

SUMMER 2019

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NATIONAL  
CZECH &  
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# Slovo

Czech  
& Slovak  
Musical  
Life

Roots, Rhythms & Reinventions

SAVE THE DATE: *Friday, September 20, 2019*



Now in its 16th year, BrewNost will feature a wide range of international beers selected by Doug Alberhasky, from John's Grocery in Iowa City. All beverages will be specially paired with culinary creations by chefs from some of the area's finest restaurants. In addition, local breweries and distilleries will offer distinctive brews and beverage creations, including wine, cider, and spirits.

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**On the Cover:**

A beautiful Dobro 33-D Resonator, Round Neck guitar. Resonator guitars were invented and patented by Slovak John Dopyera in the 1930s. For the complete story on the life of John Dopyera, turn to page 12.

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**Slovo = Word**

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**Smithsonian**  
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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Cecilia Rokusek, Ed.D., M.Sc., RDN**  
 President & CEO  
 National Czech & Slovak  
 Museum & Library

Dear NCSML Members,

What an absolute delight for me to present this summer 2019 issue of *Slovo* as we focus on some unique perspectives of Czech and Slovak music. And as a proud Smithsonian Affiliate, I am pleased to have this issue dedicated to music as the Smithsonian celebrates 2019 as the “year of music.”

There is no doubt the contributions of Czechs and Slovaks to music throughout the world are remarkable from my personal favorite early composers like Leoš Janáček, Antonín Dvořák, and Bedřich Smetana, to 20th and 21st century artists and performers like Karel Gott, Petr Janda, Helena Vondráčková, and Waldemar Matuška whose music connected to the people during turbulent periods in Czechoslovak history. Music was an important voice for the Czechoslovak people during the Communist era. One of the most popular bands of the 1960s — and still playing today — was Plastic People of the Universe (also a personal favorite band of Vaclav Havel). This band came to popularity in Prague in 1968 after the time of the Prague Spring. They continued to play underground and were imprisoned for their music described by the Communist Party as “organized disturbance of the peace.” Band members all served prison sentences for playing. Their music exemplified a form of strong, yet non-violent aggression, that has helped to shape democratic societies around the world.

One could almost say music helped to shape the identity of the Czech and Slovak Republics and all of their regions. Music indeed is synonymous with Czech and Slovak culture, history, and daily living. Its impact on a global level is truly noteworthy. These outstanding musical contributions carried over from the Czech and Slovak lands to America. This issue of *Slovo* highlights some of these more unique contributions. I would just like to mention a few more that we can all be so proud of. When the Moravian Brethren settled in America in 1735 in Georgia and later in 1740 in Pennsylvania, they introduced into America the very distinctive “Moravian” organ music. In the 1800s as more settlers came to America, they brought with them our cultural dancing and music, the pride of all Czechs and Slovaks. The “polka” became part of the American culture. Historians believe the origin of the word polka came from the saying *tančit na polovinu* (“dance in half”) which refers to the half tempo of polka music and the Czech word *pole*, meaning field. I have to admit that after the classics of Dvořák and Smetana, polka music is my favorite. I am always fascinated when I hear the “Beer Barrel Polka.” Its roots are truly Czech but other Americans and Germans have taken the music and adapted it. In 1927, Czech musician Jaromír Vejvoda wrote the first version of this polka and with the help of a fellow musician compiled the “*Modřanská Polka*” (Polka of Modřany). There were no lyrics! In 1934 lyricist Václav Zeman wrote the words to this composition and called it “*Škoda Lásky*” (Wasted Love). In the 1930s this polka became popular throughout the world. The Germans adapted it and it became known there as “*Rosamunda*.” In the U.S. (in 1939) *Škoda Lásky* became the Beer Barrel polka and was recorded and played by the Andrews Sisters, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Bobby Vinton, Billie Holiday, and Joe Patek.

Interesting to note is the relationship of our Czech and Slovak polkas and waltzes to Mexican music. As immigrants from the former Austrian-Hungarian Empire settled in Mexico, they influenced the music significantly by combining it with “Ranchero” music to create “Norteño” and “Banda” music. Listen carefully to Mexican music and one can clearly feel the Czechoslovak imprints.

I have only touched on the musical contributions of our Czechs and Slovaks, past and present. I could write so much more but I think I can best summarize my thoughts in the words of Antonín Dvořák: “The music of the people is like a rare and lovely flower growing amidst encroaching weeds. Thousands pass it while others trample it under foot, and thus the chances are that it will perish before it is seen by the one discriminating spirit who will prize it above all else. The fact that no one has yet arisen to make the most of it does not prove that nothing is there.”

May our Czech and Slovak music always be preserved, celebrated, and created for all future generations throughout the world.

## Letters to the Editor

We encourage discussion of the issues and stories presented in *Slovo*.

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**Michael Cwach** (*Unexpectedly Rich History: Bagpipes of Bohemia*) has Czech and German roots. His interest in Czech music came from his father who played the *heligonka* and sang in Czech. Cwach studied music performance and the history of musical instruments at various colleges and universities in the United States. In 2012, he completed his PhD in music at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. Currently living near Bechyně, Czech Republic, he teaches instrumental music and is a semi-professional tuba player.

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**Lee Bidgood** (*Czech Bluegrass: Notes from the Heart of Europe*) began doing research on Czech bluegrass at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and continued through graduate work at the University of Virginia. He has been supported by two Fulbright grants, worked on the documentary film *Banjo Romantika* (Lange, 2015), and wrote *Czech Bluegrass: Notes From the Heart of Europe* (Illinois, 2017). An early member of the Steep Canyon Rangers, he has worked with Czech musicians Martin Žák, Five Brothers, G-Runs and Roses, and Roll's Boys, and performs these days on fiddle, mandolin, viola, and viol whenever possible. As associate professor at East Tennessee State University he coordinates graduate programs in Appalachian Studies, teaches courses in ethnomusicology and bluegrass, old-time, and country music, and leads a mandolin orchestra.

**Tomáš Kačo** (*Gypsy Roots: Current Roma music in the Czech Republic*) is a pianist, composer, and singer from Nový Jičín, Czech Republic. Influenced by Gypsy music and self taught on the piano, he has developed a passion for classical music. He has performed in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Israel, and the U.S. He released his solo album, *My Home*, in 2018.



## Sounds of a Century:

# 100 YEARS OF CZECHOSLOVAK CLASSICAL MUSIC

By Daniel Buranovský



Author Daniel Buranovský  
Photo by Jana Šantará

One hundred years is a respectable age, almost unattainable for a man. But a country has no age, similarly to music. Countries and music have only their own history. Their age changes and renews the constant pulse of emerging younger generations, bringing into their history a permanent breath of freshness, new ideas and changes.

In its development, Czechoslovakia transformed from Austro-Hungarian roots into a confident republic. Later, during the Second World War it was forcibly divided to later reunite and look for its face in various forms of federation. Throughout its existence, it was exposed to the external and internal pressures of the social development of the turbulent 20th century. Finally, the countries decided to co-exist separately and peacefully divided into two states and live side-by-side in the European community.

Music reflects social events and development. It is interesting that we do not have a unifying expression in music for the era of the 20th century, compared to the past (such as Classicism and Romanticism). Permanent geo-political changes and the dehumanization of society under the influence of wars reflected as a mirror in musical development. The desire for peace and the return of the “good old days” along with the excitement of change brought a mix of genres and styles in music and even led to these genres and styles being intertwined.

In the pre-war period after the emergence of the new Czechoslovak state, on the ruins of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy, new musical directions from Western Europe (Impressionism, Expressionism and others) penetrated into this space, despite the fact that there were strong post-Romantic conservative tendencies. Dehumanizing views — such as the Second Vienna School with its representatives Schönberg, Berg, and Webern, but also “New Matter”, represented by Paul Hindemith — found a breeding ground in changing living conditions and difficult economic years. In the world, there was also a fight between the traditional “affectionate” music and experiments with the progress that began in Vienna with the *Scandalkonzerte* scandals, initiated by Arnold Schönberg and Igor Stravinsky in Paris.



*Left:* Bedřich Smetana, 1824-1884.

*Right:* Antonín Leopold Dvořák, 1841-1904.

In Slovakia, under the conditions of historical development within Hungarian rule, world-renowned personalities of music were absent, which would influence national feelings in the same way as in the Czech Republic, where the influence of music by Bedřich Smetana and Antonín Dvořák received worldwide acclaim. The Czech music scene, which was built on the basis of favorable development in the area of national musical traditions, helped Slovak institutions in their creation and development. After the formation of the common state in Slovakia, musical development was based on the work of Ján Levoslav Bella — who actually lived most of his life abroad — and the work of other composers of the older generation at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, including Viliam Figuš-Bystrý.

The new state of Czech and Slovak life brought the gradual establishment of national music and cultural institutions. For Slovak musicians, composers and performers initially used the opportunity to study abroad, where the traditions of musical culture were embedded in deeper roots. In the field of musical composition, Vítězslav Novák was a very important personality for the new generation of Slovak composers. Despite his post-Romantic orientation, he managed to preserve and develop in his students the fresh and modern musical thinking, with which other composers have enriched the music. He raised a generation of composers, such as Slovak national artists Eugen Suchoň, Ján Cikker, Alexander Moyzes, and others. They created their own original, distinctive style, supported by folk musical elements, characterizing the national musical feeling and laid the foundations of a generation of Slovak musical modernity.

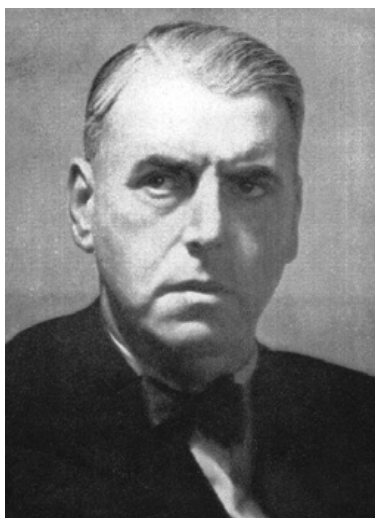
Czech music in the first half of the 20th century was dominated by distinctive personalities of the music scene, which far exceeded the borders of the Czech Republic due to their originality and the strength of their work, particularly Leoš Janáček and Bohuslav Martinů. Both composers created a distinctive style of modern music; Janáček with the extraordinary expressive power of his musical motives, which were based on the neo-folklore modeling of so-called “chanting”, impressive and suggestive melodies based on folk art enriched with impressive harmony. Martinů grasped his music as a fresh construction, in rich melodic-rhythmic shapes and modern harmony with a neo-classical touch. An exceptional feature was, for example, the work of Czech experimenter Alois Hába and his immaterial microtone composition, to which he also designed special musical instruments. Another important



Ján Levoslav Bella, 1843-1936.

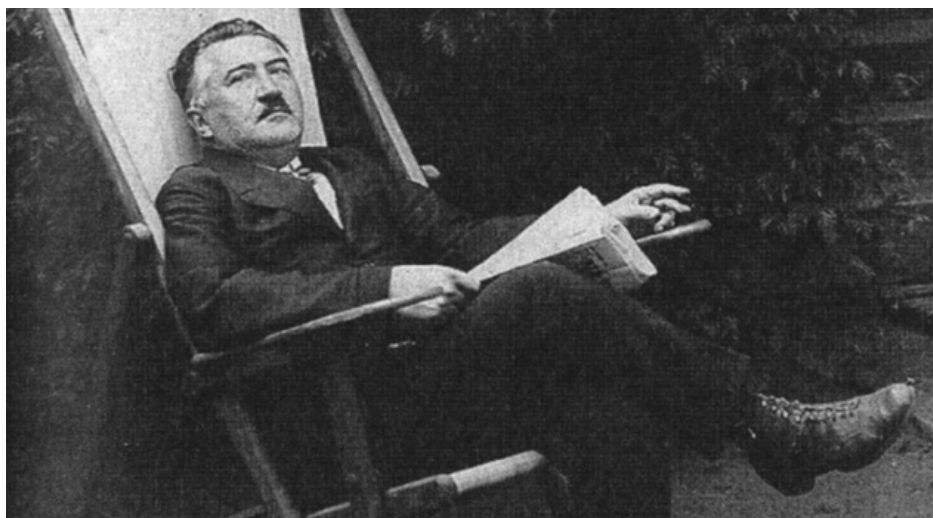
Viliam Figuš-Bystrý, 1875-1937.





