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Cultural Grants Program
FY 2014

The Embassy of the United States of America
Public Affairs Section

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Dancing Dimension Club

“1ST SLOWESTFEST”

(1,500 USD)

The purpose of the festival is for the recognition and popularization of West Coast Swing in Slovenia. West Coast Swing (WCS) is a partner dance with roots in Lindy Hop. It is characterized by a distinctive elastic look that results from its basic extension-compression technique of partner connection, and is danced primarily in a slotted area on the dance floor. The program of the “1st SloWestFest” dance festival included two days of classes for public hosted individually by Robert Cordoba and an acclaimed dance instructor from Slovenia Matjaž Brinovec. More than 100 participants attended the workshops. Los Angeles based dance instructor Robert Cordoba gave lectures and workshops on West Coast Swing dance in culture. Robert Cordoba has been teaching for the last 20 years throughout the world and in Europe since the late 90s. A powerful showman on the swing dance circuit, Robert Cordoba is an inventive, professional swing dancer and instructor. He is a 7-time U.S. Open Swing Dance Champion as well as a Swing Dance Hall of Famer. Robert is a veteran dance competitor, first appearing on the swing dance circuit in 1990. Robert capitalizes on over 30 years of training and performing in Ballroom and Latin. With over 30 years of dancing, teaching, performing, choreographing and judging experience he has judged every major event including the Grand Nationals and U.S. Open multiple times.

Museum of Architecture and Design

“24TH BIENNIAL OF DESIGN – BIO 50 – 3,2,1,...TEST”

(5,000 USD)

The Biennial of Design (BIO) is the world’s oldest and longest-running international design event. Established in 1963 with the first exhibition in 1964,



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

BIO explores and presents current developments in international design through a critical selection process of projects and proposals. Following an international open call, BIO received submissions from 593 applicants from a record number of 56 countries. Curator, co-curators, and the mentors of each of the BIO 50 themes selected more than 100 multidisciplinary participants from 20 countries, among them also four participants from the United States: William Myers, Evan Frenkel, Aleksandr Mergold and Georg Rafailidis. Participants were engaged in 11 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. The curator chose 12 international mentors, including Mr. Evan Frankel and Mr. William Myers and 12 Slovene mentors to elaborate a project brief, guiding and overseeing a collaborative process over the course of 6 months. BIO 50 sees connecting over 100 participants from over 20 countries in a story of designing the everyday life. The result is a unique look at the design process and collaboration in the field of design.

Druga Godba

“30TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL DRUGA GODBA”

(5,000 USD)

The 30th International Druga Godba Festival offered a diverse and intensive musical program presenting the trends and latest developments in the world of traditional and urban music. Druga Godba International Festival was founded in 1999 with the aim of securing better conditions for the future organization of the festival which was first held in 1984. In addition to the festival, Druga Godba is also involved in publishing, promoting and representing promising young musicians and groups, while in addition to producing cultural events. New York based hip-hop singer and poet Akua Naru also participated in the festival dedicated to rap and hip-hop music. Akua Naru’s program consisted of a writing



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

workshop for 25 people up to 30 years in age, a roundtable discussion, and a concert. As a woman and as “a carrier of the torch for Global Black Culture,” Akua Naru shared her experiences as an artist in today’s world with fellow female warriors. Akua Naru’s concert was packed with people and positive energy.

House of Experiments

“SCIENCETIVAL 2014”

(5,000 USD)

The House of Experiments organized a festival which displayed new, interesting, and attractive ways to promote science among all generations, mainly among young people. The House of Experiments attracts more than 25,000 visitors a year. This is a hands-on science center with exhibits that can be performed by the visitors. The House of Experiments seeks to promote science among young generations in an effort to build a richer society, one that is open to the exchange of ideas, scientific discoveries, innovations in industry, and personal insights. The project is organized annually in several public locations throughout the center of Ljubljana. During the four days of Sciencetival 2014, people were able to watch and actively participate in a wide variety of science shows performed by Slovenian and foreign guests, including American science communicators Chris Chiaverina, Bob Friedhoffer, Brian Jones, Eugenia Etkina and Stanley Micklavzina. This year the festival celebrated its 5th anniversary and for this occasion the organizers prepared a special exhibit called “The Biking Bridge.” The activity was meant for those adults who wanted to test their fear of heights by riding a bike on a wire across Ljubljanica river. More than 3000 visitors attended Sciencetival.



