

Summary of the Panel Discussion

After the presentations, a panel discussion with other exhibitors took place. The participants included: Irina Zaitseva (Regional Public Charitable Foundation "Circus and mercy" Yu. V. Nikulin, Russia), Nargiz Tamabekkyzy (Kazakh State Circus Museum, Kazakhstan), Gilles Maignant (private collector, Circus Museum of Gilles Maignant (Association "CIRCUS PATRIMONIUM", France), Roberto Fazzini (private collector, printer, Dorotea and Roberto Fazzini CIRCUS HISTORICAL ARCHIVE, Italy), and Emese Joó (Director of the Museum, Library and Archives of Hungarian Circus Arts).

The moderator of the panel discussion, Bruno Schütz, asked the participants about the differences between public and private collections, as well as their views on collection expansion and the possibilities of international co-operation.

Irina Zaitseva presented their foundation and collection which preserves the relics of the famous Nikulin family. She highlighted various programs related to circus arts and the organization of international youth camps, through which they promote circus arts and wish to bring Nikulin's heritage closer to young people. They feel the need for a place where they can fully showcase their collection. Regarding international collaborations, they aim to promote the work of Y.V. Nikulin more extensively abroad.

According to **Nargiz Tamabekkyzy**, every object once considered 'alive' in circus arts holds significant museological importance. Since 2016, the Kazakh Circus Museum, which she leads, has acquired nearly 500 items. However, she identified the lack of a well-equipped exhibition space as a significant challenge. She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the XV. Budapest International Circus Festival and the conference and welcomed further exchange of similar experiences.

Gilles Maignant's private collection has been established for over 40 years and now includes more than 350 circus costumes dating back to the 1900s. His response regarding collection expansion was linked to the possibilities of international co-operation, as he sees increasing cultural and historical diversity as a way to enrich collections. Since circus arts in this region are less accessible to him, he issued a call to Central European circus artists and museologists to enrich his collection with donations from Central and Eastern European circuses. He sees evidence of collaboration in the creation of the current exhibition and hopes to present even more circus art objects at the next circus festival, some of which have already been offered, such as a 50m² circus model and a costume from the 1900s.

Roberto Fazzini began building his own collection 50 years ago, which now includes 26,000 posters. He highlighted the opening of the Italian National Circus Arts Museum in Modena this year as a great achievement. He stated that although his collection includes items from all over the world, he personally considers Italian circus posters the most beautiful and valuable. He supports international cooperation by sending pieces from his collection to foreign exhibitions.

Emese Joó emphasized that the strength of the Hungarian Circus Museum as a public institution lies in its scientific methodology, which involves qualitative research and

observation. The collection of Hungarian circus heritage began only 4.5 years ago, as previously Hungarian public collections contained minimal or no circus artifacts. The primary goal is not the collection of old objects but rather the presentation of personal stories associated with the objects.

She stressed the importance of having a permanent exhibition venue while emphasizing the need to clarify a common misunderstanding in public discourse: the exhibition is not equivalent to the museum. The museum is a collection-based scientific research institution, while the current international exhibition ('Wonderful Circus World') only showcases a few dozen selected artifacts from the museum's 40,000-piece collection. The exhibition aims to strengthen the Hungarian circus and artist community by showing what is needed in a national public institution for the preservation and presentation of their heritage.

In response, she rejected Gilles Maignant's call: "I will be the first to say no [...] because I would not like to see Hungarian circus historical material abroad." She believes that collaborations that rely primarily on a well-developed scientific methodology, which allows every collector and researcher to explore and present their own nation's circus arts, can lead to progress.

Bruno Schütz