

summary

Digital contents compiled in recent decades by institutes specialising in national heritage open up new opportunities for collections to supply their originally analogue materials more efficiently, as well as in an innovative way. In the competition for the attention of visitors experts experiment with increasingly new technologies, often using tools and practices which have been tried and tested in mass communication. Today digital storytelling often appears in the Hungarian museum scene as a fashionable method of presenting collections. Various applications of a new type of storytelling have quickly spread since the 1990s and have gained popularity, not only in education and tourism but also in museum practice. The superficial interpretation of technology threatens with the danger of only seeing the product as a virtual exhibition created with multimedia means. Yet digital storytelling is a far more complex method and it is worth learning about its history, toolkit and some good practices in order to use it successfully. The so-called narrative change which occurred in the 1970s and 1980s radically transformed the research methods of social-scientific disciplines. The story, the narrative, is known to be a basic form of human meaning-creating activities, a way of interpreting the surrounding world. However, it is impossible to interpret the world in its entirety, only individual narratives exist, which reflect the identity and the socio-cultural position of the individual. The spread of digital media and thus storing information in a digital form promote the application of storytelling since content is segmented to parts. Individual parts can be relayed in optional form and order. The narrative can be shaped according to the recipient's demands. Stories are mediated in different forms and by different tools in the new communication model of the digital age. The first step in creating a narrative is for the storytellers to be able to manage their own digital collections in either some collection handling system or digital repository. Today several free software applications and subsidiary possibilities help to generate a story. The use of digital storytelling may be advantageous from several aspects for museums holding the treasures of national heritage. Each item of the heterogeneous collections has its own story, at the same time an object of art can be made into part of another story by placing it in another context. The use of digital storytelling requires more effort and creativity from the curator, yet it makes identification and understanding easier for the recipient. It is an exciting question how storytelling, which is gaining in popularity and is based on participation, will modify the roles of storyteller and listener.

With modification in 2014 of the law on cultural heritage protection, a new model appeared about the archaeological requirements in relation to large investments. Accredited institutes are appointed on the basis of a decree, so it is not necessary for investors to have a public procurement procedure to select the institute conducting excavations. Currently, undertaking the archaeological tasks in connection with a large investment, or awarding the associated right of participation, involves an annual, quality oriented administrative procedure. An accredited institute or organisation is obliged to report about the existence of the conditions every year. The minister examines them and each year publishes the list of accredited institutes (those with the right to excavate) and organisations (enterprises without that right). Accreditation is the least thought-through or mature part of Hungarian archaeological protection, though it is a new, defining element. The goal would be to raise the level of execution of archaeological tasks, in that only accredited institutes can undertake activities in relation to large investments. Thus the aim of the accreditation process would involve qualification, testing suitability and certification. Yet the criteria for qualification are weak. The highest requirement for qualification is an MA degree, expertise in archaeological periods is not included, only suitability for heading excavations counts. Clearly, defining the conditions for the personnel has not been fully worked out, such as what kind of qualifications are to be required for individual spheres of activity, what experience is required, and regulation of the legal relations is not uniform. The material conditions are only roughly sketched out. In the case of properties no indicators or index-figures are presented and the facilities could be better elaborated. With the relatively easily fulfilled financial conditions, accredited bodies have to meet four criteria: 1. the necessary financial means must be available; 2. they have paid the fees for subcontractors on time; 3. they are not on the list of those who owe tax or are under the act of distraint and have no tax, customs or contributions or other public liabilities owing for longer than six months; 4. they are not under bankruptcy or liquidation proceedings. Albeit important, none guarantees reliable operation in the future. Archaeological accreditation seems to be a step towards outsourcing and privatising archaeology, rather than a strict system of accreditation (since private organisations which for the time being have no right to excavate easily “have got in”). The introduction of accreditation and the effect of the new system is not yet visible. At the same time privatisation implicitly means that sooner or later there will have to be opportunities for foreign enterprises to be accredited.

Deficiencies and damage disturb or destroy the aesthetic value of a work of art. Some specialists favour preserving a deficient, damaged condition. Others regard it as just a starting point for further treatment. The degree of restoration of an artwork, or its necessity, can be influenced by the events of an object's history. Thus the study of their past records is an important task from the aspect of restoration. The difficulties concerning a picture's history are well exemplified by *Lot and His Daughters* by the Florentine artist Orazio Fidani (1610 – after 1656), held in the Museum of Fine Arts. Partial investigation was undertaken in the 1890s. During the Napoleonic Wars, when it was held by the Esterházy Picture Gallery, the picture was seriously damaged and thus it was given a new canvas support. Then attempts were made to correct the deficiencies. In line with the then prevailing practice, this involved re-painting. More thorough investigation took place in the 1980s. This revealed a strongly fractured, fragmentary picture, whose restoration was questioned. In 2000, in the course of a new investigation, the restorers established that about a quarter of the work was seriously deficient. However, most of it remained almost perfect. A decision was made in favour of complete restoration of its forms and colours. A special case of aesthetic restoration of an incomplete fresco is that of *The Annunciation* by Cola Petruccioli (1360 – 1401). The surface of the fresco in the Fine Arts Museum was full of blemishes, numerous abrasions and deficiencies across a large area, which disrupted its unity. Major problems were treated with plaster, while the damaged painted parts were retouched. Preservation of a conserved state is exemplified by the Nagyszalók altar of the Virgin Mary (Hungarian National Gallery), dating from 1483. In the early 20th century a wing depicting *The Annunciation* was pointlessly supplemented. During later restoration, it was decided to comply with the original situation. Mihály Munkácsy's *Christ Before Pilate* (1881) is a good example of using archive documentation. The beard of one of the figures, a high priest, was retouched essentially on the basis of a contemporary photograph taken by Adolphe Braun. A good example of preserving the past is provided by the main altar of Csíkszentlélek (National Gallery). With the help of its construction frame, found during restoration, it was possible to recreate the unity of the altar, which had survived in excellent condition. A case of complementary sculptural work was that of the 1520 St. Anne altar from the Church of the Holy Spirit in Leibic (National Gallery). There are also examples of entire supplementation and damage restoration. Such is the 1520 St. Anne altar from the Church of St. John the Baptist in Kisszeben (National Gallery). The process was aided by the example of the altar from Leibic.

HAS ZSIGMOND MÓRICZ DIED?

Ágnes Karácsony talks to Ferenc Darvasi and Gergely Péterfy

p. 71

IWhat must a community not forget? It is a question regarding literary memory. What would become of society and what would it be like without literary memories? Ferenc Darvasi, a researcher of Iván Mándy and an editor, Gergely Péterfy, a writer who with his novel *Stuffed Barbarian* reinstated Ferenc Kazinczy to his venerable place in Hungarian literature, and *Múzeum-Café* explore who defines literary memory and whether the position of future generations can be concluded from the present.

MC: The zeitgeist shapes who regards literature by what criteria and when, which authors are raised into the canon or perhaps who is excluded from it. What else shapes it?

GP: Clearly, the zeitgeist changes rapidly and future generations read authors differently. Try to explain to a teenager today what the present generations in their 40s and 50s felt in 1980 when in pubs we read György Petri in samizdat. But how taste is formed is a multi-faceted game. Currents may bring writers into fashion, but later they may even experience a low tide in literary life.

FD: Let's look at those around the journal *Occident* and their influence. From the aspect of the canon, it seems that Hungarian prose in the first half of the 20th century could be entirely defined by Zsigmond Móricz and Dezső Kosztolányi. No doubt they are excellent writers, yet the list of names can be extended – from Gyula Krúdy to Ernő Szép. On the other hand, Móricz was raised to a pedestal during the time of socialism, just as Attila József was appropriated. Kosztolányi was the “black sheep”, “uninterpretable”. But that has changed. The postmodern zeitgeist has somewhat – let's say – “devalued” Móricz, regarding his world as distant. Hence he had a few bad years in literary memory. He almost had to be rediscovered. Zsófia Szilágyi, Anna Cséve and others who showed new facets of Móricz have played a significant role in that.

