

Sinfo

March-April

The Best from Slovenia

IN FOCUS
Cultural heritage matters

I FEEL
SLOVENIA



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SLOVENIA IS A PEARL IN THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL CO-SPACE



Photo: Bruno Toič

The European Year of Cultural Heritage is underway. It will feature a great variety of events and projects around the continent, all organised for the purpose of stimulating public interest in the cultural heritage of Europeans, particularly among children and young people.

Slovenia is a land of rich cultural heritage. Because of its geographical position it has always been at the centre of European history and significant historical events. This has been repeatedly confirmed by important archaeological sites. Our homeland is lauded for its natural beauty, and is a true pearl and rarity in Europe. It has everything it needs to become a major cultural destination of European importance, providing a rich range of tourism products and services, and in recent years this has also been recognised by UNESCO.

SINFO has never failed to pay proper attention to cultural heritage. Cultural heritage, in fact, is something we write about regularly. This time, however, we've placed it in the spotlight. The present publication provides a wealth of stories to tell about the institutions that have made a significant contribution to our national identity; a range of initiatives that further develop and transform old cultural patterns into something new; an insight into important archaeological findings and traditional Slovenian customs. We also reveal the carefully-kept secrets of the past and present the creative business opportunities that cultural heritage offers you.

Tanja Glogovčan, Executive Editor

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CULTURAL HERITAGE MATTERS

Cultural heritage is our life companion; it is the legacy of our ancestors that we aim to enrich for the sake of future generations. It is not only something that we admire, as it also possesses a challenge and an opportunity for us to interpret it as we see fit.

INFINITE TIME IN A FINITE SPACE

Museums as representatives of the Slovenian national being and consciousness

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



The Slovene Ethnographic Museum is the main Slovenian ethnological museum.
Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

Among the forerunners of museum professionals in Slovenia we may rank Janez Vajkard Valvazor (1641 – 1693), and his extensive and rich collections. These comprised more than ten thousand books, graphic prints by foreign masters, a numismatic collection and one of antiquities. The year 1821 saw the creation of the first professional museum institution in Slovenia – the Carniolan Provincial Museum in Ljubljana.

The Carniolan Provincial Museum was established on the initiative of a group of enlightenment figures who represented contemporary burgher society, and who were led by Baron Žiga Zois (1747 – 1819).

It offered an assemblage of all manner of things created by nature or human hands, and thus reflected and influenced the memories and fate of the province and the qualities of its inhabitants – in terms of history, statistics, natural science, technology, physics and mathematics, folk tales, fairy-tales, folk songs, descriptions of habits and customs practiced by the Carniolans, and so on.

After a few decades museums started appearing elsewhere in Slovenia – in Celje in 1882, in Kamnik in 1893, a museum in Ptuj in the same year, and in 1882 the school museum in Ljubljana. The Slovenian museums of the time were dependent on amateur, non-career museum staff. The First World War was followed by a flourishing of museum activity and the beginnings of more focused collecting. Between the wars, from 1918 to 1941, the Carniolan Museum was renamed the National Museum. The National Gallery was established in 1928, and then in 1935 the Ljubljana City Museum opened. New museum societies were created, and those working in culture and the arts had increasing influence. As a result of this the Museum of Modern Art was founded in 1947, and in the years after the number of museums continued to rise.

BETWEEN NATURE AND SOCIETY

Among the larger museums it is certainly important to highlight the National Museum, Natural History Museum and the Museum of Contemporary History.

Strolling through their corridors and rooms you can get to know Slovenia as part of both a natural and social environment.

The collection in the **National Museum** includes the world's oldest musical instrument – a 60,000-year-old flute, the product of a Neanderthal. It also houses a dugout canoe from the Iron Age. Visitors can view a situla, an elaborate bucket-shaped vessel, from Vače near Litija, which even on the world scale ranks as one of the finest products of situla art. The museum also offers a fascinating collection of paintings covering the period from the 16th to the middle of the 20th century. This collection mainly features portraits of men and women of note in the Slovenian lands who represented individual noble and burgher families, and portraits of other persons who lived in the past in these lands.

The Natural History Museum of Slovenia offers a wonderful stroll through time, right from the beginning of life on Earth. The permanent exhibition comprises several collections. The Geo-Palaeontology Collection features a large number of fossil remains found in Slovenia. The Baron Žiga Zois Mineral Collection, Hohenwart Mollusc Shell Collection and the Ferdinand J. Schmidt Insect Collection are foundational collections with great historical and scientific value. Visitors can get to know the biodiversity of Slovenia by viewing the Alpine, wetland, forest and marine diora-

mas, and collections of birds, reptiles, fish and the skeletons of various vertebrates. The main exhibit at the Natural History Museum of Slovenia is the skeleton of a mammoth that is around 20,000 years old, and was found in Nevlje, near Kamnik.

The Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia is a national museum devoted to the heritage of recent history starting from the beginning of the 20th century. It houses collections from the First and Second World Wars, material from between the wars and material from the socialist era, as well as the emergence of the new Slovenian state. The collections showcase museum objects, archival and book material, artwork and photographs. The permanent exhibition Slovenians in the 20th Century presents major events, ways of life and historical testaments from the beginning of the First World War to Slovenian independence.

MUSEUMS WITH A PERSONAL STORY

There are also some fascinating Slovenian museums that portray the characteristics of the lives led by Slovenian people in a given environment.

These include occupations and other activities that are an important part of the national identity.

The town of Idrija is most famous for its mercury mine and tradition of lacemaking. The Idrija section of the **Idrija Municipal Museum** – there is also an associated Cerklje Museum – comprises permanent and temporary displays in the now renovated castle complex. Visitors can view the permanent exhibition Five Centuries of the Mercury Mine and Town of Idrija, which earned the museum an award from the Luigi Micheletti Foundation for best European museum of industrial and technical heritage. The museum also houses ethnological, historical, art, geological and lacemaking collections.

The **Coal Mining Museum** is located in Velenje, and was created based on the work of countless generations of Slovenian miners. It represents a noteworthy form of collaboration between the functioning Velenje Coal Mine, which also manages the museum, the urban municipality of Velenje and Velenje Museum. The special features you can admire in this museum include a mine lift from 1888, which is the oldest operating lift in Slovenia, the pit head tower from 1888, a geological column of rock in the Šalek Valley, a presentation on building underground roadways, an extensive overview of shafts in the Velenje Coal Mine, a collection of pit measuring and geodetic equipment, a presentation of the tradition of “jumping the skin” (which dates back to the 16th century, when Czech and Slovak miners introduced the rite of initiating new miners), and an old miner’s dwelling from before 1930.

When you visit the Slovenian coast, the **Museum of Saltmaking** is certainly something you should not miss. The wealth of vegetation, the birds that make their home there, and the traditional saltmaking will enchant you. You can find out how salt used to be obtained, how it is harvested today, what the salt workers used to wear and how they lived. The Museum of Saltmaking is located in an abandoned section of the Sečovlje saltpans on the right bank of the Giassi canal. It occupies a real saltmaker’s house, with a museum collection and array of salt, along with the related feeder channel for sea water.



The Natural History Museum of Slovenia
Photo: Anže Malovrh/STA



Welcome to the amazing world of illusions - to the Museum of Illusions in Ljubljana. Photo: Stanko Gruden/STA

Since its opening in 1959, the **Apiculture Museum** has devoted its efforts to the rich history of Slovenian beekeeping, and recorded, collected, preserved, documented, presented and popularised this heritage. The museum showcases the history of this pursuit since the times of beekeeping in hollow tree trunks and up to the middle of the 19th century, along with the presenting the stories of the acclaimed apiculture teachers, writers and beekeepers Anton Janša (1734–1773) and Peter Pavel Glavar (1721–1784). The main part of the museum is devoted to the painted panels that adorn the fronts of beehive boxes. The biology room shows visitors the biology of the native Slovenian species of bee, the Carniolan Grey.

The **Slovenian Alpine Museum** offers a delightful experience to everyone – and not just mountain enthusiasts – in its setting below idyllic peaks that reign over the area around Mojstrana. The permanent exhibition involves a stroll through the past and present, set out as a museum narrative. You can experience this on your “own ascent” up a mountain. Through 11 themed sections you pass the milestones of Slovenian mountaineering, Alpinist and mountain rescue history, and get to know the impulses that have drawn people to the mountains since the earliest times. The history of Slovenian Alpinism, infused with a love of homeland, takes you from the beginnings of organised mountaineering to the first Alpine ascents and the superlative achievements of today’s Slovenian climbers, on mountains at home and abroad.

MEMORY OF A TIME THAT SHOULD NEVER BE REPEATED

Slovenia also offers some fascinating museums that evoke memories of the two world wars.

These include the **Franja Partisan Hospital**, a fully reconstructed monument from the Second World War. The hospital is a unique example of medical care provided to people in extraordinary circumstances. Visitors can also experience an exceptional homage to the Soča (Isonzo) Front at the **Kobarid Museum**, which takes you from the major battlefields of the First World War to those that were fought in this area. There is also the fascinating **Tabor Military Museum, Lokev**, which is housed in a defensive tower built in 1485 and that was opened to the public on 14 August 1994. The owner of the collection and manager of the museum is Srečko Rože, who as a child was fascinated by the tales of his grandfather, Viktor Rože, a veteran of the Austro-Hungarian army in the First World War, as well as by the tales of his father, Albin, from the time of the Second World War.



The Slovenian Alpine Museum in Mojstrana is a unique Alpine and mountaineering centre in Slovenia. Take a walk through the permanent exhibition with an exciting concept – “The way is the story, the story is the way”. The exhibition guides you from the call of the mountains and mountaineering preparations through mountain huts to the conquest of the peaks. Photo: Lili Pušnik/STA

NATIONAL GALLERY CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

This year's main exhibition will be dedicated to Ivana Kobilica

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



Photo: Daniel Novaković/STA

The National Gallery of Slovenia is the country's principal institution dedicated to fine art from earlier periods, housing the largest art collection in the country, dating from the High Middle Ages to the 20th century. This year, when the Gallery is celebrating its 100th anniversary, its main exhibition will be dedicated to the Slovenian painter Ivana Kobilica.

The National Gallery society was founded in 1918. However, endeavours to create a home ("acropolis" as the gallery was named upon its establishment) for Slovenian art were already underway at the end of the 19th century. Among those advocating the establishment of a gallery were the polymath and journalist aristocrat Peter von Radics (1836–1912), the Mayor of Ljubljana, banker and diplomat Dr Ivan Hribar (1851–1941), and the Društvo za krščansko umetnost (Christian Art Society), which in 1907 compiled a collection of old Slovenian art.

For decades Slovenians nourished the desire to have their own art institution, and this desire, yearning even, was finally fulfilled in 1925.

And thus from the dreams of the founders and supported by the high cultural awareness of Slovenians the National Gallery developed into one of the most prominent institutions of art and culture. In 1933 the Gallery held an opening ceremony for the expanded permanent exhibition of Slovenian fine art.

MILESTONES

The beginnings are certainly the first milestone. They include the first monographic exhibitions of the painter Ivan Grohar and the Šubic brothers, which were followed by many others. A special milestone was the exhibition of Chinese painting in 1988. It was the National Gallery's most visited exhibition up to that date. Standing out among the projects dedicated to Slovenian art is the great exhibition Gothic Art in Slovenia, which the National Gallery presented in 1995 in cooperation with the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana.

The relocation of the Robba Fountain also received a lot of attention. The fountain, also called the *Fountain of Three Carniolan Rivers* (i.e. the Sava, Krka and Ljubljana), with sculptures of white marble, was finished in 1751. It was designed by Francesco Robba and was installed in Mestni trg in front of Ljubljana Town Hall.

Another milestone in the National Gallery's exhibition and research activities was an extensive exhibition of Slovenian impressionists and their contemporaries put on in 2008. It launched the exhibition of *Slovenian Impressionists in the Parisian Petit Palais* in 2013.

PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS

The National Gallery owns artworks from several artists in permanent collections, arranged by period from the High Middle Ages to the modern day. In addition to these collections classified by periods, the Gallery also owns the Zoran Mušič collection. The authors of artworks dating from the High Middle Ages to the Renaissance period (1200–1600) are mostly unknown, and the majority of works from this period are paintings, frescos and sculptures of a religious nature, mostly altarpieces.

THE MAIN EXHIBITION IN THE EYCH IS DEDICATED TO IVANA KOBILICA

It is no coincidence that Slovenia opened the European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) at the National Gallery, which houses many great works of art by Slovenian artists. Here we can admire works from such figures as the 15th century painter Janez Ljubljanski, to the greatest Slovenian painters, sculptors, architects and other artists of the modern era.

The main exhibition in the celebratory year is dedicated to the Slovenian painter Ivana Kobilica (1861–1926), who is considered the most successful Slovenian female artist. Even her contemporaries acknowledged that she achieved what her male colleagues could not.

She had many exhibitions at the renowned Salon in Paris, and became an honorary member of the French Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts (National Society of Fine Arts).



Ivana Kobilica
Photo: National Gallery Archives

For most of her life she lived and worked in European capitals, such as Vienna, Munich, Paris, Sarajevo and Berlin. She only returned to Ljubljana at the start of World War I. After her Munich phase, when her paintings were predominantly produced in darkish brown colours, the paintings she made in Paris were in violet, blue and green tones, and her later paintings made during her stay in Berlin made greater use of white tones.

Her oeuvre is marked by images of her family members and children, portraits of members of middle-class society, particularly in Ljubljana, genre scenes and especially flowers.

The most popular painting among visitors to the National Gallery is hers, the one entitled Summer. She created the painting when she was 27 or 28.

Later she remembered how children crowded around her when she was making it and commented: “She didn’t do this right just now. You’ll see, she will make it right.” This painting was part of the first art exhibition in Ljubljana, held in 1900.

KNOWLEDGE IS THE FOUNDATION OF RESPECT FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

Through play, conversation, and even organised birthday parties at the Gallery, children and adolescents can get to know the cultural riches of Slovenia and other nations. Members of Gal’s Club discover and experience the exhibited artwork, which then become the inspiration for their own creations in the gallery workshop.

The Gallery also offers many educational programmes for adults: trips with the National Gallery abroad, seminars and lectures. It also organises family activities, e.g. designing amulets for year-round luck, making seals, painting in impressionist style, graphics workshops, sculpting, and so on.

The National Gallery can thus be a schoolroom for the general public, the host of various ideas and a place that encourages us to strive for the same goals as the Gallery’s founders, who dreamt about a Slovenian “acropolis”.

They dreamt that the Slovenian nation would have a treasury for spreading knowledge, change and experience. After a century we can say that their dreams have been realised, and will continue to be achieved in the future.



In 1891 Ivana Kobilica impressed the Salon in Paris with her painting Summer, which later travelled to Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Prague, Dresden and Sarajevo. The painting, whose reproduction was published in the Journal illustré after the exhibition in Paris, was created at the home of Ivana’s mother in Podbrezje. The painter used a photograph as a reference. The models for the painting were her sister Fani as the girl making a flower garland, and her cousins Janezek and Katrica as the children helping the lady from the city braid the flowers. In the background are two boys from the neighbourhood.
Photo: National Gallery Archives

JERNEJ HUDOLIN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INSTITUTE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OF SLOVENIA

Heritage is an opportunity for the present and the future

D.S., I.M.



Jernej Hudolin, Director General of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia.
Photo: Nebojša Tejić/STA

Jernej Hudolin was first employed at the Restoration Centre in 1989. In his time there he gained a deep understanding of conservation and restoration work, and international contacts afforded him a broader view of the functioning of monument protection services around the world. In 2002 he took charge of the Restoration Centre. In that period the Centre cooperated in numerous inter-institutional projects, such as the Apoxyomenos and the oldest wheel exhibitions, among others, and started developing contacts with leading institutions in the field of restoration around the world, such as the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, which as head he signed an agreement on research cooperation with, and in this way opened up many new paths and opportunities for the Institute For the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia (IPCHS). Since 2014 he has headed the IPCHS. As Director General he has been actively involved in adopting vital systemic solutions in the area of heritage protection and sustainable development. During his mandate the IPCHS has implemented a range of complex conservation and restoration projects.

Now in 2018, the European Year of Cultural Heritage, we talked to Jernej Hudolin about the opportunities and stories offered by heritage.

Slovenia is becoming increasingly attractive as a tourist destination. Is the linking of heritage and tourism a trend, an opportunity or a need?

Without heritage there is no full-bodied tourism, heritage is an opportunity for tourism to develop. Restored heritage can serve as an outstanding tourism product. First and foremost visitors are without doubt drawn most by the natural environment and heritage, both living (kurent carnival figures, Škofja Loka passion plays, potica cake) and of course the castles, villas, bridges, archaeological remains and much more.

Cultural heritage is a reflection of and expression of our values, identities, religious and other beliefs, our knowledge and traditions, and is also one of the key elements in the infrastructure of modern tourism, as indicated by data from the World Tourism Organization.

And Slovenians are able to offer something here that competes with other nations.

So can Slovenia be compared with other countries like Italy and France?

Individual heritages cannot be compared, but it is true that in the territory of a small country such as Slovenia, there are fewer remains. Nevertheless we have a considerable amount of artefacts that are comparable on a European and even world scale. For example, the frescoes recently discovered by archaeologists in Celje can be compared in many respects with those of Pompeii. Heritage is also one of the key elements in the infrastructure of modern tourism.

