



I, WE AND OTHERS

images of my world

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum
Permanent Exhibition in Short



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Welcome

This is an exhibition about man and his place in the world: in time and space, and in relation to other people. The social and cultural environment that shapes us, directs and colours our connections with others. Through our relations with others we each try to find answers to the fundamental questions: **Who am I? Who are others? How do we differ and what do we have in common?**

We give ourselves meaning through our shared life with others. Belonging to different groups helps us to recognise who and what we are. This exhibition's seven chapters reflect the different aspects of the individual's sense of place and social belonging: **I - the individual / My family - my home / My community - my birthplace / Beyond my birthplace - my departure / My nation - my country / My otherness and foreign otherness - the wider world / Me - my personal world.**

Graphic introduction to the cohesive thread, the story titled *An Individual's Journey*, through three sets of images: a human face (life cycle), a tree (yearly cycle), and the position of the sun in the sky (daily rhythm).



These exhibition chapters link a single concept and uniform design. The cohesive thread running through all of the chapters is **An Individual's Journey**, a personal life story, drawing upon Jo e Dular's novel *And the Krka Flows Onwards* and a story made up of moments from personal and family life that combine with the shared, common history of our space.

The exhibition space is symbolically organised; among the elements are metal networks of different densities and shapes, symbolising “coordinate networks” of social and cultural environments, and with them the defined meanings of phenomena, things and words. In the exhibition, we have tried to capture this variety of forms and meanings by creating mosaics of pictures, sounds, words and objects from museum and private collections. In a similar mosaic, we shape our perception of the past, the present and the future.



As a symbol of Everyman, David is depicted in several ways; each of them tells of a specific part of the exhibition story.

Human figure consisting of seven squares (logo of the exhibition I, We, and Others: Images of My World).



The colours used within the exhibition spaces speak of the diurnal and annual cycles that give rhythm to our personal life cycle. Moving pictures remind us of the constant dynamism of life and its many individual variants, which the exhibition in itself cannot reproduce.

Exhibition sounds build a symbolic bridge between the unique, the common and the universal. The direction of viewing is slightly different from what we are used to. Don't let that bother you, as it is only one of our culturally conditioned perceptions.

Our exhibition will raise questions and get you thinking about yourself and others, about our world and the life we lead. We would like it to prompt you to seek your own answers to many different questions.

I - the individual

What am I? Who am I?



1. I - the individual

..... 7

What am I? Who am I? Questions that we ask when we stop our daily routines and calmly reflect on ourselves and on the world we live in.

The individual is the smallest unit of mankind. In the exhibition, this individual is represented by the silhouette on the central pillar. Most people recognise this as Michelangelo's representation of David and can see analogies between his battle with Goliath and the individual's relation to the world.



Beside David there stands a network vessel containing seeds (beans). We can interpret it as a fountain or as the bottom half of the cosmic egg. How does a seed know into what it must grow? - we are constantly amazed by this incredible capacity of nature to inscribe its genetic laws into even the smallest cell of the living organism.

The central element of the exhibition space is the mosaic image of Michelangelo's David on the pillar, surrounded by a myriad of small mirrors (photo by J. Žagar).

The human species has some characteristics that distinguish it from others. Every individual carries the whole of humanity in their genetic make-up, but also has a part of the biological

identity, which makes them unique and unrepeatable. The material to the right of the entrance speaks about the human biological nature, with a special emphasis on the biological aspects of the body, head and hands.

To the left of the entrance, the exhibition is dedicated to humankind's social nature. Throughout our lives, we grow into culturally and socially conditioned beings. We arrange our bodies in accordance with the social standards of beauty, reputation and appropriateness. Each of us plays various social roles. We are also defined by a personal name, signature, handwriting and other markings of individuality. Through these, we are recognised by others.



The Tree between Nature and Culture: a glimpse into the display case (photo by J. Žagar).

The two parts of human nature - the biological and the social - are connected by a tree, a symbol of life, which is constantly growing and renewing itself, perpetuating its species through the generations. In our exhibition, a tree is a simile for man himself.

Let us move through the passage, which illustrates the beginning of the story of life's journey. The biological progression from conception to birth is the path of the individual. Through the enlightened gateway of birth, the specific world into which we are born can already be heard and seen.

