

# New Year Dance Highlights

The year ahead looks rich with Russian and guest dancers and choreographers.

By [Yulia Savikovskaya](#)

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“Master and Margarita” **Damir Yusupov / Bolshoi Theater**

Dance in Russia in the coming year will be many things: orderly and chaotic, experimental and classical, beautiful and surprising. We asked ballet companies what premieres and events to expect in 2022. Here are our advance picks.

## **Woland’s Ball at the Bolshoi Theater**

Definitely not to be missed is the new ballet of “Master and Margarita” that premiered on Bolshoi Theater’s New Stage at the end of 2021 and will be performed soon in 2022. The ballet was choreographed by Edward Clug and set to the music of Alfred Schnittke. The libretto was written by the choreographer himself, who immersed himself in Mikhail Bulgakov’s mysterious world of Stalin’s Moscow in the 1930s. With an impressive team including set

designer Marco Japeli, costume designer Leo Kulaš and lighting designer Martin Gebhardt, the first performances made a huge impression. Audiences called it extraordinary, grandiose and magnificent, with the ballet rendering both the epic and lyric elements of the novel and Schmitke's 20th-century modernity. The first performances in the new year begin on [Feb. 15](#).

## **Two new ballets by Alexei Ratmansky at Mariinsky and Bolshoi Theaters**

Russia's two biggest opera and ballet houses are preparing new works by the world-renowned choreographer Alexei Ratmansky. April will see the premiere of "The Art of Fugue," a ballet in two acts, created especially for Bolshoi Theater dancers and set to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, with set and costume designer George Tsybin and lighting designer Brandon Baker working with Ratmansky. In May 2022 it will be Mariinsky Theater's turn to impress the public with "Pharaoh's Daughter" set to the music of Cesare Pugni. In this piece Ratmansky follows in the footsteps of Marius Petipa and uses elements of his predecessor's choreography. He will work in collaboration with Americans Robert Perdziola (set and costume design) and Marc Stanley (lighting design). You can get your tickets for the Bolshoi [here](#) and the Mariinsky [here](#).

## **New choreography at the Bolshoi and Moscow Academic Music Theater**

The summer of 2022 will be a time of exploration in modern dance at two Moscow ballet companies. In July 2022 three contemporary choreography works set to the music of Russian composers will debut at the Bolshoi Theater: "Dancemania" by Vyacheslav Samodurov set to music by Yuri Krasavin; "Seasons" (Les Saisons) by Artemy Belyakov set to Alexander Glazunov's music; and "Made in Bolshoi" (choreography by Anton Pimonov, music by Anatoly Korolyov) on the New Stage. The Moscow Academic Music Theater (MAMT) is also preparing an evening of three one-act contemporary ballets: "In G Major" choreographed by Jerome Robbins to music by Maurice Ravel, "Blakeworks1" choreographed by William Forsythe to music by James Blake, and the world premiere "Birthday Party" choreographed by Andrei Kaidanovsky. There will be more world premieres of one-act ballets in the summer at MAMT: "The Illusive Ball" by Dmitry Bryantsev set to Frédéric Chopin's music, and a yet nameless ballet by Sharon Eyal. You can book your tickets [here for the Bolshoi](#) and [here for MAMT](#).

## **Ballet Moscow and Norwegian choreographer Jo Strømgen**

In the summer 2022 Ballet Moscow will present the premiere of its first collaboration with Norwegian choreographer Jo Strømgen. His works "The Virus" and "Estragon" were performed in Russia in 2019 and 2014 respectively. This new ballet will be called "Pavilion" and will have the choreographer's trademark features: a combination of expressionism and brutalism, elements of the absurd and humor, the synthesis of dramatic theater and dance, as well as the use of cinematography. This is not to be missed. In the new year, Ballet Moscow will also perform its award-winning "Café Idiot" and "All Roads Lead North." They will be performed at the Meyerhold Theater Center. Book your [tickets here](#).

## **Dance Open Festival at Alexandrinsky Theater in St. Petersburg**

Although it was forced to go online during the first year of the pandemic, in 2021 the Dance

Open festival managed to bring many performances from Russia and abroad to the Alexandrinsky Theater in St. Petersburg. Although the exact dates are still not confirmed, the festival is always a unique opportunity for dance lovers to see experimental works in various forms of dance created by famous choreographers and performed by some of the world's best companies — all in a few weeks of this very intense festival. Follow events at the [Dance Open site](#).

### **See classical ballets at Mariinsky Theater throughout the year**

And finally, whenever you come to St Petersburg in 2022, you can always see one of the famous classical ballets that Mariinsky Theater has in its repertory, which it presents every day and every week. Look for performances conducted by Mariinsky's principal associate conductor, the American Gavriel Heine, as he knows the dancers very well and knows how to conduct for them. In particular, do not miss Petipa's "Raymonda" set to Glazunov's music and "Sleeping Beauty" — special showings on Feb. 15 and 16 in Sergei Vkharev's reconstruction of Petipa's original to honor what would have been Vkharev's 60th birthday. We also recommend seeing the Mariinsky's versions of "Swan Lake" and "Romeo and Juliet," which premiered here and are still shown in the same version. The productions of "Giselle," "Jewels," and "La Bayadere" are also not to be missed. Book your tickets at the [Mariinsky](#).

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