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Cankarjev dom

“55TH LJUBLJANA JAZZ FESTIVAL”

(5,000 USD)

The 55th Annual Ljubljana Jazz Festival brought to Slovenia a Grammy Award winning American jazz vocalist, songwriter, and actor Gregory Porter, delivering his contemporary vision of jazz, soul and gospel at the soul-out Open Air Theater Krizanke venue. He won a Grammy in 2014 for best jazz vocal album, *Liquid Spirit*. His debut album, *Water*, released in 2010 via Motéma Music, was nominated for Best Jazz Vocal album at the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards. The 55th Ljubljana Jazz Festival boasted an impressive array of compelling configurations in a relaxed yet bold atmosphere. Apart from the saxophone, this year's leitmotif, the dominant theme of the event was a generous measure of free jazz and contemporary practices of experimental improvisation. The records show that the festival was attended by more than 2000 visitors. The festival received excellent media coverage and an exceptional response from the public. The 55th Ljubljana Jazz Festival featured a wide variety of events and numerous concerts.

Swing Dance Association Maribor

“MARIBOR SWING FESTIVAL”

(1,500 USD)

The Swing Dance Association of Maribor organized an international swing dance festival featuring U.S. dance instructor Andrew Sutton. The festival consisted of a two day workshop which allowed participants to learn basic and advanced techniques of Swing styles. Traditionally this is a 3 day event, where first day is dedicated to teambuilding, sightseeing and e.g. movie night (usually old B&W swing themed movies). The second day is dedicated to thematic dancing workshops and the third day consists of two level workshops in the morning and in the afternoon which are called »an extra dancing activity«. Friday and



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Saturday evenings were designated dance evenings which included social dancing to authentic swing era music. Andrew Sutton is a World Champion, US Open Champion, and an American Champion, has performed on NBC, and is the founder of DanceNinjas.com. He is an internationally known professional dancer and dance teacher, a USA dance competitions award winner, and an owner of a dance school. He has visited to 35 countries & 229 cities teaching studying dance along the way. Andrew specializes in teaching dance fundamentals that cross over in every form of dance. Instead of improving one dance to one style of music, Andrew helps to improve all of one's dancing abilities to every song one loves. The festival was attended by 150 participants.

DUM Association of Artists

“WHAT IF TIME STOOD STILL?”

(4,000 USD)

The U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana supported an exhibition by visual artists Ed Ruscha and Claudia Juskowicz titled: “What if Time Stood Still?” This project created a dialogue between American conceptual art in the past and present. The past was represented by art created by world famous artist Edward Ruscha while the present was represented in film through the eyes of video artist Claudia Juskowicz. The exhibition was divided in two parts, one side presenting Ruscha’s work called “Every Building on Sunset Strip” from 1966, while the other part showing Juskowicz’s video work called “Every Building on Avenida Alfonso Ugarte,” created in 2011.

Slovene Writers’ Association

“29TH VILENICA INTERNATIONAL LITERARY FESTIVAL”

(2,700 USD)

The 29th Vilenica International Literary Festival, one of the largest festivals of its kind in Slovenia, aims primarily to create a platform for writers, poets, essayist,



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

critics, and publishers from Central European countries to exhibit their work. The theme of this year's edition is "Crossing the Language Bridge." This festival takes place annually in Lipica as well as at other venues throughout Slovenia. Since the first international festival Vilenica in 1986, the climax of the event has been the presentation of the Vilenica International Literary Prize, awarded by the Slovene Writers' Association, in accordance with its statute, to a Central European author for outstanding achievements in the fields of literary and essay writing. American publisher John O'Brien, American-Slovene writer and translator Erica Johnson Debeljak, and American writer and editor Linda Spalding participated at the 29th Vilenica International Literary festival. By inviting American writers to actively participate in the festival, the project aims to address the Mission's goals of promoting American culture in Slovenia.

