

Light image in fashion nowadays

Which hairdo to choose this season

By Natalia Berestovitskaya

Hair fashion has its own rules, followed avidly by those keen on making a good impression and expressing themselves via their appearance. Thoughts are already turning to Christmas and New Year, with people wondering how best to wear their hair. The Belarusian national hairdressing team has recently returned from the World Championship in Paris, which brought together 58 states. Belarus was represented by 10 professionals in the team event, with Inna Chaikovskaya winning a silver medal for her 'Nail Fantasy Design'. Yekaterina Yasintseva came fourth in the men's 'Full Fashion Look'.

Having returned from France, our team shares their views on the latest trends and innovations of this season's hairdressing art. "Speaking

of fashionable hair trends, waves, curls and 'big hair' are in," notes Natalia Khodanova, an international category jury and the team coach. "Curls are always feminine, perfect for those wishing to create a sexy image. Elegant curls undoubtedly conquer the hearts of men, while 'big hair' is great on long-haired beauties."

"Today's hairdos are quite natural, moving away from the pomposity of baroque style: a hot trend a few years ago. Light images are in fashion now," notes Anastasia Yatkova, an international class master and an absolute champion of Belarus and Russia (ranked among the top ten European and world masters). "Wedding hairstyles should be ethereal, perhaps using subtle decorations. Everything should be transparent, delicate and lacy."

Natural hair colours are also



Creativity in hairdressing is always appreciated; it was a 'must' at the contest

popular at the moment. Natalia Khodanova tells us that blonde girls are still in fashion, but that tones of auburn — from light golden to chestnut brown — are gradually increasing in popularity. Hair cuts are

well defined and regular, with variants of the blunt bob on trend.

"Men's styles are strict, stressing masculinity," continues Ms. Yatkova. "However, if you are a true rebel, looking for something different and

ready to experiment, you can embrace creativity. This is always successful. Express your individuality and don't be afraid to be yourself. Be natural while creating your own image."

Ladies prefer hot men

How men in full vigour can overcome their mid-life crisis

By Polina Lokhmanenko

Minsk theatre goers have been much impressed by the spectacular *Ladies' Night* show, produced by Yevgeny Yershov. It honoured ballet master Galina Shelenkova and was based on a script written by Jacques Collard, Anthony McCarten and Stephen Sinclair, whose works have been staged all over the globe.

At first sight, the show's plot is simple. A bunch of typical American guys — steel workers by profession — lose their jobs as a result of cut-backs, without any hope of finding new employment. Their depression is of true male character: they go drinking, get into fights and argue loudly with each other. Meanwhile, their wives, learning that their menfolk have lost their jobs, take the children and leave. Every day, the guys gather at their favourite bar, drink beer and discuss how to find a way out of this 'pit of self-loathing'. From time to time, they look at the job adverts in the papers, with no success.

Eventually they find an advert for male strippers, with entrance tickets costing \$200 per person. They soon realise that this could be the answer to their dilemma. Of course, at first, it all seems a joke — a job hardly worthy of brutal steel workers. How can they dance in front of a crowd of excited women? However, life is cruel and, at the end of their tether, they make a vital decision, choosing to take up stripping.

The performance is full of humour and, although its central characters are men, offers women a wonderful opportunity to learn what men talk about when they gather to-



Scene from *Ladies' Night* performance

gether. The show destroys the classical stereotypes regarding theatre and should appeal to sophisticated theatre lovers and ordinary people alike. The entertainment ends with a surprising strip dance by these expressive and talented actors.

The troupe unites various Minsk theatres, who have the audience crying with joy during the last thirty minutes, despite the men dancing being far from young. In my view, it's a performance about women, who are so beloved. Their presence in the show is invisible but it's clear that the men's actions are for the sake of love.

Belarusian Internet forums for theatre lovers are full of exalted reviews of the show. Those who've seen it advise everyone to buy a ticket and speak of going again themselves. No doubt, its success is deserved; it has been in rehearsal for nine months. The premiere took place at Minsk Concert Hall's Main Hall and was an unprecedented sensation, gath-

ering a huge audience. The show was initially staged in Mogilev and, after success there, was brought to the capital. Below are some reviews from the Internet.

Yulia: *This is a wonderful commercial project; everything is of the best, yet without any hint of intellectual pomposity or psychological depth! All is perfect: actors, producers, artists and makeup. The producer deserves the highest praise for his boldness!*

Masha: *This is the best performance staged in recent times! We are tired of conservative and academic shows, which are boring. This performance gives us fantasy! A new genre has been born before our eyes. Never before have I laughed so much. I feel ease and joy in my soul.*

Valeria: *I've seen much in my life but this is the first time I've been treated to such a delicate and 'tasty' show in Minsk. Thank you. I think I'd like to go again in a couple of months!*

Songs of ancestors

By Olga Shavela

Belarusian folk songs preserve many characteristics of our ancient culture, passed from generation to generation via live singing rather than being recorded

Participants of the GUDA Belarusian folk band have studied the techniques of such national traditions, collecting songs during folklore expeditions to Belarusian villages. Before one of the band's rehearsals, I talked to its members about the past and the future of traditional folk songs in Belarus.

Ceremonial songs account for a considerable part of your repertoire. Why are they so attractive?

Natalia Kravtsova: *They've inherited huge positive power.*

Anna Yemeleva: *These songs boast meditative elements in the structure of their melodies and verses, alongside repetition. They aim to bring human beings into harmony with themselves and with nature.*

Victoria Mikhno: *Belarusian ceremonial folklore is the most ancient layer of our nation's culture.*

Olga Yemelyanchik: *Archaic ceremonial folklore is of primary importance in researching the roots of the Belarusian ethnos.*

Why are Belarusian folk songs unique?

Anna Yemeleva: *The songs are unique in their archaic verses and melodies, which have been preserved until today. Such material in Western Europe is found only in museums and archives. Today, musical works are primarily performed on stage and for the audience. Our ancestors sang songs together not only during rituals but as they fulfilled household duties: baking a 'caravaï' loaf, going to the field or gathering crops. There were neither performers nor spectators: all were participants.*

Natalia Kravtsova: *These songs are unique in their sound, since deep breathing is required; it's an acquired skill. Obviously, no microphones were used, yet songs were heard even in neighbouring villages. On one of our expeditions, we were told that future wives were selected depending on the strength of their voices; a strong voice meant that a young girl was hard-working and physically strong.*

Do you add anything to the verses or melodies?

Natalia Kravtsova: *No, we try to preserve the traditions, learning songs by listening to the voices of old women. We have several songs with arrangements, but we only sing on stage without musical accompaniment, following ancient folk tradition. Belarusian ceremonial singing is primarily female and has no musical accompaniment.*



Traditions and modernity

What are the prospects for the development of folk music in Belarus?

Lyubov Sivurova: *Today, many bands combine folk rhythms with rock or jazz. We're using traditional singing methods. We enjoy this and we aren't going to move away from this path. Moreover, we receive positive feedback from our listeners; it's as if their genetic memory awakens. Today, many young people are keen to learn more about traditional music and dancing.*

Natalia Kravtsova: *We show people how their ancestors lived while involving them in traditional dancing and games. Our fellow countrymen's interest in the past is stirring, as is their awareness of their place within ancient culture.*