

# 'I'd like people to ponder their lives'

Moscow V. Mayakovsky Academic Theatre premieres *Love of People*, staged from Belarusian Dmitry Bogoslavsky's play

By Tatiana Khomichenko

Last year, the play exploded onto the theatre scene, making the short-list of the Eurasia International Playwrights Contest, topping the *Lyubimovka* Festival of Young Playwrights and winning the National Theatrical Award's Contest of Contests online vote, as well as the Golden Mask Festival and the *Acting Faces-2012* Contest. Clearly, this is a new phenomenon for Belarusian drama.

Dmitry, 27, is a shy young man who feels embarrassed by his sudden fame. "I'm not yet a wise old bird," he smiles.

**Dmitry, you are an actor with the Belarusian State Youth Theatre but have begun writing plays...**

In 2009, the theatre closed for repairs but I had no wish to leave, which inspired me to write my first play: *The Pawn*. It was staged at the Centre for Belarusian Drama. My second reached the finals of the international *Lyubimovka* Festival. Belarus has little modern drama, so our playwrights like to get together to read their plays. Not long ago, a Studio of Alternative Drama opened, aiming to help novices become staged before real audiences. In January, we'll start rehearsing *Chronicles*.

**The jubilee 90th season of the Moscow V. Mayakovsky Academic Theatre opened with your *Love of People*, on its small stage. How**

**did you receive an invitation from this famous, popular theatre?**

I had no such aspiration but was called by director Mindaugas Karbauskis — a holder of Golden Mask awards — asking when I was planning to come to Moscow. I was surprised by his call as, at the time, I was preparing to go to the *Lyubimovka* Festival. On hearing this, he said, "Meet me there." I did, and a successful union was created; I haven't had to re-write or change my play in any way.

***Love of People* tells of a modern village where much cruelty exists...**

Life is not always kind. We see a lot of comedy staged but I'd rather people pondered their lives more deeply. It's easy for us to hurt those we love. It's as if we are on the eve of winter while waiting for summer.

**What are your main genres and themes?**

Trends are changing, so my play is full of revelations. It's common to combine genres; I see nothing bad in it. A good play should explore all aspects of life.

**How long does it take you to write a play?**

A long time, as I need to contemplate deeply — through my soul. I have a year old badger-dog, called *Veliamir*, whom I hide from, on my grandfather's balcony. With a notebook on my knees, I work winter and summer. However, it took me several

years to write my last play: *Calm Murmur of Passing Steps*. There is file on my table entitled 'ready'; once a play is placed there, it remains unchanged.

**How many plays do you have in the file so far?**

Eleven.

**Who is your favourite playwright?**

It's Maeterlinck, as he has so much happening in his plays. An atmosphere of pain is also crucial.

**What drew you to the theatre?**

I had no plans originally, although I joined the Inventive Comedy Club at school. I wanted to enter the Acting Department but fate took me on a different path and I failed my third round of entrance exams. I entered college and, during my third year of studies, was offered a job at the Youth Theatre, which I accepted.

**How do your parents view your success?**

On seeing my first play, they were upset to see me billed as 'Belarusian playwright Dmitry Bogoslavsky', saying, "You have a Russian passport. Your grandfather is a Don Cossack and you call yourself a Belarusian playwright." I was born in Minsk but my parents moved to Elista. Naturally, I travelled with them. After graduating from school, I returned to Belarus as I love Minsk more than Moscow. It's quieter and has its own charm. I also met my wife, Yulia, here.



Dmitry Bogoslavsky is interested in serious drama

## The MT's reference

Mr. Bogoslavsky's *Calm Murmur of Passing Steps* reached the finals of the *Lyubimovka* Festival of Young Playwrights — hosted by Moscow in September. In his new work, he continues to explore the thin line between reality and illusion.

## Pavel Kukhta's virtuoso guitar playing

**Pavel Kukhta wins prize at International Pittaluga Classical Guitar Competition, hosted by Italian Alessandria**

27 entrants from 20 countries took part in three rounds, judged by an interna-

tional jury of leading guitarists, conductors, composers and music critics: Alfonso Montes (Venezuela), Bernard Maillo (France), Paolo Ferrara (Italy), Thomas Heck (USA), Stein-Erik Olsen (Norway), Frédéric Zigante (Italy) and

Micaela Pittaluga (Italy).

Three performers were selected for the final: Keruan Lazar from France, Dzherakul Yekachai from Thailand and Belarusian guitarist Pavel Kukhta (holder of a Master's Degree from the Belarusian

State Academy of Music and a soloist with the Belarusian State Philharmonic). It was the first time in the history of the competition that a Belarusian entrant had reached the finals, so his third place prize was very welcome.

## Meetings expand acquaintance

By Galina Nenasheva

**Turkey Through Poets' Eyes literary and music soiree hosted by Minsk's House of Friendship**

According to Nina Ivanova, the Chair of the Presidium of the Belarusian Society of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, the meeting marked Turkey's National Day. She views such meetings as a good tradition, bringing us closer to understanding Turkish culture, history and traditions. The Belarusian Society of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries joined forces with the Belarus-Turkey Society to organise events, which gathered the intelligentsia, students and representatives of the Turkish diaspora. The packed House of Friendship was the best proof of mutual interest in expanding Belarusian-Turkish cultural

relations.

Members of the Union of Writers of Belarus, Irina Tulupova and Alina Legostayeva, who had recently visited Turkey as part of a Belarusian delegation, shared their impressions of its people and countryside. Meanwhile, Belarusian and Turkish youngsters (including winners of various international music contests) were prominent in reciting poetry in Belarusian and Turkish. Belarusian university students recited verses in Turkish, having been studying keenly for several years. Of course, knowledge of language promotes acquaintance with a country's culture, which is the best basis for expanding contacts between states.

Ms. Ivanova is confident that cultural co-operation between Belarus and Turkey will gain additional impetus, as is the ultimate goal of the Belarus-Turkey Society.

## Experiment and traditions enjoy both unity and diversity

By Tatiana Biryuzova

**Domestic textiles presented at *Metaphors and Metamorphosis* in Minsk**

Leading experts in the field of art textiles presented their works, as did young graduates of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts.

The exhibition gives insight into the latest trends in experimental art textiles in Belarus, in all its forms.

Planar and volumetric textiles were on display, using a variety of materials: linen, plastic, cardboard, organic

glass and polymers. The exhibition is truly experimental, gathering works which are creative in their use of form, colour and material.

For decades, domestic textiles have developed from the traditions of tapestry. The first graduates of the Textile Department of the Faculty of Arts and Crafts began experimenting in this direction, creating a new dimension and language. Today, many have their own students.

In our country, textile art enjoys regional characteristics, having always been popular. This may be why



Exposition brings genuine interest

Belarusian artists strive to enrich traditional tapestries with raised textures and spa-

tial elements — as is evident at *Metaphors and Metamorphosis*.