



Belarussian
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Cultural Resistance in Belarus

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*there will be plenty of air and the prisoners will be free
going through their volumes of lives unspent,
stolen from them...*

Taciana Niadbaj

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1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY



Darja Pataturka, director of the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theater, of Belarus had her contract not extended. Darja wishes she had quit last year, but "that needed strength which wasn't there at the time."

Vadzim Jermašuk, a well-known Belarusian blogger, was detained on August 17 in Ščučyn and sentenced to 25 days of administrative arrest. The essence of the accusation is that by inspecting the local skate playground (he wanted to help create a similar one in Hrodna), "he incited others to take part in an unauthorized sports event".



Uładzimir Mackievič, a philosopher and methodologist, is facing charges under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code (organization of actions that grossly violate public order).



Illa Mironaŭ, a well-known Homel-based volunteer, was sentenced to 25 days of administrative arrest for wearing a T-shirt saying "Write Letters", which was considered "unauthorized picketing".



A civil case has been instituted to liquidate the **Belarusian Writers Union**. **Barys Piatrovič**, head of the organization, says that they will try to defend themselves in court and prove their point.



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The Supreme Court has opened a case on the liquidation of the **International Public Association Baćkaŭščyna**, which cooperates with the Belarusian diaspora from more than 20 countries for promoting Belarusian culture in Belarus and abroad by publishing numerous books on Belarusian culture and the history of Belarusians abroad, organising conferences, including World Congresses of Belarusians every five years.



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The authorities want to liquidate the **Belarusian Language Society**, and as part of it – the newspapers **Novy Čas** and **Naša Słova**.



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In Minsk, only 4,000 schoolchildren have **Belarusian** as their language of instruction, which is about 2% of the total number of schoolchildren in the Belarusian capital.



2. LIFE OF THE IMPRISONED PEOPLE



Ihar Bancer has been put in punitive confinement for another 10 days.



Andrej Alaksandraŭ, a journalist, media manager, poet, and his partner **Iryna Złobina** – both in the pre-trial detention center number 1 in Minsk since January 12, 2021 – are going to get married there.

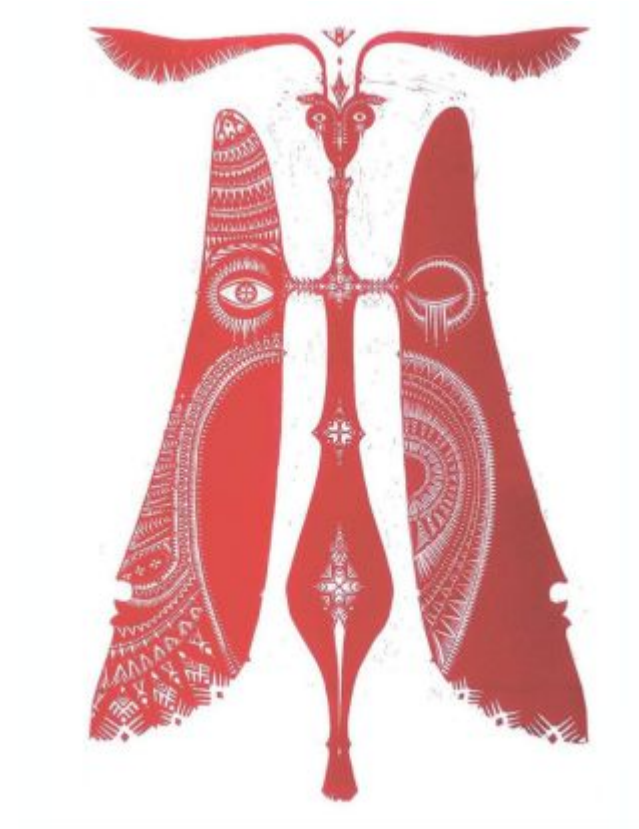
3. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM



An online screening of the play "**The Room Is Dying**", directed by **Palina Dabravolskaja**. The first big performance in Minsk took place at the TeArt festival, which was created thanks to the support of Viktor Babaryka at OK16 cultural space, which was directed by **Maria Kalesnikava**.



