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Culture Programme

**Latvian Presidency
of the Council of the
European Union**

January – June 2015





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**CONTEMPORANEITY
UNIQUENESS
EXCELLENCE**

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PHOTO: F64 PHOTO AGENCY

Last year, when Riga was awarded the title of the European Capital of Culture, it became the focus of international attention. This will only increase with the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2015, and will significantly draw the international public's interest to our country and its culture. We are proud that Latvia is not only in the spotlight of the political stage, but also has the opportunity to showcase its rich culture, history and traditions to the international community.

The extensive cultural programme in its contemporaneity, excellence and uniqueness can be experienced in each of the programme's **six themed projects**: the idea of a united Europe; the end of World War II; the road to contemporaneity in professional art; the synthesis of artistic genres and addressing topical societal issues in art; song and dance celebrations on the Amber Road; and engaging the diaspora in the Presidency.

We are especially proud of the **Latvian Star Programme**, which brings together the most gifted and world-renowned artists – composers, musicians, conductors, theatre companies, choirs and orchestras. Their performances will include classical and jazz music concerts, opera, ballet and theatre, as well as art exhibitions and multimedia projects, literature readings and cinema days.

The Latvian cultural events will take place in different European Union countries (Belgium, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Luxembourg, and Germany) and beyond – the USA, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, China, etc. All of the **Latvian embassies** abroad will also take part in these events, and 76 world libraries will receive books about Latvia and Latvian cultural history as gifts.

The Presidency has given Latvia a unique opportunity not only to be at the centre of attention, but also to bring together the salient values of Latvian culture, and create outstanding and effective presentations in the main venues of the Presidency in Riga, Brussels and Luxembourg, and elsewhere.

We invite you to **get to know Latvia!**

Edgars Rinkēvičs

*Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Latvia*



PHOTO: J. DEINATS

“**Someone** great is someone who bears great responsibility,” said the classic Latvian poet Rainis whose 150th birthday we will celebrate in 2015. This is how Latvia, a small country in terms of geography and population, is feeling right now at the start of its first Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

For Latvia this is a time full of challenges and great opportunities. In 2014, Riga was the European Capital of Culture and this year we have started our Presidency of the Council of the European Union. In addition, we are approaching 2018 when several European countries – including Latvia – will celebrate 100 years of independence. When showcasing our culture to the world, we often talk about **Latvian identity**, who we are, what our roots are and where we belong. What, however, does the world know about us?

Latvia can be proud of its rich cultural heritage, ancient language and beautiful traditions which have been preserved and nurtured over hundreds of years and generations. It is said that only by understanding and respecting the past can one fully understand the present. In Latvia, we attach great value to this aphorism in our everyday life by creating a cultural space in which the old blends with the new, and the traces left by European and world culture naturally entwine with Latvian **cultural symbols**.

Culture has had a great impact on the formation of Latvia as a country – both at the beginning of the 20th century and towards its end when Latvia regained its independence from the Soviet regime. We are truly proud of our Latvian culture which is also enjoyed by the international community. Latvia is not rich in natural

resources or oil, but we consider that the wealth of our country and community lies in our **creative and talented people**, regardless of the fields they represent. Latvians who have already left their mark on the history of culture in Latvia and the wider world include: Elina Garanča, Aleksandrs Antoņenko, Mariss Jansons, Andris Nelsons, Gidons Krēmers, Pēteris Vasks, Alvis Hermanis, the Latvian Radio Choir, the State Choir *Latvija*, Iveta Apkalna, Baiba Skride, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Mischa Maisky, Vija Celmins, Gunnar Birkerts, Mark Rothko and many others who can trace their roots back to Latvia.

Latvian language and culture is our strength and common identity, as you will certainly be able to witness if you spend any length of time in Latvia. We hope to be able to showcase this national identity through the Presidency’s official cultural programme in the designated countries. In addition, Latvian embassies have also planned a variety of events during the Presidency.

I am delighted that culture can act as a **powerful ambassador** in presenting Latvia to the world. Discover Latvia!

Dace Melbārde
Minister for Culture
of the Republic of Latvia

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The Presidency Logo

Designing a special and unique logo has become a tradition for every country holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The logo tells the story of each nation – a story that is rooted in its individual history and traditions, but at the same time reaches towards the united future of the European Union. The logo is one of the most visible symbols of the Latvian Presidency, and is used in documents, publications and presentations, souvenirs, and objects in different environments, including the digital one. It also adorns the buildings of the Council of the EU in Brussels, event venues and brochures all around the world.

The logo for the Latvian Presidency is based on the classic image of a **grinding stone**, which has been known throughout Europe for centuries and is rich in associations. The grinding stone was once a significant innovation and a trigger of change in households across Europe. Today, it remains the instrument that brings about bread, the symbol of nourishment and prosperity. Made from stone, it can endure centuries of motion and still sustain productivity.

The circular shape of the grinding stone suggests unity and wholeness – the commonly held ideals and values upon which the European project is built. The dynamic movement of the rotating grinding stone brings about the **energy and growth** with which Europe meets new challenges. With Latvia at the wheel, Europeans are certain to gain new perspectives.

The author of the Latvian Presidency logo is the graphic designer **Gunārs Lūsis**, who is best known as the “Father of the Latvian Lat” as he designed the first coins used in Latvia after the country regained independence over twenty years ago. Last year, however, Latvia joined the Eurozone and it has now begun its first Presidency of the Council of the European Union. It is therefore very symbolic that Gunārs Lūsis designed the logo of the first Latvian Presidency – another fresh challenge.

Following the pattern of other Presidencies, for the Presidency Culture Programme a special derivation of logo was created – as **vibrant and energetic** as the cultural life in Latvia.

Design of Latvia: Official Souvenirs



A traditional part of Presidency's cultural and public diplomacy programme are the souvenirs: not only the official scarfs and ties, but also a special gift, representing the presiding nation's culture, traditions and design. In Latvia, this special gift is **svilpaunieki** (ceramic whistle).

The clear sound of the *svilpaunieki* tells the story of Latvian ceramic tradition – a craft perfected over hundreds of years that is still thriving today. There can be many forms of *svilpaunieki*, originating and derived from the Latvian flora and fauna. For the Presidency, we chose the form to be a bird.

These *svilpaunieki* have been **handmade** by almost **40 ceramic artists** from various parts of Latvia. It means that every single one of the little birds is unique, and, before opening the box, you can never know if you will find a pigeon, duck, owl, rooster or even a hoopoe there. The artisans have used very different techniques and stylistics. The oldest artisan is 83 years old, and the youngest one – 26.

See more on www.eu2015.lv/svilpaunieki



Traditionally the Presidency **scarfs and ties** are made of silk. Using the pattern of the Presidency logo – the motive of grinding-stone – this silk tie has been designed by **Arvids Priedite**, a well-known textile artist, interior designer and author of the design of several award-winning Latvian coins.

However, the scarf we chose to make from linen – a more traditional material for the Baltic region. Using the colours of the Presidency logo – cool grey and red – this linen scarf has been designed by Latvian textile artist **Kristine Ramane**.



With special care we have selected extraordinary gifts for the heads of delegations in some of the events. **Bug** is a Latvian brand that specializes in wooden accessories and was born as a contemporary take on the classic gentlemen's bow tie. Using a **unique technology** and only natural materials, this twenty first century bow tie is hand cut in Riga from the finest wood veneers, polished to perfection with natural oils, wax or shellac.

See more on www.bugbowtie.com



A unique technology is used also by **Ginta Sičeva** – Latvian designer who creates magnificent jewellery as well as other accessories like bags, scarves, gloves, hair and makeup accessories, carnival masks, stationary and Christmas decorations. The accessories are laser cut and then hand-stitched from artificial leathers. For the Presidency, the artist has made three types of **amazing brooches**.

See more on www.ginta.co.uk

A special gift is prepared also for the heads of delegations in Eastern Partnership Summit – **silver brooches** for the ladies and **set of cufflinks** for gentlemen, designed by the well-known Latvian metal design artist **Juris Gagainis** and handmade in Latvia. The inspiration for this artwork he has drawn from the Latvian ethnographic brooch *sakta* and the grinding-stone of the Presidency logo, both in form and facture. In the centre of the brooch – a gilded circle of sun with a golden dewdrop, symbolically elevating Latvia in the light of European Union.





PHOTO: ANDREAS MALKMUS

In 1997, Austria's legendary Lockenhaus Chamber Music Festival was a witness to a small revolution, when the violinist Gidon Kremer presented a brand new orchestra by the name of *Kremerata Baltica*, which comprised a total of 23 young players from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. They conquered the discerning audience immediately, injecting **new blood** into the festival with their exuberance, energy and joy in playing.

Kremerata Baltica, an educational project with a long-term vision, was Kremer's fiftieth birthday present to himself: a way of passing on his rich artistic experience to his young colleagues from the Baltic States whilst making no compromises on his artistic standards as he nurtured and inspired musical life in the region. In a few years the talented group of musicians managed to develop into one of the best international chamber orchestras in the world, and they have cemented their international reputation in major concert venues around the world.

In the last fifteen years, *Kremerata Baltica* has played in more than fifty countries, performing in 600 cities and giving more than a thousand concerts across the world. It is one of the European chamber orchestras that **tours the most** and has performed in the most prestigious halls,

including the Vienna *Konzerthaus*, *Musikverein*, *Bozar*, Carnegie Hall, *Rudolfinum*, the Royal Albert Hall, Suntory Hall, and many others. Since 2003 *Kremerata Baltica* have also been holding their own festival in Sigulda, Latvia. They have released more than twenty CDs, won Praemium Imperiale Grant for Young Artists in 2009, received Grammy Award and ECHO prize in 2002, were nominated for another Grammy in 2015. Among the celebrated soloists with whom *Kremerata Baltica* has played are soprano Jessye Norman, pianists Martha Argerich, Mikhail Pletnev, Evgeny Kissin, Daniil Trifonov, and Oleg Maisenberg, violinists Thomas Zehetmair and Vadim Repin, and cellists Boris Pergamenschikov, Yo-Yo Ma, and Mischa Maisky, whilst conductors include Sir Simon Rattle, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Christoph Eschenbach, Kent Nagano, Heinz Holliger, and Vladimir Ashkenazy. Each of these musicians has contributed to the shaping of the chamber orchestra.

Essential to *Kremerata Baltica's* artistic personality is their **creative approach** to programming, which often looks beyond the mainstream and has given rise to numerous world premieres of works by composers such as Arvo Pärt, Giya Kancheli, Pēteris Vasks, Leonid Desyatnikov and Alexander Raskatov. The orchestra's wide-ranging and carefully chosen repertoire is also showcased in its numerous and much-praised CD recordings. *After Mozart*, a twenty-first century take on the composer, won the internationally-coveted Grammy Award and German ECHO prize in 2002. Some of the latest CDs from the record label *Nonesuch* include *De Profundis* and *Hymns and Prayers* with Gidon Kremer, and *The Art of Instrumentation: Homage to Glenn Gould* (released in September 2012 for Glenn Gould's eightieth birthday), an album comprising eleven pieces and arrangements by **contemporary composers** that quote from or are inspired by works, mostly by Johann Sebastian Bach, that Glenn Gould famously recorded during his career.

The most recent recording was released in January 2014, entitled *Mieczysław Weinberg* (ECM). It was recorded with Gidon Kremer and soloists at Neuhausen and Lockenhaus in 2012 and 2013, and makes a strong case for Shostakovich's assertion that Weinberg was one of the great composers of his era. The recording was highly appreciated by music professionals and lovers and received a Grammy nomination in "Classical Compendium" category.

Of all of the world's leading violinists, Gidon Kremer has perhaps had the most unconventional career. Born in Riga, Latvia, he began studying at the age of four with his father and grandfather, both of whom were distinguished string players. At the age of seven, he entered Riga Music School. At sixteen, he was awarded his first Grand Music Award of Latvia and two years later he began his studies with David Oistrakh at the Moscow Conservatory. He went on to win **prestigious awards** including the 1967 Queen Elizabeth Competition and first prize in both Paganini and Tchaikovsky international competitions.

This success launched Gidon Kremer's distinguished career, in the course of which he has established a worldwide reputation as one of the most original and compelling artists of his generation. He has appeared on virtually every major concert stage with the most celebrated orchestras of Europe and North America. In addition, he has collaborated with today's foremost conductors. Gidon Kremer's repertoire is unusually extensive, encompassing all of the standard classical and romantic violin works, as well as music by twentieth and twenty-first century masters such as Henze, Berg and Stockhausen. He also championed the works of living Russian and **Eastern European composers** and has performed many important new compositions, several of them dedicated to him. He has become associated with such diverse composers as Alfred Schnittke, Arvo Pärt, Giya Kancheli, Sofia Gubaidulina, Valentin Silvestrov, Luigi Nono, Aribert Reimann, Pēteris Vasks, John Adams, Victor Kissine, Michael Nyman, Philip Glass, Leonid Desyatnikov, and Astor Piazzolla, bringing their music to audiences in a way that respects tradition and yet remains contemporary. It would be fair to say that no other soloist of his international stature has done as much for contemporary composers in the past thirty years.

An exceptionally prolific recording artist, Gidon Kremer has made more than **120 albums**, many of which brought him prestigious international awards and prizes in recognition of his exceptional interpretative powers. These include the *Grand*

www.gidonkremer.net
www.kremerataltica.com

PERFORMING IN:

Brussels, Belgium (see page 52 – 53)
 Milan, Italy (see page 76)
 Luxembourg (see page 81)
 Odessa, Ukraine (see page 91)



PHOTO: KRISTAPS KALNS

Prix du Disque, the *Deutscher Schallplattenpreis*, the *Ernst-von-Siemens Musikpreis*, the *Bundesverdienstkreuz*, the *Premio dell'Accademia Musicale Chigiana*, the *Triumph Prize 2000* (Moscow), the *Unesco Prize* in 2001, the *Saeculum-Glashütte Original-Musikfestspielpreis Dresden* in 2007 and the *Rolf-Schock Prize* in 2008, Stockholm, the "Life Achievement" prize of the Istanbul Music Festival in 2010, and the *Una Vita Nella Musica – Artur Rubinstein Prize* (Venice) in 2011 which is considered to be the Nobel Prize of music, among many others.

In 1997, he founded the *Kremerata Baltica* chamber orchestra to foster **outstanding young musicians** from the three Baltic States. Since then, Mr Kremer has been touring extensively with the orchestra, appearing at the world's most prestigious festivals and concert halls. Gidon Kremer plays a Nicola Amati, which is dated to 1641. He is also the author of four books that have been translated into a large number of languages, which reflect his artistic pursuits.



SLLC "LATVIJAS KONCERTI" PUBLICITY PHOTO

PERFORMING IN:

- Minsk, Belarus (see page 58)
- Frankfurt, Germany (see page 72)
- Hamburg, Germany (see page 72)
- Munich, Germany (see page 72)
- St Petersburg, Russia (see page 88)
- Kiev, Ukraine (see page 91)

Juvenescence, fervour and vitality, a thirst for knowledge and high levels of professionalism, excellent work and enthusiasm, all of which form part of the formula for the *Sinfonietta Rīga* State Chamber Orchestra. Since the orchestra was founded in 2006, **Normunds Šnē** has been its artistic director and chief conductor. The musicians of *Sinfonietta Rīga* are young and are open to creative challenge. They are studying the traditions of Baroque musical performances and the nuances behind the interpretation of Classical music; they are brilliant performers of contemporary music and do not shy away from non-academic experiments and crossover projects. The promotion of the genre of chamber symphony in Latvian music is among the orchestra's ambitions, and to this end *Sinfonietta Rīga* commissions a new score twice a year.

Sinfonietta Rīga regularly enjoys collaborating with guest conductors. A number of programmes have been staged in cooperation with Paavo and Kristjan Järvi, Heinz Holliger, John Storgårds, Christoph Poppen, Juha Kangas, Tõnu Kaljuste and Ariel Zuckermann. **Brilliant soloists** have performed together with *Sinfonietta Rīga*: Monica Groop, Inga Kalna and Olga Pasichnyk (Pasiczchnik); as well as pianists Kristian Bezuidenhout and Alexander (Lexo) Toradze; the most prominent Latvian organist, Iveta Apkalna, violinists Kolja Blacher, Isabelle Faust, Thomas Gould, Alina Pogostkina and Baiba Skride, Augustin Dumay and Alexander Janiczek, plus the violist Maxim Rysanov, the trombone soloist Christian Lindberg, jazz drummer Peter Erskine, accordionist Ksenija Sidorova, flutist Patrick Gallois and the experts in early music, Andrew Lawrence-King and Enrico Onofri. The orchestra is working together with the Latvian Radio Choir and its conductor, Sigvards Kļava. Together, they have staged several annual musical programmes including the first performances of Latvian sacred music.

www.sinfoniettariga.lv

Along with the concerts in Latvia and the Baltic States, *Sinfonietta Rīga* has toured Toronto and Paris, the *Herkulesaal* (Hercules Hall) in Munich, and the Lincoln Center in New York. This year the orchestra is going to the Old Opera House (*Alte Oper*) in Frankfurt, the *Laeiszhalle* in Hamburg, the *Herkulesaal* in Munich, and is also ready for concerts at the Philharmonic Halls in Kiev and St Petersburg.

The contribution of *Sinfonietta Rīga* to the recording of the album, *Adam's Lament*, by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (ECM) has won a **Grammy Award**; but the rest of the seven recorded albums have been released by the devoted partners of *Sinfonietta Rīga*: *Wergo*, *Ondine* and *Challenge Records*. Twice the orchestra has been awarded the highest prize available in its country for achievement in culture and music, the Latvian Grand Music Award.

Normunds Šnē is among those Latvian conductors who are eager to urge composers to write new opuses to be performed. All of the orchestras that he has initiated, be it the Riga Festival Orchestra or the predecessor of *Sinfonietta Rīga* – the Riga Chamber Musicians, were keen to perform those scores that were written in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in order to single out the best masterpieces and newly created opuses. Normunds Šnē has conducted the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, the Liepāja Symphony Amber Sound Orchestra, and the Latvian National Opera Orchestra. He has worked with a number of internationally renowned soloists: pianists Peter Donohoe and Kristian Bezuidenhout, violinists Tatiana Grindenko, Gidon Kremer, Alina Pogostkina, Vadim Gluzman, Baiba Skride and Isabelle Faust, cellists Natalia Gutman, Mstislav Rostropovich, David Geringas and Truls Mørk, trombone soloist Christian Lindberg, percussionist Peter Erskine, jazzman Joe Zawinul, and others. Normunds Šnē was amongst the founders of the ARENA New Music Festival in Latvia in 2003. He is still also an oboist.



PUBLICITY PHOTO

PERFORMING IN:

- Bruges, Belgium (see page 50)
- Brussels, Belgium (see page 51)
- Minsk, Belarus (see page 58)
- Naples, Italy (see page 77)
- Kiev, Ukraine (see page 91)
- London, United Kingdom (see page 94)

The Latvian Radio Choir (the LRC) ranks among the top professional chamber choirs in Europe, and its refined taste for musical material, its fineness of expression and vocals that are of unbelievably immense compass have charted its course as a noted brand on the world stage. Since 1992, the LRC has two conductors, **Sigvards Kļava** as the musical director and principal conductor, and **Kaspars Putniņš**.

The LRC's repertoire ranges from Renaissance music to the most sophisticated scores by modern composers; and it could be described as a sound laboratory in which the singers explore their skills by turning to the mysteries of traditional singing, as well as to the art of quartertone and overtone singing and other sound production techniques. The choir has established a new understanding of the possibilities inherent in the human voice; one could also say that the choir is the creator of a **new choral paradigm**: every singer is a distinct individual with his or her own vocal signature and roles in performances. The expertise of singers has made the LRC a remarkably flexible ensemble that is able to deal with vocal and instrumental music, as well as with operatic performances, multi-media projects, intimate *a capella* talks, and theatrical shows in which singers can express themselves as soloists and talented actors.

LRC concert programmes always contain well-considered and refined musical messages. These include *Sacred Chants*, *Night Prayer*, *Meeting in Music*, *Evening Conversations at St John's*, and various projects with contemporary composers, among many others. Every year, the choir commissions about ten new works from Latvian composers. The choir actively popularises the music of **Latvian composers** around the world. The choir's recordings of works by Ēriks Ešenvalds, Kristaps Pētersons, and Mārtiņš Viļums have won each of them first prize at the *UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers*. The LRC is one of the four founders of the European professional chamber choirs' association, *Tenso*. In 2010 the LRC was proud to complete the international overtone singing project, *Consrescence*, which was curated by Lasse Thoresen.

www.radiokoris.lv

The choir has participated in the top international musical forums in Salzburg and Montpellier, the Baltic Sea Festival, *Klangspuren Schwaz*, *La Musica*, *Ultima*, the Venice Biennale, the *White Light Festival USA*, and *Soundstreams* in Canada; and has performed in renowned concert halls such as the *Concertgebouw* and *Muziekgebouw* in Amsterdam, the *Konzerthaus* in Berlin, and *Cité de la Musique* in Paris, the Lincoln Center in New York, and in Dresden's *Frauenkirche*. The LRC has successfully worked with many outstanding guest conductors, including Riccardo Muti, Heinz Holliger, Lars Ulrik Mortensen, Stephen Layton, Tõnu Kaljuste, James Wood, and Essa-Pekka Salonen, amongst others.

The Latvian Radio Choir records on a regular basis. Every season, three or four new CDs appear in collaboration with labels such as *Hyperion Records*, *BIS*, *GB Records*, *Ondine*, and *Naïve*. Released on the ECM label, the opus by Estonian composer Arvo Pärt, entitled *Adam's Lament*, received the prestigious Grammy for the **best choral performance**: the LRC, along with the chamber orchestra, *Sinfonietta Riga*, the ensemble, *Vox Clamantis*, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra took part in the recording under the baton of Tõnu Kaljuste.

Amongst the most valued recordings is Sergey Rachmaninov's *All-Night Vigil* (praised in February 2013 by the renowned music magazine, *Gramophone*, as the **best recording** and ranked as one of the 25 best albums of the year by American radio station, NPR). The choir has also participated in the recording of the latest album by Elina Garanča released by one of the world's oldest and most respectable recording companies, *Deutsche Grammophon*, in October 2014.

The choir has been awarded the most esteemed musical prize in Latvia, the Grand Music Award, a total of seven times (in 1994, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2011). In autumn 2014 LRC also received the Award of the Cabinet of Ministers – the highest official award for an outstanding contribution in Latvian music and achievements on the international stage.

Latvian Radio Big Band and Raimonds Pauls



LATVIAN RADIO BIG BAND

"The Latvian Radio Big Band is great. This big band deserves a bright and spectacular future!"

— Kurt Elling

"The Latvian Radio Big Band is a Latvian treasure."

— Peter Eldridge, New York Voices

The Latvian Radio Big Band has played a significant part in the history of Latvian jazz music and, since 2012, after a sixteen year break, the legendary jazz band has resumed its active creative existence. The leader of the Latvian Radio Big Band is the artistic director of the *Rīgas Ritmi* international music festival and the *Rīga Jazz Stage* international jazz artists contest, musician and producer, **Māris Briēžkalns**, while the other leader, and also conductor and musician, is **Kārlis Vanags**, with Maestro **Raimonds Pauls** serving as the orchestra's patron.

The big band performs quality jazz music and recordings in collaboration with world class artists which include Italian singer Roberta Gambarini, jazz vocalist Kurt Elling, drummer Jojo Mayer, and vocal band *New York Voices*. Maestro Raimonds Pauls and the renowned Georgian composer, Giya Kancheli, have made special arrangements of their compositions for the big band.

In 2014 the big band was working on several projects, in particular the closing concert for the international music festival, *Rīgas Ritmi 2014*, which took place on 5 July at the Riga Congress Centre and featured Grammy Award-winning

trumpeter and flugelhornist, Randy Brecker, and singer Ester Rada, as well as the *Mare Balticum* project which was developed under the aegis of the Capital of Culture *Rīga 2014* programme and featured the great Australian multi-instrumentalist, trumpet specialist James Morrison. On 28 November, within the framework of the project, a unique body of musical material was performed in the shape of Latvian songs of the sea, arranged in jazz rhythms.

In 1966, both the Latvian Radio Big Band (then named Latvian SSR Television) and the Radio Popular Music Orchestra were founded. In 1992 they were combined under the new name of the Radio Light and Jazz Music Orchestra. Their first leader and conductor was composer **Ringolds Ore** and, from 1968 to 1991, violin player and arranger **Alnis Zaķis**. The Latvian Radio Big Band has also been led by Raimonds Pauls and **Gunārs Rozenbergs**. However, in 1996 the orchestra was disbanded. After its liquidation, development of the jazz movement in Latvia was taken up by the *Rīgas Ritmi* festival. At the moment the Latvian Radio Big Band exists under the management of PLLC *Latvijas Koncerti* and the *Rīgas Ritmi* festival on a project-by-project basis.

One of the greatest Latvian composers in the fields of popular music, jazz, and classical music is the pianist **Raimonds Pauls** (born 1936). He is one of the most famous Latvian composers not only in Latvia but also beyond its borders. His music has been performed in countless countries, in the most prestige concert halls. His rich, creative imagination has combined the intonations of Latvian folk music, jazz, blues, rock'n'roll, French *chanson*, German *schlager*, and popular songs with elements of worldwide trends, creating modern, interesting, and democratic music for everyone. Built on modern rhythms and arrangements, his refined sense of harmony helps the composer to avoid the monotony that is unfortunately present in many contemporary examples of pop music. Pauls is often the interpreter or the concert master for performers of his compositions. His piano playing style is marked by a very individual, **accented short touch**, making his style easy to recognise.

