

summary

Veresegyház is a small town in Pest county, 25 kilometres from the capital, Budapest. It was first mentioned in a charter of 1375. In recent decades it has been one of Hungary's most dynamically developing and attractive communities. Since it gained the status of town in 1999, its population has doubled, reaching 18,000 – thanks to an influx of young families. A quarter of the population are under 18 and the average age does not reach 40. With its industrial and agricultural background alongside its rich cultural life, the town ranks fifth in Hungary in terms of development. In recent decades the idea of establishing a local museum has been raised several times. First in 1975 when, with the financial assistance of the local council, the Hungarian National Museum conducted excavations and the issue arose in connection with housing the resulting finds. This was linked to the idea of organising a local history exhibition in the Luttor House at 58 Fő Road, which was held in 1980-89. It turned out that the exhibition could possibly be the core of a future museum, though the actual, limited result took the form of a local folk museum established in 1990 in the Láng House at 95 Fő Road. The two-room building presented the local peasant lifestyle of the early years of the 20th century with furnishings purchased by the local authority and collected by local residents. Temporary exhibitions displaying local traditions were also held there. The idea of establishing a museum matured, such that in 1995 a concept plan was drawn up. However, primarily due to financial difficulties, nothing came of the plan and the idea was put on hold for a long time. About 20 years were needed before the town, with its growing cultural life, could regard a longer-term plan for a museum as realistic. Towards the end of last year, the town used its own resources to transfer the local history collection to its final, restored home at 5 Szentlélek Square, which was in the possession of the local authority. The former local residence, which is based on medieval foundations, stands in the historical centre of the town, near the church, a listed building also originally medieval, but reconstructed in Baroque style. It has a ground space of more than 250 square metres, which can be adapted for exhibitions, as well as community and other purposes. It also has a large garden suitable for open-air events. The professional approaches, the past of Veresegyház, the building renovated specifically to house a museum and the existing local history collection have justified the establishment of a 'museum collection of public interest'. There is also the organisational and financial background for this. The local authority of Veresegyház has undertaken to ensure the functioning of the museum by providing the necessary personnel and finance within the framework of the Váci Mihály Cultural Centre.

This summer the At Home Gallery in Šamorín, Slovakia, staged András Blazsek's exhibition *History of a Split between Islands and Dams, Circles and Lines*, which reflected on the landscape changed by the Gabčíkovo dam in such a way that, although the artist kept a distance from the usual Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros discourse, he focused on matters which provided a new perspective and language for the otherwise over-discussed theme. The exhibition aimed to rise above the trauma, as the gallery itself had done years earlier. Thus both the gallery and the exhibition expressed the intention of going beyond significant, albeit very different themes. The relationship between the place of the exhibition and the exhibition itself was especially important and meaningful, even though that may have not been in the minds of either the gallery or the artist. The At Home Gallery is housed in a former synagogue, which was built in 1912 in Somorja (today Šamorín). It is the only synagogue which has remained intact in the Žitný ostrov region of Slovakia. During the Holocaust, the Jewish community almost entirely disappeared from the area and the synagogues were systematically demolished during the era of state socialism. The contemporary art gallery was established in a private apartment in 1995. In 1996 it moved to the synagogue building with the approval of the Slovak Jewish Communities. Since its foundation, the At Home Gallery has worked to its own ideals and conviction independently of any political orientation. This is thanks to the fact that in those years when no state subsidy could have even been imagined, there were citizens' organisations, associations and foundations which could be relied on. After the initial heroic operation of the gallery, when it had to face many difficulties, it was the president of the Slovak Republic, Andrej Kiska, who delivered the celebratory speech in 2015 marking the 20th anniversary of its foundation. András Blazsek's exhibition involved a degree of rising above matters. The topic and the trauma are enormously different from the gallery's own history, yet they share something in common: leaving behind a theme and an attitude, and using a new language together with a search for new content. This involves rising above the usual discourses about the dam, which have not been able, or did not want to get away from the familiar political, legal and environmental approach and certainly have been determined to place the dam on one side of the conceptual dichotomies: constructed justifiably or not, constructive or destructive, useful or useless. Meanwhile, the area where the construction itself was realised and caused most change was not examined. In line with the intention, the exhibition only examined the landscape, which was not the subject of research so far, and in that way it aimed to tell the story of the dam and its consequences.

