



# The FORUM

The Scotland-Russia Forum magazine. No. 35, Summer 2016

[www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/publications.html](http://www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/publications.html)

## All change

The SRF magazine is changing again. Longstanding members may remember how we started and the much slicker look of more recent issues, with lots of colour, professional design and a wide range of subject matter.

## A magazine for members

We have decided to go back to basics. The main readers of the magazine have always been our members despite attempts to increase circulation. Therefore we will concentrate on producing a magazine which contains more about issues the SRF was created to address, more about what we are doing, and more input (I hope) from members themselves. The SRF is a membership organisation - we'd like to ensure you know what your organisation is doing and we hope you will tell us what topics you'd like us to cover.

## Format

Many of you have told us you'd like us to save money and distribute the magazine online. We are printing far fewer copies than before and hope to move more and more to an online format. We'll be asking members to let us know if they'd prefer online or print and don't worry, if you want to stay with print that's fine. The new format will be cheaper to produce, with its simplified design, possibly less colour and a smaller print run - but an online version could be more colourful and have more content.

## Editor

We are very grateful to our last editor, Elizabeth Roberts, and to sponsor Forest Purposes LLP for the splendid Autumn 2015 and Spring 2016 issues. We are now looking for a new editor to work with us on future issues. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this.

Let us know what you think of these changes!

*Jenny Carr, SRF chairperson and acting editor*

## The FORUM

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All opinions expressed are those of the contributors, and don't necessarily coincide with those of the committee or the editors.

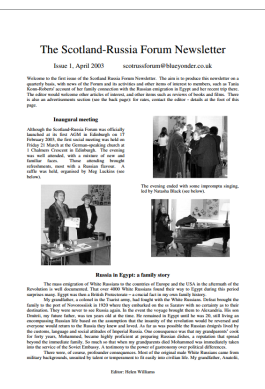
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## In This Issue

- All change - new look and contents
- Events roundup and other SRF news
- UK-Russia Year of Language & Literature 2016
- Russian films to look out for
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- Festival listings
- Members' page & Letters to the Editor



Covers in 2003, 2008 and 2016

## Events roundup



Language Show Live Scotland at SECC Glasgow, March 2016. Visitors and helpers at the SRF stand; singers from Russkaya Cappella and the Russian childrens choir.

Find out about RUSSIA

WELCOME HOME RUSSIAN LANGUAGE HISTORY MORE...

Where do you want to start? Click on the image below.

- Привет! ??? Learn some Russian
- Explore the largest country in the world
- SPACE the first human in space and other firsts
- History Vikings, tsars and revolutions
- FOLK TALES Baba Yaga and other stories
- RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS (not just Pavlov and his dog)
- Who was ALEXANDER PUSHKIN?
- FESTIVALS
- A visit to the BALLET
- MUSIC
- RUSSIAN FOOD
- SPORT

January: redesign and relaunch of our children's website [www.findoutaboutrussia.co.uk](http://www.findoutaboutrussia.co.uk)



The monthly "Chai n Chat" group meet at Summerhall. 5 May

## Other recent activity

- **January:** submission to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee inquiry into the UK's relations with Russia
- **March:** OSCR approve our application to change our form of organisation to a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation). More information on page 3.
- **13 May:** Colin Souness "Working on a Russian icebreaker in the Arctic" (SRF talk with RSGS and Univ. of Edinburgh)
- **26 May:** Steven Main and Catherine Booth "Secret histories in Edinburgh and Shrivenham – Soviet / Russian Military Studies and the Cold War" (SRF talk with NLS)

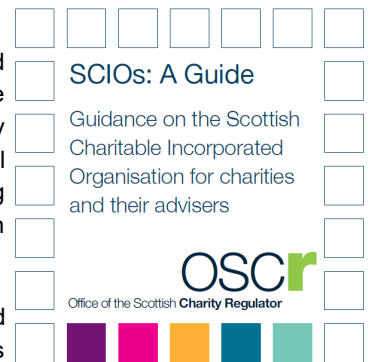


# Update on the SRF

## We have changed into a SCIO. What is that?

A SCIO is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation. When the SRF was first registered as a Scottish charity in 2007 the only form available was the Unincorporated Charity, but the SCIO was introduced in 2011. The main difference between the two is that the SCIO is an entity in its own right and all the charity's actions are in the name of the SCIO, not that of individual members or representatives. Assets and liabilities are also held by the SCIO, thus reducing trustee and member liability in case of problems. For more information see OSCR information sheet: [https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/1038/cscios\\_a\\_guide.pdf](https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/1038/cscios_a_guide.pdf).

