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January, 1984

SVU Activities

PREPARATIONS FOR THE TWELFTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

OCTOBER 26-29, 1984

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO,
TORONTO, CANADA**

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Members of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, Inc. (SVU) and non-members interested in Czechoslovak culture are invited to participate in the XIIth International Congress of the Society which will take place from October 26 to 29, 1984 in Toronto, under the auspices of the University of Toronto. Interested persons wishing to present papers or organize panels and symposia on a specific topic, should write the specialists for the academic areas indicated below. If no specialist for your academic area of expertise is indicated, proposals should be sent directly to my address (see below). The proposals should contain the following:

1. A brief paragraph describing the content of the paper or the topic of the panel or symposium.
2. In the case of the organization of panels or symposia, please indicate also the names of potential participants.

Any questions regarding the general program of the Congress should be directed to me.

The following are the specialists to whom proposals are to be sent:

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19 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

★ ★ ★

AN OPEN LETTER

During the SVU Executive Board meetings the lack of direct participation in the management of the Society on part of the members of the SVU Council, as well as of the membership at large, came to our attention. The members of the Executive Board asked me to write this "open letter."

I would like to point out to all persons involved and interested in SVU activities that the Executive Board would appreciate any suggestions - in English, Czech or Slovak - sent to the Executive Board members or the Editors of **SVU Bulletin** and **SVU Zpravy**, on subjects such as: the membership drive, future meetings, establishment of new SVU chapters or specialized sections, long range planning, fund drives, names (nominations) for consideration of honorary and founding members, potential candidates to serve on the Council and Executive Board of the SVU, and so forth.

I wish to urge the Council and the whole SVU membership to obtain and read the By-Laws of the SVU that outline the mission of the Society and the opportunities to serve the Society in a variety of capacities. The By-Laws may be requested from our Secretary Milos K. Kucera, 245 East 63rd St., New York, N.Y. 10021. They also have been reprinted in SVU Biographical Directories, but the most recent amendments are of importance to us all.

Karel B. Absolon, M.D., Ph.D.
SVU Vice-President
11225 Huntover Dr.
Rockville, MD 20852

★ ★ ★

Personalia

CHARLES S. BEDNAR - SVU VICE-PRESIDENT

Charles S. Bednar was born on November 3, 1930 in New York, a son of Karol Bednar (b. 1898 in Hodonin), leading worker of the Slovak Sokol in America and editor of its press. He studied political science at Rutgers University, earning his B.A. in 1951 and M.A. in 1952. He finished his studies with a Ph.D. degree at Columbia University in 1960. He shortly taught political science and philosophy at Lynchburg College, Virginia, and since 1962 has been a member and Chairman of the Department of Political Science at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania. During the decade 1970-1980 he also was the Associate Dean of the same College.

Dr. Bednar is a member of several Greek letters honor societies and of many professional societies. For his teaching merits he was awarded in 1965 a special prize by the Lindback Foundation. He also was nominated for the Outstanding Educators of America Award. In addition to his scientific and educational work, Dr. Bednar has been on the board of directors of the YMCA in Allentown.



KAREL HRUBY EDITOR OF PROMENY (METAMORPHOSES)

Karel Hruby was born in Plzen (Pilsen) on December 9, 1923. He graduated from a Teachers College in his native town and then continued his studies at Charles University in Prague, earning a Ph.D. in sociology in 1950. He taught in Stribro and Plzen between 1950 and 1955, when he was arrested for "treason" and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. He was released after five years and had to work at first as a factory worker. He now lives in Basel, Switzerland, and works as a sociologist for the CIBA-Geigy International company.

Karel Hruby's special interest has been Masaryk, since his doctoral dissertation that explored "Masaryk's Philosophical Realism in the Literary Criticism." He organized the SVU Conference on Masaryk in 1980, at Interlaken, Switzerland. The papers from that conference were published by the Society as **T. G. Masaryk in Perspective. Comments and Criticism**, edited by Milic Capek and Karel Hruby (see **Bulletin III**, 1, January 1982; available from SVU Books).

Dr. Hruby was elected President of the SVU Swiss Chapter in 1982 and was in charge of the 1983 Regional Conference in Bern which we reviewed in the last issue.



