

Slovene Theatre Group Performs in Mexico

page 3 >

Marko Hatlak's Concerts in May

page 4 & 5 >

David Vertačnik's Exhibition Opening

page 6 >



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

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Business Delegation of Amcham to Colorado

For the second consecutive year, the Embassy of Slovenia in Washington, DC, joined forces with the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia (AmCham Slovenia) and the Public Agency Spirit Slovenia to organize a visit of a group of Slovenian companies to the United States, this time to the state of Colorado. The delegation was composed of the following companies: Law firm Avbreht & Zajc, Kontekst Consulting, Metrel, Robotina, Tajfun, and Trimo.



An informal get-together hosted by the Honorary Consul of Slovenia in Colorado.

The program of the visit ran from Monday, May 18 to Friday, May 22. It started with an informal get-together hosted by the Honorary Consul of Slovenia in Colorado, Lucky Vidmar, and his wife Aubrey Ardema, and attended also by the Commander of the Colorado National Guard, Major General H. Michael Edwards, as well as by representatives of the Slovenian community in Pueblo, Colorado.

On the second day of the visit, the delegation attended the Denver World Trade Day, an annual international business event with more than 500 attendees from Colorado and internationally. In his address to the attendees, the Ambassador of Slovenia, Dr. Božo Cerar, emphasized the importance of the delegation for deepening the business ties between Slovenia and Colorado.

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Visit at the Colorado State University.

Address by Dr. Ronald M. Segal, Vice President of CSU.

The ambassador also joined the program on Wednesday May 20, when the delegation visited the Colorado State University upon the invitation of Dr. Ronald M. Segal, Vice President of CSU and Enterprise Executive for Energy and the Environment -- a former NASA astronaut of Slovenian descent.

Colorado Springs was the last stop of the delegation. Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance, the local partner, organized a business

lunch, followed by a reception and B2B meetings for Slovenian companies. In the evening, L&B Connectors organized a moderated presentation of all delegation members, followed by an informal gathering at the Pikes Maker's Place.

Overall, the visit to Colorado, a state which had received an award as the fastest growing business environment in the U.S. (source: Business Insider 2014) and one of the most business-friendly environments

for business and innovation. (Source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce 2014) was a success. Similar to last year's visit to Ohio and Pennsylvania, the Mission 2015 was built on some pre-existing links, as Ambassador Dr. Cerar pointed out: "Slovenia and the State of Colorado are connected by a strong friendship, based not only on economic cooperation but also on excellent cooperation between the National Guard and the Slovenian Armed Forces".



Business lunch at Colorado Springs Business Alliance.

Colorado Springs Business Alliance.

Ambassador Dr. Cerar Joins State Department's Experience America Trip to VA

Ambassador Dr. Cerar together with ambassadors of 60 other foreign nations visited Virginia on Thursday, May 28, during the Experience America trip organized by the State Department. The visit was the 17th "Experience America" trip that the Office of the Chief of Protocol has conducted for foreign diplomats and the 13th since the start of the Obama administration. The aim of the program is to give foreign diplomats a deeper understanding of the United States' diversity and, as well, to stimulate foreign trade and investment.

The ambassadors and their spouses, representing nations on five continents, started the day in Richmond at a panel discussion on business in Virginia. Hosted by Maurice Jones, the state's secretary of commerce and trade, and Todd Haymore, the secretary of agriculture and forestry, the panel also featured representatives of business. The Group also visited Governor's Mansion in Richmond for lunch with Governor McAuliffe as well as Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville where they attended a reception jointly with business and community leaders from across the state.



Ambassador Dr. Cerar, Virginia's Governor Terry McAuliffe, and his wife.

Slovenian Theater Group Performs in the FCTAI Theater Festival in Mexico

Between May 25 and 30, the Cosmocomico international festival of alternative theater (Festival Cosmicómico de Teatro Alternativo Internacional FCTAI) took place in Zacatecas, Mexico, featuring different workshops, panel discussions and performances. The festival began with a conference entitled 'Living Theater' in the foyer of Fernando Calderón Theater in Zacatecas, with Rodolfo Obregon of the Rodolfo Usigli Theater Center from Mexico City as the main presenter.

