

# He lives and ... glows on stage

Guitarist and arranger Alexey Skrypnik is confident music is best medicine for soul

Alexey is never without his guitar and, like a true gentleman, is ready to give his attention to any worthy example. So great is his passion for musical instruments that, during a recent launch party for his *Land's Blessing* CD, hosted by the Belarusian Philharmonic, his musical instruments lined the stage, taking pride of place. I'd hoped to have the 29-year-old handsome bachelor tell me a few glamorous stories but he only has eyes for his music. He is an inspired poet, artist and musician — every girl's dream — but his current love is his guitar, which came from the Braslav region.

Maple trees grew near the local Roman Catholic church. They were later cut down and my own guitar was made from that timber, impregnated with bell ringing and prayers. If only it could speak! Rainbows are blessings from heaven, as are beautiful forests. I remember how my

mother took me to concerts, museums and exhibitions in Leningrad — where we lived when I was just three. I also remember by grandfather playing an old waltz which I loved so much that, later, I composed variations on the melody. I even transformed them into a piano concerto, which I performed for my entrance exams. At school, I was greatly impressed by famous Gennady Kaganovich's improvisation. He would place a picture in front of a musician and ask them to interpret it musically. This made me realise that anything can inspire us.

**Have you been to Spain?**

It's my dream. About eight years ago, I visited the UK for an international festival, performing alone and with a choir. I presented my first CD — 'Let's Talk' — recorded jointly with my 'Antalex' band on Belarusian radio. It consisted of two vocalists, a violin player, a flautist, a clari-

net player, two guitarists and percussionist. Following this, North Wales invited me to give guitar master classes.

**You lectured successfully at a Minsk children's musical school for several years. One of your fans — attending a concert — tearfully told me how you even cured one student of their muteness.**

It's an exaggeration of course.

He preferred not to speak and no one was able to persuade him otherwise until I asked

him to teach me. The boy liked the idea and all else followed;

finger motility improves all-round development and helps develop speech. Music is known to be the most powerful and 'sweetest' of medicines.

After my concert at the Belarusian Philharmonic, people came up to thank me, telling me that my songs and ballads had inspired them to live anew.

Alexey recently completed a book of sonnets and has personally participated in preparing the videos which accompany his philharmonic concerts — preparing shots and time-keeping.

I like to find my own way and follow my own ideas. Legendary Belarusian guitarist Vladimir Ugolnik once joked that I need a twelve-stringed guitar rather than one with six or seven strings.

Everyone laughed but I'm still pondering — why not? It's further proof that teaching is a great art; I developed my own methods, play-

ing with four fingers rather than the traditional two. I'm now writing a book on this, analysing the words of a wonderful teacher — Valery Gromov. However, it's exhausting to teach pupils from dawn to sunset. It left me little time for my own music. I love to give concerts, so I left the school.

**How many concerts are you booked for?**

I've received invitations from regional philharmonic orchestras, though not as many as I'd wish. However, I don't need to have three concerts a day! I come alive on stage and ... glow. I always feel nervous before a concert but I become totally relaxed once I start performing. Afterwards, I feel exhausted — as if I'm fully drained. Probably, I give too much of myself.

**Are you a free artist today?**

Not exactly. I work part-time at the Union of Musical Workers (I'm a member). I spend most of my time at my own studio, which was not easy to set up — I had to make many sacrifices to save the money. Luckily, my relatives understand me well, especially my mother — who is a singer and accordionist. I compose and record music at home.

**Explain please...**

Do you want to hear my new ballad? It's called 'The Master of a Serene Soul'...

By Nadezhda Zarechnaya

## Investments for arts

By Diana Kurilo

**Vitebsk's Contemporary Art Centre to set up museum in building which once housed Vitebsk's Folk Art School, founded by Marc Chagall and Kazimir Malevich**

The first stage will be financed by a grant from the American Embassy to Belarus, won by the Vitebsk museum in a programme for preserving cultural heritage. The next stage will see foreign investors joining the project — attracted as a result of the Belarus Investment Forum, held in November 2008 in London. In total, \$12m is needed for the implementation of the project.

