

## Celebrating 100 years of the Department of Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases and Head and Neck Surgery of the Zagreb School of Medicine (1921 – 2021)

### AUTHORS:

DRAGO PRGOMET

STELLA FATOVIĆ-FERENČIĆ

SILVIJA BRKIĆ MIDŽIĆ

The ENT Department was established on September 26, 1921 in a former primary school building at 17 Draškovićeve Street in Zagreb (today Elementary School Dr. Ivan Mertz), with Dragutin Mašek as its Head. On October 22, 1921, on the occasion of the grand opening of the Department, Mašek gave a lecture entitled *The Scope and Importance of Otorhinolaryngology*, which represented the first lecture in clinical medicine for students of the newly-founded medical school. This year, therefore, the Department celebrated a century of work, bringing to mind with its numerous activities the fact that the life of one department is not only a history of a specialized branch of medicine, but also an important segment of Zagreb's past.

Given that the ENT Department is one of three oldest departments of the Zagreb School of Medicine, with rich tradition and eminent

experts who left their mark not only on the profession, but also on the whole development of the Croatian society, the organizers involved a series of institutions in the celebration. First of all, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, specifically its Department of Medical Sciences, whose three full members – Ante Šerčer, Branimir Gušić and Ivo Padovan – were ENT specialists, while Šerčer and Gušić were also heads of the ENT Department. We also wish to mention the University of Zagreb, whose five rectors were medical doctors, and one of them was Zvonimir Krajina, also the head of the ENT Department. In organizing the events of great help was the Zagreb School of Medicine, whose four deans were also heads of the Department: professors Mašek, Šerčer, Gušić and Krajina. Others who joined us include the University Hospital Centre Zagreb, the City of Zagreb, Croatian Radio Television and the Croatian Post. The activities included those intended for the academic community, as well as those inviting the broader public.

One of the attractions in the series of events was putting in service a Zagreb city tram showcasing the logos of the Department, the Medical School and the University Hospital Centre. The painted tram started operating on September 4, symbolizing the close-



ness of medicine and the life in the city, and was well-received by the public. On the occasion of the anniversary, the Croatian Post printed the original stamp, envelope and supporting text about the Department authored by Jana Žiljak Gršić.

A special issue of *Liječnički vjesnik*, the official bulletin of the Croatian Medical Association, was published, containing ten topics covering the history of the Department, as well as ten articles on recent advancements in otorhinolaryngology and head and neck surgery. The guest editor of this special issue was Drago Prgomet, the current head of the Department. With this issue, a historical circle was completed, given that in 1926 an issue of this oldest Croatian medical bulletin was also dedicated to otorhinolaryngology, whose experts then emphasized the work of their new department on the occasion of its fifth anniversary.

Croatian Television filmed a documentary entitled *Majstori umijeća (Masters of Art)*, shown precisely on the one hundredth anniversary of the opening of the Department, on September 26, 2021. In collaboration with the production house Mediart, the Department filmed a documentary recording the testimonies of the current personnel working there, as well as their messages about the past and future of this institution. The film was premiered on October 4, 2021, during the promotion of the monograph about the Department. It was also shown during the celebration of the centenary at the University Hospital Centre on October 22, 2021, on the same day that the first clinical lecture was given one hundred years ago.

A particularly important event was the exhibition and the photo monograph about the Department. The exhibition, entitled *In a Time Shift: The Zagreb School of Medicine Otorhinolaryngology Department from the Analogue to the Digital Period* was opened on September 27, 2021 in the lobby of the Education Centre at the University Hospital Centre Zagreb. The organizers of the exhibition were the Croatian Museum of Medicine and Pharmacy CASA, the Division for the History of Medical Sciences of the Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science CASA, and



the Zagreb School of Medicine. The authors of the exhibition are Silvija Brkić Midžić, Stella Fatović-Ferenčić and Drago Prgomet. With the presence of students and employees of the University Hospital Centre, School of Medicine and the Department, the exhibition was opened with the speeches by Marko Pečina, FCA, the Director of the Croatian Museum of Medicine and Pharmacy CASA, Professor Marijan Klarica, the Dean of the Zagreb School of Medicine, and Professor Ante Ćorušić, the Principal of the University Hospital Centre Zagreb. The exhibition is open until the end of 2021 and has so far aroused strong interest among the visitors, especially the students.

The highlight among the events was the promotion of the photo monograph of the Department entitled *The Visual Memory of the Profession: The Department for Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases and Head and Neck Surgery of the Zagreb School of Medicine on the Occasion of One Hundred Years of its Existence (1921 – 2021)*. The authors of this first photo monograph about one of School's departments are Stella Fatović-Ferenčić and Drago Prgomet, and it was published by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Zagreb School of Medicine. It was conceived as a sort of high-quality photo scrapbook that emphasizes the visual aspect of the Department's diachronic development. The promotion was held on October 4, 2021 in the Academy's National Hall, with the presence of the host – the President of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Velimir Neidhardt, FCA, as well as many other prominent representatives of the academic and cultural community. The guests were welcomed by Vida Demarin, FCA, the Secretary of the Academy's Department of Medical Sciences, and the newly-elected Dean of the Zagreb School of Medicine, Professor Slavko Orešković. The photo monograph was presented by Pro-

fessor Marijan Klarica and its authors: Professor Stella Fatović-Ferenčić and Professor Drago Prgomet.

The celebration of the centenary, organized by the Department and dedicated to the personnel of the Department of Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases and Head and Neck Surgery of the Zagreb School of Medicine, was held on October 22, 2021 in the Hugo Botteri Hall at the University Hospital Centre Zagreb, precisely on the one hundredth anniversary of the first clinical lecture for students of the School and the opening of the Department. Along the welcoming speeches by the Dean of the School and the Principal of the University Hospital Centre, the Head of the Department Drago Prgomet held a lecture *The Scope and the Importance of Otorhinolaryngology – a Century Later*. Professor Branimir Anić, the chief editor of *Liječnički vjesnik*, presented the special issue of this journal dedicated to otorhinolaryngology; Professor Stella Fatović-Ferenčić presented the photo monograph and the exhibition; and the Head of Public Relations of the Croatian Post Jo Kempen presented the stamp and the envelope. The celebration ended with the projection of the documentary film about the Department by Ivana Živković and Drago Prgomet.

The centennial is an important jubilee for the Department due to its continuity; for the medical community through appreciation of the contributions that the ENT profession gave to the development of medicine; and for the broader public through cognizance of the well-being that medicine offers in life. The series of events and activities prepared for the centenary of the Department of Ear, Nose and Throat Diseases and Head and Neck Surgery of the Zagreb School of Medicine is a symbolic gaze at the past with pride and gratitude on the values that form part of our professional as well as national identity.