RENE WELLEK, SVU PAST PRESIDENT - 80

Rene Wellek, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature at Yale University, was born on August 22, 1903 in Vienna, Austria. His father was of Czech origin and moved his family to Czechoslovakia after 1918. Rene Wellek earned his doctorate in English Literature in 1926 at Charles University in Prague. During the twenties he did research on Carlyle and Kant in England and for a while taught in the United States. Between 1931-1935 he lectured on English Literature in Prague and then

SMETANA YEAR

The following information covers in detail the three concurrent projects concerning the promotion of Czechoslovak music at the San Diego State University during the Smetana Year and in the future. We hope they will find response and support from the whole Society.



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
AND FINE ARTS
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN DIEGO CA 92182

November 21, 1983

(619) 265-6031

NEWS RELEASE

The Smetana Centennial: An International Conference and Festival of Czechoslovak Music

The Smetana Centennial: An International Conference and Festival of Czechoslovak Music will be held at San Diego State University on March 29 to April 8, 1984. The international conference has received the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the L. J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, the Paul C. Stauffer Memorial Fund and the Friends of Czechoslovak Music. In addition, the leading international musicians and scholars -- Gerald Abraham, past president of the Royal Music Association; General Jan J. Ambrus, Ret., Czechoslovak Air Force, WW II; David Atherton, music director of the San Diego Symphony and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestras; Rudolf Firkusny, concert pianist, residing in New York; Karel Husa, resident composer, Cornell University; Rafael Kubelik, conductor and recently retired music director, Bavarian Radio Orchestra; Sir Charles Mackerras, music director, Sydney Symphony Orchestra; Jarmila Novotna, soprano, Metropolitan Opera; Jan Popper, conductor and professor emeritus, University of California, Los Angeles; and Francis Schwarzenberg, professor emeritus, Loyola University -- have endorsed the Smetana Centennial project. The conference/festival also has the support of the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society; the House of Czechoslovakia, Balboa Park, San Diego; the Los Angeles Chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences; and the San Diego Branch of the Czechoslovak National Council of America.

The purpose of the conference will be to bring together the community of scholars engaged in the study of the Czech composer, Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884), and of other Czechoslovak composers. By examining the music of Smetana and his successors in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the conference will also commemorate the 100th anniversary of his death and thereby recognize the leadership and direction which he gave to the revival of a Czech national school of music in the 19th century.

Smetana is not only a significant figure in the history and development of Czech Nationalistic music, but also he ranks with his peers as a Romantic composer who has made a noteworthy contribution to 19th-century musical genres. In his total output, there are eight operas, nine symphonic poems and other orchestral works, chamber music, choral music, songs, and piano music -- all substantial statements in their respective genres. The need for the conference becomes apparent when, 100 years after his death, it is noted that the average concertgoer is familiar with only the three dances from the **Bartered Bride** and perhaps the symphonic poem *Vltava* (Die Moldau) from the cycle **Ma Vlast**. Before World War II, scholarship about Czech music in English was carried on primarily by British scholars. To some extent, they still lead the field. However, it is fortunate that in the past 10 to 12 years a number of young American scholars have begun the study of Czechoslovak music. Some of them have been invited to participate with senior scholars in the conference. On the centennial of his death, it is therefore of utmost importance that the music of Smetana and his position in the history of music be reexamined.

Although the conference will celebrate the centennial of the death of Smetana with attention being focused on his life and works, it will also address the important questions of Smetana's relationship to his age and heritage, and of his impact on subsequent Czechoslovak music in the 19th and 20th centuries. The conference participants are being asked to present a critical appraisal of the man, his music, and influence.

Some of the topics to be considered and the issues raised are as follows: Smetana: His Predecessors, Music and Influence, Sources, Editions and Specific Stylistic Problems; The National Revival and Smetana: Artistic, Social and Political Issues; Smetana and His Contemporaries: Protagonists and Antagonists; A 20th-Century Perspective of Smetana: Views by Composers, Critics and Historians; and A Round Table: Summary and Conclusions.

The conference will convene over a three-day period, March 29-31. There will be morning and afternoon conference sessions, and related musical events in the evening as part of a concurrent music festival, as well as an exhibit of rare books, scores, manuscripts, letters and other documents. There will also be an exhibit of Czechoslovak costumes and arts and crafts. During the conference, there will be a plenary session with the concurrent meeting of the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society.