We consulted members on the change at our AGM last October, were given the go-ahead and duly (but slowly) completed the OSCR forms. Our application was accepted and the SRF has been a SCIO since 20 May 2016. Our charity number is unchanged, SC038728 (details on the OSCR website—[www.oscr.org.uk](http://www.oscr.org.uk)).



## Website changes



Now that we have finished the new version of [www.findoutaboutrussia.co.uk](http://www.findoutaboutrussia.co.uk) (improved design, useful search facility, more pictures) we are now embarking on the redesign of our main website [www.scotlandrussiaforum.org](http://www.scotlandrussiaforum.org), also using a template from the strangely named Weebly.

We hope that the new design—simpler, cleaner, more up to date—will also be popular. When both are online a major benefit will be halving the annual fees. Another important benefit is that we can load more pages, and more data in general. The current version is at capacity and to add new material I often have to find something to delete. There are other benefits too but rather than enumerate them we'd prefer to hear your opinions on the new site in due course.

We had a lot of student help with the first site and have one student and an artist already busy on the second—many thanks to all concerned.

More offers of help would be gratefully received!

## Work with schools

The SRF's aim is to promote interest and understanding in Russia and her neighbours. But how can there be interest or understanding if Russia is perceived to be so marginal that its language and culture barely feature on the school curriculum? And if generations of schoolchildren never hear of Russia they will take the message that it is indeed unimportant.

That is why we believe it is important to get Russian studies back into schools. This aim was dealt a severe blow by the SQA's recent decision not to include Russian in the Curriculum for Excellence national courses. Russian Highers and other "national courses" disappeared in 2015 and as a result there has recently been almost no Russian taught in schools apart from a few boarding schools offering GCSE and A Levels to their mostly Russian born pupils.

A year later the picture is a very little better. There are now three high schools offering beginners' classes to pupils sitting the "Languages for Life and Work" qualification. A start. And we are working hard to persuade primary schools to consider introducing a short course in Russian as their second non-mother tongue language in P5. No takers as yet but we were encouraged by the interest from teachers at the recent Language Show and by the enthusiasm of Glasgow City Council, the only Local Authority to list Russian as a possible language for primaries in its area.

## Help needed

If you can help us in any of the following areas we would be delighted to hear from you.

- **Magazine editor:** We are looking for someone who understands the aims of the SRF, has ideas for the content and design of the *Forum*, and can implement those ideas on a shoestring.
- **Reviews editor:** an assistant to the editor, you will commission reviews of books, films, theatre and exhibitions of interest to our readers
- **Website redesign:** We need people with basic computer skills (nothing fancy), and capable of paying attention to detail to help us transfer our website to the new platform.
- **Regular admin help:** if you can give us 6 hours a week or more, can make a longterm commitment, and would be willing to help in the office on an independent basis with any tasks that need doing we would love to hear from you. (Saintly) SRF members only.
- **Work with schools:** help us find schools interested in starting a Russian club or class. You need to be an enthusiastic self-starter with an understanding of the Scottish education system.

Email Jenny Carr on [info@scotlandrussiaforum.org](mailto:info@scotlandrussiaforum.org) to discuss. All work is unpaid and voluntary.



## UK-Russia Year of Language and Literature 2016

2014 was a year when political relations with Russia deteriorated, but during the UK-Russia Year of Culture the British Council delivered over 340 events in Moscow and 12 other cities, which reached almost one million people face to face and 12.5 million overall (almost 9% of Russia's population).

2016 has been designated the UK-Russia Year of Language and Literature, reflecting the desire of both UK and Russian governments for greater people-to-people and institution-to-institution engagement. The organisers, as before, are the British Council and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The more difficult the political relations, the more valued the cultural relations.

