



SLOVENIA

GUEST OF HONOUR 2023
AT FRANKFURTER BUCHMESSE

HONEYCOMB OF WORDS

I. HONEYCOMB OF WORDS	2
II. PRESS CONFERENCE	4
III. HANDOVER CEREMONY	13
IV. AUTHORS	16
V. SLOVENIAN PROFESSIONAL AND LITERARY PROGRAMME AT THE FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR 2022	22
VI. SKICA Berlin	25
VII. TRANSLATION FUNDING AND PROMOTION OF THE SALE OF RIGHTS	27
VIII. BOOK TITLES BY COUNTRY	29
IX. IN SHORT: THE SLOVENE BOOK MARKET	31

I. HONEYCOMB OF WORDS

SLOVENIA IS A SMALL COUNTRY AT THE HEART OF EUROPEAN DIVERSITY.

The country's territory marks the meeting place of three major ecosystems – the Pannonian Plain, the Alps, and the Mediterranean – which makes it one of Europe's most biodiverse countries in terms of the number of plant and animal species per square kilometre. Bees play a vital role in maintaining this special diversity: without their pollinating efforts, our colourful world would turn into but a gloomy moor.

Slovenia also lies at the crossroads of four European linguistic groups: Slovenian belongs to the Slavic language group, and borders the Romance, Germanic, and Finno-Ugric linguistic groups. At this unique European crossroads of languages and cultures, playwrights, poets, writers, journalists, teachers, priests, and all people who write and speak Slovenian in general have, over the centuries, moulded their language into a dynamic communication tool. Relatively few people speak it, but it is a language of love sonnets, crime stories, and hermetic novels, and is likewise used to discuss advanced quantum mechanics and psychoanalysis.

Traditionally, Slovenian intellectuals and writers have been multilingual due to the small number of Slovenian speakers and their location at the crossroads of numerous cultures, and many of them have written their respective works in at least one foreign language. This is where we draw our fascination with the honeycomb of words from: just as bees – in proportion to their size – venture far out into the world to return home with only a drop of nectar and a speck of pollen, so too have various cultural, artistic, and intellectual influences entered the Slovenian language and Slovenian culture through numerous translations and authors who have emigrated to Slovenia from elsewhere. Authors writing in Slovenian have shaped a

multifaceted yet independent, dynamic, and original world by drawing on these influences. The result of this is a culture that reflects European diversity, while at the same time remaining independent and original; it is an independent cell that recognises the fact that it owes its existence and development to the connections it has with the honeycomb of humanity.

Slovenia is the second Slavic country to serve as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair. It is a small literary culture that over the past two decades has produced some internationally influential authors. Upon first glance it is seemingly small and marginal, just as bees look at first glance. But looks can be deceiving: the world is beautiful, expansive, and colourful, particularly owing to its marginal creatures and cultures.

Our hosting programme

Slovenia will present in Frankfurt as a modern, culturally developed, politically dynamic country, and a great tourist destination with a rich literary culture. The latter has a long and important tradition in Slovenia; it is worth noting that the country's euro coins depict two important Slovenian personalities, both closely associated with books: *Primož Trubar*, the author of the first Slovenian book (otherwise a priest), who was active in the 16th century, and *France Prešeren*, a great poet, guardian of the Slovenian language, and a critic of Slovenian provincialism, who was a central Slovenian figure of the 19th century. Due to the political tunnel vision of Austria/Austro-Hungary and Yugoslavia (especially the second, socialist Yugoslavia), throughout a major part of Slovenian history the most talented and insightful Slovenian intellectuals preferred literature and culture to politics. This refuge became less

attractive to ambitious young people only with the economic, social, technological, political, and cultural developments that came with, and culminated in, independence and integration into the EU.

On the one hand Slovenian book production has traditionally been outward-looking, and rather inward-looking on the other. Works by Slovenian authors have rarely been translated into foreign languages, while Slovenian publishing houses have opened their doors wide to translations. The situation has begun to change over the past two decades, and the trend towards translating Slovenian works has gained momentum, particularly in preparation for the Frankfurt Guest of Honour project. Thus, between 2019 and 2022, more than 600 translations of Slovenian works in all languages have been published – some one-fifth of which in German-speaking countries – which is almost three times as many as before the start of activities related to the Frankfurt Book Fair.

We will present Slovenian book production and the country's literary landscape in the frame of four programme clusters.

1. Slovenian literary landscape in the past 30 years. The aim of this cluster is to effectively introduce the main trends in Slovenian book production over the last couple of decades, from fiction to the Ljubljana school of psychoanalysis. This cluster will also include foreign authors who live in Slovenia but do not write in Slovenian, and Slovenian authors who live abroad and/or write in foreign languages. We want to pay special attention to Alma Karlin, who represents a unique bridge between German and Slovenian culture, and who also broke down many prejudices of her time through her work and lifestyle.

2. Slovenian authors globally. A number of panels, round tables, and literary readings will present the most translated Slovenian authors from all literary fields. Thus, it is inevitable that the Slovenian performance in Frankfurt will also encompass reflections on European and global problems, especially the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war. In this respect – in the form of individual presentations or round tables – we expect the participation of noted philosophers such as Slavoj Žižek. Numerous Slovenian fiction writers whose works are available in German will be presented through discussions with their German counterparts. We will pay special attention to the cluster on children's books, which will announce Slovenia's guest hosting in Bologna 2024. We will also hold an exhibition of illustrations by the best Slovenian illustrators today.

3. Small publishing markets in Europe. Through a number of round tables, lectures, and panels we will discuss, together with our publishing colleagues who operate in small book markets, the question of what distinguishes small markets from large ones, and the likely sources of their innovations and breakthroughs. We will discuss how small book cultures can become brands and what steps authors need to take if they wish to become internationally successful, together with what the author and the publisher can do to make this happen. We will also pay special attention to multilingualism and multiculturalism in small markets, and we will be particularly interested in authors who write in several languages. We will also pay special attention to educational publishing.

4. The importance of deep reading in the screen era. This cluster will be the most international one and will include several debates on the positive external effects of reading books in the screen era and on new, innovative approaches to promoting book reading.

Alongside the appearances of the authors, the fair will also feature a number of other events. As a way of national presentation, Slovenia will introduce the book *Slovenia: Its Culture and History*, which will be published in German and English, and will present all the key areas of Slovenian culture, from gastronomy and music to literature and diplomacy. FBF 2023 will also serve as an opportunity to present a historical overview of the finest moments in Slovenian-German relations, which will be displayed in a documentary film.

II. PRESS CONFERENCE

PROGRAMME

- Presentation by Frankfurter Buchmesse representatives
- Speech by the Slovenian Minister of Culture, **Asta Vrečko**
- Screening of the video »Honeycomb of words«
- Speech by the Director of Slovenian Book Agency, **Dimitrij Rupel** and Slovenian curator, **Miha Kovač**
- Short conversation with selected authors **Peter Svetina**, **Ana Marwan**, **Nataša Kramberger**, **Erwin Köstler**, and moderated by **Katja Gasser**

Date: **20 October 2022**

Time: **10:00 AM**

Place: **Frankfurt Pavilion, Agora**



Asta Vrečko

MINISTER OF CULTURE

By becoming the central guest at the largest international book fair in Frankfurt, Slovenia's long-standing efforts will bear fruit. Slovenian books are published in Germany by some of the most respected publishing houses. Such works are translations of some of the best books Slovenian literature and the humanities has to offer, works that not only keep the memory of Slovenians alive, but also, in the broader public dialogue, tell the tale of the fate of the individual, Europe, and global developments. The Frankfurt Book Fair, one of the world's most important events in the field of culture, is an important point of departure to further strengthen the visibility of Slovenian art and culture on the European and the larger global map.

It is a great honour and responsibility to play a role at the heart of fair activities at an event that is much more than a fair alone. It is not only about the promotion of Slovenian authors, Slovenian literature, art, and culture – it is also about visibility and the promotion of our country. Moreover, we will also address the pressing concerns of our contemporary time through literature and satellite events.

Culture defines us, enriches and fascinates us; and it fosters socialisation. We develop our creativity and broaden our horizons through and alongside art, which makes room for us to grow, be more open, and nurture more solidarity. Art often raises issues and questions, makes us reflect and encourages us to think critically, all of which are essential for the overall development of the individual and indeed all of society. I also see this great project as a contribution to our shared future.



