

WHEN THERE IS ENTHUSIASM!

"EXPOMAX BACAU 600" 1st - 9th October 2008

**New approaches and innovations
A good example to be followed
by Maximaphily Associations
all over the world**

By Nicos Rangos

Display and photos by Viorel Cojan

winner of the title "Best artist of the Year 2008"



Barely four months had passed after the "EFIRO 2008" World Exhibition in Bucharest 20th - 27th June 2008 when an exhibition, a new important event, loomed on the philatelic horizon of Romania - the big surprise exhibition "EXPOMAX BACAU 600".

The Municipality of Bacau

The essential driving force behind the realisation of the exhibition was the Municipal Council of the town of Bacau whose popular and active Mayor is Mr. Romeo Stavarache. We had the opportunity of making his acquaintance during a visit to the Town Hall. We met him in his office, an office unusually small and simple. "The plans for a modern office have been ready for a long time but the town of Bacau takes priority," the young Mayor told us, full of confidence in himself as he showed me the map of the districts of the town. "I'm very happy because I devote all my time and all my strength to improving the quality of life of the inhabitants of this town, both at the level of creativity and modernisation and at the cultural level." The Mayor, active and discreet, open-minded and clearly enthusiastic, feels proud of the history and culture of his town. "Philately is a part of this culture and Maximaphily has deep roots here," he added.

The Romanian Maximaphily Association "Dr Valeriu Neaga".

The central driving force behind the realisation of the exhibition was the administrative Council of the Romanian Maximaphily Association, recently created, to which has been given the name of an important person, the physician Dr Valeriu Neaga, who was the pioneer of Romanian Maximaphily. The Council of the Association composed of well-known authors and enthusiasts, academics, writers, editors and personalities from the sciences, letters and arts, put a lot of effort into the organisation and communication to make the exhibition a success.

The initiator of the "big surprise" was the founding president of the Romanian Maximaphily Association, Vasile Doroș. A retired general of the Romanian army, possessor of a great deal of knowledge and experience and with many friends, he has acquired a major reputation in his country. Creative and decisive, dynamic and enthusiastic, polite and efficient and also an unrivalled organiser, he quickly became a deserving president of the Romanian Maximaphily Association "Dr Valeriu

Neaga". Moreover, on June 26th 2008 in Bucharest, during the official meeting of the FIP Maximaphily Commission, he won a seat as member of the Bureau. Vasile Doroş has a vision and seizes every opportunity.

The exhibition honours the 600th anniversary of Bacau

The town of Bacau, the largest town in the historic region of Romanian Moldova, is currently celebrating 600 years from the first documentary proof of its existence. It is mentioned in a document of the Prince of Moldova Alexander the Good, dated 6th October 1408. Vasile Doroş, in cooperation with the Mayor, Romeo Stavarache, wished to honour the town near which he was born and grew up and where he continues to live with his children and grandchildren. He mobilised all his forces, exploited those of his remarkable collaborators, members of the organising committee, and had in store for all the guests a series of creative innovations and important surprises:

Activity and innovations

- He formed a versatile organising committee to organise the international Maximaphily exhibition in cooperation with the inspired Mayor of Bacau and under the lofty patronage of the Philatelic Federation of Romania.
- He managed to heighten the awareness of the three mayors of the neighbouring towns and to mobilise the artists, journalists, teachers, pupils, leading citizens, friends and everyone he knew.
- He put at the disposal of his guests the cars of the private company of which his son is the director.
- Within a very short space of time he managed to enlist the support of more than 30 donors, including the three neighbouring municipalities.
- During the same short space of time he secured the participation in the exhibition of six countries with 48 collections. The exhibition was of a high standard also through the diversity and quality of the collections of Romania and those of France, Italy, Belgium, the Republic of Moldova and Cyprus. It received a great deal of promotion thanks to the large number of billboards (fig.2) and through the radio, television and the Romanian press.
- The first prize and the gold medal were awarded to Mihai Ceuca for his innovative collection "Famous men connected with Freemasonry".
- The first innovation was to present at the opening ceremony the choir of a primary school with a 12 years old singer, the charming young girl Andreea Pavel, (fig.3 and fig.4) who won the interest and



Fig. 2 - The great deal of promotion in the main crossroads of the city



Fig. 3 - The 12 years old singer, the charming young girl Andreea Pavel, who won the interest and affection of all the audience



Fig. 4 - Vasile Doros while he welcomes Romeo Stavarache, the Mayor of Bacau, Leonard Pascanu, Anny Boyard, Nicos Rangos and other guests in the exhibition venue

affection of all the audience. Moreover, a group of pupils belonging to the philatelic circle of

Arbore-Suceava village travelled more than 200 km to Bacau. Their traditional costumes from the north of Romania, the music and songs, gave a pleasant picture of the colourful folklore of the country.

