

Press Communiqué, 6 September 2005

Information and photographs available from:

Dita Hasalová, CzechMania

Tel: 731 467 718

E mail: hasalova@czechmania.com

The project "*100 Icons of Czech Design and Style*" is being presented at an original exhibition in Prague as part of the Designblok Festival.

Škoda Auto, the project's General Partner, presents the Czech première of the exhibition:

CZECH 100

100 Icons of Czech Design and Style

Patron: the Lord Mayor of Prague, Dr Pavel Bém.

Venue: Baťa Department Store, 4 – 20 October 2005
Wenceslas Square 6, Prague 1

Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 9am – 9pm; Sat: 9am – 8pm; Sun: 10am – 8pm.
Information on: www.czech100.com

Czech 100 is an exhibition that maps the Czech lifestyle over the past one hundred years with considerable detachment, humour and pride.

The exhibition consists of **100 icons**, representing **major achievements in the field of design and lifestyle** from Cubism to the present day, ranging from **furniture, china, lighting, toys, graphic design, automobiles and domestic appliances to animated films**. Many of the featured objects played a significant role in the everyday life of the Czech household.

In October 2005 the exhibition will be displayed **in the very centre of Prague**. One hundred representative items from the past hundred years – many of them literally cult objects – will be displayed from 4 to 20 October in the **Baťa Department Store on Wenceslas Square, i.e. actually inside one of the Czech 100 icons**. The exhibition will be accompanied by an outdoor installation of vintage cars on the Můstek pedestrian zone.

The selection process, which was by means easy, and frequently gave rise to noisy debate, involved leading figures from the Czech arts world, including designers, gallery owners, art dealers, curators and journalists.

An entertaining exhibition catalogue will guide the readers through the Czech lifestyle of the 20th century

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1. The project

Organiser: CzechMania
Concept: Tomáš Zykán
Curators: Tereza Bruthansová, PhD
with Jan Králíček MA on behalf of CzechMania

Information: www.czech100.com



The Czech 100 project comprises the travelling exhibition and accompanying book of the same name.

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Tomáš Zykán, who conceived the exhibition, said the following:

“We have tried to put together a hit parade of the best of Czech design and show the breadth of its range. We wanted our selection to be both representative and playful, to entertain but also to reveal other associations. Although our perspective is essentially historical, our selection is intended to publicise the present generation of designers and assist their future careers in a globalised world.”

The project’s curators Tereza Bruthansová and Jan Králíček said the following about the preparations for Czech 100:

“When Tomáš Zykán of CzechMania asked us to collaborate on this project, we knew at the outset that we wanted to approach it seriously and light-heartedly at one and the same time. We therefore tried to view the Czechs’ lifestyle over the past hundred years with a certain detachment and humour.

“Yet in the course of organising it we often had a definite sense of pride. We certainly had nothing to be ashamed of. We can take pride in a whole number of timeless designs and world patents. The Tatra 77 car, the Mole cartoon series and soft contact lenses all originated here. The Czechoslovak Pavilion at the Brussels Exhibition of 1958 broke records with the number of prizes it received. The world can envy us architectural Cubism and our applied arts in the form of fantastic glass objects or striking graphic designs.

“When it came to selecting 100 icons we were assisted by leading figures of the Czech art world, including designers, gallery owners, art dealers, curators and journalists, among them Jan Němeček and Michal Froněk of the Olgoj Chorchoj studio, Jiří Pelcl, Rector of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design and Janek Jaros, owner Prague’s Modernista gallery. They accomplished honourably that far from easy task. And we make no secret of the fact that the process often involved impassioned debate, so that sometimes we had to resort to a vote.”

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2. The exhibition:

Title: Czech 100
Curators: Tereza Bruthansová, Jan Králíček and Czechmania
Installation: Hippos Studio

Venue: Baťa Department Store, 4 – 20. October 2005
Wenceslas Square 6, Prague 1

Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 9am – 9pm; Sat: 9am – 8pm; Sun: 10am – 8pm.
Information on: www.czech100.com

Following its première at the Berlin Design Festival in May and a showing in Bratislava, the exhibition will go on display **as an impressive installation in the very centre of Prague** in conjunction with the Prague Designblok festival.

One hundred representative items from the past hundred years – many of them literally cult objects – will be displayed from 4 to 20 October in the **Baťa Department Store on Wenceslas Square, one of the Czech 100 icons** – icon No.19 – the functionalist building designed by the architect Ludvík Kysela in 1927. The exhibition will be accompanied by an outdoor installation of vintage cars on the Můstek pedestrian zone.

