

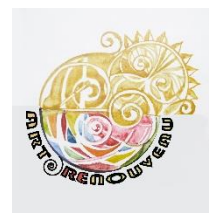


Town Trail – Secession Ljubljana

ART NOUVEAU – ART RENOUVEAU 2014–2017



Erasmus+





Walk around *Art Nouveau Ljubljana*, observe buildings typical of this period and answer the questions. You can start your path anywhere you like, but make sure to walk the whole path and collect as many correct answers as possible. Estimated time of the task is 90 minutes.

A SECESSION LJUBLJANA



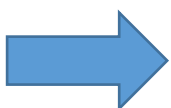
The term »Secession« in Slovenia is used following the example of the Vienna Secession (in other European countries the terms Art Nouveau, Jugendstil, Modern Style, Liberty, etc. are also used as a name for this period), because in the Art Nouveau period, the Slovenian territory was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and numerous Slovenian artists and architects studied in Vienna.

The term »Ljubljana Secession« is a name for the neighbourhood between the old city centre and the main railway station. This neighbourhood was mostly rebuilt between the years of 1895 and 1910. It includes many important and well preserved architectural masterpieces. Secession Ljubljana is one of the most recognisable parts of the city and that part of our cultural heritage which put Ljubljana alongside the biggest Art Nouveau capital cities, such as Brussels, Vienna, Paris, Barcelona.



On Easter, 14th of April 1895 at 11.17pm CET time, Ljubljana, with its 31,000 citizens and 1,400 buildings, was shaken by a very strong earthquake (its aftershocks were existing all the way to Vienna in Austria, Split in Croatia and Florence in Italy). About 10% of the buildings had to be demolished and all the rest were in need of a restoration. The whole Empire started to donate money and provide help to restore the city. On 7th of May, the Monarch himself, Franz Joseph, visited Ljubljana and donated 10,000 goldinars (you could buy about 8 loafs of bread for 1 goldinar at that time). Fun fact: one day after the earthquake, Jakob Aljaž, a Slovenian priest, bought the peak of Slovenian's highest mountain Triglav, and the mountain was thus given to Slovenian people in perpetuity. Other European countries, and also the USA, donated money to help.

That way, the renovation could start immediately. A very important person in the renovation progress was a member of the City Council, who became Ljubljana's mayor the following year, Ivan Hribar. The first thing he realised as the new mayor was the creation of a city plan (drawn up by Maks Fabiani). The city turned into a busy building site: in the next decade over 400 buildings were constructed, many were restored, electric lighting in public places was introduced in the city and the sewage system was improved. The post- earthquake year also led to a new building law that, among other things, limited the height of houses and regulated the width of streets, making space for walkways and a city tram system. A renaissance of the city began, which has left



important traces in the city centre still visible today. *For the walk around Secession Ljubljana start on Miklošič Square.*

Miklošič Square



Miklošič Square

The square in front of the Judicial Palace was first symbolically called Slovenian Square and was designed according to the plans of Maks Fabiani in 1900. Lime trees were planted next to the Miklošič and Cigalet Road, which gave the park its frame and symmetry. This was highlighted even more with the circular planting of maple trees. The centre of the park were low box trees, trimmed into geometrical patterns. Before the beginning of the Second World War the city municipality rearranged the park and changed the original design.

1. Look at the old map of Miklošič Square (Slovenian Square at that time). What shape is it?
2. Today the square is named after the linguist Fran Miklošič (1813-1891). Look at his monument. Do you notice anything unusual?



Until 1908 there was a monument dedicated to the Emperor Franz Joseph across the Judicial Palace in gratitude for his visit after the 1895 earthquake. After the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, a monument of Fran Miklošič, after whom the square got its present name, was placed on the old pedestal, replacing the old monument of the Emperor.

The park is almost completely surrounded by buildings, built between the years 1900 and 1907 and represents the most beautiful Secession quarter in Ljubljana. The Secession buildings around it were built for the wealthy local merchants, lawyers, businessmen, all mostly Slovenian. Krisper House was built first according to Maks Fabiani's plans, as an example for all others around the square.

