



MOST

THE BRIDGE

SUMMER 1995



News of the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library

MINISALON COMES TO NATIONAL CZECH & SLOVAK MUSEUM & LIBRARY

by David Reiners

"Minisalon, Czechoslovakia's dissident artistic voice," opened in a large exhibition at the National Czech and Slovak Museum & Library on July 1, 1995, as part of a two-year tour of nine museums across the United States. It is the largest collection of contemporary Czech and Slovak art ever assembled.

The exhibition was organized in 1984 by dissident artist Joska Skalnik at the height of Czechoslovakia's artistic and political repression. But the artworks themselves did not have their first public showing until just three years ago in Prague. What happened over those eight years between 1984 and 1992 is a touching story about human trials - and the ultimate triumph of Czech and Slovak artistic spirit.

Activist Skalnik, who today serves as Cultural Advisor to the Czech Republic, formerly was a leader in the Jazz Section. This group had attempted to organize nonpolitical activities in the fields of art, literature and music. But by 1984, the group had made such an impact that it was banned by the government. Skalnik himself was jailed for nearly a year.

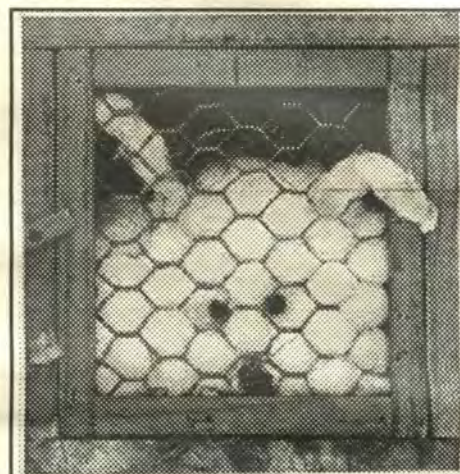
He conceived his risky, secret project after reading a contraband photocopied version of George Orwell's 1984, a book about an

oppressive future society. His Minisalon project was not only completed but successfully concealed until the fall of communism made it safe to be revealed.

Skalnik issued secret letters to 300 Czech, Slovak, and Moravian artists, asking for artworks which had a chance for showings, despite government censorship in the artwork selection process.

The letter informed the artists that they would receive a lidless, wooden shadow box, 6-inches tall by 6-inches across by 2-inches deep. They were to create a reflection of artistic oppression. Whatever they created had to fit within the inner portions of each tiny box.

The proposed exhibition never occurred due to fear of government reprisals -- and even more jail sentences. For eight years, the tiny



Kurt Gabauer,
"Bunny rabbit"

works submitted by the 244 artists who responded to Skalnik's secret letter were hidden away in the artist's apartment.

After the fall of communism in Czechoslovakia in 1989 during the "Velvet Revolution," the exhibition finally opened in Prague in 1992. It was declared a National Treasure by the Czech Republic and slated for inclusion in the permanent collection of Prague's National Museum.

Visitors to Minisalon at the National Czech and Slovak Museum & Library will be immediately struck by the sophistication of the works.

The boxes contain mixed media in glass, rock, wire and paint. Certain themes occur. Two works present the images of rabbits in utter
continued, page 2, col. 1



Katarina Kissoczyova,
"We can laugh at it"

"Minisalon", continued from page one confinement in cages; two others are real mousetraps in miniature.

There also are representations of the human condition during that era in Czechoslovakia -- hanging meat.

The 244 works in Minisalon are filled with satire, clever choices of materials and overt camouflaging of a dissident culture running parallel to a ruling one.

This is an emotionally moving exhibit not to be missed. Exhibition dates are July 1, 1995, through August 26, 1995, 9:30 am to 4:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday. Minisalon is being sponsored by First Trust & Savings Bank, APAC, and nationally by Becker & Poliakoff, P.A., a Florida-based law firm with offices in Prague, and by Staropramen, the premiere brewery of the Czech Republic.

David Reiners is Senior Accounts Manager at Henry Russell Bruce Public Relations.

GUILD HOSTS SLOVAK TEACHERS AT WFLA HERITAGE HALL

The Guild of the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library hosted a dinner for a group of teachers from Orava, Slovakia. The 14 educators joined approximately 82 Guild members and guests for the evening.

