



Podobe ustvarjalnosti  
dr. Zmage Kumer,  
vtisnjene v razkrivanje  
pešemskega izročila

Razstava o veliki raziskovalki slovenske ljudske pesmi, slovenistki in etnomuzikologinji dr. Zmaga Kumer, je opredmetena zgodba o njeni pripadnosti rojstnemu kraju in domovini. Je prikaz dela raziskovalke, ki je bila vseskozi tiho povezana z izročilom svojega kraja: tako kot so ribniški krošnjariji s svojimi krošnjami odhajali po svetu, tako je šla, obogatena s kulturnim spominom rodne doline, v svet Zmaga Kumer, se neštetokrat vračala in se z bogastvom svojega raziskovalnega dela, prikazanega v obliki razstave, dokončno vrnila.



dr. Zmaga Kumer  
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**V** razstavi se povezujejo tri zgodbe, ki se med seboj prepletajo na poseben način. Prva je osebna zgodba Zmage Kumer, 24. aprila leta 1924 rojene v Ribnici. Predstavljena je z zapuščino, ki jo je Zmaga Kumer namenila svojemu rojstnemu kraju, vključno z bogato osebno knjižnico. Simbolično predstavljeni osebni predmeti in muzejska oživitve njenega delovnega okolja se na razstavi prepletajo: osebna pot Zmage Kumer je namreč neločljivo povezana z zgodbo njenega raziskovalnega dela, ki pomeni drugo zgodbo razstave.

Etnomuzikološka pot Zmage Kumer, ves čas povezana z Glasbenonarodopisnim inštitutom v Ljubljani, se razkriva v prikazu na panojih, v knjižnici, v mali muzejski postavitvi, ki skuša simbolično opredeliti njeno raziskovalno iskanje, predvsem pa v predstavitvi njenih objav.

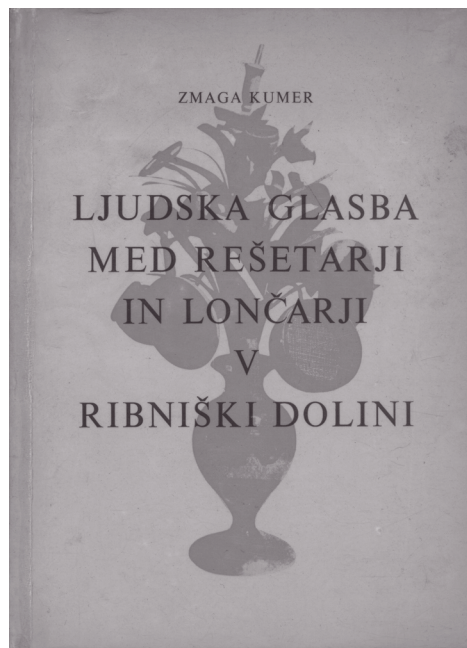
Muzejski prikaz zaključuje tretja zgodba, povezana z rezultati njenega raziskovanja in hkrati s pesemskim izročilom Ribnice in njenih ljudi. Ta zgodba je prelita v zvočne zapise: s pesmijo in glasbo, dostopno z dotikom na zaslon, vsakič znova razkrije delček izročila, ki se mu je Zmaga Kumer posvetila s svojim življenjem in delom.

Zvočni zaključek razstave osmišlja celotno postavitev spominske sobe. Raziskovalka dr. Zmaga Kumer je namreč eno svojih najbolj tehničnih del namenila prav svetu svojih otroških sanj, Ribniški dolini. Pred štirimi desetletji, leta 1968, ko so evropsko stičišče Zahoda in Vzhoda zaznamovali študentski nemiri in se je na obzorju zarisoval nov čas, je bila tako, skrita in obvarovana pred utripom velikega sveta, zaključena posebna monografija o izročilu njenega otroštva. Ribniška dolina, pesemski sprehodi med rešetarji in lončarji. Monografija *Ljudska glasba med rešetarji in lončarji v Ribniški dolini* je etnomuzikološka zgodba o pesmi in o ljudeh, zazrta v dediščino, ki se je izmikala sodobnosti. V njej je njena avtorica, dr. Zmaga Kumer, tedaj v evropskem prostoru že uveljavljena raziskovalka, svoj pogled na pesem in svet izrazila s preprosto, v ljudsko pesemsko govorico prelito zgodbo o malih ljudeh. Z njo je zaznamovala svojo osebno in strokovno zavezanost tistim, v katerih je prepoznavala samobitnost Slovencev: ljudem na podeželju. In zavezanost strokovnemu pogledu, ki se je s folklorističnih polj oziral za sledmi narodopisja.

Ta pogled se je izrisoval postopno, na razdalji med mestom in podeželjem, med Ribnico, kjer se je Zmaga Kumer rodila, Celjem, kjer je kot gimnazijka preživljala drugo svetovno vojno, in Kočevjem, kjer je kot maturantka zaključila gimnazijo. Bogastvo du-

ha in v ljudski spomin zapisane stopinje slovenstva jo je učila odkrivati tudi izobrazba, ki je bila deležna kot študentka slavistike, po slavistični diplomi pa še študij na folklorno-zgodovinskem oddelku Akademije za glasbo.

Študij je za Zmago Kumer, uradno tedaj še vedno imenovano Zmagica Kumer, pomenil strokovni vstop v prostranstva izročila. Iskanje sledi srednjeveške božične pesmi, ki se je leta 1955 izteklo v njenem doktorskem delu *Slovenske prireditve srednjeveške božične pesmi Puer natus in Betlehem*, je nakazovalo le eno od smeri njenega zanimanja. Že med študijem, ko je leta 1948 na Glasbenonarodopisnem inštitutu začela delati kot asistentka za besedilno analizo ljudske pesmi, se je posvečala vsem področjem etnomuzikologije. Največ svojih raziskovalnih moči je posvetila slovenskim pripovednim pesmim; po njeni zaslugi so prav po pripovednih pesmih po svetu najbolj spoznali slovensko ljudsko pesemsko izročilo.



