



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
EMBASSY OF REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
WASHINGTON

# NEWSLETTER

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## Opening of New Consulate in Mexico

**On March 3, Ambassador Dr. Cerar opened in Guadalajara, Mexico, a Consulate of the Republic of Slovenia, headed by the Honorary Consul Alejandro Díaz y Pérez Duarte.**

Honorary Consul Diaz is a career diplomat, who recently retired from the Mexican Foreign Service. Among other posts, he served as the

Ambassador of Mexico to Austria, Slovakia and Slovenia, based in Vienna.

At the beginning of the evening, Ambassador Dr. Cerar, Honorary Consul Diaz and his wife Lydia greeted the guests. Among them were scholars, entrepreneurs, members of the consular corps in Guadalajara, including the President



Ambassador Dr. Božo Cerar and Honorary Consul Alejandro Díaz.

of the Guadalajara Honorary Consuls' Association as well as media representatives and Slovenians living in the federal state of Jalisco.

The official opening ceremony began with the presentation of the national anthems of Slovenia and Mexico and speeches of

Ambassador Dr. Cerar and Honorary Consul Diaz. The reception that followed featured Slovenian wines provided by the representative distributor of Radgonske Gorice Wines in Mexico, Mr. Javier Iñiguez, served along with Mexican food. During the event, pictures and short films on Slovenia were presented to the attendees, who were also offered tourist brochures about the country.

The opening of the second consulate in Mexico will facilitate bilateral relations between Slovenia and Mexico. With help of the



Ambassador Dr. Cerar lectured on the topic: ‘The International Criminal Court: From Nuremberg to Kampala and Beyond’.

Students attending Ambassador’s lecture at the University of Guadalajara.

honorary consuls, Slovenia is paving the way for cooperation with Mexico in various spheres from economy, trade and investment to tourism, offering also a multitude of options for cooperation in culture, higher education and science. The

honorary consuls also provide ample opportunity for maintaining contact and cooperation with Slovenians living in Mexico.

During his visit in Jalisco, Ambassador Dr. Cerar also gave lecture at the University of Guadalajara

on the topic “The International Criminal Court: From Nueremberg to Kampala and Beyond” and met with the university’s rector Itzcóatl Tonatiuh Bravo Padilla.

## CULTURE

# Guitarist Mak Grgić Performs In the Conversations-In-Culture Series

On March 1, Slovenian guitar virtuoso Mak Grgić performed at the Delegation of the European Union in the United States. The concert was

part of the Conversations-in-Culture series and presented to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Slovenian Independence. Following welcoming

remarks by the Delegation’s Spokesperson and Head of Press and Public Diplomacy Section, Mr. James Barbour, and by Ambassador Dr. Bož



Guitarist Mak Grgić and cellist Dorotea Rác.

The event was attended by some 150 guests.



Cerar, Mak Grgić took the audience on an eclectic journey of tunes.

During the concert, titled “Music Cosmopolitanism”, Mak Grgić performed compositions by Slovenian composers Nejc Kuhar and Nina Šenk, cinematic music by Ennio

Morricone and Leonard Bernstein in his own arrangements, early European works as well as those by the great classics of the guitar repertoire. Joining him as a guest artist was the Croatian cellist Dorotea Rácz. The concert was followed by a reception, during which

around 150 guests could also admire an exhibit by one of the leading Slovenian poster designers, Jože Domjan. The exhibition, titled Eye. Thought.Hand. will be on view on the premises of the E.U. Delegation through the end of April.



Mak Grgić performed compositions by Slovenian composers Nejc Kuhar and Nina Šenk and music by Morricone and Bernstein, among other.



The concert was followed by a reception and viewing of an exhibit by Slovenian graphic designer Jože Domjan.

## EDUCATION

# American-Slovenian Education Foundation (ASEF) Gala in San Francisco

As the Slovenian flag proudly adorned Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, on February 28 people flocked to celebrate the

3rd anniversary of the American-Slovenian Education Foundation (ASEF). Thanks to two Slovenian students who wanted to make

available to others what they saw as invaluable experience in the American higher education system, seven graduate students from



The ASEF gala took place in Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Photos by: Krista Chew and Ivo Ravnik.

