

Nesvizh Castle's interiors to become even more harmonious

National Academic Theatre premieres Nikolay Pinigin's *The Abduction of Europe, or Ursula Radziwill's Theatre*

By Veniamin Petrov

The performance is in three parts: a ballet, an opera and a comedy. It reconstructs a typical theatrical evening at Nesvizh Castle, enabling audiences to see how the Radziwills would have been entertained centuries ago. One might worry that the reproduction would be so slavish to detail that content might be compromised, lacking delicate nuances; on the contrary, within its genre, the performance appears quite post-modernistic. Masks evoke each character — a fool, villain, thief or beauty — with emotions expressed through gesture and movement.

The Abduction of Europe is a humorous play by the founder of domestic professional theatre, filled with sarcasm and a sense of the grotesque. Some 'traditional-



New performance of National Academic Theatre takes audiences back to old theatrical times

ists' may not appreciate the new interpretation but its authors can easily argue for the genuine nature of their staging, recreating 18th

century Nesvizh entertainment.

The first part of the show appears idyllic, featuring students of the Belarusian State Choreography

College; some even forget to smile while dancing, taking their job so seriously. However, the historical truth is fully met and the age of

the performers well corresponds to the age of the actual characters. The second part of the performance is a special success, with the comic opera representing the whole 'Nesvizh harlequinade'.

The project has enabled its director and artistes to express their fantasies. Olga Matskevich's costumes look as if they are separate characters with lives of their own, being full of imagination and spirit. In turn, Andrey Zubrich's score sounds as if it was extracted from 18th century archives; no doubt, he reveals the age wonderfully, his music being full of lyricism and naivety, while meeting the emotional needs of the play.

The Abduction of Europe, or Ursula Radziwill's Theatre is to be staged at the restored Nesvizh Castle and will, no doubt, be adapted. The complex show, intermixing its genres and styles, will keep its spirit of 'home entertainment' however, feeling like a game and an improvisation. Unlike another Nesvizh theatre revival — *The Black Lady of Nesvizh* — there is no mystery; rather, fanfares and kettle-drums are heard. It's a true pleasure to follow this theatrical evolution, while learning more about our history.

'Villainous roles are interesting'

Anastasia Vinnikova goes to Dusseldorf to perform at *Eurovision*, while pondering her career as an actress

By Viktor Korbut

She initially needs to compete against contestants from Ukraine, Moldova, Estonia and Latvia in the semi-finals. "I'm not afraid of rivalry. Competition is a great thing," Nastya admits, confidently thinking of the future. She'll perform *I Love Belarus* at the European musical competition; English, Belarusian and Russian language versions are available at www.belarus-eurovision.by. Not long ago, she performed at one of Amsterdam's largest clubs, which gathered *Eurovision* contestants from 21 countries.

Your song, *I Love Belarus*, is very patriotic. Do you sing from your soul?

The theme is close to my heart, so the song really comes from my soul. Many famous composers and singers have devoted songs to their home over the years. Alicia Keys sings of America, while The Beatles sang of Liverpool. French chansonniers recollect Paris. I was born in Belarus. I love my country and want to celebrate it in song; it's quite logical.

Did you change your image before the contest?

I've changed nothing — not even the length or colour of my hair. I

have no desire to change. I'm still searching for my own image, so it's easy to experiment, trying something new, but it's also vital to feel at ease. If your image and the way you feel contradict your inner voice, it works against you.

Have you heard your rivals sing? What do you think of them?

Giving concerts in Holland, I met participants from almost every country. I was able to watch and assess their performances and must say that their recorded shows and the way they perform in reality differ greatly. All are very strong, with great live energy, which is great. I love the entrants from Holland and Greece.

You study at the Linguistic University. Would you give up your studies for the sake of a musical career?

This will never happen! I want to have a higher education. Moreover, I'm convinced that it's not enough to have just one education in our modern world; at least two or, even, three are needed. However, music is my soul's desire, as I love singing and the feeling of being on stage. I love to share my emotions with the audience and receive their charge of feelings in return. In Holland, we so well understood each other that



Anastasia Vinnikova

the Dutch audience even sang along with me: 'We love Belarus'. This was a strong response; it's always great when such an exchange happens. The atmosphere created is indescribable. I wouldn't change that for anything, but studies are essential. Moreover, my knowledge gained at University was of great help in Holland. There was a large press conference, lasting for about three hours, all in English, with reporters from all over the world in attendance. I needed no translator as I speak fluent English.

What are your plans for the future?

Probably, I'd like to try acting, playing a multi-faceted role; it seems so interesting. Simple heroines are loved by everyone, with their character already known. Villainous roles are interesting. At school, we had an annual contest — 'Ball. Ball. Ball'. We once staged 'Gone with the Wind', where I performed Scarlett O'Hara, whose character is questionable. I loved playing her.

New interpretation of Frantsisk Skorina

By Tatiana Pastukhova

Unified electronic bibliography to be developed countrywide within next five years

The *Culture of Belarus* programme has allocated \$300,000 from the state budget to create the national database, with around Br1bn directed to organising a unified electronic catalogue of Belarusian libraries. From 2011-2015, every edition will be listed, including periodicals, audio and video resources and other documents and notes.

The 'Frantsisk Skorina — the First Belarusian and Eastern Slavonic Printer' electronic library, shall

also be developed. During business trips to Russia, Ukraine, Slovenia, Germany, Denmark and other countries, specialists will study and digitise Skorina's editions, to be later included into the electronic library. The programme envisages the creation of facsimile editions by the outstanding printing pioneer.

A 'Radziviliana' electronic library is also on the agenda, with separate editions digitised and the most precious electronic copies of books being bought from abroad. Moreover, at least ten collected editions will be created for Nesvizh's National History and Culture Museum-Reserve.

Atlantica in musical space

Belarusian band Atlantica signs contract for promotion of new album in France

The contract covers concerts and promotion for the band on national musical channels, on the radio and in the press. *Atlantica's* debut single should appear on the French market in May. The album is still being worked upon in Minsk, involving music arranger Oleg Ivanovich, and will be released in autumn. The French contract won't influence the CD's musical direction, notes Dmitri



Atlantica focuses on France ry Bezkorovainy, *Atlantica's* press spokesman. He also tells us that individual songs from the album are already known to Belarusians: *If You're My Woman* and *Odyssey*.

The album's release in France involves recording several songs in French. However, the band intends to preserve its creative manner and style, while moving towards electro-dance. *Atlantica's* previous albums are now available for purchase on France's largest Internet sites.