Studio Dansa

"NEW ORLEANS SECOND LINE REVIVAL IN LJUBLJANA"

(1,025 USD)

The "New Orleans Second Line Revival" took place in the center of Ljubljana on July 26, 2014. The purpose of the second line is to present to a wider audience American swing culture through music and dance. A band named "Zeleni Zajci" and The Papirnica Vevče Wind Orchestra paraded on the streets of the old town, followed by a procession of dancers, who cheered, sang, and clapped. These musical groups performed at interval stops throughout the old town. Onlookers filmed with mobile phones, photographers took memorable snapshots, and the dancers attracted the observers to join the procession. A host guided the audience through different eras of swing music. Along the way, professional swing dancers showcased their dancing skills and invited others to participate. Around 200 participants took part in this fun procession of dance and music. The Second line is a tradition in brass band parades which take place in New



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Orleans, Louisiana. The purpose of the second line is to pay tribute to artists that have passed on.

SiNAPSA, Slovenian Neuroscience Association

“BRAIN AND...LECTURES ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF HUMAN BRAIN”

(5,000 USD)

SiNAPSA, the Slovenian Neuroscience Association, unites Slovenian professionals and researchers in the field of neuroscience. Top Slovenian neuroscientists gave a series of 48 lectures on different aspects of the human brain titled “Brain and ...” which accompanied the 3-month long exhibition: “Brain - The Inside Story,” taking place at the Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre. The exhibition “Brain - The Inside Story” was prepared by the American Museum of Natural History of New York, in collaboration with Codice, Idee per la cultura, Torino, Italy, and the Department of Culture at the Municipality of Milan; Guangdong Science Center, Guangzhou, China; and Parque de las Ciencias, Granada, Spain. The exhibition “Brain – The Inside Story” explores how the human brain works, specifically as it relates to the senses (“Your Sensing Brain”), emotions (“Your Emotional Brain”), thinking (“Your Thinking Brain”), how the brain ages (“Your Changing Brain”), and how technological advances may change our brains in the future (“Your 21st Century Brain”). The estimation of the number of participants at these lectures was at around 1400. One of the major goals of SiNAPSA is to promote knowledge about the human brain as well as raise awareness among the general public and policy makers about brain diseases.



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Institute for Non-profit Communication Divja misel

“AMERICAN LIBRARY UNDER THE TREETOPS”

(7,000 USD)

The the main objective of “American Library under the Treetops” is to promote and deepen the understanding and appreciation of American literature in Slovenia. Divja Misel has gained wider recognition by setting up open-air libraries – “Libraries under the Treetops”. This is a social awarness project that began in the capital in the summer of 2005. “American Library under the Treetops” is a mobile library that reanimates public spaces in Slovenian towns during the summer and offers free reading and relaxation within an innovative design. The general objective of this project is to foster the social inclusion of the public through books and intergenerational encounters in public space within a pleasant setting. The “American Library under the Treetops” would be presented as a library out in the open, located in Ljubljana's city center. The space would provide two benefits to the public: it would offer an informative insight into American culture and literature (offering a wide array of literature classics, books on art, history, culture, as well as a variety of American magazines and newspapers) and work as a public space for relaxation and offer a pleasant stop while walking about the city center. By implementing innovative and easy-to-use furniture (bookshelves, magazine boxes and deck-chairs) within the setting of Congress Square, organizers ensure a natural and relaxing atmosphere for reading, as well as a continuous flow of visitors, who may, through passing by, stop to get a book or a glimpse of one of the magazines on display. Because of a great selection of books and magazines offered during this event, American culture and literature was able to be presented to more than 150 visitors of all ages and interests a day.



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Otok, Institute for Development of Film Culture

“10TH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL KINO OTOK”

(4,000 USD)

The Kino Otok - Isola Cinema Festival is a specialized non-competitive film festival which focuses on contemporary film production from so-called third world cinematography: Asia, South America, Middle East, East Europe, and Africa. The international film festival was launched in 2004 in the small coastal town of Izola. Although it is a relatively small festival, its specific film program, which usually brings several hard-to-see films and many well-known international guests, attracts a broad national and international interest. Through the cultural grant, U.S. art film production was introduced to the Slovenian audience. Legendary film directors James Benning and Richard Linklater were presented through their work and also through a recently produced documentary by Gabe Klinger titled: “Double Play: James Benning and Richard Linklater,” which received an award for “Best Documentary” at the Venice Film Festival in 2013. Up and coming U.S. film scholar, historian, critic, and curator Gabe Klinger visited the 10th International Film Festival Kino Otok - Isola Cinema. He teaches film at the University of Illinois and at Columbia College in Chicago, Illinois. One of the early works of filmmaker James Benning, a short film called “Chicago Loop,” was also shown to the audience. Following the screenings, a discussion between Gabe Klinger and film critic Michael Pattison took place, discussing themes such as filmmaking, reception of films, and their meaning within the cultural sphere and society in general.

