



# Czechoslovak-American Puppetry

*William Keyes, Milan Knizak Vit Horejs*

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For fifty years, a troupe of antique marionettes were confined to a dusty closet at Jan Hus Church in the heart of New York City's Czech and Slovak neighborhood. In 1984, Vit Horejs brought his puppet show of Czech Fairy Tales there. When he found the hidden trove, he felt he had his work cut out for him: he had to bring the puppets back to the stage and he had to discover their history. The first task resulted in the creation of the Czechoslovak-American Marionette Theatre, which has since performed traditional and not-so-traditional marionette performances in twenty seven states, in Europe and in Asia. This book is the result of years of detective work on the second task. In addition to the lead historical essay about hundred and fifty years of Czech-American puppetry, the book contains William Keyes essay "'We Were-And We Shakk Be:' Puppetry and Czecho-Slovak Politics, 1860-1990," focusing mostly on Milan Getting, a Slovak-American and puppeteer who worked ! tirelessly for the creation, recognition and preservation of Czechoslovakia in the first half of our century. The book is complemented by Milan Knizak's essay "The Marionette Proud and Dignified" devoted to overall history of Czech puppetry and individual puppet carvers. Twenty-four color and twenty black-and-white photographs.

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