The following is a list of participants who have been invited: Dr. Michael Beckerman, St. Louis, Missouri; Dr. John Clapham, Bristol, England, Dr. Zdenka E. Fischmann, Corona, California, Dr. Edith Vogl Garrett, Brookline, Massachusetts; Dr. Karel Husa, Ithaca, New York; Dr. Nors S. Josephson, Fullerton, California; Dr. Jaroslav Mracek, San Diego, California; Dr. Zdenka Pilkova, Prague; Dr. Barbara Hampton Renton, Valley Stream, New York; Dr. Boris Schwarz, New York, New York; Dr. Richard Taruskin, New York, New York; Dr. John Tyrrell, Nottingham, England; Dr. John H. Yoell, Los Angeles, California; and Dr. Joseph F. Zacek, Albany, New York.

The music festival, March 29 to April 8, 1984, will feature the San Diego Symphony in a complete performance of Smetana's **Ma Vlast** conducted by Paavo Berglund and Karel Husa's **Two Sonnets from Michelangelo** conducted by the composer. In addition, there will be a series of concerts of chamber music by Smetana, Dvorak, Janacek, Martinu and other Czechoslovak composers performed at San Diego State University. Also, Karel Husa has been commissioned to write a Smetana fanfare. The festival will present a Czechoslovak Ethnic Day at San Diego State University on Saturday, April 7. There will be folk dancing, popular outdoor brass band music (dechovka), a Food Fair featuring a variety of Czechoslovak pastries and appetizers, and a production of Smetana's **Bartered Bride** Saturday evening.

Inquiries about the Smetana Centennial should be sent to: Professor Jaroslav Mracek, Department of Music, San Diego State University, San Diego, California 92182. Telephone: 619/265-6031.



FRIENDS OF CZECHOSLOVAK MUSIC

Professor Jaroslav Mracek
Executive Director

Honorary Members

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Gerald Abraham | Rafael Kubelik |
| Jan J. Ambrus | Sir Charles Mackerras |
| David Atherton | Jarmila Novotna |
| Rudolf Firkusny | Jan Popper |
| Karel Husa | Frantisek Schwarzenberg |

December 1983

Dear Friend of Czechoslovak Music:

The Friends of Czechoslovak Music has been established initially to help commemorate the Centennial of the death of the Czech composer, Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884), by a conference and festival of Czechoslovak music in San Diego.

The aims and objectives of this organization are to promote concerts and festivals of Czechoslovak music nationally and internationally, to help provide scholarships for students of Czechoslovak music, to give financial support to conferences and visiting scholars, and to assist composers and performers of Czechoslovak background.

The first general meeting was held on Sunday, June 26, 1983. By a unanimous vote, the organization known as the **Friends of Czechoslovak Music** was established.

A slate of officers was elected: Jaroslav Mracek, Executive Director; Margaret Opicka, Secretary; Eva Sullenger, Treasurer; and the following Directors of the Executive Board: Marie P. Dolansky, Membership; James C. Opicka, Fundraising and Publicity; Jaroslav Mracek, Program and Development, and Music Commissions; Jan J. Neumann, Scholarships; Jana Drazil, Social Arrangements; and Ivo K. Feierabend, Constitutional and Legal Counsel.

Form for contribution follows on page 20.

preliminary announcement

THE SMETANA CENTENNIAL

**An International Conference and Festival
of
Czechoslovak Music**

March 29 – April 8, 1984

San Diego State University

The conference will convene over a three-day period. There will be morning and afternoon conference sessions, and related musical events in the evening as part of a concurrent music festival.

