



# Architectural walking tour of Ljubljana

Area total  
**163.8 km<sup>2</sup>**

Elevation  
**295 m (968 ft)**

Population total  
(1 January 2013)  
**274,826**

University of Ljubljana  
Faculty of Architecture



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A

B

C

D

E

A. La petit cafe & restaurant

1. Trg francoske revolucije
  2. Križanke
  3. Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica - NUK
  4. Vegova ulica
  5. Univerza Ljubljana
  6. Kongresni trg
  7. Mesarski most
- B. Makalonca
8. Tromostovje
  9. Ljubljanski grad
  10. Peglezn
  11. Zmajski most
  12. Tržnica
  13. Mesarski most
- C. Cacao

14. Miklošičeva ulica
15. Grand hotel Union
16. Zadrúžna gospodarska banka
17. Kozolec
18. Metalka
19. Nebotičnik

D. Nebotičnik

20. Narodna galerija
21. Moderna galerija
22. Park Tivoli
23. Državni Zbor Republike Slovenije
24. Trg republike
25. Cankarjev dom
26. Ferentovi vrtovi
27. Rimski zid

E. Trnovski zvon, Sax pub

28. Trnovski pristan - plaža
29. Fakulteta za arhitekturo

A. La petit cafe & restaurant

1. The French revolution square
  2. Križanke
  3. The National and University library
  4. The Vegova street
  5. The University of Ljubljana
  6. The Congress square
  7. The cobbler's bridge
- B. Makalonca
8. The Triple bridge
  9. The Ljubljana castle
  10. The Iron
  11. The Dragon bridge
  12. The market
  13. The Butcher's bridge
- C. Cacao

14. The Miklošičeva street
15. The Grand hotel Union
16. The Cooperative commercial bank
17. The Hayrack
18. Metalka
19. The Skyscraper

D. The Skyscraper

20. The National gallery of Slovenia
21. The Gallery of modern arts
22. Park Tivoli
23. The National Assembly building
24. The Republic square
25. The Culture and congress centre
26. The Residential area in the Ferant garden
27. The Roman wall and colonia Iulia Aemona

E. Trnovski zvon, Sax pub

28. Trnovo enbankment - the beach
29. The Faculty of Architecture



POI



tour visit



start / end of tour



places to drink and eat

## **ABOUT PLEČNIK'S LJUBLJANA:**

The famous architect Jože Plečnik (1872-1957) tried to model Ljubljana on ancient Athens. The multitude of his creations in the city referred to as a whole as "Plečnik's Ljubljana", is considered to be one of the 20th century's most important total works of art.

Plečnik left a lasting mark on three central European cities: Vienna, Prague and Ljubljana. According to Friedrich Achleitner, a renowned art critic from Vienna, Plečnik with his singular style may come to be considered an architect of the future.

Upon his return from Vienna and Prague to Ljubljana in 1921, Plečnik accepted the post of professor at the newly established University of Ljubljana and focused all his creative energies to designing the city. The so-called Plečnik's Ljubljana, a unique example of urban planning, is considered to be one of the 20th century's most important total works of art.

In designing today's nation's new capital, Plečnik tried to use modern approaches while modelling the city on ancient Athens. His unique style is characterized by the use of redesigned classical architectural elements combined in the master architect's own special way. Plečnik redesigned Ljubljana with consideration to the city's water and land axes. He undertook the building of several of Ljubljana's key buildings and renovation of numerous existing ones.

Plečnik's best known works include the National and University Library building, the Ljubljanica river embankments and bridges, the most notable among the latter being the Triple Bridge and the Cobblers' Bridge, the Central Market, the Križanke Summer Theatre, the Bežigrad Stadium, the funeral home at the Žale cemetery, and the Church of St. Michael in the Marshes.

Plečnik left his own distinctive mark also on Ljubljana's surrounding areas, where a number of buildings, monuments and churches were renovated in his signature style.



**OUR TOUR:**

Our shortened tour will take us to the following works by Plačnik:

National and University Library building

Vegova street

Ljubljana river embankments

Triple Bridge

Cobblers' Bridge

Central Market

Križanke Summer Theatre

**OUR TIMEFRAME:**

We will commence our tour depending on the weather on Wednesday 17th June at 14:00 or on Saturday 20th June at 14:00. The start of the tour will be at the rear entrance of the Faculty of Architecture. The tour will take about 2 hours, we will conclude it at the same location as where we started. Your guide will be Janez P. Grom ( mobile - 0038640453349 ).

# 1

## Trg francoske revolucije *The French revolution Square*

It is characterised by a monument to Napoleon, designed by architect Jože Plečnik. It was erected in 1929 on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of Illyrian Provinces – a period when Napoleon's reforms enabled the development of Slovenian culture.

With the placement of the obelisk, architect Jože Plečnik tamed the otherwise irregular shape of the square and directed the views to the Castle and along the Vegova towards the Kongreni trg. The obelisk with the dust from the grave of a fallen French soldier consists of roughly treated rectangular solids of Brač marble, with golden inscriptions engraved. Later, the architect surrounded the foot of the obelisk with four concrete pillars to achieve the effect of gradation in height. The square at the park of Križanke ends in a stone wall, behind which there were once public toilets.

