

Museum of Naïve Art accredited by the Latvian government

June 20, 2007

In June 2007, the Museum of Naïve Art (MNA) has been granted an official recognition by the Latvian government and is now listed among state-accredited museums. The MNA, which is managed by Kultūras un mākslas projekts NOASS, a society for promoting and managing arts-related activities, received an accreditation for a period of five years.

"The fact of accreditation is more than just a status symbol because it also guarantees that the museum's collection of culturally important heritage will be adequately preserved. Every year, we renew the exposition and organise three or more separate exhibitions, which makes the Latvian Museum of Naïve Art attractive for tourists and increases its popularity in the entire country. During the first year of activity, more than 20,000 people visited the new museum," comments Aivars Leitis, director of the MNA.

The museum's collection consists of original works of art that represent the uniqueness of naïve art and introduce the main types and trends of this genre in Latvia. The exposition, which is the only one of its kind in the country, offers a compact view of key works of naïve art and allows tracing the development of the genre in Latvia.

There are 180 units on display at the moment, and it is planned to expand the collection to about 1,000 works of art in the next five years. The current exposition includes monumental pieces by Žanis Bulavs, a number of artworks by Ināra Ķelpe, Edgars Krīgers and Rahmails Jakrins, as well as expressive facemasks and wooden figurines by Kārlis Lūsis.

In the second season that began in the spring of 2007, three noteworthy exhibitions will take place. In July, there begins a retrospective of Žanis Bulavs, which will even include the painted walls of his workroom, brought to Andrejsala from Kuldīga. During the yearly festival of Rīga, in August 2007, a second exhibition will open, titled People and Animals in the City and featuring artwork by Imants Polis, Filips Šalajevs, Ilze Zemzare, Rūdolfs Vētra and several other artists. The season will close with an exhibition Edgars Krīgers: Life and Painting, marking the 90th anniversary of the late artist, as well as by the unveiling of a new book telling the life story of Krīgers.

The MNA first opened in May 2006 by adapting a former customs warehouse located in Andrejsala. The continued support of SIA Jaunrīgas attīstības uzņēmums allows the museum to maintain a suitable space both for expositions and for storing its collection.

The museum's objective is to explain and popularise the processes of naïve art, the meaning and the distinguishing features of the genre within the broader cultural context, thus increasing awareness and recognition of naïve art among Latvians and foreign visitors alike.

Further information: Aivars Leitis, director of the Museum of Naïve Art (phone 29507759) and Dzintars Zilgalvis, chairman of the board of Kultūras un mākslas projekts NOASS (phone 29474401).