

Between the Urban and the Rural: BACK TO THE CITY

Final thesis paper to obtain the academic degree

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Submitted at the Faculty of Art and Design, Bauhaus University, Weimar

Polonca Lovšin

2014

Between the Urban and the Rural: BACK TO THE CITY

Final thesis paper to obtain the academic degree

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Submitted at the Faculty of Art and Design, Bauhaus University, Weimar

by

Polonca Lovšin

Born: 28.10.1970

Matriculation Number: 81198

2014

This Ph.D. work was supervised by:

Prof. Dr. Frank Eckardt, Professor for Urban Studies and Social Research,
Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Bauhaus University, Weimar
(Scientific research, theoretical part)

Prof. Norbert W. Hinterberger, Professor of Fine Arts,
Faculty of Art and Design, Bauhaus University, Weimar
(Artworks, practical part)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)	6
ABSTRACT (GERMAN)	8
1 INTRODUCTION	21
2 ALLOTMENT GARDENS AND COMMUNITY GARDENS	35
3 SELECTED EXAMPLES FROM THE HISTORY OF URBAN GARDENING IN THE USA, UK, GERMANY, AND THE REST OF EUROPE	47
4 THE HISTORY OF ALLOTMENT GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA	59
5 THE ILLEGAL (from the bottom up) AS AN INDICATOR OF STRUCTURAL INCONSISTENCIES OF THE FORMAL SYSTEM (from the top down)	91
6 THE FORMAL TOP-DOWN APPROACH IN ARRANGING URBAN GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA (2007-2010)	97
7 URBAN GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA TODAY	119
8 THE COMMUNITY GARDEN BEYOND A CONSTRUCTION SITE IN LJUBLJANA	127
9 COMMUNITY GARDENS IN THE CONTEXT OF ART	161
10 BACK TO THE CITY	175
11 ARTISTIC RESEARCH	203
12 CONCLUSION	219
BIBLIOGRAPHY	225

ABSTRACT (ENGLISH)

Between the Urban and the Rural: BACK TO THE CITY

This doctoral thesis defines the relationship between the urban and rural in the 21st century, and focuses on food as a key component. The fact that food is, for the most part, produced in the countryside and then transported to the city has a significant influence on this very imbalanced relationship today. The main goal was to show that it is necessary to bring agriculture, urban gardening, the breeding of domestic farm animals, and beekeeping back to the city, which would have a positive affect on both the city and the countryside. All of this is already taking place at the local level, within the neighbourhoods of our cities and through the work of self-organised activities and initiatives, which have been taken up by city residents themselves. One example of this is the community garden, a new model of gardening which offers fertile ground for growing vegetables and to test various forms of co-existence, different ways of designing spaces, the creation of alternative values, and a positive vision for the future of city residents.

In 2010, I co-created the community urban garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, which is the central part of this artistic research. Throughout the entire four-year process of creating this community garden, theory and artistic practice were intertwined, and informed one another. This community garden is an example of a self-organised and self-managed community space located in a residential neighbourhood in the centre of the city of Ljubljana, and as such is a typical example of urbanism from the bottom up. I placed the creation and development of our community garden in a dialogue with the formal way of arranging urban gardening in Ljubljana, a top-down approach, which the city has been carrying out intensively since 2007. I compared the solutions being proposed by the city of Ljubljana for organising urban gardening with the way it is organised in other European cities, the UK, and the USA. I also researched the recent rapid growth of self-organised initiatives which are focused on the local production of food and seek to find more economic and ecologically friendly models to visibly influence the future of cities and the countryside. Here, community gardens play an important role, as in addition to the production of food they are also spaces for the criticism of existing urban policies, a self-organised revitalisation of neglected spaces, and places of resilience, because they differ from that which real estate agencies, large financial companies and city authorities desire them to be.

The community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* has become living proof that, through a group action, the residents of a neighbourhood can influence existing city policies and the future of both their own neighbourhood and that of the entire city. The initiators of this garden are artists and architects, and we began this community garden in the context of an art festival, which also shows that art can influence the processes of everyday life and help to create much

needed spaces within cities to serve various purposes. Our community garden has also shown itself to be an important platform for the exchange of knowledge on organic gardening, ecology in everyday life, and critical architecture, as well as serving to connect related initiatives. Together with these other initiatives we are stronger, and are influencing structural changes within city politics, thereby also co-creating the future of Ljubljana. This community garden is helping us to redefine our relationship with the city and re-awaken the desires and actions of residents connected with realising their fundamental right, the right to the city.

My other artworks, which I am presenting in the context of this doctoral thesis show an optimistic vision for the future of cities. The video animations *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013), as well as the accompanying collages, visualise a city of the future where urban and rural practices live together side-by-side. This vision is being realised by city residents themselves, with their active participation in the creation of community gardens, growing their own vegetables, urban beekeeping, and by having egg-laying hens in their gardens. My desire was also to present the theoretical concept and scientific research to a non-academic public, and to people without specialised training. Using the method of storytelling I included knowledge from the research into the video animations and collages. In this way my artistic work, with an intentional playfulness, challenges today's faith in science and theoretical concepts, as well as directing attention to working with common sense, with one's own hands and with the earth. This can contribute to a change in the still dominant anthropocentric view of nature, which is an urgently needed change for our future.

Keywords: rural, urban agriculture, community gardens, urban beekeeping, the bottom-up approach to urban planning

ABSTRACT (GERMAN)

Zwischen dem Urbanen und Ländlichen: ZURÜCK IN DIE STADT

Einleitung

Das Ziel meiner Ph.D.-Arbeit ist es, die Beziehung zwischen dem Ländlichen und Urbanen im 21. Jahrhundert zu erforschen. Seit 2009 ist die Anzahl der Menschen, die in Städten wohnen, höher als die Anzahl derer, die am Lande leben. Ich habe herausgefunden, dass Lebensmittel der wesentliche Indikator des Grades am Gleichgewicht zwischen dem Urbanen und Ländlichen sind. Heute wird die Mehrheit der Lebensmittel in ländlichen Gebieten angebaut und verarbeitet und von dort in die Städte transportiert. Genau aus diesem Grund kann urbane Landwirtschaft, worunter man den Lebensmittelanbau in Städten versteht, einen großen Einfluss auf die Beziehung zwischen dem Urbanen und Ländlichen haben. Die Beziehung zwischen den beiden Gebieten stand bei der Stadtplanung und Raumordnung immer an vorderster Stelle, jedoch wird sie heute, wo mehr als die Hälfte der Bevölkerung in Städten lebt, zu einem zunehmend wichtigen Thema.

In dieser Ph.D.-Arbeit schlage ich einen optimistischen Blick in die Zukunft der Städte vor, der durch eine intensivere Einbeziehung von ländlichen Praktiken erreicht werden kann. Hier verwende ich »ländlich« in Bezug auf die Intensivierung verschiedener landwirtschaftlicher Praktiken in der Stadt. Der allgemeine Begriff, der den Anbau von Lebensmitteln in urbanen Gebieten beschreibt, ist urbane Landwirtschaft. Einige typische Beispiele sind: urbanes Gärtnern; Organisation von Bauernmärkten; Gestaltung von kleinen bewaldeten Gebieten zur Erzeugung von Brennstoff, Früchten und Nüssen; Fische und andere Fischereierzeugnisse aus Becken, Teichen und Flüssen; Aufzucht von Tieren einschließlich Kaninchen, Ziegen, Meerschweinchen, Hühner, Schweine, Gänse und Enten; sowie auch urbane Bienenhaltung. Die Berücksichtigung meines Vorschlages über die intensivere Einschließung von urbanen landwirtschaftlichen Praktiken in Städten würde ein Gleichgewicht zwischen dem Urbanen und Ländlichen herstellen, etwas, das im letzten Jahrhundert oder schon länger verdreht wurde. Obwohl die Ausbreitung der urbanen Landwirtschaft sowohl der Stadt wie auch dem Land zugute kommen würde, würden die Menschen und die Natur selbst in beiden Umfeldern davon am meisten profitieren – und das ist eine wichtige Richtung, in die man in Zukunft gehen sollte, um das Überleben der Menschheit und unserer Kultur zu sichern.

Im ersten Teil dieser Doktorarbeit fokussiere ich mich auf das urbane Gärtnern. Es ist wichtig zu wissen, dass in dieser Arbeit zwischen zwei Arten der urbanen Gärten unterschieden wird: dem Kleingarten (auch Schrebergarten) und dem Gemeinschaftsgarten. Ich werde die Unterschiede zwischen den beiden erläutern, um somit die Gemeinschaftsgärten als neue Form des urbanen Gemeinschaftsraumes vorzustellen, der auf der aktiven Beteiligung der Anwohner basiert.

Mein Ziel ist es herauszufinden, wieso Gemeinschaftsgärten in Nachbarschaften heute äußerst wichtig sind und wieso sie auch für die Zukunft der Städte eine große Rolle spielen. Ich werde die allgemeinen und besonderen Eigenschaften der Kleingärten und Gemeinschaftsgärten in Kapitel zwei, *Kleingärten und Gemeinschaftsgärten (Allotment Gardens and Community Gardens)*, vorstellen.

Mein Wissen über Gemeinschaftsgärten basiert auf meiner Erfahrung, die ich bei der gemeinsamen Gründung des Gemeinschaftsgartens *Jenseits der Baustelle* (orig. *Onkraj gradbišča*; engl. *Beyond a Construction Site*) 2010 in Ljubljana machte. Der Garten spielt eine zentrale Rolle in dieser Doktorarbeit. Der gesamte Text bezieht sich auf ihn und er wird in Kapitel acht, *Der Gemeinschaftsgarten Jenseits der Baustelle in Ljubljana (The Community Garden Beyond a Construction Site in Ljubljana)*, näher beschrieben.

Um den Unterschied zu sehen, den unser Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle* in der Politik über das urbane Gärtnern in Ljubljana gemacht hat, musste ich mich der Geschichte des urbanen Gärtnerns in Ljubljana im Allgemeinen widmen. Neben der Geschichte des lokalen urbanen Gärtnerns erforschte ich auch die Entwicklung der Kleingärten in Europa, die für Slowenien am relevantesten ist, und konzentrierte mich auch auf die Geschichte der ähnlichen (urbanen) Gartenpraktiken im Vereinigten Königreich und den Vereinigten Staaten. Das wird in Kapitel drei, *Auserwählte Beispiele aus der Geschichte des urbanen Gärtnerns in den Vereinigten Staaten, Vereinigten Königreich, Deutschland und dem restlichen Europa (Selected Examples from the History of Urban Gardening in the USA, UK, Germany, and the Rest of Europe)*, vorgestellt. Ähnlich wie in anderen Gebieten Europas basiert das urbane Gärtnern auch in Slowenien (und insbesondere in Ljubljana) auf dem Konzept der individuellen Kleingärten. In Ljubljana wurden Kleingärten fast 60 Jahre selbstorganisiert und waren halblegal. Der erste Teil der Geschichte der Kleingärten in Ljubljana wird in Kapitel vier, *Die Geschichte der Kleingärten in Ljubljana (1945-2007) (The History of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana (1945-2007))*, beschrieben.

Die offizielle Stadtplanungspolitik in Slowenien und Ex-Jugoslawien hat es ermöglicht, dass diese illegalen Kleingärten (und deren Bau) errichtet und bis zu einem gewissen Grad auch toleriert wurden. Dieser Vorgang begann in den 1950ern Jahren und war in den 1980ern Jahren am intensivsten. Ich schrieb einen kurzen Überblick über die Situation in der damaligen Stadtplanung in Ljubljana, um somit die offensichtliche »Nichtregulierung« des urbanen Gärtnerns seitens der Stadt und des Staates darzustellen. Einen allgemeinen Überblick biete ich in Kapitel fünf, *Das Illegale (von unten nach oben) als ein Anzeichen der strukturellen Inkonsistenz des ehemaligen Systems (von oben nach unten) (The Illegal (from the bottom up) as an Indicator of Structural Inconsistencies of the Formal System (from the top down))*.

Der zweite Teil der Geschichte des urbanen Gärtnerns in Ljubljana beschäftigt sich mit den Maßnahmen, die die Stadtverwaltung (die 2006 neu gewählt wurde) in den Jahren zwischen 2007 und 2010 ergriff. Zwischen 2007 und 2008 wurde fast ein Drittel der bestehenden Kleingärten in Ljubljana beseitigt und die darauffolgenden Maßnahmen der Stadt erwiesen sich als eine ungeschickte und nicht komplett durchdachte Planung. Die Situation in dieser Zeit wird in Kapitel sechs, *Das ehemalige Top-Down-Prinzip bei der Planung des urbanen Gärtnerns in Ljubljana (2007-2010) (The Formal Top-Down Approach in Arranging Urban Gardening in Ljubljana (2007-2010))*, näher beschrieben.

Der dritte und letzte Teil der Geschichte der Kleingärten in Ljubljana fokussiert sich auf den Zeitraum ab 2010 bis heute, 2014. Zur Zeit ist die Stadt der Mediator zwischen den Bürgern, die einen urbanen Garten haben wollen, und den privaten Grundbesitzern und berät die Bürger über die privaten Organisationen und Bauern, die sie kontaktieren können, wenn sie einen Kleingarten besitzen möchten. Deshalb spezialisierten sich in den letzten zwei Jahren einige Initiativen, Bauern und sogar kleine Privatunternehmen auf den Bau urbaner Gärten für die Bewohner von Ljubljana. Darunter ist auch unser Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle (Beyond a Construction Site)*, der 2010 entstand. Diese Initiativen und Projekte werden in Kapitel sieben, *Urbanes Gärtnern in Ljubljana heute (Urban Gardening in Ljubljana Today)*, vorgestellt.

Im Zusammenhang mit der Kunst werde ich unseren Gemeinschaftsgarten unter die anderen gemeinschaftsbasierten Kunstwerke platziert. Ich versuche Antworten auf die Fragen zu finden, wo die Kunst darin liegt und was die Rolle des Künstlers in solchen Gemeinschaftsprojekten ist. Einige Aufmerksamkeit wird auch dem Einfluss gewidmet, der von unserem reflektierten Ansatz während des ganzen Gründungsprozesses des Gemeinschaftsgartens auf das Geschehen auf der Baustelle ausgeübt wurde. Das wird in Kapitel neun, *Gemeinschaftsgärten im Zusammenhang mit der Kunst (Community Gardens in the Context of Art)*, erforscht.

In Kapitel zehn mit dem Titel *Zurück in die Stadt (Back to the City)* werde ich meine Aufmerksamkeit von unserem Gemeinschaftsgarten auf meine vier individuellen Kunstwerke lenken, die neben dem Gemeinschaftsgarten den praktischen Teil dieser Dissertation darstellen. Meine individuellen Kunstwerke basieren auf klassischen künstlerischen Techniken wie Kunstaktionen, Skulpturen im öffentlichen Raum und Videoanimationen. Ihr Inhalt bezieht sich auf die Einschließung von domestizierten Tieren in das Stadtleben, was ein weiteres Segment der urbanen Landwirtschaft ist.

In Kapitel elf, *Künstlerische Forschung (Artistic Research)*, werde ich herausfinden, wie meine Kunstwerke einen Treffpunkt zwischen Kunst und künstlerischer Forschung bilden. In diesem

Kapitel werde ich die Methoden beschreiben, die ich benutze, um Forschung mit Kunst zu verbinden. Ich versuche auch herauszufinden, ob die Kunstwerke zu bestimmten Zeitpunkten Einfluss auf die Forschung oder auf die tatsächlichen Verhältnisse in diesem Bereich hatten, und werde zwei verschiedene Methoden vorstellen, die während der Entstehung dieser Kunstwerke benutzt wurden.

Schlussfolgerung

Diese Doktorarbeit basiert zwar auf dem Standpunkt, dass Landwirtschaft intensiv in Städte integriert werden sollte, mir war aber die Situation in diesem Bereich nicht völlig bewusst. In meiner Doktorarbeit schlug ich einen optimistischen Blick in die Zukunft von Stadt und Land vor. Ich meine, dass ein Gleichgewicht zwischen dem Urbanen und Ländlichen erreicht werden kann, wenn man Landwirtschaft in der Städten fördern würde - indem man Landwirtschaft »Zurück in die Stadt« bringt (so wie das der Titel meiner Videoanimation vorgibt). Urbane Landwirtschaft leistet den wichtigsten Beitrag zum Ausgleich dieser fragilen und wichtigen Beziehung. Deshalb sollte es im Interesse der Bürger liegen, das urbane Gärtnern, die urbane Bienenhaltung und die Aufzucht von domestizierten Tieren zu praktizieren und damit eine positive Auswirkung auf die Stadt sowie auch das Land zu erzielen. Davon profitieren aber vor allem Mensch und Natur selbst, deshalb ist dies eine wichtige und notwendige Ausrichtung für die Zukunft der Menschheit und unserer Kultur.

Diese Forschungsarbeit hat bestätigt, dass es heute ein immer größeres Interesse an urbanem Gärtnern und anderen landwirtschaftlichen Praktiken in europäischen Städten gibt. Der beste Beweis dafür sind Wartelisten für Gärten und eine ansteigende Anzahl an urbanen Gärtnern. In England gibt es zur Zeit 3558 Kleingärtenanlagen mit einer Anzahl von 154.432 Gärten. Allein dieses Jahr gibt es 78.827 Personen, die auf den Wartelisten für Kleingärten stehen. Auch in Deutschland sind die Wartelisten lang, allein in Berlin warten nämlich 16.000 Gärtner auf ihren Garten. Das zweitwichtigste Anzeichen dafür, dass das Interesse an urbaner Landwirtschaft wächst, ist das steigende Interesse an urbaner Bienenhaltung in europäischen Städten und Städten im Vereinigten Königreich sowie Nordamerika. Im Zeitraum von 2008 bis 2013 ist die Zahl der urbanen Bienenhalter im Vereinigten Königreich um fast 200% gestiegen. In New York ist urbane Imkerei seit 2010 gesetzlich zugelassen, doch es war schon vorher ein etabliertes Hobby, das von einem Netzwerk von Organisationen, Blogs und Fachgeschäften unterstützt wurde. Heute gibt es in Berlin circa 500 Bienenhalter und sie produzieren 150 Tonnen Berliner Honig. Sie glauben daran, dass lokaler Honig wenigstens die Bevölkerung dazu anregt, über die Herkunft ihrer Lebensmittel nachzudenken. Dass Stadtbewohner ihr eigenes Gemüse anbauen, verantwortungsbewusst mit Naturressourcen umgehen, ihr Umweltbewusstsein stärken und ökologisch in ihren Alltagsleben vorgehen wollen, sind alles Zeichen, dass die Menschen einen Einfluss auf ihr Leben, die Lebensqualität in den Stadtvierteln und das Leben in Städten haben wollen.

Ein weiteres Argument, dass diese Behauptung untermauert, kann in den bestehenden Bewegungen und Initiativen gefunden werden, die sich auf lokalen Lebensmittelanbau konzentrieren und in den letzten Jahrzehnten ins Leben gerufen worden sind. Diese Bewegungen fördern die lokale Nahrungserzeugung und möchten die bestehenden wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und politischen Zustände beeinflussen. »Zustände« in urbanen Umfeldern heute beziehen sich auf alles, was überwiegend auf Konsum und Profit ausgerichtet ist. Initiativen wie *Transition Towns*, *Incredible Edible*, *Ecovillages* und viele andere vor kurzem etablierte Gemeinschaftsgärten bestätigen, dass eine Wendung zum Besseren möglich ist, indem man lokal in kleinem Umfang und mit Gruppenaktivitäten anfängt. Obwohl ihre Anfänge bescheiden waren, wuchsen diese Initiativen schnell und breiteten sich über ihre Stadtviertel, Stadtgrenzen und sogar Staatsgrenzen aus. Zum Beispiel wurde die Bewegung *Transition Town* zum *Transition Network*, die heutzutage über 470 Initiativen in mehr als 40 Staaten verbindet.

Der wichtigste Beweis, der die Hauptidee dieser Doktorarbeit bestätigt (dass man urbane Landwirtschaft intensivieren muss) wird aus meiner künstlerischen Tätigkeit abgeleitet. Ich habe fünf Kunstwerke als Beispiele einer positiven Zukunft erschaffen. Vier davon sind individuelle Kunstwerke, die auf klassischen künstlerischen Techniken basieren. Das fünfte Kunstwerk ist von zentraler Bedeutung für diese Doktorarbeit und ist der Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle (Beyond a Construction Site)*, den ich 2010 in Ljubljana zusammen mit anderen Initiatoren gründete.

Im ersten meiner vier individuellen Kunstwerke, meiner Raumintervention *Ein Plan mit einer Ziege (A Plan with a Goat)* (2010), ging ich mit einer Ziege auf einer verfallenden Fläche im Zentrum von Ljubljana spazieren. Das zweite war eine Skulptur im öffentlichen Raum und die dazugehörige öffentliche Veranstaltung *Goldenes Ei (The Golden Egg)* (2012), bei der ich ein Hühnerhaus mit drei Eier legenden Hühnern vor dem Rathaus in Slovenj Gradec aufbaute, um damit die Diskussion über die selbstversorgende und lokale Lebensmittelproduktion anzuregen. Das dritte, *Zurück in die Stadt (Back to the City)* (2011), und vierte Kunstwerk, *Das richtige Gleichgewicht (The Right Balance)* (2013), sind beide Videoanimationen, in denen ich eine Vision der Städte schuf, die von Bienen, wilden Tieren, Hühnern und Ziegen bewohnt werden. Ich ermutigte damit die Rückkehr der Tiere in die Stadt, nicht nur ihres Nährwerts wegen, sondern um das Umweltbewusstsein zu fördern und Abfälle zu verwerten. Ich wollte die Wichtigkeit betonen, die im Aufbau einer anderen emotionalen Bindung zwischen Stadtbevölkerung und Tieren liegt, wodurch auch unsere Sensibilität (im Sinne unserer Einstellung) gegenüber der Natur verändert wird. Gerade die Stop-Motion-Methode der Animation, die auf dem Geschichtenerzählen basiert, hatte es mir ermöglicht, die künstlerische Forschung und die Kunstwerke zu vereinheitlichen. Die Einbeziehung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung in meine Kunstwerke mittels Geschichtenerzählens ist die wesentliche Methode, die

ich während meiner Studien als Doktorandin entwickelt habe. Die Geschichten, die ich erfinde, ermöglichen mir, das Publikum zum Denken und Teilen anzuregen und es dazu bewegen, sich mit meinen Inhalten auseinanderzusetzen – so können sie sich mit meinen Kunstwerken auf emotionaler Ebene verbinden. Die Tatsache, dass ich diese Geschichten ins Leben gerufen hatte, erleichtert es dem Zuschauer, sich mit meiner Kunst und meiner Forschungsarbeit zu identifizieren und dabei auch ihre Botschaft in Erinnerung zu behalten. Die Macht dieser Videoanimationen demonstriert genau, wie das aus der Forschung gewonnene Wissen mit der künstlerischen Arbeit verbunden ist. Wenn ich zurückblicke, sehe ich, dass auch eine andere Theorie und Forschung meine künstlerische Arbeit beeinflusst hat, und zwar die Anthropozänthese (Abschnitt 10.3.). Um die Idee des Anthropozäns verkörpern zu können und den Zuseher an die veränderte Perspektive gegenüber der Natur zu erinnern, können die Tiere in meinen Animationen sprechen. So verwandle ich sie in Subjekte und stelle sie dem Menschen gleich. Die utopische Idee, dass die Natur als ein Subjekt und nicht als Objekt behandelt werden sollte, wurde 2008 in der neuen Verfassung Ecuadors erstmals verwirklicht. Das gewährt der Natur unveräußerliche Rechte – anstatt unseres »Rechtes auf Natur« werden »Rechte der Natur« thematisiert.

Schließlich ist hier noch das fünfte Kunstwerk, das Kernstück dieser Doktorarbeit: der Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle*, den wir 2010 in Ljubljana zusammen gründeten. Mein Wissen entspringt aus der Gründung dieses Gemeinschaftsgartens und diese Gemeinschaft hat viel zur Entwicklung meiner Studie beigetragen. Die Studie und Forschung über das Geschehen auf diesem Gebiet fand parallel zur Entstehung des Gemeinschaftsgartens und der damit verbundenen Arbeit statt. Deshalb liefert der Gemeinschaftsgarten eine wichtige Introspektion und greifbare Aspekte, vor allem was den kreativen Prozess hinter dem Bau eines Gemeinschaftsgartens betrifft. Diese Kombination von Theorie und Praxis ist vor allem für das Konzept der künstlerischen Forschung in dieser Doktorarbeit wichtig. Das Wissen, das durch diesen Prozess erlangt wurde, könnte nicht anders erreicht werden. Außerdem bewies dieses vor Ort stattfindende und gemeinschaftsbasierende künstlerische Engagement auch, dass Kunst und Kultur in verschiedene Sphären des Alltags eindringen und Veränderungen auf der politischen und strukturalen Ebene der Stadt bringen können. Eine wichtige Bestätigung dieser Behauptung entspringt aus unserer Anfangszeit, als wir 2010 den Gemeinschaftsgarten gründeten. Die Tatsache, dass wir eine Gruppe von Künstlern und Architekten sind und dass wir unseren Gemeinschaftsgarten während eines Kunstfestivals gründeten, kann nicht ignoriert werden. Die kurzfristige Erlaubnis, das Grundstück zu benutzen (während der zwei Wochen des Kunstfestivals), wurde vom Grundbesitzer – der Stadt – um ein Jahr mit zusätzlicher Verlängerungsoption verlängert. Das bestätigt, dass Kunst und Kultur dabei helfen, Türen zu öffnen, die sonst nur schwer zu öffnen wären. In unserem Fall waren das die Türen der Stadtverwaltung. Kunst und Kultur

verhelfen zu einer schnelleren Einholung der Erlaubnis für die zeitlich beschränkte Nutzung des Grundstücks. Die bestehende Stadtpolitik so zu beeinflussen, so dass die Stadtbewohner einen leichteren Zugang zu urbanen Flächen haben und die vorübergehende Nutzung von Flächen zu einer gängigen Praxis wird, war auch ein wichtiges Ziel unseres Gemeinschaftsgartens. In Ljubljana ist es sehr schwer mit der Stadt eine Einigung über die zeitlich beschränkte Nutzung von Flächen zu erzielen. Obwohl wir mit unserem Gemeinschaftsgarten Erfolg hatten, bleibt dies jedoch noch immer eher eine Ausnahme. Es wird noch viel Zeit und Kooperation von vielen Initiativen nötig sein, bis wir wirklich einen Einfluss auf die Stadtpolitik haben werden. Jetzt ist es klar, dass unser Gemeinschaftsgarten eine wichtige Rolle bei der Zusammenführung ähnlicher Initiativen spielt. Er dient als eine Plattform, die unsere Ziele an die Öffentlichkeit in Form von Diskussionen, Workshops, Veranstaltungen vor Ort, Veröffentlichungen in lokalen Zeitschriften und mit ständigen Aktualisieren unseres Blogs, vermittelt. Die Vernetzung mit ähnlichen Initiativen hat es uns ermöglicht ein einflussreicher und starker Akteur in diesem Bereich zu werden, was in einen langfristigen Einfluss auf die Stadtpolitik übergehen könnte. Von Anfang an wollten wir mit der Stadt verhandeln und nicht gegen sie ankämpfen, weil wir glauben, dass man nur mit Verhandlungen einen Einfluss auf die Stadtpolitik haben kann. Durch Verhandlungen mit der Stadt konnten wir einen Vertrag über die zeitlich beschränkte Nutzung der Fläche abschließen und das war ein wichtiger Schritt, der die Stadtpolitik von Ljubljana in Zukunft vielleicht verändern wird. Der Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle* spielt noch eine andere wichtige Rolle im Kontext von Ljubljana. Wir haben diesen Gemeinschaftsgarten genau im richtigen Moment gegründet – in einer Krisenzeit des urbanen Gärtnerns in Ljubljana. Deshalb fokussiert sich ein großer Teil meiner Forschung auf die Analyse der Bedingungen für das urbane Gärtnern in Ljubljana in der Vergangenheit sowie auch in den letzten sieben Jahren, als sich die Stadt entschloss, »Ordnung« in die Kleingartengebiete zu bringen. Die etwas ungeschickte Planung wird bis heute fortgesetzt und reflektiert die Unfähigkeit der Stadt größere Flächen für das urbane Gärtnern und einen leichteren Zugang zu den Gartenflächen zu schaffen. Die Stadt agiert heute primär als Vermittler zwischen den privaten Grundbesitzern und den interessierten Bürgern, die die Stadt über deren Interesse am urbanen Gärtnern informieren muss. Deshalb fingen die Bewohner von Ljubljana selbst an, die privaten Grundbesitzer und privaten Unternehmen, die das urbane Gärtnern unterstützen, zu kontaktieren. Manche Bürger kehren jedoch zu ihren Gärten zurück und gärtnern noch weiter illegal. Einige Stadtbewohner formten Initiativen und eine dieser Initiativen ist der Gemeinschaftsgarten, *Jenseits der Baustelle*. Es ist wichtig zu erwähnen, dass unser Gemeinschaftsgarten parallel zum öffentlichen, von der Stadt ausgeführten Top-Down-Ansatz gegründet wurde. Unser Bottom-Up-Ansatz regt ein wichtiges Nachdenken über das öffentliche Top-Down-Prinzip der Arbeit an und bietet eine mögliche Alternative. Was die Stadt von unserer Gemeinschaft lernen könnte, ist, dass Gärten auch in der Innenstadt in Wohngebieten geformt werden müssen. Das wird zur Zeit in den neuen Raumordnungsplänen ignoriert. Die Stadt könnte sich auch

über die formale Organisation von Gemeinschaftsgärten informieren, die in einem sehr starken Gegensatz zu ihrem Kleingartenvorschlag steht. In mancher Hinsicht sind Gemeinschaftsgärten wirtschaftlicherer und basieren auf gemeinsamen Raum, gemeinsamen Geräteschuppen und gemeinsamen Geräten und Werkzeugen. Die Teilnehmer schaffen den Gemeinschaftsgarten mit ihrer eigenen Arbeit und das macht einen großen Unterschied in ihrer Haltung gegenüber Raum und Gemeinschaft.

Unser Gemeinschaftsgarten trägt auch zur Diskussion über öffentliche Flächen in Ljubljana bei. Die Tatsache, dass diese verlassene und verfallende Fläche im Zentrum von Ljubljana in einen blühenden Gemeinschaftsgarten verwandelt wurde, ist eigentlich nicht so überraschend. Die Bewohner dieses Stadtteils vermissen grüne Flächen und qualitätsvolle öffentliche Räume und die Stadt bietet diese nicht an. Deshalb übermittelt unser Gemeinschaftsgarten eine wichtige Nachricht an die Stadt: dass der bestehende öffentliche Raum und die grünen öffentlichen Flächen, die von der Stadt geplant wurden, eine Überlegung wert sind. Der Erfolg dieses Gemeinschaftsgartens, der von den vier Jahren Existenz bestätigt wird, beweist, dass Gemeinschaftsflächen und »essbare« grüne Flächen, die von unserem Gemeinschaftsgarten angeboten werden, sehr von den Anwohnern erwünscht sind.

Gemeinschaftsgärten berühren auch die politische Sphäre, da bei der Gründung eines Gemeinschaftsgartens die Teilnahme der Nachbarschaft sehr wichtig ist. Nur mit aktiver Beteiligung kann die Transformation von Raum und Leben in einem Stadtteil langfristig ermöglicht werden. In unserem Fall hat der ganze Prozess des Gartenbaus bewiesen, dass die Teilnahme der Anwohner nicht von selbst kommt; wir mussten entsprechende Umstände schaffen, um das Interesse der Menschen zu wecken, ihr Wohlbefinden zu fördern, sie dazu bringen, uns zu vertrauen und mit uns zusammenzuarbeiten. Wir versuchten uns vorzustellen, was diese verfallende Fläche sein könnte, und versuchten herauszufinden, was fehlte – sowohl in unserem Leben als auch in diesem Stadtteil. Unsere eigenen Lebensmittel anzubauen, mit der Stadt über die urbane Fläche zu verhandeln und eine Gemeinschaft von befähigten Anwohner zu schaffen - das ist kein kleines Projekt. Gemeinschaftsgärten fördern die Fähigkeit zur Selbstversorgung. In Gemeinschaftsgärten ist die Selbstversorgung mit dem Anbau eigener Lebensmittel und mit der Gründung von einem eigenen Gemeinschaftsraum verbunden, ganz zu schweigen von der Gemeinschaft selbst. "Diese Praktiken umfassen oft neue Wege des Beziehungsaufbaus zwischen Menschen, neue Wege, die Natur zu verstehen und eine andere Sensibilität gegenüber dem städtischen Umfeld zu entwickeln (in Bezug auf sein Aussehen und wie wir uns in ihm fühlen sollten) und die Idee, dass wir mit dem alltäglichen Leben experimentieren können."¹ Außer den lokal angebauten Lebensmitteln befürworten Gemeinschaftsgärten das Recht der Anwohner auf Stadtraum, ihren Bedarf nach Zusammenarbeit und ihren Wunsch Gemeinschaften in ihren Stadtteilen zu formen

¹ ECF, Interview mit David Harvey, Teatro Valle Occupato, Rom, 28.9.2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> (25.1.2014).

und sich zusammen gegen das von der heutigen neoliberalen Stadtpolitik Gegebene und Vorgeschriebene zu wehren. Gemeinschaftsgärten verändern das Leben der Anwohner, zuerst auf der persönlichen Ebene, dann auf der Ebene der Gemeinschaft und später auf der Ebene der Stadt. Veränderungen in unseren Köpfen und in unserem Umfeld geschehen nicht nur durch das Denken, sondern durch die Zusammenarbeit.

Einen Raum selbst zu verwaltet, selbst zu organisieren und selbst aufzubauen ist das Bottom-Up-Prinzip der Stadtplanung. Der Bottom-Up-Ansatz schafft eine Stadt, die auf den Entscheidungen von weniger mächtigen Gruppen von Menschen basiert, die zu den mächtigeren Ebenen durchdringen: zu Bürgermeister, Direktoren oder Beamten. Das Bottom-Up-Prinzip wird nur durch Gruppenaktivitäten und einer aktiven Beteiligung der Bevölkerung Bewohner möglich gemacht: "Die zentralen Elemente des Bottom-Up-Urbanismus oder selbstinitiierten Urbanismus sind: Selbstorganisation, Selbsthilfe, Gestaltungsmacht und Etablierung von Regeln für eine Gemeinschaft, die sich mit und um den Raum, den si erzeugt, bildet."² Wir müssen uns bewusst werden, dass die slowenische Gesellschaft schon viele positiven Erfahrungen und viel Wissen über Selbstorganisation und Gruppenentscheidungen auf lokaler Ebene besitzt. Deshalb können Selbstverwaltung und Selbstorganisation nicht einfach als unmögliche Utopie abgelehnt werden. Der Gemeinschaftsgarten *Jenseits der Baustelle* hat bewiesen, dass sie in die Realität umgesetzt werden können.

² Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, von Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Wien, 2012, S.11.

LET'S MOVE TO THE CITY!





As of 2009 it has been confirmed that the number of people living in cities is higher than the number of people living in the countryside.

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No.1

1 INTRODUCTION

My aim in this doctoral thesis is to articulate the relationship between the rural and the urban in the 21st century. Some of the characteristics of rural areas include the fact that they have a low population density, smaller built-up areas, and activities related to agriculture. On the contrary, urban areas can be characterised by the fact that they are densely populated and densely built-up, and focus on other activities, such as those connected with trade, business, education, etc. If we take food as our main focus, the majority is cultivated and processed in rural areas, and then transported into cities. Food is a key point and indicator of the level of balance between the countryside and the city. The relationship between the two has always been at the forefront of urban and regional planning, but today, with more than half of the human population living in cities, this is becoming an increasingly important topic.

In this doctoral thesis I will suggest an optimistic view of the future of cities which can be achieved by a more intensive inclusion of rural practices. Here, I am using “rural” in reference to an intensification of various forms of agricultural practices in the city. The general term used for the cultivation of food in cities is urban agriculture, and some typical examples include: urban gardening; the establishment of farmers markets; arrangements of small wooded areas for the production of biofuel, fruits and nuts; fish and other aquatic products harvested from tanks, ponds, and rivers; the rearing of domestic farm animals including rabbits, goats, guinea pigs, and chickens; and also urban beekeeping.

Following my proposal for a more intensive inclusion of urban agricultural practices in cities would create a balance between the urban and the rural, something which has been distorted over the last century, or even longer. Though an expansion of urban agriculture in the city will benefit both the city and the countryside as entities, the greatest benefit will be to the actual people and to nature itself in both of these environments – and this is an important direction to take for the future (survival) of humanity and our culture.

Allotment Gardens and Community Gardens

In the first part of this thesis paper I will focus on urban gardening. An important distinction in this paper is the division of urban gardening into two forms known as allotment gardening and community gardening. I will articulate the differences between allotments and community gardens in order to introduce community gardens as a new kind of urban community space which is based on the active involvement of local residents. I have focused on four criteria that demonstrate the differences most clearly: the first important aspect concerns the location of the land that allotments and community gardens occupy in the city, then there is their design characteristics, followed by the way gardeners are organised among themselves, and, finally, the relationship with the city. Also, the motives behind obtaining allotments and community gardens are very important; motives to join a community garden can reach far beyond just

growing vegetables. They can be connected to the social and political changes of life which are being experienced either in a local neighbourhood within the city, or in the city as a whole. Community gardens have been developing in Europe for about two decades. However, today community gardens are beginning to appear all around Europe at an accelerated rate; in major metropolises like Berlin, London, and Vienna, but also in smaller cities, like Maribor, Zagreb, Prague, Bratislava, and Ljubljana. In this paper I will present the common and specific characteristics of allotments and community gardens in chapter two, *Allotment Gardens and Community Gardens*.

Learning from the Community Garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in Ljubljana

My knowledge about community gardens is grounded in my experience of co-creating the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in Ljubljana in 2010. This was done together with a group of artists and architects gathered around the culture and art association *Kud Obrat*, and we created this garden in an abandoned construction site located in a residential neighbourhood near the city centre. We have been developing this community garden together with residents from the neighbourhood since 2010.

In this text I will present the background of the group of initiators from the culture and art association *Kud Obrat*, of which I am both a co-founder and member. I will analyse our reasons for selecting this degraded space, and describe the location and neighbourhood. I will present the circumstances which enabled us to start this initiative, and explain what our priorities and goals were when creating the community garden, as well as the rules we made for forming the space and the community. I will analyse what we learned from what was a slow process of urban transformation, and whether our community garden managed to influence Ljubljana's existing spatial policies. It is important to realise that a community garden based on the participation of neighbourhood residents and their collective action is a "bottom-up" approach to urbanism. This approach to urban planning is self-organised and self-managed by the participants involved and stands in contrast to the kind of "top-down" urban planning proposed and carried out by the city. The bottom-up approach is accompanied by the important political and social aspects of community gardens. My aim is to articulate why community gardens today are especially important in neighbourhoods and, therefore, for the future of cities. Due to everything mentioned above, the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* occupies a central position in this thesis. I refer to it throughout this text, but describe it in most detail in chapter eight, *The Community Garden Beyond a Construction Site in Ljubljana*.

The History of Urban Gardening

In order to see the difference our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* created in Ljubljana's urban gardening policies, I had to look into the history of urban gardening in

Ljubljana in general. In addition to looking at local history on urban gardening, I also researched the history of allotment gardening in Europe, which is the most relevant to the situation in Slovenia, and dedicated some attention to the history of similar (urban) gardening practices in the UK and USA. Their gardening movements developed in parallel to those in Europe, and there has been a mutual influence. Additionally, today networks like *Transition Towns* and *Ecovillages* are being built on an international level. These kinds of initiatives, with their great emphasis on growing food locally, are creating an impact beyond the countries of their origins. In connection with this fact I have also written about the development of urban gardening in the USA, UK, Germany, and the rest of Europe, which is presented in chapter three, *Selected Examples from the History of Urban Gardening in the USA, UK, Germany, and the Rest of Europe*.

The History of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana until 2007

German allotment gardens (Kleingartens) and the allotments in Austria have had the greatest influence on allotment gardening in Slovenia and much of Eastern Europe. Similar to most places in Europe, in Slovenia (and Ljubljana in particular) urban gardening is based on the concept of individual allotment gardening. In Ljubljana allotment gardening has been self-organised and semi-legal for almost sixty years. The allotments in question were not, however, planned by the city. On the contrary, they were, at least from the city's point of view, welcome only on a temporary basis. In the beginning urban gardening was merely tolerated, but slowly, in the 1980s, the city of Ljubljana legalised urban gardening and formalised the rules surrounding it. However, these rules were not respected by the gardeners and the city did not carry out any kind of supervision or enforcement. The city's mismanagement of the issue gave rise to a chaotic, illegal form of gardening which in turn made allotment gardening into marginalised practice. In 1984 allotments occupied a total of 200 hectares of land; in 1995 they took up 265. It was right at this time that a wild expansion of larger illegal allotment sites began in the Ljubljana districts of Žale, Črnuče, and Barje. In the following twenty years these allotment sites became the object of ridicule by experts and urban planners, and they also obtained a negative public image. These were among the first allotment sites the city decided to remove in 2007.

In this text I have divided the story of allotment gardening in Ljubljana into three parts. The first part concerns time period from the end of the Second World War to the large removal of illegal gardens which was carried out by the city in 2007-2008. I have selected case studies from the past that differ from each other in terms of land ownership, the ways gardeners were organised among themselves, and the size of the gardening areas. I will begin with "Fond" Gardens, an example where apartment blocks were designed together with their accompanying gardens, and continue with the Litostroj Allotments, a case where gardens appeared on the land of the Litostroj factory in a newly built, post-war neighbourhood for the use of factory workers. Finally,

I will cover two large illegal allotment sites on public land, in the Žale and Črnuče districts of Ljubljana, where allotments appeared in a chaotic form, with the aesthetics of self-built structures, the appearance of a shanty town, and many other wild and informal aspects. Due to the fact that allotments in Ljubljana developed mostly in a self-organised form, most allotment gardeners were not connected to any formal body. The formal organisation of gardeners was something that was visibly lacking during the process of their removal in 2007-2008. However, despite the fact that allotment gardeners in Ljubljana were rarely organised, in the past there were a few exceptions where they were connected and belonged to gardening associations. Two of the most interesting cases were self-organised initiatives: *The Emona Vrtniček Allotment Gardening Association* and *The Allotment Gardening University*. These two organisations played a key role in the self-organisation of allotments in Ljubljana during the 1980s and 1990s. Another important aspect of these initiatives was the fact that they enabled an exchange of knowledge on organic gardening, both locally and on an international level. I will conclude that chapter in a positive light and present two successful and practical examples of allotment gardens in Slovenia. The first is the allotment gardening site in the Slovenian city of Velenje named *Kunta Kinte*, which was founded in 1978. The second, a modest well organised example, was organised in Ljubljana on a former military refuse dump in the district of Savlje in 1993. These two examples show how well planned allotment gardens can be beneficial for both the city and residents. This first part of the history of allotment gardening in Ljubljana is described in chapter four, *The History of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana*.

But, how was it even possible that, in the past, allotments in Ljubljana occupied public land without any major problems? And this was not only done by typical allotment gardeners. There were also individuals with unresolved housing problems occupying public land, who had managed to illegally build their family homes there. This is something that had been going on since the 1950s, and took place most intensively in the 1980s. The policies of official urban planning actually played a part in enabling this illegal allotment gardening (and construction) situation to happen, and even tolerated it to a degree. This was due to the fact that the previous formal Yugoslavian system, along with its Slovenian subsystem, tolerated spontaneous, informal reactions to the blockades and impediments which were a part of the formal system. This is something that made the system unique. I have written a brief overview of the state of urban planning in Ljubljana at that time in order to also understand the apparent “non-regulation” for urban gardening that appeared on the part of both the city and state. Although this topic is too extensive to be covered completely in this thesis I have presented a general outline in chapter five, *The Illegal (from the bottom up) as an Indicator of Structural Inconsistencies of the Formal System (from the top down)*.

The Top-Down Approach in Arranging Urban Gardening in Ljubljana

The second part of Ljubljana's urban gardening story concerns steps taken by the city administration (which had been newly elected in 2006) from 2007 to 2010. Ljubljana's administration of the time was very active and introduced several visible improvements to the city: changes in architecture, the design of new public spaces, the construction of several new bridges, and better regulated public transport, limits on road access for cars, new bicycle lanes, and an economical system for renting city bicycles. The majority of the changes can be seen in the old core of the city centre. Another issue the new administration was determined to deal with was regulating or bringing "order" to urban gardening.

The city began by removing almost one third of existing allotments throughout Ljubljana in 2007-2008, but the subsequent steps taken by the city authorities showed awkward and not completely thought-out planning. First, a former allotment site in the district of Žale was transformed into a public park. Next, in 2009, the city accepted a new rulebook for the organisation of allotments and an ordinance concerning the lease of the allotments. In 2010 a new spatial plan for Ljubljana set aside 30 new locations which were to be permanently dedicated to urban gardening. In the spring of 2010, based on their newly created rules, the city offered another 65 new model allotment gardens in two allotment sites. It was soon apparent that the extremely well-arranged and well-equipped allotments were too costly for the city to maintain, and as a result no new allotment sites were created after 2010. The city proposal proved to be too expensive; the conditions for leasing badly formulated, and the new allotments which were created came nowhere near meeting the needs of residents, or replacing the number of those that had been removed. I will present the situation from this time in more detail in chapter six, *The Formal Top-Down Approach in Arranging Urban Gardening in Ljubljana*

The Situation in Ljubljana Today

The third and last part of the allotment gardening story in Ljubljana centres on the period from 2010 to today, 2014. In 2010 the city created the first and the last of the new model allotments, and again decided to amend their rules and regulations. Now, 50 newly arranged allotments are being offered on an already existing allotment site in the Savlje district. No new urban gardens on city land have been planned by the city for the near future. Currently, the city plays the part of mediator between citizens interested in obtaining urban gardens and private land owners, advising citizens on which private organisations and farmers can they contact if they wish to obtain an allotment.

For this reason, in the last two years several initiatives, farmers, and even small private companies oriented towards arranging urban gardens for residents in Ljubljana have been created. I will present these initiatives and developments in chapter seven, *Urban Gardening in Ljubljana Today*, and counted among these initiatives is also our community garden *Beyond*

a *Construction Site*. I must also note the fact that our garden was created right in 2010, during a period of municipal paralysis which was caused by the city's attempts to regulate urban gardening practices. An important influence on the way this thesis work was carried out was the fact that our community garden developed in parallel to the official top-down approach which was carried out by the city. In contrast, we made use of a bottom-up approach, which enabled us to reflect more deeply on the official top-down one, and also created a possible alternative to it.

The Context of Art

Since our initiative *Kud Obrat* is composed of artists and architects, and due to the fact that we initiated the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in the context of an art festival, the context of art is very important. I have positioned our community garden among other artworks based on participation. I discuss an important shift regarding the idea of art in public spaces, from site specific works in the 1970s to community art and participatory projects today. I try to answer the questions of where the art is, and what the role of the artist is in community-based projects, also dedicating some attention to how our reflective approach throughout the entire process of creating this community garden influenced development at the site. This is covered in chapter nine, *Community Gardens in the Context of Art*.

Following that chapter I will direct attention from our community garden to my own four individual artworks which, in addition to the community garden, compose the practical portion of this thesis. These individual artworks differ from the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in terms of their location, authorship, and the methods used. My individual works of art use classical media-like art actions, public sculpture, and video animations. Their content is focused on including domestic farm animals into the life of the city, which is another segment of urban agriculture.

Throughout all of chapter ten, titled *Back to the City*, I advocate for the return of domestic farm animals to the city. I have based my position on existing case studies on raising domestic farm animals in cities today. I will present the use of goats in New York's parks, which was done with the intention of eliminating invasive plants, and also introduce the English initiative *Incredible Edible* which, in the frame of growing food locally, promotes raising chickens in our backyards for eggs. I will describe the growing phenomenon of urban beekeeping, which is taking place in gardens and on the rooftops of major cities such as Paris (on *The Palais Garnier*) and London (on the *Fortnum & Mason* department store), and recently also on the rooftops of various hotels, banks, museums, galleries, or airports in many other European cities as well. In my spatial intervention *A Plan with a Goat* (2010) I walked around with a goat and allowed it to eat the plants at a degraded space in the centre of Ljubljana. For my public sculpture and accompanying public event *The Golden Egg* (2012) I set up a chicken coop with three chickens

laying eggs in front of the Slovenj Gradec city hall. Finally, in both of my video animations, *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013), I show cities inhabited by bees, wild animals, chickens, and goats. I encourage the return of animals to the city not only for their food value, but also in order to raise ecological awareness and recycle waste. This is all done to underline the importance of establishing different emotional bonds between city residents and animals, which would in turn alter our sensitivities (in the sense of our attitudes) toward nature. This was the main idea I had in mind when creating my artworks, which describe the kinds of future cities which have a harmonious balance with the countryside.

In chapter eleven, *Artistic Research*, I will analyse how my artworks create a meeting point between art and research. In this final chapter I will outline the methods have I used to combine scientific research with artwork. I will also attempt to trace whether the artworks have, at certain points, influenced the research, or the real situation in the field, and will introduce the two different methods I used while creating these artworks. The first is related to the community garden, artwork based on co-authorship and the gradual transformation of a neglected urban site into a community garden. The method used was collective action based on the participation of neighbourhood residents. In this community-based project theory and practice were closely interwoven. The community garden developed together with the research, and the two (the on-site project and the research) constantly informed each other.

The second method, which I find crucial and have used in my video animations, is based on storytelling. I will describe the reasons for using stop-motion animation and why I believe that making stories out of researched material can contribute to a different understanding of the research itself. I have used this method in both video animations, *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013) and in my collages.

1.1 Urban Gardening Terminology

Urban agriculture, or **urban farming**, is a general term used for the cultivation of food in cities. Some typical examples include: urban gardening; the establishment of farmers markets; arrangements of small wooded areas for the production of biofuel, fruits and nuts; fish and other aquatic products harvested from tanks, ponds, and rivers; the raising of domestic animals, including rabbits, goats, guinea pigs, and chickens; and urban beekeeping.

In this thesis paper I will speak extensively about urban gardening, raising domestic animals and beekeeping in cities. In the first few sections, when I write about vegetable gardens I am referring specifically to urban gardening. **Urban gardening** is defined as growing both vegetables and decorative plants in various locations of a city. These can be private gardens behind family residences, public gardens, allotments gardens, and community gardens. In my text I use urban gardening mostly in connection with urban gardening in general, not for specific types of gardening. One important distinction in this paper, however, is the division of urban gardening into **allotment gardening** and **community gardening**. These are two different models of urban gardening. They are interconnected, and can therefore be hard to distinguish, but I will analyse their differences in order to highlight the importance of community gardens in neighbourhoods today. Individual **allotment gardens**, or **allotments**, are a traditional form of gardening seen when a family leases one allotment **plot** (a parcel of land). These plots usually have a fence, a garden shed for tools, a paved area, a small lawn, and a garden bed. The **garden bed** is the limited space of soil where plants are being grown. An **allotment site** is a larger area which is occupied by several allotment gardens. Gardeners on organised allotment sites are members of **allotment gardening associations**. To be a part of the allotment gardening association is usually a condition for obtaining an allotment garden. A **community garden** is a piece of land maintained together by many gardeners. Community gardens are located in the centre of the city, often in residential neighbourhoods. Within a community garden there are **individual garden beds** (individual gardens) and **collective garden beds** (collective gardens), and in some cases all of the garden beds are cultivated collectively. A community garden is a **community space** where not only the individual gardens beds, but also the entire community space is maintained together. Community gardens are an evolution of allotment gardens with an emphasis on community space and collective action.

1.2 An Increased Interest in Urban Gardening Today

In the last decade in Europe and the UK, the interest in both forms of urban gardening, community gardens and allotments, has been growing. The areas claimed by allotment gardeners in cities are large,³ but in the last few years they have not met the demand of city

³ In Germany 1,300,000 urban gardens occupy 46,640 hectares of urban land. In Austria 38,900 gardens occupy 896.5 hectares, and in the Netherlands 240,000 gardens occupy 280 hectares. In Ljubljana, after the removal of one third of the gardens in 2007-2008, urban gardens now occupy 130 hectares of land. Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009, pg. 173.

residents. This is reflected in the waiting lists to lease allotments, which have been emerging in recent years. Waiting lists for gardens are an important indicator of the fact that demand for urban gardening is growing, and that cities need to plan ahead and set aside land for gardens on a larger scale. Here I will list the number of allotment gardens and allotment sites in England, Germany, and Denmark. These are countries with a long history of legalised status for urban gardening, and their urban gardening associations keep records of the number of allotment gardeners and allotment sites.

In England there are currently 3,558 allotment sites consisting of 152,432 gardens. This year, according to Transition Towns report 2013,⁴ there are 78,827 people on the waiting list. In Berlin there are 67,961 allotments and 16,000 gardeners on the waiting list.⁵ Even though Berlin has the highest number of gardeners, there is also an exceptionally high interest in allotment gardening in other German cities. In Nuremberg the waiting period to obtain a garden is approximately 12 months, in Ingolstadt it is 24 months, and in Fürth it is three years.⁶

In Denmark, according to current information (2014), there are 420 associations and 42,000 allotment gardeners. The allotment garden sites are often at attractive locations in the city, and this results in long waiting lists for both membership in gardeners associations, and to obtain an actual garden. The longest waiting list which I came across was in the Danish city of Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark. Here, the *Skovlunden* gardening site is among the most desired, and the waiting period to obtain a garden is fourteen years.⁷

What took place in Ljubljana in 2007 and 2008 is the opposite of what city authorities did in other European cities. In Ljubljana, one third of all the existing allotments were removed, coming to a total of 2,000 allotments which were erased and subsequently never replaced. In seven years only 114 allotments were offered to the city residents in return for those removed. Why the city approached the allotment gardening situation in this way is something I discuss throughout this thesis paper, but the most brief overview of the events and procedures is described in chapter four, *The History of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana*, and chapter six, *The Formal Top-Down Approach in Arranging Urban Gardening in Ljubljana*.

