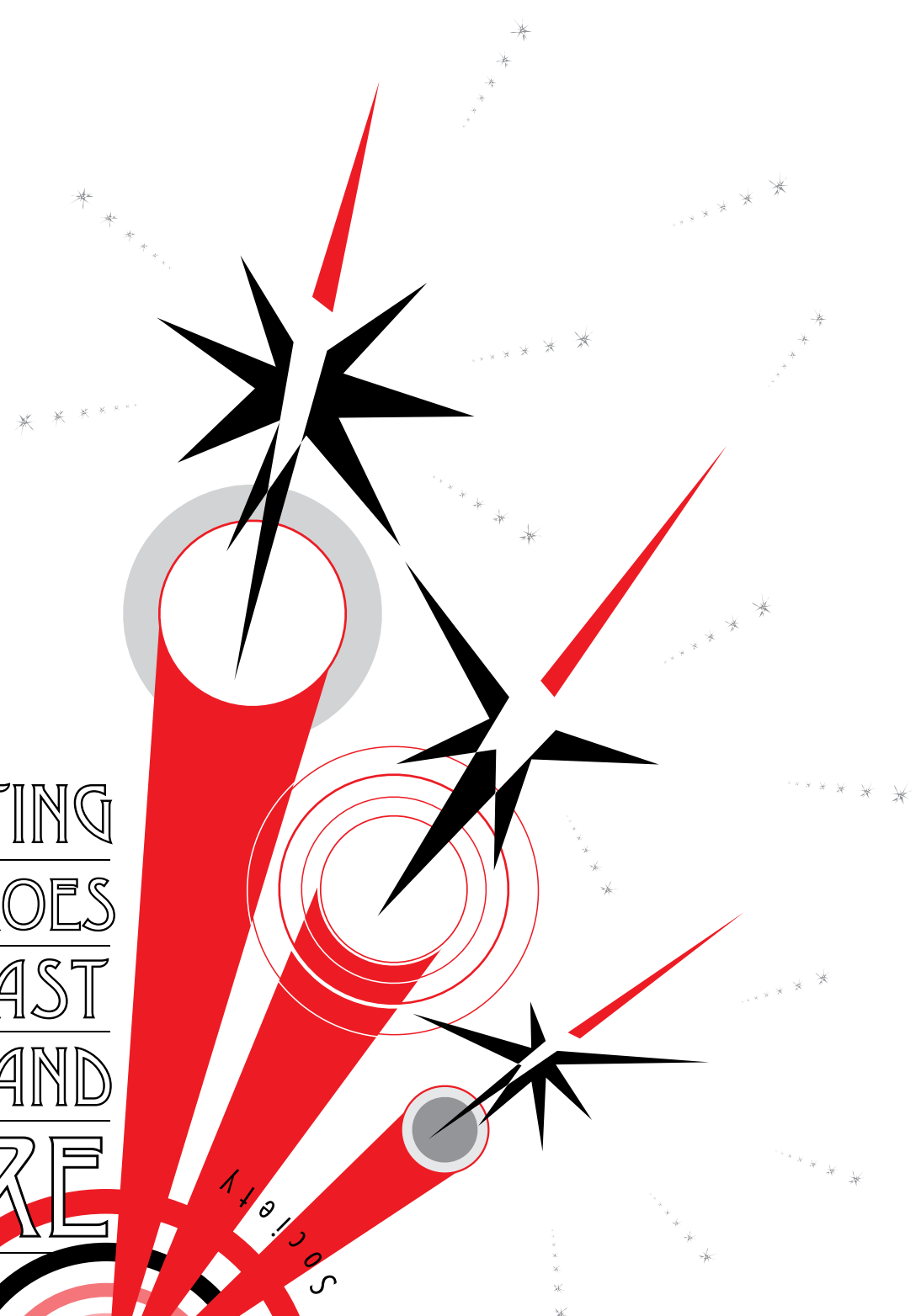


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September 23, 2010

Dear Friends:

Welcome to our second fall Gala benefitting the Russian Children's Welfare Society (RCWS). Thank you for joining us this year to celebrate Russia's winning bid to host of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games. We are extremely fortunate to have some of the world's premier athletes show their support for RCWS initiatives. Event proceeds will go to purchase sport equipment for orphanages in Russia and to support other RCWS charitable programs.

Founded in 1926, RCWS assists children at risk in Russia, from Pskov to Irkutsk, by funding orphanages, hospitals, educational scholarships, rehabilitation centers for disabled children, homeless shelters and schools.

