



Belarusian  
PEN  
Centre

# Cultural Resistance in Belarus

**Issue 26 (39)**

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*Culture knows no boundaries. Imagination knows no boundaries. The need for expression and freedom of creativity should not be limited in any way. Walls built by fear, aggression and terror separate people from themselves and from others. There is no summer behind the walls.*

1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY
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\*SUPPORTED BY PEN BELARUS

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# 1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY

**Hanna Važnik** [Hanna Vazhnik], a music teacher, was sentenced to a year of home imprisonment for changing the first stanza of the national anthem of Belarus and posting it in her personal Twitter account, starting with "We are extremists, peaceful people."



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**Andrej Alaksandraŭ** [Andrey Alyaksandrau], the imprisoned journalist, mediamanager and poet, charged with high treason (Article 356-1 of the Criminal Code).

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The trial over **Mikałaj Dziadok**, blogger, author of prison literature, activist of anarchist movement, started in Minsk on June 29. He gave a statement about torture by police.



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All employees of the state magazine **Maładość**, which in creative circles was considered the best state literary magazine, quit – they were only four after the dismissal of editor-in-chief Sviatlana Vucinava in February 2021.

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Several cultural figures informed that upon their return to Belarus at the border, their luggage went through a thorough check including filing a report. This might be due to their administrative arrests during the protests.



The Belarusian authorities have demanded to stop the work of the **Goethe-Institut** and the **German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)** in Belarus.

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**Taǎciana Sieviaryniec** had her house searched, as a result books written by her son, Paviel Sieviaryniec, were taken away along with a white-red-white umbrella and several little flags.



**Ihar Kaźmierčak** [Ihar Kazmierchak], editor-in-chief of the regional independent resource [orsha.eu](http://orsha.eu) and owner of the national souvenir shop Cudoŭnaja Krama, on July 2 received a summons to the Investigative Committee.

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**Anžalika Ahurbaš** [Angelika Agurbash], a Belarusian singer living in Moscow, who's been actively supporting the protest, is charged with inciting hostility and insulting Aliaksandr Lukashenka, for which she faces up to 12 years in prison.



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## 2. SYMBOLS

**Siarhiej Muraviejka** was sentenced to a year of open air prison for taking a state flag down from a building in Baranavičy.

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**Jadžviha Małaščanka**, a 17-year-old graduate of Gymnasium №4 in Baranavičy, received a warning for covering her shoulders with a piece of cloth of white and red colors at the school-leaving party.

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**Kaciaryna Vinnikava**, a graduate of the BSU Law School, was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest for expressing gratitude to the fired BSU professors during the awarding of diplomas ceremony from the stage, in a white dress with a red belt.





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## 3. LIFE OF PEOPLE BEHIND BARS

**Anžalika Borys**, political prisoner, chairwoman of the Union of Poles in Belarus, is in poor health. She eventually agreed to be moved to Poland, but the authorities are holding back the process in order to blackmail her colleague, journalist **Andrzej Poczobut**.

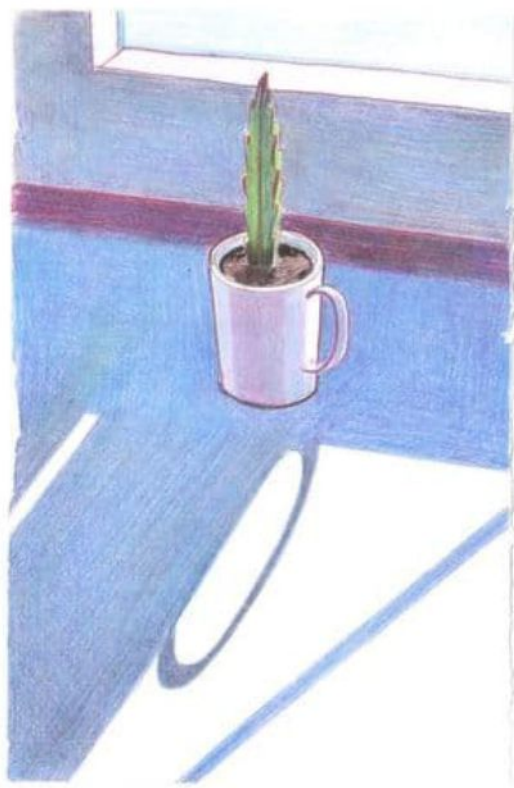


**Uladzimir Hundar**, an activist and local historian, went on a hunger strike in the solitary confinement where he was placed for refusing to say it aloud that he was "prone to extremism". He wrote in his latest letter to the family about the torture behind bars.

## 4. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM



The **Victory Artists** media project tells the stories of Belarusian creatives who have experienced repression, to help understand how a creative person feels under pressure and captivity, and those who do a lot for our Victory but who have miraculously escaped harsh repression.



**Stasia Mironcava,**  
A Portrait of the Imprisoned Cactus



**Lilia Kvacabaya** illustrates Belarusian folk traditional costumes

TYDZIEŃ  
KULTURY BIAŁORUSKIEJ



BY\_CULTURE  
GLOBAL WEEK

5-11.07.2021

Global week of Belarusian Culture takes place on July 5-11.

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## 5. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE



**Hanna Sieviaryniec**, writer and researcher of literature, teacher,

*"Even now, when I feel rather frustrated, I understand that the months from June last year to April [2021] in my life were the most meaningful and happy, despite the fact that they were very painful and full of suffering. I have a feeling almost every day that I had lived to be useful at this time."*

**Uładź Lankievič**, poet, translator, musician, member of the Belarusian PEN Center:  
*"I've got faith in people again. Let's just say, for a long time, I lived in my own microcosm and to not get frustrated, I just didn't think about what was happening outside. But last year has shown me that there are quite a lot of people in Belarus who keep their dignity."*





## 6. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY



A concert of Belarusian solidarity in Lviv.

СЦЭНА  
БЕЛАРУСКАЙ  
САЛІДАРНАСЦІ  
НА ФЭСЦЕ «СВЯТО МУЗЫКІ У ЛЬВОВІ»

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## 7. POLITICAL PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS



In July, 3 people who are somehow involved in the cultural development of our country, will celebrate their birthdays behind bars. They are **Mikałaj SasieŹ**, a choreographer (July 16); **Alaksiej Sančuk**, musician (July 18) and **Viktar Łosik**, copywriter (July 22).



Letters can be sent to the following addresses (but only those written in Russian or Belarusian)

**Mikałaj SasieŹ** and **Alaksiej Sančuk**:

Турма №4. 212011, г. Магілёў, вул. Крупскай, 99А

**Viktar Łosik**:

СІЗА-1. 220030, г. Мінск, вул. Валадарскага, 2

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