

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

ISSN 1991-2978



Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 41 (711) ● THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2017 ● WWW.SB.BY



50th championship title earned at Kremlin Cup

Max Mirnyi, partnered by Austrian tennis player Philipp Oswald, wins tournament in Moscow

In the final match, the Belarusian-Austrian duo defeated Damir Džumhur (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Antonio Šančić (Croatia) — 6:3, 7:5. Max Mirnyi debuted at the Kremlin Cup in 1996 and has now won the event for the fifth time. Previously, he has claimed victory with Australian Sandon Stolle (2001), Swiss Roger Federer (2002), Indian Mahesh Bhupathi (2003) and Russia's Mikhail Youzhny (2005). For 40-year-old Max Mirnyi this is the 50th championship men's doubles title, at tournaments held under the aegis of the Association of Tennis Professionals.



Utilities under the spotlight

By Vasily Kharitonov

At the nationwide seminar discussing the improvement and development of Belarusian housing and the utility sector, Alexander Lukashenko asserts that we must maintain control of this vitally important sphere

“The Government and local authorities must thoroughly analyse the optimal solution for problems. I can’t allow a lack of control in this vitally important sphere. Heat and water supply and capital repairs must remain under state control at the very least,” Mr. Lukashenko has underlined.

The President believes that public needs will continue to grow, and rising prices for services are to be expected as time passes. Speaking to participants of a seminar focused on bringing order to the housing and utility sector, he emphasised, “We must have a concrete plan of action, working with companies providing housing and utility services.” He



Technologies vital for housing and utility sector

addressed those present in this hall, reminding them of their duty to act in the interest of the state and society, and to make the ‘correct managerial decisions’.

The seminar focused on how best to improve and develop Belarusian housing and the utility sector, with the President instructing everyone within the branch to seek proper understanding of system processes. “This is from where corporate spirit begins, alongside readiness to fulfil set tasks. Our well-being and the confident future of the country depends solely on us,” he underlined.

Mr. Lukashenko believes it vital that we develop a long-term programme to reclaim and close landfill sites, while launching new

approaches towards waste management. He commented that 4 million tonnes of solid communal waste are generated in the Republic annually, with only 16 percent recycled in 2016 and the rest buried. “Compared to our neighbours, we appear to do well, outstripping all other CIS states, as well as Latvia and Slovakia. We’re comparable with Spain, Portugal and Finland, but our problem remains serious.”

The President of Belarus isn’t against private and state structures jointly managing utility services. He notes that competition is healthy, as is the arrival of private companies, but stresses, “I’m in favour as long as it beneficially influences the quality of services

and people react positively to these changes.”

He notes that, in Russia, the arrival of private organisations has brought significant increases in tariffs, with citizens now owing trillions of Russian Roubles in unpaid utilities. He’s adamant that Belarus must not see the same situation. “Let private companies come but tariffs will be set, and they’ll need to work within those perimeters. We’ll also control the quality of their work.”

The Head of State notes that the system of housing and utility services should not be one of exorbitant profitability; organisations should understand that no ‘crazy’ money is to be made in this sphere. He also mentioned the trend of newly-established private organisations being liquidated, with buildings becoming serviced by local state housing and communal enterprises. He believes that this shows that homeowners aren’t ready to take collective responsibility for common property and cannot bring order without outside help.

Helping however we can

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) launches unusual charity campaign for children with special needs

The three-year project unites the international organisation with businesses, aided by Priorbank and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. It will cover three directions: supporting families raising children with special needs; promoting alternative homing for orphans, including family-type houses; and helping socialise teenagers entering an independent life.

According to the Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Protection, Alexander Rumak, there are more than 30,000 children with special needs countrywide, with most living with their families, thanks to social support. However, some are left without parental care. According to UNICEF data, 70 percent of such children, living in boarding schools, have mothers and fathers. The UNICEF Regional Director for Europe

and Central Asia, Afshan Khan, doesn’t doubt that these children could return to their families if the necessary medical and social support were available. Meanwhile, it’s important to change social attitudes.

Doctor Rashed Mustafa Sarwar, UNICEF Representatives in Belarus, tells us that, last year, a quarter of all Belarusians were involved in charity work, with most undertaking ‘one-time’ events. Of course, children need constant support. After studying experience in Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and other countries, the new project, liaising with Priorbank, aims to raise funds in the first instance. Clients of Priorbank will be able to make donations directly from their account, via online and mobile banking (and soon via ATMs).

With an easy ‘one click’ donation, funds will become available to train specialists and to prepare schools to work with children with special needs and physical disability.

Warm days and nights in Sochi

Belarusian delegation among most representative at 19th World Festival of Youth and Students, taking part in discussions, as well as in sport and creative events

By Alexey Fedosov

A special robotics section featured at the festival in Sochi, including an interactive exhibition of robots. Ksenia Androsik, from the Belarusian youth delegation, admitted that it was her first time seeing a ‘live’ robot and, even, communicating with one. Smart machines can maintain conversations easily.

Ksenia was impressed most by her opportunities to meet people, such as a famous businessman who shared his secrets of success and called on everyone to bring their ideas to life fearlessly. She also met a young man who develops modern prostheses for those with impaired mobility. He’s familiar with having a lack of mobility, having only one leg himself.

“We communicated very well. He’s keen on printing prostheses via 3D printer, to reduce costs and make them more comfortable. I like to see



Selfie made at Belarusian stand

people trying to help others, rather than thinking only of their own problems,” notes Ksenia.

The Belarusian exhibition at the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students saw new activities each day, with young people taking the initiative. Gleb Lapitsky, who represented the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus, notes that young people tried to surprise participants each day. For example, they conducted a flash mob, asking ‘why is youth the future?’ According to Gleb, this resulted in a good film. Moreover, visitors to the Belarusian, cornflower-blue stand were able

to tour Belarusian castles, using virtual reality glasses.

“The *Belarus — A Source of Inspiration* project drew queues wishing to draw the motifs of Belarusian ornamentation, symbolising fire, youth, our flourishing land and enrichment,” notes a member of the delegation, Ivanna Podilo.

A student of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts, Vlad Dolzhevsky, developed a creative photo project, *Open Minsk for Yourself*, especially for the festival. Vlad’s series of postcards, using his own photography, were offered as souvenirs.

The Belarusian exhibition at the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students presented the achievements of the country across various spheres, including education, tourism and sport. Volunteers told visitors about the 2nd European Games, which Minsk will be welcoming in 2019, and the IIHF World Championships in 2021. Moreover, leading youth movements of Belarus were represented.

Many festival events enjoyed popularity, with seats in the ‘cherished’ lecture room requiring arrival up to three hours in advance. Famous French writer Frédéric Beigbeder, art-

ist Sergey Bezrukov, and the Director of the Bolshoi Moscow State Circus, Edgar Zapashny, each drew crowds, as did the Director General of the State Central Museum of Contemporary History of Russia, Irina Velikanova.

Gleb Lapitsky, together with his friends, was among those lucky enough to spend almost two hours asking questions of the famous guests, enquiring on the nature of talent and human happiness, and creative freedom.

A student of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts, Vlad Dolzhevsky, was keen to attend master classes in photography, design and graphic art, and to chat with world-known professionals. Participation in the world festival also gave the opportunity to make new friends from around the globe.

The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Sochi, is the largest event in the sphere of international youth interaction, featuring at least 25,000 people, from most countries of the world. A multi-coloured daisy was the symbol of the festival, symbolising the succession of traditions, the ties of generations, and the peace and unity of the world community. Its coloured pixels denoted community in our age of information. The forum aims to bring young people together, and to promote the development of international and inter-cultural interaction.

Cuba is distant, yet ever closer

By Vladimir Khromov

Belarus keen to develop relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries, with the assistance of Cuba, notes Alexander Lukashenko, meeting the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Cuba, Gerardo Suarez Alvarez, as he finishes his diplomatic mission in Belarus

“I’d like Cuba to continue supporting us in establishing closer relations with friendly countries across the Caribbean Basin region and Latin America. We’d like to have good relations with them and, of course, our ties should be based on trade and economics. We can offer much to these countries, just as we’ve done for friendly Cuba,” the Head of State underlined.

