

ISSUE #11

DECEMBER 22, 2020

CULTURAL RESISTANCE IN BELARUS



BELARUSIAN CULTURE SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION
BELARUSIAN PEN CENTRE



Art: Natalia Grebionkina

1. PEN BELARUS' MONITORING RESULTS
2. ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS
3. PRESSURE, DISMISSAL, BAN
4. REPRESSIONS FOR THE SYMBOLS

5. CULTURAL RESISTANCE
6. VOICES OF BELAURUSIAN CULTURE
7. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

STAND WITH BELARUSIAN ARTS AND CULTURE COMMUNITY

DONATE TO

THE **BELARUSIAN CULTURE SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION**

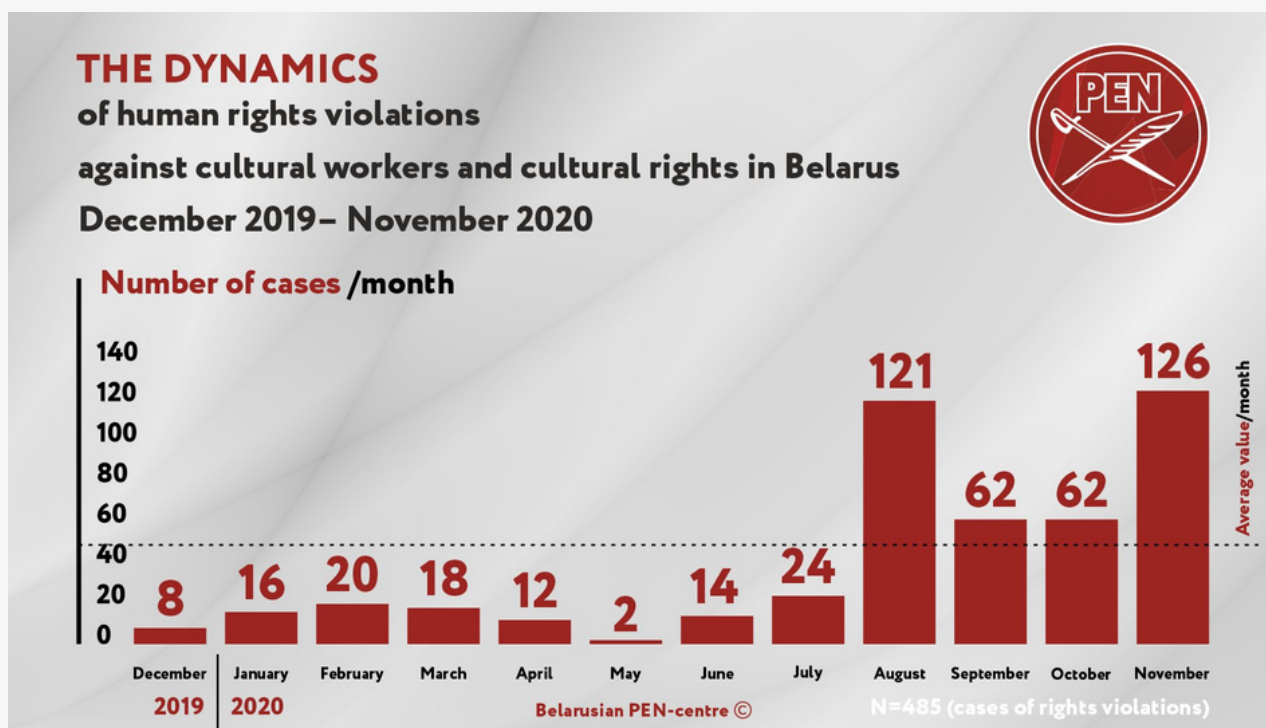
& **SAVE OUR SONGS CAMPAIGN**

SUPPORTED BY PEN BELARUS

1. PEN BELARUS' MONITORING RESULTS



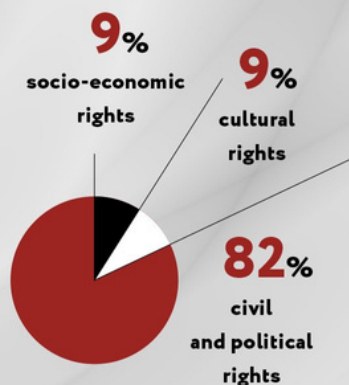
PEN BELARUS HAS BEEN MONITORING VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AGAINST CULTURAL WORKERS AND CULTURAL RIGHTS IN BELARUS (DECEMBER 2019 - NOVEMBER 2020), AND HAS PRESENTED THE FIRST RESULTS AND DATA. THE YEAR-END REPORT IS TO BE RELEASED SHORTLY.



