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AND AESTHETIC COMMUNICATION**

**IMPACT OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS OF
EUROPEAN CULTURAL POLICIES ON
CURATORIAL STRATEGIES IN CONTEMPORARY
PERFORMING ARTS**

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политика на стратегије кустоских пракси у савременим
извођачким уметностима)**

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Candidate: Ana Letunić

Mentors: Dr. Milena Dragičević Šešić, prof. emerita

Prof. Dr. em. Wolfgang Schneider

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Abstract

This research stems from the idea that the current cultural policy discourse of the European Union points to the necessity of the struggle for articulation of values in art that are above those pragmatically instrumental, using the examples from the German and post- Yugoslav independent performing arts scenes as case studies. The priorities of the European Union programmes Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020 are coming from the current socioeconomic policies so the arts and culture is increasingly associated with social action, the promotion of individual and collective identities and the support to urban regeneration projects, which altogether creates a debate on possible instrumentalization of culture. At the same time, the European independent performing arts scene reflects these social complexities and the changes in European society more incisively, due to its networks reaching far beyond the national performing arts cultures and the precarious nature of its work conditions. Inevitably, what arises is the question of *reverse impact studies* that are the subject of this research while its objective is the examination of the influence of financial instruments of cultural policy on the formation of organisational cultures, curatorial strategies and aesthetics development in the European independent performing arts scene. Practices from the post- Yugoslav and German independent performing arts scene that will be analysed in this research suggest that the discussion on the new evaluation criteria and valorisation of artistic production belongs to the domain of bottom-up cultural policies and the struggle for the public interest on a European level. The qualitative analysis presented in this study aims to provide a foundation for an original perspective on the role of independent performing arts within society. Specifically, it aims to explore the relationships between cultural policy and the value of the arts, as well as the involvement of independent culture and arts organisations in the development of valorization for their work.

Apstrakt

Ova teza proizlazi iz ideje da trenutni kulturnopolitički diskurs Europske unije ukazuje na nužnost borbe za artikulaciju vrijednosti u umjetnosti iznad onih pragmatično instrumentalnih, koristeći primjere s njemačke i postjugoslavenske scene nezavisnih scena izvedbenih umjetnosti kao studije slučaja. Prioriteti programa Europske unije Kultura 2007.-2013. i Kreativna Europa 2014.-2020. proizlaze iz aktualnih socioekonomskih politika pa se umjetnost i kultura sve više povezuju s društvenim djelovanjem, promicanjem individualnih i kolektivnih identiteta te potporom projektima urbane regeneracije, što sve zajedno otvara raspravu o mogućoj instrumentalizaciji kulture. Istodobno, europska scena nezavisnih izvedbenih umjetnosti oštrije odražava ove društvene složenosti i promjene u europskom društvu, zahvaljujući svojim mrežama koje sežu daleko iznad nacionalnih kultura izvedbenih umjetnosti te prekarnim uvjetima rada. Neizbježno se nameće pitanje obrnutih studija utjecaja koje su predmet ovog istraživanja, a cilj mu je ispitivanje utjecaja financijskih instrumenata kulturne politike na formiranje organizacijskih kultura, kustoskih strategija i razvoj estetike u europskoj nezavisnoj izvedbenoj umjetničkoj sceni. Prakse s postjugoslavenske i njemačke nezavisne izvedbene umjetničke scene koje će biti analizirane u ovom istraživanju sugeriraju da rasprava o novim kriterijima vrednovanja umjetničke produkcije spada u domenu kulturnih politika *odozdo prema gore* i borbe za javni interes na europskoj razini. Kvalitativna analiza predstavljena u ovoj studiji ima za cilj pružiti temelj za originalnu perspektivu o ulozi nezavisnih izvedbenih umjetnosti u društvu. Konkretno, cilj joj je istražiti odnose između kulturne politike i vrijednosti umjetnosti, kao i uključenost nezavisnih kulturnih i umjetničkih organizacija u razvoj valorizacije vlastitog rada.

1. Introduction

The discourse of *justification of the arts* seems to dominate the performing arts sector in its attempt to comply with the quantitative criteria of evaluation imposed by the cultural policy makers. In the context of Western governments' apparent loyalty to evidence-based policies, it is not surprising that one of the main results of such development of cultural policy is the flourishing of quantitative criteria of evaluation and impact studies. Tendencies of instrumentalization of the arts and convergence of economic and cultural goals have been appearing in the European Union cultural policies (Minichbauer, 2015), i.e., the shift of objectives from the Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe programme. On the other hand, the independent performing arts scene in Europe, still reflects a system of values in European societies that has not yet been deformed by political pragmatism but is based on the intrinsic understanding of the value of arts (Schneider, 2017). Due to its proneness to experiment, claims of autonomy, expectation of critical viewpoints and attention to political matters, the contemporary performing arts field contributes in a variety of ways to the unsettling of the dominant socioeconomic tendencies.

According to critical cultural policy analysis (McGuigan, 2004), what is necessary is that the debate on cultural policy separates from the focus on the instrumental value of art and, especially after the austerity measures, its "economic value" as the main justification for the "public investment" in the arts and culture. Examples of such understanding of arts and culture that is not based on instrumentalism, can be found in the both in the post- Yugoslav independent performing arts scenes and the German *Freies Theater*, within a variety of platforms that discusses and formulates cultural policy requirements at regular meetings, organises campaigns and develops concepts that contribute the discussion on criteria of evaluation for the projects of the independent contemporary performing arts scene (contemporary theatre, performance and dance). Unlike the post-Yugoslav region whose independent performing arts scene(s) is highly dependent on the European funds due to their marginalization in the local context, cultural actors of *Freies Theater* (independent theatre, performance and dance) in Germany have better support in local and national contexts although organisations in both contexts strongly advocate for an exemplary bottom-up approach regarding setting the criteria of evaluation for artistic projects.

1.1. Subject of the research

Within this research, the findings on the *Freies Theater* will be compared to the independent performing arts scene in the post- Yugoslav region, with the aim of rethinking its policy making procedures in relation to European cultural policies. Through analysis of tender documents of European Union in the field of contemporary performing arts, curatorial analysis of programs and activities of independent performing arts organisations, and interviews with the directors of relevant performing organisations and platforms in Germany, this research aims to contribute the development of new evaluation criteria and valorisation of artistic production beyond the dichotomy of intrinsic value and instrumentalization of culture.

What seems relevant to observe is how this pragmatic shift in the funding programmes influences a change in the curatorial strategies of the organisations whose financial sustainability depends on the funds secured by those programmes. Such organisations are easily found in the context of post- Yugoslav countries since there is a lack of national and local funding of independent cultural scenes and its' organisations have primarily developed due to support by international funders from the nineties on. Some of the organisations are adjusting their organisational cultures, curatorial strategies and aesthetic development in order to achieve financial sustainability while others insist on redefinition of the evaluation criteria of their work. In both contexts, due to the discontent with the position of independent scene in the overall cultural system, new organisational cultures and forms of solidarity are arising that might be a stepping-stone to bringing more bottom-up approach to policymaking. It is important to observe and analyse these practices in order to contribute to the broader European discussion on the value of arts. More specifically, this research aims to observe and analyse participatory cultural policies and cooperation of the public and the civil sector in order to propose new criteria of valorisation of the arts.

1.2. Research questions and hypotheses

The following questions are raised by this research:

- What is the impact of financial instruments of European and other relevant cultural policies on the curatorial strategies and aesthetics development in the post-Yugoslav and German independent performing arts scenes (contemporary theatre, performance and dance)?
- How are the criteria for evaluation of performing arts projects within the post-Yugoslav and German independent performing arts scenes constructed, in the context of the “value of the arts” discussion?
- What is the role of the figure of performing arts curator in negotiation of priorities and influences between the policy makers and the artistic community?
- How do austerity measures and precarious conditions of work influence new organisational cultures and forms of solidarity in the post-Yugoslav and German independent performing arts scenes?
- In what circumstances might European independent performing arts organisations bring more bottom-up approaches to cultural policymaking?
- Is it feasible to contribute to the development of new evaluation criteria and valorisation of artistic production beyond the dichotomy of intrinsic value and instrumentalization of culture?

The main hypothesis that emerges from these questions, and from framing them in the theoretical background recognized as adequate, is the following:

(H0) There is a necessity on a European level to construct evaluation criteria for artistic projects that would express value of the arts beyond quantitative indicators and socioeconomic impact.

Its supporting hypotheses are:

(H1) Currently, criteria for valorisation of the artistic projects on a European level are constructed to measure socioeconomic results more than artistic ones, which is visible in the shift of priorities between European Union funding programmes for culture.

(H2) Depending on their sustainability, actors of independent performing arts scene based within the EU are partly adapting their programming strategies and aesthetic development to the socioeconomic valorisation of art while others, such as the actors of the European independent performing arts scene, demand the redefinition of evaluation criteria of their work.

(H3) Under conditions of collaborative and collective organisational culture, exemplary bottom-up approaches to policymaking appear in German *Freies Theater* and the EU along with the possibility of constructing new evaluation criteria for contemporary performing arts projects.

(H4) The emerging figure of the performing arts curator is highly relevant for negotiation of funding priorities between the policy makers and the artistic community.

The main objective of this interdisciplinary research is to analyse the influence the financial instruments of cultural policy have on the curatorial strategies, aesthetics development and organisational cultures firstly in post-Yugoslav independent performing arts scenes and German *Freies Theater*, and then the European contemporary performing arts scenes, with a focus on the independent performing arts organisations that respond both to the local and European criteria of project evaluation and valorisation of the arts.

This research will also analyse how those criteria of project evaluation and valorisation of the arts are constructed, in relation to the European discussion of the value of arts. This also means challenging the politicality of various organisational cultures on the German and European independent performing arts scene, as well the role of the emerging figure of a performing arts curator. Based on the findings, this research aims to contribute to the development of new models of criteria making for arts and culture, on a broader, European level.

1.3. Methodology of the research

The methodology includes theoretical research, as well as empirical research in the post-Yugoslav region and Germany combining different methods such as interviews, mapping and case studies.

The formulation of a theoretical framework for empirical research is primarily an interdisciplinary effort that calls for the consideration of numerous fields of research. Literature from various fields is read, examined, and placed in the context of the research topic during the preliminary research stage. The methodology includes philosophy of arts (discussions on value of arts, public sphere, etc.); sociology of arts (new institutionalism, community studies etc.), theory of performing arts (aesthetics of independent theatre, postdramatic theatre, contemporary dance studies) and cultural policy (arts management models, impact studies etc.).

The desk research phase will include an extensive variety of secondary sources of data, including the Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018) by the European Council, national government databases, the Compendium of Basic Trends and Facts (Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe), and many others, as the beginning of the empirical research in the post-Yugoslav region and Germany. The independent performing scene, as well as existing materials on post-Yugoslav and German cultural policies, including national and municipal strategies for culture and public calls, will be explored. The empirical research that follows is grounded in qualitative research methods including mapping, in-depth interviews, and direct and indirect observations.

Although this research is a part of the thesis developed within PhD programme in Management of Culture and Media (i.e. Management of Performing Arts), it grasps beyond its scope since it deals with the topic of the value of arts that has been developing within the disciplines of philosophy and sociology of the arts. Therefore, as the main theoretical frameworks the study uses theories of critical cultural policy analysis (Bennett T., 1992, 2000; Dragičević Šešić 2017, 2018; Gielen 2013; Habermas 1996 [1992], McGuigan, 1992, 1996, 2004; Minichbauer 2000, 2005; Vidović 2017), with the specific emphasis on the value of arts theories (Belfiore i Bennett

O., 2007, 2008, 2010; Bourdieu, 1993; Holden, 2004, 2006; Klamer 1996, 2003; Throsby, 2001, 2010)and, for the analysis of aesthetics development, performing arts studies (Cvejić, 2005; Janša 2013; Kunst 2013, 2015; Lehmann 2006; Schneider, 2017; Vujanović, 2012).

The research will employ theories from the fields of philosophy and sociology of arts to establish clear definitions and determine correlations between the notions associated with precarity and the precarious nature of artistic labour (Butler, 2004, 2005; Lorey, 2010, 2013; Kunst, 2015 ; Lazzarato, 2006; Pewny 2011; Virno 2004) to the terms from new institutionalism and new arts management models (Gielen 2010; McRobbie, 2001; Praznik 2020, 2021; Ranciere, 2006; Vujanović, 2012; Vidović and Žuvela, 2018).. During the analysis of new organisational cultures and proposition of organisational models that contribute to bottom-up policymaking, the research will put focus on collaborative and collective organisational cultures (Bishop, 2006; Cvejić 2012; Kunst 2015; Praznik 2020; Virno, 2004) and the role of the performing arts curator in between the artistic community and policy makers (Madžoski 2013; Malzacher 2011; Milevska 2008; Morland & Amundsen, 2010; Staal 2018). Finally, it will build on the research on the criteria of evaluation and critique of the impact studies (Belfiore, E. & Bennett, O., 2007, 2008; Kosmos 2022; Matarasso 1997; Power 1994; Scullion and García 2005; Selwood 2002).

As a preparation for the case study research phase, cultural mapping will be used as a method as the second phase of the empirical research both in post- Yugoslav region and Germany. Broadly conceived, cultural mapping promises new ways of describing, accounting for, and coming to terms with the cultural resources of communities and places (Duxbury, 2015). In order to identify the key cultural policy issues regarding the independent performing arts scene, several cultural conferences, seminars, performing arts festivals and meetings have been attended.

Cultural policy symposia and meetings at the independent performing arts scene attended during the process of research include:

- “Passion and Politics”, PNEU 18, Advancing Performing Arts Project and Szene Salburg, Salzburg (Austria)

- “Make room for Dance!” Nomad Dance Advocates, Station Service for contemporary dance, Belgrade (Serbia)
- International conference: “Participatory Governance in Culture: Exploring Practices, Theories and Policies. DO IT TOGETHER.”; Kultura Nova Foundation and Rijeka 2020 LLC, Rijeka (Croatia)
- “Curatorial practices and curatorial discourse in performing arts” workshop by Virve Sutinen. Student Centre Zagreb, Goethe Institut and Advancing Performing Arts Project (APAP), Zagreb (Croatia)
- NXT Conference “Making a Living from the Arts”, The European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA): The Amsterdam University of the Arts (AHK) Amsterdam, Netherlands.
- “Dance vs Circumstances” Tanznacht 2016, Uferstudios, Berlin (Germany)
- IETM Plenary Meeting “Value of the arts”, Valencia (Spain)
- Symposiums by Landesverband freie darstellende Künste Berlin (LAFT), Berlin (Germany);
- Industry Get-Together of the Independent Performing Arts Community Berlin by Performing Arts Programm (PAP), Berlin (Germany);
- events and press conferences by Koalition der Freien Szene and others.

On the basis of observation of cultural policy and performing arts expert circles at these events, fourteen short interviews are completed with key actors in cultural policy research and performing arts from Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Slovenia, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Poland and Austria, all partaking in European projects, in order to finalize “mapping of field” research phase. The materials of the conferences and the interviews will be used as a resource of the mapping since documenting idiosyncratic, local knowledge (Selby and Bradley 2003) is a crucial element of the research process.

The research's main phase is based on the case studies method, and it analyses four specific case studies of independent performing arts organisations and platforms in the post-Yugoslav region and Germany. The criteria for the selection of the organisations are based on partnership between organisations in the post- Yugoslav region and Germany within a framework of who long-term European projects in contemporary performing arts, i.e. Advancing Performing Arts Project/APAP and Life Long Burning Network. While in-depth interviews have been used as

a tool to establish case study central points, printed and online resources will also be used to prepare case studies. After conducting (in English) interviews with the organization's curators and partners, a basis for comparison between the post-Yugoslav region's organisations and those in Germany will be established. This comparison will assist with pattern matching and explanation-building.

The main analytical methods used in this phase will be integrated policy analysis, comparison, curatorial analysis, content analysis, and discourse analysis. The data from the mapping and the interviews will be analysed using discourse analysis. In order to identify the effect of local, national, and transnational cultural policy dynamics on their programming strategies, organisational cultures, and aesthetic development, curatorial analysis of programme values (curatorial selection) will then be applied to the programmes of the relevant organisations from the case studies.

1.4. Keywords

contemporary performing arts; European Union financial instruments of cultural policy; instrumentalization of culture; impact studies, advocacy, cultural policy values, curatorial agency, European project networks

2. Changes in cultural policy discourse of the European Union

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has further revealed the precarious working conditions and the structural fragility of the independent performing arts sector, but the discourse of *justification of the arts* has been dominating the sector in its attempts to comply with the quantitative criteria of evaluation imposed by the cultural policy makers since the financial crisis in 2008. IETM- International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts commissioned a mapping report in 2015 with the purpose of presenting the state-of-the-art research in the European performing arts sector on cultural impact. In the report, it is visible that independent performing arts organisations across Europe have been making efforts in order to contribute to the justifications undertaken to counteract budget cuts in the arts and culture sector (Shishkova, 2015: 4).

This chapter aims to explore ways the post-political condition, sustained by the homology between precarity of cultural workers and the free-market ideology, have been influencing the understandings of the value of culture and its criteria of evaluation. Through a critical analysis of available research on the topic of value of the arts, it considers the arguments for the need for a more constructive articulation of values and beliefs against the backdrop of cultural policies that the instrumentalization of the arts leaves aside due to a significant pressure still placed on the arts sector to defend the value of and public investments in it.

Furthermore, it provides a short historical overview of cultural policy-making in the EU countries in order to observe a gradual shift towards economic arguments and objectives in the field of culture. The last part of the chapter engages with discourse analysis to detect paradigm changes from the “Culture” to “Creative Europe” funding programmes. These transitions are visible through employing in the discourse on ‘consumers’ as opposed to the discourse on ‘audiences’ which is critically reflected upon in the context of the value of the arts discussion since “the role of ‘the consumer’ diminishes the role of ‘the citizen’” (McGuigan 1992: 165).

2.1. Instrumentalization of culture and the value of the arts in the post-political condition

To create something means to place oneself outside of the measurable measure.

(Gielen 2013 :17)

Governments have increasingly overtly sought benefits from art funding since the 1990s. Following the growing emphasis on the effective use of scarce resources, the question "does art produce value?" or "what is art useful for?" continued to reverberate, but the fundamental issue here was and still is: "what qualifies as value?". That topic has mostly served as a platform for a renewed debate on intrinsic and instrumental values in the cultural sector in general, and in the arts in particular. Generally speaking, intrinsic value relates to what has value or is good in and of itself, whereas instrumental values supply value as a means to an end or are beneficial for something else (Holden, 2004: 3). There appears to be a governmental emphasis on valuing arts for their impact rather than their intrinsic value. This has become evident in an increased use of market rhetoric and an emphasis on instrumental values as a strategy of establishing the legitimacy of public financing in the arts, not just from politicians and public decision-makers, but also, in a growing range of situations, from artists and arts institutions themselves.

Entrenched in the current unstable socioeconomic landscape, cultural institutions and industries increasingly operate within neoliberal ideologies where "open, competitive, and unregulated markets represent the optimal mechanism for economic development" (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 2). In addition to growing competition between cities, many local politicians are interested in the concept of "creative class" and "creative cities" that were developed by Richard Florida and Charles Landry. With regard to the immaterial work in the field of performance, Rullani (2004: 12), in terms of cognitive capitalism, does not really stress the process of sharing knowledge but the process of cognitive valorisation since there is an equal (or maybe even stronger) competition in the domain of the immaterial economy. According to McGuigan (1996: 42) the pervasive ideology of consumerism in late capitalism, which places the sovereign consumer at the centre of reality, coincides neatly with neoliberal globalisation. Similarly, Mark Fisher observes in his capital work the control society of 'capitalist realism' (2009) which traps us in the manifestations of neoliberalism where the

market is an information processor with knowledgeable agency. The one-dimensional attention to consumption and the marketization of everything that is promoted by neoliberal globalisation, the dominant ideology of the age, in effect, poses a big problem for public cultural policy, arguably undercutting its very reason to be.

