

Report on the IAML 2010 Congress

Joan Colquhoun McGorman

International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres Congress
Moscow, Russia
June 27–July 2, 2010

Although it has been many years since I suspended my active involvement in IAML, I have always remained interested in the association and its work. The last time I attended a IAML conference was in Ottawa in 1994.

The idea of attending the IAML Congress in Moscow intrigued me. I decided to go for several reasons. I wanted to update and renew my knowledge of the association and all of its important projects in advance of the IAML conference which CAML will host in Montreal in 2012. I hoped to see some international friends and colleagues I had known years ago. Also, I welcomed the opportunity to visit Russia with the special camaraderie and supportive structure of a IAML conference. I was not disappointed!

This was the first time that IAML has met in Russia. At first, it seemed rather intimidating to deal with visas and other complications of going so far away, and to a place where I had almost no knowledge of the language and culture. Thankfully, the organizing committee, led by Emilia Rassina, of the Taneyev Library of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, did an excellent job of smoothing the way into Russia for foreigners who do not speak the language. Translators were provided, most of them charming young music students at the Conservatory.

The welcoming committee, including translators, was at the airport to meet each flight carrying IAML delegates. They helped us get some money exchanged and then provided complimentary transportation by car in small groups to the conference centre. It was such a relief to have that taken care of – the traffic was incredible!

The weather was hot and sunny for the entire week. It was near the beginning of an extraordinary heat wave in Russia. Later in July there were news reports of severe forest fires which caused Moscow to be darkened by smoke and ash. However, during the IAML Congress the sky was always blue, even until late in the evening. Darkness lasted only a few hours with dawn breaking about 3 a.m.

Like many of the foreign delegates I had arrived early for the Congress to allow some time to see the sights of Moscow. On Saturday June 26, Daniel Paradis, Joseph Hafner and I had a guided tour of the area near the Kremlin, after which we visited the Kremlin itself. The overwhelming impression was of the vastness and long history of the place. The churches are very beautiful with richly decorated interiors and brilliant onion-shaped domes. The next day we visited the Tretyakov Gallery of Russian Art and its environs.

The Congress was held at the Russian Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation (RAPA). This is a huge complex which was constructed near the end of the Soviet era and contains both hotels and conference facilities inside a security fence. Every time we returned from outside the RAPA complex we had to go through a security office and show a special pass which we had been given upon arrival. It is outside central Moscow, but near a subway station which provided convenient transportation to downtown. There is a MacDonald's near the entrance to the subway, which some IAML attendees frequented for the free wireless internet access.

Everything in Moscow is enormous! The subway stations are like underground palaces with elaborate decorations celebrating aspects of Moscow's history.

Six Canadians attended: Melissa Gravel (Laval), Joseph Hafner (McGill), Brian McMillan (McGill), Daniel Paradis (Concordia), Sheilah Roberts (Memorial University) and Joan Colquhoun McGorman (retired, formerly National Library of Canada). There were about 250 delegates, including a large contingent from the Russian Library Association. Most papers and presentations were given in English, with a few in French, German or Russian. Since nearly half of the attendees were from Russia, simultaneous translation was provided for them in many of the sessions. When presentations were given in Russian, a translator provided the English equivalent sentence by sentence.

The schedule followed the traditional IAML conference plan, including concerts on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Unlike most IAML conference venues, RAPA was not associated with a library or music academy. However, we did have the opportunity to visit the National Library of Russia (Lenin Library) and the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory. On Tuesday there was a concert in the Pashkov Dom, the beautiful Concert Hall of the National Library of Russia. The setting was perfect for a performance, by Pratum Integrum Orchestra, of baroque music on historical instruments. On Thursday we had a guided tour of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory and its library. The concert in the Small Hall of the Conservatory following the tour was entitled "Fifty years of Russian Avant-Garde."

The Opening Ceremony included welcoming speeches and a performance by a traditional *cappella* ensemble, followed by a lovely reception.

The Opening Session on Monday morning featured a video presentation, "Musical Libraries and Archives of Russia" which was produced in English especially for IAML and gave us an excellent introduction to our host libraries. (This can be viewed at: <http://www.iamlcongress2010.ru/index.php?id=28>)

At the National Reports session Joseph Hafner presented CAML President Kirsten Walsh's report. He also conveyed greetings to IAML from Maria Calderisi, a Past-President of IAML who had to cancel her plans to attend the Congress. It was interesting to hear the reports from other countries and know that there are many projects and concerns in common.