1.3 Organised and Illegal Urban Gardening

One important criteria that can be used to classify urban gardens is the status of its legality. It is mostly the countries of northern and central Europe, Scandinavia, and the UK which can boast of legally arranged urban gardening. In the cities of these countries, due to early industrialisation, a large part of the working population lived in poor conditions. A large number

⁴ http://www.transitiontownwestkirby.org.uk/files/ttwk_nsalg_survey_2013.pdf (21.9.2014).

⁵ Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 6, pg. 6. <http://jacsmiit.com/book.html> (21.7.2014).

⁶ Eames, A. *Germany Holidays: Schrebergärten, Germany's suburban garden kingdoms*, <http://germanyiswunderbar.com/eastern-germany/germany-holidays-schrebergarten-germanys-suburban-garden-kingdoms/> (21.9.2014).

⁷ <http://www.dac.dk/en/dac-cities/> (21.9.2014).

of allotments appeared early-on as the citizens strove to help themselves and improve living conditions. Later, during the process of urbanisation, these gardens and gardeners gained legal rights and status, meaning that the gardens were then protected by law. State rules and regulations on gardening were then included into legislation, along with the rights of gardeners.

In every city it is possible to find a space for vegetable gardens. There is always a plot of land lying on its own which is not being used. Much more difficult than actually finding land is arranging a legal contract to lease the land and determine the rights of usage. Allotment garden sites usually appear on a plot of land temporarily, and have to be moved many times to make way for new city plans. If the allotments are established formally, the city finds substitute land for the gardens. For example, in Denmark all the gardening sites became permanent with the adoption of a law in 2001. However, in this case permanence does not mean the allotments at that location remain there forever, but that if the city plans some form of development at the allotment location, a new location is found for the gardeners. However, even that kind of intervention on behalf of the city's administration can encounter resistance from gardeners. Due to its value, city land is often subject to speculation and desired gardening sites can easily be included in such kinds of land resale.⁸

Naturally, the gardeners have fewer rights when the allotments are on land illegally which, when viewed on a global scale, makes up the great majority. In this case the city removes the allotments and the gardeners look for new temporary land themselves, and once again change it through their hard work into blossoming gardens.

Allotments in Ljubljana have had a history of semi-legal status, and were created by the gardeners themselves on public land. However, they were not completely illegal and were tolerated by the city on temporary basis. In a certain periods some rent was paid to the city, and some gardeners had individual contracts. Despite the city's attempts to legally organise urban gardening in Ljubljana, which was the goal of the first ordinance on allotment gardening, adopted in 1985, the city did not carry out any supervision or inspections. This is important for an understanding of the Ljubljana gardening crisis, which started long ago and became the most dramatic with the removal of large number of illegal gardens in 2007 and 2008. The attempts of city authorities to implement rules and order, and to plan and design urban gardens, was an attempt to arrange the area set aside for urban gardening on the basis of spatial planning legislation. However, due to prior mismanagement on the part of Slovenian cities today, such as Ljubljana, Maribor, Nova Gorica, and Slovenj Gradec, cities are now trying to regulate all of

⁸ "In Berlin many of the 73,000 small garden plots in more than 900 complexes are fighting for their existence, with gardeners increasingly reaching for their pitchforks to defend their estimated 7,413 acres (3,000 hectares) against the bulldozers, as international investors discover the attractions of the city. The gardeners have accused local politicians of selling off the land as cheap 'green land' to entice developers, before converting its status to 'building land' – almost nine times more valuable."

Kate Connolly, *Berlin's urban gardeners reach for their pitchforks to fight off the developers*, The Guardian, August 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/05/berlin-garden-colonies-threat-developers> (21.6.2014).

the urban gardening which originated and developed as a self-organised and illegal practice. Though it is true that allotment gardeners are adaptable and constantly find new land for gardening in the city, the Ljubljana administration's intervention in 2007- 2008 intimidated city residents. Only a few dared to continue with illegal gardening, and any legal options, in terms of city mandates, were nonexistent at the time. In the district of Črnuče, the largest illegal gardening site, it was a few years after the removal of the garden sheds that gardeners began to return to their abandoned gardens, and even that was done in the fear of a return visit by inspectors. "Today in Ljubljana only the brave are engaged in allotment gardening".⁹ Ljubljana is still going through a process of transition whereby illegal urban gardening gains legal status.

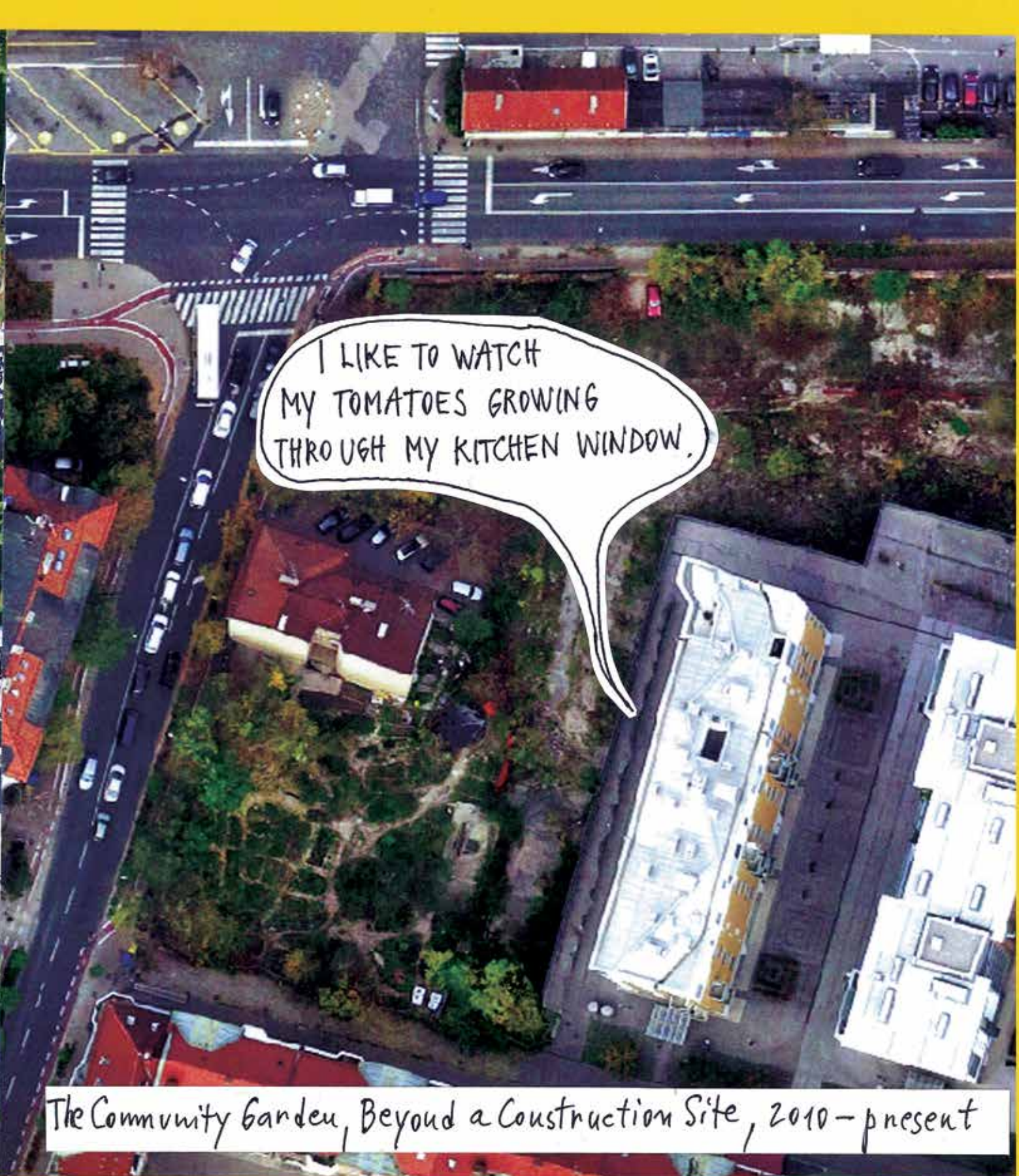
⁹ In 2010 our association *Kud Obrat*, of which I am co-founder, initiated the Ljubljana community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*. In Autumn 2013 we organised the public discussion *Kaj pa mestni vrtički?* (What about urban gardens?). We invited representatives of the city and other initiatives focused on urban gardening which have appeared recently, and have implemented projects and started initiatives to develop urban gardening in Ljubljana. At that point, landscape architect Maja Simoneti, who has been actively involved in urban gardening for almost 20 years, underlined the fact that in Ljubljana at the present moment only "the brave ones" are gardening.
<http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/2013/10/07/posvet-kaj-pa-mestni-vrticki/> (21.9.2014).



The Savlje Allotment Garden Site, 1993-present

The characteristics of allotment gardens

- located on the outskirts of the city
- plot sizes of 40-200 m²
- individual plots, individual garden sheds
- for growing healthy food, recreation, and contact with nature



The Community Garden, Beyond a Construction Site, 2010 - present

The characteristics of community gardens

- located inside neighbourhoods, inside the city centre
- plot sizes of 1-20 m²
- collective and individual plots, a collective space, a collective garden shed
- for growing healthy food, criticising existing urban policies, the need to act and change a neglected site, the need to create a community in the neighbourhood, recreation, and contact with nature

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 2

2 ALLOTMENT GARDENS AND COMMUNITY GARDENS

An important distinction in this paper is the division of urban gardening into two forms known as allotment gardening and community gardening. I will articulate the differences between allotments and community gardens in order to introduce community gardens as new kinds of urban community spaces and communities which create small but important changes on the social, political, and ecological levels of cities today. My knowledge about community gardens is grounded in my experience of co-creating the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in Ljubljana in 2010. This was done together with a group of artists and architects gathered around the culture and art association *Kud Obrat*. The thing that must be emphasised the most is that this community garden was created with the active participation of neighbourhood residents. The existing urban gardening tradition in Ljubljana is based on allotment gardening, and for this reason I believe it is important to analyse the differences between allotments and community gardens. This will be done to show the contribution our community garden has made in both the local context of urban gardening, and the wider context of existing urban policies in Ljubljana.

For the classical individual form of gardening which we encounter in all European cities, and also in Great Britain, I have chosen the widespread term “allotment gardens”, or “allotments” for short. Other terms, which are to a great extent present in literature, are Kleingartens (small gardens), vegetable gardens, family gardens, and Schrebergartens, but these all describe the same form of gardening from the end of the 19th century, and the most suitable term in English is “allotment”.

The other form of gardening is “community gardening” which has been appearing all over Europe and the UK, particularly in the last two decades, and was present in the USA even prior to that. Community gardens are a kind of evolution of allotment gardens, with an emphasis on the communal and collective. In addition to gardening, one of most important goals of community gardens is building a community and community space in the neighbourhood. So, the motivation of those participating in community gardens reaches far beyond just gardening. Sometimes the motivation is the desire to restore and revive neglected land in their neighbourhood, but it can also be a criticism of urban city policies, or the need for a social gathering area within the neighbourhood. Another important consequence of community gardens is the goal of influencing municipal spatial and social policies. Community gardens therefore facilitate social, economical, ecological, and political transformations. As the group *aaa*¹⁰ would say, community gardens “foster practices of self-management within a bottom-up

¹⁰ Constantin Petcou and Doina Petrescu are architects and co-founders of *aaa* (atelier d’architecture autogeree). This association collaborates with various local initiatives in different cities. They organise themselves according to the specific topic and context of spatial interventions, and depending on the competency and number of participants. Constantin Petcou and Doina Petrescu are authors of several influential texts. In addition to their theoretical work they participate in public discussions and are active within spatial interventions implemented in specific urban and rural areas. Since 2008 *aaa* has been developing the larger project *R-Urban* in Colomb near Paris. Our association *Kud Obrat* invited Doina Petrescu to Ljubljana in 2009 to present the community garden project *Ecobox*. We also further collaborated with *aaa* by including their texts into a thematic issue of the *Bul-*

approach to ecological regeneration in which ecology extends beyond the environmental aspects to include social, cultural and economic concerns.”¹¹

The division into allotments and community gardens can not escape the rigidity of it. The historical example of Schreber’s gardens from Leipzig nicely demonstrates how the first allotment gardens came into being in connection with the community space *Schreber’s Square*. This square was a community space which was created in an area between schools and has been managed since 1865 by an association which also prevented land speculation in the area. Just four years later, around that square, the so-called “children’s gardens” came into being. Those gardens then developed into the typical allotment gardens referred to today as *Schrebergardens*.¹² So, even the historical *Schrebergardens* were first built around a community space. Consequently, I do not seek to compare and differentiate between community and allotment gardens in terms of which is “better”. My aim is to present community gardens first and foremost as important alternative spaces for socializing, practicing ecology and to actively involve into creating cities from the bottom up. I learned from the history of allotment gardening that many gardening associations have developed into strong communities and when they are organised they can also influenced urban policies – which is something I claim is typical for community gardens. However, I am also aware of the fact that community gardens have become somewhat fashionable in today’s cities, and that in some cases they do not accomplish any of the things I have outlined and neglect the important role community gardens can play.

I have focused on four criteria that demonstrate the differences most clearly: the first important aspect concerns the location of the land that allotments and community gardens occupy in the city, then there is their design characteristics, followed by the way gardeners are organised among themselves, and, finally, the relationship with the city. Also, the motives behind obtaining allotments and community gardens are very important; motives to join a community garden can reach far beyond just growing vegetables. I will begin with an analysis of allotment gardens and then continue to community gardens. When describing allotments in each subchapter I will compare the general situation in Europe with the specific allotment gardening situation in Ljubljana. When covering community gardens in general I will make comparisons to our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in Ljubljana.

letin of Architects with the title *Participation?* This issue was edited by co-founders of *Kud Obrat* Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič in the summer of 2011.

¹¹ Constantin Petcou, Doina Petrescu, *aaa* (atelier d’architecture autogeree), *R-Urban Resilience*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 334.

¹² Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 11.

ALLOTMENT GARDENS

2.1 Allotments: Land on the Outskirts of the City

Allotment gardens began to appear in greater numbers at the outskirts of Europe's industrial cities around the end of the 19th century. After the Second World War industrial cities became modern cities through the process of modernisation, and these new modern cities felt the need to push all traditional activities, which were previously associated with the countryside, out of the city. In modern times, city farms, the breeding of domestic animals, and even allotment gardening were understood as decadent; outdated and a sign of underdevelopment. That is another reason that after the Second World War allotment garden sites came to be found at the outskirts of cities. Allotment gardens also today occupy land at less attractive locations, by the fences of industrial zones, on land not intended for development, under power lines, around highways and railways, and on land that is unsuitable for development, such as floodplains, swamps, and steep slopes. Even though all allotment gardeners would like to have their allotment close to their residence, due to the value of land in the core of the city, this is rarely possible.

Allotment garden sites which are more far removed from the centre of the city have different legislation than those in the core of the city. In these cases the allotments are larger, as well as the gardening sheds, which makes it possible to spend the night, and these gardeners often spend the entire weekend at their gardens.

In Ljubljana new spatial Plans were accepted in 2010. This was a great opportunity for the city to plan sites for the gardens throughout the city. The new city plan – *Plan of the City of Ljubljana* (OPN),¹³ defines thirty sites intended for permanent urban gardening, but unfortunately all of them are on the outskirts of Ljubljana. There is a great lack of understanding regarding the importance of actually having gardens throughout the city of Ljubljana, and the only ones left in the centre are the protected *Krakovo Gardens* (Krakovski vrtovi).

This is why our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* plays such an important role in bringing urban gardens back into the city centre.

2.2 Allotments: Design Characteristics

Individual allotment gardens are usually from 50m² to 400m² in size. They usually have a fence and garden shed, which also serves as protection from the weather, and a storage place for tools. At some allotments in Ljubljana garden sheds are not permitted, only a container for tools, as is the case at the Savlje allotment garden site. If the allotments are larger, larger tool sheds, which make it possible for gardeners to spend the night, may also be suitable. If the

¹³ Ordinance on the municipal spatial plan for the Municipality of Ljubljana – section for implementation (Odlok o občinskem prostorskem načrtu MOL – izvedbeni del), Uradni list RS, št. 78/10 <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=100183> (21.9.2014).

allotments have been established legally, the plots are shaped orthogonally (with right angles), as experience has shown that this is the most rational way to arrange the space. Usually organised allotment garden sites also have community areas, a collective space to gather, a children's playground, and a grass lawn. These areas are provided with public pathways which make it possible for non-gardeners to walk freely. The water supply and municipal waste removal is provided for.

When the allotments are illegal and have not been planned, the plots have a more organic shape, which is dictated by the shape of the terrain and natural obstacles. In Ljubljana there were three large illegal allotment gardening areas: in the districts of Črnuče, Žale, and Barje. The largest among them was in Črnuče, and there allotment gardening could be seen in its most elemental, organic, and wild form. The illegal allotment garden site takes shape gradually; everyone designs his or her own garden without regard for the whole. The allotment gardeners construct their own garden sheds from cheap and refuse materials. The water supply and the removal of waste is dealt with individually and is not organised. Any organisation among the gardeners themselves is founded upon verbal agreements.

2.3 Allotments: Gardening Associations

In all countries where allotment gardening is well organised the gardeners are themselves organised in gardening associations. Gardening associations are also a useful resource for the city, and represent a connection between individual gardeners and the city when the land is public. The association collects membership fees and rent, and also has a rulebook for the gardeners. The gardeners in the association carry out any necessary supervision in terms compliance with the rules, records of abandoned allotments, and updating the waiting list for any new interested gardeners. In Germany, Austria, Holland, England, and France allotment gardening associations are a must for the creation of an allotment garden site.

When the allotment garden sites are not legal, the gardeners are usually not members of an association. They make verbal agreements, and usually have no agreement with the city. But, as I have already said, allotment garden sites in Ljubljana were semi-legal, and gardeners on public land did occasionally have contracts with the city, and also paid rent at certain periods. There have been a few gardening associations in Ljubljana's allotment gardening history, but the one which made the greatest contribution in terms of the organisation of allotments in the 1980s and 1990s was the *Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association*. It was mainly active in Ljubljana from 1984 to 1998 and also contributed significantly to the respect of rules at eleven gardens sites in Ljubljana. I will present this association in more detail in the chapter four, *The Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association*.

In the guidelines for the development on allotments in Ljubljana from 1997, Maja Simoneti warned of the necessity of allotment gardening associations. Helena Regina, a representative

of the city at the Department of Environmental Protection, with whom I spoke this year (2014),¹⁴ confirmed that even the new rules do not require the organisation of allotment gardeners into allotment gardening associations.

2.4 Allotments: The Motives for Allotment Gardening

From the end of the 19th century all the way up until the Second World War the main motive for gardening was survival. In addition to that, allotment gardening also represented an individual outdoor space for those with humble housing conditions. From the state's perspective allotment gardening was seen as something positive, even as a family activity which could contribute to political stability. In the beginning of the 20th century allotment gardens played an important role in social self-help: for citizens who wanted to improve the unbearable living conditions caused by overpopulation, hunger, and lack of housing. They would rent allotments, grow their own food and, in many cases in cooperation with the city, put an urgently needed roof over their heads. Examples include the "allotment colonists" from Berlin from around 1900, or the large settlement movement in Vienna from 1919. Here, a bottom-up approach to building a city was an important contribution both to allotment gardening and from it.

After the Second World War cities became modernised and the economic position of residents improved. The main motive for allotment gardening was then cited as actively spending one's leisure and relaxation time in nature. It is important to mention that in socialist political systems, like those in Eastern Germany and Slovenia (Yugoslavia), allotments also represented a retreat into the private sphere. In a political system oriented towards community, with an often strictly controlled private life, allotments enabled a kind of retreat which was often criticized by party members.

Today there is an increased interest in both forms of urban gardening (allotments and community gardens). Urban gardening is connected with a greater concern for the environment and the obvious importance of locally grown food. The ability to produce one's own healthy and safe food is one of the main motives for allotment gardening today.

¹⁴ A conversation with Helena Regina, Oddelek za varstvo okolja MU Mestna občina Ljubljana (Department of Environmental Protection of the Municipality of Ljubljana), Ljubljana, on 31 March at 10 a.m.



The Krasnansky Zelovoc Community Garden, Bratislava
Photo by: Matej Mikuška, September 2013

COMMUNITY GARDENS

2.5 Community Gardens: Land in the Neighbourhood

In contrast to individual allotment gardens, which can usually be found at the outskirts of the city, community gardens appear within the city, very often within residential neighbourhoods. Community gardens are created on forgotten and abandoned land, or poorly used grass lawns in the immediate vicinity of the residences. They are a part of the neighbourhood, and not just spatially, as they usually include nearby residents; members of a community garden usually live in the same neighbourhood, on the same street, or even in the same apartment block. In my research I have seen many different types of land occupied by community gardens. The land that is used by a community garden can be an existing inaccessible or unused lawn, like in Amsterdam, where a community garden was created on a lawn enclosed by two apartment blocks (*The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour*, 2008), or like in Bratislava, where the garden was created on the lawn in front of some apartment blocks (*Krasnansky Zelovoc*, 2013). In Maribor a community garden was created on a lawn at the edge of the city, in the vicinity of a densely populated residential area (*The Community Urban Eco Garden*, Borova Vas, 2012). Many examples of community gardens are created on abandoned land, empty paved parking lots, and construction sites, and they can be seen in Berlin, Paris, Prague, and Ljubljana. At Moritzplatz Square in Berlin a community garden was created in the unattractive space beside a busy roundabout (*Prinzessinnengarten*, 2009). In Paris a community garden was created on the paved land by an abandoned train stop (*Ecobox*, 2001). In Prague a community garden was created in an abandoned parking lot (*Prazelenina*, 2012). In Ljubljana we planned out our community garden in a previously closed and long inactive construction site (*Beyond a Construction Site*, 2010).

2.6 Community Gardens: Design Characteristics

Community gardens usually have individual and/or common garden beds. The common gardens usually have a common garden shed with shared tools, a common area for socialising, and the space, water, and garbage is managed communally. The garden beds are much smaller than for typical allotments, and measure 1-20m² in size. From this we can conclude that gardening in community gardens is not first and foremost oriented towards improving a family's economic conditions. A large number of community gardens are created on paved surfaces, former parking lots, and even on contaminated land. Since there is often not a sufficient amount of land for anything to grow, the gardeners usually bring in new soil (*Ecobox*, *Prinzessinnengarten*, *Prazelenina*, *Abby Gardens*, *Beyond a Construction Site*). More often than not, the gardeners make smaller beds, like raised wooden garden beds (London, Ljubljana), between wooden pallets (Paris), and often they place soil in the large plastic bags which are used for construction. This last method has proven to be the simplest and quickest (Prague, Berlin, Paris), and also makes it possible to move the garden to another location if necessary.



The Prazelenina Community Garden, Prague
Photo by: Prazelenina archive, 2014

2.7 Community Gardens: Why Participate?

Besides gardening itself, there are numerous other motives for participating in a community garden. The residents of a neighbourhood occasionally decide to participate because they are unsatisfied with a neglected location and are ready to actively change it. They could also be critical of existing city policies and fed up with waiting for the city to do something. Some people are lonely and in need of socialising in their home neighbourhood. At many community gardens young families can be counted as members, because the parents of children in a city want their children to have direct contact with nature, see how things grow, get their hands dirty with soil, observe the weather and seasons, and to see how good food prepared from vegetables grown by their own hands can be.

The creation of connected communities in a neighbourhood is an important effect of community gardens and has a noticeable impact on life in the neighbourhood. What we have learned from our example is that participants initially come for the gardening, and only after some time realise how important it is to them that they have made new friends and created a place for socialising.¹⁵ Many participants have said that it was only gradually that they came to know how

¹⁵ Video interviews with participants of the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* were filmed for the presentation of our community garden at Apolonija Šušteršič's exhibition. She is also a co-founder of our community garden. Apolonija Šušteršič, *VESOLJSKE POLITIKE (POLITICS 'IN SPACE'), An Exhibition of Two On-site Projects*, Tobačna 001 Cultural Centre, May 2012.

important meeting at the garden was becoming to them. It was only while gardening that they became aware of other the important components of the garden.

It is clear that community gardens are important for the revitalisation of neglected land in neighbourhoods, the creation of a community space, and the creation of a community. This, in turn, has an influence on the connection between people in the neighbourhood, feelings of safety and familiarity, and tolerance for differences. So, among the important contributions of community gardens are: growing your own food, practising ecology on an everyday level, and practising self management and bottom-up urbanism.

Community gardens are therefore spaces where we learn to live and work together, to co-exist in the cities of today and the cities of the future. A historical example from which we can learn today was co-created by American sociologist and fighter for peace Jane Addams.¹⁶

The parks she co-created together with the residents of a multi-ethnic neighbourhood, which was considered a slum at the time, were understood by her as spaces for “re-creation” which encouraged community. She felt that the conceptualisation of an ethics of living together was important, and the idea came from her direct experiences of conflict and conflict resolution in her neighbourhood in Chicago, where she worked for nearly forty years.¹⁷

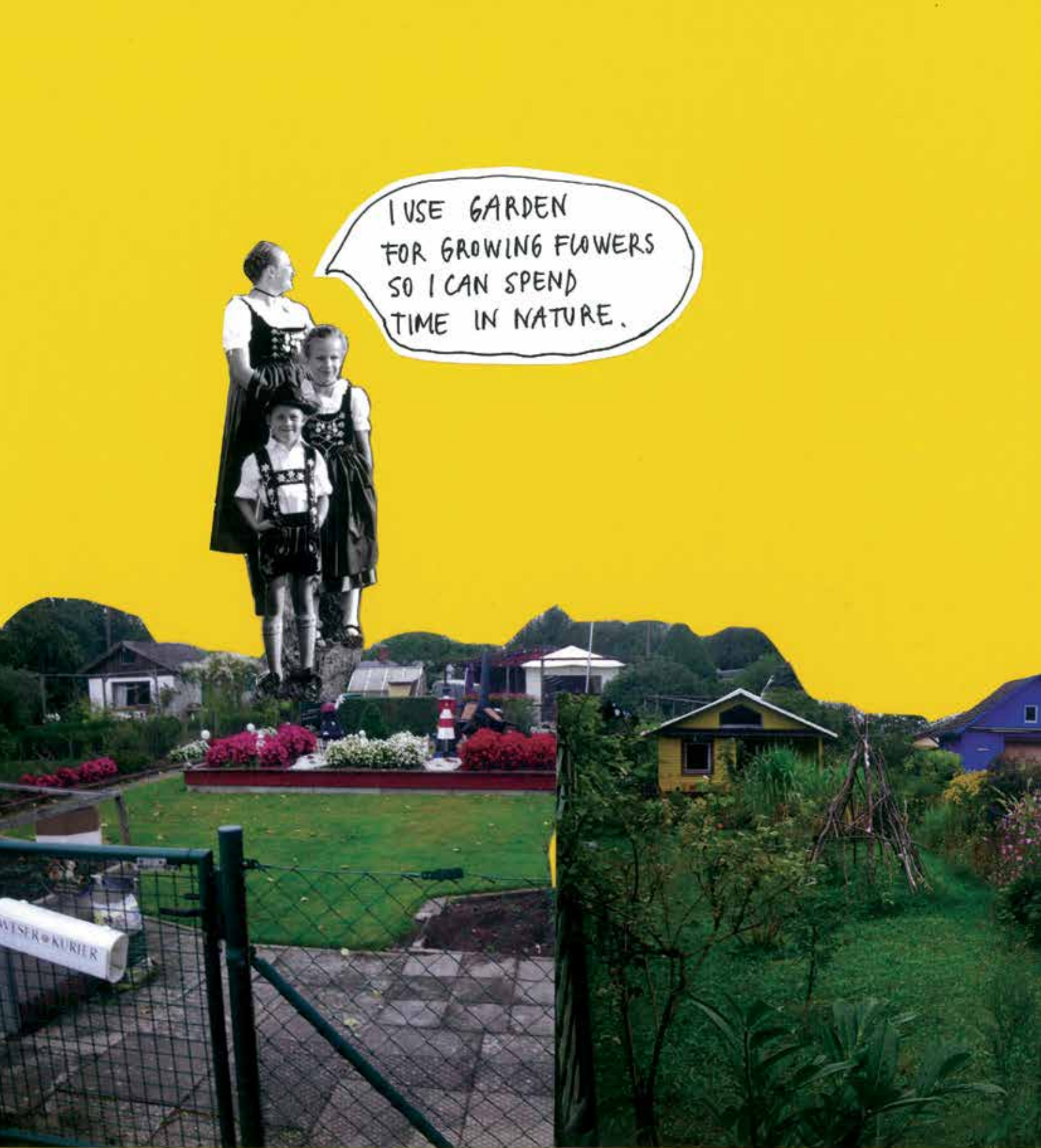
The group *aaa* from Paris wrote that projects such as *Ecobox* (a community garden in Paris) seek to evaluate the adaptable and reversible use of space and attempt to preserve “urban biodiversity”, which is then encouraged by the coexistence of various lifestyles and living practices.



*The Krasnansky Zelovoc Community Garden,
Bratislava
Photo by: Eva Jurdikova, May 2013*

¹⁶ Jane Addams (1860-1935) was a pioneer settlement worker and founder of Hull House in a neighbourhood of Chicago in 1912. She was public philosopher, sociologist, author, and leader fighting for women’s suffrage and world peace. In 1931 she became the first American woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

¹⁷ Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 16.



I USE GARDEN
FOR GROWING FLOWERS
SO I CAN SPEND
TIME IN NATURE.

Recent development in Germany shows also a shift in ownership of gardens from German owners to migrants from other countries - like e.g. Russia and other Eastern European Countries. Observations prove differences in the use of allotment gardens between migrants and Germans.

WE ARE MAINLY GROWING
FRUIT AND VEGETABLES



The Kuhlhinteren Allotment Garden Site, Bremen

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 3

3 SELECTED EXAMPLES FROM THE HISTORY OF URBAN GARDENING IN THE USA, UK, GERMANY, AND THE REST OF EUROPE

Despite the fact that I am focusing on a European context, which is the most relevant to the situation in Slovenia, I have also dedicated some attention to the history of similar (urban) gardening practices in the UK and USA. Their gardening movements developed in parallel to those in Europe, and there has been a mutual influence. Additionally, today networks like *Transition Towns* and *Incredible Edible* are being built on an international level. These kinds of initiatives, with their great emphasis of growing food locally, are creating an impact beyond the countries of their origins. In this chapter I will present Community Gardens in the USA, Allotments in the UK, and the “Schrebergartens” and “Kleingartens” in Germany and the rest of Europe.

3.1 Community Gardens in the USA

The term community gardens is used differently in the USA, Europe, and the UK, and that leads to a degree of confusion which I would like to avoid. It was already in the 1970s that community gardens began to take shape in US cities. However, even these initiatives from the early 1970s had their predecessors. Long before that (in 1912), Jane Addams, a social worker and public philosopher, not to mention a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, emphasised that new cities must be cities of cultural and ethnic diversity in which we must nurture “cosmic patriotism”. In the multi-ethnic neighbourhood of Chicago where she was active for more than forty years she saw places where cosmic patriotism could develop, and that was right in the city’s parks. For her the parks, which offered common places for socialising and recreation, seemed to be a place in which city residents with various racial and ethnic barriers could meet, and where they could exchange their social and cultural practices in a different atmosphere and setting, far removed from the pressures of everyday life, crowded apartments, streets, and workplaces of the densely populated neighbourhood.¹⁸ In these park-gardens Jane Addams saw the potential to accept differences and the possibility of peace.

During the First and Second World Wars “victory gardens” were developed in the USA, and they were in reality quite similar to our “allotments”. At the time, Victory gardens increased the self-sufficiency of local residents and also made it possible for women and children who were not on the front lines to actively contribute to the struggle for victory. They helped grow food within cities and thereby reduced the need for an external food supply.

In the 1960s dissatisfaction with the urban planning of cities was growing in both Europe and the USA. Jane Jacobs,¹⁹ a journalist and activist, attacked the then urbanistic and architectural

¹⁸ Lisa Heldke, *Cultivating Cosmic Patriotism by Cultivating Cosmos: Urban Gardening and the Creation of Community*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 112.

¹⁹ Jane Jacobs was a journalist and activist. She was not important only because of her keen observation and an extraordinary ability to analyse urban processes, but was also a participant in civic movements. She took the radical position that a city functions due to the spontaneous self-organisation of the urban population, and not due to a pre-established plan. Her resounding critique of the urbanism in American cities was published in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961. The book has become one of the most influential books in the history of urban planning and has influenced many subsequent theories and approaches within the field of urban social theories.

Pavel Gantar, *V zagovor mesta!* (In defence of the town!), foreword to the Slovenian edition of Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Umiranje in življenje velikih ameriških mest), Studia Humanitatis, Ljubljana, 2009, pg. 499-511.

planning in the works for the renewal of American urban city centres. She criticised the profession at its core and undermined the idea that it was possible to establish urban order with rationalistic planning from the top down. Since she was not only an analyst and keen observer, but also an activist, it was to her credit that several urban renewal projects in New York were cancelled in favour of preserving the older part of the city.

It was in this atmosphere later in the 1970s that the first groups to initiate community gardens organised themselves. *GreenThumb*²⁰ and *Green Guerrillas*²¹ were formed as a criticism of New York's city urban policies in the 1970s. The motive behind their creation was the visible decay of urban spaces and a criticism of the city politics which was allowing this to happen. We can see similar motives with the initiators for community gardens in modern European cities today. Community gardens in the USA can be large revitalisation projects in neighbourhoods for the preservation of green areas, for smaller vegetable gardens, or to make streets more green. Many community gardens are organised by non-profit organisations like community gardening associations and various other kinds of community associations, and this can be done by a church or other land owner, such as a school or university. "Since the early 1970s, New York City has supported more than 1,000 community gardens on public land. The government has opened 18 farmer's markets for direct sale of locally grown farm products. Other United States cities such as Boston and Philadelphia have even more community gardens per capita than New York. In Seattle, New York, and Washington, D.C., projects help the homeless produce their own food and community and home farmers contribute fresh food to their homeless neighbours."²² After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, there is now a special meaning behind establishing urban gardens in New Orleans. American philosopher Lisa Heldke, underlines the power of imagination behind reclaiming existent community gardens ruined by Katrina's floodwaters. The neighbourhoods of New Orleans became "food deserts" when neighbourhood grocery stores closed. Due to the additional exposure of topsoil to saltwater, raised garden bed inventions (also in old bathtubs) were a clever way to create gardens above the now toxic soil. A collective garden in the city presents endless opportunities for participants to train their imaginations.²³

²⁰ "GreenThumb was initiated in response to the city's financial crisis of the 1970s, which resulted in the abandonment of public and private land. The majority of GreenThumb gardens were derelict vacant lots renovated by volunteers. These community gardens, now managed by neighbourhood residents, provide important green spaces, thus improving air quality, biodiversity, and the well-being of residents. But gardens aren't just pretty spaces; they're also important community resources."
<http://www.greenthumbnyc.org/about.html> (21.9.2014).

²¹ "In the early 1970's, Liz Christy and the original band of green guerrillas decided to do something about the urban decay they saw all around them. They threw "seed green-aids" over the fences of vacant lots [...]. They created the Bowery Houston Farm and Garden – and they sparked a movement. The green guerrillas began rallying other people to use community gardening as tool to reclaim urban land, stabilize city blocks, and get people working together to solve problems. Soon, dozens of community gardens bloomed throughout New York City, and neighbours formed vital grassroots groups."
<http://www.greenguerrillas.org/history> (21.7.2014).

²² Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 2, pg. 24.
<http://jacsmi.com/book.html> (21.7.2014).

²³ Lisa Heldke, *Cultivating Cosmic Patriotism by Cultivating Cosmos: Urban Gardening and the Creation of Community*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 119-120.

3.2 Allotments in the UK

Great Britain has an exceptional allotment gardening tradition which dates all the way back to 13th century “town commons”.²⁴ Later, in the middle of the 19th century, gardens were also created for workers. Already in 1842 four hundred allotments were given to factory workers in Nottingham. In 1908 *The Small Holdings and Allotments Act* cleaned up and summed up all the legislation of the time which demanded of local authorities (rural and urban) that they arrange allotments for the working population. The First World War had a large impact on the allotment garden programme, which had been increasing the number of allotments until 1916. At that time every fifth household had its own allotment. In the period between world wars allotment gardening, which was characteristic of working class families, extended to include the entire population.

It is also necessary to mention the famous idea behind Ebenezer Howard’s *Garden City* (1889)²⁵, which had the purpose of combining the qualities of urban and rural life. The idea and its partial realisation has strongly influenced architects and urban planners around the world. Another important contribution which came about a little later was Patrick Geddes’ attempt to plan cities differently with the introduction of the term “region city”.²⁶ His suggestion was that the natural resources in the region and existing economic and social dynamics be studied before planning, which would even be considered a quite advanced approach by today’s standards. Geddes’ suggestion was to focus on the complex relations between climate, vegetation, animals, and economic activities, all of which also influence the way a society evolves. “Allotment participation increased during the 1970s, then dropped off during the 1980s and early 1990s. In the late 1990s, there was a resurgence of interest and applications. The current surge is fuelled by an interest in good and safe food and community development. The decentralisation of governmental authority has engendered support by some local authorities, particularly in Wales, to support locally-based food security and small-scale enterprise.”²⁷ But residents of UK cities have some complaints as well. In 2001 Jac Smit wrote: “around 200,000 individual allotments have been eliminated during the last 25 years. At the same time, 13,000 applicants are on waiting lists. There are approximately 300,000 plots at 8,000 locations. This deterioration is in contrast to an increase in allotments in several other countries, including France and the USA.”²⁸

In both of my video animations and this text I present more recent initiatives in the UK, such as

²⁴ “Commons refers to the cultural and natural resources accessible to all members of a society, including natural materials such as air, water, and a habitable earth. These resources are held in common, not owned privately. The resources held in common can include everything from natural resources and common land to software.”
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons> (21.9.2014).

²⁵ Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (1889).

²⁶ Patric Geddes, *Cities in evolution: an introduction to the town planning movement and to the study of civics* (1915).

²⁷ Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 4, pg. 6.
<http://jacsmi.com/book.html> (21.9.2014).

²⁸ Ibid.

the *Transition Town Network* (2006)²⁹ and *Incredible Edible* (2007).³⁰ These initiatives started in the UK and developed into global networks. Despite the fact that they started in small towns (Totnes and Todmorden), they were easily adjusted to urban situations in general, as both focus on local food production. For *Transition Towns* the idea of local resilience, which can be achieved by urban gardening and solidarity, is a solution for adapting to a future with scarce resources.

In the last two decades community gardens have been blossoming in the UK, just as in other European cities. One of the first in the centre of London is the *Culpeper Community Garden*,³¹ It is named after the famous 17th century herbalist, Thomas Culpeper, who published his works in Islington. This community garden was created in 1982 out of a derelict site and is taken care of by local residents, members of the garden, and volunteers. *Abbey Gardens* was created on the initiative of local residents in London's West Ham in 2006. The main motive was to save the neglected land from vandalism and decay. It was mainly due to the active role of local residents that the city quickly began to participate in the development of the project. In 2008, with the launch of the art project *What will the harvest be?*, the art group *Somewhere* made a plan for an open park with raised garden beds and open access to produce. Due to the contaminated soil they set up thirty raised beds on which participants could grow whatever they wanted. Since then the local initiative has grown into a group of sixty volunteers of varying ages, knowledge, and nationalities. All of garden beds are common, so the participants garden and pick their produce together.

3.3 The “Schrebergartens” and “Kleingartens” in Germany and the rest of Europe

Germany has had a long urban gardening tradition which has influenced similar practices in both central and eastern Europe. During the beginnings of industrialisation the first vegetable gardens in Germany were organised by well-meaning land owners, factory owners, municipalities, and charitable organisations. The name for these gardens was *Armengaerten*, which means gardens of the poor, and they were instrumental in helping the poor to deal with hunger and the then unbearable living conditions in cities. In 1826 such gardens could already be found in nineteen German cities.

The first organised allotment gardens were referred to as *Schrebergartens*,³² and appeared in the industrial area of Leipzig in 1865. They were named after the head of a local clinic, doctor Daniel Gottlob Moritz Schreber.

²⁹ <http://www.transitionnetwork.org/> (21.9.2014).

³⁰ <http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/> (21.9.2014).

³¹ The garden is tended communally by local people, garden members, and volunteers. http://londonist.com/2008/11/natureist_culpepper_community_garde.php (21.9.2014).

³² Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 6, pg. 6. <http://jacsmi.com/book.html> (21.7.2014).

Originally the intention behind these gardens was to improve conditions for children, and serve as sports and playground areas. Approximately 250 parents worked on the site and arranged it for their children. The children's gardens also had an educational function in terms of fostering a sense of urban health and social responsibility, and a sense of the individual. However, parents who first took care of "Schreber square", a central point of the community space, quickly took over the gardens as well.³³ Right from the onset a gardeners association was formed. It named itself the *Schreber Association*, and with that an entire movement was born. From just a few hundred plots in the middle of the 19th century, the number of gardens rose to about 450,000 in the early 1930s. At the end of the 19th century the German *Schrebergardens* spread across Europe, and even today we can encounter them in a similar form.

Just as the *Schrebergardens* were being created in Germany, in France a social reformer named Abbe Lemire advocated for workers gardens in the industrial areas of French cities. Both initiatives are an indication of the overall and unbearable living conditions in cities in the 19th century. At that time, cities were experiencing both the shock of industrialisation and the pressures of modernisation. As migrants from the countryside practically invaded cities, living conditions were miserable, the cost of living went up, and there was nothing to eat. Elke Krasny writes that at this time the housing shortage, food rationing, and hunger led to the appropriation of land in the city. This approach of residents helping themselves, by means of settlements for the homeless and allotment gardens, plays an important role in the idea of developing a city from the bottom up. Not only were city residents growing food on their own plots, but allotments served as starting point for the development of settlements. Krasny describes the first "garden colonists" on the outskirts of Berlin, who called themselves "farm citizens" and were a mix between farmers and factory workers. By 1900 there were 40,000 "allotment colonists" in Berlin.³⁴

Krasny continues by writing that it was more than just growing food and breeding small animals; it was their collaboration and co-existence which played an important role among them. In this perspective, gardening appeared as the ultimate social self-help strategy for survival, and in the long term this also influenced the urban development of Berlin. For this reason it is not surprising that allotment gardening areas in Germany were protected very early on. "The first law, the so-called *Act of Allotment Gardens and the Leasing of Plots* [...] was already ratified in 1919. In 1983 the law was amended and modified to the still applicable *Federal Act on Allotment Gardening*, which was amended in 2006. Germany was the first country which included allotment gardening as both an activity and a permanent use of space into their spatial legislation."³⁵

³³ Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 10.

³⁴ Ibid., pg. 13.

³⁵ Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani (Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana)*, Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009, pg. 173.

Between the First and Second World Wars allotment gardening experienced a great expansion in England, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy, followed by another during the Second World War on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1949, post World War II food shortages had given the movement a boost, and the number of allotments in Germany had risen to about 800,000.

In the 1960s Western Germany's interest in urban gardening dropped. Christa Müller, sociologist and author of the 2011 book *Urban Gardening* mentions it in connection to the modern way of living. "In the 1960s, as the economy boomed, people in West Germany had given up their urban vegetable gardens, not least of all for reasons of social status; many wished to demonstrate, for example, that they could purchase food and no longer had to grow and preserve it themselves."³⁶ A different scenario was taking place in Eastern Germany where, similar to Slovenia, many allotment gardeners saw their gardens plots as a refuge from the trials of daily life in socialism. In 1950 it was not unusual to hear party members criticising allotment gardeners for their "petit bourgeois" behaviour, and their attempts retreat into their own private sphere. During that time there were even political attempts to make gardening collective, like today's community gardens, but with strong political supervision.

Historian John Paul Kleiner describes how political structures have even tried to modify the culture of allotment gardening by taking steps to collectivise plots, as for example in the construction of the city of Stalinstadt, today's Eisenhüttenstadt: "Here, planners included 'common orchards' into the blueprints for the new, model city where otherwise allotment plots might have appeared."³⁷ Kleiner continues by writing that official attitudes towards allotment gardens changed dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s, when allotments became one of the ways to address the persistent shortfalls in the quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables available to East Germans. "Indeed, the economic importance of the GDR's 855,000 allotment gardens can scarcely be underestimated. A handbook for East German gardeners published in 1981 underlined this fact by reporting that 'On average, allotment gardens and small animal breeders provide 1/3 of all fruit, 1/10 of all vegetables, 2/5 of eggs and all the honey available in East German shops each year. In this way, allotment gardeners and small animal breeders contribute to the increase in our Republic's economic activity.'³⁸

In 1996 the federal union of allotment holders in Germany was composed of about 1 million members who had organised themselves into about 14,000 allotment garden associations all over the country, which came to approximately 650,000 households. Interest in gardening was growing just like in most European cities. Among citizens who were interested there were also many migrants. Allotments used by immigrants had a different focus in gardening than those

³⁶ Nicolette Stewart, *Urban Gardening in Germany*, 24.6.2013.
<http://www.young-germany.de/topic/live/food-fun/urban-gardening-in-germany> (21.7.2014).

³⁷ John Paul Kleiner, *Eastern Eden: Allotment Gardens in the GDR*, August 27, 2013.
<http://gdprojectified.wordpress.com/2013/08/27/kleingaerten/> (21.7.2014).

³⁸ Ibid. (Ernst Pannach, *Kleine Gärten, grosser Nutzen – Small Gardens of Great Utility*: Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1981, pg. 8).
<http://gdprojectified.wordpress.com/2013/08/27/kleingaerten/>. (21.7.2014).

used by native Germans. “Recent development in Germany shows a shift in the ownership of gardens from Germans to migrants from other countries – e.g. Russia and other Eastern European Countries.”³⁹ Today in Germany many allotment gardeners use their gardens for recreation, and they grow vegetables only in small amounts. In contrast to that, immigrant allotment gardeners intensively grow both vegetables and fruit. I have made use of this observation in my video animation *The Right Balance*.⁴⁰

A similar model of individual allotment gardening to the one in Germany was developed in Slovenia at the end of the 19th century. After the Second World War allotment gardening grew more intensively in Slovenia, other republics of the former Yugoslavia, and in virtually all of the cities in Eastern Europe, each with its own local specifics. Here it should also be mentioned that there are a number of strong connections between German and Slovenian allotments. The first relates to the name “Kleingartens”, or small gardens, the name still used in Germany for allotments today. The most common expression in Slovenian for urban gardens is “vrtiček”, which also means small garden. It is also clear that allotments came into Slovenia from Germany and neighbouring Austria, where they were well organised and supported by the state. In 1984, when Zdenka Goriup published the first research on urban gardening in Ljubljana, she and her co-researchers paid special attention to German allotment gardens. They placed the German categorisation of the types and positions of gardens in the forefront, and also presented the guidelines for planning and designing allotment garden areas which were used in Germany. On the whole, the research praised German gardening organisation as a model of good practices, with many suggestions from Germany serving as a base for the first urban gardening ordinance in Ljubljana, which was accepted in 1985.



The *Kuhhirten* Allotment Garden Site, Bremen
Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, September 2013

³⁹ http://www.metabolicity.com/profiles/blogs/allotment-gardens-and-other?xg_source=activity (16.12.2012).

⁴⁰ More about this artistic research can be found in section 10.4, *The Right Balance*, a Video Animation.

In addition to the high number of allotment gardens in major German cities, in recent years community gardens have also begun to spread across the rest of Germany as well. An example of a well known Berlin community garden is the *Prinzessinnengarten*, which was created in 2009 on an abandoned location near the busy roads of the Turkish Kreuzberg quarter. That community garden has influenced many of today's gardens in other cities, such as Maribor, Ljubljana, Bratislava, and Prague. Like many before them, the initiators received their inspiration from a visit to Cuba which, with its 14.6% share of urban farming, is a world leader in urban farming.⁴¹ Due to the trade embargo, the loss of the former Soviet market, and the loss of chemical agent imports used in farming, Cuba diverted its agriculture to organic production and accelerated the development of urban farming. Havana produces up to 90% of its green produce within the city. The gardens, which can be seen everywhere (in the public parks and the city areas converted to urban farms) have inspired many travellers.



The Prinzessinnengarten, Berlin
Photo by: Marjetica Potrč, 2013

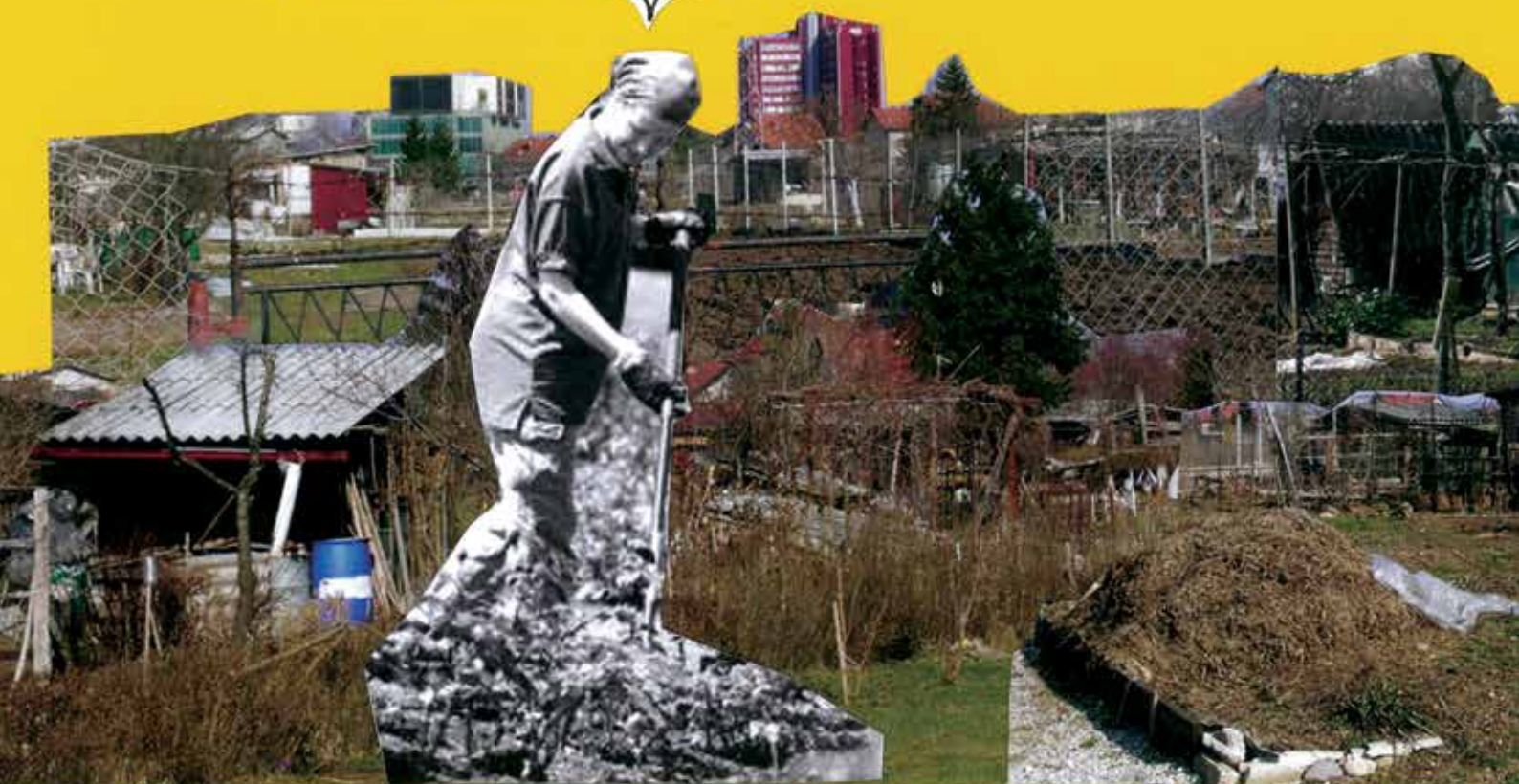
⁴¹ Christiana Ergas, *Cuban Urban Agriculture as a Strategy for Food Sovereignty*, <http://monthlyreview.org/2013/03/01/cuban-urban-agriculture-as-a-strategy-for-food-sovereignty/> (21.9.2014).

Another interesting initiative in Berlin was created in 2008 with the closing of the Berlin Tempelhof Airport, where the local initiative *100% Prozent Tempelhofer Feld* is committed to keeping the area of the former airport green.⁴² The city was planning the construction of 4,000 affordable housing apartment blocks on the green area, but on 25 May, 2014, the citizens of Berlin had the chance to vote on whether the land would become a new Berlin neighbourhood or remain a park. Almost 65% rejected plans for the large-scale property development. In addition to various other space interventions which are taking place on the empty green areas of the airport there is also the *Allemande-Kontor* community garden,⁴³ which began in 2011. From the ten initial raised garden beds, they now have three hundred, as well as approximately nine hundred gardeners who have organised themselves and are taking care of the space. This is also an example of allotment gardeners acting as critics of top-down city management.

⁴² Tempelhof is a famous Berlin airport which was built in 1924. This large airport became famous during the Second World War because of Hitler and the Reichtag's involvement, and was very busy in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s – during the cold war. Due to the rather central location in the city, the Tempelhof airport was closed in 2008. Since the closure of the airport, the local initiative *100% Tempelhofer Feld* has been active.
<http://www.thf100.de/start.html> (21.9.2014).

⁴³ <http://www.allmende-kontor.de/> (21.9.2014).

I HAVE CREATED
A VEGETABLE GARDEN



In 2010, a former allotment site in the district of Žale was transformed into a public park.

In 2007-2008 the city began by removing almost one third of existing allotments throughout Ljubljana.

