

Hungarian culture comes to Toledo with the opening of an art exhibit featuring folk and contemporary works, coins & medallions

The Toledo Sister Cities International has been introducing Toledoans to a myriad of visitors from around the world, broadening the horizons of all through a sharing of experiences.

Now, TSCI has planned an extraordinary experience slated to begin June 30. Four exciting exhibitions of artworks from Hungary will be on display in the Owens-Illinois Art Center Lobby at One SeaGate through August 21 daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sponsored by the Ohio Arts Council, the exhibit is free.

Highlighting the opening will be a visit from Attila Toth, journalist and painter whose works are part of the Contemporary Art display. Accompanying Toth is Mrs. Miklos Pal, director of the Folkart House, Szeged, Hungary, and an organizer of the Folk Art collection displayed.

Coin & Medallion craftsman Sandor Toth, whose collection is also part of the exhibit will travel to Toledo for the exhibit's closing ceremonies, along with Marta Jellinck of the Bekes County Folk Arts Center and an organizer of the exhibit.

Recently, the works were on display at Martin University's Greer Museum in Rio Grande, Ohio. Museum curator James Allen reports that hundreds of visitors have seen and enjoyed the exhibit. "I have never seen anything like this in Ohio," he said. "We are very fortunate to have this experience," he exclaimed.

Elizabeth Balint of TSCI said the Folk Art, in particular, consists of very beautiful items. She described the intricate wood carved pieces, embroidery, pottery, decorated eggs, musical instruments, highly decorated folk dance shoes and baskets, as very

representative of the best of Hungarian art. She said the original oil paintings also on display are very exciting.

"Sandor Toth's coins and medallions are also very beautiful and extremely interesting. He has cast a coin for Toledo which adds a special touch to this exhibit," she explained.

The exhibit, a first of its kind in the area, was initiated by Martin Nagy, executive director of the Common Space for Creativity and a member of the TSCI cultural committee. Nagy was invited to Toledo's sister city Szeged for a cultural exchange. Upon seeing the works at the Folkhouse and the Bekes County Folk Art Center along with meeting Toth, he developed the idea of putting together the various media and bringing it to Ohio.

"Toledo has a strong Hungarian heritage," cited Balint. "This exhibit will be very culturally informative." She said the art exhibit will also tie into the Birmingham Festival August 20. A special Sister County agreement between Lucas County and Csongrad County will be signed in a ceremony the morning of the festival. Szeged is located in Bekes County.

Balint said the Folk Art display travels to Sauder Museum in Archbold following the Toledo exhibition.

Toledo Sister Cities International is dedicated to building mutually beneficial international economic development as well as promoting educational and cultural opportunities with Toledo's sister cities and their nations. TSCI, for the past three years under the direction of John Henry Fullen and Elizabeth Balint, has worked with representatives of each of Toledo's sister cities, To-

ledo, Spain, Qinhuangdao, China, Poznan, Poland and Szeged. Several promising business relationships have developed through this organization. In Hungary, TSCI assisted in the opinion of a Chrysler/Jeep dealership

The Sister Cities program, now nationwide, began in Toledo in 1931 when a sister city tie with Toledo, Spain was initiated. This began a national citizens' initiative which now links over 1000 United States cities with over 1500 cities across the world.

According to Fullen, "The sister cities

initiative recognizes the paramount importance of building international relations based on friendship, trust and mutual gain which can create an opportune environment for economic development. The global market has arrived. In order to thrive, Toledo must be a full-time and committed member of the international community.