

Icon-painting heritage of four nations

About 100 works of art are presented in Minsk at the *Orthodox World. The Image of Christ in the Iconography of Eastern Europe Countries* exhibition



By Andrey Semenov

A unique exhibition — *Orthodox World. The Image of Christ in the Iconography of Eastern Europe Countries* — opened on September 18th at the National Art Museum in Minsk. It is dedicated to a significant event; the 1025th anniversary of the Christianisation of Kievan Rus, which the orthodox world celebrates this year. Its opening also coincides with another important anniversary for Belarus, namely the 35th anniversary of arch-flamen services of Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, the Patriarchal Exarch of all Belarus.

The exposition presents about 100 works of art from the late 14th-early 19th century from collections of nine



The exhibition of unique icons attracts visitors to the museum

museums in four countries: Russia — the State Tretyakov Gallery and the Russian Icon Museum (Moscow), Ukraine — the National Kiev-Pechersk Historical and Cultural Preserve (Kiev), Serbia — the National Museum in Belgrade, Belarus — the museum funds of the Ancient Belarusian Culture Department of the Centre of Research in Belarusian Culture, Language and Literature of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Art Museum, the National Polotsk Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve and the Grodno State Museum of Religious History. The Church Historical Museum of Belarusian Orthodox Church created in May of this year in Minsk, donated divine service vestments, relics, and a number of items of personal devotion of the Metropolitan Filaret for display in this exhibition.

The exhibition is located in three

halls. The icons placed in the first hall are devoted to Christ's birth and his miracles. In the second hall there are icons which tell of Christ's life leading to the crucifixion. The third hall contains icons depicting the faces of the Disciples and other followers of Christ.

Visitors to the exhibition will be able to see such masterpieces of orthodox iconography as the 15th century Deesis (Deisis) Tier from the Tretyakov Gallery, the late 17th century piece Ascension of Jesus Christ from the National Kiev-Pechersk Historical and Cultural Preserve, The Transfiguration (circa 15-16th century) from the National Museum in Belgrade and the 1678 work of master Georgius — Christ Pantocrator from the collection of the National Art Museum of Belarus.

The purpose of this original cultural project is to display the originality and kinship of spiritual roots

of the Orthodox Slavic people. The icon-painting heritage of these territorially close regions, with centuries-old history, is shown in a single space. Icons from different countries, for the first time shown together, embody of the idea of conciliarism of the Orthodox world, with the common thread, the image of Jesus Christ, to unite them.

According to Vladimir Prokoptsov, the Director General of the National Art Museum, a number of other activities will be held in the museum: Orthodox Church chants will be played, experts will discuss the role of Orthodox iconography in history and meetings with priests and art critics will take place. On 10th October, the 35th anniversary of arch-flamen services of Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, the Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus will also be celebrated here.

Unveiling unique pages of history

By Dmitry Svetlov

Exhibition devoted to the 150th anniversary of the uprising of 1863-1864 opens at the National History Museum

Material for the exposition has been obtained from a Polish exhibition, from the archives of the National History Museum of Belarus as well as from private collections. Dorota Lewandowska, the author of the exhibition and a research worker at the Main Archives of Ancient Documents in Warsaw, said that the exhibition aims to show, not so much the uprising of 1863-1864 itself, but the people who participated in it. "It was important to us to portray the people who had struggled for independence. You see a lot of young faces, people that fought against their enemies despite their fear. But we have also shown those who were against the uprising," she commented.

The exposition is split into two

thematic parts. In the first section, visitors become acquainted with the items from the Polish exhibition, prepared by the Main Archives of Ancient Documents together with the General Directorate of the State Archives and other Polish archives. Manuscripts and printed documents, iconographic materials and photographs are presented here. On stands, which display the points of view from Polish scientists about the events of 1863-1864, are placed photographs from the National Digital Archives of Poland, exhibits from their artistic crafts section and historical valuables from the Historical Museum of Warsaw.

The second section consists of local material which has been gathered by the National History Museum of Belarus. These include graphic arts, phaleristic (medal) collections sphragistic (seals and signets) pieces and other pieces of the mid-19th century.

Magical art of dancing performed by *Sozhski Karagod*

Gomel hosts 7th International *Sozhski Karagod* Festival of Choreography

By Yuri Pinchuk

Yekaterina Degtyareva, the Acting Head of the Department for Ideological Work, Culture and Youth Issues, for Gomel City Executive Committee, tells us that the contest involved over 20 groups — from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Latvia, Serbia, India and elsewhere. The festival featured around 2,500 people — an impressive figure — and was hosted by Tsentralny Stadium, in the regional centre.

The opening night featured a magical show inspired by the four elements: fire, water, earth and air. As ever, a fire drama was organised, as was a contest of ballroom dancing,



Festival magic of dance

ing, entitled Golden Lynx. Both events always enjoy great popularity with audiences. The jury was headed by Artistic Leader and Chief Ballet Master of Khoroshki Dance Company, Valentina Gaevaya.

Various other Gomel venues also took part, promoting the wonderful art of dancing, and the event

finished with festive fireworks in each of Gomel's districts. Residents also celebrated city day, with various cultural and sporting sites opening especially in time for the event. Ms. Degtyareva notes that an arts school has been launched in one Gomel district, alongside a Palace of Water Sports.