

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE

25TH BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

Ljubljana, Slovenia
25. 5. – 29. 10. 2017

Museum of Architecture and Design is launching an open call for participation in FARAWAY, SO CLOSE – 25th Biennial of Design. The open call is dedicated to designers, architects, filmmakers, graphic designers, interaction designers, illustrators, writers, animators, photographers, researchers and other interdisciplinary agents who see the biennial as an experimental, collaborative platform for testing, developing and sharing their own approach and expertise within the issues and structure of the new biennial format.

Application deadline: 10 July, 2016

Apply at www.bio.si!

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE - curatorial statement -

If the city continues to be the paradigm within which the evolutionary effects of society are interpreted – as well as its dreams and failures - a new society that has grown up in an interconnected, emancipated and informed urban model, is now beginning to look towards the extra-urban dimension as an innovative planet to inhabit: a neutral gap in history with no codes or roots and without any clear-cut historical connotations.

We have become accustomed to discussing worldwide issues, we have become aware of the ethical importance of global events and changes, yet many places that are close to our own living environments remain ignored, untouched, disregarded. Places that ask to be given a meaning and a context.

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE investigates what is distant, but not yet remote enough to penetrate our memory because it is still waiting for a semantic connotation.

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE turns its attention to what is close, but so close in space and time that it neither catches our attention nor our intention.

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE looks at the commitment to an innovative framework that binds humanity to a new common history starting with local resilience and the traces of a not-yet-distant-past.

FARAWAY, SO CLOSE is based on the possibility of imbuing the disused and the banal with a human dimension.

New frictions emerge from the cohabitation of remote meanings and contemporary habits as we look for new territories to give meaning to, places to re-inhabit, ancient relations to re-enact, basic coexistences to re-imagine. Can this friction between these diverse conditions produce new scenarios for a different present time?

Slovenia will act as a charter for stimulating, discussing and testing this theoretical approach by taking into consideration its geography which comprises 60% forest, 40% cultivated land, 11.000 registered caves, 28.000 km of watercourses and other natural phenomena that are suffering under the harsh spotlight of tourism. Closing mines and the symbols of a faded dream, contemporary urban ruins caused by the economic crisis and now taken over by wilderness, protected areas of extraordinary natural beauty that 100 years ago were sites of horrendous battles and now used as training spots by international extreme athletes.

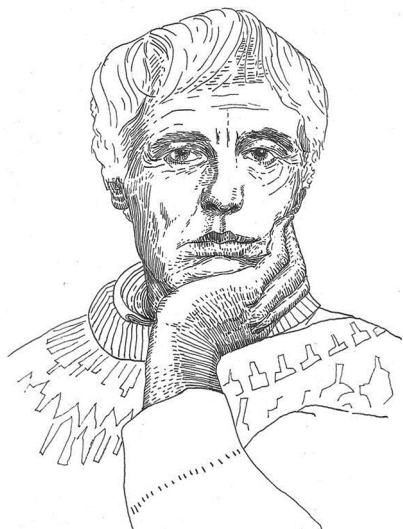
In order to articulate spatial and design practice starting from the existing Slovenian environment, and by using the dislocation of the Biennial as a production platform and a speculative scenography, FARAWAY, SO CLOSE has selected seven Slovenian individuals (Profiles) well known for their unique personal and professional projects outside the field of design. Their originality and their knowledge will be interpreted by seven international creative figures (Translators), chosen for their ability to use design and architecture as tools for investigating contemporary issues.

Each pair will act in a specific location that becomes a setting for a screenplay to be developed. UNDERGROUND RELEASE in the subterranean world of caves, OCCUPYING WOODS in the omnipresent forest, AFTER UTOPIA in a soon to be closed mining landscape, BRAND NEW-COEXISTENCE inside a contemporary urban ruin, COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED in a rural playground, RESILIENCE OF THE PAST in a quiet alpine setting that was once a battleground, NEW HEROES on the looming sea.

By testing disciplines outside their comfort zone, FARAWAY, SO CLOSE will present possible scenarios in the form of seven episodes that will attempt to enquire into global as well as local issues.