*Ljudska glasba med rešetarji in lončarji v Ribniški dolini*  
*Folk Music among the Sieve-Makers and Potters of Ribniška Dolina*

Obzorje Zmage Kumer se je zarisovalo v okolju, ki je zelo jasno prepoznavalo ločnico med mestom in podeželjem, med obiskovalci mestne tržnice in tistimi, ki so prodajali solato, med klobuki mestnih dam in rutami vaških žena. Ta ločnica je varovala raziskovalno polje glasbenega narodopisja. V tako opredeljenem svetu je Zmaga Kumer pesem prepoznavala kot odsev nepokvarjene duševne pokrajine preprostih ljudi. Tako je razumela tudi raziskovanje slovenskih ljudskih pesmi. Zbirka *Slovenske ljudske pesmi*, znanstveno-kritična izdaja vseh doslej znanih slovenskih ljudskih pesmi, opremljena z napevi, je začela izhajati na njeno pobudo. Ta zbirka naj bi nadgradila monumentalno Štrekljevo zbirko *Slovenske narodne pesmi* in je tudi ohranila njeno metodološko naravnost.

Prav razkrivanje pripovednih pesmi je slovensko pesemsko dediščino in Zmago Kumer najbolj približalo drugim narodom. Temu razkrivanju je bila namenjena tudi ustanovitev Baladne komisije, Kommission für Volksdichtung, pri kateri je od vsega začetka, torej od leta 1966, sodelovala tudi Zmaga Kumer. Z njenim velikim slovensko-nemškim delom *Vsebinski tipi slovenskih pripovednih pesmi* (1974), prvotno namenjenim poglavljeni mednarodni primerjavi ba-



Zmaga Kumer, Marija Šuštar in Valens Vodušek med terenskim raziskovalnim delom v Loškem Potoku, september 1956.

Zmaga Kumer, Marija Šuštar and Valens Vodušek conducting field research in Loški Potok, September 1956.

lad, pa smo Slovenci med prvimi dobili izčrpen, vsestransko razčlenjen pregled nad našim pripovednim pesemskim izročilom. Svoje zanimanje za pripovedne pesmi je poglobljala v številnih razpravah, kot je na primer *Balada o nevesti detomorilki* (1963), ki so sistematično razkrivale razna področja naše najdragocenejše pesemske dediščine.

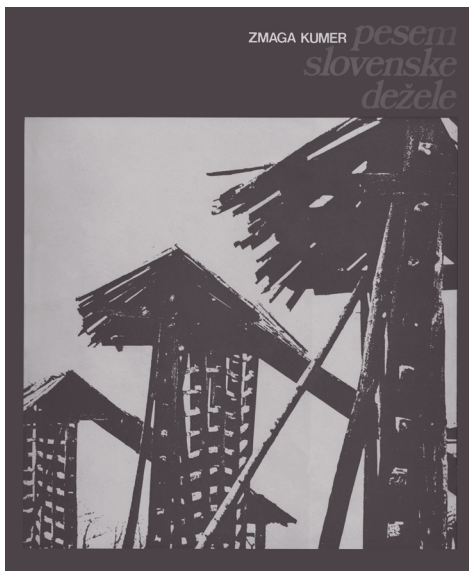
Odnos Zmage Kumer do izročila je bilo nadvse spoštljivo razkrivanje prostranstev duha. Raziskovala je v času, ki sta ga simbolno zaznamovala iskanje *Lepe Vide* in sledenje magičnim zvokom belokranjskih kresnic. Čeprav je na podeželje odhajala kot mestni otrok, pa je bil čas njenih raziskovalnih poti tudi čas pristnih terenskih izkustev. Tistih, ki so se čez desetletja vračala v podobah skromnih kamric, kjer je spala v dneh snemanja na terenu, zadreg bivanja pri družinah in klepanja kose v jutranjem svitu. O tem ni slišala pripovedovati, to je bil svet, ki se je v njeno raziskovanje ljudske pesmi zarisoval sam.

Prav zato je v svoj pogled na ljudsko pesem vključila razna področja življenja v preteklosti in sedanosti. Tako je nastala tudi njena antologijsko zasnovana monografija *Pesem slovenske dežele* (1975), kjer je petje in pesem vpletla v koledarsko leto in življenjski krog. Izjemoma je o življenju spregovorila tudi neposredno, prav posebno predano in z ljubeznijo pa z že omenjenim delom *Ljudska glasba med rešetarji in lončarji v Ribniški dolini*, ki je z letnico 1968 izšlo leto pozneje. Tesno povezanost je čutila tudi s Koroško, kamor je med jurjevimi in kresom zahajala vse do svoje smrti: ljubezen do Koroške je izrazila z zbiranjem in izdajanjem tega pesemskega izročila, o svoji posebni povezanosti z Ziljsko dolino in življenju Ziljanov pa je spregovorila v knjižici *Od Dolan do Šmohorja* (1981).

Ob folklorističnem delu je tako nevede sledila tudi življenjskim zgodbam in se bližala spoznavnim principom tedanjega narodopisja. S pogledom, nadvse spoštljivo zazrtim v pesem, je namreč marsikdaj prestregla tudi življenje samo. Ne v tisti trdoti, ki je puščalo grobe sledi kolesnic v blatnem kolovozu, temveč tako, kot ga je lahko videla kot hči učiteljice in davčnega uradnika: kot življenje, ki ga je žlahtnila ljubezen do zemlje in do pesmi. Iskala je podobo tega življenja in ob tem verjela, da le to lahko pojasni pesem. Ta moralni dolg je čutila kot raziskovalka in le tako je lahko ob izidu knjige o Ribniški dolini njej in njenim ljudem v spomin zapisala: »Ribniška dolina je tako postala drugič moja«.