Vitebsk's Folk Art School was founded in the 1920s and is a site of great cultural value, since Marc Chagall, Kazimir Malevich and El Lisitsky laid the foundations of contemporary avant-garde art there.

According to the Director of Vitebsk's Contemporary Art Centre, Valentina Kirillova, businessmen's interest in the project stems from the famous names connected with it. They see the opportunity of establishing new tourist infrastructure at national and international levels while aiding the creation and promotion of artwork by contemporary painters.

## Reserved legacy of the Roerichs

Gomel exhibition unveils life and artistry of Svetoslav and Nicholas Roerich



Reserved Land unveils many interesting facts about the Roerichs

By Tatiana Shur

The exhibition showcases 44 original works by Nicholas Roerich from his *Himalayas* series and 10 pictures by Svetoslav Roerich. Visitors can also see materials relating to the entire Roerichs family, including photos and videos of their contribution to Russian and global culture.

Nicholas Roerich (1874-1947) is known as an exceptionally gifted artist, philosopher, scientist, public figure, writer and traveller, leaving

a rich literary and scientific legacy, including 7,000 canvases. His *Himalayas* series is dedicated to the route of the famous 1924-1928 Central-Asian expedition under his own leadership. In five years of travel, the team visited inaccessible regions of Central Asia and the Himalayas, while Nicholas created over 500 pictures. Many more were completed on returning home — from sketches.

Svetoslav Roerich (1904-1993) created several thousand canvases. This out-

standing landscape and portrait painter devoted his life to the study of Beauty as the major component of man's moral transformation. Svetoslav initiated the establishment of the International Centre of the Roerichs and handed his family's rich legacy to Russia; these treasures are now kept at the Roerich Museum.

The exhibition is being organised by Gomel Palace and Park Ensemble and the Moscow International Centre of the Roerichs.

## A soldier, writer, citizen...

**Visitors to the show at the Museum of the Belarusian Literature History to follow Alexander Savitsky's path of life**

The literary-documentary *Along the Paths of Life* exposition is a part of the social-cultural project — *A Man is Born to Live...* — dedicated to the 65th anniversary of Belarus victory in the Great Patriotic War and is based on the archives of Alexander Savitsky, a prosaic writer, publicist, laureate of the State Award of Belarus and Honoured Citizen of Polotsk, and the funds of the State Museum of the Belarusian Literature History. The Head of the museum's scientific-expositional department, Svetlana Pavlitovskaya, tells us that the exhibition show-

cases Mr. Savitsky's photos, manuscripts and editions translated into foreign languages.

The show is thematically divided into three parts. The first part — *With Faith and Truth* — is dedicated to the Great Patriotic War. Former soldier Savitsky wrote about the courage of the Soviet Army soldiers and Belarusian partisans in the war years who died to secure the happiness of their motherland.

The *First Paves the Way* section embraces the writer's work in peaceful time. His works reflect the youth's life in the after-war years and the problems of modern days.

85-year-old Mr. Savitsky has many works for children. The *Allegiance to the Path* section reveals another facet of his talent.

## Spring festival

**Minsk University of Culture Art Gallery hosts exhibition of Chinese and Belarusian works by young people**

The event has been organised jointly by the Chinese Embassy and the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts, with support from the Belarusian State Academy of Arts. Belarus often liaises with China in the field of culture and this is

not the first joint project or the last. Chinese audiences have already had the chance to enjoy the professionalism of Belarusian masters. Belarusians, in turn, are delighted to get acquainted with Chinese art. The show coincides with the traditional Chinese spring festival of Chun Jie. It features the best diploma papers of students from over a dozen Belarusian and Chinese Art Academies.