Photo: Danijel Novakovič

Dimitrij Rupel

DIRECTOR OF SLOVENIAN BOOK AGENCY

A large part of Slovenian history can well be equated with literary history. Slovenian literature was an instrument of national liberation. The Slovenian Romantic poet France Prešeren (1800–1849) regretted the fact of the day that “in our country, the ladies and gentlemen who give the commands speak German, while their subordinates speak Slovenian.” Relations between Germans and Slovenians were sometimes turbulent and difficult, but by the end of the 20th century it mellowed. Germany made a decisive contribution to the international recognition of an independent Slovenia.

Slovenia’s guest appearance at the Frankfurt Book Fair is an occasion for celebration. Although the Slovenians are guests at the fair, they are also presenting as hosts. Slovenia invites German and other readers to listen to our stories. We would be thrilled if foreigners visited Slovenia in person – to see its natural and cultural attractions, including the beehives described in our motto.

Book texts are comprised of words, which are organised in a system that is comparable to a honeycomb. A poem, a novel, an essay... a honeycomb of words. A honeycomb, with its characteristic hexagonal structure, uniformity, and the message that there is something precious within, represents design, architecture, scientific concepts, and networks. The Worldwide Web is a honeycomb of messages consisting predominately of words.

The Slovenian nation and the Slovenian state are founded on culture and books. The honeycomb of words and the honeycomb of honey are typical Slovenian phenomena and indeed, achievements.



Miha Kovač

SLOVENIAN CURATOR

Located at the windy crossroads of Europe's language groups and cultures, with only two million native speakers, in its best moments Slovenian culture has nurtured authors who were able to produce fiction and non-fiction books that communicated with a range of culturally diverse readers. In the past decade, Slovenian publishers and authors have taken an enormous step forward in generating international interest in their works, particularly with its flagship Slavoj Žižek, who has left a visible mark on the global factory of ideas and concepts. But he is not alone: over the past five years the number of annual translations from Slovene grew six-fold over the period 1946–1991, and three-fold over the period 1991–2011. The Frankfurt 2023 Guest of Honour programme is an excellent opportunity to build on these trends and show that many Slovenian authors can inspire readers around the world with their stories and ideas.

Miha Kovač is a professor of publishing at the University of Ljubljana. Before turning to academia, he worked as a publisher of the two largest Slovenian publishing houses and as editor-in-chief of the Slovenian edition of National Geographic Magazine. His last book in Slovenian, *Read to Breathe*, has been translated into seven languages. His works written in English include *Never Mind the Web: Here Comes the Book* (Chandos Publishing) and *Is This a Book?* co-authored with Angus Philips (Cambridge University Press). With Adriaan van der Weel, he co-edited *Reading in the Post-Textual Era*, a special issue of *First Monday* on the differences between reading in print and on screen.



Photo: Personal Archives

Matthias Göritz

GERMAN CURATOR

Slovenia may be a small country, but its poetry is great. According to Peter Handke, "Slovenians write their history not by means of their war heroes, but by means of their poets." And indeed, few European countries have such a density of literary creation as Slovenia, inhabited by just 2 million people, where some 6,000 books are published annually, 400 of them poetry collections.

Worldrenowned Slovenian poets - from Srečko Kosovel, to Dane Zajc, to Tomaž Šalamun - bear witness to the relevance of the poetic. Poets are not only still said to have great political commitment, it is downright expected of them. Even the singer Patti Smith has chosen a fine little poem by Kosovel as her favorite:

A Small Coat

I would like to walk around
in a small coat of
words.

But hidden underneath should be
a warm, bright world.

What is wealth?
What is luxury?
For me it is this:
a small coat I have,
and this coat is like
no other.

*Translated from the Slovene by
Ana Jelnikar & Barbara Siegel Carlson*



Matthias Göritz is a poet, translator, and novelist. He has published four collections of poetry (*Loops, Pools, Tools and Spools*), four novels, including *Der kurze Traum des Jakob Voss* (2005), *Parker* (2018) and *Die Sprache der Sonne* (C. H. Beck 2023), and three short stories. He teaches at Washington University in St. Louis and has translated, among others, works by John Ashbery, Rae Armantrout, Mary Jo Bang, Max Porter, Boris Pahor, and Ales Šteger. Göritz has received numerous prizes, including the Hamburg Literary Prize, the Mara Cassens Prize, the Robert Gernhardt Prize, the William Gass Prize and, most recently, the international Pretnar Prize, 2022. Göritz's own books have been translated into many languages..

Erwin Köstler

Erwin Köstler was born in 1964 and works as a translator and independent literary researcher. He lives in Vienna and translates all literary genres, both “classical” (including Vladimir Bartol, Ivan Cankar, Slavko Grum, Srečko Kosovel, Prežihov Voranc, Vitomil Zupan) and contemporary Slovenian literature (including Franjo Frančič, Zoran Hočevar, Mojca Kumerdej, Sebastijan Pregelj, Andrej Skubic, Breda Smolnikar), the literature of the Carinthian Slovenians (Jože Blajs, Milka Hartman, Lipej Kolenik), as well as graphic novels (by Zoran Smiljanič, Marijan Pušavec, Jakob Klemenčič, Ivan Smiljanič, Blaž Vurnik). His extensive intermediary work includes lecturing and teaching, as well as journalistic and scientific work in the fields of translation and Slovenian literature. Awards: The Austrian State Prize for Literary Translation (1999), the Lavrin Diploma of the Association of Slovenian Translators (2010), the Fabjan Hafner Prize (2020). His recently published works include: Mojca Kumerdej: *Kronosova žetev*, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2019; Vitomil Zupan: *Menuet za kitaro (Na petindvajset strellov)*, Berlin: Guggolz, 2021; Franjo Frančič: *Ljubiti Abadona*, Klagenfurt: Heyn 2021; works in the making include: Vinko Möderndorfer: *Druga preteklost*, Salzburg, Vienna: Residenca (to be published in 2023, together with Andrej Leben); Drago Jančar: *Ob nastanku sveta* (to be published in 2023).



Photo: Personal Archives

Peter Svetina

Peter Svetina graduated from the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana with a degree in Slovenian Studies and received his Ph.D. in Old Slovene Poetry. After graduating from the same faculty, he was first appointed assistant professor of Slovenian literature, and then, for a short time, the head of the Pioneer Library in Ljubljana. Since 2003, he has been working at the Institute of Slavonic Studies at the University of Klagenfurt (since 2007 as an associate professor).

He has written professional and scientific papers on old Slovenian literature, Slovenian lyrical poetry, and young adult literature. He edited the anthology of old Slovenian young adult literature *Pionirji na promenadi*, and his work *Metuljčki in mehaniki* is particularly focused on understanding Slovenian young adult literature in relation to its social context. He has also co-created textbooks and has translated from other languages (English, Czech, German, and Croatian).

Most notably, he writes for children and youth. His first picture storybook, *O mrožku, ki si ni hotel striči nohtov*, was published in 1999 and was soon followed by a play for puppet theatre. Several of his poems and stories have been translated into foreign languages (English, German, and Korean). He also writes poems for adults. His first collection, *Kavarna v prvem nadstropju*, was published in 2001.



Photo: Saša Kovačič

Ana Marwan

Ana Marwan was born in 1980 in Murska Sobota, and after studying comparative literature at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana she moved to Vienna in 2005, where she began her literary career in 2008, receiving the Schreiben zwischen den Kulturen literary prize. After completing Romance Studies at the University of Vienna and working at various odd jobs, she has focused for the past six years exclusively on writing longer and shorter prose texts in German and Slovenian. Her debut novel *Der Kreis des Weberknechts* was published in 2019 by the Austrian publishing house Otto Müller Verlag. Her second novel, *Zabubljena*, which was created in Slovenian, was published by the Beletrina publishing house in 2021 and received the Kritičko sito award. In recent years, she has published short stories in anthologies and literary magazines. In 2022, she won the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize at the 46th Days of German Language Literature for her short story *Wechselkröte*. She currently lives in a village between Vienna and Bratislava.



