



Sinfo

May-June

The Best from Slovenia

IN FOCUS

World Bee Day for the first time

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WORLD BEE DAY FOR THE FIRST TIME

This is quite an extraordinary achievement, and it can be said that the credit for this goes to all those who are aware of the importance of bees for humanity as a whole. The current issue of Sinfo therefore describes the path leading from the first idea for World Bee Day to launching the initiative, and up to our recognition for this achievement and its importance.

Beekeeping is certainly a mission, and beekeepers are the ambassadors of a healthy lifestyle and concern for a clean environment. Moreover, the beehive is a Slovenian architectural phenomenon. Due to their painted panels, Slovenian beehives could even be called outdoor art galleries. By spreading beekeeping from the countryside to the urban environment we have laid the foundations for urban beekeeping, which has also experienced significant development in Slovenia.

And there's something more - it's a positive challenge for all of us. So let's make something to preserve nature. Let's make something more for ourselves.

However, other current stories have also attracted our attention, such as those from highland culture, and the life of winemakers, sports, and the economy, and these are also explored in this issue of Sinfo.

Tanja Glogovčan, Executive Editor

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WITHOUT BEES THERE WILL BE NO LIFE

Apart from raising awareness about the importance of bees and other pollinators, World Bee Day is also a project aimed at the preservation of our planet. The bee indicates the cleanliness of the environment, as the species is the first to detect changes in it. It is, therefore, high time to start listening to them.



THE UNITED NATIONS PROCLAIMS 20 MAY AS WORLD BEE DAY

Respect for bees also guarantees the survival of humans

JERNEJ KOVAČ

The United Nations General Assembly in New York unanimously adopted a decision proclaiming 20 May World Bee Day on 20 December 2017. This success is the result of cooperation between the Slovenian Beekeeping Association, as an initiator, and the Republic of Slovenia.

It was a morning in September 2014 when Boštjan Noč, the president of the Slovenian Beekeeping Association, was driving to work and listening to a radio programme about world days and their significance. This is when he got the idea that bees should have their world day, too, because every third spoonful of food in the world depends on bees, and bees are becoming more endangered each day. He communicated his idea to the management of the Slovenian Beekeeping Association on the very same day, and proposed that 20 May should be proclaimed as the World Bee Day.

The initiative convinced the Beekeeping Association and afterwards the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Dejan Židan, who made a commitment that the Ministry would make efforts for the realisation of World Bee Day.

The idea was then supported by Borut Pahor, the President of Slovenia, and, in the spring of 2015, by the entire Government of the Republic of Slovenia. The Government established a special interdepartmental project team headed by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Dejan Židan that made it its objective to achieve the goals of the initiative.

A DAY DELIBERATELY CHOSEN

Slovenia proposed the celebration of World Bee Day in the month of May for several reasons. First, this is when bees in the northern hemisphere are most active and begin to reproduce. This is also the period in which the need for pollination is greatest. In the southern hemisphere it is autumn, a time for harvesting bee products and of days and weeks of honey.

The specific day chosen, 20 May, is the birthday of Anton Janša (1734–1773), a pioneer of modern beekeeping and one of the greatest experts in this field in his day.

A CHALLENGING PATH FROM THE IDEA TO ADOPTION

This was the beginning of a three-year period of intense informing and lobbying of various publics around the world. Slovenia organised or took part in a number of professional and political conferences to discuss the issue. In order to find support, it presented the initiative to ministers and other statesmen, both within the European Union and across the world, as well as in international organisations. In terms of beekeeping, the key event was

the 44th international congress of Apimondia, the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations, in South Korea, where the initiative was unanimously confirmed by beekeepers from all over the globe.

The most important and challenging task, however, was the official procedure for the realisation of the initiative, which continued for over a year and a half with various United Nations Organisations, first the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN in Rome and then at the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization in New York. Countless documents had to be drafted and other tasks completed in order to obtain official support from each individual member state active in these organisations.

"It was clear from the discussions held with representatives of

states around the world that the they had long been aware of the importance of bees, pollination and apiculture, but that nobody had come up with such an initiative," said Snežana Popovič, head of the Service of Coordination and International Affairs and the leader of the project team for the proclamation of the World Bee Day at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food.

With the aim of raising awareness about the importance of bees and other pollinators, and their key role for the agriculture, environment and the human race in general, Slovenia designed an interactive exhibition entitled "The Bee World".

The pavilion was first presented to the public at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) during the 25th session of the Committee on Agriculture in September 2016. Then it toured numerous cities around the world (including at the headquarters of the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium, the congress of Apimondia in Istanbul, Turkey, an international fair in Hong Kong, China, and the headquarters of the United Nations in New York, USA).

As a part of the awareness-raising campaign about bees, Slovenia launched the so-called honey breakfast even before making the initiative for World Bee Day. It was first organised in 2007, when Slovenian beekeepers offered children in kindergartens and schools honey for breakfast. Since then we have held several presentations and workshops for children about the importance of bees for our food



supply, with a focus on the preservation of a clean, healthy environment and countryside as a part of this education and promotional campaign. On the basis of this good practice, Slovenia launched an initiative at the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Brussels to introduce a European honey breakfast in March 2014. It was adopted by many EU Member States, as well as other countries.

After more than three years of efforts, Slovenia's initiative was actively supported by 115 countries from all over the world, including the biggest, e.g. the USA, Canada, China, the Russian Federation, India, Brazil, Argentina, Australia and the European Union.

The resolution for the proclamation of World Bee Day was finally unanimously confirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 20 December 2017, and 20 May was thus proclaimed the annual World Bee Day.

WORLD BEE DAY IS BUT THE FIRST STEP; WHAT WE NEED IS CONCRETE ACTIONS

Although World Bee Day is certainly an achievement of Slovenian diplomacy, it also brings about responsibilities. Slovenia has thus morally committed to protecting bees and other pollinators. The unanimous adoption of the resolution by all countries in the world was the first revolutionary step towards taking an active role in ensuring biodiversity and a more successful fight against world hunger. In order to be successful, we must now

address the governments of all countries, their business communities and citizens themselves. Awareness about the vital importance of saving the bees must reach every individual. We must do more than just talk – we must undertake concrete activities to increase care for bees and promote the development of beekeeping – everywhere, including in developing countries.

SLOVENIAN KNOW-HOW FOR THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT OF BEEKEEPING

Slovenia is well aware that now is the time to carry out concrete actions for preserving bees. This has led to the decision to establish the Slovenian Beekeeping Academy. The enthusiastic response to the World Bee Day project has also raised interest in Slovenian beekeeping know-how.

Slovenia is increasingly recognisable for its care of bees, and is gaining reputation also as a country of excellent beekeepers and a well-developed beekeeping sector.

Slovenia wants to communicate this know-how beyond its borders as part of an international school, and thus contribute to the improvement of beekeeping know-how and the exchange of good practice elsewhere in the world. Slovenia will therefore also contribute to the resolution of a number of global problems – the elimination of poverty and hunger, and the creation of new jobs in rural areas, especially in developing countries.



"Bees connect and unite us, which is of enormous importance in today's world, full of unrest and conflict." Dejan Židan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food of the Republic of Slovenia. Photo: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Archives



The principal objective of the FAO – a world without hunger – cannot be achieved without bees. After the adoption of the sustainable development goals and the climate change agreement, Slovenia's initiative is one of the first concrete steps in this direction, said José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, on 14th Slovenian Beekeepers' day in Maribor in 2016. Photo: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Archives

DR PETER KOZMUS

Every third spoonful of food we eat is dependent on pollination

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: SBA'S ARCHIVE



Peter Kozmos

"The aim of World Bee Day is to raise public awareness about the importance of bees and also draw attention to some of the problems they are facing. We will propose actions to improve the situation, and decisions that should be taken jointly to facilitate the survival of bees. I expect that World Bee Day will help change environmental conditions to facilitate the survival of bees and other pollinators, which is why 20 May will not only be celebrated as the World Bee Day, but also as a worldwide green planet movement aimed at providing food to people all around the world," notes Dr Peter Kozmus – beekeeper, researcher, president of the Beekeeping Council of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, and vice-president of the International Federation of Beekeepers' Associations, APIMONDIA.

The exceptional importance of bees is also described in the new book entitled *No Bees, No Life*.

That is true. With the cooperation of 68 experts from 32 countries, this 352-page book describes why bees are so important. Bees and other pollinators are very important for people's lives. They are of exceptional importance for the whole world as well as for environmental protection and nutrition. According to the FAO's data, bees and other pollinators are invaluable in ensuring global food security. As much as a third of food produced in the world, i.e. every third spoonful of food, depends on pollination.

Unfortunately, bees and beekeeping worldwide have recently been facing several problems and challenges, the main ones being the development of agriculture, the wide use of pesticides, globalisation and transmission of bee pests and diseases over longer distances, climate change, the sale of adulterated honey, and so on.

Bees are obviously an endangered species that needs to be protected.

Most of us know that bees provide us with top-quality products – honey, pollen, beeswax, propolis, honey bee venom – but we must be aware that their role in pollinating plants is even more important.

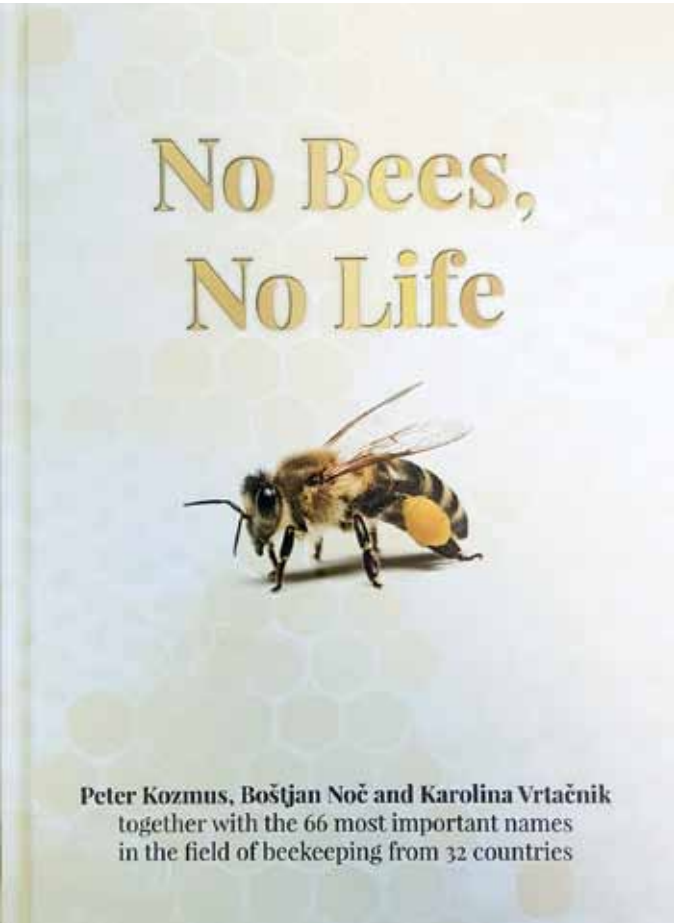
Pollination and its irreplaceable role in the production and provision of food have often been poorly understood, and especially underestimated, in the past.

This is partially because pollination has always been a natural phenomenon, and people have not had any concerns or costs in ensuring that it occurs. Expanding agricultural areas, more frequent and intensive use of chemicals that are harmful to bees and other pollinators, globalisation, climate change, and the like have all led to a decline in the number of bees and other pollinators in many parts of the world, and created the need for a systematic pollination service. Through pollination, bees and other pollinators contribute significantly to food security, food diversity, adequacy of vitamins and quality. The global value of pollination is estimated at as much as 235 to 570 billion dollars. Bees furthermore need clean air, water, and an environment along with diverse vegetation to ensure that their development is not disturbed. The same environment, which is however becoming rarer, is also the most appropriate for human life. Therefore, the large majority of actions to improve the living conditions of bees also directly contribute to improving the environment for human life.

Slovenian beekeepers are among the best in the world. What places you at the top?

Foreign beekeepers coming to Slovenia and other tourists who travel across the country and visit beekeepers offering api-tourism are generally very pleased, in many cases even surprised at what they see. Visiting beekeepers in other countries can give a good picture or comparison of our beekeeping practices.

On the basis of all the information I think that I can objectively estimate that,



The book Without Bees, There Will Be No Life was awarded a silver medal for beekeeping literature in Turkey.

when compared to others in terms of organisation, Slovenian beekeepers can serve as an example for other beekeeping organisations.

We have established excellent channels for the transfer of knowledge from institutions, through the Public Advisory Service on Beekeeping, to beekeepers, and have done a lot to raise people's awareness on the importance of bees and the quality of our bee products. Communication between governmental and non-governmental organisations as regards beekeeping in Slovenia is excellent, and there are many other positive aspects.

