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**FOUR RUSSIAN AUTHORS TAKE PART IN PEN WORLD VOICES FESTIVAL AND READ AT
(LE) POISSON ROUGE**

New Russian Literature: A Bilingual Reading

Monday, May 3 at 7:00pm
The Gallery at (le) Poisson Rouge
158 Bleecker Street
Note: This is a 21+ event.

CEC ArtsLink is proud to partner with the PEN World Voices Festival to bring four Russian authors to the annual celebration of books and writing from around the globe, which will take place from April 28th to May 2nd this year. Following the festival, the writers will give an additional reading at The Gallery at (le) Poisson Rouge on May 3rd, providing American audiences with an extra opportunity to become acquainted with vibrant new talent coming out of Russia's literary scene.

Poets Inga Kuznetsova, Pavel Nastin, and Natalia Sannikova, and prose writer Sergei Sokolovskiy were selected for the residency through a competitive nomination process. The authors represent different regions of Russia, including not only the nation's capital but also Kaliningrad, its European exclave, and Kamensk-Uralsky, an industrial city in the Ural Mountains. Their work is equally diverse, ranging from metaphysical poetry to gritty short prose. Yet despite their varied backgrounds, they are united by the shared experience of writing in post-Soviet Russia, where the tradeoff for a newfound freedom of speech is the challenge of artistic survival in an uncertain, profit-driven economic environment.

On May 3rd, New Yorkers will have a unique opportunity to hear all four writers in person at The Gallery at (le) Poisson Rouge. A multimedia art cabaret dedicated to the fusion of popular and art cultures, (le) Poisson Rouge is an ideal venue to introduce wider audiences to contemporary Russian literature and names beyond those of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. The writers will read selections from their latest work in Russian, accompanied by New York-based poets John Coletti and Laura Sims reading the English translations. A Q&A and informal reception will conclude the evening.

While in New York, the four authors will also participate in a number of readings and panel discussions on April 30th and May 1st as part of the PEN World Voices Festival, joining over 150 writers from 40 countries. This is the first time that Russia is represented by this many writers at the festival, now in its sixth year. In a time when contemporary Russian literature remains largely isolated due to linguistic, cultural and economic barriers, and ironically also due to the ubiquity of the great Russian classics, this is an especially important step towards including Russia's contemporary authors in the global literary discourse.

In line with the residency's goal of stimulating cross-cultural communication, the group will also spend a week at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill prior to arriving in New York. While at UNC-Chapel Hill, they will give a public reading and meet with a variety of American literary peers, students, and faculty. This will be the fifth year that the university partners with CEC ArtsLink to host such a group.

The residency and readings are part of the Open World Cultural Leaders Program, an endeavor of the Open World Leadership Center at the Library of Congress with partnership and funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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CEC ArtsLink, through a multi-faceted program of cultural exchange, serves to create and sustain constructive, mutually beneficial relationships in the arts between the United States and Eastern and Central Europe, Russia, Central Asia and the Caucasus. Working with artists, arts organizations and community-based groups, CEC ArtsLink provides an essential structure for ongoing dialogue, contributing to a culture of openness and trust between nations.

With years of experience as a leader in cultural exchange between the United States and Central and Eastern Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, CEC ArtsLink has long been a behind-the-scenes player in numerous esteemed cultural events, as a supporter and facilitator of residencies, projects, and networks for artists and art managers at venues across the U.S. and around the world. Today, we are pleased to bring an on-going series of cultural events to the public through our partnerships in New York, around the United States, and abroad. Visit www.cecartslink.org for more about upcoming events and on-going projects.

Open World's Cultural Leaders Program aims to forge better understanding between the United States and Russia by enabling emerging Russian leaders in the arts to experience America's cultural and community life, and to work with their American counterparts. Support for the cultural program is provided through partnership and funding from the **National Endowment for the Arts**. Open World is a unique, nonpartisan initiative of the U.S. Congress. Delegates range from judges to mayors, from innovative nonprofit directors to experienced journalists, and from political party activists to regional administrators. Over 11,000 Open World participants have been hosted in all 50 U.S. states since the program's inception in 1999.

(Le) Poisson Rouge is a multimedia art cabaret founded by musicians on the site of the historic Village Gate. Dedicated to the fusion of popular and art cultures in music, film, theater, dance, and fine art, the venue's mission is to revive the symbiotic relationship between art and revelry; to establish a creative asylum for both artists and audiences. LPR prides itself in offering the highest quality eclectic programming, impeccable acoustics, and bold design. The state-of-the art physical facilities, a work of art themselves, are the embodiment of the experimental philosophy that drives the venue.

The **UNC Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures**, the oldest Ph.D.-granting program in Slavic languages and literatures in the southern United States, first offered courses leading to a graduate degree in 1965 and became established as an independent department in 1969. The department's research specializations include versification, literary translation, literary critical theory, literature and Orthodox theology, gender studies, literature and the Holocaust, performing arts studies, and emigre culture. The curriculum provides students with instruction in five Slavic/East European languages (Russian, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Serbian and Croatian) and extensive coverage of topics in the literatures and cultures of Russia/the Soviet Union, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Serbia and Croatia.

For more information about the visiting writers, please visit www.cecartslink.org, or email akadysheva-yong@cecartslink.org.

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