During the completion of NUK on the northern edge of the square, Plečnik designed a monument to Slovenian poet Simon Gregorčič. The poet's bust stands on a pedestal of old stones, which was initially covered by a wooden pergola with vines. Later, Plečnik replaced the pergola with arches made of artificial stone; both elements are reminiscent of Gregorčič's native Primorska landscape.





## Križanke *Križanke*

2

The renovation of the old Križanke monastery into an open theatre was Plečnik's last work. It brought closure to the idea of the Vegova street as the city's main cultural road. For the design, the architect chose the architectural language of the Renaissance, which was not frequently used in Slovenia due to historical circumstances. He paved the wide central courtyard of the monastery with concrete panels and added arcade balconies with loggias, embellished with sgraffito decorations. Below it, Plečnik arranged a bar for stand-up receptions, which his assistant Bitenc later remodelled into a restaurant. At the entrance to the courtyard there is a lapidarium with remains of the former Križanke church. In the renovation, Plečnik used a number of architectural elements of demolished buildings in Ljubljana: the pergola on the balcony at the monastery wall is supported by the columns from the Ducal Court (Knežji dvorec), and many other historical sculptures and portals are included. The renovation also included two small courtyards: The Devil's Courtyard, designed in Mediterranean style, and a small courtyard with an archaeological park. The Devil's Courtyards was intended for chamber performances; Plečnik remodelled it with a network of wall lamps and a new paving. Unfortunately, the great courtyard was not a suitable venue for the events; it was later changed into the lobby of the Open Air Theatre. The Open Air Theatre was added by architect Bitenc, who respectfully carried on the tradition of Plečnik's work. The Open Air Theatre is covered with an innovative canvas sliding roof.

### 3 Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica NUK *The National and University library*

It is among Plečnik's most important works; it is built on the site of the former Ducal Court (Knežji dvorec). The library was designed as a house of national knowledge. In design the building follows the example of a Renaissance palace with a distinct stone rusticity of the ground floor, a central part in brick and a prominent cornice. The brick façade envelope, broken up by stone – remnants of demolished houses in Ljubljana, makes its size seem smaller than it is, allowing it to not stand out from the skyline of brick roofs of old Ljubljana. The interior of the library was designed by Plečnik as the 'road to knowledge', i.e. path from the darkness of ignorance towards the light of knowledge. The entrance to the library is from a side street, intentionally not accentuated, hence contributing to a more profound experience of the Great hall. Plečnik designed the Great hall as a column hall with a staircase in dark polished Podpeč stone. On top of the staircase and transversal to it, there is the Great reading room, a light and open space. The transversal sides of the Reading room, forming a part of the façade towards the Vegova and Gosposka streets, are entirely glass-enclosed and broken up by a symbolic column in the middle. At the end of the 1990s, architect Marko Mušič renovated the basement areas, which were previously used as storage space, and partially redesigned the information areas on the ground floor.







## Vegova ulica *The Vegova street*

4

Running along the ditches of the former medieval walls of the Novi trg, was designed by Jože Plečnik as an important cultural axis, along which there are the buildings of the University, the former Realka secondary school, the Music Society, and the National and University Library. The Vegova Street is part of Plečnik's idea of a city feature running from the Trnovo Church along the Emonska to the Trg francoske revolucije and further to the Kongresni trg monumentally ending in the Južni trg, which was, in fact, never built.

It took Plečnik almost 15 years to develop the street – he started by renovating the façade of the Music Society building in 1932, on the occasion of the first Slovenian music festival. In front of the building, he designed a park on the remains of the medieval wall, which served as a leitmotif in the street design. The park is somewhat raised above the street and runs all the way to NUK, where it ends at the monument to Gregorčič, on the Trg francoske revolucije.

The park gives the otherwise busy street a celebratory and poetic atmosphere: raised above, it creates a hallowed entrance to cultural institutions and offers a resting area with a view of the street.

# 5

## Univeza Ljubljana *The University of Ljubljana* 1940 - 1944

The University of Ljubljana building is located on the site of the former Provincial Mansion (Deželni dvorec), where provincial governor deputies held office and resided until 1791. In 1821, the Provincial Mansion hosted the famous Congress of the Holy Alliance, which brought together several European monarchs (the Austrian emperor, the Russian tsar and the king of Naples) and is considered to have ended the Napoleonic Wars. The Mansion was destroyed in the earthquake of 1895. In 1902 a new building was constructed on its site. Since 1919 it has been the seat of the University of Ljubljana.

The design for the University building was made by the architect Jan Hrasky and later revised by Josef Hudetz. The building has four different facades designed in the style of German Renaissance with neo-Gothic elements. The fasades are decorated with 14 medallions depicting the coats of arms of Carniolan towns. A medallion depicting the provincial coat of arms adorns the front facade.

Above the main entrance, the facade is enhanced by a stately balcony and a cupola. The balcony is known as a place where numerous eminent political figures made their appearances on historic occasions. Other remarkable features of the building include a large inner courtyard, a small park with a fountain adorned with France Kralj's satire of Europe in front of the main entrance, numerous portraits of eminent university professors, and a clock turret surmounting the facade facing the Vegova ulica street.



