

Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

Commemorative postage stamps "Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava"
September 1975

The Biennial of Children's Book Illustration, traditionally held every two years in Bratislava, capital of Slovakia, opens again on September 5 of this year and the Federal Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Czechoslovakia is issuing a set of five commemoratives in honour of the occasion. The event has been celebrated thus once before - in 1971 - with a four-stamp set presenting book illustrations that had won awards at the previous biennial - namely by Eva Bednářová and Mirko Hanák of Czechoslovakia and by Ysue Segawa of Japan (Pofis No. 1911-1913).

The current set, dedicated to the Biennial of Children's Book Illustration, presents outstanding selections from previous such events and is truly representative in that it shows the works of artists from various countries. It is furthermore also more exacting in design. Accompanying the set are three First Day Covers. Each of the five stamps has an adjoining coupon; the size of both stamps and coupons is the same - 23 mm in width and 30 mm in height. All coupons bear the same inscription - "Biennial of Illustrations - Bratislava" - in Slovak, Russian, French, English, German and Spanish and each bears the name of the respective artist, his country, and a small drawing of which mention will be made in the following text describing the separate stamps.

The illustration depicted on the first, 20 h stamp is by Nikita Charushin of the Soviet Union. It is a graphic sheet showing a group of pelicans. A pelican also appears on the coupon.

The illustration depicted on the second, 30 h stamp is by Lieselotte Schwarz of the Federal Republic of Germany and is from the book "Der Traummacher". It shows the book's hero asleep under a tree. The drawing on the coupon is that of a bird.

The illustration depicted on the third, 40 h stamp is by Val Muntenau of Rumania and is from the book "Tinerete fara batrinete". It shows the fairy-tale hero on horseback. The drawing on the coupon is a stylized bird.

The illustration depicted on the fourth, 60 h stamp is by Klaus Ensikat of the German Democratic Republic. Taken from the book "Hochzeit des Pfau" it shows a handsome peacock. The coupon bears a drawing with a butterfly.

The fifth, 80 h stamp presents an illustration by Róbert Dúbravec of Czechoslovakia to the story "The Golden Pearls" from the book "The Stone King" and shows a rider on horseback. The drawing on the coupon is of a cow.

Also appearing on the stamps is the official emblem of the Biennial.

As has already been stated three First Day Covers are being issued with the set, the cachets adding the names of three more artists to the list of those whose illustrations appear on the commemoratives. The first presents an illustration to the story "The Golden Bird" from the book of Norwegian tales "The Three Princesses of the Blue Cliff". The picture is by the Slovak artist Albín Brunovský, well known to collectors of Czechoslovak stamps also for his stamp design. The cachet on the second First Day Cover presents the picture of a cat by Binette Schoeder of the Federal Republic of Germany, winner of the Golden Apple, one of the prizes of the 1971 Biennial. The cachet on the third First Day Cover presents an illustration by the Polish artist Andrzej Strumillo from the book of Scandi-

navian tales entitled "Narzeczone z morza básnie Skandinawskie" depicting a wolf with large belly, which won the Grand Prix at the 1971 Biennial.

Children's books play a very important cultural-educational role. A good children's book that is made even more attractive by the illustrations it contains is a treasured possession. Every grown up remembers at least one such book from his childhood of which he was particularly fond. Good children's books are a long-standing tradition in Czechoslovakia and exemplify the care devoted to the development of children in that country. That is one reason for the great interest elicited by the Biennial of Children's Book Illustration which is held in Bratislava every second year and attracts entries of truly remarkable calibre. The present set of commemoratives celebrating the event is merely proof that the efforts of illustrators of children's books are appreciated.

On September 5, 1975 the Federal Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic will issue a set of commemoratives entitled "Biennial of Illustrations - Bratislava" and comprising the following five stamps:

- 20 h - Illustration by Nikita Charushin - USSR
Engraved by Jindra Schmidt
Colours: black, brown, yellow, red
- 30 h - Illustration by Liesellotte Schwarz - GFR
Engraved by Jindra Schmidt
Colours: red, brown, blue, yellow
- 40 h - Illustration by Val Munteanu - Rumania
Engraved by Jindra Schmidt
Colours: black, red, blue, gold
- 60 h - Illustration by Klaus Ensikat - GDR
Engraved by Ladislav Jirka
Colours: black, yellow, blue, red
- 80 h - Illustration by Róbert Dúbravec - Czechoslovakia
Engraved by Jan Mráček
Colours: black, yellow, red, blue

Graphic design by Prof. Milan Hegar

The stamps were printed at the Post Printing Office in Prague by rotary recess print combined with three-colour photogravure. The dimensions of the stamp pictures are 23 x 30 mm. Each stamp has a coupon of the same dimensions with the inscription "Biennial of Illustrations - Bratislava" in Slovak, Russian, French, English, German and Spanish. One stamp sheet comprises 25 stamps and 15 coupons.

Issued with the set are three First Day Covers with illustrations by the following artists:

- 1/ Albín Brunovský - Czechoslovakia
- 2/ Binette Schoeder - GFR
- 3/ Andrzej Strumillo - Poland