

The museums of Shusha

Shusha was also distinguished by the large number of museums among the cities of Azerbaijan. On August 10, 1977, by the decision of the Council of the Ministers of the USSR, the historical part of Shusha was declared a «Historical Architectural Reserve».

The Green Pharmacy Museum in Shusha was one of the most unique museums in the former Soviet Union. In the museum, samples of the medicinal plants growing in Shusha were neatly collected in baskets, and information about these plants was reflected on the special boards on the wall. In another corner of the museum, there are ancient pharmaceuticals of the XVIII-XIX centuries, rose pots, copper cloths, stone teapots, etc. was demonstrated.

Among the museum's exhibits, was a portrait of Karim bey Mehmandarov, a research scientist who graduated from the St. Petersburg Medical-Surgical Academy in 1877, worked as a doctor at the St. Petersburg Clinical Military Hospital, and returned to Shusha in 1883 to continue his medical career. The numerous books on medical medicine were displayed in the museum.

In 1980, at the initiative of the Shusha State Historical and Architectural Reserve and with the help of the people of Shusha, the first "Open Museum" was established in the Republic due to the nature of the "Ganja Gate" in the protection zone.

The ancient objects from our historical past were displayed here. The exhibits of the museum consisted of decorative stones with national patterns, inscriptions carved from various products, column stairs and other beautiful architectural samples.



Carpet museum. (The house of Mehmandarovs)

The appearance of the museum house of Shusha, the founder of Azerbaijani professional music Uzeyir bey Hajibeyov, attracted special attention. Some elements of the Azerbaijani national-architectural art were used with great pleasure when creating U.Hajibeyov's house museum. The museum is



House museum of Uzeyir Hajibeyov

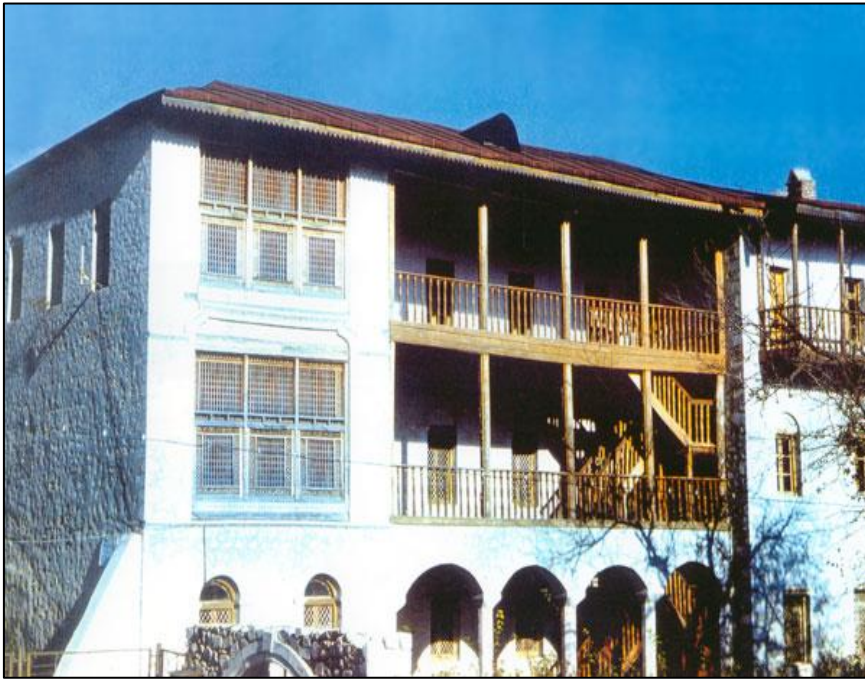
surrounded by marble. The five-room museum preserves rich materials from the first years of U.Hajibeyov's creative work, his personal belongings, photos of his relatives and family members, as well as tape recordings of the great artist. U.Hajibeyov's state awards, orders and medals, clothes were also among the exhibits on display.

