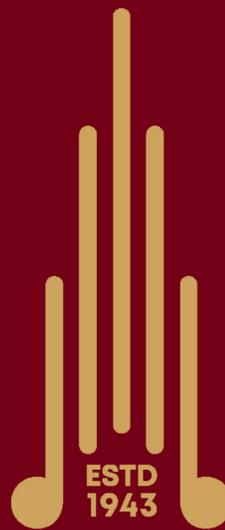




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Russian Childrens
Welfare Society
Helping Children
for 100 years!
1926-2026*

*Petroushka Ball
2026*



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The 56th Annual

Petroushka Ball



Friday, February 6th, 2026 • The Plaza Hotel • New York City

To benefit the RCWS Educational Programs in the United States

Dear Guests,

Welcome to the 56th Petroushka Ball, celebrating the 100-year anniversary of the Russian Children's Welfare Society!

The last 100 years have been a time of tremendous change for both the world and for the RCWS. From the Charity's humble beginnings on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in the 1920s, to aiding Russian families in 14 countries by the 1950s, to turning its full attention to supporting underprivileged children inside Russia in the 1990s, the RCWS has adapted to the needs of the times while navigating a changing world landscape.

For the last 30 years, the RCWS has provided critical aid to orphanages, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and students in the form of university scholarships. Last year, the Society provided scholarships to 136 students who would not have had the opportunity to pursue a higher education without our financial support. For over 20 years, the RCWS has been sponsoring and organizing a Yelka celebration in Moscow for over 1,000 children from various orphanages across Russia. Each child was treated to a trip to the theater, and given candies and a present. Every December for the last 5 years, the Society has shipped over 3,000 gifts to children at orphanages and other partner organizations. The children look forward to the RCWS presents and Yelka event every holiday season, and your support makes it possible.

As the next evolution in our work, two years ago, the RCWS established a new program supporting Russian language education here in the United States. This year, we are planning to increase our financial support for Russian language and culture schools in this country. By doing so, we continue our mission, this time in a way that will strengthen students' ties to Russian culture, Russian language, and the rich repository of Russian literature and music.

What better way to celebrate the RCWS's centennial birthday than by attending The Petroushka Ball! Originally hosted as a modest dance in the afternoon during the early years of our organization's history, the Ball has now become a grand affair at the Plaza Hotel, with entertainment provided by stars of the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Opera, and the American Ballet Theater. I wish both returning and new guests a most joyful evening—one they will remember and want to relive from year to year.

The Russian Children Welfare Society has taken care of thousands of disadvantaged children since 1926. With contributions from generous donors and our Ball guests, we hope to continue carrying out our mission for many years to come. If you would like to learn more about the work we do please visit www.rcws.org.

Wishing you good health and happiness for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Beatrice M. Fekula
President of the RCWS



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2026



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The Society Celebrates its 100th Anniversary



1926–2026

This year, the Russian Children's Welfare Society (RCWS) proudly celebrates the 100th anniversary of its founding. In the spring of 1926, the founders pledged their commitment to improving the lives of Russian children living outside the Soviet Union.

The direction of the Russian Children's Welfare Society's many initiatives has been guided to a great extent by the unending political and social flux of the 20th century. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 prompted the migration of large numbers of Russians to Western Europe, Asia, and North and South America. By the early thirties, the Society had ten branches operating throughout the United States and was sending money and material assistance to schools and organizations in locales as diverse as Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Finland, France, Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Harbin, Shanghai, and Istanbul.

The RCWS gained recognition from the Presidential War Relief Control Board as an approved charity for work abroad during the Second World War. By 1950, the Society was again sending relief to 14 countries.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia's infrastructure left an alarming number of children disenfranchised. For 30 years, after establishing the Moscow Representative Office, the Society directed most of its aid to assist children at risk in Russia by funding an array of projects that included medical programs, college scholarships for orphans, schools, orphanages and homeless shelters, and rehabilitation centers for children with special needs.

The RCWS has been tax-exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code since 1944. Please visit the Society's web site at www.rcws.org for more information about our charitable work.

As we look toward the next century, our work continues to evolve. We're proud to begin a new chapter: supporting Russian language education here in the United States. It's a way of honoring our heritage, while building cultural bridges for the next generation.