MC: And also aesthetician Péter Balassa. At the time of the 1989-90 political changes he wanted to know “why you can feel that Móricz has died”.

FD: Yes, until then everyone kept saying Móricz's style was not as interesting as his world. Having reread Móricz, Balassa was among the first to say that Móricz's language was only apparently simple and rough, but actually it was imaginary and well-structured.

GP: Let me mention the case of Lőrinc Szabó. His poetry was almost completely absent from literary discourse in the 1980s. He was actually sliding into a role of a Shakespeare translator, in which he did not really excel. But a few literary historians, primarily Lóránt Kabdebó, pulled him out from the pit. They dusted down Lőrinc Szabó and organised conferences about his oeuvre.

MC: *So literary historians and researchers significantly determine literary memory.*

FD: That is true, but it still matters who is concerned with their oeuvres. It is very fortunate that György Vári began researching Péter Balassa's writings and Márton Soltész started to review those of Zsolt Csalog.

GP: It's true that it often depends on individual moves who gets into the limelight, yet not only literary historians may discover an author, but writers themselves may strive for predecessors. I think Péter Esterházy did a lot for Kosztolányi by putting him back into literary memory. Of course, there are unquestionable texts. They are vital, elementary and need no movers. They themselves forge ahead. They are like lightening – they strike and that's it. For example, each page of Attila József or Sándor Weöres excites you every time.

FD: I agree. Yet in vain were other authors highly esteemed by the general taste of their age, although later generations no longer mentioned them and they cannot clamber back to literature. Ferenc Herczeg used to be considered a leading writer, he was as famous as a pop star.

GP: He was really a star of gentry Hungary. Today he is not read because he is not interesting. Certain ways of speaking and thinking become out of date over time. Some authors fall from memory precisely due to the lack of development of the language.

FD: But Ferenc Herczeg faded not only due to his style. His role in Horthy's Hungary did not necessarily do him much good. By the way, his own time found him more readable than Kosztolányi and it is always easier to achieve mass success for a writer who serves a customary taste. Kosztolányi's writing technique was absolutely novel, with hidden concealments between the sentences at that time. I even find it difficult to imagine how his works were understood. He or Babits were not read by the masses. We must not forget either that *Occident* was regarded as a small journal and had few readers.

GP: *Occident* represented a marginal subculture. It had 200 subscribers, even at its peak. But that small intellectual circle grew into something huge.

MC: *Yet we take it for granted that certain authors have always been present in Hungarian literature and have never fallen out from there. Then it turns out that there were some even among those who were considered solidly there, yet who needed to be rediscovered.*

FD: Such as Miklós Radnóti. When I attended university at the beginning of the 2000s Radnóti's literary position in the canon weakened. Literary history's theory of the main current, Petőfi–Ady–Attila József, ranked Radnóti as a lower side branch of Attila József.

MC: *While in an early diary note Radnóti wrote that his generation was the Radnóti generation.*

FD: It is a fact that his oeuvre, although not immense, occupies an exceptional place in literary history. But it required Győző Ferencz's competence. He began editing Radnóti's texts and arranging Fanni Gyarmati's library perhaps some 20 years ago. When making the extensive notes at the end of Fanni's diary nothing escaped Ferencz's attention. And literary historian in Szeged, Tamás Bíró-Balogh, is also concerned with Radnóti. He has recently compiled a volume of the poet's dedications.

MC: *I was surprised to hear Ferenc Darvasi say a year ago that Iván Mándy was held in unquestionable esteem in the 1980s. However, after his death many had their doubts regarding him. I myself agreed with poet Péter Kántor who said: "It was good to live with Iván Mándy in the same country." But truly – and I am looking at Ferenc Darvasi now – did you have to find Mándy's place again in Hungarian literature?*

FD: That's going too far, yet attention directed to Iván Mándy strongly fluctuated already during his lifetime. Not all the poets gathered around the journal *Újhold* (New Moon) had a volume published before 1948, but he did. For example, László Lator had a volume of poems ready, yet it was banned from publication at the last minute in 1948. A volume of poetry by Lator could be first published only in 1969. However good a poet he is, for a long time he had to take a different path. He was primarily a translator and an editor, which must have been a great disappointment for him. On the other hand, Mándy was awarded the Baumgarten Prize already at a young age. That was followed by years of being banned, silence and in vain did the Csutak books follow one another after 1956, since he became really well-known only in the 1970s. So much so that he still had a large following in the 80s and 90s, whereas at that time Péter Esterházy and other postmodern writers were very much on the scene. But Mándy perhaps achieved too much. Authors whose influence is very high in their lifetime can often fall out from the canon temporarily or entirely.

MC: *Why is that?*

FD: Literature is often a contest of generations – they have different ideals regarding literature. Péter Esterházy is the emblematic figure of the generation more or less in their 60s and 70s. Although younger people also appreciate him, they regard someone else as “their own writer”.

MC: *Incidentally, is there still something to discover about Mándy?*

FD: A conference on the journal *Újhold* was recently held in the Petőfi Literary Museum. Of those connected to *Újhold*, interestingly there were special presentations held only about Ágnes Nemes Nagy, Mándy and János Pilinszky. The three of them have remained. The others unfortunately have not. Although György Rába would also deserve it, for example. The “resurrection” of writers can also be helped by finding some unpublished manuscripts after their death, although you must be careful with that, too. Ágnes Nemes Nagy did not want her novel *Five Pine Trees* published. After Aladár Schöpflin had not recommended its publication, she was self-critical enough to leave it at that. The book was published after her death. It is for ever a question whether something a writer did not want to be published has to be, or is allowed to be published. To keep writers in memory it is important to even collect their correspondence. Iván Mándy would be 100 in 2018. That is when Magvető will publish his selected letters. Currently I am collecting material for the book, making notes about the letters and trying to find the pair to those he received. Perhaps he also wrote to those from whom he received letters, although he was not a great correspondent. He was also noted for writing his short stories on the paper of others’ letters. I’ve found a letter by Ottó Orbán in the manuscript archive of the PLM that was filed among the Mándy manuscripts because he began writing a short story on it.

MC: *Do you think that the new literary memory has changed the past image of Mándy?*

FD: For instance, Mándy’s early letters are very interesting. We always recall him stereotypically as a coffee drinking gentleman who hardly speaks. Yet those letters show that he was also young and easy-going.

MC: *Do you think that literary circles can also designate literary standard-bearers for themselves?*

GP: Absolutely! Mihály Babits designated János Vajda, and Péter Esterházy marked out Géza Ottlik. Everyone develops his own world in which he tries to lean on lines of force which others didn’t do earlier. Those who become strong in a literary period usually conclude an alliance about whom to place in the centre of interpretation. Of course, they do it for their selfish interest and for aesthetic admiration.

FD: Perhaps that was why Iván Mándy was forgotten for some time. It was because he went so much on his own way. It is awkward when someone tries to write in Mándy's style. In addition, that world no longer exists. You can feel nostalgic about it, but it cannot be continued. Mándy's universe is his own, inside out. This is also true for Szilárd Borbély – it cannot be continued. When he died a great number of people spoke up, he was liked by young people. It will take the next 10-20 years for it to be decided whether he remains in the general consciousness.

GP: By the time a writer dies we may have had enough of him. The world around him quiets down. The swell of the sea calms down after the obligatory memorial volumes. And people suddenly stand in the present, which those authors who are alive will have a say in. I don't think you can avoid it. I wonder what will happen to Péter Esterházy, since the magic 20 years can reach anybody. After his death an author in any case spends as much time in purgatory. Then it will be decided what happens: long damnation or hallelujah. But it is good anyway if the magic time catches up with one, since then there is a chance for literary resurrection. And if 25 years later he can still say something essential for the given era, then he will surely remain. Otherwise he disappears together with his own age.