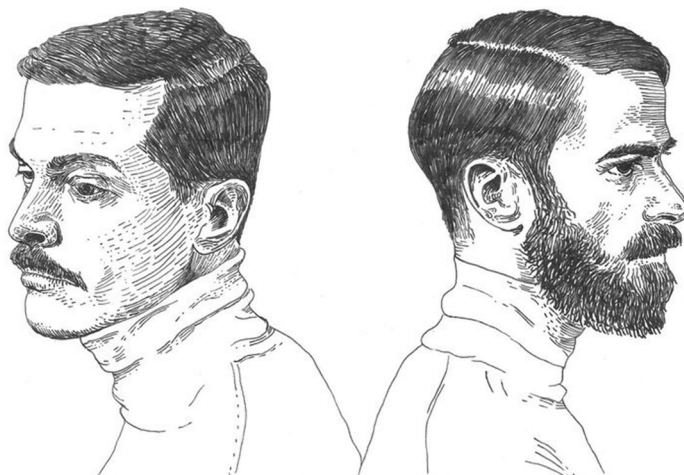
Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan

Episode I
UNDERGROUND RELEASE



ANDREJ DETELA
- Profile -

Andrej Detela is a researcher in theoretical physics, an inventor, philosopher, writer and poet. His main interest lies in the new theory of syntropy, the self-organizing ability of nature that transcends the laws of entropy and gives deeper meaning to our lives. Andrej is active in ecology, and has invented several new types of electric motors that are now finding their way into the next generation of smart electric vehicles. He feels himself close to Eastern philosophies and religions, and has travelled extensively in India and Japan. In his work and his daily life he tries to follow the orphic unity of science, art, and spirituality. He believes that sensitive and mindful dialogue between people and nature greatly benefits our human existence, in both the spiritual and material sense.



STUDIO FORMAFANTASMA
- Translator -

Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin are Studio Formafantasma, an Italian design duo based in Amsterdam. Their interest in product design developed at the Design Academy Eindhoven, where they graduated in 2009. Since then Formafantasma has developed a coherent body of work characterized by experimental investigations into materials, and explores such issues as the relationship between tradition and local culture, critical approaches to sustainability and the impact of objects as cultural conduits. Their work has been presented and published internationally. In 2011 Paola Antonelli of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and esteemed design critic Alice Rawsthorn listed their studio amongst a handful of practices that will shape the future of design.
www.formafantasma.com

Episode II
OCCUPYING WOODS



MATEJ FEGUŠ
- Profile -

Matej Feguš joined manufacturing company Donar as a student in 1999. He eventually bought the company and used a modern entrepreneurial approach to develop it into one of the most successful and internationally acclaimed Slovenian companies. His company designs and produces ergonomically designed office chairs and sound furniture, for which they received several design awards. Feguš says that he is a traveller through life. He is inspired by pushing the boundaries of thinking among adolescents, so he loves to challenge and open minds in "TiPovej", the institute for creative society. For several years he has been volunteering and mentoring in "Pogumni.Kreativni.Podjetni", an initiative designed to encourage boldness and creative thinking among young people, as well as promoting the idea of entrepreneurial spirit as a positive value for an innovative and open society.



MATALI CRASSET
- Translator -

Matali Crasset is an industrial designer, a graduate of the Ateliers – E.N.S.C.I. After her initial work experience with Denis Santachiara and with Philippe Starck, she set up her own studio in Paris, called matali crasset productions. She considers design a form of research, working from an off-centre position that allows her to serve daily routines and trace future scenarios. With both a knowledgeable and naive view of the world, she questions the obviousness of codes so as to help her break these bonds. She currently works on participative projects, on a local and global level, both in rural and urban settings. From her meetings, creative workshops, discussions and common desires, she works with different project leaders who share the same conviction that these collective processes result in plausible social bonding scenarios. www.matalicrasset.com

Episode III
AFTER UTOPIA



IZTOK KOVAČ

- Profile -

In 1993 a choreographer, teacher and dancer Iztok Kovač established the international dance company En-Knap in Leuven, Belgium, under the wings of the Klapstuk Festival; a year later the group moved its headquarters to Ljubljana, where he established EN-KNAP Productions. After 14 years of project-based work, Kovač founded in 2007 the international dance company EnKnapGroup, the first permanent ensemble for contemporary dance in Slovenia, which began working on a repertory basis. Two years later EN-KNAP Productions was entrusted with the management of the Španski Borci Cultural Centre in Ljubljana, where Kovač is the artistic director and programmer of the domestic and international programme. In addition to 32 of his own projects, artistic direction and pedagogical work, his opus also includes six dance films. Kovač has received numerous domestic and international awards for his work.



