



Loop project - National research
INTERVIEWS: Entry # 51



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BY:

Jana Jelen

Tia Milašinović Iveković

David Premuš

KARLO PLAHINEK

Artist



Karlo and his mural of Nikola Tesla.
Authorized by Karlo Plahinek

Karlo Plahinek

was born on September 18, 1986 in Zagreb, where he lived all his life and completed his education. When he finished middle school, he enrolled in and attended the 10th gymnasium. Later on, after four years, he got into the Academy of Fine Arts, where he achieved his masters degree in painting. Starting and taking part in many and many projects has helped him improve his skills and abilities. He says that the academy is a place filled with important information and possibilities, and a great place to direct you in any artistic expression. A majority of his latest jobs are murals, which he started to paint more seriously in the last ten years.

HOW did you discover the opportunities related to reuse?

We all want a more sustainable living, and a big part of that would be recycling and reusing. Reuse can be defined as to use again in a different way or after reclaiming or reprocessing. This simple definition is the essence of reuse art. Creative reuse is the art of reworking objects and materials in something different. Reuse allows all things to become new concepts and creations. So, all these things that would end up filling landfills or floating in sea or river, such as glass bottles or plastic bags can become a form of sustainable art. And these possibilities stretch as far as imagination. Just like us, our waste deserves a second chance.



Red wooden door.
Owner: David Premuš



My work gives me a lot of opportunities in reusing old materials, rebuilding something or similar. I usually reclaim materials that have been discarded or thrown away and then I reimagine, rework or recreate them with existing resources. Reuse art is a great way of showing appreciation to the environment and it is very original. This approach brings a lot of benefits, extending the life of materials or reducing the amount of waste that is generated.

It is not something new, on the contrary, we have been creating works with old items for a long time.



Garden decorated with old garden aids.
Owner: David Premuš

Take for example old fabric, cloths or sheets. Also, Picasso, himself, made a lot of collages with old newspapers and magazines. Considering this situation, with corona and lockdown, I have had a lot of free time so I have discovered that there are lots of things you can do with old tires or plastic bottles.

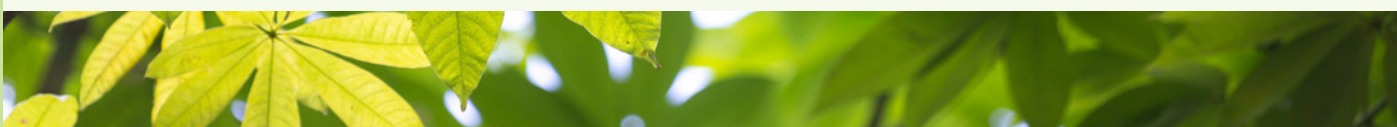


Old wooden chair used as garden decoration.
Owner: David Premuš

Also, limited financial resources kind of made me realise that I should change some tactics in work. Internet mostly helps me get my motivation but also creativity. This kind of creative reuse is something you can do at home on your own. I think it can make your day much more interesting and make you feel like you have done something useful.

I think that that kind of art motivates people to contribute a bit more to the planet, circular economy and sustainability.

It raises awareness, especially among children, and the importance of recycling and also living a greener life. Lots of young people aren't aware of the possibilities they can do for our planet and I think that this kind of approach should be taught in schools so the awareness could be raised. People have to realise that we shouldn't throw away an almost new thing because of some stupid reason, but we should try to make something that has a new purpose. There are also financial benefits of reuse, we don't have to buy something new but we can create it and, in that way, cut our expenses, but also help the environment.



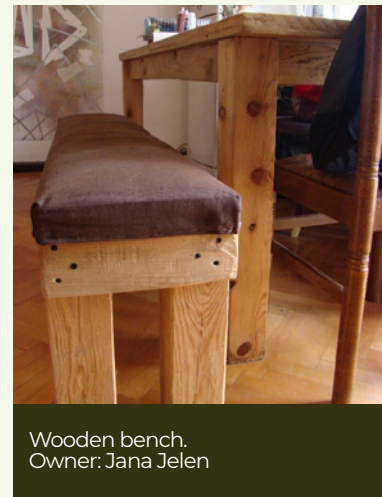


WHAT DO YOU REUSE AND HOW:

can you give us some examples of reuse in your economic activity?

Mostly, I use old bottles, tires or parts of cloth, but sometimes even old wood parts that I transform into some kind of everyday objects. But it doesn't really matter what kind of material you use, as long as you have the right goal, you can make something new from anything.

Also, materials like paper, cardboard, wood, glass, metals, plastics and rubber seek to be transformed. So, for example, I like turning old wooden boards, beams or pallets into tables or benches and even lampshades. That kind of furniture people mostly use at home as their everyday things or in their gardens like some kind of lounge chairs and coffee tables, so outside, where it really fits perfectly because it seems natural and it does not pop out. It is much better than these plastic furniture parts that are most common nowadays. Besides furniture, I make picture frames from these old wooden parts and slats by putting them together.