Photo: Una Rebič

Nataša Kramberger

Nataša Kramberger is a writer, columnist and organic farmer. She writes essays, reports, and commentary for newspapers and magazines. She won the 2010 European Union Prize for Literature for her debut novel, *Nebesa v robidah*. Her novel *Primerljivi hektarji* was published in 2021 by the publishing house Verrichter Verlag under the title *Verfluchte Misteln* (Cursed Mistletoe). During the summer she lives in Jurovski Dol, Slovenia, and runs – together with an organic art collective – Zelena centrala, a small biodynamic farm. During the winter she lives in Berlin.



Photo: Daniele Croci

Katja Gasser

Literary critic and culture journalist. She was awarded a doctorate for a thesis about Ilse Aichinger and Günter Eich. She has been the head of literary department at ORF-TV since 2008. She was awarded the Austrian State Prize for Literary Criticism in 2019. Currently, she is released from her duties at ORF, because she is the artistic director of Austria's appearance at the Leipzig Book Fair 2023.



III. HANDOVER CEREMONY

Date: **23 October 2022**

Time: **4:00 PM**

Place: **Forum 1, Guest of Honour Pavilion**



Drago Jančar

Writer Drago Jančar is one of the most acclaimed and translated Slovenian authors. He worked as a journalist and as a film screenwriter and an editor in a publishing house. He was involved in setting up the main newsletter of Slovenian socially critical intellectuals, *Nova Revija*, and became one of its editors and key collaborators. Between 1987 and 1991 he advocated, in his role as President of the Slovene PEN Centre for the democratisation of Slovenia and Yugoslavia until the final split with and end to the one-party regime. Novels and short stories represent the core of his writing. He has also written a number of plays that have been performed in numerous Slovenian and European theatres. In the 1990s, he wrote internationally resounding essays on European cultural and political issues. Later, he focused exclusively on prose; this year he published his twelfth novel. His artistic attention focuses on the existential dilemmas of man: a man controlled by the uncontrollable and misunderstood wheels of history on one hand, and by personal stigma on the other. He is sometimes described as being a “seismologist of chaotic history”; however, he writes on the radiating nature of life and the entangled nature of human destinies.

His books have been translated into 33 languages, and he has received many prestigious and international awards, including the Prešeren Lifetime Achievement Award, the Herder Prize for Literature, the French Best Foreign Book Prize, and the Jean Améry Prize for Essays. He has received the Kresnik Prize for the Best Novel of the Year four times, and in 2020 he was awarded the Austrian State Prize for European Literature.

In 2003 he was awarded the Herder Prize for literature.

Jean Améry Preis for Essays, Frankfurt Book Fair 2007.

Hemingway Prize, Lignano, Italy 2009.

Le Prix Européen de Littérature, Strasbourg 2011

Prix du Meilleur livre étranger (Prize for the best foreign book – *I Saw Her That Night*), Paris 2014.

Austrian State Prize for European Literature, Salzburg 2020



Photo: Mankica Kranjčec

Maša But

Maša successfully completed her studies of jazz vocals at the Carinthian State Conservatory in Klagenfurt under the mentorship of Prof. Caroline De Rooij. She is a member of various jazz and pop ensembles (WCKD Nation, Vudlenderji, 3:rma, Hauptman, etc.), performing at many music festivals at home and abroad (Popevka 2019, Popevka 2021, Waves Vienna, Athens Jazz Festival, MENT, Tallinn Music Week, Festival Lent...) and on radio music shows such as Izštekani on Val 202, Prva vrsta, Jazz in Hendrix, and Radio SI Mainstage. In autumn 2021, she released the album *Si ti tisti* with the group Vudlenderji, and in May 2022 she released, together with duo 3:rma, her debut album *A well-paved road* in collaboration with the renowned guitarist and producer Femi Temow.



Photo: Personal Archives

Janez Krevel

Janez Krevel graduated in 2020 in jazz double bass, pedagogy studies, from the Gustav Mahler Private University, and in 2021 in jazz double bass, performing arts studies, at the same institution. He continues to study at the master's level in classical double bass in the class of Andrea Gehring in Klagenfurt. As his choice of education already suggests, he is a highly versatile musician who has appeared in a wide variety of ensembles in recent years, ranging from professional orchestras (KSO, VSO, SNG Opera in Balet Ljubljana) to various chamber groups (Jaka Pucihar quartet, Bekavac/Leben/Krevel trio, Rok Zalokar quintet, Igor Bezget trio, Andrej Toplišek quartet, Magic Pond), performing predominantly original music both at home and abroad.



Photo: Personal Archives

IV. AUTHORS



Ana Schnabl

Ana Schnabl debuted with her short story collection *Razvezani* (Beletrina, 2017), which was awarded the Best Debut Prize at the Slovenian Book Fair, and was nominated for the Novo mesto Award for best short story collection and the MIRA Literary Award of the Slovenian PEN Centre. The translation of the collection into Serbian (*Partizanska knjiga*, 2018) received the Croatian Edo Budiša Award, and the collection has also been translated into German (Folio Verlag, 2020). Her first novel, *Mojstrovina* (Beletrina, 2020), has won approval from numerous literary critics at home, and its English translation (*Istros Books*, 2021) featured in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and *The Irish Times*. This year, the novel *Mojstrovina* received a German (*Folio Verlag*), and Serbian translation (*Partizanska knjiga*). In parallel to the translations, her second novel, a quasi-criminal novel *Plima* (Beletrina), was published in 2022. In past years she has taken positions as writer-in-residence in Belgrade, Pazin in Croatia, Lavigny in Switzerland, and this year in Vienna (Museumsquartier) and Berlin (LCB). In the last week of August this year Schnabl also led an artistic seminar within the framework of the European Forum in Alpbach.



Photo: Mankica Kranjec

Jela Krečič

Jela Krečič is a philosopher and writer. She has published two novels, *Ni druge* (None Like Her) and *Knjiga drugih*, with the former translated into both English and German. Her theoretical oeuvre focuses on aesthetics and popular culture. She has published a monograph, *Zmote neprevaranih: od modernizma do Hollywooda*, and edited the anthology *The Final Countdown: Europe, Refugees, and the Left*. She is a lecturer at the University of Ljubljana, and for the past year has been working as a researcher on the Slovenian Research Agency project Truth and Indirectness. Towards a New Theory of Truth.



Photo: Personal Archives

Miljana Cunta

Miljana Cunta is a poet, editor and translator, and the author of three collections of poetry – *Za pol neba*, *Pesmi dneva*, and *Svetloba od zunaj*, and a number of accompanying texts and reflections on poetry. Her poems have been translated into English, French, Croatian, Italian, Macedonian, and German, and have been nominated for Slovenia's main poetry awards. She studied comparative literature and literary theory, and English language and literature at the University of Ljubljana. The poet Brane Senegačnik wrote of her poetry: "The patterns drawn by her landscapes of poetry are similar to patterns drawn by two lovers playing a game of hot and cold; we recognise fluid social motifs, observe paintings in galleries or on the seashore, or enter into the poet's – and thus our own – inner life. This poetry represents these landscapes: individual images, thoughts, and motifs seem to be the pure elements from which they emerge. Whether they are Greek islands, Roman squares, a landscape with birch trees, or a bedroom, they are always part of the same world that extends outwards and inwards. There is something muffled, unsettling, yet pure in the air: the openness of this world makes it real."



Photo: Matej Povše

Milan Dekleva

Milan Dekleva, poet, writer, playwright, essayist, and translator, graduated in comparative literature and literary theory from the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana. He was co-editor of the student magazine *Tribuna*, *Radio Študent*, and the Student Cultural Center. He also worked as a music teacher and journalist on the cultural editorial board of *Ljubljanski dnevnik*, where he also edited the literary supplement *Svet v knjigah*. Until his retirement, he worked as the editor of the cultural editorial board of children's and youth programs at RTV Slovenija. He is an associate member of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Dekleva is the author of 25 collections of poetry, eight novels, three books of short stories, and three books of essays. As a poet, he returns to the origins of European thought and Eastern philosophies, employing paradoxes and musical improvisation processes. His poetry paints a holistic view of the world, the universe, nature, and man.

Dekleva's narrative texts mainly tackle the lives of individuals who arrive at a personal, social, or historical watershed. He also writes opera libretti, texts for cantatas, for theatre, puppet and radio plays, songs, stories, musicals for children, and translates from English, Italian, Croatian, and Serbian.

