

# Last Imperial residence

Exhibition dedicated to 400th anniversary of Romanov dynasty unearths unique exhibits from vaults of Mogilev Regional Local History Museum

By Svetlana Ivanova

Even today, debate continues about the character of Tsar Nikolay II. Some view him as a martyr while others see his excessive gentleness as weakness, believing that reform would have changed the course of history. No doubt, Mogilev played a fatal role in the fate of the Emperor, explains Lyudmila Tomchik, a senior researcher at the museum. She tells us, "In August 1915, after Mogilev became the military capital of Russia, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Nikolay II, came to the General Headquarters. This changed the life of the provincial town and, later, as it turned out, of the whole Russian state."

The exhibition details the visit of the Russian Tsar to Mogilev and, though the idea appeared long ago, it is only this year that the project has really taken shape. In addition to photography, there are unique exhibits, including two works by artist Ivan Dryapachenko: one depicting the dining room in the local governor's house in Mogilev, where the Emperor dined, and the other showing the Tsar's study, in the same building.

Many consider it to be a miracle that the paintings have survived. It is the first time that they are on display, alongside metal cups engraved with the Tsar's por-

trait, and that of his wife, Alexandra Fiodorovna. Such items were distributed generously among subjects on special occasions, but are now considered a rarity.

Mogilev residents have also donated wonderful artefacts: one anonymous donor has given an edition of *Iskra* (Spark) magazine, which has been in the family for many years: released by *Rodnoe Slovo* (Native Word) newspaper in 1912, it is dedicated to the heir, Prince Alexey. He was captured in a variety of poses: resting, walking, and with his parents and sisters. Despite over a hundred years passing, the ink remains clear.

Many photographs exist of the royal family in Mogilev. One shows father and son — both in uniform — sat on a bench. In another, they are in a boat on the Dnieper. Nikolay II stands with officers near the Town Hall and at the railway station. Mogilev residents have handed down stories, such as how the Tsarina gave a simple peasant girl her own coat, in return for supplying the Emperor and his family with milk. As a child, local resident Simeon received a gold coin from the Tsar, coming out of St. Nicholas' Monastery. He kept it all his life and bequeathed it to the monastery. An unusual icon featuring the Tsar's image has even been found behind a wood veneer of one of the oldest buildings in the city and is on show at the exhibition.



Exhibition arouses great interest

## Belarusfilm Studio makes an appeal

National Film Studio to present five works at 66th Cannes International Film Festival



Shot from *Fish Called Impossible-3* cartoon

By Yelena Ponomareva

The Belarusian films won't be participating in the main competition programme; rather, they'll be shown in *Short Film Corner* (established in 2004 to introduce new filmmakers). The forum also includes lectures

and master classes, allowing filmmakers from around the world to establish creative contacts and forge new friendships.

Belarus' cartoon *Fish Called Impossible-3*, by director Alexander Lenkin, has already won various prizes at international festivals, as

has Mikhail Tumelya's *How I Serve the Pan*. Also being screened are the documentaries *Special Theatre*, *Looking for Happiness* by Yekaterina Makhova, *Taken Land* by Yury Timofeev and *Oksana Volkova A Prima Vista* by Natalia Zhamoidik.

The 66th International Film Festival in Cannes opens with *The Great Gatsby*, directed by Australian Baz Luhrmann and starring Leonardo DiCaprio. The main competition features 19 films, including those by the Coen brothers, Roman Polanski and Takashi Miike. The jury is chaired by American legend Steven Spielberg.

In 2012, *In the Fog* by Sergey Loznitsa, shot jointly by Belarusfilm and European film companies, won the FIPRESCI prize (International Federation of Film Critics) as best film in the main competition.

## Internet ticket booking

Tickets to 22nd International Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk Arts Festival available at box offices nationwide

Tickets can be purchased with cash or cards from 400 sales outlets across the Belarusian regions and those with Internet access can even book online. Foreign visitors from Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States, Poland, Bulgaria, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, Greece, Canada and the USA are likely to take advantage of the move.

The Festival launched ticket sales for its 18 Summer Amphitheatre concerts in late May while other tickets are to go on sale in early June.

The major idea of 22nd International Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk Arts Festival is the unity of Slavonic cultures and nations. As is traditional, before the opening and after the closing of the festival solar concerts of star performers will be hosted by the Summer Amphitheatre.

Major traditional events of the festival will be preserved: opening and closing gala-concerts, concerts of art



Lucky owners of precious tickets

masters from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and the Union State and Vitebsk-2013 International Pop Song Performers Contest, as well as international children musical contest, the Day of Youth, theatrical and cinema projects and separate creative events.

At present, negotiations are underway on the participation of famous performers from various countries in the opening gala-concert. The programme of the festival also includes a concert of the National Academic Concert Orchestra of Belarus (under the leadership

of Mikhail Finberg), involving popular performers. Moreover, it's planned to organise various events during festive days: a holiday of folk crafts — Town of Masters, an open regional holiday of traditional weaving — *Linen Lacings*, Belarusian Farmstead holiday, a trade fair of the produce of Vitebsk and Belarusian manufacturers, concerts of popular performers, amateur bands on the city's stage grounds.

The 22nd International Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk Arts Festival will be held from July 11-15th.