Ervín Schulhoff, 1894-1942.

*Right:* Josef Suk, 1874-1935.



composer was Ervín Schulhoff, representing mainly Expressionist music. Some other great composers such as Josef Suk and Josef Bohuslav Foerster remained more traditional and in the spirit of Romanticism.

The developments in the music arena after World War II were significantly influenced by political changes and the country's focus towards socialism. The ruling party's ideological demands ran into ambivalence in the creative views of composers. The greatest influence was the group of prominent personalities who emigrated from Czechoslovakia and neighboring countries to the West (Bohuslav Martinů, Béla Bartók), as well as significant personalities of Russian music, such as Stravinsky. The avant-garde continued to develop in musical thinking, despite the official demand for engagement and clarity that came from the spheres of Soviet influence.

The constant struggle between the official demands of ideologists and the demands of musical personalities to preserve personal freedom in the creative process was the reality of the Czechoslovak music scene in the second half of the 20th century. In the 1960s, when the social climate began to loosen up, a strong generation of avant-garde composers came onto the music scene. Reflecting events in Europe, they followed the trends in the legacy of the Second Vienna School and European New Music and implemented into musical compositions freedom and experiment. Nevertheless, the political regime preferred traditionalist neo-classical or neo-folk trends.



Miloslav Kabeláč, 1908-1979.

Klement Slavický, 1910-1999.



The post-war development in the Czech Republic was dominated by the personalities of Miloslav Kabeláč, a composer of symphonies and an original music architect, as well as Klement Slavický, an experimenter and author of dramatic virtuoso compositions inspired by folklore, but also by the avant-garde. He was an important composer of mainly film music for the exceptional animated films of Jiří Trnka and Václav Trojan. A number of other composers have built on them. Among them is Petr Eben, an extremely prolific author — inspired by folk modality — and holder of the French Knights of Art and Writing Award. Another important personality was Ilja Hurník, music popularizer, author of symphonic works, and also a writer of well-known stories. A little younger than the others, Luboš Fišer excelled in orchestral work as well as in composing great film music.

In those years, Slovakia was represented by young composers. Ilja Zeljenka was an extremely prolific composer and respected personality, author of symphonic and piano music and film music. Roman Berger was a deep and philosophical composer. Ladislav Kupkovič was an experimenter who was





Jiří Trnka (1912-1969) and Václav Trojan (1907-1983) working together in 1960.

one of the few who gradually left the avant-garde and returned to the neo-romantic work.

The present is still marked by the existence of diverse trends in art, including music. The rapid liberation of political influence after the regime's change after 1989 brought the release of creative production in all directions of 20th century musical heritage. Immediately after the change in political conditions, there was much more intense contact between musicians and foreigners. Many went to study in Western countries, with official contacts with emigrants coming back to their homeland. The rapid development in society, the changes in the mood of the population, and the focus on the economy resulted in the division of the republic, fortunately in a calm, "gentle" way.

Unprecedented differentiation and plurality of compositional musical orientations developed. There was also a fusion of genres. Today, film music is experiencing an unprecedented boom. The musical direction at the turn of the millennium is given by another strong generation of composers. In Slovakia, a significant role in music culture belongs to Vladimír Godár, an important personality of music, and composer of deep philosophical works and reference film melodies, and Juraj Beneš, an important author of avant-garde operas such as *The Players*, or *Petrified*. An interesting character is Peter Breiner — who lives in the United States — a skilled composer, arranger and pianist, who in his work presents a fusion of musical genres of classical music, jazz, and neo-folklore. Evgeniy Irshai, a composer of Russian nationality who has been working at the Academy of Performing Arts for many years, represents a strong musical individuality that enriches Slovak production.

In the Czech Republic there are musical personalities such as Juraj Filas, a Slovak composer living in Prague, whose works are played all over the world, such as his *Requiem Oratio Spei* which was played at Carnegie Hall. There's also Silvie Bodorová, creator of lively music of modal characters, and Petr Kofroň, composer, conductor, and author of stage works, operas and musicals.

In an effort to keep the audience that is inclined more to entertainment than to the profound experience of musical content, as in the past, these artists are more eager to endear themselves to or at least communicate with the audience. Thus, they tilt towards different directions, or to some extent to lyricism of "new age" style and dreamy fantasy. They also try to increase the attractiveness of music by synthesizing and fusing different genres and

Juraj Filas.



Bratislava's opera house — known officially as the historical building of the Slovak National Theatre — is a Neo-Renaissance style building opened in 1886 as the City Theatre, according to the design of Viennese architects F. Fellner and H. Helmer.



Historic 1906 street view postcard of the National Theatre in Prague. The National Theatre in Prague was constructed in 1883, and is generally considered the prime stage in the Czech Republic. It is the flagship of the National Theatre institution, amounting to four buildings and encompassing four companies. Today the theatre offers three artistic ensembles: opera, ballet and drama.



The magnificent site of the National Theatre in Prague sits on the Vltava river bank and faces the beautiful panorama of the Prague Castle.



styles to create crossover compositions. The speed of lifestyle inspires composers to minimalism in content and reduction in scope, but there is no permanent avant-garde and experiment. Music in the context of visual art and the possibilities of electronization in a variety of multimedia performances has gained great importance. The present is also characterized by a number of composers' associations, groupings, and interpretative ensembles dedicated to introducing new works in public.

Among the youngest Czech composers is Marek Ivanovič, the chief conductor of the opera in Brno and the author of the successful opera *Čarokraj* at the National Theatre in Prague. There's also Lukáš Sommer, a great guitarist, composer, arranger, and author of concert compositions. And Jan Ryant Dřízal, the holder of several important compositional awards, is the hope for the future.

Among the contemporary young composers in Slovakia excels Vladislav Šarišský, a multi-genre composer, inventive experimenter, and innovator. There's also Ľubica Čekovská, author of the opera *Dorian Gray* based on the novel by Oscar Wilde.

Music, according to the famous Italian pianist, composer, and philosopher of the past Feruccio Busoni, is a cosmic phenomenon from which the composer chooses a part as his garden that he cultivates and cultivates for his own enjoyment and the enjoyment of his surroundings. It is good fortune for every country, when it consists of creative individuals, endowed with musical invention who enrich our world with music. The Czech and Slovak Republics are in this sense happy countries. ■

## Unexpectedly Rich History: BAGPIPES OF BOHEMIA

You may be surprised to learn about “Czech” bagpipes being regularly played in Bohemia, but it is true and has a rich tradition. Bagpipes played in Bohemia differ from the familiar Scottish Highland bagpipe. Suffice to say those played in Bohemia are smaller and not as loud.

One of many types of European bagpipes played by musicians in folklore groups in Bohemia was a family of bagpipes known as *bock* (German for “buck” or “billy goat”). *Dudy* is the collective term in Czech for bagpipes of all kinds, which are distinctive instruments that make a constant sound with their drone or drones over which a melody is played.

The *bock* form of bagpipe can be documented as being played in Bohemia from the early 17th century. Perhaps they were played even earlier when other types of bagpipes, such as the *sackpfeife*, were likely played. According to visual records, it appears the 18th century *bock* was played for the upper class during pleasant diversions such as dancing. Other types of bagpipes were played for the masses.

In certain regions of Bohemia, such as Chodsko in West Bohemia, there are at least two terms used to describe the *bock* bagpipes. One is a dialect word *pukl* which is the label applied to the bellows-blown bagpipe played in the region. Today these bagpipes are also called *dudy*, which is the general term in Czech for all types of bagpipes. However, in the past the small mouth-blown bagpipes were known as *dudy*.

The role of bagpipes in Bohemia in the 19th century is clearer and based on written testimony, visual record, and surviving instruments. The *bock* were made in three basic configurations tuned in various keys. They all had a bag (air reservoir) made of leather, sometimes with the hair retained, a chanter or melody pipe, and one drone. The drone produces the characteristic continuous sound common to bagpipes. The chanter and drone each have a single beating reed — with a body made of bone or brass — to which a cane reed is secured with wound string.



By Michael Cwach



Author Michael Cwach.

Left: *Dudy* made by Juraj Dufek (1976-). Photo by Václav Vomáčka

Right: *Pukl* or *puklík* made by Jakub Konrady (1905-1987) of Domažlice. Photo by Václav Vomáčka



Michael Cwach in *chodský kroj* from lower Chodsko with *pukl*.  
Photo by Václav Vomáčka

Michael Cwach in *kroj* from Hvozd'any near Bechyně with *dudy*.  
Photo by Václav Vomáčka



Sharing the same basic parts, the *bock* were made in various forms. They differed in regard to being mouth-blown or bellows-blown, and how the drone pipe was configured. The first type was mouth-blown with the chanter and drone pipe in front of the player. These are properly called *dudy*. The second variation looked much the same as the first, but bellows were added to avoid mouth blowing. The third type was also bellows-blown but the drone, with a 90 degree bend in it, rested on a shoulder of the player and is known as *pukl* or *puklík*.

Bellows provide a number of advantages. First, maintenance is largely reduced as no moisture from the player's breath is introduced into the bag or other parts of the instrument. Secondly, if the bagpiper chooses, he can sing to his own accompaniment on the bagpipe. The third type is the preferred configuration used today and the most popular key is E-flat major.

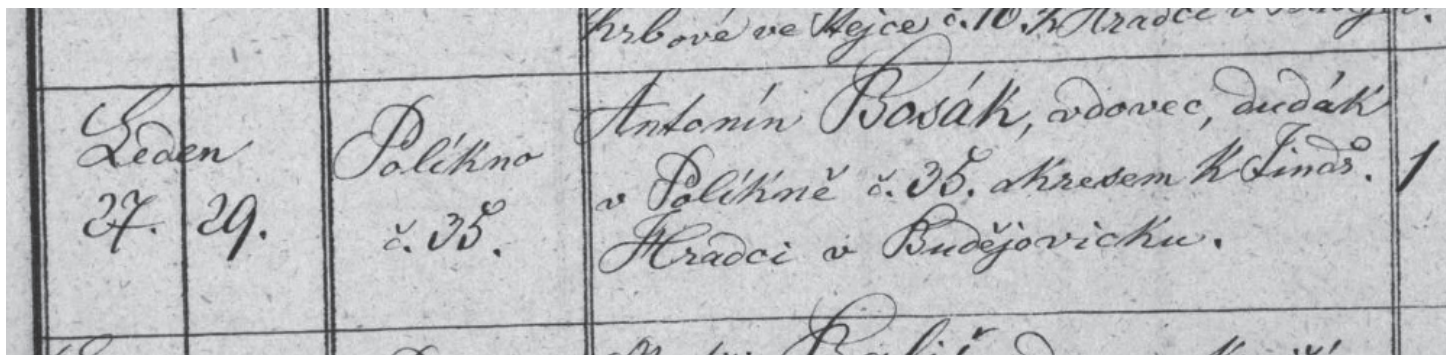
Both the *dudy* and *pukl* suffice as solo instruments. As with all bagpipes, notes can be played very quickly, and the speed of the notes and their ornamentation is only limited by the speed of the player's fingers. Bagpipes also can be played in combination with other instruments, and there were a number of standard combinations historically. One was *malá selská muzika*, which could include a *pukl*, E-flat clarinet and violin. Another form is *velká selská muzika* which added a B-flat clarinet to previously mentioned trio of musicians. Both forms existed in the distinct ethnographic region known as Chodsko in West Bohemia.

Of course, *dudy* were more important in the past than they are today. They were played in pubs and served as a good source of income for the bagpiper and other musicians who prided themselves on their ability to improvise. Pub patrons were not passive listeners. They initiated the singing and the musicians accompanied them and played variations on the melody. For this musical collaboration, the instrumentalists were paid.

