"... service until the last breath" - József Fitz exhibition

2014/11/05 - 2015/04/20





József Fitz worked as Director-General of

National Széchényi Library between 1935 and 1945. His name is associated with significant technical innovations, reforms, restructuring of organization and important professional decisions. Our exhibition presents József Fitz's career and his scholarly as well as library organizational activities.



[1]Entitled "...service until the last breath", an exhibition was opened in the Catalogue Space on

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Floor 7 of National Széchényi Library on November 5, 2014. The exhibition is to commemorate the one-time Director-General of NSZL, József Fitz (1888-1964).

József Fitz joined NSZL in 1934, and he served as Director-General between 1935 and 1945. His name is associated with significant technical innovations, reforms, restructuring of organization and important professional decisions. Our exhibition presents József Fitz's career and his scholarly as well as library organizational activities. As a chairman of the Association of Hungarian Librarians and Archivists, he had made great efforts to lay the foundations of the organized education of librarians in Hungary.

The quotation ("... service until the last breath"), which gives the title of our exhibition, comes from a lecture, given by József Fitz in 1943, on how libraries should prepare for the imminent war. As Director-General of NSZL, he had remained faithful to this slogan and during World War II, he did his best to try and save both his colleagues and Library collection. Following his unworthy removal from the post of Director-General, he continued to work hard, steadily and efficiently.



[2]József Fitz was an excellent professional, both from the theoretical and practical points of view. As a writer, focusing on book history, what he had produced became an enormous success. His publications have been read by students and researchers studying and researching library science. His major works are the following:

- A könyv története (History of the Book), Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1930. (A Magyar Szemle kincsestára, 53.);
- Hess András, a budai ősnyomdász (András Hess, the Early Printer of Buda), Magyar Bibliophil Társaság, 1932; Gutenberg. Hungária, 1940. (Hungária-könyvek, 7.);
- A magyar nyomdászat (Hungarian Typography), 1848–1849. Hungária Hírlapnyomda Rt., 1948. (Hungária-könyvek, 13.);
- A magyar nyomdászat, könyvkiadás és könyvkereskedelem története 1–2. (The History of Hungarian Typography, Book Publishing and Bookselling Vol. 1-2), Akadémiai Kiadó. Vol. 1: A mohácsi vész előtt (Before the Battle of Mohács). 1959; Vol. 2: A reformáció korában (In the Age of Reformation). 1967.



[3]Fitz's research in book history has been continued and his achievements have been used and further developed by his colleagues and students who also became honored and internationally renowned representatives of their profession.

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József Fitz's memory will be preserved by the Hungarian library community. The József Fitz Book Prize bears his name. Since 1988, this prize has been granted annually by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture to books considered to be the Book of the Year, based on votes of librarians. (Votes can always be cast on books published in the previous year.)

Our readers can have a look at the exhibition on Floor 7 of National Széchényi Library, from November 5, 2014, during the opening hours of the Library. Visitors not holding an NSZL Reader Pass can have a look at NSZL's temporary chamber exhibitions for a flat fee of HUF 400.

See <u>Invitation card</u> [4] 2015/02/10 - 09:19

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