The second innovation was the choice of venue for the exhibition. In addition to the town Museum, which hosted a dozen of the collections, the large, modern, commercial complex of Bacau the "Arena Mall", was chosen (fig.5). The frames with the collections on display covered almost all the spaces of the wide passages of the second floor.



Fig. 5 -The modern Mall of Bacau where the exhibition was hosted

The 48 collections aroused the natural curiosity of the customers shopping in the big store. Everyone said that it was the variety and size of the images of the maximum cards which attracted their attention. Shopping-bags in hand, they stopped to look at them and asked for all sorts of information about Maximaphily which, rich in images and colours, is the most popular class, especially with young people. A pleasing and impressive list of prize-winners was on display in the official "Arkadia" restaurant of the store. A series of slides showed the organisations and the phenomenon of Maximaphily at world level, (fig.6)

- All the guests were offered wonderful hospitality, in generous measure and of high quality, and above all from the heart.

Tour of Bacau

Another innovation was introduced with the organisation of a guided tour of two days. It started with Bacau, the birthplace of the Olympic champion Doina Melinte, the great poets George Bacovia and Vasile Alecsandri and of numerous distinguished painters, celebrated writers, mathematicians and other men of science. The "Mihail Jora" High School, the "G. Bacovia" Theatre and



Fig. 6 - The opening ceremony

the ancient orthodox churches are true jewels of classical architecture and unique centres of religious art. We had the chance not only to visit but also to experience the greatness of the tradition which co-exists with culture, modern life and creation.

The guided tour to Tescani, Moinești, the Trotuș mine and Onești

The surprises continued with the excursion to Tescani and guided tour of the museum of the celebrated Romanian musician Georges Enesco at Moinești, to the monument "Dada" by Tristan Tzara, to the historic church built in the 15th century by Prince Stefan the Great, the museum of religious art at Borzești, the tourist complex "Trotușul", the Town Hall at Onești, whose popular and friendly Mayor, Mr Emil Lemnaru, gave us a warm reception. However, what aroused the greatest interest was the descent to the impressive salt mine, near the town of Targu Ocna, the Trotuș mine. The princely contract for the sale of salt dated in the year 1380 is the oldest written evidence of its existence, (fig.7)



Fig. 7 - The bus while disappears entering the mine

It takes twenty minutes by bus to descend to the 11th level at a depth of 240 metres below the surface. The colour and characteristic smell of solid salt, the feeling that we are far from the sun and oxygen and the cold we felt because of the temperature down there, made us anxious but at the same time the mine offers to thousands of others treatment for their chronic respiratory ailments, (fig. 8) For the first time in our lives we found



Fig. 8 - The 11th level at a depth of 240 metres below the surface

ourselves facing the illumination of a subterranean town of 13,000 sq. metres, with huge excavated passages, kiosks and games rooms for basketball, tennis, table-tennis, natural exercise etc. We also admired the big church carved by the miners, with its wonderfully painted dome, a fit place for the knowledge and the spiritual recovery of patients, workers and visitors. This Orthodox Church, which was hollowed out in 1992 on the initiative of workers in the mine, is the only subterranean church at such a great depth below the earth's surface. On the iconostasis is the icon of St Barbara, the patron saint of miners, and also that of Saint Paraskeva, the protector of Moldavia, (fig.9)



Fig. 9 - We admired the big church carved by the miners, with its wonderfully painted dome

The Maximaphily meeting at Slanic

Our final stop was at the mountain resort of Slanic-Moldova where we had the opportunity of living for a short time in the well-built holiday villas and admiring the river falls and the wonderful scenery with the many natural beauties of the green mountain and autumn colours, (fig. 10)



Fig. 10 - Vasile Doros in front of his wonderful villa on the mountain in Slanic

There, in the ambiance described, in the course of a special meeting and in the presence of the French, Italian, Romanian and Cypriot delegations, we discussed subjects relating principally to Maximaphily. We noted the current development which the circulation of personalised stamps presents today and talked about the dynamic which could be developed in the near future for Philately and for Maximaphily in particular. In addition, we also called to mind the creation of maximum cards thanks to personalised stamps.

