

HUNGARIAN VOICE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF HUNGARIAN CULTURE

**Hungarian
Documentary**

Bandi's Story

**Film & Book
Review**

Folk Tale

**Budapest
Chronicles II**

Imre Reiner

Salty Soup

**Alternative
Medicine**

Doroszló

**Who Are We
Anyway?**

**The Urban
Fakanál**

"I hope though, that even if not at this moment, there will come a time when a person of good character will be distinguished from a bad person, and that *that* will be the criteria for the likelihood of his staying alive, rather than the religion recorded on his birth certificate."

Endre Hitesi,
the Russian Front,
October 11th, 1941

**Bandi's
Story**
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EDITOR

A NOTE FROM THE

I recently received a questionnaire from a local Hungarian who was writing a school paper on the preservation of Hungarian culture, the Hungarian language and cultural artifacts by first and second generation Canadians. It included many themes we have dealt with before – the importance of the language, the future of the Hungarian community in Vancouver, what cultural objects are important to us, etc. The question that I found most difficult and intriguing, however, was what “makes” a person Hungarian?

Since I can remember, I have been told by my elders that “I am not a real Hungarian.” I learned that to many Hungarian immigrants, I could never speak the language well enough or be patriotic enough to qualify. Fortunately, I have unlearned such nonsense and I set my mind to discovering, unequivocally, what makes one Hungarian.

In the meantime, I had been working on a fascinating story with my good friend George Hennessy (see page 4), which helped me learn, once and for all, what makes a Hungarian. I have always believed that the greatest treasures can be found very close by – often right under our noses. Precious family mementos are usually among them and are universally cherished, however, a more in-depth examination and understanding can enrich us even more, and propel us towards enlightenment. Studying anything from different perspectives is guaranteed to facilitate understanding and improvement, and the resulting knowledge, put to practical use, can be exhilarating.

Not long ago, I distanced myself from the Hungarian Veterans’ Association (MHBK) after ten years of faithful service. Although I was well aware of the prevalent xenophobia among my elders, I looked the other way, knowing that it is often difficult to let go of out-dated ways of thinking.

It was at this time that George, my fellow MHBK Vancouver Chapter member, shared some information with me about his father’s military service. A few years ago, he joined the Sydney Chapter of the MHBK after rekindling his interest in his family’s military history. His father, Endre (Bandi) Hitesi was a frontline fighter during the Second World War, and his grandfather was one during the First. As George shared his family photos and information with me, it became clear that we had a unique case on our hands – one that would not have been brought to light while under the auspices of the MHBK. A significant part of it has to do with aspects of our history that most Hungarians try to forget – as the parts of our past that we are not proud of, are often ignored.

George Hennessy bravely stepped forward to share a painful part of being Hungarian, and together, we examined it all very carefully. I asked him to write his father’s story* for us, and he graciously did so, and in the meantime, our scrutiny of the case revealed significant historical information that I am sure you will all find fascinating. We discovered many new things - 65 years after the events, that no one else had known. Our journey was buoyed up by a number of helpful and bright people – Lorraine Weideman, Péter v. Laborc, Gergely Sallay, Judy Young, Ágnes Vashegyi MacDonald and Ajtony Virágh.

George’s father is 98 years-old, and often apologises for not remembering things the way he used to. So many documents were destroyed after the Second World War, and the combination of these elements leave us with several missing pieces of the puzzle. Colleagues, more knowledgeable than I, have recommended that I wait to publish the results, however, I believe that it is timely to do so now – perhaps bringing it to the attention of the public will stir more memories and bring forward more facts. Taking everything into account, Bandi’s is a Hungarian story, and my role in presenting it to you fills me with pride. I only wish that so many years hadn’t passed before acknowledging these brave Hungarian gentlemen.

On our cover is a portrait of Bandi in his Hungarian officer’s uniform. On the reverse of the photo an inscription reads: “I was able to survive the difficult times of the Arrow Cross regime in this disguise, which also made it possible for me to help many others in the same predicament. In commemoration and with love, Endre Hitesi. Budapest, November 2nd, 1946.”

I think if you feel yourself to be Hungarian you are one - and no amount of ignorance can ever take that away from you.

P.Cz.

***For a more comprehensive version of Bandi’s Story, see the *Magyar Front*, Volume XI, Issue 1, available through the International Hungarian Military History Preservation Society - www.NewFront.ca**

HUNGARIAN DOCUMENTARY CAPTURES CANADA



MTV (MAGYAR TELEVIZIÓ) DUO DESCEND ON VANCOUVER

A trip across Canada is no small journey. Most of us know people that have strapped their suitcases to the car, piled in their luggage, packed a few lunches and made their way to the opposing coast. Driving across the Rockies, the Prairies all the way to the Maritimes is almost a rite of passage for many young Canadians. The immensity of undertaking such a road trip could likely not be overstated for a visiting TV crew from Hungary – a country that would fit into Canada well over one hundred times.

Tibor Nagyistok and Szilvia Sipos spent a few weeks traveling across this vast country – by land, sea and air. Their purpose was to create a story for Hungarian Television – MTV’s travel documentary program – a little like their home-grown version of *The Lonely Planet*. At the outset, there were no clear stories to follow and only one common thread: the Trans-Canada, one of the world’s longest national highways. Their title: *Keresztül Kanadán. Az út és amit összeköt* (*Across Canada: The Road and What It Binds*) points clearly to how 8000 kilometres of paved road (and a few kilometres of water) tie a country of many immigrants together.

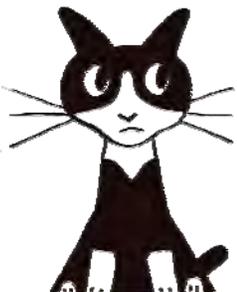
Admittedly their task is monumental - after a six hour plane ride from eastern Canada to their starting point on the west coast, Tibor and Szilvia have a good idea of how just how large Canada is. According to Tibor, they relied primarily on stories provided by contacts uncovered via the internet, as they did not have a concrete plan: “We tried to prove that we can travel through a huge country like Canada with just the assistance of brand new internet-friends - a network community! With a small crew like ours... Szilvia is the reporter, and I’m the cameraman, editor and producer.”

Continued on page 11...

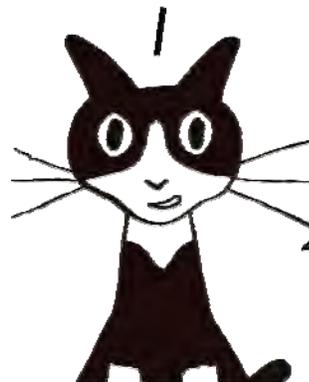
MAZSOLA
EPISODE 8

WRITTEN BY
PETER CZINK
ILLUSTRATED BY
JORDY STARLING

AH YES, A HALF-CENTURY AGO
WE WERE REVOLTING.



DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF!
ONCE YOU GET PAST THE ALCOHOL ABUSE
AND RACISM, YOU'LL BE JUST FINE.



C. 2009



Endre Hitesi, called Bandi by those closest to him, was born in 1910 into a middle-class Budapest family. He was the youngest of three children, having two older sisters. His father Jenő was a decorated soldier who served in the Royal Hungarian Army during the First World War - Bandi remembered the day he left when he was only four years old, returning four years later, never having had a single day's leave during the entire conflict.

Jenő Hitesi had established a large and prosperous shoe importing business in Budapest, and after graduating from Szent István High School, Bandi joined his father in the family business. Although they were not religious, the Hitesi family had Jewish roots, and at that time one Jewish grandparent was enough to define a person as being Jewish. The Numerus Clausus Act - legislation in Hungary that limited the rights of Hungarian Jews - prevented Bandi from entering university, but he did quite well nevertheless, and even bought himself a car.

At the outbreak of World War II, eligible Hungarian citizens were subject

to conscription, however, people of Jewish descent were instead placed into labour battalions, which at the time were recognized units of the army. Members of these battalions wore uniforms and were subject to military laws and discipline, but carried no arms of any

Csalátnév	1. sor. dd. j. M.	Érvényes előző utolsó lakcímjére (községi névvel)	Budapest
Ányai név		év, hó, nap	1910. 10. 30.
Anyakönyvi írásom		hely	Budapest
Államnév	Károly ak.	állás	
Foglalkozás	szobrász	magas (formái)	
Családi és utónév	10. utca	Valás	125
Atyja neve	Jenő Hitesi	éves	1940. október
Születési hely	Budapest	typhus	7
Házastárs	Katalin	cholera	9
Iskolai		előzetes	

Bandi's ID locket documents. His religion is clearly listed as "izr" - izraelita (Jewish).

kind. In due course Bandi had to report to one of these units which was located outside Budapest, and travelled there in his car. Not entitled to a rank, he did qualify to wear the so-called "intelligence stripe" because he was a high school graduate.

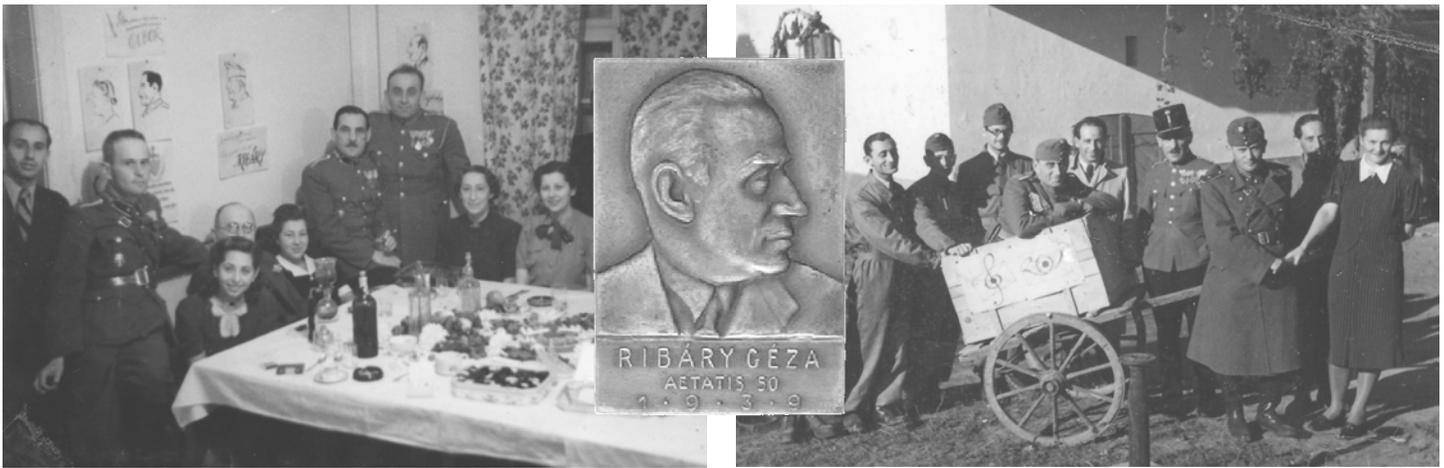
The Hungarian Army was suffering

from a serious shortage of all kinds of vehicles - the labour battalions especially so, since priority was given to the fighting units. A number of the commanding officers of these labour units were ex-World War I veterans called out of retirement - some still wearing their First World War uniforms. Many of these officers acted decently towards their Jewish personnel, diligently carrying out their duties of organizing labour, such as digging defensive trenches and tank traps. Later on during the Second World War, anti-Semitism became more blatant - fuelled by pressure from Nazi Germany, and cases of intolerant and even sadistic treatment of labour unit personnel have been documented.

As it happened, the Commanding Officer of Bandi's battalion was one of the decent ones who carried out his duties without any cruelty to those under him. On learning that Bandi actually had a car at the battalion (which had no mechanised transport of its own), he immediately installed Bandi as his official driver. They travelled to Budapest many times, where the CO would be invited to Bandi's home for proper meals - surely a

Bandi doing administrative work, posing in front of a knocked-out Soviet tank, and with Hungarian and German comrades.





HENNESSY COLLECTION

Left: 4th and 5th from the left are Bandi's father and wife; the officer with the moustache is the labour unit CO, Captain Gyula Gábor. Standing beside him is Lieutenant Dr. Géza Ribáry. Right: Ribáry with the Hitesí family - the identity of this well known champion of Jewish-Hungarian rights was also unknown until the photographs were examined for this article.

welcome reprieve to the regular military fare. These circumstances developed a good relationship between the two of them, and Bandi remembers that unlike thousands of others, his time in the labour battalion had not been as terrible as it might have been. Two of his friends, who would write about their mistreatment to their wives, were not so fortunate, having served in another battalion.

