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Buryat Sculptor Awarded Prize by Italian Town

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Namdakov's work "Golden Shoria" was made in a Pietrasanta workshop.

Buryat sculptor Dashi Namdakov was awarded the 23rd "Pietrasanta e la Versilia nel mondo" award last weekend at a ceremony in the Italian town of Pietrasanta. Namdakov was presented with a ceremonial "cavalletto," or sculptor's work bench.

The prize is given out yearly for creative excellence, and in the past has been won by numerous international sculptors who have done work in Pietrasanta, which is home to numerous workshops that specialize in casting metal sculptures.

Namdakov has produced several metal sculptures in workshops in Pietrasanta but was awarded the prize specifically for his piece "The Royal Hunt" (Tsarskaya Okhota), an equestrian statue depicting two riders chasing after prey.

"They are nomads of Eurasia, where home is a tent, and the roof is the sky above them," says

the description of the sculpture. "The souls of the riders 'breathe' the unlimited immensity of the steppe, through which they gallop."

Though created in Pietrasanta, the sculpture will only stay in the Italian town until the end of January, after which it will be moved to the republic of Tuva in Russia.

Tuva republic head Sholban Kara-Ool, who was present at the award ceremony, said he was "proud that our composition was highly valued by eminent international masters." Namdakov's work will be incorporated into the Center of Asia sculpture complex in the center of Kyzyl, Tuva's capital.

Namdakov was born in 1967 in the village of Ukurik in Zabaikalsky region. As a teenager, he the Krasnoyarsk State Art Institute in 1992. His monumental sculptures have been installed in numerous Russian cities as well as abroad in Astana, London and Pietrasanta, among other locations.

Last year, Namdakov was awarded the Mongolian Order of the Polar Star for his work in developing Buryat-Mongol cooperation in arts. The Buryats are an Altaic group closely related to Mongols and Tuvans who live primarily in the Russian regions of Irkutsk and Zabaikalsky, and the Buryatia republic.

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