

## Our people at Carnegie Hall

**The New Age — New Names** gala concert welcomed an audience of over 3,000 to Carnegie Hall in New York. Young musicians from around the world took part, including Belarusian clarinetist Anton Moiseenko, who is hailed as one of the elite of the Russian music community.

Sponsored by the Vladimir Spivakov International Charity Foundation and the Mstislav Rostropovich Foundation, he is currently a student of the Central Music School of the Moscow State Conservatory (named after Tchaikovsky).

All those taking part in the concert were CIS laureates of international competitions, accompanied by the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Constantine Orbelian, performing works by Handel, Rossini, Liszt, Shostakovich and Babajanyan, as well as by Sergei Rachmaninoff, Igor Stravinsky, Sviatoslav Richter, Yuri Bashmet, Vladimir Spivakov and Dmitri Hvorostovsky. All are beacons for the creative work of young musicians within the Commonwealth.

## ‘Real Italians’ identified at Days of Piedmont

**Laureates of Real Italian-2012 Award chosen in Belarus during Days of Piedmont**

The award coincided with the Days of the Italian Region of Piedmont, with support from the Italian Embassy. Past winners include former Belarusian Ambassador to Italy Alexey Skripko and master hairdresser Darya Dubrovina.

Ten people were nominated for the title of ‘Italian Belarusians’ — across various spheres: charity, education, music, art and science. Winners were chosen from a preliminary vote by the jury and from public votes online.

The director of one of the capital’s Italian restaurants, Igor Adamenko, believes that the Days of Piedmont — held in Belarus for the first time — should become a tradition, strengthening our relations. He explains, “As a rule, each country or region is associated with some important historical site or event. Bordering France and Switzerland, the Piedmont Region is known worldwide for its elegant and original cuisine — an important part of the cultural heritage of Italy.”

The theme has been Enogastronomy (the art of combining food and wine) — for which Piedmont is well-known. The President of the Association of Italian Chefs, Marco Sacco, who holds two Michelin stars, took part in the event, demonstrating his skills in Minsk and sharing a few of his secrets. Other members of the Piedmont delegation also held master classes: the Head of the Italian Enogastronomic Tour Operator, Tour Gourmet, professional sommelier Sandro Chiriotti; and famous Italian journalist and restaurant critic Alberto Lupini.

The Days of Piedmont ended with gala dinners, at which Piedmont cuisine was presented; chef Marco Sacco demonstrated a variety of new dishes.

# Jiří Karas’ own original view of his surrounding

*Třebíč* and *Studio* photographic exhibitions by young Czech painter, hosted by Minsk’s University of Culture Gallery, stand out amongst sea of cultural events

By Victor Mikhailov

Jiří Karas Junior has inherited much from his father, also called Jiří, including a sincere love of art. In fact, his father, Jiří Karas, is the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to Belarus,

whose genuine interest in Belarusian culture is widely known.

His son’s creativity is our subject of interest however. What inspired him to call one of his exhibitions *Třebíč* — after the ancient European city? It is a unique example of many centuries of co-existence of Christian

and Jewish cultures. Its Jewish quarter of Zamosti, of over 120 houses, remains almost completely intact, prompting UNESCO to include the city on its protected list. *Třebíč* is the first independent Jewish monument to be located beyond the borders of Israel. Its two ancient synagogues are

true pearls of architecture; the Jewish cemetery’s earliest burial dates back to 1625.

Meanwhile, the Christian monastery of St. Procope was erected in the early 13th century, standing as a prominent monument in Romanesque style (as seen in Moravia).

Most importantly, *Třebíč* is the young man’s native city, where he was born to the famous Czech parliamentarian (the first Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Republic of Belarus - Jiří Karas). He received his education there and is now a third year student at the Film Academy in Czech Písek. *Třebíč* photo exhibition shows us the city of his childhood rather than tourist shots of historical monuments. Its 24 photographs reveal the city’s wonderful tiled roofs and the balconies of typical urban ‘panel’ houses, ancient grave stones and modern park benches, power stations and baroque style palaces.

His *Studio* comprises just six shots, taken during visits to the artistic workshops of famous Belarusian painters last year. We see patriarchs of Belarusian pictorial art: Arlen Kashkurevich, Georgy Poplavsky, Boris Arakcheev and Leonid Dudarenko. Jiří captures an intimacy which allows us to feel that we know his subjects well. Although small, the exhibition is worth viewing.



Photo by Jiří Karas



Jiří Karas and his father at opening of exhibition, hosted by University of Culture Art Gallery

# Singer’s success may be greatly influenced by change of image

Alena Lanskaya to represent Belarus at *Eurovision-2013* in Sweden

By Lyudmila Minakova

More than 80 singers and bands tried to reach the finals of the national selection round for the International Song Contest in Belarus, with ten chosen. Belteleradiocompany organised the competition to select the top performer, with its jury headed by its chairman, Gennady Davydko. Alena Lanskaya’s *Rhythm of Love* received the most audience and jury votes, sending her to Sweden’s hosting of *Eurovision* this coming May, in Malmö.

Last year, Alena suffered great disappointment after being congratulated on winning the selection round for Baku’s hosting of *Eurovision*. However, *Litesound* was sent in her place (after having come in second). Alena’s determination and tenacity have led her to enter the *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk six years in a row, resulting in her Grand Prix win in 2011. Perhaps she’ll enjoy the same success at *Euro-*



Alena Lanskaya to represent Belarus at *Eurovision-2013*

*vision*, winning the hearts of the European audience. This time, her score of 24 points out of 24 possible gave her an easy victory. She has been presented with an award especially made by Ne-

man Glassworks.

Lanskaya’s performance is quite different to last year’s. Gone is the demure, romantic singer in a long dress and flowing hair, sitting on a crescent

to sing her ballad. Instead, she has donned a scarlet mini-dress and an extravagant hairstyle, performing sensual movements while surrounded by four bare-chested men (from *Trend Deluxe* ballet group). Rhythmic and exciting, her song was composed by Leonid Shirin, Yuri Vashchuk (music) and Alexey Shirin (lyrics) and was recorded in London.

“We have talented people who can compose fantastic songs,” asserts Alena. We hope that our song will find appreciation across Europe. Of course, months of rehearsals, costume selections and preparation lie ahead but Ms. Lanskaya is an old hand when it comes to competitions: local and national. After one such event, some years ago, she was advised to go to Minsk’s Spamash recording studio. Now, aged 27, she’s won numerous music competitions in Belarus, Russia, Bulgaria and the USA and is the youngest Honoured Artiste of Belarus.