

SLOVENIAN
ARMED
FORCES
BAND

25
YEARS





25 years of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band

A journal marking the 25th anniversary of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band

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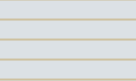
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»Music is the message of peace, and music only brings peace.«

»Glasba je sporočilo miru, in le glasba prinaša mir.«

Zubin Mehta



MATEJ TONIN, MSc

Minister of Defence



Dear members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band

I am very proud of you. As a professional band, you have been giving an extra dimension – a cultural and musical character – to our defence forces for a quarter of a century. Thanks to you, the Slovenian state has upheld and refined the long tradition of military bands in Slovenian territories dating back to the times of Maria Theresa.

With your musical performances, you elevate all of the most important moments of military life. You honour the most solemn events, fill merry occasions with joy, and accompany bitter moments with respect. Enjoying wide recognition, you are among the principal drivers of cooperation between the military and the civilian environments. With your participation in high-level official events, you keep making an irreplaceable contribution to the overall image of the Slovenian Armed Forces. You are the main pillar of the musical programme at state celebrations, while also participating in humanitarian events and excelling at international musical and military festivals, and on many other stages at home and abroad. As invaluable ambassadors of Slovenian culture, you impress your audience wherever you go – always proudly wearing the Slovenian Armed Forces uniform.

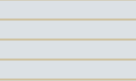
I had attended your concerts even before I became the Minister of Defence, and had enjoyed many beautiful moments doing so. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has hit right at the time of your anniversary, the majority of your concert activities have had to be cancelled. I admire your sustained efforts to stay in physical, mental and musical shape, and to employ modern technology in finding creative ways to reach your audiences. By doing this, you connect tradition with new approaches in musical creativity. I am looking forward to the day when the situation once again permits you to use your harmonious musical expression to bring us joy.

Dear band members, let me sincerely congratulate you and express my gratitude for the 25 years of your dedicated work in the service of your homeland. I will strive for you to be able to work in the best possible conditions, in order to keep bringing pride to the Slovenian Armed Forces and the Republic of Slovenia, and to develop your musical creativity.



Major General ROBERT GLAVAŠ,

*Chief of the General Staff,
Slovenian Armed Forces*



Dear members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band

You are celebrating an important milestone in your activities. On your 25th anniversary, important events will also be historically documented, thanks to this journal. Over the years, you have staged many performances at home and abroad, and it is in order for us to remember them.

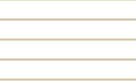
On this year's anniversary of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, I sincerely congratulate all the band members, including those former band and unit members who contributed in any way to the band's successful work in the past. I thank you for your dedicated work, which maintains and strengthens the reputation of the Slovenian Armed Forces as a reliable and trustworthy partner at home and internationally.

I would like to extend special gratitude to your families and loved ones for their understanding and support, enabling each and every one of us to fulfill our mission and tasks with dedication and efficiency.

I wish you all the best in fulfilling our common goals in the future.



Lieutenant Colonel JANEZ KLJUN,
*Commander of the Slovenian Armed Forces
Band since 2018*



The military is constantly developing and changing. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band has not been exempt from these changes over the years, despite not being a typical military unit. In one such transformation, I was on the receiving end of an order to fill the post of band commander. The military-style reply: “Yes, Sir!”

The band’s mission is to foster and develop musical art, and to represent and promote the Slovenian Armed Forces. The band musicians therefore participate in a wide variety of official events, such as wreath-laying ceremonies, military funerals, change of command ceremonies, receptions for commanding officers, musical activities performed by smaller bands (promoting the military profession, benefit concerts, marking various events and anniversaries, etc.), and concert band performances, including classical music, in collaboration with established conductors from Slovenia and abroad. Cooperation with various musicians and singers enriches all those involved. From time to time, however, unpredicted circumstances occur. Each activity requires a programme. In the official protocol, things are very clear; in other areas, not so much. What can often cause us trouble, however, is not the programme or the performance but song titles. Ne, ni res (“No, it’s not true”), Za prijatelje (“For Friends”) and Samo nasmeh je bolj grenak (“Only a smile is more bitter”) are just a few titles that sometimes collide with the cruel (political) reality.

Recently, our work has been associated with the situation with regard to Covid. Musicians, too, have had to adapt to the limited and altered work routine. However, through our performances and productions posted on various online sites, we have demonstrated our capacity to perform at the highest level even in tense circumstances. This has also been a time for reflection, as the permanent crew has been strengthened. We will be even stronger now, and I often say to the band members: appreciate this dream job. Which musicians have the privilege to play for the British Queen, to perform a programme on Red Square, to be regular guests at the Presidential Palace, to have their performances guaranteed throughout the year, and so on?

The vision of the incumbent Chief of Defence is one of a military organization that is manned, equipped and trained to perform its duties. Our band has the knowledge, skills and experience, but lacks certain resources. While the quality of musical performance is of the highest level, the band’s housing is anything but. For the coming period, we would wish for an infrastructure conducive to the band’s mission and reputation, i.e. facilities for day-to-day activities that are on a par with those of comparable bands. This is something I will advocate for even when I accept my next duty. I am looking forward to the band’s next activities and concerts, when my wife and I will be among your regular audience.

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Foundation and history

THE TRADITION OF MILITARY BANDS IN SLOVENIAN TERRITORY

“Military bands have been an official or unofficial element of armed forces throughout the entire military history. Their appearance, role and importance have changed through history, both with regard to instrument development and the development of military tactics and strategy. After the end of the Cold War, the overall number of military bands decreased, as did the number of musicians per band; however, they have remained an integral part of all military organizations. The military band has remained the main form of modern military musical ensembles. Like their appearance, the role and importance of military musical bands have not changed since the end of the Cold War. First and foremost, modern military bands still provide musical support to the military and state protocol, while also playing an important role in shaping and expressing the military corporate spirit.”¹

Military music is predominantly instrumental music which is usually associated with ceremonies and various other activities performed by military units. In the past, it had several roles: it was employed to give signals and commands in battle; in military camps or hospitals, it was performed in connection with certain daily activities (such as waking up or to announce the start of the night rest); and, ultimately, its role was also to cheer up and encourage soldiers. Instruments (first the drums and the trumpet, and later also the flugelhorn) were introduced to the battlefield once armies grew so large that they became impossible to control using voice commands. Music also had an important role in the large-scale movements of military formations from one location to another. Such events required a constant marching rhythm, meaning that the military ensemble would march side-by-side with the troops. A band was composed of woodwind and brass musicians as well as percussionists, and even pipers in Scotland. In time, this role of military music lost its importance due to the increasing motorization of military units. The first records of the use of musical instruments in battle date back to antiquity, when music was used both to exercise command and to intimidate the enemy. It seems that military music retained a similar role during the Middle Ages, when the roles of individual instruments, among other things, were specified in greater detail. The trumpet became an instrument used to issue orders to the cavalry, whereas the infantry received its orders

¹ Budal, G. (2006). *Razvoj, vloga in pomen vojaških godb* (“The Development, Role and Importance of Military Bands”, Graduate Thesis). Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences.

via the drum. By the 17th century, a distinction had been established between two types of military music units: the music ensemble on the battlefield, and the military band. The first was composed of musicians who were part of the regiment, retaining its main function of directing movement on the battlefield, as well as the everyday lives of soldiers in military camps and barracks. A military band, on the other hand, played mainly at various ceremonies and on other social occasions. It was composed of professional, often civilian, musicians who were members of a special unit separate from the regiment.²

Records of military music in the Slovenian territories date back approximately 500 years. There are records of rural and urban defence militia cornetists and timpanists, who were later joined by town fifers and provincial trumpeters. They were part of the regular structure of the regional militia established to defend Carniola. Čerin³ writes that in the 15th century the region of Carniola established a regional militia, with one armed man required to join from each house. The first official records date back to 1544, when musicians were part of the Ljubljana city guard, their duties encompassing military purposes as well as church and public performances. Apart from guard duty, town fifers were required to participate in various ceremonies hosted by the region or the capital, in solemn masses, hymns of thanks following battlefield victories, and receptions of rulers. In addition, they signalled the time of day from towers (known collectively in Slovenian as *turnerji*), and also attended other solemn occasions and weddings. In 1771, town fifers and provincial trumpeters lost their vital role, as Maria Theresa introduced a regular army where a musical band was assigned to every regiment. Soon these bands, which were much larger in size and of better quality, replaced all that was left of the town and provincial musicians. The only other known information is that a sniper choir with an eight-person musical band was established in Ljubljana in 1789. It is not known how long that ensemble existed.⁴

² Sukljan, N. (Ed.) 2012). *Godbeni zvoki: Zbornik ob 40-letnici organiziranega godbeništva na Slovenskem in 15-letnici ustanovitve Zveze slovenskih godb* (“*Band Sounds: Journal Marking the 40th Anniversary of Organized Band Music in Slovenia, and the 15th Anniversary of the Association of Slovenian Bands*”). Ljubljana: Association of Slovenian Bands.

³ Čerin, J. (1944). Mestni in deželni trobentači („Town and provincial trumpeters“). V N. Velikonja, B. Borko, T. Debeljak and Z. Simčič (Ed.), *Zbornik zimske pomoči* („*the Zimska Pomoč Journal*“) (p. 345–351). Ljubljana: Zimska pomoč.

⁴ Čerin, J. (1927). *Zgodovinski razvoj vojaških oz. turških godb* (“*Historical Development of Military or Turkish Bands*“). *Pevec*, 7/1-2, 1–2. 7/3-4, 11–12. 7/5-6, 19–21. 7/7-8, 26–28.

Military musicians soon became indispensable at musical events in Slovenian territory. In 1802, the Philharmonic Society orchestra in Ljubljana only had 25 members, six of whom were military musicians.⁵ After 1822, however, military bands in Ljubljana became more and more closely integrated into the cultural and musical life of the city. Without a large number of military musicians in their midst, members of the Philharmonic were unable to perform a solemn mass, an opera, or any other complex symphonic or choral and instrumental piece. The organization of symphonic concerts in Ljubljana was mainly made possible by the large number of military musicians comprising a military band assigned to the 27th Infantry Regiment stationed in Ljubljana.⁶

The end of the March Revolution of 1848 saw the formation of national watches and citizen guards (units of armed town residents) in Ljubljana and in other towns of more than 1,000 residents. The main mission of these watches and guards was to defend the ruler, the constitution and legislation, and the independence and territorial integrity of the state; following the example of military chapels, some of them organized their own bands composed of woodwind, brass and percussion sections. Naturally, such bands required, and were assigned, special rules confirmed by the administrative council and signed by the temporary commander of the national watch. The rules encompassed the activities of the national watch band, and the appointment of the musical director and the bandmaster. During that time, bands were focused on public performances. In addition to German musicians, many band members were of Slovenian or Czech descent. In 1848, the national watch band gave eighteen performances. It was nothing unusual for the musicians, especially bandmasters and conductors, to also work as composers and arrangers. By performing overtures, arias, marches and other pieces by famous composers of the time (Bellini, Verdi, Mercadante, Auber, Donizetti, J. Strauss), they brought the splendour of world capitals closer to the Slovenian nation. In addition, no concert went by without hearing pieces penned by Slovenian composers (K. Maško, M. Vilhar). The programme regularly included polkas, marches and potpourris infused with Slovenian folk motifs, contributing to the sense of national awareness.⁷

⁵ Čerin, J. (1927). *Zgodovinski razvoj vojaških oz. turških godb ("Historical Development of Military or Turkish Bands")*. *Pevec*, 7/1-2, 1-2. 73/4 11 12 75/6 19 21 77/8 26 28

⁶ Kuret, P. (2008). *100 let Slovenske filharmonije 1908–2008 ("100 years of Slovenska filharmonija, 1908–2008")*. Ljubljana: Slovenska filharmonija.

⁷ Cvetko, D. (1958–1960). *Zgodovina glasbene umetnosti na Slovenskem ("History of Musical Art in Slovenia")*. Ljubljana: DZS.

Muzika Dravske divizijske oblasti.

U četrtek, dne 12. januarja 1922
ob 20. uri

duorana „Union“

II. simfonični
KONCERT.

Sodeluje: gospa Paula Lovšetova,
solistinja Narodnega gledališča.

Dirigent: kapelnik dr. Josip Čerin.

1.) **W. A. Mozart: Simfonija C-dur (Jupiter simfonija).**
1. Allegro vivace 2. Andante cantabile. 3. Menuetto, Allegretto. 4. Finale, Molto allegro.

2.) **Dr. R. Strauss: Dva slavospěva za visoki glas s spremnjenjem orkestra. Op. 71.**
1. Slavospěv ljubezni. | Poje g. Pavla Lovšetova
2. Ljubezen.

Odmor.

3.) **Dr. A. Dvořák: Opoldnevica, simfonična slika po narodni pripravedki K. Jar. Ebenš. Op. 108.**

4.) a) **A. Glazunov: II. Serenada za mali orkester. Op. 11.**
b) **M. J. Glinka: Caprice brillant na thème Jota aragoneza. Instrum. Rimsky-Korsakov.**

5.) **E. Adamč: Ah, mladost II moja, kje si? (Oton Župančič) Spominu pokojne matere. Slika za orkester.**

MAJŠKA TRGATNA LJUBLJANA

A concert programme of the Drava Division Music Orchestra from 1922⁹

After World War I, the Philharmonic Society was disbanded, and Ljubljana would not host any symphonic concerts for a long time. Musical life developed around the *Glasbena matica* music association, where the Orchestral Society was founded in September 1919. As an amateur string orchestra, the Orchestral Society performed either on its own or as part of a larger symphonic orchestra including members of the opera, military or, later, the radio orchestra, as well as students. In the early 1920s, in addition to other military bands (the military band of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and the Royal Serbian Guard ensemble), Ljubljana saw regular performances by the Drava Division Band led by Dr Josip Čerin. For four concert seasons, Čerin staged symphonic concerts with a riveting and high-quality repertoire, which was one way of saving the impoverished musical life in Ljubljana during that period. The musicologist Dr Leon Stefanija characterizes the Drava Division Band, the National Theatre Orchestra, the Radio Ljubljana Orchestra, and the Ljubljana Philharmonic as the four main pillars of the instrumental music scene in Ljubljana during the interwar period. In addition to its opera activities, the National Theatre Orchestra also staged symphonic concerts. In 1921, the Drava Division Military Band began to perform regular symphonic musical cycles as well.⁸

⁸ Stefanija, L. (2010). *Prispevek k analizi institucij slovenske glasbe 20. stoletja* ("Towards an Analysis of Slovenian Musical Institutions of the 20th Century"). Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts.

⁹ Kuret, P. (2008). *100 let Slovenske filharmonije 1908–2008* ("100 years of Slovenska filharmonija, 1908–2008"). Ljubljana: Slovenska filharmonija.

In the 1920s, the Drava Division Military Band, contracted by the world-renowned record label Columbia Records, recorded what was probably one of the first vinyl records in Slovenian territory to have an original, exclusively domestic playlist.¹⁰ Due to the limited number of recordings and general difficulties facing Slovenian instrumental music at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the recording of the song by Viktor Parma, entitled *Pozdrav Gorenski* (“Greetings To Gorenjska”), which is kept among the old recordings of the National and University Library’s musical collection, is extremely important.¹¹ The Drava Division Military Band was disbanded following the capitulation of the Yugoslav army in 1941.

During the National Liberation Struggle, many musicians, as well as entire civilian wind bands, joined Partisan units, forming the first Partisan bands. Following the capitulation of Italy, the number of military bands increased, so that by the second half of 1944, all higher units (corps and divisions) had their own musical bands. The best-known event is the departure of the Hrastnik Mining Band and part of the Zagorje Mining Band crew under the leadership of the conductor and composer Jože Bruno. A



smaller number of these musicians joined the band of the Main Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Slovenia, whereas the majority joined the VII Corps to form the VII Corps Band.

The National Liberation Army General Headquarters Ensemble with conductor Bojan Adamič¹²

¹⁰ Krivokapič, I. (2004). Pihalne godbe – O dobah slovenskega godbeništva “Wind Bands – On the Periods of Slovenian Bands”. *Deloskop*, 16. 12.-22. December 200443/20/21

¹¹ Parma, V. (ca. 1920). *Pozdrav Gorenski* (“Greetings to Gorenjska”) [gramophone record]. London: Columbia Graphophone co.

¹² Sukljan, N. (ed.) 2012). *Godbeni zvoki: Zbornik ob 40-letnici organiziranega godbeništva na Slovenskem in 15-letnici ustanovitve Zveze slovenskih godb* (“Band Sounds: Journal Marking the 40th Anniversary of Organized Band Music in Slovenia, and the 15th Anniversary of the Association of Slovenian Bands”). Ljubljana: Association of Slovenian Bands.

On 18 August 1944, the Main Headquarters of the People's Liberation Army and the Partisan Detachments of Slovenia ordered the formation of its own military band and the VII Corp Military Band. In 1944, all the principal economic, cultural, military and political institutions were formed in the region of Bela Krajina. The Band of the Main Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Slovenia was based in Črnomelj, with Bojan Adamič serving as its bandmaster. The band performed for Partisan units, in hospitals, and at rallies, military parades, celebrations, and funerals of Partisans and their commanders. It also played at the head of the column of liberators who marched into the liberated Ljubljana on 9 May 1945, bringing the first post-war Slovenian government to the capital. The band was active until the liberation, staging 44 public performances and giving ten performances in the Liberation Front Radio broadcasts in this brief period of operation.

Other military units which established their own bands included the XXXI Division, the IX Corps, the IV Operative Zone (which also had a salon orchestra in addition to its wind band), the Partisan Detachment of Kozjansko, the XIV Division Headquarters (40 musicians), and the XII Brigade.¹³ The



The IX Corps Band¹⁵

bibliography of musical pieces composed during the National Liberation Struggle, which was compiled by Dr Franc Križnar,¹⁴ indicates that in addition to battle songs (mainly marches), folk songs and patriotic songs, Partisan bands also performed foreign hymns, funeral marches, and even overtures. This leads to the conclusion that apart from bolstering the combat morale of the fighters, the bands also performed protocol duties and were active in the field of artistic performance.

¹³ Križnar, F. (1992). *Slovenska glasba v narodnoosvobodilnem boju ("Slovenian Music During the National Liberation Struggle")*. Ljubljana: Scientific Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts.

¹⁴ Križnar, F. (1992). *Slovenska glasba v narodnoosvobodilnem boju ("Slovenian Music During the National Liberation Struggle")*. Ljubljana: Scientific Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts.

¹⁵ Sukljan, N. (ed.) 2012). *"Band Sounds: Journal Marking the 40th Anniversary of Organized Band Music in Slovenia, and the 15th Anniversary of the Association of Slovenian Bands"*. Ljubljana: Association of Slovenian Bands.

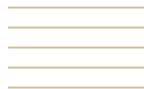
The Slovenian Home Guard also had its own military ensemble. The need to establish a military ensemble emerged with the burial of fallen Home Guard members in Kočevje. A band was put together *ad hoc* from former military musicians who had remained in Ljubljana and from members of the railway musical society Sloga. The Slovenian Home Guard Band was established on 1 December 1943. It performed as a wind, chamber, string and dance orchestra. The band's activities included escorting Home Guard units to exercises; participating in holy masses; playing at the military parade marking the Slovene Home Guard's first oath of allegiance; staging regular open-air concerts and concerts for the wounded in military hospitals; participating in propaganda rallies; and recording albums. In addition to the commander and his deputy, the band comprised about 50 musicians.¹⁶

Despite the abolition of the Slovenian military after World War II, the continuity of military bands in Slovenian territory was upheld within the military of the federal state. The main and representative Yugoslav military band was the Yugoslav People's Army House Orchestra from Belgrade, which was renamed the Artistic Band of the Yugoslav People's Army in 1967. The band consisted of a symphony orchestra including a choir, and an entertainment orchestra with a small vocal group. The symphony orchestra and its choir performed at public events, staging concerts to foster musical culture among members of the Yugoslav People's Army and popularizing the musical culture of the Yugoslav nations; the entertainment orchestra and its vocal group functioned as a popular music group for cultural and entertainment purposes within garrisons.¹⁷

Apart from the Artistic Band of the Yugoslav People's Army, there was a total of 12 bands in 1985, their activities covering 200 garrisons. The garrisons in Slovenia were supplied, in musical terms, by the bands of the Army Authorities in Ljubljana and Zagreb, each comprising 51 members.

¹⁶ Osana, J. (1999). Zgodovinski razvoj godbe Slovenskega domobranstva od 1. decembra 1943 do 28. februarja 1945 ("The Historical Development of the Slovenian Home Guard Band from 1 December 1943 to 28 February 1945"). *Zaveza*, 9/34, 89–91. <https://www.zaveza.si/zaveza-st-34/>

¹⁷ Gažević, N. (ed.) 1973). *Vojna enciklopedija: peta knjiga: Lafos-Naukrat* („The Military Encyclopedia: Volume V: Lafos-Naukrat“) (p. 666). Beograd: Military Encyclopedia Editorial Board.



There were many Slovenian musicians who held important roles within the military bands across the entire Yugoslav federation prior to its collapse. Many of them established themselves as conductors and composers. The list of prominent Slovenians who had a lasting impact in this regard includes Jože Brun, Gvido Učakar, Vinko Savnik, Anton Kumer, Franc Klinar, Rudolf Zakrajšek, Janez Tavčar, Franc Rotar, Ivan Rupnik, Rado Simoniti, and Anton Kvaternik. In total, more than 500 original compositions were created by 71 Slovenian composers and other musicians, including nearly 300 choral and 80 solo songs. In addition to 200 adaptations, various symphonic musical pieces and several band songs and marches were created. The most widely mentioned composers include Bojan Adamič, Jože Brun, Marjan Kozina, Janez Kuhar, Anton Lavrin, Viktor Mihelčič, Karol Pahor, Maks Pirnik, and Jože Skrinar. There are several more important works of the time that are worth mentioning, such as: *Partizanska uvertura* (“Partisan Overture”) and *Slavnostna Uvertura* (“Solemn Overture”) by maestro Bojan Adamič, and *Predigra* (“Prelude”) and *Prva partizanska uvertura* (“The First Partisan Overture”) by Anton Lavrin.¹⁸

The continuity of military bands in Slovenian territory, which began in the second half of the 18th century, when the first written records on military bands as institutionalized forms of military units appeared, remained virtually unbroken until 1991. The period of discontinuity only lasted for five years – until the formation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band in 1996. As the Slovenian Armed Forces did not have their own military band at the time of their foundation, the role of the military band was performed by the Vevče Paper Company Band. Even though this amateur band is one of the most recognized in Slovenia, the training and appearance of its amateur musicians were not suitable to the role and image displayed by military bands around the world. The urgency to establish a professional military band was increasing.

¹⁸ Križnar, F. (1992). *Slovenska glasba v narodnoosvobodilnem boju* (“Slovenian Music During the National Liberation Struggle”). Ljubljana: Scientific Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts.

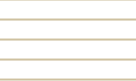


BORIS ŽNIDARIČ, PhD

*State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence
of the Republic of Slovenia, 1991-1994*

Remembering events dating back twenty-five years can often be a thankless pursuit, but this is not the case this time as we are talking about the period of preparing and forming the Act establishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band – a band that has, through its activities, not only justified its own existence, but also exceeded all expectations at home and abroad. I am certain that the professional, artistic and other aspects of the band’s activities will be covered by other authors with an in-depth knowledge of the field. Instead, my piece will focus on the implementation of an idea that had been a long time in the making, all the way from the organization to the Act establishing the band, with its important mission. There are two aspects concerning the activities of military bands that can be identified from historical records. The internal aspect involves raising the battle morale of armed forces members engaged in combat, while the external aspect involves projecting patriotism and national belonging externally, by promoting a nation’s arts and culture.

During the post-independence period, the Territorial Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, and later the Slovenian Armed Forces, did not have its own military band. However, the Republic of Slovenia did have an established police band, which also performed protocol duties. This was, and still is, a rare example in Europe.



On 3-6 December 1995, Colonel Pavle Vindišar and I attended the 50th International Military Sports Council (*Conseil International du Sport Militaire*) conference in Rovinj. The conference was opened with military honours, including a performance by the Croatian Armed Forces Band. I thought about the length of the Croatian war of independence, wondering how Croatia was able to sustain such a band, given that even Slovenia, which had been living in peace since October 1991, had not decided to establish one. This motivated me to organize and found our own band. Having returned from the official trip, I briefed the then-Minister of Defence, Jelko Kacin, who supported the initiative. Unofficial talks with some musicians employed by the Police Band followed. One of them was my subordinate during my work at the Ministry of the Interior from 1990 to 1993, when I served as Assistant to the Minister of the Interior and as Deputy Police Commander. In establishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, I was assisted by the artistic director and conductor Milivoj Šurbek, MSc, musician Ljubo Vošnjak (who today holds a doctorate), and later by the musician Jani Šalamon (who today holds a Master's degree). After several meetings and content-related coordination we produced a document, which I then presented to the narrow collegiate board of the Minister of Defence. On 1 April 1996, the groundwork was laid to issue the Act of the Minister of Defence establishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band and designating Ljubo Vošnjak and drum major Jani Šalamon as band commander and deputy band commander, respectively. Just ten days later, Franc Rizmal was employed as the first conductor of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band.

Their employment in the Office of the Minister of Defence, which lasted several months, was relatively turbulent. It was necessary to provide adequate facilities and material conditions for work, and to form mechanisms and procedures for selecting candidates for recruitment. A special role in this regard belonged to the, alas, late Jože Privšek, a versatile musical artist, who gave the newly formed musical body a special value. During the development of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, its management and members faced several challenges at home and abroad, including personnel and material means, as well as creative and artistic expression. All of this has ensured them a firm spot on the music scene within their genre of musical creativity.

Looking back to the creation and operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, each and every one of us who participated in its organization and establishment can be proud of their contribution. I wish the Slovenian Armed Forces Band Command and all band members every success in fulfilling the band's mission in the future.



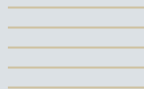
Lieutenant General IZTOK PODBREGAR, PhD

*Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces,
1995-1998*

For the past thirty years, my life and work have been dynamic and diverse. Since the Republic of Slovenia's independence, I have participated in various tasks and events revolving around the development of the national security system. As nearly 19 years have passed since my employment in the Slovenian Armed Forces, and since I work as a university professor involved in research and teaching today, my record of the foundation and formation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band may come across as subjective, inaccurate and deficient. But such is my recollection of the facts and events of 1996.

