

# Lively stage of five continents

Representatives of almost twenty countries worldwide take part in Minsk's parade of the best student troupes

By Alla Kazachenkova

"Some theatrical companies attend regularly," notes Sergey Turban, Art Director of the *Teatralny Koufar* International Student Theatre Festival. "Fans eagerly await them. Actually, the *Teatralny Koufar* has its own audience. Tickets were on sale with the aim of regulating numbers, rather than making a profit. Sometimes, these are too many people, so we have to slightly restrain enthusiasm."

This year, troupes from 28 theatres arrived in Minsk, from 16 countries — including remote Brazil and Morocco. Lithuania was keen to send seven theatrical companies to the forum. However, Director of the Festival, Yekaterina Solodukha tells us that some had to be rejected, to avoid the competition programme lasting a month.

As is traditional, the main award was determined by the audience, with people casting votes by secret ballot following per-



Many participants of *Teatralny Koufar* International Festival place stake on improvisation

formances. The Galerka Youth Theatre-Studio, from Russian Yekaterinburg, took the prize for *Gupeshka* — a comedy based

on Vasily Sigarev's play. Kaspars Kotans, from the Latvian University, won 'Best Actor' for his role in *In the Burning Darkness*, based

on Spanish Antonio Buero Vallejo's play. He was joined on stage by his teachers. The university stage is just as popular in Riga as

those of professional companies and recently celebrated its 65th anniversary.

In total, eight prizes were awarded, with 'Koufars' given in the shape of painted small chests — created by Victoria Shidlovskaya, a student from Minsk's Art College (named after A. Glebov).

"We desperately need student theatrical companies," believes Vladimir Ushakov, a member of the jury, and founder and leader of Minsk's Modern Art Theatre. "They revive and refresh stage art. I love the serious attitude of youngsters towards the stage. They boldly take on the most serious works, and present them rather well. Most vitally, they positively influence youth culture, making it more profound and interesting. Many student theatrical troupes are currently headed by professionals: the Starap National Theatre of the Belarusian National Technical University is headed by former actress Valentina Kostaltseva. It's good that university art opens up additional opportunities for students."

The chairman of the jury, Budapest director Peter Forgacs, praised the level of the event. Students in Hungary lack a similar festival, so Mr. Forgacs aims to use his experience of the Minsk forum to create a Hungarian version.

## Visiting Dostoevsky

By Fiodor Mikhalev

Fiodor Dostoevsky experts from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Poland and elsewhere gather at Ivanovo (Brest Region) on eve of writer's birthday

The writer's family hailed from the village of Dostoevo, in the Ivanovo District; it's long since been a place of pilgrimage for fans and researchers of Dostoevsky's talent. For 25 years, the local school has run a mu-

seum devoted to the writer, which enjoys over 3,000 exhibits. It keeps strong ties with Moscow's Dostoevsky Foundation and museums devoted to the artist in St. Petersburg. Last November, Ivanovo hosted an international scientific conference entitled *F.M. Dostoevsky and the Global Literary Process* — dedicated to the 500th anni-

versary of the famous family. This autumn, Dostoevo has expanded its museum exhibition significantly, with many new items devoted to the globally famous writer's life and art-istry.



Pokrovskaya Church at Brest Region's Ivanovo

## Adults encouraging curiosity of young museum goers

Minsk hosts *Museum Hide-and-Seek* family activity

Five literary museums in Minsk are inviting families to bring their children aged between 6 and 13 for a quiz adventure. Points can be earned for each question correctly answered, with adults allowed

to lend a helping hand. Children seem especially keen to play *Museum Hide-and-Seek* with their grandparents and, no doubt, their elders will not be found wanting in their general knowledge.

The project has been initiated by the Yanka Kupala State Literary Museum, sup-

ported by the State Museum of Belarusian Literary History and the Yakub Kolas State Literary and Memorial Museum, as well as the Maxim Bogdanovich and Petrus Brovka Literary Museums. The quiz will last until mid-November, with prizes awarded.

## Worthy place found for unique historical exhibits

By Nadezhda Radionova

Living room from noble manor recreated at Molodechno Regional Local History Museum

The exhibition explores the first settlements found in the Minsk Region, historical events from the time of the Polotsk Principality, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Rzecz Pospolita, and socio-political and cultural development within our land as part of the Russian Empire. One section is dedicated to the 1812 war, while the first half of the 19th century also receives attention — being the time when industrial and agricultural change arrived. Moreover, the culture of the region and that of national minorities is also examined.

The museum is showcasing unique exhibits found during archaeological digs in the Minsk Region: a 12th-13th century golden temple ring worn by the Dregovich tribe, 11th-12th century items made from glass, leather and bone, and 16th-17th century tiles. Interesting coins found in the Molodechno District's Moroski village in 1971 are

also on show (14 treasures have been found in total in the Minsk Region).

A gold-woven 18th century Slutsk sash, donated by the Moscow State Historical Museum in 1968, and black-letter books from printing houses in Cologne, Nesvizh, Vilno,

letter from Vilno University to Zorian Dolenga-Khodakovsky asking for assistance in collecting ancient Slavonic artefacts (1818). Collections of labouring tools and items from rural life are also showcased, including folk costumes, woven items and crafts.



Historical exhibits suit reality perfectly well

Warsaw, Sandomierz, Unev and Moscow, released from 1646-1789, are also on display. Additionally, visitors can peruse 17th century manuscripts in old Belarusian language, written in the Latin alphabet, and a

The most spectacular item in the exhibition is the recreated living room from a noble manor, featuring furniture from the late 19th century. An antique cabinet piano graces the hall, its lid decorated with a bas-relief depicting a lyre.