Mesztegyő, a small village in County Somogy, conceals a special treasure. The interior walls of the church erected next to the Franciscan monastery founded in 1746 were painted by István Dorffmaister (1729-1797). Restoration of the church, which was severely damaged during World War II, began with the ceiling frescos above the main altar in 1996-97. After a five-year break, restoration headed by Gábor Lehrbaum of the approximately 100-square-metre apse, which is eight metres high and reaches the dome, was completed in 2002. One of the most talented and prolific figures of Baroque painting in Hungary, Dorffmaister lived and worked in the country until his death in 1797. He met the Count Kéthely Hunyady family from Upper Hungary towards the beginning of his career. The family moved the Franciscans to their Mesztegyő estate in order that they would organise the construction of the village church. In 1788 Joseph II abolished religious orders, which put an end to the Franciscans' presence. Later, the Sisters of Mercy used the monastery for quite a long time, then following nationalisation and restoration the school, which is still there, was housed in the building. Construction of the church was completed in 1756. With regard to its size and decoration, it can be considered one of the most beautiful and significant monastic churches in the Veszprém diocese. Its imposing interior is striking, even in its dilapidated condition. The over-all effect suggests that a uniform architectural and iconographic programme for the whole building showing late Baroque stylistic elements was implemented. Two side pilasters of the four in the trompe-l'oeil architecture of the shrine support a triumphal span, which is decorated with the coats of arms of the donor Baron János Hunyady Nepomuki and his wife Baroness Erzsébet Haller. Two Hungarian saints can be seen in the painted niches. Dorffmaister's favourite figures, the frescos of Saint Stephen and Saint Ladislaus, are depicted with grisaille technique, giving the impression of life-size statues. The artist closed the shrine's shell vaulting with a composition of the Holy Trinity, opening the space for revealing the heavenly sphere. The main altar is joined by four side altars, two to the north and two to the south. The side altars still have traces of shrapnel from the war, and mould due to the unresolved insulation has also caused damage, therefore a large part of the walls have been whitewashed. Their research and restoration will be the task of a further phase of restoration. It should be noted that expert exploration of the connections of listed buildings could cast light on the suspicion of art historians, according to which the interior frescos of the Mesztegyő church show similarities with the parish church of Sümeg, which is the work of Maulbertsch and precedes the Mesztegyő frescoes dated at 1772 by 15 years.

Since the 2010 book by Zsolt Vasáros about museum exhibitions there has not been a comprehensive study dealing with designing and staging an exhibition, and the relationship between designed and implemented exhibitions in Hungary. The genre of exhibition reviews is declining and in any case they seldom address the work of those who design visual effects and brands, and create exhibitions, while elsewhere in the world texts about these issues keep appearing. *MúzeumCafé* spoke with two experts who have staged many large-scale exhibitions, though they have never worked together. Art historian Krisztina Jerger worked for Budapest's Kunsthalle between 1977 and 2005, and was a permanent curator for Józsefváros Gallery from 1978 to 1982. She received the Award for Excellence in 1981 and 1985, and the Noémi Ferenczy Prize in 1993. She was deputy director and arts director of the Hungarian Institute of Culture in Warsaw between 2005 and 2010, and was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Polish Republic in 2010. She received the *MúzeumCafé* Award for the National Gallery's exhibition *The Survivor's Shadow – The Life and Works of El Kazovsky*, of which she was one of the curators. Zsolt Vasáros DLA, is an associate professor and head of the Department of Industrial and Agricultural Building Design at the Architecture Faculty of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. He not only has several permanent and temporary exhibitions to his name, but also the Narmer Architecture Studio, which designed the National Museum Restoration and Storage Centre. His doctorate examined the joint issues concerning architecture and archaeology. He has been awarded several national and international prizes for the recently completed Rudapithecus Visitors' Centre in Rudabánya, which he designed together with the Faculty's Doctoral School. According to Krisztina Jerger, a fundamental task of staging an exhibition is to facilitate interpretation by devising an invisible map and defining focal points and correlations, as well as to provide an enjoyable time for visitors. Today the person staging an exhibition is vital. He/she is not only in charge of scenography but also the brand, yet his/her name is rarely mentioned. The person responsible for an exhibition's scenography is sometimes noted, but it is still not a common practice. Jerger has worked with the best artists who asked her to curate and stage their exhibitions, trusting her value judgement and spatial perception. Staging an exhibition is always preceded by a long talk with the artist about selecting works and shaping the installation. Zsolt Vasáros rarely works with contemporary artists, rather with archaeologists, art historians and historians. Not all exhibitions have been success stories, and it has not depended on the displayed objects but on the participants and even his own contribution.

THEME

FROM THE SILVERWARE OF FREDERICK THE GREAT TO TUBULAR FURNITURE

Applied Arts, Design, the Culture of Objects in the Museums and Galleries of the German Capital

by Dániel Kovács, art historian, events director at the Collegium Hungaricum Berlin