Slovenia have already profited from ASEF's program. Under the adept direction of Slovenia's Honorary Consul, Tom Brandi, Jure Leskovec and Peter Rožič have amassed a fervent following of like-minded supporters across the United States. Board members include Dr. Božo Cerar, Slovenia's present ambassador to the United States, former Senator from Iowa, Tom Harkin, and former U.S. ambassador to Slovenia, Johnny Young.

The fundraising event on February 28, honored educational pursuits in American-Slovenian relations. At the beginning of the evening, Soprano Suzana Ograjenšek, whose voice graced the first gala, entranced the black-tie audience with

Slovene classical composer Friderik Širca's work. Dr. Denny McShane flawlessly performed an original composition for his spellbound fans. A sumptuous meal, served in a superb 32nd floor setting as the lights of the city flickered below, was enjoyed by all - including St. Francis' beneficent General Manager John Hutar, who also happens to be ASEF's treasurer. Of course, no Slovenian gathering is complete without potica. Jože Antolin's array of variations on the traditional delicacy drew a crowd that included his own children. Dan Zemelman's musical accompaniment enriched the cocktail hour as well as the dinner.

This year's ASEF Lifetime Achievement Award went to

astronaut Dr. Ronald M. Šega, who charmed his listeners with stories of outer space. Seated on the stage next to the interviewer, Honorary Consul Tom Brandi, Dr. Šega told of his first visit to Slovenia's capital, Ljubljana, and his gracious midnight welcome at the airport by the-then President, Milan Kučan. "But who are all these people waiting behind the fence?" asked the astronaut. "They're your relatives." Dr. Šega recounted how he had promised the President to take a photo of Slovenia from his shuttle. After 5-days of being socked in by fog, the trip was extended by one day. On that 6th day, the skies parted to give the perfect view of his family's homeland.



Honorary Consul Tom Brandi and Dr. Ronald M. Šega.



The fundraising event on February 28, honored educational pursuits in American-Slovenian relations.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

# ASEF Fellowship Program 2016

The American-Slovenian Education Foundation (ASEF) fellowship program provides student financial support, allowing fellows to focus on their research. Fellowships build lasting relationships between ASEF and academic institutions. The purpose of the fellowship is to strengthen research and study exchange between Slovenia

and the U.S. with the objective of giving talented Slovenian students the ability to realize their potential to the fullest. The ASEF fellowship provides funding (travel, housing, and living expenses) for a 10 week summer research visit to a U.S. university or research institution in the area of applicant's field of study/expertise.

### Eligibility

Applications are open to full-time Slovenian as well as Slovenian-American students enrolled in a higher education institution. A typical applicant is a senior undergraduate, master's, or junior PhD student.



## Participating institutions

The fellowship provides funding for a 10 week summer research visit to the following research groups:

### Political and social studies:

Harvard University, Dr. Peter Verovšek who works in international political theory. His research examines how socially mediated collective memories serve as resources for political innovation in the aftermath of broad historical ruptures. He is currently starting a new project examining flexible approaches to the implementation of the emerging global transitional justice norm.

### Computer science:

University of Southern California, prof. Jernej Barbič, who is looking for students with interests in numerical methods, computer graphics, fast physics, special effects for film, medical simulation, finite element methods, model reduction and control of nonlinear systems. Stanford University, Prof. Jure Leskovec, who focuses on data science and modeling of human activity traces. Analysis of large social and information networks. Applications of recommender systems, machine learning and data mining to big data problems.

University of California Berkeley, Prof. Dawn Song, who is looking for students focusing on computer security, including security and privacy issues in Web and mobile systems; analysis of and defense against malicious code; using program analysis, algorithms design, and machine learning for security and privacy.

## Computational and molecular biology:

University of California, San Francisco, Prof. Andrej Šali, who works on projects that use large-scale computational models grounded in the laws of physics and evolution to study the structure and function of proteins. Developing methods for: predicting the structures of proteins; determining the structures of macromolecular assemblies; and annotating the functions of proteins using their structures.