Is this because of the way that stories that draw people in?

Of course, mainly the stories. Each story begins with the right strategy and awareness of what our comparative advantages are in this area.

In my opinion we have here in Slovenia a great synthesis between the natural environment and cultural heritage, which enable amongst other things the development today of such a sought-after range of experiences.



The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Koper
Photo: Barbka Gosar Hirci

Take for instance tourism by boat. According to available data, the most attractive packages are supposedly those that include little locations inland from the coast offering complete stories. Including cuisine, a lovely setting and legacies of the past. Just to joke a little, not everything is in the Louvre.

The Institute is the leading body in the country covering the protection of heritage. Does that mean all of Slovenia's heritage is in your hands?

Of course not. Heritage is in the hands of the people. It is the people who live with it and protect it, and we experts can only help them in this. Of course the answer lies primarily in cooperation. In this way the best stories are created. And there are plenty of them. Take for example the castle and island at Bled. We drew up a comprehensive conservation plan for them that included both architectural renovation and the conceptual design of developing the castle and island along with archaeological excavations. We have consistently and are still enjoying outstanding cooperation with the managers and users of these spaces (the municipality and Bled Institute for Culture), and today the once largely forgotten castle is full of visitors. Much the same is true of Plečnik's house in the Trnovo suburb of Ljubljana, and there are quite a few examples in Ptuj. We should also not forget the Minorite complex in Maribor, and I could list more. Alongside observing the most advanced methods and principles of the profession, our guiding focus is on making heritage as accessible as possible to the public.

This year Europeans have dedicated the year to cultural heritage, and Slovenia is involved in the EYCH 2018. What does the IPCHS have lined up for this?

We entered the new year with a full programme that we are already implementing.

The more far-reaching stories certainly include the exhibition as part of the project *Aljaž Turret – Let's Preserve our Symbol*.

This autumn, for the first time in 122 years, the little tower (on Mt Triglav) will be brought down to the valley to the premises of the Restoration Centre. We will conduct conservation and restoration work on the tower and return it in the shortest possible time to the summit of Triglav. In order for us to also present this project to the public, we put together an exhibition which will, if all goes

according to plan, be displayed in several cities both at home and abroad. We are also producing a monograph on bridges from the new collection Our Heritage. In this context we will of course be organising the European Heritage Days and European Cultural Heritage Week. Together with ICOMOS Slovenia we are organising a symposium on the topic of managing monuments in the context of the EYCH 2018 motto – Sharing Culture, or as we have dubbed it in Slovenia: Our heritage: where the past meets the future.

You mentioned some activities as part of EYCH 2018. Let's talk a little bit about the conservation and restoration projects that await your Institute in the coming period.

Within the constraints of our modest means we are striving to devote particular attention to promoting heritage, but the cornerstone of our work remains the profession. So this means conservation and restoration plans and interventions, sociological, natural history, archaeological, non-invasive (and where essential also invasive) research, documentation, heritage study, and so forth. This year numerous projects await us: new discoveries in the main square in Celje will occupy our experts full-time, we are also in the concluding phase of restoration work on the exceptional Carpaccio oil paintings in Koper, and continuing the restoration of the dugout canoe from the Ljubljansko Barje wetlands. As I mentioned earlier, we will be devoting ourselves to the Aljaž Turret, and we need to do a comprehensive review of all the heritage units entered in the record, which is a very extensive project.

Let's finish with some plans and wishes for the future.

Heritage offers countless stories, renovated buildings facilitate the development of a location, they create new jobs and paint a new image of Slovenia. I am convinced that the stories we are generating at the IPCHS through our work will thrill both foreign guests and us Slovenians who hold our homeland dear. And we are also justifiably proud of our heritage. .

When conservators and restorers complete their work and a restored piece of heritage is returned in some form to the people, we return it to life. At that time we create the conditions for new stories, new opportunities and new tourist experiences.



The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Koper
Photo: Zoja Bajde

ŠVICARIJA CREATIVE CENTRE

New cultural and social dimensions

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: NEBOJŠA TEJIĆ/STA



The renovation of the former Hotel Tivoli, or the Švicarija, which in 2013 was declared a cultural monument and has kept its nickname to the present day, was completed in the middle of last year. With its outward appearance freshened up, the building has gained new cultural and social dimensions. It has the job of managing the International Graphic Art Centre, and the venue that hosted was last year's 32nd Graphic Art Biennial was renovated.

At the end of last year the first users also moved into the artists' studios. Just as it once was, the building of the former hotel may become a gathering place for artists. Through conservation work and the renovation of all the originally preserved architectural elements, the building has regained its former image, with numerous painted features both inside and outside.

THE ŠVICARIJA PROJECT: COMMUNITY, ART AND NATURE

The project – an exhibition entitled *Švicarija: community, art and nature*, through which the centre is right now inserting itself into the cultural life of the capital – derives from three fundamental elements that have marked the history of the building: community, art and nature.

The exhibition and accompanying programme inspired by the building bring up to date the history of Švicarija and in this way offer a signpost for its function in the future. Švicarija was never just whatever was expected of it, as parallel stories quickly started latching on to its officially prescribed purpose.

Single-day escapes from the bustle of the city soon morphed from a simple stroll into unexpected experiences. A walk along the promenade did not just mean an excursion into nature, but an important social and cultural event that spiced up the leisure time of people from the widest variety of social strata.

At its inception, Hotel Tivoli was associated with the artificially transformed natural environment of the park and with the development of the national identity. That kind of setting gave rise to a Bohemian gathering place and a space for discussion on the role of art in society. The ambience of the coffee shop in the hotel building offered a venue for public debate, and in this way the possibility for the democratisation of society. But the gradual degradation of the building and the rapid turnover of management curtailed the hotel's high ambitions. Yet even after its demise, things were still going on in the building. By force of circumstance



Originally Švicarija was a wooden guest house opened in 1835.

the overgrown, gradually crumbling edifice became a refuge for a very wide variety of people who breathed new life into Švicarija. Despite numerous impediments and the diversity of the individual fates of its inhabitants, the specific features of the hotel building enabled a community to be created from the sequence of unexpected users. This gave purpose to the building and ensured its existence to the present day.

RESTORATION IN LINE WITH ALPINE ARCHITECTURE

The restorers tried to renovate everything that had been preserved. There is the original wood on the panelling and balconies that run along the exterior, and the ground floor ceiling is also original. Where there was once an event room, there is now a multipurpose room that is also open to the public. The ceramic tiles have been preserved and renovated in the tap room, which was once to the right of the entrance. There is a similar situation with the parquet, the balcony doors and the window shutters, of which there are around 400, and with some other parts of the fixtures and fittings.

The fresco work retains the charm of the building, providing an added value and keeping the character of a cultural monument, while defining the structure both internally and on the exterior.

On the façade the painted flowers are Gorenjska carnations or pinks, which at one time represented the connecting theme of the decorative wall paintings in the common spaces, while now they are only partially preserved.

HOTEL TIVOLI WAS ONCE A BREAKFAST SPOT

The building dates way back to 1835, when a wooden inn was opened at the foot of Tivoli Hill. The name Švicarija, with its Alpine connotation, took hold because of the building's appearance. The following advertisement accompanied the opening:

"Five minutes from the central post office, at the end of a shady tree-lined avenue, and above the city's Tivoli Castle in the forest stands a large terrace with a marvellous view of the city, a select restaurant, a concert every day, the most popular place of entertainment for Ljubljana society." The fact that this spot was a popular gathering place for the people of Ljubljana is seen by the postcards of that time, through which city residents communicated how they enjoyed themselves there with food and music.

Between 1908 and 1910 the Hotel Tivoli was built close by the



Today Švicarija Creative Centre provides working and living studios to local artists, and residential spaces to international artists.

former Švicarija. Its construction was financed by the Ljubljana municipal authorities, and then the hotelier Ivan Kenda acquired a lease on it. A popular gathering place for socialising and dancing, the hotel also had a large summer garden. It was famed for its good bread, pastries and white coffee. Artists and above all literary figures liked to go to the Hotel Tivoli. After his arrival from Vienna in 1909, the writer Ivan Cankar lived there, even writing his essay *Bela Krizantema (White Chrysanthemum)* in the hotel. In 1910 he then moved to Rožnik, and this was the time when the essay was published.

In his design the city architect Ciril Metod Koch relied on the homestead style, principally using elements of Alpine houses.

The investor – Ljubljana municipality – wanted the building to be in harmony with its surroundings. For this reason they first studied forest houses in Germany and Austria, and Koch travelled all over the Gorenjska region sketching architectural details for the building. He then transposed these details into the design of Švicarija.



Exhibition at the Creative Centre Švicarija - 32nd Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana.

A MEDIEVAL SWORD WITH AN INSCRIPTION FROM THE LJUBLJANICA RIVER

Following the trail of the first crusades in Slovenian lands

DR. ANDREJ GASPARI



The front side (aver) of the Byzantine silver coin (billon aspron trachy), minted in Constantinople, most probably under Alexis III Angel-Komnen in the period 1195-1197. (Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, Collection of the Potočnik family). Photo: Matevž Paternoster

A sword with an invocation inscription found in the Ljubljana River is certainly among the most attractive artefacts shown to the public at the City Museum's exhibition on medieval Ljubljana. The sword was found during a dive near the village of Lipe in the Ljubljana Marshes, and the valuable find belonging to the Collection of the Potočnik family was acquired by the museum in 2010.

The incompletely preserved sword with a broken point features a relatively short blade with a wide groove, an almond-shaped pommel at the end of the hilt and a short and straight cross-guard.

The preserved length of the sword is 75 cm, and it weighs close to 750 grams. The upper part of one side of the blade's groove has remains of an engraved and inlaid Latin inscription with iron inserts, which can be read on an X-ray image as "INOMIM +".

The acronym of the words that end with St. Anthony's cross (*crux patibulata*) belongs in the group of "INNOMINEDOMINI" invocation inscriptions, meaning "in the name of God" or "in the name of the Lord". A trace of this inscription can also be seen on the other side of the blade, where however only the letter "O" is legible.

The sword, whose origin can be with considerable reliability dated on the basis of its design features back to the 11th century or, at the latest, to the beginning of the 12th, was found without remains of its scabbard, although this does not necessarily mean that the weapon sank in a battle. At that time scabbards were generally made of organic materials, i.e. leather-coated wooden sheath, with the only metal parts being the chape, the mouth and the the buckle and the fittings of the belt set, so they have been rarely, and even then only in traces, preserved on parts of swords originating in the same period and found in the Ljubljana river and other inland waterways of Europe. The production origin of the sword can only be guessed at the moment, but it might have been made in a blacksmith's workshop of one of the monastery centres in southern or central German territory.

Specific weapons can most likely be imagined as part of the equipment of a knight, protected with a conical helmet, a chain-mail and an oval-conical shield, and armed with a sword, a spear and possibly an axe.

In the initial, principal period of high feudalism's chivalric age, swords were a precious symbol of social status and affiliation to a military order, while, on the other hand, they were regarded as potentially sacred objects that may have been inscribed with prayers, blessed in special liturgical rituals or dedicated with the noble actions of their bearers.

The oldest *in nomine Domini* inscriptions, which convey the Christian component of chivalry (*miles christianus*) and perhaps the very blessing of the sword, originate from the early 11th century.

LJUBLJANA DURING THE FIRST CRUSADES

Because of its early origin and prestige, the sword hold an outstanding position among the medieval finds from the Ljubljana Basin, as it belongs in the archeologically and historically modestly documented period after the stabilisation of the south-eastern border of the Holy Roman Empire, between the end of the Hungarian invasions in the second half of the 10th century and the beginning of the 12th. Ethnically heterogeneous, with Slavs, Germans and Romans, the colonized territory between the Eastern Alps, the Friuli region and Istria became an area of expansion for the Bavarian dioceses and nobility, who soon took up leading positions in terms of both land ownership and political rule.

At that time Ljubljana's strategic position on the most favourable transport communication between the Italian regions and the northern Adriatic and Central Europe or the Danube region once again proved its importance.



A sword from the Ljubljanica River near Lipe. The 11th or beginning of the 12th centuries. The sword has a preserved length of 75 cm (Museum and Galleries of the City of Ljubljana, Collection of the Potočnik family). Photo: Matevž Paternoster

For the new empire this place had a special significance as an alternative link between Italy and the German lands, as well as a transit area toward Hungary.

In the 11th century the intention to control the communication node in the central area of the Ljubljana Basin, and favourable conditions for the development of trade and crafts, probably contributed to the emergence of a settlement on the right bank of the Ljubljanica River under the Castle Hill, where presumably the first wooden castle protected by a defence trench was erected (referred to in the Charter of 1161 as *castrum Leibach*); this settlement becomes the centre of the political, military, judicial and administrative authorities.

Extant documents attest that, in the middle of the 11th and at the beginning of the 12th centuries, several Bavarian high noble families had their properties in the Ljubljana Basin – lords of Machland from the Upper Austria, Counts of Cham-Vohburg, Counts of Bogen and the family of the Friulian Count Werihen. Some of these estates south of the Sava River were obtained by the Carinthian Dukes of Spanheim in the first half of the 12th century, who are deemed to be the founders of the unified feudal estate of Ljubljana.

Medieval Ljubljana flourished under the Spanheims in the middle of the 12th and beginning of the 13th centuries, when the city was consolidated and given its tripartite urban layout, as well as the fortified fortress above the town, later mentioned among the main castles of the Spanheim family (*castrum capitale*).

The castle on a 70-m high hill with a clear view and central position was surrounded by smaller, tower-like castles situated on the borders of the estate, which served as residences for the lower gentry.

Ljubljana's location on the transcontinental communication route at that time also attracted military orders, whose activities focused on providing transport and supplies to their members and other crusaders and pilgrims on their way to the North Adriatic ports and onwards towards the Holy Land. Before 1228 the southern part of the former complex adjacent to the castle in the area of Novi trg (today's Križanke) belonged to the Teutonic Order, who set up their commandery at a site where the Templars might already had their House, possibly in the second half of the 12th century.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE FINDS OF MEDIEVAL WEAPONS IN THE LJUBLJANICA RIVER

The weapons and other military equipment from the Ljubljanica River, which quantitatively speaking overshadow the rest of the finds from the period between the 11th and middle of the 13th centuries, clearly reflect the military significance of the Ljubljanica River as a navi-

gable part of the transport route between the Eastern Alpine and Pannonian regions and the Italian lands or the northern Adriatic ports. Among the known contingents that moved over this territory in the earlier part of this timeframe and that could serve as background for interpreting part of the military finds from the Ljubljanica River, there are also two great armies from the first crusades between 1096 and 1101: an army from Lombardy, led by Anselm, the Archbishop of Milan, that in the autumn of 1100 probably travelled through Carniola in the direction of the Balkans, and a group from southern France under the command of William IX, the Duke of Aquitaine, who allegedly followed the same route in the spring of the following year..

In addition to the marches of rulers and princes escorted by a large number of representatives of south-eastern Alpine nobility and their clientele – lower gentry and militia – a number of other crusader groups and pilgrims travelled along the routes between the inland and coastal towns on their way to and from the Holy Land.

The owner of two Byzantine silver coins from the 12th century, most probably minted under Emperors Manuel I Komnen (1143-1180) and Alexis III Angel (1195-1203), found in the Ljubljanica River, might also have joined the Crusades.

Possible reasons that the sword in question sank into the river could range from accidents during military transport or clashes at certain places along the waterway, possibly connected with control points or crossings, to deliberate acts intended to conceal the traces of a crime or even a votive offering of weapons by throwing them into water – a presumption that still arouses controversy in the profession, and stirs the public's imagination. A practice that was well-documented for older periods, one that may have even inspired the medieval tale of the famous Excalibur sword, could have its root in the traditions of Celtic-Germanic societies; the finding of actual weapons in the water could in this context mean the fulfilment of the vows of a veteran from the ranks of the local nobility, or a member of one of the returning contingents in transit.



The Ljubljanica River on the Ljubljansko Barje. Photo: Arne Hodalič

THE LJUBLJANICA

A River that connects

IRENA ŠINKOVEC, MUSEUM AND GALLERIES OF LJUBLJANA



Underwater archaeological research of dugout canoe from the end of the 2nd century BCE.
Photo: MGML, David Badovinac

The Ljubljanica River, which features an extensive karstic and wetland basin and numerous archaeological finds that place it among the world's sites of special interest, has recently started attracting well-earned attention from both experts and the general public. This river of many names, which along its long and mysterious route through karstic terrain disappears and re-emerges several times, is only called the Ljubljanica when it appears at Vrhnika.

It continues its path through the Ljubljana Marshes and on through the capital city to Podgrad, where it flows into the Sava. One of the richest and at the same time most endangered archaeological sites, recognised ever since the first intensive efforts to regulate the watercourse in the 19th century, it was declared a cultural monument of national importance in 2003 in its stretch running from Vrhnika to the divergence of the Ljubljanica and the Gruber Canal at Špica in Ljubljana. The Ljubljanica and the Bistra, along with all the main karstic sources, are also protected as natural assets of national importance. More than a hundred species of birds nest along the Ljubljanica, which is also home to more than 40 species of fish.

