

Twists & Turns:

The Story of Sokol



"...to be a Czech should mean to be a Sokol....We must see every man and every woman assembled under our standards and train their bodily vigor and indomitable spirit...for the smaller the nation, the greater activity it must develop in order to remain an active and influential element of humanity..."

- Miroslav Tyrš

An Exhibit in Six Panels

First Panel:

The title panel bears the name of the exhibit and an iconic image of a Sokol athlete.

Second Panel:

In 1862, Miroslav Tyrš and Jindrich Fügner formed a gymnastic club in Prague on the model of the German *Turnverein*. Two separate clubs were initially created: a German *Turnverein*, and the Prague Gymnastic Club (*Pražský tělocvicný spolek*). The Czech club used a falcon (*sokol*) as its symbol and soon came to be known by that name. This panel tells the story of how Sokol began in what was to become Czechoslovakia and how it developed over time.

Third Panel:

While in power, the Nazi regime saw Sokol as a threat to the new national identity it wanted to build. Traditional practices, celebrations and groups were seen as tools for Czechoslovaks to resist Nazi ideals and society. As a result, Sokol was banned, just as it had been during World War I and was again under communism.

Fourth Panel:

This panel describes the Slet – how it was named, how often one occurs, what takes place at one. It describes how Slets changed as politics changed in Czechoslovakia. They disappeared all-together from 1938 to 1948 and were changed into *Spartakiads* during the communist regime.

Fifth Panel:

How and when did Sokol come to the United States? Where were the first Sokol units founded? As Sokol membership steadily rose, it was used as a tool to strengthen Czech and Slovak communities. Fraternal organizations and social clubs provided opportunities to engage in the community as well.

Sixth Panel:

Primarily images, this panel pays homage to Sokol as it exists today.

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Exhibit Rental Information

Twists & Turns: The Story of Sokol is comprised of six retractable panels that tell the story of Sokol's beginning in what became Czechoslovakia, and its subsequent development and expansion. It was banned as a practice during both World Wars and again while communists controlled the state. Czechs and Slovaks brought Sokol with them to the United States where they used it to build and solidify communities that preserved their culture and heritage.

Exhibit Contains:

- 6 panels that retract into a metal base (opened like a roller shade), each housed in a black zippered bag. The opened panels are each 48 x 72 inches in size.
- 2 folded poles hold each panel open (in bag with panel)
- Shipping box containing all panels weighs approximately 100 lbs.

Space Requirements:

- 26.5 linear feet (allowing for 6 inches between each panel). This figure is based upon all six panels being set up in a row, but they can be in any configuration within a space.

Time:

- Duration of exhibit is negotiable

Security:

- Periodic checks of exhibit area
- Open to the public only while there is an attendant in the building

The NCSML traveling exhibition program is generously supported by American Czech Association, Los Angeles and American Sokol Los Angeles.

Procedures for Booking:

The borrower must pay for shipping costs to and from the venue. The NCSML Traveling Exhibit Coordinator will ship via FedEx and send return shipping labels via email once the exact return date has been determined. The Coordinator will also arrange the package pick-up. The NCSML Finance Director will bill the borrower after the exhibit's return to the NCSML.

Setting up the Exhibit:

- Remove metal case (panel rolled within) and two poles from bag
- Place metal case flat on floor
- Straighten bent pole and insert together at the elastic (do this for both)
- Insert both poles into circular slots near either end of the case
- Lift panel and unroll far enough to attach it to the tops of both poles
- Unlatch both poles and raise the rest of the way together (approximately 1.5 to 2 feet, may need two people)
- Latch both poles to lock them in place

Questions about this exhibit?

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