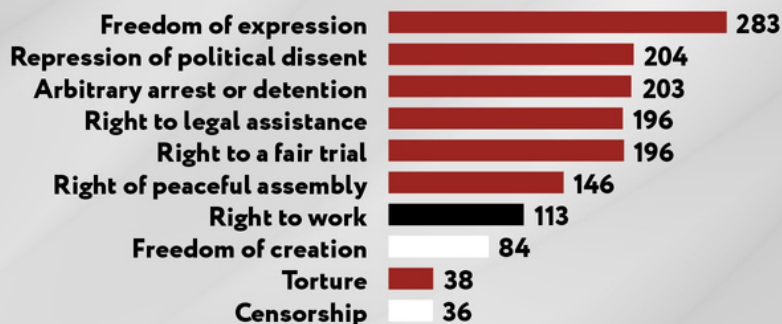
TYPES OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST PRIVATE PERSONS AND COMMUNITIES



CATEGORY
OF HUMAN RIGHTS

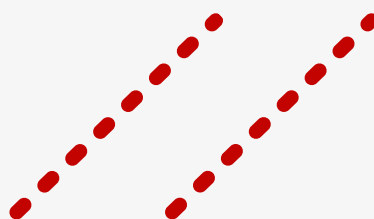


TOP-10
VIOLATIONS



Belarusian PEN-centre ©

Period: December 2019 – November 2020



TYPES OF RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST PRIVATE PERSONS AND COMMUNITIES



DURING THE REVIEW PERIOD

9%

OF VIOLATIONS RELATE TO CULTURAL RIGHTS

WHILE

82%

TO CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS
OF CULTURAL WORKERS

RELATE

Belarusian PEN-centre ©

1. ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS



Sviatlana Kuprejeva, the daughter of the writer **Mikoła Kuprejeŭ**, a former member of the initiative group of **Viktar Babaryka** and a close friend of their family, has been in custody since July 11 on charges of tax evasion. On December 11, the court extended her detention for another **2** months.



Aliaksej Halubec, dj Delos, detained on December 13 and having spent two nights in Akrescina remand prison, was fined **30** basic units [€265].



Lera Łazuk, an artist detained on Sunday, December 13, was sentenced to **13** days in jail on December 16.



Dzianis Filipienka, a musician from Rahis band, who was detained on December 14 to serve a **13**-day administrative arrest, received another **13** days on December 16 (for participating in a protest on October 25).



DETENTIONS ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20:



Andrej Jankovič, a cartoonist who became famous after a rally on August 30, when he protested in the image of a "fake president" and spent

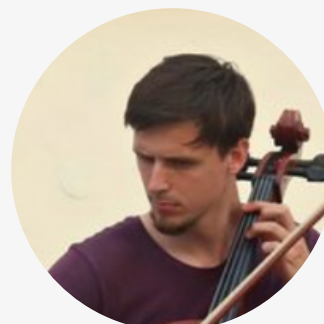
7 days in jail for that (earlier he had served **10** days of administrative arrest for August 16), was detained in Hrodna.



Viktar Jakubaŭ, candidate of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor of Polack State University. He was detained as he was returning from a children's party in his neighbourhood.



Jahor Šumski, photographer and designer, was detained near his home in Minsk.



Anton Silič, a street musician, was detained in Hrodna.