1. What do all four houses around the park have in common?

2. Look at the ornamentation on each of the houses and note their features:

a) Krisper House

(Miklošič Street 20; Maks Fabiani, 1900):

b) Regali House

(Miklošič Street 18; Fran Berneker, 1906):

c) Pogačnik House

(Cigale Street 1; Ciril Metod Koch, 1901):

č) Čuden House

(Cigale Street 3; Ciril Metod Koch, 1902):



Continue your path down the Miklošič Street, towards Prešeren Square.

Miklošič Street



Bamberg House (Miklošič Street 16; Maks Fabiani, 1907)

When designing a house for Mr Bamberg, the publisher and printer, Fabiani strived to connect architecture and environment. He designed it in the Modern Style, which can be seen in his choice of materials and building elements, among which the strong, vertical lanes in the grey concrete plaster stand out the most.

3. What is the façade made of?

4. What is portrayed under the roof?

Grand Hotel Union (Miklošič Street 1; Josip Vancaš, 1903–5)

The idea of building a modern hotel was that it would attract more foreign visitors to Ljubljana. From a functional, technological and organizational viewpoint, building such a hotel was an enormously tough task, so the work was entrusted to a reputable architect from Sarajevo, Josip Vancaš, who had successfully accomplished a series of such projects before. The hotel fit the modern hotel standards of the time: it was functional, convenient and hygienic (with electricity, central heating, hot water, en-suite bedrooms and lifts). The main hall was a true technological achievement: 15m wide, 33m long and 11m tall, it was the biggest and the most representational hall not just in town, but on the whole Balkan Peninsula.

5. What is the decoration on the hotel façade composed of?

6. Look at the etched glass in the hotel. What is portrayed here?

People's Loan Bank (Miklošič Street 4; Josip Vancaš, 1907)

Josip Vancaš used the typical Secession motifs, taken from the Vienna architect Otto Wagner: ceramic tiling, shallow balconies, wrought iron balcony railings and the two corbels with girls' heads at the top.

7. What is shown on the façade?

Cooperative Business Bank (Miklošič Street 8; Ivan Vurnik, 1922)



Ivan Vurnik (1884-1971) was, along with Plečnik and Fabiani, an important trend-setter in Modern Slovenian architecture. In his early period, he wanted to create a national Slovenian architectural style that would combine functionality with good designs and aesthetic beauty. He often incorporated traditional motifs in his design. Later he focused on Functionalism and was an excellent urban planner. Vurnik was responsible for the establishment of an architecture department at the University of Ljubljana where he was a lecturer for many years.

8. Look at the façade and sketch a typical design feature.

9. What is the interior of the building decorated like? The painting is a work by architect's wife, Helena Vurnik.



The search for the so called National Style can be found in the art of all emerging national countries of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of 19th century and it grew stronger after the First World War. In the architectural renovation of Ljubljana around the year 1900, we can see the echoes of Slovenian national socio-political and cultural revival.



Continue the path until you reach the end of the Miklošič Street and a view on Prešeren Square, which is a meeting point, will open up in front of you.

Prešeren Square



Urbanc House (Prešeren Square 4b; Friedrich Sigismundt, 1903)

On a prestigious location in town, the merchant Felix Urbanc ordered the construction of the first modern department store in Ljubljana. The cosmopolitan look of the store was created through its façade and the interior use of space and decorative elements (following the example of department stores in Paris, Vienna, Budapest, etc.).

1. Which ancient god is depicted on the top of the roof? Why? How can you recognise him?
2. What kinds of decoration is repeated on the façade? Which of these are connected to the ancient god?
3. Look at the canopy above the store. Which materials are used? What does the shape of the canopy represent? Sketch the characteristic lines.
4. Look at the interior. Who is depicted on the staircase?

Hauptmann House (Prešeren Square 1; Ciril Metod Koch, renovated in the 1904)

The building itself was built in 1873, but its owner decided to renovate it in the modern style of the Wagner-inspired Vienna Secession.

