

# **FARAWAY, SO CLOSE**

## **25<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL OF DESIGN**

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

### **25<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL OF DESIGN (BIO 25) OPENS**

Thursday, 25 May saw the opening of *FARAWAY, SO CLOSE* – the 25<sup>th</sup> Biennial of Design (BIO 25) curated by Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan. This year's BIO 25 showcases an exhibition at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) and installations on seven locations across Slovenia – Rožni studenec near Kočevje, Trbovlje, Mayor's Cave near Grosuplje, Kobarid, Genterovci near Lendava, Monfort in the municipality of Piran, and Ljubljana. For the first time ever, BIO, the world's oldest design biennial, left the safe haven of the museum and ventured into different landscapes.

Together with so-called translators and profiles the participants unleashed their creative efforts in seven groups or episodes: UNDERGROUND RELEASE with Studio Formafantasma and Andrej Detela is set in the subterranean world of the Mayor's Cave near Grosuplje and OCCUPYING WOODS with Matali Crasset and Matej Feguš in Rožni studenec near Kočevje on the edge of the untamed virgin forest; AFTER UTOPIA with studio Point Supreme and Iztok Kovač reacts to the soon-to-be-closed mining infrastructure in Trbovlje; BRAND NEW COEXISTENCE with Didier Fiuza Faustino and Mojca Kumerdej explores the fall of modernism in the urban context of Ljubljana; COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED with Studio Mischer Traxler and Klemen Košir scouts the rural playground of Genterovci out in the Lendava-area landscape; RESILIENCE OF THE PAST with Studio Folder and Renata Salecl explores a tranquil Alpine setting, the brutal, former battlefields of the Kobarid area; and NEW HEROES with Odo Fioravanti and Marino Medak investigates the theme of migrations, employing the proximity of the sea on the Slovenian coast.

International creative figures, who we called translators, were chosen for their ability to employ design and architecture as tools with which to investigate contemporary issues. We paired them with selected Slovenians, so-called profiles, each of them an expert in their respective field, who offered their knowledge and original approach as inspiration with which to articulate the design practices and speculative scenography showcased at the Biennial. The territory of today's Slovenia serves as a paradigm for potential scenarios developed around both local and global issues.

*FARAWAY, SO CLOSE* is therefore an experiment that plays with formats: designers were mobilised to design a tentative original interpretation of local Slovenian dimensions in order to come up with new

questions that extend to the wider context as well. BIO 25 investigates unprecedented ways in which the modern population interprets and activates the alter-urban, with the word “alter” referring both to the notion of the alternative and the concept of coexistence. Theoretical discussion of the alter-urban in the context of BIO 25 was made possible by decentralising the biennial itself and through the observations and reactions of the participants.

More than 73 participants from across the globe joined BIO 25 this year. In the coming months the Biennial, which recruited and involved more than 70 partners and supporters among Slovenian companies, educational institutions, cultural organisations and societies, will offer more than 60 events both at MAO and on the locations of the installations.

“BIO is a transdisciplinary lab, a classroom, and a forum where its own powers are tested. This is why at BIO design will push you out of your comfort zone; it will present you with challenges that need to be answered and with possibilities that can be exploited. You will experience it on trails and trips you never meant to take. You will find it in territories and places you never meant to visit. At BIO, you will bump into design where you least expected it.” **Matevž Čelik, Director, Biennial of Design / Museum of Architecture and Design**

In the lead-up to the official opening ceremony MAO hosted an interview led by **James Taylor Foster**, writer and editor at Archdaily, with Biennial curators **Angela Rui** and **Maja Vardjan** and guests: **Renata Salecl**, **Simon Farresino from the design duo Formafantasma**, and **James Westcott**, expert in the “Anthropocene” and author of Marina Abramović’s biography.

BIO 25 will run until 29 October and will offer guided tours and MINIMAO at MAO children’s workshops paired with a tour of the Mayor’s Cave; four Saturdays have been reserved for guided tours of local installations and the landscapes that inspired each respective episode. Genterovci and the profile of the episode COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED, culinary explorer Klemen Košir, await with Dandelion Trips, with the first taking place already on Sunday, 4 June.