One of the museums established in Shusha was the Carpet Museum. This museum was organized in the guesthouse of Mehmandarovs, built in 1849 by the famous architect Karbalai Safikhan Garabaghi. In the middle of the ceiling of the museum is engraved a flower bed, and although it was painted a century and a half ago, it has not lost its beautiful ornaments. Karabakh carpets, which were once awarded medals at art exhibitions in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg and Moscow, were the main exhibits of the carpet museum in 1970-1980. The Carpet Museum in Shusha presents not only old carpets, but also khurjuns (a saddle bag), saki (a large carpet bag for storing and transporting carpets and pastels), saddle covers, spinning wheels, combs, comb beaters (in carpet weaving), a spindle, a cob (yarn wound on a spindle or removed from a spindle), a ball of coiled, twisted threads, wool, etc., scissors and other items of centuries ago.

The Art Gallery, opened in Shusha in 1981, was located in the city's Ojaggular neighborhood. Built in 1750, it consisted of three floors, a magnificent ten-room building belonging to the merchant Abbasgulu aga Zohrabbeyov, which preserved its beauty and history. Rovshan Bayramov, a member of the USSR Union of Artists, who did a lot to enrich the museum with exhibits, headed the Art Gallery of Shusha. The art gallery featured over 500 paintings. Along

with the works of the world's most skilled brush masters, the works of our republic, as well as local artists, found their address here.

The works of the artists of Shusha- Rovshan Bayramov, Tofiq Zeynalov, Valeh Mammadov and others were of great interest in the museum. Even works by local artists were exhibited in Moscow in 1985-1986. These works dedicated to the past of Shusha, attracted more attention in the Gallery and gave a clear picture of ancient Shusha. The works of S.Bahlulzade, S.Salamzade, N.Abdurrahmanov, M.Rahmanzade and other prominent artists also constituted valuable exhibits



Art Gallery. (The house of Zohrabbeyovs)

of the Art Gallery. The gallery also displayed a variety of household items, stoneware and copperware. Along with all this, a special corner dedicated to Uzeyir Hajibeyov was created in the Art Gallery.

The creation of the unforgettable

house museum of the great artist Bulbul is a product of the mentioned period. Reminiscent of a village house, this courtyard once again demonstrated that the house where Bulbul lived was preserved in its natural state.

The numerous exhibits, items about the life of the great artist, photographs, tape recordings, albums and other valuable personal belongings, were displayed on the shelves, chairs, cabinets and shelves in the rooms.

One of the most visited places in Shusha was the Museum of History and Local Lore. The rich exhibits of the Museum of History and Local Lore were collected in a building which built in the XVIII century. The exposition of the museum acquainted the spectators with the centuries-old history of the Azerbaijani people. In the 1970s, thousands of ancient and modern exhibits were collected at the Shusha History Museum at the expense of state-funded items purchased from the local population. The hall, which reflects the ancient history of Karabakh, displayed archeological

materials, samples of material culture, household items, ancient coins, photographs and other auxiliary materials obtained because of excavations in various regions, villages and in Shusha itself. In the other hall, materials dedicated to the medieval period of Karabakh were collected. Among the items on display were tools, weapons, pottery, and handicrafts from that period. The museum also kept documents on the activities of prominent figures of Karabakh, manuscripts of figures of science, literature and art, materials related to state figures. Other halls of the museum displayed materials from the XIX-XX centuries. The museum also kept materials on the flora and fauna of Shusha, underground and surface natural resources.



House museum of Bulbul (after the occupation)

When Armenian vandals captured Shusha on May 8, 1992, the museums were looted and destroyed. Armenian vandals in Shusha destroyed 464 historical monuments and museums, more than 40,000 museum exhibits, more than 100 archeological monuments, 6 state theaters and concert studios. The collapse of the city did not allow the

evacuation of exhibits in its museums. Employees were able to remove a small part of the museum exhibits from the city.

After the liberation of Shusha from the clutches of the enemy on November 8, 2020, the city began to be cleared of debris. Concrete steps are being taken to restore museums that existed before the occupation. On August 29, 2021, the inauguration of the house-museum of People's Artist Bulbul, who has provided great services to the development of Azerbaijan's music culture, took place after the restoration. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended the inauguration ceremony.

Other museums will be restored one after another. Every visitor to Shusha will see that his former face has been restored. Shusha museums will reopen their doors to visitors.