

The exhibition *Paths, Ties, and Discoveries: Three Authors from Serbia on the Women Writers Route*

The exhibition *Paths, Ties, and Discoveries* opened at the National Library of Serbia on December 7, 2022. Vladimir Pištalo, the director of the National Library of Serbia, Andreja Rihter, the president of the Women Writers Route Association, as well as Biljana Dojčinović and Mirjana Stanišić, the authors of the exhibition, spoke at the opening.

The exhibition is part of the project *Women Writers Route*, launched on the initiative of the Forum of Slavic Cultures. This is one of the 48 cultural routes of the Council of Europe and one of around a dozen that pass through Serbia. This route links seven Slavic countries and fourteen women writers. Apart from Serbian women writers – Jelena J. Dimitrijević, Isidora Sekulić and Desanka Maksimović – the following women authors are also included in the route: Elisaveta Bagryana from Bulgaria; Maria Konopnicka from Poland; Zinaida Gippius, Anna Akhmatova and Marina Tsvetaeva from Russia; Zofka Kveder, Lili Novi and Ljupka Šorli from Slovenia; Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić and Marija Jurić-Zagorka from Croatia; and Divna Veković from Montenegro.

In the Serbian section of this route, an important role belongs to the National Library of Serbia as an institution that keeps the legacy and works of these women writers, and to the Foundation of Desanka Maksimović, which is located in the National Library of Serbia itself. The exhibition was organised in collaboration with *Knjiženstvo*, based at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade.

At this exhibition, we present the works of Jelena J. Dimitrijević (1862–1945) that she wrote on her journeys across America (1919–1920) and around the world (1926–1927), and we also present the poems that she wrote in the early 1930s in France. Dimitrijević's experience in America is described in her 1934 travelogue *The New World or A Year in America*, in her stories from the *Serbian Literary Gazette*, and in the poems from her manuscripts *On the Ocean and Over the Ocean*, *Toward the Sun for the Sun*, and *From the New World*, all of them being kept at the National Library of Serbia. Her journey around the world is narrated in the form of a travelogue entitled *Seven Seas and Three Oceans*, whose two volumes are kept in the collection 540 at the National Library of Serbia. The poetry written in France, in the French language, is kept under the title *Au Soleil Couchant* (collection 544).

The part of the exhibition dedicated to Isidora Sekulić (1877–1958) contains a manuscript of her book *Fellow Travellers* (collection 183), the first edition of this 1913 collection of texts, and the three entries from it that she originally published in the *Serbian Literary Gazette*. In her written communications with Svetislav B. Cvijanović and Svetislav Petrović, which are kept at the National Library of Serbia and are exhibited for this occasion (collections 641 and P642), one can note Isidora's enthrallment with the culture and nature of this part of Europe. Sekulić's fascination with the beauty, magnificence and quietude of Norwegian landscapes is at the core of her travelogue *Letters from Norway*, whose first edition is included in this exhibition.

Desanka Maksimović (1898–1993) visited many countries, yet travelogues are only a minor part of her overall literary oeuvre. This exhibition presents a travelogue of hers about Australia, from a notebook that was found in her legacy, and is now publicly exhibited for the first time. The exhibition also displays original manuscripts of her poems, letters and translations. What has also been singled out from her rich legacy for this exhibition is a batch of unpublished materials which bear evidence to her relationships with different Slavic women writers. The materials in question are the correspondence that, from 1957 until nearly the end of her life, Desanka Maksimović had with Ida Radvolina and Olga Kutasova.

At the opening the exhibition, Mrs. Andreja Rihter gave out the certificates of the Council of Europe to the members of the Association, including *Knjiženstvo*.

The exhibition is open until March 17, 2023.

The digital version of the exhibition is posted at https://blogdigitalna.nb.rs/index_izlozbe.php.



Exhibition about Jelena J. Dimitrijević, Isidora Sekulić and Desanka Maksimović is ready.



The opening – many guests appeared despite the bad weather.



The Council of Europe Certificate for *Knjiženstvo* (from left to right) Andreja Rihter (president of the Women Writers Route Association), Biljana Dojčinović (coordinator of *Knjiženstvo* and co-author of the exhibition), Vladimir Pištalo (director of the National Library of Serbia) and Mirjana Stanišić (representative of the Foundation of Desanka Maksimović and co-author of the exhibition)



Visitors at the exhibition



(from left to right) Nađa Stojković (accessories designer), Miloš Ninković (catalogue and exhibition designer), Andreja Rihter (president of the Women Writers Route Association), Biljana Dojčinović and Mirjana Stanišić (authors of the catalogue and exhibition), Mateja Jančar (representative of the Women Writers Route Association), Mladen Vesković (representative of the Ministry of Culture and Information of Serbia) and Dragan Purešić (vice director of the National Library of Serbia)