Janja Žagar

My family - my home

What is my family to me? What is my home to me?
What roles do I play in my family?



2. My family - my home

What is my family to me? What is my home to me? What roles do I play in my family?

These are questions for all of us. In the exhibition, they are considered in three parts: the first on the family, the second on the home, and the third on the outward connections of family and home with the wider community. You can hear a baby's cry, the voice of family members, the crackling of a fire, the preparation of food, a shared meal, prayers, the creaking of a door ... Do these remind you of life in your home?

The family is usually the first environment into which the child is born, accepted, raised and offered support. Within the exhibition, it is illustrated by three symbols: the nest, the hearth and the threshold. The nest offers shelter, survival, a long-lasting link between those who protect it from the outside world. The hearth and its warmth symbolise the interpersonal relations among family members, while the threshold reminds us of the going of individuals into the world and returning to the safety of home.

The family is the basic and the oldest social group. The institution has changed over time and families have been and still are very heterogeneous. They vary in terms of the number of members and spouses, the number of generations, the role of men and women, how they make a living, their social position and their way of life.

Home offers family members shelter and safety, at least in principle. Within it, the family is realised through various rituals and mutual relations. In the home, the feelings of belonging, safety and predictability are strengthened. Within it, we satisfy



Wire mesh nest with spheres of different sizes symbolizes affiliation with other people (one's family) and space (one's home) (photo by J. Žagar).

our basic needs: the preparation and consumption of food, sleep, heat and light, hygiene, storage ...

For family members, a sense of a shared past is important and the feeling of a long, continued family history. That is why we seek our roots in the past and through our offspring divert our gaze to the future. We preserve family rituals, festivities, ways of behaving, knowledge, family signs and symbols, and hold onto souvenirs of the past. We preserve the memory of our predecessors through oral tradition, writings, photographs and objects.



Projected image of fire connects the themes of family and home (photo by J. Žagar).

Through family names and house numbers, fences and hedges, and other markers, the family define the boundaries of home and property, keeping it separate from other homes and from the world outside.

The exhibition chapter is rounded off in the media point Ravbarjevi. On the touchscreen, you can select footage of the everyday and festive life of the Reichmann family from Austrian Carinthia.

Polona Sketelj

My community - my birthplace

Where am I from? Which people are close to me?
With whom do I share my working days and festive occasions?



3. My community - my birthplace

The local community is made up of people who live on a certain territory. They have in common a shared local history, interests and festive days. Through interpersonal relations, transferred knowledge and tradition, and even through mutual control, the local community can have an important influence on the life of the individual. It shows concern for the safety of its members and stands by them through good times and bad, on workdays and festive days, in birth and death. But, although from the outside it may appear relatively uniform this is deceptive, for it is made up of individuals connected (and also separated) by ties of blood, neighbourhood, age, gender, social status and specific interests.

This section of the exhibition is divided into two parts: the first talks about local people, the second about local territory.



Glimpse into the exhibition area My Community - My Birthplace with a wire mesh tree as the central stage element (photo by M. Habiž).

The local community is a universal phenomenon, but extremely varied. In the exhibition, we present through the example of the village community an important social and cohesive role, which can be seen in mutual help, the communal celebration of festivities and the desire to deal with common problems. A particularly important role in community life is connected to the places where people gather, for example, village inn, village well, tree, fire station, church, cemetery ...

The symbol of the community at the exhibition is a stylised wire tree, for the Slovenian situation it would be a linden tree (you can see the real one in front of the museum administrative building). Beneath its leafy crown there took place in the past trials and judgements; beneath it, village homesteads decided on communal matters, and village lads gathered and sang... The seats beneath the linden invite us to pause a while and consider: **Where am I from? Which people are close to me? With whom do I share my working days and festive occasions?**

The local community cares for the safety of its people and their property. In Slovenia, an important role is played by voluntary firefighting societies. In many places, the local fire station is the centre of cultural life. In the exhibition, the patron saint of firefighters, St. Florian, leads us from physical safety to spiritual security. This is connected also with other saints and the Catholic churches dedicated to them.



Display case with some of the items related to the local community and the management of common affairs (photo by J. Žagar).