Mr. Lukashenko suggested discussing interaction with Venezuela, saying, “Maybe, you know more about the situation in Venezuela, which is also a friendly country for us, and can share a few words on it. I’d be very grateful to you,” he said. “With much regret, your diplomatic posting in



Alexander Lukashenko and Gerardo Suarez Alvarez during meeting

Belarus is coming to an end. I always tell ambassadors who’ve made a major contribution to the development of Belarus’ relations with the country they represent that they’ll not regret their time spent in Belarus. You’ve learned a lot about our country,” asserted Mr. Lukashenko. “You’re no stranger to

us. Since Soviet times, we’ve respected the Cuban people and the state, and we’ll continue to do so. You’ve done so much for the development of these relations, strengthening their foundation.”

The Cuban Ambassador thanked the Belarusian President for his consistent and friendly position to-

wards Cuba, saying, “Thank you for your friendship with Fidel Castro and Raul Castro.” Gerardo Suarez Alvarez stressed that Cuban leaders have been connected by ties of friendship with Alexander Lukashenko and with the people of Belarus.

The Ambassador remarked that the official visit

of the Belarusian President to the Republic of Cuba in 2012 gave serious impetus to their development.

During his meeting with the Ambassador, Mr. Lukashenko mentioned his hope to make another visit to Cuba soon, saying, “I should be able to visit Cuba before long. I feel the need to pay tribute to

Fidel. I must visit his tomb.”

According to the President, the visit should help update the agenda of bilateral relations. “You should know that if Belarus can do anything for Cuba, our country is always open to you, and ready to take action,” underlined the Head of State.

Political relations between Belarus and Cuba are characterised by coinciding positions on key international problems. Legislation governing our bilateral relationships is well developed, with around thirty inter-governmental and inter-departmental treaties, agreements and protocols signed. These regulate relations in the spheres of trade-economic, transport, military-technical collaboration, healthcare, education and certification, and governing consular-legal matters.

Between January and August 2017, our bilateral trade was worth \$50.4m, with cargo trucks, tractors and trucks, tyres, potash fertilisers, trailers and semi-trailers being main sources of export income for Belarus, as well as components and spare parts for automobiles and tractors.

Philosophical questions are in focus

1st Belarusian Congress of Philosophy — *National Philosophy in Global World* — launches in Minsk

By Olga Zdanovich,
Konstantin Bakun

Minsk transformed into a major intellectual platform for several days, gathering five hundred scientist-philosophers from twenty countries, to discuss acute problems. Today’s global challenges and contradictions are driving wedges between nations. However, philosophical knowledge could help international co-operation and integration, as the Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Vladimir Gusakov, believes. He comments that innovations in politics, economics and culture have a role to play, with philosophy as the most all-embracing science.

The General Secretary of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, Luca Maria Scarantino, notes that Congress is positioning our country as a platform for the communication of the international scientific community.

We’ve asked thinkers of our time about the role of philosophy



Scientists from twenty countries gather for 1st Belarusian Congress of Philosophy

in the world, its national and global aspects and the global problems it’s focusing on. We’ve also learnt views on Belarus’ role within modern political processes.

Prof. Weihan Cui, Deputy Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, PhD:

Philosophy helps form our structure of consciousness and thinking methods but much depends on the particular school of philosophy and its national peculiarities. I believe the Belarusian Congress offers a good opportunity for scientists from around the

world to co-operate. Of course, it will facilitate the convergence of eastern and western schools of thought. Much has been spoken of globalisation today and, in my opinion, it’s an objective trend worldwide; it’s impossible to avoid it. Many questions arise regarding world development; philosophers and scientists should unite in finding a way to cope with today’s global challenges. With this in mind, the Belarusian Congress is a good example of interaction between philosophers, to address serious problems.

Grigory Ioffe, Professor of

Geospatial Science at Radford University (USA):

The idea Belarus has voiced regarding relaunching the Helsinki Process is bold and looks almost impossible. However, in recent years, much of what was previously viewed as impossible has been realised. I’m not talking only of positive events — but of negative, like the Ukrainian crisis. I’d advise Belarus to promote this idea of a new negotiating process globally. A couple of years ago, few could imagine that Belarus would become an arena for ne-



Acquaintance with ancient books

gotiations and that leaders of the two largest countries — Germany and France — would come here. I now express my compliments to the Belarusian Foreign Ministry for its ideas voiced to Western colleagues. This message underlines that Belarus is a young country lacking experience of democracy and, accordingly, it’s illogical to demand anything from it yet. On the other hand, your country demonstrates willingness to learn from others.

Receipt game is exciting!

By Vyacheslav Ivanov

Fortune — lottery

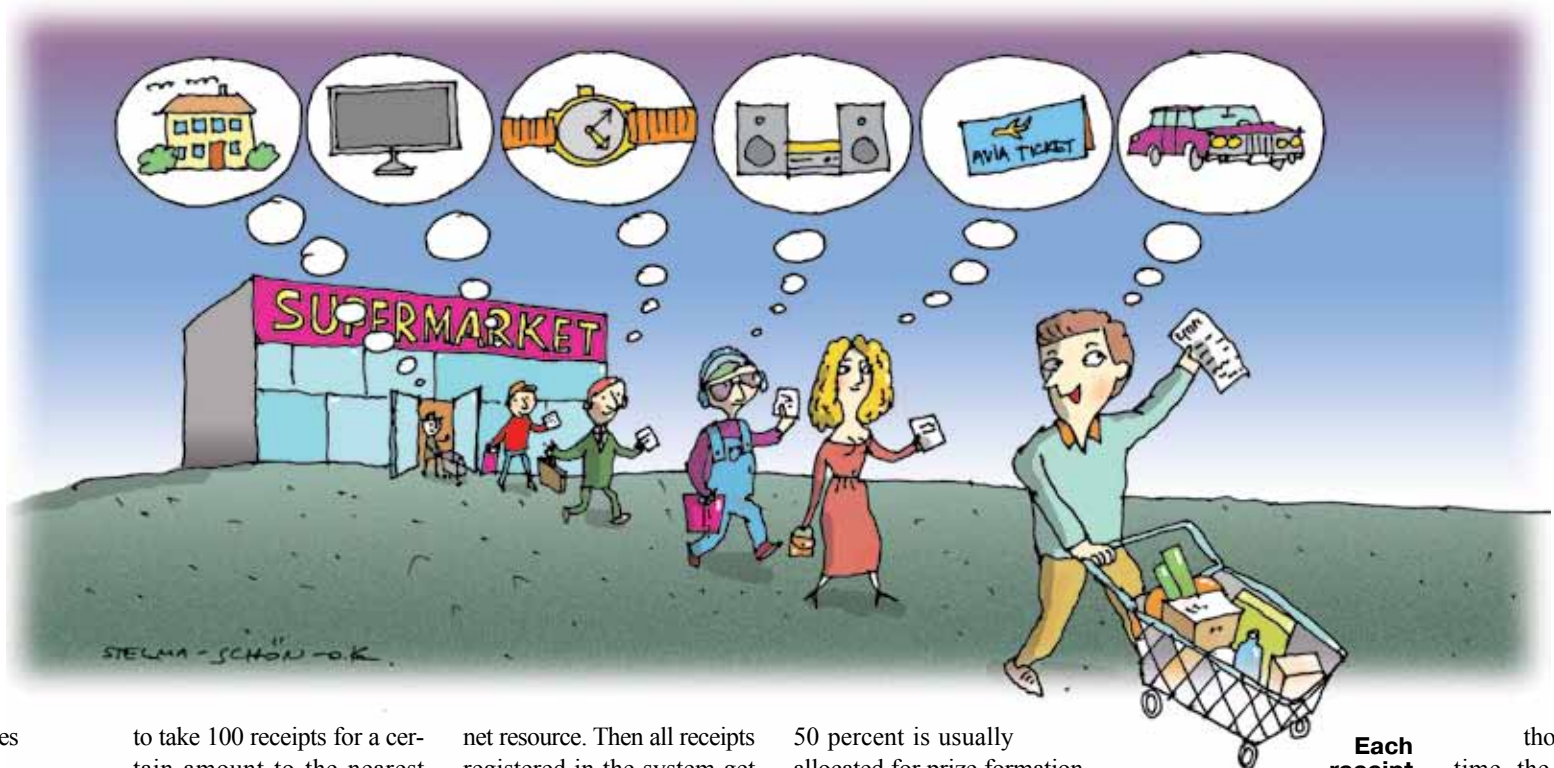
When in 1879, American trader James Ritty designed the first cash register, he pursued one goal: to ensure protection against concealment of money by his sellers. The device simply did not allow personnel to steal money. However, with the expansion of the application of cash registers, sales receipts started to fulfil the functions of the protection of buyers' rights and securing control of income. But a receipt is not a dogma. Unscrupulous sellers have always found ways to hide their real turnover. To strengthen control, revenue bodies became involved in the activities of buyers.