Martin Roth, Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum, described the Year of Culture as: "a cultural emergency kit in a difficult situation."

Mikhail Shvydkoy, Presidential adviser for international cultural collaboration, said in a media interview that "cultural ties, and in particular Years of Culture, are a priceless tool allowing us, so to say, to keep the communication muscle toned." And of the Year of Language and Literature: "In the context of the current political and military crisis, a year of language and literature seems to be very important. It proves that culture and nations have a presumption of innocence."

Michael Bird, Director of the British Council in Russia (and formerly Director of the British Council in Scotland) has said: "The UK and Russia share enormous respect for each other's written and spoken cultural heritages. Both have languages which are widely spoken. Both are proud of their literary traditions. And both recognise the importance of celebrating this as a means of building understanding and trust."

### In Russia ...

*Michael Bird, Director of the British Council in Russia, writes:*

The Year of Language and Literature is about both the UK's literary heritage and contemporary writing. It is also celebrating the enormous continued impact of William Shakespeare, as part of *Shakespeare Lives*, the British Council's global celebration to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

The British Council is leading the UK programme in Russia, in partnership with FCO, UKTI and VisitBritain and other UK organisations, as well as numerous Russian partners nationwide. The Founder Sponsor of the Year is BP.

The programme extends far beyond Moscow and aims to reach both professional audiences and the wider public.

Highlights so far have included Shakespeare Schools Day, in which the British Council and the Russian Ministry of Education involved children in every school across the Russian Federation, and the launch of a Shakespeare train which will run on the Moscow Metro for six months, and a photo-exhibition *Shakespeare Lives at Domodedovo Airport*.

The National Portrait Gallery in London and the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow have celebrated their 160<sup>th</sup> anniversaries (both were founded in 1856) with an exchange of exhibitions. The exhibition in Moscow featured the National Portrait Gallery's very first acquisition, the Chandos portrait of Shakespeare, and also Alexander Nasmyth's iconic portrait of Robert Burns.

The British Council is promoting FutureLearn's Massive Open Online Course, *Robert Burns – Poems, Songs and Legacy*, to Russian audiences. The course was developed by the Centre for Robert Burns Studies at Glasgow University.

The British Council is also using the Year of Language and Literature to promote contemporary Scottish literature in Russia.

Three Scottish poets, Don Paterson, Christine de Luca and Stewart Alexander Sanderson, are visiting Russia to collaborate with Russian poets, and there will be a reciprocal visit to Scotland. The programme is developed by the British Council in partnership with the Scottish Poetry Library with support from the Edwin Morgan Trust and Creative Scotland.

Two Scottish writers, Jackie Kay and Louise Welsh, are among 12 writers featured in the New Writing from the UK award. This is part of a competition for Russian literary translators linked to the Moscow Non/Fiction Book Fair in November when the UK will be Guest of Honour.

Louise Welsh is also one of five writers taking part in a UK-Russia Literature Seminar at Tolstoy's country estate at Yasnaya Pol-yana.

British and Russian writers will take the Trans-Siberian express from Moscow to Vladivostok and hold pop-up literature festivals in cities along the route.

Meanwhile the British Council and a Russian partner, Arzamas Academy, have launched *Emoji Shakespeare*, featured as Best New App and App We Love in 88 countries. *Emoji Shakespeare* has captured the imagination of young audiences who never before thought of reading Shakespeare for pleasure.

However the undoubted highlight of the Year so far has been the visit of Sir Ian McKellen as ambassador for the British Council's and British Film Institute's *Shakespeare Lives on Film*. He opened the British Council's Midsummer Nights Festival in Moscow with his one man show *Shakespeare on Stage, on Screen and Elsewhere*. He introduced his classic film of *Richard III* in Mos-cow, Ekaterinburg and St Petersburg and returned to the stage afterwards for question and answer sessions. All the venues sold out within hours and second screenings were arranged. At the end of each evening he performed Sir Thomas More's speech to a mob baying for "strangers" to be "removed" from sixteenth century London. It is a powerful appeal to Londoners' humanity, and its contemporary relevance was fully appreciated by the audiences.