However, he is not afraid to trust other creative collectives with interpreting his compositions while he also brings together special groups of performing artists by producing his own music.

This maestro has also composed music for films, the theatre, and the ballet, as well as for musicals; he has done numerous seasonal con-

www.raimondspauls.lv
www.rigasritmi.lv

PERFORMING IN:

Brussels, Belgium (see page 56)
Moscow, Russia (see page 88)



PIANIST, COMPOSER, MAESTRO RAIMONDS PAULS

cert shows. He has filled the post of minister of culture for the Republic of Latvia and has served as the artistic director of numerous musical collectives and the organiser of musical contests. Maestro Raimonds Pauls is a winner of numerous awards and has been named Commander of the Three Star Order of Latvia.



PHOTO: ANSIS STARKS

PERFORMING IN:

- Riga, Latvia (see page 32 and 38)
- Paris, France (see page 68)
- Berlin, Germany (see page 71)
- New York, USA (see page 100)

The State Choir *Latvija* is one of the greatest beacons of Latvian culture with its rays of musical sunshine and its perfect, warm, instrumentally nuanced vocal tradition, and the peculiar sound of Latvian choir culture, which seems so marvellous to the rest of the world. It is no wonder that the world's greatest orchestras and conductors want to see the largest professional choir in the Baltics in their concert programmes on a regular basis. Since 1997 the artistic leader and chief conductor of the choir has been **Māris Sirmāis**, while its director has been **Māris Ošlejs**. In 2017 the State Choir *Latvija* will celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary.

The musical intelligence and vocal skills of its fifty members makes it a universal team that is capable of painting exquisite *a cappella* murals and creating a **magnificent vocal symphony** with a triple orchestra. The choir has collaborated with world class symphonic orchestras, such as Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, and also with Finnish, Singaporean, Israeli, German, US, Estonian, Muscovite, and Saint Petersburg symphony orchestras. The choir has performed in prestigious concert halls all around the world, including the *Concertgebouw Amsterdam*, the *Laeiszhalle Hamburg*, the Culture and Congress Centre in Lucerne, the Igor Stravinsky Hall in Montreux, the *Gasteig München*, the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow, the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic, the Lincoln Center in New York City, and many more. The choir has performed with numerous great

www.koris.lv

conductors such as Mariss Jansons, Zubin Mehta, Neeme and Paavo Järvi, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Valery Gergiev, Simone Young, Stephen Layton, Andris Nelsons, Vladimir Fedoseyev, etc. It has also been part of recordings that have been produced by *Warner Brothers*, *Harmonia Mundi*, *Wergo*, and *Ondine*, as well as numerous music recordings by Latvian, German, and other production companies. The choir is a seven-time winner of Latvia's Grand Music Award, winner of the Cabinet of Ministers' award in 2003, and also of the annual award by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia in 2007. The choir's greatest achievement is a series of concerts with Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and conductor Mariss Jansons on a world tour to celebrate the orchestra's 125th anniversary.

In Latvia, particularly cherished is the Annual Sacred Music Festival, which was first organised in 1998 by the State Choir *Latvija*, and which has featured special guests that included world famous composers Arvo Pärt, Giya Kancheli, John Tavener, Sofia Gubaidulina, Valentyn Sylvestrov, John Rutter, Krzysztof Penderecki, etc.

This choir is an **internationally-demanded**, solid trademark, and an academic value that is always open to innovative projects, covering everything from collaborating with musicians of the likes of *Sigur Rós*, performing jazz compositions by Joe Zawinul, performing with Kristjan Jaärvī's electro-acoustic band, *Absolute Ensemble*, creating computer game and soundtrack recordings, and providing operatic concert performances and vocal instrumentals to large-scale performances.



PHOTO: AGNESE TAURINA

PERFORMING IN:

Riga, Latvia (see page 32)
Paris, France (see page 68)

The Latvian National Symphony Orchestra (the LNSO) is one of the cornerstones of Latvian culture, the animator of achievements in musical creativity, the keeper and polisher of classical treasures, and a source of thoughtful relaxation.

The LNSO was founded in 1926 as the Latvian Radio Symphony Orchestra. In the years following the war, despite the initially quite crippled and deformed repertoire policy, the orchestra even managed to get state support (as a mouthpiece for propaganda), and the conductors, together with some of the Latvian Radio management, created the possibility of gradually being able to free themselves of the dross and ideological demands. The explosive and colourful personality of **Leonids Vigners** stood out especially (chief conductor in 1949–1963 and 1966–1975). Many of the concerts he conducted created a true furore, setting both orchestra and public alight in genuine flames of art. **Edgars Tons'** time as chief conductor was short (1963–1966) but brilliant and richly creative. The installation of **Vassily Sinaisky** (1975–1987) brought new breath, musical gravitas and greatness. This charismatic and well-educated musician (alongside conducting, he had also studied the piano and musicology) integrated smoothly into the orchestra's best traditions, often creating real music festivals for everyone (including expansive vocal-symphonic compositions as well as the great works of Johannes Brahms and Gustav Mahler). In addition, Sinaisky was responsible for introducing a great many Latvian works into the concert scene, primarily the monumental symphonies of **Jānis Ivanovs**.

For several years the chief conductors were foreign musicians. **Paul Mägi** (1990–1994) brought intelligence and demanded much from the orchestra. To a certain extent this was continued by the work of **Olari Elts** (2001–2006) that stood out with the diversity of programmes, sophisticated musicianship and restrained elegance. A major turn and a leap in quality was seen when **Karel Mark Chichon** took over the reins in 2009, having worked with the orchestra before on several occasions. As the leader of the orchestra, Chichon was considerate, low-key

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but demanding, even to the extent of being picky. However, this resulted in a slow but even improvement in the orchestra's ensemble playing that reached a level of freedom and uplift in the performance that earlier had been witnessed only on rare occasions. Moreover, the allure of Chichon's personality, his complete devotion to music-making, resulted in a rapid increase in the number of concert goers.

From October 2013 the chief conductor of the LNSO is **Andris Poga**. Alongside these duties he continues to work as assistant (from 2011) to the music director of *L'Orchestre de Paris*, Paavo Järvi, and assistant conductor (from 2012) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Apart from the conductors mentioned, over the years the orchestra has worked with many outstanding conductors and internationally acclaimed soloists. Among them we could name such masters as Valery Gergiev, Arvids and Maris Jansons, Kristjan, Neeme and Paavo Järvi, Kirill Kondrashin, Kurt Masur, Krzysztof Penderecki, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Leonard Slatkin, Yuri Simonov and Evgeny Svetlanov. These days we can also add our own **Andris Nelsons** to the list. Amongst the finest soloists we should note Natalia Gutman, Van Cliburn, Alexander Knyazev, Alexei Lyubimov, David Oistrakh, Vadim Repin, Sviatoslav Richter, Mstislav Rostropovich, Grigory Sokolov, Rodion Shchedrin (as soloist and conductor), Paul Tortelier, Maxim Vengerov. Early on, this stellar constellation had included numerous home-grown stars who are now widely known in the world: Elna Garanča, Ilze Graubiņa, Filipp Hirschhorn, Inga Kalna, Maija Kovaļevska, Gidon Kremer, Mischa Maisky, Kristīne Opolais, Marina Rebeka, Egils Siliņš, Baiba Skride, Vestards Šimkus, and Egils Upatnieks to name a few.

There's another aspect to the life of the orchestra that deserves special mention: their concert tours in Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Gibraltar, Greece, Italy, Japan (Suntory Hall, Tokyo), Russia (the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory), the Netherlands (*Concertgebouw*, Amsterdam), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Finland, Spain, Switzerland, Germany (Berlin State Opera, *Leipzig Gewandhaus*) and Sweden.



STILLS FROM THE DOCUMENTARY, *TEN MINUTES OLDER*
(HERCS FRANKS, 10; RIGAS KINOSTUDIJA, 1978)

WATCH LATVIAN CINEMA IN:

- Belgium (see page 48 – 49)
- Belarus (see page 60)
- Ukraine (see page 92)

Upon becoming the presiding country of the Council of the European Union, it is very important that Latvia demonstrates to other countries what kind of a country it really is. This should be done not simply by pointing it out on a map and not by citing population figures and economic indicators, but by portraying its soul and depicting emotions that are typical only to this country. In seeking to fulfil this aim there is no more potent tool than film. This synthesis of various art forms not only supplies effect with story and other 'measurable quantities'; much more so, it speaks the language of feelings, demonstrating the mentality of the people through intangible nuances. Film is also the most accurate testimony of an era down to the most minute detail, reflecting a world of changing events over the course of an entire century.

The National Film Centre of Latvia has developed a portrait in the form of a comprehensive collection of films, ranging from the classics to the contemporaries and encompassing seventy films of various lengths and genres, these being the most poignant and characteristic pages of Latvian film. These collections are to be sent to Latvian embassies worldwide.

The classics section of the film collection shows that Latvia was already a fully-fledged European country long before it joined the European Union. Feature films from this period (the 1960s to the 1980s) demonstrate a broad spectrum from temperamental nineteenth century melodramas based on literary works to the Soviet-era domestic comedy that has become folklore, and the most popular Latvian film of all time; from the ironically striking social criticisms of the 1930s to a story of forbidden love without a happy end. And we even have our own 'new wave', just like the French or the Czechs – the free thought of the 1960s and a yearning for spiritual disengagement, a rebellious hero, and a system that seeks to destroy him.

In the realm of documentary films, Latvia's name has been written into the pages of film history since the early 1960s by means of a particular phenomenon, this being the school of poetic documentary film with an entire range of directors and cameramen active in this field. The likes of **Hercs Franks**, **Juris Podnieks** and **Ivars Seleckis** all achieved worldwide fame in their respective eras, and the film collection includes their legendary films as well as those of other filmmakers.

Animation was born comparatively late in Latvia – only in the mid-1960s. However, from the start, two equally powerful, talented personalities simultaneously developed this genre in two different energy-based directions. For almost thirty years, director **Arnolds Burovs** was showing the way by putting in place a stable foundation for stop motion (puppet) animation, while the creative tandem of director **Roze Stiebra** and cameraman (later director and producer) **Ansis Bērziņš** worked productively and successfully, first using the cut-out technique and, beginning in the early 1980s, also drawn animation to tell their stories.

Shortly before the turn of the century, together with the whole of society Latvian film experienced radical changes. The country regained independence, and both the economic situation as well as the circumstances for creative work changed at their very core. This, however, did not affect the creative potential of the filmmakers. This is demonstrated in the contemporary section of the film collection, which is comprised of live-action feature films as well as documentaries, with animation for children as well as adults.

The contemporary feature film set indicates that in twenty-first century Latvia two trends are equally apparent – marked *auteur* films that re-

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ceive recognition from film critics and accolades in international film festivals, and films that are aimed at a wide range of viewers, including both quality family films, as well as historically patriotic and comprehensive productions. Ideally, it is possible to bring together both of these trends, as with director **Jānis Nords'** feature, *Mammu, es tevi milu* (*Mother, I Love You*, 2013). An award at the Berlin International Film Festival and recognition at a number of other festivals did not prevent the film from being well received by viewers at home.

Contemporary documentary film demonstrates the tremendously broad range of genres, from pictorial examples of contemplative documentaries to works enriched with visually surprising and internationally significant historical research; from extravagant documentaries of multilayered saturation to attractive stories of 'common people' that nevertheless pose important questions about life and even film.

In terms of the number of films, the most comprehensive part of the collection is comprised of contemporary animation films. This is also the genre that brings contemporary Latvia its most diverse and numerous points of recognition on the international film scene. **Signe Baumanē**, **Vladimirs Leščovs** (Vladimir Leschiov), **Nils Skapāns** and others are world-famous *auteur* filmmakers who work in animation. Latvian films have been included in the programmes of the most significant animation festivals, for example Annecy International Animation Film Festival and the Short Films Section of the Cannes Film Festival, where the Latvian film *To Swallow a Toad* (2009) was included. Available for viewing are two feature-length animation films, an indication of the maturity of the animation field and its professional ability.

The Presidency Venue – the Castle of Light

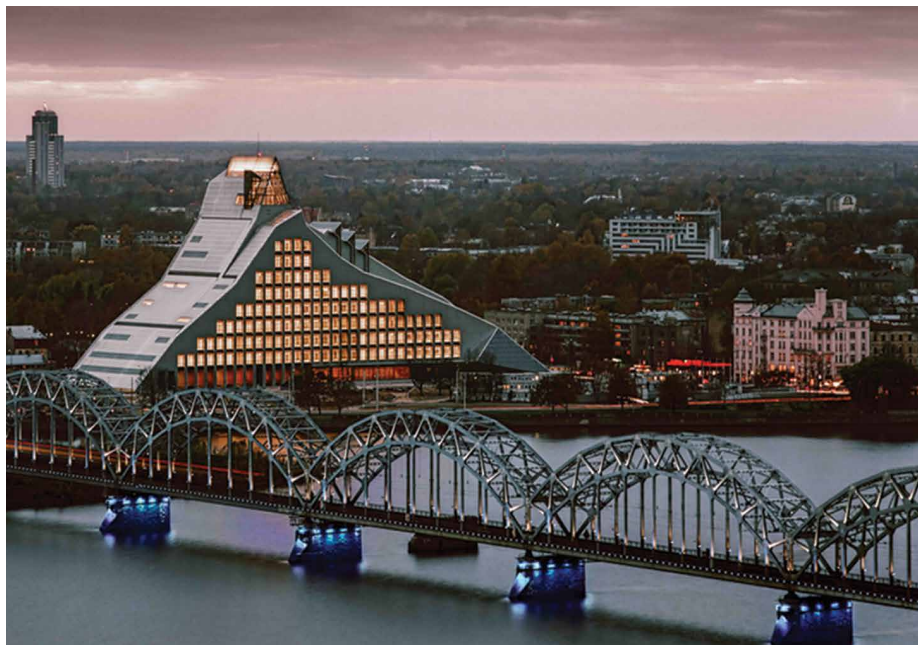


PHOTO: INDRIKIS STŪRMANIS

The venue for most of the events in Latvia for the Presidency of the Council of the European Union will be the new National Library of Latvia (NLL) building, also known as the Castle of Light (Gaismas pils). It is a landmark of the city of Riga, a spacious and functional place of learning equipped with state-of-the-art technology. The pyramidal structure, which rises 68 meters high on the Daugava riverbank opposite the historic city centre, is among the greatest projects of the 21st century in Latvia. At the same time, it is one of the **largest cultural buildings** in Northern Europe in the 21st century. This makes the library a world-class, modern and creative informational and cultural centre. The library provides collections, services and premises for education, research, self-improvement and leisure purposes. Besides the standard services and routine operations, the Castle of Light and its infrastructure serve as a platform for the activities of various partners in cooperation, and a place of unique creative synergies.

The first sketch of the building – an expressive image of Modernism inspired by the nation's age-old cultural traditions – was drawn in 1989 by

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the world-renowned architect, **Gunnar Birkerts** (USA), who is of Latvian origin. In subsequent years, the project was developed together with **Modris Ģelzis** and other Latvian architects and engineers. The official Inauguration of the Castle of Light was held on 29 August 2014, and it was also one of the central venues for Riga's events as the European Capital of Culture.

The National Library of Latvia (NLL) is a centre of culture, science and education of national significance established on 29 August 1919. The goal of the NLL is to create and maintain a collection of national and global literature, ensuring its long-term and free accessibility to each and every local resident, and to foster its creative use. The NLL's collection exceeds **4 million units** and predominantly includes publications from Latvia and abroad about Latvia and Latvians, works issued in Latvia and works by Latvian authors. In addition, special collections are available to readers: rare books, manuscripts, the Letonica collection, the collection of the Baltic Central Library, art and music, audio recordings, graphic productions, small print materials, and maps.

Exchange Programme for Writers and Translators

Celebrating the trio Presidency of Italy, Latvia and Luxembourg, an exchange programme for writers and translators has been organized in cooperation with Ventspils Writers' and Translators' House of Latvia. One Italian and one Luxembourgian writer or translator will each have the chance to visit **Ventspils** – a well-maintained coastal city where, in each house, street, yard and square, the past is just as

www.ventspilshouse.lv

important as the future. Its historic former town hall has been remodelled as a centre for writers and translators from around the world, providing an opportunity for them to meet and work. "Here, everything is in one place: solitude and conversation, work and respite, daily bread and wine," says the homepage.

Similarly, Luxembourg and Italy will be visited by one translator or writer from Latvia.

Latvian Literature Readings

In April and May 2015, selected readings from Latvian literature will take place in several cities in the United States of America (New York, Rochester, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Lincoln and Washington), thereby launching and presenting several Latvian

www.literature.lv

authors' books published in the English language (Nora Ikstena's collection of short stories *Life Stories*, Liāna Langa's selected poem collection *Deadly Nightshade*, Edvīns Raups' collected poems *then touch me here*, and Zigmunds Skujiņš' novel *Flesh-Coloured Dominoes*).

The Book Donation



PHOTO: F64 PHOTO AGENCY

To introduce the international audience to stories about and from Latvia, and to support the expansion of library collections, the Book Donation is a significant event in the culture programme for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, in cooperation with the National Library of Latvia. With the help of our embassies, 73 libraries and high schools abroad will receive in total **22 titles** on history and politics, culture, language, literature, art and architecture. The selected books represent the Latvian publishing tradition and support the general principles of the Presidency's culture programme – contemporaneity and quality. In historical context and in line with the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU, Latvia's ties with Europe have been emphasized.

As a part of the Presidency's cultural programme, in the Latvian diplomatic missions you will be able to visit travelling exhibitions telling the tales of the history, development and achievements of Latvian culture.

The exhibition, ***The Fatherland and Freedom. Sculptor Kārlis Zāle. The Brothers' Cemetery and the Freedom Monument***, is devoted to the Freedom Monument, the Riga Brothers' Cemetery and the sculptor who created them – Kārlis Zāle. The exhibition reveals Zāle as the most gifted monument sculptor in Latvia. It also tells the tale of the process of building the complex cultural monuments, the symbolic meaning behind the sculptures in the groups of objects and their references to Latvian history. The exhibition celebrates the high artistic value of the monuments in an international context, and also reveals their role in the nation's self-preservation process. In 2015 we will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the unveiling of the Freedom Monument.

Latvian amber, linen, wood and clay, leather and metal can be seen in ***PROUD LATVIA. Latvian Design Success Stories***. It reveals creative developments in Latvian design. The exhibition is a series of stories about materials used in creating design works. Amber, linen, wood and other materials are a natural match for the Latvian spirit and understanding of the aesthetic environment. Thus, for the last decade Latvian designers have been using more and more of these materials that have been tested throughout centuries, transforming them into modern and fashionable pieces.

In the exhibition, ***Building the State. 9th–21st Century Latvia. Destinations and Symbols of Latvia***, you will find over one hundred photos of diverse Latvia. The oldest architectural example is the Āraiši Lake dwelling site made of wood, which was reconstructed from the archaeological finds in the Āraiši Lake. In the 12th century, German builders arrived in Livonia, bringing along the new stone house building technique. Furthermore, Latvia's presence in the events of European geopolitical space can be characterised by gothic and baroque style examples from Hanseatic League cities. The example representing the aristocratic lifestyle is the Rundāle Palace designed in a baroque style by Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli, whereas the economic potential of Latvia in the interwar years is showcased by the Ķegums Hydroelectric Power



PHOTO: ANSIS STARKS, 2014

Station. But the symbol of a modern state is the new building for the National Library of Latvia in Riga, designed by Gunnar Birkerts.

Nine buildings in Riga, Liepāja and Ventspils have been selected in the ***Art Nouveau Architecture in Riga and Latvia*** photography exhibition, representing the most outstanding Art Nouveau examples in Latvia. One can recognise the characteristics of Latvian Art Nouveau in these buildings: eclecticism, occasional exaggeration and decorative saturation, as well as elements of national romanticism. Art Nouveau's roots in Riga trace back to the first years of the 20th century, when industry and trade experienced rapid growth, and the population grew significantly. Almost 40% of the stone buildings built during this period in the capital city of Latvia belong to different forms of Art Nouveau.

Age of Vikings in Latvia is an exhibition on the importance of Latvian inhabitants in Northern and Eastern Europe from the 7th to 12th centuries. It showcases their rich culture and influence in the region, reveals contacts between inhabitants of the East Baltic region and Scandinavia, and proves that Latvia played a significant part in the animated world of the Vikings. The exhibition shares the evidence on East Baltic geography, mutual contacts and conflicts described in Scandinavian runes, sagas and chronicles. It also tells the story of the Daugava river as one of the most significant trade routes in Eastern Europe, and provides a look at Scandinavian artefacts found in the monuments of the Kurši, the Livs and the Semigallians.

Latvia can be seen from a bird's eye view in ***Wondrous Latvia***, with aerial photographs by Juris Kalniņš. The exhibition displays vibrant landscape photographs from all four seasons. Latvian nature can be moody and emotional, yet well-balanced. The dominant theme of the exhibition is ***Green Latvia***. Without the white winter and beautiful autumn, the whole exhibition would be green.

The world's smallest camera ***VEF Minox***, the medicines ***Ftorafur*** and ***Meldonium***, plasterboard and citric acid – you will be able to find out about all of these products developed in Latvia in the exhibition, ***Latvia's Achievements in the 20th – 21st Centuries***. Its aim is to showcase Latvia's achievements and scientific potential in Europe and the world. The basis of the exhibition is a selection of noteworthy facts which have left their mark on the world's map.

The ***Sport in Latvia*** exhibition introduces visitors to Latvian Olympic medallists. Over the course of 100 years, Latvian sportspeople have participated in the international sporting events representing three different states, and winning 86 medals in the Olympic Games in 20 disciplines. A notable part of the exhibition is devoted to Latvian basketball teams, tennis players, and the best racing car drivers and motorbike riders. There is also a variety of photographs capturing the strength, speed and joy of movement in sports.



THE FASHION SHOW ORGANISED BY THE MINISTRY OF LIGHT INDUSTRY, JANUARY 1966. LATVIA STATE ARCHIVE OF AUDIOVISUAL DOCUMENTS, PHOTO: V. NIKOLAJEVS

The exhibition, ***Let's Talk About Fashion. Latvia and Fashion from the '50s until Now***, proves that certain pages of fashion history can tell a great deal about Latvia and Latvians. The starting point of the exhibition is 1948, when ***Rīgas Modeļu nams*** (Riga Fashion House) was established in the capital city of Latvia. The exhibition showcases how not only fashion trends but also the way we talk about them have changed over time. You will discover living fashion outside the fashion magazines, as well as Latvia's enthusiastic interest in ethnographic symbols. In this exhibition, you will learn about the Untamed Fashion Assembly in Riga as one of the focal points in 1990s fashion, and about the works of contemporary Latvian designers.



PHOTO: LATVIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE ARCHIVE, PHOTO: ILMĀRS ZNOTIŅŠ

Special Edition 2 Euro Coin



PUBLICITY PHOTO

Latvia can do it! The most obvious manifestation of this encouraging and national self-awareness-raising motto is the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Latvia is in the global spotlight and this provides a historical opportunity for the country to demonstrate its achievements in various areas and its ability to take a responsible approach to addressing complicated tasks. It is this perception that inspired the Latvian graphic designer, **Gunārs Lūsis**, who not only devised

the Latvian Presidency logo – the grinding stone – but has also designed the special Latvian Presidency 2 euro coin. **Jānis Strupulis** is the author of the plaster model.

The weight of a grinding stone as it rotates accumulates the energy that has ensured the basis of existence for Latvians. Once ground, grain is transformed into rye bread loaves, giving the people the strength to work and sparking off celebration expressed in song and dance for centuries.

Presidency Stamp

Issuing a stamp dedicated to the Presidency of the EU Council is a tradition of the presiding country's public postal service provider. The Latvian stamp features the Presidency's grinding stone logo which symbolises the basis of European welfare – hard work and the ability to strive for shared values – by combining the traditional and the contemporary. The stamp was designed by **Ģirts Grīva**.



PUBLICITY PHOTO

Latvia

- **1 January – 31 March**
Exhibition "1514. Book. 2014"
- **8 January**
The Opening Event for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- **8 January – 28 August**
Design Exhibition "REPUTATION"
- **7 February – 19 April**
Exhibition "Two Centuries of Italian Portrait Painting. 1580 – 1780"
- **23 April – 10 June**
The 5th Riga International Textile and Fibre Art Triennial "DIVERSITY&UNITY"
- **27 April**
Symphony "Northern Light" by Ēriks Ešenvalds
- **1 – 2 May**
Conference Dedicated to the 150th Anniversary of Rainis and Aspazija
- **15 May – 5 July**
Mikhail Baryshnikov Collection of Baryshnikov Arts Center
- **27 June – 6 September**
Exhibition "Edward Steichen. Photography"
- **28 June**
The Closing Event of the Latvian Presidency: Closing Concert of the Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival

The Opening Event for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

8 January 18:00

Latvian National Opera, Riga
www.opera.lv



THE LATVIAN NATIONAL OPERA

Ēriks Kiršfelds, cello
Reinis Zariņš, piano
Conductor **Andris Poga**

State Choir *Latvija*
Latvian National Symphony Orchestra

The concert will open with a new opus created especially for this event by the critically acclaimed Latvian composer **Ēriks Ešenvalds**. About his new piece, *After the Storm*, Ešenvalds says: "It conjures up an ancient Latvian scene just after a thunderstorm. As the clouds subside, shepherds emerge from their shelters and call out to each other, rejoicing in the sun, the lush grass and the beauty of nature's bounty."

