

In memoriam Jenő Zepezáni
1947 – 2022

We have lost a man, but his memory will remain as long as there is someone to recall his facial features, his movements, to recall snippets of conversation, to smile at the mischievous smile that comes out of the corner of his mouth, out of the corner of his eye. His fingerprints, which gave value to our cultural and material heritage, which our descendants will perceive with all the secrets he revealed, and which will live on in time, and as it is natural, we must pass on to future generations.

Although the Museum of Odorheiu Secuiesc has old roots, it truly became under his leadership a recognized and appreciated institution by specialists. Taking advantage of the opportunities given at any given time, fighting against the intellectual constraints of the time, he managed to give the institution he led a good reputation, where specialists, museologists, painters, sculptors and photographers were always welcome, even from abroad, because here they found an open door and could enjoy intellectual refreshment. Jenő Zepezáni did his best to offer the best to the friends of the museum and visitors under the given circumstances. He saw deeply, felt and resonated, was creative and gave room for creativity, his knowledge was well known. He argued if it was necessary, when he had to, he opposed, if he encountered obstacles, he looked for ways out and did all these in the interest of the museum.

He was the kind of critic who was capable of voicing his disagreement and successfully defending his point of view, when in those times, such an attitude was not always „appropriate”. The museum under his leadership became a prestigious and respected institution in Szeklerland. In those days, when travelling exhibitions were not yet common practice, his exhibitions were known even beyond the borders. He knew how to enrich it and develop it. He loved and understood photography. He loved to do research, to write down his thoughts in order to become true public values, urging others to do the same. He always liked to come up with something new, he loved to show off his innovative ideas.

He promoted new research themes, exhibitions, some in rural areas (by setting up peasant houses, commemorative rooms), conferences, creative camps, cultural collaboration agreements at institutional level, prints and magazines published by the Museum and cultural foundations. Under his leadership, the restoration workshop of the museum was set up, where students of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts had the opportunity to work on several occasions in the framework of the restoration training, contributing to the protection of the museum’s heritage and to the acquisition of their own specialized knowledge.

He considered important and supported the establishment of the annual Transylvanian Hungarian Restorers’ Training Conference and its yearbook, the Isis Transylvanian Hungarian Restorers’ Booklet, and throughout his work he helped to keep it alive by supporting and applying for grants. Under his direction, the museum’s restoration workshop was set up, where students of the Hungarian University of Fine Arts could work on several occasions in the framework of restoration exercises for their own education and for the protection of the museum’s objects.

He excelled in his passion for his work, in his responsibility for the preservation of cultural heritage, for the appreciation and awareness of local history, the encouragement of research, and the popularization of culture. These are the elements that make up our image of Jenő Zepezáni.

András Lajos Róth

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