

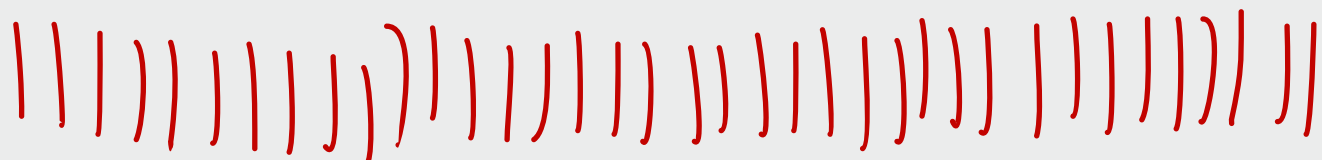
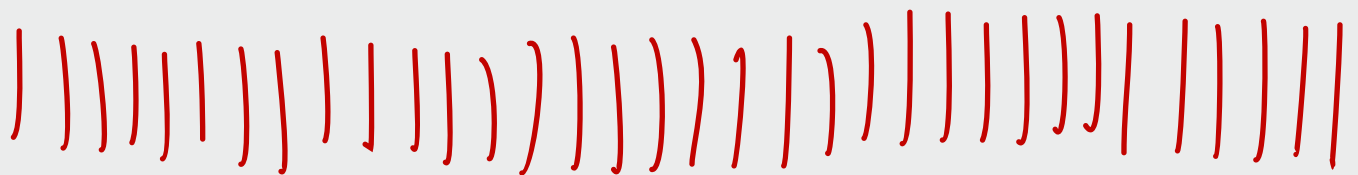
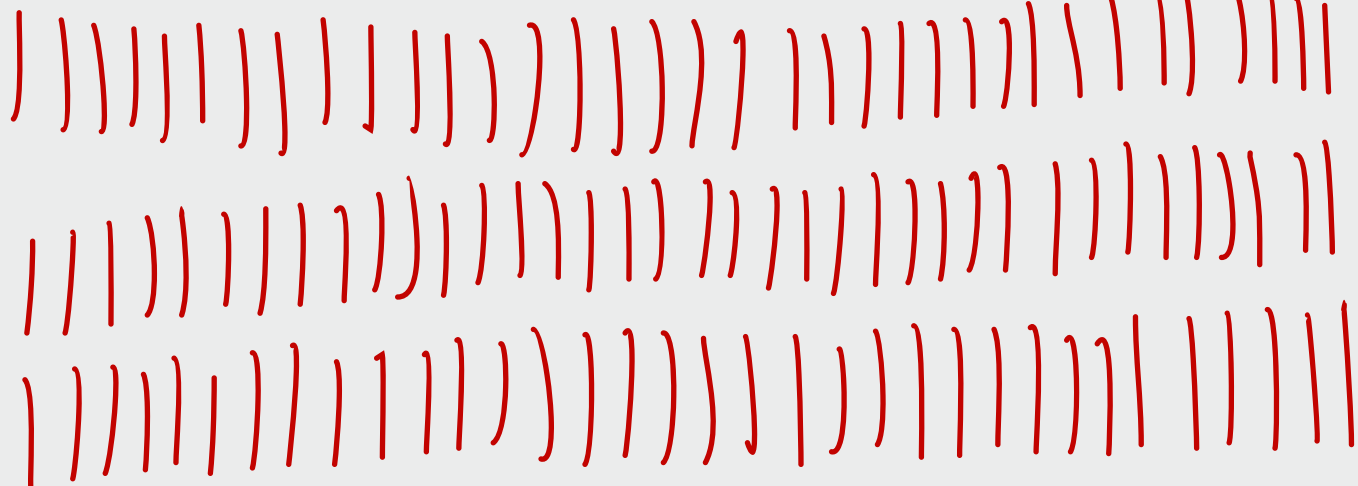


Cultural Resistance in Belarus



Issue 39 (52)

September 27 – October 3, 2021



*And motherland's listening in silence—
all words, and words, and words ...*

Carlos Sherman

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1. PERSECUTION, CONVICTIONS, CULTURAL POLICY



Kirył Salejeŭ, sound producer of the Youth Theater in Minsk, musician, was imprisoned two weeks ago. He is charged under Art. 342 of the Criminal Code (actions that grossly violate public order), but the details are unknown.