## Kongresni trg *The Congress square*

6

It was built on the site of the former Capuchin monastery. The city designed the square for a special occasion – the Congress of the Holy Alliance in 1821, the alliance of the countries that defeated Napoleon and strived to preserve monarchical rule. The square was intended for parades and official events. The Congress of the Holy Alliance lifted Ljubljana from anonymity into which it was pushed after the end of Illyrian Provinces and the retreat of the French in 1813. The late 1920s were characterised by a systematic development of urban public space – streets were paved and infrastructure was being developed.

The north and south sides of the square end in buildings. The Wolfova, Vegova and Gosposka streets, Gerberjevo stopnišče (Gerber's Stairway) and Gledališka stolba (Theatre Staircase) all end in the square. The important buildings in the square include the Kazina building, the Slovenian Philharmonic, the Music Society building, St. Trinity Church (Ursuline Church) with the monastery, the secondary school Gimnazija Jožeta Plečnika and the Carniolan Provincial Mansion – the seat of the University of Ljubljana, i.e. the neo-Renaissance building by the Vienna-based architect Josip Hudetz.



# 7

## Čevljarški most *The Cobbler's bridge*

The site of the present Cobblers' Bridge, built by the architect Jože Plečnik between 1931 and 1932, was formerly occupied by a covered wooden bridge connecting the Mestni trg and Novi trg squares, two major parts of medieval Ljubljana. The bridge provided space for cobblers' workshops - hence the name Cobblers' Bridge. At its south end it was decorated with a statue of Christ, now kept in the Church of St. Florian. The 19th century saw the building of a new, cast iron bridge. On the initiative of the architect Jože Plečnik it was later moved to a site opposite Ljubljana's maternity hospital to connect the Zaloška cesta and Poljanska cesta roads.

Like Plečnik's Trnovo Bridge, the present Cobblers' Bridge was conceived as a broad balustraded platform connecting two different parts of the city. It was made of artificial stone like another of Plečnik's creations, the Triple Bridge. The characteristic appearance of the Cobblers' Bridge is due to its balustrades with short balusters and tall, different sized pillars topped with stone balls. The central two pillars support lamps and are slightly shorter, which gives the bridge a uniquely dynamic appearance. On the sides, the bridge platform is decorated with a geometric pattern. In 1991, all the balustrades were renovated.





## Tromostovje The Triple bridge

8

The central of the three bridges forming the Triple Bridge has stood in its place since 1842, when it replaced an old, strategically important medieval wooden bridge connecting the north-western European lands with south-eastern Europe and the Balkans. Between 1929 and 1932, the side bridges, intended for pedestrians, were added to the original stone bridge to a design by the architect Jože Plečnik, who thus created a unique architectural gem of Ljubljana.

Plečnik removed the metal railings from the old stone bridge and furnished all the three bridges with massive stone balustrades and lamps. From each of the side bridges, two stairways lead to terraces situated just above the river, where poplar trees were planted to contribute to the overall appearance of the Bridge.

It has a key position on the crossing of Plečnik's two urban axes, the river axis and the axis running between the Rožnik and castle hills. In 1992, the Triple Bridge was thoroughly renovated.

# 9

## Ljubljanski grad *The Ljubljana Castle*

It is a medieval castle in Ljubljana, Slovenia. It is located at Castle Hill (Grajski grič) overlooking the old town.

The oldest mention of the castle dates from 1112 to 1125. In 1335 it became property of the House of Habsburg. In the 15th century it was almost completely demolished and rebuilt with a complete wall and towers at the entrance, where a drawbridge was placed. A chapel was also built at that time. In the 16th and 17th centuries, other structures were gradually built.

The castle's purpose was to defend the empire against the Ottoman invasion as well as peasant revolt. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the castle became an arsenal and a military hospital. It was damaged during the Napoleonic period and, once back in the Austrian Empire, became a prison, which it remained until 1905, resuming that function during World War II. The castle's outlook Tower dates to 1848.

At the end-1960s, the long and extensive renovation works started. The whole renovation took more than 35 years. In the 1990s, the use of the castle as a place for weddings and cultural events began. The Ljubljana Castle funicular, a railway to the top of Castle Hill, was built in 2006.





Peglezn  
*The Iron*  
1933 - 1934

10

Architect: Jože Plečnik

When in the early 1930s Jože Plečnik was preparing plans for Ljubljana's new town hall to be built in the Vodnikov trg, his designs for the wider square area included a building to be constructed on a plot of land between the Poljanska ulica and Kapiteljska ulica which was, until the earthquake of 1895, occupied by a narrow house referred to as Peglezen (charcoal iron in Slovenian). A new town hall was never built, but the unusual designs for a new Peglezen building attracted attention of Matko Prelovšek, the director of Ljubljana's office of construction, and his wife Elza, who offered Plečnik to finance the construction.

The present Peglezen, built between 1933 and 1934, consists of several differing floors stacked on top of each other in a step-like arrangement. The facade facing the Poljanska ulica is characterised by various types of windows. On the side facing the Krekov trg, the second floor includes a conservatory decorated with five pairs of pillars. The façade facing the Kapiteljska ulica is quite different, with windows arranged in a more dynamic pattern. The building has a unique staircase.

Zmajski most  
*The Dragon bridge*  
1907

It was built in the beginning of the 20th century, when Ljubljana was part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. As one of the best examples of reinforced concrete bridges and of the Vienna Secession style, the bridge is today protected as a technical monument. It is intended primarily for motorized traffic.

