

Change², the second Belgrade Design Week, will attract the attention of the world's media to the Serbian capital. Over 100 guest celebrities, including the 10 most in demand, were at the first Week. This year too, the main aim is to use creativity as a stimulus to promote development in an area trying to recover from the tragedies of the 1990s.

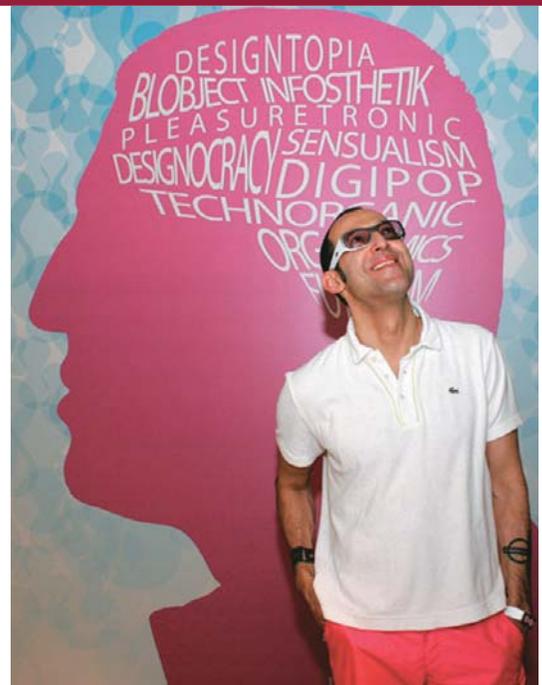
In Belgrade the design of Eastern Europe is born

EVENTS

by Sanja Lucic

The top creative minds in advertising, design and publicity, consultants, creative directors, art directors, leading publishers, top names in tourism and publishing, brand creators and architects will again meet in Belgrade for the international event known as the Belgrade Design Week (BDW). The occasion, from 7 to 12 May 2007, will bring professionals from many countries to Belgrade, giving it a claim to be the design capital of Eastern Europe. Six days of pure energy, creativity and innovation will once more attract the attention of the creative world to a city striving to rank alongside the long-established "Meccas" of design such as Milan, London and New York. The success of the first Week in 2006 confirmed the need for such a high-level multi-media event in this part of Europe.

Last year, thanks to the presence of more than 100 world-famous celebrities and a large number of sponsors, the event was covered by both TV and press. The 20 leading creators of contemporary brands, the world's 10 most intriguing designers, high-end businesses from all over the region, marketing, media and fashion experts were all there. The first BDW was attended by guests who would not have been out of place at the Milan Design Week. When the organisers are asked "How come it was such a great success?" there are two key factors in their reply: there is no other event of this type at this level anywhere between Milan and Istanbul; and "the era of the great



European metropolises is fading and gradually giving way to the big 'exotic' cities like Belgrade" – this second fact being confirmed by the presence of the international visitors.

During last year's event, in various locations across the city, the public had opportunities to get together with Christian Schroeder from Landor, Fernando Gutiérrez from PENTAGRAM, Karim Rashid, Luigi Colani, Eugenio Perazza from Magis, Italy (one of the sector's leading companies whose distinctive image – simplicity combined with cutting-edge technology – has created products that are now part of permanent

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belgrade design week 2006

BRAND SCAPING SERBIA

Apr. 16 Sunday

Apr. 17 Monday

Apr. 18 Tuesday

Apr. 19 Wednesday

Apr. 20 Thursday

Apr. 21 Friday

Apr. 22 Saturday

09:30 h a

15:00 h b

20:00 h c

20:00 h d

22:00 h e

23:00 h f

00:00 h f



Jelovac: Let Me Explain Change²

Jovan Jelovac, architect, designer and one of the most important brand consultants in Eastern Europe, Creative Director of *trans:east brandvertising*, in Serbia, has carried out many programmes and campaigns for large Serbian companies. He also works on international campaigns for Imperial Tobacco UK, Hoffmann La Roche, Swiss, Inteko and Rus and is a member of the brandvertising network covering Berlin, London, Budapest, Zagreb, Bucharest, Sofia, Nicosia, Vienna and Moscow. Each year, with different partners, he co-produces international projects, TV series, films and the Belgrade Design Festival.

