



Newsletter volume V

November 2011

HORA has had an active year so far! As you follow our progress we would like to share some highlights from 2011.

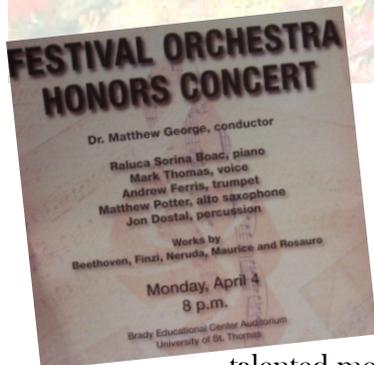
HORA at the Festival of Nations



During the May 2011 Festival of Nations, HORA has once again designed and staffed the Romanian booth using this year's 'national markets' theme. Our booth presented typical 'market merchandise', mainly ceramics and decorative fabrics.

Our exhibit received numerous visitors and our staff happily answered questions, stamped passports and made sure that the power point presentations ran continuously, bringing the beauty of Romanian folk art to the festival.

Raluca Gheorghiu Boac in Concert



As part of her program in the Honors Concert at the St Thomas University on April 4th, Raluca interpreted Beethoven's Concerto nr 1. Her performance was very well received and enjoyed by the audience. HORA is happy to promote this

talented member of the Romanian community by making parts of this concert available on YouTube and through our website (<http://hora-mm.org/news.html>).

July Event in Rochester



As promised in our spring Newsletter, we have prepared several presentations, some already part of previous events and some new, which can be shown on request or invitation to interested parties in a variety of settings.

One of these presentations, entitled *The Romanian Icon*, was given by Raluca Octav in July 2011 to a private group in Rochester, Minnesota. It was well received, and the same talk will be given in February 2012 at the Duluth Public Library.

Oral History Project

One of the goals of HORA is to preserve a record of the Romanian experience in Minnesota. As one method of fulfilling that goal, HORA members have started a project to interview members of the local Romanian community.

One of the first volunteers for our interviews was Mrs. Ann Popa Bongard (pictured), an esteemed member of the local community whose parents Procopie Popa and Victoria Mihi were among the first immigrants to St Paul, MN in the early 1900s. Mrs. Bongard remained very active in helping Romanian newcomers and in supporting the activities of both the St Mary's (St Paul) and St Stefan's (So St Paul) churches. The interviews will be archived and eventually incorporated into a book about Romanian-American experiences in Minnesota.

To volunteer in the project, please email us at info@hora-mn.org.



Interview with Mrs. Ann Bongard

Romanian Genealogical Society Formed

HORA board member Vicki Albu has a passion for the studies of genealogy (family history) and the history of early Romanian emigration in the Twin Cities. Her great-grandfather Ilie Moiescu came to the US through Ellis Island in 1911, followed by his wife and two children, and eventually settled in St Paul and So St Paul. Vicki noticed that there are very few organizations that can help people research their Romanian roots, which is part of a very popular American interest. She therefore decided to form a Romanian Genealogical Society, affiliated with both HORA and the Minnesota Genealogical Society (www.mngs.org). The first meeting of the Romanian Genealogical Society will be held on Saturday, November 19th, from 1 to 4 pm, at the Minnesota Genealogical Society, room 218, 1185 N Concord Street, in South St Paul MN. The meeting is free and open to the public. Bring

old photos and other information that you would like to share. Vicki will give a short talk about early Romanian immigration to the Twin Cities and the group will discuss future meetings and topics. Please join us! Refreshments will be served.

Romanian Fall in Minnesota

On October 14th, HORA held an event titled *Romanian Fall in Minnesota* at the West Saint Paul Public Library. The event showcased presentations by HORA members Gina Popa and Raluca Octav, and welcomed guest speaker Sasha Bortnov. In her presentation Gina talked about Romanian fall traditions, including the harvest celebrations, the ‘*must*’ (freshly squeezed and fermented grapes), wine making, as well as the making of ‘*țuica*’, or moonshine, in both communist Romania and USA under prohibition. She depicted in vivid colors the feel of the fall fairs she remembered and enjoyed while living in Romania. Raluca touched on other aspects of fall celebrations, the ‘*remembrance of the ancestors - moși*’ (from *stramoși*, meaning ancestors) and accompanying foods – ‘*colac*’ and ‘*coliva*’. Also part of Raluca’s presentation was the “Merry Cemetery from Săpânța”. Sasha Bortnov, a passionate and experienced local vine grower and wine maker originally from Moldova, shared stories from his accomplishment in the field, his collaboration with the University of Minnesota, and his participation at the State Fair – including the many prizes he has earned.



Photos left to right: guest speaker Sasha Bortnov; Adriana Brasoava, happy winner of *vișinata*; homemade *colac* for the audience

About 40 people attended the successful and well-received event where apple cider, coffee, and traditional *colac* were served. A bottle of Romanian *vișinata* (tart cherry liqueur) was offered as a drawing prize!

Upcoming Events

The **Romanian Day at the Gophers women’s basketball game**, will be on December 11th 2011, 2pm at Williams Arena. The event, held at the University of Minnesota, is **honoring Romanian player Alexandra Ionescu**, a new recruit in the team coming directly from Romania. Pre-game,

HORA will offer Romanian food to the Fast Break Club and Season Ticket Holders (local Romanians are invited to participate). During the game and at break HORA will exhibit merchandise, artifacts and will provide information and media presentations at the Romanian Culture Center. The Romanian dance ensemble IZVORASUL will give a performance at half-time. Tickets for the basketball game are only \$6 – so please join the game to cheer (in Romanian too) for Alex!

Call for Members and Volunteers

After two years and several events under our belts, the HORA board has established the need for volunteers to help with the everyday organizational functions. Until now, all the work surrounding the events – the planning, managing, publishing, mailing and other activities needed to keep the organization active – have been shared by the members of the board. We need volunteers to actively help with fundraising, membership, advertising, mailing, merchandise production and selling, event management, and much more. Please email HORA at info@hora-mn.org to volunteer!

One Word from the Treasurer

Ours is a nonprofit organization, supported through donations and volunteer work. Through your contribution and participation you make HORA possible. Please keep us in mind and consider becoming one of our benefactors. Your contribution is tax deductible and will receive a letter of acknowledgment upon request. For more information visit our website at www.hora-mn.org.

HORA remembers...

Liviu Ciulei, who recently passed away at 88, was one of the greatest Romanian directors the international stage has known. He was an actor and film director who later focused on art direction in the theatre – a position he held at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis from 1980 through 1985. Theater critic Clive Barnes called Ciulei “one of the most imaginative directors in the world”. During his tenure, the Guthrie won the Tony Award given annually to an outstanding regional theatre. Also, Ciulei is said to have brought international recognition to the Guthrie.

David Hawley from the Pioneer Press wrote that critics from all over the world showed up for the grand opening of *The Tempest* in the early 80s. Ciulei was a visionary who brought to the American theatre something that Romanians would well understand: the sense that “tragedy is funny and funny is tragic”.

