

„Rolling seats for understanding“

Starting position

Today’s situation of Gorizia and Nova Gorica is still determined by the Transalpina railroad line as symptom of the historical border between Italy and Yugoslavia. This is the most significant barrier for the future urban development connecting both cities. For this reason, *Rolling seats for understanding* focuses precisely on the railroad line as a site for mutual understanding.

The project expands the competition brief for serving as example for a “peace mission” - also for other geographical contexts in today’s disturbing times of increasing conflicts and wars worldwide.

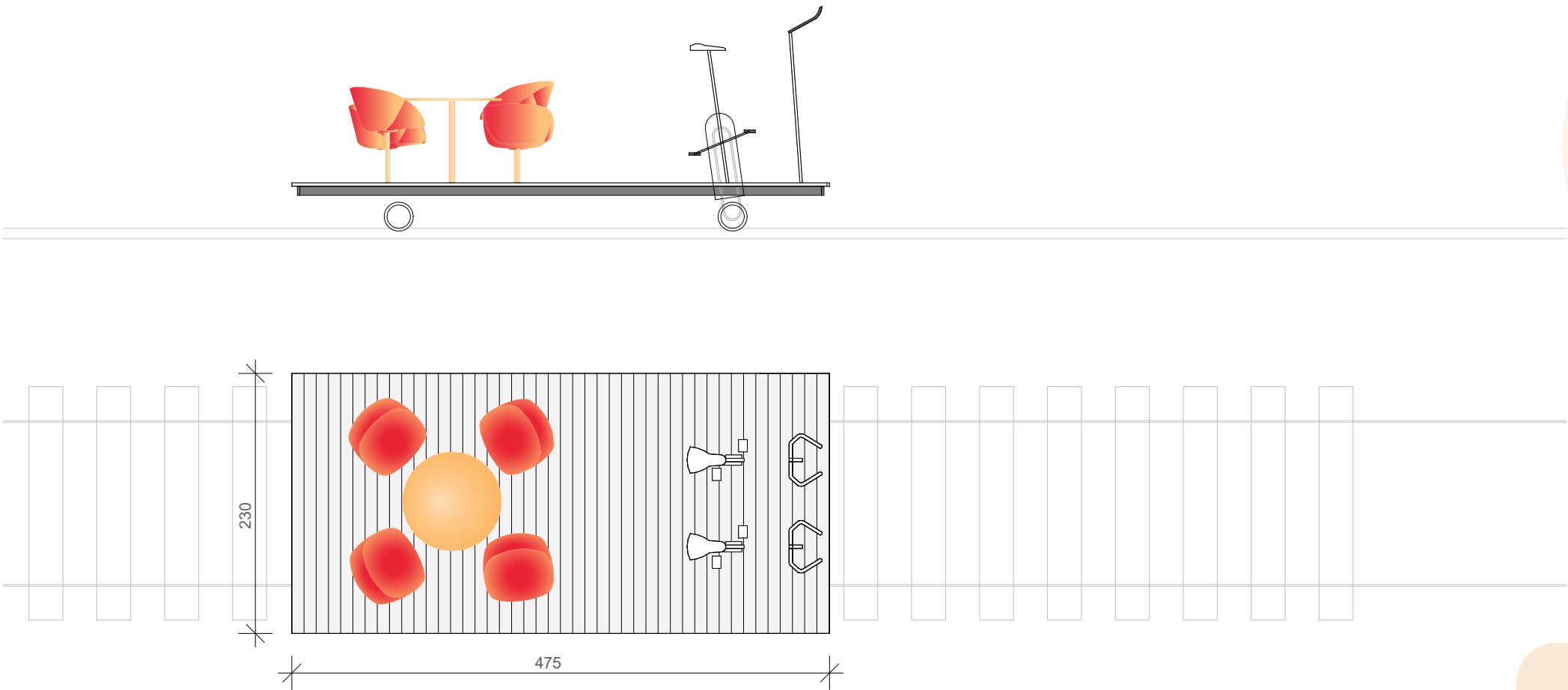
Project: A moving dialog as peace mission

*Rolling seats for understanding* offers a design project for a dialog in “slow motion”, on a bicycle trolley placed on the railroad tracks. Four swivel chairs are installed at a round table on a platform mounted on a bicycle trolley. This constellation is ideal for informal conversations on peace.

Even though the animosities and long lasting traumas based on nationalism have meanwhile widely been addressed, they have not been completely resolved until today. Therefore this post-conflict situation between the two cities offers an ideal basis for peace conversations - also on political conflicts in other geographical contexts. Therefore the slow journey along the barrier/ border can be considered an “exercise” for peace missions.