Tako občuteno podeželje ni zaznamovalo le teh upodobitev, temveč je bilo navzoče tudi v njenih raziskavah ljudskih pesmi, pa naj je bilo izpostavljeno posebej ali pa v ozadju, kot nevidni usmerjevalec pri razvrščanju pesemskega gradiva. Čeprav v njenih podobah vasi, ki so se vpletale v ljudsko pesem, ni bilo slišati brnenja traktorjev ali delavskega avtobusa in čeprav je njen pogled pri pesmih iskal »stare žalostne, ne tiste kvante«, je vendarle domači in tuji javnosti skušala posredovati »pesem slovenske dežele« v vsej njeni celovitosti. Ne le v monografiji, ki jo je naslovila s tem simbolnim naslovom, temveč v neizmerljivem nizu misli in objav, ki jih statistika meri z več kot petsto tridesetimi naslovi raznih del in štiridesetimi samostojnimi knjižnimi izdajami. Z njimi je pesem samo in misel nanjo vračala ljudem.

Pogled, ki se je oblikoval ob Štrekljevi zbirki *Slovenske narodne pesmi*, je namreč navdihoval in usmerjal vse njeno delo. Oblikoval je tudi izdajo zbirke, kot je bila zbirka *Ljudske pesmi Koroške* z upodobitvijo pesmi posamičnih dolin – *Kanalska dolina* (1986), *Ziljska dolina* (1986), *Spodnji Rož* (1992), *Zgornji Rož* (1996) in *Podjuna* (1998). Za monografsko zaokrožene prikaze pesemskega izročila pa si je Zmaga Kumer prizadevala predvsem potem, ko se je z upokojitvijo odmaknila od terenskega raziskovanja. Tako so



*Pesem slovenske dežele*  
*Songs of Slovenia*

nastale zbirka slovenskih ljudskih pesmi o Mariji, *Lepa si, roža Marija* (1988), zbirka slovenskih ljudskih pesmi o vojaščini in vojskovanju *Oj ta vojaški boben* (1992), zbirka nabožnih pripovednih pesmi *Čez polje pa svetinja gre* (1994), zbirka kolednic *Mi smo prišli nócoj k vam* (1995), upodobitev slovenskega ljudskega pasijona v zbirki *Zlati očenaš* (1999), folkloristični prikaz svatovskih pesmi v knjigi *Je ohcet vesela* (2001), mrliških pesmi pa v zbirki *Ena urca bo prišla* (2003).

Pripravo teh zbirke je usmerjala njihova aplikativnost. S to naravnostjo je pripravila zelo odmevni pesmarici slovenskih ljudskih pesmi *Eno si zapojmo* (1995) in *Še eno si zapojmo* (1999), pred dokončnim odhodom z inštituta, kjer je delala tudi po upokojitvi, pa je na podlagi monografije o Ribniški dolini s sodelavci pripravila še zgoščenko *Od Ribnice do Rakitnice* (2003). Njeno delo so po dokončnem slovesu od Glasbenonarodopisnega inštituta ZRC SAZU zaokrožili splet razmišljanj o Mariji, Svetem pismu in ljudski pesmi (2004) in zbirke Mohorjeve družbe *Koledniki prihajajo* (2003), *Od klopotca do adventnega venca* (2004), *Od pusta do majnice* (2005) in *Od Florjanovega do velikega šmarna* (2006). Svoj etnomuzikološki opus je Zmaga Kumer simbolično zaključila z zbirko *Delo in ljudska pesem na Slovenskem* (2006).

Delo in ljudska pesem sta namreč zaznamovala vse njeno življenje. Njeno delo pa ni bilo vidno le v objavah: navzoče je bilo v navzven nevidnem urejanju, ki ga je zahtevalo zbiranje bogatega pesemskega izročila. Njeno redoljubnost je odsevalo tudi klasificiranje gradiva in dopolnjevanje z vsemi dosegljivimi podatki. Ves arhiv Glasbenonarodopisnega inštituta nosi sledove nešteti ur njenega nevidnega dela. Iz teh pogledov so nastala tudi njena teoretsko zasnovana dela, kot sta *Vloga, zgradba, slog slovenske ljudske pesmi* (1996) in njen zadnji celoviti pregled vseh spoznanj s tega področja oziroma njenih pogledov, monografija *Slovenska ljudska pesem* (2002). V teh delih je skušala na izčrpen, vendar dovolj poljuden način približati slovensko pesemsko dediščino tudi tistim, ki se z ljudsko pesmijo ukvarjajo le ljubiteljsko, in hkrati utemeljevala svoje poglede nanjo.

Zaradi potreb po raziskavah godčevstva se je lotila tudi tega področja, čeprav se ni čutila poklicano zanj. Na podlagi obsežnega gradiva o ljudskih inštrumentih, zbranega z dolgoletnim raziskovalnim delom na terenu, jih je opisala, opredelila in razvrstila po

mednarodni klasifikaciji. Delo *Slovenska ljudska glasbila in godci* (1972) je, obogateno in dopolnjeno z novimi spoznanji, ponovno izšlo čez dobro desetletje (*Ljudska glasbila in godci na Slovenskem*, 1983), v nekoliko predelani obliki pa tudi v okviru mednarodne zbirke *Handbuch der europäischen Volksmusikinstrumente* v nemškem jeziku (*Die Volksmusikinstrumente in Slowenien*, 1986).