The new bridge was constructed upon the plans of Vienna company Pittel+Brausewetter based on a patent by Austrian engineer Josef Melan. In April 1901 taken over by the architect Ciril Metod Koch. It was completed in 1907. The dragons were designed by Zaninović and produced in the Vienna factory A. M. Beschorner. When the bridge was completed, it was dedicated to Franz Joseph I to commemorate forty years of his rule.

The Dragon Bridge, although significantly modeled after the Nußdorf weir, is often regarded as the most beautiful bridge produced by the Vienna Secession. It is the first bridge in Slovenia paved with asphalt, the first reinforced concrete bridge in Ljubljana, and one of Europe's earliest reinforced concrete bridges. When opened in 1901, it had the third largest arch in Europe at that time. The bridge is built to the Melan System invented by Josef Melan, which gained popularity particularly in the United States and Germany because the bridges could be built without a supporting stage.







## Tržnica

### *The market*

1940 - 1944

12

Architect: Jože Plečnik

Until the earthquake of 1895, the Vodnikov trg had been occupied by a diocesan college. Later, plans were to build a new town hall there, but was discharged after it had been established that the existing meat market halls, situated at a nearby river embankment, no longer complied with hygiene regulations.

The present market, built by the architect Jože Plečnik between 1940 and 1944, was conceived as a two-storey range of riverside market halls following the curve of the river. On the side overlooking the river, the market halls were furnished with large semi-circular windows, and on the side overlooking the street adorned with a colonnade. The whole complex, reflecting Renaissance influences, was covered with a roof of massive concrete tiles. Plečnik planned to fill the gap in the range of market halls with a monumental covered bridge to connect the two embankments, but the bridge, supposed to be called the Butchers' Bridge, was never built.

When a decision was taken to connect the market with the Triple Bridge, Plečnik built a flower shop resembling the temples of classical antiquity next to the bridge and connected it with the market by adding another roofed colonnade. The additional colonnade now provides shelter for stalls selling herbs, spices, and art and craft items.

# 13

## Mesarski most *Butchers' bridge* 2010

Architect: Jurij Kobe

The foundation of the bridge consists of 11 piles of a depth of 27 m, while the span structure consists of three, spatially curved, shell, load-bearing structures. The steel structure spans 33.00 m, the width is 17.3 m. The walking belts at the sides are made of triple-pane safety glass of a thickness of 39 mm with anti-slip treatment. The walking surface and the two access staircases needed to overcome the height difference between the river banks are made of Pohorje granodiorite-tonalite. The main hot water pipeline and cable duct system were installed below the structure.

The bridge features bronze statues, the work of academic sculptor Jakov Brdar. Besides the smaller sculptures of frogs and shellfish on the top of the bridge's fence, the bridge is dominated by three major groups of sculptures. The sculptures present figures from Ancient Greece, and Christian and Jewish mythology.

The statue of Adam and Eve, the shamed pair banished from Paradise, is at the access to the bridge from the Ljubljana Central Market and the Ciril-Metodov square. The presumptuous Satyr, awaiting the punishment inflicted by Apollo, is in the middle of the bridge, while the statue of the fleeing Prometheus is at the staircase on the left bank, along the embankment Petkovškovo nabrežje.





Miklošičeva ulica  
*The Miklošičeva street*  
1898

14

In Slovenia, Art Nouveau architecture started to appear after the 1895 earthquake, with the restoration of the shattered Ljubljana. It was only after 1900 that the Art Nouveau style became established. Most of Art Nouveau buildings in Ljubljana were built between 1901 and 1909. In Ljubljana, the provincial capital of the Slovenian territory, more than 80 examples of Art Nouveau architecture were to be found. Along the Miklošič street, between the Prešern square and the Miklošič park, and in the broader area of this axis, between the Slovenska and Resljeva streets, the landmarks of Art Nouveau architecture in Ljubljana are located. In Ljubljana. The style is particularly reflected in the façades. In this way, Ljubljana quickly evolved into a more lively, decorated and contemporary city.

In Art Nouveau, two types of residential buildings were most often used: residential buildings for lease and residential villas. However, neither type of residence was invented at the time. True innovations of the time were large windows in living and representative areas, porches and covered terraces.

The first true Art Nouveau façade ornaments in Ljubljana, and in Slovenia in general, were designed by architect Maks Fabiani, who later designed many buildings with Art Nouveau elements in Ljubljana.