With the ambitious plan of joining NATO and the European Union, the Republic of Slovenia entered the Partnership for Peace. Suddenly, the dynamics of international cooperation in various fields increased dramatically. I feel that this was a time when all NATO and Partnership for Peace nations realized they had to get to know and connect with each other as much as they could, through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, in order to complement or improve each other.

In the spirit of increased cooperation, the amount of protocol work increased, owing to a higher number of visits from foreign delegations. At the national level, the musical side of protocol was performed by the Police Band, but also involved the Slovenian Armed Forces Guard. As an active



participant, the Slovenian Armed Forces had its own responsibilities, which also involved protocol duties. At some point it became clear that protocol personnel could not keep up with the workload, but the fact was that the Slovenian Armed Forces were still responsible for performing protocol duties at their own events. It should not be forgotten that the dynamic evolution of the Slovenian Armed Forces required the development of an appropriate level of motivation and values of the defence forces. This, in turn, required improvements in the field of music, which is based on the rich tradition of Slovenian military songs and marches, with the aim of shaping the identity of the young military of the time. Once we had connected all these facts, we realized we could build recognition through music as well, and decided to take a new organizational step.

The need to develop the identity of the Slovenian Armed Forces, and an opportunity for the military to receive greater recognition, also came about due to the fact that with the signing of the Dayton Agreement, the war in the Balkans had formally ended and the situation had begun to deescalate. This was a chance for the Slovenian Armed Forces to take greater development steps which were less narrowly focused on its basic function.

During that time, the State Secretary post at the Ministry of Defence was held by Dr Boris Žnidarič, a man of rich and diverse experience and an excellent operative capable of doing everything that needed doing. He invited me, as the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, for a talk, presenting me with the idea of establishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. He had held senior posts within the Police for years, so he was very familiar with the organization, situation and personnel of the Police Band. It did not take much for me to be impressed by the idea. Music is close to my soul by nature; I have had some musical training, and in my youth, I even hoped music would become my profession. So, after that first conversation, we agreed to think about how to make this important idea a reality as soon as possible.

Next time, thanks to him, the meeting already involved several more people. He had invited Dr Ljubo Vošnjak and Jani Šalamon, MSc, who were still members of the Police Band at the time but were open to new opportunities, requirements and development.

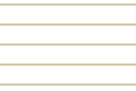
A new project task began to take shape, with Dr Boris Žnidarič ensuring the proper conditions at government level. Apart from legal decisions, it was necessary to provide appropriate personnel. Dr Vošnjak and Jani Šalamon, MSc tackled the professional issues, while my task was to integrate all of that into the regular plans of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

Let me mention another very important point. Some excellent Slovenian musicians of the time felt the need to develop the Slovenian military march and music for the Slovenian Military Band. In this respect I would particularly like to mention maestro Jože Privšek, with whom I personally met to discuss these issues. An outstanding and established musical persona, he explained to me the wide scope and importance of the historic project. Even today, whenever I hear Slovenian military marches performed by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band or by another military band, American for example, I remember that meeting and our conversation.

Dr Vošnjak, Jani Šalamon, MSc, and conductor Franc Rizmal quickly transformed their original crew into a small music group which began to gain prominence immediately. They were joined by Aljoša Deferrri, Marjan Petrej, Neža Gruden, Matej Rihter, Rudolf Strnad, Jernej Ivan, Aleš Stopinšek, Miklavž Ašič, Maša Bertok Duh and specialist Ana Šalamon, and by Janja Rudolf and Aleš Gašparut as administrative assistants.

When our military band began to form, we were faced with an interesting challenge in the issue of purchasing our instruments. By then, the Slovenian Armed Forces had already established a standing procurement procedure, but it was designed for and focused on military equipment, armaments and ammunition. Naturally, instruments, music stands, charts, hall and studio rentals did not fall into that category. As an airman having dealt with the challenges and specifics of procuring spare parts for military aircraft since 1991, I combined this experience with my knowledge of the musical field, simply adapting and applying it to the procurement of musical instruments.

I remember an interesting logistical predicament from a later period (I believe it was during my service as Chief of the SAF General Staff), when the entire band travelled abroad to participate in a prestigious international event. Thanks to the motivation and dedication of the band members, the issue was resolved in an innovative way, and they still represent us abroad with dignity.



The details of the professional development of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band are best described by its members and by musicians working with the band. It is only right for them to present their views and memories as they are.

I consider it an honour to have been given the opportunity to participate in the formation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, which has certainly established itself not only within the Slovenian Armed Forces and within military circles, but also within the sphere of music at home and abroad.

Let me conclude by expressing my wish for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band to remain development-oriented, and to keep growing in terms of personnel and expertise in the future. May the challenge that has accompanied the band since its creation, and which those of us in command were involved with at the time, not prove too difficult for today's management structure, for this is one way of developing Slovenian military culture.

THE FOUNDATION AND HISTORY OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND

“In the initial years of its operation, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band first had to form, attune and develop its own sound. The next step was for us to be accepted by our employer and by civilian audiences. The idea of having a band operating within the Slovenian Armed Forces system was often questioned. Through our professional work, we proved ourselves again and again, co-creating countless events hosted by the Slovenian Armed Forces, staging concerts in cooperation with civilian structures, and building our reputation. At the Christmas and New Year concert in Laško in 1997, it became clear that no-one could jeopardize our progression and existence. The concert was recorded by a Radio Slovenia team, and after the programme was done, the technician, Cole Moretti, asked me: ‘Who are you guys? What energy, what sound, wow!’ ‘We’re the Slovenian Armed Forces Band,’ I proudly replied. ‘Just keep it up, we will be hearing a lot about you yet,’ he said enthusiastically. The rest is history.” (Aljoša Deferri, 2020)

At the initiative of then State Secretary Dr Boris Žnidarič, 1996 saw the development of a project task (KAB-BŽ/0002-96, 3 January 1996) and the formation of a project group to establish the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. The approval of the temporary band formation (SAF General Staff, No. 801/25, 20 February 1996) established the conditions for employing the first band members. Officially, the beginning of the operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band can be traced back to the day of the appointment of the band commander, Dr Ljubo Vošnjak, and the deputy commander, Jani Šalamon, MSc, i.e. 1 April 1996. The band’s command, which was assigned an office within the facilities of



the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF GS) at Kardeljeva ploščad 25 in Ljubljana, was joined by the artistic director, conductor Franc Rizmal, on 10 April 1996. They were tasked by their superiors with establishing a band formation that would constitute a small unit with around 48 employees, and which would be subordinate to the Personal Staff of the Chief of the SAF GS.

The first band commander, Ljubo Vošnjak, PhD, in the office at the SAF General Staff, April 1996 (PHOTO: SAF Band archive)

On 7 May 1996, order No. 1020 (SAF GS, No. 801-77/96, 7 May 1996) was signed, providing the necessary basis for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band to begin its operation. In this way the groundwork was laid for the fulfilment of the band's mission – performing tasks related to protocol, concerts and recording. That date was later designated as the band's anniversary day.

The command's main task during the initial months of operation was to host musical auditions in order to select the candidates to be employed in the band. The auditions took place in the hall of the Ljubljana Vič-Rudnik Music School. By the end of 1996, the commission, which was composed of president Franc Rizmal, member Jani Šalamon, MSc, and external consultant Jože Privšek, had assessed as many as 61 candidates, 28 of whom had been successful.

The band's first performance took place at the celebration of the "Slovenian Armed Forces Day" at the Franc Rozman Stane Barracks (today known as the Edvard Peperko Barracks) on 11 May 1996. Performing as a brass quintet including a percussionist, the band comprised Matej Rihter, Damjan Damjanovič, Neža Gruden, Marjan Petrej, Damjan Jureš and Jani Šalamon, MSc. They gave the première of marches composed by maestro Privšek.

An important milestone in the year of the band's foundation occurred on 4 October, when the band was moved into renewed facilities adapted to the band's activities within the 51st Regional Command of the Slovenian Armed Forces in Šentvid (the present-day Slovenian Territorial Defence Barracks), where it is still based today. The official ceremony, which included speeches by the Minister of Defence, Jelko Kacin, and the Deputy Chief of the SAF GS, Viki Krajnc, was followed by the first concert of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band under the leadership of Franc Rizmal in the barracks' park.



The first performance of the brass quintet, Ljubljana, May 1996 (PHOTO: SAF Band archive)

However, in the move to the new facilities the issue of space was, unfortunately, not fully resolved, as the band had no adequate hall for joint rehearsals. The management first tackled this issue by renting a hall at the Ljubljana Vič-Rudnik Music School, and later by renting the Helidon studio, which is a more suitable option in all respects, and which the band still uses today.



The band's first concert,
Ljubljana Šentvid,
October 1996

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



The band's first
rehearsals at a music
hall in the Ljubljana Vič-
Rudnik Music School,
September 1996

PHOTO: SAF Band archive

Prvi nastop Big Banda Orkestra SV

V Plečnikovi Festivalni dvorani, ki slovi kot najlepša plesna dvorana v Srednji Evropi, je bil lani 4. tradicionalni častniški ples v počastitev pete obletnice življenja v samostojni Sloveniji.

Gostje so prišli iz vse Slovenije in se pridružili snovalcem te humanitarne prireditve iz Združenja slovenskih častnikov. Ves izkupiček bo kakor vsako leto nakazan v Sklad za pomoč otrokom žrtev vojne 1991, ki deluje pri Rdečem križu Slovenije.

Po nagovoru predsednika ZŠC polkovnika Mihe Batare je spregovoril minister za obrambo Jelko Kacin.

Za prijetno ozračje je poskrbel dramski igralec in novinar Jože Logar, ki je z izbranimi besedami, predvsem v verzih, predstavil ljubezen do domovine in bližnjega. Z veliko spretnostjo je povezoval program, v katerem so nastopili vrhanski pesalci Plesne šole Urška in prvič doslej Big Band Orkestra Slovenske vojske pod taktirko Klemna Repe in s pevcom Matjažem Mrakom ter posebno gostjo večera pevko Mio Zaidarič.

Pokazalo se je, da so takšne prireditve potrebne, saj se utrjuje medsebojni odnosi tistih, ki soustvarjajo slovenski obrambni sistem, ne glede na to, ali prihajajo iz Murske Sobotice, Maribora, Dravograda, Celja, Metlike, Kranja, Ilirske Bistrice, Sežane, Kopa ali iz drugega slovenskega kraja.

Prireditve je bila izvedena ob veliki podpori podčastnikov in častnikov iz vse Slovenije ter s sodelovanjem nepogrešljivih pokroviteljev in donatorjev. Naj omenimo le največje: Mobitel, Nova Ljubljanska banka, Stanovanjsko-komunalna banka, Avtotehna Vis, MOL Ljubljana, Electa inženiring, Kolinska, MTD Elektronika, Krka, Obrtna zbornica Slovenije, Liko Vrhnika, Kras Sežana, MIP Nova Gorica, Vino Koper, Gostišče Jazbec, Mesarija Arvaj. Vseh ni mogoče naštet, zato bodo objavljeni ob drugi priložnosti.

I. V.

An article in *Revija Slovenska vojska*, Issue 131, 17 January 1997



The first Christmas and New Year concert, December 1996
PHOTO: SAF Band archive

The band's command faced many challenges. Apart from recruiting highly qualified personnel and ensuring adequate facilities, one of the greatest challenges was to provide the uniforms; for such a visible unit, nothing short of flawless appearance is expected. Additional tasks involved arranging the transport of musicians, instruments and equipment; organizing meals due to the atypical working hours; equipping offices with computers and acquiring appropriate music software; procuring music scores and so on. The selection and purchase of instruments is another story in and of itself. To this day, such challenges have always been resolved through a fair amount of good will, enthusiasm, persistence and ingenuity, and the assistance of various divisions and sections.

OBISKALI SMO ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE

Leto in pol po ustanovitvi

Si lahko zamišljate Slovensko vojsko brez svojega orkestra? Poldrugo leto mineva, odkar je bil ustanovljen, v tem času pa ima za sabo že več kot 170 nastopov. Orkester Slovenske vojske je razporejen v Gardni bataljon, saj so glasbeniki s strunnimi gardisti postali nepogrešljiv del steylnih protokolarnih sprejemov in drugih slovesnosti. Čeprav se maloštevilni so se javnosti predstavili tudi z nekaj odmevnimi koncerti, v kratkem pa bo izšla še kaseta njihovih izvedb. Zato smo tokrat zeleli več izvedeti o njihovem delu, načrtih pa tudi nekaterih začetnih težavah, ki jih premagujejo.



Orkester Slovenske vojske z gardno enoto predstavlja slovensko državo na meddržavnih sprejemih. (foto: Bruno Toič)

An article in Revija Slovenska vojska, No. 154, 30 January 1998

The Slovenian Armed Forces is constantly evolving and keeping up with the progress of modern technologies, and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band is accordingly constantly adapting. However the work method of a musician has not changed dramatically, as it is not subject to the turbulent changes characteristic of modern technological progress. The nature of the work, the musical performance process, playing techniques, and instruments have remained virtually unchanged even after 25 years. Thus, Dr Boris Žnidarič's project task to establish the Slovenian Armed Forces Band still accurately summarizes the band's operation, and the conditions required for it to grow and perform its activities independently of its higher-level unit and of the transformations within the main institution. The formation was composed of the command and the music part, with further organizational units neither necessary nor sensible due to the special characteristics of the band. The organizational aspects were the responsibility of the commander, who was also an excellent and experienced musician, whereas the artistic director/conductor was responsible for the artistic aspects.

As a distinctly atypical unit within the structure of the Slovenian Armed Forces, the band was subjected to numerous reorganizations with regard to its position within the system. Reorganizations, which are fundamental to the operation of military units, determine the Slovenian Armed Forces Band formations. On 3 November 1997, for example, the band, which was part of the personal staff of the Chief of the SAF GS, was made subordinate to the 12th Guard Battalion at the organizational level of a company.

In November 2001, an order by the Chief of the SAF GS temporarily re-established the command of the band through the Chief of the Personal Staff of the Chief of the SAF GS at the level of operational control.



The band's first visiting performance abroad,
Vienna, March 1997 FOTO: SAF archive

Based on an order by the SAF GS (No. I802-00-6/2004-34-449, 21 June 2004), the 12th Guard Battalion was abolished on 1 July 2004. Following this, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band was subordinate to the SAF GS as a separate internal organizational unit. On 1 July 2013, based on an order by the SAF GS (No. 8040-10/2012-365, 10 June 2013), the Protocol Unit and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band were merged into an reorganized Protocol Unit. The command of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band was therefore assumed by the Protocol Unit commander, while the artistic director retained responsibility for the artistic leadership of the band. By immersing the band into military structures and attempting to make its structure resemble that of most military units, the woodwind, brass, percussion and support divisions were established. To improve efficiency, the Protocol Unit was restructured into two separate units subordinate to the General Staff, i.e. the SAF Guard Unit and the SAF Band, on 1 January 2018, in line with an order from the General Staff (No. 800-1/2017-77, 1 December 2017).

All the transformations, including personnel shortages and other specifics and circumstances, had an impact on the recruitment dynamics, chain of command, and work organization, while also causing atypical career paths for some individuals and inconsistencies with regard to the appointment to management and other posts or positions (different titles have been applied to the person in command of the band – commander, chief, or head – as is evident from the *Management Overview According To Held Posts* and *Management Overview According To Formation Titles* tables.

GODBA SLOVENSKE VOJSKE JE DOBILA NOVE PROSTORE

Koračnice nam bo igral naš orkester

Verjetno bi težko našli koga, ki se ne bi strinjal s trditvijo, da nas glasba spremlja od rojstva do smrti in je stalni spremljevalec našega življenja. To je danes čista resnica, saj skoraj vsi mladi hodijo po svetu s tako imenovanimi walkmani na glavi in se le malokdaj ločijo od njih.



Kakor se za vojaško slovesnost spodobi, so jo pripadniki Godbe Slovenske vojske začeli z državno himno

An article in *Revija Slovenska vojska*, No. 125, 11 October 1996

During its 25 years of operation, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has successfully developed and evolved into a professional, vibrant, diligent and high-quality ensemble. Staging more than 200 performances annually, the band is much sought-after for cooperation with famous conductors and many elite soloists, both domestic and foreign. A special recognition of the band's quality comes in the form of regular invitations to military band concerts and festivals in Europe and the US, where the band performs as a worthy ambassador of Slovenian arts and culture. On its 20th anniversary in 2016, the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor, awarded the Slovenian Armed Forces Band the Order of Merit. Prior to that, the band had been awarded the Bronze Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces and the Gold Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces in 1997 and 2006, respectively.

After 25 years of operation, there is still room for improvement. Bearing in mind that change is the only constant and an inseparable companion to development, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band looks to the future with optimism and great expectations.



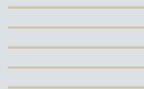
The evolution of the SAF Band emblem



Military specialist, Class XIV LJUBO VOŠNJAK, PhD

First Commander of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, 1996-2009

It is difficult to give an answer or a description to someone asking what your profession is and what you actually do if your basic qualification is that of a police officer, but you work as a musician professionally – both within the police and the military – while you have also graduated from all academic levels of the study programme on Criminal Justice and Security Studies. Perhaps that was why I was offered employment by the then State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, Dr Boris Žnidarič, who launched the initiative to establish the SAF Band. It is hard for me to decide whether to focus on the musical or the managerial aspects. In the light of the band's mission, which is music production, it makes sense to describe the development from the musical perspective. This task, however, will be accomplished with greater ease and justification by authors whose knowledge and musical education makes them more suited to it; after all, I mostly did not meddle with the specifics of their work back when I was in command. My role at the time was to receive ideas from music professionals and incorporate them into the very special environment of military structures, characterized by pronounced hierarchy, subordination and military discipline. Someone may interject that this is also true of music institutions. It is, of course, but in the context of musical creativity, and with a fair amount of improvisation, individual organization and understanding of musical training.



To our views and vision, the basic guidance provided by our employers was rather modest, yet achievable for that period. By that, I mean the proposed formation (comprising 48 members) and the education structure of the musicians. The visionary idea proposed by my deputy (and later one of the Band's commanders), Jani Šalamon, MSc, included a large orchestral band of academy-trained musicians who would be able to perform elaborate orchestral scores and incorporate a wide range of musical structures: a concert orchestra, a protocol band, a show band, a big band, and several smaller chamber groups. In the year of the band's foundation, however, this was utopian, due to the financial and spatial capacities and conditions related to the band's position within the hierarchical structure. The views of some individuals were at odds with our vision, favouring a smaller musical band with a relatively low level of education whose role would be to stage internal performances within the Slovenian Armed Forces. Several organizational starting points were certainly based on the experience Jani Šalamon and I had gained during our work with the Police Band. There, it had proven useful to divide management tasks between the band's commander and its artistic director/conductor. Such a division of responsibilities is not common in military bands around the world, where the role of "band leader" is invested in one person. This, however, deviates significantly from the management structures of all other types of orchestra, where the management role is invariably shared by the band's director and its artistic director/conductor. This form of leadership proved to be beneficial from the very start of our activities, and even more so during the subsequent development of our ensemble.

The decision of how much energy and time to devote not just to the formal organization and foundation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, but also to convincing the powerful individuals who strongly opposed the foundation of the band at first, was in our hands. We wished that if they were not going to help, they would at least not undermine the formation of this musical corps. The roles taken up by individuals (not only within the Slovenian Armed Forces) may be explained in three ways: the first related to the notion that establishing a military band in independent Slovenia was a great idea, worth supporting and participating in its implementation; the second way of thinking was to let people do what they wanted as long as it did not involve extra work; but the third approach was very negative, entertained by those who questioned the point of such a military band, and even thought about preventing its formation.

As the Slovenian Armed Forces developed, so did its band, making great progress. From its humble beginnings, it has evolved into an elite ensemble well-established at home and abroad, far exceeding the original vision, which was constrained by the period and the situation. The quality of today's crew is a reflection of the work continuity of all band members, their expertise, and their high level of education and devotion to their unit in conjunction with their collaboration with elite Slovenian and foreign artists. Of course, the time will come when the band is situated in appropriate facilities conducive to high-level artistic pursuits. Will this include a nice concert hall? It has been promised several times.

I am delighted that most of the musicians I said goodbye to upon my retirement are still part of the band. Some of them performed their military service in our unit as teenagers, and have stayed in the Slovenian Armed Forces Band ever since.

Dear former colleagues, after twelve years of retirement, I still look back to the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's journey with pride and emotion. As for this journal, my wish is that it will represent an important step toward preserving and reaffirming the military band's musical mission. Even within such a unique organization as the Slovenian Armed Forces.



Military Specialist, Class XIII JANI ŠALAMON, MSc

First Deputy Commander of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, acting Deputy Commander, Conductor and Artistic Director 1996-2009, Head of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band 2009-2011

The artistic and creative pursuits of an ensemble require the perfecting of all of its activities, but above all else, they stem from its vision and deliberate recruitment. The management of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band at the time was aware that this approach and vision could create the conditions for the successful representation of the Slovenian Armed Forces and Slovenian music performance. At its first meeting with the heads of the ministry and the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, the band's management was presented with the idea of recruiting new members by sending a circular to military employees urging anyone who played a musical instrument to join. Responding instinctively, the band's commander and deputy commander replied that with such an approach, they needed neither such a management nor a professionally-trained conductor. This naivety and lack of pragmatism, though criticized by the superiors at first, turned out to be the right attitude in the long run.

Without a doubt, a factor contributing to the Slovenian Armed Forces Band becoming what it is today was the decision by its first management to seek collaboration with maestro Jože Privšek, who participated in more than sixty auditions. This decision sent a clear message about the management's vision. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band should be a professional band whose quality is comparable to other professional ensembles. This is how the foundations that had been laid in terms of expertise and personnel gained additional validity in musical circles.

In spite of the obstacles, the enthusiasm and persistence of all the band members enabled them to make a connection and adopt ambitious goals. It was this very connection, as well as devotion to other people and common goals, that gave the idea its purpose.

The recruitment policy focusing mainly on choosing highly-educated musicians has shaped the band into what it is today. The band does not only comprise alumni from the Academy of Music in Ljubljana, but also graduates from other prestigious European universities. Throughout the whole period, the main obstacle to the recruitment of musicians was the compulsory basic military training, from which the musicians employed in the Slovenian Armed Forces are not exempt. Joining such a band requires extra motivation, which nevertheless provides added value and gives recognition of the quality and reputation of the musical corps.

The departure of the first SAF Band conductor in 2000 was one of the important changes and turning points in the band's human resources vision. As the labour market did not offer a large selection of academy-educated conductors, and such personnel were not interested in regular employment, the band management decided to collaborate with external, guest conductors. In time, however, it became clear that such an approach only enabled concert activities on certain levels. Therefore, one of the key tasks for the commander and his deputy was to find an appropriate musician with an academic degree in conducting. It was also important to recognize the crucial need to gradually implement additional institutional military and musical training, and to groom a conductor who would also be able to perform certain military duties. While the establishing process required the SAF Band to have a management that was divided according to musical expertise and leadership duties, the long-term goal was to groom a conductor. This process aimed for an organizational structure known to all military bands in the world, one where the conductor, with an appropriate academic education, also serves as the band's commander, performing leadership duties at all levels and in all fields of work.

There is no doubt that a military band connects the people and the military. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band upholds the tradition and its mission as an ambassador of culture, which armed forces have fostered throughout history.

FOTO: MO – GŠŠV



Lieutenant Colonel FRANC RIZMAL

First artistic director and conductor of the SAF Band, 1996-2000

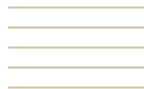
It was in the early spring of 1996 that I received an invitation from Dr Boris Žnidarič, then State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, to enter employment at the Ministry of Defence as a conductor and artistic director, and to participate in the formation of the first military band in the independent Republic of Slovenia, which was later designated the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Truly proud and honoured, but also feeling great responsibility and butterflies at the opportunity to direct the military band's artistic activities to contribute to the recognition and development of our young state, and to building bridges of sympathy and national awareness both at home and abroad, I accepted the invitation. Together with two colleagues I had become acquainted with while visiting the State Secretary – Commander Ljubo Vošnjak and Deputy Commander Jani Šalamon – I began our work in an empty office at the ministry in April 1996. Based on the adopted formation and the project task of establishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band given by Dr Boris Žnidarič, I produced the *Baseline and Guidance for the Constitution and Development of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band*.

Initially, one matter of key importance in the long term was to enlist the best young musicians, preferably unburdened by experience with other bands, with positive human sides and willing personalities able to develop the sound and perform concerts as well as military protocol duties at the highest level. In numerous auditions, we chose the best of the best, amassing a selection of 40 to

50 musicians in less than a year. The band's first assembly and concert took place on 4 October 1996 at the official opening of our facilities; they were followed by an excellent big band performance at the officers' ball, and a Christmas and New Year concert for the Ministry of Defence. For the quality of the band and the performance of protocol duties, it was also important to immediately form various chamber groups (brass quintet, wind quintet) and to gradually increase their number.

At my request, the acclaimed maestro Jože Privšek was invited to participate in the auditions as a technical advisor. His charismatic and professional demeanour and human warmth were key to ensuring the extremely high standard of the auditions. His five protocol marches and, later, the *May Suite*, which was first performed by our big band at Kino Šiška on 15 May 1997, on the Slovenian Armed Forces Day, only enriched our collaboration. The maestro was pleasantly surprised at the quality of the band, which he stated publicly in an interview for *Pepita* magazine in June 1997. Let me point out that he did not wish to conduct or interfere with our development in any way, either professionally or artistically. I think that as a great man, he felt that the band members should fulfil the mission entrusted to them together, and each on their own, in their given field.