V tujini so bile njene objave zelo odmevne, tako tiste, ki so bile izdane doma, kot tiste, ki so bile izdane na tujem, in teh ni bilo malo: na tujem je namreč izdala skoraj tretjino svojih del. V tujini so izhajali tudi sintetični pregledi, pomembni za razumevanje slovenske ljudske pesmi: *Das slowenische Volkslied in seiner Mannigfaltigkeit* (München 1968), *Slovenačko narodno pesništvo* (Novi Sad 1987). Sodelovala je z najpomembnejšimi raziskovalci ljudske pesmi drugih narodov, delno tudi kot članica različnih uredniških odborov. Od leta 1956 do 1975 je bila vključena v etnološko raziskovalno skupino Alpes Orientales, bila je med soustanovitelji skupine za raziskovanje ljudskih balad Kommission für Volksdichtung, med letoma 1973 in 1993 pa je bila članica kuratorija za podelitev nagrade Europa-Preis für Volkskunst s sedežem v Hamburgu. Skoraj dvajset let je sodelovala pri izdaji *Jahresbibliographie der Volksballadenforschung* in v okviru združenja ICTM delovala v okviru skupin za ljudske balade in ljudske inštrumente.

Svoj pogled je želela posredovati mladim, ne le v svojih delih, temveč neposredno, s pedagoškim delom. Med letoma 1953 in 1989 je predavala na Oddelku za muzikologijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani, nekaj let pa tudi na Akademiji za glasbo. Leta 1977 je bila gostujoča profesorica v Innsbrucku, predavala pa je še v Münchnu in Sarajevu. Svoje pedagoško delo je podprla z deli *Uvod v glasbeno narodopisje* (1969) in *Etnomuzikologija* (1977, 1988), kjer je strnila spoznanja etnomuzikološke znanosti doma in na tujem, obogatena z lastnimi raziskovalnimi izkušnjami.

Njeno življenje je bilo raziskovanje in raziskovalni prostori njeno drugo domovanje. To je leta 1992 zabeležilo tudi mednarodno priznanje za njeno delo, Herderjeva nagrada. Doma je bila leta 1983 nagrajena z Redom dela z zlatim vencem, leta 1998 za življenjsko delo z najvišjim priznanjem, s Zoisovo nagrado, leta 2003 s Štrekljevo nagrado, pred tem pa v okviru stroke že z Murkovim priznanjem (1989). Med te nagrade se je leta 1992 uvrstila

še posebna nagrada njenega rodnega mesta: natanko petsto let za tem, ko je cesar Friderik III. Ribničanom izročil patent za krošnjarjenje, je občina Ribnica dr. Zmago Kumer izvolila za častno občanko. Ta izvolitev je imela zanjo poseben pomen.

Nagrade in priznanja, podeljena dr. Zmagi Kumer, so dopolnjevale izvolitve za častno članico ZRC SAZU (1995), Slovenskega etnološkega društva in Mohorjeve družbe, postala je Dama Božjega

groba (2001), osebno pa so ji veliko pomenili tudi odzivi preprostih ljudi: poznali so jo v neštetihi vaseh, saj je sama ali kot del ekip Glasbenonarodopisnega inštituta z mikrofonom v roki in s terenskim zvezkom tja zahajala desetletja. Poznali so jo iz radijskih oddaj *Slovenska zemlja v pesmi in besedi*, v katerih je ljudem želela predstaviti zaklade slovenskega pesemskega izročila, in s številnih predavanj in strokovnih srečanj, kjer je Zmaga Kumer z vsem znano borbenostjo skrbela za ustrezno umeščenost ljudske pesmi v javno strokovno zavest.



Zmaga Kumer ob prejemu Zoisove nagrade, Narodni muzej, Ljubljana, november 1998.  
Zmaga Kumer receiving the Zois Prize, National Museum of Slovenia, Ljubljana, November 1998.

Te nagrade so razkrivale vrednost dela desetletij. Desetletij vere v ljudsko pesem, v njeno moč in v njeno trdoživost.

In vere v ljudi, ki, tam na deželi, to pesem ohranjajo iz roda v rod. Leta 1975 je sicer izšla njena bolj polemično zastavljena knjižica z naslovom *Kam bi s to folkloro?*, vendar je bil njen notranji odgovor jasen: v podobah njenih zadnjih del je še vedno dišalo po kruhu iz kmečke peči, čeprav je žerjavica v njej večinoma že ugasnila.

Ljudska pesem je v očeh Zmage Kumer še vedno prinašala davno sporočilo: »Čez polje pa svetinja gre.«

Na Janževo, 27. decembra leta 2008, se je Zmaga Kumer od tako razumljenega podeželja poslovila. Iz Doma počitka v Gornjem gradu, ki je bil njen zadnji dom in njen zadnji in najbolj zgovorni teren, je odšla s spoznanji, da se je življenje spremenilo in pesem z njim. Tudi zato je v mislih tiho odhajala v dolino svojega otroštva, v rodno Ribnico: vse do svojega nemega slovesa tistega mrzlega zimskega jutra je namreč neomajno verjela v moč in poslanstvo ribniškega rešeta. Takšnega, kot so jih nekoč njeni rojaki nosili naprodaj po vsem cesarstvu, da bi ljudje mogli – in znali – ločevati zrno od plev.

Z Ribnico se je tako Zmaga Kumer vnovič povezala s predmeti, ki jih ji je namenila, z dediščino, s katero je mestu svojega otroštva želela vrniti izročilo njegovih dedov. Tako kot so njen dolgoletni dom v Ljubljani krasili simboli Ribnice, je z njenim darilom Muzeju Ribnica njena spominska soba obogatila dediščino tega kraja: oplemenitila jo je s podobo hoje za pesmijo, ki se ni nikoli končala.

dr. Marija Klobčar

*Utrinek iz otroštva: Zmaga Kumer kot deklica v kuhinji družine Pust v Ribnici, za njo na levi gospa Pust, na desni mama Fina Kumer.*

*Zmaga v gimnazijskih letih. Fotografirano v Studiu Pelikan Celje.*

*V družbi Uroša Kreka, sodelavca na Glasbenonarodopisnem inštitutu, pri transkribiranju posnetkov s terena, Ljubljana, 1961.*

*Tiskovna konferenca Inštituta za slovensko narodopisje ob izidu knjig njegovih sodelavcev, 18. 12. 1992.*