In autumn, BIO 25, with interviews with acknowledged Slovenian and foreign artists/creators joins the festival of the first pan-European architectural platform Future Architecture, and 27 October will see the closing conference of the Biennial. The Biennial catalogue will be available in July. The Associated Projects Programme BIO 25 will offer a range of exhibitions and events aimed at providing a wider view of the issues addressed by the central exhibition of the Biennial, bringing together designers, curators, educational institutions and cultural organisations from Slovenia and beyond.

## **SUNDAYS AT BIO 25**

### **Guided tours and children’s workshops**

**28.5. / 11.6. / 25.6. / 9.7. / 20.8. / 3.9. / 17.9. / 1.10. / 15.10. / 29.10. at 11:00; tour of the Mayor’s Cave at 13:00**

For ten Sundays, the Museum of Architecture and Design will offer guided tours of the exhibition *Faraway, So Close*. Guided tours offer visitors better insight into the work processes of various groups, the observations and thought processes of the authors, curators and other experts and creators of this year’s Biennial. After you’ve seen the exhibition at MAO in the company of your guide you’ll visit the Mayor’s Cave at Grosuplje for the installation by the Underground Release team. **Free bus transport has been organised from the MAO parking lot to the Mayor’s Cave and back.**

The creative MINIMAO workshop is a place of fun, play, creativity, meeting and socialising. It’s a place where children, through dialogue and fun didactic tools, learn about the issues addressed by the exhibition and employ this new knowledge and a wealth of imagination to create their own items.

## GUIDED TOURS OF LOCAL INSTALLATIONS

**1. July** COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED: Genterovci near Lendava

**9. July** UNDERGROUND RELEASE and AFTER UTOPIA: Mayor's Cave at Grosuplje and Trbolje

**7. October** OCCUPYING WOODS: Rožni studenec near Kočevje, edge of the virgin forest and Bunker Škrilj

**21. October** UNDERGROUND RELEASE and NEW HEROES: Lipica Quarry, Monfort in Portorož and Museum of Salt-Making in Sečovelje

**Organised bus transport, applications at [izobrazevanje@mao.si](mailto:izobrazevanje@mao.si).**

## DANDELION TRIPS

**4. 6. / 2. 7. / 6. 8. / 24. 9.**

The workshops offer a half-day culinary experience on the episode location of *Countryside Reloaded* in Genterovci near Lendava. Led by food researcher Klemen Košir and the authors of this project, the workshops include tours of installations, foraging excursions to gather wild plants, and preparation of meals in an empty supermarket specially transformed for this occasion.

Price: EUR 10; with prior application at [izobrazevanje@mao.si](mailto:izobrazevanje@mao.si) only!

Location: Genterovci, Pri Čardi 14, Dobrovnik - Lendava

## DEBATES AT BIO 25

*Faraway, So Close* Talks

**27. 9. 2017**

**BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS – Closing Festival of the Future Architecture Platform**

**20.–30. 9. 2017**

**Closing conference BIO 25**

**24. 10. 2017, 18:00**

**More info at [bio.si](http://bio.si).**

## CONTACT AND MEDIA

Museum of Architecture and Design

Pot na Fužine 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

+386 1 548 42 70

[infobio@mao.si](mailto:infobio@mao.si), [www.bio.si](http://www.bio.si)

Media and interview contact

Ana Kuntarič

[ana.kuntaric@mao.si](mailto:ana.kuntaric@mao.si)

+386 1 548 42 74

More material and high resolution photos

<https://bio.si/sl/za-medije/>

[#farawaysoclose\\_bio25](https://www.instagram.com/farawaysoclose_bio25)

Instagram: **FarawaySoClose\_BIO25**

Twitter: **@bio\_ljubljana**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje](https://www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje)

## FOREWARD

**Matevž Čelik**  
**Director, MAO**

Design has the power to change the way we live, the way we produce and use goods, and the way we inhabit places. BIO is a transdisciplinary lab, a classroom, and a forum where its own powers are tested. This is why at BIO design will push you out of your comfort zone; it will present you with challenges that need to be answered and with possibilities that can be exploited. You will experience it on trails and trips you never meant to take. You will find it in territories and places you never meant to visit. At BIO, you will bump into design wherever you least expect it.