We have a terrific program planned for this evening. We are honored to have with us tonight two leading performers, courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera: Ekaterina Semenchuk, mezzo-soprano, and Mikhail Petrenko, bass, who will be starring this fall in Metropolitan Opera's new production of *Boris Godunov*. Ms. Semenchuk is a good friend of the RCWS having performed brilliantly at our *Petroushka Ball* two years ago.

It is important that we continue to raise awareness and enthusiasm surrounding our organization. We welcome all new RCWS supporters and thank those of you who have continually helped us through both prosperous and economically difficult times. It is thanks to you that we can grow as an organization and scale our initiatives accordingly. We will continue to reach out to you and hope to see you at next year's 46<sup>th</sup> annual *Petroushka Ball* on February 11, 2011 at the Waldorf=Astoria.

On behalf of thousands of less-fortunate children in Russia, the Russian Children's Welfare Society would like to thank you for your time, support, enthusiasm and generosity.

Sincerely,

Vladimir P. Fekula  
President & CEO

Anna Sergeeva  
Director of New York Office

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**EVENING PROGRAM**

**6 PM**

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Sports Photo Exhibit by Yuri Shalamoff – Retrospective\*  
*\*Available for sale, portion of proceeds will benefit RCWS charitable programs*

**7:30 PM**

Official Program with remarks by Sport Celebrities and Diplomats  
Sasha Cohen, Guest of Honor

Special Performance by stars of the  
Metropolitan Opera's new production of ***Boris Godunov***  
**Ekaterina Semenchuk** and **Mikhail Petrenko**  
Craig Rutenberg, pianist  
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**8:30 PM**

Dessert and Champagne

**9 PM**

Auction Closing

The following stars contributed for the event auction: Viacheslav Fetisov, Maria Sharapova, Sasha Cohen, Johnny Weir, Serena Williams, Sergei Makarov, Viktor Petrenko, Diana Vishneva, Vera Zvonareva, Vika Azarenka, Teymuraz Gabashvili, Igor Lukanin, Kristin Fraser, Joannie Rochette, Tanya Adamovich and others.

**9:30 PM**

Evening Concludes

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## TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS



EKATERINA SEMENCHUK

Russian mezzo-soprano Ekaterina Semenchuk begins the 2010-11 season at the Metropolitan Opera in the role of Marina in *Boris Godunov*, after which she travels to the Chopin Institute in Warsaw to sing the world premiere of a new work by invitation of the composer, Krzysztof Penderecki. She welcomes the New Year in Vienna with a series of appearances at Vienna Konzerthaus, and travels to Rome to sing Alexander Nevsky at Santa Cecilia under the baton of Vasily Petrenko. In the Spring, she travels to Japan with the Mariinski Theater and Valery Gergiev, with whom she appears as Didon in *Les Troyens*, before returning to Europe for further concert appearances in Valencia and Poland. American audiences will have the opportunity to appreciate her great artistry when she appears with James Conlon and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and at the Ravinia Festival.

Recent successes include her appearance with Royal Danish Opera in the title role of *Carmen*, a role she has also sung at Polish National Opera, Oper Leipzig, Germany, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, Dallas Opera, Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, and in Tokyo and Seoul with Myung-whun

Chung. At Los Angeles Opera she made her role debut as Fricka in *Die Walkure* to great acclaim, and sang the role of Didon in *Les Troyens* with the Mariinsky Theater in St Petersburg, Russia, and at Carnegie Hall, New York. She appeared as Sonya in *War and Peace*, Polina in *Pique Dame* and Olga in *Eugene Onegin* at the Metropolitan Opera; Olga at the Royal Opera House in London; Sesto in *La Clemenza di Tito* and Maddalena in *Rigoletto* for Settimane Musicali di Stresa under Gianandrea Noseda.

A member of the Mariinsky Theater, Miss Semenchuk took part in international tours to Covent Garden, La Scala Milan, Teatro Real Madrid, the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall in New York, Washington Opera, the Salzburg Festival (in concert performances of *Pique Dame*, *Kitezh* and *War and Peace*), in Israel, China and many European countries. In St Petersburg she appeared as Fenena in *Nabucco*, Carmen, Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Laura in *The Stone Guest*, as Hanna in Rimsky-Korsakov's *May Night* and in many other roles.

Past appearances include the role of Preziosilla in *La Forza del Destino* and Polina at the Deutsche Staatsoper, Berlin, conducted by Daniel Barenboim; Ascanio in *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Baden-Baden Festival; and Charlotte in *Werther* at Graz Opera.

As a recitalist, Ekaterina Semenchuk has toured in Europe, North America and Argentina. With her accompanist Semion Skigin, she recently celebrated Shostakovich in recital at the Vienna Konzerthaus. Her performances with Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra have included Berlioz's *Romeo et Juliet* conducted by Carlo Rizzi, and Verdi's *Requiem* with Gustavo Dudamel. She also sang *La Mort de Cleopatre* with Valery Gergiev at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Prokofiev's *Hamlet* with the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mikhail Jurowski, and Mahler's *Second Symphony* and *Kindertotenlieder* with the Philharmonia conducted by Eliahu Inbal. She sang Mahler's *Third Symphony* with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and Marin Alsop, and with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra under Pieteri Inkinen. Her debut recording of Russian songs is available on the Harmonia Mundi label.



## TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS



### MIKHAIL PETRENKO

Bass Mikhail Petrenko was born in St Petersburg and graduated from the St Petersburg State Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatoire (class of Professor Minzhilkiev). This season he sings the role of Pimen in the new production of *Boris Godunov* at the Metropolitan Opera. Other engagements in the coming season include Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Mariss Jansons and Filippo in *Don Carlo* (Italian version) with Yannick Nezet-Seguin at the Netherlands Opera, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Canadian Opera Company and *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin and also at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Upcoming concert work includes Hunding in *Die Walküre* and Rachmaninov's *The Bells* with the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Simon Rattle, *Shostakovich Symphony No. 14* with the Bamberger Symphoniker and Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Boulez.

Mr. Petrenko made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera during the 2001-02 season in *War and Peace*. Other appearances with the company include Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Pistola in *Falstaff*, and Hunding in *Die Walküre*. Most recently, he had a great success with Maestro Gergiev in Baden-Baden singing Hagen and Fafner in the *Ring Cycle*. Other recent performances include Hagen at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, the Storm Knight in a concert performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kashchey the Immortal* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and Pope Clément in *Benvenuto Cellini* at the Salzburg Festival. He has also sung Daland in *Der Fliegende Holländer* at the Baden-Baden Festival, Ramfis in *Aida* and Varlaam in *Boris Godunov* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* in Genoa, Hunding in Salzburg and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, and the Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlo* with the Paris Opera.

He has toured extensively with the Mariinsky Opera Company, having performed with Maestro Gergiev at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Teatro la Scala Milan, Teatro Real in Madrid, the Théâtre du Châtelet Paris, at the Suntory Hall in Japan, for the Salzburg Festival and for the Melbourne Festival.

In a change to his usual performances he recently appeared as Leporello in a film version of *Don Giovanni*, which is due to be released soon.

Mikhail Petrenko was awarded diplomas at the III International Rimsky-Korsakov Competition for Young Opera Singers (St Petersburg, 1998) and the 1st Elena Obraztsova Competition for Young Opera Singers. He was also a Prizewinner at the International Rimsky-Korsakov Competition for Young Opera Singers and a finalist and diploma-winner at the Maria Callas New Verdi Voices Competition in Parma, 2000.



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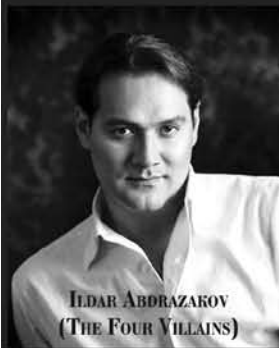
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# About the Society



This year, the Russian Children's Welfare Society (RCWS) proudly celebrates its 84th anniversary. In the spring of 1926, the original organizers pledged their commitment to improving the lives of Russian children throughout the world, a commitment that we strive to uphold today and well into the future.