The band members (from 10 to 15) began rehearsing regularly in 1997, gradually developing not only the quality of the music, but also their relationships. Both the quality and the relationships grew spontaneously, strengthening with the rising number of members. In February, we began rehearsals with the big band, which comprised employed and soon-to-be-employed musicians chosen at the auditions. With this vision, the band was set up in less than one year. The sheet music archive was enriched with commissioned pieces, while the ever-greater challenges saw the band evolve into an excellent ensemble that enthralled their audiences and received glowing reviews. During that period, we gave about 30 performances, including 25 full-length concerts at home (concerts for the Slovenian Armed Forces Commands; Christmas and New Year concerts in Laško in 1997, 1998 and 1999; two performances at the Union Hall in Maribor in 1998; and performances at the Lent Festival in 1998 and 1999, at Slovenska filharmonija in 1999, and at the Ljubljana Festival in the Križanke Summer Theatre in 1999, to name but a few) and abroad – always featuring an exclusively Slovenian programme (at the Austria Centre in Vienna in 1998; at the Brucknerhaus in Linz in 2000; the opening concert of the Mid Europe Festival in Schladming in 1999; Braunschweig, Germany in 1999, etc.).



In addition, we made recordings for the Radio-Television of Slovenia and the ORF in Vienna, and published an audio cassette with the recording of the New Year concert in Laško in 1997 and our first CD in 1999. The audio cassette and the CD are documents attesting to the quality achieved by the band at the time. Paquito D’Rivera, the world-renowned saxophonist and the main guest of the Lent Festival in 1998, wrote for the *Večer* daily newspaper: “Monday saw the performance of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band; it was beautiful. The members of my band agreed. There are many similar bands in Cuba, but they were incredible. A very high-quality band.”¹⁹ In the *Dnevnik* daily, Peter Kušar expressed a similar opinion: “With the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, we have gained another good, not to say representative, ensemble of its kind. That says a lot considering we have quite a lot of excellent, elite wind ensembles.”²⁰

By team effort as well as by individual contribution, coupled with the great support and effort of the command, the administration, support services and, of course, splendid musicians, and with a great deal of pioneering enthusiasm and hard work during my time as the conductor, we succeeded in creating something beautiful and unique, recognizable due to its sound, quality, and youthful energy, which happens only once in the history of a country. A sincere thank you to everyone and happy birthday, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band!

¹⁹ Harb, I. (9 July 1998). Glasba je svetovni jezik (“Music is a global language”). *Večer*, 54/156, 15.

²⁰ Kušar, P. (14 October 1999). Nastop Orkestra Slovenske vojske (“The performance of the SAF Band”). *Dnevnik*, 49/280, 23.



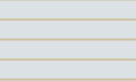
Military Specialist, Class XIII ALJOŠA DEFERRI

*First concertmaster of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band (1996-2008),
technical manager of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band since 2018*

It was in early 1996, during a rehearsal of the Police Band, where I was employed, that the conductor, Milivoj Šurbek, MSc, asked the question: “Who would like to play in a military band?”. Total silence ensued. “Fine, forget it, then!” he said and left the hall. That was the first time a “clue” about the Slovenian Armed Forces Band emerged.

Before that, the utopian idea of the composer and conductor, maestro Bojan Adamič, had been discussed, according to which the Police Band would also perform the activities and tasks of a military band. From independence to the foundation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band that role had been performed by the Vevče Paper Company Band. The Slovenian Armed Forces, however, required a professional band, a position which was championed by Dr Boris Žnidarič, State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence at the time.

In April of that year, he laid out the formal and legal basis for the establishment of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Dr Ljubo Vošnjak was employed as Commander of the Band, while the role of Deputy Commander was awarded to Jani Šalamon, MSc; both of them had been my colleagues in the Police Band. Soon after, Franci Rizmal joined the band as the conductor. I was then invited by Jani Šalamon to join the newly founded band as the concertmaster and to help with the selection of



its musicians. I accepted the challenge, although I felt uneasy about leaving my job in a recognized band with a long tradition and venturing into the unknown. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band had to be formed and provided with musicians, instruments, facilities, and so on. The next step was my audition, which I did on 7 May 1996 in the music hall of the France Šturm Music School. More auditions followed, as the band slowly took its form, and we began rehearsing in the music hall of the Vič Music School. I remember wearing a shirt and a tie to make a good impression at the first rehearsal, when suddenly the pen in my pocket began leaking ink. Despite my efforts to cover up the stain, I drew attention from my colleagues.

We did not have our own rehearsal rooms at the time; only two offices at the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces. The facilities where the band is still headquartered today (in the present-day Slovenian Territorial Defence Barracks) were provided by Colonel Jože Prvinšek, commander of the 51st Regional Military Territorial Command. In August 1996, Dr Vošnjak, Jani Šalamon and I visited those premises, which had been rearranged for musical activities. This was also when the first secretary of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, Janja Rudolf, came for her job interview. We took over the facilities in October 1996, formally marking the occasion with the band's first concert in the barracks' park, wearing combat uniforms as this was all we had at the time.

Uncertain and proud, we set off on an incredible musical journey across the rough seas of military life, with melodies from all corners of the world providing the wind in our sails. We have experienced many beautiful and less beautiful moments, creating a wonderful story that is imprinted deep into our hearts and the hearts of all people. The journey continues, to infinity and beyond. Godspeed!

OVERVIEW OF BAND PERSONNEL

1996			
1/4/1996	31/12/2009	Ljubo Vošnjak, PhD	Commander
1/4/1996	30/9/2011	Jani Šalamon, MSc	Deputy Commander – drum major
10/4/1996	1/10/2000	Franc Rizmal	Artistic Director – conductor
17/6/1996	31/8/1999	Marjan Petrej	Trombone
1/7/1996		Aljoša Deferri	Clarinet, concertmaster
1/7/1996	18/5/1998	Neža Gruden	Horn
9/9/1996		Rudolf Strnad	Trumpet
1/10/1996		Jernej Ivan	Horn
1/10/1996	3/10/1999	Matej Rihter	Trumpet
1/10/1996		Aleš Stopinšek	Clarinet
14/10/1996	3/3/1999	Miklavž Ašič	Saxophone
14/10/1996		Maša Bertok Duh	Flute
14/10/1996		Aleš Gašparut	Administration and technical support
5/11/1996		Specialist Ana Šalamon (Pezdirec)	Flute
2/12/1996	16/9/2016	Janja Rudolf	Head of office
1997			
4/1/1997	3/1/2007	Armando Mariutti	Flute
3/2/1997		Tomaž Zlobko	Saxophone
10/2/1997	31/8/2003	Uroš Košir	Tuba
10/2/1997		Katarina Kroflič (Gale)	Bassoon
10/2/1997		Sebastijan Sušnik	Administration and technical support
15/2/1997		Mojca Pestotnik	Administration
6/5/1997		Katja Rihter (Oserban)	Oboe
2/6/1997	31/8/1999	Rok Spruk	Clarinet
1/7/1997		Igor Berlak	Trumpet
1/7/1997		Aleksander Vinšek	Clarinet

1998			
25/5/1998		Edvard Bizjak	Horn
10/8/1998		Boštjan Bone	Trumpet
23/11/1998		Fredi Simonič	Trombone
9/12/1998	31/8/2000	Andraž Poljanec	Percussions
30/12/1998	31/8/1999	Matjaž Emeršič	Clarinet
1999			
15/3/1999	10/9/2002	Specialist Anamarija Tomac Krečič	Flute
12/4/1999	14/12/2005	Ali Ulaga	Trombone, bass guitar
1/6/1999		Sandi Cej	Administration and technical support
27/9/1999		Gregor Vidmar	Clarinet
13/12/1999	30/9/2019	Maja Povše	Percussions
13/12/1999		Sebastjan Snoj	Percussions
13/12/1999		Boštjan Tement	Trombone
13/12/1999	31/8/2019	Damjan Tomažin	Trombone
13/12/1999		Dejan Žnideršič	Trombone
20/12/1999	22/9/2002	Urška Vrhovec Chabbert	Administration
2000			
14/8/2000	31/8/2006	Gregor Tovšak	Horn
6/11/2000		Robert Šinkovec	Music sheet custodian
2001			
11/6/2001		Tomi Berlak	Clarinet
11/6/2001		Marko Cimerman	Clarinet
11/6/2001		Gregor Gubenšek	Trumpet
11/6/2001		Martin Konjajev	Percussions
11/6/2001	31/8/2010	Vilko Kroflič	Saxophone
11/6/2001	31/8/2015	Dimitrij Lederer	Clarinet
11/6/2001		Gorazd Majdič	Clarinet
11/6/2001	31/8/2009	Zmago Štebih	Trumpet

19/9/2001		Primož Kravcar	Trombone
10/10/2001	31/5/2019	Andreja Šolar	Percussions
2002			
11/2/2002	5/9/2004	Primož Zemljak	Horn
20/2/2002		Sandi Rečnik, MSc	Tuba
25/2/2002		Janez Benko	Clarinet
2004			
1/9/2004		Dejan Brečko	Trumpet
1/9/2004		Urban Fele	Trumpet
1/9/2004	30/6/2005	Uroš Gorenc	Clarinet
15/9/2004		Tomaž Makan	Tuba
1/10/2004		Klavdija Feguš	Flute
15/12/2004		Bojan Starin	Administration and technical support
15/12/2004	14/7/2013	Tomaž Štemberger	Administration
2005			
19/12/2005		Damjan Medvešek	Horn
2006			
1/2/2006		Nikica Banjac	Horn
10/5/2006		Jaka Janežič	Saxophone
2007			
18/6/2007		Aleš Ogrin	Piano
16/7/2007		Slavko Čot	Euphonium
6/8/2007		Vasja Burkat	Euphonium
6/8/2007		Urban Knez	Clarinet
6/8/2007		Boštjan Vendramin	Clarinet
20/8/2007		Matic Nejc Kreča	Clarinet
4/9/2007		Specialist Vanja Ivanković	Flute

2008			
7/7/2008		Anja Ovnik Brglez, MSc	Flute
22/9/2008		Erna Kerman	Percussions
1/12/2008	31/10/2011	David Čekada	Administration and technical support
2009			
9/3/2009		Gašper Kržmanc	Guitar
4/5/2009	30/4/2013	Nataša Cankar	Administration
3/8/2009		Klemen Krajc	Double bass, bass guitar
3/8/2009	30/11/2009	Gašper Peršl	Percussions
2010			
22/3/2010		Miha Recelj	Percussions
2012			
1/1/2012		Blaž Umek	Tuba
2013			
15/10/2013		Tadej Drobne	Saxophone
2017			
1/11/2017		Irena Kraljić Smolej	Administration
2018			
1/1/2018		Janez Kljun	Commander
3/4/2018		Jernej Henigman	Administration and technical support
2019			
14/1/2019		Nina Ravnjak (Klinar)	Saxophone
14/1/2019		Miha Kosec	Clarinet
14/1/2019		Anžej Remšak	Trumpet
14/1/2019		Melinda Urh	Saxophone
2020			
15/10/2020		Aleksander Erjavec	Command senior enlisted leader
2021			
1/3/2021		Simon Tavčar	Euphonium

MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW ACCORDING TO HELD POSTS ²¹

COMMANDER	
Ljubo Vošnjak, PhD	1996–2009
Jani Šalamon, MSc	2009–2011
Aljoša Deferri	2011–2013
Marko Hlastec (PROTOCOL UNIT)	2013–2018
Janez Kljun	2018–
DEPUTY COMMANDER	
Jani Šalamon, MSc	1996–2009
Aljoša Deferri	2009–2011
Maša Bertok Duh	2011–2013
Fedja Vraničar (PROTOCOL UNIT)	2014–2015
Aljoša Deferri	2018–
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, CONDUCTOR	
Franc Rizmal	1996–2000
Milivoj Šurbek, MSc ²²	2000–2006
Andreja Šolar*	2003–2018
Jani Šalamon, MSc	2007–2009
Aljoša Deferri	2019–

HEAD OF THE PROTOCOL BAND	
Jani Šalamon, MSc	1996–2004
Fredi Simonič	2004–2012
Gregor Vidmar	2012–
HEAD OF THE BIG BAND	
Jani Šalamon, MSc	1996–2009
Rudolf Strnad*	2006–
VODJA KOMORNIH SKUPIN	
Fredi Simonič	2013–
HEAD OF CHAMBER GROUPS	
Aljoša Deferri	1996–2014
Janez Benko*	2008–

*Doubling of the post due to the introduction of the formation duty

²¹ Sources: SAF band archives (concert programmes and other documents)

²² Permanent guest conductor

MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW ACCORDING TO FORMATION TITLES²³

Ljubo Vošnjak, PhD	Band Commander Deputy Band Chief Band Chief Senior Military Specialist – Head of the Band	1996-2004 2004-2006 2006-2008 2008-2009
Jani Šalamon, MSc	Deputy Commander – Drum Major Conductor Artistic Director Deputy Band Chief Senior Military Specialist – Deputy Head of the Band Senior Military Specialist – Head of the Band	1996-2004 2004-2007 2007-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2011
Franc Rizmal	Artistic Director – Conductor	1996-2000
Aljoša Deferri	Concertmaster Senior Military Specialist – Assistant Chief Senior Military Specialist – Deputy Head of the Band Head of the Band Senior Military Specialist for the Band Senior Military Specialist – Technical Manager of the Band	1996-2008 2008-2009 2009-2011 2011-2013 2013-2018 2018.
Maša Bertok Duh	Principal Soloist Deputy Concertmaster Assistant for Protocol and Ceremonies Senior Military Specialist for Protocol and Ceremonies Senior Military Specialist – Artistic Director Senior Military Specialist – Deputy Head of the Band Senior Military Specialist – Band Event Organization Senior Military Specialist – Head Producer	1996-1999 1999-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2011 2011-2013 2013-2018 2018-
Rudolf Strnad	Instrumentalist Principal Soloist Senior Military Specialist – Assistant Chief Senior Military Specialist – Assistant for Small Ensembles Senior Military Specialist – Head of the Big Band	1996-2001 2001-2009 2009-2011 2011-2013 2013-
Fredi Simonič	Instrumentalist Head of Chamber Groups	1998-2001 2001-2004

²³ Sources: SAF Band archive (SAF Band formations and personnel files)

Fredi Simonič	Drum Major Senior Military Specialist – Drum Major Senior Military Specialist for Production Senior Military Specialist – Head Producer and Conductor for Small Ensembles Senior Military Specialist – Head of Chamber Ensembles	1996-2004 2004-2006 2006-2008 2008-2009 2017-
Gregor Vidmar	Soloist Principal Soloist Senior Military Specialist for Protocol and Ceremonies Senior Military Specialist – Ceremonial Conductor Senior Military Specialist – Head Conductor of the Ceremonial Band Senior Military Specialist – Head Conductor of the Ceremonial Band - Drum Major	1999-2001 2001-2009 2009-2012 2012-2013 2013-2017 2017-
Andreja Šolar	Postgraduate Intern Soloist Group Leader within the Band Group Leader Senior Military Specialist – Assistant Conductor Senior Military Specialist – Artistic Director – Conductor Artistic Director – Conductor Senior Military Specialist – Head of Concert Band – Conductor	2001-2002 2002-2004 2004-2007 2007-2008 2008-2011 2011-2013 2013-2017 2018-2019
Janez Benko	Soloist Instrumentalist Senior Military Specialist – Soloist 2 Senior Military Specialist – Soloist 1 Senior Military Specialist – Head Concertmaster	2002-2004 2004-2010 2010-2016 2016-2017 2017-
Janez Kljun	Commander of Accounting Department, 1st Battery Command Platoon Commander, Command Platoon Battery Commander Assistant for Operations Deputy Commander – Executive Officer Senior Officer, Senior Staff Course Participant Deputy Battalion Commander Section Head Senior Officer for Material Formations and Operational Records Department Head Senior Officer for Material Formations and Operational Records Band Commander	1995-1996 1996-1999 1999-2002 2002-2006 2006-2009 2009-2010 2010-2012 2012-2013 2013-2016 2016-2017 2017-2018 2018-



Mission

“The fundamental mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band includes fostering and developing musical art as well as representing and promoting the Slovenian Armed Forces. /.../ Through its creative activities, the Band develops musical art. In doing so, it raises the battle morale of the members of the Slovenian Armed Forces, and motivates, creates and promotes the organizational culture of the Slovenian Armed Forces and the Republic of Slovenia at home and abroad. It performs education processes and provides “cultural services” within the Slovenian Armed Forces, upholding the tradition of military bands in Slovenian territories.”²⁴

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band participates in the protocol duties of the Slovenian Armed Forces, the Ministry of Defence, and the Republic of Slovenia, while also performing concert and recording activities.

Its main tasks include participation in military ceremonies (formal receptions with the SAF Guard); grieving ceremonies (military funerals, wreath laying, commemorations); various military celebrations and ceremonies (state celebrations; celebrations of the Days of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Force Command, Military Schools Centre, brigades, battalions, regiments, and units with combat flags; at handovers of military duties, oath takings, and receptions of battle flags; and at ceremonies where decorations, ranks and promotions are awarded); and exhibition openings and literary events. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band performs these tasks with various ensembles as dictated by protocol and the nature of the event and its script.

²⁴ *Performing Musical and Protocol Tasks within the SAF*. (10 June 2019). Directive No. 13–15, 804-67/2019-1. Internal materials of the Ministry of Defence.



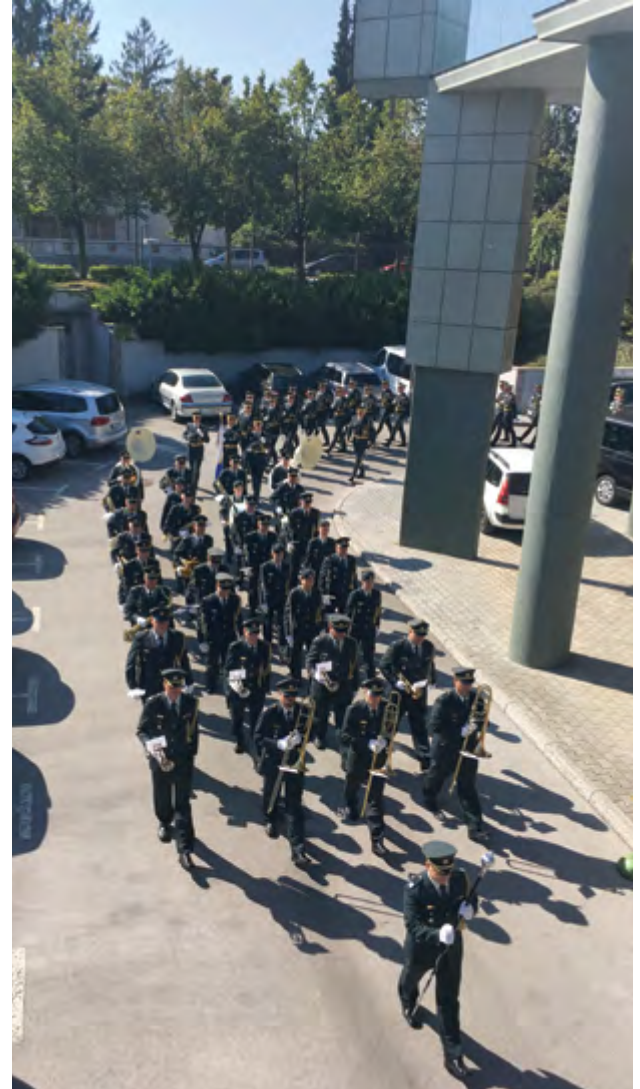
Formal reception with military honours in front of the Presidential Palace

PHOTO: Dare Čekeliš



Formal reception with military honours in front of the Ministry of Defence

PHOTO: MoD – SAF GS



The band arriving at an event

PHOTO: Maša Bertok Duh



Wreath laying
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Military ceremony
PHOTO: MoD – SAF GS archive



Open-air concert
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Military parade
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Memorial ceremony
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Open day of the battleship "Triglav"
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Solemn military oath

PHOTO: Revija Slovenska vojska archive



Celebration of the Slovenian Armed Forces Day

PHOTO: Brane Petrovič



Main state celebration

PHOTO: Daniel Novakovič, Slovenian Press Agency



Exhibition opening

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Participation in an international festival
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



International cooperation in the
context of a military exercise
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Recording in an RTV Slovenia studio
PHOTO: Rok Golob's personal archive



Performance at a formal celebration
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Joint concert in
the context of
international
cooperation
PHOTO: SAF Band
archive



Ambient music at a protocol dinner
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Concert for the troops
PHOTO: Nataša Cankar



Reception at the award ceremony of the highest state decorations in the Presidential Palace
PHOTO: Stanko Gruden, Slovenian Press Agency

With its concert and recording activities, the Band provides motivation, strengthens morale and patriotism, and educates, but most of all, it represents the Slovenian Armed Forces and its culture, identity and tradition, giving it the mark of a cultural institution. Through its artistic contribution, the Band improves its recognition and builds the reputation of the Slovenian Armed Forces among the civilian population. As a universal language, music has that unique quality of connecting people, overcoming linguistic, generational and cultural barriers with the greatest sincerity. Thus, an important part of the band's mission is realized in its artistic, charitable and educational roles, and through its key role in civil-military cooperation with various organizations at local to international levels.

The importance of the Band's participation in events is reflected not only in its professional musical performance, but also in the solemn atmosphere created by the very presence and posture of uniformed musicians. Thus, the band has become indispensable in Slovenia, regularly enriching celebratory, memorial, sports and other events in the greater Ljubljana area and across Slovenia, while also often representing its homeland outside its borders. Together with its ensembles, the band has gradually become not only an accompaniment to numerous events, including those outside the SAF structure, but also an important factor in broadening horizons with respect to musical culture.



Celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Union of Veterans and Participants of the National Liberation Struggle

PHOTO: Iztok Pipan



Traditional memorial ceremony on the Nanos plateau
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Traditional ceremony at the memorial ascent of Mount Triglav
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Traditional celebration on the Pokljuka plateau, at the meeting of the Union of Slovenian Associations of Veterans and Participants of the National Liberation Struggle and other veteran organizations
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Traditional ceremony at the all-Slovenian meeting of interned women and stolen children
PHOTO: Iztok Pipan



Cooperation with the local community, concert in Šentvid

PHOTO: Foto Zvone



Cooperation with the City of Ljubljana, June in Ljubljana Festival

PHOTO: Brane Petrovič



Cooperation with the local community, 24 hours of Šmarna Gora

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Cooperation with the Firefighting Association of Slovenia
PHOTO: Firefighting Association of Slovenia archive



Collaboration with the Police Band, Love Day
PHOTO: Maša Bertok Duh



Collaboration with the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra
FOTO: Živa Tory, Ljubljana Festival



Ski-flying World Cup Final in Planica

PHOTO: Nataša Oblak

OSREDNJI PROGRAM - SKLADATELJI IN IZVAJALCI

SOBOTA, 26. september 2015 ob 19.00, Ljubljana

20.00 – 21.00, Slovenska filharmonija, Dvorana Marjana Kozine
Orkester Slovenske vojske
dirigentka: Andreja Solar

1. Florent SCHMITT: DIONYSIAQUES, OP. 62
2. Karol PAHOR: ISTRJANKA – 15 plesnih miniatur
v duhu istrske narodne melodiķe
3. Luis Serrano ALARCON: DUENDE
Štirje preludiji

SOBOTA – 26. september 2015 – 19.00

UNICUM
 UNIVERZNA UPRAVA
 UL. SLOVENSKE VOJSKE 1
 SI-1000 LJUBLJANA

Collaboration with the Society of Slovene Composers

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band often has an educational role as well, holding performances in kindergartens and schools; providing opportunities for promising Slovenian and foreign students to give solo performances or to improve their skills playing with the concert band; and enabling students of conducting to gain vital experience in front of a band.



The Travelling Music, a concert by combined youth choirs
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Presenting the profession of a military musician
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Presenting the profession of a military musician
PHOTO: Janeza Benko's personal archive



“Zborovski BUM”,
mass singing by school
choirs

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



A retrospective of style, educational concerts for primary
and secondary schools

PHOTO: Prežihov Voranc Primary School archive



A conducting seminar with Jan Cober in collaboration with
the Public Fund for Cultural Activities

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



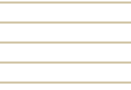
MATJAŽ DREVENŠEK, MSc

Full Professor of Saxophone and Vice-Dean for Artistic Activities at the University of Ljubljana Academy of Music

Admittedly, it is difficult to gather one's thoughts around such a big anniversary – a quarter of a century of operation of one of the central musical institutions of the country, an accolade which the Slovenian Armed Forces Band certainly deserves.

Shared stories keep popping up, sometimes blurry, other times very vivid. Having intensively jogged my memory (like most artists, I do not keep records, of course), I have discerned four aspects of my longstanding cooperation with your excellent band. I worked as a substitute in the saxophone section while the band was still in its infancy. Conducted by Franci Rizmal, my “boys” from the Zagreb Saxophone Quartet and I played jazz on a “tour” in Laško more than two decades ago. I work as a teacher whose former students are regular or occasional members of your ensembles. And finally, as Vice-Dean for Artistic Activities at the University of Ljubljana Academy of Music, I occasionally set up an artistic collaboration (which is, in my opinion, not often enough) between these two prominent institutions.

While I will probably never be a substitute in your band again, I will continue to ensure that young people from my school come to play for you with as little academic baggage as possible. As for the possibility of soloing again, let us see what the future brings. I do promise, however, to do my best to



enhance the cooperation between the only music academy in the country and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, hoping that together we can take this cooperation to a higher level soon.

We both have a whole range of talented individuals, and we only have to make our joint ideas a reality as soon as possible.

To many successful years ahead, dear colleagues!



Soloist Nežka Prosenjak,
student at the Maribor
Conservatory of Music
and Ballet

PHOTO: Nataša Oblak



Soloists Dana Verč in Peter Kaiser, students at the
Academy of Music, University of Ljubljana

PHOTO: Brane Petrovič



Soloist Samanta Škorja, student at the Academy of Music,
University of Ljubljana

PHOTO: Branko Furlanič

Charity occupies a special place in the Band's activities. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band always readily responds to invitations to participate in concerts with a humanitarian character. Convinced that music has the power to stir the heart of every listener, we like to believe that we not only make someone's evening more pleasant, but also that through small deeds – and great persistence – we can help change the world for the better. Through benefit concerts at home and abroad, we have helped to raise funds for the Slovenian Red Cross; voluntary firefighting societies; Lions and Rotary clubs across Slovenia; Caritas; primary schools across Slovenia; the purchase of a mammography machine; the anti-epilepsy society Društvo Liga proti epilepsiji; the Anin sklad fund; the Demining Foundation; the Association of War Veterans; the purchase of equipment for the Paediatric Clinic with the musical Man of La Mancha organized by Pop TV; Jesenice General Hospital; assistance in recovery after a natural disaster; the purchase of an instrument for the young cellist Luka Šulič; the Radio 1 28-hour charity marathon; and many others.



