

The Fourth Prague Defenestration: 18

by Jerry Ratch

I went back to the Charles Bridge over the Vltava River and felt the plaque of the Wall of Gropers, and that was where we hatched our plan, in front of my ancestors. I could just feel their presence there. They would be with me, the Gropers of Prague.

And Camille von Footitch *was* an artist, after all, so this only made sense. As much sense as Christo wrapping tanks with sheets of material as an expression of art, in reaction to Soviet occupation. It was this kind of thing that ran in my blood.

Legend has it that the Gropers were from a group of noblemen, who had everything but breasts, and so grew jealous of the women who possessed them “in abundance.” They formed a secret society who at first admired them from a distance, but grew more and more curious about a particularly handsome pair that seemed to have a life of their own, until they simply could not resist their natural curiosity and ultimately reached out and fondled them one day in public. And that move became memorialized by a bronze plaque at one end of the Charles Bridge. It's not like it was an ever-present, on-going event. Or it could be that it happened all the time in those days. Not nowadays, of course.

So we set up cameras outside Prague Castle at the famous Defenestration window. Then we set up a soft pit below with feather mattresses, and the first time I dove out the window myself as the cameras were rolling. A huge crowd had gathered because we announced the time and place at the John Lennon Wall, and it went viral, just like the Fourth Defenestration. Next we launched a pink pig with pink wings that were battery operated and flapped as the

pig flew. Well, that was a hit and went viral, and we were in business. We took a toll to see what would come next, and again we made a killing by announcing that Defenestration was the new norm and fast becoming a Notoriously Bohemian Art Form. Now everybody wanted to tie on these battery-operated wings and fly out the castle window. Everybody, that is, but the KGB. They were steadfastly not amused, and couldn't figure out how to outcompete us, and move in on our burgeoning capitalistic enterprise.

Soon we were approached by a Russian television producer, who made us an offer we couldn't refuse. They wanted to launch an entire busload of Russian tourists out this window, to show the folks back in the homeland who had learned all about the Third Defenestration when the Communists had thrown a bunch of unhappy Bohemians out the window during the Communist occupation. And we agreed, but with one stipulation, and that was that the first in line had to be bonafide KGB. All in good fun, of course. And believe it or not, they agreed!

Defenestration as a Bohemian Art Form. Who would have thought?