Faraway, So Close, this year's edition of BIO, focuses on Slovenia's main potential: its landscape. Curators Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan have deployed international teams of designers to the woods, the karst underground, mining areas, the plains of the Pannonian Basin, the Slovenian coast, and the Slovenian Alps. The projects designed and presented at BIO seek to identify the potential of places that are only a stone's throw away from the capital, yet are excluded from current discussions on the future. The most interesting part of the biennial and the key content of the exhibition held at the Museum of Architecture and Design is therefore on display in seven venues: Grosuplje, Kočevje, Kobarid, Lendava, Trbovlje, Piran, and Ljubljana.

BIO presents new models and strategies for tourism, for marketing and presenting attractions, for food production, and for the development and growth of possible new activities, all developed by designers through common research and cooperation with local organisations and businesses. More important, however, is the fact that through their fieldwork the designers have managed to mobilize a wider circle of people and organisations to take part in identifying opportunities and implementing changes necessitated by altered demographics, the climate, and economic reality—and this is exactly what reflects the power, ability, and relevance of design for a better common future.

## FARAWAY, SO CLOSE

Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan

Good news: recent trends are showing that more and more people in Europe are leaving cities and settling in rural and other non-urban contexts. What's more, this trend appears to be intensifying. Although the city remains the model within which the evolution of contemporary society is discussed and interpreted, and the absolute number of people living in large urban centres continues to increase, recent data point to a significant shift that is framed as a new phenomenon: informed and emancipated young people who have grown up in an urbanized model are taking their values to other anonymous contexts.

Considering the Slovenian geographical, political, and economic aspects, the BIO25 Biennial is an occasion to test the consequences of this initial paradigm. The country appears to be the perfect foundation for a discussion of the status of this global shift and as a way to test the "faraway" as a *yet undefined* area to explore once again.

*Faraway, So Close* investigates the unprecedented ways with which the contemporary population interprets and activates the alter-urban by considering the "alter-" as linked both to the notion of an alternative and to the concept of coexistence.

New liberating frictions could emerge from the cohabitation of remote meanings and contemporary habits in the search for new territories to which we can give meaning, places that can be re-inhabited, where ancient relationships can be re-enacted, basic coexistences re-imagined. At the collective level, it is a matter of inventing a common world and creating a global space for exchange.

The Anthropocene arrives at the moment when we understand that geology is not distinct from human production. It thus becomes clear that we are producing our future environment. In what kind of conditions do we want to live?

The theoretical appropriation of the *alter-urban* within the context of BIO25 has been made possible by the de-centralization of the biennial itself and also by the observations and responses of the participants. Seven multidisciplinary teams, led by international guest designers in dialogue with seven Slovenian professionals, were asked to explore precise locations as contemporary ruins, countryside, caves, forest, post-industrial sites, the Alps and the Mediterranean Sea as platforms from which to launch a discussion about our broader contemporary social condition.

Each project starts with the formulation of a story, the so-called *episode*, where real context and hyper-fiction intersect. The overall goal is to activate a discourse around these situations, formulating questions and opening up possible scenarios and visions. Thus each location became a discursive space for a theoretical and design-related speculation.

For the designers, working in a precise local context provides an opportunity to discover their identity through an itinerary. Expeditionary projects work as a practice for the re-appropriation not only of landscape, but also of the design field. Through this dialogical signification, the figure of the designer as a contemporary subject is caught between the need for connecting the global and the specific, the need for combining individual identity and opening to the other. And each biennial fights its battle on the ground. BIO25 actually leaves the institution, decentralizing across the whole country, and thus finds a different ground on which to test its efficiency and reach new audiences. The exhibition encapsulates the hardware of the biennial itself, focusing on two different categories to explore – site-specific and museum – both considered by the teams through the design of two binary installations.