If we perceive the twentieth century as the century of the Welfare State, by the turn of the millennium, writes Jürgen Habermas, “benefits have been reduced, while at the same time access to social security has been tightened and the pressure on the unemployed has increased” (2001: 50). He warns that: “In the long run, a loss of solidarity such as this will inevitably destroy a liberal political culture whose universalistic self-understanding democratic societies depend on” (ibid.). It is no coincidence that phenomena such as the redefinition of the democratic paradigm, the retreat from welfare provision, the transformation of the parties, and the success of populism have all appeared contemporaneously, in accordance with Habermas' prediction. Democracy nowadays treats citizens with indifference, as mere consumers of its offerings of leadership. Already according to Mair (2002: 42), we have moved into a form of democracy where ‘the people’ of twenty-first century Western Europe may enjoy more enshrined rights than ever before, but in exchange for less real (or at least less perceptible) voice and sovereignty than in the past.

Citizens are thus driven away from direct participation in politics (other than voting) and instead encouraged to adopt a ‘consumerist’ concept of politics where the only thing that is said to ‘count’ is resolving the practical, immediate and usually local problems of the ‘man in the street’. Politics is characterised, even by many politicians themselves, as something which most ordinary people naturally prefer to be involved in as little as possible. Dewey concluded already almost a century ago that the main characteristic of the public is ‘indifference’ and one of the causes for this is the administrative system found in democracy, where the specialisation of competencies isolates ordinary people from public concerns: “Persons have their own business to attend to, and 'business' has its own precise and specialised meaning. Politics thus tends to become just another 'business': the special concerns of bosses and managers of the machine” (1927: 138). Therefore, it is held that they have better things to do, such as attending to their personal and professional lives, and that politics should facilitate them to do this with minimal interference. Nowadays, social and economic crisis is one of the consensually established problems that is sustained by a universalizing populist discourse and,

structured around ecologies of fear, it sustains and expresses the deepening of a post-political condition.

According to Žižek (2006: 36), post-politics is marked by the predominance of a managerial logic in all aspects of life, the reduction of the political to administration where decision-making is increasingly considered to be a question of expert knowledge and not of political position. Post-politics relates to a politics in which ideological or dissensual contestation and struggles are replaced by techno-managerial planning, expert management and administration, “whereby the regulation of the security and welfare of human lives is the primary goal” (Žižek, 2006: 71). For Rancière (1998: 82), this desertion of the political and the staging of politics as a form of consensual management of the circumstances is one of the tactics through which spaces of antagonism and conflict are stilled and displaced. In the post-political condition, the conflict of differing ideological visions embodied in different parties, which compete for power, is replaced by the collaboration of enlightened technocrats, mostly economists standing for a free-market ideology.

For the cultural sector, this post-political reasoning often means an assumption by cultural policy makers that the free-market logic explains most of the levels of value we can attribute to cultural products- which, ultimately, contributes to the discourse of *justification of the arts*.

2.1.2. Valuation of culture in times of sustainable development

Assessing culture only in terms of economic profit perpetuates a modernization paradigm of progress, understood as economic growth that some theorists believe to be unsustainable (Ac, 2014). In this context, the concept of sustainable development is also criticised, if reduced to economic principles. The concept of development was restricted to the economic growth vector until the 1980s as the ‘productivism’ development method was attempting to maximise quantitative output. That decade also brought the New Public Management trend which aimed at increased effectiveness in the public sector, whose monitoring has been demanding

observable and measurable variables. Since the restrictions on natural resources as well as the environmental concerns involved were quickly uncovered, the notion of 'sustainable development' became more relevant, which essentially meant focusing on the socioeconomic processes that allowed people to meet their needs without compromising the capacity of future generations to meet theirs.

With time, the limits of growth have been reached, the crisis became apparent and thinking about sustainable development on a global level has resulted in an insight that the consideration of its economic, social and environmental aspects is insufficient. These three dimensions alone cannot reflect all the complexities of contemporary society and, therefore, culture is identified as the fourth pillar of sustainable development (Hawkes 2001: 10). There were many of those, including UNESCO and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which voted for the model of sustainable development involving culture, because in the final analysis, culture shapes what is considered to be the development and determines "the relation of people to the world" (UCLG 2010: np). Culture is, therefore, declared the "fourth pillar of sustainable development" in 2010 and, recently, its role is even more highlighted within UNESCO's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a way it opens up a pathway towards innovation in all aspects of development. It is relevant to observe how this has happened following the serious financial crisis that began in 2008, during which public funding for the arts has been reduced in many European countries. These developments appear to have produced a perceived need for determining the quantitative social and economic value of cultural and artistic expression.

Knowing the history of the concept of sustainable development, which was created as also an attempt of legitimation and the extension of economic growth, of course we must not forget the danger of the 'vicious circle' in which we inevitably fall into when we interpret culture as a means for incorporating development, understood as economic growth. Such a threat is evident from the plenary presentation that was a part of "Agenda 21 for Culture". For example, Sir Fazle Abed, the former director and founder of BRAC Foundation at the opening of the International Congress of UNESCO (which took place 15 to 17 May 2013 in Hangzhou in China), stated that "the purpose of development is to change the culture." He obviously put the spotlight on economic development, and he further clarified that "culture becomes absolutely essential for determining effective programs" (...) because "if the program is not culturally appropriate, it will not work" (...) "It is only when some developmental program

becomes part of the culture, it becomes viable." In the spirit of this, Abed pointed to the formation of more than 400 theatre groups that are "the most effective way to convey the values and perceptions of social problems," given that they are "both ways of education and entertainment." He summed up his presentation by Agenda post-2015 according to which "we need sustainable development, and to be sustainable, it has to affect the culture, so that sustainable development means cultural change until it incorporates the development and then it becomes viable." Sustainable development is established in a neoliberal system, which is based on market-oriented activity, competitiveness and financial efficiency. International and European documents addressing sustainable development promote, above all, economic development and recommend the reduction of public services, which leads to the fact that the economic pillar of sustainable development contains several risks for art and culture (Duxbury in Hristova et al. 2015: 72).

Current trends in the European Union and beyond- at local, national and transnational levels- is cutting public funding and encouraging private financing. Creative Europe programme shows encouraging cultural industries that, as an instrument of economic development, fit perfectly with the economic pillar of sustainable development. It is reasonable to ask, is there any point in cultural policy at all other than as an adjunct to economic policy? There are some, however, who believe that questions of cultural value are not reducible to popularity and economic expediency.

2.1.3. Contribution of 'measuring culture' to instrumentalism in cultural policy

The debate on the evaluation of the arts by the criteria that are not inherent to the field of the arts, mainly economic and social ones, has been on going and resulted in documents such as the Warwick report on the Future of Cultural Value (Belfiore, Firth, Hart, Perrin, Brock, Holdaway, Woddis, 2015). Prior to this report, one of its authors, Belfiore elaborated extensively on the instrumentalization of the arts in the context of UK New Labour policies (Belfiore, 2007, 2010, 2012). Similar tendencies of instrumentalization of arts and convergence of economic and cultural goals have been appearing in the European Union cultural policies, i.e. the shift of objectives from the Culture 2007- 2013 and Creative Europe programme which

will be elaborated on in the following chapters. Looking at today's European context, Kosmos also highlights "social impact, as a term and a signifier, has become much more than just a requirement posed by funding bodies" (2022: 22) since artists and cultural workers use it in many different ways but mostly "when addressing the issues of their serious and authentic engagement with society" (ibid).

Selwood (2002: np) previously criticised the tendencies of instrumentalism in cultural policy, also known as the evidence-based policy, which led to the introduction of "accountability and strategic management into the arts in the form of the so-called three Es – economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The cultural sector in the United Kingdom was required to submit statistics as proof of its ability to contribute to broader government goals, including eliminating social exclusion. In order to document the role of arts and cultural organisations, project assessments, toolkits, guidelines, and frameworks were established (ibid.). The proliferation of impact studies, which were intended to "measure and assess the extent to which the subsidised arts have a socio-economic impact, thus contributing to governmental economic and social policy" (Belfiore, Bennett, 2008: 123), developed in response to a call for the production of new practical knowledge about how we value culture. It also sparked a lot of criticism and discussion on the intrinsic and instrumental value of arts and culture.

The report "Use or ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts" (Matarasso, 1997) that provided a new measuring methodology of impact became the basis for understanding the social impact in the arts which then highly influenced British policies. Based entirely on participatory arts as the preferred genre and means for achieving social impact, Matarasso's analysis was based on a review of sixty projects in various locations. Although he used a variety of tools, the report mostly relied on participant answers to questionnaires. In this way, he clustered fifty social impacts into six categories (personal development, social cohesion, community empowerment and self-determination, local image and identity, imagination and vision, health and well-being), and, most importantly, he imagined them as being quantifiable and controllable. Besides this, he suggested a list of guidelines to adhere to, which also serves as a list of success indicators: inclusion of all participants in setting objectives; obtaining convincing evidence of commitment from all parties involved; integration with other social programs, including participation of local authorities and public agencies in the planning process; the ability to acknowledge risks and failures (currently referred to as "risk

mitigation strategies"); excellence in applying the highest standards of (artistic) practice in the processes and outputs; and, lastly, a joint evaluation that includes the funders and communities that were beneficiaries of the project (Matarasso 1997: 83).

In his writing, Matarasso positions himself as a mediator between the funders, i.e. the government and the artistic community which he feels needs to develop “a healthy dialogue with the wider society on whose money it so often depends” (Matarasso 1997, V) since it is “about what the arts can do for society, rather than what society can do for the arts” (ibid.). Although this sounds limiting for a variety of artistic practices, this rationale appears as an alternative to justifying the arts through its economic impact within influential reports such as “The Economic Importance of Arts in Britain” by Myerscough written in 1988, which Matarasso debates with. In that sense, social impact of the arts provided a better option in relation to the argument that arts should be funded due to creating profit, jobs and growth of creative industries.

However, according to Đurić (2016: 22), the impact studies presented within this one and following reports have been criticised for two main reasons. The research has not been perceived as objective since it had a clear goal of advocating for the cultural sector, and it "has blurred the boundaries between advocacy and research" (Belfiore, Bennet, 2008: 7). The other critique has been directed towards the type of data generated- as the objectives were clearly defined and the impacts were measured using predetermined indicators of social and economic relevance, this type of research did not “engage with the real purpose of the arts” (Belfiore, Bennet 2008: 8; Belfiore 2002: 8) or "measure what is essentially unmeasurable – the value people derive from culture" (Selwood, 2002: np). Contrarily, it concentrated on what was simpler and less expensive to gather and analyse - outputs, results, and impacts articulated as quantitative data - while ignoring the long-term benefits of cultural participation (Selwood, 2002: np).

While it is easy to agree with Belfiore and Bennett that the notion of evidence-based cultural policy is premised on a variety of simplifying assumptions, ranging from the idea that there is an unequivocal definition of the arts and culture to the idea that their impact can be measured and that it will indeed secure public funding, it is also necessary to recognize their proposal that the discussion on cultural value should not continue in such simplistic form, based on the "false and sterile dichotomy between intrinsic and instrumental values" (2007: 228). As

highlighted in their report "Rethinking the Social Impacts of the Arts" and later in the book *The Social Impacts of the Arts* (2008), instrumentalization was not invented only by the UK's New Labour government or, it should be added, by UNESCO and European Commission.

The impacts of the arts on the human social environment have existed for as long as the arts themselves, with the first evidence of awareness about them, in this example negative, as early as Plato's Republic in 5th century BC Greece (Belfiore and Bennett 2007: 41). The report also reminds us that the impacts of the arts have not always been perceived as solely positive, as in the current advocacy for the sector's sustainability. To be more specific, the report distinguishes three broad perspectives to the impacts or values of the arts that have coexisted throughout history. The first is identified as the 'negative tradition,' and it assumes that the arts are a corrupting or distracting force in society. The second is characterised as the 'positive tradition,' which claims that the arts have a variety of good impacts. In contrast, the third strand rejects such pragmatic understandings of art and holds that the value of the arts should be based only on aesthetic considerations, rather than being equated with or dependent on its utility or any other practical or ethical issue (2007: 14).

Despite the fact that Belfiore and Bennett conduct their research into the impact of the arts, which corresponds to the concept of culture in the narrow sense, their contribution to the debate that the "beliefs and theories about the ways in which the arts can affect human beings have changed over time and in accordance with the political, cultural and intellectual climates of the time" (2007: 10), may indeed be extended to the entire field of culture and provide us with an important perspective on how to value it. This apparent proposition is frequently neglected or ignored in public debates about cultural value, particularly in the realm of public policy and when faced with the problem of public funding. When cultural funding is cut, the entire sector goes into battle mode, dividing into those who take the offensive stance and set out to prove the value, or outright indispensability, of the sector to inclusion, growth, development, sustainability, or whatever objective informs the public domain at any given moment, and those who revert to defensive arguments of culture's intrinsic values, denying the possibility that it be valued by any other criteria than its' own.

They are, however, as difficult to detect and transform into unquestionable arguments but, in reality, the opposition appears to be quite insignificant. What could be much more important is the reversal of the causal link between culture and funding. When intrinsic or

instrumental values become aims or expectations for arts and culture, there is a high chance of making an error of believing they are valuable because of what they achieve but, in fact, they are able to do what they do because they are valuable. This takes us to the second approach towards the concept of cultural value that explores how to express or articulate what determines cultural value without considering the rationale for public funding. How do we evaluate and represent value as the totality of all material and non-material resources invested in the process, the product, and everything conveyed by it?

2.1.4. Value of culture beyond instrumentalism

Value remains one of the most challenging concepts to tackle also in the opinion of the African historian Achille Mbembe: “The way out is a complete overhaul of how we think about value and how we create and distribute it. (...) Only thing is that creating a different value system is not only a political act but also a cultural battle: we need new ideas and imaginations. Not as an escape into a kind of utopia but as a cultural practice” (in Rogghe and Hillaert, 2014: np). In considering cultural value McGuigan, for example, points us to Bourdieu and his assertion that art and culture exist only socially and are caught up in struggles for distinction (1996: 32). Their values are formed, transmitted, and accumulated in the field of cultural production, which Bourdieu refers to as “the economic world reversed” (1993: 29). Recognizing that works of art are both material and symbolic goods, Bourdieu cautions that understanding their value requires understanding “works of art as a manifestation of the field as a whole, in which all the powers of the field, and all the determinisms inherent in its structure and functioning, are concentrated” (1993: 37). We may argue that precisely because it is not reducible to economic reasoning, cultural goods have attracted the attention of economists. The economy of culture is a very active research field that is well aware of the limits of solely economic logic. It has acquired analytical techniques that can help us obtain valuable insights into cultural value with the development of service, knowledge, and information markets.

David Throsby, a notable cultural economist, developed his theory of cultural value in two major publications, *Economics and Culture* (2001) and *The Economics of Cultural Policy* (2010). In the publications, he argues that price, as the primary economic indication of value, is flawed and concludes that “at best, prices are an indicator of value but not necessarily a direct

measure of value" (2001: 24). According to him, there should be funded research to assess the monetary value that consumers place on cultural goods and services, and he adds a set of non-exchange values to the understanding of the economic value of cultural products and services (2010: 20): existence value (people value the arts simply because they exist); option value (people wish to retain the option that they may wish to consume the arts at some time in the future); and bequest value (people think it is important to pass the arts on to future generations). Finally, he acknowledges that non-economic factors influence these selections and distinguishes between economic and cultural value. Further on, he identifies the fundamental dichotomy between economic and cultural as the dichotomy between individualistic and group impulses: "whatever the artistic products produced and consumed, the processes of producing and consuming them can be seen not only as individual enterprise, but also as expression of a collective will which transcends that of the individual participants involved" (2001: 15).

Ultimately, he recognizes that non-economic factors also influence these decisions and he differentiates between economic and cultural value, while going even further and establishing the basic opposition between economic and cultural as the opposition between individualistic and group impulse. This underlying assumption leads Throsby to proposing a list of six different types of cultural value: aesthetic, spiritual, social, historical, symbolic and authenticity value. Throsby also suggests methods for evaluating if these values are present in cultural goods and services, including contextual analysis, content analysis, social survey methods, psychometric measurement, and expert appraisal (2001: 31). The methods, like their explanations, imply that these values are subjective in nature, which must be kept in mind.

Throsby builds on Bourdieu's concept of 'cultural capital' to express both economic and cultural values of culture in its tangible and intangible forms in order to make cultural value operational (2001: 47). In his 2010 book "The Economics of Cultural Policy", he elaborates on the necessity for operationalization, which reads more like an argument for cultural policy that is not only economic. Even though Throsby acknowledged the limitations of the proposal to measure these values, describing the process as "giving formal expression to judgements that would otherwise be left simply to informal processes" (2010: 22), it appears that in terms of public policy, there is a fine line between attempting to measure values, turning them into impacts, and then setting them as targets and objectives.

On the other hand, one of the leading European cultural economists, Arjo Klamer, presents a somewhat different perspective on the value of culture. He also criticises solely instrumental economic logic, methods, and approaches that attempt to render the valuations of cultural goods "objective and democratic" (Klamer, 2003: 5) and takes the view of criticising economics and expanding it with sociology and anthropology because "economic theory does not account for relationships and does not recognise a value that is beyond measure" (2003: 6). His approach is more nuanced than Throsby's as he takes into account "the discursive context where values of cultural goods evolve". Thus, he proposes a dynamic approach to value, which is not a fixed, quantifiable input in an economic or other evaluation process, but something that changes and is impacted by it. He acknowledges that cultural goods "have a life and pass various stages in which their values are being realised, sustained, affirmed, questioned and so on in characteristic ways" (Klamer, 1996: 25). For Klamer, it is critical to understand that commodities are only one stage of a cultural good's life cycle. According to him, this dynamic process of valuation occurs in three distinct spheres: economic, social, and cultural. Each has its own discourse for establishing worth and acknowledges various values. The price of a good, its exchange value, is referred to as value in the economic sector, and it will lead the valuation process or discourse towards concepts such as market, supply, demand, profit, wealth, income, economic growth, and so on. Social values operate in the social sphere while they "have a broad range and comprise the values of belonging, being member of a group, identity, social distinction, freedom, solidarity, trust, tolerance, responsibility, love, friendship and so on" (2003: 9). According to Klamer, in our daily lives we negotiate a lot more than economic values and they undoubtedly play a part in every step of a cultural good's lifespan.

Therefore, cultural values, exist in a realm that transcends both the economic and the social and are expressed in the process of "inbred, acquired and developed ability to experience the sublime or sacred character of a good, to see its beauty, or to recognize its place in cultural history" (2003: 10). While acknowledging that these domains and their distinct values are interrelated and may have an impact on one another, in "claiming a separate category for cultural values and cultural capital", he believes that they differ from economic and social values because they "require special skills, and operate in a unique sphere" (2003: 11). The reason for this is that cultural values may be communicated and negotiated in discourses free of economic and social meaning. These values are impossible to quantify and, as a result, are frequently overlooked in public policy, yet their existence must be acknowledged if we are to properly understand the value of culture. This is crucial not just in terms of recognizing what

he refers to as "the exceptional character of cultural goods," but also because he feels it counterbalances against "the impersonal and objectifying relationships that characterise transactions with the government and in markets" (Klamer 1996: 29).