After 1920, the Department of Architecture was opened in Ljubljana, as part of the technical faculty of the new university. Its first professor was Ivan Vurnik, who was later joined by Jože Plečnik. It was because of their efforts that we, the Slovenians, got the Ljubljana School of Architecture. Some of the more famous buildings on the street:

Grand hotel Union, Miklošičeva 1, architect Josip Vancaš, 1903–1905

Ljudska posojilnica (People's Loan Bank building) at Miklošičeva 4, architect Josip Vancaš, 1907

Zadružna gospodarska banka (Cooperative Commercial Bank), Miklošičeva 8, architect Ivan Vurnik, paintings by Helena Vurnik, 1922

Bambergova hiša (Bamberg House), Miklošičeva 16, architect Maks Fabiani, 1907

Krisperjeva hiša (Krisper House), Miklošičeva 20, architect Maks Fabiani

Sodna palača (Court palace), Tavčarjeva 9, built between 1898 and 1902, architect A. von Spindler from Vienna

Delavska zbornica (The Chamber of Labour), today Kinoteka, with works by sculptor Lojze Dolinar, Miklošičeva 26, 28, architect Vladimir Šubic, 1927–1928

Austrotel Hotel and car park, architect Jože Koželj, 1971  
Palača Grafika, Miklošičeva 40, architect Vladimir Šubic, 1931

Palača Vzajemne zavarovalnice (Vzajemna zavarovalnica insurance company building), Miklošičeva 19, architect Jože Plečnik, 1928–30





## The Grand Hotel Union 1903–1905 15

Architect: Josip Vancaš

Grand Hotel Union was the city's first modern hotel and the largest building of its time in Ljubljana.

It has the largest hall in the Balkans which was regarded as an extraordinary technological achievement due to its challenging iron roof structure. The building, almost 100 m in length, was built to the design of architect Josip Vancaš between 1903 and 1905.

The entire building, that is the façade and the interior with all the equipment and an impressive rich collection of etched glass panels (now replaced by replicas), was designed in Art Nouveau style. It is divided into two wings, connected into a whole by a prominent corner tower with a dome. The façade is decorated with plant motifs, which differ from one floor to another. Later, the building was renovated twice, but in general it preserved its Art Nouveau appearance.

Zadružna gospodarska banka  
*The Cooperative  
Commercial Bank*  
1921

Architect: Ivan Vurnik

The Cooperative Commercial Bank in the Miklošičeva street is one of Ljubljana's landmark buildings. Its richly decorated façade makes it stand out from its surrounding area, the otherwise similarly vivid Art Nouveau city quarter. It was designed by architect Ivan Vurnik in 1921 and is considered as one of the finest examples of national style.

The interior includes a Baroque painted hall with a glass ceiling, consisting of small blue glass squares, with a decorative strip of glass pieces of different colours. Stained glass windows depicting geometric patterns decorate also the staircase hall on the first two floors.

The painted hall and façade is the work of the architects' wife Helena Vurnik, a Viennese by birth, who was involved in her husband's exploration and creation of typical Slovenian architecture. The geometric decoration is executed in red, white and blue, the colour combination of the Slovenian flag, featuring motifs from the wealth of Slovenian iconography: a stylised landscape of spruce forests, wheat fields and vines, and the motive of women in the Slovenian national costume.





Kozolec  
*The Hayrack*  
1953

17

Architect: Edo Mihevc

This part of Ljubljana was named after a hotel of the same name (German: Bayerischer Hof) that used to stand there, named after the court of the Kingdom of Bavaria, home of Austrian Empress Elisabeth of Bavaria. The name was given in honour of the new wife of Emperor Franz Joseph I on the occasion of her arrival in the city. The building was demolished in 1962.

Already during its construction it was named Kozolec ("hayrack"), as it was reminiscent of the Slovenian hayrack with its skeletal framework and accentuated horizontal plates, surrounded by undeveloped land plots. The building is positioned away from the street edge, as determined by the new construction line running along the Dunajska road towards the north. The separation from the street created an area, where the ground floor had to be addressed in terms of substance and design: with commercial and business premises, while the visible concrete structure is replaced by stone, cladding and glass. The building stands on piling; its skeleton structure enables a flexible organisation of the interior and a free floor plan of the apartments. Street side balconies of the apartments recede inwards, and hence replace the green outer space and increase the quality of living in the city centre.

Metalka  
*Metalka*  
1963

Architects:

Edo Mihevc, Branko Kraševac

Similar to the Nebotičnik of the 1930s, the Metalka high-rise building is an expression of contemporary, globally competitive Slovenian architecture of the 1960s. It was built for a metal company, which explains its technologically advanced and innovative aluminium façade. In his design, the architect Edo Mihevc was inspired by the Seagram Building, a skyscraper in New York. In line with the rules controlling the construction of high buildings along main roads, the building is placed away from the street – the platform, that is the front area, is a small 'market' place along the street. The slender rectangular skeleton of the skyscraper with a core along one of the longest sides is surrounded by a light façade envelope. The façade envelope, designed by Branko Kraševac, consists of prefabricated aluminium panels – an innovation in civil engineering technology of the time and a symbol of progress of the domestic engineering community.







## Nebotičnik *The Skyscraper* 1933

19

Architect: Vladimir Šubic

Upon completion, Nebotičnik was the tallest building in Central Europe and it remained the tallest building in the Balkans until World War II. It was designed by Vladimir Šubic with the help of Ladislav Kham, Ivo Medved (the pavilion of the terrace), Marjan Mušič (tempietto on top), Marjan Sever and Bojan Stupica (fittings of the café). A sculpture by Lojze Dolinar adorns the façade (at the height of the sixth floor, a 4-m sculpture depicting a female figure looking into the future); the monumental lobby on the ground floor is lined with polished Podpeč marble and adorned with four bronze heads of Penates (protectors of home and family in Greece and Roman mythology) by France Gorše and the relief above the main entrance by Boris Kalin. Upper storeys are accessible by elevator, a great innovation at the time, or the monumental spiral staircase. At the time of opening, the café was decorated with carefully selected fittings and decorations inspired by American cafés. The walls were lined with Kras marble, the ceiling was decorated with a golden meander against a blue background, velvet curtains were drawn before the windows, while the views of the city were magnificent.

