

BIO 50

24th Biennial of Design
Ljubljana, Slovenia
18. 9.—7. 12. 2014

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In 2014, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the **24th Biennial of Design in Ljubljana (BIO)**, Slovenia, builds on the event's tradition and history, advancing into an experimental, collaborative territory where design is employed as a tool to question and transform ideas about industrial production, public and private space, and pre-established systems and networks. The 2014 edition of BIO breaks with the traditional system of awards, choosing instead to award collaboration, its process and outcomes.

Organized by MAO, the Museum of Architecture and Design, **BIO 50** is curated by Belgian critic and curator **Jan Boelen**, director of Z33 - House for Contemporary Art, Head of the Master department Social Design at the Design Academy in Eindhoven (NL), and chairman of the Flemish Committee for Architecture and Design.

Following an international open call that received submissions from 593 applicants from a record number of 56 countries, curator Jan Boelen, co-curators Maja Vardjan and Cvetka Požar, and the mentors of each of the BIO 50 themes have selected the participants for the Biennial of the Design in Ljubljana. More than **100 multidisciplinary participants from 20 countries** will participate in BIO 50, engaging in eleven themes: *Affordable Living, Knowing Food, Public Water Public Space, Walking the City, Hidden Crafts, The Fashion System, Hacking Households, Nanotourism, Engine Blocks, Observing Space* and *Designing Life*. For each team, international and Slovene mentors elaborated a project brief, guiding and overseeing a collaborative process over the course of six months. Team members with their diverse experiences, knowledge and motivation are developing one or more projects to present at the Biennial. The process of teamwork is comprehensively recorded and documented on the BIO 50 website and social media channels.

From 18 September to 7 December 2014 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, BIO 50 will present the outcomes of each team's work in an exhibition, and projects will be published in an accompanying catalogue. An international jury comprising industrial designer Konstantin Grcic, design critic Alice Rawsthorn and designer and professor Saša J. Mächtig will grant an Award for Best Collaboration.

The BIO 50 main show will be accompanied by an exhibition on the Biennial's fifty years of history, shedding light on the transformation and shifts in the discipline of design, our society, and ultimately everyday life. Alongside these visions of the future and reflections on the past, a lively program of events, exhibits and lectures will animate the city of Ljubljana for the duration of the Biennial.

www.bio.si

Instagram: [instagram.com/bio_50](https://www.instagram.com/bio_50)

Twitter: twitter.com/@BIO_50

Facebook: www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje

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THEMES AND MENTORS

1. AFFORDABLE LIVING

In Slovenia, as in many parts of the world, contemporary cities seem to be filled with empty, unused buildings, kept off limits by invisible policies and regulations. Simultaneously, city residents young and old face on-going difficulties when it comes to housing, one of their basic rights. Questioning and exploring the causes and consequences of this trend, this team will develop strategies and tactics aimed at making contemporary affordable living a reality.

Team mentors

Tadej Glažar, architect and professor at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana ProstoRož, the community of architects and designers that investigates, verifies and opens up new possibilities for the use of public space in cities. www.prostoroz.org

Rianne Makkink, architect and designer, co-founder of Studio Makkink & Bey www.studiomakkinkbey.nl

Partners

Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region www.rralur.si

Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana www.fa.uni-lj.si

Sašo Medved, Laboratory for Sustainable Technologies in Buildings, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Ljubljana www.fs.uni-lj.si

2. KNOWING FOOD

What are the new discussions we can have about food? From healthy eating to new scarcities, from harvest to consumption, the food networks of the industrial age are becoming smaller, more local and specific. Tapping into local knowledge of food, resources, production and distribution, this team will strive to create a new consciousness about what lies on and beyond the plate.

Team mentors

Lucas Mullié, foodcurator, co-initiator of Foodconvertors and Tijdrestaurant www.lucasmullie.nl

Digna Kosse, designer, www.digna-k.nl

3. PUBLIC WATER PUBLIC SPACE

From the immediate dissolution of rainwater into any city's sewage system, to the removal and disrepair of drinking fountains in urban centres, water has, in recent years, progressively disappeared from public space. In a country like Slovenia, with an abundant supply of pristine water, can we return this essential component of everyday life to public space? This team will strive to raise awareness of these questions and concerns, and reintegrate local water on the stage of daily public life.

Team mentors

Marko Fatur, civil engineer, expert on water cycle and water systems, working at the Urban Planning Institute of Ljubljana, www.luz.si

Aldo Bakker, product designer, working in his own studio since 1994 www.aldobakker.com

4. WALKING THE CITY

Walking in an urban environment is an essential component of contemporary life. From the mundane – the stroll of the flâneur or a functional shopping walk – to the ritual – a religious procession or a political protest march – the pedestrian has rights and agency, and yet seems to neglect or have forgotten them. Returning to a pedestrian scale, this team will devise new ways of urban action and reclaim public space as a privileged platform for walking.