The unending political and social flux of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has impacted and guided the direction of the Russian Children's Welfare Society's



various initiatives. The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 prompted the emigration of large numbers of Russians to Europe, Asia, North and South America. By the early thirties, the Society had ten branches operating throughout the United States and was sending money and material assistance to schools and organizations in locales as diverse as Estonia, Poland, Finland, France, Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Harbin, Shanghai (China), and Istanbul (Turkey). By 1950, the RCWS had gained recognition by the Presidential War Relief Control Board as an approved charity for work abroad during the war; the Society was able to continue sending relief to 14 countries.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia's transitioning infrastructure has left an alarming number of children disenfranchised; as a result, RCWS has shifted its focus to underprivileged children residing solely in Russia. Currently, too many children across Russia are without adequate medical care, education, and vocational training. The statistics are alarming:

- *There are over 700,000 orphans in Russia. UNICEF estimates that 95% of these children are social orphans, meaning they have at least one living parent who has given them up to the state.*

- *2,176 orphanages exist in Russia. The number of orphanages has increased by more than 100% in the last decade.*

- *Approximately 15,000 children leave Russian orphanages each year. Of those 15,000, the large majority is either 16 or 17 years of age. Only 4 % are admitted to universities.*

*Over 617,000 Russian children are disabled.*

*Only 15-20% of newborn Russian children are considered healthy.*

Given the overwhelming need for support, the Russian Children's Welfare Society now directs most of its yearly aid to children in Russia by funding:

## **Orphanages and Homeless Shelters**

Many of the estimated 700,000 orphans in Russia are unable to take

care of themselves or find a job, factors that greatly contribute to the high rates of suicide, homelessness, prostitution, and crime among former orphans. Our goal is to enable orphanages to meet basic needs and to promote comprehensive programs that help orphans grow to be healthy, independent adults.

## **Educational Scholarships and Programs**

During the six years since the inception of the RCWS scholarship program, the number of participants has grown from 3 in the academic year of 2003-2004 to 42 in 2008-2009. Currently, RCWS is supporting 38 students in Pskov, Yaroslavl, Moscow, and Velikiy Novgorod regions. To date, the program has been enormously successful in providing a support structure for students as they transition from living in an orphanage to attending a university on their own. For an annual cost of approximately \$2,000 per student, the Society is helping orphans successfully complete an academic degree or vocational training in order to steer them in the direction of a promising future. To date, 13 of our scholarship recipients have completed their schooling and found employment. RCWS requires academic transcripts from each scholarship recipient, as well as reports on the use of the stipend to assure accountability.

According to RCWS Board Member Sam Harding who recently traveled to Pskov, Moscow, Velikiy Novgorod, and Yaroslavl to meet with scholarship recipients and our new applicants, *"Not only did they appreciate the financial support from their scholarships, but they valued the control and discipline created by their obligation to report monthly on their expenses and academic progress, knowing that at least one caring person maintained high expectations of them."*

The Society also supports secondary education. The St. Alexis School and Orphanage near Yaroslavl, for example, offers rigorous



programs in the liberal arts, math, and science to prepare students for university enrollment. Children who are not college-bound have the opportunity to learn trade skills through apprenticeships, while disabled children participate in classes specially designed to meet their specific needs.

## **Medical Care and the Education of the Russian Doctors who provide it**

### **1. "Let's Give Beauty Back to the Children"**

Having a facial deformity is a wretched burden for thousands of Russian children suffering from congenital defects, tumors, cleft lip and palate, or other trauma. Only 2-3 hospitals in all of Russia have specialized surgeons to undertake cases that often require



# About the Society



multiple surgeries and highly advanced medical technology. Costly operations are often postponed, leaving many of the affected children to grow-up surrounded by unsympathetic peers who mock them for their unsightly appearance. The social stigma places families under severe stress, causing parents to abandon 10% of such children and entrust them in the care of state orphanages.

Professor Roginsky insists that early diagnosis and treatment of facial deformities is not only critical for the patients' physical health,



but also for their psychological development and expedient social integration. While many of these children will undergo multiple surgeries over a period of time, it is better to fix the problem before awareness of a defect sets in and damages self esteem for life. Thanks to donor support and the help of advanced medical micro technology, Professor Roginsky and his staff have witnessed many of their patients' personalities flourish with hope and happiness as they gain the ability to do what is second nature to most, to smile.



Since 2007, the RCWS has been collaborating with the *Kommersant's* Russian Aid Foundation to raise required funds for the Moscow Center for Maxillofacial Surgery (MCMS) to treat children with facial deformities. Through its website and ad space in *Kommersant*, the Russian Aid Foundation has provided an important forum where children suffering from all types of diseases can ask the average Russian to make a donation that will make treatment possible. The Foundation scrupulously investigates each case

to avoid fraudulent appeals and all money is channeled directly to the medical institution providing the care. RCWS designated a total of \$240,000 towards this project from 2007 to 2009, allocating \$1,250 - \$2,500 per operation. In addition to surgery, funds are used for pre-op observations and the expertise of trauma specialists, oncologists, neurosurgeons, speech therapists, etc. Transportation costs for families living in areas with substandard care are also covered. RCWS contributions are matched by readers of the *Kommersant* newspaper, allowing us to assist an ever-growing number of children. To date, we have helped over 300 children with facial deformities escape a future marked by cruelty and isolation.