This process is organised in different countries in different ways. In Italy, for example, until 2002, responsibility regarding the observance of cash was not only the seller's but also the buyer's. A person who did not take a receipt was considered a tax dodger. The financial bodies penalised consumers who, after the payment of goods or services, could not present a receipt. According to Italian legislation, a consumer could be stopped for inspection within a radius of 50m from the place of purchase or consumption of services, and the penalty for its absence was approximately \$300.

In Turkey, several years ago, the system allowed citizens to deduct the amount of VAT on purchases from their taxable base of income tax, confirmed by means of sales receipts, when declaring their income at the end of the year. While, in progressive Taiwan, in the 1960s, authorities started to carry out receipt lotteries. One of the conditions of Taiwan's economic miracle was a low tax rate which could not be supported without ensuring high collectability.

In some cities of China, people began to implement a lottery in 1998. Prizes were from 100 to 5,000 Yuans. The experience of China inspired others. Citizens had

What is the sales receipt that we are given in shops when ever we buy anything? It is piece of paper which stays in your pocket for a long time, with coins and other items. To avoid accumulating unnecessary rubbish, some people get rid of them directly in the shop. People check the total amount spent, crumple it and throw it in the trash. Recently, experts of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties have suggested other ways to use these receipts by turning them into lottery tickets. How should such draws be organised to stop them becoming an additional burden on businesses and what should a buyer have to do to get a prize? *MT* correspondent searched for answers to these questions.



to take 100 receipts for a certain amount to the nearest tax office and received a lottery ticket in exchange. The budget was about \$10,000 for each round. The main prize was a car. As a result, in some countries shops began to show

PRICE TAG

According to the Ministry of Taxes and Duties, the volume of hidden economy in the sphere of trade and services in the total added cost is

19.3
percent

significantly greater turnover than before the lottery.

In February of this year, the news came that receipt lotteries may appear in our country — the Ministry of Taxes and Duties discussed a presidential draft decree which would give the ministry the right to organise similar games. The mechanism of such game is simple: the buyer purchases goods or services, he receives a sales receipt and registers it on a special Inter-

net resource. Then all receipts registered in the system get put into a specially created automated information system. The winning receipt is chosen by computer, or the organisers can do it manually.

It is expected that the Republican Unitary Enterprise Information-Publishing Centre of Taxation will organise the receipt lotteries and form a prize fund. However, the exact sum of the prize or frequency of the games was not announced. At the same time, the draft decree underlined that incomes of citizens in the form of prizes received from participation in receipt games will not be liable for tax. However, the buyer is obliged to keep all playing receipts.

Pluses and minuses

Certain disadvantages of the scheme have however, already been identified. Firstly, many representatives of businesses have a rather critical attitude to it as the Ministry of Taxes and Duties, represented by the Information-Publishing Centre of Taxation, will be the operator of the games and accordingly, a recipient of income. Secondly is the fact that, according to the decree, the prize fund will be formed from approximately 20 percent of the previous months income from cash services, which has caused some bewilderment. Experts note that no less than

50 percent is usually allocated for prize formation during similar lotteries. In the draft outline given, 80 percent will remain with the organiser of the lottery. Thirdly, if the draft decree is carried out in the suggested manner, then buyers would bear the main financial load, as manufacturers and sellers of goods and services will inevitably include their own expenses in the price.

Larisa Shibko, Head of the Central Administrative Board of Control of Excisable Goods, Gaming Business and Electronic Control Systems of Realisation of the Goods of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties,

Winning a million and a car for a receipt from a shop — the Ministry of Taxes and Duties will launch a receipt lottery, it may be held at the beginning of 2019

reminds us that our country already has the experience of carrying out receipt lotteries. Some years ago, in 10 shopping centres such games were carried out as a pilot, “Buyers who wanted to take part in a similar game, bought goods in certain shops. Having received a receipt, a person registered as a participant — for this purpose it was necessary to register the receipt on the site of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties or to send an SMS message. Following the re-

Each receipt for payment of goods or services could become a variant of a lottery ticket free of charge

sults of the pilot, we carried out an analysis of gain by the shops taking part, and in the majority of shopping centres it was possible to observe an increase during the period of the lottery.

The Ministry of Taxes and Duties says that the principle of carrying out a lottery should be simple: the buyer registers in the control system of the cash equipment, entering an alphanumeric unique identi-

fier, and the receipt-winner will be already defined by use of an automated information system. Another variant is also possible: to scan a graphic code on the receipt using a smartphone application.

Business opposes

The minimisation of ‘shadow’ cash and an increase of taxes in the budget is good business. But initiatives of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties often have opponents — businessmen. Business unions

already resolutely reject initiatives of state financial control and say such offers are an attempt to bring new controls over businessmen as well as new administrative procedures.

“In our opinion, it is suggested to introduce additional financial loading on the real sector of the economy in the form of a ‘monthly fee’ and additional deductions from all sales of goods, works and rendering of services,” believes Vladimir Karyagin, Head of the Minsk Capital Union of Businessmen and Employers.

He reminds us that 80 percent of payment for servicing of the means of taxation will go to the authorities. At the same time, the Information-Publishing Centre of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties remains a monopolist in this sphere and will receive excessive profits.

Business unions consider that business entities will be compelled to include new expenses in prices and tariffs that can lead to the growth of inflation. It means that it will result in worsening of the position of the population because both work and services will rise in price. The Ministry of Taxes and Duties counters this by saying that with existing tariffs, the cost of services for information servicing of users of cash registers may grow approximately by Br1.5 a month for each cash register. The Ministry of Taxes and Duties says that the first receipt game in our country could be held at the beginning of 2019, when work is expected to be completed on the connection of cash equipment to systems of cash registering services.

The winner of the lottery could learn about their success by visiting websites of the Ministry of Taxes and Duties or Information-Publishing Centre, and the mass-media will also publish results. It would be possible to check them during a period of six months from the purchase. The main thing is to keep the receipt, after all without it you could not receive the prize.

Sending the right signal to investors

International Rating Agency Standard & Poor's raises Belarus' sovereign long-term credit rating to 'B' level and maintains outlook at 'stable'

Belarus' short-term rating has been confirmed at 'B' level, indicating that our country is able to pay its debts on time, now and in future, but that we need to beware of unfavourable economic conditions.

According to Standard & Poor's report, the enhance-

ment of a long-term rating facilitates GDP growth and helps attract external financing. This time, the release of Eurobonds — worth \$1.4 billion — on top of a \$700 million loan from Russia, played their part in the rating. "This covered most of Belarus' financing needs for 2018," the report states.

Analysts at Standard & Poor's are rather optimistic, forecasting 2 percent growth annually, for Belarus, from 2017-2020. They believe that

improved bilateral relations with Russia will help, as will improving economic figures with major trade partners: the Russian Federation and the European Union.

The rating sends the right signal to investors. However, the Agency warns against excessive confidence and suggests that the Government focus on structural reform of the economy. It reports: "The expansion of economic activity in 2017 is primarily caused by cyclical, rather

than structural, factors. After attracting external financing, the country's authorities aren't keen on attracting an IMF loan, and, as a result, impetus to conduct large-scale structural reform is likely to decline'.

Over the first eight months of this year, GDP rose by 1.6 percent (compared to the same period of last year). The Government has set more optimistic goals for 2018, aiming for a 3.5 percent rise.



Standard & Poor's forecasts growth of 2 percent, annually, for the Belarusian economy

Scientists should obviously look far beyond the horizon

By Lyudmila Danusevich

Power engineering, bio, nano, space and medical technologies are priority areas for the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Today, this is a key factor in sci-tech progress. A real contribution to the production of high-tech innovation goods is made by the organisations of the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus — comprising of seven institutes and three companies, employing more than a thousand people. The targets set for the Centre are being realised in a full innovation cycle, starting from fundamental applied scientific research in various spheres of solid state physics and ending with the launch of scientific products. We discussed the most significant research and developments, as well as plans for the future, with the Centre's Director General, Doctor of Physico-Mathematical Sciences and correspondent member of the National Academy of Sciences, Valery Fedosyuk.

Mr. Fedosyuk, our society shows a keen interest in scientists and industrialists working closely together. What aims are behind the institutes and enterprises of the scientific and production associations, headed by you?

The principle used by the Centre to build its scientific-practical activity is that we don't only develop new magnetic, semi-conductive, superconductive, super-hard materials with new promising qualities — which open new opportunities for the manufacture of innovative goods — but also produce them ourselves. And not only as raw materials. We also manufacture ready-made items which are supplied to a range of enterprises of our country and are

exported abroad. This includes not only goods, in some cases, it refers to ready-made high-technology equipment.

Could you give us examples of the release of high-technology and science-intensive products?

We produce new composition materials comprising artificial diamond powders and cubic boron nitride. Then we manufacture cutters from them and supply these to metal-working production facilities: Minsk Motor Works, Minsk Tractor Works and others. They are used to cut cast iron and various types of processed steel. Another example is that we have developed and organised the production of magnetic induction therapy devices (from our own materials and based on them). These are present in each polyclinic. Previously similar equipment weighed around 40kg, while the modern devices are about 2.5kg — the feedback is very positive.

Enterprises where there are fluid products — bread-baking plants, feed-milling plants, Belaruskali and others (from which it's necessary to withdraw any added iron mechanically) — have magnetic separators made at our enterprise, Ferrit. Previously they were manufactured in Russia, worked on a constant current and were energy-consuming. We produce these on permanent magnets which is much more energy efficient. If we take a modern gas stove with electric lighter made at Brest's Gefest, they also use our ferrite magnets. There are lots of similar examples.

Recently, samples of the first Belarusian electric vehicle and electric bicycle were presented in Minsk at a testing facility. The scientists at the centre are known to be developing an ultra condenser for them.

The electric vehicle had a Russian-made energy storage device, while the electric bicycle was equipped with one produced in China. We've developed a very ef-



Research conducted by young scientists

ficient and quick method to use graphene-like material — the so called cryo-method — and trial samples of energy storage devices have been already created based on it. We're now improving them and plan to produce samples of these energy storage devices by the end of the year. These can be installed on an e-car or an e-bike. According to our estimates, it will be much cheaper and more powerful compared to imported analogues.

Mr. Fedosyuk, one of the Institute's oldest laboratories — that of the physics of magnetism, headed by you — is involved in developing protective radiation screens. Have new developments appeared in this area?

Of course, we mustn't remain stagnant and there are shifts in this direction. Previously we have worked on developments primarily tackling screens to protect people from electromagnetic emissions,

while recently we have developed those ensuring additional protection from radiation.

I should mention that our employees, together with Integral JSC — Integral Holding Managing Company, Planar JSC and the Lykov Heat and Mass Transfer Institute at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus have been involved in a cycle of works aiming to research composite materials — optimal in structure and efficient in the absorption of radioactive emissions. Radiation screens were produced, ensuring highly-efficient protection of electronic components and integral microcircuits for which the 2016 State Award of Belarus was given. We're very proud of this.

At present, work is being conducted on nano-materials and a new area is being developed — multiferroics. These are magnetic materials which combine magnetic and dielectric properties. At present, this is a major trend. If it turns out to be practical, in the future we will have a super-computer, able to store much more data at a higher operating speed.

This is a kind of hybrid which will be managed by two types of fields: magnetic and electric. It is the technology of the future. We're developing the area of nano-technologies in the sphere of magnetic sensors, which are in demand for detecting extremely weak magnetic fields of objects, around diagnostics of bio-systems, i.e. it will have a bio-medical application. With our colleagues from the Russian Federation, we're studying such materials as quasi-one-dimensional nano-structures. All these new areas are probably the technologies not of tomorrow, but the day after. Meanwhile, scientists need to look far beyond the horizon. We try to follow the trends of the global scientific movement in the fundamental areas. Our major goal is to launch the results of our research in practice.

Angel-keepers of the Games

Time is passing like a swift comet, with the 2019 European Games in Minsk rushing to meet us. Invitations are now open to designs for the competition mascot, which should uphold Olympic values and fit the ‘Bright Year, Bright You’ slogan. Applications must be received by November 15th. Our reporter visited Minsk’s State Gymnasium-College of Arts and invited pupils to share their views, with delightful results.

By Vladimir Stepan

Uliana Rusetskaya:

Long ago, Belarusians adopted the tradition of lighting a sacred fire on the shortest night of the year (on the day of the summer solstice). This symbolically divided the colossus of the calen-

itself, so you have to beware! Importantly, it’s very, very beautiful.

Anastasia Lisovets:

I propose a hedgehog as the Games’ mascot: no ordinary hedgehog but Symonka

forest trees. Importantly, this letter (like no other) is great for connections. It’s an ideal symbol, connecting words and vowels. It gives the Belarusian language its unique expressiveness and melody, making it like a beautiful

organisers won’t forget our traditional, delicious cranberries in sugar and other tasty dishes — such as cranberry juice and pies.

Larks could be a great mascot. Why not? This cheerful bird symbolises our country perfectly, being small, and seemingly modest, while having an enchanting voice. Who doesn’t admire the lark? I think a lark-boy and a lark-girl should be made, to sing together.

Anya Rogovskaya:

It seems to me that our country looks like a bird. It’s no accident that a stork is its symbol. We’ve white storks — ‘busly’, and black storks — ‘batsyany’. Vladimir Korotkevich’s *Land Under White Wings* is definitely our Belarus under the white stork’s wings. Meanwhile, black storks live only in Belarus. To avoid argument over which is more representative of Belarus, I propose using the crane as our mascot. It represents ‘aiming high’, as well as health, happiness, purity, fidelity and honesty.

Nastya Senko:

I’ve always dreamt of owning a dog: a small, friendly puppy. When asked to draw a mascot for the European Games, I immediately thought that, probably, everyone dreams of having such a good friend, as I do. As a result, I’ve drawn my dream. If you like it, let everyone have such a friend. Everyone liked the Olympic bear because it was friendly, so mine can be the same! If I could, I’d gladly give it to everyone. I’ll name my friend Tofik. Sadly, you’ve come too early. I’ve made my Tofik from clay but it’s yet to go into the kiln, and

Works sent for the contest
its moustache has fallen off! Can you help me reattach it?

Yevgeny Sakovich:

Our students’ ideas are wonderful, being not only spiritual but born from the heart. I suggest that you look at the drawings by older children. Here are sketches by Liza Golovko, who’s already graduated from the college. Pay attention to her style: this is the true hand of a master! Look at her images representing each sport! She’s a very talented and sensible girl.

Sofia Vardevanyan’s badge, featuring Minsk-Arena, is superb, while Nastya Lebedinskaya’s Pushistik and Chicken use well-considered colours and materials. These ideas could go straight into production. Anya Kaleinik’s funny Tsmok (A Small Dragon with a Chamomile Flower) is also wonderful. In my opinion, it’s much more pleasant than the aggressive basketball-playing Tsmok: it’s more friendly-looking, more human-like. It’s simply fabulous. Why not make this the mascot of the Games?

On seeing these idea, it’s clear that any could be the mascot. Everything made by children has positivity. You feel the warmth of their creativity, and want only to smile on seeing these ideas, even if you’ve been feeling sad. Choosing one alone will be a challenging task. Just as important as the image is the thinking behind it, since we need to explain and promote the mascot. It should have its own biography, becoming a fully-fledged brand.

Definitely, this is an adults’ job but we must never forget that children are our best mascots, and our angels.



Yevgeny Sakovich during lessons with his pupils

The bell is ringing, sending students rushing to their next classes. Some hold combs, or pieces of paper. Some grab a snack on the way. Noise reigns!

Yevgeny Sakovich, the Deputy Director for Academic Work, is taking us on a tour, chatting enthusiastically of his pupils’ ideas for the mascot. On entering the classroom, we’re met by hundreds of characters, some incredible, others recognisable: deer, bison, snails, fish, birds, dragonflies, dinosaurs and angels. Figurines stand on the floor, tables and shelves, while some hang from the ceiling. All have been created by the children, creating a scene of utter joyfulness.

