

Monument of Janusz Korczak (Fundation Shalom)

The idea of building a monument to Janusz Korczak was born shortly after the war. In 1946 a Committee to Honor The Memory of Janusz Korczak was formed. It included his friends, a small number of pupils who had escaped the extermination, and former coworkers of the old doctor. The committee passed a resolution to erect a monument to J. Korczak in Warsaw. Scores of years were passing. In various countries of the world, as well as in various places in Poland, traces of memory about J. Korczak were commemorated in a variety of forms, recalling the tragedy of death and extermination. These were often placed away from central locations, and were thus scarcely accessible to wide numbers of people whom the humanistic message of the character and the idea of The Old Doctor should have reached. For that reason the Shalom Foundation and the Polish Janusz Korczak Association (Polskie Stowarzyszenie im. Janusza Korczaka) had undertaken to bring about the building of a monument in the center of Warsaw. The project of building of a monument to Janusz Korczak came about at the initiative of Professor Jadwiga Binczycka, the chairman of the Polish Janusz Korczak Association, and Golda Tencer, General Director of the SHALOM Foundation. From the group of people devoted to the idea of the building emerged an **Honorary Committee for the Building of the Monument (Komitet Honorowy Budowy Pomnika), which included: Krystyna Janda, Malgorzata Niezabitowska, Joanna Rogacka, Nina Terentiew, Beata Tyszkiewicz, Jakub Gutenbaum, Jozef Hen, Adam Kilian, Wieslaw Ochman, Pawel Piskorski, Zbigniew Religa, Szymon Szurmiej, and the Minister of National Education and Sport - Krystyna Lybacka. Ms. Jolanta Kwasniewska** accepted **an honorary patronage** over the entire work.

Three charity concerts were organized to collect the necessary means for the building. The concerts were linked with auctions of works of art, lead by Wieslaw Ochman:

- On November 20, 1999 a concert by Golda Tencer and the first auction of works of art were held;
- June 25, 2000 - concert "Songs of the Jewish Street" performed by Golda Tencer and the ensemble of the actors from the State Jewish Theater in Warsaw and a second auction of works of art;
- December 3, 2000 - concert by Wieslaw Ochman and his guests (Magdalena Idzik, Aleksandra Stoklosy and Heleny Christenko) and the third auction of works of art.

Many people have already helped the initiators, which brings the idea closer to being realized. The art auction was made possible by the generosity of the Polish artists, who handed over their works, and of private donors, who donated to the organizers works by great Polish painters and artists. We warmly thank all the donors for their help.

Convinced as we are that modern man needs and craves contact with higher values, such as good, love, respect for another person (child), the art of communicating, forgiving, tolerance, the art of dialogue - and Janusz Korczak personified such values and confirmed them with his life - we acknowledged that his monument could also be a monument to such values. Keeping in mind Janusz Korczak's own statement that "sadness is too cold for children, so they soon run out into the sun of happiness" - we wanted to erect a monument with an optimistic, joyous meaning. The Organizing Committee announced an International Competition for the Janusz Korczak Monument Project, and appointed a Jury for the Competition. The Jury included eminent creative artists from the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, professor Marek Budzynski and professor Adam Myjak, Szymon Szurmiej - the Director of the State Jewish Theater in Warsaw, and two additional people to supply advisory voices: Marek Web - Institute YIVO and Lena Benoualid - architect.

At the November 14, 2002 session of the jury, after a discriminating examination of the entries the Committee awarded two equivalent prizes: entry # 5 - authors Bogdan Chmielewski, Zbigniew Wilma entry # 6 - author Magdalena Walczak on January 24 2003 the Committee For The Building Of The J. Korczak Monument chose the **monument authored by Bogdan Chmielewski, and Zbigniew Wilma** for realization.

On September 6, 2001 The Communal Counsel Board of Warsaw - Centrum voted that the Janusz Korczak Monument will be situated in the western part of the square located on the north side of The Palace of Culture and Science, between the extension of Sliska Street, and Swietokrzyska Street - in downtown Warsaw.

on September 19, 2003, a **foundation stone was laid under it.**

The celebration of the laying of the foundation stone was accompanied by the **show "Give Childhood to the Children"** the children from orphanages and schools named after Janusz Korczak. The celebration was held in the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw.