



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Christina Carroll

All of us are beginning to return to our usual activities and events in Milwaukee's Slovenian community after the recent Covid pandemic. As you will read in this issue, the Slovenian Arts Council held in-person events these past two years, along with the other Slovenian organizations who sponsor summer picnics, the Slovenian cultural booth at Holiday Folk Fair, the annual Martinovanje celebration, summer balina league, and the Uspeh Christmas sing-along. The Slovenian Arts Council successfully sponsored collaborative events involving the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) Peck School of the Arts, the Republic of Slovenia Consul General's Office in Cleveland, the Republic of Slovenia Ministry for Slovenians Abroad, the Triglav Cultural Society of Milwaukee, and the Slovenian Union of America Milwaukee Branch #43.



The Slovenian Arts Council awarded two Performance Grants: to Theatre Gigante (Isabelle Kralj and Mark Anderson) to support a joint project between the University of Maribor in Slovenia and the Eastern Washington

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## INAUGURAL SLOVENIAN FILM FESTIVAL PLANNED FOR OCTOBER AT UW-MILWAUKEE

by Jeff Martinka

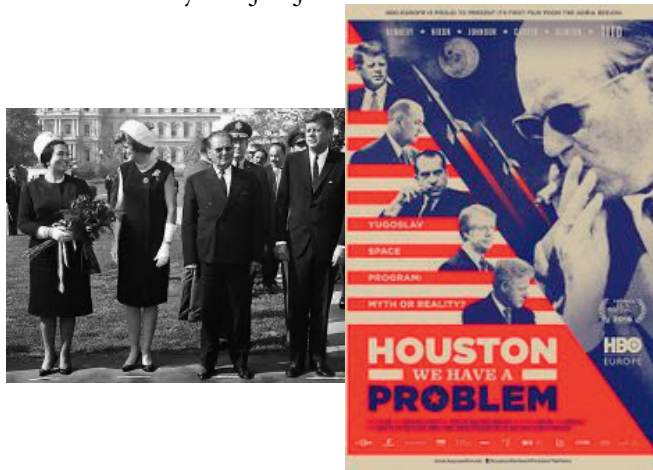
The UWM Slovenian Arts Council is pleased to announce plans for the Inaugural Festival of Slovenian Films. The 4-film mini-festival is planned for the weekend of October 7th & 8th and will be co-hosted by the UWM SAP and the UWM Film & Video Studies Department. The festival will be held in the Fine Arts Cinema (Room B91), in Mitchell Hall on the UWM campus.

The four chosen films have all received honors in either European and/or Slovenian film competitions. If community interest is strong, this first effort will be repeated each fall. The movies were selected by UWM Slovenian Arts Council member Paul Zovic, who worked closely with Slovenian officials at the Embassy and in the film industry in Ljubljana.

To spark your curiosity (and to get you to save-the-dates), here are two of the four chosen films. The final two films and other film festival details will be offered this summer.

One of the full-length feature films offered will be "Houston, Imamo Problem!" (Houston, We Have a Problem!). The movie is an internationally co-produced docufiction/mockumentary film by director Žiga Virč. It explores the myth of a secret \$2.5 billion deal behind the U.S. purchase of the former Yugoslavia's clandestine space program in the 1960s. Will this "overseas aid" from John F. Kennedy boost Yugoslav's sagging economy and did Josip Broz Tito have any technology to help the US fight Sputnik?

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Jovanka Budisavljević, Jacqueline Kennedy, Josip "Tito" Broz, and John F. Kennedy, featured in "Houston, Imamao Problem!"



## SUMMER PICNIC AT FRANK MURN'S HOME

by Beverly Marinello

One of our SUA Branch 43's most senior members, Frank Murn, has cordially invited Slovenian Union of

America Branch #43 members and Slovenian Arts Council board members to a summer picnic at his home on Wednesday, July 26, 2023.

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PICNIC >

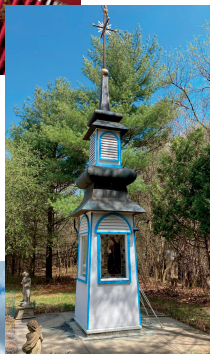
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Frank owns a 200-acre farm in the Town of Genesee on which he created a lovely prairie that features wildflowers and welcomes wildlife.

As part of his stewardship of the property, Frank built structures typically found in Slovenia, including a roadside chapel, a scale model water-powered gristmill/lumber mill and a kozolec (Slovenian hay-drying rack). Those attractions will be included in the tour. His home was built in a distinctly Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced Prairie style and features his extensive art collection. Guests will also enjoy some of Frank's many, and sometimes very elaborate, whirly-gig creations. Invitations with more info will be sent directly to SUA members and SAC via email.



Frank Murn,  
Murn Chapel,  
Murn Kozolec.



PRESIDENT >

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University, collaborating on a translated publication of Slovenian fairy tales written by Slovenian playwright Rok Vilčnik, and to the Slovenian Union of America Milwaukee Branch #43 who hosted a Martinovanje celebration in Fall 2022. We are also very excited to be planning a new Slovenian Film Festival at UWM for this October. These events and programs are planned by the Slovenian Arts Council with funding from the Frank & Mary Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund--UWM Foundation, and from your generous donations.

The world is finally opening up again after the past couple years, and many people have discovered a new enlightenment or at least a different attitude of approaching new experiences. Do you think you would have enjoyed attending a Slovenian chamber choir

performance although you prefer rock or polka music? Would you consider viewing a foreign film (Slovenian) with English subtitles, so that you could hear the Slovenian language while reading the English translation on the screen?

I hope that in the upcoming months you will open your mind to new experiences showcasing your Slovenian heritage that you would never have considered in the past: read a Slovenian book translated into English, listen to a different type of instrumental or harmonic melody, view a Slovenian foreign film, join the multi-age balina (bocce, lawn bowling) league, eat a delicacy other than Kranjska Klobasa or potica, and drink a Laško beer or a type of wine produced in the various wine regions of Slovenia.

Enjoy life!

*Christina M. Carroll*

Christina Carroll

SLOVENIAN FILM FESTIVAL >

*continued from page 1*

The 2016 film earned awards at the Slovenian Film Festival (Best Feature Film, Best Editing, Best Actor, 2016), Mediterranean Film Festival (Audience Award), and Karlovy Vary Int'l. Film Festival (East of West nomination for Žiga Virc).

As a second teaser, the festival will also feature "Babičino seksualno življenje" (Granny's Sexual Life). The 2021 animated short film has swept up a basket of awards, including European Film Awards (Best Film-Short Film Category 2022), Cesar Awards (Best Short Film 2022 and Best Animated Short Film 2023), Les Arcs Festival (Best Animated Film), Berlin Interfilm Festival (Special Mention 2021), Tampere Film Festival (Grand Prix 2022) and the Slovene Film Festival (Special Achievement Award 2021).

Based on a book detailing the anonymous testimony of four elderly Slovenian women, the four reflect on

their memories of when they were young and how vastly different the relationships between men and women once were. Their voices then merge into one single voice, that of Grandmother Vera, who tells her own story in engaging detail.

Save the dates, October 7th and 8th, and plan to sample the award-winning cinema of Slovenia.



"Babičino Seksualno Življenje."

# FOLK FAIR AWARD

by Jeff Martinka

The Slovenian culture booth at the 2022 Holiday Folk Fair was again organized by the UWM Slovenian Arts Program and earned the "Best of the Fair Award." That is the top award offered by the International Institute of Wisconsin to the ethnic groups represented at the event. Created and produced by UWM SAC member Nancy Reese, the theme of our winning booth was "Coming to America." It was the second time UWM SAP booths created by Nancy have won the "best of" awards.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to set up, staff, and take down the Slovenian booth. In addition to the support of UWM SAP itself, the effort again received generous financial support and booth-staffing volunteers from the members of the Triglav Cultural Society.

The 2023 edition of the Holiday Folk Fair returns to the Wisconsin State Fair Park's Exposition Hall on November 17th-19th. Nancy has generously offered to create a new Slovenian display again. To help in staffing our booth (2-hour shifts on any of the three days), please contact her at [nareese@wi.rr.com](mailto:nareese@wi.rr.com).



*The award-winning Slovenian booth from the 2023 International Holiday Folk Fair*



# A SLOVENIAN PALM SUNDAY (CVETNA NEDELJA)

By Linda Abstetar

What a glorious Palm Sunday we had in Milwaukee this spring! Thank you to all who joined us at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Greenfield, Wisconsin for the 8:30 Mass.