Benefit concert for the purchase of a mammography machine in collaboration with the *klapa* Sveti Juraj HRM
PHOTO: Davor Lipej



Benefit concert of the Slovenian Red Cross
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



The opening of the Radio 1 28-hour charity marathon
PHOTO: Darja Štravs Tisu



Participation in the charity musical Man of La Mancha
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



The Slovenian Armed Forces Band

“The arts, song, and especially music, foster national awareness. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band has been a constant in the history of the Slovenian Armed Forces, giving it the status of a cultural institution and a unique shine. It is present in the most important moments of military life, honouring the most solemn events with its music, filling merry occasions with joy, and accompanying bitter moments with dignity and peace.” (Andreja Katič, 2016, at the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the SAF Band)

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band, the youngest Slovenian professional band, stands tall among other professional orchestras and bands. Within the Slovenian Armed Forces, no protocol event, celebration, exhibition opening or ceremony goes by without the performance by one of the band’s ensembles. The main characteristics distinguishing the Slovenian Armed Forces Band from other bands and orchestras are its abilities to form diverse ensembles and to adapt to the nature of an event and to the spatial situation.



Protocol band
PHOTO: Bruno Toič

The fundamental task of the SAF Band is to participate in protocol events, mostly with its protocol band and usually in collaboration with the Slovenian Armed Forces Guard. Protocol duties are performed at receptions of foreign defence ministers, chiefs of defence, and senior defence and military representatives of the EU and NATO, as well as at military events hosted by the Slovenian Armed Forces or the Minister of Defence and at receptions taking place at the highest levels of government. The course of an event, including the number of musicians, is detailed in the protocol rules of the Ministry of Defence and the Republic of Slovenia. The ensemble is led by the head of the protocol band – the drum major. The playlist mostly includes hymns, fanfares, marches, patriotic pieces and other music usually played at official receptions.

Apart from its high-level musical performance, a protocol band is also characterized by a harmonious and perfect appearance. This encompasses the appearance of every individual and, thus, the entire formation; a flawless arrival and departure by the band; unity in the lifting, holding and lowering of instruments; orderly grouping; and general stalwartness and discipline. These skills are perfected through the choreography of the “band in motion” or the “show programme”, which combines music, marching and dance. In cooperation with the drum major, the choreographer employs figurative elements for the chosen music as they see fit, including the steps, movements, turns, windmill or spiral shapes, and often other dance elements and even singing. Music supported by a carefully devised choreographed programme has an outstanding aesthetic effect, captivating the audience again and again.



A choreographed programme of the protocol band
PHOTO: Bruno Toič

The concert band, which comprises all the musicians, is the largest formation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. It is a universal formation, performing at gala concerts with an artistic programme as well as at more casual events featuring more light-hearted music. The band is headed by the head of the concert band – the conductor; often, the baton is also passed to a guest conductor. Apart from various other performances, the band enthralled audiences on Slovenian stages every year at traditional spring, autumn, and Christmas and New Year concerts.

The quality of the concert band is reflected most clearly in its artistic interpretation and prowess, while the band fosters its continuous growth by overcoming ever new challenges. By putting original copyright works, transcribed works and first performances of pieces by Slovenian and



foreign composers in its programme, the concert band plays a central role as an ambassador of wind orchestra repertoire within the Slovenian music scene.

The concert band
PHOTO: Brane Petrovič

Due to its smaller number of musicians, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's big band is more adaptable in terms of space. It performs at official ceremonies and individual concerts, and often actively participates in educating young people. Its most notable concert performances, however, are at numerous festivals. The ensemble is led by the Head of the Big Band, while the baton is occasionally given to a visiting conductor. The ensemble's playlist includes jazz, pop, rock and dance music as well as funk, soul, latin jazz, fusion, and other musical styles. The energetic performance of the pop programme gives the Big Band a characteristic sound, making it popular and recognized in professional circles as well as with a wider audience.



The big band
PHOTO: Matej Kramžer

The musicians of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band are also active in smaller chamber groups, such as a brass quintet, a clarinet quartet, a wind quintet, a flute quartet, a saxophone quartet, percussion ensembles, and a popular folk music group; in extended chamber ensembles, such as an extended national folk music group and a small jazz group; and in other occasional groups or as individuals. The participation of a chamber group at an event depends on its script, the availability of the musicians due to other activities, and other circumstances. The chamber groups are coordinated by the head of the chamber ensembles. For the most part, wind and percussion players perform indoors, while brass players mostly perform outdoors. The changing nature of chamber ensembles is reflected in their diverse repertoire. By playing in chamber groups, musicians strengthen joint playing and develop solo skills. Thus, chamber groups greatly contribute to the general unity of the band.



The brass quintet

PHOTO: Janez Benko's personal archive

A clarinet quartet with a bass player and a percussionist

PHOTO: Janez Benko's personal archive





Wind quintet
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Jazz duo
PHOTO: MoD – SAF GS archive



Flute quartet
PHOTO: Fredi Simonič



Saxophone quartet
PHOTO: Tadej Krese



Small jazz ensemble
PHOTO: MoD – SAF GS archive



A popular folk music group
PHOTO: Hubert Rolant



An extended folk ensemble
PHOTO: Franjo Cesarec



Clarinet trio with a bass player and a percussionist
PHOTO: Aleš Stopinšek



A percussionist
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



A trumpeter
PHOTO: Carmen Kos



A percussionist
PHOTO: Bruno Toič

From its modest beginnings, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has evolved into an ensemble that is widely known in Slovenia and receives invitations to various concerts and festivals throughout Europe (Austria, Italy, Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, North Macedonia, Russia, Czechia, Denmark, Hungary, Kosovo, Croatia) and the US. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band has given almost 4000 performances, more than 100 of which have been abroad. It raises its visibility through all of its ensembles. The events that draw the biggest audience, however, are the Tattoo²⁵ Festivals, where the protocol band performs with its choreographed programme.

Apart from invitations to many events at home and abroad, the quality of the band is also reflected in guest performances by internationally recognized conductors and soloists. These are always impressed by the professional and dedicated attitude of the band members, who are not only excellent band musicians but often turn out to be great soloists as well. To name some of them: Janez Benko, Igor Berlak, Maša Bertok Duh, Edvard Bizjak, Boštjan Bone, Sandi Cej, Slavko Čot, Aljoša Deferri, Tadej Drobne, Matjaž Emeršič, Klavdija Feguš, Urban Fele, Neža Gruden, Gregor Gubenšek, Vanja Ivanković, Jaka Janežič, Erna Kerman, Martin Konjajev, Klemen Krajc, Primož Kravcar, Matic Nejc Kreča, Gašper Kržmanc, Tomaž Makan, Armando Mariutti, Aleš Ogrin, Marjan Petrej, Andraž Poljanec, Maja Povše, Miha Recelj, Katja Rihter, Matej Rihter, Sebastjan Snoj, Rok Spruk, Aleš Stopinšek, Rudolf Strnad, Ana Šalamon, Zmago Štebih, Anamarija Tomac Krečič, Gregor Vidmar, Aleksander Vinšek, Tomaž Zlobko, and Dejan Žnideršič.

For its outstanding artistic work, noble pursuit of its mission, and honourable representation and enhancement of the image of the Slovenian Armed Forces, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band received the Bronze and Gold Medals of the Slovenian Armed Forces in 1997 and 2006, respectively. Marking its 20th anniversary in 2016, the band was awarded the Order of Merit by the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Borut Pahor.

²⁵ The origins of the word date back to the Thirty Years' War around 1600. In the territory of what is today Benelux, there was a mercenary army under the command of a Dutch officer corps. They introduced the custom of dispatching drummers and ers from the garrisons to the towns every evening at 9.30pm, signalling the barkeeps to stop pouring beer – "*doe den tap toe*" (meaning "to close the tap") – and for the soldiers to return to the barracks. Just as the term "*tap toe*" has evolved into "*tap-too*" and "*taptoo*" into today's "*tattoo*", the custom itself, which originally represented a military music form, has evolved into complex events involving theatrical, dance and musical elements. Such shows are very popular across the world, with the biggest festivals taking place in Edinburgh, Basel, Moscow, Norway and Canada.

NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES BY THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
FROM 1996 TO 2020

1996	44	2009	161
1997	94	2010	210
1998	104	2011	186
1999	105	2012	195
2000	98	2013	191
2001	130	2014	233
2002	121	2015	250
2003	112	2016	224
2004	126	2017	219
2005	120	2018	207
2006	138	2019	180
2007	159	2020	78
2008	150	Total	3835

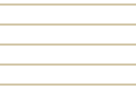
The background is a solid blue color. Scattered throughout are numerous white line-art icons of musical instruments. These include various types of guitars (acoustic, electric, bass), saxophones, trumpets, trombones, French horns, tubas, drums (snare, tom, cymbal), flutes, clarinets, and oboes. The instruments are oriented in different directions, creating a sense of a diverse and active band.

We are the Band

The band is certainly one of the most visible public aspects of the Slovenian Armed Forces. It consists of trained musicians as well as administrative and technical staff.

The compatibility of seemingly contradictory fields, such as musical creativity and the rigidity of military organization, definitely poses some challenges. Nevertheless, with its success and development, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band constantly demonstrates the importance of musical arts within the military. Musicians are drawn to the band mainly by their love of music, which is reflected in their dedication to the music profession since early youth. In order to achieve a high level of proficiency in playing a musical instrument, musicians develop, through years of training and sacrifice, an enviable level of diligence, discipline, accuracy, expertise and capacity for cooperation. By entering into the Slovenian Armed Forces, their work ethic is further enhanced by virtues such as unity, loyalty, honour, solidarity, and patriotism. Thus, every musician displays the best of both worlds, a symbiosis between military ideals and musical creativity. With their unique and irreplaceable specialization within the military organizational structure, musicians as military specialists often display an above-average performance of all military duties. Furthermore, the music profession compels one to constantly develop and perfect musical capacities, skills and knowledge. Consequently, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians devote most of their time to mastering their playing skills, maintaining their musical form, and acquiring new musical knowledge. This, however, does not end when the daily work tasks are done. A musician's training is always ongoing, and so most of them are also engaged in musical activities outside their working hours, either as musical school teachers or as conductors and members of amateur bands. In this way, apart from their personal development, these individuals also cultivate audiences and, above all, raise awareness of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's activities among the wider public, while also promoting the ideals of the institution by representing the Slovenian Armed Forces within the local environment as an embodiment of the highest values.

The relatively modest number of 50 musicians can form various ensembles performing different musical genres, as each individual possesses an elite level of knowledge and performance of multiple music styles. Only excellence and extreme flexibility, coupled with the urge to broaden their horizons, enable the musicians to play different musical genres the way from Baroque, Renaissance, Romantic and modern classical music to marches, popular folk tunes, jazz and other popular styles.



This creates a situation where the same musicians who performed a protocol task yesterday may be performing a challenging classical programme with the concert band today, and will be entertaining the audience in a jazz-themed big band show or presenting the profession of military musician in a kindergarten tomorrow. The core of the band comprises classically trained musicians, who are nevertheless very much at home in other musical styles, giving the band a unique versatility.

In addition to the musicians, the management and administrative and technical staff form an indispensable part of the band. As an integral part of the team, they deal with the management, planning and other support activities, enabling a seamless performance of the band's concert and recording activities. A band can only fulfil its mission through the effort of every individual striving for a common goal, regardless of their role. This is why every performance of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band reflects the work, reliability, ingenuity and dedication of all the employees with more or less public exposure: the musicians, the management, and the administrative and technical staff. The credit for the band's success does not go to individual achievements but exclusively to the collective effort by all participants towards a shared goal. No one can play a symphony alone, for harmony can only be heard in an orchestra.



PHOTO: Bruno Toič



MANAGEMENT	
Lt Col Janez Kljun	Commander
Military Specialist, Class XIII Aljoša Deferri	Artistic Director
1SG Aleksander Erjavec	Command Senior Enlisted Leader
Military Specialist, Class XIII Maša Bertok Duh	Head Producer
Military Specialist, Class XII Fredi Simonič	Head of Chamber Ensembles
Military Specialist, Class XII Rudolf Strnad	Head of Big Band
Military Specialist, Class XII Gregor Vidmar	Head of Protocol Band – Drum Major
Military Specialist, Class XI Janez Benko	Concertmaster

FLUTE	
Military Specialist, Class XI Ana Šalamon, specialist	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class XI Klavdija Feguš, MSc, piccolo	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class XI Vanja Ivanković, specialist	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class X Anja Ovnik Brglez, MSc	Soloist I
OBOE	
Military Specialist, Class V Katja Rihter	Instrumentalist I
CLARINET	
Military Specialist, Class XII Gregor Vidmar	Head of Protocol Band – Drum Major
Military Specialist, Class XI Janez Benko	Concertmaster
Military Specialist, Class XI Aleš Stopinšek	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class X Tomi Berlak	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class X Matic Nejc Kreča, E-flat clarinet	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class X Aleksander Vinšek	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IX Miha Kosec	Soloist II

Military Specialist, Class IX Boštjan Vendramin, Alto Clarinet	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class V Marko Cimerman	Instrumentalist I
Military Specialist, Class V Gorazd Majdič	Instrumentalist I
Military Specialist, Class IV Urban Knez, bass and contrabass clarinet	Instrumentalist II
BASSOON	
Military Specialist, Class XI Katarina Kroflič	Group Leader
SAXOPHONE	
Military Specialist, Class XI Tomaž Zlobko	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class IX Tadej Drobne	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class IX Nina Ravnjak	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class IX Melinda Urh	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class IV Jaka Janežič	Instrumentalist II
TRUMPET	
Military Specialist, Class XII Rudolf Strnad	Head of Big Band
Military Specialist, Class XI Boštjan Bone	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class XI Gregor Gubenšek	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class XI Igor Berlak	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class X Dejan Brečko	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class X Urban Fele	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IX Anžej Remšak	Soloist II
EUPHONIUM	
Military Specialist, Class X Vasja Burkat	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IX Simon Tavčar	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class V Slavko Čot	Instrumentalist I

HORN	
Military Specialist, Class XI Edvard Bizjak	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class XI Jernej Ivan	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class X Nikica Banjac	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IV Damjan Medvešek	Instrumentalist II
TROMBONE	
Military Specialist, Class XII Fredi Simonič	Head of Chamber Ensembles
Military Specialist, Class X Boštjan Tement, bass trombone	Principal Soloist
Military Specialist, Class IX Primož Kravcar	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class V Dejan Žnideršič	Instrumentalist I
TUBA	
Military Specialist, Class X Tomaž Makan	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IX Sandi Rečnik, MSc	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class IX Blaž Umek	Soloist II
PERCUSSION	
Military Specialist, Class XI Miha Recelj	Group Leader
Military Specialist, Class X Martin Konjajev	Soloist I
Military Specialist, Class IX Erna Kerman	Soloist II
Military Specialist, Class V Sebastjan Snoj	Instrumentalist I
PIANO	
Military Specialist, Class IX Aleš Ogrin	Soloist I
GUITAR	
Military Specialist, Class IX Gašper Kržmanc	Soloist II
CONTRABASS AND BASS GUITAR	
Military Specialist, Class IV Klemen Krajc	Instrumentalist II

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

SFC Jernej Henigman	Commander of Support Department
Military Specialist, Class VIII Robert Šinkovec	Music Sheet Custodian
Military Specialist, Class V Sebastjan Sušnik	Movement and Transport
Military Specialist, Class II Bojan Starin	Material Supply Management
Military Specialist, Class I Sandi Cej	Driver
Military Specialist, Class I Aleš Gašparut	Driver
Irena Kraljić Smolej	Administrator V
Mojca Pestotnik	Administrator V













External collaborators

During the past 25 years, many musical artists have shared the stage with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Some have only done so once, others multiple times, and many have joined us as permanent external collaborators for a longer time period.

Guest conductors, soloists and other external collaborators contribute significantly to the growth and development of the band. With their artistic presence, they break the everyday routine, bring new creative energy, enrich the programme and perfect the musical interpretation.

JOŽE PRIVŠEK

“I also work with the Slovenian Armed Forces Brass Band, headed by the excellent conductor Franci Rizmal, who is originally from Žalec, and I have to admit they have pleasantly surprised me by their quality. As you know, in the past we only had a military band in Belgrade, but now we have our own, home-grown band, which I think will prove itself – not only when they receive senior state officials wearing service dress uniforms, and not just because they are playing my suite.”(Jože Privšek, 1997)²⁶

Maestro Jože Privšek was, without a doubt, a very important musical persona among those contributing to the formation of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band in 1996. He collaborated with the band as an external artistic advisor from its foundation. He was present at more than 80 auditions for new musicians, and wrote the first marches for the band.

Jože Privšek is one of the key Slovenian composers of jazz and popular music. Over more than thirty years of heading the RTV Slovenija Big Band, his body of work reached more than 4000 adaptations and original pieces. He received many awards for his work, and was posthumously awarded the Gold Medal of the Slovenian Armed Forces for his contribution and dedication to the development of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Privšek’s knowledge, and the experience he brought to the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, still represent one of the foundations of the corps’ artistic creativity and sound.

²⁶Jerman, J. (1997). Dobro jutro, gospod Privšek (“Good Morning, Mr Privšek”). *Pepita*, 1997/6, 34.



The audition jury: from left to right, Jože Privšek, Franc Rizmal, Jani Šalamon, MSc
PHOTO: SAF Band archive

“Maestro Jože Privšek was present at the audition as an external collaborator, and I remember the feeling of awe when playing the first notes. After successfully passing the audition, I accepted the invitation by the jury members to join them for a chat over a pint of beer at the local marketplace. There I had the honour of meeting the great Slovenian musician, Jože Privšek, who was very relaxed and funny in the assembled company. He kept saying he had to go home because he was expecting guests. He reminded us every hour that they were expecting him at home. Late in the evening, he suddenly got up and checked his watch. We thought he was about to head home when he said: ‘Well, they definitely aren’t expecting me anymore, so, barkeep, hit us with another round!’ We all burst out laughing.” (Aljoša Deferri, 2020)

GUEST CONDUCTORS

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band has played under the batons of numerous prominent Slovenian and foreign conductors: Milivoj Šurbek, pianist and permanent guest conductor from 2000 to 2006; Colonel François Boulanger, conductor of the French Republican Guard Band; Jan Cober, Dutch conductor and teacher; Colonel Michael J. Colburn, conductor of the “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band from 2004 to 2014; Alain Crepin, Belgian saxophonist, composer, teacher and conductor; Gregory Dudzienski; Simon Dvoršak, Slovenian conductor, pianist, répétiteur and teacher; Jordi Francés San Juan, Spanish percussionist and conductor; Franc Gornik; Patrik Greblo, conductor and arranger; Marjan Grdadolnik, Slovenian clarinetist, teacher and conductor; Tomaž Habe, Slovenian composer, teacher and conductor; Pieter Jansen, Dutch conductor, pianist and



George Pehlivanian, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, November 2008

PHOTO: SAF Band archive

percussionist; Peter Kleine Schaars, Dutch composer, conductor and teacher; Major Timo Kotilainen, conductor of the Finnish Navy Band; Lieutenant Commander Guntis Kumačevs, conductor of the Central Military Band of the Latvian National Armed Forces; Uroš Lajovic, Slovenian conductor; Izidor Leitinger, Slovenian conductor, composer and trumpeter; José R. Pascual-Vilaplana, modern Spanish composer and conductor; George Pehlivanian, American conductor; Bart Picqueur, Belgian composer, teacher, conductor and clarinetist; Živa Ploj Peršuh; Miljenko Prohaska, Croatian composer, arranger and conductor; Klemen Repe; Isabelle Ruf-Weber, Swiss conductor; Karmina Šilec, conductor and artistic director of Carmina Slovenica; and Lieutenant Colonel Jaroslav Šip, composer, pianist and conductor of the Czech Army Central Band, among others.



Peter Kleine Schaars, Marjan Kozina Hall,
Slovenska filharmonija, February 2014
PHOTO: Andrej Kerman



Isabelle Ruf Weber, Marjan Kozina Hall, Slovenska filharmonija,
October 2015
PHOTO: Nataša Oblak



Marjan Grdadolnik, Lucijan Marija Škerjanc Hall, Conservatory of Music and Ballet Ljubljana, October 2019

PHOTO: Aleksij Valentinčič, Society of Slovene Composers



Franc Gornik, Prešeren Square, May 2010

PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Michael J. Colburn, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, April 2012

PHOTO: Foto Boni



Pieter Jansen, Marjan Kozina Hall, Slovenska filharmonija,
March 2018

PHOTO: Brane Petrovič



José R. Pascual-Vilaplana, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom,
March 2013

PHOTO: Nataša Oblak



François Boullanger, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, October 2009

PHOTO: Foto Boni

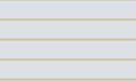


MILIVOJ ŠURBEK, MSc

Permanent guest conductor of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band 2000-2006

The idealized image of uniformed personnel, either firefighters, police officers or soldiers, encapsulates virtues such as fairness, honesty, stalwartness, and team spirit. In the real world, alas, this image is often tarnished. We can see that for musical bodies operating within uniformed units, these virtues form the core of their operation. Fairness towards the composer, work discipline, honesty in recognizing artistic authority, dedication to teamwork, and dogged persistence are prerequisites to their professional success. Music is the language of emotion, creating a positive mood both in the work team and among the audience, having a therapeutic effect, encouraging and stabilizing the spirit before and after action, as well as celebrating, bringing solace and offering emotional support at all moments of life.

All of this is the task and responsibility of the professional Slovenian Armed Forces Band, which is celebrating 25 years since its establishment this year. We could say that a wind band reflects the nobility and honour of the military profession.



As a musician, I was overcome and drawn to participate by the trembling sound of the flutes; I was overcome by the gracious oboes, the velvety clarinets, the humorous bassoons, the sexy saxophones, the academic horns, the sunny trumpets, the solemn trombones, the royal tubas, and by the all-encompassing, stimulating rhythm. It drew me to create music with the band for several years, enjoying the growth of the fledgling but nevertheless excellent band which has evolved into an elite ensemble today. For that, I am profoundly grateful.

The artistic experience was intertwined with protocol responsibilities, and there was professional discipline, love for the mission, and artistic exhilaration everywhere you looked. The latter, especially, grew fast with every performance.

I tried to design concert programmes in such a way that their subject matter would reflect military and human virtues. I fondly remember the project entitled *Requiem* by Frigyes Hidas, dedicated to the victims of all wars. The band, together with many mixed choirs and solo singers, performed it at Cankarjev dom, and later repeated the performance in Trieste, Maribor and Nova Gorica. I remember a grand concert commemorating the anniversary of the painter Vincent van Gogh in cooperation with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It took place at Cankarjev dom, where we performed the monumental composition by Rolf Rudin, "To Infinity". On the 10th anniversary of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, we performed an interesting piece entitled *L'homme arme* by the New Zealand-born composer Christopher Marshall, who lives in the US. The performance was enriched by ballet dancers and members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Guard. Somehow managing to see the performance of his piece on YouTube, the composer described it as exemplary and worth recreating, which made me particularly happy.

Naturally, our programmes were designed so that Slovenian names stood out the most. A special place belonged to the giant of Slovenian popular music, the composer and arranger Jože Privšek, to whom we dedicated several successful concerts entitled *Hommage à Jože Privšek*. His popular songs gripped every audience. We played at a series of very successful concerts employing the *Three Tenors* pattern. In our case, the three tenors were Metod Žunec, Alexander Brown and Sebastjan Podbregar. An inspiring concert in Portorož was organized by Patrik Greblo, and I think that is where he got his idea for establishing the Eroica trio.

As the conductor of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, in my programme I always wanted to pursue a reflection on heroism, the justification of resistance, treason, victory, human intimacy, and love for one's homeland, which should never cease and which calls for defending honour and duty. A military ensemble like the Slovenian Armed Forces Band is capable of planting these emotions in the hearts of the listeners, and of having a great impact on the optimism of troops and civilians alike, either in war or in peace.

A band with an appropriate programme means a healthy emotional life of the members of the armed forces, which makes its role invaluable. In this respect, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band rightly has enormous importance.

PHOTO: Fabrice Bourdeau, French Republican Guard Band



Colonel FRANÇOIS BOULANGER

9th Director of the French Republican Guard Band since 1997

Several years ago, as the principal conductor of the French Republican Guard Band, I was invited to conduct the Slovenian Armed Forces Band.

I received a wonderful welcome from the musicians, who really wanted to play a French musical programme under my leadership. They are excellent on both the personal and the collective levels, making it possible to achieve results with great efficiency. Thanks to the strong musical character of the band, we were able to provide a dynamic and spirited interpretation during the concert.

I took great pleasure in sharing those musical moments with the band, and the concert was a success as well, earning warm applause from the audience. It is a very nice memory in my career as a conductor.



JOSÉ R. PASCUAL-VILAPLANA

Chief Conductor of the Banda municipal de Bilbao and the Banda municipal de Barcelona

Dear colleagues, dear friends

I would like to send you my sincere congratulations on your 25th anniversary. In recent years, I have had the honour of being able to work with you as a guest conductor on two occasions, in 2013 and in 2015. In both projects I felt very fortunate to be able to direct a band formation at such a great artistic and human level. Working with you has allowed me to verify your organizational efficiency and your great musical level. In addition, I was always given very special personal treatment for which I will always be grateful. Leading the Slovenian Armed Forces Band was a great experience for my personal and professional development. Projects like those prepared by the SAF Band dignify the work of professional bands in the contemporary cultural world.

Thank you very much for letting me share a little moment of your story. I feel very honoured and fortunate, and I hope that life allows us to share musical and personal moments again.

Your admirer and friend



SOLOISTS

The band has performed together with many excellent soloists.

