

Sinfo

September-October

The Best from Slovenia

IN FOCUS

Dream out loud

**I FEEL
SLOVENIA**



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SLOVENIA**

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September-October 2019

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IN THE COMPANY OF THE BEST

It has become a tradition for our September issue to draw attention to topics related to Slovenian literature and themes associated with the Slovenia's foreign policy. We are presenting also art, cultural heritage, successful projects in science and business, tourism, cuisine, and more. When a successful project or an interesting person captures our attention, we always feel an urge to share the story with you.

As usual, you will find the main topics coupled with other interesting stories and attractions. The Pomurje region boasts the Expano exhibition pavilion, a successful project to promote the region. Soon there will be a film festival, the exhibition on Plečnik's Pavilion in Brioni has been concluded, and this issue also presents the Creative Forum, and Jurij Souček, an actor whose remarkable voice and gift for narration enchanted children with a world of fairy tales.

Very importantly, the University of Ljubljana is also marking its centenary this year. More attention has been devoted to this topic because it tells a story that Slovenians can genuinely be proud of. Throughout its years of existence, the University of Ljubljana has been deeply marked by Slovene studies present at universities abroad.

All the stories and challenges presented here prove that Slovenians always have been, are, and certainly will remain in the company of the best. Great things are done by people who think great thoughts and then go out into the world to make their dreams come true.

Tanja Glogovčan

Tanja Glogovčan, Executive Editor

8 2022 FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR
A business and cultural opportunity for Slovenia

12 ONE LITERATURE, MANY NARRATIVES
Three excellent Slovenian female authors

16 10 YEARS OF THE TRADUKI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK AND THE SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY
They are both major pillars in the preservation of Slovenian literature

20 BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR ILLUSTRATORS EXHIBITION
Meet six top Slovenian illustrators

32 CENTENARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
In the company of the top three percent in the world

38 ON THE OCCASION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA
Slovene at foreign universities

48 SLOVENIAN TEAM WINS THE DESIGN/BUILD/FLY INTERNATIONAL AIRCRAFT COMPETITION IN THE US
A team of mechanical engineering students developed the world's best unmanned aircraft

72 AN UPSCALE GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE IS MORE THAN JUST EXCELLENT CUISINE
The need for young staff in the hospitality industry

76 22ND FESTIVAL OF SLOVENIAN FILM
The Pick of Slovenian Film Creativity

84 CREATIVE FORUM LJUBLJANA
Uniting creative capital beyond borders

88 AMAZING KAYAKING
Slovene rivers and lakes attract the world's best kayakers



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DREAM OUT LOUD

The only limits are the limits of our imagination. Dream up the kind of world you want to live in. Dream out loud. At high volume. That's what we do for a living.

(U2)

2022 FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR

A business and cultural opportunity for Slovenia

ANJA KOVAČ, RENATA ZAMIDA
PHOTO: THE SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY ARCHIVES



The fair's audience is interested in the history of the country and its current events, the country as a tourist destination, as well as the economic situation in the country and possibilities for connections and cooperation.

With almost 300,000 visitors, 7,500 exhibitors from 109 countries, 4,000 events and 10,000 journalists, the Frankfurt Book Fair is the world's largest such event. Since 1988, the fair has designated one country (or region) as an honorary guest. The always long list of candidates shows the great desirability of the title, which is why we are particularly proud that Slovenia has managed to become one of the holders. It will be given this honour in 2022, and the Slovenian Book Agency will bear the main responsibility for the activities related to this.

The honorary guest country has the opportunity to present itself to its full advantage. The programme is part of the efforts of the Frankfurt Book Fair to provide support for the publishing industry all over the world. More specifically, many doors open for the publishers, authors and cultural institutions from the honorary guest country when this title is held – international networking becomes more intensive, authors gain better recognisability, and the number of translations into foreign languages rises greatly even before the honorary residency, and also continues afterwards. As much as 70% of all media attention during the fair is dedicated to the honorary guest country.

Moreover, the honorary guest country is the centre of attention for an entire year, not just those five days in October when the fair is held, but from the handover of the title at the end of the previous fair to the end of the fair in the year of its honorary participation.

Slovenia will thus have the opportunity to present itself from October 2021 to October 2022, which goes very well with the Slovenian presidency of the EU in the second half of 2021.

THE FOCUS IS NOT JUST ON LITERATURE

Due to the great media coverage of the honorary guest, the information that is released reaches not only the expert public and interested readers, but also the general public, who, due to the

long tradition of the title, is already familiar with the concept, and looks forward every year to the presentation of the current honorary guest country. The public is also interested in the history of the country, current events, the country as a tourist destination, its economic situation and the possibility of making connections. After the selection procedure, which usually lasts for several years, the honorary guest countries are finally confirmed by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is great recognition for a nation in all respects, and a good starting point to establish various connections, not only in the fields of literature and culture.

WHAT POSITIVE EFFECTS HAVE THE PREVIOUS HONORARY GUEST COUNTRIES SEEN?

Georgia, a country that can be compared to Slovenia in terms of recognition, carried out as many as 700 events, held 16 important exhibitions throughout Germany, and welcomed 157 new translations of Georgian books into German in one year. Between 2010 and 2014, Iceland gained 200 new translations, and the Netherlands made as many as 400 new translations in its year of honorary participation (2016). Every year, as part of the honorary participation, there are many theatre and dance productions, visual arts exhibitions, film screenings, presentations of fashion and industrial design and much more. Honorary participation in Frankfurt has represented a breakthrough to the world's literary and cultural scene for many countries.

Among the past honorary guest countries, quite a few of them have used this title not just to promote their literature and culture, but to promote the country as a whole.

These are countries whose economic and cultural ties with Germany were only emerging at the time of their participation, e.g., Iceland (2011), New Zealand (2012), Brazil (2013), Finland (2014), and Georgia (2018).

Afterwards, these countries saw many positive effects in areas outside culture:

- increased tourist interest (Iceland registered a 300% increase in interest, and New Zealand a 50% increase in interest, with 15% more German tourists);
- impact on the economy and diplomatic contacts (New Zealand has noticed increased co-operation between pharmaceutical and IT companies, and closer diplomatic contacts);

- greater recognisability of the country (New Zealand received about 9,000 media mentions, Finland 8,000, Iceland and Brazil about 7,000).

MANY OPPORTUNITIES ARE AWAITING SLOVENIA

Slovenia already has traditionally good cultural contacts with Germany. After all, German is immediately after the languages of the former Yugoslavia when it comes to the number of translations of Slovene works – but such contacts are primarily about historical connections. Moreover, the recognisability of Slovenia as a country in the German-speaking area is currently smaller than we would like it to be.

By gaining the title of honorary guest, Slovenia may expect an improvement in the recognisability of Slovenian literature and culture abroad, not only in Germany, and also a continuous up-

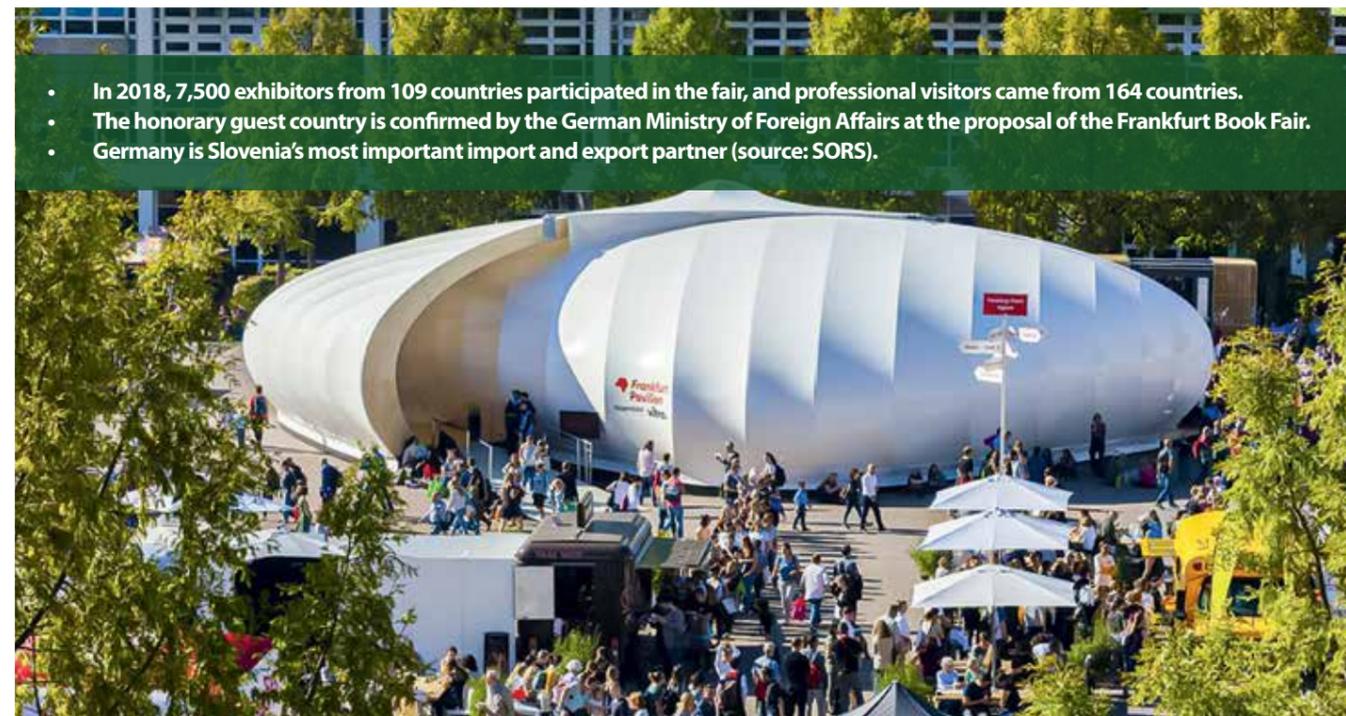
grading of this recognisability, the building of contacts and networks among Slovenian and foreign publishers, the development of domestic personnel in the field of copyright marketing to foreign countries, and the promotion of the interest of translators in translating from Slovene into foreign languages.

The co-operation between Slovenia and Germany is also important to the economy, since Germany is the most important of Slovenia's partners in the trade of goods, and this role needs to be maintained and further strengthened.

Therefore, the goals of Slovenia include, among others, the use of the title of honorary guest country as a means of soft diplomacy, and the building of new strategic partnerships and bilateral cooperation in the cultural, economic and tourism sectors, not only with Germany, but with the rest of the world.

Therefore, the goals of Slovenia include, among others, the use of the title of honorary guest country as a means of soft diplomacy, and the building of new strategic partnerships and bilateral cooperation in the cultural, economic and tourism sectors, not only with Germany, but with the rest of the world.

The Slovenian Book Agency has been conducting preparatory activities for several years: through a translation seminar for translators from Slovene to foreign languages, study tours for foreign publishers in Slovenia, national presentations at book fairs around the world and financial support for the translation of Slovenian literature and the mobility of Slovenian authors, the Agency has in recent years created a good foundation for the activities planned for 2022. Now there are other sectors that need to get actively involved in the preparations, and to fully utilise the title of the honorary guest country at the Frankfurt Book Fair.



- In 2018, 7,500 exhibitors from 109 countries participated in the fair, and professional visitors came from 164 countries.
- The honorary guest country is confirmed by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the proposal of the Frankfurt Book Fair.
- Germany is Slovenia's most important import and export partner (source: SORS).



ONE LITERATURE, MANY NARRATIVES

Three excellent Slovenian female authors

MANCA G. RENKO

The Slovenians like to boast about the variety of their country's geography: from the plains to the mountains, from the lakes to the sea. This, of course, is true. But it is not only the landscape that is varied, as the same also holds true for the arts.



Photo: Henrik Sorensen-GettyImages/GulliverFilm&Foto

A quick glance at contemporary female authors shows that their works belong to several genres – poetry, novels, essays – and feature a range of dynamics in their content and narrative, which easily address a great variety of readers.

Here we present three female authors, who probably have some common threads among them, yet whose literature is completely different.

Anja Golob is one of the most recognized Slovenian poets and her work has won many awards. However, poetry is not the only tool she uses to co-shape the world around her; she is also active as an independent publisher who endeavours to produce high-quality books that would otherwise not be available to readers in Slovenia, and as a pointed and committed columnist and commentator on modernity, always maintaining a critical stance and striving to give voice to the voiceless. Her poetry is powerful and lucid. The writer Anja Mugerli is quieter and milder, and her prose, most notably the novel *Winory (Spovin)*, flows lightly and in an everyday manner. The novel, which can be read in a single day, takes readers along the hills of Goriška Brda in western Slovenia, acquainting them with the flows of memory and family stories. Her book introduces unfamiliar things, while still making it possible for the reader to identify with them. Nataša Kramberger, one of the best essayists of her generation, was one of the last feature writers before that form completely disappeared from newspapers. In her latest work, *Commensurate Acres (Primerljivi hektarji)*, she has changed her narrative. As an autobiographical story, it tells of how she inherited a farm and became a professional farmer, moving from Berlin and Milan to the Slovenian countryside, and how she turned from a writer enjoying life in big cities into someone fighting for the survival both of herself and her many plants and animals.



Photo: Miloš Milošević

ANJA GOLOB (born 1976)

Anja Golob has published four books of poetry and was twice awarded the Jenko Award for best Slovene poetry collection (2014 and 2016). She works as poet, writer and translator. In 2013 she co-founded a small publishing house VigeVageKnjige, where she is now chief editor. It specializes in publishing Slovene translations of graphic novels for both children and adults. She lives in Maribor and Brussels.

that i am your boy

*that i am not the shadow of the dog you take for walks caress
gently that sleeps in your bed that sees you naked that is close to
you close enough for a bite that sees you cry it isn't enough i reject
it i don't want to neither be a shadow nor a bitch*

*that i am your boy that i grow in your presence slowly into a man to
see you up close when you cry when you bite when you sit when i sit
when we sit to make you tea when you're sick to see the coy
passion in your eyes when you're looking at me*

*to place my naked willing body at your disposal do it do
what you will let me put down a gun on the table before me a knife a
bullet a feather a whip a lipstick a garter to motion just do it to lie
down on the floor before you do it i whisper go on do it*

*to be the one you whip the shadow that falls on the barren
bed in late afternoon make me have it all and more than
what you want make me bear it make me what I shall be before
i vanish into what i'm becoming for you an animal a shadow a boy*

From the poetry collection *Da ne da ne bo več prišla ...* (self-published, 2019)
Translated from Slovenian by Tadeja Sprunk for the Reading Balkans project
(<http://www.readingbalkans.eu/>)



Photo: Miloš Milošević

ANJA MUGERLI (born 1984)

Anja Mugerli is a writer and language editor. Her first book, a short story collection entitled *The Green Armchair (Zeleni fotelj)*, was published in 2015 and her first novel *Winory (Spovin)* in 2017. She also writes plays, two of which won prizes in the drama section of the Castello di Duino international competition in Italy. She lives in Nova Gorica.

The vineyard beneath the house has been standing for three generations. I stroll among the vines, inspecting them carefully. I rub my palm against the coarse surface of a vine shoot, which calls to mind an old man's skin. The vineyard terraces slope down into the valley. Here is where Merlot grows. My vineyards roll on to the other side of the road, toward the east. What grows there is Rebula and Cabernet Sauvignon. The house had been built by my Nonno with his bare hands – I know that story by heart. When I was born, my father added another storey, thus earning the fame of a snob and wastrel, but today the house cannot hold a candle to the brand-new buildings which have mushroomed all over the nearby hills over the last few years. It calls for all kinds of repair, the windows are draughty, and the paint is peeling off the façade in places, drawing greyish maps on the white walls. During our geography lesson, Arna dubbed one of them America and another Australia.

From the novel *Winory* (Litera, 2017)
Translated from Slovenian by Nada Grošelj



Photo: Miloš Milošević

NATAŠA KRAMBERGER (born 1983)

Nataša Kramberger is a writer, a farmer and a journalist. Her first novel *Heaven in a Blackberry Bush* (2007) won the EU Prize for Literature and was among the finalists for novel of the year in Slovenia. She is also the author of *Without Walls: a Newspaper Tale of Berlin and Other Places* 2004-2014. Her latest work, *Commensurate Acres* (2017), is about her experiences as a young farmer. She lives between her home village of Jurovski Dol in Slovenia and Berlin, where she runs the Slovenian-German cultural society Periskop.

*I sit on my wheelbarrow at the field's edge, waiting to see what's up. When it finally comes close, it stops and rolls down the passenger-side window. Hands on the wheel, he calls out while leaning slightly in my direction:
"Howdy, hello there!"
I smile and nod.
"On vacation, are we?"
I look around the sacks, the wheelbarrow and the muddy boots, trying to come up with an answer.
"Yeah ..."
"Feels good every now and then, huh?"
I ought to say something.
He speaks some more instead, yelling from behind the wheel:
"There's no place like home, eh!"
There.
"Am I right?"
He leans over the passenger seat, looking me in the eye through the open window.
"You're right, you're absolutely right."
"Of course I am! Good to see you in these here parts!"
I get up from the wheelbarrow and walk over. So we don't have to yell.
"As long as you got the time!"
It's no use. He's still yelling.
"You don't write for them newspapers no more, huh?"
"I do, I still do, just not very often."
"Got axed, did we?"
"Eh ..."
"Well, can't have it all. Huh?"
Well put.
"I mostly write books now."
"Books!"
Oh my. Did I really just say that?
"Books, yes."
He nods like a pundit:
"As long as you can afford it!"*

From *Commensurate Acres* (LUD Literatura, 2017)
Translated from Slovenian by Jeremi Slak

10 YEARS OF THE TRADUKI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK AND THE SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY

They are both major pillars in the preservation of Slovenian literature

SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY AND ANDREJ LOVŠIN



Traduki stage at the Leipzig Book Fair.
Photo: Tobias Bohm

In 2009, the co-operation started between the Slovenian Book Agency, which was established shortly before that by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, and the newly-established Traduki international network, which was founded a year earlier on the initiative of the private German foundation S. Fischer Stiftung, and five other institutions from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.

Slovenian Book Agency was the first institution from South East Europe to become a member of this network. After countless successful literary projects and more than 1,000 supported translations, both organisations are celebrating their 10th anniversary of operations and planning new collaborations.

TRADUKI CONNECTS THE GERMAN-SPEAKING AREA WITH SOUTH EAST EUROPE

Traduki is the European network for literature and books that supports translations of modern literature between South East Europe and the German-speaking region, which consists of: Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, Germany, Romania, North Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia, and Switzerland. This programme not only co-finance translations, but also supports residencies and work scholarships for writers and translators, as well as presenting literature from South East Europe at international book fairs.

A decade ago, when the literature of South East Europe was still relatively unknown in the German-speaking area, the S. Fischer Stiftung foundation decided to co-finance the costs of translation and copyright, both from German to the languages of South East Europe, and vice versa. In addition to that, the foundation also co-finance translations between the languages of South East Europe. The network's annual budget for translations, performances

at fairs, support for regional literary festivals and writers' residencies amounts to EUR 600,000, and it supports up to a hundred projects. With such help, as many as 878 books have so far been published.

The first criterion of the Traduki network (whose name means translation in Esperanto) is always the quality of the books; their priority is literature (including children's and young adults), and especially younger, as yet untranslated authors who need more support at the start of their careers.

In addition to this emphasis on quality literature, the network also dedicates part of its work to political and socially critical topics. More specifically, Traduki's role is political since it enables the establishment and maintenance of relationships between nations that were not so long ago in conflict.

It uses literature to mediate the problematic issues of this part of Europe to the German-speaking area, while fostering a better understanding of the region.

THE SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY PROMOTES SLOVENIAN LITERATURE ABROAD

Traduki has a partner organisation in every one of the participating countries (apart from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo), which also partly co-finances the network. In Slovenia, this is the Slovenian Book Agency, which contributes EUR 15,000 to the network on an annual basis. With direct financial support and various other activities, Slovenian Book Agency supports all segments of the Slovenian book market: publishers and their catalogues of original Slovenian authors and translations from foreign languages, producers of literary and other reading culture events, authors, translators, and literary critics. With projects such as Growing Up with a Book and A Book's Journey, it also addresses the development of reading culture among young people.

An important area of Slovenian Book Agency's operations is the promotion of Slovenian literature abroad: Slovenian Book Agency organises national presentations at the most renowned book fairs in the world, among which are the Frankfurt, Vienna and Leipzig Book Fairs, as well as the Bologna Children's Book Fair in Italy.

Besides these, it has participated in fairs in Paris, Belgrade, New Delhi, Beijing, Moscow, and many others. Since quality translations from Slovene to foreign languages are crucial for the promotion of Slovenian literature abroad, Slovenian Book Agency has been organising a translation seminar since 2010, which offers translators from Slovene to foreign languages an insight into the current state of contemporary Slovenian literature, and the possibility of working with Slovenian authors, critics, publishers, lecturers, and other actors in the field of books.

Slovenian Book Agency also organises study tours where, over a few of rather intense days, they present key literary events and locations

to foreign publishers and journalists. They also present Slovenia as a country with exceptional cultural, historical, culinary, and other heritage, which is still completely unknown by many. To form a complete circle in the promotion of Slovene literature abroad, Slovenian Book Agency provides financial support for the translation of Slovene literary works into foreign languages with the possibility of covering the travel costs of Slovenian authors who are travelling abroad.

Activities in the field of international co-operation have intensified in recent years, with two agreements for Slovenia's honorary participation at international book fairs being signed in 2018, namely at the Bologna Children's Book Fair (2021), and at the Frankfurt Book Fair, world's largest trade fair for books (2022).

