

## Ljubljana: City and Myth

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**Abstract:** Ljubljana is a city that bears indelible traces of the creativity and originality of one of the great masters of Mitteleuropean modernism, Jože Plečnik; He did not proceed according to an impersonal and universal plan, constructed on paper: the history that interested Plečnik has a beginning and an end and concerns the people who live in the city. This urban project became a reality through an incessant process of architectural design. Similar to a stage play, the sequence of urban events imagined by the architect, becomes the telling of a story with its own characters and the dialogue between them.

Each of the works imagined by Plečnik appears to refer to a vaster plan for the city. They resemble autonomous parts of a vast urban programme constantly searching for an overall equilibrium. He pursued a precise plan, working with the monumentalisation of the elements that make up public space, constructing a new historic memory for the city.

Nonetheless, Plečnik's grand scheme was never fully completed, and at the end of his lengthy career as an architect there were more proposals than built works. Beginning in 2004 the city of Ljubljana undertook an ambitious project involving businesses. The project involved the investment of more than 20 million Euro and the construction of a complex programme of interventions involving many young professional offices from the city. Projects were linked, primarily, to the urban infrastructure of the River Ljubljanica, from the city centre to its suburbs.

**Keywords:** Jože Plečnik, historical memory, urban sequences, Ljubljanica, environmental infrastructures, architecture without time

### *Ljubljana “auteur city”*

Ljubljana is one of those rare cities whose urban structure conserves an impression of the strong sign of the architecture that generated it. It is a city that bears indelible traces of the creativity and originality of one of the great masters of Mitteleuropean modernism, Jože Plečnik, the author of a different modernism, which never turned its back on tradition and established a concrete dialogue with the “architecture of place”<sup>2</sup>. A simultaneously rich and measured expression of a

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2. “[...] Plečnik was one of the greatest interpreters of this modernism and the isolation and unrepeata-

personal style that makes the current capital of Slovenia a sort of auteur city. The city is the work of an author who left an unequivocal legacy of projects and constructions that, despite the passing of time and notwithstanding the transformations it brings, conserves the fascination of its captivating beauty intact (when not with added value). These constructions continue to stand in all of their evocative power, beyond the widespread and deeply rooted echoes of the testament entrusted to his projects, which that has yet to be fully exhausted.

Jože Plečnik lived between Slovenia, Austria and Czechoslovakia, where he studied and took his first professional steps, divided between the Nordic tradition of Austro-Hungarian and Germanic architecture and the Mediterranean classicism of the Greeks and Romans (cultivated during his travels, above all in Italy). He returned to Ljubljana in the early 1920s after a lengthy period of study abroad: initially in Vienna, under the guidance of the great Otto Wagner, with whom he worked on the design of the city's subway system and the reorganisation of the Danube Canal, honing the tools of his trade; later in Prague, where he was commissioned by the first president of the Czechoslovakian Republic (Tomaš G. Masaryk) with the reorganisation of the castle, gardens and courtyards, a unique occasion for verifying his ability to dialogue with the city and its historical structures. It was precisely during his time in Prague (1919-1934) that he first became interested in the renewal of his native city. His early urban projects already expressed a desire to give form to a city he imagined as the nation's new capital of architecture, art and culture.

Back in Ljubljana Plečnik chose to live in the suburb of *Trnovo*, where he opened a small practice. It was precisely here that he took his first steps toward the realisation of a visionary idea of restoring dignity to the city's urban structure. He moved on foot, from his home toward the city centre, measuring the spaces of a transformation he still only imagined, thinking and seeking the solutions that would later become reality in the drawing and realisation of his projects. As one of his students from this period stated, it was precisely from the house in

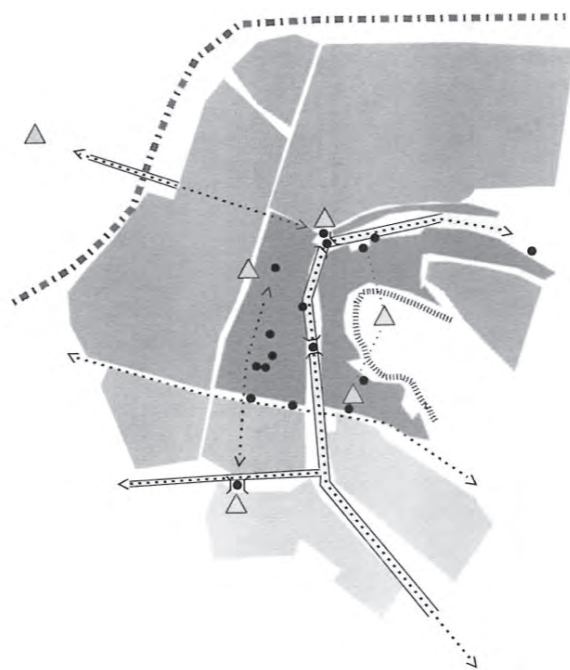
bility in which he wished to place it today continues increasingly to give way, as his work gradually reveals itself, to the surprise generated by his extraordinary capacity to produce materials impossible to substitute for our time", translated from text by Alberto Ferlenga, *L'architetto delle città*, in MALACARNE, ROSSO 1996.

*Trnovo* that the Plečnik constructed his ideal city, a thesis supported by some of the most authoritative scholars of the Slovenian master. They confirm how, in reality, «[...] Plečnik did not proceed according to an impersonal and universal plan, constructed on paper: the history that interested Plečnik has a beginning and an end and concerns the people who live in the city. His walks through Ljubljana served to capture all of this: he observed, measured and weighed, mentally defining what it was possible to modify, raise to a higher level, what could be the supporting element of a successive organisation and those items, of minor value, to be concealed, ignored or even demolished»<sup>3</sup>.

*The city as a unique composite element*

Plečnik's work was a labour of patience, the effort of someone who with an almost obsessive attention observes and selects the traces and elements of permanence that belong to history, beginning precisely with a deep understanding of the context in which he operates. His exercised his capacity for invention with intelligence and courage, operating simultaneously between the city that existed and that yet to be built, in an attempt to reveal the ever present soul of the missing element that remains. This radical transformation was activated nonetheless by parts and entrusted to the rearrangement of a few elements, engaged in a dialogue with one another and with the space containing them. Each of his architectural projects was arranged in a clearly defined network of references that, taken together, possess the ability to restore a unitary urban form and, in the end, to reveal themselves in the creation of public space. This urban project became a reality through an incessant process of architectural design. «[...] The work of Jože Plečnik in Ljubljana is offered as a lesson in architecture rich with operative suggestions and in many ways extremely contemporary. It raises the same questions asked of today's cities, to which the Slovenian architect offered a solution, to the same degree that the relationship binding the city to those who inhabit it remains unchanged. The point of view of the wayfarer and the views offered to the observer were the base for Plečnik, coupled with historic studies of his beloved city, which he employed to develop his

3. Peter Krečič, *L'immagine della Lubiana di Plečnik*, in MALACARNE, ROSSO 1996.



*Interpretation of Ljubljana by Jože Plečnik. Plan and references.  
(source Daniela Ciarcelluti).*



*Ljubljana, the Congress Square in a vintage photo.*



*Ljubljana in a vintage graphic print.*



*Interpretive schemes of Ljubljana by Jože Plečnik.*





*Jože Plečnik, the Three Bridges.  
(Photograph Sergio Camplone)*



*The riverfront in the Market area.  
(Photograph Sergio Camplone)*



*Jože Plečnik, the Market front on the Ljubjanica River (Photograph Sergio Camplone).*

considerations on the structure of public urban space and atop which he constructed his own idea of design that was resistant to the novelties of the avant-gardes and fashion»<sup>4</sup>.

Similar to a stage play, the sequence of urban events imagined by the architect, becomes the telling of a story with its own characters and the dialogue between them. The spectator crosses the stage as a direct participant, enamoured of the signs that attract attention to direct him in other directions in a harmonious continuity. Routes are constructed using diverse forms that, all the same, define the beauty of the unique story, told in fragments, of the city.

Each of the works imagined by Plečnik appears to refer to a vaster plan for the city. They resemble autonomous parts of a vast urban programme constantly searching for an overall equilibrium. In fact, each project, other than being presented as a specific solution to specific situations, upon closer inspection reveals the countless references between this part of the city and all of its other parts. It is a sophisticated and refined system of connections and elements that emphasise their belonging to a broader urban vision. Plečnik manages each time to transform the resolution of simple problems into new occasions for research and experimentation, to re-compose the lines he used to configure spaces capable of expressing the characteristics of the new city to the fullest. He pursued a precise plan, working with the monumentalisation of the elements that make up public space, constructing a new historic memory for the city using “Perennial Architecture” that testifies to time without history, with neither a beginning nor an end<sup>5</sup>. This monumentality was constructed as a reference to the origins of the city, as opposed to the dimensions of each intervention; a *großestadt* constructed through the articulation of minute parts. It is the measured application of an adaptive strategy that works by fragments, intended as a collection of small projects belonging to a global design, a new urban configuration. All the same «[...] notwithstanding the evident references to history, what is proposed is not a historicist reconstruction like

4. Gino Malacarne e Paolo Rosso, *Introduzione*, in MALACARNE, ROSSO 1996.

5. Annotations borrowed from Janez Koželj found in a selection of notes on a passage along the river, entitled *Lubiana. Tra monumentalizzazione e contestualizzazione, il progetto delle infrastrutture come occasione di ri-costruzione dell'identità urbana*, edited by Domenico Potenza, 1998.

the many others imagined for city centres between the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries. In this case, it is the continuous opening up of spaces and the introduction of slight deformations that define a realistic approach to controlling urban space through the creation of a unique and composite work»<sup>6</sup>.

*The extraordinary sequence of the Vegova ulica*

«Visiting Ljubljana one is struck by the quality of the legacy offered by Plečnik's work. We are attracted by his key buildings, such as the library and churches, but above all by the countless emphases on urban elements created from so little: steps in front of a church, the memory of the bastions along *Vegova ulica* and the *walk up to the Castle* [...] they are parts of buildings, entrances stairs, single façades, as if the problem of unity continued not to be felt as such; other times the intervention tends simply to offer an architectural sign and a comforting practicality to the simplest elements of urban connection [...]. It is precisely in the extension of two levels to the entire city as a sum of dispersed events that avoids any interconnection in which we find the most interesting and modern aspect of this work»<sup>7</sup>.

This is the method Plečnik employed to construct his sequences, including the principal sequence that begins from the *Church of Trnovo* (where he lived) and expands out into the dimension of the *Bridge* of the same name (1928-1930), almost an extension of the church square in its arrangement of the four pyramids to the sides and the birch trees (which divide the vehicular space from that for pedestrians). The design continues in the alignment of *Erjavec ulica*, as far as the reorganisation of *French Revolution Square* with its monumental obelisk dedicated to Napoleon and Illyria (1929). Here the broad space of pause offered by the Square marks, to the right, the entrance to the *Križanke Convent* (restored by Plečnik after the war) and, in front, on axis with the continuation of *Ulica Žanke Erjavec*, the small aedicule with the monument to the poet Simon Gregorčič (1936). *Ulica Žanke Erjavec* (home to the National Library) was completed between 1939 and 1941 with the design of an articulated system of paths and terraces raised on

6. Alberto Ferlenga, *Joze Plečnik archeologo del tempo*, in FERLENGA, POLANO 1990.

7. FERLENGA 1988.



different levels. Their rhythm is marked by stone pedestals decorated by bronze busts of famous musicians accompanying us into *Congress Square* (now Liberation Square). This public square (completed in two phases from 1926 to 1940) was to have been the focal point of the entire sequence, with the division of *Stella Park* and the redesign of the Baroque Stele of the Holy Trinity in front of the façade of the *Ursuline Church*. It was to be completed by the realisation of the *Odeon Theatre Complex* (1942-1944) destined to occupy the entire block between the Square and the riverfront.

This is one of the tangible examples of the Plečnik's idea for Ljubljana city-capital of Slovenia, imagined in its public spaces at the service of the community. The solutions of this specific project, whether built or only designed, constantly lend themselves to a plural interpretation that remains open to future transformations. While the articulation of the city was imagined in parts, it remains capable of preserving the unity between disaggregated situations and attempts to govern (through corrections, alignments and perspectives) those portions of the city in which Plečnik intervened. The references are clear and rooted in the early forms of urban design realised through the identification of road axes and monumental centres, as in the plans of Sixtus V for Rome or those of Borromeo for Milan, and the episodic methods employed in the creation of urban plans.