Moreover, Slovenian beekeepers can be extremely proud of our tradition, apiaries and Alberti-Žnideršič (AŽ) hives, which are our speciality, as well as our indigenous Carniolan bee, known globally for its calm behaviour, which is why it is the second most widespread subspecies of bee in the world. For all these reasons Slovenia has recently also become increasingly recognised as an api-tourism destination, since many tourists coming to Slovenia want to visit at least one beekeeper in addition to our other tourist attractions.

Slovenian beekeeping is of course facing some problems. We have difficulties in some areas, and we would like to reduce or overcome them in the future. By that I mean global climate change, which has a significant impact on apicultural harvests, honey production, intensive agriculture and bee health. Keeping bees healthy requires considerable knowledge and experience from beekeepers, and consequently has a major impact on the economics of beekeeping as a result of large declines in the number of bee colonies during the winter. In short, Slovenian beekeepers can serve as an example for other beekeepers and beekeeping organisations in a number of areas, but there are certain areas that require improvements in the future.

You intend to market your knowledge with an international beekeeping school. That is correct.

Through the initiative to declare 20 May World Bee Day, several foreign beekeep-



Peter Kozmus inspecting his bees.

ers and officials learned about Slovenian beekeeping. This resulted in an increased demand for our beekeeping know-how from various countries, even on other continents.

We want to respond to this demand with an international beekeeping school, where participants will acquire basic knowledge on the biology of bees, beekeeping technologies, bee products, and the promotion of apiculture products, as well as to gain an insight into our methods of beekeeping and organisation. We want to provide the international school's participants with the knowledge required to ensure a more effective beekeeping in the future.



Honey tasting with Peter Kozmus

Slovenian beekeeping has been developing well recently, the number of beekeepers has been increasing and, more importantly, new beekeepers are younger, which has resulted in lowering the beekeepers' average age from 65 years to nearly 58 years in the last decade.

Beekeeping school clubs organised in nearly 200 primary schools, numerous training modules, events and promotional activities held by the Public Advisory Service on Beekeeping, and the work done by more than 200 beekeepers' societies around Slovenia and regional beekeepers' associations have all played an important role in this development. There are also an increasing number of professional beekeepers whose core activity is beekeeping. Moreover, a relatively large number of beekeepers added another activity as an added value to beekeeping – such as apitherapy, api-tourism, breeding of queen bees, sale of a broader range of bee products – which also improves employability. It is difficult to estimate how Slovenian beekeeping will develop in the future, since this depends on several factors and apicultural harvests, which are crucial for the survival of bees as well as for profitability of beekeeping through honey flow.

I think that regardless of harvests, awareness about the quality of Slovenian honey among consumers will continue to rise in the future, which will result in an increased demand for this honey.

Our Super Food portal is the central channel for promoting Slovenian food on the internet. What is the quality of Slovenian food in general?

The majority of locally produced food is of higher quality than other, all too often industrially produced, food. We Slovenians often have the opportunity to obtain a certain amount of our food from our immediate surroundings.

It is also an excellent idea to visit local producers and suppliers of certain agricultural products, and establish a genu-

ine relationship with them to ensure a source of high-quality food.

Furthermore, when choosing food in supermarkets, greater attention should be paid to its origin and quality. I recommend not using price as the most important criterion when buying food. We must be aware that food has a major impact not only on our well-being, but also on our health. That is why it is even more important what kind of food we eat.

There is talk about the establishment of a Slovenian beekeeping academy and centre of excellence in beekeeping.

Yes, that is true, the beekeeping academy and the centre of excellence are being established. We intend to inform people about the launch of the project by the first celebration of World Bee Day.

How would you assess urban beekeeping, which is becoming increasingly popular?

Urban beekeeping has been around for several years, and has recently seen positive development and an increase in recognition and popularity, especially in Ljubljana. The beekeeping society Urban Beekeeper plays an important role in this, by offering information and knowledge on urban beekeeping to all those who are interested.

The aim of urban beekeeping is not to produce large quantities of bee products, but primarily to raise people's awareness about the importance of bees for the environment and of the urgent need to preserve the environment to such an extent that bees can develop nicely.

If bees survive, develop well and even create honey surpluses that can be collected by beekeepers at a certain location, this is a clear sign that this location is healthy and provides a good environment for human life.

BEEKEEPING IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE LAND OF THE CARNIOLAN GREY BEE

Many faces of modern beekeeping

TANJA GLOGOVČAN

The well-known saying that beekeeping is the poetry of agriculture originates from Slovenia. The same, of course, applies to the adage that to be Slovenian is to be a beekeeper.
Photo: Jošt Gantar

Beekeeping is a part of the Slovenian identity, which is why beekeeping poses challenges for several fields: tourism, entrepreneurship, culture and art.

All Slovenians and most tourists who visit the country know the unique bee houses, beehive panels, gingerbread hearts and honeycakes. Beekeeping associations have their own banners, and beekeepers have ceremonial suits and their own collection of leisure wear. Slovenians are emotionally attached to bees.

RELAXATION IN THE WORLD OF BEES

The soothing sound of buzzing, the aroma of honey wafting through the air, the touch of warm wax or honey, meditation, and pleasure. A moment of stillness, calm, and relaxation. All this is a part of apitherapy offered by many a provider of apicultural tourism services. An interesting fact is that Slovenia is the only country in the world with certified apicultural tourism providers who receive one, two or three bee symbols depending on their range of services.

Such spa treatments strengthen the immune system. Bee houses turn into apitherapeutical chambers, where one can make oneself comfortable and benefit from the therapeutic effects of aerosol with a beneficial physical and mental effect, especially on the respiratory system. The sound of buzzing bees further contributes to relaxation. In addition, apitherapy helps clear lung pores, alleviates pneumonia and bronchitis, and is also beneficial for asthmatics.

Although apitherapy is not a part of officially recognized medicine in Slovenia, national history in this field is rich. Filip Terč (1844 – 1917), a doctor living and

working in Maribor, was also a beekeeper and national awakener in this regard.

He treated rheumatism with bee stings, and recorded all events in case histories. He treated about 600 patients with a success rate of about 85%. The 30th of March, Filip Terč's birthdate, was chosen as World Apitherapy Day at the 2006 Apitherapy Congress in Passau (Germany), while Terč was named a pioneer of modern apitherapy. A monograph about him was published in 2013, and two short documentaries were made by TV Slovenia.

APITOURISM

This is a unique travel experience, integrating relaxation, discovery of new places, ways of life and nature, and education. Such tourism also strengthens awareness about our responsibility towards nature.

It is an attractive and sensory way to present Slovenia as a healthy destination, a country of hospitable people and, above all else, a homeland of excellent beekeepers with rich apiculture and centuries-old practices developed by our beekeepers with their gentle work.

The philosophy of this relatively new branch of tourism is built around respecting natural laws; the functioning and the purpose

of bees can be compared to the functioning and purpose of people and their putting values such as belonging, organisation, diligence, respect and harmony into practice. If we consider all this together with the trend of travelling to green, eco and healthy destinations oriented towards well-being and satisfaction, we can rightly talk about a comprehensive sustainable product. Api experiences include visits to beekeepers, presentations and tasting of bee products, such as honey liqueurs and sparkling mead, which goes well with goat cheese with chestnut honey, honey chocolate pralines, gingerbread, refreshing energy drinks with herbs and honey, and invigorating teas. On a typical apitour you can admire our architecturally distinct apiaries – which cannot be found anywhere else in the world – visit beekeeping museums, attend a presentation on the life and activity of bees, attend lectures on how to strengthen and preserve your health using

bee products, produce decorative objects from beeswax, paint beehive panels, and bake honey pastries.

SOCIALISING WITH BEES

An example of good practice in apitourism is shown by Boštjan and Anton Noč, who continue a rich tradition of several generations. They have over 500 hives of bees in various locations, which they transport across Slovenia during the grazing season. They practice beekeeping using only the Carniolan bee. The family has an established production of honey, pollen, propolis and honey drinks. They were the first in the world to launch a perfume with notes of Slovenian honey.

This year they took things to a new level innovative project, Bee



Slovene bee houses turn into apitherapeutical chambers, where one can breath aerosol directly from hives and relax while listening to the buzz of bees.
Photo: Jošt Gantar



Bee Paradise Noč
Photo: Boštjan Noč

Agritourism is becoming increasingly popular because people yearn for a genuine connection with nature, sparks in the eyes of simple-living people and coexistence with everything that surrounds us. Many farmers also practice beekeeping and offer apitourism services.
Photo: Jošt Gantar

Paradise Noč. When a visitor enters the room, they immediately feel like they are in a kingdom of bees and beekeeping, because they are completely surrounded by apicultural motifs. They can sense the fragrance of hives, admire live bees and taste bee products.

Bee Paradise Noč also displays many extraordinary photographs: of a queen bee, worker bee, drone, swarming bees and bee products and advice in how to use them.

A particular attraction is bees in a glass dome, where you get a feel for the life of these remarkable insects.

Bees will accompany you everywhere – even when you look out of the window you will see live bees behind the glass.

The apitherapy part is also an important component of this ‘paradise’, where you can inhale aerosol from the hive. Aerosol can be inhaled immediately from the chamber on a special relaxation bed and through an inhaler. A 60-square-meter honey plant garden is located in front of the Noč bee paradise. From April to October, typical beehives, such as the kranjič, koš, AŽ-hive and LR-hive, will be displayed in the garden. A special attraction is a hive where bees deposit honey directly into glasses.

APISLOVENIA

Slovenia hosts the greatest annual beekeeping event in Europe. It is always in Celje.

A single location thus offers materials and equipment for beekeepers, as well as honey and honey products for consumers.

It is usually attended by over 5,000 professional and amateur beekeepers from 20 countries and more than 70 providers of beekeeping equipment from across Europe, presenting new equipment and materials. An important part of the fair is found in the innovations and products related to apitourism and apitherapy.

BE A BEE

In April the National Gallery of Art awarded Jakopič Prizes – the National Art and Visual Art Awards for 2018. One of the winners was Polonca Lovšin, an architect and sculptor, with her project Be a Bee.

One of the central areas of Lovšin's interest is self-sufficiency, which operates independently of the existing systems of production and includes contemporary values such as high quality of life, sustainable development, ecological sustainability and so on.

A few years ago, when bees began dying in large numbers in Slovenia, the author

initiated a project Back to the City, focusing mainly on the importance of bees in the ecosystem, and set the hypothesis that the only nature that may survive in the future is urban nature, which includes the urban bee.

Her project Be a Bee was a step further. She asked herself what would happen if bees became extinct. She thus made a series of prototypes – special clothes, objects and accessories – for the manual pollination of plants, along with videos showing people using them, revealing both the importance of pollination and a key element in the life of bees, teamwork.



This year's edition of the ApiSlovenia fair again attracted many Slovenian and foreign beekeepers, along with many who are aware of the importance of beekeeping, who appreciate home-grown honey, and are interested in innovations in this field.
Photo: ApiSlovenia Archives