In his well-known study "Why are artists poor: The Exceptional Economy of the Arts?" (2008), Hans Abbing argues art and value are inextricably linked either through power or money. He classifies the mechanisms by which values are attached to art into only two categories, but he does not dismiss all of them:

While many people consider it a struggle between art and money, between aesthetic and economic value, between good and evil, the sacred and the worldly, the spiritual and the vulgar, it is basically the fight between different forms of power. The power to tell what is good and what is bad in the arts competes with purchasing power (2008: 77).

He refers to "two-faced character of the economy of the arts," (2008: 12) as he believes there are two spheres that both operate in art- the gift sphere and the market sphere. He claims that one persistent belief both within and outside of the creative industry is that economic value and aesthetic value are two entirely distinct things (2008: 72). He observes these spheres as sociological concepts which mostly consist of attitudes, values, and beliefs, including myths. Abbing finds himself adhering to two sets of beliefs at the same time because he is both an artist and an economist. He gathers a sizable amount of first-hand anecdotal information to support the premise that artists frequently make sacrifices, suffer losses, rely on self-sustainability and are sceptical of markets. He shows that it is more common for artists to act contrary to the model of rational economic self-interest calculations and contends that there is a surplus of artists. Therefore, as everyone with a working knowledge of economic "rules" is aware, when supply exceeds demand, prices decrease. If we summarise it, he believes artists are poor because of their irrational values.

Although his book is subtitled "The Exceptional Economy of the Arts", it can be understood as a thorough critique of the idea that art is somehow exceptional from economy. For Abbing, the myths which have economic consequences have misled art into thinking it is economically exceptional as it is perceived to be 'sacred' (2008: 23). Abbing acknowle

edges that artists seem to be exceptional producers from an economic standpoint, but he does not go on to question if the production of art itself is itself economically exceptional. Abbing claims that art has an "exceptional economy" due to the 'large presence of donations and subsidies" (2008: 12).

On the other hand, we might argue that even though art is economically exceptional in several ways, receiving grants is not one of them. In the times of 'corporate welfare' when astonishing amounts of funds are given by governments throughout the world to transnational corporations and banks, barely any economic sphere or industry is left to the market. Still, due to the post-political condition, a great pressure remains on the arts sector to justify its value and public investments.

2.1.5. Public value of culture and the post-political condition

In the last decade, a heightened discussion about the value of arts and culture between the cultural players who are engaged in attempts to develop languages and methods that can better describe the values of culture has been continuing. It is reasonable to argue the language currently adopted in the cultural sector by the funding systems in Europe, is defective not just because it fails to provide an adequate means of talking about culture, but because it is a language of dependency and supplication that fosters relations of inequality. Although the other sectors (such as the army) are also funded by the citizens' tax, only the arts are described as a subsidised sector, being not-for-profit (if we define profit in an economic sense). There seems to be a consensus on the inappropriateness of the opposition between instrumental value and intrinsic value, since the value of culture cannot be described in terms of this either/or. One of the most prominent examples of this reasoning is a text called "Capturing Cultural Value" by John Holden, published after the British think tank Demos organised a conference on the theme of 'Valuing Culture' in 2003. Resonating with the post-political condition, the key message of the text was: "The value of culture cannot be expressed only with statistics. Audience numbers give us a poor picture of how culture enriches us" (2004: 1). The central argument in Holden's writing was a plea for a completely new understanding of the public funding of culture. According to Holden (2010: 14), "we need a language capable of reflecting, recognizing and capturing the whole range of values expressed through culture." Instead of telling us about their

work, cultural organisations are obliged to account for how they support integration, crime prevention and learning while the instrumental language currently adopted forces culture into the role of the supplicant. One of the remarks Holden makes is that both cultural institutions and army are financed through taxation, but it is only the former that is described as being dependent on grants. Therefore, in view of the value created by the cultural sector, investment would be the more appropriate term to use.

The public value discussion leads Holden to a conclusion that every organisation must determine for itself what its purpose is rather than being assigned a purpose through, mostly economic, language. Holden employs the concept of public value, introduced in the field of public management, and presents it as institutional value by focusing on cultural organisations (Carnwath, Brown, 2014: 33). It produces a value triangle with intrinsic and instrumental values with value being „located in the encounter or interaction between individuals on the one hand, and an object or experience on the other“ (Holden, 2006: 15). While his understanding of intrinsic and instrumental values somewhat relates to Throsby and Klamer's cultural and social and economic values, the institutional value is a distinct concept which "relates to the processes and techniques that organisations adopt in how they work to create value for the public" (2006: 17). This type of value realises itself in the form of public goods, such as "creating trust and mutual respect among citizens, enhancing the public realm, and providing a context for sociability and the enjoyment of shared experiences" (2006: 17).

By placing focus on cultural organisations, Holden adapts the idea of public value, developed in the field of public management by the American scholar Mark Moore, and presents it as institutional value (Carnwath, Brown, 2014: 33). Together with intrinsic and instrumental values, it forms a value triangle (Holden, 2006: 15). For Holden, "value is located in the encounter or interaction between individuals on the one hand, and an object or experience on the other" (2006, 15) and while his intrinsic and instrumental values more or less correspond to Throsby's and Klamer's cultural on one side and social and economic values on the other, the institutional value is a new category which "relates to the processes and techniques that organisations adopt in how they work to create value for the public" (2006: 17). It is realised in the form of public goods, such as "creating trust and mutual respect among citizens, enhancing the public realm, and providing a context for sociability and the enjoyment of shared experiences" (2006: 17). He employs this value framework to tackle the many demands placed

on the cultural system by the environment, which in this case is represented by another triangle: public - politicians and policymakers - professionals (2006: 31).

What differentiates Holden's theory from Throsby's and Klamer's is that he does not define cultural value as one type of value attributed to cultural good or experience, as opposed to economic and social values, but rather includes all of these values as part of the cultural value as a principle for thinking about the cultural system. A few other examples of the debate on the evaluation of the arts by the criteria that are not inherent to the field of the arts, mainly economic and social ones, has resulted in documents such as the Warwick report on the "Future of Cultural Value" (Belfiore, Firth, Hart, Perrin, Brock, Holdaway, Woddis, 2015). The Warwick Commission launched a series of public seminars on the following three issues: 1) Is it possible to assign a value to culture, and, if so, how? 2) Can the value of culture be measured outside of a monetary context? and 3) What are the limits of the current econometric models in terms of the evaluation of culture? Further on, this revision of the concept of "value" follows work in finding alternatives to GDP and other measurements of quality of life or wellbeing since "GDP does not properly account for social and environmental costs and benefits" (van den Bergh & Miklós, 2014: 10).

In the post-political condition when the managerial logic prevails, this discussion is still ongoing with the aim of providing arguments for cultural and art institutions in favour of social capital, as opposed to the economic one. The attitude of cultural and art institutions has been historically changing according to the broader sociopolitical changes- when the geopolitics ruled in the 19th century, institutions became instruments of the dominant nationalism (Klaić, 2012: 16). Today, after neoliberal capitalism arrived, they switched to legitimising themselves in quantitative criteria (audience numbers, output measurements, income figures etc.) Therefore, institutions are becoming structured around the needs of monitoring systems or, in the words of Power, "the consequence is a displacement in the terms of government discourse, from service- specific values of teaching, care and so on to more abstract, financial and quantitative categories" (1994: 13). On top of that, this discourse claims to be apolitical. Referring to Mark Fisher's notion of capitalist realism (2009), Gielen suggests that "by persuading us that there is only one liveable reality possible, neoliberalism slips into the ideology of realism where only that which can be calculated is manageable and only that which is manageable is realistic" (2013: 26). Whatever cannot be measured is too soon discarded as impracticable and useless.

What seems necessary is that the debate on cultural policy separates from the focus on the instrumental value of art and, especially after the austerity measures, its "economic value" as the main justification for the "public investment" in the arts and culture. Dragičević Šešić diagnoses the problem as the concern "to what extent public cultural policy should ignore capitalist markets as a value ranking mechanism" due to "capitalist logic is creating distortions in cultural life" (2021: 11). If we already affirm the art within the economic logic, Kunst (2013: 118) places art closer to the senseless spending than to the economy of the production of value. When discussing valorization of arts in terms of social impact, Gielen also claims „creativity is often equated with ‘problem-solving (i.e. “patching up the holes” of the same system that produces them, op. a.); which is something else entirely than causing problems or, rather, problematizing issues, a task that was until recently reserved for artist or dabbler“ (2019: 80). Therefore, instrumental cultural policies are not sustainable in the long run and can easily turn from cultural policies of "survival" to the cultural policies of "extinction" (Belfiore 2004: 202). The consequences of claims about the value of culture being unimportant to political actors are visible in hyperinstrumentalization. In the words of Dragičević Šešić, "post- capitalist cultural policies should be able to value what markets are not capable of" (in Kisić, Tomka 2021: 12). Therefore, if the sector is to be able to stake a claim to independence, stronger reasoning must be developed to facilitate the continuity of an autonomous sphere of artistic and cultural policy practice.

2.2. Brief historical overview of cultural policy-making in the European Community: towards economic core aims

"On nous parle de l'avenir de l'Europe, et de la nécessité d'accorder les banques, les assurances, les marchés intérieurs, les entreprises, les polices, consensus, consensus, consensus, mais le devenir des gens?"

[We hear about the future of Europe, and the need to agree on banks, insurance, internal markets, companies, policies, consensus, consensus, consensus, but the future of the people?]

(Deleuze, G. in Minichbauer, R. 2005: 91)

What is nowadays regarded as European cultural policy has been evolving gradually, with contributions and momentums coming from a wide range of players and stakeholders. These inputs have included initiatives, strategic documents, decisions, and instruments with the explicitly promoted cultural goals by the, among others, Parliament or the Commission. Although culture is a cohesive factor that influences how communities see their identities which can be viewed as the very foundation of a transnational European society (Gielen 2005: 21), the European Union's absence of culture as one of its founding principles is likely due in large part to its absolute values in contrast to the relative political aims. Logically, the European Union's focus on the cultural and media sectors has undergone numerous shifts in regards to policy developments during the past three decades. Culture was envisioned in the early stages of the European integration process only as the symbolic addition of identity and diversity to the evolving community. Further on, the idea of formal coordination of cultural policies was not well received by the Member States because the principle of subsidiarity predominated (Romainville 2015: 193). Therefore, explicit cultural policy in Europe was under the jurisdiction solely of national governments with some input from the UNESCO (Dragičević Šešić 2022)¹ and especially from the Council of Europe during the process of evaluation of the national cultural policies that was initiated in 1986² and until 1992 when culture was included

² See more in Dragičević Šešić Dragičević Šešić M. (2022) : Professionalisation of the cultural sector through the development of art/cultural management and cultural policy as academic, research-based disciplines. In

into the treaties of the European Communities with the adoption of the Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty (now 151 in the amended Treaty of Amsterdam), which then created a legal basis for later European Commission programs and actions (Sievers Wingert 2012: 36).

The Clause 1 of the Article 128 stated that: “The Community shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (CEC 1992: No C191/24). The tension between the two most important concepts in this context is already apparent in this statement of principles: on the one hand, an assumed commonality supported by the notion of a shared history, common heritage, etc.; and on the other, the need to protect and safeguard the cultural diversity of those living in Europe. In general, this tension is seen as an easily reconcilable tension within what is referred to as "the unity of diversities," rather than as a contradiction in and of itself. Clause 2 of the article defined the scope for community action with regard to culture as “improving the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples, conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage of European significance; non-commercial cultural exchanges and artistic and literary creation, including in the audio-visual sector” (CEC 1992: No C191/24).). When it comes to the prospects for Community action, the article's main emphasis is on cooperation and exchange, particularly non-commercial cultural exchange, which is extremely important given the growing dominance of the so-called "cultural industries" and other commercial aspects of culture on a global scale. However, Clause 2 of the Article excludes numerous individuals who live in Europe as well as cultural elements of non-European origin that have influenced or interacted with the European cultural field because it exclusively refers to the "culture and history" (in singular) of the European people. Clause 3 stated that the Community and the Member States “shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of culture, in particular the Council of Europe” (ibid.) so this opens up the closure the limitation from Clause 2, but only partially since the "non-Europeans" within the EU are not taken into account. Clause 4 which is beyond the issue of cultural cooperation and states that the European Community should “take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of this Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures” (ibid.). This clause thus makes a legal bridge between culture and other

Karjalainen T-M. & Simjanovska V, *The Art of Rethinking. New Era for Arts Management* (Sibelius Academy Publications), pp. 33 – 58.

aspects of European policy and serves as a significant recognition of the transversality of culture. It invites not only a critical evaluation of how actions in other EU policy areas (such as economy and development) could negatively impact culture, but also how grants to cultural practitioners have a limited access to resources in these areas.

The article has been fairly criticised for its vagueness and contradictions (Shore 2006: 16), but it also represented a symbolically significant shift towards a new transnational level of cultural policy-making and regulation. The policy discourse shifted from the "pluralist decade" that dominated the 1980s and the early 1990s to the "convergence decade" in the 1990s and up until the year 2000, and subsequently to the current situation where the discourse on the cultural and creative industries predominates (Schlesinger, 2015). It can also be seen as the start of a new phase in the development of European culture by the EU in order to enhance the Union's legitimacy and broad public support, broaden the reach of its power and influence, but also to affect development of "a common sense of heritage, history, and belonging - the goal being to turn member- state nationals into a "body politics", or European "demos" (ibid.).

Furthermore, in 1992 the Commission also delivered a communication titled "New Prospects for Community Cultural Action" which added to opening a pathway towards further dynamization of EU cultural action. The ideas on the programs "Kaleidoscope 2000" (artistic and cultural projects of a European dimension) and "Ariadne" (books and reading) were included with a new communication in 1994. A year later, the Commission issued a proposal for a program on cultural heritage and the implementation of Article 151 was evaluated within the "First Report on the Consideration of Cultural Aspects in European Community Action" that was published in 1996. In that same year "Kaleidoscope" was launched while "Ariadne" and "Raphael" (programs focusing on cultural heritage) followed a year later. In order to examine EC activities in the sector of culture since 1993, the Commission offered a comprehensive program of funding and programming in support of cultural cooperation in 1998 called "Culture 2000" and organised the first "European Union Cultural Forum." The Kaleidoscope and Ariadne programs were expanded, but "Connect" was launched in 1999 to support collaborative educational and cultural initiatives while effectively drawing upon culture's ability to cut across borders and sectors. The program "Culture 2000" was adopted by the Parliament and Council in 2000. It had a 167-million-euro budget and was planned to run from 2000 to 2004 but, meanwhile, the program has been extended until 2006.

Establishment of a single framework program “Culture 2000” brought about a radical shift in the Commission's discourse on culture. With the claim that culture has “an important role to play in meeting the new challenges facing the Community” (European Commission 1998: 13), the text of the initial proposal generally supports a trend towards the “multiplication of culture's utility,” as identified by Barnett (2001: 412), and with this, the proliferation of objectives connected to wider EU issues, including “social cohesion,” “European citizenship,” and “external relations” (ibid.).

The economic aspect of culture has also grown significantly, which is visible in the statement regarding the programme that culture is „both an economic factor and a factor in social integration“ (Decision No 508/2000/EC), the addition of an another economic objective (ibid., Article 1, (g)) and the inclusion of ‘socio-economic consequences’ as an evaluation criterion (ibid., Article 8). This convergence between economic and cultural goals only continues to increase in the following programmes “Culture (2007-2013)” and “Creative Europe” which will be shown in the following subchapter.

2.2.1. Recent changes within financial instruments of cultural policy: *Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020*

In the meantime, the European Union made significant progress towards establishing conditions for a more coordinated policy-making in the field of culture after adopting the “European Agenda for Culture in a Globalizing World” (European Commission, 2007) and introducing the Open Method of Coordination (OMC). The creation of the new “Creative Europe” programme and the merger of the two previously separate “Culture” and “MEDIA” programmes were presented in this context as potential steps forward in better managing and coordinating the two previously separate programs as well as an essential tool in achieving the Agenda's goals, including the goal of making “culture a catalyst for creativity” within the framework of the “Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Development”.

In order to examine the changes in European cultural policy after 2000, this chapter will observe the shift in the funding priorities between the programmes “Culture 2007-2013” and “Creative Europe 2014-2020”. Both programmes shared priorities such as transnational

mobility, the establishment of networks, cooperative projects and the impact-broadening activities of organisations. The focus of the support measures in the previous cycle was placed on intercultural dialogue while in the current cycle the emphasis is on audience development.

General objective of programme “Culture 2007-2013” was to “enhance the cultural area shared by Europeans, based on a common cultural heritage through the development of cultural cooperation between creators, cultural players and cultural institutions taking part in the programme, with a view to encouraging the emergence of European citizenship” (Commission, 2007 n.p.). Specific objectives included promoting the transnational mobility of cultural players, encouraging the transnational circulation of works, cultural and artistic products and encouraging intercultural dialogue. Beyond the specific objectives the programme did not specify any further priorities, leaving freedom to cultural operators to adopt tailored approaches suited to their needs while the “Creative Europe” programme gained more precision about the programme’s priorities to supplement the specific objectives. With the "Culture" programme through 2013, there was no mention of growth, jobs, or competitiveness, in obvious contrast to the current support program.

The general objective of “Creative Europe” programme is to “foster the safeguarding and promotion of European cultural and linguistic diversity, and strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors, with a view to promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy” (Commission, 2014 n.p.). Hence, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are indeed to be promoted, but it is also made clear that "culture as a catalyst for creativity" is considered to exist "inside the framework for growth and employment." As a result, it is made clearly evident that culture does not exist separately from market orientation and growth-related requirements. According to the Commission's communication on the program (European Commission COM 2011, 786:7) that acknowledged “Culture” and “Media” also for their economic successes and improvements, there is a clear stance that the cultural sector must maximise its "potential for economic growth, job creation, and social inclusion" within Creative Europe.

The Commission (2014 n.p.) provided elaboration on some changes in the objectives, in comparison to the previous programme. For example, the specific objective to support the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally addressed the

challenge of globalisation and the adaptation of the sector to the digital shift. That is visible in the objectives of providing cultural operators with skills and knowhow to facilitate adjustment to the digital shift (audience-building strategies, new business models) through mutual peer learning; supporting artists/cultural professionals to internationalise their careers; strengthening European and international networks of cultural professionals to facilitate access to new opportunities and markets. Promotion of the transnational circulation of cultural, creative works and operators and reaching new audiences addressed the problem of fragmentation, which, in the words of the Commission (2014 n.p.) “resulted in limited circulation of works and artists and limited choice for consumers”. That objective is fragmented into supporting international touring, events and exhibitions; supporting literary translation, including promotion packages; supporting audience-building as a means of raising curiosity of the public and particularly young people and building a long-term audience for European cultural works.

Finally, the specific objectives of Creative Europe programme, including those already mentioned, are supporting the capacity of the European cultural and creative sectors to operate transnationally, promoting the transnational circulation of cultural and creative works and operators and reaching new audiences in Europe, fostering policy development, innovation, audience building and new business models through transnational policy cooperation, supporting studies, evaluations, policy analysis and statistical surveys, supporting transnational exchange of good practices and knowhow, peer-learning activities and networking related to policy development, including cultural and media literacy, support the testing of new and cross-sectoral approaches to funding, distributing, and monetizing creation and more.

Through the expansion of cooperative activities, the overall objective of supporting the development of a "European citizenry" was still being promoted until 2008 while the current program no longer engages with the notion of European citizenry. At the same time, the former program's draft no longer addresses the flexibility surrounding the personal circumstances of people affected, which was still a factor within the previous funding cycle. Within “Creative Europe 2004-2020”, there are four instead of nine calls for proposals since, in the words of the European Commission 2011 786:5): “actions lacking critical mass, a long-term perspective, or which are oversubscribed due to their design will be discontinued”.

