

# Bold images of Boris Arakcheev inspire his daughters' work

Minsk's Palace of Arts Gallery embraces originality with artistic event

By Victor Mikhailov

Even the most flamboyant of avant-garde artists fade into the background when compared with this master. Boris Arakcheev is perhaps the most renowned and revered of all Belarusian artists, inspiring young talents with his originality. They may follow the latest trends in the fine arts but they raise their hats in his honour. He is a 'pillar' of Belarusian pictorial painting, revealing the core of true realism through his sincerity and originality.

Mr. Arakcheev's works continue to influence and impress, despite some having been created over half a century ago. The master himself is now 85, so today's show certainly deserves its title: *Stages of a Great Path*. Visitors can view the breadth of his artistic journey, full of inspiration and intensity. At the tender age of 17, he fought the fascists on the frontline. No doubt, the horrors of those war years affected his psyche and created his feelings of sympathy and empathy for others' pain. His understanding of human kindness in the face of suffering is evident in his works, which hark back repeatedly to his

youth. His war experiences developed in him a touching and impressive feeling for the theme of bravery in the face of adversity, exploring the depth of human dignity.

His series of works devoted to the defenders of Brest Fortress in 1941 draws on his never forgotten past, filled with bravery and action. The defenders' deeds help define his attitude towards life, bringing its value into sharp focus. In fact, Mr.

the National Art Museum of Belarus. The work perfectly reflects his artistic journey of drawing and draughtsmanship (from his time at Minsk Art College), sketches created during workshops, early drafts from his student years and his diploma paper itself (in sketches). Also on show are pictures drawn in those years when he painted outside, at various open-air workshops, alongside his students.

expressed in his pictures. His landscapes abound with a bright palette, inspiring great admiration for nature. His fresh summer mornings and delicate late autumn scenes are enchanting and compelling, full of positive energy; it seems that a vital force pulsates from their heart.

The Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Artists'

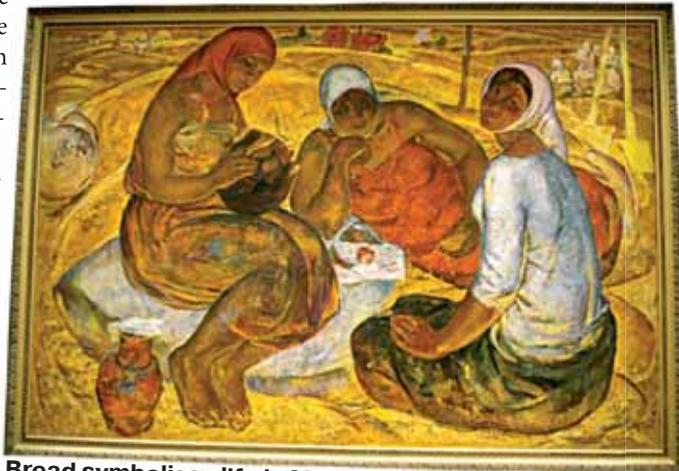


Boris Arakcheev and his daughter Oksana

always remains faithful to himself. He has a sharp eye and a love of life, whatever the circumstances. He ever admires the talent of his pupils and boasts never-ending curiosity. He apprehends the surrounding world with huge passion," stressed Mr. Zinkevich, adding that Mr. Arakcheev is followed 'by wonderfully talented generations of fine arts masters — who are the pupils of this great artist, teacher and

man' who chairs a cultural association called Traditions, noted Boris' enduring connection to Belarus throughout his life. He was born in a Russian village on the River Volga but has remained faithful to the traditions of Belarus' realistic art.

Mr. Arakcheev is still painting, full of artistic plans even at the age of 85. Despite his age, he continues to search for new images which represent his time... and succeeds. His three daughters have followed in his path, trying to realise their true artistic talent. The present show is a family exhibition, with his daughter Oksana contributing her *Look Into the Mirror of the Soul* series, which showcases portraits of our contemporaries. Oksana has her own style and technique but her works are similar to those of her father in spirit, as we might expect. Naturally, Boris Arakcheev remains the star of the show. His artistry is an example to follow, though blind copying is inadmissible. It is a principle sacred to the Arakcheevs.