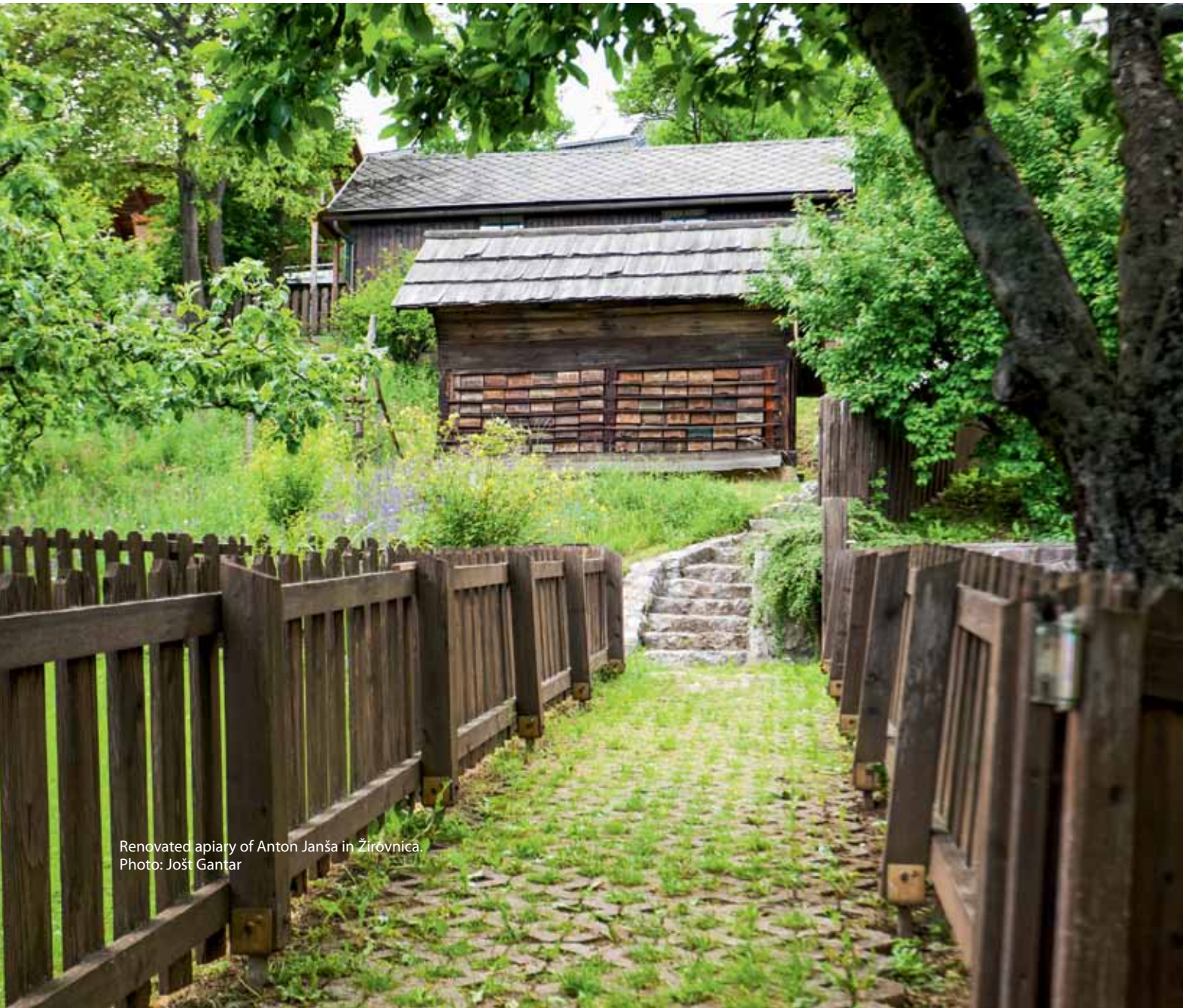


The work of visual artist Polonca Lovšin can be described at the most general level as a transition between art and everyday life, whose purpose is simply progress.
Photo: Personal Archives

PIONEERS OF SLOVENIAN BEEKEEPING

Slovenian beekeeping know-how was part of the first beekeeping school in the world

BRIGITA JUHART



Renovated apiary of Anton Janša in Žirovnica.
Photo: Jošt Gantar

The first World Bee Day will be celebrated this year – but why on 20 May? Today marks the birth, more than 270 years ago, of Anton Janša, a pioneer of modern beekeeping, an academy-trained painter and beekeeper, and the first teacher of beekeeping in imperial Vienna.

The large Janša family from Breznica in the Gorenjska region was poor, but was for its talent for painting. The descendants of the Janša family have long been passionate about beekeeping and probably learned their diligence from bees. Anton was the oldest of nine children (he was born on 20 May 1734), and had the desire to learn about painting ever since he was a child. In 1766 he went to Vienna together with his 15-year younger brother Lovro, where they enrolled in a copper engraving and painting school, and their brother Valentin joined them a year later. Lovro and Valentin became successful painters, while Anton devoted his life to beekeeping in 1769.

JANŠA BROUGHT HIS BEEKEEPING KNOWLEDGE TO IMPERIAL VIENNA

He applied to a call for applications (*Ökonomie Gesellschaft*) searching for a qualified teacher of apiculture.

He passed the exams with honours in 1770, and became the first imperial teacher of beekeeping at the beekeeping school in Augarten in Vienna, established by Maria Theresa.

He was given the task of travelling around Austria, and studying and teaching beekeeping. He began diligently adding to the knowledge on beekeeping that he obtained in his “school” in front of his home apiary in Breznica. He soon became famous for illustrative lectures based on a thorough knowledge of

bees, and the Carniolan method of beekeeping spread across the country. Janša was the first to teach that bees must not be killed and that hives should be put out to pasture.

In addition to teaching beekeeping, Anton Janša also wrote textbooks, where he presented his own method of beekeeping, which was significantly different from the teachings of other writers at that time.

He wrote two noteworthy specialist books (in German): *Abhandlung vom Schwärmen der Bienen* (A Treatise on the Swarming of Bees) in 1771, followed by *Vollständige Lehre von der Bienenzucht* (A Complete Guide to Beekeeping).

Both introduced numerous new developments to beekeeping knowledge at the time, and corrected several misconceptions. Today, they have been translated into the majority of European languages. One of his achievements as a beekeeper was to change the size and shape of beehives to enable them to be stacked together in a block.

JANŠA'S KNOWLEDGE SPREAD ALSO IN HIS HOMELAND CARNIOLA

Shortly before Janša's work another Slovenian beekeeper thoroughly studied and noted the method and conditions for beekeeping in Carniola. This was Peter Pavel Glavar, a priest from

Komenda, who used his vast knowledge of bees and beekeeping to present the method of beekeeping in Carniola that was in many ways more advanced than in other Austrian lands. In the years 1776–1778 he translated Janša's book *A Treatise on the Swarming of Bees* from German, and supplemented it with his own knowledge, thus becoming the writer of the first specialist book in the Slovenian language. If Anton Janša was the first teacher and promoter of Slovenian beekeeping knowledge in Vienna, Peter Pavel Glavar made efforts to develop beekeeping in Carniola at the time, and established beekeepers cooperatives and the beekeeping school in the Dolenjska region.

THE AŽ HIVE NAMED AFTER ANTON ŽNIDERŠIČ

Slovenia has another famous beekeeper, Anton Žnideršič (1874–1947). He was a businessman, and had been interested



Anton Janša
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

in bees since he was a child, breeding around 500 bee colonies.

He found some shortcomings of the kranjič-type beehive, and developed a new type that allowed for faster development of bee colonies and increased honey and wax yields.

Since his development was modelled on the Italian beekeeper Alberti, the new beehive was called the Alberti-Žnideršič hive, or AŽ hive for short, or the Žnideršič hive.

NEW LIFE FOR CARNIOLAN BEEKEEPING THANKS TO THE ROTHSCHÜTZ FAMILY

After flourishing in the 18th century, Slovenian beekeeping suffered a noticeable decline with the introduction of sugar. Beekeeping thrived again in the second half of the 19th century, thanks to trade in Carniolan honey bees, which was accelerated by beekeeping fairs.

Beekeeping in Carniola progressed in the 19th and at the turn of the 20th century largely thanks to the Rothschütz family. Their greatest achievement was that, by generally popularising the Carniolan honey bee and writing about it in numerous specialist articles and books, they laid the groundwork for it to be recognised as an independent subspecies of the melliferous bee *Apis mellifera carnica*.

Moreover, Filip Rothschütz greatly contributed to the beginning of the bee trade.

However, in terms of beekeeping, Filip's son Baron Emil Rothschütz was the most important member of the family. He married the Countess Antonia Lichtenberg from one of the oldest noble families in Carniola, and they moved to the Podsmreka Mansion near Višnja Gora, where he founded the Carniolan Commercial Apiary. This became the centre of all beekeeping activities in Carniola. He also began trading in bees on a large scale.

In his four commercial apiaries Emil Rothschütz housed over 1,000 beehives. He was an all-round innovator; he invented several beekeeping accessories and tools, and presented them in his sales catalogues. He was highly educated and broad-minded. Rothschütz cooperated with numerous beekeeping experts, and was forward-thinking at the European level. He published many articles in various specialist, predominantly German, beekeeping journals, and was also involved in publishing. In addition to catalogues for his apiaries he wrote several essential books on beekeeping. His design work led to the construction of an extensive library in Podsmreka, while Rothschütz was also one of the three co-founders of the *Carniolan Association for Prudent Beekeeping (Kranjsko društvo za umno čebelarstvo)* in 1873, and served as its President. The association published a gazette entitled *Slovenska čebela (The Slovenian Bee)* and its German counterpart *Die Krainer Biene (The Carniolan Bee)*.

THE STRONG BEEKEEPING TRADITION IN SLOVENIA HAS BEEN PRESERVED TO THE PRESENT DAY

Carniolan beekeepers felt the need to join forces as early as in the 18th century. They connected with each other with the aim of extending their knowledge because the method of beekeeping adapted to technological progress.

At the end of the 19th century the first societies were founded and started issuing periodicals – the Slovenski čebelar (*The Slovenian Beekeeper*) magazine, which is still published today,

and is the oldest regularly published specialist periodical in Slovenia.

This is more evidence of the strong beekeeping tradition in Slovenia.

Slovenian beekeeping know-how is exceptional, and with the celebration of World Bee Day the interest in this knowledge has once again begun increasing. The Slovenian government accordingly established the Slovenian Beekeeping Academy, which will provide a higher level of professional knowledge to beekeepers. As part of the Slovenian Beekeeping Academy, informal education programmes will be held on beekeeping that will primarily be intended for foreign national, education providers and other interested public. These programmes will be conducted by highly-trained experts with practical experience.



Peter Pavel Glavar
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

THE CARNIOLAN HONEY BEE

There is a hard-working and resilient bee out there, namely the Carniolan honey bee

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



Slovenia is home to the grey bee subspecies – the Carniolan honey bee (*Apis mellifera carnica*). Because of the light grey hairs that ring its abdomen, Slovenian beekeepers affectionately call it the 'Carniolan grey'. Photo: Franc Šivic

According to legend, bees arrived in modern-day Slovenia after the Flood. Along with other animals, Noah supposedly took bees on the Ark, and they ended up in our beautiful country because of a storm. The legend is interesting, but most likely nothing more. However, we can say with certainty that Slovenia is home to the Carniolan honey bee.

The territory of present-day Slovenia is the indigenous land of the globally-recognised and highly-appreciated subspecies of bee – the Carniolan honey bee (*Apis mellifera carnica*). Its evolution dates back to the time after the end of the last ice age, i.e., some 10,000 years ago. It belongs to the Central Mediterranean and South-Eastern European group of bees, which is widespread in Slovenia and the Balkan Peninsula (Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and northern Greece), in Romania, in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, all the way to the Carpathians, in Serbia, Montenegro and Austria.

MAIN QUALITIES

The Carniolan honey bee is famous for its gentleness, industriousness, humility and excellent sense of orientation.

Compared to other subspecies it is an above-average wax making bee. However, the main virtue of the Carniolan honey bee is its docility.

This bee subspecies is perfectly adapted to the Slovenian climate and pasture conditions, having lived here for millennia. It tolerates cold, snowy winters, frequent rainy and windy summers, and makes good use of the available pollen forage. The subspecies is specialised at finding honeydew on spruce and fir. It is also characterised by well-developed hygienic behaviour, which makes it less prone to various diseases.

The Carniolan honey bee spends its winters in small colonies with relatively modest food supplies, but its development in

spring is rapid, and colonies sometimes reach their peak as early as May.

PROTECTION OF THE CARNIOLAN HONEY BEE

The bee, in particular the indigenous Carniolan honey bee, is part of Slovenia's national identity.

Indeed, it is the only country in the European Union to have introduced legal protection for its bees. The Carniolan honey bee is protected by the law on livestock, which provides the legal basis for various measures for the support of maintaining this subspecies and beekeeping in general in Slovenia.



Carniolan bee
Photo: Slovenian Beekeepers Association Archives



MUSEUM OF APICULTURE IN RADOVLJICA

**Instrumental in promoting respect
for the tradition and art of apiculture**

TANJA GLOGOVČAN

In the museum is the largest collection of beehive panels.
Photo: Miran Kambič



View of the permanent exhibition at the Museum of Apiculture, collection of beehives and beekeeping paraphernalia. Photo: Miran Kambič

Slovenia boasts a long history and rich heritage of apiculture, which is being preserved thanks to a few small-scale private beekeeping collections and especially to the Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica. Established in 1959, it is a specialised museum and the only authorised one of its kind in Slovenia.

Ever since its establishment the museum has been at home in the Radovljiška Graščina (Baroque Radovljica Mansion). In 1963 it became a branch of the Radovljica Municipality Museums. The decision on the establishment of the Museum of Apiculture dates back to 1929, when Avgust Bukovec, the editor of the periodical *Slovenski čebelar* (*Slovenian Beekeeper*), called on beekeepers to systematically collect their beekeeping equipment. He was well aware of the uniqueness of Slovenian folk apiculture, especially the Carniola-type beehives (called *kranjiči*), tools and the unique beekeeping methods. Bukovec felt that the growing exports of beehives with painted beehive panels abroad should be prevented. He was also worried because Slovenia's mainly regional museums of the time rarely exhibited any beekeeping paraphernalia.