Translations into foreign languages include English, Italian, German, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Polish, Dutch, Czech, Slovak, Croatian, Serbian, Hebrew, Finnish, and others.



Lila Prap

Lila Prap is a children's book author whose books, especially her illustrated storybooks, have been popular with children and parents alike for more than two decades, inviting them into a world of humour, playful games, and creativity with her witty quips expressed in text and illustrations. Her picture storybooks from the *Zakaj* series encourage readers to seek answers to various questions with numerous nonsensical conclusions that always end up with the right, scientifically-proven answer.

While her books are popular at home, they have also inspired young readers in different countries around the world. They are translated into more than 38 languages, and a series of cartoons has been created based on her picture storybook *Zakaj* in Japan.

Both her literature and illustrations have been awarded at home and abroad.

While she finished her university studies in architectural engineering, it was the limitless imagination of the child's world that absorbed her completely.

She lives and works on the edge of Celje, where she hosts a children's gallery, which she is happy to show to any and all visitors.



Photo: Personal Archives

Aleš Šteger

Aleš Šteger lives in Ljubljana and has published numerous collections of poetry, novels, and essays, which have been published in more than 20 languages. He has also collaborated on several projects with musicians (Vito Žuraj, Jure Tori), visual artists (Stojan Kerbler), and filmmakers (Peter Zach and the film *Onkraj meja*).

He has received several international awards, including the Best Translated Book of the Year Award in 2011, in the USA, the Horst Bienek International Prize (2016), the Alfred Kolleritsch Prize (2021), and the Spycher Literature Award Leuk (2022). Šteger received the title *Chevalier des Arts et Lettres* by the French Ministry, and is a member of the Academy of Arts, in Berlin, and the German Academy for Language and Poetry. His most recent poetry collections in German are *Über dem Himmel unter der Erde* (Hanser, 2019), *Logbuch der Gegenwart: Aufbrechen* (Haymon, 2019), *Gebrauchsanweisung Slowenien* (Piper, 2022) and the novel *Neverend* (Wallstein, 2022).



Photo: Mankica Kranjec

**V. SLOVENIAN PROFESSIONAL AND
LITERARY PROGRAMME AT THE
FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR 2022**



PROGRAMME 14. 10. 2022 – 23. 10. 2022

14. 10. 2022 at 17.00

Poetry vending machine – opening;

Schiller Nationalmuseum / Literaturarchiv Marbach,
Schillerhöhe 8-10, 71672 Marbach am Neckar

An event with Matthias Göritz and Miljana Cunta.

20. 10. 2022 at 10.00

Press conference;

Frankfurt Pavilion, Agora

Speech by Asta Vrečko, Minister of Culture.

Speeches by Dimitrij Rupel, Director of the Slovenian Book
Agency and Miha Kovač, Slovene curator.

Debate with Peter Svetina, Ana Marwan, Nataša Kramberger
and Erwin Köstler.

Moderator: Katja Gasser

Interpreter: Zdenka Hafner Čelan

20. 10. 2022 at 10.00

Every story matters project presentation and closing event
with B2B event;

Conference Room Illusion, Congress Centre, Third Floor

Speakers: Katja Stergar, Staša Guček

20. 10. 2022 at 14.00

Innovation in publishing in small markets;

Publishing Perspectives Forum, Conference Room Spectrum,
Congress Centre, Second Floor

A debate with experts Benas Berantas, Lawrence Schimel, Urpu
Strellman and Senja Požar on how authors build brands in export
markets and how publishers and agents of those markets help
open doors to translations of their authors.

Moderator: Rüdiger Wischenbart

20. 10. 2022 at 17.30

»Für mich sind sie alle lebendig« – Why translating dead,
yet literarily living authors matters; International Translator's
Stage, Hall 4.0

A debate with Erwin Köstler (translator and literary scientist),
Hans Jürgen Balmes (translator and publisher) and Sebastian
Guggolz (publisher and moderator).

20. 10. 2022 at 18.30

Slovenian reception;

Translator's stage, Hall 4.0

21. 10. 2022 at 17.00

Land-Wirtschaft – Debate on Environmental Issues;

Slovenian national stand, Hall 4.0 B56

A debate on environmental issues with Nataša Kramberger and
Luisa Neubauer.

Moderator: Doris Akrap

21. 10. 2022 at 17.30

»Keine wie sie«;

Reading Zone of Independent Publishers, Hall 3.1

A conversation with Jela Krečič about her new novel.

Moderator: Katharina Strauß (Lesendes Federvieh - Blog für
Buchkultur)

Interpreter: Liza Linde

Organised by Mitteldeutscher Verlag and Beletrina.

22. 10. 2022 at 10.30

»Gebrauchsanweisungen für Slowenien«;

Slovenian national stand, Hall 4.0 B56

Presentation of a personal report on Slovenia, by Aleš Šteger.

Moderator: Bettina Feldweg

With typical Slovenian pastries.

22. 10. 2022 at 16.00

»Die Schnittmenge der Schönheit«, poetry event;

Literary Festival Literaturbahnhof, Haus des Buches,
Braubachstrasse 16, 60311 Frankfurt

Presentation of new book by Milan Dekleva, published by Edition
Thanhäuser.

Moderator: Silke Scheuermann

Interpreter: Amalija Maček

22. 10. 2022 at 16.00

Versopolis platform poetry event;

Open Books, Haus am Dom, Domplatz 3, 60311 Frankfurt am
Main

Conversation with Martin Piekar (Germany), Nina Dragičević
(Slovenia) and Gaia Ginevra Giorgi (Italy).

Moderator: José F. A. Oliver

22. 10. 2022 at 19.00

Nostalgie im Roman;

Bookfest City, Lindley Lindenberg Hotel, Lindleystraße 17, 60314
Frankfurt am Main

A debate on contemporary Slovene fiction with Jela Krečič, Ana
Schnabl and Aleš Šteger.

Moderator: Andreas Unterweger (writer and editor)

Interpreter: Amalija Maček

23. 10. 2022 from 9.00 to 17.30

Duo / Yellow and Blue;

Frankfurt Pavilion, Agora

A 2022 choreographic paraphrase with Mateja Bučar, Katja Legin
and Nataša Živkovič (DUM - Association of Artists / Dancers
Without Answers).

Organized and supported by SKICA Berlin.

23. 10. 2022 at 12.00

Warum haben die Zebras Streifen?

Struwelpeter Museum, Hinter dem Lämmchen 2-4, 60311
Frankfurt am Main

Workshop by Lila Prap, author's performance, drawing with
children.

23. 10. 2022 at 16.00

Handover ceremony;

Forum 1, Guest of Honour Pavilion

Debate with Drago Jančar and Manuel Rivas.

Moderator: Shila Behjat

Interpreter: Amalija Maček

Musical performance: Maša But (vocal) and Janez Kovel (double
bass)

After event: Slovenia – Spain, wine reception.

VI. SKICA Berlin

Saša Šavel Burkart

HEAD OF THE SLOVENIAN CULTURAL
INFORMATION CENTRE BERLIN – SKICA BERLIN

The Republic of Slovenia has two Slovenian cultural information centres – one in Berlin and one in Vienna, and both are involved in preparations for the project: Slovenia, Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2023. SKICA Berlin is also an important partner of the Slovenian Book Agency on this project.

In these turbulent times of pervasive social, political, and environmental crises, cultural diplomacy is an important tool for connecting, networking, exchanging, and promoting; as well as for strengthening mutual relationships, bridging gaps, implementing and presenting contemporary sustainable concepts, and numerous possible forms of cooperation, and thus for striving to create and develop new forms of cosmopolitanism in Europe and the contemporary world.

The project: Slovenia, Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair is also an important interdisciplinary platform for a broader, genre-diverse presentation and promotion of Slovenian culture and arts. Our mission will entail, among others, working with partner cultural institutions throughout Germany. We will put particular focus on the promotion of Slovenian books, art, and culture within the network of diplomatic missions in Berlin, and in the context of events run by the EUNIC Berlin network (European Network of National Institutes for Culture Berlin), of which SKICA Berlin is a full member.

In cooperation with our German partners, competent Slovenian institutions, and the curators of Frankfurt 2023, SKICA Berlin will be systematically presenting Slovenian literature translated into German, and Slovenian authors. Our partners to date include Literaturhaus Berlin, Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, Haus für Poesie Berlin, and Haus des Buches Leipzig. We aim at expanding this network even further starting next year.