The design was based on neoclassical and Art Déco styles, and was crowned with pilasters on the upper floors. Its design follows the classical tripartite division of tall buildings, pioneered by American architect Louis Sullivan. It

is composed in a way to homogeneously interact with the street and pedestrians, while the shaft and the crown, topped by a cylindrical staircase with a mounted flag pole, were added after the completion of the tower. The façade is broken up by evenly distributed rectangular windows framed in stone, accentuated on the ground floor and first floor, and by semi-circular windows in the café on the eleventh floor.

The structure consists of a reinforced concrete skeleton and features concrete and brick walls, supported by 16 concrete pilings, each extending 18 m through the ground to the bedrock. Nebotičnik rises to a height of a little over 70 m. The construction is earthquake resistant. The statics were calculated by the engineer Dimnik, following a challenging and reliable Japanese model; in the calculation 35 times the amount of the seismic factor was considered.

The first six floors (the ground floor to floor five) are predominantly a place of business, while the sixth to ninth floors are private residences. The building featured ceiling lights with etched glass, designed by the Ljubljana glass designer Ivan Klein, and a special mirror before the entrance into the café, which showed the reflection of a slender figure. Today, there remain three original matt lights and lamps of tinsmith Kregar and original sliding doors, inspired by American examples. Originally, in the café only crystal or silver was used for serving.

On top of Nebotičnik, there is a renovated café, which was recently reopened to the public.





Narodna galerija  
*The National gallery of Slovenia*  
1893–1896

extension 2001-2002

Architect: František Škabrouť

The building was built on base of the design of the Prague architect František Škabrouť, who created the winning design chosen from among 17 competition entries. It was built between 1893 and 1896 as Ljubljana's and Slovenian Narodni dom (National House) in the style of the then popular neo-Renaissance. The construction was headed by A. Wagner. The design includes a three-part plan view, similar to a basilica. The building was originally used as a venue for events by various societies and for theatre performances; it housed a restaurant and a large garden in the back of the palace. There was also a large gym on the ground floor. It housed the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, until its relocation to new premises on New square. For the purposes of the Academy, the Narodni dom was modified in 1928, while in 1933 the National Gallery held its first exhibition there.

Due to spatial constraints, the National Gallery was expanded in 1993 to the area of the demolished Delegates' Club on the Puharjeva street, where an extension was built to the design of Edvard Ravnikar and his collaborators. The new premises host a permanent exhibition of European arts; the installation was designed by Miljenko Licul and the museum curators. Between the two buildings, in 2001–2002 a central extension was built based on the design of the architectural office Sadar + Vuga, for which the architects Jurij Sadar and Boštjan Vuga received several awards. The original Robba fountain was moved to the entrance area of the museum.

# 21

## Moderna Galerija *The Gallery of modern arts* 1948

Architect: Edvard Ravnikar

The Moderna galerija was the first important work by architect Edvard Ravnikar. It was designed when the architect still worked on the design of Plečnik's National and University Library building (NUK), before his departure to Paris to study with Le Corbusier. This early Ravnikar's work partly follows the classicist principles of Jože Plečnik: its design is axisymmetric, with a raised central volume, housing the accentuated main exhibition hall. Other halls of different sizes are situated in both lateral wings and have zenithal lighting. The main entrance, in the upper ground floor, is accentuated by the wide entrance staircase covered by a monumental canopy. The façade is, similar to NUK, clad in differently treated, white stone panels. The windows that are sunk into the level of the façade are framed in artificial stone. The stone pillars breaking up the window openings in half, further accentuate the image of monumentality. The pool, i.e. the water mirror outside the entrance was rebuilt; the green is occupied by statues from the Moderna galerija collection.





## Park Tivoli *Park Tivoli* 1813 - 1939

22

Architect: Blanchard 1813,  
Plečnik 1921–1939

Tivoli Park is Ljubljana's largest and most beautiful park, stretching right into the city centre. It was designed in 1813 by the French engineer Jean Blanchard and created by joining together the parks which had surrounded Podturn and Cekin mansions. The park, covering an area of approximately five square kilometres, is crossed by three grand horse chestnut tree-lined walks and landscaped with ornamental flower beds, interesting trees and numerous statues and fountains. The park area blends into the slopes of the Rožnik hill, to which it is connected by several walking paths and an exercise path with several exercise stations along its length.

Tivoli Park's scenic Jakopič Promenade (Jakopičevo sprehajališče), designed by the architect Jože Plečnik in the central part of Tivoli Park, has become a well known outdoor venue for exhibitions of large-format photographs, open throughout the year.