FD: On the other hand, it is also possible that others may look at an author in a different way 10-20 years later and a new perspective may open up for his oeuvre. Part of the nature of oeuvres is that many people write about an author on his death, then the feeling fades. Although in a strange way, few writings were published about Imre Kertész when he died. It could be felt, it seemed, that he did not become a basic experience in Hungarian literature. Esterházy was commemorated by many. He is missed from present day Hungary, as also in public life and from a moral aspect.

GP: It is European literary memory that fosters Imre Kertész and not the Hungarian, or at least not so much. It represents a painful lack in Hungarian literature that Kertész somehow does not have a place in it. His texts have not become as deeply embedded in our literature or in the discourse about literature as any of the texts of Esterházy, Nádas or Krasznahorkai. I do not know the reason. Perhaps because his sentences were too strong, because they were written by a Nobel Prize winner. Or because you cannot so playfully cuddle up with a sentence by Kertész as with a sentence by Nádas? Or because he regarded what we have here as provincial. He was absolutely right about that. In any case, how authors will be regarded in the future does not merely depend on what happens to them in the Hungarian public mind. The international literary process, which also shapes us, will have a word, too.

MC: *Can the genre also shape literary memory?*

FD: Good question. Hungarian literature is focussed on novels. Readers also place themselves more into a novel than, say, into a short story. If you only take the prose line of Miklós Mészöly–Iván Mándy–Géza Ottlik, it is not accidental that Ottlik is mentioned most. That is because he wrote his novel *School at the Frontier*, although it did not represent a milestone regarding its style even in its own era. Yet, Mándy did not write a novel, and Mészöly is more difficult to read. By the way, publishers often try to direct authors who are essentially short story writers towards the novel.

MC: *In such a case the publisher immediately deprives the author of the opportunity of literary memory.*

FD: Even that may happen. Since they not only write their best books but those they should not necessarily do.

MC: *It turns out from what you have been saying so far that there are different literary memories in Hungary. But is it only a Hungarian phenomenon?*

GP: It is surely specific that Hungary has a politically and ideologically determined literary memory. Those who get into power often want to rewrite the past. They believe they have attained a top position even in the politics of memory. Of course, there are those whom you cannot put in a box politically or ideologically according to peremptory decision. We have mentioned Attila József. It doesn't matter that a left-wing discourse gave him prominence, he himself remained so vivid that his talent shines through anyway. And it is an aesthetic experience. My daughter is a 16-year-old secondary school student and I can see how much Attila József captures her.

FD: Yes, there are authors whom no ideology can damage. I, for example, would like to reread *The Paul Street Boys* every year. Ferenc Molnár's novel lives on from generation to generation without any kind of promotion.

MC: *Returning to the subject, can Albert Wass or József Nyirő be part of literary memory due to political pressure in the 21st century? Can it be taken seriously that politics commands who should belong to the canon now?*

GP: It's an important question. To the west from Hungary there are no court mercenary pen-pushers or court chronicles. It is our misfortune in Hungary that literature can be pulled into such games whereby favourite writers of a political system are born. Anna Jókai is the Iván Boldizsár of the present era. These are unfortunate matters. It is not a good thing to be the writer of any system. Hungary is still devastated and infected by division and the opposition

of the urbanists and populists. That's why it's possible that when power changes hands a prominent person on one or the other side stretches out the hands so he could be at the forefront of the canon. One has to work on putting all this behind, so that the double shrine would cease to exist. The mechanism itself has to be broken down. That requires a dialogue of the elites.

FD: It's still difficult to say where Albert Wass will get to. I think he'll fade. Of course, there may be many factors that can keep an oeuvre on the surface. It could be definitely interesting if a professionally accurate monograph is written about such a writer by a serious literary historian.

GP: Yes, I agree Albert Wass can be written about, but to raise him to the centre of the canon – well, that is a political manoeuvre. I think that at present a great 'anti-enlightenment' revolution is taking place here. One of its episodes is the literary historical and aesthetic rewriting of the narrative. They try to replace the fundamentally, after all left-wing-revolutionary Hungarian literary tradition, in which the king and the court represent the enemy with their clerical, feudal, land-owning and feather-hatted literature. The question is whether we allow the formation of a "current literary history" which regards, for example, Petőfi as marginal and does not lay emphasis on the renewal of the language, but highlights the royalist bootlickers of the era.

MC: *It cannot happen.*

GP: Alright, I agree. It would be a farce to regard literary junk as valuable.

MC: *Inheritors of writers' estates can also do much for an author's literary position after his death, can't they?*

FD: They can help, but can also do harm if they are not willing to have a work published or make a bad decision due to avarice. There are some inheritors who go over the top and want to have something published by their relative every year, yet the demand has faded and with that they only cause damage to the writer.

MC: *Gergely Péterfy, you are not only a writer and literary historian, but also a multiple literary inheritor. Lajos Áprily is your great-grandfather and Zoltán Jékely is your grandfather. What can the grandson do for them?*

GP: You cannot mix up the grandson's admiration and love with literary historical inclinations. Even if I separate the two, the outside world may still find it clumsy. I don't want that.

Of course, I keep using quotes from Jékely in my writings and I deeply feel attached aesthetically to my grandfather. I would like someone apart from myself to recognise, for once, that besides his brilliant poetry he also wrote remarkable prose. I cannot do that. It is a taboo for me.

MC: Don't you miss anything? Some writers have been unfairly forgotten by Hungarian literary memory.

FD: Although I wouldn't say they are forgotten, the names of Miklós Szentkuthy, Tibor Déry, Endre Andor Gelléri and moreover Ernő Szép come suddenly to my mind. There are small discoveries, but more or less the same names crop up. Kosztolányi has forged ahead now and Babits has slipped back a bit. Babits was the fundamental premise for those around the journal *Újhold*. Today he is a star only for a few. But he may return. The fluctuation of memory is sometimes fast and sometimes slow.

GP: I strongly miss my favourite writer Sándor Lénárt not being included at all in literary memory. He is neither in public thinking nor everyday discourse.

MC: Has György Petri whom you have already mentioned remained?

GP: Yes. Pretty much. I may see it like that because many of my liberal-humanist acquaintances quote him on Facebook. Living literature is what is talked about in pubs and cafés, what is shared on social networks or what we happen to take our mottos from. But Hungarian literature is a cause for a few ten thousand people. Perhaps an author who proves to be classical will line bookshelves in a special edition in 20-25 years on, and then he will be part of national memory. Yet he may drop out from time to time. For example, Lord Byron was the greatest poet of the 19th century, for the 19th and even the beginning of the 20th centuries. Today we do not talk about him, although a good 100 years ago everybody placed themselves in the literary scene in relation to Byron. So I think that generations clearly decide about literary memory. Kosztolányi included Ferenc Kazinczy in the canon. He had his portrait on his shelf, although it was rather due to Kazinczy being a Freemason. But the revolutionary relationship with the language also connected them. An author will obviously be an important writer if he is considered the most important predecessor for writers of later times. That is why I included Kazinczy in my prose. Kazinczy is my Ottlik, if you like.

