

# FARAWAY, SO CLOSE

## 25<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

**Ljubljana, Slovenia**  
**25. 5. – 29. 10. 2017**

The 25th edition of the Biennial of Design in Ljubljana is set to strengthen its role as an interdisciplinary collaborative platform where design is employed as a catalyst for change.

BIO 25, under the title “Faraway, So Close”, will be curated by Angela Rui, a Milan- and Rotterdam-based design critic and curator, and Maja Vardjan, curator of Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO).

In line with their focus on the humanistic side and expression of design, they will use the Biennial to decode through design the effects of environmental changes, asset migration, and reactions to the systemic crises.

In the face of the total failure of the theory of Positivism, we are now forced to confront the crucial and still largely hidden meaning of the consequences of “post-modernization”, for which the city seems to have lost its authority as the territory where we look to find the source of quality existence.

Small changes are already taking place and gaining ground, and new inputs are slowly modifying our urban and rural environments. New frictions emerge out of the co-habitation of remote meanings and contemporary habits, as we look for new territories to signify, places to re-inhabit, ancient relations to re-enact, basic coexistences to re-imagine. Can this friction between distant conditions produce new scenarios for a different present time?

Along with the main subject-themes of the biennial, BIO 25 will de-centralize and will be interpreted as a shift towards new territories to be seduced by research and discourse, as well as by the idea of an event with which to produce knowledge. In the age of super information consumed in real time, the challenge of a biennial becomes increasingly closer to real conditions of everyday systems; to provoke and challenge the paradigms related to design and architecture through their pragmatic application, acting as a “permanent work in progress”.

Slovenia, in accordance with its geographical conditions, will perform as a paradigm to stimulate, discuss and test the status of this global shift.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 25TH BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

Open Call	May–5 July 2016
Kick-off event	15 September 2016
Process	Autumn 2016–Spring 2017
Exhibition	25 May–29 October 2017

Today BIO is structured as a long-term collaborative process, where teams of designers and multidisciplinary agents develop alternatives to established systems. BIO works as a testing ground, where design is employed as a tool to question and improve our daily life, among different and multidisciplinary design approaches that touch systems, production, services, scientific research, humanistic issues, unexpected conditions for the production of our habitat. The diverse array of topics resonates with both local and global demands, with its comprehensive projects aimed at creating resilient structures that develop over time, often beyond the duration of the Biennial.

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### JOIN US at MILAN DESIGN WEEK 2016

BIO 25 is coming to Milan Design Week 2016, where the curators Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan will explore the main topics along with other prominent curators and design thinkers at four different events.

**Sunday, 10 April at 5 pm**

#### **FARAWAY, SO CLOSE, Biennial of Design 2017 at Noosphere XX1 – A Mobile and Evolving School**

*Pavilion Noosphere XX1 at La Triennale Garden, Viale Alemagna 6, Milan*

Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan with Gianluigi Ricuperati, Italo Rota, Barbara Brondi, Marco Rainò, Cristiano Seganfreddo.

**Tuesday, 12 April at 12 am**

#### **Year of Design World Preview 2016/2017 by Abitare and Jil Sander**

*Jil Sander HQ, Via Beltrami 2, Milan*

Editor and Curator Marco Sammiceli in conversation with Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan.

By invitation only! ([ana.kuntaric@mao.si](mailto:ana.kuntaric@mao.si))

**Tuesday, 12 April at 5 pm**

#### **Afternoon RESET: RESET - The Royal Academy of Art, The Hague**

*Via Ventura 15 - 5th floor, Lambrate, Milan*

Angela Rui, Maja Vardjan and Jan Boelen on the format of BIO Ljubljana.

**Wednesday, 13 April at 5 pm**

#### **Meet the Curators: BIO Ljubljana, Biennial of Design 2017 at European Design Stories**

*Palazzo Clerici, Via Clerici 5, Milan*

Adam Štěch with Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan

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### Press kit and high resolution photos

Ana Kuntarič, [ana.kuntaric@mao.si](mailto:ana.kuntaric@mao.si), +386 1 548 42 74, + 386 41 606 436

## ABOUT THE CURATORS

CURATORS: Angela Rui and Maja Vardjan  
Assistant curator: Claudia Mainardi

### Angela Rui

Angela Rui is an Italian editor and curator based in Milan and Rotterdam, working in design theory and criticism. She was design editor for *Abitare* magazine (2011-2013), is currently writing for Italian and international design magazines, and curated the editorial project for *Icon Design* magazine (Mondadori, 2015), where she continues to work as contents consultant. She recently curated the 2015 edition of *Operae*, the independent design festival based in Turin, under the title *HERE / NOW. Under Present Effect*.