Numerous cultural events will be held in Frankfurt and throughout Germany. Next year, in cooperation with the Slovenian Film Centre, we will be, among others, presented at the DOK Leipzig with Slovenian documentary films, and at the



Photo: Regine Sablotny

Go East festival in Wiesbaden with Slovenian fiction films. The European Cultural Days, hosted by the Museum of European Cultures in Berlin – MEK, will be dedicated to Slovenia.

Slovenian and German cultures are intertwined and interact in many ways and have a rich past and contemporary history of cultural exchange. We should not forget that crucial ties for cooperation between Germany and Slovenia are not only political and economic in nature, but also cultural as well.

In symbolic terms, these links began as early as the 16th century, when Primož Trubar wrote the first Slovenian books, *Katekizem* and *Abecednik*, during his service in Rothenberg. And there are other landmark cultural crossovers: the Freising Manuscripts, the oldest known surviving records in Slovenian, are actually preserved in the Bavarian State Library.

The German public is probably unaware that the Reformation also had a ground-breaking influence on the formation of the Slovenian language; that the Slovenian impressionists formed in Munich; that the most important Slovenian painter Ivana Kobilca studied there at the end of the 19th century; and that Slovenian painter Anton Ažbe established his famous painting school in Munich, which helped many important artists to make a name for themselves.

Last but not least, it is interesting to note that the oldest bicycle in the world, which is preserved at the City Museum of Ljubljana, was restored at the world-famous restoration centre in Mainz.

After the Second World War, Slovenia had become connected with modern Germany through economic migration since the end of the 1960s, and in more recent contemporary times through “cultural” migration and brain drain. Around 50,000 Slovenians live in Germany and around 20 Slovenian societies and associations are in operation there. There are also lectureships in the Slovenian language at universities in Berlin, Cologne, Regensburg, Munich, and Tübingen.

Numerous German cities are partnered with Slovenian cities, such as Ljubljana and Wiesbaden, Škofja Loka and Freising, and Murska Sobota and Ingolstadt, a home to the German automotive industry and the seat of Audi automotive’s headquarters, a city where many people from Prekmurje emigrated in search of a better life.

Today, the cities are connected, particularly through cultural exchange, which is based on the close cooperation between Murska Sobota Gallery and the city of Ingolstadt. Since 2000, the German capital Berlin, known as one of the world’s cultural

and artistic capitals, has become a magnet, particularly for the younger generations. Our renowned comic artist Miki Muster has worked and created in Germany for many years, and many other acclaimed authors and creators have worked and continue to work here, including musician, Vinko Globokar; director, Mateja Koležnik; conductor and director of the Bremen Philharmoniker, Marko Letonja; director, Hanna A. W. Slak; screenwriter, Blaž Kutin; director, Sašo Podgoršek; philosopher, Bojana Kunst; curator, Maja Škerbot; horn player, Andrej Žust; clarinetists, Andraž Golob and Matic Kuder (members of the Berliner Philharmoniker); jazz vocalist, Mirna Bogdanović; Vito Oražem (director of the design centre in Essen); fashion designer, Neli Štrukelj; architect, Bika Rebek; and industrial designers, Mito Mihelič, Nikolaj Salaj, and Robert Lešnik, the latter as head of the design department at Mercedes-Benz. Other people living between Germany and Slovenia include artist, Nataša Brborović; artist, Igor Štromajer; writer, Nataša Kramberger; composer, Vito Žuraj; and many more.

Being the guest of honour at the world’s leading event for books and publishing has a considerable influence on a global scale, and not only in terms of cultural exchange. In the case of the fair/event, culture can serve as a unique platform for networking in other fields and for forging bonds with an eye to the future. It is instrumental in the effort to boost the visibility and presence of Slovenian authors, artists, and writers in Germany and well beyond.

VII. TRANSLATION FUNDING AND PROMOTION OF THE SALE OF RIGHTS

Slovenia has a strong literary tradition and an extensive system of support measures, which were assumed from the Ministry of Culture, competent since 2009, and developed by the independent Slovenian Book Agency, following the model of analogous foreign institutions (such as the Finnish FILI, the Dutch Letterenfonds, etc.). The Slovenian Book Agency allocates around 4.5 million euros annually for subsidies to all involved in the chain of book publishing, of which around half a million is allocated to international cooperation and the promotion of Slovenian authors abroad.

Grants for the translation and publication of works by Slovenian authors

Annual open calls for translations from Slovenian into foreign languages include, first translations of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels, and comics. Applicants must be legal persons (publishing houses, theatres) registered abroad. The subsidy covers up to 100% and up to a maximum of 10,000 EUR for translation costs.

Contact: katja.stergar@jakrs.si

Grants for printing costs

An annual open call to cover the printing costs of Slovenian Books published in foreign languages includes, first prints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels, and comics. Applicants must be publishing houses registered abroad. The subsidy covers up to 70% and up to a maximum of 3,000 EUR for printing costs.

Contact: katja.stergar@jakrs.si

SLOVENIA– Guest of Honour at the Frankfurter Buchmesse 2023

An annual open call for translations from Slovenian into German language includes, first translations and reprints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works

on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels, and comics. Applicants must be publishing houses registered in Austria, Germany, or Switzerland. This subsidy covers up to 50% and up to 11,000 EUR for all types of costs connected with publication (excluding license fees) and promotion for first translations or 50% and up to 3,000 EUR for reprints; eligible costs include printing, typesetting, cover design, and corrections.

Contact: mateja.humar-jelnikar@jakrs.si

In 2022 and 2023 publishers from EU countries publishing first prints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels, and comics can apply for a fixed sum of 5,398.48 EUR towards the costs of translating, editing, printing, and publishing Slovenian works in German, French, and English.

Travel grants are also available for Slovene authors, translators, editors, or rights agents who have been invited to literary or industry events abroad. An invitation and the program for the event must be enclosed with the application. There is one call per year, which covers trips throughout the year.

International translation seminars of Slovenian literature

The International translation seminar for Slovenian literature was organised by the Slovenian Book Agency (JAK) for the first time in 2010, in Novo mesto. It was conceptualized by the then expert commission for the international promotion of Slovenian fiction and humanities at JAK, in cooperation with Tanja Petrič, who was selected as the seminar lead. Since 2018, the seminar has been organised by the Slovenian Association of Literary Translators with the financial support of the Slovenian Book Agency. So far, the international translation seminar of Slovenian literature has brought together some 100 translators from 25 countries or linguistic environments. The seminar has also seen the participation of 12 mentors, a selection of more than 40 Slovenian authors, and involvement of more than 80 professionals, from lecturers and moderators to publishers and other experts in the field of Slovenian literature and culture.

The seminar is aimed at established and promising translators of Slovenian literature into foreign languages from all corners of the world. Participants gain insight into the current state of Slovenian contemporary literature and the possibility of working with Slovenian authors, critics, publishers, lecturers, and other agents in the field of books and book publishing. It contributes

to more published high-quality translations, provides better information for translators from the Slovenian language, and fosters closer cooperation between translators, publishing houses and authors, and also serves as an important platform for networking. In terms of content, it is comprised of two parts: the first part is dedicated to translation workshops where participants work on a selected excerpt with the help of guest authors and expert workshop leaders. The aim of the workshops is to provide an in-depth look at the author's work and credo. The second part of the seminar is intended for presentations and lectures by Slovenian experts on contemporary Slovenian literature, history, film, culture, publishing, the promotion of Slovenian literature, and similar topics. Each year, the seminar also includes a presentation on the mechanisms of and opportunities for co-financing fiction, translations, and translators, and is held by a JAK representative. The evening programme consists of literary events with guest artists open to the public, and a thematic cultural programme.

Between 2010 and 2016, the five-to-six day seminar was held over the summer months in Novo mesto, with the local co-organisers Hostel Situla and Založba Goga. In 2017, the venue relocated to Maribor, where it collaborates with MKC Maribor and Hostel Pekarna.