To Fr. Michael Merkt, a huge "hvala lepa" (thank you) for his support of the Slovenian community and for blessing our beautiful butare. We had a wonderful turnout with dozens wearing their Narodna Noša's (national costume of Slovenia), and other proud Slovenians walking in procession or in the congregation. Four generations were among the proud Slovenians ranging from the oldest, Mr. Frank Murn to the youngest Slovenians, Joseph Berlin, Bobby and Caroline Mejač and John Wainio.

Thank you to Mark Frohna, Dominic Marinello, Jeff Martinka, Anne Sagadin, Jackie Smith, and Kristina Strmsek, for carrying in the palms and then distributing them to

the congregation. Many thanks to all who donated bakery for the delicious free will offering pancake breakfast after the Palm Sunday services!

Our Slovenian parents and grandparents were proud of their nationality and we in return are proud to be able to continue with the traditions and customs that they passed on to us. We shared in the joy with Slovenians around the globe as they also participated in this beautiful tradition.



*Palm Sunday Mass 2023*

## MEGARON CHAMBER CHOIR VISITS MILWAUKEE

by Christina Carroll

On September 27, 2022, Director and Composer Damijan Močnik, along with the Megaron Chamber Choir from Ljubljana, Slovenia, visited the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) on their tour of the Midwest. This event was sponsored by the UWM Peck School of the Arts and the Slovenian Arts Council. The 40-member choir was invited to attend a choir rehearsal class where both choirs met and performed for each other. Later, the group visited UWM's Music Library and the Slovenian Music Collection. In the evening, Director Močnik and Megaron performed a public concert in the UWM Helene Zelazo Center for the Performing Arts. Selections were sung in the Slovenian, Ukrainian, English, and Spanish languages. A social followed the concert.

The following day, the Triglav Cultural Society and the Slovenian ArtsCouncil welcomed the group to a luncheon held in the Dom at the Triglav Park in Wind Lake, Wisconsin. After the luncheon, an impromptu sing-along was started among the Megaron Choir and the members of Milwaukee's Slovenian community in attendance, some of whom were former members of the Uspeh Slovenian Chorus. The beauty and the soul of the Triglav Park induced the youthful Slovenian visitors to play balina, soak up the sun at the lakefront, and stroll the grounds. Before ending the afternoon, the singers congregated back at the Dom, spontaneously singing while gathering as a group to say farewell. It was a treat to once again enjoy an a cappella mini concert by Director Močnik and Megaron.

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## USPEH HOLIDAY SING-ALONG

By Beverly Marinello

Please mark your calendars for December 12, 2023, 6 pm. Join us at the HA Todd Jr., American Legion Post 537, 9159 W. Beloit Rd., Milwaukee 53227 for the Annual USPEH Holiday Sing-along. We promise you an evening filled with favorite Slovenian and American Christmas songs guaranteed to get you in the holiday spirit. Look forward to complimentary beer, soda, and Slovenian treats; donations accepted.

Watch the fall edition of the UWM SAP Newsletter for more details, including our TWO great accordionists and our special guest emcee for 2023.



USPEH 2022 Sing-along

### MEGARON>

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Damijan Močnik is the artistic leader of music activities at St. Stanislav's Institute in Ljubljana and is a professor at Ljubljana's Academy of Music. He is a winner of numerous Slovenian and international composing competitions. Director Močnik formed the

Megaron Chamber Choir in 2003; its singers were former students of St. Stanislav's, a diocesan classical gymnasium (college-prep high school). Močnik and his ensembles received many awards and recognitions from various choral competitions throughout Europe.



*The Megaron Choir from Ljubljana came to Milwaukee and sang for gathered attendees at Triglav Park*