10. Draw three different styles of decoration.

11. What colour are the decorative elements?

1. Circle which elements dominate the façade:

a) Botanical elements/floral elements

b) Geometrical elements

The Prešeren Monument (Ivan Zajec, 1905)

The location for the Prešeren Monument was chosen by Maks Fabiani who also designed its massive granite pedestal.

12. What is the monument of Slovenian's greatest poet composed of?

13. What is depicted on the side reliefs of the pedestal?



The monument, dedicated to Slovenian's greatest poet France Prešeren (1800-1849) was ceremoniously unveiled on 10th of September 1905. Because of a nude muse above the poet's head, the statue first faced great resistance and criticism among art experts and church clergy. The Archbishop of Ljubljana, Anton Bonaventura Jeglič even wrote a protest letter to the mayor Ivan Hribar, demanding that the statue be removed from the front of the church.

City Savings Bank (Čop Street 3; Josip Vancaš, 1903-4)

This was the first Slovenian bank facility, which functioned in the Town Hall until a purpose-built bank was constructed. The most outstanding element on the City Savings Bank's façade is the wrought-iron and glass canopy shaped in the form of the petals of a wide open flower.

14. Draw the signboard. State where this is to be found, e.g. above the front door. Be careful with the letter fonts.

15. Which sculptural elements on the façade are connected with the purpose of the building (Savings Bank)? Take a look at the design features and make a promotional message that you could link to the building. Compare them to the ones on the People's Loan Bank on the Miklošičeva Street.



Continue your path along the river Ljubljanica towards the Dragon Bridge, then cross the bridge and walk back on the other side of the river past the markets and the Cathedral to the Three Bridges.

From the Dragon Bridge to the Triple Bridge



The Dragon Bridge (Jurij Zaninović, 1901)

The bridge was one of the largest reinforced concrete bridges in Europe at the time. The first asphalt road in Slovenia was laid across it. The bridge was constructed upon the plans based on a patent by the Austrian engineer Josef Melan and the design by the architect Jurij Zaninović. The chief attraction of the bridge are four dragon statues standing on pedestals at its four corners, which became a symbol of the city. The lamps on the bridge's fence are part of the original design and were originally gas lamps. When the bridge was completed, it was dedicated to Franz Joseph I of the Habsburg Dynasty to commemorate forty years of his rule from 1848 to 1888.

16. Which Secession elements do you notice on the bridge?

17. Whose initials are displayed on the gilded relief in the middle of the bridge's arc?
Copy them.

18. Because of its decoration, the bridge soon became known as the Dragon Bridge. Along with 4 big dragons, there are also many more smaller ones, in total, there are as many as 20. How many were you able to find?



Ever since the Baroque period, dragon has been a part of Ljubljana's coat of arms. The dragon represents power, bravery and greatness. It is depicted on many of the city's buildings, on the car licence plates of Ljubljana, on its city flag etc. and is a popular hero in fairy tales and songs. The Ljubljana Dragon magically derives from the legend of Jason and the Argonauts, according to another interpretation it comes from a medieval knight, Saint George, who is the patron saint of Ljubljana Castle's chapel.

The Sokol Gymnastic Society's Hall (Tabor 13; Ivan Vurnik, 1923–26)

The Hall was built by the Sokol Gymnastic Society, which gathered nationally-minded citizens into a sports organisation. It was one of the first big sports facilities in Slovenia and is decorated in the National style. As on the Cooperative Bank, Vurnik decorated the façade with architectural elements and stuccowork.

26. Which decorative elements and motifs can you see on the façade?

The Market (Pogačar Square, Jože Plečnik, 1940)



Jože Plečnik (1872-1957) is the most famous architect in Slovenia. He influenced the architectural and urban landscape of Ljubljana between the two World Wars. He is associated with the Secession era through his academic studies and work in Vienna. His most notable works from this period are the Langer House, the Zacherlhouse and the Church of the Holy Spirit. Then he moved to Prague and worked on the restoration of the Prague Castle and the Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord. Upon the establishment of the Ljubljana School of Architecture, he was invited by the fellow Slovene architect Ivan Vurnik to become a founding faculty member and moved to teach architecture at the University of Ljubljana.