With the aim of protecting these natural assets, conserving biodiversity, and strengthening the diversity of the landscape, the area of the Ljubljana Marshes has been declared a nature park, and the entire course of the Ljubljanica from Vrhnika to Ljubljana is also part of the Natura 2000 network.

The European Union recognised the great development potential of cultural heritage, and declared 2018 the European Year of Cultural Heritage, while 2018 and 2019 will involve special attention focused on cultural tourism, which represents one of the fundamental economic sectors on a global scale. The mass visiting of world attractions, a phenomenon which has been growing rapidly in recent years, brings with it the danger of a lower quality of life for local residents and has already been threatening monuments of

natural and cultural heritage. New projects are thus being oriented towards sustainable forms of development that include integrated planning and connecting on the macro-regional level. At the same time, they are building on the revitalisation of degraded areas, which are a consequence of diffuse and unsystematic spatial planning, the collapse of major industrial operations, neglect of historical cities and village cores, sources of environmental pollution and, consequently, the changed demographic and social structure of the local populations. A lack of integrated development programmes in the area of spatial planning, including revitalisation of areas with heritage features, leads to the permanent loss of areas and structures of cultural heritage.

INTEGRATED PROJECT TO REVITALISE HERITAGE OF THE WIDER AREA OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

In 2014, Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, in cooperation with the Municipality of Vrhnika, designed an integrated project to revitalise the heritage of the wider area of the local community. The fundamental purpose was to bring the extraordinary development potential of the spatial features and the cultural and natural heritage face to face with economic and environmental decline, which reduces the quality of life and contributes to the exclusion of local residents, especially young people.

The project builds on an integrated and cohesive approach to developing the wider region of the Ljubljanica basin, which in addition to Vrhnika includes the potentials of the extensive karstic area

and the Ljubljana Marshes, all the way from Babno Polje to Ljubljana.

The pronouncement of the social importance of heritage, of the need to preserve it for the public good and of the development potentials in the scientific, cultural, educational and economic fields, is reflected in ensuring the public interest and observing a participatory approach in its management.

The first phase of the project, which was co-financed with funds from the EEA Grants Financial Mechanism and implemented in 2015/16, comprised the protection of the most endangered elements of this cultural monument – the underwater archaeological research of a Roman vessel and its protection *in situ*, and the Late Iron Age dugout canoe that was raised from the riverbed and will be put on public display after conservation work. Remedial work on the river banks and water monitoring were carried out in the wider area of the monument. At the same time, renovation works were carried out on the building of the abandoned stitching shop of the Vrhnika Leather Industry plant, and the Ljubljana River Exhibition was set up, linking the natural and cultural heritage

of the Ljubljana basin and the development of the Vrhnika area from prehistory to the present day.

The exhibition displays more than 400 archaeological objects from the Ljubljana riverbed, and also features a chamber for the permanent display of the dugout canoe, which at nearly 15 m in length ranks among the longest craft of this type in Europe. Indeed right up until the construction of the section of the southern railway between Ljubljana and Trieste in 1857, the Ljubljana was an important transport route. To date more than 70 archaeological finds of boats and oars from various periods between pre-history and the modern era have been documented in the area of the Ljubljana Marshes.

In addition to an efficient programme plan for the existing exhibition space, the overall project continues with the phased revitalisation of the wider area.

There are more than 300 cultural heritage units registered in the area of the Municipality of Vrhnika alone but, at the same time, the area is in decline due to the collapse of major industrial operations and today's environmentally risky industries.

being realised through new jobs. Connecting and supplementing programmes in the wider area ensures more comprehensive and higher-quality products and services for visitors, while also easing the burden on mass tourism locations.

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WITHOUT WALLS

Cultural heritage has an important part to play in designing the future of Europe.

In memory of the millions of dead a hundred years after the end of the “War to End All Wars”, when the survivors believed that something like that could never happen again, let there be no room in a united Europe for building walls.

There is no shortage of opportunities for implementing the motto of the Year of Cultural Heritage – “where the past meets the future”.

Revitalised premises of the stitching shop complete with an exhibition on the natural and cultural features of the Ljubljana River and its basin.
Photo: Jaka Babnik

Navigating the Ljubljana in a reconstructed dugout canoe as part of the Navis project, which is reviving the tradition of river navigation.
Photo: Stik Group

EUROPA NOSTRA RECOGNITION FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

In the Same Boat – Young Guardians of Heritage

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ

Rafting in old way.
Photo: STO

As part of the awards for cultural heritage presented by the European Commission through the Europa Nostra organisation, last year the expert jury gave special mention to the Slovenian project *In the Same Boat – Young Guardians of Heritage*, which transfers knowledge such as making dugout canoes and linen, distilling essential oils and blacksmithing to young people.

The project shows in a unique way that the knowledge and skills of traditional crafts are important for today's society. This project in the Notranjska region saw the participation of 180 people, including 22 older people with the skills and knowledge, and 22 young people to whom these were then transferred. A total of 25 certificates were issued. "Young people learned how to conduct research in a scientific way, they got to know the conventions on protecting nature, so that includes the park, and also the intangible cultural heritage, they gained a theoretical and practical education, learning amongst other things to seek out old tools and tune them up for work," said Ljoba Jenče, founder and director of the PAJN Institute for Conatural Existence, which designed and implemented the project, talking to the Notranjsko primorske novice newspaper. Europa Nostra awards prizes for exceptional achievements in cultural heritage in Europe, with the aim of promoting high standards of preserving such heritage, promoting the international exchange of knowledge and experience, and also research, education and information related to cultural heritage.

HOUSE OF HERITAGE

In a project lasting two years at the House of Heritage, the education centre for intangible cultural heritage established in Dolenja vas by Ljoba Jenče, 24 young guardians of heritage, assisted by master craftsmen and -women, made and launched a dugout canoe, and learned to make linen and spin it into thread. They cooked up essential oil from fir trees, and forged their own special nails for making the dugout. While they were acquiring their skills, the young guardians also interviewed 41 local people who still retained the old knowledge.

The young guardians of heritage have also documented all they have learned and stored it in a box of knowledge of the region. They have gained the invaluable experience of connecting with masters in four fields that are traditional in the Cerkljiško Polje area.

In addition to the 24 young guardians of heritage, a group certificate was also received by pupils from the Postojna Secondary Forest and Woodworking School, who followed and documented the procedures and tools needed to make a dugout in the old way using authentic materials, starting with the selection of a 200-year-old fir tree in the forest. The dugout was finally launched on Lake Cerknica in September 2014.

The candidates for guardians of heritage first underwent the theoretical part of the training and then an exam, and this was followed by work in the field and in practice in one of the four crafts: making the dugout, blacksmithing, linen-making and distilling essential oil.

All future leaders and guardians of heritage had to first familiarise themselves with Notranjska Park.

Ljoba realised that the young people of today are almost illiterate in terms of handicrafts. "Binding a bundle of fir branches looks simple, but it isn't. Some people are really skilled at explaining, but not so good at doing the work. Others prefer to be quiet and work. Like in the old days," says Ljoba, "for the old folks say: 'We worked, and in between we talked a bit, but today it's just talking.' For this reason we had to divide the certificates for young guardians of heritage into categories. A certificate for those who know how to make things, one for those who only know how to present things, and one for those



The model was designed by Director of the Pajin Institute Ljoba Jenč, a collector of Slovenian folk memories, who received the certificate from Maestro Placido Domingo, President of Europa Nostra, in the city of Turku in Finland
Photo: Andrej Hogan

who know how to do both. The craftsperson knows only how to make things, with a knowledge of tools and procedures. The leader knows only how to interpret. A leader-craftsperson is at a higher level, anyone who trains in the skill for five years will become a guardian of heritage, and someone who puts in ten years becomes a master."

CREATIVE MEETING POINT

At the House of Heritage, where this project was carried out with help from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, things were lively pretty much all the time.

They twice planted flax in a field with an organic certificate, but given the time constraints the students spun linen thread from flax grown elsewhere. They also hosted Bela Krajina linen-making experts, and a Norwegian woman who showed how they make boats in Norway, and now a young blacksmith from the House of Heritage is acquiring knowledge there.

They do not sell the distilled oil, but prefer to have it for themselves at home, since it is very precious. Each bottle smells different, and to get two or four millilitres they need to boil the ingredients for four or five hours. At the House of Heritage they have set up a presentation of the distillation process, and in the corner are bundles of linen, while the walls are hung with large photographs. In short it is a little museum, a workshop and house where creative people can meet, all in one place.

Local women and also those who settled here from other countries visited the multicultural section to tell stories, while weaving products and friendship and also learning Slovenian. The young women who joined Ljoba, generally with degrees but unemployed, wove on looms, while children and their teachers also came to the House. The precious knowledge of crafts and familiarity with nature, which in the past were handed down from generation to generation, are now better protected, documented and being transferred to the younger people of today.



Hammering horseshoes at the Historial in Škofja Loka.
Photo: Jošt Gantar

MEMORIAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN JAVORCA

A Hundred-Year-Old Beauty with an Exceptional Message

DAMJANA FORTUNAT ČERNILOGAR, MUSEUM COUNCILLOR, TOLMIN MUSEUM



Javorca in the year commemorating the hundredth anniversary of its existence.
Photo: Marko Grego, 2016, Tolmin Museum Archives.

The mainly wooden memorial church, which is set above the valley of the Tolminka river in Javorca, was built in 1916, the year when battles between Austro-Hungarian and Italian soldiers were raging in the immediate vicinity on the Isonzo front. Situated in a beautiful mountain environment, it resists the ravages of time and climate, and stands as a stark reminder to passers-by of the bloodbath of the First World War.

On account of its remoteness, the Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit in Javorca is often, but unjustifiably so, in the shadow of the more easily accessible Russian Chapel on the Vršič Pass, which was built in the same year. After almost a century, the documents kept by the Geyling family in Vienna for decades have given a new insight into the time of the church's construction.

By staging the exhibition *The Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit in Javorca – Hundred Years of “the Basilica of Peace”* and presenting a monograph on the building, the Tolmin Museum has brought the remarkable story written by the church's builders to the attention of the wider public.

The hundredth anniversary revealed and highlighted the core values of Javorca, such as peace and respect for different cultures, religions and nationalities.

THE STORY OF AN ARCHITECTURAL PEARL

When Italy declared war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire in May 1915, the area along the Isonzo river turned into a war zone. A new front, the Isonzo Front, was thus formed. In the first year of fighting casualties were high, as the system of defence was still in its

infancy, while climate conditions in the high mountains made its development all the more difficult. The area of the Krn Range, particularly Mt. Mrzli vrh and Mt. Vodil vrh, were soon covered with a number of military cemeteries. Soldiers of the 3rd Mountain Brigade, a battle unit of the XV Austro-Hungarian Corps, wanted to build a lasting memorial to their fallen comrades for future generations. After careful consideration, they decided on the proposal by the Viennese artist **Remigius Geyling** (1878—1974).

His idea was to build a memorial church as a shrine for Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, atheists and those from all nations that defended the monarchy.

At the same time, he wanted to preserve the memory of the many human casualties. The church was built from his plans by voluntary contributions from soldiers of the 3rd Mountain Brigade, and through their voluntary work. Instead of resting at the rear, far from the war, the soldiers preferred to engage in the noble work of building the church.

Construction work was headed by the Hungarian **Géza Jablonszky** (1876—1945) from Budapest. He and Geyling cooperated very well, and together developed solutions for many details. Geyling also did a very good job with the decoration of the interior, which features two large floating angels in front of the altar. The wooden parts of the altar in the interior of the church are the work of the

South Tyrolean carpenter **Anton Perathoner** (1888—1965) from St. Ulrich/Ortisei. Other craftsmen also distinguished themselves in the construction, with around thirty in military uniform working daily at the site. In Javorca, soldiers who were craftsmen were once again able to do what they did before the war. They carved stone blocks, built walls, cut wood, struck iron, cooked glue, ground paint and painted.

It is hard to imagine today how anyone could build a church on the margins of the Isonzo battlefield. At that time, Javorca was not completely safe from enemy grenades, which occasionally struck in its vicinity. What is even more surprising is that the construction took a good six months after the foundation stone was laid in 4 April 1916. The church began serving its purpose on 1 November 1916, providing a place of acceptance for soldiers of different nationalities and religions until the end of the First World War. The construction materials, stone and wood, were processed in improvised workshops at the construction site in Javorca, and the wood was transported from Bohinj.

For the construction of the church, the architects chose an area in Javorca located approximately equal distances from the main Austro-Hungarian positions on the mountains Vodil vrh, Mrzli vrh and Sleme.

They were also familiar with the origin of the name 'Javorca'. The name derives from 'javor' (a maple tree), which is a holy tree according to an old folk tradition. The sycamore maple, which is also a symbol of strength and endurance, is still present in the area of Javorca.

The church is set in the mountain environment, with an extraordinary sense of space. It is not cowardly hiding behind a wall, and it stands there in the open. Its outer walls feature 20 coats of arms of the provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the common coat of arms of the monarchy. The front of the church bears the inscription PAX (Peace). Soon after the first few months into the fighting, peace was strongly desired by the soldiers. An important feature of the church is its interior, uniformly decorated in Art Nouveau style. The harmony of the predominant colours, blue, black,

gold and white, gives a special sense of holiness. The sight of oak panels which bear the inscribed **names of 2,565 Austro-Hungarian fallen soldiers** of different nationalities is deeply moving. The panels with the names of fallen soldiers open like pages of a book, as if attached to the wings of angels.

Despite the unfavourable climate in the mountain environment and the earthquake that hit it in 1998, the memorial church has survived to the present day. It has undergone three major renovations in three countries: 1934 (Italy), 1980—1982 (Yugoslavia), and renovation after the earthquake in 2004—2005 (the Republic of Slovenia). On the occasion of the church's hundredth anniversary, restorers again entered the building and revived its colours, while the bell tower was renovated in 2017. The municipality of Tolmin, which is the owner of the church facility, together with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia, continues to work to preserve the church.

A UNIQUE REMINDER

In 1990 the Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit in Javorca was declared a historic monument in the area of the Municipality of Tolmin; since 1999 it has been a monument of national importance; in 2007 it was recognised as being of European significance (an intergovernmental initiative label). In 2016, on the hundredth anniversary of its construction, following the exhibition staged by the Tolmin Museum, the church received significant media coverage and attracted an increased number of visitors. In 2018, it receives the European Heritage Label. The church in Javorca is recognised as having had a significant role in the historical and cultural development of Europe.

MONUMENT OF PEACE FOR A LASTING PEACE

The outside of the church tells a story of the First World War and its builders, who were of different nationalities. The idea of a memorial church was brought to life by burning in the names of fallen Austro-Hungarian soldiers. The inscription PAX (Peace) on the front conveys a powerful message. In 1934 Italians added a panel with the Latin inscription **Ultra cineres hostium ira non superest** (Wrath does not reach through the ashes of the enemy), placed at the entrance of the church.

With its extraordinary powerful message, the Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit in Javorca encourages visitors to reflect on the futility of war. It symbolises the power of common artistic endeavour and construction, and calls for peace and respect for differences.

Javorca is today a place for gatherings, for forging ties and sharing the memory of those who lost their lives on the Isonzo Front. The wish of the church's builders to preserve it for future generations has come true. Our duty is to continue to maintain the church and spread the message of peace, solidarity and mutual respect.

Despite the remote location, the church is well worth the effort of visiting it, and you will certainly not regret the trip.



A look into the colourful interior of the church.
Photo: Marko Grego, 2015, Tolmin Museum Archives



Tržič
Photo: Peter Balantič

ST GREGORY'S DAY – "LIGHT ON THE WATER"

From pre-Christian ritual to tourist event

DR. BOJAN KNIFIC

Today on St Gregory's Day children still launch tiny ships, boats, houses and other objects, with little candles lit on them, along rivers, streams, ponds and water channels. In some places this custom has an especially fascinating mythical background, including in Tržič in the Gorenjska region.

In an event which in modern times has been evolving in the context of tourism and education, participants symbolically herald the arrival of spring and the lengthening of the daylight hours, and in particular they ensure the preservation and development of our memory of a custom that in the past century was most prominent among artisans in Gorenjska towns and in the area around Ljubljana. Called *vuč v vodo* or in some places *luč v vodo*, the custom heralds the arrival of the lighter half of the year, especially important when people were not able to work under artificial light – and could only do so from dawn to dusk.

IN A DEAF TIME

The day took its name from St Gregory, better known as Gregory the Great (540-604), one of the most outstanding church scholars and popes.

His feast day is 12 March, but the St Gregory ritual is celebrated on the evening of 11 March.

According to the ancient understanding of time, the day ended when the sun set, and the new day began when evening fell. This was also the "deaf time", when darkness ruled. And darkness was necessary for people to perform the rituals that guaranteed order in the world. A ritual is something that ensures order, otherwise chaos would rule (the Slovenian word for ritual, *obred*, contains the meaning "in order").

According to the calendar, spring begins on 20 March, or in some years 21 March, but until recently many people regarded the Feast of St Gregory as the first of the spring saint days. Indeed, under the old Julian calendar St Gregory was celebrated on the first day of spring. However, the calendar reform of Pope Gregory XIII (1502–1585) shifted the feast day, and it no longer coincided with the spring equinox.

