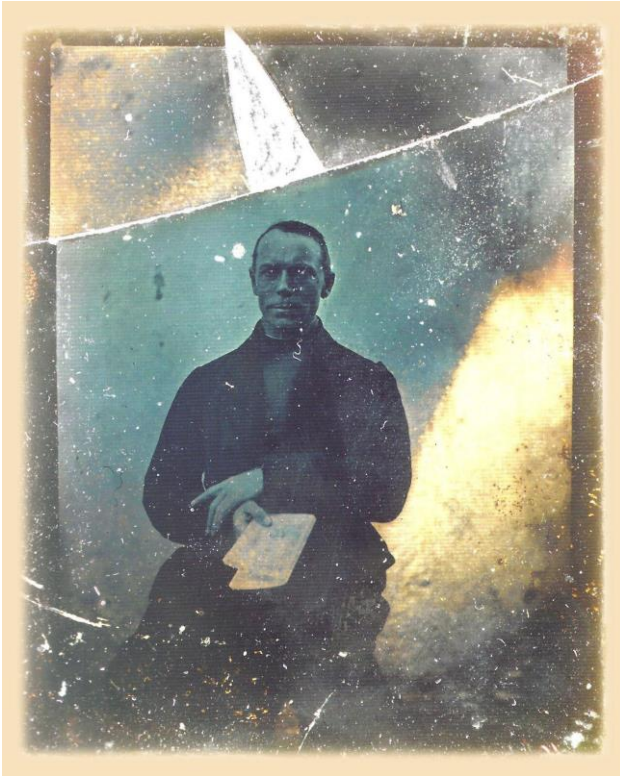


Janez Puhar (1814 – 1864)

The inventor of photography on glass plate

The honorary sponsor of the whole year 2014 celebration of Puhar's 200th birthday is Mr. Borut Pahor, the president of the Republic Slovenia.



Exactly 172 years have passed since photography on glass plate was invented. Less than three years after the Frenchman Daguerre succeeded to make photographs on a silver-coated copper plate (1839), a Slovenian priest from Kranj, Janez Puhar, came up with the revolutionary technique of glass plate photography. He invented glass photography on the 19th April 1842, while the Vienna Academy and a year later the Académie nationale agricole, manufacturière et commerciale in Paris recognised this achievement by awarding him the honorary diploma nearly ten years later, in 1851 and 1852.

Puhar's method is based on exposing a glass plate covered with sulphur treated by iodine vapours. The prepared glass plate was then placed in the camera and simultaneously exposed to light and mercury vapours for 15 seconds. The exposed surface accepted more mercury vapours. The image was then fixed with alcohol. The presence of sulphur and mercury on the plate was proven at the Nuclear laboratory of Jozef Stefan institute in Ljubljana in 1999.

The advantages of Puhar's invention are: positive picture and short exposing time (15 seconds only) which enabled him to take portraits. Janez Puhar's legacy consists of 6 portraits.

In the year 2014 we celebrate Janez Puhar's 200th birthday. This anniversary is the reason why the photographic society, named after the inventor of glass plate photography, has decided to award the Janez Puhar "Gold Medal for best portrait" at several FIAP events in the year 2014:

- 8th FIAP World Cup for Clubs 2013.
- 3rd JIPF International Photographic Exhibition, Japan
- 50^e Challenge du Photo-Club Esch Salon Mondial 2014, Luxembourg
- 8th International Salon of Photography - Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- F2 - Salon Internacional de Fotografia – Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 7th Miniature 2014 Kranj, Slovenia

The initial event into whole year celebration of Puhar's 200th birthday was the festive meeting in »Slovene Academy for Science and Art« in Ljubljana on 29th January.



Ms. Blazenka First, the guardian of 4 Puhar's original photographs in the National museum in Ljubljana, had the initial presentation about life and achievements of Janez Puhar



Although Mr. Mirko Kambic is 94 years old, his lecture about Janez Puhar, about his contacts with people coming from whole world to Bled was so interesting, vivid and warm, full of positive energy, and friendly humour, so we can say "he made the evening".



Big part of his life, Mr. Kambic was researching the history of photography and particularly the life of Janez Puhar. His achievements were also internationally recognised. The honorary FIAP distinction ESFIAP was handed over to him by Mr. Kurt Batschinski, member of FIAP Directory Board and Mr. Vasja Doberlet, FIAP Liaison Officer for Slovenia.

Next event was the first exhibition about Janez Puhar's life, his achievements and photography making process. The exhibition was created by Petra Puhar, relative of Janez Puhar. The exhibition about the inventor is accompanied by photo exhibition of members of the Janez Puhar Photo Society and will travel through whole year to all the 12 places, where Puhar lived in his 50 years long life. Puhar was born in Kranj, he studied in Ljubljana and when he finished the study of theology he worked in 10 different places as Bled, Radovljica, Kamnik etc.

The exhibition about Janez Puhar was already set up in Kranj and in Ljubljana:

Kranj – Regional museum:



Recently renovated castle Khislstein in Kranj was the first host of the exhibition.



The exhibition is accompanied by photographic works of the Janez Puhar Society members.



36 photographs in black and white technique symbolize old techniques.

Ljubljana – gallery KULT 3000:



Second exhibition opening: Gallery KULT 3000 in Ljubljana.

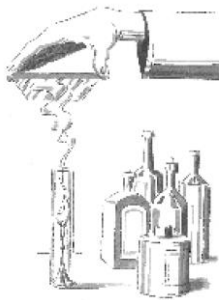


Petra Puhar explained the concept of the exhibition to the Minister for cultural affairs of Slovenia, Mr. Dr. Uroš Grilc

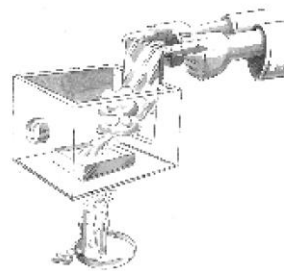


A guest of honour was also the mayor of the capital city Ljubljana, Mr. Zoran Janković.

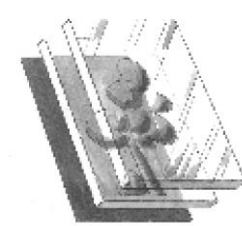
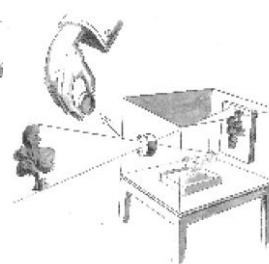
Puhar's process of making photography and his own instruction:



Clean glass plate covered with Sulphur and treated by iodine vapours.



Place so prepared glass plate into camera and simultaneously expose to light and mercury vapours for one minute (later 15 seconds). The surface exposed by light accepts more mercury vapours, what creates the image.



Fix the picture with alcohol. Protect it against scratching and humidity with another glass plate.

From the Puhar's text published in report of Austrian Academy for Science in 1951 (Slovenian National Museum, Ljubljana)

Photos: Vitomir Pretnar and Vasja Doberlet
illustrations: Zmago Puhar

More about Janez Puhar: <http://www.puhar.si>