

IARGUS 2008 - The Year of the Gypsy

While past Guitar festivals had the Gypsy (Romani) dimension to them, this year's edition of the festival, IARGUS 2008, which was held May 29 through June 1, was entirely dedicated to the Russian-Gypsy seven-string guitar. In particular, this event celebrated the life and incredible achievements of the seven-string guitar virtuoso, composer, and improviser, Sergei Dmitrievich Orekhov, 1936-1998. Orekhov developed his own style based on the Russian guitar tradition of Sychra and Vysotsky, as well as the Russian-Romani folklore and jazz. He was a typical legendary character, who is still worshiped by many Russian enthusiasts from Moscow and Vyborg, Russia to Kharkov, Ukraine, from New York, NY and Charlotte, NC to Los Angeles, CA. Today, Orekhov's successors collect his compositions as audio recordings, decypher, transcribe, and publish them, and bring them back into the music halls.

The talent of Orekhov was so great that no living guitarist can replace him or even come close. However, together we can effectively show various facets of his creative genius. This showcase of Roma and non-Roma guitarists included the magnificent Vadim Kolpakov, nephew of Aleksander; the famous New York vocalist Vasily Romani; Oleg Timofeyev, the main force behind the Russian guitar revival; and a force of others from countries as far as Russia, Sweden, and Australia.

