

# The distorted world of modern fashion

Irina Khanunik-Rombalskaya presents provoking dolls at Minsk's University of Culture Art Gallery: *MONEYkenshchitsy-Iznanka*

Fourteen eccentric dolls are on display, provocative in their hypertrophied proportions and grotesque beauty. Rather than walking dogs, they boast ironic decorations and accessories, made from vintage fabrics and lace, silver, fur and beads. There's even a camera from 1935.

"They provoke extreme reactions — both positive and negative. Each captures a sense of loneliness and pain at being judged only by their attractiveness. The idea behind the dolls is complex and emotional," notes Natalia Barsukova, the Director of the University of Culture Gallery.

Irina notes that the exhibition comes close to her birthday and that it's a real novelty to have so many people attend her 'celebra-

tions'. The dolls are accompanied by photos of famous beauties: Miss Belarus-2008 Olga Khizhinkova; Miss World Photo Model-2011 and the First Vice Miss of Seven Continents in 2011, Inessa Kuntsevich; as well as top Belarusian model Kristina Kuchinskaya. There is even a photo of Irina.

Honourable guests at the exhibition included Italian footwear designer Maurizio Iacopini, who is popular with US First Lady Michelle Obama and actress Jessica Alba. He'll soon be presenting his collection in the capital. He tells us, "This is my first visit to Minsk. I've heard much about Belarusian people and am delighted by your culture and desire to progress forward."

The exhibition runs from February 6th-13th.



TV-host, model Irina Khanunik-Rombalskaya, with her dolls

## Patterns dear to heart

**Slutsk sashes on display at Maxim Bogdanovich Literary Museum in Minsk**

For one day only, the *Our Treasures. Slutsk Belts* exhibition (in the photo) allowed visitors to admire the unique and rare treasures: one continuous belt and two halves. "Only eleven continuous belts are held by Belarusian museums," notes curator Mikhail Baranovsky, the Director of Belaruskaya Khatka (a branch of the Maxim Bogdanovich Literary Museum).

He tells us, "Various museums have continuous belts, as well as halves; sometimes, even fragments go on display. We have a true collection of Slutsk belts." The treasures are a source of national pride, being intricately woven from delicate gold and silver silken threads. Some belts were 4.5m long and could be up to 50cm wide.

Unfortunately, the weaving technologies are now completely lost. Belarus' 2012-2015 *Slutsk Belts* state programme aims to revive traditional Slutsk belt production — for sale as souvenirs — while promoting those bygone skills.

The brief exhibition kicks off the *Relict* cultural-educational project, which hopes to draw public attention to the most precious items from the Maxim Bogdanovich Literary Museum. Four such events are scheduled for this year.

## Audience waiting for bright parties

By Alexander Svetlov

**One of best tenors of modern times, Akhmed Agadi, to perform at Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus**

A leading soloist of the Mariinsky Theatre will perform the party of Vodemon in Piotr Tchaikovsky's romantic *Iolanthe*, as well as the part of Cavaradossi in *Giacomo Puccini's Tosca*. The Honoured Artist of Russia, People's Artist of Tatarstan and owner of the highest theatrical award of Russia — Golden Mask in 'Best Male Role' nomination — Akhmed Agadi perform on many famous stages. He took part in performances of the Russian Bolshoi Theatre, the Netherlands Opera, the Royal Danish Opera, the Budapest State Opera, the Strasbourg Opera and the Colon Theatre in Buenos Aires.

Akhmed Agadi is a permanent stage partner of Anna Netrebko, Maria Guleghina and other prominent opera stars. The singer tours much and he has already performed in France, the UK, Holland, Denmark, Austria, Belgium, Latvia, Argentina and Turkey. In 1998, he was recognised best singer at the Fiodor Shalyapin International Opera Festival in Kazan. He took part in opera festival in Baden-Baden where he performed the parties of Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*) and Rudolf (*La Bohème*) under the guidance of Valery Georgiev.

## Museum quarter being created in Vitebsk

In 2013, Vitebsk continues working on creation of the museum quarter that will be located in Kalinin Street — almost in the centre of the city

Museums will occupy three buildings that are part of the historical and architectural heritage. There will be the Museum of Vitebsk People's Art School History, the Museum of Yury Pen and Marc Chagall's Art Centre. Restoration of all three buildings has been included into the regional and city investment

programmes.

The concept of the Museum of Vitebsk People's Art School History, created by Marc Chagall and Kazimir Malevich, has already been developed. The debates on how the museum of the teacher and mentor of such celebrated artists as Marc Chagall, Ossip Zadkine, El Lissitzky,

Solomon Yudovin will look like, are still ongoing. However, one thing is already known for sure: there will be also paintings by Yury Pen from the Vitebsk Regional Museum of Local History funds. This is logical, since this museum complex will also include Marc Chagall's Art Centre.

According to the Head of the

Culture Department at the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee, Larisa Olenskaya, the creation of the museum quarter in the city centre with well-developed recreation infrastructure will attract visitors while creating conditions for further development of tourism in the city.

## Honourable mission possible

First socio-cultural TV channel — Belarus 3 — launched

The new TV channel is to broadcast works united under the theme of *My Belarus*. The country's best TV documentaries and films, alongside theatrical performances and concerts of classical and modern music, are to be shown. One programme is *Secrets of the Soul* (about people's lives) while another is a socio-cultural project entitled *Di@blog*.

Belarusian language programmes will prevail, accounting for around 70 percent of broadcasting, but Russian language programmes are also planned. The best domestic and foreign



films and soap operas, including those based on classical literary works, are also to be screened on

Belarus 3.

The country's first digital TV channel will be accessible

by 96 percent of the population, according to the Ministry for Communications and Informatisation. "This is a new format, as part of the transition from existing analogue TV. Viewers can still watch on analogue sets, but most new TVs are equipped with digital tuners. Over the next two years, we'll introduce digital television nationwide," explains the General Director of Belarus 3, Victor Mayuchy.

Belarus 3 is operated by the National State TV and Radio Company, aiming to promote our culture and intellectual values through modern media.