

Ministry of Culture
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Dr. Martina Ruhsam
Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen
ATW - Institute for Applied Theatre Studies
Gutenbergstr. 6
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Frankfurt, 15.1.2021

Dear Madam/Sir,

I, the undersigned (Dr. Martina Ruhsam) am shocked about the recent developments in regard to the lack of financial support of several well-established NGOs in Slovenia. I wish to express my concern and support in relation to the current financial cuts on the contemporary art scene in Slovenia. My colleagues and me have been informed about the lack of structural support and the lack of constructive dialogue with the decision-makers on the side of the Slovene Ministry of Culture.

I have been collaborating with Maska in various ways and this collaboration has always been fruitful and rich. I am lecturing at a reknown Institute (Institute for Applied Theatre Studies) at the Justus-Liebig-University in Gießen (Germany) and I was always talking with my students about Maska as an extraordinary organisation. The team of Maska is a very recognized group of professionals that is known internationally and the lack of substantial funding would lead to a slow erasure of their efforts. This also means that Slovenia will loose international recognition in the field of culture.

I and my colleagues support Maska. We will do everything we can in order to help Maska to continue with their work. I also support Emanat, Gledališ e Glej, Delak Institute, City of Women and Ana Monro. They are crucial and important organisations in and for the cultural scene in Slovenia and beyond the national scope. It is impossible to imagine the landscape of Slovene contemporary art without all these organizations and their projects. As someone who has lived and worked in Ljubljana for six years I know these organisations well. They have deeply influenced me and my work.

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 Slovene society. We are aware that the great majority of contemporary art practices are realized 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 cuts, impossibility of dialogue and disconnection of the players from the scene into the processes of common interest put in danger not only the further development of these scenes, but also its past achievements, creating discontinuity and drains that are almost impossible to cure.

I hereby express concern and disbelief related to the current events between the independent art scene and the Ministry of Culture. I am alarmed in the first place by the lack of procedures for funding, and the Ministry's lack of capacities to stand for the position of culture and arts in Slovenia.

I protest over the current situation and appeal for:

- enlargement of the budgets for culture
- re-structuring of the positions at the Ministry of Culture
- inclusion of the competent professionals into the vital decision-making processes

With commitment and support to the art scene in Slovenia, I send my best regards,

Dr. Martina Ruhsam