

Ability matched by style

Minsk is captured by fashion boom, with several catwalks simultaneously demonstrating autumn-winter collections at Belorussian Fashion Week

Thirst for recognition

Belarus has already produced several designers able to lecture at the largest fashion industry centres. Among them are Alexandra Budnik (lecturing at Barcelona's European Institute of Design), Tatiana Plaks (Parisian Berso Studio) and Sergey Nester (Rome).

Over the past year, more promising designers have made names for themselves: Olga Borodey, Maria Boyarovskaya, Yekaterina Burak, Leor Gofman, Anna Dragotsennaya, Yulia Latushkina, Natalia Lyakhovets, Yavazhina Miklashevich, Yekaterina Safonova and Apti Eziev. All desire recognition, with some already earning fame. Leor Gofman has been invited to the National History Museum to show his works — a true honour for a young designer. Some are showing at Berlin's Lafayette Gallery, giving a joint demonstration of French and Belarusian fashion at this authoritative centre of beauty; it's a real breakthrough.

In early May, masters from London, Berlin, Milan, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Vilnius, Riga and Moscow demonstrated their collections at Minsk's Palace

of Sports. In reply to Belarusian hospitality, Berlin's Lette-Verein Fashion Design School invited designers Darya Kucheiko and Tatiana Tur for internships, while Irina Tereshchuk was invited to co-operate with the University of Wales and Vilnius Academy of Arts.

Fighting shadows

For the second time, Belorussian Fashion Week (BFW) has made an attempt to bring some designers out of the shadows; until recently, they were known exclusively to a narrow range of clients domestically. Yanina Goncharova, who heads the BFW project, is convinced that she has managed to organise 'a fully-fledged fashion week, including educational seminars, show rooms, catwalks and parties.' "At the BFW, Lena Tsokalenko and Olga Samoschenko asserted themselves as Belarusian specialists, having already presented their collections in Moscow," she notes.

Lyudmila Labkova, Lyudmila Tarakanova and duo Tamara Goridovets and Tatiana Yefremova also impressed the audience at the event, which was also attended by Russian actor Alexey Panin, presenter Uncle Vanya, and



Belorussian Fashion Week helps designers demonstrate their talents

TV hosts Nina Bogdanova and Irina Khanunik-Rombalskaya. These celebrities lent the fashion week an 'official' status for sceptical members

of the public.

Minsk can hardly be called a fashion capital but it's important to follow trends. Such forums as Belorussian

Fashion Week help designers outline Belarusian designs and find their own place in the profession.

By Victor Andreev

Feelings influencing concept

Mogilev's Pavel Maslenikov Regional Art Museum hosts personal exhibition of ceramics by famous Belarusian sculptor Valery Koltygin

The exhibition showcases over 80 pieces created by the master over the last three years as part of his *Junctions* series. Through these philosophical miniatures, he endeavours to show the journey of life, our fate and destination.

"Each person has their own burdens to bear and their own decisions to make," noted Mr. Koltygin during the solemn opening of the exhibition. "Those who wish to express something through art always try to comprehend their creative process, analysing and understanding themselves from beginning to end, against the background of our subjective universe. We are both creator and lead character simultaneously. Having analysed my creativity, I've come to the conclusion that I've always been at an intersection of feelings while searching for figurative solutions. This has guided the conceptual vision of this show and my artistry on general."

Mr. Koltygin's *Palettes* triptych is on show for the first time. "When I was young, I used to gather artistic palettes, where the chaotic mixture of paints sometimes created unique images and original colours and shades. I've tried to reflect this in my ceramic palettes, using various reprints, 3D plastic models and drawings," he notes.

Muses gather in Nesvizh for festival

Town brings together famous musicians, artists and scientists in May for 16th time

By Lyudmila Minkevich

Belarusian muses traditionally congregate in Nesvizh's ancient park, with the busts and sculptures of prominent public figures, patrons of arts and artists from the Radziwiłł family looking down from above. The atmosphere of the luxurious palace and estate, under a pure forget-me-not blue sky, has been unique for the past 16 years. The artistic and enlightening *Muses of Nesvizh* festival is a long-awaited holiday for local residents, inspiring similar events countrywide.

Each year, Nesvizh brings together various forms of artistic initiative: theatre, painting and music. The National Academic Concert Orchestra, conducted by Professor Mikhail Finberg, performs classical works by ancient masters, as well as contemporary pieces and pop music — by Belarusian and foreign

composers. Each year, the maestro and his musicians prepare a new programme, with Nesvizh residents being the first to enjoy it.



Song and Jazz gala concert ends Muses of Nesvizh-2011 holiday of arts

"Nesvizh at the Centre of Europe has been hosted by the town's cultural centre for the second time," notes Mr. Finberg. "Last year, the concert was dedicated to Chopin. This time, the string orchestra

prepared *Seasons of the Year*, embracing works by Vivaldi, Piazzolla and Tchaikovsky, with the *Birthday* concert as its prologue. We've honoured

the names of Belarusian composers from the 19th and 20th centuries, whose jubilee anniversaries we're celebrating this year. You won't hear this music at the Philharmonic or on the radio."

Nesvizh's Town Hall hosted a solo concert by Vladimir Soltan (clarinet), a laureate of international contests and a scholarship holder of the Spe-

cial Fund of the President. He is the son of the outstanding Belarusian composer. A great pop and jazz gala concert finished this bright artistic holiday.

"Undoubtedly, this holi-

day would have been impossible without state support," believes the maestro. "Over these years, a special layer of listeners has grown and the level of music has considerably enhanced. This festival has become a foundation for opening similar events in other towns. Today, the National Orchestra conducts around 130 festivals in various Belarusian towns. Two are held in Chernobyl affected regions: the district centres of Chechersk and Khoyniki."

The festival has become a tradition — part of the history of Nesvizh. Those who attended the first concert of the *Muses of Nesvizh* now bring their children and grandchildren; Anna Sen of Nesvizh this year visited the event with her six year old grand-daughter, Dasha. She tells us, "I annually visit the *Muses of Nesvizh* and never miss a performance. It's my second time here with Da-

sha, who will start school this year. However, she already knows something about art, attending dance lessons and musical school."

The Chairman of Nesvizh's District Executive Committee, Ivan Krupko, tells us about local authorities' plans for the development of the town. "Nesvizh isn't standing still. At present, documents are being prepared relating to the reconstruction of the Roman Catholic Church of God's Body, with the Radziwiłł's Palace awaiting its opening. Exhibitions are currently taking place in its 13 halls, with construction works due to finish by July 1st. A hotel and a restaurant will become operational and, in December, the palace will open fully. A number of concerts are then planned, with a gala concert by the Opera Theatre scheduled for 25th June. Maybe, the 17th *Muses of Nesvizh* will also be organised there."