

# Artistic product from author's performance



Second Belarusian Biennale of Pictorial Art, Graphics and Sculpture showcases palette of works

By Victor Mikhailov

'Biennale' is not a common word, being more widespread among artists than audiences. A famous biennale is regularly held in Venice and even resembles a fashion show in Milan. Experts are usually surprised by what they see and are sometimes intrigued by extraordinary and avant-garde premieres.

The Belarusian Biennale is more of an artistic report made by artists on a certain period of time. However, it is unique and differs from a traditional exhibition. Of course, to make a report, you need to prepare carefully. On visiting the Union of Artists' Palace of Arts Gallery, it's easy to feel lost; the diversity is overwhelming. Many works are evidently successful, arousing interest, while some lack as much expressiveness. It seems the Biennale is just awakening and is yet to be fully perceived by artists. The latter need time to realise that their participation is a serious mission. On the eve of the show, the Biennale's organisers were unsure of how to display works to best effect; accordingly, the artists were also not fully prepared for the show — although the event was announced as a true artistic festival or a contest following the example of famous European art forums. Interestingly, the Biennale almost coincides with the 20th Congress of the Belarusian Union of Artists.

Nevertheless, the event is of benefit to participants, while encouraging discussion among the whole com-

munity of professional artists. The works on show are likely to become the subject of serious talk on the state of affairs in the Union. Personally, I don't think that expectations have been met regarding standards, for various reasons; the artists

fers the opportunity to ponder and compare. The difference between the styles of two generations is obvious, with the younger contributors announcing their desire to paint in their own style, with professionalism coming with time. They are

form and colour combination. If you spend time perusing them, you certainly feel they are worthy of being on show. Of course, several prominent Belarusian artists share the same avant-garde manner, or at least began in this style: such as

painting immediately. However, we need time to decide on their artistry, musing on whether they feature true classical professionalism. In turn, the painters of the old Belarusian school (perhaps even from Soviet times) have another outlook. As a

not uncommon for Belarusian artists to change their style of painting after creating pictures which show them as true professionals. These works offer evidence of their skills as a painter; on changing their manner, they can begin a new stage of artistry.

People's Artist of Belarus Grigory Poplavsky — known as a graphic painter — is showcasing an oil painting at the Biennale, widely demonstrating his extensive abilities. Meanwhile, Gornel painters Nikolay Kazakevich and Robert Landarsky are again confirming their reputation for being bright and unique landscape painters. Their ability to depict the beauty of our native land makes their works stand out, even at the Biennale.

Vladimir Maslennikov has confirmed his adherence to realism in art. His landscapes are always picturesque, attracting us with their authenticity. Valery Shkarubo shares this ethos. These artists are professionals, boasting their own manner of painting; it's impossible to imagine them copying someone else's style.

The Biennale winner is to be chosen democratically, with each participant secretly voting for their favourite artists under three nominations. Independent experts will then choose a winner. The victor will be asked to display works at international exhibition forums, establishing a link between national art and that of Europe and the rest of the world. Belarus already has similar traditions of success: think of famous Chagall, Pen, Soutine and Khrutsky.



Works exhibited at Biennale have already aroused interest, although in various degrees

themselves have not given the event the attention it really deserves, simply using it as another chance to show their usual works, rather than preparing something new and surprising.

Despite this, the show is on a major scale, featuring works by famous artists and lesser known painters. It of-

clearly convinced of this. Among them, two names stand out: Zoya Lutsevich and Yekaterina Sumareva. They have already confirmed their unique styles and request that we treat them with understanding and respect. Really, their works show little classicism; they embrace novelty of

Zoya Litvinova. By comparing these works, it's easy to see their mastery. In turn, works by People's Artist of Belarus Gavriil Vashchenko are full of his own philosophy, thoughts and ideas; he embraces paradox.

In most cases, young artists are keen to make a name for themselves in formal

rule, their previous works have already confirmed their ability to draw in a realistic manner. They have passed the route of artistic evolution. Kazimir Malevich, before creating his globally known *Black Square*, painted many realistic works, confirming his high status as a classical artist. It's

# Instrument only comes alive when it is played

By Tatiana Pastushenkova

**17th century Italian violin presented at Belarusian State Philharmonic Society**

The unique 17th century violin, created by Italian master Andrea Guarneri, went on show to the public at the closing ceremony of the 4th International Piano Contest *Minsk-2010*, held at the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society. The honour of playing the instrument was granted to Vlada Berezhnaya, a student of the Belarusian State Academy of Music. She per-

formed the first part of a Piotr Tchaikovsky concerto, accompanied by the State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Belarus.

Belarus already possesses experience of acquiring precious instruments; in 2005, the Culture Ministry and the Academy of Music purchased a rare violin by a German master, which is now used for lessons and at various international competitions.

The Rector of the Belarusian State Academy of Music, Yekaterina Dulova, notes that the Academy has created the correct condi-



Vlada Berezhnaya first trying the instrument

tions to store the violin, as stipulated by its sellers and experts. The violin case, containing special humidity

sensors, is equipped with shockproof components. Meanwhile, its place of storage has been equipped

with special technology to protect it from external influences. "All necessary measures have been taken. Experience of storing and lending violins relies on international practice," explains the Rector, adding, "The instrument won't lie on a shelf; it will find itself in the hands of masters. It only comes alive when it is played."

Andrea Guarneri's violin, costing \$230,000, was created in the city of Cremona in 1673. Its bow was made by a master called Henry in the second half of the 19th century. Another

bow (from the late 19th century) was also purchased, worth \$18,000.

The authenticity of the unique violin and its bow has been certified by two experts: Russian Mikhail Goronok (Director of the State Collection of Unique Musical Instruments at the Russian Culture Ministry's State Museum and Exhibition Centre ROSIZO); and Eduard Kuchinsky (Professor of the Violin Chair at the Belarusian State Academy of Music). The instrument's integrity, quality of restoration, timbre and bow quality have all been assessed.