

STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Arts & Theater

'Performing Revolution' festival marks end of the red regime

By **Michael J. Fressola**

November 01, 2009, 5:00PM



Hungary's Gyor National Ballet in "Petrushka," part of "Performing Revolution in Central and Eastern Europe" at the Joyce Theater Jan. 26-31, 2010.

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Twenty years ago, red regimes toppled all over eastern and *mittel* Europe. The time was right. Revolution had again become a contagious idea.

Musicians and composers, dramatists, filmmakers and writers were among the agitators seeking change and their art expressed discontent, fear, defiance. The bravest and most dangerous material called for immediate upheaval.

In honor of the anniversary, a citywide international festival, "Performing Revolution in Central and Eastern Europe" is revisiting the overthrows in the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia through the performing and visual arts.

It opens later this week. "Rebel Waltz: Underground Music From Behind the Iron Curtain," a six-band showcase, will play Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 11 p.m. at Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St., Manhattan.

The bands, Dezerter (Poland), Kontroll Csoport (Hungary), Psi Vojaci (Czech Republic), Timpuri Noi (Romania) and Bez Ladu A Skladu (Slovakia) can be credited today with stoking the rebellion that liberated their countries.

All are making their American debuts in "Performing Revolution in Central and Eastern Europe."

The festival encompasses dozens of performances and presentations through next spring. Among the upcoming highlights: "Dancing with the Berlin Wall," a site-specific project by choreographer Nejla Yarkin. A Berlin native with Turkish roots, Ms. Yarkin grew up with the Wall. While the outside world viewed it as a symbol, for her it was a daily reality.

"Dancing With the Berlin Wall" will start Nov. 9 at 6 p.m. at 28 Ludlow St., Manhattan, and move to the Goethe Center at 5 E. Third St.

"The Velvet Oratorio," a production of the Untitled Theater Co., sponsored by the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, will play the Bruno Walter Auditorium at 111 Amsterdam Ave., Manhattan, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m. and Nov. 30 at 7 p.m. "Revolutionary Voices: Performing Arts in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1980s," an exhibit at the New York Library for the Performing Arts, will run through March 20.

A film festival, "Storm Cloud Warnings: Resistance and Reflection in Polish Cinema, 1977-1989," will run Feb. 3-11 in the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center.

Dozens of events are being presented under the festival's aegis. Visit www.performingrevolution.org for details.