

| Highlights |

«LA SAISON FRANÇAISE À
BACTRIANE»

June 20, 17:00

Classic music concert
*T. Sattorov Tajik National
Conservatoire*

June 21

«Fête de la Musique»
7 p.m. | Music concert.
Padida Green Theatre

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Spring | Jazz | Piano Forte

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Message on the board from Anna

The Internet - an international critic and producer. This is how one can characterise its new role. Nowadays any starting artist can just upload his recordings onto the web in order to be noticed by a large public. Various projects which took place not so long ago like 'Virtual Orchestra' on 'YouTube' and 'Hit Parade' on NTV, have shown that there is an alternative to modern developments in music. It is possible to attract fans without any large financial investment.

The 'YouTube' project got a virtual orchestra together made up of 90 musicians from 30 countries and performed live in the famous Carnegie Hall in New York under the leadership of the famous conductor Michael Tilson Thomas. In order to participate one had to upload the score of the musical instrument, record a video and put it on 'YouTube'. The results of the vote were inevitably ambivalent, but nonetheless this has shown that the Internet 'factory' works.

Another example is the 'Hit Parade' of alternative music, in which the authors tried to find these so called fake stars and only put on air those whom they considered genuinely popular, whose music people download and who are called 'alternative' musicians. More than seventy thousand candidates took part in the last vote.

Famous Jimi, as he was named on the Russian



web is a Tajikistani citizen who, thanks to the Internet, caught the attention of 180 thousand people, including the 'Asian Dub Foundation' - a British ethno-electro band which invited Jimi Boymurat in the first part of their concert.

According to reports that appeared on Russian TV, the message seems to be- yesterday's musicians are today's migrant workers. The interest shown by the Russian public can be attributed to Jimmy's exotic, spontaneous and silly behaviour. This is of course debatable, but nonetheless Boymurat took to the big stage of the 'Roll Hall' and, beating the rhythm with an empty bucket, he demonstrated his vocal and artistic talent.

The Internet could of course become an alternative space for real art and talent (<http://asiaplus.tj/articles/137/3599.html>). The most important thing is that it doesn't end up becoming an online 'Star Factory'.

Anna Basanova

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All that Jazz...

What do we know about jazz? One can hardly attribute a definite formula to it nor indeed would this be of any use since to this day no one has come up with a universal definition to describe jazz. Professionals think of jazz as a form of music that unifies various types of musical expression with different cultures from all over the world. For jazz amateurs, this is an art form very much associated with improvisation.

Jazz is essentially improvisation often simultaneously involving many musicians. We will not, however, delve into the history of the origins and development of jazz. It is worth noting though that the birth of jazz came about from the fusion of European and African musical traditions and subsequently from the unique process it underwent in its development. This resulted in the prevalence of its artistic beginning and its gradual emergence from the confines of cultural and territorial borders.

Nowadays jazz comprises a great number of different styles: ranging from traditional blues, rag time, through to swing, bebop and modern jazz further developing into forms of free-jazz and electronic music.

The Blues is the most accessible style for jazz amateurs. People often say that playing the blues is a way to get rid of sadness and this is so pertinent that many musicians only play when they are in a melancholic state of mind, translating this into their music as a soft musical line woven from sad and even mournful sounds.

However, regardless of the seeming simplicity of this form, the blues is by nature something that is played with endless variation.

The musical structure of the blues can be explained as follows: it has 8 or, more often, 12 bars integrated into a text of which the first line is repeated twice and the third line is used as a logical conclusion to the second.

The blues is comprised of several forms. Spoken blues is particularly interesting. This type of blues is communicated through speech rather than with brief moments of singing over a guitar accompaniment.

Towards the end of the 1940s and at the beginning of the 50s yet another type of blues was developed called 'rhythm and blues'. This form



differs in its strong emphasis on musical accompaniment, in the expressive way in which it is performed and in its use of quicker tempos and precise rhythms. The principal proponents of 'rhythm and blues' included the saxophonists Louis Jordan and Earl Bostik, the guitarists T-Bone Walker and Muddy Waters, the pianists Jay McShann and later Ray Charles as well as the singer Big Joe Turner. Contrary to previous jazz styles, instruments in the rhythmic sections took on a different role- that is the piano, double bass, guitars and drums which alongside wind instruments then became solo voices in their own right.

Instead of the drums it is the cymbals that take on the main role in the percussion section. Bebop fever lasted nearly five years before 'cool-jazz' appeared on the scene, a relaxed and more emotional take on bebop. Cool-Jazz follows a stricter structure and is a more lyrical and reserved form of jazz. Typical features of this style include a rich sound, a strong emphasis on composition and harmony as well as a feeling of pure and clear music.

