

Delicate patterns and techniques remind us of famous masters

Production of Slutsk sashes to be revived in Belarus

Slutsk sashes were made by Belarusian hand-weavers in the late 18th-early 19th century, being unique in global and national art culture. In the past, sashes were worn by men of wealth, with their rich embroidery showing the power and status of the wearer. Those Belarusian masters who made the belts entered Western European history for their skills in decorative-and-applied arts. The sashes' compositional harmony and sophisticated motifs earn them a place among the paramount achievements of global art culture.

In fact, the mastery of Belarusian weavers was so high that all sashes — even those produced outside Slutsk — were called Slutsk sashes: they were

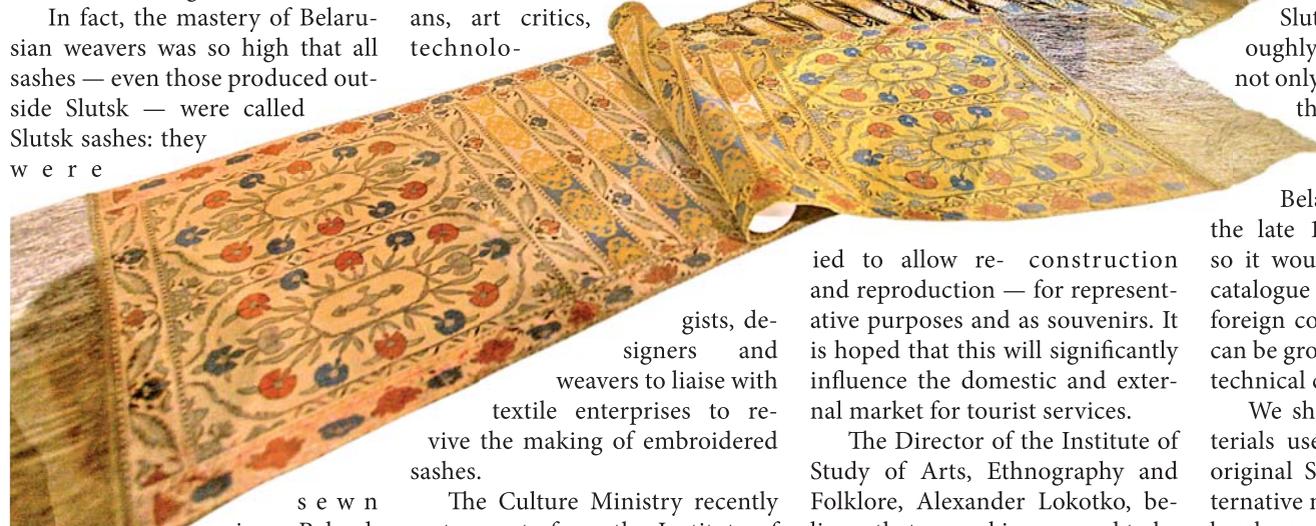
Ukraine, Russia and across the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in the Rzech Pospolita and, even, in French Lyon. All were influenced by Slutsk designs and workmanship, with training in the art taking seven years or more. Apprentices were taken on under strictly controlled terms, to preserve the secrets of the craft.

Sadly, those secrets have been lost, although attempts are being made to restore the ancient craft — at the request of the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko. He has asked his — histori- ans, art critics, technolo-

Study of Arts, Ethnography and Folklore (named after K. Krapiva) of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Art Museum, the State Committee for Science and Technologies, and Vitebsk State Technological University to discuss the matter. They were joined by several companies: Belkhu-dozhpromysly, Slutskie Poyasa and the Borisov Combine of Decorative-and-Applied Arts. Original Slutsk sashes are to be stud-



Slutsk sashes at National Art Museum



settled, with the history of Slutsk sashes studied thoroughly. We need to understand not only how they were made but their ethno-social functions. Several different styles existed (made in Belarus and abroad) from the late 18th-early 19th century, so it would be useful to create a catalogue — from domestic and foreign collections. Various sashes can be grouped by style, theme and technical characteristics.

We should also study the materials used in the production of original Slutsk sashes, so that alternative modern substitutions can be chosen carefully. In addition, it

needs to be decided how 'modern' Slutsk sashes might be used in our contemporary world. A range of marketing proposals are needed, with the tourist sphere likely to be at the centre of the mission.

Those at the meeting were shown a unique late 18th century Slutsk sash, by the Director of the Museum of Ancient Belarusian Culture, Boris Lazuko. He explained that specialists are welcome to view the collection at his museum, so that reproduction sashes can be created in the same style as the historical originals. Slutsk sashes are a symbol of our national culture but much work lies ahead to revive this aspect of Belarus' past.

gists, designers and weavers to liaise with textile enterprises to revive the making of embroidered sashes.

ied to allow reconstruction and reproduction — for representative purposes and as souvenirs. It is hoped that this will significantly influence the domestic and external market for tourist services.

The Director of the Institute of Study of Arts, Ethnography and Folklore, Alexander Lokotko, believes that several issues need to be

Lost rare treasures become available holographically



By Svetlana Veremeiko

By late 2012, Mogilev's P. Maslennikov Regional Art Museum is to launch a holographic exhibition entitled *The Mystery of Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya's Cross* (the first of its kind countrywide)

Visitors will be able to see over twenty holographic depictions of the cross and various lost Belarusian icons and other treasures. Preparations are underway, overseen

by International Engineering Academy physicist Leonid Tanin, who has long been involved in the *Hermitage to Each House* project. This aims to make rare artefacts available to all and began with his first exhibition of artistic holograms in 1978, in the USSR.

"I read about scientist Tanin's work long ago and am delighted to have him now liaising with us," notes the Deputy Director of the Museum for Scientific Work, Svetlana Strogina. "Financing has been allocated for the project and the concept is being discussed, with much work ahead."

Legendary Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya's Cross and other unique Belarusian treasures were lost during the Great Patriotic War from the museum's special archives.

Pure sound for *Litesound*

Belarus' *Eurovision-2012* entrant for Baku records contest song and prepares for promo-tour of Europe

By Viktar Andrejeu

Litesound has recorded its contest song — *We Are the Heroes* — at the Music Recording Studio of Beltele-radiocompany's Belarusian Radio, which boasts the latest contemporary equipment. Famous musical producer and composer Dimitris Kontopoulos is working with the group as a consultant. His most successful work to date includes arranging *My Number One* — for *Eurovision-2005* winner Helena Paparizou, and *Work Your Magic* for Belarusian Dmitry Koldun, as well as writing *Shady Lady* for Ani Lorak and *This Is Our Night* for Sakis Rouvas. Mr. Kontopoulos notes, "The studio equipment rivals that of top world studios. Only the best sound recording companies in the world, in Great Britain and



Litesound prepare for *Eurovision*

Sweden, have similar."

Dmitry and Vladimir Karyakin, soloists for *Litesound*, have experience of touring various countries and tell us, "Everything can be done at the highest level in Belarus, so there's no need to go abroad to seek out the latest technical services. Our national radio can

rival any."

We Are the Heroes, recorded at Belarusian Radio, is to be broadcast across European radio stations while the band sets off on its promo-tour along the continent.

Soon, the Karyakin brothers will begin staging their performance and shooting a video. *Euro-*

Fest producer Anastasia Tikhonovich notes that there is a wealth of ideas to choose from, initiated by the stage producer and choreographer. She tells us that negotiations are underway with famous stage masters.

Dmitry Karyakin believes that the video is likely to be shot in Belarus. "There are plenty of ideas for the video, as proposed by Russian and Ukrainian music video directors. We want to make the video really memorable. We've even received ideas from our fans by email. Our draft theme is that we are facing the end of the world and need to save the planet, so must show everyone how to work together to do so."

The musicians are also studying Azerbaijani; they are to perform at *Eurovision's* second semi-finals on May 24th.