

Kabinet muzičkih automata

Tekst/By: SONJA PODGORELEC
Snimio/Photos: EDO FRANIĆ

Iza iznimno zanimljive zbirke glazbenih automata smještene u Muzeju grada Zagreba stoji i jednako tako zanimljiva osoba - Ivan Gerersdorfer. Posjetitelju muzeja predloženi su mehanički glazbeni automati iz čitava stoljeća njihove vladavine (1814.-1914.), podrijetlom iz Hrvatske, Njemačke, Austrije, Švicarske, Italije i Sjedinjenih Država.

Behind the extremely interesting collection of music machines in the Zagreb City Museum is an equally interesting person - Ivan Gerersdorfer. A visitor to the museum can see mechanical music devices dating from 1814 to 1914 from Croatia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the United States.

A CABINET OF MUSIC MACHINES





HEROPHON

WAGNER

BEETHOVEN

Small white tag with illegible text

U zagrebačkoj gornjogradskoj Opatičkoj ulici, iz ulaznog prolaza Muzeja grada Zagreba odzvanjaju gromoglasni taktovi velikog orkestra. Kakva svečanost u dvorištu muzeja, upitat će se prolaznik? No, zaviri li unutra, primijetit će da je dvorište prazno, a ako ponesen znatiželjom za glazbom krene u predvorje muzeja, sa čučenjem će primijetiti da tamo nema nikakvog orkestra, već da glazba koju sluša nekoliko posjetitelja, izlazi iz nečega što izgleda poput starinskoga ormara...

A taj ormar, neka vrst prastarog džuboksa, glasnu i vjerodostojnu glazbu stvara zahvaljujući svojoj kompliciranoj utrobi što podražava sve instrumente velikoga orkestra. Radi se, naime, o "orkestrionu" - glazbenome automatu starom stotinjak godina, koji još uvijek savršeno radi i koji je dio jedne od najzanimljivijih zbirki Muzeja - one Ivana Gerersdorfera, čovjeka koji je najzaslužniji za to da ovaj, kao i svi drugi glazbeni automati zbirke, sviraju baš kao u doba kada su nastali.

Vjerojatno neće nimalo začuditi da iza iznimno zanimljive zbirke stoji i jednako tako zanimljiva osoba. Ivan Ge-

gersdorfer rodio se 1927. u Zagrebu, gdje je završio klasičnu gimnaziju i, potom, položio urarski majstorski ispit. Kako je i priličilo Zagrepčaninu staroga kova, stanovao je na Gornjemu gradu, u Demetrovoj 7. I nadimak mu je bio pravi starozagrebački - "Hanzi", a građani su ga dobro znali, jer je ulicama, sve do pred kraj svoga života, volio juriti svojim atraktivnim oldtajmerom - bijelom Lanciom iz 1926, takozvanom "Gretom Garbo". Sasvim u skladu s time, bio je okorjeli neženja i pred matičarem je pokleknuo tek sa 64 godine...

Zanimljivo je da se Gerersdorfer urarstvom počeo baviti zbog glazbe, u koju se, pak, jednim dijelom zaljubio zbog gena. Naime, djed s majčine strane bio mu je operni tenor Zvonimir Freudenberg, a i njegova majka, Vera Meid, tako er je postala operna pjevačica koja je, doduše, javno nastupala tek kraće vrijeme.

Po očevoj strani, pradjed mu je bio Ljudevit Gerersdorfer, čovjek koji je 1866. utemeljio prvu hrvatsku tvornicu šešira, poslom kojim se bavio i Ivanov otac. No, potonji je podatak važan samo da vidimo kako je Ivan živio u financijski solidnoj obitelji, čemu nije odmoglo ni to što je pra-



- Zagrepčaninu staroga kova i nadimak
- je bio pravi starozagrebački - "Hanzi",
- a građani su ga dobro znali, jer je ulica-
- ma volio juriti svojim atraktivnim old-
- tajmerom - bijelom Lanciom iz 1926.,
- takozvanom "Gretom Garbo".





baka po majci, Marija Kovačić, 56 godina bila guvernanta u obitelji ure Jelačića Bužimskog, brata bana Josipa Jelačića te upraviteljica njihove palače u Demetrovoj 7, u koju će Ivan kasnije preseliti. Puno značajniji za našu priču bio je trenutak kada je, kao dječak, prvi put čuo glazbeni automat - glazbenu kutiju s likom sove.

“Zanimalo me kako ta kutija svira, a nije gramofon, pa mi je otac kupio prosjački vergl. Iz ljubavi prema muzičkim automatima izučio sam urarski zanat, jer akustičar tih naprava je nešto između urara i klavir-majstora. I sam

sam radio malene muzičke automate, stavljao ih u satove, a svu uštetinu trošio na kupovinu čudesno lijepih mehanizama. No, svi automati koje sam kupio bili su neispravni, pa sam ih popravljao, što mi je pricinjavalo velik užitak.