The informal meeting took place on May 4th in the Heritage Hall of the Museum and the food was provided by members of the Guild. President Sylvia Rohlena welcomed the guests and introduced Pauline Jasa, who gave the invocation in Czech.

After dinner, UNI professor Kurt Meredith extended greetings and appreciation from the visitors. The Slovak educators were visiting the state to observe teaching methods as part of The Orava Project which was a combined effort between the University of Northern Iowa and

Slovak officials.

The teachers sang some Slovaki songs and entertained the gathering with the impromptu program. With the help of an interpreter, one of the teachers, Miro Ghandi, thanked those in attendance and expressed the feeling that he and his group were made to feel very much at home.

John Rocarek, Guild member, spoke to the group and told the educators how proud the local Czech and Slovak community was of the non-violent nature of the student-led revolution and the ensuing separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. He stated that behind every student is an educator and that influence was certainly a determining factor in the peaceful aspect of the changes that have taken place.

Visiting
Slovak
teachers and
Guild members
enjoyed an
old-fashioned
American
potluck dinner
at the
Museum's
lovely
Heritage Hall



The Village Corner



"Village Corner"

Don Janda

Czech Village, Cedar Rapids

Houby Days ... a celebration of the morel mushroom.

From humble beginnings in 1977, selling kolaches on a card table on the sidewalk, "Houby Days" has grown to an event attended by possibly as many as 25,000 people. This year's 18th Annual Houby Days again was a tremendous success! In the past it usually rained on one of the festival days, but this year the weather could not have been any better. Record crowds were in attendance for the Houby Contest as well as the Kolach Eating Contest. The Houby contests included a most oddly shaped mushroom contest as well as six other categories. The hungry participants at the Kolach Eating Contest were able to devour nine kolaches in two minutes (adult category), and the hungry child's class winner "inhaled" three kolaches in one minute. In addition to the local Czech Village merchants selling their products on the sidewalk, eight other food vendors participated in the Houby Days celebration. Again Davidson's Midway was on the 16th Avenue bridge, and close by was the Great America Arts and Crafts area. Because of the

beautiful weather, Sokol's enjoyed another record breaking "houby a vejce" (scrambled eggs and mushroom) breakfast.

Other entertainment included almost continuous music in three areas of the village, St. Ludmilla's bingo, a first time (in recent years) Polka contest, magic and balloons by street artist "Rickie Rowray", and a fun Button Accordion contest.

*In each issue of The Bridge ...
"The Village Corner" will
introduce you to a local
Village merchant.*

This issue's merchant is:

Cookie Vanous Czech Feather and Down.

CZECH FEATHER AND DOWN CO.

84 1/2 -16th Ave. SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
Phone: (319) 364-0952
Hrs: Tues.-Fri. 9:30am-5pm
Sat. 8:30am-12:00pm

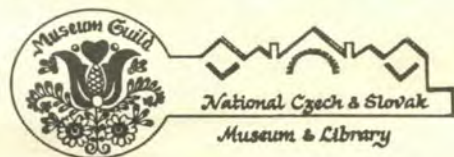
Some processes just can't be improved with time. If you've ever snuggled deep into a down comforter or a feather bed, you know that polyester fillers just cannot match their comfort. And the Czech Feather and Down Co. has been doing business the same way for over 100 years. All of their products are still handcrafted in the same fashion and style as when the company started, using only feathers and down.

In the past, Czech families would have feather stripping parties, hence the name. Cedar Rapidsians have counted on Czech Feather and Down Co. for a good night's sleep since 1883. That tradition with deep ties to the city's Czech heritage continues in Czech Village.

In addition to manufacturing feather and down pillows, the Czech Feather and Down Co. handcrafts comforters and feather beds. They can make any size or weight pillow, and shipping is available.



*Next issue will introduce you to
Village merchant Sykora
Bakery.*



Museum Guild News

Spring has been a busy time for the Guild. Members enjoyed a wonderful evening on May 4, 1995, with twenty educators from Slovakia. After a full day of visiting elementary and middle schools in Cedar Rapids, the educators joined over eighty guild members, family and friends for an old-fashioned American potluck. The highlight of the evening was the many old songs that the entire group sang along with the guests.

In mid-May, members helped with Houby Days. A special thank-you goes to the volunteers that also helped at the Ethnic Fest. Despite the weather, everyone had a great time.