p. 95

The inscription above the Reichstag entrance designed by Peter Behrens, the modern blocks of Hansaviertel, Le Corbusier's Machine for Living near the Olympic Stadium, the world's first traffic light among the modern skyscrapers of Potsdamer Platz – in Berlin the history of design is at the same time the history of the city. However, the situation is often contradictory. The largest museum with the greatest past has today a distinctly negative reputation. However, the institute functioning in line with the most exciting concepts occupies a rather small space. The Gutshaus Mahlsdorf mansion has been presenting the culture of objects and interior design of the second half of the 19th century since 1960. It is the home of Europe's largest Gründerzeitmuseum. The Mahlsdorf mansion is a local cultural centre, a popular events location, a place of pilgrimage for Berlin's LGBT community and a space for exhibiting design. Berlin has several interior design museums which have been established in former manor houses, like the Mahlsdorf mansion, though in view of the vicissitudes of the 20th century, it is not surprising that their furnishings are rarely original. Among applied arts museums, the one in London was the first to be established, in 1852. The second was in Vienna, in 1863, which was followed four years later by Berlin's. Thus the former Deutsches Gewerbemuseum, which since the directorship of Julius Lessing has been called the Kunstgewerbemuseum, is the world's third such museum. After several temporary locations, in 1881 the museum was provided with its own palace, designed by Martin Gropius and Heino Schmieden. The building was used for four decades according to the original intention – as a school and as a museum. A major part of the works was destroyed during World War II, then in the following decades the Kunstgewerbemuseum functioned in parallel in two separate countries, on each side of the border dividing the city, in the Köpenicki and the Charlottenburg mansions, respectively. In its current state, the new museum built in 1985 is merely professional with nothing on a human level. The museum seems to do its best to discourage visitors. In addition, a number of specialist institutes operate in Berlin, which you can boldly approach should you wish to learn about the history of Germany's culture of objects and design. One of those is the Bröhan Museum, where in addition to the latest acquisitions (tubular furniture of 1920s Berlin) a fair amount of Zsolnay porcelain can be seen. Among the institutes in Berlin dealing with the culture of objects, mention must be made of the archive and museum concerned with the Bauhaus, established in 1919, and which has become a favourite of not only professionals, but also tourists. In the past decade its number of visitors has doubled, reaching more than 100,000 a year, of whom more than 80% are foreigners.

Two huge buildings stand on Vienna's Stubenringen, the section of the Ringstrasse, or Grand Boulevard, linking the Danube Canal and the Stadtpark. Even at first sight you can see quite clearly that they are more or less the same age as the ring road itself, which Emperor Franz Joseph had initiated and which was constructed between the 1860s and 1890s. The two buildings house the Austrian Museum of Applied Arts and the University of Applied Arts Vienna, whose establishment was due to Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberg (1817-1885). He was the main promoter and founder, and his artistic approach and organising ability defined the first major period of institutionalised applied arts in Austria. It is instructive to examine the history of the Austrian Museum of Applied Arts, which in its exhibition concepts about the arts, museology and justification for collecting art objects even reflected the era preceding its foundation in 1864. It was easy to build the subsequently developing, so-called *Wiener Werkstätten*, which was associated during the turn-of-the-century Secessionist period with the name of Arthur von Scala (1845-1909), on this (from the start modern) institute within the framework of the museum. In terms of the museum's history, it was of great importance that the basic aim was not oriented towards the aims of conservation, rather creating a living, continuously renewing institute. Space was allocated to production, creation and reproduction – whether in terms of actual objects or the driving ideas behind them. Therefore, since it positioned itself between the two poles of 'art' and 'craft', two newer poles formed the boundary for the museum, namely practice and theory. Between the 1860s and the 1890s, the museum was primarily concerned with finding the appropriate environment and ideal arrangement of objects. The first exhibition, which opened in 1864, presented 2000 art objects, part of which comprised the emperor's private collection (made public then for the first time). The first location was the ballroom of the Hofburg, the imperial palace, but the museum quickly outgrew that space. After several temporary locations, it opened in its present building in 1871. With the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the promising development of the museum also came to an end. In the changed political and social climate, within which a national state had to be built on the ruins of what was now a defunct empire, there was nevertheless a certain continuity. The period between 1955 and 1985 can be characterised as transitional. Then the appointment of Peter Noever as director in 1986 marked the beginning of a new era. In place of the art-historical and traditional arts-centred approach – which, as we have seen, basically differed from the 19th-century conception of its foundation – the museum adopted a present-day and future-oriented perspective.

When I assumed my function of Director of the MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art in September 2011, one of the key tasks awaiting me was launching the preparatory process for a big anniversary in May 2014 – the celebration of the MAK’s 150 years. The task had several dimensions: First, developing a series of anniversary projects, with an entirely new approach for presenting the applied arts and design as its centerpiece—the 2,000 square-meter MAK DESIGN LAB being the result. Secondly, inviting a visionary speaker for the ceremony celebrating 150 years of the MAK. It became very clear to me that this visionary speaker had to be Martin Roth. Martin had become Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2011 but I only met him a year later. When I eventually invited him to deliver the keynote address at the MAK’s Anniversary (and he gladly accepted), I expected something special but I didn’t have a clue what exactly Martin would come up with. Martin surprised us all with the proposal of establishing an informal network of Applied Arts and Design Museums. According to Martin, such a network would reflect the shared opportunities and challenges Museums of Applied / Decorative Arts and Design face today and explore the ways of capitalising fully on the synergies between our institutions in the future. Martin also saw a need to discuss the relationships of Applied Arts and Design Museums with creative industries and examine the social impact of our Museums in a broader context. Martin invited me and three other colleagues from Paris, Prag, and Hamburg to join him as co-founders of the AAD Museums Network, which was formally established in the fall of 2014 and held its first meeting in Vienna in June 2015, with more than two dozen museums attending. More than 30 Museums have become part of the Network, and the number is still growing. When convening under our new chairman Olivier Gabet in Paris this fall, we will pay our respect to our generous friend and visionary mentor Martin Roth, who passed away in August 2017. It was his conviction that the public museum is owned by, and belongs to, the public and therefore had a mission to educate the public. He firmly believed in the European project and passionately defended it against its detractors. In his five years at the helm of the V&A, Martin was a dynamic and audacious museum innovator who left a legacy of continuing relevance to all Applied Arts and Design Museums. Besides construction projects such as the new V&A Exhibition Road Quarter, designed by Amanda Levete, and the new Europe 1600 – 1815 Galleries, Martin made us fully aware why museums have to play an active role in society and work for positive change of our civilization. It is in this spirit that the AAD Network will continue its work and hopefully live up to the vision Martin had in mind when he proposed such a network in Vienna in 2014.

