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Sochi 2014: Winter Olympics closing ceremony – as it happened

Drama, dancing, wildly excessive firework displays and even a sense of humour were all on display as the curtain came down on Sochi 2014

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Fireworks explode around the Fisht Olympic Stadium at the end of the Closing Ceremony of the Sochi Winter Olympics. Photograph: Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP/Getty Images

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<http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2014/feb/23/sochi-2014-winter-olympics-closing-ceremony-live>

Hello world!

And so, it comes to a close. It seems like only yesterday that I was perched upon a chair very close to this one [enjoying the opening ceremony](#). Since then a total of 298 medals have been placed around the necks of athletes from 26 nations, and now it's time for some backslaps and fireworks.

What we know about what's to come

So, what do we know about this closing ceremony? The artistic executive producer, [Marco Balich](#) – an Italian with plenty of experience in this field, having been the creative director and executive producer of both opening and closing ceremonies at both Turin 2006 and football's Euro 2012, who will also executive produce both ceremonies for Rio 2016 – said this:



While the Sochi 2014 Opening Ceremony was the most spectacular Winter Olympics ever, the Closing Ceremony will be emotional, and it will highlight the great soul and heart of Russia.”

The creative director, Konstantin Ernst, had this to say:



In order to present our culture objectively we decided to look at it through a European's perspective, through the eyes of a man born in the very heart of Europe: prominent director Daniele Finzi Pasca. We wanted to see how Russian culture reflects in the world art context and which part of Russian culture has already become an integral part of world culture.

And finally, here are some further clues from a press release:



The audience will be presented with a European vision of Russia. Spectators of the Closing Ceremony at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games will once again meet Lubov (*Love*), the young girl who was already introduced during the Opening Ceremony. Along with her new friends Valentina and Yura, she will travel through Russian culture, turning the pages of Russian literature, enjoying the magic of Russian art and listening to the wonderful sounds of Russian music.

We also know that Pyeongchang, the South Korean hosts of the 2018 Winter Olympics, will have eight minutes to play with, that someone will be playing a gayageum, a traditional Korean instrument, and that the head of Gangwon province, Choi Moon-soon, will be handed the Olympic flag.

Talking of flags, I've got a list of all the flag-bearers and Britain's will be waved by Lizzy Yarnold. Ice hockey's Julie Chu will do the honours for America, freestyle skier David Morris leading Australia's delegation with Canada the only nation to name two athletes, the bobsleighters Heather Moyse and Kaillie Humphries, as flag-bearers. Perhaps they could loan someone to one of the nine nations who don't have anyone to carry their flag, and so will have a volunteer doing the job.

And not a fancy mechanical snowflake to be seen, I'd wager ...

2.50pm GMT

Talking of fancy mechanical snowflakes, Konstantin Ernst – quoted below – chose an interesting T-shirt for his pre-ceremony press conference in Sochi:



Konstantin Ernst, chief executive director of the closing ceremony, speaks at a press conference. Photograph: Larry W Smith/EPA

Updated at 6.51pm GMT

3.11pm GMT

So, with a little under an hour to fill before the ceremony starts, I'm going to come up with some of my favourite people and moments from the Games. For a start, the finish to the first men's ski cross quarter-final was incredible. I think this was my favourite event of them all, for sheer thrill-factor.