## LOCAL AUTHOR WRITES CHILDREN'S BOOK IN ENGLISH AND SLOVENIAN

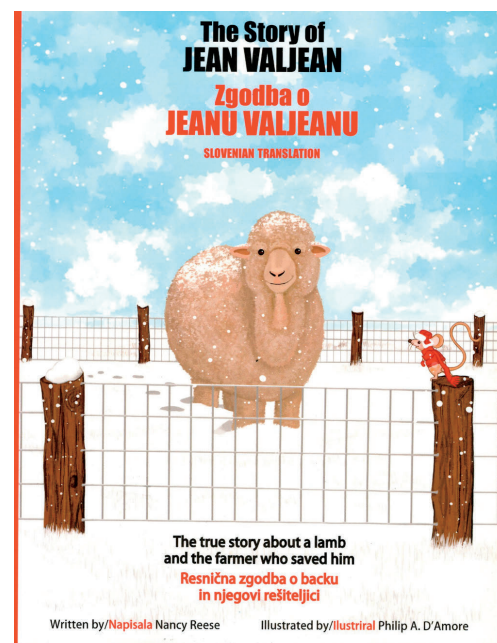
by Nancy Reese

UWM Slovenian Arts Council member Nancy Reese wrote her first children's book in 2021. The Story of Jean Valjean is a true story about a lamb that Nancy saved while working on the farm staff at Old World Wisconsin in March 2013. The original book was written in English with Spanish translations on the same page.

With bi-lingual books becoming more popular, Nancy decided to publish a copy with Slovenian translations, also on the same page. She solicited the help of her Slovenian friend, Nives Sulič-Dular, a professional translator in Ljubljana, to do the translations. This book tells the delightful story about how Nancy nursed this lamb back to health after he was frozen to the ground when he was born. It is a great learning opportunity for those wishing to learn

Slovenian or to introduce your children or grandchildren to the written Slovenian language. With the English at the top of the page and the Slovenian below, it is easy to compare the English words to the Slovenian words. Actual photos of Jean Valjean growing up on "Farmer Nancy's" place are also included, from birth to what he looks like now. Jean is still alive and well at Nancy's little farm in Dousman, WI.

The books are available on Amazon or Barnes and Noble. The English/Slovenian version is available in paperback and sells for \$10. Or signed copies by the author AND Jean Valjean can be purchased directly from Nancy Reese either by coming out to her house or having it mailed to you at a cost of \$5 S&H. You can contact Nancy at: [nareese@wi.rr.com](mailto:nareese@wi.rr.com).



# MARY (GORENC) BREGANT 1933-2023

by Christina Carroll

In February, the Slovenian Arts Council (SAC) lost a dear friend and fellow Council member. Mici was one of the original members of the Council that was formed in 1986 by the Dean of the UWM School of Fine Arts and John Ermenc, the attorney for Mary Ermenc (UWM Frank and Mary Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund). Over the years, Mici always volunteered her time and ideas to make SAC events a success. In September, at age 90 accompanied with her walker, Mici attended the luncheon event held at Triglav Park when the Megaron Chamber Choir visited Milwaukee. She even participated in the sing-along with the Milwaukee Slovenian community and Megaron.



*Mici Bregant*

Mici was an active member in the Slovenian community. She not only served as SAC Recording Secretary but will be most remembered as the former Director of Milwaukee's USPEH Slovenian Chorus and the Director of the former Slovenian Church Choir of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Greenfield. In addition to her musical talents, Mici's writing skills made her a frequent contributor to the publications of the Slovenian fraternal KSKJ and the Slovenian Union of America. Mici was a prime example of achieving a balanced life—her love for her large, growing family; her faith in God; and her involvement and pride in her Slovenian heritage. Most of all, we will miss her contagious smile and laughter, always maintaining a positive outlook on life.



## HELP US GO DIGITAL

by Christina Carroll

If you would like to receive these UWM SAP newsletters in a digital format (pdf) via email instead of a paper copy sent through the US Postal Service, please email your name and email address to: [slovartsmke@gmail.com](mailto:slovartsmke@gmail.com). We will still maintain the mailing of hard copies to those who do not wish to share their email addresses with us.

Please note, your email address will be used ONLY to distribute our newsletters, notices of our sponsored events, and other invitations (Zoom, etc.). Emailed items will be sent from [slovartsmke@gmail.com](mailto:slovartsmke@gmail.com). This account is administered privately by an officer of the Slovenian Arts Council, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.



SLOVENIAN  
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## A MILWAUKEE VISIT BY DIGNITARIES FROM REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

By Christina Carroll

On September 24, 2021, the UWM Slovenian Arts Council and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) welcomed Consul General Alenka Jerak, her Sr. Asst. Olivera Baumgartner, along with the Republic of Slovenia Minister for Slovenians Abroad Helena Jaklitsch and the Secretary for Slovenians Abroad, Zvone Žigon. The Slovenian entourage visited the Golda Meir Library at UWM where they were welcomed by UWM Provost Johannes Britz and Vice Provost Dev Venugopalan. Also present to welcome the group was the Dean of the UWM Peck School of the Arts Kevin Hartman and UWM Libraries Director Michael Doylen. UWM Music Librarian Anna Grau Schmidt prepared a display of items taken from the Slovenian Music Collection (the largest collection outside of Slovenia), along with old maps of the Slovenian lands housed in UWM's American Geographical Society Library. Ms. Jerak presented some Slovenian musical CDs to add to the Slovenian Music Collection.

