

Participating Plays

Open World Cultural Leaders: Playwrights

Princeton, New Jersey and New York City

April 2009



Scenes from *Pacific Island (Ostrov Mirny)*, a play by Aleksandr Arkhipov

On an island somewhere along the maritime border of the Russian Federation, a first lieutenant charges two inartful new recruits with the task of producing a morale-building play. No one on the base is prepared for ensuing Russian Nationalist interpretation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

The play was translated to English for the British Royal Shakespeare Company.

Scenes from *JUNK! (KHLAM!)*, a play by Mikhail Durnenkov

Set in a bargain store, stacked floor to ceiling with footballs and toilet paper, *JUNK!* traces the connections between the assembled shoppers. Asked what the play is about, Durnenkov writes, "it is an attempt to find out if we can break away from the confines of our existence and become Other, having already known everything about oneself for a long time. Can circumstances turn a person into a murderer, or is a murderer born a murderer?" *KHLAM!* was produced recently by the Center for Playwrights and Directors Theater in Moscow, and the ILKHOM Theater in Tashkent.



Their Crimes (Ikh Prestupleniya) Aleksandr Rodionov

Three pairs of Russian tourists arrive at a seaside resort on the Persian Gulf and discover that while their bad behavior provokes no notice at home, here, a simple scuffle lands them in court, facing as much as life in prison.

This new work by Rodionov walks the line between writing for stage and writing for film, and employs his trademark technique of verbatim dialogue, recorded in real-life situations and bent into dramatic adaptation.

Expecting Guests (V Ozhidanii Gostyey), a play by Ksenya Stepanycheva

A glimpse into the lives of two young people who love each other. It is New Year's Eve, and they are waiting for guests to arrive in their home. Having finished preparations for the party, they start to chat idly—the type of moment that defines the sum and shape of our lives. Stepanycheva writes, "I wanted this sketch to show the humor and the absurd that is hidden in the routine."

