



**THE PASSION PLAY**  
**THE HERALD OF TIME**  
*(Passion, signum temporis)*



The Slovenians, a small nation in numbers in the draft between the Romance, Germanic, Hungarian and Ottoman worlds, have been able to preserve themselves through centuries only by Christian inculturation. The Passion Play, the suffering of Christ, played a special role in this, which is evidenced by records of this from the tenth century onward. Till the reforms of Maria Theresa and of Joseph in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, passion plays in Slovenia were played in Ljubljana, Tržič, Laško and Novo mesto, Škofja Loka and maybe elsewhere.

The passion plays in Slovenia are even today a good herald, a marker of time, a kind of litmus. In the last hundred years, we have been particularly tested and threatened by two neighbouring totalitarian regimes, fascism and nazism, and after the Second World War even by the domestic communist regime. It was not allowed to stage passion plays under their regime.

**After the fall of the Berlin Wall and democratic changes in Slovenia, we started to stage passion plays again.** The first one was staged in 1992 (Mrakov Process) in the Municipality Mengeš. After that still **eleven Passion plays around Slovenia.** One of them was in Razbor (Municipality Sevnica) from 1998 to 2007. The Ribnica Passion Play started to be staged in 2007 and after that every year. Beside in Ribnica they also staged in Velike Lašče, Kočevje, Logatec, Škofja Loka and Sodražica.

**The heart of Passion Plays in Slovenia is Škofja Loka Passion Play** which was (within modern era) **first performed in 1999.** The last performance was previously in 1937. The Škofja Loka Passion Play is one of the last baroque passion plays in Europe, written in 1721, and performed as a procession through old Škofja Loka city center.

It is necessary to emphasize that it is the oldest preserved Slovenian drama text. Each performance is very demanding because more than one thousand passion volunteers from the area of the broader Škofja Loka are involved. The Škofja Loka Passion Play encourage all passion volunteers to engage in active, spiritual, religious, cultural and social life of the area.

The Škofja Loka Passion Play was performed in the year 1999, 2000, 2009 and 2015. **The next performance will be in 2021 celebrating three hundred years or original text which was written by capuchin frier Romuald.** Original book from 1721 is preserved in Capuchin Monastery Škofja Loka.



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Scene »Eden« from Škofja Loka Passion Play 2015.

From 2006 on the Museum Society of Škofja Loka **published yearly journal The Passion Play Contributions** (slovenian: *Pasijonski doneski*). They include cultural, spiritual and other themes and different literary, theater and arts articles of the Škofja Loka Passion Play, other Passion Plays from Slovenia and the Passion Plays from Europassion group.

**In 2011 Slovenian passion players** from different Slovenian passion cities **started to meet in Škofja Loka** and exchange their experiences.

**In December 2016 Škofja Loka Passion Play** (slov. *Škofjeloški pasijon*) **was inscribed on UNESCO representative list of intangible culturale heritage of humanity**. Many members of Ventus Passionis were very active within almost ten years process of preparing thorough necessary documentation.



**In July 2018, the Capuchin Monastery Škofja Loka was registered as the holder of the spiritual heritage of the Škofja Loka Pasion play in the Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Slovenia**. The Passion Play Wind and

the Capuchin Monastery, together with the co-holder Municipality Škofja Loka, are the equilibrium foundation for staging Škofja Loka Passion Play in future. The Škofja Loka Capuchins are custodians and spiritual guardians of the Škofja Loka Passion Play and as such the linker of all passion players across Slovenia.

## **THE MAIN EVENTS OF THE VENTUS PASSIONIS (THE PASSION PLAY WIND) FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT UNTIL 2019**

### **2017**

**The first meeting of the VENTUS PASSIONIS – THE PASSION PLAY WIND was in May 2017 in the Capuchin Monastery Škofja Loka**. The main mission of Ventus Passionis is to connect passion play people from all Slovenian Passion Play cities (up to now from Škofja Loka, Ribnica, Preddvor, Štepanja-vas ...) and nurtures the spiritual wealth and the message of the passion play within them. The spiritual leaders are the friars of the Capuchin Monastery in Škofja Loka which hosted also official seat. VENTUS PASSIONIS - THE PASSION PLAY WIND is organized in a way of connecting and social networking through various passion play events in order to strengthen and deepen the passion play spirit among passion players in Slovenia and around the world.

### **2018**

From 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2018, **a four-member delegation from the Europassion association** (the President Josef Lang with his wife, the General secretary Herman Josef and Country representative Franz Miehl) **visited Slovenia** at the invitation of the Passion Play Wind. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2018 the delegation visited the Passion Play in Ribnica.

