



Have you ever been on Triglav?

Academy of Design and National Museum of Contemporary History (MNZS), 2011

Partner 7: National Museum of Contemporary History, Slovenia > Kaja Širok

1. Exhibition Concept

In this project 18 students of visual communication and interior design from the Academy of Design (AD) in Ljubljana, have explored the issues of national identity. The project was run by Axel Vogelsang, lecturer and researcher at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts. The project was dealing with the question – What does it mean to be Slovenian? The project emerged during the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Slovenian independence. Since the national identity is expressed in various ways, the students were exploring many fields of such: architecture, language, symbols, typography, personal history, geography, fashion, imagery, sports, music, etc. The methods of work were adjusted to the diverse topic of the project. The students used photography, typography, illustrations, interviews (oral history), spatial design, movies, textiles, etc. The resulting exhibition *Have you ever been on Triglav?* Inaugurated on 23rd of June 2011, attempts to craft answers via audiovisual means, photographs, personal accounts that tell the various tales about growing up in Slovenia and creating a Slovenian identity.¹ The photographs tell stories that hardly fit in the old, dusty mould of paradigms, taboos and ideas about identity. The project was based on an interdisciplinary workshop about storytelling and designing the interactive space with stories, represented in an exhibition at the end.

¹ Triglav is the highest mountain in Slovenia and it is the symbol of the Slovene nation. It is a national symbol and its stylized profile is part of the Slovenian coat of arms.

2. Reception

The project was not centralized only on Slovenian students, so there was an international participation, since the identities are shaped from the national point of view, as well as from the “outside” view. The main theme was the role of identity in the everyday self-perception and answers were posed to students - is Slovene identity important? Does the idea of Slovene identity have a meaning? What is typically Slovene and how is it perceived nowadays between its populations? Or, even more important, how the younger generation, especially the ones born in 1991, perceived themselves, their nation and its identity? All those questions and the whole project were to explain the importance of the construction of memories from the present understanding of identity. To explain how narration about everyday life involves the construction of self in narration, and how our perception, concepts, debates on past are created in everyday dialogues. In this case social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, etc. were an essential part of research time during the workshop.

A distinct emphasis is placed on the fact that the younger generation talks about their present situation via photographs and personal recounts and interviews in a critical way, exposing and blowing away the stereotypical view on Slovenians as “good-hearted, open, honest and hard-working people”. To quote the exhibition: “What’s the Slovenian national sport? ENVY.”

3. Exhibition Design

The main goal of this presentation (and its visual proposal) was not to show how the younger generation perceived their environment, but also to show how oral history can be used in exhibition design, on what level it can change the design and how to include the visitor inside the narrated story. The exhibition was made almost costless, out of gathered materials, which students managed to collect during the workshops.

4. Visitors Approach-Activation/Participation

The highlight of this project lies in the fact, that it was made by students and that the MNZS has left the museum entirely to them. Before the exhibition, the students had to fill a questionnaire which asked questions about certain aspects of national and personal identity. They had to prepare a 30 second introduction in which they answered the question "Why did you choose to become a designer?" Students were also asked to take photos and moving images of what they thought was typically Slovenian. The challenge was not only to refer to the typical tourist clichés but to take a closer look at what makes Slovenians and their country tick. After that, students went out and asked people about what they thought was typically Slovenian. The students were divided up in different groups with different tasks: One group asked people to write down three words or concepts they thought were typically Slovenian onto a piece of cardboard. A variation was to ask people to draw typical Slovenian things. The interviewees were then photographed together with the cardboard. Another version was to take photos of people posing with a typical Slovenian object.

They set up a Facebook group (my favorite spot) as a research and PR-tool. After posting on the group each student was then asked to invite hers or his FB friends to post their favorite spots. This campaign was only running for about two weeks at the end of the workshop and they collected about 40 different posts. More important though was, that at the end they had about 400 members in that group which they could invite to the exhibition.