3. PRESSURE, DISMISSAL, BAN



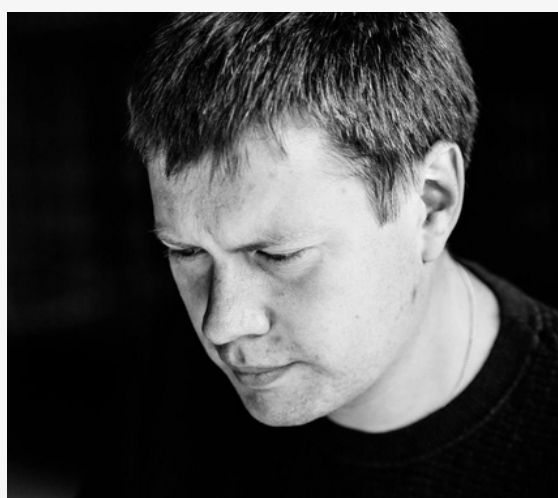
Фота: CXT

The **Doŭnar** family, founders of the Honar clothing brand, are threatened with "socially dangerous" status for an alleged photo from the march on social

media, but neither the family saw the photo nor were they explained the reasons for the allegations.



Kanstancin Jaškoŭ, a composer, left Belarus together with his family. As he himself explained, the situation for people who condemn violence and lawlessness is becoming more dangerous every day. The last straw was the news about the restriction on leaving Belarus.





ALAKSIEJ STRELNKAŬ, A THEATRICAL CRITIC AND LECTURER AT THE BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMY OF ARTS, WAS FIRED.

"On November 19, I announced to the academic administration of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts about the beginning of my strike in connection with the events in the country and the way the Academy communicates with its students and professors. Today I received the order of my dismissal for absenteeism. I started working at the Academy in 2013 and wanted my knowledge to benefit students and graduates. I'm still convinced that we have a future, while those who are frantically engaged in repressions don't."



Natalla Lavanava, who worked at the Center for Experimental Directing at the Belarusian State Academy of Arts, was also fired for having joined the general strike.



Art Credit: Valer Viadrenka

The work of photographer **Valer Viadrenka** was not allowed to be exhibited in the gallery "High Place" in Minsk. The reason could not be explained, the employees of the gallery only referred to some "regulations" defining which works can be exhibited and which can't.



Andrej Bastuniec, Chair of the Belarusian Association of Journalists (BAJ), journalist, on December 16 was interrogated as a witness in a criminal case, instigated under Article 361 of the Criminal Code (calls to actions aimed at causing harm to the national security of the Republic of Belarus).



Photo Credit: BAJ



Art Credit: Andrej Šaparaŭ

Andrej Šaparaŭ, a designer and artist, member of the Belarusian Union of Designers, had to leave the country together with his wife, **Sviatlana Piatuškova**, also an artist. The reason for their concerns about their safety was a call from the police regarding the image Andrej posted on his personal Facebook page.

4. REPRESSIONS FOR THE SYMBOLS



Jelizaveta Bursava, a 87-year-old Holocaust survivor from Belarus, a multiple champion in shooting, until her retirement she worked as a teacher of Russian language and literature, on December 16 was tried under article 23.34 of Administrative Code for a white-red-white flag on her balcony (a mass event – picketing) and fined **15** base units [**€130**].

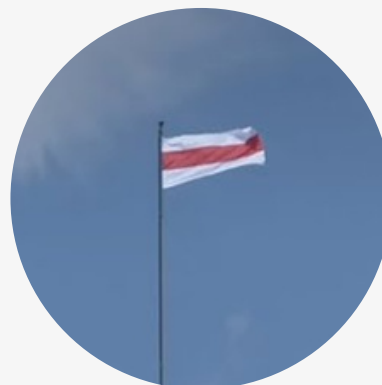
Hleb Šapo, who was the director of several performances representing Belarus at the Junior Eurovision-2015 and 2017, the adult Eurovision in 2015, as well as the assistant director at the Junior Eurovision-2010 and 2018 in Minsk, on December 15 was sentenced to **10** days of administrative arrest for a white-red-white flag in his window.



Three citizens from Minsk, including **Andrej Macuk**, a well-known both in Belarus and abroad specialist in the history of the 18th century Grand Duchy of Lithuania, were sentenced to **15** days of arrest for celebrating a birthday in the yard, as they had a cake with “Pahonia”, which is along with the white-red-white flag considered a good enough reason for arrest.