Andrej Kołas, a historian and lecturer at the Mova Nanova Belarusian language courses, was detained on September 27 on the formal grounds of "checking his hunting rifle" and sentenced to 10 days in prison.



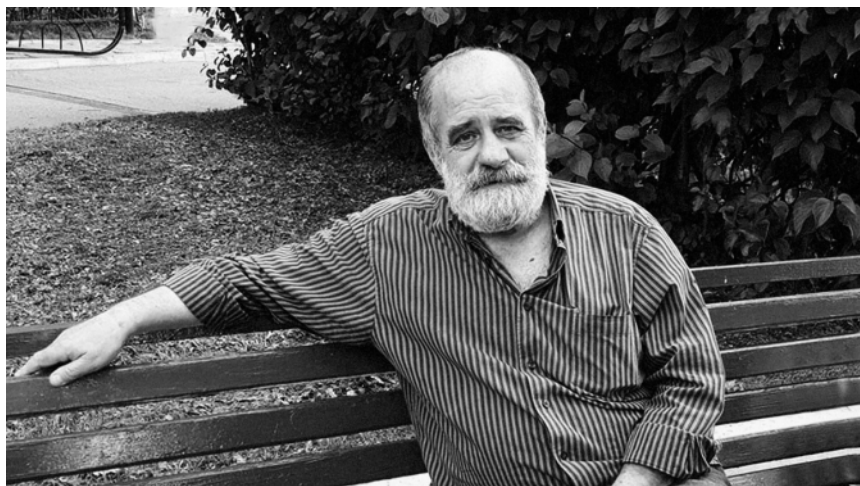
Anatol Kudłasievič, a bard and writer, was detained on September 29 after his apartment was turned into a mess by the police officers. The following day he was fined about 990 Euro for the white-red-white flag in his window.



On October 1, the Supreme Court liquidated **the Union of Belarusian Writers**.



2. LIFE OF THE IMPRISONED PEOPLE



Kanstancin Sieviaryniec, a Belarusian poet, translator, publicist and journalist, **Paviel Sieviaryniec's** father, died of coronavirus on the night of October 1. Paviel wasn't allowed to attend his father's funeral.



Aleś Puškin in his letter writes that he refused writing a pardon petition, that he had to spend 5 days in solitary confinement, and that he has distributed about a hundred portraits of prisoners. He shares plans for a joint exhibition with artists who have been imprisoned, and is working on a play under the working title "Black Stork". пад рабочай назвай «Чорны бусел».



Natalla Chierše has been transferred from the colony to male prison. In a colony, prisoners go to the canteen and to work, can walk around the closed territory of the colony, and are not in the cell all the time, like in prison.

Ihar Bancer will be transferred to the Viciebsk colony for the remaining 1 month and 25 days of his term for "violating the regime" of the open air prison ("khimiya").



Anton Šnip, an imprisoned bagpiper from the band Irdorath, intends to marry his girlfriend in the pre-trial detention center, but hasn't received a response from the Investigative Committee. Šnip's defence was suspended until October 15, his lawyer's license is likely to be revoked.



Maria Kalesnikava tells in detail about her life in prison, her principles and faith in the Belarusian people.



3. DISSENT AND CULTURAL ACTIVISM

PEN Belarus has published the "**Vague Time Manifesto**", which includes the most important principles of the organization's existence and activity in the conditions of the political crisis in Belarus after August 2020.



Here are some points from it:

Belarusian PEN sees its mission in building a space for the development of culture, dialogue and realization of the potential of creators, in protecting the civil and cultural rights and freedoms of the People of the Word.

Belarusian PEN considers literature and culture to be the basis of a stable democratic system.

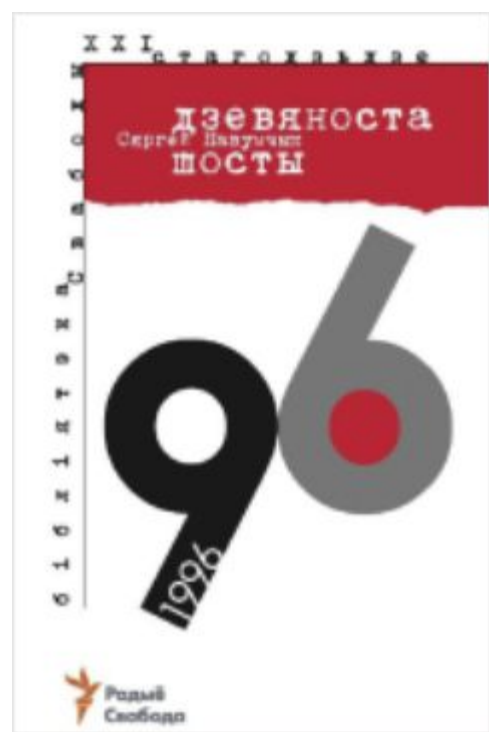
Belarusian PEN uses a human rights approach.