A series of graphic works from the Belarusian artist Maryja Stankievič



Aleś Puškin sent his drawing of Elžbieta Radziwił, daughter of the last owner of Niašviž Castle, from behind bars.

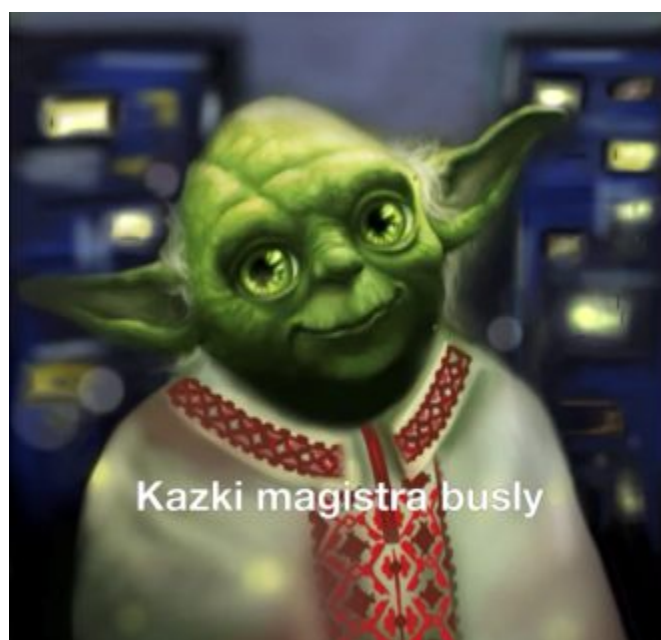
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A new song from the Belarusian music band in exile **Razbitaje Serca Pacana**.

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The **Magister** residential district in Minsk presents a pilot episode from the series of audio stories "**Magister's Tales**" – the first fairy tale about where storks came from.



A year ago, at the height of the protests in Belarus, almost **60 workers** resigned from the Yanka Kupala National Academic Theater in Minsk. The actors have joined the Independent **Theater Group Kupalaŭcy** and mainly show video versions of the performances, because it is impossible to get permission to show, and the authorities put pressure on the administrators of the premises willing to cooperate with such troupes.



Photo: Volha Babkova



The **Student Art Association** is holding a short film competition theme "**language**".

Video of the reading of Johann Wolfgang Goethe's famous epic "**Reinecke-Lis**" in Belarusian and German. The unusual artistic decoration was created by the team of the cultural center Korpus, one of the few cultural venues in Minsk which keep living.



Palina Dabravolskaja, a Belarusian director, actress and musician, has created a triptych of audio performances "**Viartannie**", parts of which she produces daily in a specific telegram channel.

4. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE

Maryja Vajtovič, an activist from Baraŭlany in Minsk, an event organizer who was forced to leave Belarus together with her family because she became a suspect for "involvement in terrorism",
«We have no plans to stay and take root abroad. We need to survive in this time and see how people live where the laws work. We hope to return to Belarus and bring this useful experience.»



Aleś Dzianisaŭ, musician,
“Why write songs, put on plays and be creative in general now? Then why should a cook make food? Should a yard keeper sweep the street? The same is true of people who are genuine creatives, who create not for the sake of another award or hype. They can’t but create.”

5. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY



In support of **the band Irdorath** and their friends who are now behind bars, musicians from different countries are recording covers of the song "Change".

German band **CORVUS CORAX** held a demonstration in front of the Embassy of Belarus in Berlin on August 16, in support of the Belarusian musicians from **Irdorath** facing criminal charges for playing at big rallies in Minsk in 2020.