*A scene from her childhood: Zmaga Kumer as a little girl in the kitchen of Pust family in Ribnica; on Zmaga's left Mrs Pust and on her right her mother Fina Kumer.*



*Zmaga during her secondary-school years. The photo was taken at the Pelikan Studio in Celje.*

*Zmaga sitting next to Uroš Krek, her colleague at the Institute of Ethnomusicology, transcribing recordings collected during fieldwork, Ljubljana, 1961.*

*A press conference of the Institute of Slovenian Ethnology on the occasion of a book release by associates of the institute, 18. 12. 1992.*

The exhibition about the great researcher of Slovenian folk songs, the expert on Slovenian language and the ethnomusicologist Dr Zmaga Kumer, is a tangible story of her belonging to the place of her birth and her mother country. It is a presentation of the work of a researcher who was throughout her life always quietly connected with the tradition of her home town: just like the



peddlers from Ribnica set out to travel the world carrying their peddler packs, Zmaga Kumer would also take off into the world enlightened with the cultural reminiscence of the valley she was born in, but she came back countless times, and finally also returned for good through the wealth of her research work presented as part of the exhibition.

Dr Zmaga Kumer

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The exhibition presents three stories interwoven in a very special way. The first one is a personal story of Zmaga Kumer, who was born on 24 April 1924 in Ribnica. It is presented through the heritage given to the place she was born in by Zmaga Kumer herself, including her well-stocked private library. The exhibition combines her personal belongings presented in a symbolical way and her working environment brought to life at the museum: the personal journey of Zmaga Kumer is namely inseparably connected with the story of her research work, which makes up the second story presented as part of the exhibition.

The ethnomusicological path of Zmaga Kumer, all along closely connected with the Institute of Ethnomusicology in Ljubljana, is uncovered through a presentation on display panels, in the library, in the small museum installation, the aim of which is to make Zmaga Kumer's research quest tangible in a symbolic way, and in particular through a presentation of her publications.

The museum presentation is rounded off with the third story about the results of her research work and at the same time with the tradition of songs of Ribnica and its people. This story is presented by means of audio recordings: songs and music are accessible through touch screens, whereby a small part of the tradition, which Zmaga Kumer devoted her life and work to, is revealed every time.

The final part - the audio section of the exhibition gives meaning to the way everything is exhibited in the memorial room. The researcher Dr Zmaga Kumer namely devoted one of her most weighty works to the world of her childhood dreams: the Ribnica Valley. Four decades ago, in 1968, when the European crossroads of the West and the East were strongly affected by the students' unrest and when a new time was on the horizon, a special monograph about the tradition of her childhood - hidden and thus protected from the throb of the great outer world - was completed. The Ribnica Valley, musical walks among the sieve-makers and potters. The monograph *Folk Music among the Sieve-Makers and Potters of Ribniška Dolina (Ljudska glasba med rešetarji in lončarji v Ribniški dolini)* is an ethnomusicological story about the songs and the people, immersed in the heritage

cluding the contemporaneity. In the monograph, its author Dr Zmaga Kumer, by then a well-established researcher, conveyed her view of the songs and the world through a simple story about the ordinary people imbued with the language of folk songs. Through it she denoted her own personal and professional commitment to the people in whom she would recognize the independence and originality of Slovenians: the people living in the countryside, as well as her commitment to the professional view aiming for a connection between the folkloristic fields and the traces of ethnography.

This view was being outlined gradually, as part of the distance between the town and the countryside, between Ribnica, where Zmaga Kumer had been born, Celje, where she had been living during World War II as a secondary school student, and Kočevje, where she finished gymnasium as a secondary school senior. She was further encouraged to become aware of the wealth of the intellect and the footsteps of belonging to the Slovenian nation embedded in people's memory by her schooling provided as part of her Slavic studies and after her graduation also by her studies at the Department of History and Folklore of the Academy of Music.

For Zmaga Kumer her studies signified professional entry into the vastness of tradition. The search for the vestiges of medieval Christmas songs, which came to an end in 1955 in her doctoral thesis *Slovenian Arrangements of the Medieval Christmas Song Puernatus in Betlehem (Slovenske prireditve srednjeveške božične pesmi Puernatus in Betlehem)*, indicated one of the many directions of her interest only. Even during her studies, when she started working as an assistant for textual analysis of folk songs at the Institute of Ethnomusicology in 1948, she devoted her attention to all fields of ethnomusicology. She spent most of her research time working on Slovenian narrative songs; she takes credit for the fact that it was narrative songs that the tradition of Slovenian folk songs became best known for in the world.

The horizons of Zmaga Kumer were drawn in an environment with very clear dividing lines between towns and the countryside, between the town market visitors and the lettuce vendors, between the hats worn by ladies in towns and the kerchiefs worn by women in villages. This dividing line was safeguarding the research area of the musical

ethnography. In a world defined in such a way Zmaga Kumer identified songs as a reflection of the innocent soul landscape of ordinary people. And this is how she comprehended the research of Slovenian folk songs too. Publications of the collection *Slovenian Folk Songs (Slovenske ljudske pesmi)*, a scientific edition of all known Slovenian folks songs known by that time, accompanied with their melodies, were started at her initiative. This collection was supposed to add onto Karel Štrekelj's monumental collection *Slovenian Folk Songs (Slovenske narodne pesmi)* and also maintained its methodological disposition.

It was this unveiling of narrative songs that introduced both the heritage of Slovenian songs and Zmaga Kumer herself to other nations more than anything else. *The International Ballad Commission (Kommission für Volksdichtung)* was established for the purpose of this and Zmaga Kumer took part in it from the very start, from 1966 onwards. With her great Slovenian-German publication *Type Index of Slovenian Narrative Songs (Vsebinski tipi slovenskih pripovednih pesmi; 1974)*, the purpose of which was originally an in-depth comparison of ballads, the Slovenians were among the first to get an exhaustive, broadly dissected overview of the tradition of Slovenian narrative songs. Zmaga Kumer deepened her interest in narrative songs in a number of papers, such as *The Ballad of the Bride-Infanticide (Balada o nevesti detomorilki; 1963)*, all of whom systematically uncovered different areas of the most valuable Slovenian heritage of songs.