**International Conference
March 29-31**

Preliminary list of participants

Michael Beckerman, St. Louis, Missouri
John Clapham, Bristol, England
Zdeňka E. Fischmann, Corona, California
Barbara Hampton Renton, Valley Stream, New York
Edith Vogl Garrett, Brookline, Massachusetts
Karel Husa, Ithaca, New York
Nors S. Josephson, Fullerton, California
Jaroslav Mráček, San Diego, California
Zdeňka Pilková, Prague, Czechoslovakia
Boris Schwarz, New York, New York
Richard Taruskin, New York, New York
John Tyrrell, Nottingham, England
John H. Yoell, Los Angeles, California
Josef F. Zacek, Albany, New York
Others to be announced

**Concerts (subject to change)
March 29-April 8**

- The San Diego Symphony conducted by Paavo Berglund (Smetana, *Ma Vlast*) and Karel Husa (*Two Sonnets from Michelangelo*)
- A Piano Recital of Czech music by Linda Di Giustino Gamble
- Chamber Music Concert by SDSU faculty and students
- An Orchestral, Choral and Wind Ensemble Concert by SDSU faculty and students
- Opera: Smetana's *Bartered Bride* by SDSU Opera Workshop and Los Angeles Sokol Dancers
- Other concerts in preparation

The following are the topics of the various sessions:

- (1) Smetana: His Predecessors, Music and Influence
- (2) Sources, Editions and Specific Stylistic Problems
- (3) The National Revival and Smetana: Artistic, Social and Political Issues
- (4) Smetana and His Contemporaries: Protagonists and Antagonists
- (5) A Twentieth-Century Perspective of Smetana: Views by Composers, Critics and Historians
- (6) Round Table: Summary and Conclusion

"Smetana and His Age" is the general theme of the International Conference which will be held March 29-31, 1984. The Pacific Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society will meet at SDSU on Saturday, March 31. There will be one joint and one independent session. Members are invited to submit papers to the conference or to the independent session.

The International Conference is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Additional funding is forthcoming from the Paul C. Stauffer Memorial Fund, the Friends of Czechoslovak Music and other sources.

For further information please contact Professor Jaroslav Mráček, Department of Music, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182. Telephone (619) 265-6036 or 265-6031.

**Department of Music
College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts
San Diego State University**

SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

**JAN LOEWENBACH GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP
IN MUSICOLOGY FOR CZECHOSLOVAK MUSIC**

The Jan Loewenbach Graduate Scholarship in Musicology for the Study of Czechoslovak Music has been established by the Department of Music, San Diego State University, with the support of the Loewenbach family. The scholarship will assist graduate students in the study of Czechoslovak music and with the materials in the Loewenbach Collection. Students applying are advised to acquire some linguistic background in Czech or Slovak. Scholarships will be awarded up to \$1,000.

For application or information, please write to Dr. Jaroslav Mráček, Department of Music, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182. Telephone (619) 265-6036 or 265-6031.

Jan Loewenbach (1880-1972) was a distinguished attorney, music critic and publicist of Czechoslovak music. He received the degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence from Charles University, Prague in 1910 and practiced law in Czechoslovakia until 1939. As an attorney, he formulated the copyright laws in Czechoslovakia to protect the rights of composers and authors. As a music critic and publicist, he wrote for numerous European music journals, championing the cause of Czechoslovak contemporary music. He was a close friend of Leoš Janáček, Jaroslav Křička, Bohuslav Martinů and other Czechoslovak composers. Under the pseudonym of J. L. Budin, he wrote the librettos for Martinů's first opera *The Soldier and the Dancer* and Křička's *The Gentleman in White*. With the outbreak of World War II, he emigrated to the United States where he continued his active support of Czechoslovak music in New York City as the cultural adviser to the Czechoslovak Information Office. He planned the celebrations for the Dvořák Centennial in 1941, wrote an extensive book on Smetana (unpublished), arranged the American premiere of Dvořák's *Rusalka* in Detroit in 1945, and was in close touch with Jarmila Novotná, Rudolf Firkušný, Bohuslav Martinů and other Czechoslovak artists. Dr. Loewenbach went back to Czechoslovakia after the war and then returned to the United States. He went into retirement in New York. The Loewenbach family donated the personal papers from his American period to the San Diego State University Library.



BOOKS OF INTEREST

We reprint excerpts from two reviews by SVU member Josef Kalvoda, Professor of History and Political Science at St. Joseph College, West Hartford. Msgr. Ludvik Nemeč, SVU member, has taught at Rosemont College in Pennsylvania. He celebrated his 70th birthday last October. Professor H. Gordon Skilling is SVU honorary member and an expert on Czechoslovakia.

Ludvik Nemeč. Our Lady of Hostyn. Queen of the Marian Garden of the Czech Moravian, Silesian and Slovak Madonnas. (New York: RCH Press, 1981 Pp. xii, 171. \$6.00, paper.)

