

Tourists search for treasures

Museums and palaces open new exhibitions and halls, while galleries show modern art from abroad

By Viktor Korbut

Autumn is a time when our cultural life gains momentum. Tourists travelling to Belarus might be interested to know where they should go to gain new impressions and come to know the country closer, learning more about the history of Belarusians' cultural ties with other nations.

Poland, now presiding over the EU, is presenting one hundred days of its culture in Belarus, for the whole autumn period. The *I, Culture* Festival has already begun — with events in London, Berlin, Madrid, Tokyo, Beijing, Brussels, Paris, Moscow and Kiev. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Poland to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Leszek Sherepka, notes that artistic events are planned for these nine capitals, in addition to Minsk. It's a worthy list!

Those wishing to find out more about Polish theatre can do so from October 7th-26th in Minsk, during the *Theatre International Forum*. From October 27th-29th, the capital is to host the Days of Lublin Theatre, while Polish films are being screened within the 18th Minsk International *Listapad* Film Festival (November 5th-12th). In addition, the Palace of Sports shall host the *Lem Planet* avant-garde performance on November 11th (based on Stanisław Lem's works), as part of the Polish cultural programme in Minsk. On November 22nd, *Zakopower* band is giving a concert, uniting Polish folk and modern music. An exhibition of paintings by Belarusian-Polish artist and teacher Ferdinand Rushchits,

held at the National Art Museum from November 25th to December 31st, concludes the wonderful festival.

The *Minsk-Mensk: Pages of History* exhibition of rare editions is on show at the Presidential Library of Belarus, featuring books published in Belarus in the 1920s-1930s (when the capital was officially named in the Belarusian manner — Mensk).

The exhibition comprises valuable books from the library's department of old printed and rare editions. Among them is the Belarusian Constitution (1927; in Russian, Belarusian, Polish and Hebrew) and national classical writer Maxim Bogdanovich's original *Vyanok*

(*Wreath*) collection — published during his lifetime. The most interesting exhibits include photos of streets, squares, parks and suburbs of Minsk, in addition to its old maps and plans.

The Museum of Autographs has been launched at Gomel's Central City Library. It has taken many years to collect all its exhibits, with the staff taking care to preserve books with their authors' signatures. Visitors to the museum can see autographs by Mother Teresa, Marshall Semen Budenny, cosmonauts Yuri Gagarin, German Titov and Georgy Grechko and film director Krzysztof Zanussi, in addition to Vladimir Mulyavin, Igor Luchenok and Yuri Bashmet.

Most of the signatures are by literary personalities such as Ivan Shamyakin, Vasily Bykov, Alexey Dudarev, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Yevgeny Yevtushenko.

ers of the Special Fund of the President of Belarus for Support of the Talented Youth," he tells us.

The restoration of Zhilichi Palace and Park Estate began in 2009, and is due to be completed in 2015, hosting a museum, mini-hotel and library. In turn, the Radziwills' Palace in Nesvizh is set to be fully open by December, following its massive restoration.

The Molodechno Local History Museum has a display devoted to the history and culture of the Minsk Region. Coinciding with the *Dazhynki-2011* Fair, it's impressive in having an auditorium — featuring the reconstructed home of a 19th century Polish gentleman.

The Director of the museum, Taisia Lenkevich, took me on a tour of the other gallery halls, saying, "Here, you can see archaeological finds from the first settlements in the district, in addition to documents and artefacts telling of events from the times of the Polotsk principality, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Rzech Pospolita and the Russian Empire. One of our halls is devoted to the 1812 War. You can also see a temple ring once worn by a woman from the 12th-13th century Dregovich tribe, as well as 11th-12th century artefacts made from glass, leather and bone and 16th-17th century tiles. A gold-woven 18th century Slutsk sash is also worthy of attention — donated by the Moscow State Historical Museum in 1968. Other exhibits include editions from printing houses in Cologne, Nesvizh, Vilno, Warsaw and Moscow, and 17th century hand written documents."



Unique Museum of Autographs recently opened in Gomel



Opening ceremony of Zhilichi Palace and Park Estate, in Mogilev Region

Ancient citadel perceived in modern way after revival

By Olga Zharkovskaya

Underground museum, fragment of 12th century city and Lower Market to appear at Minsk's Citadel Historical and Archaeological Centre

Around five years ago, it was decided to re-create Minsk's Citadel complex, as part of the reconstruction of the capital's historical centre. Its design has been finally approved... so what can we expect?

The new complex will be located along the River Svisloch, from Nemiga metro station to the fountain at the Sports Palace, comprising

an underground museum, a fragment of the 12th century city and the Lower Market.

"Although the occupied layer of the citadel was 80 percent dismantled, it has managed to preserve the foundations of the first 12th century stone church, fragments of streets' wooden pavements, houses and household outbuildings, as well as part of the defensive embankments and entrance gates," notes Sergey Baglasov, the chief architect of the project. "During archaeological digs, these elements have been studied, with many household utensils and decorations collected.

These silent witnesses of the city's history are being stored underground in a conserved state and in storage rooms of scientific institutes."

A trade and entertainment complex is to be created on the site of the Medieval Lower Market, nearby the currently operational metro station of the same title. However, it will be of new construction, only using motifs of the original market. Only one permanent structure will be erected — a café, with trade stalls being of a mobile nature, alongside a tented theatre pavilion. The market will sell souvenirs, crafts and artworks, while of-

fering seasonal public catering and performances by artists, clowns and illusionists.

The citadel is to be connected to the Troitsky Suburbs via a pedestrian walkway and an unusual exhibit is planned for nearby the river. From the 11th-12th century onwards, floating mills were widespread, with millwheels for grinding installed on boats. Anchors were either dropped or boats were fixed to a bridge; when necessary, a boat could be then moved to another place. The design includes a 'Floating Watermill with Sculptural Composition of Miller Menesk and His Team'.

Putting aside shyness and hesitancy in favour of bravery

By Alexander Chernyavsky

National Academy of Sciences' Physiology Institute develops medicine to encourage extroversion

The new medicine is inhaled as a nasal spray, containing endotoxins usually found on the walls of the colon; these bacillus help activate the immune system. Vladimir Kulchitsky, Deputy Scientific Director at the National Academy of Sciences' Physiology Institute, explains, "During our early tests, it was noticed

that rats and mice stopped hiding in holes after inhaling endotoxins. They became braver, moving into open spaces."

The findings could help athletes and students push themselves forward and may help those whose shyness prevents them from forming relationships.

"Athletes can use this medicine with utter impunity," continues Mr. Kulchitsky. "If a correct approach is used, endotoxins are absolutely harmless and shouldn't fall into the same category as forbidden drugs."