The next day the Passion Play Wind with Capuchins in Škofja Loka at their premises organized a round table entitled »From Love to Us«. The guests at the round table were



Josef Lang, jesuit Marjan Kokalj (the first director of the re-staging of the Škofja Loka Passion Play 1999 and 2000), capuchin friars Jožko Smukavec and Metod Benedik and Helena Ilc, director of the Ribnica Passion play. The event was organised by capuchin Jaroslav Knežević and Andreja R. Megušar.

Speakers at round table »From Love to US« in Capuchin monastery Škofja Loka. 2018.



On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2018, at the initiative of the Passion Play Wind, **the Ribnica Passion Play was performed in Škofja Loka.** This passion is performed by young »rock passion players« for more than ten years in a row. It is a modern, up-to-date passion play with original modern music and above all vital. It has a future!

Scene from Passion Play Ribnica. 2018.

We must also not forget the passion plays in Štepanja vas-Ljubljana and in Preddvor. **In Štepanja vas the Passion play** is mainly prepared by young people from the mid 90s of the previous century under the spiritual guidance of the Capuchin Friars who lead the parish. **In Preddvor the passion play was first staged in 2018** at the initiative of their priest Branko Setnikar. In 2019 beside in Preddvor they performed also in Škofja Loka and in Homec near Domžale.



In June 2018, a group of 15 passion players attended **the annual meeting of the Europassion in Budaors, Hungary.** At the general meeting, **the Passion Play Wind was entered as an equal member of Europassion family.**

Andreja R. Megušar, Hiacinta Klemenčič and Aleksander Igljčar at Europassion Congress in Budaors.





The Slovenian passion group in Schönberg / Sankt Vith in Belgium.

From 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March, the Passion Play Wind, together with the Capuchin Friars from Škofja Loka, organized a pilgrimage to Belgium with seeing the performance of Passio in Schönberg /St. Vith. 45 passion players from Škofja Loka, Preddvor, Štepanja vas-Ljubljana and Ribnica led by capuchin friar Jaroslav Knežević participated in the pilgrimage.



On 29<sup>th</sup> March, a new edition of the journal **The Passion Play Contributions 2019/14** was presented in Škofja Loka.

On 12<sup>th</sup> April, the Passion Play Wind together with the Selca parish, Museum Society of Škofja Loka and Lonka Cultural and Historical Society Stara Loka organized a **Passion Play Evening in Selca** (Municipality Železniki).



From 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019, Slovenia was again visited by **Franz Miehl, St. Margarethen, Austria**. Together with Andreja R. Megušar, the Coordinator for the Passion Play Wind, on Palm Sunday he visited the Preddvor Passion Play. There they met with Preddvor mayor Rok Roblek and the priest Branko Setnikar, initiator for the Passion play in Preddvor. Helena Ilc, manager of the Ribnica Passion Play was also in Preddvor.

Andreja R. Megušar, Franz Miehl, Mayor Rok Roblek, Priest Branko Setnikar, Manager of the Institute for tourism Preddvor Ernesta Koprivc, Head of the Preddvor Passion play Metod Jagodic

The Sotočje Association from Škofja Loka with the president Hiacinta Klemenčič **organized a pilgrimage on foot from Škofja Loka to Preddvor to see the premier of Preddvor Passion Play**. Group of pilgrims (around 20) went on foot from Škofja Loka to Preddvor (around 20 km).

On 16<sup>th</sup> April, Franz Miehl and members of the Passion Play Wind **visited the Passion play in Štepanja vas - Ljubljana**.



Aleksander Igličar, Andreja R. Megušar, Franz Miehl and capuchin Matej Štravs in Štepanja vas-Ljubljana.



Scene from Štepanja vas Passion Play 2019.

On 15<sup>th</sup> April, the Passion Play Wind together with the Capuchin Monastery Škofja Loka organized a **spiritual explanation of the first scene of Škofja Loka Passion Play “Eden” from jesuit Marjan Kokalj** who was the first director of the re-staging of the Škofja Loka Passion Play in 1999 and 2000.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> April, the Capuchin Monastery Škofja Loka prepared a **dramatic performance of the live and work of the author of Škofja Loka Passion play capuchin friar Romuald**.



Preddvor Passion Play in Stara Loka. 2019.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> April, the **Preddvor Passion Play performed in Stara Loka near Škofja Loka**.

From the 9th to the 12th of May, representatives of the VENTUS PASSIONIS – the Passion Play Wind will visit the Europassion Congress in Tullin, France.

All passion events were published in media in the Škofja Loka region and in Slovenia.

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