Other times that bagpipes were played during dances include the harvest festival, church fairs, and on the last three days of Carnival. In early years, on the Monday of Carnival bagpipers would play from house to house. At later times, on Tuesday during Carnival, they would have a dance that included having a drink of wine at a table in middle of the floor, dancing, returning to the table, and then paying a ransom to be free. The ransom money was used to pay the musicians.

There are eyewitness reports that *dudy* were used in weddings in Bohemia. Bohumil Kraus (1908-1986), a very gifted performer, provided insight to the types of bagpipes that were played in Chodsko. He indicated there was a clear distinction between the small mouth-blown *dudy* and the large-bellows blown *pukl* in Chodsko. He wrote that during some rural weddings the bagpiper, or *dudák*, would play the mouth-blown *dudy* for the wedding activities — likely the processions, before and after the wedding — but for the dance the *dudy* were abandoned in favor of a *pukl*.

Perhaps the most detailed description of bagpipes being used during wedding festivities in the 19th century probably comes from the villages of Políkno and Roseč in South Bohemia near Jindřichův Hradec. Here, the well-known *dudák*, Antonín Bosák (1800-1867) was active for decades and is thought to have played for more than 700 weddings. He and other musicians might have led the procession from the groom's home in one village to the bride's home, then to the church in another village perhaps an hour's walk away. After the wedding Mass, they spent time in the local pub where they would sing, dance, and drink. Then they made another procession back



to the bride's house. During this hour-long trip, guns were fired and the small band was almost always playing. After the reception meal at the bride's house, they went to the pub where they sang, danced and played until morning.

It is rare to see bagpipes played in the Czech Republic today unless one seeks them out. Most contemporary Czech people have not have seen "their" bagpipes live, but are familiar with them from illustrations in fairy tales and movies. They are most often heard in public at local and regional folklore festivals. They are also played at private occasions such as birthdays, meetings of hunters and firemen, or any occasion where a bagpiper might have been invited.

In the 19th century, Czech bagpipers were known to have been active in Czech settlements in Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Further, Czech diaspora communities in the U.S. had the opportunity to experience a fine *pukl*-violin duo in the form of Josef Šnabl and Ondřej Ludvík from Domažlice who arrived in New York in early 1920. Upon their arrival in the United States, they recorded with the Victor recording label and two songs were released on record 72654. The duo visited Czech and Slovak communities in 12 states from New York to Nebraska.

So, indeed bagpipes — of a different sort than what most people are familiar with — are part of the Czech music-making tradition and augmented many communal activities. ■

Death record of Antonín Bosák the *dudák* mentioned in the article. This is special as it lists his occupation as *dudák*, or bagpiper. It may very well be the only example of such an occupation being listed in such records.



This postcard is from Domažlice, perhaps from around 1900. It belongs to a collection of Czech bagpipe postcards owned by author Michael Cwach.

## The Man Who Made the Dobro:

# REFLECTIONS OF MY FATHER, JOHN DOPYERA

By John E. Dopyera



John Dopyera was born in Slovakia in 1893. John is credited with inventing the resonator guitar which was an important contributing factor in the early development of the electric guitar.

### *Early life*

Dad was born in Stráže, Slovakia, on July 6, 1893. He was the fourth child in a family of ten and was the eldest son. All ten children were born in the “old country”. Stephanie, Erma, Laura, then Dad. Rudy and Louis came next, then two sets of boy-girl twins, Robert and Valeria and Gabriela and Emil. When Dad was about three years of age, the family moved to Dolná Krupá where Grandfather Josef Dopyera became the village miller.

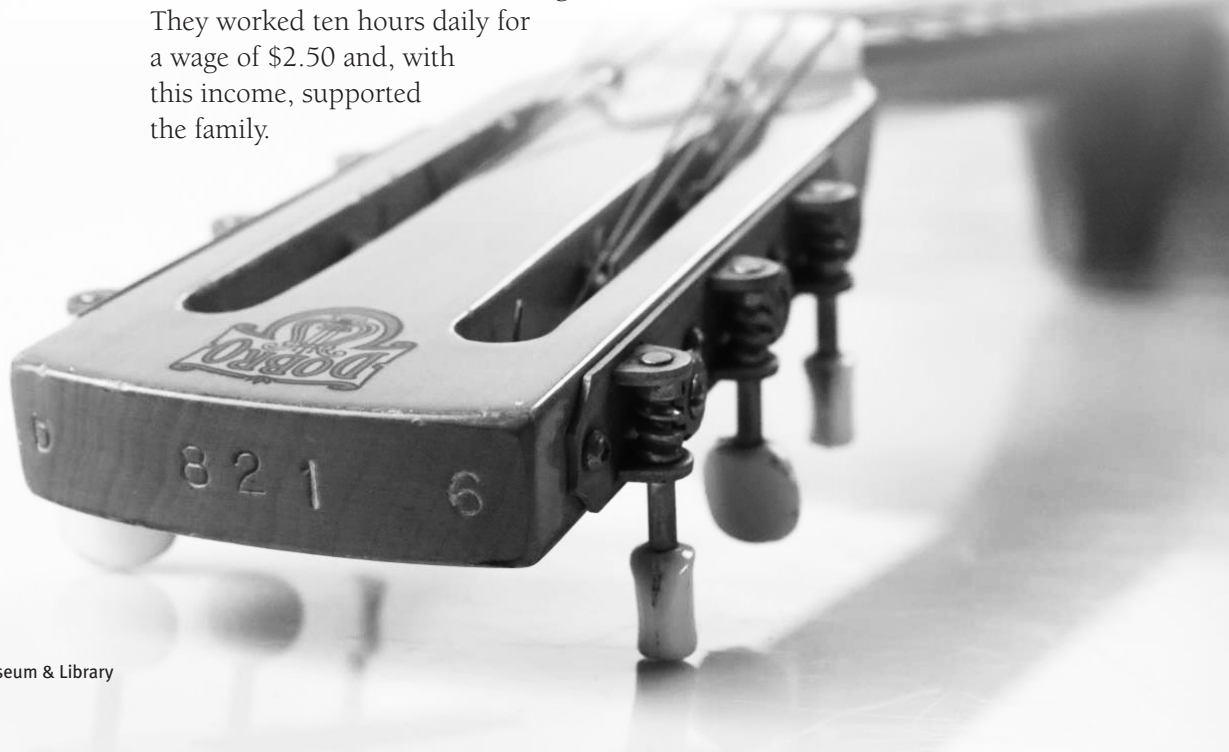
As the eldest son Dad very early on worked with his father in the mill. Dad often commented that most of his skills as a craftsman were developed working with his father. He also learned five languages as he had to speak with customers coming to the mill who spoke Czech, German, Hungarian, Polish, and Russian.

Grandfather Dopyera appeared to have many talents including that of violin maker. Dad learned his violin making from his father and in fact made his first violin under his father’s tutelage before the age of 14.

I know very little about Grandfather and Grandmother Dopyera except that Grandfather was born in Čáry, Austro-Hungary and that Grandmother was Catherine Sonnenfeld. A church document indicates they were married in 1887. Family lore has it that Grandfather Dopyera was reluctant to emigrate but was aware that war (World War I) was looming on the horizon and didn’t want his sons to serve in the army.

The family thus left for America in 1908. I don’t know if they stayed in New York for a period of time or whether they left directly for the west coast. When they departed, they boarded a boat for Galveston, Texas and from there took a train across the New Mexico and Arizona Indian territories. Grandfather Dopyera, Dad, and Rudy almost immediately took jobs as skilled craftsmen at Pacific Sash and Door in Los Angeles.

They worked ten hours daily for a wage of \$2.50 and, with this income, supported the family.



Dobro Model 45 Resonator Guitar.



John Dopyera and his brothers made musical instruments, violins and guitars in particular, and became famous for patenting the resonator guitar. It combined a wooden guitar and a metal resonator. The company name of Dobro combined the first two syllables of the words DOPyera BROthers — which also means “good” in Slovak.

*Left to right:* Emil, John, and Rudy Dopyera during the 1970s.

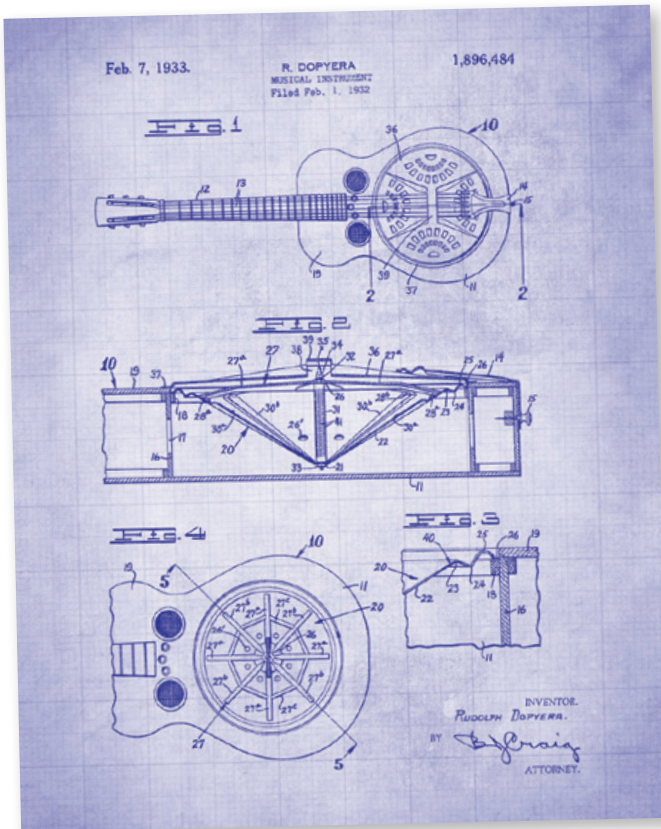
## *Making instruments*

During the early 1920s Dad and Rudy started manufacturing banjos. How many they made and sold I do not know. It was during this time, however that an incident occurred that was to change the shape of acoustic instrument development and making. Dad told me one day a vaudeville guitar player named George Beauchamp stopped by his shop to talk about a problem he was having. Mr. Beauchamp indicated his acoustic guitar was unable to produce enough volume to compete with other instruments in the vaudeville orchestra. (Ten years later this problem was “resolved” with the production of electric guitars.) What came from their discussion was the idea of placing aluminum resonators into the guitar body to amplify the sound played on the guitar. Several months of experimenting resulted in a tricone, all-metal German-silver Hawaiian guitar. Dad and Mr. Beauchamp decided to begin, in what was already the National Company, manufacturing the instruments in quantity. Major buyers initially were the Hawaiian steel-guitar players — Sol Hoopii for one.

The partnership of Dad and George Beauchamp apparently was not destined to endure. Their split was sped up by what Dad considered as Mr. Beauchamp’s not always responsible handling of company finances and by the latter’s efforts to project himself as the inventor. In 1929, Dad suddenly resigned as shop foreman and left the company. The development of the Dobro guitar came about as a direct consequence of Dad’s resignation from National. As part of his contribution to the National partnership, Dad turned over his patents on the National resonator. Subsequent to his departure from National, Dad and Rudy began working on a different version of resonator. Unlike National, Dobro resonator was concave and the bridge was placed in the center of the aluminum “spider web” arrangement.

1931 Dobro Resonator.





1933 Resonator Guitar patent.

John Dopyera's Resonator Violin.



Because Dad was concerned National would sue him for patent rights, he placed the patent in Rudy's name.

Dad's brother, Louis, had invested in the National and he also invested, along with brother Bob, in to the Dobro. Apparently with the onset of the Depression, the National Company began to have financial difficulties and Louis bought them out. He also managed to own more than 50 percent of the stock in the Dobro Corporation and after several years of manufacturing, he decided to move the company to Chicago. Gradually the whole business shifted to Chicago, manufacturing a wide variety of guitars until they could no longer get materials due to the advent of World War II.