At the regular meeting on June 3, Milly Ortner, Membership chairman, announced that we now have ninety-four members. As we review our first year of organization, it is exciting to see so many participants. Our goals included volunteer scheduling and timing so that every member will become an active part of the Museum.

This was reinforced when Al Beach, Interim Director of the Museum, spoke to the Guild. He emphasized the need the Museum has this summer for volunteers. The need includes receptionists, gift shop, and tour guides. We discussed scheduling and how to meet the demand. We want to thank Al for the inspiring and encouraging words plus the thank-you he expressed for the work already done.

The regular meeting time is the first Saturday of the month at the Museum at 9:30. We have a business meeting, social time and program. Our July meeting featured Milton Pohlana, who spoke on the Life and Times of Jan Hus. A well known patriot and reformer, Jan Hus lived from 1369 to 1415 and lectured on reform at Charles University.

The Guild also participated in the hosting of the Children's Choirs from Pardubice and Bratislava July 10th. The Czech merchants, Museum and Guild all played a part in their stay.

The August meeting of the Guild will feature an expanded social hour in the hopes that all members will be in attendance.

We welcome new members. Our meetings are held the first Saturday of each month (unless it is a holiday weekend and then it is moved back a week) at 9:30 AM at the **National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library**.

by Sylvia Rohlena, President
Maridee Dugger, Vice President



CALENDAR

July 1 - Augst 26: Minisalon
Open

August 5: Guild Meeting

September 2: Guild Meeting

October 3: Traveling Exhibit
Opens

October 7: Guild Meeting

October 17 - 22: Museum
Dedication
Week

November 4: Guild Meeting

December 2: St. Nicholas
Day

December 9: Guild Meeting



Volunteers are the lifeblood of every growing, successful organization. Each person is equally important in his or her task. As a **Host** or **Hostess**, you are the first one to greet the visitor. You will make the all-important first impression with your greeting. **Gift Shop** people are important because the sales help to sustain the Museum.

Tour Guides are important because they will make the visitor feel he or she has seen the best Czech and Slovak Museum and will want to bring others to visit. Equally important are the tasks of help with bulk mailings, helping with Heritage Hall, doing volunteer calling or working to keep the grounds beautiful. **ALL** volunteer help is appreciated so select a task and give Barb a call at with days and times you can help. A special **THANK YOU** to all those who have helped over the past two months. You were great! Keep up the good work!!

VOLUNTEER ALERT...NEEDED:

Village Tour Guides
Museum Tour Guides
Host or Hostess
Gift Shop
Immigrant Home Tour Guides
Barb's Museum number ... 362-8500
At least four volunteers are needed each day. More on Friday, Saturday & Sunday. Guides - Hostess - Gift Shop.

TRAINING SESSIONS
Will be scheduled

Shifts Available

Hours

Open: 9:30am - 1:00pm
12:30pm - 4:00pm
Tuesday thru Saturday

MARCH VOLUNTEERS

Chris Dolan
Sheryl Stanley-Dolan
Phil Nejd
Paul Erger
Milo Lanka
Ed Nejd
Joe Michel
Ann Kloubec
Jo Miller
Marj Nejd
Dolores Usher
Marlene Schrimper
Mana Zlatohlavek
Milly Ortner
Pat Rent
Stan Kosek
Leona Poduska
Hermina Rigel
Adeline Volesky
Zula Oujiri
Irma Modracek
Olga Sedenka
Marge Stone
Lynne Erger
Pauline Jasa
Dolores Travnicek
Betty Truesdell
Charles Opatrny
Joann Ferguson

APRIL VOLUNTEERS

Betty Stepanek
Lorraine Snider
Milly Ortner
Marlene Schrimper
Vera Conway
Betty Truesdell
Olga Sedenka
Rose Miller
Ann Kloubec
Fran Brown
Wanda Koutny
Barb Sherman
Mana Zlatohlavek
Joann Ferguson
Irma Modracek
Marilyn Tucker
Zula Oujiri
Marge Stone
Bob Stone
Pauline Jasa
Venda Jasa
Stan Kosek
Leona Poduska
Karen Grejnicka
Emma Davidson
Georgiana Brejcha
Anne Reif
Maridee Dugger
Sylvia Rohlena
Sr. Mary Lou Podzimek
Iona Mittvalsky
Marge Pace
Barb Edmunds
Frank Edmunds
Charles Opatrny
Betty Hass
Inez Popelka