The UWM visit was followed by a brief tour of downtown Milwaukee, the old Slovenian neighborhood that was established around the former St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee's Walker's Point area, and a narration of the Milwaukee Slovenian community involvement in the establishment of a Slovenska Hiša at the Milwaukee Public Museum. They also learned of work to sustain the Slovenian cultural booth at the Annual Holiday Folk Fair (see additional story on that effort).

The guests were then welcomed at a luncheon hosted by the UWM Slovenian Arts Council and the Triglav Cultural Society at Triglav Park in Norway, Wisconsin. Upon their arrival, the officers of Triglav greeted the special dignitaries with a traditional shot of šljivovec served with bread and salt. This special visit commemorated Slovenian Statehood Day, the 60th Anniversary of Triglav Park, and the 35th Anniversary of the formation of the UWM Slovenian Arts Council.



*Triglav member Patrick Carroll with Slovenian Minister Helena Jaklitsch and Consul General Alenka Jerak*

## THANKS TO A DEAR FRIEND AND HELLO FROM YOUR NEW EDITORS

By Jeff Martinka

Helen Frohna and her family have been pillars of the Milwaukee Slovenian Community for more than 70 years. As part of her own impacts, Helen has been the selfless, tireless, and uber creative editor of the UWM Slovenian Arts Program newsletter since 2012. Thank you, Helen, for keeping our community informed of the work at the Arts Program for those many years. Najlepsa hvala!



*Helen Frohna  
and her son, Mark.*

This latest edition was the product of a two new editor's team: Jeff Martinka is responsible for getting the newsletters written and Kimberly Gardner will then turn the words into a professional easy-to-read final product (Helen wore both hats!). Jeff and Kimberly may introduce themselves in another issue.



*Kimberly Gardner and Jeff Martinka*

Any questions or suggestions can be directed to Jeff Martinka at [jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com).

## SAC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

by Jeff Martinka

The UWM Slovenian Arts Council is pleased to welcome two recent additions. Beverly Marinello is a retired professional from Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin. Beverly is an enthusiastic and active member of SUA Branch 43 and its Branch Reporter for the Zarja magazine, following the passing of Mici Bregant. She is a member of the Uspeh Slovenian Chorus and after visiting Slovenia with her son Dominic last year, Beverly is already planning her second visit. Beverly is following in the footsteps of her mother, Christine Boyance, who participated in Uspeh Slovenian Chorus concert tours to Slovenia in the 1980s and 1990s. She is also following the lead of her grandmother, Angeline Pipan in her passion for cooking and baking

traditional Slovenian foods, which she happily shares with all of us at Slovenian events.

A second new addition to the Slovenian Arts Council is Linda Abstetar. Like Beverly, Linda is active in SUA Branch 43, currently serving as its Co-President. In her role, she has helped produce the last three Martinovanje events of SUA. Since 2015, Linda is also the Co-Director of the local Slovenian Balina League, which draws contestants from across the area to courts in West Allis. Before joining UWM SAC, Linda and her husband David were regular volunteers at the Slovenian Booth at the Holiday Folk Fair. Before retiring, Dave and Linda's sign company supported many Slovenian causes with in-kind support, as well.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars and join fellow Slovenians as we celebrate our culture locally!