Zmaga Kumer's attitude to tradition equalled bringing to light the vastness of the spirit in the most respectful way. She did her research at the time that was symbolically marked by the quest for the *Lovely Vida* and following the magical sounds of Midsummer Night singers in Bela krajina. Even though she would come to the countryside as a city child, the time of her research journeys was also a time of genuine experiences obtained as part of her fieldwork. All of those that would decades later come back as images of modest rooms she had slept in during the time she was doing recordings in the field, the uneasiness of living with families and scythes being sharpened at dawn. She did not only hear people talk about it, this was a world that drew itself into her research of folk songs as well.

This was the reason why she included various areas of the life in the past and the present in her viewpoint of the folk song. And this is how her monograph *Songs of Slovenia (Pesem slovenske dežele; 1975)* was created; the monograph was set up as an anthology and in it Zmaga Kumer incorporated various aspects of the calendar year and the cycle of life. By way of exception she also talked about life directly, in an especially devoted way and with love in the previously mentioned work *Folk Music among the Sieve-Makers and Potters of Ribniška Dolina (Ljudska glasba med rešetarji in lončarji v Ribniški dolini)*, which was published a year later with the year of origin 1968. She also felt a close connection to Koroška Region, where she had a habit of going between St. George's Day and Midsummer's Day. She manifested her love for this region by collecting and publishing their traditional songs. And as for her special link to Gailtal (Ziljska dolina) and the life of the local people, she talked about it in the booklet *From Dolane to Šmohor (Od Dolan do Šmohorja; 1981)*.

In doing her folklore-related work she also unknowingly followed the life stories and drew nearer to the cognitive principles of ethnography at the time. With her perspective, most respectfully



*Zmaga Kumer in Milko Matičetov med zapisovanjem otroškega izročila v Reziji, Korito, 21. 6. 1963.*

*Zmaga Kumer and Milko Matičetov writing down children's traditions in Rezija, Korito, 21. 6. 1963.*

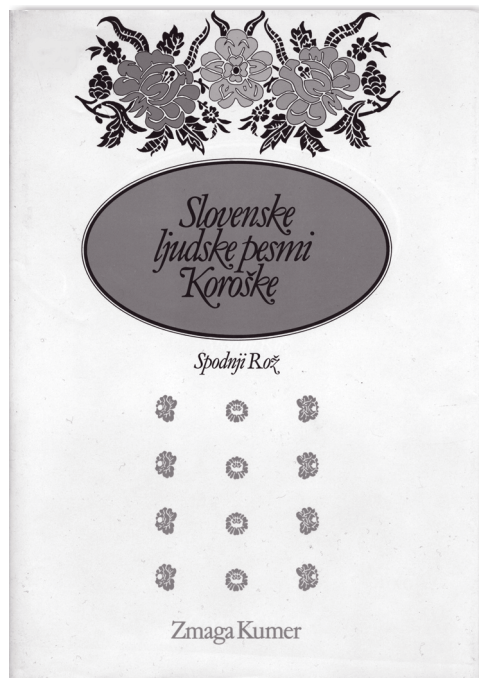
focused on songs, she namely often intercepted life itself as well. Not life in its toughness that left behind a rough and muddy cart track, but life as she saw it as a daughter of a teacher and a tax office clerk: life that was refined through love for the land and the songs. She was on the lookout for the image of this life and in doing so she believed it was only this that could throw light upon the songs. She felt some sort of a moral debt as a researcher and at the time of publication of the book about the Ribnica Valley she wrote to the memory of the valley itself and its people: »The Ribnica Valley thus became mine for the second time«.

The countryside perceived in such a way thus left a mark not only on these depictions, but was also present in her research of folk songs, either emphasized separately or in the background, as an invisible guideline in the classification of song materials. Even though her images of villages that were incorporated in the folk songs contained no humming sounds of tractors or the workers' bus and although she was looking for »the old, melancholic songs, not the euphemistic ones«, she nevertheless did her best to present the national and the international public with the »song of the Slovenian land« in all its entirety. And this was the case not only in the monograph that she gave this symbolic title to, but in a countless series of thoughts and publications as well; according to the statistics there are more than 530 titles of various works and 40 independent book editions, through which Zmaga Kumer gave back the songs themselves and thoughts about them to the people.

The viewpoint that took shape under the influence of Štrekelj's collection *Slovenian Folk Songs (Slovenske narodne pesmi)* was namely a source of inspiration and orientation for all of her work. It also impacted the publication of collections, such as *Slovenian Folk Songs from Carinthia (Ljudske pesmi Koroške)* with the depiction of songs from individual valleys - *Kanalska dolina* (1986), *Ziljska dolina* (1986), *Spodnji Rož* (1992), *Zgornji Rož* (1996) and *Podjuna* (1998). And as for the tradition of songs presented in the form of monographs, Zmaga Kumer mostly worked on them after she had retired and no longer did fieldwork; as a result of this the following works were created: a collection of Slovenian folk songs dedicated to the honour of Mary, *You're Beautiful, Rose Mary (Lepa*

si, roža Marija;1988), a collection of Slovenian folk songs about the military service and the warfare *Oh, This Military Drum (Oj ta vojaški boben*; 1992), a collection of religious narrative songs *There Goes a Sacred Thing across the Field (Čez polje pa svetinja gre*; 1994), a collection of carols *We Came to You Tonight (Mi smo prišli nócoj k vam*; 1995); a depiction of the Slovenian folk Passion as part of the collection *Our Father (Zlati očenaš*; 1999), a folkloristic depiction of wedding songs in the book *There's a Merry Wedding (Je oh-cet vesela*; 2001) and of funeral songs in the collection *There Will Be This One Hour (Ena urca bo prišla*; 2003).