POINT SUPREME

- Translator -

Point Supreme Architects was founded in Rotterdam in 2008 by Konstantinos Pantazis and Marianna Rentzou and is now based in Athens. After studying in Athens Konstantinos Pantazis did a Master of Excellence in Architecture at The Berlage Institute Rotterdam; Marianna Rentzou did a Master of Architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, followed by further studies at the Design Academy Eindhoven. Their work integrates research, architecture, urbanism, landscape and urban design and includes self-initiated projects for the city. They exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 2012, were named among the 20 most influential personalities in Greece by the biggest Greek daily, and are included in Wallpaper magazine's Architects Directory for 2015. "Athens Projects", a book dedicated to their work, was published in 2015. They are currently building projects in Athens and on the Greek islands. www.pointsupreme.com



Episode IV
BRAND NEW COEXISTENCE



MOJCA KUMRDEJ
- Profile -

Mojca Kumerdej is a Slovene writer, philosopher, journalist and critic. She works as the cultural contributor for Slovenia's largest daily newspaper Delo. Alongside literature she also covers the performing arts, intermedia arts and science. Kumerdej graduated in philosophy and sociology of culture from the University of Ljubljana. Her debut novel "Krst nad Triglavom" (The Baptism Over Mount Triglav, 2001) is a parody and a witty and ironic reworking of one of Slovenia's most historically important works, the epic poem "Krst pri Savici" (The Baptism at the Savica) by France Prešeren. Her next two published books, "Fragma" (2003) and "Temna snov" (2011), are collections of short stories. Her most recent novel "Kronosova žetev" was published in 2016. Her stories have been translated into 13 languages and have been published in various Slovene and foreign literary journals and anthologies.



DIDIER FAUSTINO
- Translator -

Didier Faustino is an architect and artist working on the relationship between body and space. He started his own practice at the crossroads of art and architecture just after graduating in architecture in 1995. Since then he has been developing a multi-faceted approach, ranging from installation to experimentation, from visual art to the creation of multi-sensorial spaces, mobile architecture and buildings. Faustino's work has been honoured with several prizes and shown in collective and solo exhibitions. He is frequently invited to lecture at major universities and institutions as well as international events. Didier Faustino currently divides his time between architecture (Spain, Mexico City, Portugal), art (with exhibitions in Grenoble, London and Rome) and teaching (AA School, Diploma Unit 2). He is also the new editor in chief of the French architecture and design magazine CREE. www.didierfaustino.com

Episode V
COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED



KLEMEN KOŠIR
- Profile -

For Klemen Košir (born in 1974) researching food culture represents one of the islands of humanism today, an island that connects the past with the present and reminds us of the importance of physical labour, of collaboration, and of contact with nature. A journalist and author by profession, he first spent several years writing about food culture for the biggest Slovenian daily Delo, then decided to strike out on his own to work independently. Over the past four years he has authored and published four books on different culinary themes, for which he received four awards, one of them an international award. Currently, he is working on a book about cod fish, weaving a complex story of integration between North and South. In having his book translated Klemen hopes to reach beyond the country's borders and gain both a wider, more international readership and recognition as the unique author and publisher he is.



STUDIO MISCHER'TRAXLER
- Translator -

Katharina Mischer (1982) and Thomas Traxler (1981) founded mischer'traxler studio in Vienna in 2009. Striking a balance between handcraft and technology, they design objects, furniture, production processes, kinetic and interactive installations and more, focusing on experiments and conceptual thinking within a given context. They graduated from the IM-masters department at the Design Academy Eindhoven. Their works have been exhibited in numerous museums and at international festivals and fairs. Projects by mischer'traxler can be found in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Vitra Design Museum and the MAK Vienna. Their projects have won several awards: as a studio mischer'traxler was awarded the "W-hotels designer of the future award" by Design Miami/Basel, "W-hotels" in 2011 and recently they won the "Young talent award" granted by the Be-open foundation. www.mischertraxler.com