Alaksandr Šarajbak from Hlybokaje town in Viciebsk region was fined **40** basic units [**€350**] for the flag over his house.

Pavieł Marozaŭ, an activist from Pastavy, received **8** days of administrative arrest for the same reason.



5. CULTURAL RESISTANCE



THE MUSIC PROJECT TRYNIĆI (**IVAN KIRČUK, SIARŽUK DOŪHUŠAŪ AND MARHARYTA LAŪČUK**) PRESENTED THEIR VIDEO LITO/SUMMER,

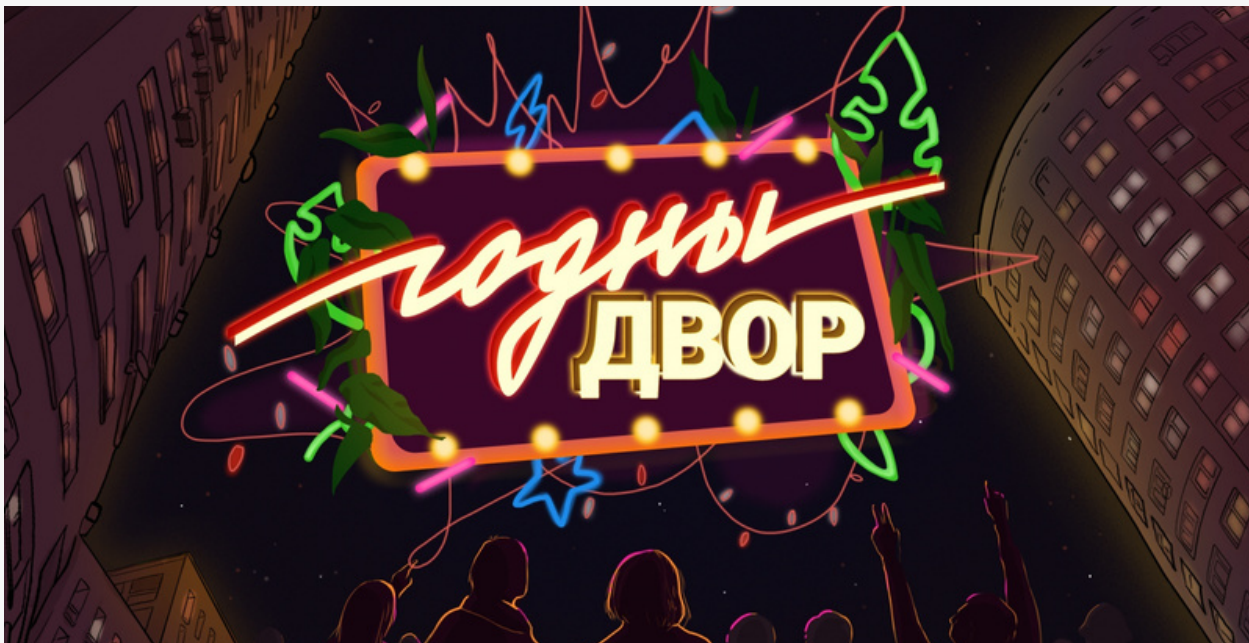
A BELARUSIAN FOLK SONG, WHICH THEY DEDICATED TO AUGUST 2020. THE DIRECTOR OF THE VIDEO IS **JURA DZIVAKOŪ**.



Dzmitry Strocaŭ held an online reading of his poems "BELARUS IS OVERTURNED" about the last four months in Belarus, on December 15, with the support of PEN Belarus.



The second Women's Poetry March took place online on December 19, with the readings from **Maryja Badziej, Volha Markitanava, Maryja Martysievič, Hanna Otčyk** and **Taćciana Svietašova**.