What should be emphasised is that only cultural actors who work in culture on a non-profit basis were eligible for funding under the previous program "Culture", which marks a relevant change in the rationale of the European cultural policy. Another change is that the operating grants have been terminated because, in the Commission's view, they were too challenging for applicants and were not sufficiently results-oriented. They have been replaced by project grants, which of course provides obstacles for institutions that don't usually operate on a project basis and deepens precarious conditions of work. Further on, instead of continuing with the previous annual call for proposals with a shifting country focus towards projects from acceding and candidate nations, there has been a clear decision within "Creative Europe" to fund projects from countries in the neighbourhood of Europe and the European Economic Area.

2.2.2. Semantic shifts from cultural towards creative and audiences towards consumers

We can also observe a significant semantic shift in the priorities and the language of EU cultural policy as the "cultural and creative sector" now refers to what was formerly the cultural sector, which makes it more challenging for anyone involved in non-profit or public cultural organisations to relate to these terms. Further on, the Commission puts a focus on "competitiveness" and "growth" while using the term "consumers" in preference to "audiences", which are portrayed as a malleable mass. The new focus on "strategic audience-building by cultural institutions through cultural marketing, visitor research, target-group positioning and cultural transmission" is supported, above all, by "challenges of our time", "digital shift", "new technologies", and "economic growth. This could be interpreted as a policy response to the economic developments and various crises which then delegates the responsibility of financing culture from the public bodies to the audiences, i.e. "consumers".

Within the "European Agenda for Culture 2007", there is a clear articulation of an instrumental approach to cultural policy which was assigned a strategic role: "There is also acknowledgement that culture is an indispensable feature to achieve the EU's strategic objectives of prosperity, solidarity and security, while ensuring a stronger presence on the international scene." (European Commission COM (2007) 242:3). In the "Creative Europe"

programme, the aspect of intercultural dialogue does not hold the same relevancy as in the previous program and cultural diversity and identity are considered in the context of global competition. Following the subsidiarity concept, projects that are not profit-driven or do not foster competition are thus left to the Member States. However, the new program gives the concept of "creativity" a central role, often associated to "capacity-building/-reinforcement" as well as in conjunction with the already mentioned notion of "growth."

For example, although the program still promotes cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, it is made clear in the same sentence that "culture as a catalyser for creativity" is understood as pertaining to "the framework for growth and employment". The Commission's communication regarding the programme clearly states that the cultural sector will optimise its "potential for economic growth, job creation, and social inclusion" (European Commission COM 2011, 786:7) next to acknowledging the two previous programmes mainly for their economic achievements and developments. The communication puts strong emphasis on the contribution of the cultural and creative sector to the GDP in the 27 EU Member States as the fastest-growing sector. Also, the challenges in the sector are observed primarily from a perspective of financial capacities.

Condensed into core aims, all this means the prevalence of economic aspects of the cultural sector, which has been among the main objectives in EU cultural policy since the early 1980s at the latest. In a cultural policy, which has become more and more pragmatic, this economic core aim is becoming increasingly overwhelming today and, with these priorities laid out, the convergence between economic and cultural aspects is a clear objective. This shift towards discourse on "consumers" is an indication of the described shift towards economic arguments and objectives in the field of culture where citizens became neglected, since "the role of 'the consumer' diminishes the role of 'the citizen'" (McGuigan 1992: 165).

The evident change in the style of the programme has been for the most part rejected between scholars: "This development functions as part of a Europe-wide shifting process in cultural policy, that [...] shall 'depoliticize' the state-supported production of art: Away with the remains of cultural production as dissent, as opposition and as the creation of public spheres, bring on the creative industry as a most unadulterated and affirmative function of economy and the machinery of the state; accordingly, there is a movement in the terminology

of programmes within cultural policy away from emancipatory and socio-critical elements to issues of social integration and the creative industry. The fog machines of creativity – ‘creative economy’, ‘creative class’, ‘cultural entrepreneurs’, and ‘creative industries’ – were and are in this process essential propaganda tools” (Raunig 2011 n.p.). More generally speaking, the expansion of the market discursive formation is candidly visible in the way we name our policies: first there were arts policies, then the cultural policies and now, finally, we have the creative policies.

The focus on “growth” is also a symptom of a neoliberal rationale, which is based on market-oriented activity, competitiveness and financial efficiency. International and European documents addressing growth promote, above all, economic development and recommend the reduction of public services, which leads to many risks for art and culture. In relation to the discussion above on the post-political shift of politics to economics, we can conclude “Creative Europe” departs from the language of culture. It puts into effect a clear paradigm shifts in EU funding policy because the existing objectives have shifted dramatically from cultural promotion to the promotion of economic activity.

3. Responses from the performing arts field to the shifts in the European cultural policy discourse

'Sous les pavés, la plage!'

(Under the cobblestones, the beach!)

(Cousin, B. and Fritsch, B, 1968: np)

It is valuable to observe how the independent performing arts scene in Europe reflects these social complexities and the changes in European society more incisively, due to its networks reaching far beyond the national performing arts cultures and the precarious nature of its work conditions. Based on interdisciplinary literature overview and field research by participation in symposia and gatherings that revolve around conditions or work in the contemporary performing arts, the following chapter will examine how do precarious conditions of work influence new organisational cultures and forms of solidarity in the independent contemporary performing arts scene in Europe.

The notion of 'independent performing arts scene' will be used interchangeably with 'independent cultural sector' (depending on whether there is more emphasis on artistic or policy aspects in the analysis) and, therefore, it is relevant to define both terms. Although different definitions and interpretations are often attached to the independent cultural sector, the scope of this chapter does not allow for a broader elaboration of this term or for initiating a theoretical argumentation in favour of a particular opinion nor does it attempt to develop a new definition. According to Kenny and Taylor (2016: 37), there are also several other terms to describe this sector: the third sector, the nonprofit sector, the civil sector, non-governmental, charitable, socio-cultural, etc. but none of these fully conveys the sector's complex nature. Still, most authors agree that the independent sector has three key functions (ibid.): it guarantees, protects, and ensures the right to free assembling of people around common interests, promotes values and ideas, introduces new initiatives in the existing cultural system, and contributes to an enduring tradition of independent criticism of dominant power and ideology in the cultural public sphere. This understanding of the independent sector assumes it provides control to ensure public interests are met within institutions of the public sector and a voice to secure fair

spending of public resources. In this manner, this sector partly guards the trust of the citizens in their society and its institutions (Dragičević Šešić, Dragojević, 2007: 11). Since civil society is a community of actors whose legal forms of association are voluntary, its members have the power to interpret and transform the social and political structures within which they operate.

Vujanović (2010: 896) defines the term ‘scene’ based the legacy of analytical aesthetics and institutional theory of art, as defined by Arthur Danto who puts the emphasis on discursive atmospheres and knowledge that enable the appearance of a work of art as well as George Dickie who analyses institutional dispositifs. The multitude of diverse and interconnected elements form art as a social practice: artworks/works, actors (who act in different registers, from artists to producers to critics and theorists), networks and collaborative initiatives, then art institutions (from schools to production houses and financiers to festivals), as well as concepts, knowledge, discourses and theoretical practices and atmospheres. Within the large study “Das Freie theatre im Europa der Gegenwart. Strukturen – Ästhetik – Kulturpolitik” about the independent performing arts scene in Europe, Brauneck (2016: 44) notices the it is defined by an emphasis on its autonomy, collective work, freedom from hierarchies, the desire to experiment and to explore diverse artistic potential as well a committed advocacy for urgent social issues. EAIPA – European Association of Independent Performing Arts, founded in September 2018, defines the independent performing arts scene as a “designation which includes the totality of all professional freelance theatre makers, artists, ensembles, independent institutions and structures working in the genres of dance, theatre, performance, music theatre, children’s and youth theatre as well as overall interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary artistic work” (2018: 3).

3.1. Conditions of work in independent performing arts sector across Europe

In another publication from 2021, EIPA expands on the scene having shaped “new institutional patterns, a common language, interaction and collaboration on all levels as well as common strategies in advocacy” (2021: 13). Within this publication, Eder elaborates on a survey about conditions of work of independent performing arts associations in 13 European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland) which encompasses almost 160,000 artists, 1,600 production managers and about 9,000 ensembles when counted altogether. The results are quite discouraging: with an equivalent disposable income below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median equivalent disposable income after social transfers, a majority of independent performing arts professionals are at risk of poverty in each of the thirteen countries under study. Additionally, almost all of the surveyed organisations anticipate that many individuals will fall into poverty once they reach retirement age. Consequently, according to this most recent EAIPA study, a total of 77% of performing arts practitioners in all countries under study depend on having a second job to maintain a basic standard of living (2021: 50).

These results are very similar to data from national studies on independent cultural sector in Europe. The results of a study by on labour conditions of civil society organisations in contemporary arts and culture foundation Kultura Nova in Croatia show the average fee in the sector is 400 euros (well below the national average) as well as a high prevalence of burnout among the respondents (Barada, Primorac, Buršić: 2016: 72). According to the Hans Böckler Stiftung research, the average gross year income for performing artists registered with the Künstlersozialkasse (shortly KSK) in Germany in 2014 was 14.971 euros (Norz 2016: 36). In contrast, long-term employed artists' average gross annual income in 2010 was 34.776 euros, which is much greater. Additionally, the survey results show a wide range in respondents' annual incomes, with a concentration in the lowest income categories: up to 40% of working artists had an average net annual income from their artistic labour of less than 10,000 euros. A more recent study by Annelies Van Assche on the living and working conditions of dance artists in Brussels and Berlin (with 63 respondents) reveals that more than half of all

respondents make less than 1.000 euros per month on average, while 81% of all respondents make a maximum of 1.500 euros per month, which is still significantly less than the national average. In addition, over nine out of ten respondents have multiple jobs, and the majority of respondents had worked as freelancers in the previous five years. When working multiple jobs, the majority of the available budget is allocated to tasks involving creative labor. Assche concludes that “besides being dance artists, they also appear to be survival artists” (2017: 5).

Going back specifically to European independent performing arts scene, recent report from an IETM focus meeting in Brussels (Shishkova 2022: 5) also warns that the existing funding paradigm, which is currently thought by performing arts professionals who are diversely situated (geographically, culturally, politically and professionally) to be founded on the values of productivity and growth, increasing inequity and requiring urgent change. With 89 percent of all cultural venues partially or completely closed (UNESCO 2021: np), the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic along with some of its’ harshest economic effects additionally exposed the vulnerability of cultural workers who depend on project- based work with inadequate support and protection mechanisms. Paradoxically, the year of the pandemic 2020 is the year of the pandemic outbreak also marked the 40th anniversary of 1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist by UNESCO. Looking at the situation today, in words of Neil within a recent UNESCO study on working conditions for artists: “the largest subsidy for the arts comes not from governments, patrons or the private sector, but from artists themselves in the form of unpaid or underpaid labour” (2019: 6). Apparently, there are still a number of obstacles to improving the status of the artists as there are still many challenges artists face trying to exercise their labour and cultural rights. Several European policy studies (IDEA Consult 2021; KEA 2006) indicated the prevalence of project-based, underpaid and voluntary work in the independent cultural scene, while highlighting the challenging long-term impacts this has on professional and private lives of freelance cultural workers. This is just some of the research that reflects the precarious conditions under which the work is being produced, as well as poverty and self-exploitation in the field.

3.1.1. Precarity as a norm for performing artists in the project-oriented work regime

Short-term temporalities, a lack of protection imposed on by a lack of social and labour law norms, lack of material resources such as permanent venues and structural grants and challenges with securing a means of life as a result of low-income level raise the pressure on individuals and clearly reflect leaking of state apparatuses due to multiple crises. They have been left to make use of their own "human capital," which is in accordance with neoliberal rationale, which holds that each person is accountable for and responsible for their own well-being even as the government dismantles its social protection and social solidarity networks. This process is accurately described by David Harvey (2005: 76):

“It is precisely such a context of diminished personal resources derived from the job market that the neoliberal determination to transfer all responsibility for well-being back to the individual has doubly deleterious effects. As the state withdraws from welfare provision and diminishes its role in arenas such as health care, public education, culture and social services, which were once so fundamental to embedded liberalism, it leaves larger and larger segments of the population exposed to impoverishment. The social safety net is reduced to a bare minimum in favour of a system that emphasises personal responsibility”.

Judith Butler (2012: 136) also argues that precarity largely depends on the organisation of economic and social relations, i.e. the presence or absence of sustainable infrastructures as well as social and political institutions. In this sense, precarity is inseparable from the political dimension that concerns the organisation of protection needed by the body. Thus, according to her, precarity exposes our sociality as well “the fragile and necessary dimension of our interdependence” (2012: 139). Along a similar line of thought, Tsianos and Papadopoulos explain that “precarity is where immaterial production meets the crisis of the social systems which were based on the national social compromise of normal employment” (2006: np). According to their proposal, these are some of the characteristics of embodied precarity: vulnerability (the steadily experience of flexibility without any form of protection);

hyperactivity (the imperative to accommodate constant availability), simultaneity (the ability to handle at the same time the different velocities of multiple activities); recombination (the crossings between various networks, social spaces, and available resources); restlessness (trying to cope with the overabundance of communication, cooperation and interactivity); unsettledness (the continuous experience of mobility across different spaces and time lines) and so on.

As for the genealogy of this often-used notion, Casas-Cortés believes that the use of the term precarity appeared during the 1990s as a response to the increasingly widespread appearance of contracts that meant unstable labour relations, often with low pay and less protection against dismissal. In the context of the time, this term represented a reaction to the loss of workers' rights, and historically achieved advantages through labour movements and struggles, which led to their institutionalisation at the national level (related to health insurance, pension system reforms and increasing privatisation of the public sector) (2014: 209). Casas-Cortés distinguishes four different, although related, conceptual developments of the notion of precarity: 1) work after the disappearance of the welfare state; 2) a new paradigm of alternating and immaterial work; 3) constant labour mobility; 4) feminization of work and life. This division is not restrictive or chronological, it does not organise reality into precise and static identities, but unites multiple realities into unstable formations, which are not absolute, but are practical and have their material consequences (2014: 207).

Standing (2011) indicates that the term precariat had different meanings even before it became part of popular speech. In Italy, *precariato* referred to people working unskilled jobs with little income, implying that a precariatized existence was the normal way of life. In Germany, this term has been used to describe not only temporary workers, but also those who are out of work and for whom there is no hope of being socially integrated. Standing believes that this is close to Marx's idea of the lumpenproletariat. He finds the historical ancestors of the precariat in the *banausoa* in ancient Greece, who were obliged to perform productive work in society (as opposed to slaves who worked only for their owners). They had no opportunity to rise on the social ladder and worked alongside foreigners who had the right of residence and artisans with limited rights. They did all the work in society, without the expectation that they would ever participate in the life of the polis and become full citizens who were not engaged

in work, but in *praxis*. It was a reproductive activity, a job that was an end in itself to strengthen personal ties and public participation in the life of the community (2011: 24).

Isabell Lorey wrote extensively about the normalisation of precarization that she sees as a neoliberal management instrument. Lorey believes that precarization is not a new phenomenon within capitalism (2010: np). The normalisation of neoliberal precarization has a long history in industrial capitalism, where precarious living and working conditions have become the norm for many people. In fact, the period in which the state took care of the social protection of workers was only an exception and a short excess. In particular, she highlights the unpaid work of women in households and the situation of immigrants, which has always been precarious, as well as anyone who is not thought having full citizenship. According to her, we are nowadays being governed through continuous precarisation that establishes social links, structures, relations and dynamics in society precisely with the production of a pertinent feeling and fear of insecurity. The specificity of her approach is found in the idea of self-precarization, which she sees as a consequence of romanticising creative and affective work (2006: np). During the 2000s, it became obvious that cultural workers, due to freedom and autonomy compared to long-term employment, chose precarious living and working conditions for themselves, which slowly cease to be alternative and potential places of resistance but become completely normalised for the majority of workers. In Lorey's words:

“This financing of one's own creative output, enforced and yet opted for at the same time, constantly supports and reproduces the very conditions in which one suffers and which one at the same time wants to take part of. It is perhaps because of this that workers, these voluntary precarized virtuosos, are subject so easily exploited; they seem able to tolerate their living and working conditions with infinite patience because of the belief in their own freedoms and autonomies, and because of the fantasies of self-realisation. In a neoliberal context, they're so exploitable that, now it is no longer just the State that presents them as role models of living and working” (2011: 87).

Self-precarization consists in being creative and in designing oneself as an opportunity to sell one's entire individuality on the affective labour market. Short-term, insecure and low-paying jobs, which we often call "projects", are becoming more and more normal for a large part of society, particularly within the creative profession since "external precarization induced by the meanwhile institutionalised neoliberal or post-Fordist regime of flexible artistic accumulation is intrinsically interwoven with a partly voluntary self-precarization, stemming from the desire to be a creative subject" (Laermans 2010: 291). Therefore, performing artists can indeed be perceived as the prototypes of the post-Fordist work regime.

Similarly, in Standing's definition of the precariat, artists are typically part of the third subgroup, also known as the precarious intellectuals. According to him, this category consists of (highly educated) individuals working in the creative economy who, because of the nature of their employment, are unable to have a secure future. As seen by Hesters (2004: 86), professional pathways in the arts tend to be non-linear and non-hierarchical, and they operate more as trajectories with a strong improvisatory nature. This atypical career trajectory is very similar to the rising freelance entrepreneurial career paths, which are especially common among the younger generation of (highly) educated professionals in the creative industries in Western societies.

The creative workforce, according to Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) description of the "new spirit of capitalism," is the new subjectivity that undertakes immaterial labour on a flexible basis within the context of transient projects. Since the key concepts from the 1968 student demonstrations (such as imagination, creativity, and pleasure) have now become the cornerstone of the standards of work in the cognitive capitalist system, this position demands constant networking in order to ascertain future employment chances. The changes in the contemporary structure and organisation of production, which today is most widely defined as post-Fordist, are based on a change in the conception of work. Post-Fordist most succinctly means post-industrial. This means that the system is not based on the production potential of the industry, but on the symbolic potential of information, knowledge, communication and feelings, and that the key production forces have changed. The consequence of that is a change in the valorization system, i.e. the creation of surplus value not only from the labour invested, from the direct exploitation of labour in a manner known in the circumstances of industrial production, but from the symbolic value of the product (Grlja 2010: 48).

Many other scholars, including Gielen (2010), Kunst (2015), Lazzarato (2006), Pewny (2011), Praznik (2020, 2021), Virno (2004), and Vujanović (2012), have proposed the performing artist as the paradigmatic example of this new creative workforce engaged in immaterial and globalised project work in response to Boltanski and Chiapello's seminal work. For example, Praznik (2020: np) talks about the paradox of unpaid artistic work which is based on the one hand on the persistence of creative ideals out of passion (so called passionate labour), and on the other hand, insisting on the concept of the autonomy of art, which rejects both the economic and wider socio-political foundations of the artistic, and consequently also the cultural and creative work. In doing so, she advocates for valorising artistic work as labour, embedded in economy and subject to the economic processes.

Vujanović claims that, "speaking from a macro-perspective, the contemporary international dance scene mostly works according to the principles of the tertiary sector of neo-liberal capitalism, and therefore functions as a training ground of post-industrial economy" (2013: 191) when discussing the politicalness in the contemporary dance field. She notes that, paradoxically, contemporary performing artists embrace nomadism, adaptability, multitasking personalities, collaboration, and endless networking as elements of their processes of production. According to her, these circumstances are "responsible for turning artists' lives into an increasingly precarious existence" (2013: 191) but they are also seen to make dance professionals politically opportunistic because they make them complicit with neoliberal ideology.