Vocal soloists who have worked with the band include: Alya, Miriam Andersen, Irena Baar, Mojca Bitenc, Helena Blagne, Monika Bohinec, Pia Brodnik, Alexander Brown, Sabina Cvilak, Eva Černe, Živa Češarek, Vera Danilova, Tina Debevec, Nuša Derenda, Ana Dežman, Elena Dobravec, Nina Dominko, Nuška Drašček, Maruša Ferenčak, Rok Ferengja, Igor Janez Filipovič, Bernarda Fink, Marcos Fink,



Vlado Kreslin, Kongresni trg, June 2016

PHOTO: Matej Kramžer

Edvin Fliser, Nina Fras, Alenka Godec, Ditka Haberl, Anika Horvat, Tjaša Hrovat, Eva Hren, Andraž Hribar, Samo Ivačič, Slavko Ivančič, Manca Izmajlova, David Jagodic, Andrej Jerman, Jadranka Juras, Žiga Kasagić, Matej Matjaž Kastelic, Primož Kerštanj, Maja Keuc, Sergej Kiselev, Katja Konvalinka, Tinkara Kovač, Jani Kovačič, Anja Kramar, Branka Kraner, Vlado Kreslin, Domen Križaj, Lado Leskovar, Lea Likar, Janez Lotrič, Emilia Martesson, Marina Martesson, Neda Martić, Željka Martić, Vita Mavrič, Tomi Meglič, Andrej Mikek, Milena Morača, Matjaž Mrak, Omar Naber, Neisha, Alfi Nipič, Maja Oderlap, Oto Pestner, Majda Petan, Jan Plestenjak, Sebastjan Podbregar, Katja Predovnik, Ana Pucar Jerič, Tim Ribič, Gašper Rifelj, Branko Robinšak, Teja Saksida, Dušanka Simonovič-Žličar, Grega Skočir, Leticia Slapnik Yebuah, Renata Smolnikar, Ana Soklič, Mark Sovinšek, Iva Stanič, Teja Stegel, Nina Strnad, Veronika Strnad, Martin Sušnik, Francka Šenk, Manca Špik, Jana Šušteršič, Darja Švajger, Eva Teršek, Klemen Torkar, Marjan Trček, Tomaž Udovč, Juan Vasle, Jože Vidic, Elda Viler, Ana Vipotnik, Irena Vrčkovnik, Irena Yebuah Tiran, Robert Yebuah, Miran Žitko, Urška Žižek, Mia Žnidarič and Metod Žunec, among others.



Nina Strnad, Tone Čufar Theatre, Jesenice, April 2018
PHOTO: Nik Bertoncej



Eva Hren, Park Theatre, Murska Sobota, May 2017
PHOTO: Aleš Cipot



Janez Lotrič, SNT Opera and Ballet Ljubljana, January 2002

PHOTO: Jana magazine archive



Urška Žižek and Jože Vidic, Marjan Kozina Hall, Slovenska filharmonija, May 2010

PHOTO: Foto Boni

Instrumental soloists who have worked with the band include: Sašo Avsenik, David Baumgarten, Sebastian Bertoncelj, Tine Bizajl, Betka Bizjak Kotnik, Anja Bukovec, Tomaž Cilenšek, Janez Dovč, Luka Einfalt, Gregor Fele, Primož Fleischman, Petra Gačnik Greblo, Bojan Gorišek, Matej Grahek, Nejc Grm, Hinko Haas, Miha Haas, Izak Hudnik, Peter Kaiser, Klemen Kotar, Lucija Krišelj, Bratko Krivokapič, Milko Lazar, Boštjan Lipovšek, Miloš Mlejnik, Nina Mole, Magdalena Navodnik, Mija Novak, Robi Novak, Denis Novato, Oksana Pečeny, Uroš Polanc, Nežka Prosenjak, Jure Pukl, Eva Julija Rečnik, Kiril Ribarski, Sanja Romić, Kaja Sešek, Vlatko Stefanovski, Silvester Stingl, Samanta Škorja, Nina Tafi, Žan Tkalec, Vid Ušeničnik, Josef Vacula, Dana Verč, Ivan Vombergar, Tomaž Zamuda and Nebojša Jovan Živković, among others.



Sanja Romić and Primož
Fleischman, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev
dom, October 2010
PHOTO: Foto Boni



Anja Bukovec, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, November
2008
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Denis Novato, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom,
November 2008
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Vlatko Stefanovski, Congress Square, June 2017

PHOTO: Bruno Toič

Ensembles that have shared the stage with the band include: Aeternum, Ana Pupedan, Eroika, Fake Orchestra, Katrinas, Klapa Sveti Juraj HRM, SONUS Saxophone quartet, Kvatropirci, MJAV, New Swing Quartet, Pepel in kri, Rožmarinke, Trio Vivere, Vocabella, the Zagreb Saxophone Quartet and the Mobilis Quartet, among others.



Trio Eroika, Stožice Centre, March 2011
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



New Swing Quartet and Alenka Godec, Križanke, May 2018
PHOTO: Damjan Končar

It is also important to note the band's collaboration with choirs such as: the Slovenian Philharmonic Choir, the Slovenian Chamber Choir, the Partisan Choir, RTV Slovenia Youth and Children's Choir, Carmina Slovenica, France Prešeren Kranj Academic Choir, Lek Men's Chamber Choir, Obala Koper Mixed Choir, Samospev Črnomelj Mixed Choir, Viva Brežice Mixed Choir, Vox Carniolus Jesenice Mixed Choir, KUD Rogoznica Men's Choir, Pinko Tomažič Trieste choir, Sorške kresnice Girls' Choir, Alojzij Šuštar Primary School Youth and Children's Choir, Dragomelj Primary School Children's Choir, Juršinci Primary School Youth and Children's Choir, Koper Primary School Children's Choir, Nazarje Primary School Youth and Children's Choir, Tončka Čeč Trbovlje Primary School Choir, and Gallina Vocal Group, among others.



The Slovenian Philharmonic Choir and RTV Slovenia Youth and Children's Choir, Marjan Kozina Hall, Slovenska filharmonija, May 2010

PHOTO: Foto Boni



The Partisan Choir, Kodeljevo Sports Centre, April 1999

PHOTO: SAF Band archive

At various events, the band co-created the artistic programme with other artists. Among them were: actors, such as Leopold Bibič, Boris Cavazza, Tina Gorenjak, Kristijan Guček, Tone Kuntner, Danijel Malalan, Gašper Malnar, Luka Ortar, Matej Puc, Klemen Slakonja, and Jurij Souček; choreographers, such as Mojca Horvat, Silvestra Perčič and Vojko Vidmar; dancers, such as Siniša Bukinac, Igor Čupković, Regina Križaj Babačič, Miha Krušič, Katarina Truden Alta, Urša Vidmar, Vojko Vidmar, and Igor Sviderski; speakers and moderators, such as Ida Baš, Nataša Bolčina Žgavec, Janez Dolinar, Simon Korez, Tajda Lekše, Jure Longyka, Mojca Mavec, Jure Sešek, Cvetka Šeško and Bernarda Žarn, among others.



NUŠA DERENDA,

Singer of popular music

In 2021, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band marks 25 years of successful operation.

I would like to take this opportunity to say I am grateful for the many instances I have been invited to collaborate with both the concert band and the big band, performing my own hits, songs from the treasure trove of Slovenian “evergreens”, and, naturally, a selection of various global hits. We have collaborated at official ceremonies, various music events, Christmas and New Year concerts, and benefit concerts.

Working with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has always been a great pleasure, as the band is composed of excellent musicians and led by excellent conductors employing a professional approach that ensures the elite quality of the band. One can feel the positive energy and respect, and a performer feels “safe” in their company.

I also must not forget to mention that events overseen by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band are always organized in great detail and with great diligence.

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band, sincere congratulations for all your achievements, and I hope you will continue to fulfil your mission with such great success.

PHOTO: Franci Virant



DARJA ŠVAJGER MOHORIČ,

Singer of popular music and Associate Professor of Singing at the Academy of Music and the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television of the University of Ljubljana

I have been working with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band for over 20 years. I was introduced to the band by the unforgettable Jože Privšek. In addition to wonderful and inspiring joint musical pursuits, there has always been a lot of laughter and good moods. I hope we meet again soon. My sincere congratulations for the 25th anniversary to each and every one of you, and wishing you many successful years to come.



ALENKA GODEC,

Singer of popular music

Whenever I think back to my collaborations with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, including its big band, it brings a smile to my face. We have performed together on many stages, even outside our borders. It is an honour and pleasure to work with such exceptional musicians. Our collaboration has always been relaxed and fun, and at the same time professional and effective – the best combination there is. It would be interesting to know how many concerts we have performed together. At some point, there were so many that I wondered aloud if a slightly adjusted military uniform could be made for me as well. Dear members of the band, I am grateful to have been part of your musical journey. I congratulate you on your 25th anniversary, wishing from the bottom of my heart for you to stay creative, and remain a pride to us all.

PHOTO: Žiga Culiberg



NUŠKA DRAŠČEK,

Singer of classical and popular music, Assistant Professor in the Department of Singing at the University of Ljubljana Academy of Music

I have shared the stage with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band several times, each collaboration forming a fond memory. I always receive a warm welcome, and one can feel you enjoy music – this makes the experience for us soloists all the less demanding and all the more enjoyable. The support from such a “corps” really gives you wings. I am looking forward to new joint projects, amusing rehearsals and excellent concerts. And I wish you will continue to love music as much as you do forever.



PHOTO: Rok Golob

KATARINA HABE, PhD

*Musician and founder of the band Katrinas,
Associate Professor of General Psychology at
the University of Ljubljana Academy of Music*

Katrinas has been collaborating with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band for several years. We have worked together with the concert band and the big band. It is interesting that all three group line-ups – the first with Eva Hren and Marija Kavčič, the second with Neža Drobnič and Sanja Mlinar Marin, and the third, in which Petra Grkman rejoined Sanja and me – have collaborated with the SAF Band.

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band is composed of excellent musicians, and singing together with them is always a pleasure. The rehearsals are filled with positive energy carrying us right into the music. Every time we sing with them, we can leave ourselves to the music, knowing they will put up a great performance – technically flawless and with great musical touch. They have always given us the impression that they enjoy collaborating with guest musicians, making us feel accepted in their midst. In the process our ties have grown from professional into friendly ones. We have always found it amusing that the band members always wear uniforms, which give a formal and serious impression, but then take on completely different roles through music.

Together, we performed across Slovenia with our Christmas and New Year concert and celebrated the 20th anniversary of Katrinas at the Studenec Summer Theatre, and we have been their guests at many protocol events.

Regardless of the occasion, it was always energetic and fun, with music lifting us to the sky.



Major projects

Every year, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band organizes many concerts and participates in various projects at home and abroad. Many of them have made a special place in the hearts of the audience due to their programme, participants, occasion or magnificence. This is why the band remembers them fondly and views them with special pride. The most high-profile projects include the traditional Christmas and New Year concerts with domestic and foreign conductors; exclusive and unique projects; celebrations honouring important events and personalities; World Music Day performances; the Unicum Festival; the Night of Slovene Composers; world congresses; festivals; collaborations with other musicians and ensembles (the Police Band, the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, the RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, Orkestar Oružanih snaga Republike Hrvatske, Kapel Van De Koninklijke Luchtmacht, the US Army Europe Band and Chorus, Heeresmusikkorps Neubrandenburg, Militärmusik Niederösterreich, USAFE Check Six Jazz Ensemble, a joint band comprising representatives of military bands of Great Britain, the US, Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia); and many other events.

During these 25 youthful years, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has celebrated its existence and successes every five years. In celebration of the 5th and 10th anniversaries, it organized two solemn concerts presenting two difficult but extremely attractive programmes. Both events used the language of music to contemplate on the subjects of war, peace, and the role and importance of personal virtues. On its 15th anniversary, the band organized the first festival of military bands in Slovenia, called *Regiment po cesti gre* (named after a well-known Slovenian folk song entitled “The Regiment Is on the March”), marking the occasion in a unique way in front of a faithful audience and accompanied by the most elite foreign military bands. The band celebrated its 20th anniversary by throwing a magnificent concert, presenting itself in three different ensembles. The ingeniously designed programme encompassed the variety of the band’s creative pursuits, using three completely different musical styles to demonstrate the band’s ability of transformation, its mastery, and its uniqueness on the Slovenian scene.



Concert at the Mid Europe wind music festival, Schladming, July 1999

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Performing at an international festival of military bands, Germany tour, October and November 1999

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



The Band's fifth anniversary and the first Slovenian performance of *The Song of Fortunio*, an operetta by Jacques Offenbach adapted by Jani Golob, Linhart Hall, Cankarjev dom, May 2001
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Guest performance at the international festival of military bands, Modena, July 2002
PHOTO: SAF Band archive



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA OBRAMBO
ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE

SKD

JAVNI SKLAD RS ZA KULTURNE DEJAVNOSTI

Frigyes Hidas

REQUIEM

V SPOMIN NA ŽRTVE
VSEH VOJN V ZGODOVINI ČLOVEŠTVA

SOLISTI:

ŽELJKA MARTIČ, sopran
NEDA MARTIČ, alt
ALEXANDER BROWN, tenor
JUAN VASLE, bas

ZDRUŽENI ZBORI:

Komorni zbor DE PROFUNDIS KRANJ
dirig. Branka Potočnik Krajnik
Mešani pevski zbor VIVA BREŽICE
dirig. Simona Rožman Strnad
Mešani komorni zbor LJUBLJANSKI MADRIGALISTI
dirig. Walter Lo Nigro
Mešani pevski zbor AKADEMIJE ZA GLASBO V LJUBLJANI
dirig. Marko Vátovec

ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE
DIRIGENT: Milivoj ŠURBEK

TRST, nedelja 7. aprila 2002 ob 18.00 uri v Kulturnem domu
MARIBOR, četrtek 11. aprila 2002 ob 19. uri v Unionski dvorani
NOVA GORICA, sobota 13. aprila 2002 ob 20.30 uri v Primorskem
dramskem gledališču



GRAND HOTEL UNION
hotel in konferenčni center

sezona
2003/2004
1. koncert

Hommage à Jože Privšek

ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE
Dirigent: Milivoj Šurbek

Solisti: Darja Švajger, Alenka Godec,
Ditka Haberl, Elda Viler, Oto Pestner,
Alfi Nipič, Edvin Flisar in
New Swing Quartet

UNIONSKA DVORANA

Četrtek, 2. oktobra 2003
ob 20. uri

Program

J. Privšek	<i>Na Modrem nebu</i> (Dan Slovenske mjske 1996)
J. Privšek	<i>Alfin</i>
J. Privšek	<i>Majnska suita</i> (Dan Slovenske mjske 1997)
J. Privšek/M. Kalata/J. Privšek	<i>Tam, kjer sem doma</i> (Eldin Flisar, Sln. popevka 1968)
J. Privšek/G. Strnila/J. Privšek	<i>Ne prižigaj luči v mraku</i> (Elda Viler, 1972)
J. Privšek/F. Milinski/J. Privšek	<i>Kako sva si različna</i> (Alenka Godec in Alfi Nipič, 1973)
J. Privšek/E. Budau/J. Privšek	<i>Na snežno noč</i> (Oto Pestner, 1980)
J. Privšek/E. Budau/J. Privšek	<i>Samo nasmeh je bolj grenak</i> (Ditka Haberl, Sln. popevka 1976)
J. Privšek/D. Volkarh/J. Privšek	<i>Solza, ki je ne prodam</i> (Eldin Flisar, Sln. popevka 1970)
Tradicional/J. Privšek	<i>Pospouri</i> (New Swing Quartet)
♩♩♩	
J. Privšek/D. Volkarh/J. Privšek	<i>Silvestrski poljub</i> (Alfi Nipič, 1971)
J. Privšek/M. Kalata/J. Privšek	<i>Zato sem zoro te ljubil</i> (Alenka Godec, Slovenska popevka 1973)
J. Privšek/D. Volkarh/J. Privšek	<i>Sinoči</i> (Oto Pestner, 1974)
P. Petrus/S. Fagan/J. Privšek	<i>Prisluhni mi</i> (Dajša Sagger, Emsong 1995)
J. Privšek/E. Budau/J. Privšek	<i>Nekoč se bova srečala</i> (Eldin Flisar, 1971)
J. Privšek/M. Kalata/J. Privšek	<i>Zlati prah imal v očeh</i> (Elda Viler, Sln. popevka 1969)
J. Kander/F. Elhi/J. Privšek	<i>New York, New York</i> (Dajša Sagger)
J. Privšek/D. Volkarh/J. Privšek	<i>Nad mestom se dan!</i> (Ditka Haberl, Opusja 1985)
J. Privšek/D. Volkarh/J. Privšek	<i>Mati, bodiva prijateljca</i> (Oto Pestner, Sln. popevka 1972)
M. Nizbary/M. Nizbary/J. Privšek	<i>An American Trilogy</i> (Oto Pestner & New Swing Quartet)



The Band's 10th anniversary,
Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom,
October 2006

PHOTO: MoD – SAF GS archive



Performance in the *Izštekani* ("Unplugged") radio show on the Val 202 radio station as part of the Brass and Patina project, Studio 26, Radio Slovenija, November 2006

PHOTO: Alan Orlič Belšak



The *Mission: Harmony* concert marking Statehood Day for members of the KFOR international operation and mission, Kosovo, June 2009

PHOTO: Emil Jalovec



Collaborating with the Carmina Slovenica choir in the *Na juriš in the mood! Od koračnic do swinga* project, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, March 2009

PHOTO: Carmina Slovenica archive



Conversation with the composer David Maslanka before the first Slovenian performance of his Mass, Slavko Osterc Hall, Slovenska filharmonija, May 2010

PHOTO: Foto Boni



Concert with the Check Six jazz band, Velenje House of Arts, October 2010

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Concert with guest conductor Jan Cober, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, October 2010

PHOTO: Foto Boni



The musical and theatrical spectacle *Lipica v Ljubljani – Ponos, lepota, pogum* ("Lipica in Ljubljana – Pride, Beauty, Courage"), Stožice Sports Centre, March 2011

PHOTO: Alenka Slavinec



The Band's 15th anniversary, first festival of military bands in Slovenia, *Regiment po cesti gre*; Stožice Sports Centre, June 2011

PHOTO: Bruno Toič

ZVEZA SLOVENSKEH GODB

Organizacijski odbor Leto Bojana Adamiča 2012
v okviru projekta Evropska prestolnica kulture Maribor 2012
ob 100. obletnici rojstva Bojana Adamiča
vabi na

Slavnostni koncert
Orkestra slovenske policije
s solistom Matjažem Mrakom
in
Orkestra Slovenske vojske
dirigent Milivoj Šurbek

v soboto, 27. oktobra 2012, ob 19.30
v dvorani Union v Mariboru
ter

Koncertni dan Bojana Adamiča
v nedeljo, 28. oktobra 2012, ob 13.00
v dvorani Union v Mariboru

Rhalski orkester KUD Polka Maribor,
dirigent Ervin Harizan
Rhalski orkester Zrja Sočnanj,
dirigent Miran Štamočič

Godbeno društvo Rudarjevič Mlaja,
dirigent Domen Prezelj

KD Godba Cerknica,
dirigent Miha Dragičič
Delavska godba Irbitlje,
dirigent Jaka Kotar

Vijubno saljudni tudi na
Mednarodni znanstveni simpozij o Bojanu Adamiču,
ki bo v soboto, 27. oktobra 2012, od 9.30 do 16.30 v Univerzitetni knjižnici Maribor in
odprtje razstave *Medla za mojstra in Zveza maske o Bojanu Adamiču*,
ki boča ob 12.00 prav tako v Univerzitetni knjižnici.

Vstop prost!

MARIBOR 2012

Logo of the organizing committee and sponsors.



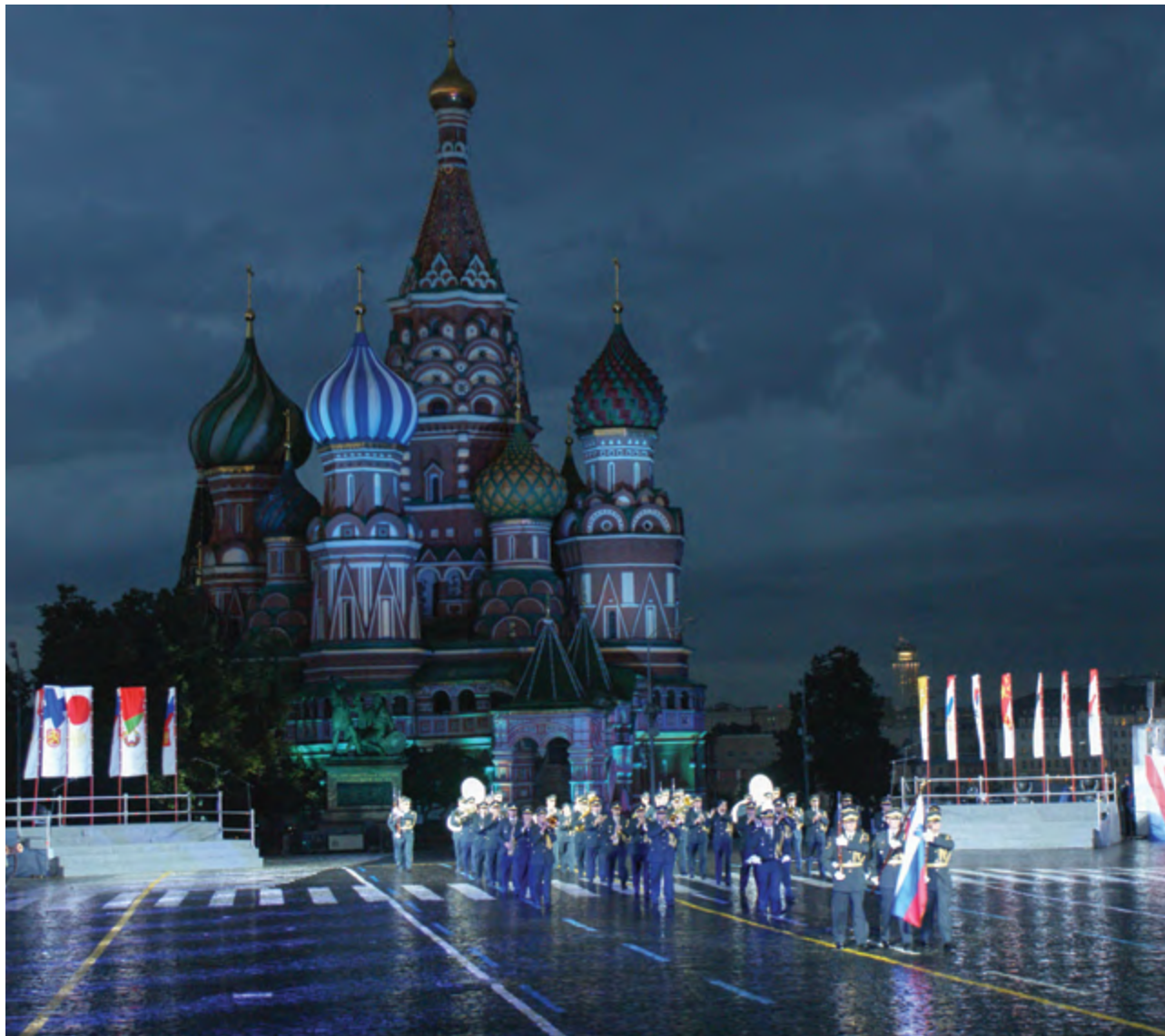
Performance at the Marezijazz Big Band Festival, Marezige, June and July 2012 and 2015

PHOTO: SAF Band archive



Performance at the Marshal Radetzky International Festival of Military Bands, Olomouc and Kroměříž, Czechia, August 2013 and 2014

PHOTO: Nataša Oblak



Performance at the Spasskaya Tower International Festival of Military Bands, Moscow, August and September 2013

PHOTO: Dušan Pavli



The Retrospective of Style, an educational tour of 28 primary and secondary schools in Slovenia in 2013 and 2014

PHOTO: Janez Benko



Concert at the Lent Festival, Maribor, July 2014

PHOTO: Saša Huzjak



Performance at the Innsbrucker Promenadenkonzerte and Innenhof der Kaiserlichen Hofburg festivals, Innsbruck, July 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2019

PHOTO: Hubert Rolant



Performance at the Avenches
Tattoo International Festival
of Military Bands, Avenches,
September 2015
PHOTO: Marc Andre



Concert at the Summer under
the Chestnut Tree festival,
Opčine, July 2016
PHOTO: Archive of the Slovene Cultural
Society Tabor



The Band's 20th anniversary, Gallus Hall, Cankarjev dom, October 2016
PHOTO: Danijel Mlakar



Concert in collaboration with Vlatko Stefanovski,
Belgrade, April 2017
PHOTO: Teodora Ćirić



Collaborating with Izidor Leitinger on the *Ujjayi – A Musical Suite*, Linhart Hall, Cankarjev dom, November 2018
PHOTO: Bruno Toič



Autumn concert, Marjan Kozina Hall, Slovenska
filharmonija, October 2018
PHOTO: Robert Cotič



Concert at the XVIII World Saxophone Congress, Zagreb,
July 2018
PHOTO: Nives Milješić



Queen – It's A Kind Of Magic
with Omar Naber and Tina Debevec, concert tour of Slovenia from October 2019 to January 2020
PHOTO: Jožef Kozel

Concert of the joint band comprising members of military bands within the armed forces of the Republic of North Macedonia, Greece, Great Britain, the USA and the Republic of Slovenia marking the 70th anniversary of NATO, Skopje, April 2019

PHOTO: MOD North Macedonia archive





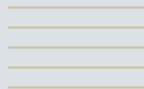
Military Specialist, Class XIII ANDREJA ŠOLAR

Artistic director and conductor of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, 2011-2019

The Slovenian Armed Forces Band's entire creative body of work and the scope of its musical reproduction can hardly be summarized in a few words. I can, however, present my own point of view, formed during the 17 years I was part of it. The music profession is unique, for we, the creative souls, know and inhabit a slightly different world, a world where art knows no bounds and cannot be ensnared, but can only be felt and given free rein to rise into boundless dimensions and find its way into the heart.

How to introduce art into a system that is very different? How to stay true to the mission of the artistic profession despite your employer's wish for a lighter repertoire, and to maintain the creative growth of the band and the musicians' professional level while performing a plethora of tasks? To me, this was a daily challenge. The stage was our greatest ally, and diverse concert projects made it possible for us to at least partly fulfill our mission as artists.

Annual concerts; collaborations with acclaimed domestic and foreign conductors and renowned soloists; performing at music festivals such as the Unicum Contemporary Music Festival, the World Music Days and the World Saxophone Congress, and at international venues such as the Innsbruck music festival and the Mid Europe festival in Schladming; collaborations with professional orchestras, such as the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra, and other musical institutions – all of this attests to



the quality and professionalism of the musicians of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. It is proof that the Band is, without a doubt, on a par with other professional orchestras.