Episode VI
RESILIENCE OF THE PAST



RENATA SALECL
- Profile -

Renata Salecl is a Slovene philosopher, sociologist and legal theorist. She is a senior researcher at the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana, and holds a professorship at Birkbeck College, University of London. She has been a visiting professor at London School of Economics, lecturing on the subject of emotions and law. Every year she lectures at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law (New York), on psychoanalysis and law, and has also taught courses on neuroscience and law. Since 2012 she is visiting professor at the Department of Social Science, Heath and Medicine at King's College London. The best known of her many books are "Choice" (2010), "On anxiety" (2004), "Sexuation" (2000) and "(Per)versions of love and hate" (1998) and have been translated into 13 languages. She also writes columns for various European newspapers, including Delo (Ljubljana) and La Vanguardia (Barcelona).



STUDIO FOLDER
- Translator -

Folder is a design and research studio founded by Marco Ferrari and Elisa Pasqual in 2012, and based in Milan. It focuses on the visualization of ideas and concepts through a diverse range of work, including editorial design, art direction, exhibition design, brand identities, data visualization, web platforms and curatorial projects. Recent clients include The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, The Serpentine Galleries, La Biennale di Venezia, the Triennale di Milano, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, and the Onassis Cultural Centre. Marco Ferrari served as Creative Director of Domus magazine and is currently a professor at IUAV University of Venice, and at ISIA, Urbino. Elisa Pasqual is a PhD candidate in Design Sciences at IUAV, Venice, where she is also active with school's BA and MA programmes. www.studiofolder.it

Episode VII
NEW HEROES



MARIN MEDAK

- Profile -

Marin Medak began his markedly adventurous life during his university years. Since then he has kayaked solo more than 2500 km in the Adriatic and Mediterranean, and made a 500 km unsupported sea kayaking expedition along the coast of Croatia with Paralympian Gal Jakič. In 2011 Simon Osborne and Marin became the first to successfully paddle the coast of South Korea and in 2012 Marin led a 4-man Slovenian-British ocean rowing expedition across the Atlantic. His latest expedition consisted of a row from Tunisia to Turkey together with the Australian Huw Kingston. Marin is currently completing his degree in electrical engineering.

www.marinmedak.com



ODO FIOROVANTI

- Translator -

Odo Fioravanti studied Industrial Design at the Design Department of the Milan Polytechnic. Since 1998 he has worked as an industrial designer, and been experimenting with graphic and exhibition design, firm resolved to melt different design disciplines into a single continuous matter. He has taught at many design schools and academies and his work has been featured in numerous international exhibitions. In 2010 the Design Museum of the Triennale di Milano featured a solo exhibition of his work entitled "Industrious Design". In 2011 he won the "Compasso d'Oro Prize ADI" with the Frida wooden chair by Pedrali. Since 2006 he has run the Odo Fioravanti Design Studio, developing projects for various companies.

www.fioravanti.eu

ABOUT THE CURATORS



ANGELA RUI

Angela Rui is an Italian editor and curator based in Milan and Rotterdam, working in design theory and criticism. She was design editor for *Abitare* magazine (2011-2013), is currently writing for Italian and international design magazines, and curated the editorial project for *Icon Design* magazine (Mondadori, 2015), where she continues to work as contents consultant. She recently curated the 2015 edition of *Operae*, the independent design festival based in Turin, under the title "HERE/NOW. Under Present Effect".

Rui has a particular fondness for the humanistic aspect of design: with "Meeting Mirabilia" she managed a series of live interviews from the studios of LiveOn4G (Telecom) to discuss the use of poetry, dreams, uncertainty, nature, and desire as new platforms for design (2014). For the Triennale Design Museum she curated the exhibition and catalogue "Ugo la Pietra. Disequilibrating Design" (2014), and for the Milan Design Film Festival (2014) co-wrote the short film "Seven Billions", dedicated to the poetics of Andrea Branzi.

She is passionate about the design counterculture, she taught at the School of Design (Politecnico di Milano) until 2015 and she is training future designers enrolled in the Master of Interior Design program at NABA, Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti in Milan.