Throughout the week events were held in cultural venues throughout the city such as La

Cáscara, la Ciudadela del Arte, la Casa Dulcería La Esperanza, and Fernando Calderón Theater, where on May 26 the Slovenian show entitled "Ballet of Revolt" by choreographer and dancer Leja Jurišič was presented.

The show which with body language, mockery, mimicry and "satirización" recreates passages of history, political scenes and historical moments to talk about social injustice, was produced by Žiga Predan, of the Društvo Pekinpah from Ljubljana. Scenography was by Petra Veber, who jointly with Leja Jurišič directed the performance.



Accordianist Marko Hatlak Performs in Easton, Annapolis and Washington, DC



Performance at the Kennedy Center.

A few hundred people joined the event at the Kennedy Center.

As part of the European Month of Culture in Washington, DC, the acclaimed Slovenian accordionist Marko Hatlak performed on several occasions between May 7 and May 23. The tour was presented in cooperation of the Embassy of Slovenia with the Kennedy Center, World Artists Experiences organization and the International Club of DC.

Marko Hatlak has been

present on Slovenian and international stages since 2000. He played as a soloist with symphony orchestras in Slovenia and abroad – Moscow Philharmonic, Jena Philharmonic, RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, and others; in chamber music ensembles with various internationally renowned musicians – Stefan Milenković, Vlatko Stefanovski, Stefan Hussong, Miho Maegaito,

Una Palliser, Mate Bekavac, Karmina Šilec, Neil Innes and Tommy Emmanuel; and in tango and ethno ensembles – Marko Hatlak & Funtango, Distango, and Terrafolk. In this period, he recorded several records with a repertoire of tango, contemporary, baroque, classical, and ethno music. He provided music for film and theater as well as performed shows for primary school students. His



In Avalon Theatre in Easton, MD.

The concert in Annapolis was opened by Ambassador Dr. Cerar.



Signing CDs in Annapolis.



At the embassy on May 7.

May trip was the second one in a year – in October 2014, he performed within the scope of the Conversations in Culture Series at the E.U. Delegation in Washington, DC, and in several venues in Knoxville, TN.

In this tour, he performed on May 7 at the embassy of Slovenia in the Tastes of Slovenia event presented in conjunction with IDCD. On Saturday, May 9, he delighted the visitors of the 9th annual E.U. Open House at the Embassy of Slovenia. On May 13, he played for the audience in Avalon Theatre in Easton, MD, and on May 14 in the Maryland

Hall of the Creative Arts in Annapolis, MD. Both concerts were organized in cooperation with Ms. Betty McGinnis of the World Artists Experiences. During each performance, he enlivened the program with amusing stories about the pieces, and spiced up some of them by singing, fascinating the audience with an unforgettable experience.

The highlight of his concert series was the performance on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage on May 23. Over 400 listeners complimented Hatlak's excellent

and enchanting performance with a standing ovation. Hatlak thrilled the audience by using a unique, original interpretation of each individual piece, featuring works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Astor Piazzola, Richard Galliano, Vlatko Stefanovski, as well as Vlado Kreslin, Iztok Mlakar, Slavko Avsenik, and Metallica.

The concert was transmitted live and in online video, and is available at: http://www.kennedy-center.org/explorer/artists/?entity_id=221265&source_type=B



Millennium Stage performance was streamed live online.



Kennedy Center.

Opening of Dimensional Poetics Exhibition by David Vertačnik



Remarks by Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar



More than 100 people joined the opening night.

Within the scope of the European Month of Culture series, the Embassy of Slovenia hosted on Friday, May 22, an art event introducing artwork by American artist of Slovenian ancestry, Mr. David Vertačnik from Kansas.

