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REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 11, 2015, VOLUME 11, NUMBER 28

## Prime Minister Dr. Cerar and Slovenian Business Delegation Visit the U.S.



PM Dr. Cerar and the government delegation visiting EMC in Boston.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Miro Cerar, accompanied by the Minister of Public Administration, Boris Koprivnikar, and a Slovenian business delegation, visited the U.S. between December 1 and 5. The visit of the delegation was supported by the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia and SPIRIT Slovenia public agency and included representatives of 21 companies, business associations and faculties from Slovenia. The

purpose of the Prime Minister's working visit to the U.S. was to present Slovenia as a prospective development opportunity for merging the innovative use of digital technologies and services at all levels of operation: citizens, government and society, and to promote Slovenia as a reference country and an active stakeholder in digital transformation fueled by ICT in Europe.

On his first visit to the U.S. the PM and the delegation traveled to New York, Boston,

San Francisco and Seattle, where they visited the headquarters of crucial information and communication technology companies in the US, i.e. EMC, Oracle, Cisco and Microsoft. At the beginning of his trip, he first met with representatives of IBM at their Watson Center in New York. On behalf of the government, Minister Koprivnikar signed a memorandum of cooperation with IBM, with which both parties seek long-term cooperation to connect

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Investment breakfast at the New York Athletic Club.

Reception for the Slovenian community in New York.

the business sector, government bodies, academia, researchers and start-ups into an intelligent and effective ecosystem that will drive the growth and competitiveness of the Slovenian economy. After the meeting with IBM's representatives, the Slovenian PM and the delegation attended the reception hosted by Ambassador Dr. Cerar in the Hall of the Slovenian St. Cyril's Church in East Village where they met with members of Slovenian community in New York.

to meet with members of the European-American Chamber of Commerce. He was received by the chamber's Executive Director, Yvonne Bendinger-Rothschild, and its President, James Rosener, before taking part in an investment breakfast. While the business members of the delegation continued presenting their companies in New York, the government officials left for Boston to meet officials of data storage and information security company EMC.

by the delegation, visited IT companies Cisco and Oracle. The business representatives had made a stop at electric cars maker Tesla a day earlier. The Slovenian government and Oracle signed a memorandum of understanding during the visit to the headquarters of the company with which both sides committed to close cooperation in the digitalization of the Slovenian public administration and of public procurement in health. The Slovenian prime minister was received by Oracle CEO Mark Hurd, who presented the benefits of the proposed cooperation.

The next day, Wednesday, the Prime Minister presented Slovenia's advantages for U.S. investors as he made a stop at the New York Athletic Club

Continuing his U.S. trip in San Francisco on Thursday, December 3, PM Dr. Miro Cerar and Minister Koprivnikar,

accompanied At Cisco, the delegation



Meeting with IBM's representatives in New York.

Discussion at the Stanford University.



Signing Memorandum of Understanding at Oracle.



Meeting with Microsoft CEO Nadella.

was welcomed by the head of the department for smart and connected communities, Anil Menon, while Cisco executive director for SE Europe, Peter Hajdu, presented Cerar with a letter of intent. The digital transformation of the society and economy also topped the agenda as the delegation made a stop at Stanford University arranged by Jure Leskovec, Slovenian professor at the university. The dean of the Ljubljana Computing Faculty, Nikolaj Zimic, handed the leadership of Stanford a letter of intent for closer cooperation between the two schools. PM Dr. Cerar and his delegation

wrapped up day one of his visit to the West Coast by attending a reception for Slovenians in San Francisco, jointly hosted by Slovenian Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar and Honorary Consul Thomas J. Brandi.

On Friday, December 4, Prime Minister Dr. Cerar concluded a four-day tour of the U.S. The last stop of the visit was Seattle, where Public Administration Minister, Boris Koprivikar, signed a memorandum of understanding with Microsoft. The document focuses on the development of an ecosystem that would connect the government, public institutions, businesses, start-

ups, universities and investors. During his visit to Microsoft headquarters, Prime Minister Cerar told Microsoft CEO, Satya Nadella, that Slovenia wants to become a green reference country in digital Europe by taking advantage of its geostrategic location, size, highly educated and creative work force and safe and reliable environment to boost its economic edge. While in Seattle, PM Cerar also met with representatives of University of Washington and with Affiliate Professor of Slavic Languages & Literatures, Michael Biggins, translator of many Slovenian books translated into English.



