PRESS RELEASE



The Bauer Brothers: The Story of Three Boys from Valtice

A new book rediscovers the masters of botanical illustration, the forgotten cultural heritage of the town of Valtice, Czech Republic.

Valtice / New York, September 10, 2025 – A newly published, richly illustrated book, *The Bauer Brothers: The Story of Three Boys from Valtice*, introduces for the first time in the Czech Republic the story of three remarkable brothers born in the 18th century in Valtice.

The book traces the extraordinary journey of **Joseph, Franz**, and **Ferdinand Bauer,** from their childhood in the monastery of the Brothers Hospitallers in Valtice, through their studies in Vienna and work on the Liechtenstein Codex, to their international careers at a royal court and prestigious scientific institutions.

- Joseph Bauer became Director of the Liechtenstein Gallery in Vienna
- Franz Bauer served as Court Painter to King George III at Kew Gardens in England
- Ferdinand Bauer joined scientific expeditions to Australia and Greece

Their exquisite watercolors, considered among the pinnacles of scientific illustration, are preserved in institutions such as the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, the University of Oxford, and the Natural History Museum in London. Allegedly, J. W. Goethe compared their work to that of Leonardo da Vinci.

The Story Behind the Book

The project was initiated by **Suzanna (Zuzana) Halsey**, who discovered the Bauer brothers through **Přemysl Krejčiřík**, the director of the Lu & Tiree Chmelar Herb Garden in Valtice, where artist **Zdeňka Žďárská Benešová** led a program, *Painting with the Bauers*. With no Czech book available on the Bauers, Suzanna and Zdeňka set out to create one, aiming to *rediscover* the legacy of the Bauer brothers for the broader public and inspire young people's interest in science and art. Zdeňka invited her former students from the ZUŠ Mikulov art school—**Anastasia** and **Maria Komarova,** and **Klára** and **Veronika Kružíková**—to form a *dream team*.

About the Book

After two years of intensive work and research trips to museums and archives, the young authors, guided by their former teacher, created over a hundred original illustrations and wrote the accompanying texts. The book features:

- Watercolors, linocuts, pen-and-ink drawings, comics-style illustrations
- Landscapes, portraits, flowers, and imaginative scenes
- QR codes linking to digitized Bauer illustrations in foreign archives
- Drawings of flowerpots by local children inspired by the young Bauer brothers

Dr. H. Walter Lack, former director of the Berlin Botanical Garden, author of several volumes on the Bauer Brothers, served as mentor and expert consultant, and contributed the foreword.

The book has been translated into English and German.

The Czech edition is available at the Valtice Chateau bookstore.
The English edition will be released in Fall 2025.

Exhibition & Book Launch

Saturday, **OCTOBER 11**, 2025, at 3 PM

Gallery of the historic **Havlíček Villa in Břeclav – Poštorná**, Tř. 1. máje 418

The authors and sponsors will present the story behind the book and raise a toast to its publication. The composer **Petr Růžička** (violin), accompanied by **Roman Motyčák** (percussion), will perform *Bridges*, an original piece composed especially for this occasion. **Dr. H. Walter Lack** will also be in attendance. English interpretation will be provided.

The event is sponsored by the Moravská krása (Moravian Glory) Foundation in Břeclav.

The exhibition of original book illustrations will remain on view until December 2025.
It is currently on display at the Valtice Chateau.

Lednice - Valtice Music Festival (LVHF)

Sunday, **Oct 12** at 4 PM – Valtice Chateau
Talk by Dr. H. Walter Lack, *The Bauer Brothers and Diversity of Organisms* (in English)

Sponsors

Friends of Czech Greenways, New York; The Prince of Liechtenstein Philanthropic Foundation; The Town of Valtice; Zdeňka & Ondřej Žďárský; Moravská krása Foundation in Břeclav; NPÚ Valtice, and the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU-New York)

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Fun Facts

- In honor of the brothers, the plant genus *Bauera*, native to Australia, was named by Sir Joseph Banks.
- Ferdinand Bauer developed a complex color-coding system to save time while painting in the field.

Endorsements

"The House of Liechtenstein welcomed the publication of this book with enthusiasm and admiration for the talent and courage of the young authors, guided by their inspiring mentor." — H.S.H. Princess Tatjana Lattorff Liechtenstein

"This book is more important than it may seem. These young women teach us humility in the face of beauty that surrounds us."
— Michal Růžička, Prince of Liechtenstein Foundation

"I am proud that the town of Valtice supported the publication of a book about our distinguished natives. I believe it will help revive local history and the stories of Prior Boccius and the Order of the Merciful Brothers." — Aleš Hofman, Mayor of Valtice

"The Bauer Brothers book is fresh, artistic, and surprising. I applaud the enthusiasm of this young creative team." — Peter Sís

Other Things to See and Do in Břeclav

- **Church of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary** – Neo-Gothic landmark built in 1895–1898, commissioned by Prince Johann II of Liechtenstein, located near the Havlíček Villa.
- **Railway Museum in Břeclav** – Located in the central railway station, showcasing the history of railway transport from the 19th century to today.

- **Municipal Museum and Gallery Břeclav** – Housed in a restored synagogue, featuring local history, Jewish heritage, Slavic archaeology, and contemporary art.
- **Lichtenstein House** (Lichtenštejnský dům) – Permanent exhibition on the Liechtenstein family's history in South Moravia.
- **Zámeček Pohansko** – Empire-style hunting lodge built for Jan I of Liechtenstein, showcasing Slavic archaeology and regional history.
- **Liechtenstein Greenways** – Easy biking trails through the region, including the Poštorná trail near the Havlíček Villa.