

**P O P   C U L T U R E**  
**R U S S I A !**

Media, Arts, and Lifestyle

**Birgit Beumers**

A B C  C L I O

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## **Music and Word**

The phenomenal success of the Russian duo t.A.T.u, which topped the British charts in the summer of 2002 with their album *200kmh in the Wrong Lane*, placed Russian pop music on a firm footing internationally for the first time. Although there had been occasional releases in the West and tours of Russian pop and rock bands in Europe and the United States, to actually reach a place in the charts was unheard of. Even Al-sou, the discovery of 1999 who lives and studies in London, had not reached that level of success in the West.

Before dealing with the manifestations of contemporary pop music in Russia, this chapter explores its homegrown origins, which lay on the one hand in the official Soviet pop culture of the 1960s and 1970s (*estrada*) and on the other hand in the underground bard and rock movement that surfaced eventually in the late 1980s during Gorbachev's *perestroika*.

### **Jazz and Rock**

#### ***The Beginnings of Jazz and Rock Music***

After the Revolution, popular musical expression was controlled so as to remain accessible to the masses and ideologically acceptable. The "mass song" was developed, and marches and secular anthems remained prominent. Folk songs were also popular, but more in their kitschy and arranged orchestrated versions for public performance than as a continuation of ancient rituals (fake lore). Western popular music, on the other hand, became suspect: jazz and the fox-trot were labeled decadent, and jazz in particular was controversial because it was perceived as dangerously democratic and uncontrollable, since it relied on improvisation. Furthermore, it was an art of the black people. This made it especially difficult to deal with from an official point of view: produced by the oppressed of the capitalist world, jazz was supposedly silenced. In 1928, the fox-trot and tango were declared harmful, largely because of their sexually arousing movements; the fox-trot in particular was associated

with homosexuality, drugs, and eroticism (according to Maxim Gorky). The vitriolic campaign against Western music was scaled down somewhat in the 1930s, when a sanitized form of jazz and tango created by Soviet composers gained popularity. Only such sanitized forms were popular in the West, and free from censorship.

**Jazz Music** Leonid Utesov (1895–1982) and Alexander Tsfasman (1906–1971) were the two most famous jazzmen of the 1930s and 1940s, who produced an equivalent of big band swing for dancing. Both provided entertainment at the front during the war. Utesov also wrote the music for a number of films made during the 1930s, including the musical *Jolly Fellows*. He became one of the most popular composers in the USSR. Oskar Strok (1893–1975) was perhaps lesser known, but he was the Soviet king of the tango.

At the end of the war, jazz again came into the firing line of ideology when the secretary for ideology, Andrei Zhdanov, attacked jazz music as hysterical and cacophonous. He ordered the arrest of jazz musicians, such as Eddie Rosner and Leonid Piatigorsky, and also the “arrest” of saxophones. This ban was lifted only in the mid 1950s under Khrushchev, but even then jazz remained an alien musical style, until the performance of foreign jazz and rock at the Sixth International Youth Festival in Moscow in 1957.

During the 1950s another phenomenon occurred in Soviet culture: the appearance of *stilyagi* (style hunters), people who imitated Western dress and style. On the one hand they represented the dandy, concerned only with the consumer culture of the West; at the same time, the *stilyagi* offered a revolt against the stifled dress

habits in the Soviet Union. The state answered this trend with a campaign against Western influences, exposing the antics of the *stilyagi* to satire: they had “cocktail hours,” loved jazz music, wore colorful ties and tight suits, representing all the worst features of Western consumerism. Music—both jazz and rock—was seen as a bad influence on young people. The *chuvikha* (youth slang: girl, “bird”; sometimes there is also a masculine form, *chuvak*) was the female version of the *stilyaga*, a woman sporting short hair and skirts and blouses instead of the traditional long hair and pinafore dress. The *shtatniki* (*shtaty* mean the United States) donned Italo-American-style suits and the *beatniki* appeared in jeans and sneakers. Glenn Miller’s “Cattanooga Choo Choo” became the anthem of the jazz movement. In 1955 the jazz opera *Porgy and Bess* was shown in Moscow. In 1962 Benny Goodman toured the USSR. On the home front, improvised jazz concerts took place on Mayakovsky Square in the late 1950s, and the first history of jazz was published in 1960, indicating the increasingly official acceptance of the music. Dixieland bands performed in restaurants, even if there was no dance floor and the repertoire was tightly controlled by the state. Jazz cafes were organized to get a grip on Soviet youth and control those that had gone out of control. By 1966 the state record firm Melodiya was releasing jazz and pop records, giving further proof of a relaxation.

Although jazz had been more or less accepted by the mid-1960s when Brezhnev came to power, the real thing for the new generation was by then pop and rock. Jazz remained of interest to the cultural elite and the intellectuals, but not the masses. Jazz remained an important factor in the

development of rock music in the USSR but also as a movement that broke the wall keeping musical influences from the West from having an impact on popular Soviet culture. Voice of America's broadcasts of Western jazz and pop music were crucial, however.

Soviet jazz musicians and groups were more or less respectable. Important jazz musicians were Igor Brill (b.1944), a pianist who participated in a number of jazz groups in the 1960s, including a band with the jazz musician Yuri Saulsky (b.1928). In the 1990s Brill still had his own band and played occasional concerts, spending the rest of his time as teacher at the Gnesin Institute for Music. The Ganelin Trio (1971–1986), composed of Viacheslav Ganelin, Vladimir Chekasin, and Vladimir Tarasov, was one of the most respected jazz bands in the 1970s, playing avant-garde jazz that fused different styles and offered a theatrical performance. Finally, Sergei Kuryokhin's (1954–1996) band Popular Mechanics, founded in 1985, became famous for its mixture of jazz, rock, and other musical forms in the 1980s, with saxophone player Anatoli Vapirov. The band and Kuryokhin performed abroad and were featured in the BBC series *Comrades* (1986).

***Jazz and Rock “on the Bones”*** From the mid-1960s onward, the thorn in the flesh of the authorities was called rock and roll. Rock music reached the USSR via jazz bands and in some ways was more acceptable than jazz, as it seemed to appeal to the lower, proletarian classes as well as to a different, younger, generation. In a sense, jazz had paved the way for rock music.

In 1961 a decree on parasitism had been passed, however, obliging every Soviet citizen to have a workplace. This created, in

the long term, the phenomenon of the “generation of janitors and night watchmen,” those who sought a fake employment that left them free time to do what they wanted to do: paint, compose, sing. In 1962, Khrushchev's attacks on modern art, especially the young, abstract art movement, had further undermined a potential for the development of a culture that would interest the young generation. Another complication in the spread of rock music was the absence of a homegrown production facility for electric guitars, which were made only in Poland and East Germany.

The impact of Western rock music on the Soviet scene cannot be underestimated. The Sixth International Youth Festival (1957) had brought musical groups from the entire world to Moscow. Moreover, the invention of the vinyl that could be printed onto any piece of plastic led to the appearance of pirated recordings of Western rock, which were available from the 1950s on in the form of *roentgen-izdat* (“music on the ribs” or “music on the bones”): records printed on X-ray plates. Later this activity was linked to crime (the state was not making a profit from this “business”) and made illegal. In the 1960s, some X-ray record makers were even arrested.

Although Elvis Presley had a relatively small impact, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and the East German bard (*Liedermacher*) Wolf Biermann were popular, underscoring the strong tradition of the word in Soviet culture. The public recital of poetry for large audiences had a long-standing tradition, going back to Vladimir Mayakovsky in the 1920s and ending with the mass performances of Yevgeni Evtushenko and Andrei Voznesensky in the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, the recital of poetry to a melodic accompaniment from piano or guitar was

only a small step away from this tradition. Here the so-called bard movement sprang up, with the poet composing and performing his song (the *avtorskaya pesnia*, the author's song).

### ***The Bard Movement***

The main exponents of the bard movement have been Bulat Okudzhava, Alexander Galich, and Vladimir Vysotsky, although other names may be associated with the movement as well, especially Yuri Vizbor (1934–1984). The bard song remains important both for the development of Russian rock in its emphasis on the lyrics rather than the tune and for contemporary Russian culture. Bard songs continue to be performed and remain very popular in the performance of other singers, such as Yelena Kamburova (b.1940), who has appeared on the Moscow stages since the 1960s. Although the bard songs were initially performed only for a small circle of friends, the appearance of reel-to-reel tape recorders, which replaced the X-ray plate vinyls, allowed the recording of the performances and their copying and distribution in what came to be known as *magnitizdat* (publishing on magnetic tape, a word formed in allusion to *samizdat* and *tamizdat*, the—illegal—publication of books as carbon copy or abroad). Indeed, by 1960 there were more than 100,000 tape recorders available, and production was increased further.

Many of these bard songs were critical of the heroic manner with which Soviet historiography dealt with the victory in World War II, ignoring the sacrifice of the individual to achieve that victory. Others dealt with the horror of the Stalin era (still much of a taboo despite the 20th Party Congress and Khrushchev's Secret Speech on Stalin's



Vladimir Vysotsky, actor and bard, reciting Boris Pasternak's poem "Hamlet" to the guitar at the beginning of *Hamlet*, directed at the Taganka Theater by Yuri Liubimov in 1971. (Photo by Valeri Plotnikov)

crimes) or touched upon the lonely and isolated individual, estranged from the state and society.

The first songs were performed in the late 1950s and 1960s by Bulat Okudzhava, dealing with themes of love and the horror of war. Okudzhava avoided direct reference to Stalin but created allegorical references to Stalin as a "black tomcat" ("The Black Cat" [Chernyi kot]). Galich's songs dealt with the gulag and the suffering of the people more poignantly and directly, turning the statue of Stalin into a vampire ("Night Watch" [Nochnoi dozor]). Yet even the bard movement, requiring no official acknowledgment or support from party or state (since performances were private and so was distribution), aroused the wrath of the state, which tightened up cultural politics in preparation for the 50th anniversary

Galich, "Night Watch" (Nochnoi dozor) *excerpt*

The bronze statues go back where they came  
from,  
But the alabaster ones lie hidden away.  
Maybe they're crippled for the time being,  
But even their dust retains its shape,  
These alabaster ones just need some human  
flesh,

And once more they'll acquire their greatness!  
And the drums will beat!  
The drums will beat,  
Beat, beat, beat!

—translation by G. S. Smith

of the Revolution in 1967. In 1968 the media launched a massive attack on Vysotsky, who was later also accused of profiteering; in 1971 Galich was expelled from the Writers' Union, and he emigrated in 1974. Okudzhava was suspended from the Writers' Union in 1972. Of the three, Vysotsky was best positioned in the Taganka Theater (where he was employed as an actor) to perform his songs and to record them in France.

The bard movement was really begun by Bulat Okudzhava, who began to recite his poems in a modest, nondeclamatory way and to accompany himself on the guitar. Galich and Vysotsky joined this tradition later, engaging more in Muscovite jargon and the underground and back streets; Okudzhava remained largely within a classical, nineteenth-century tradition.

Bulat Okudzhava was born in Moscow. His father was executed during the purges of the 1930s; his mother was arrested and released only in 1955. He volunteered for the army and served at the front and thus drew on his first-hand experience of the war in his lyrics. He was a novelist, member of the Writers' Union, and poet-bard. Okudzhava began performing in the mid-1950s, and the songs were distributed through tape distribution (magnitizdat) and not offi-

cially released on record until the 1980s. He used a simple vocabulary and plaintive melodies, focusing on traditional themes: women, love, war, and the city of Moscow.

His treatment of these themes was always unconventional. When dealing with the war in such songs as "Paper Soldier" (*Bumazhnyi soldat*, 1959) or "A Song about Soldiers' Boots" (*Pesnia o soldatskikh sapogakh*, 1956–1958), Okudzhava never glorified the war but emphasized instead the loss of individual life. This was very much against the official war ethos in the Soviet Union, which celebrated Victory Day with parades and reminded the nation of the hard fight the country had put up against fascism. The emphasis on individual lives, on the other hand, was very much in line with the ethos of the Thaw. During the 1950s, artists had begun to stress the individual's heroism rather than the collective feat, so that in this sense Okudzhava tapped into the cultural context of his time. "Paper Soldier" illustrated the fragility of life and the heroism of the individual displayed during a war in which so many perished.

His Moscow songs were hymns to the old city, singling out the different transport systems (the metro and the trolleybus), as well as his native Arbat district (now a pedestrian zone) in such songs as "Song

**Okudzhava, "Paper Soldier" (Bumazhnyi soldat)**

But once there was a soldier boy,  
And he was bold and handsome,  
But he was just a children's toy,  
He was a paper soldier.

He wanted to remake the world,  
So everyone would be happy,  
But he was hanging on a string,  
He was a paper soldier.

For you he would be glad to die  
In fire and smoke twice over,  
But all you did was play with him  
He was a paper soldier.

And you would never share with him  
Your most important secrets,  
And why was that? It was because  
He was a paper soldier.

And he would keep cursing his fate,  
No quiet life he wanted,  
And he kept asking: Fire, fire!  
Forgetting he was paper.

Fire? I don't mind. Go on! You'll go?  
And one day he went marching.  
And then he died for nothing, for  
He was a paper soldier.

—translation by G. S. Smith

about the Arbat" (Pesnia ob Arbate, 1959), "The Last Trolleybus" (Poslednii trolleibus, 1957), and "The Moscow Ant" (Moskovskii muravei, 1956–1958). His "Moscow Metro" (Moskovskoe metro, 1956–1964) ironically echoed with its refrain "Stand on the right, pass on the left!" the command given by the escalator guards on the Moscow metro during peak hours while commenting, by extension, on the attempt of the Soviet system to regulate absolutely everything. In his love songs, he always glorified women, elevating them to the level of an adored icon. One of his best-known songs is "The Blue Balloon" (Pesnia o golubom sharike, 1957), which touched upon folk traditions in its simplicity and brought out the lyrical tone characteristic of Okudzhava's treatment of the theme of women.

Okudzhava's songs never contained a positive, socialist hero. They were sung in a melancholic voice to a guitar accompani-

ment. His songs are an integral part of urban popular song culture and feature in numerous references to urban culture on the television and cinema screen as well as in the theater. His songs are frequently performed by stars of popular music.

Vladimir Vysotsky was an actor by training and joined the company of the Taganka Theater, where he created his reputation as a stage actor. In 1966 he married the French actress Marina Vlady (Poliakova), which allowed him to travel abroad and enabled him to record several albums in France. Vysotsky grew up in the back streets of central Moscow, which exerted a long-lasting effect on his later career: he would always remain loyal to colloquial language, underground jargon, and alcohol. While training as an actor, Vysotsky began to write poems, which he sang to his own guitar accompaniment. He was one of the bards or "guitar poets," to use the phrase coined by G. S.

Smith in *Songs to Seven Strings*, and his hoarse voice became his trademark. Vysotsky's songs dealt with themes incompatible with socialism: alcoholism, Stalinism, street life, prostitution, crime, and quite simply everyday Soviet life. He addressed the people and their problems and therefore received popular veneration. He was never officially recognized as a poet during his lifetime, however.

Vysotsky started performing his songs around 1960, initially to friends, and only later to a large audience. He dealt with different themes: "street" or "crime" songs stylized his own experience of life in the Moscow streets. He explicitly referred to those aspects of Soviet life that were taboo subjects: eroticism and promiscuity in "The Lady Nark" (Ninka, or "Navodchitsa"), prostitution and theft in "Sad Romance" (Grustnyi romans), or alcoholism in "Militia Report" (Militseiskii protokol). He used colloquial language, right down to the vulgar slang of Moscow's streets, and parodied fairy tales and folk legends.

A number of Vysotsky's poems concerned everyday Soviet life. He mocked lifestyles, past and present: "Dialogue in Front of the TV" (Dialog u televizora) was an understanding, yet parodic report of an everyday conversation of a couple in front of the television set, which he sang parodying the speakers' voices. In "Tender Truth" (Nezhnaia Pravda) he attacked the pseudo-objectivity of the Soviet press, echoing the unjust and uninformed campaign a Soviet paper (*Sovetskaya Rossiya*) had launched against him in 1968. He investigated the problems of everyday life: the delays and cancellations of internal flights, the formalities and surveillance associated with travel abroad, overcrowded transport, discussions with the telephone operator.

There were also several songs about sport, which offered an ironic perspective on the Soviet obsession with fitness and physical exercises, such as "a.m. P.T." (Utrenniaia gimnastika) with its mockery of the daily morning exercises on radio, or "The Sentimental Boxer" (O sentimental'nom bokserere), where the movements of the boxer carry political undertones.

Songs about the war formed an important part of Vysotsky's work: although he had no first-hand experience of war, his songs revealed a deep understanding of individual suffering. He expressed an unorthodox attitude to the war by rejecting the heroic tone prevailing in descriptions of the great patriotic war (World War II) in favor of an emphasis on the individual and human sacrifice. In "Seriozha Fomin" he challenged the heroic principles of the Soviet Union when he reported that Fomin had been made a Hero of the Soviet Union although he avoided the draft and never fought during the war, whereas the little man goes without any reward. In "He Didn't Come Back" (On ne vernulsia iz boia) he mourned the death of a friend during battle, underlining the feeling of personal loss. In "In No-Man's Land" (Na neutral'noi polose) he described the attempt of a Soviet and a Turkish frontier guard to pick flowers for their beloved ones on neutral land and asked why borders exist at all. Vysotsky's songs about war were descriptive and mournful, sad but without explicit reproach. His stance, nevertheless, was essentially a pacifist one.

A major theme throughout Vysotsky's career was the role of the poet in society: his delicate and fragile position, his loneliness, and his responsibility were reflected best in his most famous song, "Wolf Hunt" (Okhota na volkov). Here he identified

**Vysotsky, "Wolf Hunt" (Okhota na volkov)**

I'm straining my utmost, every sinew,  
 But yet again, today like yesterday,  
 They've surrounded me, surrounded me,  
 And they're merrily herding me in to do my  
 tricks.

The shotguns are busy from behind the spruce  
 trees,  
 The hunters are hiding in their shadow,  
 And the wolves go head over heels in the snow,  
 Turned into living targets.

The wolf hunt is on, the hunt is on!  
 For gray prowlers, old ones, and cubs;  
 The beaters shout, the dogs howl themselves  
 sick,  
 There's blood on the snow and the red spots of  
 flags.

Our legs and jaws are swift.  
 Why, pack leader, answer us,

Do we turn toward the shots as if doped,  
 And never try to go beyond the prohibitions?

The wolf cannot and must not do otherwise . . .  
 And now my time's coming to its end!  
 The man I'm destined for  
 Has smiled and lifted his gun . . .

The wolf hunt is on, the hunt is on! etc.  
 But I've transgressed my obedience and gone  
 Beyond the flags the thirst for life was stronger!  
 And behind me I heard with joy  
 The amazed cries of the people.

I'm straining my utmost, every sinew,  
 But today's not the same as yesterday!  
 They've surrounded me, surrounded me,  
 But the hunters have been left empty-handed!

—translation by G. S. Smith

with a wolf, doomed to be hunted by the huntsmen (the Soviet system), but finally breaking with all conventions and escaping. This song reflected a poem by Sergei Yesenin in which the latter also identified with a hunted wolf—who is killed. Its only hope is that somebody will write a song about him; Vysotsky fulfilled that request; and he replaced Yesenin as Russia's most genuinely popular poet.

Alexander Galich was an accomplished playwright before he began writing poems, which he sang to the guitar. With a large amount of political bitterness, Galich satirized the system, its victors as much as its victims. In "Episodes from the Life of Klim Petrovich Kolomiitsev," both the worker Klim and the party official are ridiculed:

Klim for reading the wrong speech, the party official for not realizing the mistake. Galich investigated the grind of everyday Soviet reality, such as sexual exploitation for social advancement ("Tonechka") or adultery and subsequent denunciation ("The Red Triangle").