PM Dr. Cerar's address at the reception in San Francisco.



The event in California was attended by over 120 guests.

# President Pahor Meets with Vice President Biden at the Regional Summit



U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden speaks with Slovenian President Borut Pahor in Zagreb, Croatia, on November 25, 2015.



The Brdo-Brijuni summit gathering heads of state from countries in the area of the former Yugoslavia and Albania.

Leaders from southeastern Europe gathered in Zagreb, Croatia, on Wednesday, November 25 as part of the Brdo-Brijuni Process. The informal regional club was established in 2010 to promote Euro Atlantic integration. However, managing the massive flow of refugees has recently proved a major political challenge for all participating countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania. Hence, the regional cooperation summit focused on security in face of refugee crisis as leaders debated mounting international security challenges.

The meeting was hosted by the presidents of the two countries behind the initiative: Slovenia's Borut Pahor and Croatia's Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. The significance of the meeting has been affirmed by the attendance of high level representatives of both the E.U. and the U.S. Besides heads of states of the above-mentioned

countries, European Council President Donald Tusk and U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden took part in the meeting. Austrian President Heinz Fischer was also an honorary guest at the event.

In the light of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris, Ankara, Beirut and Bamako, the leaders of the Brdo Brijuni process urged a joint fight against the causes of extremism and terrorism and agreed to hold regular dialogue at the operational level among the U.S., the E.U. and Southeast Europe, which is vital to combat global security threats. The meeting provided a new impetus in efforts to deal with the crisis and reaffirm the commitment of all countries to EU integration, a key driving force of reforms in the region.

The leaders also urged strengthening stability, security and prosperity in Southeast Europe. In their statement, leaders of the Brdo-Brijuni process urged further strengthening of the Euro-Atlantic partnership between the U.S. and

the European Union and boosting the E.U. enlargement process and NATO integration process. This was supported in particular by the U.S. Vice-President, Joe Biden, and the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk. Biden also warned that the region still has many pending problems, but that enormous progress has been made in recent years. He commended almost all the countries that were at war a few years ago and which can now cooperate for the common good. Before the summit, Slovenian President Borut Pahor met U.S. Vice-President Biden to discuss bilateral relations and European security issues. The Vice-President thanked Pahor for co-hosting the Brdo-Brijuni summit and for remaining deeply engaged in supporting reform and Euro-Atlantic integration processes in the Western Balkans. The two leaders also discussed European security challenges and the situation in Iraq and Syria.

# Writer Jani Virk at the Guadalajara Book Fair in Mexico



Between November 28 and December 6, Guadalajara hosted the largest book fair in South America: Feria Internacional del Libro de Guadalajara (FIL). After the Frankfurt Book Fair, the annual Guadalajara book fair is the second-largest in the world. Representative of Slovenia at this year's – the 29th – edition of the festival was writer, poet, translator and editor, Jani Virk.

In Guadalajara, Jani Virk took part in several events and programs. On Monday, November 30, he participated in the Festival of European literature (Festival de las Letras Europeas), where he spoke of European literature together with German writer Gregor Sander and French author Frederic

Boyer. Among other engagements, he lectured at the Guadalajara University and presented his latest book translated into Spanish: What the River Swept Away, What Was Carried Away by Smoke (Lo que se llevó el río, lo que se llevó el humo), published by Editorial Arlequín de Guadalajara in November. The author also had a literary event in Mexico City on December 5. The program was organized by the European Union Delegation in Mexico and took place on the premises of Biblioteca Vasconcelos.