And what does an example of good cooperation practice look like? A Slovenian author may write his or her new book during a stay at one of Traduki's residences, and the Slovenian Book Agency supports its publication in the original Slovene, and subsequently its translation. The translation is done by a translator who has participated in the Slovenian Book Agency Translation Seminar. The Slovene original may be represented by the author at a literary event, which is financially supported by Slovenian Book Agency. When a book is translated, for example, into German, the author will present the book on the Traduki stage at the Leipzig Book Fair, or visit one of the German-speaking countries. A book review may be written by a journalist who has been a participant in Slovenian Book Agency's study tour and knows Slovenia and its literary context well. With a lot of work and a little luck, the book finds its way to readers.

Traduki and the Slovenian Book Agency have a similar mission: to support high quality publishers, authors, translators and other actors in the field of literature,

and to help them establish international contacts.

At the most basic level, both organisations support content and activities that contribute to a better understanding both within as well as between nations. Perhaps the example given above

sounds complicated, but it shows clearly how the operation of the Slovenian Book Agency and the Traduki network are intertwined, and that they are indispensable for maintaining and developing quality literature in Slovenia and the thirteen other countries in the network. May the first ten years of their co-operation be just the beginning, and may the Traduki network expand in the next ten years to new partner countries.



Traduki team
Photo: Nelly Rodriguez



BOLOGNA CHILDREN'S BOOK FAIR ILLUSTRATORS EXHIBITION

Meet six top Slovenian illustrators

SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY



The Bologna Children's Book Fair is the world's most important fair in the field of children's and youth literature and illustration. Photo: Bologna Children's Book Fair archives

Slovenia is a country with a population of two million. Despite its small size, it has a very diverse and rich book market. Around 4,000 titles are published in Slovenia every year, 900 of which are children's books. Such numbers place Slovenia among the world's leaders in the number of books published per capita!

Slovenia has a long and rich tradition of children's and young adult literature. The first collection of children's books in Slovene, *Čebelica* (Little Bee), was published over sixty years ago and is still being added to today. The classical school of Slovenian book illustration, which generations of children were brought up with, also proved to be a springboard for a new generation of bold, innovative, and recognisable illustrators.

The quality of Slovenian illustration is recognised all over the world. Books embellished with images by Slovenian illustrators have been published in countries and languages around the globe, including Argentina, the United States, Japan, France, Germany, Austria, China, and more.

Slovenia has been chosen as the guest of honour country at the Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2021.

Meet six top illustrators that have in recent years been included in the prestigious curated Illustrators Exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, chosen by experts from among thousands of illustrators from all over the world!

ANA ZAVADLAV



Photo: Studio Pavšič

Ana Zavadlav (1974) graduated in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana, where she also completed her specialisation in graphic design. In 1999 she attended a course at the graphics department of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in the United States, and in 2002 spent some creative time at the Cité d'Art in Paris. Since 2003 she has been mostly devoting her time to illustrating books for children and young adults. She has received numerous domestic prizes for her work, including the Prešeren Award for Students (1993) and the University Prešeren Award (1994).

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 2019 were from the book: *Čriček in temačni občutek*, translation of *De genezing van de krekel* (The Cricket and his dark feeling) by Toon Tellegen, first published in Slovene by Mladinska Knjiga, 2017.

ANDREJA PEKLAR



Photo: Personal archives



Andreja Pekljar (1962) is a Slovenian painter, illustrator and children's book author. She is a freelance artist who mostly illustrates children's books. Her illustrations have enlivened numerous picture books as well as schoolbooks and magazines for children and young adults. She has held a number of independent exhibitions of her illustrations, and also participates at various important internationally selected exhibitions of illustration abroad. Some of her books have been included in the White Ravens recommendations list prepared by the International Youth Library in Munich. She has received many awards and prizes for her work in both Slovenia and beyond.

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 2018 were from her book: *Luna in jaz* (The Moon and I), originally published by Sodobnost International in 2019.

MAJA KASTELIC



Photo: Personal archives

Maja Kastelic (1981) is an illustrator and author of the award-winning picture book *Deček in Hiša* (A Boy and a House). She has received a range of prizes and awards for her work in illustration (The Hinko Smrekar Acknowledgment 2012, the Hinko Smrekar Plaque 2014, the Levstik Award 2015, the Kristina Brenk Award 2015, the IBBY Honour List 2016). Her books were included in the White Ravens catalogue in Munich, as well. Her illustrations have been selected for quite a few exhibitions, and translations of her books have so far been published in Italy, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Mexico, China, Bulgaria, South Korea, Spain, Canada, the US and the UK. Maja collaborates with some of the most prestigious publishers in Slovenia and abroad.

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 2015 were from her book: *Deček in Hiša* (A Boy and a House), originally published by Mladinska Knjiga, 2015.



PETER ŠKERL



Photo: Personal archives

Peter Škerl (1973) graduated in graphic design and illustration, and has since created an extensive opus in illustration. With his flair for illustrating literary content he uses a variety of artistic techniques in different combinations to develop a unique form of artistic expression. Peter also co-created theatrical plays and puppet shows, at first as an amateur actor, later as a designer of artistic concepts. An illustrator for almost twenty-five years, he has received several awards, including, in 2012, Slovenia's most prestigious prize for illustration, the Hinko Smrekar Award, for his illustrations in the book *Močvirniki* (Marshlanders).

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 2014 were from the book: *Močvirniki* (Marshlanders), text by Barbara Simoniti, originally published by Mladinska Knjiga, 2012.

ALENKA SOTTLER



Photo: Personal archives

Alenka Sottler (1958) started off by informally training in drawing and sculpture at her father's studio before going on to graduate in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana. She has worked as a freelance illustrator for some of the best Slovenian and foreign publishers and magazines, and illustrated over fifty books. Among other awards, she has received two recognitions of merit at the 3X3 International Illustration Show, the Prešeren Fund Award, a nomination for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, two nominations for the Hans Christian Andersen Award, and was awarded a gold medal at the 2016 Annual Exhibition of the Society of Illustrators in New York, of which she is also a member. She lives and works in Ljubljana as a freelance illustrator.

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 2008 were from the book: *Tri pesnitve* (Three Poems), text by Andrej Brvar, originally published by Litera, 2007.

LILA PRAP



Photo: Personal archives

Lila Prap (1955) is an award-winning Slovenian writer and illustrator. After completing her studies in architecture in Ljubljana she worked for a while in architectural and urban planning, taught subjects related to architecture and civil engineering, and also as a graphic designer at Gorenje. She is now a freelance artist and works in furnishing, decorating, and graphic design, as a cartoonist, and as a writer and illustrator of books for children. Her picture books are extremely popular far beyond Slovenia. An animated film was made in Japan based on her book *Zakaj?* (*Why?*), and the book itself was also included in school curricula in Germany, France and Australia. The recently published *Zmajji?!* (*Dragons?!*) is her seventeenth picture book.

Illustrations exhibited in Bologna in 1998 and 2000 were from her books: *Živalske uspavanke* (*Animal Lullabies*), *Zakaj?* (*Why?*), both originally published by Mladinska Knjiga, 2000 and 2002.



EXPANO AND ART

The Pomurje Region at your fingertips

HELGA LUKAČ
PHOTO: PERSONAL ARCHIVES



On my grandfather's footsteps (*Po stopinjah mojega deda*) is the title of the photographic exhibition by Mankica Kranjec, who has woven invisible threads of connection with her grandfather through photography, capturing ephemeral images and securing them a place in our memory.
Photo: Mankica Kranjec

Expano was the Slovenian pavilion at the Expo in Milan in 2015. Now is designed to bring Pomurje (Pomurje Region), to your fingertips, introducing the region, its tourist offer, business opportunities and key attractions. It is the gateway for visitors to the region, through as we wish to impress them with our traditions, beauty of the landscape and peaceful life by the River Mura. We encourage visitors to further explore Pomurje through agritourism and by visiting thermal spa resorts, discovering wine-growing hills and the Pannonian beauty of our cities and towns, as well as to taste our wines and cuisine. Expano is thus a promoter of tourism in Pomurje. Visitors from far and wide can experience the region and help us develop new contents, so that Pomurje may today and tomorrow offer inspiring, unforgettable and unique experiences.

As a regional promotion centre, Expano co-creates, connects and makes known the best that Pomurje has to offer, which visitors can explore with the use of modern technologies, and gives voice to the varied arts and artists from this region.

They are inspired by the endless Pannonian landscapes, rolling hills, plentiful vineyards, fields and forests, the misty River Mura and the many paths among the fields. In addition to the permanent interactive exhibition, where visitors can learn about visual art, music and literature, Expano also hosts pop-up exhibitions. As the world and times are changing, so do our exhibitions: They are temporary, and set in a space that provides creative challenges and freedom to curators in their designs and artistic expressions.

Celebrating the centenary of the unification of Prekmurje with the rest of the nation, the awareness of one's identity is now even more prominent, taking on a much more significant role in the thoughts and actions of all of us who are closely connected with this region. The River Mura, which once divided and separated the Prekmurje people from the rest of Slovenia, is now a cohesive force, joining us all in Pomurje. This very environment, its natural gifts and historic facts, created a space for various artistic expressions and awakened in its people the artistic soul that we all carry hidden inside.

ON MY GRANDFATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Pomurje, or more exactly the town of Ljutomer, was the site of the first Slovenian film, celebrated today with the Grossman Fantastic

Film and Wine Festival, which is named after the first Slovenian film-maker Karol Grossman. This rich art heritage is also included in the interactive experience park, where films and renowned local painters are presented in the *Panoart glej* section. The *Panoart poslušaj* section of Expano is a great ceramic pot, presenting musical artists of various genres, as well as literature.

The latter is closely connected with the photographic exhibition of Mankica Kranjec, granddaughter of Miško Kranjec. Miško Kranjec was a writer from Prekmurje who left a significant mark on Slovenian literature, and a three-time recipient of the Prešeren Prize. He wrote more than fifty novels and stories describing his homeland.

On my grandfather's footsteps (*Po stopinjah mojega deda*) is the title of the photographic exhibition by Mankica Kranjec, who has woven invisible threads of connection with her grandfather through photography, capturing ephemeral images and securing them a place in our memory. The exhibition, starting its journey in Expano, is a priceless witness to a time about to slip away, but which is nevertheless a part of us and our soul – the soul of the Pannonian people. It reveals images from the past and gives witness to the transient nature of a particular time and space. The



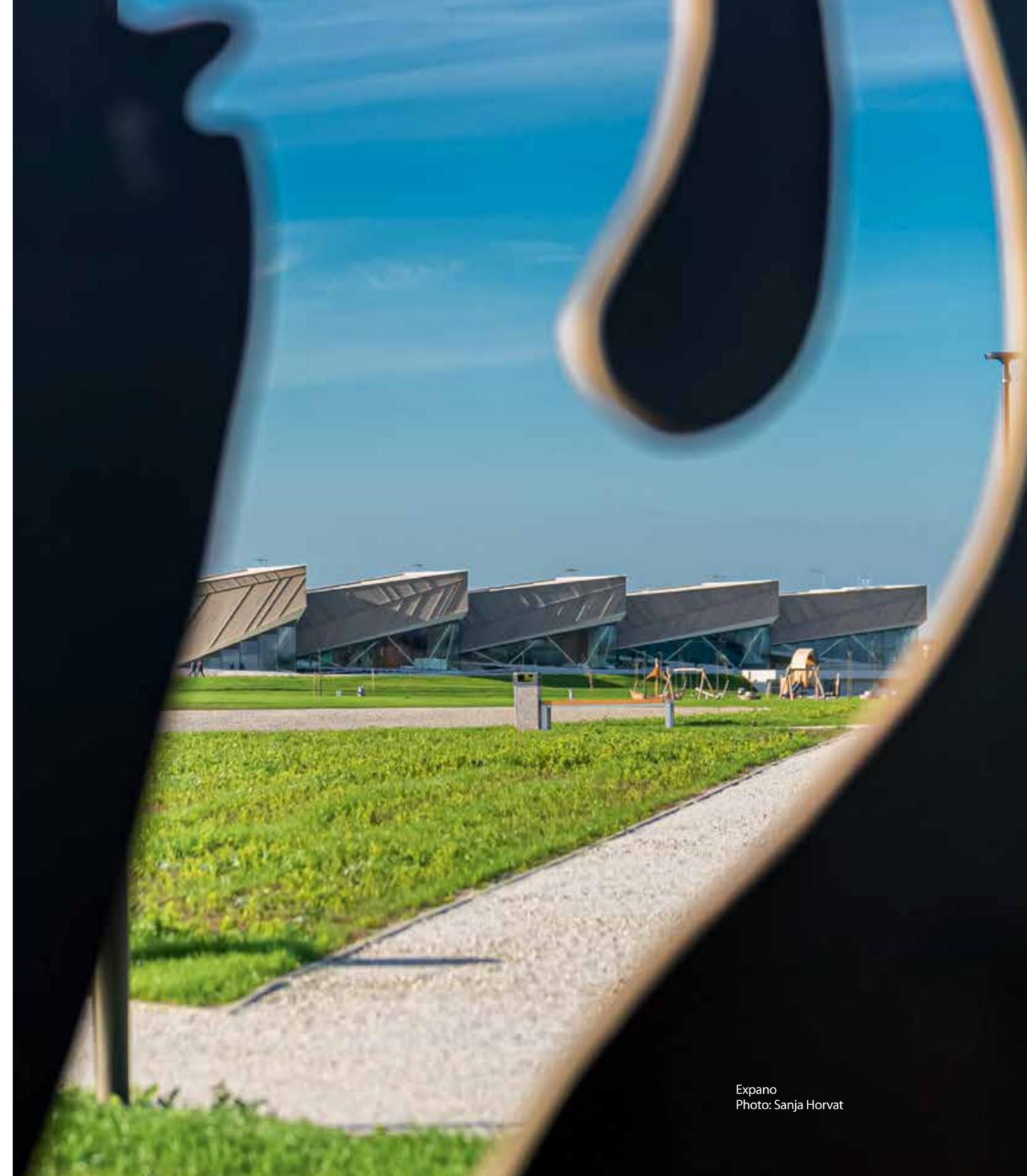
Mankica Kranjec
Photo: Viktorija Kranjec

captured images of long lost buildings, which Miško Kranjec described in his novels, keep alive a vision of a time slowly eroded today by globalisation and show the variety and authenticity of the region. Mankica Kranjec says that by searching for her grandfather's footsteps she also discovered her own roots and was granted entry into the life of Miško Kranjec in a way she hadn't known before: *"Through photographic images and my lens I try to present the motifs of the beautiful Prekmurje flatlands, especially as they are today, where my grandfather spent his childhood in the swampland, hunting and fishing. I photographed old farmhouses where he used to meet his friends and visited villages where he rode a bike once a week to buy fresh rye bread in the local bakery. I bear witness to a certain time, which no longer exists in its original form, but still remains in the memories of the people who knew the world my grandfather was writing about."*

A superb photographer and journalist, who says that she is most interested in uncovering new ideas and new worlds, unveiling hidden and forgotten images, has surpassed the boundaries of the local with her photographic projects and given it a different, cosmopolitan outlook, enabling all visitors, for wherever they come from, to experience a specific time through her images.

All photographs on exhibit, which were created by studying Miško Kranjec's literary works, bear citations from his novels as well as the memories and stories of his son, Mankica's father. The exhibition is thus a photographic documentary of the literature of a certain time and space; it is our memory and our connection with the past, intended for the future.

In the Expanso regional promotion centre, the permanent interactive exhibition at the experience park is, therefore, complemented with exciting temporary exhibitions by artists, who live and work in the local area, providing visitors with new perspectives of comprehending and experiencing Pomurje.



Expanso
Photo: Sanja Horvat

CENTENARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

In the company of the top three percent in the world

DARJA LISJAK AND POLONA MOVIRIN, UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA



Since its establishment in 1919, the seat of the University of Ljubljana has been the Provincial Manor in Kongresni trg, one of the most beautiful buildings in Ljubljana and a cultural monument of the first category.
Photo: Željko Stevanić, IFP d.o.o.

The oldest and largest higher education and research institution in Slovenia, the University of Ljubljana, is celebrating its centenary. Even though at beginning its rectors were faced with efforts to dissolve it, the University of Ljubljana survived. Today, it ranks among the top three percent of the best universities in the world.

The idea of a Slovenian university was considered unrealistic when it first emerged in 1848 as a part of the Slovenian national programme. Some fifty years later, in 1901, the proposal for a Slovenian university was discussed by members of the Parliament in Vienna, which governed Slovenia at the time. *“Come back again in one hundred years with such an urgent proposal. Perhaps it will be possible to set up a Slovenian university then. But I believe that even then there will be no need and especially not an urgent one,”* said MP Josef Pommer about the proposal. The Slovenian people did not have to wait one hundred years. After the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, the idea of a Slovenian university gained new momentum. This time, the endeavours were successful.

On 23 July 1919, Aleksander Karađorđević, Prince Regent of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, a country which Slovenia joined after the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, signed the Act on the University of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in Ljubljana, in today’s University of Ljubljana.

The seat of the university was the former Carniolan Provincial Manor, which, a hundred years later, still serves as the seat of the University of Ljubljana. The first lecture was held on Wednesday, 3 December 1919 at 9 am, a date which is now regarded as the birthday of the University of Ljubljana.

A TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

The beginnings of the University of Ljubljana were very modest. It had five founding members – the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Law, Technical Faculty, and Faculty of Theology. The first 18 professors of the University were appointed by royal decree on 31 August 1919.

In the first academic year of 1919/1920, 942 students enrolled in the University, 28 women and 914 men. Although the number of men greatly surpassed the number of women, the first PhD title was bestowed on a woman, which was then a rarity even in Europe. The title was awarded to Ana Mayer on 15 July 1920 for her dissertation entitled *On the effects of formalin on starch*.

In the early 20th century, completing secondary school was a rarity in Slovenia and only a few considered getting a university education, and even fewer were able to afford it. Nevertheless, the University grew. When WW2 ended, a new era began and there was a growing need for experts. The founding members expanded their fields and study programmes and new members joined the University, resulting in an increasingly diverse offer of study programmes. Today, the University of Ljubljana is one of a few universities, on a

global scale, which offer study programmes in all fields – natural science, social science, humanities, engineering, medicine, art, and sports. It brings together 23 faculties and three art academies which are providing knowledge to almost 38,000 students in this academic year. More than one half of all undergraduate students in Slovenia complete their studies at the University of Ljubljana, as well as more than two thirds of master students and students of specialised studies, and more than eighty percent of PhD students.

FROM A NATIONAL TO AN INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

At the time of its establishment in 1919, the focal point was the national, Slovenian-Yugoslav importance of the university. *“For some, the university was the highest Slovenian institution, which would preserve the language. For others, it was a predominantly Yugoslav institution that would use Slovenian solely as one of the Yugoslav dialects and (in addition to scientific development) would serve for the creation of a single Yugoslav nation with one language,”* says Prof. Dr Božo Repe from the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana.

The University has long outgrown its national confines and became an internationally recognisable institution which places great emphasis on internationalisation. It cooperates with highly established universities across the world and encourages its members to establish connections with specialised higher education institutions in the teaching and research field.

At a recent signing ceremony, it joined the EUTOPIA alliance, taking over its coordination. The EUTOPIA alliance brings together the Vrije Universiteit Brussels, the University of Gothenburg, the University of Paris Seine, the Pompeu Fabra University and the University of Warwick, with more than 165,000 students, 30,000 staff members, and research centres covering 760 scientific fields.



Rector of the University of Ljubljana, Prof. Dr Igor Papič, for the 2017 – 2021 term. Photo: Foto studio NORA d.o.o.