I CREATED THE GARDEN
OF ALL SAINTS



The Žale Illegal Allotment Garden Site, 1960-2007

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 4

4 THE HISTORY OF ALLOTMENT GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA

In order to assess the contribution our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* brought into the context of urban gardening in Ljubljana, I had to look into the history of allotment gardening in Ljubljana. In this chapter I will start with a brief overview of Ljubljana's allotment gardening history to provide a perspective on the entire chronology of events, beginning with the situation after the Second World War, and continuing all the way until the present day (2014). This is presented in section 4.1, *A Short History*. To a great extent, my text on the history of allotment gardening in Ljubljana relies on published research from 1984, 1997, 2000, and 2009, which I present in section 4.2, *Existing Research on Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana*. Next, I have selected case studies from the past that differ from each other in terms of land ownership, the ways gardeners were organised among themselves, and the size of the gardens. They are presented in section 4.3, *Selected Examples of Ljubljana's Allotments from the past*. Despite the fact that allotment gardeners were gardening semi-legally, and were for the most part not members of allotment gardening associations, I will present two important exceptions from the mid 1980s to the end of the 1990s: *The Emona Vrtiček Allotment Gardening Association* and *The Allotment Gardening University*. They are presented in section 4.4, *Selected Examples of Allotment Gardening Organisations*. I will conclude this chapter by presenting two examples of good practices from Slovenia. The first is the allotment site *Kunta Kinte*, which was created in Velenje in 1978, and the other is a modest version of an allotment site which was organised at a former military refuse dump in Savlje in 1993. They are presented in section 4.5, *Two Examples of Good Practices in Slovenia*.

4.1 A Short History

Allotment gardening in Ljubljana began to develop at the end of the 19th century, grew between the First and Second World Wars, and continued to do so after the Second World War. At that time an intensive process of urbanisation began in Ljubljana and, in parallel with that, there was increased interest in allotment gardening. "Here the most intensive process of urbanisation took place primarily between 1950 and 1980, when people from rural areas and migrants from other Yugoslav republics moved to cities and started working in factories. In this thirty-year period, the urban population grew from 26% to 49% of the whole – almost the same as it is today."⁴⁴

Allotment gardening was not planned by the city, but it was considerably well organised, particularly on a small scale near apartment blocks and on land owned by factories.

In time the first larger allotment garden sites began to take shape on public land which was not intended for development. These allotment garden sites were not planned by the city, but from the city's point of view they were welcome on a temporary basis. In a certain time periods allotment gardeners had agreements with the local community administrations, and paid rent. In the following decades those allotment garden sites expanded. In 1984 allotment gardening in the city of Ljubljana occupied 200 hectares of land, and this grew considerably in the following decade. In 1995 allotment gardening took up 265 hectares of land. Even though this period was characterised by chaotic unplanned developments and expansion, my research has shown that allotment gardening was not entirely disorganised. *The Emona Vrtiček Allotment Gardening*

⁴⁴ My research on the process of urbanisation in Ljubljana took place during the year of 2007 and in connection to individual single-family housing. These houses appeared in Ljubljana during a period of intensive urbanisation in the 1970s and 1980s, and were based on the "self-building" strategies of new city residents. They were not just typical of Ljubljana, but were also built during that time all around Slovenia. The text is part of the concept of my video animation titled *Why Slovene Houses Look the Way They Do*, 2007.

<http://www.lovsin.org/eng/video-animation/why-slovene-houses-look-the-way-they-do-2007/> (21.9.2014).

Association, which was founded in 1984, was the only self-organised initiative organising allotments. At the time, in addition to their land in the district of Vič, the association was supervising other allotment garden sites, eleven in total across Ljubljana (in the districts of Vič, Fužine, Moste, and Žale).

Despite that, in the 1980s and 1990s, there was also an expansion of illegal allotment garden sites in the districts of Črnuče and Barje which, in the following twenty years, became the object of ridicule on the part of experts and urban planners, and also obtained a negative public opinion. As can be seen from statistics from 1995 to 2005, interest in allotment gardening declined, and allotment gardeners occupied only 186 hectares of land. After the removal of almost 2,000 allotments in 2007 and 2008, allotment gardens towards the end of 2008 only took up 130 hectares of land.⁴⁵

The first legislative basis for allotment gardening in Ljubljana was an ordinance on the regulation of allotment gardening in the area of Ljubljana municipalities, which came into force in 1985 (UL SRS 15/1985). Allotment gardeners did not respect this new ordinance, and the city did not take any action to punish those who violated the rules. Allotment gardeners appropriated larger plots than allowed, constructed garden sheds that were too large, dug individual wells, improperly used chemical agents and fertilisers, and dumped waste wherever there was sufficient space to do so. This uncontrolled proliferation and arrangement of allotments continued until the 1990s. The fact that the city administration ignored urban gardening development and did not manage it at this time led to allotment gardening's uncontrolled and disorganised development. The arbitrary occupation of land by gardeners also caused damage on occasion, such as when allotments expanded to occupy protected land near water reservoirs. All these events then contributed to allotment gardening's poor public image. Despite the fact that the city had begun making attempts to keep records of the situation at the end of the 1980s and, to that end, also conducted several studies, the allotment gardening situation in Ljubljana remained disorganised until 2007. At that time the new city administration decided to take drastic measures and removed approximately one third of existing illegal allotments in Ljubljana.

The city followed this move by creating new rules for the design and lease of the new model allotments, and for arranging new allotment sites. The detailed rules offered absolutely no flexibility and the leasing conditions were problematic, favouring elderly residents with low incomes. The vicinity of the residence to the new gardens, which is an important factor, was not a condition in the 2009 rules. Two new model allotment sites were created in 2010 in a bureaucratic, formal, and idealistic way – meaning without any connection to urban reality. The design principles and spatial criteria for the allotments had been raised to a high level

⁴⁵ Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009, pg. 65.

(mandatory fences, parking, common areas, toilets, children's playgrounds),⁴⁶ which required an enormous amount of funds for just a small number of gardens. Immediately after the two new sites were opened in 2010 the city realised that such a financial investment was not feasible, and the creation of subsequent allotments (according to the new unrealistic standards) was discontinued.

An overview of the entire situation gives the following figures: in the seven years since the city removed almost 2,000 allotments, only 65 new model allotments were offered, with another 50 being offered this year (2014). This comes to 114 new allotments in total, just 5.7% of all those removed. I am critical not only of this pitifully small number, but also of the fact that the city did not make any attempts to improve conditions at even one of the previously existing allotment sites. The city could have easily preserved a certain amount of allotments and, through realistic guidelines, could have economically rearranged the allotments to suit the new conditions.

One of the illegal allotment sites has been replaced by a new public park, which met with high approval from residents, but is questionable from the perspective of finding an economical and sustainable planning solution, such as combining a new public park and part of the previous allotments. Other than some changes to the city's infrastructure, which was done around the new stadium, no development took place on many of the former allotments which were removed, and these pieces of land are becoming neglected.

With this formal and rigid method of regulating the allotment gardening issue, the city has halted all development of allotment gardening. An over-regulated and slow process has literally crushed all the expectations of city residents, who were hoping that the city would be capable of offering allotments for legal and organised gardening. Both the general need for self-sufficiency and the economic crisis of 2008 make the removal of such a large number city allotments in Ljubljana, without replacements, unreliable from an economic and ecological point of view, not to mention for the future of the city. In contrast, other European cities, such as London and Berlin, have recognised the increased interest (and need) for allotment gardening and have increased the available areas for allotments. I will present the steps Ljubljana's new city government took in greater detail in chapter six, *The Formal top-down Approach in Arranging Urban Gardening in Ljubljana*. The current situation (2014) is discussed in chapter seven, *Urban Gardening in Ljubljana Today*. There I will also present initiatives connected to urban gardening that have been appearing in Ljubljana in the last few years, including our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*.

⁴⁶ Two new allotment sites were formed by the city in 2010. Individual gardens have a common area for socialising, a playground, running water, dry toilets, waste disposal, and parking. In order to arrange 65 gardens at two gardening sites the city spend approximately 300,000 euros, which turned out to be an unacceptably high cost for such a small number of gardens.

4.2 Existing Research on Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana

Allotment gardening in Ljubljana was not completely ignored in professional circles and has been the subject of several still relevant studies. In connection with the history of allotment gardening in Ljubljana, my texts have to a great extent relied on published research from 1984, 1997, 2000, and 2009. Three studies⁴⁷ also received funding from the Municipality of Ljubljana, which reflects a certain level of readiness on the part of the city to gain a better perspective into the allotment gardening issue, since the city was willing to use the studies as an aid in gaining control over the chaotic allotment gardening situation of the time. Since the projects are an almost evenly spaced 10 years apart, the research offers a good insight into the general condition of allotment gardening. This makes it possible to follow the development of allotment gardening in Ljubljana until the time of their removal, which began in 2007. It is precisely here that my dissertation concretely connects with the actual history, with an emphasis on the last few years, of the city's regulation of the issue. In combination with the successful implementation and development of our community garden in Ljubljana, this thesis paper also seeks to offer a point of departure for alternative gardening solutions.

Planning and Regulating Allotments in Ljubljana, 1984⁴⁸

The first official research work done on allotment gardening in Ljubljana was published in 1984 and was created by architect Zdenka Goriup from the Ljubljana Urbanistic Institute (Ljubljanski urbanistični zavod). This was a two-year field and research project which attempted to present the importance of allotment gardening in urban centres. The research showed the historical development of allotment gardening, as well as its meaning and role for both people and the city. The research emphasised a fact which was ignored in Ljubljana until that time: the importance of legally regulating urban gardening already in the planning phase, before development. This idea was based on examples of good practices from other countries and placed the German categorisation of the types and positions of gardens in the forefront. The research also presented the guidelines for planning and designing allotment garden areas which were being used in Germany. This is not surprising, as allotment gardens in Germany are considered to be some of the best organised and regulated to this day, something which is to the advantage of both their allotment gardeners and cities. A comparison with the situation in other countries in the past was, despite various political systems, also accepted and welcome. From the findings of the research it was evident that the Slovenian professionals (urbanists, landscape architects, architects) saw allotment gardening with great prejudice, and that allotment gardening lacked any professional guidelines, planning, or supervision. To many people allotment gardening came to represent degraded green surfaces and a necessary evil which the city needed to get rid of as soon as possible. Like Zdenka Goriup wrote in 1984, "Allotment gardening came to represent the narrow-minded mentality of smaller private ownership, the negative revival of land ownership atavisms, people closing themselves off into their own personal sphere, a retreat from collective interests, etc. All these long held

⁴⁷ Zdenka Goriup, *Planiranje in urejanje območij malih vrtov (vrtičkov) v Ljubljani* (Planning and Regulating Allotments in Ljubljana), Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana 1984. Maja Simoneti, *Usmeritve in pogoji za nadaljni razvoj vrtičkarstva v Ljubljani* (Guidelines and Conditions for the Continued Development of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), MOL-oddelek za kulturo in raziskovalno dejavnost, Ljubljana 1997. Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009.

⁴⁸ Zdenka Goriup, *Planiranje in urejanje območij malih vrtov (vrtičkov) v Ljubljani* (Planning and Regulating Allotments in Ljubljana), Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana 1984.

prejudices have only recently begun to slowly 'soften', as what has long been present in the east and west begins to break through in Slovenia: an awareness of the social, recreational, educational, mentally-hygienic, urban design/style, and economic importance of allotment gardens."⁴⁹

Goriup's research served as the foundation for designing the first legal basis for allotment gardening in Ljubljana, the *Ordinance on Regulating Allotment Gardening in the Area of Ljubljana Municipalities (Odlok o urejanju vrtičkarstva na območju ljubljanskih občin)*, which came into force in 1985. The ordinance was created according to detailed knowledge of conditions elsewhere, and was a high-quality guide. It stipulated that land intended for allotment gardening would be determined according to municipal plans and, based on that, according to already defined spatial implementation acts. The ordinance determined the size of the plots of land, the size of the garden sheds, and the permitted construction materials. Despite the good foundation offered by the ordinance, the new rules were not followed by the allotment gardeners, and the city municipality did not carry out inspections, so the ordinance did not contribute to any improvement in the existing situation.

Guidelines and Conditions for the Continued Development of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana, 1997⁵⁰

Maja Simoneti discovered almost ten years later that it was not possible to trace any implementation of the abovementioned ordinance in actual practice. She writes this in the second important study of allotment gardening in Ljubljana titled *Guidelines and Conditions for the Continued Development of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana (Usmeritve in pogoji za nadaljni razvoj vrtičkarstva v Ljubljani)*. In the opinion of Simoneti and her co-workers, the condition of allotment gardening in Ljubljana, due to the lack of action and regulation on the part of the city, had become progressively worse. She urgently suggested immediate measures and the creation of professional guidelines. The research project once again underlined the importance of allotment gardening for the city, presented the characteristics of allotment gardening, analysed the conditions in Ljubljana, and proposed conditions for both design and planning. In addition, the research suggested a point of departure for the supervision of the allotment gardening situation to improve the existing situation. The quality of the text is connected to real conditions in the field, which is also evident in the design of pragmatic proposals for how to improve conditions at the existing allotment gardening sites, and design guidelines for their development. The research stressed some still topical organisational improvements: the importance of designing an advisory service on the part of the city, the necessity of uniting the allotment gardeners in an association, and also numerous design approaches which

⁴⁹ Zdenka Goriup, *Planiranje in urejanje območij malih vrtov (vrtičkov) v Ljubljani* (Planning and Regulating Allotments in Ljubljana), Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana 1984, pg. 109.

⁵⁰ Maja Simoneti, *Usmeritve in pogoji za nadaljni razvoj vrtičkarstva v Ljubljani* (Guidelines and Conditions for the Continued Development of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), MOL-oddelek za kulturo in raziskovalno dejavnost, Ljubljana 1997.

could conceal the visibility of the allotments, which was an issue with the general public. Their disorganised and untidy appearance was heavily criticised by all sides, and this research proposed planting green hedges and other similar but simple approaches.

This research is widely known and often used as a reference in other research and debates on the topic of allotment gardening.

Allotment Gardening, 2000⁵¹

Nina Vastl's specialised postgraduate research on allotment gardening was done at the Faculty for Architecture between 1997 and 2000. Its special value is in helping to see and understand informal and illegal architecture. Vastl analysed the self-building strategies of allotment gardeners – a segment of informal architecture. Illegal architectural structures like garden sheds for tools, improvised collectors for rainwater, and pergolas, all constructed without permits, are an obvious example of informal architecture. Vastl turned the attention of architects to something they did not want to look at – informal, unplanned architecture in Slovenian space. The profession of architecture has often looked down upon and ignored this informal form of architecture, which was booming especially in the 1980s and 1990s. Simultaneously, Vastl's work pointed at an important element in self-building and self-organisation which allotment gardening relied upon up until that point. John Paul Kleiner writes that especially in East Germany's past, which can be compared with Slovenia, the activities of allotment gardeners were developing in an economic environment where building a garden shed, a fence, or a door was not simply a matter of heading to a building supply store. The self-built architecture of allotments and the stories of their creation serve as examples which make it possible to examine a myriad of aspects of everyday life there. Constant shortages in consumer goods helped to make the self-built culture flourish, something which had a great impact on the way people related to and needed each other (John Paul Kleiner).⁵²

Vastl collected extensive photographic documentary material of allotment garden sites in Ljubljana, Škofja Loka, and Kranj, and also provided an analysis of the architectural details and self-building methods. Perhaps to the surprise of many, in the study she also included recipes for pickling vegetables, and for the preparation of fresh vegetable meals from her neighbours' allotment gardens and friends. This made her research resonate with today's motives for allotment gardening which are predominantly connected with producing one's own vegetables for healthy food. For me the A4 file folder format is also interesting from the perspective of artistic research, an area in which I could easily place her work *Allotment gardening*.

⁵¹ Nina Vastl, *Vrtičkarstvo* (Allotment Gardening), specialistična naloga (specialised postgraduate research), Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2000.

⁵² John Paul Kleiner *Eastern Eden: Allotment Gardens in the GDR*, August 27, 2013. <http://gdobjectified.wordpress.com/2013/08/27/kleingaerten/> (22.7.2014).

Vrtičkarski recepti (Allotment Gardening Recepies)
 Nina Vastl, *Vrtičkarstvo*, specialistična naloga,
 Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univeza v Ljubljani, 2000.
 (Nina Vastl, *Allotment Gardening*, specialised
 postgraduate research, Faculty of Architecture,
 University of Ljubljana, 2000.)



PECENA PAPRIKA V OLJU

Saravine za en kozarec (87 l): 4 rdeče paprike, 2,5 dl olja /sončnično ali olivno/, nekaj strobov česna, kisavice soli, sol. Paprike operemo in očistimo. Narežemo jih v namočeno pekoč in damo v ogreto pekočo. Na kado na nekaterih delih pedri in se naredijo meljaji, paprike previdno obrnemo. Ko so paprike pečene, potakamo, da se malo ohladijo, in jih nato okupimo. Se tople damo v marinate iz limoninega soka, soli in strobov česna. Vse skupaj dobro premešamo, pokrijemo in pustimo za 24 ur v hladilnik. Naredimo dve jih posode, da se segrejejo na sobno temperaturo, očistimo in naložimo v kozarce. V vsak kozarec dodamo še par celih strobov česna. Ostanki marinade vlijemo v olje in vse skupaj segrejemo do 80 stopinj C. Z vročim oljem prelijemo zalijemo kozarce in posode, da so paprike popolnoma prekrite. Kozarce še tople zapremo.

MESANA SOLATA

Paprika, rdeči in zeleni paradižnik, čebula, zobje, fetterani (popravilno lahko vso zuberjave, ki ostane na vrhu), kis za vlaganje, sol, sladkor, poper, koren, olje. Vse zelenjavo operemo in zmočimo na razceke, posebno in posolimo nekaj časa sol. V velikem loncu razrežemo kis za vlaganje z vodo v razmerju 1:1, damo malo olja, sladkor, poper in koren. Marzano zelenjavo na hitro premešamo v pripravljenem kis, jo naložimo v kozarce, zalijemo z vročim kisom in kozarce tople zapremo.

Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana, 2009⁵³

This is the most recent research published on allotment gardening in Ljubljana. It was created on the basis of a two-year research project which assumed allotment gardening was polluting the environment (allotment gardening in Ljubljana as a source of pollutants in the soil, in the food produced, and in the groundwater). The publication summarised and expanded many sections of the above mentioned research and, especially for the average reader, presented a far too scientific approach with numerous analyses of soil, groundwater, produce, etc. The important role of this publication is that their hypothesis – the suspicion that allotment gardening was polluting the environment any more than other activity – was disproved. At first glance that suspicion seemed somewhat odd and smelled of the city's desire to find some legitimate justification for the removal of allotments. The publication was done in the context of the Institute of Geography and financed with city funds. For my sources, I have relied mainly on information from legislation in connection with allotment gardening in Slovenia and legislation in other countries. I have also used statistical information regarding the number of existing allotments and allotment sites from both Slovenia and elsewhere.

→

Polonca Lovšin: The map of selected examples of Ljubljana's allotments from the past.

⁵³ Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment Gardening In Ljubljana), Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009.



**The Litostroj Allotments,
1946-present**



**Ljubljana's Largest Illegal Allotment Site in Črnuče,
circa 1980-2008**



**The "Fond" Gardens (Fondovi vrtovi),
1931-present**



WHAT IS
THE HISTORY?

**The Žale Illegal Allotment Site,
circa 1960-2007**



4.3 Selected Examples of Ljubljana's Allotments from the past

Here I will present different forms of allotments which appeared in Ljubljana in the past, the first example being from before the Second World War. These examples are not the only ones in existence, but I find them to be the most exemplary of allotment gardening in Ljubljana. I selected case studies which differ from each other in terms of land ownership, forms of organisation among gardeners and size. I will start with the "Fond" Gardens, a case where apartment blocks were designed together with accompanying gardens. This will be followed by the "Litostroj Allotments", where gardens were created for factory workers on the land of the Litostroj factory. Finally I will discuss two large and illegal allotment sites on public land, in the Ljubljana districts of Žale and Črnuče.

The "Fond" Gardens (Fondovi vrtovi), 1931-present

Several apartment blocks in Ljubljana which were planned for workers and built near factories also had gardens located on a stretch of land which ran behind and parallel to the blocks. Each apartment was entitled to one garden bed. In Ljubljana this type of system first appeared with the planning and construction of the "Fond" apartment blocks between 1931 and 1938. The railway had dedicated a fund ("fond" in Slovenian, hence the name "Fond" apartment blocks and "Fond" gardens) for the construction of an apartment block community for its workers in the district of Bežigrad in Ljubljana. In addition to the modern architectural design of the apartments the plan gave a great deal of attention to the surrounding arrangements. Emergency vehicle routes ran between the apartment blocks and gardens, which were spread out on the south side of Plečnik stadium.⁵⁴ Between the road and the gardens, in equally spaced intervals, there were iron pavilions intended to provide a place to rest and for local residents to socialise. The design of this complex reflects a comprehensive form of planning and is the only example of its kind in Ljubljana.

The new city government in 2006 brought with it a period of uncertainty for the Fond gardens. One of the actions of the city's new leadership was to encourage public-private partnerships. In the spirit such partnerships, plans were made to renovate Plečnik stadium, which bordered on the Fond gardens. The residents of the Fond apartment blocks discovered – to their surprise – that the land under their gardens was also included in the stadium renovation plans. As has been seen in a number of other cases (Berlin, Vienna, London), allotment garden land in cities can easily become the subject of real-estate speculation. The residents of the Fond apartment blocks also tried to prove that in the case of their gardens this was nothing but speculation on the part of the city, and they organised themselves, co-creating *Koordinacijski odbor stanovalcev Fondovih hiš* (the Coordination Committee for the Residents of the Fond Houses). In the course of the process they gained the position or status of "third parties" in the contractual dispute. There were many problems with the procedure, some were connected with the change in ownership which came about with the formation of new state when Slovenia gained

⁵⁴ Plečnik stadium, also called Bežigrad Central stadium, was built by the important Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik in 1928. It was predominantly used for football matches and was the home of the football club NK Olimpija, established in 1945. The stadium was closed in 2008 for renovations. These renovations are to be done by the city and co-partner Slovenian multimillionaire Jože Pečecnik, but they have not actually started yet because of the "Fond" gardens, which will be developed in the new plans. The new Stožice stadium on the outskirts of Ljubljana was built by the city in 2010, and is currently the largest stadium in Ljubljana and Slovenia.

independence in 1991,⁵⁵ while others were connected with the unconstitutional and controversial “Detailed Municipal Spatial Plan”.⁵⁶

The residents of the Fond apartment blocks achieved a partial removal of the metal fence which had prevented access to all gardens since 2008, thereby making it possible for apartment owners to access their gardens. For now they are still gardening and hope that sooner or later, at the state level, they the unconstitutional spatial planning plan will be annulled, and they will regain ownership of the Fond gardens.



The “Fond” Gardens

Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, December 2013

⁵⁵ The “Fond” apartment blocks and gardens were built on land owned by the railway companies before the Second World War. After 1945, when Slovenia became part of SFRJ (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), all private property became public property. After 1991, when Slovenia seceded from Yugoslavia and became an independent state, property owners were able to request that their former property was returned to them. However, the transfer of ownership was easier for housing, while open land remained publicly owned and gradually became the property of the municipality of Ljubljana. Home owners had to request for the functional land belonging to their apartment, which is a small but extra expense. The owners of the Fond apartment blocks never requested this functional land (either because they did not know they had to do so, or because they wanted to avoid the extra costs). This is just one of the problems concerning the issue of ownership of the Fond gardens.

Katarina Bajželj Žvokelj, Ljubo Rezar, Peter Rondaj (in the name of the Fond housing residents), The renovation of Plečnik stadium, *Spopad med Davidom in Goljatom za košček zelene Ljubljane* (A Confrontation between David and Goliath for a Piece of Green in Ljubljana), Mladina 44, Ljubljana, 5.11.2013.

2009 <http://www.mladina.si/48763/prenova-plecnikovega-stadiona/> (18.9.2014).

⁵⁶ The Detailed Municipal Spatial Plan (Občinski podrobni prostorski načrt – OPPN) was accepted by the municipality. According to the committee of residents at the Fond apartment buildings it is unconstitutional, and was accepted on the demands of major Jankovič and an investor. According to Slovenian legislation, the plan can only be challenged by the constitutional court, which has not happened yet.

Koordinacijski odbor stanovalcev Fondovih hiš: Peter Rondaj, Ljubo Rezar in Katarina Bajželj Žvokelj, Plečnikov stadion – reakcija na okoljevarstveno soglasje, 12 June, 2012

<http://trajekt.org/2012/06/04/prenova-plecnikovega-stadiona/> (18.9.2014).

The Litostroj Allotments, 1946-present

The Litostroj foundry and machine factory was an industrial giant, founded in 1946, with the factory occupying a large area in the northern part of the city. The entire area was designed virtually as a city within a city. It is held that Litostroj was never merely a factory, but also a community of people, like a large family. Soon the area became the Local Community of Litostroj, which says a lot about the size of the neighbourhood, as such administrative units were usually formed by merging smaller ones. Out of the almost 6,500 people who lived in the neighbourhood, 80% worked in the factory and lived in the apartment blocks located opposite to it. By nationality Litostroj was a microcosm of Yugoslavia, and, by the way it was outfitted, the neighbourhood was a miniature city. They had their own community health care centre and public transportation; they established a technical vocational school which prepared and trained young staff members for work in the factory; they had a kindergarten, stores, and a printing house. The workers of Litostroj established numerous associations, among which their alpine association is very well known, as it also erected a mountain cottage at the top of Soriška Planina mountain in 1958. Naturally, the cottage was named “Litostroj” and bears the name to this day. This all speaks to the great zeal of the workers’ associations in post-war Yugoslavia. “The complex also had its own garden nursery (in the area between the woodshop and the Gorenje train line they even produced food for the factory cafeteria. Gardening activities also developed out of social reasons – here they were able to employ workers who had been injured or were disabled.”⁵⁷ This made virtually the entire Litostroj neighbourhood surrounding the Litostroj factory almost entirely self-sufficient, and created a high level of social awareness.

As can be imagined, even this enormous factory experienced changes and downsizing. Since 1980, when there were 4,500 people employed there, today (2014) there are only 440. The Litostroj factory has gone bankrupt and now, in its restructured form, operates as its successor Litostroj Power.

When the Litostroj factory was being constructed, allotment gardens were also created on factory land, between the railway and the itself factory, at the edge of Litostroj’s territory. These allotment gardens were initially intended for the workers of Litostroj Factory, and the gardeners were connected into the *Litostroj Allotment Gardeners Association*. The Litostroj factory equipped the site with running water, which was a big contribution needed for well-organised gardening.

These allotments have remained to this day, though the tenants have changed. Today the land is owned by a few farmers and a Republic of Slovenia land fund. A small part of the land is also owned by the company Plinarna Ljubljana. All of the gardeners, even if they do their gardening

⁵⁷ *Smernice za vzdrževanje in prenovo karakterističnih območij mesta Ljubljane* (Guidelines for the Maintenance and Renovations of Characteristic Areas of the City of Ljubljana), Litostrojsko naselje, Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana, July, 2013, pg. 10.

on a different property, are still members of the *Litostroj Allotment Gardeners Association*, which has approximately 1,200 members, and they pay a fee for the land and use of water. On the corner of this allotment site there are a few additional gardens which are there illegally. Their gardeners do not pay rent, but they do pay for the water they use as per verbal agreements with the legal Litostroj allotment site.



↑→
The Litostroj Allotment Gardens
Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, September 2014



The Žale Illegal Allotment Site, circa 1960-2007

Savsko Naselje is the first residential neighbourhood of Ljubljana on which construction began after the Second World War, in 1948. Construction began somewhat outside the strict city core, along Šmartinska Road. "A characteristic of Savsko Naselje is that it was created based on a previously complexly prepared urbanistic plan which, from its very beginnings was to include or foresee all the needs which arise within a concentrated area composed of a large number of apartment blocks (supplies, schools, day care, cultural life, etc.). So, in the beginning it was merely a 'construction district' in the context of which individual investors issued locations for the construction of individual residential buildings. The realisation that it was necessary to replace these plot-based development plans with a complex unified development plan was born only around 1956, and even during this period it did not go beyond the opinion that it was mainly about just determining the locations of the residential buildings, with supplementary buildings and equipment for the residential buildings to be placed, as necessary, in the empty spaces between residential buildings later on."⁵⁸ When the idea of planned residential neighbourhoods began to take hold in Slovenia, which was given impetus by the exhibition and publication *Stanovanjska skupnost* (Housing Community) in Zagreb in 1958, the construction of Savsko Naselje was already nearing its end. In 1958 five residential high-rise buildings were erected to finish off the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood has individual houses, smaller and larger apartment blocks, a kindergarten, an elementary school, and service providers, such as stores, a post office, and various offices. It is characterised by its plot-based design, and the diverse types of residences, both in terms of visuals and quality. Even the grass lawns were planned plot-by-plot and the public spaces were designed according to what remained empty. The public space had more children's playgrounds, spaces for rest and socialising, and a large number of community areas.

Allotments were never planned for the neighbourhood, but in time it was evident that the residents of this neighbourhood also wanted to have vegetable gardens. Gradually they began their gardening activities in the nearby public land in the district of Žale. There was no planned development on this land, which was located under power lines near the main city cemetery. Since the land was very near the Savsko Naselje residential neighbourhood and was accessible on foot, it was an ideal gardening location for those residents. That marked the beginning of the large illegal Žale allotment garden site. At the time this land represented the edge of the city and its proximity to Žale,⁵⁹ the city's main cemetery, was the reason for the

⁵⁸ France Ivanšek, *Družina, stanovanje in naselje* (Family, Housing, and Settlement), a survey conducted in 195 apartments in Savsko Naselje (1961), published by author and company Ambient, Ljubljana, at the 25th anniversary of the company Ambient (1963-1988), Ljubljana, 1988, pg. 25.

⁵⁹ The *Garden of All Saints* was built according to plans by architect Jože Plečnik in the years 1937-1940. It was an inventive and unique solution of such "farewell facilities", with exceptional architecture and an originally developed idea of cemetery arrangements. It is designed as a city of the dead with a propylaea, catafalque, oratory, and a farewell chapel in the park. During the first decade of the 21st century, Plečnik Cemetery was declared a cultural monument of Slovenia, and the area and architecture is protected as cultural heritage. It was also declared a cultural monument of Europe, one of just three in Slovenia.

<http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=93037> (18.9.2014).

http://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ple%C4%8Dnikove_%C5%BDale (18.9.2014).

site's name. The new and developing allotment site also stood side-by-side with the solemn architecture of Jože Plečnik, his *Garden of All Saints (Vrt mrtvih)*, which had been completed before the start of the Second World War.

At the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s the city expanded in the direction of the improvised gardens. When the new Nove Jarše residential neighbourhood was built, its residents also started to garden at the Žale allotment site. In the 1980s and 1990s the allotments expanded around the cemetery walls and over any other available space. Along increasingly busy Šmartinska Road the entire allotment garden site was completely exposed to view. The appearance of the illegal allotment garden site was at first glance chaotic and poor, even though the gardens themselves were neatly arranged. The garden sheds, pergolas, benches, water collection, and green houses were all made from cheap and refuse materials by the allotment gardeners themselves. This poor aesthetic appearance influenced the increasingly negative public opinion of the allotment site, which was often referred to as a "shanty town". Due to the architectural importance and significance of Plečnik's Žale,⁶⁰ the allotment site's increasingly central position with regard to the city (after the city's expansion), and the way it was so exposed, the Žale allotment garden site increasingly became the target of city planners and obtained a very negative public opinion. In the spring of 2007 the city's new management decided "once and for all" to settle the allotment gardening issue, and their first move was to remove all allotments from the Žale site. This intervention had a great deal of support from the public, more so because in the eyes of many Plečnik's mighty architecture was in an impossible dialogue with the self-built architecture of the allotment gardeners.

→
Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 5

⁶⁰ All of Plečnik's works were declared national monuments at the beginning of this century, but the fact that Plečnik's Žale cemetery was also declared a cultural monument of Europe was especially significant: it was precisely the juxtaposition of this important work of architecture with the haphazardly organised gardens that provided an additional argument for the subsequent removal of the allotments.



Čhnuče - the Largest Illegal Allotment Garden Site, 1980 - 2008



NO ONE KNOWS
I HAVE BEEN SLEEPING
HERE FOR MORE
THAN A YEAR.

The illegal allotment garden site takes shape gradually; everyone designs his or her own garden without regard for the whole. The allotment gardeners construct their own garden sheds from cheap and refuse materials. The water supply and the removal of waste is dealt with individually and is not organised. Any organisation among the gardeners themselves is founded upon verbal agreements.

Ljubljana's Largest Illegal Allotment Site in Črnuče, circa 1980-2008

I very much like Maja Simoneti's vivid description of the conditions at Ljubljana's largest illegal allotment garden site in the area of Črnuče from her research in 1997: "All of the plots are driven to by car, the gardeners park at various available locations along the access roads. The water supply is obtained illegally by digging wells. Sanitary problems are solved arbitrarily and on an individual basis. Most of the allotments are supplemented by a functional building. Some of them are also very large and solidly built, and, especially in the summer, they make it possible to stay for longer periods of time and spend the night. It is not possible to write with any certainty about whether some of them are not being lived in on a permanent basis. On their plots the allotment gardeners grow vegetables, and some individuals also have rabbits and chickens. A common sight is the constant presence of dogs, as gardeners do not have enough room for them in their apartments, and at the gardens they also help with the security of the produce. Today the area is marked in official plans as a forest, but is being intensively used as an allotment garden site by some 900 tenants who have lease agreements with the Rezka Dragar Local Community Administration. Since the city does not in fact own all the land being cultivated, this is a kind of semi-legal situation with conditions subject to change according to denationalisation demands and the yet unsettled formal legal condition of the land."⁶¹

This illegal allotment garden site in Črnuče, the largest of its kind, was created at the end of the 1970s and developed chaotically until no more space was available. From the map of existing gardens in Ljubljana attached to the research work by Zdenka Goriup in 1984, it is evident that the allotment site in Črnuče occupied approximately half of the territory which it occupied ten years later. By the end of the 1980s the allotment site took up all available land along the Sava river. The entire area, which extends along the Sava river, is quite far from the city's centre and hidden in greenery from the eyes of the public. In 1989, during an intervention by municipal administrative authorities, inspectors surveyed the situation in the field and made note of almost 900 gardens which were taking up 800 hectares of area. The allotment garden site had all the characteristics of an illegal one, and in many aspects violated the allotment gardening guidelines which were adopted by the city in 1985. The size of the allotment plots differed, varying in size from 33m² to 738m², with more than 50% of the plots exceeded the allowed 200m². The analysis showed that many of the allotment garden sheds were also too large and constructed from prohibited materials.⁶²

It was precisely because of the inspectors that those responsible at the local community's administration had decided to make records of the existing conditions. However, due to the

⁶¹ Maja Simoneti, *Usmeritve in pogoji za nadaljni razvoj vrtničarstva v Ljubljani* (Guidelines and Conditions for Further Development of Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana), Ljubljanski urbanistični zavod (LUZ), Ljubljana, 1997, pg. 59.

⁶² The analysis showed that in the Črnuče gardening area 528 buildings had the following dimensions: (a) 123 allotment sheds with less than 8m²; (b) 341 allotment sheds with dimensions from 8-17m²; and (c) 64 allotment sheds from 17-35m².

Drago Kos, *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov* (Rationality of Informal Spaces), Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univerza v Ljubljani, 1993, pg. 214.

organic nature of the plot organisation, this proved to be very difficult. A sketch, or ground plan of the existing condition was achieved only with the help of aerial pictures of the location, which served as a basis for a map of the actual site. It was at this time that house number plates with the address “Vrtiček” (“Allotment garden”) were arranged, which was a humorous and creative approach to numbering the allotments.⁶³ The city’s goal in 1989 was to establish conditions which would be relatively simple to control. The fear was that the allotment garden site would soon develop into an illegal residential settlement, something that no city wants.

It became quite evident that the spatial encroachments at the Črnuče site, in terms of size and shape, had exceeded the fundamental guidelines of the allotment gardening regulations, and for that reason it was not possible to legalise this area as an official allotment site. In accordance with norms it would have only been possible to legalise smaller buildings with an area of 8m². Even though the allotment site came to be all on its own, meaning that it was not organised by the city, the city was not opposed to the basic activity of allotment gardeners – growing vegetables. However, it was precisely on these large allotments that, in addition to gardening, other motives were present as well, such as leisure and recreational activities, and this is what bothered the city.

From the point of view of illegality, it is also important to note the fact that the allotment gardeners occupied the entire river bank of the Sava river. The result was that there was no longer any public access to the river bank itself. With that, the use of land in the area was in conflict with the definition of the river bank as something for the public good. The ownership of the land added to the unordered state. After 1991 previously common or community land was returned to its owners. Today the ownership at this allotment garden site is shared by the state (the river bank, representing 20% of the land), the city (with a very small 12%), and private owners, who collectively own 68% of the land. On top of that the area is marked in planning documents as a forest – a designation that does not permit allotment gardening at all.

In the fall of 2008 the removal of unauthorised gardening sheds began, and I describe this in greater detail in section 6.3, *The Removal of the Črnuče Allotment Garden Site*.

⁶³ These were metal house number plates which closely imitated the ones on houses which have numbers and street names. The name of the road on the allotment number plates was replaced by the description “Vrtiček” (“Allotment”), and this was accompanied by its number. The original number plates were used by Nina Vastl for her art project, an intervention in a public space named *VRTIČEK 821* (ALLOTMENT 821), which was realised in the Second International Festival of Young Independent Creators, Ljubljana, 1998.

Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani*, Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009 (an image of allotment shed number plates is also the cover image of the book).

4.4 Selected Examples of Allotment Gardening Organisations

Due to the fact that allotments in Ljubljana developed, for the most part, in a self-organised form, most allotment gardeners were not members of any formal body, but there were a few exceptions in which gardeners were members of gardening associations. This occurred primarily in gardens near factories such as Litostroj and Kolinška. In this chapter I will present two important self-organised initiatives, the *Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association*, founded in 1984, and the organisation which was linked to it, the *Allotment Gardening University*. These two associations played an important role in organising Ljubljana's allotments during the 1980s and 1990s. Another important aspect of their work was the creation of a platform for the exchange of knowledge about organic gardening, which took place on both a local and international level.

The Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association

In 1984 there was an incredibly progressive allotment gardening association in Ljubljana called *Emona Vrliček*.⁶⁴ Though it only started out as the *Small Economies Allotment Gardening Cooperative*, it later grew into the *Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association*, and left a significant mark on the self-organisation of allotment gardening in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite the fact there was a total absence in terms of city allotment gardening management, this association took on an organisational role. In addition to starting the association, the initiators also established the *Allotment Gardening University*, which had the goal of educating allotment gardeners and disseminating knowledge about organic gardening.

The association was co-founded by Pavle Šegula and his spouse Anka Oblak (Anka Šegula at the time). They were both retired and dedicated all their time to allotment gardening. The association was well organised and had its own statute – regulations with 34 articles – which was published in 1984 by Z. Goriup in her first research work on allotment gardening. The existence of the association was also mentioned by M. Simoneti in her research work from 1997. However, in the context of existing research there was no background information on the establishment of the association and its goals. For that reason my text relies on an article⁶⁵ written by Anka Oblak at the association and university's tenth anniversary in 1994, and on what she told me in conversation⁶⁶ this April (2014).

In 1984 the association leased 15 hectares of land, which was a refuse dump for construction materials prior to that. This degraded area was created in the 1980s when Tržaška Road was being expanded. Many of the surrounding buildings were demolished, and a place was needed for all the discarded construction materials and other refuse. The land was owned by the Ljubljanske Mlekarne dairy, which was prepared to lease the land without rent for a 20 year period, until 2004. This completely unutilised land, which no state institution was able to revitalise, was transformed by hardworking allotment gardeners into flourishing gardens. The land is situated on marshy soil which is wet and acidic, and not ideal for agriculture. After many

⁶⁴ The name for the gardening association is related to history of Ljubljana. The first Roman military camp was built around the year 50 BC on Ljubljana territory. It later became a permanent settlement called Iulia Aemona (Emona).

⁶⁵ Vida Oblak (Anka Oblak), *10 let vrličarske univerze in društva Emona vrliček* (10 Years of the Allotment Gardening University and the Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association), Naša komuna, Ljubljana, 28 June, 1994, pg. 8.

⁶⁶ I visited Anka Oblak at her home in Bizeljsko on 17 April, 2014.

years of work on the land, the co-founder of the association, and an active gardener, stated that the allotment gardening project had succeeded in drying out the land and transforming it into fertile soil.

The self-organised initiative took place simply and was very well organised. Among those involved there was a surveyor who, together with his friends, surveyed the land and drew up a plan. They hired a tractor to plough the land, which was then precisely divided up into sections with 50m² gardens and neatly planned pathways in-between. They began without garden sheds, but in 1987 several 2m by 2.5m sheds were erected, and served as a place to rest and store tools. The sheds were able to house one bed, which allowed people to lay down if exhausted, but were never intended to be lived in. Dry toilets were arranged and water was obtained by digging holes and making wells. According to Anka Oblak the atmosphere was predominantly a friendly one and everything was produced organically without chemicals. The gardens were beautiful and the entire site was very well kept. In 1994 there were approximately 300 allotments located there.

The Emona Vrliček association is also very important when it comes to the organisation of allotment gardening at numerous other locations in the city, not only in the district of Vič-Rudnik, where they had their gardens. They took care of eleven allotment sites which were named in connection with their locations: Mali graben, Mala gospodarstva, Emonci, Mostiščarji, Bobri 1, Bobri 2 (in the district of Vič-Rudnik), Žale and Fužine 1, 2, 3 (in the district of Moste-Polje), and Dolomitski odred (in the district of Šiška). All of these allotment sites except for Žale were created on former refuse dump sites. The municipality even went so far as to ask the association to try and organise the Žale and Črnuče allotment gardens, which were already in existence at the time. Anka Oblak has said that at Žale they were quite disciplined and that there were not many exceptions regarding the allowable sizes of the allotments and the sizes of the garden sheds. They ended up taking Žale under their wing. The same could not be said for the Črnuče allotments, which were from their very beginnings more chaotic; garden sheds were too large, as well as the plots of land, and there was prohibited breeding of domestic animals, such as goats and pigs. According to the words of Anka Oblak, the Črnuče allotment gardeners were not prepared to accept and adapt to the new rules which were in accordance with the ordinance on allotment gardening from 1985. For that reason they did not take over leadership of the site.

In 1994 approximately 1,300 allotment gardeners were members. In time they started to collect membership fees from allotment gardeners, which they used to finance group actions, put out publications, and run accompanying activities connected with the *Allotment Gardening University*. During its active period (1984-1998) This self-organised bottom-up initiative took on the role of organising allotment gardening in Ljubljana, something which the city should have been doing.

The Allotment Gardening University, 1984-1998

With a vision to educate people on how to garden without the use of chemicals, Anka Oblak and Pavle Šegula established the *Allotment Gardening University* in 1984. The founders obtained their initial knowledge on organic gardening from a visit to Austria (Klagenfurt) and Germany (Stuttgart), where they took part in seminars on organic farming. There they also visited existing allotment gardening communities and got familiar with their rules and modes of operation. They returned with literature and even tools for organic gardening, and tested everything in practice. From the membership fees paid to the allotment gardening association they were able to cover the basic costs of the university's activities. These activities were directed towards the education of allotment gardeners in organic gardening, with expert guests and lectures in Slovenia, Italy, and Croatia. They published an internal newspaper called *Vrtičkar* (The Allotment Gardener), an organic planting and sowing calendar, and continuously put out other smaller publications as well. They were also guests on radio and television programmes on organic gardening. Between 1994 and 1998 Anka Oblak had a daily radio show on Radio Ognjišče (once a week live, and every day with pre-recorded segments). Articles on organic gardening were published regularly in topical Slovenian magazines (*Jana, Naša Žena, Demokracija, Zdravje*). Pavle Šegula continually developed their planting and sowing wall calendar over the course of several decades. During their almost fifteen years of existence the *Allotment Gardening University* published many useful original booklets which helped to educate and spread the idea of organic gardening.

During an interview with Anka Oblak, I discovered that after her husband passed away she also slowly withdrew from the association. According to her, it was intensive work which was also connected with certain political pressures.⁶⁷ In 1998 she closed down the university, which she led almost entirely by herself after her husband's death. She called a general meeting and a new board was elected to run the *Emona Vrtiček Allotment Gardening Association*. She handed over the entire archive of the association to the newly elected president. The archive included membership records, accounting, rulebooks, and publications which were printed by the university for its members.

Around that time, near the end of the 1990s, the city began to give notice to the allotment gardeners informing them that the location in the district of Vič where they had their gardens was to be used for the construction of a mosque. Many people left and the gardeners associated with the allotment gardening association slowly changed.

Today at this location in Vič there are still people gardening. Unfortunately, every trace of the association's archive and the *Allotment Gardening University* has been lost. In my research I was unable to discover how exactly the story of this important association, which contributed so much to the improved organisation of allotment gardening in Ljubljana, ended.

⁶⁷ This is covered in more detail in section 8.9.

In order to comprehend how advanced the idea of the university was, it is necessary to imagine Ljubljana in 1984, at a time of socialism, and in the wider context of Yugoslavia. There were no private schools and universities, and this made the very idea of the *Allotment Gardening University* a provocative one, and seen by those in power as a political one as well. The founders of the university were called in for questioning and they experienced some minor political pressure. Nevertheless, it is precisely in connection with this idea, that even gardening requires knowledge and learning, that the special weight of this initiative lies. It is also important to note that the university spread the idea of gardening without chemicals. That is because if today's organic gardening is the predominant form of gardening among urban gardeners, in the 1980s it was a novelty, and for many a regression and rejection of the progress made in large-scale production with the use of chemicals. However, the motives for gardening today are precisely to produce healthy food without chemicals. Organic gardening does not pollute the soil and groundwater, it makes use of and collects of rainwater, uses water moderately, practises composting, supports the use of home-grown local seeds, and more. Organic gardening is a form of gardening that was practised by our grandmothers, so many people can learn about natural gardening from their predecessors from the countryside. Most importantly, the vegetables are also healthier than most of the ones we find in stores. Through the practices of organic gardening, urban gardeners are practising ecology on an everyday level, and this is an important concept for the future of cities and their residents. People who produce their own vegetables also say that they place a greater value on them, because they know how much work is invested in growing just one carrot – and that can make that carrot so much more delicious!

→
Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 6

WHAT WILL THE
FUTURE BRING?



Dom Kulture, Otou Gaspari, 1959, Velenje

In 1959 the new socialist city of Velenje was officially inaugurated. Twenty years later, when the high ideals connected with the city's beginnings met with reality, the well-organised allotment garden site *Kunta Kinte* was created.

GARDENS FOR
THE MINERS.



The Kunta Kinte Allotment Garden Site, 1978 - present

4.5 Two Examples of Good Practices in Slovenia

In addition to most of its illegal and unorganised allotment gardens, Slovenia has two well-organised allotment garden sites. The *Kunta Kinte* allotment site in Velenje was created at the end of the 1970s, and the other allotment site was created on a former military refuse dump in the Ljubljana district of Savlje in 1993. Furthermore, the Savlje allotment site is very topical, as in the spring of 2014 the city arranged for an additional 50 new gardens at the location. The question then is, what can Ljubljana learn from these two examples?

The Kunta Kinte Allotment Gardening Site in Velenje, 1978-present

It is no coincidence that the one and only organised allotment gardening site which was created in the 1970s in Slovenia was created in the city of Velenje. This city was created on the basis of a new modern urban plan, as a model example of a socialist city. The process of this city's formation is worth mentioning, as it provides a context to a forward-thinking and modern method of city management. It was in this context that the successful *Kunta Kinte* allotment gardening site was created, and it is operating to this day.

Velenje was the first city to be created after the Second World War from scratch, on the grass and fields alongside a smaller mining settlement. Before that there was a mining town there, and it was based on the excavation of brown coal, or lignite. After the war the new economic system, which was based on the self-management of community property, gained momentum and planned for Velenje's coal to provide electricity for all of Slovenia. This was also to be realised with the help of a large heating plant, built in the neighbouring city of Šoštanj. Due to the foreseeable increase in the intensity of excavation, they planned the construction of a new city for 14,000 people. In 1959 they ceremonially opened the city centre in honour of the 40th anniversary of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. The city park is characterised by a large statue of Josip Broz Tito, who often visited Velenje. In memory of Tito, in the 1980s Velenje was renamed to "Tito's Velenje".⁶⁸

Architect Rok Poles from Velenje writes that Velenje was designed as an example of a modern socialist city for the new working man. Urbanism and architecture were designed by the most notable Slovenian architects of the time, and all was done in the spirit of international style. The buildings were designed with the mark of their authors: ambitiously, aesthetically, and functionally. "The city was not an end in itself: the high quality of urban living was intended to transform the residents into model members of the socialist community, who took care of the environment responsibly, and were socially active at cultural and athletic events."⁶⁹

R. Poles continues by noting that the city gradually developed according to its modernistic plans

⁶⁸ Tito, the President of Yugoslavia, visited Velenje at least four times, first in 1958. He was accompanied to the newly built city by important statesmen of the world, including Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, and Nicolae Ceausescu. After Tito's death in 1981 the city of Velenje was renamed "Titovo Velenje" (Tito's Velenje) in his honour. I personally grew up only knowing Titovo Velenje as the original name. In 1990 the city's name was changed back to Velenje, but there is still a large statue of Tito in the central square.

⁶⁹ Rok Poles, *Velenje sprehod skozi mesto moderne* (Velenje, a walk through a modern city), Mestna občina Velenje, Velenje 2013, pg. 13.

until 1965, when the mining crisis resulted in high unemployment. In the 1960s the industrial production of Gorenje's household appliance division moved there, which, besides the mine, was the largest industry in Velenje. In the 1970s the urban policies of Velenje changed, and from then on city policies supported the scattered construction of individual family residences, mega apartment blocks, and neighbourhoods which exceeded the criteria of the original ground plan.

The excavation of coal caused the cave-ins of older mining tunnels (even after the Second World War), creating a basin which filled with water. Three lakes were created, which changed the shape of the valley and took up an area of 200 hectares. The largest lake, Jezero Velenje, was slowly rearranged into a recreational zone. It was by that lake that they began to slowly set up the *Kunta Kinte* allotment gardening site in 1978.⁷⁰ The gardening site was created on the initiative and with the funds of the company Premogovnik Velenje (the Velenje Coal Mine) for the families of the Velenje miners. During the 1965 mining crisis in the area many miners lost their jobs. Half of the land is owned by Premogovnik, the other half by the city. The site was created gradually and today has 250 plots with areas of 200m², which allows allotment gardeners to spend more of their leisure time there. The allotment site is fenced-in and has several public access ways to the gardens; garden sheds have a uniform design and public toilets have also been provided. Not long ago, by working together, the gardeners installed running water. The gardeners have voted for a group which assists with the organisation of allotment gardeners and makes sure that the rules, which have been precisely determined, are followed.⁷¹

The *Kunta Kinte* allotment garden site is an example of good practices which has never been repeated in Slovenia. Similar directions have been taken in terms of design at both newly planned allotment garden sites in Ljubljana, which were set up by the city of Ljubljana in 2010. Their features include: a uniform design of garden sheds, good community facilities (running water, common toilet facilities, the organised removal of waste), a community place for socialising, and a children's playground. All these facilities are part of a well-organised allotment gardening site, which is to the advantage of both the gardeners and the city. However, though that kind of equipment is desired, it is not absolutely necessary, and allotments can do without much of it – especially if the city doesn't have sufficient funding and can not cope with the demand for urban gardens. Instead of few highly-equipped allotment gardens, it would be more reasonable to create many gardens with basic equipment, something which was done

⁷⁰ The gardening colony was named *Kunta Kinte* right from the beginning. The name was taken from the protagonist, an African slave brought to North America, of the TV mini-series *Roots* (1977). The series was broadcast on Slovene TV at the end of the 1970s.

⁷¹ Mateja Kotnik, *Nenavadno vrtničarsko naselje ob Velenjskem jezeru* (An Unusual Gardening Community at Velenje Lake), *Nedelo*, 17.4.2011.
<http://www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/nenavadno-vrtnicarsko-naselje-ob-velenjskem-jezeru.html#> and from a conversation with the groundskeeper of the allotment site (13.2.2014).

in Ljubljana's Savlje allotment site this year. In comparison to Ljubljana, in 2013 in Zagreb six new urban gardens were opened. For the time being they do not have garden sheds and in terms of common facilities they are equipped minimally. Despite that, with this intervention the city of Zagreb has, in a short period of time, made gardening possible for a large number of interested city residents.

The Savlje Allotment Gardening Site at a Former Military Dump in Ljubljana, 1993

The second simply and basically organised allotment garden site was created in Ljubljana in 1993, and was organised by the city municipality at a former military dump. After Slovenia's independence in 1991, and after the departure of the Yugoslavian army from Slovenia's territory, both Slovenia and Ljubljana obtained the management of military barracks, and any remaining military buildings and land. The military refuse site in the north-western part of Ljubljana came into the possession of the Ministry of Defence, but in 1993 the city set up 208 allotments on the 21 hectares of land. The land is located in an area specified for agriculture and opposite high apartment blocks, which is basically an ideal set-up for a successful allotment garden site. A part of the land was divided into sections with 208 plots, each 60m² in size. The advantage of this gardening site is that the water supply pumps are evenly distributed throughout the gardening area. In the area it is prohibited to build garden sheds, but containers for tools are permitted. There is also organised waste removal. The site is simple, operating well, and serves as a model example of a basically equipped allotment site. It appears that gardeners initially paid rent to the local community administrations to which they belonged, between 1993 and 2001. However, in 2001 the local community administrations were transformed into district community administrations, which were larger but had similar functions to the previous entities.⁷² From 2001, when the Savlje allotments began to fall under the district community of Bežigrad, they no longer had lease agreements. At that time all supervision of the allotment tenants was lost and gradually some smaller irregularities began to take place. For example, some of the allotment gardeners began to cultivate more than one garden, taking over additional allotments from their neighbours on the basis of verbal agreements.