If the aim of the on-site installations – which hopefully will endure – was the construction of a specific dialogue with the location, including the respective municipalities, institutions, and inhabitants, the museum represents the state of this specific instant in time and its urgency. It is a place for the construction of a broader narrative that will no doubt be perceived as faraway again as soon as the near future. But today it represents the place that opens possibilities for speculation related to the need to create a global space of exchange.

## ASSOCIATED PROJECTS

The program of parallel events that aims to give a broader view of issues addressed in FARAWAY, SO CLOSE, a core biennial exhibition curated by Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan. Local and international designers, curators, educational institutions and cultural organizations will enhance the biennial with a diverse program of events, exhibitions, conferences, lectures and other projects. The program will feature individual or group presentations, new or established projects, exhibitions and events relating to a wide spectrum of activities in the field of design. The events and their locations will become points of convergence in Ljubljana and the wider Slovenian territory, contributing to the creation of a rich and engaging program for the Biennial. The exhibitions include: *Art for Everyday Life. Modernist Glass Design in Slovenia* at National Museum of Slovenia, *GeoMerce: Turning Plants into Miners* and *The Common\Uncommon Object @ Livein slums* at Kresija Gallery and many more. More at **bio.si**.

## BOOK FARAWAY, SO CLOSE COMING IN JULY

Preorders for the book Faraway, So Close are taken at [info@bio.si](mailto:info@bio.si). Texts were contributed by: Nabil Ahmed, Andrea Branzi, Tony Côme, Brendan Cormier, Domitilla Dardi, Thomas Geisler, Rory Hyde, Alexandra Midal, Dimitrij Mlekuž, Emanuele Quinz, Renata Salecl, Anna-Sophie Springer, James Westcott, Elia Zenghelis and many others.

## 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).

## UNDERGROUND RELEASE

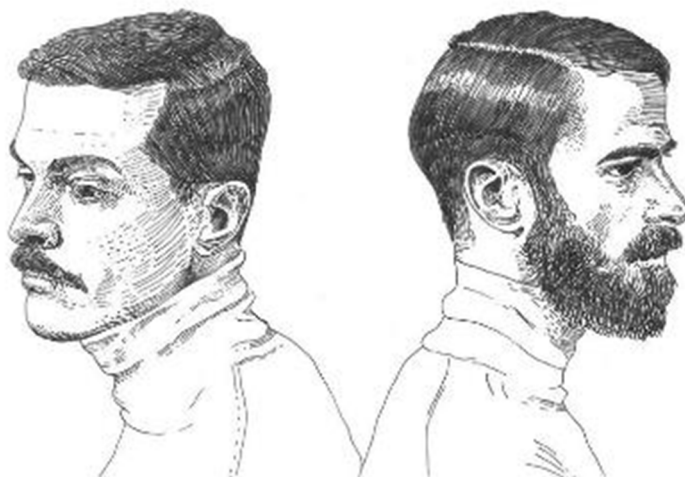
### Grosuplje – Županova jama



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](http://www.formafantasma.com)

Because of the special geological features of Slovenia's Karst terrain, approximately eleven thousand



caves are officially registered in the country. A huge underground network of chambers exists just beneath our footsteps, unchanged since time immemorial, indifferent to the passing seasons, and the mutations of our human environment. This subterranean world has long been perceived as a place of the unknown, causing us to ask what analogous spaces the contemporary environment has sacrificed, and what places remain that speak to the unconsciousness, revealing our deepest relationship to the materiality and immateriality of nature.

From the perspective of design, a natural resource leaves the purely geological realm and enters the human one the moment we encounter it. At that instance, we face a crossroads where the underground world can be "released" from various perspectives. Addressing such a place and the issues it raises, the team of designers identified two scenarios, both of them set in underground Karst spaces: the Lipica quarry which is man-made, and Županova Jama (Major Cave) which is naturally-formed. The central issue of the episode is communication between these two inverted worlds.