Russian Children's Welfare Society
16 West 32nd St, #405 New York, NY 10001
E-mail: main@rcws.org · Tel: 212-473-6263 · Fax: 212-473-6301
www.rcws.org

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Tonight's Performers



OKSANA VOLKOVA

Mezzo-soprano

Oksana Volkova was born in Minsk, Belarus. She holds degrees from the Belarusian State Academy of Music in voice, studying under Lidia Galushkina, and stage direction, studying under Margarita Izvorska-Elizarieva. Since 2010, she has made regular guest appearances at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow performing a number of roles, including Lyubasha (*The Tsar's Bride*), Laura (*The Stone Guest*), Polina (*The Queen of Spades*), Olga (*Eugene Onegin*) and the title role in *Carmen*. In 2016, she received the National Theatre Award in Belarus for her interpretation of the Bizet heroine, and she has appeared as *Carmen* at numerous international opera venues, including at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, in Buenos Aires, at the Salzburg Landestheater, in Tokyo, Riga, Tallinn, and Vilnius. She made her debut at La Scala in the role of Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

She has been invited to perform several roles at New York's Metropolitan Opera besides *Carmen* (Sonietka in *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*, Olga in *Eugene Onegin*, Maddalena in

Rigoletto). She has performed at London's Royal Opera House (Olga), Beijing's NCPA (Dalila in *Samson and Dalila* and *Carmen*), Palermo's Teatro Massimo (Laura in *La Gioconda*), the Nice Opera (Marguerite in *La Damnation de Faust*), and the Teatro San Carlo in Naples (Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*). During the 2017/2018 season, she made her Salzburg Festival debut (Polina) under the direction of Mariss Jansons and her Geneva debut at the Grand Theatre (Santuzza). She also sang the roles of Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the Metropolitan Opera and Olga at the Hamburg Staatsoper.

Volkova's discography includes recordings of *Rigoletto* and *Eugene Onegin* with the Metropolitan Opera (Deutsche Grammophon, DVD), *The Queen of Spades* conducted by Mariss Jansons (BR Classic, CD) which received The International Opera Award in the category "Recording (Complete Opera)", *Rigoletto* with Dmitri Hvorostovsky (Delos, CD), as well as the solo program "*Poison d'Amour*" conducted by Constantine Orbelian (Delos, CD) This album was included in the Opera News Top Ten Albums list of classical music.

Volkova has received numerous distinctions and awards over the course of her career, including The Casta Diva Russian Opera Award (2021), Person of the Year in the Field of Theatre Culture (2018), State Prize of the Republic of Belarus (2017), Honored Artist of the Republic of Belarus (2012), First Prize at the 12th Mikhail Glinka International Competition (2007), and several others.

Her current projects include *Carmen*, *The Queen of Spades*, and *The Stone Guest* at the Bolshoi Theatre and the Verdi Requiem at the Tanglewood Festival with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andris Nelsons.



Tonight's Performers



BERJ KARAZIAN

Tenor

Berj Karazian graduated from the Yerevan State Conservatory in Armenia and began his career at the Opera Studio of the Yerevan Conservatory, performing demanding roles such as Conte Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina*, and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He was later invited by the Royal Scottish Academy of Music & Drama to perform the leading role of the Prince in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges* at the Glasgow Royal Opera Theater and the Edinburgh Festival Opera Theater.

Upon returning to Armenia, he was invited to join the Armenian National Opera & Ballet Theater as a leading tenor soloist. There, he performed more than 20 operatic roles, including the Young Gypsy (*Aleko*), Alfredo (*La Traviata*), Edgardo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Don Ramiro (*La Cenerentola*), Conte di Libensdorf (*Il viaggio a Reims*), Poliuto (*Poliuto*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), Cassio (*Otello*), and Saro (*Anoush*). In 2014 Berj Karazian was awarded

the title of Honored Artist of the Republic of Armenia for his exceptional contribution to the arts and music.

Internationally, he has appeared in a broad array of productions: Alfredo and Nemorino at the Lithuanian National Opera, Edgardo at Richmond Hill Art Center in Canada, Tamino (*Magic Flute*) at the Dubai and Kuwait Opera Houses, and concert performances such as *Oratorio de Noël* (Saint-Saëns) at NDR Hanover, *Inno delle Nazioni* (Verdi) in Moscow, Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and *Messe Solennelle* in Bologna, and the *Christmas Oratorio* (Bach) in Hamburg.

