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*in* **LOVE** *with*  
*volim* **KONAVLE**

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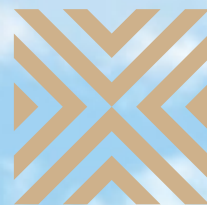
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## Božo Lasić

Načelnik Općine Konavle  
Head of Konavle Municipality

### Dragi posjetitelji!

Kao načelnik Općine Konavle, svake godine s ponosom vas pozdravljam i zahvaljujem što ste naš kraj izabrali za svoj odmor. Oni koji nam se iznova vraćaju najbolji su svjedoci onoga što Konavle doista jesu, a vi koji ste ovdje prvi put, dobro došli u naš mali komad raja.

Konavle su više od sunca, mora i netaknute prirode. Konavle su povezanost s lokalnim ljudima, lokalnim životom, kulturom, tradicijom i običajima. Ovdje, na krajnjem jugu Hrvatske, život može biti ono što želite od njega i puno više. U jeku svjetskih nemira prepoznali ste nas kao oazu u kojoj možete, barem na kratko, zaboraviti sve probleme koji tište svijet na dnevnoj razini.

Hrvatska je kao zemlja uvijek bila sigurna destinacija, a Dubrovnik, osobito Konavle, u tome itekako prednjače. Vjerujem da je to jedan od najvažnijih aspekata kvalitetnog odmora i kvalitetne destinacije. No, važno je istaknuti kako ta sigurnost nije *usiljena* ili *proizvedena* za potrebe turista. Ona je naša svakodnevica. To nije slučajno, niti se događa slučajno. Taj osjećaj koji imate čim sidete sa zrakoplova, parkirate automobil, zakoračite na rivu, nešto je što kultiviramo iz godine u godinu, iz generacije u generaciju.

Ovdje možete uživati i u aktivnom odmoru, bilo na biciklu, pješačkim stazama, moru ili uz konje, bilo u svakojakim drugim avanturama, a možete i jednostavno nestati u blagostanju opuštenog uma.

Izbor je na vama, na nama je da to omogućimo, a na meni je da vam poželim dobrodošlicu od srca.

### Dear visitors,

As the Head of the Konavle Municipality, I proudly welcome you and thank you for choosing our region for your holiday. Those who return to us time and again are the best testament to what Konavle truly is, and to those of you here for the first time, welcome to our little piece of paradise.

Konavle is more than sun, sea, and unspoiled nature. Konavle is a connection with local people, local life, culture, tradition, and customs. Here, at the southernmost tip of Croatia, life can be whatever you wish it to be — and so much more. In a world of turmoil, you have found here an oasis where you can, at least for a little while, leave behind all the troubles that weigh on the world day after day.

Croatia has always been a safe destination, and Dubrovnik — and Konavle in particular — leads the way in that regard. I believe this is one of the most important aspects of a quality holiday and a quality destination. Yet it is important to note that this sense of safety is not manufactured or put on for the benefit of tourists. It is simply our everyday life. This does not happen by chance, nor does it come about accidentally. That feeling you experience the moment you step off the plane, park your car, or set foot on the promenade is something we have nurtured year after year, generation after generation.

Here you can enjoy an active holiday, whether on a bicycle, on a walking path, in the sea, on a horse or in any number of other adventures — or you can simply lose yourself in the bliss of totally relaxing your body and mind.

The choice is yours. It is our role to make it possible, and it is my privilege to offer you a heartfelt welcome.



## Frano Herendija

Direktor Turističke zajednice Općine Konavle  
*Director, Konavle Municipality Tourist Board*

Poštovani čitatelji,

pred vama je sedmi broj našeg i vašeg časopisa *Volim Konavle – In Love with Konavle*, u kojem donosimo novu lepezu priča o povijesti, ljudima i prirodnim ljepotama našega kraja. U vremenu brzih promjena, povratak baštini, ljudima i pričama ovoga kraja izraz je poštovanja prema prošlosti, ali i važan način razumijevanja sadašnjosti.

Teme koje donosimo u ovome broju otvaraju različite poglede na Cavtat i Konavle – od povijesnih slojeva i graditeljske baštine, preko prirodnih znamenitosti, do istaknutih pojedinaca, običaja i kulturnih tragova koji danas žive u kolektivnom pamćenju. U tom su mozaiku svoje mjesto pro našle priče o svestranoj umjetnici Olgi Solovjevoj, koju je vjor Oktobarske revolucije doveo u Cavtat, književniku i novinaru Ratku Zvrku te našoj suvremenici, flautistici i glazbenoj pedagoginji Đivi Kušelji.

Ovaj časopis prostor je susreta prošlosti i sadašnjosti, mjesto na kojem baština živi kroz riječ, uspomenu i istraživanje. O tome svjedoče tekstovi o ladanjskoj arhitekturi Cavtata, ilirskim gomilama, cavtatskim zidinama, samostanu i pobožnostima vezanim za Gospu od Snijega.

Gastronomsku priču u ovom broju posvećujemo starinskoj konavoskoj torti od oraha.

Uvijek rado zabilježimo i vrijedne obljetnice poput 30 godina djelovanja čuvara konavoskog folklora – KUD-a Stjepana Radića, kao i priče o umijećima koja ne smiju pasti u zaborav, poput kamenorezačke radionice Šuljak. Svaki od tih priloga otkriva jedan djelić mozaika našega identiteta – kulturnog, povijesnog, umjetničkog i životnog.

S vjerom da ćete teme koje donosimo u ovom broju naći zanimljivima, predajemo vam ga na čitanje.

Dear readers,

In your hands is the seventh issue of our magazine *Volim Konavle – In Love with Konavle*, bringing you a fresh collection of stories about the history, people, and natural beauty of our region. In a time of rapid change, returning to the heritage, people, and stories of this land is an expression of respect for the past, and an important way of understanding the present.

The topics in this issue offer different perspectives on Cavtat and Konavle — from historical layers and architectural heritage, through natural landmarks, to remarkable individuals, traditions, and cultural legacies that live on in our collective memory. Within this mosaic, you will find stories about the versatile artist Olga Solovyeva, brought to Cavtat by the winds of the October Revolution; the writer and journalist Ratko Zvrko; and our contemporary flautist and music educator Điva Kušelj.

This magazine is where past and present meet — a place where heritage lives through words, memories, and discovery. This is reflected in articles on Cavtat's manor-house architecture, Illyrian burial mounds, the town walls, the monastery, and the devotions surrounding Our Lady of the Snow. The gastronomic story in this issue is dedicated to the traditional Konavle walnut cake.

We also take great pleasure in marking meaningful milestones, such as the 30-year anniversary of the guardians of Konavle folklore, the Stjepan Radić Cultural and Artistic Society, as well as stories about crafts that must not be forgotten, like the Šuljak stone-carving workshop. Each of these contributions reveals a piece of the mosaic of our identity — our culture, history, art, and humanity.

With the hope that you will find the topics in this issue engaging, we invite you to read on.





# Na osunčanim padinama poluotoka Rata

“ Vile dubrovačkih vlastelina, smještene unutar uzdužnih parcela, okrenute su pročeljima prema moru i poluotoku Sustjepanu. Slobodnostojeće prostrane stambene jedinice okružene su vrtovima, terasama i unutarnjim dvorištima, stepeništima i cisternama, a ponegdje imaju i privatnu kapelu.

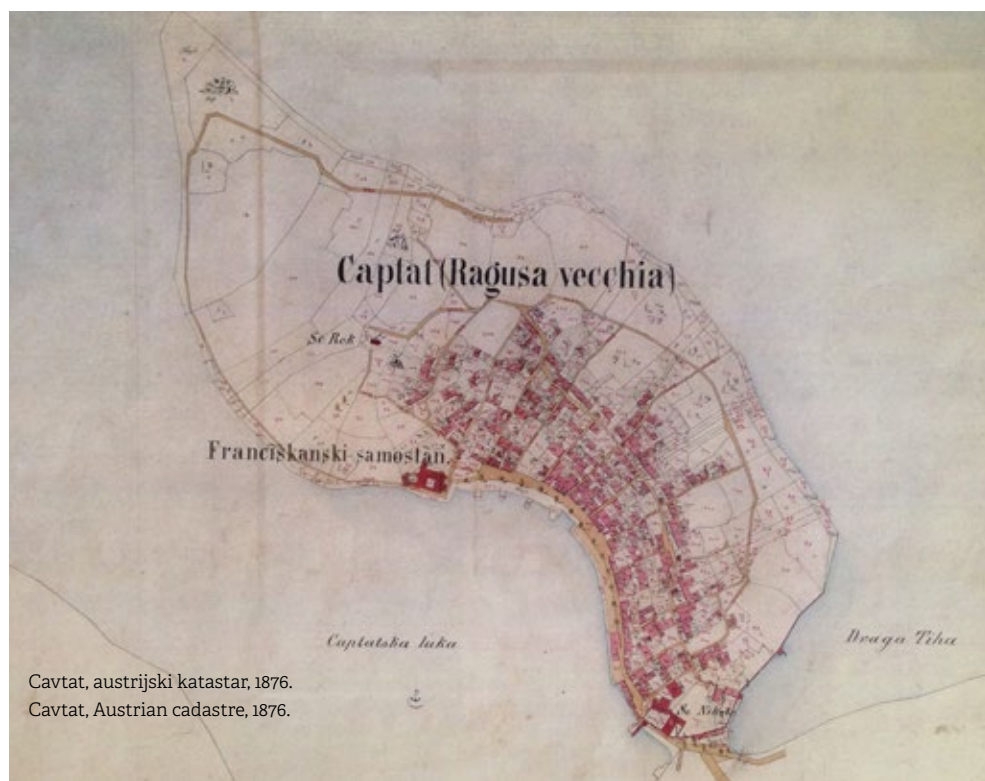
Urbani prostor povijesne jezgre Cavtata, izgrađene na osunčanim padinama poluotoka Rata, čini savršen okvir za spokojnu i sadržajnu svakodnevnicu. Nekad središte rimske kolonije Epidaura, Cavtat je postao dio snažne Dubrovačke Republike početkom 15. stoljeća. Urbanistička struktura novog Cavtata nedvojbeno se oslanja na antičku matricu. Ulica Prijeko, jedina transverzala u cavtatskom urbanom tkivu, zasigurno slijedi liniju antičkog *decumanusa maximusa*. Pruža se po hrptu poluotoka Rata, a iz njega se okomito prema moru spuštaju ulice. Takav ulični raspored, vjerojatno nešto izmaknute orijentacije u odnosu na današnju, zatvarao je *insule*, moguće i *domuse*, odnosno stambene jedinice rimske kolonije Epidaura.

Dubrovačka Republika 1426. godine kupila je Cavtat zajedno sa zemljom u vlasništvu bosanskog velikaša Radoslava Pavlovića koja se nalazila pretežno u zapadnom dijelu Konavala. Već sljedeće godine provedena je podjela novostečene zemlje

među dubrovačkom vlastelom. Na katastarskom planu Cavtata prikazana je podjela poluotoka Rata iz 16. stoljeća u duge, uske dvostruke čestice zemlje odvojene prolazima. Na tom će se prostoru razviti utvrđeni renesansni grad.

Godine 1427. izgrađen je obrambeni zid na uskoj prevlaci koja poluotok spaja s kopnom. U nemirnom razdoblju druge polovice 15. stoljeća odre-

đeno je da se jedan dio stanovništva Konavala u slučaju opasnosti treba skloniti u Cavtat. Na pravilno podijeljenim desetinama cavtatske zemlje započinje izgradnja ljetnikovaca dubrovačke vlastele. Upravo unutar njihovih visokih ogradnih zidova moglo je naći zaštitu stanovništvo okolnih područja, a u vrtovima su mogli biti sagrađeni privremeni zakloni. Nakon što je na ovom području prestala po-



Cavtat, austrijski katastar, 1876.  
Cavtat, Austrian cadastre, 1876.

## LADANJE U CAVTATU

stojati opasnost od oružanih sukoba, upada i pljački, Cavtat prestaje biti zbijeg i postupno se razvija u kolektivni prostor ladanjskog karaktera.

Od početka novog formiranja grada do 17. stoljeća izgrađena je većina podijeljene zemlje. Vile dubrovačkih vlastelina, smještene unutar uzdužnih parcela, okrenute su pročeljima prema moru i poluotoku Sustjepanu. Slobodnostojeće prostrane stambene jedinice okružene su vrtovima, terasama i unutarnjim dvorištima, stepeništima i cisternama, a ponegdje imaju i privatnu kapelu. Sve su to elementi ladanjskog arhitektonskog tipa koji se kao posebnost dubrovačkog područja razvija u 15. i 16. stoljeću. Za razliku od ostalih urbanih cjelina na području Dubrovačke Republike, posebnost Cavtata jedinstvo je ladanj-

skog i urbanog života, prožimanje osamljenog boravka u neposrednom dodiru s prirodom i kolektivnog života u urbanom prostoru.

U 18. stoljeću Cavtat prerasta u živo trgovačko i pomorsko središte. Život se koncentrira oko poprečnih komunikacija, ulice Prijeko i obalne linije. Pretežno tipska barokna stambena arhitektura Prijekog ima terase okrenute prema moru, ispod kojih su trgovine i gospodarski prostori s pristupom s glavne ulice. Izgradnja se spušta do same morske obale, gdje neki od dubrovačkih vlastelina grade svoje barokne ljetnikovce otvarajući se terasom prema cavtatskom pejzažu i uvali. Živa trgovačka i pomorska djelatnost nastavlja se i kroz 19. stoljeće, kao i intenzivna izgradnja koja s vremenom prelazi perimetre rene-

sansnih gradskih zidina.

Kontinuitet ladanjske arhitekture i kulture ladanja u Cavtatu modernim oblikovnim jezikom nastavlja vile građene prvih desetljeća 20. stoljeća, poput *ville* Račić i *ville* Banac, koje na obalnoj liniji flankiraju povijesnu jezgru grada.

Cavtat je i u današnje vrijeme zadržao privatnost kuća na posjedima ograđenima kamenim zidovima, ispunjenim vrtnim poljima s mirisnim mediteranskim biljem, opremljenim paviljonima i pergolama na vitkim kamenim stupovima. Tek prolazom kroz vrata korte, unutarnjeg dvorišta cavtatskih kuća, ostvaruje se neposredan kontakt sa slojevitim povijesnim supstratom i pulsirajućim suvremenim životom mjesta.





# A peaceful retreat on sunlit seaside slopes

“ The villas of Dubrovnik’s aristocracy stood on elongated plots, their façades facing the sea and the nearby Sustjepan Peninsula. These spacious, freestanding residences were surrounded by gardens, terraces, inner courtyards, staircases, and cisterns; some even included private chapels.

**T**he historic heart of Cavtat, built on the sunny slopes of the Rat Peninsula, offers the perfect setting for a peaceful yet fulfilling everyday life. Once the center of the Roman colony of Epidaurum, Cavtat became part of the powerful Dubrovnik Republic in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The layout of the “new” Cavtat clearly follows its ancient Roman roots. Prijeko Street — the town’s only street running across the peninsula — likely traces the line of the Roman *decumanus maximus*, the main east–west road typical of Roman

## THE HISTORIC TOWN OF CAVTAT



cities. It stretches along the ridge of the peninsula, with smaller streets descending steeply toward the sea. This grid once enclosed Roman residential blocks and possibly elegant townhouses belonging to ancient Epidaurum.

In 1426, the Republic of Dubrovnik purchased Cavtat along with surrounding lands from the Bosnian nobleman Radoslav Pavlović. The land was soon divided among Dubrovnik's noble families. A 16<sup>th</sup>-century property map shows the peninsula divided into long, narrow double plots separated by passageways — the framework for what would become a fortified Renaissance town.

By 1427, defensive walls were built across the narrow isthmus connecting the peninsula to the mainland. During the turbulent second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, part of the population of Konavle was instructed to seek refuge in Cavtat in times of danger. On these neatly divided plots, Dubrovnik's noble families began constructing their summer residences. Within their high enclosing walls, local residents found protection, and temporary shelters were built in the gardens.

Once the threat of invasions and conflict faded, Cavtat gradually transformed from a refuge into a refined seaside retreat. From the 15<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, most of the plots of land were developed. The villas of Dubrovnik's aristocracy stood on elongated plots, their façades facing the sea and the nearby Sustjepan Peninsula. These spacious, freestanding residences were surrounded by gardens, terraces, inner courtyards, staircases, and cisterns; some even included private chapels.

This architectural style, the Renaissance country villa, became a distinctive feature of the Dubrovnik region in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Unlike other urban centers of the Republic, Cavtat developed a unique



character: here, rural retreat and urban life blended seamlessly. One could enjoy solitude amid Mediterranean nature while still participating in the social life of a lively town.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Cavtat grew into a vibrant center of trade and seafaring. Life focused around Prijeko Street and the waterfront. The mostly Baroque houses along Prijeko featured sea-facing terraces, with shops and storage spaces on the ground floors opening onto the main street.

Construction extended down

to the shoreline itself, where some Dubrovnik noble families built elegant Baroque summer villas with terraces overlooking the bay and surrounding landscape. Trade and maritime activity continued through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, accompanied by further construction that gradually expanded beyond the Renaissance town walls.

The tradition of villa architecture continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with refined residences such as Račić Mausoleum and Banac Villa, which frame the historic town center along

the waterfront.

Even today, Cavtat preserves the privacy of homes hidden behind stone walls, surrounded by gardens filled with fragrant Mediterranean plants. Pergolas rest on slender stone columns, and shaded pavilions invite quiet relaxation. Only by stepping through the gate into a *korta* (the traditional inner courtyard of a Cavtat house) can visitors truly experience the layered history and vibrant contemporary life of this remarkable coastal town.



# 30. rođendan

## Folklornog društva u Pridvorju

**Baš kao u tradicionalnom konavoskom vezu, ovi mladi ljudi kroz ples, pjesmu i svirku povezuju prošlost i sadašnjost i nit po nit stvaraju čvrste veze i izvan druženja na folkloru.**

**O**kruženo plodnim poljima i netaknutom prirodom u blizini rijeke Ljute, leži selo Pridvorje, svojevrsno središte konavoske tradicije, običaja i narodne nošnje. Sve to kao da je objedinjeno kroz djelovanje Kulturno-umjetničkog društva Pridvorje koje ove godine slavi 30. obljetnicu, ali ima dugogodišnju tradiciju čuvanja folklornih vrijednosti Konavala. Mladost u narodnim nošnjama ne simbolizira samo očuvanje tradicije već i bogatstvo te povijesne utjecaje, a jasno ukazuje na identitet, pripadnost i posebnost prigode kao što je ova okrugla obljetnica.

Narodne nošnje poistovjećivane

su sa životom na selu, pa je dio ljudi modernizacijom života u Konavlima svoje stare nošnje jednostavno odbacio. Isto tako, veliki dio tradicionalnih nošnji uništen je tijekom Domovinskog rata 1991. godine, ali jedan je dio ipak sačuvan. U poratnom vremenu primjetan je porast svijesti o tradicijskim vrijednostima, identitetu i pripadnosti, no obnova domova i gospodarstva bila je prioritet. Ipak, mnogi su u svojim domovima ponovno željeli imati tradicionalne konavoske nošnje, ali riječ je o značajnoj investiciji. Za jednu kvalitetnu žensku narodnu nošnju treba izdvojiti između 2000 i 3000 eura, dok ručno rađena

konavoska muška nošnja može stajati i više. „Bilo je po Konavlima vrsnih majstora krojača za učiniti nošnju, ali više ih nema“, ističe predsjednik KUD-a Pavo Đukan te dodaje da su se u nekim obiteljima čuvale mustre i krojevi za nošnje, ali je nažalost sve uništeno. Iz kartona i novinskog papira koji se umetao u tkanine da bi bile čvršće, stručnjaci koji čuvaju našu baštinu iščitali su da su albanski krojači, tzv. terzije, svjetski poznati po svojoj vještini, dolazili u Konavle i šivali tradicijsku odjeću.

Taj podatak bio je smjernica skupini konavoskih entuzijasta za krenuti na put prema Kosovu i Albaniji. Kontaktirali su brojne terzije na Kosovu pokušavajući s njima obnoviti staru suradnju, no vrijeme je i tamo donijelo inovativna rješenja, strojnu obradu i materijale koji više nisu prirodni. Nastavak putovanja prema Albaniji imao je za cilj pronaći mogućnost izrade novih nošnji, ali po uzoru na one originalne, povijesne. Misija je ispunjena tek po povratku i to pronalaskom kolekcionara koji i izrađuje narodne nošnje u pograničnom području Crne Gore, u blizini Skadra. S tim kao da je priča dobila potvrdu izvornosti s obzirom na to da se jedan od vezova na poprsnici ženske konavoske nošnje naziva skadarica.

