

Report BOG Iris Trübswetter:

Youth communicates. Bavarian-Russian Youth Culture Forum on Film and Theatre "Russian theatre performances don't get any further than Garching".

The recent dawning of the Cold War, the economic sanctions imposed by the EU and the USA on Russia and the double-sided military threatening gestures have brought many of the positive developments in the friendly rapprochement between Germany and Russia to a halt after the end of the Soviet Union. Below this official sanctions policy, the German-Russian Year of Youth Exchange was proclaimed for the year 16/17 2017, initiated by the foreign ministers of Russia and Germany, Sergei Lavrov and Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who also took over the patronage for the year. In this context, a conference entitled "Jugend kommuniziert, erste bayerisch-Russische Jugendkulturforum 2017 - Film und Theater" (Youth Communicates, First Bavarian-Russian Youth Culture Forum 2017 - Film and Theatre) was held in Munich on 18 October. It was initiated by the Russia-Germany Society and the "Russkij Mir" Foundation and was held in cooperation with the German partners OstWestWirtschaftsForum Bayern and the Bayerische Ostgesellschaft. Russian Consul General Sergey Ganzha opened the event with his welcoming address, which was followed by representatives from the State Chancellery and Ministry of Culture, as well as the chairmen of the organising associations, Xenia Zinoviev, representing her sick mother Olga Zinoviev (Russian-German Society), Minister of State a.D. Eberhard Sinner (OstWestWirtschaftsForum Bayern e. V.) and Iris Trübswetter, 1st Chairperson of the Bayerische Ostgesellschaft e. V., in addition the Chairperson of the BDWO Peter Franke and the Chairperson of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs Rosmolodesch Alexey Ljubtsov. The participants of the forum arrived from Moscow and St. Petersburg, they came from Bavaria, Hamburg and Berlin. Directors, actors, scriptwriters and musicians from both countries presented themselves to a diverse audience of 100 people, including numerous pupils and students, most of whom were invited due to their Russian language skills. The two-hour central panel was chaired by Christine Hamel, cultural editor at the BR, who introduced the participants of the round from Russian and German film and theatre people individually and then posed several fundamental and current questions. There were David Lindner-Leparda, film producer, Jochen Greve, screenwriter, screenwriter, Martina Veh, director, Vincent Kraupner, director, Leonid Semenov, actor, Christoph Reiserer, composer and filmmaker, David Drevs, specialist translator - all from Munich and Russia Andrey Bogatyrev, director of documentary and feature film. Mrs. Hamel briefly described the great tradition of German-Russian cultural contacts, which reached its peak at the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century. Thus, the development of German and Russian film was closely interwoven. Russia and Germany were a common space for communication, and art was the language of departure in Europe. Two wars disrupted this unique collaboration, which then developed cautiously again since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The questions that Mrs Hamel asked were the following:

What is relevant? What visions does the individual have and what are the problems? Is there a trend towards renationalization? How important is internationality? What is the difference between inside and outside perspective? What is to be done?