## WORKS ON DISPLAY

Underground Release  
light installation, Mayor's Cave  
Dan Adlešič

The installation set in MAO and designed by Studio Formafantasma includes:

Above Ground  
movie  
Formafantasma with Isabella Rinaldi

One, Two, Three, Four  
movie  
Dan Adlešič and Eva Jäger with Isabella Rinaldi and Patrick Lawrie

An Atlas  
Patrick Herron

## ASSOCIATES

Municipality of Grosuplje, The Mayor's Cave, Tourist and Environment Association of Grosuplje, Marmor, Sežana d. d., Company for the Production and Processing of Natural Stone, Karst Research Institute, Geological Survey of Slovenia, The Notranjska Museum Postojna, Society for Cave Biology, Tular Cave Laboratory, The Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region, Ljubljana Tourism

## OCCUPYING WOODS

Kočevje – Rožni studenec



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](http://www.matalicrasset.com)

Forests cover sixty two percent of Slovenian territory and this is expected to increase in the future. Recent economic development programs focus on the protection and innovative use of natural resources. These programs have quickly taken into account the effects of the economic crisis that has

seen the failure of many wood-based industries as well as the increase of abandoned farmland in the more remote parts of the countryside. From an objective perspective, this space is being returned to nature.

This situation has provided an opportunity to speculate about open questions related to the notion of modernity. From a broader and more contemporary perspective, design inherited the mistaken belief that our culture originates from the Industrial Revolution, long interpreted as a historical development that had the power to generate a new society, economy, and language. Everything that happened during the long process of human civilization before the Industrial Revolution is dismissed as a useless footnote to the present and, more importantly, the future.

The *Occupying Wood* episode proposes a possible change in perspective: is it possible to imagine and re-enact today the social norms that formed the model of experimental communities developed at the beginning of the 20th century, and thus escape from the rationalization and standardization of so-called modern life? Are we capable of designing new and vital platforms for further human and social development?

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### ***The Common Stump***

wood stove, Kočevje – Rožni studenec  
Matali Crasset

### ***Edge Effect***

Installation, Kočevje – Mahovnik  
Marcin Liminowicz and Pola Salicka

**The installation set in MAO and designed by Matali Crasset includes:**

### ***Discover Kočevje***

Petra Bukovinski

### ***My Neighbour Tree: Storytelling Beyond Human***

Karolina Ferenc

### ***Digital Wood***

Annika Frye

### ***Make Forest Great Again***

Jurij Lozic

### ***Under the Skin of the Forest***

Martina Obid

### ***Beyond the Wood***

Daniel Riegler

### ***Edge Effect***

Marcin Liminowicz and Pola Salicka

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Kočevje, Kočevje Slovenia Forest Service Kočevje, Slovenian State Forests, Public Agency for Tourism and Culture Kočevje, Gymnasium and Secondary School Kočevje, The Urban Lair, Association for Development of Spatial Culture, Kočevje Regional Museum, Tiled stoves producer Robert Žuman, Kočevje Business Incubator, Slovene Ethnographic Museum, National Museum of Contemporary History

## AFTER UTOPIA

### Trbovlje – Pavillion next to Workers Cultural Centre



#### 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 programr of the domestic and international program. 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](http://www.pointsupreme.com)

Utopia is connected to the idea of a potential perfect society as well as to the invention of collective desire pushed as close as possible to the realm of reality. In the case of the first definition, Yugoslav

visions of utopia entered the domain of the real: the will toward a radically different world made possible the creation of a new state and a new social subject, put into effect by the realization of the socialist society.