Team mentors

Marko Peterlin, architect and urban planner, co-founder of Institute for Spatial policies (IPoP) www.ipop.si

Judith Seng, product and process designer, working in her own Berlin studio since 2005 www.judithseng.de

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Partner

Institute for Spatial policies (IPoP) www.ipop.si

5. HIDDEN CRAFTS

Is there new life to be found in the methods, outcomes and distribution of craft? What can designers learn from a country's craft tradition? Tapping into Slovenia's rich craft history, the country's manufacturers will be chosen to collaborate with designers in a discovery process. All participants will contribute with time and engagement, embarking together on a trip that has no pre-defined destination.

Team mentor

Tulga Beyerle, freelance design expert, writer and curator, co-founder and director of Vienna Design Week www.viennadesignweek.at

Partner

Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region www.ruralur.si

6. THE FASHION SYSTEM

From textile production to retail, merchandising and all the stages in-between, the means by which we clothe ourselves are complex and multi-layered. Tradition and technology are part of the fashion industry, while links between designers, producers and consumers introduce new dynamics into the fashion system. Questioning the institution of fashion and its many facets, this team will seek to understand the human position within the machine that clothes us.

Team mentors

Tina Hočevar, architect and designer, initiator of the Paul Malina project
www.paulmalina.wordpress.com

Eugenia Morpurgo, designer, author of the Repair It Yourself (RIY) and footMade projects
www.eumo.it

Evan Frenkel, student at Design Academy Eindhoven, researcher of open and active clothing manufacturing systems. www.efrenkl.blogspot.nl

Partners

Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, University of Ljubljana www.ntf.uni-lj.si

Nataša Peršuh, SQUAT, Ljubljana www.squat.si

7. HACKING HOUSEHOLDS

Traditional household appliances are created as a closed system; when something goes wrong, the most cost-effective solution is to throw out the appliance and replace it with something new. In an age when 3D printing and DIY circuitry make industrial processes accessible to any individual, this team will build upon users' newfound abilities and opportunities to repair, customize, modify and repurpose existing products, creating a family of appliances designed for disassembly, repair, and modification.

Team mentors

Tilen Sepič, designer, photographer and multimedia artist, co-founder of design collective Rompom <http://fablab.popupdom.si/>

Jesse Howard, designer and co-initiator of the OpenStructures project (OS), www.jessehoward.net

Partner

Lidija Pritržnik, Gorenje Design Studio www.gorenjedesignstudio.com

8. NANOTOURISM

After decades of a booming tourism industry with wide impact on territories and economies all over the world, are there smaller-scale, non-intrusive ways of promoting a tourism experience? The Nanotourism team will work in two different constellations: the first group will research possible experiences of tourism, exploring relevant global references as well as regional potentials. This research will be the basis for the second group, which will come to fruition during

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the AA Visiting School Slovenia, a workshop taking place in Vitanje in July 2014. This application is valid for the first group of Nanotourism.

Team mentors

Aljoša Dekleva in Tina Gregorič, architects and founders of studio Dekleva Gregorič arhitekti
www.dekleva-gregoric.com

Partner

Architectural Association (AA), School of Architecture, Visiting school
www.aaschool.ac.uk/STUDY/VISITING/slovenia

9. ENGINE BLOCKS

Vehicles have become increasingly specialized and unique, yet their mechanical essence remains largely the same. Could the future of transportation lie in a sustainable, modular mechanical solution where the main element – an engine – is adaptable in and to a variety of local contexts? Working towards an evolutionary, modular transportation device, this team will aim to create a system of objects with a hacked, interchangeable and easily removable engine.

Team mentors

Gaspard Tiné-Berès and Tristan Kopp, product designers and founders of Re-do Studio
www.re-do-studio.com
Tomos Research and Development team www.tomos.si

Partner

Tomos, d. o. o. www.tomos.si

10. OBSERVING SPACE

Slovenia harbors a budding space scene, epitomized by the recently formed Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies (KSEVT), which promotes research on “space culturalization” and “through its Composite Missions of art and science”. Harnessing the potential of this remarkable convergence, this team will explore new ideas that can be sparked by the presence of the human in outer space.

Team mentors

Miha Turšič, director and co-founder of KSEVT – Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies www.ksevt.eu
Nelly Ben Hayoun, director and experience designer, creator of the International Space Orchestra and other missions www.nellyben.com

Partner

KSEVT – Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies, Vitanje www.ksevt.eu

11. DESIGNING LIFE

In recent years, the intersection of design and science has created and opened doors to new explorations of speculative futures, creating possible scenarios for daily life in coming years. Building upon Slovenia’s bio-art scene and pharmaceutical industry, this team will engage with various sciences and biology to strengthen and develop existing ties and create multiple new experiments.