Most of the gardeners come from the apartment blocks opposite the site, which makes it possible to store additional tools at home and bring only what is necessary to the garden. The same can be said for the toilet facilities, which are absent at the site, but because of the proximity of the residences they are also not urgently needed. In the same way there is no need for additional parking spaces, as there is adequate parking at the apartment blocks. Another

⁷² A brief history of the district community of Moste is as follows: on 31 December, 1998, the local community administration (Krajevna skupnost) Kodeljevo Moste-Selo and Nove Fužine were abolished; on 15 January, 2001, Ljubljana's city council established district communities in the Municipality of Ljubljana; in July 2001 the first meeting of the Moste District Community was convened, which constituted seventeen members of the Council of the District Community.

A history of district communities Moste, the website of the Municipality of Ljubljana:
<http://www.ljubljana.si/si/mol/cetrtno-skupnosti/moste/> (18.9.2014).

advantage of this area (for the city) is the already existing fence, which had already been placed there when was a military refuse dump. The fence has contributed to limiting the illegal expansion of gardens, while also being of use to the gardeners who have more protection for their produce against theft. The greatest uncertainty in this location was the quality of the soil, as this had been a military refuse dump and there are many unpredictable things buried under the first layer of soil.

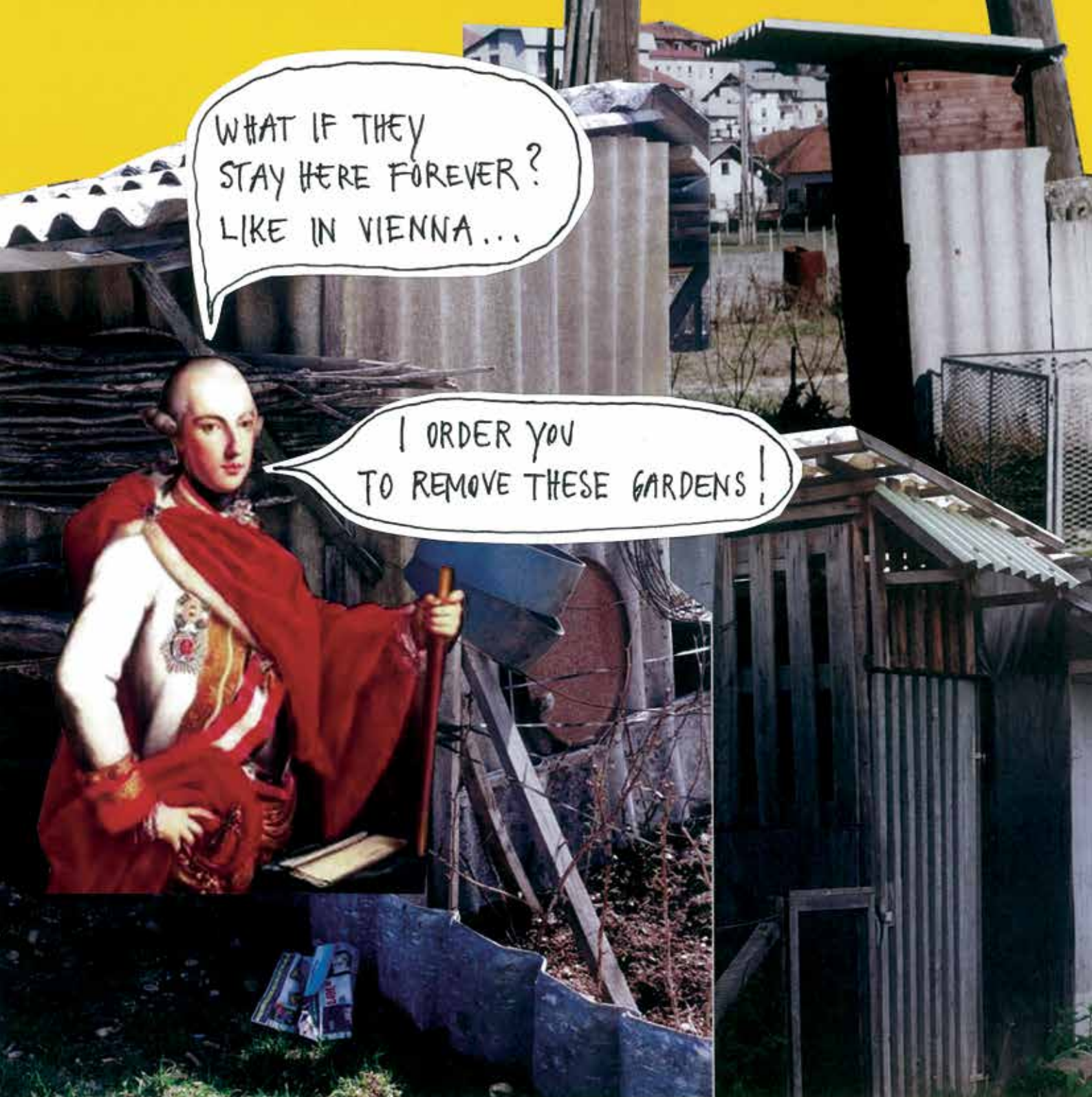
The city, already in 2010 when it had designed the model allotments, also had plans for making changes in the Savlje site, to transform it into an ecological allotment garden site, but these plans were not realised.⁷³ In 2014 the city created 50 additional gardens on this allotment site, which I also describe in chapter seven, *Urban Gardening in Ljubljana Today*.



The Savlje Allotment Gardens
Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, October 2013

⁷³ In 2010 the city planned to reorganise the Savlje allotment garden site into an ecological urban gardening site. They planned to collect rainwater from the existing house for radio amateur clubs and collect it in underground containers. A water pump powered by solar panels would then pump the rainwater around the site. These plans were never implemented.

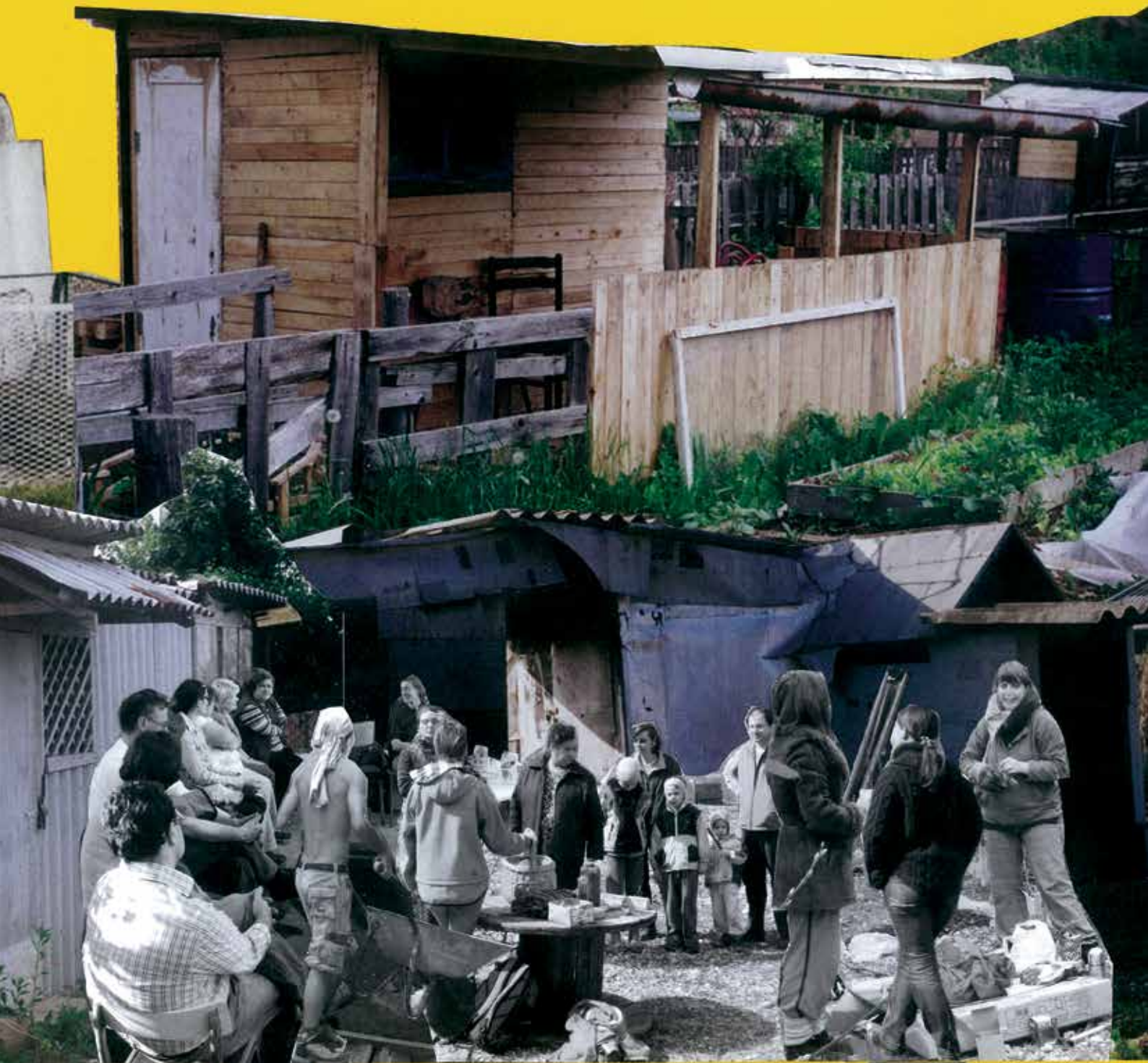
A conversation with Helena Regina, Department of Environmental Protection of Municipality of Ljubljana areas, 31 March at 10 a.m.



WHAT IF THEY
STAY HERE FOREVER?
LIKE IN VIENNA...

I ORDER YOU
TO REMOVE THESE GARDENS!

The key elements of bottom-up urbanism or self-initiated urbanism are: self-organisation, self-help, the power to create, and the establishment of rules for a community formed by and around the space they collectively created.



←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 7

5 THE ILLEGAL (from the bottom up) AS AN INDICATOR OF STRUCTURAL INCONSISTENCIES OF THE FORMAL SYSTEM (from the top down)

How was it possible that allotments in Ljubljana in the past occupied public land without major problems? And it was not only allotment gardeners, but also individuals with unsolved housing problems who occupied this public land, some of them building their illegal single-family residences homes since the 1950s, but most intensively in the 1980s.

If we look at the “informal” as an answer to what official formal solutions are unable to solve, then informal spatial practices are also an indicator of the structural inconsistencies of formal management. In the case of illegal residential buildings in Ljubljana the circumstances have been presented very well by spatial sociologist Drago Kos in his study *The Rationality of Informal Spaces* (*Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov*).⁷⁴

Typical cases of illegal and informal individual housing in Ljubljana in the 1980s can be even an aid in understanding illegal allotment gardening. The analyses presented in the above mentioned study help this research reflect on wide-spread illegal and informal spatial practices within a Slovenian and Yugoslavian context. The practical examples, which were chosen for this analysis have shown various models of how official and formal suggestions meet with informal solutions. The most interesting example of informal individual residential buildings is the largest illegal residential neighbourhood in Ljubljana, Rakova Jelša. Towards the end of the 1930's low-quality social housing of immigrants to Ljubljana began to appear in this area. “The actors in this story of informal residential practices undoubtedly confirm the suspicion that it is a difficult residential situation, that is to say there is an existential pressure, which faces the unresponsive formal residential system, the fundamental mobilisation factor for informal work [...]. Stimulation for illegal building practices is an almost complete ‘physical’ absence of formal regulations in concrete spatial situations. In fact, illegal building practices rarely run into real resistance, i.e. the prompt reactions of the administrative spatial management apparatus. This kind of practice therefore accelerates the epidemic of this occurrence.”⁷⁵

From this practical example we can conclude that the illegal occupation of spaces and informal construction appears when it strikes against the unresponsiveness of the official system. In the case of Rakova Jelša, as well as in the case of the illegal allotment garden sites in Žale, Črnuče, and Barje, for many people the obvious absence of control also meant a quiet acceptance on the part of the city. In the case of the Črnuče allotments, where many of the rules were violated, mostly in terms of the sizes of plots and garden sheds which grew into

⁷⁴ Drago Kos is a sociologist and professor of environmental and spatial sociology at the University of Ljubljana and Maribor. He is head of the *Centre for Spatial Sociology* at the Faculty of Social Sciences in Ljubljana. Among his many influential texts is the book *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov* (Rationality of Informal Spaces, 1993) where he presents an analyses of illegal and informal building strategies in Ljubljana. I have referred to this text several times throughout my thesis, most specifically to the chapter *Neformalno nelegalno vrtničkarstvo v suburbanem okolju* (Informal illegal allotments in the suburban environment), where he analyses the illegal allotment gardening settlement in the district of Črnuče.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

smaller houses, the formal system began to experience the fear that a new illegal residential neighbourhood would develop at this allotment garden site.

As Elke Krasny writes, in Vienna around 1918, and in a similar atmosphere of crisis, workers began gardening at the city's limits, where 60,000 allotments appeared. Due to the additional residential crisis the gardeners began to arrange smaller residences on their allotments. This is where the "settlement movement" originated.

However in Vienna we are talking about a well organised group of people who, prior to that, united themselves in an allotment gardening association which contributed to allotment gardening becoming a constitutional part of social rights within Austrian Legislation (in July, 1919). Gradually, out of the allotment gardening association, the "Siedlerbewegung" movement began to develop, and it became a paradigmatic example of the negotiations between the formal and informal; between illegal activist appropriation and the dichotomy of social self-help and municipal administration. They developed a system of non-profit community ownership through their experience of community work. Every one of the participants had to contribute between 1,000 and 3,000 hours of unpaid work for the construction of their house and common or communal infrastructure.⁷⁶

The method of using communal work was also a common practice in the socialist system of former Yugoslavia, and therefore also in Slovenia. For example, there was one form called "youth work brigades"; organised youth work actions which took place on a voluntary basis immediately after the Second World War. They carried out works of public interest, such as the construction of roads and other kinds of infrastructure. One example, almost entirely built through work brigades, was *Cesta bratstva in enotnosti (The Brotherhood and Unity Highway)*, a highway that stretched over 1,180km across former Yugoslavia. Another example of volunteer public works, similar to the volunteer work requirement for the abovementioned Vienna movement, was the construction of the abovementioned new socialist city of Velenje, officially opened in 1959.⁷⁷

If I return to illegal allotment gardening in Ljubljana, we can also understand the informal spontaneous activities of allotment gardeners as providing a kind of relief to the system. Kos writes: "Perhaps it is difficult for westerners to understand that such a degree of illegal construction of allotment gardening is even possible. Allowing this also speaks to the laxity of the network between the market and urbanistic planner, which was characteristic for all socialist systems. What made the Yugoslavian system, or the Slovenian subsystem, unique from this

⁷⁶ Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 20-21.

⁷⁷ Rok Poles, *Velenje sprehod skozi mesto moderne (Velenje, a walk through a modern city)*, Mestna občina Velenje, Velenje 2013, pg. 13.

point of view is mainly the fact that it tolerated spontaneous, informal reactions to the blockades of the formal system.”⁷⁸



Samograditeljska vrtilkarska arhitektura (Self-built Allotment Gardening Architecture)
Nina Vastl, *Vrtičkarstvo*, specialistična naloga, Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2000.
(Nina Vastl, *Allotment Gardening*, specialised postgraduate research, Faculty of Architecture,
University of Ljubljana, 2000.)

⁷⁸ Drago Kos, *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov* (Rationality of informal spaces), Fakulteta za družbene vede, Univerza v Ljubljani, 1993, pg. 214.

UPS! THEY ARE TOO EXPENSIVE!

STOP ACTION NOW!!

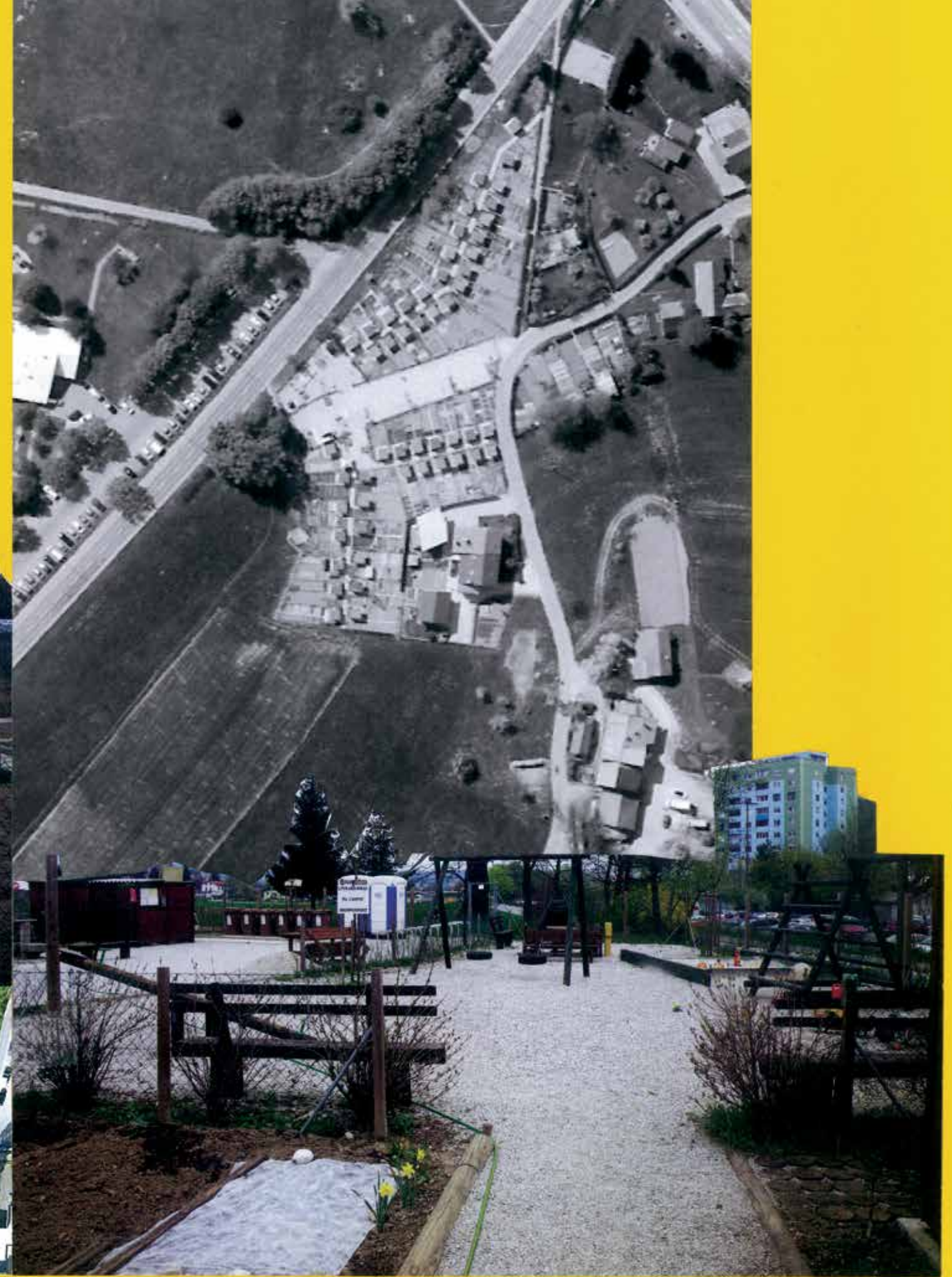


WE ARE ALL THE SAME AGE

WE HAVE ALL THE SAME GARDEN SHEDS



In the spring of 2010, based on their newly created rules, the city offered 65 new model allotment gardens in two allotment sites.



Dravljje - the New Model Allotment Garden Site, 2010 - present

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 8

6 THE FORMAL TOP-DOWN APPROACH IN ARRANGING URBAN GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA (2007-2010)

Here I will focus on the steps taken by the new city government since 2007, until the first and last new model allotments were created. I will present the new city government's vision in section 6.1, *Ljubljana's New City Administration*. This new government was also determined to bring order to the existing allotment gardening situation. First they removed almost one third of existing allotments in Ljubljana in 2007-2008. I describe this in greater detail in section 6.2 *The Removal of the Žale Allotment Garden Site*, and section 6.3, *The Removal of the Črnuče Allotment Garden Site*. All subsequent steps taken by the city show a degree of awkward planning. One of the city's first moves was to turn the former allotment site in Žale into a public park, which I analyse in detail in section 6.4, *Instead of an Allotment Site, a Public Park*. Next, in 2009, the city accepted a new rulebook for the organisation of allotments and an ordinance for the leasing of allotments, which is described in section 6.5. *The Rulebook and the Ordinance from 2009*. In 2010 a new spatial plan for Ljubljana determined 30 new and permanent locations for urban gardening. In the spring of 2010, based on the new rules, the city offered 65 new model allotment gardens in two of the allotment sites. I present them in section 6.6, *Two New Model Allotment Sites Created by the City in 2010*. Soon it was evident that the highly-arranged and well-equipped allotments were too expensive for the city, so no new model allotment sites were created after 2010. On top of the prohibitively expensive costs for the city, the conditions for lease were also badly formulated.

It is still hard to believe that the city of Ljubljana decided to remove such a large number of allotments in 2007 and 2008 without a good plan for their immediate replacement. However, this not only demonstrates poor planning, but also how poorly informed the city was (the mayor, the city's administration), and how disconnected the city was from urban reality. A higher level of self-sufficiency for cities has been a focus of European cities since the early 1990s. Self-sufficiency, in combination with the economic crisis which hit Europe and Slovenia in 2008, makes the removal of such a large number city allotments in Ljubljana without replacements something that is surely in conflict with the economy, ecology, and the future of the city. Quite to the contrary, other European cities, such as London and Berlin, have recognised the growing interest and need for allotment gardening, and have increased the available areas for allotments. I learn a great deal when I look into the urban gardening situation of nearby cities, especially the ones that share a common Eastern European history. Partially because of the former socialist systems which were in place, some things are dealt with in a similar fashion. In Bratislava two new community gardens were created in 2012, followed by another community garden and two allotment garden sites in 2013, and more are to open in 2014. In Prague, in the last two or three years, interest in urban gardening has grown significantly. In the city there are five community gardens which are functioning well. In the spring of 2014 two more were created. The *Prazelenina* community garden, which was created in 2013, is the largest to-date. In 2014 a new gardening site was also set up in Maribor. In 2013 six city allotment gardens were opened in Zagreb – some are community gardens, and some are classic allotment sites, and they have been organised simply for now, without garden sheds. The urban gardening issue became important in Zagreb in 2012, when public discussions on the topic were started by several civil initiatives. It was only one year later, with the city's cooperation, that their new gardens were realised.

6.1 Ljubljana's New City Administration, 2006-2014

I am aware of the fact that the new government in 2006 inherited a chaotic, informal, and illegal allotment gardening situation. However, the dramatic steps taken by the city to establish order were not carefully thought-out, and were far too autocratic in nature.

This new city administration is far from passive, or inactive. Since 2006, the city of Ljubljana, especially the old city core, began to transform its physical image with increased speed.

Numerous new architectural interventions, the renovations of old buildings, and a reorganisation of public transport had an impact in visually improving Ljubljana. The city built numerous new bridges over the Ljubljanica river, the city's bus transportation was regulated, new pedestrian zones were created, a new stadium was built, and a new public network for renting bicycles was established. New public sculptures were erected, parking garages were built, and there were many other novelties. After a series of previous mayors who, from a spatial perspective, carried out no improvements, the new city policies greatly influenced the image of the city and life within it. City residents were enthusiastic about these new policies and in 2010 they re-elected mayor Zoran Janković⁷⁹ for another four-year mandate. Characteristic of the new city policies was a series of new approaches for doing business with the city's land, a model of large investments in private-public partnerships, a significant indebtedness of the city, and the selling-off of city property. All this is also characteristic of politics in European cities today, a time of the so-called neo-liberal city. Resale of land and large construction investments also offer the possibility for land speculation, which has been attributed to the mayor of Ljubljana and several other parties. In addition to changes for the better, along with these top-down formally planned architectural interventions, the city also made some poor decisions and created some senseless strategies. These are primarily connected with an intolerance and lack of support for alternative models (in culture, for space, and for work) which are not oriented solely towards consumerism. So, the city is acting like it wants to control all aspects of city development, which creates difficulties for any alternative culture or art which is not oriented towards the "industry of culture". This is also true for other forms of self-organised initiatives or the appropriation of buildings and land for temporary use. I could mention several such situations, especially regarding a lack of understanding regarding the conditions within culture, where the city and ministry have shown that they favour "cultural industries", which turn culture into a commodity. For example, despite the fact that the project to renovate the former Rog factory into a centre for cultural industries has been delayed (and is being questioned because of the large investments involved and the current economic crisis), the city refuses to make the temporary use of property possible at the site, something which could be used for alternative practices. In contrast to this the city supports cultural districts (for example, the cultural district of Tabor), where capital is attempting to commodify culture to the extreme. The city's attempts to regulate urban gardening reflect a

⁷⁹ Zoran Janković is the present mayor of Ljubljana. He was mayor from 2006-2010 and was re-elected for a second term, 2010-2014.

mentality of overregulation and an attempt to maintain complete control over practices that are organic, adaptable, and non-representative in a classical sense. In my text I will trace the steps taken to arrange urban gardening in Ljubljana by this new government, which not only clearly shows the new government's mentality, but also shows the extent of the bureaucratic apparatus which it inherited.

THE REMOVAL OF ALLOTMENTS

6.2 The Removal of the Žale Allotment Garden Site, 2007

Initially, in March of 2007, the inspectorate of the city administration for the Municipality of Ljubljana urged the allotment gardeners who were on municipal land (part of the allotment gardening land in the district of Žale was privately owned) to remove their garden sheds and any other structures from their allotments. After a period of two months, inspectors working with city service workers removed all the sheds and gardens that remained, billing the allotment gardeners for the work. The majority of allotment gardeners removed their garden sheds and other structures, many in anger, by writing angry messages on the sheds and by burning them down. Resistance, however, was weak, and was no legal recourse, as the allotments were illegal – the allotment gardeners had no contracts and had not paid any rent for an extended period of time. Even though the *Emona Vrliček Allotment Gardening Association* had also taken the Žale allotment site under its wing back in the 1990s, in 2007 the Žale gardening community was weak, and the gardeners were not organised in a collective group. This proved to be a great disadvantage when they tried to resist and oppose the city's decree. An attack on allotment gardening in general could be felt, and this negative perspective was strongly supported by the media, which showed the allotment gardeners in a primitive light – even as environmental polluters. Many wrote that the gardeners used chemicals and poisonous building materials, burned asbestos roofing, and accumulated garbage. To cover the roofs of their sheds and border their garden beds many gardeners used asbestos-salonite from the Slovenian factory Salonit Anhovo. Existing research on Ljubljana's allotments has estimated that more than half of all allotment garden sheds were covered with asbestos roofing. After the allotments in Žale were demolished 188 tonnes of waste was collected and 35 tonnes of asbestos was taken to the Barje refuse dump.

Vegetables from Allotments Are Not Healthy

In the 1990s, during a time of generally increased awareness with respect to environmental pollution, an environmental perspective also began to emerge in connection with allotment gardening. This warning took place in two directions. Experts warned the gardeners that the polluted air near roads and highways could have an impact on the pollution levels of their produce and posed a threat to their health, just as produce can be affected by polluted soil and

various forms of electromagnetic radiation. For example, the allotment garden site in the district of Žale was located under large power lines. There was a prevailing idea that the polluted urban environment was not suitable for growing healthy vegetables, and to a great extent this stereotype is still present. We too faced it as organisers of the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, as our garden lies in the centre of the city, along the very busy Resljeva road. It was precisely due to the doubts of many people about the quality of our produce that in the autumn of 2013 we sent our produce and soil out for testing. We wanted to verify the amounts of heavy metals (lead, cadmium) present, which can be found in exhaust gases, and which could pose the greatest threat to our garden. The analyses showed that the amounts were within acceptable limits, that the produce was healthy, and that the soil was not polluted. With that we rejected the stereotype that allotment gardening is an unsuitable practice for the centre of city due to the larger concentrations of pollution.

Allotments Are Polluting the Environment

The environmental factor, which criticised allotment gardeners, warned that allotment gardening could pollute the environment. In the case of Ljubljana, which lies on a gravel base and draws its drinking water for the city from groundwater, the concern was connected mainly with the pollution of groundwater. Allotment gardeners were allegedly doing damage to the groundwater, mostly by using excess amounts of fertilizer, incorrectly using protective chemical agents, interfering with and pumping up ground water without authorisation, and illegally dumping waste. This was also followed by criticisms aimed at the use of poisonous construction materials (asbestos roofing, polystyrene foam, and other materials) which were used to build the sheds, greenhouses, and structures to collect rainwater. From a spatial aspect the illegal expansion of allotment gardeners onto land along five city water treatment plants was criticised in a similar light. At the Kleče pumping station, the allotment gardening area reached all the way to the perimeter of the station itself. The research work *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment Gardening in Ljubljana) from 2009 was based on previous research, which had as a point of departure a presupposition of the damage caused by allotment gardening areas (allotment gardening in the Municipality of Ljubljana as a source of pollution in the soil, produce, and groundwater). "Despite the intensity of the allotment gardening, the results of the groundwater testing did not confirm any explicit influence of allotment gardening, meaning that other anthropogenic sources are of such a high intensity that they dominate over any effect on the part of the allotment gardens."⁸⁰ When the allotments were demolished in 2007 the media criticised the allotment gardeners mostly for being irresponsible and environmental polluters. This was because a large amount of waste was collected when the sheds were demolished. Ljubljana's allotments were composed of self-built architecture; structures and facilities in the gardens were created by gardeners

⁸⁰ Brigita Jamnik, Aleš Smrekar, Borut Vrščaj, *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani* (Allotment gardening in Ljubljana) Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana 2009, pg. 5.

at their own cost. Of course, in the manufacture of garden sheds, fences and containers for collecting rainwater, cheap materials were used, mostly from left-over material after the renovation of residences, waste material from building sites, wood from old furniture, and other sources. To cover the garden sheds they selected the cheapest roofing materials: sheet metal or asbestos-salonite. When some gardeners in 2007 even burned down their sheds in anger, some of the poisonous asbestos-salonite materials also caught fire, which is believed to activate the carcinogenic particles within.⁸¹ At this point I would like to emphasise that in the last 50-70 years our entire society, together with the allotment gardeners, has gone through the process of first believing in technological progress, and then losing faith in it. For the most part, in the last decade, attention has been directed towards the industrial production and processing of food. Doubts in industrial farming, mono-culture production with the aid of chemicals, and industrially processed food is precisely the reason that interest in allotment gardening has increased to such an extent in this decade. So, there was a time when allotment gardeners, just like everyone else, believed in the safety of chemical agents and modern materials (asbestos-salonite). It was only in this last period that allotment gardeners have gradually switched to organic production without the use of chemicals. In Ljubljana the *Allotment Gardening University* in particular was ahead of its time, as from its very beginnings in the 1980s it researched, practiced, and educated people on the advantages of organic gardening, the property right known as usufruct,⁸² slow food, etc.

6.3 The Removal of the Črnuče Allotment Garden Site, 2008

The second wave in the removal of illegal garden sheds took place one year later, in October of 2008, and happened in Ljubljana's largest illegal allotment garden site in the district of Črnuče. Here there were almost nine hundred allotments, a great majority of which were in violation of the allotment gardening rules (in terms of plot size, garden shed size, pumping groundwater, blocking access to the entire river bank, and more). At the city's initiative the state inspectorate made a decree for the removal of the illegal garden sheds which were too large. Many people who were appalled by the situation described the garden sheds as "vikendice" (little cottages),⁸³ and some even had their own swimming pool. The Črnuče allotment garden site was more complicated than the one in Žale. This was due to land ownership, the larger number of allotments, and the more organic pattern of land occupation, which made for tricky access to the allotments themselves. The city owned only 12% of the land, the state owned less than 20%

⁸¹ The Slovenian factory Salonit Anhovo produced asbestos panels until 1996. Since 2003 the use of asbestos in Slovenia has been prohibited. The information that asbestos is harmful if inhaled and causes serious respiratory diseases has been available for around 20 years. The same applies to chemicals, pesticides and other chemicals which were promoted from 1970-1990 for use in agriculture and gardening. Even today, many biological fertilizers have questionable origins. One of our active gardening members on the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, Irena Woelle, advises all of us to read the descriptions in the fine print of any packaging.

⁸² See section 8.6 in connection with urban gardening in Cuba for a more detailed explanation.

⁸³ "Vikendica" is the Serbo-Croatian word for cottage. The use of this term alludes to the fact that oversized, illegal garden houses were built mainly by immigrants from the former Yugoslavia, who, stereotypically, do not follow rules or respect order.

(the river bank), and the remaining 68% of the land was privately owned. According to Bogomira Skvarča, head of the inspectorate for the city municipality, the allotment gardeners in Črnuče had already been informed in the 1990s of their future removal, but this action was never carried out. In October of 2008, in the early hours of the morning, excavators under the supervision of the state inspectors were greeted by the barricades of the allotment gardeners. A few hundred of them came and the resistance was greater than expected. The police got involved and prevented any violence from taking place. Despite their resistance, the gardeners were not able to prevent the removal of their garden sheds. An additional factor was the lack of any kind of organised group tactic, both at the site and in terms of a dialogue with city authorities. Also typical for this site, the illegal gardeners were not members of an association, which would have helped to defend their gardens. 160 sheds which were on city and state land were removed, and the allotments and garden sheds located on privately owned land remained.

In the same year the removal of illegal allotment sheds also began at the third largest allotment garden site in the district of Barje. There, state inspectors removed 130 garden sheds which were on city land. The media reported that the city removed 1,800 allotments all together, which was later confirmed by head inspector Bogomira Skvarča. She emphasised that they did not have an exact number of garden sheds removed, but that the number ranged from somewhere between 1,800 and 2,000 sheds.⁸⁴

Despite this fact it is important to point out that the removal of garden sheds and the removal of allotment gardens is closely connected, as wherever sheds were removed gardening was also not allowed.

Instead of Allotments, Empty Land

After the removal of illegal allotments and garden sheds at the Črnuče site, the city did not transform the land along the Sava into a recreational zone, as they had said they would. Instead, in the next few years the city developed a recreational and picnic area on the opposite bank of the Sava river within the context of a different project. To this day (2014), no new development plans have been implemented at the former site. In fact, last year (2013) the allotment gardeners gradually began to return to their gardens, as the city had done nothing to prevent this. Now these same gardeners are gardening more illegally than before. They do not invest any time or funds into garden sheds due to the fear of removal. The city's awkward (or lack of) planning in connection with how the allotment gardening issue was settled has showed itself in various degrees at the space in question. At many other locations in the city where allotments were removed (behind the Droga Kolinska factory, around the new stadium, and in the districts of Vič and other parts of Črnuče) the land was left barren, without any spatial interventions and changes. The land has grown over, and the previously well maintained

⁸⁴ A conversation with Bogomira Skvarča, Head Inspector of the Municipality of Ljubljana, Ljubljana 16 April, at 1 p.m.

allotments have been replaced with weeds and, even worse, unfinished construction projects (a part of the new Stožice stadium). There was not even one attempt to improve conditions at single illegal allotment garden site, which would have been one of the possibilities for a temporary solution that benefited both the city and gardeners. By removing allotments the way they did, those responsible at the city acted in a rigid way, trying to formally bring order to a unique and chaotic spatial situation. The situation had arisen due to the city's own negligence, and there were no attempts to adapt plans to actual conditions in the field. Many allotment gardeners at Črnuče and other locations were driven away without any concrete reason, and none were offered alternative land for gardening. City counsellor Miha Jazbinšek, an architect and political opponent of incumbent mayor Jankovič, was against the removal of the allotments in Črnuče. He commented that it was necessary to put the city's neglected leasing conditions in order, and to deal with the issue according to the allotment gardening project proposal made by Justin Bevk and Maja Simoneti in 1997 – not to simply, uncritically, and indiscriminately demolish everything in sight. Simultaneously, according to Jazbinšek's opinion, this course of action abused the legitimacy of using the priority demolition of illegal residential buildings where they are an obstacle, which will make it harder to do so when this actually is necessary according to plans

The Regeneration of Existing Allotment Sites

One possible approach to regulating the illegal allotment sites would be to regenerate them. This could have been one of the possibilities for the Črnuče allotment site. Regeneration (as a temporary or permanent solution) would have enabled a gradual transition to a more organised form of allotment gardening. This would have helped the city regulate the actual situation in the field and would have been in accordance with its financial capacities.

Simply proposing a new model without being able to regenerate an existing allotment site shows the lack of connection between the formal system and actual conditions in the field. This was a conscious decision by city authorities who wanted to avoid solving problems in the field, something which is not routine and requires some creativity. Why was it necessary to remove all the allotments and propose a new model of allotment gardening? According to the logic of bureaucracy, the easiest thing to do is to start over and make an ideal plan. This kind of solution allows an official to remain in his office, or a planner to remain far away in the confines of his studio, resulting in a total lack of connection with real conditions in the field. This reminds me of utopian urbanistic proposals from the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. E. Howard (*Garden City*, 1898), Le Corbusierja (*Ville Radieuse*, 1924), F.L. Wright (*Broadacre City* 1928-1932), and others planned new cities and new societies together. They believed that with the design of a space they could also design a society, and this came to be seen as part of their utopian vision. Quite to the contrary, the initiatives of today, which are committed to the greater self-sufficiency of cities, spring from existing conditions in cities. For example,

Transition Towns initiate the dynamics of change (transition) in existing neighbourhoods; they do not propose the planning of a new, idealistic, self-sufficient city. If I apply this to the situation of allotment gardening in Ljubljana, in addition to the new model allotments, the city could have selected at least one existing gardening area and regulated it simply and quickly. Some of the suggestions for the regeneration of existing allotments had already been recommended by Simoneti's research. She suggested keeping good records of conditions in the field, making fences using hedges, assisting with the supply of water, forming allotment gardening associations, and establishing an advisory service. With a small amount of funds the city could have improved the conditions of several existing allotment garden sites and in so doing enabled a continuity in urban gardening. Step-by-step the city would have introduced order into a chaotic spatial situation according to accepted guidelines and rules, and this would have been a more gradual and organic change to a living situation – far superior to discontinuing any possibility of gardening for 2,000 gardeners in an instant.

6.4 Instead of an Allotment site, a Public Park, 2007-2009

In the district of Žale, on land which had been occupied by allotment gardeners for almost fifty years, the city planned a public park. Together with Ljubljanski urbanistični zavod (the Ljubljana Urbanistic Institute) Maja Simoneti, a landscape architect and researcher who had studied the allotment garden issue in great detail for almost twenty years, cooperated in designing the new park. She had recommended more than one solution to the city, and the first suggestions were to combine the park with the existing allotments. This suggested solution would have preserved a significant amount of existing allotments, implemented new public pathways between them, and concealed their view with a hedge fence. However, the city insisted on removing all of the almost 500 allotments.

According to Maja Simoneti,⁸⁵ who was present during the removal of allotments in Žale, the work of city inspectors in the field was done with a great deal of patience and sensitivity. At the location they faced problems which were as different as the owners themselves (private owners and the municipality). One garden also had bees, so the inspectors were prepared to wait and, together with beekeepers, made special arrangements for the transport of the hives.

Together in the field, deputy mayor Janez Koželj, director of the Ljubljana Botanical Garden Igor Bavcon, and Maja Simoneti marked all the healthy adult trees and included them into the plans for the new park. Many of them are fruit trees, and if you pass the park today you can see people picking up cherries, plums, apples and walnuts. These trees are a kind of memory marker of the former allotments. The park began to take shape immediately after the removal of the allotments in 2007, and work was continued in 2008, with the newly designed public park opening in 2009. According to the plans, only the first phase of the park's development

⁸⁵ A conversation with Maja Simoneti, 20 December, 2013, Ljubljana, 8:30 a.m.

has been completed. In the future, if there will be funding for it, there are plans to set up an additional parking lot at the northern border of the park, a children's playground, and a pavilion.⁸⁶

It was crucial that the city hurried with the transformation of the land at the location into a city park. This was a special strategic move which convinced the city's residents that removing the allotments had been justified. City residents had the impression that the city had serious plans regarding urban gardening, that the new park was a beautiful arrangement of that area, and they also received an official promise from the mayor to the effect that in a short period of time they would be given at least 30 new locations for allotment sites.

⁸⁶ <http://www.luz.si/smarpark.aspx> (18.4.2014).



The Žale Allotment Gardening Site
Photo by: Nina Vastl, 1998
Nina Vastl, *Vrtičkarstvo*, specialistična naloga,
Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univeza v Ljubljani, 2000.
(Nina Vastl, *Allotment Gardening*,
specialised postgraduate research,
Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana, 2000.)



The Public Park at the former Žale Allotment Garden Site
Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, January 2014

→
Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 9



The Zale Allotment Garden Site, 1993





Public Park ou former Allotment Site in Zale, 2010



HERE IN HAVANA
WE HAVE TURNED
ALL OF OUR
PUBLIC PARKS
INTO VEGETABLE
GARDENS.

Urban Gardens Instead of a Public Park

Even though in the eyes of many citizens the public park at the former allotment site in Žale was a fantastic solution, this move by the city needs to be analysed. The creation of a public park on the space where there were already cultivated green areas is a kind of paradox; green areas replaced by green areas. Naturally, these are a different kinds of green areas, “useable” (for example, for gardening) and recreational. Two stereotypes that work against vegetable gardens are: first, that only “non-useful” plants are beautiful; second, that a “working” landscape (one where people garden) does not belong in an urban landscape. “While the allotments represent a ‘working landscape’ the park represents a ‘leisure landscape’, where the plantings basically do not consist of useful plants, but are there for visual and leisure pleasure [...]. In contrast to that the people connected with urban gardening at Cuba’s Ministry of Agriculture expressed the need to convince urbanists and other spatial planners that salad can be as decorative as flowers.”⁸⁷ In Cuba, due to their economic crisis and bare necessities, the opposite occurred as in Ljubljana. Namely, public parks were transformed into allotment gardening areas where vegetables are grown in raised beds. However the reason did not lie with the economic crisis alone. This is the context of a new concept, the “edible landscape” which is created by urban gardeners. Urban agriculture creates a green and aesthetic landscape that is at the same time productive and beautiful: streets lined with trees bearing fruit, ponds and rivers producing fish and water vegetables, hillsides yielding biofuel, and formerly vacant lots with vegetables growing in them. This landscape is both fertile and beautiful.

The new public park created on the former Žale allotment garden site could have been an example of progressive planning: a combination of public park and allotment gardens. If the city had partly preserved the existing allotments, it would have shown a more forward way of thinking compared with the drastic and one-sided removal of all the allotments. An additional argument for this solution, a combination of existing allotments and a public park, is the fact that it would be economical and sustainable. In this case the city would have reduced (or avoided all together) costs connected with the removal of allotments, as well as costs associated with the arrangement of new allotments. By preserving a certain number of allotments in this area the city would have also lowered additional expenses for the maintenance of public green areas and maintained, not reduced, the Ljubljana’s self-sufficiency.

It is necessary to make note of the fact that the neo-liberal cities of today, including Ljubljana, are on the edge of bankruptcy. Funds intended for public services, such as the maintenance of green spaces, has been reduced to their bare minimum. Due to this lack of funds the maintenance of green areas is being discontinued, as if it should fall to the care of city residents. Maintaining green spaces in the city with the help of allotment and community gardens is one of the possible solutions for the future of green urban spaces.

⁸⁷ Bohn & Viljoen Architects, *Laboratories for Urban Agriculture: Havana to Milwaukee*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architecturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 230.

How a park can be combined with allotments can be seen in the well known example of the Naeurum allotment site in a suburb of Copenhagen. This project is among landscape architect Carl Theodor Sørensen's most important. The allotment garden site was created between 1948 and 1952, and instead of orthogonal shapes, the plots are oval and situated on a grass lawn. It is a good example of a harmonic co-existence between public green spaces and allotment gardens.

While Ljubljana is very slow with its bureaucratic way of arranging urban gardening, in just one year many new gardens were created in Zagreb. The movement to push for urban gardening was started in 2012 by many local initiatives (*Parktipacija*, *Prostor za vrt*, *Zelena akcija*, *Urad za permakulturo*) in cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences, and several public forums were organised. This encouraged public debate on the need for city gardens, especially community gardens. The city of Zagreb was planning the design of six parks to link the old part of Zagreb with New Zagreb, which is characterised by socialist apartment blocks. In the area of Travno, the location where the fourth park was being planned, there were still some twenty active allotment gardeners. In April of 2012 they were removed to make room for the Mamutica park. In relation to the removal of existing allotments, the local initiative supports that they support the new parks, but that it is also necessary to set aside an area for allotment gardeners. For the New Zagreb park named Lakun, the group *Parktipacija* strongly advocated for the creation of a community garden in one part of the park. The city did not complete the park, but it did cooperate with local initiatives, and together with them it arranged several other locations which are suitable for allotment gardening. In the spring of 2013 the first community garden, *Prečko*, was created, and over the course of 2013 an additional five city gardens were opened in Zagreb.⁸⁸

THE NEW RULES

6.5 The Rulebook and Ordinance from 2009

In 2009 the city of Ljubljana accepted a rulebook for the regulation of urban gardens. They are in written form with an additional graphical summary of the rules. Though many variations for allotment gardens were proposed, the regulations determine a concept for tool sheds, the position of the shed on the allotment (with variations 1 and 2), an example of the arrangement of a one-hectare allotment gardening area equipped with tool sheds, and a container for tools. There is also an example of how to arrange the area with a common tool shed, and one example of an arrangement without any storage for tools. What is clear from the rulebook is that the design of a gardening area with several variations was thought out to the last detail. Simultaneously, the rulebook determines the conditions for the lease of a garden, which were

⁸⁸ Unpublished research done in 2014 by Veronika Reven, a Ljubljana based geographer interested in urban gardening. She sent me the text personally in the spring of 2014.

oriented towards vulnerable groups of elderly citizens with a difficult social status. Allotments owned by the city of Ljubljana were leased to people with permanent residence in the area of Ljubljana who did not own any suitable land for gardening within the city, and whose household members also did not own such land. An additional advantage was given to citizens over the age of 60, large families, and citizens who were receiving social aid. The public criticised the specific conditions in the tender for leasing allotments, because they excluded all other groups interested in urban gardening. Though this gesture takes into account the socially vulnerable, with it the city limited allotment gardening to the social class of elderly and economically disadvantaged residents, thereby marginalising it. Since only a miniscule number of allotments were offered, the reason for this social limitation seemed obvious. 175 people responded to the open call, a large number considering the limiting conditions, and this reflected the high interest in obtaining an allotment gardens. 65 families were chosen. One of the most important and sensible conditions, the proximity of one's residence, was not a condition for the lease of an allotment.

6.6 Two New Model Allotment Sites Created by the City in 2010

The city created two allotment sites in accordance with the new gardening rules, at the districts of Štepanja Vas and Dravlje respectively. The allotment site in the district of Dravlje is much better off due to the larger number of allotments, which justify the well-equipped nature of the site. It has 51 gardens which range from 50m² to 150m² in size, each garden has its own tool shed, creating a unified appearance. The site has shared toilet facilities, a children's playground, a common water supply, and parking. The entire site is enclosed by a fence.

The same spatial organisation can be found in Štepanja Vas, but only 14 allotments. The gardeners have shared toilet facilities, a children's playground, and a common parking area. A common water supply was promised, but has not yet been provided.

If I look at the city's elegantly designed model allotment gardens in a positive light, their high level of organisation is a great novelty, both for the city and for allotment gardeners. In this way the city was able to pay tribute to allotment gardening and recognised the importance of urban gardening in Ljubljana. This tribute is even more important because in the past urban gardening in Ljubljana was ignored. The city also showed how exemplary organisation contributes to the organisation of allotment gardening, which is in turn an organised and well-maintained sight to everyone else, to the entire city. As mayor Zoran Jankovič said in his address to the new tenants at the opening: "Their role [of the gardeners and their allotments] is exceptionally important. They will be a promotion of what we would like to see in Ljubljana: order, cleanliness, and a green capital."⁸⁹

⁸⁹ STA 13.4.2010, <http://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/novi-vrticki-novi-obdelovalci.html> (27.3.2014).

However, the desire of the city to introduce a new system, order, and model gardens for arranging the urban gardening situation was unrealistic. The city underestimated the cost of the investment. Due to the high level of communal equipment the entire cost on the part of the city became enormously high. The expense appeared even more dramatic because over the past sixty years the city's investment in allotment sites was practically non-existent. For all of the abovementioned reasons, immediately after the opening of the first two example and model allotment sites all further planning was halted. After the city reviewed its mistakes, officials decided that it was necessary to correct the conditions for renting and leasing allotments. It took another three years for a new rulebook to be accepted, and new regulations to be designed. The new rulebook came into effect this year, in February of 2014. In accordance with the new improved rules, this spring the city offered an additional 50 gardens on the already existing allotment site in Savlje. So, in seven years the city has offered a total of 114 new legal allotments.

For a number of reasons, the careless erasure of 2,000 allotments is not justified by the establishment of a small number of new ones, despite their high level of quality. So, if I view the criticisms of the new model allotments together with all the other gestures which the city has made in the last seven years, the entire process of regulating the allotment gardening issue in Ljubljana looks like an unorganised and thoughtless approach to dealing with the issue. The steps which were taken: 2007-2008 (the removal of 2,000 allotments), 2009 (the acceptance of a corrected over-regulated rulebook for the design and lease of allotments), 2010 (a presentation of new model allotments), 2010 (30 locations determined for permanent use for urban gardens, all on the outskirts of the city), 2013 (the amendment of the 2009 rulebook and the acceptance of a new rulebook), and 2014 (the opening of an additional 50 gardens in the previously established allotment site of Savlje). A chronological view shows the disorganised and long-term planning of the campaign to regulate allotment gardening. The city was not connected with actual conditions in the field, with the large demand for allotments, or the economic crisis. The city incorrectly estimated its own investment in allotments and did not even realise that this was incompatible with its own budget. The conditions for leasing gardens were poorly formulated and did not take into account some very important criteria, like the proximity of the residents to the gardens. Permanent allotment gardening is being planned on land which is on the outskirts of the city, and where the city is only a 26% owner. The city does require that new allotment gardeners be members of associations, nor was there any attempt to temporarily improve the conditions at even one allotment garden site. And, possibly the worst result of these actions, Ljubljana has taken a step in the wrong direction in terms of increasing its self-sufficiency.

Here I would like to expose yet another important deficiency regarding the organisation of new model allotments. The city excluded any kind of participation on the part of allotment gardeners.

Prior to 2007 allotment gardeners did everything by themselves, from dividing up the land into plots, constructing garden sheds, erecting fences, to arranging their plots with benches and pergolas, all of which was described in detail in Nina Vastl's study. All this work has now been taken over entirely by the city. It is obvious the city's investment must be balanced, but this can be done in many ways, such as lowering the standard of communal equipment in the allotment sites. Another possibility, which is not just a theoretical one since we have practiced it in our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, would be to include the gardeners in the process of setting things up. In that way the city could benefit from the readiness of allotment gardeners to actively include themselves in creating gardens. Also, this would make it easier for gardeners to gain access to gardens and, possibly even more important, they would get to know each other better through their preparation of the site. A process of collaboration between the gardeners and the city would establish new relations, which could contribute to better connection between the gardeners and the city. This knowledge is based on the process of creating our community garden, and it is something the city could make use of, implementing it into the future planning of urban gardens in Ljubljana.





I DON'T KNOW,
ASK THE FARMERS!



2010 new city plan
permanent urban


The community garden
Beyond a Construction Site,
2010 - present

WHERE CAN WE
GARDEN IN THE CITY
TODAY?



Legenda

Podrobnejša namenska raba prostora - OPN MOL ID

 Raba ZV - površine za vrtičkarstvo

Datum: 20.5.2014 Merilo 1:40.000

n- Plan of the City of Ljubljana (OPN), defines thirty sites intended for gardening, and all of them are on the outskirts of Ljubljana.

Today (2014) the city of Ljubljana is more of a mediator, connecting residents interested in obtaining urban gardens and private land owners.

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 10

7 URBAN GARDENING IN LJUBLJANA TODAY

In 2010 the city stopped creating new model allotments and started to correct the rules, finally amending the ordinance and rulebook for the lease of allotments in 2014. There were also a few changes in the spatial plan, since in the improved version urban gardening is also permitted on farm land. This year, in 2014, the city has offered 50 newly arranged allotments at the already existing Savlje allotment site. No other new urban gardens have been arranged on city land by the city. Today the city is more of a mediator, connecting residents interested in obtaining urban gardens and private land owners. For this reason, in the last two years several initiatives, farmers, and small private companies oriented towards arranging urban gardens in Ljubljana have appeared. Among them is also our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*.

Fifty Additional Gardens at the Existing Savlje Allotment Site, 2014

In 2013 the land at the Savlje allotment garden site finally came into the possession of the city of Ljubljana. Prior to that it was still owned by Ministry of Defence. The city arranged for an additional 50 allotments on the available land within the fence, which will soon be leased. Due to concerns regarding the quality of the soil, in November 2013, when they were preparing the gardens and removing the upper layer of soil, tests were conducted to check the quantities of mineral oils, cadmium, zinc, and lead. The tests showed that the concentrations were lower than those prescribed and confirmed that the soil was suitable for the production of food.

In March 2014 the municipality made an announcement about the new allotments. In parallel with the tender they are also making new records of the legitimate tenants at the 208 already existing allotments. Since February 2014 the new improved rulebook has been in effect. An important novelty of the new rulebook is the additional preference given to those who live in close proximity to the allotment site (less than one kilometre away).

The city has asked all 208 currently “registered” gardeners to confirm whether or not they still want to have a garden. Two thirds have responded, so approximately one third of the older allotments will be included in the new tender and offered in accordance with it.⁹⁰ Despite the humbly equipped nature of this allotment area, this was an economic and practical gesture on the part of the city. The Savlje site will now make it possible for 258 gardeners to garden which, from the city’s perspective, currently represents the largest regulated allotment site in Ljubljana.