More than 100 guests joined the exhibition opening and the wine reception that followed. The evening also featured a performance by accordionist Marko Hatlak. Opening remarks were given by Ambassador Dr. Cerar who presented Vertačnik's art as art about humanity and humanity's earthbound ties. In the artist's statement, Vertačnik outlined that his creative work is about primitive symbols that relate to his heritage, as well as the natural world. He has always been attracted to agrarian images -- plants, agricultural tools, the fruitful soil -- using them to describe and symbolize life cycles, such as fertility, growth, depletion and renewal.

David Vertačnik received his M.F.A. from the New York State College of ceramics at Alfred University in Alfred, NY in 1975 and his Bachelor of Science degree from Indiana State University in 1972. David has taught at the University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS since 1979. His art has been viewed in numerous solo, two-person, and group exhibitions in the United States and Slovenia. His work is held in public and private collections, including those belonging to Bethel College (Newton, KS), the Overland Park Convention Center (Overland Park, KS), Emprise Bank (Wichita, KS), and the town of Most na Soči, Slovenia, where three of his sculptures grace its picturesque river walk. Vertačnik employs a wide range of materials in his pieces, such as ceramics, cast bronze, industrial and agricultural objects. Many of his sculptures are designed for outdoor sites, created with

elements that move freely in space.

The exhibition Dimensional Poetics by David Vertačnik will remain on view at the Embassy of Slovenia until June 22.



Ambassador Dr. Cerar with David Vertačnik next to CQ, CQ, CQ artpiece.

"What About Mojca?" Film Screening



The screening took place at the Corner Store Arts.



Remarks by Deputy Chief of Mission Vladimir Kolmanič.

A documentary film "What About Mojca?"/"Kaj pa Mojca?", directed by Urša Menart, was presented as part of the European Month of Culture program in Washington, DC. The screening took place on Thursday, May 28, at the Corner Store Arts, close to the Eastern Market Area in Washington, DC. Present at the screening was cinematographer Mr. Darko Herič, who was in the month of

May artist-in-residence in the Slovenian Ministry of Culture's studio in New York.

The film explores the role of women in Slovenian cinema, analyzing how the status of women in the society is reflected in film classics. Through conversations with film actresses, female theoreticians and artists, and by analyzing the most common phrases, the film attempts to pinpoint a

typical Slovenian film heroine. The screening was cosponsored by RTV Slovenia and Embassy of Slovenia in Washington. The event and the reception that followed was made possible due to the hospitality by Ms. Kris Swanson, the director of Corner Store Arts, and the financial support by Dr. Lea Plut-Pregelj and Mr. Vladimir Pregelj.



Štefka Drolc is one of the protagonists in the documentary.



Darko Herič with Dr. Lea Plut Pregelj and Vladimir Pregelj.

How to Express the Essence through Moving Images



Cinematographer Darko Herič (Portrait ©Pavel Posavec; Bathtub ©Barbara Vekarić) surrounded by the stills from his films *The Dual* (top right, ©Simon Gaberščik), *There Once Was a Land of Hardworking People* (bottom right, ©Darko Herič), *7 sex 7* (bottom far left, ©Darko Herič), *What about Mojca* (center left, ©Darko Herič), *Inhaling* (top far left, ©Darko Herič). Collage by Marta Stemberger.

Darko Herič, the current Slovene artist-in-residence in Brooklyn, is a very talented, promising, and prolific Slovene cinematographer with an M.A. in Cinematography from the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Zagreb, Croatia.

Marta Stemberger: Why did you choose New York?

Darko Herič: I was looking for a city that's the most connected with cinema. I was in Berlin last year at the Berlinale Talents, the Berlin International Film Festival's platform for emerging film creatives from all over the world.

So I decided to go to New York this year. Two of my films will be screened while I'm here: a Croatian film, *Dragi Lastane!* (*Dear Lastan*, 2014), at the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Film

Festival on May 21, in NYC, and a Slovene film, *Kaj pa Mojca?* (*What about Mojca?*, 2014), on May 28, Washington, DC.