Sir Ian took the Shakespeare train on the Moscow Metro. The media coverage generated by his visit was extraordinary, with hundreds of articles and a score of news items on television. Everywhere he went, young people recognised him and asked for selfies. The power of culture to touch people's lives could not have been clearer.

**Sir Ian McKellen and the British Council's Shakespeare train on the Moscow Metro.**

Photographer Valeriy Belobeev. © British Council

## In the UK ...

*Observations by Jenny Carr, SRF*

The main organisers of the Year, on behalf of the Russian government, are Rossotrudnichestvo (the Federal Agency for CIS, Compatriots Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation, <http://gbr.rs.gov.ru>) and Russia Beyond the Headlines / Kompass (<http://thekompass.rbth.co.uk/>).

The Russian programme was launched at the Royal Festival Hall with a screening of the classic Greta Garbo silent movie *Love*, based on Anna Karenina, with a new score performed by the Russian violinist Vadim Repin.

A highlight of the Year has been the exhibition *Russia and the Arts: the Age of Tolstoy and Tchaikovsky*, the National Portrait Gallery's spring exhibition of paintings from the Tretyakov. This was opened by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets.

A new initiative for the Year is the plan to introduce musical and poetical salons at Rossotrudnichestvo's London base.

Apart from these many of the events announced as part of the Year were already scheduled, although interesting and worthwhile in themselves. Some had no official connection, such as the BASEES conference and the Glasgow Language Show in March. Other annual events on the list, such the Russian presence at the London Book Fair, the Russian Children's Book Fair, the Pushkin in Britain competition and the Moffat Conference have more of an official connection, the latter for example regularly attracting Russian politicians, diplomats and cultural leaders.

Of these the Moffat Conference is of particular interest to our readers. It will be held on 21-23 October this year and the topic is *Poets and Power*, with discussion of both Russian and Scottish poets by a number of interesting speakers. Official guests at the opening of the conference will include Ambassador Yakovenko and the new director of the Russian State Library for Foreign Literature. More details on [www.moffatbookevents.com](http://www.moffatbookevents.com).

Outside the Year there are a number of interesting cultural events in the UK in 2016-17: the Science Museum's well received *Cosmonauts* exhibition which ran over the winter of 2015-16 (and was originally planned as a key event of the 2014 Year of Culture), the Edinburgh International Festival which has a good Russian programme this August, and next year the anniversary of 1917 will bring excellent art exhibitions to London's Royal Academy and Tate Galleries.



## Russian Films to look out for

By Flip Kulakiewicz

The cinematic output from the Soviet Union and, more recently, the Russian Federation has long been one of the most admired products from a region with no shortage of artistic expression. A recent retrospective on Tarkovsky at the Filmhouse in Edinburgh in May-June 2016, delivered to high attendance and effusive praise from audiences, demonstrates the extent to which Russia's cinematic imprint can still be felt today.

Much criticism was levelled at the Russian government's proposed new laws in January 2015, which stipulated that funding could only be granted to films which conform to certain desired principles and depictions of Russian society. Earlier, in 2014, Andrei Zvyagintsev, probably Russia's best known contemporary arthouse director, had voiced his frustrations that working in Russia was akin to "living in a minefield"; in doing so he was merely echoing many of his compatriot directors' complaints about the heightened climate of state intolerance within which they work. Despite these restrictions, films continue to be produced on a range of topics: recent high-profile successes such as Zvyagintsev's *Leviathan* and Andrei Konchalevsky's *The Postman's White Nights* at international film festivals show that complex and acclaimed films are definitely out there. Read on for a by no means exclusive list of recent Russian-made films which are worth investigating.



**The Fool** (2014) Described by Variety as 'Kafka meets the Sopranos' and released to widespread critical acclaim, 34 year-old director Yuri Bykov fashions a gripping yet bleak tale of corruption and moral compromise set in the Russian provinces. Dima Nikitin (a superb Artyom Bystrov) is a municipal plumber who discovers a crack in the foundations of huge apartment block and realises it could collapse at any moment. To the horror of his family and the town's administration, he embarks on a quest to have the building evacuated before disaster strikes. One particular scene, a mesmerising long take set to Viktor Tsoi's 'Spokoinoi Noch', is sure to remain with you.



