From Russia with Love: Literature, Music, Art, Film
Symposium, RIT

Date: Thursday, April 18th
Time: 8:30 am - 8:30 pm
Location: Campus Center Reading Room & Bamboo Room (2nd floor), SAU 1829 (1st floor)
Sponsored by: College of Liberal Arts, College of Liberal Arts Honors Program, M&T Bank, and Department of English.

8:30 am Coffee and pastries
8:40-9:00 am Welcome and opening remarks:
Elena Sommers, Department of English, RIT
James Winebrake, Dean, COLA, RIT

9:00-10:30 am Dostoevsky: 2x2=4-Crystal Palace=death:
Tolstoy—what does it mean to live a Good Life?
John Givens (University of Rochester): “Tolstoy's Jesus versus Dostoevsky's Christ: A tale of Two Christologies.”
Brian Schroeder (Dept.of Philosophy, RIT): “Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and the Overcoming of Nihilism: A Double Movement.”
Topher Froehlich (RIT student): “Loathing, Loving, and Laughing with the Underground Man.”
Babak Elahi (Associate Dean; COLA; RIT)- with
Hector E. Flores, (Dean of Graduate Studies, RIT) -“The Global Heirs of the Underground Man.”

9:00-10:30 am Poetry and Music.
Carl Atkins (Dept. of Performing Arts and Visual Culture, RIT): "Red, White, and Blue: Jazz in Russia from 1920 to the present."
Diane Forbes (Dept. of Modern Languages and Cultures, RIT): “The Evolution of Akhmatova’s Poetry: From Self to Other.”
Gail Hosking (Dept. of English, RIT): Reading of Akhmatova
RIT String Quartet, select movements from Borodin’s Quartet in D: Introductory comments by Michael Ruhling (Dept. of Performing Arts and Visual Culture, RIT).

10:30 -11.30 am Staged Reading (Q & A to follow): Dostoevsky, “The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor.”
David Munnell, director (Dept. of Performing Arts and Visual Culture, RIT).

11.30 am-12.30 Lunch break.

12:30-2:00 pm Art as Politics:
Jose Alaniz (University of Washington): “‘Flashy Pictures’: Comics, Social Activism, and Russian Youth.”
Elena Sommers (Dept. of English, RIT): ‘To Depict the New Woman is to Invoke Her’: Public Awareness Advertising and the Survivalist Discourse of Russia’s ‘Boost the Birthrate’ Campaign.
Alex Miokovic:  “Radical Cultural Documents: The Politics of Russian Portraiture 1869-1881.”
Dinah Holtzman (Dept.of Performing Arts and Visual Culture, RIT): “From Russia with Lust: The Sadomasochistic (Homo) Erotics of Sergei Eisenstein’s Mexico”

2:00-3:00 pm Global Nabokov:
Julian W. Connolly (University of Virginia): “From Russia to America- the Depiction of Nationality in Nabokov’s Work.”
Maxim D. Shrayer (Boston College): "Nabokov and the Heritage of Western Pomerania"

3:00-4:00 pm Nabokov (student led panel): “Author, Narrator, Reader: Love and Morality in Lolita.”
Daniel Suzanne Smith (co-facilitator)
Ashleigh Butler (RIT student): “The Metamorphosis of Love and Woe.”
Kara Golis (RIT student): “Morality in Lolita.”

4:00-5.00pm Waiting for America--reading, Q&A, and book signing by an award-winning author, Maxim D. Shrayer
Waiting for America is the first English-language book to explore the experience of Soviet Jews waiting, in transit, to enter the New World. In 1987 a young Jewish man, the central figure in this captivating memoir, leaves Moscow for good with his parents. While waiting, in Austria and Italy, for a US refugee visa, the book's twenty-year-old poet quenches his thirst for sexual, political and cultural discovery through his colorful European misadventures.

5:00-6:00 pm Closing remarks (10 min) and reception;
Film: The Mermaid. 2007. (Russia’s entry for the Foreign Oscars, World Cinema Directing Award at Sundance) –an artistically/digitally inventive, coming of age story ending in death, where a teenage girl moves to Moscow, meets an advertising executive, falls in love, saves his life 3 times, and dies, after she is transformed into the face of his Moscow advertising campaign that markets properties on the moon to wealthy Russians. The film, a social critique of Russia postmodern capitalism, presents itself as a reflection of the relationship between fairy-tale, film, and the capitalist regime of production and consumption.
Round-table: Elena Sommers (Dept. of English, RIT), Babak Elahi (Associate Dean; COLA), Dina Holtzman (Dept. of Fine Arts). Elisabetta D’Amanda (Dept. of Modern Languages and Cultures, RIT)

6-8 pm Anton Chekhov -Uncle Vanya. David Munnell, director (Dept. of Performing Arts and Visual Culture, RIT). Q & A to follow.