Galich regarded himself as belonging to the "generation of the doomed"—survivors of the purges and of campaigns against "cosmopolitanism," who preferred, however, to immerse the memory of those days in oblivion. He acknowledged a collective guilt, which to him lay in silence about the past. "Petersburg Romance" and "Goldminers' Waltz" were full of self-reproach for his own lack of outspokenness at the right time. His song "When I Return" reflected

both the desire and hope to return and the need for the Russian soil, culture, and audience. His language combined refinement with street jargon, as his style combined high culture with prison manners.

If Galich has always been better known as playwright than as bard, and known among the intellectual circles, then Vysotsky and Okudzhava were both popular heroes for their civic courage in singing about themes that were not part of the official discourse and, in Vysotsky's case, for mocking, parodying, and ridiculing Soviet life.

### ***Rock Underground***

Although the bards were a significant influence on the importance of the lyrics, the main source of inspiration for the rock movement of the 1960s was the Beatles. Their popularity from 1964 onward was unbroken, despite the press attacks on the group, despite derision in the satirical magazine *Krokodil*, and despite accusations that the band played into hands of capitalism. In the early 1960s, rock musicals were banned, and the first rock groups were arrested. The authorities then co-opted the bands, however, in order to keep tabs on them and ensure proper monitoring. Clubs with dance facilities and vocal instrumental ensembles (VIAs) were permitted in the mid 1960s and placed under official control. The most important of these clubs were the Vremena Goda (Seasons) in Gorky Park and the Molodezhnoye (Youth) Café.

***Illegal Rock: The Beginnings of Soviet Rock (1970s)*** In 1963 Alexander Gradsky, at the age of 14, performed some Presley tunes in a school concert. He formed the band Tarakany (Cockroaches), which imitated Beatles songs. Then Gradsky played with Mikhail Turkov, the grandson

of Nobel Prize winner Mikhail Sholokhov, for Slaviane (The Slavs, 1965–1966), which was the first proper Soviet rock band. Here, and with his subsequent band, the Skify (Scythians, 1966), Gradsky sang in English. Subsequently he set up the band Skomorokhy (1966–1976), which sang in Russian. Gradsky's classical bel canto tenor is an excellent voice for the rock band but also for solo performances, which he still gives to audiences of the New Russia.

In 1969 a rock festival was organized in Yerevan; it was held annually until 1972, when the organizer was arrested for embezzlement. There were few international concerts in the 1960s and 1970s that would have enabled Soviet rock fans to see live performances: in 1967 the Rolling Stones visited Warsaw. In 1968 the planned Donovan tour was canceled because of the Soviet invasion in Prague. Between 1968 and 1970, a campaign against hippies led to arrests and the shaven heads of Soviet hippies. In 1975, Cliff Richard was the first Western pop star to visit the USSR, followed by Elton John in 1979. The latter performed the Beatles hit "Back in the USSR" at the last concert, despite official prohibition.

An important development in the acceptance of rock music was the creation of several rock musicals, with an orthodox socialist plot but rock music. In 1975 the rock opera *Orpheus and Eurydice* by Alexander Zhurbin (b. 1945) was directed by Mark Rozovsky in Leningrad. A guitar ensemble accompanied the performance that featured Orpheus as a rock star. The soundtrack of *Jesus Christ Superstar* was popular and performed publicly in 1973 by the band Arsenal at the Central Writers' House (TsDL) in Moscow. Arsenal had emerged from an official Soviet jazz group under the



Alexander Gradsky performs during his concert at the Central Concert Hall Rossiya, 2001. (Photo by: Alexey Kudenko/Kommersant)

saxophonist Alexei Kozlov (b. 1935). The band had performed jazz and rock music in the Molodezhnoye Café before Kozlov joined a band with Yuri Saulsky. The group continues to play to the present day, but now at the Moscow Philharmonic with a classical repertoire, providing another example of the gradual acceptance of jazz music into official culture. The composer Alexei Rybnikov (b. 1945) created the rock opera *The Death and Radiance of Joaquin Murietta*, based on Pablo Neruda's play, staged at the Moscow Theater of the Lenin Komsomol in the 1970s. His rock opera *Perchance*, based on the long poem by Andrei Voznesensky, created the megahit "I Will Never Forget You" (Ia tebia nikogda ne zabudu).

At the same time the disco wave of the 1970s hit the Soviet scene, and—strangely

enough—it appealed to Soviet officials. Especially the image of John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*, with short hair and a tidy suit, was found attractive. The tunes of the Swedish band ABBA were popular and officially accepted. In 1978 a British company was hired to equip a number of discos in the USSR in an attempt to make the disco an attractive venue for the young generation. The Metelitsa (Blizzard) disco on Kalinin Avenue (now New Arbat) became a prototype of disco with strobe lights and mirrored walls. In 1978 the West German band Boney M was invited, although their song "Ra-Ra-Rasputin"—rhymed with love machine—was banned from the concert on 19 September. In 1977 the Soviet label Melodiya (after a deal with EMI records) released Paul McCartney's album with the Wings, "Band on the Run." The Bee Gees,

Rolling Stones, and sporadic Beatles songs were finally released on vinyl.

The 1970s saw a number of important rock groups being formed, most of which fed directly or indirectly into the rock scene of the 1990s. These were unofficial groups and they remained underground, with their members performing fake jobs as janitors and night watchmen in order not to attract the attention of the authorities as “parasites.” Many Soviet rock groups imitated the Western style rather than creating and developing their own. Only in the mid-1980s did the rock groups begin to develop their own style and become more popular and more widely circulated on tapes than foreign rock bands. They now addressed issues of Soviet reality and Soviet life that mattered to their audiences.

The first major rock band was Andrei Makarevich and Mashina Vremeni (Time Machine), formed in 1968. This—unofficial—band mocked official stars, making *styob*, the satirical and parodic reference to the official canon, one of the key characteristics of rock music. Makarevich exploited similar themes to those of the bard songs but used rock language instead of a plain melody. With his stilted manner and nasal voice, he tackled issues of time and existence, remaining apolitical. Makarevich expressed an underlying indifference toward the system. The song “Battle with Fools” labeled all Soviet people fools. “Masks” asserted that the only way to be yourself was to wear a mask. In 1979 the band was taken under the wings of the state concert agency and allowed to give official concerts. It took part in the Tblisi rock festival in 1980 and won the main prize. Time Machine was the voice of youth.

In 1972 the art-rock group Vysokosnoye Leto (Leap Year Summer) formed under

Alexander Sitkovetsky. Stas Namin, the grandson of a high-ranking Soviet party official, played in school and university bands in the late 1960s and 1970s before setting up the band Tsvety (Flowers), performing romantic and lyrical songs on the album *Flowers Have Eyes* (*Est' glaza u tsvetov*), launched by Melodiya. The band was dissolved by decree in 1975 as a hippie band, but by that time Namin had managed (as the first rocker) to join the Union of Composers. In 1978 Namin revived his group for concerts but became actively engaged in the “rock for peace” movement and later created a center for the promotion of Soviet rock that produced the band Gorky Park (1988) as a flagship for Russian rock music for the United States. Gorky Park was designed to sell Soviet rock abroad, with the symbol of a hammer and sickle and using for its name the title of Martin Cruz Smith’s thriller. The metal rock group produced clips on television and gave concerts in 1988–1999 before moving to the United States. Their second album, *Moscow Calling* (1993), was not a hit, and the members of the group moved back to Russia as the group gradually fell apart.

The most significant formation of the 1970s was the band Aquarium by Boris Grebenshchikov (BG), formed in 1972. The Leningrader Grebenshchikov had indulged in Beatles songs in the 1960s and performed them in English. In forming the band Aquarium, he combined rock, theater, and Eastern philosophy. The band was named Aquarium—by analogy with the feeling of a fish in an aquarium—to convey their isolation in society. The group included Seva Gakkel, Andrei (Diushka) Romanov, and Mikhail Vasiliev (Fainstein). The instruments were unusual for a rock band, sometimes including a violin and a



Front man Boris Grebenshchikov of the Aquarium rock band is interviewed at the press conference launching the band's first DVD, *25 Years of Aquarium*, at the President Hotel, Moscow, in 2001. (Photo by Sergey Ponomarev/Kommersant)

cello. In the late 1970s the influence of Bob Dylan made itself felt, and around 1980 the band had a brief punk phase with dissonant sound. During one rock festival in Tblisi, Grebenshchikov rolled on the floor clutching his guitar while the cellist was standing above him. This was interpreted as a sexual act, and the officials left. After the Tblisi concert, BG was expelled from the Komsomol and lost his job. All the other band members began working in pro forma jobs (night watchmen) but spent their time making music. The band continually sought new ideas and experimented. They attracted several leading sax players for their albums and recorded three albums (1981–1984) with the pianist Sergei

Kuryokhin, who provided an ironic counterpoint that disappeared when he left the band.

Although at first Aquarium's lyrics reflected the typical stagnation attitude of indifference and lack of belief in any system, later lyrics were inspired by ideas taken from J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, populating the songs with gnomes and knowledge of the center of the earth. Grebenshchikov hovered between orthodox and pagan imagery, divided between anguish and hope for Russia and its potential. His moods changed from despondency to lamentation, anger to darkness. In the 1990s he increasingly turned to Eastern philosophy. Aquarium's most political song

**Aquarium and Boris Grebenshchikov, “The Generation of Janitors”**

The generation of janitors and night watchmen  
has lost each other:  
in the endless space of the earth  
everybody has gone home.  
In our time every third person is a hero:  
they don't write articles,  
they don't send telegrams.

They stand like flights of steps  
when the burning oil  
lashes down from one floor to the next.  
And from somewhere they hear singing  
Yet who am I to tell them that this is a mirage?

We were silent like fish  
while everything you could think of  
was up for sale  
including our children.  
And the poisoned rain  
was pouring down into the rotting gulf  
And we still watch the screen  
And we still wait for the news.

And our fathers never lie to us—  
they don't know how to lie,  
like a wolf does not know how to eat meat,  
like birds do not know how to fly . . .

Tell me what I have done to you,  
why there is that pain,  
which has no explanation;  
it runs apparently in the blood.  
But I kindled the fire myself, which is burning  
me from inside,  
I digressed from the law,  
but did not reach love.

But pray for us,  
pray for us, if you can.  
We have no hope  
but this is our way.  
And the voices sound nearer and louder  
And may I be cursed, if this is a mirage.

—translation by Birgit Beumers

was the 1988 title “Train on Fire” (Poezd v ognе) with a video clip where the band members were dressed as revolutionary soldiers, led by the Gorbachev-type figure Colonel Vasin. Soviet history was reversed, the Revolution turned back, but at the same time the entire planet was turned upside down. Politics never remained on the level of simple satire but were always embedded in larger existential or spiritual patterns. An anthem of their generation was the song “Generation of Janitors” (Pokolenie dvornikov), which bemoaned the fate of those who once abandoned their social status for independence from a system that began to put up everything for sale, ideals and property. Indeed, the role of the rock

musician as a prophet and an idol of a different alternative lifestyle had become outdated: “the generation of janitors and night watchmen have lost each other in endless space.” Ultimately, they have “no hope, but this is our way.” Grebenshchikov accurately described the predicament of his own role as musician and poet, whose voice became redundant in the new consumer-oriented Russia.

Musically Grebenshchikov combined Western and Soviet traditions and styles. The influence of the Beatles and Bob Dylan was clear in the 1970s songs. In 1988, BG was offered a contract by the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) for recording *Radio Silence*, but he returned disap-

pointed with the album. He has written music for the films of Sergei Soloviev that have enhanced his popularity and that of the films, especially *ASSA*. Since 1998 BG gives concerts only solo or with specially assembled musicians (pick-up groups), and Aquarium has been disbanded. Grebenshchikov, although a phenomenally talented composer who has made a massive impact on Soviet and Russian rock music, has ultimately surrendered to the impossibility of matching the former unofficial underground status of his band, his status, and his lyrics with the world of commercial rock music in the New Russia. Indeed, in the 1980s when his band was officially acknowledged, he was one of the few people to be anxious about the implications of this change.

***From Clampdown to Freedom (1980s)***

Although many rock groups were recognized officially in rock concerts in the early 1980s, the years between the death of the head of ideology, Mikhail Suslov, in 1982 and the arrival of Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 were three terrible years for underground culture. After Suslov's death, Konstantin Chernenko was put in charge of ideology. He attacked the lax ideological supervision and was very critical of disco sound. By 1984 he had ordered the compilation of a list of unacceptable bands. Between 1982 and 1984, numerous raids were carried out to confiscate illegal tapes and equipment. Furthermore, the political climate—under the impact of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the subsequent anti-Western campaigns—had a detrimental effect on the rock scene, which became increasingly demoralized. After 1985, when Gorbachev came to power and reformed the Central Committee posts of ideology

and propaganda, the state interfered very little in musical culture. Indeed, in 1987 the Union of Composers admitted both the composer Rodion Shchedrin and the jazz musician Yuri Saulsky. Despite the initial clampdowns, the 1980s saw a proliferation of rock bands, some temporary features of the scene, others lasting well into the era of the New Russia. By the Gorbachev era, rock music had become acceptable, although it was still despised by the intellectuals and some of the party elite for the vulgarity they perceived as inherent in any form of mass culture. Soviet rock music tackled existential issues and explored the meaning of life for a generation of people who had felt indifferent to the state and society, who had marginalized themselves from that society and established for themselves an alternative (underground) lifestyle. Once this alternative style became accepted and merged into the mainstream, the special role played by many of these groups in the 1980s vanished, and those who failed to redefine themselves and find their own style disintegrated.

The influence of the bard tradition continued in the 1980s, with the popularity of Vysotsky increasing after his death. The emergence of a new bard, however, stressed once again the predominance of the word for the rock movement. The biggest rock star of the 1980s generation never performed with a band, only with his acoustic guitar; he never gave concerts beyond the scope of a theater, avoiding large arenas that were popular among the bands. Yet his voice and his songs remain treasured to the present day. Alexander Bashlachev (1960–1988) was the first rocker with authentic poetry. He led rock out of the antisocial satire mode and the styob attitude that were predominant in groups

**Bashlachev, "Time for Little Bells" (Vremia kolokolchikov)**

For a long time we had sultriness and frost.  
All were removed and set free.  
We gobbled the snow and the birch  
and grew as tall as the bells.

When lamenting we did not spare salt.  
When having a feast we did not spare  
gingerbread.  
The bell-ringers with black blisters  
pulled the nerve of the brass dynamics.

But with every day times change.  
The cupolas lose their gold.  
The bell-ringers loiter about the world,  
The bells are broken and smashed.

What are we beating around the bush for now  
like underground men in our own field.  
If nobody cast us a bell  
that means the time is for little bells.

The heart is ringing under the shirt.  
Ravens scatter in haste, in all directions.  
Hey, bring the shaft-horses out with their traces  
and all their four hooves.

But how many years have the horses not been  
shod  
wheels have not been oiled,  
there are no lashes, the saddles are broken  
and all knots undone.

But in the rain all roads are rainbows.  
We are in no mood for laughter.

But if there is a little bell under the arc,  
that's it. Get ready and let's go!

We whip them, whistle and urge them on,  
struck to the bones, to the marrow.  
Hey, brothers, can you sense with your livers  
the threatening laughter of little Russian bells?

For centuries we chew the curses and the  
prayers  
For centuries we live with our eyes gouged out  
We sleep and drink—day by day, litre by litre  
We sing no more—we are unable to . . .

We waited. We wait. Everybody was filthy.  
Therefore we all looked alike.  
But under the rain it turned out we were all  
different.  
The majority—honest and good.

May the Big Bell be broken to pieces.  
We have come with our black guitars.  
Big Beat, Blues and Rock 'n' Roll  
Have enchanted us with their rhythmical spell.

In our hearts—sparks of electricity  
Hats in the snow. And turn up the volume!  
Rock 'n' Roll is the pagan religion—  
I love the time of the little bells!

*—translation by Birgit Beumers*

such as Mashina Vremeni. His song "Time of the Little Bells" (Vremia kolokolchikov) became the anthem of the rock movement. Bashlachev wrote his songs easily, drawing on pagan Russian imagery and on Russian folk rhythms (such as the pace of the

troika), creating a network of emblems and symbols while taking the listener on a journey through history: not official history but that of the Russian people. His images of Russia and its people reflected a profound understanding of the spiritual strength, the

vastness of space that knows no measure. In this song he advocated the need for a bell (a voice, a spokesperson), which is not available. Therefore he called for the polyphony of several bells (voices). Politically, he asserted the strength of the people as opposed to a single-person leadership while also alluding to the return to nature (*kolokolchik* is also a bluebell). Bashlachev combined poetry and rock music in a unique way. He left his hometown of Cherepovets in 1984 and performed his songs and ballads in the bard tradition, telling stories of Russia and its roots, parodying Russia's decline, and uncovering the dark pages of Stalinism and fascism. Bashlachev's song "Vaniusha" was about the resurrection of the Russian soul and typified the always optimistic and hopeful endings of his songs. He performed and traveled a great deal and married a Leningrad girl to get permission to live in Leningrad (*propiska*). He committed suicide in 1988.

**Rock and Film** The cinema of the late 1980s had a huge impact on spreading rock music, offering the musicians an opportunity both for background music as well as for roles in the films. Many films featured performances of rock bands, creating, as it were, free music clips for the bands. The filmmaker Sergei Soloviev (b. 1944) made a number of films, including adaptations of classical literature and films dealing with youth problems. Particularly significant was the film *ASSA* (1988), starring figures of the Leningrad underground movement, including Sergei Bugayev, Timur Novikov, Irena Kuksenaite, Viktor Tsoy, Boris Grebenshchikov, and Zhanna Aguzarova. In *ASSA*, rock music stands in the center, offering a different, alternative lifestyle rather than being the source of destruction

and unrest, as in Iuris Podnieks's documentary *Is It Easy to Be Young?* (*Legko li byt' molodym?*, 1986), about the demolition of a train after a rock concert in Oger, Latvia, in July 1985. The documentary had for the first time shown a rock concert in the Soviet Union. It had explored the problems of the young generation, who were fans of the forbidden fruit of rock music, who lacked confidence, who rejected materialism, who felt they were not needed, who had no place in the society that surrounded them and could not identify with its values, who used drugs and alcohol to escape from a reality to which they had no relation, and who sought their place in life. The film did nothing outstanding by today's or Western standards, but for the Soviet Union of 1986 this was an outrageously open statement about a young generation that felt superfluous to society. The lyrics of rock music commented on the false ideals suggested by official culture and supported an escape into a dream world. The band leaders soon became role models, ideals, heroes.

The Russian rock scene had many such "heroes" to offer, and *ASSA* was not the first film to star rock musicians, but the first to show them in a positive light and as a positive influence: Valeri Ogorodnikov's *Burglar* (*Vzломshchik*, 1986) had underscored the negative influence of a rock musician, inciting his younger brother to steal a synthesizer for him. Both in *Little Vera* (*Malen'kaia Vera*, 1988) and *Is It Easy to Be Young?* the rock concerts were crushed by the police. In this sense, *ASSA* represented a strong change in the perception of underground culture in general and rock music in particular. Bananan (played by the Leningrad artist Sergei Bugayev, known as Afrika) is a nonviolent and innately good character, who stands apart



Zhanna Aguzarova, the stunning performer who has always sought new ways to outrage and shock her audiences. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

from the others because of his behavior and his appearance (he has one earring). He is juxtaposed to the “Soviet” official Krymov, played by the documentary filmmaker Stanislav Govorukhin—a representative of the establishment—who holds power over his mistress Alike (Tatiana Drubich). He may possess the power to have Bananan killed, but Alike becomes aware of the plot and kills Krymov. Bananan is a romantic hero, who triumphs—even if in death. In the finale a concert by Viktor Tsoy takes place against all the rules and regulations, and the song “I Want Change” (Ya khochu peremen) expresses dissatisfaction with a world where happiness is possible only through escapism into a dream world.

As the Soviet Union collapsed, Sergei Soloviev set up a course at the Moscow

Film Institute VGIK (Vserossiiskii gosudarstvennyi institut kinematografii, All-Russian State Institute for Cinematography) consisting of a group of students who came from Kazakhstan, including Rashid Nugmanov, Darejan Omirbaev, and Serik Aprymov, who would become the leading talents of Kazakh cinema in the 1990s. ASSA marked a watershed in the representation of rock music and also greatly influenced the first and most important film of the 1980s by one of Soloviev’s Kazakh students: Rashid Nugmanov’s *The Needle* (Igla, 1988).