When a village or a town opens or inaugurates a memorial house, room or plaque it not only presents the birthplace, holiday home or last residence of a noted person, but also itself, its own existence. With the gesture, it gets on the culture map, has a physical share of the literary, artistic canon and realises in real space information memorised in school. It becomes a place which has undoubtedly given something to the world. For more than a 100 years museums trying to reveal something of the secret that artists and writers have with their everyday life have opened across the world. Communities make financial sacrifices – rarely repaid financially in Hungary – to operate an institute that can be interpreted as a complex symbol. In 1961 Enikő Balkányi, who helped establish several literary memorial houses, considered memorial houses outstandingly important because she thought that the birth, values, shortcomings and possible contradictions of a work would become natural and coherent by making their writer personally close. You can get nearer to a writer if you learn about his or her appearance, surroundings, personal effects and habits. The concept has not changed much in decades, although in 2007 Zsuzsa Kalla in her introduction to the Regeneration Project of Literary Memorial Houses emphasised the identity-building impact of literature, while highlighting the magic of intimacy and the feeling that visitors could experience among personal effects in their favourite writer's house. Since Hungary's network of literary memorial houses is mainly rooted in the Kádár era, the question is raised: how is it possible that in a period which was ideologically overregulated, the cult of such writers could grow with individual exhibitions, whose justification is beyond doubt. How is it that post 1989-90 Hungary inherited such a network in which the residences of noted writers were not only valued by the people's republic based on Marxism and Leninism, while the present time has also regarded these literary houses as deserving of preservation and regeneration. The inspectors of the Petőfi Literary Museum provided the literary, museological supervision in connection with the professional authenticity of the authorised literary memorial houses. The memorial houses usually functioned as exhibition places, the collection was held in the centre's safe storerooms and that was where it was possible to research it. The lessons learnt from the history of literary memorial houses and similar museums did not become outdated with the political changes of 1989-90. Perhaps most importantly, establishing such a museum is a responsibility which cannot be taken on without the support of the funding community. Although playing with the past may involve a competitive advantage in momentary games, it may be worth considering whether the future can be burdened with its own heritage.

I AM SLOWLY GOING HOME

The Regeneration of Hungarian Memorial Houses

Gabriella Gulyás and Ilona H. Bagó

p. 101

For centuries literary memorial houses in Europe have been hallowed places for the homage and commemoration of writers, pilgrimage destinations and important institutes of cultural memory. Today they are part of heritage tourism, an entire branch of industry and a network developing cultural tourism. The history of their establishment, the variety of their circumstances and their institutionalisation show that they have formed part of what is held to be important in public memory. The tendency of recent decades has been that memorial houses have seen themselves as museums and libraries. Hungary occupies a distinguished place in Europe in terms of memorial houses, having 160 literary museums, memorial houses, memorial rooms, memorial places and exhibitions. The number shows that the appreciation of literary heritage has always been significant in forming national identity. The popularity list is headed by Petőfi. Seven houses preserve his memory, and the Petőfi Literary Museum has an outstandingly rich collection in relation to him. Attila József has five, Jókai, Arany and Ady have three, and Berzsenyi, Bessenye, Kölcsey, Madách, Mikszáth, Gárdonyi, Babits and Illyés have two memorial houses devoted to them, while Vörösmarty, Katona, Vajda, Nagy and Weöres each have one. Those who have lost out due to changes in the canon include Péter Veres, Pál Szabó and József Darvas. Although the character and works of Veres and Darvas are disputed, their memorial houses can be considered both local and regional attractions. Literary history and readers' preferences are not always the same. Although a writer may not belong to the literary canon, preserving their memory is often respected. Initially, literary memorial houses established in the 60s and 70s drew many visitors. With changes in the canon, as well as reading habits and preferences, in the 80s the level of interest declined. Then after the 1989-90 political changes the situation turned tragic with the number of memorial house visitors radically falling. The content of exhibitions often became outdated, visually they grew tired and buildings deteriorated. The funding local authorities and county museums tried to save what they could, but the long-awaited, long-term programme for revitalisation of memorial houses only got underway with the Petőfi Literary Museum working out the details following a 2007 request from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Developing the functioning network of literary memorial houses was one of the strategic aims of the project. Project financing was realised from a special part of the budget set for 2008-2010. In 2009, in the interest of standing on several legs, the Association of Hungarian Memorial Houses was established. Continuation of the work became possible partly thanks to the National Cultural fund and the EU, as well as county and local authority resources.

THE RUSSIAN WAY

In the Footsteps of Bulgakov in Moscow and Kiev

Beatrix Basics

p. 139

The first public Bulgakov Museum was established in March 2007 by the Moscow City Council in flat 50 at 10 Bolshaya Sadovaya Street. The writer's first Moscow residence was in this building and the institute considers itself to be the first and only Bulgakov memorial museum in Moscow. In autumn 1921 Bulgakov moved into the building, but a different flat, with his first wife, Tatiana Lappa. He moved to no. 50 in 1924 and this is the one known from his *The Master and Margareta*. The Mikhail Bulgakov Foundation was established in 1990 with the aim of making no. 50 accessible to the public. The goal is to preserve the special atmosphere of the place, which relates to several periods of history – pre-revolutionary Russia, the Soviet era and the post-Soviet period alike. In the summer of 1924 the writer moved to a quieter flat on the fifth floor, no. 34, which appears in *The Master and Margareta* as no. 302. With that he ensured his wife's residence, since the following year they were already divorced. He married his second wife, Lyubov Belozerskaya, in April 1925. At the time the building's originally multi-room apartments had been divided up and were co-tenancies, as recalled in Bulgakov's novel. Besides a continuous struggle with another museum on the ground floor, the institute has been troubled by internal contradictions, such that the day before the fifth anniversary of the museum's foundation, on 14 May 2012, the city's cultural authority dismissed the director and invited applications for a new one. Since autumn 2012 the Italian architect Gabriele Filippini has been the director. He presented an ambitious plan to the public and the funding authority, expressing the intention of working with everyone aiming to preserve the memory of Bulgakov, including the ground-floor memorial museum and the former director. The other Bulgakov Museum at 10 Bolshaya Sadovaya is called the Bulgakov House Museum-Theatre. The privately-owned institute was founded earlier than the state museum, being established in 2004, since when there has been constant rivalry between the two. In contrast with the official museum, this one has free entrance and its opening times are more visitor-friendly, from 1 pm to 11 pm, and on Saturday it can be visited until 1 am. Apart from its archive of documents relating to Bulgakov, there is also a children's theatre. In Kiev, the Bulgakov Literary Memorial Museum is known as the Bulgakov House, or the Listovnichni House (after a later owner). It was renovated between 1989 and 1991, and it was ready and opened in time for the centenary of Bulgakov's birth. It houses around 3000 objects: the writer's personal effects, books, postcards, photographs and documents. Its furnishings echo the former atmosphere. It was here that Bulgakov lived when a school pupil and a medical student, when he was already a practising doctor and later a writer.

IS IT POSSIBLE AT ALL?

The Imaginary Archive of Avant-garde

Zsolt K. Horváth

p. 169

If the concept of cultural heritage means the sum total of achievements, individuals and intellectual, cultural phenomena deemed valuable for a given community, then the historic avant-garde in Hungary can surely be a part of that. If the practice of museumisation involves conservation of the past, processed and interpreted through objects and documents, then this task can be ticked off with the establishment in 1976 of the Lajos Kassák Memorial Museum. Undoubtedly Ferenc Csaplár, who both fostered and analysed Kassák's complex art legacy, deserves merit given that avant-garde literally and metaphorically became *institutionalized*. Yet despite all his efforts the situation seems not to have been entirely resolved. Documenting, systemising and presenting heritage with exhibitions represent a part of what is called *intellect fostering* in the context of cultural memory and heritage. Nevertheless, the question now is whether both in the case of historic avant-garde and neo-avant-garde the subject itself, i.e. the comprehensive artistic, aesthetic and socio-critical movement questioning the artist's role, the existence of enclosed autonomous artwork and the institutional system of the arts, makes this process possible. Is the museumisation of the avant-garde justifiable or even possible at all? The question is whether manifestations connected to a complex artistic approach which probes the boundaries of art and openly questions the concept, institutions and hierarchy of the arts can really be documented. What does to document mean? What is a document itself? And what does the concept of a museum or archive based on collecting, classifying and presenting the documents mean in the long run? If it is true that art is what is 'forbidden', i.e. what goes beyond the customs and practices consumed and interpreted comfortably as 'art' and 'high culture' in the bourgeois world and sees its own legitimacy in the incessant *provocation* of the artistic and cultural routine, then can a moment be fixed at which 'forbidden art' always remains provocative and subversive? The intention to preserve the past is always problematic and complex, but to do that with avant-garde, which denounces the relations with tradition, continuity and the experience of time, is perhaps even more complicated. To put it more simply, in order to show avant-garde in the present, which is sunk in the past, we somehow must show the *wild alienness* of the atmosphere of the artist's manifestation beside classic museological, art and literary-historical everyday activity. It is not the identical features which would restore some kind of naive continuity that we should look for, rather the dispositions which are radically different from those of the present, which called for *such* and not other forms of artistic manifestation at the time, while today they would be inadequate and out-of-date.