Neopisivo sam sretan kad muzički automat, nakon pedesetak godina šutnje, zasniva u mojim rukama. Tog trenutka točno znam odakle potječe i koliko ima godina, jer repertoar je rodni list svakog automata. Živim sam, nikada se nisam ženio i cijeli dan provodim uz svoje automate. Oni trebaju gotovo svakodnevnu njegu” - ispričao je 1988. Gerersdorfer novinarki “Vjesnika” Jasni Šipek.

Dječjačko oduševljenje tako je preraslo u kolekcionarsku strast, pa je Geresdorfer do 1960., kada je zbirku otvorio za javnost u svome stanu u Palači Jelačić, sakupio 22 čarobne glazbene kutije svih veličina. Svoj mini-muzej, koji je imao po dvije besplatne ture svakoga utorka i četvrtka, nazvao je “Kabinet muzičkih automata”.

Jedinstvena zbirka (postojala je još samo jedna slična u Monaku) prvi je put valorizirana 1976., a kad se za nju zainteresirao tadašnji austrijski konzul u Zagrebu, činilo



se da će još jedna zagrebačka kolekcija krenuti preko granice. No, Gerersdorfer je bio odan svom Zagrebu, pa je, iako bez mirovine, 1977. odlučio svoju zbirku glazbenih automata darovati gradu. U stalnome postavu Muzeja grada Zagreba, Gerersdorferovi automati su izloženi od 1994.

- Za posjetitelje Muzeja ovo je najatraktivnija i najzanimljivija zbirka, jer većina automata savršeno funkcionira, što se demonstrira pri vojenim turama. Izloženi su svi automati iz zbirke.

Njih nema puno, ali su zaista raritetni, u sjajnome stanju i pomno održavani. Sačuvan je i sav pribor za uporabu i održavanje - od alata do bakelitnih ploča, rola za aparate, igala i slično, a tu je i zbirka najstarijih gramofonskih ploča u Zagrebu - kaže Zrinka Jelčić, kustos i voditelj zbirke.

Posjetitelju muzeja tako su predočeni mehanički glazbeni automati iz čitava stoljeća njihove vladavine (1814.-1914.), podrijetlom iz Hrvatske, Njemačke, Austrije, Švicarske, Italije i Sjedinjenih Država. U to doba,

glazbena kutija dominirala je u kućnom ambijentu, dok su ulicama lelujale melodije automatskih orgulja uličnih svirača, takozvanih "verglaša". Jedan takav vergl iz Graza s kraja 19. stoljeća atrakcija je Gerersdorferove zbirke.

Također, osobito su zanimljivi oslikani automati, poput automatskih orgulja u satu s lovačkim prizorom ili glazbena škrinja iz 1870. ukrašena figurama leptira, pčela i ptica. Poseban doživljaj predstavljaju i "mehanička ptica" s kolibrijem šarenog perja, švicarska glazbena kutija s izmjenjivim valjcima čiji poklopac krasi cvijeće i glazbala, zatim orkestrion s pejzažem na mjesecini i čak 18 kompozicija, "herophon" s medaljonima na kojima su likovi velikih kompozitora te "ariston" s cvjetnim motivima.

Ova jedinstvena zbirka, u kojoj su zastupljeni svi glavni proizvođači glazbenih automata, kako su nas obavijestili u Muzeju, uskoro se vraća u svoj stari prostor - dvije sobe Gerersdorferova stana u Demetrovoj ulici. No, i do tada, posjetitelji će moći uživati u gromoglasnom zvuku orkestriona, koji je nekada morao nadjačati buku prepunih kavana i pivnica, složenih automata što savršeno oponašaju zvuk zvona ili kastanjeta, kao i onih koji bi željeli biti harfa, svirala ili ptica.

Doista, riječ je o zbirci koja je vjerodostojan dokument kulture građanskog života Zagreba...

- An old-fashioned Zagreb man with an original Zagreb nickname - "Hanzi" - he was well known to the city's residents because of his passion for speeding through the streets in his beautiful classic car - a white 1926 Lancia, known as "Greta Garbo".



On Opatička Street in Zagreb's Upper Town the thunderous sounds of a large orchestra are echoing from the entrance passage of the Zagreb City Museum. Passersby may wonder what is going on in the museum's courtyard, but looking inside, they will notice that the yard is empty. If their curiosity about the source of music takes them into the museum itself, they will be surprised to see that there is no orchestra. The music, to which other several visitors are listening, is coming out of something that looks like an old-fashioned wardrobe.

And that wardrobe, a kind of ancient juke-box, creates loud, realistic music thanks to complicated internal mechanisms that simulate all of the instruments of a large orchestra. It is an "orchestration", one hundred year-old music machine that still operates impeccably. It is part of one of the most interesting collections of the Museum. It once belonged to Ivan Gerersdorfer, a man who is most responsible for the fact that this machine and all of the others play just as they did when they were created.