THE MUSEUM SHALL BE IN RADOVLJICA

The grand opening of the museum was held on 3 July 1959. The majority of the items were collected from all around Gorenjska, with members of local apicultural societies contributing a great amount, while the Association of Apicultural Societies for Slovenia also provided some. The permanent collection was initially set up in four rooms, where beehives, beekeeping tools, preparations and painted beehive panels were put on display.

The year 1963 saw the establishment of the Radovljica Municipality Museums, which created a cluster of museums consisting of the Iron Forging Museum

in Kropa (which was independent until then), the Museum of Apiculture and the Museum of Hostages in Begunje na Gorenjskem.

ON DISPLAY

In 1973 the Museum of Apiculture marked the 200th anniversary of Anton Janša's death, and to honour the occasion the permanent exhibition acquired two new rooms and the museum published a catalogue. Since 1977 visitors have had the opportunity to observe live bees. A year later the museum set up an apitherapy room, equipped by Medex's development centre for cooperation between Medex developers and medical specialists (Biotični Centre). This opened the door to new opportunities abroad (international symposia, a travelling exhibition of painted beehive panels, and so on).

The current exhibition Apiculture in Slovenian Lands (*Čebelarstvo na Slovenskem*), which was opened in 2000, extends across five rooms and displays three key topics that are typical for Slovenian apiculture: the Carniolan bee as an indigenous breed, globally recognised beekeepers and painted beehive panels.

The tour of the museum ends in the room where temporary apiculture-related exhibitions are held. The travelling exhibition of beehive panels has also played an important role in promoting the Museum of Apiculture in Slovenia and elsewhere. In cooperation with Slovenian embassies it has travelled to many European museums and galleries in Vienna, Munich, Zürich, Szombathely, Spittal an der Drau, Tolmezzo, Freising, Berlin, Dublin, Limerick (the year when Slovenia joined the EU), Aarhus (Denmark), Paris, Brussels and Ivančice (Czech Republic).

Visitors can get a great experience by attending a beeswax products workshop at the museum. Children can go to the children's corner to meet Cvetka the Bee, paint their own beehive panel and put it on the apiary. The museum shop offers technical literature, honey and other souvenirs. In 2009 the Museum of Apiculture celebrated its 50th anniversary, and installed a temporary exhibition on the occasion.

The museum is closely connected with Slovenian beekeepers, the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association (ČZS) and the Beekeeping Education Centre of Gorenjska (ČRICG) in Lesce.

In its efforts to promote the declaration of 20 May as international World Bee Day the museum, with the support of ČZS, sold promotional badges and organised temporary and promotional exhibitions. One of the more visible ones was the Save the Bees exhibition at Ljubljana Castle, which attracted over 34,000 visitors in 2016.

If the initial collection upon the museum's establishment in 1959 was around 300 objects, today the number exceeds 2000. The items are classified into three different collections. The richest collection is the one with nearly 800 painted beehive panels. Another very interesting collection, though less researched, is the collection of a number of different beehives, from the oldest gum hives, halved log gums, various forms of



Save the Bees exhibition held in 2016 at Ljubljana Castle, which was officially opened by FAO's Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva. Photo: Jerneja Jelovčan Koselj

Carniola-type beehives (*kranjiči*) and skeps, to newer changed and adapted beehives with mobile frames. As for the beekeeping tools, some of the older items are particularly interesting, such as queen cages to work with queen bees, feeders to provide supplementary feed to bees in beehives, swarm catchers, smokers, protective equipment, honey extractors, honey and wax presses, as well as tools for the production of combs and queen-rearing equipment.

The museum's documentary collection contains a large photographic library, slides and documentary materials on more and less known beekeepers and apicultural societies. Anton Janša holds a special place among Slovenian beekeepers for his extraordinary contribution to Slovenian apiculture.

The museum also boasts a well-stocked technical library that contains literature related to apiculture, selected foreign and domestic periodicals (Slovenski čebelar, Kranjska č' bela, etc.), older apicultural publications (antiquarian materials), domestic apiculture literature, publications of apicultural associations and societies, picture books and educational books on the topic of apiculture, publications of the Museum of Apiculture (beehive panel catalogues, collections of publications of the curator in charge), non-bibliographic material (ephemera, news clipping collections, materials from participation in training programmes). The accession register lists over 2,550 items of bibliographic material.

AMBITIOUS VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The main tasks of the Museum of Apiculture will remain to record, document, keep, preserve, study, present, and promote beekeeping heritage, and to nurture links between specialists and the lay public. Given that the museum enjoys support at home and abroad, there is no doubt that its importance will continue to grow.



Exhibition of beehive panels painted by pupils attending the Anton Janša Primary School at the Presidential Palace. Photo: Daniel Novakovič/STA

STORIES FROM BEEHIVE PANELS

Beehive panels are not just folk art, but also fine art

TANJA GLOGOVČAN



Beehive Panels
Photo: Jošt Gantar

Painted beehive panels are an essential element in the history of Slovenian beekeeping, and even in the history of Slovenian folk spiritual culture. These panels stand in the same relation to the fine arts as songs and tales do with regard to literary folk art. But the images from beehive panels also tell a special story of Slovenian history, ideas, beliefs and customs. They are unique historical records.

The art of painting beehives most likely began towards the end of the 18th century, in the golden age of baroque culture.

The oldest beehive known today originates from 1758, and depicts an image of the Virgin Mary with a child.

The classical period of painted beehive panels was the first three quarters of the 19th century, especially the years between 1820 and 1880. Given that Anton Janša was from the Gorenjska region, this art probably also started in the Slovenian Alps, particularly in the hills behind Radovljica and Kranj, and right up to the border with the Pannonian Plain. Decorating such panels soon spread over the Karawanks into Koroška. However, none can be found in the flatlands of Slovenia, in Pannonia, the eastern Dolenjska region, or Bela Krajina.

MARKING OF BEEHIVES

The panels were supposedly painted so that bees could recognise their own hive and beekeepers could easily distinguish between individual beehives, but also to protect them against curses and accidents.

The first images on the panels were mainly religious, with simple stories, but they were well-thought-out in a decorative sense.

An image of Madonna or one of the

Saints is usually in the middle, and on both sides there are bouquets or vases with flowers or part of a curtain. Also typical are pastoral images from the life of the rural population, particularly images of significant events.

Images of the landscape and nature are rare, usually only appearing as the background for the story. There are no portraits. Signs of vanity and embellishment are seldom found, as this was not a part of rural life (the only exception is the story about the mill and desire for youthfulness and beauty). The most frequent motif is punishment. Since the beekeepers were men, the images are mostly about their view of life and attitude towards the opposite sex. However, there are no erotic motifs, while those depicting beekeeping itself are rare.

To make the beehive panels spruce wood was generally used, and in rare cases the wood of linden, pine or larch trees. Experienced painters prepared their own quality paints. They finely ground the base paints and mixed them with linseed oil. This durable technique made it possible for images to resist both sun and rain. Panels that were later painted with industrial paints are significantly less durable.

The composition, layout of the figures, decoration and colour of beehive panels are all based on the baroque tradition. The signif-

icant fact here is that the painters, either professional or amateur, didn't want to create "works of art". For them, the most important thing was the content. Nevertheless, all panels are beautiful and have an intimate character. The paintings on beehive panels are not just folk art, but also fine art.

Together with countless village churches and hay racks, such beehives are typical elements of Slovenian rural architecture and a recognisable symbol of the country. Almost every farm used to have at least one a beehive in times past.

RELIGIOUS STORIES FROM BEEHIVES

The Old Testament and New Testament served as an inexhaustible source of stories for beehive panel painters.

Very popular is the story of original sin, in which Adam and Eve, encouraged by the snake, consumed the forbidden fruit

and thus enraged God, who banished them from the Garden of Eden. Also appearing very often is the story of the Great Flood and Noah's Ark, as well as images of Moses, who led the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt.

One of the most frequently depicted figures was Job, in the story about old Job who sits on a pile of manure and pays off for his wife with a fistful of worms. In Slovenia Job was considered the protector of the beekeepers until around the 19th century. Also John the Baptist, the man who came before Jesus Christ, appears quite often. He became the protector of tailors, tanners, furriers, innkeepers, and capital convicts, as well as the protector of sources of water.

Among the most popular motifs are the images of patron saints. One of the most depicted is St Florian, who protects mankind



Adam and Eve in Paradise
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

against both earthly and eternal flames. Florian's Sunday was also a holiday of shepherds. Also cellarers, soldiers and brewers considered him their protector. He is depicted as a warrior with a bucket, who extinguishes a house that is on fire.

Saint Anthony of Padua is another who intervenes in cases of emergency. In Slovenian folk tradition he appears in "The Legend of Smlednik". In this the Baron from Smlednik demands a tax from a farmer, who already paid it to the baron's deceased father. The farmer seeks protection from the saint, who orders the devils to bring the old baron from hell to confirm the farmer's statements. Also popular is St George, the patron saint against contagious diseases, death at sea and in war, helping those in mortal danger, the protector of soldiers and crusaders, and, in Slovenian folk tradition, the protector of fields and cattle.

Among the female saints, the most frequently appearing are St Catherine and St Barbara. According to legend, Catherine of Alexandria was so learned that merely through discussion she converted to Christianity 50 philosophers who tried to convince her

of the superstition of the religion. The Roman Emperor Maxentius thus ordered her torture on a spiked breaking wheel, but as the lightning of heaven shattered the device, he ordered her to be beheaded. Her attributes are therefore a torturing wheel and a sword. St Barbara is a patroness of the miners, towers, farmers, architects, construction workers, girls, prisoners, artillery, fortresses, firefighters and the dying. Her attributes are a three-windowed tower, chalice and host, sword and torch, gun barrel or peacock's feathers, long coat and a head-covering.

Also quite common are depictions of St Lucia and St Agnes. As the legend goes, Lucia gouged out her own eyes, as they had charmed one of her suitors, and she sent them to him. The young man then converted to Christianity. She is thus frequently shown holding her eyes on a plate. Folk tradition describes her as the protector of sight.

Another rather frequent image is the end of the world. Christ as a judge will divide the entire human race, risen from the dead, based on the goodness or wickedness of their deeds, and condemn them to eternal glory or punishment.



Mary the Pilgrim
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

PROFANE MOTIFS

Those motifs derive from folk storytelling and everyday life, or show important events. One of the oldest profane motifs shows Pegam and Lambergar. Folk song describes their combat, and in all probability the story is about the historical battles between the Habsburgs and the Counts of Celje, who in 1418, as the heirs of the Ortenburgs enlarged their properties, particularly in Carniola. Another historical scene is that of the execution of the Austrian Archduke Maximilian in Mexico. A reflection of the Counter-Reformation is also the depiction of Martin Luther and his spouse Katharina von Bora, taken to hell by the devils. This motif is of a humiliating nature.

Profane motifs often include humorous stories, scenes of soldiers and from everyday or festive village life (the work of

farmers, marriage, scenes from inns).

The motif of two soldiers leading prisoner reflects the forced recruitment into foreign armies after the introduction of general military duty in the last quarter of the 18th century.

A special category is made up of images that mock human weaknesses or faults. Interesting here is the story of Old Woman's Mill. Rural citizens probably understood the motif as punishment for female nagging. The mill as a rejuvenating instrument is derived from original idea of forges, where old people were reformed into young ones with the help of fire.

Litigious passion is shown by the motif of two farmers quarrelling over a cow being milked by a lawyer. This motif also depicts the Slovenian saying that when two people are fighting over something, the third party wins all.



St George and St Martin
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

At the end of winter and the beginning of spring most customs are connected to the Shrovetide period and its patron "Pust". He is depicted wearing a fool's cap with bells. His holiday is Shrove Tuesday, distinguished by parades of carnival costumes, and the season ends on Ash Wednesday with the burning of a straw effigy representing the "Pust". Wearing masks has its roots in the belief that the spirits of ancestors and fertility spirits could only be approached by a man wearing a mask.

Also interesting is the image of "sawing the witch". On Ash Wednesday a log or a wooden board with a painted witch or straw effigy is cut in half and thrown into water, which symbolizes that one half of the unpopular fasting time has already passed. This custom should be understood as driving out the winter.

Quite an old motif is a battle over a pair of trousers. The Slovenian folk version includes two women. The motif of derision shows the desire for marriage, but also has a deeper background

in conditions where unmarried women weren't provided with social security. The motifs of making soup out of trousers of a boy who is catching girls with trousers on a hook have similar meanings. However, marriage is considered to be one of the most important and happiest events in life.

Beehive panels are still painted in Slovenia even today, although with different stories and more pastoral images.

Modern Slovenian apiculture indicates the value of this profession, as well as the awareness that bees are an important part of nature.

SOURCE: Pripovedi s panjev (I in II) (Stories from beehives (I and II), Museum of Apiculture, Radovljica, 1992.