The Applied Arts Museum's online collection database (gyujtemeny.imm.hu) has been accessible for all since October 2012, and as it expands it covers an increasing proportion of the collection. The online interface for registering the museum's objects relies on the ArtLista-Törzsléltár software, which was developed in Hungary and which facilitates continuous expansion of the content. From the start, one of the main aims was for objects to be included in the database together with newly-made, high-quality digital photos. We established the country's most up-to-date and in particular very user-friendly collection portal, accessible in both Hungarian and English. After the system was set up, digitization of the most outstanding Art Nouveau objects was undertaken first, with the support of an EU tender in the framework of the Partage Plus project (2012-2014, www.partage-plus.eu). Although the digitization of several thousand art objects was involved, with numerous items being scanned in 3D, it was clear that at that pace the museum's stock of 100,000 art objects would require decades before being fully accessible online. In 2015 about 5000 objects of the core collection were thus accessible, along with much reference material and 2000 photos of buildings made within the Partage Plus project. In order for the entire core collection to become researchable online within a reasonable time, i.e. within a few years, in the course of 2015 the museum developed the Transparency Project, which was launched with government support in early 2016. For the Museum of Applied Arts, the aim was for every art object of the collection to become accessible on the internet with a photograph and all important data. Thus outside researchers as well as members of the public to the widest extent would be able to obtain information about the objects, their history and significance. Within the project, it became possible to undertake the digitization much more quickly than earlier – sometime in a mass way. This has involved development of the museum's information technology toolbox – including a significant expansion of storage capacity with the server in order to accommodate archiving of the high resolution photos – as well as equipping new photo workshops. Implementation of the Transparency Project is taking place with a set volume of digitization and publication for each month. Almost the entire staff of the museum's collections are taking part in the process. The results speak for themselves. In 2016 around 10,000 art objects in the core collection were published online. The realistic aim for the end of 2017 is that around 60% of the entire collection (in total 62,148 objects) will be digitized and published online. Within the Partage Plus project, in 2013 the museum was connected with the Europeana portal and since then the museum's art objects have continuously been added.

The Contemporary Design Department of the Museum of Applied Arts was established in May 2015 with the aim of executing its mission of commitment to being the design centre of its era – a role it assumed on its foundation. Among the other aims, there was the intention to have a contemporary design collection which tries to retroactively remedy a deficiency of several decades. After all, when the museum opened there was a well-functioning practice of collecting contemporary art objects, though that ceased in the 1920s. A Modern Department existed between 1972 and 1995 with a mixed collection, which was difficult to define. Its history was rather convoluted up to the time it was closed under the directorship of Zsuzsa Lovag. The formation of the Department of Contemporary Design represents the return of a concept which was lost nearly a hundred years ago: namely that the museum would not only fulfil a role of archiving, but also have an intensive relationship with contemporary design institutions, designers and collectors – for the museum to be an engine, a generator of processes, instead of being just a passive observer. Despite all deficiencies, the museum core of Hungarian design can already be found in the collection of the Applied Arts Museum, and a survey of the complete collection with such a concept in mind is being conducted at present. Design can build a bridge to achieving openness towards contemporary art, since it is present in everyday life and spaces, and provides a solution for various problems. Reservations about contemporary art can be mostly done away with via design. While the majority of people can see contemporary works of the fine arts merely in museums and galleries, design surrounds us, forming our immediate or distant surroundings. The collecting involves individually crafted works, objects made by manufacturers and mass produced pieces, as well as different ways of presenting the museum's collection. It is a thinking process, therefore it is regarded as important for the museum to generate design processes so that it can follow the path of an art object from design to creation, then archive and present it. The foundation of the Department of Contemporary Design prior to the major reconstruction of the Applied Arts Museum reflects a clear-cut commitment to contemporary culture and a reference to the fact that the establishment of a Budapest Design Museum is part of the renewal process. It will open in the new wing of the building following the years of reconstruction. The aim is to establish a 20th and 21st century design collection. The experience of the MaDok project must also be taken into account when developing the collecting strategy. The next series of exhibitions aims to launch design projects which are inspired by objects in the entire museum collection, thus creating the opportunity to present contemporary designers.