We show a sense of belonging to the local community in different ways, for instance through symbols and coats-of-arms. This can be a way of emphasising the particularities and attractions of where we live and of its inhabitants. Because of our sense of attachment to our local environment and people, we might even perceive the next settlement or village as part of the outside world. In recent decades, we have been witness to an ever greater interest in local characteristics and their revival. A local community can also appear in large urban centres, where it functions in the concentric circles of its streets and quarters or is connected to the whole town or city.

Nena Židov

Beyond my birthplace - my departure

Leaving home - where to and why? Do I remain who I am?



4. Beyond my birthplace - my departure

On our journey through time and space, we may cross the border of our home town or settlement. We may be led to other villages, towns or cities for a range of reasons. For the purposes of the exhibition, we have chosen three primary motives for leaving: earning a living, faith and knowledge. The central exhibition story focuses on the search for a living wage or a better life. In a mosaic of words and pictures we encounter many departing daily or seasonal migrants who left home in past centuries and decades, taking with them their knowledge, skills, products and goods...

The path is both a symbolic and a tangible representation of departures. It is a road, a signpost... And on every path there are people... (photo by M. Habič).



In the exhibition, we symbolically start our journey when we say goodbye to the rooftops of our home place in the photograph and see opposite a sign pointing us in the direction towards our destination. In the mirrored wall we confront ourselves and ask: **Leaving home - where to and why? Do I remain who I am?**

On this symbolic journey, on which we are led by the symbolic sounds of footsteps on different country road surfaces and the noisy arrival in town, we meet six selected characters. Three female on the left and three male on the right. Two, a harvester and a forester, are representatives of seasonal workers, the washerwoman and knife-sharpener offer services, while the milk-seller and peddler of woodenware offer goods produced by themselves or others. However, they did not only leave home, but also returned there. Their return is symbolised by

Photo on previous page
B. Zupančič

their outlines from the back, either reflected in a mirror or looking back towards the start, towards the “roofs of the home place”. Upon their return, they brought with them not only earnings and goods, but often also various new, foreign cultural elements and notions about other, different people.



Crossroads and intersections as symbolic representations of departures.

In addition to this central story, there are side stories about leaving home for reasons of knowledge and education or of faith.

Many found a better life in towns, to where they relocated and settled. At the end of the central exhibition story, we encounter different reactions to some of this urban immigration. This includes the appearance of prejudices regarding newcomers and foreigners.

Inja Smerdel

My nation - my country

How do I experience the country that belong to?
Which nation do I believe to be my nation?



5. My nation - my country

This exhibition chapter has a number of parts. The first looks at the country and its territory, the second the individual within it and the third the country and its people. We would like you to consider: **How do I experience the country that belong to?**
Which nation do I believe to be my nation?



View of the exhibition area
My Nation - My Country
(photo by M. Špiček).

Today's world is organised on the basis of national or multi-national states. The individual is part of larger social, ethnical and territorial communities, such as a nation or state. Our belonging to a country is connected with the territory itself, but also the political order within it, with its constitution, laws, armed forces, police and taxation. A sense of belonging to a nation comes from upbringing and an awareness of historical, linguistic, cultural and economic ties.

The state as a large kind of social and territorial community has changed over time. Many changes that took place in the 20th century for the Slovenes can be traced through changes in different state symbols such as the features of the state territory and capital, the coat-of-arms, the flag, the national anthem, the currency and the ruler.

The state cannot operate without its power apparatus, which can be secular or / and religious. The timeless and universal



Towns are the hubs of economic and political power; centers of education, and “melting points” of numerous identities. Their role and significance in certain periods are illustrated with a collage of photographs of Slovene towns and state capitals.

nature of power, but also its inaccessibility, untouchability and arrogance, is symbolised in the exhibition behind glass by items such as a stylised desk, a throne and the cross-section of a pyramid, symbol of a social structure, which is run and controlled by the highest level of society.

With a glance in the mosaic of mirrors you can see yourself as an individual beneath the ever-watchful eye of the authorities. The state, with its different

bodies, laws, rules and symbols, permeates every nook and cranny of our lives: it identifies, educates and monitors us, rewards us and punishes us... But the relationship is two-way: the individual can influence the state too - through elections, referenda, protests...

In the exhibition, the state and its people are shown through our awareness of belonging to a particular nation, which was shaped through different periods of history. Among the most important cohesive elements of national awareness are a common language and the idea of shared national characteristics. These shared national symbols are the foundation of national identity. They are taken from the nation's history, mythology and cultures, from geographical and other characteristics of the space, but also important individuals (poets, writers, scientists, sportsmen ...) can be found among them.