Vintage Society for Preservation and Development of Swing and Rockabilly Culture

“VINTAGE SWING FESTIVAL 2014”

(4,200 USD)

The U.S. Embassy supported the Vintage Swing Festival 2014, also known as “ViSwiFt,” which took place in Celje on October 17-19. The aim of the festival



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

was to celebrate swing dance, music, style, and friendship. The festival consisted of dance workshops, lectures on swing dance history and its influence today, and evening swing dance parties. These parties offered live music and included exhibits such as an old-fashioned hairdressing booth and a working vintage photo booth. Besides hosting world class swing dance instructors, such as two well-known U.S. dance instructors Dax Hock and Sarah Breck, the organizers also hosted living legend Norma Miller, also known as “The Queen of Swing.” At the age of 94, this amazing lady impressed the audience with her clear mind, sharp attitude and her dance moves. It was almost unreal hearing first-hand the stories about her youthful encounters with Ella Fitzgerald, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Ethel Waters, and other well-known jazz musicians.

Kulturno društvo Obala Jazz

“SOUL 'N' JAZZ LEGACY PROJECT”

(5,000 USD)

The U.S. Embassy supported the “Soul 'n' Jazz Legacy Project” with performers Gwen Hughes and James Thompson, taking place in various locations throughout Slovenia from January 20 through February 5, 2015. Along with the four concerts for performed general public, Gwen and James also met with students in Ajdovščina and Piran. Gwen Hughes has recorded her last album “Instead of Light in New York” with world-renowned music producer Danny Kopelson of Blue Note Records. The album was first introduced to the audience during her winter Slovenian-European tour in January 2009. Her first two albums were nominated for a Grammy Award, which is a great honor, and she was awarded two Merit Grammy awards. A sax player and a vocalist, James Thompson currently lives in Italy and has had the opportunity to work together with Italian musicians like Zuccherò and Spagna. The “Soul 'n' Jazz Legacy Project” was able to bring the history of American jazz and soul music to many of



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

the smaller communities in Slovenia; communities that would not be able to have the opportunity to interact with music and art of this caliber.

Cankarjev dom

“25TH LJUBLJANA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL”

(5,000 USD)

The 25th Ljubljana International Film Festival, popularly known as LIFFE, is the largest and most important film festival in Slovenia. In its 25 years of existence, the festival has opened windows to the inhabitants of Slovenia onto the world's cultural arena. The festival is organized by the Cankarjev Dom Cultural and Congress Center Film Program, but films are also screened at several other cinemas throughout Ljubljana. Once considered a festival of only art films, this event has slowly become a mainstream festival that must not be missed. Last year more than 100 films were presented over a period of two weeks at different locations throughout Ljubljana. The recent film festival featured ten American films: “Night Moves” by Kelly Reichardt, “Birdman” by Alejandro Gonzales Inarritu, “The Wizard of Oz” by Victor Fleming, “Foxcatcher” by Bennett Miller, “Whiplash” by Damien Chazelle, “Buzzard” by Joel Potrykus, “Palo Alto” by Gia Coppola, “Listen Up Philip” by Alex Ross Perry, “Love is Strange” by Ira Sachs, “Blue Ruin” by Jeremy Saulnier.

The Ljubljana International Film Festival is the largest and most important film festival in Slovenia. The festival was originally launched in 1989 and was known as the Ljubljana Film Art Festival. The main purpose of the festival is to familiarize audiences with non-Hollywood films, which are usually not screened in commercial Slovene cinemas because the art cinema distribution network is relatively new in Slovenia.



