

Where Europe Meets Asia

GEORGIA25

11-17 April 2016

INVITATION to a cultural feast of writers and films in London marking 25 years since the Restoration of Georgia's Independence

At the mountainous crossroads of Europe and Asia in the south Caucasus, between the Black and Caspian seas, Georgia was fought over for centuries by Arab, Mongol, Persian, Ottoman and Russian empires. It survived with its own language and alphabet, early-Christian churches, and ancient culture of winemaking, feasting and polyphonic song.

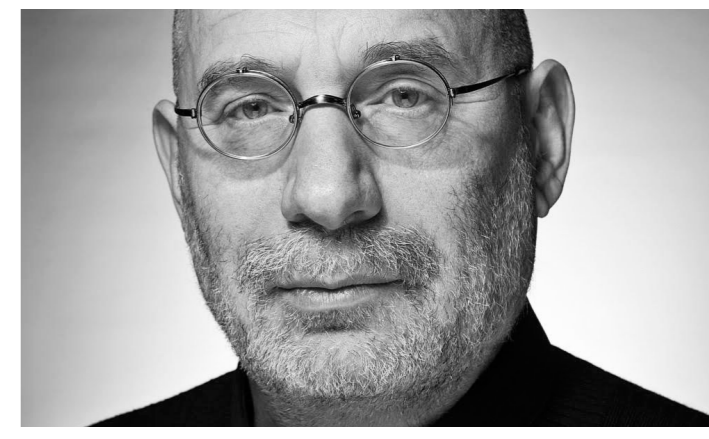
The 9th of April is remembered in Georgia as a day of both grief and liberation. On 9 April 1989 Red Army troops cracked down with toxic gas and shovels on peaceful demonstrations in the capital Tbilisi, killing 21. Exactly two years later in 1991, Georgia declared independence after 70 years of Soviet rule.

Join us in the week of this dual anniversary to explore how contemporary writers and filmmakers see Georgia past and present – from post-Soviet fiction to new-wave cinema.

Talks

MASTER OF MYSTERY

Boris Akunin, bestselling Russian crime writer born in Georgia, in conversation with **Boyd Tonkin**, Senior Writer at *The Independent* and jury chair of the 2016 Man Booker International Prize. Akunin – the pen name of Grigory Chkhartishvili – discusses his fiction, the arts of translation, and what 19th-century Tsarist Russia (the setting of his Inspector Fandorin mysteries) might tell us about today. *Asia House, Monday 11 April, 6:45pm. Tickets: £10/£8/£6*



Boris Akunin



Boyd Tonkin

A double bill of Georgia's past through writers' eyes: FROM THE KNIGHT IN THE PANTHER SKIN TO STALIN'S GREAT TERROR

Historian **Donald Rayfield**, author of *Edge of Empires* and *Stalin and His Hangmen*, in conversation with **Maya Jaggi**, cultural journalist and Artistic Director of Georgia25. This world authority speaks about the 'golden age' of the medieval poet Shota Rustaveli, and his own translation of *Kvachi* (described by William Boyd as the 'picaresque masterpiece of 20th-century Georgian literature'), a novel denounced as pornographic and whose author was shot. *Asia House, Tuesday 12 April, 6:30pm.*



Maya Jaggi

EYEWITNESSES ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

Two of Georgia's most famous novelist-screenwriters, **Aka Morchiladze** and **Dato Turashvili** in conversation with documentary filmmaker **Teresa Cherfas** about the rocky path to independence, the civil war that followed, and the legacy of the '90s – a time of bread queues and blackouts. Turashvili's *Flight from the USSR* probed the true story of a group of Georgian students who hijacked a Soviet airliner in 1983 to escape to the West, and whose execution shocked society. In Aka Morchiladze's *Journey to Karabakh* a privileged youth from Tbilisi on a road trip looking for drugs strays into the Nagorno-Karabakh war. *Asia House, Tuesday 12 April, 7:30pm. Combined tickets: £8/£6/£5*



Aka Morchiladze



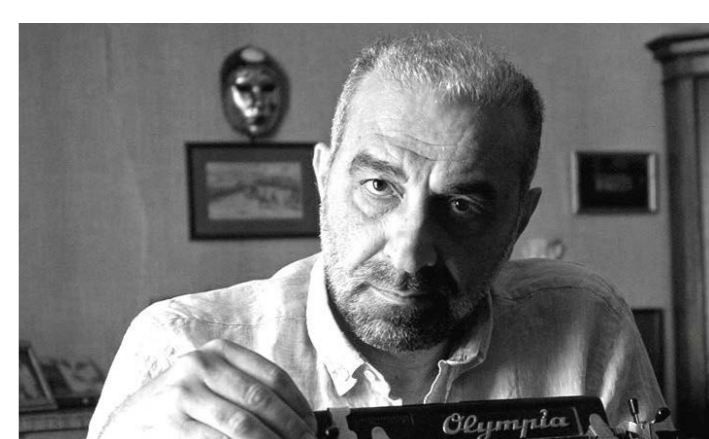
Teresa Cherfas

EUROPEAN WAYS

Zurab Karumidze, novelist and co-editor of *Georgia's European Ways*, in conversation with **Maureen Freely**, novelist, President of English PEN, and translator of the Turkish Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk. For 300 years, according to a new book of essays, Georgia has gravitated towards a European identity that was interrupted by 70 years of Soviet rule. Karumidze, now an adviser to the Georgian government, discusses what makes Georgians dream of Europe as their home. What is the forgotten history of the First Republic of 1918-21, when European modernism suffused Georgian arts, and avant-garde Russian artists found refuge there? What are the parallels, or contrasts, with Turkey in its relationship to Europe? *Europe House, Wednesday 13 April, 6:30pm. Free but registration is required.*