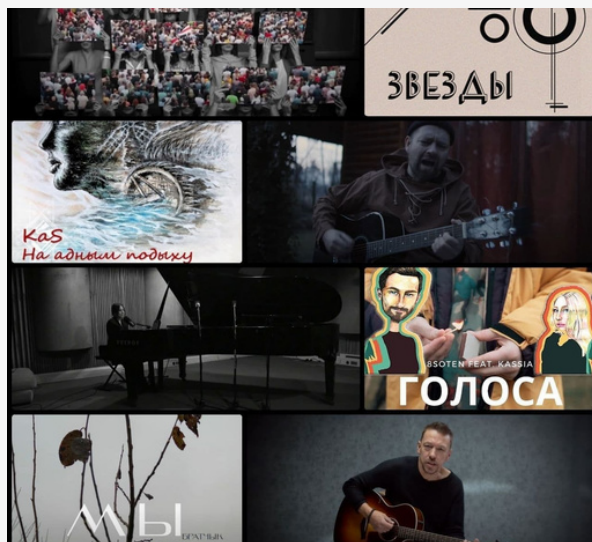


The premiere of the interactive show **Hodny Dvor** (Worthy Yard) took place on December 17.

It's an online gathering that conveys the atmosphere of the same gatherings of neighbours which have become a new tradition for thousands of Belarusians.



Siarhiej Michalok and the band Drezden presented a new music video Barrikado, a kind of manifesto in response to what is happening in Belarus.



Almost **500 songs** were created this year by musicians from different countries under the influence of Belarusian protests. See the link for the playlist.

Inna Afanasijeva,
a Belarusian singer,
released a new music
video and spoke in
support of the
Belarusian people.

**"SO MUCH HAS
HAPPENED OVER THIS
TIME DIVIDED INTO
"BEFORE" AND
"AFTER"! BUT I KNOW
THAT BELARUSIANS
ARE THE STRONGEST
AND THE MOST BRAVE
PEOPLE WHO KNOW
HOW TO LOVE! I'M
PROUD TO BELONG TO
THIS NATION, AND I'M
GRATEFUL TO EACH
OF YOU FOR YOUR
LOVE!"**



PLATER MAMA



The first single of the new Belarusian music project with female vocals PLATER, named after the strong, young and talented revolutionary of the XIX century Emilia Plater, is dedicated to our mothers.

**"TODAY THEY MAY BE WALKING
BY OUR SIDE LIKE NEVER
BEFORE. THEY WAIT FOR US AT
HOME EVERY NIGHT, THEY GO
OUT WITH US, THEY HELP US GET
PREPARED FOR A "WALK", THEY
WAIT BY THE DETENTION
CENTERS AND THE POLICE
DEPARTMENTS, THEY ARE
ALWAYS WITH US, NO MATTER
HOW OLD WE ARE AND WHAT
HAS HAPPENED TO US."**





The Belarusian Film Festival is taking place in Minsk on December 17-23.

The festival shows the films which were part of the program of the canceled film festival Listapad and hosts two remembrance events dedicated to the deceased **Luba Ziamcova, Maksim Haŭrylenka** and **Uładzimir Michajłoŭski** who worked on the documentary project "Unknown Belarus".

Students of three universities –

Belarusian State Academy of Arts, Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts, and Belarusian State Academy of Music – organized the Student Association of Arts to support culture and student initiatives.



An online festival "Music's by your side" took place for the second time, as the first one was warmly welcomed by the audience. The participants were musicians **Lavon Volski** and **Pavieł Arakielan, Illa Čarapko-Samachvalaŭ** ("Петля Пристрастия", "Кассиопея"), **Andrej Mielnikaŭ, bands RECHA, LEIBONIK, Re1ikt.**





**CHILDREN'S
DRAWINGS
ON THE
WALLS OF A
STREET IN
MINSK.**



**SEE THE PORTRAITS OF HER
INMATES THAT **NATALLA
CHIERŠE**, A BELARUSIAN WHO
WAS SENTENCED TO 2.5 YEARS**



**IN PRISON FOR TAKING A MASK
OFF A RIOT POLICEMAN DURING
THE WOMEN'S MARCH ON
SEPTEMBER 19, MADE.**

6. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE



Photo Credit: journalby.com

HANNA SIEVIARYNIEC, A TEACHER, WRITER, LITERARY CRITIC, HAS SHARED HER THOUGHTS ON THE RESULTS OF 2020.

