

“József Domján, His Art in Hungary, China and North America” The Return to China Project

Kálmán Magyar

Domján József Foundation, Budapest, Hungary

American Hungarian Museum, Passiac, New Jersey, USA

magyar@magyar.org

www.magyarmuzeum.org

www.domjanart.hu

www.magyar.org

Email: magyar@magyar.org

József Domján

[Budapest, March 15, 1907 – Pascack Valley, New Jersey, USA , November 22, 1992]

- **One of the most important Hungarian visual artists of the 20th Century.**
- **Probably the only Hungarian graphic artist who was invited to research, exhibit and work in China during post WWII years (1955, from July to November)**
- **He had many major exhibitions in China, in at least 15 major cities.**
- **His art was well received in China and during his life his art continued to be greatly influenced by his visit to China.**
- **He was considered to be the a special guest artist of the Peoples Republic of China and was introduced to many important Chinese artist, among them Chi Pai Chi, whom he was honored to share work.**
- **He received the Master of Color Woodcut recognition which is offered in China one in a Century.**
- Domján achieved the highest recognitions from the Hungarian government including the Kossuth Price in 1956.
- After the 1956 Hungarian Uprising he emigrated to Western Europe , later to the USA.
- Became a celebrated artist in North America and major museums exhibited his art in over 500 showings.
- Developed color woodcut art to an artistic form which is unique and unmistakably attributable to him.
- **His images incorporate the vision of a contemporary [spiritual] painter, and a disciplined technician as a woodcutter, inspired by folklore many in memory of his Chinese visit.**
- His works may be considered to be executed in the spirit of Bartók and Kodály: creating a contemporary modern art form, based on traditional folkloric elements.
- Domján is an important part of Hungarian cultural heritage and his art should become an integral part of Hungarian fine art history.
- **Domján's visit to China in 1955 is an important cultural event demonstrating the willingness of two nations to cooperate.**

József Domján and his wife, Evelyn



Images from Domján's visit in China in 1955

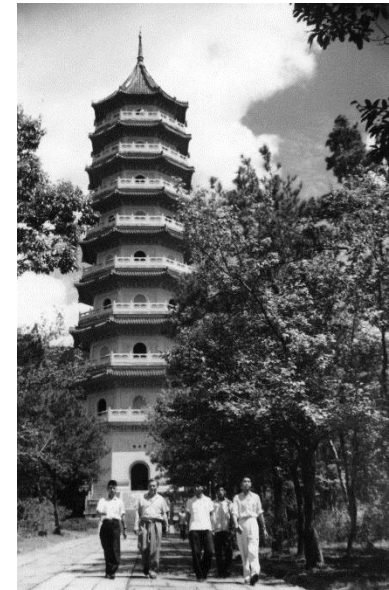
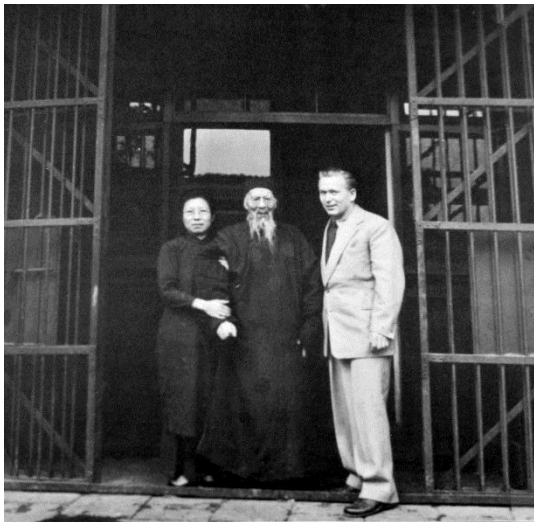