**Under the Sun** (2015) Recently enjoying its world premiere at Edinburgh International Film Festival, renowned documentarian Vitaly Mansky's newest feature is a quietly compelling exploration of daily life in Pyongyang, North Korea. The film follows eight-year-old girl and her parents over twelve months as she prepares to join the Korean Children's Union on the 'Day Of The Shining Star' (Kim Jong-Il's birthday). Made under intense scrutiny from the North Korean authorities, Mansky's film gives audiences a fascinating insight into one of the world's most inaccessible places.



**The Gulls** (2014) This striking and atmospheric debut from Ella Manzhieva heralds a talented new voice in Russian cinema. Set in the province of Kalmykia, and the first feature film to be released from that region in 25 years, *The Gulls* is the story of Elza (model Evgeniya Mandzhieva, making her feature film debut), an unhappily married woman living in a remote village on the shores of the Caspian sea. When her husband is temporarily jailed due to his illegal fishing activity, Elza has to reflect on the opportunities that suddenly open up for her.



**Under Electric Clouds** (2015) Aleksei German Jr's latest outing is a dense and lengthy eight-part film set in a near-future Russia. The characters in its 'stories' include a Kyrgyz construction worker, the heirs to an oligarch who has been framed, a real estate lawyer with a recurrent dream, a museum guide who once stood alongside Yeltsin in 1991 and an architect contemplating his short-lived success. While admittedly not to everyone's taste, this is a beautifully shot, enigmatic and thought-provoking piece.



**City 40** (2016) Fresh from its premiere at Sheffield Doc Fest in June, this engrossing documentary is set in the town of Ozersk, one of Russia's few remaining closed cities. Residents' movements are strictly controlled and the majority of them work for Mayak Nucleur Complex, which produces much of Russia's nuclear weapons and where almost all of the country's fissile material is stored. Despite foreigners being prohibited from entering the city, director Samira Goetschel smuggled cameras inside to interview its residents and recount their stories: the result is a chilling portrait of blind idealism, environmental contamination and political apathy.

*Flip Kulakiewicz graduated in History and Russian at the University of Edinburgh in 2010. She worked as an SRF administrative assistant at the Scotland-Russia Institute before spending three years teaching with the British Council in Egypt and Colombia. She has now returned to Edinburgh as Education & Learning Coordinator at the Centre for the Moving Image, which incorporates the Edinburgh International Film Festival, Edinburgh Filmhouse and Belmont Filmhouse.*



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# Books

## Glas Revisited or How the Glas-SRF Partnership Came About

By Natasha Perova

Based in Moscow Glas has been publishing English translations of contemporary Russian authors and overlooked 20<sup>th</sup> century classics for more than 25 years and still remains a showcase for new Russian writing. With more than 150 names represented in our thematic anthologies and single-author issues, GLAS is an important English-language source on Russian literature today. However over the last two years we were not able to publish any new titles (for purely financial reasons) while the need for an independent publishing program to promote new talents from Russia is greater than ever before.

At this point the SRF, who have been sympathetic to our cause for some time, extended a helping hand by offering a page on their site as a channel for information on Russian literary life. Regretfully, Russian literature is again divided into officially accepted, accepted with reservations, and unaccepted, to say nothing of the most implacable of censors – the market economy.

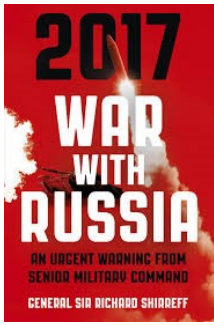
SRF is known for their wide-ranging activities to bridge the gap between the UK and Russia by organising events and projects as well as supplying objective information on various aspects of Russian life and culture. They see an additional angle of vision on Russia in its literature. So together we are launching this online resource on Russian literature. This is a logical move since literary fiction provides a more accurate picture of a society than any media which many of us have long ceased to trust. If you want to know what people feel and think, what makes them tick, what aspirations they have, and what losses they sustained, you should get to know their poetry and prose, their narrative nonfiction and drama. You do need to have some background information though to better understand and appreciate Russian fiction but I'm sure that readers of the SRF publications have all the basic facts on Russia, both its past and present.