So far, Bandi's story was no doubt interesting, however, it would soon turn into an incredible one. While away with his unit, a letter arrived at his home in Budapest ordering him to report for duty in the regular army. A family member delivered this call-up order to Bandi, who immediately showed it to his commanding officer. The CO determined that since Hungary was at war, this extraordinary order to report to the regular army for active duty took precedence over his earlier conscription into the labour battalion. He was released and reported as ordered for active service. He was posted to an engineering bridge building unit. They were mechanized, and used Hungarian designed tractors which towed pontoons capable of being joined together to form the foundations for floating bridges. This unit, being part of the Royal Hungarian Army, was deployed to the Russian Front. At a point shortly before, or just after the commencement of a fierce battle with the Red Army, Bandi claims to have received an unprecedented field promotion to the rank of *zászlós* (the lowest officer rank in the Hungarian Army). During massive artillery bombardment and tank attacks, his unit suffered a considerable amount of casualties. Afterward, Bandi and his surviving

comrades were returned home to Hungary.

Toward the end of the Second World War, the far-right, Nazi influenced Arrow Cross seized the reins of power in Hungary, and Bandi found his own family and many friends in mortal danger due to their Jewish heritage. The advancing Red Army, Allied saturation bombing and mounting losses added to a chaotic resentment among the population of Hungary – while excesses ran rampant. Bandi became determined to do his best to do what he could to counter the Arrow Cross and to safeguard his loved ones. In an officer's uniform, he formed and commanded an armed underground unit operating from a bombed-out factory. Here they engaged in the production of forged papers for use by those who needed most to escape the attention of the Arrow Cross.

One day Bandi drove in a military vehicle to the labour unit where his two friends were posted, as news had arrived that they believed that they would be unlikely to survive much longer. Still seemingly a member of the regular Hungarian Army, he feigned engine trouble and, pretending that he didn't recognise his two friends, ordered them to push his vehicle. As soon as they were at a safe distance, they jumped in and they all returned to Budapest.

One day after the Red Army entered the capital, Bandi, still in uniform, heard Russian voices outside. Not wanting to be captured as a Hungarian soldier, he buried his uniform and medals under some rubble and donned civilian clothing, narrowly escaping a term in Siberia as a prisoner of war.

For two years Bandi and his family tried to put their lives back together, but by 1948 it was apparent that communism was there to stay, and life, as he once knew it, would never be the same again. He left Hungary behind and moved to Australia with his family, the two friends he had rescued and their families.

Bandi is alive today – 98 years-old, now in a nursing home and hardly able to walk. He still can be engaged in meaningful discussions and he even retains his old sense of humour. Recently, he happily went through all of his army photos with me, dutifully identified the people he remembered – then, as his memories faded, he promptly asked for his lunch, and left his past for us history buffs to deal with.

EPILOGUE by Peter Czink

When I first asked George Hennessy to write an article about his father, I never would have imagined that we would end up examining it in such detail. Bandi's Story was put together from what George had learned over the years, and from his dad's own personal reminiscences. Unfortunately, George only developed a serious interest in his father's military career relatively recently, and today, Bandi's memory is clouded from so many recollections gathered over his many years. So, when George was finished, I noticed a few puzzling inconsistencies, and questions arose - from other historians as well.

Lively discussion followed, and I requested high resolution scans of the Hennessy photos – then a systematic examination of all of the material com-

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“BRACINGLY ORIGINAL AVANT-GARDE BLACK COMEDY”

Stranger Than Paradise - (1984) Directed by Jim Jarmusch

by Angus MacDonald

Jim Jarmusch creates films in direct opposition to the big-budget world of the Hollywood studio system. His films represent a return to the beginnings of cinema with a minimalism reflected in his stories, composition and camera movement. He films in naturally lit settings and tells stories that are inhabited with realistic characters. Jarmusch exhibits an approach to filmmaking that is reminiscent of the styles of neorealism and the French New Wave, with plots that are concerned with poverty, social problems and a humanistic appeal that renders powerfully his accurate and unique vision of American culture. It is a culture he exposes with compelling characters that exhibit, on a basic level, an inability to communicate, relate or even show a purpose in life. His cinematic visions explain that just being an American is not enough anymore; he understands its citizens have been short-changed on a promise made, and then forgotten. Jarmusch's style and composition interprets this loss brilliantly with communicative camera work, edgy humour and incredibly biting satire.

Jarmusch said, "I feel like I'm American - only coincidentally." He refers to the simultaneous cultural connection and disconnection he feels with the US. Jarmusch explains, "America's a kind of throwaway culture that's a mixture of different cultures. To make a film about America, it seems to me logical to have at least one perspective that's transplanted because ours is a collection of transplanted influences." Paradise is what America is selling but what it delivers is much less. Many of the citizens of his cinematic stories come from somewhere else, with imported beliefs that still cling to a notion that America holds possibility, glamour and success. Instead, they live in a cultural wasteland, filled with disposable lifestyles and TV dinners. Director and writer Jim Jarmusch explores the dynamics of human relations and the reality of a cultural and spiritual poverty that has existed since America has.

Stranger Than Paradise, filmed in provocatively expressive black and white, is the story of three people with seemingly nothing to do in life. This boredom is captured with perfection by Jarmusch's steadfast and unhurried direction. Cinematographer Tom DiCillio keeps the camera work simple, with very little move-

ment and unhurried fades, to express the honesty, simplicity and slow-paced life of the characters as they wait for any break from the monotony. "The New World", the title of the first part of three stories in the film, reveals the cultural desert that is modern New York. As Hungarian cousin Éva takes her first steps through the crumbling city, after her arrival from Budapest, she plays a cassette of blues musician Screamin' Jay Hawkins who asserts the "spell" put on its prisoners who are both trapped and lost in this utopian metropolis. The camera tracks her, moving from right to left onscreen, creating a sense of tension, as she passes by signs that are painted with slogans like, "the king's county" and "quality you can trust."

These ironic messages forecast what she doesn't find in America. She arrives at her cousin's one-room apartment and wonders, "is this world better than the one I left?" She is introduced to an American culture of Chesterfield cigarettes, TV dinners, television and football. She quickly announces that football is a stupid game that she does not understand, and she echoes the voices of a million immigrants to the bizarre land. Her confusion is understandable. America's "spell" takes getting used to, if you let it at all. The gamblers, her cousin Willie and his friend Eddie, repeatedly abandon Éva, and this desertion imitates the cultural abandonment she is experiencing. Jarmusch's understanding of a wearisome and mundane existence is exposed beautifully with long takes where seemingly nothing happens. However, it is in these quiet moments, that are reflections of our own, routine, everyday worlds, that his brilliance in capturing human existence on celluloid shines.

Jarmusch apprenticed under prominent directors Nicholas Ray and Wim Wenders. When Jarmusch showed Ray his script for *Permanent Vacation*, the short film that would become *Stranger Than Paradise*, he remembers "[Ray said], 'There's nothing happening. You need action. The girl should pull a gun out of her purse and shoot the guy.' At which point I'd take the script home and remove even more of the action." This purposeful minimalization of anything forged or forced is evidence of Jarmusch's influence from French filmmakers Jean-Luc Godard and Francois



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SEEING OURSELVES THROUGH SOMEONE ELSE'S EYES

Sándor Petőfi. *John the Valiant*.

Translated by John Ridland. London: Hesperus Poetry, 2004.

by Ágnes Vashegyi MacDonald

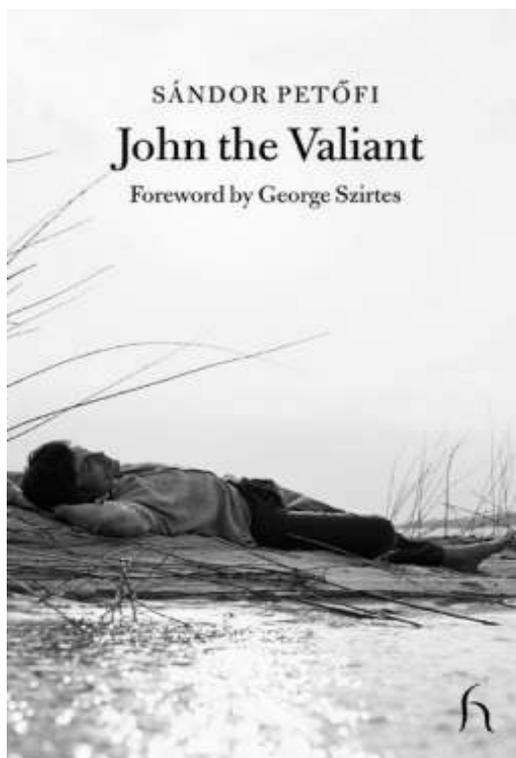
One-hundred and sixty years ago at this time, in 1848-49, the Hungarian War of Independence (*Magyar Szabadságharc*) was taking place. It began with the March 15th Revolution in Pest, which was part of the mass of revolutions sweeping across Europe. Students took to the streets of Pest and Buda demanding fundamental political changes, freedom of the press, and the administrative merger of Hungary and Transylvania, among other things. Elsewhere in Europe, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels had just written *The Communist Manifesto*, calling out to workers to unite recognizing the plight of millions of oppressed people. Years of poor crop production yielded only starvation and unrest among peasants, extended working hours and inhumane conditions consumed factory labourers, and nations were swallowed up by absolutist monarchies. Such were the basic causes of the European Revolutions of the 1840s that Hungarians joined. Among them was the poet, Sándor Petőfi (1823-1849). Petőfi was part of the young intellectuals' group called "The Society of the Ten" or the "Young Hungary" that regularly gathered at the Café Pilvax to discuss life, the arts and politics, celebrating the spiritual legacy of the French Revolution. By the spring of 1848 Petőfi had already gained acknowledgment in Hungarian literary circles and fame among readers for his folksy poems, including the most popular *János Vitéz* (*John the Valiant*).

Concerned with Hungarian politics and the effort of gaining independence from the Habsburg House, along with a vision for global liberty, Petőfi transitioned into a poet revolutionary composing outspoken verses such as "Wait till the slave generations are uncharmed/and tired of chains take to arms/their faces flushed, their banners red/and on their banners the slogan spelled/Freedom for the World" in "One thought torments me..." (*"Egy gondolat bánt engemet..."*), and "By the God of the Hungarians/ We swear,/We swear, that we will be slaves/No longer!" in the "National Song" (*"Nemzeti dal"*). With Petőfi's manifest actions, literature irreversibly became amalgamated with history and politics in Hungary. The March Revolution led to the subsequent war against Austria under Admiral Lajos Kossuth's leadership. Remaining a

central figure, Petőfi was not exempt from critiques in the press, who saw him as a Bohemian armchair revolutionary. Energized by pride, anger and readiness, Petőfi enlisted in the *Honvéd* army, joining the Polish General József Bem's troops in Transylvania, leaving behind his expecting wife, Júlia Szendrey. He was the aide-de-camp for Bem. It is difficult to imagine the dainty-figured poet fighting enemy soldiers. Indeed, true to his rebellious nature, Petőfi did not don uniform, but he more often held a pen than a sword at the camp; he kept producing poems and letters. When he was last seen at the battlefield of Segesvár on July 31st, 1849 he was wearing a gaudy white shirt and waving in his hand what seemed like a sword (it very well could have been his long feather pen); he was later killed by Russian troops and buried in a mass grave. Petőfi's body, however, was never recovered, which instigated much controversial debate about his death and also a supposed subsequent life.

But this is history, and what we know about history is usually based on interests of different powers one way or another. Nationalism is one of these points, a term I did not grow up with. My parents wanted me to have a decent classical education, whatever that might have meant during the 1970s and 1980s, with no strings attached. As a result, I sometimes felt awkward in social situations because I just could not get so enthusiastic about the history of Magyars from a nationalistic perspective as others did in our unruly teenage years. I developed a sense of *not-belonging*, an identity that can be dangerous in some cases and helpful in others. It certainly has helped me in the many-year process of becoming Canadian - until recently.

I just had the opportunity to co-teach a second-year university course with fellow doctorate students and our professor, Dr. Steven Taubeneck. Our main theme was "The Other Empires of Europe: Culture, History, Politics of Austria/Germany, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Hungary." We each had a three-week section to give undergraduate students a general sense about these cultures and nations, and how they are linked by history, politics and literature. Introducing Sándor Petőfi's work to young Canadian students was an obvious choice on my part if I wanted to convey any sort



TRANSLATED BY
ANDI SZILÁGYI

HUNGARIAN FOLK TALES

THE OLD SOLDIER

Once there was a soldier in the world who served for thirty years. When he grew old, he was freed from service because he could no longer perform the duties of a soldier. They even let him keep his uniform. He had nothing in his pocket but three krajcár.

He walked and wandered until he reached a forest. Then he stopped to ponder, "If I find a village, I will spend my three krajcár: one on a pipe, one on tobacco, and one on matches." By the time he counted this out, a man with grey hair came up to him and begged him for alms. The old soldier gave him one krajcár.

But the soldier thought to himself, "If I buy a pipe and tobacco with the two krajcár I have left, then I won't have enough for matches. And if I buy tobacco and matches, then I won't have enough for a pipe." By the time he thought about this, the grey-haired man came up to him again. Again, he asked for one krajcár. The soldier gave it to him. But he knew that he could not buy anything with his last krajcár. Now the grey-haired man begged for a third time, and the soldier gave him his third krajcár. The beggar saw how good-hearted the drifter was, and he asked him what he wished in return for the three krajcár pittance.

