

# Many could become patrons of art

Belarus' historical and cultural heritage monuments restored with the help of investors

By Yury Chernyakevich

Recently, news agencies reported on Soveiki Palace and Park Estate in the Brest Region's Lyakhovichi District being sold at auction for almost \$200,000, to a Russian entrepreneur. Similar sites in Belarus could fetch similar sums, with interest already evident among foreign businessmen, especially those from Russia.

According to Alexander Lenkov, the Deputy Head of the Culture Ministry's

Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Heritage, regional authorities lack funds to restore ancient buildings registered as state property. Accordingly, four years ago, the decision was made to auction the sites with the intention of buyers investing in their preservation, restoration and renovation.

The Culture Ministry hopes to see all 46 estates find new owners. However, over the past four years, only a dozen have been sold. Of course, each



Purchasing of mansions and palace and park ensembles can be a pragmatic move of patrons

presupposes considerable investments, which will expand local district budgets. Over 150 estates exist countrywide with cultural heritage status, with most situated in the Grodno, Brest and Vitebsk regions. Some are a burden on local authorities, requiring continuous upkeep yet, with investment, they could become true treasures, to rival famous Nesvizh and Mir, helping promote tourism.

Other cultural sites recently auctioned include the Volkovysk District's

Kraski village manor, which sold for around \$100,000 to a Russian entrepreneur; restoration has begun, with the surrounding grounds also developed, to include a hotel and a café, opening within the next four years. The Volkovysk District's former Bokhvitsi dukes' estate, in Podorsk village, has also been sold to a foreign investor, for \$120,000; it is to gain a tourist centre to promote visitors from Belarus and abroad.

Of course, such sums are modest, but a far great-

er amount is required to be 'promised' for the restoration of such sites. Contracts are approved by the Culture Ministry's Department for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Heritage, including strict rules for investors, which may be deterring some. However, purchase is open to any foreign citizen or company, so potential buyers could come from any corner of the world.

The former estate of Duke Umyastovsky, in the Iyve District's Zhemyslavl

village (Grodno Region), is also for sale: often compared with French Versailles. Radzivilimonty Palace and Park Estate, in the Kletsk District, also needs a new host. It previously belonged to the Radziwills: the prominent magnate family of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

It's hoped that domestic and foreign investors will help preserve Belarus' great heritage, for the benefit of future generations and to help attract more tourists to our beautiful country.

## Eurovision — dance style entry

Belarus to take part in Eurovision Young Dancers Competition, hosted by Polish Gdańsk on June 14th

The country will be presented by Yana Shtangey, 18, a third-year student of the Belarusian Choreographic College. In total, representatives of 10 countries will fight for the victory on the stage of the Baltic State Opera, including Armenia, Sweden, Germany, Slovenia, Norway, Ukraine and Poland.

Dancers aged between 16 and 21 years can participate in the competition. Moreover, only solo dancers, who have classical or modern dance

school education with the basic skills of classical ballet, can take part in the dancing contest. During the contest, each participant will perform one solo dance. Music and dance style is chosen at the participant's discretion. Also, a group dance choreographed by the competition's choreographers will be presented. It is performed by the participants, divided into two groups.

The final will see two dancers, who will get the most votes of the jury. The performance will include elements of solo and group dance performances. The winner will be determined by the jury among the participants, who qualify for the final.

## Animated films for children and adults

Best Belarusian cartoons shown in Moscow

The celebration of classic Belarusian cartoons was held at the Friends' Movie Film Forum in the Russian capital, at the end of April. It featured over 40 animated films, for children and adults, in various genres and film lengths, created by masters of the Soviet period and by young an-

imators. In addition, Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine, Georgia and Germany presented cartoons at the festival.

Belarusian animation is considered to have begun in 1971, when Belarusfilm launched its animation studio. Since then, it has created over a hundred animated works, for children and adults.

## Belye Rosy — to be continued

National Belarusfilm Cinema Studio shooting continuation of 1983 folk comedy based on Igor Dobrolyubov's famous film, focusing on younger generation of Khodosy brothers

The plot of the new film sees Andrey Khodos returning to his village to settle on an isolated farmstead, after tiring of life in the big city. However, urban concerns soon catch up with him when a couple of young and enthusiastic businessmen arrive with plans to buy the homes of local residents, with grand construction in mind. To save his fragile world from destruction, Andrey helps his family, delving into his own roots in the process and cementing his relationship with village life.



Moment from a favorite film *Belye Rosy* of Belarusfilm Studio

People's Artist of the Lithuanian SSR Juozas Budraitis is taking the main role, alongside People's Artist of Russia Galina Polskikh, Andrey Merzlikin and Irina Yegorova. The cast includes Honoured Artist of Belarus

Victor Manaev, as well as Belarusian Yulia Smirnova, Pavel Kharlanchuk-Yuzhakov and Sergey Zhbakov. The script has been written by Alexey Dudarev, Alexandra Butor and Yulia Gigel, with Ms. Butor, a graduate of the

Belarusian State Academy of Arts (Alexander Yefremov's studio), is production director.

The full-length film began shooting in March and should appear on screens in spring 2014.

## Classical music endures time

Minsk Spring-2013 cycle of concerts hosted by Belarusian State Philharmonic

This year's musical project was dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the country's largest instrument: the organ sited in the Philharmonic's Main Hall. The

festive programme lasted five evenings, opening with a gala-concert by Belarusian and Russian organists, and included performances by German organist Professor Johannes Geffert, playing music by Johann Sebastian Bach, Nicolaus Bruhns, Charles-Camille Saint-

Saëns, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Louis Vierne.

In late April, the Philharmonic will host a concert by graduates and students of the Music Academy, performing works by Johann Sebastian Bach, and by romantic composers and Belarusian 21st cen-

tury composers. The festival will finish on May 6th with a concert on World Organ Day, dedicated to the 850th anniversary of the famous Notre Dame de Paris. The programme is to include pieces by César Franco, Leon Belman, Olivier Messiaen and Louis Vierne.