The Triple Bridge (Jože Plečnik, 1930)

In medieval times, there was just a wooden bridge over the Ljubljanica. A new stone bridge was built in 1842. After the earthquake the need for a bigger bridge arose, but the plans were delayed for a good many years.

The job of making the bridge bigger was entrusted to Plečnik, who found out that the bridge already standing was in a really good condition, so it would be irrational to demolish it. He made a plan for two new bridges for pedestrians that are not parallel with the old bridge but are funnel-shaped leading to and opening up the space from Prešeren Square to Town Square. He added a new balustrade and connected the bridge with stairs to the lower terrace which sits above the beautifully designed river embankment.

Filip Mansion (Cankarjevo nabrežje 1, Leopold Theyer, 1895)

Both corner buildings (Philip Mansion and Kresija Palace) were built after the earthquake in historical style as a monumental entrance to a new street that opened a wide view towards the Robba Fountain and Castle Hill. Filip Mansion had some interesting Secession interior decoration including etched glass on the staircase. The cafeteria on the ground floor was also furnished in Secession style.



Walk along the Stritarjeva Street towards Town Square with the Baroque Robba fountain and the Town Hall and onwards through the old city centre to Old Square.

From Town Square to Old Square



Drofenig House (Town Square 23; Karl Brunnler, 1914)

This department store, which was built by a merchant Franc Drofenig on the site of a former Baroque house, is the first building in Ljubljana with a reinforced concrete and a prefabricated iron façade, decorated with black polished marble and big windows. Plečnik was the first to do this on the Zacherl House in Vienna. There is not much decoration, the only thing that shows the Secession motif is the golden decoration of the cornice under the roof and the decorated projecting roof.

Girls' Primary School (Levstik Square 1; facade Maks Fabiani, 1900-1)

This monumental building of an eight-year school for girls, which was built after the earthquake, has pure lines, clear articulation of the façade with some beautiful Secession decoration: stuccowork with plant motifs and stylised floral wreaths. There were also inscriptions with pedagogical themes on the horizontal lintels above the floors.

27. Draw the town's coat-of-arms which you will find above the entrance.



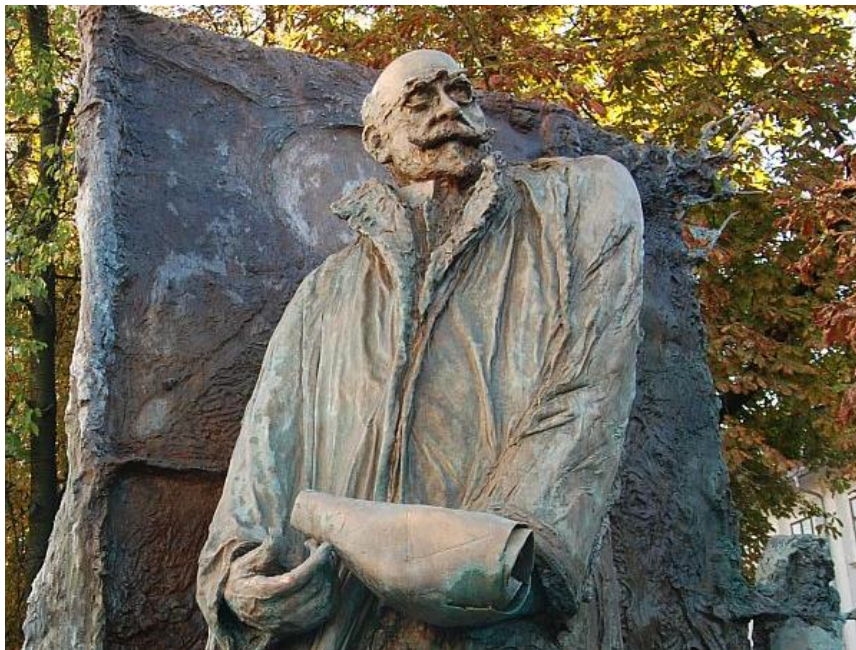
Carry on over the bridge across the Ljubljanica river, turn right and walk along the beautiful embankment on the other side until you come to the statue of Ivan Hribar. Then cross Congress Square, pass the Parliament and Republic Square until you reach Mladika (this is where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is today).