"We are pleased that we were able to install the exhibition in the Baťa store, which is also one of the exhibits," says Radim Babák of Hippos Design Studio and he adds: "Design is part of everyday life, which suits it better than a museum."

The exhibition will also have an interactive dimension: visitors will be asked **to choose their favourite icons**. The public will therefore have an opportunity to say what they consider to be the best examples of Czech design.

There will be plenty to choose from. The icons of Czech design range from the legendary Tatra 77 car of 1934 to the latest Škoda Roomster, from avant-garde graphics to the present-day cult magazines Blok and Živel, from Modernist toys to the Mole cartoon films, and from the Prague Metro to jewellery or the Kofila chocolate wrapper.

The exhibition's **high point** will be an **open-air display of exhibits at Můstek from 7 to 13 October**. They will include vintage cars and motorcycles, and the design studies for the new Škoda Yeti car will be exhibited for the first time.

Thomas Ingenlath, chief designer for Škoda Auto, says the following about his work with the project:

"Cars of the Škoda brand, which celebrates its hundredth anniversary this year, are a significant part of Czech design. They are common feature of street scenery and have influenced the Czech lifestyle for an entire century already. Their design reflects social developments and the evolution of the creative spirit."

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3. Supporting programme of the exhibition

The supporting programme at the cinema of the National Technical Museum is a combination of Czech documentary and cult films.

The films will include the unique documentaries *Vzpomínám, Vzpomínáš, Vzpomínáte* (1996), *Styl 60* and *Expo 1958*, as well as art films such as *Florenc 13.30* (1957), *Ikarie XB1* (1963), *Ukradená vzducholod'* (1967) and *Český sen* (2004). There will also be afternoon screenings of Czech animated films for children.

4. The Czech 100 project touring Europe

Czech 100 is being displayed successively in several European cities

Czech 100 is a travelling exhibition, which has already been shown in Berlin and Bratislava and will travel from Prague to Stockholm, Brighton, Milan and several other European cities.

In a recent review the Financial Times stated *inter alia*:

Who would have thought that design could act as such an entertaining guide to a country's economic, political and social fortunes? Yet an exhibition [Czech 100] shows that – in the case of the Czech Republic at least – it can.

Clare Dowdy, Financial Times, 11 May 2005

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5. The book

Title: Czech 100 Design Icons
Authors: Tereza Bruthansová and Jan Králíček
Graphic design: Zuzana Lednická and Aleš Najbrt (Studio Najbrt)
Publisher: CzechMania

An entertaining exhibition catalogue will guide the readers through the Czech lifestyle of the 20th century.

Copiously illustrated and with a text in Czech, German and English, it will be presented to the public during the Prague exhibition and go on general sale immediately afterwards.



The book's authors had the following to say about their concept:

"The book is intended as an entertaining manual of Czech design and lifestyle from Cubism to the present. We've tried to include a maximum of essential data and background information while making the style as easy to read as possible.

"Thanks partly to its light-hearted graphics, this is a publication you can flip through to get a glimpse of our past and our present, but it can also be also for more serious study, because it provides unique reference material. We divided the icons up into several chapters covering specific periods and at the head of each section is the most characteristic woman's face for that period, and a visual background reflecting the architecture, fashion and films of the times, as well as social and political events.

"Each chapter also features three of the main designers of the period. In a way Czech 100 Design Icons is a fascinating 'encyclopaedia' aimed at the widest possible public."

**The book will be on sale from October in all main bookshops and on www.kosmas.cz.
Details can be found on: www.czech100.com**

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- Concept:** Tomáš Zykán, CzechMania
- Curators and authors of texts:** Tereza Bruthansová and Jan Králíček
- Expert panel:** Jiří Svestka, gallery owner; Janek Jaros, owner of the Modernista gallery; Jiří Pelcl, Rector of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Jan Němeček and Michal Froněk, studio Olgoj Chorchoj, Dagmar Koudelková, Design Centre of the Czech Republic, Jana Semerádová and Jiří Macek, DesignBlok
- Architectural design:** Ondřej Tobola and Radim Babák, Hippos Design
Graphic design: Zuzana Lednická and Aleš Najbrt, Studio Najbrt
Production: Dita Hasalová, CzechMania
- General partner:** Škoda Auto
- Partner of the supporting programme:** National Technical Museum
- Expert partners:** National Technical Museum, Museum of Applied Arts, Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design, Krátký film, Czech National Film Archive, Design Centre of the Czech Republic
- Main sponsors:** Staropramen, Baťa, 3M, CSA Czech Airlines

Exhibition organised by CzechMania, an agency publicizing Czech design abroad
www.czechmania.com

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