

BRITISH RUSSIAN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Old New Year Greetings to everyone!

THE SOCIETY'S A.G.M. is planned for 14 February 2014, together with a Round Table discussion of **Sport And Its Place In Russian National Life**. This will take place at Birmingham and Midland Institute (6.30 for 7.00pm).

Note that on Wednesday 12th March 2014 David Venables, one of our members, will be giving a display and talk to the Birmingham Philatelic Society entitled '**Russian Empire to Soviet Union: Stamps & Labels**'. This will take place at the Birmingham & Midland Institute at 7pm. We urge all members of the British-Russian Society to attend this event, which promises to be both informative and entertaining. The talk will provide a brief introduction to a display of items, which can then be viewed close-to. David gave a successful talk on a different subject last year.

OTHER EVENTS

2014 promises to be a memorable year for those interested in things Russian, since it will be the *Anglo-Russian Year of Cultural Exchange*. The following musical events are planned:

At Symphony Hall on Thursday 9 January, to inaugurate a Season of Russian Classics Andris Nelsons will conduct the CBSO in a performance of Prokofiev's *Classical* Symphony No 1, followed by Stravinsky's *Petrushka*. On Saturday 11 January presenter Paul Rissmann interprets *Petrushka* using 'illustrations, anecdotes and a 100-piece symphony orchestra'. This promises to reveal a hidden depth to Stravinsky's well-known masterpiece. Andris Nelsons then conducts the CBSO in a full performance.

On Sunday 12 January, at the Town Hall venue, the pianist Paul Lewis plays Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and works by Beethoven, Bach and Liszt. Again at Symphony Hall, on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 January, Andris Nelsons conducts a programme including highlights from Prokofiev's ballet score *Romeo and Juliet* (currently introducing *The Apprentice*).

At the same venue on Saturday 22 February, the opening concert of the Anglo-Russian Year of Cultural Exchange 2014 will feature the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio under their artistic director and chief conductor Vladimir Fedoseyev. One of only two performances in the UK, the programme includes Borodin's *Polovstian* Dances as well as works by English composers. Violinist Vadim Repin performs Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.

Thursday 6 March will see the CBSO under Michael Seal performing Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony – his personal musical response to Stalin's terror. The pianist Gabriela Montero performs Rachmaninov's Second Concerto. On Saturday 8 March

Paul Rissmann explains the story behind the music, after which Michael Seal conducts a full performance of the Symphony. This is another in the series *Tuned In*.

On Wednesday 12 March Rachmaninov's Second Symphony is performed by the CBSO, conductor Mikhail Tatarnikov, in a programme that also features Mussorgsky's *Night on a Bare Mountain*. The pianist Peter Donohoe plays Dohnányi's *Variations on a Nursery Tune* and will give a free pre-concert talk on Wednesday 12 March at 6.15pm and Thursday 13 at 1pm.

At the Town Hall, on Monday 25 November at 7.30pm, the cellist Adrian Brendel and pianist Imogen Cooper will conclude their concert of works by J S Bach, Schubert and Liszt by playing Rachmaninov's Sonata for Cello and Piano.

Look out for **Khovanshina**, Mussorgsky's political masterpiece, with Birmingham Opera Company and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under their director Graham Vick during April-May.

'Marco Spada', a rarely performed ballet choreographed by Pierre Lacotte, will be performed by the Bolshoi Ballet in a live relay shown at Birmingham's Mac Cinema on Sunday 30th March. Tickets cost £17.50 (£14).

And lastly . . .

For those unable to make Sochi for the Winter Olympic Games 2014, you can keep in touch, live on *BBC Sport*, and follow specific events by smartphone, laptop, tablet or connected TV. The opening ceremony takes place on February 7 (live on BBC Two) and the closing ceremony on February 23.