Andrej Dular

My otherness and foreign otherness - the wider world

What makes me travel to foreign countries and live among strangers?
How do I judge otherness? Where do I see equivalence?



6. My otherness and foreign otherness - the wider world

In the wider world, we are all confronted with other and different cultures. On our travels, we familiarise the world with our own culture and, upon our return, we bring home information about others. Thus we add to our personal world. Do think about these questions: **What makes me travel to foreign countries and live among strangers? How do I judge otherness? Where do I see equivalence?**

View of the exhibition area My Otherness and Foreign Otherness - The Wider World (photo by J. Žagar).



What is it that entices the individual into foreign lands, among different people? The reasons for going into the wider world vary. In the past as well as today, some were forced to flee from danger or even from persecution because of their political and religious beliefs, of ethnic or other identities. Researchers were led by curiosity, emigrants by the desire to make a living, missionaries by the conviction that they were going to change the world, adventurers and travellers by the desire to discover it. With the development of modern communication, intercultural contacts have become an important part of our everyday life, so otherness feels closer and more familiar.

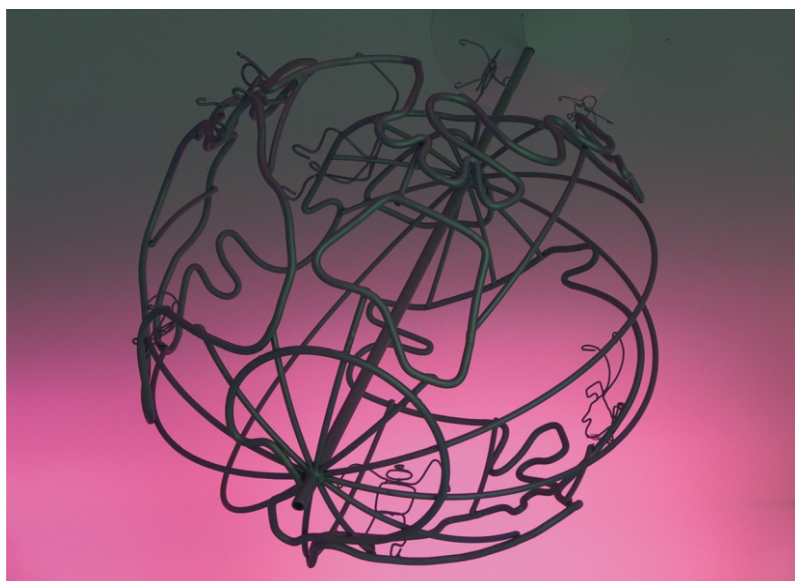
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B. Zupančič

The exhibition shows us individuals' motives for departure from the "safety of the known", making use of some familiar names from Slovenia's past. In the 19th century, a powerful imprint was left by the missionary work and concern for people shown by Friderik Baraga in North America and Ignacij Knoblehar in Sudan. On the other hand, Anton Codelli's departure for Togo in 1913 /14 was in order to realise his idea of a wireless connection between Africa and Europe, while the exceptional cosmopolitan Alma Karlin was led on her eight-year-long round-the-world journey by her free spirit, driving her to constant movement.

To experience a different world is what motivates many travellers. Slovene people have most often observed a different world through the Egyptian perspective: we have travelled to Egypt for almost 200 years, in the past, mostly as individuals, and today with tourist agencies. After a regular shipping route between Trieste

and Alexandria was established in the mid-19th century, Slovenes could see the magnificent heritage of the Pharaohs, which also meant contact with Islam and a jumping-off point for pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

In the last part of this exhibition chapter, we look at those who left because of better opportunities. They were led by the need to make ends meet or the desire for a better income. They became emigrants or temporary workers abroad. On their arrival in the new national and cultural environment they took



People on the World - the central scenic element (photo by J. Žagar).

on a new identity, they became immigrants. Like a pendulum torn between two identities, two desires. Swinging between adaptation to the new environment and the desire to preserve their original identity is constantly present in their lives and feelings. Through contacts with their relatives at home, they made a large contribution to their notion of the world.