"I don't want anything ... except maybe a pipe that never burns out, a haversack from which a loaf never disappears, and from which the wine is always brimming."

With this, the grey-haired man disappeared. The soldier continued on his way, sauntering through the forest. Suddenly he saw, hanging from a tree, a canteen, a haversack, and a pipe. He knew these were meant for him.

He unhooked them and started to eat because he was very hungry. He drank from the wine and put the pipe in his mouth. All he had to do was inhale because the tobacco was already burning in the pipe.

Some devils took notice of this and asked him for his newly found possessions, but he did not give them over. Those thieves then took everything from him by force, and even beat him up for good measure. Sorrowfully, the old soldier continued forward. As he walked and wandered, he

again met the grey-haired man, who asked him:

"Do you wish for anything in return for being so charitable? I can see you have not had much luck on your journey."

"Nothing really, just a club that will smash and slash until I command it to stop."

And in a moment, the club was already in his hand. With that, the old soldier went over to the devils' house and asked them for his pipe, his canteen, and his haversack. But the devils did not give them to him. Instead, they wanted to beat him afresh.

Then the old soldier commanded his club, "Hit them, cut them, my little club, but not your father!"

The devils begged him to stop, that they would return everything they stole from him, just as long as he made the club stop beating them. When he got everything back, he ate and drank and started smoking. Then he resumed the road again.

He walked and wandered and when he reached the edge of the forest, he noticed a tiny candle flickering amid the vast darkness. He went directly to it. Pretty soon, he saw that he was coming to a city, but that the city was engulfed in total darkness, except for the flame of one candle which burned within it. As he fumbled to find his way, he bumped into the gatekeeper.

The old soldier asked him, "Why is this city smothered in such darkness?"

"This city is in mourning," replied the gatekeeper, "because the king of the devils wants to marry the daughter of our king. But our king will now allow it, and so the devils hailed this eternal darkness on us. If anyone lights up the city, the king will have to give over his daughter, along with half of his kingdom."

The old soldier wanted to know which road lead to the devil king's palace. The gatekeeper pointed out the way, and whispered to the soldier, "Bring back the king's two molars, because it is only with those that the city may be lit up again."

The old soldier departed, resumed his wandering, until he hit upon the devil's palace. But when he opened the gate, he saw that no one was home. The king's throne was empty.

Continued on page 22...

The Austro-Hungarian Empire decimalized in 1857, adopting a system of 100 Kreuzer to 1 Gulden, Austrian Florin or Hungarian Forint. In the Hungarian language it is known as the *krajcár* (in contemporary Hungarian, *krajczár*).



...continued from our last issue:

BUDAPEST CHRONICLES II

A literary junket through the streets of Hungary's Capital

by Angus MacDonald

Yogurt is delicious in Europe. A culture of cultures.

Budapest Metro, in the store, for sale together: alcohol and knives. Get drunk and fight. Another sells underwear and foreign currency. Change your panties and your *forints*.

Medve G-day. Waiting, car parts, turbo mechanic, Buda Porsche, Pest Porsche, 1500 Euros? "It is too much I will push it off your lot to the street." Mexican *étterem* Iguana. American kitchen, Spanish ham, Japanese microwave, Italian fridge, disabled parking, 1969 *Polski* Fiat, 1957 Volkswagen *Bogár* with canvas top. Smart crash. Hungarian stock market. Sixteen recessed halogen lamps, the smell of rotting meat in the courtyard. Lemonade, made in the USA. "That's the way it is! No nostalgia. See, I have this. Before I didn't have it. Now I do." No conscience. Memory fragments. The mental pictures, locked away, fade. Say the name. Wayne. A father, a friend. Names are more important than the person. The lines that go down are longer than the lines that go up. The window above the door. Crisp white shirts, banners, brochures, a schematic explosion on the screen. Unable to determine the part needed. No purchase. This slippery slope.

She never changes. She looks the same. Crystal glasses, bowls of pastry, immaculate order, composure, the talk of confidence, matron's authority, "you must, you must," the same trouble at home.

Money creates assurance and imagined acceptability.

Csaba, Kata, Boldi, Zita, Pink Cadillac. *Mojito*, cola, *bor*, *kagyló leves*, tuna salad, pasta *pomodoro*, toast Palermo, *dió fagyi*, 15% discount for VIPs. A private room, a plastic cactus, Cactus Clone. Csaba's story of being stopped on the way home. Cop: "did you drink?" Csaba: "no." (a lie) Cop: "well why not?" *Tipikus* attitude.

Found nostalgic books in the bookstore near Liszt Square. Great Hungarian companions to Coupland's *Souvenir of Canada*. Watched some sparrows. A puddle ensnared a yellow dragonfly. It was deftly snatched by one of the birds that bit its wings off and fed it to a chick. It was a magic moment. Then two pigeons courted on a statue's head. Preening each other, we shared their warm scene.

I tried on some red DDR shorts and put on a living room callisthenic exhibition. We had a great laugh.

I woke up early, at 5:25, and began my day with *Retroactive Justice: A Pre-history of Post-communism*. Found another typo or spelling mistake, sloppy editing, and the fifth in this Stanford University Press publication. "Jut" for "just." Stand forth. Another clue to my own da Vinci code. Social. Patriarchal. Auto-motive. Johnny Cash. Reburial. Cemetery. Alcohol. Agriculture. Asia. Journal. *The Good Master*. Steps. The buffoon bird's squawk. Hero worship. Guilt. Feed the young. Empty nest. Sweat. Mental poison. Prairie son. A polluted river of sin. The concepts of good and evil. Kidnap. Plastic heavens. Smooth abrasion. Delicate brutality. The words that flow like a secretion from the pen's tip. The early morning. An empty twenty-story tower. This view costs one thousand dollars per square foot. A very high ceiling. The sun and what I need.

Another sauna and steam at Gellért. French bikers enjoying their *shvitz*. In the 8 degree plunge pool I ask, "*c'est froid?*" *Oui, c'est froid*. On the news: a Christmas-chocolate making factory sells confections laced with feces, the name of the company becomes public so they sue for damages: their brand has been sullied. A coalition of the extreme right and the Communist party in Slovakia. Slovaks detest Hungarians. The reasons are not, apparently, definable. A man cut up a small iron bridge and sold it for scrap. The air traffic controllers at Budapest International Airport threaten to strike if they don't get a 100% raise, they avoid job action by settling for 6. A truckload of Ukrainians nearly die of suffocation while being smuggled into Austria. The temperature inside the container reaches 50 Celsius. European migrants? Ambulances responding to or returning from emergency calls suffer 70 collisions with unaware motorists every year. Drivers here do not know how to get out of the way... what's that noise? Perhaps what's needed is a mandatory course called Living in the 21st Century 101. A 23 km intercity train route will be cut from the system because it carries only 10 passengers a day. A Brinks armoured truck is held up by a masked would-be robber who flees when the currency guard fires his gun in the air. A private pier being constructed at Lake Balaton for luxury yachts is damaging the fragile ecosystem. The government will sue the company. Bush turns 60 today, mugs with President Harper on television. Anniversary of London's bombing. A new *szoci*-museum opens in a distant Hungarian town.

We take in United at *Zöld Pardon*. Funky, like Jamiroquai, Will Smith, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, Dr. Dre, DJ *Tessék*. Thirteen year olds are getting drunk. I hear the *Haver* talking to himself.



PHOTO: ANGUS MACDONALD

NEWS FROM HUNGARY

by Magda Sasvári



EUROPEAN SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIP

2008.IX.28.

Hungary has won the bid to host the European Swimming Championship in 2010, the Executive Committee of the European Swimming Federation announced September 27, 2008.

GYURCSÁNY ON HUNGARY'S RECESSION

2008.XI.19.

Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány told a meeting of the National Development Council on November 18 that the global financial crisis could drag Hungary into recession for as long as a year and a half.

DISCOVERY OF SUBTERRANEAN LAKE

2008.XI.19.

It looks like the world's largest subterranean hot-water lake has been discovered recently in a cave under Budapest. The 9 metre deep lake, enclosed in a 20-25 metre high natural dome sparkling with brown and white calcite crystals is part of the Molnár János Cave, the biggest cave system in Hungary. It is almost 90 metres long and 30 metres wide. Environmental Minister Imre Szabó praised the beauty of the cave and promised to commit funds for its preservation. The mayor of District II, where the cave is located, said that the district was applying to UNESCO to include the cave in its list of world heritage sites. So far 180 different sized caves are known to exist under Budapest.

"THE MADMAN AND THE SOLDIER" SELLS FOR HUF 110M. RECENTLY UNCOVERED TITIAN MASTERPIECE TO BE EXHIBITED IN PÉCS

2008.XII.11.

A Titian, depicting Mary with the child and Saint Paul, the most valuable painting found in Hungary over the past half a century, will be exhibited in Pécs from January 7th to February 6th, the

director of the local House of Arts and Literature told reporters in Pécs on Wednesday.

Andrea Kóhalmi said that the painting, initially attributed to an unknown Italian master, had adorned the wall of a residential home in Pécs. In 2005, however, it turned up at an auction to be sold to another private individual for 140 million HUF (EUR 532,000).

Art historians had suspected that the unsigned painting was a Titian, but it was only subsequent X-ray examinations which proved them right. More evidence came in the form of an inventory showing that the picture was registered as a painting by Tiziano Vecellino (1488/90-1576) and kept in the collection of the prince of Modena in the 17th and 18th centuries. The estimated value of the painting is 1.4 billion HUF (EUR 53.2 million).

NEW FIVE-STAR HOTEL IN DEBRECEN

2008.XII.18.

The recently opened Hotel Divinus is the first five-star hotel in Eastern Hungary. Zoltán Disznós, the owner and operator of the new hotel plans to "transport the guests into a luxurious paradise."

BUDAPEST CITY COUNCIL SUPPORTS 2020 OLYMPIC BID

2008.XII.20.

The Budapest council decided that the city would bid on the 2020 Olympic Summer Games. This document will be sent to the President and the Prime Minister. Following that, it will be up to the Parliament to decide, probably in the first half of 2011, whether or not the city will present a bid.

MAJORITY OF HUNGARIAN POLITICIANS LOST POPULARITY IN 2008

2008.I.08.

The popularity of most politicians fell in 2008, with the largest drop suffered by opposition MDF party

leader Ibolya Dávid, opposition liberal Free Democrats leader Gábor Fodor and President László Sólyom, according to a poll by Szonda Ipsos published in Wednesday's *Népszabadság*.

The popularity of main opposition Fidesz leader Viktor Orbán increased to 49 points following a referendum on health care initiated by his party. He headed the popularity poll with 45 points in November but fell by 1 point to fourth place in December.

At the same time, Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, who averaged around 27 points before September, increased his rating to 31 points by the end of the year.

At the bottom of the poll, Free Democrats parliamentary group leader János Kóka has replaced former health minister Ágnes Horváth.

BUDAPEST SPRING FESTIVAL 2009.III.20. - 2009.IV.5.

The Budapest Spring Festival (March 20th – April 5th 2009) is the largest annual cultural event in Hungary, boasting orchestral and chamber concerts, jazz, contemporary dance, film screenings and much more. A multitude of venues throughout the city welcome the finest Hungarian and international performers.

In 2009, the theatre section of the Budapest Spring Festival features the Hungarian premiere *The Park* by Botho Strauss and Puccini's *Turandot*, conducted by Péter Oberfrank. Orchestral concerts include performances by Joshua Bell & the Camerata Salzburg and Oleg Maisenberg & the Kremerata Baltica, while on the jazz front there is the Nigel Kennedy Quintet, featuring the famous English violinist.

Visit the Budapest Festival Centre's website for full details of the programme, including exhibitions and special events:

www.fesztivalvaros.hu

Sources: Budapest Online, Magyar Nemzet, Hir TV.

...MTV continued from page 3

Their story begins in Victoria at the Trans-Canada's Mile-0, which coincided with the 30th Annual Western Canadian Hungarian Folk Festival. In fact, no amount of planning could have provided for better timing as this was a chance to meet with a few of the original and second-generation Canadian-Hungarians interested in preserving their culture. "We planned to stay and film with both Hungarian-Canadians and native Canadians showing small stories, families and multicultural life along the Canadian Highway." From Vancouver Island the duo traveled the Trans-Canada's watery portion between Victoria and Vancouver.

Indeed, Canada's reputation as a multicultural and tolerant place was a major theme for Tibor and Szilvia. This was evident upon first meeting with them and touring Vancouver. From its oldest streets in Gastown to one of North America's largest "Chinatown" neighbourhoods, they found plenty of local stories confirming their suspicions surrounding Canada's quilted mosaic. Referring to then Mayor of Vancouver, Sam Sullivan: "Electing a mayor who is disabled shows acceptance; the safe injection place was also a unique and a good example..."