It was said that after St Gregory's Day with each wind the snow would melt, while "the farmer ploughs the long field, hat worn to the side, begging his old wife for bread," because they had run out of the food made the previous year. There was also a saying that on that day "women cooked between the legs, and no longer in the oven," meaning that they no longer cooked in the bread oven but in front of it – sitting at a tripod or four-legged grate on which they placed a pot.

LIGHT ON THE WATER, A ST GREGORY CANDLE LIT

Sources from Gorenjska and around Ljubljana from the 19th and 20th centuries testify that on the eve of St Gregory's Day people would launch a little candle on water, or light a fire on water or ice. The locations where the candle vessels, tiny ships, boats, houses, baskets and so forth, were launched with burning candles or fires have generally not changed – at least up to the time when the custom shifted from its ritual function to being a tourist attraction.

This was a symbolic act performed where there was water (a river, stream, pond, channel and so on).

They cast light onto the water, and they also said they were lighting a Gregory, since with the lengthening days and right up to the Feast of St Michael (September 29) artisans no longer had to work under artificial light..

This custom is still practiced most notably in Tržič, Kropa and Kamna Gorica, and the oldest information on it comes from Železniki, although it was also known in some other locations.

BRANDISHING THE BROOM, STRAW BONFIRE AND LIHT-PRATEL – TRACES OF PRE-CHRISTIAN RITUALS

In Tržič, writers between the World Wars mentioned that upon launching St Gregory candles they would make a bonfire, which



In March last year the Atrij Gallery in Tržič staged an exhibition entitled *Vuč u vodo* (*Light on the Water*), when the old year ends and the new one begins. Alongside a presentation of handicraft traditions, the gallery exhibited numerous old St Gregory candles, while the exhibition also highlighted the wider context and the centuries-long development of this custom. Photo: Tinkara Zupan/STA

may have been of straw. They would set it up on the banks of the Tržiška Bistrica stream, or it burned on the water. Another act frequently mentioned in Tržič by writers, along with the launching of candle vessels, was the brandishing of blazing brooms. They wrote about how they waved torches made of old brooms steeped in pitch; that they attached to the brooms štrafjele (pitch-covered cloths that cobblers used in making their thread), set them alight and waved them in the air in circles or figures of eight. When they burned out, they were thrown into the bonfire or water. After the celebration people went off for *liht-pratel*, or “roast of light”.

All three actions show traces of pre-Christian rituals. People lit bonfires on the major days of the calendar year, and in pre-Christian belief systems straw held a special meaning associated with the end of the old year and start of the new. Waving burning brooms in a circle is in itself a symbolic act associated with the movement of time, and waving brooms in figures of eight represents an apotropaic act. The figure of eight makes the lines of a cross, which is clearly associated with magic. And what about the *lihtpratel*? This “roast of light”, at least originally, could not have been anything other than a meal whose principal ingredient was meat – something which during the Lenten time of the Christian church was forbidden, although the authorities did not succeed in suppressing the practice, which lasted right up into the 20th century, at least on a representational level. It would appear that this, too, is a remnant of a pre-Christian ritual.

The practice of launching candles on water is seen in many places around the world, and is especially notable in nearby Bad Eisenkappel (Železna Kapla) in Carinthia, in several places in Bavaria, in Switzerland, in eastern France, the Czech lands and Macedonia.

But the dates of launching and the reasons behind the act are different – launching lights for St Gregory’s Day is only practiced in some places in Switzerland, and in other areas the ritual is part of various other festivals of the winter-spring period.

CULT SPACE IN TRŽIČ

The custom evolved from older pre-Christian beliefs that can also be seen in how the physical environment was arranged. Mythical points in the physical space are often set out so as to make regular geometrical lines, usually triangles. Within these special importance was held by the ritual angle of $23.5^\circ \pm 1.5^\circ$, which matches the incline of the Earth’s axis.

The location of launching of St Gregory candles in Tržič in relation to Pehtra Baba on Kamnek and to the parish Church of the Annunciation creates a ritual angle of 23° . Moreover Pehtra Baba is aligned with a place called Na Skali, the Church of St Joseph and Velika Mizica, where bonfires are lit on midsummer’s day in June. In view of our knowledge of spatial arrangement, the launching of St Gregory candles maintained the location where in pre-Christian rituals fire was put on or in the water.

BIRD WEDDING

In many places in Slovenia people would say that on St Gregory’s Day the birds get married. But in this respect the people of Tržič had a head start – they claim that the birds get married on the Feast of St Vincent (22 January). Old people used to tell children that the birds had a wedding and that the remainders of the feast could be found in the bushes and other places where they had their nuptials. They then took the children to these places, where they had hidden tiny treats, and got the youngsters to search for them. Of course the children found the treats, and in their naivety and innocence believed that these were the sweets, pastries and other goodies that the birds had left just for them after their fabulous weddings.

The making of St Gregory candles in Tržič has been taken up by primary and nursery school children. At first just a few dozen ves-

sels with candles would be floated on the water, then in time the number grew to several hundred, and in recent years the number made has grown close to a thousand. Something that has become a permanent feature is the exhibitions and events where children and adults present the heritage of this ritual.

For the people of Tržič, St Gregory’s Day has special significance. Before the day, children from all the local primary and nursery schools make candle vessels, and the event is accompanied by various activities. This year, too, the people of Tržič launched St Gregory lights along the Tržiška Bistrica. A bonfire burned and children waved burning brooms.

They even included a stroll past the “mythical points” around Tržič – points that include the location for launching the lighted vessels and that make up the ritual angle.

The people of Tržič live with the heritage of St Gregory’s Day – and are happy to be joined in this by people from elsewhere.



In 2015 the practice of launching St Gregory candle vessels on the eve of St Gregory’s Day, which is celebrated on March 12, was entered in the Slovenian Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage, thereby according the custom an all-Slovenian significance and establishing the precondition for its appropriate preservation and development. Photo: Peter Balantič

SLOVENIA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF EUROPE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE

Diversity is Slovenia's Privilege

PETRA ČAD, SLOVENIAN TOURIST BOARD



Cherry Festival
Photo: Andrej Tarfla

Cultural tourism in Slovenia is distinguished by cultural and ethnologic diversity on the one hand, and by connectivity and accessibility on the other. The urban and the rural are intertwined in a unique way, and geographical accessibility allows visitors to quickly experience both city and country life.

The richness of Slovenian cultural heritage is the result of several influences from the various peoples that traded in the area of modern Europe and across its borders, and who made Slovenia one of their outposts. At the same time, Slovenia is a junction of four typical European geographical and cultural areas – the Alps, Mediterranean, Karst and Pannonia.

In the following months, culture and cultural tourism will turn a new page: winter has been chased away by the Kurenti, heralds of the spring that brings new life, a plethora of activities, holidays and other festivities.

The Kurent, the most recognisable character in Slovenia, is the central figure of the international Kurentovanje festival. This is one of the most important festivals in Europe that revives our traditional ethnological heritage. In December 2017 the Kurent rounds were entered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and this year, too, Kurentovanje drew more than 100,000 visitors to Ptuj, the oldest town in Slovenia, from 2 to 13 February. Shrovetide was vibrant elsewhere in Slovenia, too: traditional events include Laufarija in Cerklje, Škoromatija in Brkini and Pust in Cerklje. The costumes of Slovenian regions represent Europe in miniature and emphasise the diversity typical of Slovenian lands. Existing tourist services encompass the visits of Shrovetide festivals and museum collections.

Shrovetide is followed by Easter, the feast that gathers the whole family and revives old rituals. The festive table in Slovenia is loaded with traditional delicacies topped by Easter eggs. Coloured

hard-boiled eggs are one of the most recognisable symbols of Easter, and reflect the diversity of Slovenia's landscape; they are featured in rituals such as chopping or beating Easter eggs with coins and sticks. Easter rituals are typical of both urban and rural areas. The authenticity and many folk traditions of the countryside are a guarantee of an extraordinary Easter experience in Slovenia. You can attend a workshop or demonstration of Easter egg decoration, while all culinary aficionados will enjoy a course on making and baking the traditional Slovenian walnut potica, say in Potižnica on the island in the middle of Lake Bled. Ham in pastry with horseradish will provide for a heartier festive meal.

SPRING AND SUMMER FESTIVALS IN SLOVENIA

Slovenia's four seasons are distinctive and inviting, and are the basis for numerous festivals and events.

This year, too, brings a period rich with music, arts and culinary pleasures: The Chocolate Festival Radovljica, Druga godba, Jazz Cerklje, Kino Otok, Seviq Brežice, Imago Sloveniae with the Summer in Ljubljana Old Town, Ana Desetnica, Summer Museum Night, Ljubljana Jazz Festival, June in Ljubljana, Jurjevanje (a folklore festival), Idrija Lace Festival and the Cherry Festival are just a few examples enriching the tourism offerings of Slovenia. Especially popular in the summertime are the so-called festival holidays in the Soča Valley. This green destination with forests, mountains and an emerald-coloured river spreading across three municipalities has grown into quite a phenomenon in recent years. The valley lures crowds of young and old music fans from all over the world who gather for a week's holiday in the unspoiled nature. The festival town of Tolmin hosts MetalDays, Gora Rocka,

Sajeta and Punk Rock Holiday. The Soča FESTIValley trademark unites several festivals focused on sports, outdoor activities and cuisine. Especially unmissable are the two greatest summer festivals of Slovenia: Festival Lent in Maribor and the Ljubljana Festival. With extraordinary performances by national and international musicians, both festivals boost the city vibe and attract domestic as well as countless foreign visitors.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT HAND IN HAND

The importance of cultural tourism is further confirmed by the newly selected European Destination of Excellence 2017, focused on cultural tourism. The winner was Koper, while Ptuj, Slovenske Konjice, Radovljica and Karst were shortlisted. The Karst area ranks among the oldest cultural landscapes in Europe. The remains of prehistoric forts, stone architectural heritage, well-developed stone-cutting trade and art give the Karst a unique character.

Its key spots and events of interest are the Lipica Stud Farm, Škocjan Caves Regional

Park, numerous culinary festivals (Teran and Prosciutto Festival, Month of Karst Cuisine, celebration of Saint Martin's Day), the First and Second World War thematic trails, and the castle and town of Štanjel.

Štanjel places the greatest emphasis on its cultural role (the Ferrari garden and the legacy of Maks Fabiani, exhibitions in Lojze Spacal gallery, Štanjel architecture from prehistoric forts to the castle); of particular value is the cultural landscape, where the natural landscape (protected under Natura 2000 and known for having the greatest biodiversity in Europe) is intertwined with the stone remains of life from prehistoric times until today. All of the above attracts an increasing number of visitors to Štanjel, so the Komen municipality now devotes even more attention and effort to landscaping the surroundings, connecting and marking trails, renovation work (such as the newly renovated Fabiani home-stead, façade with new stone-lined windows and castle roof) and producing new content (a winery in the round tower, and museum of the protected Natura 2000 site). The charms of the Karst



Formally organised since 1998, Ana Desethica International Street Theatre Festival is an annual festival organised by the Ana Monro Theatre. Held at the beginning of summer (mainly) in Ljubljana, the festival offers different street art genres and other performances (theatre, dance) by numerous artists. Photo: Andrej Tarfila

landscape have long enticed couples who increasingly choose Štanjel as their wedding venue. The Karst really leaves no room for boredom: in Divača you can visit the interesting Museum of Slovenian Film Actors, join a stonecutting workshop or take a guided tour of the Karst Living Museum, truly something for everyone.

The preservation of our cultural heritage must be integrated and careful, for it is an important part of our national identity and has great potential for the tourist industry.

It is therefore of key importance that tourism planning take into account sustainable development in the preservation of cultural heritage and the tradition of the space or landscape.

The Karst municipalities of Divača, Komen, Hrpelje-Kozina and Sežana entered the Green Scheme of Slovenian tourism last year, and will soon receive the Slovenia Green Destination (SGD) certificate, with this process comprehensively evaluating the sus-

tainable operation of destinations as well as encouraging continuous improvements. One of the six areas of the Slovenia Green standard thus focuses on culture and tradition. This category evaluates how the included destinations preserve their cultural heritage, artefacts and fossils, and especially how they manage tourism, i.e. prevent its negative impacts on culture. The category also concerns our intangible heritage and respect for authenticity. A good example of the inclusion of authenticity in tourism products and its appropriate presentation can be found in Tomaj, where you can join original games of detectives and adventurers called Karra, and thus experience the Karst in a playful, interactive and unique manner. By solving puzzles and riddles guests discover the charms of the Karst landscape, the village of Tomaj, and the legendary poet Srečko Kosovel. They can take part in a treasure hunt, visit an escape room and even have an outdoor escape experience. The discovery of our cultural heritage in such an innovative, interactive way is one of the best approaches to discovering the culture of space and living, and a fun way of acquainting our children with their heritage. The promotion of this pioneering tourism project was co-financed by Slovenia and the EU from the European Regional Development Fund.



Štanjel
Photo: Domen Šuc

A FESTIVE YEAR IN WORDS AND PICTURES

RTV Slovenia museum collection

ZDRAVKO ERJAVEC, RTV SLOVENIA MUSEUM COLLECTION TREASURER
PHOTO: RTV SLOVENIA ARCHIVES

The museum collection was established in the spring of 1983 so as to preserve with utmost care the intact original form of numerous technical items that are now “outdated”, but which over the rich and long history of the radio and television media generations of artists – masters, in fact – used in their work. The museum collection has been active for a number of years as part of the archival service.

RTV Slovenija’s idea to establish a museum collection is in fact very old, and dates back to the 1960s. Due to a shortage of space at that time, however, the collection was sadly not established then, but thanks to some enthusiasts many obsolete technical items had already been collected and handed over to the museum collection. Most of the credit for establishing the collection goes to the first editor, Dušica Erzin. The museum collection was held at Dalmatinova Street 8 in Ljubljana until 2004, when the lease contract was terminated (as part of denationalisation), and the collection was moved.

Radio technology saw major developments after 1920. At this point we should draw attention to the engineer Marij Osana, who built a radio transmitter by himself and on 8 March 1924 launched trial radio broadcasting in Ljubljana, which could also be followed in the Gorenjska region. At that time the Balkans had no radio stations, whereas in Slovenia only 12 radio receivers were available. Osana continued with his work and it was under his leadership that Slovenia started to build a powerful transmitter with a capacity of 2.5 kW in Domžale. The broadcasting was first carried out on a trial basis and with a wavelength of 578 metres. Marij Osana is thus considered to be the pioneer of the radio and the father of radiophony in Slovenia. Radio Ljubljana was launched on 1 September 1928, when the writer Fran Saleški Finžgar and poet Oton Župančič were the first people to be heard speaking live on the air using a microphone made by Reiss, which is kept in the RTV Slovenian Museum Collection as one of its most precious exhibits. At the opening event for Radio Ljubljana Fran S. Finžgar said “today marks the holiday of the Slovenian word”, Oton Župančič recited an excerpt from his famous “Duma”, and a choir of as many as 800 singers from the Educational Union gave a performance.

Officially, Radio Ljubljana began its broadcasting on 28 October 1928 on the premises located in the then Bleiweis Street, whereas TV Ljubljana started broadcasting thirty years later on 11 October 1958.

A RICH MUSEUM COLLECTION

A collection of more than two hundred original exhibits testifies to the work that has occurred on both national radio and television, including transmitters and communications. The museum collection showcases old microphones, all sorts of recording devices, old radio and television receivers, cameras, mixing boards, various electronic tubes, old cameras for recording television dramas, cameras that were once used for shooting on site, including the one from 1958 – which was set up in the TV studio floor – and numerous exhibits of transmitters and other communications equipment. It features different technical items from various periods of radio and television, as well as transmitters and communications in general, which are part of the rich history of RTV Slovenija. Each exhibit has its inventory number and a file containing a brief history and description of the item along with information on which service used it and when; the age of the exhibit is also recorded with information on when the item was handed over to the museum, as well as whether it was written off by the technical service or donated. Exhibits in the RTV Slovenia Museum Collection are part of our priceless cultural heritage and the RTV House is justly proud of them. All exhibits are of permanent significance for science, history and culture.



Phillips microphone, type 9589.

The exhibits in the museum collection not only have great museum value, but their practical significance is important too, given that directors often came to the museum collection and used the exhibits for backgrounds in their films – which is why it is not surprising that TV shooting crews have also paid frequent visits to our museum to record or shoot for various broadcasts.

They have thus recorded a number of contributions for TV Dnevnik news, shots for the show “Zlata šestdeseta leta slovenske popevke” (The Golden Sixties of the Slovene Pop Song Festival), the educational broadcast “Enajsta šola”, TV broadcasts about sound, and the list could go on. Such works also provide an opportunity for viewers to see the exhibits on their small screens.

TECHNICAL HERITAGE OF RTV SLOVENIA

The most valuable exhibit is a marble-plated carbon microphone made by Reiss, which was in use from 1928 to 1941 in Studio 1 at the then Radio Ljubljana in the former Bleiweis Street in the capital. The visitors also greatly admire a Philips microphone, type 9589, made in Holland, which was in use at RTV Ljubljana until around 1943. The aforementioned microphones are also among the most often photographed items in the collection. There is a lot of interest in some recording devices, too, such as one of the oldest Nagra recorders (used for field work at the end of 1950s by the legendary reporter Silvo Matelič).

