

The folklore ensemble Poľana was founded at the turn of years 1955 – 1956, and already in the year 1956 won first place in the regional round of the Competition of the youth creativity in Banská Bystrica

. This was the beginning of its successful performance. The material and financial conditions of the folk group improved when the legal relations between the folk ensemble and the founder – Rectorate of University College of Forestry and Wood Technology (VŠLD) were solved.

In 1976 the Rectors board of VŠLD approved the Bylaw of the Folk ensemble Poľana

. The university management was creating optimal material and financial conditions for all activities of the ensemble. Continuity of the work was guaranteed by experienced members of the folk ensemble management: J. Račko, M. Almássyová and the director E. Senko.

{rokbox title=|Archívna fotografia :: | size=|1038 718|}images/articles/cb8u.jpg{/rokbox}

Great benefit for the folk ensemble was that M. Križo, a great interpreter of Slovak folk songs, became the manager of the male vocal group. This group soon became a pillar of the artistic level of the whole ensemble.

In 1972, the ensemble rehearsed programme, which was performed not only at regular performances in the university, in the town and in the district, but it was performed also on the regional round of Folk Artistic Creativity Competition in Martin. The ensemble was awarded by an honourable mention for its programme unit and by several awards for vocal and playing “fuja ra” (shepherd’s pipe). In the same year the ensemble participated also in the national Slovak competition of university folk groups in Nitra. Here, the male vocal group won recognition for the first time.

It won an award for the best vocal performance. After that, the group performed regularly at

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Written by FS Poľana

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various cultural events, even on radio and television.

It participated in folk festivals in Východná, Heľpa and Detva. In 1974 in Academic Zvolen (competition of university folk groups) the ensemble won the second place and was awarded for the best vocal performance (the male vocal group), style presenting of folk music and for choreography.

{rokbox title=|M. Križo 1975 :: Mužská spevácka skupina| size=|913 674|}images/articles/krizo.jpg{/rokbox}

In 1978 the ensemble was the winner of the competition Academic Zvolen, and was again awarded for the best vocal group and choreography. In all these competitions the male vocal group was very successful. During this period the position of the choreographer was held by J. Tlučák, and then by I. Krista, who was in 1974 replaced by František Chudý, who is still in this position.

{rokbox title=|Vítazný blok na AZ 1978 :: Poľana skončila na 1. mieste tejto súťaže| size=|993 729|}images/articles/AZ78.jpg{/rokbox}

The management of male vocal group was after M. Križo taken charge by I. Nemčok and then by M. Pavlík (in years 1987 – 1992), who was in the position of a vocal pedagog for one year replaced by I. Smolík. Since 1993 A. Králik was in charge of both vocal groups (male and female), however at present he has been working only with the male vocal group. In 1988 a female vocal group was created and Anna Šatanová, a singer of Slovak folk songs, became the leader of the group. Already in the year 1993 the female vocal group won the competition Academic Zvolen and in 1995 and 1997 the whole ensemble became the laureate of the competition. After A. Šatanová the leaders of the female vocal group were Jana Benková, Zuzana Fabianová, Pavol Gejdoš, Lucia Šalapková and Daniel Bebej.

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{rokbox title=|František Chudý :: 2008 | size=|811 960|}images/articles/50cent.JPG{/rokbox}

At present, as well as in the past, the members of the ensemble are young people, mostly students and employees of the university, but also people from Zvolen and its surroundings. Today, the ensemble has about 70 members, who work in male and female vocal groups, music and dance groups.

During its long history the folk ensemble Poľana had hundreds of performances in our country as well as abroad (Austria, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Serbia, Croatia, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Turkey, Greece, United States, Mexico, Cyprus, Syria and others).

At present the director of the ensemble is Pavol Gejdoš, František Chudý is the art director as well as the dance pedagogue. Alexander Králik is the leader of the male singers; Daniel Bebej is the leader of the female singers and folk music is led by Miroslav Danihel.

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