

Fantastic kingdom of philosopher from Boyary

Pinsk artist Sergey Zhilevich not only paints in the open air around his home but exhibits around the globe and has sold works at well-known international auction house Sotheby's

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Sergey Zhilevich lives in the village of Boyary, in the Pinsk District, and is known by all local residents. They can all direct you to his home. One elderly lady I meet on the street tells me, "Oh, if you want the sculptor's home, go straight ahead and, when you see the court yard filled with figures, you'll know you've arrived." Within a few footsteps, it's obvious that I've found the right location. In the courtyard, there's a 3m wooden statue of the Mother of God, with her baby. In the garden, where you might expect to see apple trees or tomatoes, there are a host of sculptures — each unique and worthy of attention.

It's immediately obvious why Pinsk residents advise a trip to Boyary: the sculptures have the power to move even the coldest of hearts. One is inspired by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's whimsical *Little Prince*, while another, an upturned flower entitled *Found*

of Eternity, arouses nostalgia — remembrances sad and joyful. Near the house, a sculpted water sprite sits near a pond and arbour. All these marvels have been created by one person, making a magical world.

Sergey's home is now included on all local tourist routes, so he's used to welcoming visitors — not only from Belarus but elsewhere around the world. His 4,000 square metre plot is a unique outdoor gallery: a fantastic kingdom! Visitors are fascinated to see the home of a world famous artist; his sculptures are known across the USA and Europe. His *Saint George* was sold at Sotheby's auction house recently, being bought by a UK private collector.

Mr. Zhilevich remains down to Earth: easy to chat to, without any airs or graces. He makes friendships quickly and is happy to share little details about his creativity, plans and ideas. He's also happy to show people his latest works. Visitors to galleries can usual-



Sergey Zhilevich's art studio gathers many visitors

ly only dream of having such a garrulous guide.

Such is Sergey's talent that he can create a work of art from any material to hand: wire, decayed wood, stone or, even, a glass bottle. Using an ordinary silicate block, he can cut out a postmodernist portrait. His mastery is impressive. "My works have been exhibited in Belarus, Spain and Poland but, mostly, in the USA and Germany. I often make them to order for pri-

ate collections in the UK and elsewhere," says Sergey. Certainly, his pieces are in steady demand. It's hardly surprising, as the maestro is always searching for some new way to express himself. "I'm constantly experimenting and searching for something new, so I don't have any particular style. Sometimes, I create abstract works and sometimes use a Cubistic style. However, I've never tried Surrealism," he admits, smiling.

After touring his outdoor gallery, he invites us into his house, where his paintings hang. He has an endless capacity to discuss his works and has now begun a new form of expression: writing poetry. He admits that it's a whole new area for him but he's already published a collection of verse. He tells us, "Poetry transports me, as do the sculptures and pictures I've created over many years. Let's see what happens."

Chronicle of home life

By Anton Krupko

Cinema Amateur. Autumn Dream documentary, by Olga Dashuk, receives special jury prize at 17th Thai Short Film and Video Festival

The international representative cinema forum took place at the beginning of September in Bangkok, with the film from Belarus receiving high praise and recognition. Ms. Dashuk's film follows Anatoly Antonovich Shneider, 82, from Tolochin: the oldest amateur film maker in Belarus. For the past five decades, he has been filming around his home, recording the lives of his neighbours and key events in village life. His films are simple (even naïve) yet sincere and emotional. They provide an invaluable historical resource, chronicling bygone years.

The Thai Film Festival has taken place annually since 1997, with support from Bangkok's Culture and Art Centre, featuring local and international films, and promoting other creative talents.

History through the camera lens

Exhibition by well-known photographer Yuri Ivanov opens at Vitebsk Art Museum

By Yuri Chernyakevich

Between White and Black. Photographic Retrospective of the History of Belarus of the Late 20 — Early 21st Century exhibition gives Vitebsk residents the chance to view the history and culture of Belarus through the camera lens, thanks to 230 photos, in 14 thematic sections. The photos show important historical events, vivid phenomena and well-known representatives of history and culture of Belarus from the 1960s onwards.

Mr. Ivanov is a man of marked individuality, as seen by his huge body of work. He reveals that he once worked for the 'News' (Moscow) press agency, as the staff correspondent for Belarus for some time. He has also been a photojournalist for BelTA, and for 'Belarus' publishing house, as well as for the News, RIA Vesti and RIA Novosti press agencies. He was even Bureau Chief of RIA Novosti in Belarus.



Alexander Kishchenko against *Gobelin of Century*

As a member of official delegations, he attended many important historical events, including being among the select few recording the signing of the well-known Białowieża Agreements in Viskuli at the end of 1991.

One of the key moments of his career was taking part in *One Day in the Life of the USSR* (Collins Publishing, USA): a competition organised by TIME-LIFE Publishing House in 1990. His *Letuchka* was named among

the top photos in the world for 1980-1990. Yuri has also won an award at the prestigious *World Press Photo* contest, organised by The Hague, and prizes at various other national and international competitions — including from the Journalist Union of Belarus. He holds an Honorary Diploma of the Supreme Soviet BSSR and, in 1987, was named among the top 100 photographers worldwide.

Today, Mr. Ivanov heads

the department of photography at *Culture* newspaper and believes he has plenty of vigour remaining! He feels just as dynamic as when he first began his career. Last year, residents of the Minsk, Grodno and Gomel regions saw his exhibition *Between White and Black. Photo Retrospective of the History of Belarus of the Late 20 — Early 21st Century*. As Yuri notes, Vitebsk residents are sure to see more of his exhibitions in future.

In search of treasures of Radziwill family

By Victor Stepanov

Traces of Apostles full-length film, by Sergey Talybov, being released in Minsk

The four part TV series has been created by Belarusian National Film Studio, LLC First Cinema Video Company and CJSC Second National Television Channel. The thrilling adventure follows the Soviet reconnaissance and German Ahnenerbe: each keen to find the famous treasures of the Radziwill family. The story's dual plot line also follows Alevtina, a modern day student of law, who spends her summer in her native town of Nesvizh.

Belarusian Veronika Plyashkevich, Pavel Kharlan-chuk-Yuzhakov, Igor Sigov, Dmitry Mukhin, Oleg Garbuz, and Tatiana Markhel have roles in the film, while Victor Lobkovich is the author and producer. Oleg Sukhamer has written the film script.

The Belarusian premiere was screened in July, at the *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk, as well as being broadcast by the Rossiya TV-channel in May.

Crimean entourage of folk music

By Sergey Ivanov

Belarusian singer Dmitry Sergeev performs at 9th Eastern Bazaar — an international folk and pop singing TV contest

The international festival took place on the coast of the Crimean Peninsula, in the city of Sudak, with participants from 25 countries, including Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Greece, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Spain. Belarus was represented by Dmitry Sergeev, a soloist with the Youth Variety Theatre and teacher at the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts — in the vocal department.

The event saw each participant sing three songs in folk-pop style in their native language, aiming to support talented singers of popular and folk music, while preserving and developing national traditions and expanding international creative ties. The event promotes peace, friendship, mutual understanding and strengthening of cultural-spiritual co-operation between the West and East.