Thus far, three prose works in the field of adult literature (except for poetry, as the number of international poetry translation workshops is higher) and one text in the field of youth and children's literature have, as a rule, been selected. The works range from novels and short stories to documentary fiction and essays (for example Edvard Kocbek – *Tovarišija*, Aleš Debeljak – *Balkanska brv*, and Boštjan Videmšek – *Plan B*). More recently, genres such as crime fiction and comic books have also been included in the selection. Until 2015, up to 16 participants were invited to the seminar based on the submitted documentation (application form, biobibliography, and motivation letter). However, since 2016, only a maximum of 12 candidates are invited to the seminar in order to improve the quality and intensity of the work. Participants come from different countries and continents, with the largest group usually comprised of those translating into South and East Slavic languages. Numerous active translators come back as returning seminar participants (they can apply every second year), and the seminar is also an important forum for discovering new and promising literary translators, also from languages that have not yet been represented by active translators translating into Slovenian (such as Latvian and Japanese).

The results of each year's evaluations demonstrate that the seminar has been achieving its goals and purpose from the very beginning. We see an increase in the publication of (selected) texts by guest Slovenian authors in various print and online media over the years. Until 2017, JAK published sample translation booklets in printed form, which are available among the Presentation material on the Slovenian Book Agency's website.

Translation seminar for translators of Slovenian literature from Slovenian into German

The Slovenian Book Agency established this seminar for translators into German in 2016, as one of the support mechanisms for the candidature of Slovenia as the Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair, with the aim of facilitating more intense exchanges between the Slovenian and the German-speaking literary circles, and having more high-quality translations of Slovenian literature into German published. Selected participants are usually invited to the German seminar directly, and work on texts by two guest authors, in both adult and young adult literature.

The aim of the German seminar is to encourage as many high-quality translations of established Slovenian authors as possible, in cooperation with reference publishing houses from the German-speaking area. Furthermore, the aim of the seminar is to train promising German translators for their first independent translations and presentations within the project: Slovenia, Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2023. The seminar is important both from a professional perspective (familiarising translators with current texts, the Slovenian book market, Slovenian publishers, and authors) and from the perspective of networking and training translators from Slovenian into German who are just entering the arena.

VIII. BOOK TITLES BY COUNTRY

GERMANY

Trockenzeit (Sušna doba)

Babnik Outtara, Gabriela
Schenk Verlag, 2021

**Die kleine Gruselfee
(Groznovilca v Hudi hosti)**

Bauer, Jana
S. Fischer Verlag, 2019

**Monsterschreck (Kako
prestrašiti pošast)**

Bauer, Jana
Tulipan Verlag, 2022

**Denk an mich, auch in guten
Zeiten (Misli name, ko ti je
lepo)**

Gal Štromar, Maja
Edition Converso, 2020

**Nachts in Europa (Noč v
Evropi)**

Glavan, Polona
Schenk Verlag, 2021

Batseba (Prva dama)

Hrastelj, Stanka
Homonuclus Verlag, 2022

**Einsame Weltreise (Samotno
potovanje v daljne dežele)**

Karlin, Alma M.
AvivA Verlag, 2019

**Im Banne der Südsee (Urok
južnega morja)**

Karlin, Alma M.
AvivA Verlag, 2020

Balkanalien (Balkanalije)

Kentrič, Samira
Verlagshaus Jacoby & Stuart,
2021

**Verfluchte Misteln
(Primerljivi hektarji)**

Kramberger, Nataša
Verbrecher Verlag, 2021

Keine wie sie (Ni druge)

Krečič, Jela
Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 2022

**Chronos erntet (Kronosova
žetev)**

Kumerdej, Mojca
Wallstein Verlag, 2019

**Du existierst nicht
(Izbrisana)**

Mazzini, Miha
Edition Converso, 2021

Panorama

Šarotar, Dušan
Schenk Verlag, 2022

**Über dem Himmel unter
der Erde (Nad nebom pod
zemljo)**

Šteger, Aleš
Carl Hanser Verlag, 2019

**Als der Winter verschwand
(Kurent)**

Šteger, Aleš
Karl Rauch Verlag, 2019

Neverend

Šteger, Aleš
Wallstein Verlag, 2022

**Gebrauchsanweisung für
Slowenien**

Šteger, Aleš & Göritz, Matthias
Piper Verlag, 2022

**Menuett für Gitarre (Menuet
za kitaro)**

Zupan, Vitomil
Guggolz Verlag, 2021

**Wie ein Dieb bei Tageslicht
(Like a thief in broad
daylight)**

Žižek, Slavoj
S. Fischer Verlag, 2019

**Hegel im verdrahteten
Gehirn (Hegel in a wired
brain)**

Žižek, Slavoj
S. Fischer Verlag, 2020

**Der Exzess der Leere
(Incontinence of the void)**

Žižek, Slavoj
Turia + Kant, 2020

**Sex und das verfehlt
Absolute (Sex and the failed
absolute)**

Žižek, Slavoj
WBG, 2020

**Lacans Politische Klinik Des
Seins**

Žižek, Slavoj
V. Klostermann, 2020

**Ein Linker wagt sich aus der
Deckung (A left that dares to
speak its name)**

Žižek, Slavoj
Ullstein, 2021

AUSTRIA

**Ding-Dong-Geschichten
(Ding dong zgodbe)**

Bauer, Jana
Hermagoras Verein, 2021

**Filio ist nicht daheim (Filio ni
doma)**

Bojetu, Berta
Wieser Verlag, 2020

Das Vogelhaus (Ptičja hiša)

Bojetu, Berta
Drava Verlag; Wieser Verlag,
2022

**Das große Südtirol-
Wimmelwörterbuch
(Kukujev slikovni slovar)**

Bucik, Nataša
Verlagbuchhandlung Julius
Breitschopf, 2019

**Schau durch das Fenster
(Poglej skozi okno)**

Flisar, Evald
Hermagoras Verein, 2020

**Alice im Irrenland (Alica v
nori deželi)**

Flisar, Evald
Theater im Keller, 2021

Gesammelte Stücke, Band 2

Flisar, Evald
Hermagoras Verein, 2021

**Abaddon lieben (Ljubiti
Abadona)**

Frančič, Franjo
Verlag Heyn, 2021

**Dass nicht dass nicht mehr
kommen wird ... (Da ne da ne
bo več prišla da ne bo da me
žge da se odganjam odganja
a ...)**

Golob, Anja
Edition Korrespondenzen,
2022

Der Stiefsohn (Pastorek)

Hudolin, Jurij
Septime Verlag, 2019

Wenn die Liebe Ruht (In ljubezen tudi)

Jančar, Drago
Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2019

Appalachian Trail: 3500 Kilometer Berge und Amerika (Apalaška pot: 3500 kilometrov hribov in Amerike)

Kenda, Jakob J.
Drava Verlag, 2022

Goldman oder Der Klang der Welt (Pianistov dotik)

Komel, Mirt
Hollitzer Verlag, 2019

Komm, schnüren wir die Knochen (Pojdimo vezat kosti)

Lipuš, Cvetka
Otto Müller Verlag, 2019

Schotter (Gramoz)

Lipuš, Florijan
Jung und Jung Verlag, 2019

Seelenruhig (Mirne duše)

Lipuš, Florijan
Jung und Jung Verlag, 2021

Menagerie (Menažerija)

Markun, Eva
Mali Verlag, 2022

Kalorien und Nationalstolz (Venček domačih: predmeti, Slovencem sveti)

Mlekuž, Jernej [Editor]
LIT Verlag Wien, 2022

Kosovel und die sieben Zwerge (Kosovel in sedem palčkov)

Osojnik, Iztok
Artikel-VII-Kulturverein für Steiermark - Pavelhaus, 2020

Die Mexikaner 1-5 (Meksikajnarji 1-5)

Pušavec, Marijan; Smiljanić, Zoran
Bahoe Books, 2018-2021

Alma M. Karlin: Weltbürgerin aus der Provinz (Alma M. Karlin: svetovljanka iz province)

Pušavec, Marijan & Klemenčič, Jakob
Bahoe Books, 2020

Slovenische Seele (Duša slovenska)

Sam, Anej [Editor]
Drava Verlag, 2021

Grün wie ich dich liebe grün (Razvezani)

Schnabl, Ana
Folio Verlag, 2020

Meisterwerk (Mojstrovina)

Schnabl, Ana
Folio Verlag, 2022

Gespräche mit Niemandem (Pogovori z nikomer)

Senegačnik, Brane
Hermagoras Verein, 2022

Momente der Entscheidung (Trenutki odločitev)

Sever – Franta, Franc
Bahoe Books, 2022

Die schwarze Flamme (Črni plamen)

Smiljanić, Zoran & Smiljanić, Ivan
Bahoe Books, 2022

Vom kleinen schwarzen Vogel und der weißen Vögelin (O črnem ptičku in beli ptičici)

Smotlak, Maja
Fran Verlag, 2021

Logbuch der Gegenwart: Aufbrechen (Na kraju zapisano 5-8)

Šteger, Aleš
Haymon Verlag, 2019

Tschefuren raus! oder Warum ich wieder mal zu Fuß bis in den zehnten Stock musste (Čefurji raus!)