Fox shaving Hunter
Photo: Museum of Apiculture in Radovljica Archives

URBAN BEEKEEPING

Slovenia has the highest bee population density in Europe

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ

Urban beekeeping, or beekeeping in cities, is increasingly popular in Slovenia. The quality of honey produced in cities is often even higher than in the countryside. This type of beekeeping is growing in popularity around the globe, and the number of urban beekeepers is rising by no less than 200% each year. But this is nothing new for Slovenia – the town of Idrija has had a municipal apiary for nearly 100 years.

Apiaries also have a long history in Ljubljana, where the beekeeping society Urban Beekeeper is in charge of apiculture promotion. The City of Ljubljana has also launched a campaign called For a More Beautiful Ljubljana, which involves a new project Let's Help the Bee: Make the City Floral, which aims at encouraging residents to plant nectar-bearing plants that provide bees with food in times when it would otherwise be scarce.

THE TREND OF GETTING BACK TO NATURE

The growing popularity of urban beekeeping can be ascribed to the popularity of beekeeping in general, the trend of getting back to nature, and food self-sufficiency.

Some of the more famous apiaries in Ljubljana are on top of the Cankarjev Dom cultural and conference centre, on the balcony of the Government building, the meadow of the Atlantis Water Park in BTC City, and on the Slovenian Environment Agency's roof.

Bees can thus enjoy healthy bee pasture throughout the season. It is the absence of intensive farming and fruit growing in cities that offers the potential for high-quality honey. Analyses show that the quality of honey produced in cities does not lag behind that produced in the countryside, and sometimes even exceeds it. City parks, little gardens around apartment buildings and flower beds provide bees with diverse pastures throughout the year. Studies also show that honey produced in cities does not contain pesticide residues, because bees collect nectar from unsprayed plants. In addition, residents in urban areas are more

aware of the harmful effects of pesticides. Such honey also does not contain heavy metals, exhaust gas residues or dust particles. Another interesting fact is that cities offer pasture year round, which is why bees do not need any supplementary sugar as feed. Honey from cities also prides itself on a more varied composition than honey produced on rural monocultures. However, caution is necessary in urban areas so that bees do not disturb the residents living in the vicinity. Apiaries must thus be placed so as to prevent bees from bumping into passers-by. To this end, owners often set them up on their roofs or terraces, although in such cases bees must be protected from sun and wind.

Other big cities around the world are witnessing the rapid development of urban beekeeping, too. London is the capital of urban beekeeping, to the point where bees have faced starvation in the middle of pasture seasons due to their population density.

Urban beekeeping is beneficial for the environment, because bees effectively take care of natural ecosystems. Bees not only produce sweet honey, but also bring other advantages, such as pollinating fruit trees and garden produce, and improving the quality of life.

The self-initiative to create a communal garden called Beyond the Construction Site (Onkraj gradbišča) right across the main railway station in Ljubljana is one of the fifteen areas in the city where Gorazd Trušnovec is taking care of bee families. An architect by profession, he installed two beehives on his balcony two years ago, and now he has thirty-five across Ljubljana. How is urban beekeeping different from traditional beekeeping?

Urban beekeeping, Ljubljana
Photo: Jošt Gantar

Gorazd Trušnovec, architect and urban beekeeper: “The technology is the same, just access is more difficult and it takes some skill to climb to the terrace so often. It is difficult to have many bees in an urban environment. Three or four beehives will not attract any attention from the neighbours, while a large apiary means a huge concentration of bees, which increases the risk of disputes. Biodiversity is high in the city, which makes it harder to produce monofloral honey. There is always something blooming and so nectars mix. Bees do not take orders about where to fly and because they cover a radius of three kilometres, they bring a variety of flavours. I like this because it yields a very harmonious blend. However, the analysis of the honey collected on the roof of Španski Borci Cultural Centre showed that it could be classified as forest honey. It is interesting to be able to produce forest honey in the city centre. But bees only have to fly over Kodeljevo to find themselves in the forest of Golovec. Each of the fifteen locations in the city where I keep my bees yields a different honey.”

Boštjan Noč, president of the Slovenian Beekeeping Association: “Apiaries in urban environments are instrumental for the development of apiculture; they also generate interest in bees among young people, help in organising more and more beekeeping circles in urban primary schools, encourage residents to plant more melliferous plants, raise public awareness about the importance of bees, and encourage a wider dialogue for a bee-friendly environment. Another reason why urban beekeeping is so important is because it shows that our cities can provide a clean environment. Also worth mentioning is the fact that Slovenia has the highest bee population density in Europe per square kilometre, and it ranks second in terms of the number of beekeepers per capita, at around 10,000.”



Urban beekeeping on the roof of the Slovenian Government Building, Ljubljana.
In the photo: Dr Miro Cerar, Slovenian Prime Minister.
Photo: Anže Malovrh/STA



Urban beekeeping, Idrija
Photo: Marko Šinkovec

SLOVENIAN BEES IN ESTONIA AND NEW YORK

The Carniolan honey bee – the second most widespread bee in the world

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ

PHOTO: MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD ARCHIVES



Slovenia's interactive World of Bees pavilion in New York.
Photo: Robi Poredoš/STA

Since last June Slovenian bees have lived in the garden of Kadriorg Palace, the residence of the Estonian President in Tallinn, Estonia. President Kersti Kaljulaid set up three beehives in the large garden extending in front of the palace, which have become home to bees originating from Slovenia and southern Austria.

At the end of August last year honey was extracted at the President's palace for the first time. The beekeepers got to keep one half of the yield and the other half stayed at the palace. The honey was poured into special jars that were distributed as protocol gifts.

Slovenia will gift a beehive with beehive panels to the UN to mark the first World Bee Day; hopefully some bee colonies from Slovenia will make their home in that very hive.

Current US legislation only allows the import of bees from Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There are 25 bee subspecies in the world, but the second most widespread bee, the Carniolan bee, is indigenous to Slovenia and protected as such. It is known for its calm behaviour, which is a positive characteristic in times when urban beekeeping and bee tourism are gaining momentum. Car-

niolan bees are not bothered by people, which is why many Slovenian beekeepers rarely wear protective gloves and veils.

The resolution passed through the UN's system very smoothly owing to the Slovenian diplomatic team in New York, which attracted 115 sponsors for the resolution.

Studies conducted by the UN and the International Union for Conservation of Nature show that bee populations and those of other pollinators are declining significantly, which is why they are increasingly endangered. This is due to a number of factors, such as intensive farming, pesticides and pollution. Bees are also exposed to new diseases and pests, while the growing global population is reducing their natural habitat. Climate change is another factor that substantially threatens the survival and development of bees and other pollinators.

Stanislava Šmon, a New Yorker from Maribor who works for the UN: *"The Slovenian initiative received a very encouraging response. Every day people from all over the world are sending messages congratulating Slovenia for the initiative. It seems that people are increasingly aware of the importance of bees in the production of healthy food. Unfortunately they are more and more threatened in areas with intensive farming."*

20 MAY – FIRST CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD BEE DAY, INCLUDING IN SLOVENIA

World Bee Day: an Opportunity to Act

JERNEJ KOVAČ

Bees play a key role in increasing the yield of plants, food safety and the nutritional value of foods. Without bees we could lose a whole range of foods, such as potatoes, pepper, coffee, pumpkins, carrots, apples, almonds, tomatoes, and many more.
Photo: Peter Kozmos

The principal objective of World Bee Day is to devote at least one day a year to raising the awareness of the global public about the importance of bees and other pollinators for humanity. At the same time, this is also an opportunity for professionals, politicians, economists and the broader public to discuss the challenges of preserving bees, and determine specific activities enabling their survival. Slovenia is thus preparing for its first celebration of the World Bee day with a great sense of commitment.

May will see a range of events taking place all over Slovenia, focusing on bees and pollinators. The celebration will reach its peak from Friday, 18 May, to Sunday, 20 May, when several national and international events will take place.

- **Friday, 18 May at 9:00 a.m. (Žirovnica, Pod Stolom hall): World beekeeping conference Global challenges in beekeeping**

The conference will be divided into eight thematic units. Slovenian and international renowned beekeeping experts will thus touch upon pollination, pesticides, the use of bee products in nutrition and apitherapy, care for the quality and safety of bee products, the development of sustainable methods for Varroa management, the transfer of knowledge about beekeeping, the management of foraging sources of bees, and the promotion of bees and bee products.

The conference aims at producing optimal and feasible solutions for eliminating certain problems related to beekeeping and setting short- and long-term goals for their implementation.

- **Friday, 18 May 2018 at 7:00 p.m. (Višnja Gora near Ivančna Gorica): Unveiling of the Carniolan honey bee memorial**

The Carniolan honeybee is an autochthonous bee species and part of the national identity of Slovenia. Slovenian beekeepers will accordingly pay their tribute to it by unveiling a memorial devoted to this special bee.

Saturday, 19 May 2018 (Brdo pri Kranju Congress Centre): International ministerial conference on the importance of bees and other pollinators for sustainable agriculture and food security

Slovenia will host a ministerial conference about the role of bees and other pollinators.

Ministers and other high-profile guests from about 40 countries from all continents will discuss the role of bees in ensuring food security, preventing hunger, and preserving the ecosystem services for agriculture.

Inter alia the conference will be attended by José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO, Carmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Sacko Josefa Leonel Correa, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, and Philip McCabe, president of Apimondia, the global association of beekeepers.

- **Sunday, 20 May 2018 at 12:00 a.m. (Breznica, Žirovnica): The first celebration of World Bee Day**

The first celebration of World Bee Day will begin with a ceremony under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor. This will be followed by an informal assembly of Slovenian beekeepers at the village of Breznica in the Municipality of Žirovnica. Beekeepers, families, and all those who want to celebrate World Bee Day can also visit the so-called honey village, where bee products and handicrafts can be bought at over 80 stalls. Honey delicacies from different Slovenian regions will be available for tasting, too.

SLOVENIA ISSUES A COMMEMORATIVE COIN ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD BEE DAY

The Bank of Slovenia will issue a special two-euro commemorative coin to celebrate World Bee Day, and it will circulate throughout the Eurozone. Janez Bizjak, the author of the draft design selected at a public contest, sought inspiration in World Bee Day and the world of bees. His motif was a globe shaped as a honeycomb, or honeycomb shaped as a globe.

Commemorative coin
Photo: The Bank of Slovenia Archives



The coin is expected to be issued in May, with one million coins eventually in circulation. The coin will be made using two techniques: ordinary striking (available at par value of two euros per coin) and striking with a brilliant finish in a plastic capsule (the retail price of which will be determined at a later date).



Apiarian products from Slovenia.
Photo: Jošt Gantar

IVAN CANKAR'S LIFE

Through the eyes of writer Boštjan Gorenc - Pižama and illustrator Tanja Komadina



Photo: Bor Slana/STA

Boštjan Gorenc – Pižama first established himself in the world of literature as a translator from English. He became popular among the youngest readers with his translations of the books from the series *Captain Underpants* by Dav Pilkey and *Mr. Gum* by Andy Stanton, and he won over teenagers with his translations of best-sellers such as: John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*, R. J. Palacio's *Wonder*, and Rainbow Rowell's *Eleanor & Park*. Reading his translation of George Martin's *The Song of Ice & Fire*, adults were able to live the full-blooded world of fiction, or mythological America in *American Gods* by Neil Gaiman. His translation of the Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman novel *Good Omens* made the 2012 Honour List of the International Board on Books for Young People. Boštjan Gorenc – Pižama, however, likes to pretend that his first officially published translation (*The Oracle Book*) never happened.

Since 2008, he and Matej de Cecco have made the readers of the youth magazine *Pil* laugh when reading the three volumes of the comic strip *Šnofijeva družina* (Šnofij's Company). His solo literary debut, *sLOLvanski klasiki 1* (*sLOLvene classics 1*) was meant to convince himself that the 15 years he had spent on the internet were not a total waste of time. It was awarded the title of the Book of the Year at the 2016 Book Fair, and to date has sold more than 9,500 copies. In May 2017 the President of the Republic of Slovenia presented him with the Apple of Inspiration for the book's role in making literature popular among young people. The autumn of 2017 saw the publication of his first picture book, *Kaj se skriva očku v bradi* (*What Is Hidden in Dad's Beard?*), illustrated by Igor Šinkovec. He also writes fairy tales for the *Lahkonočnice* project of bedtime stories.

When he is not busy being a bookworm, he records the podcast *Glave* (*Heads*) or does stand-up comedy. At the moment he also entertains audiences in *Brade* (*Beards*).

About Cankar Boštjan Gorenc – Pižama says:

'If you really have to stuff your head with short stories, they should at least be Cankar's.'



