

Obverse

The collector coin's obverse features a framed image of Orava Castle, symbolising the home region of Janko Matúška. Within that frame, the Slovak coat of arms appears above the castle, and to the right of the frame, inscribed in facsimile, is a four-line extract from the original handwritten lyrics of what became the Slovak national anthem. Along the bottom edge of the design is the name of the issuing country 'SLOVENSKO', and between it and the frame is the year of issuance '2021'. The mint mark of the Kremnica Mint (Mincovňa Kremnica), consisting of the letters 'MK' placed between two dies, is on the left side of the design.



Janko Matúška's sculpted gravestone, entitled "Muse", at the Historical Cemetery in Dolný Kubín

Reverse

The reverse shows a framed portrait of Janko Matúška with the poet's facsimile signature inscribed along the frame's left edge. The coin's denomination and currency '10 EURO' is situated below the portrait. Along the upper left edge of the design is the name 'JANKO MATÚŠKA', and along the lower left edge, separated from the name by a dot and running in the opposite direction, are the years of Matúška's birth and death '1821 - 1877'. To the right of the frame are the stylised letters 'PV' referring to the coin's designer Peter Valach.

Coin details

Denomination:	€10
Composition:	.900 silver, .100 copper
Weight:	18 g
Diameter:	34 mm
Edge lettering:	• AUTOR TEXTU ŠTÁTNEJ HYMNY SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (Author of the Slovak national anthem's lyrics)
Issuing volume:	limited to a maximum of 11,000 coins in either brilliant uncirculated or proof quality
Designer:	Peter Valach
Engraver:	Dalibor Schmidt
Producer:	Kremnica Mint (Slovakia)



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200th anniversary of
the birth of
Janko Matúška

SILVER COLLECTOR EURO COIN

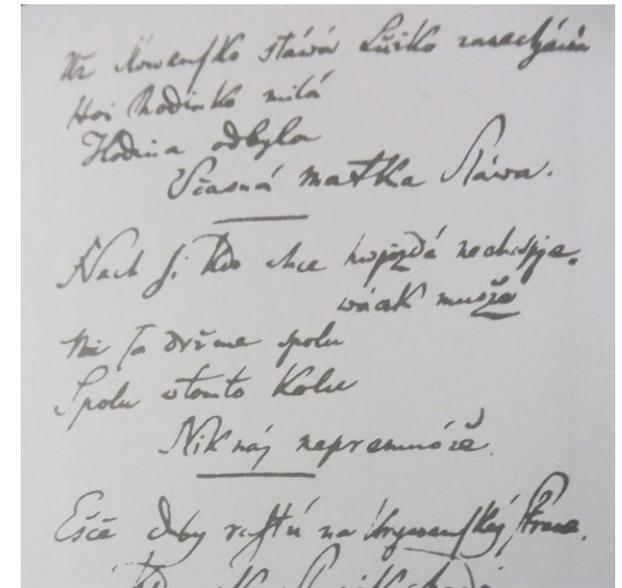


Bust of Janko Matúška in front of the Gymnasium in Dolný Kubín

JANKO MATÚŠKA (10 January 1821 – 11 January 1877) was a Slovak poet and activist who spent his whole life in his native Orava region (in what is now northern Slovakia), except for a few years when he studied at the Gymnasium in Gemer and at the Lutheran Lyceum in Pressburg (now Bratislava). During his short Pressburg period, inspired as part of a group of students around Ľudovít Štúr, he produced a modestly sized literary oeuvre. He wrote poems, folk ballads, and fables, and also tried his hand at drama. His works from this period secured his place in Slovak history, not simply as a romantic poet but mainly as the writer of a poem that would become the lyrics of the Slovak national anthem.

That poem, which had the same musical rhythm as the contemporary folk song “Kopala studienku”, arose spontaneously when the Lyceum students, celebrating the arrival of 1844, learnt of a church convention decision to bar Ľudovít Štúr from teaching at the institution and so spreading Slovak nationalist ideas among his students. A group of indignant and disappointed students left the Lyceum in protest and decided to complete the academic year at the Lutheran Lyceum in Levoča. In the poem, originally titled “Prešporskí Slováci, Dunaj, Levočané”, students from Pressburg – situated on the Danube River (“Dunaj” in Slovak) – call on students in Levoča to remain resolute in their activism, to stay united, and not to fear troubles or enemies. Later, when put to music, the poem was renamed with the words of its first line, as “Ponad Tatrou blýska” (“Lightning over the Tatras”). Today, as the title of the Slovak national anthem, it has the almost identical title “Nad Tatrou sa blýska”. A couple of lines of this short poem made Janko Matúška one of the most well-known of the Štúr group poets, yet only a little is known about his life.

The famous poem originated in the early hours of 1 January 1844. It seems that everything important we know about Janko Matúška occurred in January, including his birth and death. He came from a landowning family, but after they became poorer, the father had to take various jobs to feed his six children and to pay for his sons’ education. Janko Matúška and his older brother Juraj organised revolutionary ac-



Facsimile handwriting of Janko Matúška

tivities in Orava. Consequently, in spring 1849, Matúška had to hide in the mountains from advancing Hungarian revolutionary guards. He fell ill there and suffered from related ailments until his death. He produced no literary works in the last 22 years of his life.

His private life was ill-starred. He married Žofia, the sister of his physician friend Karol Veselovský. The couple differed in temperament and interests, had no children, and had to struggle with Janko’s health problems and a shortage of money. Several years after Matúška’s death, Slovak nationalists raised money for his gravestone. At its formal unveiling, however, the authorities banned the singing of “Ponad Tatrou blýska”, the song inseparably connected with his name.