

# Present to the fourteenth from Stefania Stanyuta

Life inspired great actress' roles while nature provided her with a talent for crafts

By Yelena Buyakovskaya

As her son, Alexander, recollects, Stefania was an actress 'from head to toe' — able to take on the persona of anything from a TV set to a twig or a pair of spectacles! She'd often say, "I'll show you rather than explain." Her imagination and skill enabled her to cope with any role.

Over her long life, Ms. Stanyuta also loved crafts, making interesting gifts for her family, friends and fans from natural materials; she even shared her skills with the Nature and Fantasy Club (which has about forty of her craft works).

At first sight, it's hard to tell exactly which materials Ms. Stanyuta used: looking more closely, you can see a peach kernel used for a pendant, and a beautiful locket made from a sea urchin. Her beads are acorns, and the seed heads of whitebeam, dog-rose and other flowering plants. Almost all of her creations have a story of their own.

"Holidays in the Crimea, Stefania found an interesting plane-tree, whose black pilose fruits she brought home for craft projects," explains club leader Alexander Leiko, who knew the actress personally. "Another time, she fell over a stone while walking along the seashore: in fact, it was a mammoth bone." The collection of this great actress includes items made from Manchurian walnuts, corn, beans, and seeds from the vetch and spindle tree. She also used pasta in various shapes: stars, spirals and so on.

Her hand-made crafts have also helped people in hard times. Her



Actress Stefania Stanyuta's hand-made items often helped people in difficult situations

friends recollect a man coming to her dressing room after a performance, proclaiming, "Don't you remember me? I'm that man from Smolensk: the fourteenth!" Naturally, this meant nothing to anyone else, but Stefania later told them about the winter of 1942. She had been evacuated to Russian Tomsk, with the Kupala Theatre and, on New Year's Eve, was hosting a party. The weather was severely frosty and she lacked money but exchanged some of her craft works for bread

and a fir tree. Unfortunately, thirteen guests appeared: an unlucky sign (especially during wartime), so she went into the street to find a fourteenth guest, asking the others to await her return. There were just ten minutes before midnight and the streets were empty, but she suddenly noticed a lonely man. He had been evacuated from Smolensk and became the fourteenth guest. Parting, Stefania presented him with a hand-made locket which he kept all his life.

The actress also loved to sew costumes for her performances, coming to her first rehearsal at the Kupala Theatre wearing a hand-made linen dress. Young Stefania had sewn this herself; it was truly unique, with nothing similar on sale in the shops. She had used a banch linen painted by her father, artist Mikhail Stanyuta, imitating the motifs found on Slutsk sashes. Naturally, she was the envy of all the young women in the company!

## Joint project unites cinema studios

Cinematographers from Belarus, Germany, Latvia and the Netherlands shoot film based on Vasil Bykov's work

By Viktar Korbut

Belarusfilm is providing the sets and costumes for the film, which is being based on Bykov's *In the Fog*. It is to be one of the most powerful projects in which our national cinema studio has ever been involved.

Film director Sergey Loznitsa, who was born in Baranovichi, is working on the film, while the international crew includes Polish costume designer Dorota Roqueplo and Czech director Martin Sebik. Vladimir Svirsky of Belarus, a graduate of the Russian Academy of Theatre Arts, is playing the lead role.

Mr. Loznitsa calls the film a drama 'about a person who tries to make a moral choice under amoral circumstances'. He notes, "The action takes place in 1942, in Nazi-occupied Belarus. Wayman Sushchenya is accused of helping the Germans, so two partisans arrive at his isolated farmstead to punish him. Sushchenya endeavours to prove his innocence, creating a tense atmosphere."

Oleg Silvanovich, Belarusfilm's



A shot from V. Bykov's film: *In the Fog*

Director General, is keen to liaise with foreign partners, as this brings financial benefits and allows him to promote films more widely at international film festivals. Germany has provided the lion's share of funds for this project.

Mr. Silvovich is keen to see 'Belarusian' films gain greater recognition abroad, with joint projects broadcast across Russian and Ukrainian television. *In the Fog* is to be also released in Europe.

Recently, Belarusfilm shot another 'international' picture: *A Lonely Island*. Its budget stood at 1.2m Euros and it was produced by Lege Artis Film (Estonia) and Studio F.O.R.M.A. (Latvia), alongside Belarusfilm. Filming took place in Latvia, Estonia and Belarus.

Estonian film director Peeter Simm, who wrote the script and directed the work, tells us, "Big cities conceal the secrets of people's private lives. The film explores several of these

'stories': a professor of literature fails to communicate effectively with his son — a locomotive engine driver; a young teacher finds herself in a complicated relationship with a senior pupil (the son of an Estonian taxi driver and a Belarusian stewardess); two friends who are former sailors fall in love with the same woman, enduring a long term love triangle; and a young ballerina confined to a wheelchair 'tortures' her mother with blame. Each person's life is so complex that they must strive hard to gain understanding of themselves and forgive those close to them. The film shows us that, regardless of nationality, we share similar concerns and sorrows."

Mr. Silvanovich hopes that the joint project will recoup its costs. "We understand perfectly that if a producer brings in several million Dollars, he seeks a return. Commercial success is a vital factor in making a film. It's becoming more common for various European countries to share the cost of film production, as they seek grander projects which will attract a wider audience."

## Novopolotsk to have its own Bolshoi Theatre

By Vasily Svetlov

### Second branch of National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre to be set up in the city

An agreement — signed between the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre, the Novopolotsk City Executive Committee and Naftan JSC — envisages co-operation in the field of organising tours: for individual artistes and for the Bolshoi Theatre troupe in Novopolotsk. Performances are to be staged monthly, at various city sites.

The first branch of the Bolshoi Theatre opened in 2011, in Mogilev. Already, the troupe has successfully staged the ballets of *Don Quixote* and *Giselle* at the Palace of Culture and at Mogilev Concert Hall, in addition to *The Party of Ancient Romance* and a concert of vocal music (featuring the Serenade string quintet).

In addition to traditional events such as the *Nights of the Bolshoi Theatre in the Radziwill Castle* opera and ballet festival, the Minsk International Christmas Opera Forum, and the Large New Year Ball, the new troupe is an integral part of the Bolshoi Theatre, taking part in enlightening and social activities.

## Portentous number five

By Kirill Merinov

### Litesound to perform fifth in line at second semi-finals



Litesound band performs

According to the draw, our entrant is to compete directly against artistes from Serbia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Macedonia, Malta, Ukraine, Armenia, Bulgaria, Sweden, Georgia, Slovenia, Estonia, Turkey, Slovakia, Croatia, Norway, Lithuania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The band's manager, the father of Dmitry and Vladimir Karyakin, Yuri Dmitrievich, tells us that the boys are delighted with the draw. "During our stay in China, we entered into the spirit of Eastern superstitions and began to look at the 'energy' of particular numbers and words," he notes. "Number four in Chinese is associated with the word 'death' but 'five' is considered lucky for those willing to work hard and show determination. Accordingly, we're very happy with the draw."

Six countries — the UK, France, Germany, Spain, Italy and Azerbaijan (the winning state from last year) — are automatically through to the Eurovision-2012 finals. On May 24th, we'll see whether the Belarusian rock band will join them!