Team mentors

Jurij Krpan, architect and curator, art director of Kapelica Gallery www.kapelica.org
William Myers, writer and teacher, author of *Biodesign: Nature + Science + Creativity*
www.william-myers.com, www.biology-design.com

Partner

Kapelica Gallery, Gallery for Contemporary Investigative Arts, Ljubljana www.kapelica.org

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CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Since its founding in 1964, the Biennial of Design (BIO) in Ljubljana has surveyed the state of contemporary design from the heart of Central Europe. Witnessing the many shifts and changes the discipline has undergone in the last 50 years, BIO has seen design transition from its birth at the crossroads of industrialization and modernism towards a discipline that permeates all layers of everyday life.

Ultimately, the many steps in this transition have illustrated the fragility of the discipline's initial framework. The contemporary world is no longer a place of and for mass production and distribution; instead, design has migrated through the multi-layered networks of today towards local, specific, customizable scenarios where the designer is no longer an all-powerful creator, but an element in a network of collaboration and influence. Similarly, in a world over-saturated with products and projects, the fundamental goal of design ceases to become the production of yet another chair.

Today, design has become a form of enquiry, of power, and of agency. With it, the role of any event that seeks to represent and disseminate design has also fundamentally changed. On its 50th anniversary, BIO embraces this opportunity to build upon its own tradition and history, advancing into an experimental, collaborative territory where design is employed and implemented as a tool to question and transform ideas about industrial production, public and private space, and pre-established systems and networks.

Engaging designers and multidisciplinary agents from Slovenia and abroad, BIO 50 will create twelve teams to work on a wide and comprehensive range of topics that resonate with local and global demands. Team mentors will elaborate a brief for each category, guiding participants in the creation of one or more projects to be developed and implemented during the Biennial.

BIO 50 will be a complex, transformative effort that seeks to strengthen local and international design networks, search for alternatives to implemented systems where design can play a role, and create bases for resilient structures that can develop through time, beyond the duration of the Biennial.

Jan Boelen / Z33

CURATORIAL TEAM



Jan Boelen graduated as Product Designer at the Media and Design Academy (KHLim) in Genk. He is the founder and artistic director of Z33 House for Contemporary Art in Hasselt, Belgium; head of the Master Department Social Design at the Design Academy Eindhoven; and chairman of the committee for Architecture and Design of the Flemish Community. With the aim to create projects and exhibitions that encourage the visitor to take a different look at everyday objects, Boelen founded Z33 in 2002, creating a unique laboratory and meeting place for experiment and innovation, where one can visit groundbreaking exhibitions featuring contemporary art and design. At Z33, Boelen has created exhibitions with Raf Simons, Studio Makkink & Bey, John Körmeling, Thomas Lommée, Dunne & Raby, Marti Guixé, and Aldo Bakker, among others. Boelen and Z33 also organize projects in public space, and facilitated the 2012 Manifesta 9 in Belgium.



Cvetka Požar, PhD, is an art historian and curator at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). She is the author of the exhibition and book *To the Polling Booths! The Poster as a Political Medium in Slovenia 1945-1999*. She was the co-curator of several exhibitions, most recently of *Iskra: Non-Aligned Design 1946-1990* and *Designing the Republic: Architecture, Design and Photography in Slovenia, 1991-2011*. She has edited several exhibition catalogues and is co-editor of MAO's *AML Contemporary Book* series.

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Maja Vardjan is an architect and curator. Following her period as creative director of the T5 Project Space gallery and as the architecture editor of *Ambient* magazine, she currently works as curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). She is the author of the *Design and Dialogue* publication and curated the *Silent Revolutions: Contemporary Design in Slovenia* exhibition. She has recently co-curated *Under the Common Roof*, an exhibition on modern public buildings drawing from MAO's archive.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND KICK-OFF EVENT

The Biennial of Design launched in December 2013 an **ambitious call for applications** (opened until 12 January 2014). Entering the realm of collaboration, where design is a tool to rethink everyday life, the Biennial was looking for individuals to shape possible futures for design, integrating and contributing to the outcome of each group. BIO was looking for team members with diverse backgrounds and a multidisciplinary approach, students and professionals alike; for team members who are self-motivated and unafraid to experiment; and for team members who can bring their expertise to the table and simultaneously learn from their peers. They should wish to take part in a long-term transformative effort to strengthen local and international design networks, search for alternatives to implemented systems where design can play a role, and create bases for resilient structures that can develop through time, beyond the duration of the Biennial.

