



Belarussian  
PEN  
Centre

# Cultural Resistance in Belarus

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*"Their shackles and hatred will break against  
our dancing, singing and laughing."*

*Maria Kalesnikava*

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# 1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY



The **Poloniczka** Cultural and Educational Association of Poles in Belarus has been liquidated for “activities that contradict the statute and for disseminating information that discredits Belarus”.

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The International Film Festival “**Listapad**”, which has been held in Minsk annually since 1994, this year will be organized by Belarusfilm, not by Art Corporation Center for Visual Arts. Last year, “Listapad” was canceled due to the unfavorable epidemiological situation”, the organizers learned about it from the media.

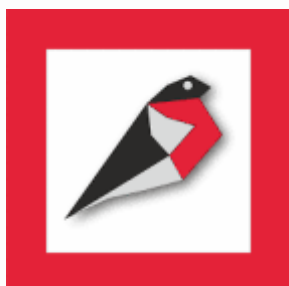


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The court hearing on liquidation of the **Belarusian PEN Center** has been postponed to August 9.

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A video clip by the **Daj Dorogu** band was labeled extremist by the court ruling. The musicians chose to close access to it on the web, not to put anyone who may share it in danger, and the leader of the band Jury Stylski left Belarus.



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The private **Nił Hilevič University** was eliminated on the decision of the authorities.



16 people were attacked by the armed people, with shooting and drone filming, at a Birthday party of the front woman of **Irdorath** fantasy-folk band Nadziežda Irdorath. Six musicians were fined. Uładzimir Kałač, Nadzieja Kałač, Piotr Marčanka, Julija Junickaja and Anton Šnip, Pavał Šmyha, and Zmicier Šymanski are facing criminal charges as suspects of group actions that grossly violate public order. Maryja Padalak, Alaksandr Sinkievič, Dźmitryj

Šymanski, Jaŭhien Srečienki, Michaił Arakčejeŭ and Alaksiej Paŭaŭčenia received 15 days of administrative arrest. Last summer the band played during the Sunday marches in Minsk.



**Uladzimir Mackievič**, a philosopher and methodologist, the founder of the Flying University, and **Taččiana Vadałažskaja**, a sociologist and coordinator of the Flying University, were detained on August 4 after a KGB search. They are now in the Pre-Trial Detention Centre of the KGB. Uladzimir Mackievič is suspected of organizing or participating in actions that violate public order.



New sentences in the "**karahod case**": 11 people received from 2 to 3 years in open air prison and home imprisonment, one – Ihar Łaptovič – 2.5 years in a colony. 7 of the 12 defendants pleaded not guilty.

Андрасюк Арцём Аляксандравіч — 2 гады «хіміі» (віну не прызнаў);  
 Бірукоў Аляксей Валер'евіч — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (часткова прызнаў віну);  
 Бірукова Таццяна Юр'еўна — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (часткова прызнала віну);  
 Дзягцярык Сяргей Васільевіч — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (часткова прызнаў віну);  
 Дзям'янка Дар'я Васільеўна — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (не прызнала віну);  
 Касцюк Андрэй Пятровіч — 3 гады «хіміі» (не прызнаў віну);  
 палітзняволены Лаптановіч Ігар Анатольевіч — 2,5 гады калоніі (не прызнаў віну);  
 Лаптановіч Юлія Аляксандраўна (жонка Ігара) — 3 гады «хатняй хіміі» (не прызнала віну);  
 Макарэвіч Уладзімір Віктаравіч — 2,5 гады «хіміі» (не прызнаў віну);  
 Парфеевец Андрэй Аляксеевіч — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (часткова прызнаў віну);  
 Пяцінкін Канстанцін Паўлавіч — 2 гады «хатняй хіміі» (прызнаў цалкам віну);  
 Шыла Наталля Уладзіміраўна — 2,5 гады «хіміі» (не прызнала віну).



Police came to **Dźmitry Dźmitryjeŭ**, photographer of the Novy Čas media outlet, on August 5, and he was sentenced to 15 days of administrative arrest.

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The authorities disseminate a “**black list**” of 400 names of art workers, journalists, etc., who spoke out against the election fraud and violence, quit in protest, went on strike, and so on, calling not to hire these people; their personal information is also spread.



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**Siarhiej Vieramiejuk**, a musician who was sentenced to 15 days in prison in June, the day before he was to defend his diploma, left Belarus last night. On August 9, he had a summons to the military registration and enlistment office (which meant that he could be sent to serve in the army).