For more than eight years, Berj was a resident guest at the Palaces of St. Petersburg Festival, performing in over 20 concerts, including Verdi's *Requiem* and Mozart's *Requiem*.

As one of the leading interpreters of the Swan's Tenor Solo in Orff's *Carmina Burana*, he has been invited to perform on some of the world's most prestigious stages, including the Konzerthaus Berlin, Sala São Paulo, Shanghai Symphony Hall, Tongyeong Concert Hall in South Korea, Musik- und Kongresshalle Lübeck, and the Forbidden City Concert Hall at the Beijing Music Festival.

After relocating to the United States, Berj made his debut singing *Beethoven's Symphony No. 9* and Bruckner's *Te Deum* at the Ambassador Auditorium in Los Angeles. He has performed at Carnegie Hall and appeared in *Opera Goes to Hollywood* at Bryant Park with the New York City Opera. He participated in the *Echoes of Our Ancestors* project at the Greek Theater in Los Angeles.



Tonight's Performers



ALISA SADIKOVA

Harpist

Alisa Sadikova was born in Saint Petersburg, Russia. In 2010, she entered the Special Music School of the Saint Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory and began her harp studies with Karina Maleeva. She received the Salvi Foundation Scholarship and studied with Catherine Michel at the Cambridge Musica Mundi High School in Belgium. In 2025, she completed her Bachelor of Music degree in harp at The Juilliard School and is currently pursuing a Master of Music degree with Nancy Allen. She is a recipient of the Kovner Fellowship at Juilliard, a prestigious program providing comprehensive financial and programmatic support. Her previous awards include the Guzik Foundation Grant (2021–2025) and the Jerome L. Greene Fellowship (2024–2025).

Sadikova has won numerous competitions, including the Yuri Temirkanov Prize (2012), Young Talents of Russia (2017), the Scandinavian International Instrumental Music Compe-

titution (2023), and the Clara Schumann International Competition (2023). She has performed as a soloist with orchestras on five continents, in more than 25 countries, at venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Vienna State Opera, and the Tonhalle in Zurich. She has also appeared at the World Harp Congresses in Sydney (2014) and Hong Kong (2017).

She has collaborated with internationally renowned artists, including Sarah Brightman, and toured globally as part of the “Royal Christmas Gala.” She has released five CDs internationally, including her latest solo album, *Harp Constellation* (2023), which was met with critical acclaim. Among her other recognitions is a scholarship and individual grant from the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation (2015), and a study grant from the Guzik Foundation (2021–2025).

Her artistry has been praised in the press: Classical FM described her playing as “unbelievably beautiful musicianship,” while BBC Classical Music Magazine wrote, “I’m still struck with awe every time I hear her play—only a genius can do what she does.”

She is the official artist and ambassador of Lyon & Healy and the Salvi Foundation.

Alisa Sadikova’s exceptional talent and dedication have established her as one of the leading harpists of her generation. Her performances are in high demand at major concert halls worldwide, and her virtuosic technique and musicality have earned wide acclaim. In addition to her live performances, her recordings and online projects have reached audiences internationally. As she continues to expand her repertoire and refine her artistry, she is poised to make a lasting contribution to the field of classical harp music.



Menu and Entertainment



APPETIZER

BUTTERNUT SQUASH RAVIOLI [veg]

Sage Butter, Trevisano, Apple-Balsamic, Spiced Pumpkin Seeds

ENTREE

FILET MIGNON [gf]

Crispy Parsnip Cake, Sauteed Caulini, Trevisano

DESSERT

LEMON MERINGUE TART [veg]

Sable Breton, Lemon Crèmeux Italian Meringue

Selection of butter cookies, Coffee, Tea

DINNER WINES

Chardonnay, Antigal, AR

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TOAST

Paul Louis Blanc de Blanc, FR

Executive Chef: Chef Richard Brown Pastry Chef: Chef Albert Bello

.....

DINNER ENTERTAINMENT

Oksana Volkova, mezzo-soprano

Berj Karazian, tenor

Alisa Sadikova, harpist

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Jonathan Kelly, piano

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The Museum of Russian Art collects, preserves, exhibits, and illuminates the rich artistic tapestry of Russia, past and present, through outstanding exhibitions and public programs for all audiences.