Nugmanov’s *Needle* was the first film to openly address the issue of drugs. As in ASSA, the hero—Moro—is played by a rock star: Viktor Tsoy. Moro returns to his hometown Alma-Ata to collect debts from Spartak (Alexander Bashirov), visits his former girlfriend Dina, and finds she is on drugs. He tries to get her clean, taking her to a deserted *aul* (village) by the dried-up Aral Sea. When Moro discloses the dealer’s identity (the freaky doctor is played by another rock star, Petr Mamonov) and prepares to leave with Dina, he is stabbed by the dealer on a wintry road. Heroes never die, however: Moro lives on, walking down the snow-covered road with his blood leaving red dots on the white surface to the tune “Blood Type” (Gruppa krovi). The positive moral values are perpetuated as he continues to live, but only in a world of dream and escape, whereas the drug dealer triumphs in reality. Nugmanov had no illusions about reality but instilled such illusions in his viewers. In this sense he followed his teacher’s solution offered in ASSA, where rock music offers salvation from a reality that has no room for honesty and change.

Nugmanov’s film revealed not only the meaninglessness of life (drug addiction, debt collection, drug dealing) but also the

**Kino and Viktor Tsoy, "Blood Type" (Gruppa krovi)**

A warm place, but the streets await the stamp  
of our feet  
the stardust on our boots  
The soft chair, the chequered plaid, the  
cigarette put out too late.  
A sunny day in blinding dreams.

The blood group on the sleeve  
My ordinal number on the sleeve  
Wish me luck in the fight  
Wish me  
Not to remain in the grass  
Not to remain in the grass  
Wish me luck  
Wish me luck

I have money to pay but I do not want to win at  
any price

I don't want to put my foot on anyone's chest  
I would like to stay with you  
Simply stay with you  
But a star high up in the sky guides me onto  
my way.

The blood group on the sleeve  
My ordinal number on the sleeve  
Wish me luck in the fight  
Wish me  
Not to remain in the grass  
Not to remain in the grass  
Wish me luck  
Wish me luck

—translation by Birgit Beumers

barrenness of the land, symbolizing the absence of a future. If there is a future, it lies on the snow-covered road that leads to the land of illusions and dreams. *The Needle* also raised the issue of country and city: life in the city is corrupt and flawed. It is in the desert by the Aral Sea that Dina comes clean and finds her way back to Moro. Urban civilization may mean progress, but purity lies in a return to one's roots. Soloviev inspired his pupils to address the problems of the young generation and, in putting their faith in rock stars, to express dissent with the system.

**Moscow Rock** The 12th International Youth Festival was held in Moscow in 1985 and had an effect similar to that of the youth festival of 1957: many Western rock stars, including Udo Lindenberg and Bob Dylan, visited the USSR and influenced the

domestic rock scene. In 1986 Melodiya finally released the first Beatles album in the USSR. In October 1986 the band UB40 gave a concert in Moscow, and numerous visits by Western pop and rock stars followed during the glasnost years. Moreover, domestic rock music was also recognized and officially distributed, and in 1987 Melodiya released the first Aquarium album. The West's interest in Russian rock was equally great, however, and thus Artemy Troitsky's book on the rock movement in the USSR was first published in English in 1987, and the American producer Joanna Stingray released the first major collection of Soviet rock (the album *Red Waves*) in 1986.

The rock scene in Moscow developed during the late 1980s and fed into the formation of the musical taste of the audiences for both pop and rock music. Although Moscow was the center for music

production and business, the Leningrad rock scene brought forth the more experimental and innovative groups, maybe less popular with large audiences but appreciated by music lovers. The rock scene in Moscow gradually gathered around various clubs and concert halls, but mainly the Gorbunov House of Culture (DK Gorbunova) in the northwest of Moscow. Most famous rock groups gave concerts there and do so to the present day. Moreover, a market developed around the concert hall for the trade of musical releases. Many of these were pirated copies, and there is a historical reason for such widespread piracy. The official prohibition of rock and jazz music in the 1960s and 1970s had led to a homegrown, illegal production of records (“on the bones”) and tapes (magnitizdat). Most of these tapes were not only traded for money but also exchanged for other recordings in the 1960s and 1970s, and this pattern laid the foundation for the production and distribution of rock albums in the same way. In any case, only the state, which had initially forbidden their official release, was losing money in this operation. Rock bands would record their albums and release them on tape, often supplying insufficient copies to satisfy demand, and pirates copied the tapes and later the CDs to satisfy the demand and sell their releases at lower prices. This business spread substantially in the mid-1990s, when the park around the Gorbunov House transformed into a video and audio market. Films suffered the same fate of being copied illegally and sold at a lower price on the Gorbushka. The concept of pirated products preventing the producer (and the band) from recouping the money invested in the release was alien for the ex-Soviet “consumer,” who was used to dealing only

with the state as producer, supplier, and distributor. And there was no harm perceived in deceiving the state, hence the blooming “shadow economy” in the Soviet era, where a minimal segment of the production sector was private, yet produced more steadily than the state-run enterprises (for example, vegetable produce from private gardens). The clampdown on videopiracy began when the American Motion Picture Association complained to the World Trade Organization, as it was losing large sums of money through the illegal distribution of U.S. films. Piracy of computer programs continues, as does piracy of music. The Gorbushka moved from the open-air park to the former television factory Rubin in 2002 and now sells largely licensed VHSs and DVDs. The range of CDs available at the Gorbushka is huge, but the percentage of pirated disks is probably still more than half of the products on offer at the market.

Initially, a number of bands populated the Moscow rock scene. The group Cruise was one of the first hard rock bands, formed in 1979 under a VIA. Voskresenie (Sunday), set up in 1979 with ex-members of Mashina Vremeni, performed many bard songs, exploiting the theme of the lyrical hero who, despite a hard life, has not been broken by the system. Both bands disintegrated in the 1980s when their “underground” themes were no longer in demand and became part of official discourse.

The art-rock group Avtograf (Autograph) was formed in 1979 with members from the band Vysokosnoye Leto (see above) with Alexander Sitkovetsky and the sax player Sergei Mazayev. It won second place at the Tbilisi rock festival in 1980. The band was very popular in the 1980s and became especially well known as the first Russian band

to participate in the concert Live Aid for Africa in July 1985, with two songs broadcast live to the concert arena. They also took part in the benefit concert for the victims of Chernobyl on 30 May 1986 in the Olympic Stadium Moscow, run under the title "Account 904" and organized by Alla Pugacheva and the rock critic Artemy Troitsky. AvtoGRAF turned to pop rock in the late 1980s and produced an album in the United States (*Stone Border*, [Kamennyi kraj], 1990). Soon after it dispersed in the United States, but most of its members returned to Russia later. The role of rock bands in the peace movement of the 1980s was a very important one, and it fed into the official political agenda of the new Soviet leadership that sought nuclear disarmament.

A massive impact, however, was made by the new groups formed in the mid-1980s. The group Bravo, established in 1983, is one such example. Bravo's leader, Yevgeni Khavtun, was looking for a lead singer when he was contacted by a woman called Ivana Anders from Moscow, who had an extravagant performance style. Ivana claimed to reside in a large apartment of her diplomat parents in central Moscow while they were working abroad. A year later Ivana was the star singer of the group, but she was arrested for falsifying documents and imprisoned for eight months with a period of "exile" in her Siberian hometown near Novosibirsk. In order not to be labeled a "provincial" girl and to avoid problems with a Moscow residence permit (*propiska*), Zhanna Aguzarova had "borrowed" the passport of a friend, Ivan Anders, after having failed to enter the Moscow Theater Institute (which would have given her the right to reside in Moscow), since she was deemed too capricious, with likely bouts of laziness and excesses of stardom. Aguzarova

impressed with her colored hair, her miniskirts and trouser suits, and a variety of costumes and makeups she created for herself. Bravo's music was easy-going and stylish, and the rest of the band was well dressed, so that it was quite distinct from the other underground rock bands. The song "Yellow Shoes" (1984) was a megahit, as were other tunes from the first Bravo album. As an innovative and stunning performer, Zhanna was always seeking new ways to outrage and shock her audiences. She left the band in 1989 for a solo career, and Bravo hired Irina Yepifanova as their lead singer. Aguzarova spent several years in the United States with the band Nighty Nighties and upon her return to Russia in 1996 turned toward techno music. She performs regularly and remains one of the top singers of the new Russian pop and rock scene.

Heavy metal music was represented by the band Ariya (Aria, 1984), organized on the basis of the VIA Singing Hearts (Poiushchie serdtsa) under Viktor Bekstein. Its album *Megalo-Mania* (Maniia velichiiia) sounded pretty much like the tunes of the Iron Maidens. The band underwent several substantial changes and crises in the late 1980s, turning to simplified and American-style tunes. They continued to perform in the 1990s with successful concert tours and new albums, and their popularity rose substantially with their image-maker and sponsor, Harley Davidson. The hit "Care-free Angel" (Bespechnyi angel) served as a promotion tune for the motorcycle design.

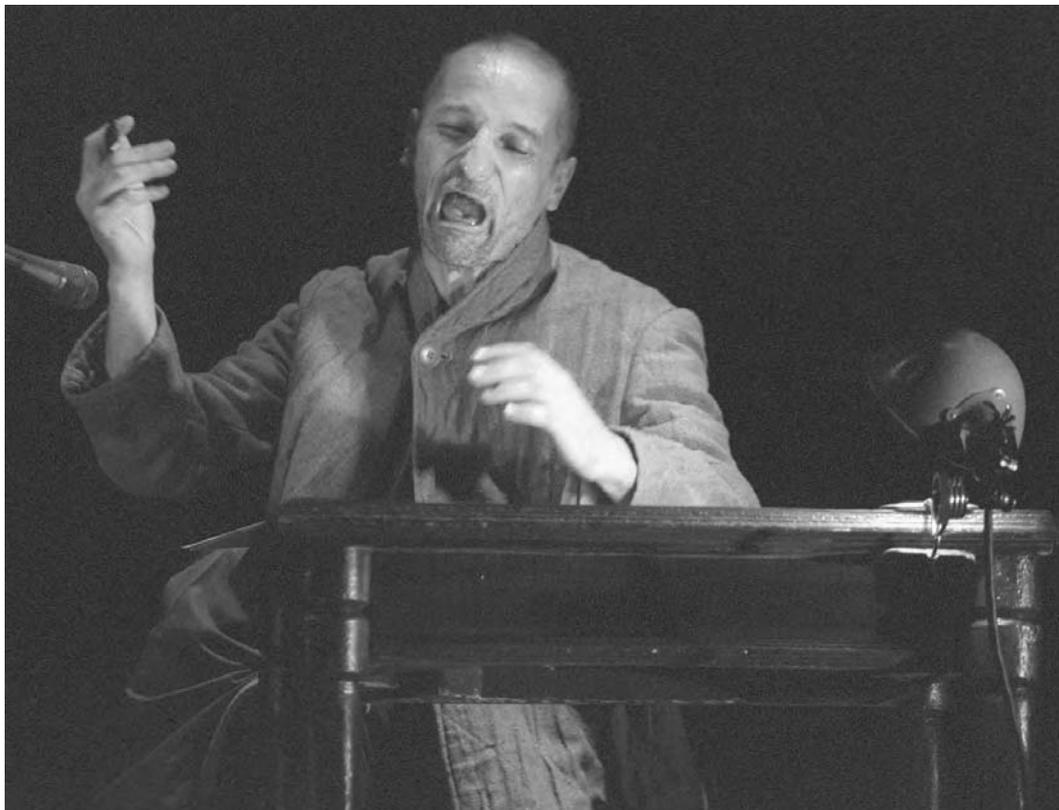
The band Crematorium (1983) was organized by the Moscow students Armen Grigorian and Viktor Troyegubov. At first they played tunes with existential themes, and the song "Koma" made them widely known, with the clip "Waste Wind" (Mu-

sornyi veter) shown on the television youth programme *Vzgliad*. They have since released a range of albums and remain one of the most popular rock bands in the New Russia, with regular concert tours. Va Banque (1986) was founded by Alexander Skliar in Moscow, playing hard orthodox rock and punk. Skliar's hoarse voice lent itself to that type of music. The band toured in the late 1980s, both within Russia and beyond, and recorded an album in English. They experimented with the creative process, recording the album *na kukhne* literally "in the kitchen," with an accidental accordionist picked up in an underground passage participating in the improvised play. The hit "Black Flag" (Chernoe znamia) bemoans the deception of the Russian simple man by the authorities in a parable where bandits, stealing the black flag, betray the people while they are being watched by a commissar and a general. The song effectively deploys an accordion to underscore the gypsy and folk tunes that form the basic melody for the song. Thus the text strips the situation of the Russian people by parodically using a Russian folk tune, as if the predicament of the people were normal. A further example of the parodic use of conventions is the association of spring not with bright colors and romantic feelings but with the drunken housekeeper sweeping the courtyard ("Spring" [Vesna]). Demonstrating once again the close relationship between text and music in Russian rock music, they released an album in 1999, entitled *Lower Tundra* (Nizhniaia tundra), inspired by the fashionable and popular post-modernist writer Viktor Pelevin.

The group Mongol Shuudan may not be one of the most popular rock groups in Russia but has reached a wide international audience with their participation in

Sergei Bodrov's film *I Wanted to See Angels* (Ia khotela uvidet' angelov, Russia/United States, 1992). The band was formed around Valeri Skoroded and Igor Toropov in 1988. Mongol Shuudan plays anarchic rock and thus occupies a rare niche in the Moscow rock scene. Moreover, they combine rock compositions with folk intonation and quotations from Cossack songs or ditties from the period of the civil war. Their hero is Batka Makhno, a rock hero and Cossack chief, whose story is told to racy rock melodies with jazz saxophone interludes, parodying the heroic narrative.

A phenomenon exclusive to the Moscow scene is the appearance of performers. Petr Mamonov is the best example of such a performer. A Moscow street urchin, he was brought up in the same area as Vladimir Vysotsky, on Karenyi Riad. Without completing his education, he tried a number of jobs and careers, but failed. In 1982 he began to write songs and perform them in a sexy and obscene, aggressive manner. In these songs Mamonov recounts his own life. In 1983 he formed the band *Zvuki Mu* (Sounds of Mu, where Mu stands for the first two letters of "music" or as the "mooing" of cows), sponsored and organized by the bored son of the general secretary's official English interpreters, Sasha Lipnitsky. In 1988 Mamonov debuted as an actor in Nugmanov's cult film *The Needle*, and his acting continued in a number of top films of the 1990s. His musical illiteracy makes the songs sound unlike the typical tunes of the rock scene, which led Brian Eno to choose this group for a recording in 1987. The songs witness the hero's lack of involvement with reality (for example, "Soviet Press"). In the 1990s Mamonov released further albums as Mamonov and Alexei, having abandoned *Zvuki Mu*. At the



Actor and rock musician Petr Mamonov performs in the stage play *Pushkin of Chocolate*, staged in the Stanislavsky theater, 2001. (Photo by Dmitry Lekay/Kommersant)

same time he began to perform on the stage of the Stanislavsky Theater, where the productions *Bald Brunet* (Lysyi briunet), based on a play by Dana Gink (published in English), and *Nobody Writes to the Lieutenant* (Polkovniku nikto ne pishet) allowed his stage talent to develop to the full. His eccentric antics provide the driving force for the productions, which are essentially shows of Mamonov, only with an underlying dramatic text. This dramatic foundation was abandoned in the show *Is There Life on Mars?* (Est' li zhizn na Marse?) and subsequent shows of Mamonov staged at the Stanislavsky Theater, which draw a full house.

Another performer is Igor (Garik) Suka-

chev. He initially formed the band Brigada S (1986) and established his bandit-like conduct as the group's leader. In the mid-1990s Sukhachev formed the group Botsman i Brodyaga (Boatswain and Vagrant, 1995–1996) for a project with Alexander Skliar, in order to create an album of the favorite songs of Soviet times, including songs composed by Vysotsky and Utesov. At around the same time he disbanded Brigada S and created the band Neprikasayemye (Untouchables). More important is Sukachev's input into the cultural scene with his films *Midlife Crisis* (Krizis srednego vozrasta, 1997) and the autobiographical account of his childhood, *The Holiday* (Prazdnik, 2001).



Rock band Agatha Christie performs on the stage of Luzhniki Sports Complex. The 2003 concert marked the band's fifteenth anniversary. (Photo by Ilya Pitalev/Kommersant)

Numerous bands arrived on the Moscow (and Petersburg) stage from the provinces in the late 1980s and 1990s. The Urals proved a genuine cradle of rock music: Alexander Bashlachev came from there, and the city of Sverdlovsk represented a vibrant center. Indeed, the composer Alexander Pantykin played an important role in this development, not only as leader and founder of the band Urfin Dzhuiz (Urphin Juice), which earned him the title Granddad of Ural rock (*dedushka Uralskogo roka*), but also subsequently as a composer and producer of rock music. Pantykin as-

sisted in the discovery and promotion of young regional talents with his recording studio and the record label Tutti Records. Thus, Pantykin helped the group Nautilus Pompilius to record their first album long before they moved to Petersburg.

The band Agata Kristi (Agatha Christie, 1985) emerged from the Urals with an album *Second Front* (*Vtoroi front*, 1988) that mixed postpunk with elements of chamber music. The group, like so many of the 1980s, represented the indifference and nonconformism of their generation. In the 1990s they moved to Moscow, where they

were produced by Sergei Lisovsky's company, and released the album *Opium* (1992). Further albums that followed indicate the band's move toward more psychedelic pop. Of the album *Main Kaif* (parodying Hitler's *Mein Kampf* with the substitution of *kaif*, meaning pleasure) in 2000, only the song "Secret" made it onto radio. Although Agata Kristi remain popular, they produce sombre and heavy music where the sound drowns the melodies.

The group ChaiF (1984) also stems from Sverdlovsk. The title of the band combines the word *chai* (tea) and *kaif* (pleasure, high). It was established by Vladimir Shakhurin and Vladimir Begunov, who initially composed songs for themselves before they gave stage performances with drum and trumpet accompaniment to their guitars. Gradually, the group expanded and presented a tour of a dynamic rock show. By 1992 they had reached national fame with their Beatles-style songs that invited the audience to join into the refrain and that abstained from the parodic and satirical tones of many other rock bands. ChaiF's "Don't Hurry" (*Ne speshi*) reminds people to enjoy life, and the hit "17" is a romantic song where the singer reminds his wife of the days when they were young (when she was 17) and promises to do the same things he used to do for her when they were first in love: buy flowers and write songs. Thanks to their melodic tunes and the universal and general themes tackled in the songs, ChaiF enjoys wide popularity among all ages.

Sektor Gaza was formed in Voronezh in 1987 by Yuri Klinsky. It followed the punk style of the Sex Pistols but created more melodic songs that were "punk for the people." Their use of slang and vulgar language (especially in the album *Gas Attack* [Gazo-

vaia ataka]) made their songs rare on radio, from which they were censored. The group disbanded in 2000 when Klinsky died of cardiac arrest.

**Leningrad Rock** In Leningrad the rock club on 13 Rubinstein Street, formed in 1981, became the chief venue for new rock bands to appear. Indeed, in many ways the "northern capital" overtook Moscow in the number and proliferation of rock bands, and festivals were held largely in the Caucasian capitals Yerevan and Tbilisi in the 1970s and 1980s, and later in the Baltic republics, thus away from the tight control exercised in Moscow. The Leningrad café Saigon (on the corner of Nevsky Prospekt and Liteinyi Avenue) served as a major meeting place and later as the main music store. In the late 1990s the shop was closed, and the building converted into the Radisson SAS Hotel.

