

Good opportunity to learn about traditions

Days of Qatari Culture hosted by Minsk

By Darya Yepiphanova

Qatari artists performed at the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society, while a Qatari cultural village set up in the square near the Philharmonic. Guests found pleasant surprises in each national pavilion, tasting national cuisine, sweets and drinks from this Eastern country, while being entertained by Qatari national music and perusing folk crafts.

Belarus' Culture Minister, Pavel Latushko, noted at the solemn opening ceremony, "Qatar's Days of Culture in Belarus is a significant event in our two countries' cultural life, showing our desire to strengthen mutual cultural ties." He emphasised that the event provides a good opportunity for Belarusians to learn more about Qatar's unique cultural traditions. "Belarus' Days of Culture, held in Qatar in March 2012, made it clear that the Qatari people are interested in our culture. I think that Belarusians will feel the same."

Mr. Latushko joined Qatar's



Qatari cultural village in front of Philharmonic Society building

Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage, Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al-Kuwari, in signing an executive pro-

gramme of cultural co-operation between the governments of Belarus and Qatar for 2011-2013. The min-

isters expressed hope for fruitful collaboration in cultural and educational areas.

Actors awarded great ovation

Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre wins International Youth Theatre Forum in Chisinau with Office, based on Ingrid Lausund's play

The performance staged by Yekaterina Averkova was named best by the jury, headed by director Alexander Shapiro. Companies from the CIS, as well as from Russia, Georgia and the Baltic States took part. Second place went to *The Pilgrim*, directed by Latvian Kārlis Krūmiņš, while *Flight over the City* by Narine Grigoryan (Yerevan State Puppet Theatre named after Tumanyan) came third.

Office, based on Ingrid Lausund's play and staged with support from the Belarusian Culture Ministry, conquered the hearts of the audience (from Moldova and other CIS states). They were delighted with the performance, clapping for some time and refusing to allow the actors to leave the stage. Staff from the Belarusian Embassy to Moldova and representatives of Belarusian communities also attended, sincerely supporting their fellow countrymen.

Topping the prize rankings

Dmitry Strukov. Album of Drawings. 1864-1867 facsimile edition, released in 2011 by Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House, awarded winner's diploma and Grand Prix at 9th CIS International Art of Book Contest, hosted by Astana

By Svetlana Iskortseva

The unique photo album, belonging to the *Encyclopaedia of Rarities* series, aims to reveal forgotten historical and cultural monuments, while promoting the revival of national traditions to the younger generation. The book contains watercolours by Russian painter, architect and researcher of Christian relics Dmitry Strukov, created between 1864 and 1867, during expeditions through the Northern-Western lands of Tsarist Russia. The album contains pictures of around 200 wooden and stone Orthodox and Catholic churches, most of which are no longer standing, in addition to drawings of church relics, gravestones, ancient mounds and views of towns and villages. Alongside Strukov's drawings, the edition also gives fragments of his itineraries and commentary by contemporary art experts. There is only one original, held by the Rare Book Department of Vilnius University Library,

which has never been on show to the public.

The Grand



showing works from Vetka Museum of Folk Arts (named after F.G. Shklyarov).

Back in the 17th century, Old Believers settled in Vetka and neighbouring areas, coming from various Russian regions, including from Moscow. Belarus' largest centre of Old Believers originated in Vetka,

are released by state publishing houses. These were entered in all the contest's nominations and, after summarising the results, Belarus took the lead for the number of awards. Domestic book publishers were awarded seven honorary diplomas of various degrees.

According to the Belarusian Information Ministry's Department for Publishing

boasting a culture uniting Russian and Belarusian roots and making a priceless contribution to the cultural traditions of our two states.

In total, 121 editions from 10 countries took part in the event — from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. Our country presented 23 books, of which 13

Activity and Book Trade, the solemn awards ceremony of the 9th CIS International Art of Book Contest will take place in September, at the 25th Moscow International Book Fair. The winning editions will be displayed at a show run by the Russian Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications, before being donated to the Museum of CIS History. Next February, the best books from across the CIS will grace the 20th Minsk International Book Fair.

Rhythms of ballet

Belarusian ballerina Yekaterina Oleinik receives third prize and title of laureate at Helsinki International Ballet Competition

The 7th International Ballet Competition has been held at the Finnish National Opera House, as part of jubilee events devoted to celebrating the 200th anniversary of Helsinki as the capital of Finland. This year, 100 dancers from more than 20 countries took part over the week, entering three competitive rounds of classical and modern dance.

Yekaterina Oleinik, partnering the leading master of the Belarusian ballet, Igor Onoshko, performed the pas de deux from *Don Quixote*, followed by a modern number called *Fragile Eternal Paradise*, by Grodno choreographer Dmitry Kurakulov. In the third round, she danced the pas de deux from *Swan Lake* and a piece from I and I, by Belarusian choreographer Dmitry Zalessky.

Jury notes impressive content

Belarusian documentary *The Bell Ringer*, by Yekaterina Makhova, wins Grand Prize at film festival in Slovak city of Košice

20 countries took part in the competition: Germany, Serbia, Belarus, the UK, France, Latvia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Spain, Argentina, Macedonia, Turkey, Romania, the United States, the Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia.

The international jury — headed by EJ Baumeister (USA), a producer, director, Emmy Award winner (1981) and Academy Award winner (1982) — chose *The Bell Ringer* as the most outstanding work at the festival.

The film is dedicated to the traditions of church bell ringing in Belarus. Stepan Yarmonyuk, from Dorop-eevichi village in the Malorita District, is the main protagonist. He has lived through difficult times with the Church of the Holy Nativity of the Mother of God — a 17th century wooden building. It was closed during the war and during the atheistic 1960s but reopened in 1988. Stepan began ringing at the age of ten and, today, in his 80s, continues the tradition.

The Bell Ringer is a frequent guest at such forums, having already been awarded at the *Listapad-2011* Minsk International Film Festival: 'For Loyalty to Traditions'.