

## LUDOVÍT FULLA – PAINTER, GRAPHIC ARTIST AND ILLUSTRATOR



The National Bank of Slovakia is gradually issuing commemorative coins devoted also to important anniversaries of leading personalities in Slovak modern art. In 1994, a commemorative silver coin was issued for the centenary of the birth of Janko Alexy, in 1995 for the centenary of the birth of Mikuláš Galanda, and now another commemorating the centenary of the birth of Ludovít Fulla is being prepared.

Ludovít Fulla (27.2.1902 – 21.4.1980) – painter, graphic artist, illustrator, stage designer and art teacher – is one of the most important figures of Slovak creative art in the 20th century. His creative work was fundamentally important for constituting Slovak Modernism. His personal style is characterized by a special poetry of the image relying on surface and decoration, a synthesis of rational and emotional elements, brilliant colour, knowledge of folk art, East Slavonic iconography and world Modernism. He participated in many international exhibitions and significantly contributed to the presentation of Slovak art. He won various domestic and international prizes. His picture „Song and Work“ won the Grand Prix at the 1937 World Exhibition in Paris, and a tapestry based on it won the gold medal at the EXPO 58 world exhibition in Brussels. He also achieved international success as the creator of avant-garde stage designs and book illustrations for children and young people. He donated a large collection of his works to the state. They are kept in the Ludovít Fulla Gallery at Ružomberok, part of the Slovak National Gallery.

In April 2001 the NBS declared a public competition, conducted anonymously, to design a coin to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Ludovít Fulla. Twelve artists submitted 15 designs for the competition. After assessing the submissions, the expert commission recommended first prize be awarded to the design of the academy artist Emil Fulka, an

artist new to designing coins. His excellent choice of characteristic motifs representing Fulla's drawing and painting, as well as the quality of the portrait, convinced the commission. All the elements used, including the writing, form a balanced composition on the coin's faces. A detail from the picture „Song and Work“ – the motif of a flying flutist occupies the right part of the obverse. In the left part is a sheet entitled „The Black Women“.

A second prize was not awarded in the competition. Three artists won third prize. In the design by Mária Poldaufová, the commission especially appreciated the quality of the obverse with a depiction of a typical Fulla motif – Jánošík on a horse, with successful translation of the impression of colour from the picture to relief. Bc. Peter Ilčík fittingly used decorative two-plane relief with rhythmic alternation of relief surfaces. On the obverse he used the motif of Jánošík on a horse, and on the reverse a portrait supplemented with pieces from Fulla's pictures. In the design by Roman Lugár, the commission positively evaluated his relief work. On the obverse he drew on Fulla's illustrations for Slovak folk tales, while on the reverse he combined a portrait in one alternative with a depiction of Jánošík on a horse, in the second alternative, a motif from a picture of Madonna with angels.

The commemorative 200 Sk coin with a diameter of 34 mm and weight of 20 g is struck from silver with a purity of 750/1000 at the Kremnica Mint. 13,700 coins are being produced, including 2,400 of proof quality. The edge bears the inscription: „LUDOVÍT FULLA – MALIAR – GRAFIK – ILLUSTRÁTOR“ (Ludovít Fulla – painter – graphic artist – illustrator). The beginning and end of the text are divided by a mark in the shape of a painter's palette.

Ing. Dagmar Flaché, photo Ing. Štefan Fröhlich