

## ***Interdisciplinary International Summer School *Crossing Media Boundaries: Gender and Writing Across Artistic Media****

The third interdisciplinary international summer school of the CEEPUS network *Women Writers in History* took place in Nova Gorica from 27<sup>th</sup> August to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025. Titled *Crossing Media Boundaries: Gender and Writing Across Artistic Media*, this summer school took place at the University of Nova Gorica. More than 20 students, from eight countries (Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, North Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, and Slovenia), participated, along with lecturers not only from these countries, but also from the Netherlands and Italy. Along with the lectures and workshops which were held at the Faculty of Humanities, a one-day trip to Trieste was also organized.

On the first day, Professor Katja Mihurko, the program coordinator, opened the summer school with welcoming remarks. The introductory session was led by Darko Ilin, a PhD student at the University of Nova Gorica and the main organizer of the summer school. In that introductory session, that is interactive workshop, each participant presented what crossing the boundaries of artistic media meant to them.



*The introductory session led by Darko Ilin*

The lectures following the introductory session were given by Katja Kobalt, who spoke about children's literature and illustrations created by women during the Yugoslav period, and Professor Alicia Montoya from Radboud University, Nijmegen, who discussed the SHEWROTE database (*Studying Historical Early Women's Reception: Oeuvres, Texts, Engagements*) and its importance for the field of digital humanities. At the end of the first day, a *get-together* session was held in the faculty hall, giving participants the chance to get to know one another better in an informal setting and exchange ideas and insights on various topics.



*A get-together in the faculty hall*

On the second day, a one-day trip to Trieste was organized, during which Professor Marta Verginella gave a lecture in the Gregorčič Hall at the Association of Slovenian Cultural Societies ETS (*Zveza slovenskih kulturnih društev ETS*). The lecture focused on *Slovenka* (1897-1902), a periodical that emerged from *Edinost* (founded around 1870), a political magazine that, among other things, advocated for women's participation in the public sphere. In addition to the lecture, participants had the opportunity to explore the city of Trieste and its rich cultural heritage – not only following in the footsteps of James Joyce and Italo Svevo, but also discovering the female voices that shaped the city's cultural scene at the beginning of the 20th century.





*The lecture by Marta Verginella – Slovenka magazine, Trieste*



*In Trieste*

The third day began with a workshop by Professor Maša Grdešić on the representation of the female author in the HBO series *Girls* – that is, portraying a young woman striving to become a writer in a neoliberal context. Questions concerning gender roles, female authorship, women’s topics, intimacy, the authenticity of writing, and other related themes were discussed.



*The workshop held by Maša Grdešić – A moment from the series Girls*

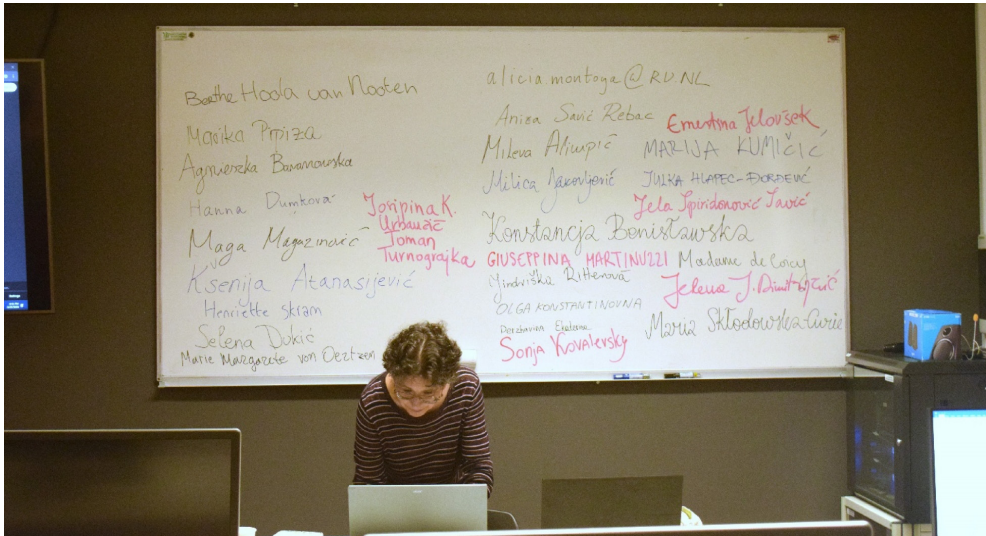
The program continued with an interview between Sara Vukotić, a researcher at the University of Nova Gorica and a member of the summer school’s organizing team, and Ana Čigon, a Slovenian multimedia artist who portrayed her work and exhibitions. She spoke about her creative process, her motivations, and the intersection of activism with various artistic media.

In the afternoon, a workshop on the SHEWROTE database was held, during which each participant edited and added the bibliography and biography of a female author of their choice, thereby enriching the database’s content and scope. The workshop sparked considerable interest and enthusiasm among the participants.





*A moment from the short film Francka (2015) by Ana Čigon*



*Alicia Montoya and the list of female authors added to the database*

The fourth day began with a workshop led by students from the University of Belgrade, together with their professor, Biljana Dojčinović, focusing on gender roles and creativity during student protests in Serbia. The introductory part provided a historical overview of student protests, from 1968 through the 1990s up to the present day. In the later part of the session, the students discussed their own activism, creative contributions, and the role of the media, and shared their work on the topic.



*Biljana Dojčinović – the introductory part of the lecture*



A workshop by Matěj Hřib followed, focusing on creative reading and writing strategies, from palimpsests to internet memes, and examining how popular culture, memes, and fan fiction shape and challenge traditional narrative forms.



*The workshop led by Matěj Hřib – From Palimpsests to Memes*

On the final day, Darko Ilin and Natalia Toporowska held a workshop on *queer-zines* and magazines published in Central Europe during late socialism and early post-socialism – from the 1980s up to the second decade of the 21st century in Slovenia, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Serbia. Participants, working either in groups or individually, created their own posters inspired by the workshop’s theme, which resulted in the unique queer-zine *Nova Kvirica 2025*.



*A creative workshop – making queer posters*

The summer school concluded with each participant presenting an individual project in the form of a poster, highlighting the key features and themes of interdisciplinary approaches and creative innovations. The works were presented as project proposals that could potentially be further developed and realized. Unlike the 2024 summer school, held in Ljubljana and primarily focused on acquiring theoretical knowledge, the 2025 program placed greater emphasis on each participant’s creativity, pushing and transcending the boundaries of art in innovative and unique ways—not only in literature, but also in film, television, music, painting, and other media.

On the final day, diplomas were awarded to the summer school participants, and the organizers were warmly greeted with applause and gratitude for the memorable gathering in Nova Gorica.





*Katja Mihurko and Darko Ilin – presenting the diplomas*

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