

Ancient legend retold

Full-length adventure film *Footprints of Apostles*

By Nadezhda Lepesheva

Language barrier

Igor Sigov plays German officer Otto Wagner, necessitating him speaking in German: a true challenge. With much of the film in this language, the actors had to learn to speak like true Aryans, with the help of teachers and a translator. Igor tells us, "There was too much German language!" It's really difficult to act and remember German at the same time but we had good teachers, who achieved ideal pronunciation. The shooting scenes are excellent, as are the scenes with swords; dramatic fighting was my favourite subject at the academy."

Death trick

Others besides Igor Sigov experienced difficulties with the German language: partially forgotten since school. Yevgeny Ivkovich also played a German in the film, and faced similar difficulties, although he remembers greater challenges. "It's not the language that's terrible," he says, laughing. "Being blown up is worse — or, rather, it is for the stuntman. There was an occasion when our stuntman was almost shot, due to a misunderstanding between the director and I. On one take, I thought he had whispered 'shoot'; in fact, he'd ordered the opposite! Thank God, it



Shooting for TV serial *Footprints of Apostles* takes place on the streets of Grodno

was a blank, which flew past his ear."

What is the film about?

It's not simply the history of Soviet and German intelligence services in opposition; it tells of the partisans and of the terrible killing of Jews in ghettos. We see the lives of those who protected our most precious treasures and see the echoes of the past, which continue to resonate today. Each scene follows an-

other, as if through a kaleidoscope. From the first minutes, you worry about young lad Heinrich, who manages to avoid being shot by a miracle. Years later, as a young adult, he is working for the Soviet intelligence service, sent on an expedition with German scientist Otto Wagner, to explore the tunnels below Nesvizh Castle. Wager is keen to locate the mysterious golden apostles for the Fuhrer; once belonging to Genghis Khan

and Alexander the Great, they will bring power and prestige to the Third Reich.

A parallel modern day plot tells of young Alevtina, who goes to visit her grandmother in Nesvizh, hearing the story of the Radziwiłł treasures. This inspires her to explore...

Of course, some of the twists of the plot deserve to be discovered first hand, so we won't reveal too much! The thriller has no trouble in capturing the imagination and is

likely to inspire audiences to read Andrew Aalvik's novel. We'll simply say that the film embraces a great many emotional themes connected with war, loyalty and the importance of wise choices. With its open ending, we are left to decide much for ourselves. Everyone who sees the film is sure to have their own opinion but we'll leave you to decide. Watch and ponder; your soul will respond with its own answers.

Favourite films for children and adults

By Andrey Suprunyuk

Museum of Belarusian Cinema History screening cartoons from Belarusfilm animation archive

The *Belarusian Cartoon Panorama. 40 Years on Screen* programme is suitable for all ages, showing the animated heritage of the country. Every Saturday for a year, audiences will see cartoons screened in chronological order, starting with those from the 1970s.

The initial part of the programme begins in September, featuring works by pioneers Vladimir Golikov and Marta Lubyankova, who are invited to the opening ceremony. In the first month, ten cartoons will delight audiences, dating from 1972-1977. The project is being realised with the Belarusian State Archive of Film, Photography and Sound Recording.

Belarusian animation is considered to begin in 1972, when Belarusfilm started making cartoons. Since then, more than 100 have been produced, for children and adults. Old celluloid has been replaced by computer technologies, and the studio has the capacity to make seven 10-13-minute films annually.

Music under ancient walls

Sophia Cathedral concert hall opens 31st season

By Igor Svetlov

In September, one of Europe's top halls hosted the Belarusian State Chamber Orchestra — conducted by Honoured Artist of Russia Yevgeny Bushkov and featuring outstanding Polotsk organist Ksenia Pogorelaya. The programme comprised two concerts for the organ with the František Xaver Brixi Orchestra and Mendelssohn's *Bartholdy Symphony #10*.

Formed in 1968, the Minsk Chamber Orchestra (as it was then known) gave its first concert at Sophia Cathedral in 1983, conducted by well-known Russian composer and organist Oleg Yanchenko, as well as by Yuri Tsiryuk and Piotr Vandilovsky. Today, the Art Director and Chief Conductor of the Orchestra is Hon-

oured Artist of Russia Yevgeny Bushkov.

Ksenia Pogorelaya is a laureate of international competitions and one of the brightest Belarusian organists and pianists, giving up to 300 concerts annually. She helps organise the *Zvany Safii* (Sophia Bells) International Organ Festival and takes part in the *Masterpieces of World Organ Art* project, as well as organ festivals across Western Europe. She has also made recordings for Belarusian radio and television.

The Sophia Cathedral concert hall is marking its 30th anniversary this year, having hosted its first event on February 19th, 1983. In 1985, Czech company Rieger Kloss installed a tailor-made organ which has become an integral part of the interior of Sophia Cathedral, drawing



The beauty of Sophia Cathedral

attention from professional and amateur musicians.

The Sophia Cathedral concert hall is among Europe's best and has welcomed musicians from 25 countries, playing at over 300 concerts of organ and chamber music annually. For 25 years, the

international festival of early and modern chamber music has aroused keen interest among not only Polotsk residents but numerous guests. The International *Zvany Safii* Organ Festival is the only international festival of organ music in Belarus.

Knightly tournament below ancient walls

By Andrey Suprunyuk

6th International Festival of Medieval Culture Novogrudok Castle-2013 held in early September

The Department of Ideological Work, Culture and Youth Politics, at the local District Executive Committee, tells us that the event began with a solemn procession of participants — from the knightly camp to Novogrudok's central square. About 300 knights and artists from 20 knightly clubs across Belarus, Russia and Ukraine took part in the international festival. Russian clubs Aridan, Russian Banner and Phoenix were joined by Ukrainian club Azgard and Belarusian clubs Silver Pegasus, West Crown, Wild Hunt and many others.

The procession was followed by the solemn opening of the festival and presentation of knightly clubs, before the first joust took place in the city square. This was ac-

companied by fire shows, by the Kiev Alentrada Historical Dance Theatre. The tournament ended with buhurt: large scale battles recreating the historical battles against the walls of Novogrudok Castle. An archery tournament, organised by the Guild of Archers of Belarus, was held on the same day.

In the evening, the ceremony of Mindaugas' coronation took place, as did a huge concert featuring Alentrada, rock groups *Jahkey* and *Aillion*, and well-known Belarusian singer Piotr Yelfimov. The first festival day ended with a fire show.

The next day was marked by a major jousting tournament, with the participation of the best knights from Belarus and abroad, on Zamkovaya Hill. Master classes in dancing and demonstration performances by archers delighted visitors. The event finally concluded with the *Farewell to Legends* concert.