### *My Childhood Memories*

Dad married my mother, Elizabeth Vera Candee, in 1927. He got to know my mother, according to family

lore, through knowing Grandmother Candee first. Subsequent to Dad's illness during his late twenties, he began to explore non-medical aspects of health and along with his explorations he discovered Christian Science. Grandmother Candee was a Christian Science practitioner. Dad claimed he was cured of his difficulties through his association with her. Somewhere along the line through his contact with Grandmother Candee, he met my mother. She, aside from being a good cook and good traditional Christian, also played piano. An early picture of Dad and Mom shows Mom playing piano and Dad, the violin.

My brother, Joseph, was born in August of 1928 and I, a year later. We were obviously too young to be very aware of the tumult going on during this period with Dad's departure from National and the startup of the Dobro Company. I do remember going to the Dobro factory with my mother on many occasions to pick up my father after work. I can still picture the racks of freshly produced guitars and I can still smell the paint that came out of the lacquer room.

I have several strong memories of Dad during my childhood days in Los Angeles as always trying things out, both in the shops and elsewhere. He was frequently involved in developing experimental instruments, doing custom work for clients. Dad was also always exploring ideas. He was very curious. He joined the Masons and the Rosecrucians. He read widely. He was a health food faddist before anyone knew there was such a thing. Throughout his life he was preoccupied with diet and with observing the effect of what he ate on his health. He was a good cook, creating wonderful potato pancakes, strudels, poppy seed pastries, and honey cakes. He also liked gardening.

### *Later Life*

During 1937 and 1938, three events occurred which were significant for our family: Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, Grandfather died, and a great aunt on my mother's side of the family also died. This latter loss led to a journey cross country which drew us away from Los Angeles. My mother inherited much of my great aunt's estate and she, therefore, needed to go to Springville, New York to take care of those matters. We were gone for three months — June, July and August of 1940. On the way back to California,





Built throughout the late 1930's, the Dobro model 62 featured fiddle-edge construction, a nickel-plated brass body with sand-blasted 'Spanish Dancer' scene, a mahogany neck, and bound rosewood fingerboard. At \$62, the model 62 was one of the more pricey Dobros available at it's introduction during the height of the Great Depression.

we drove to Grants Pass, Oregon. Dad's brothers, Rudy and Ed, had moved there shortly before. The fact that Ed and Rudy were in southern Oregon, plus the possibility of war, led my parents to decide to move there as well. We returned to Los Angeles so Dad could straighten out business affairs and in August of 1941 we moved north. When the war started in December, Dad and Mom felt they had made a good decision. We had a large garden and my mother canned extensively. We had a cow and raised chickens, ducks, and geese. With our own eggs, milk, and produce we were able to be much more self-sufficient than in the city.

Dad almost immediately acquired a rental shop in Grants Pass in which he did various repairs and did other kinds of building and repair work as well as some retail sales. Dad's curiosity about non-conventional health care continued throughout his life. He frequently visited chiropractors and started the first health food store in Grants Pass, Oregon, in 1947.

Later that year, my father returned to California, divorcing my mother and leaving her and my sister, Anne, in Grants Pass. I was in the Air Force and had little communication with Dad. I believe he was embarrassed about his spelling, for he lacked an ability to write, other than phonetically. I visited my father during a couple of my leaves when he was living in El Monte, California. He had remarried and seemed very satisfied with his new life. His wife, Eva, was pleasant and I enjoyed my visits.

During these years, Dad and Eva moved to Escondido, California and he constructed yet another shop where he did retail and repair business with musical instruments and continued the innovative development which was a part of his endeavors. His wife, Eva, died suddenly of a heart attack in 1964. Fortunately, he had many good friends in Escondido and an active life which he greatly enjoyed as long as his age and health permitted.

As Dad began to age, it became clear to my sister and me that a time would come when he would need some assistance. It became more and more difficult for Dad to manage for himself in Escondido. When his brother, Rudy, however, became ill, he went to live with Dad and somehow Dad cared for him until Rudy's death in 1978. They had always been very close.

Dobro Hound Dog Deluxe Round Neck.





Slovakia issued a stamp honoring John Dopyera in 2001. It featured the Dobro guitar originally made by the Dopyera brothers in 1928.

The sound of the resophonic guitar is today ingrained into American music through artists like Earl Scruggs, Johnny Cash, Alison Krauss, Phil Leadbetter, Eric Clapton, Melissa Etheridge, Stevie Ray Vaughan, and T. Bone Burnett.

Despite his apparent gregariousness, Dad was a very shy and gentle person. My guess is that his strong relationship with his brother Rudy was because they complemented each other. Rudy was Dad's extreme opposite. They must have spent thousands and thousands of hours during their lifetimes, experimenting and solving problems. Rudy's death must have created a tremendous void for Dad. My brother, Joe, died after a very brief illness the same year. Dad was greatly shaken by the losses. My sister Anne, who continued to live in southern Oregon, visited, put things in order from time to time, and attempted to arrange for outside help. These were difficult times. By 1980, it became impossible, and Dad at age 86, went back to Oregon to stay. Anne and I sorted with trepidation through the clutter and richness of the life accumulations of our Uncle Rudy and our father. Dad thus went back to Grants Pass where the remainder of his life, to age 94, was spent. He died January 3, 1988.

It is my personal opinion that Dad never completely acclimated to "modern life". He seemed always to be somewhat dismayed at what he saw in the world around him and I suspect this contributed to his intensity about life. Considering his lifetime spanned the period from small village feudal life in Austro-Hungary to the fast-moving high-tech milieu of Southern California, this is perhaps not surprising.

Although he is known as the inventor of the resophonic system, his own primary identity was with violins. He thought of himself as a violinist and violin maker. Even though, in objective terms, his major contribution was with guitars, he also had at least three patents relating to violins and several violin-related innovations he never patented. His successes were well-mixed with disappointments. The rewards he gained from his work on the National and Dobro resophonic guitars were not financial. He realized few financial benefits. His rewards were ample, however, in what mattered to him most — the appreciation of those who enjoyed using and listening to these instruments. In that regard he was very successful. ■

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This article is reprinted with permission of "Brads Page of Steel," a website dedicated to information on acoustic and electric lap steel guitars. It was based on information provided by Peter Gaspar and Bob Brozman.



The Edison Phonograph was demonstrated during the General Land Centennial Exhibition in Prague, 1891.

## Early Czech Recordings Across the Atlantic: PRAGUE TO CHICAGO

By Filip Šír

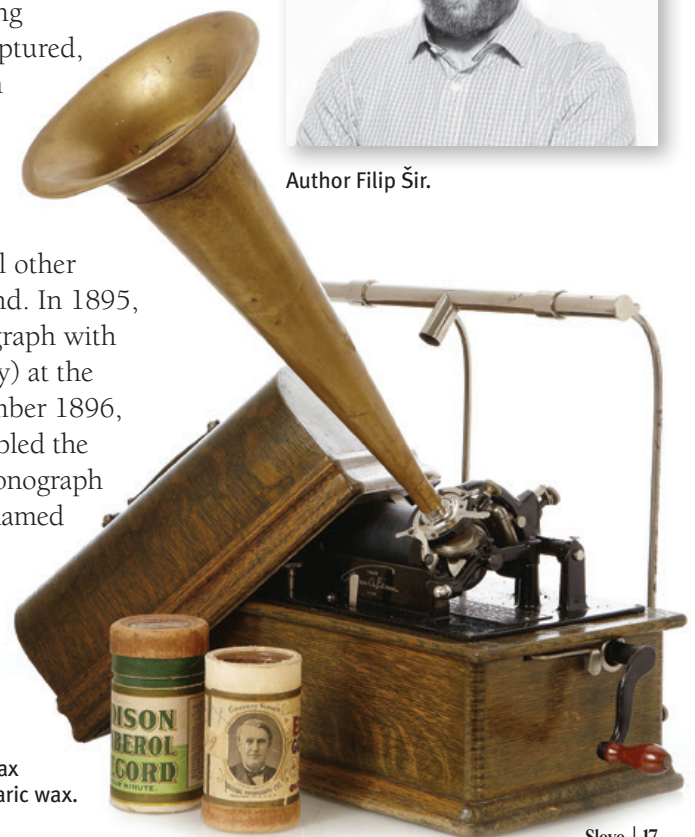
### 1891-1900: Prehistory in Czech Lands

The first time citizens of the Czech lands were able to get acquainted with Edison's phonograph and phonograph cylinders was in 1891 at the Provincial Jubilee Exhibition in Prague. The demonstration was held at the stand of the Berlin representatives of Edison's company, which was adorned with an American flag. While they were playing entertaining scenes and patriotic songs, a contemporary photograph captured, among others, dramatic actor Rudolf Innemann, comedian Josef Šváb-Malostranský, and opera singer Vilém Heš, all of whom were accompanied on piano by Adolf Krössing. None of the phonograph cylinders recorded at that time have survived.

In the late 19th century, the Czech press reported several other domestic events related to recording and reproducing sound. In 1895, the Jand'ourek and Duffek Company sold Edison's phonograph with a patented mechanical drive (i.e. not powered by electricity) at the Czechoslavic Ethnographic Exhibition in Prague. In December 1896, the Kinemato-phonograph was showcased in Prague. It enabled the projection of films to be accompanied by the sound of a phonograph and recordings of well-known — though unfortunately unnamed — Prague artists. In 1897, the magazine *Dalibor* reported Josef Hoffmann, an electrical engineer at the electrical plant in Smíchov, lent a Graphophone phonograph to the Support Units of Individual Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Smíchov for one performance, which was organized in



Author Filip Šír.



The Edison Home Phonograph recorded and played wax cylinders the were made of ceresin, beeswax, and stearic wax.



Right: The first recordings were done during the exhibition in 1891 by famous actors and singers.



The Graphophone was the name and trademark of an improved version of the phonograph. It was invented at the Volta Laboratory established by Alexander Graham Bell in the U.S.

Smíchov on March 25 of that year. The evening program included, for example, the Austrian national anthem played by the Imperial and Royal Military Band of Infantry Regiment No. 35, as well as Czech national songs and operatic arias sung by leading singers from Prague's National Theatre. There were surely many more such performances, yet, in all cases, these would have been non-commercial events where recording and reproducing sound was little more than an amusing attraction.

Similar recordings of phonograph cylinders being used as entertaining diversions for people in the audience, where it was enough to simply hear their own recorded voices, gradually transformed into a systematic activity of companies in fields focused on more affluent and culturally-oriented segments of the population. A catalyst for this change was undoubtedly the onset of gramophone records as a new medium enabling the reproduction of recorded sound, and also a format that presented a much more practical recording medium than phonograph cylinders. Gramophone records were easier to handle and store and were not sensitive to temperature changes; furthermore, unlike phonograph cylinders, they could easily be copied from the matrix master in pressing. From approximately 1900, phonograph cylinders found significant competition in the form of gramophone records, which almost completely pushed them out of the market in Europe by the end of the first decade of the 20th century.

### *Hidden stories under Czech pioneers in the United States*

The little-researched and still-unwritten chapter in the history of Czech sound recordings begins at the dawn of the 20th century. That history is contained on the phonograph cylinders and disc records that were pressed by North American companies for the numerous communities of immigrants from the Czech lands who were residing there. Most of these recordings were made by musicians who had settled in the United States, though the catalogs of ethnic recordings produced by the larger American phonograph companies also offered re-pressings of records that European companies had produced with Czech musicians, ones which were originally intended for audiences in the Czech lands. Naturally, this also worked the other way around: Czech recordings produced in the United States — mainly by the Victor and Columbia labels — were picked up by the European branches of both companies and filled their catalogs of Czech recordings that had been made



This phonograph record is of a speech by Tomáš Baťa, founder of Bata Shoes, on Esta recordings.

Catalog advertisements also promoted which records were available.



Here are two examples of famous recording labels: Esta and Ultraphon.

in Prague or elsewhere in Europe. However, this two-way exchange was cut short by both world wars, and after a brief postwar intermezzo, ended with the Communists' accession to power in Czechoslovakia in 1948.