VIRTUE FROM ABSENCE

A Monographic Exhibition Constructed without Material Legacy

Katalin Hegyi

p. 181

IWe were not in an easy position when we had the idea of staging an exhibition deserving of Sándor Weöres's poetry to mark the centenary of his birth. The estate of Sándor Weöres and his wife Amy Károlyi was left to Alice Károlyi, who organised and supported financially and intellectually the foundation of the Sándor Weöres and Amy Károlyi Memorial House in Csöngé in 2006. Due to that, the material legacy of the couple can be seen in the permanent exhibition there. It was curated by Ágota Steinert, editor of the published Weöres volumes, an expert in the poet's entire oeuvre. A large-scale exhibition encompassing the whole life and work of the two poets, was staged in the regenerated birthplace. This meant that the presentation of Sándor Weöres with traditional literary methods of exhibitions was not possible, since we had no compilation of objects which would be required for that. In his poem *Self Portrait* he writes: *My friend, you who aim to know me, / look at my room: nothing there / was my own choosing; open my wardrobe: / there is nothing that characterises me.* This convinced us that it was not important for the objects which surrounded him to be presented in the exhibition, since the milieu he lived in did not interest him and was primarily created by his wife, the poet Amy Károlyi. The Petőfi Literary Museum holds many manuscripts, artworks, sound and film recordings connected to Weöres, and we were able to select from among those for the exhibition. A team was set up by the Creative Technology Lab of the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, which presented Weöres's poetry with creative language games involving visitors. Software for 10 games and an information database about the poet's journeys have been developed. Ten thematic display boards reflected the poet's life, his inspiring experiences and achievements, namely: family, birthplace (parents and Csöngé), masters (Mihály Babits, Dezső Kosztolányi, Milán Füst, Béla Hamvas), friends (Gyula Takáts, Győző Csorba, painter Árpád Illés, Nándor Várkonyi, Lajos Fülep, Ágoston Pável), presentation of a doctoral thesis, *Birth of Poetry*, the relationship between the poet and music (Zoltán Kodály, Béla Bartók), the active organiser of literary life (editor of *Sorsunk*, *Dunántúli Szemle*, tireless manager of their contributors), his love for Amy Károlyi, the writer of poems for children, the poet concerned with public life and a summary of the oeuvre's eternal values. The exhibition was held in the Petőfi Literary Museum from June 2013 to October 2014. Then it became a travelling exhibition – after Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs, Veszprém, Sátoraljaújhely and Miskolc, since 1 December 2016 it has been on display in the Jósza András Museum in Nyíregyháza. The plan is for it to travel to four towns of Sekler Land in 2017. The project was implemented with the sponsorship of the National Cultural Fund.

THE SPECIAL WORLD OF BAROQUE THEATRES

Temporary Exhibition in the Vienna Theatermuseum

János Papházi, historian and senior museologist

p. 189

Among Vienna's museums the Theatermuseum is not so well known. Standing in Lobkowitz Square, close to the Albertina, the museum opened in October 1991. Its special collection is housed in the former Lobkowitz Palace. To mark its 25th anniversary, last March saw the opening of *Spettacolo barocco! Triumph des Theaters*, a temporary exhibition about Baroque spectacles and the special world of Baroque theatre. Presenting such a theme in this manner had long been an aim of the museum in order to show the public part of its rich Baroque collection. Apart from its own objects, the display includes others from more than 15 institutes and individuals, including special items from Český Krumlov, Cologne, Munich and Salzburg. The Baroque era witnessed one of the most resplendent periods in theatre history. Ballet and opera enlivened the royal and princely courts, while the risqué presentations of itinerant comedy actors were popular among ordinary people. Opera became the queen of the Baroque age. Its heroes were generally figures from ancient mythology. Through these roles the performers were able to present their gratitude to their generous patron, the all powerful emperor, who was happy to see himself as a hero of mythology. Some of the popular spectacles were connected with celebrations of special events (e.g. weddings and births). They involved special lighting, fireworks and tournaments, in which many splendidly dressed people, adorned with shining decorations, paraded in groups for the noble lord. These, as the successors of medieval knights' tournaments, were particularly popular. The exhibition chronologically covers the era from the time of Emperor Leopold I to the first decades of Maria Theresa's reign. As the closing item of the display, there is the cityscape as seen from Lobkowitz Square by Bernardo Bellotto (Canaletto). The painting is one of 13 views of Vienna the artist painted in 1759-60, on commission from Maria Theresa. Canaletto depicted the confined square from the first floor of the Augustinian monastic house looking in a north-east direction. St. Stephen's Church rises in the background. The building, designed by Giovanni Pietro Tencala for Master of the Horse Philipp Sigmund Dietrichstein, was constructed in 1685-87 and was the city's first significant Baroque palace. In 1694 construction continued in line with plans by Johann Baptist Fischer von Erlach. After several changes of ownership, in 1745 the palace came into the possession of the Lobkowitz family, whose name it still bears today. The exhibition has been curated by Daniela Franke, Rudi Risatti, Andrea Sommer-Mathis and Alexandra Steiner-Strauss. The display is complemented by 18 scholarly studies and an inventory of art objects, a 340-page catalogue, numerous guided tours and several concerts. The interesting, beautifully staged exhibition can be viewed until to 30 January 2017.

MISTRESS OF THE RÁKOSHEGY HOUSE

Beatrix Basics

p. 213

Térseklél, which today no longer exists, was located 22 kilometres from Komárom. In 1879 Regina Ehrental was born there, the youngest, seventh child of a poor Jewish family. She studied in Győr and Budapest. Her early poetry was published when she was in Győr. Following her brother, she moved to Pest, where initially she aimed to be an actress, but given the success of her poetry she turned to literature instead. From 1897 her poems were published under the name of Renée Erdős. Endre Ady called her “the genius poet girl”. Her first volume of poetry, *Maiden’s Dreams*, appeared in 1899. Her talent was recognised by many people and Károly Eötvös took her on as literary contributor for *Egyetértés*, the paper he edited. Her second volume of poems was prepared for publication by Sándor Bródy in 1902. Their passionate relationship lasted for three years, but it came to an end because Renée Erdős was not prepared to marry him. While in Italy she met Lajos Fülep, whom she married in 1913. Fülep, one of the greatest 20th-century Hungarian art historians, was a suitable partner, but the marriage wasn’t fortunate. They had two daughters, but before the second was born she left her husband and then lived alone with her small daughter and new-born child. Due to thrombosis and pulmonary embolism, she was confined to bed for a long time. She wrote fiction in order to maintain herself and her family. She had five poetry volumes published between 1899 and 1921, and in the 1920s her popular novels appeared. Their resounding success had financial results and she was able to buy a villa in Rákoshegy. In 1926 in Rome, aged 47, she married her secretary, who was ten years her junior, had been employed for a long time and had also been managing the household. But this marriage was also unsuccessful and her husband left her. Fortunately, the most important place in her life has remained almost untouched to this day and thus her memory is preserved by the collection and exhibition room of the Renée Erdős House in Budapest’s 17th District. While strolling among the family houses of the district, the building appears as an unexpected, surprising sight, as if you were entering another world. The villa was built in 1895. The romanticizing, Eclectic edifice is still surrounded by a well-tended garden, as it was during the writer’s lifetime. The collection was established in 1990, as was the exhibition space, thus the character of the memorial house has remained. The ground-floor rooms house a permanent local history exhibition, next to which is a room furnished like a traditional folk house and a small display of items from the collection of Rezső Epress, a local collector. The Renée Erdős memorial room was set up at the start and there is a diorama exhibition about the nature protection area located on the edge of the district. Since 1990 these have been updated several times.