“This is a horse,” explains schoolgirl Nastya, tossing her pigtailed back. “Its mane and tail are made from oat spikes!” She adds, “Look, this golden angel is made from wheat straw! An angel could be the mascot too.”

We, adults, exchange glances. The child’s ideas are beautiful! Why shouldn’t the mascot be an angel? Has such a character been used before, at the Olympics or the European Games? It’s a lovely idea to make it from golden straw, our traditional Belarusian material, from which church gates were once made.

We ask the children to show their sketches, drawn at home over the weekend. The school curriculum is too full to allow time during the day, despite the importance of the task.

dar. They kindled bonfires and rolled burning wooden wheels from old carts into the fire, from sloping hills. The wheel, symbolising the sun, burnt, giving warmth and light, before the darkness of night came. The ritual symbolises the cycle of day and night, of new life, and our desire for light to reign over the dark, for good to banish evil. The symbol of the Kupalie fire — a burning circle — should perhaps open and close our Games. After burning, the Kupalie wheel always revives!

A lynx could also be the mascot: a friendly lynx, resembling a beloved domestic cat, despite its secretive nature. It’s strong and resilient, just like we Belarusians. Moreover, it’s great at fighting back and defending

— as we saw in Kolas’ *Symon, the Musician*. As a literary character, my Symonka loves playing the violin, gusli and bagpipes, and is a talented singer. Symonka will entertain people sitting in the stands and his spines will hold flowers and sweets, to offer as gifts. He won’t let anyone be bored!

Anna Virt:

If I suggest not an animal or a bird but a Belarusian letter, would it be approved? We have a unique letter which no other alphabet has: the letter ‘ŷ’. It sounds wonderful! Just listen: ‘ŷ-ŷ-ŷ!’ It’s like an echo from the cellars of an ancient castle, or the whistling of the wind in tense sails. I hear this sound in the depths of our Belarusian lakes and in the rustling

song. Like a bird, it connects all corners of Belarus, transforming dialects into a single Belarusian language. Belarusians have long been united, so I think the letter would need to be supplemented by a motif from our vyshivanka: something representing the earth or sun.

Yulia Davydova:

I have many ideas, including a cornflower, a bison with a wreath on its head, a Kupalie wheel, and our Belarusian eel, which swims half the world, across the seas and oceans, before returning home. This is a wonderful fish, which is ours, Belarusian!

My merry ‘cranberries’ could become a symbol of the 2nd European Games. In any case, I hope that the or-

Stylish and with national identity

Belarusian athletes to wear elegantly casual light-grey parade uniform at Olympics in PyeongChang, designed by Belarusian Lyudmila Labkova, in co-operation with specialists from Belleprom Concern. Yulia Latushkina, who dressed the Belarusian national Olympic team for the Games in Rio, also suggested her variants, working in co-operation with a tailor shop at the Chief Economic Board of the Property Management Directorate of the President. Thus, four variants of the parade uniform (two from Labkova and two from Latushkina) were submitted to the President.



Presentation of Olympic uniform

Lyudmila Labkova's uniform is somewhat looser in style than that of Yulia Latushkina, but bears similarity in using our national motifs through her design, interlaced unobtrusively to em-

phasise our national identity.

Mr. Lukashenko has requested that other designs submitted for the contract be placed into mass production, for sale at the country's largest supermarkets.

Capital to again welcome young talents

By Yuliana Leonovich

Belarus to host Junior Eurovision Song Contest for second time, decides European Broadcasting Union, after receiving all applications

The major musical and dance show will take place in Minsk in November 2018, with the Belarusian TV and Radio Company co-ordinating all stages of the contest — from the pre-party to the final entrance on stage of all performers.

Olga Salamakha, Belteleradiocompany and European Broadcasting Union (EBU) project co-ordinator, explains the early announcement of Belarus' hosting. "Because of a change in the rules, the television company-organiser of the show can be named before the finals of 2017. Amendments have been adopted to better plan the budget and all preparation stages for the contest, as

well as to enable EBU member states to apply to host *Junior Eurovision-2018* in advance. This year, according to the contest's leading group, Belteleradiocompany's application was the best, enabling Belarus to be granted host status. Expenditure for *Eurovision* is borne by the host country and the European Broadcasting Union jointly, as the major organisers. Minsk welcomed *Junior Eurovision* in 2010, giving millions of TV viewers all over Europe a spectacular show, highly praised by the EBU. Our country boasts two victories: in 2005, Ksenia Sitnik won the event with her *We Are Together* and, in 2007, Alexey Zhigalkov won, singing *With Friends*. Maybe, we'll manage another win this year."

On November 26th, Helena Maraai from Tbilisi will represent Belarus at *Junior Eurovision-2017* with her composition *I'm the One*.

Cow with 'kinder-surprise'

Large Snigir family, from Yasen, happy to receive an unexpected present: a cow from the President of Belarus. Interestingly, it was not single; in the coming future, a calf will be born.

By Alena Prokina

Horned casting

Olga Snigir, despite being only 23 years old, is already the mother of five children. Her elder son — Vanya — is six. Kirill and Sergey are five and three years old respectively, while twins Maxim and Polina will turn two in November. Her husband — 26 year old Sergey — works as a mechanic at the collective farm. Definitely, such a large family could hardly exist without the household — which is truly large. The Snigirs have a garden, breed rabbits, geese, guinea fowls, pheasants, chickens, turkeys and a pig. However, until recently, they lacked a cow, though it is much necessary for family with many children who need fresh milk, butter, cottage cheese and sour cream. Meanwhile, they've not yet managed to save enough money to buy a new animal. In this respect, they often recalled a phrase from famous *Prostokvashino* cartoon when Sharik with Matroskin said: 'It would be great to sell



Snigir family with many children, from village Yasen

something unnecessary and buy a cow'. Actually, the family had no unnecessary belongings while the price of a cow is truly great for the large family who receive only the maternity allowance and Sergey's modest salary.

Suddenly, the family got a surprise: representatives of the social service came to them. They aimed to inspect what kind of a family they were and whether their request was a joke or not. The officials also had to investigate

whether the Snigirs would be able to take care of the cow. On learning that everything was ok, the local Yasen-Agro farm bought a cow — following the President's order.

Hay for Belka

Almost the whole administration of the district came to officially present the gift. The guests told the dumbfounded hosts that the cow was thoroughbred and its price was almost \$1,000. It produces up to 25 litres of milk

daily. Moreover, it was a true 'kinder-surprise': a calf shall be born in spring. Shortly, speaking, two cows instead of one have been presented.

"My wife Olya is still in shock," Sergey Snigir admits. "She has not told me about her letter to the President and admitted only after officials from the district administration came to us. As she says she did not expect a reply. Of course, I did not like that she had not consulted me and even thought: how would we feed the cow in winter."

The children are happy, while the youngest are a little afraid of coming close to the cow. Meanwhile, the elders immediately volunteered to help.

Moreover, apart from Belka, the Snigirs have been presented with a milking machine, a bunk bed for children, a laptop, a bag of sweets and toys. Olya got embarrassed and asked to heartily thank Alexander Lukashenko. Villagers have lined up: to congratulate the family with this 'replenishment' and to look at the 'present'.

Shalom, church!

By Andrey Zakharov

Vitebsk receives its first synagogue in over a hundred years, with solemn opening in Griboedov Street, attended by city authorities, rabbis, priests of other confessions, members of the Jewish community, and numerous guests

The fate of Vitebsk is closely connected with Jewish culture. Before the revolution, seventy-four synagogues were active in the regional centre and, according to the late 19th century census, Jews accounted for more than half of the urban population.

The foundation for the new temple, called David's Tent, was laid in autumn 2015. Alexey Feoktistov, the architect for the site, which will become a city landmark, notes that he's designed it to fit harmoniously with the architectural aesthetic of the city, which is unique worldwide. The synagogue is filled with symbolic features, including images inspired by the creativity of outstanding Jewish artists. Its light and spacious hall (550sq.m) has windows which reproduce Marc Chagall's *Twelve Tribes of Israel*, highlighted with internal illumination. Meanwhile, stones from Jerusalem are mounted into the eastern wall of the prayer hall, to recall the famous Wailing Wall.



