



500 guests attended the Grand Opening of the New Embassy Building

Washington, 29 September – Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel ceremonially opened the newly renovated Slovenian Embassy on California Avenue on Friday. The opening ceremony was attended by about 500 guests – Slovenian Americans, Americans, members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of the US Administration and the Congress, including the Democratic senator of Slovenian origin from Minnesota, Amy Klobuchar and the Republican congressman from Florida, Lincoln Diaz Ballart.

Minister Rupel described Slovenia's path from independence in 1991 to its EU presidency in the coming year, and stated that this year marks the 15th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Slovenia. "Only 16 years ago, we were part of the problem, but we have quickly become part of the solution," stated Minister Rupel, emphasizing that in terms of the country's small population, Slovenia's contribution to international security is exceptional.

Minister Rupel also outlined the priorities of Slovenia's EU presidency, from EU enlargement, climate change, energy security and intercultural dialogue to the strengthening of the EU's role in international relations. "Slovenia will attach particular importance to the strengthening of the alliance between the EU and the United States," stated Minister Rupel.

Minister Rupel announced the third visit by the US President to Slovenia during the EU-US Summit. At the end he expressed the expectation that the new embassy would become a lively meeting point of different people and cultures, like Slovenia itself.



In her address, Senator Klobuchar expressed gratitude for the invitation and commended the renovation of the building, also devoting some words to her Slovenian origin and priding herself on being the only one among the four members of the Congress and the Senate, who are of Slovenian origin, with a real Slovenian family name.

Slovenia's Ambassador to the United States, Samuel Žbogar, said in his address that guests could view the works of 24 contemporary Slovenian artists in the group exhibition entitled *Move Moment*. He expressed special gratitude to artist Bogdan Grom of New Jersey, originally from Trieste, who donated one of his sculptures, entitled *Straža*, to the renovated building. Guests also enjoyed the singing of Slovenian soprano Sabina Cvilak, performing with the Washington Opera. Žbogar stated that the building was in very bad condition in 2002, "in approximately the same condition as Yugoslavia in the 1980s and '90s".

Please, enjoy the photo gallery below....



Warm welcome awaited guests at the entrance...



Minister Rupel during his speech.



While the guests were arriving....



Senator Klobuchar, Congressman Lincoln Diaz Ballart, minister Rupel and Ambassador Žbogar during the performance of Sabina Cvilak.



Minister Rupel cutting the ribbon with Senator Klobuchar, Congressman Lincoln Diaz Ballart and Ambassador Žbogar.



Ambassador Žbogar with former US Ambassador to Slovenia, Mr. Young.



Mr. Grom, the author of the sculpture 'Sentinel', is greeted by Ambassador and Mrs. Žbogar. Ambassador at the opening ceremony awarded Mr. Grom with a Recognition for the donation of his art work.



Members of the Armed Forces and Police Band.



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EXHIBITION **Move Moment**

The Move Moment is an exhibition of artworks of twenty-four Slovenian artists, all members of Fine Artists Society of Ljubljana. This group of internationally renowned painters, sculptors, graphic artists and photographers has chosen their creations for the exhibition, honoring the opening of the new Slovenian Chancery in Washington, DC.

The works of eleven painters - Bojan Bensa, Brane Sever, Dušan Muc, Jelka Flis, Silvan Omerzu, Viktor Bernik, Žarkov Vrezec, Bojan Gorenc, Dušan Kirbiš, Marko Butina, Dušanka Kajfež - exhibited in the Move Moment are ranging from modernism to post-modernism.



Bojan MAVSAR, The Power of the Bird / Moč ptiča, 2006

The works of five sculptors - Alenka Vidrgar, Bojan Mavsar, Jožef Vrščaj, Jurij Dobrila, Mojca Smerdu - are ranging from narrative symbolism to clear abstract language, sometimes also geometrical, while the works of the critically acclaimed sculptor Tobias Putrih are free hand drawings, tracing singularly rational and at the same time playful abstract constructions. In the United States Tobias Putrih is represented by Max Protetch Gallery in New York City.

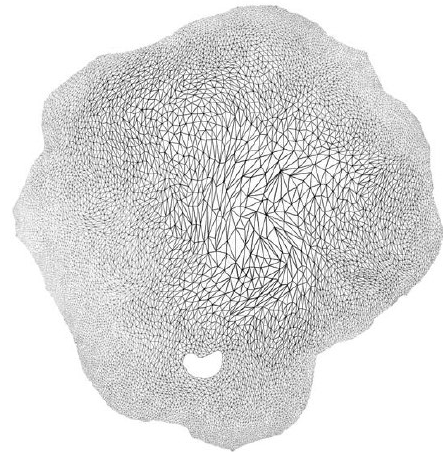
The graphic quartet - Zora Stančič, Mojca Zlokarnik, Hamo Čavrk, Damjan Kracina - draws attention to the current trend of geometric art exploring color using traditional techniques with iconic and figurative-associative elements.

The three photographers - Barbara Jakše Jeršič, Stane Jeršič, Dragomil Bole - represent the new function of contemporary photography as the medium of representation that has surpassed the basic function of documenting events in the physical world.

This remarkable display of contemporary fine arts is a unique opportunity for American public to gain insight not only into Slovenian

art, but also into the people of this Central European country, where culture has always been an essential part of its national identity.

The exhibition is on display at the Embassy of Slovenia from September 28 through October 26, 2007, and is open to public during the Embassy's office hours - from 10a.m. till 5 p.m.



Tobias PUTRIH, QR / S / O REFLEX, 2003