

Landscapes reflect our soul

Recently, Brest has been looking rather foggy and gloomy, just as depicted by Minsk artist Valery Shkarubo. It may be wise to admire autumn's beauty from under the safety of an umbrella. Alternatively, we can visit Brest Art Museum to view Valery's canvases. These show us snow-covered fields at twilight and firs shrouded in mist and night shadows, with the road stretching into the distance. He paints Belarusian landscapes in different seasons, and in different moods

By Valentina Kozlovich

The personal show by one of Belarus' leading artists, State Award holder Valery Shkarubo, features 26 paintings and will be open in Brest



Mr. Shkarubo enthralled with evident love for native places

for about a month. "These landscapes need more space than we can offer — not because there are so many of them but because Valery boasts a deep understanding of nature; his pictures are full of energy. No one is left indifferent:

professional or layman. Mr. Shkarubo has universal appeal," stresses Brest graphic painter Lev Alimov.

Mr. Shkarubo admits that he does not try to reveal more than is depicted on his landscapes. "Nature is close to my soul and is not always filled with sunshine. However, it is tranquil, which places it closer to the inner world of many Belarusians. Simultaneously, it shows the depth of our human soul," the artist notes.

Of course, anyone can search for metaphors in his canvases, inventing hidden feelings and images. However, we can simply admire his works for what they are: simple depictions of our landscapes in subdued, yet rich, colours. His talent is clear. "Mr. Shkarubo is not



Valery Shkarubo's landscapes and nature scenes leave no one indifferent

a melancholic," emphasises Mr. Alimov. "Rather, he is deep, with a strong personality. Of course, darkness does not automatically indicate sorrow; sadness can exist in paintings which appear bright and amusing. Mr. Shkarubo demonstrates an easy love for his homeland. His works are touching and show that he is in love with his life. I visited his workshop eight years ago and found it empty; his works are in great demand."

During the opening ceremony, the host noted that Marc Chagall's granddaughter owns a painting by Mr. Shkarubo, showing

the significance of the artist. I personally doubt that Valery loves such flattery, since anyone who views, or purchases, his pictures can clearly see his talent. Those created by the Minsk artist hang in galleries in Belarus, Russia, China and Germany, as well as in private collections in the USA, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Greece, Austria, Slovenia, Denmark, Poland, Turkey, China and Japan.

Several days after the first night, I again visited the exhibition. Without photographers or cameramen present, I could concentrate on Mr. Shkarubo's pictures

and agree with Mr. Alimov: this artist loves life. Moreover, he is truly accessible, creating landscapes outside of time and fashion. There is no need for 'clever facial expressions' on viewing his *Touch* or *Sad Twilight*. Nor do we need to look for hidden motifs or mysteries. We should simply admire his talent, which enables him to capture moments which most of us ignore.

The show has already toured Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Slutsk, Gomel and Mogilev. In mid-December, Valery Shkarubo's canvases head for Grodno, from Brest.

Gown for Krzysztof Zanussi

Famous director becomes honourable professor of Grodno State University

Not long ago, Krzysztof Zanussi visited the educational establishment to lecture on his *Strategy of Life* to students and teachers. These days, the director is touring the world, lecturing at various institutions. During a solemn ceremony, he was made an honourable professor of the educational establishment — awarded a gown, a certificate and a medal 'For Merits to Grodno's Yanka Kupala State University'.

The famous director de-

votes much time and effort to teaching at the National Film, Television and Theatre School in Poland and has been a professor at the Silesian University in Katowice since 1992. Mr. Zanussi co-operates with the National Film and Television School in the UK and offers master classes to foreign students. Additionally, for several years, he has been lecturing students taking the Higher Course for Screenwriters and Directors in Moscow. The director is an honoured doctor of the Russian State University of Cinematography (VGIK), of

Minsk's European Institute, of Bucharest's Academy of Theatre and Film, of Sofia's Bulgarian University, of St. Petersburg's State University of Cinema and Television, of Valencia's Catholic University and of Lublin's Catholic University.

The title of Grodno State University's honourable professor is granted to Belarusians and foreigners who have contributed greatly to the development of the educational establishment, promoting its status within the international arena. So far, 28 people have been so honoured.

Folk art creativity draws on diverse mythological themes

By Marat Gorevoi

National History Museum hosts *From Wood, Clay and Metal* exhibition of decorative and applied arts

The exhibition, organised by the Belarusian Union of Folk Craft Masters with support from the Culture Ministry, is displaying around 80 works by Minsk's Andrey Metelsky (ceramic items) and Alexander Pavlov (embossing and wood carving) and Lida resident Gennady Savon (metal casting).

Doctor of Art History, Prof. Yevgeny Sakhuto, notes that the artworks are united



Exhibits of the show

by their use of traditional materials, inspired by our rich heritage of folk crafts and high mastery. He tells us that Mr. Metelsky's ceramics, created using smoking and wax finishing techniques, draw on our mythology, as well as history and way of life. The artist has taken part in numerous contests and exhibitions and has been awarded for his high

mastery and personal contribution to the revival and development of pottery traditions.

Mr. Pavlov primarily explores the theme of religion and is inspired by military-historical plots, showing our past way of life. He is one of the few painters to use sophisticated portrait embossing, depicting Belarusian historical figures with almost photographic accuracy. The master has won many prizes at national craft festivals and competitions.

Blacksmith Savon's works are also attractive and he has taken part in various national contests.

Festival reaching maturity

My Happiness captures 'Listapad Gold' while audiences appreciate *The Brother*



Victor Nemets takes major role in *My Happiness*

By Irina Svirko

Sergey Loznitsa's *My Happiness* (Ukraine-Germany-Netherlands) represented Ukraine at the 17th Minsk International Film Festival — *Listapad-2010*, capturing the Grand Prix: 'Listapad Gold'. It was chosen by the professional jury, headed by Lithuanian director Šarūnas Bartas. *My Happiness* is Mr. Loznitsa's feature film debut, although he has created many well-known documentaries. Born in Belarusian Baranovichi, he now lives in Germany and works regularly in Russia and Ukraine.

The film premiered this spring at the Cannes Festival, arousing interest, and discussions continued dur-

ing the *Listapad* Festival. Belarusian audiences were ambiguous about the film, however, which explores the absurdities of life in a remote Russian province. The director stresses that the film's themes are universal since they note the simple truth that those who are treated badly will seek revenge.

The 'Listapad Gold' is not Mr. Loznitsa's first award, since he has already won the Grand Prix and a prize from the Russian Guild of Film Critics (at the *Kinotavr* Festival), alongside a prize for best script at *Kinoshok*, and the Grand Prix for best film at the International Festival of Young European Cinema — *Voices*, among others.

The People's Choice Award went to *The Brother* (Venezuela), which also received a special prize 'For Humanity and Spiritual Values in Cinematography' — founded by the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko.

This year, *Listapad* featured about 50 feature films, and documentaries, in addition to films shot by young directors. For the first time, it featured a red carpet, world level stars, a professional jury, well-known and discussed films and those showing a rather more intellectual bent. This was the 17th *Listapad* to be held but the first to stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's most prestigious film festivals. It seems the Belarusian event plans to advance in this direction. According to *Listapad's* Programme Director, Igor Sukmanov, it is vital 'to leave behind amateur artistry and shift to a normal festival mechanism, as seen worldwide, entering a real festival medium'.

Next year, celebrating its 18th birthday, *Listapad* will achieve this maturity more confidently, in its newly discovered format, truly entering adulthood.