Pēteris Vasks' Cello Concerto will recall the threats against the newly recovered independence of the Baltic States in January and August 1991. In this piece, Vasks' ideals and anxieties can be clearly discerned: it embodies light and hope that do not leave the composer even in the darkest of days, but at the same time it is a mirror of darkness and aggression. **Ēriks Kiršfelds**, the concertmaster of the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra's cello section and long-time concertmaster of the *Kremerata Baltica* Chamber Orchestra's cello section, will perform the cello solo.

Finally, in his *Choral Fantasia*, **Ludwig van Beethoven** will speak of the brotherhood of

men and global joy. The brilliant underlying theme of this opus is his song *Gegenliebe*. The audience will recognize this theme as a precursor of the magnificent melody of the finale of the Symphony No. 9 – *The Ode to Joy*. The piano solo will be performed by **Reinis Zariņš**, a two-time recipient of the Latvian Grand Music Award (2012 and 2013) and winner of 11 international music competitions. He has performed all over the world, including the Amsterdam *Concertgebouw*, the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York's Steinway Hall, the Wigmore Hall in London and the Glazunov Hall in St Petersburg.

Conductor **Andris Poga** has been the Artistic Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra since November 2013. Having studied philosophy as well as conducting, he was Assistant Conductor of the *Orchestre de Paris* and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He was in charge of the *Munich Philharmonic's* tour to Beijing, Shanghai and Taipei in October 2014, which received great critical acclaim. He received the Latvian Grand Music Award for an exceptional debut, in 2007.

Design Exhibition "REPUTATION"

8 January – 28 August

National Library of Latvia, Riga
www.lnb.lv

The REPUTATION exhibition showcases the most notable achievements in Latvian contemporary design in the global arena and the interaction between different design disciplines and other sectors. It focuses on examples of Latvian design and their originality to convey the message that "Design in Latvia is great and has a worldwide reputation!"

With this exhibition, the authors wish to broaden the local and international community's understanding of Latvian design and find ways of harnessing the reputation it has gained more effectively in order to transform these outstanding achievements into tangible benefits for Latvia more often and more successfully.

www.dizainamanifestacija.lv

The exhibition features **large-format prints** of design works that have been awarded prestigious international awards in recognised design competitions. A total of 19 outstanding examples of Latvian design – products, packaging, graphics, fashion, interior design, mobile applications and design management – are featured in the exhibition.

REPUTATION is the first of four contemporary design exhibitions organised under the joint title DESIGN MANIFESTATION. It is a **unique project** in the history of Latvia showcased in four interrelated exhibitions – REPUTATION, HUMANISATION, INFORMATION and SITUATION – that represent our country and its achievements in design over the last 15 years on such a large scale.

The theme of this exhibition was selected due to the fact that Latvia is the presiding country of the EU Council in 2015, therefore the emphasis lies on the national identity in the context of EU and the global world. The exhibition presents the topical and most innovative current trends in the field of textile and fibre art and the aim of the Triennial is to contribute for development of professional art and creative artistic processes.

85 artists from 29 countries were accepted for the show and two guest artists are invited to exhibit: **Edite Pauls-Vignere** from Latvia and for the first time – the world famous **Michael Brennan-Wood** from the United Kingdom.

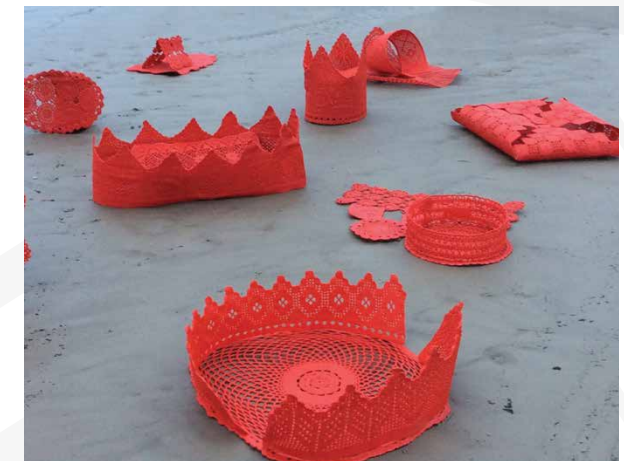
Alongside with the main Triennial exhibition several satellite events are planned: a guest exhibition from Latin America "wonderwoman – BRA art", exhibition of young Latvian textile artists "DIVERSITY&UNITY: NEW VOICES" and also one-man shows in several Rigan Galleries.

www.lnmm.lv

The 5th Riga International Textile and Fibre Art Triennial "DIVERSITY&UNITY"

23 April – 10 June

The *Arsenāls* Exhibition Hall of the LNMA, Riga
www.lnmm.lv/en/arsenals/



BARBARA ĀBELE. SERVED. RE-SERVED. PRE-SERVED. COTTON, POLYURETHANE, 2014

Exhibition "1514. Book. 2014"

1 January – 31 March

National Library of Latvia, Riga
www.lnb.lv

RĪGA 2014

EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE



ULRICH TENGLER, *DER NEUE LEVENSPIEGEL* (L.), STRASSBURG-MATTHIAS HUPPEFF, 1514. PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF LATVIA, PHOTO: NORMUNDS BRASLIŅŠ

The exhibition "1514. Book. 2014" is a unique and deeply personal chance to travel 500 years into the past – to understand that the book was and is a powerful medium in every person's life, even if some may say that they don't read books. The exhibition, which includes **more than 60 books** published in 1514, shows that contact with books, as a special kind of collective experience, has shaped every one of us.

The exhibition aims to illustrate the 'great culture' of 1514, reflecting intellectual life, and 'small culture', the everyday life, the native place and customs. It will therefore include not only the works of humanists, liturgical and prayer books, but also books of calculations and cookbooks, calendars and even novels about knights, which belong to the **medieval tradition** of courtly culture. It will not be possible to physically leaf through the books; they will be in showcases. However, the content of the books will be accessible using interactive tablets placed next to each showcase.

Italian art from past centuries, especially painting, **has pride of place** in the displays of countless Western European art museums, and they especially welcome exhibitions relating to the art of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. As Latvia takes over the Presidency of the Council of the EU, treasures from the museums of **Bologna** will be arriving as a greeting from Italy. The choice of this city is no coincidence because Bologna and Latvia have ancient historical ties. During his European tour in 1785, Peter, the **Duke of Courland**, fell in love with the city and as a memento of his presence, he founded an art prize at the Bologna Academy of Art. This prestigious competition came to be known as the *Concorso Curlandese* and endured long after the Duchy of Courland had been forgotten. In Latvia this story was **rediscovered** in the 20th century.

The exhibition comprises the works of Lavinia Fontana, Annibale Carracci, his brother Agostino and cousin Ludovico, Guido Reni, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, Donato Creti, Gaetano Gandolfi and other artists.

Exhibition "Two Centuries of Italian Portrait Painting. 1580 – 1780"

7 February – 19 April

Art Museum Riga Bourse, Riga
www.rigasbirza.lv



GUIDO RENI (1575 – 1642), *PORTRAIT OF MOTHER GINEVRA PUCCI*, 1610/1612. PUBLICITY PHOTO

Edward Steichen. Photography

27 June – 6 September

Photographs from the collection of the Luxembourg National Museum of History and Art

The *Arsenāls* Exhibition Hall of the LNMA, Riga
www.lnmm.lv/en/arsenals/



EDWARD STEICHEN, *ACTRESS POLA NEGRI*, 1925. MNHA 1985-030/081
© 2014 THE ESTATE OF EDWARD STEICHEN/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

Mikhail Baryshnikov Collection of Baryshnikov Arts Center

15 May – 5 July

Art Museum Riga Bourse,
Bosse's Hall and Art Nouveau Salon
www.rigasbirza.lv

In 2015, when Latvia and Luxembourg share the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, it is especially important to strengthen international collaboration between cultural institutions. This provides the possibility for the public to become acquainted with **art treasures** that are significant for the whole of Europe. In the summer of 2015, the Latvian National Museum of Art (LNMA), in collaboration with the Luxembourg National Museum of History and Art, will hold an exhibition of works by the outstanding photographer **Edward Steichen** (1879-1973) in Riga at the *Arsenāls* Exhibition Hall of the LNMA.

Steichen, who was born in Luxembourg and emigrated to the USA, is distinguished in the history of photography as one of the most outstanding and influential photographic artists of his time. He gained the greatest recognition as an **un-surpassed portraitist**. Through the eye of the camera, he immortalised countless contemporaries and famous historical figures – Winston Churchill, Auguste Rodin and Henri Matisse, to name but three. In the USA he worked alongside Alfred Stieglitz, the founder of photography as art.

Kim? Contemporary Arts Centre in collaboration with Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC) in New York (USA) and Art Museum Riga Bourse offers an insight into the art collection of Riga-born and world-famous choreographer and dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov. Mikhail Baryshnikov's **interest and fascination** with the world of visual arts started in the 1970's when he began to assemble a variety of small-scale works on paper. A few of the works came to Baryshnikov as gifts, but he procured a vast majority of the collection purchasing individual pieces he appreciated aesthetically over many years.

The collection is proof of bright intellect, expertise and intuition. One of its notable aspects is **stylistic diversity** marked by a journey from realism to impressionism, including several later styles such as surrealism and some works of theatre, set and costume design.

The collection was first shown at ABA Gallery, New York in 2012 and later at the Pushkin Museum, Moscow in 2013. Exhibition in Riga is accompanied by a catalogue and an educational program.

Rainis and Aspazija 150th Anniversary

Rainis (Jānis Pliekšāns, 1865–1929) and **Aspazija** (Elza Rozenberga, 1865–1943) were European and world class litterateurs and public figures. For over a century their creative work has served as a measure of Latvian literature and political public opinion. The contribution by these poets, especially Rainis, is still significant to the development of philosophical thought. They wrote plays and poems, worked as journalists, and translated world classics – Goethe, Ibsen, Shakespeare and Pushkin. He got involved in politics and became the minister for education. She fought for women's rights and didn't shy away from speaking about the inconsistent human nature.

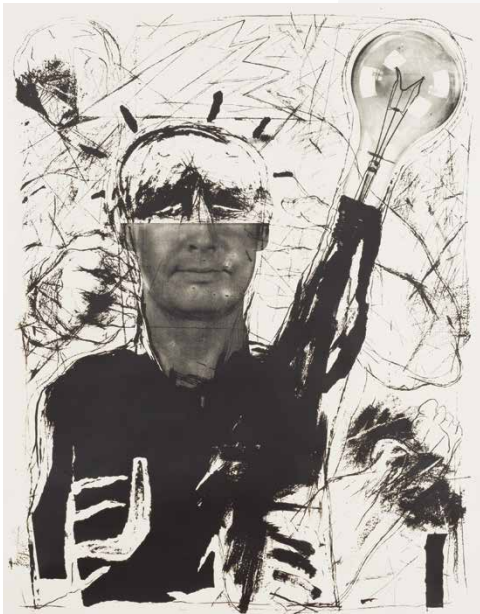
Rainis always lived with a **vision of the future**. Being a visionary of the new age with a broad view of the world, he was the builder of identity for his nation, a developer and promoter of the idea of a national state, a pioneer of the new age in Latvian literature. The poet's vision is comprehensive and topical as it solves the issues involved in the relationship of individuals and society as a whole in educational and cultural aspects, stressing their driving force for future development, and seeing prospects for the **integration of Latvian culture** into the European cultural space. His works are integral parts of Latvian culture, along with Aspazija's feminine, tender, and deeply thoughtful poetry and once so-sharp, modern and still-topical plays, *The Silver Veil* and *The Lost Rights*.

O ver the past 150 years, Europe has seen tidal changes of various political ideologies, accompanied by the change of various forms of power – an interchange of monarchy, democracy, authoritarianism, and totalitarianism. In evaluating the past importance of authors in meeting the challenges of their eras in diverse cultural, social and political milieus, one wonders what the **interaction** of the written word with today's socio-political processes is. Is the relationship between the writer and power in contemporary Europe as pertinent a subject as it once was? How was this affected by the advent of globalisation and digitisation? What is the Europe envisioned by today's writers, and how do these visions gel with those of their predecessors? How will the recent wave of populism and rekindled nationalism play out, and what are the **possible exits** writers see from what seems like a severe crisis of European identity? In Latvia, no one has better demonstrated the dilemmas faced by writers engaged in politics, the inherent conflict between truth and power, than the eminent literary couple Rainis and Aspazija at the forefront of the romantic revolutionary New Current movement at the close of the 19th century.

Conference Dedicated to the 150th Anniversary of Rainis and Aspazija

Between Truth and Power. The Role of Authors in Building and Changing Europe

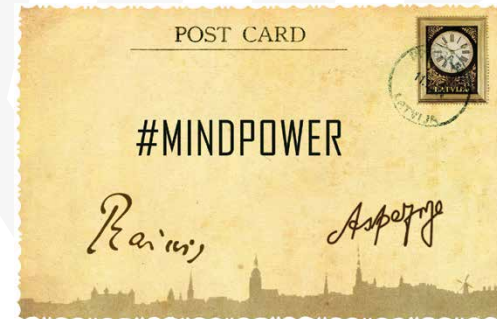
1 – 2 May Ziedonis Hall, National Library of Latvia, Riga
www.lnb.lv



ANDRIS BREŽE, SUMMONS III, 1988

Short Film Series #mindpower

Rainis – musician **Goran Gora**
Aspazija – **Eva Ikstena-Strapcāne**, news presenter at Latvian Television
Director **Olafs Okonovs**
www.jps.lv



"Thoughts hold great power: what you think is who you are."

— Rainis

The short film series *#mindpower* is based on the work of the great Latvian writers and public figures of 19th/20th century, Rainis and Aspazija, who were active supporters and promoters of **modern European ideas**. In 2015, we celebrate their 150th anniversary.

To present their literary heritage, opinion-leaders and celebrities from each EU country will read fragments of the Latvian writers' works in their native language. TV star Per Morberg (Sweden), bishop of Helsinki Irja Askola (Finland), actors Tadas Gryn and Toma Vaškevičiūtė (Lithuania) are among them. Starting from 7 January, one short film will be released on the official website of the Latvian Presidency – **EU2015.LV** – and in social media every week. *#mindpower* is produced by Juris Podnieks studio and supported by the *airBaltic* airline, Jūrmala – the capital city of Rainis and Aspazija – and the EP Information Office.

Join the *#mindpower*, watch a new short film **every week** and travel through Europe for half a year!

This exhibition is intended as a dialogue between two personalities through their ideas and creative work. An essential role is played here by mutual **correspondence** between the poets – their love, their quest for creative work, and their future vision. At the same time, letters ensure the linear (chronological) development of the exhibition and serve as a reason for a dialogue about literature, philosophical and societal ideas, and developments in global politics and the poets' personal lives.

The correspondence between the poets began right after they met in February 1894, and continued until Rainis passed away in 1929. The correspondence is included in the Latvian National Register of UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme as an **important legacy** of European culture. Their 150th anniversary is marked on the UNESCO memorable date calendar.

www.memorialiemuzeji.lv

Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist The Story of Two Latvian Poets



RAINIS, 1901. PHOTO: M. POLAKOV. RTMM 74116



ASPAZIJA, 1903. PHOTO: OSVALDS LANGE. RTMM 55140

See in:

Belarus (see page 58)
France (see page 69)
Russia (see page 89)

Symphony "Northern Light" by Ēriks Ešņvalds

27 April

Latvian National Opera, Riga
www.opera.lv



ĒRIKS EŠŅVALDS. PHOTO: AIVARS KRASTIŅŠ

The State Choir *Latvija* with **Māris Sirmajs** in the lead will take you on a journey in a two-part concert, where the jewels of the Baltics meet the magic of the Northern Lights. The first part of the concert will feature choir music, but the second will feature the premiere of the multimedia symphony *Northern Light* by **Ēriks Ešņvalds**.

This outstanding 40-minute long symphony is a masterpiece devoted to the atmospheric optic phenomenon, the Northern Lights. It is a unique piece which has an added value of cultural historical heritage. Ēriks went on several expeditions to northern Norway to meet his collaboration partner in this project – the Norwegian, Kjetil Skogli, a professional Northern Lights photographer and video maker – as well as to Iceland, Greenland and northern Alaska (USA). While there, he recorded nature sounds (breathing of whales in the fjords, frost cracking the tree barks, wind gales and dogs howling) and recorded **tales and folksongs** of the Northern Lights as told by the Nordic nations. All of these materials will be used while the symphony is performed.

What is the sound of the Northern Lights? Scientists believe that they have no sound, but through the unique stories, the beauty of nature and breath-taking photographs and videos, Ēriks Ešņvalds gives them a voice.

Ēriks Ešņvalds is the most internationally celebrated young composer of Latvia. He was born in Riga in 1977 and studied at the Latvian Baptist Theological Seminary (1995-97) before obtaining his Master's degree in composition (2004) from the Latvian Academy of Music. From 2002 to 2011 he was a member of the State Choir *Latvija*. In 2011 he was awarded the two-year position of Fellow Commoner in Creative Arts at Trinity College, Cambridge University.

Ēriks has won multiple awards for his work, including the Latvian Grand Music Award (2005 and 2007). The International Rostrum of Composers awarded him first prize in 2006 for *The Legend of the Walled-in Woman*; he was made a laureate of the Copyright Award in 2006 and was "The Year's New-Composer Discovery" of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in 2010, the same year he was nominated for the British Composer Award.

Ēriks' compositions have been premiered by various ensembles and choirs and in 2007 the Latvian National Opera staged his **first opera** *Joseph is a Fruitful Bough*. His music has been performed at numerous international festivals including *Klangspuren* in Austria, the Schleswig-Holstein in Germany, *Tenzo Days* in France, the Haarlem Choir Biennale in the Netherlands, *Voices Now* in the UK, ACDA National and Regional Conferences and the Spoleto Festival in the USA. At the 2014 World Choir Games, held in Riga, he composed the **Games anthem**, gave a major presentation on his work, acted on competition juries, and had a large-scale production premiered by the *Latvian Voices* and *The King's Singers*. Ēriks' forthcoming premieres include works for the Boston and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, the Utah Symphony with ACDA chorus at the 2015 National Convention in Salt Lake City, a new opera at the Latvian National Opera, and pieces for the University of Michigan, Fuller Theological Seminary, Chor Leoni Vancouver, University of Miami Glee Club, ChorWerk Ruhr and others.

www.eriksesenvalds.com
www.koris.lv

The Closing Event of the Latvian Presidency: Closing Concert of the Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival

28 June

The Grand Stage of Mežaparks, Riga
Mežaparks, Lielā estrāde



XXV LATVIAN NATION-WIDE SONG AND XV DANCE CELEBRATION. PHOTO: REINIS OLIŅŠ

The closing concert of the 8th **Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival** will at the same time be the final event of the public diplomacy and culture programme for the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The concert will feature music from previous Nordic-Baltic Choral Festivals as well as new songs from all member states. The Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival's united choir will perform part of the famous cantata *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff, which has the potential to become one of the most impressive performances of this musical piece.

In 2015, the Festival tradition celebrates its 20th anniversary, and Latvia has the honour of organizing it once again. This year, about **8,000 singers** from Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland will take part in the Festival. Latvian diaspora choirs, as well as choirs from Italy (Presidency of the Council of the EU before Latvia) and Luxembourg (Presidency of the Council of the EU after Latvia) are invited to participate in the Festival.



XXV LATVIAN NATION-WIDE SONG AND XV DANCE CELEBRATION. PHOTO: ILMARS ZNOTIŅŠ

The tradition of the Festival was established in 1995 by the distinguished Latvian conductor **Imants Kokars**. The first Nordic-Baltic Choral Festival took place in Riga, bringing together almost 6,000 singers from the Nordic and Baltic countries.

www.nordicbalticchoir.lv
www.lnkc.gov.lv

Belgium

- 20 November 2014 – 1 February 2015**
Exhibition "Impressions and Parallels"
- 22 November 2014 – 8 February 2015**
Exhibition "Impressions and Parallels. La Louvière – Riga"
- 7 January – 30 June**
Justus Lipsius Design by Design Studio H2E
- 16 January**
The Official Opening Concert of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union
- 17 January**
The Latvian Radio Choir. Vocal Poetry from East and West
- 17 January**
Double Bill: Jazz from Rigas Ritmi Festival
- 28 January**
Violinist Elīna Bukša in "Concerts at Noon"
- 13 and 14 February**
"Sonja" by The New Riga Theatre
- 13 – 22 February**
Latvian Cinema in the International Animation Film Festival "Anima"
- 13 February – 31 May**
Exhibition "Visionary Structures. From Johansons to Johansons"
- 18 February**
Latvian Culture Event at the European Economic and Social Committee
- 20 – 27 February**
Latvian Cinema in the International Love Film Festival of Mons
- 25, 26 and 27 February**
Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica
- 12 March**
Andris Nelsons and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
- 15 March**
Laima Jansone Trio: Zarbugans
- 20 – 28 March**
Latvian Cinema in the Millenium International Documentary Film Festival
- 1 April – 7 June**
Ieva Epnere Solo Exhibition
- 23 April – 3 May**
Latvian Cinema in Brussels Short Film Festival
- 24 April**
The Latvian Radio Choir and "Lāčplēsis"
- 26 April**
The Latvian Radio Choir and the Blindman quartet
- 27, 28 and 29 April**
Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica
- 6 – 10 May**
Photo Exhibition "25 Moments"
- May**
Latvian Cinema in *Bozar* Centre for Fine Arts
- May**
Latvian Cinema in *Cinamatek*
- 4 June**
Iveta Apkalna: The Splendour of Organ
- 15 June**
Violinist Baiba Skride & Friends
- 16 June**
The Closing Event of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

The Official Opening Concert of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

16 January 20:00

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

National Orchestra of Belgium
Karel Mark Chichon, conductor



PHOTO: MARCO BORGGREVE

Elina Garanča, mezzo



© GABO/DG

Works by **Ēriks Ešenvalds**, **Hector Berlioz**, **Pyotr Tchaikovsky**, **Igor Stravinsky** and **Andris Dzenītis**



Elina Garanča records exclusively for *Deutsche Grammophon*.

Bozar celebrates the beginning of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and welcomes the mezzo, Elina Garanča, one of the most charismatic artistes of her generation. For the occasion, she presents a musical journey across Europe and through different musical eras, from the France of Berlioz to the Russia of Tchaikovsky via the contemporary Latvia of Dzenītis and Ešenvalds. This is a varied programme that will give full scope to the powerful stage presence and extraordinary vocal range of the Latvian star, who will be accompanied by the National Orchestra of Belgium, conducted by Karel Mark Chichon who, between 2008–2012, was also the chief conductor and artistic director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra.

Elina Garanča was born into a musical family in Riga, Latvia, and studied at the Latvian Academy of Music with her mother Anita Garanča, professor and vocal pedagogue. Since September 2005, Ms Garanča has been an exclusive recording artist with *Deutsche Grammophon*. She has received the prestigious *ECHO Klassik* award for “Singer of the Year” twice, has been named as *Musical America’s* Vocalist of the Year 2010, has won the MIDEM Classical Award as “Singer of the Year” and has been honoured by the *Wiener Staatsoper* with the title of “Kammersängerin”. Highlights of recent seasons include her critically-acclaimed house debut in the title role of Bizet’s *Carmen* at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. Elina Garanča appears by arrangement with Askonas Holt.

Karel Mark Chichon has been described by the *New York Times* as “a conductor of genius”, and continues to thrill international audiences with his temperament, passion and musicianship. In recognition of his services to music, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain made Chichon an officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in June 2012. He is chief conductor of the *Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern* (from September 2011), with whom he recently renewed his contract until 2017. His previous positions include chief conductor and artistic director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and of the Graz Symphony Orchestra.

For more than 75 years, the **National Orchestra of Belgium** (NOB) has given passionate performances of the great classics of the symphonic repertoire, while also bringing the same vigour to bear on the music of its own time. NOB has a long-established partnership with the *Bozar* Centre for Fine Arts and it works closely with the Queen Elisabeth Competition.

www.elinagaranca.com
www.karelmarchichon.com
www.eriksesenvalds.com
www.dzenitis.webs.com
www.nob-onb.be

Double Bill: Rigas Ritmi All Stars

17 January 20:15

Studio 1, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

Māris Briežkalns Quintet
“*Latvian Evergreens*”



DRUMMER MĀRIS BRIEŽKALNS

Laima Jansone Trio



ARTIS ORUBS, LAIMA JANSONE, ANDRIS GRUNTE

In the framework of the Brussels Jazz Festival Latvia offers two outstanding programmes from *Rigas Ritmi* jazz festival, which is one of the most widely-attended and much-loved music events in Latvia.

Māris Briežkalns Quintet (MBQ) is one of the leading and most interesting small acoustic mainstream bands on the Latvian jazz scene, stretching special accents on pop jazz and Latin jazz. In 2005, Māris Briežkalns, with his fellow musicians, created the first MBQ album, called *Latvian Evergreens*, not even imagining that the project might have a continuation. The band later released their second album, and it is as thrilling, witty and lovely as the first. Some pieces are musical mysteries, while others are distinguishable right away. But all of them are innovative, free from ancient jazz standards, and have been revived once again.