In her seminal book "Artist at Work" (2015), Bojana Kunst elaborates further on these phenomena and juxtaposes the artists' projective temporality (which is always situated in the future) with the socio-economic precarity (which they are actually living in in the present). To be more precise, the idea of project work includes the time dimension, uncertainties, and tensions it implies because the verb "projecting" always refers to the realisation of potentials and, therefore, to future action (2015: 158). But the combination of the pressure to work too intensely in the present and the anxiety of not having enough employment in the future characterises the projective temporality Kunst describes. Due to the expectation that their projects will be successful eventually, projective temporality causes art and culture workers to lose track of the present. Artists are increasingly living in the future, which stands in stark contrast to the socioeconomic precarity that limits them from having stable future prospects

over the long term. For instance, contemporary dancers typically only have temporary jobs as dancers, but in between such projects, they frequently work in an array of tasks such as administration, bookkeeping, production and tour management, promotion, and communication. She does not make a differentiation between personal and professional investment and describes the project as the primary approach for producing artistic work (2012: 13). She also emphasises that project labour eventually displaces full-time and long-term employment in Western culture as a whole in a number of ways (such as short-employment contracts, consulting work, or self-employed freelancing).

Artists are frequently viewed as the forerunners in the present-day institutionalisation of this project-oriented work regime because the type of project-based work performed by performing artists within the context of their personal networks can be considered as a clear example of current socio-economic shifts within the cultural and creative economy. The next chapter will attempt to demonstrate how, despite the fact that performing artists might be seen as the archetypes of the post-Fordist work paradigm, they are also frequently the ones who struggle the most to challenge it.

3.2. Resistance strategies and political potentials of the performing arts in the post-political condition

Art still cherishes the idea of that which can always also be otherwise imagined.

Pascal Gielen (2013: 26)

In the post-polical condition, Bauman (2000: 40) observed public space as "increasingly empty of public issues". As a reaction to this, increasing number of contemporary artists and curators have in the last three decades inquired structures of togetherness and shared concerns about both local and global societal issues. Becker notes: "a number of artists have used these interventions of public and private to take on a new role and a new line of interrogation appropriate to this historical moment (...) because they discern that what is missing now is public discourse about the relationship of individuals to society" (2012: 67). This kind of work regularly opens up questions regarding the critical positioning of the work and the interrelation between content and form in relation to the socio-political specificities of the context. Most often, it engages with relationality, participation and community and it encompasses formats such as collaborative authorship, participative projects and active forms of spectatorship or audience engagement.

On the other hand, the discussions on the ambiguous proximity between performing arts and politics are nothing new in itself, starting from Athenian democracy within which Hannah Arendt diagnosed that "performing arts have indeed a strong affinity with politics" (Arendt 1998: 154) due to the performative mechanisms of political practice and the politicality of artistic performances. Therefore, politicality of performing arts is materialized not only the direct use of political motifs in performing arts but also through the modes of representation on stage, as well as its modes of production. While *artist* practices explicitly connect art and activism which results in a hybrid form of art and activism that uses art as a mean towards change and social transformation (Milohnić 2005, np), at the same time each and every performance is political, be it implicitly or explicitly articulated. To be more precise, there is no performance without the public sphere which makes it inherently political. This implies that

the productions that highlight political and social issues of a community might not have as relevant of a political impact as those that choose to rethink and advance their artistic strategies. According to Vujanović and Piazza, performing artists nowadays are counting on “the political power of performance in the direct interaction and live copresence of people in public” (2019: 11) and, thus, participation and interaction are understood as a “guarantee” for performance’s political potentialities.

In a similar vein, Peggy Phelan thought that liveness, together with ephemerality and immateriality, was what established the political potential of performance within capitalism. There, it functions symbolically as "a representation without reproduction" that, due to its immateriality and lack of mediation, continues to be "unmarked" preventing it from being absorbed into the system (1993: 4). However, we can nowadays witness that, similarly as conceptual art which originated in the 1960s and 1970s with the aim of subverting commodification, ephemerality and immateriality of performing arts did not prevent its appropriation by the market. Therefore, there has been a surge of independent performing artists and cultural workers who are rethinking the relationship of content of artistic activity and its means and methods, as well as the way how political principles are employed in the operative aspect of functioning within the institution of art. In short, they are reflecting not only about *what* is being produced, but also about *how* it is coming to being.

Going back to Raunigs’ pledge for “cultural production as dissent, as opposition and as the creation of public spheres” (2011, np), a great number of artists and curators respond to the post-political condition by becoming directly engaged with the political conditions of neoliberalism. The self-authorized subjects question established hierarchies, prevalent authorships, and define new alliances by taking control of political means and knowledge creation. As Rancière notes this "return to politics" asserts "art's capacity to resist forms of economic, political and ideological domination” (2010: 34).

3.2.1. Self- governance and collectivity as strategies of resistance

As shown in the previous chapter, artists as creative workers in immaterial capitalism are especially vulnerable to neoliberal value regime due to the promise of individual independence and opportunity for self-realisation through labour. Therefore, creative entrepreneurs are often accompanied by a significant degree of individualization or decollectivization of project activity within the current context of production. Not surprisingly, Boltanski and Chiapello have taken the artist and artistic activity as the model of the neoliberal economy whereas this model was constructed on the idea of the individual as “human capital” as an interpreter of her/himself” (Lazzarato 2006: np).

As a response to this, in the last decade of the 20th century, the affirmation of collectivity was renewed because the collective began to serve as a model of opposition to the model of a flexible, mobile, non-specialized worker who can adapt to various situations. Surely, the collective is more difficult to adapt, less flexible and less mobile. In a situation where there are no permanent contracts and stable incomes, maintaining unity requires the commitment of all members and resistance to the currents that pull towards the huge individualised market of contemporary arts and culture. The emphasis on collectivity in the arts was politicised from the beginning as Debord explains that the very idea of the collective in avant-garde movements involved the transposition of organisational methods from revolutionary politics into art (1961: np).

Unlike historical vanguards that were associated with centralised political parties, today's collective practices are associated with a decentralised and heterogeneous network that constitutes post-Fordist collaboration. Generally, in post-Fordism collaboration has become one of “the leading terms of a contemporary political sensibility that characterises a new generation of practices in the fields of art, political activism, as well as software development“ (Rogoff and Schneider 2008: 352) but, of course, not every collaboration should be mistaken for collectivity. Collectivity requires a rhizomatic processes, in which knowledge distributes and multiplies in unpredictable ways rather than being organised around a centre. Broadly speaking, the term collectivism refers to a wide field of practices that also includes participatory practices (based on rethinking the distinctions between authors and audience, as well as active and passive spectators), community art, all the way to contemporary conditions in which collectivism becomes a product of entrepreneurial culture, and participation becomes the same

as consumption. According to Claire Bishop's renowned work "Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship", the identity of the participants in participatory art in the broadest sense has changed from the crowd (10s of the 20th century), the mass (1920s), the people (1960s and 1970s), through the excluded (1980s), the community (1990s), to today's volunteers for whom participation is a continuation of culture social networks (Bishop 2012: 177). Nevertheless, in the independent performing arts scene collective situations are conceived as an opposition to capitalism by denying individual authorship, but above all by rejecting bureaucracy and consumerism through the free activity of play. Arendt also recognises this by claiming "the collective nature of work requires a loss of awareness of individuality and identity as it is not based on equality but on sameness and is entirely social" (1998: 213).

Collectivity is closely linked to self-organisation, a concept used to refer to the organising and decision-making processes that are a part of civil society organisations which encompasses the independent performing arts scene, as well. As already discussed, civil society's members are equipped with the power to interpret and to transform the social and political structures within which they interact. In these times of the pervasiveness of the economic rationale, it is useful to highlight the role of civil society as the social space of freedom and solidarity, often contrasted with the state but not reducible to the market. According to Vujanović, "self-organisation supports the art's transforming potential to intervene in social relations" (2006: 63). In the history of the performing arts, various groups and collectives have been developing their artistic strategies and production modes as an outspoken alternative to institutionalised and bureaucratised infrastructure of repertory theatres. Dragan Klaić (2012: 44) elaborates on the history of the self-organised performing arts organisations by looking at the experimental theatre groups which began relying on the basic support of various avant-garde movements around the end of the nineteenth century. Following the end of World War II, groups spread throughout Western Europe that drew inspiration from the chamber theatre movement and later the countercultural streams and subcultural constellations of the 1960s and 1970s, which led to the cultural revolution. Klaić detects three main streams of performing groups stemming from that period: 1) ones emerging from European academic institutions reflecting students' enthusiasm for artistic experimentation while also expressing generational social criticism and the politics of anti-authoritarian resistance; 2) political and economic migrants who had been

uprooted by decolonization and migrated throughout Western Europe; 3) feminist and queer movements, in the fight for emancipation and against prejudice (2012: 45)

In the overview of today's European independent performing arts scene, Brauneck also highlights the collective production mode and the freedom from hierarchies as one of its main markers (2016: 44). Collectivity and self-governance as a mode of resistance to the dominant individualistic and market-oriented paradigm culture production of has been especially present in the post-Yugoslav region, due to the legacy of the often-neglected Yugoslav experiences and practices of self-management³ which explored more than depth in one of the following chapters about the independent cultural scene in the region. In general, collectives from the region and beyond practice the horizontal structure of work, are open towards experimental and progressive artistic tendencies, their programme promotes new formats and models of action; and they produce works with a critical view that are related to "independent culture". Finally, in the context of resistance to precarious conditions of work, according to Vujanović (2006: 64) "self-organisation could be just one more artistic r/e-volution, like those we know from that 'other' history of art which maps the practices from historical avant-gardes to late-post-modern critical art in the age of culture" and influence cultural system as a whole.

3.2.2. Challenging the current policies by building trans-local alliances

Although the post-Fordist stage of capitalism transformed artists into creative workers, at the same time there are new possibilities of resistance which refuse the pessimistic views of artists and art institutions being necessary engines of capitalist production, and thus too complicit with the system in order to play a critical role within society. Relying on authors such as Schuster (2012) and Bifo Berardi (2009), Milena Dragičević Šešić reflects on the refusal of the

³ *Self-management* was the main principle of industrial and social organisation in former Yugoslavia, created as a system of relationships based on social, as opposed to state-owned, means of production. Self-management, or the return of the means of production and their management to the subjects of labour—the workers—was, in other words, a form of production. In addition, control over decision-making, or more figuratively, presence over representation, was another essential component of self-management as an official paradigm that was (though only partially and later) attained. This meant that worker's collectives were to become sovereign bodies within factories (enterprises), able to vote and debate important issues regarding the operations of the enterprises employing them, and own conditions of labour (Pajović 2022: 79).

command of capital as the organiser of production as tactics and strategies which many “artists and artistic researchers are experimenting with these in order to provoke capitalist cultural policies” (in Kisić & Tomka 2022: 7). These artistic strategies experimenting with the notions of laziness and refusal of work can be seen a part of a struggle Van Kerkhoven also detects as one of the most significant burdens the arts face today: struggle against velocity, the pressure to produce, for the time that can and may be wasted as well as time in which research might occur without a purpose or deadline. She also observes that, in addition to economic pressure, political pressure takes the shape of pervasive social control, an increase in rules and regulations, and an increase in bureaucracy (2009: 8).

In a similar vein, Bojana Kunst situates the current art institution as that which exists in between participation and precarisation. According to Kunst, participation appears as a trend in contemporary institutionalised production of art that seeks to challenge hierarchies "reawakening the emancipatory potential of the arts (especially in the times of the political crisis of participation in general) [...] to prove that the audience has been reached, awoken and somehow shaken" (2015: 6). However, Kunst also presented the term "precarisation" as essential in institutionalised production. Kunst asks: "can we relate between the inclination of the art institution to become social places and the strange coincidence between precarity and participation?" (2015: 7). The connection between participation and precarisation is evident when analysing the insights from the case studies in relation to the Creative Europe programme and its' concentration on quantitative aspects of the cultural sector. Supposedly, cultural and political community such as the European Union should not conduct a purely market-oriented cultural economy, but rather support precisely those areas that are qualitatively of cultural importance, and have little funding available to them.

Chantal Mouffe similarly poses the question of whether critical artistic practices should engage with highly bureaucratised institutions with the aim of transforming them or they desert them altogether (2014: 74). While positioning possibilities of resistance as controversial once it is accepted that institutions could play a role within them, she groups artistic practices into ‘strategies of exodus’ and in ‘strategies of engagement’. The former is based on the pessimistic viewpoint already described. To support the latter, Mouffe uses Gramsci's theory of hegemony (1971), which gives permission to rethink institutions because what is at a given time recognized as the natural order is always the result of sedimented hegemonic practices.

Consequently, it is constantly open to challenge from counter-hegemonic actions that aim to contest it in order to create a different hegemony. Mouffe underlines the critical function of artistic practices in this dynamic since, according to her, the artistic terrain has nowadays become very strategically important. To be more precise, in order to generate dissent and create a variety of agonistic spaces where the dominant consensus is contested and new forms of identification are made available, critical artistic practices should engage with the institutional landscape rather than abandoning it. In this regard, she contends that artistic practices should manifest themselves in “different modes of interventions in a multiplicity of spaces” in order to challenge the neoliberal creativity regime (ibid.)

Engaging with the institutional landscape also means engaging with cultural policies and its financial instruments through various forms of discussions and advocacy actions. Recent years have seen an increase in relevant initiatives for fair pay and experimentation with artist wages or universal income schemes, driven by professionals in the arts and culture sector, in response to calls for fair practice and more sustainable working conditions. For example, SOTA- State of the arts in Belgium has been founded in 2013 as an open platform that “enables artists and cultural workers to initiate actions for a fair art field” as well as a “bottom-up movement striving for inclusivity, fair practice and more solidarity” (2022: np). Besides regular actions by Performing Arts LAFT (Berliner Landesverband Freie Darstellende Künste) and ZTB (Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin) which will be discussed more in detail in the following chapters, AG Work Culture was initiated in 2021 by local choreographers and dramaturges to facilitate discussions on the culture of work within Berlin dance community and to provide tools and activities that would eventually lead to the improvement working conditions (ZTB 2022: np). “Za K.R.U.H.” (For BREAD) Platform in Croatia has since 2020 been gathering cultural professionals and artists in the struggle for fair wages and long-term public funding of the arts, which they see as the main method of ensuring their accessibility to the broadest possible audience and preserving the dignity of cultural work (BLOK 2022: np). Similar initiatives have been established in the United States, such as W.A.G.E.- Working Artists and the Greater Economy whose stated advocacy mission is to establish “sustainable economic relationships between artists and the institutions” as well as to “introduce mechanisms for self-regulation into the art field that collectively bring about a more equitable distribution of its economy” (W.A.G.E. 2008: np).

On a transnational level, there are platforms such as Cultural Workers organise which provides research on alliances between cultural workers as well as research and advocacy initiatives by long-term European networks such as IETM- International network for contemporary performing arts which regularly reacts to policy developments with the aim of influencing the European and international cultural policy discourse (IETM 2022: np). EAIPA- The European Association of Independent Performing was founded with a similar aim in 2018 in order to initiate new policy proposals and raise visibility of the sector (EAIPA 2022: np). The pandemic deepened the discussion on the conditions of work for the artists and cultural workers due to 89 percent of all cultural venues partially or completely closed (UN 2021: 7) resulting in harshest economic effects which have exposed the structural fragility of cultural organisations. Therefore, this crisis instigated conversations about the necessity for new funding schemes (that are not centred around project-based work) such as the digital conference “How to be together? Conversations on International Exchange and Collaboration in the Performing Arts” co produced by European festivals Tanz im August Berlin and Zurcher theatre Spektakel (and co-curated by the author of this thesis). When discussing the role of transnational networking as a basis of creating better conditions of work, Heba Hage Felder from the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture stated that the artists and cultural workers “have no choice but to be international” since that is a “question of mobilising the efforts that as artists, as institutions, as policy makers in our different spheres we speak up, we speak together and we create the movements that are needed in order to challenge the current situation” (Keil 2020: np). This statement is only one of the illustrations of the conviction of performing artists and cultural workers to create autonomous spheres which resist dominant regimes of precarity by building alliances that reach far beyond the national borders. Both the idea and practice of creating alliances carries potential that could be an unforeseen ideological counterforce to neoliberal hyper-individualism.

4. Curating in performing arts as an agent of change in cultural policy

Making things public is also an attempt to make a public.

Simon Sheik (2007: 178)

Based on the previous mapping of the tensions stemming from politicality of the work conditions in the field, this chapter proposes a stronger accountability of the role of the curator in the performing arts in relation to the negotiation of priorities between policymakers, audiences and the artistic community since, in the last two or three decades, the verb ‘to curate’ has shaken free of the context of the visual arts scene to become a buzzword in the international performing arts scene and its project networks. Since curatorial practice belongs to an open and undetermined field, the consequence of its unusual trajectory is that it can act in a transformative manner. If the curatorial practice stands for certain concepts and produces connections that result in collapse of hierarchies, it can broaden the horizons of emancipatory practices by pointing out new models of subjectivity.

The growing number of formal and informal educational programmes for curating in the performing arts, along with the distribution of theories on performing arts curating, is itself both a cause and result of this discursive formation that has been present on the international performing arts scene and its international project networks that have been steadily unfolding since the 1980s. Irit Rogoff notes that this expansion of curatorial visibility is pertinent to “the dominance of neoliberal models of work that valorise hyper-production” (2013: 41), thus making the curator a perfect post-Fordist entrepreneur or, to be more specific, *culturepreneur*. As many of us experienced, *culturepreneurship* is inherently linked with precarious conditions of work which often entail romanticising the ‘freedom’ freelance creative work can bring in comparison with stable employment. Thus, Malzacher also relates the visibility of the curator to a “generally altered professional world which also increasingly relies on free, independent, as well as cheaper labour” (2014: 118). Also, following Bauman’s theory of “liquid modernity,” the walls between different sectors of society have been torn down, which has also

enabled easier transfer of practices and terminology between the visual arts and the performing arts fields.

But what does this transfer of practices and terminology actually do? Are experiences and results from the field of visual arts, in which curatorial practice has already existed for some time, easily translatable to the performing arts? Why do equivalent roles in the performing arts (such as selector, dramaturge, producer, and critic) no longer satisfy? And, finally, what potential does the figure of the performing arts curator carry for negotiating cultural policies in the European independent performing arts sector? Within the last decade especially, various authors and performing arts professionals have been trying to reach a conclusion about whether this imported terminology is just a rebranding or a hybrid of already-existing roles and functions, or if it in fact implements new practices.

Through a reflection on how the term has appeared in visual and performing arts and a comparison of the curatorial practices within both media, the first part of this chapter will try to reach a conclusion as to whether the curator has the potential to produce similar impacts in performing arts as she did in visual arts and how the potential of this mediating practice extends into matters of politics and/or cultural policy.

In the second part of the chapter, statements from interviews with several performing arts curators from Croatia, Serbia, Poland, and Germany active in the European independent performing arts scene will provide an overview of the dilemmas in the field concerning their curatorial responsibility towards cultural policy instruments as well as how they are advocating for more arts-driven cultural policy, both within their national contexts and across the European Union.

4.1. Curating in performing arts: background and recent developments

It is within the last two or three decades that the term curator was translated into the field of performing arts from the field of visual arts, where she was already a controversial and frequently discussed figure. Nevertheless, this did not happen without a certain suspicion towards the trendy use of this term. For example, Hilde Teuchies in an interview for *Frakcija* says that in France and Belgium, “they don’t use the term curator in the performing arts” (Malzacher, Tupajić, Zanki 2011: 23). Hannah Hurtzig (*ibid.*, 25) also expresses her confusion:

“I would be interested in knowing how the term curator, that we know from visual arts, has entered our system. For me this is still a bit mysterious. In the 1980s and early 1990s we were called programmers or program makers. That also included from time to time the production of a catalogue or a book, to have conferences, and to programme according to themes and topics. So why is it now suddenly called curating? Is it about distinction, upgrading the job?”

