

Bibliofili, kolekcionari, donatori

BIBLIOPHILES,
COLLECTORS,
DONORS

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Valpovo Landowners – Bibliophiles, Collectors, Donors

Museum of Slavonia keeps numerous valuable objects of family heritage as part of the collections its Historical Department, Artistic Crafts Department, Numismatics Department, Ethnographic Department, and the Library Department, and their members can truly be described as *Bibliophiles, Collectors, and Donors*.

Today, the preserved heritage of the Prandau-Normann family at the Museum of Slavonia speaks about the everyday life and practices of the owners of the Valpovo Estate, their interests and social leanings, and they illustrate the life in this area during a period of over two centuries. One of the most valuable preserved family libraries in our country, with close to ten thousand bibliographic units, as well as music material, mostly manuscripts, the numismatic collection donated by the Count Rudolf von Normann-Ehrenfels to the City Museum, as it was called then, ethnographic material, an exceptional cartographic collection, artistic crafts objects: furniture, decorative items, photographs, paintings, documentary material... are all a part of the rich treasury of the Valpovo landowners kept at the Museum of Slavonia and presented to the public for the first time in this manner.

However, among these few, there are also some very valuable items that speak of the Valpovo nobility as lovers and advocates of culture, art, literature, and music, as collectors with wide interests, who kept, developed, and enriched existing collections with valuable, often rare pieces of art, through several generations.

Most of the objects featured in the exhibition arrived at the Museum after World War II, as a result of the activities of the Committee for Collecting and Preserving Cultural Monuments and Antiques (KOMZA).

It was founded by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of Croatia in June of 1945 and it was *originally a part of the National Institute*

*for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, and then, from 1946 to 1947, it was under the administration of the Conservation Institute of Croatia.*¹ KOMZA's mission was to protect – record and safely store all objects of cultural-historical and artistic significance that became property of the newly established Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FNRJ). As a KOMZA official², Dr Danica Pinterović and the Osijek museum,³ as the most significant state institution in this area, were tasked with maintaining the abandoned Slavonian castles and other buildings where these valuable objects were found, as well as with protecting them, until the decision was made on their relocation.⁴ The Documentary Collection of the Museum of Slavonia⁵ grants us the possibility to inspect the actions that were taken, through the KOMZA monthly reports, numerous minutes, requests, and decisions. Two documents sent to the Administration of the State Museum in Osijek⁶ in October and December of 1945 demonstrate the situation found by Dr Danica Pinterović: On her first visit to the castle in Valpovo⁷ (where the Children's Home was relocated earlier), in the related report, she mentioned everything that was found during the inspection of the rooms used by the Children's Home, as well as the attic space, where many objects were also stored – furniture, paintings, and books, but they were destroyed because the roof of the castle was significantly damaged. During the two subsequent visits⁸, all the found objects that had cultural and historical significance were moved to the designated room on the 2nd floor, in the left wing of the castle, they were deposited and their information was noted in the records, after which the room was sealed; all of this was done in the presence of a Three-Member Committee⁹ specifically appointed for this occasion. Dr Danica Pinterović requested funds for the space where the stored cultural and historical material will be deposited several times during

¹ Vinaj, M.; Vujić, Ž. Muzealnost knjižnice Prandau-Normann u Muzeju Slavonije Osijek. *Muzeologija* 48/49(2011/2012), Zagreb, p. 124.

² *Museum commissioner at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Art Department, as she calls herself in her report about her trip to Valpovo on 29 October 1945.*

³ In 1945/1946 Croatian State Museum in Osijek, after 1947 Museum of Slavonia.

⁴ Pinterović, D. O razvoju osječkog muzeja. *Osječki zbornik* 6(1958), Osijek, p. 19.

⁵ One of the collections of the Historical Department of the Museum of Slavonia.

⁶ Reports sent to the head of the Osijek museum, Dr Josip Bösendorfer (Head of the Museum from 1941 to 1949).

