

A Competition for Art and Photographic Work

We are Making our Landscape 2005

Slovenian Association of Landscape Architects

The project "We are Making our Landscape"

Introduction

The objective of the project "We are Making our Landscape" was to educate and raise awareness of public in general about the landscape. It was implemented by the Slovenian Association of Landscape Architects (SALA) in co-operation with the Department of Landscape Architecture, Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, with the financial support from the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning, and other sponsors. The duration of the project was from October 2004 to May 2005, and it comprised several activities and events, such as:

- a series of posters "Slovenian Landscapes" was published in October 2004,
- a seminar with a workshop to inform teachers about the project took place in November 2004,
- a publication on the presentation workshop was issued in November 2004,
- a competition for art and photographic works started in December 2004,
- the competition was closed and the best works selected in May 2005,
- exhibition of the selected works and a ceremony with presentation of awards and presents to the best participants was organised in May 2005.

Presentation of the project "We are Making our Landscape"

The purpose of the project "We are Making our Landscape" was to disseminate knowledge about the landscape to the general public, and especially to present better the Slovenian landscapes. The project aimed to stimulate children and adults to observe the landscape in everyday environment and to perceive the landscape qualities in order to raise awareness of the public for the environment, space and landscape in the earliest age possible. The project focused on education of the pedagogues, mentor teachers, children and their parents, as well as the general public. With the suggestive title "We are Making our Landscape" we tried to point out the idea that all of us who live in a certain environment, with our attitude and the way of living, have influence on the state of the landscape and the space, and thus take part in the creation of our everyday environment. The awareness of the importance and values of landscape should become a common sense and, consequently, a criterion for interventions in the physical space and for the relationship of individuals with the physical space. All this in accordance with the latest achievements in the field and with the objectives of the European Landscape Convention that entered into force in Slovenia in March 2004.

Justification of the project

The fact that we have to face the changes in the landscape consciously and creatively was a starting point of the project. Familiarity of the professionals and public in general with our landscapes is crucial for a creative management and planning of the Slovenian landscapes. The visual character of the landscapes depends on the images that the society has of the landscape, which also influences the way we deal with the landscape. The quality of the space and the living environment we are to make depends to a great extent on the development processes, as well as on the individuals and their willingness to make decisions about the future development of the physical space and about the destiny of our landscape heritage. That is why we intended to stimulate the children and the adults alike to observe their everyday environment and so to establish a positive relationship towards the Slovenian landscapes.

Activities and events in the framework of the "We are Making our Landscape" project

1. Publication of a series of posters "Slovenian Landscapes" in October 2004

The concept of a series of five posters was based on a research project "Regional Distribution of Landscape Types in Slovenia" (1998), which defines five landscape regions in Slovenia. Each poster presents one of the landscape regions with the most characteristic photographs of the landscape types. The photographs are accompanied by a short description of the landscape type, and each poster contains a detailed explanation of terms related to landscape in general, Slovenian cultural landscape and outstanding landscape. The series of five posters was published in the edition of 500 copies each.

2. A seminar with a workshop to inform teachers about the project took place in November 2004

A seminar accompanied by a presentation workshop for primary school teachers, kindergarten teachers, and all the others interested in landscape management was held in Ljubljana. The workshop was attended by 50 participants, mainly primary school teachers. The workshop focused on the creation of the notion of landscape, of the role of the landscape architect in the society, as well as on how to perceive, analyse and shape the landscape. The participants took active part in discussing the presented topics, and gave several interesting suggestions on additional methods of knowledge dissemination.

3. A publication on the presentation workshop was issued in November 2004

The Publication for the carrying out of the workshop in the framework of "We are Making our Landscape" project was prepared, intended for the general public and, mainly, for mentors, such as teachers, educators and parents, to be used as a teaching tool for the subjects related to natural sciences, environment and art classes in primary schools and kindergartens. The Publication contains the presentation of the project "We are Making our Landscape", a definition of the term 'landscape', presentation of the European Landscape Convention, presentation of the project "Regional Distribution of Landscape Types in Slovenia", definition of the natural and cultural landscape, perception of the landscape, experience values of the landscape, landscape analysis on the case of Radensko polje and landscape representation.

4. A competition for art and photographic works was announced in November and December 2004

The competition for art and photographic works in the field of landscape management was of educational and awareness-raising nature, and was aimed at children between the ages of four and fifteen. It was based on the observation of the landscape we live in, and on the representation of its characteristic images through art and photography. Children were asked to capture individual situations in the landscape, or individual characteristic landscape elements. The competition was announced on the SALA web site and in the media, and was sent to all primary schools and kindergartens of Slovenia.

The children were divided into the following age groups:

- Group A: ages 4 to 6,
- Group B: ages 7 to 10, and
- Group C: ages 11 to 15.

5. Closure of the competition, selection of the best works and awards in May 2005

The competition was attended by 90 primary schools and 43 kindergartens. Submitted were 1029 art and photographic works including 797 drawings and paintings, 22 models and 210 photographs. The motifs were mainly natural and cultural landscapes, city and urban landscapes, landscape patterns that were presented also in an abstract manner, children and school playgrounds, private gardens, individual landscape elements (trees, flowers, houses, hayracks, mills), and of course, people and animals as landscape components. The panel of experts was composed of 10 persons, representing the Department for Landscape of the University of Ljubljana, and landscape architects, members of SALA. The selection criteria were creativity, innovativeness, readability, the message conveyed, composition (proportions, hierarchy, rhythm, contrast, accents, articulation of structural elements). Awarded were 95 children, namely 63 for individual works, 19 for the group works and 13 special awards for groups. The latter were given to groups and mentor teachers for the outstanding works, unity of the group works, innovative work methods, and sometimes for the comprehensive presentation of the method by the group as a project. Awards were sponsored by the national and local authorities, museums, publishers, bookshops, horticulture firms and firms dealing with landscape planning.

6. Exhibition of the best works and the ceremony of awards presentation to the best participants at the Technical Museum of Slovenia at Bistra, May 27, 2005

More than 200 people participated at the opening of the exhibition and the award ceremony for the best works – awarded children, teachers and parents. Upon conclusion of the ceremony, the host, i.e. the Technical Museum of Slovenia, offered a free guided tour of the permanent collections of the museum. The exhibition lasted from May 2005 till February 2006.

7. Publishing of a brochure and presentation of the project at the international conference "Landscape and Society", Ljubljana, May 11–12, 2006

The project "We are Making our Landscape" was presented on the occasion of the international conference "Landscape and Society", Ljubljana, May 11–12, 2006 dedicated to the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in Slovenia. An exhibition of the best works was organised at the Ljubljana Castle during the conference. Also, a brochure about the project and especially about