After a stay in Vancouver, Tibor and Szilvia headed east to Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto. Other highlights from their whirlwind road-trip include visiting with Canada's Governor-General, Michaëlle Jean. "The Governor General's office allowed us only 45 minutes, but at the end we had been walking and interviewing her for two hours! She gave us kind of a personal tour of Rideau Hall."

In accumulating what seemed like several videotape-filled suitcases, Szilvia and Tibor soaked in multiculturalism throughout the Lower Mainland and across the country. Their experience brought them a glimpse into the immigrant experience in Canada – and this, of course, was not limited to the story of Hungarian immigrants. In spending long days and late nights uncovering Canada's origins and aboriginal culture, Tibor characterized Canada today as an "immigrant-importing nation from which other countries could learn."

While trekking thousands of kilometers, Tibor and Szilvia had amassed dozens of hours of footage from which to piece together the Canadian experience on film. The project remains among the first of its kind; an opportunity for Hungarians to view not just the varied and textured landscape or clichéd outdoors, but to be exposed to uniquely Canadian concepts.

Greg Csiszár

Magyar Televízió's story can be viewed at: www.mtv.hu/videotar/?id=32211

First article: www.mtv.hu/magazin/cikk.php?id=306182

Second article: www.mtv.hu/magazin/cikk.php?id=307069

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PACIFIC CINÉMATHÈQUE, THE NHV AND THE HCCA PRESENTS

THE VANCOUVER PREMIER SCREENING OF FREEDOM'S FURY AND TOUCHED BY WATER

Wednesday, February 4th, 2009 - 7:30pm

See both films for the Single Bill Ticket Price: \$9.50 Adults, \$8.00 Students/Seniors

FREEDOM'S FURY

USA 2007. Directors: Colin K Gray
and Megan Raney Aarons (*The Sibs*)

There was blood in the water, literally, when the water polo teams of Hungary and the Soviet Union met in the semi-finals of the 1956 Summer Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia. The match, one of the most notorious and violent in any sport in Olympic history, took place just weeks after invading Soviet forces had crushed Hungary's 1956 uprising against Soviet Communist domination. Tempers were running high and revenge was in the air, but it was below the waterline that many of the most vicious assaults were launched. As verbal taunts escalated into a battle royal of punching, kicking and gouging, even outraged spectators, most of them fervently pro-Hungarian, threatened to join the fray. Written and directed by Colin Gray, executive produced by Lucy Liu and Quentin Tarantino (who described the events as "the best untold story ever") and narrated by Olympic champion swimmer Mark Spitz (who was once coached by Ervin Zádor, a central figure in the tale), this fascinating documentary uses a wealth of archival material to recount the extraordinary "Blood in the Water" match and its historical context. It also records a remarkable reunion, 50 years after the fact, of the surviving Hungarian and Soviet players.
90 minutes.



TOUCHED BY WATER

Canada 2006. Director: Tamás Wormser

When filmmaker Tamás Wormser emigrated from Budapest to Montreal two decades ago, he moved from a culture where public bathing is part of the fabric of life to a country where the concept of public bathing is foreign.

His culture shock inspired the extraordinary *Touched by Water*, "a documentary that dives into the lush world of bathing. From the holiest rituals to fashionable leisure, from ancient Roman baths and elite European spas, via Turkish hammams and ritual dips in the Ganges, to high-tech, modern swimming pools, the film looks at bathing cultures around the world and explores our essential bond with water, the sensual pleasure we derive from it as well as the spiritual renewal" (Montreal World Film Festival). "Shot in 13 countries over the course of 10 years, the exquisite *Touched by Water* is both an ode to the social ritual of public bathing and a thought-provoking look at water's spiritual significance. From Christian baptism to Muslim prayer ablutions, most key ceremonial rites of passage involve water...Wormser is a gifted cinematographer. His footage immerses the viewer in a kaleidoscope of exotic water rituals" (Patricia Bailety, cbc.ca).
46 minutes.



PACIFIC CINÉMATHÈQUE

200-1131 Howe Street Vancouver, BC (604) 688-8202



Freedom's Fury - Colin K. Gray and Megan Raney Aarons (The Sibs)

Writer and director Colin Keith Gray and his sister, cinematographer Megan Raney Aarons are one of the few filmmaking brother and sister teams in the business. They are known simply as "The Sibs," who are compelled to tell provoking stories with themes of social justice, impertinent comedy and neglected historical and political narratives. The pair grew up in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and France. In 1998, Gray created his first film production company called WOLO Entertainment to enable the duo to make *Freedom's Fury*, a documentary about the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the infamous Hungary – Soviet Union water polo match of the same year at the Melbourne Olympics. Colin was an avid water polo player who grew up in Canada and heard stories of Hungary's legendary prowess in the sport, and he realized that the historic match between Hungary and the Soviet Union, set against the backdrop of the people's Revolution, would make a great film. The Sibs set about tracking down any surviving players and found Ervin Zádor, who promptly signed on to the project. The young filmmakers then travelled to Budapest in 1999 to do research where they had unprecedented access to restricted secret police archives. The Sibs then returned to Hungary in the Spring of 2002 for three months of filming. *Freedom's Fury* is a powerful feature length documentary about the "bloodiest game in Olympic history." The film follows the account of Zádor, the young star of the Hungarian team who found himself at the vortex of the one of the most politicized sporting contests every fought. The film follows the lives of the players of the Australian games while the human tragedy unfolded two weeks prior back home in Hungary. The hopeful, forward-looking documentary took 4 years to finance, film and market, and was released in 2006 to immediate critical acclaim.

Touched by Water - Tamás Wormser

Budapest-born writer, actor and director Tamás Wormser moved to Canada in 1986, and in 1991 he finished the Film Production program at Concordia in Montreal. During his study, he made the narrative films *Prometheus* and *The Hat* and the documentaries *Lama Geshe Kenrab* and *Hippo Sapiens*. He went on to become the founder of Artesian Films and direct and produce eleven films under its banner. He followed up with another documentary in 1996, produced by the National Film Board of Canada, entitled *Faces of the Hand* which has been praised as a "straightforward ode to the human hand [that is] at once poetic and informative" by *The Montreal Mirror*. Wormser's passion for making documentaries has continued to the present with subjects as diverse as professional dance (*Step Up*), Hungarian-Canadian galas (*The Ball of Their Lives*), teenaged fathers (*Believe In Me*), modern-day nomadic artists (*Traveling Light: Artists on the Move*) and a very well-received film shot in 13 countries that explores bathing ceremonies (*Touched By Water – Eaux de vie*). The CBC extolled it as "exquisite... both an ode to the social ritual of public bathing and a thought-provoking look at water's spiritual significance." The documentary plunges deep into the sumptuous world of bathing rites investigating our age-old affiliation with life sustaining water. Wormser explores ancient Roman baths, elite European spas, Turkish *hammams* and the river Ganges to search for meaning with our sacred aquatic bond. The film went on to receive a nomination for Best Documentary at the Montreal World Film Festival. Critics have said that Wormser masterfully uses his camera like a paintbrush, teasing the canvas of life. Presently he is living in Montreal with his wife and two sons and developing several feature-length films.



A.M.

...Film Review continued from page 6

Truffaut who wanted to pull moviegoers out of their dream state and back into a reality that resonates life. Jarmusch's films are the equivalent of fill-in-the-blanks puzzles: scenes fade in earlier and fade out later than is typical, leaving us to wonder what else transpired. Between the dream and reality exists Jarmusch's cinematic poetry.

The focal point of all Jarmusch's work is the apparent contradiction that exists between the popular perception of the American Dream and what that dream actually holds. Hungarian Éva came to America with dreams of Jay Hawkins, the "wild man" screaming in her ears, and that his "spell" would set her starved and yearning soul free. What she found instead was her cousin's squalid one-room apartment and nothing for her to do. Jarmusch reveals that America is a tedious, boring place, although the inhabitants pretend to live in freedom enveloped in false glamour. In *Stranger Than Paradise*, John Lurie plays the character of Béla, or Willie as he prefers to be known in America, and we watch as he gambles his life away at the cost of any meaningful human bond or relationship. When Éva leaves for Cleveland, he feels the loss of companionship and all impoverished newcomers to America who recognize well, the sense of loss, reflect his emotional need.

The rhythm of the pacing in Jarmusch's first film is a unique cinematic experience. The particular rhythms grow out of the stories themselves. Jarmusch "uses sequence shots throughout"

his films and the camera "inexorably waits at a predetermined location" for characters to come and go in the frame. He sets you up to slow you down, to let you live the lives of his characters, to focus on the unhurried reality they experience. In *Stranger Than Paradise*, Jarmusch makes you watch his characters watch television and you feel and share their utter boredom. His long static takes and slow fades reinforce the pace he wants you to undergo.

The "camera movement in his films creates a visual world that is always in transition." *Stranger Than Paradise* sees Willie, Eddie and Éva traveling from socially collapsing New York City to bleak Cleveland, Ohio (Jarmusch's home state, he was born in Akron) then to the theoretical paradise of Florida, but there is only more of the same decomposing culture that is unavoidable and everywhere. Eddie explains, "you come to someplace new and everything looks the same."

Jim Jarmusch chronicles modern society in America with his adroit wit and a humanistic sensibility that compassionately and thoughtfully records life as it is lived, by real people in real situations. His cinematic visions, realized with a style that synthesizes character development, camera work, sound engineering and composition of the frame, encompass a reality rarely seen or attempted in the Hollywood system. In his films, America is observed through a foreign consciousness that all immigrants share. Jarmusch uses their eyes to show us what we normally are unable to see. 🍷

I M R E R E I A E R



by Lorraine Weideman

Although many people aren't familiar with Hungarian artist/designer/publisher Imre Reiner, his work is universally used by practically everyone who uses a computer today.

Printing practices changed dramatically in Europe during the fifteenth century. Writing precious manuscripts by hand was overtaken by the invention of movable type that was developed in the 1400s by Johannes Gutenberg of Mainz, Germany – a process which resulted in an explosion of printed books. Hungarians have played a significant part in printing and typography design, from the early letter-forms that were carved and rolled with ink - to the multitude of downloadable fonts available today with just a click of your mouse.

Almost 200 years before Imre Reiner was born, engraver and printer Nicholas Kis (misztótfalusi Kis Miklós in Hungarian), designed the now universally well-known typeface “Janson,” in Amsterdam in the 1680s (he worked there while publishing a new Hungarian edition of the bible).

Imre Reiner was born in Versec on August 18, 1900. His artistic pursuits led him to study sculpture in Budapest in 1918, and following the war, he went on to study painting and graphic arts at the Frankfurt School of Arts and Crafts. He continued his studies in Stuttgart with Ernst Schneidler, and there he would meet his future wife Hedwig Bauer.

From 1923 to 1925 he worked in New York and Chicago, returning to Europe to continue his studies with Schneidler that would include painting, and graphic and industrial design. In 1931, he moved to Paris, married Hedwig, and a year later

they moved to Ruvigliana, Switzerland.

Typography design, or fonts (that so many of us use with our various computer programs today), is what made Imre Reiner's work universal. In the 1900s, he designed several typefaces that are still popular today. Reiner wrote: “Lettering and all its ample and manifold forms is a topic that never can be exhausted. Writing is not only a mirror of the character of the writer and of the period in which it was written, it leads anyone studying it into the glamorous regions of bridled passions, where primeval forms and ancient riddles meet, where what is otherwise uncontrollable shows itself docile and willing, demanding no more of the observer than patience and sympathy with its own world.”

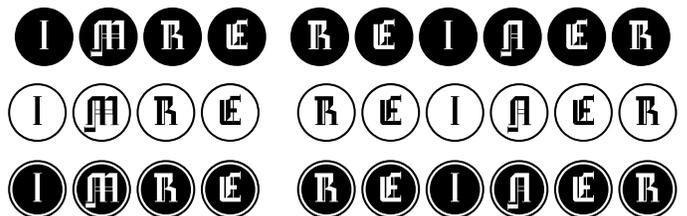
Typographers and designers during this avant-garde era had a new role - one that reflected the modern and abstract movements in art and architecture.

From 1930 until 1959, Reiner designed the Meridian, Gotika, Corvinus, Matura, Symphonie, Floride, Reiner Script, Bazaar and Pepita fonts. His successful Reiner Script was based on his handwriting and was frequently used in book design and advertising in the 1950s and 1960s.

He wrote numerous books and articles on typography and design, and co-wrote with his wife on the application of lettering for display work on dust-jackets, title-pages and text. He was also a prolific illustrator, creating images for works by Cervantes, Goethe, Voltaire, Frisch, Gorky and Rilke.

Reiner's well-rounded education gave him the skills to master a variety of artistic disciplines, and he created a prolific body of work as a painter, illustrator, typographer, calligrapher, sculptor, writer and designer for more than fifty years, until his death on August 21, 1987. Today, his fonts are alive and well, his illustrations still vibrant, and his books are a great resource for designers.