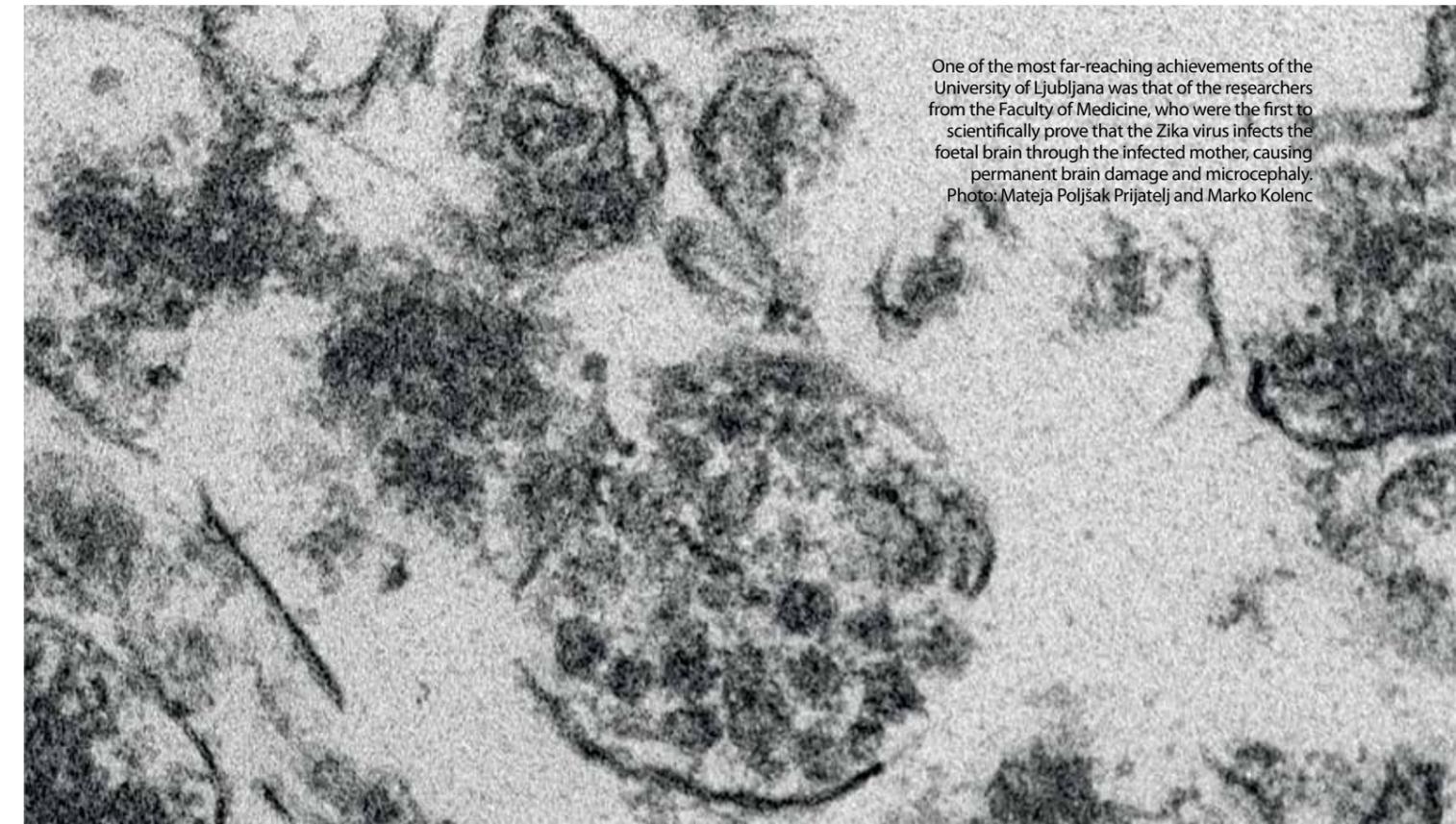
EUTOPIA will operate as a network of European campuses for dealing with global and local challenges through collaborative research, increased mobility of students and staff, and shared innovations that serve the wider public in regional communities.

In addition to heading EUTOPIA, the University of Ljubljana is also actively involved in international associations such as the Utrecht Network (a network of 32 European universities from 27 states fostering the internationalisation of higher education), The Guild (association of 19 distinguished research-intensive universities from 14 countries), the Venice International University – VIU (a consortium of 18 universities from across the globe which exchange knowledge and ideas by developing, promoting and organising joint multicultural, international, interdisciplinary academic and research activities, thereby significantly contributing to new forms of teaching, joint research results, and strategic objectives of internationalisation). In 2014, the University established the Global Alumni and Associates Network (SMUL), which unites the scientists, professors and other renowned individuals working in the fields of academia, research and development abroad and who are associated with Slovenia.

DEDICATION TO RESEARCH

Many initially saw the University of Ljubljana as merely a university which would primarily serve the preservation of the Slovenian language, national independence, and the education of teaching, administrative and technical staff. But they were wrong. The first rector of the University of Ljubljana, the mathematician Dr Josip Plemelj, was deeply dedicated to research. His solution to the Riemann-Hilbert problem in 1908 and other achievements make him one of the most important mathematicians of the early 20th century. When he was appointed rector of the newly established university in 1919, his reputation drew in national and international intellectuals and scientists.

Research activity has therefore been a part of the University of Ljubljana from the very beginning. In terms of the number of research projects, it is at the very

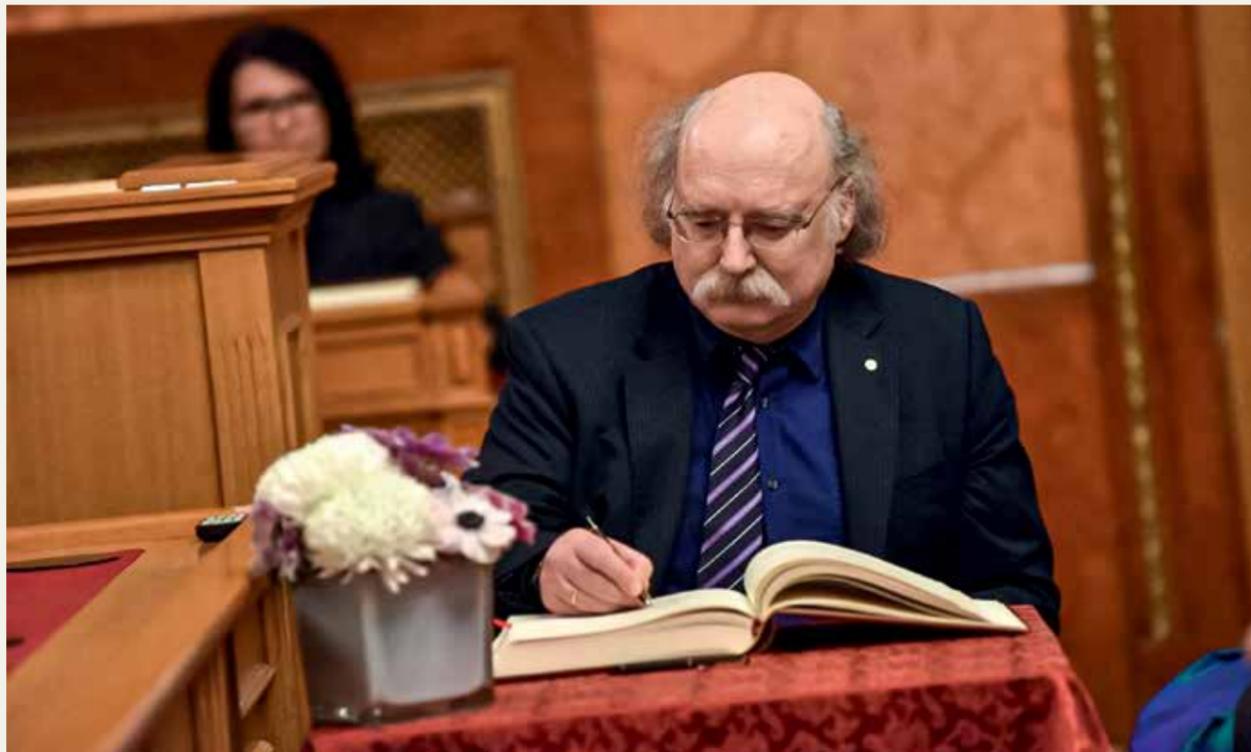


One of the most far-reaching achievements of the University of Ljubljana was that of the researchers from the Faculty of Medicine, who were the first to scientifically prove that the Zika virus infects the foetal brain through the infected mother, causing permanent brain damage and microcephaly. Photo: Mateja Poljšak Prijatelj and Marko Kolenc

top of universities and research organisations from new EU member states (EU 13).

In light of the size of our country, the University is recording exceptional achievements in acquiring ERC (European Research Council) funding. "We are the only Slovenian university with acquired ERC projects, i.e. we have acquired five such projects. Scientists from the Universi-

ty of Ljubljana are among the best in the world. We need only think back to the breakthrough scientific achievement proving that the Zika virus infects the foetal brain through the infected mother, causing permanent brain damage and microcephaly. Let us not forget the numerous awards for scientific excellence bestowed on the employees of the University of Ljubljana, which they received at home and abroad, while our students string up success after success at international competitions," says the Rector of the University of Ljubljana, Prof. Dr Igor Papič.



This year, Nobel Laureate in Physics and Honorary Doctor of the University of Ljubljana prof. dr. Frederick Duncan M. Haldane swore the oath as a Slovenian citizen in the premises of the Slovenian Embassy in Washington. Prof. Haldane was born in London; his father was Scottish, and his mother Ljudmila Renko was a Carinthian Slovene. Photo: Foto Studio NORA d.o.o.

The University of Ljubljana ranks among the top three percent of the best universities in the world. "This information is that much more important if we regard it in the context of the fact that these top three percent include universities which receive up to one hundred times more funding from the state than the University of Ljubljana; however, I guarantee that they are not a hundred times better than us," says Prof. Dr Papič.

The University of Ljubljana has been ranked in the 500-600 group of the Academic Ranking of World Universities, or the Shanghai Ranking, and in the 601-800 group of the Times Higher Education Ranking. In the QS World University Rankings, it progressed from the 651-700 group to the 591-600 group in the last year.

"Every day, we realise the vision of the University of Ljubljana, i.e. to be a recognisable, internationally open and excellent research university, creatively contributing to the quality of life. On the occasion of the centenary anniversary, my wish for our University is that it continues to boldly tread its path, maintain its open spirit, and pursue high goals and global challenges," added Rector, Prof. Dr Papič.



Ana Mayer, the first Slovenian Doctor of Science
Photo: University of Ljubljana archives

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

Slovene at foreign universities

MOJCA NIDORFER ŠIŠKOVIČ

PHOTO: CENTRE FOR SLOVENE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ARCHIVES



World festival of Slovene Language,
2014: booklets *Žepna slovenščina* (Pocket
Slovene) in over 20 languages.

The Slovene at Foreign Universities (STU) programme has been running at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana, both celebrating their 100th anniversary in 2019, since the 1960s. In terms of organisation, professional focus and content, the programme is a part of the Centre for Slovene as a Second and Foreign Language in the context of the Department of Slovene Studies.

The main mission of the STU programme is to support Slovene studies at foreign universities at the content and organisational levels, while its activity is also of national importance for the Republic of Slovenia, as Slovene studies present the Slovene language, literature and culture and Slovenia across the world. The programme supports the teachers and facilitates the teaching of Slovene, the knowledge of the language, research work, and contacts at universities across the globe.

In 2019, there are 62 universities included in STU which hold Slovene courses while 29 of them offer the language as an undergraduate and/or postgraduate programme. Every year, approximately 2,000 students learn or study Slovene at foreign universities.

Each year, some 50 diploma and master's theses are written on various subjects related to the Slovene language, literature and culture, as well as an average of five doctoral dissertations. Across the globe, there are more than 100 teachers holding courses in the Slovene language, literature and culture, 31 of these are employees of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana and posted to foreign universities by the Republic of Slovenia.

THE HISTORY OF TEACHING SLOVENE AT FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

Slovene was present at universities in the form of various courses and programmes as early as at the beginning of the 19th century.

It has the longest history at the University of Graz, where the first Chair of Slovene studies was set up in 1811, as Slovenians often studied at this nearby university.

The emergence of the second oldest Slovene studies is related to the setting up of the Department of Comparative Slavonic Linguistics, established in 1849 at the University of Vienna by Franc Miklošič, which enabled the teaching and researching of the Slovene language. Miklošič's importance is even more significant, as he was the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Vienna for three years and the University's rector from 1854 to 1855. The third oldest lectures on Slovene at universities date back to 1874, and were held at the University of Zagreb.

SLOVENE DURING THE PERIOD OF THE SETTING UP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA

In addition to the universities in Graz, Vienna and Zagreb, in the early 20th century courses and lectures on Slovene were offered at universities in Belgrade, Prague, Padua, and Naples. These programmes are still being implemented today, and Slovene is offered as a language course and a study programme. Furthermore, this was also a time of increasing efforts to establish the first Slovene university, which were finally realised in 1919. The centennial of the first Slovene university, the University of Ljubljana and the Faculty of Arts as one of its five founding members, also marks 100 years of research and teaching of Slovene studies in Slovenia at university level, while both institutions are closely connected to universities across the globe.

The first lecture at the new university in Ljubljana, which had a strong symbolic note and was a lecture on the historical grammar of the Slovene language, was held by Professor Dr Fran Ramovš at the Provincial Manor in Kongresni trg on 3rd December 1919.

Before the University of Ljubljana was established, Dr Ramovš and Dr Rajko Nahtigal held lectures at the University of Graz. They were then joined by Dr Ivan Prijatelj and Dr France Kidrič, who came to Ljubljana from Vienna, and Dr Ivan Grafenauer from the University of Zagreb, all holding lectures on Slovene literature and language in Ljubljana. Professor Dr Rajko Nahtigal was also appointed the first Dean of the Faculty of Arts.

Slovenians who taught and engaged in research at universities across the globe were often responsible for Slovene content being included in the teaching and research work, as their reputation and recognisability as well as research achievements in Slovene studies in the international arena paved the way for Slovene studies in other locations. In 1918, Professor Janko Lavrin founded the Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies at the University of Nottingham, paving the way for Slovene studies within this department. In 2000, Professor Peter Herrity published *Slovene: A Comprehensive Grammar*, which is still considered the most comprehensive grammar of Slovene available in English.

Between the two world wars, Slovene started being taught at the universities in Munich (after 1920), the Jagiellonian University in Krakow in 1926, in Hamburg in 1931, and the Comenius University in Bratislava in 1938.

Today, Krakow and Bratislava offer Slovene studies to more than 80 enrolled students a year. During this time, Matija Murko, who taught Slavonic Philology at the Department of Slavonic Studies at the University of Vienna, was a full professor at the universities of Graz, Leipzig and the Charles University in Prague, co-founded the Institute of Slavonic Studies in Prague and led it from 1932 to 1941. The favourable position held by the Slovenians as a part of the new state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which was formed after the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire

in 1918, and especially in the Drava Banovina, a province of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1929–1945), enabled substantial cultural and linguistic development and official use of Slovene, and brought the Slovene people recognition in Central Europe of the time.

THE BEGINNING OF SYSTEMATIC ADVANCEMENT OF SLOVENE AT FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

Following major social changes and the transformation of Europe after the Second World War, by 1960 Slovene had become a part of study programmes at universities of neighbouring countries and in the common country of Yugoslavia: in Trieste in 1945, in Zadar in 1950, in Budapest in 1953, in Novi Sad in 1958, and in Skopje in 1959. After 1960, organised advancement of Slovene studies across the globe started emerging, and the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana played a crucial role in this right from the start. At the beginning, it selected and co-financed teachers of Slovene for foreign universities and sent them Slovene books. In 1964, they started implementing the principle of reciprocity with foreign language teachers coming to the Faculty and teachers of Slovene going to foreign universities.

Throughout all these years, the content, organisation, implementation and the development of the STU programme have been the responsibility of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana. Initially, the activity was funded by the National Educational Community and later by the ministry responsible for higher education. This model of providing support to Slovene at foreign universities, which enabled direct academic contact with foreign institutions and gave preference to professional management of the programme, contributed significantly to the successful development of Slovene studies around the world.

SEMINAR OF SLOVENE LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

A special role has been played by the two-week Seminar of Slovene language, literature and culture, which was first organised

at the Faculty of Arts in 1965 in order to encourage cooperation with foreign universities. The Republic of Slovenia funded the event and soon, in 1972 (the 8th Seminar), it attracted 120 students and teachers, researchers, translators, and professionals employed in culture from foreign universities and Slovenians living abroad, and this number has remained high until the present day. In 2019, the 55th Seminar was organised. For numerous participants, this Seminar is their first contact with Slovenia and the Slovene language, and encourages them to start focusing on it in a professional manner. Some of them, nowadays university professors, have managed to set up Slovene studies or upgrade Slovene courses into study programmes, e.g. Lidija Arizankovska in Skopje, Maja Đukanović in Belgrade, Olena Džuba Pogrebniak in Kiev, Jelena Konicka in Vilnius, Aleš Kozar in Pardubice, Istvan Lukacs in Budapest, Olga Plotnikova in Moscow, Emil Tokarz in Katowice and Bielsko-Biala.

As the years went by, the potential and the requirements of the Seminar grew to an even higher professional level, and the first international scientific meeting for Slovene studies, the Obdobja Symposium, was organised in 1979 during the first few days of the Seminar. The symposium became a traditional event, and a special conference that saw its 38th edition in 2019.

With new possibilities for cooperation, new courses and programmes of Slovene studies were set up from 1960 to 1980: Seattle (1964), Rome and Moscow (1965), Sofia (1975), Paris (1969), Szombathely (1970), Warsaw (1972), Klagenfurt (1973), Nottingham (1974), Udine and Katowice (1976), Regensburg and Bucharest (1978), Bern (1981), and in 1989 in Tübingen and Würzburg. Rado L. Lenček, professor of Slavonic languages at Columbia Uni-



versity in New York, contributed greatly to the growing presence of Slovene studies in the USA, including through his efforts to set up the Society for Slovene Studies in 1973. Since 1977, the Society has been publishing the Slovene Studies international journal.

IN INDEPENDENT SLOVENIA

In the 1989/90 academic year, just before Slovenia's independence, there were 25 departments with Slovene studies at foreign universities across the globe, and 13 teachers from the Faculty of Arts were appointed to work at foreign institutions. In the 1990s, Slovene studies were set up at universities in Kansas in 1990, in Gent in 1994, in Brno, Vilnius and Trieste within the translation studies department in 1995, in Brussels in 1996, and in Tokyo, London and Łódź in 1997. A teacher was sent from Slovenia to the Macquarie University in Sydney from 1989 to 1995, although this cooperation was discontinued due to the high costs involved.

The enlargement of the European Union and Slovenia's accession in 2004 brought new circumstances, which significantly affected the operation and development of Slovene studies at foreign universities.

The European university arena was unified with the adoption of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, expanding the possibilities of inter-university cooperation and student and staff mobility. ECTS credits have allowed new courses to be included in study programmes, and a growing number of students of non-linguistic programmes have decided to enrol in courses of Slovene. The Republic of Slovenia supported the opening of Slovene studies in countries which are home to larger Slovenian communities, at other universities across the EU and around the globe: in Buenos Aires in 2003 and in La Plata in 2006, in Cleveland, Lisbon,

Lviv, Beijing (BFSU) in 2008, in Granada in 2009. Slovene studies were also set up in Gdansk in 2005, Pardubice in 2006 and Kiev in 2010. With support from Slovenia, the Slovene studies were set up after 2010: in Sarajevo in 2014 (again), Köln in 2015, Hebei in 2016, in Beijing at the University of International Studies in 2017, in Cordoba in Argentina, in Banjaluka, in Tokyo at the Soka University, and at Stanford University in 2018, and in Rijeka in 2019.

In the last few decades, the activities and programmes in Slovene studies have been growing stronger at universities across the globe due to the stable and systematic support from Slovenia and the relentless work of STU teachers, individuals at universities, and the wider Slovenian community. In 2015, the National Council of the Slovenian National Minority in the Republic of Serbia and the University of Belgrade, the Faculty of Philosophy, started issuing *Slovenika*, a journal for culture, science and education. Numerous international conferences have been organised at universities across the globe, including as a celebration of significant anniversaries of Slovene studies, e.g. the 100th anniversary in Belgrade, the 90th anniversary of the Faculties of Arts in Bratislava, the 9th anniversary of the Slovene studies in Prague, the 40th anniversary in Moscow. In 2018, the Cankar i(n) mi student conference was organised in Belgrade. In cooperation with regional associations and universities from neighbouring countries, the Slavic Society of Slovenia organised congresses in Klagenfurt, Trieste, Szentgotthárd, Zagreb, and Udine.

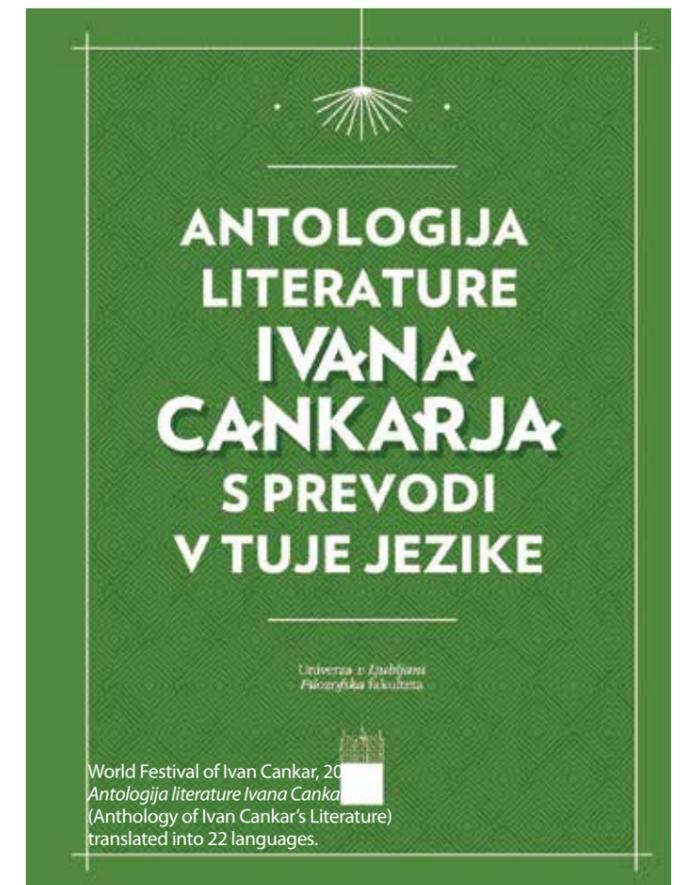
In the context of the STU programme, the World Festival (*Svetovni dnevi*) projects have been organised since 2004 as well as numerous other events in cooperation with teachers, foreign universities, Slovene diplomatic missions, and various project partners, e.g. RTV Slovenia, the Slovenian Book Agency, the Slovenian Film Centre, the Government Office for Slovenians Abroad, and publishing houses. Some three to five thousand visitors attend these events every year, and with such projects the STU contributes to the spread of the Slovene language, literature and culture, and thus the Republic of Slovenia itself, along with the promotion of Slovene studies.