The importance of the exhibition lies as well in the idea to give the audience a chance to express their own opinions and experiences with regards to Slovenian identity. For this reason the group integrated some participatory elements to the exhibition. The name of the exhibition was "Have you been on Triglav?" To climb mount Triglav is also seen as some sort of initiation ceremony for Slovenians even though many haven't been there. That was the basis for the first participative element of the exhibition. At the entrance to the exhibition the visitor was confronted with the question "Have you been on Triglav?" There were laid out ballots on which this question could be answered with either "yes" or "no".

5. Conclusion: Have you ever been on Triglav? exhibition in respect to the COP1 and COP2

The project emerged the question about identity, not just Slovenian identity, but also identity in general and it also included the foreigners with their idea of a Slovenian identity. It also inspired the young adults (the population, the least present in the museums) think about the subject (identity), which is again one of the things, not very present among that population (Toolkit 1 – the object immanent, comparative, and thematic and beyond Europe approach). The integration process was partially driven in the participation of the foreign people, talking about the Slovene identity (Toolkit 2 – integrating cultural Europe (social arena). The whole project was in the hands of students (under supervision of the professors) and they worked intensively by activating other people, among them also (non)visitors of the museum, where the exhibition was at the end. The whole exhibition had some very simple participation opportunities for the visitors – post notes (on which the explanation of their favorite spot was) to be put on the big map of Slovenia. During the exhibition there was a collection of the recipes of Slovenian dishes – food as a part of the identity. During the project itself there was also a competition among the students of AD for the logo and typography for the exhibition (Toolkit 3 – activation, participation and & role modification). Some objects can have different meanings among different generations (the students had a different view on Slovenian symbols of identity as older generations – more critical), which could also serve as the base for the new dialogs – but perhaps this was a bit too much for that project, at the same time it can be kept in mind for the next ones (Toolkit 4 – synesthetic translation of perspective). In this project the social media was used as a serious research tool and PR-tool at the same time. It helped by reaching the young adults and collecting the new audiences (Toolkit 5 - Social web and interaction).

6. Bibliography

<http://slovenianidentity.posterous.com/pages/about-this-project> (14.08.2013)

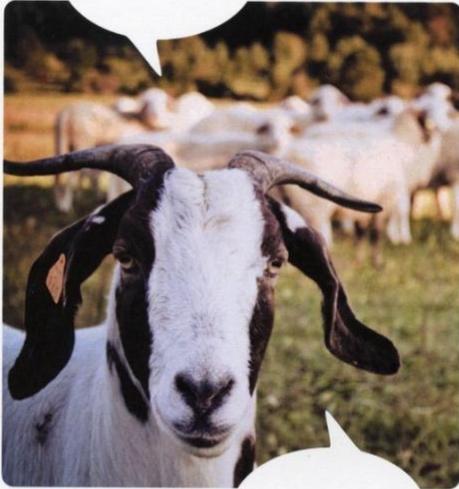
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<http://www.24ur.com/novice/samostojnih20let/foto-in-video-kaj-pomeni-biti-slovenec.html> (14.08.2013 - Link with a video – partially in Slovenian, partially in English – just to get the idea)



How long does it take to cook »jota«?



I have no idea.

You are cordially invited to the opening on Thursday, the 23 June at 18 p.m. at the National Museum of Contemporary History. Slovenians, part-Slovenians, part-time Slovenians and non-Slovenians are welcome! ... or just drop in any other day from 24 June to 24 July 2011.

For more information visit slovenianidentity.org.

ALI STE ŽE BILI
NA TRIGLAVU?
HAVE YOU BEEN
ON TRIGLAV?
Nacionalni muzej sodobne zgodovine

What does it mean to be Slovenian?

Is it about your birth place, the passport, the language? Is it maybe about your attitude? Do you need to know how to make »goveja juha« or to visit Triglav to become a proper Slovene? And by the way, how old do you think Slovenia actually is?