# 23

DZ Republike Slovenije

*The National assembly building*

1954–1959

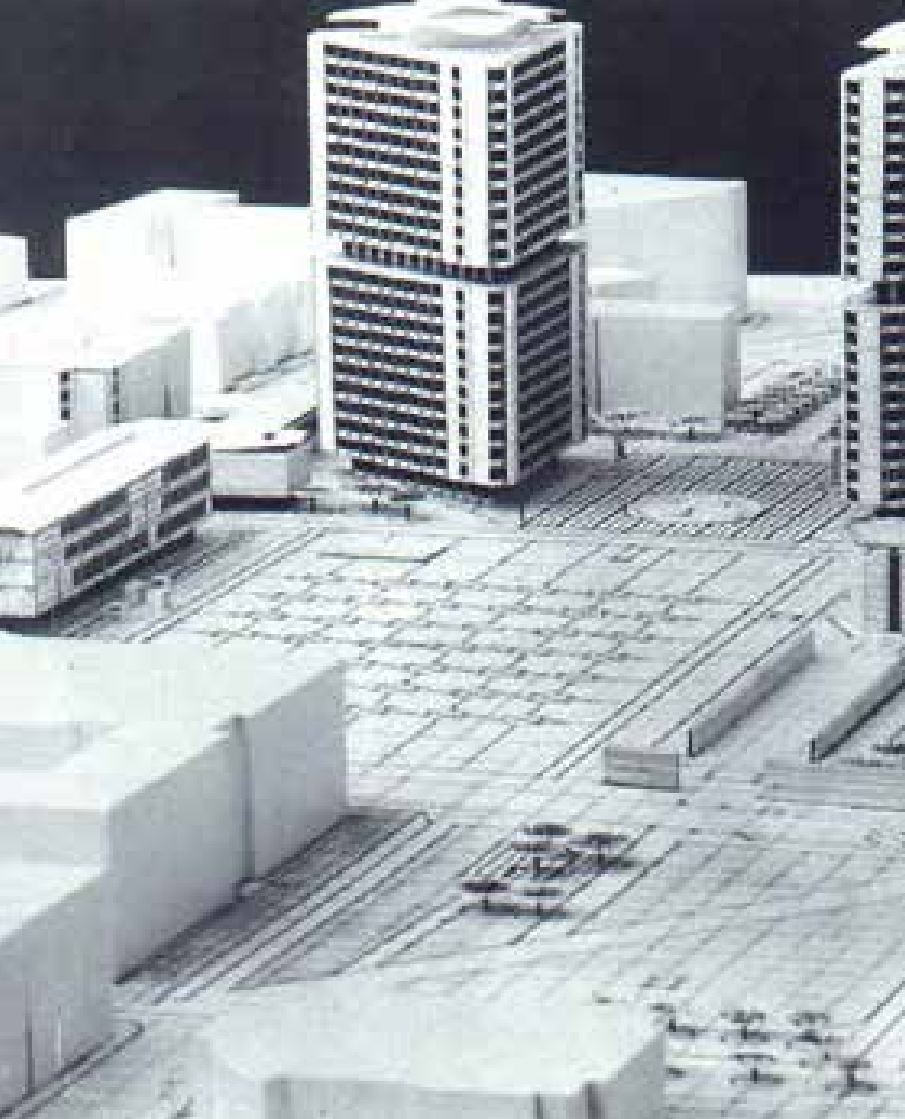
The square building, built between 1954 and 1959, was designed by architect Vinko Glanz, a student of Plečnik.

The works on Parliamentary building began in 1954 and construction was finished in 1959 and the People's Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia held its first meeting on 19 February 1959th. The building has interior of 2200 m<sup>2</sup>. Initially, it housed Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia since its independence it occupied the National Assembly and National Council.

During construction they held on to the principle of using domestic materials, such as marble, stone and wood. The building is lined with marble slabs, fills under the windows on the facade are made of green granite from Oplotnica.

The front facades portal is adorned by five granite pillars rising to the half of the first floor, the completion of the portal serves as a balcony. The authors academic sculptores Karel Putrih and Zdenko Kalin have used symbolic compositions, figures that symbolically show the real life (peace, family happiness, children's game industry ..). Front main entrance doors and gates are made of oak.





Trg republike  
*The Republic square*  
1962–1982

24

In the area of the Trg republike square of today there used to be the northern wall of Emona. In the empty space, the Auersperg family planted a large, Baroque garden. It eventually became part of the Ursuline Monastery wider area. The edge of the garden was developed between the two wars. The Ursulines were also involved in the development. The centre of the square, however, was developed after 1960. Between 1962 and 1982, a major architectural development of the square and the surroundings was carried out by a group of architects headed by Edvard Ravnikar. His collaborators were Anton Bitenc, Miloš Bonča, Jože Koželj, Anton Pibernik, Franc Rihtar, Vladislav Sedej and many others. First, in 1963 a car park was built. In October 1964, the construction was halted because of lack of funding. In 1965, an extension to the Šubičeva secondary school was built, while in 1971 the commercial building Maximarket and the high-rise NLB with the extension and the platform were added. In 1975, the Ursuline part was completed and the Monument to Revolution was erected. Later, the second high-rise with an extension was completed.

On 26 June 1991, Slovenia was declared an independent country on the square, and the new flag of Slovenia was publicly raised for the first time.

