

Tourists to enjoy concerts during country travels

In late August, medieval castles in Krevo, Lyubcha and Mir join Zhilichi Palace in opening museum exhibitions and hosting musical festivals

By Viktor Korbut

Mir Castle and the town of Lyubcha are to host an unusual festival from August 27th-28th, welcoming members of two old families: the Nabokovs and the Svyatopolk-Mirskis. It will be the first time since 1939 that the families have visited, although they owned estates in Mir and Lyubcha before WW2. The *Nikolay Nabokov's Memory Festival* is dedicated to their ancestor, the composer, who became famous after moving to the USA. He was born in Lyubcha and was cousin to writer Vladimir Nabokov and related to the Svyatopolk-Mirskis — who began restoring Mir Castle, with all works eventually finished last year. Help was given by the Belarusian state and the Castle is now on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Nikolay wrote the first American ballet, while composing scores for ballets staged by George Balanchine's Russian Ballet of Monte Carlo, as part of Sergey Dyagilev's *Russian Seasons*. He also wrote several oratorios, symphony half-phrases and piano-forte pieces; these are to be performed for the

first time, in Lyubcha and Mir, by famous Belarusian musicians. The event will also feature a film about the composer's life and work.

The National Commission for UNESCO has joined the National Art Museum in initiating the Festival, which is to be held annually. Among its honourable guests this year will be Princess Irene Antoinette Stanislaus and Maria Svyatopolk-Mirski (direct heirs of the Svyatopolk-Mirskis) and Irene Antoinette Stanislaus' daughter, Olivia Furtwängler, with her husband.

Meanwhile, the village of Krevo, not far from the Lithuanian bor-

der and from Lyubcha and Mir, is welcoming guests to its traditional *Krevo Castle Regional Festival*. On festive days, the Castle (built in the 14th century by the grand dukes of Lithuania to protect Vilnius from crusaders) hosts its own Town of Craftsmen. Master

classes on folk dancing, singing and games are organised, in addition to numerous contests. The best folk ensemble is chosen, in addition to the best cook, singer and poet. Moreover, a Krevo prince and princess are crowned; this symbolic act indicates Belarusians' respect for medieval customs.

For several years now, the Festival's participants have organised camps for youngsters, giving them the chance to help restore the unique Castle, protecting it from destruction. Students take an active part while also helping col-

late folklore materials.

Krevo Castle is an outstanding fortress, known throughout Europe. In the late 14th century, the Krevo Unia was signed there, uniting Lithuania and Poland as a single state under Duke Jagaiło's rule (the son of a Lithuanian duke and a Belarusian princess, from Vitebsk). Every year, festivities are organised near its walls, to honour its former owners. These are also dedicated to the crowning of the first Lithuanian King — Duke Mindaugas. Medieval and folk dances are performed by Belarusian and Lithuanian ensembles and knights' fights are recreated.

Majestic Zhilichi Palace (in the Mogilev Region's Kirov District, not far from Bobruisk) also played a part in Belarusian-Lithuanian cultural ties. Constructed in the 1830s by famous Vilnius architect Karolis Podčasinskis, many of its rooms are richly decorated. Not long ago, its first halls opened after restoration, housing a children's arts school. Simultaneously, work has been underway in the main building, which is to house a museum, an art gallery and a library. According to the schedule, the Palace's revamp will be complete by 2016, with the restoration

of the neighbouring park and additional premises following. A tourist route is expected to be launched, with the estate becoming a major sight in the Bobruisk area. The Chairman of the Kirov District Executive Committee, Vladimir Piskizhev, explains, "This architectural monument once belonged to land owner Bulgak. Its degree of preservation is impressive, as its classical decorations have survived. In terms of size, the Palace can only be compared to famous Rumyantsev-Paskevich Palace in Gomel."

The opening of a hotel on the site is now being discussed, with investors invited to finance the project; entrepreneurs from Belarus and abroad may take part. Meanwhile, tourists can presently stay at Kirill Orlovsky Sanatorium, situated nearby. It offers recuperative services and will accept travellers for a single night. Healing showers, baths, massage and an infra-red sauna are available. In turn, the neighbouring village of Myshkovichi is known for its equestrian school, with a manege planned for the sanatorium. Restorative horse riding is to become another exclusive service.



Krevo Castle celebrates anniversary of Mindaugas' crowning



Tourists drawn to Mir Castle

Korotkevich's new distribution across Russia

By Alexander Korzhenevsky

Belarusian classical writer available to Russian readers

Even in the past, Russian language readers were well aware of Belarusian classical writer Vladimir Korotkevich's historical novels, poems, stories and essays. His *Ears Under Your Sickle* was twice printed in Moscow, while *The Black Castle*

of *Olshany* and *The Savage Hunt of King Stakh* have been published many times.

Valentina Shchedrina, born in the Gomel Region, translated Korotkevich's most famous works into Russian and, not long ago, the Literatura i Mastatstva Publishing House launched a new release of the writer's works in Russian, with help from Belarus' Information

Ministry. Six volumes are planned, all united under the *Light of the Past: Classics* series and including Ms. Shchedrina's famous translations — made in the 1970s.

The series starts with *Christ Landed in Gorodnya* — a novel with an interesting history of publication. Translated by Naum Kislik, its short version was published in *Nieman* magazine back in the

1960s. However, it failed to be released in its full version. Not long ago, the novel was released in St. Petersburg, under a different translation. Now, readers can experience another translation — made by a lecturer of the Belarusian State University's Institute of Journalism, Candidate of Philological Sciences Piotr Zholnerovich.

"Last year, we celebrated

Vladimir Korotkevich's 80th birthday, releasing many new editions of his novels in the original language in Belarus," Nikolay Minzer tells us, from the Literatura i Mastatstva Publishing House. "Korotkevich's new Russian editions will start with our *Light of the Past: Classics* multi-volume collection. Probably, these will be distributed across all Russian speaking countries."