



Belarussian
PEN
Centre

Cultural Resistance in Belarus

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“Act until no one has time to ban you.”

Erich Maria Remarque

- 1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY**
- 2. LIFE OF THE IMPRISONED PEOPLE**
- 3. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM**
- 4. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE**
- 5. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**
- 6. POLITICAL PRISONERS’ BIRTHDAYS**

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1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY

The Ministry of Internal Affairs announced the detention of the owner of an underground printing house. A 47-year-old resident of Tarasaŭ village of Minsk district made flags, stickers, and “other products with unregistered symbols” in his printing house.



There was an attempt to hack the resources of the **Belarus Free Theatre**.



Siarhiej Marozaŭ, photographer from Hrodna, was called for a "preventive talk" with the police. They took a sample of his saliva, fingerprints, and he had to sign a document admitting his awareness of criminal charges for participating in protests. Before the election of 2020, Siarhej for 5 years created social and media advertising for the local police, but last August, he recorded a video throwing away all the awards he received from them.

Juraś Kopcik, detained on September 4 during the festival "Battle of Vorša" and sentenced to 10 days for participating in an "unauthorized mass event", received another 12 days of administrative arrest.



Kirył Salejeŭ, the son of Vadzim Salejeŭ, culturologist, professor at the Academy of Arts, has been detained.

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Alaksandr Bahdanaŭ (Papa Bo), founder of the Cultural Center “Korpus”, and **Maksim Kruk**, sound designer, haven’t been released after 10 days of arrest – they are suspects in a criminal case under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code.



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Dzmitry Padrez (Dream), a street artist, is known to have been detained as a suspect in the criminal case under Art. 130 of the Criminal Code (incitement of social hatred) since July.

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Jula Čarniaŭskaja, who as a suspect in TUY.BY case, has been under home detention for five months, has had her term extended.

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Uladzimir Punko, director of an enterprise in Viciebsk, was thrown in jail for 20 days for a white-red-white napkin in his car.

Mikataj Jankojć, music journalist and musician, was detained September 15 and later fined 980 Euro “for disobeying a police officer”.



Vadzim Jermašuk, blogger Vadimati, is a suspect in criminal cases under Art. 368 of the Criminal Code "insult to the President of the Republic of Belarus" and Art. 370 of the Criminal Code "mockery of state symbols”.



Беларускі фолк-метал гурт **Znich** атрымаў ад чыноў Belarusian folk-metal band **Znich** has been denied a tour permit by officials for a concert on their 25th anniversary at the Re:Public club in Minsk.



Authorities liquidated the **Belarusian School Society**.



The court liquidated the local history organization **Talaka**, which had existed for 35 years.



2. LIFE OF THE IMPRISONED PEOPLE



Eduard Babaryka can't get permission to exercise in the cell (he used to actively practice yoga), but during walks he continues jogging, pushing up, etc. He also learns to draw, but can't buy books.

Aleś Bialacki, a human rights activist and a member of the Belarusian PEN Center, has been in prison for two months. Behind bars he is writing memoirs about his work at the Maksim Bahdanovič Literary Museum.



On September 15, punk musician **Ihar Bancer** was released from the punitive confinement, where he had been put for 40 days, and brought to the open air prison in Viciebsk, where he is to serve his sentence. Bancer has been on a hunger strike for the last 19 days to protest against illegal actions against him. Now he isn't well.

Viktar Babaryka was transferred to another job: he works with bakery wares in the room with temperatures exceeding 30 degrees Celsius, with no ventilation, the windows are not allowed to open.



3. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM

The long list for the **Carlos Sherman Award** has been announced. This award for the best literary book translation into Belarusian was founded in 2016 by the Belarusian PEN Center, the Union of the Belarusian Writers and the Local charitable organization Viartannie Foundation.



A meeting with **Adam Hlobus**, a Belarusian writer, poet and artist, took place on September 14 at the Maksim Bahdanovič Literary Museum in Minsk. The book "**Family**", discussed at the meeting, was shortlisted for the Jerzy Giedroyc Literary Award in 2018.



Small but meaningful and brave actions of creative civil resistance



Women in white-red-white clothes read Belarusian books on the train – a group of women had been fined and sentenced to administrative arrests for that before

Residents of Minsk sang “Mahutny Boža” (“Mighty God”) near the church of St. John the Baptist, the song de facto banned and punishable





VOKA video service has released a documentary "Gaining Height" about **Alla Kasabuckaja** – the first Belarusian who managed to climb Everest.