RCWS receives numerous thank you letters from the parents of patients who were treated as a result of this project. In a recent letter, a thankful mother of one of the surgery recipients wrote: "My name is Galina Morozova and I want to say a big THANK YOU for sponsoring my daughter's Anna maxillofacial surgery. After the surgery my daughter could breathe better and her face looks much better as well. As a mother, I want to thank you for your help in that very difficult for us situation. Thank you for not leaving us alone to cope with this problem."



## II. Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis Project

RCWS continues to purchase specialized arthritis equipment for the Moscow Institute of Rheumatology and the Sechenov Medical Academy. The Society has also facilitated training for Russian rheumatologists in New York and in Russia. Dr. Thomas Lehman,







# About the Society



Professor of Medicine at Cornell University Medical School and Chief of Pediatric Rheumatology at the Hospital for Special Surgery, has been instrumental in the success of this project. Dr. Lehman continues to participate in instructional conferences with Russian doctors.

### **III. Helping Children with HIV/AIDS**

Official government statistics indicate that there are 333,332 Russians infected with HIV, making Russia home to the highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Europe today. Since many more are unaware of their HIV status, international organizations believe that the true figure may be somewhere between 800,000 to 1.5 million. Medicine has fortunately advanced to the point where transmission of the virus from mother to child during pregnancy and birth can be stopped. Thousands of children, however, are born with HIV every year, and many are abandoned soon after by their mothers.

In 2007, RCWS started working with the "Future without HIV/AIDS" Foundation and the All Russia Pediatric AIDS Center in St. Petersburg, which provides assistance to infected orphans and pregnant women. Many of the HIV infected children have been transferred from hospital to hospital, never interacting with other children or playing with toys. At the Pediatric AIDS Center, there is a community of 40 sick and orphaned children who receive the attention of a dedicated staff of medical and educational professionals responsible for fostering their emotional development and integration into society. The Society's \$11,500 contribution in 2008 provided funds to equip the facility with furniture that best simulates a homelike atmosphere within the hospital. The children have also had the opportunity to take part in excursions to the theatre, circus, and parks.

The Society commends the Pediatric AIDS Center for its commitment to children many regard as a lost cause. We hope these kids continue to beat the odds, overcome their developmental delays, and maintain their health.

### **Rehabilitation Centers for the Disabled or Mentally Challenged**

Treatment for children with mental or physical disabilities is limited in Russia. RCWS continues to support the "Inspiration" Rehabilitation Center outside of Moscow, which provides a safe environment for disabled children who have escaped abusive homes. The Center's programs include educational activities, art therapy sessions, psychological assistance, music lessons, athletics, vocational training, and legal advice.

Because nothing can replace a real home and loving parents, we also support an innovative program by Father Ilya Dorogoychenko that seeks adoptive parents for challenged children. Father Ilya feels it is important that we don't "create one more shelter that will just increase the number of abandoned children. Even in our poor little township it is possible to find adoptive parents for our kids."

### **Annual New Year's Party for Orphans in Moscow**

**In December 2009, RCWS hosted our annual "Yelka" party for over 1,000 children.** What began as a modest venture 10 years ago has grown into the most important celebration of its kind in Russia. Thanks to support of Irina Kudrina and the Northern Crown Foundation, approximately 350 orphans and disabled children attended the "Nutcracker on Ice" holiday show at the Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium. In addition, RCWS personnel and volunteers visited several pediatric hospitals, orphanages, and shelters in the Moscow region with Ded Moroz and Snegurochka (the Russian Santa Claus and Snow Maiden) bringing gifts to those who were sick and unable to attend the festivities. For some children it was the only gift they received this Christmas and it was truly cherished.

Please view a full list of RCWS recent grant recipients and information about our on-going projects at the Society's web site: [www.rcws.org](http://www.rcws.org)

The Society is proud of its accomplishments in its 84-year history and pays tribute to our predecessors and donors who transformed the



organization into one of the leading charities in Russia today.

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(80° PROOF)

Distilled in Russia

1 Litre

ORIGINAL  
RUSSIAN VODKA WITH NATURAL FLAVOURS