To me, caring for the artistic growth of the Band always came first, and it is precisely projects like those mentioned above that artistic activity urgently requires. The programme choices may not have always appealed to a broader audience, but they were vital to the progress of the musicians. In designing the repertoire, I consulted classical works by acclaimed composers and, in line with global trends, introduced new materials for wind bands.

My fondest memories are of concert projects that touched many hearts. To me, one of these was definitely performing a Mass by the American composer David Maslanka, who mesmerized us by his presence and inspired us with the timelessness of a monumental piece. Seeing him moved listening to his own creation filled me with gratitude and made me realize the power of musical expression and our mission. The tears in his eyes, and the thank-you letter I received later, gave special meaning to our collaborative rendition:

“This is a small “Thank you” for your work with the Mass – from hearing the idea, to the many, many hours of study, to the intense technical work with all the performers, to the breakthrough into a stunning performance. You look at this as the biggest musical event of your life, but your gift to me is extraordinary – you have confirmed for me the full size, shape and power of this music. After 14 years I am finally at peace with it.” (David Maslanka, 1943-2017)

Heartfelt congratulations on your anniversary, and may David Maslanka’s words provide inspiration for your future artistic endeavours.

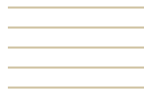


IZIDOR LEITINGER

Composer, conductor and all-round musician

Towards the end of 2017, I received a call from Rudolf Strnad, the conductor of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's big band, who told me they would like to work with me. He asked me to write an original composition merging various genres that would be tailor-made for the band. I took the offer, or the challenge, with great pleasure. The rest of our conversation revolved around forming an ensemble that we agreed would be an expansion of the classic big band: saxophones with flute, five trombones, five trumpets, horns, a rhythm section with additional orchestral percussion instruments, and vocals.

At the time, I was just about to travel to Uruguay for a six-month meditation retreat. Some thoughts and ideas started to form in the back of my brain even before my departure. As my Uruguayan retreat was coming to an end, I intensified my creative work and began composing music for the project. When I returned to Europe and Slovenia in early November, there was very little time left to realize the project. I would very much like to emphasize, and express my gratitude for, the patience shown by Rudolf and the entire band during the time before that concert; it was not until a few weeks before the concert that I had finished the entire composition, written the texts, and sent



sheets on the fly so rehearsals could be prepared. It was an intense and creatively exhausting period, which is nothing unusual when working on such a project.

When I heard and felt the big band musicians play my music during the first rehearsal with the rhythm section, I was not only completely calmed down, but also impressed – with their dedication, their precision, and their interest in how to play my music, in how to make it shine the brightest. I felt as if we had been collaborating since forever, as if we had played music, rehearsed and created together since forever. When other members joined the rehearsals, the sound naturally grew in strength. I was mesmerized by the powerful sound of the big band, and we were able to make it even stronger.

For me, this was a very important project because it happened after my six-month meditation retreat, because I had a completely free rein and, above all, because I felt absolute trust. In my view, the most important thing for any composer, arranger or conductor is for the orchestra to have trust in them. This is reflected in the musicians, in a way, following you blindly. This does not mean they are not masters of their craft, but rather that they let themselves go. The Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians let themselves go, and this touched me, moved me. I was awed by their great trust. I felt fantastic, and the creation and performance of the seven-part jazz band suite entitled *Ujjayi* is truly one of the most beautiful moments of my creative career. The possibilities and feelings of freedom when expressing oneself definitely contribute to this, but most of all, it is seeing and feeling that the musicians do not have a hard time at the rehearsals, and are playing your notes with the greatest joy. I really got the impression that the musicians identified themselves with the project. Clearly, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians are engaged in many projects throughout the year, playing an extensive repertoire, but during those two weeks of preparations and intense rehearsals, we breathed as one family.

I really wish we could repeat the *Ujjayi* project or dive into something new. I am truly grateful for the invitation and our collaboration in 2018. My experience with the band is deep, sincere, and utterly inspiring.

On its anniversary, I wish the Band all the best and that you keep on doing what you are doing.²⁷

²⁷ Written and edited by Maša Bertok Duh based on a voice recording



PHOTO: Bor Slana

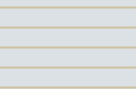
KARMINA ŠILEC,

Artistic director and conductor of Carmina Slovenica

From Marching Songs to Swing: this is the title we gave to a theatrical concert involving music that had united people in the anti-fascist rebellion, strengthened their optimism, and reinforced their belief in ultimate victory.

We were happy that the Slovenian Armed Forces Band and its big band joined the project integrating different musical expressions. From the music of pre-war Berlin and Paris to French and Italian Partisan songs, swing, and Slovenian Partisan songs, together with the two fine-tuned bands and their numerous soloists, we created the first programme of its kind in modern Slovenian history.

As excellent interlocutors to the choral music, the two bands autonomously co-created the evening's programme: from lyrical songs – as an expression of the powerlessness, cruel fates and suffering in war – to battle songs expressing pride, victory, glory, honour, awareness of power and so on, to humorous, ironic, and even cynical compositions. The ensembles were excellent in all registers.



With a positive creative charge, we performed a selection of legendary songs such as *Hej, brigade and Na juriš*, and enjoyed some playful swing with *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Kiss Me Good Night, Sergeant Major*, and *Je Suis Swing* in the second part.

The cooperation, relaxedness, discipline and creativity of the musicians of both ensembles of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band contributed greatly to the success of the project.

The annual airing of the video recording of the concert by RTV Slovenija has been bringing joy to a large audience for more than a decade, while the CD and LP records are lasting documents of that successful collaboration.

Congratulations on your anniversary.



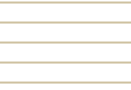
PHOTO: Sašo Papp

SIMON DVORŠAK,

Assistant Professor at the Department of Conducting at the University of Ljubljana Academy of Music

My first collaboration with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band goes back to 2011, when we recreated the musical *Man of La Mancha*. I was very pleased with the response of the musicians, who studied the materials with a highly professional approach and were very welcoming and supportive of the singers, who were encountering the genre for the first time. What made the project particularly satisfying was the fact that this was the first time a professional orchestra had participated in the production of a musical outside the institutionalized framework. In doing this, the SAF Band set a good example for the development of music theatre in Slovenia.

I was also extremely happy to receive the band's invitation to hold a masterclass for young conductors. Such experience is invaluable for students of conducting, adding value to the regular lectures and rehearsals of the Academy of Music. The course was followed by a concert in memory of the great maestro Carlos Kleiber, which certainly represented the highlight of the collaboration for the students.



I believe that, in addition to its fundamental mission, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band will remain open to various projects and collaborations, enriching the musical present and future of our country.

Heartfelt congratulations to the band on their 25th anniversary, and to many successful years to follow.

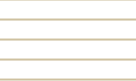


**Repertoire and
discography**

In its relatively short time of operation, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has managed to create a vast collection of recordings, particularly thanks to the longstanding support from, and collaboration with, the music production team of the national broadcaster, Radiotelevizija Slovenija. The band has also made many television and radio programmes with the national and local television stations, while also preparing shows in collaboration with foreign radio and television broadcasters. With the exception of the published sound recordings, which comprise diverse subjects, the major part of the band's discography remains unpublished, and is kept in the archives of RTV Slovenia and the Ministry of Defence. This is because most of the sound and video recording takes place live, directly in concert halls, at many of the more prominent music events. These concerts have very diverse programmes, as the band's repertoire usually includes, in addition to transcriptions of symphonic works, original works for wind orchestra or big band by Slovenian and foreign composers. Through its concert and recording activities, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band encourages composers and arrangers to explore the styles and mind-blowing sound potentials enabled by a modern ensemble of wind, brass and percussion instruments in innovative ways. This is why the band can pride itself on many premières and first performances of compositions on Slovenian stages, which often has to do with foreign guest conductors who draw the programme material from their national and cultural treasure troves. In terms of content, collaborations with foreign conductors usually include not only fundamental or new works by national composers, but also pieces of immense cultural or patriotic importance to their homelands. Thus, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band enriches the Slovenian music scene with new and fresh music by foreign and domestic composers, introducing European and global trends into our space and, above all, representing an important aspect of musical culture.

The band's score archive includes stylistically diverse compositions for the concert band, the big band, the protocol band, and various chamber ensembles written by domestic and foreign composers and arrangers, often including current and former Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians: Miklavž Ašič, Janez Benko, Edvard Bizjak, Aljoša Deferri, Gregor Gubenšek, Katarina Kroflič, Gašper Kržmanc, Aleš Ogrin, Aleš Stopinšek, Rudolf Strnad, Jani Šalamon, Andreja Šolar, Damjan Tomažin and Tomaž Zlobko, among others.

The score collection currently includes about 2800 compositions. The majority of them – more than 1000 – are works for the concert band, although the collection also includes more than 750 works for



the big band and more than 250 marches for the protocol band. The music sheet archive also contains more than 600 works for chamber ensembles and more than 60 hymns, which are indispensable for the band's protocol role. Special mention should be made of the works composed specifically for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, which, despite being based on different occasions and inspirations, represent meaningful milestones in the band's note chart collection and in Slovenian musical history.

COMPOSITIONS WRITTEN FOR THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND

JOŽE PRIVŠEK

***Svečani mimohod* (“Solemn Parade”, 1996), *Na modrem nebu* (“In the Blue Sky”, 1996), *Koračnica slovenske mornarice* (“The Slovenian Navy March, 1996), *Pod slovenskim praporom* (“Under the Slovenian Banner”, 1996), *Majska suita* (“The May Suite”, 1997)**

“When the Slovenian Armed Forces Band was formed, we did not have a music sheet archive, so we would borrow scores from the archives of other bands (particularly the Police Band) while also purchasing our own. During the first months of its operation, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band performed as a brass quintet with a percussionist. The first compositions written specifically for that ensemble were created by maestro Jože Privšek. Later, as the Slovenian Armed Forces Band grew, he adapted all of them to the larger number of musicians, with these marches becoming part of the standard repertoire over the years.

“Undoubtedly, the composition that left the deepest mark on the band's work over the first 25 years is *The May Suite*, maestro Privšek's masterpiece. The first time we performed it was at the celebration of the Slovenian Armed Forces Day at Kino Šiška in Ljubljana in May 1997. What was most memorable for me was the rehearsals, where Privšek was also present. He sat in the twilight at the back of the hall, barely visible, but you could feel his energy everywhere. We all played as one, and in the synergy our glances shot past the conductor towards the back. When we were done, he commended us and gave us a thumbs-up.” (Aljoša Deferri, 2020)

TOMAŽ HABE

“My first encounter with the musicians of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band was at the Ljubljana Secondary Music School, later the Ljubljana Conservatory of Music and Ballet, in subjects such as orchestral music, counterpoint, harmony or solfeggio. Among the first were the tubist Ljubo Vošnjak (who today holds a PhD), the percussionist Jani Šalamon (who today holds an MSc), and the clarinetist Aljoša Deferri. I did not count exactly, but I ended up teaching more than 27 members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band.

“As a composer, I met the Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians and their conductor, Milivoj Šurbek, at the premiere performance of the entire *Sinfonie Carnioli “Soudaška”* at the main celebration in memory of General Rudolf Maister on Saturday, 17 April 2004, at the Kamnik Arts Centre. Our next meeting was at the concert performance of my original score entitled *Hodil po zemlji sem naši* (“I roamed this land of ours”) on 4 April 2006 at the Slovene National Theatre in Ljubljana. That concert included as many as six première performances, three of which were given by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band: *Popotnik* (“The Traveller”), *Koračnica pesnika Vojanova* (“The Poet Vojanov’s March”) and *Tri pesmi o zemlji za glas, zbor in veliki pihalni orkester* (“Three Songs about the Land for Vocals, Choir and the Big Wind Orchestra”).

“That same year, together with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band and guests – the Viva Brežice Mixed Choir, Jože Vidic and the Katrinas trio – we prepared and performed a series of New Year concerts entitled “A Winter Fairytale”. With the exception of *Aleluja* by Emil Glavnik, all the pieces were adapted or composed by me. I wrote the adaptations of the virtuoso composition *Hora staccato*, and of *Les Patineurs* by Émile Waldteufel specifically for the band. The concerts took place on 18 December in Ljubljana, on 19 December in Maribor, and on 21 December 2006 in Nova Gorica.”

Popotnik (“The Traveller”, 2004/2005)

“A playful traveller roams Slovenia to the rhythms of swing. He begins his journey in Bela Krajina (*Spazila san Janka*), sets off for Bled and Bohinj in the Gorenjska region (*Po jezeru*) and then continues to the Primorska region (*Stu ledi*), suddenly finding himself in Prekmurje (*Če bi jaz bila fčelica*), returning to Gorjanci and finishing in the Gorenjska region. All the folk motifs used are varied. The composition

is performed in a relaxed manner, paying attention to the swing rhythms. Special emphasis is to be placed on the rhythm, so that the bass line is not too heavy and the entire composition expresses joy and spirit. A guitar is not compulsory, but you must have a percussionist with a good sense of swing music. The original was written for the excellent clarinetist Aljoša Deferri, who was the concertmaster at the time, and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Following its success, the composition was later adapted exclusively for orchestra. In that form, it was performed more than 22 times across Slovenia.”

Koračnica pesnika Vojanova (“The Poet Vojanov’s March”, 2006)

“The Poet Vojanov’s March is written as a concert piece. It has the characteristic form of a march but is larger in scope, which is reflected in the larger band and also makes its performance more difficult. The theme is adapted from *Završki fantje* by Emil Adamič based on lyrics by Rudolf Maister. Following the introductory fanfare, the march teems with optimism and happiness.”

Three songs about the land for vocals, choir and the big wind orchestra

V polju mak rdi (“The poppy reddens in the field”, 1973, 2006); *Polje* (“The Field”, 2006); *Zemlja* (“Land”, 1976, 2006)

“As the Slovenian Armed Forces Band plays an important role as one of the pillars of patriotism, I decided to write three songs for male vocals (tenor or baritone) and the concert wind orchestra. The result was a song cycle entitled *Three Songs about Our Land*. I wrote the lyrics for the first song myself. In the first part, I describe the beauty of nature and the environment, wondering later (in the chorus): ‘Why would we not love you, homeland, why do we not love you enough?’ For the second song, I chose the poetry of Tone Kuntner, who describes growth, for every seed contains the sprout of new life. The title is *Polje*, “The Field”. The third song, *Zemlja* (“Land”), consists of two parts. The first part sets music to lyrics by Črtomir Šinkovec, while the chorus was written by myself. The song was written as early as 1976. It had been performed by choirs with great success at the Camp of Slovenian Choirs in Šentvid, but I changed its instrumentation for this song cycle. In all three songs, the orchestra is accompanied by the rhythm section. The songs range from chanson to hymn. While I was creating them, I already had the great interpreter Oto Pestner in mind, who then also participated in the première performance.” (Tomaž Habe, 2021)

TOMAŽ ZLOBKO

To je ... (“This Is ...”, 2006) and Venček žejnih (“The Thirsty Ones’ Medley,” 2006)

“In 2006, when our band celebrated its 10th anniversary, the conductor, Milivoj Šurbek, made a facetious suggestion: ‘Write something, so we have something to play at the gala concert that is our own.’ The suggestion led to the creation of two compositions: *Venček žejnih*, a samba-rhythm medley of folk drinking songs and virtuoso instrumental interludes, and *To je ...*, in which the band casually sways to the rhythm of swing.”

Zimski sentiment (“The Winter Sentiment,” 2019)

“In *Zimski sentiment*, the music and lyrics are about things which are dear to us all, and which make us happy: the Christmas and New Year season, family, home. In all my compositions, there is space for excellent soloists, who are not in short supply in our band. I am proud and grateful that the compositions were performed by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, of which I have been a member since its beginnings.” (Tomaž Zlobko, 2020)

JAKA PUCIHAR, MSc

Venček slovenskih narodnih (“Slovenian Folk Songs Medley”, 2007)

I wrote *Venček slovenskih narodnih* at the request of the members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, particularly, of course, for the chamber ensembles. Having been an active external collaborator of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, and its big band in particular, for several years, I knew the musicians well and was impressed by the quality of their playing, so it was a joy and an honour to write an adaptation for them. The composition is written in a jazz style, often switching between instruments and sections, which creates melody. In parts, it is reharmonized and combined into a medley of various folk songs which interchange quickly, building contrast according to the mood.” (Jaka Pucihar, 2021)

MILKO LAZAR

Krpanove zgodbe (“Krpan’s Stories”, 2008)

“In 2008, I received a request from Slovenska filharmonija to write a new composition. They asked me to write something about Martin Krpan. As I did not want to depict his entire story in the composition, I tried to provide an abstract sketch of Krpan’s spirit, his immense energy, courage, fighting spirit, and never-ending travels. I gave the composition the title *Na Krpanovi poti*, “On Krpan’s Path”. The head of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band at the time heard the composition and asked me to make an adaptation for the concert wind band. This is how the composition *Krpanove zgodbe* was born. The composition is similar to the stories about Krpan in character and tempo. I weaved some themes from the original into it, reshaping them and adding new ones. But most of all, I tried to make use of all the capabilities of our elite Slovenian Armed Forces Band.” (Milko Lazar, 2021)

Bil je mož od foha (“He Was a Man of the Craft”, 2012)

“I knew maestro Bojan Adamič well. We often worked together, on the stage or behind it. He made a tremendous impression on me at our very first meeting. I think he was one of the greatest Slovenian music personalities. He was a free-spirited man with a clear and uncompromising way of thinking. Until the end of his life, his bright, witty and curious spirit guided him wherever something new, different, or unusual was going on. All I can say about my new composition for the concert wind band is that it is dedicated to Bojan Adamič.” (Milko Lazar, 2012)



Composer Milko Lazar after the première performance of his composition *Bil je mož od foha*

PHOTO: Foto Boni

JANI ŠALAMON, MSc

Ponosni nase (“We Take Pride”, 2008)

“Soon after graduating from the School of Music in the US in 2006, I had the idea to write a march. The work on the first sketches, melodic themes and harmonizations began as early as the autumn of 2007, and the march received its final form in 2008. I did not think about the title at first. It just offered itself because, at that time, the Slovenian Armed Forces performed promotional activities under the motto *We Take Pride*. The première performance of the march by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band took place on 6 January 2009 at a celebration marking the Day of the Force Command of the Slovenian Armed Forces in Brdo pri Kranju. On 19 March 2009, the Chief of the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces designated the march *Ponosni nase* as the official march of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

“At the time of its creation, the march and the slogan were best described by Military Specialist, Class XIV Simon Korez, the Slovenian Armed Forces spokesperson at the time: ‘The march *Ponosni nase* by Jani Šalamon is a composition involving many instruments which express our common motto as a reflection of our actions. At the same time, it is the composition embraced by the Slovenian Armed Forces as its official march. Pride is a symbol of the dedication to co-creating new solutions, and is a result of clear principles, indomitable will and courage. The march is given its character by the motto *We Take Pride*, which formed as an expression of the positive development of the Slovenian Armed Forces during its eighteen years of operation. Let this march and the motto unite all members of the Slovenian Armed Forces and fans of the music played by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, which has been proudly creating music debuts for years.’

“In 2009, I invited Mojca Krapež to contribute the lyrics for the song *Ponosni nase*. For the vocal version, I used two themes which occur in the first part of the march. On 15 May 2009, at the celebration of the Day of the Slovenian Armed Forces at the General Maister Military Post in Maribor, the vocal version for choir and orchestra was performed for the first time by the Carmina Slovenica choir and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. Later, I also wrote a version for mixed choir and orchestra, while an adaptation for an *a cappella* mixed choir was written by Jaka Pucihar, MSc.”

MARKO MOZETIČ

Al' polka al' samba ("Polka or samba", 2008)

"I wrote the song *Al' polka al' samba* for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band and the soloist Denis Novato on the diatonic button accordion. It combined polka and Latin-American rhythms. The band recorded the song at the Helidon Studio and performed it for the first time at a concert at the Studenec Summer Theatre, which was recorded and aired several times by RTV Slovenija." (Marko Mozetič, 2020)

RUDOLF STRNAD

Zrejšo je žito ("Ripe is the Grain", 2015)

"The intro of the composition had remained written by hand on an old piece of paper for several years before I finished it. The score waited in a studio cabinet until the time was right. I have always been drawn by this Prekmurje folk tune, and I have always heard it in a rhythm that is different from the one we are used to. The push to finish the piece came with our big band's collaboration with Vlatko Stefanovski. The central theme of the concert was folk ethno-music in new guises. I remember singing the new *groove* to Vlatko over the phone, as he was already familiar with the melody. As the concert performance was excellent, we later also issued a CD.

"The piece *Zrejšo je žito* is written in a 12/8 beat, while the roots and authentic patterns originate in Africa." (Rudolf Strnad, 2021)

IZIDOR LEITINGER

The Ujjayi Musical Suite (2018)

"*The Ujjayi Music Suite* is a sonic stroll across seven movements or ambiances, encouraging performers and listeners to search for and create their own story taking place behind the musical

facade. In creating this piece, I did not limit myself in the choice of music style, and I generally dislike talking about *compartmentalization* in art. There are only two music genres – the one that moves you, and the one that pierces the ear. I gave creativity free rein, giving preference to the spontaneity, surprise and richness of the musical palette enabled by the extended ensemble of our orchestra's big band. *Ujjayi* is a Sanskrit term meaning 'victorious breath' and symbolizes the heart's victory over the mind." (Izidor Leitinger, 2018)

GAŠPER KRŽMANC

Livertango (2015)

"A homage to Piazzolla's *Libertango*, *Livertango* was written specifically as an intro to the orchestral adaptation of that piece. The phrase from *Libertango* forms the theme of the piece, which is adapted to the minor twelve-bar blues structure merely by way of changes at the end of the phrase.

"The title deliberately differs from the original in one letter only, because the composition corresponds to the original in such a large proportion. In addition, this reflects the humour and lightness of the piece, which gladly extends Iztok Mlakar's²⁸ Latin dance repertoire from the cha-cha-cha to the tango.

"The composition was recorded and published on a Slovenian Armed Forces Band CD, where the soloists, in a standard jazz manner, play a few circles of the solo before finishing again with the theme, which then continues into Piazzola's orchestral composition."

Funky Monkey (2020)

"*Funky Monkey* is piece written for the rhythm section and later adapted for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's big band. The title was inspired by visits to the zoo and observing monkey shenanigans. The piece is part of an album called *Zookeepers*. The musicians are put in the roles of animal handlers, where the animals have very human qualities.

²⁸ Mlakar, I. (1992). *Beštija, Štorije in baldorije* [sound CD]. Ljubljana: RTV Slovenija, Založba kaset in plošč.

“The theme is written in a simple AAB form, with a fairly light and catchy melody. This is a common characteristic to all similar-sounding standards played by every jazz or rock musician in numerous jam sessions during the years of their training.

“The harmonic structure of the piece seems diverse and complicated at first, but the streak of dominant chords still gives free rein to the soloist, and it is up to them to decide how complex an approach they will take to playing their solo. Those with more skill can make use of every alteration, while the less skilled, including the author, can safely and convincingly navigate through all the harmonies with just a few pentatonics.

“The arrangement for the big band is fairly difficult. Due to the funk rhythm and many *kicks*, the band needs to be very precise in terms of rhythm. There are also several parts which put the band’s high register to the test. While this is not the most common indicator of a good arrangement, it is, if the piece sounds well, an indicator of a good big band, and the Slovenian Armed Forces Big Band certainly is one.” (Gašper Kržmanc, 2020)

ANA ZLOBKO

Variacije na Tartinijevo temo (“Variations on a Theme by Tartini, 2020)

“*Variacije na Tartinijevo temo* is a composition for solo clarinet and flute and for wind orchestra based on Tartini’s *Devil’s Trill Sonata* in G minor. In the piece, I freely make variations of the thematic material from the first and last movements of the sonata, often adapting this material and making it fairly distant from the basic melody. Within a colourful orchestration and, at times, a somewhat otherworldly atmosphere, the piece gives both soloists room to interpret the most virtuoso part of the composition.” (Ana Zlobko, 2020)

Composer Ana Zlobko after the première performance of her
“*Variations on a Theme by Tartini*”

PHOTO: Jadran Rusjan



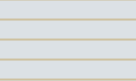


Colonel MICHAEL J. COLBURN

27th Director of "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, wind ensemble director and a Professor of euphonium at Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Throughout my tenure as Director of "The President's Own" U.S. Marine Band, there were many unforgettable experiences, but some of my favorite memories came from my opportunities to work with military musicians from different countries and cultures. Without a doubt, one of the best of these experiences occurred when I was invited by Lieutenant Colonel Jani Šalamon to conduct the Slovenian Armed Forces Band in a gala concert held on 3 April 2012. Although Lt Col Šalamon retired before the concert, he put me in the capable hands of Aljoša Deferri, Andreja Šolar, and Maša Bertok Duh, all of whom helped me to plan the program and organize my time in Slovenia. We agreed that the program should focus on American and Slovenian composers, as the musicians in the SAFB were eager to make American music under my baton, and I was equally eager to learn more about Slovenian music and culture!

For the American music, I first selected some traditional works by well-known composers, starting with music from John Philip Sousa, a musical figure who is especially important to the members of the Marine Band because he served as our 17th Director from 1880 to 1892, and it was during this



time that he earned the title, “The March King.” I decided to include Sousa’s most famous march, “The Stars and Stripes Forever,” the national march of the United States, as well as his “Hands Across the Sea,” a march that evokes a sentiment I found appropriate for our collaboration! In addition to including traditional marches by Sousa, I also programmed a piece by Samuel Barber, his “Commando March”, composed shortly after he was enlisted in the U.S. Army during World War II. Completed in 1943, it is his only march and, unfortunately, his only work for concert band. Another American composer who is well known internationally is Aaron Copland, and I selected a transcription of one of his orchestral favorites, “Four Dance Episodes from Rodeo”. It still amazes me that a “city boy” who spent his entire life in New York was able to create music that so beautifully evoked the dramatic landscape and lifestyle of the American West, and his style continues to influence composers, especially film composers, to this day. It was very interesting to explore these traditional American works with Slovenian musicians, and I was pleased to see how receptive they were to my suggestions about adjustments that could be made to their rhythm, articulation, and style in order to make these works sound more “American”. This is always one of the biggest challenges I deal with when I conduct traditional American works with musicians from other cultures, and I was happy to see that the Slovenians were so flexible!