MAJA VARDJAN

Maja Vardjan is an architect and curator. Following her time as creative director of the T5 Project Space gallery and the architecture editor of *Ambient* magazine, she now works as curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). She is the author of the publication "Design in Dialogue" and curated the "Silent Revolutions: Contemporary Design in Slovenia" touring exhibition (MAO, 2011-2015). She also curated "Under the Common Roof", an exhibition on modern public buildings drawing from MAO's archive (MAO, 2013) and has served as a contributor and editor of several books and catalogues.

Maja Vardjan deserves much of the credit for the major changes and overall success of Ljubljana's recent iterations of the Biennial of Design. Together with Jan Boelen and Cvetka Požar she co-curated the 24th Biennial of Design, BIO 50. In honour of BIO's 50th anniversary, the team managed to change the focus and path of Europe's oldest design biennial and to influence the traditional thinking behind and perception of the role of international biennials today. Most recently, she curated the exhibition *Saša J. Maechtig: Systems, Structures, Strategies* (MAO, 2015).

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Museum of Architecture and Design is launching an open call for participation in FARAWAY, SO CLOSE – 25th Biennial of Design. The open call is dedicated to designers, architects, filmmakers, graphic designers, interaction designers, illustrators, writers, animators, photographers, researchers and other interdisciplinary agents who see the biennial as an experimental, collaborative platform for testing, developing and sharing their own approach and expertise within the issues and structure of the new biennial format. After choosing an episode and team, the selected participants will actively join their research and design process.

From 25 May to 29 October 2017 in Ljubljana, FARAWAY, SO CLOSE – the 25th Biennial of Design will present the seven local interventions along with the outcomes of each team, gathered in the main exhibition and accompanied by the institutional catalogue.

Application deadline: 10 July, 2016

Apply at www.bio.si!

ABOUT BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

BIO – The Biennial of Design in Ljubljana is an international platform for new approaches in design. BIO was founded back in 1964, making it the first design biennial in Europe. Witnessing the many shifts and changes of the last 50 years, BIO has seen design transition from its birth at the crossroads of industrialization and modernism to a discipline that permeates all layers of life and human endeavour.

Today BIO is structured as a long-term collaborative process, where teams of designers and multidisciplinary agents develop alternatives to established systems. BIO works as a testing ground, where design is employed as a tool to question and improve our daily life, among different and multidisciplinary design approaches that touch systems, production, services, scientific research, humanistic issues, unexpected conditions for the production of our habitat. The diverse array of topics resonates with both local and global demands, with its comprehensive projects aimed at creating resilient structures that develop over time, often beyond the duration of the Biennial.

SAVE THE DATE

Open call deadline
10 July 2016

Selection of participants
July 2016

Kick-off event
12–16 September 2016

Process
Autumn 2016–Spring 2017

Exhibition
Opening: 25th May 2017
Open to the public from 25 May to 29 October 2017

ORGANISATION

The Biennial of Design is organised by MAO, Slovenia's national Museum of Architecture and Design (www.mao.si). MAO preserves and archives works from prominent architects and designers of the 20th and 21st centuries, constituting a rich history of creative ideas, vision and production. MAO organizes and shares this seemingly unlimited source of inspiration and exploration of architecture and design through its many compelling exhibitions, publications and diverse programmes. In this unique environment where past, present and a desire to discover the new come together, MAO, an important European creative hub, serves as a dynamic forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and dialogue for and among a wide range of visitors. MAO is also the founder and coordination entity of the first pan European architectural platform Future Architecture.

www.futurearchitectureplatform.org

MAO Team

Matevž Čelik, director, Biennial of Design
Maja Šuštaršič, head of Biennial of Design
Anja Zorko, head of marketing
Špela Vidmar, project manager
Ana Kuntarič, public relations

FARAWAY SO CLOSE

Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan, Curators
Claudia Mainardi, Assistant Curator
Grupa Ee, Visual Identity, Graphic Design
Goran Medjugorac, illustrations
Delfino Sisto Legnani, Photos

CONTACTS & PRESS

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Press kit and high resolution photos
www.mao.si/For-the-media.aspx

FOLLOW THE JOURNEY AND GET INVOLVED!

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