Download these Imre Reiner fonts (Gotika Buttons One, Two and Three) for free at:
<http://moorstation.org:80/typoasis/blackletter/htm/gotika.htm>



Most people will already have a few fonts designed by Imre Reiner on their computers - Corvinus Skyline, Matura, Mercurius, Pepita, Reiner Hand, Stradivarius are all popular fonts used by home desk-top publishers and professional designers alike.

Many of them are available for purchase at:
www.myfonts.com
<http://www.myfonts.com/browse/person/reiner/imre/>

DESIGN INSPIRED BY TRADITION

Recently, Hungarian illustrator, designer and teacher Csaba Szenteczki published *The History and Techniques of Graphic Press Design*, (*A nyomtatott grafika története és technikái*, Budapest, 2003). His detailed book is a historical study of graphic design and printing, written in Hungarian. It describes the development of printing technology before the aid of computers and the influence of the printing press. Szenteczki also illustrated a children's book entitled *Mesikönyv* written by Gergely Péterfy in 2005, and has exhibited his art in Toronto, New York, New Jersey, and Budapest.

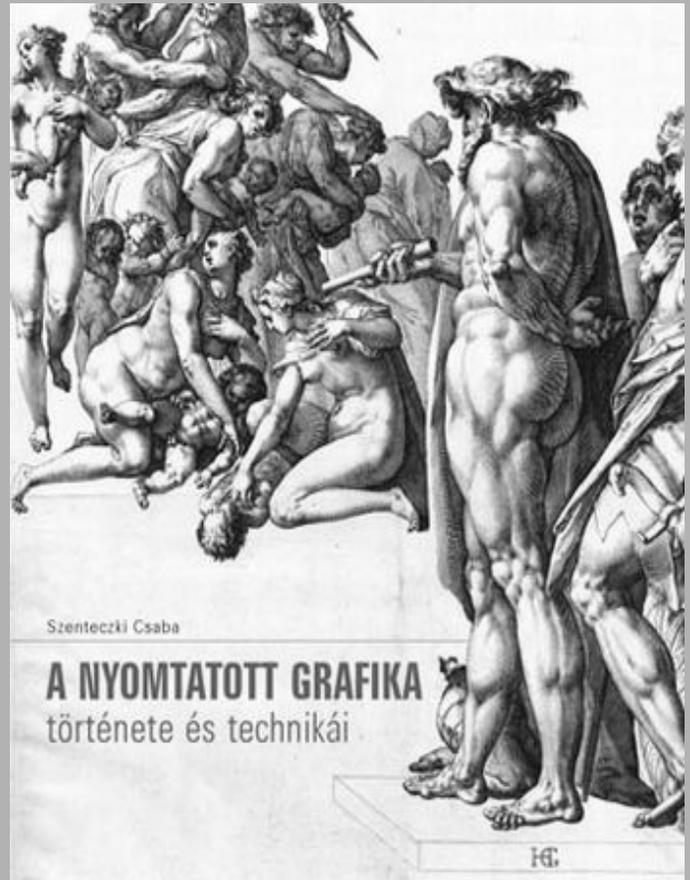
Szenteczki attended the prestigious Budapesti Kezkomu-vezeti Foiskola (Budapest Academy of Fine Art) and has been teaching at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design since 1999 as Assistant Professor of Graphic Design.

Currently, he is researching the history and images of the *Emlékkönyv* or keepsake album, that was popular in Hungary a couple of centuries ago. These albums often had a little lock, much like the North American diary, except these little books would be filled with personal notes, poems and drawings, with additions from close friends. Szenteczki creates metaphors through his illustrations that juxtapose bold graphic design inspired by traditional printing techniques.

L. W.

You can order *The History and Techniques of Graphic Press Design* online:

www.flaccus.hu:80/Temakorontent/TartalomReszletek.jsp?konyv=4213



If you know a Hungarian, ask them about healthy living. They probably have strong convictions about exercise and diet. Good food is a central theme of Hungarian life and soup is serious. Ask a Magyar about soup: their eyes will glaze over with childhood memories and they'll tell you that soup is an essential, almost compulsory part of a meal. Hungarian soup comes in various forms but it's generally safe to say that if there's soup on the menu, it'll be delicious. From hearty *gulyás* (is it a soup or stew?), to liver dumpling, chicken noodle, sour cherry, wild mushroom, to spicy fish: soup (*leves* LEH-vesh) is very popular in Hungary. It's sacred. Most lunches or dinners in Hungary commence with a bowl of stomach-settling and appetite-inducing soup.

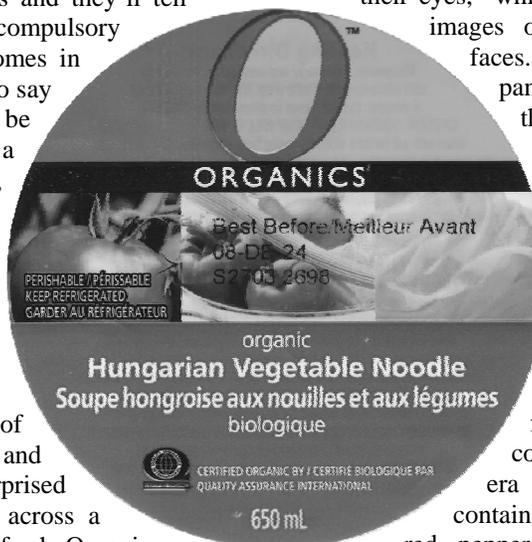
In Canada, we also consume a lot of soup, but it's generally bland, canned and over-salted. So it was with surprised excitement that Ágnes and I came across a new product at the local Safeway: fresh Organic Hungarian Vegetable Noodle soup!

The second to last ingredient on the label is paprika, thus making it Hungarian. The container also has 106% of a person's daily sodium requirements thus making it Canadian. The soup is produced by the Calgary-based Canyon Creek

Food Company and their website states that their soup offers an "alternative to cooking from scratch" and "fresh is best." I guess by fresh they mean "not frozen" since the soup has a shelf life of 3 months! The company thinks "people eat with their eyes," which to me just sounds scary and elicits images of temporarily blinded soup-streaked faces. Sadly, attempts to contact the company to find out more information about the "Hungarian-ness" of their product failed. We are left to guess how the recipe was developed, if a Hungarian was involved, or if there was simply an abundance of paprika sitting around and they didn't know what else to do with it.

Oddly, the soup doesn't taste salty at all, in fact it's sweet. We both reached for the shaker after first slurp. The noodles were over-cooked yet tasty, reminiscent of socialist era cafeteria fare, I'm told. The recipe contains organic everything: tomatoes, carrots, red peppers, onions, celery, potatoes, chicken broth; and while presumably this makes it more nutritious, it doesn't make it taste especially *magyar*. Beyond the penultimate spice on the ingredient list, it's not clear what makes this soup Hungarian... but as long there's paprika, there's hope. 🍲

Angus MacDonald



The NHV, the HCCA and CUPPA JOE COFFEE presents an evening of spoken word featuring

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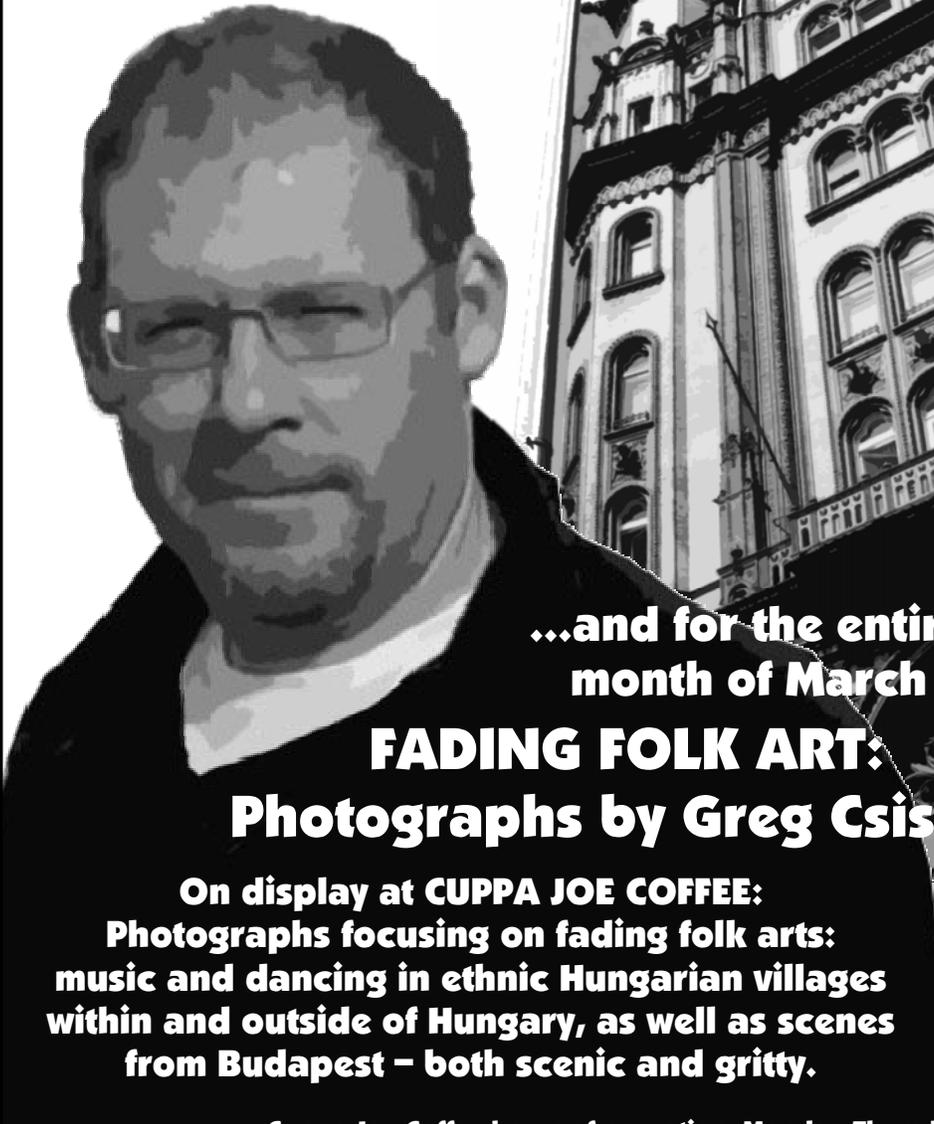
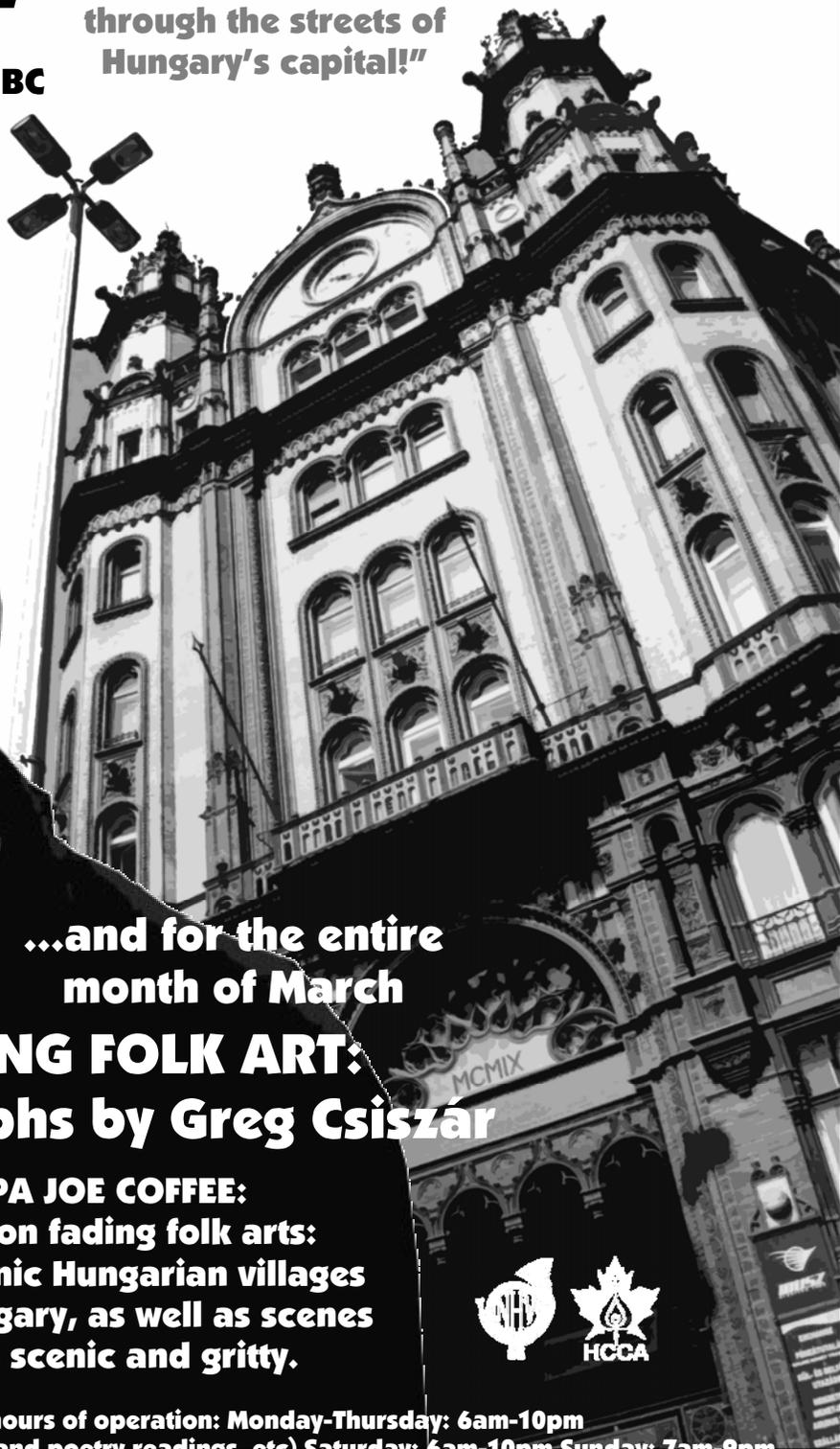
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ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE: HUNGARIAN STYLE



Do you ever get frustrated with the options available to you for health care? Is popping pharmaceuticals getting you down? Does the idea of having a dozen acupuncture needles inserted into various and sundry parts of your body give you the willies? Well then, how does a pleasant stroll, or even a leisurely sit, at the Tápiószentmárton Kincsem Horse Park sound?