The **Laima Jansone Trio** first appeared on stage at the *Rigas Ritmi* Festival in 2012, when the Latvian *kokle* folk instrument player, Laima Jansone, performed together with percussionist Artis Orubs and bassist Andris Grunte. The trio revealed a new melodic synthesis, one that was unique and uncommon to jazz music.

www.rigasritmi.lv
www.reverbnation.com/marisburykalnsquintet
www.laimajansone.com

Born in Latvia in 1990, **Elina Bukša** has been playing violin since the age of five. Since 2011 she has been studying with Ana Chumachenko in masterclasses in France, Germany and Switzerland. Since her debut with the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra at the age of twelve, Elina has undertaken important concert appearances in her native Latvia, and with the Latvian National Symphony orchestra, the Latvian National Opera Symphony orchestra, *Collegium Musicum Riga*, and others. Elina plays using a Domenico Montagnana violin dated to 1723, which is on loan to her by the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel. In 2013, Elina received the Latvian Grand Music Award, the highest honour in Latvian music for “Debut of the Year”. Since September 2011, she has been studying at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, under the direction of Augustin Dumay. She received a scholarship from Mr and Mrs Michael Guttman.

Pavel Kolesnikov was born in Novosibirsk in 1989. He began studying the piano and violin at the age of six, and entered the Moscow State Conservatory in 2007. In September 2012, he entered the piano section of the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel under the direction of Maria João Pires.

Elina Bukša in “Concerts at Noon”

28 January 12:30

Musical Instruments Museum, Brussels
www.mim.be

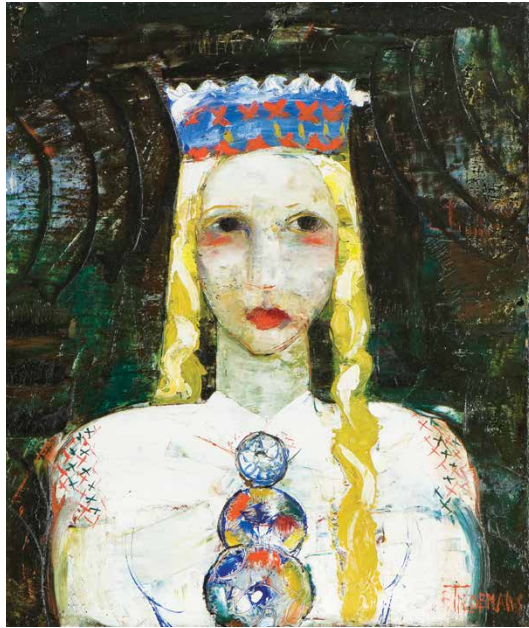


PHOTO: BERNARD ROSENBERG

Impressions and Parallels

20 November 2014 – 1 February 2015

Fine Arts Museum of Liège (BAL), Liège
www.beauxartsliege.be



JĀNIS TIDEMANIS GIRL IN A FOLK COSTUME, C. 1930. LNMA COLLECTION.
PHOTO: NORMUNDS BRASLIŅŠ

Works by the Wallonian artists' group, *Nervia*, from both partner museum's collections will be on show at the Ianchelevici Museum in La Louvière. At the same time, Belgian art classics will be engaged in a dialogue with representative works from Latvian **contemporary art**. LNMA has selected the works of various contemporary Latvian artists, including Andrejs Grants, Kristaps Ģelzis, Monika Pormale, Miervaldis Polis and Kristīne Kursiņa. The exhibition is complemented by recently made contemporary art from the private collections of Ieva Epnere, Krišs Salmanis, and Andris Eglītis, as well as Ivars Drulles' object *Listen to the Angels Singing*, which was made specifically for this exhibition.

www.lnmm.lv

Impressions and Parallels. La Louvière – Riga

22 November 2014 – 8 February 2015

Ianchelevici Museum, La Louvière
www.ianchelevici.be



KRIŠS SALMANIS 02cm 02.02.02., TATTOO, SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS, 2002 – 2042

At the end of the 1920s, Latvian art saw an influx of Belgian influences. These gained in strength in the 1930s, giving rise to a **"Belgian fashion"** in local painting. The spread of Belgian impressions was encouraged by a large exhibition of Belgian art in Riga in the autumn of 1927. This was followed in 1932 by the gift of a collection of Belgian art to the Latvian state, which was initiated by the Latvian diplomat, Jānis Lazdiņš, and the Belgian commissioner general for foreign exhibitions, Paul Lambotte.

In November 2013, a large exhibition named *Impressions and Parallels. Belgian and Latvian painting from the collection of the Latvian National Museum of Art. First half of the 20th Century* opened in the Art Museum Riga Bourse. Paintings by Isidore Opsomer, Albert Saverys, Valerius de Saedeleer, Albert Servaes, Philibert Cockx, Louis Buisseret and other notable Belgian artists were on show **for the first time** alongside works by Latvian artists including Jānis Tidemanis, Kārlis Padegs, Ģederts Eliass, Jānis Liepiņš, Leo Svemps, Eduards Kalniņš, Valdis Kalnroze, and others. In Liège, the selection of Belgian and Latvian paintings that were on show in Riga will be supplemented with works from the collection of the Liège Museum of Art.

RĪGA 2014

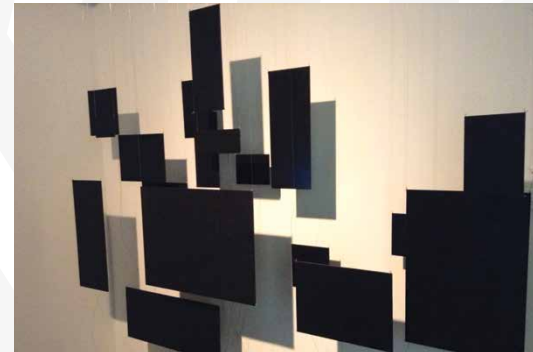
EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Visionary Structures. From Johansons to Johansons

13 February – 31 May Opening 12 February

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

Works by **Gustavs Klucis (1895–1938), Kārlis Johansons (1890–1929), Valdis Celms (1943), Jānis Krievs (1942), Artūrs Riņķis (1942), Gints Gabrāns (1970), Voldemārs Johansons (1980)**



VOLDEMĀRS JOHANSONS EMISSIONS, 2011

Ieva Epnere was born in 1977 in Latvia and she lives and works in Riga. She holds a Master of Arts in Visual Communication from the Art Academy of Latvia and is a Postgraduate (Laureate) of HISK, the Higher Institute for Fine Arts, Gent, Belgium.

"In my work, **Waiting Room**, the leading role is played by a young woman. She is a musician who has arrived in Brussels from abroad. Through her I got to know the city, as well as people close to her. This work is about loneliness and longing, as well as about hopes and other people, people who are next to you, and when they are needed the most. Often a random conversation or a shared walk in the park can mean a lot. In our busy everyday lives we do not even notice the subtle nuances and feelings of the people next to us. I am interested in the **wordless dialogue** among people, the fragile connection that we have with certain people in our lives."

www.ievaepnere.com

The exhibition entitled *Visionary Structures. From Johansons to Johansons* has been selected as a highlight that presents the most significant values of Latvia as part of the European cultural space. It offers an insight into Latvia's avant-garde art in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, covering the **most experimental** and visionary artistic endeavours of their day, as well as looking into their historical transformations. By instigating a dialogue between different periods, the exhibition reveals **parallels and coherences** between works of art, each of which belongs to a different age and another ideological era.

The curator of the exhibition is Ieva Astahovska and it is organised by the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art in collaboration with the Latvian National Museum of Art.

To coincide with the exhibition in Brussels a special edition double DVD set of *Klucis. The Deconstruction of an Artist* will be released by VFS.

www.lcca.lv

Ieva Epnere Solo Exhibition

1 April – 7 June Opening 31 March

Espace Photographique Contretype, Brussels
www.contretype.org



PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE SERIES WAITING ROOM, 2014.
© IEVA EPNERE

Photo Exhibition "25 Moments"

6 – 10 May

European Parliament, Brussels
www.europarl.europa.eu

The most memorable moments in the history of Latvia from the regaining of independence to the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (1990–2015)



PHOTO: GUNĀRS JANAIŅIS

The National Evening has become a tradition – an event that takes place at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and which is organised by the country presiding over the Council of the EU. This year Latvia will be in charge of entertaining the four hundred EESC members and partners. The event will be launched by the Permanent Representative of Latvia to the EU, Ambassador **Ilze Juhansone**, and the EESC President, **Henri Malosse**.

The event programme includes a musical performance by the vocal group, *Ugunis*, and an instrumental performance by the band that is headed by **Andris Amantovs**, as well as a show of traditional Latvian folk dancing. The attendees will be invited to enjoy the photographic exhibition, *Latvia from a Bird's Eye View*, which will remain open for three weeks. Over the course of the evening, **wild-mushroom soup** will be served, cooked under the supervision of the Latvian-trained Belgian chef, **Doric Duys**.

Each moment of joy, surprise, anger, sorrow or pride leaves a mark in our soul. Emotions fade over time, but the impression left by each moment remains and changes us forever.

Those twenty-five years, since Latvia regained its independence on **4 May 1990**, have been full of memorable moments that have filled the Latvian people with both pride and joy for their state, as well as regret for the state's indifference to the fate of its inhabitants. During these years we had to prove our equality as members of the European family of nations, and we had to acknowledge that there is **still much to do** in order for Latvia to become a success story for all of its children.

The photo exhibition *25 Moments*, a project of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia devoted to the 25th anniversary of the restoration of Latvia's independence will be opened to the public in Latvia and Brussels on May 2015. The curator of the exhibition is photographer **Ilmārs Znotiņš**.

Latvian Culture Event at the European Economic and Social Committee

18 February 19:30

European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels
www.eesc.europa.eu

Entrance by invitation only



COURTESY OF BRUSSELS LATVIAN DANCERS

Justus Lipsius by Design Studio H2E

7 January – 30 June

Council of the European Union
Headquarters, Brussels
www.consilium.europa.eu

Design studio, H2E, is implementing *Justus Lipsius* – an interior design solution concept in this building in Brussels within the framework of the first Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The solution is aimed at promoting interest about Latvia by creating an **attractive environment** for communication in the context of Latvian design and traditions.

The interior on the building's ground level and on level 50 invites visitors to explore the space through experience by engaging people in the visual and tactile process of exploring Latvia. The main items include furniture that has been created by **Latvian designers** and large-scale photos of Latvian scenery that inspire visitors to communicate about and with Latvia. Several Latvian design brands are represented: unique, hand-made floor lamp by *mammalampa* (leva Kalēja); machine-made, laconic MINT furniture (Jānis Rauza); and the prestigious *Red Dot Award: Product Design 2012* winners, *Bloom Stool*, with stools that have been produced by RIGA ChAIR™ (Aldis Cirčenis), as well as the *Spriego pats* bench which has been set up by the young designer, Ģirts Arājs, and which draws attention to the aspect of sustainability. The *Meet Me!* modular outdoor furniture system (Ligita Brēģe) offers a functional recreational meeting venue and a singular style of playground for all ages.

The exhibition opens with *Spriguleits*, Latvian ethnographic **dance steps**, which offer visitors the chance to sense a significant part of the Latvian identity, of which the most striking manifestation is the tradition of the unique Latvian Song and Dance Festival, which is included in UNESCO's list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This leads to modern Latvian design based on an interpretation of trade traditions in the context of new technologies.

www.h2e.lv
www.mintmebeles.lv
www.rigachair.com
www.mammalampa.com



COURTESY OF H2E

“Anima” International Animation Film Festival

13 – 22 February

www.animafestival.be, Brussels



SIGNE BAUMANE ROCKS IN MY POCKETS, 2014.

From 13 to 22 February 2015, the *Anima* International Animation Film Festival will take place in Brussels, giving over 35 000 regular visitors the chance to see the most outstanding examples of animation art from all over the world in various competition categories: national, international, short and feature animation films. Visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy a retrospective of animation films, as well as some special programmes. More than 50 international guests will take part in the festival.

This year, the festival's honorary guests will be from Latvia – a country with long-established traditions in puppetry films and countless talents in the animation genre. As previously announced, the director **Signe Baumann** will participate in the opening event of the competition's feature film category during which visitors will have the chance to see her latest creation – the humorous and witty full-length animation film which was the Latvian entry for the Academy Awards *Akmeņi manās kabatās (Rocks in My Pockets)*. The festival will also screen Signe Baumann's retrospective of animated short films, as well as a programme of Latvian animation films for children and adults.

Mons International Love Film Festival

20 – 27 February www.fifa-mons.be, Mons

The Festival, which usually takes place in February during the week of Saint Valentine's Day, deals with the theme of “Love” **in all its forms**. The films selected are far removed from obsolete and overused romantic clichés, the

aim being to look out onto the world and at film directors whose works are unfortunately not often commercially distributed.

Latvia will be represented by Andris Gauja's film “The Lesson”.

Millenium International Documentary Film Festival

20 – 28 March

www.festivalmillenium.org, Brussels

Since it was founded in 2009, the Millenium International Film Festival has remained true to its vocation by screening documentaries on issues that call on us to reflect and which help us discover ‘the other’, its complexity and the beauty of difference. Created with the goal of paying homage to films

whose themes are related to the Millennium Development Goals, the festival has become a must-attend event because of the originality of its programming. This year it will include some pearls from Latvia: a selection of films by such well-known directors as **Herz Frank** and **Laila Pakalniņa**.

Brussels Short Film Festival

23 April – 3 May

www.bsff.be, Brussels

The Brussels Short Film Festival is an event intended for cinema lovers, both audiences and professionals, promoting and circulating short films and generating contacts between

the audience, young directors and professionals. This year the festival will take place for the 18th time. Latvia will be represented by both classic and the very latest award-winning short films.

May **Bozar Centre for Fine Arts,** Brussels
www.bozar.be

May **Cinemathek,** Brussels
www.cinemathek.be

Founded in 1938, *Cinemathek* offers a global view of the cinema with five daily film screenings. The cycle looks back at film classics, amateur productions, directors, actors, national theatres and documentaries. This spring it will also screen a few gems from Latvia – director Laila Pakalniņa's *The Shoe*, as well as several works by the legendary documentary filmmaker **Juris Podnieks**.



LAILA PAKALNIŅA. THE SHOE, 1998

The Latvian Radio Choir. Vocal Poetry from East and West

17 January 20:00 Concertgebouw Brugge concert hall, Bruges
www.concertgebouw.be

Kaspars Putniņš, conductor
Tom De Cock, percussion



COURTESY OF THE LATVIAN RADIO CHOIR

Latvia is the cradle of choral music: singing is practically its national sport and the Latvian Radio Choir is the country's vocal ambassador. Connoisseurs regard the choir as one of the best in the world.

In this exceptional programme, the choir treats us to the wonderful and unexpected marriage of Romantic Western and contemporary Eastern choir repertoires. Toshio Hosokawa composed *Die Lotosblume* – a setting of a poem by Heinrich Heine – as a homage to Schumann. This shared fascination with nature can also be seen in the work of Toru Takemitsu, another of Hosokawa's heroes. Tranquil simplicity and complex eruptions of sound go hand in hand with sophisticated part-singing and fierce declamation. A rare listening experience.

The Latvian Radio Choir (LRC) ranks among the top professional chamber choirs in Europe, and its refined taste for musical material, its fineness of expression and vocals that are of unbelievably immense compass have charted its

www.radiokoris.lv

course as a noted brand on the world stage. Since 1992, the LRC has two conductors, **Sigvards Kļava** as the musical director and principal conductor, and **Kaspars Putniņš**.

The LRC's repertoire ranges from Renaissance music to the most sophisticated scores by modern composers; and it could be described as a sound laboratory in which the singers explore their skills by turning to the mysteries of traditional singing, as well as to the art of quartertone and overtone singing and other sound production techniques. The choir has established a new understanding of the possibilities inherent in the human voice; one could also say that the choir is the creator of a **new choral paradigm**: every singer is a distinct individual with his or her own vocal signature and roles in performances. The expertise of singers has made the LRC a remarkably flexible ensemble that is able to deal with vocal and instrumental music, as well as with operatic performances, multi-media projects, intimate *a capella* talks, and theatrical shows in which singers can express themselves as soloists and talented actors.

The Latvian Radio Choir and "Lāčplēsis"

24 April 20:15

Studio 4, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

Sigvards Kļava, conductor



LILITA BĒRZINA AS LAIMDOTA/MIRDZA SAULĪTE IN THE FILM LĀČPLĒSIS (BEARSLAYER, 1930, DIRECTOR ALEKSANDRS RUSTEĪKIS). COURTESY OF LAC RIGA FILM MUSEUM

The Presidency's cultural programme pays host to an encounter between two of the most peculiar contemporary music interpreters – the BLINDMAN saxophone quartet and the Latvian Radio Choir. Their daily concert life is characterised by searches for novel combinations of sonorous expression and new creative friends.

The concert programme is based upon **the merging** of the instrument and the voice in one musical sound pattern, joining together the most characteristic trends from the Polyphonic Era and contemporary music. The polyphonic music allows new relationships between the human voice and a musical instrument to be sought out and encouraged.

The programme's foundation is the motif by Bach, *Jesu Meine Freude*, a musical and ideological perfection; along with a masterpiece of contemporary electronic music, *Mortuos Plango, Vivos Voco* by the legendary Jonathan Harvey. The concert will also include a special dedication to both ensembles by Latvian composer **Jēkabs Nimanis**.

The aim of the **Lāčplēsis** project (which means *The Bear-slayer*) is to reveal a specific piece of historical material – the film *Lāčplēsis* (1930) by Aleksandrs Rusteikis, part of the Latvian cultural canon – in an emotional and nowadays relevant message, using contemporary choral music, vocal art and electronic music as means of expression.

The story takes place in **two eras**, the mythical time and the first part of the twentieth century, when Latvians were fighting for their freedom. The soundtrack also forms two parallel layers – it preserves the film's original track, incorporating the most outstanding examples of Latvian choral music of the first part of the twentieth century, and uses world renowned contemporary vocal music, respecting and accentuating the drama and style of the film.

The acoustic venue will synchronise the charm of live performance, original recordings of the film's soundtrack score by L. Leibovics, and electronic music sound patterns, interacting and thereby intensifying the expressiveness and topical nature of the film.

The Latvian Radio Choir and BLINDMAN Saxophone Quartet

26 April 20:15

Studio 4, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

Sigvards Kļava, conductor



ERIC SLEICHIM & BLINDMAN [SAX]. COPYRIGHT: GUY KOKKEN, 2013

A Portrait. Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica

25 February 20:00

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

BRIDGES TO BACH

Gidon Kremer, violin
Evgeny Koroliou, piano
Anna Vinnitskaya, piano
Ljupka Hadzigeorgieva, piano
Kremerata Baltica

The programme is about the works of three great twentieth century composers of the former Soviet Union. **Dimitri Shostakovich's** Piano Trio No. 1, op. 8 will recall of composer's romantic tone tradition. **Mieczyslaw Weinberg** – still an underrated and great Russo-Polish composer, whom the world is only just rediscovering. His works amaze the listener with an intrinsic power. **Sergey Rachmaninov's** Elegiac Trio No. 2, Op. 9 is a piece of commemoration to the great Russian composer, Pyotr Tchaikovsky.

27 February 20:00

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

GIDON KREMER'S BIRTHDAY CONCERT

Gidon Kremer, violin
Martha Argerich, piano
Alexei Mochalov, bass
Sergei Nakariakov, trumpet
Kremerata Baltica



PHOTO: ALBERTS LINARTS

The programme is highly influenced by the recording released by *Nonesuch* in 2012, entitled *The Art of Instrumentation: Homage to Glenn Gould*. Gidon Kremer asked several contemporary composers to arrange string orchestral pieces that were a part of the repertoire of the famous interpreter of Bach, Glenn Gould. Works by V. Silvestrov, G. Kancheli, L. Desyatnikov, S. Tickmayer, or V. Kissine are giving the listener the opportunity to gain a different understanding of how **J. S. Bach's music** might sound today – a symbolical bridge between the classic past and the innovative present.

www.kremerataltica.com
www.gidonkremer.net

26 February 20:00

Royal Conservatory of Brussels, Brussels
www.conservatoire.be

Gidon Kremer, violin
Giedrė Dirvanauskaitė, violoncello
Oleg Maisenberg, piano
Anna Vinnitskaya, piano
Madara Pētersone, violin
Džeraldas Bidva, violin
Santa Vižine, viola

The birthday evening of Gidon Kremer, best known for his original interpretations of classical works and unconventional programming, is marked by the works of composers such as **Mozart**, to whom Gidon Kremer and *Kremerata Baltica* dedicated several recordings, including the Grammy Award winner *After Mozart (Nonesuch, 2001)*, and **Shostakovich**, a prominent figure in twentieth century music. A work by **A. Raskatov** provides a glimpse into Mozart's life, *5 minutes in the life by W.A.M.*, which beautifully preserves the sensibilities of the eighteenth century in a purely innocent manner.

A Portrait. Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica

27 April 20:00

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

Gidon Kremer, violin
Mischa Maisky, violoncello
Kremerata Baltica



PHOTO: ANDREAS MALKMUS

Mieczyslaw Weinberg is a recently discovered twentieth century Russo-Polish composer. Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 5 was the first work to be written after the composer's release from Lubyanka Prison, where he spent almost three months. Thus it depicts a variety of emotions: isolation, disappointment, longing for freedom, hope... Meanwhile Weinberg's Sonata No. 3, Op. 126 for Violin Solo is an exceptionally **complex and mysterious work**.

Franz Schubert rounds off the programme with Fantasy in C Major. The piece is thought to be the most technically challenging composition by Schubert both for the violinist and pianist.

29 April 20:15

Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

Gidon Kremer, leader, violin
Olesia Petrova, mezzo soprano
Kremerata Baltica

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

Milan, Italy (see page 76)
Luxembourg (see page 81)
Odessa, Ukraine (see page 91)

An evening dedicated to praise Pyotr Tchaikovsky's music. String Sextet in D Minor *Souvenir de Florence* was written while he was visiting Florence in Italy and was inspired more by the country's sunny climate than by Italian music. Later on, the work was revised in Russia, which can be felt in the last two movements which pulsate with Russian character. This special arrangement for violoncello and string orchestra brings together *Kremerata Baltica* and one other native from the Baltics – the great Latvian cellist, **Misha Maisky**.

Raskatov's *The Seasons Digest* is a re-working of Tchaikovsky's piano cycle, *The Seasons Op. 37a*, for a string orchestra, violin solo, percussion and prepared piano (this time replaced with a violoncello).

www.mischamaisky.com

28 April 20:00

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

Gidon Kremer, violin
Daniil Trifonov, piano

After the very successful project, *Eight Seasons* (Antonio Vivaldi and Astor Piazzolla), *Kremerata Baltica* presents a new set of works that are coloured by the seasons by coupling together pieces that are related to **Russian and American cultures**.

Desyatnikov's *The Russian Seasons* demonstrates Russian character, respecting its traditions, and is based on Russian folk songs.

Philip Glass' new composition represents American culture with its liberalities. The work will be accompanied with video projections by Jonas Mekas, – a filmmaker, poet and artist of Lithuanian origin, who has often been called the godfather of American avant-garde cinema, along with the young video artist Rimas Sakalauskas, Adam Magyar, a prominent figure in media arts, and Pingo van der Brinkloev, a digital artist from Denmark.

“Sonja” by The New Riga Theatre



PHOTO: GINTS MĀLDERIS

13 February 20:30

14 February 20:30

**Duration: 1h 40 min
(no intermission)**

Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

Cast:

Actors – **Gundars Āboliņš, Jevgēnijs Isajevs**
Director – **Alvis Hermanis**
Designer – **Kristīne Jurjāne**
Sound – **Andris Jarāns**
Light – **Arturs Skujiņš-Meiļiņš**
Stage technicians – **Kārlis Tone, Jānis Smirnovs**
Stage manager – **Linda Zaharova**
Tour manager – **Eliņa Adamaite**

“There was a person and there isn’t a person any more. Only the name has remained – Sonja...”

— **Tatiana Tolstaya**

The performance is based on a short story by Tatiana Tolstaya. Tolstaya’s writings are characterised by an admirable depth of knowledge when it comes to human nature, something that is accompanied by a sophisticated commentary and precise observation of contemporary society. *Sonja* is an ironically sympathetic, grotesque and sad story – an impressionistic miniature about a lonely woman, whose fate has played a mean trick on her.

Sonja is a little dense, a little ugly, a little lonely. But she does have some talents: she is an excellent cook and seamstress, and is great at getting on people’s nerves. Then one day she receives a love letter, passionate and serious, and *Sonja*’s heart is aflame. Little does she realise that the letter was written by her evil friend, Ada. The letter changes *Sonja*’s life forever.

The premiere of this performance was held in 11 April 2006.

www.jrt.lv

The young Latvian conductor, **Andris Nelsons**, once referred to as ‘the new Karajan’, brings the house down in opera and concert halls alike. He guides the *Royal Concertgebouw* on a journey through the music of Mozart and Shostakovich and the Oboe Concerto that Richard Strauss composed at 81 years of age. This charming, melodic work is a real technical *tour de force* for oboists, and the Russian Alexei Ogrintchouk has agreed to take up the challenge.

Born in Riga in 1978 into a family of musicians, Nelsons began his career as a trumpeter before studying conducting. He was the principal conductor for the *Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie* in Herford, Germany, and musical director for the Latvian National Opera.

Now Andris Nelsons is the musical director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and has been **critically acclaimed** as music director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

www.andrisnelsons.com

Andris Nelsons and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra

12 March 20:00 **Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels**
www.bozar.be

Andris Nelsons, conductor
Alexei Ogrintchouk, oboe
Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra



© MARCO BORGGREVE

Laima Jansone Trio: Zarbugans

15 March 11:00 **Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels**
www.bozar.be



PHOTO: F64 PHOTO AGENCY

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

17 January
Studio 1, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

4 May
Neumünster Abbey, Luxembourg
www.neimenster.lu

“The interplay between a jazz musician and a folk musician in finding common ground cannot possibly be easy. Yet it allows one to step back from jazz standards...”