Folklorna tradicija u Konavlima počiva na narodnim plesovima među kojima se izdvaja poskočica, a prate je potkolo, marica i denči, uz nezaobilazno pučko pjevanje i jedinstvenu konavosku zdravicu koja i danas živi na svadbenim svečanostima. KUD Stjepan Radić, uz to, obogaćuje svoje nastupe svirkom mandolinskog sastava i pjevom mješovitog zbora i klape.

Puno je nastupa tijekom godine, no jedan se izdvaja jer, kako kažu, najteže je nastupiti pred domaćom publikom. Manifestacija Proljeće pri Dvoru već godinama je središnji folklorni događaj u Pridvorju na kojem sve skupine prikazuju što su pripremale tijekom godine. Organizira se ispred





Kneževog dvora, a svoj rad predstave sve generacije društva, koje trenutačno broji oko 130 članova u više dobnih skupina, od čega je njih stotinjak mlađe od 18 godina. Kulturno-umjetničko društvo iz Pridvorja danas vode mladi ljudi među kojima su najstariji na pragu tridesete. Ta mlada uprava društva ističe da je ključ uspjeha naći dobitnu kombinaciju njihovih ideja, mladenačke energije i poleta s mudročću, iskustvom i smjernicama nadzornog odbora kojeg čine stariji članovi društva.

Gostovanjima u inozemstvu čla-

## **Gostovanjima u inozemstvu članovi društva žele osnažiti povezanost hrvatskih iseljenika s Republikom Hrvatskom, pa su tako iza njih putovanja u Italiju, Mađarsku, Rumunjsku, Austriju, Sjevernu Makedoniju, Kosovo, Crnu Goru, Vojvodinu i Srbiju.**

novi društva žele osnažiti povezanost hrvatskih iseljenika s Republikom Hrvatskom, pa su tako iza njih putovanja u Italiju, Mađarsku, Rumunjsku, Austriju, Sjevernu Makedoniju, Kosovo, Crnu Goru, Vojvodinu i Srbiju.

Iako posjet Gradišćanskim Hrvatima u Mađarskoj i Beču pamte kao organizacijski iskorak, ostat će u sjećanju i kao jedno od najbitnijih putovanja u povijesti KUD-a. Prepričavaju se nastupi u mađarskom dijelu Gradišća, u selima Und i Hrvatski Židan, te druženje u župi don Bosco u Beču, a još su svježije slike plesa ispred dvorca



Schönbrunn. Kako i ne bi bile kada su ponosni mladi članovi društva u tradicionalnim nošnjama zaplesali na istom mjestu na kojem su davne 1908. balali njihovi prethodnici.

Iako putuju diljem Europe, u njihovim su srcima brojni nastupi na smotrama folkloru, od Đakovačkih vezova, preko Vinkovačkih jeseni do smotre Na Neretvu misečina pala. Svako putovanje ispisuje nove potvrde o gostoprimstvu, ljubavi i čežnji Hrvata izvan domovine. Primjerice, prilikom posjeta Crnoj Gori, priča predsjednik KUD-a, po završetku nastupa prišao mu je jedan od posjetitelja i kratko rekao: „Hvala što nam održavate duh.“ Time je u par riječi pojasnio koliko Hrvatima u dijaspori znači posjet sunarodnjaka i koliko cijene tradiciju svojih predaka.

Ovo društvo svojim svježim i inovativnim pristupom izlazi iz uobičajenih okvira i iz dana u dan pomiče granice. Članovi društva mladi su ljudi iz cijelih Konavala, ne samo iz njihovog sela. Ponosno čuvaju svoju tradiciju, ali i nesebično svoju ljubav prema folkloru prenose na nove generacije. Baš kao u tradicionalnom konavoskom vezu, ovi mladi ljudi kroz ples, pjesmu i svirku povezuju prošlost i sadašnjost i nit po nit stvaraju čvrste veze i izvan druženja na folkloru. Nije stoga neobično da se članovi ovog društva nađu zajedno u maslinama ili da se natječu i zabavljaju na kvizu znanja kojeg sami organiziraju. Zajedničkim putovanjima ova mladost otkriva svijet, ali i sebe, a kroz druženja koja organiziraju stvaraju zdrave temelje odnosa među mladim ljudima koji u svojim malim sredinama žive punim plućima.

Pridvorje je širom otvorilo vrata svim zaljubljenicima u folklor i zato im se ljubav u folkloru višestruko vraća. Ova iskrena folklorna priča koja je utkana u ples i pjesmu leti Konavlima i već je puno brakova proisteklo upravo iz KUD-a. Velika i sretna folklorna obitelj zaista postoji.



# The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pridvorje Folklore Society

**Much like the intricate threadwork of traditional Konavle embroidery, these young people weave past and present together through dance, song, and music — and stitch strong bonds that reach far beyond their time at rehearsals.**

**S**urrounded by fertile fields and pristine nature near the river Ljuta lies the village of Pridvorje, a centre of Konavle tradition, customs, and folk costume. This rich heritage finds its expression in the work of the Cultural and Artistic Society of Pridvorje, which this year celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary — though its roots in preserving the folkloric heritage of Konavle go back much further. Young people in traditional dress are not merely a symbol of preserved tradition; they embody richness, historical influence, and a clear sense of identity, belonging, and the significance of an occasion such as this landmark anniversary.

Folk costumes were long associated with rural life, and as modernization came to Konavle, many people simply set their traditional dress aside. A great number of tradi-



tional clothes were also destroyed during the Croatian War for Independence of 1991, though some were saved. In the post-war years, awareness of traditional values, identity, and belonging grew noticeably, but rebuilding homes and livelihoods was the immediate priority. Many families nonetheless wanted to have traditional Konavle costumes in their homes again, but found it a considerable investment. A quality women's folk costume costs between two and three thousand euros, while a handmade men's Konavle costume can cost even more.

"There used to be highly skilled tailors throughout Konavle who could make a complete outfit, but they are gone now," says Society president Pavo Đukan, adding that some families had kept patterns and templates for the costumes, but these too were sadly lost. From the cardboard and newspaper that had been inserted into the fabrics to give them structure, heritage experts were able to deduce that Albanian tailors — known as *terzije*, world-renowned for their craft — had once travelled to Konavle to sew traditional garments.

This discovery became the start-

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ing point for a journey undertaken by a group of Konavle enthusiasts, who set off for Kosovo and Albania. They contacted numerous traditional tailors in Kosovo in an attempt to revive the old collaboration, but time had brought change there too — machine production and synthetic materials had largely taken over. Continuing

on to Albania, the group hoped to find someone capable of producing new costumes faithful to the original historical models. The mission was ultimately fulfilled after their return, through the discovery of a collector and costume-maker working in the border region of Montenegro, near Shkodër. This felt like a kind of confirmation of authenticity, given that one of the embroidery styles on the front panel of the women's Konavle costume is known as the *skadarica* — a name derived from Shkodër itself.

The folklore tradition of Konavle rests on its folk dances, of which the *poskočica* is the most distinctive, accompanied by the *potkolo*, *marica*, and *denči*. These are inseparable from traditional singing and the unique Konavle toast — the *zdravica* — which is enthusiastically used to this day at wedding celebrations. The Cultural and Artistic Society Stjepan Radić further enriches its performances with a mandolin ensemble and a mixed choir and *klapa* vocal group.

Performances take place throughout the year, but one stands apart — as the members will tell you, the hardest audience to perform for is always the one at home. The event known as *Proljeće pri Dvoru* (Spring at the Court) has for many years been the central folklore gathering in Pridvorje, at which all the groups present the songs and dances they have been preparing over the course of the year. It is held in front of the Knežev dvor (Duke's Court), and every generation within the society takes part. The society currently has around 130 members of all ages, of whom approximately 100 are under the age of 18. Today, the Cultural and Artistic Society of Pridvorje is led by young people, the oldest of whom are on the threshold of 30. This young leadership emphasises that the key to success lies in finding the right balance between their own ideas, energy, and enthusiasm on one hand, and the

wisdom, experience, and guidance of the supervisory board — made up of the society's older members — on the other.

Through international performances, the society's members seek to strengthen the connection between the Republic of Croatia and Croatian diaspora communities. Their travels have taken them to Italy, Hungary, Romania, Austria, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Vojvodina, and Serbia.

Their visit to the Burgenland Croats in Hungary and Vienna stands out as both an organisational mile-

stone and one of the most memorable journeys in the society's history. Performances in the Hungarian part of Burgenland and a gathering in Vienna are fondly recounted, as are the vivid images of dancing in front of Schönbrunn Palace. How could they not be, when proud young members of the society in traditional costume danced in the very same place where their predecessors had danced back in 1908?

Though they travel across Europe, their hearts are equally full of memories from folklore festivals closer to home — from the Đakovo Embroi-

dery festival and the Vinkovci Autumn to the gathering *Na Neretvu misečina pala* (*Moonlight falls on the Neretva river*). Every journey brings a new testament to the warmth, love, and longing for home of Croatians living beyond their homeland. During a visit to Montenegro, the society's president recounts, a member of the audience approached him after the performance and said simply: "Thank you for keeping our spirit alive." In a few words, that visitor captured just how much a visit from compatriots means to Croatians in the diaspora, and how deeply they cherish the traditions of their ancestors.

This society, with its fresh and inventive approach, steps beyond the conventional and pushes boundaries a little further each day. Its members are young people from across Konavle, not only from the village itself. They guard their tradition with pride, and pass their love of folklore on to new generations with equal generosity. Much like the intricate threadwork of traditional Konavle embroidery, these young people weave past and present together through dance, song, and music — and stitch strong bonds that reach far beyond their time at rehearsals. It is no surprise, then, that members of this society find themselves picking olives together, or competing in a quiz night they organise themselves. Travelling together, these young people discover the world — and themselves — while the friendships they build create healthy foundations for life in communities where they live fully and wholeheartedly.

Pridvorje has opened its doors wide to all who love folklore, and that love has been returned many times over. This sincere folkloric story, woven into dance and song, drifts across Konavle on the breeze — and more than a few marriages have grown from within the society's ranks, creating a large and happy folkloric family.



# Cavtatske zidine



Franz Joseph Sandmann, *Ragusa Vecchia*, 1847.

(obojena litografija prema crtežu Johanna Högelmüllera / colored lithograph based on the drawing by Johann Högelmüller)

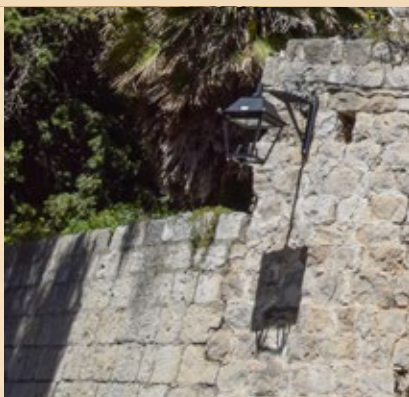
“ Cavtatske zidine danas su sačuvane tek djelomice. Preživjele su ratove i burna stoljeća, ali su krajem 19. i početkom 20. stoljeća u velikoj mjeri porušene ili rasprodane. Ipak, Knežev dvor i dijelovi zidina još uvijek svjedoče o utvrđenjima koja su stoljećima štitila južni prag Dubrovačke Republike i snažno obilježila povijest Konavala.



**U** 15. stoljeću Cavtat je bio jedan od najambicioznijih urbanističko-vojnih pothvata Dubrovačke Republike. Nakon otkupa istočnog dijela Konavala od bosanskog vojvode Sandalja Hranića 1419. godine, Dubrovačka Republika otkupila je i njihov zapadni dio. Odmah po procjeni sigurnosnih prijetnji s istoka, započela je plansku izgradnju obrambenih fortifikacija na poluotoku Ratu. U antičko doba tu je stajao rimski Epidaurum.

Već 1429. dubrovački je Senat donio odluku da se taj cavtatski poluotok odvoji od kopna kanalom širine dvadesetak metara. Zahvat je bio ozbiljan i hitan, pa je nakon izvida terena tročlana komisija izradila precizan prijedlog za njegovu izvedbu. Naime, nakon ostvarene kupoprodaje u 1427. bosanski vojvoda Radoslav Pavlović nije se mirio s gubitkom tog teritorija i Dubrovčanima je osporavao pravo na nj. Ta nesnošljivost će 1430. godine kulminirati otvorenim sukobom, u povijesti poznatom kao Konavoski rat. Dubrovačka Republika je također žustro reagirala apelima bosanskome kralju Tvrtku II. Tvrtkoviću i Sandalju Hraniću, ali i ugarskome kralju Sigismundu, pa čak i Mlećanima, a oglasila je i bogatu nagradu onome tko usmrti ili živoga privede vojvodu Radoslava. Uslijedili su pregovori, pa mir sklopljen 1432. godine. Radoslav je nastavio poslovati s Dubrovačkom Republikom.

U međuvremenu je kanal ozidan do razine tla i preko njega je izgrađen most. Usto, Cavtat je s istoka trebalo opasati zidinama, pa je podignut fortifikacijski pojas s kulama, puškarnicama i ophodnim putom. Uski otvori u zidinama, kakve i danas možemo vidjeti na njihovom očuvanom dijelu, prilagođeni su onodobnoj tehnologiji vatrenog oružja, a dva masivna zidna krila zalazila su u more i tako onemogućivala nepozvan ulazak u



Cavtatske zidine (današnji ostatci), 15. st. / Cavtat town walls (today's remains), 15<sup>th</sup> ct.



Katastarski plan, 1837. / Cadastral plan, 1837.



Puškarnica »na ključanicu« u cavtatskim zidinama, 15. st. / Keyhole-style loophole (gun slit) in the walls of Cavtat, 15<sup>th</sup> ct.

je srušiti njegove zidine, pa ih je Dubrovačka Republika trebala obnoviti. Kao i prethodne, ove radove izveli su Konavljani u dobi od 16 do 60 godina života, pod nadzorom državnih povjerenika i inženjera. Premda su gradili vlastitu utvrdu, odnosno sklonište, njihov rad ipak nije bio dobrovoljan, nego državna obveza usporediva s vojnom službom.

Cavtat. S obzirom na to da je Cavtat bio ključno središte sustava evakuacije i obrane Konavala, nakon prvobitnoga kneza ovdje je stalno boravio vojni kapetan s posadom.

Isto tako, Cavtat je planski organiziran unutar zidina: nove parcele raspoređene su pravilno, ulice na potezu sjever-jug okomito presijecaju Priješko. Potonja je, doduše, zadržala blago zakrivljenje uzduž hrpta poluotoka, i to zato što je pratila trasu *decumana* rimskog Epidaura uz kojega je u antici prolazio vodovod iz Vodovađe.

Premda su pojedine parcele bile omeđene visokim zidovima, čime se zapravo ciljalo ostvarenju drugostupanske fortifikacije, godine 1451. herceg Stjepan Kosača uspio je zauzeti Cavtat. Prije povlačenja dao

Na utvrđenju Cavtata angažiran je i vrhunski talijanski hidrotehničar i graditelj Onofrio di Giordano de la Cava. Tijekom boravka u Dubrovniku (1436. – 1443.), glasoviti graditelj opravdao je ukazano povjerenje: uspješno je proveo radove na uspostavi vodovodnog sustava u Dubrovniku, na pregradnji Kneževa dvora nakon požara 1435. te na izgradnji obrambenih zidina u Stonu i Cavtatu (1441.).

Zato nije slučajno da se na veduti Dubrovnika u opsežnom djelu Jacopa Filippa Forestija *Supplementum Chronicarum* – onodobnom *bestselleru* s opetovanim i proširenim izdanjima – istaknuto prikazuje i Onofrijeva fontana. Njezin simbolički prikaz (na lokaciji Velike fontane prikazan je lik Male fontane) nalazimo i u kapitalnom djelu Forestijeva suvremenika

Konrada von Grünenberga (1487). U razdoblju rastuće osmanske prijetnje cavtatske su zidine dodatno ojačane kulama i produženim krilima. Crtež austrijskoga poručnika Johanna Högelmüllera iz 1845. zorno prikazuje dio utvrđenja, a čitav fortifikacijski sustav izgrađen na potezu Luka Cavtat (*Porto di Ragusa Vecchia*) – Uvala Tiha (*Valle Tiha*) vidljiv je na katastarskom planu iz 1837. godine.

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# The Walls of Cavtat

Cavtatske zidine (ostatci u 19. st.), 15. st. / Cavtat town walls (remains in the 19<sup>th</sup> ct.), 15<sup>th</sup> ct.

**“ The walls of Cavtat survive today only in part. They weathered wars and turbulent centuries, but were largely demolished or sold off piecemeal in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Even so, the Rector’s Palace and sections of the walls still stand as testament to the fortifications that for centuries guarded the southern gateway of the Republic of Ragusa — and left a lasting mark on the history of Konavle.**

**I**n the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Cavtat represented one of the most ambitious urban and military accomplishments of the Republic of Ragusa, as Dubrovnik was known at that time. Following the purchase of the eastern part of Konavle from the Bosnian duke Sandalj Hranić in 1419, the Republic went on to acquire the western part as well. An immediate assessment of security threats from the east prompted the systematic construction of defensive fortifications on the Rat peninsula — the very site where the Roman city of Epidaurum had stood in antiquity.

As early as 1429, the Ragusan Senate resolved to separate the Cavtat peninsula from the mainland by cutting a canal roughly 20 metres wide. The undertaking was considered urgent and serious: following an on-site survey, a three-member commission drew up a detailed plan for its execution. The urgency was well-founded. After the sale was completed in

## THE DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF RAGUSA



Konrad von Grünenberg, *Beschreibung der Reise von Konstanz nach Jerusalem*, 1487.  
 Konrad von Grünenberg, *Description of the Journey from Constance to Jerusalem*, 1487

1427, the Bosnian duke Radoslav Pavlović refused to accept the loss of the territory and contested Ragusa's right to it. This hostility came to a head in 1430 with open armed conflict, known to history as the War of Konavle. The Republic responded vigorously, appealing to the Bosnian king Tvrtko II Tvrtković, to Sandalj Hranić, to the Hungarian king Sigismund, and even to Venice — and went so far as to offer a substantial reward for anyone who could kill or capture Duke Radoslav alive. Negotiations eventually followed, and peace was concluded in 1432. Radoslav went on to resume commercial relations with the Republic.

In the meantime, the canal had been excavated and lined with stone to ground level, and a bridge was built across it. Cavtat also needed to be enclosed by walls on its eastern side, so a defensive belt was raised, complete with towers, arrow loops, and a patrol

walkway. The narrow openings in the walls — still visible today on the surviving sections — were designed to suit the firearm technology of the period. Two massive wall wings extended into the sea on either side, making it impossible to enter Cavtat without authorisation. As Cavtat was the key hub of Konavle's evacuation and defence system, a military captain and his garrison were permanently stationed there, alongside the civil governor.

The town within the walls was also carefully planned: new plots were laid out in a regular grid, with streets running north-south and cutting perpendicularly across the main thoroughfare, Prijeko. Prijeko itself retained a slight curve along the spine of the peninsula — following the line of the Roman *decumanus* of Epidaurum, alongside which an ancient aqueduct from Vodovađa had once run.

Although individual plots were enclosed by high walls — a deliberate measure intended to create a secondary line of fortification — in 1451 Duke Stjepan Kosača nonetheless managed to seize Cavtat. Before withdrawing, he ordered the walls demolished, leaving the Republic of Ragusa to rebuild them. As with the original construction, this work was carried out by the men of Konavle between the ages of 16 and 60, under the supervision of state commissioners and engineers. Although they were building their own fortress and place of refuge, their labour was not voluntary — it was a civic obligation, comparable to military service.

The celebrated Italian hydraulic engineer and master builder Onofrio di Giordano de la Cava was also engaged in the fortification of Cavtat. During his years in Dubrovnik (1436–1443), this renowned builder more



Palača cavtatskog kapetana (Knežev dvor) s ostatkom zidina na zapadu, 1555. – 1558.  
The Captain's Palace (Rector's Palace) with remains of the western town walls, 1555–1558.



Giacomo Filippo Foresti da Bergamo, *Supplementum chronicarum orbis ab initio mundi*, 1490.

than justified the trust placed in him: he successfully completed the construction of Dubrovnik's water supply system, the reconstruction of the Rector's Palace following the fire of 1435, and the building of defensive walls at Ston and Cavtat (1441).

It is no coincidence, then, that Onofrio's Fountain features prominently in a view of Dubrovnik published in Jacopo Filippo Foresti's wide-ranging work *Supplementum Chronicarum* — a bestseller of its day, reprinted and expanded several times. A symbolic depiction of Onofrio's Great Fountain, showing an image of the Small Fountain, can also be found in the

major work of Foresti's contemporary Konrad von Grünenberg (1487). As the Ottoman threat grew, the walls of Cavtat were further strengthened with additional towers and extended wings. A drawing by Austrian lieutenant Johann Högel Müller, made in 1845, clearly depicts part of the fortifications, while the entire defensive system — stretching from Cavtat Harbour (*Porto di Ragusa Vecchia*) to Tiha Cove (*Valle Tiha*) — is visible on a cadastral plan dating from 1837.