Similarly, Malzacher stated “barely anything that the profession of the curator in the performing arts consists of is new in itself” (2011: 19). According to him, the role of curator differs from the one of programme maker, production dramaturge, *intendant* or artistic director because the naming of certain functions depends on the institution and context. Brandstetter expresses the same opinion by saying that the curator in performing arts is “a new role model that is composed out of a lot of old roles” (2011: 23).

On the other hand, Bismarck focuses more on the positive possibilities of using the term of “super-curator” in the performing arts, explaining: “curators being enthusiastically granted an exceptionally ‘artist-like’ status is considered as progress within the evolution of the field” (Bismarck, 2011: 53).

To better understand this shift in thinking about the profiles of professions in the arts, it is necessary to go further back in history and elaborate how the curator gained the position she holds in contemporary visual art. According to Bismarck, in the 1970s the idea of an ‘auratic artwork’ and ‘auratic author’ disappeared and was replaced by art that could not be understood

without relations. Artworks began to define themselves precisely through their contexts and to critically question the institutions that surrounded them. Links between artists, artworks, audiences, cultures, social and political realities, discourses and institutions became an ongoing issue.

The curator appeared as a provider of the contexts that are crucial for the proper reception of a work of art. Some curators, like Harald Szeeman, took this a step further and created their own artwork consisting of the works of (other) artists—an act which established Szeeman as a star curator. Brian O’Doherty concluded, “we enter the era where works of art conceive the wall as a no-man’s land on which to project their concept of the territorial imperative” (1999: 27). One of the symptoms of the critical debate surrounding the intensification of curatorial practice was the simple appearance of the verb ‘to curate’, where once there was just a noun. According to Farquharson (2003: 7), “new words, after all, especially ones as grammatically bastardised as the verb ‘to curate’ (worse still the adjective ‘curatorial’), emerge from a linguistic community’s persistent need to identify a point of discussion.” He continues on the changing perception of the curator as caretaker⁴ (from Latin *curo, curare*: to take care) to a curator who has a more creative and active part to play within the production of art itself: “to curate...may also suggest a shift in the conception of what curators do, from a person who works at some remove from the processes of artistic production, to one actively ‘in the thick of it’” (ibid.).

Shortly after this shift happened in the artworld at large, according to Pristaš (2011: 31), independent theatre in the 1980s and early 1990s witnessed radically new aesthetics which gave rise to new working structures and hierarchies within ensembles, collectives, and companies that came into existence along with new or newly defined theatre houses and festivals. Famously, Hans-Thies Lehmann calls this new theatre “postdramatic” (2006: 1) and positions it somewhere between theatre and performance art.

What Malzacher notices is that, during roughly the same time period, artists who make performance art (to be distinguished from the performing arts) elevated video or photo documentation of their performances to the status of artefact. Jelena Vesić (2011 np) specifies

⁴ Curation comes from the Latin *curo, curare, curavi, curatus*, meaning “to arrange/see/attend to, heal/cure, provide for, take care of, worry/care about” (source: <http://www.latin-dictionary.net/definition/15304/curo-curare-curavi-curatus>, last accessed 19 March 2021).

three approaches to exhibiting performance art: theatrical (re-enactment), archival (documentation) and transformation of the documentation into an art object. This conversion of performance art into an artefact might be a symptom of a general discussion about whether performance art has closer ties to visual or to performing arts, but also a sign that the performing arts were opening up to an influx of practices and discourse from other artistic media. Theatre's shift to stand in greater proximity to performance and visual arts can be understood through Lehmann's proposal that postdramatic theatre is no longer primarily focused on the dramatic text in itself, but evolves a performative aesthetic in which the text is put in a special relation to the material situation of the performance and the stage. Thus, theatre directors lost the text they would once have staged, dramaturges lost their drama, producers lost their missions within their obsolete organisations and the term curatorship, which encapsulates a particular way of dealing with formats, with art and artists, and with economies and audiences, suddenly seemed transferrable.

Malzacher (2011: 11) claims that the Belgian and Dutch concept of the *kunstencentra*, with its open, mostly interdisciplinary approach, made it possible to reinvent theatre as an institution from eighties on. No longer divided by medium, art venues became sites at which terminology could circulate freely between disciplines.

At the same time, performing arts theory was actively looking for new terms and beginning to borrow them from other theoretical discourses such as critical theory. Pristaš explains that the general "intellect" grew in public and uses Paolo Virno's explanation of the period as "concrete appropriation and re-articulation of the knowledge/power unity that has congealed within the administrative modern machine of the state" (2011: 32). Re-articulation of knowledge and power facilitated the appearance of those who *make things happen* on the performing arts scene. Depending on the institution, these people would be officially called artistic directors, *intendants*, dramaturges, managers, producers or—most recently—curators.

Whether referring to certain functions in the performing arts with a term from a different field is appropriate depends on the differences and similarities between practices in those two fields. The most obvious difference is, Malzacher observes, that theatre and dance performances are not "paintings, transportable artefacts or even clearly defined installations" and that "they are almost always more demanding, in terms of staff, space, time and finances. This can be a market flaw in [the?] age of speed and spacelessness" (Malzacher 2011: 12). It might be added:

in the age of liquid modernity⁵. Vincent Baudriller (2011: 99) states: “compared to visual arts, compromises are inherent in the performing arts: they are much more part of the social and economic realities; they involve more people and infrastructure; they are more difficult to manoeuvre.” Hannah Hurtzig (2011: 25) makes it more specific: “In theatre, any concept is only worth max. 20% concerning the result, the rest is carrying stuff from here to there.”

Further on, Malzacher highlights other differences between exhibiting visual and performing arts. For him, “a performance normally requires the undivided attention of its recipients during a period of time that is defined by the artists” and “unlike visual arts, the singular work of art is still the prevailing model in practice” (2011: 13). Performing artists seem to not prefer to put themselves in relation to other artists as much as visual artists do, which could be the main point where the performing arts benefit from a dialogue with curatorial practices in the visual arts. The need for that kind of borrowing of terms might indicate that there has been a lack of articulation and documentation in the performing arts. In comparing performing and visual arts curating Hans Ulrich Obrist (2011: 47) said: “Everything we do includes publishing a book. Whereas I’m often astonished that in performing arts you have great artists, but there has barely been a book published on their work. There is a huge discrepancy in terms of literature.” That signals the necessity of curatorial work, which—as can be seen in the visual arts, where catalogues, for example, are an integral part of almost all exhibitions—consists to a large extent of verbalization, communication, and discussion.

On the other hand, visual arts curating practices in an indirect way have gained from a dialogue with performing arts practices, too. With the appearance of what Nicolas Bourriaud termed “relational aesthetics”⁶ and the appearance of art as a social space, arts exhibitions came more and more to be perceived as happenings. Harald Szeeman (1996 np) compared his work with that of a theatre director, and Beatrice von Bismarck (2011: 54) writes, “Rather more similar to the theatre director, the curator creates a temporary constellation in which spatially and temporally structured layers of meaning compete with each other.” She goes on about how this

⁵ Term coined by a sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in his book *Liquid Modernity* (Blackwell Publishers, USA, 2000) that describes the conditions of contemporaneity as a world in which the transitory is valued more than the permanent, the immediate more than the long term, and utility has the highest value of all.

⁶ Bourriaud (2002) defines relational aesthetic as a theory for “judging” artworks on the basis of the interhuman relations they represent, produce or prompt. He's contextualising relational art as a set of artistic practices, which take their theoretical and practical point of departure in the whole of human relations and their social context rather than in independent and private space.

analogy between theatrical performance and art exhibition opens up perspectives regarding the processual moment of curatorial activity. Same as with theatre or dance, the phases of creation and presentation come into the stage.

Choreographing the audience, signifying the space, and deciding on the time and duration—this is what a curator does for an exhibition and what a director does for a single theatre piece. Thus, the task of a curator in the performing arts lies primarily in handling multiple performance pieces.

Bismarck writes that “programming accepts the task of putting the presented pieces in a relationship to each other, of seeing them as mutually commenting or complementing, of intertwining them with exhibitions, theory, or music” (2011: 56). This definition clarifies the difference between classical festival selection and programming. Good programming does not consist simply of good performances. The curatorial field, according to Bismarck, “by transcending the limits of the arts genre, puts into motion not only objects and people, but also and above all the relations that these acquire with respect to each other, as well as to space, time and the institution that constitute the specific power of the curatorial set” (ibid.).

4.2. Curating as a mediating (cultural-)political practice

While these authors emphasised power relations within the artworld, they were less concerned with how the field is politically structured and governed. In order to think about how curatorial practices can intervene in cultural policy, it is helpful to draw on the comparison between curatorial and political activity made by curator, writer, and educator Maria Lind (2009, n.p.): “Curatorial would thus parallel Chantal Mouffe’s notion of ‘the political,’ an aspect of life that cannot be separated from divergence and dissent, a set of practices that disturbs the existing power relations.”

When reflecting on which power relations the figure of the curator inhabits, it is helpful to revisit the etymology of the word “curator” that comes from mediaeval English “curatus” or “one responsible for the care of souls” stemming from Latin “curare” or “to take of care of” (Etymology dictionary: 2021 np). In her book *De Curatoribus: Dialectics of Confinement and*

Care, Madžoski (2013: 28) elaborates on how the function of the “curator” made its transfer from the parochial to the institutions of the state: in the moment of the Roman Empire’s bureaucratisation, “curators” became male public officials assigned to certain citizens who were not full members of society (such as teenage women and men as well as disabled citizens) to take care of their affairs. Therefore, aside from the function of caring, the curator also became a mediator between the “souls” due to taking care of and the bureaucratised state.

Observing the development of the art world as we know it today, Bourdieu (1993: 261) reflected on the processes within which the mediating activities of the curator (and other cultural agents) add cultural meaning and value to the artworks:

The subject of the production of the artwork – of its value but also of its meaning – is not the producer who actually creates the object in its materiality, but rather the entire set of agents engaged in the field. Among these are the producers of works, classified as artists...critics of all persuasions... collectors, middlemen, curators, etc.; in short, all those who have ties with art, who live for art and, to varying degrees, from it, and who confront each other in struggles where the imposition of not only a world view but also a vision of the art world is at stake, and who, through these struggles, participate in the production of the value of the artist and of art. (Bourdieu 1993: 261)

When reflecting on Bourdieu’s thoughts in the context of the neoliberal art market of today, Larsen and Andreasen take the understanding of a curator as middleman a step further by arguing that artistic creativity is no longer understood as a “primal scene of production” but that instead “production-consumption today is about how to style a patchwork of mediated material” (Larsen and Andreasen 2006 n.p.). While the capitalist economy of today attends to regulation of access to the market and mediation between the market and everyday life, the middlemen, they propose, are seen as the ones who “quietly follow market trends and – like capitalism – arrive when everything is ready” (ibid.) but still produce a subjectivity that is in control of the flow of productivity.

This chapter proposes that such production of curators’ subjectivity can be vital to challenging current policies and provide the potential for political agency. The curator as a middleman thus

becomes an agent operating between what is now and what could be different in the ways that socio-political structures are regulated and governed.

Recent critical thinking about the curator's mediation between artists and the contexts of their work, between artworks and audiences, and between the art world and greater society have given rise to the concept of "curatorial agency," coined by curator and visual culture theorist Suzana Milevska. Drawing on the idea of "art as agency," which suggests that art does not only passively represent the world, but also has the power to act in and on it, "curatorial agency" assumes that the curator is not merely a presenter of existing artistic concepts and projects, but rather an active societal agent that contributes to "a crossreferential understanding of art between different artistic, cultural, ethnic, class, gender works, moreover, towards the improvement of society in general" (Milevska 2008, 184). Thus, curatorial agency is rooted in curatorial knowledge production, art for social change, and collaborations among curators, artists, and activists.

On the other hand, the way the curator mediates between the artworld and the bureaucratic apparatus (as written above, chronicled already in the Roman Empire) or, to be more specific, cultural policies, remains an issue not as closely examined.

This is also something that differs between the performing arts and visual arts. When comparing the curatorial activity between the two, it is possible to argue that the visual arts field is more market-oriented, while performing arts curators tend to focus more on the socioeconomic context in terms of politics and policies and, thus, intervene in the public sphere and influence political decision-making more clearly.

To clarify the differences between performing and visual arts in relation to economics of production, Malzacher (2011: 17) elaborates:

Theatre and dance makers, however, have almost no access to the free market, to that form of that age-old form of insurance. Which at least has the advantage that a curator (or art critic) cannot profit from the artworks of those artists whom he is promoting – we are spared this part of potential corruption. On the other hand, many a visual artist will cast a look of envy to the subvention market of dance and theatre, since it

seems to offer protection against the at times hysterical capitalism of the free art market.

Although subventions have been decreasing since the economic crisis in 2008, this position closer to the margins of the art market still enables more contextual and political work in the performing arts than in other art media, calling to mind previously mentioned Hannah Arendt's insight on "the proximity of theatre and politics". In her essay on curating in performing arts, Staal (2018: 4) also proposes that curators have a responsibility in "contextually embedding art works [which] represents an attempt to re-establish art's place at the centre of society and to connect with other disciplines and aspects of daily life."

Although Malzacher (2011: 17) does mention high subsidies for the performing arts, cultural policies in Europe and beyond nowadays increasingly support market-oriented cultural actors, making the institutions of the state seem more and more complicit with the hegemony of capitalism. Still, as shown in the previous chapter, in between the leaking state apparatuses and the invasive mechanisms of the market, curators, artists, and cultural workers from the independent European performing arts scene are providing the terrain on which conflicting points of view can be confronted, thereby contributing to political activity.

4.3. Field research: curatorial dilemmas within current policies

In order to give visibility to these conflicting perspectives of diverse curatorial agencies, the second part of this chapter will present insights from several semi-structured interviews with the curators with the curators of independent contemporary performance organisations from Croatia, Germany, Poland, and Serbia, each of whom were subsidized by the EU programs Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020. The organisations are: BADco (Zagreb), Stary Browar Nowy Taniec (Poznań), Station: Service for Contemporary Dance (Belgrade), Uferstudios for Contemporary Dance (Berlin), and Walking Theory (Belgrade). In all these contexts, the dichotomy of the cultural sphere between the public and civil sector is quite visible since, according to Mišković (2013: 25), Krolica (2014: 29) and Landau (2017: 73), a great deal of public

resources is still invested in maintaining the status quo of the cultural framework and its infrastructure, including paying the salaries of a high number of administrative, technical, and artistic personnel. On the other hand, in all four contexts a smaller amount is invested in cultural programmes of the independent scenes. Therefore, a significant percentage of contemporary performing arts organisations in the independent cultural sector partly achieve financial sustainability by functioning according to a project-based model that implies collaborating on international initiatives and implementing organisational strategies of internationalisation and networking. The criteria for selection of the interviewed organisations was their participation in Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020, the European Commission's framework programmes for support to the culture and audio-visual sectors.

The interviewee from the collective BADco reflects on the issues the collective he works within had with the priorities and the evaluation processes in the European programmes. BADco. is an internationally recognized collaborative performance collective based in Zagreb, Croatia that focuses on research into the protocols of performing, presenting, and observing by structuring its projects around diverse formal and perceptual relations and contexts (BADco: 2021 n.p.). The performance collective was both a project coordinator and partner in three projects supported by Culture 2007-13: *Black/North SEAS*, a multi-lateral European platform which linked the arts with other sectors of political and social life through a series of international and intercultural co-productions that toured seaports, coastal cities and resorts around the North Sea and the Black Sea between 2008 and 2010; LAB021, a European Platform for Interdisciplinary Research on Artistic Methodologies; and *TIMeSCAPES*, a long-term artistic research and production platform whose objective is to artistically reflect the transversal issue of time that cuts across economy, society and art. Concerning the focus on the audience development, they state that the culture of presentation and care for the spectator is developing more and more while the emphasis on financing the artistic production is missing, which is all "in accordance with contemporary populist politics". They continue: "The emphasis is on the politics of presentation, which has a lot to do with the curatorial turn. [The] role of a curator appears as a function that is oriented towards the audiences and not towards the artists and that is visible from the discourse of the curator. Namely, former programmers were producers who were taking care of

their artists, and curators are now taking care of their audiences...that is a significant paradigm shift.” They consider the narrative of audience development to be, in actuality, a narrative of the economic valorisation of culture that is much closer to the US model of financing culture than to the European one. According to them, the main idea that art, as well as education, has value in itself is lost.

The interviewee from Walking theory (a Belgrade-based independent platform for performing theoretical-artistic activism), mentions a similar issue: “There is no more focus on the production, but just on presentation and circulation of artworks as market goods. Also, when we look at the results of [the] Creative Europe strand for Culture, there are many [more] big institutions than there were in the previous cycle...It is getting more difficult for smaller, independent, non-profit-driven organisations to be interesting to the EU programmes.” Walking theory have collaborated as partners in two projects supported by Culture 2007-13, *TIMeSCAPES* and *Create to Connect*, another project that deals with “researching and finding new approaches to educate the audience as well as the production models that will engage the audience in new innovative ways” (Walking theory: 2021 np). They warn the structure of the organisation heavily depends on the received project grants since there is no consistency in local funding nor institutional grants to support the organisation.

Another issue that reappears for these producers when talking about the valorisation of their work is the issue of quantitative vs. qualitative evaluation. For example, they also mention that there is no content evaluation of their programmes in the EU funding programmes which “says a lot about the monetization of artistic practice: what can be monetized, will be financed.” The interviewee from Station: Service for Contemporary Dance, an organisation from Belgrade that supports the development of the contemporary dance scene in Serbia (through education, production, and promotion of emerging artists, dancers and choreographers), and has been a partner in European project networks such as *Life Long Burning*, *Departures and Arrivals* and *apap: advancing performing arts project* also warns about the position of the “small players” in the recent funding landscape:

We have a valuable experience of working within a network that worked as a consortium (big European houses with a [few] smaller scale organisations from south-eastern Europe) and it seemed like a strong hierarchy at the beginning but actually, by constant questioning of modes of working, relations, communications, goals and so on, we made a step from a consortium to a real network...And there happened a growth to a network where you can really share ideas on what is supposed to be happening and how it is supposed to be realised in the contemporary dance scene and the European culture.

They also state that the change in the relationship of the partners, where the hierarchy in the project is usually dictated by the percentage of a certain organisation's budget in the overall project budget, is an intensive process of constant work that gives "fantastical results." Stanica insisted on developing some models of work that avoid "systems of the jury, commission, decision making by certain individuals on the destiny of the others and tried to find models of decision-making that are based on individual responsibility for a certain choice." This intensive work to change the hierarchies and decision-making processes that are usually present as early as the application stage can be understood as a bottom-up intervention, which reflects more closely the real interests of the community (Blackshaw, 2010: 52).

The interviewee from Uferstudios for Contemporary Dance in Berlin has been, a long-term partner in the same European network as Stanica from Belgrade. The international project Life Long Burning (LLB), supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union, strengthens transnational co-operations, fosters the mobility of artists and their works, contributes to career development, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, and promotes knowledge transfer, audience outreach, and the public display of dance (LLB: 2020 n.p.). They also maintain that evaluation needs to be "qualitative, not quantitative," particularly emphasising the criteria of visibility: "Many implemented actions might be focused more on the organisation of the dance scene and not reaching a wide audience, but nevertheless, it doesn't mean they're not important for gaining visibility at a later point—sometimes you just need to do research that doesn't produce visibility."