— **Ģirts Pavēnis**, jazzmusic.lv

The Trio first appeared on stage at the *Rīgas Ritmi* Festival in 2012, when the Latvian *kokle* folk instrument player, **Laima Jansone**, performed together with percussionist **Artis Orubs** and bassist **Andris Grunte**. They revealed a new melodic synthesis, one that was unique and uncommon to jazz music. *All About Jazz* called the project ‘the find of the Festival’, as well as foreseeing a prosperous future for it. During *Rīgas Ritmi 2013*, the audience had the chance to witness the Trio’s new concert programme, *Zarbugans*, influenced by both **jazz and folk**. The Trio continued to impress with their unique synthesis of modern and traditional music, joined by the extraordinary stage layout and the visual presence of other musicians.

www.laimajansone.com

Over the past few years **Iveta Apkalna** has succeeded in ‘wiping off the dust’ from the queen of all musical instruments and establishing a new reputation for the organ. Through her compelling performances, technical brilliance, and charismatic stage presence, she has made it her mission to bring the splendour of organ music beyond the church walls and into the concert halls.

Iveta Apkalna, as a soloist and also performing with some of the world’s top orchestras, appears in concerts throughout the world, shining in prestigious concert halls and the leading festivals around Europe. In 2005 she became the **first organist** ever to receive *ECHO Klassik* as the “Best Performing Artist”. In the 2014–2015 season, Ms Apkalna performs with the Berlin Radio Symphony under Marek Janowski, and with the Liège and Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestras among others.

www.apkalna.com

Iveta Apkalna: The Splendour of Organ

4 June 20:00

The Cathedral of St Michael and St Gudula, Brussels
www.cathedralestmichel.be

In the programme of the Bozar Centre for Fine Arts
www.bozar.be



PHOTO: NILS VILNIS

Baiba Skride & Friends

15 June 20:00

Royal Conservatory of Brussels, Brussels
www.conservatoire.be

In the programme of the *Bozar Centre for Fine Arts*
www.bozar.be

Baiba Skride, Gergana Gergova, violin
Brett Dean, Nils Monkemeyer, alto
Alban Gerhardt, cello



© MARCO BORGREVE

Closing Event of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Latvian Radio Big Band, Maestro Raimonds Pauls,
Kristīne Prauliņa and Intars Busulis

16 June 20:15 Studio 4, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be



VOCALIST KRISTĪNE PRAULIŅA AND THE LATVIAN RADIO BIG BAND

*"It was a typical Skride performance: passionate
and risk-taking."*

— *The Guardian*, 21 October 2013

The Latvian violinist, **Baiba Skride**, performs in the company of three highly talented musicians in a programme of string quintets that spans three centuries and three eras: Classicism in the case of Mozart, Romanticism with Brahms, and contemporary music by the Australian composer, Brett Dean, born in 1961.

Baiba Skride's natural approach to her music-making has endeared her to some of today's most important conductors and orchestras worldwide. Following her debut at the BBC *Proms* with the Oslo Philharmonic and Vasily Petrenko with Szymanowski Concerto No.1, Geoff Brown in *The Times* noted, "Latvian violinist Baiba Skride sailed over the orchestra's magic forest with long lines of melody, **silver and sweet**." Skride plays the Stradivarius "Ex Baron Feilitzsch" violin (1734), which is generously on loan to her from Gidon Kremer.

www.baibaskride.com

*"Just played with the amazing Latvian
Radio Big Band! These guys (and gal) can
hold their own with any big band on the
planet! Great section work and sound,
killer soloists and swingin' rhythm section!
You can't ask for more than that!"*

— *Randy Brecker*

The **Latvian Radio Big Band** has been revived after a sixteen year break and the new creative team behind it consists of composer and pianist, Maestro Raimonds Pauls, producer and jazz musician Māris Briežkalns, and conductor, jazz performer, and saxophonist Kārlis Vanags. In this project, the team will perform jazz classics and also new melodies, some of them specifically composed for the young jazz and gospel singer Kristīne Prauliņa's voice, as well as **special arrangements** of both old and new pieces and Georgian composer Giya Kancheli's film melodies.

www.rigasritmi.lv
www.raimondspauls.lv

Belarus

25 – 27 March
Latvian Cinema Days in Minsk

27 March – 24 April
Exhibition "Amber – Jewel of the Baltic Sea"

31 March
The Latvian Radio Choir: Mother Teresa Prayer

April – September
Exhibition "Love Is Never-Ending"

June – July
Exhibition "Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist"

Road movie "Planet Amber"

Mother Teresa Prayer

31 March

Belarusian State Philharmonic, Minsk
www.philharmonic.by

"In the silence of the heart God speaks.
If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you."
— Mother Teresa



COURTESY OF LATVIJAS KONCERTI

www.radiokoris.lv (see page 16)
www.sinfoniettariga.lv (see page 14)

The exhibition is aimed at introducing European society to the greatest Latvian personalities of the twentieth century – the litterateurs, Rainis and Aspazija, stimulating interest in the most significant achievements of their creative work, and their contribution to the development of the **history of ideas** in the context of the development of global culture and society. The exhibition is intended as a dialogue between two personalities through their ideas and creative work.

In the revelation of the exhibition's content an essential role is played by mutual correspondence between the poets – their love, their quest for creative work, and their **future vision**. This correspondence was acknowledged as being a significant part of the world's cultural and living history, and it was entered into the Latvian National Register for the UNESCO 'Memory of the World Programme'. Their 150th anniversary is marked on the UNESCO memorable date calendar.

www.memorialiemuzeji.lv

Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist The Story of Two Latvian Poets

June – July

Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum, Minsk
kupala-museum.by



RAINIS AND ASPAZIJA AT THE SEASIDE TOWN OF JŪRMĀLA, 1905. PHOTO: UNKNOWN. RTMM 18675

ALSO IN:

20 – 24 April
UNESCO House,
Salle des Pas Perdus,
Paris, France
en.unesco.org

May
Kirov, Russia

The premiere of the concert, *Mother Teresa Prayer*, was held in Riga Cathedral on 28 November 2012 and included three world premieres by three Latvian composers: *Lord, Open our Eyes* by Pēteris Vasks; *Litany to Mother Teresa* by Andrejs Selickis; and *Silence, Love and Light* by Rihards Dubra. The programme was conceived, produced and conducted by **Sigvards Kļava**, and was performed by the Latvian Radio Choir and the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra, along with soloists from the **Riga Dome Choir School**.

This programme revolves around Mother Teresa and the music is featuring the power of faith that she inspired. The concert is sculptured as a musical commemoration in which Mother Teresa simultaneously prays for herself and for the entire world.

ALSO PERFORMING:

12 February
National Philharmonic of
Ukraine, Kiev, Ukraine
www.filarmonia.com.ua

RĪGA | 2014

EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Amber – Jewel of the Baltic Sea

27 March – 24 April

The National History Museum of the Republic of
Belarus, Minsk
history.museum.by



PHOTO: ROBERTS KANIŅŠ, NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LATVIA

SEE ALSO IN:

5 – 30 June
The Kyiv History Museum, Kiev, Ukraine
www.kyivhistorymuseum.org

When the world was younger, ships, explorers and merchants carried not only foreign goods, but also stories. Those stories drew a map of the world and taught people that there are broader horizons beyond their own fence. Baltic amber has always been valued as the **Gold of the North**, so two young Latvians set out on the ancient amber trade route from the Baltic coast to the south of India to learn how this Stone of the Sun has changed the world we live in. The idea behind the project is to break down old stereotypes of amber as an archaic relic with cultural and historical dimensions and shape a brand new identity image of amber.

www.vfs.lv

RĪGA | 2014

EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

The exhibition is a thematic message revealing the spread of amber, the Baltic Sea area as an amber crossroads, the amber road and the cultures involved, and also amber in mythology and folklore.

Amber has been known in the territory of Latvia since the end of the early Neolithic (approximately the second half of the fourth century BC). It was treated as a jewel and was **the most valuable** of export goods. The art of processing amber was very highly developed. It was sewn into clothes, used in ornaments and jewellery, and even placed into graves along with the deceased.

Amber jewellery still retains its place in Latvian lifestyle. Time has not changed the material, but types of ornaments have changed along with time and fashion. Heavy strings of precisely processed egg-shaped beads were popular in the second quarter of the twentieth century. During that time, amber ornaments served to a certain extent as an acknowledgement of **Latvian taste** while under Soviet occupation.

www.lnvm.lv

Planet Amber

Road movie, 90 minutes

The travellers: **Marta Selecka** and **Gustavs Terzens**
Director: **Uģis Olte**



PHOTO: UĢIS OLTE

Latvian Cinema Days in Minsk

25 – 27 March

Pobeda Cinema, Minsk
www.kinominska.by/cinema/23/



THE CHIMNEY (LAILA PAKALNIŅA, 2013)

Nine complimentary screenings at the *Pobeda* cinema, a multifaceted programme with a broad spectrum, beginning with the public's good old favourites to the most recent award-winning films. The selection contains a programme of children's animated short films, adult short films, documentaries, and a programme of films by the widely-acclaimed Latvian director, **Laila Pakalniņa**.

The aim of the *Love Is Never-Ending* exhibition is to give a snapshot of Latvian contemporary art by taking a brief look at the history of contemporary art since 1990 and the current tendencies in art in Latvia: the so called **"reporting" trend** in contemporary art, formalism and neo-conceptualism. Each artwork in the exhibition will be accompanied by a text about the work itself and its role in Latvian art as a whole, along with information about the author. The exhibition will be set out in chronological order.

The name of the exhibition – *Love Is Never-Ending* (*Mīlestība nekad nebeidzas*) – is taken from the 2008 work by **Sarmīte Māliņa** and **Kristaps Kalns** which will be included in the exhibition. The artists created this piece as an ironic nostalgic reflection on the past in which banal old objects – bedroom furniture and its components – are turned into impressive minimalistic compositions. This work can be interpreted as a contemporary take on the *vanitas* theme. It thus has a deeper semantic meaning: the triumph of eternity over secular life which symbolises the purpose of creating any true work of art. The exhibition on the recent history and the overview of the current tendencies in Latvian contemporary art created especially for Belarus will also have the same focus.

Exhibition "Love Is Never-Ending"

April – September

Yakub Kolas Square, Minsk

Organiser: **Institute for Contemporary Art, Riga**,
in collaboration with **the Museum of Modern
Fine Art, Minsk, Belarus**
www.artmodern.museum.by



SARMĪTE MĀLIŅA,
KRISTAPS KALNS. *LOVE IS
NEVER-ENDING*, 2008.
PHOTO: KRISTAPS KALNS

China

5 January – as long as the weather allows

Latvian Artists at the Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival

2 – 12 March

Art Project "World Cities. Live Paintings"

April

Folk Dance Group "Daiļrade" and Crafts Fair

16 and 17 June

The Latvian National Ballet: The Sleeping Beauty

Latvian Artists at the Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival

5 January – as long as the weather conditions allow

Harbin city, Heilongjiang

The Harbin International Ice and Snow Sculpture Festival is one of the world's largest ice and snow art events and has brought together thousands of artists from around the world every winter since 1985. A number of local and international competitions take place during the Festival. For Latvia, the two most important are the International Snow Sculpture Competition and the International Ice Sculpture Competition, as Latvia has its own world champion in these areas.

Yes, it turns out that Latvia excels not only in winter sports, but also in **winter arts**. This is the third time the artist Kārlis Īle and his colleagues represent Latvia in Harbin. In 2011, he won first place in the ice sculpture competition, and in 2012 he took second place in the ice sculpture competition and first place in the snow sculpture competition.

This year, the Latvian artists – **Kārlis Īle, Mintauts Buškevičs, Maija Puncule, and Ainars Zingņiks** – again were aiming for honours at these competitions and got rewarded with the first place in snow sculpture competition and second place in the ice sculpture competition.



THE SNOW SCULPTURE COMPETITION WINNER *INTERNAL BORDERS* TELLS THE STORY ABOUT BORDERS WITHIN PEOPLE'S MIND AND THE NECESSITY TO OVERCOME THEM. PHOTO: LI KE REN



THE SCULPTURE *RAIN DOG* BY KĀRLIS ĪLE AND MINTAUTS BUŠKEVIČS WAS AWARDED SECOND PLACE AND DEPICTS A WET LITTLE DOG WHO LOYALLY FOLLOWS ITS OWNER DURING A RAINFALL. PHOTO: LI KE REN

The Latvian National Ballet

The Latvian National Ballet is the only professional ballet company in Latvia. The history of the Latvian ballet has had close ties with the finest traditions of the Russian school of classical ballet for more than ninety years. These have been passed down from generation to generation, and eventually gave the world such Riga-trained ballet stars as **Mikhail Baryshnikov, Māris Liepa,** and **Alexander Godunov.**

Tchaikovsky's beautiful music and the magnificent stage design take the audience to the wonderland of fairies, fairytale characters, princesses and evildoers. In a distant kingdom, fairies arrive to a christening ceremony of the baby princess Aurora to give the little girl beauty, wisdom and kindness. Only the evil fairy Carabosse, whom the Master of Ceremonies has forgotten to invite, takes revenge by placing a curse – on her sixteenth birthday, the Princess will prick her finger on a spindle and die.

"*The Sleeping Beauty* is a benchmark of the classical ballet. The dancers are required to have flawless sense of style, especially perfect hand and foot positions. [...] it is well suited to our company as it has many larger and smaller roles, with **technically demanding** dancing not only for the leading soloists, but also for the fairies, jewels and other roles. I think this ballet may also pride one of the most challenging female roles in the classical ballet – the princess Aurora's role, which can be performed only by the best ballerinas," says **Aivars Leimanis**, the Head of the Latvian National Ballet.

The original choreography by Marius Petipa has been kept for this staging by the Latvian National Ballet.

www.opera.lv

The Sleeping Beauty

16 and 17 June

National Centre of Performing Arts (NCPA), Beijing
www.chncpa.org

Ballet in three acts
By **Pyotr Tchaikovsky**

Choreographer – **Marius Petipa, Aivars Leimanis**

Aurora – **Baiba Kokina, Elza Leimane-Martino**
Prince Desire – **Sergei Neikshin, Viktors Seiko**
The Lilac Fairy – **Alise Prudāne**
The Evil Fairy Carabosse – **Ieva Rācene**



PHOTO: ANDRIS TONE, COURTESY OF THE LATVIAN NATIONAL OPERA

Folk Dance Group "Daiļrade" and Crafts Fair

April For information on place and time visit
eu2015.lv/latvia-en/cultural-programme



FOLK DANCE ENSEMBLE DAIĻRADE PERFORMING AT THE FINAL COMPETITION OF DANCE ENSEMBLES DURING THE 15TH NATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL

In spring 2015 the residents and visitors of Beijing will have the opportunity to experience **Latvian culture**. Performances will be held by the *Daiļrade* folk dance group, and, guided by the artisans of the Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia, everyone will have a chance to try out a variety of Latvian handicraft skills like weaving, clay and amber processing, wood-carving, and others.

Daiļrade folk dance group was founded in 1990. The repertoire includes not only well-known traditional dances but also innovative performances that have earned the name "folk-ballet".

The **Ethnographic Open-Air Museum** of Latvia was established in 1924. The museum collects documents and preserves the objects of folk building monuments of Latvian historical and ethnographical regions, along with evidence of the way of life and culture of the rural population, characteristic to the period from the 17th to the 20th century.

www.tda-dailrade.lv
www.brivdabasmuzejs.lv

Art Project "World Cities. Live Paintings"

2 – 12 March

Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Design,
Hong Kong
www.sd.polyu.edu.hk



PLEIN AIR IN THE HONG KONG MUSEUM OF ART. PHOTO: FROM THE ARCHIVE OF THE AAL

The Rector of the Art Academy of Latvia, Professor Aleksejs Naumovs, and Pro-rector Professor Kristaps Zariņš are returning to Hong Kong to continue work on the *World Cities. Live Paintings* project, painting Hong Kong *en plein air* and supplementing the exhibition in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Design, one of the most distinguished design education centres in the world.

The exhibited works reflect impressions gained in the world's metropolises and culturally rich European cities. The viewer is taken on a colourful journey from Riga to Washington, Miami, New York, Hong Kong, Venice, Paris and countless other destinations. Most paintings in the exhibition were created outdoors in a dynamic setting in order to capture a particular moment – usually on a large-scale canvas with expressive brushstrokes, mixing pigments directly on the surface of the painting. The whole process is determined by the situation – in sunshine or rain, in company or in solitude, the artists paint their landscapes in the course of a few hours.

www.lma.lv

France

- ▶ **14 – 20 January**
Exhibition "A Glimpse of Latvia. Nature and Architecture"
- ▶ **6 February**
Vestards Šimkus Piano Recital
- ▶ **9 – 15 February**
Latvian Days in Strasbourg:
- ▶ **11 February**
Accordionist Ksenija Sidorova Concert
- ▶ **10 – 15 February**
Exhibition "Breakfast in Europe"
- ▶ **30 March – 15 April**
Exhibition "The Synthetic Evolution. Gints Gabrāns"
- ▶ **20 – 24 April**
Exhibition "Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist"
- ▶ **18 May**
The Verdi Requiem
- ▶ **9 June**
The Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra with
Ainārs Rubiķis and Reinis Zariņš

Exhibition "A Glimpse of Latvia. Nature and Architecture" The Official Opening of the Latvian Presidency in Strasbourg

14 – 20 January

The European Parliament in Strasbourg

Louise Weiss building
Allée du Printemps, 67070 Strasbourg



PHOTO: JURIS KALNIŅŠ

Cities are places where nature meets civilisation. The exhibition focuses the spectators' attention on Latvia's great advantage – the harmonious equilibrium between nature and the urban landscape. For example, in the photograph showing Latvia's most beautiful small town, Kuldīga, we see the **Venta waterfall**, which is Europe's widest natural waterfall, together with the elegant 19th century bridge. Photographers: Juris Kalniņš, Indriķis Stūrmanis and others. J. Kalniņš' pictures of the earth's ornaments illustrate the book *The Possible Europe* by the French thinker Bernard Sordet, published in Riga in 2014. The exhibition contains several of the photographs from the book.

Vestards Šimkus Piano Recital

6 February 20:30

Salle Cortot, Paris
www.sallecortot.com



PHOTO: JĀNIS DEINĀTS

Vestards Šimkus is a true pantheist of the Olympus of Latvian musicians. For him, one of the cornerstones of harmonious creative existence is to be in harmony with nature and the change of seasons. Long strolls in the woods and the surrounding countryside, a healthy lifestyle, and the loving aura of his family are part of his daily life.

In the creative sense, Vestards Šimkus is a king of the moment, and a master of momentary magic. His former composition teacher is the world famous Latvian composer, **Pēteris Vasks**, who is still an ardent admirer of the pianist. Vestards does not write much, and his compositions written so far have been like flickers, fixed improvisations given their real colour by the author's incredibly skilful fingers.

At *Salle Cortot*, Vestards Šimkus will perform his own **Dreamscapes**. *Nine Etudes for Piano*, which made their debut in the autumn of 2014. In November 2014, Vestards Šimkus performed his new miniature score series at the prestigious annual Lucerne Festival at the Piano. Each dreamscape is given a figurative name, and the images include phenomena such as silvery dark trees, floating stars, parallel dream time, forgotten dream, and reality.

Along with his own miniature score series, Vestards Šimkus will perform Johann Sebastian Bach's chorale preludes arranged for the piano by Ferruccio Busoni.

Latvian Days in Strasbourg 9 – 15 February

Accordion is still a relatively young instrument on the classical platform. Since the major changes in its mechanics made in 1960s, its own original repertoire started to grow rapidly, which strengthened instrument's identity.

"In the concert you will hear some of the most popular original compositions written for accordion as well as transcriptions of classical works to which accordion brings a new life. And one of the works, Nyzhnyk's *Sansara*, is getting its French premiere tonight," says the Latvian accordionist **Ksenija Sidorova**.

Ksenija was encouraged by her grandmother to take up the accordion at the age of eight. At 16 she went to London to study with Owen Murray at the Royal Academy of Music where she was a prize winning undergraduate and went on to receive a Masters with Distinction. She was also awarded the Philharmonia Orchestra Martin Musical Scholarship and the Philharmonia Orchestra Friends Award. She was the first accordion player to win the prestigious WCoM Prince's Prize.

Past engagements include performances with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, *Sinfonietta Riga*, *Kremerata Baltica*, the Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre and CBSO, and other.

www.ksenijasidorova.com

Accordionist Ksenija Sidorova

11 February 18:30 **Salle du Münsterhof**
9, rue des Juifs, Strasbourg



PHOTO: JOHN KENTISH

Breakfast in Europe: Art Exhibition by Professors of the Art Academy of Latvia

10 – 15 February

The European Parliamentary Association, Strasbourg
www.ape-europa.eu



PHOTO: INESE KUNDZIŅA

At the exhibition professors of the Art Academy of Latvia, publicly known artists from different areas of art, creatively share their impressions of travels around Europe. The exhibition comprises of **porcelain plates** that are of the same size but carry different content, over-painted in each author's peculiar handwriting. Their motifs are explained by sources of inspiration on the walls – photo fixations of special moments that have been experienced around Europe.

The exhibition is made up in the form of a **collection of stories** and reflects the different experiences and viewpoints of artists and lures viewers into an enticing visual adventure. The exhibition also reminds one of the pride of Latvia – the success story behind the *Baltars* porcelain workshop in the 1920s.

www.lma.lv

The Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra with Ainārs Rubiķis and Reinis Zariņš

9 June 20:00

Cité de la musique et de la danse, Strasbourg
www.conservatoire.strasbourg.eu



REINIS ZARIŅŠ. PHOTO: AIGA OZO

By invitation from the Strasbourg Philharmonic Orchestra, in this concert it will be led by the Latvian **Ainārs Rubiķis**, music director and conductor of the Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet Theatre. The concert programme features Wagner's symphonic poem *Siegfried Idyll* and works by two Latvian composers. One will be **Pēteris Plakidis** with the masterpiece composed in his early days, *Music for Piano, Strings and Timpani*. The solo will be performed by a young Latvian pianist living in London, **Reinis Zariņš**. He is an architect of sounds who has a unique mindset and brilliant technique, with an exceptional ability to paint the picture of each opus in great detail. The other work will be **Pēteris Vask's** orchestral piece *Viatore*. The winner of the Gustav Mahler Conducting Competition in 2010, Ainārs Rubiķis, is a new maestro who is very popular throughout Europe. This season he will make his debut with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and perform with Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Gulbenkia Orchestra and the *Orchestre National d'Île-de-France*.

On 18 May, the Verdi *Requiem* concert in Paris will be performed by the **Latvian National Symphony Orchestra** and conducted by its Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, **Andris Poga**, who is known to Parisian audiences from his time as Assistant Conductor of the *Orchestre de Paris* from 2011 to 2014.

The quartet of soloists will also be extraordinary: the soprano part will be sung by **Maija Kovalevska**, a regular guest of the Vienna State and the New York Metropolitan operas; the mezzo-soprano by Olesya Petrova, a St Petersburg Conservatory Opera Theatre soloist and a guest soloist with the Perm Opera; the tenor by Giorgio Berrugi; and the bass by **Egils Siliņš**, one of the most sought-after basses for Wagner and Richard Strauss interpretations.

They will be joined by the **State Choir Latvija** which has performed Verdi's *Requiem* with the best conductors in the world for the last four decades.

www.lns.lv
www.koris.lv

The Verdi Requiem

18 May 20:00

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris
www.theatrechampselysees.fr



CONDUCTOR ANDRIS POGA. PHOTO: JĀNIS DEINĀTS

The Synthetic Evolution. Gints Gabrāns

30 March – 15 April

Society for the Encouragement of National Industry/
Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale
(SEIN), Paris
www.industrienationale.fr



GINTS GABRĀNS. FROM NO WHERE. 2010 – 2014

The works by Gints Gabrāns are the obvious choice for the exhibition. For many years he incorporates new technologies and achievements in science in his works encouraging the spectators to enjoy new experiences of perception and cognition revealing the hidden beauty of the reality invisible to human eye.

The exhibition consists of works from the series *Out of Nowhere* which helps us to see how complex structures are spontaneously created through a natural process of form-creation according to the principles of chaos and self-organisation. The plastic sculptures have been made using a simple physical process – pouring liquefied polyethylene in cold water. Thus, spontaneously complex forms and structures are created as a result of the self-organisation principle.

According to the philosophy of the SEIN, a special event which interweaves arts and crafts, new technologies and economics will take place during the exhibition: a conference on Digital Europe, a priority of the Latvian Presidency in the Council of EU.

www.gabrāns.com

The exhibition is aimed at introducing European society to the greatest Latvian personalities of the twentieth century – the litterateurs, Rainis and Aspazija, stimulating interest in the most significant achievements of their creative work, and their contribution to the development of the history of ideas in the context of the development of global culture and society. The exhibition is intended as a **dialogue** between two personalities through their ideas and creative work.