An important role is also played here by a great sensitivity for natural elements that, in particular in the city of Ljubljana, is used to focus attention on a number of primary measures. They include: the view linking the *Castle* with *Tivoli Park* and establishing fixed reference points in the urban horizon; the path along the banks of the *River Ljubljanica* that opens up unexpected glimpses of the architecture of the ancient city centre. These two measures are fundamental to the construction of the city. They interest and integrate one another, constituting the essential orientation markers for the city's residents, tourists and visitors. Plečnik worked with this idea, emphasising its character (beauty) accompanied by alignments and perspectives and the extensive presence of small interventions. They are projects at the human scale, which he himself arranged in strategic points, at street corners or to the sides of bridges, as part of an intelligent play of solids and voids.

His is a city to be experienced “in step”, to be measured by those who cross its streets and squares. A fundamental role in this experience is played by the details of small works of architecture, less as objects in their own right and more as part of a system of orientation in public urban space.

*A symphony on the banks of the Ljubljana*

A great deal of importance in the design of the city is given to the presence of the river that crosses Ljubljana and, in particular, the occasion exploited by Plečnik to transform this natural element into a sort of large public urban space running through the entire inhabited centre of the *Spica* (the archaeological area at the height of the bifurcation of the Ljubljana) as far as the *locks at Poljane*. This is yet another sequence staged by the great master. This element of separation and annoyance is transformed into a sort of urban infrastructure fronted by the city's main public buildings, similar to the *Grand Canal* in Venice. «Plečnik constructs this axis like a symphony or a beautiful story: he begins with an overture of long horizontal notes, of riverbanks and streets on both sides of the River *Ljubljana*, flanked by tree-lined boulevards along the terraced riverbanks»<sup>8</sup>. The river, above all in the central part of its urban crossing, as it appeared in the 1920s, is the fruit of the concrete interventions realised by Alfred Keller, the Viennese architect who reinforced the riverbanks.

In its most peripheral section, Plečnik redesigned its extreme edges, modelling the terraces to step down toward the water and underlining the diverse levels with rows of poplar trees and weeping willows, gently sloping planes, where the riverbanks widen and slip directly into the water.

In the most central part he sought to soften the high concrete walls with small landscaped terraces and plantings of trees on the riverbanks. It is a bespoke tailored approach of urban re-stitching that employs elements linking the two sides of the river, connected by some of the most beautiful architectural (infrastructural) projects, including: the *Cobblers' Bridge* (1933), conceived as a true public square overlooking

8. Peter Krečič, *L'architetto delle città*, in MALACARNE, ROSSO 1996.

the water; the *Three Bridges* (1929-1932) with its two side wings for pedestrians flanking the original central bay in stone, with stairs connecting the level of the city with the level of the river below where tall trees mark the presence of the living natural world flowing below it. There is also the monumentalisation of the riverbanks in the lengthy section of the *Covered Market* (1940-1944) overlooking the river, interrupted by two loggias decorated by columns and crossed by the monumental *Butchers' Bridge* (a covered bridge that was never built). Further ahead this monumental section of the river terminates at the *Dragon Bridge*. From this point onward there is a return to the organisation of tree-lined avenues that accompany the river all the way to its "triumphal arch" as Peter Krečič called it «[...] there is no other way to define the monumental composition of the three towers with transversal connections concealing the mechanics of the system of locks (*Zapornice*). It is the final agreement, a salute to the *Ljubljana* as it leaves the city.

«Works of architecture are or become infrastructural elements in a situation which already demonstrates signs of contemporary disaggregation. They indicate the possibilities of a diverse approach to planning that repropose and reconsiders more traditional urban spaces, constructed from fragments with an elevated urban and architectural value that attract urban parts devoid of quality. It is the sign of a *beneficial confusion*, equally applied to the city and buildings, from whose folds he extracts the forms and rules of a new destiny»<sup>9</sup>.

Seen in these terms, we can consider Plečnik's work to be highly contemporary as it lends itself to an adaptive strategy that intervenes in the interstices left open by the transformations of history or in those parts without any particular significance that would suggest their conservation. His was not the tactical vision of someone who works with the indispensable completeness of additions; it was more accurately technical, an approach of someone who entrusts each individual intervention with the capacity to create a multiple modification.

This important succession of projects and built works is capable of entering into contact with the living body of the city, and possesses the ability to modify the ways and forms it faces the water. The flowing

9. FERLENGA 1988.

river becomes the spinal column of public space, its structuring axis, passing beneath the main elevations of buildings, widenings and public squares, presented in all of its natural beauty. This is demonstrated by the different levels of the terraces, the highest and most public spaces of the bridges and the paved riverbanks, and the lowest and most intimate level of the flowing water (it is enough to study the section of the *Market*, or the design of the underside of the bridges, hovering just above the surface of the water). This extends into the way the large sloping planes and steps accompany the edges of land as they slip into the water.

*The legacy and relevance of Plečnik's spirit*

«With the redesign of the Ljubljana, after many years the architect stole the reins from the hands of the engineer. Only now are we able to appreciate the beauty of Plečnik's language, yet we must await the end of the century to find its proper position between the modern and the postmodern. In the end, the Slovenian architect is closer to the revolution at the dawn of the century than to the confusion at its end»<sup>10</sup>.

Nonetheless, Plečnik's grand scheme was never fully completed, and at the end of his lengthy career as an architect there were more proposals than built works, due also to his immense generosity in producing updates and variations at any occasion offered to confront the themes of renewing urban spaces. All the same, the powerful sign of renewal received by the city during the thirty years spanning from his return to Ljubljana to his final days remains intact. His work will forever mark this city with a singular and rich production of buildings, public squares, canals, riverbanks and riverside parks in which the *Ljubljana* plays a central role as an urban infrastructure and public space. It extends between the buildings of the ancient city centre, which is enriched by a singular form of cultured and hospitable monumentalism. This is evident in the re-proposal of the *Stoà* for the portico of the *Market* on the right bank of the river and the *Agorà* in the realisation of *Congress Square* on the left bank.

Unfortunately, during the final decades of the past century, fol-

10. PRELOVŠEK 1988.

Following Slovenia's declaration of independence and opening toward the rest of Europe, Ljubljana suffered a notable disaggregation of its public urban spaces. The river gradually lost the aulic spirit conferred upon it by the master's projects, to the point of conceding its role as the leading figure on the urban stage. It was subordinated to a chaotic system of vehicular traffic that relegated the spaces overlooking its banks to the role of haphazard parking lots. This new condition undermined the overall fascination of the historic city centre and produced a substantial shift of primary public and commercial activities toward the immediate suburbs. Residents gradually moved toward other parts of the city, triggering a process of 'peripheralisation' of the centre. This situation grew unsustainable and threatened the very roots of the strategic role imagined by Plečnik for the city, and answers are being sought since the early years of the new millennium.

The idea is to set out precisely from the legacy of the Slovenian master and, above all, to once again set in motion not only what Plečnik himself had imagined in his projects, as much as the methods (the strategies) of intervention involving still available fragments in order to reactivate forms of urban renewal. The river once again becomes the key to the renewal of the city centre, as widely proposed and in part realised by the projects of the master. Obviously, it is not possible to image the *tout-court* reuse of the language and forms inherited from Plečnik, nor is it possible to confirm his lexicon without slipping into a senseless and improbable re-proposal of a "rule" belonging to a time and a context that has now changed. It is however possible to confirm the spirit, as some of his pupils and a few contemporary architects have been able to do. This is a sort of transcription capable of restoring the sense of his work without betraying its underlying spirit. Only in these terms is it possible to imagine a form of design with Plečnik "as what undoubtedly remains alive are the urban solutions proposed by Plečnik, permeated by his ideology, based on the conviction that a city must live for its inhabitants, as it represents a gift from the architect to all of its residents, without exception"<sup>11</sup>.