The group Zoopark (Zoo, 1981), formed by Mikhail "Maik" Naumenko (1955–1991), became an immediate success at the rock club. Naumenko was the ideal rock star hero, following the street aesthetics of Vladimir Vysotsky and creating the image of the gentle rebel. He broached formerly taboo themes in his songs, such as the issue of sex, best illustrated in his song "Sweet N" (*Sladkaia N*), which openly addressed a debauched lifestyle that included prostitution and alcoholism. Naumenko and Zoopark gave numerous concerts in Leningrad and beyond the city, but sadly the group dissolved with the untimely death of Naumenko.

Another tragic rock hero was Viktor Tsoy (1961–1990). He played in various bands while a student at a design and craft school (having been thrown out of the Art Academy after an "ideological" conflict),

**Zoopark and Mikhail Naumenko, "Sweet N" (Sladkaia N)**

I woke up in the morning, in my clothes,  
in an armchair in my closet within my own four  
walls.

I waited till dawn for you to come,  
and wonder Sweet N where you spent the  
night.

I washed and brushed my teeth,  
thought about it, but decided not to shave.  
I stepped outside and followed my nose,  
it was light outside and the day had begun.

And on the bridge I met a man  
who told me that he knew me.  
He had a rouble, and I had four,  
and therefore we bought two bottles of wine.

And he took me to the strangest place,  
Where people were dancing so the house was  
rocking  
Where people were drinking cocktails and  
played dice  
And nobody thought about what would happen  
after.

It was a typical attic scene  
from two speakers wafted Bach.  
Everyone thought of his own affairs  
one about six billion\*, the other about six  
roubles.

\*world population

And someone as always was babbling about  
flying saucers  
and someone as always was preaching about  
Zen,  
but I sat like a statue and wondered stupidly  
where you spent the night, Sweet N.

Not sharing the general high spirits  
I forgot myself and sipped rum in the armchair  
People came and went  
And again couriers were sent shopping

The ladies were particularly polite,  
and one tried to capture me  
I was silent in the corner and wondered myself  
where you spent the night, Sweet N.?

I was angry at myself, angry at the evening  
and could only find my boot with difficulty.  
And although I was asked to stay  
I decided to leave although I could have stayed.

And when I came home, you were asleep  
But I did not wake you up to have an argument  
with you.

I thought to myself: "Is it really that important  
with whom and where  
you spent the night, my Sweet N?"

—translation by Birgit Beumers

before forming a duo in 1982 with Alexei Rybin. Their songs echoed the thirst for love of a generation that felt unwanted, and the attempts to make sarcastic comments led only to tender and understanding notes. In 1984 Rybin and Tsoy were joined by Yuri Kasparian, Alexander Titov, and Yuri Gurianov to form Kino. Their

1984 album *Captain of the Kamchatka* (Nachal'nik Kamchatki) became an instant success. Tsoy's technique of evenly pronouncing the words meant that every word was clear, but it also struck the audience as a laconic statement. The notes of loneliness and despair still underlay the songs' melodies. Kino continued its massive suc-



The rock star and actor Viktor Tsoy, whose premature death in 1990 turned him into a genuine rock legend in Russia and abroad. (Henry Diltz/Corbis)

cess, and Tsoy appeared in the films *ASSA* and *The Needle*. The song “Blood Group” accompanied the final scene of *The Needle* when the knightlike Moro wandered off into the other world, having failed to realize his noble aims in this world. The tune “I Want Change” ended Soloviev’s film *ASSA* (1988), where the alternative hippie lifestyle represented in the film by the character of Bananan finally triumphs—albeit after Bananan’s destruction by the current, prevailing system—in a semi-forbidden concert. Tsoy died in a car accident while on holiday in the Latvian Baltic Sea resort Jurmala. His premature death turned him into a genuine rock legend in Russia and abroad.

The group Auktsyon (1983) emerged from a series of attempts by Leonid Fyodorov to form a band at the Polytechnic Institute in Leningrad. Eventually he teamed up with the poet and DJ Oleg Garkusha and formed Auktsion (Auction), a band that played postpunk and new wave music. Later they became influenced by the ethnic music of southern Europe and Central Asia. The group’s name was once misspelled as Auktsyon and thus they arrived at their current name. They played, like so many bands, in the Leningrad rock club, with visually striking performances of the absurd texts of Garkusha. Their costumes were designed by the hip Leningrad designer Kirill Miller (“Killer Miller”). Their albums, released from 1987 onward, sold well. In the early 1990s they worked with the émigré poet Alexei Khvostenko for their albums *Kettle of Wine* (Chainik vina, 1992) and *Lodger of Heights* (Zhilets ver-shin, 1995), with the latter drawing on the experimental poetry of the 1920s writer Velimir Khlebnikov. Again, a rock band drew on “high” Russian culture and the literary traditions of the early twentieth century for its lyrics. In the latter half of the 1990s, the band became less active, and Fyodorov produced the band Leningrad.

In Leningrad in 1983, Sviatoslav Zaderny formed the band Alisa that, until 1985, lacked a successful lead singer; Zaderny found such a singer in Konstantin Kinchev from Moscow. The band immediately landed a hit with “My Generation” (Moe pokolenie), which became a youth anthem. The song bemoaned the reduction of an entire generation to silent witnesses of their time, who feared the light and lived withdrawn in the underground. Such a gloomy view of life in Russia is typical of Kinchev. Alisa alluded to the world of Lewis Car-

**Alisa and Konstantin Kinchev, "My Generation" (Moe pokolenie)**

2013 moons  
are given to the absurd game.  
The light of passing stars  
is still light.  
It's so difficult to believe in your path  
from this wall to that wall.  
Answer!  
Did you hear me or not?

Unfortunately I am weak  
as the witness to the events on the Bald Hill.  
I can foresee,  
but cannot foretell.  
But if you suddenly see  
my eyes in your window  
then know  
that I have come to disturb your sleep.

This is my generation standing silent in the  
corners  
my generation dares not sing,  
my generation feels the pain  
but again puts itself under the lash.  
My generation looks down,  
my generation fears the day,  
my generation cherishes the night,  
and devours itself in the mornings.

A blue-green day  
rose, once the thunderstorm was over.  
What an amazing event,

but we miss it.  
It's so difficult for you to make up your mind,  
you are used  
to weighing up the pros and cons.  
Understand  
I give you a chance.

It is my job to be alive,  
it's a cheek, but it runs in the blood.  
I know how to read in the clouds the names  
of those who know how to fly.  
If ever  
you feel the pulse of great love  
know  
I have come to help you get up!

This is my generation standing silent in the  
corners  
my generation dares not sing,  
my generation feels the pain  
but again puts itself under the lash.  
My generation looks down,  
my generation fears the day,  
my generation cherishes the night,  
and devours itself in the mornings.

Hey, generation, answer.  
Can you hear me? Can you hear me?  
I am here.

—translation by Birgit Beumers

roll's *Alice in Wonderland* and parodied Western rock music with inclusions of Russian folk elements. Kinchev offered a powerful requiem to Alexander Bashlachev with the album *The End* (Shabash). Alisa continued to release albums during the 1990s and remained very popular. Their musical styles moved from hard rock to

disco and techno sounds, and thematically the lyrics revealed an increasing preoccupation with spiritual elements, not unlike the development of Grebenshchikov. Around the same time as Alisa, Mike Borzykin formed his group Televizor (1984), beginning like so many groups in the Leningrad rock club. Borzykin had the

### Televizor, "Get out of Control" (Vyiti)

We were watched from the days of kinder-  
garten  
Sweet aunts and kind uncles found our soft  
spots  
And hit us there as if we were their livestock.  
So we grew up as an obedient herd  
We sing what they want, we live like they want  
We look up to them with the eyes of slaves  
We watch them beating us up . . .

Get out of control  
Get out—and sing what you feel  
Not what is allowed—  
We have a right to yell!  
Get out of control  
Get out of these walls!  
Get out—we were born to be free  
Get out and fly!

We have become sly, have learnt how to hide,  
and new aunts, new uncles  
look into our eyes and pat our heads  
asking us to disappear into the lower depths.  
But we stand, we are sick of falling down,  
tell us: what for?  
Who are we? Who provokes our bad dreams?  
Here we are, not easy to get on with.  
Hide the birches—there are not enough for  
everybody.  
Today ten, tomorrow twenty.  
That's the way it was, that's the way it will be.

—translation by Birgit Beumers

reputation of being a difficult child, which lent itself to the formation of the image of an egocentric and lonely rocker. He continually broke rules and taboos, and an underlying pessimism resounded from his songs and themes of teenage frustration dominated his early work. In 1986 two songs were forbidden for concert performance (but played nevertheless). "Get out of Control" (Vyiti) dealt with the supervision of every aspect of daily life by the Soviet system and supported the need to break free to "get out of these walls." Of course, any censorship intervention in the mid-1980s raised the profile of a group, and performance despite the prohibition made Televizor the leading band in the mid-1980s. In another song they condemned the Stalinist generation and the system that still overshadowed the present, creating—following the model of Bashlachev—a parallel be-

tween fascism and Stalinism in the song "Your Father Is a Fascist" (Tvoi papa fashist). The band was barred from performing in Moscow until the summer of 1988, very late into the Gorbachev period.

The Leningrad scene fed on its own amateur rock bands, but a number of bands from the provinces also moved to that city rather than to Moscow. Yuri Shevchuk was born and raised in Ufa (Bashkortostan) and formed a band there in the early 1980s, with whom he participated in a number of festivals. In 1987 he moved to Leningrad after the authorities in Ufa forbade further performances of his group. He instantly formed a new group around him, called DDT, and also found a musical style leaning toward hard rock, but using both violinists and saxophonists. Shevchuk's lyrics were imbued with social concerns. "I Got This Role" (Ia poluchil etu rol') became the



Yuri Shevchuk, leader of the DDT rock group at a jubilee concert of his group at the Olympic Sport Complex, 2000. (Photo by Dmitry Lebedev/Kommersant)

new anthem of the rock movement. Shevchuk followed in many ways the traditions of Vysotsky: a concern for social ills, the hoarse and emotionally charged voice, and a love for Russia and her past informed his songs. The album *Actress Spring* (*Aktrisa vesna*, 1992) revealed a mixture of Russian folk and rock styles. As the 1990s moved on, and the need for a voice of opposition gave way to a voice that entertained, Shevchuk became less angry and challenging and more disillusioned with the role of a rock poet in the New Russia. Although DDT continues as a band, he has, in many ways, suffered a fate of marginalization from the mainstream similar to that of Grebenshchikov.

The other “migrant” group was the band Nautilus Pompilius, formed in 1978 by Via-

cheslav Butusov and Dmitri Umetsky in Sverdlovsk, who made their first album in 1982 with Alexander Pantykin. The lyrics written for the group by Ilia Korniltsev represented a poetic world that was most suitable for Butusov’s fragile melodies. After some years of performing, Butusov dissolved the group and moved to Petersburg, where he reinvented Nautilus in 1990. The following albums had a huge success in Russia and beyond, developing a style of guitar-based rock compositions for lyrics that dealt with the fragility of human life and that did not necessarily possess any political or social resonance. By 1997 the band had disintegrated, however, and although the albums *Yablokitai*, recorded in London with electric music by Bill Nelson, and *Atlantida* still carried the name of the



Viacheslav Butusov with his new band Ju-Piter performing on the stage of the B-2 Club in Moscow in 2004. (Photo by Alexey Kudenko/Kommersant)

band, they were recorded by Butusov with free-lance musicians. A genuine experimenter, Butusov continues to compose music and has collaborated with the band DeadUshki (literally “dead ears,” or phonetically “dedushki,” grandfathers, formed in 1998), which creates electronic music. Butusov features prominently in Alexei Balabanov’s blockbuster *Brother*, where the opening of the film captures the hero stumbling onto the set where the clip “Wings” (Kryl’ia) is being shot. He gets beaten up and continues his search for the latest album of “Nau” throughout the film, at one point accidentally walking into a party at Butusov’s flat. The song explores the fragility of the human soul but uses the image of wings that allow man to fly and that have been removed from man’s back,

leaving a scar. The crippled individual, unable to “fly,” is condemned to a profane existence, so unlike Viktor Tsoy’s lines that allow man to step with ease into the skies, guided by the “star high up in the sky” and still carrying “stardust on our boots.” Butusov’s lyrical heroes are condemned to a sullen existence in the New Russia.

## Pop Culture

### *Rock Meets Pop*

The rock movement of the 1980s continued well into the 1990s. Some bands lost their voice of opposition, unable to find a role in a society that no longer relied on the underground to spell out truths. Others established themselves with a particular musical

**Nautilus Pompilius, "Wings" (Kryl'ia)**

You are taking off your evening dress, standing  
with your face to the wall.

I can see the fresh scars on your spine which  
is as soft as velvet.

I want to cry with pain, or forget myself in a  
dream.

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

Some time ago we used to have time, now we  
have things to do:

To prove that the strong gobble up the weak, to  
prove that soot is white.

We have all lost something in this senseless  
war,

By the way—Where are your wings which I  
liked so much?

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

I don't ask how much money you have, or how  
many men,

I see that you are afraid of open windows and  
upper floors,

And if tomorrow there is a fire and the whole  
building is in flames,

We will die without those wings which I liked  
so much.

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

Where are your wings which I liked so much?

—translation by Birgit Beumers

style, from punk to hard rock, techno, and jazz. At the same time, rock music had now become official and moved into the public arena, thereby mixing with popular music.

**Boys and Girls (1990s)** A new phenomenon occurred of managers and producers launching and promoting rock bands. The composer Igor Matvienko launched a project with the vocalist Nikolai Rastorguyev and formed the group Liube (1989) after a successful concert in Izmailovo. He promoted the band through an album and a film (*Liube Zone*, [Zona Liube, 1994]). At concerts the group presented itself in black T-shirts and checked trousers, playing a heavy and loud pop and folk mix. The image of the band, and indeed their name, drew on the youth gang "liubery," named after the Moscow work-

ing-class suburb Liubertsy. The "liubery" manifested a harsh opposition to Western influence (unattainable to them financially), not unlike the skinheads. Liube hits included the song "Makhno" (1988), which drew on Cossack-style tunes. For the hit "Atas," they created a stage image in military uniforms of the 1940s for a lyrical and humorous song that contributed to their image as a neofascist band.

Another novelty for the 1990s was the emergence of girls' bands. Although the rock scene had been largely male dominated, with women taking their place on the lighter estrada stage, several girl bands were formed. The first and most successful was the band Kolibri from Leningrad/St. Petersburg, organized as a musical and aesthetic project by Natalia Pivovarova in 1988. Together with Yelena Yudanova and

Inna Volkova, Pivovarova formed a trio that performed hits of the 1950s, accompanied by the sax player from DDT, Mikhail Chernov. In 1990 the trio was joined by Irina Sharovatova and called itself Kolibri. The song "Yellow Autumn Leaf" (Zheltyi list osennii) became an instant hit, establishing the style of the band with a decadent, sentimental note, without however abandoning the satirical and parodic touches (styob) so typical of the Soviet rock movement. The lyrics were concerned with love and female secrets. In 1999 Pivovarova left the band for a solo career, indeed taking a short stint at directing a play. The group Litsei (Lyceum, 1992) also started off with three girls, one of them the daughter of Andrei Makarevich, Anastasia. Dressed in jeans and sneakers, they offered a repertoire of harmonized and melodious songs, composed and produced by Makarevich. The most successful girls' band was Strelki (Arrows, 1998), which was formed, like Liube, by a producer and composer who selected the girls with a specific project in mind. Their songs "Ma Mummy" (Mamochka mamulia) and "You Ditched Me" (Ty brosil menia) became hits among a largely teenage audience. The trio ViaGra was formed originally in Kiev in 2001, when the group had a clip shown on Biz TV. Under a powerful Moscow producer, they soon signed a contract with Sony and received the Ovation award. The trio, with changing singers, but always consisting of a blonde, a redhead, and a brunet, draw heavily on their sex appeal, sporting short skirts and using the nurse-look to enhance their erotic appearance.

After the success of the girl band, the boy band followed suit. A-Studio, a band from Almaty (hence A-studio), had worked as an orchestra for the Kazakh singer Rosa Rymbaeva since 1981 before venturing on

their own pop and jazz tunes with Eastern influences in 1987. In 1989, "Julia" became a hit, followed by successful albums in the early 1990s. The band dissolved in 2000. A greater resonance was achieved by the project of Bari Alibasov with the group NaNa (1994). They were the first boy group to perform in the Hard Rock Café in New York, building their performances on choreographed dance acts. Alibasov formed the group by competition and casting, recruiting Vladimir Levkin, Vladimir Asimov, Vladimir Politov, and Viacheslav Zherebkin for the band while he managed the group. The emphasis was less on song than on stage performance, as the group was modeled on the Beatles with a neat appearance and a groomed hairstyle. An element of eroticism had become an integral part of show business, and NaNa was soon accused of promoting itself as a gay band.

Ivanushki International (1995) was another youth project launched by Igor Matvienko (who had also launched Liube). He recruited the dancer and singer Andrei Grigoriev-Apollonov from Sochi and matched him with a singer and actor from Moscow, Igor Sorin, to form a group. In 1996 they launched their debut album of techno dance music and in order to achieve maximum publicity resorted to free concerts in Moscow schools. Their video clips were successfully shown on the major music channels, and Ivanushki became very popular among a teenage audience.

Although in Moscow music became more and more a business and bands were assembled to meet the needs of a producer, the Petersburg scene relied on organic formations. The band Tequilajazzz (1991) brought together Yevgeni Fyodorov, Konstantin Fyodorov, and Alexei Voronov. They played heavy guitar music largely for



The pop group Ivanushki International performs during the celebration of the group's fifth birthday at the Olympic Sports Center in 2001. (Photo by Sergey Mikheev/Kommersant )

club performances, becoming gradually more melodic and more appealing. They have composed music for the theater and have recorded two albums with Kolibri. The band Chizh and Co. (1993) under Sergei Chigrakov (Chizh) is characterized by his falsetto voice and guitar play. Chizh recorded his first album with support from Petersburg musicians. His songs are autobiographical and deal with contemporary life. Chizh is extremely prolific. His 1997 album *Bombers* (Bombardirovshchiki), with the song "Tanks Thundered in the Fields"

(Na pole tanki grokhotali), was the best-selling album of the year. The song mockingly tells the story of a war and makes pointed references to the ongoing Chechen war. Korol i Shut (King and Jester, 1989) represented punk music in its early days and launched its first album only in 1996, presenting frightening stories in their lyrics set to dynamic rock music. Their songs have caught on with audiences and are frequently played on radio. Ruki Vverkh (Hands Up, 1997) is a dance band originally from Saratov, formed by the duo Sergei

Zhukov and Andrei Potekhin. The song "Little Boy" (Malys) included the voice of a little boy and turned into a major hit. Another discovery from the provinces was the band Mumii Troll (Mummy Troll) formed in Vladivostok in 1979 by Igor Lagutenko. After work placements in China and London, Lagutenko recorded his debut album in London in 1996 and gained attention with his rhythmic and melodic provocative punk. His songs became hits and were played on the radio in the late 1990s. Lagutenko started to promote young talent, among others Zemfira. His band was nominated to represent Russia in the Eurovision Song Contest 2001 with "Lay Alpine Blues" and took twelfth place. He has recently written the music for Leonid Rybakov's debut film, *Book Stealers* (Pokhitiiteli knig, 2004).

The American-based band Bering Strait was formed in the mid-1990s by a group of teenagers from Obninsk, Siberia, who traveled to Nashville, Tennessee, and began performing a Russian-inspired form of country music. Natasha Borzilova and Lydia Salnikova play the guitar and keyboard and perform the vocals in the band, and Ilia Toshinsky, Alexander Ostrovsky, Alexander Arzamastsev, and Sergei Olkhovsky provide the musical accompaniment. Bering Strait is popular in the United States, where the band has released its records with Universal, although it remains obscure in Russia.