“FOR ME, AS A PERSON WHO PROMOTES LITERATURE, THE MAIN RESULT IS THE INCREDIBLE LONGING PEOPLE HAVE FOR THE AUTHENTIC CULTURE. TWO YEARS AGO 5-7 INDIVIDUALS WOULD APPEAR AT LITERARY EVENTS IN A WARM MUSEUM, AND NOW 50-70 PEOPLE CAN STAND IN THE COLD AT THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD GATHERINGS: ADULTS, CHILDREN, DOGS... YOU TALK FOR AN HOUR AND A HALF - THEY LISTEN, YOU COULD TALK FOR THREE HOURS AND THEY WOULD LISTEN. LONGING FOR THE AUTHENTIC CULTURE IS SUCH AN EXPENSIVE VALUE, FOR THE SAKE OF WHICH WE HAVE TO WORK HARD TO HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER THESE PEOPLE.”



KACIA IVANČYKAVA, A BELARUSIAN SINGER FROM THE BAND IOWA, SPOKE ABOUT THE EVENTS IN BELARUS, ABOUT HONOR AND SELF-ESTEEM.

“We can be proud of ourselves, that we know what we want. We respect ourselves, our opinion. We know that we are this country - the people who live here, work at factories, bake bread, make bricks for houses, create music and develop art, unite in spirit, write books. These people should be proud of themselves, because even in prisons, in moments of adversity, they stay true to themselves.”



Volha Jakuboŭskaja, an artist and children’s illustrator, an author of a series of pictures about cats and wolves.

“The time comes when you realize that you are not protected in your nest on a tree once this tree is shaken. I have no idea how to live with this burden. I believe that a person should live, do his or her job, love their country, love their children, their land. What's wrong with that? I want no violence here.”





Photo Credit: nn.by

Cimate Suładze, a trumpet player who plays on the streets and at solidarity concerts for neighbourhoods and for this was sentenced twice, first to **13** days, then to **15** days of administrative arrest, on his experience.

“IT FELT LIKE A REAL NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMP WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL TORTURE. THE RADIO PLAYED AT FULL POWER THERE FOR DAYS, WITH TWO DIFFERENT RADIO WAVES AT THE SAME TIME. DURING THE DAY, WE WEREN’T EVEN ALLOWED TO TOUCH OUR BEDS. THE BENCH WAS TOO SMALL, AND IF I REALLY WANTED TO LIE DOWN, I LAY ON THE TILED FLOOR.”



Maksim Žbankoŭ, culturologist, media-analyst, cultural activist in his essay about the nature of revolution says:

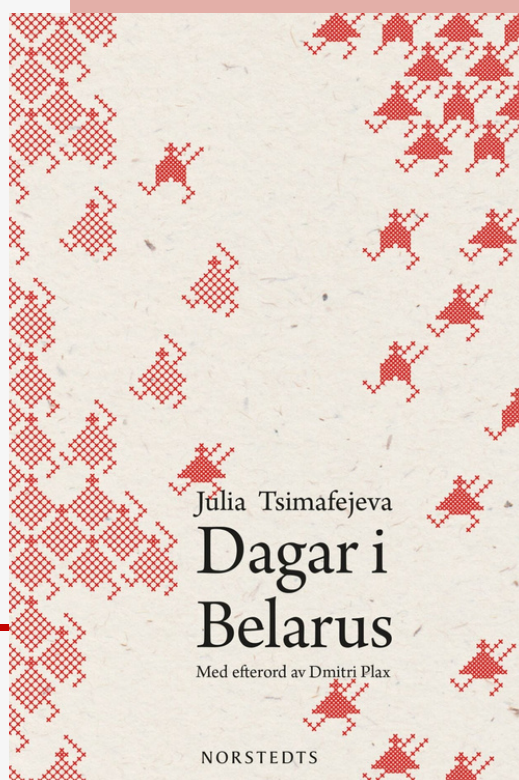
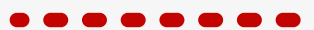
“What do we see here and now? A strange mixture. The movement bypassing the rules. Legal insurrection. Unhurried walking maneuvers. Riot of “devil-may-care’s”. Criticism of power without fighting for power. Spontaneous alliances and street improvisations. Legalization of freedom in the complete absence of an ideological basis for mass action.”



7. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY



THE DAUGAVPILS THEATER HOSTED A **READING** OF **ANDREJ KUREJČYK'S** PLAY "OFFENDED. BELARUS(SIA)"

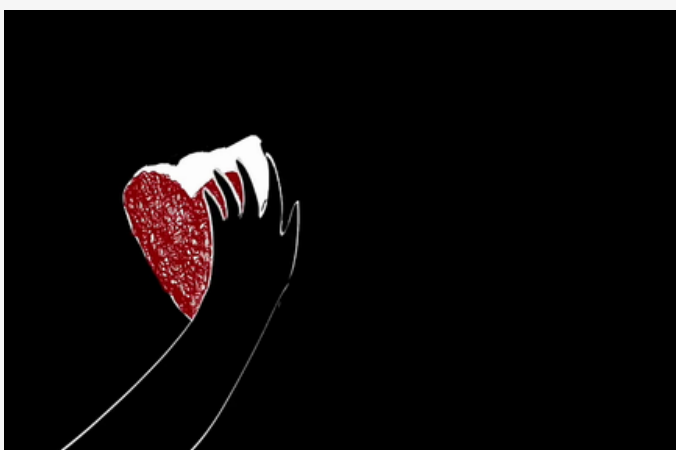


Julia Cimafejeva's diary "Days in Belarus" about the revolutionary events of summer-autumn 2020 has been translated and published in Swedish ("Dagar i Belarus").

Poems by *Uładź Lankievič* and *Hanna Komar* about the events of summer-autumn 2020 in Belarus have also been translated into Swedish and published in the Swedish PEN journal PEN / Opp, along with the translation of the *essay*, "Fascism as Memory" by *Alhierd Bacharevič* .



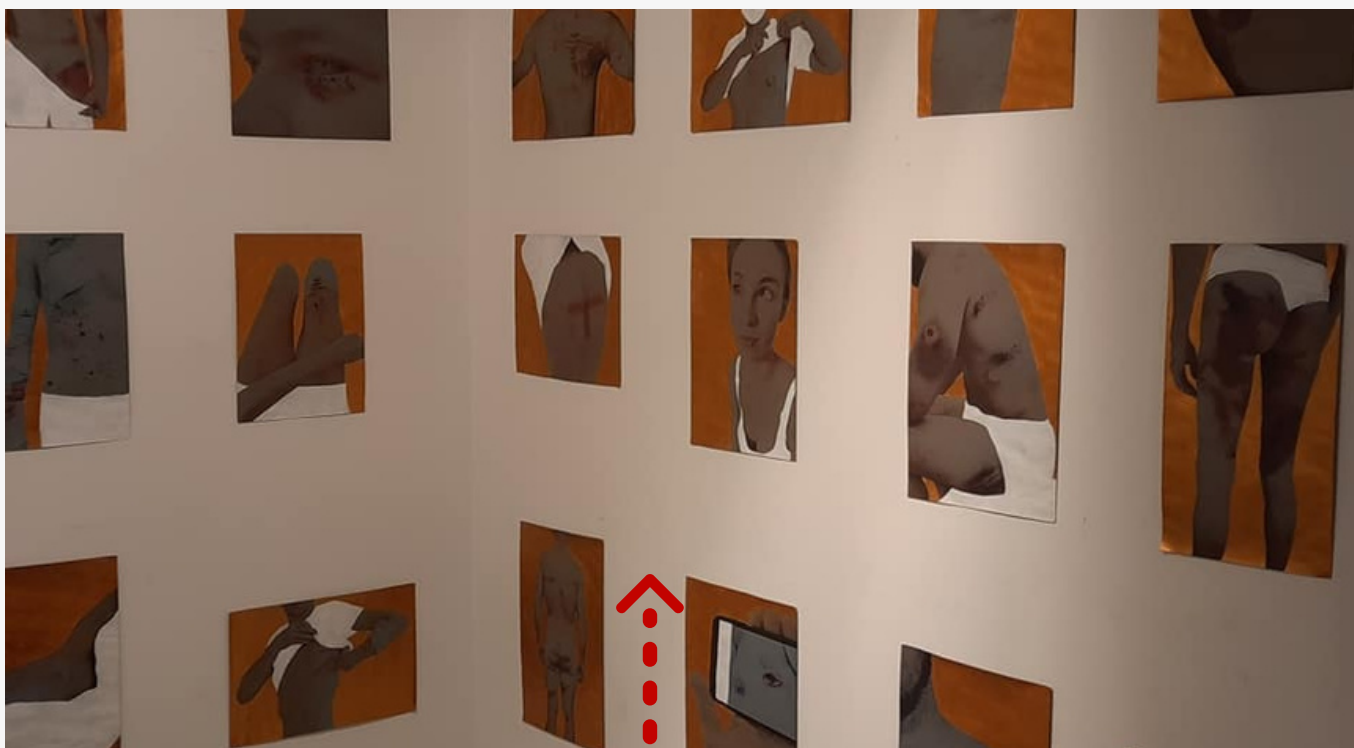
THE FILM "PERSIAN LESSONS" DIRECTED BY **VADZIM PERELMAN**, THAT **ULAD KARECKI**, A VOLUNTEER OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF VIKTAR BABARYKA, POLITICAL PRISONER WHO HAS BEEN IN PRISON SINCE AUGUST 13 AND IS SUSPECTED OF ORGANIZING RIOTS, WORKED ON, IS NOMINATED FOR AN OSCAR.



