

PORTTRAITS

Happy birthday, professor Dorin Almășan



In his 75 years of life, Professor Dorin Almășan has found a way to combine art and sport

Professor Dorin Almășan turned 75 years of age. After decades devoted to physical education and writing, he is afraid of the direction in which modern sport is going. A visit to Professor Dorin Almășan's place means more than a well-lighted apartment and excellent coffee. The generous bookcase comprises books that reveal the specialty of the host: physical education. There are also volumes on interdisciplinarity, on the old sports spirit of Cluj, in which the culture of the body must combine with the culture of the soul and mind. A graduate (1956) of the Institute of Physical Culture of Bucharest, Professor Dorin Almășan turned on Saturday, 16 May, 75 years of age. As a student at IPC, he had the chance to learn from the great personalities of Romanian education. We only mention some names: Virgil Roșală, Eugeniu Bran, Ioan Kunst Ghermănescu, Leon Teodorescu, Ioan Șiclovan, Gheorghe Zîmbreșteanu, Zeno Dragomir, Florian Ulmeanu, Titus Tatu, Lucian Vasilescu, Nicolae Băiașu, Gheorghe Ghișoiu, or Nicolae Nicoară. In 1952, sports education in Romania acquired in the person of Dorin Almășan a new disciple, who graduated five years later, from the athletics/handball specialty. He went to Ocna-Mureș, where he produced a revolution. "I was the first physical education teacher in the town, at the mixed high school. I asked the girls to wear shorts for physical education classes. The mothers, the parents were angry, they told me that this had never happened before. I explained them that physical education requires certain equipment", he recalls with nostalgia. Two years later, he came to Cluj, only to discover that there were more than 300 vacant positions, which were "reserved" based on nepotism criteria. He was a sports teacher at "Bălcescu" High School, then at the Polytechnic Institute, for 30 years.

Sport in a cassock

He holds a special memory of his sports teachers. In Blaj, there were two priests, father Crețu and father Rinea. "We had a large gymnasium with mirrors all around. The teachers came to physical education classes dressed in cassocks. They held great classes", the writer recalls. And in Alba Iulia, he met another outstanding character, Emil Tămaș. "Sober, elegant, straight-backed, he rode his bicycle to school. After he died, I found out that he was a national hero, wounded in terrible fights on the front, decorated. He never spoke about his past", Dorin Almășan added. As for the direction in which modern sport is going, Professor Almășan does not think high of it. "The great sadness about high performance sport is the overestimation of money, which leads to accidents. Injured gymnasts, tennis players, football players who die on the field or during training. The body is pushed beyond the limits of human resistance, training is oversteering. If this tendency is not stopped, high performance sport, which is an assumed risk, may become a danger. Sport, like economy or politics, is at a crossroads. Physical education should become again an important component of education. I can only hope in

mankind's wisdom. Because high performance sport is anything but health!", Dorin Almășan concluded.

Dorin Almășan in a few data:

1934 - born in Aiud, Alba county

1956 - a graduate of the Institute of Physical Culture (currently ANEFS), Bucharest

1956-1959 - physical education teacher at the Mixed High School of Ocna-Mureș, Cluj county

1959-1960 - athletics trainer at the School Sports Club Cluj

1960-1962 – handball instructor and trainer at CS Constructorul Cluj

1962-1964 – physical education teacher at “Nicolae Bălcescu” High School Cluj

1964-1999 – Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor at the Polytechnic Institute Cluj-Napoca

1999 – the present – Associate Professor at the “Avram Iancu” University Cluj-Napoca

1954-1956 - handball player in a team of 11 at “Știința ICF” Bucharest, division A

1960-1965 – handball player in a team of 7 at “Știința” Cluj

1992-1999 - Director of the Romanian Olympic Academy – Cluj branch

1975-1980 – President of the Methodological-Scientific Cabinet of the Cluj County Council for Physical Education and Sport

1992 – member of the Romanian Writers' Union, Cluj branch.

He started as a journalist in the “Tribuna” journal, in 1964. He is the author of more than 500 articles and studies published in Romania and abroad (Germany, Sweden, Australia). He was a radio and TV producer (local and central channels) on cultural and specialty subjects.

He became known for his complementary contributions as an author of puppet plays, a member of the Romanian Writers' Union, the Director of the Romanian Olympic Academy, Cluj branch (1992-99), the Director of the quarterly journal of interdisciplinary studies “Palestrica Mileniului III” (published since 2000). He was awarded the “Fair Play” Prize for the promotion of Olympism, by the Romanian Olympic Academy Bucharest, 2000; he was awarded the “Constantin Kirițescu” Prize, the history-philosophy section, for the book “O istorie a exercițiilor fizice, a educației fizice și a sportului” (“A history of physical exercise, physical education and sport”) (in collaboration with G. Lupan), 2001.

He is the author of 20 volumes (poetry, prose, books for children, specialty books, monographs):

- Iuliu Hațieganu și ideea educației fizice în România (in collaboration with Albin Morariu) monograph, 1969;
- Eroi contemporani, 1971, monograph; 144.000 km de fericire, short stories, 1974;
- Colorează și ghicește, rhyming riddles, 1974;
- Cutezători ai secolului XX, 1977, monograph;
- Vara piticului, fairy tales, 1986;
- Taina cetății, fairy tales, 1990;
- Carte cu animale - poems, riddles, 1991;
- Sufletul arenei, poems and aphorisms, Mannheim, 1992;
- Mingea și prietenii săi, 1993;
- Carte cu animale, coloring book riddles, 1996;
- O singură viață, o singură moarte, short prose, 1996;
- Fără pretenții, poems, 1997;
- Elogiul prieteniei (in collaboration with V. Ludu), 1999;
- Anotimpuri cu povești, 2000;
- O istorie a exercițiilor fizice, a educației fizice și a sportului (in collaboration with G. Lupan), 2001;
- Spirale I (Cultură, civilizație, sport);

- Spirale II (Repere sentimentale), 2002;
- Homo sapiens - Homo ludens (idei, opinii, detalii), 2005;
- Sinuciderea se mai amână (poems), 2006;
- Ideea de sport în sculptură, 2007, book that was awarded one year later the “Inter-Art” Prize of the Cluj-Napoca Writers’ Union.

Ovidiu Blag and Horațiu Damian