

Ministry of Culture
Maistrova 10
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

February 2nd, 2018

Dear Madam/Sir,

I, the undersigned, Mark Yeoman, Artistic Director of the Noorderzon Performing Arts Festival in the Netherlands, 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. Having worked on numerous occasions with a variety of Slovenian artists and organisations over the past 15 years, I can only react with significant dismay at the news the I, and many colleagues all over Europe, am now hearing from our partners in Slovenia. We share amongst other things numerous projects co-financed at a European level, with organisations that apparently now even fear for their own continuity and future existence.

I am hereby writing to you, also on behalf of many colleagues here in the Netherlands, to plead, where possible, for some re-consideration of recent developments in Slovenian cultural policy making, and for more discussion together with representatives of the Slovenian independent cultural scene, many of whom have been my trusted partners on countless occasions thus far.

Slovenian contemporary art has played a significant role in the contemporary art scene globally, surprisingly much for a relatively small country, as well as being a lively and reflective segment of Slovenian society within the country itself. 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.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Yeoman', followed by a horizontal line.

Mark Yeoman

Artistic Director
Noorderzon Performing Arts Festival, Groningen

Artistic Director
Grand Theatre, Groningen