Images from Domján's visit in China in 1955



Images from Domján's visit in China in 1955

Visit with Chi Pai Chi



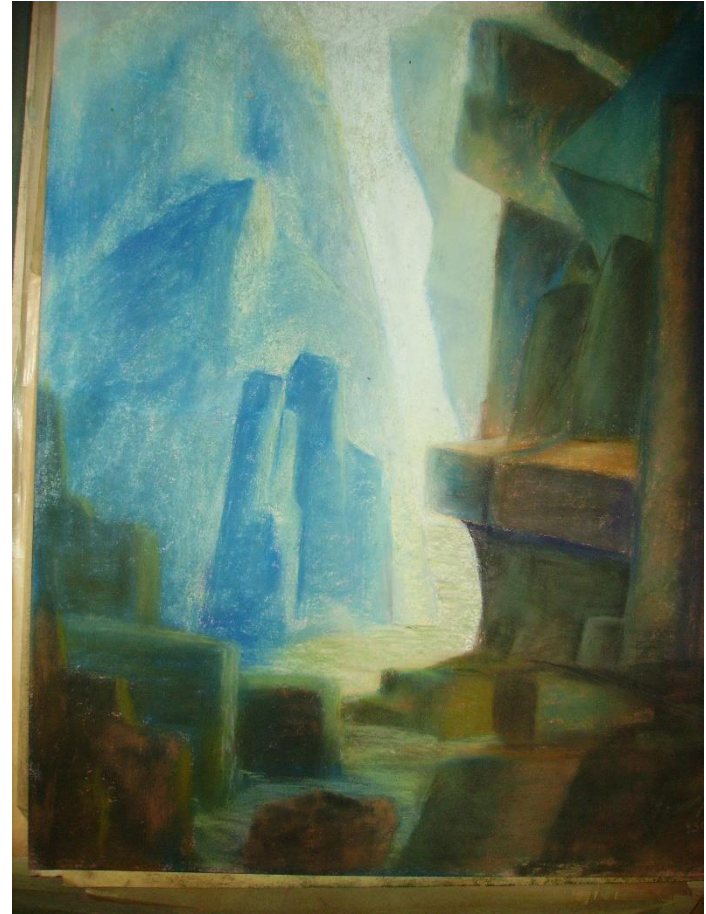
Chronology of Domján [1]

- 1907, March 15 – Born in Kispest, Budapest district, and family moves to Köbánya while he is a baby.
[Harmat utca 1-3]
- 1924 - Becomes an engine fitter and works in a large factory as iron worker.
- 1930 - Becomes unemployed due to the economic depression in Hungary and sets out on foot to travel through Western Europe – covers 10,000 miles, visiting major museums and places of art.
- 1933 – Returns to Hungary, still unemployed and takes a job as a hermit at Csátka, a remote pilgrimage place in the Bakony mountain area, meets contemporary artists who “discover him”.
- 1934 – Formal training in fine art begins at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Learns from the leading artists in Hungary.
- 1938 – Exhibition of non-figurative “Spiritual Paintings” bring him recognition.
- 1940 – Meets his wife, Evelyn, at a Summer art colony in the Miskolc area. The life long collaboration begins.
- 1945 – Rebuilds his bomb out studio in Budapest and continues his art.
- 1948 – Extended study and work trip to Scandinavia, organizes first one-man exhibits.
- 1949 – First exhibit of 30 color woodcuts at the Szépművészeti [Fine Arts] Gallery in Budapest.
- 1950 on – Exhibitions in Hungary and London. Works of Chain Bridge, Big Poppy, Hungarian Heroes, János Hunyadi, Medimpex medical herb series, build new studio in Rózsadomb area.
- 1955 – Munkácsy Prize, Retrospective exhibitions of 240 woodcuts at Ernst Museum, Budapest. Invitation to China and a five months study and work visit as a celebrity, received “Master of Color Woodcut” recognition given once in every century.**
- 1956 – Awarded the Kossuth Prize, October 20th opens his exhibition in Geneva, Switzerland at the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire

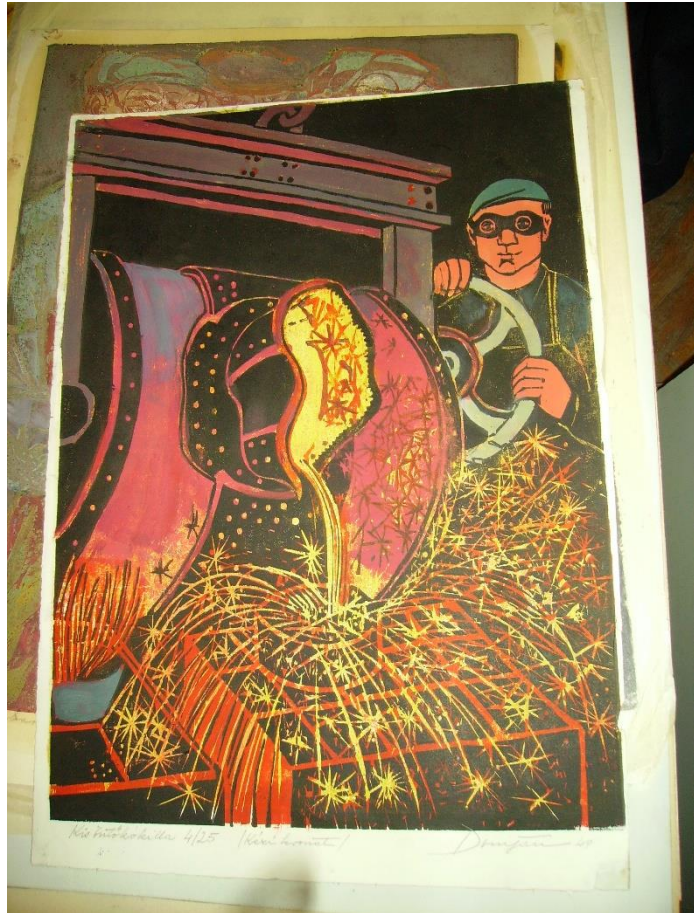
Early works



Early works



Early works



Early works



Early works



Chronology of Domján [2]

- 1957 – Joined by wife and three children in Switzerland, continue work, and arrives in New York on August 31. First American exhibition is in the United Nations.
- 1958 – Exhibitions continue, most important major exhibit in Cincinnati Art Museum.
- 1959 – Exhibitions in Europe and USA, “Angel” is commissioned by the Metropolitan Art Museum, New York.
- 1960 – Invited by President Eisenhower in the White House, UNICEF publishes Christmas Card.
- 1961 on – Works included in “Prints of the World” travel exhibit originating from London. Peacock Festival exhibitions of 44 color woodcuts at the Montclair Museum, NJ.
- 1963 – Becomes a USA citizen.
- 1964 – World’s Fair in New York, movie is shown about Domján at the New Jersey Pavilion. [Magic of Woodcut].
- 1966 – Major show at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, exhibitions in Paris, Mexico City. Tapestries are created in France and Spain.
- 1967 – Builds studio in Tuxedo Park, New York.
- 1968 on – Gobelin Tapestries, Carpi Italy exhibit, Tokyo publication, one man show in Reading Museum, Pennsylvania.
- 1970 – June 26 his house and studio burns to the ground. ***Everything is lost.***