The Belarusian PEN assesses the current state of affairs in Belarus as a situation of terror and calls on the regime to stop it immediately.

In times of crisis and uncertainty, the Belarusian PEN strives for constructive models of behavior: mutual respect, solidarity, non-violence, transparency, consistent protection of one's own values and rights.

Belarusian PEN considers Belarus-centricity to be the most important principle of its activity. Everything we do, we do with thoughts about Belarus and for Belarus.

The book "Ninety-Six" by **Siarhej Navumčyk**, a member of PEN Belarus, was published in the series "Library of Freedom. XXI century" of Radio Liberty/Free Europe.



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Volny Chor sang in support of the imprisoned sportsmen.



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An exhibition of masks by **Anastasija Rydleŭskaja** "Where is your face" opened in the cafe Vieršy in Minsk.

Michaïł Hulin, an artist, at the Festival of art in public space "Open City" in Lublin spent three days in the "belly of a whale".

"Here is the context of isolation during the coronavirus, and the extreme experience of political prisoners, and the isolation of Belarus. We are all now —

in the womb of a monster, by and large. And we don't know how long this imprisonment will last."



An online discussion "**The (non)womanly face of Belarusian prose**", organized as part of the Jerzy Giedroyc Literary Award by the PEN Belarus.



Valancina Aksak's book "Third Eden" has been published.



An exhibition "**Antibodies. Young Art from Belarus**" is running in Hamburg on October 1-10.

A book "**The Great Lubavičy Synagogue in Viciebsk**" about the synagogue, according to researchers, visited by Mark Šahaŭ's family, has been published.

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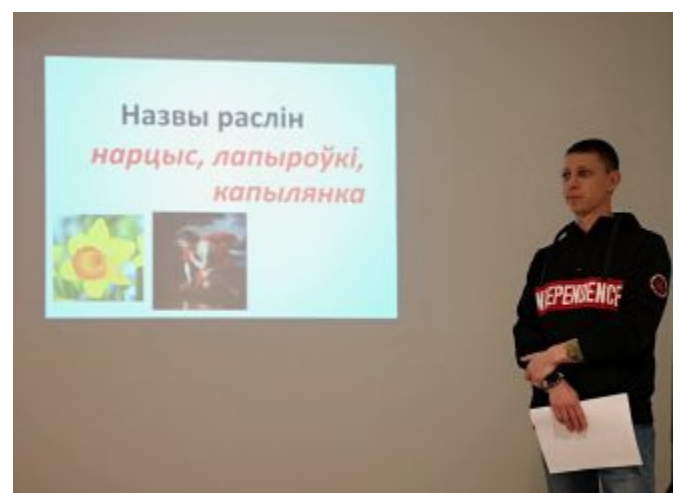
Volha Jakuboŭskaja,
"Ballad about the struggle»



Free Language, a project of free conversations in the Belarusian language has started in Belarus.

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Mova Nanova, courses of the Belarusian language, now runs in Vilnius as well. The organizers are those speakers who used to come to such classes in Belarus.



A group for those interested in **Belarusian traditional songs** has opened in Vilnius under the direction of Sviatlana Čakuška, singer of the band **Miareža**.



The jury summed up the results of the Nił Hilevič Literary Competition "Exlibris". This year's winner is the poet **Janina Raviaka**.



Two short lists of the **Ciotka Award** (co-founded by PEN Belarus and the Union of Belarusian Writers, supported by the Local charitable organization Viartannie Foundation, is given for the best Belarusian-language book for children and teenagers in the two categories: Best Literary Piece and Best Artistic Presentation) have been announced.



