



Olga Antropova with the Miss Belarus-2004 crown
By Lyudmila Minakova

Shifting from being a model to a teacher

The first Belarusian beauty was crowned in 1998: Svetlana Kruk, from Grodno. At that time, she was a graduate of the National Beauty School and a Grodno State University student. Later, she married Sergey Kuznetsov, also from Grodno, and they moved to Moscow. She worked as a model in Italy and visited the USA but, in the course of time, replaced beauty pageants with other occupations. These days, Svetlana lectures in



Miss Belarus-2010 Lyudmila Yakimovich is currently involved in musical projects



Olga Khizhinkova of Vitebsk wins finals of 6th Miss Belarus-2008 National Beauty Pageant

Life after bright triumph: fates of *Miss Belarus* queens

Since 1998, every other year, Belarus has organised a Republican Beauty Pageant. Who are our top beauties, entrusted to wear the longed-for crown? Who has represented our country at global beauty contests for a two year period? What happens to these 'Cinderellas' after the ball? Where does life lead them?

mathematics at the Moscow Educational Centre and, last year, participated in the *Teacher of the Year* contest. She was named among the top ten teachers in Moscow. Also, Svetlana now has two charming children.

Young miss

In 2000, Anna Stychinskaya, 17, from Mogilev, took the crown. Being under 18, she couldn't travel abroad for many foreign contests but made a name for herself in the fashion industry, working as a model. She later became a modelling director and teacher, touring abroad with the *Fashion Mill* Festival.

Happy mother

In 2002, Olga Nevdakh, from Brest, was studying at the Minsk Institute of Modern Knowledge. After winning her crown, she toured half the world, taking part in *Miss Europe* and *Miss World* and winning the 'Photo Model' nomination at the World Championship for Performing Arts in Hollywood. She then returned to her native Brest and now heads the Brest branch of the Sergey Nagorny Fashion Studio, while bringing up her daughter, Masha.

Beauty with a brush

After winning the *Miss Belarus* title in 2004, Olga Antropova, from Brest, liaised with model agencies in Istanbul, Milan, Miami and New York. She won *Top Model International* in 2005 but decided to give up modelling. She settled in New York

for several years, attending a local arts school and the Italian Culinary Academy. Her cooking skills are now exemplary: she makes a good tiramisu and her pasta is delicious. On returning home, she entered the Moscow Detali International Design School and is now involved in art, while dreaming of opening her own confectionery company.

Always positive

In 2006, when Yekaterina Litvinova



Journalism is new occupation for Olga Khizhinkova

won the pageant, she was a Belarusian-Russian University student. Several months on, she moved from her native Mogilev to Minsk, becoming a model agency commercial director. Yekaterina worked as a TV host for a while and now specialises in advertising.

Dreams come true

In 2008, the crown went to 21 year old Olga Khizhinkova, from

Vitebsk. Before the contest, she worked as a manager and headed a fashion theatre club at Vitebsk's College of Light Industry (from which she graduated). "Of course, my life changed after the pageant," Olga admits. "I moved into the Minsk flat I'd been given and entered the Belarusian State University's Journalism Institute. Journalism is my major passion now. I write for an Internet site, preparing interviews and writing articles. I'm also involved in the 'Dreams Come True' charity. Modelling is just a hobby."

Singing queen

In 2010, Lyudmila Yakimovich, 22, from Grodno, was a fifth year student at the Belarusian Institute of Law, specialising in legal psychology. "I haven't changed in myself," she asserts, speaking of her life following her crowning. "I still view the world around me positively, feeling love for people. However, my life plans have changed as I'm now working on a musical project, preparing to debut as the lead singer with a band. Of course, I still model, combining the pleasant and the useful." Not long ago, Lyudmila returned from a Polish beauty pageant as 'First Runner Up', having beaten girls from 69 other countries.

Next year, we'll crown a new Belarusian beauty. Already, selective rounds have been held countrywide, gathering entrants for the 2012 crown.



Miss Belarus-2006 Yekaterina Litvinova tries modelling