The meeting in Madrid is expected to outline the measures to take over control of the northeastern Catalonia

Spain to grab Catalonia powers as crisis intensifies

Spanish PM has moved to fire Catalonia's president and his entire government using special powers in Spain's constitution

Speaking on Saturday after a crisis cabinet meeting to decide on measures to block the Catalan government's attempts to achieve independence, Spain's Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy said he would call elections in the region within six months in order to recover legality and the normal functioning of the country's institutions.

Mr. Rajoy said he had tried to

avoid imposing direct rule on the wealthy region under the constitution's Article 155, but that he had no choice after Catalan President Carles Puigdemont had failed to retract the claim that Catalonia has the right to declare independence after holding an illegal referendum.

"It was not our will, not our intention. We are applying Article 155 because no government of

any democratic country can accept that the law be ignored, violated and changed by imposition."

Article 155, never previously used since Spain's constitution came into force in 1978, allows a government to take the 'necessary measures' and 'give instructions' to a regional authority when it acts beyond its legal scope. Under these special powers, the central government plans to run all de-

partments in Catalonia's administration or create new bodies to do so. As well as Mr. Puigdemont, Catalonia's Vice President, Oriol Junqueras, and all of the region's ministers will be dismissed from their posts, Mr. Rajoy said.

The government has sent its request to trigger Article 155 to the senate upper house in parliament, where the plan will go to a vote on Friday.

Bitcoin booms to over 5,000 Dollars

Despite fears of a bubble crypto-currency Bitcoin has broken through the 5,000 Dollar mark

The controversial crypto-currency Bitcoin hit a new record high of above 5,000 Dollars, making it four times more expensive than an ounce of gold. At the start of this year it was worth 966 Dollars, but its market capitalisation is now close to the total assets at Goldman Sachs. Some investors are warning of a bubble, but with near-unprecedented returns, many are piling in.

UK inflation is highest since 2012

British inflation rose to its highest level in more than five years for September, adding to the likelihood that the Bank of England will raise interest rates next month

British inflation rose to its highest level in more than five years for September, according to official data, adding to the likelihood that the Bank of England will raise interest rates next month. Consumer prices were 3.0 percent higher than a year ago. Market analyst, David Cheetham said, "Today's release has all but rubber-stamped a rate hike from the central bank."

It's been driven largely by the Pound's fall since the Brexit vote, squeezing household incomes as wages have failed to keep pace. Although some of the decline has already been felt by consumers, some retailers are only now starting to pass on price rises, with IKEA increasing prices by 3 percent to compensate.

Plenoptic x-rays: an alternative to CT scans

Computerised tomography — or CT Scans — have been one of the greatest achievements in medical imaging. But it can expose patients to potentially harmful doses of irradiation. Can we come up with a safer alternative?

Scientists in a European research project are tackling an inherent problem of x-ray imagery: in order to produce a three-dimensional visualisation of an object, the camera of a CT scanner needs to make a full circle around it, sometimes taking thousands of x-ray images.

Marta Fajardo, Researcher in plasma physics and project coordinator at IST-ID VOXEL, ex-

plains, "The alternative that we're researching in this project is a so called plenoptic camera. It has an optical system that allows you to record a 3D image from a single position. This type of camera has been shown to work in visible light. What we're trying to do is to make it work in the x-ray spectrum."

Using lasers, researchers produce x-rays with the required

characteristics. The beam is adjusted in a maze of lenses and mirrors until it passes through the studied object. The resulting x-ray image is captured by a detector that may resemble a digital photo camera.

But how do you get a 3D image from a single shot? This French SME used two wine corks to demonstrate the principle. This matrix of micro-lenses is the key



optical element. It allows you to change the focus after the photo has been taken — thanks to newly developed computational algorithms for image reconstruction.

X-rays are trickier to work

with than visible light, so it will take years of research to produce x-ray 3D images of relatively large objects.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Napoleon Orda's incredible legacy

Series of lectures — *Orda Studies* — to be hosted by National Art Museum of Belarus, from late October to late November, enabling us to learn more about the famous personality

By Vladimir Velikhov

The impoverished noble family, of the Minsk Province, bore a son in 1807 whose life came to resemble an adventure novel and whose name became synonymous with 20th century romanticism. Napoleon Orda was an artist, a musician and a traveller, who wrote an impressive number of documents on the cultural heritage of the Rzecz Pospolita.

He conducted musical and poetic improvisations with Adam Mickiewicz and, following the 1831 Rebellion (as a result of which he had to emigrate to France under a false name), he took drawing lessons under Pierre Gerard and music classes under Frédéric Chopin. He later directed the Italian Opera and became



Exhibition of Napoleon Orda's drawings at National Art Museum

involved in the politics of the time.

The series of lectures is devoted to Orda's influence on architecture, music and visual arts, with historians, art critics, and researchers helping visitors to expand their knowledge of this amazing man. The

project supplements an exhibition of Orda's pictures being showcased at the National Art Museum.

This year marks the 210th birthday of one of the most prominent cultural figures of Belarus and Poland, from the 19th century. As a

man with wide ranging interests, Napoleon Orda is known for creating over a thousand diverse drawings and watercolours, featuring memorable historical sites across the former Rzecz Pospolita and Western Europe. The major share

of his legacy is kept at the National Museum in Krakow. Many of his original graphic works are connected with towns, palaces and mansions, and Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches of Belarus.

One hundred and ten of his drawings and watercolours are on display at the Minsk museum (from the Krakow Museum's collection) featuring depictions of the regions of Bialystok, Grodno, Vilno, Vitebsk, Mogilev and Gomel. It is the first such exhibition in Belarus. Previously amateurs of domestic arts and culture could only see graphical works from the *Album of Historical Views of Poland*, published by Napoleon Orda in Warsaw's workshop of Maximilian Fayans in 1873-1883.

Book printing from Middle Ages

By Khariton Mikhailov

National Art Museum presents *From Book Treasury exhibition, featuring publications from Belarus' 16th-early 19th century publishing houses*

The exhibition coincides with the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing, initiated by Francysk Skaryna's printing of Bible texts in Prague. It features around a dozen publications by Belarusian publishing houses from the museum's collection, which includes 192 artefacts. Most books in the collection are of liturgical and religious-moral content: Orthodox and Uniate publications and books created by the Old Believers. The collection comprises many works collected through expedition activity, which the museum began after World War II. Nearly two dozen books have been purchased from individuals, or have been donated by state agencies.

The oldest exhibit presented at the exhibition is the 1600 Gospel, made by the ma-



major Belarusian book printing centre of the late 16th-early 17th century: the Mamonichi brothers' publishing house, in Vilno. Initially, the brothers attracted a master of book printing, the closest associate of Ivan Fiodorov — Piotr Mstislavets. Four Evangelist prints of this publication date back to the first publication of the publishing house: the 1575 Gospel. The museum exhibit has been restored for the jubilee of Belarusian book printing and the whole process has been photographed to be further demonstrated at the show.

The Seven Day Acatistos edition is a true rarity, printed in 1698 by Maxim Voshchan-ka, at Mogilev's Brotherly publishing house (in the late 17th-early 18th century, over forty different publications were released). Featuring over a dozen woodcuts, it demonstrates the skill of the Mogilev school of engraving, and is sure to delight visitors to the

exhibition.

From the famous publishing house of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Vilno Trinity Monastery (in the second phase of its activity from 1760 to 1839), the 1794 Canon, aimed at Old Believers, is on show. The edition is decorated with traditional graphic elements, as seen in Moscow editions for Old Believers.

Evangelia in Festis (Gospel for Holidays), printed in Latin in 1765, is also on display, created by Suprasl Monastery's publishing house (1692-1803). Other exhibits include *Missale Romanum* (a Roman Catholic liturgical book of 1826), created by Polotsk's publishing house, and *Sacred Hermeneutics* (1830) in two volumes, produced at the Vilno publishing house, which operated from 1775 to 1842.

The exhibition enables visitors to come closer to the five-hundred-year-old history of Belarusian book printing.

