

Little known drawings in romantic style

Works by Polish painter Kanuty Rusiecki go on show at Mir Castle

The exhibition features 27 sketches and paintings from the 1844-1846 album, entitled *Novogrudok Through the Eyes of Kanuty Rusiecki*. Opening in late July, the collection also has its own album, released to complement the show, explains the Deputy Director for Scientific and Educational Work at Mir Castle Complex, Andrey Yanushkevich.

Rusiecki's works depict everyday life in Lithuanian and Belarusian towns and villages, offering interesting historical insight. "The book includes a relatively unknown picture of Mir Castle, which is one of earliest showing Belarusian ancient architecture in romantic style," notes Mr. Yanushkevich.

The book features sketches and watercolour paintings, most of which were created during the Polish artist's visit to Novogrudok, Nesvizh, Snov and Mir.

Kanuty Rusiecki (1800-1860) lived and worked in Lithuania, creating works in the styles of classicism and romanticism: mostly landscapes and portraits but some with a religious theme. Over 300 of his works are kept in the Lithuanian Art Museum and are exhibited at the Vilnius Picture Gallery. However, the location of many of his paintings remains unknown.

Breaking competition

Minsk hosts *Battle of the Year* break dancing championship

Teams and solo dancers from Belarus and other CIS states took part, with the best dance team and solo dancer receiving invitations to the popular and prestigious break dancing competition *Battle of the Year* (BOTY), being held in Braunschweig, Germany.

This year, the *Battle of the Year* panel of judges included world famous dancers: repeated winner of international tournaments — Menno (the Netherlands); the winner of more than 50 dance titles — Focus (Finland); and the world dance legend Maurizio (Italy). Bboy Maurizio started dancing in 1984 and, in the early 1990s, participated in the world's first hip-hop tour, sponsored by fashion designer Calvin Klein.

The first *Battle of the Year* was held in Germany in 1990 while the first selection tour in Belarus was organised in 2012. Last year's finals featured a battle between teams from Belarus and Russia on the Sports Palace stage, with Belarus proceeding to the world final in French Montpellier. Our Belarusian dancers, from Hunters break dancing school, were placed 7th out of 19 finalists.

The beauty of balconies

For the third year, Zelva in Grodno Region hosts contest for best balcony in 18th century style, with winner announced in late August, during *Annensky Kirmash Fair*

By Svetlana Sokolova

Where there is a will

The Zelva competition requires residents to create a balcony to be not only beautiful but fitting the festive Fair's atmosphere. Unfortunately, Zelva lacks 18th century buildings so residents and members of the jury must use enthusiasm and imagination. French Rococo style usually proves popular, with residents making their own iron fretwork and spiral curls, decorated with large flowers and fan-shaped shells.

Basket of treats

Last year, the best balcony belonged to Zelva's Lyudmila Rusak, who tells us, "As soon as I saw the advertisement in the local newspaper, I began to prepare. It's not easy matter, as you need to consider the composition and then find or make the necessary details." I ask her how many people took part and whether

a competitive spirit prevailed, as well as what made her entry stand out. She tells us, "There were more than ten participants. Our building alone had three balconies decorated. We paid special mention not only to decorating in a beautiful manner but in old style, using an old samovar, embroidered tablecloths and towels — especially brought from the village — and a suspended cradle. We posed as a family in traditional dress, having just returned from the fair. Above the table, we placed the samovar and various treats: hanging doughnuts, dried mushrooms, and a string of onions." Besides taking tea themselves, the host and hostess lowered a woven basket from the third floor to the pavement on a rope, to share their treats. Colleagues still smile on recalling the picnic.

Storage of old skis

"There is a science in architecture and illumination, looking



Winning balcony from last year's competition

at the possibilities and principles of using light sources," notes architect Vyacheslav Chernatov, Professor of the Architecture of Residential and Public Buildings Chair, at the Belarusian National Technical University. "It is considered that balconies are not well suited to our climate; in apartment buildings, they 'steal' scarce sunlight from lower floors and health officers argue that lack of UV penetration contributes to rickets in children. In the Khrushchev era, when people needed space to store potatoes and dry clothes, balconies appeared on most apartments. It seems preferable to construct French balconies (suitable for flower pots in the warmer months) or bay windows that 'catch' rays from different an-

gles. Architects have been gradually rejecting balconies in Belarus since the 1990s, as seen in the Kamennaya Gorka suburb, using bay windows and French balconies instead."

Sky underfoot

Balconies and loggias, closed on three sides, are usually used as storage areas but those in Barcelona, on buildings designed by the great Catalan Antonio Gaudi, are similar to Venetian carnival masks. Those in Helsinki are like crows' nests and Chicago has glass balconies on the 103rd floor of the Sears Tower, offering incredible views.

This year, citizens of Zelva, as usual, are preparing for the contest, ready for the *Annensky Kirmash Fair*.



You'll never feel bored at *Annensky Kirmash* in Zelva

Grodno wins international jury praise

International *Vasara-2013* Theatre Festival awards Grand Priz to *Queen of Spades*, by Grodno Regional Puppet Theatre

Lithuanian Druskininkai hosted the festival, which is held under the patronage of Rimas Tuminas — the Artistic Leader of the Vakhtangov

Theatre in Moscow. The festival's theme of 'Classics and the 21st Century' aimed to explore the 'deep and fully-fledged co-operation between theatres across Lithuania, Russia, Belarus and other spiritually close countries', according to Mr. Tuminas.

The international jury an-

nounced winners in 11 nominations, and the winner of the People's Choice Award. Individual awards for contributions to theatre and cinema were presented to *Vasara-2013* international jury member Regimantas Adomaitis, alongside Lyudmila Chursina — who pleased the audience with her *Eleanor and Her Men*,

on the last day of the festival.

Thirteen performances were staged in Druskininkai, by theatres from Moscow, St. Petersburg and Orenburg, alongside those from Armenia, Belarus, Lithuania and Moldova. Students of theatrical universities also performed their diploma works.