A brief overview of the STU programme and the history of setting up various courses and study programmes of Slovene studies

shows how the Slovene language found its way into study programmes at universities across the world. In a short span of time achieved major progress in the number of Slovene studies, as well as their development and broader activities. At the same time, academic cooperation and exchanges between the universities with Slovene studies around the world and in Slovenia are getting stronger, and will play a significant role also in the future of Slovene studies, all of them being part of a globalised university market.



Teachers of Slovene at the STU meeting in Ljubljana, December 2018.



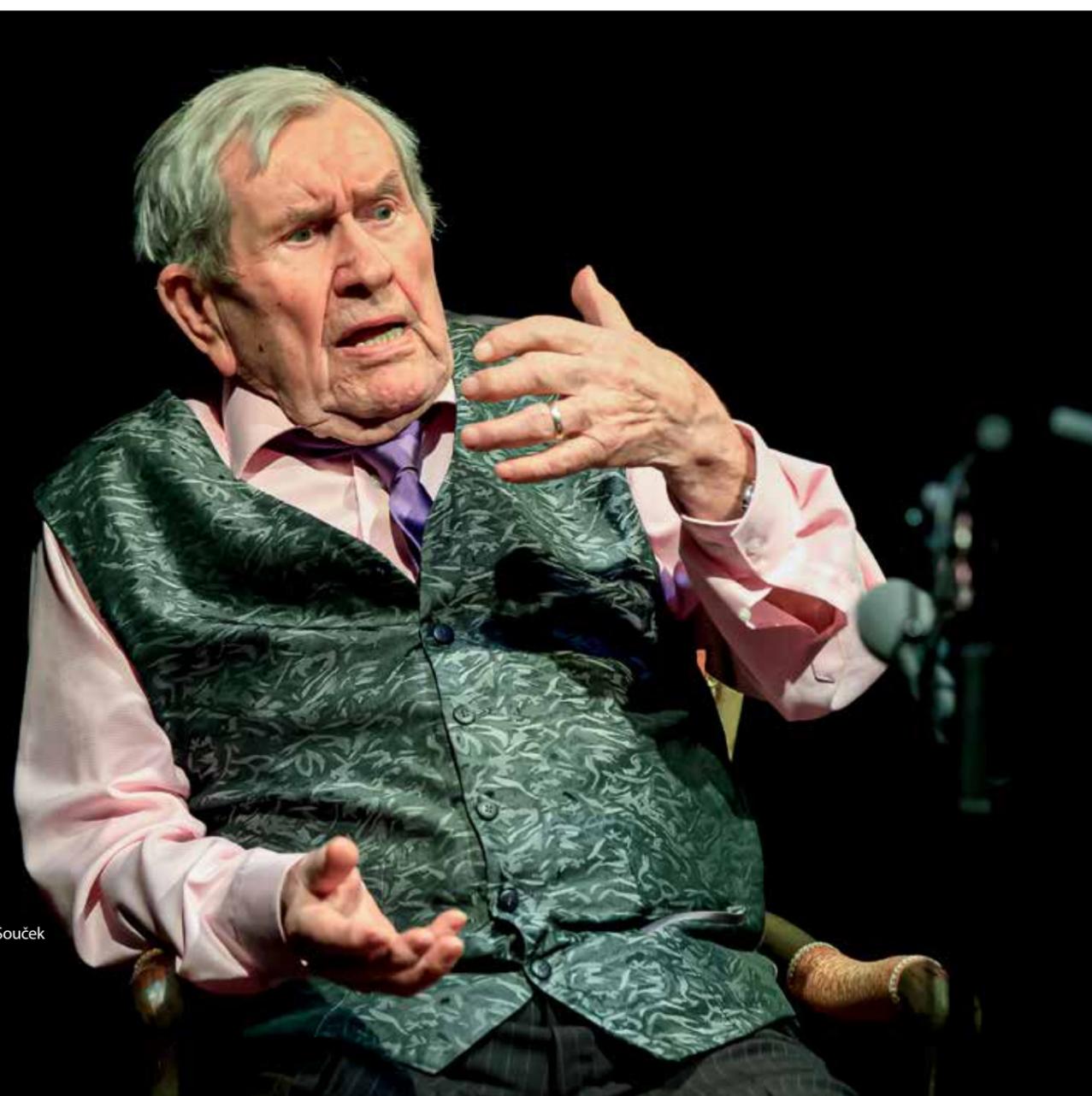
World Festival of Ivan Cankar, 2018
Antologija literature Ivana Cankarja
(Anthology of Ivan Cankar's Literature)
translated into 22 languages.

JURIJ SOUČEK

There are no best ones; you are either good or not good!

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ

PHOTO: PERSONAL ARCHIVES AND SNT DRAMA ARCHIVES



Jurij Souček

He is seen as a sometimes misunderstood actor. *"Artists think differently than most people. We see things that other people do not,"* he says. His generation of actors did not get along. Only one was allowed to be the champion, and every single one of them strived to be The One, which in turn led to competition and conflicts. Before Souček, the reigning champion was Stane Sever, then his colleague Polde Bibič.

"People still find it difficult to deal with competition and place too much emphasis on one person, as though only one can be good, and people continually fight over who is the best. There are no best ones; you are either good or not good! There is no other possibility."

His complex interest in theatre steered him towards directing, and becoming a herald of the theatre avant-garde.

Throughout his career he has played some 150 theatrical roles, including some really memorable ones. He created more than 600 roles on the radio, and most people know him for his incredible ability of interpretation using a diverse range of voices, and for the famous characters he created when dubbing cartoons.

He received the Borštnik Ring Award in 1994, the Viktor Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005, and the Ježek Lifetime Achievement Award in 2018.

NO ONE HAS LEFT SO MUCH WARMTH IN THE HEARTS OF YOUNG VIEWERS AS JURIJ SOUČEK

He began with Maya the Bee, where he was Flip the Grasshopper, then he lent his voice to cartoons such as *Jamie and the Magic Torch*, *Maxidog Fik*, and *The Water Sprite Rákosníček*, but most remember him for the role in *Piggeldy and Frederick*, even though

one of his favourite characters is Josip Ribičič's Mouse Mishkolin. Children know his voice from many famous cartoon characters and radio dramas, and adults from a varied range of radio characters. While it was the jury's opinion that he built his unique image as an actor with his original visual interpretation, Souček's work in cartoon dubbing represents a special chapter in his career.

No one has left so much warmth in the hearts of young viewers as Jurij Souček has, as the characters who were brought to life by his velvety voice were so vivid, and his linguistic bravura so humorously ingenious, that children could see the story even if no pictures were present.

Her statement about her job being a dream profession and about it being difficult for her to imagine doing anything else (at least at this moment) made the selection committee recognise that Dora is a woman who can inspire young people to study engineering and become the creators of the future, and thus a worthy winner of the award.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HIM TO BE AN ACTOR?

"It means everything. Already as a child, I felt it was my calling to become an actor. I loved performing. I sang well and played the violin. I was a happy child, and I am still keeping this happiness alive now that I am ninety years old. I regret that today, the requirements for

actors are different than what they used to be. Today, the focus is no longer on the voice. If you do not have it, they can enhance it with a microphone. In my time, a good voice was the condition to get the job; now this is no longer necessary."

FRANE MILČINSKI JEŽEK LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

"With the same zeal and deliberation of a relentless explorer of the theatre, Souček also enthusiastically embraced new media and joined creative groups at Slovenian National Radio at the very beginning of his career, co-developing a specific sound image for the original Slovenian Radio Drama, as well as Slovenian National Television, at the time of the latter's experimental start more than 60 years ago," the jury wrote in its reasoning for the Frane Milčinski Ježek Lifetime Achievement Award, which Souček received a year ago.

"His radio opus is one of the most extensive ones in the history of Slovenian radio. His contribution to radiophonic art is invaluable, in terms of both scale and diversity. Souček's first TV appearances date back to 1958, where he can be seen in skits alongside Frane Milčinski Ježek. In the last six decades he has become one of the most recognisable faces and voices of Slovenian television," the text added. For decades, he worked in both media as an actor and performer, author of texts and adaptations, and occasionally as a director.



Jurij Souček with his wife, Milena Morača, opera prima donna.

A GREAT OPERA LOVER

As a boy during the war, he regularly visited opera shows, admitting that this was also partially because the ticket served as a curfew pass.

His wife, Milena Morača, is a renowned opera prima donna. They met in Maribor, where he directed *The Lysistrata*.

"Sometimes, the relationship between two renowned artists can be a little difficult, but this gives life its flare," says Souček on living with a prima donna.

Has he retired with any major unfulfilled wishes to play a specific role? "There was actually a time when I just wanted to play Jerman in Cankar's *The Serfs*. It was not meant to be. My colleague Rozman later portrayed Jerman."

ON THE THEATRE OF TODAY AND THE CONDITIONS GOVERNING IT

"Today's theatre is different because the work methods are different. Traditional dramaturgy has disappeared, texts are being transformed; it is more about ideas and concepts, sort of the director's personal project. I do not see a true theatre in that; it is more a project than drama." He also misses higher work standards and the correct valuation of artistic and creative work in general. "There is no real selection and no real authorities who would put things in the right place."

Intuition or the right feeling for people and things are very important to him. He is therefore much more upset by people taking things too lightly today, too superficially, and by the fact that they do not need or search for a more in-depth analysis of life and the human soul.

At ninety years old, Jurij Souček is still a very vital man who has managed to keep the joyous inner child alive, who likes to talk and socialise with people, who still looks forward to every performance, and these are certainly not lacking.

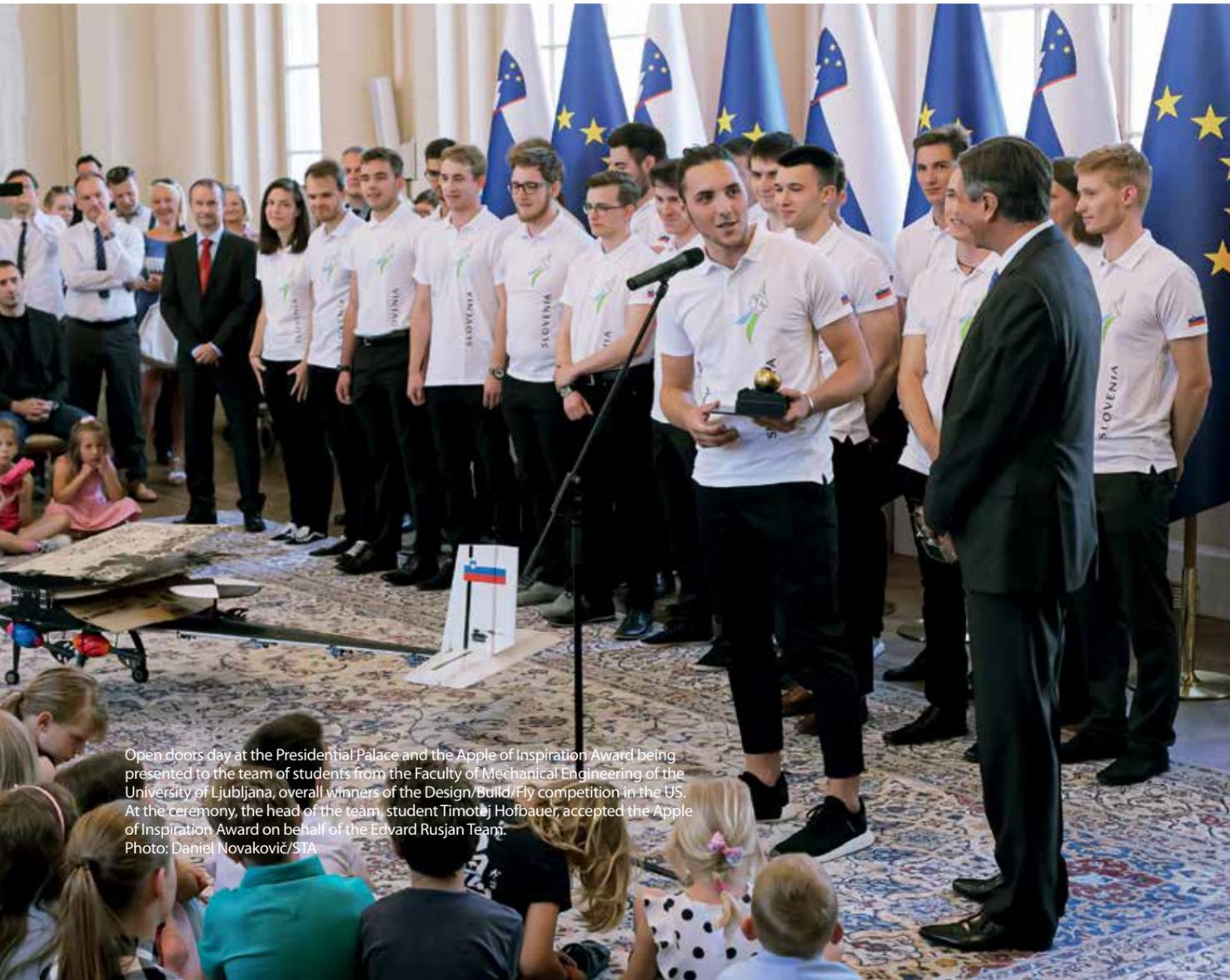


After graduating, Souček joined Ljubljana Drama in 1953 where he worked until 1989. It was at Ljubljana Drama that he created the first of his many prominent roles. He also worked with experimental theatres, and in 1960 played Creon in Dominik Smole's *Antigone* on Oder 57, while the Ad Hoc theatre headed by Draga Ahačič was the first in Slovenia with a theatrical production of a Sartre play. He also headed three theatre groups. The first was named after the phone number of the box office of the Šentjakob Theatre where they rehearsed in the morning, when the members of the amateur theatre were at work. His second group was called *Stranski vhod* – today's Mala drama. As he said for *Tednik* magazine: "Mala drama happened by mistake. It was supposed to be a space for prop storage, but it turned out the ceiling was too low and the doors too small. So we patched it together somehow, and I was able to come here with my group, which I called *Stranski vhod* (Side Entrance) because you had to come in from the side entrance." When Mala drama was in crisis, he set up *Levi oder*. "Not just set up. I built it with my own hands."

SLOVENIAN TEAM WINS THE DESIGN/BUILD/FLY INTERNATIONAL AIRCRAFT COMPETITION IN THE US

A team of mechanical engineering students developed the world's best unmanned aircraft

DANILA GOLOB



Open doors day at the Presidential Palace and the Apple of Inspiration Award being presented to the team of students from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana, overall winners of the Design/Build/Fly competition in the US. At the ceremony, the head of the team, student Timotij Hofbauer, accepted the Apple of Inspiration Award on behalf of the Edvard Rusjan Team. Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

The team had to design a radio-controlled aircraft able to simulate carrier operations for this competition, which attracts teams from over 100 world-renowned and well-established universities every year. With their aircraft, which they named Pretty Boy, the Slovenian team won first prize competing against 104 teams and 785 participating students.

Seventeen students from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana, competing under the name the Edvard Rusjan Team, took the task on painstakingly and professionally. It took them more than six months to build the Pretty Boy, they spent more than 2,000 hours of work on it, and carried out more than 40 test flights. The students fabricated an extremely capable aircraft, which can take off independently and reach a speed of over 100 km/h.

THE FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Design/Build/Fly (DBF) is an international competition organised by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Foundation, challenging students to build and fly radio-controlled aircraft. The aim of the competition is transferring the students' theoretical knowledge into practice, thus helping them gain experience in design, simulation and construction. The contestants have to devise and build an unmanned aircraft which they then have to fly to complete missions.

The Edvard Rusjan Team, which has participated in the competition since 2008, has often achieved excellent results and won for the first time in 2015.

The team of students, working under the mentorship of assistant professor Viktor Šajn, built an aircraft made of carbon fibre and weighing only 9 kilograms, with a 2.5-metre wingspan and a unique bomb-releasing mechanism. It was precisely this mechanism that brought them victory. The little bombs were mounted along the fuselage, where the other participating teams did not dare to install them in case they affected the aircraft's stability during flight. The Slovenian team managed to drop four more bombs than the team in second place, ultimately convincing the judges that they were the true winners.

The members of the Edvard Rusjan Team became the overall winners for designing, constructing, fabricating, testing and flying the aircraft, securing Slovenia's second victory at the DBF contest.

THE APPLE OF INSPIRATION AWARD FOR AN INNOVATIVE TEAM

The extraordinary achievement of the Slovenian student team was recognised by the President of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, who presented them with the Apple of Inspiration, an award given to individuals and groups that inspire others, with scientists often receiving it. *"The victory of the students from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Ljubljana has confirmed that Slovenians are true flyers, we leave everyone behind with our knowledge and precision,"* announced the Office of the President of the Republic at the award ceremony.

The Edvard Rusjan Team presented the winning Pretty Boy aircraft in the Presidential Palace.

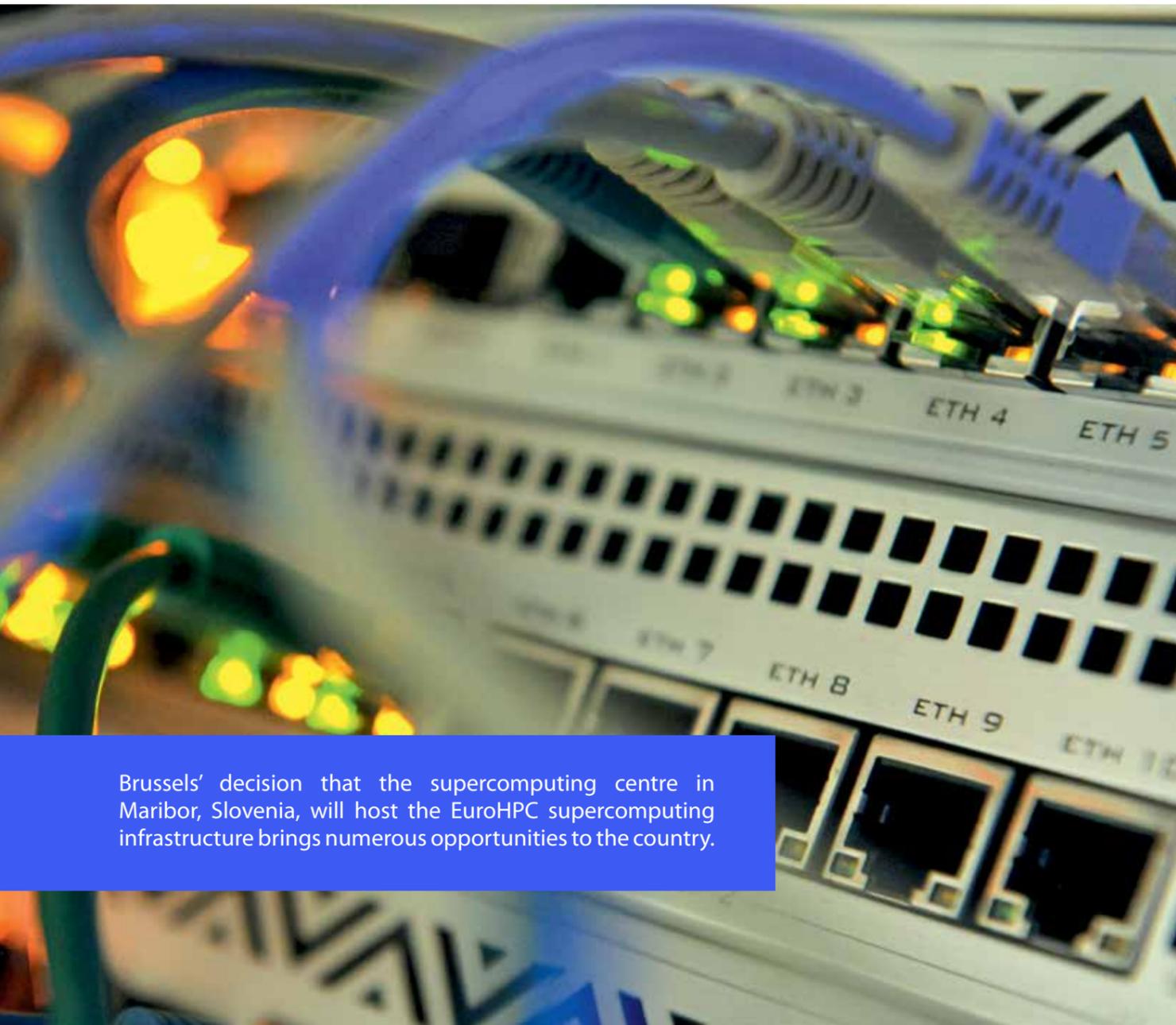
The excellent theoretical knowledge, perseverance, inventiveness and innovativeness of the Edvard Rusjan Team will provide a solid basis for their future success. Moreover, taking first place in a large, international competition is indeed a real incentive for their further plans.

The team is named after Edvard Rusjan, a Slovenian aircraft constructor, pilot and aviation pioneer.

EUROPEAN SUPERCOMPUTING CENTRE BRINGS NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO SLOVENIA

The engine to power the digital economy

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: TAMINO PETELINŠEK/STA



Brussels' decision that the supercomputing centre in Maribor, Slovenia, will host the EuroHPC supercomputing infrastructure brings numerous opportunities to the country.

It is a significant contribution to the possibilities of Slovenia's development. Experts believe that such projects are an excellent way to show the rest of the world how advanced Europe is, and what kind of development potential it still has. Ninety percent of supercomputing technologies are intended for economic use.