Preparation of these collections was impacted by their applicability. With this in mind Zmaga Kumer put together two books of Slovenian folk songs that attracted a lot of attention: *Let's Sing One (Eno si zapojmo*; 1995) and *Let's Sing Another One (Še eno si zapojmo*; 1999); and before she finally left the institute, where she worked after her retirement as well, she also prepared a CD together with her associates based on the monograph about the Ribnica Valley: *From Ribnica to Rakitnica (Od Ribnice do Rakitnice*; 2003). After bidding farewell to the Institute of Ethnomusicology of the Slovene Academy of



*Slovenske ljudske pesmi Koroške*  
Slovenian Folk Songs from Carinthia

Sciences and Arts for good, her work was rounded off with a series of thoughts on Mary, the Bible and folk songs (2004) and collections published by the Mohorjeva družba publishing house: *Here Come the Carol Singers (Koledniki prihajajo*; 2003), *From the Wind Rattle to the Advent Wreath (Od klopotca do adventnega venca*; 2004), *From Shrovetide to Maypole Day (Od pusta do majnice*; 2005) and *From St. Florian's Day to the Assumption (Od Florjanovega do velikega šmarna*; 2006). Zmaga Kumer symbolically rounded off her ethnomusicological work with the collection *Work and the Folk Song in Slovenia (Delo in ljudska pesem na Slovenskem*; 2006).



*Od Ribnice do Rakitnice*  
From Ribnica to Rakitnica

Work and folk songs namely left a mark on her entire life. But publications were far from the only work she did: her work included managing and organizing materials, on the outside an almost invisible task, which was called for by the pursuit of collecting the wealth of song tradition. Her orderliness was further reflected in the way she classified the materials and supplemented them with all of the available details. The entire archive of the Institute of Ethnomusicology carries traces of countless hours she put into her invisible work. These view-points also served as a foundation for her works based on theory, such as *The Role, Structure and Style of the Slovenian Folk Song (Vloga, zgradba, slog slovenske ljudske pesmi*; 1996) and her final comprehensive overview

of all of the findings from this field and her viewpoints – the monograph *Slovenian Folk Song (Slovenska ljudska pesem; 2002)*. In these works Zmaga Kumer endeavoured to bring the heritage of Slovenian songs closer to the people that only have to do with folk songs on the non-expert level; she aimed to do this in an exhaustive, yet sufficiently comprehensible way, and at the same time she also explained her own viewpoints regarding this subject matter.

Moreover, as it was necessary to also research musicians and their instruments, Zmaga Kumer took up research in this field as well, although she had felt she was not qualified for it. Based on an extensive amount of materials on folk instruments, collected by means of field research work of many years, she described, defined and classified the instruments according to the international classification. The work *Slovenian Folk Instruments and Musicians (Slovenska ljudska glasbila in godci; 1972)* was published again over a decade later in an updated version with new findings (i.e. *Folk Instruments and Musicians in the Area of Slovenia; Ljudska glasbila in godci na Slovenskem, 1983*) and in a somewhat revised form also in German as part of the international collection *The Handbook of European Folk Music Instruments – Handbuch der europäischen Volksmusikinstrumente (Folk Music Instruments in Slovenia; Die Volksmusikinstrumente in Slowenien, 1986)*.

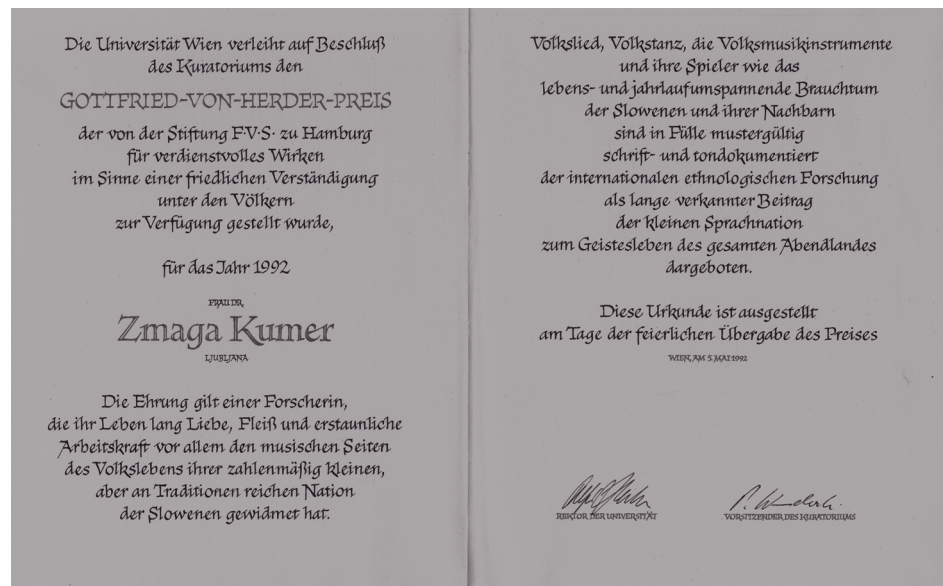
Outside of Slovenia, Zmaga Kumer's publications attracted a lot of attention, both those published in Slovenia, as well as those published abroad. And there was no shortage of the latter, almost one third of her work was namely published outside of Slovenia. Among the works published abroad there were some synthesis reviews important for the comprehension of Slovenian folk songs: *The Slovenian Folk Song in Its Diversity (Das slowenische Volkslied in seiner Mannigfaltigkeit; München 1968)*, *The Slovenian Folk Songs (Slovenačko narodno pesništvo; Novi Sad 1987)*. She worked with the most renowned researchers of other nation's folk songs, partly also as a member of various editorial committees. Between 1956 and 1975 she was part of the ethnological research group *Alpes Orientales*, she was one of the co-founders of the group for the research of folk ballads – *The International Ballad Commission (Kommission für Volksdichtung)* and

between 1973 and 1993 she was member of the board of trustees for the European Award for Folk Art (*Europa-Preis für Volkskunst*) with the seat in Hamburg. For almost twenty years she participated in the publication of the *Annual Bibliography of Folk Song Research (Jahresbibliographie der Volksballadenforschung)* and was as part of the ICTM organization active in groups for folk songs and instruments.