Virk (1962) completed his studies in comparative literature and German at the University of Ljubljana. The writer, poet, and translator from German language

was the chief editor of the literary journal, *Literatura*, cultural and later chief editor of the daily newspaper *Slovenec*, and is now the editor of the cultural program at the national broadcasting company RTV Slovenia. In 1999, he won the Prešeren Foundation Award for his collection of short stories *A View of Tycho Brache*.

Jani Virk's literary tour in Mexico was made possible with the support of Beletrina Publishing House, the Slovenian Book Agency, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Slovenia in Guadalajara, Mr. Alejandro Diaz, the Arlequin Publishing House, Escritores Casa Guadalajara, and the Slovenian Embassy in Washington.



# Išt Huzjan Presents the Work of the OHO group at the Metropolitan Museum in New York



The book by Ištvan Huzjan "OHO and the Korean Avant-Gard Association."

Slovenian visual artist Ištvan Išt Huzjan took part at the FIELD MEETING Take 3: Thinking Performance event on Friday, October 30. At the meeting, he presented an art performance titled From here to here and introduced to the audience his research project titled "OHO and the Korean Avant-Garde Association". The event was held at the Metropolitan Museum in New York as part of the Asia Contemporary Art Week (ACAW).

With his project "OHO and the Korean Avant-Gard Association", Huzjan compares artwork of two artistic movements from different parts of the world, one Korean and one Slovenian. The project, materialized also in a book, questions the randomness of the similarity of artistic ideas between Slovenian and Asian art of the late sixties. Though these groups have never been in touch with one another, they

have more in common that one might expect. During his presentation at ACAW, Huzjan comprehensively presented the Slovenian art in the historical context and placed OHO Group visions among the global artistic tendencies of the 20th century. The program was streamed live on the web and was followed by a discussion.

A two-day forum brought together FIELD MEETING performances by 35 artists, curators and directors of cultural institutions in the U.S. and Asia. These, together with Huzjan, presented their latest art projects and through lectures /performances, offered an insight into their respective creative processes and shared their views on contemporary art trends. In addition to the main event, Asia Contemporary Art Week offered a large number of collateral events that took place during the week of October 28 to November 8, among them

exhibition openings at the partner galleries, discussions in the context of PERFORMA hub and social events aimed at networking.

In addition to presentations at ACAW, the artwork of the Slovenian art collective OHO is included in an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. A retrospective exhibition titled Transmissions focuses on the parallels between the South American and Eastern European art in the period from 1960 to 1980. Drawn from The Museum of Modern Art's collection, Transmissions brings together landmark works by Eastern European artists including Geta Brătescu, Tomislav Gotovac, Ion Grigorescu, Sanja Iveković, Dóra Maurer, and the anti-art collectives Gorgona, OHO, Aktual, and Fluxus East, as well as Latin American artists such as Beatriz González, Antonio Dias, Lea Lublin, and Ana Mendieta.

# The Museum of Christianity in Slovenia



**What better way to learn about Slovenia's history, art and heritage than by visiting various museums spread throughout the country? When making a list of things to do in Slovenia, do not forget about interesting galleries and museum collections. We will do our best to introduce as many as possible in our newsletter.**

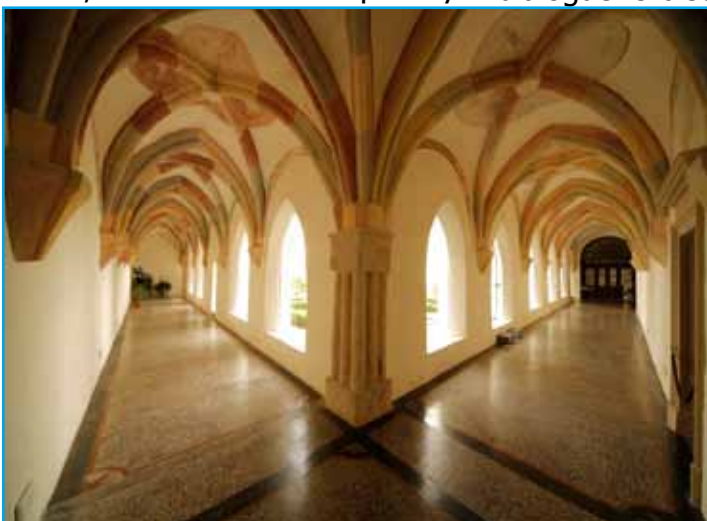
The Museum of Christianity in Slovenia is a state museum and the main Slovene museal institution for collecting, studying and exhibiting movable sacral cultural heritage. The museum, whose beginnings date to the 1980s, is located in the old prelacy

at the Stična Cistercian abbey, 22 mi. southeast of Ljubljana.