Application fields of supercomputers are expanding by the day, and experience shows the importance of this technology. The major importance of this acquisition was emphasised by the Director of the Maribor Institute of Information Science, IZUM, Aleš Bošnjak, and Arnes Director Marko Bonač. According to Bošnjak, this project brings multiplicative effects, as scientific institutions will be able to significantly increase the extent and quality of their research projects. Bonač emphasised that the supercomputing centre will be of great help not only to researchers and industry, but also the public sector. In addition to Maribor, supercomputing centres will be set up in Sofia (Bulgaria), Ostrava (the Czech Republic), Kajaani (Finland), Bologna (Italy), Bissen (Luxembourg), Minho (Portugal), and Barcelona (Spain).

These centres will provide support to the European research community and industry in developing know-how and knowledge applications in medicine, advanced materials and combatting climate change.

SLOVENIAN SUPERCOMPUTER VEGA

Slovenia is already in the process of building a supercomputing centre for the processing of big data as part of the HPC RIVR project in Maribor, which connects researchers and development centres. The centre will provide the tools which are necessary in the era of big data and data processing, machine decision-making, and digital security.

Called VEGA, after the mathematician Jurij Vega, the Slovenian supercomputer will have the capacity of five petaflops, which means that compared to currently available supercomputers this places it around number 35 in terms of performance.

The eight EuroHPC computers will have a combined capacity of 500 petaflops. The biggest three will rank among the top five in the world.

This centre represents a turning point for the University of Maribor, the city of Maribor, and the entire eastern region of Slovenia, as it will contribute to the development of numerous studies in

diverse scientific fields, and also represent a major contribution to the development of the economy.

The HPC RIVR project is funded by the European Union from the European Regional Development Fund (80%) and the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (20%) in the context of the Operational Programme for the Implementation of the European Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. The project applicant and coordinator is the University of Maribor, and project consortium partners include the Institute of Information Science (IZUM) and the Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto (FIŠ). If everything goes as planned, the national supercomputing centre will be launched next year.

SUPERCOMPUTERS BENEFIT PEOPLE IN NUMEROUS FIELDS

Too often, supercomputers are seen as unrelated to everyday life. However, they are needed to process the growing amount of data and benefit people in numerous fields, such as dealing with earthquakes or hurricanes, discovering and treating diseases, ensuring security, simulating social phenomena, optimising products, particle physics simulations, crypto-technology development, deep learning, artificial intelligence, and more. Supercomputers can shorten the time it takes to develop a new car from 60 to 24 months, but are also important for the development of encryption technologies, i.e. for national security and defence.

Supercomputers are of key importance for the EU's competitiveness and its independence in the data economy. At the moment, major quantities of data are being processed outside of Europe, such as in the USA, which threatens privacy and commercial trade secrets. Supercomputers are the engine to power the digital economy. It is a tough race, and today the EU is lagging behind in not having any supercomputers in the world's top ten, warns Brussels.

The EU will contribute EUR 486 million under its current multi-annual budget, and participating countries will match this from national funds. So far, thirteen countries have signed the declaration on supercomputers. In March last year, the declaration was signed by France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain, and these countries were later joined by Belgium, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Greece, Croatia, and Slovenia. The declaration, which remains open for signing by other countries, binds signatories to cooperation in the development of high-performance computers. One of the objectives is to have a European supercomputer among the top three in the world in 2022-2023.

The European Commission has proposed investing EUR 1 billion in the European supercomputer infrastructure by 2020, and the EuroHPC Joint Undertaking was set up to achieve this by the end of that year.

SLOVENIAN SCIENTISTS INVOLVED AGAIN

Even Slovenian businessmen and businesswomen are environmentally aware and ambitious

TEA KNAFLIČ



It is very important to balance between economical growth and the ecological impact.
Photo: RyanMcVay-GettyImages/GulliverFilm&Foto

Nowadays it seems that we are all like the emperor from Andersen's fairy tale, The Emperor's New Clothes. We like to dress up and we have more than enough clothes. Crowded stores are always tempting us to buy new items and accessories. However, there comes a moment when it is necessary to empty those packed wardrobes. Most of us give clothes that are still in good condition to humanitarian organisations. Those with more imagination transform them into new products. But the fact is that even they will end up in a landfill one day.

In 2015, 6.4 million tonnes of clothing were used in EU member states. The total amount of textile waste generated in the EU is estimated at nearly 16 million tonnes per year.

As much as 75% of textile waste ends up in landfills and incinerators, which is a pity since it can be used to extract useful raw materials.

The EU has shown its concern for the environment by imposing on its member states a mandatory proportion of reused and recycled waste. This proportion has gradually increased over the years. The biggest challenge for countries will undoubtedly be the year 2025, when at least a 55% share of reused and recycled products is envisaged. It is thus essential that member states learn how to responsibly handle all types of waste, including textiles.

RESYNTAX PROJECT

Some member states have tackled this challenging task together, and have proven with the Resyntax project that joint efforts can make tremendous progress in the area of textile recycling. The Resyntax project, which was launched in June 2015, was co-financed by the European Community. It has 20 partners from 10 EU countries. It is coordinated by the German Soex Group, which is engaged in the mass collection, sorting and recycling of used textiles.

Three Slovenian organisations have also joined this project: The IOS Research Institute from Maribor, which is the project's co-coordinator, the Laboratory for Chemistry and Environmental Protection of the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Maribor, and the Tekstina company from Ajdovščina.

The Resyntex project aims to create a new concept of the circular economy covering the textile and chemical sectors. They want to completely recycle separately collected textile waste of the lowest quality, which would otherwise end up in an incinerator or landfill. They also want to raise public awareness that recycling is essential, and stress that textile waste can be used to produce new secondary raw materials.

IOS AND INNOVATION

The IOS Research Institute involved in this project is a private research and development organisation based in Maribor. Its fields of expertise are measurements, research, education and consultancy in the field of environmental protection, sensors and new (nano)materials. Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Lobnik, partly employed at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering of the University of Maribor, and Director of IOS and Technical Director of the Resyntex project and Dr. Mojca Poberžnik from IOS, noted how hard they have worked to achieve remarkable success with regard to chemical recycling. They explained that before this there had only been a mechanical way to process textiles, and that this meant only low-quality material could be obtained, which could be recycled twice or three times at most. Issues also arise with mechanical processing when the clothing is a combination of cotton and plastic.

In contrast, chemical recycling breaks down textiles into various substances, such as bioethanol and proteins, which are a substitute for resin, while polyester and polyamide become polymers of plastic or textile fibres. All the recovered substances can be re-used, which means complete recycling. Chemical recycling means endless recycling.

Due to the importance of the topic, the laboratory in Maribor has attracted the interest of the largest manufacturers of sports equipment, as this has the highest chemical recycling potential. Adidas, Nike, Decathlon, and DuPont are following the development of the Resyntex project, since they are directly concerned with the recycling of textiles, and want to be sustainable.

IOS manages and runs a demonstration line in Maribor where they can currently process up to one hundred tons of fabric annually. But we must not forget that this remains an ongoing project. Thanks to Slovenian scientists, the development will continue, strengthen and set guidelines for others to follow.

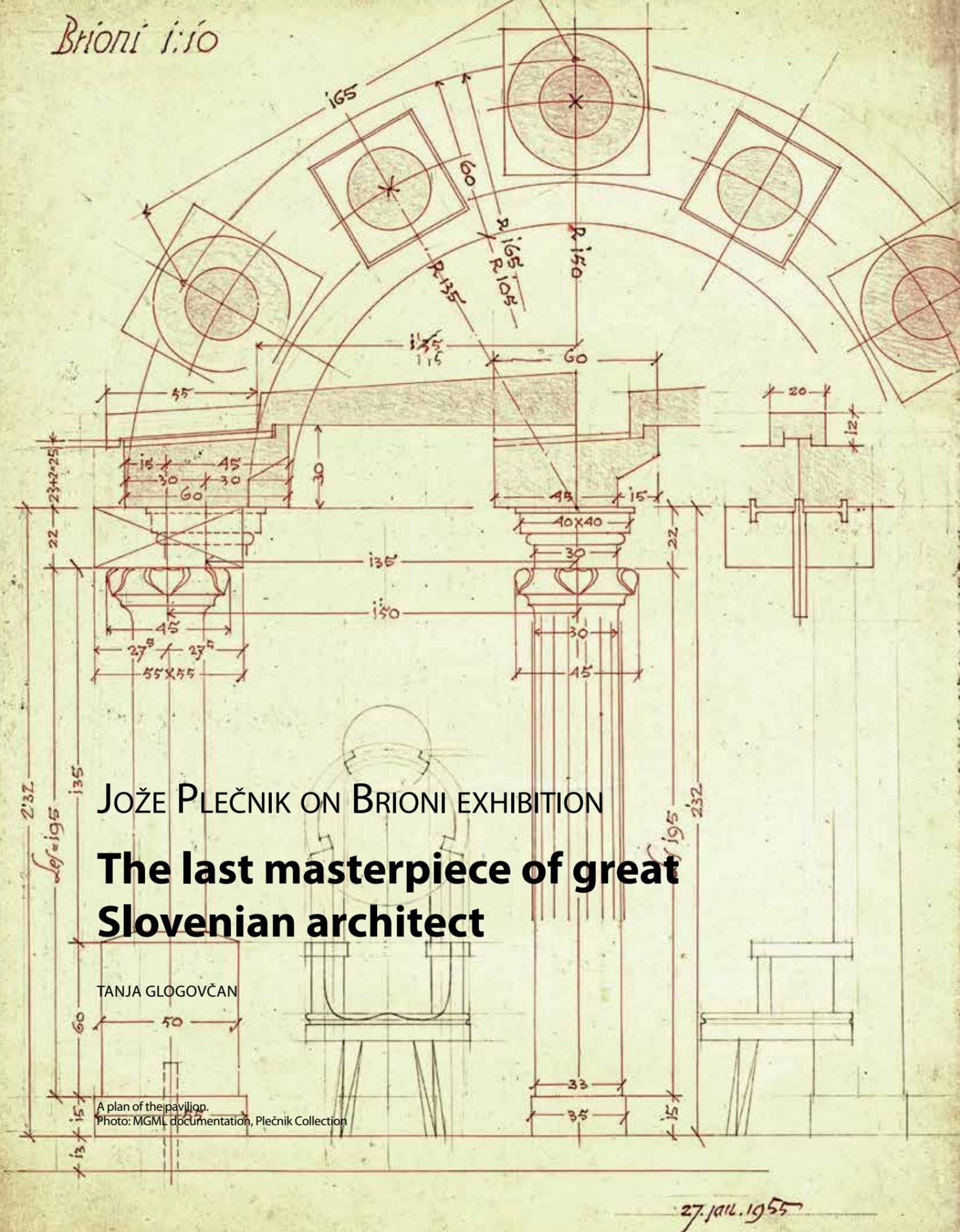
FUTURE PLANS

The staff at IOS lack neither ideas nor motivation. They are continually thinking about new products and developing those they already have. It is worth mentioning here the innovative concepts of water purification and reuse that IOS has developed, along with sensors for detecting the freshness of food and as well as pesticides in food and the environment.

We can be proud of Slovenian scientists who invest their efforts in making our world a better, cleaner place.



The IOS Research Institute is already focused on the chemical processing of plastic materials, although more research is needed before solutions are found.
Photo: IOS Research Institute archives



JOŽE PLEČNIK ON BRIONI EXHIBITION
The last masterpiece of great Slovenian architect

TANJA GLOGOVČAN

A plan of the pavilion.
 Photo: MGML documentation, Plečnik Collection

This May, the Croatian island of Veliki Brijun saw the opening of the Plečnik on Brioni exhibition, which presents the last fully completed work by the Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik (1872-1957), the garden pavilion for former Yugoslav president, Josip Broz Tito.

The exhibition has already visited the Croatian cities of Zagreb, Varaždin, Karlovac, Osijek, and Split. The pavilion stands next to the White Villa, which still serves as a protocol facility of the Croatian Government. This was the first opportunity for the broader public to see it, a fact of which the organisers, the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Croatia and the Brijuni National Park, are especially proud. The joint desire of the organisers and the general public is to make the visit to Plečnik's pavilion in Brioni more accessible.

UNIQUE AND TYPICAL PLEČNIK

The construction of the Brioni pavilion was one of Plečnik's last works. In a way, it brings together all of his artistic ideals. Already during his studies, it was Plečnik's desire to build in stone in a Mediterranean environment. With the Treaty of Rapallo (1920 – 1947), Slovenia lost the Karst and access to the sea, which prevented Plečnik from realising his dream in the Mediterranean part of his homeland which he loved so dearly. However, at the time, Plečnik was very busy shaping the architectural image of Ljubljana and Prague, and did not even search for such an opportunity.

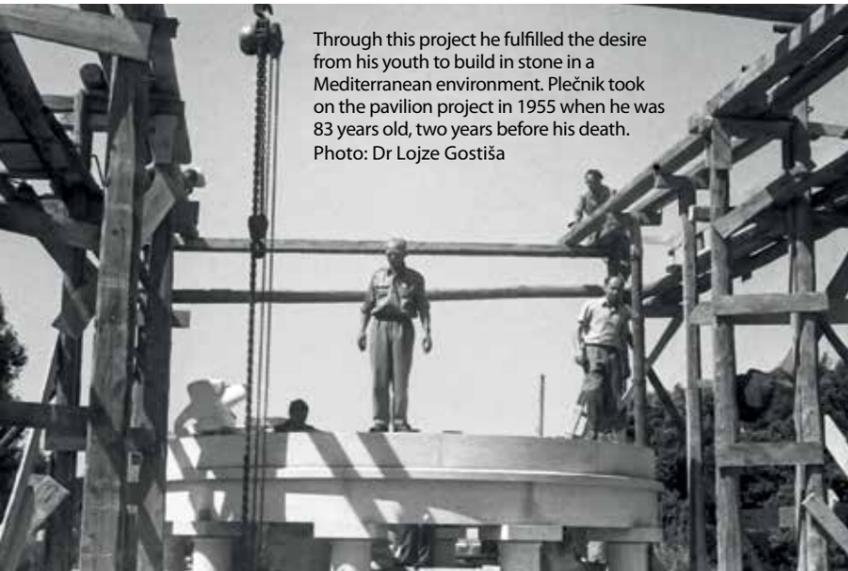
The offer by the art historian Dr Lojze Gostiša, who, unlike many others of the time, saw Plečnik for the genius that he was, and by Slovenian combatants of World War Two who wished to grant Tito a work of art of the highest quality, came at just the right moment. It later became clear that this was a good decision, as Tito admired Plečnik, and was familiar with his architectural and other artistic creations.

Plečnik fell in love with the Mediterranean upon his visits to Venice, Florence, and Rome, writing that: *"Venice is the most beautiful symbiosis of the sea and the sky. The Roman Church of St Peter is the most beautiful gift to God. The Sistine Chapel is the most important work of a mere mortal."*

He further hoped to meet President Tito in person, as he believed him to be an important historical figure. This meeting was planned for Plečnik's second visit to Brioni; however, at the last moment, Tito was unable to make it due to some urgent affairs. Two plans were drawn for the pavilion, and the second one was realised. The pavilion was built in cooperation with Naravni kamen, a company led by Milan Pertot, and the sculptors Frančišek Smerdu, Ivan Sajovic, Marija and Stane Keržič, the carver Jože Lapuh, and the painter France Mihelič. The construction was headed by the architect Tone Bitenc, a long-standing assistant of Plečnik.

A TEMPLE WITHIN A TEMPLE WITHOUT REVOLUTIONARY ICONOGRAPHY

The temple within a temple was the unique inspiration behind Plečnik's work of art in the form of a pavilion. Plečnik emphasised this duality by raising the roof plate and intermediate corbels above the outer stone ring. A unique detail is the combination of stone and wood. This way, Plečnik symbolically connected the Mediterranean with the north. Stone and wood also play different tectonic roles. The former carries the heavy roof in the form of stylised and smooth Doric columns, while the wooden columns are hollow and lit from within at night. This kind of installation is a material opposite to the compact Istrian stone. Pieces of coloured marble are attached to the wooden columns, an ornament taken from Czech medieval art. The pavilion rooftop is adorned by Frančišek Smerdu's statue of Ganymedes, cup-bearer of the gods, while Marija and Stane Kržič adorned the roof corbels with statues of birds. The template for the ceiling mosaic was made by France Mihelič.



Through this project he fulfilled the desire from his youth to build in stone in a Mediterranean environment. Plečnik took on the pavilion project in 1955 when he was 83 years old, two years before his death. Photo: Dr Lojze Gostiša



Plečnik's pavilion on Veliki Brijun. Photo: Andrej Peunik/MGML

The architecture of this pavilion lacks any kind of revolutionary iconography. Wooden columns and animal sculptures represent ideologically neutral ornaments. Later, the wooden columns from Slavonian oak were unnecessarily coated brown and stripped of their noble beauty of naturally-aged silver-grey wood, which was a part of Plečnik's idea.

After the master's death, one of his students, Tone Bitenc, transformed the wooden model of the pavilion into a chandelier for the small restaurant room in Križanke.

In memory of the gathering of Slovenian communists in Okroglica, Plečnik designed a massive stone table, while two stone vases next to the pavilion commemorate the gatherings in Dolenjske toplice and Čebine.

In the spirit of the time in which the pavilion was being built, an entry from the diary of Dr Lojze Gostiša from when he visited Plečnik's home (16 March 1956) has to be mentioned: *"He spoke of his plans for the Brioni shed. He was visibly better when I was leaving and said that he had to work so that he would not be sick."* And: *"You have your Party. I am thrilled by everything good and beautiful that you will do. I will be with you with all my heart and, as you can see, I have been with you. I worked on this building with all dedication to serving the people."*

TITO LOVED THIS ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE

The power and quality of Plečnik's architecture lie in the originally transformed antique starting point or in the Etruscan and Greek tradition. Plečnik is recognisable for his transformation and use of Greek and Etruscan architectural elements and principles.

He designed the Brioni pavilion filled with artistic inspiration and enthusiasm, and perhaps also the memory of the Italian symbiosis between the human hand and Heaven's wonders.

Judging from photographic sources, Tito often enjoyed Plečnik's pavilion. He had a garden spot there, with wicker chairs and a table, sipping coffee and smoking his favourite cigar, alone or in the company of others.



Photo: Andrej Peunik/MGML

The Plečnik on Brioni exhibition, which has been organised by Plečnik House and the National and University Library, unveils the previously unknown original plans of the pavilion and photographs of Plečnik's two visits to Brioni, including Plečnik's last portraits. Special acknowledgements go to Dr Lojze Gostiša, who donated the presented materials to the NUK Manuscript Collection. There is also Dr Gostiša's especially valuable personal testimony on the circumstances that contributed to the development of this project, which is now Plečnik's symbolic testament.

CONDUCTOR JANKO KASTELIC

His home: the world and music

PETRA LOŽAR

Conductor Janko Kastelic is one of those artists who like to renew their strength during the summer months in the unique atmosphere of Piran.
Photo: Marina Shunko Kūche



Janko Kastelic

Piran, an old seaport town developed on salt, used to be a cosmopolitan seaside town marked mostly by the influence of nearby Venice. Its narrow streets and close-set Mediterranean houses serve as a unique background to different cultural events in town. Thanks to such events, various artists spend their summer holidays there, taking advantage of the most photogenic town on the Slovenian coast to stimulate their creativity.

Conductor Janko Kastelic is one of those artists who, together with his family, like to renew his strength for his artistic creation in the unique atmosphere of this town during the summer months.

Kastelic's home is the world, but his path always brings him, albeit just for his holidays, to Slovenia and particularly to Piran and Ljubljana. To Ljubljana because of his relatives, and to Piran because of his deep friendship with the parish priest Zorko Bajc, a devoted guardian and custodian of the town's invaluable cultural heritage. His lawn beside the St George Pastoral Centre sees richly varied and artistic events throughout the summer months. Through the years, Kastelic and Bajc have formed a sincere bond of friendship. As a token of his thanks and appreciation to Mr. Bajc and his affection for cultural activities, Kastelic bestowed his grand piano to the Pastoral Centre, with the purpose of giving young talents an instrument to give concerts on. The piano was shipped from Toronto, through Cairo to Koper, which was a considerable logistic feat, but well worth the effort, as its beautiful sound now resounds throughout Piran,

Kastelic has been active in opera, but is also dynamic in the choral and orchestral literature. Kastelic has composed film music, conducted orchestras in popular festivals and even improvised during the Pope's visit to Slovenia in 1996.

Furthermore, Janko Kastelic is recognised as a distinguished instrumentalist, particularly because of his improvisational skills at

the piano, organ and the harpsichord. All of this is reflected in his view of a contemporary musician, who has to be highly versatile and knowledgeable.

CULTUREPOINT PIRAN FESTIVAL

Being an advocate of educating young musicians and of comprehensive music education, Kastelic founded CulturePoint Piran, a festival, to promote young upcoming artists and to bring attention to the beautiful city of Piran to foreigners. Due to his busy schedule, he has put the festival on hold in recent years, but it is clear from our conversation that it will hopefully soon be revived.

Janko Kastelic was born in Ljubljana and moved to Canada in his early childhood. He began his musical career at St Michael's Choir School in Toronto as a boy soprano and accompanist. He was invited to this unique school (a copy of the Viennese Boys choir school in Austria) thanks to his role in *The Ugly Duckling*, where he played the leading role and was immediately noticed. Later, he travelled extensively with the Choir and gained much insight into the treasure trove of choral literature.

Nevertheless, Janko Kastelic was not only a talented singer but also talented in playing the piano and the organ. He was awarded the gold medal from the Western Ontario Conservatory of Music in both piano and organ at a very young age.