Wooden bench.
Owner: Jana Jelen

I also reuse old canvases. So, it is mostly turning old objects into new ones that I could use. Thus, I mentioned at the beginning, I reuse old bottles and tires. Bottles can be rebuilt into so many things.



Wooden lampshade.
Owner: Jana Jelen

I sometimes like to do murals made out of bottle caps or ornaments, something like flowers, that I make from the bottles. Regarding tires, they make awesome plant pots, I typically plant flowers in them and leave them in my garden.

Besides, they can be used as a part of a swing. This year, for the first time I have even planted a small garden with tomatoes, cauliflower and zucchinis. There are also lots of examples in the world that look amazing.

There is a miniature park in Rotterdam that is completely built from recycled plastic found in the rivers. Built from blocks that float on water, the park is very useful for people, but also for the ecosystem because animals can live and eat there. Besides, reused and recycled products became very popular, so many designers are using that concept. Some furniture is nowadays being produced from old textile and pieces of cloth.



To sum up, everyone can do something like this, it just makes our lives greener and helps the environment. We can all help our eco system just by separating trash and not throwing away old clothes, bedding and other fabric items because great new things can be made out of them.



Flowers planted in an old tire. Owner: Jana Jelen

I am sure that we all have some old objects at home, but definitely old tires that can really make a garden much more interesting.

I am currently working on a little private project in my backyard, so I am building a little fountain decorated with old glass pieces from bottles.

LET'S TALK about the real impact of reuse on your turnover: economically speaking, what are these figures?

When we talk about reuse you cannot simply talk just about the money. Reusing has several levels and you are not able to count all the benefits that this brings. Money is not the issue here; you cannot look at everything through economy and profit. It just doesn't make any sense to put material over spiritual needs that every person has.

Taking care of our environment, and in that way helping it and keeping it clean, has a positive impact on all of us. When the environment is in its balance, we are too. It allows us to establish a better connection with and within ourselves, experience a greater sense of inner peace and have more higher-quality relations with others around us.



Bio Garden - cauliflowers.
Owner: Tia Milašinić Iveković

So, this reuse project and actual art that I am doing nowadays really makes me appreciate and enjoy the earth and its gifts, or benefits, much more. I am very proud and thankful that my profession allows me to kind of become a part of nature and be a part of, let's call it a healing process that the Earth is put into.



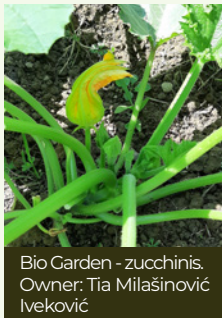
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Even if you are not aware of it, you have a deep connection and an intimate relationship with the environment and all of the nature, because it is built into us and our psyche as human beings. And, as I said not being aware of it, is where the problem accrues. That is why and when people begin destroying and polluting our surroundings.



Their actions destroy the eco balance I already mentioned, which some of us work and “fight” for, all because of their selfishness and greed. Not only that it ruins the flora and fauna, it slowly but surely accumulates negative emotions within those people and others around them, which then lead to more and more problems. We should all take a look at how our ancestors admired and honoured the Earth, and learn from them and nature itself.

It is not about what you do for a living, it is only about good will and creativity. This process does not require a lot of tools or any spending at all.



The profit that is made is actually something much more valuable than money, it is producing zero waste and that brings a feeling I cannot even describe. So, there is nothing to be disposed of and that makes it affordable for everybody, therefore there are no excuses for not reusing. This reusing of waste teaches you a lot of new techniques and improves your skills along the way. Not to forget, it is really fun and at the end of the day, isn't that what life is really all about?

REUSE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the so-called “circular economy”?

A	B	C
16	11	3

2. Do you believe that a more sustainable economic system can be equally productive than the current one?

A	B	C
11	9	10

3. Which of these consumer choices have you decided to implement in the last 10 years to protect the environment?

A	B	C
15	8	7

4. How will the so-called “circular economy” affect the job market?

A	B	C
8	13	9

5. In your work, how many strategic choices related to sustainability have been made in the last 10 years?

A	B	C
8	11	11



6. Which of these 4 “Rs” is more important to ensure a better future for humanity?

A	B	C	D
5	3	17	5

7. Which of these 4 “Rs” is most present in your family’s daily life?

A	B	C	D
1	8	17	4

8. In your opinion, what link is there between technology and the “circular economy”?

A	B	C
13	13	4

9. Do you think we will be able to change the way we consume so as not to affect the environment and its limited resources?

A	B	C
5	11	14

10. Are you familiar with the UN 2030 Agenda or have you ever heard of SDGs?

A	B	C
25	0	5

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

11. Do you think that the economy in the past was more sustainable than it is today?

A	B	C
13	12	5

12. Which of these 3 statements do you consider the most true and important?

A	B	C
12	16	2



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