



Grand opening kicks off BIO 26 | Common Knowledge

The official grand opening of BIO 26 | Common Knowledge took place on 14 November at the Ajdovščina passage in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The event kicked off the 26th Biennial of Design, which is open to visitors through 9 February 2020. Guests were welcomed by MAO director Matevž Čelik, curator Thomas Geisler, and assistant curator Aline Lara Rezende.

Petra Culetto, State Secretary at the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia, officially opened the biennial with a vibrant speech about the importance of sharing knowledge. The evening continued with BIO 26 | Open Knowledge Night, a guided tour of the commissioned projects at the biennial's various partner institutions around Ljubljana. Afterwards, all the guests were invited to dance and celebrate the opening at the BIO 26 | Underground Music Hall, featuring independent alternative Slovenian music labels at the Ajdovščina underpass.

"The official opening of BIO 26 | Common Knowledge was a great success and I would like to express my gratitude to the curatorial team of this edition, Thomas Geisler and Aline Lara Rezende, who did an amazing job setting up this biennial of design packed full of interesting exhibits, works, and ideas about the information crisis. I'm inviting everyone to experience BIO 26 | Common Knowledge in Ljubljana up to 9 February. We're looking forward to seeing you there!" MAO director **Matevž Čelik** said enthusiastically.

Curator **Thomas Geisler** added: *"After months of hard work, I'm very proud to present BIO 26 | Common Knowledge to the world. I hope the exhibitions and accompanying events will provoke and inspire visitors to form new ideas and insights about the global information crisis. By displaying different point of views and exploring new concepts, we're shedding a light on all aspects of this global theme."*

On Friday, 15 November, guided tours at the partnering institutions continued during BIO 26 | Open Knowledge Afternoon. After that, BIO 26 | Talk #1 took place at MAO: the curatorial team invited BIO 26 advisory board members **Deyan Sudjic**, **Amelie Klein** and **Maja Vardjan**, design mentor **Paolo Patelli** and renowned Slovenian architect **Aljosa Dekleva** to join the discussion titled Information Crisis and Knowledge. The evening concluded with the first guided tour of BIO 26 | Common Knowledge exhibition at MAO in the company of the curator and assistant curator.

Delve into the information crisis

The 26th Biennial of Design deals with the information crisis and grapples with the challenges of traditional institutions of knowledge, which now find themselves in a dramatically changed context. Existing in an era of fascinating technological progress and an incomprehensible amount of information, which often comes from unconfirmed sources, BIO 26| Common Knowledge shows how design can help create open institutions. For the commissioned projects BIO 26| Common Knowledge has partnered with six institutions central to knowledge production and dissemination, including a museum, a library, a university, and a newspaper, but also a botanical garden and a retirement home.

During the biennial, visitors will surely be amazed by the *Serendipity Searcher*, one of the commissioned projects, which is a visual atlas and physical search engine that generates unexpected pathways to the treasured archive of the National and University Library of Slovenia. It brings together a spatial installation, machine learning, and human agency to physically reveal, select, and search for visual relationships among the library's holdings. The installation consists of a large light panel and transparent filters that can magically reveal images when placed within its frame. Visitors are invited to interact and physically move the filters to explore visual connections or generate new ones by highlighting any two images of interest.

BIO 26| Common Knowledge represents a central exhibition of historic and contemporary projects. These include is *Superflux's Drone Aviary*: an ongoing research & development project investigating the social, political, and cultural potential of drones, a popular technology that is infiltrating and transforming civic space. Because civilian drones are becoming increasingly ubiquitous in our daily lives, the work imagines a near-future city that will be inhabited by "intelligent" semi-autonomous networked flying machines. The project ultimately raises some crucial questions: How will our cities adapt to drones? What supporting infrastructure will they need? How will they integrate into the fabric of the city?

Visit BIO 26| Common Knowledge: delve into the world of information and be amazed by the commissioned projects, central exhibition, and various accompanying events. The Biennial of Design is open through 9 February 2020.



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