Photo: Personal Archives

Tanja Komadina is an illustrator and author of comic strips. She was born in 1976 and graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, where she continues to live and create. As a self-employed cultural worker she cooperates with many Slovenian publishers. Her comic strips, text books, belletristic and educational works address children and youth. Her illustrations and comics are on display at group and individual exhibitions in Slovenia, as well as biennials of illustration at home and abroad.

She loves mornings, peace and quiet, coffee and books, walks and runs, cats, dance, flea markets, urban cycling, vegetables prepared in a myriad of ways, and ice cream all year round.

The many awards she has received for her work include the 2012 award of the Ljubljana Academy of Fine Arts and Design for artistic achievements, the 2015 Golden Pear for her first comic strip *Fino kolo* (*A Fine Bicycle*), listed in the White Ravens catalogue, and, together with Nataša Konc Lorenzutti, the 2016 Golden Pear for the book *Kdo je danes glavni* (*Who Is in Charge Today*), and the 2017 Levstik Award for her illustrations in the Maša Ogrizek's book *Gospa s klobukom* (*The Lady with the Hat*).

What does Ivan Cankar mean to her?

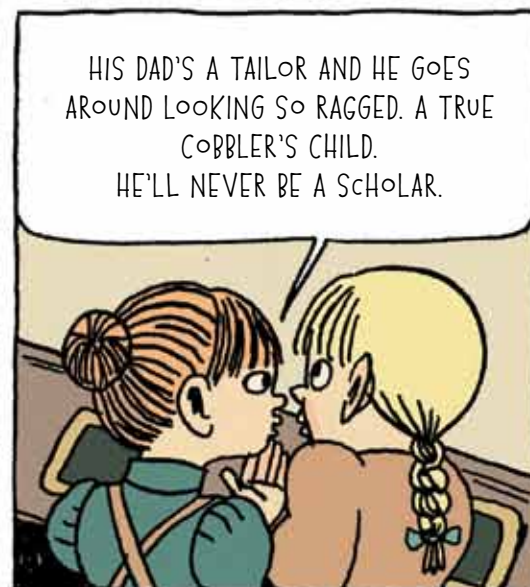
'Critical reflection, love for the language and writing, resistance against unfair practices and systems.'



WELL YOU REALLY DO HAVE NEW TOGS, IVAN! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN THEM YET.



HAVE YOU GOT THE SAME TAILOR AS THAT EMPEROR IN THE ANDERSEN FAIRY-TALE? HA HA HA HA



HIS DAD'S A TAILOR AND HE GOES AROUND LOOKING SO RAGGED. A TRUE COBBLER'S CHILD. HE'LL NEVER BE A SCHOLAR.



SILENCE, BOYS!

HAHAHA
HEHEHE



LET US BEGIN. WHO CAN TELL ME WHAT ONE AND ONE IS?



WHAT ON EARTH IS SHE ASKING? EVERY STUPID KID KNOWS THAT. EVERYONE SAYS: "WHAT'S WON PLUS WON?"



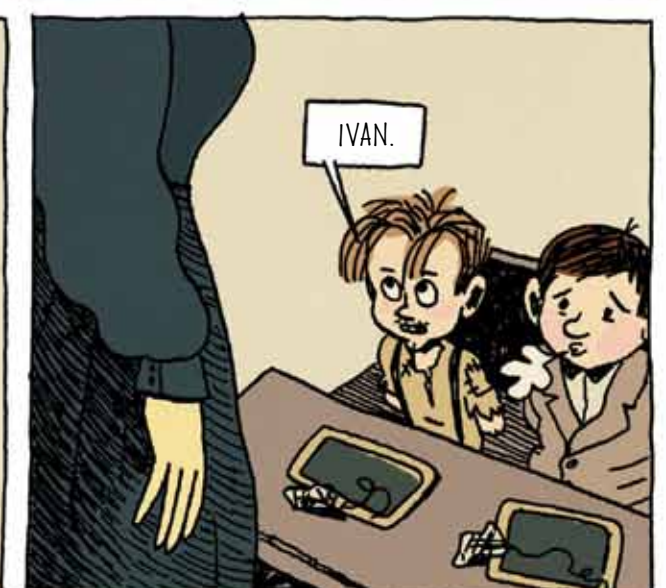
WON AND WON!

HA HA HA



AND WHAT IS SO FUNNY?

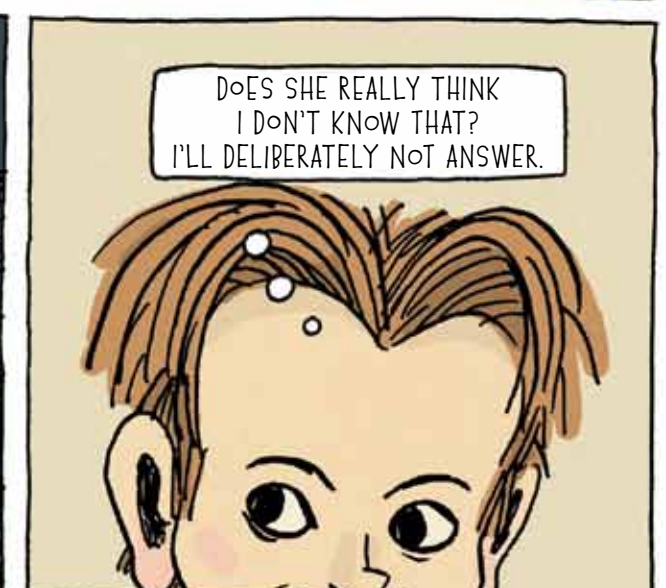
YOU, THE RAGGED ONE, WHAT IS YOUR NAME?



IVAN.



WELL, IVAN, WHAT IS ONE AND ONE?



DON'T SHE REALLY THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT? I'LL DELIBERATELY NOT ANSWER.

FESTIVAL EUROPA CANTAT 2021 WILL BE HELD IN LJUBLJANA

This will be the largest music event in Slovenia's history

TANJA GLOGOVČAN

Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, was successful in its efforts to host the international choral event Festival Europa Cantat 2021, winning out against Dublin and Utrecht.

This year, the Slovenian representative in Tallinn is the Girl Choir of the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium in Ljubljana Šentvid with choirmaster Helena Fojkar Zupančič.
Photo: Gregor Požun



Festival Europa Cantat is the largest international music festival in Europe, and the largest music event to be held in Slovenia. The project was founded by the Europa Choral Association – Europa Cantat (ECA EC). For decades the Association has successfully collaborated with the Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for Cultural Activities. Slovenian representatives are often chosen to sit on the Association's executive boards and music commissions and provide their professional expertise.

About 3,000 to 4,000 singers, composers, conductors, instrumentalists, and choral publishers from all over the world will participate at the eight-day festival. Approximately 50 of the world's greatest conductors and mentors will attend this event and adapt to the levels of the

participants, who are both choral music aficionados and professionals.

They can choose to participate for one or more, but eight days at most. The choral programme lists about 100 choral events and has a diverse accompanying programme of cultural events in the city that for eight days lives and breathes music.

The organisation of the Festival Europa Cantat 2021 festival is Slovenia's opportunity to strengthen its brand of choral culture. The festival will at the same time present a tourist and economic challenge. Slovenia being chosen to host the festival in 2021 means that the country has been recognised in the choral world as a place with a long choral tradition and development, and that the success and international achievements of the best Slovenian choirs have not gone unnoticed.



With several thousand participants, the project hosts rich cultural events and includes the locals in parts of the cultural programme, services, and tourist promotion. It is an opportunity for Slovenian choirs to promote themselves internationally and discover new music and choral programmes (for example choral singing as therapy).

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MANY SINGING TALENTS AND PERSONALITIES

The festival can also be a valuable personal experience. The first involvement of choral singers with the Festival Europa Cantat can influence their approach to choral singing. Professionals, choir-masters and composers regard this European and increasingly global festival as a valuable experience and opportunity for professional growth.

At the same time, it is also a great chance to socialise. Singers usually begin their day with practice of the programme of their chosen multi-day workshop, or by attending one of the study workshops to gain a few hours of experience from different individual fields, styles and repertoires.

Choirmasters and composers can attend meetings to perfect various aspects of choral activities. The first round of concerts usually begins in early afternoon.

LIVE AND BREATHE MUSIC

During the festival, the streets and cultural institutions burst with choral music in combination with other art forms, such as vocal



and instrumental works or the so-called cross-overs. One of the most intriguing approaches is known as open singing, when all singers gather on the main city square. The locals have an important role in this event, as they are also invited to join in. The free of charge “choral promenades” (i.e. choral night, choral promenades, choir performances, and others) are very enticing for the tourists as well. Slovenia’s small size will play a part in the festival, as the events will easily be spread all over the country in many cities, so it can be said that all of Slovenia will live and breathe music.

The festival will feature child and adult choirs and mixed, male-voice and female-voice choirs. The most recent festival in Pecs in 2015 hosted participants from 48 countries in Europe, Asia, both Americas, Africa, and Australia and New Zealand. The participation of non-European choirs has been on the rise in recent years, as choral singing is popular all over the world.

Festival Europa Cantat 2021 – Music lovers welcome. You will fall in love with Slovenia, too.

Interesting choral history

Choral singing became popular in Slovenia after the Spring of Nations in the middle of the 19th century.

Jurij Slatkonja (1456-1522), a Viennese bishop of Slovenian descent, established a Vienna court chapel choir, known today as the Vienna Boys’ Choir.

In Basel in 1501, Balthasar Praspergius, a scholar from Mozirje, published a discussion in Latin on singing.

In the first Slovenian books and songbooks Primož Trubar (1508-1586) encouraged members of the church to sing in their native language.

Carniola-born Jacob Handl-Gallus (1550-1591) was a choirmaster, humanitarian and composer. He is indisputably a giant of European music of the 16th century.



Perpetuum Jazzile
Photo: Anže Malovrh



Ingenium
Photo: Andrej Grilc

ALJAŽ TURRET

Preserving the symbol of Slovenia

DR MARTIN KAVČIČ, INSTITUTE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE OF SLOVENIA
GORAZD LEMAJIČ, MSC, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SLOVENIA



When you arrive breathless at the top, it is hard to escape the feeling that this metal shelter has a soul.
Photo: Institute for The Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia Archives

The top of Triglav, the highest mountain in Slovenia, is home to one of the most prominent of Slovenian national symbols, the Aljaž Turret. At the beginning of 2017 the government of the Republic of Slovenia appointed the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia (ZVKDS) as the manager of the Aljaž Turret and the land on which it stands. The renovations will start at the end of this year’s hiking season.

For the purposes of the restoration the ZVKDS Restoration Centre, in cooperation with the National Museum of Slovenia and others, will remove the Aljaž Turret from the top of Triglav and then return it to its original location when a thorough reconstruction has been completed.

The symbolic value of the turret makes the restoration a very delicate procedure that will need to be carried out in a well thought-out, meticulous, and attentive manner.

A BASTION OF THE SLOVENIAN NATION AND A MOUNTAIN REFUGE

Triglav became a Slovenian symbol due to the efforts of the priest, composer, mountaineer and passionate patriot Jakob Aljaž (1845– 1927). The turret is a reminder of the rebellion against the Germanisation of the Slovenian people during the reign of the Habsburg Monarchy in Slovenia in the 19th century. As the highest peak of Triglav watches over Slovenia, the Aljaž Turret symbolically represents the Slovenian spirit.

THE SYMBOLIC REFUGE ON TOP OF TRIGLAV

The cylindrical metal turret with a conical roof and a flag on top is 1.25m wide and 2.5m high, and known as the Aljaž Turret. It is not just a somewhat unusual but welcome mountain refuge on

Slovenia’s highest peak, as it soon became the symbolic refuge of the residents of the land beneath it. At the time other cottages were situated at lower elevations and were foreign-owned, so the primacy of the Aljaž Turret provided a memorable emblem for the Slovenian nation. The turret was originally made in a very rational manner; it was but a raw metal galvanized cylinder with two sets of small windows and a small door that closed automatically.

Despite its small size, the turret was surprisingly well-equipped. It contained three round stools, two samovars, six tin cups, a barometer, a thermometer, and a container of spirits for the samovar. Besides the guest book, Jakob Aljaž considered Perenhart’s panoramic painting of Triglav on the inside rim the most important ‘tool’ in the turret.

The original appearance of the turret did not last very long. Austria-Hungary carried out geodetic measurements a year after the turret was set up and it was then painted white with a black roof for better visibility. The Rapallo Agreement signed between the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Italy established a border that ran over Triglav’s peak and made the Aljaž Turret a subject of national rivalry. The turret was painted in the colours of one state and later the other.

After World War II the Yugoslav government changed the turret to make it more socialist and iconographic in appearance. It was repainted red, it received a commemorative medal, and the flag was replaced with a five-pointed star.