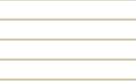
In addition to featuring the music of established composers, I wanted to include some newer works by living American composers, including Michael Gandolfi’s “Flourishes and Meditations on a Renaissance Theme”. I commissioned this work while I was Director of the Marine Band, and was very proud when it won the prestigious Sousa-ABA-Ostwald Award for outstanding band compositions in 2012. Early in the program I included one of my favorite concert openers, John Mackey’s “Asphalt Cocktail,” an exciting and humorous work that depicts a crazy taxi-cab ride through the streets of New York City. It was in these newer American compositions that I thought the talent of the SAF Band members really shone through. In particular, the brilliant clarinet playing of Aljoša Deferri and his section-mates, and the technical prowess of the entire ensemble, which was really put to the test in these exciting pieces of music!

One of the most interesting aspects of this experience was the opportunity to learn about Slovenian musical culture, both old and new. I was very pleased when I was informed that a new work had been commissioned from Slovenian composer Milko Lazar for this concert, “Bil je mož od foha”, and

that I would have the chance to lead the première performance. I had been unfamiliar with Milko Lazar's music before this event, but was immediately impressed by his unique ability to blend the influences of his classical and jazz training. I found his compositional style to be very attractive and accessible to the musicians and audience alike, and as always, appreciated the opportunity to lead a work with the composer present in order to receive criticism, suggestions, and encouragement. It was an absolute joy to conclude the program with Bojan Adamič's "Tra ta ta" march, a joyous and delightful work that, unsurprisingly, elicited a warm and enthusiastic response from the audience that reminded me of the effect of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" on American audiences! Whenever I hear such a strong audience response to a traditional march, it reminds me that military bands are in many ways guardians and ambassadors for musical traditions, and that this is one of our most important roles. That said, we can't just become musical museums, so I was pleased to see the SAF Band's commitment to commissioning new works from Slovenian composers like Milko Lazar. To remain relevant to a culture, I feel it is vitally important for military ensembles to maintain a commitment to both new and traditional music.

I will never forget the week that I spent working with the musicians of the SAFB. In addition to being incredibly talented, the musicians were an absolute pleasure to work with. Not only were they receptive to all of my criticisms, observations, and suggestions, they brought a wonderful spirit and sense of humor to every rehearsal. (It is often said that music is an international language, but I have also noticed that humor must be a subset of that language, because I've never worked with an ensemble that didn't enjoy a good joke!) Not surprisingly, our productive week of rehearsals led to an excellent concert, and it was a joy to lead the ensemble in such a beautiful and acoustically magnificent concert hall!

In addition to taking care of my every musical need, my hosts also ensured that my wife Nancy and I had the chance to experience many aspects of life in Slovenia. Before this trip, we knew virtually nothing about this country, so we were amazed by the beauty of Lake Bled and Bled Castle, the spectacular Postojnska Jama caves, the stunning architecture, and the variety of cuisines, including the most delicious Italian meal we've ever eaten anywhere – including Italy! We found Ljubljana to be an exciting and vibrant city and thoroughly enjoyed exploring its neighborhoods, parks, and open



markets. Although we came to Slovenia with limited knowledge of its history and identity, we left as ardent admirers of this unique and wonderful country.

As valuable and treasured as all of these musical and cultural experiences were, by far the best part of this trip was the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people and to make new friends. Our incredible hosts, the wonderful band members, and virtually everyone we met throughout Slovenia were unfailingly kind, generous, and interested in comparing stories about our respective countries. As I have always found in my travels, it is both amazing and encouraging to see how much we all share, not only in music, but in our personal lives as well. This trip served as a valuable reminder of the importance of extending “Hands Across the Sea”, for the experiences are often enriching, surprising, and memorable. I congratulate the musicians and leaders of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band on their 25th anniversary, and wish them many, many years of continued growth and success.

DISCOGRAPHY



CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CONCERT

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
FRANC RIZMAL

DUŠANKA ŽLIČAR, Soprano
MAGDALENA NAVODNIK, Piano

LIVE AT THE LAŠKO ARTS CENTRE (December 1997)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian
Armed Forces, audio cassette, 1998



SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND #1

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
FRANC RIZMAL

DUŠANKA SIMONVIČ, Soprano

STUDIO HELIDON (1998), LIVE AT THE LAŠKO ARTS CENTRE
(December 1997 and 1998), LIVE AT THE MARJAN KOZINA HALL,
SLOVENSKA FILHARMONIJA (October 1998)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces
in cooperation with the RTV Slovenija Publishing and Record Label,
CD, 1999



SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND: UNDER THE SLOVENIAN BANNER #2

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
ALJOŠA DEFERRI, JANI ŠALAMON, ANDREJA ŠOLAR,
MILIVOJ ŠURBEK

STUDIO AVSENIK, STUDIO H. D., STUDIO 14 (1998)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces in cooperation with the RTV Slovenija Publishing and Record Label, CD, 1999



**SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND 1996–2006 CD1
SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES DAY CONCERT 2002 #3**

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
ANDREJA ŠOLAR

LIVE AT THE MARJAN KOZINA HALL, SLOVENSKA FILHARMONIJA (May 2002)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces in cooperation with the Radio Slovenia Music Programme, CD, 2006



CD 2
OH, THAT SOLDIER DRUM #4

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND – BIG BAND
JANI ŠALAMON

ALJOŠA DEFERRI, JANEZ BENKO, GREGOR VIDMAR, ALEŠ SUŠA, Clarinet

RUDOLF STRNAD, Trumpet

NUŠA DERENDA, OTO PESTNER, Vocals

SILVESTER STINGL, Piano

KLEMEN KOTAR, Tenor saxophone

PRIMOŽ KRAVCAR, Trombone

STUDIO 26 RTV SLOVENIJA, GAS STUDIOS (March 2006)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces in cooperation with the Radio Slovenia Music Programme, CD, 2006



DVD – SELECTED CONCERTS 1996–2006 #5

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
FRANC RIZMAL, MILIVOJ ŠURBEK

BOŠTJAN BONE, MATEJ RIHTER, RUDOLF STRNAD, Trumpet

ALJOŠA DEFERRI, E-flat clarinet, clarinet

JURIJ HLADNIK, MATEVŽ NOVAK, BOJAN ZELENJAK, Clarinet

ANAMARIJA TOMAC, Piccolo

MILOŠ MLEJNIK, Cello

LEV PUPIS, Soprano saxophone

PRIMOŽ KRAVCAR, Euphonium

LIVE IN THE LINHART AND GALLUS HALLS, CANKARJEV DOM IN LJUBLJANA
(1998, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces in cooperation with the Radio Slovenia Music Programme and the RTV Slovenia Art Music Editorial Office, DVD, 2006



10 YEARS OF THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
MILIVOJ ŠURBEK

ALJOŠA DEFERRI, *Clarinet*
GREGOR GUBENŠEK, *Trumpet*
PRIMOŽ KRAVCAR, *Euphonium*
VOJKO VIDMAR, *Choreography*
URŠA VIDMAR, SINIŠA BUKINAC, IGOR ČUPKOVIĆ,
GAŠPER MALNAR, *Dancers*
SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES GUARD

LIVE IN GALLUS HALL, CANKARJEV DOM,
LJUBLJANA (October 2006)

Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Defence TV-Studio, DVD,
2006



BRASS AND PATINA

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
ANDREJA ŠOLAR

STUDIO HELIDON (February 2006)

RTV Slovenija Publishing and Record Label, CD, 2006



WE TAKE PRIDE #6

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
JANI ŠALAMON

STUDIO HELIDON (February 2008)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, CD and music sheets, 2006

FANFARE FOR RAISING AND LOWERING THE FLAG #7

ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE
GREGOR GUBENŠEK, Trumpet

STUDIO HELIDON (February 2008)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian
Armed Forces, CD, 2006



WE TAKE PRIDE

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
JANI ŠALAMON

BRDO PRI KRANJU (May 2009)

Ministry of Defence, Public Relations Service,
Multimedia Department, DVD, 2009



LIVE AT THE GALLUS HALL, CANKARJEV DOM IN LJUBLJANA, LIVE AT THE MARJAN KOZINA HALL, SLOVENSKA FILHARMONIJA (2007, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016)

RTV Slovenija Quality Programmes Publishing Service, double CD, 2016

**SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES
BAND: 20 YEARS – LIVE CONCERT
RECORDINGS (DOUBLE CD)**

CD 1

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
ANDREJA ŠOLAR

OKSANA PEČENY DOLENC, Violin
NUŠA DERENDA, Vocals
ALEŠ OGRIN, Piano
JAKA JANEŽIČ, Tenor saxophone
GAŠPER KRŽMANC, Guitar

CD 2

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND

GEORGE PEHLIVANIAN, JAN
COBER, MICHAEL J. COLBURN,
ISABELLE RUF-WEBER, JOSÉ
RAFAEL PASCUAL-VILAPLANA,
BART PICQUEUR, GUNTIS
KUMAČEVS

SANJA ROMIĆ, Oboe
PRIMOŽ FLEISCHMAN, Soprano
saxophone



SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BIG BAND FEAT. VLATKO STEFANOVSKI

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND – BIG BAND
RUDOLF STRNAD

VLATKO STEFANOVSKI, Guitar
ALJOŠA DEFERRI, TOMAŽ ZLOBKO, JAKA JANEŽIČ,
Saxophone

GAŠPER KRŽMANC, Guitar
DOMINIK KRANJČAN, Trumpet
JANEZ DOVČ, Accordion

LIVE AT CONGRESS SQUARE IN LJUBLJANA (June 2015)

RTV Slovenija Quality Programmes Publishing Service, CD, DVD,
2016



20 YEARS – SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND

SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES BAND
ANDREJA ŠOLAR, RUDOLF STRNAD, GREGOR VIDMAR

KATJA RIHTER, DARJA ŠVAJGER, NUŠA DERENDA,
ALENKA GODEC, NUŠKA DRAŠČEK, KATRINAS,
RUDOLF STRNAD – Vocals

LIVE AT THE GALLUS HALL, CANKARJEV DOM IN LJUBLJANA
(October 2016)

Ministry of Defence – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces,
USB-video recording, 2016



PHOTO: Rok Golob's personal archive





TOMAŽ GUČEK

Music editor, Music Editorial Office, Radio Slovenia – First Programme, RTV Slovenija

We can be proud of the fact that since the Slovenian Armed Forces Band's foundation in 1996, Slovenia has had another elite professional wind band in addition to the Police Band.

Regular performance of military duties aside, the band incessantly fills the radio archive, recording several concerts and performing various projects each year. What is particularly important is the band's constant cooperation with selected conductors of similar ensembles from other countries, who bring traditional musical ideas but also, more importantly, fresh and modern ones.

As the music editor of the First Radio Programme responsible for ensembles and wind bands, I am always delighted to work with the band, as I have a deep respect and appreciation for its activities and creative work.

I wish the band and its members – musicians – to persevere, grow and flourish on their path, and to preserve the tradition of military wind orchestras. These belong, one could say, to the oldest music ensembles, accompanying humanity in its defeats and, above all, its victories since ancient times.

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Reviews and Feedback

All the expressions of gratitude, criticisms, publications, ideas and impressions we receive are valuable and important to the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. We read them with gratitude, and below we present only a few of the many responses which perhaps best illustrate our mission.



Glasbeniki, ki znajo tudi streljati

Article entitled "Musicians who also know how to shoot", published in the daily newspaper *Delo*, 15 October 2016

“This time (14/10/2015) they performed at the Kozina Hall of Slovenska filharmonija in Ljubljana, notching up another success. It is always a performance by tested, and often additional, musicians who enrich our wind, brass, and percussion scene in one way or another ... Their perfections, although we have heard them before, have only cemented the position and role of our ensemble which, thanks to such achievements, has long ceased to be merely a protocol or a formal state ensemble. Let their mission, which is musical art, continue on several levels!” (Dr Franc Križnar in an article entitled Orkester Slovenske vojske s tujo dirigentko Isabelle Ruf-Weber, Revija Slovenska vojska, No. 11, November 2015)

“The band is well trained and mature in both its performance and its interpretation ...” (Primorske novice, 13 March 1998)

“Fascinating from a wind and brass, and from a musical standpoint, the evening clearly showed the band’s ambitions to go beyond its work duties and deliver artistically demanding accomplishments as well.” (Clarino, 7–8, 1998)

“The Slovenian Armed Forces Band performed on Monday; it was beautiful. Members of my band agreed. There are many bands like this in Cuba, but they were incredible. A very high-quality band.” (Paquito D`Rivera in an interview for the Večer newspaper, 9 July 1998)

ORKESTER SLOVENSKE VOJSKE PRAZNOVAL DRUGO OBLETNICO OBSTOJA

Poznajo ga doma in tudi že v tujini

Eden stalnih človekovih spremljevalcev skozi življenje je prav gotovo glasba. Ta posameznika spremlja od rojstva do smrti. Z njo se lahko izražajo žalost, veselje in vse, kar je vmes. Zato je povsem normalno, da je glasba tudi sestavni del vojaškega življenja. Težko si je predstavljati vojsko, kako na slovesnostih in različnih priložnostih koraka brez takta, ki ji ga daje glasba. Zato so imele, imajo in bodo imele vse vojske na tem svetu svoje godbe oziroma orkestre. Zakaj bi bila Slovenska vojska izjema?



Orkester Slovenske vojske na enem od protokolarnih nastopov

Peter Lukac Čuhala

“The first concert evening of the Mid Europe 1999” Article in the SAF Magazine, No. 170, 23 October 1998

festival in Schladming was opened by the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, which has developed into an elite music ensemble over a short period of time. This, of course, is mostly thanks to their conductor, Lt Col Franc Rizmal. The musical interpretation in Schladming exceeded all the expectations we had of this wind orchestra from Slovenia, and its conductor.” (Österreichische Blasmusik, 1999)

“With the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, we have gained another high-quality, not to say representative, ensemble of its kind. That says a lot considering we have quite a lot of excellent and elite wind ensembles.” (Peter Kušar in an article entitled Nastop Orkestra Slovenske vojske, Dnevnik, 14 October 1999)

“With its new conductor and an ambitious programme, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band has proved that it understands its professional mission in very broad terms.” (Pavel Mihelčič in an article entitled Lahkotni korak orkestra, Delo, 15 May 2001)

“This was the right Spanish selection for our fully booked band, for the good-spirited artists who, as part of an ensemble consisting of wind, brass, percussion, and other instruments, perform more than just professional duties. The very rhythmic works, in particular, created a very colourful atmosphere, making our concert stages even livelier... The full auditorium made it clear that experts and crowd alike knew how to reward the performance, which was interesting for everybody on both the professional and lay levels.” (Dr Franc Križnar reviewing a concert with the Spanish conductor José R. Pascual-Vilaplana in an article entitled Orkester SV s španskim dirigentom in glasbo Pirenejskega polotoka, Revija Slovenska vojska, No. 4, April 2015)

Razigrani glasbeniki s čini

**V Sloveniji imamo en vojaški orkester, v Avstriji jih je devet – Prvi koncert v Laškem
Kdaj predstavitev ljubljanskemu občinstvu? – Majska suita botra orkestra Jožeta Privška**

Simfonični pihalni orkester Slovenske vojske je star komaj dobri dve leti, pa ga ljubitelji tovrstne glasbe v Sloveniji in tujini že dobro poznajo. Vse več je mest in krajev, kjer žele slišati v njegovi izvedbi med drugim Gershwinove melodije, West Side Story in iz Privškovega opusa malo posebno Majsko snito, ki jo je kot orkesterov boter napisal prav zanj. Občinstvo na vsakem koncertu z bučnim aplavzom doseže, da trobentar praporščak Matej Rihter še enkrat zaigra Beneški karneval. Od vsega začetka orkester vodi dirigent in umetniški vodja podpolkovnik Franc Rizmal.

Article in the
Delo newspaper,
16 October 1998

“The evening of inspiring sound discoveries was rewarded by warm and extended applause from the audience, and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, letting itself be guided into the glow of the Northern soundscape by Kumačevs, once again demonstrated the maturity and excellence of its performance.” (Igor Krivokapič in an article entitled *Orkester SV začenja tretje desetletje delovanja*, *SAF Magazine*, No 3, March 2016)



Zanimivosti / Dan ljubezni / Na okoli 40 prizoriščih po Sloveniji je včeraj ob 18. uri zazvenela zimzelena pesem Dan ljubezni skupine Pepel in kri. Vseslovenski dogodek je sooblikovalo več kot 60 glasbenikov in zasedb, pripravil ga je KD Pihalni orkester Logatec ob 100-letnici svojega delovanja. V Ljubljani sta med drugim skupaj nastopila Policijski orkester, ki letos praznuje 65. obletnico svojega delovanja, in Pihalni orkester Slovenske vojske. x cr

Fotografija: Luka Cjuha

A piece in the *Dnevnik newspaper*, 24 May 2013



Načelnik Generalštaba Slovenske vojske
Chief of General Staff of Slovenian Armed Forces


Ljubljana, 18. oktober 2006

Člani Orkestra Slovenske vojske,

deset let delovanja je že čas, ko strnemo spomine. V tem obdobju ste bili uspešni promotorji Slovenske vojske.

Ob vašem jubileju vam z zadovoljstvom čestitam, še posebej ker sem imel pred desetimi leti priložnost verjeti v vas.

Sporočam vam, da me niste razočarali. Dosegli ste uspehe, ki bi si jih lahko želeli tudi ostali pripadniki Slovenske vojske.

*Generalpodpolkovnik
Albin Gutman*

Načelnik Generalštaba Slovenske vojske

“As always at this time of the year, there are many ceremonies taking place, where the 12th Guard Battalion and the Slovenian Armed Forces Band are indispensable. I was encouraged to write this by the ceremony marking Statehood Day. With your performance, you have once again contributed a large piece to the mosaic of reputation enjoyed by the Slovenian Armed Forces among the citizens of Slovenia. I am certainly proud and honoured to receive congratulations and praise from domestic guests and foreign diplomatic and military representatives after your performances.” (Major General Ladislav Lipič, Chief of General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Ljubljana, June 2003.

“To the Slovenian Armed Forces Band: 2013 is coming to an end and the holiday season is upon us. We are asking ourselves whether we have successfully achieved this year’s goals. You are among those who have contributed to the fulfilment of our goals, demonstrating you have a big heart. Your excellent performance marking the Slovenian Armed Forces 1st Brigade Day, when we remember the first line-up of our forces in 1990, made our anniversary so much richer. I sincerely thank you for your selfless contribution, and wish you a lot of happiness, success and moments of joy in the coming year.” (Brigadier General Miha Škerbinc, Commander of the 1st Brigade of the Slovenian Armed Forces, Ljubljana, 27 December 2013)

“Dear members of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, it is my great pleasure to congratulate and thank you for your successful participation in several local and national-level events. With your excellent, professional performance, you successfully represented the Slovenian Armed Forces, making a big contribution to its public image. Despite considerable staffing problems, I wish you success in your future work.” (Brigadier General Iztok Podbregar, MSc (who today holds a PhD), Chief of the General Staff of Slovenian Armed Forces, Ljubljana, 29 April 1999)

“Dear band members, last week we initiated this year’s 49th summer festival in Ljubljana with an event at Ljubljana Castle. You and your colleagues certainly contributed to the evening’s success (and we hope this will also be the case for future evenings), so allow me to express my sincere gratitude for the excellent cooperation. We wish you many fine festival moments at other events as well. We are looking forward to seeing you there.” (Darko Brlek, Artistic director and Head of the Ljubljana Festival, Ljubljana, 18 June 2001)

“Dear band members, the main celebration of Statehood Day was a huge success. It has been a long time since we have seen such an atmosphere and so much excitement at an official celebration. We thank you for your efforts and your contribution to the success of the event. We hope we will meet again soon.” (Ksenija Benedetti, Head of Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia, and Aleksej A. Loos, Secretary of the Coordinating Committee for State Celebrations, Ljubljana, 28 June 2006)

“In the name of maestro George Pehlivanian and myself, I would like to thank you for the assistance of the musicians of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band in the performance of Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 at the main concert marking the Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in

Brussels. The efforts of your musicians greatly contributed to the extremely successful performance of one of the most difficult works in the symphonic repertoire. At the same time, I would like to sincerely congratulate you on your selection of highly professional staff for the Slovenian Armed Forces Band.” (Damjan Damjanovič, Director of Slovenska filharmonija, Ljubljana, 3 April 2008)

“On 6th May 2008, you held an excellent concert and created an unforgettable evening to mark the 50th anniversary of the Maribor National Liberation Museum. Your performance was remembered and praised by many guests long after the event. I would like to express sincere gratitude in the name of the National Liberation Museum, and everybody who had the chance to enjoy your performance. I hope you will perform at our museum again in the future. You are always welcome.” (Assist. Prof. Dr. Aleksandra Berbih-Slana, Director of the National Liberation Museum, Maribor, 30 May 2008)

“Allow us to first extend greetings on behalf of the Celje Rotary Club – Barbara of Cilli, and ourselves. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for your performance at the Barbara of Cilli gala concert marking the 45th anniversary of the Slovenian Song Festival, which we organized, with your assistance and with great success, on 8 November 2007 at 7.30pm at Celjski dom. The concert, which we organized before the end of the calendar year, was our first major project as a newly founded, second Rotary Club in Celje. As this year marks 45 years since the first Slovenian Song Festival, we decided that the theme of the concert should be the period in Slovenian musical performance in which the Slovenian musical and national identities were greatly strengthened through unrepeatably evergreen melodies and lyrics which represent a part of Slovenian musical history that needs to be cherished and continued. A festival primarily involves people – composers and performers – without whom the Slovenian Song Festival would never have run for 45 years, nor would it continue to grow. So once again, thank you ... Naturally, the evening we spent together also had a charitable aspect, presenting aid activities aimed to help those affected by the recent natural disasters wreaking havoc across Slovenia (the total financial and material donations amounted to 12,000 EUR); in addition, donations worth 2000 EUR in total were presented to two socially disadvantaged families. Of course, the outstanding success of the concert, and the good deeds we performed together, would not have been possible without your assistance, for which we are sincerely grateful. We hope we can count on your cooperation in the future as well.” (Andreja Rihter and Ivo Umek with members of the Celje Rotary Club – Barbara of Cilli, Celje, 12 November 2007)

“On behalf of all members, volunteers and parents of children with special educational needs in the Vesele nogice society, I thank you for your efforts, and the work you have put into the concert for our children. For us, your help and efforts opened the door into the coming year, and into a better future for our children. Congratulations to everyone for the organization, excellent performance, and leadership. We thank each and every one of you for the work, words, and the confidence in our work. Your trust is not misplaced.” (Spomenka Valušnik, president of the Vesele nogice society, which assists people with physical and mental health disorders, Laško, 19 December 2013)

“On behalf of the Regional Red Cross Association in Koper, we would like to thank you for your noble gesture. A benefit concert like yours is very important for our organization and represents a significant contribution to the performance of social programmes for our young ones. We would like to sincerely thank you on their behalf as well.” (Irena Sirota Dobrila, president of the Koper Regional Red Cross Association, Koper, 30 December 2013)

“On Saturday, 6 September 2008, we had a pleasant event in the village of Golo near Ig, also thanks to you. We marked several significant anniversaries: the 500th anniversary of the birth of Primož Trubar, the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the Union of Slovenian Associations of Veterans and Participants of the National Liberation Struggle, and we remembered the brave people who, in difficult circumstances, founded the Ljubljana Brigade 65 years ago. We thank you for all your efforts to make the event a success. We would not have made it without your help, hard work and dedication.” (Janko Heberle, president of the Ljubljana Union of Slovenian Associations of Veterans and Participants of the National Liberation Struggle, Ljubljana, 30 September 2008)

“I would like to thank you for your assistance in the realization of the humanitarian project “A Night of a Thousand Dinners” in 2006, dedicated to demining two areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With your help, we have gathered the highest amount to date, which will, with the US double donation system, amount to 12 million Slovenian tolar” (Goran Gačnik, Director of the International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, Ig, 13 March 2006)



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
VELEPOSLANIŠTVO REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE
WASHINGTON
Obrambni ataše

Datum: 5. 10. 2007

Orkester Slovenske vojske Vojašnica Šentvid
g. Ljubo Vošnjak, poveljnik
Ulica bratov Komel 51, 1210 Ljubljana-Šentvid

Zahvala in čestitke ob nastopu pripadnikov ORKSV v ZDA

Spoštovani poveljnik, *Ljubo*

Dovolite mi, da izrazim moje osebno navdušenje in iskreno zahvalo ob več kot odmevnih nastopih pripadnikov Orkestra Slovenske vojske ob otvoritvi novega Veleposlaništva Republike Slovenije v Washingtonu, dne 29. 9., in v kulturnem domu Slovenska Pristava pri Clevelandu, dne 30.9. 2007.

Veseli me, da ste z visoko profesionalnostjo in izrednim programom tako uspešno promovirali Orkester Slovenske vojske in še posebej, da ste na teh dveh omenjenih nastopih, pred skupaj več kot 1000 prisotnimi, kot že mnogokrat doslej dokazali, da Slovenska vojska potrebuje in je lahko ponosna na svoj Orkester.

Še posebej naj se zahvalim tudi v imenu vseh prisotnih zdomcev, ki ste jim s svojima nastopoma prinesli tudi košček domovine. Kaj jim to pomeni, tako daleč od domačih in prijateljev, so največ povedale solze v njihovih očeh, ter vsi tisti burni aplavzi ob koncu posameznih delov vašega programa, ki so še dolgo odmevali v tako prijetnem večeru.

Lepo prosim, da to mojo zahvalo in čestitko prenesete vsem pripadnikom Orkestra Slovenske vojske, ter drugim, ki so z nesebičnim osebnim prispevkom pripomogli k tem velikim uspehu v Združenih državah Amerike, za kar se vam že v naprej tudi zahvaljujem.

