



# The Folk Club

## of Reston-Herndon

### ...Preserving Folk Traditions



Vol 4, No 7, September, 1991

## MUSIC: IN LIFE; IN DEATH

by Dick Moore

What does music mean to you?

Is it simply entertainment? Is it a way of communicating with others who share common interests? Is it part of your spiritual/religious experience? Is it a means to easing some of the pains of life? Is it something of all of these?

For the past several days, I have been wondering about the meaning of music to a man named Pavel Haas.

Haas was born in Czechoslovakia in 1899 and died in 1944, together with many of his religious group. Barbara and I first learned of him on the Fourth-of-July weekend when we attended several Boston Symphony Orchestra presentations at Tanglewood in Lenox, Massachusetts. The irony of Haas' story was particularly poignant, given the implications of the Fourth of July with its symbolism concerning independence and the freedoms of speech, religion, and assembly...and, of course, the pursuit of happiness.

Haas was a composer/musician who was well embarked on an active career by the time Europe entered its period of nightmarish horror in the 1930s. He had been influenced greatly by Slavic and Moravian folk music, just as had been other composers who looked to folk music for their inspiration.

At Tanglewood, we heard the Boston Symphony string section play Haas' *"Study for String Orchestra."* It had first been performed on September 15, 1944 in a Nazi prison camp about 35 miles north of Prague, Czechoslovakia, in an ancient garrison known as Terezin.

The Nazis used Terezin as a kind of gigantic temporary cell to hold prisoners en route to the death camps in Poland. Later on, they manipulated the world's awareness of the cultural life that had developed within the city to deceive the world as to the nature of Hitler's concentration camps.

A substantial number of the prisoners were either professional musicians or well-trained amateurs. The first Jewish prisoners were sent there late in 1941 and,

eventually, the inhabitants included many of the most gifted artists in Europe. At first, the prisoners gave secret concerts in the attics and basements, but these inevitably were discovered by the prison-camp administration ...and then promoted as a means of maintaining order among the prisoners.

Haas was one of the first prisoners sent to Terezin. Shortly before his arrest, he had divorced his non-Jewish wife in order to save her and their daughter from the camps. During nearly three years in captivity, he composed a number of works, although only three of them have survived.

As far as the outside world was concerned, Terezin was a model camp. The Nazis had deceived the world by inviting the International Red Cross to inspect the camp, and in 1944, they "beautified" the city in a superficial way, extending even to the construction of an outdoor concert stage. They even produced a film, purportedly documentary, entitled, *"The Fuhrer Presents the Jews with a City."* This film was supposed to show a performance of Haas' *"Study for String Orchestra."* Haas was shown in the audience evidently pleased with the performance.

All of this was nothing more than a show. The music itself was not performed when the so-called "documentary" was filmed.

Within a month of the actual premier of Haas' work, most of the orchestra members ...and Haas himself ...had perished in the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

We know now that even in 1939, Haas had responded to the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia by composing a number of works in which he embedded the ancient Czech hymn to St. Wenceslas and the traditional Hussite hymn *"Ye Warriors of God."*

So I wonder today what music meant to Haas and his companions. I will never know, but can imagine that it was both a link to his cultural roots and a statement of humanity in a totally inhumane and insane situation.




Somehow, playing the work songs and the gospels of the slaves and their descendants, as well as other folk music rooted in the travails of the common people, will mean something more to me from now on.



# October 1991

## Reston Folk Club





| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY             | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY | SATURDAY                                   |
|---|--|--|-----------------------|---|--------|--|
|   |  | 1<br>7:30pm Folk Club<br><b>Showcase Performance</b>       | 2                     | 3   | 4      | 5<br>Ray Kaminsky at<br>Waterford Festival |
| 6<br>Hickory Grove at<br>Colvin Mill  | 7  | 8<br>Tortilla Factory<br>Private Party - we<br>move to Wed | 9<br>7:30pm Folk Club | 10  | 11     | 12   |
| 13  | 14<br> Columbus Day<br>(Observed)<br>Thanksgiving Day<br>(Canada) | 15<br>7:30pm Folk Club<br><b>Beggar's Velvet</b>           | 16                    | 17  | 18     | 19   |
| 20<br>Hickory Grove at<br>Sully Plantation  | 21   | 22<br>7:30pm Folk Club                                     | 23                    | 24  | 25     | 26   |
| 27<br> Daylight<br>Savings--set<br>back 1 hour<br>Ray Kaminsky at<br>Maggie's in<br>Middleburg | 28   | 29<br>7:30pm Folk Club<br>Showcase Lottery<br>Draw         | 30                    | 31<br> Halloween |        |  |



# September 1991

## Reston Folk Club



| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY   |
|---|--|--|-----------|----------|---|--|
| 1<br>Friends of the Folk Club, Campout<br> | 2<br>Labor Day<br>Friends of the Folk Club, Campout<br> | 3<br>7:30pm Folk Club Showcase<br>Dierdre Murphy | 4         | 5        | 6<br>7:00pm Hickory Grove at Potomac Overlook Pk, Arlington | 7<br>5:00pm Hickory Grove at Down's Park, Pasadena, MD |
| 8<br>6:00pm Hickory Grove at Rockville Civic Ctr  | 9  | 10<br>7:30pm Folk Club                           | 11        | 12       | 13  | 14   |
| 15<br>Eileen Joyner at Takoma Park Folk Festival  | 16   | 17<br>7:30pm Folk Club Chesapeake                | 18        | 19       | 20  | 21   |
| 22  | 23   | 24<br>7:30pm Folk Club Showcase Lottery Draw     | 25        | 26       | 27  | 28   |
| 29<br>Ray Kaminsky at Maggie's in Middleburg  | 30   |  |           |          |   |  |

## Eileen Joyner Releases First Album

Reston - Herndon Folk Club member Eileen Joyner announces the release of her first album. Although it is officially entitled *Always Wear Underwear*, Eileen refers to her project as "the album that ate my savings." A lot of money and hard work went into the album whose initial recording sessions began five year ago. Eileen is pleased with the results. All of the songs on the album were written by Eileen. Some songs reflect serious concerns about modern life, while others take a sideways look at the world. Several cuts from the album have already been heard on WAMU, WETA and WLTT.

The album is the proud product of our local music scene. It was recorded at Takoma Recording in Takoma Park, Inner Ear Studios in Arlington, and Oasis Recording in College Park. It was produced by Eileen and Micah Solomon, a Silver Spring native.

Local musicians performing on the album include Marcy Marxer, Bob Williams, Jody Marshall, Tom McLaughlin, Mike Wheaton, and Dr. Brown. An album release celebration concert will be held at The Open Door Coffeehouse on September 7. The Open Door is located in Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King St. in Alexandria.

*Always Wear Underwear* has been released in both cassette and CD format. It will be available at Eileen's concerts, as well as The House of Musical Traditions and The Open Door Coffeehouse.

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The Reston Community Center has invited the Folk Club to entertain participants in its "FolkWalk" on October 12 (a Saturday). We are looking to People to sign up for 1/2 hour sets from 7:30AM to 12:30PM.

We are currently planning not to have a sound system, but that may change. Travel costs will be covered. "Upbeat music is desired.

Contact Lynn Jordan!

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ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

Check your Label - Are you expiring? "19910901" is expiring with this issue. Don't miss an issue - Don't miss the benefits of the Folk Club. Please send in your membership check (\$12.00) to keep your membership active!



Long-time Folk Club Member Gail Thompson  
graduating in May from Mary Washington College in  
Fredericksburg, VA.

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### The Folk Club

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