response to our delegation of 12 members of *Russian Heritage*, giving many hugs and fondly recalling his experiences in Russia. *RH* Board member Vladimir Khokhlov met Cliburn on three occasions in Leningrad and the two enjoyed renewing their acquaintanceship.



Above: Bill Parsons reads proclamation to Van Cliburn

Left: Vladimir Khokhlov, Susan Haig, and Bill Parsons With Van Cliburn.

The Florida Orchestra Performs Many Russian Classics This Season

Opening Night for the regular season: **Shostakovich: Symphony No. 7 (Leningrad!)** Saturday, October 7 at 8:00 pm at the Mahaffey Theater; Sunday, Oct. 8 at Ruth Eckerd Hall. This is one of the many Shostakovich performances scheduled to mark the 100-year anniversary of the composer's birth in 1906. For ticket information, call 1-800-662-7286.

Free Concert in the Park: Saturday, October 14 at 7:00 pm in VINOY PARK in downtown St. Petersburg. **Susan Haig** will conduct many favorites, including Tchaikovsky's rousing **1812 Overture!**

Coffee Concerts: Thursdays, at 11:00 at Mahaffey Theater, conducted by Susan Haig:

October 12: Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Massenet, and more.

December 7: Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Schuman, and more.

Coming in January: Tchaikovsky's Sixth *Symphony (Pathétique)* & *Violin Concerto*.

PROCLAMATION

Russian Heritage of St. Petersburg, Florida

WHEREAS,

Van Cliburn is a world symbol of cultural exchange and cooperation during the difficult days of the Cold War, when he won the First International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in May of 1958; and

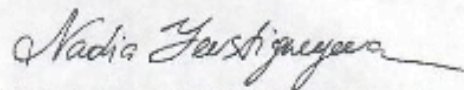
The people of St. Petersburg, Florida will have the opportunity to hear Van Cliburn perform Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No. 1", which is the piece that won him the Gold Medal at the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow almost 50 years ago; and

Russian Heritage of St. Petersburg, Florida supports such cultural exchange and cooperation with Russia through our sister city of St. Petersburg, Russia, established in 2003; and

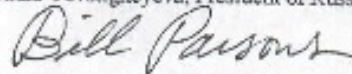
Van Cliburn is a strong advocate of musical education and support for young performing artists through his Tchaikovsky competitions in Texas, and the scholarships provided through his Foundation; and

Van Cliburn is opening the season in the newly renovated Mahaffey Theater, which is a showcase for music and the performing arts in beautiful downtown St. Petersburg;

Now, therefore Russian Heritage does recognize Van Cliburn as our distinguished cultural ambassador of the two St. Petersburgs, and we present to him this small gift as a token of our appreciation.



Nadia Yevstigneyeva, President of Russian Heritage



Bill Parsons, Chair of the Board of Russian Heritage

September 25, 2006
St. Petersburg, Florida

Dimitri Kozyrev: Space/Vision/Perception: Now – Nov. 12 Art Exhibit at the Gulf Coast Museum of Art

Dimitri Kozyrev is a native of St. Petersburg, Russia. His large-panel paintings and drawings suggest the imagery of Cubism through the deconstruction of the natural world: volumes flatten, things fall apart, and chaos reigns. Kozyrev takes viewers on flights of fancy filled with melancholic memories, yet still optimistic about prospects.

The Gulf Coast Museum of Art is located in the Pinewood Cultural Park next to Heritage Village at 12211 Walsingham Road in Largo. Free Russian films are being shown at 1:00 pm on the days indicated in the following schedule, in connection with the exhibit. For more information, call 727-518-6833.

Russian Film Series

September 30-October 6	Masters of Russian Animation III	2000 (English Subtitles)	133 minutes	NR
This exciting collection of animated shorts offers a rare glimpse of Russia's most vibrant decade, the 1960s. The program contains 10 award-winning films: "The Story of One Crime" (1962), "The Man in the Frame" (1966), "My Green Crocodile" (1966), "There Lived Kozavkin" (1965), "Mountain of Dinosaurs" (1967), "Passion of Sales" (1967), "Glass Hammer" (1968), "Ball of Wool" (1968), "Singing Teacher" (1965) and "Film Film Film" (1968).				
October 7-13	Solari	1972 (English Subtitles)	169 minutes	PG
Director Andrei Tarkovsky's science fiction cult classic presents an uncompromisingly unique and poetic meditation on space travel and its physical and existential ramifications. Scientist K's Kefkin travels to the mysterious planet Solari to investigate the failure of an earlier mission. When his long-dead wife appears on the space station, he realizes that the planet has the power to perceive human desires and make them a reality.				
October 14-20	Crime and Punishment	1960 (English Subtitles)	112 minutes	NR
Director Lev Kuliczhnov hews close to the aesthetic of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's classic novel. Law student Raskolnikov (Georgi Yartsev) becomes a killer and falls deeper into the quagmire with every attempt to validate his abhorrent acts. A detective is not on his trail, but Raskolnikov's deadliest foe may be himself. Innokenty Smoktunovskiy and Vera Fyodorova co-star.				
October 21-27	Treasures of Hermitage	1992 (English Subtitles)	162 minutes	NR
The Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, holds the distinction of housing one of the most diverse and widespread collections of art in the world, featuring such varied pieces as Oriental artifacts to works of the Renaissance masters. The six films collected in this two-part DVD series explore the museum's vast holdings and take a close look at a number of distinctive pieces, as well as the exceptional rooms that house the artwork.				
October 28-November 3	Tchaikovsky	1972 (English Subtitles)	153 minutes	NR
Filmed in Russia, France and England, Igor Talenkin's lavish biopic of Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Innokenty Smoktunovskiy) paints the picture of an artist who expressed his deepest sorrows and greatest joys in his passionate works. Dimitri Tiomkin (as a Wonderful Life) scored the film, which features ballerina Maya Plisetskaya performing Tchaikovsky's brilliant ballets. Vladislav Stozhchik and Antonina Shurikova also star.				

RUSSIAN HERITAGE MEMBERSHIP FORM 2007

Those interested in Russian culture are welcome to join Russian Heritage by paying the yearly dues. Members receive a monthly newsletter, discounts at certain events, such as the Old Russian New Year Celebration.

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