The turret kept this image until 1984, when socio-political changes gradually began to take place. During the recording of the film about Julius Kugy, who dedicated most of his career to studying the Julian Alps, the turret was painted grey in an effort to restore its original appearance. Since then the turret has not been repainted.

At first, only private citizens contributed to the upkeep of the turret. Minimal maintenance was carried out and only occasionally, on anniversaries. This lack of maintenance motivated volunteers, starting in 2000, to launch their own initiatives so as to take the restoration of the turret into their own hands. With nothing but

the best intentions to preserve the turret, the Alpine Association of Slovenia, the Association of the Friends of Triglav, and the Alpine Association Ljubljana Matica tried to minimize the most obvious damage by patching the dents and holes, replacing the steel cables that had been torn off, removing old layers of worn paint and repainting parts of the turret, among other repairs.

THIS THING HAS GOT A SOUL

The first step towards preserving the Aljaž Turret is to raise awareness among the public about the significance of the monument. This was done recently with a documentary and by holding the exhibitions The Aljaž Turret “This thing has got a soul” and The Aljaž Turret – Preserving the Symbol in 2017, along with several book publications and articles. In 2015 a conservation plan was made at the Restoration Centre of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage of Slovenia. The plan listed the



The Aljaž Turret in 1922-1923
Photo: Gorenjska Museum Archives

monument’s most significant cultural protection qualities and laid out the procedures for its conservation. Various expert opinions have been obtained, such as an architectural record of the current state, complete with extensive photo documentation, a report on the chemical composition of some metal parts of the turret, and a research report determining a sequence of the layers of paint.

Time and 123 years of exposure to extreme weather and the inappropriate behaviour of many mountain visitors have led to the point where, from a professional point of view, the conservation of the turret requires more than just the efforts of individuals.

ZVKDS thus made a conservation plan in 2015 and arranged monitoring of the turret, which revealed that the damage is not only superficial but has in some places advanced to problematic construction faults. This is clear from the way the turret tilts, the deformations in the basic volume of the turret and the bowed load-bearing structure.

On the basis of these scientific findings the key institutions in charge of the national monument concluded that the turret is in need of a complete renovation.

Accordingly, at the end of the 2018 hiking season, the turret will for a short time be moved to the valley under the watchful eye of the ZVKDS Restoration Centre, where, in appropriate conditions, it will undergo thorough restoration in efforts to remove the damage that the monument has sustained over time.

After the restoration a management plan will be made which will lay out the necessary activities to preserve the national monument for future generations.



Gorazd Lemajič, MSc, and Dr Martin Kavčič –
monitoring the turret before the 2017-2018 winter
Photo: Marko Vrabec, 19 October 2017

ALPINE FLOWERS OF BOHINJ

Paradise for flower lovers and botanical experts

POLONA PREŠEREN
PHOTO: MITJA SODJA



The beautiful world of flowers in the Julian Alps and mountains above Bohinj can be observed on one of numerous hiking tours.

The Julian Alps are magnificent and special just as they are. Their peaks offer a view of the entire Adriatic Sea, and starting in June they are adorned with mountain flowers. The international festival of Alpine flowers organised in Bohinj is dedicated to flowers, bees, nature and enjoying each other's company. This year's festival will take place from 25 May to 10 June. Its official opening will be the main event to mark the 240th anniversary of the first ascent of Triglav.

When the snow melts, the mountains and meadows become covered with flowers. This is when the Alpine landscape is truly a treat for the eye. In the summer flowers grow right up to the highest peaks and stay there until autumn. Some of them grow only in this area of the Alps. This was the reason why the locals from Bohinj and its surroundings decided to organise a special festival to recognize the true value of the floral richness of Bohinj, Triglav National Park and Slovenia as a whole. The idea to organise the International Festival of Alpine Flowers in Bohinj was thus born.

FLOWERS WITH THEIR OWN FESTIVAL

The people in Bohinj developed the festival with a view to encouraging the exploration of Alpine flowers, scientific knowledge and creativity related to flowers, as well as to provide visitors and locals with a rich experience of the nature and cultural heritage of the area. The decision was made: a few days a year would be devoted only to flowers, right when the majority of wild flowers are in bloom.

The festival, now with a 12-year tradition, provides a range of cultural events associated with floral themes in Bohinj – from art exhibitions, excursions, and explorations of flowers to musical eve-

nings. After all, flowers are also an inspiration to artists.

Lovers of nature and flowers will find plenty of attractions. The festival also offers the opportunity for experts to discuss and familiarise themselves with Alpine flowers, their preservation and significance. Various workshops and presentations of different ways in which wild flowers can embellish and enrich our lives are held: from photography courses to culinary workshops, from learning about beekeeping to art classes.

Visitors can take a tour in the company of local guides and botanical experts to explore the floral richness of Bohinj and its surroundings, as well as some other interesting botanical areas in Slovenia.

"We endeavour to provide visitors with insights into botanical knowledge, folk heritage and artistic creation, as well as with knowledge of not only what is beautiful but also of that which may be prepared as a dish or put on the table," says Klemen Langus, Director of Tourism Bohinj. He adds that by visiting the Festival "you can experience Bohinj in a new way and learn many interesting facts about its past, the harmony between man and nature and about the beauty that is sometimes hidden in the imperceptible details."

RICH BOTANICAL HISTORY OF BOHINJ

Botanical experts have always been interested in exploring the floral treasures of Bohinj and its surrounding mountains. From early spring to autumn these mountains are a genuine botanical garden. Hellebores are the first to bloom, followed by other flowers heralding the arrival of spring. Next the meadows and grasslands in the valleys bloom, and then the botanical jewels on the higher slopes take their turn.

The inhabitants of Bohinj are convinced that not many regions in the Alps can boast more diverse flora. This is due to the vicinity of the Mediterranean Sea, supporting thermophilic vegetation on the southern slopes of the lower Bohinj Mountains and Pršivec, a viewpoint peak just above Lake Bohinj. Above Lake Bohinj there is a relatively small area of various altitudinal belts extending to the highest peaks far above the forest line.

The vast majority of the meadows in the Julian Alps are human made. Without the diligent work of the local people the meadows would be overgrown by forest, which would turn into mountain pines and rocks higher in the mountains. The present landscape has been taking shape for many centuries, even over a thousand years, since people first settled in these mountains and valleys. The local people in this area were also occupied with cattle breeding and raising of sheep and goats. To feed their animals during the winter natural resources had to be used with respect and consideration. In order to prepare enough hay for the winter cows were put out to pasture in the summer months, first in transitional pastures and then in high mountain ones. Due to the wet climate, ornate hayracks had to be built for drying the hay. The most beautiful specimens are still on display in the villages of Bohinj, especially at Studor. This has formed a precious cultural landscape, of which the inhabitants of Bohinj are justly proud.

The abundance of flowers also invites numerous insects, mainly butterflies and bees. With its botanical riches, Bohinj and its surroundings areas are wonderful places for watching butterflies flying from flower to flower. Beekeeping also has a long tradition here. The beekeepers from Bohinj take good care of the Carniolan bee, which, owing to a richness of the colourful Alpine flowers, produces very tasty and high-quality honey.

The more we learn about the world of Alpine flora, the closer our friendship with the flowers in bloom. "Flowers are associated with a lot of knowledge, stories and ancient wisdom; they accompany us from our birth to our death, inspire our creativity and make our life more beautiful," the people in Bohinj say.

INTERESTING FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

The festival, which is primarily based on respect for nature, has achieved much more than merely increasing people's knowledge about Alpine flowers and guiding botanical excursions. In cooperation with Triglav National Park and the increasingly important support of local associations and societies, the festival has become interesting for a wide group of guests, who are interested in active and adventurous relaxation in nature.

Botanical attractions of Bohinj

Bohinj houses over 1,000 various plant species as part of the so-called Alpine-limestone flora, which is among the richest in Europe. Some plant species grow only in Bohinj and were thus named after Bohinj or Triglav.

Plant species are a part of many stories and tales. The most famous is the Triglav Rose (*Potentilla nitida*), which played a part in the tale about the Goldhorn. Its layout, diverse terrain, altitude difference, the influence of the Mediterranean, and the geological substratum have contributed to the extraordinary variety of flora. In the valleys you can find colourful meadow flora (spring gentian, arnica, bellflowers, etc.). In spring the lower mountains are adorned by the Lady's slipper orchid, the Bohinj iris, and Clusius' gentian.

The Fužina mountains are rich in scree flora, which appears above 2,000 metres, where flowers such as the Triglav Rose (*Potentilla nitida*), King of the Alps (*Eritrichium nanum*), Triglav Gentian (*Gentiana terglouensis*), and Triglav Hawksbeard (*Crepis Terglouensis*) can be found. By the end of June the most typical orchids and edelweiss also appear. A special place is held by plant species of the highland marshes that formed because of the peat moss.

Important: Alpine plants have an important role in the fragile mountain ecosystem. If you would like to take their beauty with you, take a photo of them, but do not pick the flowers.



A number of plants are edible or even have medicinal properties.

GREEN LIGHT WORLD FLIGHT'S ENVIRONMENTAL MISSION

Providing a complete picture of global change with new measurements

VESNA ŽARKOVIČ
PHOTO: MATEVŽ LENARČIČ



The Slovenian aviation and climate researcher Matevž Lenarčič started a flight from Maribor airport to a new environmental mission with an ultralight aircraft. This time, Asia will overtake more than 20,000 kilometers in length and collect environmental pollution data to combat climate change.

On 9 April the Slovenian pilot and climate change researcher Matevž Lenarčič took off from Maribor Airport, heading towards Asia to embark on a new environmental and flight mission called Zero Emission Living. It is aimed at collecting data relating to climate change.

On his 21,000-kilometer long route he will fly over Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, China, Mongolia and Russia. He longest stage is expected to last 12 hours.

The flight will be of great importance for science. The most important results of this project are measurements in areas where no data have yet been collected. The mission started in areas known to be interesting for studying climate change, while the second part of the flight will cover areas where only a few measurements have been taken so far.

The information collected will include the conditions of the environment and climate in order to allow monitoring of the efficiency of actions to reduce global warming. One benefit of the project is that it will provide airborne measurements, which are generally lacking – the majority of measurements being taken close to the ground. These data will be used in analysis with other experts to improve models and their predictive power, as well as to create parameters for monitoring the efficiency of actions.

Whereas previous missions were focused on black carbon, the team is now interested in the broader composition of pollution.

Therefore, in addition to measuring the contribution of aerosols that absorb sun-

light, it will also monitor contributions of other aerosols that absorb and scatter it. Newly installed and innovative instruments will be used for the first time to achieve this.

Dr Griša Močnik, head of scientific research part of the team:

“We will supplement the data collected in previous round-the-world flight missions with the results of this year’s measurements far in the east, thus making a significant contribution to key scientific objectives of the project: taking measurements in a wide area where no such measurements have been taken yet, and airborne measurements, which are very rare because of high costs. Our team presented the results of this research at more than 30 conferences and workshops around Europe, Asia and America. With the work carried out, the mission successfully joined the scientific research project led by the University of Vienna. When taking all these measurements we developed a methodology which was also used at a local level. We can use this to determine sources of pollution and estimate the direct impact of traffic and biomass burning on the quality of air and life.”

The results so far have shown that air pollution with particles caused by human activity is widespread around the globe, but with considerable differences, and the easiest way to assess such differences is by taking airborne measurements.

The general green partner of the project is Energetika Ljubljana, and the general eco partner is Lumar.

Marko Lukić, director of Lumar: “Lumar has been searching for energy-efficient living solutions to reduce different emissions related to the burning of fossil fuels and production of electricity for several years. This is how we came up with the Zero Emission Living concept, which aims for comprehensive living without emissions, since today’s technologies easily allow us to become a zero-carbon society. However, this requires raising people’s awareness, and this is where enthusiasts, such as Matevž and his team, play an important role. Their goal is not to make a profit, but to try and raise global awareness about the actual situation of environmental pollution with an elemental and human approach that is nonetheless data-driven.”

Lenarčič will once again be flying in an aircraft Dynamic WT9, manufactured by the Slovakian company Aerospool, which will also most likely be a partner in the coming years.

These future missions will serve as a milestone in aviation. “An aircraft with a larger fuel tank from the same manufacturer is already being produced,” said Lenarčič. The new aircraft will be capable of carrying from 600 to 650 litres of fuel, which should allow 50 hours of flying. Destinations planned for the future include the Indian subcontinent, with the Himalayas, and the South and North Poles.



Pakistan Coast



Hurghada, Egypt

CREATIVITY AS THE FOUNDATION OF STABILITY

The role of the creative industries in modern society

JANJA KLASINC

PHOTO: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARCHIVES



The Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Union for the Mediterranean organised an international conference entitled Creative Forum Ljubljana, which took place in the City Museum of Ljubljana on 11 and 12 April. Together with numerous other organisers they hosted nearly 100 creators from Slovenia, the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean.