11. VERRI 2010.

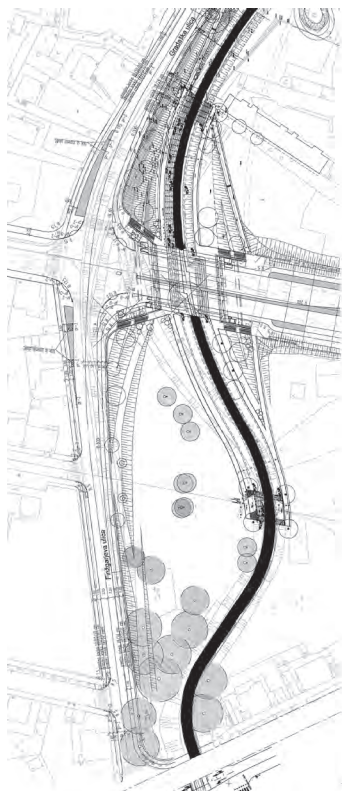


*An ambitious public project*

Beginning in 2004 the city of Ljubljana undertook an ambitious project involving businesses, banks and public and private companies in the restoration of the centre to its role as a the grand catalyst of the city's fascination and economy. The project involved the investment of more than 20 million Euro and the construction of a complex programme of interventions involving many young professional offices from the city, through the organisation of public competitions (more than 40). Projects were linked, primarily, to the urban infrastructure of the *River Ljubljanica*, from the city centre to its suburbs. The river gradually returned to its role as a guide, within this system, beginning above all with the revisitation of many of the original ideas left on paper by Plečnik. The principal objective was to stem the emptying of the historic centre and improve the quality and attractiveness of its spaces, beginning with the quality of the air (the elimination of vehicular traffic) and the restoration of the public role necessary to daily relations and activities of its residents. At the same time, it must also attract tourists and visitors to admire the beauty of the city's history and monuments.

More than two kilometres of paths overlooking the river were involved in the renewal project, from the intersection with the *Gruber Canal* to the tall portals of the locks. This new sequence began with the construction of a new pedestrian bridge (2010) at the southern tip of the urban island to connect the *Botanical Gardens at the University* (the oldest institution in the city) with the new *Špica Park*, a vast landscaped area that terraces down toward the *River Ljubljanica*. At this point the left and right banks of the river were renewed and restored in all their natural beauty, with new paths and areas of rest, illuminated and designed to be used at all hours of the day. The banks in front of the historic district of *Trnovo* (also rehabilitated) intersect the small tributary of *Gradiščica* (a branch of the *Ljubljanica*) just downstream from the *Barjanska*, one of the principal roads into the city; here a new bridge (2008) redesigns the entrance to the city centre, reutilising all available landscaped spaces (fully respecting the tradition of Plečnik) for residents of the historic district.

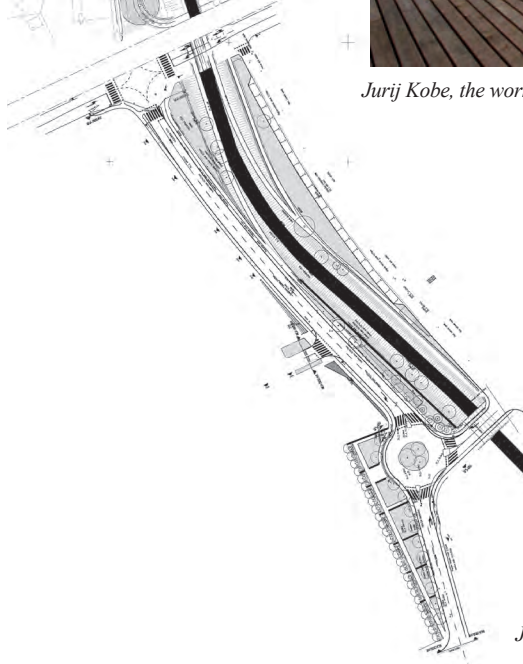
As they gradually approach the centre, the riverbanks assume a more urban character, both in their height above the water and the