There had been no such talented or trained musicians in Kastelic's family until then. His maternal grandfather was self-taught, and he apparently inherited his love of music from him, just like his first instrument, a diatonic accordion. Upon graduation from the choir school, Kastelic was accepted to the Edward Johnson Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto, where he continued his studies in conducting, music theory, composition, and piano. His aim was to become a professional pianist, but he suffered an

unfortunate hand injury before his studies. He was no longer able to practice for several hours a day. Together with his university teachers, he decided to continue his studies in conducting, theory and composition, which he considers, regardless of the injury, was the right decision for his future. *"Being a pianist means living a pretty solitary life, while being a conductor demands teamwork."* After he completed his studies at the University of Toronto, his desire to learn and experience more compelled him back to Europe and to

Slovenia, where he attained a position as an accompanist and assistant conductor at the Slovenian National Theatre Opera and Ballet Ljubljana. One of the reasons why he chose Ljubljana to start his artistic career in Europe was because his family originates from there. He knew and was determined early on to sharpen his artistic skills in other larger European capitals. After two seasons at the Slovenian National Theatre Opera and Ballet Ljubljana, he was invited to be the assistant accompanist at the Paris National Opera (*Opéra National de Paris*), where he began to work with prominent singers and conductors. His career path continued to the Vienna State Opera (*Wiener Staatsoper*), where he was appointed assistant conductor and second chorus master in 2002. In late 2005, he became one of the heads of the Opera School for children at the Vienna State Opera. As assistant conductor, he was responsible for the demanding choruses in Schönberg's opera *Moses und Aaron* at the Vienna State Opera in March 2007. The following year, he conducted Strauss' opera *Die Fledermaus* at Schönbrunn.

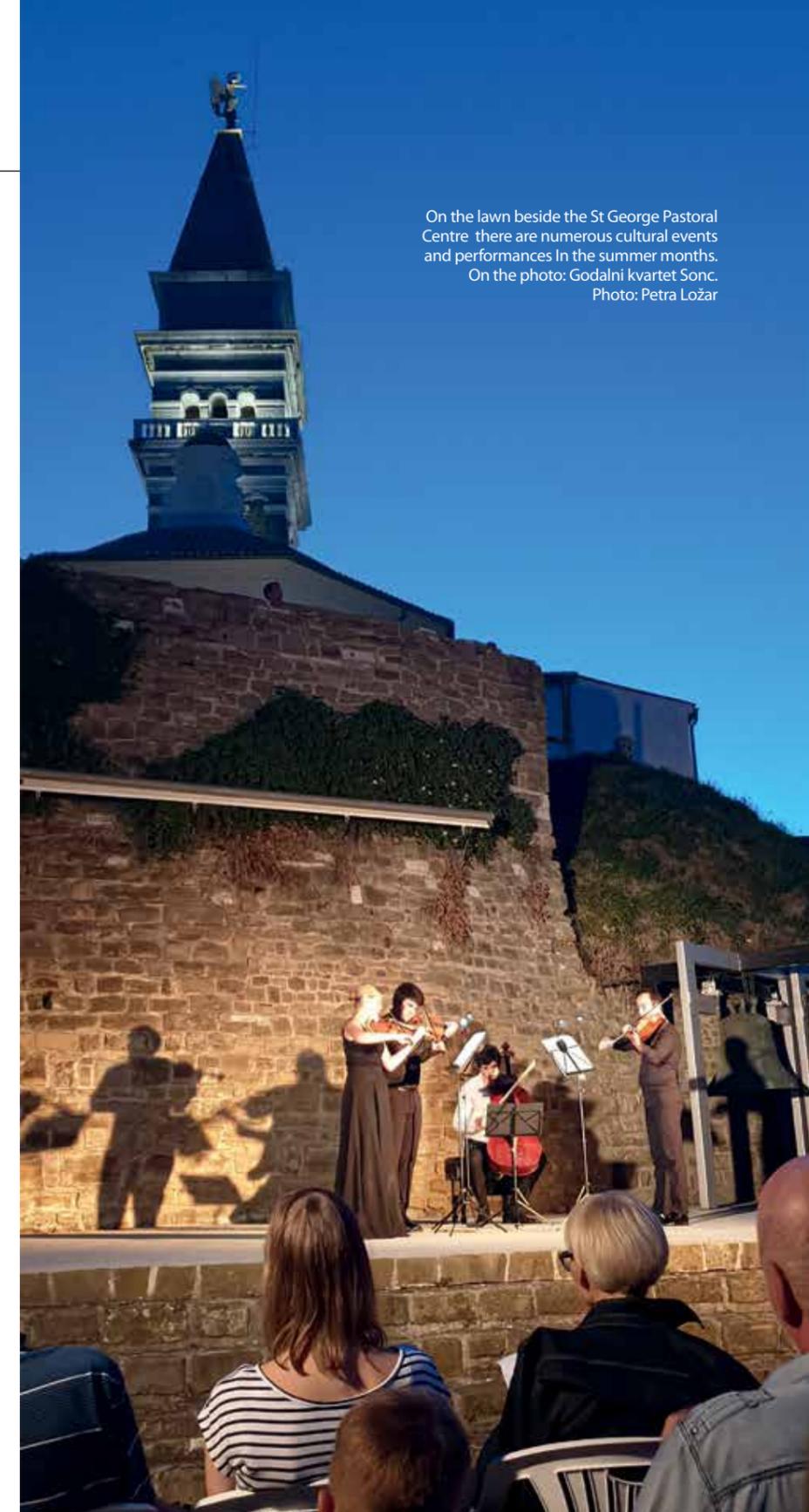
His path brought him back to Slovenia, and he began working as artistic director at the Slovenian National Theatre Opera and Ballet Maribor in 2008. Under his short tenure the opera house began to receive great acclaim across the borders and Europe. Unfortunately, he had to terminate his work there prematurely due to health reasons. He took some years off to recover and reflect on the follow-up of his career.

After a three-year creative break and some reflection, in March 2015 he was appointed a conductor at the prestigious Viennese Hofmusikkapelle at the Hofburg in Vienna.

He was the first Slovenian conductor to conduct there in 500 years, after Jurij Slatkonja (21 March 1456, Ljubljana) who founded the Hofmusikkapelle.



Kastelic's home is the word, but his path always brings him to Slovenia, particularly to Piran, because of his deep friendship with the parish priest Zorko Bajc, a devoted guardian and custodian of the town's invaluable cultural heritage.
Photo: Zorko Bajc



On the lawn beside the St George Pastoral Centre there are numerous cultural events and performances in the summer months.
On the photo: Godalni kvartet Sonc.
Photo: Petra Ložar

THE STORY OF BENCHES AND PEOPLE

Unique and artistically designed benches that tell stories

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ

THE TEAM BEHIND THE STORY OF BENCHES AND PEOPLE, ZOKL

PHOTO: ANDREJA SERŠEN DOBAJ/STA



Unique bench that brings to life an arena for socialising. The sculptor is Robi Jurak.

With its unique and artistically designed benches, The Story of Benches and People project addresses the people living in or visiting Maribor. The project brings together various authors, sculptors, painters, architects, and industrial designers who are willing to gift their creations to the city and contribute to its artistic visual image with unique benches which bring to life an arena for socialising.

"These artistic benches are placed at various locations throughout the city and connect to a tourist path bringing new energy, as creating something that is available to all is infused with the realisation that we are much more when we are a part of a collective whole. Through beauty, content, and creative fulfilment, the authors communicate with us. Especially important are the connections at all levels, among the authors, the profession, those who give content and those who wittingly or unwittingly absorb it," says Liljana Jarh, the project's mastermind and president of the Story of Benches and People Association. *"We want our ideas and creativity to liven up the visual image of the capital of the Slovenian Styria, and to offer an aesthetic place for resting or socialising, contributing to a higher quality of life, coexistence, and cooperation in the city,"* says Dika Vranc, member of the project team.

For the past four years, the project has been marked by the non-commercial and voluntary participation of authors and owners or managers of bench locations and the project's organisational team.

EACH NEW BENCH IS A NEW STORY

Each bench has its own theme, which inspires the author's design and choice of material and adds new content to the location. The first bench, Open Book by Nejc Brezovšek, stands in front of the

University Library of Maribor. It is also used as a place for free book exchange.

The Woman's Bench by academic sculptor Metka Kavčič is an example of a story which is closely connected to the location. The bench stands in front of the Judgement Tower and tells the story of Inquisition against "witches" in Maribor in the Late Middle Ages. Two complementary benches, which symbolise coupledness and polarity, the intertwining and complementing of all that is different in one, are called The Two of Us. They stand in Slomškov trg square and are the work of academic sculptor Dr Marjan Drev. There is a bench with the design of Slovenian lace included in the metalwork by Dr h. c. Vojko Pogačar, academic sculptor, which stands in front of the Večer publishing house.

The author of the Stand and Withstand bench is architect Uroš Rošker. The bench was placed before the Evangelical Church in Maribor for the 500th anniversary of Protestantism and bears a quote from Martin Luther: "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree" as well as a quote by Primož Trubar: "To stand and withstand". The Sklop bench in Židovski trg square is the work of architect Janko Rožič. It is designed as a large ellipse with a cut out circle around a mighty tree carrying the message of connections at all levels; between the galleries at this location, between nature and culture, the city and the river and its surrounding hills (a part of the bench are two stones from Pohorje and Kozjak), between man and the world, etc. The bench in the City Park tells the story of Olympic winner

Leon Štukelj and its author, industrial designer Miha Kuhar, says: "When the masterminds behind the project approached me with the request to design a bench dedicated to Leon Štukelj, I was very honoured. On the one hand because of the invitation but on the other also because of the subject matter I was assigned." Added to the bronze bench are casts of the original rings on which the world famous Olympic gymnast worked out, as well as a cast of his signature.

There is a bench shaped like masks or faces in front of the Maribor Puppet Theatre, the work of mag. Primož Pugelj, academic sculptor. The Bench of Generations stands in front of the Maribor School of Design. It was designed by three young architects – Sašo Žolek, Goran Piršič and Davor Fistrič and stands out for its length (30 metres) and weight (40 tons). A Moment is the name of the bench

placed on the right bank of the Drava River and this was designed by academic sculptor Vlasta Čobal Sedmak. It is dedicated to the Slovenian Hospic association and invites people to bring painted stones with positive messages to the bench.

In four years, fifteen unique benches have been placed across the city and the project is still running, with invitations to the project also coming from other towns. The wish for cooperation and connections goes beyond the city limits of Maribor.

REACTIONS FROM ABROAD

The project has not gone unnoticed by the national and international public. At every opening of these benches, which is organised as a cultural event, a large number of people come and show

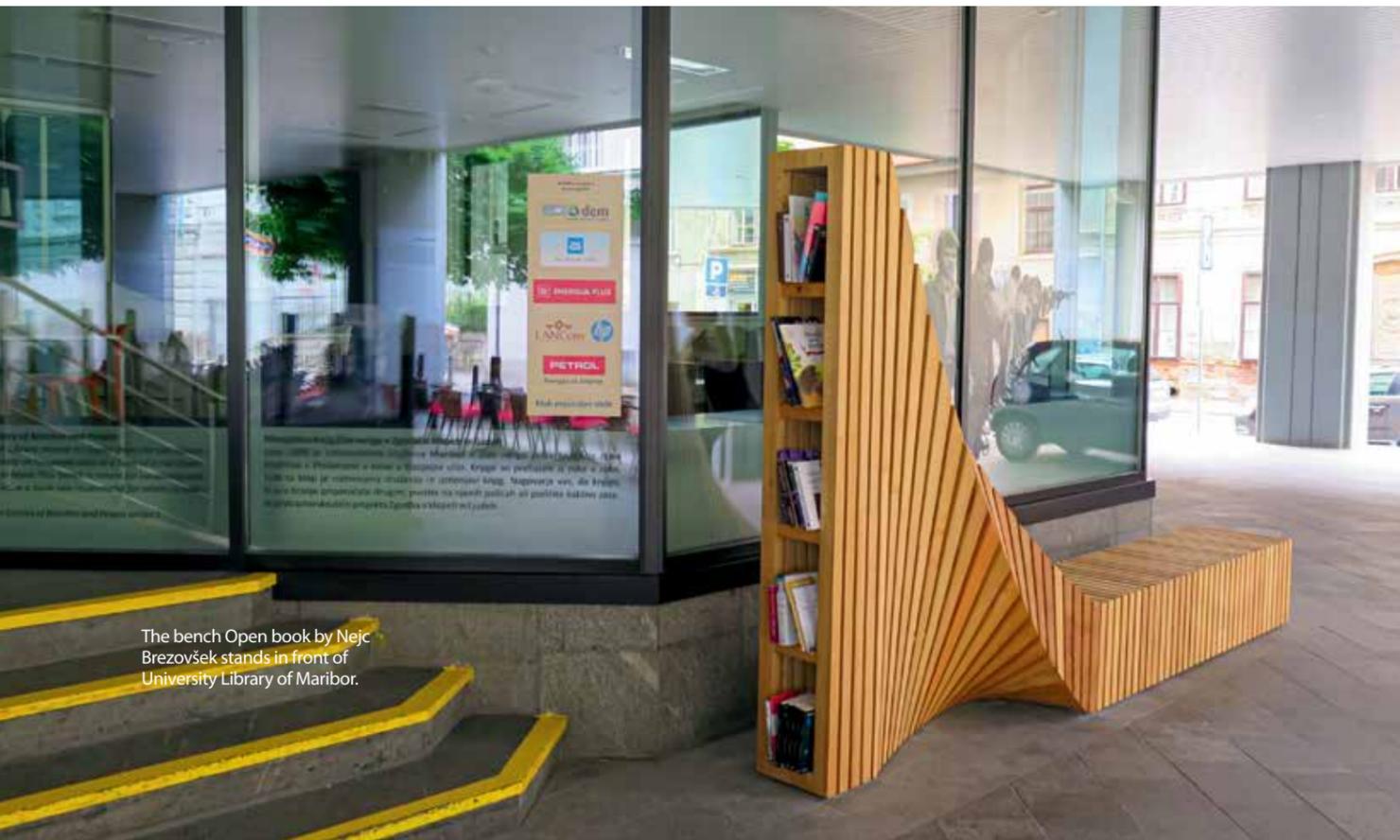
their support. They each have their own favourite bench.

People talk to each other, express their thoughts, and give life to these useful artistic sculptures. Just as the authors of these benches do not all come from Maribor, the reactions to the project come from other cities in Slovenia, even from abroad.

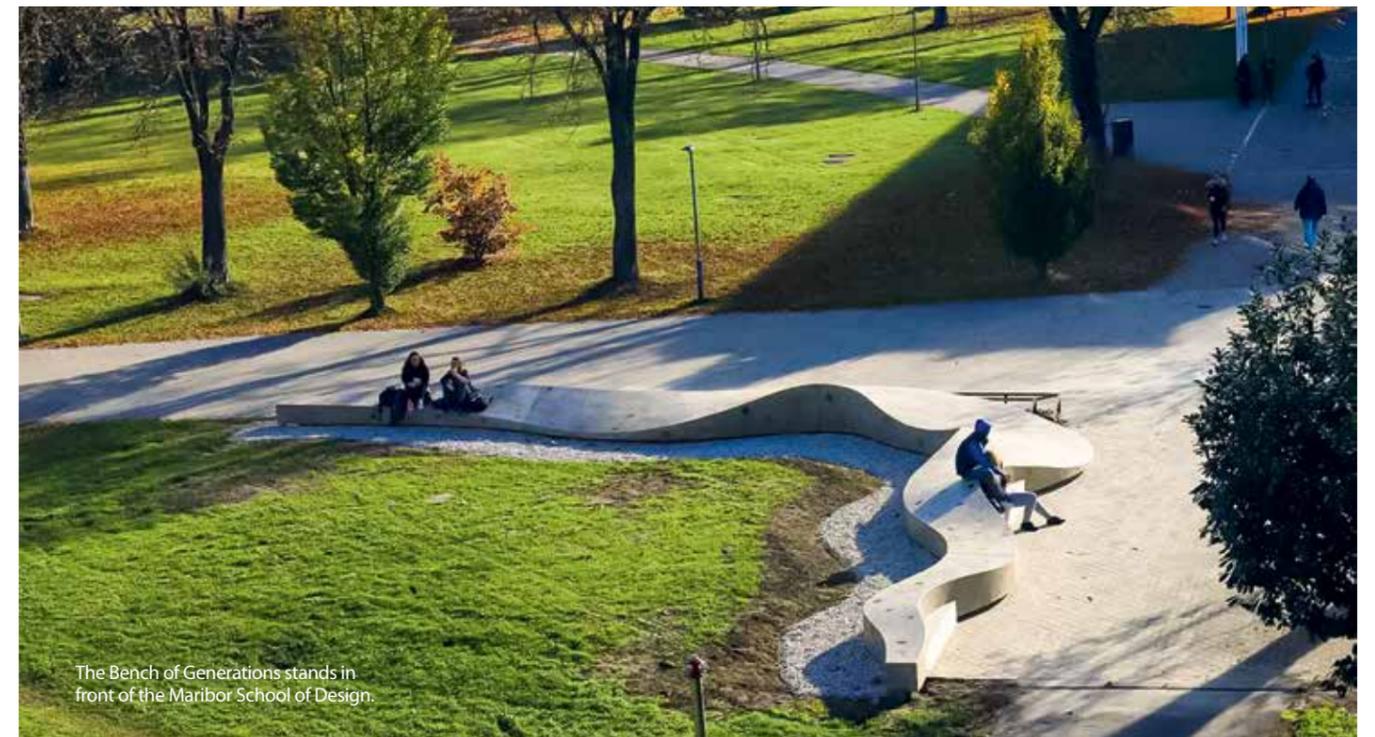
"Decisions on new benches are made one at a time, as the project depends on having the means for the manufacturing and positioning

of the bench, and all required permits. We would not be able to operate without the much appreciated help and support of our donors," says Liljana Jarh.

In the context of the URBACT/Creative Spirits international project and in cooperation with the Municipality of Maribor and the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Transportation Engineering and Architecture, a bench was designed by four master's students of architecture under the tutorship of architect Nande Korpni. The bench, called A Memory, stands next to the Quarantine building, i.e. the former imperial prison. In the context of an international workshop, the project team presented their work to city representatives from across Europe, and took them on an urban stroll through The Story of Benches and People.



The bench Open book by Nejc Brezovšek stands in front of University Library of Maribor.



The Bench of Generations stands in front of the Maribor School of Design.

TATJANA KALAMAR MORALES

Designer and Illustrator – TaTiKALAMAR

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: PERSONAL ARCHIVES



Tatjana Kalamar Morales

She loves design in which the beautiful, the functional, and the comfortable go hand in hand. She has always been close to fashion, and loves natural materials such as high-quality double mercerised cotton, silk, and flax.

Her pillows are made of natural fabrics and filling. The sun- and moon-shaped pillows can bring reading closer and make it more comfortable. Especially attractive are the inspirational illustrations on the book holders and bookmarks. All for pleasant reading which then becomes dreaming, says the designer and illustrator Tatjana Kalamar Morales.

Your pillows for books, tablets and laptops are a welcome addition to the couch, kitchen or bed. Your offer had to be expanded to pillowcases, as customers said they loved falling asleep on your pillows.

The book pillow helps us when we are reading on the sofa, in bed or at the table.

As a lover of good books and everything beautiful, and especially everything natural, the logical step for me was to include buckwheat husks, which have so many positive characteristics. Buckwheat as the forgotten crop of Prekmurje was also the subject of my research thesis in grammar school.

Fortunately, it has returned to our fields. Buckwheat husks are a side product, as buckwheat is mainly used as food. The pillow, which is filled with buckwheat husks, anatomically conforms to the body, which makes it especially pleasant for use. The product is made of two components, and therefore has two functions. The pillow is also a book holder, while I also made an iPad holder, which is easy to remove because of the velcro strip which is also the label. You simply remove the book holder and rest on the pil-

low, which then anatomically conforms to the shape of your head or another part of the body.