University of California, San Francisco, Prof. Matija Peterlin, who works on molecular biology, immunology, virology and genetics to tackle intractable immunodeficiencies, be they the bare lymphocyte syndrome or AIDS. These approaches also find resonance in autoimmunity and cancer.

### Physics:

University of California Berkeley, Prof. Uroš Seljak, who works on theoretical, observational and numerical astrophysics and cosmology, and data mining of large cosmological observations and simulations of dark matter.

### Mechanical Engineering:

Princeton University, Prof. Andrej Košmrlj, who works on projects at the intersection of physics and mechanical engineering. Projects are focused on investigation of mechanical metamaterials, mechanics of structures, nonlinear mechanics and mechanics of biomaterials.

## Applications should include:

- Application form
- Curriculum Vitae with a focus on applicant's research.
- Transcripts of applicant's courses.
- A Research statement (no longer than 2 pages) that should include: Previous research experience: list and describe all of your project/research work for courses, participation at research projects, lab work at your department, your independent research, relevant summer internship experience, and sim.
- A proposal for a project or an idea for your thesis/dissertation that you want to work on during your visit. Describe the project or the idea and argue why you find it interesting. Include list of scientific references related to your field of research.
- Two reference letters. The letters should (among other things) clearly describe your contribution to the research projects you participated in.
- The letters should be written by the supervisors/advisors of past research projects, summer internships, or your diploma/M.Sc. thesis.
- All documents (except reference letters) should be submitted by the candidates in PDF format via the application page.
- Letters of reference should be submitted by the reference-letter writer at the reference application page.

## The deadline for submitting all the documents is March 31, 2016.

If you have questions about the program or the application process, please contact ASEF at [info@asef-fund.org](mailto:info@asef-fund.org). Full announcement is also available at: <http://www.asef-fund.org/fellowship2016.html>

# 35th Summer School of Slovene Language 2016

The Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana invites you to visit Slovenia this summer and take a course in Slovene while enjoying an unforgettable Slovene holiday. Various Slovene language courses are scheduled for the period July 4–29, 2016, at the Faculty of Arts, Aškerčeva 2, Ljubljana.

You can choose between a two-week (40 hours) and four-week (80 hours) morning course, 4 lessons each day for a total of 20 lessons a week. The course takes place Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

If you want your studies to be more intensive, you can decide to attend an optional course, i.e., two additional language classes a day, available on July 5 through 15, 2016, and/or July 19 through 29, 2016; 2 lessons each day for a total of 18 lessons in 2 weeks from Monday to Friday from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

According to your level of knowledge of Slovene, you can select from among the following courses: Beginners' level (Conversation and Phonetics), Intermediate level (Conversation/Slovene Literature and Culture/Grammar), and Advanced level (Conversation/Slovene Literature and Culture/ Preparation for the Exam of Slovene at the intermediate and advanced level). Individual elective courses will be held if at least five students enroll.

At the end of the Summer School, you will receive an official Certificate of Attendance at a Slovene language course at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana.

After successful completion of the course, the participants are

awarded ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credit points: 3 credits for a 60-hour course, 4 credits for an 80-hour course, 6 credits for a 120-hour course.

If you want to obtain an official certificate of Slovene, you can take the Exam of Slovene at the Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced Level, administered by the Examination Center at the Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language, and other institutions in Slovenia (only the Basic Level).

Summer school activities are not limited to language learning; there is also a varied social program, where you can get acquainted with Slovene culture, history and contemporary reality. In workshops, you will learn about cultural practices and customs, meet famous and interesting Slovenes, see a Slovene film or a theatrical production, go to a concert and do some sports.

The activities of the accompanying program are held in the afternoons and in the evenings and are covered by the tuition fee. Parts of the accompanying program are translated into English, which enables beginners to follow those activities as well; other activities are held only in Slovene and are meant as a direct complement of the language courses.

Anyone with an interest in learning Slovene is very welcome. However, participants must be at least 18 years old; younger participants should attend the **Youth Summer School** (more information at: <http://centerslo.si/en/for-children/youth-summer-school/>).

Tuition fees vary from EUR158 to 915 (about \$170 to \$1000) and cover language courses as well as the additional activities

program. The textbook is not included in the price, you will buy it at the course after the results of the placement test are known. The price of the course also does not include the Exam of Slovene.