# 25

## Cankarjev dom *The Culture and Congress centre* 1983

Architect: Edvard Ravnikar

Cankarjev dom (1983) – the largest Slovenian cultural and congress centre – is the last building to be built on the Trg republike (Republic square) and one of the most important works by Edvard Ravnikar. To Ravnikar's design the building was partially buried in the terrain to deliver the extensive programme with theatre, concert, cinema and conference halls of different sizes. This is how he succeeded in preserving the original composition and ratio of the Trg revolucije, as he planned it in the 1960 competition design. Hence, the majority of the halls is underground. The sequence of lobbies in front of the halls on different floors connects Cankarjev dom with the levels of Trg republike and the surrounding streets. The Grand Reception Hall on the ground floor – the lobby of the largest Gallus Hall – connects the Trg republike square and the Prešernova cesta, while the lobby on basement level 1 connects the building with the Maximarket passageway. The building body is diverse, following the spatial layout of the interior. The uniform façade envelope of white Carrara marble plates gives the building a relaxed and uniform appearance. Experts often find many similarities between Ravnikar's Cankarjev dom and the cultural and congress centre Finlandia in Helsinki, which was designed by the most famous Finnish architect Alvar Aalto.







Ferentovi vrtovi  
*The Residential area  
in the Ferant Garden*  
1975

26

Architect: Edvard Ravnikar  
Collaborators: Ervin Prelog

The residential area is located in the area of a former Emona forum; architect Edvard Ravnikar took this into consideration in the design of individual building masses as well as in the presentation of archaeological remains. The Ferant Garden is composed of four units distributed over the perimeter of the area. Along with the existing development along the Rimska street, this is a mixed-programme district. Along the streets Rimska, Gregorčičeva and Slovenska, residential areas of different heights rise above the public programme on the ground floor, and in some places higher. The unit raised above the level of the street along the Slovenska reveals the remains of the Roman Emona. The courtyard of the district is a pass-through public park with a car park below; on the west side it is limited by a pavilion. The shifting of buildings creates a dynamic appearance of the whole, connected by a brick façade surface with characteristic corner 'stitches'. In some places, the brick structure is broken off by a visible reinforced concrete structure. An interesting element of the façade are hanging plants, which make up for the shortage of greenery in the area. The residences are designed in a longitudinal direction and they have wide floor areas.

Rimski zid  
*The Roman wall and  
colonia Iulia Aemona*

During the 1st century BC, a Roman military fort was built on the site of the present Ljubljana, below the castle hill. Construction of the Roman settlement of Emona, fortified with strong walls, followed in 14 AD. It had a population of 5,000 to 6,000 people, mostly merchants and craftsmen, and was also an important Early Christian centre with its own goddess, Eburna. In 452, Emona was virtually destroyed by the Huns, led by Attila. Its remaining inhabitants fled the city; some of them made it to the coast of Istria where they founded a 'second Emona', Aemonia, now the town of Novigrad.

The south end of the walls of the Roman City is almost entirely preserved. Some gates in the wall were walled up in the times of Emona because of the danger of attacks. The former main entrance is characterised by columns designed by architect Jože Plečnik.

Three main routes led from the Roman Emona:  
Petovia – now Slovenska – in direction towards Ptuj  
Aquileia – now Tržaška – towards Aquileia in Italy  
Siscia – now Zoisova – towards Sisak in Croatia





## Trnovski pristan - plaža *Trnovo embankment - the beach*

28

The Trnovski pristan, with its broad stone steps descending towards the river, is a unique architectural creation designed by the famous architect Jože Plečnik. Being one of Ljubljana's most beautiful promenades, it has turned into a popular place for socializing over the recent years. Particularly young people, who often hang out there on warm summer days, refer to it as "Ljubljana beach".

The Trnovski pristan stretches across the riverside area between the Prule Bridge and the point where the Gradaščica channel joins into the river Ljubljanica. In the past it was used for unloading the boats carrying stone from the Podpeč Quarry, intended for the construction of buildings in Ljubljana. Later, when the architect Jože Plečnik was commissioned to landscape the banks of the Ljubljanica river, the area was turned into a promenade, remarkable for its stone steps lined by a row of willow trees.

When Trnovski pristan was reconstructed between 2007 and 2009, the ageing willow trees were replaced by new ones and several new architectural elements, including uniquely designed wooden benches and street lamps, were added to complement Plečnik's original design and help create the vibrancy for which the embankment is known today.

## Fakulteta za arhitekturo *The Faculty of Architecture*

Due to lack of space in the old classical building of the Faculty of Architecture, a competition was organized to select plans for a new addition in the 80s. The winning project of architect Miloš Florijančič was partially built ten years later. The project follows the former Plečnik ideas of the extension of two symmetric extensions on the both sides of the old building. It would have created a steady pace of buildings that are dotted from the junction with Emonska cesta towards Ljubljana river.

The new building is set slightly back from the old and it is lower, which gives the older one a dominant role. The spatial design is inspired by the old, symmetrically designed building. The staircase in the middle of it consists of two parts: a large amphitheater lecture hall Plečnik and a smaller one Vurnik lecture hall and a gallery on the ground floor, there is a library on the first floor. On the top floor are the drawing office with cabinets.

Building provides a uniform and homogeneous appearance brick facade that complements the Zoisova street high concrete vaulted corridor. Arcades which are overgrown in the summer by plants, overlapping access ramp and stairs to the entrance. While continuing a steady pace classicist facade of the old building, which has a stone canopy in its focus, which was created in the 50s by Plečnik.



Univerza v Ljubljani



Walking tour guided by:  
Assist. Janez P. Grom

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