Professor Msgr. Ludvik Nemeč is a prolific writer and an accomplished scholar. His most recent book presents a perspective of the Marian cult and a reflection on current religious conditions in Czechoslovakia. The volume relates the legend of Hostyn, where centuries ago the Tatar invasion was stopped, about the apparition at Turzovka, and about hundreds of places of worship to which Czechs and Slovaks have made pilgrimages.

There are more than 1,200 Marian churches and chapels in Czechoslovakia. This indeed, reflects "the true dictum of Jesuit Jiri Plachy who in 1648, holding a Marian flag, defended Prague against the Swedes. Standing with his university students on the Charles Bridge, he inspired the young fighters to bravery with the words: 'Dear was the Virgin Mary to the Czechs, dear will be the Czechs to the Virgin Mary; citizens, let us defend ourselves; the Queen of Heaven is with us!'" (p. 30).

The Czech and Slovak settlers in the New World have also built churches dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Currently American Catholics of Czech origin, upon the initiative and under the leadership of Msgr. Nemeč, are building a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Hostyn in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., and proceeds from this book will be used for that purpose.

The title of the book is derived, in part, from the name of a book by Julius Zeyer, **Marianska Zahrada (The Marian Garden)**. When Zeyer published this well-known book before World War I, less than two-and-a-half percent of Czechs professed other than the Catholic faith. Although a large part of the intelligentsia was somewhat religiously indifferent, the Czech people, especially in the countryside, in Moravia, the mountainous regions and small towns, was deeply religious. Among the outer manifestations of this religious sentiment were mass pilgrimages to famous shrines such as Svaty Hostyn, Svaty Kopeček, Svata Hora, Stara Boleslav, Chlumek nad Luzi and others. . .

Msgr. Nemeč refutes a misconception widely spread among the English-speaking peoples according to which the Czech culture was Protestant. He shows that the Czech and Slovak cultures were deeply rooted in Catholicism. As the Czech historian, Frantisek Palacky, has already noted, "the most beautiful memorial of Old Czech art . . . is the Virgin Mary with the Infant in the church monastery in Vyssi Brod" (p. 140) . . .

The book by professor Nemeč is illustrated by a large number of photographs of shrines, statues and pictures from various churches in Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and Slovakia. It is equipped with an index, notes and bibliography. It is a pioneering work and an excellent source of information on the subject.

From **Nationalities Papers**, Vol. XI, No. 2, Fall 1983, p. 320.

★ ★ ★

H. Gordon Skilling, **Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia**. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981. Pp. xv + 363. \$37.50)

Thus far, this is the largest English language study of Charter 77 and human rights in Czechoslovakia. It consists of some 195 pages of narrative with footnotes, 143 pages of selected documents of the Charter, information about the trials of 1977 to 1980, and an index. Professor H. Gordon Skilling discusses the origins of the Charter, its signatories and spokesmen, and the response to it within Czechoslovakia and abroad.

The author points out that, contrary to widely spread opinion, some 90 percent of the signatories of the document were non-Communists and only a small minority of them were ex-Communist party members. The first spokesman for the human rights movement was Jan Patočka, an apolitical man and philosopher who was prepared and willing to risk his life for the cause. Vaclav Havel, another non-Party member who is a writer and a "prisoner of conscience," has languished in prisons for several years. The movement itself, however, consists of people from all walks of life whose backgrounds and views differ widely.

While some of the Chartists hold parochial views, Havel and Jan Tesar for example have advocated cooperation with dissident movements in other countries, especially Poland. The conditions existing in Poland, however, are radically different from those in Czechoslovakia where the Chartist movement has been confined to merely a small fraction of the population. In Poland Solidarity represents some nine and a half million workers.

Skilling's conclusions about the significance and future of the movement are tentative. Regardless of what will happen in the future, the movement has already produced a significant amount of literature as noted in the publication. Undoubtedly Vaclav Havel will be remembered for his courage and his essay "Power of the Powerless," in which he brilliantly describes "living in the lie" and shows the way to those who seek "to live in truth."

The book is a valuable source of information for anyone who does not read Czech and is interested in human rights in Czechoslovakia. . .

From **The American Political Science Review**, Vol. 76, 1982, p. 454.