Vojnović, Goran
Folio Verlag, 2021

Was ist Sex? (What is Sex?)

Zupančič Žerdin, Alenka
Turia + Kant, 2019

Marx lesen (Reading Marx)

Žižek, Slavoj
Passagen Verlag, 2019

Pandemie!: Covid-19 erschüttert die Welt (Pandemic!: COVID-19 shakes the world)

Žižek, Slavoj
Passagen Verlag, 2020

Die Schnittmenge der Schönheit

Dekleva, Milan
Edition Thanhäuser, 2022

SWITZERLAND

Wo bist du? (Kje si?)

Bartolj, Marta
Baeschlin Verlag, 2019

Adam und seine Tuba (Adam in tuba)

Gombač, Žiga
NordSüd Verlag, 2022

Gregor der Löwe (Lev Robi)

Klenovšek Musil, Manica
Baeschlin Verlag, 2020

Ein Konzert für Dachs (Posluh, jazbec gre!)

Mav Hrovat, Nina
Baeschlin Verlag, 2021

Der Weg (Pot)

Zaplotnik, Nejc
AS Verlag & Grafik, 2020

IX. IN SHORT: THE SLOVENE BOOK MARKET

According to the International Publishers Association (IPA), Slovenia has the second highest number of books published per million inhabitants in the world.

After Slovenia's independence in 1991, nearly all publishing houses successfully made the transition to the open market economy, and many new ones were established. In combination with the rapid development of digitisation and printing technology, this led to growth in newly published titles. Alongside this, Slovenia has successfully retained and further developed its traditionally widespread network of public libraries, from which readers borrow significantly more books than they buy in bookstores.

Owing to the significantly higher number of readers and authors in countries such as Spain, France, and Germany, more than 100,000 new titles are published annually, while in small markets such as Iceland, Slovenia, Lithuania, and Estonia, only some 1,000–3,000 new titles are published annually. However, when the number of books published is calculated per million inhabitants, small markets perform better than large ones. For example, Estonia and Iceland published more than 2,000 new titles per million inhabitants per year between 2010 and 2015, while Slovenia, Finland, and Norway published 1 500–2 000 titles per million inhabitants annually, putting them on par with the UK.

Because of the smaller number of authors, as in all similarly small book industries, Slovene book publishing depends substantially on translations. For example, it is logical to expect that the number of successful crime writers in Germany, a country of 80 million, would be higher than Slovenia's in mere 2 million. As a result, in small markets, the lack of a more diverse domestic book production environment is compensated by translations. Since its independence in 1991, when access to copyrighted works became much easier, the number of translations in Slovenia has traditionally accounted for around one-fifth of all book production: Back in in 1990, 1853 books

and pamphlets were published in Slovenia, of which 154 were translations; after 2000, the number of translations levelled off at around 30% of entire book production. In fiction, however, translations represent more than half of all book production: In 2020, of some 1,800 fiction titles published, 1072 were books written in Slovene, 409 were translations from English, and 250 from all other languages. For novels, for example, the number of translations was double the number of originals: out of 648 novels published in 2020, 446 were translations.

The biggest Slovene publishing house is Mladinska knjiga. Together with its imprint Cankarjeva založba, it published more than 600 new titles and reprints in 2021 in all book categories. The company also owns the biggest chain of bookstores in the country. The biggest player in educational publishing is Rokus Klett, while Učila International has become the biggest publisher dealing exclusively in trade publications. A set of smaller publishers such as Beletrina, Miš, Goga, and Litera have become specialized in quality (Slovene) fiction, while companies such as UMco specialise in mass market non-fiction. The biggest publisher of religious matter is Družina, and is becoming one of the main non-fiction publishers, publishing authors such as Peterson and Scruton. As Ljubljana is the home of the Ljubljana School of Psychoanalysis, Slovenia has a long tradition of high-brow (intellectual and academic) non-fiction publishing: small publishers such as Sophia, Studia Humanitatis, and Krtina systematically produce translations and domestic works, particularly in the fields of philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and psychoanalysis. Last but not least, Slovenia has a long tradition of minority publishers in Austria and Italy. For the last forty years, publishers such as Wieser, Drava, Hermagoras, and ZTT have played an important role in opening German and Italian book markets to Slovene authors. And founded in 1851, in Klagenfurt/Celovec by Slovene priests, Hermagoras/Mohorjeva is the oldest/longest operating Slovenian publishing house. Today, it publishes books in Slovene, and German. In addition to Klagenfurt, Mohorjeva has two branches, one in Gorizia/Gorica in Italy, and one in Celje, in Slovenia.

Public libraries and bookstores

The number of bookstores in Slovenia has long been relatively low, most likely due to the fact that the majority of the population traditionally lived in towns with less than 5,000

inhabitants, where opening and running a bookstore was not economically viable. For this reason, other distribution channels for books such as door-to-door sales, mail order, and book clubs flourished in the 20th century. A turning point came in the 1990s and 2000s with the advent of digitization and large shopping malls, which led on the one hand to an increase in retail book sales, and on the other hand to rapid growth in online sales. Online sales were further accelerated by the pandemic after 2020. As a result, there are only two large bookstore/stationery chains (with up to 50 stores), and one small chain (with up to 10 stores) in Slovenia, today. We can, in fact, count the number of independent bookstores on just two hands. However, all publishers have their online stores, where – especially smaller publishers – usually generate more than half of their sales.

As a result, public libraries have been more important in the dissemination of books than have bookstores, reaching areas and readers where bookstores, as businesses, could not compete. And they have long been seen as an important mechanism in the effort to preserve the country and the culture's linguistic identity – which is one of the chief reasons local communities and governments have systematically supported public libraries over the last 100 years.

Today, thanks to a dense network of public library branches and bibliobuses, even people living in remote areas have easy access to books without having to travel far from home. In addition, Slovenian libraries are relatively well financed and have a wide range of newly published books, so it is not surprising that the number of loans far exceeds the number of book sales. An average Slovenian borrows a book or extends a loan about 11 times a year (compared to two books sold per capita), and every fifth Slovenian has a library card.

Digitisation

The Slovenian e-book market started to develop in 2013 with the launch of Biblos, a library lending platform, and e-emka, an e-bookstore. Since the market is small, there is almost no private investment in digitalisation, and most revenue comes from library lending. In 2021, there were 6,200 e-books – approximately two years of book production – available in Slovenian, on Biblos. These e-books only saw a little more than 250,000 loans, which represents just 2% of all library lending, which in turn means that library users prefer to read on paper rather than on a screen. The audiobook market in Slovenia is still in its infancy, so we expect serious growth to come, as well as growth linked to library lending, after 2023.

Rights sales

Rights sales represent the most dynamic segment of Slovene publishing. In the two decades between 1991 and 2010, Slovene authors published 1330 translations that were either agreed directly with foreign publishers or published by Slovene ethnic minority publishers operating in Austria or Italy. This number roughly corresponds to the number of translations published in the 46 years previous, between 1945 and 1991 (with half of these translations being into languages of the former Yugoslavia).

Between 1999 and 2003 for example, Slovene authors signed on average some 60 contracts annually for translations of their works into foreign languages. What's more, almost no Slovene publishing house at the time was systematically involved in selling rights abroad, and almost all of these contracts were negotiated by authors. Twenty years later, between 2019 and June 2022, some 600 contracts were signed for translations of Slovene books, and 7 publishing houses were systematically selling rights abroad. The highest print-run for a Slovene book in translation – as stated in the contract – allowed for sales of 40,000 copies. In addition, especially in non-fiction, the most successful Slovene authors started to write their books in English, which led to a new phenomenon – bilingualism in Slovene book production.