**Pop and Scandal** After boy bands and girl bands, the turn came for scandals to create publicity for groups. Zapreshchennye barabanshchiki (The Forbidden Drummers) were the discovery of 1999 with the song "A Killed Negro" (Ubili negra). The band from Rostov indeed initially con-

sisted of drummers who were joined by an orchestra and arrived in Moscow in 1997. They play rock with interesting rhythm changes, introducing a samba rhythm for "A Killed Negro," telling the story of a Negro who is not playing basketball and not dancing hip hop, using clichés of the Negro to establish that he is dead while the refrains express outrage that he has been murdered. He is then revived by a healer and returns as a zombie. The text is mocked by its pronunciation with a seemingly foreign accent. This creates a slow and monotonous recital of the words that lends them a deadpan tone while telling the story of the killed Negro with a mockingly low-key refrain "oi oi oi."

Even more outrageous are the texts of the Petersburg folk-punk band Leningrad founded in 1997 by Sergei Shnurov (Shnur) with some members of Tequilajazzz. The band's lyrics are full of extremely vulgar language, parodying the establishment while offering melodic rock tunes for the musical ear. The song "Sluts" (Bliadi) is a good example of the vulgar texts produced by the group. The song tells the story of a man who is looking for a warm place for his penis ("tolko khui rabotaet / khochetsia emu tepla / khot odna by mne dala"), appealing to the sluts to help out this "uncle" (diadia). Another song, Paedos (Pidarasy), deals with the dull life in town, leaving sexual aberration as the only way out for the lyrical hero. Leningrad's texts may be spoofs of contemporary pop groups or established rock bands. Thus, they have recorded parodies of Zemfira and even of the Kino hit "Blood Type." Because of their obscene language they have been banned by Moscow's mayor from playing concerts in the city, although they have appeared in several rock clubs (B2 and Jao Ja). The vul-

garity of their texts, combined with a deadpan, folksy rendering, makes their songs not unlike those of the London-based Tiger Lillies.

The preoccupation with sexuality, straight and otherwise, is one of the key factors in the contemporary Russian rock scene to model the image of a group and promote it in the mass media. The homosexual theme was alluded to by NaNa, although they did not deliberately stage homoerotic performances. *Gosti iz Budushchego* (Guests from the Future, 1998), organized by the composer Yuri Usachev with his singing partner Eva Polsna (who is half Polish), were initially concerned with their pop and rave songs, arranged for them by the top Russian DJ, Groove. "Run from Me" (*Begi ot menia*, 1999) became a hit, however, largely because of the clip where Eva features along with another girl. Moreover she slurs the line "you turned out not to be my fate, but" (*ty moei sudboyu ne stal . . . a*) so that the verb indicates that she is speaking of another woman, not a man (*stal* is the masculine form, *stala* the feminine form of the verb, which in the past tense in Russian gives a clue to the gender of the speaker). The second hit, "Hatred" (*Neliubov'*), featured in the clip Yuri Usachev with another man, alluding to homosexual love. The sadomasochistic rhythm, combined with groaning, did the rest to create two songs that, through their clips and performance, promoted lesbianism and male homosexuality for the first time deliberately.

This trend would be trumped, however, by the most popular pop band in Russian history, the duo t.A.T.u, playing in a Euro-pop rock style. They deliberately alluded to their lesbian relationship, but moreover this was a relationship of teenagers (and

minors), not adults. The duo was formed in 1999 by the producer Ivan Shapovalov. He cast Lena Katina (b. 1984) and Julia Volkova (b. 1985) for the band, dressing them in school uniforms (white blouses, ties, and checked miniskirts) and taught them some lesbian antics. With that they became the most popular band in Russia; with 1.5 million albums sold, they conquered the international charts and toured Europe and the United States, finally representing Russia at the Eurovision Song Contest in 2003 with "Don't Trust, Don't Be Afraid" (*Ne ver, ne boisia*), gaining third place.

The band's name derived from *Ta liubit tu* (this girl loves that girl). They advertised their young, forbidden love in the clips to their songs and their interviews. They first launched their single "I've Gone Mad" (*Ia soshla s uma*, 2000; English version "All the Things She Said"), which reached number one on Russian radio, backed by a video clip on MTV and a mini album. This was followed by "Not Gonna Get Us" (*Nas ne dogoniat*, 2001), which led to a contract with Universal. By 2002 they had an album in English, *200kmh in the Wrong Lane*, and reached the top of the charts in Europe. All this was achieved by a careful marketing campaign that styled the girls as lesbians (which they were, in fact, not), and by their maintaining this facade in interviews. Once their image collapsed as both started dating boys, their career came to an end.

t.A.T.u's songs describe the anxiety of the girls that they might be discovered doing wrong. The song "Malchik Gay" deals with the frustrations of a girl in love with a gay boy. In their hit "All the Things She Said" (*Ia soshla s uma*) they mention forbidden love; they emphasize that the girls are "mixed up and cornered" but that they want each other so much. In "I've Gone Mad" the girls



The girl band t.A.T.u takes part in the “Stopudovyi” Hit (Hundred-Pound Hit) Awards ceremony held by Hit-FM radio in the Kremlin Palace, 2001. (Photo by Alexey Kudenko/Kommersant)

present themselves as considered to be mad by others and in need of a cure. The clips illustrated the girls’ feelings for each other, and their entrapment in a society from which they sought to escape.

And I’m all mixed up, feeling cornered and  
rushed  
They say it’s my fault but I want her so much  
Wanna fly her away where the sun and rain  
Come in over my face, wash away all the  
shame  
When they stop and stare—don’t worry me  
'Cause I’m feeling for her what she’s feeling  
for me

I can try to pretend, I can try to forget  
But it’s driving me mad, going out of my head

While they seemed naive and in love in television interviews, they clearly knew very well the roles they had to play and broke free from the expectations at every opportunity. For example, after being criticized for kissing on one television show in the United States during their tour in February 2003, they were allowed to kiss during another but chose not to do so. On the *Tonight Show* with Jay Leno on 24 February 2003, they benefited from the fact that the studio staff did not know Russian to ex-

press their opposition to the war in Iraq, when they quite outrageously sported T-shirts with the phrase “KHUI VOINE” (f\*\*\* the war). On the next evening, on *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, they wore T-shirts with the word *censored*. t.A.T.u may have been the most important pop duo to bring Russian pop music to the attention of the West, but their image was a very fine construct that ultimately broke apart.

If the image of the t.A.T.u girls had been entirely artificially created, then Alsou is a genuinely talented singer, who used publicity to market her talent rather than create it. Born in Tatarstan, Alsou (Alsu Safina) is the daughter of LukOil’s vice president. She moved to Moscow in 1991 and attended a musical school, but in 1993 her family sent her to a London school specializing in design. In 1999 Alsou, aged 15, sang her tune “Winter Dream” (Zimnii son) in a clip directed by the gifted and popular film- and clip-maker Yuri Grymov, who created a clip where she featured as a Lolita-type character alongside the star actor Sergei Makovetsky (who looks not unlike Jeremy Irons, who had just starred in Adrian Lyne’s remake of *Lolita*) and Yelena Yakovleva. Alsou signed a contract with Universal, and in 2000 she was the youngest-ever singer to represent Russia at the Eurovision Song contest, taking second place in the competition with her song, “Solo.” In 2000 Alsou launched her first English album and subsequently received the European Music Award. She returned to Moscow in 2003 to study at the Theater Institute.

Zemfira (Ramazanova) was discovered in 1998 at a rock festival in Moscow and was helped in her career by Ilia Lagutenko of Mumii Troll for her first album. *SPID* (Aids) became an instant hit and was played frequently on radio. Zemfira’s individual man-



Alsou, the talented singer who represented Russia in the 2000 Eurovision Song Contest. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

ner of singing made her one of the most popular performers in Russian pop and allowed her to form a group around her for her next albums. Also known for their voices rather than their media image are the Nochnye Snaipery (Night Snipers, 1997), a duo of Diana Arbenina from Magadan and Svetlana Urganova from Petersburg, who perform their songs to electronic music arranged with help from ex-Nautilus musicians. Another successful voice is that of Julia Chicherina from Ekaterinburg, who launched her career in 1997 with the single “40,000 km” that became a radio hit. She moved to Moscow, where “Tu-la-la” became popular on radio and allowed her to launch a number of albums.



The rock singer Zemfira performs at the Maxidrom rock festival in the Olympic Sports Complex in 2002. (Photo by Alexey Kudenko/Kommersant)

The most innovative new talent is that of Natasha Ionova, but she has conquered the charts not with her voice, but by the creation of her puppet personality. The 17-year-old Natasha, who performs as the band Gliukoza (original spelling ГЛЮКЪ)ЗА where *gliuk* means a *high* and the complete word *glucose*), appeared on the stage in 2003. Gliukoza loaded her first composition onto the Internet as mp3 files and then gained popularity with her cartoon figure. She wears a mask of this character for her clips and performances, portraying a girl with blond hair (like her) through her mask.

The Russian rock scene clearly moved into the public domain and turned into a fully fledged business in the 1990s. Although talents still emerge onto the public arena, many pop groups are created and

produced, manipulated by producers and mass media to bring in a commercial profit.

#### ***Estrada and Pop Music***

The record company Melodiya was founded in 1964 to control the releases of Soviet music; the majority of its sales were pop music, not recordings of classical music. And this music was pop music of the estrada genre.

If rock music had a massive impact on popular music in the 1990s from the underground, then estrada was the official popular entertainment. It was popular despite its official status, whereas underground was popular because of its unofficial nature. Estrada draws on jazz music and performance, merged with some disco element. Performances on the estrada stage

are usually in the form of a concert version with an audience to watch a spectacle rather than dance. Estrada is mass entertainment of a stage concert, requiring preparation and choreography, design and movement as well as costumes; it is a theatricalized performance.

In the 1960s famous estrada singers included Mark Bernes (1911–1969), who performed both on stage and in film; the native Polish singer Edita Piekha (b. 1937); Sofia Rotaru (b. 1947), whose success came in 1968 with a song about soldiers who did not return; the bass baritone Lev Leshchenko (b. 1942); Iosif Kobzon (b. 1937), who since 1959 has performed as a singer. Many of the estrada songs came from the pen of Alexandra Pakhmutova (b. 1929, Sverdlovsk), a composer who graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1956 and has written more than 300 songs. Pakhmutova followed the tradition of the 1930s ballads and the bard song, and the jumps in octaves are a characteristic feature of her compositions. Her most famous song is “Tenderness” (Nezhnost’, 1966), which is extremely popular to the present day. The composers played an increasingly significant role in creating the right tunes but also collaborating with appropriate interpreters. Igor Krutoy (b. 1954) is a composer who founded in 1988 the ARS center, which among other things produced television shows on music. Raimond Pauls (b. 1936, Riga) had worked with a jazz sextet and conducted the Riga Estrada Orchestra before beginning to write his own music. He worked closely with such poets as Andrei Voznesensky, Robert Rozhdestvensky, and Ilia Reznik for the lyrics.

The 1960s and 1970s also saw a revival of the folk song, much in the style of country folk song in the performance of Zhanna

Bichevskaya (b. 1944), who collects and performs folk songs and accompanies herself on the guitar, dressed in plain and simple black dresses to avoid the theatrical effects achieved on the estrada stage. Nadezhda Babkina (b. 1950) is a singer with an alto voice who not only performs folk songs but also heads the folk section at the Gnesin Institute and has founded a center for folk music.

An extremely popular singer of the 1970s was the opera baritone Muslim Magomayev (b. 1942, Baku), who is little known in the West. Magomayev had studied music at Baku Conservatory and spent a short term at La Scala in Milan before becoming a solo singer of the Azerbaijan National Opera and Ballet Theater (1963–1969, 1978–1987). In between he performed on the estrada, lending his lyrical intonation and his velvety, romantic voice to the songs of Ario Babadzhanyan (1921–1983). His “Beauty Queen” (Koroleva krasoty) was a megahit of the 1970s and is still frequently played at concerts and on radio. Magomayev later returned to the classical opera stage but even then continued to use his direct contact with the audience in order to popularize opera music.

The major discovery of the 1970s, however, was Alla Pugacheva. Her song “Harlequin” (1975) not only won the main prize at a prestigious festival in Bulgaria but also established her fame as the leading Russian pop diva, a reputation that survives into the present day. Although scorned by the intelligentsia, which hated anything popular and therefore profane, she became the pop queen, with all the stormy affairs and eccentricities of a star. Pugacheva staged her songs as theatrical performances, where the singer adopts a role and changes this role from show to show, but also from song



Alla Pugacheva, the Soviet pop legend, performing her hit “Harlequin” in the costume designed for her theatrical performance of this 1970s hit. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

to song, varying her intonation, changing costumes, and altering the pitch of her voice to match the mood of the song. Most of Pugacheva’s songs of the 1970s and 1980s were composed by the team of Raimond Pauls and Ilia Reznik, who wrote the hit “Yellow Leaves” (Zheltые list’ia, 1978). Although the heyday of her career was clearly in the late 1970s, Pugacheva continues to make the headlines, whether it is with her marriage to the much younger pop star Filipp Kirkorov, or the launch of a shoe and fashion label, or the participation in 1997 in the Eurovision Song Contest with “Primadonna,” where she came in only fifteenth.

**Pop Ladies** Pugacheva created a precedent for women to cast themselves in different roles and theatricalize song performance almost to the level of Western show business. Her model was followed, directly and indirectly, by many people in the 1980s. The soprano Larisa Dolina (b. 1955) made her appearance on stage with exotic stage numbers for her light dance tunes. Irina Allegrova cast her image as a femme fatale with her smoky voice while still performing as lead singer in bands. The songs written by Igor Nikolayev launched her solo career in the early 1990s, and later she also worked with composer Igor Krutoy, who created dramatic ballads for her. The Latvian Laima Vaikule (b. 1954) was discovered by Raimond Pauls when she performed in Riga’s restaurants and clubs in the 1980s. She cast herself in various roles, creating a choreographic score for her performances. Her tall figure, short blond hair, and cabaret and variety style made her demeanor similar to that of Liza Minelli. She became popular with a song written for her by Ilia Reznik, “Night Bonfire” (Nochnoi koster, 1986), which featured on radio.

Natalia Vetlitskaya made her debut in 1984 with the group Mirage but gained popularity through her affair with the pop singer Dmitri Malikov (b.1970), whom she married in 1989. The blond sex symbol performed rhythmic tunes with a mischievous voice. The song “Playboy” (1994), written by composer Oleg Molchanov and presented with a video clip, was a hit that marked her comeback after divorcing Malikov. After marrying a businessman, she has disappeared from bohemian circles but not from the stage. Irina Saltykova also began in the group Mirage, before marrying pop star Viktor Saltykov, whom she di-

forced in 1995, going on then to launch a solo career. Saltykova gained popularity with songs by Oleg Molchanov, especially “Gray Eyes” (Serye glaza) with a rather erotic video clip, and “Doll’s House” (Kukolnyi dom), both drawing on techno and disco rhythms. In 2000, she starred in the blockbuster *Brother 2* as herself, a star singer who has a brief affair with Danila Bagrov (played by Sergei Bodrov Jr.). Saltykova’s erotic poses and gestures, sometimes bordering on vulgarity, make her a frequent object of scandals reported in the tabloid press and also qualify her as the “face” that advertises Life Style condoms. Alyona Sviridova not only sings but also composes her own songs. She promoted herself with video clips made by the filmmaker Ivan Dykhovichny and later by Fyodor Bondarchuk (“Poor Lamb” [Bednaia ovechka]). In 1999 she featured on the cover of the Russian edition of *Playboy*. Although all these pop singers are perhaps talented and have appealing voices, most created their stage image not through performance but through media scandals. This demonstrates how fast Russian pop culture has assimilated the working mechanisms of Western show business, where the media can build or destroy the image of a star. The fact that so many new bands and voices are not discoveries, but the creations of producers, ties in with this development.

***Gentlemen of the Estrada*** If the women build their images on erotic attraction, the male pop stars tend to draw on a more classical image. Oleg Gazmanov’s education in the navy shows in the creation of song cycles in different styles, from Cossack to navy and officers’ songs. His songs moved from rock and folk intonations to a

disco sound, and then to romances. For a while he performed some songs with his son, Rodion, underscoring his image as a family man. Valeri Meladze also appears as a well-groomed singer, mainly performing compositions by his brother. Although the stage image of the tenor Valeri Leontiev carries some degree of sexual ambivalence, with his songs from the pen of Pauls, he established himself as a talented singer with slightly effeminate manners and appearance. Later he worked with the composer Lora Kvint (b. 1953), who also wrote the rock opera *Giordano* (1988), in which Leontiev sang the main part.

The Pugacheva clan includes, in the wider sense, two further male singers: her husband and her ex-son-in-law. Pugacheva’s husband, Filipp Kirkorov, is a star in his own right, but the relationship feeds the media with stories because Kirkorov is almost 20 years younger than Alla. Born in Bulgaria into the family of a famous singer, Kirkorov studied music at the Gnesin Institute in Moscow and began performing at the Leningrad Music Hall and in Alla Pugacheva’s Theater, before embarking on a solo career. In 1994 he married Alla Pugacheva, a union that has shed no negative light on his career; in a sense, Kirkorov revived attention toward Pugacheva’s waning star and thus perpetuated her name. Kirkorov has given concerts in large international venues (Madison Square Garden, Friedrichstadtpalast Berlin) and is produced by Russia’s most powerful music producer, Sergei Lisovsky. His outfits come from the designer Valentin Yudashkin. Kirkorov has quickly become a cult figure, and his appearances in films and on stage (in the musical *Chicago*) are a guarantee for box office success. Born in Sverdlovsk,



Russian pop diva Alla Pugacheva (right) and her husband Filipp Kirkorov (left) arrive at the Kremlin Congress Palace to attend the Eighth Golden Gramophone Awards ceremony, 2003. (Photo by Alexey Kudenko/Kommersant)

Vladimir Presniakov could hardly have missed the rock movement that was so strongly represented in the town. After a stint in a hard rock group, his voice broke, and he turned to modern jazz and break dancing. With his falsetto voice, he soon launched a solo career. Presniakov's liaison with Pugacheva's daughter, the actress and occasional singer Kristina Orbakaite, with whom he has a son, provided mundane stuff for the tabloids.

***The New Russian Estrada*** If in Soviet times the estrada had provided light entertainment for the masses through theatricalized performances of songs and concerts, then in post-Soviet Russia the theatrical element decreased and the image making was left to producers and the media rather

than talent. Gradually, the role of the producer increased in importance, and music became a business rather than a form of keeping people entertained in an ideologically suitable manner. The rise of the mass media, especially television, facilitated the creation of images through music clips. Although these were expensive to place on the national channels, with the appearance of musical channels, clips became the most important way of promoting a new star. Some clip makers reached designer status: Yuri Grymov and Fyodor Bondarchuk are the top directors and image makers. In 1995, Muz TV began to transmit in 21 cities, charging a flat fee for every song played. In September 1998, MTV followed suit, creating a competing outlet for new musical clips.

Moreover, the pop scene was subjected to fast changes in taste. In the early 1990s audiences were eager to go to Russian rock concerts, especially those groups that had previously remained in the underground. As the underground rock surfaced and became mainstream, many of the bands lost their remit and failed to keep the audience's attention. New rock groups satisfied new demands. By the mid-1990s, a generation of teenagers had grown up, born around 1980, that had seen very little of the old Soviet system. These teenagers of the mid-1990s had entered school during the Gorbachev years, had benefited from reforms in society, and had been exposed to Western influences. At the same time, this generation had also seen their parents work hard and struggle to survive during the economic chaos of the Yeltsin years. These teenagers were no longer interested in the stories of underground rock bands and dissident voices, but in disco rhythms that allowed them to escape from the chaos that surrounded them and that many could not understand. They followed fashion trends rather than idols, and the arrows signaling what is "in" and what is "out" changed very fast in the latter half of the 1990s and in the new millennium.

The television programs *Golden Gramophone* (Zolotoi grammofon) and *Star Factory* (Fabrika Zvezd) keep teenagers and younger children glued to the television set. *Golden Gramophone* is a competition of the best songs of the season, and it is produced in collaboration with Russkoye Radio, the radio station that has made it its policy to broadcast predominantly Russian music in order to promote it over and above Western tunes. *Star Factory* is a talent show, where—in the manner of the German talent show *Deutschland sucht*

*den Superstar* (which even produced a singer who represented the country at the Eurovision Song Contest)—amateurs are allowed to present their songs. By contrast with the German variant, though, here they perform with the star they try to imitate.

