

“EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW” ABOUT THE ÖRKÉNY WEB PAGE



In the early spring of 2009 the national library launched the web page paying tribute to István Örkény (<http://orkenyistvan.hu>) as the outcome of an agreement between the National Széchényi Library and the Örkény family. It was introduced on 8th April, a date close to István Örkény's birthday, as he was born on 5th April 1912. In the finals of the eFestival multimedia contest in November 2009, the service was awarded the winning digital media application qualification in the “Digital preservation of Hungarian cultural heritage” category.

In the early summer of 2008 Zsuzsa Radnóti, István Örkény's widow contacted General Director István Monok with the news that the family would like to publish some of István Örkény's outstanding pieces on the pages of the Hungarian Electronic Library (MEK). Subsequently, as a result of the agreement with the Palatinus Publishing Company the national library digitized four volumes. For the sake of enriching our virtual collection, these texts covered by copyright suggested the idea that the national library should develop a multimedia web page with cooperation and strong support from the Content Provision Department, the Collection of Theatre History, the Informatics Directorate and the family. In the course of negotiations, NSZL was licensed to make public not only the most popular Örkény pieces (*Selected One Minute Stories*, *The Tóth Family*, *Catsplay*, etc.) but also several other texts and excerpts (*Pisti in the Bloodshed*, *The People of Lagers*, *From the Secrets of the Trade*, etc.) with the proviso that these works should be available only through the web page and should not be included in the MEK collection. In addition to the Örkény pieces, as added intellectual value, the page includes five lists: the selected bibliographies of translations of his works, literature about him, lists of fiction inspired by Örkény and the best known theatre performances of his plays in

Hungary and abroad. Thanks to the Internet, several elements of the lists and bibliographies can be clicked and thus directly accessed via the home page. Relying on the collections of the library and the family, several photos of stage productions and of Örkény's life, playbills, theatre and film posters, manuscripts, excerpts from newspapers and journals have been digitized. In addition, the service gives István Örkény's career details, his biography illustrated with pictures, photos of him and of items of fine art that his work inspired. Under the *Interesting bits and pieces* heading, a bunch of widely used words, quotations, stories, texts and other curious details originating from Örkény's works have been collected. Besides the 350



visuals, the web page contains a number of multimedia elements as well. Thanks to the Mojzer Publishing Company, Kossuth Radio and Hungaroton, István Örkény's voice (his own pieces and reports) can be heard and, several of his one-minute stories are presented by Pál Mácsai. In the film section, there are excerpts from Zoltán Fábri's *The Tóth Family* and Károly Makk's *Catsplay*, as well as the televised version of Péter Valló's *In memoriam Ö. I.* and József Pacskovszky's film, *The Real Death*.

The web site has a summary in English, supplemented by the bibliography of English translations, a number of texts and some English reviews. The find function makes the web site more reader friendly, guiding your way in the 400 virtual pages and several



The eFesztivál certificate

hundred documents. The provision is operated by the free and open source code Drupal content provision system. In designing the profile of the web page, inspiration came from photos taken in István Örkény's flat. When you enter, you hear the sound of his Continental typewriter. As a special exception, NSZL refrained from having the national library in the Internet domain name, as it was bought by István Örkény's family and made available to the national library.

The continuously growing service is a good example of how the combination of the national library's rich collection and the opportunities offered by virtual space can create new values and encourage further ideas. In cooperation with the Association of Hungarian teachers, the National Széchényi library advertised a competition for teachers of Hungarian under the title of *Learn Örkényese!* The contest was motivated by the desire to bring István Örkény's writing closer to readers and to promote the sophisticated application of computer technology in education. The award-winning submissions are available on the Örkény web page.

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The introductory page of the web site

