

The true icon of the Slovenian landscape is the hayrack (kozolec). Their picturesque appearance gives it a “special stamp” to Slovenia’s cultural landscape. It was the impressionistic Slovenian painter, Ivan Grohar (1867-1911) who had painted the hayrack as the defining image of the Slovenian countryside. Simple hayracks are not unknown in other parts of alpine central Europe, but decorated or plain are unique to Slovenia.



Another form of folk art is the painting of “Beehive Fronts”. Slovenia alone has developed such a unique kind of art. In Slovenian history there is a rich tradition of affection and love for the bee. According to Dr Jozko Savli, beehive fronts called “celnice” achieved



an esthetic effect on the outside of the bee house where they joined into a single picturesque design. A large number of the 600 motifs are biblical in nature. The golden age of beehive art was from the 18th to early 20th centuries.

Bobbin lace-making (Klekljanje) is a unique phenomenon in Slovenia. Although the skill has always been practiced in other parts of the country, it was developed most intensively in the Idrija region. The Idrija lace (idrijska cipka) is regarded as representative of Slovenian heritage and creativity in the field of handicrafts and as such a popular gift for state and promotional purposes. The lace-making school in Idrija was established in 1876 and has continued operating without interruption to this day. Annual exhibitions and competitions produce numerous technically and artistically accomplished pieces by the many outstanding practitioners of the handicraft.



Lake Bled (Blejsko jezero)

The lake is situated in a picturesque environment, surrounded by mountains and forests. A medieval castle stands above the lake and on the only natural island in Slovenia sits the Assumption of Mary's Pilgrimage Church built in the 15th century. The church has a 52 meter tower and 99 steps leading up to the building.

The lake is also famous among rowers since it has very good conditions for the sport. It hosted the World Rowing Championships in 1966, 1979 and in 1989. It will host the World Rowing Championship again in 2011.



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www.twincitiesslovenians.org

Art & Architecture of SLOVENIA



A green piece of Europe...

This colorful land with its well preserved natural environment is situated in the center of Europe. Slovenian geography with its rolling hills and mountains has served as a backdrop for Slovenia’s art and architecture. Ljubljana, Slovenia’s capital mirrors the great periods of art: Classicism, Renaissance, Baroque and Art Nouveau.

One is struck by the number of churches and castles built at the tops of hills. One third of the monuments of Slovenia’s cultural heritage are sacral buildings. Some 500-600 castles or remains of castles exist in Slovenia today.

Slovenian contributions to Impressionism:

One art critic, Sonja Vadjal called Slovenian Impressionism the “first consciously organized expression of the Slovenian character in art”. Slovene impressionism revealed itself around 1900 with an exhibition in Ljubljana of the work of four artists: Richard Jakopic, Matija Jama, Ivan Grohar and Matej Sternen. Even though the four differed as to what constituted memorable art, each contributed to the shaping of the country’s maturing nationalistic aspirations. Richard Jacopic was the accepted natural leader of the group and it was largely through his efforts that there be an exhibition pavilion - Slovenian Art Gallery. It was a first in Ljubljana and Slovenia.

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Matija Jama, according to Vadjal, felt that nature and its impression was his standard but the painting was intended to “make an impact on the eye, not the intelligence”. In this he differed diametrically from Jakopic’s view of impressionism.

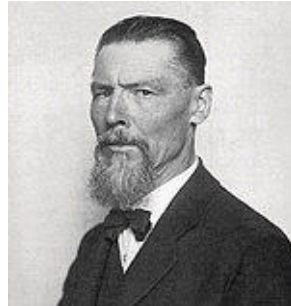
H. Gregory Prusheck

Art critics call him the “best of the modernistic painters of Chicago”. Other American sources called him the “vagabond artist who enjoyed presenting exhibitions for the masses”. The above painting is titled, *Landscape Composition* and was painted in 1931.



Slovenian Architects :

Joze Plecnik (1872-1957), Architectural legend of Slovenia holds a special place in the history of the Slovene nation. He became one of the leading architects of Central Europe and a classic architect of world renown. He envisioned Ljubljana as the new Athens based on his perceptions of ancient Rome, of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque periods and the Mediterranean.



With his designs, plans and landscaping he breathed beauty and style into the city core, covering the areas of the Ljubljana castle, old and new sectors of the city,

embankments of the river, parks and squares throughout the city. Specific areas carried the Plecnik style: Tivoli Park, Congress Square with Park Zvezda, Tromostovje (three bridges), the National and University Library, Church of St. Francis in Siska, the Baraga Seminary, Ljubljana Stadium, and Zale cemetery complex. Plecnik’s Ljubljana is a “monument to a man’s love for his country and pride in his Slovenian heritage”.



John Jager, a Slovenian architect who designed two Catholic churches in Minnesota: St. Bernard’s in St. Paul and St. Stephen’s near St. Cloud. He founded the Hiawatha Heights Improvement Association in Minneapolis which

encouraged any new development to be sensitive to the wildness beauty of the neighborhood. In 1905 he was a key member of the Minneapolis City Planning Commission.



Alexander Papesh, was America’s foremost builder of stadiums including the University of Texas in Austin, West Virginia Coliseum, Three River Stadium in Pittsburgh and Robert Kennedy Stadium in Washington, DC.

Frank Strgar, Born in Slovenia in 1932, on a small farm near Bled. He was educated in Slovenia and Austria, then immigrated to Canada and eventually moved to the US. He then earned his certification in Civil Engineering in Seattle, in 1967. He moved to Minnesota in 1970 where he eventually founded SRF (Strgar, Roscoe, Fausch), Consulting Group, Inc. in Wayzata, MN.



Under the leadership of Franc Strgar, SRF Consulting Group produced many noteworthy structures, among them; the High Bridge over the Mississippi in St. Paul, the Bloomington Ferry Bridge over the Minnesota River, I-35 E through St. Paul. Slovenians are proud of his creative contribution to Minnesota's infrastructure.