2. CULTURE AND ART

1. Cultural options in the city and in the country (museums, exhibitions, theatres, cinemas, concerts, the circus, dance)
2. Popular forms of culture and art (genres, famous personalities)
3. Attending cultural events
4. Music, film, theatre and folk festivals, atmosphere
5. Other forms of art – folk music, dance, painting, sculpture, architecture – well-known artists/performers

A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry and see a fine Picture every day of his life. (J. W. Goethe)

Culture and art are part of everyday life of people. They add aesthetic value to our lives, enrich our mind and please our senses. Various cultural events present an interesting way of spending the free time of individuals, couples and families. Both culture and art are parts of national heritage of every country – all of them do their best to develop and promote it. Cities offer many cultural attractions to citizens and tourists.

**Art** is a way of communicating feelings. Artists express themselves in many forms – music, literature, architecture, painting, drawing, sculpture. **Music, dance and theatre are performing arts**. **Painting, sculpture, architecture and photography are decorative arts**.

**Music** has become a hobby, a profession and a part of the lifestyle of many people. Those who like classical music can enjoy a concert of philharmonic orchestra in a concert hall or attend a festival. Some of the festivals are held annually, such as **the Bratislava Music Festival**. Composers like **Mozart**, **Beethoven** and **Bach** have become the most important figures of the European musical heritage. Ode to Joy, a part of Beethoven’s masterpiece *Ninth Symphony*, became the **anthem** (hymna) of the European Union. Opera lovers can chose from a list of opera performances in one of the many opera houses, such as **the Royal Opera House** in London, where visitors can see both opera and ballet performances. A very famous concert venue in New York City is **Carnegie Hall** where concerts of classical as well as popular music are held. Spectators can enjoy it extraordinary acoustics.

Fans of different music styles – pop, rock, jazz, blues or country can enjoy the music at music festivals of the different genres, go to see their favourite singers or groups live at concerts or simply listen to CDs, MP3 players or watch concerts on DVDs. Thanks to digital technology the music industry supplies the market with all possible music genres recorded on many different types of media.

Slovakia is famous for its tradition of folklore music. Folklore groups dressed in traditional costumes dance at folklore festivals (the most famous is the one held in July in **Východná**). Young people prefer modern dance which includes many different types. Oriental dance is becoming very popular among women throughout the whole of Europe.

**Dramatic art** has a very long tradition in countries like England and France. The famous English theatre company, **the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre**, brings together famous actors and directors of the world to work on the greatest plays. Numerous London theatres are concentrated in the West End, the entertainment heart of London, which remained a fashionable place for theatre and opera throughout the years. One of the major cultural events in Scotland is **the Edinburgh International Festival** which is a festival of classical music, opera, theatre and dance. Slovak theatre-goers can also enjoy various types of theatre performances. Musicals, performed at the **New Scene Theatre** in Bratislava, have become very popular in the last few years. Other favourite theatres in this town include **the Slovak National Theatre, the Small Scene of the Slovak National Theatre, the Hviezdoslav Theatre, the Arena Theatre** and many others.

**Cinema** generally enjoys great popularity. In Slovakia most films are of American productions; in the cinemas they are often shown with Slovak subtitles (titulky), on the TV they are dubbed (dabované). French, Spanish, and other foreign language film are quite rare, mostly presented at film festivals or in special film clubs. The most famous international film festivals are held in **Cannes**, **Venice and Berlin**. Ordinary small cinemas are now being replaced by large multi-screen air-conditioned complexes in shopping centres. Some of them have introduced three-dimensional (3D) films. In summer, people like to go to open-air cinemas. The number of cinema-goers has dropped throughout the years because films are now available on DVDs. They can be rented from DVD rental shops. Every year, actors, actresses, directors and screenplay writers are awarded a prize for their achievements in filmmaking. *The Academy Award (Oscar)* is the main national film award in the USA.

