



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

# THE PRINCESS DASHKOVA RUSSIAN CENTRE

## APRIL 2013 NEWSLETTER



### March Events Review

March saw the Dashkova Centre present a major series of events under the title 'SLOVO: The Russian word in Scotland', in association with our long-time partner, Academia Rossica, and funded by the Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (CRCEES) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (ARHC). The Dashkova Centre welcomed a number of prominent Russian authors and journalists, as well as academics from around the world.



Dmitry Bykov

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The first event, on 13<sup>th</sup> March was An Evening with Dmitry Bykov. Bykov, one of Russia's foremost literary figures, is an author, poet and journalist, and this evening demonstrated the full breadth of his interests. Beginning with a reading of his poetry, Bykov then engaged with the sold-out audience on a range of themes, from the literary scene in Russia to his opinions of the recent protest movement.

On 14<sup>th</sup> of March, an international symposium, entitled 'The Writer as a "Language Laboratory": Experiment, Reflection and Construction of Social Meaning' took place in the Centre. The symposium was attended by a scholars from the UK, US, Russia and Europe, including Roman Leibov (Tartu University), Tine Roesen (Aarhus University), Maxim Krongauz (Russian State University for the Humanities) and Mikhail Epstein (Durham and Emory Universities). The first session saw a selection of academic papers focusing on writers' linguistic activity, and the role of the writer as a figure manufacturing social and political values in language. This was followed by a roundtable event during which participants, including the author and filmmaker Mikhail Segal, discussed the linguistic aspects of literary production.

The symposium was followed by a screening of Mikhail Segal's film *Short Stories (Rasskazy)*, which combines four separate short films together, touching upon themes relevant to modern Russian life such as corruption and the attitude to history and memory. Segal himself took part in a question and answer session with the audience, discussing his film and literary work.

Unfortunately, unforeseen problems with the visa process meant that the planned event with the writers and journalists Marina Koroleva and Elena Fanailova was postponed until the 28<sup>th</sup> of March, when Dr Marina Koroleva, the writer, scholar, journalist and Deputy Chief Editor at the *Ekho Moskvy* radio station, took part in an event entitled "Echo of Moscow: Cultural Politics in Contemporary Politics" at the Dashkova Centre. This was presented by two members of the Dashkova Centre, Dr Luke March and Dr Vera Zvereva and had a format of a double interview. Luke March led a discussion of *Ekho Moskvy* as the defender of free speech in Russia and the station's strategies of survival. Then discussion moved to the changing linguistic norms in contemporary Russian culture and explored Koroleva's own programme 'We speak Russian!'. Finally, Koroleva's novel *Vereshchagin* (Concerto Grosso)



A packed audience at the Dashkova Centre



Dr Marina Koroleva

was presented. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Dr Rose France for her perfect interpreting of this discussion.

## **News from our Russkii Mir partners**

A Russian Centre supported by the Russkii Mir Foundation will be opened at the University of Durham on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Durham Centre will be the fourth in Britain, joining the centres at Pushkin House in London, St Antony's College Oxford and, of course, here in Edinburgh.

## **April Events**

### **Workshop with Lilia Shevtsova for University of Edinburgh Students**

**Date: Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 15:00 – 16:15**

**Venue: Princess Dashkova Centre, 14 Buccleuch Place**

A Q&A session with Dr Lilia Shevtsova, exclusively for University of Edinburgh students. Students will be invited to pose their questions to one of the world's authorities on Russian politics in advance of her Erickson lecture.

Places are limited; to attend, please contact Dr Luke March ([l.march@ed.ac.uk](mailto:l.march@ed.ac.uk)) by 12:00 on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April.

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### **The 2013 Honorary Erickson Lecture**

**Lilia Shevtsova, Carnegie Foundation**

### **Russia XXI: Challenge for the West**

**Date: Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April, 17:30**

**Venue: The Playfair Library, Old College, South Bridge, University of Edinburgh**

In the 21st century, Russia will finally show the results of its authoritarian experiment. Signs of the decline of the Russian matrix are already visible, although it has managed to survive after the collapse of communism through imitation of liberal democracy and the elite's personal integration into the West. The Kremlin's attempts to prolong its life through coercion and the deterrence of Western influence may have disastrous consequences for both Russia's future and the stability of the Eurasian space. What the potential for Russia's movement toward the rule of law system is, what the future scenarios for Russia are, and what global influence the Russian awakening will have - these are the questions that will be addressed in the lecture.

**Dr. Lilia Shevtsova** chairs the Russian Domestic Politics and Political Institutions Program at the Carnegie Moscow Center. She is also an Associate Fellow on the Russia and Eurasia Programme at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), a senior research associate at the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of Economics, a member of

the board for the Institute for Human Sciences at Boston University, the Women in International Security international association, the Liberal Mission Foundation, and the New Eurasia Foundation.

All are welcome. Entrance is free but by ticket only. Please register for tickets via <http://ericksonlecture.eventbrite.co.uk>

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### **Conference: Russian Politics from Below**

**Date: Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April, 10:00-18:00**

**Venue: Princess Dashkova Russian Centre, 14 Buccleuch Place**

In the post-Soviet era, a great deal of attention has understandably been paid to the study of formal and institutional politics in Russia, particularly at federal level. Scholars have rigorously analysed the country's evolving constitutional framework, the expanding power of Yeltsin's and Putin's presidencies, the composition of party politics, and the level of control exerted by the regime over the media. Of course, a vast range of 'bottom-up' social movements have also been studied. The aim of this conference, however, is to shift emphasis towards a bottom-up approach in order to examine the complex interactions between social movements, organisations, opinion, and activism on the one hand, and the incumbent regime on the other. The conference is held in cooperation with the University of Glasgow. It is funded by the Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (CRCEES).

Panels will include: Forms of civic engagement; Ethnic politics; The politics of protest; Society-state relations

Conference website: <http://tinyurl.com/russiafrombelow>

Programme: <http://tinyurl.com/russiafrombelowprogramme>

For information please contact: [Ammon.Cheskin@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Ammon.Cheskin@glasgow.ac.uk)



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