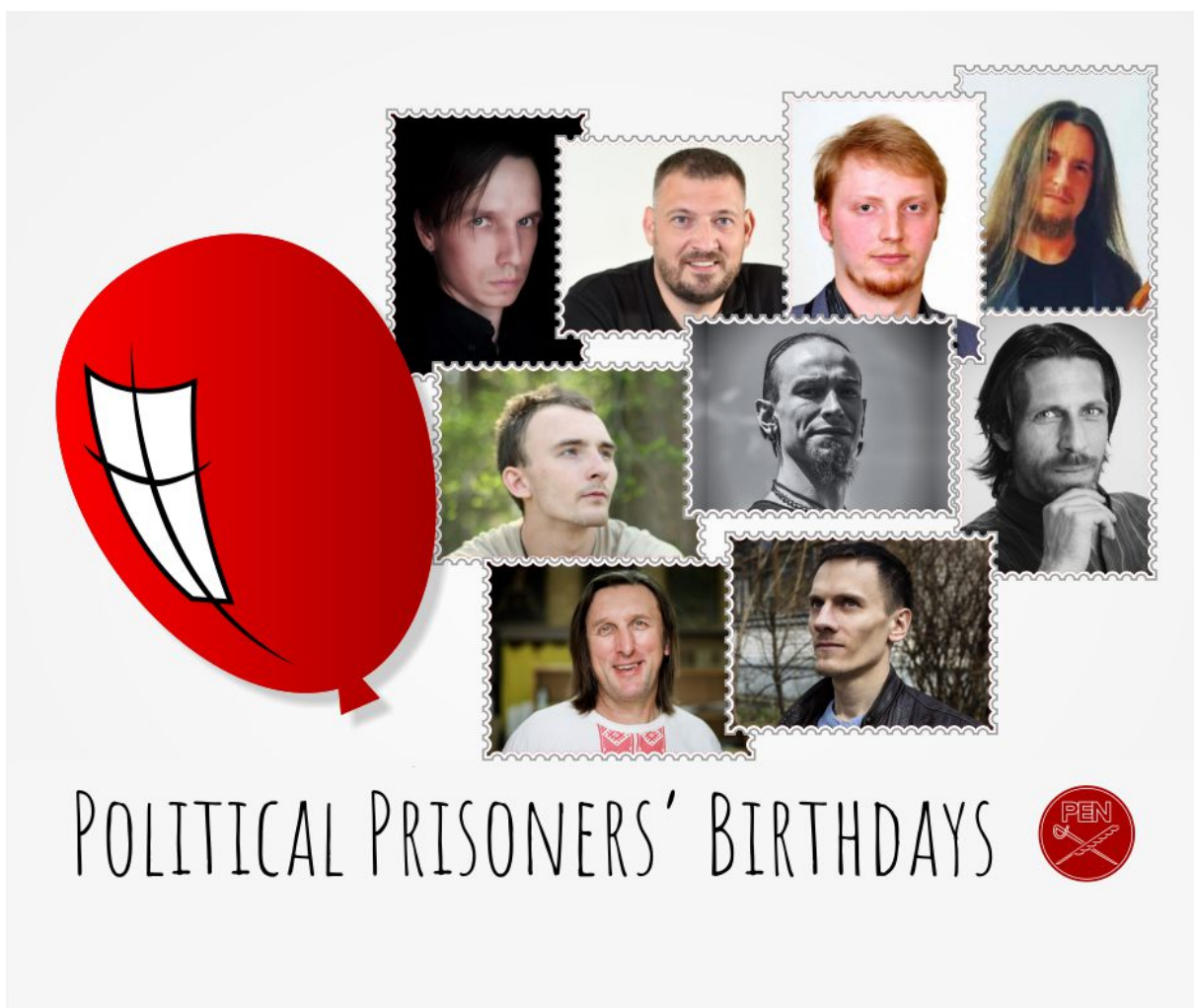
An episode about Belarus has been released on the German Youtube channel **Der Dunkle Parabelritter**, covering the detention and imprisonment of the musicians from **Irdorath**, as the author of the channel is their friend and supporter.



The Norwegian Writers 'Association, the Writers' Union, the Association of Norwegian Authors and Translators of Educational Literature, the Association of Norwegian Translators, and the Norwegian Association of Authors of Children's and Youth Literature

in a joint statement defend independent Belarusian writers.

6. POLITICAL PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS



In August, 9 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); **Piatro Marčanka**, musician of Irdorath (August 16); **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); **Ihnat Sidorčyk**, director, actor and poet (August 25); **Uładzimir Kałač**, musician of Irdorath (August 31).

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

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