I intend to present to you Russian authors not yet available in English or just recently published for the first time in English and little known yet. For quite a few new authors I have detailed synopses and translated excerpts from their books, but occasionally I'd like to attach extracts in Russian for those who can read the language, and particularly for translators looking for new authors they might want to offer publishers for translation. I'll be happy to answer readers' questions and respond to their comments. The latter sometimes show the extent of the gap still existing between the English-language and Russian worlds – I often come across signs of them in translations I line-edit with the original. I'm particularly interested to spot the various misunderstandings and address them. Psychologists believe that fears derive from insufficient information and in turn lead to aggression. So lack of knowledge breeds aggression. People interested in cross-cultural matters can prevent this. I think literature can be helpful here too.

Glas books can still be purchased from Inpress: <http://inpressbooks.co.uk/collections/glas-new-russian-writing-1>







## “2017 War With Russia”

By General Sir Richard Shirreff

Reviewed by Andrew Monaghan

**2017: War With Russia. An Urgent Warning from Senior Military Command.** General Sir Richard Shirreff. London: Coronet, 2016. Hb. 436pp. ISBN 978-1-473-63222-6

Until 2014 the idea of a Europe “whole, free and at peace” dominated the thinking of Western politicians and officials. Indeed, the notion of state-to-state war in Europe was so unthinkable that it did not feature in the discussion, even in fiction. European armed forces were reconfigured to address different problems, and, in many cases, they were significantly reduced in size, with high performance and heavy weapons withdrawn or mothballed. The war in Ukraine has deeply shaken that sense of security. It has generated much concern about Moscow challenging the post-Cold War European architecture and potentially testing NATO’s collective defence by launching an attack on the Baltic States.

Framed as a “future history”, Richard Shirreff’s book is intended as a “wake-up call” for Western leaders, and emphasises the need for NATO to be ready to repel looming further Russian aggression that imperils both the independence of NATO members and existence of NATO. A retired British Army general, and, having served as Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR), NATO’s senior European officer until March 2014, the month after Russia’s annexation of Crimea, Shirreff certainly reflects on these challenges with vim.

He has written what he calls a “fact-based prediction”, blurring the lines between fiction and scenario modelled war gaming based on what he knows from his service. The mix of fiction and fact certainly lends some advantages to the author, allowing him, for instance, to make points that would have been difficult to include in a more formal set of memoirs. But it also means that the book is neither fish nor fowl, and builds in some problems.

The fiction fairly rattles along, though it also often clunks, whether because of repetition or because of the nature of many of the characters involved: the women are blond and sporty, and the Russians are villains straight from central casting, replete with canned dialogue.

Nor is Shirreff subtle. There are frequent analogies with Hitler and the second world war, and the criticisms of self-serving British and European politicians and officials is boomed at the same forceful pitch throughout. The author’s alter ego often emerges as these points are made, and to drive them home, they are made in turn by each character group: British generals, American politicians, and even, helpfully, the Russians all pile in to the attack on the capabilities, resilience, intelligence and moral fibre of the UK and NATO.

Some, even much, of this is fair enough. But each of his targets will say they have been only moderately served, and there is a risk that the noise of axes being ground, occasionally rather vituperatively, may drown out the reasonable points that Shirreff seeks to make.

And the “fact-based prediction”? Yes, NATO faces many of the challenges that Shirreff describes. And relations between Russia and the West have become adversarial to the extent that war cannot be excluded – witness Turkey’s shooting down of a Russian jet in late 2015, an act which the Russian prime minister suggested had given Russia the grounds to go to war. The message that the modernisation of the Russian armed forces is well under way, altering European security is also important, even if the Russian defence industry will have to hurry up to produce sufficiently quantities of that equipment to meet his deadline of 2017. It is a shame, though, that the reasons for Russia launching a war against NATO are so simplified.