The Museum Volunteers' View

MAY VOLUNTEERS

Ann Kloubec
Betty Hass
Marlene Schrimper
Wanda Koutny
Milly Ortner
Zula Oujiri
Marge Stone
Bob Stone
Iona Mittvalsky
Leni Stastny
Betty Stepanek
Leona Poduska
Fran Brown
Marge Pace
Rose Kopecky
Inez Popelka
Dolores Usher
Olga Sedenka
Joann Ferguson
Dolores Travnicek
Marilyn Tucker
Dorothy Snitil
Stan Kosek
Mana Zlatohlavek
Barb Edmunds
Frank Edmunds
Anne Reif
Venda Jasa
Sr. Mary Lou Podzimek
Irma Modracek
Frank Novotny
Sylvia Rohlena
Charles Opatrny
Fern Fackler
Milo Lanka



V UPOMINKU**"In Memorium"****FOR: ARTHUR BEZDEK**

M/M Eugene Emerson

FOR: GEORGIA BEZDEK

M/M Ed Horak

M/M Terry Shepard

Irene Nedro Zarub

M/M Don Conway

M/M Eugene Emerson

Lois Kopecky

M/M Ed NejdI

Lodge 262 WFLA

M/M Glenn Modracek

M/M James Graham

M/M Wencil Wishniewski

M/M Donald Harrelson

M/M Harold Skripsky

M/M John Cimburek

Att Moyer Bergman

M/M Carl Landergott

Mrs. Joseph Trejtnar

Marian Merritt

Mary Ann Pochobradsky

M/M Lumear Netolicky

Lisa Anderson

M/M Clyde Russ

M/M James Serbousek

M/M Thomas Kopecky

M/M Daniel Kopecky

FOR: MARIE BROJER

Lodge 262 WFLA

FOR: ROBERT F. FILIP

M/M Ted Hruska

Lodge 262 WFLA

FOR: LEONA MERTA KLOUBEC

M/M Ernie Buresh

M/M John Krall

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: DELBERT KRUG

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: MILDRED KUBIAS

Bernice Dvorak

FOR: ALBERTA LONG

Dr. & Mrs. David Wolf

FOR: RUTH MACHACEK

M/M Marcus Pace (Pat)

Anna Mae Vanous

FOR: SHIRLEY MATTHEWS

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: MARJORIE POHLENA**MORROW**

M/M Stan Ditch

M/M Peter Funcke

Vlasta Huston

FOR: ERVIN PODUSKA

M/M John Volesky

Czech Heritage Singers

Mildred Ortner

Friends

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: EARL POSPISIL

Lillian Trunecek

Anne Zvacek

Fed. of Czech Groups

Margaret Pitcher

M/M Robert Smith

Carol Hershey

James Smith

M/M Ed NejdI

M/M Don Conway

FOR: MARIE SPINA RICE

Lodge 262 WFLA

FOR: DALE RUCHOTZKE

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: ELEANOR SEDLACEK

Friends & Relatives

FOR: FRANK STIFFIN

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FOR: VERL STIRSKY

M/M Leo Modracek

FOR: HATTIE SVEC

M/M Walter Waychoff

FOR: ROSE VONDRACEK

M/M Stan Ditch

M/M Joe Pickart

Lillian Janousek

M/M John Pfiffner

Helen Quass

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FOR: WILLIAM VOMACKA

M/M Chas Krejci

FOR: JARASLOVA WHEATLY

Lillian Janousek

FOR: MARGARITE WOLF

M/M Leo Modracek

Donations above were received in
March, April, and May.

Consider a donation in lieu of flowers as a way to commemorate a loved one's passing. To honor your heritage and remember a family member or friend, please send your donations to: National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, "In Memorium", 30 - 16th Avenue SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

IN-KIND DONATIONS**MARCH**

Roger Prasil

Milo Lanka

Barb Edmunds

Ed NejdI

Phil NejdI

Paul Erger

Don Janda (Sykora Bakery)

Ms. Michelle Bowser (Parson's

Technology)

A.M. Lipsky (President,

Smulekoff's Furniture)

Michael T. Usher

Mr. Gary Schultz (MCI Consumer

Marketing)

Mr. David Kaplan (President,

Signs Etc.)