Visitors to the museum collection are also interested in the exhibit displaying the mechanism for the radio “cuckoo”, which was made by a technician named France Kramar in 1928. It was based on Marij Osana’s idea. The next item of interest is a mechanical cuckoo, produced during World War II in 1943 or 1944. It was used immediately after the war at the studio on Cankarjeva Street in Ljubljana. Much of the public’s attention is also focused on old radio receivers, the first televisions, and, it goes without saying, also on the first TV camera and TV magnetoscope. Each museum exhibit brings back a world of memories to visitors.

In almost 23 years of existence the RTV Slovenia Museum Collection has showcased a rich selection of exhibits to the Slovenian public, especially at anniversaries of national radio and television.

One of the major exhibitions took place in Ljubljana in the Križanke open air auditorium in 1998 on the occasion of celebrating the 70th anniversary of radio and the 40th anniversary of TV broadcasting — RTV Slovenija’s large exhibition was under the aegis and guidance of the Technical Museum of Slovenia. The author of the exhibition, curator Ljudmila Bezljaj-Krevel, entitled it “Halo, tu radio Ljubljana!” (Hello, this is Radio Ljubljana!). RTV Slovenija participated in the exhibition as a professional assistant for archival material; it also helped in the selection of exhibits. This exhibition—one of the greatest to date—received a lot of attention and was highly praised by critics. Dr. Bezljaj produced a comprehensive catalogue accompanying the show, in which she systematically presented the history of radio in Slovenia from its beginnings in 1928 until 1998.

The exhibits have also often been presented at electronics fairs in Ljubljana (e.g. one of the major ones was in 2001) and smaller exhibitions. RTV Slovenija thus provides an opportunity for the general public to view the collection’s exhibits. In 2003 some items were showcased at the extensive exhibition organised on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana. A lot of public interest was captured by the exhibition of the most attractive items from our collection in September 2004, held as part of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts at the Merkur Centre in Ljubljana. We were especially pleased to receive an invitation from the Association of Journalists of Slovenia, which in June 2005 organised an anthological exhibition of written documents in which the RTV Slovenia Museum Collection displayed its most remarkable items.

In 2004 the most precious exhibits were displayed in glass showcases in the radio and television lobby, and later on in the underground passage between the radio and TV houses, where they are still on display; in the radio lobby visitors can view the microphones made by Reiss and others, old radio receivers, recording devices, the mechanism for the radio “cuckoo”, radio station Križanec, and the list goes on.

The exhibits such as the first TV camera, the first TV set in Slovenia, a plastic developing tray and a countdown timer for TV news, as well as important exhibits related to transmitters and communication, are on display in the entrance hall to the television premises at Kolodvorska Street in Ljubljana.

RTV Slovenia offers anyone interested in seeing the collection a free-of-charge tour of the exhibited items in both lobbies and the underground passage between the two houses.



Camera from 1958.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVING AND DEVELOPING CULTURAL HERITAGE

“Donate a cent for the restoration of Slovenia’s cultural heritage”

ALENKA ŠTRUKELJ

PHOTO: MINISTRY OF CULTURE ARCHIVES

ILLUSTRATIONS: MAJA GORJUP

A special collection of bottles of Costella natural mineral water with symbols of Slovenian cultural heritage.



The European Year of Cultural Heritage highlights the fact that our common cultural heritage is both local and European, and employs this dimension in facing some current challenges: on the one hand it sets up new opportunities for preserving and developing cultural heritage, and on the other hand it shows how preservation is essential, since our cultural heritage is an important and unique part of the social and economic potential of Europe that is closely linked to numerous other areas, and as such it represents the foundation of our common development in Europe.

“Through globalisation, our awareness of cultural heritage has become less binding and recognisable, while at the same time the economic crisis has contributed to the fact of there no longer being sufficient money for the renewal of cultural heritage, or rather heritage is too often regarded as a burden, and not as a development potential,” said Damjana Pečnik, State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture on the start of the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

Cultural heritage is indeed the foundation of our recognisability, and as such is too rarely used as a market niche for the country’s economy.

The synthesis of the Slovenia brand, which brings together natural features, cultural heritage and local food and high-quality drinking water, offers us new recognition, new paths and new markets.

This has also been recognised by the Slovenian Tourist Board, which declared 2018 and 2019 as years of cultural tourism.

MARKET OPPORTUNITY WITH AN INNOVATIVE TWIST

The European Year of Cultural Heritage can also signify an exceptional market opportunity, through which on micro levels we can enhance both heritage products and products tied to heritage with added value, and offer them in the marketplace in a new way.



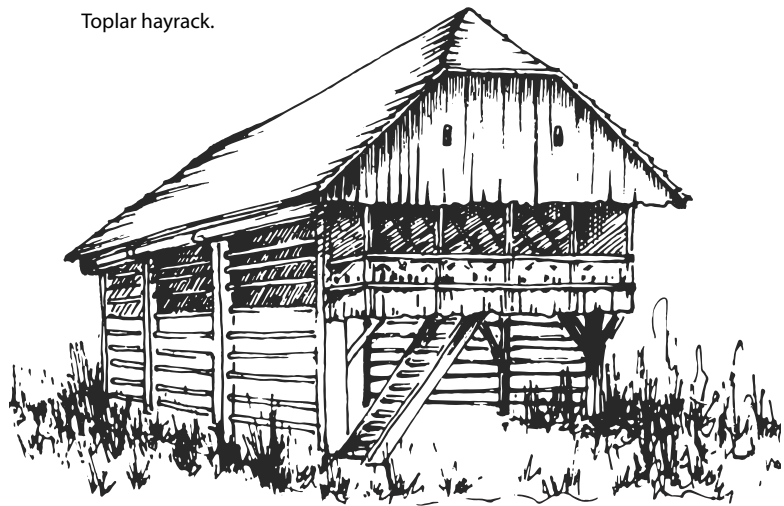
The Kurent character.

On the invitation of the Ministry of Culture, the company Costella d.o.o. joined the European Year of Cultural Heritage. The company is aware of the social and environmental responsibility it bears, so it wishes to be a proactive and innovative stakeholder in preserving the cultural heritage of the Slovenian nation.

In their view, preservation of heritage and its promotion are vital for a bright future and clear identity – both for the country and its citizens. With this reasoning they proposed to the Ministry of Culture a project for producing a special collection of bottles of Costella natural mineral water, enhanced with illustrations of five motifs of the rich Slovenian cultural heritage by the young Slovenian artist Maja Gorjup (potica cake, the kurent character, beehive, hayrack and Kostel Castle) and the sign of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. Whenever a bottle from this collection is sold Costella will donate one cent on behalf of the buyer for the restoration of one of five Slovenian cultural monuments (cultural heritage structures).

The selection of these monuments was made by the Ministry of Culture, and the

Toplar hayrack.

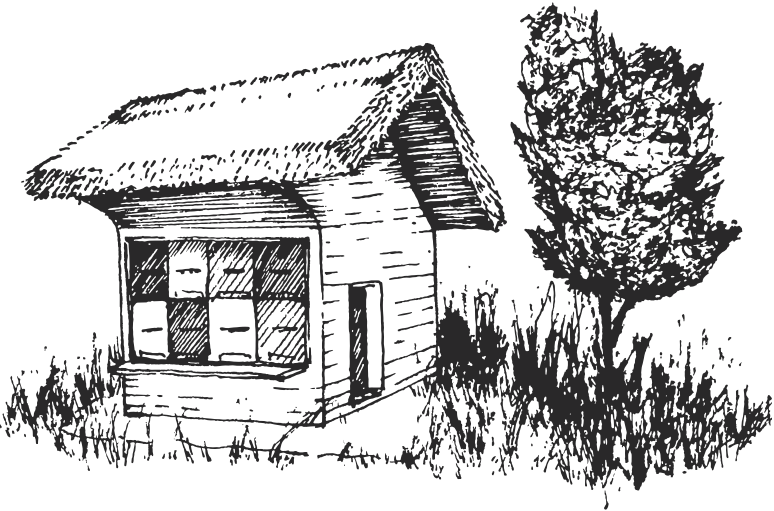


recipient of funding from the earmarked funds for preserving and maintaining cultural heritage will be selected by voting on the Facebook pages of the European Year of Cultural Heritage and Costella Company.

The company is also the first natural mineral water entitled to use the national trademark “I feel Slovenia” in its communications and promotional activities. Visitors to the Facebook pages can give likes for the renovation of the Aljaž Turret, which stands on the highest peak in Slovenia, Triglav, the dugout canoe from the Ljubljansko Barje wetland, the Ferrari Garden in Štanjel, Kostel Castle in the Kolpa river valley and the Vittore Carpaccio painting *Virgin Mary and Child on a Throne with Six Saints* from 1516, held in the Cathedral of the Assumption in Koper. The item of cultural heritage that receives the most likes will also receive the funds collected in the Costella project.

<https://www.facebook.com/costella.slovenija/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ELKD2018/>
[#CostellaforCulture](#)

Bee House.



LET’S PRESERVE CULTURAL HERITAGE. WILL YOU JOIN US?

By purchasing Costella natural mineral water bearing a special sticker with the sign of the European Year of Cultural Heritage and the motif of one of five elements of Slovenian cultural heritage from the EYCH 2018 collection, you will be donating one cent for the restoration of one of the cultural monuments and contributing something to the mosaic of preserving our cultural heritage.

The Aljaž Turret

This cylindrical metal tower with a conical roof, which stands at Mt Triglav, is not just a somewhat unusual but welcome mountain refuge, but soon after it’s placement grew to become the symbolic refuge of all Slovenians. However, after 122 years, time, exposure to extreme weather and inappropriate treatment by increasing numbers of visitors to the mountains have taken their toll. The Alpine Association of Slovenia, the Institute for Protection of Cultural Heritage, the National Museum and others taking care of The Aljaž Turret have thus decided to completely renovate the tower in 2018.

Dugout Canoe

In the flooded reaches of the Ljubljansko Barje area, in marshy sediments and the stream of the River Ljubljanica, around 60 dugouts have been found to date. This ranks the area as having one of the highest number of documented finds of this kind of vessel in Europe. Around 14.4 m long, up to 1.25 m wide and 0.68 m deep, the dugout from the stream of the Ljubljanica at Vrhnika was made out of an approximately 200 year-old oak tree and dates back to the end of the 2nd century BCE. In addition to its large dimensions and capacity, it is outstanding for its technological features.

Ferrari Garden in Štanjel

Owing to its cultural, landscape, artistic, architectural, historical and other extraordinary qualities, along with its special importance for Slovenia, in 1999 the garden at the Villa Ferrari was declared a cultural monument of national importance with properties of the cultural landscape, a monument of designed nature, a technical monument, artistic architectural monument and a historical monument. It is complete with decorative plantations, pergolas, a bowls court, pool, footpaths and viewing points, intended for delight, recreation and the display of the family’s social status. Both the purely practical, utilitarian and the symbolic decorative functions were and are still inextricably interwoven.

Kostel Castle

The castle stands in the valley of the River Kolpa, on the southern border with Croatia. It was first mentioned in written sources in 1336 as “castrum Grafenwarth”, and it was only after 1449 that it was known as Kostel. In size it is the second biggest castle complex in Slovenia, and the only one that brings together both the castle and the living settlement below it. The castle served as a border fortification in the defence of Carniola and the Celje possessions, and became an important trading post. Later it served as a key defensive point against Turkish incursions. The castle itself is fascinating, since it shows the preserved building history from various construction phases and periods (Renaissance entrance, stone window frames, vaults, loopholes and the like).

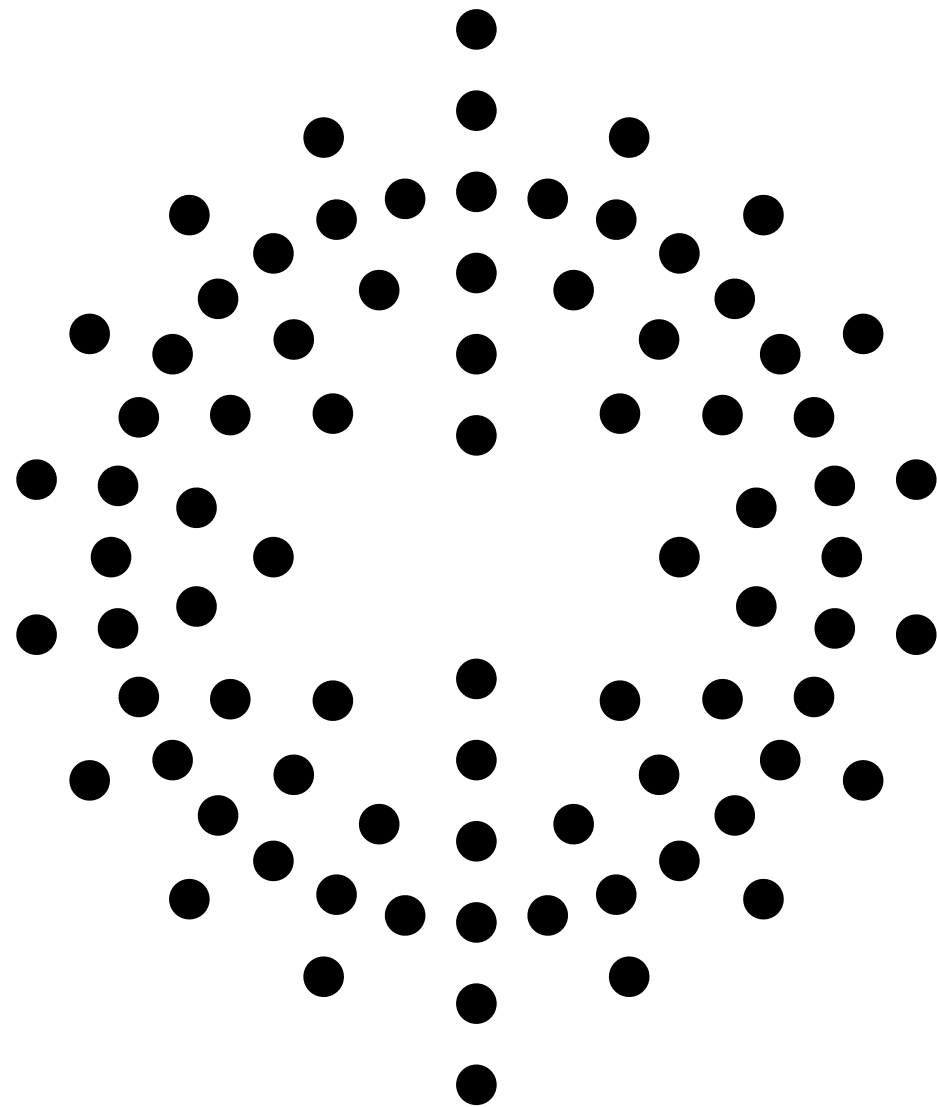
Vittore Carpaccio: Virgin Mary and Child on a Throne with Six Saints, Koper

The entire opus of the master Vittore Carpaccio stands at the pinnacle of Slovenian and European Renaissance heritage. His best-known works are painted narratives and legends of the saints, featuring the stories of St Ursula, St George, St Stephen and St Hieronymus, which are located in Venice. In these paintings Carpaccio depicted the life of that time, with a splendour of colour and an emphasis on details. The painting *Virgin Mary and Child on a Throne with Six Saints* from 1516 is the first painting by this artist in the area of Istria. It measures approximately 420 x 240 cm, and is painted using the tempera technique. The large altarpiece is kept today in the Koper Regional Museum.

NEW LOGO FOR THE UNESCO ALMADEN – IDRIJA HERITAGE

Images of human diligence and inventiveness

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ



In Idrija a new logo has been presented that will in future represent, designate and promote the UNESCO-approved heritage of mercury associated with Almaden and Idrija.

An international student competition carried out last year yielded 9 proposals.

The winning concept is the work of architecture student Ambrož Bartol.

“When I asked myself what the common identity of Almaden (the Spanish mine that was once the biggest mercury mine in the world) and Idrija is, I focused on images derived from the process of mining in those two areas. These are images testifying to human diligence and inventiveness,” said Bartol. As for the logo, he explained that the basis for his design stems from the subatomic structure of the element mercury. This is 80 points arranged in a circular form in six layers. This represents 80 electrons and therefore the atomic number of mercury.

“The logo can further symbolise the filigree quality of lace or the precision and perfection of the technique used in mining, or drops of mercury and their playfulness. In an abstract way the sign represents the principles of the working of nature,” he added.

In Idrija the hope was expressed that the new logo would contribute to greater recognition of the UNESCO heritage site and interest in it. Judging from the statistics of visits to the site, they have not yet been able to cash in on the potential from being placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The new logo can be used by tourism providers, companies, craft establishments and individuals involved in shaping and representing Idrija tourism to promote their own activities and services.

In connection with the use of the logo, the two towns have signed a special mutual agreement, and the Municipality of Idrija is already talking to the creator of the logo about designing a complete corporate image.