In the discussion of film and theatre creators, it became apparent that the basic theme of theatre and also of feature film, human drama, was omnipresent, that the individualizing and psychologizing Russian literature of the 19th century provided the model, but that the plot developed on the respective regional film. State film funding plays a central role in financing both here and there. The films are underrepresented in the other country because they are not considered to be economically successful since they are not understood by a broad public in the other culture. In addition, subtitling or dubbing would be needed first. The quality and diversity of Russian film is high and not well known here. The Hollywood blockbuster is similarly dominant in the cinema here and there. Political influence was discussed, but no agreement was reached. While the Russian directors tended to assume that they could work uncensored and freely, a Russian actor living in Munich denied this, pointing out that even in Germany the future of artistic freedom in current political developments is not guaranteed. Specifically, it was also deplored that cooperation projects which had already got off to a good start and whose financing seemed to be secure were suddenly financially dried up by the political slowdown. In the field of opera, no strangers have been registered and cooperation in the field of theatre also appears to be easier. What is lacking in order to facilitate better cooperation and export production is the financial means. What all had in common was the regret of not knowing enough about each other and the desire for more and more intensive cooperation. A number of concrete proposals were made and the organisers were advised to help with the implementation. Former Minister of State Eberhard Sinner said in his closing remarks that until the planned follow-up conference in Moscow next year, one should undertake to organize funding for the implementation of three projects. In the afternoon, a round table discussion on language acquisition, youth exchange, town twinning and cultural transfer took place in the plenary session. It was led by Prof. Martin Fincke, who was active in the university exchange between Passau and Krasnoyarsk, Oksana Kogan Pech, who tours with the Russomobil at German schools on behalf of the BDWO and the Russkij Mir Foundation to motivate Schüller to learn the Russian language, Benjamin Holm from the German-Russian youth exchange in Hamburg, Peter Franke, Chairman of the BDWO and Klaus Streinz, and Oksana Kogan Pech. Numerous shortcomings became apparent: Peter Franke complained that Russian students aged 12 and over had to hand in their fingerprints at a German consulate or visa office. For the young people, this could mean a two-times long journey to the next consulate and considerably hinder the exchange of pupils. The Russian side thankfully still does not demand this procedure. Benjamin Holm of the German-Russian Youth Exchange pointed out that there was not enough interest in the exchange, so that the annual funds of 7 million euros would not be exhausted. He wanted more applications for exchange projects. It is possible to finance 150 to 200 projects. The DRJ goes back to a 2004 agreement between Schröder and Putin.

Oksana Kogan-Pech, Susanne Fabich-Hederer and David Dreves analysed the Russian and German languages as a basis for mutual understanding. While in Russia, the number of German-speaking pupils has declined sharply and English is now the preferred language, Russian as the third foreign language has become a miserable habitat at Bavarian secondary schools. Too few schools are being offered, too few Russian teachers are being hired. In order to improve this situation, the required employment grade would have to be adapted to the requirements. David Dreves of the SDI pointed out that language and interpreter training at his institute depends on how many students with good language skills start their studies, i. e. how many students learn the language at all. Oksana Kogan-Pech from the Bund deutscher Ost-Westgesellschaft, BDWO, travels with Russomobil Deutschland at the invitation of the schools, and interested students who are about to choose their 3rd foreign language can take part in a test lesson which will make the language more appealing to them. This advertising was well received, but too small, compared to French, for example, which is on the move with 7 teams. Tatjana Lukina, founder and director of the Russian cultural center Mir e. V. in Munich, described her 26 years of intermediary work between Russian and German culture. Theatrical

performances of Russian plays, literary festivals, this year's literature series on the October Revolution, exhibitions are well attended and an important component of Russian-German cultural education work. Town twinning plays an important role, if not the most important, in German-Russian civil society contacts. In Bavaria there are only very few. Senior Director of Studies Klaus Strienz was invited as a representative, who runs the town twinning partnership Höchststadt-Krasnogorsk with great commitment and success. Details can be found on the homepage. He enthused about his particularly good personal and friendly contacts, which are also possible without a deepened knowledge of languages and called for not to be deterred by the language barrier.

At the same time, 4 theatre, film and music workshops were held, to which the students had been able to enrol, under the delightful titles of 1st Vodka-drinking bears dancing in the snow in the hustle and bustle around a samovar, 2nd A Russian fairy tale as an action thriller? 3rd "Panzerkreuzer Potemkin" reloaded To the enthusiasm of the plenum, Christoph Reiserer was able to perform the score of a silent film excerpt, which he had brilliantly worked out with the workshop participants in the available two hours. So there was a premiere to be seen and heard at the farewell ceremony in the late afternoon. After eight hours of hard work in the renovated former brewery vaults of the Einstein Cultural Centre, the walk on the high bank of the Isar river over to the Russian Consulate General, to which Ganzha had invited the Consul General, was a welcome change in the fresh air.

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