

## **CURRICULUM VITAE – Bedřiška Znojemská**

She was born on June 2, 1928 in Znojmo. Her real name was Božena Krejčová, née Fritzová. Her father Bohumil Fritz was a Czech army officer. She studied a grammar school in České Budějovice, and medicine after the war, in 1951 she was banned from studies on any Czechoslovak university. The reason stated, „*We have no use for people of your kind, especially in medicine.*“ (In her screening questionnaire, her reply to the question concerning her attitude towards the society was: „*Love thy neighbour like thyself.*“) Since then, the art became the main focus of her life. She took private lessons from artists like F. Ketzek, E. Frinta and F. Nedvěd.

In 1959 she married Bořivoj Krejčí, which marked her beginning of their shared work in the field of cathedral and religious art, bell making etc. She put illustrations in *Katolické noviny* (Catholic newspaper) and later, she and her husband worked “freelance”. Bořivoj was carving wood and designing altars, ambos, seats ... Bedřiška was painting – calvaries, presbytery paintings, window-panes.

In 1987, her first exhibition took place in Zurich and was almost completely sold out. When Agnes of Bohemia was canonized, there was another exhibition in Nepomucenum, Rome, which was bought as a whole and became a permanent exhibition. Then, there was the last shared exhibition of the couple in the Palace of Arts (now Prague Congress Centre). In 1991 her husband dies. Bedřiška Znojemská tried to deal with this painful moment via her work. She sent three of her miniatures to Mailart international exhibition in Portugal. Those gained a big popularity and Bedřiška Znojemská began getting offers from Sweden, England, Italy, France, Canada, Brazil, Spain and Germany. These resulted in 11 awards, including two gold medals from international talent exhibitions in Stockholm.

During the period of communist totality, her name was well known mostly among believers. The Catholic newspaper and exhibitions organized by daring institutions of the popular party or parish offices was the only opportunity to address the general public. Other than that, there was no mention of her in the media. The reason was simple. Bedřiška Znojemská was (and still is) a practicing Catholic, focused mainly on creating religious art. Her work is infused with her true belief which she had not given up even during totality and heavy normalization. She introduced a mystical beauty, poetic character and a specific spirit into Czech painting. She methodically works in religious field in painting, drawing and illustrating.

Her pictures, painted along the lines of romantic symbolism, tell stories. In the contemporary technical world full of brutality and dubious values, the work of Bedřiška Znojemská touches your very soul. Today, she lives and works in her flat in Prague and in her studio in Červený mlýn.

*“The future of the world is not in the technology but in the amount of love we evoke in other people. And I want to stay true to that.”* (Bedřiška Znojemská)