Ambrož Bartol.
Photo: Rok Staudacher

IDRIJA – THE UNESCO TOWN – ENTICES YOU TO NEW EXPERIENCES

In the oldest mining town in the heart of Slovenia, the sound of hammers and mining machinery echoed day after day for more than five centuries. In the past the mercury mine provided the town with great prosperity in all fields, from technology and science to trade and culture. Nowadays the entire old town centre is on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Gewerkenegg mining castle from the 16th century still watches over the attractive town, surrounded by clear waters, ample forests and green hills offering magnificent views. Idrija invites you to discover its wealth of cultural and technical heritage, already known worldwide. Get to know the tradition of lacemaking, enjoy the pristine natural environment, breathe the fresh air and taste the traditional local delicacies in the nearby villages.

8 EXPERIENCES YOU MUST TRY WHILE IN IDRIJA

- UNESCO heritage of the Idrija Mercury Mine
- Municipal Museum at Gewerkenegg Castle
- Lacemaking workshop at Idrija Lace School
- Cooking workshop – making idrijski žlikrofi by the protected recipe
- Divje jezero Wild Lake, one of the most interesting natural phenomena in the country
- Walking the Path of Idrija's natural scientists along the Rake water channel
- Cycling or hiking the theme trails within the Idrija Geopark
- Fishing in the crystal clear Idrijca river with the Idrija Angling Club



Drops of mercury.
Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

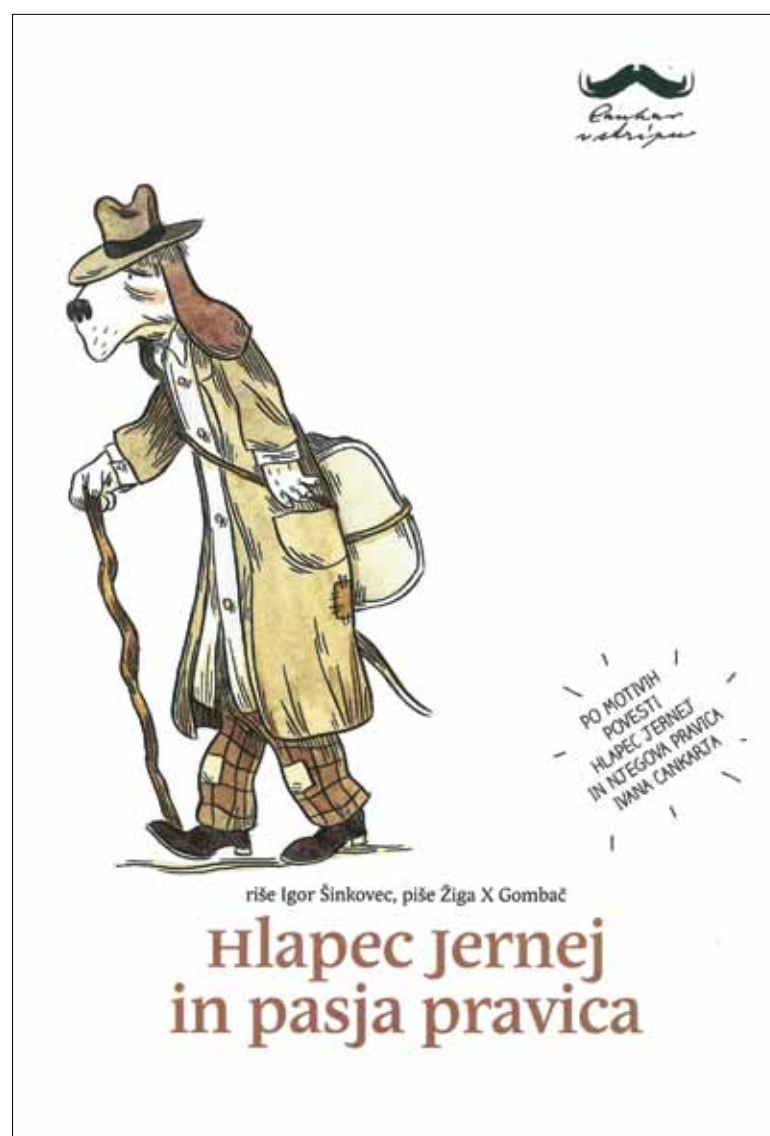


Slovenia has formally nominated bobbin lace making for UNESCO's intangible heritage list, submitting the nomination at the organisation's secretariat in Paris in 2017.
Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

BAILIFF JERNEJ AND THE DOG'S RIGHT

The master is the master and the worker is the worker

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



Illustrations: Igor Šinkovec
Text: Žiga X Gombač

Illustrator Igor Šinkovec and writer Žiga X Gombač have crafted a comic strip that will appeal to all generations, and their aims included motivating young people to read and discover the literature of Ivan Cankar.

We have already presented them, and now we showcase the story of Bailiff Jernej and the *Dog's Right* (*Hlapec Jernej in pasja pravica*), and conclude with a presentation of a random and key part of the comic strip.

The story in this comic does not take place on a farm, but in a confectionery shop. Bailiff Jernej (in the comic) together with old Sitar had an outstanding confectionery shop called "Pri slastnem smrčku". They started together from practically nothing, using a secret recipe only they knew, and made the best ice cream for miles around. Dogs would come to Pasja Ravan from near and far. Although Jernej worked as a serf for Sitar, the old man respected and regarded him as an equal. But things suddenly change when Sitar dies.

Jernej is convinced that owing to the 40 years of work he has put in, the confectionery shop is his by right, but it is inherited, of course, by the master's oldest son, who never invested any substantial time or effort in it.

Jernej is outraged and ceaselessly demands what in his opinion is his by right. But the young Sitar drives him off the property. Jernej seeks out important people so that they can judge whether an injustice has been done to him. He wanders from the beadle to the judge, from the judge to the supreme court judge, and ultimately turns to God.

IN SPEECH BUBBLES – STILL AN INJUSTICE THAT TWISTS OUR HEARTS INTO DESPAIR AND BRINGS TEARS TO OUR EYES

Jernej's story is just one of many that take place every day. They happen, although they should not.

Now, 110 years after the creation of the original *Bailiff Jernej and His Right* – the most translated work by this author – Cankar's social tale has acquired a modern image in the form of a comic strip.

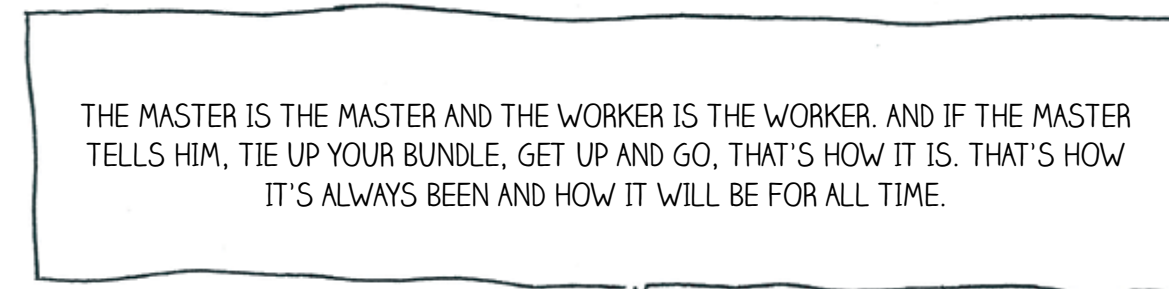
Despite all this and the fact that they talk of "ice cream", the "recipe for ice cream" and the "confectionery shop", Cankar's spirit pervades and inspires each speech bubble in the story.

Just like the 'literary original', the comic strip story includes political rhetoric, and the issue of the division of society into oppressors and the oppressed, masters and serfs. The former are capitalists, burghers and the nation. The latter are workers, artists and the common people in general. This is thus a symbolic portrayal of class struggle. At the forefront are the issues of rights, fair judgments and the associated "idea of revolution".

And in the epilogue to the comic strip there is no clear ending, just a sense that Jernej has found the right he was so zealously seeking.

In the end the reader is left with the question and hope that perhaps together with Jernej we might find personal justice and satisfaction.

Bailiff Jernej and the Dog's Right was drawn by Igor Šinkovec, with the story in the speech bubbles provided by Žiga X Gombač, and accompanying text added by Matic Kocijančič; published by Škrateljč publishing house in 2017.



CULTURAL BAZAAR 2018

Taking care of quality arts and cultural education

NATAŠA BUCIK, NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION AT THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE
ANA PETROVČIČ, NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR THE CULTURAL BAZAAR PROJECT



Cultural Bazaar 2017.
Photo: Tamino Petelinšek/STA

The Cultural Bazaar is an important part of the systematic development of arts and cultural education set out a decade ago jointly by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the National Educational Institute Slovenia. The executive producer of the project is Cankarjev dom, Cultural and Congress Centre Ljubljana. This year the Cultural Bazaar is offering its inspiration for the tenth time.

On the anniversary of the national project we put together a rich and attractive programme of professional training (presentations, lectures, workshops and more).

The main theme of the programme is the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018, with special attention being devoted to the Year of Cankar 2018 and to intergenerational connection in the area of culture.

Experts around the world and in Slovenia recognise that the experiences of children and young people with high-quality arts and cultural education are vital for their overall development, so it is important to enable them to become familiar with various fields of art and thereby with various ways of expressing oneself and communicating (through words, movement, images, music and so on). An important part in this process is played by creative partnerships – between cultural institutions and other fields (education, science, agriculture, health, environment and spatial planning) – which contribute to the transfer of creative skills from the cultural sphere to other fields.

As part of the programme we will get to know how in these ten years interdepartmental cooperation has helped us to succeed in various ways in raising awareness of the importance of high-quality cultural and artistic education, and in promoting numerous creative partnerships which today are not just contributing to a more innovative learning environment, but are also promoting



creative thinking, social inclusion, strengthening social skills and having numerous other positive effects on the development of individuals and society.

GOLDEN STICK AND FILM SCHOOL PORTALS

A special place in the programme is occupied by the presentation of five-year national projects in the area of arts and cultural education, which are co-financed by the Slovenian Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, with European Union support through the European Social Fund.

Here we should mention two significant new features in the area of cultural and artistic education: the Golden Stick portal and the Film School portal.

Whenever you want to go to the theatre with children and young people, you often face the question of which production to choose for a particular age group and how to recognise a high-



quality one that will offer young audiences an artistically rich experience that is interesting in content, emotionally stimulating, enchanting and inspiring. One of the tools you can use to help in this decision is the new web platform Golden Stick (Zlata paličica), which can be found at www.zlatapalicica.si.

Golden Stick is a reference database for searching and initial recognition of high-quality theatrical productions for children and young people. The purpose of the platform, which the Slovenian Theatre Institute has been setting up as part of the national project Gleda(l) išče, is to gather together in one place a selection of recommended productions chosen by a three-member expert panel composed of experts qualified in the theatre, education and developmental psychology. The platform ensures systematic and continuous familiarisation with professional theatre institutions and those involved in performance from across Slovenia, and with high-quality professional theatre productions for audiences in the process of becoming adults. It opens the door to the theatre – a fun-filled and brilliant space of open, emotionally charged, creative dialogue, outstanding artistic achievement and innovative, flexible forms of learning.

Film School (Šola filma) – www.solafilma.si is an informational interactive website intended first and foremost for providing information

and additional professional training for professionals involved in education in the field of film and film education.

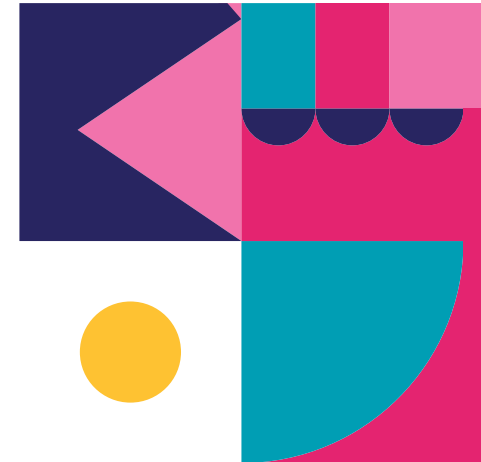
It will also be a useful tool for other experts who wish to steer young people towards high-quality film education and for students of various courses, especially for future education and culture professionals.

Film School is being set up by the Art Cinema Network of Slovenia as part of the Film Primary School, a five-year national education project for primary school educators, and by Slovenska kinoteka as part of Understanding Film, a five-year national education project intended for secondary school educators. An important part of the portal is the database of learning materials, guidelines and recommendation lists, along with the database of film works available for screening for educational purposes. The attractive and agreeably interactive Film School also highlights current events organised and implemented by the two projects, along with numerous partner cultural institutions and individuals.

Cultural Bazaar 2018

5 April at Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana

admission free
www.kulturnibazar.si



Concluding event of the Cultural Bazaar 2018: iCankar, crime thriller for young people. Production: Zavod Margareta Schwarzwald, Cankarjev dom and Mestno gledališče Ptuj. Photo: Tina Bonca

ANŽE ROZMAN, FILM MUSIC COMPOSER

“You need a clear objective and determination to succeed”

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: JURE MATOZ



The sky is the limit for Anže Rozman.

Many people in the film and music business see working in Los Angeles for major Hollywood productions as a special challenge. In January, however, the young but established Slovenian composer Anže Rozman set off for the USA with precisely this intention. His collaboration was sought by Hans Zimmer, currently the most highly prized film score composer, who has provided the music for numerous outstanding films such as *The Lion King*, *As Good as It Gets*, *Thin Red Line*, *Gladiator*, *Inception*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *The Dark Knight* and more. In February he officially started working in Zimmer's studio. Rozman has an open-ended contract, but his wish is to return to Slovenia after two years.

Could it happen that you stay forever in the USA?

I'm leaving with mixed feelings, it's very hard for me to go, I have everything here except work, which awaits me in the USA.

I would never forgive myself if I didn't go now and take this unique opportunity. It would be hard to commit to a life in the USA, since Slovenia means so much to me.

I don't know if I could feel at home anywhere other than Slovenia. That connection to homeland, it seems to me a fundamental value that I prize enormously. So there is not much chance that I would stay there.

The story began in Spain, when you said to yourself you wanted to connect with composers from Los Angeles working for Hollywood studios. If you want to do something in film music there's almost no chance without some Hollywood experience, yes?

Yes, that's true. From the start I was opening my own doors and I didn't wait for other people to call me or make it easier. So even

when I was working on my master's degree I was organising special Skype video meetings at which we talked about writing film music. In one year we talked to as many as 17 composers. I also established contact with Zimmer.

First I asked him about the music for the film *Gladiator*, which was the subject of my master's thesis. After a while I asked him directly whether I could come and work with him.

And how did the famous American respond?

He was exceptionally amenable and friendly. Zimmer is a warm and sensitive person, he was willing to listen to me and help, and he always responded on Facebook. If it hadn't been for his work, I certainly would not have been drawn so much to music. And after a certain amount of time communicating, he offered me a job. Meanwhile I had attended composer workshops in Los Angeles four years in a row, since you can only get experience of writing music for Hollywood films over there. A month later I posted the composition we recorded in London on the forum of the V.I. Control website, which is intended for musicians to help musicians.

Hans listened to it and said it was wonderful. On Facebook he wrote to ask if we could talk on the phone. When we talked later, he said he liked the composition very much and that he had plans for me in the future. The next time, we talked for a full two hours about Gladiator. He was enthusiastic.

Are the conditions for working in this field in the USA similar to those in Slovenia?

There is no set-up at all like the American one in Slovenia. There are 12 composers working in Zimmer's music studio, and I am the 13th. Each of us has their own studio where we write music for a specific project. Some are more enthusiastic about composing electronic music, and others orchestral. Of course there is also a lot of collaboration among the composers. There will be no shortage of work, since new films are being made all the time, plus sequels and TV series that need music. I won't have direct communication with the clients, which is great, since this system allows you to focus just on writing music and not with other things that distract you. Every day I can come up with 2-3 minutes of music, but if it's less complex, I could also write up to 10 minutes.

Where do you draw your inspiration, is this to do with talent or something else?

I don't think I have a lot of talent exactly, there are lots of musicians with more. Maybe what distinguishes me from others is that I always felt passionate about composing, even before I had any idea that it could be a profession. I put all my energy into it. You know, I believe that inspiration almost doesn't exist, the subconscious itself produces things. Now, when I am composing for different projects every day, there is not much time for inspiration.

In the majority of cases I have no melody already in my head. I simply start work and then something comes. I never think about whether some product of mine is a piece of genius.

Other people should judge that. I simply feel a great need to write music. Technology has advanced so much that you can't tell whether music has been produced on a computer or wheth-

er it is a mixture of computer generation and real instruments.

In Slovenia you collaborated with everyone you wanted to work with, and did projects that suited you.

Yes, that's true. I am grateful to my professors at the Music Academy, but if you want to achieve something outstanding, you need to go beyond what the education system offers. It annoys me when I ask composers what they are doing and they reply that they are writing something for the composing class.

The thing is, I am convinced that you have to compose for musicians, not for the system. I always took this dimension into account at the academy, too, where I worked on music that would really be played.

