

# Delve Deeper into "Belarusian Waltz"

A film by Andrzej Fidyk

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Susan Conlon and Martha Perry of the Princeton Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the upcoming P.O.V. documentary "Belarusian Waltz," that premieres on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at 10 PM (check local listings at [www.pbs.org/pov/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/)).

*Belarus has been called "Europe's last dictatorship." Since 1994, Alexander Lukashenko has ruled the ex-Soviet republic with a despotic hand, jailing the opposition, shutting down the press and refusing to investigate the assassinations of dissidents. He has virtually silenced his critics — but not one lone performance artist who stages public stunts mocking the dictator's pretensions. "Belarusian Waltz" is the story of Alexander Pushkin, whose audacious, comical exploits find him facing the hostility of the police and the consternation of his family. An offbeat tale of post-modern street theater meeting 1930s-style authoritarianism, the film offers a surprising window into the soul of the Belarusian people. A co-production of ITVS International.*

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## ADULT NONFICTION

**Ash, Timothy Garton.** *History of the Present: Essays, Sketches, and Dispatches from Europe in the 1990s.* New York: Random House, 2000. Chronicles the happenings in Eastern Europe during the 1990s through a collection of essays, sketches, and dispatches written as history was being made.

**Bishop, Claire.** *Participation (Documents of Contemporary Art).* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006. With essays by Umberto Eco, Bertolt Brecht, Roland Barthes and others, this book places participatory art in both a historical and theoretical context, while exploring how it encourages and produces new social relationships.

**Fedor, Helen.** *Belarus and Moldova: Country Studies.* Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1995. This volume from the Library of Congress analyzes the political, social, economic institutions of Belarus and Moldova.

**Finkelpearl, Tom.** *Dialogues in Public Art.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000. Contains an assortment of interviews with people who create and experience public art.

**Gross, Jan Tomasz.** *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, expanded edition, 2002. Gross describes the terrors of the Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia, comprised Eastern Poland between WWI and WWII.

**Hamilton, Daniel and Gerhard Mangott, ed.** *The New Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova.* Washington, DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2008. In this volume, leading European, Russian and American scholars examine the dynamics of the new Eastern Europe.

**Lacey, Suzanne.** *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art.* Seattle, Wash.: Bay Press, 1995. This set of essays is an attempt to formulate an ideological understanding of installation, performance, site-specific work and other manifestations of public art frequently encountered, yet generally misunderstood.

**Parker, Stewart.** *The Last Soviet Republic: Alexander Lukashenko's Belarus.* Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2007. Lukashenko has been called the "last dictator in Europe." This book explores the reality of Belarusian social policy and human rights, while making note of the level of external interference in the democratic process in Belarus.

**Silitski, Vitali and Jan Zaprudnik.** *Historical Dictionary of Belarus.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2007. With over 400 dictionary-style entries, this book provides readers with quick and easy access to basic facts, the history, and the important people of Belarus.

**Zaprudnik, Jan.** *Belarus: At a Crossroads in History.* Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.

Zaprudnik— a native Belarusian — paints a vivid picture of the complex past of his homeland (formerly known as Belorussia), paving the way for his analysis of the challenges facing the newly independent republic.

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## ADULT FICTION

**Freudenberger, Nell.** *The Dissident.* Ecco, 2006. Yuan Zhao, a Chinese performance artist entangled in the subversive community of Beijing's East Village (an artist enclave located in Beijing's "industrial dump"), moves to Los Angeles to show his work and teach studio art.

**Vonnegut, Kurt.** *Bluebeard: A Novel.* Delacorte Press, 1987. An old World War II veteran and abstract painter recounts his past to a voluptuous widow, revealing man's compulsion to create and destroy what he loves.

**Steinhauer, Olen.** *Victory Square.* New York: St. Martin's Minotaur, 2007. The revolutionary politics and chaotic history of life inside Olen Steinhauer's fictionalized Eastern European country have made his literary crime series one of today's most acclaimed. This is fifth and final entry in the series. Other titles include: *36 Yalta Boulevard, The Bridge of Sighs, The Confession, and Liberation Movements.*

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## NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Belarus (Then & Later).** Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1993. Discusses the history, geography, differing ethnicities, politics, economy and future of the former Soviet republic of Belarus. Grades 3-6.

**Gosnell, Kevin.** *Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova.* Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 1992. Compares and contrasts the three former Soviet republics of Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova, which are linked by geography and economics. Grades 3-6



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**Manushkin, Fran. *How Mama Brought the Spring*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2008.**

A mother in Chicago tells her daughter how Grandma used to make a special surprise on the freezing cold winter mornings in Belarus- so special that it seemed to bring spring with it. Grades K-2.

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## FILMS, VIDEOS, AND BROADCASTS

***Burnt By the Sun (Utomlyonnye Solntsem)* A film by Nikita Mikhalkov. Columbia TriStar Home Video, 1994. (134 min).**

In the Soviet Union of 1936, revolutionary hero Colonel Kotov is spending an idyllic summer in his dacha with his wife and their 6 year old daughter. They are surprised by the arrival of the charming Mitia, who exploits his status as an old family friend to carry out a dark mission. Kotov's confidence in himself and his country are at first unshakable; he is unable to comprehend that his peaceful family vacation is about to be destroyed by the brutality of the Stalinist regime. In Russian with English subtitles.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

***Cabaret Balkan (Bure Baruta)* A film by Goran Paskaljevic.**

**Paramount Pictures, 1998, 2000. (102 min).** In this dark comedy set in war-torn Yugoslavia, the lives of various citizens -- a cab driver, friends in a gym, a girl on a bus, a performance artist and more - intersect during one unpredictable night in Belgrade. In Serbo-Croatian with English subtitles.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

***Come and See (Idi I Smotri)* A film by Elem Klimov.**

**Byelorussianfilm, 1985. DVD release: New York: Kino on Video, 2003. (142 min).** The story of the horrific and harrowing experiences of a young boy growing up during the brutal German occupation of Byelorussia during the Great Patriotic War. Winner of Moscow Film Festival Grand Prize.

In Russian with English subtitles.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

***Freedom*. A film by Tom Baker.**

**Madacy Entertainment Group, 1998. (60 min).** Topics include how three of the century's great spontaneous uprisings (Tiananmen Square, Prague Spring, and the Hungarian Uprising) were crushed. Also shows the Dalai Lama's flight into exile and the continuing struggle to restore political and religious peace in Tibet; how the indigenous peoples of the world are reclaiming the rights to land that once was theirs; the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of communist domination in Eastern Europe, among others.

[www.madacy.com](http://www.madacy.com)

***The Lives of Others*. A film by Florian Henckel von**

**Donnersmarck. Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2007, c2006. (138 min).** Set in East Berlin in 1984, a secret service agent assigned to monitor a playwright and his girlfriend begins to question his assignment and his loyalty to the government. In German with optional English, French, or Spanish subtitles.

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