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Slovene Chamber Music Theatre

“GIAN CARLO MENOTTI - THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF”

(5,000 USD)

The Slovene Chamber Music Theater performed a “grotesque operatic thriller in one act” written by Italian-American composer Gian Carlo Menotti. The work tells of the twisted tale of morals. Commissioned by NBC radio in the 1930s, “The Old Maid and the Thief” was one of the earliest operas composed specifically for radio. Upon the opera's premiere in 1939, the work was received with wide enthusiasm by American music critics. The aim of this project was to introduce the chamber opera genre to the Slovenian public and highlight the contribution of modern American composers to the evolution of twentieth-century opera. Alongside three performances for general public, the Slovene Chamber Music Theater performed twice for a young audience. Approximately 800 young people attended the performance.

Kulturno društvo Veronikine zgodbe

“LARRY CORYELL’S OPERA WAR AND PEACE”

(7,000 USD)

The U.S. Embassy supported the world premiere of Larry Coryell’s opera “War and Peace,” based on the Russian novel of Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy. Larry Coryell is an American jazz fusion guitarist. He has played in a number of popular Northwest bands, including the Dynamics, while living in Seattle. In 2007, Coryell published an autobiography titled “Improvising: My Life in Music.” His opera “War and Peace” is a musical fusion between jazz and opera and will be done in co-production with “Veronicas Tales” at the University of Ljubljana along with the Academy of Music, the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television and the Faculty of Computer and Information Science. The main goal of the project was to represent different



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

forms of jazz music, mainly from the jazz masters, and propagate jazz music and its philosophy to the Slovenian public, particularly to the younger audience.

Big Band Krško

“1ST INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY KRŠKO”

(5,000 USD)

This project was a set of public events which included screening of various jazz movies, workshops, and concerts which took place in Krško on April 30th. The aim of the event was to celebrate the history of jazz music and culture. The program also included a concert by Big Band Krško featuring American singer Carole Alstron. The event took place in front of the Krško Cultural House and was free of charge. The U.S. singer Carole Alstron played leading roles in several musicals such as Cole Porter's "Kiss Me, Kate" (Kate), A.L. Webber's "Jesus Christ Superstar" (Mary Magdalene), Mitch Leigh's "Der Mann von LaMancha" (Aldonza), Leonard Bernstein's "Trouble In Thahiti," and "West Side Story" (Anita). Carole appeared in theatre pieces as well as performed classical, contemporary, jazz, gospel, and blues music in radio and television. Approximately 300 people attended the 1st International Jazz Day in Krško.

Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana

“DESIGN (DIS)ABILITY”

(5,000 USD)

The production center RogLab of Ljubljana and Open Style Lab of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the United States organized an international collaborative workshop titled “DESIGN (DIS)ABILITY”, which took place from March 30th through April 3rd in Ljubljana. The international collaborative workshop was led by two mentors from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. Grace Teo and William Li. Dr. Grace Teo is the founder of Open Style Lab, a 10-week program at the Massachusetts Institute of



U.S. Embassy
Ljubljana

Technology which teams up student designers, engineers and occupational therapists to create functional yet stylish clothing for people with disabilities. The workshop in Ljubljana was focused on design, disabilities, and assistive technology. For over a month, teams of 15 participants from 9 countries worked closely together with three people who have disabilities: Silvo, Tanja, and Katarina. These people were very glad to be given the opportunity to work with the participants and were very satisfied with the work and the outcomes of the workshop. On Friday, April 3, the final results were presented to the public along with a discussion titled “Fashion, Technologies and Physical Disabilities.” The aim of the project was to raise awareness about design and disability.



Cultural Grants Program

Dancing Dimension Club.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Museum of Architecture and Design.....	2
Druga Godba	Error! Bookmark not defined.
House of Experiments.....	3
Cankarjev dom.....	5
Swing Dance Association Maribor	5
DUM Association of Artists.....	6
Slovene Writers' Association	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Studio Dansa.....	6
SiNAPSA, Slovenian Neuroscience Association.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Institute for Non-profit Communication Divja misel	9
Otok, Institute for Development of Film Culture	10
Vintage Society for Preservation and Development of Swing and Rockabilly Culture	10
Kulturno društvo Obala Jazz	10
Cankarjev dom.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.1
Slovene Chamber Music Theatre	123
Kulturno društvo Veronikine zgodbe	Error! Bookmark not defined.3
Big Band Krško	Error! Bookmark not defined.4
Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana	13