Dato Turashvili



Zurab Karumidze

WRITING THE NEW GEORGIA

On Georgia's Mother Tongue Day, **Lasha Bugadze**, new-generation novelist, playwright and cartoonist, in conversation with **Claire Armitstead**, Books Editor of *Guardian News & Media* What does it mean to be a writer in today's Georgia with its freedoms and flashpoints – from religious revival to the shadow of 2008 when Russian tanks advanced on the capital? Bugadze's play *The President Has Come to See You* was performed at London's Royal Court in 2013. Why, in the view of this satirist, has politics taken the role of theatre? *Asia House, Thursday 14 April, 6:45pm. Tickets: £8/£6/£5*



Lasha Bugadze



Claire Armitstead

Talks include complimentary Georgian wine

A GEORGIAN WEEKEND OF NEW AND CLASSIC FILMS AT REGENT STREET CINEMA

SATURDAY 16 APRIL

Levan Tutberidze Two features by the pathbreaking director: *Trip to Karabakh* (4pm), based on Aka Morchiladze's landmark novel, which launched Georgia's cinematic revival in 2005. *Maira* (8:15pm – UK Premiere) On the Black sea coast, a man just out of jail strives to support his family with a fishing boat he names after the goddess of fate. Georgian entry for best foreign language film for the 2016 Oscars. Contemporary Georgian documentaries (2pm + 6:15pm) including *Zaza Rusadze's Bandits*, about the 1983 hijacking of a Soviet airliner. Plus shorts: *Tornike Bziava's April Chill*, on the awakening conscience of a Russian soldier in the 1989 crackdown; and *Levan Shubashvili's The Enclosed Space*, filmed at Tbilisi zoo during the summer floods of 2015.

SUNDAY 17 APRIL

Masterpieces of Georgian cinema
Tengiz Abuladze's classic trilogy of 1967-84: *The Plea* (2pm); *The Wishing Tree* (3:40pm); *Repentance* (5:50pm). A surreal critique of Stalin's most feared lieutenant, Lavrenti Beria, the final film became a symbol of glasnost;
Otar Iosseliani's 1996 *Brigands Chapter VII* (8:40pm), a fragmented classic on the disintegration of the 1990s.

For details about film screenings, please visit: <http://lifethroughcinema.com>



Repentance



The Wishing Tree



Brigands Chapter VII

Georgia25

WHERE EUROPE MEETS ASIA: GEORGIA25 is presented by the Georgian National Book Centre, Tbilisi, in association with Maya Jaggi, Artistic Director.

With partners: Asia House; Europe House; Life Through Cinema directed by Jason Osborn; Regent Street Cinema.

With support from the Embassy of Georgia in the UK; Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia; Georgian National Film Centre. PR support from Four Colman Getty.

GEORGIA25 marks three anniversaries in April:

– 9 April 1989 Peaceful pro-independence rallies in the Georgian capital Tbilisi crushed by Red Army soldiers, killing 21

– 9 April 1991 Georgia's declaration of independence 9 years later, reclaiming the sovereignty of the First Republic of 1918-21 after 70 years of Soviet rule. That brief republic followed more than a century of Tsarist imperial rule after 1801.

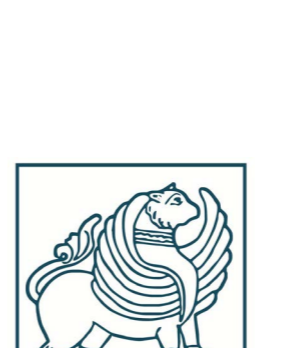
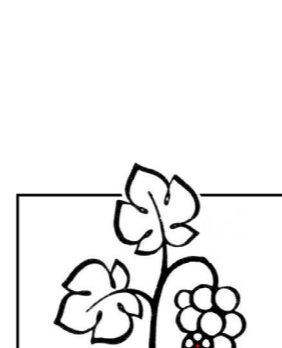
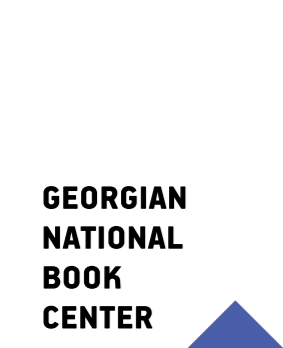
– 14 April 1978 Deda Ena (mother tongue) Day commemorating popular protests that halted Soviet moves to oust Georgian as the official language in Georgia

VENUES & TICKETS

Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G 7LP
<http://asiahouse.org/events/category/georgia-25/> Tel: 0207 307 5454

Europe House, 32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU
<http://eventbrite.co.uk/e/georgias-europe-ways-zurab-karumidze-in-conversation-with-maureen-freely-tickets-23722710265>

Regent Street Cinema, 22 Regent St, London, W1B 2UW
<http://regentstreetcinema.com/where-europe-meets-asia-georgia25/>
Tel: 0207 911 5050



<http://book.gov.ge/where-europe-meets-asia-georgia25>

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