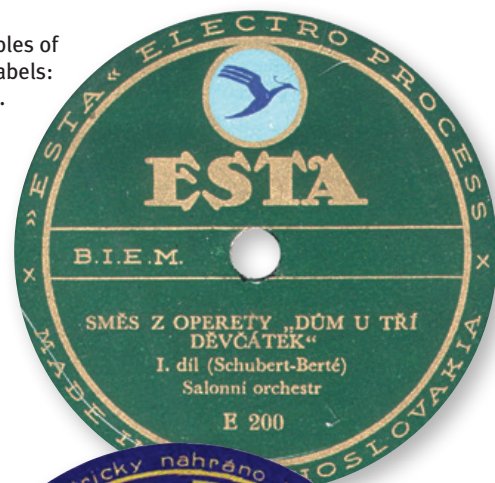
### *Czechoslovak record companies Esta and Ultraphon and their subsidiaries*

The history of the first Czechoslovak record company, Esta, and its discography of Czech recordings were recently examined in detail. Let us therefore just briefly mention some milestones in the development of these record companies.

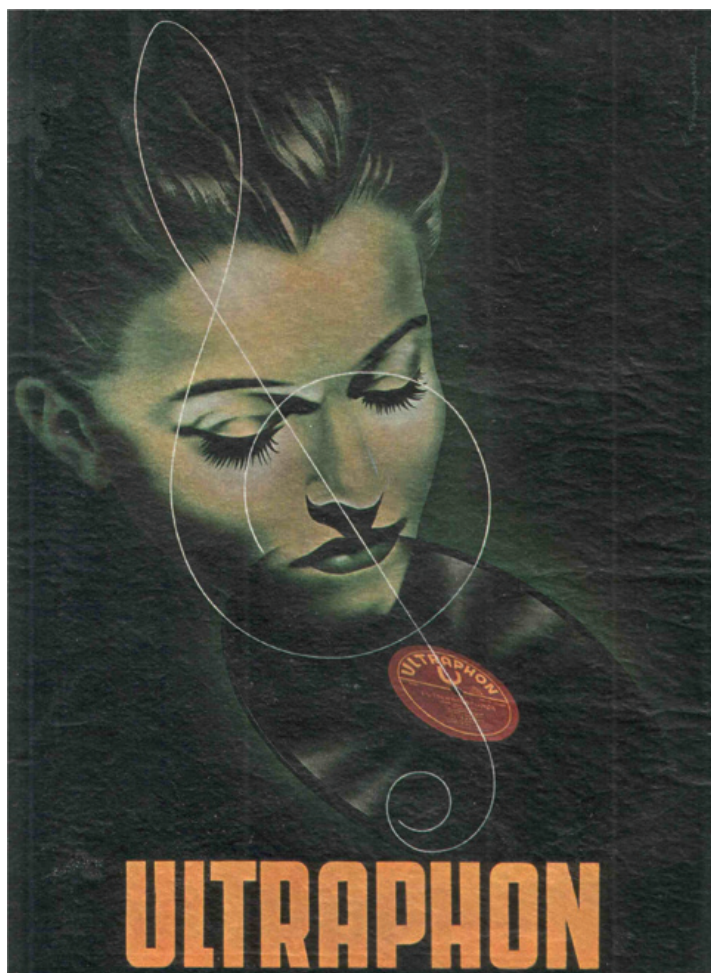
In the middle of 1930, the Prague company Forresta announced production of bendable celluloid gramophone records with the Esta Flexible label, pressed from the matrices of several German companies. The relatively primitive methods of production of these gramophone records, made from highly flammable material, aroused the attention of the relevant authorities, who soon prohibited their production. Therefore, in the fall of that year, the company began manufacturing shellac gramophone records from its own matrices. The company introduced the Slavia and Desky Lido labels as cheap sub-labels. Until the end of the 1930s, Esta almost exclusively produced recordings of popular music on gramophone records with a diameter of 25 cm and pressed made-to-order gramophone records for both the domestic market and for foreign countries, where they were published under various brands. On the basis of a contract with German company DGG, Esta also pressed Brunswick and Polydor gramophone records. During World War II, gramophone records with the label "Lyre with a mandolin" were pressed in the Esta factory with propagandistic recordings of Charlie and his Orchestra, and, before the end of WWII, they also pressed Polydor gramophone records for the Russian Liberation Army (Vlasov Army) and Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Bandera Army).

A detailed inventory of the repertoire of the Czechoslovak Ultraphon label is still awaited. We would like to only briefly mention some of the more important moments from the company's existence, which was at one time the largest record producer in Czechoslovakia.

The first Ultraphon gramophone records featuring Czech and Slovak repertoire appeared on the domestic market thanks to the Prague distribution company Ravitas at the end of 1929. They were recorded in the Berlin recording studio of parent company Deutsche Ultraphon Aktiengesellschaft; German technicians later arrived in Prague with recording equipment. The company, at first, also distributed numerous recordings originally made



A classic advertisement from Ultraphon.





The Ultraphon Gramophone, manufactured by Deutsche Ultraphon Gesellschaft, was a double-horn gramophone with 2 soundboxes. It created a “spatial” sound effect by playing on two pick-ups simultaneously.

The recording pictured is of President Edvard Beneš making a speech before leaving Czechoslovakia in 1938.



for the German catalogue, and it also took over the distribution of the Musica Sacra and Orchestrola labels. In 1931, it introduced cheap sub-labels Artona, Selektion and, for a short time, Ultraphonet.

In 1933, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Trade permitted, and, retroactively from January 1, 1932, registered joint stock company

Ultraphon, which took over all of the assets and liabilities of Ravitas, and bought the trademark. The company gradually acquired the majority of renowned Czechoslovak artists and music ensembles

for recording gramophone records. It also carried out important orders for Czechoslovak Radio and the Sokol movement, and recorded many speeches of leading cultural and political personalities. Dozens of recordings in German, for both the domestic, German-speaking Czechoslovak population, as well as for Germany and Austria, were published on the Ultraphon label. Czech Ultraphon also distributed gramophone records of German company Telefunken, and both companies mutually recorded and traded their matrices.

Along with other auxiliary and secondary companies from the sound industry, both of the aforementioned Czechoslovak record companies were nationalized in 1945 on the basis of President Edvard Beneš decree and their productions were merged. On January 1, 1946, they were transferred under the authority of the newly established state-owned Gramofonové závody. The still-existing Supraphon, originally founded in 1946 as a distribution company for the export of Czechoslovak gramophone records abroad, became the legal successor of Ultraphon and Esta.



### After Esta and Ultraphon: The Story about Supraphon

In the period of 1950 to 1960, Gramofonové závody, n.p. was pressing shellac records decorated with blue-gold Esta-Lev labels with a picture of a lyre and texts in English for export. They were distributed abroad by the Czechoslovak foreign trade company Artia. For this line of exports, both recordings from Supraphon's period catalog as well as prewar recordings from the catalogs of the phonograph companies Ultraphon and Esta (which had already been nationalized and ceased to exist), were distributed. It is not possible to determine whether they were intended for sale to Czechs in the United States, because the Czech archives did not preserve any records from this fairly extensive edition of phonograph records. ■

The images above represent the digital archive of old recordings from Supraphon Live, Cz.

G. Gössel and F. Šír: *Czech catalogue of recordings of gramophone company Esta 1930-1946*. In 2015, The Moravian Library in Brno published 100 copies within the *Virtual National Phonotheque* project. Its electronic version is at <https://archive.org/details/ceskykatalognahravegramofonove>.

Filip Šír is currently working at the National Museum in Prague on a project titled “Mapping: Early Sound Recordings of Czech Settlers in the USA.”



## Czech and Slovak Dance Bands:

# FROM THE COAL FIELDS TO THE CORN BELT

By James P. Leary

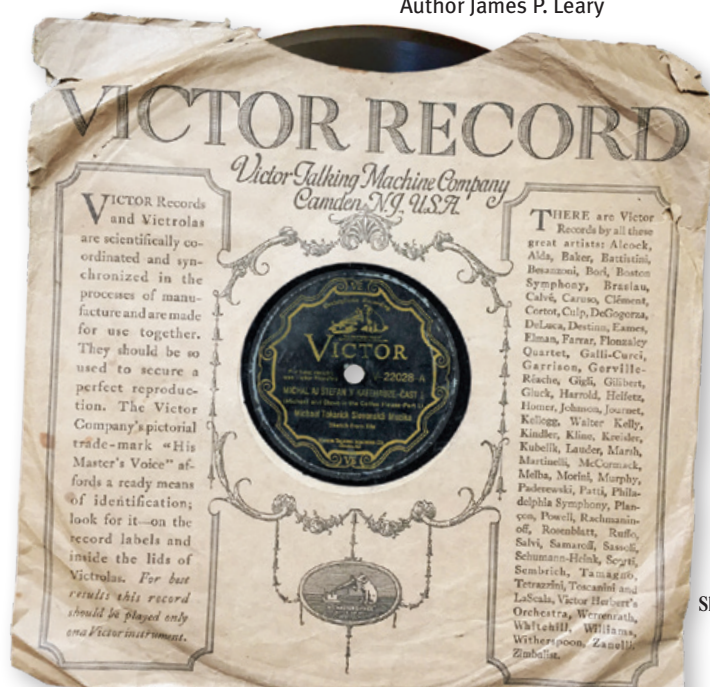
Rollicking Czech and Slovak bands featuring folk songs and dance tunes emerged in America with waves of 19th and early 20th century immigrants. Relentlessly combining Old and New World sounds, their widespread, vibrant, yet mostly divergent recorded legacies and musical descendants persist into the present.

Slovaks settled mainly in the industrialized Northeast, extending into northern Ohio. Whether toiling in Pennsylvania's coal mines and steel mills, or in Cleveland's factories, Slovak musicians through the early decades of the twentieth century included ensembles built around both accordionists and Romany-influenced combinations of *cimbalom* (hammered dulcimer), bowed bass, and fiddle. The fiddling bandleader Michael Tokarick (1891-1952) was exemplary. Hailing from Minersville in the Pennsylvania coal fields, he recorded more than 40 tracks for Victor from 1928 to 1931 (Spottswood 1997). Beyond polka and *czardas* tunes rendered in a "raw, unsanitized style evoking the rowdy village bands of Slovakia" (Charap 1999: 56), Tokarick created a Slovak greenhorn, *Janko Lajdak* (John Slob), who figured in such comic mixed-language musical skits as "*Janko U Salone*" (John in the Saloon), "*Janko Lajdak Pres Robotu*" (John Slob is Looking for Work), and "*Janko Lajdak I Policman*" (John Slob and the Policeman).



Author James P. Leary

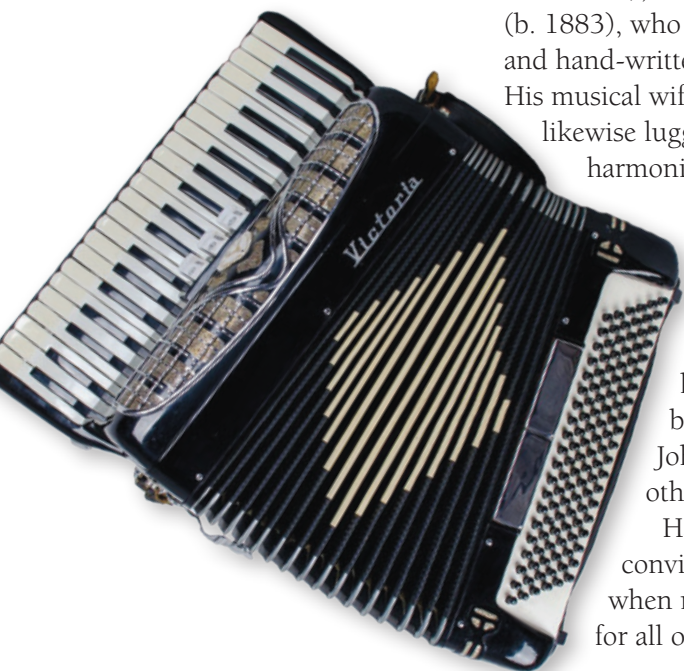
1929 Victor Records recording:  
*Michal Aj Štefan Kafehauze – Čast 1*  
 (Michael and Steve in the Coffee House – Part 1),  
 Michael Tokarick Slovenská Muzika.





