

# The New York Times

## With Crane Overhead, Carnegie Is Off Limits

Daniel J. Wakin

October 31, 2012

The crane boom [dangling over West 57th Street](#) like a broken violin bow, a result of [Hurricane Sandy](#), has paralyzed life at [Carnegie Hall](#), one of the world's most precious concert spaces almost directly across the street.



The hall canceled all concerts on Tuesday and Wednesday, and Thursday's performance by the Orchestra of St. Luke's, which was rescheduled to June 1. A performance by the pianist Wael Farouk at Weill Recital Hall was also moved from Thursday to June 1. The city has cordoned off streets surrounding the hall and cut off utilities to the area for safety reasons, making it impossible for audience members, performers and anybody else to enter.

At a news conference on Wednesday, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said West 57th Street would "not be fully reopened until sometime this weekend at the earliest." Work may begin as early as Thursday, said a city official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to discuss the matter. As the work proceeds, the official said, the cordoned-off zone will shrink, with West 57th Street being the last section to open.

The closing comes at a critical time for Carnegie, which is in the heart of its season. In the coming days scheduled performers include the pianist Murray Perahia, with a solo recital; the King's Singers; the Belcea Quartet; the Oratorio Society of New York; the Emerson String Quartet with the pianist Yefim Bronfman; and the violinist Midori. This week's cancellations included the pianist Lang Lang and other prominent soloists in a benefit concert and the Mariinsky Orchestra from St. Petersburg under the conductor Valery Gergiev.

While the city and engineers come up with a scheme to secure and remove the boom, concert life at the hall remained in suspended animation. Carnegie officials said they were making decisions about canceling or postponing concerts one day at a time.

Clive Gillinson, the hall's executive and artistic director, said he could only wait to be informed by city officials. "Until somebody tells us a timeline, we can't do anything except to work on a daily basis," he said. "There is no plan at the moment."

Mr. Gillinson said it was too early to tell what the financial impact of the cancellations would be on Carnegie Hall. While it stands to lose ticket and rental income, it will also be spared expenses and the fees it pays to performers presented by Carnegie.

There appeared to be no imminent danger to the structure of the 121-year-old hall, which includes two other smaller auditoriums, Zankel Hall and Weill. Mayor Bloomberg said on Tuesday that the Buildings Department had declared the crane to be stable.

The crane was being used to build an apartment tower at 157 West 57th Street, which will be 73 stories tall, according to city records, although it is being marketed as a 90-story building.

Mr. Bloomberg has said that the strategy would be to strap the loosened boom to the building, known as One57, and then remove it using a second crane to be built on the tower's roof. Once the boom is secured, the streets could be opened, he said. There would be sporadic closings during the damaged crane's removal, he said on Wednesday.

Elsewhere, New York's culture business was getting back to normal. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center said on Wednesday that it would go forward with concerts this weekend. The Metropolitan Opera rehearsals for a new production of Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera" took place with nearly full attendance, the Met said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/01/arts/music/dangling-crane-boom-keeps-carnegie-hall-off-limits.html>

## **Mariinsky Orchestra concert in NY cancelled**

October 31, 2012



A concert of the St.Petersburg Mariinsky Symphony Orchestra under Valery Gergiev has been cancelled in New York City due to the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, local media reported on Wednesday.

The concert in Carnegie Hall was to become the final part of the Mariinsky Orchestra's tour of the United States and Canada.

[http://english.ruvr.ru/2012\\_10\\_31/Mariinsky-Orchestra-concert-in-N-Y-annulled/](http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_10_31/Mariinsky-Orchestra-concert-in-N-Y-annulled/)

# Los Angeles Times

## CULTURE MONSTER

ALL ARTS, ALL THE TIME

### Some New York performances still shuttered post-Sandy

David Ng

October 31, 2012



Some major Broadway productions and downtown New York cultural venues remained closed Wednesday as the East Coast continues to get back on its feet following [Sandy](#). Power outages have forced many institutions south of midtown to suspend operations.

On Broadway, five productions remained closed at least through Wednesday: evening performances of ["The Lion King"](#) and ["Mary Poppins"](#) as well as matinee performances of "Jersey Boys," ["Evita"](#) and "Scandalous." All other Broadway shows are set to resume regular performances on Wednesday, officials said.

Carnegie Hall said that all concerts scheduled for Wednesday have been canceled, including a performance by the Mariinsky Orchestra with Valery Gergiev and a recital with harpist Suzanna Klintcharova.

Although the Metropolitan Opera is planning to return to the stage with "[The Tempest](#)" on Wednesday, the Met's neighbor at [Lincoln Center](#), the New York Philharmonic, announced that its "Rush Hour" concert on Wednesday would be canceled.

In the downtown area, many museums and theaters remained closed due to the widespread power outages. The New Museum said on its website that it will remain closed "until conditions improve," although the New York Times reported that it will open on Wednesday. The Public Theater also appeared to be in a state of uncertainty, saying on its Twitter account that its box office remains closed until further notice.

