

# VICTORY OVER THE SUN AT YOUR SCHOOL

*TWO FUTURIST STRONGMEN rip the curtain.*

*THE FIRST*

*All's well that begins well!*

*THE SECOND*

*And ends?*

*THE FIRST*

*There will be no end! We astound the universe!*



## The One and Only Victory



*Victory over the Sun*—the outrageous, hilarious, groundbreaking Futurist opera first staged in St. Petersburg, Russia in December 1913—has amazed audiences around the world for over a century. Widely considered the world's first performance piece, *Victory over the Sun* (VOTS) remains as avant-garde today as in its first performance. Its iconoclastic libretto shatters conventions of theater, literature, art, and music.

Now you can share the experience of this historic play with your students in a landmark contemporary translation. With playscript by poet Aleksei Kruchenykh, sets and costumes by the renowned Suprematist artist Kasimir Malevich, and music by Mikhail Matiushin, the antic experimentalism of VOTS is especially engaging to young minds. As they watch it in performance, or perform it themselves, new possibilities in creativity are discovered, engendering a spirit of inquiry and adventure that translates to all their academic pursuits.



## About the Translation



My original English-language translation was commissioned for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's celebrated 1980 reconstruction of the first Futurist opera. Like the original 1913 production, tickets for this event were at a premium as American audiences heralded VOTS as a transformative artistic event. Subsequently, my translation has been used for productions at Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Hirshhorn Museum of the Smithsonian, the Museum of Natural History of New York, the Garage Museum of Moscow, Boston University, and internationally at scores of theaters, museums, and colleges.

*Victory* has gotten glowing reviews in the United States, Russia, and internationally; please see the [Media](#) page.

*A READER: HOW EXTRAORDINARY LIFE WITHOUT THE PAST IS!*

## About Me

I am the Brooklyn-born daughter of Russian-speaking Ukrainian nationals, survivors of persecution by Stalin and Hitler both. My translation life has included some joyous projects, including the landmark anthology *Twenty-first Century Russian Poetry*, which I edited. This ebullient collection includes ultracontemporary poetry from Russian and Russian-speaking Ukrainian poets, as well as émigré poetry from the diaspora. I also have been a translator on the Russian Bible for the Eugene A. Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship of the American Bible Society, especially on its translation and evolution. A major work was the translation of an annotated bibliography of Russian Bible translations from the old Russian and Soviet empires and Baltic States spanning four centuries. Please see the [About](#) page for my artistic bio.





Larissa performing in *Victory* at Boston University

*THE TALKER: What? . . . Those who still put their hope in cannon fire will be boiled into porridge today!*

### **Victory and Your Students**

An encounter with VOTS is a delightful, multidimensional learning experience. Russian students, theater students, and students of art, music, and poetry may all be inspired by this unique multimedia piece.



***Below are three options for a VOTS experience at your school, which can be tailored to the needs of your students.***

### Option 1: Film, Lecture, Q&A

This option includes:

- a showing of a film of the *Victory over the Sun* reconstruction by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (45 minutes);
- a lecture on the Russian Futurists and a reading and discussion of *The Slap in the Face of the Public Taste* manifesto;
- background on Russian history of that time;
- a review of the artistic and thematic threads in VOTS, followed by commentary and Q&A.



**Time:** About 75 to 90 minutes.

### Option 2. Informal Student Staging

**Includes Option 1.** Students and faculty can mount an informal *Victory over the Sun* performance. Students can cold-read (or sing) the roles, choose music for the production, create costumes and choreography, and project images as digital “sets.” And students staging this piece need not worry about chaos and gaffes and improvisations— the original productions were replete with those.

I provide all background and advisement included in Option 1. I serve as a consultant to the performance and participate in a panel after the performance(s).

**Time:** Prep time can range from a few hours to a few days.



### **Option 3. VOTS Reconstruction Includes Options 1 and 2.**

Students mount a formal production. They rehearse roles, perform music, create costumes and sets based on the original production, or bring their own avant-garde art to the stage. The level of investment is up to the students and faculty. The performance may be opened to the community.

I serve as consultant and participate in a panel after the performance(s), providing all elements of Options 1 and 2.

**Time:** Rehearsal time can range from a few days to a few weeks.

*THE FUTURIST STRONGMEN:  
all's well that  
begins well  
and has no end  
the world will perish but there's no end  
to us!*

#### **CONTACT**

**Larissa Shmailo**

[larissa@larissashmailo.com](mailto:larissa@larissashmailo.com)

(office) 212-712-9865

(cell) 646-326-9816

[www.larissashmailo.com/victory](http://www.larissashmailo.com/victory)

Please see Larissa's website at [www.larissashmailo.com](http://www.larissashmailo.com) for more information.