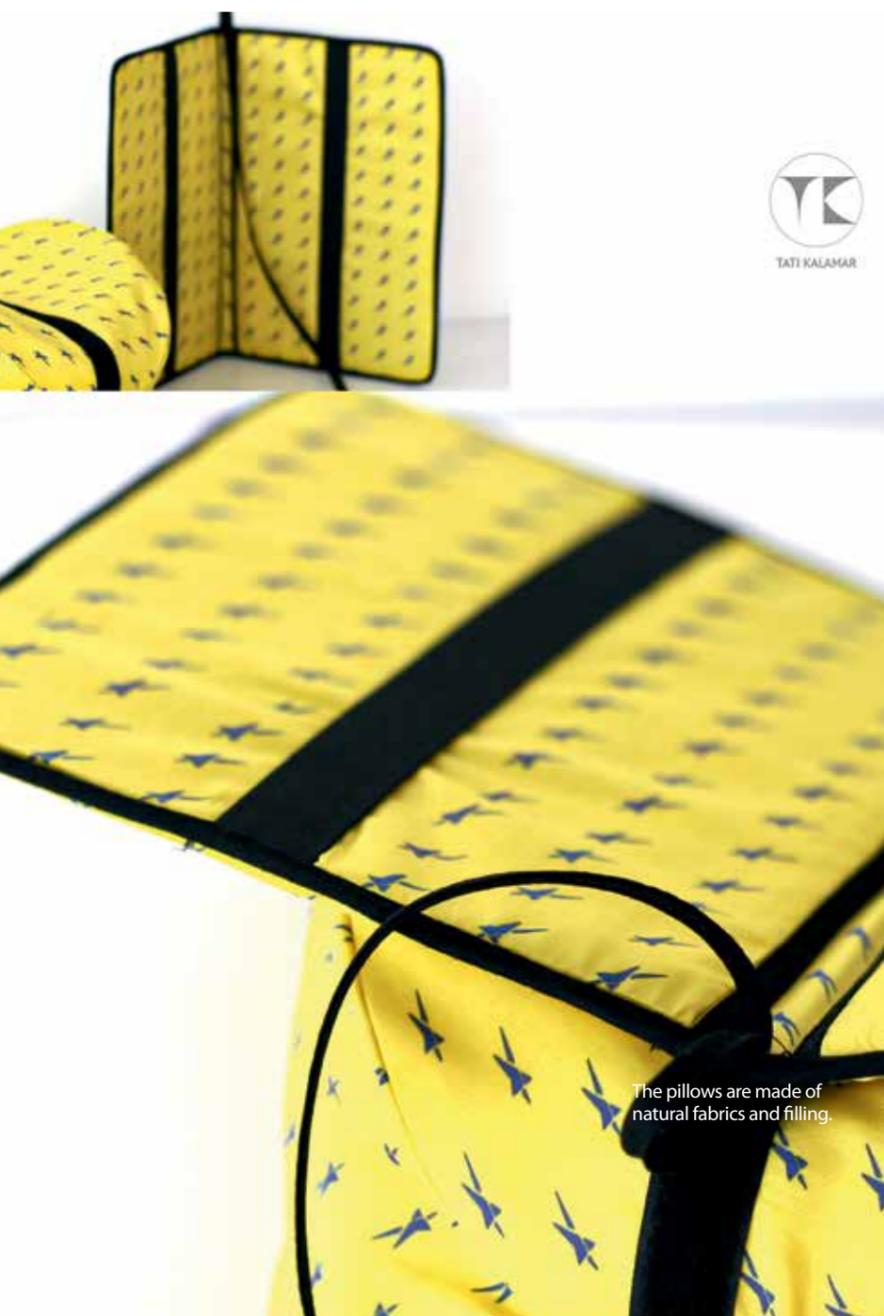
So, when we are tired, this is the time for the second function?

It is interesting that some of my friends use the pillow for completely different purposes. One of them sleeps on it, another used it to help her recover after surgery, while yet another friend's children have turned it into a ball. When the product creates new stories, a smile comes to my face. Perhaps this product is not a necessary tool for survival, but it is definitely welcome and can be a lovely present. It is usually made of cotton, but it is also very beautiful in silk. In the future they will be totally unique, as I will design each of them separately from leftover silk used for the making of ties in Italy.

My customers are great book lovers, and lovers of high-quality products in general.

You studied in New York. What effect did this have on your creativity and new ideas?

Parsons School of Design is one of the most famous schools of design in the world. I was very curious about what studying there would be like. My knowledge from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering of the University of Ljubljana (Textile and Fashion Design) was the right basis for confident debate and criticism during my continuing education in the context of the spring semester in Digital Graphics and at ICP. It gave me a new wind in my sails, awakening a new passion for illustrations, after spending 10 years designing clothes in Mura, where I was the head of creative development for two years. During my two years in New York I realised that changing directions within design was a completely logical thing that can be an upgrade to all that you do. Even if it might seem that creating over 200 digital portraits of globally re-



TATI KALAMAR

The pillows are made of natural fabrics and filling.

nowned managers for a New York company might not be in any way related to my previous job in Slovenia, in the end, the creative process is rather similar.

Are the working conditions for an illustrator similar in the two countries?

Illustration has become a global phenomenon, and its future lies in the search for new paths, how to develop a new idea, how to chart new territory and enlighten it in a special and authentic way. It is true that the conditions in New York are different and prices better known, but you have to be resourceful, the same as in Slovenia. Knowledge matters, but also a little bit of luck.

What is the best part of what you do?

Creativity is a challenge given meaning by a smile which appears when you least expect it. I love developing an idea, even a brand, which a customer has been carrying inside them for the longest time but was unable to draw or create themselves. I try to step outside the box I am given and create something new with details, materials, and the conventional form. I am not afraid of the word classic, as it can always be put in a different context.

This is why I see it as an inspiration in fashion accessories such as scarves, where the illustration is my personal mark.

I always loved touching silk and wool. I always get goose bumps when I find a piece which is really unique. When I was designing golf clothes and men's suits for e.mura, I loved designing jackets and coats with hidden pockets and other details. Yes, I have always been drawn to details. When we discover them in our own way, a new story and a new world open.

Your ideas, plans and focus for the future?

For me, the world of designing clothes, accessories, uniforms and illustrations is a large world of images where the first impression counts. The focus will also be consulting on dress codes. Together with Dr Simona Šarotar Žižek, we have been creating a new programme in which we combine the knowledge of management and the effect of the image. This does not include only clothes,

even if they are the integral part. The most personal part will be the new limited edition of TatiKALAMAR innovative products made from high-quality natural fabrics (shopping bags, shoulder bags for bikes, phone cases with EM smog protection, scarves, multi-purpose scarves). When you work with the Italians and other neighbours, a different perspective, extensive experience, and lively inspiration are always present.



New edition of TatiKALAMAR innovative products.



AN UPSCALE GASTRONOMIC EXPERIENCE IS MORE THAN JUST EXCELLENT CUISINE
The need for young staff in the hospitality industry

META PAVLIN

Chef Tomaž Bevčič of Rizibizi restaurant.
Photo: Klemen Korenjak

How important is gastronomy to you when choosing your holiday destination? Research says that this is one of the main selection criteria of every third guest. When it comes to the Slovenian gastronomic offer, we cannot overlook the question of its quality, which goes beyond the basic factor of culinary skills.

Experts say that a comprehensive gastronomic experience is essential, and they are joining forces to educate and popularise the various catering and tourism-related professions.

The Gault & Millau Workshop – Knowledge Under the Toque is one of the most important such projects.

Slovenia has unique conditions and distinctive advantages to create a superior culinary experience. We have a spectacular environment, with beautiful and diverse nature that impresses every visitor. We are increasingly committed to sustainable cultivation, we respect what is local, and cultivate culinary folk memories and traditions. And we have exceptional individuals – local growers, top chefs, winemakers, and caterers who create a variety of gastronomic experiences.

According to the Slovenian Tourist Board, today as many as 30% of tourists choose a holiday destination based on culinary expectations. For such people, enjoying good food and beverages is their primary criterion when choosing a destination. *“Devoted gastronomy-loving tourists reach out to various guides, seek knowledge and information, carefully plan and book their visit in advance. These guests are also seeking quality gastronomic offerings, which is why gastronomic guides are an active channel for presenting providers, manufacturers and destinations, or for enhancing the recognisability of gastronomic brands in European markets and beyond,”* notes Mag. Maja Pak, the Director of the Slovenian Tourist Board (STO), explaining the decision to partner with the Gault & Millau international gastronomic guide.

Gault & Millau is one of the three most influential international guides in the world of gastronomy, and was brought to Slovenia last year by Mira Šemić, a wine academician and one of the ambassadors of Slovenia – European Region of Gastronomy 2021.



The winners of Gault & Millau Slovenia 2019 awards.
Photo: Peter Irman

“With Gault & Millau, Slovenia received its culinary itinerary,” says Ms Šemič, the Director of Gault & Millau Slovenia. “And it received much more, namely an ambitious team that creates links between the key players in Slovenian gastronomy with one strong ambition: to raise the standards of comprehensive gastronomic experience to the level of top-class gastronomy,” she adds.

CHEFS ARE FAMOUS, WAITERS NOT YET

Slovenian cuisine has made significant progress in recent years. Exceptional chefs, innovative and creative, dedicated to local traditions while working with modern trends, have put Slovenia on the map of international cuisine with their successes and recognitions. As a result, the status of a chef has also been elevated in the eyes of the professional as well as general public. But while on the one hand the recognition, popularity and respect for the cooking profession has grown, the rest of the hospitality profession has been gradually losing ground. *“The gastronomic experience is always comprehensive. As a guest, we do not only experience the taste of the food and the perfection of the plate we get on the table. In fact, our experience is influenced by everything that is part of it: from the waiter’s smile to his ability to present dishes and suggestions for wine choices, to the ambience, tableware, everything. The Gault & Millau guide rates just that – the whole experience, so it is also a great incentive to create a top gastronomic – as well as tourist – offer,” says Ms Šemič. Maja Pak also agrees with her, and emphasises that “the arrival of this globally influential and recognisable guide is positive*

for raising the standards in the catering industry, since the providers included in the evaluation continually improve their offer and thus also their rating in the guide.”

Gault & Millau, however, has done a lot more in Slovenia, connecting the country, the profession, interest associations, the economy and practice in the field of education, and increasing the enthusiasm of young people for all the hospitality-related professions.

It started the Gault & Millau Workshop – Knowledge Under the Toque, which offers young people free education in all related areas.

YOUNG PEOPLE EXCITED ABOUT KNOWLEDGE UNDER THE TOQUE

The first in a series of events, the Gault & Millau Workshop – Knowledge Under the Toque, took place in May at Hotel Slon in Ljubljana, and was attended by more than 120 young people and their mentors from Slovenian high schools and colleges of hospitality and tourism. The event united both theory and practice: at the beginning, a comprehensive picture of Slovenia as a gastronomic tourist destination was outlined by Mag. Maja Pak,

followed by an introduction to the skills of a waiter by Ms Šemič. Young people also gained an insight into the basics of sensory analysis of wines, and in the practical part they upgraded this with the basics of food and wine pairing. Chef Ana Roš recounted her life story, from humble beginnings to the stars. Chef Tomaž Bevčič (Rizibizi restaurant) and Chef Jure Tomič (Oštarija Debeluh) gave them an introduction to cooking techniques. Chef Bevčič made a fish plate of bass with asparagus, to which Ms Šemič added and made a sensory description of with stories of the selected wines: Belica Ribolla from Medana, and the renowned Kupljen Riesling. Chef Tomič made a meat plate with roast duck, for which Ms Šemič chose Belica Merlot from Medana and Kobar Blaufränkisch. All the winemakers donated their wines as part of their sponsorship, and the company Lidl Slovenija also supported the event.

“The profession of a waiter is wonderful,” Ms Šemič said to the young people, “It is a creative profession, but it requires a lot of knowledge – about food, about wine, about etiquette, etc. – it requires a comprehensive personality.” Therefore, it is essential that a waiter is well versed in the chef’s work, the processes in the kitchen, and various cooking techniques and specialities, so that he or she can provide the guest with an authentic experience. Ms Šemič worked for many years in the hospitality industry, and learned many critical elements of a good eating place as the own-

er of a restaurant and later a wine shop in the centre of Ljubljana. She gladly shared these experiences with the young people at the event. *“You must love what you do. Only in this way will the pleasure of work propel you to learn new skills and to refine yourself in the little details. Do not overlook the details; with them, you can create the perfect picture. And believe me, there is nothing better than seeing a guest go home happy. Thanks to you.”*

A SECOND KNOWLEDGE UNDER THE TOQUE EVENT IN OCTOBER

The next Gault & Millau – Knowledge Under the Toque event will be held on 21 October 2019 at Hotel Slon. All young people who are just entering the hospitality industry, both high-school and college students from all Slovenian schools, as well as young chefs and waiters of Slovenian restaurants, are welcome to attend.

In the second event of the series, knowledge will be shared by Chef Tomaž Kavčič (Gostilna pri Lojzetu), Chef Ksenija Mahorčič (Gostilna Mahorčič), Chef Igor Jagodic (Restaurant Strelec) and again Ms Mira Šemič, director of G&M Slovenia and wine academician. Young people can register for the event via email, which will be published shortly on the Gault & Millau Slovenia website and on the GaultMillauSlovenia Facebook profile.

A STANDARDISED WAY OF EVALUATING EXPERTS

Gault & Millau is one of the three most influential international gastronomic guides. It is known for its chef’s toques, which are assigned to restaurants. The method of evaluation is standardised for all countries and is carried out by independent, educated and anonymous “inspectors”, who visit each restaurant several times. They go as a regular guest, pay the bill, and, based on their experience, they give their assessment based on various criteria.

Restaurants can earn a maximum of 20 points, and depending on the number of points receive from one to five toques. Restaurants that have received at least three toques are included in the guide, while Gault & Millau also presents awards for the Chef of the Year (Igor Jagodic in 2019), the Best Restaurant of the Year Award (Gostilna pri Lojzetu and Hiša Franko in 2019), the Biggest Contribution to the Development of Slovenian Modern Cuisine Award (Janez Bratovž in 2019), the Chef of the Future Award (David Vračko in 2019), Traditional Cuisine Chef Award (Meta Repovž in 2019), the Young Talent Award (Mojmir Marko Šiftar in 2019), the Best Pop Award (to Open Kitchen in 2019), and the Best Waiter Award (Matic Šubic in 2019). The guide also gives evaluations of selected winemakers and microbrewers. The new edition in 2020 will bring some additional local innovations.

The new Gault & Millau Slovenia 2020 guide will be formally presented on 13 November 2019. At the event, both awards and prestigious titles will be given to the recipients for the year 2020.

22ND FESTIVAL OF SLOVENIAN FILM

The Pick of Slovenian Film Creativity

ŠPELA BARLIČ



In the week from 17 to 22 September, Portorož will again, for the twenty-second consecutive year, say goodbye to summer in the best possible way – with film. The last week of summer in Slovenia's most starlit coastal resort will be characterised by the socialising of film enthusiasts and film-makers, and the harvesting of the fruits of the labours of new Slovenian film creativity.

The festival's enviable tradition dates back to the Week of Domestic Film, which was held in Celje in the 1970s. Each year, it draws increasing attention from film-makers, the media, and visitors. In 2018, there were more than 800 accredited guests who enjoyed 112 films, including features, medium-length films, and shorts. The festival has kept up with the public's increased interest and need for more space. After the screens of Portorož Auditorium became too small for the growing number of registered films, a part of the programme moved to the colourful Monfort Exhibition Space, the former salt storehouse on the coast of Portorož, where some screenings are free of charge and attract numerous residents and visitors. The festival makes sure that at the time of the harvest the pick of Slovenian film makes the coast breathe in the rhythm of moving pictures, and once the festival ends it brings its winners to the capital. This year, the winning films will be screened at the Kino Komuna cinema from 24 to 26 September.

In Portorož, we will see new Slovenian films of all lengths and categories, as well as co-productions and children's films.

The films in the competition programme will be in the running for the Vesna Award, the main national award for audio-visual art in the best feature, best documentary, best medium-length, best short and best student film categories, and minority co-production category. Slovenian cinematography is gaining recognition abroad and we anxiously await national premieres of films which were in the competition programmes of major international film festivals: Oroslan by Matjaž Ivanišin in Locarno, Half-Sister by Damjan Kozole in Karlovy Vary, and Stories From The Chestnut Woods by Gregor Božič in Toronto. We look forward to getting to know young film-makers and again spending time with Slovenia's renowned and recognised directors: returning to Portorož are Metod Pevec with I am Frenk, Andrej Košak with All Against

All, Siniša Gačič with the documentary The Daughter of Camorra, Miran Zupanič with the documentary Sing Me a Song, and many others. Every year, there are several award-winning co-production films to be seen. This year, these are Stitches by Miroslav Terzić, the feature God Exists, Her Name is Petrunya by Teona Strugar Mitevska, which premiered in the competition programme of the prestigious Berlinale festival, and the winner of the 2019 Pula Film Festival, The Diary of Diana B by Dana Budisavljevič.

In addition to the film programme, which focuses on national creativity, the professional programme is actively being developed, paving the way for intensive international cooperation in film production and distribution, seeing to the exchange of professional experience, and developing specific film expertise in all phases of film creativity and marketing (project development, post-production, sale of copyrights, etc.). This year, the festival will not only host professional guests from the region, but also numerous guests from Italy: Italian producers and distributors, and representatives of state institutions focusing on the film industry. We also expect interesting Italian film-makers, who will showcase their work at the *Focus, Italia* part of the programme.

The Festival of Slovenian Film will thus enter its 22nd year fully renewed, and symbolically connected with a salt crystal that refers to the heritage of the area.

The Festival Director, Jelka Stergel, hopes that the event will express admiration for film creativity, "which literally represents the essence of art as understood by Hegel: the sensuous presentation of ideas." The screens of this year's film festival will undoubtedly present us with an abundance of good ideas to think about for long into the future.



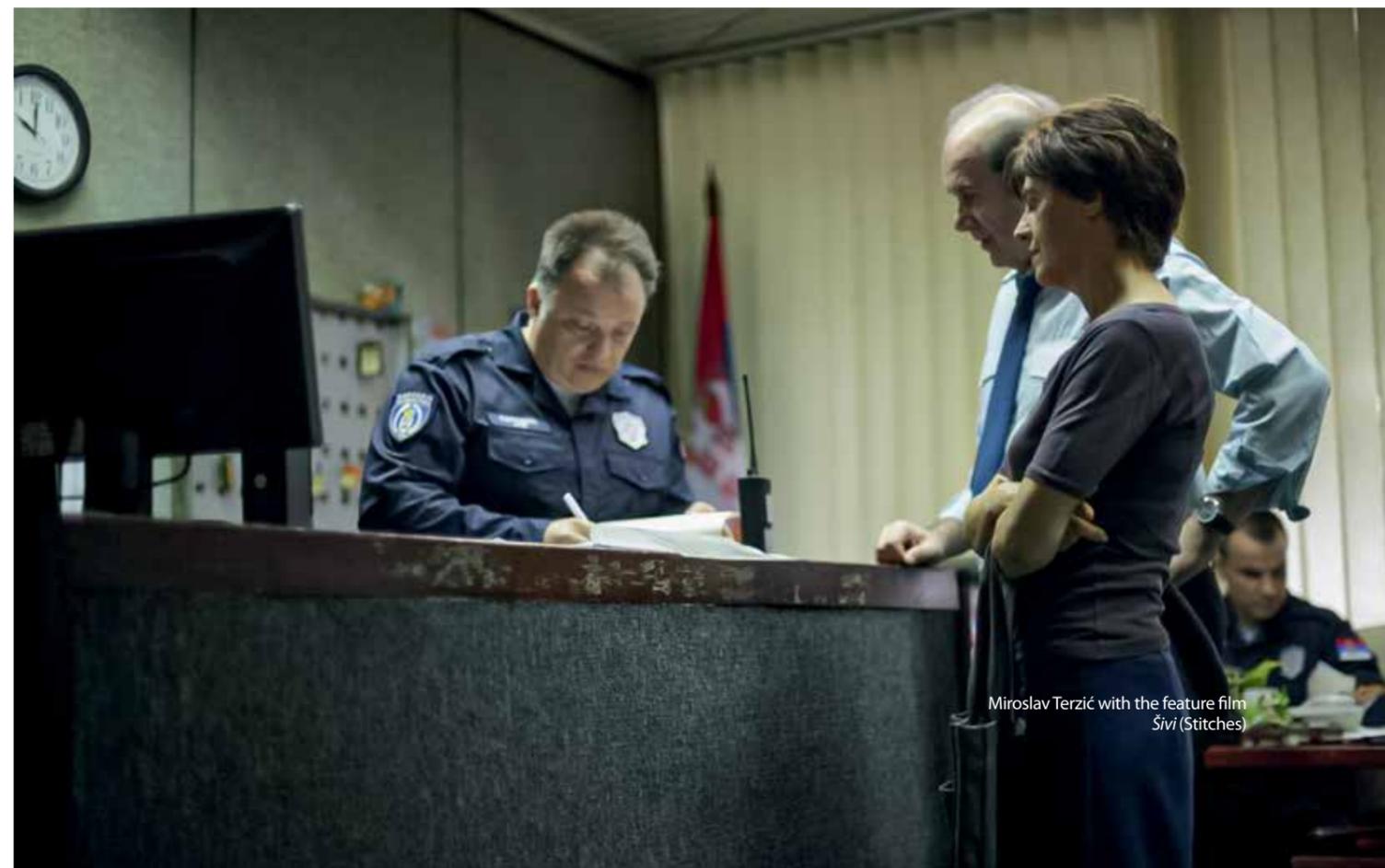
Damjan Kozole with the feature film
Polsestra (Half Sister)



Metod Pevec with the feature film
Jaz sem Frenk (I Am Frenk)



Teona Strugar Mitevaska with the feature film
Bog obstaja, ime ji je Petrunija (God Exists, Her Name Is Petrunya)



Miroslav Terzić with the feature film
Šivi (Stitches)

THE JULIANA TRAIL – LONG-DISTANCE HIKING TRAIL

Beauty that takes your breath away

POLONA PREŠEREN

The Juliana Trail connects alpine valleys, pastures and other places in the Julian Alps. Photo: Marko Sinkovec/www.slovenia.info

A completely new hiking trail, the Juliana Trail, will be officially opened at the end of September. It runs around the Julian Alps, and thus is a route on which you will not conquer the summits. Instead you will feel the summits and admire them from a respectful distance, and learn about the rich natural and cultural heritage of life at the foot of the Julian Alps.

The circular hiking trail around the Julian Alps offers the hiker a different experience of Triglav and other mountains, and provides an adventure in Triglav National Park that is respectful and considerate of nature. On the Juliana Trail, we will get to know the places and people at the foot of the mountains, and be fascinated by the views of Triglav and its surroundings.

THE JULIANA TRAIL CONNECTS THE JULIAN ALPS AND THE FOOTHILLS

It is dedicated to all lovers of nature and hiking, who want to get acquainted with the Alpine world. In recent years, the number of visitors to the Slovenian mountains has increased considerably, while mountaineers who are striving to collect high altitude sites and beautiful photographs often forget that one should go to the mountains only well-equipped and when physically fit. Above all, having the right amount of respect for the mountains is vital.