★ ★ ★

A New Translation by Michael Henry Heim

Michael H. Heim teaches Czech and Russian Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is SVU member, past co-editor of this **Bulletin** (see issue II, 2, May 1981), and has translated several books by contemporary Czech authors. His newest accomplishment is his translation from the Russian of **The Island of Crimea** by Vassily Aksyonov (Random House: 395 pp., \$16.95)

Aksyonov now lives in exile in the United States, though he was popular and very successful in the Soviet Union during the post-Stalin era. He is a son of the writer Eugenia Ginzburg who perished in the gulag. His father was also Stalin's victim.

The book is a satirical and fancy free presentation of a Western-like democratic society established in independent Crimea by the White Russians who found refuge there after the Revolution. Heim's translation is idiomatic and witty, making the book very readable for the American public.

★ ★ ★

In **Bulletin** IV, 2, May 1983 Jozka Pejskar's **Posledni Pocta (The Last Honour)** was reviewed by Frank Meissner. Many universities and libraries holding Czech materials have acquired the book as an indispensable research and source tool, reserving the upcoming second volume. Some copies of the first volume are still available directly from the author (J. Pejskar, 330 N. Stage Coach Lane, Fallbrook, CA 92028) or from the publisher in Switzerland (Konfrontation AG/SA, Werdhoelzlistrasse 14, CH-8102, Zurich, Switzerland).

★ ★ ★



Beyond the Chestnut Trees

Maria Bauer

Biography

November \$15.95

224 pages 5 ¼ x 8 ¼

8 black-and-white illustrations

LC: 83-42917

ISBN: 0-87951-190-7

"I will be thinking about people and scenes in Maria Bauer's haunting memoir for a long time. It is an elegant book, beautifully structured, with vividly evoked landscapes and personalities" (Gail Godwin).

It is impossible not to be moved by this masterfully written reminiscence of a woman who returns to Prague after a forty-year absence. Although the spirit of the city and its people has changed, familiar sights rekindle Bauer's memory and we are transported back to the idyllic, and often turbulent, time of Czechoslovakia between the two world wars. Interwoven with the contemporary story of Bauer's search for the people of her past is a vividly drawn series of flashbacks in which we experience the events and the characters of her childhood. Among them are her mother and father, whose diminishing wealth and social status parallels the changing political climate, and the two men Bauer learns to love: Karel, the elegiac artist, and Robert, who heroically aids her family in their courageous escape from the Nazis.

Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1919, **Maria Bauer** divides her time between Woodstock, New York, and Washington, D.C.

★ ★ ★

Tales of the Czechs, by Kathy and Joe T. Vosoba

(Lincoln: Word Services, 1983, p. 65; order from Nebraska Czechs of Wilber, Wilber, NE 68465; \$7.65 incl. postage)

The book is described as "History and Legends as told at the Pageant of the Czech People, Wilber Czech Festival, Wilber, Nebraska, 1962 through 1982." The full-color cover and illustrations are by Beth Vosoba of Wilber.

The authors, Kathy and Joe T. Vosoba, SVU member, explain that "this little booklet is obviously far from a thorough treatment of 1,500 years of a people. To serious historians, we extend our apologies. We feel it is better to pass on some history by means of entertainment than to pass on nothing at all." All profits from the book go to the the Nebraska Czechs of Wilber, a non-profit organization that holds the copyright. The organization sponsors the annual Wilber Czech Festival (see **Bulletin IV**, 2, May 1983),

BOOKS BARRED BY PRAGUE FIND NEW LIFE IN TORONTO

By Michael T. Kaufman

Special to The New York Times

TORONTO — A noted Czech emigre novelist and his wife, also a writer, have set out to sustain Czech literature and redeem it from the political arbiters of culture in Prague, who have banned more than 200 writers.

The novelist, Josef Skvorecky, whose own books have been outlawed, and his wife, Zdena Salivarova, have gone into competition with Czechoslovakia's official publishing establishment by issuing 139 Czech books.

Some are by authors who fled or were banished after the Soviet military intervention in 1968 ended a brief period of liberalization; others are the works of writers still living in Czechoslovakia whose manuscripts have made their way here.