Family

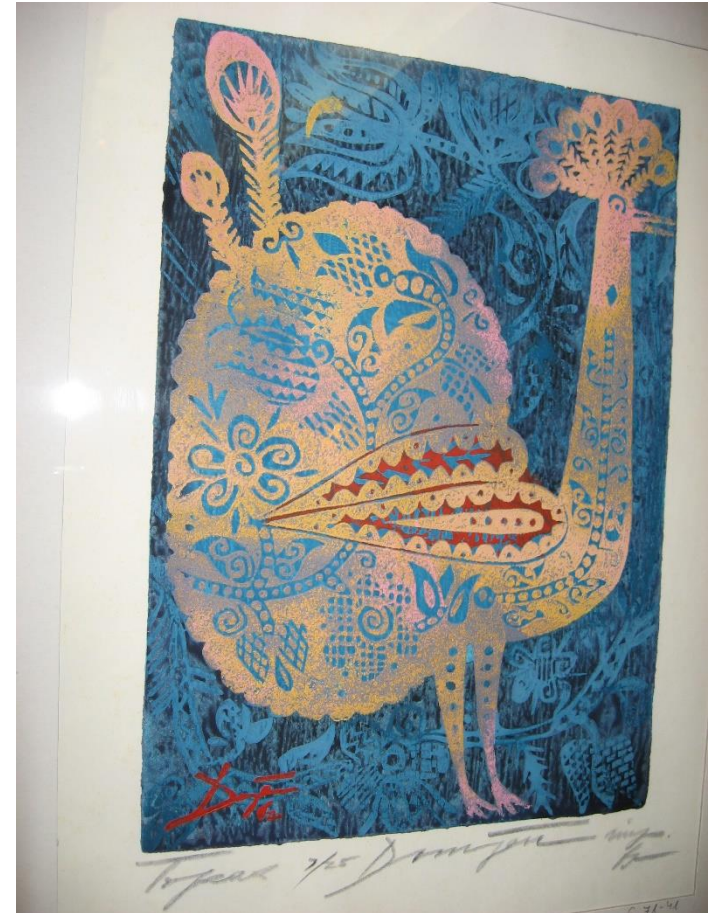
A család 1965-ben



Reinvention



Reinvention



Reinvention ends:

his home burns with all artwork on June 26, 1970



Chronology of Domján [3]

- 1971 – Builds new larger studio at Tuxedo Park, New York, all cement and cinder block – the “Sanctuary of Art”. The MET published Unicorn note card, sterling silver Snowflake, the Phoenix images emerge.
- 1972 – Dürer and Domján exhibition in New York City to commemorate the 500th birthday of Dürer. Two masters of woodcut are exhibited side by side. Commissions from the MET; Taos, NM event.
- 1973 on – Tapestry one man shows in Austin, TX, New Jersey State Museum, Cincinnati, Washington D.C., commissions from The MET.
- 1976 – Among the many exhibitions The Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C shows within the Centennial Exhibition Domján works. Exhibitions in Sárospatak, Hungary commemorating Rákóczy's 300th anniversary of his birth, receives key to the City.
- 1977 – In May the Domján Museum opens in Sárospatak, early works are housed there. Exhibitions in America of woodcuts and tapestry.
- 1978 on – New color woodcuts and exhibits, creation of Toldi, Sun-Gates, Round Table Conference in Paris by UNESCO – woodcut presentation, Rákóczy award, Béla Bartók diploma by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture, Blue Beard's Castle series, the book Toldi is published,
- 1982 - Alice Tully Hall Exhibitions in conjunctions with Zoltán Kodály's Centennial – Székely Fonó [The Spinning Room] series is revealed. The Most Beautiful Folk Ballad series is released in Budapest – more works created more exhibitions held in USA.
- 1982 on – Hollóháza porcelain factory produces peacock plates, Folk Ballads exhibited. Large retrospective exhibition at the Hungarian National Gallery [1984]. After 500 exhibits accurate records are not kept, but frequent show continue.
- 1992 November 22 – Dies at Pascack Valley Hospital in New Jersey, after a brief illness at age 85.