Following an international open call that received submissions from **593 applicants from a record number of 56 countries**, curator Jan Boelen, co-curators Maja Vardjan and Cvetka Požar, and the mentors of each of the BIO 50 themes have selected the participants for the Biennial of the Design in Ljubljana. More than **120 multidisciplinary participants from 20 countries** participate in BIO 50.

An introductory event at Ljubljana's Museum of Architecture and Design formally launched the teamwork for BIO 50 on 13 and 14 February 2014. The **BIO 50 kick-off event** was full of enthusiasm about the collaboration during the Biennial. Following lectures on *the Tricks, Tools and Traps of Collaboration* by designer Thomas Lommée and researcher Liesbeth Huybrechts and introduction by curatorial team and mentors, team members started to collaborate, share their ideas, explore new concepts and create bases for specific projects.

JURY

The international BIO 50 jury is comprised of industrial designer **Konstantin Grcic**; design critic and author **Alice Rawsthorn**; and designer and educator **Saša J. Mächtig**. Together, they will grant the newly instituted **Award for Best Collaboration**, which will be announced in the opening week of the Biennial.



Photo: Markus Jans

Konstantin Grcic is an industrial designer and founder of Munich-based Konstantin Grcic Industrial Design (KGID), where he has developed furniture, products and lighting for some of the leading companies in the design field. Many of his products have received international design awards such as the Compasso d'Oro for his Mayday lamp (Flos) in 2001 and the Myto chair (Plank) in 2011. His works are integrated in the permanent collections of the world's most important design museums, such as the MoMA and the Centre Georges Pompidou. Grcic has also curated exhibitions for The Serpentine Gallery, the St. Etienne Design Biennale, and Rome's Istituto Svizzero.



Alice Rawsthorn is an internationally renowned design commentator, whose columns for the International New York Times are syndicated to other media worldwide. Her latest book, *Hello World: Where Design Meets Life*, explores design's influence on our lives: past, present and future. Rawsthorn has spoken on design at important international events including the World Economic Forum in Davos. Based in London,

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she is a trustee of the Whitechapel Gallery and the dance group Michael Clark Company, as well as chair of trustees at Chisenhale Gallery.



Saša J. Mächtig is a luminary of Slovenian industrial design. One of the founders of the Design Department at Ljubljana's Academy of Fine Arts in 1984, he was awarded the title Professor Emeritus by the University of Ljubljana for his contribution to the development of the discipline. In his multiple roles as a professor, designer and architect he headed numerous interdisciplinary groups for the development of new products and systems. Mächtig was also active in the international sphere, particularly in executive boards of professional associations. Amongst his achievements is the organisation of the 17th ICSID world congress in Ljubljana in 1992.

ORGANISATION

The Biennial of Design is organised by MAO, Slovenia's national **Museum of Architecture and Design**. 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 serves as a dynamic forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and dialogue for and among a wide range of visitors.

ABOUT THE BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

The Biennial of Design (BIO) is one of the world's oldest and longest-running international design events. Established in 1963 with the first exhibition in 1964, BIO explores and presents current developments in international design through a critical selection process of projects and proposals. The BIO catalogues that accompany every biennial carry exceptional cultural and historical value, representing a unique overview of design from Slovenia and around the world, as assembled and exhibited at BIO over the past five decades.

PARTNERS

For this year's edition, the Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region and its Regional Creative Economy Centre and company Eles, d.o.o. became main partners of BIO 50, supporting the event's concept, interdisciplinary approach and some of the themes.

The Regional Creative Economy Centre (RCKE), which has established itself within the Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR) in the last year as a practical facilitator between the world of business and the creative industries, has been specifically assigned for providing support and direction to the *Affordable Living* and *Hidden Crafts* groups at BIO 50. The aim of the Centre in line with the BIO programme is to create lasting and more permanent forms of economic ties within the framework of the projects that will raise both economic efficiency of the creative industries and the creative potential of existing Slovenian industries. www.rcke.si

The Regional Development Agency of the Ljubljana Urban Region (RRA LUR) – encourages creativity, knowledge, entrepreneurship and environmental responsibility for the sustainable development of the region of central Slovenia. www.rralur.si

ELES, d.o.o., as the main partner of the Biennial of Design supports its integrative and interdisciplinary approach and many events – photo contest, children's workshops, guided tours and the opening event. ELES is the electricity transmission system operator of the Republic of Slovenia and an important and solid backbone of the Slovenian electricity industry. ELES strategically, responsibly and sustainably plans, builds and maintains the transmission network in

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Slovenia. By managing the entire transmission network in the country, it provides for secure, reliable and continuous electricity transmission. The company is dedicated to maintain the balance between the generated and used electric ity within the transmission network 24/7. As the guardian of the national electricity system, it is closely linked to the transmission networks of the neighbouring countries and integrated into the European energy system. www.eles.si

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