In September 2003, Jelovac was the only representative from Eastern Europe at the World Creative Forum in London. One of the people he met in the English capital was Wally Olins (the man who introduced the term “branding” to Europe in the 1970s), who included one of Jelovac’s projects in his book *ON BRAND*, which came out in 2004 and became the standard work all over the

collections in New York's MoMa and London's Victoria and Albert Museum); Ross Lovegrove, whose work includes exhibits in the Guggenheim, Ben Evans (London Design Festival), Gaetano Pesce, Christophe Muesser, McCann Erickson. Round tables, debates on the future of the four sectors important to Serbian industry (trade, the food & drinks industry, tourism, entertainment) and two days specially devoted to branding prove that, after a stormy past, Belgrade is now ready to become the centre of Eastern Europe and the hub of developments in planning, culture, education, business and industry. Belgrade Design Week 2007 will be organised, as it was last year, by brand consultants trans:east, as a non-profit project in association with Mikser. The creator of the festival, Jovan Jelovac, explains that "in a region with 50 million inhabitants and Belgrade at its centre, it is very



_Belgrade Design Week (left: the 2006 programme) was a big success starting from its first edition, in which 20 of the biggest contemporary brand creators took part

world. The gesture told Jelovac that even after 20 years of isolation Belgrade and Serbia could also be known for something useful, creative and intelligent, and could become the driving force of the new economy, with new strategies and creations, new ways of communicating, a new spirit, style and taste.

Why choose Belgrade?

It may seem illogical to dare to hold a design, advertising and branding festival in a poor and traumatised country, a festival of disciplines at the highest levels of contemporary communication related to contemporary ways of doing business, but I was sure that the spirit of Belgrade in the 1970s had survived. Because I was so convinced, today we have a festival that is unique because it brings together the best creative minds in the world for the purpose of education rather than production, and that makes this festival a workshop for ideas, concepts and reflection, with the possibility of choosing to influence the direction in which a whole generation of

communications and business experts will develop.

What does such a festival bring to Serbia?

If everyone in Belgrade and Serbia wants to be part of the world then we must visit Change² to study, to take notes and to dream... and finally, to make use of this experience because this is the only possibility we have for change. Some of the best communications experts, people who are in a position to change the world by creating new global economies, will be teaching at this festival. The Design Week will provide an ideal window to raise awareness of the changes; those who shape the new world by producing global changes at every level will be there. We are demonstrating that it is possible to become involved in current global trends and how to succeed in an increasingly competitive local and global market.

What sort of impressions and reactions do the participants have?

The guests at last year's BDW such as Peter Saville, Jan Rijkenberg, Eugenio Perazza, Kessels

important to use design and creativity to explain the changes taking place in the world. New means of communication, new democracies, new ways of thinking mean new lives and new possibilities, especially for the smallest populations and the new nations. If the world wants Eastern Europe to be successful then it must come to Belgrade to show us what is good and what we can do in the near future”.

The aim of Belgrade Design Week is not just to present a creative process, but to give it a social context, to investigate the prospects for business related to design, to ensure that design becomes the tool that will allow some economies to become competitive on the world market. Design as a means of communication, an aspect which, after almost a decade of isolation, is extremely important for Serbia.

This year, many leading businesses such as Swarovski, Alessi, Gaia & Gino will share their experiences with the visitors. Today's most powerful women in the worlds of design and architecture – Zaha Hadid, Winka Dubbeldam, Matali Crasset, Hella Jongerius, Patrizia Urquiola – will explain what is so revolutionary about the female



_Wally Olins, who introduced the term “branding” to Europe in the 1970s, included one of Jelovac's projects in his book *On brand*, standard work all over the world



Kramer, Landor, Miles Newlyn, Dejan Sudjic, Metadesign, Ben Evans and the others set an extremely high standard; we brought all the great names together in one place. This year we'll do even better. Just look at the programme! All the guests have been struck by this city's creative energy. They want to be invited... every time. What more can I say?