The book’s scenario structure acts both as a narrative crutch and a prison. Developments are often telegraphed early and rather obviously, most notably one big tragedy which feels inevitable almost as soon as it enters the story. It also limits the scope of the book where real flights of imaginative fiction could have driven the author’s point home more effectively. The scenario he uses is a (slight) variation of the mainstream one widely in service in the media and think tanks. It extrapolates from how the war in Ukraine evolved, then packages it and converts it into a step-by-step escalation that plays strongly to Western fears. It is plausible. But the Russians too easily play to an expected form, and it has a sense of intellectual rigidity in what is a dynamic and evolving situation; the faint whiff of preparing to fight the last war.

*2017 War with Russia* is a curate’s egg of a book. The central messages that Russia should no longer be treated as a sideshow or distraction and that warfare is evolving – and that combined, this needs serious attention – are very important, and it is to be hoped that they survive accusations of sensationalism or critiques of style or evidence.

*Dr Andrew Monaghan* is senior research fellow in the Russia and Eurasia Programme at Chatham House. He is also a visiting fellow at the Changing Character of War Programme at Pembroke College, Oxford. Until late 2012 he led the Russia related research in the Research Division of the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome. He is the author of *The New Politics of Russia: Interpreting Change*, published by Manchester University Press in July 2016. *Sir Richard Shirreff* will be at the Edinburgh Book Festival on 22 August.

# Edinburgh Festival



Clockwise from top:  
Valery Gergiev (EIF)  
Kiril Karabits (EIF)  
Maxim Vengerov (EIF)  
Measure for Measure (EIF)  
Natalia Osipova (EIF)  
Animation (Fringe)  
Penetrating Europe (Fringe)  
Anglichanka (Fringe)  
Counting Sheep (Fringe)  
Stand-Up from Russia (Fringe)



**7 August:** Boris Berezovsky plays Rachmaninov. Orchestra Dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. Usher Hall

**10 August:** Maxim Vengerov in Recital. Usher Hall

**12-14 August:** Natalia Osipova and Guests. Sadler's Wells production at the Festival Theatre. Three dance works created for Natalia Osipova, joined in two by Sergei Polunin.

**15 August:** Das Rheingold. Mariinsky Opera, conducted by Valery Gergiev. Sung in German. Concert performance at the Usher Hall.

**16-20 August:** Measure for Measure. Cheek by Jowl / Pushkin Theatre / Declan Donnellan. Lyceum Theatre.

**17 August:** Daniil Trifonov in Recital. Usher Hall

**20, 21 August:** Russian National Orchestra. Conductor Kirill Karabits, Mikhail Pletnev piano.

**22 August:** Daniil Trifonov and Friends. Queen's Hall



[www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

**3-28 August:** Counting Sheep (Lemon Bucket Orkestra, Ukraine)

**3-14 August:** The Animotion Show - War and Peace.

**4-14 August:** Etherwave: Adventures with the Theremin

**4-28 August:** The International Incident. Comedians from Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Malta.

**6-15, 17-28 August:** Abi Roberts – Anglichanka.

**21-29 August:** Stand-Up from Russia

**22-28 August:** Penetrating Europe, or Migrants Have Talent (Molodyi Teatr)

**27 August:** Reflections. Singers Ekaterina Gopenko (Moscow, Russia) and Magda Nova (Kiev, Ukraine)



[www.edbookfest.co.uk](http://www.edbookfest.co.uk)

**13 August 2-3pm:** Luke Harding. Putin's Polonium Plot

**17 August 5.45-6.45pm:** Oleg Kashin & Andrey Kurkov. Political Parables and Putin's Russia

**21 August 7.30-9pm:** Wi the Hail Voice. Mayakovsky and Morgan's Poetic Revolution

**22 August 5-6pm:** Richard Shirreff. Play with Putin at your Peril

**23 August 3.45pm-4.45pm:** Helen Rappaport. A Revolution in Historical Perspectives

**24 August 2.15pm-3.15pm:** Arkady Ostrovsky. Why Russia is on a Knife-Edge

**24 August 3.30-4.30pm:** Charlotte Hobson & Marina Stepnova. Revolutionary Roads

**24 August 8.30-9.30pm:** Vadim Levental & Agustín Fernández Mallo. Novels that Inspire Novelists

**25 August 2-3pm:** Neil Mackay & Eugene Vodolazkin. Echoes of Umberto Eco

**26 August 6.30-7.30pm:** Guillermo Erades & Hamid Ismailov. The End of the Soviet Union



# Members

## Membership of the SRF 2016-17

Please help us keep the SRF going. Consider supporting us as a member (or even with a single donation) if you believe