At the same time, the process of modernization transformed the constructed environment and society at large. The state, through a blend of utopia and pragmatism, also constructed the common desire of the community. Finally, the concept of self-regulated society led by the working class became the engine of the development of urban and rural territories in Yugoslavia, among them Trbovlje – the town that provides the case study for the team of designers and architects. Nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains, Trbovlje, with its coal mining tradition, was one of the first industrialized regions in Slovenia. The collapse of Yugoslavia and the rise of the ideologies of capitalism and privatization caused the collapse of the industrial model of the factory as a productive platform for wellbeing and social efficiency. Mines closed, leaving behind massive industrial infrastructure, high levels of unemployment, and nostalgia understandably became a social disease. In the absence of any meaningful utopian ideas today, how can design access instances from the past that carry meaning while also avoiding naïve optimism? Instead of imagining an ideal vision for the future, the episode *After Utopia* examines the present and the hidden realities of the post-industrial town of Trbovlje.

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### ***Tiny Museum***

glass pavilion, Trbovlje  
Point Supreme

### ***Just what is it that makes today's Trbovlje so different, so appealing?***

billboard, Trbovlje  
Ground Action

**The installation set in MAO and designed by Point Supreme architects includes:**

### ***Curtain of extraordinary beings***

Point Supreme

### ***in Trbovlje***

video  
Locument

### ***Green grasses, Few Summers After***

Gaja Mežnarič

### ***Curtain Calling***

video  
Museo Wunderkammer

### ***Dancing the Monument***

Museo Wunderkammer

### ***The After Utopia Critical Set***

Salottobuono

### ***Racing Suit by Dr. Bobo***

Soft Baroque

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Trbovlje, Workers Cultural Centre Trbovlje, Punkt, Association for the Development of Creativity and the Creative Industries, Trbovlje Hrastnik Mine, Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, Zasavje Museum of Trbovlje, National Museum of Contemporary History, Slovene Ethnographic Museum

## BRAND NEW COEXISTENCE

Ljubljana — Museum of Architecture and Design



MOJCA KUMERDEJ

- 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 FIUZA FAUSTINO

- Translator -

Didier Fiuza 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 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](http://www.didierfaustino.com)

Since the economic crisis, Slovenia, like most European countries, has been dealing with the presence of abandoned construction sites in urban and rural areas. These sites are trapped in the now well-known

stalemate that doesn't allow for the renegotiation of their meaning or for their use through alternative programs developed by local municipalities or national governments. How can failed political and economic systems transform what has been abandoned into a dimension of liberation from efficiency and specialization?

The starting point of the main discourse of the episode *Brand New Coexistence* is Kiosk K67 that is interpreted as an architectural modern ruin in Ljubljana. Designed in 1966 by the Slovenian architect and designer Saša J. Mächtig, the K67 – easily visible and accessible – inhabited the cityscape and provided different services not only in Ljubljana but also in other cities across Europe. Today, K67 is both a design icon of the 20th century and a derelict and abandoned object scattered throughout these cities. It is a nostalgic reminder of socialism, and a living organism capable of perpetual regeneration through new functions and vernacular mutations. But it has also turned into an obsolete element, reflecting the failure of the precise past for which it was designed.

The act of manipulation turns K67 into a trophy of the past, its purpose shifting from function to memory. The new and more fragile object, which has no purpose or precise function, symbolizes the destruction of the collective interest and its replacement with the individual one. It becomes a distorted icon: namely, a reflection of our distorted modern society.

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### **Exploring Dead Buildings 3.0**

installation, Ljubljana

Didier Fiuza Faustino with Guillaume Viaud © ADAGP Paris, 2017

**The installation set in MAO and designed by Didier Fiuza Faustino includes:**

### **Exploring Dead Buildings 3.0**

video

Didier Fiuza Faustino © ADAGP Paris, 2017

### **The Interpassive Machine**

Polona Dolžan, Miloš Kosec, Julien Manaira, Margarethe Müller, Lilian Pala, Simon Rowe, Nikolaj Salaj

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Ljubljana – Department of Urbanism, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, The Public Company Ljubljanska parkirišča in tržnice d. o. o., The Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region, Ljubljana Tourism



## COUNTRYSIDE RELOADED

Lendava — Genterovci



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](http://www.mischertraxler.com)