In the 1970s it was 'jazz-rock'

that became the prevailing style in the world of jazz. This took shape by combining the metrical pulses of rock music with complicated jazz harmonies and improvisation. At the helm of this movement stood the trumpeter Miles Davies. He introduced the use of electric guitars and all possible types of electric keyboards and synthesizers which had an almost hypnotic effect, especially on its young audiences due to the way it was performed by bopping musicians.

The development of jazz-rock saw the emergence of 'fusion' which included elements of jazz, rock music and traces of modern European musical culture like pop, rock, reggae, hip-hop and metal. Characteristic to this style is a gentle and reserved way of playing expressed with a philosophical eye on the world often coming across with a feeling of bitterness and cynicism.

Jazz is a multifaceted style. However much one plays this genre of music or recognises familiar motifs when listening to it, one can never completely define it. Jazz musicians are always searching for new ways to develop jazz music.

I do not know whether there is any use in trying to predict how jazz music will develop in our century. However, there is one thing we can always be sure of- jazz will always retain the contributions made to its development in the past 100 years. Thus also preserving its main goal- to convey emotion.

Takhmina Goibnazarova



Musicians of the world, unite!

It was nearly with these same words that one of the concert organizer, F. Kuziev (from 'Bactria' Cultural Centre), expressed the idea behind the Dushanbe jazz festival. When discussions and meetings on the event came to an end, on the last day of the festival F. Ulmasov, vice-director of Tajik National Conservatoire, very tactfully described the nature of the project.

Was there jazz at this festival, can one talk about Tajik jazz?! If one is to consider the band 'Mizrob', that participated last year in the third International Bishkek Jazz Festival and in the Yekaterinburg Festival this year, then we cannot deny them their 'jazziness', even when they did not set themselves too clear a goal. They play on Asian and European instruments, create lyrical improvisation and in the process reveal the tonal richness of different musical cultures. The audience listened respectfully to Indian, Russian, Iranian and Tajik themes as well as to recognisable and completely new themes alike.



school of jazz which enjoys 70 years of experience. It was an 'intellectual' and 'mellifluous' jazz that radiated from them, the jazz of 'thunder and lightning' – it was Jazz written with a big letter.

'Avesta' from Tajikistan played with gusto but the product was a musical shouting, it was as if they were trying to communicate with each other from different sides of a gorge. The piano solo, played by a graduate in wind instruments, sounded tinny and did not sing.

The pre-festival jam session laid on for the musicians to get to know each other was rather unexpectedly interrupted. Both the piano and drums were taken over by members of the audience and yet another person joined them to sing 'Jurajonam' by Sh. Juraev.

All in all, a veritable celebration of music took place in Dushanbe and showed how important it is to develop, cherish, foster and care for jazz culture. It is not hastily and chaotically that one paves the way for a cultured audience or raises the prestige of such a unique musical style. Jazz organically incorporates and synthesises the standards of ethno, folk and fusion music. It preserves and improvises on the rhythms and melodies developed by generations of artists and enhances the artistic abilities of performers in a band. The essential professional preparation leads both to the creation of new melodies but also to communication with the professional in the auditorium – that is "the director in the armchair". 'The louder, the better' is definitely not what this is about. Melody does not exclude rhythmicity, the boldness of the harmony is the musicality of the idea behind it.

Zarema Karpova, critic.



With fifty years of experience it was the group 'Artsakh' from Uzbekistan that presented themselves as the 'intellectuals' of the event. They presented their compositions in a conservative, sober jazz style. The trombonist 'tromboned' that he was very much a man of jazz.

A musical 'orgy' was stirred up by the saxophonist of the Turkmen group 'Arvana'. The audience raved and eardrums vibrated. The concert went on.

The sophistication of Kyrgyz jazz was stylishly presented by the band 'Salted Peanuts'. In their musical experiments, ethno-jazz combined Kyrgyz styles with classic jazz standards.

The band 'Caspian Jazz Group' from Azerbaijan revealed the boundless musical riches of jazz. Although students, the performers belong to a classic



Dushanbe Piano Festival.

Interview with the American pianist, Dr. David Korevaar.

A little introduction for our readers, what brings you to Dushanbe this second time round?

As with my first trip, I was invited to come via the Cultural Envoy programme of the US State Department. I will confess that I did my best to invite myself back after the first trip, since I was so struck by the warmth and openness of the Tajik people whom I worked with.