By selecting content on the touchscreen, listen to the life stories of some Slovene women who left their homeland to make a living in Alexandria, Egypt, and their descendants.

Marko Frelih, Daša Koprivec

Me - my personal world

Who, then, am I? Where do I come from and where am I going?



7. Me - my personal world

We are approaching the end of the exhibition and of An Individual's Journey, the literary memory of Jože Dular of his forebears and the River Krka that has accompanied many lives and that still flows onwards, in spite of many historical changes. With the human silhouette, we return to the individual. The image of David is much smaller here than at the beginning. It is placed among the gigantic space of our world and of the universe. It seeks answers to the questions: *Who, then, am I? Where do I come from and where am I going?*

David as a symbol of Everyman on the mosaic depiction of the Earth. The concluding animated sequence in the final exhibition chapter represents a visual summary of the concept of positioning within the (self) constructed image of the world.



The chapter about man's internal world reminds us that memories of the trodden path are not just personal memories. Everything a person experiences is experienced with others. Our environment influences what is worth remembering from our personal, common and universal past and in what way that memory should be renewed.

Look into the starry sky above, which - here at the exhibition - represents the past: the past of humankind, connected with the past of our common world and the past of universe.

Photo on previous page
B. Zupančič

For each individual, the external world is a space with previously amassed ideas, inventions, knowledge and visions of humankind. This is the starting-point for the individual's understanding and agency. Science and technology enable us to take an ever-deeper look into both the microscopic world and the endless depths of space. In so doing they also influence our temporal, spatial and social appurtenance and define our heritage.

The sounds in this room (a heartbeat, the ticking of a watch, a fire, a bell, the howling of the wind) support the dialogue between the internal and the external. The story of both is linked by two more subsections. The first (Questions and Answers) speaks about the concepts and the understanding of the world, the meaning and the supernatural, the other (Choice as creation) about the creation of the personal world through the internalisation of selected images, thoughts, experiences, events, memories etc. Selecting content at the final touch-screen should also alert you to the importance of mediated media images, life experiences and oral heritage.



Memory Captured in Objects:
a glimpse into the display case
(photo by J. Žagar).

Each individual's journey through life is a unique experience; a person's character is an unrepeatable collection of their affiliations and placement in time, space and among others. We are born alone and we depart from life alone - yet it happens in a way that suits the social and cultural understanding of life and death. The narrow, poorly lit passageway, similar to the tunnel at the start, brings our exhibition to an end. Step through the threaded curtains into the light!

Janja Žagar

The museum's living room and Personal exhibitions

Here, you now enter your real world, but also our “living room”, a place for rest and educational programmes. Relax, talk, read



Museum den is also an area for sharing memories, experiences, and opinions: members of the study group discuss their stories and examine photographs; March 2012 (photo by J. Žagar).


the materials offered, or watch the mosaic video portrait **Vesna** on the touch screen. You can also view any of video narrations by the visitors (Gallery of Narrators) or a small current exhibition from personal exhibition cycles (My Life, My World or My Collection) that are prepared by our visitors, supervised by one of the SEM curators.

Voluntary cultural mediators Brigita Rupnik and Janez Doler are filming Olga Pivk - Vidmar (on the left); April 2011 (photo by A. Kofol).



You can become the author of a personal exhibition too. Just contact us! In this way, with us, you will complement the con-

tent of the exhibition I, We and the Others: The Images of my World, which observes people and the world through the aspect of cultural relativism and cognitive pluralism; which understands the meaning of objects through the changing relationship between people and things, between symbolic and useful. Which treats every human life as a link between the people of the past, the present and future ages.



SLOVENSKI ETNOGRAFSKI MUZEJ

S E M

KONTAKT OBVESTILA SPOROČILA ZA JAVNOST VPRAŠAJ SEM INFO

Domov

Galerija pripovedovalcev

RAZSTAVE

JAVNI PROGRAMI

PUBLIKACIJE

SPLETNE ZBIRKE

PROJEKTI

AVDIOVIZUALNO

Filmografija SEM

Priprave

SEM v gibanju

Galerija pripovedovalcev


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GALERIJA PRIPOVEDOVALCEV


nastaja v sklopu razstave

Jaz, mi in drugi


podobe mojega sveta

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Nomination 2013

Slovenski etnografski muzej

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Odprto: torek - nedelja, 10.00 - 18.00

