

TALES ABOUT KING MATTHIAS - NATIONAL TALE-TELLING COMPETITION AND MULTIMEDIA HOMEPAGE IN HONOUR OF THE RENAISSANCE YEAR



The continuation of traditions and the virtual space

Making multiple uses of the options offered by the virtual world and at the same time relating them to the classic elements of solemn ceremonial events and the intention of creating traditions, the national library and its cooperating partners have again made a national appeal to all actors of public education. The call-words for the several months of preparation and the one-day competition were “online registration” and “database of nominations”, “multimedia homepage” and “stage production”, “press conference” and “wreath-laying”, “ingredients of the festive spirit” and “communication strategies”.

Competition in tale-telling

In April 2008, the National Széchényi Library (NSZL for short) and the Once-upon-a-time Foundation for

Children’s Culture (Once-upon-a-time for short) advertised a three-round competition (school, regional and national finals) under the title of TALES ABOUT KING MATTHIAS for Hungarian students in the 4th to 8th forms of primary schools and, separately, for secondary schools, both inside and outside the Hungarian national borders.¹ There were seven regional finals between 8 and 19 September 2008 in Budapest, Debrecen, Eger, Kaposvár, Kecskemét, Szentendre and Tapolca,² with some 360 students participating. From the regional rounds 25 competitors went into the national final.

The finals of the tale-telling competition took place on 30th September 2008 in the NSZL great hall in Budapest, on the day of Hungarian folk tales, which commemorates Elek Benedek’s birthday. Winners were awarded in two categories.³ The two first prize winners were given textile artist *Zsuzsanna Várnai*’s picture, “My tale” and ceramic sculptor *Judit Józsa*’s “Jankó”, donations of the two artists to the event.



The moment of joy — The head of the jury László Helyey and the blind story-teller, András Szabó, who wins the first prize
(Photo by Lajos Karasz)



Award ceremony — with ceramic sculptor Judit Józsa and textile artist Zsuzsanna Várnai in the foreground
(Photo by Lajos Karasz)

¹ The staff of the homepage (www.egyszervolt.hu) was of great assistance in the organization of the national tale-telling competition, as well as Rita Péterfi, reading sociologist in the NSZL Research and Organizational Development Department.

² Budai Cistercian Saint Imre Secondary School – Budapest; Péter Méliusz Juhász County Library and Information Centre’s Children’s Section – Debrecen; Sándor Bródy County and Town Library – Eger; County and Town Library – Kaposvár; József Katona County Library – Kecskemét; Pest County Library – Szentendre; Albert Wass Town Library and Museum – Tapolca.

³ Members of the jury were Ildikó Boldizsár, a scholar dealing with tales, György D. Fenyő, a secondary school teacher and deputy president of the Association of Hungarian Teachers; Katalin Gabnai, a drama teacher; László Helyey, an actor and Attila Nagy, a reading sociologist. The winner in the younger category was András Szabó (Szil), and in the secondary school category Viktória Lengyel.

The multimedia homepage and the press conference

The new multimedia home-page called TALES ABOUT KING MATTHIAS (<http://matyasmesek.oszk.hu/>) with database background was introduced on the day of the tale-telling competition. The profile of the digital collection was inspired by the initials and other ornaments found in the corvinas kept in the national library, which one of *Marcell Jankovics's* tale illustrations symbolically ties to the world of tales and legends surrounding King Matthias Hunyadi.



The opening page of the Tales about King Matthias homepage

The homepage starts with some Flash animation. The introduction to the service intended for adults as well as children is written by the scholar of tales *Ildikó Boldizsár*. In the textual corpus of the page, there are almost two hundred tales collected by *Ildikó Kriza* and *Rozália Kóka*, as well as Galeotto Marzio's stories about King Matthias, who is famous for his excellent, wise and funny sayings and deeds. In cooperation with the Hungarian Catholic Radio, 109 texts of the *Ildikó Kriza* collection have been

recorded and can be listened to under the audio-tales menu point.⁴ The tales are presented by the actor *László Helyey*. This page is intended also as an educational supplementary material. Therefore, a selected bibliography of the literature and a historical study has been attached. The former is the joint work of *Ildikó Terjéki*, a secondary school teacher, and *Jolán Mann* (Electronic Document Centre), while the latter is written by *György Gelniczky*, a secondary school teacher.

The Galleries include miniatures and sketches related to Mátyás Hunyadi, selected by art historian *Ágnes Tóvizi*, a member of the NSZL Collection of Old Prints. *Marcell Jankovics's* eighteen illustrations to accompany *Ildikó Kriza's* volume feature separately.⁵

The programming of the page was done by the contributors of Egyszervolt. The designer and graphic artist of the service and the tale-telling competition was *Máté Török* from the NSZL Electronic Document Centre.

Participants of the press conference was first greeted by Director *István Monok*, followed by brief information by Honorary Director *Katalin Bánkeszi* and *Marcell Jankovics's* sentences, and finally *András Berecz* was telling us a tale. After the speeches, led by Deputy Mayor *János Sediánszky*, participants walked down to Fátyol Park in District I, where following the words of commemoration by General Deputy *Péter Dippold* and Mayor *Sediánszky*, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the well of *Elek Benedek*, the father of Hungarian tales.

Annamária Sudár
sudara@oszk.hu

⁴ The story telling of finalists in the tale-telling competition is uploaded to the homepage at the time of writing this report.

⁵ The third gallery is edited at the time of writing this report, with a selection of photos taken at the commemorations.