railway net Gorizia / Nova Gorica



elevation / floor plan

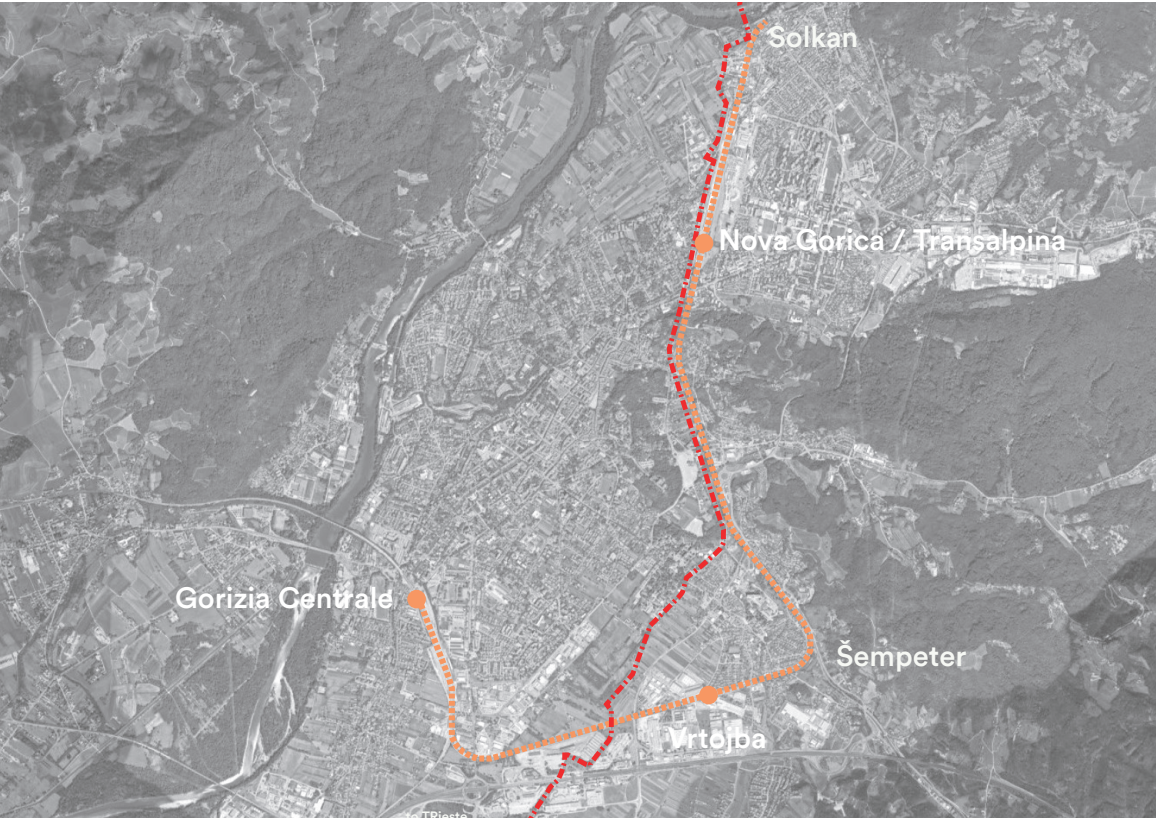
The setting for a “dialog on peace”

The object can be used either as a four person constellation or by two people. If necessary, one person can be called in to translate, although this will probably be necessary for fewer and fewer languages thanks to today’s digital possibilities.

Two other people steer/ ride the bicycle trolley with their muscle power. If the conversation partners prefer to have a private conversation, the ride can be interrupted upon their request; the bicycle trolley would be parked on a side track, until new conversation partners step on and take a new ride....

Coming to existence of Nova Gorica

On May 1, 1945, Josip Broz Tito and his troops conquered Gorizia and remained there for forty days, which are remembered as a reign of terror by the Italian population. With the “Peace Treaty of Paris” in 1947, the border between Italy and Yugoslavia was established along the railroad line to Jesenice, right in front of the train station „Stazione transalpina“. A new city, Nova Gorica, was built on the other side of this border in Slovenia, based on plans by Ravnikar. Nova Gorica developed into a flourishing city in Slovenia, whereas Gorizia declined due to being located in Italy at the EU-border/ iron curtain. Only after the end of Yugoslavia and with Slovenia’s entry into the Schengen area in 2007 the two cities started to slowly grow together.



the route of the journey

The scenario of a journey

The journey begins in Solkan and continues on the tracks via the Stazione transalpina, through the tunnel to Sempeter, where the journey continues towards the Stazione Centrale across the border, where it ends. Altogether the ride offers a spatial psychogeographic mapping, since the bicycle trolley stops at each border crossing.

Of course, these conversations can only be realized in close cooperation with the two railway companies (trenitalia, Slovenske železnice). The slowness of the journey, the interruptions - but not least the unusual nature of the situation, together with the experience of over 70 years of peace process between the two cities, can be considered as potential for the future.

Future perspectives of *Rolling seats for understanding*

*Rolling seats for understanding* could also be envisioned as first step towards installing a „Center for Post-Conflict“, which transparadiso will present as proposal for Gorizia/ Nova Gorica in the frame of the EU-Project SPACEX (<https://www.spacex-rise.org>).

The „Center for Post-Conflict“ aims at providing a safe environment for inviting an international audience/ visitors to make use of that unique center for addressing their current conflicts in other geographical areas - and also the future of Gorizia/ Nova Gorica.

In this way the „Center for Post-Conflict“ (based on *Rolling seats for understanding*) could serve as best practice example for holding a dialog in a confidential setting.