One school for all to become well-known

Lithuanian Art Museum hosts international *Vilnius Drawing School (1866-1915)* exhibition

By Victor Mikheev

The show is dedicated to the school which was headed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Ivan Trutnev, a famous artist and an academician of the Petersburg Academy of Arts. After Vilno University closed, in 1832, the school became the only professional educational institution specialising in arts in the North-Western Region of the Russian Empire in the late 19th century.

Mr. Trutnev had a classical academic education and supported academic teaching traditions. However, many students of the school chose different artistic paths. Some became world-famous artists of 20th century modernism — including Belarus-born Chaim Soutine. Some continued realistic traditions, or found their own individual, inimitable artistic style.

The National Art Museum of Belarus has sent twenty-three works, by nine artists, to the exhibition.



Chaim Soutine's picture — on the right

Among them is the only painting of Ivan Trutnev kept by the museum — *Religious Procession for Water Consecration in Village* (1858). Other pictures include works by his legendary students. Lev Alperovich — who was later taught by Ilya Repin at the Academy of Fine Arts — is represented by his pictorial and graphical pieces, while famous Belarusian painter Yazep Drozdovich is demonstrated by five pictures, on different themes, drawn in different periods: historical paintings, space travel and allegorical compositions. The exhibition also features works by

Schraga Zarfín — known now as a Parisian School painter. Other pictures include the single work by Mikhail Dashkevich (*In the Tavern*, 1898) and Moisey Maimon's graphics (rarely exhibited in Minsk before). These works are making their first appearance in Lithuania. In addition, Boris Zalkind's *Vilno Street* (1937) has been especially restored for the exhibition. Works by Pavel Yuzhik (*Interior*, 1930s) and Zenon Lensky (*Vasilevskaya's Portrait*, 1903) have previously been exhibited at a major Minsk project: *Ten Centuries of Belarusian Art*.

Rothschild has played first violin

Brest hosts Belarus' largest theatrical festival, *Belaya Vezha*

By Tatiana Orlova

No judges

Brest's stages have seen ten days of performances, with audiences enjoying shows not only in theatres but on city streets. *Belaya Vezha* attracts not only local artists but enjoys international recognition, with many troupes from Belarus, Russia and Lithuania.

Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy, based on Polish playwright Witold Gombrowicz's work, brought together actors and technicians from five countries. The play (originally staged in Hungary by Ukrainian director Yaroslav Fedorishin) has received praise from critics in Lithuania and Russia.

The festival has no jury, using instead a team of experts who meet daily to discuss the performances they've attended. This year, Russian and Belarusian critics were joined by those from Po-

land, Lithuania and Estonia.

The range of shows is always impressive, including not only traditional drama but puppet shows, musical arts and mime, and some shocking experiments. This time, *Belaya Vezha* attracted some little-known bands, which raise money for their performances via crowd-funding online. Among them were Minsk's *Opium* show, staged by the ART Corporation Centre of Arts and *Billy Milligran* by St. Petersburg's Such Theatre.

Belarusian InZhest, Estonian Fert Theatre, Lithuania's Theo- mai Studio and Russian Studio. projekt also operate without state funding. However, the quality of their work is obvious, throwing up questions as to how theatre funding is approached generally.

No minute for rest

Many of the performances were bold in their approach, tack-



Lvov Theatre Voskresinnia performs in Brest's central square

ling issues uncommon for the theatre. For example, Poland's *Remus* looks at the history of the Kashubians — a small nation between Poland and Germany, which speaks its own language and strives to preserve its individuality. In turn, Kazakh *Jute* is a little-known story of families who died from starvation on the Siberian Steppe in the 1930s. The performance — full of beautiful rituals — throws light on why so many people died during the Holodomor. Meanwhile, po-

litical experiences are disclosed in Batumi's *Syndrome, or Whom Are You Praising?*

"The Batumi theatre has taken Slawomir Mrozek's *Karol* as the basis for its performance," comments Polish critic Tomasz Milkowski. "It was written in the early 1960s, when the world was experiencing unrest. Although the troupe demonstrates the characteristic style of Georgian theatre, filling each moment with song, dancing, light and cries, the topic of the show

is very serious. The artistes manage to show how modern terrorism grows almost from nowhere; there is no reason for it, but it exists. Anyone can become its victim."

The *Russian Violin of Rothschild* roused great empathy, demonstrating depth and skill, to win the *Golden Mask* Award for best performance at *Belaya Vezha-2017*. In the best traditions, it provokes us to ponder our own life, and our outlook upon the world.

Amazing gymnastics for the mind

By Natalia Tychko

Dark rooms, mysterious sounds and the feeling that you're in another world... Not cinema but the virtual gaming world! Quests have become part of our life, with players wandering through labyrinths, solving puzzles and competing intellectually.

Locked up

"From a technical point of view, the quest is a team game for 2-5 people, who are locked in a heavily decorated room for around an hour (a globally recognised period of time). You have to solve all the puzzles, with something happening in the room each time: furniture will move, bottles may bubble, or an entrance to a new room may open. On passing onwards, you solve further puzzles, with victory awarded on completion of the final task," explains the Managing Director of GameRoom, Vladislava Montik.

Quests differ, from rescuing someone from captivity, or escaping from an NKVD prison, to finding the treasure of Tutankhamun, or discovering a cache



More than hidden doors in quests

in the apartment of Ostap Bender or Sherlock Holmes. Of course, no harm can befall you, as a team of operators keeps a close eye at all times, via hidden cameras. If necessary, they can direct players but the aim is to solve tasks as quickly as possible, while having fun. "No one is expelled before having fully completed the quest, as we want to ensure that clients are pleased," Vladislava adds.

Sophisticated quests

In recent times, quests have expanded, with all Minsk game rooms

featuring multiple rooms. You begin by being locked in a room, from which you must escape: a prison, a psychiatric hospital or a dungeon. Organisers are ever seeking new scenarios, to surprise players, and quests are becoming more technological and intellectually sophisticated.

"Quest lovers appreciate our company, since we offer very unusual transitions between rooms. We have no conventional doors and you never know how you'll reach the next location: through the ceil-

ing or the floor," adds Ms. Montik. Specialist knowledge of chemistry, biology or mathematics isn't necessary, but logical thinking is.

Not scary at all

A rating of '18+' on advertising doesn't mean that the game has adult content; rather, it refers to the complexity of tasks. Applications are often considered individually. Of course, some people are more easily scared than others. If you're frightened by the haunted house at the fair, this may not be for you. There's more than plastic skeletons jumping out of the darkness!

"If a 14-year-old asks to take part, demonstrating that they've already completed ten quests, we'll permit them to come, but will keep an eye on them," confesses Vladislava.

Adventure and detective quests don't tend to be as frightening, being rather a game of wits. If you want to feel scared, there are 'horror games' to choose from. These were very popular initially but have become stale, as players quickly cease to be daunted by creepy sounds and

shadows or actors jumping out. Moreover, such quests are unlikely to be attended by mothers with children, the elderly or anyone who's sensitive. These attract adults with nerves of steel, seeking an adrenaline rush.

Safety rules

It's almost impossible to be injured during the game. The chance is only as likely as in your own apartment. Extreme games are different, but players are warned in advance.

In its years of operation, GameRoom has worked to offer a unique product, gathering the necessary props, and training its team. It's not easy to find ultraviolet ink, a bull horn or a steel sword. Every object has its own story. "Our director brought back stuffed animals from a vacation in the Moscow Region, where a bankrupt restaurant was selling them very cheaply. He spent the night in the train arm in arm with a wolf!" says Vladislava.

Prices range from Br 40 to 80, depending on the day of the week and length of the quest.

Win from third attempt

BATE Borisov, having one defeat and one draw in the Champions League Group Stage, beats at home German Köln — 1:0

By Semen Bondarev

For almost an hour, the BATE-Cologne match played at a steady pace, until the first goal. This should have reversed the game and made the coaches shift to Plan B, since both would have understood that going on the counterattack was the safest strategy. In the 54th minute, after reaching Igor Stasevich's penalty area, the ball passed from German's defender to Serbian Mirko Ivanić (who has played for the national team of Montenegro). Ivanić danced through the German squad, before passing to midfielder Alexey Rios, who sent the ball straight into the net, without any support in the penalty area. BATE's fans at Borisov-Arena exulted while over a thousand who'd arrived from Germany sighed in despair.