Since the cultural and creative industries all over the world employ almost 30 million people, the main topic at the forum was the role of the creative industries in modern society. Slovenia also considers this a great opportunity for the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean, which are among the priority regions in Slovenia's foreign policy interests.

The aim of the conference was to promote the flow of information, exchange of best practices, cooperation, emergence of new ideas and search for sustainable solutions, as well as to form a new polycentric network of cultural and creative industries that could serve as a model for regional cooperation, job creation and economic growth stimulation.

The conference also hosted a political forum called *"Creativity as a tool for regional cooperation"*. The host was the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Karl Erjavec, while Tibor Navracsics, the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, was the representative of the European Commission. The high-level forum was also attended by Igor Crnadak, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jorge Borrego, the Acting Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, Etjen Xhafaj,

the deputy minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, as well as the other prominent guests.

Minister Erjavec's address highlighted the importance of young people. He presented the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI), established in Piran, as Slovenia's most important contribution to youth issues in the region.

In its efforts to create a stable, democratic and economically successful neighbourhood, Slovenia would like to transfer best practices and play a connecting role in the areas of the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean. Jorge Borrego, the Acting Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, expressed his recognition for Slovenia's strengthening of the partnership between the Northern and Southern Mediterranean, as well as for the promotion of regional cooperation and dialogue. "Regional challenges require regional solutions. The value and importance of creative activities should thus be recognised", said Borrego, and pointed out that creativity contributes to stability and peace in the world. In the opinion of Tibor Navracsics, the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, there are still many unexploited opportunities in the Western Balkans and Southern Mediterranean, also in the areas of the culture and creative industries. In formulating its strategies for the development

of creative industries, the EU supports a “bottom up” approach, i.e. one that derives from the local communities. Among the EU programmes that promote creativity, education and mobility, the Commissioner Navracsics highlighted the Erasmus programme and the Creative Europe programme.

The creators presented a large number of their activities and emphasised the great importance of connecting and/or networking them, as seen with the links between the Creative Egypt and Creative Palestine networks. Also presented was a newly established creative network called Arteria, which is

based in Ljubljana and brings together creators from the Western Balkans. Through creative activities in the area the Arteria network wishes to offer people opportunities for a higher quality of life and thus stop the flow of emigration from the countries of the Western Balkans. Discussions at the event drew attention to the fact that the creative sector is one of the fastest-growing in the global economy. This is why the creators expect a better understanding of their work at all levels, i.e. from local and governmental to the level of international organisations. Here it is necessary to take into account the “bottom up” principle, as the creators do not want any imposed models.



Slovenian Foreign Minister Karl Erjavec hosted the European Commissioner Tibor Navracsics and other prominent guests at the forum.



Also presented at the event was the creative network Arteria.

SEVENTH EDITION OF AFRICA DAY

In partnership with Chatham House

DOMEN GRGIČ

PHOTO: MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARCHIVES



Africa Day is an international conference, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, within the framework of the Bled Strategic Form and in collaboration with national and international stakeholders. The conference has been held every year since 2012, and is intended to celebrate the establishment of the Organization of African Unity/African Union. The first day of the 2018 conference is organised in partnership with Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs based in the United Kingdom.



Slovenia will host the Seventh edition of the Africa Day conference between 14 and 16 May 2018. The conference will be opened by the highest representatives of Slovenia, the European Commission and African Union Commission.

Slovenia's annual high-level Africa event is hosted under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor and is intended to improve policy outcomes for citizens in Europe and Africa as a result of a deeper understanding and strengthened cooperation between the two regions.

The focus of the first day of this conference will be on African and European cooperation on governance, identified at the 5th AU-EU summit as one of the four strategic areas of the EU-Africa partnership. Expert policy discussions will examine, among other issues, the relationship between capable and accountable institutions and sustainable growth; civic participation and gender inclusion; youth perspectives on good governance; local and community governance; global governance and standard setting; and African and European synergies and cooperation on these issues.

AIMS

The conference aims towards improving policy outcomes for citizens in Europe and Africa, as well as to enhance bilateral ties be-

tween Slovenia and African countries, with particular emphasis on strengthening economic and cultural cooperation.

African countries are rapidly adopting new approaches and innovative technologies, transforming their economies, upgrading infrastructure, enhancing environmentally sustainable industrial production and striving for better digital connectivity. These emerging trends open up significant opportunities for cooperation, which will be discussed and further explored during the event.

Slovenia can offer many answers and solutions to the specific needs of the African partners in many fields.

In this context, the second day of the conference will focus on growing economic and investment opportunities in Africa, which will be presented by African delegations, as well as on cooperation with the relevant Slovenian companies through B2B meetings.

Representatives of the political, business, academic and cultural life from African and European countries, as well as members of the diplomatic corps and international organizations are invited to take part in the conference, which will also be open to the wider public.

The conference will be complemented by a cultural and academic programme highlighting the rich heritage and contemporary culture of Africa.

VINO EURO 2018 SLOVENIA

Slovenia hosting the European Football Championship of Winemakers

POLONA PREŠEREN

PHOTO: ZVEZA VINARJEV VINSKA REPREZENTANCA SLOVENIJE ARCHIVES



At the end of May 2018, Slovenia will host the 5th Football Championship of Winemakers. This is a special international event combining sports and *la dolce vita* – amateur football and winemakers – in the best possible way.

The international amateur football event will take place from 29 May to 2 June in various towns around Slovenia – in Goriška Brda, Maribor and Beltinci and Murska Sobota, where the knock-out stages will be held. Matches will be played on a normal football pitch with partially adjusted football rules.

Apart from Slovenia, the tournament will feature the national teams of Austria, Italy, Hungary, Germany, Switzerland and two additional national teams – Portugal and Czech Republic. At the last European Championship in Mainz, Germany, in 2016, Slovenia won first place, thus becoming European champions for the third time.

CHAMPIONSHIP ACCOMPANIED BY A BIG EUROPEAN WINE FESTIVAL

An exclusive international wine festival will be organised as part of Vino Euro 2018, where visitors will have a chance to try excellent wines from all the participating countries while watching the knock-out matches. The festival will take place on 2 June, on the day of the final match, in front of the Fazanerija Stadium in Murska Sobota.

- 200+ players from eight countries
- 100–150 renowned wine cellars and winemakers
- 80+ world-renowned foreign winemakers
- 300+ wines from eight countries

The organisers want to use the European Football Championship of Winemakers 2018 as a platform for elevating wine culture in Slovenia, and present themselves as an attractive tourist destination and excellent organiser.

As the host of the tournament Slovenia would like to present itself to the international public as a sports, wine, tourist and commercially interesting country, as well as show its experience as an outstanding event organiser. Moreover, the organisers want to set the rules of the game and guidelines for financing and organisation of the European Football Championship of Winemakers, which would take place under the unified brand Vino Euro, as well as establish a European association or committee for championships of winemakers. The championship will be divided into two parts: Vino Euro 2018 – the athletic part – and Vino Euro Festival – the festival part with wine tasting.

SLOVENIA WILL PLAY AGAINST RUNNERS-UP GERMANY, HUNGARY AND SWITZERLAND

Last year's 20th anniversary of the Slovenian Wine Festival, held at Hotel Union in Ljubljana, included a group draw ceremony attended by the representatives of national teams participating in the championship. The draw divided the teams into two groups: group A (Italy, Austria, Czech Republic and Portugal) with matches played in Goriška Brda, and group B (Slovenia, Germany, Hungary and Switzerland) with matches played in Maribor.

The Slovenian winemakers' team will play against strong opponents, one of them being the current runners-up and the only team that managed to take the European title from Slovenia at four official championships – Germany. Hungary is also a strong young team that played excellent football at the last European championship, whereas Switzerland is considered the outsider of the group.

The competitive part will take place in the Slovenian wine districts of Goriška Brda and Maribor, while the knock-out stages will be held in Pomurje, where semi-final matches will be played at the stadium in Beltinci, which will also host matches for 5th and 7th places. The match for 3rd place and the final will be played

at Fazanerija Stadium on 2 June, and will be accompanied by a unique European wine festival.

Sebastjan Rojs, coach of the Slovenian winemakers' team, said: "Slovenia, Germany and Hungary are three strongest teams in the championship, and they will play against each other in one group. One of the favourites will have to leave the tournament after the group stage. This means that we will have to train even harder to finish at least second in the group and advance to the semi-finals. The Czech Republic and Portugal are newcomers to the tournament, and it is interesting that the draw placed them both in group A."

The Slovenian team will try to be the first to win the European title on home ground, and this aim is captured in the championship's slogan: *IN VIVO VICTORIA (In wine there is victory)*.



Sports is connecting people.

MANY FAMOUS FOOTBALL PLAYERS ON THE NATIONAL TEAM

The Slovenian national team of winemakers includes some famous football players who played in the Slovenian First Football League, and others who are no strangers to the pitch.

- Tim Lo Duca, a retired football player from the Slovenian First Football League, now running a family winery Ducal in Svečina.
- Janez Aljančič, a former player of Domžale, Maribor, Triglav and Olimpija, who played 199 league matches in the Slovenian First Football League and scored five goals. He was also a member of the Slovenian national team, and is currently running a successful family restaurant Pr' Bizjak in Preddvor in the Gorenjska region.
- Boštjan Žnuderl, a former member of NK Maribor, where he played in the Champions League. After that, he spent most

- of his football career in Austria.
- Matej Vračko, a former member of NK Maribor, who is today running the home winery Vina Vračko in Jurij in the municipality of Zgornja Kungota, near Maribor.
- Gregor Goričan, a former youth player for NK Maribor, who continued his football career in the lower Austrian leagues. He is a representative of the Vina Leber Vračko winery from Svečina.

The ambassadors of the championship are Matjaž Kek, coach of the Croatian team Rijeka, who is also one of the godfathers of the descendant of the old grapevine at the Jezeršek estate, and Ivo Daneu, a legend of Yugoslav basketball and supporter of the Slovenian wine-makers' football team.



The Slovenian team will try to be the first to win the European title on home ground.

NEW CHALLENGES FOR SLOVENIAN HOCKEY PLAYERS

Ice hockey phenomenon

POLONA PREŠEREN

Arriving at the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang as a real outsider, Slovenia's national hockey team faced new challenges at the end of April.



Slovenian hockey players are phenomenal on a global scale. The reason why their achievements are so outstanding is very simple. In 2017 there were only five arenas and 134 professional ice hockey players registered in the country, and Slovenia has just two semi-professional clubs that play in the international Alps Hockey League.

Ever since hockey was introduced to Slovenia, the main rivals have been the two biggest clubs, namely Olimpija from Ljubljana and Jesenice.

Despite the -cold arenas, it usually gets heated in the stands and on the ice at their games. Though this year Jesenice has so far won more often, victories and defeats have been traditionally more or less evenly distributed between the two. The title of the national champion has also been exchanged between Olimpija and Jesenice, and the loyal fans enthusiastically cheer their respective teams on.

Hockey players from Slovenia used to make up most of the members in the national team of former Yugoslavia. When Slovenia became independent it started its slow yet unequivocal ascent to the group of elite teams.

As the achievements of the Slovenian national hockey team are really exceptional, foreign producers are even contemplating making a film about its success story.

Having played against fierce competitors at the qualifying tournament in Minsk in September 2016, the team's fighting spirit

earned them a ticket to PyeongChang. These were the team's first Winter Games, but further proof that history repeats itself. At the 2014 Winter Olympics, held in Sochi, the Slovenian team was ranked seventh.

In PyeongChang they – surprisingly – beat even the US team and won a game with the Slovak players, but, regrettably, lost against Norway, thus failing to qualify for the quarter-finals.

At the end of April the Slovenian hockey players faced a new challenge in Budapest: the Ice Hockey World Championship, Division I Group A. The team's goal was to qualify for the elite division. In recent years the Slovenian team has alternated between the elite group and Division I, and last year it did not make the former. The goal was therefore for Slovenia to play again in the elite division. Our national team is led by the Finnish hockey expert Kari Savolainen, who is assisted by the legendary Niko Zupančič, from Slovenia.

As ice hockey is one of the strongest team sports in Slovenia, the team remains highly motivated, and invigorated by some new young players. For many newcomers this was their first chance to play for the national team.

Savolainen thus travelled to Budapest with a younger team and an entirely different story than the Olympic one in February. "I said to the players that this competition was an entirely new story. Korea is history and we must make a fresh start. We are again at the beginning, we have some new players, we miss some players, but it is the same for other teams," commented Kari Savolainen ahead of the Championship.



Jan Urbas is the captain of the Slovenia national team at the Ice Hockey World Championship in Budapest.
Photo: Drago Cvetanovič/HZS Archives

