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Dutch-Russian cultural cooperation dossier 2018



What do the numbers say? DutchCulture publishes 'Edition Russia: cooperation in the museum sector, performing arts and shared cultural heritage', documenting the trends and current realities of cultural cooperation and exchanges between the Netherlands and the Russian Federation in 2018.

Going through the data and noticing the growth of cultural activities by Dutch artists in Russia is a good reminder of the ongoing exchange between cultural actors in Russia and the Netherlands. Where bilateral relations prove to be difficult at times and language and cultural differences are unavoidable, Russian and Dutch cultural actors find a common language and keep exchanging knowledge. Where borders, visa procedures and political tensions are ineluctable, artists find ways to reach out to new audiences and create communities.

"Great works of art are only great because they are accessible and comprehensive to everyone," stated the famous Russian writer Lev Tolstoy at the end of the 19th century. More than a hundred years later, the accessibility of arts and culture seems to be just as relevant. When analyzing the data, we see that educational projects, knowledge sharing and outreach to various target groups are important themes within the cultural cooperation between Russia and the Netherlands. Besides, the presentation of music and dance also remains a big part of the exchange between the two countries.

The trend among cultural organisations to reach out to various target groups, which has become more prominent in the field of cultural exchange between Russia and the Netherlands over the past years, has resulted in some fruitful projects in the year 2018. In this article, I will highlight a couple of cultural makers, their projects and their impact, to give you a peek behind the numbers.

Some numbers and facts

So what do the numbers say exactly? In 2018, 212 Dutch artists participated in 465 cultural activities across Russia, making it the eighth most visited country. These events took place at 199 venues across 36 cities around the country. By far most of the activities took place in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Yekatering, Kazan and Perm are respectively placed three, four and five with far fewer activities taking place than in the two cultural capitals. The cultural fields that form the biggest part of the activities were heritage, music, performing arts, audiovisual media and architecture.

Cultural exchange of high artistic quality between Russia and the Netherlands has been happening for centuries, and the cooperation in the field of shared cultural heritage shows us that cultural actors in both countries aim to preserve this. By reaching out to new audiences and developing educational programs around performances and exhibitions, art becomes a bit more accessible to everyone, which according to Lev Tolstoy makes these works of art even more valued.

Read [full article](#) by Lenka Boswijk

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This dossier is part of an ongoing series. DutchCulture's new database allows it to gather enormous amounts of data about all Dutch cultural activities abroad in 2018. But numbers are just numbers unless you interpret them. That's why for the main focus countries, we give some meaning to those figures. For example, you can read the previous editions on [Belgium](#), [China](#), [France](#) and [Italy](#) in this series.

Image: Poster exhibition 'Reuse, Redevelop, Redesign' in Krasnoyarsk

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