From The Mayor Hribar Statue to Hribar House



Ivan Hribar (1851-1941); mayor at the time of the earthquake damage restoration

The Ljubljana devastating earthquake in 1895 initiated the renovation of Ljubljana, but Ivan Hribar with his small group of nationally-conscious patrons of Slovenian origin, and the Vienna-schooled architects were able to face the challenge. Hribar played an important role in placing Ljubljana on the map as an important political, economic and cultural centre. During his 15 years as mayor, he directed the whole process of the rebuilding of Ljubljana. In the Town Hall, he introduced Slovenian as the official working language and added the Slovenian names to street signs. The Slovenian inscriptions were written in much larger script than the German ones to emphasise the importance of Slovenian identity. He was forced to withdraw those signs because of pressure from high authorities in Vienna. They only remained on the signs for new streets. He campaigned for the establishment of the Slovenian national institutions, such as Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts, for the Slovenian language as an official language and for education in the Slovenian language. He had many supporters within the Slovenian artists and writers, and he tried to raise awareness of Slovenian national identity by erecting statues of learned men such as Janez Vajkard Valvasor, France Prešeren, Primož Trubar. He financially supported the National Gallery and initiated plans for the Ljubljana museum. He travelled widely around Europe and tried to bring modern technology to our country.



Ivan Hribar Statue (Mirsad Begić, 2010)



After the earthquake, the city government and the army started building temporary residences for the homeless. Despite the cold April weather people sought shelter in tents, Slovenian Railways offered railway carriages, the wealthier stayed in the horse-drawn coaches. Fran Jakopič (father of the painter Rihard) made available 150 big barrels to be used as temporary accommodation.

Mladika (Prešeren Street 25; Maks Fabiani, 1907; Boarding School: Ciril Metod Koch, 1910–12)

The city government chose Maks Fabiani, the most respected architect of Slovenian origin at the time, to be the architect of the first high school for girls on Slovenian soil.



Maks Fabiani (1865-1962), Slovenian architect and one of the founders of modern architecture in Vienna, left his own mark in Ljubljana. Besides the post-earthquake regulation plan and plan for the Miklošič Park, he designed numerous buildings which indicated the way towards the next, functionalist phase of modern architecture with its structured modern façades (for example, Girls' school on Levstik Square, Šentjakob Presbitery, Mladika etc.).

19. Mladika was once girls' grammar and boarding school. Which elements on the building point to that?



Maks Fabiani achieved his first doctor title at the University of Vienna. By the end of the First World War, he had a great university career, and important commissions in Vienna, which won him international fame.



You are about to reach the final point of interest - from Mladika go back to the city center, on the map find the way to Slovenska street and take it to reach Trdinova street.

Hribar House (Tavčar Street 2; Maks Fabiani, 1902–3)

Ivan Hribar, mayor of the time, bought the building's grounds, the profit of which was intended for building a girls' school (Mladika). With that, he clearly showed his effort to establish a school that was important for the city. He put the job of drawing the plans into Maks Fabiani's hands. Fabiani designed the house in classical antique proportions, making the cube the main element of the façade design, which is explicitly geometrical.

20. In which style did the architect design the façade?

The Agricultural Loan Bank (Trdina Street 2, 8; Ciril Metod Koch, 1906–7)

Two buildings of the same kind with mirror ground plan are known for their colourful façades with diverse Secession motifs. Each floor is decorated with ceramic ornamentation.

21. Take a look at the ornamentation on the façade and write down the motifs that are repeated.



Congratulation! You have walked all the way around the Secession Ljubljana and got to know many interesting things. Can you summarize the main characteristics of the Secession?

What types of buildings are built in the Secession style?

What decorative features predominated?

What were the main colours used on the façades?

What materials were used for decorating the façades?



This activity book was compiled and designed by students and teachers of the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium (Ljubljana, Slovenia) as a part of the project Erasmus+ project “Art Nouveau – Art Renouveau”, No. 2014-1-UK01-KA201-000226_3, financed by Erasmus+, KA2, in the academic year 2015/16.

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