Gardens Organised on Private Farm Land

With the passive attitude of the city opportunities for small businesses and self-employment are being created. Landscape architect Nataša Bučar Draksler, leader of the project “pridelaj.si”, established the kind of company that could take advantage of what was happening. She leased farm land from a farmer and, using her own knowledge, designed and organised gardens in accordance with the city’s demands to rent out. The site in Savlje is the first created by her

⁹⁰ Darja Valenčič, *Saveljski vrtički: Kako naj izberem? Tega ni mogoče deliti!* (How to choose? This can not be shared!) Dnevnik newspaper, 4.3. pg. 9, and also on the basis of a conversation with Helena Regina, Department of Environmental Protection of the Municipality of Ljubljana.

company. She has also received offers for land in other parts of Ljubljana, and she is working on opening new urban garden sites. Her company seeks to establish a network of eco-fields where non-farmers can garden. Her condition when leasing the land is that the land is at least 500 hectares in size, and that she can lease it for a period of at least five years. The gardens in Savlje are enclosed by a wire fence, the soil has been sifted, and a water supply has been provided. She offers two sizes of plots, 40m² and 112m². The cost of rent is higher than at city allotments (the city leases allotments for 1 euro/m² per year), but her company also offers ecological workshops and advice for gardening to its members.

Another offer, which is also not the only one of its kind, comes from a Dravljje farmer's own farm land on which still stands a typical Slovenian-style hayrack (kozolec toplar).⁹¹ He has tilled the fields, divided the land into plots, and leased out the first allotments in 2013. He has provided the gardeners with a uniformly designed garden shed (according to the model from the rulebook), and the hayrack serves as a covered community space. Water is taken directly from the stream which runs along the edge of the allotments. Allotments are rented out at the same price offered by the city, 1 euro/m² per year, and all the allotments were rented out immediately. As a result, he is currently setting up another portion of his land on the other side of the stream for allotments as well.

Self-organised Initiatives Focused on Urban Gardening

In 2013 in Ljubljana, out of necessity, some self-organised initiatives appeared which made gardening possible for a small number of Ljubljana's residents.

According to Maja Simoneti, the initiative *Za Progo* (Behind the Railway Line) is a legitimate "guerrilla" initiative. A few dozen gardeners garden along a railway line. The land is partially owned by the botanical garden and partially owned by the city, but the gardeners do not have permission from the city. In connection with this project all of the allotment gardeners became part of the television show *Dobro Jutro* (Good Morning), which is taped by Televizija Slovenija and is shown every week on the channel Slovenija 1. During filming the gardeners at their gardens are given advice by experts from the botanical garden. This is an interesting combination of urban gardening and education, and also a partially illegal occupation of land which the city is tolerating.

A new initiative which is oriented more towards the revitalisation of the Savsko Naselje neighbourhood is *Iniciativa Savsko naselje*, which came about on the initiative of the city in cooperation with various other initiatives (*KD Prostoroz*, *Saprabolt*, *Mladi hišni prijatelji*,

⁹¹ A Slovenian hayrack is usually a wooden building open on one side and used for drying cereals and grasses. It is a typical architectural sight in the Slovenian countryside. Hayracks are divided into single and double hayracks. Approximately 80% of these kinds of hayracks are located in Slovenia. They are also found in the northeast of Italy and in the south of Austria, as there is also a Slovenian minority living there.

skupine BOB).⁹² The goal of the initiative is to carry out a project of social integration for the local community by 2015. Through various meetings they created raised community garden beds and invited residents to join them in gardening. The land is owned by the city, which many residents are not aware of, and people have the feeling that the initiative is happening in their territory. The sense of belonging to a territory is very strong in neighbourhoods, and this is something the initiative should expect. It is important to take into account that working with the community is a slow process.

Zelemenjava stunned everyone when it was simply started in 2013 by gardener Darja Fišer. Through the internet and Facebook she organised informal events for the exchange of excess vegetables, saplings, and seeds. Through this self-initiative, *Zelemenjava* has been spreading to various locations in Ljubljana and all across Slovenia. On their website they write that they exchange seeds, saplings, produce, recipes, experience, and inspiration from the home garden. This initiative underlines the importance of treating food better. According to statistics from the European Environment Agency, we throw away or lose one third of the food we produce, and much more in cities. Fišer says: "To me it seems wrong, a crime, criminal, that we throw away produce. First we invest a lot of effort into it, then throw it in the compost. Why wouldn't we give it away? Exchanges are very simple, the notices do not cost us anything, and there is no effort in these actions."⁹³

Among these initiatives is also our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*. Once again, I must mention that our garden was created right in 2010, during a period of municipal paralysis which was caused by the city's attempts to regulate urban gardening practices. An important influence on the way this artistic research was carried out was the fact that our community garden developed in parallel to the official top-down approach which was carried out by the city. In contrast, we made use of a bottom-up approach, which enabled us to reflect more deeply on the official top-down one, and also created a possible alternative to it. It currently has 40 individual gardens, a large community space, and is making gardening and socialising possible for approximately one hundred members from the neighbourhood.

⁹² Meta Kutin, *Savsko naselje se prebuja* (Savsko Naselje is Waking Up), 27.5.2013. <http://trajekt.org/2013/05/27/savsko-naselje-se-prebuja/> (3.6.2014).

⁹³ Iva Gruden, *Zemelenjava: Zelenjavni podarim dobim*, Nedelo newspaper, Ljubljana, 14.7.2013.



The Initiative *Za Progo*
Photo by: Maja Simoneti, 2013



Iniciativa Savsko Naselje
Photo by: Saša Starec, 2013

IS THIS AN
ALTERNATIVE?

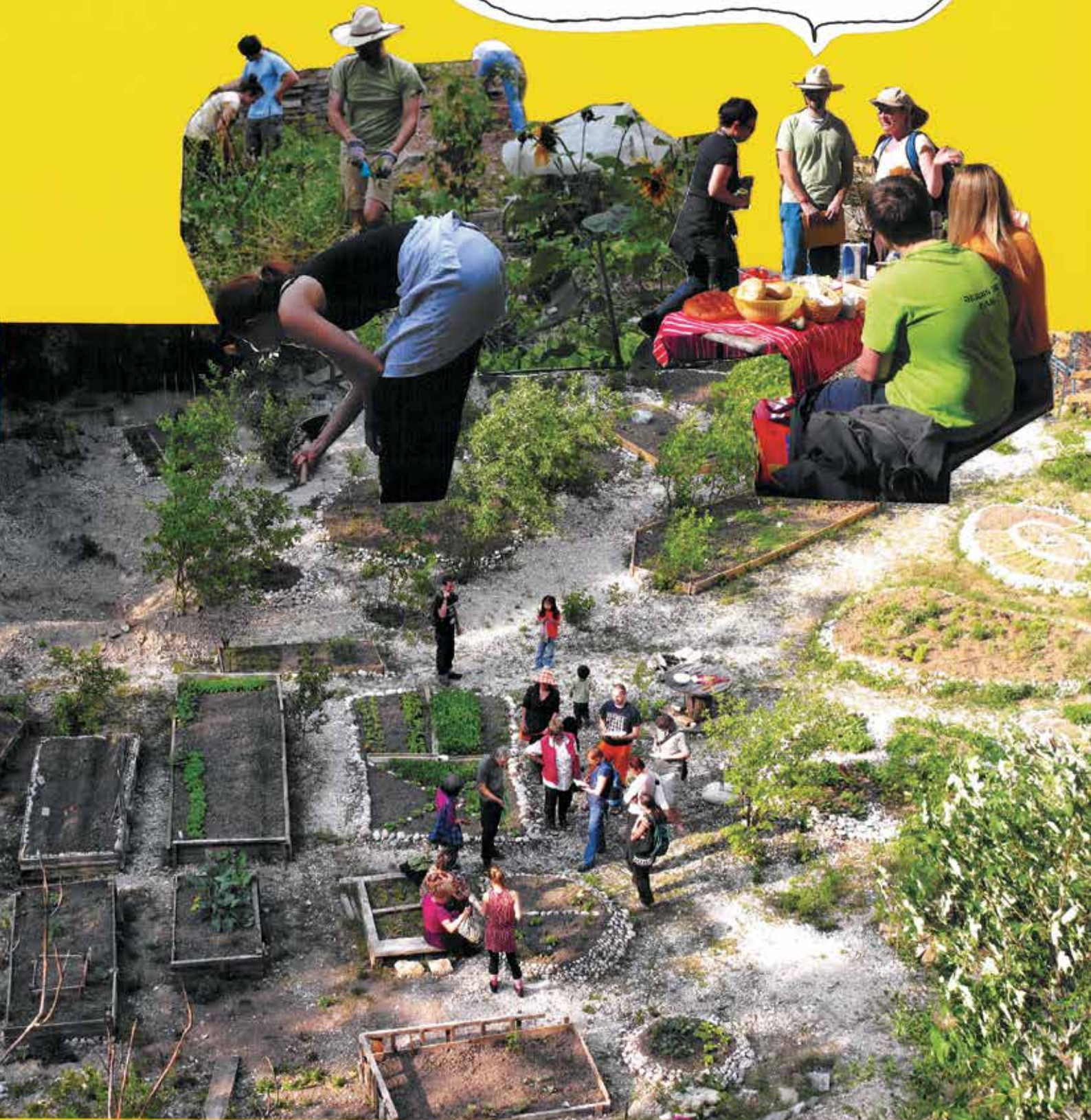
IS THIS A NOSTALGIA FOR THE
SELF-MANAGEMENT
OF YUGOSLAVIAN SOCIALISM?



Ljubljana, 2010-present

A Community Garden Beyond a Construction Site

IS THIS A ROMANTICISING OF OUR PAST COMMUNITY-BASED LIFE IN RURAL SLOVENIA?



A community garden proved to be a fertile ground for growing vegetables, and for trying out and re-inventing new ways of co-existence.

Nobody is absolutely clear what these new values and the alternative should look like.

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 11

8 THE COMMUNITY GARDEN *BEYOND A CONSTRUCTION SITE* IN LJUBLJANA

8.1 8.1 The Community Garden *Beyond a Construction Site* (2010-present, Ljubljana)

Initiators: *KUD Obrat* (Stefan Doepner, Urška Jurman, Polonca Lovšin, and Apolonija Šušteršič) in cooperation with residents from the neighbourhood and other interested individuals.

Location: Resljeva street, Ljubljana, opposite the main train station.

Duration: From August 2010 to the present.

Co-producers: *Kud Obrat* Ljubljana, *Zavod Bunker* Ljubljana.

The land is the property of: the Municipality of Ljubljana.

<http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/>

In 2010, in cooperation with nearby residents and other interested individuals, we began to transform a long closed and abandoned construction site in the residential neighbourhood of Tabor into a community space. By working together we sought to create gardens, places for socialising, and a space for ecological projects and cultural events. Our goal at the beginning of 2010 was to research the potential of degraded city land, which would see its value change through the process of group and community interventions and become a place to be used on a temporary basis. This was to be our creative criticism of existing conditions, and also an expression of our conviction that, with our ideas and active group work at this location, we could transform an attitude of city residents which feels that city spaces are a given reality which cannot be changed. We wanted to use the land legally, and so we began a dialogue with the owner of the land – the city. For us the legal approach was important, because we didn't want to involve participants in an illegal situation. It was also important for us to deal with the temporary use of land on the system's level. Through a process of negotiations with the city on the free temporary use of land, we sought to loosen the city's relationship towards temporary use, something which is very difficult in Ljubljana. Our critique of closed and thereby degraded city land was directed at promoting temporary use. Our basic starting point was that through a practical example of self-organised urbanism from the bottom up, we would be establishing an alternative model and space which would become the strongest tool for criticism. We believe that criticism is not only an idea, but a real space – a different space which we created using different methods (self-organisation, and by working together with nearby residents) and a different programme (a community space for socialising, gardening, ecology, and art). This practical example proved to be our best tool for constructive criticism, and also for the promotion of alternative visions. During the process, which involved intensive collaboration with local residents, our idea of a community space developed into a community urban garden. Due to the Ljubljana allotment gardening crisis, which became visible with the removal of a

large number of gardens between 2007 and 2008, from year to year our community garden has been becoming a more important example of an alternative model of gardening and a way to revitalise a neighbourhood. For the community garden we obtained an agreement with the city for the temporary use of land without charge for one year, and with the possibility of extension. This agreement is a precedent and I believe that we are also addressing the formal framework of city politics regarding the legal use of land for a temporary period of time. As an alternative model of allotment gardening, a community garden in the centre of the city, and as an example of alternative urbanism from the bottom up, we are interested in influencing the city administration's way of understanding and dealing with those issues.

Beyond a Construction Site has been working actively for four years now. As the first publicly declared community garden in Ljubljana and Slovenia, it is an alternative and practical example which has its finger fixed on the city and its slow, clumsy, and complicated way of dealing with the allotment gardening issue. However, while *Beyond a Construction Site* is challenging the city on one hand, on the other it is inspiring and encouraging individuals and groups to self-organise and, in agreement with landowners, to create alternative and community spaces in their own neighbourhoods.

8.2 The *Kud Obrat* Initiative

The interest of our group in this project came from previous cooperation from 2004. When I first worked together with Urška Jurman we had the roles of artist and curator, but quickly moved beyond that. Together we organised the international in interdisciplinary two-month project *Ready 2 Change*.⁹⁴ That project connected alternative forms of living, working, and thinking about architecture, nature, energy, and cultural systems. The two-month programme, with an exhibition, lectures, excursions, various workshops and a mobile artistic residence, was an example of connecting and exchanging experiences between various disciplines. The cooperation of various disciplines and interconnecting for the creation of group projects remained, and also became an important method for our current work. A year later, in 2005, we published *Ready 2 Change*⁹⁵ with the texts of the authors who presented their theses in the form of lectures the year before that. In 2006 we decided to establish the association *Kud Obrat*,⁹⁶ which would provide us with better production platform. Every one of us had the experience of individual practical work, but we were also interested in a joint collaboration and a group projects with a greater scope and connected with urban issues.

⁹⁴ <http://skylined.org/change/tavi/>. (18.9.2014).

⁹⁵ The book presents different initiatives of which "fil rouge" is the exploration and presentation of possible living alternatives and autonomous approaches to the systems which determine us on a daily basis. Texts focus on the principles of informal, temporary, and self-sustained architecture, the alternative usage of energy, a parallel economy, self-organisation, and mutual collaboration, as well as the "do-it-yourself" principle.
<http://www.lovsin.org/eng/publications/ready-2-change/>. (18.9.2014).

⁹⁶ The members of the non-profit art association *Kud Obrat* are: Stefan Doepner (artist), Urška Jurman (sociologist and art critic), Polonca Lovšin (architect and artist), and Apolonija Šušteršič (architect and artist).

Between 2009 and 2011, in the context of *Kud Obrat*, we created a series of lectures, presentations, and events for the discussion of spatial issues titled *Prostorske prakse in politike* (Spatial Practices and Politics).⁹⁷ Our goal was to present the public of Ljubljana with current research and realised projects which meet on the intersection between art, architecture, and urbanism, and highlight the various issues of the contemporary urban environment. Within the programme we played host to individuals and groups who presented practical projects, field research, and artworks. From the knowledge obtained with the exchange of experience from various authors in different contexts and cities, we also received inspiration and a stimulus for our spatial intervention. Based on a critical analysis of the condition of degraded spaces in Ljubljana, which highlighted the particular difficulties in obtaining temporary use through negotiations with the city, and was supported with a theoretical reflection,⁹⁸ in 2010 we launched the project *Beyond a Construction Site*. Here the quote of the group *aaa* regarding their project *R-Urban* is the most suitable: “R-Urban is in no way a transfer of theory into practice, but seeks to develop research practices and theoretical analysis, which constantly keep each other informed and supplement one another.”⁹⁹ In the development of our project over these past four years, this is something we have been doing through the creation of a community space which is based on a community garden and its accompanying activities. Through numerous community actions and meetings, public discussions, workshops, conversations, learning about organic gardening, the publication of an internal newspaper, public hours, connecting with other similar initiatives, we are constantly learning, learning by doing, and reflecting on our work with the help of theoretical analysis. The community project became a community garden, with an agreement with the city for the free temporary use of land for one year, and with the possibility of extension. With this agreement I believe that we are also changing the formal framework of city politics regarding this same kind of legal use of land for a temporary period of time. The fact that we are a successful model of the revitalisation of abandoned land in the neighbourhood, working together with residents, an alternative model of gardening (a community garden), a garden located in the centre of the city, and an example of alternative bottom-up urbanism, is also putting (positive) pressure on the city.

8.3 An Abandoned Construction Site in a Residential Neighbourhood

In 2009, when we realised the potential of this degraded land, it had already been abandoned for several years. Surrounded by an aluminium construction fence, this 1,000m² piece of land was lying on its own, partially dug up, wildly overgrown, and full of garbage. From a strategic

⁹⁷ *Spatial Practices and Politics* was a series of lectures, events, and presentations which took place in 2009-2011. The aim of the programme was to present current research and projects with a cross-section of art, architecture, and urbanism, and which deal with diverse issues of the contemporary urban environment.

<http://www.obrat.org/projects/spatial-practices-and-politics> (18.9.2014).

⁹⁸ *Participacija/Participation* editors Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič, *Arhitektov bilten mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture* (Architect's Bulletin, International magazine for Theory of Architecture), volume 188.189, Anno XXXLI, Ljubljana, July 2011.

⁹⁹ Constantin Petcou and Doina Petrescu (*aaa – atelier d'architecture autogeree*), *R-Urban Resilience*, published in, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 334.

and economic point of view the land has an exceptional position; it is located in the centre of the city, opposite the main railway station, and not far from the old city core. Two types of neighbouring apartment blocks were built in two different periods. The first was built at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, and have apartments oriented towards the green area in the inner courtyard. The second type was built in 2004 between Kotnikova and Resljeva streets, and “our” construction site, with just enough room for an additional apartment block, lies between them. We never found out officially why the “missing” building was never constructed, but it is clear that this situation is a symptom of real-estate speculation within the capitalistic production of space which aims for the most profit possible. An additional factor for the state in which we found the area was the economic and real estate crisis that caused the collapse of numerous construction companies, something which can also be seen in the design of this neighbourhood. It was finished in 2004 and is characterised by dense construction with little space between buildings, modern architecture with high-priced apartments, and a public space reduced to the bare minimum and without a trace of greenery. The construction site was abandoned six years before we arrived. Construction workers had only removed the first layer of soil and begun to dig deeper, creating a partially dug-up gravel construction pit. At the edge, which borders on the apartment blocks, the pit is dangerously deep, approximately fifteen metres, and goes to the bottom of the four-story deep basement garage of the neighbouring apartment block. The workers and excavators left the construction site in a hurry, leaving behind a half-started construction project, concrete slabs, and a great deal of construction waste (window panes, reinforced bars, pieces of insulation and other plastic materials, stacks of wood, etc.). At the first meeting with local residents¹⁰⁰ one of them told us that the metal fence was erected only later at the request of residents from the neighbourhood, as the half-started construction site was completely exposed and presented a danger to local residents.

From a Degraded Space into a Blossoming Community Garden

There is no doubt that the space was degraded. Garbage had begun to collect on it, and was thrown over the fence by passers-by. Contributing to this was the fact that along Resljeva and Masarykova streets there are no garbage containers. Unannounced, excess construction material also began to collect there (old toilets, crushed bricks, plates and tiles, plastic chairs) as it took little effort to reach the location with a car and trailer. Nature also began to take hold, and the overgrown terrain changed into a wild green space. Plants appeared on their own, like at most abandoned urban locations, and they included both local plant species and many invasive species of grasses and trees. For many of the residents in the new apartment blocks from 2004 the resulting situation was a happy accident, because the space remained empty and green, even though it was neglected and inaccessible.

¹⁰⁰ The first meeting with neighbourhood residents was held on 17 August, 2010, in front of the not yet opened construction site fence. The discussion with the residence was used to learn the residents' wishes and ideas, and it took place before any physical action on the site.

<http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/about/dokumentacija-2010/> (21.9.2014).

I agree with the idea that the city also needs abandoned and neglected spaces. If I speak about space like an organism I know that some areas are more alive and some less so; they are born and they die. At decaying spaces imagination and creative ideas are born. These kinds of spaces offer a renewed reflection on what kind of spaces we want in the city; they trigger dissatisfaction, and in that way also motivate people for change. These spaces can remain closed green spaces, or spaces of high biodiversity which landscape architect Gilles Clement advocates as “third landscapes”.¹⁰¹ Also, similarly to our initiative, these kinds of empty spaces can become places to test resilience and endurance, as advocated by the group *aaa*, which is headed by architects Constantin Petcou and Doina Petrescu. “The resilience capacity should imply also the preservation of specific democratic principles and cultural values, local histories and traditions, while adapting to more economic and ecological lifestyles. As such, a city can only become resilient with the active involvement of the inhabitants. To stimulate this commitment, we need tools, knowledge and places to test new practices and citizen initiatives, and to showcase the results and benefits of a resilient transformation to the city.”¹⁰²



May 2010
Photo by: Kud Obrat archive

¹⁰¹ The Third Landscape (an undetermined fragment of the Planetary Garden) designates the sum of the space left over by man to landscape evolution – to nature alone. Compared to the territories submitted to control and exploitation by man, the Third Landscape forms a privileged area of receptivity to biological diversity. From this point of view, the Third Landscape can be considered the genetic reservoir of the planet, the space of the future.

Manifesta du Tiers-Paysage (Manifesto of the third landscape) was published in 2003, in *Editions Sujet/Objet*.
<http://www.gillesclement.com/art-454-tit-The-Third-Landscape> (21.9.2014).

¹⁰² Constantin Petcou and Doina Petrescu (*aaa, R-Urban resilience*), published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 16.

8.4 The Tabor Neighbourhood

The neighbourhood of Tabor, where our community garden is located, is an older city neighbourhood with a mixed use of space. The neighbourhood is composed of residential apartment buildings, a retirement home, a medical centre, a kindergarten, two elementary schools, a gymnasium, the Tabor gym, and a Catholic church. Many cultural institutions and non-profit organisations are also located there. After 1991 the neighbourhood became known mostly for the “Metelkova squat”, an occupation of the former Yugoslavian People’s Army barracks and buildings. *Mreža za Metelkovo* (the Metelkova Network),¹⁰³ is an initiative of numerous alternative socio-cultural groups which was virtually promised spaces in the former barracks following the departure of the army. The breaking of this promise by the Ministry of Defence led to the occupation of the area and the creation of an important place for so called alternative culture in Ljubljana. Metelkova is a place where many concerts, lectures, and events take place. Also, many cultural non-profit organisations are located there, as well as NGOs, and they represent different marginalised social groups (LGBT, the handicapped, etc.). Today Metelkova receives financial support from the city and the state, and has an agreement with the city, which creates an interesting cooperation between the city and the self-organised Metelkova City: on one hand the city gives Metelkova the so-called status of an autonomous centre, but on the other, it puts certain demands for more formalisation. Naturally the agreement with the city came about after a long process in which the existence of the Metelkova squat was threatened by the second land owner, the state.

The former Rog bicycle factory is the another place where self-organised initiatives began to establish their spaces for production on the basis of temporary use. Unfortunately, in eight years (since 2006) those using the spaces were unable to achieve any kind of written agreement for temporary use with the city, something which was also due to the unwillingness of the city’s administration and politics.

The other part of the former Metelkova military barracks, where there are some mighty buildings from the times of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was renovated and is used by art institutions, such as the National Museum, the Ethnographic Museum, the administration for Kinoteka, and not long ago the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (MSUM, 2011).

Among others, the Bunker Institute has been active for a number of years in the neighbourhood of Tabor, running a programme within the former power plant where contemporary theatre and dance performances, workshops, and lectures are organised. It is most recognised for its

¹⁰³ “What makes the ‘Mreža za Metelkovo’ (Metelkova network) project unique is the concrete ‘social moment in time’, which is actually what triggered this relatively extensive campaign. The vacating of the military barracks in Ljubljana, a result of the Yugoslavian Army’s departure from Slovenia, something that was not unprecedented (in recent history), created a relatively rare situation in Slovenian cities. Suddenly, a new fully built space appeared, a space which the city had not planned for. (Note: There was a sudden freeing up of areas which the city until then could not seriously consider as its own space with its own potential for development, these areas could be valuable acquisitions and encourage the further development of Ljubljana (D.Požnenel, 1992:4).”

Drago Kos, *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov* (Rationality of informal spaces), Fakulteta za družbene vede, Univerza v Ljubljani, 1993, pg. 209.

international summer dance performance festival *Mladi Levi* (which began in 1997) within which we also started the *Beyond a Construction Site* project.

So, the Tabor district is a space for numerous cultural events and urban diversity, which is probably also in the favour of our community garden initiative.



Clearing the location
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, August 2010



Removing part of the protective construction
fence and replacing it with a door
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, August 2010

8.5 Opening the Doors During an Art Festival

In the context of the 2010 Mladi Levi festival, the Bunker Institute carried out a program in the neighbourhood of Tabor called *Garden by the Way* (*Vrt mimo grede*). A program focused on the green spaces in the city and particularly in this neighbourhood, with the aim of making city residents more aware of the city's green spaces, and to encourage city gardening and support social urban spaces. That is also how our cooperation was established. The Bunker Institute became a co-producer of *Beyond a Construction Site* and included the project into the *Garden by the Way* programme.

After prolonged research on the ownership of the abandoned construction site, which was not transparent (we immediately thought of real-estate speculation), we discovered that the owner of the land was the city, and not the construction company Energoplan (a company which went bankrupt in 2010). We had concluded that the owner of the land was Energoplan because of the construction fences with the logo of the company which surrounded the site. At first we received permission for the temporary free use of the land from the city for the time of the Mladi Levi festival (from 20 August to 30 August, 2010). During the festival we made a request to the city for an extension of the lease contract without rent for another year, or until the land was sold. That was how a cultural art festival helped us open the doors to the abandoned construction site, and how we entered into a dialogue with the city for the temporary use of land.

Art and culture can be tool which opens certain doors that are otherwise hard to open. In our case, those doors were the municipal doors, mainly the department for managing real-estate. This department gave us permission for the free use of land for a period of two weeks during the festival. After that step it was easier to enter into a contract for the period of one year for the temporary use of land without rent. In any case, the city made temporary use possible, which it otherwise rarely supports. Furthermore, this contract was also made possible by the personal support of deputy mayor and architect Janez Koželj, with whom we have had professional ties since the project *Ready 2 Change* (2004), and even before that, as he was advisor to both Apolonija Šušteršič and myself for several years at the Faculty of Architecture.

Regardless of the background of how we attained temporary use of this land it is necessary to emphasise that an artistic context can clearly be the key to establishing community spaces and socially engaged projects which, in usual conditions, are more difficult to carry out. For example, in 1991 even the previously mentioned *Network for Metelkova* referred extensively to the lack of space for its cultural programme and downplayed the social dimension of the project, "because the 'authorities' are significantly more suspicious of the entering of new social models of work."¹⁰⁴ The Urban Furrows (Urbane Brazde) initiative, which among other things also

¹⁰⁴ Drago Kos, *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov* (Rationality of informal spaces), Fakulteta za družbene vede, Univerza v Ljubljani, 1993, pg. 211.

established a community garden in Maribor (the Community Urban Eco Garden) succeeded in carrying out its ambitious ecological social programme in the context of The European Capital of Culture – Maribor 2012 programme.

Many other neighbourhood revitalisation projects also include art institutions and artists into the process. Artists are invited to carry out an art project within the neighbourhood, and often a sculpture or art intervention is expected, which leaves behind a physical transformation of the space. However, critical artists can also take advantage of the invitation and carry out various kinds of participatory and community based projects. Among other such examples, that is how the following projects were created: *The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour*,¹⁰⁵ a community garden and community kitchen in a residential neighbourhood of Amsterdam (2008-2009), and the project Hustadt Project¹⁰⁶ (2008-present), a community pavilion and other activities (HU Caffee) in the Hustadt neighbourhood within the German city of Bochum.

8.6 The Temporary Use of Space in Ljubljana

The contract for the temporary free use of land between us and the city is an important step in the direction of making the temporary use in Ljubljana more wide-spread. It shows that the city can overcome its distrust towards temporary users. The city has a very cautious attitude towards temporary use, and practices it mainly by supporting short-term use, such as the temporary use of city property for a single event, lasting one or two days. In our case the first permission we received was for two weeks, during a cultural festival. I interpret this refusal to permit temporary use more often, or even systematically, as the city's fear of losing control (what if the tenants want to stay forever?), but also as an expression of the city bureaucracy's inflexibility when it comes to a way of working that differs from the usual (the creation of new contracts, making adjustments for specific cases, official changes in procedure, etc.). The city is oriented toward the commercial rent and sale of their real estate, even if there is no interest or sources for commercial renting or buying. And there is even a preference not to use unoccupied and empty city property for projects that are socially useful. Temporary use is, as can be seen from our example, possible to arrange with a contract, which the city can use to protect itself. Temporary use encourages individuals or groups who see the possibility of temporary work in an empty space. Often this temporary work is also linked to the desire for less regulated and less formalised work, which enables the testing and the development of new models of co-existing and production. Naturally, this is mainly in the interests of the residents who need this

¹⁰⁵ *The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour*, was created between 2008-2010 in collaboration with *Wilde Westen* (Lucia Babina, Reinder Bakker, Hester van Dijk, Sylvain Hartenberg, Merijn Oudenapsen, Eva Pfannes, Henriette Waal), architect and artist Marjetica Potrč, and the Stedelijk Museum from Amsterdam.

¹⁰⁶ The Hustadt Project started as an invitation of architect and artist Apolonija Šušteršič to produce an artwork in the Hustadt neighbourhood in the German city of Bochum in 2008. This long-term project based on the participation of residents became the central artwork of her Ph.D. thesis at the Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts in Malmö in at Lund University in Sweden.

Apolonija Šušteršič, *Hustadt, Inshallah, Learning from a participatory art project in trans-local neighbourhood*, Malmö Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University, Sweden, 2013.

space, and less so for the city. However, the city also benefits from temporary activities on certain spaces. For example, it is through the temporary use of the city's real-estate (buildings, land) and with agreements with the city, that these spaces are more protected from decaying. Degraded areas are temporarily revitalised and, in the case of community gardens, also beautified and made more green.

All appropriations of city land (allotments) and buildings (squatting) are illegal. In the case of illegal allotment gardens, which in actual fact only occupy an open-space piece of land, working illegally without an agreement with the city is not so problematic for the user. If a building is occupied (the occupation of the Rog factory is an example from the time of the current city administration), this non-cooperation with the city makes creative endeavours much more difficult. Namely, without water, electricity, and heating, which is how a group of artists and enthusiasts associated with the *Cirkulacija 2* art group and others in the factory building have been working for eight years, conditions for long-term work are impossible. In Slovenia, the multi-layered treatment of the potentials of the temporary use of space were important activities for the informal group *TEMP* (2004–06), which combined students of architecture, art, and social and humanistic studies. In 2006, along with the Political Laboratory and a number of other groups and individuals, *TEMP* members were some of the initiators for the temporary use of the former Rog factory for non-profit and unestablished activities. The temporary use of the Rog factory was undoubtedly one of the largest and most important examples of its kind in Slovenia, but due to the lack of political will, the impossibility of reaching a written agreement between the owner (the Municipality of Ljubljana) and the users, and the consequentially poor conditions (eight years of no electricity, heating, running water, or working sewage), it is also one of the most conflicted.

One of the first systematic research projects on the specifics of the temporary use of space in a European context was *Urban Catalysts: Strategies for temporary uses – potential for development of urban residual areas in European metropolises* (2001–03). One of the results of the project was the establishment in Berlin of the working interdisciplinary platform *Urban Catalysts*, which continues with projects, research work, and publications on this topic.¹⁰⁷ Once again Cuba is an interesting example, where temporary use is based on the concept of “usufruct” (the right to use a thing and the right to derive profit from it, but not the right to sell, alter, or destroy it), which was used to formalise the status of urban farming. With the help of “usufruct” urban farmers received the right to use land for the production of food. This right is removed either when produce is no longer grown on the land, or upon the wish of the owner (in this case, the state) to use the land for other purposes. This method expresses the imperative

¹⁰⁷ *Prostori sodelovanja (Spaces of collaboration)*, May 2014, vol. 1, no. 1, Mreža za prostor, Ljubljana, pg. 10 <http://prostorisodelovanja.si/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/prostori-sodelovanja.pdf>. In Slovenian. (21.9.2014b).

that food is produced on the land and also the assurance that the land remain available for urban development when the “good times” return.¹⁰⁸

Why Negotiate with the City?

Often, when I present *Beyond a Construction Site* to the public, I am asked why we did not simply occupy the land, like the “green guerrillas”. It is important to stress that our intervention was in the first place oriented towards the neighbourhood residents. We didn’t want to involve them in some illegal and uncertain relationships and situations. Also, we made our decision to collaborate with the city with the conscious goal of wanting to influence changes within the city’s administration. We believe that a dialogue with the city, and the creation of different agreements between the city and its residents leads to the possibility of alternative forms of cooperation (such as our “exception”) becoming something more common in time. If we would have started a war with the city through the illegal occupation of the location, this fight would have obviously also been more of a direct political action. Rather, together with local residents we set foot on our terrain, which we occupy legally (achieved in a process of negotiations beforehand), and direct all attention to the process of the transformation of this land by means of a community action.

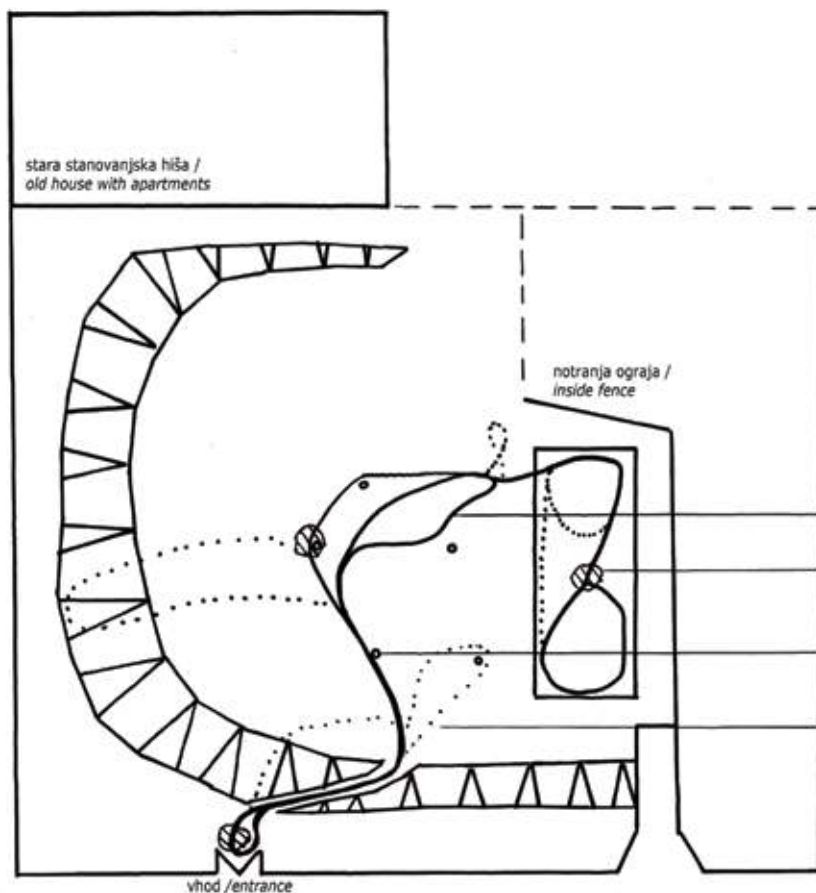
As can be seen in Ljubljana, our example has not yet made it easier to access land on a temporary basis. What our initiative *Beyond a Construction Site* has co-created is a connection with existing related initiatives within the city (and also within Slovenia) and abroad. The most active exchange and collaboration is taking place in the context of *Mreža za prostor* (Network for Space).¹⁰⁹ Currently, within *Mreža za prostor*, the representatives of several NGO’s are preparing proposals for other Slovene cities to support the temporary use of space. By connecting with and learning from each other, the possibility for more easily establishing temporary use for civil initiatives is looking up.

¹⁰⁸ Bohn & Viljoen Architects, Laboratories for Urban Agriculture: Havana to Milwaukee, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architecturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 229.

¹⁰⁹ <http://mrezaprostor.si/> (18.9.2014a).



Polonca Lovšin, *A Plan with a Goat*, 2010
Photo by: Tomaž Tomažin, August 2010



Dan s kozo / A Day with a Goat

Kraj / Place:

Mirujoče gradbišče Resljeva, Ljubljana /
Non active construction site, Ljubljana

Datum / Date:

31. Avgust / 31 August, 2010

Čas Trajanja / Duration:

7 ur / 7 hours

Po divje zaraščenem terenu sem sledila kozi cel dan
in zarisovala njene poti. Ta načrt naj bi služil kot
osnova za nov načrt pozidave lokacije.

*I followed the goat around an entire day,
charting a map of her movements.
I propose using the paths made by the goat
to design a new architectural plan for the area.*

- A** pogosto uporabljene poti /
frequently used paths
- B** prostori kjer je koza ležala /
places where the goat was
resting
- C** vrba, s katere je koza jedla lubje /
the goat was eating bark from this
willow tree
- D** samo enkrat uporabljene poti /
paths used only once

8.7 Space without a Plan, and a Plan with a Goat

Since there are two architects in our group (*Kud Obrat*), our decision to begin organising the space without a plan was not an obvious one. For typical architects, designing a space without a plan is nightmare: it represents the loss of control and supervision, and even a negation of the profession of architecture. For us this was an alternative approach, and an experiment and test of the organisation of space. Our decision to create a space without a plan represented, as its background, an opposition to official urban planning. Our alternative was an actual physical example, and much different than the sharp criticism of existing conditions within urban planning done by the provocative test group British Intellectuals behind *Non-Plan*.¹¹⁰ Though it only remained theoretical in nature, *Non-Plan* was an expression of the dissatisfaction of its authors with the results of architecture and architectural planning of the time, and reflected the fact that they believed the results could be much better if they “planned without a plan”. The text caused polemics and discussions among architects and urbanists, as it was very provocative and directed towards the questioning of architectural practices at their very foundations.

Some of our members were familiar with the text *Non-Plan*, but I was not. Nevertheless, in 2010, in the first weeks following the opening of *Beyond a Construction Site*, I carried out the spatial action *A Day with a goat*.¹¹¹ For an entire day I followed a goat through the overgrown land of the construction site and made notes of its movements. Hana the goat explored the terrain and, characteristic for a goat, could not stay still. Also characteristic of a goat, she ate constantly, which partially helped to clean up our overgrown land. On the basis of her movements I created an alternative plan of the path to the land. In that way, “without a plan”, the *Plan with a Goat* was a provocation of the rationality of planning; an experiment which questions the role of the architect and the possibilities of an improvised creation of space. Also, the *Plan with a Goat* was a tribute to nature and the knowledge of our predecessors, who often also used animals when choosing land, setting up pathways, building houses, and arranging spaces. In precisely the same way my intention was at least an imaginary rehabilitation of the relationship between humans and domesticated animals in an urban environment. The growth of cities and protection from the wild has resulted in people yearning for the countryside and wild nature. “Economic independence of animal power and urban isolation from animal farming had nourished emotional attitudes which were hard if not impossible to reconcile with the exploitation of animals by which most people lived. Henceforth an increasingly sentimental view of animals as pets and objects of contemplation would jostle uneasily alongside the harsh facts of the world in which elimination of ‘pests’ and the breeding of animals for slaughter grew more efficient

¹¹⁰ “In 1969, Cedric Price (architect) with Paul Barker (writer), Reyner Banham (architecture historian) and Peter Hall (geographer and planner) published ‘Non-Plan: an experiment in freedom’, an article in a social affairs magazine titled *New Society* [...]. The major premise behind *Non-Plan* was when ‘professionals’ were designing communities they should think before telling other people how they should live, because everyone has their own preferences and ideas. *Non-Plan* explored ways of involving people in the design of their environments by circumventing planning bureaucracy and letting the people shape the environment they want to live and work in.”

<http://tumblr.radarq.net/post/45777874461/non-plan-cedric-price> (18.9.2014).

¹¹¹ Due to the text *Non-Plan*, with which I share the basic idea of questioning established practices of spatial planning, I have changed the title of my artwork that included a goat from *A Day with a Goat* to *A Plan with a Goat*.

everyday.”¹¹² The action with a goat also showed a sustainable model of maintaining public spaces in today’s city. Namely, allowing goats and sheep to graze on public green spaces is emerging as a practice for the maintenance of green city areas. It reduces the costs of the city, and through the grazing of sheep, co-creates a sustainable city. From this there are all-around benefits for the city and the owners of the herd, as it is the most natural, simple, and economic way of managing green spaces. With grazing on public green spaces, cutting the grass is free, the goats are full, and the land is fertilised.

When I observe our community garden today I see that the garden beds could be a little closer together, which would have allowed for more garden beds – if I had had a plan. I am happy when I see that each garden bed is slightly different, in terms of overall size and shape, which is to be expected since everyone made their own – naturally, without a plan. Designing the space without a plan also introduced another important component into our management of the space. Since we worked without a plan, at every spatial intervention we had discussions and coordinated our opinions. In the same way as is characteristic for every informal kind of architecture, which works on the principles of verbal agreements, this applied to us as well. This extensive discussing, disagreeing and agreeing resulted in us socialising much more, speaking much more, and in that way we simply became both more connected to each other, and more of a community.

8.8 Creating a Space Together – Participation?

From the very beginning we were aware of the fact that our main role was to get the nearby residents enthusiastic about getting involved. Creating a community space is possible only with a group action, and the residents are the ones who will breathe life into the project, keep it going, and make the project last. So, our role was to kick off the initiative and encourage it with the goal of seeing it live on its own, in time. I can say that initiatives which set in motion community spaces see themselves as tools for change, catalysers of ideas, and mediators between the city and the residents. According to anthropologist and geographer David Harvey, who will be mentioned later in this paper, “When you ask yourself what kind of city do we want to live in, that cannot be divorced from the issue of what kind of people do we want to be, and how do we want to be. Therefore it is the remaking of ourselves and the remaking of the world around us which goes hand in hand [...]. We need to build a common property sensibility and a commons, and to encourage democratic practices in the city, and we need to encourage people coming together and discussing and deciding on what shall or shall not happen, and how it shall happen, in a particular area or in the city as a whole. So, having assemblies seems to me to be one of the democratic ways, but in order to have assemblies you need to have spaces open

¹¹² Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, Changing attitudes in England 1500-1800, Oxford University press, Oxford, 1984. pg. 301.

where you can easily assemble. And we should have a public right to that.”¹¹³

Since we do not live in the Tabor neighbourhood, and we knew it only at a glance, our first steps were to research and observe the environment. By snooping around the fence, having fleeting conversations with residents, and with a conspicuously extended period of loitering at the location and taking photographs, we soon experienced the local “surveillance”: an energetic middle-aged woman and resident in an apartment house at the edge of the construction site, who was the first critic of the existing degraded land. She would look at that piece of land through her windows and was exceptionally dissatisfied with the garbage dump into which the construction site had transformed. She was an important person who connected us, people who were not from those parts, with the location and a large portion of its history.



A collective working day in the garden
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, September 2014

¹¹³ *ECF Interviews David Harvey*, Teatro Valle Occupato, Rome, 28.9.2013.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> (18.9.2014).

Participation

The method of work which we wanted was to create a space together, right from the start, by including neighbourhood residents. We wished to develop the process as democratically as possible, with group agreements and a group action. In architecture this method would be called participation;¹¹⁴ in art there is a variety of expressions, from relational art, socially engaged and political art to participatory art. I will remain with the latter. We did not view participation naively. We knew that participation in art, architecture, and urbanism had become an institutionalised practice. As such it is a formalised and organised procedure and often a tool of manipulation. As the architect Jeremy Till¹¹⁵ says, “One must be clearly aware of the fact that a part of all participatory processes is the various degrees of inclusion: from apparent participation to that which is completely controlled by the citizens.”¹¹⁶

Our autonomous decision-making and leadership of the process was significant, as we had started our initiative *Beyond a Construction Site* entirely on our own self-initiative, thereby maintaining a great degree of autonomy. The project was not financed by an investor, this was not a course in architecture, a commissioned sociological research project, or a revitalisation project initiated or commissioned by an art institution. The only obligations we had tied us to the owner of the land, to the city, and to the non-profit organisation Bunker, which co-financed the development of the project in the first two years. The city did not expect anything specific, and Bunker had a similar ideas to ours on how the project should develop. Their co-production share was symbolic for such a large and long-term project. So, the freedom to think about the location without prior suggestions, without professional limitations, and without a deadline for the completion of the project all contributed to letting us work without interruption and without pressure. That is why we were able to develop the project gradually, through a process of transformation, which is still continuing. For our group of initiators this was by all means both a serious and playful experiment. It was a trial, a test, which would not have been possible in its current form if we had been under any kind of pressure.

The first organised gathering with the residents from the neighbourhood was a meeting in front of the closed metal fence, at the place where we later made our entrance to the construction-site-garden. The response was small, all the participants from the neighbourhood had the common viewpoint that the abandoned construction site in the middle of their neighbourhood

¹¹⁴ It is precisely because of our community garden that co-founders Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič accepted the invitation of Miha Dešman, chief editor of a magazine for the theory of architecture, to become editors of a special volume. The content of this volume contains a variety of texts and practical examples that highlight and question the importance of participation in architecture, urbanism, and art today.

Participacija/Participation editors Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič, Arhitektov bilten mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture (Architect's Bulletin, International magazine for Theory of Architecture), volume 188.189, Anno XXXLI, Ljubljana, July 2011.

¹¹⁵ Jeremy Till is co-author of the books *Architecture and Participation* (2005) and *Flexible Housing* (2007), and author of *Architecture Depends* (2009). Together with Tatjana Schneider and Nishat Awan He is a co-founder of online archive Spatial Agency (<http://www.spatialagency.net/>). This is an archive of texts and architectural case studies from the past and from today that attempt to present ways of thinking and building architecture in a different way. The authors have recently published a book based on the archive: *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture* (2013).

¹¹⁶ Jeremy Till, *The Negotiation of Hope (Pogajanje z upanjem)*, published in *Participacija/Participation* editors Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič, Arhitektov bilten mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture (Architect's Bulletin, International magazine for Theory of Architecture), volume 188.189, Anno XXXLI, Ljubljana, July 2011, pg. 12.

was unacceptable and that they supported changes for the better. We presented the participants with our wish for the space to become accessible and encouraged those cooperating to tell us their desires, and share their concerns and ideas for this location. Through the perspective of various opinions, criticisms of the city and the state, we came to know the common desire of all: that the residents felt a lack of greenery and spaces for socialising. There is a lack of greenery in this part of the neighbourhood, it is visible on first sight, and it became a motive for the creation of our community garden.

Building up a Community by Building up a Community Space

In the *Kud Obrat* collective text for the publication *Hands on Urbanism* we wrote that “the concept of community that we try to follow is one of a form of relationships, rather than a unified, homogeneous entity (a collective). A unified community erases differences and contradictions, as well as the productive conflicts and negotiations that are necessarily connected with the aim of sharing (space, tools, water, etc.). This aspect of conflict and negotiation is crucial, for it has to do with managing the relationships among differences, rather than affirming commonalities based on similarities.”¹¹⁷ The first major conflict we experienced within our community happened in the second season. It stemmed from a lack of respect for the freedom to use different approaches when cultivating the land and growing vegetables. Among us there are people who cultivate their gardens in the traditional way, as they learned at home on the farm. Other participants have some expertise from agronomy and permaculture. Our rules do not reject either method. We do however encourage ecological and organic growing without the use of pesticides and other chemicals. When intolerance flared up on the part of one gardener with regard to another gardener’s different methods, we called a meeting. We spoke about the onset of the conflict and agreed that tolerance of difference in the most important thing. The gardener who only wanted to do things her way decided on her own accord to leave our community. The rest of us continued our work together on our community garden.

The importance of working with people was also highlighted by the co-organiser of the *Emona Vrtniček Allotment Gardening Association*, Anka Oblak. In her view the most important thing in managing the allotment gardening association was actually working with people.

¹¹⁷ Kud Obrat, *Beyond a Construction Site: A Community-Based Garden Intervention in a Neglected Urban Space in Ljubljana*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 327.



The first meeting with the people from the neighbourhood in front of the closed construction site
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, August 2010

When Do the Initiators Step Aside?

All participants in community gardens are faced with conflicts within the group. Through conflicts and attempts to solve them the community is built up and grows stronger, along with the level of self-organisation. If we look at the organisational structure of our community garden we are the initiators (which are many times also the contract holders for lease of the land) and there are participants/members who joined the project as time went on. Even though we sought to avoid a hierarchy, and put forth a constant effort to remain a group of equal participants, there remains this fact of our basic and initial structure. With regard to that, the initiators of such spaces often ask themselves if the level of self-organisation in the new community is sufficiently high for them to step aside and for the space to function without them, run by the participants themselves. In other words, is the self-built community strong enough to take over organisation and coordination, and run things in a smooth and collaborative way? Lucija Babina, the cultural activist who was the co-creator of a community garden in Amsterdam in 2008,

thinks that as initiators they withdrew from their community garden prematurely. In her text¹¹⁸ she reflects on the short life of their garden and feels that a partial reason for the end of their community project was that they did not provide sufficient encouragement and did not wait for the residents to connect with each other and form a strong community. The group *aaa*, which initiated a community garden in Paris in 2001, withdrew from the process of self-organisation after three years. The community was strong enough to continue working despite the fact that in the next seven years they twice changed the location of the community garden within the neighbourhood. Even Miroslav Dudlak, the initiator of a community garden in Bratislava which was created in 2013, attests to the fact that all the work of coordinating the community is on his shoulders, and that for the time being the people from the community garden are still not ready to take over the responsibility and coordination. Matej Zonta from the community garden in Maribor left the garden as organiser after the official opening of the garden in the spring of 2012. Today the coordination of the large community garden is divided into groups which gather at the common garden sheds (there are eight at the garden). The community garden is still functioning, but there are major conflicts within the community, which will be difficult to overcome for the young group.

Two years after the start of our community garden we also began the process of stepping aside. We believed that the process of withdrawing from the organisation of gardening organisation would enforce self-organisation among participants. The first step which we tried to take was to gradually transfer the coordination of basic obligations which affect the garden to the participants-gardeners. This included door repairs, ordering water, ordering additional soil, and the organisation of group work actions. The first steps were already difficult, as people did not want to take on additional duties, either because they felt that they were not capable or because they felt they did not have enough time. It was with difficulty that we chose new coordinators for the spring of 2013. If we want our community garden to continue developing towards the goal of creating a strong self-organised community, with empowered individuals, we the initiators from *Kud Obrat* should remain present for a while longer.

8.9 The Long and Slow Process of Urbanism from the Bottom up

It is clear to all of us that interventions in city space are successful and durable only when local residents are included. With their cooperation from the beginning of the initiative, and by taking care of both their own and shared garden beds – not to mention by taking part in the shared management of the space and participation in many of the parallel activities which take place alongside the main one – a common space is created in both a physical and social sense. This is how we adopt a space, make it familiar, and begin to belong to it. The greatest difficulty when creating community projects, which we soon also faced ourselves, is a lack of interest on the

¹¹⁸ Lucia Babina, *Disappointed Hopes for a Successful Idea. A critical self-reflection on the aspirations, accomplishments and obstructions of an empowering community*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 290-296.

part of residents to get involved. From August 2010 to the spring of 2011 our activities at the construction site were carried out with the participation of only a small number of residents. On many Saturdays, over the course of several months, there were maybe seven or eight of us cleaning up the terrain, building an accessible pathway, hauling soil, and designing the first garden beds. Only one person from the neighbourhood took part in these first actions. For half a year we asked ourselves why people were not getting involved, even though many of those passing by or attending our meetings supported the project.

The already somewhat desperate call to residents¹¹⁹ in March 2011 to come and make their garden beds encountered a good response. On Saturday, March 26, 2011, we were joined by twenty residents, and on the same day they began to construct their garden beds. From then on I felt that the project had taken root. The continuation of the process still awaited us, but the cooperation of residents from the neighbourhood had been established.

It is clear that the reasons for residents' interest differ from location to location, and from city to city. The political system, city politics, social make-up of the neighbourhood, reality of the economic crisis, and a modern crisis of values are all urban realities and part of the background. David Harvey sees the reasons for the passivity of city residents in their alienation from everything: from the system, politics, from one's own vocation, from processes of work, and from the environment. Alienation came about in the process which took place in consumer societies in the 1930s and 1940s. "In searching [...] nobody is absolutely clear what these new values might look like [...]. All we do know with certainty is the values are not those which are given by the monetary calculus, they are not those given by conspicuous consumption, and they are not those given by neediness of the mass of the population, it is an alternative way of creating meaning in people's lives."¹²⁰

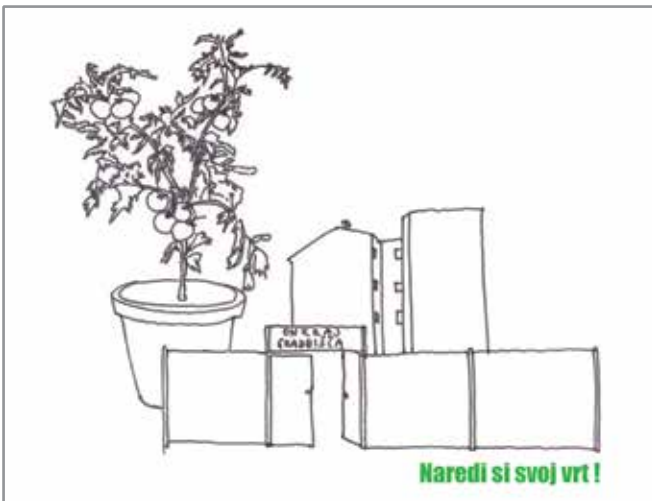
The consumerism in the socialist system, which we Slovenians lived in, did not leave its mark on us like Americans, and here I feel it is important to ask how the cooperation of the residents and their inclusion into a community gardens was influenced by the previous political system – socialism. During the time of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945-1991) the political system of socialist self-management relied on self-managing democracy and the pluralism of interests. The values of self-management and democratic group-based decision making are present in many community projects taking place in cities.

