

# Masters of craft arts leave great heritage

National Museum of Folk Art set up in Belarus

By Vera Gromchakova

Deputy Culture Minister Tadeush Struzhetsky recently announced at a press conference that Belarus is to gain its own National Museum of Folk Art, showing a variety of Belarusian crafts. "Belarus has everything it needs to launch such a museum — including quite a few folk art pieces and working craftsmen," he said.

The museum is to be part of the first Belarusian museum quarter — like those seen in Moscow, Amsterdam and Vienna. Belarus' Culture Ministry plans to complete its works by 2017, with the quarter (set up around the National Art Museum) occupying the perimeter of Kirov, Lenin and Marx streets (as approved by the Belarusian leadership).

The country has about a dozen specialised folk craft museums already, including Dudutki Museum of Ancient Folk Crafts and Technologies. In addition, district and regional history museums have folk craft rooms, as does the National History Museum and the National Art Museum.

Pottery, leather processing, cooperage, lime bast and weaving, iron works and felting have flourished in Belarus since ancient times. To keep these wonderful skills alive and well, craft schools operate, allowing masters to pass on their skills to our younger generation. The Brest Region alone has 30 such schools.

In 2012, an international open air workshop for potters is being hosted by a pottery school in the village of Gorodnaya, in the Stolín District.



Lessons of weaving at Zhlobin's Museum of Belarusian Costumes

## 'From Varangians to Greeks' tourism project

Belarus and Greece sign co-operative agreement on tourism

The document was signed in South Korea's Gyeongju, which hosted the 19th session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation. In addition, a memorandum of understanding regarding physical education and sports was signed by Belarus' Sport and Tourism Ministry and the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism of South Korea.

The Sport and Tourism Minister of Belarus, Oleg Kachan, met the Head of the Federal Tourism Agency of the Ministry for Sport and Tourism of Russia, Alexander Radkov, in addition to Iranian representatives and those from the tourism industries of other foreign states. Iran has promised to submit a draft memorandum on understanding in the field of tourism to Belarus in the near future.

Mr. Kachan presented a report on the development of tourism in Belarus, suggesting the implementation of an international 'From Varangians to Greeks' tourism project as part of the World Tourism Organisation; the proposal was approved by the organisation's Secretary General, Taleb Rifai.

## Golden autumn motifs dominate

By Sergey Kulyagintsev

Pavel Maslennikov Regional Art Museum in Mogilev hosts final exhibition of international painting open air workshop *Images of Homeland in Pictorial Art*

The exhibition showcases 90 works by thirty masters from seven countries: Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Israel and Moldova. All are to expand the Art Museum's collection.

The golden autumn landscapes of the hospitable Mstislavl District dominated the two week forum, alongside monumental architecture, portraits and still-life works. Andrian Judro from Israel and Anton Chubakov from Russia created portraits of young girls in national Belarusian costume, while famous Belarusian artist Yuri Piskun produced a narrative picture entitled *Ballet Rehearsal*, continuing the tradition of creating portraits of prominent people from the Mogilev Region. It depicts outstanding choreographer Victor Popov, working with upcoming ballet stars.

## From musical scores to prayers within documentary

By Lyudmila Minakova

*The Nun*, by Belarusian film director Galina Adamovich, awarded Grand Prix at Russia Open Documentary Film Festival

The festival, which is the most representative creative forum in Russia, brought together around 300 films from across the CIS this year.

*The Nun* was shot at the

Minsk St. Elisabeth's Convent's film studio honouring the Holy Confessor John the Warrior. It tells the story of Juliana. She was originally known as Irina Denisova, a famous Belarusian composer, a successful woman and mother of three children, before taking Holy Orders.

"One simple task always stands before me: to narrate of people using the language of cinema clearly and simply," Ms. Adamovich

admits. "I believe that the path our soul finds to God is always an interesting and worthy theme for filming."

*The Nun* has won other awards, receiving a Grand Prix at the 6th International Orthodox *Vstrecha* (Meeting) Film Festival in Sretensk and lesser prizes at the 10th *Kinolitopys* Kiev International Documentary Film Festival and 17th *Listapad* International Film Festival.

## Fanciful images successfully embodied by puppet actors



Puppets on show at Grodno Puppet Theatre

By Lidia Novikova

Grodno Regional Puppet Theatre wins Grand Prix at International *Spectaculo Interesse* Puppet Theatre Festival in Czech Ostrava

The forum brought together artistic groups from

the Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Israel, Ukraine, the UK and Holland. The Grodno company staged *Queen of Spades*, directed by Oleg Zhyugzhda — a laureate of the Presidential Award of Belarus, winning prizes for best stage direction, set de-

sign and acting.

The Grodno actors have also been invited to take part in the next festival in Ostrava — to be held two years hence. *Queen of Spades* is now being performed at another puppet festival — *Obraztsovfest* in Moscow, which features the world's top puppet theatres.

## Rhonda Larson performs *Kupalinka*



American flautist knows Belarusian melodies

By Timofey Antonenko

American Grammy Award-winning flautist and composer performs her version of Belarusian folk melody at Belarusian State Philharmonic Society, accompanied by *Ventus* band from the USA

Ms. Larson told journalists that the melody is one of her favourites, explaining, "It's so recognisable and mysterious. When I began working with the tune, it remained in my head for four days. I was singing the melody day and night (not the words, as I don't speak Belarusian). I adored it and truly think that it's one of the most wonderful melodies I've ever heard." She notes that she does know

what the song is about.

Ms. Larson enjoys music from around the world but is most keen on Celtic music and is convinced that music unites people. She explains, "Music stops conversations and gives us something positive. Today, there was a whole hall of listeners with different opinions about everything in the world but we were all inspired in a similar, yet different way, as our souls share the same language."

The talented flautist, who first visited Minsk a decade ago, likes to combine elements of melodies from various nations with jazz, classic and Celtic motifs. Her performance with *Ventus* saw a full house at the Main Hall of the Belarusian Philharmonic Society.