

COMMEMORATIVE SILVER COIN FOR THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF J. A. SEGNER

COMMEMORATIVE GOLD COIN UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE – BARDEJOV TOWN CONSERVATION RESERVE

The National Bank of Slovakia is preparing two commemorative coins for the end of 2004. One of them is a commemorative silver coin dedicated to Ján Andrej Segner, and the other is a commemorative gold coin with the motif of Bardejov.

Ján Andrej Segner (4th October 1704 Bratislava – 5th October 1777 Halle), a native of Bratislava, doctor of medicine, physicist, mathematician, teacher and inventor, was one of the important representatives of science and technology from the 18th century. He is famous for the invention of the so-called Segner wheel, which is turned by the reactive force of water spraying from bent pipes. The wheel was perfected by his friend Leonard Euler, an important mathematician. The discovery led to the construction of water turbines and later also rockets. Segner's works concerning the shape of the water drop under the influence of the forces in the atmosphere, concave and convex surfaces of liquids and the forces effecting them, and his findings from optics and astronomy, are also noteworthy. He was a successful teacher in the universities of Jena, Göttingen and Halle. His textbooks on physics and mathematics were among the most popular and were published in several editions.

The National Bank of Slovakia declared a public anonymous competition to find the design for the commemorative coin for the 300th anniversary of the birth of J. A. Segner. Nine artists participated with ten designs.

The commission of the governor of the NBS for assessing the designs for Slovak coins recommended production of the design by the Kremnica artist Mária Poldaufová, who designed two already issued Slovak commemorative coins and the relief versions of the reverse sides of the coins with the designs of the Slovak banknotes. Her design, which gained first prize, attracted the commission with its purity of sculptural work, balance of the composition and content of the design on both sides. The Segner wheel is depicted on the obverse, and a high quality portrait appears on the reverse, appropriately supplemented with drawings of the development of the construction of the Segner wheel.

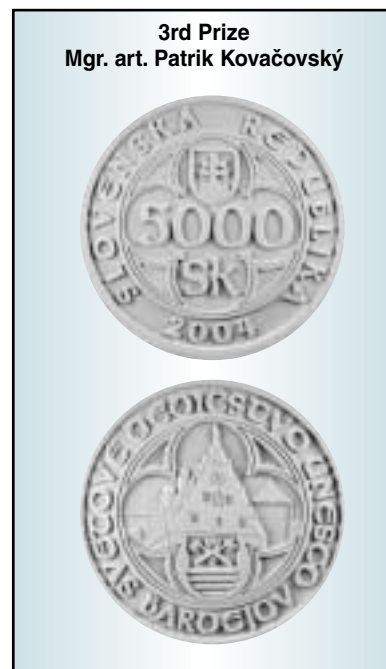
The second prize was awarded to Miroslav Ronai, who placed the Segner wheel on the obverse and an imaginative portrait of J. A. Segner with the gate from the Bratislava city shield on the reverse.

The third prize was awarded to Mgr. art. Patrik Kovačovský. Like the other two artists, he chose the Segner wheel for the obverse. He supplemented the portrait of J. A. Segner on the reverse with elements pointing to his activity as a physicist and astronomer.



The commemorative 200 Sk coin with a diameter of 34 mm and weight of 18 g was struck from silver with a fineness of 900/1000 at the Polish State Mint. 8,000 pieces of standard quality were produced and 3,300 pieces

of proof quality. A maximum limit of 10,000 standard and 5,000 proof pieces is set. The edge bears the inscription „VYNÁLEZCA – FYZIK – MATEMATIK – PEDAGÓG“ (Inventor – Physicist – Mathematician – Teacher).



The issue of a commemorative gold coin for the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage – Bardejov, town conservation reserve, is connected with the commemorative silver coin with the same theme, issued on 30th August 2004. They are dedicated to another of the five Slovak localities included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Bardejov, capital of upper Šariš, is situated in the north-eastern part of Slovakia. Its historic core with impressive architecture forms an important part of the monumental heritage of Slovakia. It was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000.

The main sources of the prosperity of the royal borough were craft and trade supported by royal privileges. The result of the flourishing in the 14th and 15th centuries is a rich secular and religious complex, which still gives the town a medieval character. The town square paved with river cobbles and with burghers' houses of Gothic and Renaissance origin at the sides, has the monumental Parish Church of St. Aegidius on its north side. It is noteworthy for its exceptionally well preserved furniture dominated by eleven Late Gothic winged altars. The second dominant feature of the town square is the townhall. Its architecture is an example of the penetration of the new Early Renaissance style into a Late Gothic form of building.

Twenty one artists submitted 26 entries to the compe-

tion to find a design for the coin. After their evaluation, the expert commission stated that the artistic and content level of the competing works is very good, and the individual artists chose appropriate motifs to express the unique cultural treasures of Bardejov.

The first prize was awarded to the design by Ing. Milan Virčík, one of the most successful designers of Slovak commemorative coins. The design became his ninth coin to be produced. The commission especially liked the realistic expression of the theme from the points of view of the content and composition, as well as the detailed sculptural composition of both sides, which form a compositionally balanced whole. A detail of the facade of the townhall with the Early Renaissance oriel and balustraded stairs is depicted on the obverse. On the reverse is the Church of St. Aegidius, a detail of a Gothic vault and a sculpture of the Prophet Zacharias from the Late Gothic side altar of the Crucifixion.

A second prize was not awarded in the competition. A third prize was awarded to two artists – academic sculptor Michal Gavula and Mgr. art. Patrik Kovačovský.

The design of academic sculptor Michal Gavula was attractive for its interesting composition and harmony between obverse and reverse. On the obverse is a detail of a Late Gothic vault in front of a panorama of the town square with the rows of typical burghers' houses and the townhall as the dominant feature. On the reverse, the

Church of St. Aegidius is placed in the centre of a detail of a Gothic vault.

The design by Mgr. art. Patrik Kovačovský attracts with its pure, balanced and untraditional central composition of the obverse and reverse. On the obverse is a Gothic rosette containing the state shield of the Slovak Republic and the face value of the coin. On the reverse is a detail of the gable of the townhall with the town shield. Appropriately chosen and positioned writing contributes to the artistic composition.

The commemorative coin with a value of 5000 Sk, a diameter of 26 mm and weight of 9.5 g was struck in gold with a fineness of 900/1000 at the Polish state mint in the number of 6,300 pieces, all of proof quality. A limit of a maximum of 9,000 pieces has been set for the issue. The edge of the coin is milled.

Ing. Dagmar Flaché, photo: Ing. Štefan Fröhlich