What tangible results emerged from the first Design Week?

In concrete terms, 1000 young people were given the chance to learn and 100 of the world's creative leaders can testify to the fantastic energy there is in Belgrade. Above all, we are happy because the festival brought home some important professionals who work abroad but whose roots are

_Jovan Jelovac (standing) is an architect and designer and one of the biggest brand consultants in Eastern Europe together with leading Seventies designer Wally Olins. They met at the World Creative Forum in London in 2003

creative principle. Then there are Rem Koolhaas, the Droog Group, Ora Ito, the Wieden & Kennedy agency and BSUR Consulting, as well as educational conferences like Change², 50 exhibitions and presentations in as many locations in Belgrade, as part of the Beograd 2 cultural festival.

This year's programme is divided into 3 areas: Innovation²/Revolution²/ Evolution². The conference also focuses on innovative publishing creativity, with the participation of *Frame*, *Domus* and *Creative Review*. With Holland as a partner, the opportunity to share experiences with a country with a long tradition of design is guaranteed. Innovation and constant research are the keys to success.

In the 1970s Belgrade was the city of the Festival of high culture. At the time, it was still a metropolis in this part of Europe; in areas where the battles for freedom in the artistic movement of Social Realism had taken place, Belgrade was able to bring together New York's underground theatre, productions by the Russian State Theatre and the dissident theatres of Poland and Czechoslovakia. It was a place where 10,000

or more people attended the premieres of films by unknown directors. After so many years of isolation, the city is trying to become itself again, despite the fact of what happened in Kosovo, despite unemployment, corruption, political radicalism, unprincipled coalitions and the visas that are obligatory if one is to see the rest of the world. Belgrade Design Week is one of the few international presentations, if not the only one, that is so well defined, logical and simple to use immediately to help design the future of the city and the nation. Step by step. To enable it to regain its status in the world. ■■■

here, such as Konstantin Grcic, Dejan Sudjic and Sasa Lekic. After 20 years, they came back to Belgrade to find a dynamic cultural scene, positive energy and highly educated and highly skilled young people.

To give you a few figures: 100 creative designers, 6 days, 5 events, 3000 visitors on the Design Superstars day, 800 visitors to every exhibition (2 exhibitions a day during the Beograd2 event), 200 journalists and over 1000 articles about the festival. Among the foreign press who covered the event I can think of the "Financial Times", "Icon", "Creative Review", "Grafik", "Frame", "Blok" (Czechoslovakia), "Kak" (Russia), "Egoist" (Bulgaria), "Oris" (Croatia), "Hisa" (Slovenia). This year "Creative Review" (UK), "Domus magazine" (Italy) and "Frame magazine" (Netherlands) will also be there.

Which Serbian designers are known in other parts of the world?

Sasha Lakic in Paris, Branko Lukic in San Francisco, Vaso Perovic in Ljubljana, Darko Mladenovic in Paris.

And design in Serbia?

The greatest progress has been made where it was easiest: in the field of communications. Advertising and design companies are very successful and are hard at work. Another favourite is the brand name sector, whose experts are also the first to succeed in exporting their knowledge. Product and fashion designers have fewer possibilities because they get little support from industry: Serbian industry is based on services, not innovations. Hence one of the BDW's primary tasks is to create a platform that will work in various directions: to make our designers known and to put designers, the economy and ideas in touch. At the same time, if we look at the Italian model, none of this will work unless the mass media adopt design as a theme; they are very important in strengthening awareness of the subject and their support in Serbia is crucial. In that sense, we believe that the Belgrade Design Week is itself a kind of medium.