T H E M E

OPINION LEADERS AND INTERACTIONS

Comprehensive visitor research at the Museum of Applied Arts

by Zsolt Koren, press officer at the Museum of Applied Arts

p. 161

A major element of the preparation for the reconstruction of the main building of the Museum of Applied Arts starting in 2017 was to conduct a number of comprehensive surveys among visitors and others related to the museum during the last year it still being open. It is hoped the results can be used to develop the museum's improvement projects and communication strategy. The surveys not only involve focussing on a thorough analysis of feedback from visitors, they should also reveal the circumstances, cultural motivation and communities of potential visitors, as well as what position museums, including the Museum of Applied Arts, occupy in the consumption of culture. The research conducted by some researchers and PhD students of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics began in autumn 2016 and the ten segments of the survey are expected to be completed by the end of 2017. Deeper reasons and connections were researched using qualitative methods in three segments in the initial phase of visitor research, when problems, ideas and recommendations were outlined, while their relevance could be checked by a sample involving a large number of people. First of all, deep interviews were conducted with 25 people, including the museum's professional staff such as art historians, restorers, heads of collections and employees who were in contact with visitors, for example ticket clerks, museum attendants and the information desk staff, as well as outside experts who were well familiar with the museum's collections or operation and were in professional contact with the institute. Focus group interviews were conducted with well-defined circles of people related to the museum, such as teachers in public education familiar with our museum education activity, opinion leaders in design, members of the Friends of the Museum group and the public attending individual events. Staff independently of their professional field who worked for the museum for less than a year and students studying economics and the arts from Corvinus University and the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design took part in managed brainstorming. We primarily asked them to have free associations about the museum building and stipulate current, exciting and trendy ideas for their generation, disregarding whether they were realistic in terms of implementation. We hoped to gain information about visitors' experiences and satisfaction primarily by personal inquiry. Two-page questionnaires were filled in by 1555 visitors in Hungarian, English, French, German and Russian after they had viewed the exhibitions. This lasted for ten weeks from May 2017 and a lion's share of work was taken by the ticket-collecting museum attendants. Our experience with this indicated that the one-off task made them enthusiastic and motivated, since it opened another communication channel between them and visitors.

Eszter Ráday's interview with the archaeologist János György Szilágyi was published in the literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* in April 2014 on the occasion of the arrival in Budapest of the first seven pieces of the Sevso treasure. The noted classical archaeologist was no longer alive when the other pieces were returned and thus some of the questions raised in the interview could perhaps have been answered more easily. The conversation was essentially continued with the chair of the Sevso Working Committee, László Török, a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. A catalogue documenting the objects of the Sevso treasure was made in England, but they were not interpreted – at least no interpretations were published. The objects arrived and researchers had one surprise after the other because it seemed that the documentation concerned not so much the actual objects but their photographs. Personally studying objects is the only possible method for an expert to determine how two items might relate to one another regarding their age, style and craftsmanship. It is a presumption, and it is more or less probable, that the items were in the same ownership at the time they were hidden. Before that they had been owned by the same people for some time. If it was known when the individual objects were made and when they were concealed, it would be clear when they were last used. A radical development occurred in the research when all 14 objects became accessible, which previously could have only been hoped for. Yet the experts were bound to be disappointed, since they hardly had any opportunity to study the treasure first-hand. Now the treasure is off to provincial museums and it is difficult to work with them while they are behind glass. It has to be taken into account that the members of the Sevso Working Committee have full-time jobs and related duties in public institutes. Therefore, a five-year research plan was worked out for the first seven pieces, but now there is a request for the deadline to be extended somewhat for the 14 objects. Certainly, there are groups of objects which had formed a unit. Professor Török is primarily thinking of the three Hippolytus vessels. It seems that the two so-called geometric ewers and the wash basin also formed a set. They were clearly produced by the same workshop, although the two ewers were not made by the same craftsman. The other pieces were not made at the same time. The differences could be a decade or two, but even half a century could have passed between the time they were made. The set of objects should be imagined as an inheritance which came from the original owner, and gifts and purchases were added to it. The hunting plate was surely a gift for Sevso. However, it is not known who presented the gift, nor who Sevso actually was. In all likelihood, it was the owner who received the gift or who commissioned the object.