Students, graduates and teachers of the animation faculty of the National Film Television and Theatre School in Lodz (Poland) made an animated **video in support of Belarusians**.



One of Germany's leading newspapers, FAZ, with a circulation of 350,000 copies and distributed in 148 countries, published an article about the work of the Belarusian bands **Stary Olsa** and **Молчат Дома** against the background of political events in Belarus. The article was also published in the printed version of the newspaper (№294, dated 17.12.2020).



BELARUS PROTEST ART EXHIBITION HAS OPENED IN THE CENTRE OF PARIS, JUST 200 METRES FROM THE LOUVRE.



English PEN has launched a weekly round-up of the activities on Belarus.

The exhibition of Belarusian art 'Before / After / 2020. Belarus' opened in Krakow on December 15 and will last until December 31. Among the participants are **Stas Sugintas, Yana Chernova, Anastasia Rydlevskaya, Hanna Plotnikava, Anton Radionov, Mari Skakun, Aliaksandr Sakalou, Maria Stankevich, Maria Kosheleva-Likhota, Lizaveta Antropova.**



Polish composers signed an open letter in support of Belarusian writers.

“WE SINCERELY SUPPORT BELARUSIAN WRITERS AND ALL CITIZENS OF BELARUS WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THE RIGHT TO A NORMAL LIFE IN OUR COMMON EUROPEAN HOME.”

The democratic opposition in Belarus

2020 Sakharov Prize laureate
for defending democracy



ON 18 DECEMBER, A WEBINAR ON THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN BELARUS WAS HOSTED BY **THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**, INCLUDING AN ONLINE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE ROLE OF WRITERS, ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS IN THE ONGOING STRUGGLE FOR FREE SPEECH IN BELARUS.



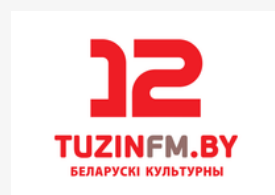
THIS NEWSLETTER WAS PREPARED IN COOPERATION BY

BELARUSIAN CULTURE
SOLIDARITY FOUNDATION

&
BELARUSIAN PEN CENTRE



INFORMATION PARTNER



TUZINFM.BY

CONTACTS

✉ belcultfond@gmail.com

✈ [by_culture](#)

🐦 [BYCULTUREFUND](#)

f [bcsfbel](#)

📷 [by_culture](#)

📺 [#BY_culture](#)

