

Ministry of Culture
Maistrova 10
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

Dear Madam/Sir,

I, the undersigned Domenico Quaranta, co-founder of the Association Link Center for the Arts of the Information Age (Link Art Center), based in Brescia, Italy, am being informed of the current situation at the contemporary art scene in Slovenia, regarding the lack of structural and financial support for NGO's and the lack of constructive dialogue with the decision-makers at the Ministry of Culture.

Slovenian contemporary art is one of the most vital segments of the contemporary art globally, as well as one of the most vital and reflective segments of Slovenian society. It is known to us that the great majority of contemporary art practices are implemented in the independent, non-governmental and non-profit part of the scene. The work of these organizations and individual artists are of immense value and meaning for the global art scene, and a sign of a developed, democratically framed society. Any drastic reductions, the impossibility of dialogue, disconnection of the participants from the processes of common interest at the art scenes, put in danger, not only further development of these scenes, but also, its past achievements, creating discontinuity and outflow of knowledge that are almost impossible to cure.

A few years ago, in my book *Beyond New Media Art* (Link Editions, 2013), translated into Slovenian by Aksioma Institute for Contemporary Art, Ljubljana, I presented Slovenia as an example of a "virtuous approach" to Media Art, where the public funding "has enabled numerous small institutions and organizations led by artists to thrive, producing and exhibiting works that would be unlikely to see the light of day elsewhere", thus becoming "the real drivers behind contemporary art in Slovenia" (Quaranta 2013: 197). I believe that the recent developments may be able to destroy this positive scenario.

For these reasons, we hereby express deep concern in regard to the current events between the independent art scene and the Ministry of Culture. As colleagues and long-term partners of the artistic associations and organizations in the independent scene from Slovenia, we are alarmed by the lack of transparent procedures of funding, lack of expertise at the Ministry's commissions and other working bodies, and the Ministry's lack of capacities to defend the position of culture and arts in its own society.

We protest over the current situation and we call for:

- the inclusion of the competent professionals into the vital decision-making processes at the Ministry of Culture
- enlargement of the budgets for culture, particularly for the non-profit organizations
- re-structuring of the Ministry of Culture to achieve more coherent cultural politics in Slovenia
- the beginning of a dialogue with the independent art scene in Slovenia
- an inclusive vision for the development of cultural politics, in particular as they relate to the independent art production.

With commitment and support to the art scene in Slovenia, we send our best regards,

Domenico Quaranta
Co-founder, Link Art Center