A uniquely Russian, and apparently temporary, phenomenon was the popularity of old Soviet music in the latter half of the 1990s. Culturally, there is a logical explanation for this "nostalgia for the golden Soviet times." The nostalgia was motivated not so much by politics as by the fact that many television viewers were pensioners, who were very badly off in the Yeltsin era, much worse than they had ever been in Soviet times. Moreover, with the massive influx and overpowering force of Western products and culture, many people, old and young, who could not afford the Western luxuries rejected Western culture not for ideological, but for economic reasons, and reverted to the good old Russian product. This phenomenon also applied to musical taste, and in 1995 ORT television producer Konstantin Ernst launched the New Year's Eve show *Old Songs about the Main Thing* (Starye pesni o glavnom). The show was so successful that he produced two further shows in subsequent years. The shows presented old estrada songs, re-recorded and sung in a contemporary vein by the stars of the 1990s. The first program was set on a collective farm in southern Russia in the 1930s and consisted of musical hits of that period. The second part moved to a more urban setting in northern Russia and presented hits of the 1950s. The final part moved on to the 1970s, and, through the time machine of *Ivan Vasilievich Changes Profession* (Ivan Vasil'evich meniaet professii, a film based on the play by Mikhail Bulgakov) took the viewer from ancient

history to the present in a costumed journey through the Mosfilm studios. Top estrada and pop stars participated in the shows.

***Solo, with Support*** Most new solo singers of recent years are women. It would appear that men still tend to perform in bands and groups, whereas women move on in solo careers. Even the popular singer Leonid Agutin now performs with his wife, Angelica Varum, as a duo. Agutin studied jazz and launched a hit with “Barefoot Boy” (*Bosonogii mal’chik*, 1992). His Latin American and samba rhythms made his music smooth and suitable for dancing. His song “Hop Hei, La-la-lei” was a second major hit and also revealed the decreasing impor-

tance of the lyrics for modern pop music. In 1997 he performed the song “Queen” (*Koroleva*) with Angelica Varum, whom he married in 1998. Varum, the daughter of the composer Yuri Varum, had created her stage image as a fragile childlike fairy tale creature, singing about childhood themes. Her “Midnight Cowboy” (*Polunochnoi kovboi* 1991) revealed an infantile demeanor and childlike images. Agutin and Varum have also produced a joint album *Business Romance* (*Sluzhebnyi roman*).

With the increasing need for a financially strong producer, corporate and private sponsorship has become vital for the Russian pop star scene. Moreover, singers rely on good composers and songwriters to create hits for them. Natasha Koroleva was



Leonid Agutin with his wife Angelica Varum, performing together. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

discovered by the composer Igor Nikolayev at a competition in Eupatoria (Crimea) and later married him. Koroleva initially performed children's songs and romantic love songs but moved to pop music in the late 1990s. Her stage image uses her sex appeal, marketed when she posed for *Playboy* in 1997. Alena Apina from Saratov arrived in Moscow in 1988 and married the manager Alexander Iratov. She embarked on a solo career, having performed with a band in her home town. "Dance till Morning" (Tantsevat' do utra, 1992) was a hit that brought out her coquettish manners. Later in her career she adopted a more dramatic style, and her performances became less mischievous and had less fervor. With songs composed by Oleg Molchanov, she tries to move to energetic pop music and performs with the young singer Murat Nasyrov. Tatiana Bulanova played dance pop music with the group Letnii Sad (Summer Garden) and developed her reputation as a singer with a weeping voice. She married the musician Nikolai Tagrin and launched a solo career. Her songs drew on Slavic folk and rock traditions and were rendered in a tearful and emotional manner. In the mid-1990s she changed her style, moving to the composer Oleg Molchanov for her songs, which allow her to display her erotic appearance in magnificent outfits. Linda is sponsored by her father. Her exotic appearance and unusual performance are manifest in the clips by Fyodor Bondarchuk: in the clip for "Underwater Dance" (Tanets pod vodoi), she is a girl with many plaits in her hair. On Linda's albums *Songs of the Tibetan Lamas* (Pesni tibetskikh lam) and *Crow* (Vorona), the backing vocals are by Olga Dzusova, one of the finest singers in Russia. Dzusova's extraordinary voice has sounded as lead of the hard rock band SS20, in her

own album *Parisian Tango*, and in the eerie and parodic interpretations of Soviet songs in the film *Moscow* (directed by Alexander Zeldovich, 2000). Katia Lel is a self-made star, who came to Moscow in 1996 and collected money from friends and sponsors to make her first song recordings and clips. She has gained wide popularity through her producer Max Fadeyev, whom she personally thanks on the cover of her album *Djaga-Djaga*.

Over the last decade Russia has created its own musical stars, whose music is more popular in the new millennium than foreign imported recordings. Although some of the rock bands still rely on parodic and provocative texts to entertain and amuse their audiences, pop stars rely on catchy tunes and appealing rhythms to reach large audiences, both in concerts and record releases. In this sense, the Russian rock and pop scene has gained full independence and stands commercially on a sound footing.

### Youth Culture and Language

The language spoken, taught, and written in the Soviet Union was an "official" language, adapted by the chief ideologues for the purpose of unifying speech habits. The richness of nineteenth-century vocabulary, documented in classical Russian literature and in the four volumes of Vladimir Dal's dictionary, as well as the old spelling was standardized after the Revolution, allegedly to combat the widespread illiteracy. The simplification of the Russian language went much further during the twentieth century, however, requiring the knowledge of a relatively small number of words in order to read the daily newspapers. Likewise, the range of words was re-

duced, as is evident in the editions of Russian dictionaries published in the Soviet era. Russian was also “purified” from any swear words and indeed any sexual terminology. This led to the publication in the late Soviet period of a number of émigré editions, such as Alex Flegon’s famous *Beyond the Russian Dictionary* (*Za predelami russkogo slovaria*), listing all those words excised from the Russian dictionary with citations of their use by writers, literati, and essayists.

At the same time, another fascinating phenomenon occurred when many intellectuals, writers, and dissidents returned from the labor camps in the 1950s and 1960s. Having been exposed to criminal jargon in the camps, they began to use the behavior, gesture, and jargon of the common criminals, both in assimilation of the behavior they had been exposed to and in rejection of the current Soviet etiquette. The use of *blatnoi zhargon* (prison slang) infested intellectual discourse and the lifestyle of those rejecting ideological values per se. This is exemplified in Venedikt Yerofeyev’s *Moscow to the End of the Line* (*Moskva-Petushki*), written in the 1970s and circulated in samizdat, in which the author-narrator’s drunkenness is a way of perceiving the reality that surrounds him. Likewise, the singer and poet Vladimir Vysotsky used street and criminal jargon in his songs, even if he was never exposed to prison. Thus, intellectuals and dissidents often colored their works with the use of nonstandard language.

In the perestroika period, in particular, English words were borrowed and became an integral part of the Russian language. The *Perestroika Dictionary* (*Slovar’ perestroiki*) mainly lists terms from the business and market economy that found their

way into the Russian language in the Gorbachev era. This impact of foreign terms went hand in hand with the introduction of the hitherto unknown principles and structures that went with them, however. Therefore these words did not stand out in the everyday discourse.

In the 1990s a new generation of people grew up who had not been exposed to the indoctrination of the party at home, in schools, and in the streets. Instead, they were exposed to a world of extreme capitalism, in which their parents were mostly struggling. These children had no responsibilities toward the state; were often neglected by their parents, who were busy with often two or three jobs to survive; and were largely left to their own devices, or at best under a *babushka*’s (grandmother’s) care. The youth jargon that developed is probably the most significant change in the Russian language since 1917.

Although youth groups had used selected foreign words to communicate and develop their own “code” in an attempt not to be understood by adults, as had been the origin of argot (talk among criminals so that they could not be understood), these “codes” expanded rapidly in the 1990s. They incorporated both the once unofficial criminal jargon as well as foreign terms. Thus, for example, a new concept that arrived with the market economy and business was public relation, in short PR. In the Russian language this became *piar* with the verb *piarit* and the noun *piar-shchik*, the adjective *piarovskii*. *Ofis* has entered the language to designate an office space, often occupied by many people, as opposed to the Russian word *kabinet*, usually reserved for one person. Other examples are *reiting*, *marketing*, *realtor*, and *notarius*.

The youth slang that developed in the language in the 1990s remains, not reserved to certain youth groups but spread across the population in general. After all, the babushki are exposed to new words used by the grandchildren they care for, and many middle-aged people have teenage children who bring into usage new terms.

### **Youth Jargon and Slang**

One term that describes a whole set of values embraced by the 1990s generation is *styob*, derived from the verb *stebat* (synonym of *stegat*: to whip, to lash). *Styob* describes the exposure to mockery that leads to an irreversible and permanent profanation. The critic Viktor Matizen has devoted a short essay to the roots of this phenomenon (*Iskusstvo kino* 9, 1993), tracing those roots to the absurdist pieces of Daniil Kharms, who wrote a parody of Pushkin in anecdotes in an attempt to counter the latter's canonization by the state. In the 1960s the anecdotes on Chapayev also showed irreverence toward the man who was, in official discourse, described as a Soviet hero. In the 1970s the term was used in the underground rock movement. *Styob* is close to postmodernism in its parody of elements of socialist culture, and this has a parallel appearance in "high" culture. *Styob* in popular culture is a remake, where the author plays a game with the public and creates a new myth based on the sacred status of past culture. Thus, for example, the anecdotes about Stirlitz in the 1990s bear witness to the mockery of Soviet intelligence, in the same way as the recourse to criminal jargon and vulgar language parodies the Soviet state's concern with propriety and standards.

Another term that incorporates an entire lifestyle of the young generation is the word

*tusovka*. *Tusovka* became a trendy word in the early 1990s and was used by Artyom Troitsky as the title for his English-language book on new Soviet rock culture. The word *tusovka* is derived from the French term *se tasser*, and *tusovat* means primarily "to shuffle cards." *Tusovatsya* describes the activity of just being with friends, with a group not necessarily of the same composition, thus exposing the *tusovshchik* not to the experience of allegiance to a group or gang but making it possible to move around different groups. The term *tusovka* defines all groups with flexible membership, however, and this creates its own kind of secluded circle. People who are out to *tusovatsya* want to have fun, without any obligations and allegiances. The *tusovka* of the 1960s underground generation (*sheshtidesyatniki*) used a different vocabulary than the young generation of today. Other words that entered the Russian language from the 1970s and 1980s underground are *kaif*, describing pleasure or a "high" under the influence of drugs; *vrubatsya* (and the noun *vrub*), meaning "to suss out, switch on," literally to cut one's way into; *fenka*, the "main thing," originally used to describe beads worn by hippies; and *fishka*, also used for "the main thing." The term *lokh* is used for a loser, a simpleton.

**Russian Teen Language** Trendy words used by the young generation that have become part of everyday speech include adjectives that describe excitement and acceptance—*prikolno* (*prikolot*: to pierce); *klyovo* (*klyover* is *gluck*, high); *kruto* (steep, aggressive, powerful); *obaldenno* (*obaldet*: be stunned)—all more or less meaning good, cool, super, or brilliant. For indifference, young people use words such as *do banki* (up to the can); *do bara-*

*banu* (up to the drum); *do lampady/lampochki* (up to the icon/lamp); *pofigu* (figuratively: nothing; *pofigu*: does not matter); *pofigu* forms the nouns *pofigism* (indifferent attitude) and *fignya* (nothing, nonsense). The ultimate state of such indifference and inactivity is *khalyava*: to get something for nothing, free of charge, without working for it. For acceptance (okay), they use the words *normalyok* (normal); *nishtyak* (nothing); *prosto taid* (simply Tide); *vse khokei* (all hockey). These are playful adaptations of the words *normal* and *okay* and draw upon the Tide detergent advertising spot. Parents are often irreverently, often out of embarrassment, referred to as *predki* (ancestors); *nachaltsvo* (superiors); *startsy* (elders); *kosti* (bones).

Youth jargon also replaces words of standard usage with words that are more visual in the description of a particular state: *oblom* means a failure or an interruption of a pleasurable experience and is derived from the term *to break off*; *prikid* is a euphemism for dress, outfit, or garment, where *prikidyvat* means “to throw on.” Trendy details are not accessories, but *pribambasy* (trendy details). Leisure is not *otdykh*, but *ottyag*, from the word *ottyagivatsya*: to stretch out. Understanding is not signaled by the word *ponimat* but by the verb *prosekat*, literally “to cut through.” Other words originate from a more commercial understanding of everyday reality: *bazarit* means “to talk your way out,” “to beat around the bush,” and refers to the term *bazar* (market). The verb *kolbasitsya* means “to have fun” and stems from *kolbasa* (sausage).

**Slang** A number of words that have been principally used by teenagers have found their way also into everyday speech.

The main area of slang that has entered everyday speech, however, largely through the crime serials on television, is the criminal jargon as well as the language in which criminals (and not only criminals) speak about money, cars, alcohol, and sex. Slang words often replace proper words in everyday speech, not only of teenagers.

### **Swearing**

Russian swearwords were never part of dictionaries, and they were considered rather more vulgar than in other European cultures. When translated into English in standard dictionaries, however, they are mostly rendered more harmless than the literal meaning would suggest, thus allowing for a leveling and an adaptation to suggest these are comparatives and not superlatives. The most commonly used phrases are *idi na khui/idi v zhopu* (go to . . .), which, along with *yob (eb) tvoyu mat* (f\*\*\* your mother), is rendered as “go to hell.” Derivatives of these swearwords are *yolki-palki*, *yolki-motalki*, and *yomoye*, which are almost commonplace, especially bearing in mind the name of the restaurant chain Yolki-Palki in Moscow. The adjectives *yobnutyi* and *yobanyi* (f\*\*\*ing) are also widespread. The verb and noun *mudit* and *mudak* mean “bulls\*\*\*,” and *mudak* is also a term used for a strange man or a weirdo. A perfectly acceptable term is *blin* (pancake), a milder version of “s\*\*\*” (used when something has gone wrong), and this remains commonly used by all classes and ages.

### **Musicals**

“The musical has no tradition in the Soviet Union” was the apologetic assertion made

## Slang

**Drink**

To drink: *bukhat* (to thump, bang), *grokhnut* (crash), *nazhirat'sia* (fill up), *drinchit* (English: to drink), *gazanut* (step on it, accelerate), *zapayat* (to solder), *dubasit* (to bang on); also: *ostakanitsya* (get a glass), *ografinitsya* (get a jug), *oflakonitsya* (get a perfume bottle).

Alcoholic: *alík*, *bukharik/bukhach*, *drinkach*.

**Sex**

To have sex (vulgar terms): *trakhat/trakhatsya* (shake), *ebat/ebatsya* (f\*\*\*), *zavintit* (screw).

Prostitute: *zhaba* (toad), *blyad*, *blyakha* (whore), *shliukha* (tart), *shmara* (thing).

Male homosexual: *pedik*, *pider*, *gomik*, *goluboi* (blue), *teply brat* (warm brother).

Arse: *zhopa*.

Penis: *khui* (tool, prick), *palka* (stick), *bolt* (bolt), *khuyovy* (adjective) (rotten, lousy), *khuiuya* (noun) (bulls\*\*\*, nonsense).

Vagina: *pizda* (c\*\*\*), *pizdets* (idiot).

**Crime**

Policeman: *ment*.

Thug: *shpana* (young), *ambal* (strong).

To kill: (*za*)*mochit* (to wet, soak), *zagasit* (extinguish), *grokhnut* (to crash, bang), *zavalit* (overthrow), *zakolbasit* (butcher).

To beat (up): *gasit* (extinguish), *kantovat* (frame), *kolot* (pierce), *mochit* (soak), *grokhnut* (crash), *smazat mozgi* (smear the brain).

Boss (head of organized crime): *avtoritet* (authority), *pakhan* (*pakhat*: to plow).

Member of a criminal group: *bratan*, *bratello*, *bratok* (brother).

Criminal group: *bratva* (brotherhood).

**Money**

Money: *babki*.

Roubles: *derevyannye* (wooden).

Dollars: *baksy* (bucks), *zelyonye* (greens).

*Limon* (lemon): a million.

*Shtuka* (thing): a thousand (rubles, dollars).

*Fistashki* (pistachios): a large sum of money.

*Beznal* for *beznalichnye* (per invoice) and *nal* for *nalichnye* (cash).

**Cars**

Bus: *bukhanka*.

Car: *tachka*, *kareta*; *tachka* is also a motorbike.

BMW: *akula* (shark), *bavarets* (Bavarian), *bumer/bimer* (bimmer); *be-em-vushka*.

Mercedes: *mers*.

VW: *zhuchok* (beetle); *bozhya korovka* (ladybug).

by most reviewers of the few musicals staged in Moscow in the late 1990s. These reviewers ignored the musical film comedies of the 1930s as well as two productions of the immediate pre- and postperestroika years. The first was the rock-opera

*Perchance* (Iunona i Avos), composed by Alexei Rybnikov to the lyrics of Andrei Voznesensky and staged at the Moscow Lenkom Theater in 1981 by Mark Zakharov and the actor Nikolai Karachentsov, who also played the main part. The musical

dealt with the trans-Pacific expedition of the Russian Count Rezanov to California in the early nineteenth century. It was a mixture of adventure drama and melodrama, thus combining the two most popular genres of film, theater and literature. Rezanov is a romantic dreamer, who is obsessed with the desire to travel to California. Implying the icon of Our Lady, he falls in love with her image. His dream comes true, and he travels to California; there he meets Conchita, the daughter of the local governor, who is engaged to Federico. Rezanov, who sees in Conchita the face of Our Lady, strives to gain her love, which Conchita reciprocates. Eventually Rezanov has to leave for Siberia, where he dies. Conchita remains faithful to him and enters a convent. The melodrama has love triumph over death in the final song "Hallelujah of Love," which can compete in its melodic appeal with the songs of Western musicals. Second was the rock-musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which opened at the Mossovet Theater in 1990 in a production directed by Pavel Khomsky and Sergei Prokhanov. Both *Perchance* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* are, however, repertoire productions in established dramatic theaters rather than productions for a stationary stage; they are performed several times a month in repertoire.

The first professionally produced musical, Janusz Stoklosa's *Metro*, opened in October 1999 at the Moscow Operetta Theater. It was managed by the team of Katherina von Gecmen-Waldeck and Alexander Vainshtok with the operetta's head, Vladimir Tartakovsky. This musical is no import from Broadway or the West End (which would have incurred high license fees), but was originally staged in Poland in 1991. The Moscow production was cre-

ated by the Polish director and the choreographer of the original show, Janusz Sosnowski and Janusz Josefowicz. *Metro* did not make stars, as *Perchance* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* had made stars of Nikolai Karachentsov and Oleg Kazanchev respectively; instead, it included stars in its cast list for guest appearances. Within the first 15 months, the show, which runs for eight to ten days en bloc every month, was seen by more than 150,000 people. It appealed to the public because of its special laser effects, because of the choreography and the professional performances of the young actors, and because of the story line, dealing with the young generation's aspirations for the theater, which are frustrated but ultimately lead to a successful underground production. Today's young generation is presented with the possibility of realizing a dream, and the musical therefore appealed first and foremost to the young audience.