It is no surprise that behind this interesting collection there is an equally interesting person. Ivan Gerersdorfer was born in Zagreb in 1927. He finished the classical secondary school and then completed his watchmaker's master exam. Befitting an old-fashioned Zagreb resident, he lived in the Upper Town, at Demetrova 7. His nickname was also an old, authentic Zagreb one - "Hanzi". The city's residents knew him well because almost until the end of his life, he loved to speed through the streets of Zagreb with his beautiful classic car, a white 1926 Lancia,



known as “Greta Garbo”. He was a confirmed bachelor, not marrying until the age of 64.

Gerersdorfer entered the watchmaker’s trade because of music, which part of him loved because it was in his genes. His maternal grandfather was the tenor Zvonimir Freudenreich and his mother, Vera Meid, was an opera singer, although she performed in public only briefly.

His paternal great grandfather was Ljudevit Gerersdorfer, a man who in 1866 founded the first Croatian hat factory, a business that his father Ivan continued, and which showed that Ivan’s family was financially well-off. In addition, his maternal great grandmother, Marija Kovačić, had been a governess for 56 years in the family of uro Jelačić Bužimski, the brother of Ban Josip Jelačić, and the administrator of their mansion at No. 7 Demetrova Street, into which Ivan would later move. A much more signifi-

cant moment for our story is the moment when, as a boy, he heard a musical device – a music box with a picture of an owl – for the first time.

“I was interested in how that music box was playing because it was not a gramophone. So, my father bought me a beggar’s street-organ. I studied the watchmaker’s trade out of my love for music boxes because an expert in these devices is something between a watchmaker and a piano master. I also made small musical devices. I put them in watches and spent all my savings for those miraculous, beautiful devices. All of the devices that I bought were not in working order, so I had to repair them, which gave me great pleasure. I am immensely happy that a musical device, after fifty years of silence, produces its sounds in my hands. At that moment I know its origin and age. The device’s repertoire is like its birth certificate. I live alone



- By 1960, when the collection
- in his apartment at the Jelačić
- Mansion was opened to the
- public, his boyish enthusiasm
- had grown into a collector's
- passion and Gerersdorfer had
- obtained 22 magical music
- devices of all sizes.

and have never married, so I spend my entire day with my musical devices. They need almost daily care," said Gerersdorfer in 1988 to Jasna Šipek, a journalist from *Vjesnik*.

By 1960, when the collection was opened to the public in his apartment at Jelačić Mansion, his boyish enthusiasm had grown into a collector's passion and Gerersdorfer had acquired 22 magic musical devices of all sizes. He named his mini-museum the "Cabinet of Music Boxes". He offered free tours on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The value of this unique collection (only one other such collection exists – in Monaco) was shown in 1976, when the Austrian Consul in Zagreb at that time became interested in it. It seemed that yet another Zagreb collection would be heading over the border. But Gerersdorfer remained loyal to his native Zagreb. So, even though he had no pension, he decided in 1977 to leave his entire collection of music boxes to the city. It has been a part of the permanent collection of the Zagreb City Museum since 1994.

"For museum visitors this is a most attractive and interesting collection because most of the boxes function flawlessly, which is demonstrated during the guided tours. All of the music boxes are on display. There are not many of them, but they are extremely rare, in perfect condition and very well maintained. All of the accessories for using and maintaining the set – from the tools to the bakelite boards, the rolls for the devices, needles, etc. – have also been preserved, and there is also a collection of the oldest gramophone records in Zagreb," says Zrinka Jelčić, the curator and head of the collection.

A visitor to the museum can see mechanical music boxes dating from 1814 to 1914 from Croatia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and the United States. At that time the orchestrion dominated the home, while the streets were filled with melodies of the street players, or "organ-grinders". One such instrument from Graz from the end of the 19th century is an attraction in the Gerersdorfer collection.

Also very interesting are painted devices like the organ in a clock with a hunting scene or the music box from 1870 that is decorated with butterflies, bees and birds. A special experience is the "mechanical bird," a hummingbird with colored feathers; a Swiss music box with alternating rollers whose cover is decorated with flowers and instruments; an "orchestrion" with a moonlit landscape, and 18 other works, including a "herophone" with medallions containing images of all of the great composers and an "ariston" with pictures of flowers.

As we were informed in the Museum, this unique collection, in which all of the major producers of musical devices are represented, is about to return to its old venue – to the two rooms of Gerersdorfer's apartment on Demetrova Street. But until then, visitors will be able to enjoy the thunderous sound of a nickelodeon, which once had to rise above the noise from crowded cafes and pubs, and complex devices that perfectly imitate the sound of a bell or castanets, or those that wish to be a harp, flute or a bird.

It really is a collection that testifies to the culture of the urban life in Zagreb. ←