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Courtesy of Vincent Trochek

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Value: \$50. Courtesy of Peter Sarandinaki

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Artwork by Natasha Ozhiganova

Courtesy of Natasha Ozhiganova

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13. Signed book copy. Peter Sarandinaki, *In Search of the Romanovs: A Family's Quest to Solve One of History's Most Brutal Crimes*

Value: \$50. Courtesy of Peter Sarandinaki

14. Gift certificate towards lunch for two at the Ubani Georgian Restaurant

Courtesy of Ubani Georgian Restaurant ubaniny.com

15. Two tickets to Joffrey Ballet School production of *Pinocchio*

Courtesy of Arina Clavel

16. Private dance lessons at the Fred Astaire Midtown dance studio

Value: \$125 each. Fred Astaire Dance Studio (Midtown)
www.fredastaire.com/new-york-midtown/

17. \$250 Gift certificate for Skin Story Studio

Can be redeemed towards any service at Skin Story Studio (skincare treatments, skincare products or laser hair removal services)
Courtesy of Yuliya Koval, Skin Story Studio, www.skinsst.com, @Skin_Story_Studio, tel: 929.259.1684

18. Private 2-hour mixology cocktail class for 2 people

Value: \$200. Courtesy of Zero Mile Catering

19. Gift certificate towards lunch for two at the Ubani Georgian Restaurant

Courtesy of Ubani Georgian Restaurant ubaniny.com

20. Spa Gift Certificate from Lena Skincare

Value: \$140. Courtesy of Lena Skincare, 211 East 43rd St, #1704, NYC www.lenaskincare.webs.com

21. Entrance for two to the Bear and Birch Banya.

Two banya hats and two bamboo banya water bottles.
Value: \$200. Courtesy of: Peter Kizenko, Bear and Birch Banya, Freehold, NJ.

22. Siberian Journey Basket.

Siberian basket with region-specific teas, jams, and sweets.
Value: \$150. Courtesy of Olga Nagdaseva

23. Banya Basket.

Banya day package with banya essentials - venik, sauna hat, herbal tea, skincare and snacks assortment.
Value: \$100. Courtesy of Olga Nagdaseva

24. Private training session with Leeza Tretter

List in Progress



NAVADA
www.navadastudio.com



Special Thanks



Irina Troshin, Clarins Bloomingdale's
Ruben Davidoff and Davidoff Law
James Demmert - Main Street Research
Edward Shnayder and NetCost Market
The Jewel of Russia
Steinway & Sons
NAVADA

The Russian Children's Welfare Society expresses its sincerest thanks to those generous and wonderful people who have put in numerous hours and a valiant effort to make this evening not only possible, but also special:

Irina Bekkerman
Paulina Brown
Adrian Fekula
Beatrice Fekula
Natasha Fekula
Peter Fekula
Sasha Fekula
Tatiana Geringer
Sophia Geringer
Katya Hayes
Kira Jordan
Sergei Klebnikov
Lola Abigal Koch
Natasha Kosianova

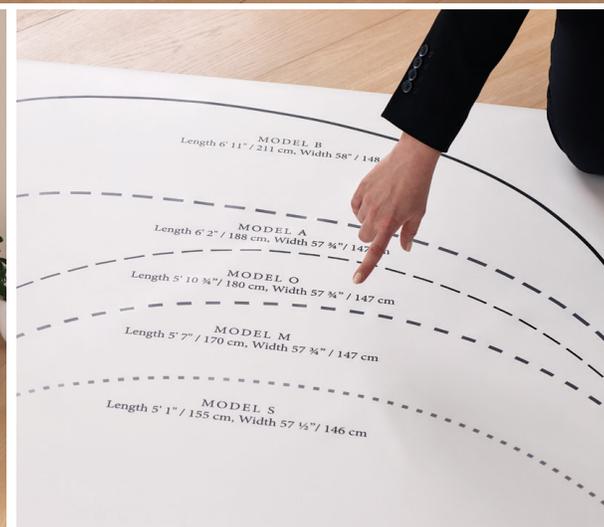
Constantine Orbelian
Alexandra Petrenko
Sasha Polin
Artem Sagurian
Tatiana Sarandinaki
Constantine Schidlovsky
Dimitry Schidlovsky
Maria Soldier
Anna Sergeeva
Alex Teih
Anna Volkova
Olya Voronetskaya
Abby Weintraub
Eleanor Masson Winters



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