4. VOICES OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE



Jadviha Raj,
poet, lecturer
at the University of the Golden Age,
*“The life test is like this: if you were
offended – forgive, and if you received
something – try to give back a little more.
It’s a law of balance that exists everywhere,
in any relationship.”*

Taras Tarnalicki, film critic, about the festival
"Listapad" going under control of officials:
*“From the very beginning, the International
Film Festival “Listapad” was a private initiative.
Now it has become completely state-owned.
Although it was previously held partially at the
expense of the republican budget, it was run by
an independent organization [ART
Corporation]. ART Corporation did their best to
find a balance between official and true art. I
don't think anything like this will happen now, I
definitely don't expect anything good from this
festival.”*



5. INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Maria Kalesnikava has been announced as the winner of the 2021 **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize**.



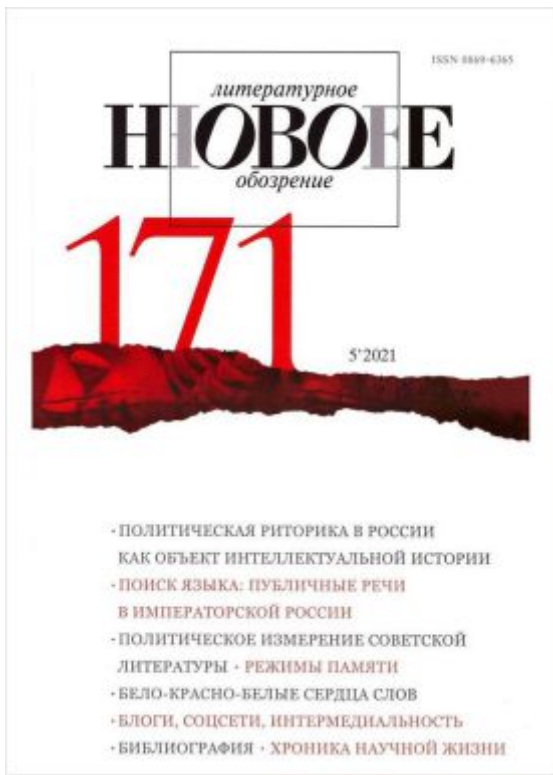
As part of the **#WeStandBYyou** solidarity campaign organized by Libereco, **Filiz Polat** (Germany) expressed her intention to become a “godmother” for **Piotr** and **Jula Marčanka** from the band Irdorath.



Free Kupałaŭcy performed live — for the first time in the year and a half — at the festival "Direction East" in **Białystok**.



A multimedia exhibition "**Belarus: Womanly Face of Democracy**" has opened in **Brazil**.



A well-established Russian philological magazine "НЛО" in its latest issue published a block "**White-red-white hearts of words**" about modern Belarusian poetry, contributed by a poet, translator and literary critic **Vladimir Korkunov**.

The action "**Music is not a crime**" took place near the Belarusian Embassy in Kyiv — Ukrainian bagpipers of the band "**Fram**" in support of the Belarusian band "**Irdorath**".



6. POLITICAL PRISONERS' BIRTHDAYS



For the beginning of October, more than 710 people have been recognized as political prisoners in Belarus, and the number has been increasing steadily. This, of course, shows that repression by the authorities not just hasn't stopped, but is actually gaining strength.


PEN Belarus, as an association of writers, is particularly concerned about the fate of cultural workers who have been unjustly imprisoned.

In October, 4 political prisoners somehow involved in the process of cultural development of our country, will celebrate their birthdays behind bars. They are:

Andrej Piatroŭski, a former history and social studies teacher from Smarhoń (October 5);
Alaksandr Nurdzinaŭ, artist (October 11);
Anžalika Borys, chair of the Union of Poles in Belarus (October 14)
and **Pavieł Maźko**, designer of clothes (October 21).

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

Andrej Piatroŭski (Андрэй Пятроўскі): Турма №1. 230023, г. Гродна, вул. Кірава, 1
Alaksandr Nurdzinaŭ (Аляксандр Нурдзінаў): ПК №1. 211440, г. Наваполацк, вул. Тэхнічная, 8
Anžalika Borys (Анжаліка Борыс): Следчая турма №8. 222163, г. Жодзіна, вул. Савецкая, 22А
Pavieł Maźko (Павел Мазько): СІЗА-7. 224030, г. Брэст, вул. Савецкіх памежнікаў, 37

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