It is still disputed what should furnish the Esterházy Palace in Fertőd-eszterháza. According to most professionals, it would be best to leave the art objects formerly owned by the Esterházy family in public collections and occasionally display them at exhibitions in Fertőd. During World War II Prince Pál Esterházy (1901–1989) first had his art objects transported to the National Museum, then in late 1944 he had the boxes containing his treasure taken to his mansion in Tárnok Street in Buda's Castle District. Yet, while the Museum of Applied Arts and the National Museum survived the siege, a bomb severely damaged the Esterházy Mansion in Buda in early 1945. In January 1949 the objects were found during explorations led by archaeologist and art historian László Gerevich and art historian Pál Voit, and they were taken to the Museum of Applied Arts. The damage was incredible, but part of the almost ruined treasures was recreated by strenuous work of several decades in the Museum of Applied Arts. The museum asserts its right to them due to this heroic restoration. The family has never requested the return of the collection, though it does not deny that there are open questions. The argument on one side is that the treasure was acquired by the state according to Law VII/1949 on abolishing entailed property – if that is so, state ownership is legal. Yet the family regards the contract of deposit as valid, and since the deposit does not become void the property rights belong to the family. The most well-known pieces of the collection, which was augmented from the 17th to the 19th century and which is the only surviving Hungarian aristocratic collection of treasures, are the 260 gold and silversmith art objects and 65 lots of attire. Another part of the collection includes 97 coins, which are held in the National Museum. In the 1960s engravings and paintings of historic subjects, as well as a special musical instrument, Nikolaus Prince Esterházy's baryton were transferred there. The latter's collection of sheet music including some valuable Haydn manuscripts were acquired by the National Széchényi Library. All this can be seen as the family collection being scattered, or as the cultural legacy compiled by one of Hungary's most important families being obtained by the relevant specialized collections. The government has wanted to change this status quo since 2012. The task of vetting public collections fell on the State Secretariat for Culture. What could be found in Hungary after the war was placed in the Palace Museum, which opened in 1959. Most public collections regard any change as negative. In February 2013 they received another letter which asked for a list of "all the objects of cultural history relating to the Esterházy property". However, the public collections could not and did not want to provide the list within the stipulated deadline of a few weeks.

THEME

ALL TOGETHER OR SEPARATE?

The Applied Arts Collections of Provincial Museums

by Beatrix Basics

p. 197

Any author intending to write about the applied arts collections of provincial museums encounters numerous issues before addressing the actual theme: the method of collecting, the richness of genres, the history of a museum itself, the clarification of historical and contemporary concepts – and these are just a few of the topics requiring research and examination. Instead of the concept of applied arts, in the mid and late 19th century the term craft industry was used in Hungary. The two earliest and most significant museums in Europe were the South Kensington (today Victoria & Albert) Museum in London, established in 1857, and the Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie, founded in 1864. In Hungary, Flóris Rómer initiated the establishment of a museum of Hungarian applied arts in 1868. In 1871 a committee was set up comprising members of the National Crafts Association and the National Hungarian Fines Arts Association, and planning a museum got underway. Although the collection expanded, the building of the Museum of Applied Arts was ready only in October 1896. Most museums in the provinces began to collect objects of art immediately after their foundation. In some very rare cases, the objects were separated as a completely independent collection, but in general they constituted part of another collection, and in many cases it has remained like that from the start. Furthermore, apart from a few special exceptions, from the beginning right up to today it has been rare for such objects to be the subject of a permanent exhibition or temporary display. There are museums where objects of art are known to be kept mostly together with other collections, but they are not displayed either in permanent exhibitions, or included in an accessible data base. Three types of institute represent a special field of applied arts collecting: one concentrates on a branch of the applied arts, another preserves and displays one or more legacies, while the third involves ecclesiastical collections. The applied arts collections of provincial museums differ not only in their size and significance, but also in their character. There is a difference in whether they are able to collect continuously. When the 2016 statistics of museums are examined, they show that only a very few provincial museums have been able to augment their applied arts collections. Statistics indicate that growth was rather true for ecclesiastical collections and another type of museum not mentioned above – castle or mansion museums. An important and specific characteristic of acquisitions is that contemporary art objects are rarely acquired by museums, either by purchase or donations. This means that apart from some collections specialised in a particular branch of the applied arts or in legacies, these collections become set in the past and do not and cannot follow the changes in the genre.

Gábor Mezei was born into a family of artists. His mother, Magda Hauswirth, made hundreds of portrait caricatures of the well-known actors and artists between the 1930s and 1970s. His father, Imre Pán, became a central figure of the avant-garde, founder of the European School and the manager of Művészbolt (Artists' Shop), which accommodated the group's exhibitions. With such a background, how could he comply with the formal requirements of organic architecture as Imre Makovecz's interior designer? How can an artist survive as his works are slowly reduced to nothing? What responsibility does caring for the Pán-Mezei intellectual and material legacy involve? Gábor Mezei began to learn to draw with Gusztáv Sikuta and in a year he became so good that he was admitted to the Secondary School of Visual Arts. At the end of the third year, István Németh asked him tactfully if he wanted to change career as the profession was without theoreticians and he could be a journalist focussing on the arts. In other words, he indicated that he would be pleased to get rid of Mezei, but the latter resisted, only to receive a low grade. His friendship with György Fekete is well-known in professional circles. According to Mezei, Fekete has such an administrative, diplomatic and political practice and network, which goes together with being easily attacked. He was often employed as an interior designer by the state during the Kádár system, which was not linked to any political status. Designers for important, even politically-related exhibitions was not selected according to that. Mezei began his career in design offices whereby he met Imre Makovecz, which brought a major change in his career. He had to design furniture for the interior of Makovecz's buildings. VÁTI was a big step forward, since he began to be involved in the restoration of protected monuments. He headed the applied arts group called Prizma 13, which included members such as the ceramic potters Imre Schrammel and Ilona Benkő, metalsmith József Péri, tapestry artists Zsuzsa Szenes, Klára Preiser and Marianne Szabó, Makovecz's wife. They presented their works at more than 20 exhibitions including one in Cologne. Gábor Mezei was one of the first members of the Hungarian Academy of the Arts, but he was not one of the founders. He left the state companies in the 1980s and worked as a self-employed designer, continuing to work mostly with Makovecz. In the 1990s he also started to paint. He is presently involved in designing the furnishing of a newly built Makovecz church in Rákosliget. Besides managing the Pán-Mezei collection, he opened it for research. The first large-scale publication of the collection was a volume on the European School. A large part of the collection is no longer held by him, but is in a museum or soon to be transferred to a museum. Thus there is a guarantee that it would not be scattered.