**Triglav Cultural Society:**

**Prvi (First) Picnic**

**Sun., June 25, 2023**

Mass at 11 am, dinner at Noon

Music by Polka Pals at 1 pm

Triglav Park Dom & Grounds

6464 S. Loomis Road, Wind Lake, WI

**SUA Branch #43 Member & UWM SAC**

**Board Member Picnic**

**Wed., July 26, 2023**

Noon

Frank Murn's Home

Genesee, WI

**Triglav Cultural Society:**

**Drugi (Second) Picnic**

**Sun., August 6, 2023**

Mass at 11 am, dinner at Noon

Music by Ansamble Veseljaki at 1 pm

Triglav Park

**Triglav Cultural Society:**

**Vinska Trgatev (Wine Festival)**

**Sun., Sept. 10, 2023**

Dinner at Noon

Music by BrewHaus Polka King/Grant

Kozera at 1 pm

Triglav Park



**Slovenian Film Festival at UWM**

**Sat., Oct. 7 - Sun., Oct. 8, 2023**

(save-the-date, screening times to follow)

Fine Arts Cinema, Rm B91

Mitchell Hall on the UWM Campus

3202 N. Downer Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

**SUA Branch 43 Martinovanje Celebration**

**Sat., Nov. 11, 2023**

6-10 pm

Root River Center

7220 W. Rawson Avenue, Franklin, WI

**Slovenian Cultural Booth at**

**Holiday Folk Fair 2023**

**Fri., Nov. 17 - Sun., Nov. 19, 2023**

Wisconsin State Fair Exposition Hall

8200 W. Greenfield Avenue, West Allis, WI

**2023 Uspeh's Holiday Sing-along**

**Tues., Dec. 12, 2023**

6-8 pm

HA Todd Jr., American Legion Post 537

9159 W. Beloit Rd., Milwaukee 53227

# THE UWM SLOVENIAN MUSIC COLLECTION

by Anna Grau Schmidt, UWM Librarian

Established with the generous gift of the Ermenc family and under the guidance of Professor Leo Muscatevc in the early 1980s, the Slovenian Music Collection at UW-Milwaukee's Golda Meir Library is truly special. The Collection makes its large selection of folk, choral, and art music from Slovenia available to the university and the community.

Over 40 years after the origin of the collection, we continue to integrate the original goals of the fund with the research and education needs of our current students and faculty. We still collect folk and traditional music, but our primary focus is on building a strong collection of contemporary and historical art music by Slovenian composers. In 2021, we started a new purchasing plan that allows us to automatically purchase all new music published by the Society of Slovene Composers, as well as works by a selection of other Slovenian composers. We also purchase studies of Slovenian music, especially those that are in English or bilingual. In fall 2023, we plan to host an event to help students and community members add information about Slovenian music and composers to the English-language Wikipedia, and would welcome the involvement of members of the Slovenian-American community. All are welcome to use any of the library's materials on-site or to purchase a Community Borrowing Card to check out materials. For assistance navigating the collection, please contact me at [schmidag@uwm.edu](mailto:schmidag@uwm.edu) or (414)251-7510.

## SUPPORT OUR WORK TO PROMOTE SLOVENIAN CULTURE IN GREATER MILWAUKEE

The work of UWM SAC was launched by a generous gift from the Ermenc Family but is bolstered every year by donations from friends of the Slovenian Community.

To make a tax-deductible donation, please make checks payable to:  
**UWM Foundation, Inc.** For proper routing to our account at the Foundation, be certain to reference the Ermenc Slovenian Arts Fund (5528000) on your check.



Select a gift amount:

\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$75 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ Other Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

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Street Address:

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### Mail payment to:

UWM Foundation, Inc. (EIN 23-7337744)

1440 E. North Avenue

Milwaukee, WI 53217

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*NOW*



You may also make a tax-deductible donation to the UWM Slovenian Arts Program online using a credit card at this link:

[http://www.give.uwm.edu/ermenc\\_slovenian\\_arts](http://www.give.uwm.edu/ermenc_slovenian_arts)

If you have gift questions, email your inquiries to: [jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com)

Thank you for considering a new gift, and Hvala Lepa, to all who have supported our work! All new gifts will be recognized in future newsletters.



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## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS DECEMBER 2020 – MAY 2023

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Antonia M. Vodnik  
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CONTACT US >

If you are interested in learning more about the Slovenian Arts Council, have story ideas for our newsletter, or have other inquiries, please contact:

Jeff Martinka at  
jeffreymartinka@yahoo.com

Social Media Sites of Interest

- [www.slovenianartsprogram.org](http://www.slovenianartsprogram.org)
  - [www.sua43.org](http://www.sua43.org)
  - [www.triglavpark.org](http://www.triglavpark.org)
  - [www.washington.embassy.si](http://www.washington.embassy.si)
  - [facebook.org](https://facebook.org)
- Slovenian Arts Program  
Milwaukee Slovenians

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