

PREFACE

The international cross-disciplinary conference called Museum(s) (and) Literature(s) held on October 26-27, 2006, attempted for the first time in this country to take up issues connected with the relationship between museums and literature. The musealisation of the literary heritage, the art of the word and the personalities of writers, the various and diverse fates of literary papers in museums, archives and libraries, and the application of information technology to the study, keeping and communication of literature heritages were the basic topics dealt with in the conference. Considerations of the topic of the writing heritage, of cross-border theoretical areas concerned with the relations between the museum and the anthology, the museum and the second hand book trade, the relations between verbal and visual arts and the visualisation of literature produced views and opinions that, thanks to the quality and systematic nature of the analyses and the originality of the approach, will part of the basis for every future initiative for the preservation and communication of the literary heritage, be it called the national museum of literature, the virtual museum of literature, the data base or register.

Papers from literature-museum practice from elsewhere in the world (from Austria, Italy, Russia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) showed concrete examples of presentation of some of the greats of world literature – of Dostoyevsky, Joyce, Svevo and others; of still greater moment, they presented museum-literature programmes that started off from concrete literary oeuvres but expanded to the world of literature and inspire the current generations of writers and readers.

Practice in Croatia was presented through the major names of heritage institutions, archives, libraries and museums. Stress was laid on the importance of collaboration among sister disciplines, which is promoted by working seminars at annual conferences of ALM (Archives, Libraries and Museums in the global information environment), and the tenth anniversary of their work at this conference linked museum workers, archivists and librarians in a concrete manner. Active participation of literary theorists and critics as well as creative writers in the very conception of the conference tells eloquently not only of the existence of an awareness that it is important to engage with the literary heritage, but also of competent, creative and contemporary considerations of systematising them. The reviews of an acknowledged scholar, an academician and a writer of this number of the journal are the best evidence of the new quality that is the outcome of work by 41 associates, the authors of the articles.

This international conference was motivated by one more anniversary: the 25th anniversary of the exhibition “Museum Book” at Interliber, the book and literature review in Zagreb. This exhibition gives a review of one year’s publishing activities of Croatian museums. The only one of its kind in the world, this exhibition endorses the fact that museums too are publishing houses, which annually issue in Croatia some six hundred titles, from proceedings and bulletins to monographs, catalogues of exhibitions and other printed items, thus taking part in an essential way in the development of the cultural space.

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