The Public is staging the new musicals "Giant" and "Fun Home."

Classic Stage Company's production of "Ivanov," starring [Ethan Hawke](#), was called off on Wednesday, while the Flea Theater's production of A.R. Gurney's "Heresy" was also canceled until further notice.

# Roll Call

THE NEWSPAPER OF CAPITOL HILL SINCE 1955

## Culture Clash

Jason Dick

November 1, 2012

The rich heritage of Russian music and dance was on full display at a lush gala at the Library of Congress last week, culminating in an otherworldly ice skating performance in the Thomas Jefferson Building's Great Hall to the sounds of Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake." But turmoil in Russia over free speech and artistic expression cast a minor pall over the festivities, providing a contrast between the event's celebration of classic art and President Vladimir Putin's crackdown on punk rock.

James Billington has been the Librarian of Congress since the Reagan administration, the custodian of the United States' repository of knowledge and culture since 1987. And he's never seen anything like the Role of the Arts in International Relations, sponsored by American University's Initiative for Russian Culture and the Mariinsky Foundation.

"It's once in a lifetime," Billington, a longtime scholar of Russian culture, said late in the evening on Oct. 25 as 4,000 guests mingled in the Library. He spoke from the vantage point of the balcony, looking down on the transformed winter wonderland that the Great Hall had become, with four "ice dancers" plying to "Swan Lake" on an acrylic surface standing in for actual frozen water.



The skating was just one part of a particularly plush program that featured artistic luminaries such as Valery Gergiev, the artistic director of the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia, and Denis Matsuev, the hulking pianist known around the world as "The Siberian Bear."

The event comes at a time, however, of rising tension in Russia over free speech, with Putin's government coming down hard on critics of his regime. And though the event organizers preferred to keep the attention on classical music, it was a different kind of Russian music that threatened the program's careful planning — punk rock protest tunes.

At a question-and-answer session, Gergiev bristled when asked by a reporter from Radio Free Europe about his thoughts on a Russian court's recent decision to send members of a Russian punk rock band to penal colonies.

In February, the band Pussy Riot performed a song in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour protesting Putin's hard-line tactics and the relationship between church and state. They were arrested for "hooliganism motivated by religious hatred."

Maria Alyokhina and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova reported to prison camps last week to serve two-year sentences. Another member of the band, Yekaterina Samutsevich, was freed by an appeals court.

"I was, myself, not so interested in hearing how the court [would decide]," Gergiev told the RFE reporter, continuing, "I thought that maybe they will find time in their lives to spend, I don't know, maybe a few months, maybe a few weeks, in one of the monasteries, and maybe they will come out of this experience, in case they find it important, slightly different persons."

Gergiev's fellow panelists at the session, including Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Beyrle and Susan Lehrman, advisory chairwoman for AU's Initiative for Russian Culture, looked pained. But the maestro continued.

"Why [do] you have to do something in the biggest church of a big country? If you want to do something artistically or politically motivated, you may do it in some other place because Russia is a country where many, many churches were destroyed."

### **'More Russian Is Always Better'**

At almost the same time, on the other side of the world, Putin was providing fuel for the fire.

At a dinner he was hosting for journalists at his estate in Novo Ogaryovo, Russia, Putin said about the band: "We have red lines beyond which starts the destruction of the moral foundations of our society," according to Reuters. He added, "If people cross this line, they should be made responsible in line with the law."

Putin's positions would go unchallenged, at least from the panel at the Library of Congress.

Still, if contemporary Russian politics intruded, the overall program was an extravaganza for Russophiles, even compared with last year's event, which featured a scaled ice sculpture of the Kremlin in the Great Hall.

“This year is far superior in every conceivable way. More people, more Russian. And more Russian is always better,” said Elliott Kaduck, an undergraduate at George Washington University studying international relations.

In addition to the ice skating and musical performance by Matsuev, the Library had on display an exhibit, “The Russian Influences on Music and Dance in America,” which featured installations on, among others, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Igor Stravinsky, Irving Berlin and Aaron Copland.

The multitiered experience, combined with the free-flowing booze and stacks of Russian desserts — such as the swan-shaped cream puffs covered in chocolate and the Birch Tree ice cream cake log — gave the evening a bit of an over-the-top feeling for some.

“You’d never find the German embassy doing this. Too inefficient,” joked Julia Broemmel, a German Fulbright scholar and American University broadcast journalism graduate student. She is a writer of the “D.C. and the Germans” blog hosted by AU.

Asked whether he could imagine such a thing as the skating transpiring in, say, the Kremlin, Kislyak merely gestured to the ice dancers. “Spectacular,” he said.

Not everyone was transfixed, particularly as “Swan Lake” played on a loop and the skating program continued late into the night.

“I want to shoot myself,” said one caterer who wished not to be identified. “If I hear this one more time,” the caterer said of the never-ending Tchaikovsky, “I’m going insane.”