Imre Bogár’s mini book collection

National Széchényi Library, Buda Castle, “F” Building, Floor 7, Catalogue Hall

[1]One of National Széchényi Library’s permanent exhibitions is the one presenting a mini book collection once collected and owned by the late Director-General of Zrínyi Printing House, Imre Bogár, who died in 1988. Owing to the generous donation of the collector’s family, this unique mini book collection is now owned by National Széchényi Library. A precondition of donation was that the collection be kept together in the form of a permanent exhibition, in memory of Imre Bogár.

[2]Nowadays mini book publishing is not as fashionable as it used to be in the 1970s or 1980s but, as time goes by, these publications become more and more valuable. Especially precious are the numbered, dedicated or richly decorated and exclusively bound items, in which Imre Bogár’s mini book collection abounds. The collector’s deep interest in mini books must have been well-known among one-time directors of publishing houses, so Imre Bogár had frequently received unique miniature publications even from abroad. On top of that, his numbered books were mostly first

copies of their series, carrying a low serial number.

[3]In addition to the fascinating and aesthetic features of the material, it is important to note that by having adopted the collection, as many as 260 Hungarian publications got into the possession of the Hungarian national library: items which had been missing from NSZL's stock and which had not even

have an archival copy.

[4]

Another advantage for NSZL is the fact that in case of 150 publications, the Library got in the possession of a missing second copy of books, having generally been collected in two copies. These copies cannot be seen in the showcases of our permanent mini book exhibition, so that they could continuously serve our readers. National Széchényi Library became richer with 248 separate foreign publications, among which there are hungarica items too. Other items from the 1,200-piece collection were registered in NSZL’s stock as binding variants. Our permanent exhibition shows foreign publications and samples of books, of which several copies have been donated.

[5]

Although the size of Imre Bogár’s collection can be considered insignificant, as compared to the 8 million-strong stock of the Hungarian national library, all the same, its adoption means an exceptionally significant growth in the number of NSZL’s mini books which, prior to the Bogár family’s generous donation, numbered merely 2,900.
Both the collector and members of the donating family deserve our honor, thanks and gratitude.

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