

Unusual cultural activities of a research institution

L. POSPIŠIL

Veterinary Research Institute, Brno, Czech Republic

Symbiosis of two opposite human activities – scientific and artistic works – in a research institution is a rather unusual phenomenon. The Veterinary Research Institute, Brno, represents one of the rare exceptions to this rule.

For several decades, the Veterinary Research Institute has been the site of a small art gallery focused on intimate presentations of visual works of art. Its activities were started in 1958 in an effort to offer employees of the Institute, and in subsequent years all members of the Czech veterinary profession, an opportunity to present their works of art created within their amateur activities. In 1961, this concept was abandoned and the current exhibition dramaturgy of the gallery concentrates entirely on works of professional artists.

During the past forty years, the gallery has been brought to the attention of the art-loving community of Brno inhabitants and has gained a firm circle of visitors thanks to excellent publicity in press, cultural institutions, and TV. The gallery mounts ten to eleven exhibitions annually and, in addition to numerous sell or lesser known Czech artists using various techniques (drawing, painting, graphics, photography), such as Jan Ralich sen., Vlasta Záborský, Miroslav Štolfa, Ladislav Novák, and Leonid Ochrymčuk, opportunities were provided also to foreign authors, including the painters Peter Voinescu from the United States and Eva Hontela from Canada (three exhibitions already) and the Australian artistic photographer Vojta Dupal.

One of the recent events held by the gallery was the exhibition of drawings and sculptural studies of the prominent Czech sculptor and painter František Hořava (24th July 1906 to 28th May 1974). The last day of this exhibition was completed by an interesting lecture on Hořava's work and presentation of a large set of photographs documenting his extensive work, which were prepared by his descendants.

František Hořava was born in Opatovice near Rajhrad in Moravia and created his artistic work in Brno. He attended a general course in modelling led by professor Mařatka in 1922–1925, a special course in modelling led by professor B. Kafka in 1925–1926, another special course in modelling led by professor O. Gutfreund in 1926–1927, and finished his studies by completion of a

course in special modelling led by professor Mařatka in 1929.

Hořava's best known works include the sculptures "Maryčka Magdonova" (Figure 1), displayed on the occasion of the Contemporary Culture Exposition in Brno in 1929, and "Farmer" decorating the premises of the Ministry of Agriculture (1929), and relief portraits of



Figure 1. Hořava's sculpture "Maryčka Magdonova"



Figure 2. Hořava's study to "Energy"

count Václav Kaunic (castle in Austerlitz) and the painter František Zvěřina (Hrotovice).

Well known are also his sculptures "Girl of Fourteen", "Kiss", "Paperboy", "Dreaming" (marble), "Return from the Field" (bronze), "Prayer", "Energy" (Figure 2 – a study) and "Harvest".

Hořava's retrospective exhibitions were arranged by the gallery KVV Aleš in Brno in 1929 and 1935. His extensive work justly ranks with the top of the Czech realistic sculpture.

Neobvyklá kulturní činnost výzkumné instituce

ABSTRAKT: V článku je popisována činnost Malé galerie Výzkumného ústavu veterinárního lékařství v Brně existující od roku 1958. Každoročně se zde uskuteční 10 až 11 výstav uměleckých děl předních českých výtvarníků. Svá díla v galerii prezentovali i zahraniční umělci (USA, Kanada, Austrálie). Jedna z posledních expozic se skládala z děl sochaře Františka Hořavy (1906–1974).

Corresponding Authors:

Prof. MUDr. Leopold Pospíšil, DrSc., Veterinary Research Institute, Hudcova 72, 621 32 Brno, Czech Republic
Tel. +420 5 41 32 12 41, fax +420 5 41 21 12 29, e-mail: pospasil@vri.cz
