

Upcoming

January 29, 2026, at 6 PM at BNH

SPEJBL and HURVÍNEK in NYC!



Our special event will present the Prague S+H Theater and its beloved marionette duo, **Spejbl and Hurvínek**, whose witty father-son banter has delighted children and adults worldwide for over a century. In 2022, a small glass figurine of Hurvínek was launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket as part of the Czech Planetum1 satellite

mission. Over time, the dialogues also included a subtle yet powerful voice of resistance during times of censorship and persecution. Under the Nazi regime, the theatre was closed and its founder imprisoned. This BNH **performance in Czech** (for all ages) will be followed by a **talk in English** exploring the theater's history against the sociopolitical backdrop of Czechoslovakia from the 1920s to the present day.

Additional performance for children in **Czech only**
January 31 at 12 noon at Czech and Slovak School in Astoria

We recommend



**Czechoslovak-American
Marionette Theatre**

December 26, 2025 - January 11, 2026

**A Christmas Carol, Oy! Hanukkah,
Merry Kwanzaa, Happy Ramadan**

Theater For The New City
151 First Ave2@ E 10th St



January 26, 2026 at 8 pm

**Prague Philharmonia
At Carnegie Hall**

20% discount code PRG53913

www.prgphil.cz/en



Image by Ilona Kohlová

The 6-Minute Challenge, #19

December 16, 2025
Bohemian National Hall
Manhattan

The Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU), New York Chapter, is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization promoting Czech and Slovak intellectual history and heritage through cultural events with the support of the Bohemian Benevolent and Literary Association (BBLA).

Produced by Suzanna Halsey
Moderated by Christopher Harwood

PRESENTERS *(in order of appearance)*

Kristýna and Marek **Milde**

Andréa **Stanislav**

Jarmila **Ptáčková**

James **Števko**

Oliver **Otcasek**

Livia **Blaylock**

Kateřina **Silverblatt**

Peter **Cikhart**

Tamara **Kramar**

Q&A

Wine reception

Please hold your questions until the Q&A, after the last presentation.

The event will be recorded and later posted on our YouTube Channel.

The SVU 6-MINUTE CHALLENGE is a series conceived in 2015 by Suzanna Halsey for SVU New York. Artists, professionals, scholars, students and scientists of Czech and Slovak descent are challenged to present their talent, the subject of their work, project, research or studies in a short presentation limited to six minutes.



Tamara Kramar is a soul-pop singer-songwriter and producer from Bratislava, Slovakia. In 2019, she moved to England to pursue a degree in cognitive neuroscience, and even though she graduated with honours, the only thing her studies have inspired so far is the title of her debut EP, *Bachelor of Science*. This 2022 release received high praise in Slovakia, earning a Radiohead award for Discovery of the Year and a spot on Forbes Slovakia 30 under 30. Slowly building a loyal audience through shows around Slovakia, Czechia and England, Tamara followed up her successful debut with a self-produced mini album called *Make It Poetic*.

Hungry for more inspiration, Tamara relocated to New York City in August 2024 and has since graduated from Berklee NYC with a master's degree in songwriting and production. The first single from her upcoming album came out last month, and the rest is expected early next year!

Interests and Hobbies: yoga, roaming around the city, window shopping, and recently, photography! I like to take pictures of all my talented friends:)

Contact @tamarakramar, www.tamarakramar.com

Special thanks to

Jiří Mírovský, Věra Dvořák and Kim Halsey



JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

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We welcome your comments, suggestions, skills, and/or donations.

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Petr Cikhart is an Emmy-winning cinematographer originally from Prague. He moved to New York in 1995 and Los Angeles in 2010. As a 19-year-old Assistant Director, he covered the war in Chechnya for Czech TV and was held hostage for two days by Russian soldiers. It was his first-ever shoot, and he was hooked. In 2012, he received an MFA in Cinematography from the American Film Institute and subsequently photographed twelve international feature films. Traveling to more than 120 countries, he has made award-winning films like *Blindsight* and *Tamara* and works extensively for networks

like National Geographic and Paramount Plus. In 2007, Petr won his first Prime Time Emmy Award for Outstanding Cinematography for his work on *The Amazing Race*. He has been nominated eleven times. When not behind the camera, Petr looks for balance between the ocean and the mountains, and most recently has been working on a book capturing his adventures.

Interests and hobbies: traveling, surfing and yoga

Contact: www.pcikhart.com



Kateřina Silverblatt was born in Ostrava and grew up in Prague, where she later earned her medical degree from the Second Medical Faculty of Charles University. She moved to the United States in 1996 and completed her pediatric residency at Long Island College Hospital. After training, she joined Dr. Finkelman in a small pediatric private practice, and together they established Heights Pediatrics. Dr. Silverblatt has practiced pediatrics continuously since 2000, guiding Heights Pediatrics' growth into one of Brooklyn's most respected and trusted practices. Known for her

problem-solving approach and her strong ability to form meaningful relationships with families, she has cared for thousands of children for nearly three decades. About ten years ago, she founded an ADHD clinic within the practice, expanding services to support children with ADHD, autism, anxiety, and other mental health needs.