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**Ihar Bancar**, musician, was put in the punitive confinement for 10 days for “violating the imprisonment regime”.



**Nobel laureate Svetlana Alexievich** was removed from the school curriculum in Russian literature for 11th grades of schools in Belarus. Her name is not mentioned in the list of "Russian-language literature of Belarus". Works of another Nobel laureate, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who wrote about the Gulag, were also removed from the curriculum.



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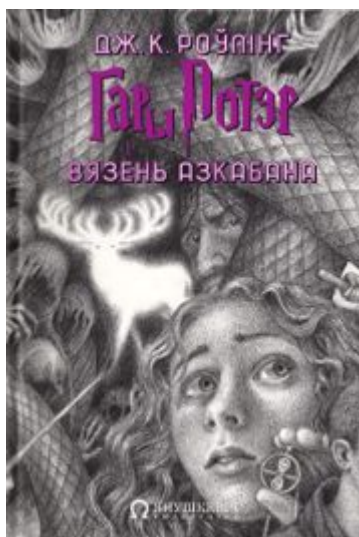
## 2. LIFE OF THE IMPRISONED PEOPLE

**Viktar Babaryka**, a patron of Belarusian culture, businessman, the leading candidate in the pre-election period 2020, and political prisoner, sentenced to 14 years of imprisonment, has been transported to the Navapolack colony, where his work is to put firewood in the bakery stove.



**Maria Kalesnikava** was offered to speak for Belteleradiocompany's TV channel, in an interview similar to the one with Raman Pratasievič. Maria replied that she would agree to give an interview to the ONT co-worker Marat Markaŭ on condition that she tells "the shocking truth about her abduction, investigation and lawlessness in prison."

### 3. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM



The Belarusian publishing house **Januškievič**, the arrest from their accounts were lifted in mid-July, announced the release of the third book of Harry Potter's adventures – "**Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**" in a Belarusian translation.

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**Vasil Hryn's** book "**Don't Despair**" has been published. When reading it, one discovers different aspects of the Belarusian soul.

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**Januškievič** publishing house has re-launched **Alhierd Bacharevič's** book "**Dogs of Europe**", which has been under examination for "extremism" since April 8.

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An online talk with the writer and member of PEN Belarus **Alhierd Bacharevič** took place on August 4 at the invitation of the Belarusians of Scotland and the Skaryna Book Club.





Belarusians  
through the eyes of the artist [vera.bei](https://vera.bei)



A portrait of **Vital Šyšoŭ**,  
a Belarusian activist in exile, found dead in Kyiv



A drawing about the situation with the Belarusian sprinter **Krystina Tsimanouskaya**, whom  
the Belarusian National Olympic Committee wanted to forcibly send from Tokyo to Belarus.



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In the new episode of the  
YouTube program  
"Around Culture",  
**Mikita Monič** [Nikita Monich]  
tells about the first Belarusian  
museumologists.



The Belarusian band **Haradsky Val**  
dedicated their new track to Maria  
Kalesnikava, all the musicians  
who played at the neighbours' gatherings,  
and Alaksiej Sančuk.



**Marharyta Laŭčuk** reads  
a poem by  
**Anna Zlatkoŭskaja**  
about missing the home  
where you can't go back.

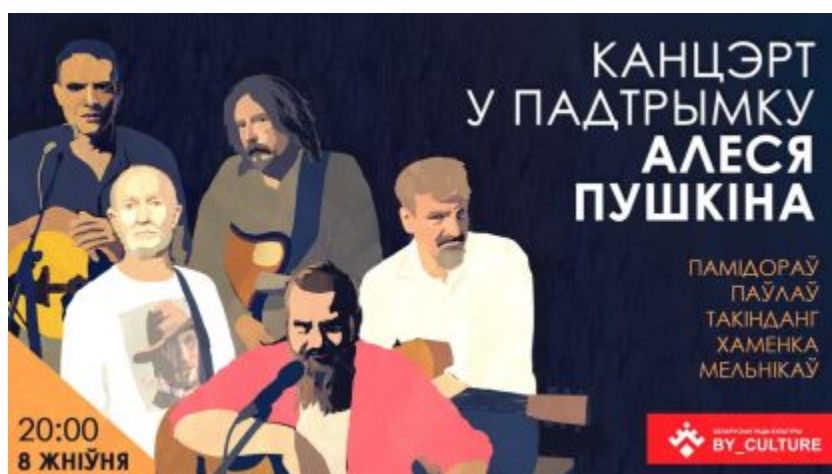


Belarusian music band **Intelligency** has released a new song and a video clip, titled **Belaruskaja Malitva** (Belarusian Prayer).