The documentary *Dear Lastan!* is about the children's newspaper *Modra Lasta* (*The Blue Swallow*), and the fictional character Lastan to whom children wrote letters with their problems.

MS: How did you get to work on the two Slovene films considered for the screening in Washington, DC: *What about Mojca*, and *Nekoč je bila dežela pridnih* (*There Once Was a Land of Hardworking People*, 2012).

DH: Urša Menart, the director of both, contacted me through the producer of the *Land of Hardworking People*, and we clicked. The idea was to present the interviewed people in typical

Slovene postcard scenes. The whole film was shot on location, and is visually very strong because of that.

MS: The work for the *Land of Hardworking People* was completely different from that for *What about Mojca*.

DH: At the VIBA Film, we found a storage room with old lights, created scenery out of these, and did all the interviews in a hall there. We were filming only actresses, the stars of the Slovene cinema. This was a big challenge for me because female portrait is one of the most difficult themes in photography. I was testing various lenses, different cameras, and different ways of filming. At the end, I made some filters that soften the face and wrinkles. The result was a

certain Marlene-Dietrich look from the 1930s, the technique they used to film the stars. I wanted to honor the Slovene actresses.

MS: How are your films being accepted abroad?

DH: In 2012, my first feature movie, *7 sex 7*, was screened at the International Film Festival WorldFest in Houston, USA, and won the Silver Remy award. It's a Croatian film, directed by Irena Škorić, who also directed *Dear Lastan!*.

MS: Your second feature movie, *Dvojina* (*The Dual*, 2013), by Nejc Gazvoda, was also well

received, with some good reviews in the *Screen Daily* and *The Hollywood Reporter*.

DH: Yes, and my short fiction film *Vdih* (*Inhaling*, 2015), directed by Blaž Završnik, will be screened at the Short Film Corner of the Cannes Film Festival this month. It's about an old recluse who prevents a young man's suicide.

MS: Congratulations! What are your goals for the future?

DH: I would like to work internationally. I would work abroad for a while, and then return to Slovenia. I wouldn't want to leave Slovenia for good. I like the people, I like how

life in Slovenia is still simpler, quieter, cleaner than elsewhere. Here in New York, I noticed all these signs about were one should and shouldn't throw garbage. Perhaps people in NYC don't feel they belong. I think in Slovenia we're more conscious about garbage because we may be more connected to our surroundings.

Visit www.arinnainc.net/en/blog to read the full interview.

Marta Stemberger, MA, is a native Slovene who's been living and translating in New York City since 1992.

TO DO LIST

Enroll in Slovenian online classes 101 or 201 in the Fall 2015

Need to take a language course for your degree? Do you want to have the possibility of learning at your own pace, and in any location you choose? If you want more freedom and flexibility in your courses then try Slovenian Language online! This course has been created to be accessible from any location, and on any device (computer, cell phone, tablet, ipad, etc.). It gives you the opportunity to rewind, and have the entire course in the palm of your hand! Weekly assignments give you the flexibility of choosing when to log in, and when to do your homework.

Classes are offered at Cleveland State University (Department of Modern Languages) under the name SLN 101 or SLN 293, SLN 101 CE and SLN 201 CE. Take the course from home, at school, work, outside, or any other location that allows you internet access! It can be accessed and enrolled into from anywhere in the world. Classes are offered for credit points or continuing education (CE). People from all around the world can enroll in these classes, so enroll quickly.

For more proficient speakers or students who finished the SLN 101 and 102,

we will offer the SLN 201 as well.

Also, there is an advanced class meeting on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. at Holden Center, through CSU.

For more information contact Luka Zibelnik at luka_zibelnik@yahoo.com

FOR A TEGRITY CLASS PRESENTATION OF THIS COURSE GO TO: <https://tegrity/y/1dvhd>

FOR A YOUTUBE EXAMPLE GO TO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCX0Wk6fZ7A&feature=youtu.be>