There is a great variety of media in which an artist can work. Paintings (Fine Art) of famous painters and sculptors (sochári) like **Picasso, Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Claude Monet** or **Michelangelo** are immortal and their artworks can be seen in a number of museums around the world**. The National Gallery** in London houses on of the greatest collections of European paintings in the world. **The Tate Gallery** is the national gallery of British art, also located in London.

Visitors to Bratislava can admire the colour paintings, landscapes, portraits and other works of arts in **the Slovak National Gallery** or **the Bratislava City Gallery**. The works of artists can be categorised into so called styles – Impressionism, Modernism, Surrealism, Naïve Art, Pop Art and others.

Architecture is the art and science of designing buildings. It includes town planning, urban design, landscape architecture (development of gardens, parks) and interior design (furniture). Many architectural works may also be seen as cultural and political symbols and they are often works of art. They can have both a functional and aesthetic character. Some new architectonic structures were made possible only thanks to new materials and the development of technology. Famous architects of the Renaissance period were **Michelangelo** and **Leonardo da Vinci**, who were also artists and scientists. At that time there was no clear dividing line between an artist and an architect one of the most famous architects of the 20th century was the controversial Austrian architect **Friedensreich Hundertwasser**, known for his revolutionary architectural designs.

Cultural events in the countryside are not that frequent. People who live in villages all their lives prefer gardening, visiting friends or watching TV. Many inhabitants of Bratislava have recently moved to villages, trying to get away from the busy city life as they do not live too far from the city, they can still enjoy the cultural life the city offers.

**Leonardo da Vinci** was a painter, sculptor, engineer, scientist and architect. He lived from 1452-1519 and is a great figure of the Italian Renaissance. His painting of an Italian nobleman’s wife called Zanoki del Giocondo, has become the most famous painting in the world, either under the title La Giaconda or **the Mona Lisa**.

**Picasso** was born in 1881 in Spain although he did most of his painting in France. He is generally recognised as one of the most inventive painters of the 20th century. He was already an accomplished (vynikajúci, skvelý, majstrovský) artist at the age of 10, had his first exhibition aged 16 and continued painting well into his 80s. He is probably best known for his surrealist paintings.

The Impressionist movement was named after **Monet**’s painting ***Impression, Sunrise***. The movement (smer, hnutie) is particularly concerned with light effects and Monet often painted his subjects at different times of day to explore these effects. Born in Paris, I 1840, he began his Impressionist paintings in the 1860s. The First Impressionist exhibition was held in 1874. Monet produced many paintings which are still popular today, including **Haystacks** and **Rouen Cathedral**.

**Van Gogh** is famous not only for his post-impressionist paintings but also for the wild temperament which led him to cutting off part of one ear and later committing suicide in 1890. The Dutch painter was born in 1853 and first worked as a schoolmaster in England before becoming a painter. Like Picasso, he did most of his work in France, including his most famous paintings, **The Sunflowers** and **The Chair**.

As well as being an artist, **Andy Warhol**, was also an accomplished filmmaker. He was born in Pittsburgh in 1928, a son of Slovak immigrants. After studying at an art college, he became one of the leading commercial artists of the 1950s, with his Pop Art style – including pictures of soup cans and drinks bottles. He was shot by a radical feminist in 1968 but survived. He carried on painting until his death in 1987.

Modern art is not about any one thing in particular. It reflects many concerns of modern life. For instance, with its strange jumble (zmes, miešanica) of colours, lines and shapes, it may not appear to be anything recognisable. It may depict real objects but in an unusual or distorted (prekrútený, skreslený, skomolený) way. Modern art does not usually tell a story. Instead, it may evoke feelings, ideas, and impressions which are hard to put into words. At the beginning of the last century, many artists turned away from the traditional depiction of nature. Photography, which was developed in the 1830s, had freed artists from the need to copy what they saw. They instead began to explore ideas about art itself or tapping their own feelings. They were also trying to express their feelings about changes that they experienced in the world around them.