THE SPLENDOUR OF THE WAHNFRIED VILLA, ITS DECLINE AND REBIRTH

Zoltán Rockenbauer

p. 221

The history of the Wahnfried Villa, which since 1976 has housed the Richard Wagner Museum, is almost as interesting as the life of the great composer, its first owner. The first, and indeed last home in Bayreuth of Richard Wagner, who was born in Leipzig, was built in 1872–74 behind the Hofgarten, the park attached to the palace of the Marquis. Already in Wagner's lifetime it was considered a place of pilgrimage, and even more so after his death. Cosima Wagner undertook the management of her deceased husband's estate. It was she who established the still existing structure of the Bayreuth Festival, doing her utmost to promote the cult of her former husband. After the composer's death the villa took on the function of a museum, though it was also a place of residence, with the number of residents continuously rising. The museum opened on the centenary of the festival, 24 July 1976. As in the time of Wagner, it became the scene of events and concerts. The exhibition could be viewed strictly by a single route, chronologically following the main stages of Wagner's life, with the history of the Bayreuth Festival relating to that. Temporary exhibitions were housed in the basement, as were the stage designs and models of former performances. Although the permanent exhibition remained the same for decades, technical innovations were introduced and after about 34 years, at the end of the 2010 festival, the institute was closed for renovation with a view to its reopening for the bicentenary of Wagner's birth, expanded along with the annexes. The new exhibition allowed for more manoeuvre, it could be better comprehended and was more clearly structured. Its internal aspects were simplified. White became the dominant colour, objects were placed in white cabinets, which in atmosphere were more reserved and had a cooler impact than the previous arrangement. However, the logical division of the rooms did not change much. The salon remained as a scene of events, and the library was removed from there. The themes of the rooms, which follow chronologically, present the most important junctures of Wagner's life, while the history of the festival was transferred to a new building. A new addition were drawers containing hundreds of original letters and manuscripts. Wagner's library is housed in the basement, as is an item of the most up-to-date exhibition technology, a huge interactive book, whose pages can be turned. Although visitors may miss the development of certain themes, all in all it can be said that the renewal was successful. With its memorabilia and documents, the rich exhibition fulfils the function of a memorial museum – arguably the main draw for visitors. It is informative about Wagner's music and about the history of the festival, while at the same time there are opportunities for further development, which sooner or later will surely prove to be necessary.

MUSEUM IN THE 'DISJOINTED TOWER'

Arany Bicentenary in Salonta

Judit Jankó

p. 247

The year 2017 will mark the bicentenary of János Arany's birth. The Hungarian parliament has declared it a 'János Arany Memorial Year'. Throughout the year events will be held in the poet's birthplace of Nagyszalonta (today Salonta in Romania). Other locations will also see celebrations hosted by, for example, the Sziglieti Theatre in Oradea, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Academy of Arts. We spoke with the director of Salonta's János Arany Memorial Museum, Zoltán Darvasi, about the institute's history, its collection and the fact that the permanent exhibition of the 117-year-old museum (making it Romania's oldest literary museum), which has not changed for 30 years, requires some revitalisation. The story of the János Arany Memorial Museum began on the day the poet died, 22 October 1882. In 1885 his son, the MP László Arany, offered his father's mementos, his collection and manuscripts to the town. In fact, he urged the creation of an association, to which he donated the objects. The letter about his father's legacy can still be seen in the museum today. The association was set up and a collection got underway to realise the aims. There were theatre performances and concerts to raise donations and many pledges were made such that there was enough to cover the establishment of the János Arany Memorial Museum. The town set up a János Arany Memorial Association and the first idea was to purchase the building where Arany was born, but its residents didn't want to sell. As a temporary solution, a memorial room opened in the school to house the objects, but it was clear that eventually it would prove to be too small. Searching for an appropriate location, it was decided to purchase the so-called Broken Tower and the memorial museum opened there in August 1899. When the birthplace eventually became vacant a collection was initiated enabling purchase of the building. The local authority renovated it in 2010, in fact it had to be almost completely rebuilt. This year, in view of the anniversary, it has been repainted and its garden has been landscaped. However, not many people are aware of its existence, even though the building has carried a memorial plaque for a long time, but in the public mind it is still a residential building, which cannot be visited. Attempts are being made to change that and increase publicity so that innovative literature lessons could be held there, and the idyll of Arany's *Family Circle* be revived, with its sweep-pole well and mulberry tree. The association would also like to update the permanent exhibition. The Petőfi Literary Museum prepared a plan four years ago, but the local authority did not accept it and support for the undertaking was not found. During the memorial year, they will be involved in the celebratory events. In the town all the important dates will be dedicated to János Arany throughout the year.

With exhibition spaces, it is important to realise the intellectual and aesthetic connections of objects and forms, as well as their conceptual antecedents, effects and structure. All of these mark out the space of interpretation. Exhibition spaces involve complex mechanisms of visual culture and methods of interpretation, which are able to present different worlds, and mobilize the different modes of abstraction. Yet they differ from one another in the way they allow for visitors' ideas, as well as intellectual and formal approaches. The memorial house as a genre is based on the unity of personal objects and private space. It represents homeliness and genuineness, along with realism and authenticity. It generates emotions, most often the feeling of 'as if'. As if he were here. As if he had just left his room. as if he were about to appear. After all, the main mementos of the person involved are here, while the theatricality of the compositions is very strong. According to the original concept, the Imre Nagy Memorial House links the homeliness discourse with the aura of the almost complete absence of authentic objects. The impact of 'furnishings' is created by absence. Before his execution in 1958 all the property of Imre Nagy, the prime minister and revolutionary martyr, was confiscated. Thus the archive of personal objects is fragmentary. So what provides the impact of the house and the possibility of story telling? What creates the personal experience? If there are no mementos, how does a memorial house become a place of pilgrimage? The historian of the permanent exhibition in the Imre Nagy House used hand-written sources and the visual designer applied archaeology and context creating a spirit structure to fill the space interpretatively. The role of manuscripts increases in the absence of objects from Imre Nagy's surroundings. He put nearly everything down in writing, he almost always read from paper. The many manuscripts that still exist show that Nagy wrote not only in Hungarian, but also in German and Russian 'fluently'. The presentation of handwriting, a pen, paper, the corrected and final texts – remembrance through reading and thinking – are familiar in museums. The lack of personal effects in the Imre Nagy House highlights the role and significance of hand-written texts: hand-shaped letters and thoughts have become the fundament of museum remembrance. The ground plan of the original space takes form on the floor in the space converted to a museum in the Bauhaus villa: the living room, the dining room, the kitchen, the pantry and the maid's room. Imre Nagy and his wife moved into the house in 1949. He lived through the major turning points of the 1950s here until his imprisonment. This period is recalled by the snow-white spirit structure made on the basis of photos and descriptions, which also calls to mind the history of the house.

THE MUSEUM BUILDER

Interview with Architect István Mányi about the Reconstruction of the Museum of Fine arts and other Museums in Pest

Péter Hamvay

p. 275

I István Mányi has been drafting designs for reconstruction of the Museum of Fine Arts, which has kept stopping short, for exactly 20 years. He thinks that often an architect does not have to perform a defined task, rather he himself has to formulate his own. He fell in love with Historicism during renovation of the University of Economics, where he had to struggle the most for covering the ceremonial courtyard. In the case of underground extension in the 1990s, it was feared the Museum of Fine Arts might collapse. Then the historic halls had to be revealed and those who wanted to divide the Romanesque and Baroque Halls with ceilings to gain new space had to be won over. With the present reconstruction the public will regain more space, service functions will go below ground, yet after the opening of the Romanesque Hall there will still be plenty of work.

MC: You have been concerned with plans for the museum's reconstruction since 1986. Allegedly, you were instructed by the director of Közti Public Building Planning Company to take on the job, for which architects would fight for today. Is that true?