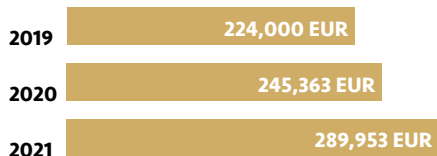
In other words, over the last 20 years Slovenian book production has slowly but steadily begun to establish itself on the global book map.

Reading habits

Slovenia is not among the most developed countries in terms of reading habits. By way of illustration, the number of readers has not increased significantly since the first survey on reading habits back in 1979 up until the last survey in 2019. Furthermore, Slovenia is in the bottom third of OECD member states in terms of the number of books people have at home, and only one-third of parents frequently read to their children at home, which remains a challenge both for cultural policy and the publishing industry. However, the use of screen media has exploded in the past decade and the smartphone has become a universal device that allows us to shop and socialise online, watch movies, listen to music and audiobooks, read blogs, books, magazines, and social media anywhere, anytime, which in turn impacts our available free time – time that we once (also) devoted to reading books. All things considered; Slovenia may not be in such a bad place when it comes to reading books.

Basic data

In 2019, 2020, and 2021, the Slovene Book Agency contributed 760,000 euros for the translation and promotion of Slovene fiction and non-fiction books into foreign languages.



Between 2019 and 2021, in preparation for the Slovene Guest of Honour program, the agency contributed 230,000 euros for translations of Slovene books into German.

Representation of translations by genre (2019–2022)

Children's and young adult literature	Fiction	Poetry	Non-fiction	Ljubljana school of psycho-analysis	TOTAL
185	237	72	54	87	635

Comparison of translation output 2000–2003 and 2019–2022*

Number of translations in the period 2000–2003



Number of translations in the period 2019–2022



This amounts to an increase of **122.81 % (350)** in the number of translations.

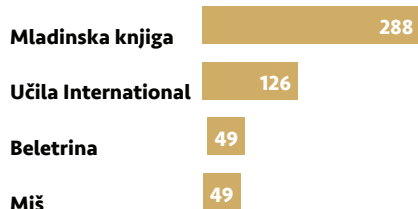
*Includes translations published by September 1, 2022

Basic book market data

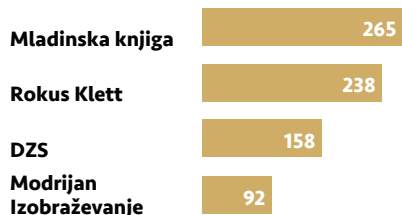
Number of published titles in 2020:
5,311

Number of translations to Slovene:
1,451

Main publishers of fiction according to number of published titles in 2021:



Main non-fiction and educational publishers:



Ebooks:

6,200 titles available on Biblos Library platform

Book market regulation:
reduced VAT, fixed prices

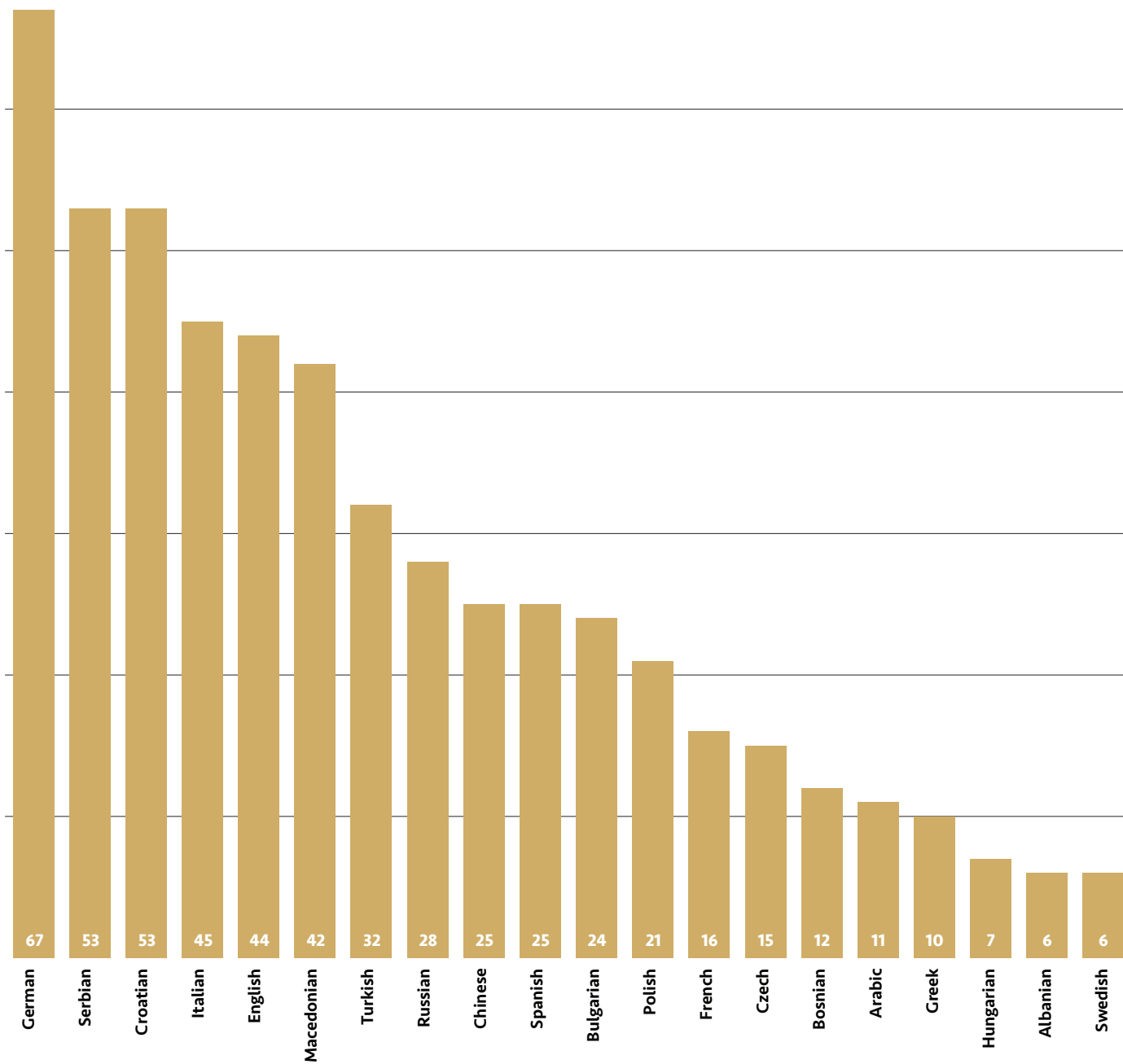
Turnover of book industry:
70 million EUR

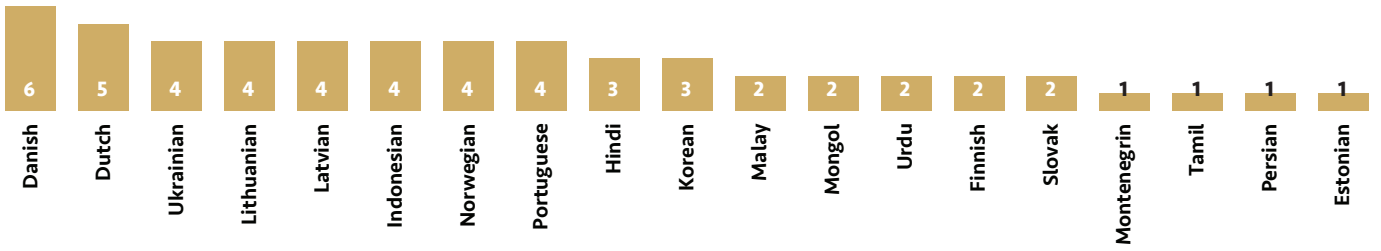
Number of bookstores:
approx. 80

Number of public libraries:
58, with 274 local units, and 13 bibliobuses

Number of rights contracts annually:
approx. 120

Strategic markets for Slovene translations





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Editors
Dimitrij Rupel, Miha Kovač
Bojana Čampa, Maruša Trobec, Amalija Maček

Design and Layout
LSD STUDIO d.o.o.
Metoda Mikuža 10, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Camera d.o.o.
Cvetkova ulica 25, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia



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