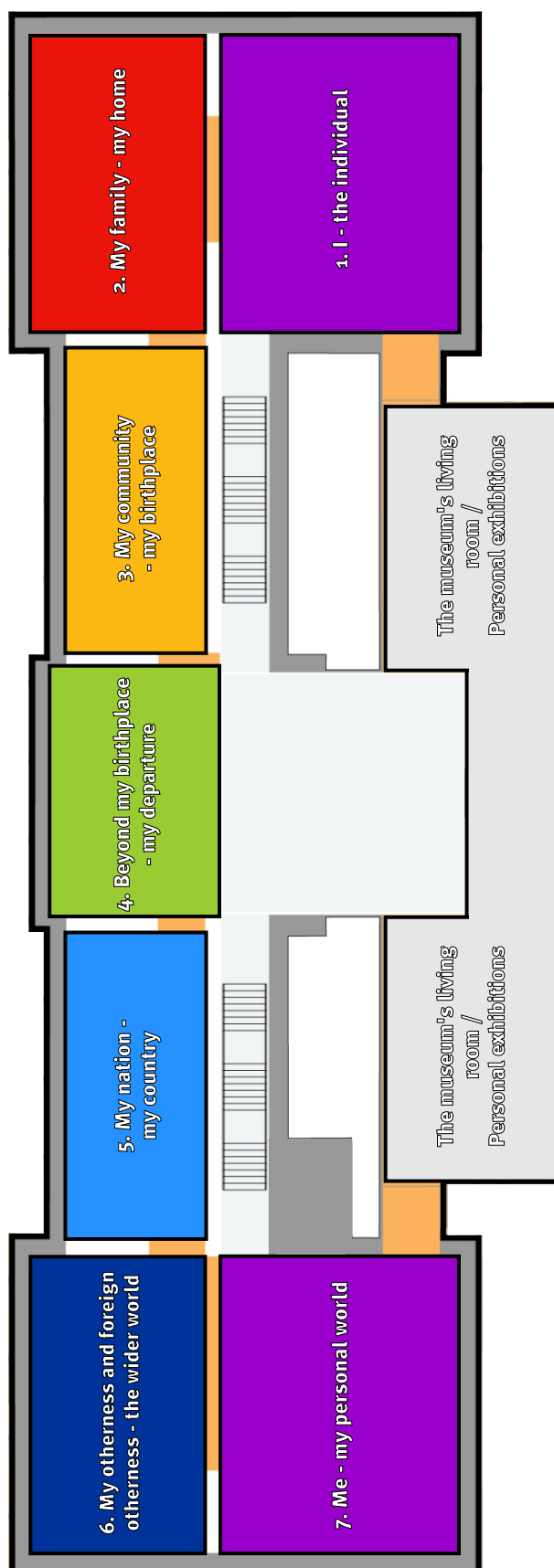
Zaprto: ponedeljki

Prost vstop: vsako zadnjo nedeljo v mesecu

ČAS ALIKVOTNIH D.

Gallery of Narrators on the SEM website, July 2013.

Exhibition plan



I, We and Others: Images of My World Colophon of the exhibition

Exhibition chapters

I - the individual: Janja Žagar

My family - my home: Polona Sketelj

My community - my birthplace: Nena Židov

Beyond my birthplace - my departure: Inja Smerdel

My nation - my country: Andrej Dular

My otherness and foreign otherness - the wider world:

Marko Frelih, Daša Koprivec

Me - my personal world: Janja Žagar

Pot Enega: po romanu Jožeta Dularja Krka pa teče naprej (1983)

Vesna - filmski mozaik posameznika: Nadja Valentinčič Furlan

Design

Eda Pavletič, Boštjan Pavletič (logo)

Central scenographic elements

INKLA plus d.o.o., Julij Borštnik, Katja Oblak, Jožef Vrščaj -
in cooperation with the authors of the exhibition

Audiovisual content

Nadja Valentinčič Furlan - in cooperation with the authors
of the exhibition

Animation, interactive application and spatial sound image

Peter Gruden - in cooperation with the authors of the exhibition



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What roles do I play in my family?
Where am I from? Which people are close to me?
With whom do I share my working days and festive occasions?
Leaving home - where to and why? Do I remain who I am?
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