

Musicians to play together

By Olga Putilova

International August of Nesvizh Forum of Chamber Orchestras launches this year

According to the Art Director and Chief Conductor of the State Chamber Orchestra of Belarus, Yevgeny Bushkov, the event is the first of its kind countrywide, aiming to show the individuality and diversity of chamber orchestras. Their repertoire can be vast, as is to be shown at the new festival. Top European groups will be taking part, bringing their own unique style and concert programmes, including showcases for their own national composers.

"I came up with the idea in spring 2012, gaining support from the Deputy Culture Minister. It's vital to continue developing the Chamber Orchestra of Belarus, which was recognised as one of the most accomplished in the USSR, in Vilnius in 1975. There is a lack of recognition for chamber orchestras today, but we hope the festival will rectify this, while showing that Belarusian chamber music rivals that in the rest of Europe," notes Mr. Bushkov.

Historical Nesvizh is to host the grand event, with outside and inside stages. The Orchestra of Lithuania is to take part, while those of Poland and Switzerland are also hoped to attend. The festival actually coincides with the 45th anniversary of the State Chamber Orchestra of Belarus, which will be touring smaller towns in March, with its new Belarus Music Gardens programme. In autumn, it will perform at the Moscow State Conservatory, which will also celebrate the ensemble's jubilee.

Artists and musicians to focus public attention

CIS Cultural Capital project aims to attract more tourists to Mogilev



Exhibition to present Mogilev — Cultural Capital of the Commonwealth 2013 certificate

By Semen Kuleshov

The Deputy Culture Minister, Tadeush Struzhetsky, notes that Gomel received 30 percent more tourists in 2011, when it became the CIS cultural capital, compared to 2010. Similarly, during their time as cultural capitals of

Belarus, Polotsk was visited by 20 percent more people and Nesvizh by 3-fold more (460,000 tourists).

He emphasises, "We hope that the CIS Cultural Capital project in Mogilev will show Belarusian cities how to interact, organise and host festivals and other cul-

tural events, while encouraging international co-operation." Oleg Proleskovsky, Belarus' Information Minister and Chairman of the CIS Council for Humanitarian Co-operation, stresses that Mogilev's status as 2013 CIS cultural capital acknowledges the importance of the city's histori-

cal-cultural legacy, and that of the CIS as a whole.

Mogilev is well known abroad as an industrial centre, exporting goods all over the globe. However, it also boasts a rich historical legacy, having been a significant centre of cultural, religious and enlightening activity for many centuries. It is a hub of Belarusian spiritual traditions.

The city on the River Dnieper already hosts various wonderful cultural events, known domestically and abroad: the *Zolotoy Shlyager* (Golden Hit) International Musical Festival, the *Magutny Bozha* (Mighty God) Festival of Church Music, and the *Mart.Contact* International Youth Theatrical Forum. In addition, Mogilev is one of Belarus' museum centres.

The Maslenitsa Kolyadki holiday — dedicated to Christmas — will close Mogilev's programme as 2013 cultural capital. Belarusian and Russian theatres — including troupes from St. Petersburg and Polonovo (Tula Region) — are to give performances, while modern artists from the Mogilev Region will be putting on an exhibition. The guests would be able to enjoy works by modern artists of the Mogilev Region and 19th century New Year fir tree decorations, as well as unique artefacts and other objects.

The following year will see two centenaries: of famous artist Pavel Maslenikov and of the building which hosts a regional museum in his name.

Katya Zharkova shows entirely different example

Model Katya Zharkova, from Minsk, now lives in New York, taking part in shoots for glossy magazines

Thousands of Belarusian girls no doubt look up to her, so she's keen to let them know that you don't need to be super slim to be a successful model. Her measurements are a curvy 84 cm waist, bust 105cm and 115 cm hips. She's proudly graced several covers and has appeared nude also.

Katya is certainly traditionally tall, at 178cm, but her voluptuous figure is a breath of fresh air in the fashion industry, where anorexia is almost the norm. International attention was drawn to the death of Isabelle Caro, from France, in 2010. At just 34kg, prior to her death, she took part in a campaign to deter others from following in her footsteps. Sadly,

she lost her own battle.

Ms. Zharkova is eager for designers to put aside the trend for extreme thinness on the catwalk and in their advertising campaigns. Of course, they need clothes to hang well but it makes sense for women to aspire to a body shape achievable through healthy living.

Famous fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld caused a stir with his comment that 'jealous fat mothers' were the ones criticising the trend for models being thin. Other top designers seem to agree, noting that clothes won't sell unless they look attractive on slim models. In some European countries, models are forbidden to work unless



Katya Zharkova during a photo session

they've been certified as achieving a healthy weight and, in Israel, glossy magazines are required to reveal which pictures are digitally altered. In the USA, where 10 million women suffer from being underweight, those models deemed dangerously slim are being released from their contracts.

Anorexia is the plague of the fashion industry and, of course,

ordinary girls are affected by the images with which they grow up. The first diagnosis of anorexia was given 100 years ago, with extreme slimness being popular in the 1960s, 1990s and in the mid-late-2000s. Ms. Zharkova is a healthy role model for today's women, of whatever age, proving that beauty does not require extreme sacrifice.

Natural environment admired by artists

By Yelena Pimenova

National History Museum joins forces with Belarusian Union of Artists for Colourful Historical Polesie exhibition

Artists Igor Orlov, Victor Barabantsev, Anatoly Belyavsky, Vladimir Kozhukh, Vladimir Kapshai, Yelena Matrosova, Vyacheslav Murashko, Eduard Rimarovich and Ales Susha liaised with Lyaskovich's Nature Museum last year to organise a wonderful exhibition in praise of Polesie.

Their love for the Pripjat Region has resulted in dozens of canvases celebrating its unique traditions, customs and landscapes. Eastern Polesie is an inexhaustible treasury of Belarusian folklore and crafts, with its rivers and lakes creating a seemingly endless series of island villages. It's a magnet for wildlife and lovers of nature, having inspired scientists, poets and artists for centuries.

The exhibition runs until March 17th.