In the revelation of the exhibition's content an essential role is played by mutual correspondence between the poets – their love, their quest for creative work, and their future vision. This correspondence was acknowledged as being a **significant part** of the world's cultural and living history, and it was entered into the Latvian National Register for the UNESCO 'Memory of the World Programme'. Their 150th anniversary is marked on the UNESCO memorable date calendar.

www.memorialiemuzeji.lv

Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist The Story of Two Latvian Poets

20 – 24 April

UNESCO House, *Salle des Pas Perdus*, Paris, en.unesco.org



RAINIS AND ASPAZIJA, 1905. PHOTO: UNKNOWN. RTMM 95558

ALSO IN:

May: Kirov, Russia

June: Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum, Minsk, Belarus
kupala-museum.by

Germany

16 January
The Opening Ceremony of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

9 February
Sinfonietta Rīga and Violinist Vineta Sareika

9 and 14 March
Sinfonietta Rīga and Violinist Baiba Skride

20 March – 19 April
Exhibition “Ornaments of the Latvian Soul in Clothing, Music, Songs and Dances”

19 May
Opera “Valentina”
Guest Performance of the Latvian National Opera

The Opening Ceremony of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

16 January

Rotes Rathaus, Berlin
Rathausstraße, 10178



STATE CHOIR LATVIJA. PHOTO: KASPARS ALKSNIS

Opening the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, **the State Choir Latvija** will give a solo concert in Berlin with an *a cappella* music programme and choral music from the creative work of Latvian composers Pēteris Vasks, Ēriks Ešenvalds, Gundega Šmite, and also Valentyn Sylvestrov, Veljo Tormis, Paweł Łukaszewski, and Josef Rheinberger. The State Choir *Latvija* is a frequent guest in German concert life, with regular collaboration proposals from the best German orchestras. The choir's performance in 2009 at the biggest music event in Germany, the *Rheingau Musik Festival*, was very special, with a performance of Rodion Shchedrin's lengthy *a cappella* liturgy, *The Sealed Angel*, after which the composer named the State Choir *Latvija* as “the best choir in the world”. It's Music Director and Conductor – **Māris Sirmāis**.

More about the State Choir *Latvija* see page 20.

www.koris.lv
www.eriksesenvalds.com

PERFORMING ALSO IN:

Riga, Latvia (see page 32 and 38)
Paris, France (see page 68)
New York, USA (see page 100)

Sinfonietta Riga and Vineta Sareika

9 February

Mozart Saal, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Frankfurt
www.alteoper.de



PHOTO: JĀNIS DEINĀTS, COURTESY OF VINETA SAREIKA

At this concert, the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra will be joined by the bright young Latvian violinist Vineta Sareika, first violin in the world famous *Artemis String Quartet*, with a **diverse programme** that contains Classicism, Romanticism and twenty-first century music. She will play solo in Pēteris Vasks' fantasy, *Vox Amoris*, for violin and string orchestra, which is designed as a message about the world's greatest power – love.

The concert programme features an opus for string orchestra called *Elongation of Nights* by the Lithuanian composer Justė Janulytė, known for her delicately beautiful and dimensional music. This composition is dedicated to Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, in autumn. *Sinfonietta Riga* has also experienced a significant level of cooperation with the remarkable Estonian composer, Erkki-Sven Tüür. His composition, *Lighthouse*, is marked by a colourful palette of vital string instruments.

www.sinfoniettariga.lv
www.vineta-sareika.com

Sinfonietta Riga and Baiba Skride



© MARCO BORGGREVE

More on *Sinfonietta Riga* see page 14.

www.sinfoniettariga.lv
www.baibaskride.com

9 March

Laeiszhalle Hamburg, Kleiner Saal, Hamburg
www.elbphilharmonie.de

The sublime works by Vienna classicists and the music by Pēteris Vasks, the most well-known Latvian composer in the world, will be presented at *Laeiszhalle* Hamburg by the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra and the brilliant Latvian violinist Baiba Skride who is giving concerts around the world extensively. Skride is going to play Pēteris Vasks' Violin Concerto ***Distant Light***. The violin concerto was written in 1997 as commissioned by the Salzburg Festival. It is one of the most often performed pieces of music on the world stage; and Vasks describes *Distant Light* as "nostalgia with a touch of tragedy – childhood memories".

14 March

Herkulesaal der Residenz, Munich
www.muenchenmusik.de

This time the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra and the great Latvian violinist, Baiba Skride, will perform the **sublime compositions** of Viennese classics and the music of Latvia's most-recognised composer, Pēteris Vasks. Baiba will also play solo in Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto.

In 2001 Baiba won the prestigious Queen Elizabeth Music Competition in Brussels. Since then she has performed with prestigious orchestras and collaborated with numerous conductors. Baiba also performs chamber music concerts with her sister pianist, Lauma Skride.

RĪGA 2014

EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Opera "Valentina"

19 May

Deutsche Oper Berlin, Berlin
www.deutscheoperberlin.de

Opera in two acts by Arturs Maskats

Libretto by Liāna Langa and Arturs Maskats

Valentina – Inga Kalna

Music Director and Conductor – Modestas Pitrenas

Stage Director – Viestur Kairihs

Set and Costume Designer – Ieva Jurjāne

Light Designer – Nicol Hungsberg

Guest performance of the **Latvian National Opera** under the patronage of Minister for Foreign Affairs of Latvia, **Edgars Rinkēvičs**, and the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, **Frank-Walter Steinmeier**.



PHOTO: GUNĀRS JANAITIS, COURTESY OF THE LATVIAN NATIONAL OPERA

27 April

Jewish Museum Berlin, Berlin
www.jmberlin.de

A panel discussion prior the guest performance with musical contribution of soprano Inga Kalna and composer of the opera "Valentina", Arturs Maskats.

The first opera by the internationally renowned Latvian composer **Arturs Maskats**, entitled *Valentina*, celebrates a cultural legend – film historian **Valentina Freimane**. The opera reveals dramatic pages from the national chronicle between the years 1939 to 1944, which are remarkable moments of Latvian history and culture for the varied ethnic groups that live in Latvia. Valentina Freimane's childhood was divided between Riga and Berlin, where her father worked as a lawyer for UFA film studios, while her mother was an enchanting society lady. On their return to Riga, this future film historian's intelligentsia family was shocked and surprised by the ongoing **Holocaust** there. It claimed the lives of Valentina's parents and husband, and the young woman herself was forced to hide from the authorities until the end of the war.

"Valentina Freimane's life story is inextricably intertwined with events in Latvian and European history, giving a panoramic view of the era in all its richness of colour and in all its contradictions. The most dramatic moments in Valentina's life have coincided with the most notable events of twentieth century Latvian history: the loss of the country's independence and a time when an enormous **spiritual force** was required in order to survive both physically and morally. However, our opera is about more than simply politics: it is also a love story with deep feelings rooted throughout all of its events," says Arturs Maskats, the composer.

www.opera.lv

Seminar in the Honour of the 150th Anniversary of the Eminent Latvian Litterateurs Rainis and Aspazija

18 March

Bavarian State
Library, Munich
www.bsb-muenchen.de

Rainis (1865–1929) and **Aspazija** (1865–1943) were European and world class litterateurs and public figures. For over a century their creative work has served as a measure of Latvian literature and political public opinion. The contribution by these poets, especially Rainis, is still significant to the development of philosophical thought. They wrote plays and poems, worked as journalists, and translated world classics – Goethe, Ibsen, Shakespeare and Pushkin. He got involved in politics and became the minister for education. She fought for women's rights and didn't shy away from speaking about the inconsistent human nature.

Ornament (*raksts*) – to write (*rakstīt*) – to dig (*rakt*) means to engrave, to dint, to make symbols on material, to leave tracks. Ornament carries a **symbolic message** – ornament turns into writing. Ornament creates rhythm, and rhythm is an integral part of our life – sunrise and sunset, the rhythm of day and night, the rhythm of the change of the seasons.

Valdemārs Ģinters, archaeologist and researcher of antiquity, believed that “from the point of view of national art history, Latvian national costume is the most remarkable and varied Latvian cultural monument”. It is an extensive **carrier of information** not only about the culture, history, and ethnic peculiarities but also portrays its wearer's social status and the interaction of cultural ties with neighbouring nations.

The exhibition tells the story of the development of the **Song Festival** tradition in connection with the shaping of national self-awareness and the national costume as one of the forms of expression. It consists of 26 visual groups of regional national costumes. The audio-visual presentation will be given on screens with special sound solutions, displaying the meaning of song and dance in the Latvian perception of life, time, and space.

www.lnkc.gov.lv

Ornaments of the Latvian Soul in Clothing, Music, Songs and Dances

20 March – 19 April Opening 19 March

The Museum of Five Continents, Munich
www.museum-fuenf-kontinente.de



LATVIAN NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CULTURE. PHOTO: AIVARS LIEPINS

ALSO IN:

7 May – 7 June
Neumunster Abbey Cultural Exchange Center, Luxembourg
www.neimenster.lu

20 June – 30 August
Exhibition hall “RĪGA ART SPACE”, Riga
www.makslastelpa.lv

Italy

20 April
Kremerata Baltica and The Seasons Project

9 May – 22 November
Exhibition of Latvian Contemporary Art

29 May
Presentation of the TV Series
“In the Belly of the City – RĪGA”

10 June
The Latvian Radio Choir

Kremerata Baltica and The Seasons Project

20 April 21:00

Milan Conservatory, Sala Verdi, Milan
www.consmilano.it



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN LUTZ

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

Brussels, Belgium (see page 52 – 53)
Luxembourg (see page 81)
Odessa, Ukraine (see page 91)

The Latvian Contemporary Art exhibition in Venice Biennale will be a tool that helps to acquaint Europe with Latvian culture, which is one of the country's most high-quality and **remarkable export products**.

In this age of globalisation, it may sometimes seem that representing national schools and phenomena is not an activity that may be of topical interest; however, the show aims to prove that, regardless of the presence of cosmopolitan trends, there are certain features in the style of expression and the body of subject matters, that are shared throughout a specific country and therefore may seem particularly interesting to others. The starting point of the exhibition is the **Purvītis Award**, the most prestigious Latvian award in visual arts. The exhibition constitutes a set of works that, in their totality, are able to represent the style of expression, diversity of personalities, and professional qualities of Latvian contemporary art.

www.purvisabalva.lv

The innovative *Seasons Project* by **Philip Glass** juxtaposes Glass' magical new work, Violin Concerto No. 2 *The American Four Seasons*, with its inspiration, Vivaldi's classic, *The Four Seasons*. Unlike Vivaldi's set of four concertos, each with three movements brimming with material that is supposed to suggest spring, summer, winter and autumn, Glass' work is four unbroken single movements, between which the soloist is playing intermezzo-like songs as a kind of commentary on the whole piece. While they too are to be taken as harbingers of each season, the movements are untitled. "Therefore, there will be no instructions for the audience, no clues as to where Spring, Summer, Winter, and Fall might appear in the new concerto – an interesting, though not worrisome, problem for the listener," says Philip Glass.

The piece is supplemented with **video projections** by several persons, starting with Jonas Mekas, Rimas Sakalauskas, Adam Magyar and Pingo van der Brinkloev.

Exhibition of Latvian Contemporary Art

"Ornamentalisation. The Purvītis Prize"

9 May – 22 November

Collateral Event of the 56th International Art Exhibition at the Venice Biennale

Tesa 99, Arsenale di Venezia
labiennale.org

Curator: **Viktor Misiano**



KRISTAPS ĢELZIS. FABRICATED PEACE IV

The Latvian Radio Choir in Naples

10 June

Teatrino di Corte

Royal Palace, Piazza del Plebiscito 1, 80132 Naples

The Latvian Radio Choir under conductor **Sigvards Kļava** presents a special programme at the *Teatrino di Corte* concert hall which includes both world famous choral music masterpieces and lesser known compositions by Latvian composers.

Doppo la Vittoria – composer **Arvo Pärt's** piece for mixed choir a cappella in Italian – was commissioned by the City of Milan, which commemorated the 1600th anniversary of the death of St. Ambrose in 1997.

The latest composition by the Catalan composer **Bernat Vivancos** – *Lasciatemi morire* – was dedicated to the Latvian Radio Choir and is a transcription for a six-voice mixed choir that notates the well-known piece *Lasciatemi morire (Let me die)* by the legendary Italian composer Claudio Monteverdi. The audience in Naples will have the opportunity to experience the world premiere of this composition by Vivancos.

The interpretation by the Latvian Radio Choir and Sigvards Kļava of the composition *Muo:aa:yiy:oum*, which was written by the Swedish composer **Anders Hillborg**, has amazed and enraptured

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

Bruges, Belgium (see page 50)
Brussels, Belgium (see page 51)
Minsk, Belarus (see page 58)
Kiev, Ukraine (see page 91)
London, United Kingdom (see page 94)



COURTESY OF THE LATVIAN RADIO CHOIR

listeners all over the world. *Muo:aa:yiy:oum* is Hillborg's first choral composition. This piece with no words was written in 1983 and was composed solely to explore the substance of a human voice. The singers intonate drawn vowels and the sounds appear as if from an enigmatic subterranean orchestra. A void gives birth to sighing air; slowly this transforms into a Babylonian mess of language in which no particular word or language is recognisable – only voices, which resound in a wordless sound panorama until they ultimately find their way back to the void from which they came.

The first part of the concert concludes with **Gustav Mahler's Adagietto: Kein deutscher Himmel** from his fifth symphony, arranged for mixed choir by the composer Gérard Pesson.

The second part of the concert introduces the Italian audience to the most outstanding examples of choral music by Latvian composers **Ēriks Ešenvalds** and **Pēteris Vasks**. The performance is embellished with Latvian folk music and the participation of soloists Aleksandrs Maijers (mouth harp, percussions, pipes) and *kokle* player Laima Jansone.

Presentation of the TV documentary “In the Belly of the City – RĪGA”

29 May

Mercato Centrale Firenze
www.mercatocentrale.it



PHOTO: ULDIS CEKULIS, VFS FILMS

The TV series *In the Belly of the City* is a STEFILM International production that re-discovers the most exciting food markets in Europe. The first five programmes made in 2013 received the *US TASTE AWARDS* for ‘Best Foreign Language Program’ and the journey now goes on to reveal more beautiful, colourful and tasty markets in Florence, Freiburg, Zagreb, Toulouse and Riga. Each episode is dedicated to one city and underlines the importance which food has for us today.

The second season of the TV series goes hand in hand with the theme of *Expo Milano 2015 – Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*. In television broadcasts on Arte and other European channels, the Riga episode will highlight Latvian food traditions and invite viewers to experience the **tastes of Riga** for themselves. During the Latvian Presidency, a presentation of the Riga episode will take place in the *Mercato Centrale* in Florence.

www.vfs.lv

The city of Riga hosts the **largest covered food market** in Europe with 3 000 stalls housed in five large pavilions. Riga Central Market, which is on UNESCO’s World Heritage List as part of the historic centre of Riga, was built by transforming old Zeppelin hangars that had been left by the Germans after World War I. Nowadays, Riga Central Market is still the central meeting and trading point for food producers from all regions of Latvia and plays an important role in the city’s urban cultural scene as many creative events take place there.

During the Riga episode of the series, made by *VFS Films*, viewers will learn about several traditional Latvian products such as hemp butter, rye bread, healing herbs, sparkling birch sap wine and fried lampreys. During the presentation of the Riga episode in Florence, participants will be able to taste these Latvian products and **learn the secrets** of the Latvian traditional recipes together with Latvian chefs.

Luxembourg



5 – 31 March

Exhibition “Latvia. Paintings from Above”



22 April

Iveta Apkalna: The Splendour of Organ



3 – 10 May

Latvian Culture Week in Luxembourg



3 May

Latvian Dance Day: A Meeting Point for Traditional and Contemporary



4 May

Laima Jansone Trio: Zarbugans



4 May – 8 June

Exhibition “What Else Does Amber Have in Mind?”



4 – 18 May

Exhibition “Sun Stone”



5 May

Trio Colorato



6 May

“Miss Julie” and Valmiera Drama Theatre



7 May – 7 June

Exhibition “Ornaments of the Latvian Soul in Clothing, Music, Songs and Dances”



8 May

Art&Valt feat. Lara Bellerose



9 May

It is the Europe Day and Latvia – the Country of Honour



11 May

Kremerata Baltica and The Seasons Project

Exhibition “Latvia. Paintings from Above”

5 – 31 March

Court of Justice of the European Union
www.curia.europa.eu



BRASLA RIVER, GAUJA NATIONAL PARK, LATVIA. PHOTO: GUNĀRS DUKŠTE

Gunārs Dukšte – a licensed hot-air balloon pilot, instructor, examiner and inspector – is a ballooning pioneer in Latvia. He has been involved in ballooning since 1991 when the first hot-air balloon appeared in Latvia. Gunārs has flown in many international events, including major ones like the World Air Games, as well as championships and globally famous balloon fiestas – Bristol Balloon Fiesta (UK), Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (USA), Chateau d'Oex Ballooning Week (Swiss Alps) and others. He is a member of the British Balloon & Airship Club. After a **successful flight** over the North Pole, he is one of the few

global hot-air balloon pilots who has been awarded the title “Polar Balloon Aeronaut”.

For many years now Gunārs’ flight companion has been his **photo camera**. “Most of the photographs in this collection differ from traditional aerial photography. Don’t spend too much time trying to spot popular tourist and historical sites, or even classic “picture perfect” postcard scenes in this collection. The pictures contain my thoughts and some views of Latvia from above, images captured while coasting over the countryside. Each one is like a small painting created by the greatest artist of all, the Nature,” says Gunārs Dukšte.

Iveta Apkalna: The Splendour of Organ

22 April 20:00

Philharmonie Luxembourg
www.philharmonie.lu



PHOTO: NILS VILNIS

The innovative *Seasons Project* by Philip Glass juxtaposes Glass’ magical new work, Violin Concerto No. 2 *The American Four Seasons*, with its inspiration, Vivaldi’s classic, *The Four Seasons*. Thanks to the initiative of Gidon Kremer and Kristijonas Kučinskas, the piece is supplemented with **video projections** by Jonas Mekas, a filmmaker, poet and artist of Lithuanian origin who has often been called the godfather of American avant-garde cinema, plus Rimas Sakalauskas, a young and innovative video artist from Lithuania, Adam Magyar, a prominent figure in media arts, and Pingo van der Brinkloef, a digital artist from Denmark.

More about *Kremerata Baltica* see page 12.

www.kremerataltica.com
www.gidonkremer.net

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

Brussels, Belgium (see page 52 – 53)
Milan, Italy (see page 76)
Odessa, Ukraine (see page 91)

Over the past few years **Iveta Apkalna** has succeeded in ‘wiping off the dust’ from the queen of all musical instruments and establishing a new reputation for the organ. Through her compelling performances, technical brilliance, and charismatic stage presence, she has made it her mission to bring the splendour of organ music beyond the church walls and into the concert halls. In this concert, she performs together with the trumpet virtuoso **Gábor Boldoczki**.

www.apkalna.com

Kremerata Baltica and The Seasons Project

11 May 20:00

Philharmonie Luxembourg
www.philharmonie.lu



PHOTO: ANDREAS MALKMUS

Latvian Dance Day: A Meeting Point for Traditional and Contemporary

3 May 19:00
Bananefabrik
www.bananefabrik.lu

Programme:

- **2 short films** by Latvian Contemporary Dance artists;
- **An exposition** of Latvian traditional costumes, and photography of traditional dance from the Latvian Song and Dance festival;
- **An exposition** of three screens looping videos from the Latvian Song and Dance festival.

Performances:

- Dive by **Dmitrijs Gaitjukevičs**;
- Performed research in Dance conducted by **Elina Gaitjukeviča**;
- ACROSS (Šķērsām) by **Krišjānis Sants** and a team of Luxembourgian and Latvian dancers.



MALTA FESTIVAL POZNAN 2014. PHOTO: MARCIN OLIVA SOTO

The Trio first appeared on stage at the *Rigas Ritmi* Festival in 2012, when the Latvian *kokle* folk instrument player, **Laima Jansone**, performed together with percussionist **Artis Orubs** and bassist **Andris Grunte**. Their concert programme, *Zarbugans*, has been influenced by both jazz and folk. *Zarbugans* is not only the name of the programme and the subsequent album, but also a unique, especially-created instrument, adding to the trio's original and contrasting essence. After the *Zarbugans* concert everyone is welcome to join and experience folk dancing at its best Latvian folk-culture tradition. Participants will be able to learn and perform at the same time numerous simple couples and **group dances** distinct to Latvia and the Baltic region. Traditional music and dance steps will be performed by the folk group *Dzērves* and dancer Krišjānis Sants.

www.laimajansone.com

Laima Jansone Trio: Zarbugans

4 May
Agora, Neumünster Abbey
www.neimenster.lu



PHOTO: F64 PHOTO AGENCY

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

17 January
Studio 1, Flagey, Brussels
www.flagey.be

15 March
Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels
www.bozar.be

Trio Colorato

5 May
The Music Conservatory of Luxembourg
www.conservatoire.lu



COURTESY OF AGNESE NIKOLOVSKA

Trio Colorato includes musicians from Latvia, Italy and Luxembourg (Agnese Nikolovska – flute, Carlo Jans – flute and Stéphane Giampellegrini – cello) and performs classical and academic music written by composers from Latvia, Italy and Luxembourg – the countries of the **Trio Presidency**. It was established in 2009 and has given performances in Latvia, Luxembourg, Greece and the USA at various concerts and festivals. In this concert they will perform two Latvian folk songs, a piece by the Latvian composer Jānis Medīņš as well as works by Franz Anton Hoffmeister, Antonio Vivaldi, Giovanni Benedetto Platti and Luc Grethen.

The Art&Valt musical duo began their musical collaboration 10 years ago at the Emīls Dārziņš Music School. The duo was born when the two young musicians – **Valters Pūce** and **Artūrs Cingujevs** – felt they were on the same musical wavelength. The cellist Valters Pūce is currently studying at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels to earn his Master's degree. He also composes original pieces for the *DaGamba* cello band.

Artūrs Cingujevs' first success came in a piano competition in France when he was nine years old. In 2010, he graduated from the Tchaikovsky Moscow State Conservatory and was awarded the Gold Medal. He is continuing his education at the Conservatory as well as at the Bern University of the Arts.

The concert will also have a special guest – the Belgian singer **Lara Bellerose**.

Art&Valt feat. Lara Bellerose

8 May
Neumünster Abbey
www.abbaye.lu



PHOTO: VALTS KLEINS, COURTESY OF VALTERS PŪCE

Exhibition "What Else Does Amber Have in Mind?"

4 May – 8 June

Neumünster Abbey
www.neimuenster.lu

COURTESY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF LATVIA

Rīga Technical University scientist **Inga Lašenko** has transformed amber using new technologies; she is the creator of amber thread. She has won the prestigious World Intellectual Property Organisation's Gold Medal for Innovation and the Gold Medal for Learning. The full potential of **amber thread** is still being explored, but it is already clear that it has amazing medicinal properties: it can be used for constructing blood vessels in cardiovascular surgery. In addition, the researcher has developed a line of amber-based natural cosmetics.

At this exhibition however, amber thread has been transformed into works of art by **Iveta Vecenāne**, a Latvian textile artist. The artist experimented with the visually unobtrusive amber thread – examining how it combines with other fibres, how it drapes in fabrics, which weaving methods work, and how it interacts with light. She is the first artist in the world to work with this new amber innovation, experimenting with its nature and integrating it with traditional textile fibres.

The exhibition was created within the framework of the *Rīga 2014* European Capital of Culture programme.

Ornaments of the Latvian Soul in Clothing, Music, Songs and Dances

7 May – 7 June

Neumünster Abbey Cultural Exchange Center
www.neimuenster.luLATVIAN NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CULTURE.
PHOTO: AIVARS LIEPINS

ALSO IN:

20 March – 19 April
The Museum of Five Continents, Munich
www.museum-fuenf-kontinente.de

20 June – 30 August
Exhibition hall "RĪGA ART SPACE", Rīga
www.makslastelpa.lv

Valdemārs Ģinters, archaeologist and researcher of antiquity, believed that "from the point of view of national art history, Latvian national costume is the most remarkable and varied Latvian cultural monument". It is an extensive **carrier of information** not only about the culture, history, and ethnic peculiarities but also portrays its wearer's social status and the interaction of cultural ties with neighbouring nations.

The exhibition tells the story of the development of the **Song Festival** tradition in connection with the shaping of national self-awareness and the national costume as one of the forms of expression. It consists of 26 visual groups of regional national costumes. The audio-visual presentation will be given on screens with special sound solutions, displaying the meaning of song and dance in the Latvian perception of life, time, and space.

www.lnkc.gov.lv

Sun Stone is an innovative project through which the photographer **Andris Zēgners** breaks the common concept of amber. We are given a unique chance to look at a close-up of a forty million year old world in which amber itself as a matter used to function as a photographer by 're-cording' moments of prehistoric time. The artist has created a brand new visual environment from this ancient micro-reality with the help of a self-made and highly innovative technical system and macro photography.

Andris Zēgners is one of the most extraordinary Latvian artists of his generation, someone who has a fine perception of the visual vibrations of the world and an ability to transform them into unusual pieces of art. He is interested in the **structure and textures** of various objects and in nature elements – their exploration and creative transformation.

www.zegners.com

Exhibition "Sun Stone"

4 – 18 May

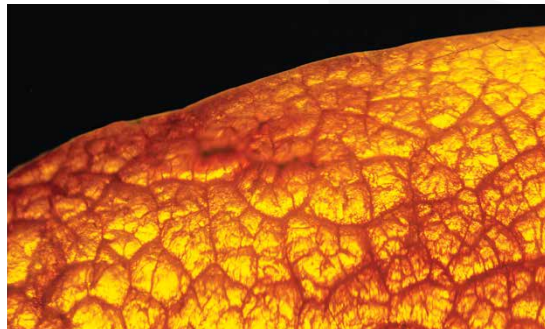
Neumünster Abbey
www.neimuenster.lu

PHOTO: ANDRIS ZĒGNERS

SEE ALSO IN:

15 – 30 April
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London
www.ebrd.com

26 May – 3 July
The Goldsmiths' Centre, London
www.goldsmiths-centre.org

A special concert programme called *New Latvian Jazz Songs*, created for singer **Kristīne Prauliņa** and her unique tone colour and style of singing by the Latvian pianist and composer Maestro Raimonds Pauls together with poet Guntars Račs, has already **enraptured audiences** at a number of concerts. The Latvian Radio Big Band under Kārlis Vanags has also created arrangements for these compositions.