The countryside is commonly perceived as a “memento” through which the city remembers and considers its counterpart: nature, the great outdoors where values, traditions, and honest principles once shaped a feeling of life in harmony with the natural environment and its rules. If in the past the countryside was informed by highly ritualized localism and farming arising from a personal relationship with the land, nature, and animals; today it has become a highly mechanized territory where automation, digitalization, and specialization is driven by the increasing demands for efficiency in agriculture and the food industry. These developments are reflected in the extreme control of the domesticated and even consumed landscape, while paradoxically the countryside has ceased being a labour-intensive place. The countryside thus becomes a kind of non-place, an undefined space in which identity and historical meaning are quickly fading away.

Beyond nostalgia and romantic longing for lost traditions, the episode *Countryside Reloaded* refers to the manifestation of a hyper-reality related to a constructed countryside illuminated by the designers' interventions. The surroundings of the Genterovci village in the Lendava region of Slovenia has been temporarily transformed into a land of knowledge, a space of awareness and criticism, where food production, consumption, and information are experienced along a 4km surrealist tour that offers not only walking, but also foraging and eating.

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### ***Humans as Temporary Visitors in the Constructed Countryside***

series of installations, Lendava – Genterovci

mischer'traxler studio, Sara Brown, Lucia Massari, Nina Mrsik, Johanna Schmeer, Giulia Soldati, Jakob Travnik

**The installation set in MAO and designed by mischer'traxler studio includes:**

#### ***Empty House***

Sara Brown

#### ***Dandelion Parade***

Lucia Massari and Nina Mrsik

#### ***Food Fields***

mischer'traxler studio and Giulia Soldati

### ***Highlighting Realities: Constructed Narration of the Countryside***

Jakob Travnik

#### ***Autonomous Agriculture***

Johanna Schmeer

#### ***Abandoned Supermarket***

Giulia Soldati

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Lendava, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Slovenian National Rural Network, MAFF, Genterovci Bilingual Primary School, Pomelaj, Cooperative for Rural Development, The Public Company Ljubljanska parkirišča in tržnice d. o. o., Slovene Ethnographic Museum

## RESILIENCE OF THE PAST

### Kobarid



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 programs. [www.studiofolder.it](http://www.studiofolder.it)



The term resilience originates in the natural sciences and constitutes one of the defining concepts of ecology. Assuming the term as a key role in this episode, the team of designers and architects

investigates the different meanings of the term by researching the events that shaped the landscape and legacy of the Soča Valley during World War I.

The designers examine the unfolding of history, challenging the notion of the past in broader terms and on a more extended timescale. The conjunction point between the notion of resilience and traces of time exists in the *land* itself, which becomes the pivotal stage from which different interpretations about its value can be extracted. How can we represent the complexity of the land's values without oversimplifying them into the mere opposition between exploitation and preservation?

Divided into three chapters, the project represents military strategies, preservation, and geomancy as specific attitudes toward the land. Each of these approaches respond to specific moments in time, and the arbitrary and speculative use of the land is observed through this specific lens.

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### ***Bioacoustics Landscape***

installation, Kobarid  
Studio Folder

**The installation set in MAO was curated and designed by Studio Folder in collaboration with:  
*The Value of the Land***

Merve Bedir, Giulia Cordin, Dawid Górny, Gili Merin, Monuriki, Ana Pečar, Anna Positano  
Design and Production: the team and Gisto

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Kobarid, The Kobarid Museum, Tourist Information Centre Kobarid, Geological Survey of Slovenia, Slovenia Forestry Institute, Stato Maggiore dell'Esercito–Ufficio Storico (Rome, Italy), Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (Wien, Austria), Martina Schiavon, Maître de conférences en Histoire des sciences et des techniques, Université de Lorraine (Nancy, France), Slovene Ethnographic Museum, National Museum of Contemporary History

## NEW HEROES

### Piran – Hall Monfort



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](http://www.marinmedak.com)



ODO FIORAVANTI  
- 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](http://www.fioravanti.eu)

The generic figure of the hero is inextricably linked to his (or her) endeavours. Mostly, these endeavours involve displacements: epic journeys that start from beloved places, along with symbols of identity, honour, and homeland, and convey the hero into unexplored lands, often hostile and desolate, populated by the unknown.

