

**Journal Entry #12**  
**February 18, 2005**

***A Business Trip to Moscow:  
The Tenth International Forum  
on Security and Safety Technologies***

As I continue my Fulbright studies in Saint Petersburg, I find myself increasingly taking “business trips” to Moscow. The most recent trip included something a little out of the ordinary for a dancer and choreographer: a visit to *The Tenth International Forum: Security and Safety Technologies* at the Crocus Convention Center just outside of Moscow.

**My Host: The Mid-Atlantic Russia Business Council**

When I arrived at The International Forum’s gigantic convention center, my host, Val Kogan, ushered me to the registration desk. There, I received a free VIP pass for the day.

Val Kogan is the President, *The Mid-Atlantic Russia Business Council* (MARBC), a Philadelphia-based non-profit organization committed to fostering business relationships between the United States and Russia. I first met Kogan two years ago in Philadelphia when I formed a Russian student club at *Temple University*. Since then, Kogan has become one of my mentors as I work through the start-up stage of my own Philadelphia-based business.

At this year’s Forum, Kogan’s organization worked with its Russian partner, *The Moscow Entrepreneurs’ Association* to bring twenty American companies to the pavilion. Such exposure helps these companies attract members of the Russian business community in order to foster relationships and transfer technology.

**The Day’s Activities**

The first thing that struck me was the convention center itself. It is a brand new building and looks just like a 21<sup>st</sup> century convention center you would find in any major US city. The popular saying, “Moscow is a Russian version of New York City”, immediately came to my mind.

After passing through security, my host and I entered the exhibition pavilion where 560 businesses from fourteen countries were presenting information about their products and demonstrating the latest technological developments in security systems, personal protection gear, and transportation and communication.

After drinking complimentary coffee in the VIP lounge, I attended three seminars: “Engineering Security and Safety of Educational Institutions”, “Deputy Hearing on Urban Environmental Safety”, and “Marketing on the Security Market”. The presenters ranged from leading business managers to government officials to Russian PhD students. The first three days of The Forum had included a welcome address by US Congressman Curt Weldon and panel discussions on fighting terrorism in Russia and homeland security measures in the United States.

Over the course of the day, Kogan introduced me to some of the other sponsors and organizers of the 2005 Forum, including Igor Filonenko (Executive Directory of *The International Forum on Security and Safety Technologies*) and Andrey Podenok (President of *The Moscow Entrepreneurs’ Association*). I enjoyed observing how these business leaders interacted with each other, and I was pleasantly surprised how welcoming they were to me – a female under 25 years old and working in the performing arts.

After the official program concluded, we went to the *School of Dramatic Art* for the annual awards ceremony. According to an article in *The Moscow Times*, the ceremony was “the security industry’s version of the Academy Awards”. After seeing the marching band, the all-girl pop star singing group, and the bronze statues that were given out to the winners, I would have to agree.

### **All Types of Relationships**

Attending The Tenth International Forum on Security and Safety Technologies gave me another view of life in Russia: the Moscow business world of trade shows. Although I do not plan on creating any new ballets about security systems and safety equipment in the near future, the experience played an important role in deepening my understanding of how Russian and American managers interact and create business relationships. Whether the product is a new ballet or an infrared light pistol, entrepreneurs still need to communicate their ideas effectively to their audiences.

*To Learn More About Rebecca Davis' studies and travel experiences, visit The Rebecca Davis Dance Company at [www.rebeccadavidance.com](http://www.rebeccadavidance.com) or email [davis@rebeccadavidance.com](mailto:davis@rebeccadavidance.com)*

*To Read About Rebecca's dance experiences at The St. Petersburg Conservatory, join "The Journey in Russia" listserv. Sign up for the listserv at [www.rebeccadavidance.com](http://www.rebeccadavidance.com).*