A-100 (patrol stations chain) team has launched a project of free guided tours around Minsk, "**Tours for a 'Thank you'**". Every week, they organize free tours of less popular areas of the city, telling about beautiful places, streets and, of course, about their history.

Belarusian musicians played a concert for the birthday of **Aleś Puškin**, the artist imprisoned for his painting.



The **Tutaka festival**, which took place on August 6 and 7, is not only the music of the Belarusian revolution, but also a way to show Belarusian culture and art in full diversity.



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## 4. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE

**Maria Kalesnikava** from the pre-trial prison called on Lukashenka to stop the violence, *“I urge you to stop fighting with your own people, listen to Belarusians and start a new dialogue. Stop the violence! Stop the absurd lawsuits! Don’t destroy the economy and successful businesses! Release people from prisons!”*



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**Alhierd Bacharevič,**

*“The reality of my novels has always been born of contact with people. Belarusians live as if they were prisoners of some terrible text invented by a sick author. A crooked, anxious reality, absurdity and angry laughter at every turn. Can a different kind of literature be born here?”*



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**Kaciaryna Andrejeva** (Bachvalava), journalist and author sentenced to 2 years in a general-security penal colony, *“My task is to save my soul from degrading and not allow prison to seep into me. Not to become a part of the ugly [prison world], but to make the space around myself a little nicer”.*



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**Maksim Znak** in an interview from behind the bars, *“A year ago I worked hard for the good and adhered to the letter of law. So I have a clear conscience about the value of my actions. Should you regret that you went to the basement and discovered the fire, or is it better never to open the door and live in blissful ignorance? I don’t think so, of course. I don’t regret the choice I made.”*



## 5. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

An exhibition “**Long live Belarus**” takes place in the polish **Galeria Wieża Ciśnień**.



Polish musicians recorded a song in memory of **Vitold Aśurak**.

Interviews with **Hanna Komar** and **Dmitry Strotsev** in the Norwegian newspaper Klassekampen.



An interview with **Olga Shparaga**, philosopher, PEN Belarus member, was published in the largest Swedish daily newspaper **Dagens Nyheter**.





## Ett år i Belarus

RÖSTER INIFRÅN EN FOLKRESNING

SVETLANA ALEKSJJEVITJ  
ALHIERD SACHAREVIČ  
KRYSTINA BANDURYNJA  
SASJA FILIPENKO  
NADJA KANDRUSEVITJ-SJIDLOVSKAJA  
HANNA KOMAR  
ANDREJ KUREJTJYK  
ULADZIMIR LJANKEVITJ  
VIKTAR MARTSINOVITJ  
MARYJA MARTYSEVITJ  
VALZHYNJA MORT  
VOLHA SJPARAHA  
DMITRIJ STROTSEV  
JULIA TSIMAFJEVA



The anthology "**One Year in Belarus**" in Swedish is to be released for the anniversary of August 9. It includes poems, essays, interviews and letters written during the protests by 14 Belarusian authors.



**The European Council of Literary Translators' Associations (CEATL), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) and the European Writers Council (EWC)** call on the governments of Europe and the international community to demonstrate firm support for the democracy movement in Belarus and to provide refuge and humanitarian assistance to those fleeing the country.



An exhibition and public program **Screams of the Silenced** in solidarity with Belarusian voices of (artistic) resistance protesting against a derailed dictatorship opened on August 7 in the Hague.



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## 6. POLITICAL PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS



In August, 8 people who have been somehow involved in the process of cultural development of our country, will celebrate their birthdays behind bars. They are **Aleś Puškin**, artist (August 6); **Siarhiej Cichanoŭski**, blogger (August 18), **Anatol Chinievič**, programmer and bard (August 19), **Arciom Takarčuk**, architect (August 20), **Siarhiej Voŭkaŭ**, actor (August 21), **Mikałaj Dziadok**, blogger and writer, public activist (August 23), **Ała Šarko**, cultural manager, program director of Press Club Belarus (August 24) and **Ihnat Sidorčyk**, director, actor and poet (August 25).

See the [link](#) for the addresses for postcards and letters.

-  [pen-centre.by](http://pen-centre.by)
-  [pen-centre.by/en](http://pen-centre.by/en)
-  [info@pen-centre.by](mailto:info@pen-centre.by)
-  [PENBelarus](https://t.me/PENBelarus)
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