This set me apart from my peers, since I had a clear goal that my music would be played. I also wrote for the professors and the orchestra, but if you don't have that goal, you will only produce what the professors dictate. So I wrote a number of pieces involving a variety of instrumentalists and orchestration, including for a symphony orchestra and the group Laibach, when they did their version of Prešeren's Baptism at the Savica.

After you graduated from the Ljubljana Music Academy you went to one of the most prestigious music schools, Berklee College of Music in Valencia.

Those were very interesting years. I gained my master's there in composing for film, television and computer games. I learnt a lot. After I returned home, I started lecturing as a teaching assistant at the Music Academy, but I felt that I was a composer first and foremost rather than a professor. So now I'm embarking on that path, and am convinced it will enrich me. And my great wish is to set up a similar kind of studio to the one I'm working in America when I come back to Slovenia.

We would also like that, of course. We wish you every success and new challenges in your new job, and see you again in two years back in Slovenia!

Thank you very much.



He is a composer of music for media (film, tv, video games, ect.) and classical music.

BELA KRAJINA

Splendour of nature and rich cultural heritage

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ



Bela Krajina pogača.
Photo: Andrej Tarfila

Enter Bela Krajina gently, with openness and sensitivity, as if you were taking someone on a first date. Let yourself be touched by its diverse history, culture and nice people, and be welcomed by the locals.

This area lies in the south-eastern part of Slovenia, bounded by the hills of Gorjanci, the wild forests of Kočevski Rog and the upland Poljanska Dolina, set between picturesque wine-growing hills and the river Kolpa. This area offers excellent cuisine and award-winning wines, plus a wealth of folk customs and traditions.

WINE SPRING IN METLIKA

Now in its 36th year, the Wine Spring or *Vinska vigred* is the biggest Slovenian wine-making cultural and tourist attraction event.

This is a celebration of award-winning wines and Bela Krajina culinary treats, and a promotion of ethnological features and cultural achievements.

The three-day event fills the squares in the old town centre of Metlika, a town aside from nearby Črnomelj and Semič on the sunny side of the Gorjanci massif that gained town rights back in 1365. Down through history the town notched up numerous firsts: it had the first fire protection service in Slovenia, the first reading room, the first savings and loan bank in the Dolenjska region and Bela Krajina, the first Bela Krajina Sokol physical training society, and one of the oldest brass bands in Slovenia.

The festival features three days of cultural events, workshops and fun experiences for all generations. Visitors can learn how to make the local Bela Krajina flatbread, discover culinary treats from the farmhouse and the peculiarities of local crafts and visit one of the museums or the gallery. You can taste the fullness of typical Bela Krajina dishes, from flatbread to lamb and suckling pig. During the festival the queen of Metliška črnina wine is crowned,

and there is a presentation of the most highly rated Bela Krajina wines. The event is staged in Metlika each year on the third weekend of May. Last year the Wine Spring enjoyed sunny days and attracted more than 20,000 people. These visitors were responsible for consuming around 210 roast lambs and suckling pigs, and for downing around 10,000 litres of Bela Krajina wine. Across the event space more than 600 traditional Bela Krajina flatbread cakes were sold and distributed.

GREEN GEORGE – BRINGER OF THE SUN'S POWER

Zeleni Jurij, or Green George, is a green man that reawakens the land. At one time he enjoyed his own procession in Črnomelj, and in Bela Krajina villages he was assisted by *Jurjaši* wassailers. iggest Slovenian wine-making cultural and tourist attraction event.

For over half a century these customs have been preserved by the Jurjevanje celebration in Bela Krajina, the oldest folklore festival in Slovenia. It features the participation of 20 folklore groups from near and far.

The St George tradition marks the onset of the midsummer period from St George's Day (24 April) to St John the Baptist (24 June). With a population of 6,000, Črnomelj is today the biggest town in Bela Krajina, and is formed of parallel streets that emerged around the castle back in the Middle Ages. The St George festival is associated with birch trees. According to the ancient custom, Bela Krajina folk drape a young man with birch branches. This dressed as the *Zeleni Jurij*, they take the young man around among the people, in this way welcoming the arrival of spring.



Metliška črnina is a dry red wine with a distinctive ruby colour. Photo: Rasto Božič/STA

SEMIČ WEDDING

The Semič Wedding is not just a traditional wedding ritual, it is also a showcase of folk customs, traditional cuisine and now nearly forgotten farm jobs and crafts. The happy couple make their vows in traditional dress and in accordance with the old customs, as observed in Semič around the end of the 19th century. The perfect atmosphere is provided by the Semič Wedding folklore group, which holds the entire proceedings together, along with the performances by folklore groups from various parts of Slovenia and abroad. The market town with around 1,500 residents maintains many Bela Krajina traditions. It is inextricably linked to nature, and is famous for beekeeping and the karstic source of the river Krupa.

WINE FESTIVALS ONE AFTER ANOTHER IN BELA KRAJINA

Bela Krajina is one of the most attractive Slovenian wine-growing districts. The mild climate and varied nature of the soil allow the production of superlative wines. They can be tasted on the Bela Krajina wine tourist road, which links up vineyard keepers and vintners of the Metlika, Črnomelj and Semič wine-growing sub-district with tourist farms and others offering typical specialties of this area.

Metliška črnina is a dry red wine with a distinctive ruby colour, Belokranjec is a dry white wine, while Portugalka is regarded as an excellent young red wine that is enjoyed even in October. Wine tasting is usually accompanied by some typical Bela Krajina pogača flatbread.

In autumn, the Črnomelj Week of Portugalka attracts visitors to this wine region, along with Metlika's Happy Autumn in Bela Krajina and the celebration of the season with the arrival of St Martin's Day around the slopes surrounding Semič.

LOCAL CRAFTS

Given the generally poorer standard of living and lack of transportation links, local crafts in Bela Krajina were maintained for a long time. The most widespread of these include weaving, pottery, woodworking, wickerwork and blacksmithing. Some of these crafts have been retained to the present day. Now the products of some crafts are acquiring a new purpose, mainly as part of what can be offered to tourists.

BELA KRAJINA POGAČA

One of the most famous native dishes from Bela Krajina is the local flatbread called pogača, which now has certified European protection. It is round, which indicates unity and infinity. It is cut in such a way as to give everyone an equal share. The appearance of the slice reflects the method of preparation and the energy put into it when the flatbread maker was kneading the dough.

It is a dish of welcome, indicating the mood of the homemaker, and the traditional way of serving it – by breaking it – joins together all who are present.

Other notable local fare is lamb and pig from the spit, roast over an open fire or in a bread oven. Bela Krajina *žlinkrofi* – dough parcels – are also part of the local cuisine. A parcel is stuffed with veal lung, bread, eggs and marjoram, plus salt and pepper. For dessert a Bela Krajina *povitica* cake is served.

TRADITIONAL BLESSING OF HORSES ON ST STEPHEN'S DAY

On the December Feast of St Stephen, the traditional patron saint of horses whom the Christian church reveres as the first martyr, the blessing of horses takes place in Dolenjska, Bela Krajina, Posavje and elsewhere in Slovenia. The biggest crowds gather for the traditional St Stephen blessing at Dolenja Stara Vas near Šentjernej, where more than 150 horse riders are usually assembled.

St Stephen was a deacon in Jerusalem, and because of his annunciation of Christian faith was condemned to death by stoning. He was declared the patron saint of horses and livestock in general in Central and Northern Europe, replacing a deity that protected these animals for Indo-European peoples. According to legend, St Stephen tamed a wild horse with the sign of the cross, whereby, as noted in *Praznično leto Slovencev (Slovenian Holidays of the Year)* by ethnologist Niko Kuret, in the eyes of the populace he assumed the

protection of horses. The blessing of horses on his feast day was first mentioned in a manuscript from Trier in Germany from the 10th century, and in Slovenia the ritual is first mentioned by the learned writer Valvasor as taking place in Nevlje pri Kamniku and in Carniola.

BLACK PROTEUS – ANOTHER FEATURE OF BELA KRAJINA

The source of the Jelševniščica stream by the Zupančič tourist farm at Jelševnik near Črnomelj is famous for being one of three locations to date in Bela Krajina where the black proteus, or olm, has been observed. This rare and endangered animal species ranks among the special features of Bela Krajina. The Zupančič farm is a new location for experiential, nature-oriented and green tourism, and the black proteus will boost the prominence of Bela Krajina as a tourist destination, both nationally and globally. In an open-air classroom with basic laboratory equipment and a simulated karstic cave, guides organise nature-study days and other forms of teaching and information for the public. The black proteus, also known as the human fish, is a cave-dwelling amphibian and sub-species of the white proteus that lives in the underground waters of Bela Krajina. While studying the source of the Dobličica stream in Bela Krajina, members of the Institute for Karst Research discovered the black olm in 1986. According to data established thus far, it only lives in the cave waters of the small area around Črnomelj – it has been observed at the source of the Jelševniščica, the Dobličica and in the Kanižarski Potok stream, and in contrast to the white species, the black proteus has distinctive dark pigmented skin and quite normally developed eyes.



The Jurjevanje celebration in Bela Krajina, the oldest folklore festival in Slovenia. Photo: Andrej Tarfila

THE ŠKRILJ BUNKER

The Frozen Past Beneath the Forests of Kočevje

MIHAEL PETROVIČ, JR.
PHOTO: PERSONAL ARCHIVES



Entry compensation shaft.

Kočevsko – the unique Karst landscape along the south edge of Slovenia – is known as the land of bears. Nearly ninety percent of the area stretching along the largest Slovenian municipality and its smaller neighbours is covered with forests that are home to, in addition to bears, two other European large carnivores, namely the wolf and the lynx.

The Krokar virgin forest, one of the six virgin forests in the broader Kočevsko area, was proclaimed a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site in June last year. Kočevsko is characterised by high forest cover, underground caves and abysses – to date, more than one hundred such sites have been discovered there. However, not all of the Kočevsko underworld was created by nature. A part of it was made by human hands, and it is this part that remained the most secure state secret for decades.

It all began in 1948, when the former Yugoslavia broke ties with the Soviet Union and its allies. As tensions were running high and because of the fear of being attacked, the Yugoslav authorities the following year issued an order requiring all leading authorities of the then federal republics to build underground command posts, from which, in the event of an attack, local resistance could be led for some time.

A similar but smaller bunker for telecommunication support was also being constructed in the same period at Škrilj, about ten kilometres from Gotenica.

ENTRY WAS EVEN PROHIBITED FOR PERSONS ACCOMPANYING TITO

Once the bunkers had been constructed, the entire area – which at its largest extent covered more than 200 square kilometres – fell under control of a special protection regime. A highly classified zone near Gotenica and Škrilj was only accessible to rare individuals. Tight restrictions were in force limiting access to the village of Kočevska Reka and nearby settlements, where only visitors holding Yugoslav citizenship were allowed to enter, subject to express authorisation granted by the authorities.

This overriding concern of Slovenian politicians to safeguard this site is confirmed by the fact that the access to the secret facilities was even restricted to persons accompanying the then Yugoslav President Tito, who visited Gotenica three times, according to the available data.

Already as construction got underway the residents of the most exposed villages faced forced eviction, and in the first half of the 1950s all churches and chapels in the closed military area were demolished. Until 1990 the inhabitants were thus denied the provision of any religious care.

The situation only changed with the democratisation of Slovenia, when the authorities opened the classified area to the public. For the first time journalists were allowed to peek into the mysterious underground world of Gotenica, which had created so many rumours. Shortly thereafter intensified defence preparations began in Kočevsko due to the deterioration of relations in Yugoslavia. The peak was reached on 17 December 1990, when the army of the emerging Slovenian state was first publicly presented at Kočevska Reka before the plebiscite on the independence of Slovenia took place. The area also played an important role during the war for Slovenia, as it provided protection for the first generation of Slovenian conscripts against the Yugoslav army, which dropped cluster bombs on the surrounding area of Kočevska Reka, something never seen before on European soil.

IN HALF A YEAR THE AREA HAS SEEN A 100-FOLD INCREASE IN VISITORS IN COMPARISON TO THE PREVIOUS FOUR DECADES

After Slovenia gained its independence the management of Gotenica was taken over by the Ministry of the Interior. A training centre was put in the village, while Škrilj is used by the Slovenian Armed Forces for their own purposes. The Gotenica underground facility now serves as storage depot – for several years it was used as Slovenia's film archive – and is therefore not open to visitors. Last year, following an agreement between the Ministry of Defence and the Municipality of Kočevje, the then almost unknown bunker at Škrilj was opened to public. Since the beginning of June 2017 the bunker has received as many as 4,000 visitors, which is a 100-fold increase as compared to the four decades before 1990. The Kočevje Institute for Tourism and Culture that organises the visits listed among those who have made the trip a number of guests from numerous

European countries, as well as from the United States of America and Brazil. This is something that not long ago would have been completely inconceivable.

The bunker was officially named K-35 and is in fact a time capsule. It seems as if time stopped within it, since it has never been renovated or thoroughly updated.

It was designed as a high-security facility some seventy-five metres deep underground, where during the Cold War signal troops, who had actually never stepped inside, would carry out their duties in the event of a chemical or nuclear attack.



Main telecommunications room.

The precision and quality of construction are in particular surprising. For example, the ventilation system has been running without a malfunction for sixty years. Moreover, the two submarine generators for electricity supply are still in use, even though the facility was subsequently connected to the public power grid. A number of tiny details reveal their own stories and the visitors may become familiar with them during a guided tour of the underground area.

NO MORE SECRETS

Nevertheless, the K-35 bunker still keeps some secrets. Since it is part of the military base, any photography of the bunker and its surrounding area is prohibited. Furthermore, individual visits are not allowed. Anyone who wants to enter the dark corridors stretching vertically and horizontally over a length of about half a kilometre must arrange for an organized tour with the operator.

The groups are taken by bus from the meeting point at Kočevska Reka to the facility entrance. Visitors are provided with an important accessory: upon the purchase of a ticket each visitor is given a blindfold.

Even in the 1990s part of the maintenance staff was not allowed to know the way to the bunker. Nowadays, the caretakers say that the use of blindfolds is no longer obligatory, but like to joke that nowhere does it say that every visitor will be brought back alive. They also warn their guests when getting on the bus that the bears from Kočevsko are especially fond of those who take off their blindfolds. No need to worry, though, so far every visitor has returned.

Visits are subject to prior reservations at:
E-mail: bunker.skrilj@kocevsko.com
Telephone number: +386 (0)59 959 204
www.kocevsko.com



Office of the Communications Officer.

MARINA MLAČIČ, DESIGNER OF SEA-THEMED FASHION JEWELLERY

My jewellery can be described by the word – the sea

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



Marina Mlačič.
Photo:Alenka Dak

Marina Mlačič is an 18 year-old pupil at Gimnazija Koper grammar school, from the coastal town of Ankaran, and produces items under the brand Maristella. This young designer of sea-themed fashion jewellery runs a successful company. Her inspiration is the sea and its treasures. She is one of those young people who recognise something extra in their surroundings, and learn from the experiences of their forebears.

The sea was never your only motif or inspiration for its own sake, and for a long time your family environment has been interwoven with it. What, then, is the inspiration from your family?

It's true, even as a child my imagination developed in part because of stories from my father, who is a captain and travels the seas and oceans. But I also gained creativity through my grandmother, who herself had artistic talent. She taught me to make baskets from material with various adornments of glass, ornamental needlework and so forth. My beginnings, if I could call them that, date back to 2012, two years after my grandmother died, when I wanted to make an imitation of the soap basket she had left me. My baskets were showcased in the magazine Lisa and in the creative magazine Unikat. Soon after that I started selling them in certain Slovenian shops.

Then you started making your own jewellery, and even then you drew attention.

It wasn't until the second half of 2014 that I started making jewellery. To begin with I resisted the idea of selling jewellery, since it's a very saturated market, but mainly because of the support I had from my family circle, I built on the concept of marine jewellery and created something that you can't see anywhere else. It is special mainly because it includes the smallest shells from the Ankaran shellfish beds and other natural materials from the Slovenian coast.

My jewellery can be described in one word – the sea. It's like bottling all the feelings you get when you're beside the water.

On the surface simple creations that conceal within a story of the sea.

So you only use what you find on the Slovenian coast?

Yes, mostly this is materials, shellfish, snails, coral, sea glass and pieces of pottery from the sea along the Slovenian coast. But when I make jewellery I do occasionally use materials I get from Iceland and Australia, since you can't find them in Slovenia any more (sand dollars, sea urchins, starfish and sea moss).

Your jewellery is truly very pleasing to the eye, and you've been successful in selling it both in Slovenia and abroad.

Although I've been selling jewellery for nearly four years, I'm still always surprised at how many people are enthusiastic about it. Since 2014, when I opened my online store, I have sold more than 3,000 pieces of jewellery in more than 50 countries around the world. My biggest-selling jewellery item is a little chain called "Dreaming of the Sea" (Illustration 1). I was thrilled when I made my first international sale. Up until the moment I sold my first item, the idea of someone on the other side of the world discovering my little store and deciding to buy my product was inconceivable and unimaginable. When my desire to sell abroad became reality, I set myself a bigger goal, to sell in all 50 states of the USA, which I succeeded in doing last year. I've sold by far the most jewellery, more than 1,500 items, in the US.

Above my bed hangs a map of the world on which I carefully mark the parts of the world my work has ended up. Some of the

more intriguing countries where I have sold items are Angola, Vietnam, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

Who are your customers?