The portion of the park known as Attila Hill (so named because of the bust of Attila placed in the location where his wooden castle is thought to have stood) is believed to be the epicentre of a magnetic field that has healing capabilities. The 1000 hectare park surrounding Attila Hill is a sort of sanatorium aimed at rejuvenating its visitors, but without a real medical bent. It does, however, offer various opportunities to nourish your health and well-being: mini golf, tennis, swimming, horseback riding, children's play area, mini zoo with various game fowl, as well as ponies and other animals, aerial sight-seeing tours - on top of the option of wandering the fields throughout the park or simply sitting and enjoying the view. The park also boasts a hotel, museum, and various places to eat, drink, and be merry, all while taking in those beneficial magnetic vibes.

The land on which the park stands had earned a reputation in the 19th century as prime horse-breeding territory, being the place where the "wonder mare" Kincsem (Hungarian for "My Treasure") was born. Ernő Blaskovich, Kincsem's breeder, as well as the owner of the land, noticed that the horses that had been pastured in this area spent an inordinate amount of time on or near the mound. The estate's veterinarian noticed that the sick horses in particular would lie down on the mound for hours at a time. The health statistics for these horses were better than anywhere else in the country, as was the reproduction rate. After news of these events got around, sick people started arriving to see if they would experience the same health benefits, and some claimed that they did experience distinct improvements within a few days, while some would return for multiple visits.

These claims prompted a spate of scientific research, which revealed a radiation of geomagnetic energy, believed to facilitate healing processes in the human body. While Attila Hill constitutes the most powerful point of this energy flow, its curative effects are said to be felt throughout the park. Scientists have yet to determine whether these energies are responsible for the apparent improvements in health, or whether there is another explanation. The theory is that because illnesses often result from a state of energy deficiency, this radiation helps to re-establish the balance of energy in a way that harmonizes the energy flow throughout the body.

Different individuals experience different sensations, which seem to manifest themselves in stages. First, they may feel tingling on the hands, legs, or all over the body; or they may experience itching, warmth, coldness, or dizziness. Second, they may feel their symptoms worsening, such as having increased blood pressure, dizziness, headaches, or other bodily aches, which may be caused by the change in energy levels and may actually signal the beginning of the path to healing. The recommended course of action, should these unpleasant sensations occur, is to simply move 20 - 30 metres away until the sensations subside. (Apparently, these "side effects" diminish with subsequent "treatments," so don't give up! Keep going for more visits if you want to obtain the full cure.) The third stage of sensations manifests itself in things such as sleepiness, general fatigue, greater muscular range of motion and strength, decreased aches and pains, less stress, and better sleep. To enhance your healing experience, park staff recommend the following: no cell phones or radios, try to spend your time in a state of peace and calm, wear loose, comfortable clothing, and tend to your bodily functions and other physiological needs (make sure you've had your dinner) before settling down for a "healing session." Ultimate comfort and relaxation is the key!

Having wandered the park myself on a recent visit to Hungary, I can say that some of my long-standing ailments did seem to improve after having spent only a few short hours there. I did not go there with the knowledge of what the park had to offer in terms of health benefits, and neither did I expect any benefits once I learned about this mysterious magnetic energy, so I can honestly say that the changes were not psychosomatic, although maybe they were simply coincidental. Still, if you have any nagging health issues that conventional medicine has been unable to help you with, consider paying a visit to Attila Hill at the Kincsem Horse Park. You might just be surprised. 🍀

Anita Bedő

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DOROSZLÓ

by Eddi Wagner

Doroszló is located between Zombor (Sombor, Serbia) and Újvidék (Novi Sad, Serbia), not far away from the river Danube. Today, only a few thousand people live in Doroszló, all ethnic Hungarians (Roman Catholics). In the past, many more people lived in this town - for the last 150 years, the population has been in a constant, steady decline.

The first documents of the parish date to the year 1313, mentioning the same name – Doroszló. The town, as well as large properties surrounding it, belonged to the famous Doroszló family for hundreds of years. In the year 1361, it was incorporated into Bodrog county, and since 1552 it belonged to the Bács county. Turkish conquests left Doroszló ruined and the local population dispersed, seeking refuge in the North. At that time, Turks built an oriental town and settled the Serb population. Once the Turks were expelled from Hungary at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the monarchy intensively rebuilt the town. Some 150 Roman Catholic Hungarian families settled in Doroszló in 1752. At that time, most inhabitants relied on fishing, but they soon turned towards agriculture. The local families sent their children to school in Szabadka, Szeged, Pécs and Pest. Most of those students would not return, but rather stay in larger cities where they would find better employment and economic opportunities. A church dedicated to St. Imre was erected in Doroszló in 1803.

Bácska was a part of Hungary for over one thousand years until December 1918, when it was occupied by the Serbian army at the end of the WW I. This marked the beginning of the history of Doroszló in Serbian hands. A number of local Hungarians then moved (or were expelled by the Serbian authorities) to the Republic of Hungary.

In April 1941, Doroszló, together with the rest of the Bácska, was re-incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary. The town did not suffer much material damage during the war years, yet some men of Doroszló died fighting in the Hungarian army. In the fall of 1944, following the end of the German occupation of Bácska, Serbian partisans and the Red Army retaliated heavily on Hungarian civilians in Bácska. The ethnic Hungarians of Doroszló were not spared. Many elders, wounded, the Roman Catholic clergy, women and children fell victim to their revenge.

Today, a Hungarian-language Elementary School (Sándor Petőfi) and The Hungarian Cultural Society (Zsigmond Móricz) are active in Doroszló. VIFO, The Youth Forum of Vojvodina,

takes care of the Hungarian theatre and drama, modern dance classes, language and art courses, and music and folklore classes for the locals. Students usually travel to other larger towns for higher education.

THE HOLY MOTHER MIRACLE FOUNTAIN SHRINE

The miracle fountain shrine of Bajkút, now known as Szentkút (the Holy Well), close to Doroszló has been known since the Middle Ages. A thirteenth century monastery was built not far away from Doroszló in memory of the martyr St. Lőrinc. This monastery was the property of nuns, and remained so until the sixteenth century Ottoman Turkish conquests. A document



The Miracle Fountain Shrine

from 1313 also mentions the existence of a fountain with miraculous powers. According to the legend, the Holy Mother has appeared at the fountain several times and she asked God to give healing powers to the water of the well. Many miraculous events have been linked with Szentkút, and many believers, including the blind and the crippled, regularly visit the shrine, collect the holy water and pray for blessing, recovery and peace of mind. The first chapel in honour of the Virgin Mary was built in 1796 and has since been rebuilt and enlarged into the present church. The Madonna of Doroszló, a beautiful sculpture of the Holy Mother was erected near the well in 1861. A large open-air altar, decorated with numerous beautiful frescos by Lajos Horváth, is attached to the outside of the church - one of these paintings describes the miracle of the forty year-old blind gentleman János

Zabloczky, who regained his eyesight back after having his eyes washed with the holy water in 1792. Since then, the priests of Doroszló claim that they witnessed many successful healings. This beautifully located Roman Catholic pilgrimage site, attracts Christian (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Evangelical) pilgrims and tourists from many different countries. Due to its holy water, its history and beautiful location, Doroszló offers ideal conditions for peaceful contemplation and prayers, encouraging believers to come back often for the powerful experience of a truly holy place.

RE DI QUAGLIE

The arrival of the Italian Count Piero Arvedi d'Emilei in Doroszló in 1999 turned out to be a spectacular event for the town - a rich Italian aristocrat, fascinated by Doroszló, its people and the natural beauty was rather unique. He decided to

purchase large properties and turn the area into a rich agrotourist attraction. Count Arvedi d'Emilei named his newly bought property complex Re di Quaglie (the Royal Quail) in honour of the rich bird colonies specific to this area. He had the old buildings renovated and turned into guest hotels, built sport playgrounds, swimming pools, horse stables and developed vineyards. The modern Lipizzaner stud farm is based on six stock lines originating from the finest lines of stallions: Conversano, Napolitano, Pluto, Favory, Maestoso and Siglavy. His concept brings thousands of European tourists and hunters to Doroszló each year. I must add that many people of Doroszló did not agree with (and still do not approve of) the hunting aspect, but on the positive side, many locals appreciate the fact that Count Arvedi d'Emilei did his best to preserve the authentic Austro-Hungarian architecture, local culture, traditions and folklore as much as possible, within his newly restored complex. He also purchased second hand traditional furniture (including the beautiful old Austro-Hungarian ceramic tile fireplaces) from the locals and used them to furnish his guest rooms.

Each year, Count Piero Arvedi d'Emilei welcomes an art colony to his property. This traditional event, sponsored by the Italian government through the Italian embassy in Belgrade, gives an opportunity for many painters from Serbia and other European countries to get together for a few weeks to enjoy the ideal peace and quiet, and to socialize while painting their masterpieces. Most of the paintings are, in the end, are auctioned for charities, left in Doroszló or simply given away.

CHRISTMAS IN DOROSZLÓ, BAJKÚT, AND RE DI QUAGLIE

My friend Norbert Greck, a student from Újvidék, often told us stories of his grandparents' beautiful old house just outside Doroszló, in Bácska. Norbert's grandfather, a painter, purchased an old *tanya* (a traditional Hungarian farmhouse in the countryside) in the early 1960s from a local peasant family, and turned it into his studio and weekend quiet oasis. In 1990, Norbert invited Klára and I to join him and three other friends in celebrating the Christmas holidays together at that old house near Doroszló. That Christmas will always remain in my fondest memories.

After a forty minute of drive from Újvidék to Doroszló, and fifteen minutes off the highway via a country road, we finally reached the house. Everyone was stunned at the first sight of it. From the outside, it looked like an ordinary old country house, but inside were unusually high ceilings, large

rooms, with all of the walls being fresco-painted by Norbert's grandfather, the furniture was antique, and his grandfather also owned a huge collection of musical instruments, enough to supply an entire orchestra.

For years, I had been hearing from my grandparents of their Christmas and New Year celebrations during the years of their youth in the 1930s in Bácska and Slavonia, long before communism. They would always tell us stories that seemed so distant, so far away, almost like a fairytale, yet so loving and unforgettable – the way my grandmother told them gave them a freshness each time, as she would always add a new little detail, never mentioned before. But with us, this was not a real traditional Hungarian Christmas. In my case, for example, even my grandparents came from urban multicultural families, not from Hungarian folk culture. In Délvidék (Vojvodina, today in Serbia), you do not go to cities like Szabadka, Pancsova or Újvidék to experience a traditional Hungarian Christmas. You would rather go to a village where Székely Hungarians live – like Székelykeve, Hertelendyfalva, Muszla or Sándoregyháza in the Bánát, where some Székely traditions are still alive. I must mention that it is thanks to the Székelys of Erdély (Transylvania, today in Romania) that most of the original Hungarian culture and folklore are preserved for us, and for future generations.

With us, it was a little bit different. This bunch of young, modern university students, who all grew up in Tito's Yugoslavia, got together on the Christmas Eve, 1990 trying to celebrate a fun holiday season just like our grandparents once did. We brought to Doroszló some delicious Hungarian treats that our mothers or grandmothers had prepared. Norbert's parents gave us a very nice tall Christmas tree, the fantastic smell of which I can still remember. The wood logs were neatly piled up next to the large fireplace before we arrived. We peeled a few mandarin oranges and left the peels next to the fire, to release the smell, just like I did at my grandparent's house when I was child. We sat around the fire and just watched it for a while. Then we sang together while we decorated the tree (we even had real *szaloncukor*), later went to the local Roman Catholic church for Mass and spent a few hours that night just walking in deep snow with Norbert's dogs. The next morning, on Christmas Day, we went sleigh riding in the forest. Norbert rented an eighty-year old horse-drawn sleigh from a local farmer who agreed to be our guide for a little fee. His giant black horses were stunningly beautiful. The entire experience was just so unreal. This was truly an extraordinary Christmas experience for all of us. ❀



Children of Doroszló

...Book Review continued from page 7

of idea about Hungarian culture and literature.