Applied arts and design are in the focus of this issue of *MúzeumCafé*. The exhibition *Grammar and Grace – 500 Years of Reformation*, staged in the Hungarian National Museum up to November, was in a sense the manifestation of this theme, so it seemed evident that the journal would interview the curator of the exhibition's goldsmiths' objects, art historian Erika Kiss, who is in charge of the museum's Modern Goldsmith Collection. ERIKA KISS graduated in Hungarian literature and art history in 1990 and obtained her PhD in 2003. Her main research fields are the history of goldsmiths' craft in modern times and the history of art collecting in Hungary. A historical theme was introduced in an unusual way at the exhibition about the Reformation. It was edifying for her to work with an ecclesiastical historian, a museum education specialist, a literary scholar and a philologist. The museum is a melting pot and Erika Kiss enjoys being an art historian in a museum of history. The historian shapes the narrative and the art historian helps to present it. The National Museum, where the two main groups are represented by the many historians and archaeologists, is her first place of work. It was not easy to get a job there as an art historian and it is still not well-defined in Hungary how an art historian should operate in a history museum. An advantage of the National Museum is that a professional can get involved in many things in addition to his or her main field. The museum is like an estate where many people live, from stable hands to the lady of the manor. Diversity is inspiring, though Erika Kiss can spend painfully little time with the collection. Many changes have taken place since she began her career. For example, assistants have been withdrawn, but as with any estate there are many diverse tasks, for which assistance is needed. The National Museum tends to be referred to as a dusty, conservative place, but that is simply not true. According to Erika Kiss, the National Museum is the forefather of Hungarian museums. *In the beginning* were the National Museum and the National Library, and that's fine. For her it is where she started working and she will always see it as something very special. She thinks that is also true for the general public. From the beginning she has had two fields of interest – textile and goldsmiths' craft. She started to lecture on the history of goldsmiths' craft in 1994. Meanwhile, she gained a scholarship to study at Sotheby's Academy in London. A relatively small circle of museum professionals and collectors is involved with goldsmiths' craft and applied arts. Thanks to the course organised for valuers, she is in personal contact with both. Private individuals compile collections in line with their personality. They search for special objects and the collection of a museum also bears the marks of a museum specialist's personality.

Miklós Bendzsel was president of the Patent Office and then the National Office of Intellectual Property for nearly 20 years. He initiated and founded the Council of Hungarian Industrial Design 15 years ago. *MúzeumCafé* asked him to help clarify some concepts with regard to industrial design. We discussed whether the fine or the applied arts were more protected, where the boundary between applied arts and design was, and how a design attitude had become a school of thinking. For Bendzsel design is mostly characterised by it being shaped according to people's intellectual and financial demands, and thus it is never autotelic. The mass production of the second industrial revolution raised a new approach by reacting to consumer demands. What is regarded as design in the language of the 21st century is rooted in the planned further development of the applied arts of the 19th century. The relationship between supply and demand is expressed by marketability. The founder of the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius, gave the institute a new and inevitable match with the motto of their exhibition in 1923: "Art and technology – a new unity". The connection between material and form, mass production and design methodology, which began the process of exploring the possibilities with the concept of design, were all issues culminating in Bauhaus. Part of consumers' self-expression, moreover identity choice, concerns which of the thousands of products with similar aims they identify themselves with. The incredible choice of goods offers identities. European schools of design express themselves via László Moholy-Nagy's definition "the final aim of design is man himself", since by design they mean the action, consideration and method of thinking which initiate an active dialogue between the appointed or found target group and the artist. The producer's special relationship with the product does not cease when it becomes abandoned and useless. After all, it is the producer who knows the nature of the product's material and sees the possibilities of recycling. All this does not simply improve efficiency, it reinforces consumer loyalty. Loyalty to a brand can be achieved not only by high quality products, but also by the responsibility whereby manufacturers make a commitment by taking over from the consumers the care for the goods. Industrial production would like to differentiate with individualisation, brand building and design itself, although technical considerations do not always support this. The boundary between applied arts and design is more sensitive. The former traditional expression is maintained for individual works which are created by outstanding craftsmanship and represent artistic value as being unique or created in a small number at most. Design is conscious sensitivity of form embodied in mass products with technical, ergonomic and aesthetic dimensions.