**You can apply for the course using the application form no later than June 24, 2016** (and July 8 for the course July 18–29, 2016). Upon receiving your application the center will send you the invoice by regular or e-mail. You can find the application form at: <http://centerslo.si/en/courses-for-adults/schools/summer-school/application-35th-summer-school-of-slovene-language-2016/>

Members of Slovene ethnic minorities in other countries and descendants of Slovene expatriates and emigrants can apply for the **scholarship** (2-week morning course). The deadline for applications is May 15, 2016. Candidates who do not have Slovene background, but are actively engaged in Slovene culture or in some other way contribute to the promotion of Slovenia in the world can apply for one of the scholarships of the Jana Zemljarič Miklavčič Scholarship Trust. **The deadline for applications is May 1, 2016.**

More information about the enrollment, payment and cancellation and the prices is available at: <http://centerslo.si/en/courses-for-adults/schools/summer-school/>

In addition, The Center for Slovene as a Second/Foreign Language at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana is this year organizing the ninth Slovene Language Summer School for teenagers. For more information see: <http://centerslo.si/en/for-children/youth-summer-school>

# National Gallery of Slovenia



Façade of the Narodni dom Palace.



Renovated Grand Hall.

*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 National Gallery of Slovenia, founded on September 18, 1918, is the main art museum in Slovenia and houses the country's largest fine-art collection from the late medieval period to and including the twentieth century.

Inauguration of the new permanent collection on January 27, 2016, marked the end of the Gallery's expansion and renovation project that lasted for four decades. Starting in the 1980s, the Gallery has managed to build two new wings and renovate the Narodni dom Palace, its home since 1926. The renovation project, started in 2009, was funded mostly by the E.U., completed in time and under budget, and involved one hundred conservation-restoration specialists. The Gallery has expanded its exhibition halls, which now cover 40,000 sq.ft., and gained modern facilities for its education, conservation-restoration,

and documentation departments.

The Gallery's annual program includes around 4 major and 15 smaller-scale exhibitions. Most are prepared by the house curators, and focus on Slovenian and European art. The emphasis, however, is on the permanent exhibition. The Permanent Collection of Art in Slovenia is arranged more or less chronologically and covers the period between the early 13th century and the end of the 20th century. Out of 3,500 paintings and 1,100 pieces of sculpture that constitute the Gallery's holdings, the Permanent Collection contains 130 statues and 415 paintings by 190 authors.



Franc Kavčič/Caucig, The Judgement of Solomon (1817–1820).



Almanach, Card Players II (3rd quarter, 17th century).





Francesco Robba, The Robba Fountain, 1751.

Artistic output from 1200 to 1600 includes works by the Ptujška Gora Workshop, whose Standing Virgin is one of the best medieval sculptures in Slovenia. The period between 1600 and 1700 is represented by a number of Old Masters from Italy and Flanders, most notably a mysterious itinerant artist Almanach, whose paintings of merry companies are filled with warnings against unrestrained pleasure. The time from 1700 to 1800 includes painters and sculptors from the central and neighboring Slovenian lands, with the period's masterpiece, The Robba Fountain by the Venetian artist, Francesco Robba, placed in the Entrance Hall of the Gallery. The



Zoran Mušič, Self Portrait, 1998.

1800–1820 period is devoted to one artist, Franc Kavčič/Caucig, who was an important Central European painter and professor at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. Marko Pernhart's Lake Cerknica is an outstanding example of the 1820–1870 art, when the growth of local studies and the formation of regional and national identities led to the exploration of natural phenomena. The Summer by Ivana Kobilca is the highlight of the years between 1870 and 1900. The painting is the most popular work with the visitors to the Gallery, and its author is considered one of the most successful Slovenian artists of all time. Early 20th century, from 1900 to 1918, is marked by a shift towards



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a native version of Impressionism, with Ivan Grohar's Larch providing a poignant statement on an artist's role in society. The Permanent Collection concludes with art after 1918 and includes works by Zoran Mušič, whose late Self Portrait references the artist's journey from the horrors of Dachau to the edge of eternity.