Vaclav Fišer's Sokol Band recorded "Pojd'te holký tancovat!" (Come Girls, Let's Dance!) in Chicago for Columbia Records, July 1927. Mills Music Library, University of Wisconsin.

The accordion was a fixture of importance in early Czech and Slovak music in the United States.



Andrew J. Smik, Jr. (1914-2011) and Joe Beno (b. 1927), sons of Slovak immigrants, drew differently on their heritage. Raised north of Pittsburgh where his father played both Slovak and American tunes, Smik adopted the stage name "Doc Williams" in the mid-1930s, and with his brother Milo formed the Border Riders to perform "straightforward country music with a strong dash of Eastern European influence" as longtime stars of the WWVA Jamboree broadcast throughout coal country from Wheeling, West Virginia (Tribe 1984: 47-48). Meanwhile, Cleveland accordionist Joe Beno formed his first band in 1946, founded a Slovak folk festival in 1970, recorded soon after with a local Czech band, the Karlin Brass, welcomed musicians steeped

in Polish and Slovenian polka styles into his band, and also dedicated an entire album to the Slovak folk dance group Trávnica from nearby Parma. Consciously pan-Slavic but also strongly Slovak, Beno contributed to the larger Cleveland polka scene and an ethnic folk dance movement that burgeoned amidst roots-seeking sparked by America's 1976 Bicentennial (Leary 1988: 344). The present day Pittsburgh Area Slovak Folk Ensemble continues as vigorous exponents of revitalized Old World musical traditions.

More numerous and widely dispersed, both urban and agrarian, Czechs settled prominently in Cleveland and Chicago, which boasted the largest urban Czech population outside of Europe. Newcomers from both Bohemia and Moravia streamed into the Texas hinterlands through the port of Galveston, while Bohemians also sought rural communities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska, where, from the outset, accordionists and brass bands played an exuberant mixture of polkas, waltzes, and marches.

Verifying the proverb "*Co Čech, to muzikant*" (If you're Czech, you're a musician), more than a few fit a pattern exemplified by Martin Stangle (b. 1883), who left Bohemia for northern Wisconsin with a baritone horn and hand-written dance tune arrangements packed in his steamer trunk. His musical wife-to-be Ludmila, who he met in an Odanah lumber mill,

likewise lugged a button accordion across the Atlantic, along with a pocket harmonica (Stangle 1980; Leary 2016). Horns, sheet music, and squeezeboxes were cherished and sometimes scarce at the outset. In 1892, as reported in the November 3 edition of Minnesota's *Worthington Advance*, "A fight occurred 11 miles east of Owatonna near Bixby. James Pavice, a Bohemian farmer, held a raffle for an accordion. Joseph Platta had the lucky number, and when going home he was assaulted by disappointed Bohemians. In defending himself he dealt John Schrom two blows with an ax, one in the head and the other in the back. Schrom was fatally injured."

Happily, Czech musical gatherings were overwhelmingly convivial. Frank Kunc of Wilber, Nebraska, typified many musicians when recollecting that, in the early 20th century, his band "played for all occasions including dance jobs, barn dances, platform dances,





A late-night “lunch” awaits dancers beneath Emil Piller’s painted backdrop in the Bohemian Hall, Ashland, Wisconsin, 1980.  
Photo: James P. Leary

county fairs, parades, dedications of buildings, house parties,” and even for funeral processions (Vosoba: 69). Dances especially occurred in venues erected by both *Sokol* (Falcon) gymnastics societies and the ZCBJ/*Západní Česko-Bratrská Jednota* (Western Bohemian Fraternal Association), whose halls, graced with vivid Old World scenes painted on stage backdrops, continue as sites for Czech musical events in such communities as Clutier, Iowa, Haugen, Wisconsin, and Verdigre, Nebraska.

Although most Czech bands, past and present, have played mainly for local doings, the growth of commercial record labels and sheet music publishers from the early through mid-twentieth century, combined with the proliferation of radio stations, reliable cars, improved roads, and an established dance hall network, fostered the rise and endurance of polka as a significant form of American roots music with several ethnic strains: German, Mexican, Polish, Scandinavian, Slovenian, and, of course, Czech. Chicago loomed large in the emergence of Czech polka thanks to the collective efforts of immigrant entrepreneurs.

Schooled in musical instrument manufacture and repair, Joseph Jiran began publishing sheet music in 1904. Within a few years Jiran’s “store on West 18th Street in the heart of Chicago’s Pilsen district, which was known as ‘Little Bohemia,’ developed into a sort of cultural clearing house for lovers of Czech music,” including the noted brass band leader Bohumir Kryl and Anton Grill, “the leading American arranger and composer of Bohemian-style old-time ethnic music.” By 1913 another Chicago Czech, Louis Vitak, published *Bohemian Dance Album* (*Česka Taneční Album*) No. 1. This led to launching a series of influential compilations, eventually published with his musical nephew Joseph P. Elsnic, that were adopted by scores of Czech polka bands (Greene 1992: 49-56).

Chicago’s vibrant polka scene lured officials from New York City’s Columbia Records to Chicago in August 1915, where they “captured Czech, Polish, Norwegian, German, and other ethnically oriented music on 131 master discs. The Czech list prominently featured Anton Brousek’s popular brass band,” as well as lively concertina dance tunes by music store proprietor “Louis Solar that reflected the music his customers preferred” (Spottswood 2018). From the 1920s until the onset of World War II, polka music recorded in Chicago featured not only performers from the Windy City like the bandleader Vaclav Fišer, but also accomplished, influential

1914 postcard featuring cornet player and noted brass band leader Bohumir Kryl.





Romy Gosz, trumpeter and band leader, with fellow musicians at a rural Wisconsin wedding barn dance, 1950s. Author's collection.

## SOURCES

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touring bands from across the Midwest who favored a Bohemian old-time sound. Among them: Cleveland's Jerry Mazanec and Jerry Pobuda; Romy Gosz and Rudy Plocar from Wisconsin's Czech stronghold in Kewaunee and Manitowoc Counties; New Ulm, Minnesota's "Whoopie John" Wilfahrt; and concertinist Joe Fisher of Mount Vernon, Iowa.

Farther afield, East Texas Czechs made their first records in San Antonio when the Fayetteville-based *Bačova Česka Kapela* (Baca's Czech Band), originally formed by Moravian immigrants in 1882, cut discs in Okeh's field studio in 1929, followed by sessions for Columbia in 1930 and Vocalion in 1935. Subsequent recording bands like Adolf Hofner's seamlessly meshed Czech music with the Lone Star state's western swing and honky-tonk country sounds. Geographically betwixt and between, stellar Nebraska Czech bands led respectively by Abie's Ernie Kucera, Schuyler's Al Grebnick, and Wahoo's Math Sladky did not make 78 rpm records until the 1950s, when technological advances made small studios possible. But Sladky, who first broadcast over Lincoln's KLMS, and many more Czech bands were heard on the radio throughout the Cornhusker state.

Czech polka bands, thriving through the 1980s when polka festivals abounded, diminished in the final decades of the 20th century as their American hearths were affected increasingly by population loss, the changing tastes of younger generations, and the appeal of rock, pop, hip hop, and country genres saturating mass media. Yet the proliferation of Czech heritage festivals, the deep roots of many performers, and their ability to combine diverse musical strains ensure the music's evolving persistence. Those seeking Czech sounds will find them alive-and-well thanks to such Texas stalwarts at the Czech Harvesters, Jodie Mikula, and Chris Rybak; Wisconsin's Danny Jerabek of Copper Box; Nebraska's Mark Vyhldal; Jerry Minar, Larry Novotny, and Eddie Shimota, all from Minnesota's "Czech Triangle"; and both Mollie B and Malek's Fishermen from Iowa. ■

## Singing Sensations:

# COMPETITION BRINGS ATTENTION TO CZECH AND SLOVAK VOICES



By Sarah Meredith

The American Czech/Slovak International Voice Competition has been held at the Weidner Center, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay every two years since 2003. It is hosted with the support of producer, Sharon Chmel Resch, Sharon Resch Foundation, Green Bay, Wisconsin.; Dr. Timothy Cheek, pianist and Czech music expert, University of Michigan; and Professor Sarah Meredith, founder and artistic director, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. It was started as a collaboration with Alain Nonat, Théâtre Lyricorégra 20, Montreal, Canada, but now takes place only in the United States. It is the only voice competition featuring Czech and Slovak vocal repertoire in North America.

Approximately \$15,000 in prize money is awarded at each competition. Every competition invites an international jury of esteemed judges, including singers, teachers, opera directors, and conductors from the Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, and the United States who adjudicate each round. Some of the past judges have included Maestro Gildo Di Nunzio of the Metropolitan Opera, in New York City; Mr. Alois Ježek, Artistic Director and Founder of the Dvorak International Voice Competition — the oldest voice competition in the world — in the Czech Republic; Professor Eva Blahová, mezzo-soprano and voice professor, of Bratislava, Slovakia; and Professor David Adams, of the Cincinatti Conservatory to name just a few. Support for the competition also comes from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Chancellor and Provost's Office, the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Czech Consulate (Chicago), and various Green Bay community donors. Free housing in private homes is arranged for those singers who request it. This promotes Green Bay community involvement and helps the singers out with their expenses.

I founded the competition in 2003 after having spent 2001-2002 as guest professor at the Academy of Music and Dance in Bratislava, Slovakia. I was astounded at finding such beautiful vocal music by Slovak and Czech composers that were not known to singers in the United States. I realized an international voice competition was the best way to promote the Czech and Slovak vocal repertoire to young singers.



Author Sarah Meredith

Mr. Alain Nonat and Dr. Sarah Meredith pose with producer Sharon Chmel Resch (*right*), recipient of the International Trebbia Foundation Award, Prague, CR, 2017.





Competitors pose for a photo op before the final round of competition, including (left to right) Kristin Kenning, Amy Call, Jan Martiník, Kira Slovaček, and event producer Sharon Resch.

## PAST WINNERS OF THE AMERICAN CZECH/SLOVAK INTERNATIONAL VOICE COMPETITION

- 2003** Kimberly Haynes, Soprano, United States
- 2005** Jan Martiník, Bass baritone, Czech Republic
- 2007** Simone Osborne, Soprano, Canada
- 2009** Melody Wilson, Mezzosoprano, United States
- 2011** Alexandre Sylvestre, Baritone, Canada
- 2013** Antonina Chekhovskaya, Soprano, United States
- 2015** Sasha Djihanian, Soprano, Canada;  
Alejandra Sandoval, Soprano, Mexico (First Place Tie)
- 2017** Grace Kahl, Soprano, United States

Left to right: Mr. Alain Nonat, Dr. Timothy Cheek, Sharon Chmel Resch, Maestro Gildo Dinunzio, Professor Eva Blahova, Jiri Nekvasil, and Dr. Sarah Meredith.



APPLICATION DEADLINE  
**September 23, 2019**

Pre-Lims, Semi-Finals & Finals

- 1<sup>st</sup> Prize **\$5,000**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize **\$2,500**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize **\$2,000**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Prize **\$1,500**
- 5<sup>th</sup> Prize **\$1,000**
- 6<sup>th</sup> Prize **\$500**

# AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL CZECH AND SLOVAK VOICE COMPETITION

Fort Howard Hall, Weidner Center,  
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Campus

Pre-Lims  
**Friday, October 11, 2019, 10 AM**

Semi-Finals  
**Saturday, October 12, 2019, 10 AM**

Finals  
**Sunday, October 13, 2019, 10 AM**

**Producer:** Sharon Resch **Director:** Dr. Sarah Meredith,  
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay **Pianist:** Dr. Timothy Cheek,  
University of Michigan **Website:** [www.uwgb.edu/voicecompetition](http://www.uwgb.edu/voicecompetition)  
**For More Information, Contact:** Dr. Sarah Meredith  
**E-mail:** [merediths@uwgb.edu](mailto:merediths@uwgb.edu) **Phone:** (920) 465-2637

This competition also builds bridges between young American and European singers, creating unique performing opportunities and furthering their artistic growth. It also is a way to keep alive and spread music that was repressed during the communist era and create a spirit of internationalism.