From our experiences with *Beyond a Construction Site* we know that the creation of a community space and community is a long-lasting process. Local residents needed time to begin trusting in this initiative and to join in at a certain time. Simultaneously, as the initiators,

¹¹⁹ Approximately twenty residents from the neighbourhood responded to our invitation *Naredi si svoj vrt?* (Make your own garden?) and brought new momentum to the project *Beyond a Construction Site*. At this meeting we presented the initiative and the three basic rules of sharing space: each of us makes his/her own garden bed (or helps if he/she is not capable of doing it alone); no chemical agents are permitted for gardening; in addition to taking care of individual garden beds each participant, according to his/her ability also takes care of the community space. By signing our declaration, the participants committed themselves to the remaining agreed upon rules and received keys to the front door and garden shed, where we store and share tools for gardening. http://onkrajgradbisca.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/onkraj_dopolnjen_11.pdf (4.6.2014).

¹²⁰ *ECF Interviews David Harvey*, Teatro Valle Occupato, Rim, 28.9.2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> (18.9..2014).

we also required time to test out various methods which would appeal to the residents. The methods we used were simple and everyday, from invitations to group actions thrown in their mailboxes, conversations with people from the streets, the organisation of specific public events at the location (such as the identification of useful wild plants at the construction site which were already growing there) to the art action with a goat (section 8.7). The residents followed our working campaigns and constant presence at the location through the windows of their apartments, but at first they still would not join in. It was only when we invited people to come and make their own gardens that they came. My feeling is that initially we spoke too abstractly: “Come and join us to create a green space together!” They probably had difficulties conceiving of such notions: *What is a collective green space anyways? How will we create a green space together?*



An invitation to residents: Make your own garden!
Designed by: Polonca Lovšin, March 2010



The third meeting with the people
from the neighbourhood
Photo by: Kud Obrat archive, March 2010.



Making the first garden beds
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, March 2010.

Between the Individual and the Collective

So, it was only when we invited the residents to create their own individual gardens in a shared space that they responded in greater numbers. Then it was clear to them, that each would have their own little piece of the garden. Simultaneously they were also open to suggestions and prepared to accept and, together with us, to realise the idea of a community space and mutual cooperation. The residents who first joined were very courageous. They had no idea what they were getting into, as our community garden is the first of its kind in Ljubljana and Slovenia. We started with nothing, without a similar example in Ljubljana which we could refer to. Right from the start we also warned everyone who joined that we might be on this land for only a year if it was sold by the city. Since they had to make their garden beds themselves, haul in soil, help to construct the common pathways, stairs, and many other things, they invested a significantly larger amount of time into the community garden than many are prepared to invest in the common good – and that without any guarantee that they would be able to remain on that location for more than one season. But did they really have no idea what they were getting into? What about Slovenia's past political and socialist system, and its existing or previous ideas of self-management?

Since community property and self-management was favoured in Yugoslavia, I find it interesting that community gardens did not develop during socialism, but rather that allotment gardening appeared in the form of individual allotments. Individual allotments enabled an urgent retreat into a private sphere.

As was mentioned in section 4.2, in 1984 Z. Goriup wrote that individual allotment gardens came to represent the narrow-minded mentality of smaller private ownership, the negative revival of land ownership atavisms, closing oneself off into their own personal sphere, and a retreat from collective interests. Even Anka Oblak and Pavle Šegula, the leaders of the Emona Vrtniček allotment gardening association and the Allotment Gardening University, were

interrogated by the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Slovenia (Socialistična zveza delovnega ljudstva Slovenije – SZDLS). There they were questioned about their political convictions and accused of “taking people away from political work and making them rely on a hoe.”

Even more than in former Yugoslavia, allotments were needed as places of escape. In East Germany the political system put greater pressure on their citizens, and social and political surveillance was a constant pressure and fear. Since also allotments were also not popular with the East German socialist party, there was even an attempt to change the model of individual allotments into collective gardening. In the newly built City of Stalinstadt in the beginning of the 1950s planners included “common orchards” into the blueprints, where allotment plots might have otherwise appeared.

Architect and sociologist Blaž Križnik of the younger generation feels that the previous socialist system left traces on the younger generation and highlighted the *Community Urban Eco Garden* in Maribor and the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* as examples of the successful functioning of civil society at the local level. “Both examples are partially modelled on the tradition of allotment gardening, village communities, and the self-management of local communities. Naturally, here we are not talking about a non-critical romanticising of our past community-based life in the Slovenian countryside, nor is this nostalgia for the self-management of Yugoslavian socialism. This is simply about positive experiences and knowledge connected with civic co-liability, self-management, and group decision making at the local level, which is not unknown in Slovenia and therefore cannot be contemptuously rejected as an impossible utopia. A reason for the latter probably lies in the fact that an emphasis on cooperation instead of competition, or the common good instead of individual privileges, is incompatible with the values of the political class.”¹²¹

Since the idea of the co-creation of a community is at the forefront of those initiating community gardens, that theoretical and already almost political desire can lead to the community garden becoming something ideological. This is something I learned from the case of the community garden in Maribor (2012), presented in the film *Green Utopia (Zelene utopije)*.¹²² The community, as can be seen in the film, and as was presented after the public screening of the film in Ljubljana by one of the initiators, Matej Zonta, gave me a lot to think about. Along with the majority of the audience, I was disappointed in the lack of solidarity of the allotment gardeners

¹²¹ Blaž Križnik is an architect and sociologist, and a researcher at Inštitut za politike prostora (Institute for the politics of Space) in Ljubljana. Currently he is a professor at Kwangwoon University in Seoul.

Blaž Križnik, *Demokratizacija vsakdanjega življenja in neoliberalni prevrat* (Democratization of Everyday Life and a Neoliberal Coup), published on the blog of civic responsibility under the heading columns, 13.3.2013. <http://ipop.si/2013/03/13/demokratizacija-vsakdanjega-zivljenja/> (18.9. 2014).

¹²² The movie *Zelene utopije* (Green utopia) was created between 2012 and 2013. It follows the creation of the *Community Eco Urban Garden* in Maribor, which was opened in 2012. The premier of the film in Ljubljana took place on 7 January, 2014. After the screening a public presentation by the authors of the movie and initiators of the community garden was organised. The speakers were Urška Jurman (*Beyond a Construction Site*), Matej Zonta (Project Coordinator for Urban Gardening), Marko Kumer-Murč (director, screenplay) and Urban Zorko (director, screenplay). The movie was produced by the Smehomat Production Association and in co-production with the Maribor 2012, European Capital of Culture project.

who blindly followed the extensive rulebook, forgetting about helping their neighbours, and any tolerance of difference. It became clear to me that all spatial solutions which symbolise a shared and community spirit of tolerance and open minded thinking without limits (for example, common sheds with common tools, allotments without fences), are still no guarantee that the community of gardeners will demonstrate solidarity and tolerance, or that the atmosphere will be a pleasant one. In Maribor initiators of the community garden organised meetings for participants, educated their new gardeners in ecological gardening, and got them involved in communal work, and yet 6-12 months of collaboration was not enough to create a strong, tolerant, and independent community. What we have learned from our example is that any long-lasting process must come from at least several years of continuous work.

Instead of a Public Space, a Community Garden

The success of the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* in the centre of Ljubljana, which is already in its fourth year of operations, is proof that the city needs to re-define public spaces. The space which we have created together is no longer a public space, which it was before it became a fenced in plot of land, but a common space which we share with each other. So, the successful work of this community garden over the course of several years is something I understand as an indicator that these kinds of spaces are needed by the residents of Ljubljana. This community space which we have designed is not a public space in the purest sense; some residents are included in it, while others are not. *Beyond a Construction Site*, which on the basis of its four-year existence has proved to be exceptionally desirable, offers an alternative to public city spaces and green city spaces, but due to its success it also demands reflection and a redefinition of public space. In that regard, our example confirms that residents feel good in a partially closed and partially open community space, which they can develop and manage themselves, in smaller groups of people, and on a green working landscape which is not only nice to look at but useful (or edible). All if this is what this community space – a community garden – has to offer. With our example of a community space, non-functional public spaces in the city seem even more thoughtless. An example of such a poorly planned public space is the square of the Ethnographic Museum at Metelkova, which is in the direct vicinity of our garden. This example once again shows a disconnection between what the architect imagines people need, and what they actually need. Since its opening in 2004, there have been numerous attempts to breathe life into the space I am speaking of, which shows that it was not planned in such a way as to encourage spontaneous interactions among residents. In order for the parking garage to be built during the renovations that took place there, the existing old chestnut trees in the square of Metelkova had to be cut down. Their replacements are little trees planted in wooden boxes, which cast a shadow just a finger wide. The administration buildings of several museums are located here, and the Ethnographic Museum, the National Museum and the Museum of Contemporary Arts use the space for their public programme, but still the square

is more or less lifeless. In the summer the square is a bleached white area baked by the sun, which people try to avoid as much as possible. The organically designed decorative pool is empty, because its construction was carried out so poorly that whenever there is water inside it soaks the basement archives below. And to make no mistake, this public space has been open since 2004.

So, the community garden shows the need for a redefinition of public space and the large need for a greater number of community spaces, and quality public spaces. Also, the community garden goes a step further than a community space. Working hard with our own hands, we have transformed the abandoned land in the centre of the city into “edible” land in the centre of the neighbourhood, into a community vegetable garden. This green space is a garden oasis with 40 small vegetable gardens and where residents come in their free time to grow vegetables and socialise. The idea that public green spaces in the city are intended for leisure is an old one. The same can be said for a landscape for leisure time, where only beautiful but inedible plants grow. As for developing community spaces instead of public spaces a more visionary idea for the future of Ljubljana would be to encourage the creation of community vegetable gardens in the city centre instead of in public green spaces, and this vision is supported by our community garden example.

Let's Keep it Green

A lack of greenery in the city is a stereotypical complaint of the great majority of city residents everywhere. We can understand this as an eternal dichotomy between nature and culture; between the countryside and the city. Perhaps even the citizens of the world's oldest city Ur satisfied their archetypal need to experience nature as an “original space” (from where we originate) by arranging suburban gardens. Kos says that nature will never be able to replace cities, and, concurrently, the city will never be able to replace nature: “This self-evident fact needs to be emphasised especially because we live in an environment where we still often encounter simplified criticisms of urban space, which offer nothing other than iron, concrete, and asphalt, or as being a kind of grey jungle.”¹²³ Back in 1977 architect Christopher Alexander gave the following instructions to architects and city planners: “Continuous sprawling urbanization destroys life, and makes cities unbearable. But the sheer size of cities is also valuable and potent. Therefore: Keep interlocking fingers of farmland and urban land, even at the centre of the metropolis. The urban fingers should never be more than one mile wide, while the farmland

¹²³ The question of the nature in the city is particularly delicate in the case of Slovenia and Ljubljana. Slovenian sociologists (Drago Kos, Marjan Hočevar, Matjaž Uršič) point out that Slovenians are an anti-urban nation. Drago Kos presents a descriptive example, a comment in the visitors' book at the presentation of design ideas for the most urban and central square in Ljubljana, Prešeren Square. The city proposed a fountain and one of the visitors wrote in the book that instead of a fountain he would prefer that they plant a linden tree and put a bench underneath so that people could relax in the exhausting city.

Drago Kos, *Neurbana nacija* (Non-urban nation) published in *O urbanizmu: Kaj se dogaja s sodobnim mestom?* (On Urbanism: What is Happening with the Contemporary City?), edited by Ilka Čerpes and Miha Dešman, publisher Založba Krtina, Ljubljana 2007, pg. 158-159.

fingers should never be less than one mile wide [...] People feel comfortable when they have access to the countryside, experience open fields, and agriculture; access to wild plants and birds and animals. When the countryside is far away the city becomes a prison.”¹²⁴



Celebrating the first year of the garden's existence
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, November 2011

¹²⁴ Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein, *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1977, pg. 22.



Poster on the entrance doors:
Politično udejstvovanje vrtičkarjev,
 Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, November 2013

8.10 The Political Activity of Allotment Gardeners

In the fall of 2013 someone put a poster on the entrance doors to our community garden: *The Political Activity of Allotment Gardeners*. Here we must once again clear up the terminology being used. From his text, it was clear that the author was referring to urban gardens in general (allotments and community gardens), though the title only makes mention of allotments.

This was a professional text by an anonymous author published in the form of a poster (A2 format). In the text, on the topic of our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, the author had written his thoughts on the activities of our allotment gardening community and praised its social and political dimension. “Guerrilla gardening opens up spaces. It represents an urban-ecological intervention, and its goal is the transformation of public spaces and the integration of communities. At the same time it is a political statement which indicates the possibilities for social change and includes the creation and articulation of new forms of political subjectivity. As Negri would say, it is a renewed occupation of the public in the name of the group.”¹²⁵ I immediately recalled a beautiful thought of Zdenka Goriup’s from her first research work on allotment gardening in Ljubljana, which had captured me completely and crystallised my thoughts regarding allotment gardening. Namely, Zdenka Goriup was an architect and she approved of allotment gardening in the city and recognised its potential. In this positive perspective on allotment gardening she also wrote this thought, which contains the political element that the article from the poster on our doors mentioned: “In a transparent and convincing way, allotment gardening shows how, with our own power, we can take care of our ‘needs’. For most people today, due to a sharp separation of functions (apartment, work, consumption, education, and enjoyment of free time) this has become hard to understand. A garden therefore leads to independent and creative work, and a sharp perspective on all that is

¹²⁵ This text was copied from a photo of poster fixed on the door of our community garden in November 2013. Later we found out that the poster was written in the context of *Tribuna* (a newspaper, which with a few gaps has been published continuously from since 1951 by a student organisation at the University of Ljubljana). The autumn issue 2013 was not printed in classical way, but texts in the form of posters were posted around the city with the contents of the article connected to the context of the location. Finally, last month (June 2014) the on-line newspaper *Tribuna* posted a link to the text’s author, Armando Garcia Teixeira. The poster from our entrance door was also an interesting example of how the different theoretical and practical issues of this community garden are communicated with the neighbourhood (within and without).
<http://www.tribuna.si/articles/politico-delovanje-vrtickarjev> (12.6.2014).

alive and beautiful. It represents the antipode of a world in which everything is obtained without effort, and which turns many away from doing something themselves.”¹²⁶ This statement has a lot in common with the passivity of people, which has supposedly come about because of several decades of consumerism, and which, according to Goriup, discourages many from doing something themselves. At the same time I have already emphasised several times that in our prior socialist system individual allotment gardeners were understood as individualists who were only doing something for themselves and not for the community (Z. Goriup, 1984), and that gardening and working with the earth was taking people away from political work, which was what the *Allotment Gardening University* (1984-1998) was accused of.

The Political Can Be Seen in Each Small Step, in Each Decision

I agree that our community garden makes a more open, undetermined kind of engagement possible for individuals, and that this can take place within a different, more open, and informal kind of space and activity than offered by today’s social structures. I only hope that the others who are included feel the same way. All decisions of the project, even small ones, have an important aspect of the political and can be sensed as not only making a different kind of community, but as being part of the project’s social aspects in general. The political is evident in each small step; from how we approached the site and neighbourhood and their residents, what was important for us, who we invited to collaborate, and around which concepts we developed the project. The political is also our attempt to turn attention to the importance of the social and political aspects of architecture and urban planning practices. The anonymous author of the text on our doors was wrong about the idea that our occupation of the space was “guerrilla” in nature. It was not. We had established a dialogue with the city, which is in my opinion an even more piercing and transformative method for the successful and gradual transformation of city policies, through the agreement and support of temporary use.

What Kind of City Do We Want to Live In?

Much more radical was the initiative “Teatro Valle Occupato”¹²⁷ in June 2011, with the occupation of the oldest Italian theatre in Rome. Here artists were able to prevent the theatre’s privatisation, and with this act they sought to warn of an alarming condition within Italian culture and politics. The initiative is committed to making Teatro Valle the first institution to function under the principle of self-governance. They are organising a widely spread campaign searching for public shareholders and gathering the necessary funds to establish the *Foundation for the Valle Theatre as a Common*. In the context of the action and events, which have been organised since the occupations, they invited David Harvey to come and speak and to reflect on their occupation. Harvey has been studying the connection between capital and urbanisation for

¹²⁶ Zdenka Goriup, *Planiranje in urejanje območij malih vrtov (vrtičkov) v Ljubljani* (Planning and Regulating Allotments in Ljubljana), Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije, Ljubljana 1984, pg. 11.

¹²⁷ <http://www.teatrovalleoccupato.it/>. (18.9.2014).

many years and has presented numerous publications and texts the most widespread on humans *Right to the City*. The first to present this demand for a changed and renewed access to urban life was sociologist Henri Lefebvre in his book *Le Droit à la Ville* from 1968, or *The right to the City*, which is now a widespread slogan. As a guest of the occupied theatre, David Harvey emphasised that inclusion into cultural practices enables an alternative way of creating meaning in people's lives. These practices often include a new way of establishing relationships with people, new ways of understanding nature, and a different sensitivity to the urban environment – in terms of how it looks and how we should feel within it, and the idea that we can experiment with everyday life. He continues by saying that this has a lot in common with the idea of “the right to the city”, in the sense that we build a city according to a different image; different from what was given to us, and different from what real-estate intermediaries or large financial institutions want. So, we do not want *that* kind of city, we want a different one, and when we ask about what kind of city we want to live in, we cannot overlook the fact that we are asking ourselves what kind of people we want to be – changing ourselves and changing the world go hand-in-hand.¹²⁸

One hundred years ago Jane Addams saw the future of the city in the city's parks. She saw the city parks as spaces for re-creation, because people of various nationalities and professions could learn tolerance of difference and co-existence in a heterogeneous society, which was characteristic of the modern city. Jane Addams encouraged “cosmic patriotism”: “The patriotism of the modern state must be based not upon consciousness of homogeneity but upon respect of variation, not upon inherited memory but upon trained imagination.”¹²⁹

In the 21st century, community gardens have among others become spaces for learning tolerance of difference, to help empower residents for the kinds of spaces they want in their cities, and also spaces for practising ecology in everyday life.

Growing Food in Cities

At its core, by growing food in cities urban agriculture includes important aspects of the political. By growing our own food we take one step out of the world of consumerism; out of processes which we automatically accepted a decade earlier. My parents never asked about the quality of food produced with the help of industrial agriculture and chemicals. The fact that food was transported from distant countries was not a problem for them. However, now we know that this increases traffic, uses natural resources (fuel), requires the construction of cold storage facilities and transport, and pollutes the environment. Not long ago it was a normal and even considered a part of modern living to buy fresh vegetables and other produce in stores. We did not ask ourselves about what a reduction in prices of produce meant for the local farmer, something

¹²⁸ *ECF Interviews David Harvey*, Teatro Valle Occupato, Rim, 28.9.2013.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> (18.9.2014).

¹²⁹ Jane Addams, *Recreation as Public Function in Urban Communities*, first published in 1912 in the American Journal of Sociology v. XVII, Nr.5, March 1912, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 102-104.

which was done in return for a profit for all those involved in the commercial chain. With our activity of producing local vegetables we are creating another system, and thus we are also influencing the old one. When we do our gardening on abandoned city land – while collecting rainwater, using home grown and autochthonous seeds, and creating compost – we improve the land of the city. By growing our own food we are making determinations about ourselves, our food, and the future of our children. In this way, with small steps, we can also have an influence on the official order of the food chain. “A new food supply structure does not replace a traditional one, but rather complements it. Remote systems alone cannot nourish all urban residents at affordable prices. Remote food production now complements local ways of furnishing urban residents with their nutritional needs, thus greatly increasing the complexity of the urban food system.”¹³⁰ Community gardens, allotment gardens and all other vegetable gardens make it possible to practice ecology on the level of everyday life, which results in an interruption in established consumer models, and a certain level of independence from the system. This is the resilience which group *aaa* talks about. So, with the creation of alternative forms of community and space we can say that growing vegetables is also a political act.



November 2011
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive

¹³⁰ Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 1, pg. 19. <http://jacsmi.com/book.html> (21.7.2014).

THIS COMMUNITY GARDEN
IS A PLATFORM

IS THIS ART?

THIS IS
A SOCIAL SCULPTURE



Ljubljana, 2010-present

The Community Garden Beyond a Construction Site



WE ARE ARTISTS
AND ARCHITECTS



IT'S JUST
A GARDEN



←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 12

9 COMMUNITY GARDENS IN THE CONTEXT OF ART

9.1 From Site Specific Art to Site Oriented Works

If I am precise, it is not necessary for art interventions which are focused on external spaces to also include society. This was demonstrated by Land Art from the beginning of the 1970s, which took art out of the galleries, out of white squares, and put it in an external space – but not in everyday life. Land Art was a transformation of physical space only at the place itself, in close connection with the location and usually away from civilisation. The early work of Land Artist practitioners (Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Walter de Maria) unravelled in the lonely places of American deserts, in Nevada, New Mexico, and Arizona. The art of Land Art focused on the “site” and on the unique combination of specific physical elements determined by the location. Land Art therefore represented the beginnings of “site specific” art, location specific artworks, which artists installed on certain locations, respecting the wider contexts of the location. In the case of Land Art “site specific art” surrendered to the environmental context of the site’s space, and was formally determined by it.

In contrary to this, our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* takes place in the very centre of everyday life, in the middle of a residential neighbourhood and its residents.

Art critic Miwon Kwon¹³¹ begins her explanation of site-oriented art with art in public spaces (public art), which is presented by autonomous artworks placed in a public space. The locations for these works were more or less universal, while the works themselves were self-referential, tough to transport, placeless, and not connected with the location in terms of content. From the beginnings in Land Art, conceptual art, and institutional critique, artists sought to step out of the framework of art institutions. In this way they hoped to expand the limitations of traditional media, such as the painting and sculpture, and to be able to transfer meaning from an artistic object to its context. In that way Land Art practitioners, minimalists, and many conceptual artists in the beginning of the 1970s focused on the context of space and they drew content for the artwork from the location itself. For art tied to a context, or to a site, the widespread expression “site specific art” became established. The space for the art was no longer an empty white, blank space, but rather it was a real place.

Artworks in public places have been developed a step further than “site specific art”. When they expand themselves to an even greater degree (in terms of space and context), Kwon calls them “site-oriented works”. Today, art has expanded to schools, hotels, hospitals, supermarkets, and prisons. Art has also expanded itself to media spaces, the radio, newspaper, television, and the internet. In addition to this spatial expansion, site-oriented works are well informed by

¹³¹ Miwon Kwon is an architect and art critic, and I had learned about her influential text *One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity*, first published in American magazine for art *OCTOBER 80*, in Spring 1997. She presented an extended reflection a few years later in the publication *One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity, Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, London UK, 2004.

many various disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, biology, architecture and urbanism, computer science, and science, and work in close connection with them.

“In addition to current forms of site-oriented art, which readily take up social issues (often inspired by them), and which routinely engage the collaborative participation of audience groups for the conceptualisation and production of the work, they are seen as a means to strengthen art’s capacity to penetrate the socio-political organisation of contemporary life with greater impact and meaning. In this sense the possibilities to conceive of the site as something more than a place – as repressed ethnic history, a political cause, a disenfranchised social group – is a crucial conceptual leap in redefining the public role of art and artists.”¹³²

If Miwon Kwon focused on the site in the development of art in public space, artist and writer Suzanne Lacy¹³³ focused on the word “public”, and Lacy’s name for this type of art is “new genre public art”. According to her, between the meaning of the words “public” and “art” there exists an unknown relationship between the artist and the public, a relationship which can itself become an artwork. Whether or not this work is in fact “art” can be a central question for many. “Appropriated, performative, conceptual, transient and even interactive art are all accepted by art-world critics as long as there appears to be no real possibility of social change. The underlying aversion to art that claims to ‘do’ something, that does not subordinate to craft, presents a resonant dilemma for new genre public artists. That their work intends to affect and transform is taken by its detractors as evidence that is not art.”¹³⁴ It is perhaps interesting to look at one more recent concept of art as a device or tool by Spanish artist Tania Bruguera. *Arte Util* in Spanish roughly translates to “useful art”, but also suggests art as a device or tool. *Arte Util* imagines, creates and implements socially beneficial outcomes. The *Arte Util Lab* is a working laboratory that will test hypotheses on the usefulness of art.¹³⁵

Where Is the Art in Community Oriented and Participatory Projects?

As Suzanne Lacy mentioned, many artists face the difficulties of defending an artistic project oriented towards a community and real social change. There are many examples and, as for the questions of whether community projects are works of art and why, I will highlight a few projects where the artists clearly articulated exactly what the artistic component of the project was. While describing the process of work that went into the *Hustadt Project*, artist and architect Apolonija Šušteršič wrote that the institution which invited her to create a work of art – the German city of Bochum – expected a sculpture in a public space in the context of a revitalisation project for the

¹³² Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity, Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*, MIT Press, Cambridge MA, London UK, 2004, pg.91.

¹³³ In her four decades of artistic practice, Suzanne Lacy has dealt with rape, violence, aging, poverty, racism, and issues of gender and youth culture. In installations, videos, and unconventional performances that blur the line separating art and political activism, she collaborates with other artists and members of the local communities in which she works. As a part of large-scale pieces that might take place over weeks and even months, she conducts media outreaches and often schedules public policy debates.

Paul David Young, *The Suzanne Lacy Network*, Art in America, June 2012.

¹³⁴ Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain, New Genre Public Art*, Bay Press Incorporated, 1995.

¹³⁵ <http://arteutil.net/main/> (19.9.2014).

Hustadt neighbourhood. A large part of her role as artist was to confidently defend a work of art that was not an art object, but the long-term process of creating a community space; a Community Pavilion together with the residents of the neighbourhood. This was her artwork, which was not in accordance with the expectations of the institution which invited her. Another example is the project co-authored by the artists and architect Marjetica Potrč. She wrote her text alongside the art project *The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour* (2008-2009), which was created in cooperation with local residents and the group *Wilde Westen*.¹³⁶ *Is this Art? The Relational Object in a Shared Space* is a text which she wrote for the opening of the project, which developed into a community garden and community kitchen. In half a year of creating the project at the location, many visitors who came to see its creation asked where the art was. This encouraged Marjetica Potrč to write a text in which she attempts to place the community garden in an art context. For her the community garden and community kitchen are “relational objects”. While referring to her work, Marjetica Potrč said in an interview: “It was a relational object, an object the community was using as a tool to articulate a new culture of living in their city and to make the city their own. A relational object has the ability to redefine your coexistence with your city; it is a catalyst of change. This is why we need art: art negotiates our relationship with the world.”¹³⁷ The expression “relational object” has its roots in the art of Brazilian artist Lygia Clark, who played a leading role in the Neo-concrete movement in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil at the end of the 1950s. This movement was committed to a subjective and more organic interaction between a work of art and the viewer. Lygia Clark maintained this artistic position throughout her entire artistic career and created objects which the viewers placed on the body, put on as clothes, and perceived using various senses. So, Lygia Clark and Marjetica Potrč both emphasised the meaning of relations (between the work of art and the public, and between the artist and society). It is the same with the relation of artist-public, which was called relational art and was emphasised in the 1990s by French art critic Nicolas Bourriaud. “Relational aesthetics”¹³⁸ was something he called artwork which was characteristic of contemporary art in the 1990s, and which created a social environment in which people who cooperated in community activities met. Today many expressions are used for contemporary art which is located in small local communities of various contexts. There is participatory art, which is focused on the method of participation and a fundamental method for the work of the artist, local residents, and the context; community art; and socially engaged art, which emphasises the interest of the artist to penetrate social processes and co-create their social change with his or her artwork.

¹³⁶ See the commentary at the end of section 8.5 titled *Opening the Doors During an Art Festival*.

¹³⁷ Marjetica Potrč, *Is this Art? The Relational Object in a Shared space*, published in the form of a newspaper by various authors (the Wilde Westen group and Marjetica Potrč), and in the context of the community based project *The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour*, Amsterdam, 2009, pg. 32.

Actual verbal quote taken from: Berit Fischer, Artist at work: Marjetica Potrč, Interview, Afterall, 12.6.2012. <http://afterall.org/online/spaces-for-a-new-culture-of-a-living/#.U7whw0BCd2E> (19.9.2014).

¹³⁸ Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Les presses du reel, original in French 1998, English translation 2002, France.

Today's art often does not want to represent and as such to function purely on a symbolical level; it is based on participation; it is situated in real life and also functions in the political sphere. The shapes which the art of today takes are various forms of rallies, media manipulations, research projects and their presentations, structural alternatives, and various forms of communication. This is "art as a living form".¹³⁹

Sometimes a statement from the artist about his work of art can once again bring attention back to the art itself, and not to its type or method. Last summer (2013) Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn said of his work, which he created in the Bronx neighbourhood of New York, that it serves art and not the community, and that his motives were completely personal artistic ones. The *Gramsci Monument*¹⁴⁰ is a temporary memorial to Italian political activist and Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). This artwork – a temporary architecture – had a gallery, lecture hall, café, and computer room, and actual spaces for gathering. Hirschhorn also stated: "My goal or my dream is not so much about changing the situation of the people who help me, but about showing the power of art to make people think about issues they otherwise wouldn't have thought."¹⁴¹

Our community garden is something we rarely brandish as art. For me, the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* is a multi-layered, and long-term spatial, local, social, and artistic experiment. But yes, I also believe in the power of art to create situations, spaces, and relations that are otherwise rarely thought of or experienced.

A Locally Specific Community Based Project in the Context of a Gallery

Shortly after the community garden opened in 2010, we began to receive invitations to present the project in publications, and to work at lectures on art and in the context of discussions on public space and temporary use. A good year after that, when we had launched our community garden, right in the fall of 2011, I published my monograph with the title *Back to the City*.¹⁴² In the publication I presented the last nine years of my artwork with photographs of my artworks and a presentation of their concepts. The last chapter was dedicated to a presentation of the

¹³⁹ *Art as a Living Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, ed. Nato Thompson, MIT Press Books, Cambridge, MA, 2012. Contributing authors: Anne Pasternak, Nato Thompson, Claire Bishop, Maria Lind, Teddy Cruz, Carol Becker, Brian Holmes, Shannon Jackson.

¹⁴⁰ The project is the first that Mr. Hirschhorn has built in the United States and will be the fourth and final such work in a series he began many years ago dedicated to his favourite philosophers, following a monument dedicated to Spinoza in Amsterdam in 1999, one to Gilles Deleuze in Avignon, France, in 2000, and a third to Georges Bataille in Kassel, Germany, in 2002. From the beginning, the monuments have been planned and constructed in housing projects occupied mostly by the poor and working class, with their agreement and help.

Ramsey Kennedy, *Bringing Art and Change to Bronx*, New York Times, 27.6.2013, New York.

¹⁴¹ Ramsey Kennedy, The temporary Gramsci Monument, under construction at the Forest Houses development in the South Bronx. New York Times, 27.6.2013, New York.

¹⁴² Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City / Nazaj v Mesto / Zurück in die Stadt*, ed. Silke Opitz, Revolver, Berlin, 2011. *Back to the City* is also the title of my animation on bees, which is a part of this artistic research and the title of my independent exhibition which was in the Kibela gallery in Maribor in 2011. The same title is also used for the trilingual publication (English, Slovenian, German), which presents nine years of my artistic creative work (2002-2011).

community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*. Regarding authorship, within *Kud Obrat* we had agreed that everyone could present the project as they saw fit. It was also self-evident that co-authorship and group texts, where we had nicely articulated the creation of the community garden, would be respected. In the same year we presented the project with a text and photographs in the Slovenian architectural journal *Arhitektov bilten*, in the context of a thematic issue with the title "Participation",¹⁴³ which was edited by co-creators of *Beyond a Construction Site* Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič. The editors placed *Beyond a Construction Site* in the context of participation with a critical reflection on participation in architecture, urbanism, and art. Among other things, practical examples were also presented, which were based on the method of including the public, something which *Beyond a Construction Site* was based on as well.

In the spring of 2012 our article about the community garden was published in the international publication *Hands-on Urbanism, The Right to Green*,¹⁴⁴ which is edited by curator, writer, and artist Elke Krasny. In addition to that we presented *Beyond a Construction Site* several times in an artistic context in the form of a lecture.

Our group strategy was to show the community garden as little as possible in the context of a gallery, and, if it were possible, show the garden personally on the location itself. With that in mind we always made efforts to make sure that all participants in the garden would not feel too exposed, so for visits to the garden we mainly took advantage of our open house hours, when the garden is already open to the public once a week for a few hours in the summertime months. In combination with our analysis and setup in a local context the community garden was well presented in publications, and even better in the form of public presentations. A public presentation makes it possible to develop a conversation and dialogue with the point of departure for this community project, as well as encourage reflections and an exchange of different opinions and perspectives. A large number of public presentations of *Beyond a Construction Site* led to topical questions on the importance of urban gardens for the sustainable development of cities and specifically for the regulation of allotment gardening in Ljubljana. A public discussion also brought forth the importance of local initiatives and self-organisation for the revitalisation of neighbourhoods, and how a community garden can make possible the revitalisation of abandoned and degraded city spaces. There was also talk on how

¹⁴³ *Participacija/Participation*, editors Urška Jurman and Apolonija Šušteršič, *Arhitektov bilten* mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture (Architect's Bulletin, International magazine for Theory of Architecture), volume 188.189, Anno XXXLI, Ljubljana, July 2011.

¹⁴⁴ The Architecture Centrum Wien (Vienna Architecture Centre) opened the exhibition *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, which was curated by Elke Krasny on 14 March, 2012. In the context of the exhibition a book with the same title was published, and in it editor Elke Krasny also included our urban community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*. The exhibition and the book *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012* present an alternative history of urbanism. The book includes 26 essays and a presentation of historical and contemporary examples of informal settlements and urban gardens from Europe, the Americas, and Asia, which follow the principle of self-organisation, participation and community action for the planning and management of urban space. As the author says: "Urban planning from the bottom up is not an exception to the rules, but the thrust of urban development, and often gives rise to changes of urban policy."

Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012.
<http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/2012/03/15/hands-on-urbanism-1850-2012-pravica-do-zelenega/> (9.6.2014).

community gardens influence the cultural life within a residential neighbourhood, thus also having an impact on the future of the city. In my personal opinion the most difficult thing to do is present the community garden in the context of an art gallery, in the form of an exhibition.

To date, the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* has been presented in a gallery only once, and that was in the context of an independent exhibition by Apolonija Šušteršič, who is the co-initiator of our community garden. In the Tobačna 001 cultural centre in Ljubljana, in an exhibit titled *Space Politics (Vesoljske politike)* in April 2012, two projects which she had developed in a local urban context through the process of participation were presented. We presented *Beyond a Construction Site* with documentary material of the community garden, documentary photographs, video interviews with the participants, copies of the contract with the city, and a chronological presentation of the project. The other art project, the *Hustadt Project*, which she had developed for several years in the German city of Bochum, was presented by her with similar documentary materials. In addition to the documentary materials, the exhibition also had an interactive element, a map of the city of Ljubljana, inviting visitors to mark degraded locations on it. The map invited visitors to propose initiatives for the revival of a city in which space is a constituent dimension of social actions. Even Apolonija Šušteršič, who created many participatory and local specific projects sees the issue of documentation as an eternal question present in her works. These works are processual, tied to their contexts, and situations, and have no sense when they are moved from one location to another.¹⁴⁵

Usually a problem appears when an artistic project like our community garden – which is tied to a specific location and to the context of that location, and has evolved through a lengthy process – has to be put in a gallery. The method of exhibiting documentary material (photographs, video interviews, texts, contracts, email conversations), which should be able to represent the on-site project is something I would like to analyse further at this opportunity. I have taken the position that a representation of this kind of project with documentary material in a gallery is not a suitable form of presentation. This places me before the key question of: How then is it possible to present the on-site community project *Beyond a Construction Site*? If I do not want to present this project in a gallery space and I am avoiding the exhibiting of our archive, how can I present it?

My goal from the very beginning of this study was, on the basis of research, to create an autonomous artwork which does not rely merely on documentation, but presents artistic research with classic artistic means and methods; video animation, an object, a spatial intervention, collages. This effort in creating a new work out of the research is evident in my two video animations, which I will present in chapter ten, *Back to the City*. While I was in the process

¹⁴⁵ Apolonija Šušteršič, *Documentation/Archive/Presentation*, from a chapter of her doctoral dissertation *Hustadt, Inshallah, Learning from participatory art project in trans-local neighbourhood*, Malmoe Art Academy, Lund University, Sweden, 2013, pg. 143-147.

of completing this thesis paper, I also decided to create a new artwork, a series of collages for each chapter of this paper. In this way I continue in my belief that I can present research and on-site specific artwork within a new artwork, and not merely as an exhibition of documented material, which shows the process (of a project's creation). Also, the combination of these new collages with the theoretical part of my thesis paper demonstrates that theory and practice can be closely interwoven. I discuss this further in chapter eleven, *Artistic Research*.

9.2 The Role of the Artist in Community Based Projects

Beyond a Construction Site is a result of the initiative of artists and architects. For that reason I ask myself, would the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* have become what it is if the initiators had had a different background, and had not been artists?

Of course, for the creation of a community garden it is not necessary to be an artist; you can just be an active individual. I spoke about this with lawyer Miroslav Dudlak,¹⁴⁶ initiator of the community garden *Krasnansky Zelovoc*, which is located in Bratislava. After many years he moved back to Bratislava from the countryside and felt there was a green space missing, and also one for socialising. Since he had young children he got people interested in the idea at the family community centre in their neighbourhood, and together they created a community garden. So it was the countryside that had taught him what kind of spaces the city needed. Nevertheless, the fact that we, as the initiators of *Beyond a Construction Site*, are artists was an advantage in our situation. First of all, the artistic context made it easier for us to gain access to the temporary use of the space. Second, as artists, in addition to theoretical knowledge, we also have practical experience in making things, creating spaces, and in communicating with an audience. This knowledge was a great help and supported us in our spatial and community-based project. Third, as artists we constantly deal with imagination, and our mission was to encourage others to imagine as well. We managed to stimulate those involved, daring them to think about the space in a different way, and about what kind of neighbourhood they wanted to live in, as well as what they needed, and how they wanted to create it. The authors of the text *Non-plan* recommended that we ourselves believe in experimenting with the space and dare to think: "What happens, if there is not a plan? What do people do, if there is nothing to hinder their choices? Would things be any better, any worse, or fairly similar? [...] Our goal is to ask why we are unwilling to trust the choices which would have developed, if we had let that happen."¹⁴⁷

As artists and architects we have specific knowledge which opens up the possibility of having a vision; the possibility of utopia, or of thinking about the future in a way where we create new, alternative ideas and situations. The fact that we noticed this abandoned construction site and saw potential in it is a result of this knowledge. At the very base of our work, artists think

¹⁴⁶ Skype conversation, March 2014.

¹⁴⁷ Reyner Banham, Paul Baker, Peter Hall, Cedric Price, *Non-Plan: An experiment in Freedom*, published in Slovenian language in the Booklet *O urbanizmu: Kaj se dogaja s sodobnim mestom?* (On Urbanism: What is Happening with the Contemporary City?), edited by Ilka Čerpes and Miha Dešman, published by Založba Krtina, Ljubljana 2007, pg. 324-325.

“outside the box” and we try to tear down borders, widen perception and knowledge, and critically observe what is given and what is established. This can be seen in the entire history of art. Many artists today are focused on a real space and real spatial and social situations, because we believe that art is a part of society and culture, and that artists have an influence on that. We are dreamers, theoretical analysts, and critics, but in addition to all of that we are also workers. In the case of the *Beyond a Construction Site* it was definitely an advantage to be able to think creatively, but also to realise our ideas in real space through manual work. Our experimental approach, openness to the unexpected, ability to communicate with the audience (with participants), and ability to imagine and inspire other participants to imagine as well are definitely advantages rooted in our artistic experience.

The Artist Co-creates a Platform for Learning and Networking

I believe that the concepts and methods of German conceptual artist, politician, and humanist Joseph Beuys are still topical and forward thinking, as well as his faith that art could transform society. This is especially so for the concepts that he developed in the 1970s and 1980s, and tested and realised in the context of artistic spaces, museums, and large festivals. These are the concepts of radical education, the permanent conference, and not least of all the social sculpture, which are alive to this day and have influenced the transformation of art in the widest sense. Even though for the artist the artistic context is often that which limits him, it is precisely the artistic context which also enables him to try and test other social models and ideas. For example, Beuys' artwork *Honey Pump in the Workplace*¹⁴⁸ was presented at the very well renowned art festival *Documenta 6* in Kassel (1977). It demonstrates the principles of operations for the *Free International University* which functions within the circulatory system of society. *Honey Pump* is an actual pump pushing honey through plastic pipes which represent the human circulatory system, and can circulate two tonnes of honey. In its one hundred days of operations the honey pump became a space for the testing of Beuys' concept of the “permanent conference”¹⁴⁹ which was intended to create a permanent dialogue on various social questions. *Honey Pump* was at once also an artistic sculptural work which symbolised human veins. The two tonnes of honey, which was pumped through the space, ran into a metal barrel, which was intended to represent the heart of society. The artwork was not completed if people did not participate in it.

¹⁴⁸ According to Beuys: “With Honey pump I am expressing the principle of the Free International University working in the bloodstream of society. Flowing in and out of the heart organ – the steel honey container – are the main arteries through which the honey is pumped out of the engine room with a pulsing sound, circulates round the Free International University area, and returns to the heart. The whole thing is only complete with people in the space round which the honey artery flows.”

Caroline Tisdall, Joseph Beuys, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1979, pg. 254.

¹⁴⁹ Over the course of one hundred days, thirteen consecutive workshops took place: the Periphery workshop, the Nuclear Energy and Alternatives workshop, Media workshop 1: Manipulation, Media workshop II: Alternatives, Human Rights Week, the Urban Decay and Institutionalisation workshop, the Migrant workshop, the Northern Irish workshop, the World workshop, the Violence and Behaviour workshop, Work and Worklessness, and an analysis of the one hundred days. The workshop titles reflect the breadth of issues that social sculpture sought to address in a public environment. Open forums were held for ten hours daily, and speakers and visitors from all over the world participated. Hundreds of people interacted with Beuys over the course of the action. The collaborative environment within Honey Pump was in opposition to the one-sided relationship between artist and public.

<http://neveryday.wordpress.com/tag/honey-pump-in-the-workplace/> (18.10.2014).

It makes sense to compare Beuys artwork with the contemporary *The Silent University*,¹⁵⁰ which was created on the initiative of Turkish artist Ahmet Ögüt in 2012 in London. It is a clear development of similar principles, which Beuys tested decades ago. It is also interesting to observe what has changed. *The Silent University* is “an autonomous knowledge exchange by and for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants”.¹⁵¹ From its very inception the university has included those who had professional lives and academic training in their home countries and were unable to use their abilities or professional training in Great Britain. *The Silent University* was created during Ögüt’s one year residence in London with the support of the Tate Museum and in cooperation with the Delfina Foundation. Support for *The Silent University* has continued well after the project’s end and is being supported by other artistic and non-artistic institutions. For Beuys the honey pump was a symbolic element of the artwork, and as a physical spatial installation it connected the content of the artwork (the establishment of a platform for conversations on social topics) with an artistic object. Fifty years later, A. Ögüt no longer needed this symbolic element. He has initiated a regularly operating self-organised platform in the form of academic programmes for the exchange of knowledge, all of which came about with the help of refugees, and in order to help refugees. In this case the artist-initiator is far in the background, as opposed to the times of Beuys, when the credibility of his art action was strongly tied to his original work and charisma. The average visitor to the website of *The Silent University* will only with difficulty discover that the initiator was an artist.

Our community garden in Ljubljana developed within an artistic context and began during an art festival. The idea of a community garden was something we developed in an artistic context, but also in the context of the everyday. Here, urban gardening, the self-management of space, and the community all have a direct impact on social and political life in the neighbourhood, and on the entire city. I like to think of our community garden as a learning platform, where it is not important that we are artists, but rather that we are residents of this city. This platform which we have managed to create with the participation of other residents enables us to learn together about self-organisation, self-management, different ways of creating a space, and allows us to raise awareness of the right to space in general. It is also about how to work together, how to grow our own food, and is connected to tolerating differences among ourselves. Another important goal which this platform enables is collaboration with similar initiatives, with the goal of influencing municipal legislation on the temporary use of space and gaining easier access to city land for urban gardening. In 2013 our Initiative *Kud Obrat* created a round table called *Kaj pa mestni vrtički?* (*What about urban gardens?*) on the topic of urban gardening (allotments and community gardens), and invited newly started projects and initiatives like the *Eco Community Urban Garden* from Maribor, and the initiative *Saprabolt*, active in the community garden project

¹⁵⁰ <http://thesilentuniversity.org/> (19.9.2014).

¹⁵¹ <http://thesilentuniversity.org/>.

in the Savsko Naselje district of Ljubljana. Darja Fišer presented *Zelemenjava*, an initiative for the exchange of seeds, saplings, and produce. At the invitation of both Darja Fišer and Maja Simoneti (from the *Institute for Spatial Policies*, or *Inštitut za politike prostora*), in May of 2014 our community garden took part in the *Chelsea Fringe* festival. This international festival was born in London two years ago as an alternative to the prestigious flower festival *The Chelsea Flower Show*. Maja Simoneti is also part of the initiative *Behind the Railway Line*, which has established a collaboration between the Botanical garden of Ljubljana, individual allotment gardeners, and a television programme about organic gardening.¹⁵² Urška Jurman from our initiative *Kud Obrat* is also collaborating with the *Institute for Spatial Policies* and some other NGO's on the project *Mreža za prostor* (Network for Space).¹⁵³ In the context of this project all the initiatives involved send proposals to the municipalities of Slovenia urging support for the temporary use of space. For this reason our community garden has become an important platform for communicating with other local and international initiatives, and has enabled us to create a network of similar initiatives in order to trigger changes on the structural level of the city as well.



A discussion with Maja Simoneti and Drago Kos
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, September 2011

¹⁵² See chapter seven, *Urban Gardening in Ljubljana Today*.

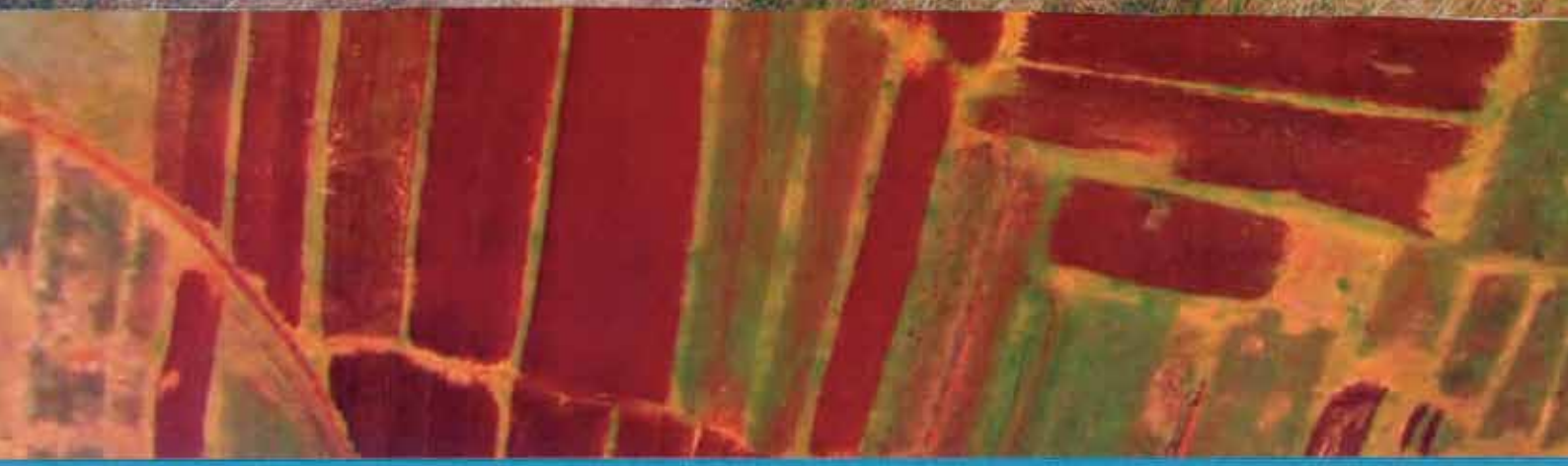
¹⁵³ See section 8.6, *The Temporary Use of Space in Ljubljana*.

Workshop: *Participatory design
by ad-hoc construction.*
Mentor: Mathias Heyden.
Photo by: *Kud Obrat* archive, May 2011

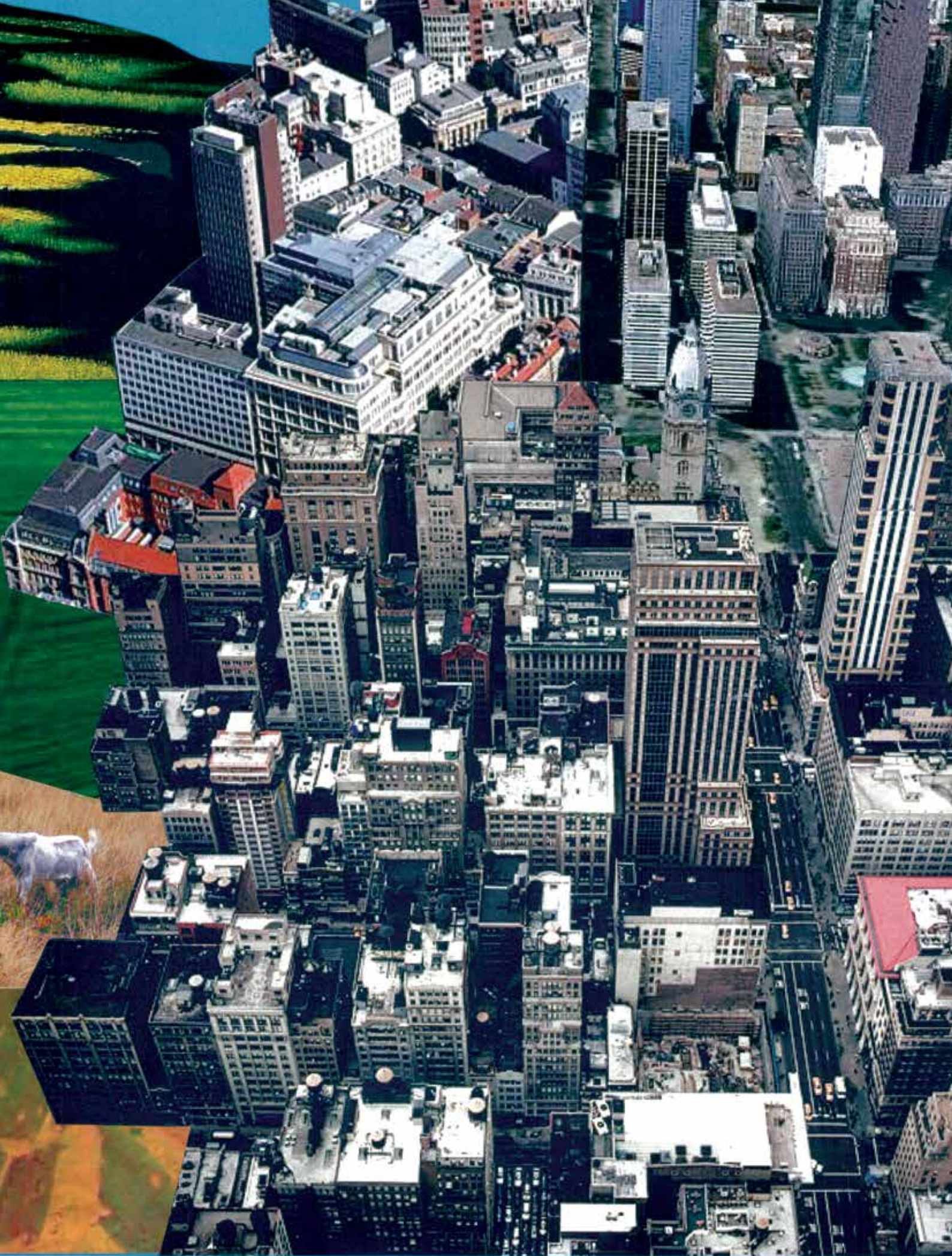


A lecture by Elke Krasny:
Hands on Urbanism, the Right to Green
Photo by: Irena Woelle, September 2014





Now for the first time in his life he was more worried about nature surviving in the countryside than in the city.

