



The RUSSIAN DEBUTANTE BALL 2016



The Russian Debutante Ball, that took place 19th November at **The Grosvenor House**, was a glittering and joyous occasion bringing together lovers of Russian culture and all those who appreciate the finer things in life.

Forty debutantes and their partners, swept down the majestic stairs of the Great Ballroom to perform the opening ceremony - choreographed by Russian dance master **Leonid Pletnev**, Honorary President of the International Dance Union. Some of the lucky debutantes were led to the dance floor on the arms of dashing young officers from the Household Cavalry sporting the striking red and gold Mess Dress of The Life Guards and of The Blues and Royals, the two most senior regiments of the British Army. It was a spectacle reminiscent of scenes from Leo Tolstoy's epic novel War and Peace.

One of the highlights of the evening was the superb performance of principal of the **Royal Ballet Roberta Marquez** dancing *The Dying Swan*, accompanied by violin music played on a **Stradivarius**, dated from 1709, the golden period of Stradivarius violins

The 600 guests, including **HH Olga Romanoff**, patron of the ball, and guests of honour **Admiral Lord West** - former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the British Home Office, the **Lady West** and **David Pountney CBE**, director of the Welsh National Opera, were treated to more dazzling performances by solo soprano of the **Bolshoi Theatre Yulia Mazurova**, accordionist and *BBC Introducing Classical Artist* **Iosif Purits**, symphony orchestra **Russian Virtuosi of Europe** and award-winning pianist **Alexander Pokidchenko** amongst others.

Guests feasted on Russian black caviar washed down by generous shots of Ivan the Terrible vodka before tucking into the fine three course dinner created by the executive chef of The Grosvenor House.

When midnight struck it was time for the quadrille, a tradition associated with grand Viennese and Russian balls. The dance floor was filled with guests enthusiastically following the steps directed by choreographer **Leonid Pletnev** to the rhythm of traditional Russian music.

The evening was a fundraising event in support of the charity Chance for Life that provides care for disadvantaged children in Russian orphanages. The charity raffle and auction raised over £15,000, that will insure the provision of prosthetic limbs for two handicapped boys from the Dmitrovsky Orphanage for the Handicapped.
www.chanceforlife.co.uk – *Registration no 1142753*

www.russianball.co.uk

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