Several other musicals followed on a semistationary basis. In November 1999 the rock legend Stas Namin (Tsvety) staged the musical *Hair* at the Estrada Theater. Namin had directed rock musicals before, even if largely as concert versions in his theater in Gorky Park. The Moscow Operetta's success with *Metro* was followed by *Notre Dame de Paris*, which premiered on 21 May 2002, created by the same production team that had worked on *Metro*. This time, though, the theater set its stakes higher and engaged the leader of the group Tantsy, Viachaslav Petkun, for the main part of Quasimodo. The musical *Chicago* opened at the Estrada Theater in Moscow on 4 October 2002 with Filipp Kirkorov in the main part; the competition for star names on the playbills was getting stronger in a growing musical market. Kirkorov sub-

sequently also dubbed the film musical *Chicago* (Russian release 2003). In March 2002, the joint Slovak-Russian production of *Dracula* (composed by Karel Svoboda, directed by Josef Bernadik) opened with a joint cast at the DK on Lenin Prospekt. *42nd Street* premiered on 12 October 2002 at the DK Molodezhi as a joint American-Russian venture, directed by Mark Bramble and choreographed by Randy Skinner, repeating their 2001 Broadway version with a mixed troupe. *The Witches of Eastwick* has been playing at the Theater of the Film Actor since 2002. Thus, although American and European musicals were adapted for the Russian stage, there was no originality in the productions, which were imitations of Western musicals.

#### **Nord-Ost: *The First Russian Musical***

*Nord-Ost* declared itself the “first Russian musical” that would play on a daily basis rather than in a repertoire theater. The casting drew on a pool of young, talented entertainment actors rather than stars so as to allow for a long-term run of the musical: Yekaterina Guseva and Andrei Bogdanov came to fame through their roles in *Nord-Ost*. In the advertising campaign, *Nord-Ost* placed itself in the context of other great world musicals, although this may simply have been part of the publicity exercise relating to Cameron Mackintosh Ltd., one of the largest musical production companies, with whom the producers Georgi Vasiliev and Alexander Tsekalo initially had a deal on *Les Misérables* for the Russian stage before the default of August 1998 made this project impossible.

*Nord-Ost* launched a massive publicity campaign in the style of Western musicals. A Web site was created primarily for marketing purposes. It was the first show with



A scene from the musical *Nord-Ost*, the first Russian musical to open in Moscow at the Dubrovka Theatre in 2001. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

an elaborate ticket booking system via the Internet, thus clearly appealing to an audience that was more middle class and was in possession of or had access to a computer. The site carried information on the music, the performance archive, program information, cast and production team, press releases and reviews of the show (only positive ones), and “surprises,” which included downloadable desktop pictures and mobile phone tunes. The design itself was not stunning but rather of an informational nature. The lax maintenance of the site after the initial launch was striking; most news items were announced in the chat-room and on unofficial sites rather than the official section. *Nord-Ost* led a publicity campaign comparable to Western standards: there were banners in the metro, advertisements on radio and clips

on television, posters in the streets, and information on the back of metro tickets all through the summer before the show opened. The slogan for the production not only stuck in everybody's mind but actually began to get on one's nerves: "Every evening exactly at 21:45 a full-size bomber plane lands on the stage."

The production was staged in the House of Culture of Moscow's Ball-Bearing Factory on Dubrovka; it cost four million dollars and opened on 19 October 2001 in the refurbished and specially equipped DK, renamed Dubrovka Theater Center, seating 1,150 spectators for a price of 300–900 rubles (US\$10–30) per ticket. Clearly, the equivalent of US\$30 for a ticket can hardly be called mass appeal (average monthly wages in 2001 ranged from around US\$500 in the cultural sector to less than US\$100 for pensions), but *Nord-Ost* attracted 350,000 spectators in the first year of its run (in other words, a full house every night).

The special effects of Broadway musicals, the imported technology for light and sound, and the professional casting process were to make this show a success story à la Broadway. The live orchestra, elaborate sets and costumes, and the special effects were designed to outdo Western musicals. But all this would be achieved on the basis of a Russian, or rather Soviet, text that had even been awarded the State (Stalin) Prize in 1946: Veniamin Kaverin's (1902–1989) epic *Two Captains* (*Dva kapitana*). The novel stretches over thirty years, from 1913 to 1943, thus encompassing the most crucial and formative years of the Soviet state, from the Revolution to the civil war, through the Stalin era to World War II. Moreover, the text was of a suitable genre, combining two love triangles in an essen-

tially melodramatic plot and drawing clear distinctions between good and bad characters. The authors placed their stakes on the Russian reader of Kaverin: on the generation of parents, who had read Kaverin in their childhood; on the 32 million people who had seen the 1955 film by Vladimir Vengerov, which dwells on the protagonists' heroism and focuses on the dilemma between political and private as well as the theme of war heroism, both characteristic features for the cinema of the Thaw; and on the millions of television spectators who had watched the six-part television series made by Yevgeni Karelov in 1976. Now, so the producers assumed, the generation of grandparents born in the 1950s and parents born in the 1970s had passed the story of *Two Captains* on to their children and grandchildren (even if those read *Harry Potter*). The show was intended to appeal to a family audience, thus to an older audience than *Metro*. At the same time, the ambition of the project was to create a piece of indigenous Russian culture by recycling the plot of a 1940s epic and drawing on the traditions of the Stalinist musical. *Nord-Ost* explores features of Soviet life, such as communal living, bureaucracy, and technological progress, parodying them slightly, but taking pride in them as experiences that have unified the people, who bore hardship with humour. The music is full of references and allusions to the musical traditions of the 1920s and 1930s. The melodramatic plot is also in line with the traditions of the 1930s musical, when melodramas were perceived to appeal to the masses, offering a plot in which personal happiness is the reward for courage and heroism in political and public life. In this sense, the story of *Two Captains* literally lent itself to be worked into a musical.

### ***Nord-Ost: Plot***

*Nord-Ost* begins with the reported failure in 1913 of the expedition of Captain Tatarinov on the *Santa Maria*. In Arkhangelsk in 1916, the dumb Sania Grigoriev witnesses the murder of a postman who carries a letter in which Tatarinov implicates his brother Nikolai Antonovich in the failure of the expedition. Shortly after, Sania's father is arrested for the murder. Tatarinov's widow, Maria Vasilievna, leaves for Moscow with her mother, Nina Kapitonovna, and her daughter, Katia. The Tatarinovs' family friend Korablev looks after Sania and teaches him to speak and helps Sania find a place in a boarding school during the civil war. When the headmaster, Nikolai Antonovich, discovers that Korablev has proposed to Maria Vasilievna, Korablev and Sania are thrown out. Katia Tatarinova and Sania have fallen in love, but Sania's schoolmate Romashov also loves Katia and vies for her love. After Maria Vasilievna has married Nikolai, she learns about Captain Tatarinov's accusations in the letter that Sania keeps in the bag he took from the murdered postman, and

she commits suicide. Sania leaves Moscow to find the *Santa Maria*. By 1938 Sania has become a pilot, still dreaming of discovering the *Santa Maria*. He has the support of the Soviet hero pilot Valeri Chkalov to fly to the Arctic, but his permission is withheld at the Main Directorate of Northern Waterways, GlavSevMorPut, where Romashov has intervened. Romashov courts Katia, but she remains loyal to Sania. During the war Katia lives through the Leningrad blockade. Romashov finds her and lies to her that Sania is dead; when he finds that this is of no avail, he tells Sania—in an attempt to destroy the love of Katia and Sania—that Katia has died during the blockade. In 1943 Grigoriev makes an emergency landing in the Arctic, and finds Tatarinov's diary kept by the indigenous people of the Nenetsk region in northern Russia. Katia finds him there, and he gives her the diary. At the end of the story, the high moral code of right and wrong upheld by the two captains of sea and air is triumphant, and their love wins.

The libretto was written by Alexei Ivashchenko and Georgi Vasiliev, also known as the duo Ivasi, who had gained fame with their song collections in the late 1990s. Ivasi was also known for their television shows on music as well as the edition of "Songs of Our Century" (*Pesni nashego veka*). Familiar with the songs of the past, Ivasi drew heavily on the music of the 1920s and 1930s, and its compositions were riddled with references and allusions to Soviet music from the operetta and musical composers of the Stalin era, Isaak Dunayevsky and Yuri Miliutin, clearly aiming to strike a familiar vein with the audiences. The tunes paced the movements. Al-

though the melodies sounded familiar, however, there were no hits: none of the melodies stick in the mind.

The set consisted of five multifunctional walkways that ran from the back of the stage to the front; they could be raised and lowered, forming bridges and platforms, ramps and ceilings. The backdrops occasionally bordered on kitsch, showing a starry sky or a sunset to enhance the lyrical atmosphere. The choreography complied with the high standard normally expected of Western musicals while drawing on a variety of indigenous and foreign dance styles to set a rhythm. The pilots performed a tap dance; the secretaries moved their legs to a

cancan; the skiers clicked their heels in a *chechetka* (a dance where the heels set the rhythm); the Nenetsk people showed a traditional dance; the skaters danced a tango. Solos and duets rendered some scenes more romantic and dramatic. There are elephantine tunes for scenes at the school; accordion music and a polonaise for the New Year; and the chattering of people's teeth in the cold weather rendered through the repetition of the first syllable. Objects, such as the kitchen utensils in the communal flat, the secretaries' office equipment, and the skis and skates, turn into instruments that are used to beat the rhythm.

*Nord-Ost* eclipsed historical themes and moved personal lives into the foreground. Nikolai Antonovich betrayed Tatarinov when failing to equip his expedition; Romashov is a compulsive liar. Neither of these villains wins: Nikolai Antonovich is crippled, relying on Romashov's help. At the same time, the bureaucratic system is blamed for obstructing achievements: GlavSevMorPut is parodied, but the bureaucracy prevents not the achievement of political feats but of personal desires. The scenes at GlavSevMorPut are carefully set against the lyric theme of the musical; through this contrast the bureaucracy is caricatured and satirized. The monotony of the secretaries' movement is juxtaposed to the open space of the world represented on a huge map at the back. The five secretaries, with huge bows in their hair, wish to look attractive while they inefficiently use their office tools (abacus, hammer, typewriter) to tap an elephantine rhythm, thus parodying their own monotonous inefficiency.

The slogan for the revived production was "the history of the country, a love story" (*istoriia strany—istoriia liubvi*).

*Nord-Ost* stressed the personal motives above the political agendas and dwelt on the possibility of love as long as man adheres to a firm moral code of right and wrong. Just as with Broadway musicals, the special effects of the Russian or Soviet musical lay in a glorification of its national achievements rather than a critique of society. The essential ingredients of Socialist Realism were reinforced as attributes of the national heritage. The spectator was invited to take pride in the Soviet past, in his personal memories rather than the official historical discourse.

*Nord-Ost* was an exploration of the Soviet past in personal, not political, terms. It stressed the continuity between past and present. Parallels may be drawn between the early years of the Soviet period and the years of the collapse of socialism: inflation, chaos, the ability to speak up, access to formerly closed territories. Putin's Russia of the present reinstates the lost connection with the Soviet past as an experience that people have lived through and that they remember with nostalgia. *Nord-Ost* legitimized Russia's history by presenting a unified discourse on the level not of political but popular history (personal theme, melodramatic genre, mass scenes). Russian history is uninterrupted, rather than halted for 74 years, thus returning to the nation the sense of belonging and continuity. This is why *Nord-Ost* was a symbol of Russia—not the New Russia, but a country with tradition rather than one where traditions were severed. It offered an innovative view on Russia and its history, reiterating Soviet history through the popular lens.

*Nord-Ost* was the first *Russian* musical, popular with audiences and critics alike. It became a status symbol for Russia's pride in its own history and culture. Suddenly,

with the terrorist attack of 23–26 October 2002, in which Chechen terrorists held the troupe and the audience hostage, it became a symbol of Russia's weakness and failure. It is no coincidence that no memorial has been erected to those who died as a consequence of the gas introduced during the liberation of the hostages on 26 October 2002. These people died in an act that shames Russia to the extent that nobody wishes to remember it. Similarly, the absence from the Web site of any information about the events of 23–26 October was striking: the list of victims appeared on another site ([www.vazhno.ru](http://www.vazhno.ru)). The lack of concern for the victims is further manifested in the absence of a memorial plaque in the theater; in the omission of any mention of the victims in the new program booklet (printed for the revival on 8 February 2003); and in the failure to commemorate the victims during the last performance on 10 May 2003. *Nord-Ost* wanted to remain a show, and as such detached itself from the terrorist attack. The government, too, strove to forget the events of October 2002 by assisting the revival of the musical in order to brush over allegations of mishandling the storming of the theater. Russia's pride had turned into Russia's shame; the revival of the show could not renew its entertainment value.

#### ***Soviet Musicals—The Revival?***

*Twelve Chairs* (Dvenadtsat' stul'ev), based on Ilia Ilf and Yevgeni Petrov's satire written in 1928, was Tsekalo's next project, which opened in Moscow in November 2003. This time a different team of composers and directors was employed: the director, Tigran Keosayan, had previously worked on film, in particular children's film; the music was composed by Igor

Zubkov, song writer and composer for a number of pop groups. The publicity campaign declared all across the city: "The Ice Is Moving" (Led tronulsia). The show was staged on the rented stage of the Moscow Youth Culture Palace (MDM), located in the southern parts of the city center.

The staging of *Twelve Chairs* is in many ways reminiscent of *Nord-Ost*. The production opens with a curtain carrying advertisements of the 1920s. The musical overture represents a medley. The set is constructivist in style, echoing the 1920s with references to Tatlin's Tower; it consists of three revolving semicircles that interconnect and revolve to form bridges, piers, and platforms. The set is much less complex and much more mobile than that of *Nord-Ost*.

The first act presents the story's characters as types: the businessmen are evil, the doctor wears a pince-nez à la Chekhov, the priest is sly and corrupt like Eisenstein's priest in *The Battleship Potyomkin*. The secret service agents (OGPU) appear stereotyped in black leather jackets, performing a tap dance, and shooting their pistols to pace the rhythm. "The ice moves" when Bender (sporting a green jacket and white trousers) becomes Ippolit's partner: they move on to find the diamonds, and the construction begins to move. There are numerous scenes in this act that offer scope for collective dances: the pioneers' orchestra is dressed in blue and red kerchiefs; the children perform a dance in which they kick each other; Madam Gritsatsuyeva and Bender's wedding is performed at a long table with food and drink, to a cabaret show with tap dance. The train and its passengers are hailed by a melody from the 1962 film *I Walk across Moscow*. The glorification of Moscow, both musically and vi-



Scene from the musical *Twelve Chairs*, which opened in Moscow in 2003. Ostap Bender (left) is seen trying to inspect one of the chairs for the hidden treasure. (Photo by Irina Kaledina)

sually—in the use of an orange backdrop for the sunrise and the city waking, or the use of kitchen tools to characterize the hostel—is reminiscent of *Nord-Ost*, as are the red stars of the Kremlin appearing from on high.

In the second act the visit to the editorial office of the newspaper resembles to some extent the treatment of bureaucracy in *Nord-Ost* in the visit to the Sea Committee. The editorial secretaries too perform synchronized movements to the rhythm of typewriters. The engineer Shchukin is portrayed as a bard with his guitar, reminiscent more of a dissident singer than of an engineer. The boat trip also reminds one of the port scenes in *Nord-Ost*: the sailors are

efficient, dressed in immaculate white suits. Bender's design for the theater, which is rejected by the troupe but liked by Gorky, is in fact a replica of Kazimir Malevich's suprematist masterpiece of the 1910s (banned in the Soviet Union), *Black Square*. The spa of Piatigorsk is crowded with patients and nurses to make it recognizable as such. The finale brings all the characters together to confirm the legendary and heroic status of Ostap Bender, the real hero of the musical. Bender's performance is weaker than that of Ippolit, however, so that there is somewhat of an imbalance in the production.

Musicals based on Soviet literature may have been appealing to the new audience

### ***Twelve Chairs: Plot***

*Twelve Chairs* is set in the early years of the Soviet period, in the 1920s. Ippolit Vorobianinov visits his dying aunt, Klavdiya Petukhova, who tells him (and the priest Vostrikov) that she has stitched the family fortune, in the form of diamonds, into one of the twelve chairs in her old family house's dining-room. After Petukhova's death, Ippolit begins to search for the diamonds. In the first instance he is followed by the priest, who has learned about the inheritance during the confession, thus underscoring the greed of the clergy. Ippolit meets Ostap Bender, a young man of 28, who is staying in the old family house, now an almshouse. Bender becomes Ippolit's ally in the search for the diamonds, for a share of 50 percent. Similarly, the chairs have been dispersed, like the wealth and the families themselves, and their large apartments have been turned into communal flats. The search for the chairs begins.

Two chairs turn out to be close by: one has been sold to a trader and purchased by the priest. Ippolit discovers it and has a fight with the priest, in the course of which Bender rips the chair open: it is empty. The second chair now belongs to Madam Gritsatsuyeva: Bender proposes and marries her, only to leave his

newly wed wife and take the—empty—chair with him. The remaining ten chairs are for auction in Moscow. Ippolit has a romantic outing with Liza, however, during which he squanders the money needed for the auction, and the chairs are sold: four to the Colombine Theater, three to a newspaper, one to the engineer Shchukin, one to Ellochka, and one to the October Railway station. Ellochka's chair proves empty. While Ippolit poses as a medium and provides a recipe for success to the editorial staff of the newspaper, Bender searches for the chairs, with no result. The engineer has locked himself out of his flat: his chair too proves empty. The theater is about to go on tour, and Bender poses as an artist to join the group. He is found out and gets kicked off the boat. Having rejoined the theater in the spa Piatigorsk, he finds the chairs—all empty. He poses as a professional chess player to cheat some people in order to get the fare to return to Moscow. Here, at the railway station, must be the last chair. Ippolit and Bender decide to wait until the morning to retrieve the diamonds. During the night Ippolit kills Bender, only to find that the railway club where they stay has been built from the money for the diamonds. Bender becomes a myth.

of musicals that acquired the taste for the new genre in the late 1990s, but they cannot sustain a long-term interest. Neither thematically nor musically have the two Soviet musicals been able to compete with their rivals from Europe and the United States. It remains to be seen whether a musical tradition that would draw on nineteenth-century literature or on contemporary themes could attract a more sustained interest from the public.

### **A to Z**

**Agutin, Leonid:** b. 1968. Agutin studied jazz at musical school and a cultural institute. At a festival in Yalta he won an award for the hit "Barefoot Boy" (Bosonogii mal'chik, 1992). He composes his own songs and also writes for Filipp Kirkorov. In 1997, performed "Queen" (Koroleva) with the daughter of the composer Yuri Varum, Angelica (b. 1969, Lviv), whom he

married in 1998. Varum and Agutin frequently perform their songs together.

**Aguzarova, Zhanna:** b. in 1967 in Novosibirsk. Came to Moscow in 1983 and worked with the group Bravo under the false name of Ivana Anders. Arrested for fake documents in 1984 and sentenced to eight months in prison. Returned to Moscow in 1985 and played as Bravo lead singer until 1989. Embarked on a solo career and performed from 1991 to 1996 in the United States with the band Nighty Nighties. In 1996, returned to Russia and adopted a techno style. Since 1999, with a new manager and performs regularly in concerts.

**Alisa:** see Kinchev, Konstantin

**Allegrova, Irina:** b. 1961 in Rostov; real name Inessa Klimchuk. In 1986 performed with the Elektroklub band. After breaking her vocal chords, her voice became hoarse and smoky. In 1987 she won the Golden Tuning-Fork; from 1992 on, solo career with composer Igor Nikolayev, later with composer Igor Krutoy.

**Alsou** (Alsu Safina): b. 1983 in the Tatarstan village of Bugulma. In 1991 moved to Moscow and attended musical school. Since 1993 at a design college in London. Her song "Winter Dream" (Zimnii son, 1999) features a clip where Alsou is a Lolita-like character. Contract with Universal. In 2000, represented Russia at the Eurovision Song Contest and took second place, with "Solo." In 2002–2003 released an English album and won the European music award. Studies theater arts at the Moscow Theater Institute. [www.alsou.ru]

**Apina, Alena:** b. 1967 in Saratov. Apina studied the piano at Saratov Conservatory and played in the local disco band Kombinatiya (Combination) before coming to Moscow in the late 1980s. She was supported by producer Sergei Lisovsky and later married the manager Alexander Iratov. She performed in the musical *Limits* (Limita), about a girl from the provinces, which was performed only twice but led to an album. Her songs are composed by Arkadi Ukupkin and Oleg Molchanov.