Her aim was to pass on her knowledge to young people, not only by means of her works, but also directly, through pedagogical work. Between 1953 and 1989 she was a lecturer at the Department of Musicology of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, and for a few years also at the Academy of Music. In 1977, she was a guest lecturer in Innsbruck and also delivered lectures in Munich and Sarajevo. She supplemented her pedagogical work with the works *An Introduction to Musical Ethnography (Uvod v glasbeno narodopisje; 1969)* and *Ethnomusicology (Etnomuzikologija; 1977, 1988)*, wherein she combined her findings regarding the ethnomusicological science in Slovenia and outside of it, enriched through her own research experiences.

Research work was Zmaga Kumer's life and the premises where she did research her second home. In 1992, this was attested by the international recognition for her work – the Herder Prize. In 1996, she became honorary member of the Scientific Research Centre of SAZU. In her home country she was in 1983 awarded with the Order of Labour with Golden Wreath, in 1998 with the highest recognition the Zois Prize for her lifework, in 2003 with Štrelj Prize and prior to this, as part of her line of profession, also with Murko Award (1989). However, what meant most to her personally was the response she got from ordinary people; she was well-known in a number of villages, as she had been going there with a microphone and a fieldwork journal in her hands for decades, either alone or as part of the Institute of Ethnomusicology teams. She was also known for the radio shows *The Slovenian Land in Song and Word*, through which she aimed to introduce people to the treasures of the Slovenian tradition of songs; she was also familiar to people from a number of lectures and professional gatherings, where her well-known fighting spirit helped her make sure the folk songs were made part of the public professional consciousness in a suitable way.

All of these awards brought to light the value of the work she had been doing throughout decades. Decades of her faith in the folk song, its power and its tenacity, as well as her faith in the people living in the countryside, who make sure the songs are handed down from one generation to another. In 1975, her booklet *What to*



Herderjeva nagrada  
The Herder Prize

*Do with Folklore? (Kam bi s to folkloro?)* with a rather polemical concept was published, however her inner answer was clear: in the images of her last works there was still a pleasant smell coming off

the bread in the farmhouse stove, even though the embers had for the most part already gone out. In the eyes of Zmaga Kumer the folk song still conveyed the long-held message: »*There Goes a Sacred Thing across the Field.*«

On 27 December, the Feast Day of Saint John the Evangelist, Zmaga Kumer said goodbye to the countryside she had understood so well. She left the nursing home in Gornji grad, which had been her last home and the place of her most garrulous fieldwork, convinced that life had changed and the songs likewise. This was one of the reasons why in her thoughts she often travelled to the valley of her childhood, to her native Ribnica. Up until that cold winter morning, when she said goodbye silently, she firmly believed in the power and the mission of sieves from Ribnica. That same kind that her fellow countrymen used to carry around the entire empire for sale, so people could – and would know how to – sort out the wheat from the chaff.

Zmaga Kumer was thus once again reconnected with Ribnica through the items she herself had given it, through the heritage, with which she aimed to give back to the town of her childhood the tradition of its forefathers. Her long-time home in Ljubljana had been adorned with the symbols of Ribnica, and through the present given by her to the Museum of Ribnica her memorial room likewise ameliorated the heritage of this place: it refined it through the image of the walking behind the song that never came to an end.

Dr Marija Klobčar

**Podobe ustvarjalnosti dr. Zmage Kumer,  
vtisnjene v razkrivanje pesemskega izročila**

**Images of Creativity of Dr Zmaga Kumer  
Imprinted in the Revealing of the Tradition  
of Songs**

*Izdajatelj:* Muzej Ribnica

*Published by:* Museum of Ribnica

*Založil:* JZ Rokodelski center Ribnica – zavod za  
rokodelstvo, muzejsko in galerijsko dejavnost

*Published by:* Ribnica Handicraft Centre –  
Institute for Handicraft, Museum and Gallery  
Activities

*Zanj:* Polona Rigler Grm

*Represented by:* Polona Rigler Grm

*Vsebinska zasnova:* dr. Marija Klobčar in  
Polona Rigler Grm

*Contents scheme by:* Dr Marija Klobčar and  
Polona Rigler Grm

*Avtorica besedila:* dr. Marija Klobčar,  
Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut ZRC SAZU

*Text written by:* Dr Marija Klobčar, Institute of  
Ethnomusicology ZRC SAZU

*Jezikovni pregled:* dr. Marija Klobčar

*Edited by:* Dr Marija Klobčar

*Prevod:* Mateja Žuraj

*English translation by:* Mateja Žuraj

*Oblikovanje in prelom:* Mateja Goršič

*Design and typesetting by:* Mateja Goršič

*Gradivo:* Glasbenonarodopisni inštitut ZRC SAZU,  
zanj dr. Marjetka Golež Kaučič, Muzej Ribnica,  
Nadškofijski arhiv Ljubljana

*Materials:* Institute of Ethnomusicology ZRC  
SAZU, represented by Dr Marjetka Golež Kaučič,  
Museum of Ribnica, Archdiocesan Archives  
of Ljubljana

*Tisk:* Tiskarna Linear

*Printed by:* Tiskarna Linear

*Naklada:* 500 izvodov

*Print run:* 500 copies

Januar 2013    January 2013



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**Dr Zmaga Kumer,**  
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of the Tradition of Songs