The museum explores over 1,700 years of sacral tradition in Slovenian territory. Over the centuries, Christianity has created an exceptional material and spiritual legacy that is given new dimensions by museal activities. On the one hand, the museum presents various collections of movable sacral cultural heritage of the Church, whereas on the other, it offers a historical overview of the social currents in which Christianity played an important role. The museum pays special attention to youth education, since the current intercultural dialogue is also dialogue among

different religions. This is a dialogue, which is increasingly present in today's world and which will play a decisive role in the future of humanity.

The permanent exhibition entitled "Life behind Monastic Walls" is located on the first floor of the museum. The exhibition presents the rich history of the Stična Abbey, the oldest operating monastery in Slovenia. Throughout its 900 years of history, the abbey has left a significant religious, economic and cultural mark on present-day Slovenia. Visitors can see monastic workshops, the memorial room of the herbalist Father Simon Ašič (1906–1992)



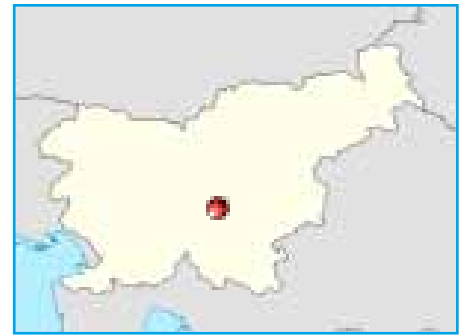
and the painter Father Gabrijel Humek (1907–1993), the twentieth-century-art-history collection, the Leopold Kozlevčar cultural history collection, the collection of devotional articles, the room of saints, the collection of ecclesiastic vestments, a reconstruction of the Stična scriptorium, the collection of liturgical vessels etc.

The permanent exhibition entitled "History of Christianity in Slovenia", which is located on the second floor of the museum, is the first exhibition of its kind in Slovenia. It is chronologically organized in twelve exhibition rooms, displaying over 200 objects. It acquaints visitors with the beginnings of Christianity in Slovenia in the third century and takes them on a 1700-year journey through history that ends in the jubilee year 2000. The exhibited objects, reconstructions, and copies serve to present Christianity in the late Roman Period, the early Middle Ages, when Slavs settled in the territory of Slovenia, the High and Late Middle Ages, when the pre-parishes, as well as the contemplative, knightly, and mendicant orders played an important role. The presentation continues with the periods of the Reformation and

Protestantism, the time of the Counter-Reformation during the 17th century, through to the 18th century period of the reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, and the 19th century, which is marked by the Spring of Nations and the activity of Bishop Anton Martin Slomšek. The exhibition is concluded with an overview of the 20th century with a particular emphasis on the first visit of Pope John Paul II to the independent Republic of Slovenia.

The ground floor of the museum houses occasional exhibitions, video projections and increasingly popular creative workshops for young and old, which seek to introduce the origin and significance of the famous 12th century Stična manuscripts. Visitors can thus try their hand at calligraphy and painting of Romanesque book initials.

The museum houses the archive of the missionary and Bishop Friderik Irenej Baraga (1797–1868), who worked among the Ojibwa and Ottawa Indians in the Great Lakes region of North America in the second half of the 19th century. A collection of original book editions, objects and correspondence of the missionary and bishop, and a collection of Slovene emigrant literature from



Muzej krščanstva na Slovenskem  
Stična 17  
1295 Ivančna Gorica, Slovenia  
Website: [www.mks-sticna.si/eng/](http://www.mks-sticna.si/eng/)

Scheduled guided tours from  
Tuesday to Saturday: at 8:30 a.m.,  
10 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.,  
on Sundays: at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

the USA, Canada, Argentina and Australia have been collected and arranged by the Salesian priest Karel Ceglar (1912–1999), who lived in Canada after the Second World War.