⁷ Report to the Administration of the State Museum in Osijek (drafted and sent on 31 October 1945 after the visit to the castle in Valpovo on 29 October 1945)

⁸ *Ibid.* (from 21 December 1945, which said that on 12 December 1945 the objects were inspected, a room was found where they could be stored, and a committee was appointed to complete the task, which was done on 20 December 1945, while keeping extensive records – Documentary Collection of the Museum of Slavonia – archival box with KOMZA records).

⁹ The members of the Committee were: 1) Pinterović Dr Danica, curator of the State Museum in Osijek, 2) Grakalić Anica, Manager of the Children's Home, 3) Vicić Antun, Head of the Office Supplies Purchasing Department of the County People's Committee Valpovo.

1946, but that space was needed even more for the relocation of the extensive library, which was slowly being chipped away, starting as soon as the wartime activities ended¹⁰, which resulted in its relocation to the State Museum in Osijek (not fully and without the matching shelves).¹¹ The implementation of the numerous activities of the KOMZA Regional Collection Centre, previously planned by its commissioner, Dr Danica Pinterović, started in early 1947. After it became known that the Children's Home will soon be moving out of the castle premises and that the sealed room with the valuable art, as well as the other objects remaining in some of the rooms of the castle, will be left without the necessary supervision, the attempts to properly handle those objects as soon as possible by moving them from the castle to the County Collection Centre in Osijek were expedited. In the first half of 1947, this work and several other protective measures at other sites in Valpovo were mostly completed, which is evidenced by many reports and minutes in various relevant institutions.¹²

In the early July of 1948, the work on the lists of objects delivered by KOMZA started and they were mostly completed by the end of the month. On 20 and 21 July, the objects delivered from Valpovo were listed. Five typewritten pages marked as Valpovo K-10/46¹³ contain 114 items¹⁴ with 143 listed objects. Six objects were designated for shipping to Zagreb (tin amphora shaped vase, polished wood tray, and four stone material vases).¹⁵ Forty-three paintings (oil on canvas) are a part of the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Osijek¹⁶ today, fifteen objects are located in the collections of the Historical Department of the Museum of Slavonia, and the rest of the objects are a part of numerous collections of the Artistic Crafts Department of the Museum of Slavonia. The preserved family library is a memorial collection of the Library Department of the Museum of Slavonia.

10 Documentary Collection of the Museum of Slavonia (files 189/46 (K 4/46.); 12/46 (K 12/46); K-33/46)).

11 Ibid. (files K 26/46; K 31/46).

12 Ministry of Education, Department for Culture and Art, Museums Section, KOMZA Acting National Collection Centre, Zagreb, County People's Committee, City People's Committee in Valpovo, and the Regional Collection Centre, i.e. the Croatian National Museum in Osijek. Ibid. (files 11/47; K-1/47; K 9/47; minutes: Valpovo, 19 January 1947; K-13/47; K-23/47; K-24/47; minutes: Osijek, 15 May 1947; K-27/47).

13 Documentary Collection of the Museum of Slavonia: List of Objects Delivered from Valpovo, file K-10/46, p. 26–30; this list does not include library material, it only contains paintings, art and crafts objects, as well as cultural and historical objects.

14 There are 115 items, i.e. ordinal numbers listed, however, the listing for the object under number 50 (white milky glass tray) was repeated under the number 101.

15 Documentary Collection of the Museum of Slavonia: List of Objects Delivered from Valpovo, file K-10/46, no. 63, 64, 66, and 68, p. 28.

16 Three small landscapes, oil on canvas (file K-10/46 no. 1, 6, and 22) are a part of the collection of the Artistic Crafts Department of the Museum of Slavonia; the painting by Joseph Hoffmann Goro Bristenstock u Švicarskoj, 1890 is on loan to the Gallery, today the Museum of Fine Arts in Osijek, for the permanent exhibition at the time (v. 23/1998).