We observed that the attitudes discussed, a year ago, at the meeting held in Macon in France, on the occasion of PHIL A MACON '07, were still negative, although today we see a more flexible attitude towards the use of certain forms of personalised stamps. We could say that today we could accept a maximum card created with a personalised postage stamp whose image contributes to the enhancement of interests that are private, social or national, on condition that this enhancement limits itself to the local or national spiritual and cultural heritage. We greet this positive attitude because it is an important step in the direction of progress which will bring the public and above all young people closer to the postage stamp, philately and maximaphily.

The position of the Universal Postal Union, during its next meeting, will contribute to the adoption of a more precise position on this subject. All the participants hoped that these new arrangements will favour the development of philately and maximaphily.

We have also opened a discussion on the postal stationery in circulation during the last 30 years of the 19th century. (fig. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20)

This is certain postal stationery, on which the image of the stamp stuck on the view side of the postcard has a visible concordance with the very small picture printed on the postcard. We all agreed that these postcards, in conformity with the regulations, both previous and new, are considered precursors of Maximaphily and in consequence these postcards are valid maximum cards.



Fig. 11 - 1902 Bayern Postal Stationery Maximum card. The image of the Coat of Arms is almost the same on the postcard compared to that on the stamp. The F.I.P. 2006 Maximaphily regulations revised in Malaga, state that old postal cards with small size illustrations are accepted due to their early date and rarity.



Fig. 12 – Very interesting 1873 German Postal Stationery. One of the oldest known Maximum Cards with excellent visual concordance

Congratulations and thanks

I express my congratulations to the promoters of this major effort, whose names are mentioned in this article. Congratulations and thanks also to the president of the Philatelic Federation of Romania, Mr Leonard Pascanu, for the patronage and support he offered to the exhibition and for his presence at the exhibition. Mention should be made of a distinctive detail which shows

his personal quality: at the time of our departure from Bacau, the president of the Philatelic Federation of Romania was there in person. He came, quite simply, to say goodbye to us.

My congratulations and thanks go equally to all the members of the Board of the Romanian Maximaphily Association "Dr Valeriu Neaga" (Vasile Doros, Ioan Daniliuc, Mihai Semenov, Mihai Ceuca, Petru Pitea, Andrei Potcoava, Coriolan Chiriches) and to all the members of the organising committee and their collaborators. In my capacity as president of the Jury, I would like also to extend my thanks to all the members of the Jury (Anny Boyard, Vasile Doros, Ioan Daniliuc, Petru Pitea, Sylvain Monteillet, Gabriel Oanca) and all the exhibitors. Each one has written his own page and has offered his own contribution with passion and enthusiasm, large or small, to the great success of the exhibition "EXPO-MAX BACAU 600".



The Jury president Nicos Rangos with members of the Jury: Anny Boyard, Vasile Doros, Ioan Daniliuc, Petru Pitea, Sylvain Monteillet, and Gabriel Oanca

The innovative structure of the exhibition could be a good example to be followed by

maximaphily associations all over the world.

The human being creates and excels when he is willing to exploit his own enormous reserve of inner energy which expresses itself with confidence in himself and enthusiasm. The apt words of Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe are clear confirmation of this:

"Ideas are useful, willingness is equally good. However they are not sufficient. To create great things in life, action and enthusiasm are necessary".



In the Town Hall at Onesti, where the popular and friendly Mayor, Mr Emil Lemnar, offered to us a warm reception



Fig. 13 - 1874, Wonderful Russian Postal Stationery - Maximum card. The image of the Coat of Arms on the postcard is slightly bigger compared to that on the stamp. One of the oldest known Maximum Card with excellent visual concordance



Fig. 17 - 1901 Guatemala Postal Stationery - Maximum Card



Fig. 14 - 1875
Bayern rare upgraded Postal Stationery - Maximum card



Fig. 18 - 1910 Sweden Postal Stationery - Maximum card



Fig. 15 - 1879
Bayern upgraded rare Postal Stationery - Maximum card



Fig. 19
1915 Luxembourg very rare Postal Stationery-Maximum Card



Fig. 16 - 1901 Greece, the Hermes image embossed on the postcard is exactly the same to that on the stamps - Only one known



Fig. 20
1926 Latvia very rare Postal Stationery - Maximum Card