Within the guided tours, the visitors can also see the ancient monastery Stična, with one of the most beautiful Gothic cloisters in Slovenia, and the baroque Basilica of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Since 2006, the Museum of Christianity in Slovenia has had the status of a state museum and its activity is financed by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia.





# Welcome to New Consul General - Andrej Gregor Rode

At the end of October, Mr. Andrej Gregor Rode assumed his position as a Consul General at the Consulate General of the Republic of Slovenia in Cleveland, OH, with consular jurisdiction over the states of Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Mr. Rode succeeded Consul General Jure Žmauc, who finished his tenure in July.

Consul General Rode holds a law degree in International Law from the University of Buenos Aires School of Law. He has worked at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for more than 15 years. Previously

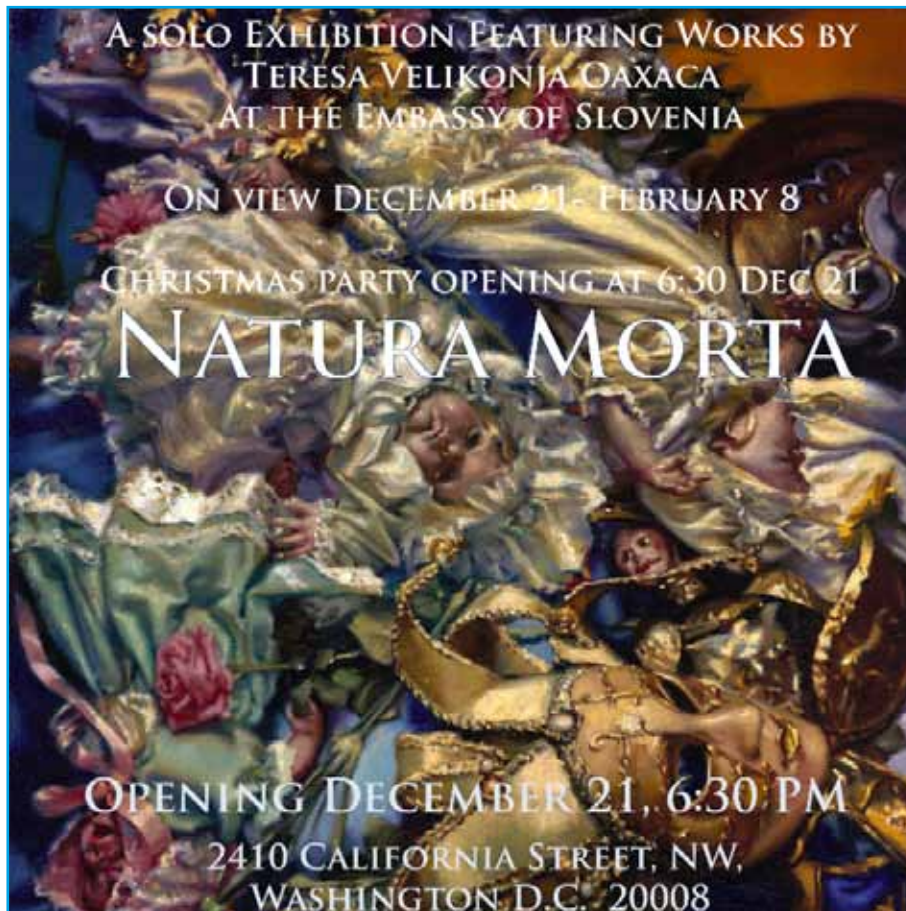
his position was the Deputy National Coordinator for the Organization for economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). He served for four years as the First Counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Slovenia to the European Union, as Counsellor at the Embassy of Slovenia in Paris and at the embassy of Slovenia in Canberra, Australia. He also worked at the Foreign Minister Peterle's Office in year 2000 and with Minister Rupel in 2005.