Köln played amazingly well last season but is having a catastrophic time at present, their well-functioning machine appearing to be broken. Coach Peter Stöger might point to the loss of striker Anthony Modeste, to China; last year, he scored twenty-five goals in the Bundesliga and dragged his team into fifth place in the championship. Without a replacement for his skill, the team is adrift, with three defeats in the Europa League and losing seven of its eight matches in the domestic champi-



BATE players achieve desired result

onship. Interestingly, Köln continues to be seen as having the 'upper hand' in most matches, claiming more ball possession. This was true at Borisov-Arena and even surpassed that of Leipzig, known for its policy of attack. However, without a leading forward, ball control brings no result. Its only draw this season was at an away match, against Hannover (when Köln mostly played in defence). Coach Peter Stöger's credibility is in question and it seems unlikely

that he'll be in charge on November 2nd, when BATE arrive for a return match.

Belarus is happy to celebrate its win over one of the strongest European championship players. BATE's head coach, Alexander Yermakovich, notes, "This is a Bundesliga team, of a certain level, and we felt their speed and power. It was very hard for us, especially in the first half, and the game could have gone either way. It's very important that we scored

and our rival let us through; there were good opportunities for counterattack but, sadly, we failed to realise them."

Notably, we saw a brilliant save in the first half, thanks to young Denis Shcherbitsky; this year, he has handled the pressure well. Part of being a good team is holding your nerve in the face of pressure. Despite setting up a goal, Mirko Ivanić failed to play brilliantly, and the central defence zone could certainly be better. Vi-



taly Gaiduchik is doing his best, but the absence of Vitaly Rodionov was noticeable. Vitaly is taking time off, having become tired as a result of his tough schedule. It would also be great to have Mikhail Gordeichuk playing, but he's still recovering from injury. The Borisov team is playing every match as if it's vital, and is ready to attract the strongest footballers. Five rounds into the national championship finals, BATE is in third place.

Alexey Rios was the hero of the evening, having joined the squad from Soligorsk's Shakhtyor three years ago. Shakhtyor released him willingly, feeling his potential limited, yet the midfielder has helped the team win titles and has significantly upped his skills. Around eighteen months ago, he was seriously considering transferring to Peru (where his father was born) but has since become a reliable defender who can also go on the attack. Importantly, at the age of 30, he's gained psychological confidence, which helped in Köln's defeat. His goal enables BATE to continue through to the next matches.

Two rounds behind, with rivals from Turkey in third place

Minchanka volleyballers win 2nd qualifying round of Champions League

By Igor Svitov

In the return match, our women's Minchanka volleyball team defeated French Rocheville (Le Cannet) at home, in the second qualifying round of the Champions League — 3:2; this sends them through to the next qualification round of the prestigious tournament.



Moment from match between Minchanka and Le Cannet-Rocheville

The match took place at Uruchie Sports Palace, lasting over two hours. The Belarusian squad had every chance of winning all three sets, taking the first two confidently, thanks to Oksana Kovalchuk and Anna Grishkevich. It seemed that the French team would never seize the initiative but several mistakes and loss of concentration enabled Rocheville to equalise the score — 2:2. In the fifth set, Minchanka earned the decisive point,

taking the match. The teams had already played, several days before, in France, with Belarus also taking a 3:2 victory.

Minchanka has qualified for the 3rd qualifying round of the Champions League, where it will face Turkish Vakıfbank. Last season, at the same stage of the tournament, the Belarusian team played Turkish Eczacıbaşı and lost its place in the Champions League Group Stage.

Enough points for third place

Tatiana Sharakova wins bronze at UEC Track European Championships

The Belarusian cyclist, aged 33, has earned 31 points, just two behind silver medallist Gyulnaz Badykova of Russia. Gold went to

Danish Trine Schmidt, with 62 points.

Tatiana Sharakova is the first on the Belarusian national team at the UEC Track European Championships in Berlin to be awarded a medal.

Semi-finals are narrowly missed

Belarusian female tennis players disappoint fans, failing to qualify for Kremlin Cup's semi-finals

Alexandra Sasnovich, aged 23 has lost to Darya Kasatkina, aged 20, in a match lasting 1 hour and 24 minutes.

The match between Vera Lapko and Irina Begu was much more intense. In the first set, the Romanian athlete, aged 27, was stronger — 6:3 — but

the 19-year-old Belarusian tennis player (who reached the tournament via qualification) won the second 6:4. In the decisive set, Begu took the lead with a break point (3:0) but the Vera Lapko didn't surrender, managing to equalise.

At 5:4 in Lapko's favour, the Belarusian athlete lost the match point on her serve and the more experienced Romanian equalised before claiming victory 6:3, 4:6, 7:5.

Shot of the week



Golden autumn in city park, in Vitebsk Region's Glubokoe

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 3rd December. *Napoleon Orda. Illustrated Encyclopaedia of the Country*
Until 3rd December. *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* Until 10th December. *Treasures of Ancient Egypt*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street
Until 29th October. Dedication to 135th birthday of photo master Lev Dashkevich and poet Yanka Kupala
Until 10th January. *Fashionable Century*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 20th November. *Skaryna's Letters and Words* Until 31st December. *Francysk Skaryna and His Epoch*

STATE MUSEUM OF HISTORY OF BELARUSIAN LITERATURE

13 Maxim Bogdanovich Street
Until 29th December. *Kandrat Krapiva: from Childhood to Maturity*

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square
Until 29th October. *Synthesis in Architecture* Until 12th November. *Whole World is Theatre*

UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE ART GALLERY

1 Oktyabrskaya Square
Until 31st October. *With Artistry in Life*

TUT.BY GALLERY

57 Dzerzhinsky Avenue
Until 20th November. *Letters from Venice. Alexandra Stelmashonok and Alexandra Zarutskaya*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

3 Nekrasov Street
Until 4th November. *Suomi 100 — 10 Photographers from Finland*

HOUSE-MUSEUM OF FIRST RSDRP SESSION

31a Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 29th October. *Revolution Names*

GALLERIA MINSK

9 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 15th January. *Museum-Factory of Fir Tree Toys*

CHELYUSKINTSEV PARK OF CULTURE AND REST

84/1 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 30th June 2018. *Legacy of Belarus: Dedicated to Minsk's 950th Anniversary*

BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS

32 Nezavisimosti Avenue
27-29.10 and 01.11. *Lighting Stars*

THEATRES

NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Street
26.10. The Players 27 and 28.10. The Swan Lake 29.10. Orchestra Virtuosos 31.10. Spartacus 01.11. Iolanthe 02.11. Jubilee night with participation of world and Belarusian ballet stars

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
26.10. A Glass of Water 27.10. Important to Watch with Soul 28.10. Puss in Boots. Honest Wife 29.10. Ali-Baba; Clinical Case 30.10. Casanova; My Wife is a Lier 01.11. Bridegrooms 02.11. Buratino.by; Mister X

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street
26.10. Weltmeister-Accordion 27.10. School of Taxpayers 28 and 29.10. The Black Lady of Nesvizh 29.10. Jubilee of Jeweller 31.10. Two Souls 01.11. The Pinsk Gentry 02.11. Pan Tadeusz

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
26.10. Double Eternity 27.10. Woe from Wit 28.10. Lady for a Day 29.10. Stars of the Seventh Sky; Love Circle 31.10. He and She

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTOR

13 Pobediteley Avenue
26.10. Abduction of Yelena 27.10. Even a Wise Man Stumbles 28 and 29.10. Nobody Ever Said Life Would Be Easy 30.10. Master and Margarita 31.10 and 01.11. #13 02.11. Forgetting Herostratos

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
26.10. Three Giselles 27.10. Pelican 28.10. Portrait 29.10. Medea Syndrome 31.10. Adam's Jokes 02.11. Two Miraculous Umbrellas; Grandfather

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
26.10. Zhmurik; Tectonics of Feelings 27.10. Family Weekend 28.10. Dunyushka and Koshchey's Kingdom; Bigamist 29.10. Chelestino's Career 01.11. The Fool 02.11. Summer Night's Dream

BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE

26.10. Mann Ist Mann 27.10. Belvedere 28.10. Morozko 29 and 30.10. The Kid and Karlsson-on-the-Roof 31.10 and 01.11. Pippi Longstocking 02.11. Aladdin and His Magic Lamp