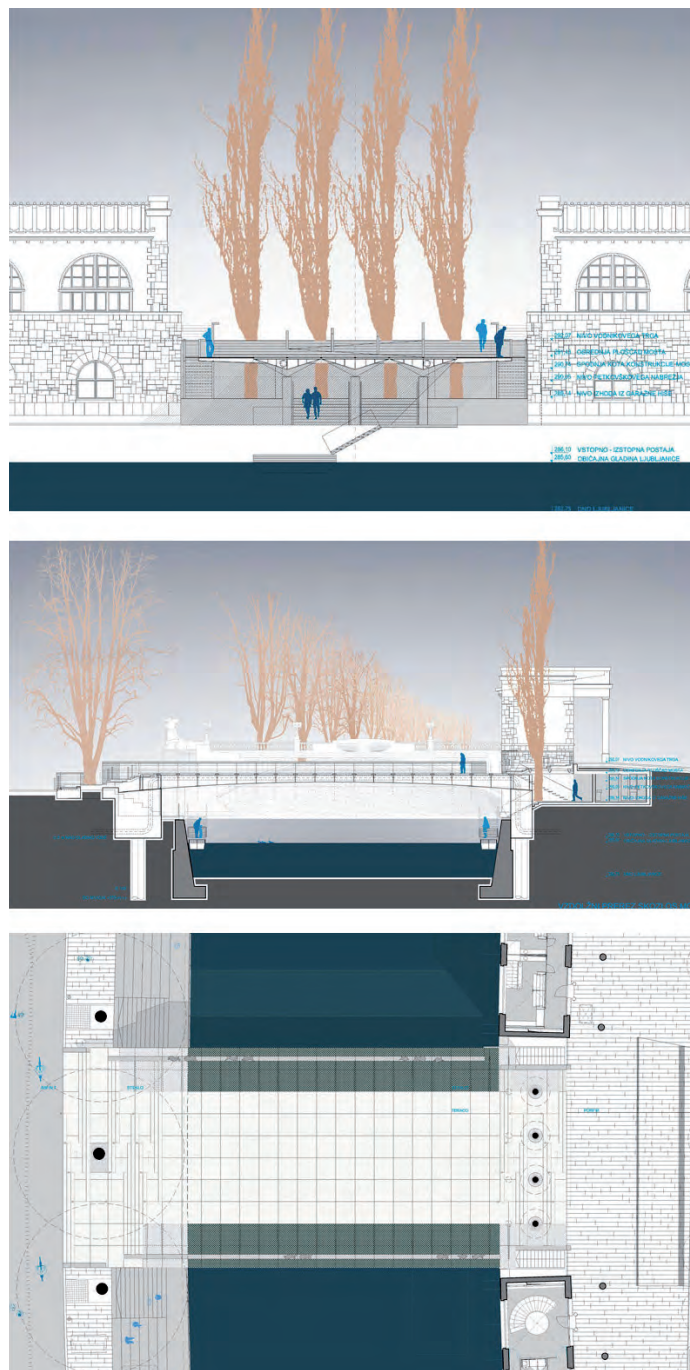
*Jurij Kobe, the Bridge on the Gradišnica.*



*Jurij Kobe, the work on the Spica (the end) of the Ljubjanica River.*



*Jurij Kobe, plan of Kolezija's Bridge and Park.*



Jurij Kobe, Butchers' Bridge, drawings of architectural design.

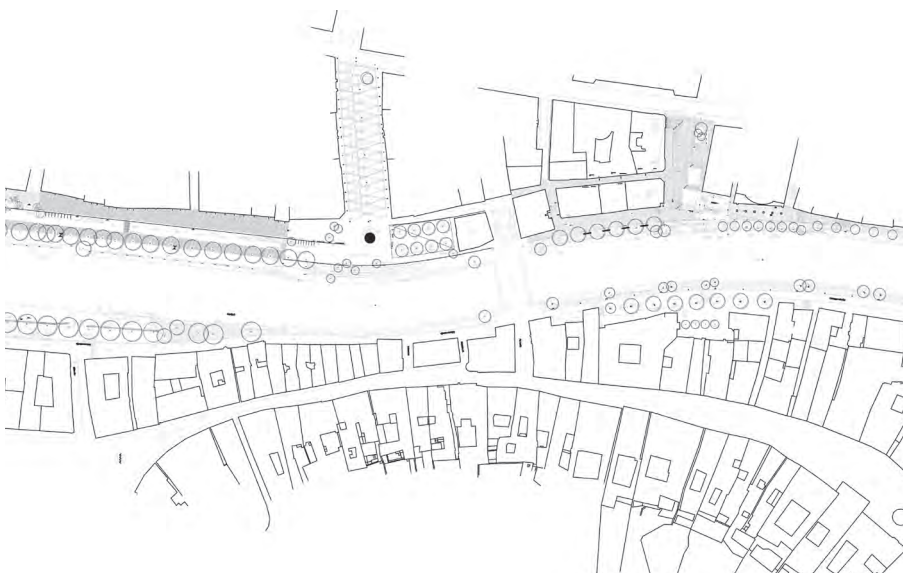




*Jurij Kobe, Butchers' Bridge (Photographer Sergio Camplone).*



*Vesna e Matej Vozlic, set-up of the Piazza Nuova, 2014 (Photographer Sergio Camplone).*



