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ON THEIR OWN

When called upon to perform the same task for the third time in a little over seven years, one cannot but go back to the first two attempts to see how they have withstood the test of time. I am pleased to note that I would change very little in my first two contributions dealing with the biography of Željka and Boris Rogić written in 1993 and 1995, after our first meetings and the start of a collaboration which has in the meantime grown into a friendship based on similar professional and generational interests and inclinations. Before I elaborate this statement.

I would like – for the benefit of those not familiar with these two texts – to recapitulate briefly the main points of the Rogićes' professional biography.

*The first text was written several years after the excellent exhibition entitled *Abitare nella periferia dell'impero* (To Live at the Periphery of an Empire, meaning the Austro-Hungarian Empire) and held at the splendid Miramare mansion in Trieste. I was encouraged by Boris Vižintin's study "The Arts in Rijeka in the Nineteenth Century" to view the Rogićes' glass-cutting effort as a continuation of the city's distinct cosmopolitan tradition.*

The mutual understanding of Željka and Boris Rogić began when they were still secondary-school students and continued throughout their law studies, which marked a significant episode in their life together, before enrolling in the Zurich School for the cultivation of glass design skills in the

*Tiffany tradition. The exhibition on which I collaborated with them for the first time was titled *Homage a Tiffany* (1993); the title of the second exhibition was *The Mystery of Tiffany* (1995). This goes to show that with these early public appearances they wanted to point quite clearly at the sources of their inspiration and their high professional standards. Working on the biographical note for the Rogićes' second exhibition, I found a quotation (in a book by Norman Potter and Douglas Jackson) that revealed to me a striking resemblance between Tiffany's and the Rogićes' personality traits and the manner in which they shaped their lives: "Louis Comfort Tiffany was a highly gifted, creative, and extremely energetic person, who did not shy away from radical change on his path in life."*

If such a quotation in the Rogićes' catalogue published in 1995 might have appeared as a sign of benevolence coming from a friend, their present exhibition fully justifies the advance signs recognized not only by myself but also by other critics who wrote about their work, ranging from the late Josip Depolo to Fedā Vukić.

The thoroughness with which they studied and absorbed Tiffany's technology as well as his complex iconography and symbolism was unmistakable evidence of their desire to adopt and transform these postulates while working in the contemporary Postmodernist context. With their deep knowledge and understanding of Tiffany's wide ranging entrepreneurial spirit, the Rogićes have remained open, joyfully and in full seriousness, to the challenges of commissions to decorate numerous public and private spaces, seeking to prove that there exist, here and now, opportunities for original works of art made in the venerable tradition of glass making, cutting and design.