¶ Actually, I was offered a bonus if I did it. Yet it was not primarily about me, but about the deep contempt for Historicism and Eclecticism.

MC: When did you fall in love with those styles which were despised by other architects at the time?

¶ Ten years earlier, in 1978, I was commissioned to renovate the former Main Custom House, at the time the Karl Marx University of Economics. More precisely, the job was for a technical renovation costing 120 million forints, which finally lasted until the end of the 80s, eventually costing more than 2.5 billion. It depended partly on my ambition that in the end the idea of the whole building was revised, discarding the earlier interior reconstruction.

MC: It was not only the architects but the official politics that were at odds with Historicism. How did you manage to overcome that?

¶ On the occasion of a ministerial inspection, Kálmán Ábrahám saw workers restoring the plaster mouldings and immediately gave the instructions for making an aluminium suspended ceiling in order to save labour costs. My detailed calculations proved that it would cost far less if

the original condition were restored, than concealed. However, most probably the treasures of the historic building were not saved due to that, but because the minister was dismissed in 1984. Otherwise, the building had not been damaged too badly during the war, but in 1949 it was rather brutally converted behind the existing façades for the purposes of the university. For example, the ceremonial courtyard and its two side courts were divided with steel elements, and the interior façades decayed above them. In terms of university buildings, I was familiar with Debrecen and I knew that a university must have a significant communal space, an assembly hall. I wanted to undo the dividing ceiling and cover the ceremonial courtyard with a glass roof, which finally happened as one of the most lasting experiences of my professional career, although many people almost irrationally wanted to prevent that by all means. Ferenc Merényi, a prominent authority on Eclecticism, who was returning from the Hungarian Academy in Rome to be director of the Museum of Fine Arts, was asked for his expert opinion. The professor's response, given on hand-made paper, supported me entirely. Moreover, he indicated that if I were to take on planning the reconstruction of the Fine Arts Museum, then Közti would get the job without a tender. I was afraid of too much work, since I was involved with the reconstruction of the University of Economics and the ELTE development in Lágymányos. Today I am pleased that someone else decided instead of me.

MC: Such things happen today, although it is true that a tender isn't usually dispensed with due to professional reasons. What was your task with the Museum of Fine Arts?

¶ It's a difficult issue – though it crops up frequently and was so in this case – in that architects do not have to perform a definite task, rather they have to stipulate it. The changing roll of museums began in western Europe already in the 80s. This was partly due to the appearance of temporary exhibitions, when not only visitors travelled to see internationally famous collections, but artworks also began to travel. This increased the number of visitors tenfold, presenting new challenges for museums. Not only were adequate spaces required, since either no or very small rooms were designed for temporary exhibitions in 19th-century museum buildings, as with the Museum of Fine Arts, but due to the increased turnover there was a higher demand for designing more spacious cloakrooms, buffets, cafés, museum shops, restaurants, conference halls, storerooms for artworks and restorers' workshops, creative education session rooms, larger and more toilets, sophisticated security systems and greater accessibility. Thus in a decade or so museums turned from quiet, devout shrines into experience centres. That was when for the first time in my life I was able to visit the major museums in Europe, and on the basis of their principles in 1986 I began to draw up plans for the reconstruction and extension of the Museum of Fine Arts.

MC: Which, admittedly were rather modest at the time.

¶ It was a long drawn-out process, which was cut up due to lack of finances. The early plans were far more large-scale, although there was criticism that I was being over-ambitious with this task, too. The investment was already given a green light by the finance minister, István Hétfényi, yet at the last minute the museum's Party secretary launched the idea that a glass tower should be rather erected on the side of the City Park. That made the project come to nothing. What we were planning – and that was partly implemented at the beginning of the 90s – was to utilize the museum's basement, which was filled with sand and was only a metre under pavement level. That was not easy either, since many people were scared that I would cause the building to fall down. Using mining methods, we extracted the earth from underneath the halls between the foundation walls and built the new ceiling while visitors used the halls above. A magician can pull a tablecloth off the table while the dinner service is untouched. We took the table from underneath the tablecloth. At the end of the 80s and beginning of the 90s, those who commissioned us to do the work didn't yet know what sizes of space were needed and they wanted to resolve the lack of space differently, for example by partitioning the large halls.

MC: Yes, actually an additional ceiling was constructed in the Michelangelo Hall and the finance department moved in there. But were there other plans, too?

¶ The museum thought that the Romanesque and Baroque Halls should also be divided with extra ceilings, but in the end that was prevented with the help of the Office of Monument Protection.

MC: What was the condition of the Museum of Fine Arts in the 80s and what tasks did you encounter with regard to the historic spaces?

¶ Large parts of the big halls were in a catastrophic state and in order for them to be used they were practically boxed. Artworks were stored in the loft covered with one layer of wired glass. In the winter it was -5°C and in the summer $+70^{\circ}\text{C}$ there. After the extension, which was not fully successful, the reconstruction halted due to lack of finances and it only restarted with the reconstruction of the Baroque Hall in 1996. Its cloisters had been earlier partitioned off and used for storage. An air-conditioned storeroom for artworks was constructed underneath during the full historic reconstruction of the hall. And the Pergamon and the Ionic Halls also had to be unwrapped. A goods entrance was made on the City Park side, which was badly needed due to the continuously increasing movement of artworks. After 2000, reconstruction continued with the renewal of a part of the museum and the Doric Hall, then there was a pause again. A dozen run-ups got us to the present project.

MC: *You are fortunate in that you did not need to reapply for designing it.*

¶ That's true, but just think what would have happened if dozens of different concepts had left their trace on the building in such a way that the following architects would have had no idea what their predecessor had left unfinished. I saw the whole building and the subsequent steps. For example, during the reconstruction I managed to get a new lift shaft built, which connected the first floor with the then still empty loft. With the next run-up, based on that the Millennium conference rooms could be constructed in the attic above the porticus and the lift leading up to them was installed in such a way that the Renaissance Hall did not have to be closed off and turned into a construction site. When László Baán became director of the museum in 2004 he studied my ideas and met me, saying that we could continue on that path. That was how preparations for extension under the ground level began.

MC: *Did it hurt you that your design did not win? What did you otherwise think of the project and its dismissal in 2011?*

¶ Tamás Karácsony submitted an excellent design, although the full resolution of several technical problems remained. The enlargement was a huge opportunity for the museum and it's a great loss it could not be realised. I also urged on the project, after all I made the first drafts with the same positions as the winning submission and I presented the design of the spaces joining the listed building.

MC: *What does the present extension mean exactly? What new spaces does the museum gain?*

¶ After the below-ground extension had fallen through, the museum had the chance to renovate the Romanesque Hall. We tried to link as many elements as possible that could be implemented as part of this development, so some 14,000 square metres of the building with a floor area of 28,000 will be renovated. The history of the triple-aisle, richly decorated Romanesque Hall is relatively well-known. This is the only part of the museum which still bears war damage. It was used as storage space, with one of the side aisles being partitioned off as a corridor. That linked the building's sections on the City Park side. Of course, reconstruction and historic restoration of the Romanesque Hall are the most important tasks. Although the decorative painting is damaged on significant surfaces, it is in a perfectly restorable condition. The plaster copies stored there and the tower storage of artworks have moved out, but two significant works, the copies of the doors of the Freiburg and the Gyulafehérvár cathedrals have remained. An air-conditioned storeroom for works of art with up-to-date storing devices is being built under the hall. Since the Romanesque Hall will again be used entirely as museum space, an important communication axis will cease to exist. So its replacement also had to be resolved.