My customers are mainly women aged between 20 and 45 who love jewellery and the sea. Mostly they buy jewellery for themselves, but often they give it as a gift. In the spring months there are a lot of orders for weddings and birthdays with a marine theme. I am very happy that there are plenty of customers who come back and buy from me again after their first purchase, either for themselves or as a gift. There are a lot of customers who have been buying from me regularly since 2014, and I am really grateful to them, since they helped start my successful entrepreneurial career, and through their purchases they are still helping me to grow and continue developing. Customers come back because of the quality of the jewellery, the nice packaging and of course the great reviews

in the online store. The icing on the cake is a discount coupon for each additional purchase.

In Koper there is also a gallery opened by the Academy-trained painter Rebeca Redek, featuring diverse works by talented artists, and you are among the youngest. Is that also a place where you can share experiences with other artists?

The painter Rebeca Redek was one of the first people to offer me the chance to sell in her shop, and for that I will always be grateful.

When you're very young, a lot of people don't take you seriously or as an equal, and consequently they aren't willing to collaborate with you. In her shop I started out by selling baskets, but now I only sell jewellery.



"Dreaming of the Sea" chain.
Photo:Personal archives

Whether I'm still the youngest, I don't know, the more important thing is that age is no obstacle in art, and it makes no difference whether you're 12 or 72. Artists have various facebook groups where we can share experiences, help each other and offer advice, and sometimes we even get together in person.

Have you never felt fear about going your own way?

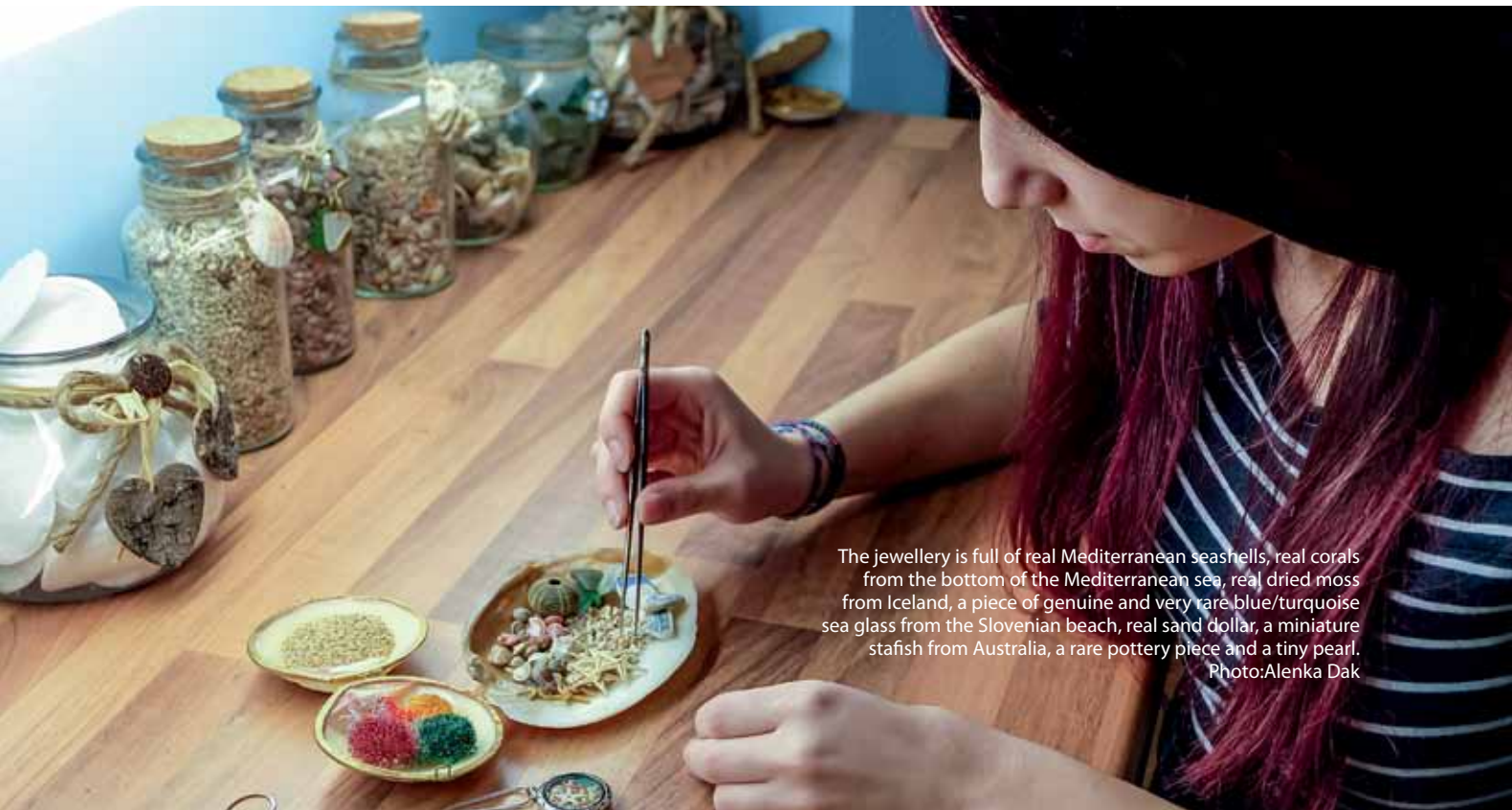
Of course I have, fear is a completely natural feeling. I think that if you don't feel fear you don't succeed, since it's only when you are scared that you realise you're doing something special. When I started making jewellery, not even in my dreams did I think that my story would be published in the foreign and national media and that my hobby would also be my "job". To achieve success I had to overcome fear, and in this I had enormous help mainly from my family, who believed in me and encouraged me at every step. At the same time I was helped by other artists who were only too happy to answer my questions about the world of sales, which at that time I still didn't know much about.

What are your plans for the future?

I have a lot of plans for the future, but I'm not rushing into any of them, since I still have a lot of years of creativity ahead of me. In first place there is always school, so now my thoughts are focused on successfully finishing the last year of secondary school and enrolling at university.

My long-term business goals are setting up my own online store as well as a physical location somewhere on the Slovenian coast, conducting workshops for young entrepreneurs, business cooperation with new foreign stores, planning the third summer collection of jewellery and all the unplanned events that will happen along the way.

I love surprises and I believe that everything happens for a reason, so I can hardly wait to see what fate has in store for me.



The jewellery is full of real Mediterranean seashells, real corals from the bottom of the Mediterranean sea, real dried moss from Iceland, a piece of genuine and very rare blue/turquoise sea glass from the Slovenian beach, real sand dollar, a miniature starfish from Australia, a rare pottery piece and a tiny pearl.
Photo:Alenka Dak

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

First Latin America and Caribbean Day

IRENA GRIL



Dan Latinske Amerike in Karibov, Ljubljana, 22. marec 2018
 Latin America and Caribbean Day, Ljubljana, 22 March 2018

On 22 March this year, as part of the Bled Strategic Forum and organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the first Latin America and Caribbean Day international conference, devoted entirely to that region, will be held in the premises of the City Museum of Ljubljana.

The aim of the event is to strengthen bilateral cooperation with countries of the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, especially in the economic, scientific and research fields, and to familiarize a wider circle of Slovenians with the region through cultural and promotional events.

The one-day conference includes three panel discussions, with a focus on bilateral and inter-regional cooperation, and the possibilities for strengthening this in the economic, scientific and research fields, where synergies can be seen primarily in the topics of the environment, water, forests and renewable energy sources.

The first panel "Fostering political dialog and bilateral and bi-regional cooperation" is aimed at strengthening such cooperation, including joint initiatives in interantional organisations,, where Slovenia shares similar positions to countries of Latin America. The second panel "Strengthening of economic cooperation" is devoted to seeking opportunities and ways for economic cooperation with countries of the region. The introductory part will present the Slovenian business environment and Slovenian companies with an interest in and experience of operating in the region. The panel will feature a presentation of the possibilities for cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank and a presentation of its programmes.. The conference envisages a presentation of country markets and LAC associations, along with the possibilities for the cooperation and inclusion of Slovenian business partners and expertise.

The initiative "Green reference Country in Digital Europe", enhancing cooperation between the Government, business sector, science and civil society will be presented. The third panel "Common responses to global challenges" is focused on sectoral cooperation, with emphasis on the environment, on water, forests, science, research and university collaboration, where the synergies with LAC countries could be found. There will also be an opportunity to present Slovenian expertise, research institutions, and projects. A part of this panel will also be devoted to a discussion on education and gender equality. The date of the conference coincides with the World Water Day (22 March) and the 8th World Water Forum, which will take place in Brasil in the same week.

High representatives of Slovenia, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, EU institutions, representatives of the diplomatic corps and business, universities and science have been invited to the event, which will be opened by the host, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia Karl Erjavec.

The accompanying programme of cultural promotion events taking place, during the week of the conference includes a festival of Latin American film in Slovenian Cinematheque, a literary evening at the Konzorcij venue on the eve of the event.

PLANICA NORDIC CENTRE

The only Nordic Centre in the world has been awarded the Maks Fabiani Award

TANJA GLOGOVČAN

PHOTO: PLANICA NORDIC CENTRE ARCHIVE



The central facility is concentric in shape and provides views of both the jumping and cross-country skiing areas. Even more - is an object for all seasons.

The Biennial Maks Fabiani Award for outstanding works in urban, regional and spatial planning was presented to the Planica Nordic Centre. The same project previously won a Plečnik Award.

The Planica Nordic Centre has been called "an exceptional complex of global dimensions". This work of art is the result of the joint work of various professional groups.

The architecture of the sports facilities is the work of the architects Matej Blenkuš, Miloš Florjančič and Klemen Kobal. The architecture of the central facility for ski runs, as well as of the service and heating facilities, was designed by Aleš Vodopivec and Marko Smrekar, while its location and landscape architecture, which is especially important in such a natural environment, was designed by architects Ana Kučan and Luka Javornik.

A MAGNIFICENT OBJECT FOR ALL SEASONS

The competition proposal was focused on the restoration and design of the landscape area of the ski jump hills in Planica. The architects further wanted to adjust the architectural appearance of the buildings to this landscape design.

The new arrangement is first and foremost characterised by the fanned layout of the jumps, which creates the image of spatial order and peace. As such, with the opening of the Planica Nordic Centre, the valley below Ponce has upgraded its role from being merely a gathering place of ski jump fans to becoming a unique complex that has no parallel in the world. In the summer the greenery above is complemented by the snow below, and vice versa in winter.

The STVAR Studio designed the part of the multifunctional sports hall of the central facility that allows just this. In the summer cross-country skiing will be possible on the snow-coated track in the un-

derground premises, while on the ground above it, at the foot of the mighty mountains, there is a football stadium surrounded by roller skate track. In the same three-level hall the winter scenario also foresees a car park facility. During the World Championship in ski jumping, the crowning event that concludes the season in this sport, the same building serves as a press centre and meets the needs the competing teams. Above the ground, among the mighty mountains, there is a ski and running stadium with a seven-kilometre-long track, designed by Uroš Ponikvar, and connected to 30 kilometres of existing recreational trails.

Are you fond of adrenaline sports? Well, in this case you just descend down the 566-meter long zip line, the steepest in the world. Many do not have the courage to do this, as the average slope of the descent is 38.33%, and the speed ranges from 40 to 90 km per hour. A wind tunnel is also there, with wind blowing through it at speeds of up to 250 km per hour, making an excellent challenge for a wide range of people looking for a unique experience. This is also a very good test of an individual's aerodynamic ability.

JUMP HIGH UP INTO THE BLUE SKY OF TRIGLAV PARK

Besides the renovated and enlarged Gorišek brothers' ski flying hill, the Planica Nordic Centre also has seven newly built ski jumping hills: three intended for children, two for the youth category, and the Bloudek's giant, which includes both HS102 and 138 jumping hills. The architects Matej Blenkuš and Miloš Florjančič from Airo, and the landscape architects Ana Kučan, Luka Javornik and AKKA Studio, arranged the jumping hills in a fanned layout. They extend from a common point at the top of the hill in the form of a fan. The architects thus achieved the appearance of a neat form of infrastructure, and the artistic image of the valley was complemented with a new torrential bed and rising valley floor.

In the jumping section of the Planica Nordic Centre STVAR Studio designed the service and heating facilities with the related external arrangement, and within the cross-country ski section they placed central facility. The concept of the sports infrastructure and land-

INTERESTING DETAILS ABOUT THE SPORTS FACILITIES

- In the construction and formation of the terrain, it was necessary to excavate more than 500,000 m3 of soil and then put 380,000 m3 of it back in a different form.
- The big HS 139 ski jump hill stands in exactly the same location as the old Bloudek’s giant, while the middle jump hill has been placed next to the big one. The name of the Bloudek’s giant is protected as a cultural monument, and so is the very axis of the jump hill.
- The sizes of the children’s’ and youth jump hills are: HS 80 m and HS 61 m for the youth category, and HS 45 m, HS 30 m and HS 15 m for children. Young ski jumpers jump at a speed of 30 km/h on the HS 15 m, and up to 85 km/h on the HS 80 m.
- All the ski jump hills are fitted with plastic coating that allows jumps even in the summer.
- The ski flying hill has undergone several renovations. The last one was started in 2013 and completed in 2015.
- A total of 28 world records have been achieved on the Gorišek brothers’ ski flying hill, the largest number on any jump site in the world.
- The highest point of the Nordic Centre is the in-run of the Gorišek brothers’ ski flying hill, at an altitude of 1151 m.
- The following transport facilities are located between the jumping hills: A two-seat chairlift, which ascends up to an altitude of 202 m, an inclined elevator whose position facilitates access to all the in-runs and thus a greater number of jumps per training unit, and the inclined elevator “Hugo”, which is another part of the site’s protected cultural heritage.
- The Hugo inclined elevator, built in 1952 and renovated in 2015, was the world’s first jumping-hill conveyor.
- The arrangement of the cross-country ski tracks included the arrangement of the routes crossing the avalanche under Cipernik and the arrangement of connections between Slatna ski slope and the adjacent forest glade. The construction of running tracks required the construction of three bridges and a roller skate track.
- In Planica there are 7.5 km of homologated tracks for the biggest competitions, which are connected with recreational tracks leading to Tamar, Kranjska Gora and Italy.
- Artificial snowmaking for the ski jumping hills and cross-country tracks requires the production of 38,000 m3 of snow per year.

scaping was a solution developed by Abiro (working on the judges’ tower, television tower, coaches’ grandstands, and visitors’ grandstands) and AKKA Studio, which arranged the landing strips of individual jumping hills. They also regulated a new torrent bed, moved the Rateče-Tamar road, and arranged the surroundings of the central object for cross-country skiing tracks and water reservoirs.

THE GORIŠEK BROTHERS SKI FLYING HILL

The historical but brand-new ski flying hill has a changed gradient in its landing slope and a new reinforced concrete in-run with a tower. The architects have raised the old springboard by five metres and pushed it back by 12 to 13 metres. The ski flying hill has also had the calculating point of the predicated average jump raised from previous K 180 to K 200, and the hill size from HS 215 to HS 225.

It is important that, along with these improvements, the architects have always kept in mind the safety of ski jumpers.

Therefore, they paid particular attention to the so-called “acceleration curve” and the related flying contour. The ski flying hill parameters and the flight curve were calculated by the engineer Janez Gorišek.

THE PHILOSOPHY UNDERLYING THE DESIGN OF PLANICA NORDIC CENTRE WAS TO MOVE THE FACILITIES INTO NATURE

For the second time the authors of this flagship of Slovenian pride have made a convincing statement with their reserved architectural language and landscape arrangement.

They successfully positioned this interesting facility amidst the magnificent world of the mountains, and added to its functionality and all-year-round usefulness. It is also this that makes Planica all the more unique and exquisite.



The refrigerated parking garage in Planica is an extremely odd and remarkably effective innovation that has become interesting for many sportsmen. It is also an important training site for the U.S. Nordic combined team at the PyeongChang Games, one that allows them to train all year round.

This is where the Americans come to ski on perfectly groomed snow in the middle of summer. They bundle themselves in hats, gloves and vests as they enter the subterranean cooler that keeps its thermostat at around 0 degrees Celsius. They pay a small fee to use the 800-meter loop that’s open to the public. They then climb downstairs and for the next two hours they ski. They go up and down and around three levels of the underground garage until they are so dizzy and exhausted they can’t take it anymore.

Slovenia has everything the U.S. needs to train for Nordic combined: a surplus of coaches, easy access to mountains, reasonably priced housing and the stunning complex with the refrigerated parking garage, plus eight jumps of various sizes, a roller-skiing track, soccer field, and an outdoor cross-country loop that’s not inside a parking garage. The Planica Nordic Centre is the place to be if you want to work on your sport all the year.

The refrigerated garage opened in 2016. The entire complex quickly became so popular that Planica needed certain amenities for all the competitions it was suddenly hosting, like space for very important people, as well as very important ski waxing. Now Ben Berend, one of the American Olympians, can’t help but think of the wasted opportunities when he sees underground parking in the US. “This could have snow in it,” he says. “This could be a cross-country ski loop.”