Mr. Skvorecky, 58 years old, whose books include the widely translated and acclaimed **Bass Saxophone**, **The Tank Corps** and **Miss Silver's Past**, said he believes that Czechoslovakia has the most repressive cultural apparatus of any Warsaw Pact country. There has been no impact, he said, from the events in Poland, and unlike the Polish authorities, who are liberalizing what they publish in the hope of gaining credibility, the Czechoslovak establishment has remained rigidly censorious.

Narrow and Safe Topics

He said that officially sanctioned writing focused on narrow, safe topics.

"It is as if at the time Mark Twain wrote *Huckleberry Finn*, people would write about the South without mentioning Negroes or slavery," said Mr. Skvorecky, who teaches American literature at the University of Toronto. He said that Government-approved Czech works included a number of anti-Semitic books that sought to establish that the liberalizations of 1968 were brought about by "foreigners" and "Jews" who "manipulated the Czech people into provoking their Soviet comrades." Mr. Skvorecky said that, in fact, there were few Jews left in Czechoslovakia since the Nazi German occupation in World War II.

Miss Salivarova is a 49-year-old former actress whose own book, **Summer in Prague**, was well received in the world and banned in Czechoslovakia, whose cultural bureaucracy it describes by telling the story of a member of a folkloric chorus that is permitted to travel abroad. It is Miss Salivarova who was the real founder of the publishing effort and is its major driving force.

"Josef had a job here and spoke English well when we arrived, but I did not and felt cut off from things," she said. She said she realized there were other Czech emigres who were cut off from their language. "A musician or dancer can survive in exile, but a writer is tied to the language," she said.

Made Use of Prize Money

She said her husband, concerned by her moodiness, had given her some prize money he had won, in the hope that she would take a course as a dental technician or computer programmer.

Instead, Miss Salivarova, whose father was a bookseller, decided to start the publishing venture by bringing out an edition of **The Tank Corps**, a book that her husband wrote in 1954 and that the Czech authorities banned in 1969. She collected lists of Czech readers all over the world, including one in Nepal. Today she has a mailing list of 10,000 and new titles come out in editions of about 2,000 copies.

The price of books averages around \$10 and the profits are put back into the business. The publications include books by such contemporary Czech writers as Jan Benes, Arnost Lustig and Milan Kundera. The most successful book on the list of 139 titles is **The House of Fear**, a book of poetry about life in a concentration camp, written by Jan Zahradnicek, a priest.

★ ★ ★

THE NUTLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PREMIERES A SMETANA WORK

On October 23, 1983, The Nutley Symphony Orchestra performed Smetana's *Scherzo from the Festive Symphony*. The American born and educated conductor and Director of Music Education in Nutley Public Schools, NJ, Dr. Ernest J. Ersfeld, SVU member, made the following comment.

From the Conductor . . .



Today's program is essentially classical in its structure with an infusion of the beginnings of romanticism in the Beethoven Symphony. This is further represented in the music of the scherzo from the Smetana Symphony which I had the pleasure of locating in the archives of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's library in Prague which I visited this past June. The orchestra parts are in manuscript and only the conductor's score is published. It is a delightful composition which reflects many moods of the "Bartered Bride" and the "Moldau" (Vltava) the most famous works of Smetana.

While this has been frequently performed in Czechoslovakia, today's performance represents its first in the United States. I am personally grateful for the efforts of my professional colleagues in assisting my efforts to obtain this music in Prague and making this presentation possible.

Constance G. J. Wagner said in the program notes:

Scherzo from "The Festive Symphony" — Smetana

This intriguing 1863 scherzo, although frequently performed in Europe, has had no exposure in the United States. The symphony as a whole also remained largely unplayed because of the heavy influence of Haydn's Austrian anthem which permeates the work. The fall of the Austrian monarchy in 1918 and the symbolism the music stirred after World War II made the complete work a less popular choice for symphonic programs.

The scherzo, however, free of any nationalistic suggestions, retained its popularity and even today delights the listener with its mature, yet joyful vitality.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

- 1) Thanks to all who have sent in news about their specialties. The **SVU Bulletin** wants to give space to all branches of knowledge represented by SVU members, to become a true forum for the Society. Suggestions for content and publications for reviews are welcome.
 - 2) When sending contributions, please indicate specifically whether your address may be printed or whether you prefer initials or name only as acknowledgement.
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