Every year, the National Gallery of Slovenia restores dozens of at-risk art pieces, publishes several monographs and exhibition catalogues, organizes hundreds of events and welcomes tens of thousands of visitors, including 20 thousand young, which makes it one of the cornerstones of Slovenian culture and identity. (by Michel Mohor, curator)



Ivan Grohar, Larch, 1904.



Marko Pernhart, Lake Cerknica (1860–1870).



### 19TH CHICAGO EUROPEAN UNION FILM FESTIVAL

From March 4 through 31, the Gene Siskel Film Center welcomes you to the 19th Annual Chicago European Union Film Festival. It's your ticket to experiencing the creativity and vibrant cultures of all twenty-eight E.U. nations from the comfort of your theater seat. Chicago premieres of 62 new features distinguish this largest showcase in North America for cinema from European Union nations, including two Slovenian films: The Tree (Drevo) and Šiška Deluxe.

Screening times:

**The Tree:**

Saturday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m.

Monday, March 7 at 6:00 p.m.

More information: <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/thetree>

**Šiška Deluxe:**

Saturday, March 19 at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 22 at 7:45 p.m.

More information: <http://www.siskelfilmcenter.org/siskadeluxe>

Address: Gene Siskel Film Center of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
164 N. State Street  
Chicago, IL 60601

## TO DO LIST- NEW YORK

### UPCOMING SHOWS BY SAŠO SANDIČ

Slovenian-born singer-songwriter and guitarist, Sašo Sandič, moved to NYC in 2014. Sašo then studied with guitar virtuosos Oz Noy, Mike Stern, Berklee professors Pat Pattison and Tomo Fujita (who taught the likes of John Mayer), and others. 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.

Sašo began playing guitar at the age of 13, inspired by the nostalgic sounds of '60s groups like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. He soon began taking lessons with accomplished jazz musicians from Slovenia, namely Primož Grašič and Samo Salamon. Playing in different local bands, Sašo made a couple of notable appearances with Slovenian's most renowned session musicians, such as the main stage at the Slovenian National Theater and Satchmo Jazz Club as part of the internationally acclaimed Festival Lent.

When: [April 11, 2016 at 6 p.m.](#)

Where: [Rockwood Music Hall, 196 Allen St, New York, NY 10002](#)

Website: [www.rockwoodmusichall.com](http://www.rockwoodmusichall.com)

\*with Oz Noy, Clifford Carter, Joe Bonadio and James Genus

\*Oz Noy - guitarist extraordinaire (Gavin DeGraw, Allman Brothers, Aerosmith)

Clifford Carter (James Taylor, Paul Simon, Art Garfunkel)

Tony Garnier (Bob Dylan)

Jeff Kazee (Roger Waters, Bon Jovi)

James genus (SNL, Herbie Hancock, Daft Punk)

Joe Bonadio (Sting, Pat Martino, Avril Lavigne)

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

<https://sasosandic.bandcamp.com>

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

### EXHIBITION EYE.THUGHT.HAND BY JOŽE DOMJAN AT E.U. DELEGATION

The E.U. Delegation hosts a public viewing of select pieces from Slovenian artist Jože Domjan's exhibit "Eye. Thought. Hand." during an extended lunch period. You will be able to take an up-close look at what The Washington Post called "eye-catching images". Before coming to the E.U. Delegation, Domjan's work was displayed at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia. Read more about his art exhibit on The Washington Post's website: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/at-the-embassy-of-the-republic-of-slovenia-an-exhibit-of-theater-posters-as-high-art/2014/11/06/a777b60e-6373-11e4-ab86-46000e1d0035\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/at-the-embassy-of-the-republic-of-slovenia-an-exhibit-of-theater-posters-as-high-art/2014/11/06/a777b60e-6373-11e4-ab86-46000e1d0035_story.html)

When: Friday, April 1, 2016

Event Time: 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.

Where: The Delegation of the European Union to the United States: 2175 K Street, Washington, D.C. 20037

The exhibit is free but registration is required. More information and RSVP: <http://www.euintheus.org/event/events-calendar/>

### 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-April 1, 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