In response to this increased focus on audiences, an interviewee that works as a contemporary dance curator from Poland stays firm in their belief that a curator's primary focus should always be the artist. In 2004 they established the first regular dance space and choreography development centre in Poland (based in Stary Browar, Poznań) with a performative program Stary Browar Nowy Taniec (Old Brewery New Dance) in the Art Stations Foundation by Grażyna Kulczyk. They are also a member of *Aerowaves*, a network for contemporary dance in Europe that is supported by the Creative Europe programme (Art Stations Foundation 2020: n.p.).

In a short interview, they also reflect on the objective of audience development: "I do not care about the numbers but am happy when I make them realise their bodies are a battlefield for ideologies and strategies." While understanding their work as "a neverending mediation between audience, artists and decision makers," they emphasise the needs of the artists as a priority in her curatorial work: "I create a space for young artists where they can risk failing and where they can grow at their own pace. It is important for me to be empathetic and take in consideration the needs of artists while the super commercial standards are posed on institutions." As a curator from the independent cultural sector, they reflect on the importance of solidarity between cultural actors in these demanding times: "We live in a constant deficit and we don't have resources but we only have ourselves, therefore, we stand on the shoulders of our friends and colleagues."

4.4. Conclusion: curatorial agency towards changes in cultural policy

A conclusion that can be drawn from this mapping is that, by affirming they do not comply with a post-political "logic of numbers" but with a qualitative approach to their projects (e. g. "making the audiences realise their bodies are a battlefield for ideologies and strategies" as stated above), these performing arts curators activate their transformative curatorial agencies. Judging by their responses, they criticise the dominant cultural-political discourse and express the need for a struggle for a more constructive articulation of values and beliefs in art that go beyond the quantitative. The reasoning of the interviewed curators offers possibilities that differ from turning into obedient cultural agents. By articulating widespread dissent, these

curatorial agencies contribute to an enduring tradition of independent criticism of dominant power and ideology in the cultural public sphere.

While the post-political spirit of capitalism brings forward measurable values and competitiveness, revisiting the historical development of the curator's position in society reminds us that it always implied the duty of care and, thus, it is only logical if it continues to challenge the uneven conditions of today. By acknowledging the responsibility of such curatorial agencies to advocate towards decision-makers and to bring critical theory towards cultural policy, performing arts curation can produce a wider impact in a policy context.

Based on this overview of the differences between visual and performing arts curation, i.e. the extent to which the performing arts sector is less embedded in the market than in the public sphere, it is possible to conclude that performing arts curation has wider potential for agency within public policies than curation in the visual arts field (from which its contemporary position nevertheless stems). Thus, the recent increase in visibility of the curator in the performing arts might stand for a shift in the direction of a greater insight into curators' accountability not only within the arts field, but in relation to other spheres of society, as well. Therefore, by contesting the economic and political framework in which performing arts curators operate and by their advocacy for bottom-up and artist-driven policies, possible cultural resistances are created that could lead to a more autonomous world of cultural production.

5. Setting the context: independent contemporary performing arts scenes in Germany and the post-Yugoslav region

The two main contexts of this research have been chosen for several reasons. Firstly, unlike most of Western and Southern Europe, performing arts landscapes in both Germany and the post-Yugoslav region are still largely dominated by a dichotomy of the repertory theatre model on one side and highly diverse independent scene on the other (Klaić 2012: 37). Most of the public subsidies for performing arts in these contexts are distributed to, above all, public theatres, which provokes strong advocacy efforts to allocate public resources from the centralised cultural institutions towards supporting the development of a wide range of independent performing arts organisations. Although these gaps in financing have highly varied intensities and gradations in the two contexts, the transformation processes of both performing arts scenes after the collapse of the Berlin wall and the current structural problems remain similar, especially in the field of contemporary dance (Tanzbuero 2013: np).

Secondly, both in a historical and contemporary context, there has been a unique set of influences within the performing arts landscapes between the two fields of inquiry. Historically, besides repertory theatres in the region having been modelled on the basis of the production models from German-speaking countries, there has been a strong artistic influence of forms such as Brechtian theatre and *Tanztheater* both in theatre and contemporary dance. Nowadays, there exists a significant degree of collaboration and exchange among contemporary dance communities in the two contexts, with an emphasis on Berlin due to the city's convergence of two the former systems (East and West). Presently, the city functions as a centre for highly mobile and network-oriented performing arts professionals since it has developed into one of the most dynamic and diverse art scenes worldwide, although with steadily growing cost of living and production. Further on, with the increasing brain and body drain of highly skilled individuals from the post-Yugoslav region (King & Oruc 2019: 2), Germany and Berlin especially become a desirable base for performing artists and cultural workers from the region since it also has highly international art schools such as HZT (Inter-University Centre for Dance) Berlin. On the other hand, as it will be shown throughout this chapter, theorists and cultural workers from the post-Yugoslav region have been generating a

strong discursive space stemming from the collective effort towards critical thinking around contemporary performing arts, which finally motivated a deeper reflection on the politicality of production models in the broader European context as well.

In order to establish the foundation for case studies, the first part of this chapter will provide an overview of the development of cultural policy systems in relation to the independent performing arts field, as well as pertaining main challenges. Within the analysis of the independent performing arts scene, focus will be placed on aspects of material conditions of production such as funding systems, precariousness of artists and cultural workers as well as advocacy processes and organisations. The second part of the chapter will consist of reflections on two events gathering artists, curators, researchers and policy makers who mapped the multiple concerns surrounding the unstable conditions of work and corresponding strategies of resistance within the European independent performing arts scenes with an emphasis on Berlin and Belgrade. The aim of the reflections was also to demonstrate how practitioners from diverse contexts learn from each other's models and form alliances in order to create a more diverse, autonomous and sustainable field of independent performing arts in Europe.

5.1. Cultural policy in Germany and *Freies Theater*

5.1.1. Development of Cultural Policy in Germany

Following WWII, West German cultural policy measures aimed to create a 'art for the sake of art' vision of the arts. This was interpreted as an attempt to divorce culture from the former regime's legacy, i.e. its reinterpretation and use of culture for explicitly ideological reasons. The Federal Republic has also prioritised "...the mediation of German and European high cultural traditions in music, drama, literature, and art, and the rebuilding of cultural infrastructure..." Burns and van der Will (2003: 141). The responsibility for cultural policy articulation and implementation based on these principles was established and entrusted to the regions and municipal bodies of each newly formed federal state in the constitution of the newly formed federal state. However, in the late 1960s, when student protest movements across

Europe provoked previously established norms to be challenged and resulted in a fundamental re-evaluation of social and cultural policy areas, the debate about the role of culture and its relevance to society as a whole began to broaden.

During the early 1970s, the German Foreign Office urged for a major reorganisation of cultural policy, resulting in an increased emphasis on aligning with the interests of civil society and representing those concerns in novel ways. The "New Cultural Policy" was embraced with enthusiasm at the municipal level, resulting in a more dynamic interpretation of culture as a means of social interaction, rather than solely as a mechanism for the dissemination and appreciation of content. The policy was formulated based on the Council of Europe's priorities related to cultural identity, cultural heritage, cultural diversity, and participation in cultural life. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a significant re-evaluation of the role of culture, resulting in a notable increase in government expenditures on the arts. This led to politicians referring to the Federal Republic as a "Kulturstaat" or Cultural State, which was associated with "the values of individual freedom and social pluralism, high quality life-style and cultural representation finding vociferous advocates in all party-political camps" (Burns & van der Will, 2003:143).

The administrative structure of the Federal Republic was implemented by the new eastern federal states (Länder), thereby reflecting the fundamental changes that occurred during the German Reunification. During the 1990s, the implementation of budgetary constraints and austerity measures coincided with these processes, thereby exposing the growing structural obstacles faced by the main traditional cultural institutions. During the early 2000s, the cultural policy in Germany achieved stabilisation. However, it continues to struggle with important challenges and requires continuous reorientation.

5.1.2. Characteristics of current cultural policy model in Germany and European cooperation

Germany's cultural policy has been built on a federal model that prioritises subsidiarity, decentralisation, and plurality as its core principles. The implementation of cultural policy is carried out by the three levels of governance, namely the Federal Government (which consists

of national authorities and Parliament), the federal states (*Bundesländer/Länder*), and the municipalities (which involves cities, towns, and counties). As stated in the Compendium's report (2020 np), a primary aim of cultural policy in the Federal Republic of Germany is to “enable as many people as possible to participate in arts and culture”.

After a literature review on the clarifying definitions and objectives of ‘cultural policy’ in Germany, we can conclude the field lacks a consensus on the meaning of its constituent terms since each author highlights different aspects of the term ‘cultural policy’. For instance, Heinrichs and Klein (2001: 60) in their definition of ‘Kulturpolitik’ put focus on the discursive practices of different actors in the field. In their view, cultural policy and culture are not determined by given legal norms but rather are created through political discussions by officers in ministries and local administrations, members of parliaments, lobby groups, artists, and so on. Wagner (2010: 173) suggests a more precise definition of ‘Kulturpolitik’ as a state-driven political action that intervenes in the cultural sphere and involves public funding through political institutions for cultural and art activities while he believes practice of cultural policy in Germany is implicitly understood as lobbying to gain more funding. According to Scullion and García (2005: 125), the objective of cultural policy research is to provide policy-relevant research, enhance evidence-based research and applied policy studies, and promote critical and reflective research that is grounded in contemporary theoretical paradigms.

Multiple institutions are engaged in the development of cultural policy and funding the pertaining cultural organisations. Several cultural bureaucracies operate at the federal level, including the German Cultural Council (*Deutscher Kulturrat*), the Cultural Foundation of the Länder (*Kulturstiftung der Länder*), and the Federal Cultural Foundation (*Kulturstiftung des Bundes*). However, there is no singular entity in charge of the comprehensive coordination of cultural policy initiatives and programmes throughout federal authorities. The Cultural Council is a significant advocacy group consisting of approximately 200 entities that are categorised into eight sub-councils, including performing arts, music, socio-culture, and cultural education. One of the primary aims of the Council is to support the delineation of more clearly defined roles and responsibilities for cultural policy between the federal and state governments. According to Burns and van der Will (2003: 137), the cultural foundations at both the Länder

and Bund levels play a crucial role in national coordination and are responsible for identifying alternative sources of financing, in lieu of public subsidies.

The diagram presented in Figure 1 depicts the comprehensive governance framework that defines the development of cultural policies across federal, regional, and municipal levels. The autonomy of municipalities in managing their cultural affairs is guaranteed by Article 28(2) of the German Constitution (*Grundgesetz*), which prevents influence from both the Federal Government and the Federal State (*Bundesland*) in which the municipality is located.

Levels of public cultural policy (structures and competences) ¹	Federal (national) level	Federal States (Länder) (regional) level	Municipal (local) level
Bodies/institutions and self- coordination procedures	Federal Government, German Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag), Bundesrat (Länder representatives) Committee on Cultural and Media Affairs in the Bundestag Committee on Cultural Affairs in the Bundesrat Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media; Federal Foreign Office, Federal Ministry of Education and Research and other ministries	16 federal states governments and Länder parliaments committees on culture in all federal states parliaments Ministries of culture	Municipal administrations and council assemblies (ca. 10,800) / county councils (294) Cultural affairs committees in larger cities Cultural affairs departments, as a rule in combination with other functions, including: cultural affairs offices, cultural institutes
Competencies	General legislation as a framework for cultural and artistic creation (e.g. tax and social law); special legislation in the artistic field (e.g. copyright law, film promotion); technical competence, especially in foreign cultural policy	Primary cultural competence (cultural sovereignty) of the federal states according to Article 30 of the Basic Law; legislation in individual sectors with special areas (e.g. Saxony's Cultural Areas Act, library laws, heritage protection laws, further education laws)	No legislative competence, but: constitutionally guaranteed right to "regulate all matters of the local community in its own responsibility" (§ 28,2 Basic Law), enactment of funding guidelines, fee regulations, target agreements, etc., also: cultural development planning
Joint institutions and cooperative arrangements	Inter-ministerial cooperation between the competent directorates-general/divisions of the federal ministries	Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Culture of the federal states(KMK + KM Kultur) with a Committee on Culture and specialised department	German Association of Cities, German Association of Towns and Municipalities, Association of German Counties, in some cases with a cultural affairs committee and a specialised division, also: local authority associations
(Co)ownership and Funding of cultural activities Facilities / Programmes	(Co-)funding of cultural institutions within the framework of capital city cultural promotion, Federal Cultural Foundation, intermediary organisations in foreign cultural policy, Deutsche Welle	Federal states museums, Federal states theatres, Federal states libraries, Federal States Archives	Municipal theatres, museums, music schools, libraries, concert halls, sponsors of independent institutions (= "basic cultural services")
Joint institutions and cooperative arrangements	Foundations as operators of cultural institutions and funding programmes (e.g. Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, Federal Cultural Foundation, Cultural Foundation of the Länder); cultural institutions under joint sponsorship (e.g. Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany)	Joint operations of cultural institutions and programmes (e.g. state theatres) as well as institutions for the funding of culture (e.g. Cultural Secretariats of North Rhine-Westphalia)	
	Federal, state and local authorities as responsible bodies, e.g: German Literature Archive Marbach, Ruhr Festival Recklinghausen, Bayreuth Festival, Industrial Garden Kingdom Dessau / Wörlitz		

Figure 1. Overview of the Governance Structure for Cultural Affairs in Germany (source: Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe)

The coordination of activities between the federal government and the states is facilitated through multiple bodies, including the "Federal States Commission for the Planning of Education and Finance of Research" (Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung) and the Commission of the Federal Government. The objective is to enhance the promotion of culture at both the national and European Union levels, while exploring new ways of financing the public sector. Regarding cultural affairs, the Länder exhibit a considerable degree of influence, to the extent that although the Federal Government may engage in consultations at the European Union level, the Länder retain the power to appoint their own special representatives.

Germany has been engaged in European cultural cooperation since 1992, as per the regulations outlined in Article 151 of the Treaty on the Foundation of the European Community. This was later followed by Article 128 of the Maastricht Treaty and most recently by Article 167 of the Lisbon Treaty (Compendium 2020: np). Arts and culture organisations frequently participate in established schemes, such as Creative Europe (2021-27). In addition to Creative Europe with focus on the cultural sector, German cultural organisations have been involved in cross-sector collaborations that has been supported by other European Union funding programmes, including the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027) and the European Social Fund.

5.1.3. Main challenges in current cultural policy

In the context of the discernible adverse effects of the recent global health crisis on the financial condition of local and regional public budgets, the primary concerns related to cultural policy have been a financial nature already since the economic crisis. For example, Schneider (2017: 515) believes:

“absurd savings targets set by local authorities in response to the financial crisis will result only in closures and mergers; the devaluing of the arts and the erosion of the cultural sphere will have lasting repercussions”.

However, these issues are partially of a structural nature and are linked to the lack of a clearly defined conceptual base for cultural policy. Despite a 60% increase in the cultural budget of the German government since 2013, certain federal states (*Länder*) continue to exert pressure on cultural institutions to enhance their economic equity-ratio, adopt more economically-driven approaches, and secure funding from alternative sources such as sponsorship, patronage, and marketing (Compendium 2020: np).

The need for a reconfiguration of the relations between the state, the market, and society with regards to the funding of cultural institutions is primarily driven by structural concerns. This necessitates the exploration of various approaches, including but not limited to public-private partnerships and greater involvement of civil society. In recent years, discussions surrounding the privatisation of public services and organisations have intensified efforts to enable more effective management of the arts. The conceptual foundation of previous cultural policies has been challenged by various factors such as strong migration trends, changes in audience demography characterised by a declining total population and a growing number of older individuals, and rapid media development.

Andreas Broeckmann, a well-known Berlin-based media arts curator, writer and a former director of the “Transmediale” (2001-2007) formulated an example of this perspective in a commentary article from 2001, addressing the situation of tension between traditional,

subsidized culture and the entrepreneurial approach visible at the beginning of the new millennial:

“With the economic slump and the shrinking cultural budgets, some makers have a tendency of sliding straight back into 19th century aesthetic values. Forget it, folks. If you have to close institutions and departments, which is bad enough, close (or shrink) the operas, shrink the mediaeval departments, and dump that plan for the ancient pottery or tsarist exhibition. They are the spectacle of old. Tell the museum people that they cannot expect to have a role to play when it comes to contemporary culture, identity politics or youth creativity if they degrade the new department to building websites. They need to be able to formulate answers-i.e., exhibitions and other projects-that reflect the culture of new generations. We are facing a fierce, very bad generation clash, which will be made worse if the cultural institutions defend the tastes of the century against the lived realities of the 21st.”

The tensions described here are especially visible in the capital of Berlin that has been branded after reunification as a “creative city”. The united city of Berlin took on an unprecedented number of cultural institutions following the integration of the East and West parts of the city on one side and a debt of more than 50 billion euros on the other. Following the fall of the Wall, the city attracted numerous international artists due to cheaper rents and plenty of empty spaces for art production and presentation. According to Wöbken and Landau (2013: 13), the city has gained recognition as a highly dynamic centre for contemporary artistic production on a global scale, with a population of approximately 40,000 independent cultural workers and artists. Additionally, the cultural and creative economy of the city employs over 160,000 people (Senatskanzlei Kulturelle Angelegenheiten: 2020 np). Still, these professionals are increasingly facing more and more precarious living and working conditions in the city, for example, rising rent and studio prices, no consistent payment of artist fees and potential spatial displacement to the city’s periphery (Rieger, 2015). These discrepancies are well captured in the slogan “Poor, but sexy!” by former Berlin mayor Wowereit (Spiegel Online: 2014, np).

Of course, all this is a part of a larger trend: a sense of "konzeptlosigkeit" (lack of concept) in how to model political, social, and cultural structures in times of economic, societal and

environmental crisis when market prerogatives of the globalized economy are increasingly putting pressure on the very concept of the social welfare state. Due to all these societal shifts, there is currently a lot of discussion in Germany about what is needed from cultural policies.

5.1.4. The performing arts landscape: *Freies Theater*

Deutscher Bühnenverein (2020) reports that Germany has the highest theatre density worldwide, with a total of 140 publicly supported theatres. These include city (*Stadttheater*), federal state (*Landesbühnen*), and national theatres (*Staatstheater*), all of which are overseen by directors appointed by the state or city council. The ensembles of these theatres consist of both permanent and short-term contract staff. The public theatre system in Germany employs approximately 39,000 individuals in addition to short-term staff, with an annual public funding of approximately 2 billion euros. The performing arts sector encompasses a diverse range of infrastructure, comprising roughly 200 privately-owned theatres, approximately 130 opera, symphony, and chamber orchestras, 80 festivals, over 400 touring performing arts organisations without a permanent venue, and an indeterminate number of free theatre groups.

The public theatre system has been facing repeated calls for reform because of various factors, including but not limited to: “the decrease in theatre’s traditional middle-class audience, the exclusion of the wider population, the self-centredness and inward-looking ‘German-ness’ of the performing arts” (Schneider, 2017: 576). The need for reconceptualizing of a model originating from the 18th century and its traditional hierarchies described in the saying “At the front we proclaim human rights, at the back you get yelled at” (*Vorne verkünden wir die Menschenrechte, hinten wirst du angeschnauzt!*) has been advocated for by authors such as Thomas Schmidt (2019).

On the other side of the permanently funded public repertoire theatre system, there is a still unmapped landscape of free theatre groups (*Freies theatre*). This common cultural political division of the German theatre landscape is heavily reflected in the distribution of financial support. For the opening of Bundesforum 2017, Dr. Wolfgang Schneider stated that „the social and economic situation of (independent) performing artists is predominantly precarious “as well as that „the criteria for theatre funding must therefore also address the social and economic conditions of theatre work“ (Schneider, 2018: 13). Fulle (2014: 29) observes the *Freies theatre*

or independent performing arts sector in Germany operates under highly precarious conditions when compared to the funding received by city and state theatres, similarly to Grandmontagne (2014: 32) who states independent artists are regarded as the new precariate.