Kristīne Prauliņa performs in Latvia and abroad not just as a soloist but also with a gospel choir and different jazz, blues and pop groups. In 2013, she won a singing competition as part of the *Ghetto Games* street sports and culture festival, gaining the opportunity to film a music video in New York. She has performed at several concerts with the Latvian Radio Big Band and Maestro Raimonds Pauls, and with other musical groups such as the Māris Briežkalns Quintet and the jazz-funk fusion band *Very Cool People*. She won the *Grand Prix* at the **Rīga Jazz Stage 2014** International Jazz Artists Contest and received the special prize from *Tele2*, the contest's partner company.

Kristīne Prauliņa in "New Latvian Jazz Songs" Project

May

For information on place and time visit
eu2015.lv/latvia-en/cultural-programme

SINGER KRISTĪNE PRAULIŅA

It is the Europe Day and Latvia – the Country of Honour

9 May Place Clairefontaine



LATVIAN FOLKLORE GROUP DZĒRVES FROM LUXEMBOURG. PHOTO: LIENE NEIMANE

Europe Day, held on 9 May, every year is celebrated by the European Commission Representation in Luxembourg (House of Europe) in cooperation with diplomatic missions, and this year Latvia will take the seat of honour. During the celebration EU Member States set up information stands/tents giving the opportunity to **find out more** about each state as well as try their traditional food and drinks. Latvia has not taken part in the festivities in the previous years; however, this year as the presiding country of the Council of the EU, Latvia will also have a stand. Along with the “exhibition” of the Member States, a stage is set up for different performances. Representing Latvia, both Latvian folklore group in Luxembourg *Dzērves* and Latvian Choir of Luxembourg *Meluzina* will take the stage.

www.dzerves.eu

The story of *Miss Julie* can be told in one sentence: on Midsummer’s Eve the young Count’s daughter becomes valet’s mistress and the next morning she commits suicide. Whereas before, amidst and after these events, a whirlwind of feelings, urges, resentment, memories of the past and dreams for the future sweep over.

The play in the Valmiera Drama Theatre version is very subtle and ascetic. Even though none of the characters – Miss Julie (Inese Pudža), Jean (Mārtiņš Meiers), his fiancée and the cook (Anta Aizupe) – raise their voice, the atmosphere among them is so tense you could cut it with a knife. The director **Vladislavs Nastavševs** (1978) doesn’t emphasize the difference in characters’ statuses; he focuses on how each of them tries to understand themselves and reach the perfect and unattainable “self”.

The Valmiera Drama Theatre founded in 1923 is the cultural centre of the town of Valmiera. In 1960s, it became the centre for modern theatre production in Latvia. Since then the interest on elite experiments and contemporary theatrical forms has only grown. The repertoire of the theatre features classics interpreted in a contemporary way and modern Latvian drama.

www.vdt.lv

“Miss Julie” and Valmiera Drama Theatre

6 May

Neumünster Abbey
www.neimenster.lu



PHOTO: MATISS MARKOVSKIS

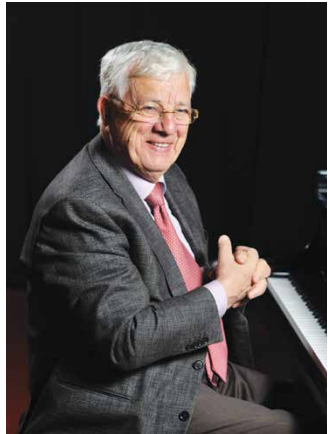
Russia

- **28 January**
Latvian Radio Big Band and Maestro Raimonds Pauls
- **27 March – 10 May**
Exhibition “Andris Freibergs. Scenography”
- **15 May – 15 June**
Exhibition “Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist”
- **17 June**
Sinfonietta Rīga: Chamber Orchestras of the World
- **27 – 28 June**
Traditional Latvian Music and Crafts in Moscow

Latvian Radio Big Band and Maestro Raimonds Pauls

28 January

Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, Moscow
www.meloman.ru



PIANIST, COMPOSER MAESTRO RAIMONDS PAULS

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

12 June
Studio 4, Flagey,
Brussels, Belgium
www.flagey.be

The Latvian Radio Big Band and Maestro Raimonds Pauls have enjoyed close ties for over forty years now. Pauls will perform as a composer, arranger, soloist, and leader of the big band.

Along with instrumental pieces, the programme features compositions in Latvian and Russian, some with lyrics by Russian poet **Yevgeny Yevtushenko**. The concert programme includes jazz standards and classics, completely new arrangements of Latvian film themes and folk songs which are featured in the project *Mare Balticum*, and the latest musical compositions by Pauls for the young Latvian singers, **Kristine Prauliņa** and **Intars Busulis**.

For more about The Big Band and Raimonds Pauls see page 18.

www.raimondspauls.lv
www.rigasritmi.lv
www.intarsbusulis.com

The programme combines classical scores with works by outstanding Latvian and Nordic composers.

Pēteris Vasks wrote his Violin Concerto *Distant Light* in 1997 as commissioned by the Salzburg Festival. It is one of the most performed pieces of music on the world stage; and Vasks describes it as "nostalgia with a touch of tragedy – childhood memories. Very Latvian. But everyone may perceive *Distant Light* freely – for this is where power of music lies."

Magnus Lindberg is one of the best-known Finnish composers of today. He was the New York Philharmonic's composer-in-residence from 2009 to 2012 and is the London Philharmonic Orchestra's composer-in-residence from the beginning of the 2014/15 season.

www.sinfoniettariga.lv

PERFORMING ALSO IN:

Minsk, Belarus (see page 58)
Frankfurt, Germany (see page 72)
Hamburg, Germany (see page 72)
Munich, Germany (see page 72)
Kiev, Ukraine (see page 91)

Sinfonietta Rīga: Chamber Orchestras of the World

17 June

St Petersburg Academic Philharmonia, Grand Hall,
St Petersburg
www.philharmonia.spb.ru

Conductor: **Normunds Šņē**
Solo violin: **Mark Bushkov**



SLLC "LATVIJAS KONCERTI" PUBLICITY PHOTO

Aspazija/Rainis: Rebel/Humanist The Story of Two Latvian Poets

15 May – 15 June Kirov

ALSO IN:

20 – 24 April
UNESCO House, *Salle des Pas Perdus*, Paris, France
en.unesco.org

June
Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum, Minsk, Belarus
kupala-museum.by

Līgo or "Jāņi" is a popular Latvian festival held to celebrate the summer solstice (Midsummer). This open-air event will host Latvian folk musicians and craftsmen to introduce the inhabitants and guests of Moscow with Latvian traditions, food and crafts.

Exhibition "Andris Freibergs. Scenography"

27 March – 10 May

A.A. Bakhrushin State Central Theatre Museum, Moscow
www.gctm.ru



ANDRIS FREIBERGS. SCENOGRAPHY (FRAGMENT OF EXPOSITION). PHOTO: REINIS DZUZILLO

The exhibition is aimed at introducing European society to the greatest Latvian personalities of the twentieth century – the litterateurs, Rainis and Aspazija, stimulating interest in the most significant achievements of their creative work, and their contribution to the development of the **history of ideas** in the context of the development of global culture and society. The exhibition is intended as a dialogue between two personalities through their ideas and creative work.
www.memorialiemuzeji.lv

Traditional Latvian Music and Crafts in Moscow

27 – 28 June

Park "Krasnaya Presnya", Moscow
www.p-krp.ru

On 24 October 2013 the talented Principal Set Designer of the Latvian National Opera, Andris Freibergs, celebrated his **75th birthday**. Since his debut in 1965, he has worked on set design for over 200 plays in the leading theatres in Latvia as well as in Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Germany, Venezuela, Armenia, Turkmenistan and Russia. As a professor in the Art Academy of Latvia since 1971 and the Head of its Department of Stage Design from 1994 to 2013, Freibergs has brought up **several generations** of new stage designers. He has received several awards including the Latvian Order of the Three Stars (2003), Best Set Designer of Estonia (2003), seven Latvian Theatre Awards for Best Set Design and one for Best Costume Design, the highest Italian theatre award *II Premio Ubu* (2010) and others.

Honouring the artist on his 75th birthday, *Andris Freibergs. Scenography* exhibition was opened at the Eduards Smiļģis Theatre Museum of the Latvian Academy of Culture in October 2013. Now it will travel to Moscow.

Ukraine

- **12 February**
 The Latvian Radio Choir and Sinfonietta Riga: Mother Teresa Prayer
- **24 April**
 Kremerata Baltica: The Seasons
- **April – June**
 Latvian Cinema Days in Ukraine
- **5 – 30 June**
 Exhibition “Amber – Jewel of the Baltic Sea”

➤ Mother Teresa Prayer

12 February

National Philharmonic of Ukraine, Kiev
www.filarmonia.com.ua

*“In the silence of the heart God speaks.
 If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you.”*

— **Mother Teresa**



COURTESY OF LATVIJAS KONCERTI

www.radiokoris.lv (see page 16)
www.sinfoniettariga.lv (see page 14)

The innovative Seasons Project by **Philip Glass** juxtaposes Glass’ magical new work, Violin Concerto No. 2 *The American Four Seasons*, with its inspiration, Vivaldi’s classic, *The Four Seasons*. Unlike Vivaldi’s set of four concertos, Glass’ work is four unbroken single movements, between which the soloist is playing intermezzo-like songs as a kind of commentary on the whole piece. While they too are to be taken as harbingers of each season, the movements are untitled. “Therefore, there will be **no instructions** for the audience, no clues as to where Spring, Summer, Winter, and Fall might appear in the new concerto – an interesting, though not worrisome, problem for the listener,” says Philip Glass.

More about *Kremerata Baltica* see page 12.

www.kremeratabaltica.com
www.gidonkremer.net

The premiere of the concert, *Mother Teresa Prayer*, was held in Riga Cathedral on 28 November 2012 and included three world premieres by **three Latvian composers**: *Lord, Open our Eyes* by Pēteris Vasks; *Litany to Mother Teresa* by Andrejs Selickis; and *Silence, Love and Light* by Rihards Dubra. The programme was conceived, produced and conducted by **Sigvards Kļava**, and was performed by the Latvian Radio Choir and the *Sinfonietta Riga* chamber orchestra, along with soloists from the Riga Dome Choir School.

This programme revolves around Mother Teresa and the music is featuring the power of faith that she inspired. The concert is sculptured as a musical commemoration in which Mother Teresa simultaneously prays for herself and for the entire world.

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

31 March
 Belarusian State Philharmonic,
 Minsk, Belarus
www.philharmonic.by

➤ Kremerata Baltica: The Seasons

24 April

Odessa National Academic Opera and Ballet Theater, Odessa
www.opera.odessa.ua



PHOTO: CHRISTIAN LUTZ

ALSO PERFORMING IN:

Brussels, Belgium (see page 52 – 53)
 Milan, Italy (see page 76)
 Luxembourg (see page 81)

Latvian Cinema Days in Ukraine

April – June

Kyiv, Odessa and Lviv
www.kino-teatr.ua



STILL FROM THE MOVIE "LITTLE ROBBERS"

National Film Centre of Latvia will offer the visitors in Ukraine several excellent Latvian films free of charge including the classic *Limuzīns Jāņu nakts krāsā* (*A Limousine the Colour of Midsummer's Night*) by **Jānis Streičs** as well as tragicomedy premiered in 2014 *Dzīmlai rūdi rallallā!* (*Then It's Hi! Hi! Hee!*), children's film *Mazie laupītāji* (*Little Robbers*) and other feature films and documentaries. The Latvian Cinema Days will take place in three Ukrainian cities – Kyiv, Odessa and Lviv.

www.nkc.gov.lv

The exhibition is a thematic message revealing the spread of amber, the Baltic Sea area as an amber crossroads, the amber road and the cultures involved, and also amber in **mythology and folklore**.

Amber has been known in the territory of Latvia since the end of the early Neolithic (approximately the second half of the fourth century BC). It was treated as a jewel and was the most valuable of export goods. The art of processing amber was very highly developed. It was sewn into clothes, used in ornaments and jewellery, and even placed into graves along with the deceased.

Amber jewellery still retains its place in Latvian lifestyle. Time has not changed the material, but types of ornaments have changed along with time and fashion. Heavy strings of precisely processed egg-shaped beads were popular in the second quarter of the 20th century. During that time, amber ornaments served to a certain extent as an acknowledgement of **Latvian taste** while living under Soviet occupation.

www.lnvm.lv

Amber – Jewel of the Baltic Sea

5 – 30 June

The Kyiv History Museum, Kiev, Ukraine
www.kyivhistorymuseum.org



PHOTO: ROBERTS KANIŅŠ, THE LATVIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART

SEE ALSO IN:

27 March – 24 April
The National History Museum of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk
history.museum.by



United Kingdom



20 January

The Opening Ceremony of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union



21 – 30 January

Exhibition "Graduation"



23 February

Latvian Musicians. Concerts



26 February

Latvian Musicians. Concerts.



11 March

Latvian Musicians. Concerts.



15 – 30 April

Exhibition "Sun Stone"



26 May – 3 July

Exhibition "Amber. The Baltic Jewel"

The Latvian Radio Choir: Cage and Time

The Opening Ceremony of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union

20 January 20:00 **St John's Smith Square**, London
www.sjss.org.uk

Soloists – **Elīna Kalnakārkle**, **Inga Martinsons**, **Kārlis Rūtentāls**, **Jānis Straziņš** (vocal),
Kristaps Pētersons (double-bass; vocal), **Rihards Plešanovs** (piano)

Musical direction – **Sigvards Kļava**



IN CESIS ART FESTIVAL. PHOTO: EDGARS GROŠEVS

The concert is designed to provocatively connect otherwise extremely opposing objects and means of expression. First is connecting picture with sound. A performance will be created with rhythmically diverse **multi-beam projections** (similar to the performance of the musical score), which will alternate between domination by the projection and different light scores or their mutual interaction. In some compositions the projection will be completely unnecessary as the desired effect will be achieved through light alone.

Second comes the connection between live sound and recordings. Provocateur **John Cage** will provide this, connected with the timeless Latvian multi-artist **Hardijs Lediņš** from the artistic group, *Nebijušu sajūtu restaurēšanas darbnīca* (NSRD; *Restoration Workshop of Unprecedented Feelings*), and Latvian composers **Juris Ābols** and **Kristaps Pētersons**.

The expression of J. Ābols is polystylistic: through this he is able to touch, outline, ironically

discuss and caricature the problems of modern humanity. He knows how to bring out the root of the problem, but instead of postulating a tragedy's solution, he dresses it up with satire. In the concert you will also hear K. Pētersons' dedication to Cage in *Pieminekļis Keidžam* (*Homage to Cage*), where double-bass and voice will meet. In Pētersons' music, general contemplation is rarely present, but it always has a **bright, bold idea**, a strongly developed narrative, and expressive realisation.

It is no coincidence in this performance that the musical interludes are provided by the NSRD. The NSRD created examples of the genre that could be called Latvian **absurd music**. Rhythm and electronics, images without contact trajectories, feelings created by momentary impressions.

www.radiokoris.lv

"CAGE AND TIME" ALSO IN:
June 18th during Riga Festival, Riga

Latvian Musicians. Concerts. Kristina Blaumane, Eva Bindere and Reinis Zariņš

23 February 18:00 **Northern Ireland Assembly**
Parliament Buildings, The Long Gallery, Northern Ireland
www.niassembly.gov.uk

26 February 18:00 **National Assembly for Wales**, Cardiff
Pierhead St, Cardiff CF10 4PZ, Wales

11 March 18:00 **The Scottish Parliament**, Edinburgh
Edinburgh EH99 1SP, Scotland



PIANIST REINIS ZARIŅŠ. PHOTO: ANDRIS SPROĢIS

This exhibition showcases amber by displaying jewellery, amber threads and large-format photographs. The handling of amber requires the right balance between sensitivity to the uniqueness of the material and substantial intellectual investment. Every piece is unique in colour, shape and texture, so it is important to maintain its **natural beauty** by adapting the design to the amber and not the other way around. The revolutionary production technology of amber thread gives craftsmen the opportunity to express their creativity by working not only with jewellery but also with textiles.

The scenography of the exhibition was created by the internationally recognised fashion brand MAREUNROL'S. The exhibition was created by the London-resident jewellery designer, Ivonna Poplanska, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia to the United Kingdom and the PUTTI Art Gallery.

The trio's programme has been created to showcase the virtuosity of each of the performers, as well as the musical chemistry between them. Beginning with single movements from well-known duo sonatas by Ravel and Rachmaninov, the focus of the programme will rest on two trios – one by Spaniard Joaquín Turina, and the other by a Latvian, Pēteris Plakidis. The programme will be rounded off with an arrangement of a well-known Welsh/Irish/Scottish folk melody.

Kristina Blaumane, **Eva Bindere** and **Reinis Zariņš** are internationally recognised musicians who all come from Latvia and presently work in the United Kingdom. Each a recipient of the Latvian Grand Music Award, they all lead busy concert lives performing as recitalists, chamber musicians, recording artists and soloists with orchestras.

Exhibition "Amber: The Baltic Jewel"

RĪGA 2014
EIROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPĒLŠĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

26 May – 3 July

The Goldsmiths' Centre
www.goldsmiths-centre.org

Andris Lauders, **Guntis Lauders**,
Jānis Vilks, **Māris Auniņš**, **Māris Šustiņš**, **Valdis Brože** – jewellery
Andris Zēgners – photographs
Iveta Vecenāne – textiles

www.mareunrols.com
www.putti.lv
www.ivonnapoplanska.com

Graduation: Exhibition by Alumni and Professors of the Art Academy of Latvia

21 January – 30 January

Opening: 20 January 18:00

Europe House, London
www.europe.org.uk/europe-house



PAULA ZARIŅA. LIKE THOSE DAYS, 2013, OIL ON CANVAS, 20 x 20 cm.

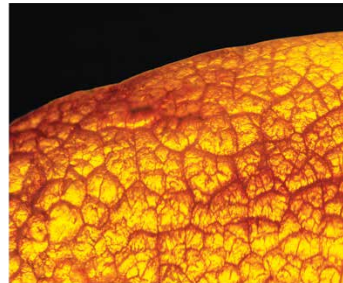


PHOTO: ANDRIS ZĒGNERS

Andris Zēgners is one of the most extraordinary Latvian artists of his generation, someone who has a fine perception of the visual vibrations of the world and an ability to transform them into unusual pieces of art. He is interested in the structure and textures of various objects and in nature elements – their exploration and creative transformation. Through the use of macro technology he has managed to achieve unusual shapes and spatial relationship by creating striking conceptual associations. It is important for the artist to look at his creative work in the context of philosophically existential matters.

www.zegners.com

More than ten young artists – alumni of 2013 and 2014 contributed to *Graduation* exhibition at the Art Academy of Latvia. The exhibition acts as a **witness to the development** of the new generation of artists, involving carefully nurtured talent that climbs up onto the international stage of art, embarks on its journey of creative development, and develops forms of artistic expression that incorporate the spirit of the age and new artistic trends.

The exhibition is proof of interest by the new generation of Latvian artists in contemporary and authentic art. The exhibition leaves a strong impression of a quest for new means of expression, a refusal to use traditional techniques, with classical cannons being reconsidered and interpreted in the light of today. It urges the viewer to get to know contemporary painting and all its angles, from the skilful portrayal of a human being, natural scenery, and the urban environment, to the use of abstract expressions of colour and texture as the main form of expression. Participants at the exhibition are alumni of the Art Academy of Latvia: Līva Graudiņa, Inta Stalidzāne, Baiba Apsīte, Paula Zariņa, Ilze Egle, Laura Pole, Magone Boleiko, Darja Fjodorova, Klāra Grundšteine, Kristīne Lasmane, Agnese Basova, and Dārta Hapanioneika.

Alongside their work is that of their scientific advisers, people who are professors at the Art Academy of Latvia.

www.lma.lv

Exhibition “Sun Stone”

15 – 30 April

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London
www.ebrd.com

26 May – 3 July

The Goldsmiths’ Centre, London
www.goldsmiths-centre.org

SEE ALSO IN:

4 – 18 May
Neumunster Abbey,
Luxembourg
www.neimenster.lu

USA

22 January – 21 February

Exhibition of Contemporary Latvian Art

12 February

Leading European Composers: Pēteris Vasks

9 April

State Choir Latvija a capella

11 April

State Choir Latvija and Baltic Composers

25 April – 5 May

Latvian Literature Readings

29 April

Concert “Rothko in Jazz”

13 June – 26 July

Exhibition “Visvaldis Ziedīņš: Travels in the Imagination”

Exhibition “Lily’s Pool”

22 January – 21 February

Art in General, New York
www.artingeneral.org

Authors: **Kaspars Groševs, Ieva Kraule, Kristīne Kursiņa & Miks Mitrēvics, Daria Melnikova, Evita Vasiljeva, Armands Zelčs**

Curated by **kim? Contemporary Art Centre**

Art in General presents *Lily’s Pool*, a group exhibition organized in partnership with *kim?* Contemporary Art Centre, Riga, Latvia as part of the International Collaborations programme.

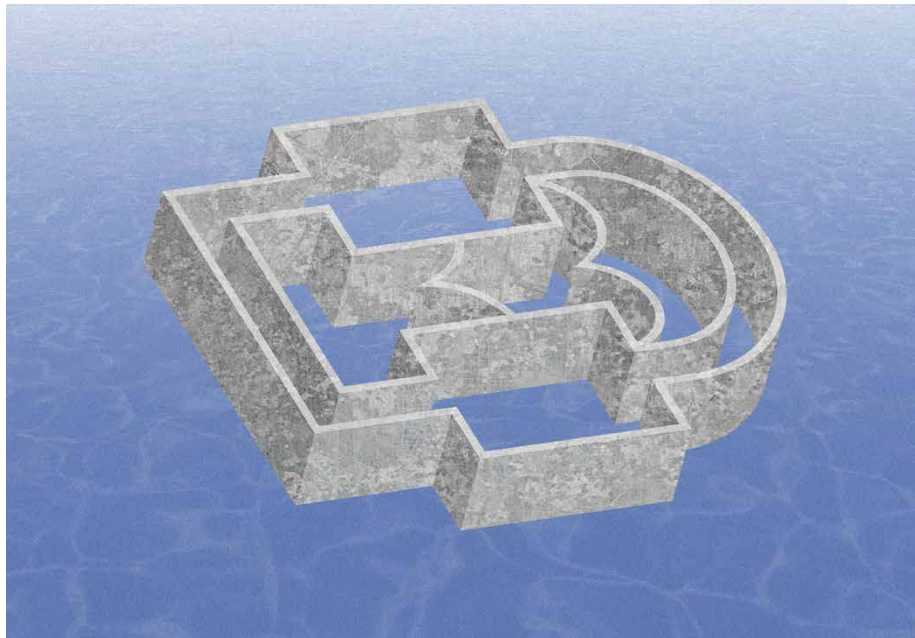
“Now I will tell you what happened at the Lily’s Pool. A welcome ceremony. It was on the verge of North and South. Yet everyone remembered a sunlight. Some say it was a perpetual flight, others claim the moon needed one half of a turn.”

Featuring the work of **seven emerging** Latvian artists, the group exhibition *Lily’s Pool* attempts to capture the presence of subtle, tangible, and poetic phenomena within a mediated post-Internet, “post-natural” culture. The participating artists utilize the varied mediums of drawing, painting, sculpture, textile, and performance to

www.kim.lv

grapple with the personal and historical memory of materials in a contemporary society engrossed in the fleeting structure of the digital. The works in the exhibition create environments that are at once palpable and uncanny, examining how the physical and social body is affected by **accelerated temporalities** and the sensations of high-speed browsing and sharing in daily life.

A karaoke performance by Kaspars Groševs will take place during the opening reception on January 22, 2015. The performance is inspired by Latvian sculptor and writer **Edward Leedskalnis** (1887-1951) who crafted the *Coral Castle* monument in Florida after emigrating to the United States. *Coral Castle* was dedicated to the artist’s former Latvian lover he called “Sweet Sixteen”.

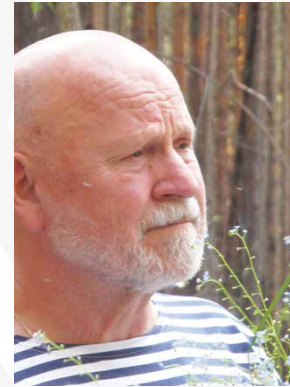


LILY’S POOL, 2014

Leading European Composers: Pēteris Vasks

12 February 18:30

Phillips Collection, Washington
www.phillipscollection.org



PĒTERIS VASKS. PHOTO: DZINTRA GEKA

“Most people today no longer possess beliefs, love, and ideals. The spiritual dimension has been lost. My intention is to provide food for the soul, and this is what I preach in my works.”