The competition has received international recognition. Chmel Resch, producer of the voice competition and a former Broadway dancer who is of Czech heritage, was the recipient of the prestigious Trebbia Foundation Award in 2017, for her work with the Czech/Slovak Voice Competition. She was honored at a celebration and dinner at Prague Castle in March of that year, which was televised live on Czech national television. ■

## Czech Bluegrass:

# NOTES FROM THE HEART OF EUROPE

By Lee Bidgood, PhD

During my first visit to the Czech Republic in 2000 as a study-abroad student, the band Reliéf was hosting a monthly bluegrass night at the downtown Prague club Malostranská Beseda. The “Czech” side of the show was carried mainly by guitarist Jirka Holoubek, whose Czech-language emcee work artfully filled the spaces between the skillfully performed English-language songs. Jirka’s playful banter and engaging stories framed the bluegrass sounds with locally resonant ideas and phrases.

I tried to speak with the members of Reliéf after the show. Based on their flat responses to my questions, I thought they seemed uninterested in talking with me — a curious American with little to offer but a few malformed Czech phrases. I later learned the members I had spoken with were embarrassed about their lack of English language knowledge!

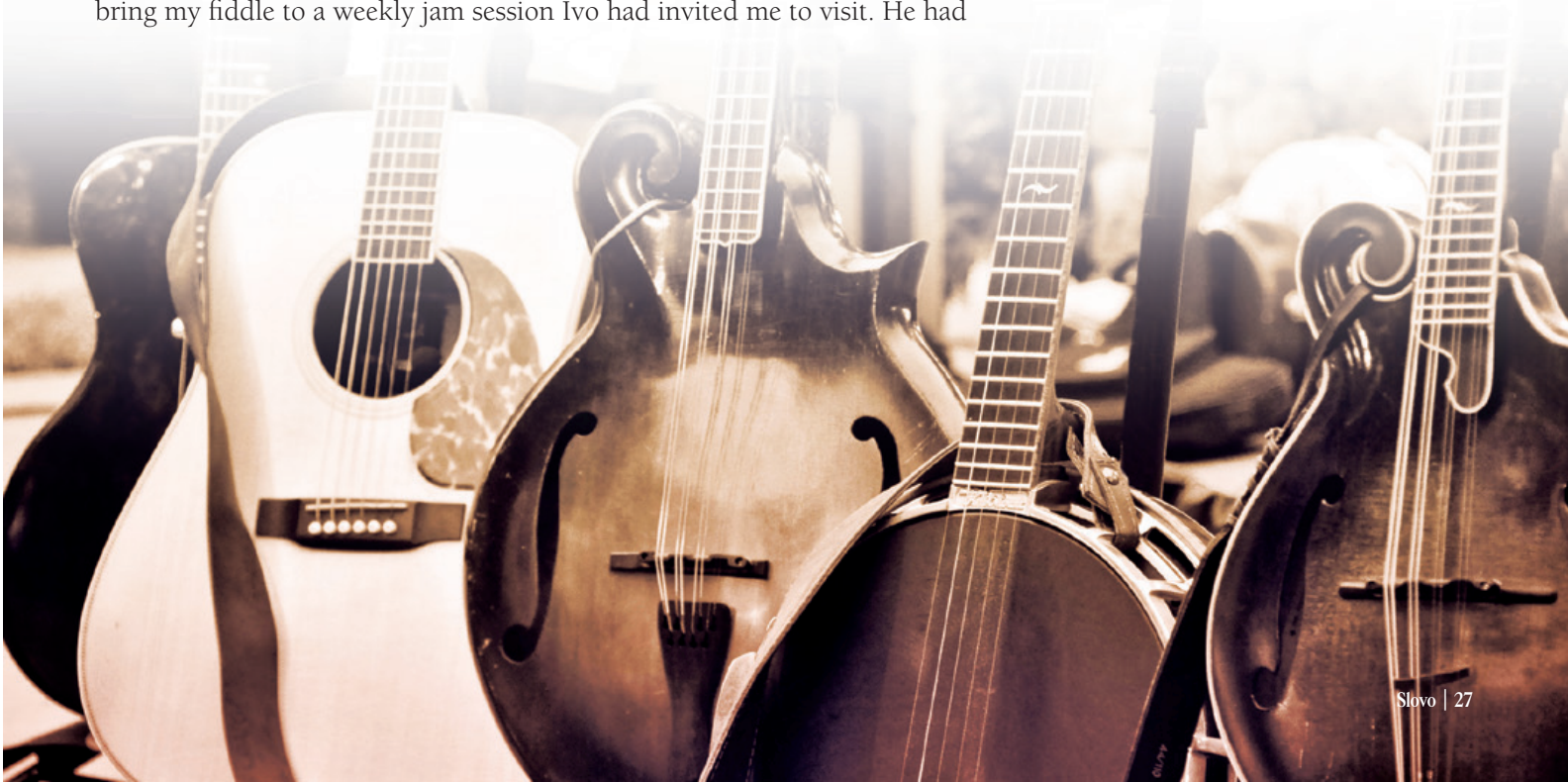
I found myself in their shoes when I returned to Prague in 2002. I was eager to meet and learn from Czech bluegrassers, but I didn’t know how to approach them. Working on my Czech skills in an intensive Charles University program during the week, on weekends I attended concerts and festivals that I found through online listings and printed information. I attended the Jamgrass Festival in South Bohemia and continued to see Reliéf in their monthly concerts at the Malostranská Beseda, but I was having trouble connecting with the actual people in these scenes.

One evening in late 2002, I attended a concert at the now-defunct CI-5, a working-class “American country” club then located across from the train station in the industrial Prague suburb of Smíchov. I recognized Ivo Drbohlav, a physicist and musician I had met at the Beseda in 2000. He enthusiastically welcomed me to his table, and that’s where it all started.

One night during the early spring of 2003, I finally got up the courage to bring my fiddle to a weekly jam session Ivo had invited me to visit. He had



Dr. Lee Bidgood’s research and performing is focused on bluegrass, old-time, sacred, and early music. While at UNC-Chapel Hill, he was mandolinist with the Steep Canyon Rangers, and these days he plays fiddle, viola, and viola da gamba with all kinds of groups.



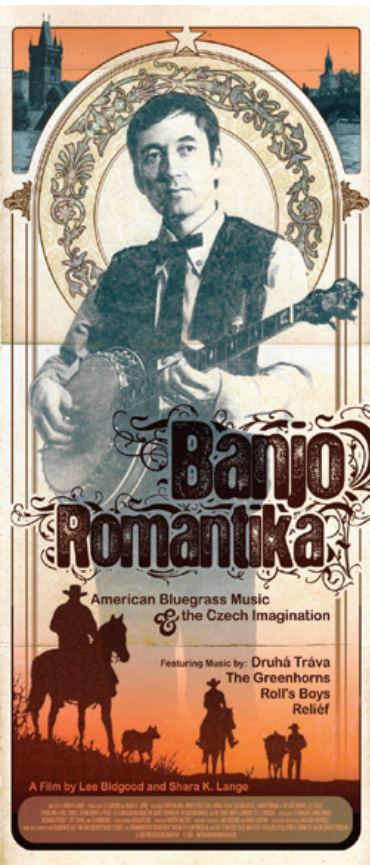


Above: In 2002, the Club “CI-5” was a regular venue for bluegrass groups in Prague; the walls of this pub basement were covered with tramping, country, bluegrass, and military symbols, showing the mix of elements in Czech Americanism.



Right: Pictured here in 2016, Country Club/Saloon U Supa, in the gritty borough of Smíchov, provided Prague’s bluegrass jammers with a venue in the mid-2000s; one night of the week was Czech-language night, another featured singing all in English.

In 2013 Lee Bidgood helped produce a documentary film based on his ethnographic fieldwork. Along with filmmaker Shara Lange, they created “Banjo Romantika” a full-length feature film based on his research on bluegrass music in the Czech Republic.



described how to get to the *Saloon u Supa* (“At the Vulture”) via Prague’s public transportation system: “Take the number 9 tram to the Bertramka stop, walk back toward the city center until you get to the street *Na Čecheličce* — go up the hill and it’s on the right.” As I turned from the park surrounding Bertramka (where W. A. Mozart stayed while visiting Prague) and started up that hill with my fiddle in tow, I found myself in the grittiest part of Prague I had yet visited. The coal smoke was stronger here than in the garden suburb of Střešovice, where I had been lucky enough to find a reasonably priced basement apartment earlier that year. Trash littered the streets and the stoop outside the pub halfway up the hill.

I paused at the threshold seeking a hint of what was going on. The clinking of glasses, the whiffs of smoke, and the inebriated shouts reminded me of the late-night rowdiness I had tired of while playing bar gigs with the fledgling band Steep Canyon Rangers in the still-smoky college bars of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, during the late 1990s. There was no way around it, though — I wanted to get involved! So I pushed through the louvered swinging Wild West saloon doors and entered the fray.

The group of men and women seated around a table littered with beer glasses were excited when they saw my violin case, but they were not sure what to make of my broken Czech. They eventually made room; I sat down, but I wasn’t sure exactly what to do next. When the next song started, my anxiety over how I would ever start playing disappeared. I heard the familiar chord progression that marks the introduction to the song “*Old Home Place*,” well known among bluegrassers since The Dillards first circulated it in the early 1960s and J. D. Crowe’s New South Band retooled it in the 1970s.

Although entirely new to the scene and etiquette around me, I immediately could participate with some fluency as a fiddler. The group played many of the songs I had learned playing in bluegrass circles in Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, all of which had been set to new texts in the Czech language. Along with Czech lyrics set to the tunes of classic songs like “*Jesse James*” and “*Blue Ridge Cabin Home*,” I recognized with some surprise a Czech-texted version of “*Sloop John B.*” Even the songs I didn’t recognize — some of which I later realized were original Czech pieces with no English-language equivalent — were intelligible, as they used the same kinds of chord progressions and performance framings (such as cues for



Left: In 2002, Reliéf was one of the top Czech bluegrass groups, with a winning mixture of hot bluegrass picking, smooth and sophisticated vocal arrangements.

Above: The 2002 performance of Sunny Side at Prague's CI-5 club shows them in "traditional" bluegrass attire; the group, with different members, still performs today.



instrumental breaks, intros and endings, and indications of keys) common to most bluegrass jams. Though divided by language, we communicated through the shared bluegrass system. The flow I joined around the table that night became my focus for that year.

In my book, *Czech Bluegrass: Notes from the Heart of Europe*, I show how Czech bluegrassers find obstacles and opportunities in their negotiation of Czechness and Americanness: in marketing their performances and products, in playing the fiddle, and in singing gospel songs. Throughout, my attention to ways of “being” Czech bluegrass emerges from my understanding of music as a process rather than an artifact, as a relationship rather than a thing. The most profound and significant moments of my work have been in intimate situations like interviews, band rehearsals, and jam sessions like the one I described above, in which musical sounds are woven into a larger fabric of social relations. As my colleagues invited me into these moments, my apprenticeship as a researcher extended — as apprenticeships tend to — outside the realm of simple instruction, blurring the boundaries between Czech and American, between work and play, self and other — doing just what music always does to connect us as players, listeners, and people. ■



You can read more about Lee's adventures and research in his book *Czech Bluegrass: Notes from the Heart of Europe*.

Excerpt [pp. 11-14, 20] from Chapter 1 of the book *Czech Bluegrass: Notes from the Heart of Europe* by Lee Bidgood. Copyright 2017 by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. Used with permission of the University of Illinois Press.

For more information visit: <https://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/catalog/48dtf8rr9780252041457.html>

## *Gypsy Roots:*

# CURRENT ROMA MUSIC IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

By Tomáš Kačo



Author Tomáš Kačo.

