

Iris Biškupić Bašić. *The Collection of Gingerbread and Candle Making*,

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The Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb is the publisher of another catalogue, this time presenting the Collection of Gingerbread and Candlemaking, authored and curated by Iris Biškupić Bašić. With this catalogue, the author has contributed not only to museum activities, but also to the detailed knowledge of this specific ethnological and cultural-anthropological phenomenon, which encompasses the history and development of crafts in Europe and Croatia, art, tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This catalogue is bilingual, with the Croatian text fully translated into English. In this way, the history and content of the Collection, as well as the phenomenon of gingerbread and candlemaking in Croatia, are available to a wider professional audience, as well as to other interested parties.

The text of the book/catalogue of the gingerbread and candlemaking collection is divided into chapters: Foreword, Introduction, About sources and references, History of gingerbread and candlemaking craft in Europe, Development of gingerbread and candlemaking craft in Croatia, Gingerbread and candlemaking collection, Gingerbread, Candlemaking, List of gingerbread and candle makers whose objects are part of the museum holdings, Conclusion, Catalogue overview, Sources and references. At the end of the first part of the book, there is a complete list and description of the activities and life stories of all gingerbread and candle makers whose objects are part of the museum's holdings listed according to the places where they worked or still work in the surrounding area of Zagreb, Varaždin, Karlovac and in the region of Slavonia. This part of the catalogue is extremely important because it is a section dedicated to the skill holders, which is extremely important in the context of intangible heritage. A separate unit consists of the catalogued collection divided into chapters: Wooden gingerbread molds, Wax casts from gingerbread molds, Metal molds "šteheri", Objects related to gingerbread and candlemaking crafts (bags, sales tent, chests, mirrors, advertising leaflets, packaging, wooden utensils – rolling pin), Licitors, Molds for votive offerings, Candles, tools and applications for decorating candles, Candlemaking tools and applications for decorating candles. The text of the catalogue/book is lavishly illustrated with 670 documentary, studio and field black-and-white and color photographs. The photographs show individual objects as illustrations to accompany the text, as well as documents, workshop interiors and details of crafting, as well as the sale of products at fairs and church festivals and other events from the early 20th century to the present day. Each catalogue item contains a studio photograph of the object.

For curator Iris Biškupić Bašić, the Collection of Gingerbread and Candlemaking is a research starting point, a field, an inspiration for various projects. This is her research topic that in the best sense connects her studies: ethnology and art history, and then museum work. Iris Biškupić Bašić has been the Head of the Collection of Gingerbread and Candlemaking since 1995, so this catalogue marks thirty years of her work on this Collection. While researching gingerbread and candlemaking, she processed old, long-acquired museum objects, acquired new ones, acquired literature from the field, conducted field and archival research and was involved in many projects (films, interpretations of ceramic licitars, jewelry), and finally, in international projects related to gingerbread craft, such as a series of exhibitions, and participated in preparing the UNESCO nomination dossier and preparing the project of decorating the Christmas tree in the Vatican. The book/catalog by Iris Biškupić Bašić represents the rounding out of her work on this Collection, but by no means the end, as the Collection will continue to grow through additions, acquisitions, or donations. In this form, the catalogue is a contribution not only to ethnological museology, but also to the research of a part of intangible heritage – gingerbread and candlemaking in Croatia. It is our obligation to constantly monitor, research, document, present this protected phenomenon, ensure the transfer of skills to younger generations, and create a favorable environment for its survival and further life. This catalogue is a great contribution to all these efforts and demonstrates the constant commitment in all the above aspects, first and foremost by Iris Biškupić Bašić, then by her parent institution, the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, and, finally, by the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia.