

# Why collect Czeslaw Slania's work?

Ashwini Amit Manjure

**Czeslaw Slania (22 October 1921 Czeladź; 17 March 2005 Kraków)** was a Polish postage stamp and banknote engraver. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Slania was the most skilled and prolific of all stamp engravers, with over 1000 stamps to his credit.

**Each piece is a work of art.** An engraved stamp consists of thousands of tiny lines, dots and dashes that the human eye conceives as a cohesive picture.

**Czeslaw Slania is the world's most productive engraver.** No one has produced as many engravings as had The Master. He is noted in the Guinness Book of World Records as the champion engraver of all time.



**Czeslaw Slania is the world's fastest engraver.** It typically takes 4 to 6 weeks to finish an engraving. Slania has set a record for completing engravings. His memorial to King Gustav Adolf released on 24 October 1973 was completed in 10 day. The wedding of King Carl Gustav and Silvia Sommerlath was done in 6.5 day, and his portrait of assassinated Prime Minister Olof Palme was completed in an amazing 5.5 days.



**Engraving is a dying art form.** Engraving is difficult, time consuming work that few are willing to learn. The process requires a long apprenticeship, and consummate patience, artistic sense and hand-eye coordination.

**Engraving is expensive to produce.** Not only must the engraver be paid, but an entire technology must support his work in order to produce it. Photographic methods, which produce the vast bulk of today's stamps, are much cheaper and faster.



**Czeslaw Slania's work is international.** Slania has done engraving work for Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Denmark, England, Estonia, Faroes, France, Germany, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, San Marino, Sweden, the United Nations and the United States.



**Czeslaw Slania's subjects are varied.** People singularly and in groups, landscapes, abstract symbols, household furnishings, famous paintings, buildings, airplanes, boats, cars, and ships are all grist for his mill.



**Czeslaw Slania has a sense of humor.** Look closely at his work. You'll see Slania skiing down a mountain or his mother planting potatoes, or the names of girl friends, relatives, friends, and co-workers buried in intricate engraving detail. He has also been known to put intentional mistakes into his work as buried jokes.



**Collecting Slania's works can fit any budget.** If you choose to collect postally used examples of Slania's stamps, the cost is minimal and the challenge is great. Adding additional items such as mint examples of his stamps, labels, postal stationary, stamp varieties and artwork gradually increases the price. There is no right or wrong way to collect. You can set your own goals and expand them as your time, interest and resources dictate.