Rui has a particular fondness for the humanistic aspect of design: with *Meeting Mirabilia* she managed a series of live interviews from the studios of *LiveOn4G* (Telecom) to discuss the use of poetry, dreams, uncertainty, nature, and desire as new platforms for design (2014). For the Triennale Design Museum she curated the exhibition and catalogue (Ed. Corraini 2014) *Ugo la Pietra. Disequilibrating Design*, and for the Milan Design Film Festival (2014) co-wrote the short film *Seven Billions*, dedicated to the poetics of Andrea Branzi. She is passionate about the design counterculture and trains future designers enrolled at the School of Design (Politecnico di Milano), and in the Master of Interior Design program at NABA, Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti in Milan.

### Maja Vardjan

Maja Vardjan is an architect and curator. Following her time as creative director of the T5 Project Space gallery and the architecture editor of *Ambient* magazine, she now works as curator of architecture and design at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). She is the author of the publication *Design and Dialogue* and curated the *Silent Revolutions: Contemporary Design in Slovenia* touring exhibition (MAO, 2011-2015). She also curated *Under the Common Roof, an exhibition on modern public buildings* drawing from MAO's archive (MAO, 2013) and has served as a contributor and editor of several books and catalogues.

Maja Vardjan deserves much of the credit for the major changes and overall success of Ljubljana's recent iterations of the Biennial of Design. Together with Jan Boelen and Cvetka Požar she co-curated the 24<sup>th</sup> Biennial of Design, BIO 50. In honour of BIO's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the team managed to change the focus and path of Europe's oldest design biennial and to influence the traditional thinking behind and perception of the role of international biennials today. Most recently she curated the exhibition *Saša J. Maechtig: Systems, Structures, Strategies* (MAO, 2015).

## ABOUT BIENNIAL OF DESIGN

BIO – The Biennial of Design in Ljubljana is an international platform for new approaches in design. BIO was founded back in 1964, making it the first design biennial in Europe. Witnessing the many shifts and changes of the last 50 years, BIO has seen design transition from its birth at the crossroads of industrialization and modernism to a discipline that permeates all layers of life and human endeavour.

Today BIO is structured as a long-term collaborative process, where teams of designers and multidisciplinary agents develop alternatives to established systems. BIO works as a testing ground, where design is employed as a tool to question and improve our daily life, among different and multidisciplinary design approaches that touch systems, production, services, scientific research, humanistic issues, unexpected conditions for the production of our habitat. The diverse array of topics resonates with both local and global demands, with its comprehensive projects aimed at creating resilient structures that develop over time, often beyond the duration of the Biennial.

## FOLLOW THE JOURNEY AND GET INVOLVED!

**[www.bio.si](http://www.bio.si)**

Instagram: **FarawaySoClose\_BIO25**

Twitter: **@bio\_ljubljana**

Facebook: **[www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje](https://www.facebook.com/muzej.za.arhitekturo.in.oblikovanje)**

## ORGANISATION

The Biennial of Design is organised by MAO, Slovenia's national Museum of Architecture and Design (**[www.mao.si](http://www.mao.si)**). MAO preserves and archives works from prominent architects and designers of the 20th and 21st centuries, constituting a rich history of creative ideas, vision and production. MAO organizes and shares this seemingly unlimited source of inspiration and exploration of architecture and design through its many compelling exhibitions, publications and diverse programmes. In this unique environment where past, present and a desire to discover the new come together, MAO, an important European creative hub, serves as a dynamic forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and dialogue for and among a wide range of visitors. MAO is also the founder and coordination entity of the first pan European architectural platform Future Architecture.

**[www.futurearchitectureplatform.org](http://www.futurearchitectureplatform.org)**

Matevž Čelik, director, Biennial of Design

Maja Šuštaršič, head of Biennial of Design

Anja Zorko, head of marketing

Nikola Pongrac, project manager

Špela Vidmar, project manager

Ana Kuntarič, public relations

Natalija Lapajne, educational program

Grupa Ee, visual identity, graphic design

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Press kit and high resolution photos  
**<http://www.mao.si/For-the-media.aspx>**