The engineering, electric and security systems of the building will also be renewed. A new boiler room will be installed, the whole building will be made accessible not only for visitors but also for the operational side, since a large heavy-duty lift transporting artworks and reaching each level was missing. It does not seem much if you do not know that the building also did not have a staircase which reached all the floors. In vain would a gate for goods be built if the building lacked accessible transport routes and the large boxes for artworks had to be carried via the main staircase. Ceilings and floors have to be reinforced, since statues of several tonnes cannot be moved even on the ground floor. Rooms for creative sessions will be shaped both in and under the old library. The library moved out a long time ago, since it had outgrown the space. The changes will also concern the extensions of the 90s. The built-in areas underneath the Ionic and Doric courtyards and the foyer between them will be opened together and used as exhibition space for the exhibition of antiquities. The Egyptian exhibition will be rebuilt and a new cloakroom will be installed, which will be able to handle 1,200 visitors at any one time. The museum's coffee house will receive natural lighting from above, behind the columns of the side wings. These spaces represent parts of earlier interventions but now we are organising them in a functioning unity without compromises. And at last a windbreaker will be installed, thus acceptable conditions concerning the wind will prevail in the foyer.

MC: *Is it possible to know which space will have what function?*

¶ Partly yes, although there are still some open issues. At the same time, in vain does a museum decide on something now if it is not sure to have the same function in 10 or 50 years. Therefore we try to create flexible spaces.

MC: *What will happen to the Michelangelo Hall?*

¶ The dividing ceiling will be taken out from the Michelangelo Hall, which opens from the Renaissance Hall. Its Renaissance decorative painting will be restored and the room of similar beauty above it, which was occupied by the Communications Department until recently, will be returned to visitors. That also used to be an exhibition room with a beautiful painted ceiling. Sometime in the 70s a suspended ceiling was installed, in a rather sinister way at that. The decorative painting, which was spray-gunned, will be restored. This space will be suitable for small events, concerts and small-scale exhibitions. The second floor accommodates a line of cabinets, which were used as storage in the past 25 years. Now they will be again used for exhibitions.

MC: *Where will the rooms for temporary exhibitions be?*

¶ By all means we would like to avoid them being the richly decorated historic spaces, since there is not much point in constantly converting them for exhibitions. The antique rooms and the space of the Antique Hall that joins them, as well as the Doric Hall to a limited extent, will accommodate temporary exhibitions.

MC: *But in that way temporary exhibitions will still be staged in the historic spaces.*

¶ Not necessarily, because the Doric Hall will not be needed every time and only in a limited way, given its protected monument character. The historicizing antique halls were modernized to the design of Bertalan Árkay in 1941. They have adequate ceiling height.

MC: *Wouldn't it still be better if a new underground hall specifically designed for temporary exhibitions were to be built?*

¶ It is not timely now, but with regrouping the existing spaces are suitable for this purpose. We cannot say that the renovation of the building finishes here. Renovation of the Renaissance Hall has not yet taken place. This magnificent space is run down, its decorative painting is imperfect, partly whitewashed, the floor is worn and the lighting is inadequate. And above there is the fantastic, unused loft space. On the Állatkerti Boulevard side further below-ground extension would be needed for parking and operational functions, and that could also house the engineering equipment for the alternative use of energy.

MC: *What do you think about the danger of relocating the Natural History Museum, which you designed in the building of the Ludovika?*

¶ If the renovation that began in the mid 90s had been finished in time, matters might have taken another turn.

MC: *Have you got plans you have not realized? Although you won the international design competition for the extension of the Hungarian National Museum in 2010, the plan was not implemented. How do you look back on it?*

¶ I started to deal with the building of the National Museum in Közti in the 80s, but due to designing the work on the Museum of Fine Arts I had to give it up. It's a great pity that later during its reconstruction and restoration they did not manage to implement the changed requirements for a museum. It is also a problem that the underground parking on Pollack Mihály Square was built without organically joining the main building, since it is unsuitable due to its space structure and ceiling height. In addition the public utilities were all installed in the stretch

between the underground garage and the main building. My design had the extension from the side of Múzeum Boulevard with facilities under the courtyard level. We would have restored the beautiful buttresses and vaulting under the main stairs to their original state. They are now divided by ceilings. We wanted the interior courtyard to be covered with glass and a new line of rooms would have been built around the building, with lighting installed at pavement level. We would have also cleared the loft. All that would have been done while fully respecting the protected features.

MC: *Complete revitalisation of the Museum Garden was also part of the plan.*

¶ The building of the National Museum is a national relic and like the herm of St. Ladislav is untouchable! That was the verdict of a prominent person in the monument protection authority. That's when the construction licence stalled. I will never identify with this opinion because, besides protecting its valuable features, a building should also meet the challenges of the time.

MC: *Ideas have been recently invited for designing the Museum Garden.*

¶ It is not a refined approach.

MC: *The Holocaust Memorial Centre, which was also designed by you, was referred to by Frank Owen Gehry as his most exciting experience in Budapest, in addition to the view from the Citadel. Yet the museum has never functioned satisfactorily. What do you think about it?*

¶ Designing the Holocaust Memorial Centre was an extremely demanding job. We worked under incredible pressure and even those who commissioned the work did not know exactly what they wanted. The concept of the permanent exhibition was not ready in time, but we stipulated its requirement for space as a working hypothesis. I am very pleased to have been able to take part. I think we gave correct responses to the historic distortions and that we made good use of the limited possibilities of the authentic location. The complex of buildings is a recognized edifice in the beautiful volume presenting the world's Holocaust museums. At home it is ignored.

MC: *It's a well-known story, isn't it? You were mostly criticised in connection with the historic restoration of the synagogue, because in its present form it cannot be used as a neutral exhibition space.*

¶ I can only say that we are fortunate to live in Europe where every decent person respects their predecessors' work. That is the essence of monument protection. The authority's work merely helps to enforce it.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Volunteering – Numerous Possibilities and Continuous Challenges

Diána Sóki and Lujza Varga, Hungarian National Museum

p. 293

To mark the tenth anniversary of the volunteers' project at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, a conference was organised in the Hungarian National Gallery. One of the guest speakers was Kusuma Barnett, who initiated and from 1988 to 2010 lead a similar project at the British Museum. She is associated with the Volunteers for Museum Learning Award, which acknowledges the best volunteers across the United Kingdom. *MúzeumCafé* spoke with her. Kusuma Barnett says that she has always liked to volunteer. It makes her feel good and useful. She doesn't see any difference between volunteering and a paid job. Volunteers undertake work in a similar manner, only not for money, but for other rewards such as pleasure, success and joy – something she herself has experienced over the years. Volunteering brings mutual benefit for an institute and the volunteer. The volunteer not only gives time but also expresses confidence, respect and esteem vis-à-vis the institute. In return the volunteer gets pleasure and enjoys the advantages which a museum ensures. She regards it as important to live in a society where people help each other and volunteering is precisely about this. Paid work and volunteering are always strictly separated. When a paid position at the British Museum becomes vacant, it is never filled by someone who has been a volunteer. This has been important, mostly for the paid staff, whose position is not threatened by a volunteer. You always have to aim for good relations between volunteers and staff. Initially it was older people who constituted a secure pool of volunteers. Younger ones can act as volunteers before getting a job. However, today we can speak of a half-and-half division, and the museum has lots of male volunteers. Volunteers work and assist in different departments. Every day they conduct 15 guided tours. In addition, they organise and implement various projects for children and people with special needs. The Volunteers for Museum Learning Award relates exclusively to museum volunteering. It was initiated by Kusuma Barnett. At first she wanted to introduce it for British Museum volunteers, but later it covered all the museums in the UK. The award relates to ten areas of museum activity, with one winner for each area. There is also one person designated as overall winner. For a volunteer coordinator, self-knowledge, self-criticism and self-learning are important. When someone knows themselves well, knows their strengths and weaknesses, then they will be consciously prepared for dealing with even the most complicated situations, and their positive qualities can come into play. The most important task for a coordinator is to build a team, which not only works cooperatively but is loyal to the institute. Kusuma Barnett was born in Sri Lanka in 1947. In recognition of her work, in 2006 she received the Order of the British Empire from the Queen.

A Várkert Bazár Öntözőház udvara



"TalaMantra – Indiai Táncképek",
a Sivasakti Kalánanda Táncszínház előadása