Interests and hobbies: traveling, biking, skiing, reading, and jigsaw puzzles

Contact: silverblatt@heightspediatrics.com



Kristýna and Marek Milde, originally from Prague, are an interdisciplinary artist duo based in Brooklyn. Their collaborative practice spans installation, sculpture, animation, and photography, often contrasting natural and manufactured materials, exploring connections between culture and nature. Kristýna studied painting at Assenza Malschule in Basel, Switzerland, and Marek studied sculpture at Atelier Dodekaeder in Germany. Both

earned MFAs from Queens College, New York, in 2007. Their recent solo exhibition *Call of the Forest* at the prestigious Kunsthalle Praha (2025), marked a milestone in their exploration of urban-ecological interdependence. Their work has been presented internationally at MoMA, the Queens Museum, Hesse Flatow, Smack Mellon, Wave Hill, MoCA Westport, and in Prague's DOX Centre for Contemporary Art, and MeetFactory. They have participated in residencies including Art Omi, ISCP, Queens Museum Studio in the Park, and LMCC Process Space. Their work has been featured in major media and is held in both private and public collections.

Interests and hobbies: hiking, gardening, cooking, playing and exploring with their son

Contact: www.mildeart.com



Andréa Stanislav, a multimedia artist based in NYC, grew up in Chicago's Czech community, with her father's family from Strážnice and Zbiroh, CZ. Stanislav's practice spans sculpture, installation, and public art. She received an MFA from Alfred University and a BFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Stanislav's work has been exhibited and collected internationally at museums, contemporary art centers, galleries, and biennials. Selected solo exhibitions include Mattress Factory Museum of Contemporary Art; Saint Louis Art Museum; Museum of Russian Art, MSP; Minneapolis Institute of Arts; Museum of Non-Conformist Art, SPb, RU; NART, Narva, EST; Gyumri Biennial, Yerevan, ARM, Klenová Museum, CZ; State Hermitage Museum, RU; and Socrates Sculpture Park, NYC. She is the recipient of a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant, NYC; Freund Fellowship, STL; and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Residency. Andréa is also an Associate Professor at Indiana University in Bloomington.

Interests and hobbies: hiking, running, Basenji dog mom

Contact: www.andreastanislav.com



Jarmila Ptáčková is a sinologist and Tibetologist affiliated with the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. She grew up in the area of Mladá Boleslav, and later earned her degree in Chinese studies and a PhD in Tibetan studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Her work concerns research on China's ethnic and development policies and their impact on the population in Tibetan areas of the PRC, on China's frontier policy, and on the Himalayan borderlands. Besides academic research and publishing, Jarmila is engaged in regular public activities aimed at students and the

general public. The major events include the annual Asian music and culture festival against xenophobia, Eastern Tunes, documentary film screenings, public talks and discussions, and commentary on the contemporary situation in China and the Tibetan areas in public media. Jarmila is currently a Fulbright visiting scholar at the Weatherhead Institute of Columbia University in New York.

Interests and hobbies: traveling, reading, hiking

Contact: www.orient.cas.cz, www.honmi.eu, ptackova@orient.cas.cz



James Monroe Števko is a NY-based actor, dancer and choreographer. Having grown up in Chicago, he came to dance late in life after entering college to study music education as a trumpet player. After three short years of dance training, he went on to Milwaukee Ballet. Since then, his other credits include The Metropolitan Opera, The Radio City Christmas Spectacular, The Lyric Opera of Chicago, and work with Broadway directors. His acting debut was in the award-winning Yiddish production of *Fiddler on the Roof* as Mendel, a role that launched him into choreography, staging the show's original Broadway choreography. He is currently applying for

Slovak *Citizenship by Descent* and has been featured in Denník N, Nový Čas, and The Slovak Spectator.

Interests and hobbies: Travel and travelhacking Slovakia, home improvement, and attempting the Slovak Language

Contact : www.jmstevko.com



Oliver Otcasek is an entrepreneur and technologist with Czech family roots and a career centered on artificial intelligence, security, and creative innovation. A graduate of the University of Rochester, he began his work in computer vision and machine learning research before moving into advanced AI roles at Deloitte and IBM. Oliver is now the founder of Swap-Dotz, a company focused on secure authentication and provenance for physical objects using cryptography and NFC, enabling trust and traceability without blockchain. He is also the steward of his father Ric Ocasek's creative legacy, curating unreleased photographs, archival

materials, and new digital projects that honor and expand the artistic footprint of The Cars' frontman. Oliver's projects consistently blend engineering, creativity, and thoughtful preservation.

Interests and hobbies: Collecting vintage cameras and mechanical artifacts, composing, and exploring history and craftsmanship

Contact: IG [@oliverotcasek.com](https://www.instagram.com/oliverotcasek.com)



Livia Blaylock grew up in Trnava, Slovakia, and studied English language and literature alongside philosophy. She began her career as a translator and interpreter and, after moving to New York in 2004, briefly reconnected with her love of books while working as a bookseller. Livia later earned a degree in special education and worked with children with special needs in New York City public schools before transitioning into free-lance behavioral therapy. In her practice, she supports children with developmental disabilities—mainly autism—from underpri-

vileged households. Dedicated to meaningful impact, she empowers parents, caregivers, and children, helping them build the skills and confidence to thrive.

Interests and hobbies: reading, running, hiking, music, the arts, movies, languages, and exploring the world through travel, taking things apart and fixing them to understand better how the world works, and she seeking out new experiences that spark curiosity and growth.

Contact: livia.blaylock@gmail.com