Friends of Slovakia

Friends of Slovakia (FOS) is a non-profit, volunteer-run organization founded in 2001 to promote US-Slovak friendship through enhanced political, economic and cultural ties. Members of Friends of Slovakia in the United States cherish memories of their association with Slovakia. Some of us have collected paintings by outstanding Slovak artists which evoke happy memories of our time spent in Slovakia.

When Ambassador Peter Burian asked FOS to join the Slovak Embassy this fall in celebrations commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, we agreed that a fitting event would be an exhibit of some of these art works held in private American collections. This initiative, Memories of Slovakia: Slovak Art in American Collections, features over 30 paintings, lent to the Embassy by the owners.

We invite you to enjoy this exhibit. If you have traveled to Slovakia, we hope it will rekindle your own fond memories of the country; if you have not been to Slovakia, we hope it will whet your appetite to visit. But most of all, we offer this exhibition as a testimony to Slovakia's remarkable twenty-year journey towards freedom, democracy, and independence. Slovakia is a valued friend and ally of the United States and Friends of Slovakia salutes the increasingly close ties between our nations and peoples.

Theodore E. Russell
Founding Chairman, FOS
U.S. Ambassador (retired)

Joseph T. Senko
Chairman & Treasurer

William Tucker, Esq
Vice Chairman and President

Julie Brès Slavik
Secretary

Memories of Slovakia:
Slovak Paintings in American Collections

under the patronage of
The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic
The Honorable Miroslav Lajčák
and
In celebration of the 20th Anniversary of The Velvet Revolution
H.E. the Ambassador of the Slovak Republic
and Mrs. Peter Burian
with Friends of Slovakia
present
An Exhibition of Paintings
by Slovak artists held in private collections in the United States

Embassy of the Slovak Republic
3523 International Court, NW,
Washington DC 20008
www.mzv.sk/washington

Memories of Slovakia:
Only a few words; paintings will tell a story. About 30 of them. They found their way to America through varied means, times and people. Some were slipped into the New World surreptitiously, others were sent by relatives to keep alive memories of a distant land.

Slovak paintings also traversed great distances over the centuries. From nationally colored romanticism of Peter Michal Bohun to the avant garde expressions of such towering figures as Hložník or Bazovsky. The changes were not only formal reflections of the artistic tendencies of the times. They were often artistic manifestos that expressed philosophical differences and longings that could be spoken only in this decoded language.

Art knows no borders, needs no interpreters. It is capable of introducing unknown vistas, peoples, costumes and customs. Slovak artists over the 150 years absorbed a plethora of different styles of their times, often went to the source and brought home new impulses. Then they put this knowledge through their own prism and created a unique “opus”. Art in Slovakia as well as Slovak art - two distinct phenomena worthy of deeper study are fascinating documents of a nation that experienced multitudes of changes.

Thanks to the generosity of our collectors we can offer this sampler of what can be found when you start exploring our “Memories.”

Klára Sever
Art Historian/ Curator

November 17, 2009 - January 2010
Embassy of the Slovak Republic
Washington DC
Dear Guests,

This fall, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the events that altered the course of the history and brought profound changes to that region and to the world. In November 1989, the Velvet Revolution, in then Czechoslovakia, started the journey of the Slovak and Czech nations towards freedom, democracy, and prosperity. Over these past 20 years, Slovakia has traveled a long and successful road. Dear guests, I hope you will enjoy hospitality of the Slovak Embassy and others with ties to Slovakia.

One of the aims of our activities celebrating the events of 1989 is to present the success story of Slovakia to the broader public in the United States. As part of the series of events commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Velvet Revolution the Embassy is hosting, we are delighted you are here to share with us the 20th Anniversary of the marvelous Velvet Revolution.

Past 20 years, Slovakia has traveled a long and successful road. The region and to the world. In November 1989, the Velvet Revolution, in then Czechoslovakia, started the journey of the Slovak and Czech nations towards freedom, democracy, and prosperity. Over these past 20 years, Slovakia has traveled a long and successful road.

Dear guests, I hope you will enjoy hospitality of the Slovak Embassy and others with ties to Slovakia.

Welcome to the Slovak Embassy! We are delighted you are here to share with us the 20th Anniversary of the marvelous Velvet Revolution.

Peter Burian
Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the U.S.A.

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Exhibit can be viewed weekdays 10 am - 4 pm by appointment only at the Embassy of the Slovak Republic. Please call: 202.237.1054 ext 200 or email: emb.washington@mzv.sk