Mr. Rode has been appointed for four years. We wish him and his family all the best and lots of success in discharging his duties as the Consul General in Cleveland.



Consul General Andrej Gregor Rode.

You can reach him at new e-mail address at: [sloconsulate.cleveland@gov.si](mailto:sloconsulate.cleveland@gov.si).



## UPCOMING EVENTS - WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **NATURA MORTA: A CHRISTMAS STILL-LIFE EXHIBIT WITH THE ARTWORK OF TERESA VELIKONJA OAXACA**

Teresa Velikonja Oaxaca, an award winning artist, was born in the United States. Her parents are of Slovenian and Mexican heritage. She has lived and traveled in many places throughout her life, and art has always been a part of it. These days she spends her time between the United States and Europe collecting inspiration, working on her oil painting, teaching master-classes all over the world and taking portrait commissions. Her work exhibits regularly both nationally and abroad, and her portrait sitters consist of an eclectic mix of individuals including notoriously hard to capture young children, ambassadors, Smithsonian museum Curators, and rock stars. When not traveling, she keeps a busy studio in Washington, DC.

The show features a range of mediums and sizes including large scale oil painting to small finely crafted drawings and etchings. The work will be focused on the representation of classical still life as the title suggests; "Natura Morta" is Italian for Still Life, and indeed many languages use the term Dead Life, rather than still to convey the time honored genre. Figures do make appearances in this show however they are often as not mere effigies of the human. There are masks of all expression, painted faces on models, skulls, dolls and German Nutcrackers, paintings of children's blocks from another age depicted Aesopian Fables with stern warnings. Through the stern reminders of vanity and mortality the nature and life spring forth in the abundance of rich colors and fabrics, abundant heads of hair and above all the flowers. If one was to count the number of flowers in the show there would be hundreds, possibly thousands. Life is represented in the cycle of demise, renewal and rebirth. Much like the celebration that takes place in the dead of winter in cultures throughout the world.

On her Slovenian side, her mother is Maria Velikonja, her grandparents were Joseph Velikonja and Tilly Rus Velikonja. Maria Velikonja has conducted some genealogy research, and discovered that the Slovenian baroque painter Anton Cebej is an ancestor. The Velikonja family comes from Predmeja, and the Rus family comes from Novo Mesto. Teresa's grandparents immigrated to the United States in 1955. This exhibit includes a large portrait of Teresa's grandfather, Joseph Velikonja, who died earlier this year in Ljubljana.

When: [Show runs December 21-February 8, on view Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.](#)

Where: [Embassy of Slovenia, 2410 California Street, NW, Washington D.C. 20008](#)

For more information call: +1 (202) 386-6610

## UPCOMING EVENTS - NEW YORK

### **CONCERT BY IN NYC SAŠO SANDIČ, JOE BONADIO, KEVIN BENTS**

Slovenian-born singer-songwriter and guitarist, Sašo Sandič, moved to NYC in 2014. After a couple of open mic appearances, Sašo released an unofficial album of demo songs with the help of Oz Noy, Keith Carlock, Mike J. Visceglia, Kevin Bents, Joe Bonadio, James Genus, Jeff Kazee, Danny Lapidus and Ted Spencer. On January 4 he will perform at the Bitter End in West Village (NYC) with Joe Bonadio (Sting) and Kevin Bents (Bozz Scaggs).

When: [Monday, January 4, 2016 at 8 p.m.](#)

Where: [The Bitter End, 147 Bleecker St., 10012 New York, NY](#)

Line-up: Saso Sandic, Joe Bonadio, Kevin Bents

More information: [www.bitterend.com](http://www.bitterend.com), T: (212) 673-7030

[www.sasosandic.com](http://www.sasosandic.com)

<https://sasosandic.bandcamp.com>

[www.facebook.com/sashosmusic](http://www.facebook.com/sashosmusic)

<https://sasosandic.bandcamp.com/album/alley-raven>

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