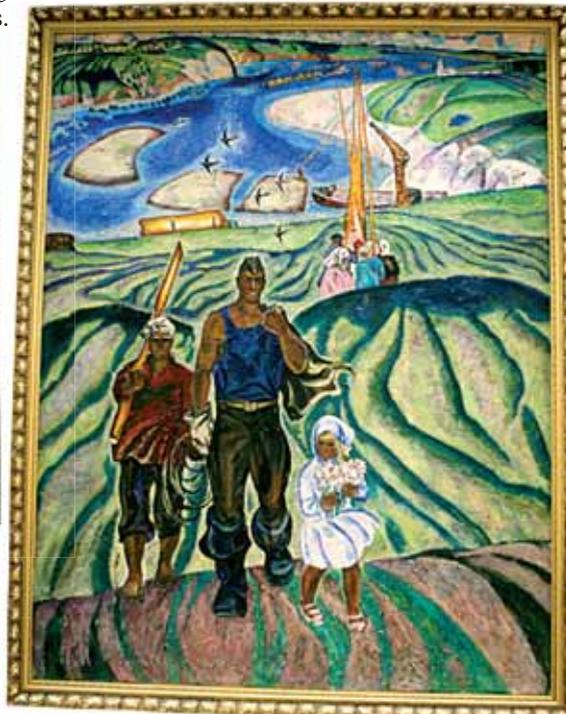
Bread symbolises life in Mr. Arakcheev's pictures

Arakcheev helped create the multidimensional poster-diorama *Minsk Cauldron*, dedicated to the liberation of Minsk in the summer 1944; it is a permanent exhibit at Minsk's Museum of Great Patriotic War History.

Interestingly, *Stages of a Great Path* is also the title of a diploma paper presented by Mr. Arakcheev in 1959. His painting was selected for exhibition in Moscow and has been reproduced in various editions over the years. Today, it is owned by

However, most of the works on show are huge thematic canvases from Boris' workshop, and from the archives of the Belarusian Union of Artists and the National Art Museum. Portraits of his contemporaries and famous personalities are also on display, in addition to pictures drawn in the past five years. Many are on show for the first time.

Boris Arakcheev is notable for his love of life, as



Boris Arakcheev's works full of energy

Board, Vladimir Zinkevich, noted at the opening ceremony that Mr. Arakcheev's artistry has influenced several generations of Belarusian artists. "For me, Boris Arakcheev is a ship, amazing in its grandeur and inviolability, its originality and wonderful courage. He

The First Deputy Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Artists, Rygor Sinititsa, called Mr. Arakcheev 'a 1960s-1970s artist of a calibre which shall never be repeated in our domestic fine arts'. Meanwhile, Honoured Figure of Arts of Belarus Vladimir Urodnich,

## Artistic luck on Tokyo stage

By Tatiana Timofeeva

Ludwig Minkus' *Don Quixote*, staged by famous Belarusian choreographer Valentin Yelizariiev, successfully premieres in Japan

In late January, Tokyo's major theatre — Bunka Kaikan — gathered a full house for the performance in the Japanese capital. Three theatre companies participated, with international ballet star Hana Sakai performing Kitri. The public and cultural elite of Tokyo attended. Mr. Yelizariiev told BelaPAN that 'Japa-

nese artists are purposeful professionals who enjoy great acclaim'. He stresses, "Their attitude to the classics and their understanding of ballet is amazing. This work has brought me huge artistic satisfaction."

The event was organised at the invitation of Japan's Ballet Association, with its President, Kenji Usui, praising Mr. Yelizariiev's version of *Don Quixote* as the best of several dozen existing worldwide. The huge audience's applause was absolute proof of its success.

## Chinese-style fashion enchants

Belarusian Fashion Centre demonstrates collection of Chinese folk costumes and women's silk clothes, which our designers recommend for spring

The show was organised by Chinese students and models from Tamara Agency. Historical costumes from China's Han, Tang of other imperial dynasties went on show, alongside outfits worn by other nationalities from the Heavenly Empire. The Chinese Ambassador's wife, Jing Ming, noted that the Belarusian fashion designers had managed to reflect the features of a Chinese costume accurately, working skilfully with silk.

The audience gave special



Show of collections is a bright event

applause to costumes representing those worn by other nationalities residing in China and the 'Silk Way' collection. Chinese students studying at Belarusian universities

made perfect models, while showing off their wonderful skill as musicians and dancers: the unique and diverse culture of this remote country was evident.

Belarusian modelling circles praised the event as beautiful, noting that guests were able to learn more about China's ancient traditions and famous Chinese silk via the interpretation of modern Belarusian designers. Famous Belarusian designer Sasha Varlamov highly appreciated the Belarusian-Chinese cultural project, in particular, adoring Belarusian clothes made from Chinese silk.

According to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of China to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Lu Guicheng, the Belarusian collection of clothes made from Chinese silk reflects the best cultural traditions of our two nations.