



Belarussian
PEN
Centre

Cultural Resistance in Belarus

Issue 25 (38)

June 29, 2021



What helps us not to give up? Our land and everything good and strong that we've inherited. Solidarity and unwavering commitment to building a better life here, at home. You look back and see the burned land behind, but we're saving our Belarus, preserving the pieces of it inside us, so one day we will put them together to build the whole again.

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1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY

Ksenija Tyrsikava, a cultural manager, left Belarus. She was detained on May 15, 2021 in her own apartment and served a 15-day administrative arrest, after which she hadn't felt safe.



Uładzistaŭ Navažyłaŭ [Uladzislau Navazhylau], vocalist of the band Gods Tower, was sentenced to three years of open air prison for "insulting a government official".



Aleś Dzianisaŭ [Ales Dzianisau], musician, and his entire family were summoned to the Investigative Committee for questioning on June 22 as witnesses in the criminal case against Aleś Puškin [Ales Pushkin] and Pavieł Mažejka [Pavel Mozheika] for "rehabilitating Nazism."



Volha Kalackaja [Kalatskaya], translator, suspected under Article 342, again.

On June 20, six people were detained near the stone To the Martyrs for Freedom and Independence of Belarus in Maładziečna. **Piotr Dyk** was arrested for 15 days, and **Žanna Pilučonak** – for 25 days.



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Illa Jasinski [Ilya Yasinsky], an actor, was forced to flee Belarus because of the criminal case opened against him.

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An entire film crew of 20 people filming a young director's thesis work were detained in Minsk on June 24. The detainees were asked what the film was about, whether there would be white-red-white symbols in it, who financed it. Most of the film crew were released at night.

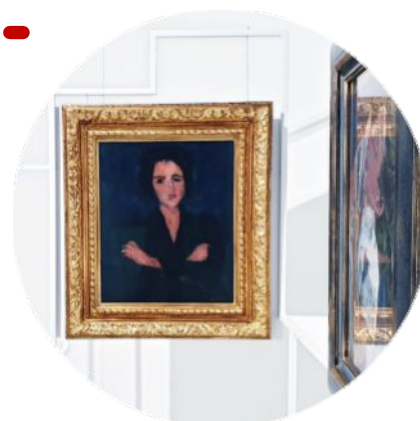
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The Center for Urban Life in Hrodna was liquidated on June 21. The reason for the closure was a painting by **Aleś Puškin** [Ales Pushkin], detained on March 30 under Art. 130 of the Criminal Code – Incitement to hatred.

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Belgazprombank gallery ART Belarus has got the paintings confiscated last June returned.



2. SYMBOLS

Piotr Kiryluk, a 45-year-old resident of the village of Bystryca, Kobryn district, was sentenced to a year of open air prison for taking a state flag from its flagpole.



Jury Šastko [Yury Shastko] and **Jaŭhien Hryb** [Yauhen Hryb] were fined 100 basic units (EUR 960) for writings and images of “protest content” (“Long live Belarus!”, “3%”, white-red stripes) at three bus stops in Žodzina.

On June 19, police officers came to the **Skarha family's** apartment for a sticker with Pahonia in the window. When the owners didn't open the door, the police took out the viewer in the door and let the gas into the apartment, forcing the door to be opened, the whole family was detained.



Uładzimir Dryndrożyk [Uladzimir Dryndrozhik], a musician, was detained on June 24 and sentenced to 7 days of administrative arrest, allegedly for a sticker on his car.

3. LIFE OF PEOPLE BEHIND BARS



Alaksandr Vasilevič's [Aliaksandr Vasilevich] term in pre-trial prison was extended again. He managed to send a message to his wife, «There is little I know and understand from here, but I know for sure that I have many more friends and good people around than I thought and could expect.»



Letter from Stasia Mironcava:

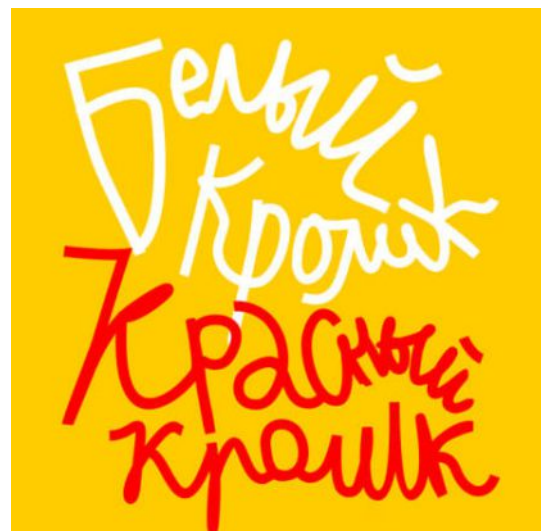
“Dishes are given to us during the meals... Then, of course, taken away. You can keep an empty plate, and I do. We always have only aluminum cups in the cell. We boil water in them. They get very hot, impossible to take with your hands. But Tania makes such circles out of the SB (propagandist newspaper), and it's okay. We drink coffee and tea using tubes made from empty pens, so as not to burn our lips. Because even if the coffee has already cooled, the aluminum keeps hot.”



Natalla Chierše [Natallia Hersche] has been in punitive confinement for the last month, in her last letter she complained about her health.

4. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM

On June 23, the play **White Rabbit, Red Rabbit**, which cannot be shown offline and during the screening of which detentions took place last week, was shown offline.



Art in support of Gods Tower frontman
Uładzistaŭ Navažyłaŭ

Olga Yakubouskaya
for Kaciaryna Barysievič





Online premiere of the play **Leave Can't Stay** by the Independent Theater Company HomoCosmos was performed by former actors of the New Drama Theater, who collectively resigned in October 2020 due to the violation of their civil rights to strike.



A song **Captivity** from **Lavon Volski** and **Marharyta Laŭčuk**.

The Modern Art Theater, which couldn't work in Belarus, has opened in Kyiv.



5. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE



Alena Anisim, Chairwoman of the Belarusian Language Society, comments on the project of the Ministry of Internal Affairs "On determining the lists of organizations and other structures, Nazi symbols and attributes",
"The flag can be banned, of course, but it cannot be erased from human memory and soul. And you can't throw it out of history. In any case, the time will come when this flag will return. Everything will be as it should be."

Siarhej Budkin, director of BY Culture,
"Speaking of developing a new cultural policy for Belarus, we are not going to impose our vision on anyone. We want to set up a process of discussing a new cultural policy, proposing our own plan of reforms, and our own 'road map'."



Miła Kotka, godmother of Belarusian street art, founder and curator of the Belarusian-Brazilian festival of street culture Vulica Brasil,
"Aspiring to the future, we must not forget about the traditions of the Belarusian people. Having lost our historical memory, forgetting about traditions and giving up the Belarusian language, we will lose contact with our land. And this connection shouldn't be lost in any case, even going to a bright future space."

6. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY


The **Belarusian diaspora** in Los Angeles created murals inspired by the works of Belarusian artists, as a sign of respect and love for their compatriots.



Poetry readings Poems of Freedom from Belarus took place during the **X International Book Festival** in Kyiv, where some members of the Belarusian PEN performed.

Volny Chor performed in Berlin at the grand opening of the Belarusian exhibition "Long Live Belarus".



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