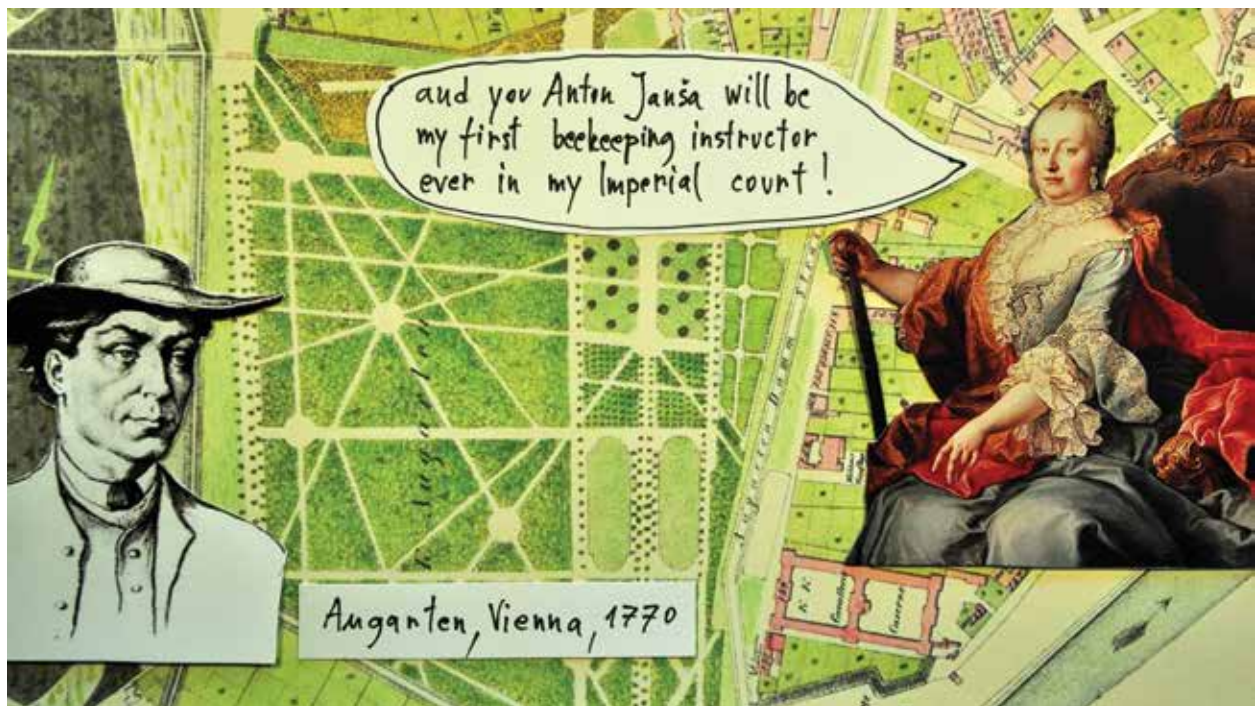


←

Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City*, 2011
10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
Collage No. 10

10 BACK TO THE CITY

In this part of the thesis paper I will turn attention from the collective artwork of the community garden to my four individual artworks, where I advocate for the return of domestic farm animals to the city. In *A Plan with a Goat* (2010) I walked around with a goat and allowed it to eat the plants at a degraded space in the centre of Ljubljana. For my public sculpture and accompanying public event *The Golden Egg* (2012) I set up a chicken coop with three chickens laying eggs in front of the Slovenj Gradec city hall. Finally, in both of my video animations, *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013), I show cities inhabited by bees, wild animals, chickens, and goats. I encourage the return of animals to the city not only for their food value, but also in order to raise ecological awareness and recycle waste. This is all done to underline the importance of establishing different emotional bonds between city residents and animals, which would in turn alter our sensitivities (in the sense of our attitudes) toward nature. This was the main idea I had in mind when creating my artworks. They describe future cities which have a harmonious balance with the countryside and more intensively include domestic farm animals in their urban environments.



Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City*, video still
HD, duration 13 min 35 sec, 2011

10.1 *Back to the City*, a video animation

I began this doctoral study with research on bees, which began to die in great numbers in Slovenia in 2008 and 2009. It turned out that bees tie together content which I have been researching for several years in my work: nature, the countryside and the city, and ecology in the widest possible sense. Bees were especially interesting for an insight in the relationship between the city and the countryside, as they made possible a connection between the different areas of urban planning, architecture, spatial sociology, local history, ecology, and even art.

Honeybees and Food

After I took the first few steps into my research I came across the issue of pollution in the countryside due to modern farming practices. Of course, here we are talking about large industrial farming, production focused on monocultures which make extensive use of chemical agents. This intensive farming of monocultures is not that characteristic for Slovenia, which is a mountainous country, and where only the terrain in the eastern part allows for vast farming areas. However, despite this fact, in Slovenia the dying off of bees was, among other things, also connected to the extensive and improper use of chemical agents in farming.

It was already in school that we learned about that most important task of the bee to pollinate plants, which makes it possible for them to multiply and produce fruit. Even though this fact is known to everyone, the importance of bees in the last few decades has been emphasised mainly in connection with the products that bees produce, such as honey, royal jelly, propolis, pollen, bee venom (already somewhat unusual), and wax. The dying of bees slowly raised concerns, namely that it would begin to affect our everyday lives, connected with food, the economy, and even when viewed from the most extreme angle, connected with the existence of human beings.¹⁵⁴

Researchers from various fields looked to the countryside where a substantial percentage of food is produced. To a great degree farming is dependent on pollination by bees. Honeybees pollinate 80% of all plants pollinated by insects. Without their “work” the quantity of fruit and vegetables produced would fall sharply. “The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that out of some 100 crop species which provide 90% of food worldwide, 71% of these are bee-pollinated.”¹⁵⁵

Food produced in the countryside has become the central connection between the city and countryside. Intensive urbanisation has emptied the countryside and saturated the cities. Despite help from industrial farming, it is only with difficulty that the countryside supplies cities with a sufficient quantity of fresh vegetables and other food. Often it is necessary to transport this food in from elsewhere. The concept of transporting food from elsewhere, from around the world, did not raise any serious concerns in the past. However, these past models of food location have been feeling some instability at their cores due to transportation and pollution, the massive use of fuel, and its non-economical nature. Environmental changes have also become more visible in the last twenty years – unpredictable weather, draughts, floods, hail, and wild temperature fluctuations are all having an impact on harvests, and not least of all on the

¹⁵⁴ The famous quote of Albert Einstein in relation to bees has been quoted widely in articles in Slovenian and international magazines and blogs. For that reason I have also included this quote in my video animation *Back to the City*. Albert Einstein: “If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man.”

¹⁵⁵ Brad Plumer, *Why are bees dying? The U.S. and Europe have a different theory*, wonkblog, May 3, 2013. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/05/03/why-are-bees-dying-the-u-s-and-europe-have-different-theories/> (.19.9.2014).

prices of produce. For that reason, since at least the 1990s, there have been many initiatives which see the future of cities and the countryside in terms of greater self-sufficiency within cities, the preservation of biodiversity, the conscientious management of natural resources, the reduction of energy use, and by making more effective use of waste products. Many independent movements and initiatives from around the world¹⁵⁶ have begun at the local level, later expanding to international movements of greater proportions. They are oriented towards encouraging a sustainable way of life with the help of the self-sufficiency of local communities and with the creation of ecological elasticity. Food is a key element, one which allows for us to make changes, and as *Transition Towns* is committed to doing, we must reduce distances from kilometres to centimetres: “Food feet, not food miles!” That is why one of their initiatives is the creation of community gardens in cities, exactly what we began to develop with the project *Beyond a Construction Site* in Ljubljana in 2010. Architect, artist, and thinker Yona Friedman nicely defined the connection between the city and the countryside: “If the city ‘dies’, the countryside continues to exist, but if the countryside dies, the city dies with it.”¹⁵⁷ That is why allotment gardens and community gardens in today’s cities are an important tool to raise the levels of self-sufficiency and sustainable development.

From studying groves of almond trees in California I learned the meaning of industrial farming and the role bees play in the process. Almond trees are an excellent example, as they are 100% pollinated by bees. With every advance developed by people, I am always surprised by the fact that we still have not found an effective artificial replacement for the pollination provided by bees. Almonds, just like all other plants, only bloom for a limited time, and in a period of two weeks the bees must pollinate a large number of trees. When the pollen has been gathered and there is no more nectar, that also represents the end of the bee’s food. The beekeepers need to relocate the hives, which are located at one monoculture, in this case at an almond tree grove, to another location, another plant species, if they want the bees to survive. The bees also face dying off when pesticides and phytopharmaceuticals are not used in accordance with guidelines, meaning that they are used with improper doses or at the wrong times.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ *Transition Towns* (Totnes UK), *Incredible Edible* (Tadmorden, UK), *Ecovillage Networks* (U.S.A., UK), and many other initiatives started locally. After a while they eventually grew into a network of initiatives aimed at creating a communities that promote social, economical and ecological sustainability.

¹⁵⁷ Yona Friedman, *Pro Domo*, Actar and Junta de Andalucia, Barcelona, Spain, pg. 187.

¹⁵⁸ The film *More than Honey* (directed by Marcus Imhoof, 2012) covers the complexity of almond production in the fields of California and its relation to bees. Production of the almonds is also the main agricultural activity in California, and it is estimated that California produces 50% of all the world’s almonds. Since the decline in the honeybee population was first seen in the United States (California), for many years hives were transported in from other parts of the country. It has become a common practice and pollination services are a good business. I also mention almond production, intensive farming in California, and the need to transport beehives from other parts of the country in my video animation *Back to the City*, which I created in 2011.



Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City*, 2011
10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
Collage No. 9

Urban Bees

It is precisely in the greater degree of biodiversity that the city differs from the countryside, which was something that surprised me. Vegetation in the city is very diverse and the majority of the time it is not maintained with chemicals. First some shrubs will bloom, then perhaps the flowers of some honey plants, followed by all types of vegetables in allotment gardens and different species of trees in public parks and promenades. Bees can therefore collect different kinds of pollen practically all year, from early spring to late fall, thereby helping nature to reproduce, causing fruit to be produced, and creating their own honey in the process. Gilles Clement, a French landscape architect and author of the manifesto *The Third Landscape*, calls honey made in the city “concrete honey”.¹⁵⁹

For already thirty years there have been several beehives located at the *Palais Garnier* opera house in Paris. Local beekeepers take care of the hives, and the “opera honey” is sold in the opera store along with souvenirs. In London in 2010 four hives were placed on the Fortnum & Mason department store in the centre of London, and these London bees produce between two hundred and three hundred jars of “Fortnum’s London Honey” a year. In London they also have bees on many public buildings: Buckingham Palace, the London Stock Exchange, the National Gallery, and the Tate Modern. London is the centre of urban beekeeping in Great Britain, but there is also interest in other large English cities. Between 2008 and 2013 the number of urban beekeepers in Great Britain increased by almost 200%. In New York urban beekeeping has been officially permitted since 2010, but before that it was an established hobby which was supported by a network of organisations, blogs, and specialised stores. Even Ljubljana is not far behind, and since May 2011 we have had three beehives on the roof of the cultural centre Cankarjev Dom. In the last few years beehives have also been placed on the buildings of business centres and hotels of all the larger cities across Europe, which then market their own “in-house” honey. It is also becoming completely normal to find city honey in the supermarkets of large cities in the section for local food. For example, in Berlin they have is “Berlin” honey. Even though the numerous beehives in cities cannot prevent a decline of bee populations in the countryside, this new generation of urban beekeepers is spreading knowledge of the current situation in the environment. For the majority of them the production of honey is not the priority. Rather, they organise events, lectures, and presentations, and use blogs and articles to keep city residents informed of how important bees are in the balance of our ecosystem.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ “The third landscape is the spontaneous biodiversity of a city, which is superior to that of field land because of the malfunctions of industrial agriculture, and pesticides in particular. ‘Concrete honey’, made from beehives located in the urban environment, is far better quality honey in terms of taste and organic biology than honey made in the countryside.”

Citation from a summary of the interview Gilles Clements did with Xavier Thomas, summary by Baptiste Lanaspèze, and it is available at the website <http://latentmarseille.tumblr.com/post/3385832983/gilles-clement-illustrated-by-marseille-the-third> (19.9.2014).

I have used this quote in my video animation *The Right Balance*, which was completed in 2013.

¹⁶⁰ Sabine Jansen, *Germany is buzzing – beekeeping in the city*, September 2013.

<http://www.goethe.de/ges/mol/tre/pan/en11650064.htm> (13.10.2013), Kristina Shevory, *The Beekeeper next Door*, December 2010, New York Times.

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/09/garden/09Bees.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (15.11.2013).

Ljubljana's Urban Bee-Keeping, and the Slovenian Bee-Keeping Tradition

Urban beekeeping and urban gardening go hand in hand. During the removal of allotments in the Žale district of Ljubljana in 2007 there was a gardener in the centre of the site with a number of beehives. At our community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* we had a lively debate on whether or not to have bees at our garden. Fear of children getting stung by bees was the first concern which led our participants to oppose the idea. In time we became more informed, and contributing factors included *Jane's Walk* and *Medeni sprehod* (Honey Walk, organised by the Bunker institute in the summer of 2011), and a walk through the neighbourhood in which we visited urban beekeepers in the area. That walk was concluded at the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* with a screening of my animation *Back to the City*, which is based on the research which I describe in this paper. Even the community garden in Maribor designated an area in its spatial plan for beehives, and eventually at our community garden we agreed unanimously to set up beehives as well, and the first was installed in the spring of 2012. Unfortunately the hive did not survive the winter, so this year a new member of the community garden will take care of a new hive.

In the beginning of 2014 we were contacted by the founders of an association for urban beekeepers in Ljubljana. They are a brand new association and are located in the immediate vicinity of our community garden. They had no idea that we already had bees at our garden and had a proposal for a few beehives. It was with pleasure that we were prepared to work with them and open *Beyond a Construction Site* for public presentations and other events of the urban beekeepers. Making connections with related initiatives enables all self-organised groups a greater network through which it is easier to achieve common goals.

We Slovenians loves bees and are quite attached to them. Beekeeping has a long tradition and is very widespread. Painter Anton Janša gained recognition for his lectures on bees, education of others, and texts. He wrote two books on the topic: *Razprava o rojenju* (A Discussion on Beekeeping, 1771) and *The Complete Guide to Beekeeping* (in German, 1775). In my animated story I brought attention to the important historical moment when the ruler of the Hapsburg Empire, the famous reformer Maria Theresa, invited Slovenian Anton Janša to be the first teacher of beekeeping at the first beekeeping school in the gardens of her palace in Vienna. We Slovenians also have our own autonomous bee, the Carnolian Honey Bee (Kranjska sivka, or *Apis mellifera carnica*), which is a very docile and hard working bee, not to mention the second most popular breed of bee in the world among beekeepers.

Not long ago beekeepers were predominantly older people, with an average age of above sixty years. However, in the last few years more and more young people are getting interested in beekeeping, and there is an increasing number of active beekeepers in cities. More ecologically oriented beekeepers are also critical of current industrial beekeeping practices, which include

some fairly controversial moments in the process due to the focus on selling honey. One such problem is the abstraction of honey with a crystal sugar replacement, but there is also the treatment of various types of diseases with chemical medication, which has weakened the immune systems of an entire generation of bees. The other kind of beekeeping, which is developing mainly among young people in urban environments is not focused so much on the production of honey as it is on keeping people informed of the importance of bees for our ecosystem.

The Characteristics of Bees Which Humans Admire

Bees have many characteristics which humans can admire. We can be amazed at the organisation of their society, their hard-working nature, their construction abilities, and the medicinal products they produce. Often bees are an inspiration to artists, designers, architects, and sociologists for all the reasons mentioned above. Namely, bees meticulously divide up their work in all periods of their lives. They are known for communicating with the aid of various chemical compounds and smells which they secrete, much like many other insects. They also make use of different kinds of motion (dancing) to send messages to other bees in the hive regarding the location of good pastures which they have discovered. They work relentlessly, which has impressed Slovenians so much that they even offer the compliment “you are as hard-working as a bee.”

For the construction of their honeycomb they use a hexagon, which allows them to use a minimal amount of material and achieve a great deal of strength. This is an inspiration to architects, structural engineers, and designers even today.

The ancient Greeks and Romans also wrote much on farming and health in connection with bees. In the first half of the 20th century bees were presented in a unique way by Belgian playwright, poet, essayist, and Nobel laureate Maurice Maeterlinck¹⁶¹ and Austrian philosopher and social reform creator Rudolf Steiner.¹⁶² Steiner’s nine lectures on bees from 1923 occupy an important place in his way of thinking and work. Steiner’s most well-known ideas are Waldorf Education, biodynamic farming, and anthroposophic medicine. His thinking influenced changes in the school system and his theories are still supporting discussions on environmental protection. Steiner’s lectures on bees, ideas on social reform, and activism heavily influenced well-known German sculptor Joseph Beuys. Beuys’ drawings of bees, lectures on blackboards, use of natural and organic materials (wax, honey, fat) in his sculptures and installations, his ideas on art and education are all closely tied to Steiner’s ideas. In section 9.2, *The Role of the*

¹⁶¹ Maurice Maeterlinck, *The Life of the Bee (La Vie des Abeilles)*, 1901, <http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/mm/b.html> (21.9.2014).

¹⁶² Nine of fifteen lectures given by Rudolf Steiner to the workmen at the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland in 1923 were dedicated to Bees. They are part of the lecture series entitled, *The Functioning of Spirit in Nature and in Man. The Being of Bees*. Published in German as, *Mensch und Welt. Das Wirken des Geistes in der Natur. Ueber das Wesen der Bienen. Vortraege fuer die Arbeiter am Goetheanumbau. Band 5*, G. Bellmann und Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Basel, 1995.
Rudolf Steiner, *Bees*, (New edition), Rudolph Steiner Press, London, 1998.

Artist in the Community Based Projects, I mention Beuys' work *Honey Pump in the Workplace*. Beuys used the symbolic meaning of honey and group work inspired by the bee community. This work represents the complexity of Beuys' ideas on "social sculptures",¹⁶³ which I have mentioned in this paper mainly as a predecessor to today's widespread artistic practices of socially engaged art and contemporary art projects, which function within a community. In this context I also see one of the possible roles of the artist today who, with his artistic initiatives, influences cultural life and changes space, himself, his family, and society.

And now a few words on the title of my artwork *Back to the City*. As we know, today more than 50% of people live in cities. So, in the last seventy years an intensive migration from the countryside to the city has taken place. A logical question would be: What do you mean, back to the city, weren't all of us already in a city? My answer is, what if I am thinking about domestic farm animals and allotment gardening? The return of rural practices to the city such as vegetable gardening, beekeeping, and raising domestic farm animals, which have been banished in the last one hundred years as a result of a vision of the modern and urban city, is itself a vision for the future of cities. This is not merely a subversive idea for renewed reflection on what a city is, but also a key component of the sustainable city, which also helps people to redefine their relationship with nature, and with nature in the city. *Back to the City* is most certainly in a dialogue with *Back to Nature*, a romantic call from the 18th century when nature became an ideal and source of morals, enlightenment, and the pursuit of happiness. On the contrary, *Back to the City* calls for bringing rural practices back to the city, so that cities and humans can regain balance.

10.2 Animals in the City

Urban agriculture is often minimised as merely urban gardening. With this thesis I seek to broaden acceptance and support for urban agriculture, and incorporate the idea of including domestic farm animals in cities. If we speak of urban farming on a world-wide scale, in cities like Cairo and Mexico City the breeding of animals prevails over the growing of vegetables. Even though the breeding of domestic animals is oriented towards the production of meat, several very useful side products are also connected with this, such as milk, eggs, fur, skin, feathers, and fertiliser. In many cases these products even overshadow the production of meat.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ "Social sculpture" is a term created by Beuys to illustrate his idea of art's potential to transform society. As an artwork it includes human activities that strive to structure and shape society or the environment. The central idea of a social sculptor is an artist who creates structures in society using language, thought, action, and objects.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sculpture (19.9.2014).

¹⁶⁴ Jac Smit, Joe Nasr, and Annu Ratta, *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities* (2001 edition, published with permission from the United Nations Development Programme), chapter 05, Pg. 13-16.
<http://jacsmi.com/book.html> (21.7.014).



Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, 2013
10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
Collage No. 7

In poor countries the breeding of animals at home enables access to important animal proteins and fresh milk products. Just as it is important with the growing of home-made vegetables, the breeding of animals in a city, or local production within a city, also brings with it an entire series of changes. Transport and storage in large refrigerators is avoided, and in this way we reduce the use of energy and impact on the environment. Another useful example is that goats and sheep are being allowed to graze on public city spaces, something that is becoming a widespread practice to maintain public green spaces without costs. As I showed in the animation *The Right Balance*, in 2012 the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation hired a herd of Nubian goats from a nearby farmer for the New York borough of Staten Island. The goats were used for their unending appetites to clean (eat) a section of the shoreline which has been taken over by invasive weeds.¹⁶⁵ Negotiations are currently underway for a similar action at New York's Long Island, where they would like to remove an invasive plant species without the use of pesticides. With the same aim in mind for the land of our community garden, before we were able to clean it up, I myself had a goat grazing on the property. Among other

¹⁶⁵ Lisa W. Foderaro, *To Tackle an Invasive Weed, Bringing In the Hooved Pros*, The New York Times, June 21, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/nyregion/at-freshkills-park-borrowing-goats-to-tackle-a-weed-problem.html?_r=0 (19.9.2014).

things, this was done in the hope of helping to clean out the wildly overgrown terrain in the centre of the city, and I carried out this project with the artistic spatial intervention *A Plan with a Goat*. I spent a day with a goat named Hana in the abandoned construction site and the goat ate constantly, helping to clean up the overgrown land. I explain this artistic intervention more precisely in section 8.7, *A Space without a Plan, and A Plan with a Goat*. However, this action was just a vision for a future that is already happening in many cities.

Occasionally, through agreements with nearby farmers, sheep are brought in public parks to graze on the grass, which lowers the costs of maintaining these green public spaces, and at the same time, because of the droppings, improves the quality of city land. This procedure is the opposite of what it once was, when the farmer arrived at a field, cut the grass, and brought it home to his animals. Now they bring the herd to the lawn, and the animals do all the work themselves. As an additional advantage cooperation between public institutions and private farmers are also being carried out, which is a new form of cooperation between the two.

The main argument against the breeding of animals in the city is the prejudice of unseemliness associated with it. Those in favour emphasise the role of the animals with the recycling of waste and the use of surplus food which accumulates in Europe, the UK, and the USA, as people in the USA and Europe throw away half of the food they buy or produce.¹⁶⁶

Herds of sheep in parks, flocks of doves on rooftops, pigs, chickens, rabbits, and bees are all animals which are, in accordance with the agenda of the self-sufficiency of cities, returning to the city.

Chickens on Our Backyards

I was invited to Slovenj Gradec, a smaller Slovene City in the context of the group exhibition *Javni govor* (Public Speech),¹⁶⁷ an international exhibition organised there. In my research I was mainly focused on the local self-sufficiency of that city. Based on my research I made the public sculpture and public breakfast *The Golden Egg* (*Zlato jajce*, 2012). The research, combined with the public sculpture and public event, created a platform for a discussion on the self-sufficiency of Slovenj Gradec. This research and this artwork also even influenced another work, the animation *The Right Balance* (*Pravo razmerje*, 2013) which I describe in more detail in section 10.4, *The Right Balance, a Video Animation*.

¹⁶⁶ In the UK, up to 30% of vegetable crops are not harvested because their physical appearance fails to meet the exacting demands of consumers. So, 30% of food never even reaches the market because it does not “look right”. Also, half the food purchased in Europe and the US is thrown away after it is bought. Vast quantities of water are also wasted in global food production, it is claimed, with around 550 billion cubic metres of water is used to grow crops that never reach the consumer. Producing one kilogramme of meat is also said to take 20 to 50 times more water than producing the same weight of vegetables.

Food Waste: Half Of All Food Ends Up Thrown Away, PA/Huffington Post UK, 10.1.2013.
http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/01/10/food-waste-half-of-all-fo_n_2445022.html (19.9.2014).

¹⁶⁷ *Public Speech*, international exhibition at Galerija Slovenj Gradec, curators Marko Košan and Tadej Pogačar, Slovenj Gradec, September 2012.

The Golden Egg is functional object and a work of art at the same time. This sculpture is a wooden chicken coop with a golden roof which I set up in a kind of baroque park with a fountain in front of the Slovenj Gradec city hall. The exhibition there focused on artworks that are oriented towards public spaces and towards addressing citizens at large; a broader audience than the one just connected to world of art. During the exhibition, three indigenous “Styrian hens” resided in this sculpture.¹⁶⁸ For the opening of the exhibition I also organised a public event, a breakfast with homemade eggs, which took place around my public sculpture (the chicken coop), and therefore also in front of the entrance to their city hall. The important part of this artistic setting was the object (the chicken coop) and the public event (a breakfast with eggs), which together offered an opportunity for discussion on self-sufficiency in an informal setting. The platform connected to this public sculpture and event enabled all invited municipal civil servants and other participants to talk about the self-sufficiency of Slovenj Gradec and a sustainable direction for the city. In this case the artistic sculpture was a social sculpture in Beuys’ sense, as it created a platform for discussion. I had added the golden roof as a symbolic and markedly fairytale-like element to help the practical and useful work obtain the credibility of an artwork. The idea was developed through research, specifically when I learned of the initiative *Incredible Edible*¹⁶⁹ from England, which is focused on local self-sufficiency and encouraged city residents to grow vegetables, cook local food, and to breed chickens for fresh eggs. *Every Egg Matters* is a part of a local campaign which is taking place within the context of *Incredible Edible*, and is encouraging the placement of chicken coops in local gardens and yards, schools, and kindergartens. In a symbolic way, my sculpture in a public place and public breakfast show the importance of home-grown food such as fresh chicken eggs, which can be worth their weight in gold. I have also included a photograph of the breakfast by the sculpture in front of city hall in the final scene of the animation *The Right Balance*.¹⁷⁰ With this I would also like to draw attention to the fact that these artworks are connected to both theoretical research, and to each other.

¹⁶⁸ The “štajerska kokoš” (Styrian hen) is the only Slovenian indigenous breed of hen. On 20 November, 1930, in Celje, the ruling organisation of the time adopted the first standards for the evaluation of this breed. Originally, it was named the Celje hen, but because of its widespread popularity in the wider region, the breed was renamed štajerska kokoš (Styrian hen). In my animation *The Right Balance*, a Styrian hen and a hen of the anonymous origin have a conversation.
<http://www.stajerska-kokos.si/>.

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/> (21.9.2014).

¹⁷⁰ Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, video animation, 2013, duration 13min 35sec.

Polonca Lovšin, *The Golden Egg*, 2012
A chicken coop with imitation gold leaf
on the roofing tiles, three hens
210cm x 80cm x 180cm
The *Public Speech* Exhibition,
Koroška Gallery of Fine Arts, Slovenj Gradec
Photo by: Polonca Lovšin, September 2012



Polonca Lovšin, *The Golden Egg*, 2012
Breakfast in a public space,
The *Public Speech* Exhibition,
Koroška Gallery of Fine Arts, Slovenj Gradec
Photo by: Franc Nabernik, Polonca Lovšin,
September 2012



Wild Animals in the City

The natural process that is happening by itself in today's cities of today is the uninvited return of animals to the city, as intruders. Many cities encounter wild animals, who make their way into the city for easier access to food. It is much easier for them to find food in garbage, compost, or in parks than in the forest. For several years already wild pigs have been invading Berlin. As can be seen in my animation *The Right Balance*, people even feed them in the park, which has an additional impact on the problematic relationship between humans and wild animals. Namely, wild pigs, especially when they have offspring, are very aggressive and can be life-threatening. Now in Berlin it is open season for hunting wild pigs and last year 1,000 were shot, mainly by hunters, but also by the occasional police officer.¹⁷¹ A similar problem is being faced in London, where for several years foxes have been plundering food from gardens and parks in the city, and have practically lost all fear of humans. In Ljubljana a wild brown bear roamed the Rožnik public park for several days in 2009. There are numerous reasons for these incursions by wild animals, but it is mostly connected with their shrinking natural environment, which is a result of ever increasing urbanism. Another reason is the easily accessible waste food which animals can find in the city. This interesting cohabitation between wild animals and the city is also being observed in cities that are shrinking (described in the project *Shrinking Cities*¹⁷²), where nature is reclaiming previously urbanised surfaces. In addition to Ivanovo, Manchester, Liverpool, and Leipzig, Detroit is a well researched and analysed example of such a city. This American city was known for its booming automotive industry and Ford factory with the first ever production assembly line. However, in the 1990s, for many different reasons, it began to shrink. Contributing factors included a lack of political vision, racial conflict, and de-industrialisation. Also, the centre of the city emptied and the population reduced to two-thirds of what it was. Along the overgrown city surfaces the wild ring neck pheasant found ideal living conditions and began to reproduce wildly. The pheasants, along with the emptied historical buildings in the centre of the city, are becoming an important city attraction, and also a part of my video animation *The Right Balance*.

¹⁷¹ Wild boar in Berlin look for food in the compost and trash, and for them it is easier to find food in city parks, gardens and cemeteries, than in the forest. Some Berliners even feed them, which is affecting their behaviour, as they are losing their fear of humans and their offspring are coming increasingly close to residences. Feeding them is officially prohibited, so Berliners can be fined for it.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13251805> (21.9.2014).

¹⁷² *Shrinking Cities* (2002-2008) is a project of the Federal Cultural Foundation, under the direction of Philipp Oswalt (Berlin) in co-operation with the Leipzig Gallery of Contemporary Art, the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, and the magazine ARCH+. In the *Shrinking Cities* project, architects, academics, and artists investigate recent developments in Detroit, Ivanovo, Manchester / Liverpool and Halle / Leipzig – and give suggestions.

<http://www.shrinkingcities.com/index.php?L=1> (21.9.2014).



Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, 2013
 10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
 Collage No. 5

10.3 A Shift in Our Sensitivity to Nature

With the practical aspect of animals in the city, which enables self-sufficiency, I am also interested in the emotional connection between people and animals, and the wider connection between people and nature. Though it may appear, and many people hold this opinion, that it was mainly in the previous century when important shifts were created in the relations between people and nature, English historian Keith Thomas has called attention to the important development of the sensibility towards nature which developed in British society between 1500 and 1800. Perhaps we can see this development in a similar way in Europe as well. "But to understand these present-day sensibilities we must go back to the early modern period. For it was between 1500 and 1800 that there occurred a whole cluster of changes in the way in which men and women, at all social levels, perceived and classified the natural world around them. In the process some long established dogmas about man's place in nature were discarded. New sensibilities arose toward animals, plants and the landscape. The relationship of man to other species for his own advantage was sharply challenged. It was these centuries which generated both intense interest in the natural world and those doubts and anxieties about

man's relationship to it which we have inherited in magnified form."¹⁷³ To that end, in the video animation *The Right Balance* I also introduced hens trying to lay grade A eggs, and who are trying to lay eggs constantly, because otherwise they will be replaced within a year. I also included information from *Uradni list Republike Slovenije* (the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia), specifically the Guidelines for the Quality of Eggs¹⁷⁴ and the Guidelines for the Protection of Livestock.¹⁷⁵

This research speaks about the need for a changed view of the city and the countryside. One of the keys is that the production of food in the cities is urgently needed for the very future of cities. It is necessary to encourage the processes which create a natural cycle within the city. With that it is also necessary to create a shift in the establishment of emotional connections between people and animals in the city, which currently consist mainly of pets, mostly dogs and cats. Domestic animals were mainly taken advantage of by people in the past as a work force, and were just bred for food. Even those connections were emotional, but rarely sentimental. I can remember my grandmother well, who at an old age lived alone and had a small self-sufficient farm. All year she bred a pig in the barn, speaking to it and feeding it, and in the summer it was slaughtered. She would cry, but she slaughtered it nonetheless, as this was part of her household economics.

With the loss of contact between city residents and farming, and with the isolation of the city from farming, we have developed an increasingly emotional relationship to animals as pets and objects of contemplation. In parallel with these feelings, the breeding of animals and their slaughter is increasing day-by-day, which, because of the city's distance to those activities, is something we do not see. In 2005 all of us present were shocked by the documentary film *Our Daily Bread (Unser täglich Brot)*.¹⁷⁶ The film provides a realistic view on the internal workings of numerous factories which produce food in present day society. While people obsessively form ties with their pets and we have a strange relationship to other domestic animals. From my experience with the spatial intervention with a goat I confess that I was actually a little afraid of it. Many of the people who knew about this art action found this completely ordinary domestic animal to be something truly exotic.

The Anthropocene

As has been mentioned, the development of a sensitivity to nature can be seen mainly in the last one hundred years. Around ten years ago, scientists started to speculate on the

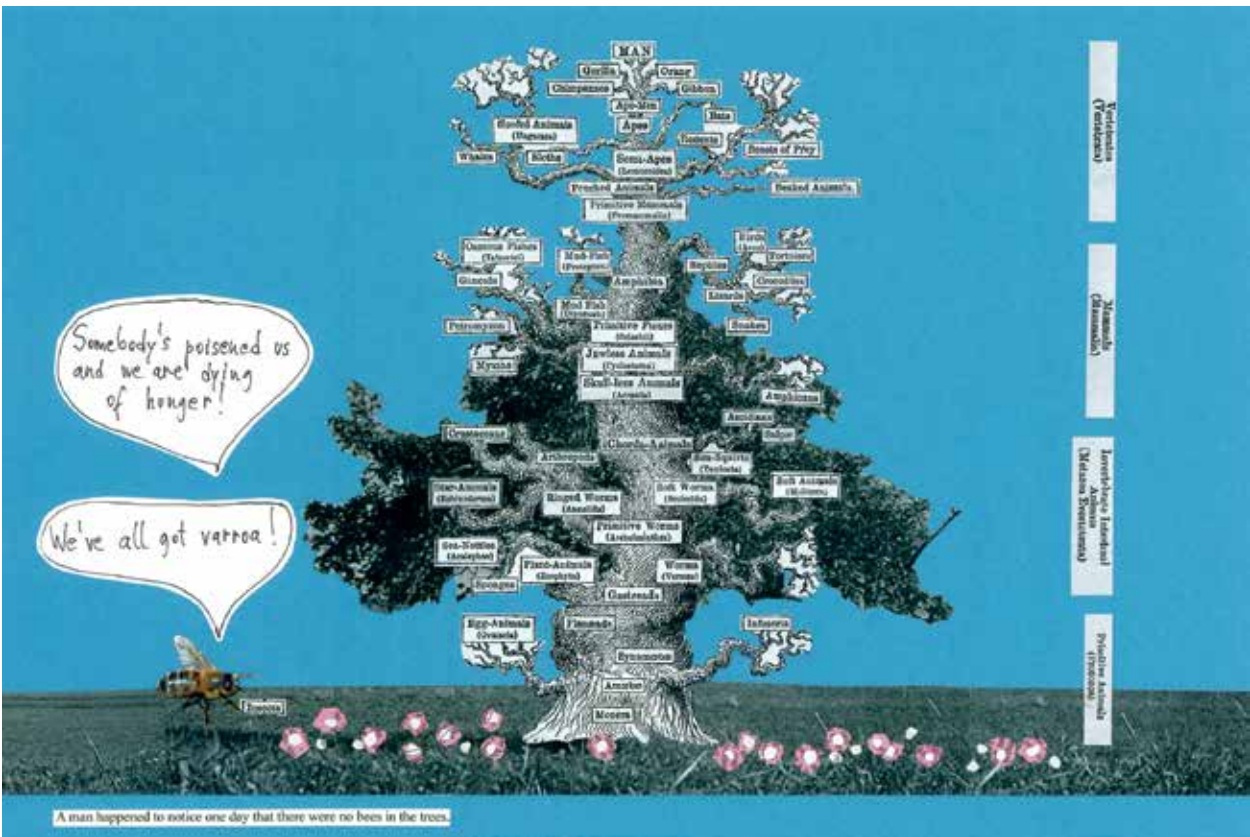
¹⁷³ Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, Changing attitudes in England 1500-1800, Oxford University press, Oxford, 1984. pg. 15.

¹⁷⁴ This regulation provides a means of labelling and minimum conditions which must be met in the production and trade of hen eggs intended for human consumption, and to ensure and maintain its quality.

¹⁷⁵ This regulation lays down minimum standards for the protection of livestock, sheds, and the registration procedure for rearing laying hens in accordance with Uradni list RS, št. 51/2010 from 28 June, 2010.

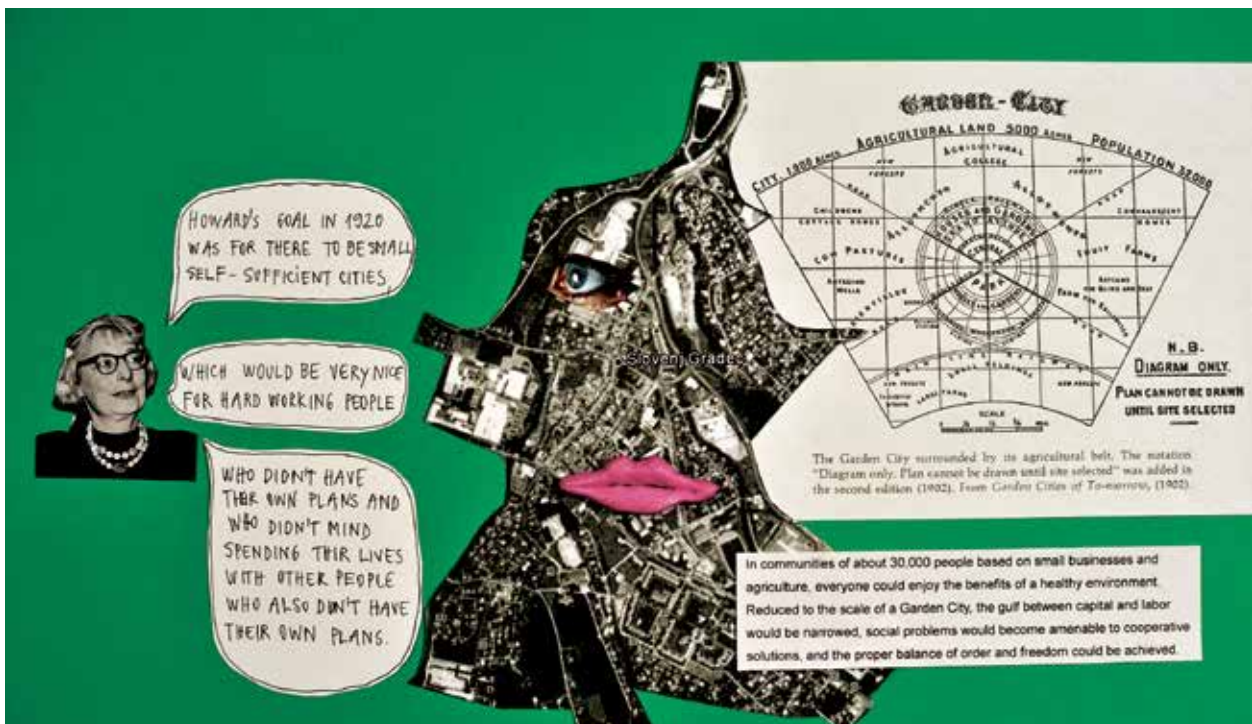
¹⁷⁶ *Our Daily Bread / Unser täglich Brot* is a 2005 documentary film directed, co-produced, and with cinematography by Austrian filmmaker Nikolaus Geyrhalter. The film depicts how modern food production companies employ technology to maximize efficiency, consumer safety, and profit.

idea of changing the name of the epoch we are now living in, and suggested calling it the “Anthropocene”, a term which is widely accepted today. According to the Anthropocene theory humanity is the equivalent of a natural force which has now fundamentally influenced the Earth’s ecosystems. In the last two hundred years, humanity and the planet have simultaneously entered into a period of radical and interdependent transformation, meaning that humanity urgently needs to change its perspective on nature. Instead of having a human-centric position towards nature, people are developing a new relationship with nature based on mutual respect and cooperation. The utopian idea that nature should be treated as a subject and not an object was realised in the new constitution of Ecuador in 2008, which grants nature inalienable rights – instead of our “rights to nature” it addresses the “rights of nature”. The development of people’s sensibility to nature is something I also describe in my next artwork, *Back to the City (Nazaj v mesto)*.¹⁷⁷



Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City*, 2011
 10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
 Collage No. 1

¹⁷⁷ Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City*, video animation, 2011, duration: 13min 35sec.



Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, video still
 HD, duration 13 min 38 sec, 2013

10.4 *The Right Balance*, a Video Animation

My second animation, *The Right Balance* (*Pravo razmerje*, 2013), was something I developed between 2012 and 2013 and was a result of my research on the Slovenian city of Slovenj Gradec, which was mainly focused on the local self-sufficiency of that city. It was after doing this research that I created the public sculpture and public breakfast *The Golden Egg*, which I describe in section 10.2, *Animals in the City*. Here I will present my second artwork, which was also derived from research on Slovenj Gradec and its self-sufficiency.

Slovenj Gradec: a Garden City?

Slovenj Gradec is the main administrative centre for the municipality of Slovenj Gradec, and is similar to many smaller cities across Slovenia which are located far from larger centres and left to transition in a hinterland of greenery. A comparison with the well-known *Garden City* of E. Howard, which I heard many times during my research of Slovenj Gradec, is only partially appropriate. All too often we compare every smaller country town with this concept, so I took the comparison between Slovenj Gradec and *Garden City* and deconstructed it in my animation with a critique of *Garden City* by American writer and activist Jane Jacobs, who put it forth in her famous book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Random House, New York, 1961.

Slovenj Gradec is a city with a rich history and lies in a valley near the Austrian border. In the period after the independence of Slovenia and the opening of the market it experienced significant changes. The collapse of its industry began before that, most dramatically in the nearby city of Ravne, which had grown in tandem with the steel industry. With Slovenia's independence (1991) there were high hopes because of the encouragement of private companies. The company Prevent is the famous "big story" from Slovenj Gradec, as it is a symbol of the wild privatisation of social enterprises in Slovenia and the immense increase of wealth for the new owners. The collapse of the big company, which began bankruptcy procedures in August 2010, had the greatest impact on Slovenj Gradec, where many jobs were lost, while smaller subsidiaries survived.¹⁷⁹

After the market was opened to foreign investment, the shopping centre at the edge of the town, full of large foreign retail chains (Intersport, Hervis, Hofer, Interspar) slowly started causing many of the small stores in the town to close down. The large number of closed stores in the very centre of the old town, which I photographed and showed in my animation, creates a sad atmosphere as the streets take over the function of trade and socialising, and the town is slowly being transformed into a commuter town.

Even the marketplace, which is the centre of the town's social life, is partially closed, with just two vegetable stands open on only certain days of the week. A few farmers who sell home-grown vegetables have moved to the front of the Mercator Center supermarket, a Slovenian supermarket chain, to the so-called shopping centre. The town is full of half-finished construction projects, an unfinished music school in the centre of the town, a half-finished youth incubator, and all of this is tied to both the economic crisis and the collapse of the Slovenian construction industry between 2008 and 2010.

In any case, the wealth of the town lies in its natural resources, in the green hinterland of the town, the surrounding hills and forests, and the clean drinking water which flows from Uršlja mountain (1699m). The vegetable gardens around the private houses, which are characteristic for all of Slovenia, including Slovenj Gradec, have always provided a great deal of self-sufficiency to the residents. The town also has a few smaller apartment block neighbourhoods, and to meet the needs of the residents who live there allotment gardening sites developed at nine locations in the town. Self-sufficiency had also been an important part of the political agenda for Slovenj Gradec in previous years, but this was more theoretical in nature, and not actually realised in practice. In 2012 a new mayor was elected, and as one of his goals he committed himself to organising the allotment gardening issue.

¹⁷⁹ Ivan Praprotnik, *Slovenj Gradec je izgubil vse, a večina hčerinskih družb Prevent Globala bo preživela* (Slovenj Gradec has lost everything, but most of the Prevent Global subsidiaries will survive), Delo newspaper, 5.7.2011. <http://www.delo.si/gospodarstvo/podjetja/slovenj-gradec-je-izgubil-vse-a-vecina-hcerinskih-druzob-prevent-globala-bo-prezivila.html> (2.5.2014).



Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, 2013
 10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
 Collage No. 9

Allotment Gardening in Slovenj Gradec

Allotment gardening is a widespread practice in Slovenj Gradec, but like Ljubljana and other Slovenian cities, it was not organised by the municipality. The city did not have any up-to-date records on the gardeners and did not collect rent. As a result of several new investments and the expected expansion of the town in certain areas, in 2011 the illegal allotments in the district of Ozara were removed, a place where allotment gardening had developed in the most informal shape possible, with the occupation of larger plots of land and the construction of buildings which exceeded size limits and design regulations. In that time the gardeners worked in different conditions, without garden sheds and with them. Some of the buildings, just like at many other locations in Slovenia, such as the illegal allotment gardening site in Črnuče, grew into smaller houses, or cottages. At all locations together there were 250 allotment gardeners, which the municipality gradually took records of. Gradually, the allotments were re-designed and the allotment sites came to be in accordance with the standards of the *Community Urban Eco Garden* in Borova Vas, Maribor (fences, pathways, a children's playground, raised garden beds for people with disabilities), and according to the example of Ljubljana's regulated allotments (unified garden sheds).

From a conversation with architect Boštjan Temniker, who was hired by the municipality of Slovenj Gradec to organise the allotment gardening issue, it was clear that with small steps the municipality was getting closer to an exemplary arrangement for allotment gardening. Temniker says: “Even here we are dealing with allotment gardening in phases, as we don’t have the personnel or finances to do it any other way. After twenty years the town finally has records on approximately 250 tenants, among which most have been cooperative and want the issue to be settled. Even though we have adopted an ordinance and rulebook, we are trying to be as humane as possible in the field. Most gardeners have a 50m² allotment. A little less than one third (seventy) of the gardeners also have a garden shed – and here the areas of the allotments are a little larger than 120m². Until now we have completely organised two locations of about ninety allotments all together. As for the gardeners from the Ozara area, we have moved them to Sotočje near Rahtel.”¹⁸⁰ The permissible garden sheds will have an area of 2m x 3m and will be constructed by local tradesmen. Leases will be from one to five years with the possibility of extension, dependent on the development plans of the municipality. Only organic gardening will be permitted.

Every Carrot Matters, Every Egg Matters

All the circumstances surrounding Slovenj Gradec sound familiar compared to the situations in which smaller towns found themselves, both in Slovenia and abroad. The orientation towards locally grown food and an increase in the self-sufficiency of the city could be an alternative model for new employment opportunities, for better family economics, for a healthy lifestyle, and also to provide a direction for the ecological development of the city and region. In the example of the initiative *Incredible Edible*¹⁸¹ from the town of Todmorden in England it is clear that an important network of initiatives oriented towards local food can develop from local initiatives. The people there self-organised and did everything to create new possibilities for the development of the town out of simple activities created around local production, and this was done both for profit and to raise the quality of life. Initiatives to produce local food are connected with their slogan of “community spirit”, which is in the simple idea of producing one’s own food, breeding bees, breeding chickens for fresh eggs (*Every Egg Matters*), taking care of community spaces, cooking with local recipes, organising public events (public kitchens) and education with the inclusion of kindergartens and schools. The initiatives within organisations such as *Back to Basics*, *Every Egg Matters*, and community spirit motivate local residents to solve problems by themselves through self-organisation and cooperation. From its humble beginnings in 2007 focused on local food, *Incredible Edible*¹⁸² has become a movement which, through

¹⁸⁰ Boštjan Temniker is an architect who was employed by the city of Slovenj Gradec in the spring of 2012. His mission was to regulate urban gardening in Slovenj Gradec. I met him for the first time in Slovenj Gradec in June 2012, while doing research. During the month of April 2014, he updated me on the current state of urban gardening in Slovenj Gradec.

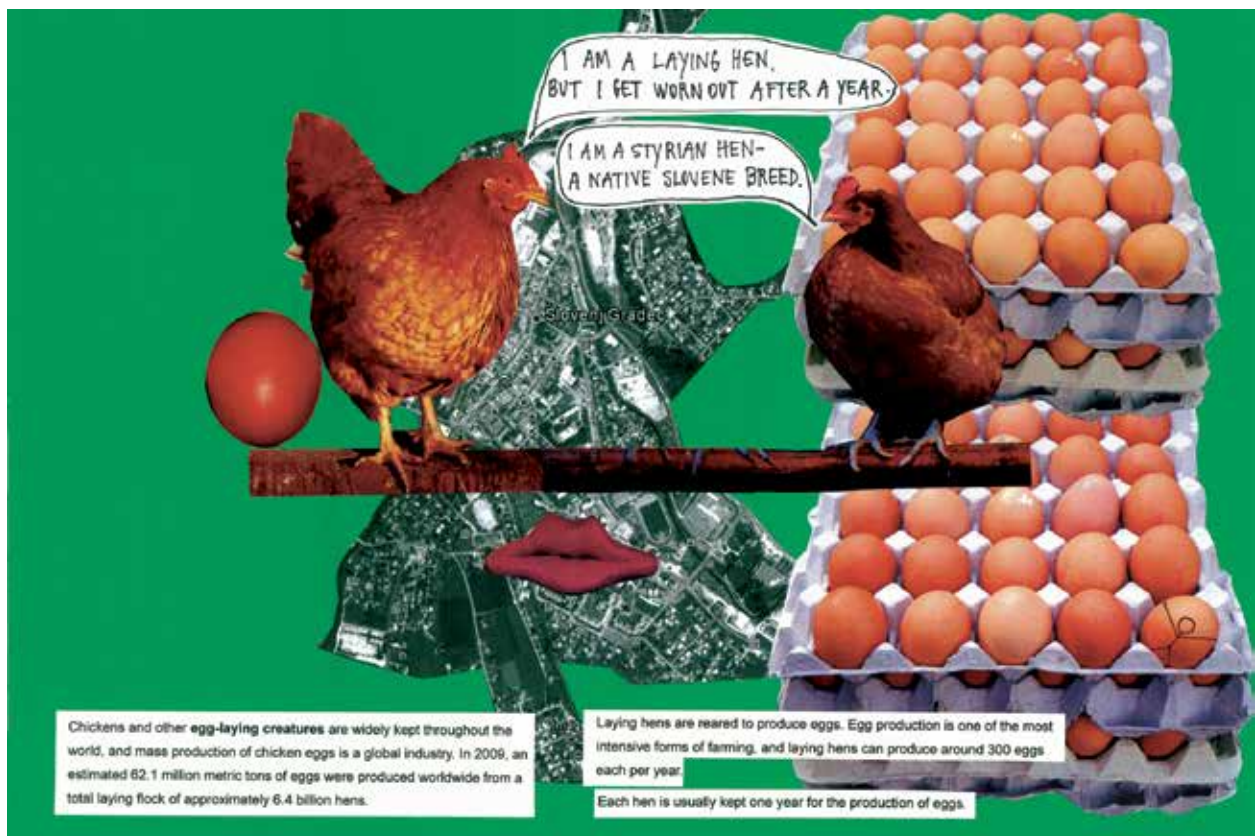
¹⁸¹ <http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/> (21.9.2014).

¹⁸² <http://incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk/> (2.5.2014).

self-organisation and the production of local food, has created changes for the better within the community and wider region, as well as encouraging similar initiatives elsewhere.

Of course, *Incredible Edible* is just one among initiatives which have appeared in Europe, the UK, and the USA in the last two decades. *Transition Towns*, *Eco Villages* and *Incredible Edible* are just among the most visible. The town of Todmorden, due to its similarities with Slovenj Gradec (in terms of its distance from larger cities, size, and number of inhabitants), is a fairly realistic comparison with the Slovenian town. In addition to the self-sufficiency of the town with the production of vegetables, the breeding or use of domestic farm animals in the city is also booming. For example, in Todmorden they created the initiative *Every Egg Matters*, which promotes the breeding of egg-laying hens in public and private spaces, for a fresh egg every day. In modern times, domestic farm animals, like other aspects of rural life, have been pushed out of the city, but in today's self-sufficient city they have once again regained their position. The future of smaller towns scattered in the rural countryside is not based on modelling themselves after the larger urban centres, but rather in making full use of all of their advantages. Unlike larger cities, these advantages have already been given, meaning that the relationship between the urban and the rural is more balanced, and it is only necessary to recognise that as an advantage. At this moment in time, the self-sufficiency vision of Slovenj Gradec and similar smaller towns is closer to the right balance than many places and large cities, and that was the reason for the title of the work *The Right Balance*. As the Bohn & Viljoen Architects wrote: "There is a paradox though: while China modernizes and urbanizes, eliminating its urban agriculture, at the very same time in New York, space is being sought out in an effort to re-establish urban agriculture. In both situations proponents of the change believe they are creating desirable cities for the future. The reality may be, that we are witnessing a rebalancing of the relationship between cities and agriculture."¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Bohn & Viljoen Architects, *Laboratories for Urban Agriculture: Havana to Milwaukee*, published in *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architecturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 228.



Polonca Lovšin, *The Right Balance*, 2013
10 Collages, 30 x 45cm
Collage No. 8

11 ARTISTIC RESEARCH

In this final chapter I will analyse the methods I have used to combine my research and artworks, and also the degree to which these artworks, at certain points, have in turn influenced the research. I divide my artworks into the categories of individual and collective. The community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* is a collective work, based on group action and co-authorship. Here, theory and practice were constantly interwoven during the process of the project's creation. The artwork developed together with the research, and theory and practice constantly informed each other. This process is analysed and described in greater detail in chapter eight, *The Community Garden Beyond a Construction Site in Ljubljana*, and chapter nine, *Community Gardens in the Context of Art*.

The method I would like to highlight in this chapter is that of telling stories, a process whereby scientific research is transmitted to the viewer through storytelling itself. I have tested and used this method extensively in my two video animations, *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013), and also in my collages. In this chapter I will focus on the method of storytelling, and storytelling with images.

11.1 The Dialogue between Research and Artworks

Artistic research is something I understand as a combination of two practices: scientific research and artistic practice. Artistic research, which is based on practical activities, is a combination of both, with one influencing and helping the other. One of the possible divisions within artistic research, and one which has been used frequently in the context of this study at Bauhaus University, is the division into theory and practice. I would prefer to avoid these categories, because I believe that it is precisely artistic research which enables the practice section to include theory, and that the artwork itself creates knowledge. The separation of theory and practice is something I have tried to avoid throughout this thesis paper, and in its place I use the categories of research and artwork.

At this point, I would like to return to a text which I first read while beginning my Artistic Research doctoral studies. Upon a re-reading of the text now, at the conclusion of this five-year process, I still find that it applies to my understanding of artistic research. This is a text by Mike Hannula,¹⁸⁴ and it was released in the spring of 2009 in the newspaper for art and research *Art & Research: A Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods*. Back in 2009, when the text was written, artistic research was a fairly new term, one which had originated in the need for both contemporary art and also universities (including Bauhaus University) to be able to define artistic research. One of the reasons for this was the introduction of a new doctoral study of art at Bauhaus University, which was similar to numerous other universities and art academies. In the five years since its inception, there has been a great deal of thought, deep contemplation, and writing done on artistic research. In the context of the weeks intended for a doctorate within our programme, we attempted many times to define what artistic research is, but despite our

¹⁸⁴ Mika Hannula is a curator, teacher and art critic. He is currently a professor of artistic research at the Faculty of Arts, Applied Arts, and performing arts at the University Goeteburg in Sweden. The article to which I am referring, *Catch Me. If You Can. Chances and Challenges of Artistic Research*, was first published in the journal *Art & Research. A journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods* in 2009.