- that Russia and its neighbours are important and interesting
- that they are underreported and sometimes misunderstood
- that the SRF does a good job raising interest and providing information through its various activities (talks and social events, events listings, websites, social media, work with schools, lending library, language classes and others).

We are very grateful to all existing members for your support, moral and financial, and hope you will renew your membership for the year beginning 1 September 2016. We have enclosed a form with this magazine for those who prefer to renew by post and will be emailing all members in August. Please note that **our bank details have changed** so please don't send your payment to the wrong account. If you usually pay by PayPal we'd be very grateful if you would consider switching to bank transfer (or cheque / cash) so that we can avoid losing 5.4% of your donation to PayPal. And if you are eligible we'd be grateful if you'd allow us to claim a tax rebate by signing our Gift Aid form. Every little helps.

The SRF is an independent organisation and your subscriptions are our main source of income. They pay for our small office, events and other running costs. We are all volunteers donating our time freely so there are no salary costs.

Readers of this magazine who are not yet members (or who have inadvertently allowed their membership to lapse) are warmly invited to consider joining. Full details on [www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/support.html](http://www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/support.html). Please contact us by phone or email if you need more information.

## Committee changes

Due to the unexpected resignation of our Treasurer Eric Wishart for health reasons we coopted Jim Patterson onto the committee in June and elected him Treasurer. We are delighted to welcome Jim on board! He has been a keen member of SRF for some time and recently retired as director of architects RMJM and head of their office in Russia. The committee is very grateful to Eric for all he did during his short tenure—and sends him our best wishes for a speedy recovery. There is a full list of the committee on [www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/aboutus.html](http://www.scotlandrussiaforum.org/aboutus.html).

## Letters to the Editor

Please email letters to [info@scotlandrussiaforum.org](mailto:info@scotlandrussiaforum.org) or post to the Scotland-Russia Forum, Summerhall, Edinburgh EH9 1PL.

Dear Editor,

**The Penguin Book of Russian Poetry** (reviewed in the *Scotland Russia Review*, Spring 2016)

I am grateful to Alexandra Smith for pointing out a number of factual errors in our biographical notes. We will ensure these are corrected in future reprints.

Smith has every right to prefer Nabokov's translation of "Silentium" to mine, but it is unfortunate that the comparison has been distorted by careless printing. In the stanza she quotes from my translation, the line-breaks have been mangled [*not the reviewer's error but introduced at the printing stage. Ed*]. This seriously disrupts the rhythm. The stanza should read,

What heart can ever speak its mind?  
How can some other understand  
the hidden pole that turns your life?  
A thought, once spoken, is a lie.  
Don't cloud the water in your well;  
drink from this wellspring – and be still.

I am surprised that she considers this wordy. Being in the same metre as Nabokov's version, it is certainly no longer in terms of syllables.

I am also surprised by her complaint about our inclusion of poems by Teffi and Shalamov, simply on the grounds that they are better known as prose writers. What matters, surely, is whether or not these are good poems.

Our anthology includes the work of sixty-two poets. I have for some time been keeping on my computer an ever-growing list titled "What a Pity you Didn't Include...". Alexandra Smith lists an additional 19 (!) "significant poets" whose omission we have not "rationalised". She appears not to understand that an anthology, by its nature, must exclude more writers than it includes.

All the best,

Robert Chandler.

London

31 Jan 2016

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*The aim of the **Scotland-Russia Forum** is to promote interest in Russia and its neighbours in order to improve understanding of those countries in Scotland.*

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