“Phoenix” period



Pomegranate

Dong Jiamin



Phoenix, Color Woodcut, 1949 Dong Jiamin

“Phoenix” period



“Phoenix” period



Yungu

the gift

Damjan



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“Phoenix” period



1950 - 1950
D. 1950



1950 - 1950
D. 1950

“Phoenix” period



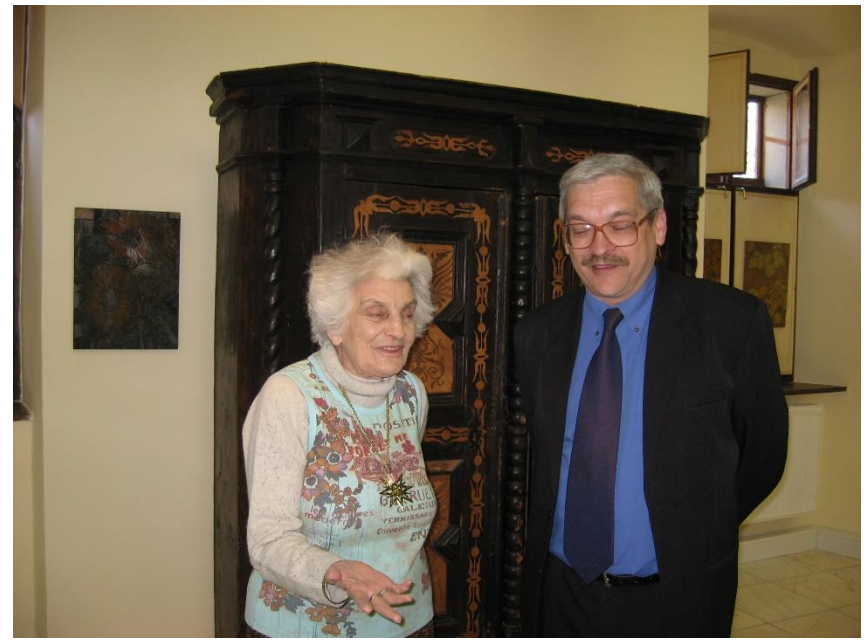
The block [duc]



SÁROSPATAK COLLECTION – ART GALLERY

- The American Hungarian Museum, Passaic signed a cooperative agreement to work together in the management and preservation of the Domján Collection.
- The new permanent exhibition opened on March 25, 2007 as part of the Centennial program.
- The Sárospataki Képtár (Gallery) houses the most significant collections of the artist, which was donated to the City by the artist, after the Hungarian Government did not allow the contents of his Budapest gallery to be taken abroad.
- Domján invested significant funds into the original Domján Museum in 1977, but the City could not afford to keep up the building beyond the late 90's.
- We are planning programs around the Gallery to keep it in sight of the interested public.