*Vesna e Matej Vozlic, design plan of the new banks of Ljubljana River. 2014.*





*Vesna e Matej Vozlic, view towards the River of Piazza Nuova, 2014 (Photographer di Sergio Camplone).*

elevations of the buildings fronting the river. The programme continues with the renovation of the historic *Hradecki Bridge* (2011) and the renewal of the *Krakovo and Breg* riverbanks (both from 2010) on the left side of the river. In particular, the redesign of the terraces of the Breg extend as far as the piazza Nova (recently completed, verify the drawing by Plečnik), one of the oldest squares in the city, fronted by the *National University Library*. Further on, other works on the left bank include the redesign of the *Hribarjevo* area and *Dvorni Square*; on the opposite side of the water, on axis with the Cankarjevo in correspondence with *Ključavničarska ulica*, the path leading up to the *Castle* was redesigned. After passing the triple bridge (the city centre par excellence), and remaining on the left bank, at the height of the *Petrovškovo nabrežje*, a small stepping pavilion suspended above the water offers a privileged view of the castle. Further ahead the new *Butchers' Bridge* (the same designed by Plečnik to connect to the Stoà of the market) has finally been built, in a refined interpretation by the architect Jurij Kobe. Projects involving the river end almost 500 meters downstream, prior to the locks. Here we find a new *Large Bridge* (2010), projecting out over the water with a small quay connected by floating supports.

The entire programme for the renewal of the section of the *Ljubljana* that runs through the historic part of the city, only summarily described here, is the fruit of a collective effort to the benefit of public and private resources. It optimised the work of multiple subjects and a great many projects, for the most part completing the humanist vision of Jože Plečnik, who imagined a capital city for Slovenia, despite the unusual ambivalence of his conviction that pure modernism would not be able to provide a satisfying urban solution in a historic context<sup>12</sup>. Today, all of the river's banks are accessible on foot as they run along the river and where they intersect the adjacent urban fabric. The result is a unified public space (the same begun by Plečnik) created through specific individual projects that restores to the historic city centre the indispensable power of attraction required to contrast the effects of its desertion and deterioration.

The project for the renewal of the *Ljubljana* was awarded the

12. "[...] a conviction in contrast with the opinion of the functionalists, for whom the importance of content was overlapped by that of efficiency". Translation from the text by PODRECCA 1982

2011 “European Council of Spatial Planners Prize” and the 2012 “European Prize for Urban Public Space”. Other than extending the already vast pedestrian centre all the way to the river by creating 4 bridges for pedestrians and cyclists, new quays, paved areas and loggias stepping down toward the river, the project also provides the area with an added value by inserting social and cultural catalysts: reading points, a *Library Under the Trees*, and the *Špica* archaeological site. The redesign of the new public spaces of the city centre and its increased urban comfort have once again attracted residents, but also new visitors (and new investors), a new network of streets, parks and squares overlaps a network of bicycle and pedestrian routes that favours the use of all spaces in the city. The new areas along the river expand the dimensions of existing public space and bring the city even closer to the water.

The success triggered by the interventions to renew the River *Ljubljanica* remain only one episode in a much more ambitious programme pursued by City Government, which imagines a future for the city that moves well beyond the public spaces of the historic centre, focusing attention on the rehabilitation and regulation of new suburban expansions. The City is experimenting with new objectives for the future development of the entire region, in which the city assumes a central role in a sustainable vision extended to Ljubljana 2025. This vision received the 2013 “Fabiani Prize” for Territorial and Urban Planning and, more importantly, the prestigious 2016 “European Green Capital Award”.

I believe we must once again insert the relevance of Plečnik’s lesson and in particular his legacy within this process. It must be linked to his vision of the street, his profound understanding of history and its modifications and the importance of returning the city to those who inhabit it. This legacy restores a founding role to architecture; the role of constructing urban public space, of making the city, as a comprehensive idea of a plan realised by giving form to projects: «[...] it is the city that imposes its rules, that models spaces, that opens up courtyards to transform them into public squares, that determines that richness dense with memories provoked by architecture and by decoration that resolves the urban centre in a new monument. Filaments of infrastructure, large urban fragments, buildings like cities dialogue between the blocks of Lju-

bljana, and like the patterns and nodes of a broken network they extend between into its gaps and large voids to build its myth»<sup>13</sup>.

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13. Alberto Ferlenga, *Joze Plečnik archeologo del tempo*, in FERLENGA, POLANO 1990.