The Plenary Session on Tuesday was a discussion of the future of IAML. Several people responded to position papers which had been distributed in advance for consideration. There seems to be a need to modernize some aspects of the association. Possibilities discussed included increasing outreach and changing *Fontes Artis Musicae* to electronic format.

The week was filled with varied and interesting sessions. There was a particular emphasis on the libraries and music of Russia, as well as Russian music collections abroad. Here are a few highlights from the Congress presentations. Daniel Paradis (Concordia University) gave an important talk entitled "RDA and Music: An Overview of the Differences from AACR2." The program "In Mozart's Words" was about an innovative project based in Italy to provide online access to Mozart's correspondence from Italy; with English, French and Italian translations of the letters and commentary in English. In "VOXPOP" we learned about the popular songs of Russia, France and Japan.

Some of the papers presented will be published soon in *Fontes Artis Musicae*. Reports of the Professional Branches, Subject Commissions, Committees and Working Groups will also be published in *Fontes Artis Musicae*, as well as reports of the "R-Projects" (RILM, RISM, RIPM and RIDiM). The minutes of the Council Meetings, at which Brian McMillan represented Canada, will also be in *Fontes*. Other reports and minutes will be available on the IAML website.

At the General Assembly and Closing Session, President Martie Severt (Hilversum, Netherlands) announced that the new President of IAML would be Roger Flury of the National Library of New Zealand. Replacing Roger Flury as Secretary-General is Pia Shekter (Gothenburg, Sweden). Honourary Memberships were conferred on Veslemöy Heintz of Sweden and Pamela Thompson of the United Kingdom.

The Farewell Dinner that evening was magnificent, featuring traditional Russian food and music. All agreed that it was a very successful Congress.

It is not just the formal meetings which are important at a IAML conference. Informal discussions at meals, tea breaks, and social events can lead to greater understanding of the importance of the work of the association and our colleagues in music libraries around the world.

The sightseeing excursions on Wednesday afternoon offered a difficult choice among tours of two magnificent country estates as well as two walking tours of central Moscow, featuring either historical or musical highlights. All the excursions were enjoyed by the participants and provided opportunities to get better acquainted with IAML colleagues. There was also an afternoon excursion for accompanying persons which was a lovely boat ride through the city on the Moscow (Moskva) River.

It has been traditional for IAML conferences to offer optional post-conference tours. These provide an excellent opportunity for delegates to see more of the host region, as well as to spend more time with other delegates. Some chose the tour on July 3 to the Tchaikovsky House State Museum in Klin, northwest of Moscow. The House, which has been preserved as it was when Tchaikovsky died, is adjacent to the new Museum which has manuscripts, music, letters, photographs and other artifacts from Tchaikovsky and his family. The tour culminated with a recital given on a piano which had been played by Tchaikovsky.

I chose the two-day tour to St. Petersburg. We left immediately after the Farewell Dinner to travel by night train to St. Petersburg. In addition to all the important tourist sights of the city the IAML delegates were treated to excellent tours of the National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg, at the end of the first day and the State Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatoire on the last evening. At both libraries we were amazed by the facilities and collections, which included manuscripts of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, as well as Russian masters.

Several of the IAML participants had planned to spend a little more time in St. Petersburg. Along with two delegates from New Zealand and one from the United States I attended the ballet, *Spartacus*, by Khachaturian at the Mariinsky Theatre (formerly Kirov) and on my last night in Russia I saw the Tchaikovsky opera, *Eugene Onegin* at the Mussorgsky Theatre.

I encourage *CAML Review* readers to look for further detail about the Moscow IAML Congress in *Fontes Artis Musicae* and online. I think that it is important for Canada to increase its participation in IAML next year in preparation for hosting the IAML Conference in Montreal in 2012. Individual membership in IAML is well worth the modest fee and can be processed easily along with CAML membership by Kyla Jemison, CAML Membership Secretary.

Next year IAML will meet in Dublin, July 24–29, 2011 at Trinity College. For more information see: http://www.iaml.info/iaml-uk-irl/dublin_2011/index.html. Start planning now!