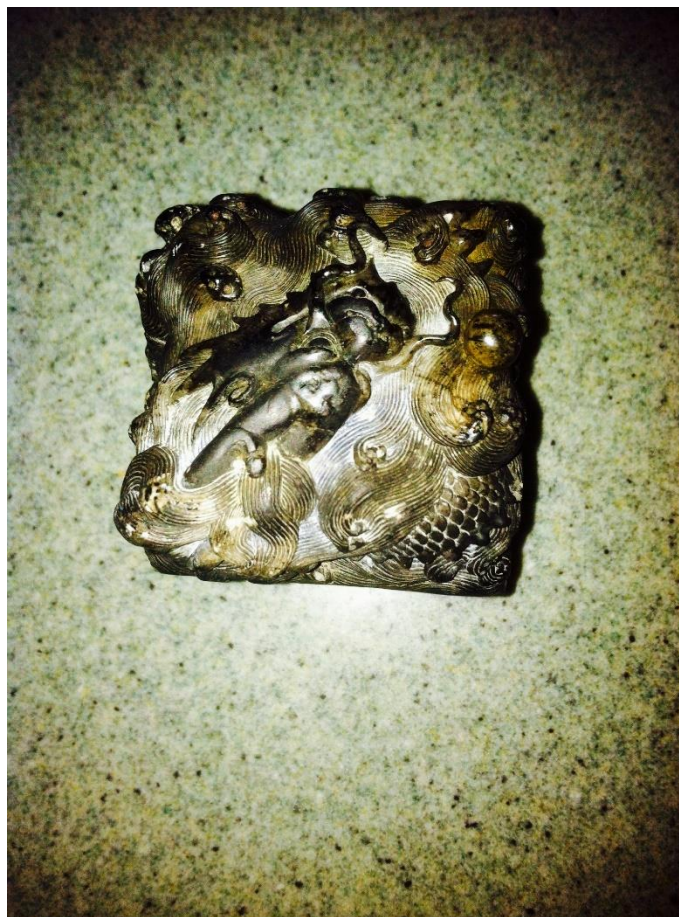




Selection of Domján Exhibitions around the World

<i>Hungary</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>China</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>USA</i>	<i>South America</i>
Budapest	Austria	Canton	Mongolia	Alabama	Nebraska	Mexico
Debrecen	Denmark	Chunking	Japan	California	New Jersey	Venezuela
Miskolc	England	Fushion		Colorado	New Mexico	
Sárospatak	France	Fuyang		Connecticut	New York	
Sátorajújhely	Germany	Hankow		Florida	North Carolina	
Szeged	Italy	Kaiteng		Georgia	Ohio	<i>Canada</i>
Székesfehérvár	Netherlands	Kiangsu		Illinois	Oregon	Ontario
Veszprém	Poland	Nanking		Indiana	Pennsylvania	
	Portugal	Peiping		Indiana	Tennessee	<i>Australia</i>
	Spain	Sanghai		Iowa	Texas	Sidney
	Sweden	Shangsha		Kansas	Vermont	Cambera
	Switzerland	Shenyang		Maine	Virginia	
	Yugoslavia	Tietsin		Massachusetts	Washington D.C,	
		Wuchang		Michigan	Wisconsin	
		Wuchow		Montana		

Domján's recognition stamp received in 1955
in China, during his visit



Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Chinese traditional art



Star of the East, 1960, 70x70 cm, Domján



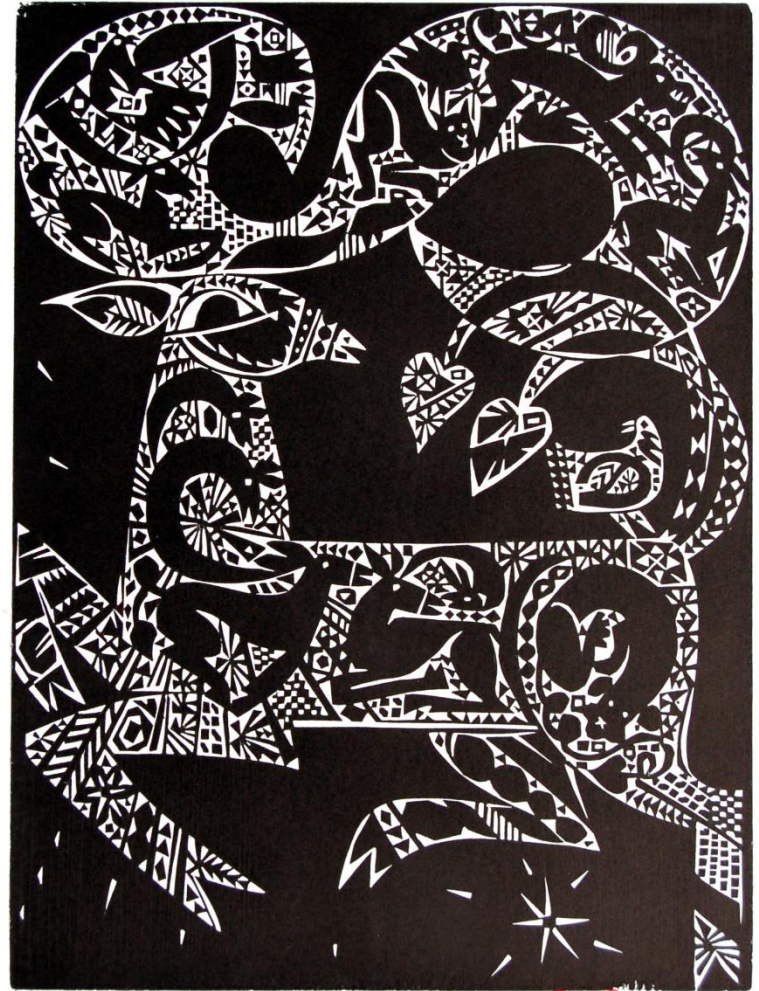
Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Chinese traditional art



Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Chinese traditional art



Domján



Wonderous Story, — Woodcut, 14/35

Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Chinese traditional art



Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Chinese traditional art



Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Hungarian folklore



Selected Domján's works illustrating influence of Hungarian folklore



Selected Domján's works illustrating contemporary design



Thank You

For more information contact:

Kalman Magyar

Email: Magyar@Magyar.org

Tel: +36-30-982-4546

Skype: 'kalmanmagyar'

WeChat: 'kalmanmagyar'