The concept of the trail is clear and straightforward: to give the hiker a sense of coexistence with the mountains, to get to know the mountains and respect them.

The trail leads a hiker through discovering the rich cultural heritage of the Julian Alps and their surroundings, including many less known natural features, historical and cultural sites, and knowledge that is passed down from one generation to another. Among such hidden treasures are unique handicraft products and culinary delights, which will give hikers, after long hours of walking, new energy – in addition to giving their taste buds a treat. Of course, there are also the priceless and genuine experiences that can be gathered along the way, and several stories and legends that will help make real memories of the mountains.

“To seek, to walk, to discover and experience an unknown diversity, to offer and use what others do not have; this is the trail to which we invite you, and by which we turn our attention back to its originality and simplicity. With the daily flood of information, technology, noise, and endless rush, modern man has become a seeker of health and peace of mind in forgotten and often distant values,” said the staff at the Bohinj TIC. “It is so beautiful here that it takes your breath away! We have preserved nature for all of you who will take the Juliana Trail,” they added in the invitation to the new path.

The hiking trail is intended for those who are not especially skilled at hiking in the highlands. It is oriented towards sustainable development, since even the vast mountains can accommodate only a limited population, and maintaining a balance is now more critical than ever. Careless trips into the high mountains destroy the natural balance, and if your path leads you away from the Juliana Trail to the heart of the mountains then be sure to act responsibly, watch where you step, be well equipped, and respect nature.

Triglav itself will watch you the entire trail, like a true mighty peak.

The trail around the Julian Alps runs clockwise and is divided into recommended daily stages, designed to allow overnight stays or refreshments, with various food and drink options at the beginning or end of the stages.

THE TRAIL IN 16 STAGES

The trail starts in Kranjska Gora, from where it goes along the left bank of the Sava Dolinka River to Mojstrana, where the stage ends. From Mojstrana, the trail goes again into the sunny Karavanke Mountains to Jesenice to the village below the Stol mountain. Afterwards, the trail leads through the villages of Begunje, Dvorska vas, Gorica and Vrbnje to Radovljica. From this town rich in cultural heritage, the trail descends to the Sava River and goes along its left bank, past the confluence of the Sava Bohinjka and Sava Dolinka Rivers, leads to Šobec and from there to Bled.

Further on, the trail goes along the northern shore of the lake below Bled Castle to Gorje, where the ascent to Pokljuka begins. The trail thus enters Triglav National Park and leads through the Pokljuka Gorge natural monument via the Kranjska dolina valley and Zajavornik mountains to Goreljek on Pokljuka.

From Goreljek, the trail descends through the picturesque villages of Gorjuše and Koprivnik to Bohinj. The trail around Bohinj begins in the Zgornja dolina valley in Jereka, from where it passes through all the villages – Bohinjska Češnjica, Srednja vas and Studor to Stara Fužina on the eastern edge of Lake Bohinj. Along the eastern shore, the trail goes to Ribčev Laz, where it temporarily leaves behind the hamlets and goes under the foothills of the Lower Bohinj mountains and across the Dobrava, with a standpoint to Bohinjska Bistrica, from where the trail crosses from the Gorenjska region to Primorska. Here, the trail leads through the picturesque mountain villages of Kal, Stržišče, Znojile and to Obloke. The trail goes along the trail of the famous Mountain Marathon of Four Municipalities, which attracts more competitors every year from near and far.

Probably one of the most picturesque parts of the trail leads from Most na Soči to Bovec along the Soča River, which inspires with its emerald colour. There are many natural and cultural sights in the area – for example, the remains of the Battles of the Isonzo, and some incredible waterfalls.

In Bovec, we find a historical trail that leads past the fortress of Kluža and further along the Koritnica River to Log pod Mangartom, set under the mighty Alpine walls of Mangart, Jalovec, and Loška stena. Here, we ascend and pass to the Italian side, past Rabelj (Cave del Predil), Trbiž (Tarvisio) and Rateče back to Kranjska Gora, and here the circle is thus concluded.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Total length: 270km
Total height difference: 7,163m
Total no. of stages: 16

Average length of a stage: 17.5km (4–5 hrs)
270km/16 stages
Opening of the trail: end of September

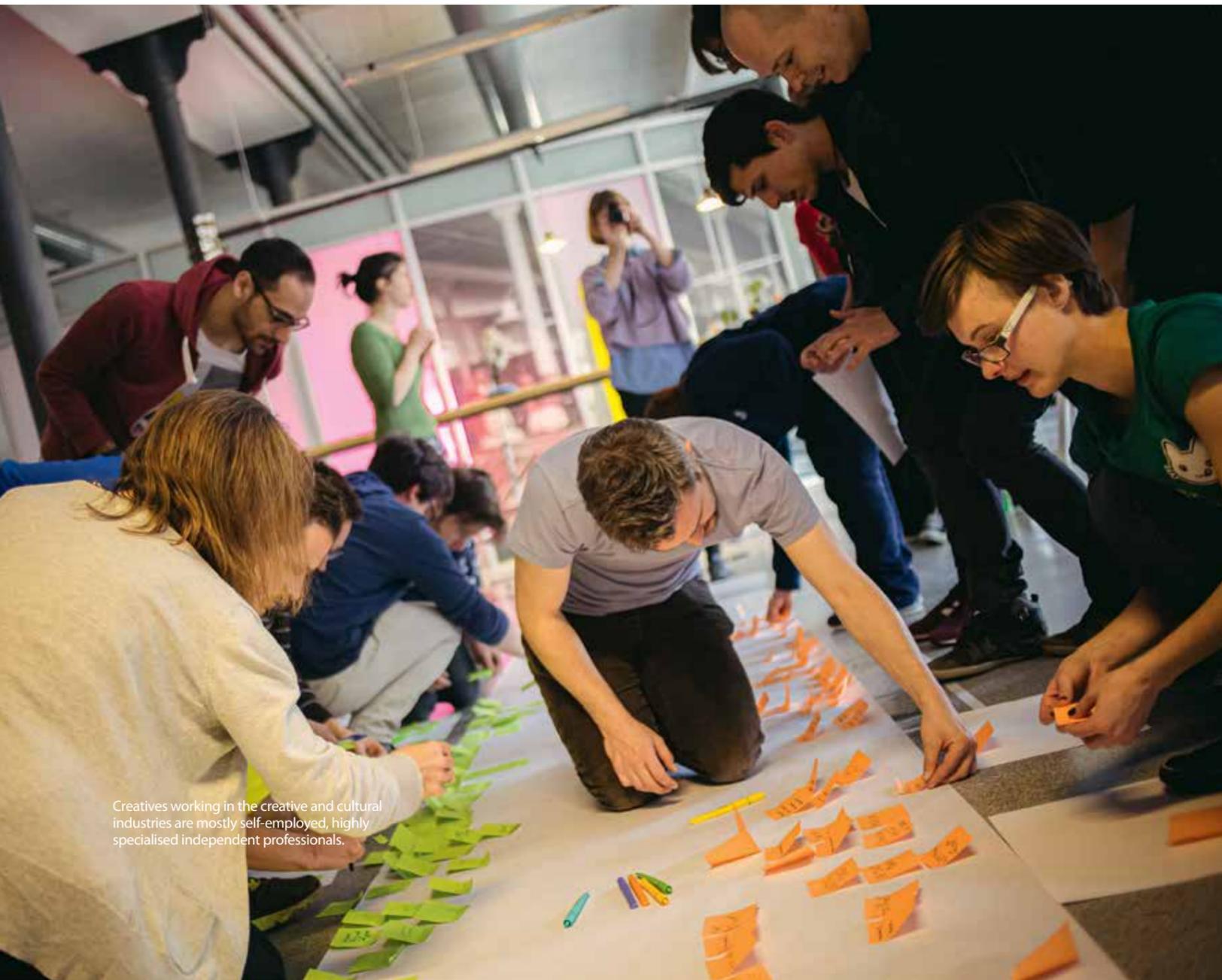
STAGES OF THE JULIANA – JULIAN ALPS TRAIL

Stage 1: Kranjska Gora–Mojstrana	19km	6hrs	+273, –447m
Stage 2: Mojstrana–Jesenice	21km	6hrs	+691, –784m
Stage 3: Jesenice–Begunje	17km	5hrs	+464, –459m
Stage 4: Begunje–Bled	16km	4hrs	+98, –182m
Stage 5: Bled–Goreljek na Pokljuki	21km	7hrs	+900, –91m
Stage 6: Goreljek na Pokljuki–Stara Fužina	22km	6hrs	+313, –1,038
Stage 7: Stara Fužina–Bohinjska Bistrica	11km	3hrs	+104, –152m
Stage 8: Bohinjska Bistrica–Podbrdo optional train Bohinjska Bistrica–Podbrdo	14km	7hrs	+770, –782m
Stage 9: Podbrdo–Grahovo ob Bači	17km	6hrs	+1,009, –1,207
Stage 10: Grahovo ob Bači–Most na Soči	17km	6hrs	+748, –897m
Stage 11: Most na Soči–Tolmin	5km	2hrs	+108, –72m
Stage 12: Tolmin–Kobarid	16km	4hrs	+126, –79m
Stage 13: Kobarid–Bovec	21km	6hrs	+445, –231m
Stage 14: Bovec–Log pod Mangartom	12km	4h	+340, –151m
Stage 15: Log pod Mangartom–Trbiž (Tarvisio)	18km	6hrs	+664, –557m
Stage 16: Trbiž (Tarvisio)–Kranjska Gora	19 km	4hrs	+181, –129m

CREATIVE FORUM LJUBLJANA

Uniting creative capital beyond borders

EVA MATJAŽ, PETRA KEŽMAN
PHOTO: DAVID LOTRIČ BANOVIČ



Creatives working in the creative and cultural industries are mostly self-employed, highly specialised independent professionals.

Creativity is clearly recognised as a driving force for development – social, economic and cultural. It creates job opportunities for young people, and benefits the environment, stability and security.

However, its potential is still greatly untapped, the disconnect between policy makers and creative communities being one of the principal reasons. How can we support creativity and not suffocate it? How can we approach young creative minds and their innovative companies? Where does foreign policy come in?

CREATIVE CAPITAL AS THE NEW MODEL OF WEALTH

Wealth manifests in different forms. Its broadest definition is anything of value that can be used for transactions. People can possess or be deprived of wealth in terms of money, time, space and social connections, most commonly known as social capital. The forms of capital are constantly reinvented because of the changing needs, wishes and problems faced by individuals or society as a whole.

Unarguably, the most important form of emerging capital is today creative capital. Similar to human capital, creative capital is a stock of habits, knowledge, skills, personal and social traits embodied in the ability to perform labour that produces economic, social and environmental value.

Nowadays, it is not sufficient to look solely at the economic output of capital; we have to broaden the equation by including also the impact on individuals, communities, societies and on our micro and macro environments.

Although an awareness of the world's most burning issues is very present among those who produce creative capital, this does not weaken the creative and cultural industries as an economic sector. On the contrary, in developed countries they are among the strongest producers of GDP, often more so than the energy and/or automotive industries, and with enormous spill-over effects on other industries.

CREATIVE HUBS AS CATALYSTS

The highest concentration of creative capital can be detected in creative hubs. Similar to the above mentioned models of wealth, such hubs also take on many forms, from nomadic communities of independent professionals to generally bottom-up developed creative centres. These centres include co-working platforms and offer a wide series of workshops, lectures, meet-ups and conferences, tailored to the needs of the creative sector.

The majority of creative hub users are people working in the cultural and creative industries. They are mostly self-employed independent professionals, and therefore have specific traits and needs in order to produce the desired outcomes.

Just as libraries, for example, are understood as a basic infrastructure that students need to develop, so creative hubs represent the essential work infrastructure for creative workers, whose number today is rising steeply.

However, new models of public support to creative hubs are urgently needed in order to accelerate the development of the cultural and creative industries.

CREATIVE FORUM LJUBLJANA

To unlock the cultural and creative sector's potential for regional development, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Union for the Mediterranean launched Creative Forum Ljubljana last year. With its focus on the Southern Mediterranean and the Western Balkans, it brings together policy makers and creative communities from twenty countries. While its first edition in April 2018 reviewed the regional state of play of the sector and called for more collaboration between governments and creatives, this year's Forum will go a step further.

From 12 to 15 November 2019, it will prepare the ground for collective action by creating region-wide communities of creative hubs, creative entrepreneurs and policy makers that will grow and co-operate well beyond the Forum.

It will offer concrete capacity building workshops and study trips for young creatives and a lot of space for dialogue with the representatives of the related governments and international organisations. The goal is to set up a "toolbox of change" and platforms that will facilitate further cooperation.

The participants will explore the dynamics of the local creative sector through visits to see some of Slovenia's best practices, which will serve as a springboard for discussions about the sector's needs and challenges. They will also attend the opening ceremony of BIO26 *Common Knowledge*, one of the most important international design biennales in Europe, in the Museum of Architecture and Design in Ljubljana.

CULTURE AND CREATIVITY AS FOREIGN POLICY TOOLS

Culture has long been sidelined as a lesser area in foreign policy, overshadowed by hard power subjects, more directly profitable tools such as economic diplomacy or more urgent issues such as climate change. In the last decade, however, it has gained substantial momentum. In the increasing complexity of foreign affairs, culture and creativity's potential is now widely lauded – the potential to empower individuals, bind societies together, create mutual understanding, stabilise regions, facilitate dialogue, create opportunities for young people, spur economic growth and sustainable development.

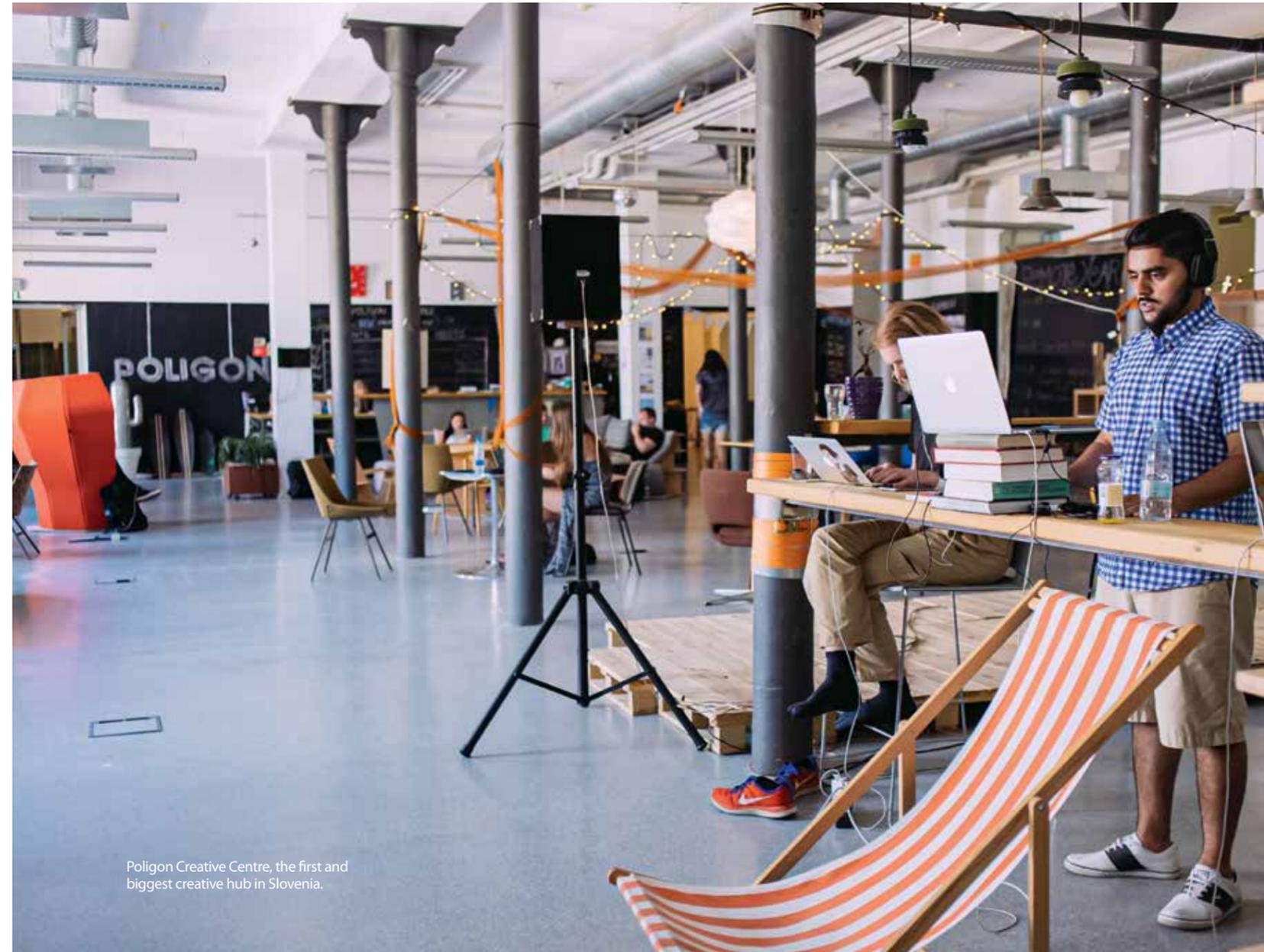
Slovenia was one of the first EU members to point to culture's central role in foreign policy during its first EU Council Presidency in 2008. Since then, the EU has developed its first strategy for international cultural relations and a new agenda for culture. Both call for cultural relations that go beyond mere promotion, are rooted in the local context and based on the principles of co-creation and mutual learning, continuously inspired by the synergies among the arts, the economy and science.

Bottom-up is the new keyword.

The capital of culture and creativity is related to the support it gets from its (policy) environment.

Creative Forum Ljubljana is therefore a catalyst, facilitator, and advocate of a change in policy that will assure an enabling environment for the cultural and creative sector in the region, be it social innovators from Albania, designers from Egypt, musicians from Palestine or architects from Slovenia.

More information: creativeforum.si



Poligon Creative Centre, the first and biggest creative hub in Slovenia.

AMAZING KAYAKING

Slovene rivers and lakes attract the world's best kayakers

NINA JELENC
PHOTO: PERSONAL ARCHIVES



Špela Ponomarenko Janič and Anja Osterman

Slovenia and its waterways are a real paradise for kayak lovers, both at recreational and world-class levels. Canoeists and kayakers are traditionally thrilled about Bovec and the emerald Soča River, which has hosted the World and European Canoe Slalom and Wildwater Canoeing Championships.

In recent years, however, Bohinj and Most na Soči have attracted a growing number of foreign sprint canoeists, who visit these places to practice.

The world class kayakers and canoeists have less than a year before they will compete at the most important sports event of 2020 – the Olympic Games in Tokyo. The best contenders at this year's Canoe Sprint and Canoe Slalom World Championships already guaranteed their tickets to the Olympic Games, while a small number of places will be available during the next year's Continental Qualification Competitions.

Consequently, this year is of particular importance for sprint canoeists and slalom athletes. To prepare for the forthcoming challenges to the best of their abilities, numerous foreign athletes have found their peace and retreat in Slovenia, where they prepare themselves for the big event.

For several seasons before this year's most important races, our finest flatwater canoeists, Špela Ponomarenko Janič and Anja Osterman, have been practising in Bohinj – a gem among Slovenia's tourist destinations. This season, however, athletes from Austria and New Zealand joined them, including Lisa Carrington, the double Olympic and ten-time world champion, with a bronze Olympic Games medal, too.

"I trained before the Rio Olympics with Špela in 2015 and 2016. We have established a good relationship, so it was easy to come and train here," said Lisa Carrington. Her teammate Caitlin Ryan also felt at home in Bohinj: *"It's very similar to the South Island in New Zealand, the greenery is beautiful, the water is beautiful and the people are so nice."*

Špela Ponomarenko Janič and Anja Osterman, both from the Slovenian Littoral, have long experienced the beauty of practising in Bohinj.

Špela Ponomarenko Janič is one of Slovenia's best athletes, with numerous medals from the World and European Championships as well as from the Mediterranean Games. Two years ago she started competing together with Anja Osterman.

As early as their first season, in 2017, they won medals in canoe sprint kayak double in the 500 metres event in both the World and European Championships. Špela did not compete last year because she was pregnant. This year, however, the duo were again among the best in the world. Out of the four world cup races which they participated in, they won four medals, two of which were gold, and also picked up two medals at this year's World Championships. This was a special milestone for them, as they won a medal at every competition they participated in.

"Lisa was one of the best paddlers in the world, so we have a good comparison at practice to see where we are, what we still have to do

and to what extent the racers from New Zealand are better than we are (or not). I think we are doing pretty well, and are not much behind," said Špela Ponomarenko Janič, who won the fourth place in the canoe sprint single boat at the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games, after a joint practice in Bohinj.

Given their performances in the past years, the Slovene canoe slalom athletes should be among the main contenders for medals in Tokyo. At the Olympic Games in Brazil, Peter Kauzer won a

silver medal among kayakers. Since then, he has also become a European champion and won a medal at a World Championship. Benjamin Savšek, a canoe athlete, has also become the World and European champion in the last two years, and will be trying to get a ticket for the Olympic Games for the third time. Moreover, the Olympic Games will undoubtedly present the best Japanese contenders, who not only have Dejan Testen, a coach from Slovenia, on their team but also chose Slovenia, with its kayak courses in Ljubljana and Solkan, to be their European base.



They are always giving great performance.

Slovenia is offering many possibilities for any sport.



