

# Unique tricks under circus dome amaze public, while clowns make them laugh without words

Belarusian audiences are able to see clowns and other performers, as part of a joint project by the Belarusian State Circus, the Yuri Nikulin Moscow Circus and the Cuba National Circus. The project is unique in gathering the best circus artistes of the world in one arena.

By Lyudmila Minakova

Those lucky enough to go to the Belarusian State Circus on these cold February days have already seen the 'hot' atmosphere which now reigns there. Cuban, Russian and Belarusian artistes demonstrate true wonders of acrobatics, trapeze walking and animal training. Have you ever seen trained badger-dogs synchronously perform commands? Have you ever seen a female acrobat sit on a chair balanced on a rope? Have you ever seen a chimpanzee playing the trumpet? These amazing performances cannot help but take us by surprise.

"Our circus can't fall short of its reputation," emphasises Tatiana Bondarchuk, Director of the Belarusian State Circus. "We should place the bar even higher with each programme. It's no accident that we're implementing another project jointly with the Yuri Nikulin Circus in Moscow and the Cuba National Circus. They are the best circuses in the

world, preserving traditions and performing tricks which quite freeze the heart."

How do you react to an acrobat on stilts performing trampoline somersaults — as presented by the Moscow Circus, headed by Dmitry Sokolov. Nikulin's Circus also boasts orangutans and chimpanzees trained by People's Artiste of Russia Aziz Askaryan. His 'pupils' travesty stage stars, play musical instruments, drive a car and even 'play' with spectators, throwing a hat into the audience.

"I love working in Minsk and like Belarusian audiences. My monkeys also love them," notes Mr. Askaryan. "The Belarusian circus is wonderful. I've travelled a great deal around the world and haven't seen anything better. Our artistes dream of arriving in Belarus, as everything here allows us to work comfortably and conveniently. Each artiste has their own make-up room with washroom and the animals enjoy perfect conditions."

The Cuban artistes also love



Cuban artistes demonstrate miracles of acrobatics and balancing to Belarusian audiences

the Belarusian circus, despite the harsh frosts on Minsk's streets. Their performances cause a real sensation with Belarusian spectators: dark-skinned dancers from the Havana Stars Ballet, a sinuous female acrobat on a low rope and a cheerful clown duo...

"The Cuban artistes are astonishing in their beauty and delicacy," notes Ms. Bondarchuk. "Cuba has preserved 'pure' cir-

cus, where tricks are the major element of each performance; the bright costumes, choreography and contemporary elements so often used by other circuses are secondary."

Although none of the Cubans speak English, the shows haven't suffered; clowns make people laugh without a single word.

"It's difficult to relate the significance of this project, as we

celebrate the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Cuba and Belarus this year," notes the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Cuba to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Alfredo Nieves Portuondo. "This is not just a cultural event; it's a social and political event. Despite distances between states, we can easily get to know more about each other. In fact, this is vital."

## Music and harmony of Chinese hieroglyphs impress visitors



Li Zuo and his works

Visitors to Belarus' National Library unveil world of Chinese calligraphy

Entrepreneur and teacher of Chinese language Li Zuo has a per-

sonal exhibition of calligraphy at the Mobilnaya (Mobile) Gallery of the National Library of Belarus. It features over 60 calligraphic works for original Chinese poems. They

are short in length but rich in content, with rhyming pairs of lines, written to follow ancient traditions.

Li Zuo works at the Department of International Relations of the Belarusian State University and has enjoyed calligraphy as a hobby since childhood. His works have been often recognised at Chinese contests — twice winning gold medals and three times capturing silver.

The exhibition is held under the auspices of the Union of Writers of Belarus and the Confucius Institute, aiming to raise interest in the art of calligraphy and in Chinese culture in general. Chinese calligraphy boasts a 5000 year old history, with the first inscriptions carved on animal bones and carapaces. This beautiful form of writing is now recognised as an art, being able to emotionally influence us with its rich form and diverse styles.

## Multiple parties desire artistic legacy

Kunstmuseum Basel (Switzerland) to return a gouache by Kazimir Malevich to artist's heirs



Kazimir Malevich's painting

In 1927, Kazimir Malevich came to Berlin for several weeks, being given a hall at a major Berlin art exhibition. Unexpectedly, he was called back to Leningrad, leaving about 100 of his art works in Berlin.

In 2010, the artist's heirs reg-

istered a claim for two gouaches and almost 60 drawings against the Swiss Kunstmuseum, which maintains that it acquired the Malevich works honourably — in line with Swiss law. Meanwhile, the artist's heirs stress that Malevich's acquaintances in Berlin had no right to sell his pictures. However, the museum has agreed to return Malevich's gouache *Landscape with Red House*; another — *The Washing Woman* — will remain in Switzerland, alongside around 60 other drawings, which are part of a permanent exhibition.

Malevich's heirs have laid claim to his Berlin works before, leading to them being sent to the New York Museum of Modern Art and to Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum. In both cases, agreements were settled.

Kazimir Malevich lived and worked in Belarusian Vitebsk for some time.