Z obličnim spoštovanjem

polkovnik
mag. Andrej LIPAR
obrambni ataše

“Your contribution reflects your compassion for those whose life path leads through thorns and pain ... the pain of shortage, illness, loneliness, and humiliation. You have displayed empathy and made a contribution towards ensuring that the clouds and rain of sorrow will cease for everyone, and that warm, gentle rays of the sun will pass through them as if through a spider web ... that the sun’s rays of hope and happiness will appear to everyone. Our gratitude is even more heartfelt because we are all aware that these have not been the kindest and nicest of times for you either, yet you still did not turn a blind eye to the anxieties felt by the youngest among us.” (Students and staff of Polzela Primary School)

“Thank you for selflessly returning the spark into children’s eyes!” (Students and staff of Nazarje Primary School)



Foto: Tadej Rižnar

Sočasno zapelo skoraj 5000 otrok

Zborovski bum Sodelovali učenci več kot 150 slovenskih osnovnih šol

MARIBOR – Staro tribuno ljudskega vrta so včeraj do zadnjega kotička napolnili mladi pevci. Na stadionu je namreč potekal Zborovski bum, kjer je skupaj zapelo več kot 4700 osnovnošolcev. Ta edinstveni glasbeni dogodek so prvič pripravili konec lanskega šolskega leta, ko je na njem

sodelovalo 36 osnovnih šol, tokrat pa so bili v zboru otroci iz več kot 150 osnovnih šol iz vse Slovenije. «Glavni namen je dvigniti kakovost mladinskega zborovskega petja in motivirati otroke za petje v šolskih zborih,» je povedala Inge Breznik iz mariborske enote zavoda za šolstvo,

koordinatorja dogodka. Med cilji je omenila še domovinsko vzgojo, saj so šolarji – spremljal jih je Big Band Slovenske vojske – peli le slovenske pesmi, nekatere tudi triglasno. «Ostanite na poti glasbe, saj si z njo razvijate kreativnost in domišljijo,» je pevce nagovorila Breznikova. **M. R.**

“I thank you for your participation in the Zadobrova Primary School benefit concert. The performance of the Slovenian Armed Forces Big Band was outstanding. We received nothing but positive feedback from students and parents.” (Principal of Zadobrova Primary School)

“Splendid. We all had a great time, even the 60s generation moved their arms and legs. If only a concert like this took place each month, to recharge our energies backwards and forwards.” (Vijoleta, PE teacher)

An article in the *Delo* newspaper, 21 June 2013

“The paradise we all long for is where music, song, dance steps, positive energy, and love of music come together. It is my pleasure to say that this was what we experienced on Monday, 2 December 2013, when we gathered at the Vrana sports hall in Vransko. We hosted distinguished guests, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band’s big band, which helped create a wonderful longing and a positive atmosphere. Aside from their own programme, the musicians knew how to perform their pieces in harmony with our choirs and a soloist from the ninth grade, which makes us particularly proud.”
(Principal of Vransko-Tabor Primary School)

“It is wonderful to feel the common pulse of joy seeing the smiles on the faces of the youngest children and the oldest teenagers alike; feeling the relaxedness of your colleagues, from cooks to the principal, through their body language; and getting goosebumps from feelings of happiness, joy and satisfaction. In the swarm of hurry, tension and worry, our time stopped – the time you took from us in order for us to be part of this beautiful, priceless company that made it possible. THANK YOU FOR THE MOMENTS you enriched for us while at work – in the mosaic of our LIVES!” (Jana, music teacher)

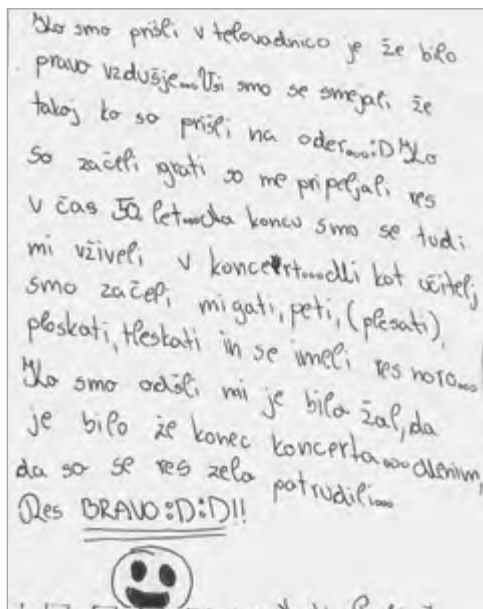
“A few days ago, you held a concert at our school in collaboration with our singers. All the students, teachers and parents were impressed by the performance. I have to admit I did not expect the concert would be so interesting. After the concert, I felt like I could listen to you for three more hours and it still wouldn’t be enough. The part I liked most was when you and our choirs sang a couple of famous songs from Slovenian youth films. We thank you for your visit and we hope that you respond to our next invitation in the same way, or better, and that you play some of your new songs.” (Anže, student)

Kranjska Gora, 04. 12. 2014

Super Vojaški Orkester

Na našo šolo je prišel zelo dober, obločen orkester. Pokazali so veliko znanja in trdega dela. Predstavili so nam pot skozi zgodovino glasbe. Od Elvisa Presleyja do Tine Turner pa vse do sedanje glasbe. To so naredili na zelo zanimiv način. Uka sem se zelo zabaval. Nisem verjel da tako dobro pejejo. Igrali so veliko vrst glasbil. Bili so zelo mirni in sproščeni. Igrali so kot, da bi bili na vajah, kot, da nat spleh ni bilo. Res so zainteresirani za to delo. Po mojem mnenju bi jih morali pokazati celi Sloveniji. Ljubo z celjo in veseljem. Kljub temu, da je vsak na svoj način najboljši, so skupaj še boljši.

ANŽE



“When I heard we were going to perform with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band at this year’s benefit concert, I had mixed feelings. I hadn’t known that the military had its own band, and I could not imagine the performance. I thought it would be a concert like the ones we organize every year at our school. My view changed as soon as I stepped into the hall at our school. I could tell by the military uniforms alone that this was not an ordinary orchestra, and that we were probably lucky to perform with them. At a rehearsal I asked myself whether we would be able to keep up with such an orchestra at all. The hall filled with people and the concert began. The orchestra started playing, and everyone was stunned, leaving themselves to the music. So did I. The band played very well and I think it should be known across the whole of Europe. The conductor seemed at ease with his role, skilfully singing his song and directing the concert. The audience felt at ease and

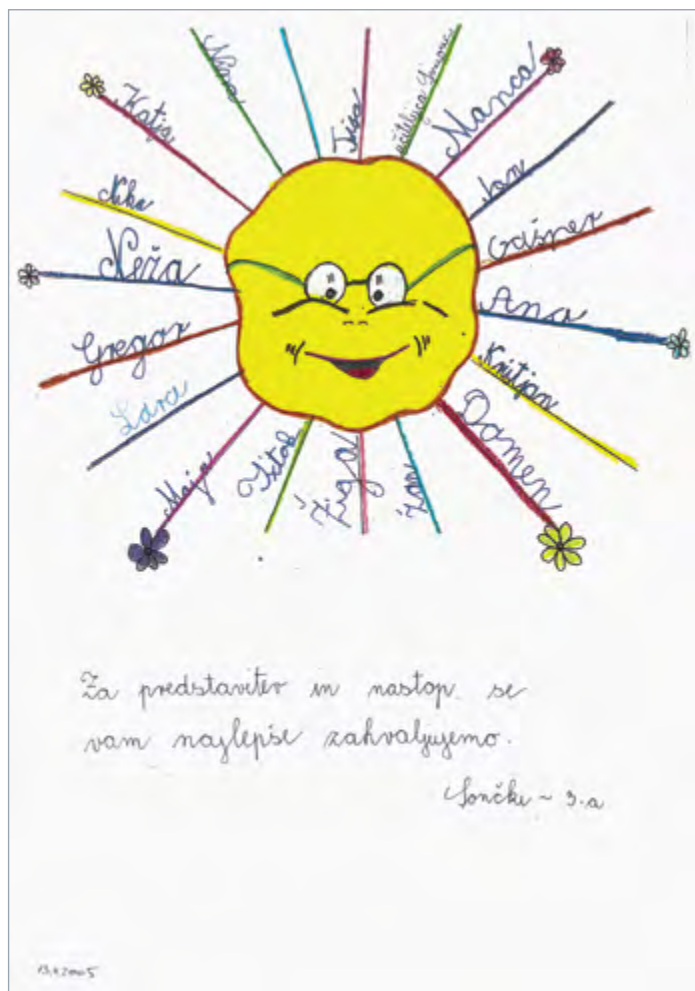
enjoyed the music as well. When we sang together with the band, everything was perfect, and it was a great honour for me to perform with them. I am grateful to them for taking their time to cooperate with us.” (Urša, student)

“Performing with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band’s big band felt great! At the concert, I got to know many musical styles I hadn’t known before. The last song, Wake Me Up by Avicii, was my favourite because it is so lively. The singer and the conductor sang the songs beautifully, and the band played very well. I saw many different instruments. It was nice to see so many parents, grandparents and other relatives attending and enjoying the benefit concert. My parents and grandma enjoyed the concert, too, as the presentation of different musical genres made them think of their childhood and youth. I’m glad our choir also had a good performance without major flaws. When the principal told us we had raised 700 euros, it made me very happy because I knew that we would use the money for a good cause. As this was the best benefit concert to date, I hope that the Slovenian Armed Forces Band will delight us by visiting our school again next year, and that the concert will be longer.” (Tara, student)

"I am one of the singers you performed with at the benefit concert on Tuesday. I had a good time and it was a very nice experience. The band played really well, but what I liked the most was that we had fun. I know I will remember this event for a long time. I would ask you, however, to make the shows a bit longer, because they are so interesting that they go by all too quickly. Thank you again for this unforgettable experience." (Daša, student)

"We, the students, listened to the big band of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. We expected them to play boring music, but they surprised us with music by Michael Jackson and Elvis Presley, which is still popular among young people. We also thoroughly enjoyed the newer, modern melodies. I recognized people from Trebnje in the band, and I know our teacher's brother is a member, too." (Janko, student)

"We expected a boring set of marches, but they surprised us with music from the 50s, 60s and 70s, and with contemporary music. The band began with music from a film whose title we had to guess. The band did not just play music but they also had two singers and excellent musicians who played different instruments and were completely in sync. After they played the last song, we clapped so hard they played another one. The songs brought many people to the stage, girls made a lively dance, and everybody clapped excitedly to the rhythm." (Jan, student)





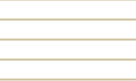
Behind the scenes

You have almost certainly come across the Slovenian Armed Forces Band as a listener. You may have been present at a protocol event, attended a celebration, a ceremony, a memorial, or sat in a concert hall enjoying the mighty sound of the band. Whatever the occasion may have been, you listened and watched a group of fine-tuned, orderly, confident musicians united in every way; in short, an ensemble that looked as if it had just stepped out of a bandbox. Yet behind the professional appearance, there is often more than meets the eye. Here, we are making an exception to remove some of the shroud of mystery with regard to the lives of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band members.

The work in the band is distinctly seasonal, with the number of performances exponentially increasing during the spring and summer period and towards the end of the year, while the less busy period is usually devoted to military duties. At the height of the season, the Slovenian Armed Forces Band members have a hectic work schedule involving a lot of time on the road, changing into one of the three prescribed uniform combinations on a daily basis, and maintaining our shooting and physical shape in addition to our musical skills. The keenly anticipated “shooting week” is followed by autumn, which, in addition to various colours, also brings the annual physical fitness test. Most band members enjoy running, and some train specifically for the annual test, while others run out of fear of the relentless number on the scales.

Whether they like it or not, regular physical activity is inevitable for the band members. Still, sometimes a piece of clothing just gives up. As if on purpose, this most often happens during or right before an event, and in our line of work, such a mishap is usually more or less public.





An individual can overcome such an embarrassment unfazed only through a great deal of confidence, humour, and support from their colleagues. It happens. All our uniforms are constantly subjected to many stress factors, from weather challenges to the physical characteristics of the owner and the tribulations of dry-cleaning. Despite careful handling and maintenance, their lifespan is limited, as attested to most clearly by the most important part of the uniform – the shoes. Famously the most important part of military uniform, footwear must always be properly cared for, clean, shiny and, therefore, thoroughly functional. In the military, shoes are really not to be trifled with, which is why band members, as paragons of military tidiness, devote special attention to them. Even so, in a hurry, it has happened that two non-identical or even two right shoes have found their way onto someone’s feet, and a pair of shoes even reached an age when both soles gave way at the most unfortunate of moments. Regardless of the combination of the footwear or its remnants, however, the shoes always have an impeccable shine.

The band plays, or at least tries to, in nearly all weather conditions. The rain and the sun cannot get to us, but they have a similar effect as we end up wet one way or another. Wind is a different story as it mostly causes trouble with the music sheets and the “flying hats phenomenon”. Temperatures below zero pose a special challenge as they have a distinct impact on the band’s attunement, the tolerability of the sound, and the ability to produce a controlled tone. Hail, however, has the opposite effect, as it plays the instruments all by itself. Written from experience.





The Slovenian Armed Forces Band travels a lot, and its members are perfectly adapted to life on the road. We pass the time on the bus talking, reading, playing board games and instruments, singing, or rooting for our athletes, while some also make use of this time to work. We also eat and sleep during late evening trips. We are always prepared for potential surprises on the

road, which are neither predictable nor rare. Occasionally, we are only surprised by a malfunction of the air conditioning, a strong smell of fuel or an imminent fire; more often, the surprise is a broken-down bus. Sometimes, we are cheered up by a jolly driver, a bus stuck between our headquarter buildings, or a breakneck, rally-style descent from the Pohorje plateau. Only rarely do we leave someone at a station; the question “Is that everyone?” is, despite obvious downsides, surprisingly effective. The bus has almost become a natural habitat for us because it is best suited to the band’s transport needs. Turbulent helicopter rides are not meant for every day, the train did not turn out very well, and if we really need to fly, it is only on rare occasions – which is probably good because the things we have experienced on the bus, we probably would not have survived on a plane.



The Slovenian Armed Forces Band musicians possess the excellent ability to find a reason to smile in every difficult situation or circumstance, occasionally making the day a little nicer for the office staff as well. Our beloved administrator, who knows all the answers, gets us out of every trouble, and is like a “second mum” to us, remembers: *“Years ago, in a conversation about retirement, a colleague suddenly asked me, jokingly: ‘Please find out when I’m due to retire.’ Without thinking too much, I immediately called the department which deals with retirements and asked how many years that particular member had left before his retirement. I got a laughing response: ‘Let them get a commendation for ten years of service first!’”*



A musical birthday card

“I entered employment in the Slovenian Armed Forces Band on 1 July 1996. Apart from myself, there were two employed musicians in the unit at the time, Neža Gruden and Marjan Petrej. The State Secretary at the Ministry of Defence and the godfather of the Slovenian Armed Forces Band, Dr Boris Žnidarič, invited us to a reception at the ministry, wishing us good luck at the beginning of our musical adventure. Although the challenges were daunting and the light at the end of the tunnel not yet visible, we began inviting musicians to auditions with great eagerness and expectation. We wanted to assemble an excellent team of musicians, of good-minded people who would lead that young musical body to success and put it on a par with professional Slovenian orchestras. The auditions took place in the hall of the Ljubljana Vič-Rudnik Music School under the watchful eye of the board of which I was part. One of the most memorable moments in those auditions was the performance of a trumpeter who was not well prepared and utterly failed to meet the standards we had set for admitting a musician into the band. The performance of the very first part, accompanied by the piano, was tragicomic. Mistakes kept piling up, the tone sounded like anything but the trumpet, and the pianist was so embarrassed she could not wait for the mess to be over. When the piece was finished, she asked all in one breath: 'Is that it, can I go now?' Before we could say yes, she took her music sheets in anger and stormed out of the hall. The situation was so incredibly funny we could barely keep our composure, our faces completely flushed. Then came even worse orchestral excerpts. We could not wait for the conductor to stop the audition, as it was clear the candidate was not going to pass it. We were in pain from holding back laughter, but Franci Rizmal still wanted to hear Ravel's Bolero. This was the highlight; Jože Privšek sank into the chairs, trying to cover up laughter, Ljubo Vošnjak started to crack, as did the others. Arriving at the part of the solo written in a high pitch, the candidate could not even produce the tone, straining himself and looking angrily at his instrument as if something was wrong with it. That was the last straw. We covered our flushed and teary faces and nearly burst out laughing when Franci told the candidate he would be informed of the result by post. When the poor man left the hall, there were a few seconds of silence before we were finally overcome with laughter which lasted several minutes. Franc Rizmal used to record the early auditions, but he ran out of tape right at that candidate's performance. A pity.” (Aljoša Deferri)

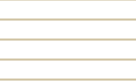


“Our second major performance of that year was with the big band ensemble at the officers’ ball in the Festival Hall in Ljubljana. For the joint rehearsals, we hired the Helidon studio in Šentvid, which remains our work space for the bigger ensembles even after 25 years. This was my first time playing the baritone saxophone in the big band. As we did not have orchestral instruments (some used their own and were paid rent for them), they had to be borrowed. I got an older instrument which was not very responsive. With a lot of practice, we nevertheless managed to give a professional performance, and officers’ balls became a regular event until 2008.”

In 1997, we bought new clarinets and saxophones, which led to the following mischievous event. Prior to the purchase, I travelled to France, to the headquarters of the company of Selmer in Paris, where I tried out the instruments. Due to the large number of instruments (19), I stayed in Paris for a whole week. It was my first business trip abroad, and I had to write a report upon my return. No one had briefed me on how detailed the document should be, so I decided to describe the trip chronologically. For each day, I also specified my lunch break. I sent the report to the General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces, where it was also reviewed by the Chief of Defence, Lieutenant General Albin Gutman, who circled my lunch breaks in red ink and wrote a remark: ‘Luckily, he didn’t submit the menu as well.’” (Aljoša Deferra)



Fans in Planica



The excellent conductor Jose Rafael Pascual-Vilaplana was our guest several times. His rehearsals were always very tasking, but also productive. At rehearsals, he would casually make wise musical remarks, which were always masked by humorous context. There is one that particularly “stuck”:
“First solfeggio and then close your eyes.”

“I can clearly remember my first concert with the Slovenian Armed Forces Band. It was a few years before my employment, when I was still a substitute in the band. One of the compositions involved other performers, whose choreography had been carefully prepared based on the music, but it was difficult to coordinate both at the rehearsals. The time of the concert came; we played fantastically; the choreography entry was great; we were about to end the song and the conductor should have stopped conducting. But he did not. Clueless, we quickly glanced at each other and continued playing, even though we had nothing more to play. There were no more music sheets, and all we had left was to repeat the final phrase and a few measures. Luckily, the final part of the song was written fairly chaotically in terms of harmony, so you could not really notice that each of us had extended it according to their own judgment. I will never forget that moment of realization, mixed with terror, on the conductor’s face when he grasped what had happened; or, a few moments later, his eyes wide open, clearly indicating an energetic and decisive final swing marking the definitive end to the piece. What was most amazing, however, was that we finished completely simultaneously with the choreography, as if that was how it should have been. We hadn’t played it so well at any of the rehearsals. The audience was visibly impressed, and we were ecstatic.” (A Slovenian Armed Forces Band musician)

During visits by foreign conductors, the rehearsals are, naturally, mostly conducted in English, providing an excellent opportunity for the musicians to enhance their foreign language skills. In spite of that, things sometimes get “stuck” or lost in translation.



A splendid French conductor spoke excellent English, but was of a modest and quiet demeanour. The rehearsals were peaceful and there was not much talking, but there was a lot of appreciation of the beautiful music. As is customary when working with a band, the conductor asked a group of musicians to play a specific part of the composition by themselves: “*Ons and app, please.*” Since no one heard their instrument having been mentioned, no one responded. Not until the maestro had patiently repeated his request several times did it dawn on one of the musicians: “Horns and harp! The letter h is silent in French!”







Every once in a while, a conductor concludes that since the Slavic languages belong to the same family, we should be able to understand their mother tongue; after all, the languages in this part of Europe are very similar. Thus, we listened to instructions in Czech for a week, nodding and shaking our heads in response, thinking the conductor couldn’t speak English. The maestro liked to speak a lot and quickly, explaining what he wanted and what he did not want with special emphasis. This often put us, the musicians, into a difficult position: “Does he want us to play piano instead of forte – or the other way around?” Apart from the music terms we all understood, it was not always easy to discern what he wanted to say based on a plethora of Czech words. We somehow navigated through a week of linguistic barriers to reach the day of the concert and the sound rehearsal, after which the conductor offered us a few words of gratitude. He did it in shockingly fluent, clear and exemplary English.

ZASEDBA ORKSV NA
PRIMOPREDAMI SANITETNIH VOZIL
V VOJ. SENTVID 8.5.03






VENTILATOR: ALJOSA DEFERRI

FL. BERTOK DUH 




KL. BENKO... 
BERLAK T. 



VIDMAR... 
VINŠEK... 
MADJČ... 
CIMERMAN... 
LEPEZER... 
STOPINŠEK... 

SAX = KROFLIČ... 

TROBENTE: ŽONE... 
BERLAK I... 
STENAD... 
ŠTEBŃH... 
GUBENŠEK... 



KORNI: BIŠTAK... 
TOVŠAK... 
IVAN... 
ŽEMČJAK...  HOMO SILECANUS

POBAVNE: SIMONIČ... 
TEMENT... 
ULAGA...  PIM

BARTON: TOMAŽIN...  Buegos
KRAČAR...  x 16


TENOR: CEJ



TUBA: REČNIK... ?
KOŠIR... 

TOLKALA: ~~BERLAK~~
SNOJ... 

POVŠE... 

KONJATEJ... 

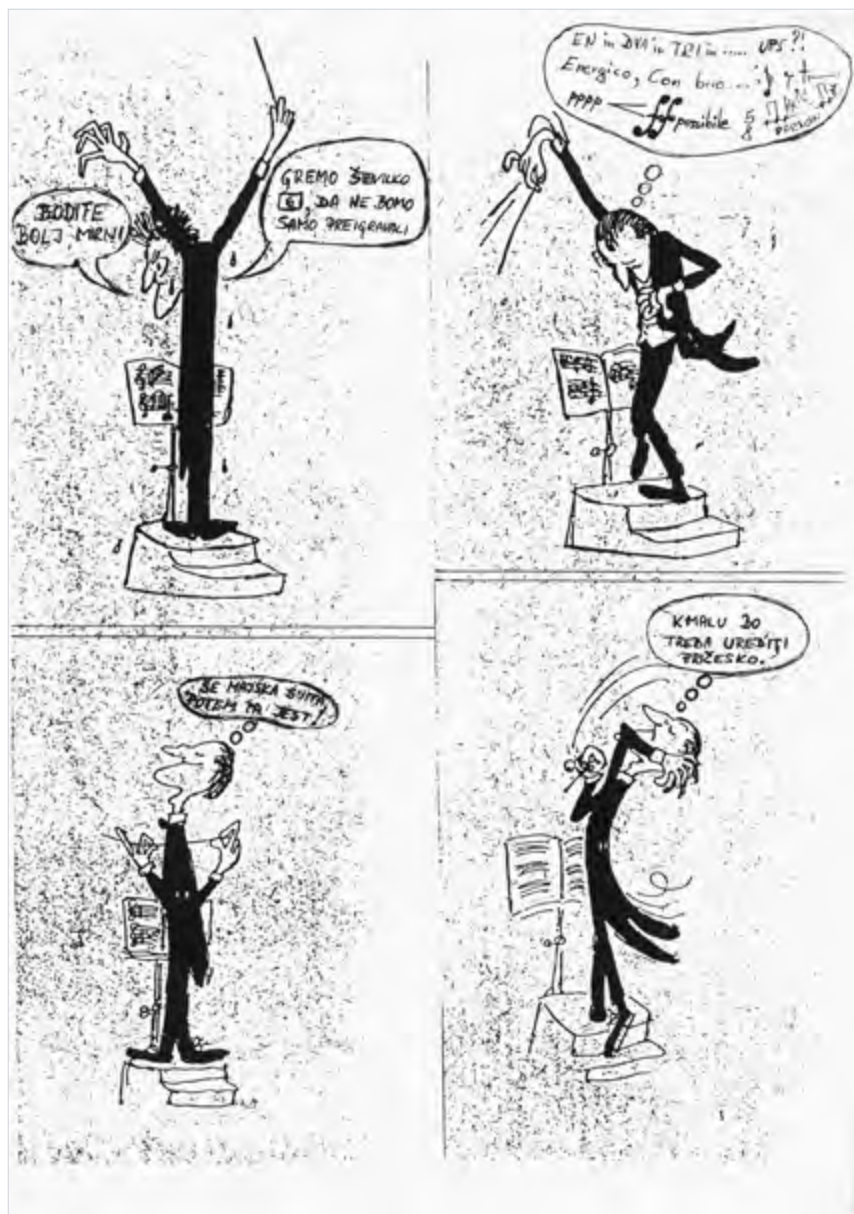


“When rehearsing for the première performance of the May Suite, I sensed extraordinary gentleness and peace at two harmonic passages in the first part of the suite, as if something had spread out, relaxed and nearly stopped ... During the break, I said to the maestro, who had not been present at the rehearsal: ‘Maestro, you’re a gentle person ...’ Giving his characteristically wry smile, slightly cynical but cheerful nonetheless, his eyes flashed and he said: ‘Well, you know, I let it slip sometimes ...’ Then we both laughed cheerfully.” (Franc Rizmal)



Humorous drawings by Gerard Hoffnung²⁹ with added comments by the clarinetist Aljoša Deferr

²⁹ Hoffnung, G. (1957). *Der maestro*. München: Langen/Müller.











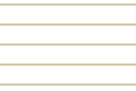
The final scene of a witty event script

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

KFOR (Kosovo Force) – Peacekeeping mission in Kosovo

MoD – Ministry of Defence

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

SAF Band – Slovenian Armed Forces Band

SAF GS – General Staff of the Slovenian Armed Forces

ORF (Österreichischer Rundfunk) – Austrian radio and television

Lt Col – Lieutenant Colonel

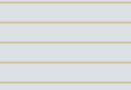
1SG – First Sergeant

SFC – Staff Sergeant

USAFE – United States Air Forces in Europe



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*“It doesn’t matter whose credit it is; what’s important is
that you keep doing this at the highest level!”*

Ljubo Vošnjak, on his retirement