**Aquarium:** see Grebenshchikov, Boris [www.aquarium.ru] and [http://handbook.reldata.com/handbook.nsf/?Open]

**Bashlachev, Alexander:** b. 1960 in Cherepovets, Urals. Committed suicide on 17 February 1988. First rocker with authentic poetry, he was discovered by the rock critic Artyom Troitsky in 1984 and brought to Moscow. Bashlachev gave private performances to his own guitar and traveled the country. He married a Leningrad girl to get a residence permit (*propiska*). In 1985 he toured Central Asia and Siberia. In 1986 started taking drugs and suffered from a writing block.

**Butusov, Viacheslav (Slava):** b. 1961 in Siberia. In the mid-1970s moved to Sverdlovsk and in 1978 formed Nautilus Pompilius with Dmitri Umetsky. First record "Ali Baba" in 1982, and first album recorded by Alexander Pantykin. Worked permanently with texts by Ilia Kormiltsev. In 1988 Nautilus was disbanded, and Butusov moved to Petersburg, where he reinvented the group in 1990. In 1996–1997, Butusov recorded the album *Yablokitai* in London, with electric music by Bill Nelson.

*Atlantida* too appeared under the label Nautilus but was created by Butusov. In 1997 dissolved Nautilus and worked with DeadUshki, who compose electronic music. His music features prominently in cinema. **Band Members:** Butusov, A. Beliaev, G. Kopylov, I. Dzhavad-Zade. **Albums:** *The Invisible* (Nevidimka, 1985); *Separation* (Razluka, 1986); *Retreat* (Otboi, 1988); *Prince of Silence* (Kniaz tishini, 1989); *Man without a Name* (Chelovek bez imeni, 1989); *Foreign Soil* (Chuzhaia zemlia, 1991); *Titanik*, 1994; *Wings* (Kryl'ia, 1995); *Yablokitai*, 1997; *Atlantida*, 1997. [www.nautilus.ru]

**DDT:** see Shevchuk, Yuri [www.ddt.ru]

**Galich, Aleksandr:** b. in Dnepropetrovsk (Ekaterinoslav) on 19 October 1919. Real name Ginzburg. Galich studied at the Literary Institute, Moscow (1935–1936) and the Stanislavsky Studio (1935–1938). From 1938 to 1941 he was an actor in the Moscow Theatrical Studio. During the war, he was an actor in the theater of the Northern Navy. Galich has written scenarios, plays, prose, poems, and songs. His play *Matrosskaya Tishina* was supposed to open the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow in 1956 but was banned by the Central Committee of the CPSU for the positive portrayal of a Jewish family. The censorship interventions are brilliantly described in Galich's novel, *The Final Dress Rehearsal*. He was expelled from the Writers' Union in December 1971 and emigrated in 1974, living in Oslo (1974), Munich (1975), and Paris (1976). He died on 15 December 1977 of accidental electrocution and is buried in the cemetery of Sainte-Geneviève-des-Bois, Paris.

**Gradsky Alexander:** b. 1949, Cheliabinsk. Rock-and-roll musician with classical tenor. Gradsky formed a number of student bands in the early 1960s, including Tarakany, with an imitation of Beatles in 1963–1964; Slaviane, 1965–1966; and Skify, 1966. Slaviane and Skify performed in English. From 1966 to 1976 he was leader of a Russian-singing band, Skomorokhi. On the post-Soviet estrada, Gradsky performs solo.

**Grebenshchikov, Boris:** b. 1953 in Leningrad. Fascinated by the Beatles and playing the guitar, he first sang the Beatles songs in English. BG studied maths. In 1972, together with the absurdist playwright A. Gurnitsky, Grebenshchikov formed Aquarium, strongly influenced by Bob Dylan in the late 1970s. After a 1980 concert, he was sacked and excluded from the Komsomol. In the 1980s the band underwent a brief punk phase. In 1981, joined the Leningrad rock club. In the 1980s, attracted famous sax players and the pianist Kuryokhin to the band. From 1985 on, Westernized rock. In 1988–1999, contract with CBS and recording of Radio Silence in London. Aquarium provided the music for Sergei Soloviev's films. Grebenshchikov participated in the alternative art group Mitki and recorded three albums of Mitki songs. 1997, awarded Triumph. Since 1998, solo.

**Band:** Seva Gakkel, Andrei (Diushka) Romanov, Mikhail Vasiliev (Fainstein). **Albums:** *Allegories of Count Diffuser* (Pritchi grafa Difuzora, 1974); *On that Side of the Mirror* (S toi storony zerkal'nogo stekla, 1976); *Blue Album* (Sinii al'bom, 1981); *Triangle* (Treugol'nik, 1981); *Acoustics* (Akustika, 1982); *Electricity* (Elektrichestvo, 1982); *Taboo* (Tabu, 1982); *Radio Afrika*, 1983; *Silver Day* (Den' serebra,

1984); *Ten Arrows* (Desiat' strel, 1986); *Equinox* (Ravnodenstvie, 1988); *Kostroma mon amour*, 1994; *Navigator*, 1994; *Snow Lion* (Snezhnii lev, 1996); *Hyperborea* (Giperboreia, 1997); *Kunstkamera*, 1998; *Psi*, 1999; *Territory* (Territoriiia, 2000). [www.aquarium.ru]

**Ivanushki International:** youth project founded in 1995 by Igor Matvienko. [www.matvey.ru] Band consists of dancer and singer Andrei Grigoriev-Apollonov from Sochi, singer and actor Igor Sorin, and Kirill Andreyev. Oleg Yakovlev from the Tabakov Studio Theater joined the group later and took over after Sorin committed suicide. **Selected Albums:** *Naturally, He* (Konechno on, 1996); *Your Letters* (Tvoi pis'ma, 1997); *Tale about Ivanushkis* (Skazka ob Ivanushkakh, 1998); *Pages from Life* (Stranitsy iz zhizni, 1999). [www.matvey.ru/ivanush/]

**Kinchev, Konstantin:** b. 1958 in Moscow. Lead singer of the band Alisa, which he joined in 1983 upon invitation from the band's founder, Sviatoslav Zaderny. "My Generation" (Moye pokokolenie) became an anthem of the rock movement. **Selected Albums:** *Energy* (Energiia, 1985); "BlokAda" (Blockade, but also The Block of Hell, 1987); *The Sixth Forest Warden* (Shestoi lesnichnyi, 1989); *Article 206.2* (Stat'ia 206, chast' 2, 1989); *The End* (Shabash, 1990: memorial concert for Bashlachev); *Geopolitics* (Geopolitika, 1998) with techno, rave, and disco elements; *Solstice* (Soltensevorot, 2000) with spiritual themes. **Band:** Konstantin Kinchev, Petr Samoilov, Andrei Shatalin, Yevgeni Levin, Mikhail Nefedov.

**Kino:** see Tsoy, Viktor

**Kirkorov Filipp:** b. 1967, Varna, son of Bedros Kirkorov. Since 1974 in Moscow. Studied at the Gnesin Institute; graduated in 1988. In 1987 invited to the Leningrad Music Hall and from 1988 to 1989 in Alla Pugacheva's Theater. Started a solo career, winning major music awards in 1992 and 1993. In 1994 married Alla Pugacheva, 18 years his senior. In 1997, concert in Madison Square Garden, New York, and Friedrichstadtpalast, Berlin. Produced by Sergei Lisovsky. Kirkorov has appeared in films and on stage, starring in the lead role in the musical *Chicago* (2002). Albums include *Sky and Earth* (Nebo i zemlia, 1991) and *Atlantida* (1992), both of which have been staged as major shows. In the Eurovision Song Contest 1995, won 17th place. [www.kirkorov.ru]

**Koroleva, Natasha:** b. 1973, Ukraine. Discovered at a competition in Eupatoria by Igor Nikolayev (b. 1960), whom she married. Concert tours to the United States in 1997. Hits include "Little Country" (Malen'kaia Strana, 1995); "Yellow Tulips" (Zheltye tiul'pany, 1995); "Is This Really Me?" (Neuzheli eto ia?). [www.koroleva.ru]

**Kuryokhin, Sergei:** b. 1954 in Murmansk. Trained as a piano player and then played jazz with Anatoli Vapirov. Kuryokhin played with Aquarium between 1981 and 1984. In 1985, founded his band Popular Mechanics, and from 1988 on, recorded and performed abroad. Kuryokhin wrote scores for theater shows, which were only realized in the 1990s (*Capriccio*, *Opera for the Rich* [Opera bogatykh]). In 1986 he featured in an episode of the BBC's *Comrades*. He died in 1996 of cancer of the brain.

**Leningrad:** see Shnurov, Sergei [www.

leningrad.spb.ru] and an unofficial site [http://leningrad.hut.ru]

**Makarevich, Andrei:** born 1953. While a student of architecture, he became fascinated with the Beatles and formed a band, Atlanty (The Atlants). In 1968 he created the band Mashina Vremeni (Time Machine) as a school band. Time Machine gained popularity during the 1970s, although many bans were imposed on the repertoire. In 1979, he was offered a contract with the state agency Roskontsert and allowed to give official concerts. In 1980 participated in a competition in Tblisi and won the first prize. Makarevich composed music for films, including the theme song for Georgi Daneliya's film *Afonya*. In the New Russia, Makarevich presents the television program *Abazhur* (Lampshade) on musical matters as well as the culinary program *Smak* (Relish). [www.mashina.ru]

**Mamonov, Petr:** b. 1951 in Moscow. In 1982 began song writing and in 1983 formed Zvuki Mu (1983–1990). The band was sponsored and organized by Sasha Lipnitsky. In 1987 Brian Eno recorded their album for 1989 release. Since 1991, performs with his stepbrother as Mamonov and Alexei. Since 1988, Mamonov has appeared in films: he played the drug dealer Artur in *The Needle* (Iгла, 1988); Selivestrov in Pavel Lungin's *Taxi Blues* (1990), and the geologist in Sergei Selianov's *The Time for Sorrow Has Not Yet Come* (Vremia pechali eshche ne prishlo, 1995). In the 1990s, theater performances at the Stanislavsky Theater, Moscow: *The Bald Brunette* (Lysyi brunet, 1991); *Nobody Writes to the Officer* (Polkovniku nikto ne pishet, 1995); *Is There Life on Mars?* (Est' li zhizn' na marse?, 1998).

**Mashina Vremeni:** see Makarevich, Andrei [www.mashina.ru]

**Namin, Stas:** b. 1951; real name Anastas Mikoyan. Namin is the grandson of politician Anastas Mikoyan. Namin was the first rocker to join the Union of Composers. While a student at the Suvorov military academy (1965), Namin organized his first band. He transferred to the Institute for Foreign Languages in 1969 and to Moscow State University in 1970, where he formed the rock band Tsvety (Flowers) and had a record released by Melodiya in 1973. In 1974 the band turned professional and was closed by decree in 1975. In 1978 Namin organized the Group of Stas Namin and revived his musical activities. He was engaged in the "rock for peace" campaign. In 1988 he promoted the band Gorky Park. He runs his own musical center cum theater, located in Gorky Park. In 1999 he staged the musical *Hair* with an American and Russian cast.

**NaNa:** formed in 1994 as boy group by Bari Alibasov (b. 1947 in Charsk, near Semipalatinsk), who had previously managed the jazz band Integral. Modeled on the Beatles, the band consists of Vladimir Levkin (b. 1969), Vladimir Asimov (b. 1968), Vladimir Politov (b. 1970), and Viacheslav Zhrebkin (b. 1969). Hits have included "Deserted Beach" (Pustinnyi pliazh) and "Faina."

**Nautilus Pompilius (Nau):** see Butusov, Viacheslav [www.nautilus.ru]

**Nord-Ost:** Russian musical. Staged in the House of Culture of Moscow's Ball-Bearing Factory on Dubrovka, where it premiered on 19 October 2001. Based on Veniamin Kaverin's (1902–1989) epic *Two Captains*,

a novel covering 30 years of Soviet history. Produced by Alexander Tsekalo and Georgi Vasiliev; libretto written by Alexei Ivashchenko and Georgi Vasiliev (the duo Ivasi). On 23 October 2002 a group of Chechen terrorists held the troupe and the audience of more than 800 people hostage, to press for an end of the Russian military action in Chechnya. On 26 October the building was stormed by special forces after an anesthetic gas had been pumped into the auditorium; more than 100 people died in the course of the liberation of the building. The show reopened on 8 February 2003 but was eventually closed on 10 May 2003. [www.nordost.ru]

**Okudzhava, Bulat:** b. 9 May 1924 in Moscow to an Armenian mother and a Georgian father. His father was executed during the purges, his mother arrested and released only in 1955. Okudzhava volunteered for the army and served at the front. He was a novelist, member of the Writers' Union, and poet-bard. His first novel, *Good Luck, Schoolboy* (Bud' zdorov, shkoliar! 1961) caused controversy for emphasizing the soldier's fear of death over and above the feeling of heroism and the fight against fascism. Okudzhava died in June 1997.

**Pauls, Raimond:** b. 1936 in Riga. Pauls studied composition at musical school and conservatory. While a student, he played in a jazz sextet and wrote his first compositions. He joined the Riga estrada orchestra and in 1964 became its head. He has worked with renowned poets, such as Voznesensky, Rozhdestvensky, and Reznik for his songs. In 1981 he wrote "Maestro" for Alla Pugacheva and has also written for Leontiev and Vaikule. He has presented since 1978 a music program on Latvian television. In 1989

he became minister of culture of Latvia and in 1998 was elected to parliament.

**Pugacheva, Alla:** b. 1949, Moscow. In 1965 appeared in the musical program *Pif Paf*, and toured with VIAs. From 1974 to 1977, with VIA Veselye Rebiata, where she learned her theatrical approach to singing. In 1974 performed the tune for Eldar Ri-azanov's film comedy *Irony of Fate* (Ironiia sud'by). Her "Harlequin" (1975) gained her stage popularity as a solo singer. Her songs were written largely by Ilia Reznik and Raimond Pauls. In 1985 she began to stage larger shows. Married to Filipp Kirkorov. In 1997 took part in the Eurovision Song Contest with "Primadonna" (placed 15th). Pugacheva's daughter, Kristina Orbakaite (b. 1971, London), starred in Rolan Bykov's children's film *Scarecrow* (Chuchelo) and later had an affair with rock singer Vladimir Presniakov (b. 1968 in Sverdlovsk), with whom she has a son, Nikita (b. 1991). [www.allapugacheva.ru]

**Shevchuk, Yuri:** b. in 1957 in Magadan. Studied graphic design at Ufa University, where in 1980 he formed his own band. In 1987 moved to Leningrad when the authorities in Ufa forbade performances; he formed the band DDT, which became famous in the rock scene. 1993 awarded the prize Ovation. **Selected Albums:** *Pig on the Rainbow* (Svin'ia na raduge, 1982); *Monologue in Saigon* (Monolog v Saigone, 1982); *Thaw* (Ottepel', 1983), English version, 1993; *Actress Spring* (Aktrisa vesna, 1992); *This Is All* (Eto vse, 1995); *Love* (Liubov', 1997); *World Number Zero* (Mir nomer nol', 1999). [www.ddt.ru]

**Shnurov, Sergei (Shnur):** b. 1973. Formed the techno group Ukho Van Goga (Van

Gogh's Ear) and the hard rock group Alko-repitsa in the 1990s before organizing the band Leningrad in January 1997. Shnurov has appeared in cult films such as Natalia Pogonnicheva's *Drink Theory* (Teoriia zapoia, 2002) and composed the music for Petr Buslov's *Bimmer* (Bumer, 2003) and Andrei Proshkin's *The Play of the Butterflies* (Igrы motyl'kov, 2004).

**styob:** derived from the verb *stebat* (to whip, to lash), it describes the exposure to mockery. Styob is linked to postmodernism because of its parody of socialist culture. Styob may refer to a remake, where the author creates a new myth based on the sacral status of past culture (for example, Chapayev anecdotes, Stirlitz, where the hero of Soviet culture is exposed to laughter and profanation).

**Sukachev, Igor (Garik):** b. 1959 and graduated from Lipetsk Theater Institute. Musician and actor. Formed the band Brigada S (1985–1993). In 1995–1996 ran, with Alexander Skliar, the project Boatswain and Wanderer (Botsman and Brodyaga) to record old Soviet songs. Since 1993, leader of the band Neprikasayemye (Untouchables). Sukachev has played in a number of films, including *Defence Counsellor Sedov* (Zashchitnik Sedov, 1988) and *The Fatal Eggs* (Rokovye iaitsa, 1995). Acted also in his directorial debut *Midlife Crisis* (Krizis srednego vozrasta, 1997) and directed *The Holiday* (Prazdnik, 2001).

**t.A.T.u:** Lena Katina (b. 1984) and Julia Volkova (b. 1985), a Russian girl band created in 1999 by Ivan Shapovalov. The duo gained popularity through their scandalous image as two underage lesbians, sporting school uniforms and dreaming of an escape

from the society that condemned their love. This image was specially created for them and lasted long enough to promote their songs, compiled on their album, which has also been released in English. t.A.T.u was the first Russian pop band to take first place in the pop charts in several European countries, including the UK. They took part in the Eurovision Song Contest in 2003, taking third place. [www.tatu.ru]

**Tsoy, Viktor:** b. 1961 in Kupchino, Leningrad. Studied art and woodcutting in Leningrad, when he started to play with various bands: Piligrimy (Pilgrims), Palata No. 6 (Ward 6), Absats (Paragraph), and Garin i Giperboloid (Garin and the Hyperboloid). In 1982 formed a duo with Alexei Rybin and released the album *45*. The group Kino emerged in 1984 with Rybin, Kasparian, Titov, and Gurianov. Tsoy played himself in Soloviev's *ASSA* and Moro in *The Needle*, for which he also provided the sound track. International tours. Died in a car accident in Jurmala in 1990. **Albums:** *45* (1982); *46* (1983); *Captain of the Kamchatka* (Nachal'nik kamchatki, 1984); *This Is Not Love* (Eto ne liubov', 1985); *Night* (Noch', 1986); *Blood Type* (Gruppa krovi, 1988); *A Star Called Sun* (Zvezda po imeni solntse, 1989); *Black Album* (Chernyi album, 1990, posthumous).

**tusovka:** trend word in the early 1990s, derived from the French term *se tasser*; *tusovat* means primarily "to shuffle cards." *Tusovatsya* describes the activity of being with friends and having fun, being in one's clique.

**Twelve Chairs:** after *Nord-Ost*, the second attempt by Tsekalo to create a Russian musical. Based on Ilf and Petrov's satire

(1928), the show was directed by the children's filmmaker Tigran Keosayan and the music composed by song-writer Igor Zubkov. Has played since 7 November 2003 in the Moscow Youth Culture Palace (MDM), but remains a pale reflection of *Nord-Ost*, both musically and in terms of special effects. [[www.12stulyev.ru](http://www.12stulyev.ru)]

**Vaikule, Laima:** b. 1954 in Riga. At age 14, Vaikule won a prize in a local singing competition. When a student of medicine, she continued to perform as a singer in restaurants and clubs, designing her own choreography for her disco songs. She was discovered by Raimonds Pauls, and her success came with texts and compositions by Pauls and Reznik, beginning with "Night Bonfire" (Nochnoi koster). In 1987 she won the Golden Lyre in Czechoslovakia. Later in her career she performed songs by Igor Krutoy and Yuri Varum.

**Vysotsky, Vladimir:** b. 25 January 1938, Moscow. He lived with his father, an army officer, in Eberswalde, East Germany, from 1947 to 1949. He graduated in 1960 from the Moscow Arts Theater studio and subsequently worked at the Pushkin Theater and Theater of Miniatures. In 1964 joined the company of the Taganka Theater, where he created his reputation as a stage actor. In 1966 he married (third marriage) the French actress Marina Vlady (Poliakova). From 1966 onward he gave concerts in the Soviet Union, France (1977), and the United States (1979). Vysotsky was addicted to alcohol. He died on 25 July 1980 of a heart failure and is buried in Vagankovo Cemetery, Moscow. [<http://vysotsky.km.ru>]

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