— Pēteris Vasks

Since 2009, *The Phillips Collection* is organising the concert series, *Leading European Composers*. Presenting some of the greatest living composers of our time, this series is unique in that the composers introduce their works with performers they select. This time, Pēteris Vasks has chosen the flautist **Dita Krenberga**, principal flute of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and the **RIX Piano Quartet** to present a programme of his chamber music. The quartet is a group of friends who live in different parts of the world and have been playing together for more than 20 years.

Composer **Pēteris Vasks** (1946) grew up in post-war Soviet Latvia. He was oppressed for his Baptist beliefs, yet nevertheless acquired widespread recognition for his unique music, becoming one of the most noteworthy composers in Latvia in the second half of the 20th century. Vasks learned to implement many musical techniques of his time, including minimalism, aleatoric music, and 12-tone serialism but has never settled on one exclusive idea in his career.

Pēteris Vasks is the spiritual soulmate of Arvo Pärt and Giya Kancheli. His music is **rich in contrasts** between the light and the darkness, deep pain and invincible faith. Vasks’ inspiration comes from Latvian nature, folk music and bird songs. The programme features *Zaļā Ainava* (Green Landscape) (2008) – a retrospect of scents and the mystery of summer solstice portrayed in music; *Ainava ar Putniem* (Landscape with Birds) (1980) stands as testimony for the composer’s passion for, as he would say, “God’s created musical part of the world”; *Klātbūtne* (Presence) cello concerto (2012) is sincere gratitude to the talented Sol Gabetta; and Piano Quartet (2001) is a whirlwind of six contrasting stages including ethnographic games, dramatic singing, scoffing march, explosive toccata and a hymn to love.

State Choir Latvija

9 April 19:00

Lincoln Center, New York
lc.lincolncenter.org

The State Choir *Latvija* returns to the USA after debut *a cappella* concerts and a joint project with the Icelandic band, *Sigur Ros*, in 2010 at the Lincoln Center during the *White Light Festival*. This time the Choir with its inspiring artistic director **Māris Sirmāis** in the lead will take you on a musical tour through the unique landscape of European and Baltic choir music in the two-part *a cappella* programme. The reper-



PHOTO: ANSIS STARKS

toire includes opuses by Johannes Brahms and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Olivier Messiaen, John Tavener. From the Baltic states you will hear Latvians Ēriks Ešenvalds and Pēteris Vasks, Estonians Arvo Pärt and Veljo Tormis and a painfully beautiful mother's prayer to the Sun to bring back her only son from the war by Lithuanian composer Vytautas Miškinis.

The programme focuses on music created by composers from the Baltic states, including Latvian composers whose music is played all around the world – 2012 Grammy nominee **Uģis Prauliņš** and the praiser of the Nordic Light, **Ēriks Ešenvalds**. There will also be three powerful compositions inspired and premiered by Māris Sirmāis – one of which, by **Gundega Šmite**, pays tribute to **Imants Mežaraups**. Mežaraups was born in Philadelphia, where he was the soul of local musical life for many years by working as a teacher and a leader for different musical groups. The programme will also include two compositions from State Choir *Latvija's* new album *Dzintara ceļš (Amber Road)*, which features 12 songs with music written by Latvian composers, and lyrics by renowned European poets, and many others.

Latvian Literature Readings

25 April – 5 May

Various cities in the
USA

In April and May 2015, selected readings from Latvian literature will take place in several cities in the United States of America (New York, Rochester, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Lincoln and Washington), thereby launching and presenting several Latvian authors' books published in the English language (Nora Ikstena's collection of short stories *Life Stories*, Liāna Langa's selected poem collection *Deadly Nightshade*, Edvins Raups' collected poems *then touch me here*, and Zigmunds Skujiņš' novel *Flesh-Coloured Dominoes*). Aimed at the American literary community and general reading public as well as Latvians residing in the U.S., this 2015 series of readings will acquaint audiences with Latvian literature and the upcoming 2018 centenary of the independence of Latvia and the Baltic countries, and Baltic countries' participation as the market in focus at the 2018 Book Fair in London, United Kingdom.

State Choir Latvija and Baltic Composers

11 April 20:00

Baryshnikov Arts Center,
New York
www.bacnyc.org
www.koris.lv

Concert "Rothko in Jazz"

29 April 18:00

Millennium Stage, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington
www.kennedy-center.org

A new audio-visual project is born! Entitled *Rothko in Jazz*, and realised by the Latvian masters of jazz, the project seeks inspiration from the work of the great artist, **Mark Rothko**. The basis of this project is a synergy between pieces of art and music. The ideal behind Mark Rothko's art is a simple expression of an intricate thought, and this idea is brilliantly embodied in his works that involve abstract expressionism. With their ascetic form and seeming simplicity, these works raise an association with imperturbable peace and ambience – exactly the line the musicians are trying to express, move and play out. The musical material aims to reflect the moods in Mark Rothko's work, which was created between 1945 and 1969: the jazz compositions are matched with certain Mark Rothko's works. During the performance, these art works will be projected as videos, and will be enlivened with special effects, as if they are being brought to life. Rothko's works will unfold in the rhythm of the music and improvisation; the project will move both jazz music lovers and admirers of Mark Rothko's art and legacy.

Both idea and project have been created by the best jazz musicians in Latvia and the Baltics – the **Māris Briežkalns Quintet**. The band has performed in some of the leading jazz and world music festivals, including *Ottawa Jazz*, *Pori Jazz*, *Venezia Jazz*, *Jazz Baltica*,

the European Jazz Festival, and on some of the most prestigious jazz stages around the world, including the *Blue Note Jazz Club* in New York and *Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club* in London. The Quintet has released two volumes of *Latvian Evergreens*, compilations of Latvian classical and popular music in jazz arrangements.

This project is a testimony to how abundant Latvian art and music can be. It is creative, amazing, lively, **inspiring and unique**. *Rothko in Jazz* is undoubtedly a great addition to the field of the synthesis between visual art and music, as well as being a valuable contribution to global culture.
www.rigasritmi.lv



MARK ROTHKO. UNTITLED (1968)

Visvaldis Ziediņš: Travels in the Imagination

13 June – 26 July

The American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center, Washington DC
www.american.edu/cas/museum

Curators: Eleanor Heartney, Ieva Kalniņa, Jack Rasmussen

Working quietly and in near obscurity during the dark days of the Latvian Soviet period, **Visvaldis Ziediņš** amassed a remarkable body of work that comprises over 3,000 sculptures, paintings, drawings and installations. These works engage a wide array of human experiences, touching on everything from the vastness of the cosmos and the mysteries of religion to the hidden structures of nature and the absurdity of human civilisation. Ziediņš employed those materials that are at hand, creating his work out of the simple stuff of everyday life – crushed tins, driftwood, old tools, bottle caps, marmalade boxes, and discarded packing materials. Largely cut off from the international art community, Ziediņš lived outside the capital of Riga and was only **marginally connected** to the Latvian art world. But while his material and physical circumstances were extremely limited, his imagination was not. His formal and conceptual explorations bear comparison to work being done across the globe during his lifetime by avant-gardists as diverse as Pablo Picasso, John Cage, Joseph Cornell, Robert Rauschenberg, Antoni Tàpies, and Arman. At the same time, Ziediņš' wit and the universal nature of his concerns make his works immediately accessible to modern audiences.

This exhibition will highlight Ziediņš' work in assemblage and collage, with a particular focus on works that address his **ability to leap across** the artificial boundaries created by national borders, political ideologies and pre-established social networks. A number of his witty and penetrating self-portraits in various media will be included, along with works that reveal his sense of a world in flux, as quotidian objects and oppressive realities are reimagined through the transformative power of art. This small selection of Ziediņš' phenomenal output reveals a rich inner world that refused to be suppressed by external difficulties.

Visvaldis Ziediņš was born on 4 April 1942 and died on 11 January 2007 in Liepāja. Between 1959 and 1964, Ziediņš attended the Decorative Design Department at the Liepāja School of Applied Arts. He did not enter the Latvian Academy of Art because he was confident that the professional foundation that he had acquired was sufficient to enable him to devote the rest of his life to creative investigations that would be independent of the official Soviet art system.



VISVALDIS ZIEDIŅŠ. COMPOSITION WITH TWO SPOONS (OBJECT). 1960S. WOOD, INDIAN INK, ALUMINIUM SPOONS AND OIL. 17 x 12.5 x 5 cm. ACC. No. 950. THE VISVALDIS ZIEDIŅŠ FOUNDATION



VISVALDIS ZIEDIŅŠ. SELF-PORTRAIT. LATE 1990S – EARLY 21ST CENTURY. PLASTIC NOSE, EYE AND ARTIFICIAL MOUSTACHE ON CERAMIC BRICK. 20 x 13 x 7.5 cm. ACC. No. 785

Other Countries

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| ➤ Austria | 104 |
| ➤ Canada | 105 |
| ➤ Denmark | 105 |
| ➤ Finland | 106 |
| ➤ Greece | 106 |
| ➤ Hungary | 107 |
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| ➤ Switzerland | 111 |

Concert to Mark the Opening of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2015

23 January 19:00

Vienna Town Hall
Friedrich-Schmidt-Platz 1,
A-1010, Vienna

This unique concert will bring together musicians and soloists from Latvia and other EU countries living in Austria to perform various works by some of the best known Latvian and European composers. The programme will consist of compositions by Jānis Mediņš, Raimonds Pauls, Jāzeps Vītols, Alfrēds Kalniņš, Richard Strauss, Ludwig van Beethoven, Claude Debussy, Giuseppe Verdi, Franz Schubert, Imre Kalman and Johann Strauss.



PUBLICITY PHOTO

Nordic-Baltic Film Festival 2015 and "The Lesson"

7 – 13 May The festival will open at 19:00 on 7 May with the film "The Lesson" (Izlaiduma gads) by Latvian director Andris Gauja

URANIA public educational institute and observatory, Vienna
www.vhs.at

For the first time in the history of the Nordic-Baltic Film Festival, Latvia has the honour to be the leading country. The central theme of the festival in 2015 is "youth and opportunities". The festival will open with the screening of the film *The Lesson* (Izlaiduma gads) by the Latvian director Andris Gauja. Before the film, there will be an opportunity to meet the director in person.

Midsummer Celebration with Folk Rock Band "Iļģi"

17 (18) June 19:00

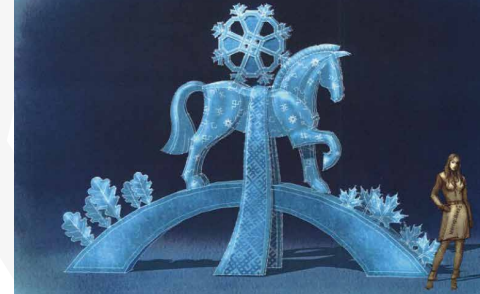
Restaurant *Oktogon*, Vienna
www.himmel.at

To mark the closing of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU, the Latvian Embassy and the Permanent Mission to the OECD, UN and other international organisations in Vienna are organising a traditional Midsummer celebration event. Latvia's best known folk rock band *Iļģi* will be performing folk music and presenting Latvian Midsummer celebration traditions.

Latvia at the "Winterlude" Ice Sculpture Festival

30 January – 16 February

Crystal Garden in Confederation Park, Ottawa
www.pch.gc.ca



THE SUN BEARER. AUTHORS KĀRLIS ĪLE AND MAIJA PUNCULE

Celebrate the joys of winter at *Winterlude* over three fun-filled weeks in February. Canada's favourite winter activities are featured across Ottawa and Gatineau at this annual event. Skate on the world's largest skating rink, check out the ice sculpture competitions or play at North America's largest snow playground!

To mark Latvia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Embassy of Latvia in Canada, in partnership with the *Winterlude* festival, is involved in the creation of an ice sculpture called *The Sun Bearer*. This sculpture has been designed by Kārlis Īle and will be exhibited in Confederation Park. It will be crafted by two experienced ice sculptors from Latvia: Kārlis Īle and Maija Puncule.

The park is open to the public during the day. Following the opening of *The Sun Bearer* sculpture on 30 January, a Latvian team will also compete in a three-day ice sculpting competition. "At play" is the theme of this year's competition.

Latvian Mitten Exhibition

2 January – 31 March

Europa-Huset, Copenhagen
Gothersgade 115, DK-1123 København K
info@europa-huset.dk

"Only for Latvians the mittens are deeply rooted into traditions, mythology and have become a significant part of our identity"
— I. Ziedonis



LATVIAN MITTENS, SIA TINES. PHOTO: ARTŪRS ČUKURS

For Latvians, mittens are much more than a way to warm your hands. Every ethnographic Latvian mitten tells a story, marks an anniversary and represents a specific region in Latvia (Vidzeme, Zemgale, Latgale and Kurzeme).

For over 20 years the *Tines* company has been collecting ancient gloves from grandmothers' dowry chests and museums across the country and has produced reproductions of these items. The exhibition features ethnographic reproductions of mittens from all regions of Latvia dating back to the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Riga Dom Cathedral Boys Choir Concert

29 January 17:00

The Rock Church (TempPELLIAUKION KIRKKO)
Lutherinkatu 3, Helsinki

The Riga Dom Cathedral Boys Choir will perform a programme of works by both modern Latvian and classical European composers: U. Prauliņš, L. Kursiņa, G. F. Handel, W. A. Mozart. The concert is designed to cover both the national and international dimensions, and to relate modernity with the past and with timelessness. Conductor – Mārtiņš Klišāns.

The Riga Dom Cathedral Boys Choir is one of the world's best-known Latvian choirs: it has been well received at different festivals and has performed both in Europe and other parts of the world. The Choir has taken part in several Latvian National Opera productions and has recorded 18 CDs.

The concert will be held in the famous Rock church in Helsinki, Finland, and will mark the beginning of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Photo Exhibition "Egons Spuris. RIGA – 19th and Early 20th Century Proletarian Districts"

23 April – 24 May

The Image Gallery, Athens
www.gallerytheimage.com

Egons Spuris (1931 – 1990) is a Latvian photographer whose name appears in the most important photography encyclopaedias in Switzerland, Germany, and the United Kingdom. He belonged to the generation that in the second half of the 20th century strived to restore the prestige of photography as an art medium. Spuris follows a so-called 'subjective documentary' approach to photography. By focusing on the primacy of the photographer and the medium itself, Spuris detaches himself from the implications of the traditional role of the Soviet photograph – reflected reality – as evidence and/or propaganda.

Spuris' most remembered body of work, "The Proletarian Districts of Riga", includes approximately 7 500 negatives and hundreds of photographs. The subjects are the blocks of flats and factories built in the eastern suburbs of Riga during the city's capitalist and industrial boom period, and the unique nineteenth century one-storey and two-storey wooden buildings. This is also the part of the city where Spuris spent his childhood and is an area which did not undergo significant changes during the Soviet occupation.

The photographs indicate not only the complex nature of a long-term commitment, but also his desire to share something of himself with others. Spuris' brief statements about his work are non-explicit and invite reflection and interpretation. This approach, where the photographer feels that words are not required to explain his work, reveals that suggestibility, openness, and contemplation are key elements to his photography.

The exhibition consists of over 50 high quality reproductions copied from the original photographs made by the artist himself.

Latvian Music Days in Budapest

22 – 24 January

Budapest Music Center, Budapest
www.bmc.hu

22 January 19:30

Orchestra **Sinfonietta Rīga**, conductor **Normunds Šnē**, soloist **Vineta Sareika** (violin)



PHOTO: JĀNIS DEINĀTS

"The compositions that we will be playing in Budapest are our best tools to show P.Vasks' and O. Herliņš's music identity within the mood and colours of music from the Baltics. At the same time, Mendelssohn's First symphony will nicely underline the musical quality and sound of orchestra. Hungary can be proud of its composer Béla Bartók, whose music has greatly impacted the whole style of 20th century music; therefore our interpretation of his composition is the best gift we could bring to the audience in Budapest," says Normunds Šnē, the conductor.

Sinfonietta Rīga and violinist Vineta Sareika are long term partners in collaboration.

23 January 18:00

"Artist in residence"

Meeting with **Pēteris Vasks**, followed by pianist **Vestards Šimkus'** solo concert

Programme:

Pēteris Vasks: The Seasons

White Scenery (1980)
Spring Music' (1996)
Green Scenery' (2009)
Autumn Music' (1981)

Franz Liszt : Apparitions

Franz Liszt : Totentanz (original version for solo piano by Franz Liszt)



VESTARDS ŠIMKUS. PHOTO: JĀNIS DEINĀTS

24 January 21:00

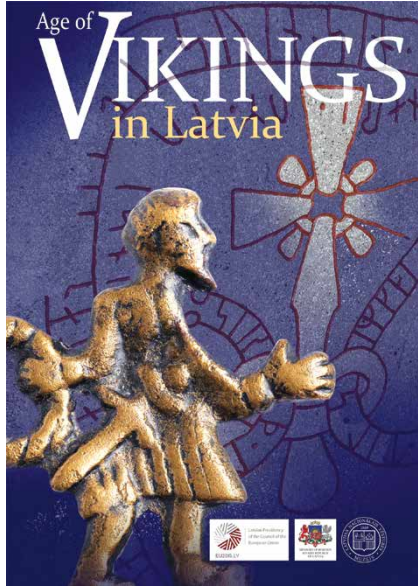
Deniss Pashkevich Jazz Quartet

Deniss Pashkevich – saxophone,
Madars Kalniņš – piano,
Andris Grunte – contrabass,
Artis Orubs – drums.

Exhibition "Age of Vikings in Latvia"

22 – 23 April Official opening on 22 April with a lecture by Dr. Hist. Arnis Rādiņš

Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
www.ria.ie



The *Age of Vikings in Latvia* exhibition combines images and texts showing the importance of the inhabitants of Latvia in the context of northern and eastern Europe from the 7th to 12th centuries. It reveals the richness of their culture and their impact in the region, as well as the contacts and interaction between the inhabitants of the Eastern Baltic and Scandinavia, thus confirming that Latvia has always been a significant and important part of the world. The exhibition uses written sources and archaeological evidence to illustrate the theme. This project was implemented by the National History Museum of Latvia. The scientific component of the exhibition was developed by Dr. Hist. Arnis Rādiņš and the design element by Ģirts Boronovskis.

The Latvian Radio Choir (LRC) ranks among the top professional chamber choirs in Europe and offers some 60 concert performances each year in Latvia and abroad. The range of skills mastered by its singers has made the LRC a remarkably flexible ensemble that can cover vocal and instrumental music, as well as opera performances, multi-media projects, intimate *a capella* talks, and theatrical shows in which the singers can express themselves as soloists and talented actors. In this concert the choir will perform works by the Latvian composers Pēteris Vasks and Ēriks Ešenvalds, as well as pieces by Rachmaninov, Bach/Nystedt, Anders Hillborg and Ligeti. Conductor – Sigvards Kļava.

The Latvian Radio Choir

3 May 20:00

National Concert Hall, Dublin
www.nch.ie



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE LATVIAN RADIO CHOIR

Sculptural Glass Art Exhibit "A Latvian Voice in Glass"

24 February – 12 April Opening 24 February 19:30

Franz Mayer Museum, Mexico
www.franzmayer.org.mx



ARTIS NĪMANIS TECHNIQUE. H₂O BREATH. ONLY WHEN WE GASP WE UNDERSTAND ITS VALUE. GLASS, 2014. 210 x 610 x 70 mm. PHOTO: MĀRIS LOČMELIS



AN&ANGEL LARGE BOWL. DECO COLLECTION. PHOTO: MĀRIS LOČMELIS

This selection of Artis Nīmanis' sculptural work is a sound example of his typical methodology – a free, plastic, yet non-traditional understanding of form. The themes portrayed in this selection, and his interpretation of the techniques used, show an increased interest in the exploration of the larger metaphysical questions of life and existence. While dominated by a desire for structure and an emphasis on shape, Nīmanis allows himself to play with the interaction of light through his glass structures to create delicate, nuanced work. One feels the sense of an aesthetic quest to bring out the most important sculptural qualities capable of enhancing the beauty of the glass – a malleable material that can be moulded into infinite forms.

Obviously, Nīmanis' work is abstract and doesn't clearly reveal the figurative forms represented in his work. However, his suggestion of these forms in the titles allows the viewer to create an ideational interpretation. By modelling the idea of these precise shapes in a flowing technique, he gives these sculptures movement and makes them seem alive. Through experimentation, a search for various compositional techniques and the characteristics of cues, Nīmanis has achieved the core aesthetic value of his work – an inner spiritual vibration, sensitively modelled into a fine, yet natural perception of shape. This combined with the fragility of the glass medium and the tonally rich plasticity of the sculpture produces a hot blown-glass vacuum, coated with a variety of materials such as gold, silver, brass and others that make these sculptures even more mysterious.

Concert to Mark the Opening of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2015

2 February 18:30

Slovak Philharmonic, Reduta,
Bratislava
www.reduta.sk

The concert programme offers a selection of various chamber music works with thematic links between Latvian and Western European composers (Joseph Haydn, Pēteris Plakidis, Tālvaldis Ķeniņš, Imants Zemzaris, Pēteris Vasks, Carl Maria von Weber). These are performed by the professional Latvian musicians Dita Krenberga (flute), Inga Sunepa (cello) and Juris Žvikovs (piano). Entrance to the concert is by invitation from the embassy.



DITA KRENBERGA. PHOTO: SANTA SAVISKO-JĒKABSONE

The "Art Nouveau in Riga. Art and Architecture" exhibition was created in 2014 in cooperation with the Riga Art Nouveau museum and the Riga City Council Association of Culture Institutions. It consists of 25 posters that show the impact of the Art Nouveau style on architecture, arts, crafts and interior design at the beginning of the 20th century in Riga. The exhibition was initially on display at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in November 2014.

Exhibition "Art Nouveau in Riga. Art and Architecture"

February

ZOYA Gallery, Bratislava
www.zoyagallery.sk

Concert to Mark the Closing of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU in 2015

10 June 19:00

Clarissine Church
Klariská 5, 811 03 Bratislava-Staré Mesto

The "Jubilate" choir

The Latvian choir *Jubilate*, conducted by Juris Kļaviņš, will present a programme of classical Latvian choir music, as well as songs by contemporary composers and Latvian folk songs. Admission to the concert is free.

Folk Jazz Concert "Zarbugans"

5 February 18:00

**Stockholm Concert Hall/
Konserthuset**
www.konserthuset.se

RĪGA | 2014

EUROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVASPILSĒTA
EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Exhibition "What Else Does Amber Have in Mind?"

The Baltic Sea. White foaming waves expose amber. Amber, naked and saturated, newly born from the bosom of the waves, comes ashore. Mankind picks it up, caresses it, polishes it and creates a new wonder of the world – a delicate filament. The road goes on. The mystery remains. What else does amber have in mind?

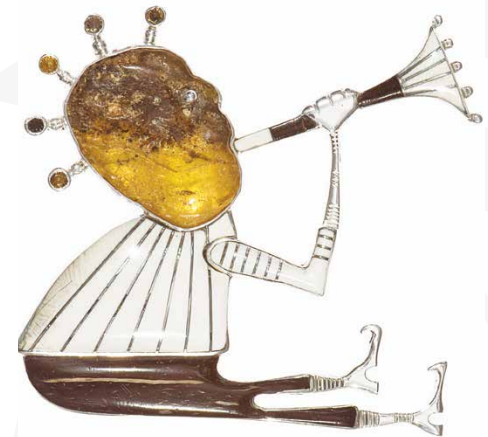
Riga Technical University scientist Dr. Inga Ļašenko has transformed amber using new technologies and is the creator of amber thread. The full potential of amber thread is still being explored, but it is already clear that it has amazing medicinal properties and can be used in textiles. Amber thread has been transformed into works of art by Iveta Vecenane, a Latvian textile artist internationally known for her tapestries.

This exhibition is organised in collaboration with the *Putti* art gallery, with the result that the textile is complemented with modern amber jewellery. In the works of Latvian jewellers Andris Lauders, Guntis Lauders, Valdis Brože, Māris Auniņš, Māris Šustiņš and Jānis Jākobsons, amber is revealed as a multifaceted and surprising material both for the artisans and for visitors to the exhibition.

Zarbugans is an intense and unique programme that combines elements of traditional folk music with jazz music and captivating passages of improvisation. The *Zarbugans* project brings together a unique combination of instruments – double bass, drums and percussion and *kokle* (a Latvian folk instrument). Together they create a fantastic sound combination that offers you a once in a lifetime experience which stimulates all your senses. The programme was created jointly by the three musicians taking part – the virtuoso *kokle* player Laima Jansone, the professional percussionist Artis Orubs, and one of Latvia's best jazz double bass players Andris Grunte.

3 or 4 March – 17 or 18 March

**La Salle des Pas Perdus, the United Nations
Office at Geneva**
www.unog.ch




GUNTIS LAUDERS. PENDANT – AMBER, CITRINE, SMOKY QUARTZ, MAMMOTH BONE, COCONUT SHELL, SILVER. 7 x 8 cm, 2013. PHOTO: NORMUNDS BRASLIŅŠ

Trio Colorato

12 May

Domaine de Penthes, Geneva
www.penthes.ch

Trio Colorato includes musicians from Latvia, Italy and Luxembourg (Agnese Nikolovska – flute, Carlo Jans – flute and Stéphane Giampellegrini – cello) and performs classical and academic music written by composers from Latvia, Italy and Luxembourg – the countries of the Trio Presidency. It was established in 2009 and has given performances in Latvia, Luxembourg, Greece and the USA at various concerts and festivals.



Thanks to all the curators, artists, producers, authors, supporters and co-operation partners who provided material from their collections and archives and made valuable contributions to the cultural programme.

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