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Alan Zazza (Sheraton Inn)

John Wombacher (Drug Town)

John Rosenberg

Mr. & Mrs. Ernie Buresh

John Wilts (Peck's Flower and

Garden Shop)

Mr. & Mrs. Alvin Krebs (Kreb's

Flower Shop)

Bob Pierson (Pierson's Flower

Shop & Greenhouses, Inc.)

Frank Stephens (Dostal Catering)

Jean Rogers (Five Seasons Hotel)

Al Zindrick (Zindrick's Czech

Restaurant)

Edward R. Kuba, Sr. (Kuba

Funeral Home)

Thomas P. Hruska

MAY

David Kaplan (President, Signs

Etc.)

Jenny Bronstrop (Jenny's Cafe &

Catering)

Mr. & Mrs. Frank Edmonds

Betty Stepanek

Clay Bergren (Henry, Russell,

Bruce Advertising)

Ron Rausch (Images Productions)

Robert Hach, Sr. (Hach's Coffee &

Tea Company)

Jeanne & Jerry Newport

(Newport Flowers, Inc.)

Judge Michael Melloy (Federal

District Court)

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International)

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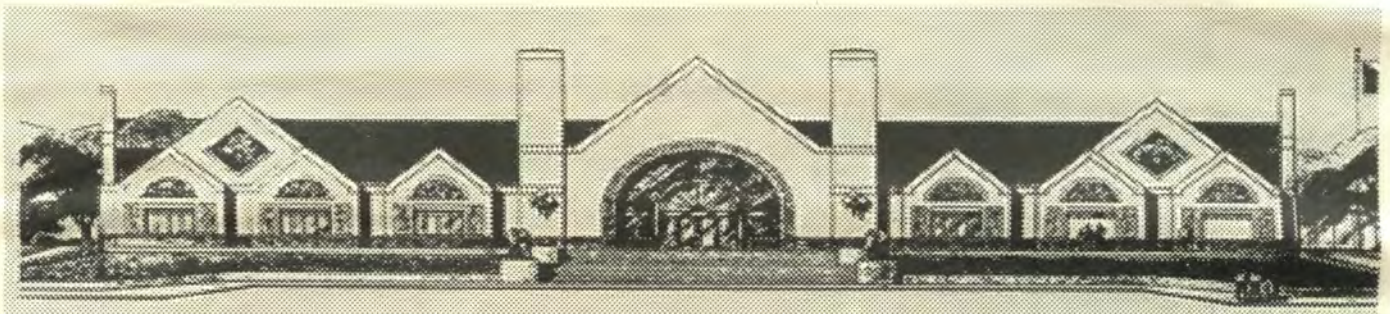
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**Make your reservations
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**Beautifully set on the
bank of the Cedar
River in Czech Village**

HERITAGE HALL RENTAL RATES

1. Entire Hall (4000 sf): \$100 per hour (two-hour minimum)
2. Half-Hall (2000 sf): \$75 per hour
3. Meeting Room (1000 sf): \$35 per hour

Included are a reasonable time allowance for setup/takedown, an on-site monitor and tables and chairs for up to 250 people. Rates are subject to change at any time prior to confirmation. The Host is to pre-pay 50% of the expected rental rate and all applicable additional charges. Balance due 30 days before the event.

ADDITIONAL CHARGES

Security Deposit. A deposit of \$200 is pre-paid and returned within 10 business days. Deductions will be made for property damage, loss or excess clean-up costs.

Security Guard Fee. If liquor, beer or wine is served at an event, a security guard will be hired by the Museum and paid for in advance by the Host.

Housekeeping Fee. The Host may choose to pick up all refuse from the rented room, restrooms and kitchen, or may elect to pre-pay for the Museum staff to arrange for clean-up.

Museum Tours. Guided tours of the exhibit area and, weather permitting, the 1890 Immigrant Home are optionally available at a pre-paid package rate.

See "Guidelines for Special Use of Museum Facilities" for more details.

Contact Sheryl Nejd1 at 319-362-8500.



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Sets will be available in the very near future.



*National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
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