In terms of the global issues that humanity has confronted in recent years, the classic hero might now be seen in the figure of the migrant. But if the traditional protocol of literature requires closing the circle of the journey with the homecoming of the hero, enriched by past conquests and current reunions with loved ones, today the journey has the appearance of a straight line, leading from one point to another, often with no real home left to return to.

Starting with the stark fact that since 2015 the number of migrants reaching EU shores has reached almost two millions, the New Heroes team confronted the complex subject of migration in the current political climate, focusing especially on the European context and the Mediterranean Sea. What could the approach of industrial design, which is based on perpetual economic exchange, possibly contribute to a subject as delicate as this one? The designers wanted to discuss the possibility of their discipline making a real difference in this issue without the active involvement of international politics, and so the project focused on the idea of heroes and the tools that heroes use for survival. If lances and shields, spears and bows defined the heroes of Greek and Latin mythology, what physical objects would future generations inherit as symbolic testament to the bravery of migrants?

## **WORKS ON DISPLAY**

### ***This is a Poor / Rich State***

installation, Piran – Hall Monfort  
Luca Fattore with Odo Fioravanti

**The installation set in MAO and designed by Odo Fioravanti includes:**

### ***Æphaestus***

Odo Fioravanti

### ***untitled***

video  
Bolleria Industrial with Elisa Testori

### ***untitled***

video  
Fabio Petronilli

## **ASSOCIATES**

Municipality of Piran, Coastal Galleries Piran, Sergej Mašera Maritime Museum Piran, National Museum of Contemporary History

## 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 1963, 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.

## ORGANISATION

The Biennial of Design is organised by MAO, Slovenia's national Museum of Architecture and Design ([www.mao.si](http://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 programs. 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](http://www.futurearchitectureplatform.org)

Curators: Angela Rui, Maja Vardjan

Director, Biennial of Design/Director, Museum of Architecture and Design: Matevž Čelik

Head of Biennial of Design: Maja Šuštaršič

Head of Marketing: Anja Zorko

Design Facilitator: Mojca Mihailovič-Škrinjar, Ad-Hoc Business Support

Assistant Curator: Claudia Mainardi

Assistant to the Head of Biennial of Design: Saša Štefe

Exhibition Coordinator: Nikola Pongrac

Public Relations: Ana Kuntarič, Pavlina Japelj

International press and communication support: Bureau N

Associated Projects Coordinator: Špela Vidmar

Educational Activities: Natalija Lapajne

Assistants: Miha Valant, Maja Kovačič, Mojca Mikolič

Technical Realisation: Matjaž Rozina, Tadej Golob

Visual Identity: Grupa Ee

Infographic: Luca Fattore

Design of Introduction Room and Location Signage: Sadar+Vuga, d. o. o.

Illustrations: Goran Medjugorac

Photos: Delfino Sisto Legnani, Marco Cappelletti, archives

## CONTACTS & PRESS

Museum of Architecture and Design  
Pot na Fužine 2, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia  
+386 1 548 42 83 [bio@mao.si](mailto:bio@mao.si), [www.bio.si](http://www.bio.si)

Press information or interview requests  
Ana Kuntarič  
**[ana.kuntaric@mao.si](mailto:ana.kuntaric@mao.si)**  
+386 1 548 42 74  
+ 386 41 606 436

Press kit and high resolution photos: **[bio.si/en/press/>>](http://bio.si/en/press/>>)**

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Facebook: **[www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje](http://www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje)**

+386 (0)1 548 42 79  
**[bio@mao.si](mailto:bio@mao.si)**

Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO)  
Pot na Fužine 2  
Ljubljana  
**[www.mao.si](http://www.mao.si)**

Opening Hours  
Tuesday–Sunday: 10.00–18.00  
Thursday: 10.00–20.00  
Closed: Monday





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