Alaksandr Vasilevič wrote a collection of fairy tales "Daddy and Penguin" for his daughter Adele while in the pre-trial detention center. Nadzieja Zielankova, his wife, made the files for printing out available to the public.

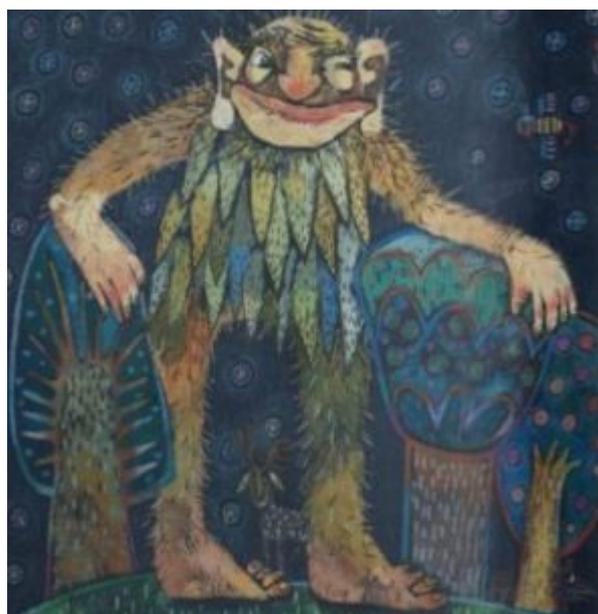


The **forum of cultural heritage restorers** took place in Minsk.

Dzianis Marcinovič, a theater critic, writes in his column for the Euroradio for Belarus about the reasons for the dismissals and the prospects of the Opera and Ballet theatre after them.



Yuri Stylsky, leader of the band "Daj dorogu!", who had to leave Belarus under threat of being arrested for a music video for the song "Baju-baj" recognized as "extremist", arranged an improv home concert.



A Belarusian in the Netherlands **Taciana van den Brink** has published a book about Belarusian mythology for children.

Aleś Puškin's self-portrait



A charity auction offering a unique printed copy of **Alhierd Bacharevič's** book "The Theater of Happy Children" with an autograph from the writer.

4. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE

Aleś Puškin from prison,

“Belarusian artists (especially young ones) are afraid and shun politics, serve Beauty and just abstract art, but I’m older, after the army (I served in Afghanistan in a helicopter regiment) I stopped being afraid of the authorities. I’ve been active since my student years, since the first Dziady-88 rally in Kurapaty. For it I got my first 15 days of arrest. I took a definite stance, that of Truth, no matter how hard it was... Belarusian society still can't come out and demand justice, like in Nuremberg – for those shot in Kurapaty. Yes, people come out, but in handfuls. And that's why we suffer – I and Belarus...”



Kryscina Banduryna, poet,

“Children are weapons. It is impossible to change an adult, a formed personality. From children, like from plasticine, one can make anything. And this is what the school will be doing, while the tired parents are coming back to life and healing their PTSD. Ideological war has crept into our homes from the side where our own control does not extend. And the only way to fight the war, I believe, is conversation. The savage, Huxley's character [Brave New World], had to explain to people what love, truth and sincerity were. We need to talk to each other, to our children, our parents, to tell them our truth – constantly, stubbornly, even when we feel like giving up.”

5. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

An exhibition of Belarusian poster protest art held in the German city of **Essen**.



Representatives of the **Polish Ministry of Culture** and **Polish cultural organizations** met with Paviel Łatuška and discussed the opportunities for Belarusian creatives affected by the Łukašenka's regime.

A meeting with **Olga Shparaga** was held at the Braunschweiger Dom in the German city of Braunschweig, during which the audience spoke about the Belarusian revolution and read excerpts from Olga's book "**Die Revolution hat ein weibliches Gesicht**".



"Belarusian Friday" in Lviv – on September 17, a number of events dedicated to Belarusian literature took place at various venues in the city.

6. POLITICAL PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS



In September, 3 political prisoners who have been somehow involved in the process of cultural development of our country, will celebrate their birthdays behind bars.

They are: **Maksim Znak**, lawyer, writer and musician (September 4),
Alaksandr Vasilevič, cultural manager (September 14)
and **Daniła Hančaroŭ**, lightning designer (September 27).

Letters and postcards (in Belarusian or Russian) can be sent to the following address:

For **Maksim Znak** and **Alaksandr Vasilevič**: СІЗА-1. 220030, г. Мінск, вул. Валадарскага, 2

For **Daniła Hančaroŭ**: Турма №4. 212011, г. Магілёў, вул. Крупскай, 99А

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