Fortunately, Petőfi's long narrative poem, *János Vitéz* is now available in English translation by the British-American scholar John Ridland under the title *John the Valiant*. It is in fact a wonderful translation that is able to stay true to the original meaning, symbols and folklore of Petőfi's poem even if the meter and rhyme scheme have to adapt to the conventions of the English language. In his introduction Ridland himself explains those necessary changes he made: "to loosen my initially strict iambic tetrameter to the present anapestic tetrameter that corresponds more closely to the four-beat, twelve-syllable alexandrines of the original poem." In this bilingual edition the reader can follow the Hungarian text on the left and the English translation on the right side of the page.

Ridland's "Biographical Note" at the end and George Szirtes's "Foreword" at beginning of the book, further provide the reader with valuable information about Petőfi, his era, and his work at hand. We learn that Petőfi published his first volume of poetry when he was 21 years old in 1844 with such mentors' help as Mór Jókai and Mihály Vörösmarty. This was followed by another volume in 1845, and verses, letters and a novel published in various magazines and other volumes, all amounting to an astonishing output considering his short life. As Szirtes explains, "His collected poems, printed in small type, on onion-skin paper, runs to just short of a thousand pages...If he had lived another twenty-six years he would have burst."

Petőfi came from a lower middle-class family with a Slovakian mother and a Serbian-descent father in the Hungarian plains (*Alföld*), hence his original name as Alexander Petrovics which he changed to Sándor Petőfi in adulthood. He attended excellent schools until his family's business went bankrupt, and then he ran off with a theatre company. Drinking and partying excessively, Petőfi had had a fair share of life-experience already in his adolescence. But it was in Pest where he finally found his lucky star. As the legend goes, in the winter of 1844 he walked from Debrecen to Pest (about 200 km) in search of a publisher for his poems. There he settled down in Pest and worked for Imre Vahot's magazine, *Pest Vogue*, as a sub-editor, fell in love with Etelka Csapó who died shortly after their encounter, descended into misanthropy and became disgusted with the decadent life-style of Pest.

Hoping to heal his pessimism he set out on a study-journey across the country. He not only gained insight into the everyday lives of country folk, but he also met his future wife in Transylvania who inspired many of his most beautiful love poems. Petőfi and Júlia Szendrey returned to Pest just in time to witness the weeks leading up to the revolution.

When the 22 year-old Petőfi finished writing *János Vitéz* (over just a few weeks) in December 1844 and January 1845, while drinking lots of red wine, smoking a pipe and almost starving, he could not have foreseen what an impact his epic poem would have within his life time and for ensuing generations of Hungarians. The building where he wrote this poem is now the Hotel Astoria on Kossuth Lajos Street in downtown Pest, and it displays a humble plaque on its façade indicating Petőfi's ghost. *János Vitéz* was, and has been an integral part of "...home, country, motherland, Hungary, or Magyarország" argues Szirtes; "in fact the two were practically interchangeable." Does *János Vitéz*, then in turn, mean nation and nationalism, too? In teaching *János Vitéz*'s English language version, *John the Valiant*, to the second year students it dawned on me

that I could not evade the idea of nationalism. When I first read *János Vitéz* in grade five (or it might have been grade six), I do not recall reading it as a symbol for Hungary. In fact, I remember reading it as a love story between a poor country boy and girl, and of overcoming hardship.

I remember the underlying humour and sarcasm that our teacher helped us also discover in the poem. Petőfi wanted to poke fun at and mock the then fashionable, indulgent, romantic style by overemphasizing those elements in his poem. Indeed, critics were puzzled by *János Vitéz* and could not make sense of it for their time's conventions. We all cheered for Kukorica Jancsi when he put up a fight with Iluska's wicked step-mother, when he joined the Hussars who set out to protect the French king against the Turks, when Jancsi wished upon a falling star, when now as John the Valiant, he fought the Giants and Witches and came out triumphant in Fairyland, uniting with Iluska in the end. These are elements of folk and classical literature that traditionally represent the "bad" so that the "good" can be sharply contrasted. János is good, so are Iluska, the Hussars, the French King, the Griffin bird, and the potter.

But somehow these basic elements of a traditional tale do not chime with young people today. Fighting the Turks seemed politically incorrect for most of my Canadian university students because it portrayed Hungarians as nationalistic. They saw John's brave acts and trials as anti-heroic or almost villainous. Their interpretations alarmed me and I asked myself where I might have gone wrong in conveying Petőfi's most revered poem? In an email, I posed the following question to my childhood best friend, Kata Lányi in Hungary, who teaches literature to grade fivers: how could I re-interpret *John the Valiant*? Coincidentally, she too was teaching it to her Hungarian students at the same time and said that she had never thought of it as nationalistic and the idea did not come up in her class. Her response reassured me, yet it was too late - I could not retract the idea of Hungarian nationalism from my students. It also made me realize that teaching Hungarian literature today in English translation necessitates a new or different kind of methodological approach that can contextualize history and its links with literature more relevant to Canadian students.

As another Hungarian childhood friend, Gerzson Péter Kovács in another email suggested, *János Vitéz* is the archetypal hero, or the cool bad-guy after whom the character of James Bond must have been created. Bond, just like János, fights evil and has a bagful of tricks to carry out his actions. Yet, Agent 007 is accepted as the hero *par excellence* while John the Valiant, according to my students, may not deserve his knightly title. He is too nationalistic.

János Vitéz remains a symbol of a hero who fights for love and truth (where truth is not equated with xenophobia), for Hungarians. Canadians are wary about nationalism, (unless we are talking about hockey). And perhaps that is good. Nationalism seems more endemic than ever before with new borders separating newly formed countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. If homogeneity comes in the guise of globalism, nationalism is no less weak in our daily reality and imagination. But being Hungarian inside and outside of Hungary ought not depend on, or gain expression through nationalism.

What *John the Valiant* can teach us is seeing ourselves through someone else's eyes. I am thankful to my students for being so sincere and helping me see Petőfi's long poem through theirs. 🍀

WHO ARE WE ANYWAY?

Part IV

Having titillated your imagination with the origins of the Magyar language and explored our connection with Attila the Hun, in this fourth instalment of the NHV's ancient history series, we now turn our focus to the Magyar people themselves during the pre-Conquest period.

In my quest for information pertaining to the early history of the Magyars, I came across a fascinating book called *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History* by András Róna-Tas. Given the dearth of information on this period, at least in regard to the Magyars, particularly in English-language sources (as I have mentioned before, almost all histories of the Magyars begin around the time of the Conquest of the Carpathians), I relied exclusively on Róna-Tas for my edification. One always has to remain somewhat critical of what one reads, particularly given the over-the-top patriotism Hungarians are known for, but not being a scholar of Hungarian history or of the early writers of the time, I'm at his mercy. (The book is also eminently more readable than a similar volume I came across, so I chose to stick with this one.) At the very least, Róna-Tas gives plenty of food for thought, and his own scepticism assures me that he is trying to make a legitimate study of the subject.

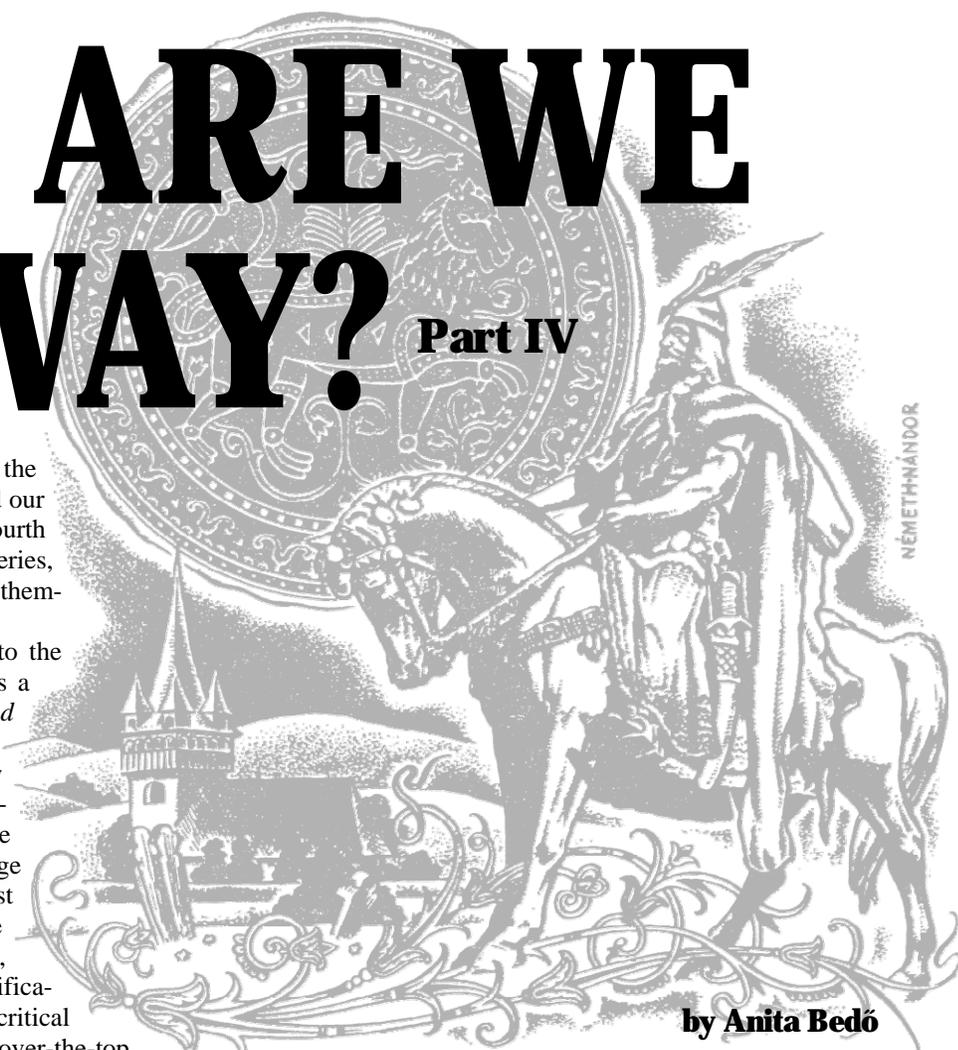
It is not my intention to write a formal book review here, but rather to give you a quick introduction to the complexity of this research and of the variety of the sources Róna-Tas investigated in order to come to his conclusions. In fact, the first 170 pages of the book is an exhaustive exploration of the sources he used in his research in attempting to reconstruct the movements of the Magyars, whom they allied with, what their culture must have been like, what their political organization may have been, and which other cultures and languages influenced their own. He uses a variety of methods taken from linguistics, historiography, archaeology, geology, cultural anthropology—among a litany of other -ologies, -ographies and -istics - to piece together the events of the time.

The ancient history of the Magyars is defined by Róna-Tas as the period from about 500-1000 BC when the Magyars were thought to have originally formed as a people (basically defined as a group of individuals having a common identity), to AD 1000, with the crowning of Saint Stephen (in January of AD 1001), thus marking the beginning of the formal Hungarian state. He begins by setting the scene with geoclimatic summaries of what the terrain might have been like at the time and

even what sort of vegetation may have existed, not just during the time of the Magyars, but thousands of years BC. Much like the current landscape, the landscape of the time was largely grasslands, which provided ideal terrain for nomadic animal husbandry, thus providing for the Magyar culture of equestrianism.

An interesting note about the climate is that, perhaps not surprisingly, it helped to define the language. Similar to how the Inuit have multiple words for snow, given that it is such an intrinsic part of their culture, conversely, the Magyars have only one word for coniferous species of trees (*fenyő*), indicating the lack of these softwoods in their native steppe terrain. Other words would have to have been adopted from other languages used by peoples living in regions where other species were prevalent. Language travels through migration of peoples and connection with other cultures, as long as the item referred to exists in the new locale; otherwise, because there is no need for the word - since the particular plant, doesn't exist there, the word becomes obsolete and disappears. Other examples of words adopted by the Hungarians include the word *narancs* for "orange," which is actually of Indian origin, introduced to magyar through Persian, Arabic, and eventually Italian mediation; and *kőris* (ash), *alma* (apple), and *vadszőlő* (woodbine) are all of Turkic origin.

