

Present and past reflected in history of artistic creativity

Modern Belarusian Painting: 21st Century album released, with Modern Pictorial Art Centre and unique Museum District in Minsk still to appear



Modern painting explored in album

By Victor Mikhailov

Of course, it takes well over a year to implement such major projects as the establishment of the Modern Pictorial Art Centre or the creation of the Museum District in Minsk. However, such projects have been outlined; the confidence of Pavel Latushko, Belarus' Culture Minister, inspires us with optimism. Speaking at the Congress of the Belarusian Union of Artists — a landmark cultural event for this

most active of creative associations — he noted that artists are among the elite of the state. He believes that they give us a golden treasury while helping us comprehend the nation's soul.

It's true that people find their reflection in art, visiting exhibitions to see how artists perceive our world and its innermost secrets. The Second Biennale of Pictorial Art, Graphics and Sculpture, hosted by the Republican Palace of Arts Gallery, offered the full range of contemporary Belarusian creativity. This forum gave us various genres, unexpected shapes and a desire to penetrate deep into the essence of things. Undoubtedly, the level of mastery was diverse, with experienced masters showing their enduring creative energy and younger artists making a name for themselves in their own fresh manner. Moreover, the Congress of the Belarusian Union of Artists encouraged experimentation, eager to avoid stagnation or superficiality.

The release of the *Modern Belarusian Painting: 21st Century* album proves that our Belarusian artists are united in having multi-faceted talent. The edition allows



Belarusian modern art represented in its full diversity at recent major show in Minsk

us to assess various artistic styles and see how the authors imaginatively interpret events of their time. It is the first volume in the *Modern Belarusian Art* series, released by the Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House, displaying works by a hundred painters who combine experimentation with classical forms.

Like the Biennale itself, the book clearly shows that contemporary Belarusian painters draw

on the traditions of the domestic art school with clear national priorities. The album depicts works by famous masters, who have undoubtedly influenced the traditions of the domestic pictorial school, as well as young painters. It contains shots of over 500 canvases, in addition to information on artists' creative biographies. The edition also presents information on art museums, galleries and exhibition halls countrywide, which regularly host

artistic exhibitions.

This is the first album in the Modern Belarusian Art series but the second is already in production, dedicated to sculpture. Albums devoted to decorative-and-applied and graphic art are also planned, with plenty of materials available. Of course, the Modern Pictorial Art Centre and the Museum District will also have much to select from in their displays; our cultural treasury is rich and diverse.



Belarus' National Academic Concert Orchestra gives bright and expressive concerts

Enchanting melodies of new musical discoveries

National Academic Concert Orchestra of Belarus gave 92 concerts in 2010

The past year has been rich in events for the National Academic Concert Orchestra of Belarus, led by People's Artist of Belarus Mikhail Finberg. In its many years of musical-educational activity, the orchestra has been awarded the status of 'Academic', while earning such titles as 'Honourable' and 'National'.

In 2010, it gave 92 concerts. Among them were 27 new, thematic concert programmes and 15 festivals organised for towns in the Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Mogilev and Minsk regions, including *Muses of Nesvizh*, *Chechersk Meetings*, *Turov-2010*, *Mir Castle*, *Mstislavl-*

Pinsk Meetings, *Visiting Napoleon Orda*, *Zaslavl-2010*, *Minsk Jazz*, *Hits For All Times*, *The 600th Anniversary of the Battle of Grunewald*, and *Slavonic Bazaar in Vitebsk*.

Those attending the festivals and art projects of the orchestra saw masterpieces of Belarusian, Western, Eastern European and Slavonic musical culture: pieces by Moniuszko, Churkin, Goland, Oginski, Orda, Glebov and other talented composers. Additionally, the orchestra prepared a large concert programme dedicated to the 80th anniversary of Vladimir Korotkevich's birth (a classic Belarusian writer).

New concert programmes were unveiled at the Republican Contest of Young Talents — *Star Rises Above Belarus* — as well as countrywide projects: *The Year of Frederic Chopin in Belarus* (devoted to the 200th birthday of this famous Polish composer), *Polotsk is Belarus' 2010 Cultural Capital* and *Belarus Is Us!* public-cultural event.

In 2011, the National Academic Concert Orchestra plans an even more extensive programme, to familiarise listeners with new musical projects, while helping them enjoy the highest musical art.

Fashion and art go hand in hand

Belarusian Fashion Centre showcases collection made from French fabric at National Art Museum of Belarus, as part of Christmas *With Love to Paris* project

By Tatiana Chumakova

A collection of evening and cocktail dresses, designed by Fashion Centre designers, was on show alongside a collection created by French Yuri Kot. "In creating the collection, we were inspired by such famous stylists as Lacroix and Lagerfeld," explains Fashion Centre Director Lyubov Manulik. "Our dresses and suits are made primarily from natural fabric and jacquard."

The Fashion Centre has been co-operating with France for 15 years, selling there clothes designed by Belarusians. According to Ms. Manulik, the Fashion Centre's clothes are in high demand in Belarus and abroad, being moderately priced.

A personal exhibition by Belarusian artist Irina Kotova — *Paris Imaginaire* — has also been held, showcasing paintings created during her time in France. Most depict French architecture and are drawn in impressionistic style. They are on show in Belarus for the first time,



With Love to Paris collection piece

travelling on to France in February-March 2011.

The *With Love to Paris* project has been organised by the Belarusian Fashion Centre and the National Art Museum, celebrating the 'Year of French Culture in Belarus'.