After World War I, only a small Roma population remained in Czechoslovakia. A significant amount of Roma who are currently residing in the Czech Republic are from Slovakia, as 95 percent of Roma trace their ancestors to Slovakia. Even today, they live mostly untouched by civilization. Yet, through all that, the music remains authentic and does not lose its meaning. In one settlement in Prešov, I encountered an unusual and a pure love of music. A group of us arrived by car. We stopped by the entrance to the settlement. Since we spoke Roma and were not there to film or photograph we were warmly welcomed. The Roma in these settlements don't like being photographed by outsiders. In a few seconds a group of at least 80 people surrounded us and looked at us as if we were from another world. We begged them to play and sing for us. It did not take much persuading and one young Roma brought a guitar. This instrument had only three strings. The rest were broken. But it did not seem to be a problem. One old woman in the group started to sing. The singing was not based on quality or technique. The voice was crackling, but in five seconds I froze and could not move. It was a slow, very sad song. Immediately another woman joined in with the second verse. The emotions that overcame us were caused by the second voice. Within a few seconds their life story opened in a song. They were also joined by a young man and then another young woman. I have never experienced such emotions through music. It was breathtaking. The beauty was that it was all spontaneous. They did not plan this, they just started to play and sing. Music which is played today in Roma families has its foundation in these settlements.

### *The relationship of Roma children to music*

It's given in Roma culture: parents are either professional or amateur musicians. Their focus is on music, music is their work, and it feeds them. They hope their children will also focus on music. In amateur families, it

Young Roma girls proudly display their traditional Roma dresses at the annual Gypsy Festival held in Bratislava.







In 2008, the first Gypsy Festival was held in Slovakia. Now each year bands, fans, and tourists come to Bratislava to enjoy three days of Roma music.

is usually the father who leads the children. He teaches the boys to play an instrument. He will lead the girls to singing and the mother will teach her to dance. The professional musicians devote themselves to classical music at a higher level, or other genre at a higher level, and their children are already predetermined to be musicians.

### *Upbringing*

The Roma amateur musicians do not use the term “talent.” For them, music is a matter of course. Music is a part of life. Some of the young Roma are conflicted due to influences from the outside world. Sometimes it involves drugs and other vices. The smart parents understand that and are doing everything to steer their children in other directions. That is why they lead their children to music, even when the children are not interested or don’t want to. The parents feel that music is a gift from God, just like every Roma child. The parent will lead them through every obstacle because they believe that music is the way to stay pure.

### *Bands*

Every town or settlement has a Roma band that plays Roma pop music. They are known as Rompop bands. In the Czech Republic there are many, but most are not known to the Czech majority. The Roma who live in the city are very proud of this band as it represents their town. The bands from each settlement are rivals and compete with each other: which one plays better, which one plays more difficult compositions, and which one has better musicians or better singers?

The name of the bands usually represents the name of the city they are from. The best know amateur Roma band is called Pardubice, named after the city of Pardubice. This band is very popular with the young Roma. Another well-known band is Teplice under the leadership of Ondra Gizman. There are also other bands which copy well-known Slovak Roma amateur bands, like Gipsy Billy, Gipsy Culy, Kajkoš, Gipsy Emil, and Gipsy Rose.

These bands play at least two keyboards and sometime you see a saxophone and a guitar. The new trend is a multifunctional keyboard which can program the whole band. That is a very attractive aspect to the Roma. It reduces the amount of musicians and starts a complicated musical conversation between members of the band.

Of course there is the singing. This basic foundation of the band is the most important style in Slovak Roma. The voice must be expressive and have an interesting sound. The higher notes one can sing the better singer they are. Singing is done solo, and the refrain has two voices. Roma bands perform regularly in cultural programs that are known as Roma amusement or Roma ball. ■



Popular Roma band Teplice.

Ondra Gizman, Teplice lead singer, guitarist, and saxophone player. The success of his music has always been due to loyal Roma listeners, including today’s younger generation.



This story was translated from Czech by Blanka Roberts.



NATIONAL  
CZECH &  
SLOVAK  
MUSEUM &  
LIBRARY

MUSEUM  
INFORMATION

Hours:

Monday through Saturday  
9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Sunday

Noon – 4 p.m.

Holidays (Closed):

- Easter
- Fourth of July
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

Holidays (Open):

- Memorial Day
- Labor Day

Regular Admission:

Members . . . . .	FREE
Adults . . . . .	\$10
Seniors . . . . .	\$9
Active Military (with ID) . . .	\$5
Students (with ID) 14+ . . .	\$5
Youth 6-13 . . . . .	\$3
Children 5 & Under . . . . .	FREE

**MORE FOR FAMILIES!**

We've added several fun and family-friendly programs throughout the year, from craft workshops to summer camps. Check [NCSML.org](http://NCSML.org) for details.

For up-to-date information on all programs and events, and event registration, check the NCSML website often: [www.NCSML.org](http://www.NCSML.org).

# MUSEUM EVENTS

## History on Tap: *Behind the Beat*

Wednesday, September 11

The African American Museum of Iowa presents an exploration of African American history through the lens of African American musical styles.

*Presented by CRST International — Contributing sponsorship from Randy's Flooring.*

## Revolution Starts in the Streets:

### Jan Kaláb Lecture and Artist Workshop

Tuesday, September 10 and Thursday, September 12

Czech artist, Jan Kaláb, will share his experience as a street artist in the newly democratic Czechoslovakia followed by a book signing for his new book, *Point of Space*. Thursday, Kaláb will host a workshop, teaching participants his style of street art on our replica Berlin Wall.

*Presented by Aegon Transamerica — Contributing sponsorship by the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation Program Fund.*

## BrewNost

Friday, September 20

Experience a magical evening at BrewNost, the Midwest's premier international beer festival and fundraiser benefitting the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library. See the inside front cover for more details on this event.

*Presented by Basepoint Wealth.*

## Immigrant Foodways

Saturday, September 21, October 19 and November 16

Learn about the food traditions and treasured recipes Czech and Slovak immigrants handed down through generations, in this series of hands-on workshops.

*Presented by GreatAmerica Financial Services.*

## Medieval to Metal:

### The Art and Evolution of the GUITAR Member Opening

Friday, October 4

See the *Medieval to Metal* exhibit from the National GUITAR Museum before it opens to the public at this exclusive, members-only celebration.

*Sponsored by Western Fraternal Life.*

## History on Tap:

### Hot Tomale Louie: Telling Stories without Words

Wednesday, October 9

Inspired by a *New Yorker* article, University of Iowa Music Professor, John Rapson, recognized a story of immigration that echoes today's political conversation about what it means to be an American and created a 13-section musical suite to express it. *This History on Tap is also made possible by Humanities Iowa.*

## Velvet Revolution Lecture

Wednesday, October 16

Join us in recognizing the 30th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution with a lecture from Dr. Josef Jařab of Palacký University, Olomouc, Czech Republic.

*Sponsored by Robert and Janis Kazimour and Palacký University, Olomouc.*

## Fall of the Wall Celebration

Saturday, November 9

Help us celebrate another significant 30th anniversary by tearing down our replica Berlin Wall and bringing our *Revolution Starts in the Streets* public art installation and programming to a close. *Presented by Collins Aerospace.*

## Old World Christmas

Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8

Shop for specialty imports and handmade gifts by select artisans, stop for seasonal treats, watch live music and dance performances, and enjoy *free* family activities all weekend long. Museum admission will also be free.

*Contributing sponsorship by Green State Credit Union.*

# MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS



## Revolution 1989

Through September 8, Petrik Gallery

In honor of the 30th anniversary, the NCSML presents an original exhibition telling the story of 1989's Velvet Revolution. Film footage, eyewitness accounts, music, and artifacts are featured. The exhibit explores the year 1989 as communist regimes worldwide experienced major unrest, including stories from China, East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Visitors have the opportunity to make their own screen printed poster in a workshop adjacent to the gallery.

The NCSML collection includes original film footage shot by an American student who was in Prague in November 1989, handmade posters painted by students in Olomouc, Czechoslovakia, and many political posters and ephemera related to Václav Havel's Civic Forum party. Artifacts are on loan from other collections in the U.S. as well as Europe, including fragments of the Berlin Wall, border uniforms, propaganda posters, and Cold War objects. The exhibition highlights the Czechoslovak story, while putting it into context with the events happening on the world stage in the 1980s. *Sponsored by Western Fraternal Life.*

## Swimming Pool

Through September 22, Anderson Gallery

*Swimming Pool* is Slovak artist Maria Svarbova's largest series yet. Maria creates colorful and atmospheric photographs of Socialist era swimming pools in her native country of Slovakia. Her figures are carefully composed, yet detached from the viewer, creating soothing, dreamlike scenes that offer silence, contemplation, beauty, and mystery. Her style is simultaneously retro and futuristic, and her warm, aqueous palette is pleasing and inviting. *Sponsored by Western Fraternal Life.*

## Lullaby: Babies in Slovak Folk Dress

Through October 6, Smith Gallery

Slovak photographer, Monika Klučiarová, combines stunning Slovak folk dress, *kroje*, with adorable babies to create spectacular portraits. The artist sees folk dress as a mosaic composed of many vital details. In addition to the cultural value and heritage value, Slovak *kroje* also offer the color and geometric patterns that form the basis of good photography.

A family photographer, whose passion is taking photos of newborns, Klučiarová has been increasingly interested in taking her work to the fine art level, boldly combining the purity of newborns with the exquisite textile works of her ancestors.

The exhibition includes 26 large, framed portraits along with selections from the NCSML textile collection, giving visitors a view of authentic folk dress.

## Medieval to Metal: The Art and Evolution of the GUITAR

October 5, 2019 through January 26, 2020, Petrik Gallery

This touring exhibition organized by the National GUITAR Museum celebrates the artistic development of the guitar. As the guitar's ancestors evolved over centuries from the earliest ouds and lutes, guitar makers experimented with shapes, materials, and accessories, seeking the perfect blend of beauty and sound.

The show features 40 iconic stringed instruments, ranging from an intricately inlaid Moorish oud, and a six-foot long Renaissance theorbo, to guitars displaying the modern Italian design of the Eko and one with a stunning transparent acrylic body from California's BC Rich guitars. Spanning centuries of design and craftsmanship, the exhibition takes visitors through the history of an object that is one of the most recognizable items on the planet.

The *Medieval To Metal* exhibition also includes life-size photorealistic illustrations of historically important guitar designs from noted artist Gerard Huerta, and 20 photographs of acclaimed musicians and their guitars from Neil Zlozower, one of the world's premier concert photographers.

*Sponsored by Western Fraternal Life.*

■ smířít se s tím, že KSČ nebude mít vedoucí úlohu v Ústavě ■ tvrdit, že jsme poučení chybami, za vše mohlo vedení ■ akční program pro sjezd 26.1.1990 se bude obsahově překrývat programem Občanského fóra ■ dialog s Obrodou /ta je součástí Občanského fóra/, co nejvíce členů KSČ do "Obrody", tím současně do Občanského fóra i když "a některými požadavky nebudou souhlasit" ■ nerozšířít Občanské fórum ve městech a obcích /ani o píd/ ■ oddělit studenty od Občanského fóra ■ neurychlovat změnu Ústavy ■ ekonomický program pouze na bázi socialismu ■ TV podléhá stále vládě /Občanské fórum dvě hodiny týdně/, rozdělit programy TV na krajské a národní, taktéž rozhlas ■ trvat na tom, že Občanské fórum se stává demagogií ■ oddělit od Občanského fóra ostatní složky Národní fronty ■ opírat se o SSSR i ve výkladu r.1968 ■ členy KSČ dostat do všech stávkových výborů a výborů Občanského fóra ■ navodit jednotnost Občanského fóra zakládáním množství levicových spolků a klubů /např.: Demokratické fórum aj./

Ze zasedání ÚV KSČ 26.11.1989





## MISSION

We inspire people  
from every background  
to connect to  
Czech and Slovak  
history and culture.

## VISION

We are a museum that celebrates life.  
*Czech life. Slovak life. American life.*  
We are a museum that encourages self-discovery,  
a museum that asks what it means to be free.  
Through extraordinary exhibitions and experiences,  
we tell stories of freedom and identity,  
family and community, human rights and dignity.  
Our stories connect yesterday with  
today and tomorrow.

NATIONAL  
CZECH &  
SLOVAK  
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