Róna-Tas goes on to discuss various archaeological periods (e.g. Paleolithic, Neolithic) as a means to assess whom the Magyars' ancestors may have come into contact with, based on the materials they are believed to have possessed, according to



by Anita Bedő

...Who Are We continued from last page

archaeological evidence, and where these materials, such as various metals, were known to have first been utilized. Since the Magyars were nomadic, items such as metals (at least in large quantities) or cultivated foods - particularly those more common, or only available, in other regions - must have been obtained from other peoples through trade or through shifting alliances.

Another significant point about the Neolithic period, characterized by tools made of polished, as opposed to unpolished metals, was that it marked the beginning of a production economy, as opposed to a simple hunter-gatherer type economy, which demanded large territories to sustain small groups of people. In the hunter-gatherer scenario, because people had to forever move around to find resources, it would have been difficult-to-impossible to develop a common identity, language, etc. among larger groups. With production being introduced, larger groups began to congregate, thereby creating larger associations and a greater sense of common identity. While the Neolithic period ended about 1500 years before the Magyars emerged, this explains how a “people” comes to be.

These archaeological periods also help to define when the Magyars started to gain some measure of independence from other ethnicities. As I have noted before, the magyar language is most often classified as Finno-Ugrian. The Finno-Ugrians are believed to have emerged at the time of the appearance of copper, which had been introduced from southern Italy somewhere around 2000 BC. The appearance of bronze, imported from Mesopotamia around 1700 BC, is thought to mark the time at which the Ugrian and Magyar peoples broke away from the Finno-Ugrian family. The formation of the Magyars themselves, Róna-Tas believes, must have been concurrent with the rising importance of iron in the first half of the first millennium BC. Presumably (and this is my own speculation), the availability of this metal allowed the Magyars

to forge their own weapons and other implements, thereby increasing their military strength and reducing their dependence on larger groups for protection and for production of these items.

To put this era into perspective, Róna-Tas attempts to orient these events roughly in relation to other notable happenings: for example, the formation of the Ugrian community took place approximately around the time of the Babylonian Empire, and the Magyars became independent from the Finno-Ugrians at approximately the same time that the Roman Republic emerged, and during the life of Confucius. However, Róna-Tas emphasizes that because the history of the formation of the Magyars is so vague, these assumptions might be off by hundreds of years.

The balance of the book will provide plenty of fodder for exploration, and I’ll get into more detail next time. For example, Róna-Tas plunges into a long survey of written sources from a variety of ethnicities, indicating that they all had contact with, and some measure of (mutual) influence on, the Magyars - works from the Byzantine and Latin empires, and from Slavonic, Iranian, Muslim, Syrian, Armenian, Georgian, Turkic, Tibetan, Chinese, and Hebrew sources. Lo and behold, he even threw in some Hungarian sources. From this quagmire of data, Róna-Tas delves into an analysis, some of which is definitive and much of which is speculative, on who were the Magyars themselves, and who were their relatives and neighbours, allies and enemies. Finally, he follows the Magyars’ movements during the Conquest from their assumed original homeland in the region of the Ural Mountains to the Carpathian Basin, gives us a cultural overview of what this society looked like by the time it arrived in its final location, and briefly reviews their integration with the rest of Europe. A journey of 500 years in 500 pages!

As you can see, we’ll have plenty to talk about in subsequent issues of the NHV. This has been but a mere taste of the intriguing road ahead. 🍷

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...Folktale continued from page 8

The old soldier climbed up into the throne and sat. When the devils came home, they saw the soldier sitting in the throne and shouted, “How dare you sit on this throne? Be gone with you before we teach you a lesson!”

But the old soldier said, “I am not leaving until you light up this city.”

When the devils rushed toward him to give him a good thrashing, the old soldier commissioned his club, “Hit them, cut them, but not your father! And knock out the devil king’s two molars!”

When the club knocked out the devil king’s two molars, the soldier picked them up, and said to the devils, “Now get out of this city and don’t ever come back. If I ever see you again, I will go to the deepest depths of hell, and there I will beat you even worse!”

The devils begged him, and they promised to give the city back its light and that they would never step foot on this land again.

The old soldier then went into the well-lit palace of the city’s king. The king was watching the sunrise, and this made him very happy. He said to the soldier, “Now that you have given us light, I will give you my daughter to marry and half of my kingdom.”

The old soldier thanked the king gratefully. But then he declined, “I don’t need your kingdom or your daughter. I will take my own road.”

He then said goodbye to the king. He walked and wandered until he found a herd of sheep without a shepherd. He stood in front of them – he was now their shepherd. And the old soldier had with him the ever-full haversack, the ever-full canteen and the ever-burning pipe. 🍷

Bandi, possibly the only known Hungarian Army Jewish combat soldier of the Second World War, poses with his CO, Lt. György Vali, a highly decorated Russian Front veteran, on top of a knocked-out Soviet T-34 tank.



...Bandi's Story continued from page 5

menced. The most glaring anomaly was Bandi's recollection of being promoted to officer rank – something he adamantly stands by to this day. He remembers being promoted in the field on the Russian Front, however, no documentation can be found. He certainly was there, his dog-tag papers exist, his unit is known, and he has 146 personal photos that are irrefutable evidence of his participation. The photos show him with a side-arm and performing tasks that would indicate responsibility and leadership – he is, without a doubt, a highly intelligent and educated gentleman. Anti-Jewish laws at that time stripped the rights from Jewish-Hungarians, and Jews were not allowed to become army officers – in fact, the ranks of considerable numbers of Jewish officers and soldiers (many of whom were WW I veterans), were taken away as well. The fact that Bandi was even in the army at that time, with the word “Jewish” on his ID papers – a soldier fighting alongside German troops – is mystifying.

Prior to his service in the army, he served in a labour unit, as many of his fellow Jewish-Hungarians did (the fact that he was later transferred into the

regular army may even be unprecedented). His labour service, however, is also highly unusual. He and his comrades wear peculiar uniforms and interact freely with high ranking Hungarian army officers. Careful examination of his 47 photographs from that time revealed that one of the officers was a famous First World War artillery lieutenant, lawyer and champion of Jewish-Hungarian rights – Dr. Géza Ribáry, who appears in no less than 12 candid snapshots from Bandi's family albums. Here too, we see Bandi executing tasks far more significant than a simple soldier or labourer would be expected to perform.

After 1941, it would have been impossible for Jewish-Hungarians to have been allowed any roles in the army, or in other fields or services, for that matter; and it is most likely that Bandi lived as a civilian again for a few years. It was in 1944, when the Arrow Cross, or Hungarian Nazis, came to power, when Bandi again put on a uniform. His impressive portrait as an officer appears at the beginning of this article, complete with his array of medals – his military participation would have easily qualified him for the awards, but Jewish-Hungarians weren't allowed those either

– even their Hungarian citizenship was taken from them.

Today, Bandi remembers little about the resistance, but a few documents still exist to prove his significant participation. I have a feeling that it was his role as a fighter and leader in those dark days that might have been even more significant than his time on the frontline – they certainly would have been more dangerous for him. A Jewish-Hungarian resistance fighter caught in the act in a Hungarian army uniform would have been executed on the spot. I am sure that anti-Semitism followed Bandi to Australia too, so consequently he made very little of his activities near the end of the war.

Bandi's Story is far from being truly finished – there is still a lot to learn, and it is my hope that bringing it to light might help in uncovering more evidence and recollections. Ever since I was a boy, I was drawn to old soldiers and I used to demand to hear their stories as far back as I can remember – and over the years I have had the pleasure to meet a great many brave fighters. Even with a few pieces of the puzzle still missing, I am certain that there haven't been any quite as inspiring as Bandi's Story. 🍷

Champion of Jewish-Hungarian rights Lieutenant Dr. Géza Ribáry addresses a unit of Hungarian labour troops, standing at attention somewhere in Hungary, around 1940. Behind him, with another officer, is Endre Hitesi. The true extent of Bandi's mysterious military career remains, for now, unknown.



The Urban Fakanál*

by Mária Vajna

HUNGARIAN LEBBENCs SOUP

Ingredients:

200 g/7oz. square pasta
30 g/1 oz. smoked bacon
500g/1 ¼ lb. potatoes
1 small onion
1 tbs. slightly hot paprika
1 small bunch parsley
1 green or yellow pepper
1 tomato
Salt

Method for best results

Dice the bacon into a large pan and fry until the fat melts. Add the pasta and fry until slightly browned. Then add finely chopped onion and sprinkle with paprika. Pour in approximately 1½ litres of water, and then add the potato, peeled and cut into cubes, season to taste with salt. Cover with a lid and cook over medium heat until the pasta is done. When serving, add the cored and finely chopped pepper, the sliced tomato and the chopped parsley. A few slices of smoked paprika sausage will enhance the flavour.

In George Lang's *The Cuisine of Hungary*, he states: "A delicious and inexpensive soup. You can actually make this with any kind of pasta in a pinch, but the unique homemade *lebbencs* pasta that gives the soup its name are well worth the slight extra effort. This soup makes a complete meal with a loaf of good bread.

The noodles can be made up to a day in advance." If you are lazy, good-quality store-bought kluski-type noodles make a reasonable substitute.

**Fakanál is Hungarian for wooden spoon. It's an essential word for your gastronomic vocabulary, and can also serve as a very naughty sounding expletive for you to use on your non-Hungarian speaking guests.*



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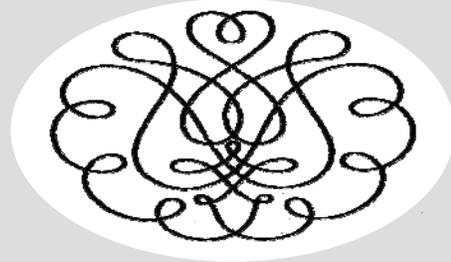
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JANUARY JANUÁR

Sunday Vasárnap	Monday Hétfő	Tuesday Kedd	Wednesday Szerda	Thursday Csütörtök	Friday Péntek	Saturday Szombat
				1 Fruzsina	2 Ábel	3 Genovéva
4 Titusz Leonal	5 Simon	6 Boldizsár	7 Attila Ramóna	8 Gyöngyvér	9 Marcell	10 Melánia
11 Ágota	12 Ernő	13 Veronika	14 Bódog	15 Lóránt Loránd	16 Gusztáv	17 Antal
18 Piroska	19 Sára Márió	20 Fabián Sebestyén	21 Ágnes	22 Vince	23 Rajmund Zelma	24 Timót
25 Pál	26 Vanda	27 Angelika	28 Károly	29 Adél	30 Gerda Marlína	31 Marcella

February 4, 2009
Movie Night
**Freedom's Fury and
 Touched by Water**
Pacific Cinémathèque
Vancouver, BC
 (see page 12 for details)

March 15
1848 Revolution Day
 Each year on this day,
 the Hungarian tricolors of
 red, white, and green are
 prominently displayed all
 over the country

March 20, 2009
Literary Night
(Budapest Chronicles II)
Cuppa Joe Coffee
Vancouver, BC
 (see page 16 for details)

*"Name-days are very
 popularly celebrated in
 Hungary, often as much
 as a person's birthday.
 A woman is typically given
 flowers on her name-day
 by acquaintances, including
 friends in the workplace,
 causing the price of flowers
 to rise around the dates
 of popular names."*

*This calendar page,
 complete with the
 unique Hungarian
 Name-days, or
 névnapok, is
 sponsored by the
 Hungarian-Canadian
 Cultural Alliance*

FEBRUARY FEBRUÁR

Sunday Vasárnap	Monday Hétfő	Tuesday Kedd	Wednesday Szerda	Thursday Csütörtök	Friday Péntek	Saturday Szombat
1 Ignác	2 Karolina Aida	3 Balázs	4 <i>Movie Night</i> Ráhel Csenge	5 Ágota Ingrid	6 Dorolya Dóra	7 Tódor Rómeó
8 Aranka	9 Abigél Alex	10 Elvira	11 Bertold Marietta	12 Líva Lídia	13 Ella Linda	14 Bálint Valentín
15 Kolos Georgina	16 Julianna Lilla	17 Donát	18 Bernadett	19 Zsuzsanna	20 Aladár Álmos	21 Eleonóra
22 Gerzson	23 Alfréd	24 Szökőnap	25 Mátyás	26 Géza	27 Edina	28 Ákos Bátor

MARCH MÁRCIUS

Sunday Vasárnap	Monday Hétfő	Tuesday Kedd	Wednesday Szerda	Thursday Csütörtök	Friday Péntek	Saturday Szombat
1 Albin	2 Lujza	3 Kornélia	4 Kázmér	5 Adorján Adrián	6 Leonóra Inez	7 Tamás
8 Zoltán	9 Franciska Fanni	10 Ildikó	11 Szilárd	12 Gergely	13 Krisztián Ajtony	14 Matild
15 Kristóf	16 Henrietta	17 Gertrúd Patrik	18 Sándor Ede	19 József Bánk	20 <i>Literary Night</i> Klaudia	21 Benedek
22 Beáta Izolda	23 Emőke	24 Gábor Karína	25 Irén Írisz	26 Emánuel	27 Hajnalka	28 Gedeon Johanna
29 Augusta	30 Zalán	31 Árpád				