It was a very interesting programme. In the first half you treated the audience to an evening of Shahidi and Copland, was there any particular reason behind your desire to include these two 'national' composers in your programme?

The first half of the programme was custom built for this trip. Tolib Shahidi had written the Traviata Fantasy specially for me, and had also sent his father's preludes as a suggestion to include. I tried to think of a way to balance those Tajik works with American works that also had a personal resonance for me. Thus, my transcription (a transcription that I did back in the 1980s) was chosen to balance Tolib's (very different) paraphrase. And, Ziyudullo Shahidi's Preludes are 1) works by the father of Tajik music and 2) based on Tajik folk material. I decided to balance those two ideas with two pieces, the first (Copland's Piano Variations) is the most important solo piano piece by someone who is seen by many to be the father of American music; the second (Rzewski's Dreadful Memories) is based on American folk material, which it uses in a manner very different from Z. Shahidi's pieces. Thus, the first half of my programme.

How did you discover the music of Ziyodullo Shahidi?

I first heard his music on my earlier visit to Dushanbe in the spring of 2008, played in a master class by one of the young students at a music school.

Both you and Tolib Shahidi arranged a piece for your concert, how is it that you decided or were asked to play his arrangement of "Di Madrid noi siam mattadori" from La Traviata? Have you worked with Tolib Shahidi before?

I met Tolib last year, when I learned his Etude-Tableau "Sufi and Buddha" for my concert at Kokhi Vakhdad. I liked his music very much, and I was pleased when he decided to create the Traviata transcription (very personal in style!) for me to perform. See above for why my arrangement ended up on the program.

If I am not mistaken, I heard you held a master-class on your last visit. Drawing from this experience what do you feel about the state of classical music in Tajikistan and of its young musicians?



I've continued last year's visit this year by repeating several of the master classes (at the Conservatory, the National Institute of Fine Arts, and at the Shahidi Music School). I am amazed by the passion for classical music on the part of teachers and administrators at these institutions, and how that love is being passed on to the younger generation. There are many obstacles to be overcome (no new pianos, a lack of piano technicians, no practical way of transporting new pianos into the country, etc.), but the people and the love of music are here.

6) And finally, from your experience of performing all around the world and as an associate professor of piano at the University of Colorado, do you have any advice for budding young Tajik concert pianists?

Love what you do, and persist!

Roger Granvill

I can't imagine the world without music.....

The famous pianist and professor Valery Shkarupa was born in 1958 in Dushanbe. He is an honoured artist of Russia and a laureate of the Sverdlovsk Governor's award for achievements in literature and art. After passing the ninth class in the Z.Shahidi music school, Valery Shkarupa went on to join the Moscow Conservatoire music school after which he also graduated from the Conservatoire itself. In 1987 Shkarupa finished his postgraduate studies at the Moscow Conservatoire. As he himself confesses, he enjoyed composition in his youth, and many thought him to have a bright future ahead of him as a composer, but his love for piano playing conquered all... Relations with his native country have not been severed: every year Shkarupa's fans at home have the opportunity to hear him play in Dushanbe. This year it was made possible by his participation in the in the first International Piano Festival 'Piano-forte'. I managed to ask him a few questions:



Valery, how did you feel the festival went and what did you think about the level?

Judging by the participation of such venerable and famous artists as Vazgena Vartayan, David Korevaar, Zaitun Narynbayev and others, the level of the festival was very high. It was a pleasure to listen to them.

Classical music, unfortunately, is not as popular as pop music. What, in your opinion, needs to be done to encourage people to come to classical concerts and to make classical music just as popular?

Much to my regret this seems impossible, it is a problem that is centuries old. Concerning pop music, any piece of music that is liked by many people can be called popular.

So what do you suggest?

In my opinion there is not enough musical education for children in Tajikistan. First of all, one must raise the status of music teachers so that future generations don't shy away from this profession. As a result not only is much will and effort required from the Ministry of Culture but also from the Government as a whole.

In Dushanbe you performed in front of a public that mostly consisted of friends, old classmates etc... How do you feel during these concerts?

I feel the sympathy and joy of the audience and experience the same feelings myself.

Let's imagine that music didn't exist. What would you do then?

It is rather difficult and terrifying for me to think about that. But, in any case, it would be something to do with the humanities, perhaps something to do with

literature. I'd probably like to be a journalist or a poet especially as I used to write poetry when I was younger.

To the great joy of all your admirers you became a pianist and I wish that you may always play to packed venues full of your fans.

Thank you.

Amal Khanom Gadgiyeva

'We are now open to applications!'

Bactria_education

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