

Interesting music lives on forever

Vladimir Baidov is the artistic leader and conductor of the *Classic Avantgarde* choir, with the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society, founded in 1988. It comprises twenty professional musicians, most of whom are laureates of prestigious national and international contests. The repertoire includes ancient Belarusian music, 17th-20th century foreign music and masterpieces of Russian classical and avant-garde music from the early 20th century, as well as compositions by contemporary composers.

By Olga Shirokova

What interesting events has the choir enjoyed recently?

Last year, we presented several programmes based on works by Stanisław Moniuszko — a founder of the Polish-Belarusian opera school and the most famous musician born in Belarus. Two years ago, the 'New Sky of Stanisław Moniuszko' CD was released with the assistance of the Polish Institute. At the same time, his 'Loteria' (Lottery) musical comedy was performed in Belarus — for the first time in over 170 years. The score was found in Poznań and the libretto was translated into Belarusian.

On June 22nd, 2011, we presented an exclusive programme, entitled 'Souvenir from the Maestro', which featured music by Chopin and his contemporaries. We used the Warsaw archives to locate rare music and then toured agrotowns near Myadel, Volozhin, Vileika and Kletsk, giving concerts which were subsidised by the state.

You travel abroad in search of forgotten national music, while pre-

senting this to foreign listeners.

Of course. Last September, we visited Astana to take part in the Day of Belarusian Culture in Kazakhstan. We represented our country alongside staff from the Modern Fine Arts Museum and two soloists from the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. We performed ancient Belarusian music, including works by Jan from Lyublin, 'Polotskaya Tetrad' (Polotsk Notebook), 'Vilenskaya Tetrad' (Vilnya Notebook) and fragments from Moniuszko's 'Loteria', as well as Belarusian folk songs arranged for an orchestra and romances.

This April, we went to North Korea for the 'April Spring' Friendship Art Festival, which brought together musical, choreographic and circus groups from China, the USA, Cuba, France, Italy, Finland, Germany and South Korea.

The Koreans heartily welcomed us, giving us ovations and even singing along with us. They were especially delighted to hear Korean music performed by Belarusian musicians; we received a special award for this. The



Popular band successfully performs both classical and avant-garde music

international jury praised our professionalism and energy and the originality of our programme. We were given two prizes and, alongside the other winners of the festival, took part in a gala-concert at the Grand Opera Theatre in Pyongyang.

The title of your band indicates that you perform classical and avant-garde music. Which prevails in your repertoire?

In recent times, we've been performing less avant-garde music, as it doesn't appeal to the general public. Its performances need to be subsidised. For example, music by contemporary composers tends to be popular only with the elite in France, the Netherlands and Sweden. Such concerts are viewed as part of their cultural legacy — with no 'box-office' variants. Unfortunately, concerts of contemporary

music aren't subsidised in our country, so our repertoire leans towards more ancient Belarusian music.

Where do you find musical scores of original ancient music?

We buy them or find them in foreign archives, photocopying scores. We were surprised to learn that no national music exists in our Belarusian archives. Fortunately, scores are kept in St. Petersburg. Unexpected discoveries also occur. Recently, one of our colleagues found a pile of photocopied music scores in Poland, from the mid-19th century. I was astonished to see that the covers were clearly decorated by a professional painter and the publishing house was located in Minsk. Belarus had its own musical publishing houses in the mid-19th century. Judging by the cover, these scores were rather expensive, although they were

designed for playing at home — a widespread hobby at that time.

What are your next plans?

On October 5th, the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society's Small Hall will host a festive holiday (organised jointly with our old partner — the Polish Institute), dedicated to our band's 20th anniversary. We'll perform Karol Szymanowski's 'Prince Potemkin', Witold Lutosławski's 'Little Suite', Dmitry Lybin's 'Post Scriptum' symphony, Pavel Streletsky's 'Summer Dreams' and Jerzy Kornowicz's 'Scenes from Bulgakov'.

In early December, we'll be inviting all music lovers for a traditional festival honouring I. Sollertinsky, in Vitebsk. On February 23rd, jointly with some dance groups, we'll give a concert including wonderful music by Strauss and his sons.

Artist's word on nature's attraction

By Alina Grishkovets

Minsk's Modern Fine Arts Museum hosts Françoise Limouzy's *Water and Rock* exhibition

The exhibition showcases about 70 pieces in ink and acrylic paint, on canvas and paper. Ms. Limouzy's works have been inspired by her trips around the globe and have already been exhibited in Belarus: in Vitebsk in March and in Gomel in May.

Françoise Limouzy was born in July 1957. After studying the history of art and drama, she began her career as a theatre comedy actress (primarily in Paris), to which she devoted the next 12 years of her life. Afterwards, Ms. Limouzy left Paris to travel. Impressions from her trips are reflected in her paintings. At present, she lives in Paris, where she teaches



Françoise Limouzy attends opening of her exhibition

yoga, and in the south of France, where she was born.

Ms. Limouzy stresses that she doesn't belong to any academic school but is 'enthralled by the curious and mysterious process of contemplation, allured by the sensuous, charming power of nature'. She tells us, "I have a close relationship with colour and form and, being confident, my brushes become weapons of creativity. I first used watercolour and pastel techniques before shifting to acrylic paints and ink — using big brushes. I

can draw sitting, standing or kneeling, with a big sheet of paper in front of me on the ground, grass or in the kitchen. I'm interested in traditions and always listen to advice — given to me by life itself. I use water to draw, sometimes rainwater, since it's a pleasure for me to be closely connected with natural elements. I need to 'dissolve' colour, making it more transparent and easier to use. I want to make it flow, illuminate and mix, while playing with its intensity. If I'm in the countryside, I usually leave my works to dry in the sun."

Unusual solutions to delight audiences

Belarusian Lyalka Theatre (Vitebsk) to stage *Diary of a Madman*, based on Nikolai Gogol's play of the same title

By Tatiana Matveichuk

Victor Klimchuk, Lyalka's artistic leader, has announced that the performance will be a highlight of the coming theatrical season, involving many of the younger artistes of the company. Moreover, the theatre's chief artist, Ales Sidorov, has developed extraordinary set designs.

Rehearsals have begun, although the premiere is not due for performance until next May or June. At present, the repertoire of the Vitebsk puppeteers includes three performances for adults based on classical works by foreign and Belarusian authors: Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, *The Ruined Soul*, or *the Sinner's Punishment*, Jan Barszczewski's *Nobleman Zawalnia*, or *Belarus in Fantastic Stories*, and *Boat of Despair*, based on Vladimir Korotkevich's work of the same title.

After the summer break, the Lyalka Theatre will again throw open its doors in early October, entertaining children with *Wolf and One, Two, Three* — a fairytale dance programme, especially prepared by the company. Adults will enjoy *The Decameron*.

In October, Lyalka celebrates its 25th anniversary, with several spectacular events being currently prepared. In particular, a week of the best performances is planned, with an exhibition of sets and puppets, a theatre party and opportunities for the audience to meet actors.

Bulgarian writer Pancho Panchev is to become an honorary guest of the holiday, as will Stanislav Zhelezkin, who heads Mytishchi's Ognivo Puppet Theatre (Russia) and the artistic leader of the Olsztyn Puppet Theatre, Zbigniew Głowacki (Poland).