<http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n2/hannula1.html> (2.5.2014).

attempts to find the “right” definition, we were unable to succeed. As Hannula says, often the more we try to determine something, the more we are forced into a normative judgement, which, the majority of the time, is based on what we want it to be. So, artistic research still eludes being defined in an unambiguous and unified way, which is also to the advantage of artistic research and the artist.

I did not concern myself too much with a definition, as I saw the attempt to define artistic research mainly as something the university needed – to formalise the programme, define it, and, based on that, form guidelines and methods. The reason I was interested in artistic research, which was very close to my way of doing art, was the result of several questions which were relevant to me: In what way does an artwork include research work? Does my artwork, which was created in the context of artistic research, create a different kind of knowledge? If so, what kind of knowledge is created through the process of artistic research? In the foreword of the recently published book *AR-artistic research*, Ute Meta Bauer and Thomas D. Trummer partially answer these questions: “The concept of artistic research is based on the fact that artistic processes of inventing and working have broader applications and a wider resonance that goes beyond an artist’s subjective approach to the world. Artistic interpretations offer a productive counterpoint to outcomes that have become established knowledge in the sciences or are currently under discussion. AR-artistic research is thus based on a conviction about the independence of the artistic. In this it is not so much ‘result’, but rather a repertoire of methods and the competence of artistic depiction that are key.”¹⁸⁵

Artistic research is not something new and there exist numerous artworks in the not too distant past within the history of art which we could classify as artistic research. The most central connection is the practice of the conceptual artists from the 1960s. Is the connection of knowledge from various other non-artistic practices, something that is characteristic of artistic research, something new? No, even this is not new, as artworks have connected with other disciplines before, with practices from sociology, anthropology, and practical philosophy, and even biology and physics, etc. except that in recent times these connections have become even more intensive, or at least more common.

For contemporary artists, including the ones doing artistic research, it is characteristic that we make use of similar methods to other professions; from the interview to field work, or even the precise searching of archives. However, even though we make use of these methods, the final result is very different. Ute Meta Bauer and Thomas D. Trummer continue: “Thus artistic research can become relevant to scientific research through its processes of mediating knowledge and, above all, through its particular efficacy in questions of representations.

¹⁸⁵ Ute Meta Bauer and Thomas D. Trummer (eds.), *AR-Artistic Research*, Koenigs Books, London, 2014, pg. 10.

Conversely, scientific interests in the artistic are of a great importance, since they propel self-reflection in art.”¹⁸⁶

My Methods

In this thesis paper I highlight two different methods which I have used to mediate the knowledge gained through research to artworks. First, in shaping the community garden in Ljubljana, the method of work was based on gradually developing a practical example, which we guided with the help of reflection and theoretical analysis. Here the research work was directly connected with the practical work, and in the process of creation these two parts constantly supplemented each other. The method we used as artists and architects was based on the inclusion of local residents – on participation – which helped us to develop the community garden and the community itself. The project was created based on group work, co-authorship, and cooperation with people from the neighbourhood.

The second method is characteristic for my video animations and collages, where I combine methods for the creation of stories. Prior to the start of this study I had already created two video animations, *The City Cows* (2008)¹⁸⁷ and *Why Slovene Houses Look the Way They Do* (2007).¹⁸⁸ However, while doing this artistic research project I deliberately tested and searched for the limits to which an artwork can “handle” research work, so that one work does not “kill” the other. Both of the video animations I created in the context of this doctoral thesis (*Back to the City*, 2011, and *The Right Balance*, 2013) represent my understanding of what an artistic research is. The fear that accompanied me, and accompanies many who do creative work on the basis of research, is that the artwork would merely be an illustration of the research. Some additional doubts I fought with were gathered around the question of how to reduce the results of the research to only the most important details, as well as how to prevent my artworks from becoming excessively pedagogical. My doubts were related to the idea of scientific knowledge which is easily presented to an audience in the form of lecture, a form often used by scientists, but I needed to transform this scientific knowledge into an artwork. According to contemporary American artist Mark Dion, most scientists have not adapted to the necessary format of the representation of their ideas. “Scientists are not necessary adept in the field of representation. They don’t have access to a rich set of tools like irony, allegory and humour, which are the meat and potatoes of art and literature.”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City / Nazaj v mesto / Zurück in die Stadt*, ed. Silke Opitz, Revolver Publishing, Berlin, 2011. pg. 54-55.

¹⁸⁸ Polonca Lovšin, *Back to the City / Nazaj v mesto / Zurück in die Stadt*, ed. Silke Opitz, Revolver Publishing, Berlin, 2011. pg. 56-59.

¹⁸⁹ Miwon Kwon in conversation with Mark Dion, *Mark Dion*, Pahidon Press Unlimited, London UK, 1997, pg. 8-33.

I ended up connecting image and text. This soon became similar to the form of comics, and became the first stage of a storyboard, which is also the first phase of animation. That is how I developed the idea that my research would be integrated into my artworks by becoming a background for my stories.

Telling Stories

I started to create stories out of research material intuitively. At one point I realised that the method of creating stories out of serious scientific knowledge enabled me to combine different aspects of research and create many different layers for reading or interpreting the artwork. In my video animations many different parts of the research are placed side-by-side, and they create a dialogue of practical examples and theoretical ideas, a dialogue of dry statistics and attractive newspaper style news, which are often in diametrical opposition to each other in terms of meaning. Everything is tied together by a story told by a narrator and the visual language created by photographs, texts with citations, sketches, and conversations with the main characters, who are often animals. In this way I include the scientific thesis of the Anthropocene into my artworks. I give a voice to animals and thus treat them as subjects, as equal to humans. With this gesture I suggest that the viewer change his or her position, or way of looking at animals and nature.

If I am closer to a scientist in the research portion, it is precisely with the creation of stories, characteristic of literature and visual art, that I also question society's current faith in science and theoretical concepts. As Mark Dion said, artists use artistic tools to open up an artwork, and one of those elements is humour. The humour in my work has crept in through various elements. These consist of unimportant and absurd local stories from the newspaper, conversations between animals, the music and artistic language of the photo collage, use of comics, and the clumsy movement of pictures. Humour helps to deconstruct a scientific presentation, and challenges the theory of this research. In certain parts of the story it pushes the research to the extreme, to the absurd. I believe that this intentional playfulness creates a productive and fruitful "opening up" of the theory within the artwork. I also see the openness of my artwork in the fact that it is made in such a way so as to reduce the credibility of my own position as author, and encourage viewers to create their own associations within independent meanings, which are not necessarily connected with my own.

When I started doing video animations I was not aware of all the potential that storytelling had in itself, nor was I aware of the effect that stories have on listener and the viewer. The method of storytelling is used by many disciplines in presentations to their public, and I found a good definition of it within a forum on marketing. The POMP marketing forum organised an international conference on telling stories of one's own company, and presented it as a good

marketing strategy: “Telling stories connects us on an emotional level and in a way that no other communication method can accomplish. Namely, good content is what encourages the target audience to think, share, and interact; it gives birth to ‘engagement’ and trust. When you tell a good story you create an emotional connection with the target audience, and on the basis of that they can more easily identify with you, your ideas, and product [or artwork]. For that reason the inclusion of storytelling/communicating/creating stories into the strategy of content marketing [or an artwork] is a necessity and simultaneously an exceptionally effective way of catching the interest of buyers [or viewers of art] to connect with it and begin to build a successful long-term relationship.”¹⁹⁰

I searched further for a deeper understanding of storytelling in literature. There exists a special kind of fairytale like the fable,¹⁹¹ which has a lot in common with my animated stories. This is a markedly educational or didactic epic form in which personified animals or things appear. They serve to illustrate a kind of life wisdom and simple lesson. In my collages and video animations the animals talk, and they say things dictated by common sense, which in truth can be considered as a form of life wisdom. Alongside the dialogue of the animals I place theories, statistics, and facts, which are often the result of human intelligence and people, and do not represent the way animals think. Aristotle was possibly the first who spoke at length of common sense, thought with a slightly different meaning than is commonly used today: “He described the ability with which animals (including humans) process sense perceptions, memories, and imagination (phronein) in order to reach many types of basic judgements. In his scheme, only humans have real reasoned thinking (noein), which takes them beyond common sense.”¹⁹² In all fables animals have human characteristics, and that enables the viewer to more easily identify with the content of what they say and to better remember the content. Furthermore, fables have two parts, something which is also characteristic of my animations. The first part is a short and clear story in which the heroes speak among themselves. The animals in my animations speak about things connected with the research of this thesis: nature in the city, the experiences of being in the countryside, and where they feel better and have a higher quality of life. For example, bees describe where there is a good pasture in Paris, pheasants are excited about the wild nature which is expanding in the centre core of Detroit, and wild pigs are happy that they have outsmarted hunters and are able to move freely in the suburbs of Berlin. The second part of the fable presents a lesson or moral. It can be at the beginning, at the end as a saying, or a main message hidden within the little story, but it is always so visible that everyone can understand it with ease. This characteristic part of fables, a concluding thought

¹⁹⁰ How “storytelling” is included in the strategy of content marketing. This text was used for the announcement of the POMP Forum, which will take place on 25 September, 2014, in Cankarjev dom in Ljubljana. The POMP Forum is an international scientific conference specialised in marketing content.
<http://www.pomp-forum.si/> (21.9.2014).

¹⁹¹ Silva Trdina, *Besedna Umetnost II*, Založba Mladinska knjiga, Ljubljana 1958, pg. 188.

¹⁹² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_sense (21.9.2014).

or saying, comes at the end of my video animations, or at the end of every animated story. The conclusion to my animated stories is not exactly the same as the lesson in a fable, but more of a conclusion to a short story which I would like to remain open.

Telling Stories with Images

The stories that I tell with video animations are based on the technique of stop-motion. Even though stop-motion is the oldest animation technique, it still attracts authors and, alongside other techniques of animation, virtually always enchants an audience. Barry Purves, animator, director and writer defines the technique in his book as follows: “Stop-motion could be generally defined as creating the illusion of movement or performance recorded over successive exposed frames of film by manipulating usually by hand some solid object or puppet or cut-out image in a spatial physical setting.”¹⁹³ The characteristic of these techniques which I find attractive to work with is the manual aspect. I am a sculptress by profession, and working with physical material is both what I am trained to do and what I like. Although in the end the final work is a video animation, a dematerialised object, working with stop-motion animation means a great deal manual work, all of which is done by hand. Stop-motion animation in my case is a collage animation based on photographs, photocopies, text, and drawings, all cut out of paper. I change the positions of the elements on the surface and each time take a picture – a single frame – with a camera. When I combine these images in a computer, one after the other, I create the illusion of movement. Barry Purves describes this technique as not the smoothest in terms of animation, but this is part of its appeal. He likes the irregularity of stop-motion, and the specific roughness of it, which suggests the work of a human hand. The hand has been intimately and directly involved, and that brings with it a certain emotional resonance.¹⁹⁴ In my video animations it is precisely this awkward movement which creates visual tension, and also a different way of comprehending the content. So, how did I end up working with stop-motion animation?

I can say that the first step was to combine an image with some text. The comic strip is a good example of this. I am inspired by the comics of architect and artist Yona Friedman, and I have used this format to reach a similar goal: to “open up” research for different audiences, not just academic ones. He started to combine text and drawings to explain his thinking about the future of cities. In the 1970s Yona Friedman developed comics as a tool to present his general idea of self-planning. Since, in Friedman’s opinion, self-planning requires learning, he first thought of formulating a language which was accessible; not reserved only for professionals, but also accessible for the uninitiated. After presenting his ideas with graph theory at many American universities, he found that his lectures only addressed academic circles, so in 1973 he “transposed” the learning of self-planning into a more accessible and clear form for people without scientific training – comics. His comics were distributed by UNESCO and some other

¹⁹³ Barry Purves, *Basic Animation 04 stop-motion*, AVA Book, Lousanne, Switzerland, 2010, pg. 6.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pg. 8.

organisations. After Friedman two real self-planning examples done by users were successful because all of the users agreed on first acquiring the necessary training, and this was done with the help of his comics.¹⁹⁵

My animations consist of sequential and juxtaposed panels that represent individual scenes. They are built and rebuilt in front of the eyes of the viewer. The panels are often accompanied by a brief descriptive section of written narrative, usually a dialogue contained in the kind of word balloons which are characteristic of comics. Prior to doing a video animation I make script and, based on that, a storyboard – which closely resembles a comic book. Additionally, I use comics inside my video animations. My main problem in using animation was the amount of text I was working with. I created different layers by using the text in a different visual way, and also by using sound – a voiceover. The voiceover is another layer in my video animation. Simultaneously, it serves as both a commentary and a way to make sure that the viewer is not to overburdened with an excessive amount of text on the screen. The stop-motion technique enables me to combine all these layers of text (inserted into comics, plain text, and text spoken in the voiceover) into one cohesive artwork.

The by-product of my animations based on paper and photographs are collages. They are not just a by-product, but have become an important part of my artistic practice, as well as important parallel works that can accompany my video animations, or even be independent. The text in my video animations has a certain rhythm. Sometimes you can not read everything on the screen, but this is not a problem. Only a fully focused person can manage all the layers of text and information, comprehending everything at once. That is why I exhibit the series of collages that correspond with an animation together with that animation. Each collage serves as a kind of chapter summary and explains slowly, without any time pressure. These collages, ten for each animation, enable the viewer to take more time and read all of the text; to observe all of the visual details, which transmit much more additional information, and to do this slowly. Collages are at once frozen frames of animation and summaries of certain chapters in the story of this animation.

During the final stage of this doctoral thesis I developed another artwork using the collage technique. Its title is *Between the Urban and the Rural*, the same as that of this thesis paper. Each collage in the artwork represents one chapter of this thesis paper, and in this way I have combined artworks and scientific research. Here, the artistic interpretations offer a productive counterpoint to outcomes of the knowledge accumulated through scientific research.

¹⁹⁵ Yona Friedman, *Pro Domo*, Actar, Barcelona, Spain, 2006, pg. 40.

Polonca Lovšin, *Every Egg Matters*,
Solo exhibition, 2013
P74 Centre and Gallery, Ljubljana
Photo by: Dejan Habicht



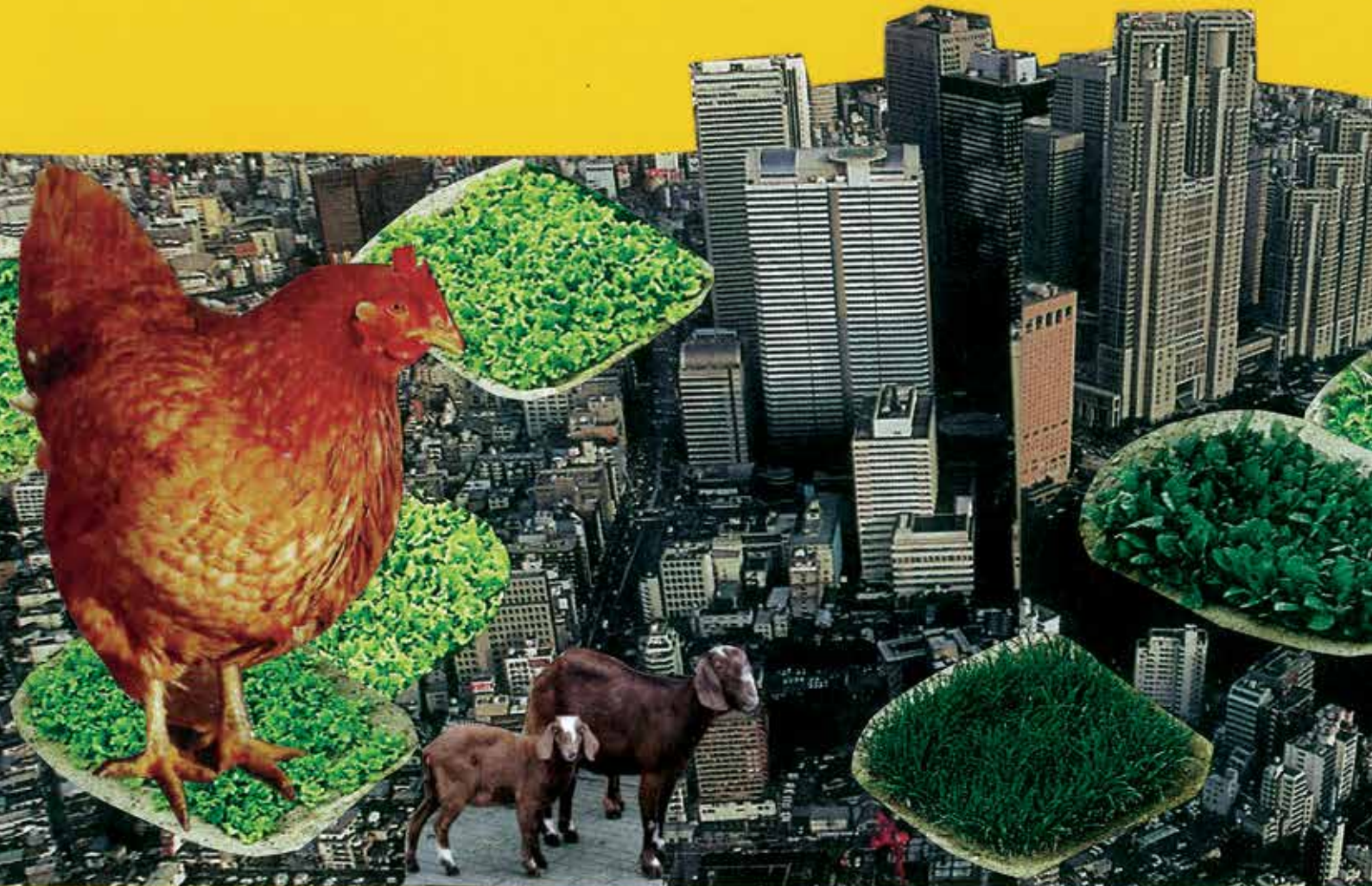
Polonca Lovšin, *Every Egg Matters*,
Solo exhibition, 2013
P74 Centre and Gallery, Ljubljana
Photo by: Dejan Habicht



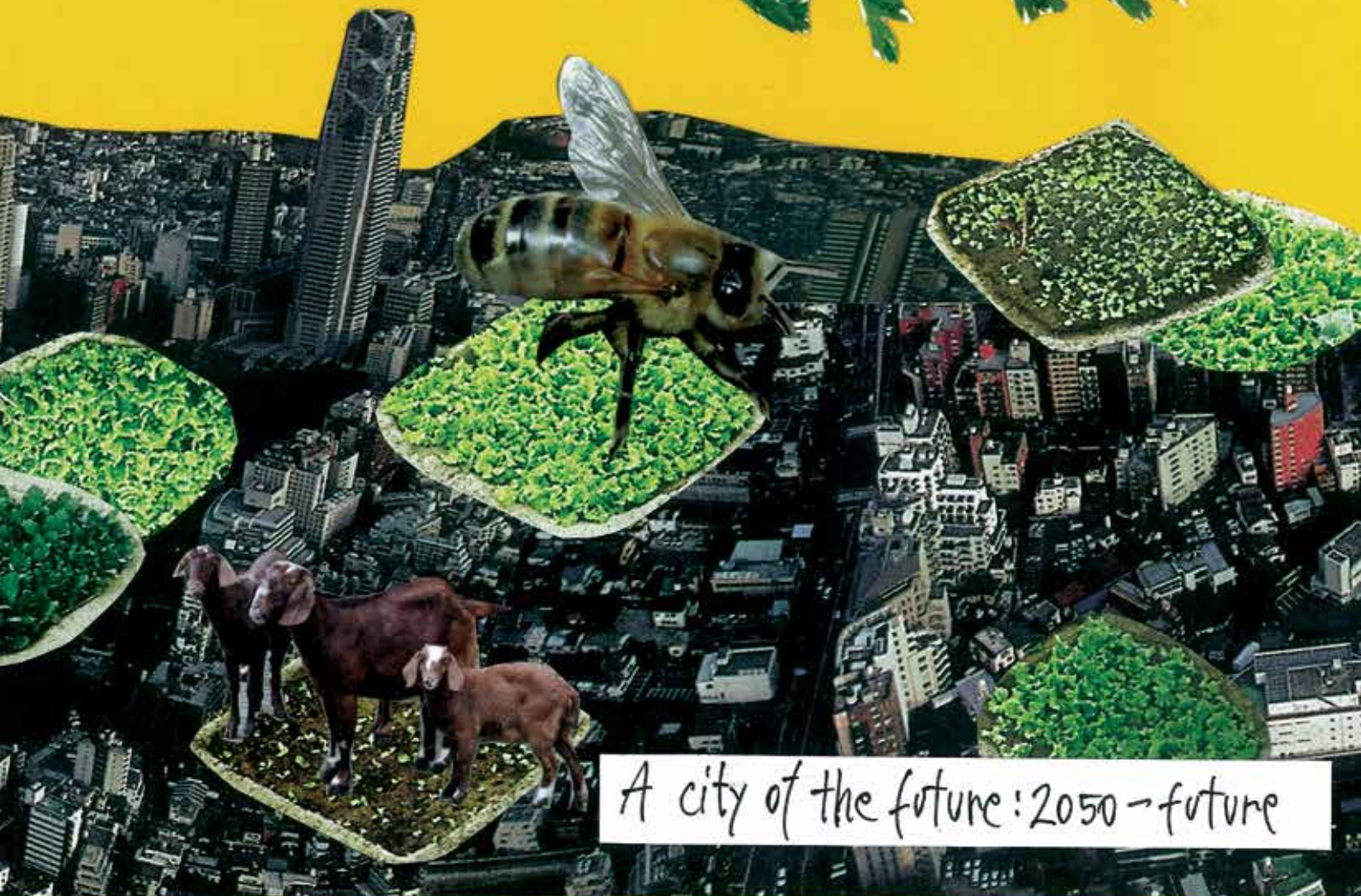
Polonca Lovšin, *Measures of Saving the World _ Part 5*
Group exhibition, 2014
Rotor Gallery, Graz, Austria
Photo by: Thomas Raggam



ALL I KNOW IS THAT
THE CARROTS I PRODUCE
TASTE BETTER.



I TOLD YOU THAT
URBAN FARMING
COULD SAVE THE CITY!



A city of the future: 2050 - future

←

Polonca Lovšin, *Between the Urban and the Rural*, 2014
13 collages, 29.7 x 42 cm
Collage No. 13

12 CONCLUSION

I began work on this doctoral thesis with the position that agriculture should be included in cities more intensively, but was not fully aware of the situation in the field. As of 2009 it has been confirmed that the number of people living in cities is higher than the number of people living in the countryside. I have realised that food is a key indication of the level of balance between the urban and the rural. Today, the majority of food is cultivated and processed in rural areas, and then transported into the city. It is precisely for that reason that urban agriculture, the practice of cultivating food in cities, can have such a strong influence on the urban-rural relationship. In this doctoral thesis I have suggested an optimistic view of the future of cities and the countryside. I believe that a balance between the urban and rural can be achieved by including agriculture in cities more intensively; by bringing agriculture “back to the city” (as the title of my video animation suggests). Urban agriculture represents a major contribution to balancing this fragile and important relationship. For this reason it should be in the interest of city residents to practise urban gardening, beekeeping, and to raise domestic farm animals, all of which can bring changes for the better, both for the city and the countryside. Most of all, urban agriculture will benefit the people and nature itself in both environments, which is an important and necessary orientation for the future of humanity and our culture.

This research has confirmed that there is a growing interest in urban gardening and other agricultural practices in European cities today. The best proof of this is the number of waiting lists for gardens, and also the growing number of urban gardeners. In England there are currently 3,558 allotment sites with a total of 152,432 gardens, and this year alone there are 78,827 people on waiting lists for allotments. In Germany the waiting lists for gardens are also long, with 16,000 gardeners waiting in Berlin alone. A second important indication of interest to engage with urban agriculture is the growing interest in urban beekeeping in European, UK, and North American cities. Between 2008 and 2013 the number of urban beekeepers in the UK increased by almost 200%. In New York urban beekeeping has been officially permitted since 2010, but before that it was already an established hobby which was supported by a network of organisations, blogs, and specialised stores. Today there are approximately 500 beekeepers in Berlin, and they produce 150 tons of Berlin’s honey. Their belief is that local honey will at least raise people’s awareness about the origins of their food. The fact that city residents want to grow their own vegetables, act responsibly with natural resources, increase their awareness of environmental issues, and practice ecology in their everyday lives, are all indicators that people want to have an influence on their lives, life in neighbourhoods, and life in cities.

Another argument to support this claim can be found in existing movements and initiatives oriented towards local food production, which have been appearing in the last few decades.

All of these movements promote growing food locally with the goal of influence existing economical, social, and political conditions in our society. By “conditions” in urban environments today they are referring to all that which is predominantly oriented towards consumerism and profit. Initiatives like *Transition Towns*, *Incredible Edible*, *Ecovillages*, and many other recently created community gardens prove that changes for the better can be achieved by starting locally on a small scale, and with group actions. Though humble in their beginnings, these small initiatives soon grew in number and reached beyond their local areas, city limits, and even state borders. For example, the *Transition Town* movement has grown into the *Transition Network*, which presently connects over 470 initiatives in more than 40 countries.

The most important confirmation of the central idea of this doctoral thesis (that urban agriculture must be intensified) has been derived from my artworks. I have created five artworks as examples of a positive future. Four of them are individual artworks which make use of a traditional artistic medium. The fifth artwork, and the central work for this thesis paper, is the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*, which I co-created in Ljubljana.

For the first of my individual artworks, my spatial intervention *A Plan with a Goat* (2010), I walked around a degraded space with a goat in the centre of Ljubljana. The second was a public sculpture and the accompanying public event *The Golden Egg* (2012), where I set up a chicken coop with three chickens laying eggs in front of the Slovenj Gradec city hall in order to encourage a discussion about self-sufficiency and local food production. The third and fourth, *Back to the City* (2011) and *The Right Balance* (2013), are both video animations in which I created a vision of cities inhabited by bees, wild animals, chickens, and goats. I encouraged the return of the animals to the city, but not only for their food value and to raise ecological awareness and recycle waste; I envision cities inhabited by domestic farm animals and seek to emphasise the importance of establishing a different emotional bond between city residents and animals, thus also altering our sensitivities (in the sense of our attitudes) towards nature. It was precisely the method of stop-motion animation based on story telling which enabled me to unify my artistic research and artworks. The inclusion of scientific research into my artworks through storytelling is a crucial method which I have developed during my doctoral studies, as the stories I create enable me to encourage the audience to think, share, and engage with my content – and this allows them to connect with my artworks on an emotional level. The fact that I have created these stories makes it possible for the viewer to more easily identify with both my art and research, but also to better remember the message. The power of these video animations precisely demonstrates how knowledge from research is connected with artistic work. Looking back, I can now see that another example of theory and research affecting my artistic work was the theory of the Anthropocene (section 10.3). To embody the idea of the Anthropocene, and to remind the viewer of this altered perspective towards nature, the animals

in my animations can speak. In this way, I turn them into subjects, and make them equal with humans. This utopian idea that nature should be treated as a subject and not an object was realised in the new constitution of Ecuador in 2008, which grants nature inalienable rights – instead of our “rights to nature” it addresses the “rights of nature”.

Finally, the fifth artwork, and the central work for this doctoral thesis, is the community garden *Beyond a Construction Site*. In 2010 I co-created this community garden in Ljubljana together with a group of initiators, and we have been developing it together with other participants to this day (2014). As a result of working on this community garden I have also engaged myself quite seriously with research on urban gardening as an important and generally understood way of practising urban agriculture. Here, my knowledge is rooted in how we built up this community garden, and how its community contributed greatly to the development of this paper. Study and research on what was happening in this field took place in parallel to actually “doing” and creating. For this reason, this community garden brings both an important introspection and tangible aspect to my thesis paper, especially regarding the creative process behind building a community garden. This combination of theory and practice was also especially important for the concept of this artistic research doctoral study. The knowledge created through this process could not be obtained in any other way. Additionally, this on-site and community-based artistic engagement also proved that art and culture can penetrate into different spheres of everyday life, and are even able to influence changes at the political and structural levels of a city. An important confirmation of this statement comes from our beginnings, from how we started this community garden in 2010. It is not possible to ignore the fact that we are a group of artists and architects, and that we initiated our community garden during an art festival. Short-term permission for temporary use of the land (during the two weeks of that art festival) was followed by permission to use the land on a temporary basis for one year by the land’s owner – the city. This proves that art and culture can be a tool which can open certain otherwise hard-to-open doors. In our case those doors were the doors of the municipality, and art and culture contributed to more easily obtaining permission for the temporary use of the land. This was also an important goal behind our community garden, to influence existing urban policies in the direction of creating easier access to urban spaces for residents, and to make the city authorities accept the temporary use of space as a common practice. In Ljubljana it is especially hard to reach an agreement with the city for the temporary use of space. However, though our community garden succeeded in reaching such an agreement for temporary use, our case is still an exception. To truly influence urban policies requires the time and collaboration of many initiatives. Now it is clear that our community garden is playing an important role in connecting similar initiatives. It serves as a platform that enables us to communicate our goals with the public in the form of open discussions, workshops, on-site events, by publishing a local magazine, and by constantly updating our blog. Networking with similar initiatives has allowed

us to become a more influential and stronger player in this area, which can in turn exercise a long-term influence on municipal policies. From the start it was our decision to negotiate with the city, and not to fight against it, because we believe that negotiation is the only way to influence urban policies. Through negotiation with the city we managed to obtain our agreement for the temporary use of space, and this was an important step towards changing Ljubljana's urban policies for the future.

The community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* plays another very important role in the context of Ljubljana. We created this community garden at exactly the right moment in time – a time of crisis for urban gardening in Ljubljana. This is why a large part of the research focuses on analysing the conditions for urban gardening in Ljubljana, both in the past and over the last seven years, when the city decided to “bring order” to allotment gardening. The official form of somewhat awkward planning continues to this day, and reflects the city's inability to organise larger urban gardening sites or provide easier access to residents for gardening land. The primary role played by the city today is to act as an intermediary between private land owners and interested residents, who must then bring their requests for urban gardens to the city. For this reason, Ljubljana's residents have begun approaching private land owners directly, contacting private companies dedicated to facilitating urban gardening, or just continue to garden illegally. Some citizens have formed initiatives, and one of those is our community garden, *Beyond a Construction Site*. It is important to note that our community garden developed in parallel to the official top-down approach which was being carried out by the city. Our bottom-up approach created an important reflection on the official top-down way of working, and offers a possible alternative. Something that the city could learn from our community garden is that gardens also need to be formed in the city centre in residential neighbourhoods, and this is something that is currently ignored in new spatial plans. The city could also learn from the different formal organisation of community gardens, which is in stark contrast to their allotment garden proposals. In many aspects, community gardens are more economical than allotments, and they are also based on collective space, a collective tool shed, and shared tools. The participants themselves created this community garden with their own work, and this has served to create an important difference in their attitudes toward the space and the community. Our community garden is also making a contribution to the debate on public space and green public spaces in Ljubljana. The fact that this abandoned degraded space in the centre of Ljubljana turned into a blossoming community garden is actually not that surprising. The residents of this neighbourhood lack green spaces and quality public spaces, and these are not being offered by the city. Therefore, our community garden is also sending an important message to the city: that existing public spaces and green public spaces designed by the city require reflection. The success of this community garden, which is confirmed by its four years of existence, is proof that community spaces and “edible” green spaces, something offered by our community garden, are highly desired by residents.

Community gardens also touch upon the political sphere, because when trying to create a community garden the involvement of neighbourhood residents is crucial. Only with their active engagement can the process of transformation of space and life in a neighbourhood be possible in the long term. In our case, the whole process of creating a garden proved that the participation of residents was not a given; we needed to create the appropriate circumstances for people to get interested, feel comfortable, start to trust us, and to collaborate. We started to imagine what this degraded space could be, and also tried to see what was lacking – both in our lives and in this neighbourhood. Growing our own food, negotiating for an urban space with the city, and creating a community of empowered residents; this is no small matter. Empowerment in the case of community gardens includes encouraging and developing the skills for self-sufficiency. In community gardens self-sufficiency is connected with growing one's own food, but also with creating a community space of our own, not to mention the community itself. "These practices often include a new way of establishing relationships with people, new ways of understanding nature, and a different sensitivity to the urban environment – in terms of how it looks and how we should feel within it, and the idea that we can experiment with everyday life."¹⁹⁶ In addition to locally grown food, community gardens advocate for the right of residents to urban spaces, their need to collaborate and create communities in their neighbourhoods, and to resist to what is given and prescribed by today's neoliberal urban politics. Community gardens create changes in the lives of residents, first on a personal level, then on the level of the community, and later at the city level. Changes in our minds and in the environment are not created only by thinking, but by working together.

To self-manage, self-organise, and self-build a space is the bottom-up approach to urban planning. The bottom-up approach creates a city based on decisions made by groups of people at a lower level of power, and pushes up to the higher levels of official power: to mayors, directors, or municipal officials. The bottom-up approach is only possible with a group action and the active involvement of residents: "The key elements of bottom-up urbanism or self-initiated urbanism are: self-organisation, self-help, the power to create, and the establishment of rules for a community formed by and around the space they collectively created."¹⁹⁷ And we need to be aware that Slovenian society also has a history of positive experiences and knowledge of self-management and group decision making at the local level from its past. Therefore, self-management and self-organisation cannot be simply rejected as an impossible utopia. The community garden *Beyond a Construction Site* has proven that community driven ideals can turn into a reality.

¹⁹⁶ *ECF Interviews with David Harvey*, Teatro Valle Occupato, Rome, 28.9.2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> (25.1.2014).

¹⁹⁷ Elke Krasny, *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*, ed. Elke Krasny, Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna, 2012, pg. 11.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 100% Tempelhofer Feld (2014) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.thf100.de/start.html> [Accessed: 21.7.2014].
- Addams, J. (1912) *Recreation as Public Function in Urban Communities*. In Krasny, E. (ed).
Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., Silverstein, M. (1977) *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Allmende-Kontor (2010) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.allmende-kontor.de/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Asociation de Arte Util (2013) [Online] Available at:
<http://arteutil.net/main/>. [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Babina, L. (2012) *Disappointed Hopes for a Successful Idea. A critical self-reflection on the aspirations, accomplishments and obstructions of an empowering community*. In Krasny, E. (ed). *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Bajželj Žvokelj, K., Rezar, L., Rondaij, P. (2009) Spopad med Davidom in Goljatom za košček zelene Ljubljane. *Mladina 44*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.mladina.si/48763/prenova-plecnikovega-stadiona/> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
In Slovene.
- Bajželj Žvokelj, K., Rezar, L., Rondaij, P. (2010) *Plečnikov stadion – reakcija na okoljevarstveno soglasje*. [Online] Available at:
<http://trajekt.org/2012/06/04/prenova-plecnikovega-stadiona/>. [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
In Slovene.
- Banham, R., Baker, P., Hall, P., Price, C. (2007) *Ne-načrt - ekperiment na svobodi*. Čerpes, I., Dešman, M. *O urbanizmu: Kaj se dogaja s sodobnim mestom?* Ljubljana: Založba Krtina. In Slovene.
- Bauer, U.M., Trummer, T. D. (eds.) (2014) *AR-Artistic Research*. London, UK: Koenigs Books.
- Bohn & Viljoen Architects (2012) *Laboratories for Urban Agriculture: Havana to Milwaukee*. In Krasny, E. (ed). *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Bourriaud, N. (1998) *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon, France: Les presses du reel.
- Campbell, M. Campbell, I. (2013) *Allotment waiting lists in England 2013*. [online]
Available at: http://www.transitiontownwestkirby.org.uk/files/ttwk_nsalg_survey_2013.pdf
[Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Clement, G. (2003) *The Third Landscape*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.gillesclement.com/art-454-tit-The-Third-Landscape>. [Accessed: 21.9.2014].

- Common Sense - Wikipedia (2014) *Common Sense - Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*
 [Online] Available at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_sense. [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Commons - Wikipedia (2014) *Commons - Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia*.
 [online] Available at:
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commons> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Connolly, K. (2013) *Berlin's urban gardeners reach for their pitchforks to fight off the developers*.
 [online] Available at:
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/05/berlin-garden-colonies-threat-developers>
 [Accessed: 21.6.2014].
- DAC&CITIES (2014) *Aarhus: Allotments more popular than ever*. [online] Available at:
<http://www.dac.dk/en/dac-cities/sustainable-cities/all-cases/green-city/aarhus-allotments-more-popular-than-ever/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Dion, M. (1997) *Mark Dion*. London UK: Pahidon Press Unlimited.
- Eames, A. (2013) *Germany Holidays: Schrebergärten, Germany's suburban garden kingdoms*
 [online] Available at:
<http://germanyiswunderbar.com/eastern-germany/germany-holidays-schrebergarten-germanys-suburban-garden-kingdoms/> [Accessed: 21.9. 2014].
- Ergas, C. (2013) *Cuban Urban Agriculture as a Strategy for Food Sovereignty*,
 [Online] Available at:
<http://monthlyreview.org/2013/03/01/cuban-urban-agriculture-as-a-strategy-for-food-sovereignty/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Evans, S. (2011) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13251805> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Fischer, B. (2012) *Artist at work: Marjetica Potrč*. [Online] Available at:
<http://afterall.org/online/spaces-for-a-new-culture-of-a-living/#.U7whw0BCd2E>
 [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Foderaro, L. W. (2012) *To Tackle an Invasive Weed, Bringing In the Hooved Pros*.
 [Online] Available at:
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/22/nyregion/at-freshkills-park-borrowing-goats-to-tackle-a-weed-problem.html?_r=0 [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Friedman, Y. (2006) *Pro Domo*. Barcelona, Spain: Actar and Junta de Andalucia.
- Geddes, P. (1915) *Cities in evolution: an introduction to the town planning movement and to the study of civics*. London: Williams & Norgate.
- Goriup, Z. (1984) *Planiranje in urejanje območij malih vrtov (vrtičkov) v Ljubljani*.
 Ljubljana: Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije. In Slovene.
- Greenguerillas (2014) *Our History*. [online] Available at:
<http://www.greenguerillas.org/history> [Accessed: 21.7.2014].

- GreenThumb (2014) [online] Available at:
<http://www.greenthumbnyc.org/about.html> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Gruden, I. (2013) *Zelemenjava: Zelenjavni podarim dobim*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.delo.si/zgodbe/nedeljskobranje/zelemenjava-zelenjavni-podarim-dobim.html>
 [Accessed: 18.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Hannula, M. (2009) *Catch Me. If You Can. Chances and Challenges of Artistic Research*.
 [Online] Available at:
<http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v2n2/hannula1.html>. [Accessed: 2.5.2014].
- Heldke, L. (2012) *Cultivating Cosmic Patriotism by Cultivating Cosmos: Urban Gardening and the Creation of Community*. In Krasny, E. (ed). *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Howard, E. (1902) *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd.
- Incredible Edible Network (2012) [Online] Available at:
<http://incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Incredible Edible Todmorden unlimited (2012) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Ivanšek, F. (1988) *Družina, stanovanje in naselje*. Ljubljana: France Ivanšek, Ambient.
 In Slovene.
- Jacobs, J. (2009) *Umiranje in življenje velikih ameriških mest*. Ljubljana: Studia Humanitatis.
 In Slovene.
- Jamnik, B., Smrekar, A., Vrščaj, B. (2009) *Vrtičkarstvo v Ljubljani*. Ljubljana: Geografski inštitut
 Antona Melika ZRC SAZU. In Slovene.
- Jansen, S. (2013) *Germany is buzzing – beekeeping in the city*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.goethe.de/ges/mol/tre/pan/en11650064.htm> [Accessed: 13.10.2013].
- Jurman, U., Šušteršič, A. (eds.) (2011) *Participacija. Arhitektov bilten, mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture. Volume 188-189*. In Slovene.
- Jurman, U., Lovšin, P. (2004) *Ready 2 Change*. [Online] Available at:
<http://skylined.org/change/tavi/>. [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Jurman, U., Lovšin, P. (eds.) (2005) *Ready 2 Change*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.lovsin.org/eng/publications/ready-2-change/>. [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
 In Slovene.
- Kennedy, R. (2013) *Bringing Art and Change to Bronx*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/30/arts/design/thomas-hirschhorn-picks-bronx-development-as-art-site.html>. [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Kleiner, J. P. (2013) *Eastern Eden: Allotment Gardens in the GDR*. [Online] Available at:
<http://gdobjectified.wordpress.com/2013/08/27/kleingaerten/> [Accessed: 22.7.2014].
- Klub gojiteljev štajerskih kokoši (2012) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.stajerska-kokos.si/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014]. In Slovene.

- Kos, D. (1993) *Racionalnost neformalnih prostorov*. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, Univerza v Ljubljani. In Slovene.
- Kos, D. (2007) Neurbana nacija. In Čerpes, I. Dešman, M.(eds.) *O urbanizmu: Kaj se dogaja s sodobnim mestom?* Ljubljana: Založba Krtina. In Slovene.
- Košan, M. (ed.) (2012) *Javni govor / Public Speech*. Slovenj Gradec: Koroška Galerija Likovnih Umetnosti / Koroška Art Gallery.
- Kotnik, M. (2011), Nenavadno vrtičkarsko naselje ob Velenjskem jezeru. *Nedelo*.
[Online] Available at:
<http://www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/nenavadno-vrticarsko-naselje-ob-velenjskem-jezeru.html#> [Accessed: 13.2.2014]. In Slovene.
- Krasny, E. (ed.) (2012) *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Križnik, B. (2013) *Demokratizacija vsakdanjega življenja in neoliberalni prevrat*.
[Online] Available at:
<http://ipop.si/2013/03/13/demokratizacija-vsakdanjega-zivljenja/> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
In Slovene.
- Kud Obrat (2009) *Spatial Practices and Politics*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.obrat.org/projects/spatial-practices-and-politics> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Kud Obrat (2011) [Online] Available at:
http://onkrajgradbisca.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/onkraj_dopolnjen_11.pdf (4.6.2014).
[Accessed: 14.6.2014].
- Kud Obrat (2012) *Beyond a Construction Site: A Community-Based Garden Intervention in a Neglected Urban Space in Ljubljana*. In Krasny, E. (ed.) *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Kud Obrat (2013) *Kaj pa mestni vrtički?* [online] Available at:
<http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/2013/10/07/posvet-kaj-pa-mestni-vrticki/>
[Accessed: 21.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Kutin, M. (2013) *Savsko naselje se prebuja*. [Online] Available at:
<http://trajekt.org/2013/05/27/savsko-naselje-se-prebuja/> [Accessed: 3.6.2013].
In Slovene.
- Kwon, M. (2004) *One Place After Another: Notes on Site Specificity, Site Specific Art and Locational Identity*. Cambridge MA, London UK: MIT Press.
- Lacy, S. (ed.) (1994) *Mapping the Terrain, New Genre Public Art*. Seattle: Bay Press Incorporated.
- Ljubljanski urbanistični zavod d.d.(2014) *Šmartinski park / Smart Park* [Online] Available at:
<http://www.luz.si/smartpark.aspx> [Accessed: 18.4.2014].
- Londonist (2008) *Nature-ist: Culpeper Community Garden*. [online] Available at:
http://londonist.com/2008/11/natureist_culpepper_community_garde.php
[Accessed: 21.9.2014].

- Lovšin, P. (2007) *Why Slovene Houses Look the Way They Do*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.lovsin.org/eng/video-animation/why-slovene-houses-look-the-way-they-do-2007/>. [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Maeterlinck, M. (1901) *The Life of the Bee*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/mm/b.html> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Mestna občina Ljubljana (2014) *Četrtna skupnost moste*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.ljubljana.si/si/mol/cetrtn-skupnosti/moste/> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
In Slovene.
- Mihelčič, M., Jazbinšek, M. (2008) *Vrtičkarski pogrom (Demokracija)*. [Online] Available at: http://sloblogi.drugisvet.com/sporocilo.php?post_id=150519. [Accessed: 14.10.2013].
In Slovene.
- More than Honey* (2012) Documentary Film. Directed by Marcus Imhoof. [DVD]. Netherlands: Imagine Film Distribution.
- Mreža za prostor (2014a) [Online] Available at: <http://mrezaprostor.si/>. [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Mreža za prostor (2014b) *Prostori sodelovanja (Spaces of collaboration)*, May 2014, vol.1, no. 1, Ljubljana: Mreža za prostor. [Online] Available at: <http://prostorisodelovanja.si/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/prostori-sodelovanja.pdf>.
In Slovene.
- Oblak, V. (1994) 10 let vrtičkarske univerze in društva Emona vrtiček. *Naša komuna*. 28 June, pg. 8. In Slovene.
- Onkraj gradbišča (2011) *Kako se je začelo*. [Online] Available at: <http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/about/dokumentacija-2010/>. [Accessed: 21.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Onkraj gradbišča (2012) *Praktični urbanizem-pravica do zelenega*. [Online] Available at: <http://onkrajgradbisca.wordpress.com/2012/03/15/hands-on-urbanism-1850-2012-pravica-do-zelenega/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Opitz, S. (ed.) (2011) *Polonca Lovšin, Back to the City / Nazaj v Mesto / Zurueck in die Stadt*. Berlin: Revolver.
- PA/Huffington Post UK (2013) *Half Of All Food Ends Up Thrown Away*. [Online] Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/01/10/food-waste-half-of-all-fo_n_2445022.html [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Petcou, C., Petrescu, D. (2012) *R-Urban Resilience*. In Krasny, E. (ed). *Hands-on Urbanism 1850-2012, The Right to Green*. Vienna: Architekturzentrum Wien.
- Plečnikove Žale - Wikipedija* (2014) *Plečnikove Žale - Wikipedia Prosta enciklopedija*. [Online] Available at: http://sl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ple%C4%8Dnikove_%C5%BDale [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
In Slovene.

- Plumer, B. (2013) *Why are bees dying? The U.S. and Europe have a different theory.*
 [Online] Available at:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/05/03/why-are-bees-dying-the-u-s-and-europe-have-different-theories/> [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Poles, R. (2013) *Velenje, sprehod skozi mesto moderne.* Velenje: Mestna občina Velenje.
 In Slovene.
- POMP forum (2014) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.pomp-forum.si/> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Potrč, M. (2009) *Is this Art? The Relational Object in a Shared space.* In Wilde Westen, Potrč, M. (eds.) *The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour.* pg.32-33.
- Praprotnik, I. (2011) *Slovenj Gradec je izgubil vse, a večina hčerinskih družb Prevent Globala bo preživela.* [Online] Available at:
<http://www.delo.si/gospodarstvo/podjetja/slovenj-gradec-je-izgubil-vse-a-vecina-hcerinskih-druzbo-prezivila.html> [Accessed: 2.5.2014]. In Slovene.
- Purves B. (2010) *Basic Animation 04 stop-motion.* Lusanne, Switzerland: AVA Book.
- Radarq.net (2014) *Non-Plan.* [Online] Available at:
<http://tumblr.radarq.net/post/45777874461/non-plan-cedric-price> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Shevory, K. (2010) *The Beekeeper next Door.* [Online] Available at:
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/09/garden/09Bees.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
 [Accessed: 15.11.2013].
- Shrinking Cities (2008) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.shrinkingcities.com/index.php?L=1> [Accessed: 21.9.2014].
- Simoneti, M. (1997) *Usmeritve in pogoji za nadaljni razvoj vrtičkarstva v Ljubljani.* Ljubljana: MOL-oddelek za kulturo in raziskovalno dejavnost. In Slovene.
- Smit, J., Nasr, J., Ratta, A. (2001) *Urban Agriculture: Food Jobs and Sustainable Cities.*
 [online] Available at:
<http://jacsmiit.com/book.html>. [Accessed: 21.7.014].
- Social Sculpture - Wikipedia (2014) Social Sculpture - Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia.
 [Online] Available at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sculpture. [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- STA (2010) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.24ur.com/novice/slovenija/novi-vrticki-novi-obdelovalci.html> [Accessed: 27.3.2014]. In Slovene.
- Steiner, R. (1998) *Bees.* Hudson New York: Antroposophic Press.
- Stewart, N. (2013) *Urban Gardening in Germany.* [online] Available at:
<http://www.young-germany.de/topic/live/food-fun/urban-gardening-in-germany>
 [Accessed: 21.7.2014].

- Šušteršič, A. (2013) *Hustadt, Inshallah, Learning from a participatory art project in trans-local neighbourhood*. Malmö, Sweden: Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University.
- Teatro valle occupato (2014) [Online] Available at:
<http://www.teatrovalleoccupato.it/>. [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Teixeira A. G. (2014) *Politično delovanje vrtičkarjev* [Online] Available at:
<http://www.tribuna.si/articles/politico-delovanje-vrtickarjev> [Accessed: 18.9. 2014].
 In Slovene.
- The Silent University (2012) [Online] Available at:
<http://thesilentuniversity.org/>. [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- TheECFchanel (2013) *ECF interviews David Harvey*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3ELIMjC8IU> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].
- Thomas, K. (1984) *Man and the Natural World, Changing attitudes in England 1500-1800*,
 Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Thomas, X. (2011) *Gilles Clément illustrated by Marseille: the Third Landscape of the L2*.
 [Online] Available at:
<http://latentmarseille.tumblr.com/post/3385832983/gilles-clement-illustrated-by-marseille-the-third> [Accessed: 19.9.2014].
- Thompson, N. (ed.) (2012) *Art as a Living Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*.
 Cambridge, MA: MIT Press Books.
- Till, J. (2011) Pogajanje z upanjem. In Jurman, U. Šušteršič, A. (eds.) (2011) *Participacija*.
 Arhitektov bilten, mednarodna revija za teorijo arhitekture. *Volume 188-189*: 12-16.
 In Slovene.
- Tisdall, C. (1979) *Joseph Beuys*. New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.
- Transition Network (2014) [online] Available at:
<http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>
- Trdina, S. (1958) *Besedna Umetnost II*. Ljubljana: Založba Mladinska knjiga. In Slovene.
- Unser täglich Brot* (2005) Documentary film. Directed by Nikolaus Geyrhalter. [DVD].
 USA: First Run Icarus Films.
- Uradni list Republike Slovenije (2010) *ODLOK o občinskem prostorskem načrtu MOL – izvedbeni del*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=100183> [Accessed: 21.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Uradni list RS (2009) *ODLOK o razglasitvi del arhitekta Jožeta Plečnika v Ljubljani za kulturne spomenike državnega pomena*. [Online] Available at:
<http://www.uradni-list.si/1/content?id=93037> [Accessed: 18.9.2014]. In Slovene.
- Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije (2013) *Smernice za vzdrževanje in prenovo karakterističnih območij mesta Ljubljane: Litostrojsko naselje*, Ljubljana: Urbanistični inštitut Republike Slovenije. In Slovene.

Valenčič, D. (2014) *Saveljski vrtički: Kako naj izberem? Tega ni mogoče deliti!* Dnevnik daily newspaper. 4 March, pg. 9. In Slovene.

Vastl, N. (2000) *Vrtičkarstvo*. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univerza v Ljubljani. In Slovene.

Young, P. D. (2012) *The Suzanne Lacy Network*. Art in America, June. [Online] Available at: <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/the-suzanne-lacy-network/> [Accessed: 18.9.2014].

Images for the collages:

Collage No.2, pg. 32-33

pg. 32, DOF1 2013 (Digital arial photograph, M 1:1000), Mestna občina Ljubljana, Oddelek za urejanje prostora.

pg. 33, DOF1 2013 (Digital arial photograph, M 1:1000) Mestna občina Ljubljana, Oddelek za urejanje prostora.

Collage No.7, pg. 88-89

Samograditeljska vrtičkarska arhitektura (Self-built Allotment Gardening Architecture).

Nina Vastl, *Vrtičkarstvo*, specialistična naloga, Fakulteta za arhitekturo, Univerza v Ljubljani, 2000.

Collage No.8, pg. 94-95

pg. 95, DOF5 2011 (Digital arial photograph, M 1:5000), Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije.

Collage No.9, pg. 108-109

pg. 94, DOF5 1994 (Digital arial photograph, M 1:5000), Geodetska uprava Republike Slovenije.

pg. 95, DOF1 2013 (Digital arial photograph, M 1:1000), Mestna občina Ljubljana, Oddelek za urejanje prostora.

Collage No.10, pg. 116-117

Raba ZV-površine za vrtičkarstvo, Občinski prostorski načrt (OPN)-izvedbeni del. Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2010.

Collage No.11, pg. 124-125

pg. 124, *Beyond a Construction Site*, March 2010, photograph by: Suzana Kajba.

pg. 125, *Beyond a Construction Site*, July 2010, photograph by: Drago Kos.

Collage No.12, pg. 158-159

Beyond a Construction Site, July 2010, photograph by: Drago Kos.

ANLAGE 1

Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Ich erkläre hiermit ehrenwörtlich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit ohne unzulässige Hilfe Dritter und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Die aus anderen Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Daten, Methoden und Konzepte sind unter Angabe der Quellen gekennzeichnet.

Bei der Auswahl der Auswertung folgenden Materials haben mir die nachstehend aufgeführten Personen in der jeweils beschriebenen Weise entgeltlich/unentgeltlich geholfen:

1. ...
2. ...
3. ...

Weitere Personen waren an der inhaltlich-materiellen Erstellung der vorliegenden Arbeit nicht beteiligt. Insbesondere habe ich hierfür nicht die entgeltliche Hilfe von Vermittlungs- bzw. Beratungsdiensten (Promotionsberater oder anderer Personen) in Anspruch genommen. Niemand hat von mir unmittelbar oder mittelbar geldwerte Leistungen für Arbeiten erhalten, die im Zusammenhang mit dem Inhalt der vorgelegten Ph. D.-Arbeit stehen.

Die Arbeit wurde bisher weder im In- noch im Ausland in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form einer anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt.

Ich versichere ehrenwörtlich, dass ich nach bestem Wissen die reine Wahrheit gesagt und nichts verschwiegen habe.

Polonca Lovšin

Ljubljana, 12 September, 2014

