

Diverse heritage of national classic

The State Literary Museum of Yanka Kupala stores over 560 manuscripts by the great writer

By Kirill Kudrin

According to its director, Yelena Matevosyan, the museum owns more than 42,000 items relating to the literary genius, including a rare and valuable collection of 562 manuscripts by Kupala. Last month, the museum gained three more to add to its previous 559 texts. "In Belarus and abroad, there are few museums which can boast so many manuscripts by our national legend," Ms. Matevosyan asserts.

This year, the museum celebrates two memorable dates: the 130th anniversary of the birth of the People's Poet of Belarus (being widely celebrated here and abroad); and 50 years of the museum's independence. In 1962, as a result of the reorganisation of the Academy of Sciences of Belarus, it passed to the control of the Ministry of Culture.

The State Literary Museum of Yanka Kupala in Minsk is one of the oldest literary museums in the country. Previously, there



New exhibition for Yanka Kupala Museum

was only one such institution — the House-Museum of Adam Mickiewicz in Novogrudok. Over its 50 years of independence, its members have established four exhibitions exploring the creativity of the writer. The first stage of the fifth ex-

hibition opened in early August and is interactive: at the entrance to the hall, every visitor receives 3D-glasses, allowing them to better feel the atmosphere of a magical Midsummer holiday. It also introduces the poet's pictures, books, media publica-

tions, household goods and personal items. His study is even recreated.

Ms. Matevosyan views *We Read Kupala's Works Together* as being among the most significant events organised to date for the 130th anniversary. Works



Yelena Matevosyan

by the national poet of Belarus were read by residents of all ages and social groups. The village of Vyazyinka hosted the Republican Festival of Poetry, Song and Craft *With One Thought on the Happiness of Belarus*, with about 7000

people taking part.

The number of foreigners visiting the Museum of Yanka Kupala is ever increasing, especially those from neighbouring countries Russia, Ukraine and Poland. Many also visit the branch in the village of Vyazyinka.

2012 becomes the year of museums

By Alexander Pimenov

Celebrations to mark the 130th anniversary of the birth of classical Belarusian literary giants Yakub Kolas and Yanka Kupala reach far beyond country's borders

The Topical Problems of Memorial Museums. Traditions and Innovations in Their Development and Activities international round table discussion has been recently held. Belarus' Deputy Culture Minister, Tadeush Struzhetskyy, noted, "This year, Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and Estonia have joined our celebration of these writers' anniversaries. It is important not just to us but to all those ethnic Belarusians who reside abroad, and to countries touched by their works; our two People's Poets of Belarus are deservedly considered as classical writers of world literature."

According to Mr. Struzhetskyy, the development of our national museums is a top priority for state cultural policy. Belarus has established a well-developed network of state and private museums, launching the Museum of Belarusian Nationhood this year, alongside the Nesvizh National Historical and Cultural Museum and the first stage of a new exhibition at the Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum (using interactive multi-media 3D technologies).

While contemporary technologies are widely used at the Belarusian Nationhood Museum, the Yanka Kupala Museum is the first to use 3D technologies — and further exhibitions are to launch next year. "2012 can be informally called a 'year of museums' in Belarus," asserts the Deputy Culture Minister. He notes that, in October, the first national forum — *Museums of Belarus* — is being held within the state *Culture of Belarus* programme. This aims to support museum activity country-wide, inspiring creative initiatives and attracting public attention to the many aspects of museum life, while encouraging museum employees in their study, preservation and popularisation of cultural treasures.

The forum will host presentations, exhibitions, contests, scientific-practical seminars and round table discussions, bringing together numerous foreign guests. Mr. Struzhetskyy hopes that it will strengthen the professionalism of museum specialists.

The Director of the Yakub Kolas and Yanka Kupala Language and Literature Institute at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, doctor of philological sciences Alexander Lukashanets, underlines that a twenty volume collection of Yakub Kolas' works is now almost ready for publication.

Walking with ease and grace

By Yevgenia Yelovskaya

Children's Theatre of Fashion in Novopolotsk proves itself a true home of elegance and style

The youngsters conduct themselves with maturity, dignity and elegance, placing their hand on their hip and marching down the catwalk to show off the clothes they're modelling, smiling at the end to the audience.



Theatre of Fashion participants in Novopolotsk

Top-Top fashion studio at the Children's Theatre of Fashion has been operational for seven years at the City House of Culture and Leisure, helping Novopolotsk's 3 to 12 year olds improve their catwalk skills. Some of its graduates now earn a serious wage modelling but director Yelena Medvedskaya considers

that the children learn something far more important: confidence and identity, grace and style, as well as good manners. They also learn practical skills, such as choreography. The especially designed programme allows children to develop their interpersonal skills alongside their self-belief, taste and artistry.

"The child's individual image is nurtured like a precious flower," stresses Ms. Medvedskaya. "Our objective is not to change them but to

studio in Sweden, as well as the *Max Moda* festival in Tallinn.

The variety of designer collections emphasise the unique images of the children, showing off their beauty to best advantage. The inspiration for the *Hard Candy* collection was everyone's favourite candy lollipop. The blouses, dungarees, skirts, trousers and jackets in pastel colours with painted designs were set off by hats and stylised canes! For models, jury and audience alike, it was a true delight.

Top-Top liaises with fashion designers from near Dvina, and with the world's leading manufacturers of children's footwear and apparel — such as Sela and Broadway.

Novopolotsk is considered to be the capital of children's fashion, mainly due to Top-Top. A year ago, its *Couture Kids* festival showed three new collections: by young designers Sergey Karelin and Yekaterina Krasikova and the third by Ms. Medvedskaya — her *Walk in the Clouds*. A second open competition is planned for December, gathering the country's leading designers and best creative teams, as well as keen audiences. Ms. Medvedskaya and her young pupils are to present a collection dedicated to the Olympics, and another entitled *Along Molodezhnaya*, honouring the main street of their native city. We wish the children every success and joy as they strut the catwalk.