

The Best Seats in the House

The holiday season is a perfect time to indulge in Moscow's fine culture

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Moscow's classical performing arts are at their finest during the holiday season, with family favorites as well as new Christmas and New Year's events. But for the more adventurous music lovers, there are some exciting premieres and rarely performed pieces. Just be sure to buy your tickets right away!

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Expect the unexpected in this meditation on love adapted from Shakespeare's topsy-turvy comedy at the Gogol Center. Emotions fly high as spectators follow the actors around four luxurious sets in this visceral performance directed by Kirill Serebrennikov.

Dec. 28-31 at 7 p.m. 8 Ul'tisa Kazakova. Metro Kurskaya. +7 (495) 120 7543.
en.gogolcenter.com/events

THE QUEEN OF SPADES

The world premiere at the Bolshoi Theater of Tchaikovsky's proto-horror opera is directed by the popular Latvian director Rimas Tuminas. The piece, completed a year before Tchaikovsky's early death, illustrates the growing delirium of an army engineer as he envisions himself seducing the matronly Queen of Spades for her riches.

Feb. 15-18 at 7 p.m. 1 Teatralnayas. Metro Teatralnaya. +7 (495) 455 5555.
www.bolshoi.ru/en

SRETENSKY MONASTERY MEN'S CHOIR

Although Russian classical music may be best known to the world, the country also maintains an impressive tradition of opera-quality choral singing in its Orthodox churches. Characterized by a range of colors from the high tenor to the basso profundo, the Sretensky Monastery Men's Choir's unearthly timbre resonates with the inimical tolling of church bells. Even if you know nothing about the Orthodox Church, the music is beautiful and profoundly moving. Don't miss their concert at the Chamber Hall of Dom Muzyki.

Feb. 16 at 7 p.m. 52 Kosmodamianskaya Neberezhnaya, Bldg. 8. Metro Paveletskaya. +7 (495) 730 1011. www.mmdm.ru/ru/events/hor-sretenskogo-monastyrya-14

GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

The Bolshoi Theater New Stage is the venue for a "theatrical concert" of Benjamin Britten's "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra" and Camille Saint-Saens' zoological fantasy "Carnival of the Animals," pieces that present the various orchestral instruments by comparing them to animals. This production adds video, playful young dancers, and interactive media sure to delight children of all ages.

Feb. 22-24, matinee and evening performances. 1 Teatralnaya. Metro Teatralnaya. +7 (495) 455 5555. bolshoi.ru/en/performances/4004/

THE SERVANT-MISTRESS

In this 18th-century comic opera at Helikon, a witty maidservant persuades her slow-on-the-uptake aristocratic master to marry her. The first of its kind, this comic opera mixes spoken dialogue and Harpo Marx-style mime in its jocular approach to aria. Giovanni Pergolesi's masterpiece remains a hilarious all-time classic.

March 24 at 7 p.m. 19/16 Bolshaya Nikitskaya Ulitsa. Metro Chekhovskaya/Arbatskaya. +7 (495) 250 2222. www.helikon.ru/en/node/1043

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