June 2017

by Gréta Süveges

p. 255

IAt first sight Bucharest is an undeniably vibrant and rapidly developing east European capital. To compare it with Budapest, Bucharest is perhaps less spectacular, but it has a strong presence of Bauhaus, which is hardly present in Budapest, apart from a few villas in Buda and perhaps some buildings on Pozsonyi Road. However, neo-Baroque and crumbling grandeur are visibly present with the brutal contrast of newly erected tower blocks and Socialist Realist buildings. Bucharest's exciting art scene emerges in this intensively developing and daily transforming urban environment. The Royal Palace built at the beginning of the 19th century on Calea Victoriei (Victory Road) in the city centre houses the National Museum of Art of Romania (MNAR). The palace consists of several parts which were built at different times and one part is still the residence of the descendants of the Romanian royal family. The building of the museum was constructed in the 1930s and opened to the public – as can be read on the website of the museum – only in 2013, following the overthrow of communism. The MNAR comprises such collections as the oeuvre of Theodor Pallady, the K. H. Zambaccian Museum and a unit including 30 small parts of the art collection compiled by 20th-century art collectors and artists. It is an interesting point that very early on, precisely from 1947, the communist regime also intended to turn the royal palace into a Romanian national museum. The Palace of Parliament (Casa Poporului) houses three museums. Besides the visitors' centre, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Communist Totalitarianism, as well as the two houses of the Romanian Parliament are accommodated in the building. It is an intangible memento of the past and the problems of "what to do with the past" in a strange medley of politics, culture and tourism. The collection compiled in recent decades and defined by the gallery as incidental becomes a visual criss-cross in the spaces of the former Ceauşescu Palace burdened with the past. Forbidden, tolerated and supported works without artists' names and dates are in one place. Visitors are left on their own with their impressions. Together with the other exhibitions, an exciting institute of contemporary art is outlined. The exhibition *The Ephemerist, A Mihai Olos Retrospective* can be seen on the first floor. Olos was an artist who worked in many fields, including painting, sculpture, graphic art, ceramics and poetry, spanning minimalism and conceptualism. Mihai Olos's exhibition is not merely a retrospective, but also an exciting look at one of the most significant artists of post-war Romanian art, as well as his inclusion in the regional art discourse. The indisputable significance of the National Museum of Contemporary Art is precisely that it reflects on the past and connects regional art with western movements.



Idén második alkalommal rendezték meg a szervezők a Fesztivál Akadémia programsorozatát, amelynek 2017. június 10. és 16. között a Zeneakadémia, a Pesti Vigadó, az Ádám Jenő Zeneiskola, a Régi Zeneakadémia és a Széchenyi fürdő adott otthont. A Kokas Katalin és Kelemen Barnabás művészeti vezetőik nevével jegyzett rangos fesztivált a Magyar Fejlesztési Bank is támogatta.

- ¶ A programsorozat szakmai részét a mesterkurzusok jelentették: a nemzetközi továbbképzésre tizennyolc és huszonkilenc év közötti hegedűs, brácsista, csellista, zongorista, fuvolista, klarinétos, nagybőgős és énekes (énekeseknél harmincöt éves korig) hallgatók jelentkezhetnek. A középpontban idén is a kamarazenélés állt, a kiválasztott diákokat kamarafarmációkba osztották be, majd mindegyik formáció a fesztivál művészeivel dolgozott együtt egy-egy komoly kamaramű tételében. A Fesztivál Akadémia a világon egyedülálló lehetőséget kínál a diákoknak azzal, hogy kamarazenei fesztiválon együtt dolgozhassanak és léphessenek fel a művészekkel. A mesterkurzuson részt vevők a közös próbák mellett egyéni tudásukat is csiszolhatták, különórákat vehettek a neves művészekről.
- ¶ A program része volt Magyarország első korosztályos nemzetközi hegedűversenye, az I. Fehér Ilona Hegedűverseny. A verseny zsűrielnöki tisztét a világhírű hegedűművész, Shlomo Mintz, Fehér Ilona tanítványa vállalta.
- ¶ Az érdeklődők meghallgathatták Fazekas Gergely műismertető előadásait és kerakasztal-beszélgetéseken is részt vehettek. A programsorozatot matinékoncertek színesítették, és a Fesztivál Akadémia minden eseményét meghatározta a kettős Kodály-évforduló (a zeneszerző 135 éve született és ötven éve halt meg), illetve az emlékezés Kocsis Zoltánra, aki az első Fesztivál Akadémián még részt vehetett.
- ¶ Nagy érdeklődés kísérte az esti hangversenyeket, melyek közül igazi kuriózumnak számított a Széchenyi fürdőben tartott *Barokk a vízben* című koncert, ahol a közönség akár Európa legnagyobb neobarokk fürdőjének medencéjéből is élvezhette Handel: *Vízizene* című művét.
- ¶ Fesztivál Akadémia 2018-ban is lesz: a kamarazene kedvelőit és a szakmai résztvevőket július 23. és 30. között a megszokottakon kívül újabb színes programok és helyszínek várják majd.

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