These and many other questions have been at the core of the research done by 17 Students of visual communication and interior design from the Academy of Design, Ljubljana. They asked themselves, they went to talk to their friends, their families and also to strangers in the street and ... they did some Slovenian cooking together and discussed the issue over some proper Jota.

The results of this research can be seen at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana from 24 June to 24 July 2011. It contains interviews, photos, drawings, recipes and some singing. Now it is your turn: Come to the exhibition and tell us about your Triglav experience, give us your opinion on Slovenian cooking and share your favourite places in Slovenia.



Luzern University of Applied Sciences and Arts
**HOCHSCHULE
LUZERN**

Art & Design
Academy of Design, Luzern

Leaflet as an invitation to the opening of the exhibition and at the same time for promoting the project, AD and MNZS, 2011



Culture

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

ALI STE ŽE BILI NA TRIGLAVU? HAVE YOU BEEN ON TRIGLAV?
 Mojca Rudman VSD
 VSD Student Exhibition

Have you been on Triglav?



What does it mean to be Slovenian?
 Is it about your birth place, the passport, the language? Is it maybe about your attitude? Do you need to know how to make »goveja juha« or to visit Triglav to become a proper Slovene? And by the way, how old do you think Slovenia actually is? These and many other questions have been at the core of the research done by 17 Students of visual communication and interior design from the Academy of Design, Ljubljana. They asked themselves, they went to talk to their friends, their families and also to strangers in the street and ... they did some Slovenian cooking together and discussed the issue over some proper Jota. The results of this research can be seen at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana from 24 June to 24 July 2011. It contains interviews, photos, drawings, recipes and some singing. Now it is your turn: Come to the exhibition and tell us about your Triglav experience, give us your opinion on Slovenian cooking and share your favourite places in Slovenia.

Are you nuts?

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Muziej Slovenije
 National Museum of Contemporary History

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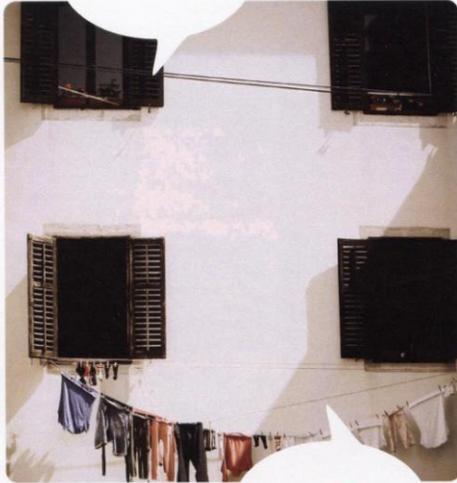


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ALI STE ŽE BILI NA TRIGLAVU? HAVE YOU BEEN ON TRIGLAV?
 Projektna Skupščina VŠB VŠG Ljubljana | 2011

What is Slovenian national sport?



What does it mean to be Slovenian?
 Is it about your birth place, the passport, the language? Is it maybe about your attitude? Do you need to know how to make »goveja juha« or to visit Triglav to become a proper Slovene? And by the way, how old do you think Slovenia actually is? These and many other questions have been at the core of the research done by 17 Students of visual communication and interior design from the Academy of Design, Ljubljana. They asked themselves, they went to talk to their friends, their families and also to strangers in the street and ... they did some Slovenian cooking together and discussed the issue over some proper Jota. The results of this research can be seen at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana from 24 June to 24 July 2011. It contains interviews, photos, drawings, recipes and some singing. Now it is your turn: Come to the exhibition and tell us about your Triglav experience, give us your opinion on Slovenian cooking and share your favourite places in Slovenia.

Envy.

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 Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sports
 Slovenian National Museum of Contemporary History
 Ljubljana University of Applied Sciences and Arts
HOCHSCHULE LUZERN
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A glimpse on the exhibition in MNZS (Photo: Sarah Brevar, 2011)



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