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# Đive Kušelj, od pozornice Carnegie Halla do đardina u Cavtatu

“**Ma gdje pošla, što god od priznanja osvojila, ova vrsna umjetnica zna da je posebna nagrada čeka u gradiću priraslom srcu. U Cavtatu.**

**F**lautistica, orkestralna i komorna glazbenica, nagrađivana prosvjetna djelatnica, profesorica flaute i komorne glazbe, pročelnica Odjela za puhače i udaraljke u Umjetničkoj školi Luke Sorkočevića. I cavtatska nevjesta!

Od slavnog Carnegie Halla do velike dvorane dubrovačke glazbene škole, Đive Kušelj intenzivno živi glazbu, a stiglo joj je i najnovije visoko priznanje struke, nagrada Hrvatskog društva glazbenih i plesnih pedagoga. Lijepo je promišljati glazbu kao poziv, posao i hobi uz obitelj koja u njezinom životu zauzima posebno mjesto.

„Pedagoški i umjetnički poziv traži jako puno vremena, odricanja, traži puno ulaganja i rada na sebi, puno vježbanja, usavršavanja, stvaranja i istraživanja. Kad se osvrnem unatrag, iznova se začudim da sam to sve stigla. Nisam nikad bila karijerist, svi uspjesi koji su mi se dogodili bili su spontani i rezultat velikog rada i truda. Ono što mi je uvijek bilo i ostalo na prvom mjestu je moja obitelj i otud sve kreće. To je moja snaga. Sretna sam da smo suprug i ja iste struke jer se tako bolje razumijemo i podržavamo. Uloga majke i supruge je nešto što mene najviše ispunjava i daje smi-

sao svemu. Sve vrijednosti koje sam stekla u roditeljskom domu nastojim prenijeti i na moju obitelj. Sretna sam što su moja djeca rasla uz nona i nonu u Cavtatu i babu i didu u Dubrovniku. Svaki trenutak koristimo za okupiti se i biti zajedno. Naša djeca Petar i Luči u Cavtatu su pohađala osnovnu i muzičku školu, oboje su trenirali plivanje, Petar i vaterpolo, Luči je plesala u Cavtatskim mažoretkinjama, a danas svira s tatom u Cavtatskoj glazbi. Oboje su u tinejdžerskoj dobi i tek trebaju pronaći svoj put“, iskreno priča ova iznimno talentirana glazbenica koja se udajom preselila iz Dubrovnika u Cavtat.

Đive Kušelj diplomirala je i magistrirala na Muzičkoj akademiji u Zagrebu u klasi prof. Novak i već tijekom studija prolazi audiciju za Mediteranski orkestar mladih u Marseilleu s kojim svira na turneji po Provansi. Finalistica je međunarodnog natjecanja *Audi Mozart* u Roveretu u Italiji. Na međunarodnom natjecanju *IBLA Grand Prize* u Ragusi na Siciliji među 170 natjecatelja osvaja nagradu za najbolju izvedbu W. A. Mozarta. 2003. godine svira solistički koncert u Carnegie Hallu u New Yorku. Na poziv flautistice dr. Suzanne Lord odlazi u SAD prezentirati hrvatsku glazbu na Florida State Universityju, Emory Universityju u Atlanti, Southern Illinois Universityju i *National Flute Conventionu* u San Diegu. Maestro Marcello Abbado, skladatelj i pijanist, inspiriran bojom njezinog tona, piše i posvećuje joj *Koncert za flautu i orkestar* koji je prouzvela sa Simfonijskim orkestrom Sanremo u Italiji. U Milanu nastupa s Orkestrom *I Pomeriggi Musicali* u Teatru dal Verme.

Nakon takvih početaka koji su ukazivali na sav raskošni talent mlade flautistice, koja je mogla osvajati svjetsku scenu, Đive se odlučuje za mirni, obiteljski život u Cavtatu, iskreno priznajući kako bez glazbe ne bi mogla živjeti, ali joj karijera nikad nije bila na prvom mjestu. Time su profi-

rali učenici s kojima radi u dubrovačkoj glazbenoj školi i brojni komorni sastavi i orkestri s kojima surađuje. Đive je slijedila svoj recept za sretan život.

„U Cavtatu smo svili svoje obiteljsko gnijezdo, što je i logično jer je obitelj Kušelj jedna od najstarijih obitelji nastanjenih u Cavtatu. Ivanov nono Niko bio je ribar i pučki pjesnik, veliki zaljubljenik u svoj rodni kraj, otac Pero bio je profesor i jedan od osnivača plivačkog i vaterpolo kluba Cavtat i klapski pjevač, brat Nikša je glumac, pjesnik i velik ljubitelj glazbe, moj Ivan profesor je u Umjetničkoj školi i akademski glazbenik, voditelj Cavtatske limene glazbe koja slavi svoju 115. godišnjicu postojanja i vršitelj je dužnosti ravnatelja Muzeja i galerija Konavala. Obitelj Kušelj je prijateljevala i s Bukovčevom obitelji, što se vidi i na njegovoj slici *Karneval u Cavtatu*. Njegova none Kate šivala je za mnoge stanovnike Cavtata, pa tako i za Bukovčeve kćeri. Sve te priče prošlih vremena nam doma živopisno priča Ivanova mama Luce. Veliku radost i zadovoljstvo nam pričinja i sviranje u crkvenom zboru sv. Nikole u Cavtatu gdje se uvijek trudimo pripomoći o velikim crkvenim blagdanima, koliko obaveze dopuste. Imamo vrlo intenzivan i gust raspored i naša glavna rečenica je 'Koji nam je sutra plan?' Tako idemo dalje dan po dan, u zajedništvu i ljubavi već 20 godina. Bože podrži i dalje“, ispričala nam je ova svestrana umjetnica kojoj nije strano ni vrtlaranje.

„Izvan glazbe baterije mi puni rad u đardinu naše obiteljske kuće. Ivanov hobi je ribanje, a i Petar i Luči ribaju od malih nogu pa smo najsretniji kad se ulovi lijepa riba pa je doma spremimo. Volimo druženja s našim prijateljima i kumovima doma i ljeti na taraci, veliki smo gurmani pa se volimo potruditi oko kuhanja, a volimo i lijepu kapljicu vina. Ne možemo zamisliti život bez mora, sunca i naših prirodnih ljepota, kako Dubrovnika

tako i Cavtata, đira oko Rata, Sustjepana, Mrkana, Bobare. Cijele Konavle su prelijepa i inspirativna“, ističe Đive Kušelj, koja je cavtatske vedute lani nakratko zamijenila njujorškim *skylineom*, i to sa svojim učenicima. Osvajanje prve nagrade međunarodnog natjecanja učenika puhačkog kvinteta i koncert u prestižnoj dvorani Carnegie Halla predstavljali su nešto mnogo više od samog priznanja. U sjećanju ostaje i lanjski nastup u slavnoj dvorani bečkog Musikvereina, gdje je Dubrovački simfonijski orkestar proslavio stotu obljetnicu. Đive je srcu prirastao i kvartet Sorkočević, a od samih početaka emotivno je vezana i s Udrugom Konavle art, gdje djeluje kao umjetnička ravnateljica festivala *Glazba i Riječ*, s kolegicom Stefani Grbić. Neizbježno je prisjetiti se i nagrade Oskar znanja, u Đivinoj vitrini i vitrini njezinih učenika nalaze se čak tri prestižna kipića.

Ma gdje pošla, što god od priznanja osvojila, ova vrsna umjetnica zna da je posebna nagrada čeka u gradiću priraslom srcu. U Cavtatu.





# Dive Kušelj

## From a Garden in Cavtat to the Carnegie Hall Stage

“Wherever she goes, whatever accolades she wins, this exceptional artist knows that the most special reward awaits her in the little town she holds closest to her heart. In Cavtat.

**F**lautist, orchestral and chamber musician, award-winning educator, professor of flute and chamber music, head of the Wind and Percussion Department at the Luka Sorkočević Arts School — and a Cavtat bride!

From the grand concert hall of a Dubrovnik music school to the legendary Carnegie Hall in New York, Dive Kušelj lives and breathes music. She recently received yet another prestigious honour: an award from the Croatian Society of Music and Dance Educators. It's beautiful to think of music as a calling, a career, and a hobby — especially when family holds such a special place in your life.

*“Teaching and performing demand an enormous amount of time, sacrifice, constant self-improvement, practice, and creative exploration. When I look back, I'm still amazed I managed it all. I was never driven by ambition —*

*every success came naturally, as the result of hard work and dedication. What has always come first, and still does, is my family. That's where my strength comes from.”*

She speaks warmly about the life she and her husband — also a musician — have built together in Cavtat, where their children Petar and Luči grew up swimming, playing music, and enjoying everything the town has to offer.

Dive studied at the Music Academy in Zagreb, and as a student she auditioned successfully for the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra in Marseille, touring through Provence. She went on to become a finalist at the international Audi Mozart competition in Rovereto, Italy, and won the award for best interpretation of Mozart among 170 competitors at the IBLA Grand Prize in Ragusa, Sicily. In 2003, she performed a solo recital at Carnegie Hall in New York. She

was later invited to the United States to present Croatian music at Florida State University, Emory University in Atlanta, Southern Illinois University, and the National Flute Convention in San Diego. Composer and pianist Maestro Marcello Abbado was so inspired by the colour of her tone that he wrote and dedicated a Concerto for Flute and Orchestra to her, which she premiered with the Sanremo Symphony Orchestra in Italy. She has also performed with the I Pomeriggi Musicali Orchestra at the Teatro dal Verme in Milan.

With such a dazzling start to her career, Đive could easily have conquered the world stage. Instead, she chose a quieter, family-centred life in Cavtat — admitting that while she couldn't imagine life without music, a high-flying career was never her priority. Her students at the



Dubrovnik music school, and the many chamber ensembles and orchestras she works with, are all the better for it. Đive followed her own recipe for a happy life.

*“Cavtat is where we built our family nest, and that makes perfect sense — the Kušelj family is one of the oldest in town.”* She paints a vivid picture of her husband Ivan's roots: a grandfather who was a fisherman and folk poet, a father who was a professor and one of the founders of the local swimming and water polo club, a brother who is an actor and poet. Ivan himself is a music teacher, conductor of the Cavtat Brass Band — celebrating its 115<sup>th</sup> anniversary — and acting director of the Museum and Galleries of Konavle.

Outside of music, Đive recharges in the garden of the family home. The family loves fishing, cooking, good wine, and gathering with friends on the terrace in summer. *“We can't imagine life without the sea, the sun, and the natural beauty of both Dubrovnik and Cavtat — walks around Rat, Sus-*

*tjepan, Mrkan, Bobara. The whole of Konavle is stunning and inspiring.”*

Last year, Đive briefly swapped the Cavtat waterfront for the New York skyline — this time with her students, whose wind quintet took first prize at an international competition and performed at Carnegie Hall. There was also a memorable appearance at Vienna's Musikverein, where the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra marked its centenary. Close to her heart is the Sorkočević Quartet, and from the very beginning she has been emotionally connected to the Konavle Art Association, where she serves as artistic director of the Music and Word festival alongside colleague Stefani Grbić. And then there are the Oscars of Knowledge awards — three of the prestigious statuettes sit in the display cases of Đive and her students.

Wherever she goes, whatever accolades she wins, this exceptional artist knows that the most special reward awaits her in the little town she holds closest to her heart. In Cavtat.

# Crkva Gospe

“ **Gospa od Cavtata i danas je snažan simbol povezanosti mjesta i njegova duhovnog identiteta – tiha zaštitnica koja spaja povijest, umjetnost i vjeru, i koja, u hladu borova i uz šum mora, čuva Cavtat kao jedno od onih rijetkih sastavnica gdje se prošlost i sadašnjost prirodno dodiruju.**

**P**osebna su mjesta na Zemlji obilježena tihom, ali snažnom povezanošću s Bogorodicom. O toj povezanosti svjedoče brojna marijanska svetišta rasuta diljem svijeta, a jedno od njih smješteno je na samome kraju cavtatske rive, ondje gdje šetnja prirodno usporava. U tom mirnom kutku Cavtata nalazi se jedna od njegovih najstarijih vjerskih građevina – crkva i samostan Gospe Snježne, podignut još u 15. stoljeću, kao snažno sidro vjere, kulture i identiteta mjesta.

Priča o Gospi Snježnoj, čiji se blagdan slavi 5. kolovoza, započela je daleko, u Rimu u 4. stoljeću. Prema predaji, usred kolovoških vrućina snijeg je iznenada prekrpio rimski brežuljak Eskvilin. Na tom je mjestu podignuta bazilika Santa Maria Maggiore, jedna od najvažnijih marijanskih crkava kršćanskoga svijeta. Štovanje Gospe Snježne postupno se širilo cijelim Mediteranom, nošeno pričama o čudima po Gospinu zagovoru, pa je tako zabilježena i ona koja govori kako je jedne godine, upravo na Gospin blagdan, snijeg zabijelio i Cavtat.

Jesu li te legende tek dio bogate predaje, danas je manje važno jer je u Cavtatu blagdan Gospe Snježne od uvijek bio najsvečaniji dan u godini. Uz liturgijska slavlja, taj dan okuplja Cavtaćane, njihove goste i hodočasnike, a Gospa Snježna – često nazivana i Gospom od Cavtata – postaje simbol



mjesta i njegova nebeska zaštitnica, tiha prisutnost koja prati svakodnevni život.

O važnosti Gospe Snježne za Cavtaćane govore brojni povijesni zapisi, još od vremena osnivanja i planiranja gradnje franjevačkog samostana 1484. godine, u razdoblju kada je Cavtat došao pod vlast Dubrovačke Republike. Samostan i crkvu gradili

su franjevci uz pomoć Dubrovačke Republike i milodara vjernika, najviše dubrovačkog vlastelina Frana Gučetića. Samostanski kompleks danas čine crkva sa zvonikom, klaustar i dvorište, skladno uklopljeni u mediteranski prostor i kameni okoliš. Klaustar je kvadratnog oblika, s arkadama i dekorativnim reljefima na lukovima, a u njegovu se središtu nalazi kruna nad gustijernom, postavljena krajem 19. stoljeća, s jasno istaknutim grbom obitelji Gučetić, što je jedan od rijetkih sačuvanih tragova donatora koji su obilježili povijest Cavtata.

Crkva je dvobrodna i u duhu franjevačke jednostavnosti, istodobno skromna i dojmljiva, dok se njezina najveća umjetnička vrijednost skriva u njezinoj unutrašnjosti koju su oblikovali najveći domaći slikari svojih razdoblja: Nikola Božidarević, Celestin Medović i cavtatski sin Vlaho Bukovac.

Središnje mjesto glavnog oltara zauzima jedno od najstarijih i najvrjednijih djela Nikole Božidarevića, *Bogorodica s Djetetom* iz 1494. godine. Slika na drvu nekoć je bila dio većeg poliptiha, koji je u velikoj mjeri stradao u potresu 1667. godine. Božidarevićeva Bogorodica sjedi s Djetetom na koljenima, okružena anđelima, dok dva anđela drže traku s natpisom *Regina coeli Laetare, alleluia*, dajući prostoru posebnu svečanost.

# Snježne



“ **Samostan i crkvu gradili su franjevci uz pomoć Dubrovačke Republike i milodara vjernika, najviše dubrovačkog vlastelina Frana Gučetića.**

Za samostan je 1880. godine Celestin Medović naslikao *Stigmatizaciju svetog Franje*. Svetac je prikazan u pejzažu, uz simbole prolaznosti i meditacije. Ovo potpisano djelo ubraja se među najznačajnije Medovićeve sakralne radove.

Najdublji i najosobniji trag u crkvi Gospe Snježne ostavio je Vlaho Bukovac, slavni slikar i cavtatski sin. Iako ga je život odveo iz Cavtata još u djetinjstvu, vodeći ga od sirotišta do pariških salona i europskih dvorova, Bukovac se uvijek vraćao svom rodnom mjestu kistom i srcem. U luneti iznad trijumfalnog luka crkve nalazi se nje-

gova monumentalna slika *Gospe od Cavtata*, naslikana u Pragu i postavljena 1910. godine. Bogorodica je prikazana ispod vedute Cavtata gledane s mora, koja se prostire cijelom širinom slike, dok oko nje lebde anđeli. Pri dnu slike ispisana je posveta Cavtatu, snažno svjedočanstvo umjetnikove ljubavi prema rodnom kraju:

CAVTATE SLAVNO I MILO MOJE  
GNIJEZDO TI SI – SVEMOGUĆEG  
RUKA DOK TE ŠTITI – VITEŠKI SE  
SVE U VIŠU SLAVU VISI.

U crkvi se, zapadno od trijumfalnog luka, nalazi i Bukovčeva slika *Gospe od Milosrđa*, naslikana 1880.

godine u Parizu, dok je 1905. godine oslikao i ograde pjevališta. Uz radove Bukovca i Medovića, crkva čuva i djela nepoznatih autora iz 18. stoljeća, koji zajedno tvore vrijedan presjek sakralne umjetnosti juga Hrvatske.

Gospa od Cavtata i danas je snažan simbol povezanosti mjesta i njezova duhovnog identiteta – tiha zaštitnica koja spaja povijest, umjetnost i vjeru, i koja, u hladu borova i uz šum mora, čuva Cavtat kao jedno od onih rijetkih sastavnica gdje se prošlost i sadašnjost prirodno dodiruju.

# The Church of Our Lady of the Snows



“ Today, Our Lady of Cavtat remains a powerful symbol of the town’s spiritual identity, a quiet guardian uniting history, art, and faith. In the shade of pine trees and accompanied by the murmur of the sea, she watches over Cavtat, one of those rare places where the past and present meet naturally and harmoniously.

Certain places on Earth are marked by a quiet yet powerful bond with the Mother of God. This connection is witnessed through numerous Marian shrines scattered across the world, and one of them stands at the very end of Cavtat’s waterfront promenade, where a leisurely walk naturally slows. In this peaceful corner of Cavtat rises one of the town’s oldest religious buildings: the Church and Franciscan Monastery of Our Lady of the Snows, built in the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a steadfast anchor of faith, culture, and local identity.

The story of Our Lady of the Snows, whose feast day is celebrated on 5 August, began long ago, in 4<sup>th</sup>-century Rome. According to tradition, in the height of August heat, snow miraculously fell upon Rome’s Esquiline Hill. On that very spot stands the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the most important Marian churches in the Christian world. Devotion to Our Lady of the Snows gradually

spread across the Mediterranean, carried by stories of miracles attributed to her intercession. Among them is a local tale that recounts how, one year on her feast day, snow also blanketed Cavtat.

Whether these legends belong purely to a rich oral tradition matters less today, for in Cavtat the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows has always been the most solemn and celebrated day of the year. Alongside liturgical ceremonies, the occasion brings together the people of Cavtat, their guests, and pilgrims. Our Lady of the Snows (often called Our Lady of Cavtat) has become both a symbol of the town and its heavenly protector, a quiet presence accompanying everyday life.

The importance of Our Lady of the Snows to the people of Cavtat is reflected in historical records dating back to 1484, when plans were made to build the Franciscan monastery, during the period when Cavtat came under the



rule of the Republic of Dubrovnik. The monastery and church were constructed by the Franciscans with the support of the Republic and donations from the faithful, particularly from the Dubrovnik nobleman Frano Gučetić.

Today, the monastery complex consists of the church with its bell tower, a cloister, and a courtyard, harmoniously integrated into the Mediterranean landscape of stone and sea. The cloister is square in shape, with arcades and decorative reliefs adorning the arches. At its center stands a crowned wellhead, installed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, bearing the coat of arms of the Gučetić family, one of the rare preserved indications of the benefactors who shaped Cavtat's history.

The church itself has two naves and reflects the Franciscan spirit of simplicity: modest yet impressive. Its greatest artistic treasures lie within, created by some of the most prominent Croatian painters of their time: Nikola Božidarević, Celestin Medović, and Cavtat's own son, Vlaho Bukovac.

At the center of the main altar stands one of the oldest and most valuable works by Nikola Božidarević — *Madonna and Child* (1494). Originally part of a larger polyptych, the wooden panel painting was significantly damaged in the great earthquake of 1667. Božidarević's Madonna is depict-

“ **The monastery and church were constructed by the Franciscans with the support of the Republic and donations from the faithful, particularly from the Dubrovnik nobleman Frano Gučetić.**

ed seated with the Child on her lap, surrounded by angels, while two angels hold a scroll bearing the inscription *Regina coeli Laetare, alleluia*, lending the space a special solemnity.

In 1880, Celestin Medović painted *The Stigmatization of Saint Francis* for the monastery. The saint is portrayed in a landscape setting, accompanied by symbols of transience and contemplation. This signed work is considered among Medović's most significant sacred paintings.

The deepest and most personal mark on the Church of Our Lady of the Snows was left by Vlaho Bukovac, the celebrated painter born in Cavtat. Though life took him away from his hometown in childhood, from an orphanage to the salons of Paris and European courts, Bukovac continually returned to Cavtat with both brush and heart. In the lunette above the church's triumphal arch hangs his monumental painting *Our Lady of Cavtat*, created in Prague and installed in 1910. The Virgin is depicted beneath a panoramic view of Cavtat as seen from the sea, stretching across the width of the composition, with angels hovering around her. At the bottom of the painting is an inscription dedicated to Cavtat, a powerful testament to the artist's love for his birthplace:

CAVTAT, GLORIOUS AND DEAR,  
MY NEST YOU ARE

WHILE THE HAND OF THE AL-  
MIGHTY PROTECTS YOU

MAY YOU NOBLY RISE TO EVER  
GREATER GLORY.

On the western side of the triumphal arch stands Bukovac's painting

*Our Lady of Mercy*, painted in Paris in 1880. In 1905, he also decorated the church gallery balustrades. Alongside works by Bukovac and Medović, the church preserves paintings by unknown 18<sup>th</sup>-century masters, together forming a valuable overview of sacred art from southern Croatia.

Today, Our Lady of Cavtat remains a powerful symbol of the town's spiritual identity, a quiet guardian uniting history, art, and faith. In the shade of pine trees and accompanied by the murmur of the sea, she watches over Cavtat, one of those rare places where the past and present meet naturally and harmoniously.



BALERINA OLGA SOLOVJEVA

# Tajna *Ruskinjine* kuće na Kamenu malom



**S**vi oni koji su bar jednom posjetili Cavtat vjerojatno su čuli nešto o njegovim najpoznatijim znamenitostima: Mauzoleju obitelji Račić, Kući Bukovac, Vili Banac... Ali, znate li možda gdje se nalazi *Ruskinjina kuća*? Kad biste to pitali nekog od starijih Cavtačana, sigurno bi vas uputio prema vrhu poluotoka Rata, a možda bi vam i rekao rečenicu-dvije o vili na Kamenu malom. Upravo zidovi tog zdanja kriju priču o jednoj iznimnoj ženi: balerini, glumici, kiparici, glazbenoj pedagoginji i filantropkinji, umjetnici koju je život od svjetskih pozornica doveo do kuće na cavtatskim hridima. Ovo je priča o Olgi Solovjevoj.

Rođena je 1900. godine u Odesi, jednom od najvažnijih kulturnih i umjetničkih centara tadašnjeg Ruskog Carstva. Kao mlada djevojka bila je primorana pobjeći iz rodnog grada nakon revolucionarnih događaja 1917. godine. U velikom valu izbjeglica našli su se ponajviše pripadnici plemstva, carski službenici i intelektualci koji su bježali pred boljševičkom vlašću i nasiljem. Povijest je tako iznova pokazala kako se potlačeni lako pretvaraju u prognitelje, dok se jedna nepravda zamjenjuje drugom, a nevini ljudi redovito plaćaju najvišu cijenu.

Olga dolazi u Beograd, gdje postaje članica baletnog ansambla nacionalnog kazališta. Veličini njezinog talenta svjedoči petogodišnja suradnja s Mihailom Fokinom i Mihailom Mordkinom, dvojicom ključnih imena ruskoga baleta 20. stoljeća. Zahvaljujući članstvu u njihovoj baletnoj trupi, nastupala je na pozornicama diljem svijeta, od Europe preko Južne i Sjeverne Amerike do Australije. U to vrijeme postaje i glumica te se pojavljuje u talijanskim i holivudskim filmovima, pretežno u manjim ulogama.

Kad se nakon četiri godine putovanja vratila u Beograd, uživala je status zvijezde, a njezino društvo

pripadalo je vrhu kulturnog i političkog života grada. Tada ostvaruje i uloge u prvim jugoslavenskim filmovima te kao balerina samostalno nastupa po gradovima tadašnje Kraljevine.

Sredinom tridesetih, nakon ozljede koja je prekinula njezinu plesačku karijeru, Olga zauvijek napušta svjetla pozornice. Dolazi u Cavtat koji je, prema vlastitim riječima, podsjeća na rodnu Odesu, pa kuća na Kamenu malom postaje njezin dom. Do Drugog svjetskog rata živi s roditeljima, a kasnije im se pridružuje sestra Lidija sa suprugom Vladimirom.

Neki izvori spominju kako je Lidija Solovjeva, udana Iraklidi, bila obrazovana i vrlo družljubiva žena koja je zahvaljujući poznavanju više jezika lako stvarala nova poznanstva. Sredinom dvadesetih došla je u Pariz, gdje ju je privukao posao kozmetičarke. Nakon toga boravi u Beču i Berlinu da bi 1927. godine otvorila kozmetički salon u Beogradu. Poslije Drugog svjetskog rata postaje vlasnica salona u Sarajevu, a poznat je njezin savjet koji je često davala mladim ženama: „Budite pametne ako morate, dobre ako hoćete, ali na svaki način morate biti lijepe!“

S druge strane, njezinu sestru Olgu povijest pamti i kao veoma važnu kariku u osnivanju Dubrovačkih ljetnih igara koje se do danas s pravom ubrajaju među najvažnije kulturne događaje u Hrvatskoj. Od 1950. godine do danas Igre svakoga ljeta pretvaraju Dubrovnik u jedinstvenu svjetsku pozornicu, gdje se Grad i umjetnost stapaju u jedno. Olga je bila dugogodišnja koreografkinja Igara i osnivačica baletnog odjela pri glazbenoj školi.

Početkom pedesetih, u svega nekoliko godina, umiru Olgini roditelji



Portret Jelice Bukovac Radosavljević  
Portrait of Jelica Bukovac Radosavljević

**Uz podršku bliskog prijatelja i umjetnika Koste Strajnića, Olga postaje kiparica, a posebno se isticala u izradi portreta. Modeli su joj bili i neka od najpoznatijih svjetskih imena klasične glazbe kojima je nesebično pružala gostoprimstvo u cavtatskoj vili. Među njima je bio i Svjatoslav Richter, jedan od najslavnijih pijanista toga doba.**



Portret Marije Radosavljević  
Portrait of Marija Radosavljević

**Olga Solovjeva rođena je 1900. godine u Odesi, jednom od najvažnijih kulturnih i umjetničkih centara tadašnjeg Ruskog Carstva. Kao mlada djevojka bila je primorana pobjeći iz rodnog grada nakon revolucionarnih događaja 1917. godine.**

i Lidijin suprug, pa sestre od tada žive same. Ali, to nije značilo prestanak aktivnog društvenog života, naprotiv! Vrata njihova doma postaju otvorena brojnim mještanima, ali i poznatim umjetnicima.

Uz podršku bliskog prijatelja i umjetnika Koste Strajnića, Olga postaje kiparica, a posebno se isticala u izradi portreta. Modeli su joj bili i neka od najpoznatijih svjetskih imena klasične glazbe kojima je nesebično pružala gostoprimstvo u cavtatskoj vili. Među njima je bio i Svjatoslav Richter, jedan od najslavnijih pijanista toga doba. Zidovi kamene kuće pamte i boravak cijenjenog skladatelja Arama Hačaturjana, vrhunskog čelista Mstislava Rostropoviča, kao i mnogih drugih renomiranih umjetnika. Tko zna – možda je neke glazbene ikone upravo pogled s prozora Olgine kuće na otok Supetar, Župski zaljev ili stoljetni Dubrovnik nadahnuo da napišu neka od svojih djela?

Godine su prolazile, priče u kući su se nizale i prava je šteta što se među gostima nije našao barem jedan pisac koji bi nam kroz svoje romane ili kronike sačuvao od zaborava sva ta zanimljiva druženja.

Lidija je htjela da se slična druženja u kući nastave i nakon njezine smrti, kao da je slijedila izreku svog suvremenika i velikog slikara Pabla Picassa: „Smisao života jest naći svoj dar. Svrha života jest taj dar pokloniti nekome“. Činilo se da su obje sestre našle svrhu u tome da svoj

dom pretvore u mjesto susreta znamenitih ljudi i njihovih ideja. U svojoj oporuci odlučile su vilu darovati Dubrovačkim ljetnim igrama kako bi poslije njihove smrti postala utočište starijim i siromašnim umjetnicima koji bi ovdje mogli živjeti i stvarati.

Olga je preminula 1974. godine, a njezino posljednje počivalište nalazi se na groblju svetog Đurđa u Cavtatu. Lako ga je prepoznati po reljefu nadgrobne ploče koji je sama izradila. Uz slova njezinog imena, reljef prikazuje i tri zaigrane balerine kao trajni podsjetnik na umjetnost koja joj je obilježila život.

Sestra Lidija provela je još gotovo dva desetljeća na Kamenu malom. Nažalost, za vrijeme rata devedesetih godina, tada već u dubokoj starosti, opet je postala izbjeglica. Odselila je iz Cavtata u vojvođanski Apatin, gdje je preminula nekoliko godina kasnije, u 102. godini života.

Vila je u tim nesretnim događajima spaljena, a oporuka sestara Solovjev nikada nije provedena. Zemljište s ruševnom kućom prodano je novom vlasniku. Danas, dok šetamo oko Rata, ostaje nam tek nepristojno zaviriti preko kamenog bedema privatnog posjeda i zamišljati kako su nekada baš u tom vrtu izgledali susreti umjetnika, glazbenika i kazališnih zvijezda. Nije teško pretpostaviti koliko bi Cavtat bio bogatiji i živopisniji da se ostvarila plemenita ideja dviju sestara. *Ruskinjina kuća* tada bi zasigurno bila jedna od njegovih najvažnijih znamenitosti, kao one spomenute na početku ove priče.



BALLERINA OLGA SOLOVJEVA

By: Vedran Mezei



# The Secret of the Russian Lady's House



Portret Jelice Lele Radosavljević  
Portrait of Jelica Lela Radosavljević

**With the support of her close friend, art historian and artist Kosta Strajnić, Olga turned to sculpture, excelling particularly in portraiture. Among her guests were some of the greatest names in classical music, to whom she generously offered hospitality in her Cavtat villa. One was Sviatoslav Richter, one of the most celebrated pianists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.**

Anyone who has visited Cavtat has likely heard of its most famous landmarks: the Račić Mausoleum, the Bukovac House, or Banac Vילה. But do you know where the “Russian Lady’s House” is?

If you were to ask one of Cavtat’s older residents, they would probably point you toward the very top of the Rat Peninsula. They might tell you a sentence or two about the villa on Kamen Mali. Behind its stone walls lies the story of an extraordinary woman — a ballerina, actress, sculptor, music educator, and philanthropist — an artist whose life journey led her from the great stages of the world to a house perched above the rocks of Cavtat.

This is the story of Olga Solovjeva.

Olga was born in 1900 in Odessa, one of the most important cultural centers of the former Russian Empire. As a young woman, she was forced to flee her hometown after the revolutionary upheavals of 1917. Like many aristocrats, civil servants, and intellectuals escaping Bolshevik rule and violence, she became part of a vast wave of refugees scattered across Europe.

She arrived in Belgrade, where she joined the ballet ensemble of the National Theatre. The scale of her talent is reflected in her five-year collaboration with Mikhail Fokine and Mikhail Mordkin, two key figures of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Russian ballet.

As a member of their company, she performed across Europe, North and South America, and even Australia. During this period, she also became an actress, appearing in Italian and Hollywood films, mostly in supporting roles.

After four years of touring, she returned to Belgrade a celebrated star, moving in the highest cultural and political circles of the city. She

appeared in some of the earliest Yugoslav films and toured extensively as a solo ballerina throughout the kingdom.

In the mid-1930s, following an injury that ended her dancing career, Olga left the stage forever. She settled in Cavtat, which she said reminded her of her native Odessa. The house on Kamen Mali became her permanent home. She lived there with her parents until the Second World War, and later with her sister Lidija and brother-in-law Vladimir.

Lidija Solovjeva Iraklidi was an educated and sociable woman who spoke several languages. In the 1920s she lived in Paris, then Vienna and Berlin, eventually opening a beauty salon in Belgrade in 1927. After the Second World War, she owned a salon in Sarajevo. She was known for a piece of advice she often gave young women:

“Be clever if you must, kind if you wish — but above all, you must be beautiful.”

History also remembers Olga as an important figure in founding the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, today one of Croatia’s most significant cultural events. Since 1950, the festival has transformed Dubrovnik each summer into a unique open-air stage where the city itself becomes part of the performance.

Olga worked for many years as a choreographer for the festival and founded the ballet department at the local music school.

In the early 1950s, within just a few years, Olga’s parents and Lidija’s husband passed away. The sisters then lived alone, but far from withdrawing from society, their home became even more vibrant. Their doors were open to locals and to renowned artists alike.

With the support of her close friend, art historian and artist Kosta Strajnić, Olga turned to sculpture,

excelling particularly in portraiture. Among her guests were some of the greatest names in classical music, to whom she generously offered hospitality in her Cavtat villa. One was Sviatoslav Richter, one of the most celebrated pianists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The house also welcomed composer Aram Khachaturian and the legendary cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, among many others. Who knows? Perhaps the view from Olga's windows, overlooking Supe-tar Island, Župa Bay, and distant Dubrovnik, inspired some of their music.

The sisters wished for their gatherings to continue even after their deaths, echoing the words of Pablo Picasso:

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”

In their will, they donated the villa to the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, hoping it would become a refuge where elderly and impoverished artists could live and create.

Olga died in 1974 and was buried at St. George's Cemetery in Cavtat. Her grave is easy to recognize: she designed the relief on her own tombstone, depicting three playful ballerinas — a lasting tribute to the art that defined her life.

Lidija lived nearly two more decades at Kamen Mali. Tragically, during the war of the 1990s, already in deep old age, she once again became a refugee. She left Cavtat for Apatin in Vojvodina, where she passed away a few years later at the age of 102.

During the war, the villa was burned, and the sisters' will was never fulfilled. The land and ruins of the villa were sold to a new owner.

Today, as we walk around the Rat Peninsula, we can only glimpse over the stone wall of the private estate and imagine the lively conversations, music, and artistic en-



Jelica Bukovac Radosavljević: Portret Olge Solovljeve  
Jelica Bukovac Radosavljević: Portrait of Olga Solovljeva

counters that once filled that garden. It is not difficult to imagine how much richer Cavtat might have been had the sisters' noble vision been realized. The Russian Lady's House would surely stand today among the town's most celebrated landmarks alongside those mentioned at the beginning of this story.



# Mihovil Šuljak, konavoski kamenoklesar

**“Od klesarstva se može lijepo živjeti, a posebno je zadovoljstvo gledati kako se djelima tvojih ruku svi dive i divit će se stoljećima.”**

**P**riča o Konavlima zapisana je u kamenu. U pločama na kojima su urezivana imena davnih pokojnika. Na crkvenim natpisima s molitvama svecima. U međama koje čuvaju plodna polja od erozije. Kamenne konavoske kuće, dvorišni zidovi, gustijerne, komini, vinski podrumi, građeni su od sivca, kamena koji je najbolje prilagođen lokalnim mikroklimatskim uvjetima. A odolijevali su brojnim potresima, požarima i ratovima. Uz taj kamen danas odrastaju novi naraštaji.

Umijeće obrade kamena uvijek je bilo cijenjena i tražena vještina, koju danas njeguju tek malobrojni. Konavle su i po tome posebne jer na svom malom prostoru imaju više ra-

dionica i vrsnih meštara od kamena. Jedan od njih je i Mihovil Šuljak. On je treća generacija klesara u svojoj obitelji. Premda je u mladosti sanjao o popravljanju automobila, posebno motora, u koje je i danas zaljubljen, splet životnih okolnosti odveo ga je u drugom smjeru.

„Moj djed se bavio klesarstvom, bio je samouk i imao je svoju radionicu u Močićima, otac je od njega naučio zanat te je upisao školu primijenjene umjetnosti u Splitu. On je bio baš umjetnički tip, a klesarstvo mu je bio dodatni posao. Ja uopće nisam bio zainteresiran za kamen. Bio sam zaljubljen u motore i sanjao sam da ću postati automehaničar. 1993. imao sam 14 godina, bilo je ratno vrijeme.

Sve nam je u Konavlima bilo spaljeno. Na nagovor oca i spletom okolnosti upisao sam srednju Klesarsku školu u Pučišćima na Braču. Cijelu sam prvu godinu smišljao kako ću ocu reći da se meni to ne radi. Nisam našao načina. Sljedeće godine bio sam među boljim učenicima u školi i shvatio sam da mi to stvarno ide, sve se posložilo.“

S tek napunjenih 17 godina Mihovil je počeo raditi za građevinsku tvrtku Građevina Quelin iz Dubrovnika, koja je radila na obnovi Grada nakon Domovinskog rata. Njegov prvi posao bila je obnova podnih ploča i izloga na Stradunu. Deset godina radio je u građevinskoj firmi i onda, nakon smrti oca, sa svojih 27 godina, dao je otkaz i otvorio vlastiti obrt. Puno mu je, kaže, u početku pomogao očev, a danas i njegov prijatelj Mijač Banac, koji je tada u Popovićima imao pravu radionicu.

„Građevinska firma nije bila ono što sam ja htio raditi. Plaća je bila jako dobra i puno sam naučio od starih meštara, ali moj je interes bio drugdje“, kaže Mihovil, i dodaje kako klesar uopće ne treba imati umjetnički talent.

„Ono što je potrebno je volja i psihička čvrstina jer je posao dugotrajan i ponavljajući, pogotovo kad se tek uči.



Kamen je tvrd, ali i osjetljiv, danima gledaš u jedno te isto. Nakon 30-ak godina u kamenoj prašini, ne mogu zamisliti da radim nešto drugo, iako sad već osjećam pritisak jer svi bi htjeli da im se posao odradi što brže, a za kvalitetan rad s kamenom treba vremena.“

Miho s obitelji, suprugom i dvoji-

com sinova, živi u Pendovom selu u Močićima. Tamo je i njegova radionica i sjedište obrta Klesarstvo Konavle, u kojem su, uz njega, stalno zaposlena još dva djelatnika, a onedavno i njegov mlađi sin, koji je na sličan način kao i on nekad prihvatio kamen kao svoj životni poziv.



**Umijeće obrade kamena uvijek je bilo cijenjena i tražena vještina, koju danas njeguju tek malobrojni. Konavle su i po tome posebne jer na svom malom prostoru imaju više radionica i vrsnih meštara od kamena. Jedan od njih je i Mihovil Šuljak.**

„Mlađi sin je prvo upisao obrt za vodoinstalatera. Nakon godinu dana škole nije baš bio zadovoljan. Predložio sam mu da upiše klesarstvo na Braču. Pristao je i završio, i sad radi sa mnom. Već vidim da će i on, kao i ja, zaglaviti u kamenoj prašini cijeli život.“

U radionici vlada popriličan red, nema nedovršenih radova, sve što se završi, odmah ide na montažu, a trenutno ekipa radi na obnovi jedne stare kamene kuće te se izrađuju kamene obrubi za prozore, kamena ograda, pragovi za vrata... No ono što je za Miha i njegovu ekipu poseban izazov jest obnova spomenika kulture nulte kategorije na listi Svjetske kulturne baštine.

Radio je tako 2016. Miho uz vrhunske inženjere, povjesničare umjetnosti i restauratore, koji su napravili projekt i nadgledali radove, na obnovi baroknog oltara dubrovačke katedrale koji je stradao u potresu 1979. te su njegovi dijelovi više od 35 godina čuvani u crkvi sv. Roka.

„Bio je to veliki izazov, zahtjevan i osjetljiv posao, koji je stalno bio pod nadzorom, kako stručnjaka tako i javnosti. Sam oltar napravljen je od oko 40 različitih vrsta kamena. Posao je dobro odrađen i zadovoljstvo je bilo

slušati lijepe komentare Dubrovčana.“

Radio je Miho i na obnovi crkve dubrovačkog parca, sv. Vlaha, obnovi dominikanskog samostana, a bio je i dio tima u obnovi dubrovačkih Skalina od Jezuita, lokalne verzije rimske Piazze di Spagna, ili, ako vam je draže, mjesta Hoda srama kraljice Sedam kraljevstava u kulturnoj seriji *Game of Thrones*.

„Skalini od Jezuita izgrađeni su prema projektu arhitekta Pietra Passalacqua 1735. u sklopu kompleksa isusovačkoga kolegija i crkve sv. Ignacija. Prvi i posljednji put djelomično su obnavljani nakon Domovinskog rata. Ovo je bila njihova prva sveobuhvatna obnova u 250 godina. Radili smo to s cijelom ekipom stručnjaka od kojih ću posebno izdvojiti Tjašu Kolačko, restauratoricu kamena s kojom stalno surađujemo. Kamen na ovim skalama direktno se utiskuje u zemlju koja je ispod, svaki je kamen tu bio već 200 godina i napravio je svoj utor i mjesto, zato je bilo posebno važno svaki neoštećeni kamen vratiti na njegovo originalno mjesto, a onaj koji se nanovo radio po utorima napraviti što sličnije starome. Zahtjevan je to bio mozaik, ali je rezultat vrhunski. To su ti poslovi koji me vesele. Puno izazova i problema, koji se rješavaju na licu mjesta u ugodnoj razmjeni znanja s kolegama, koji jednako strasno rade svoj posao.“

Mihovilove ruke i umijeće utkane su u brojne dubrovačke, korčulanske i bokeljske kamene spomenike, a projekt na kojem već duži niz godina radi i još niz godina će raditi je također zahtjevna obnova tvrđave na najjužnijem rtu Hrvatske. Na ponti Oštro na Prevlaci vjetrovima je izložena austrougarska tvrđava, koja je desetljećima propadala, a sad malo po malo poprima svoje nekadašnje obličje.

„Na Prevlaci se može raditi tek pet mjeseci godišnje i to u rano proljeće i ranu jesen. Zimi su tamo vjetrovi toliko jaki da niti jedna skela ne može izdržati, a ljeti je prevruće. No, to je posao za koji su i investitori, Društvo prijatelja dubrovačke starine, svjesni da ne može biti odrađen odmah. Radovi napreduju, sporo, ali kvalitetno i sigurno.“

Zadovoljan svojim životnim odabirom, izazovima i novim iskustvima koja mu donosi, osvrnut će se i na današnji mali interes mladih za obrtima.

„Mi imamo na Braču jedinstvenu školu klesanja u svijetu jer se tamo uče vještine rimskog klesanja kamena sa starim alatima. Žao mi je što mladi nemaju interesa za obradu kamena, jer u našem kamenom Gradu, Konavlima i okolici, posla ima kao u priči. Od klesarstva se može lijepo živjeti, a posebno je zadovoljstvo gledati kako se djelima tvojih ruku svi dive i divit će se stoljećima.“



# Mihovil Šuljak

## Stone Carver of Konavle

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**“You can make a very good living as a stonemason. And there’s a very special satisfaction in knowing that the work of your hands will be admired — not just today, but for centuries to come.”**

**T**he story of Konavle is written in stone: in the slabs bearing the names of the long departed, in church inscriptions carrying prayers to the saints, in the boundary walls that protect fertile fields from erosion. The stone houses of Konavle, their courtyards, cisterns, chimneys, and wine cellars, were all built from *sivac* — a local grey limestone perfectly suited to the region’s microclimate. These structures have withstood earthquakes, fires, and wars. And it is with this same stone that new generations are growing up today.

The art of stonemasonry has always been a valued and sought-after skill, though only a handful of craft-people still practise it. Konavle is special in this regard



## TRADITIONAL CRAFTS



too — this small region is home to more workshops and master stonemasons than you might expect. One of them is Mihovil Šuljak, the third generation of stone carvers in his family. As a young man he dreamed of fixing cars — motorbikes in particular, a passion he still holds — but life had other plans.

*“My grandfather was a stonemason, self-taught, with his own workshop in Močići. My father learned the craft from him and went on to study applied arts in Split. He was very much the artistic type, and stonemasonry was a sideline for him. I had no interest in stone at all. I was mad about engines and dreamed of becoming a car mechanic. In 1993, I was 14 — it was wartime, and everything in Konavle had been burned to the ground. At my*

*father’s urging, and through a twist of fate, I enrolled in the Stone Carving School in Pučišća on the island of Brač. For the entire first year, I was trying to figure out how to tell my father I wanted to quit. I never found a way. By the second year I was one of the better students in the school, and I realised I actually had a talent for it. Everything fell into place.”*

At just 17, Mihovil began working for a Dubrovnik construction company involved in the restoration of the Old City after the Croatian War of Independence. His first job was restoring the paving stones and shop fronts along the Stradun. He spent ten years with the company, and then, following the death of his father, he handed in his notice at 27 and set up his own business. A great help in those early

days, he says, was his father’s friend — and now his own — Mijač Banac, who had a proper workshop in Popovići.

*“The construction company wasn’t where I wanted to be. The pay was good and I learned a lot from the old masters, but my heart was elsewhere.”*

He is also quick to point out that a stonemason doesn’t necessarily need to be an artist. *“What you need is willpower and mental resilience, because the work is slow and repetitive, especially when you’re starting out. Stone is hard, but also delicate — you can spend days staring at the same piece. After 30-odd years in stone dust, I can’t imagine doing anything else, though I do feel the pressure these days, since everyone wants the job done faster. But quality stonework simply takes time.”*

Miho lives with his wife and two sons in Močići, where his workshop and the headquarters of his business, Klesarstvo Konavle, are also based. Two permanent employees work alongside him — and recently, his younger son joined the team, having come to stone carving in much the same roundabout way his father did.

*“My younger son first enrolled in a plumbing apprenticeship. After a year, he wasn’t happy. I suggested he try the stone carving school in Brač. He agreed, finished the course, and now he works with me. I can already see that he’ll end up, just like me, buried in stone dust for life.”*

The workshop is well-organised — no half-finished jobs lying around.





**The art of stonemasonry has always been a valued and sought-after skill, though only a handful of craftspeople still practise it. Konavle is special in this regard too — this small region is home to more workshops and master stonemasons than you might expect. One of them is Mihovil Šuljak, the third generation of stone carvers in his family.**

Everything completed goes straight out for installation. At the moment, the team is working on the restoration of an old stone house, crafting window frames, a stone balustrade, and door thresholds. But the commissions that really excite Miho are the ones involving UNESCO-listed cultural monuments.

In 2016, he was part of a team of engineers, art historians, and restorers working on the baroque altar of Dubrovnik Cathedral — damaged in the 1979 earthquake and stored in the small church of St. Rocco for over 35 years.

*“It was a major challenge — sensitive, high-stakes work, constantly watched by experts and the public alike. The altar itself is made from around 40 different types of stone. The job was done well, and it was a real pleasure to hear the kind comments from the people of Dubrovnik.”*

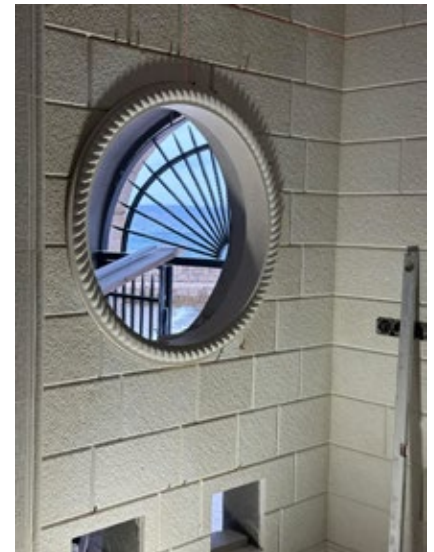
Miho has also worked on the restoration of the Church of St. Blaise — Dubrovnik’s patron saint — and the Dominican Monastery. He was part of the team that restored the Jesuit Stairs, Dubrovnik’s own version of Rome’s Spanish Steps, and, for fans of a certain television series, the very steps where the Walk of Shame scene in *Game of Thrones* was filmed.

*“The Jesuit Stairs were built in 1735 to a design by architect Pietro Passalacqua, as part of the Jesuit college*

*and Church of St. Ignatius complex. They had been partially restored after the war, but this was their first comprehensive restoration in 250 years. We worked with a whole team of specialists, and I’d particularly like to mention Tjaša Kolačko, a stone conservator we regularly collaborate with. Each stone on those steps had been pressing into the earth for 200 years, settling into its own groove and position. It was crucial to return every undamaged stone to its original spot, and to carve any replacements to match the existing grooves as closely as possible. It was a demanding puzzle, but the result is exceptional. These are the jobs I love — full of challenges that get solved on site, in the best kind of exchange of knowledge with colleagues who are just as passionate about their work.”*

The work of Miho’s hands and skill can be found in stone monuments across Dubrovnik, Korčula, and the Bay of Kotor. One of his longest-running projects — one that will keep him busy for years to come — is the restoration of a fortress at the southernmost tip of Croatia. On the Punta Oštro headland at Prevlaka, an Austro-Hungarian fort battered by decades of wind and neglect is slowly reclaiming its former shape.

*“You can only work at Prevlaka for about five months a year — early spring and early autumn. In winter, the winds are so fierce that no scaffolding can hold, and in summer it’s simply too hot. But this is a project*

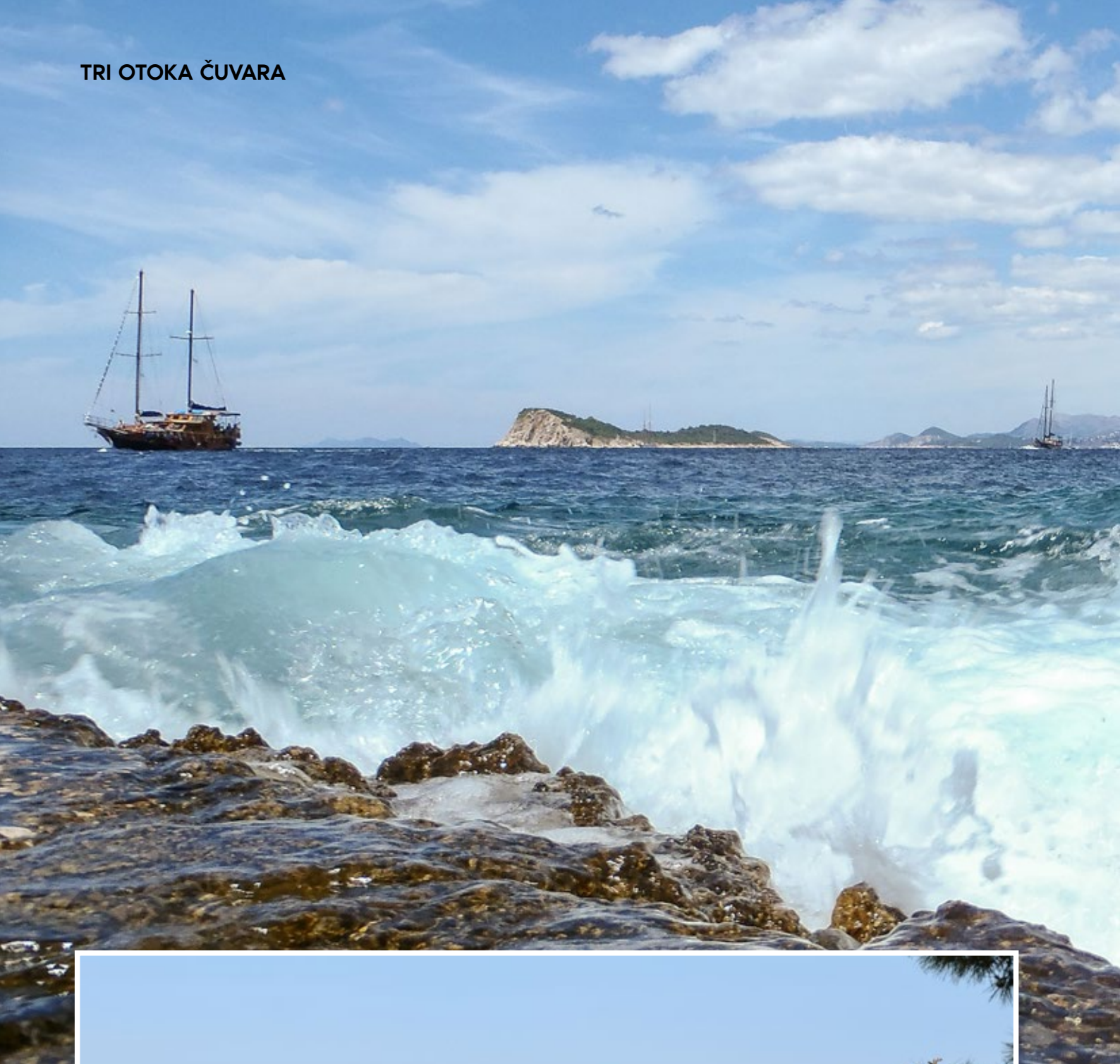


*where the investors — the Society of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiquities — understand that it can’t be rushed. Progress is slow, but it’s being done properly and safely.”*

Satisfied with the path his life has taken, Miho also reflects on the lack of interest young people show in traditional crafts today.

*“We have a truly unique school of stone carving in Brač — unique in the world — where students learn Roman-era techniques using traditional tools. It saddens me that young people aren’t drawn to working with stone, because here in our stone City, in Konavle, and across the region, there is more work than you could ever want. You can make a very good living as a stonemason. And there’s a very special satisfaction in knowing that the work of your hands will be admired — not just today, but for centuries to come.”*

# TRI OTOKA ČUVARA



**“ Cavtatska luka štiti se s mora svojim svecima i svojim otocima. Oni po lijepom vremenu plutaju na bonaci, hvatajući sunčeve zrake i ne odvajajući se od svoje luke. Po nevremenu, po velikim valovima, neverama i delumbijama stoje ukopani, pretvarajući velike valove u manje, uzvraćajući udar morskog prostranstvu.**

# Mrkan, Bobara, Supetar

**G**otovo svaka uvala ima svoje otoke čuvare. U tim uvalama smjeste se luke i utočišta za moreplovce, ribare, trgovce i sanjare. Otoci se rasporede oko ulaska u luku štiteći od olujnog mora obalu, pa život može doći do same crte mora. Uz obalu koja nije zaštićena, ne grade se ni dvori ni rive, jer je sila prirode velika i valja je poštovati.

Baš je u Konavlima to jako vidljivo. Konavoske stijene visoke su vapne-

načke litice koje se uzdižu i preko 100 metara iznad mora. Protežu se uz cijelu konavosku obalu, u dužini od oko 20 kilometara, od luke Molunat do luke Cavtat. More je duboko, teško pristupačno, uz stijene se uvijek izmjenjuju vjetrovi, a horizont pred njima je čist. Sve do susjedne Italije, preko Jadrana, nema otoka. Pa ni zaštite. Konavoskih naselja nema uz takvu obalu, tamo je carevao samo bjeloglavi sup. Konavle tako žive na svom kontinentu uz

more, a daleko od mora, i u svoje dvije luke, na samom zapadu Cavtat, a na istoku Molunat.

Ispred luke Molunat nalaze se Mali i Veliki škoj, a ispred luke Cavtat cavtatski grebeni, ili trojstvo Mrkan, Bobara i Supetar, te pripadajuće im hridi. Otoka nigdje drugo uz konavosku obalu nema. Ova tri otoka nose imena po trima svecima, Mrkan po sv. Marku, Bobara po sv. Barbari, a Supetar po sv. Petru. Osim u imenima, sve-

## TRI OTOKA ČUVARA

ci stanuju u ostacima crkvice na ovim otocima.

Cavtatska luka štiti se s mora svojim svecima i svojim otocima. Oni po lijepom vremenu plutaju na bonaci, hvatajući sunčeve zrake i ne odvajajući se od svoje luke. Po nevremenu, po velikim valovima, neverama i delumbijama stoje ukopani, pretvarajući velike valove u manje, uzvraćajući udar morskog prostranstvu.

U vremenima do početka 20. stoljeća, do pojave željeznice, sav promet iz Konavala prema svijetu, pa tako i prema Dubrovniku išao je preko cavtatske luke. Na taj su način stanovnici Konavala bili povezani sa svijetom. Osim toga, i putovanja s Levanta prema Veneciji imala su svoje postaje u lukama kao što je Cavtat. Tko je po nevremenu, s istoka, preživio plovidbu na jedra uz nepristupačne konavoske stijene, kad bi ugledao Mrkan, ugledao bi spas i znao bi da su sve njegove molitve, sve Zdravomarije i svi Očenaši uslišeni. Između Mrkana i obale se s istoka ulazi u cavtatsku luku.

Za one koji su dolazili sa zapada, kroz Župski zaljev u kojemu uvijek neki vjetar muti, zaklon koji čine otoci Bobara i Supetar, cavtatska je luka također bila utočište.

Međutim, nisu ovi otoci čuvali samo od nevremena. Čuvaju oni i od kopnenih prijetnji. Danas nenaseljeni, u vremenima barbarske opasnosti, na Mrkan je sklonjen benediktinski

red. U srednjem vijeku taj je otok bio važni crkveni, odnosno samostanski centar. Benediktinci, prosvjetitelji ovog podneblja, na Mrkanu su našli sigurnost. Do njih na ovom otoku nisu mogli barbari, osvajači i ostali kopneni junaci.

Bobara je, primjerice, čuvala stanovnike ovog područja od kolere, kuge i ostalih zaraza. Naime, ovaj otok, nenaseljen, bio je pravo mjesto za lazaret, karantenu, gdje bi se na 40 dana zaustavljali i putnici i njihova roba. To je zapravo prvi organizirani karantenski sustav Dubrovačke Republike. Izolacija putnika i nadzor robe spriječio je velike zdravstvene katastrofe u Republici, a kasnije su izgrađeni Lazareti u samom Dubrovniku, na Pločama koji su preuzeli ovu funkciju.

Ovi otoci su i čuvari ptičjih vrsta našeg neba. Od 1975. godine Bobara zajedno s Mrkanom i Supetrom čini posebni ornitološki rezervat i važno je gnjezdilište morskih ptica, naročito galebova klaukavaca, sredozemnih žutonogih galebova. Zaštićeno je to područje ekološke mreže Natura 2000 i stanište rijetkog mediteranskog bilja i stijenskih biocenoza. Stotine parova galebova klaukavca (lat. *Larus michahellis*) čuvaju svoju mladunčad na Mrkanu i Bobari. Potpuno su zaposjeli ova dva otoka jer su tamo sigurni. Naime, oni su jedina vrsta kod koje oba roditelja čuvaju mlade. U sezoni gniježđenja i u



cavtatskoj luci se čuje njihova buka. U goste primaju samo sezonske prelete ptica selica.

Cavtatski otoci čuvari su i naših usmenih predaja i priča. Među stanovnicima Cavtata i danas kruže priče o mitskim bićima, vilama, tencima, serenama i drugima koji se skrivaju na ovim otocima i koji se u osvit dana penju na barke ribara ili odvođe duše preko mora u drugi svijet.

Ako vas u nekom vlastitom zanosu vile s cavtatske rive *otmu* i u gustom mraku odvedu na Mrkan – galebovi utihnu, a ruševine crkava i samostana na mjeseci počnu vijoriti – trebate znati da ste na sigurnom, i od sebe i od mora, i od svijeta i prolaznosti života. A, ujutro, nakon buđenja, kroz vreli otočki zrak aromatična podneva, pred vama će u daljini leluhati cavtatska luka bezbrižno živeći svoju svakodnevicu, sigurna i zaštićena, čvrsto povezana prostranstvima posidonije na morskome dnu sa svojim otocima čuvarima.





# Mrkan, Bobara, Supetar

“**Cavtat’s harbour is guarded from the sea by its saints and its islands. In fair weather, they float on a glassy calm, catching the sun’s rays and appearing inseparable from the harbour. In storms — in great waves, squalls, and sudden gales — they stand firm, breaking the force of the open sea and sending it back across the waters.**

**A**lmost every bay has its guardian islands. Harbours and shelters for sailors, fishermen, merchants, and dreamers nestle within these bays, while the islands arrange themselves around the entrance to the port, shielding the shore from stormy seas and allowing life to reach the very edge of the water. Along an unprotected coastline, no manor houses or promenades are built — the forces of nature are powerful and must be respected.

This is especially evident in Konavle. The Konavle cliffs are tall limestone escarpments rising more than 100 metres above the sea. They stretch along the entire Konavle coastline — some 20 kilometres — from the port of Molunat to the port of Cavtat. The sea here is deep and difficult to access; winds constantly shift along the cliff faces, and the horizon ahead is clear and open. All the way to neighbouring Italy, across the Adriatic, there are no islands — and no shelter. No settlements line this rugged coast; it was the domain of the griffon vulture alone. Konavle thus lives on its own stretch of continent, close to the sea yet far

## THREE GUARDIAN ISLANDS



from it, its two ports sitting at opposite ends: Cavtat to the west, Molunat to the east.

In front of Molunat harbour lie Mali and Veliki Škoj, while off the coast of Cavtat rise the Cavtat reefs — the trinity of Mrkan, Bobara, and Supetar, along with their surround-

ing rocky islets. Islands are found fowhere else along the Konavle coastline. These three bear the names of saints: Mrkan after St. Mark, Bobara after St. Barbara, and Supetar after St. Peter. The saints reside not only in the names but in the ruins of small churches still standing on each island.

Cavtat's harbour is guarded from the sea by its saints and its islands. In fair weather, they float on a glassy calm, catching the sun's rays and appearing inseparable from their harbour. In storms — in great waves, squalls, and sudden gales — they stand firm, breaking the force of the open sea and sending it back across the waters.

Until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the arrival of the railway, all traffic from Konavle to the outside world — including Dubrovnik — passed through Cavtat's harbour. It was the thread connecting the people of Konavle to the wider world. Cavtat was also a stopping point on the great sailing routes between the Levant and Venice. For a sailor who had survived a stormy passage from the east, clinging to the wind along the forbidding Konavle cliffs, the sight of Mrkan meant salvation — the answer to every prayer, every Hail Mary, every Our Father. The eastern entrance to Cavtat harbour lies between Mrkan and the shore.

For those arriving from the west, through Župski Bay — where some wind always stirs the shelter formed by Bobara and Supetar — Cavtat harbour offered an equally welcome refuge.

But these islands guarded against more than storms. They also offered protection from threats on land. Today uninhabited, Mrkan was where the monks of the Benedictine order sought refuge from dangerous invaders. During the Middle Ages, the island was an important ecclesiastical and monastic centre. The Benedictines — great civilisers of this region — found safety here; no invader or land-based aggressor could reach them on this island.

Bobara, for its part, protected the local population from cholera, plague, and other contagious diseases. Being uninhabited, the island was the ideal location for a lazaretto — a quaran-



tine station — where travellers and their goods would be held for 40 days. This was, in fact, the first organised quarantine system of the Republic of Ragusa. The isolation of travellers and inspection of cargo prevented catastrophic outbreaks of disease within the Republic; later, the Lazaretto quarantines in Dubrovnik itself, at Ploče, were built to take over this function.

These islands are also guardians of the region's bird life. Since 1975, Bobara, together with Mrkan and Supetar, has been proclaimed a protected ornithological reserve and serves as an important breeding ground for seabirds — particularly the yellow-legged gull. The area is part of the Natura 2000 ecological network and

is home to rare Mediterranean plant species and rocky coastal micro-ecosystems. Hundreds of pairs of yellow-legged gulls (*Larus michahellis*) raise their young on Mrkan and Bobara, having claimed both islands as their own. They are the only gull species in which both parents share the care of their chicks. During the nesting season, their calls can be heard echoing all the way into Cavtat harbour. The only visitors they welcome are migrating birds passing through on their seasonal journeys.

The Cavtat islands are also the keepers of local legend and oral tradition. Among the people of Cavtat, stories still circulate of mythical beings — fairies, *tenci*, sirens, and others — said to hide on these islands,

climbing onto fishermen's boats at dawn or carrying souls across the sea to another world.

Should the fairies of Cavtat's promenade ever carry you off in a moment of enchantment — leading you through the thick darkness to Mrkan, where the gulls fall silent and the ruins of churches and monasteries seem to stir in the moonlight — know that you are safe: from yourself, from the sea, from the world and the passage of time. Come morning, awakening into the warm, herb-scented island air, you will see Cavtat harbour shimmering in the distance, living its unhurried daily life — safe and sheltered, bound across the seabed by meadows of seagrass to its guardian islands.



# Konavoski pjesnik djetinjstva

Nepoznati autor, U školskoj redakciji II, 1970-ih,  
Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author,  
In the school editorial office II, 1970s, Konavle  
Regional Museum

“ Zvrko je svoju pjesničku ingenioznost proširio daleko izvan materijala na kojem pjesnik stvara. Nije on djetinjstvo opjevao samo na papiru, već je djetinjstvo – ukupna kulturna i društvena pojava – bilo papir na kojem je stvarao, a time on sam nije tek dječji pjesnik, već postaje i ostaje pjesnikom djetinjstva.

Ratko Zvrko (1920. – 1998.), Konavljani iz Drvenika sa zagrebačkom adresom, bio je jedan od najpoznatijih hrvatskih dječjih književnika. Iako od 1944. godine stalno živi u Zagrebu, svojim je suvremenicima znao reći kako se *zavičaj ne gubi, ni kad se sve izgubi*. Njegova se snažna veza s konavoskim krajem ogleđa i u njegovoj želji da posljednje dane svog života provede upravo u njemu, a još više u činjenici da samo dva dana po dolasku iz Zagreba Zvrko, u zagrljaju svog zavičaja, umire.

Zvrko je bio uspješan i u drugim, s književnošću nimalo sličnim, područjima svog djelovanja. Pamti ga se kao uspješnog boksača i trenera, dugogodišnjeg novinara, urednika i dopisnika ugledne Vjesnikove kuće, no u povijesti hrvatske književnosti zauvijek ostaje upisan kao jedan od najvećih dječjih pjesnika. I danas se u čitankama za osnovnu školu nalaze njegove pjesme.

Njegov talent u pisanju prepoznala je već učiteljica u osnovnoj školi te je tako u Zvrku probudila želju da postane novinar, no nije ni sanjao da bi jednog dana mogao postati književnik. S druge strane, mi danas, od svega onoga što je Zvrko bio, najčešće ga znamo baš po tome što je bio književnik.

Pisao je i u srednjoj školi, ali svoje radove nije smatrao nikakvim vrjednijim uradcima, već samo pokušajima koje vjerojatno i drugi u tim godinama imaju. No, da je kao srednjoškolac ipak pisao malo bolje od drugih, svjedoče generacijama omiljeni Ki-Ki bomboni. Naime, tadašnja Union – Tvornica kandita i čokolade, današnji Kraš, raspisao je 1934. godine natječaj za reklamni slogan za spomenute bombone. Na natječaju je pobijedio gimnazijalac Ratko Zvrko osmislivši slogan *Bilo kuda, Ki-Ki svuda*, koji se još uvijek koristi.

Nakon srednje škole slijedi razdoblje u kojemu Zvrko, zaokupljen



Naslovnica zbirke *Grga Čvarak*, 1967. / Cover of the collection *Grga Čvarak*, 1967.

drugim aktivnostima, pjesnički ne stvara. Ponovno počinje pisati u godinama nakon Drugog svjetskog rata. Godine 1946. redakcija dječjeg časopisa *Pionir* raspisala je natječaj za odrasle književnike u kategorijama najboljeg dječjeg igrokaza, pjesme i priče. Zvrko se tada na natječaj javio pjesmom *Uzbuna u Zelengaju* i osvojio prvo mjesto. Upravo mu je taj događaj bio poticaj za daljnje pjesničko stvaranje.

Zvrko je 1949. godine počeo raditi u

sportskoj redakciji *Vjesnika*, a nakon nekog vremena, prošavši više različitih redakcija, postaje urednik dječje rubrike *Vjesnika u srijedu*. Upravo tu kreće objavljivati svoje pjesme, ali pod pseudonimom Marijan Vučić jer mu je, kao otprije poznatom novinaru i boksaču, bilo neugodno potpisivati se pod pjesme koje su namijenjene djeći. Njega je tada, kao urednika dječje rubrike, nazvao urednik ondašnjeg Izdavačkog društva IBI raspitujući se tko je taj Marijan Vučić, navodeći kako ima dobre pjesme i da bi oni rado u svojoj izdavačkoj kući objavili kraći izbor njegovih pjesama. Zvrko se tada razotkrio rekavši da je Marijan on sam te od tada počinje objavljivati pjesme pod svojim pravim imenom i prezimenom ili kako je rekao Luko Paljetak: *Ubrzo se, međutim, oglasio pod svojim pravim imenom – Ratko Zvrko, puštajući da u njemu prevlada – nomen est omen – ono nešto zvrkasto, nestašno i prkosno, od čega je satkan svaki njegov lik.*

Zvrkov se pjesnički izričaj nalazi između tradicije i suvremenosti. Pjesme su mu tradicionalne strukture:



Nepoznati autor, U školskoj redakciji 1970-ih, Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author, In the school editorial office in the 1970s, Konavle Regional Museum



Nepoznati autor, S učenicima i nastavnicima, Osnovna škola Donja Stubica, 1968., Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author, With students and teachers, Donja Stubica Elementary School, 1968, Konavle Regional Museum

podijeljene su u strofe, uglavnom katrene; stih je osmerac, pretežno trohejski, a rima uvijek prisutna, najčešće parna. Suvremenost se ogleda u izboru tema i motiva te u humoru. Karakteristika njegova pjesništva je naracija: događajnost je u njegovim pjesmama toliko izražena da se može govoriti o *pjesmama-pričama* s određenom fabulom i karakterizacijom likova. U pjesmama ne pedagogizira, već komunicira s malim čitateljem. Zvrko ne gleda djecu kao oličenje dobra ili zla nego im prilazi objektivno, stoga se djeca lako prepoznaju u njegovim pjesmama. Napisao je devet zbirki poezije, niz slikovnica, što autorskih što prepjeva s talijanskog jezika te publicističko djelo iz područja sporta *Zlatne rukavice Mate Parlova*. Najbolja zbirka poezije mu je *Grga Čvarak*, koja je do danas imala gotovo 30 izdanja i za koju je 1967. godine dobio Nagradu *Grigor Vitez*. Veliko priznanje za njegovo pjesništvo iskazano je time što je uvršten u važnu ediciju *Pet stoljeća hrvatske književnosti* pod naslovom *Hrvatski dječji pisci III*. Zvrko je svojedobno i izjavio kako mu je to najdraži životni uspjeh.

Zvrko je pripadao prvoj generaciji pjesnika koja je počela posjećivati

škole: *U moje vrijeme, znate, nisu pjesnici dolazili među nas u škole kao što danas dolaze, pa smo mi svi imali nekako osjećaj da ti ljudi koji pišu za nas, čije stvari mu učimo u udžbenicima, da ti ljudi ne žive na zemlji, da su negdje između neba i zemlje, da su daleko od nas, nedohvatljivi, nedostižljivi...*

Trudio se Zvrko biti i dohvatljiv i dostižan – brojnim posjetima škola-

ma i boravkom među djecom on briše postavljenu granicu između onih koji pjevaju i onih kojima se pjeva. Djecu je smatrao svojim najvažnijim kritičarima. Uvažavajući njihova mišljenja, Zvrko zapravo s djecom dijeli proces stvaranja poezije. Upravo ti, za pjesnika važni trenuci, ostat će zauvijek zabilježeni fotografijom. Na njima vidimo opušteno trenutke druženja učenika s pjesnikom, iz njih kao da izbija dječje uzbuđenje, čuje se meškovanje. Kada čita poeziju, njegov je stav interpretatorski, nalazi se ispred djece, vidljiva je izražajnost njegova lica koju uglavnom prate pokreti ruku. Kada potpisuje knjige ili razgovara s djecom, izraz mu je blag, nasmiješen. U prostoru je tada okružen djecom, granice se potpuno brišu: on je jedan od njih.

Zvrko je svoju pjesničku ingenioznost proširio daleko izvan materijala na kojem pjesnik stvara. Nije on djetinjstvo opjevao samo na papiru, već je djetinjstvo – ukupna kulturna i društvena pojava – bilo papir na kojem je stvarao, a time on sam nije tek dječji pjesnik, već postaje i ostaje pjesnikom djetinjstva.



Nepoznati autor, Čitanje djeci u učionici, Senj, 1960-ih, Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author, Reading to children in the classroom, Senj, 1960s, Konavle Heritage Museum



Nepoznati autor, Ratko Zvrko i Gustav Krklec, 1970-ih, Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author, Ratko Zvrko and Gustav Krklec, 1970s, Konavle Heritage Museum

# Konavle's Poet of Childhood

“ Zvrko extended his poetic gift far beyond the page. He did not simply write about childhood. Rather, childhood itself, as a whole cultural and social experience, became the canvas on which he created. In this way, he is far more than a poet who wrote for children: he became, and remains, a poet of childhood itself.

**T**he Konavle region takes great pride in being home to one of Croatia's finest children's poets, Ratko Zvrko. Born in 1920 in Drvenik, this son of Konavle spent most of his life at various addresses in Zagreb, where he worked, before retiring to his beloved Dubrovnik, where he passed away in 1998. Zvrko excelled across remarkably diverse fields. He is remembered as a successful boxer and coach, a long-serving journalist, editor, and correspondent for the prestigious *Vjesnik* publishing house — yet it is in the history of Croatian literature that he holds his most enduring place, as one of the best-known and most beloved children's poets. His



Naslovnica slikovnice *Grga Čvarak*, 1978. / Cover of a picture book by Grga Čvarak, 1978.

poems can still be found in Croatian primary school reading books today.

His talent for writing was first recognized by his primary school teacher, who sparked in Zvrko a desire to become a journalist, though he never dreamed he might one day become a literary figure. Ironically, of everything Zvrko achieved in his lifetime, it is precisely his literary legacy that we most readily associate with him today.

He wrote during his secondary school years as well, though he considered his work nothing of particular value — merely the kind of attempts most young people make at that age. Yet that young Zvrko wrote somewhat better than most is proven by a piece of Croatian cultural history beloved by generations: the Ki-Ki candy slogan. In 1934, the Union confectionery factory — today known as Kraš — ran a competition for an advertising slogan for their Ki-Ki sweets. The winner was a secondary

school student named Ratko Zvrko, with the slogan *Bilo kuda, Ki-Ki svuda* — roughly “Wherever you go, Ki-Ki comes along” (which rhymes sweetly in the original language), a slogan still in use to this day.

After secondary school came a period in which Zvrko, occupied with other pursuits, set writing aside entirely. He returned to it in the years following the Second World War. In 1946, the editorial team of the children’s magazine *Pionir* launched a competition for adult writers, with categories for the best children’s play, poem, and story. Zvrko entered with a poem called *Uzbuna u Zelengaju* (“Alarm in Zelengaj”) and took first place — an experience that would prove to be the turning point for his poetic career.

In 1949, Zvrko joined the sports desk at *Vjesnik*, and after working across several different editorial sections, eventually became editor of the weekly children’s supplement. It was

here that he began publishing his poems under the pen name Marijan Vučić, as he felt uncomfortable, as an established journalist and boxer, signing his name to poems written for children. One day, the editor of the publishing house IBI called him asking who this Marijan Vučić was, noting that he had strong poems and that they would gladly publish a collection. Zvrko revealed that Marijan was none other than himself, and from that point on began publishing under his real name. As fellow poet Luko Paljetak put it: “Before long, however, he spoke under his own name — Ratko Zvrko — letting what is truly in him come to the fore: nomen est omen — that spirited, mischievous, and defiant something from which every one of his characters is made.”

Zvrko’s poetic voice sits between tradition and modernity. His poems follow a classical structure: divided into stanzas, typically quatrains, with an eight-syllable line that is always rhymed, most often in couplets. His modernity lies in his choice of themes, motifs, and humor. A defining quality of his poetry is its narrative character; the sense of action and event is so strong that one can speak of “story-poems,” complete with plot and characterised figures. He never moralizes in his poems; instead, he simply speaks with his young readers. Zvrko does not see children as embodiments of virtue or mischief, but approaches them honestly and openly — which is why children so easily recognize themselves in his work. He wrote nine collections of poetry, a series of picture books (both original works and translations from Italian), and a sports publication, *Zlatne rukavice Mate Parlova* (“The Golden Gloves of Mate Parlov”). His finest collection is considered to be *Grga Čvarak*, which has seen nearly 30 editions to date and earned him the prestigious Grigor Vitez Award



Nepoznati autor, Susret s razredom, 1970-ih, Zavičajni muzej Konavala / Unknown author, Meeting with a class, 1970s, Konavle Heritage Museum

in 1967. The scope of his contribution to literature is further reflected in his inclusion in the landmark anthology

*Five Centuries of Croatian Literature*, under the volume *Croatian Children's Writers III* — an honour which Zvrko himself once called the greatest achievement of his life.

Zvrko belonged to the first generation of poets who began visiting schools in person. In his own words: *"In my time, poets did not come to us in schools as they do today. We all had a feeling that the people who wrote for us, whose work we studied in textbooks, did not live on the earth — that they were somewhere between heaven and earth, far away, beyond reach."*

Zvrko worked hard to be within reach. Through countless school visits and his simple presence among children, he dissolved the boundary between those who sing and those for whom songs are sung. He regarded children as his most important critics, and in genuinely valuing their opinions, he invited them into the very process of making poetry.

Those moments, so meaningful to the poet, are preserved forever in photographs. In them we see relaxed, natural gatherings of pupils with their poet — from the images one can almost sense the children's excitement, almost hear their restless shuffling. When reading aloud, his posture is that of a performer, standing before his audience, his face expressive, his hands moving with his words. When signing books or simply talking with children, his expression is warm and smiling. In those moments, surrounded by children, all boundaries dissolve — he is one of them.

Zvrko extended his poetic gift far beyond the page. He did not simply write about childhood. Rather, childhood itself, as a whole cultural and social experience, became the canvas on which he created. In this way, he is far more than a poet who wrote for children: he became, and remains, a poet of childhood itself.



Nagrada Grigor Vitez dodijeljena Ratku Zvrku 1967., privatna zbirka, foto Tomislav Turković / Grigor Vitez Award awarded to Ratko Zvrko in 1967, private collection, photo Tomislav Turković



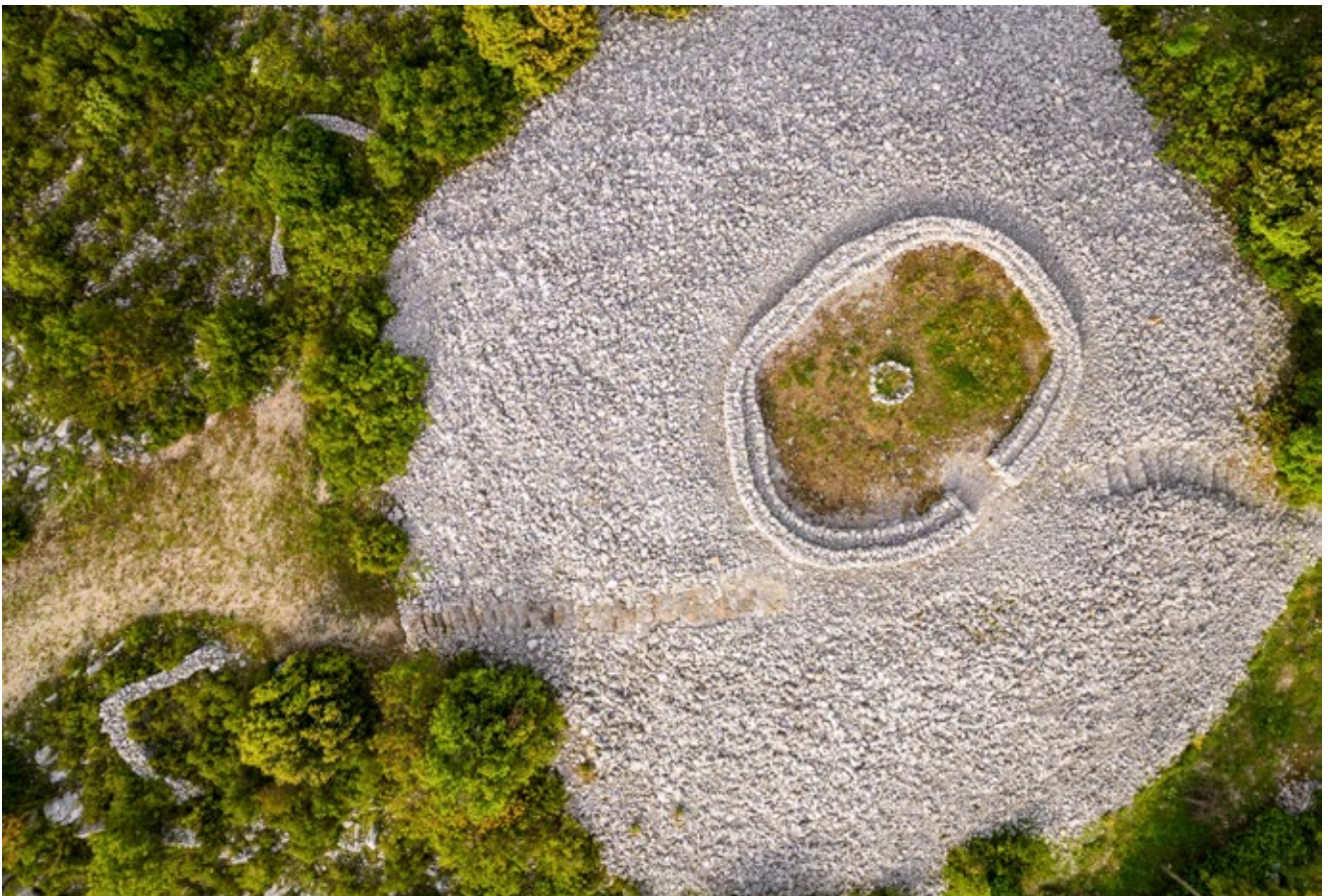
# Ilirske gomile

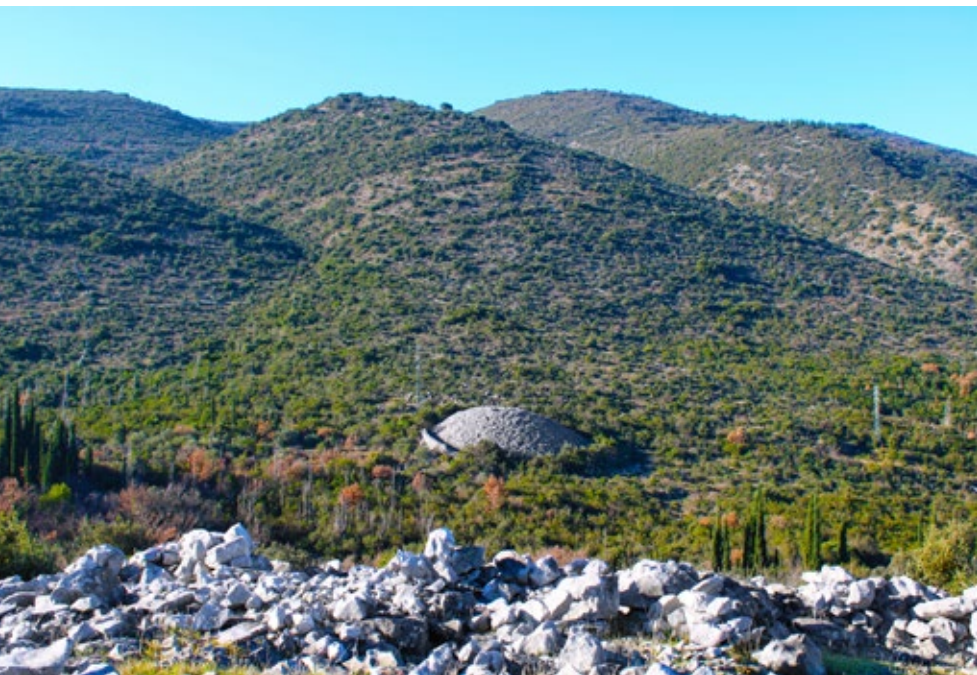
**“ Gomile na ovom području datiraju se u razdoblje od kasnog eneolitika do kraja željeznog doba, što je dugo razdoblje, a prostiru se ne samo po Konavlima već čitavim dijelom istočne Europe.**

**P**romatramo li krajolik Konavala, prostor koji se prostire na svega 210 km<sup>2</sup> primijetit ćemo planinski predio na sjeveru, dolinu u sredini kroz koju protječu mnogobrojni tokovi pitke vode i strme stijene na jugu. Plodna dolina i voda preduvjet su za gotovo svako naseljavanje prapovijesnih zajednica na nekom području, a laka obrana dodatna je sigurnost za njihovo trajno naseljavanje. Tragovi prapovijesti u Konavlima slabo su istraženi, ali su bogato zastupljeni. Gotovo svaka brdovita glavica nekad je bila prapovijesna gradina, tj. dobro branjena suhozidna utvrda, a u neposrednom vidokrugu sigurno se može uočiti i poneka gomila.

Gomila ili gromila najčešće je naziv za kameni grobni spomenik, s ili bez pokojnika, nastao u prapovijesnom razdoblju. Osim grobova, mogu predstavljati i dijelove fortifikacijskog sustava, na primjer suhozidne utvrde koje su propadanjem postale gomila kamenja. Ali, mogu predstavljati i ritualne prostore, granične oznake ili kamene krčevine nastale čišćenjem obradivih površina, iako krčevine većinom sadrže sitniji kamen od ilirskih gomila. Na području Konavala postoji preko 150 ilirskih gomila, koje su do danas ostale najvidljiviji tragovi prapovijesti.

Gomile na ovom području datiraju se u razdoblje od kasnog eneolitika





do kraja željeznog doba, što je dugo razdoblje, a prostiru se ne samo po Konavlima već čitavim dijelom istočne Europe. Razlog tome su mnogobrojna plemena Ilira koja su nastanjivala ova područja neposredno prije dolaska Rimljana, koji ih osvajaju i s vremenom asimiliraju u svoju zajednicu. Na području Konavala živjelo je ilirsko pleme Plerejaca i pleme Ardiječaca, iako su oko potonjeg još uvijek oprečna mišljenja stručnjaka.

Ako gomile promatramo iz perspektive grobnice, pokojnici su prvotno polagani u grob napravljen od 5 kamenih ploča, u zgrčenom položaju. Nabacivanjem zemlje i neobrađenog kamenja nad grob s vremenom bi rasla gomila, a uvriježeno je mišljenje da se prilikom podizanja gomile ritualno razbijalo keramičko posuđe, što se nastavljalo i po njezinu završetku. Baš kao i danas, kada se na grob štovane osobe donosi cvijeće i svijeće, prije se donosilo kamenje i razbijalo keramičko posuđe, što gomile čini mjestima štovanja kulta predaka. Pod gomilom je najčešće pokopana jedna statusno istaknuta osoba, a s vremenom se uz središnji grob, izvan gomile, nižu i drugi pripadnici istoga roda. Gomile nisu

jedini način ukopa ilirskih plemena, niti je uvijek pravilo da je pod gomilom pokopana samo jedna osoba, ali one nastaju kada se počinju raditi razlike u društvu. Naime, smatra se da je veća gomila značila viši društveni status pokojnika, pa tako najuglednije gomile dosežu visinu od 7 m i promjer od 60 m. Važnost gomile očituje se i u grobnim prilozima, na primjer ratnička aristokracija pokapa se s nakitom i oružjem. No, grobni prilozima ne mogu se znati prije nego što arheolozi istraže, odnosno otkopaju gomilu nad kojom se nalazi hrpa kamenja. Arheolozi ne preferiraju istraživanje gomila jer jednom kad se kamenje pomakne, nikada se ne može vratiti u isti oblik grobnice kakva je stajala

tisućama godina.

Grobne priloge konavoskih gomila ne znamo jer su do sada istražena samo dva lokaliteta na kojima su bile zastupljene, a spomenuto je već da ih se može pronaći preko 150. Pri sustavnom istraživanju lokaliteta Jagnjilo u Stravči istražene su gomile koje su naknadno korištene u srednjem vijeku za tadašnje ukope, pa prilikom arheoloških istraživanja nije bilo prapovijesnih ostataka. Jedan drugi vid ilirskog groba predstavlja lokalitet Peranova greda u Zastolju, no ni tu se ne može sa sigurnošću tvrditi je li bilo riječi o ravnoj, zemljanoj nekropoli ili kamenoj gomili budući da je lokalitet u više navrata devastiran cestom. Ovaj primjer devastacije gomile nije jedini, kroz povijest se često kamen uzimao s gomila za gradnju suhozida ili kuća.

Lokacijski, gomile su smještene uz gradine, puteve, iznad polja, na vrhovima, ali i padinama brda. Nema nekog jasnog pravila, ali je pretpostavka da je položaj gomile označavao kulturnu zaštitu komunikacije koju duša pokojnika čuva i nadzire. Na ovim se područjima dandanas u proljeće blagoslivljaju polja za dobar usjev, a u prapovijesti je tu funkciju imala lokacija gomile. Gomile su često na istaknutim, vidljivim mjestima, a kroz Konavle su najvidljivije u selu Mikulići, sjeverno od piste aerodroma u Čilipima, u selu Pločice, ispod UNESCO-ovog lokaliteta Sv. Barbara u Dubravci ili ispod Sokol-grada u Dunašima.



# Illyrian Burial Mounds

“ They date from the Late Copper Age to the end of the Iron Age, a long period spanning many centuries. Similar mounds can be found throughout parts of Eastern Europe and are associated with the Illyrian tribes who lived in this region before the arrival of the Romans.



Looking at the landscape of Konavle, an area of just 210 square kilometres, you'll notice three distinct features: mountains to the north, a fertile valley in the centre crossed by streams of fresh water, and steep cliffs to the south. For prehistoric communities, fertile land and reliable water sources were essential for settlement, while elevated and defensible positions offered security.

Although prehistoric sites in Konavle have not been extensively explored, they are surprisingly numerous. Almost every hilltop once hosted a prehistoric hillfort — a dry-stone defensive settlement — and nearby, you can often spot at least one stone mound rising from the terrain.

These mounds, known locally as *gomile* (or *gromile*), are most often prehistoric stone burial monuments. In some cases, they may also be the remains of collapsed defensive structures. Occasionally, they served as ritual spaces or boundary markers. While piles of stones created during the clearing of farmland may look similar, true Illyrian burial mounds are typically larger and more deliberately constructed.

There are more than 150 Illyrian mounds scattered across Konavle, making them the most visible reminders of the region's distant past.

They date from the Late Copper Age to the end of the Iron Age, a long period spanning many centuries. Similar mounds can be found throughout parts of Eastern Europe and are associated with the Illyrian tribes who lived in this region before the arrival of the Romans. Over time, the Romans conquered and gradually absorbed these communities into their own culture. In the Konavle area, historians believe the Illyrian tribes of the Plereians and the Ardiaei once lived here, although some details are still debated.

When used as tombs, the burial process followed a clear pattern. The deceased was laid in a crouched position inside a stone grave made of five slabs. Earth and unworked stones were then piled on top, gradually forming a mound. Archaeologists believe that pottery was deliberately broken during the burial ritual, and perhaps even afterwards.

Just as we place flowers and light candles at graves today, people in prehistoric times added stones and broke ceramic vessels. In this way, the mounds became places of remembrance and ancestor worship.

Usually, one prominent individual was buried beneath the centre of the mound. Over time, other members of the same family were laid to rest nearby. Larger mounds likely signified higher social status. The most impressive



examples reach up to seven metres in height and 60 metres in diameter. Some individuals, particularly members of a warrior elite, were buried with jewellery or weapons.

However, such grave goods can only be confirmed through excavation, and archaeologists are often hesitant to disturb these sites. Once the stones are removed, the original structure, preserved for thousands of years, can never be fully restored.

Despite the large number of mounds in Konavle, only two sites have been systematically investigated. At Jagnjilo in Stravča, archaeologists discovered that the mounds had been reused for medieval burials, and no prehistoric remains were found. At Peranova Greda in Zastolje, repeated road construction has damaged the site so extensively that it is impossible to determine whether it was originally a flat burial ground or a stone mound. Sadly, throughout history, stones from many mounds were removed and reused for building dry-stone walls and houses.

Burial mounds can be found near hillforts, along ancient paths, above fields, on hilltops, and along slopes. While there is no strict rule governing their placement, their prominent positions suggest they may have symbolically protected the surrounding land and routes.

Even today, fields in Konavle are blessed in spring for a good harvest. In prehistoric times, the very presence and placement of a mound may have served a similar protective role.

Because they were often built in highly visible locations, many mounds can still be easily spotted. Some of the most striking examples in Konavle are found in the village of Mikulići, north of the runway at Čilipi Airport, in Pločice, below the UNESCO-listed site of St Barbara in Dubravka, and beneath Sokol Fortress in Dunave. Silent and enduring, these stone mounds remain watchful witnesses to thousands of years of human presence, subtle but powerful reminders that life in Konavle stretches far beyond recorded history.



# Ljuta i Konavočica, rijeke koje se vole

**D**ugi periodi kišnih sezona napune čipkasta podzemlja vodom. U tom bespuću ona se pročisti i izađe na svjetlo dana kroz neki od izvora.

Na području Konavala 27 je stalnih i puno veći broj povremenih izvora različite snage. Nama su to izvori života, a za prostrani krški kraj oni su tek drenovi kojima se zemlja oslobađa viška vode. Iz dva najveća izvora u Konavlima rađaju se Ljuta i Konavočica, dvije konavoske rijeke na kojima

počiva život ovoga kraja.

Poznato je da izvori nisu vječni. Svaki i najmanji potres može ugroziti putanju kojom se voda kreće u zemlji i po zemlji. Stariji žitelji ovih krajeva svjedoče i o nestancima i o nastancima izvorišta. Voda zna kako zaobići prepreku i naći put za dalje.

Vjeruje se da je rijeka Ljuta izbila iz stijena u selu Ljuta prije desetak stoljeća. Jedna je od rijetkih rijeka kojoj narod pamti vrijeme nastanka.



Narodna legenda opisuje veliku tutnjavu i buku koja je prethodila njezinom rađanju. Prema predaji, u hercegovačkom zaleđu Konavala utopila se u izvoru djevojčica pokušavajući spasiti svoje janje. Ucviljena majka, koja nije mogla preboljeti smrt svog djeteta, godinama je prikupljala vunu od seljaka s nakanom da zatrpava izvor. Kad je u tome i uspjela, voda je u nemogućnosti protoka tutnjala kroz brda i planine dok nije probila

novi izvor, i to u Konavlima, u selu Ljuta.

Da je Ljuta izbila u 10. stoljeću potvrđuju i arheološka istraživanja Konavala. Gornji tok rijeke Ljute postao je u 15. stoljeću gospodarski kompleks Dubrovačke Republike. Kupnjom Konavala Dubrovčani su potencijal ovog velikog izvora iskoristili za izgradnju mlinova za brašno, ulje i onih za tkanine, takozvanih stupa. U arheološkim istraživanjima, koja su provedena

od 2005. do 2011. godine prilikom obnove ovog kompleksa, nije pronađena nikakva potvrda da je rijeka na ovom mjestu bila za vrijeme antike.

Rimske Konavle bile su dio agera Epidaura, a kroz njih je u 1. stoljeću izgrađen vodovod dug oko 20 kilometara koji je opskrbljivao vodom sam centar, Epidaur, današnji Cavtat. Voda se crpila na izvoru u Vodovađi, pet kilometara zračne linije istočno od izvora Ljute, a vodovod je prolazio kroz istoimeno selo, nedaleko od današnjeg izvora Ljute.

Da je u 1. stoljeću rijeka Ljuta sa svojim izvorom postojala, Rimljani bi zasigurno vodu crpili iz nje, kao što je i mi danas crpimo. Međutim, u to je vrijeme vjerojatno jedini veliki stalni izvor bio ovaj u Vodovađi, iz kojega izlazi rijeka Konavočica.

Konavočica je starija sestra rijeke Ljute, a kad je zapravo nastala, nije poznato. Njezin tok duži je od toka rijeke Ljute i u njega se slijevaju lokalni potoci. Premda mirnija, za vrijeme dužih kišnih perioda i ona bi znala pokazati svoju ljutu narav. Do izgradnje današnje ceste Gruda – Ljuta koristio se stari put koji je Konavočicu na Grudi presijecao mostom. Za vrijeme visokog vodostaja Konavočica bi jurila preko mosta. Iako naizgled bezazlena, odnijela je nekoliko ljudskih života.

Rijeka Ljuta stalni je vodotok: u gornjem je toku brza i nepredvidiva, a u donjem, kroz Konavosko polje, mirnija. Gornji tok hladne rijeke Ljute ljeti je mnogima utočište od vrućine.

Na području oko Grude Ljuta i Konavočica se smiruju, kao da svoje dvije naravi prilagođavaju daljnjem zajedničkom toku. Taj njihov susret i nastavak tijekom udvoje događa se sjevernije od Grude, a južnije od sela Lovorno. Omiljeno je to mjesto kontemplacije svim šetačima Konavoskog polja. Rijeke su tu stvorile šljunčanu obalu, mjesto na kojemu bi se u vrućim ljetnim mjesecima potražilo osvježanje koje može ponuditi samo voda.



Na to mjesto njihovog susreta rijeka Ljuta odvažno stiže sa sjeveroistoka, iz šumarka lovora i vrba, dok Konavočica stiže s istoka, već iscrpljena napajanjem istočnog dijela Konavoskoga polja. Njezin tok je plići, a njezino korito dom je raznim životinjskim vrstama, kao i endemskoj vrsti riječne kornjače. I u Ljutoj žive endemske ribice gobica i strugač, a donedavno je obje rijeke nastanjivao endemski riječni rak kojega, nažalost, više nema. Cijeli ovaj prostor sedamdesetih godina država je proglasila zaštićenim krajolikom zbog svoje iznimne prirodne i kulturne vrijednosti.

U zajedničkom toku Konavočica i Ljuta kreću prema tunelu i jazovima, u kojima voda napušta Konavosko polje vraćajući se utrobi zemlje. Do 1958. godine ove dvije rijeke, zajedno s Kopačicom sa zapada i ostalim potocima, plavile bi Konavosko polje koje bi, na nekoliko mjeseci, pretvorile u veliko jezero. Voda bi ostajala u polju do proljeća, pa bi se na njezinoj površini nerijetko vidjele barke, lovile bi se jegulje i razne ptice selice kojima je Konavosko polje bilo stanica na putovanjima prema jugu ili prema sjeveru. No, 1958. godine probijen je tunel kroz konavosku Donju bandu i od tada višak vode otječe u more pored današnje plaže Pasjače u Popovićima.

Jazovi, u kojima je do 1958. godine nestajala rijeka, vodili su vodu do mora, ali su je u svome vapnenačkom tkivu pritom pročišćavali. Sporim otjecanjem plodno tlo je ostajalo u polju, a voda je moru stizala čista. Danas s viškom vode iz polja kroz tunel, nažalost, izađu tone plodne zemlje Konavoskog polja.

More nije kraj za naše dvije rijeke, Ljutu i Konavočicu. Iz mora će kapljice vode, u vrelim ljetnim danima, *zajahati* oblak koji će zagrliti vrh Snježnice, a ako tamo, na njezinom vrhu ostane tri dana, Konavljani znaju da im predstoji kiša i da će ponovno rasti njihove rijeke. Izvori života.



# **Ljuta and Konavočica**

## **Rivers that Love Each Other**

## THE SPRINGS OF KONAVLE – SOURCES OF LIFE

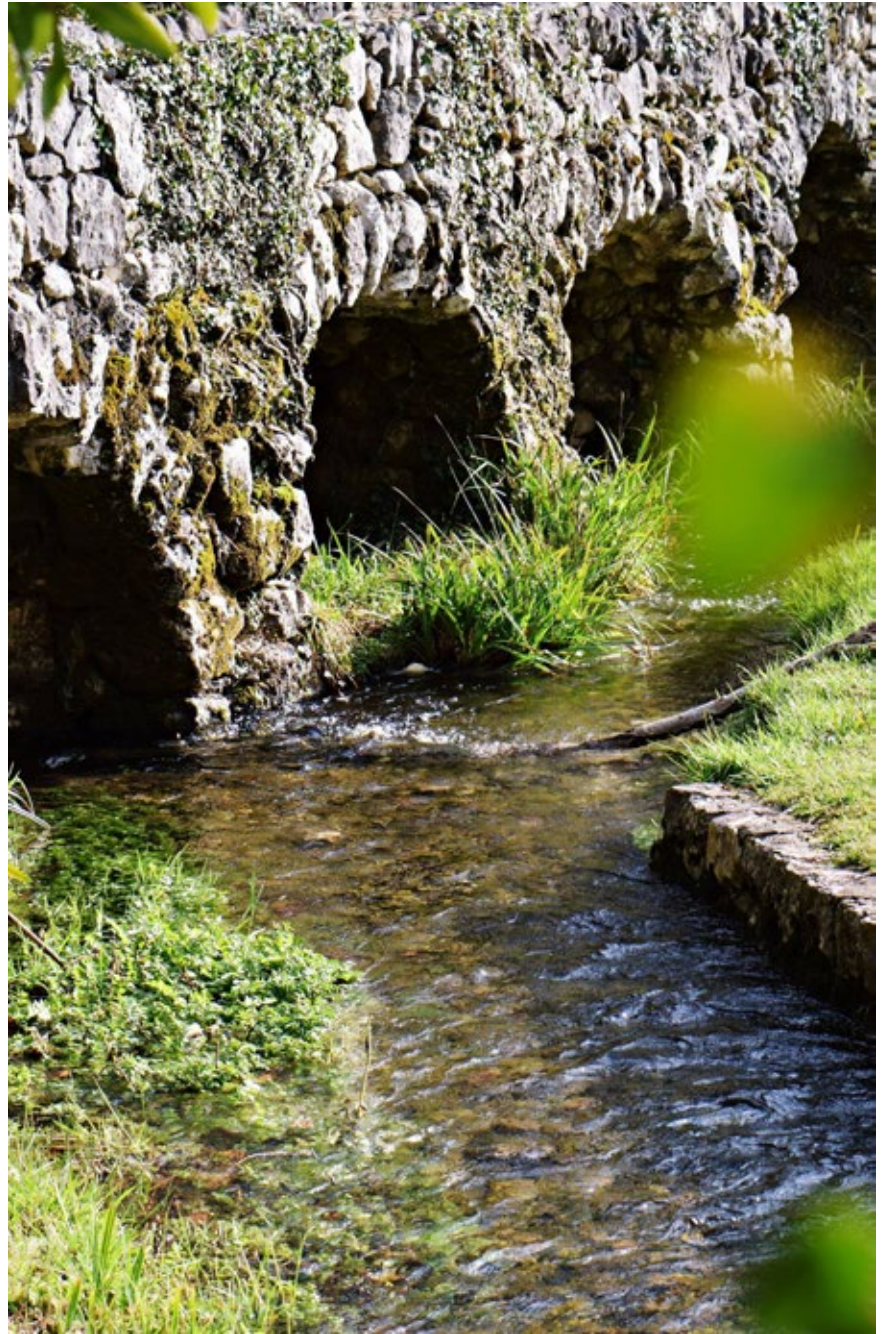
Long periods of rain fill the lacy underground channels with water. In that vast subterranean world, water is purified before emerging into daylight through one of many springs.

In the Konavle region, there are 27 permanent springs and a much larger number of seasonal ones, varying in strength. For the people of Konavle, these are true sources of life, while for the expansive karst landscape they are simply natural drains through which the land releases excess water. From the two largest springs rise Ljuta and Konavočica, the two rivers upon which life in this region depends.

Springs are not eternal. Even the smallest earthquake can alter the course by which water travels beneath and across the land. Older residents still recall both the disappearance and the emergence of springs. Water always finds its way; it bends around obstacles and continues its journey.

It is believed that the River Ljuta burst forth from the rocks in the village of Ljuta some 10 centuries ago. It is one of the rare rivers whose origin story lives on in popular memory. A local legend tells of a great rumbling and thunderous noise that preceded its birth. According to tradition, in the Herzegovian hinterland of Konavle, a young girl drowned in a spring while trying to save her lamb. Her grieving mother, unable to overcome her loss, spent years gathering wool from villagers with the intention of blocking the spring. When she finally succeeded, the trapped waters roared through hills and mountains until they broke through at a new source, in Konavle, in the village of Ljuta.

Archaeological research supports the belief that Ljuta emerged in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the river's upper course became an important economic center of the Republic of Dubrovnik. After the Republic an-



nexed the Konavle region, the people of Dubrovnik recognized the potential of this powerful spring and built mills for flour and oil, as well as mills for processing cloth. During archaeological research conducted between 2005 and 2011, carried out as part of the restoration of this complex, no evidence was found to confirm the river's existence at this site in antiquity.

In Roman times, Konavle formed part of the area of Epidaurum. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century, an aqueduct approximately 20 kilometers long was constructed

to supply water to the town center of Epidaurum — present-day Cavtat. Water was drawn from a spring in Vodovađa, five kilometers east of Ljuta's source, and the aqueduct passed through the village of the same name, not far from today's spring of Ljuta.

Had the River Ljuta and its spring existed in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the Romans would undoubtedly have used its waters, just as we do today. At that time, however, the only major permanent spring was likely the one

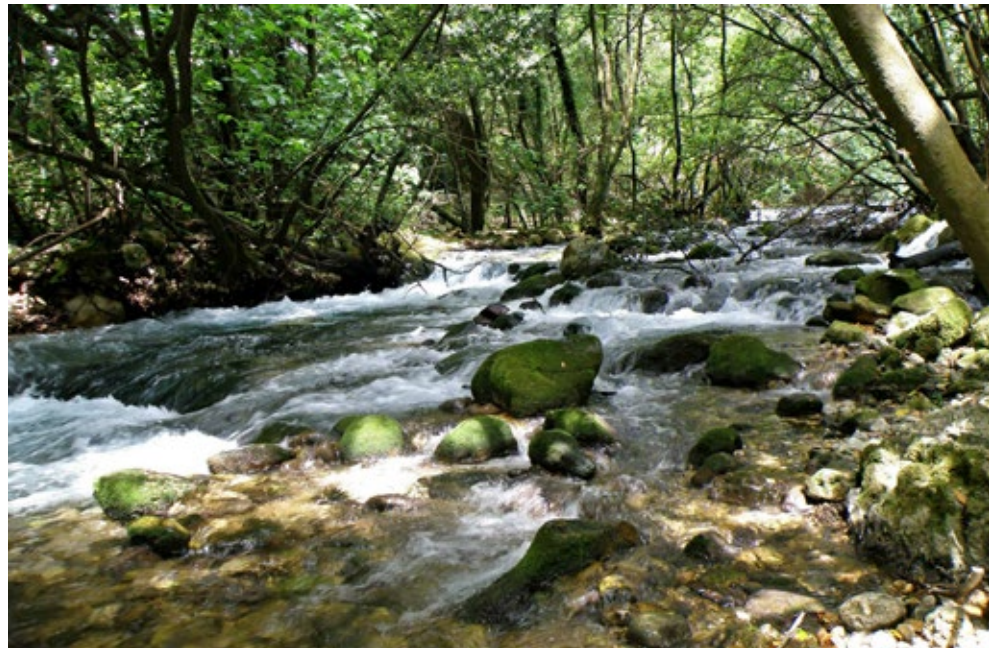
in Vodovađa, from which the River Konavočica flows.

Konavočica is the elder sister of Ljuta, though the time of its origin remains unknown. Its course is longer, fed by local streams. Although it is usually calmer, during prolonged rainy periods it too can reveal a fiercer nature. Before the construction of today's Gruda–Ljuta road, the old route crossed the river by a bridge in Gruda. During high water levels, Konavočica would surge over the bridge. Despite its seemingly gentle appearance, it claimed several lives.

The River Ljuta flows year-round: swift and unpredictable in its upper reaches, gentler as it winds through the fertile Konavle field. In summer, its cool upper course offers welcome refuge from the heat.

Near Gruda, Ljuta and Konavočica seem to quiet down, as if adjusting their two temperaments for the shared journey ahead. Their confluence lies just north of Gruda and south of the village of Lovorno — a favorite spot for contemplation among walkers exploring Konavle field. Here, the rivers have shaped a gravel shore, a place which, during the hot summer months, offers the refreshment that only water can provide.

Ljuta arrives boldly from the northeast, flowing through groves of laurel and willow, while Konavočica approaches from the east, already



wearied from nourishing the eastern part of the field. Its current is shallower, and its riverbed provides habitat for diverse wildlife, including an endemic river turtle species. Ljuta is also home to endemic fish species, while until recently both rivers were inhabited by an endemic freshwater crayfish, now sadly no longer present. In the 1970s, the state declared this entire area a protected landscape due to its exceptional natural and cultural value.

United, Konavočica and Ljuta flow toward tunnels and sinkholes through which the waters leave Konavle Field, returning to the earth's depths. Until 1958, these two rivers, together with the western Kopačica

stream and other smaller watercourses, regularly flooded the field, transforming it into a vast lake for several months. Water would remain until spring, and boats could often be seen on its surface; eels were caught, and migratory birds rested here on their journeys north and south. In 1958, however, a tunnel was cut through the lower band of Konavle, and since then excess water has drained into the sea near today's Pasačja Beach in the village of Popovići.

Before 1958, the sinkholes through which the rivers disappeared carried water toward the sea while naturally filtering it through limestone. The slow drainage allowed fertile soil to remain in the field, and the sea received clean water. Today, however, along with excess water, tons of fertile Konavle soil are unfortunately carried out through the tunnel as well.

For Ljuta and Konavočica, the sea is not the end. On hot summer days, droplets of water will rise from the sea, carried by clouds that embrace the peak of Mount Sniježnica. If a cloud lingers there for three days, the people of Konavle know rain is coming, and that their rivers, their sources of life, will rise once again.





# Starinska

# torta od oraha



**T**orta od oraha bila je slatki luksuz za svečane prigode. Za Konavolke i Konavljane ona nije bila samo slastica, već priča koja se prenosila generacijama. Ta tradicionalna torta zauzima posebno mjesto u konavoskoj gastronomiji podjednako kao i u srcima svih žitelja Konavala. S radošću su se iščekivale feste za blagdane, vjenčanja, krsno ime i imendane, jer se tada na stolu obavezno našla i ta rijetka slastica.

Stablo oraha krasilo je skoro svaku konavosku okućnicu, samonikli su rasli uz vode tekućice, a najviše na Ljutoj. Zbog višestruke iskoristivosti stablo oraha su smatrali simbolom plodnosti. Od kvalitetnog drva oraha gradili su se brodovi, izrađivalo se pokućstvo i škrinje za nevjestino ruho. Od zelenih plodova spravljao se liker, lišće su koristili u narodnoj medicini, a ukusni zreli plod uz fe-

**“Uglavnom su svi imali isti recept, samo je netko dodavao malo brašna, a netko ne. Mjerilo se na ožice jer nije bilo kuhinjskih vaga, a stečeno iskustvo bila je garancija za uspjeh torte.**

ticu kruha često se nosio u torbici za brzu okrepu ako se ogladni. Orazi su uvijek bili na cijeni i čuvali su ih u ljusci za duge zimske dane. Za to visoko stablo kod starih Slavena vladalo je praznovjerje da je preko

svojih dugačkih korijena povezano s podzemljem. Do današnjih dana je uvriježeno mišljenje da će se onaj tko zaspi u debeloj i teškoj hladovini oraha probuditi bolestan, a možda se više ni neće probuditi.

Za djecu je u jesen skupljanje plodova ispod starog stabla bilo poseban doživljaj. Smijeh, igra, puni džepovi i košici oraha pretvarali su se kasnije u zajednički rad u toplim kominima. Svatko je znao svoje dužnosti: dok su jedni lomili ljuske, drugi su odvajali jezgru, a oni snažniji mljeli su orahe. S posebnom ljubavlju i strpljenjem babe i mame pristupile bi dugotrajnom procesu izrade torta od oraha i to prema receptu temeljenom na usmenoj predaji, jer se nekoć recepti nisu bilježili. I dok su je spravljale, kroz priču bi oživjele sjećanja na one kojih više nema, a od kojih su naslijedile recept. Uglavnom su svi imali isti



recept, samo je netko dodavao malo brašna, a netko ne. Mjerilo se na ožice jer nije bilo kuhinjskih vaga, a stečeno iskustvo bila je garancija za uspjeh torte. Mlade djevojčice učile su od starijih žena o sitnim detaljima, finesama koje su bile bitne i trebalo ih je zapamtiti. Bjelanjca su dugo batile ručnom batilicom jer u protivnom torta ne bi narasla, pripravile bi brašno samljeveno na vodenom mlinu, morale su znati prilagoditi temperaturu ognja i kako namastiti duboku, široku teću u kojoj će peći tortu. Pazile su kad će dodati kupicu rakije kako bi torta bila rastresitija, nagratanu koricu limuna da se ubije jaki miris domaćih jaja. Mljevene orahe polako bi dodavale, a sav taj silni trud satkale bi u okruglu, mirisnu formu prepunu arome. Iako torta nije bila bogata sastojcima, bila je dio obiteljske tradicije i zajedništva. Ta slastica okupljala je cijelu obitelj u kominu tijekom spravljanja, da bi ponovo sve

okupila za stolom. Tada bi domaćica rezala mirišljave fete torte, pružala bi ih na malom pjatu gostima i ukućanima. Rijetko kad bi ostala koja feta za sutradan.

Mnogi stanovnici Konavala otišni su se u svijet u potrazi za boljim i lakšim životom. Uz malo prtljage, nosili su obilje sjećanja na rodni kraj u kojem su odrasli. Među brojnim uspomenaма ponijeli su i sjećanje na nezaboravne okuse i mirise. U novoj domovini kroz tu slasticu prizivali bi lijepe trenutke iz rodne kuće. Prisjetili bi se onih trenutaka sreće kad bi im baba pružila batilicu ili teću da s nje poližu ostatke kreme. Torta od oraha bila je okus njihovog djetinjstva i čvrsta povezanost s precima.

U konavoskim obiteljima starinska torta od oraha nije samo slastica, već uspomena, simbol kulinarske baštine, priča i osjećaji koji se skupa s receptom nisu mijenjali kroz niz desetljeća.

### RECEPT

**Sastojci za biskvit:** 12 jaja, 30 dag oraha, 25 dag cukara, 2 ožice brašna ili prezle, na vrh noža praška za pecivo, kupica rakije ili ruma.

**Postupak:** 12 žutanjaka batiti s cukarom, kad se cukar otopi i sve se dobro sjedini, dodati 30 dag samljevenih oraha, dvije ožice brašna i malo praška za pecivo. Lagano promiješati pa dodati kupicu rakije, na kraju dodati čvrsti snijeg od 12 bjelanjaka. Peći 35 minuta na 180 °C pa provjeriti čačalicom je li pečena. Ako na njoj ostaje tijesta, još peći.

**Sastojci za kremu:** 10 dag brašna, 15 dag cukara, 5 žumanjaka, nagratana korica jednog limuna, ½ l mlijeka.

**Postupak:** 2,5 dcl mlijeka prokuhati s koricom od limuna, onda ostaviti da se hladi. Žumanjke dobro izbatiti s cukarom, dodati brašno i polako dolijevati mlijeko koje nismo kuhali. Sve treba dobro izbatiti kako ne bi ostale grudice, nakon toga dodati ostatak mlijeka s limunovom koricom. Sve zajedno staviti na srednje jaku vatru i kuhati da se krema zgusne. Kad je gotovo, kremu ohladiti pa s njom namazati tortu.



# The Traditional Walnut Cake

**T**he walnut cake was a sweet luxury reserved for special occasions. For the people of Konavle, it was never just a dessert — it was a story passed down through generations. This traditional cake holds a special place in Konavle's culinary heritage, just as it does in the hearts of all who call this region home. Festivals, weddings, patron saint days, and name days were eagerly anticipated, not least because this rare treat was sure to appear on the table.

Walnut trees graced nearly every household in Konavle, growing wild

along the waterways, and most abundantly along the Ljuta river. Prized for their many uses, walnut trees were considered symbols of fertility. Their fine-quality timber was used to build ships and craft furniture and bridal chests. A liqueur was made from the green fruit, the leaves were used in folk medicine, and the tasty ripe kernel, tucked into a bag with a piece of bread, made for a quick and satisfying snack. Walnuts were always highly valued and carefully stored in their shells through the long winter months. Among the ancient Slavs, a supersti-

tion surrounded this tall tree — it was believed to be connected to the underworld through its deep roots. To this day, many hold the belief that anyone who falls asleep in the heavy shade of a walnut tree will wake up ill — or perhaps not wake up at all.

For children, gathering the fallen fruit beneath the old trees each autumn was a special adventure. Laughter, games, pockets and baskets full of walnuts, all later transformed into shared work around the warm hearth. Everyone knew their role: some cracked the shells, others sep-

“ Most families used the same recipe, though some added a little flour and some did not. Quantities were measured in spoonfuls — kitchen scales were not part of the picture — and years of accumulated experience were the only guarantee of success.



arated the kernels, and the stronger ones ground the nuts. With great care and patience, mothers and grandmothers would begin the long process of making the walnut cake, following a recipe passed down entirely by word of mouth, for in those days, recipes were not written down. As they worked, their conversation would bring back memories of those who were no longer there, from whom the recipe had been inherited. Most families used the same recipe, though some added a little flour and some did not. Quantities were measured in spoonfuls — kitchen scales were not part of the picture — and years of accumulated experience were the only guarantee of success.

Young girls learned from their elders, absorbing the small details and the finer points that mattered and had to be remembered. Egg whites were beaten by hand for a long time with a whisk, for otherwise the cake would not rise. They prepared flour ground at the water mill, learned to judge and adjust the heat of the fire, and knew how to grease the deep, wide pot in which the cake was baked. They knew exactly when to add a small glass of brandy to make the cake lighter and more tender, and grated lemon zest to temper the strong smell of farm-fresh eggs. The ground walnuts were folded in slowly, and all that considerable effort was shaped into a round, fragrant form, full of warm aroma. Though simple in its ingredients, the cake was a symbol of family tradition and togetherness. It brought the whole family to the hearth during the preparation, and then gathered everyone again around the table for eating. The hostess would slice the fragrant cake and pass portions to guests and family on small plates. Rarely was a single slice left for the next day.

Many people from Konavle have set off into the world in search of a better and easier life. Travelling light,



they carried with them an abundance of memories of the homeland where they had grown up. Among those many memories, they took the unforgettable flavours and aromas with them. In their new homeland, this dessert would recall happy moments from the family home — those childhood memories of a grandmother handing over the whisk or the bowl

to a child to lick the last traces of batter. The walnut cake was the taste of their childhood and a deep, enduring connection to their ancestors.

In Konavle families, the traditional walnut cake is not merely a dessert. It is a memory, a symbol of culinary heritage, a story and a feeling that, like the recipe itself, has not changed over the decades.

## RECIPE

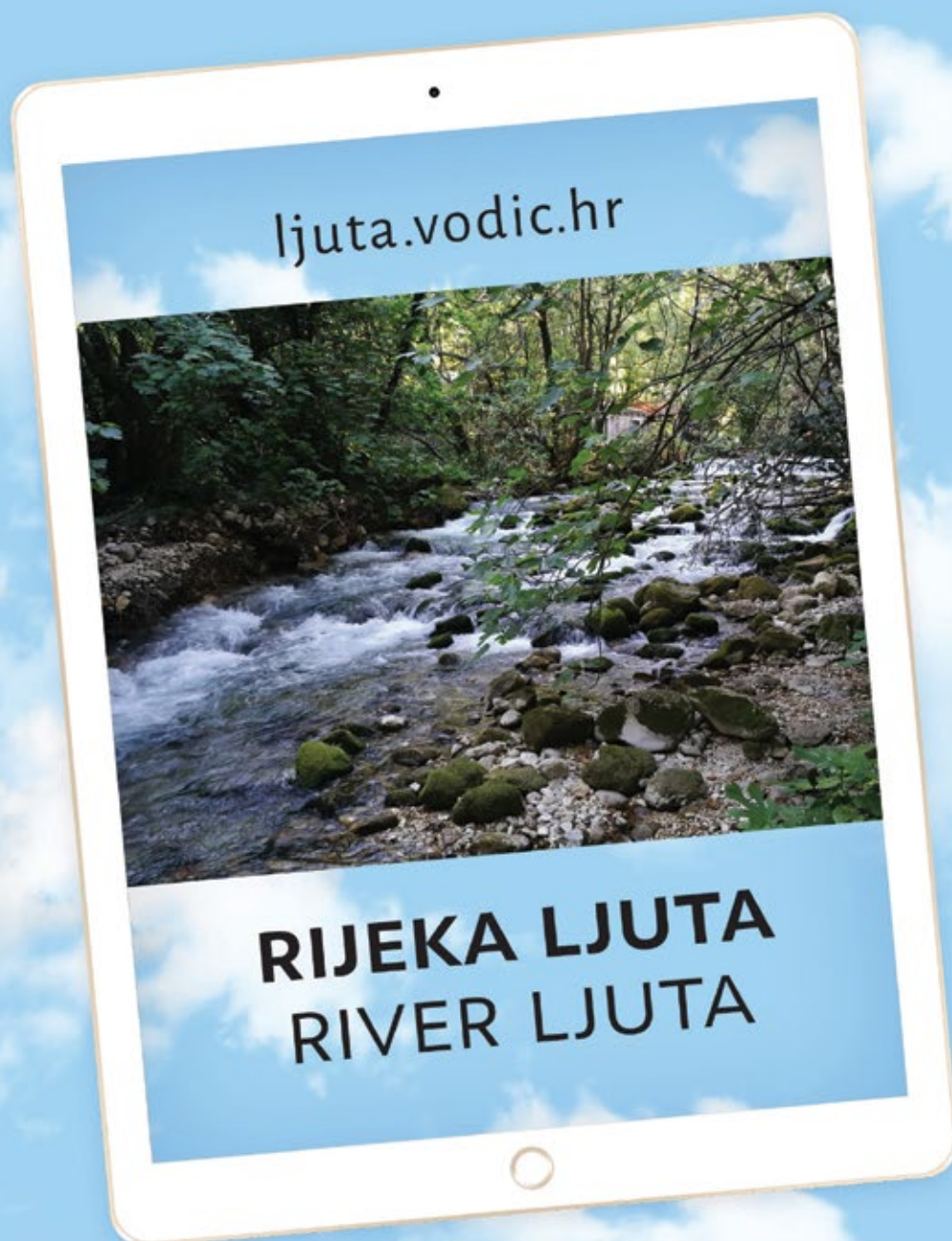
**Crust ingredients:** 12 eggs, 300 g walnuts, 250 g sugar, 2 tablespoons flour or breadcrumbs, a pinch of baking powder, a small glass of brandy or rum.

Beat 12 egg yolks with the sugar until the sugar has dissolved, and everything is well combined. Add 300 g of ground walnuts, two tablespoons of flour, and a little baking powder. Stir gently, then add the glass of brandy. Finally, fold in the stiff egg whites beaten from the 12 eggs. Bake for 35 minutes at 180 °C, then use a toothpick to test whether the cake is done. If batter remains on the toothpick, continue baking.

**Cream ingredients:** 100 g flour, 150 g sugar, 5 egg yolks, grated zest of one lemon, ½ litre milk.

Bring 250 ml of the milk to the boil with the lemon zest, then set aside to cool. Beat the egg yolks well with the sugar, add the flour, and slowly add the uncooked milk, beating continuously to avoid lumps. Then add the remaining cooked milk with the lemon zest. Place everything over medium heat and cook until the cream thickens. Once ready, allow the cream to cool before spreading it over the cake.

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