Independent theatre (*Freies theatre*), or independent performing arts (*die freien darstellenden Künste*) in Germany, consists nowadays of an array of performing arts production models, such as collectives, networks, and groups, that operate independently of established institutions and rigid structures. Their 'freedom' emerges from the fact that „the conditions of productions are designed by themselves - insofar as the economic constraints allow“ (Matzke, 2012). She explains that the members of this scene always work on two levels: on the artistic productions and the degree of institutionalisation reflected within it: unlike public theatres, „how, with whom and where to produce are among those questions that every project in the free scene has to ask itself again and again“ (Matzke, 2012). More recently, at the opening of *Bundesforum 2019*, theatre director Monika Gintersdorfer also calls for more autonomy for the German independent performing arts scene in terms of money, time and space.

5.1.4.1. Historical background and development

The independent theatre scene in Germany emerged in the late 1960s as a form of opposition to the established theatrical infrastructure, much like other anti-institutional movements. According to Batz and Schroth (1983: 12), the term *Freies Theatre* in Germany during the late 1960s was characterised as “the pathos of a demarcation ... of a rupture with the official and established, the emphasis of the autonomous” (ibid.). The emergence of such a scene in Western Germany was rooted in an ‘artistic critique’ (cf. Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 38) since it was directed against the local political influence on Germany’s decentralised and (municipal, federal, and national) pervasive theatres, and its bureaucratic working conditions.

According to Slevogt (2018: 6), „it is no coincidence that the first centres of independent theatre in the Federal Republic of Germany were established in areas where there was a highly developed working-class culture during the Weimar Republic. Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia are therefore still important centres of independent theatre in this country.“ The anti-institutional *Freies theatre* movement institutions occasionally went hand in hand

with other movements seeking alternative forms of governance, such as the non-parliamentary opposition (APO) and the Socialist German Student Union (SDS). Politicised theatre collectives (such as Action theatre in Munich Rainer Werner Fassbinder was involved with) experimented not only with alternative aesthetics but with alternative forms of living and self-organisation, as well. In that way, they became part of an artistic societal critique, which, as Boltanski and Chiapello (2005: 38) elaborate, highlights:

“...the objective impulse of capitalism and bourgeois society to regiment and dominate human beings, and subject them to work that it prescribes for the purpose of profit, while hypocritically invoking morality. To this it counterposes the freedom of artists, their rejection of any contamination of aesthetics by ethics, their refusal of any form of subjection in time and space and, in its extreme forms, of any kind of work. “

In the seventies, there has been a shift from a desire not to be governed towards ideas of different governance, i.e. a focus to alternative modes of organisation (Foucault, 2005: 76) in the independent performing arts, too. This resulted in an increasing professionalisation and institutionalisation of such „alternative governance“ production models in the 1980s and 1990s. Today's *Freies Theatre* emerged as a form of artistic criticism aimed at challenging institutionalised, alienated labour practises, hierarchical and patriarchal models of artistic production, and „the associated bourgeois principles for a good life“ (Buscher, 1987: 48). Since then, a growing number of performing artists have gained institutional support in academia (e.g. at the Universities of Hildesheim and Giessen) as well as public funding and conditions to work in independent production houses. Relationships between academic and artistic institutions enabled strengthening of the discourse on productions in the independent scene through diverse publications, conferences and other discursive formats.

Following the developments of the *Freies Theatre*, the contemporary dance scene experienced a rapid expansion during the late 1990s which was accompanied by the emergence of an independent dance scene (*Freie Szene*) and the relocation from international choreographers (such as Sasha Waltz and Xavier Leroy) to Germany (Tanzbüro 2013: np). Additionally, the establishment of the Tanz im August festival in 1988, the creation of the Sophiensaele venue in 1996, and the merger of three existing theatre venues into Hebbel am

Ufer in 2003, all played a significant role in the development of the independent performing arts scene in Germany as a whole (ibid.).

5.1.4.2. Networking and funding

In Germany, various municipal, federal, and municipal bodies offer possibilities for applying for public funding for independent performing arts. "Cultural Foundation of the Federation" (*Kulturstiftung des Bundes* or *KSB*) supports "innovative programmes and projects on an international level", i.e. that have an international impact or are co-produced internationally (KSB 2020: np). According to Schneider (2017: 576), foundation's programmes such as "One-two Pass" (*Doppelpass*) and "Home Match" (*Heimspiel*) are relevant in shaping the German theatrical landscape. Specifically, *Doppelpass* fund enables collaborations between independent performing arts and public theatre and dance companies, in order "to provide the additional time and space needed for the exploration of new models of joint working and artistic production methods" (ibid.). This enables an exchange of experiences and perspectives between theatres and independent groups related to reflection on diverse artistic and production methods. Another KSB's active programme (until 2026) focused on the performing arts is "Tanzland" ("Dance land"), which focuses on financing guest dance performances across the country and, thus, fosters decentralisation of dance practices.

Besides "Kulturstiftung des Bundes", "Performing Arts Fund" (*Fonds Darstellende Künste*) is a highly relevant organisation for independent performing artists. The fund was set up especially for independent theatre, performance and dance productions in all research fields arts (acting, music theatre, dance, figure and object theatre, performance, theatre for young audiences, site-specific performances, performative installations, gaming, etc.) It receives finances from the Commissioner of the Federal Government for Culture and Media that are then distributed through „four application deadlines per year and three support programs within which artists and groups can submit their planned productions or research projects“ (2019: 1) with the selection criteria of, among others, innovation and social relevance.

Other relevant public funding sources for the independent performing arts in Germany are various municipal or regional cultural foundations. For example, the performing artists based in Berlin can apply to "Capital City Cultural Fund" (*Hauptstadtkulturfonds* or *HKF*).

Still, in Berlin there is a relevant discrepancy in funding between institutions and the independent in scene, which is visible in the way “Senate Department for Culture and Europe-Department of Culture” (*Senatsverwaltung für Kultur und Europa- Abteilung Kultur*) distributes the city funds. For example, Berlin Senate's cultural administration funded the cultural landscape with around 600 million euros per year (*Senatskanzlei Kulturelle Angelegenheiten: 2015, np*). About 95% of that budget goes to over 70 permanently funded cultural institutions and around 5% are used for individual and project funding (including “Hauptstadtkulturfonds”!). In the description of the Senat’s funding criteria, there is also a clear market-driven logic since there in the formulation that “funding must correspond to the fundamentals of economic efficiency, economy and expediency” (*ibid.*).

The funds distributed by the Senat are divided in following categories: two- years Basic funding for groups and individual artists“ (*Zweijährige Basisförderung für Gruppen, Einzelkünstlerinnen und -künstler*), “Co-financing fund“ (*Kofinanzierungsfonds*), “Concept funding for venues“ and “Four-years Concept funding for groups and individual artists” (*Konzeptförderung für Produktionsorte*, “Cross-sector funding” (*Spartenoffene Förderung*), *Vierjährige Konzeptförderung für Gruppen, Einzelkünstlerinnen und -künstler*), “Cultural exchange stipends of the federal state of Berlin – Visual arts / Literature / Dance: Paris (*Kulturaustauschstipendien des Landes Berlin – Bildende Kunst/ Literatur/ Tanz: Paris*), Early career funding“ (*Einstiegsförderung*), “Funding for presentations of existing work“ (*Wiederaufnahmefonds*), “Individual project funding“ (*Einzelprojektförderung*), “Intercultural projects“ (*Interkulturelle Projekte*), “Research stipends“ (*Künstlerische Forschung*), “Travel allowances for work abroad“ (*Reisezuschüsse für Auslandsvorhaben*), “Stipends” (*Stipendien*), “Venue funding” (*Ein- und zweijährige Förderung für Produktionsorte*) as well as newly conceptualized grants specifically for the dance field: “Pilot project distribution fund for dance” (*Pilotprojekt Distributionsfonds Tanz*), “Pilot project support for dance residencies” (*Pilotprojekt Förderung von Residenzen für Tanz*) and “Project grant for conceptualizing a production house for dance and choreography (*Projektzuwendung für die Konzeption eines Hauses für Tanz und Choreografie*).

Except for funding for individual projects and venues, the scene is being continuously developed through collaboration networks such as the “Bündnis internationaler Produktionshäuser e.V.” („The Alliance of International Production Houses”), which is a joint initiative of “seven most important production and presentation locations for the free-producing

contemporary performing arts in Germany” (Hellerau, 2020, np) founded in 2015. The association consists of the Künstlerhaus Mousonturm (Frankfurt am Main), the Forum Freies theatre (Düsseldorf), Hebbel am Ufer (HAU, Berlin), the European Centre of the Arts Hellerau (Dresden), Kampnagel (Hamburg), PACT Zollverein (Essen) and Tanzhaus NRW (Düsseldorf) with the aim of “a more sustainable and substantial cooperation across states by independent artists and their productions, joint publications, and further development” (Slevogt, 2018: 4).

On the other hand, international networking of the independent performing arts organised is partly financed and sustained through cooperation in European projects funded through the current “Creative Europe 2014-2020” programme. According to the data provided by the "Creative Europe Desk Kultur" (2023 np), there are a total of here are seventeen big and thirty-two small European projects that involve German organisations as collaborators in the domains of performing arts, encompassing theatre, dance, performance, street theatre, acrobatics, pantomime, urban dance, and urban arts. Based on an analysis of the project data, it can be concluded that the independent scene in Europe is taking the lead in networking. With the exception of twelve public theatres and higher education institutions, the majority of German partners are affiliated with the independent scene.

5.1.4.3. Challenges and precarity

Schneider (2017:593) mentions a discrepancy in evaluation between public and independent theatre by posing a question: “The fact that independent theatre must evaluate and evidence all its activity can be seen in a positive light. Why is this not the case for all theatre?”. The criteria for selection of all three mention main funding sources (“Kulturstiftung des Bundes”, “Fonds Darstellende Künste” and “Hauptstadtkulturfonds”) include innovativeness. This is what Thomas Oberender, director of the Berliner Festspiele theatre, criticises by noticing „public funding of the performing arts follows market-based criteria: activity is supported only if it is evaluable and measurable“ with artists increasingly becoming project managers (Schneider, 2017: 578). Oberender discussed this question also in a conversation with Ostermeier (2013: 13) that addressed whether contemporary free theatre should critically reflect on their existence

as “entrepreneurial selves” in a post-Fordist economy (Ostermeier, 2013: 14). From that perspective, freelance artistic labour loses its critical edge as an alternative to the theatre establishment in Germany and become a part of the market discourse of “new”, “creative” and “innovative”. Roselt also expresses that the project-oriented and application-based free theatre “is under high pressure to innovate” (2017: 193).

In a broader sense, this can be related to the appearance of forms of what was originally artistic critique—voiced as an anti-establishment and anti-capitalist form of life—in new flexible forms of managerial discourse that Boltanski and Chiapello (2005: 25) have described. Bojana Kunst (2015: 44) has extensively analysed this problematic situation in relation to what she describes as “projective temporalities” into which project-based artists enter when moving from one project application to another. Pascal Gielen reflects on the problems of independent artists when stating that working outside of institutions “not only causes [artists] to take less risks, but also means that the grace period for “unprofitable” artistic experimentation is shortened” (2013: 26). The statistics show that the majority of artists in the field of the independent performing arts in Germany are threatened by poverty since their income is far below the average income (EAIPA, 2018: 16). Thus, the independent performing arts scene in Germany is not exempt from the paradox characteristic of post-Fordist artistic labour in which the claimed benefits of ‘independence’ (such as authentic labour processes and self-organisation) also entail un(der)paid and self-exploitive project labour.

5.1.4.4. Social security frameworks and advocacy associations

According to the Artist's Social Insurance Act (KSVG or Künstlersozialversicherungsgesetz) from 1983 (with an amendment from 2007), independent artists in Berlin are required to apply for membership at the "Artists' Social Insurance Fund" (Künstlersozialkasse or KSK). The Fund implements protection in statutory social insurance for writers, journalists, and artists that includes long-term care insurance, statutory pension insurance, and health insurance of the members' choice. This lowers the high social security costs associated with self-employment in Germany. A federal subsidy (20%) and social contributions from companies (30%) that use art and publicity cover half of the payment, with members paying the other half, much like

employees. The KSK calculates the artist, author, or journalist's monthly contribution based on their earnings from their work, with a marginal cap of 3900 euros per year. Career beginners who are in their first three years of an independent artistic or publishing activity are exempt from this requirement. Generally speaking, KSK offers a special protection for independent artists who work in increasingly precarious conditions, which is expressed on the website in the way that follows: „this is not only a socio-political but also a cultural-political achievement: with this arrangement, the creative task of artists and publicists is recognised as important to society" (Künstlersozialkasse 2020, np). However, members of the KSK are not entitled to unemployment benefits between their work contracts.

Further on, there are several organisations that represent the interests of independent performing artists in Germany in relation to unpredictable conditions. The umbrella organisation of all state associations for professional independent performing arts in Germany is the “Federal Association of Independent Performing Artists” (*Bundesverband Freie Darstellende Künste, BDFK*) founded in 1990, which makes it one of the largest theatre associations in the country. BDFK’s mission is “to sustainably improve the social and economic situation of independent dance and theatre makers” (BDFK, 2019, np.), through raising awareness on independent performing arts among the political, administrative, economic sectors and the general public, as well as advocacy of good employment practices and adequate funding policies. Also, the network is providing professional guidance and offering training courses and seminars, networking opportunities and exchange of professional knowledge. Its 1500 members are individual artists and dance and theatre venues nationwide which amounts to altogether 20.000 dance and theatre makers across Germany, pertaining to 16 state associations and three other associated organisations that all operate independently. According to Compendium (2020, np), “approximately one third of the members are production groups without their own performance venue or individual artists, about one quarter are groups or production groups with their own performance venue”.

The "Berlin Federal State Association of Independent Performing Artists" or LAFT (Berliner Landesverband Freie Darstellende Künste) was established in Berlin in 2008 as one of the state associations. The "Performing Arts Programm Berlin" is an important programme run by LAFT that serves as a means to enhance the infrastructure, professionalization, and networking opportunities for the independent performing arts community in Berlin. This

programme has been in action since 2013 and operates under the guiding principles of "Qualification, Information, Networking, and Empowering" (PAP: 2019, np). During the "Industry Get-Togethers" and symposia centred around specific topics, which are organised by PAP multiple times annually, members of the independent performing arts community engage in discussions related to various issues, including contemporary cultural policies. In addition to engaging in networking activities, providing professional training, advocating for the arts, and raising awareness, the LAFT organisation proposed a minimum standard fee for independent performing artists. In April 2019, the association held a general meeting where it was decided to raise the standard fee for freelance artists. As a result, the recommended fees increased to 2,490 euros per month for freelance artists who have an insurance obligation through the KSK, and to 2,875 euros per month for freelance artists who do not have their social security organised through the KSK. Furthermore, subsequent to the determination made by the BFDK, LAFT Berlin advocates for a minimum performance fee of 250 euros (with KSK membership) or 280 euros (without KSK membership) effective as of 2019. Still, this is only a recommendation, or a guideline, and not a legal obligation.

In the context of formations of collective organisational structures at the intersection of politics, art, and activism in EU and beyond (Mouffe: 2007 np), *Koalition der Freien Szene* or KFS ("Coalition of Free Scene") emerged in 2012 as the first widely organised collaboration of freelance artists and initiatives working in various artistic fields throughout Berlin via organisation of our public plena each year, campaigns and events. The mission of this advocacy group is "to support the interests of Berlin's independent arts community", including independent performing artists. The *Sprecher*innenkreis* (SK) (Round of Spokespeople), that consists of about fifteen spokespeople from all artistic genres, also includes spokespersons from *Landesverband freie darstellende Künste* Berlin (LAFT). In collaboration with a variety of networks, groups and individuals, KFS explicitly addresses the Berlin Senate and all decision-makers in the city to reconsider the distribution of cultural funding due to the extremely precarious situation of thousands of independent artists and hundreds of venues in Berlin. In their words, they stand "in opposition to policies that increasingly expose art created in independent structures to commercial constraints and subject it to displacement, thus restricting its autonomy as well as marginalising the social significance of art" (KFS: 2020, np). While opposing the market-driven criteria of current cultural policies, they are calling the decision makers to increase financial budgets, adopt a different approach to real estate,

introduce a minimum wage for producing artists, as well as transparency and solidarity among institutions and independent artists under the slogan: “*Freie Szene stärken! Geist ist noch flüchtiger als Kapital – Haltet ihn fest*” (“Strengthen the Independent Scene! Spirit is more volatile than capital – Hold on to it!”). One of the biggest achievements so far has been a successful negotiation with decision makers on participation in the income from the overnight-stay tax for tourists.

If we look at contemporary dance as a one of the fields in contemporary performing arts, there are also several organisations that represent the interests of dance artists in Berlin. While the interests of the artists are represented on a national level in *Dachverband Tanz Deutschland* (a national platform for artistic dance in Germany), its Berlin member is *Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin* or ZTB (“Contemporary dance Berlin”). This association was founded in 2000 with the aim of representing choreographers, dancers and organisations active in, first, contemporary dance but then (from 2017) also choreography and performance in the capital. ZTB primarily advocates for “transparent and equal communication between artists, politicians, and the public” and formulates strategies aimed at strengthening the dance, choreography, and performance infrastructure in Berlin, while also keeping members informed on relevant cultural policy matters (ZTB: 2020, no pagination). ZTB is a collaborator within the TanzRaumBerlin network, serving as the *Raumkoordination Tanz* for the *Arbeitskreis Räume*, and participating in the "Round of Spokespeople" for the Coalition of the Free Scene Berlin (*Koalition der Freien Szene Berlin*).

ZTB acts as the sponsor of Tanzbüro Berlin, which functions as the central advisory, networking, and marketing office for dance in Berlin as well as its online platform *tanzraumberlin*. Established in 2005, Tanzbüro Berlin operates as a primary institution for the dance community in Berlin, functioning as an information and advisory centre for approximately 2400 dance creators and supporters from various cities and federal states. Tanzbüro Berlin acts as “a mediator between the dance scene and cultural administration and policy, communicates with all the city’s dance stakeholders and takes action against issues in the arts” (Tanzbüro Berlin: 2020, np). In implementing projects and strategies to improve production conditions, Tanzbüro Berlin such as ZTB or the TanzRaumBerlin network. Some of the most relevant endeavours by these partners so far have been we have supported or initiating projects such “as the Inter-University Centre of Dance (HTZ), Uferstudios for Contemporary

Dance, two reforms to the Berlin funding system, the establishment of minimum pay for Berlin's independent scene and, finally, the Dance Round Table (a participatory process for the development of dance in Berlin)" (ibid.).

5.2. Independent cultural sector in the post-Yugoslav region: struggles for acknowledgement as a political subjectivity

Even more than thirty years after the breakup of Yugoslavia, the attempts to name the geopolitical area that these countries occupy today has been marked by coexisting efforts at their integration and disintegration. Terms such as "Southeastern Europe"⁷ (SEE), "Western Balkans"⁸ or "ex-Yugoslavia"⁹ have been often in use but this research adopts the name of "post- Yugoslav region" following Marriane Hirsch's explanation of the prefix "post-" in "postmemory". She explains that, similarly to the notion of postmodernism, the post- prefix emphasises both the continuing influence of the modern on the post-modern and the profound relationship between the two (2012: 5). Postmodernism does not simply denote a discontinuity or gap between the modern and the post-modern eras; rather, it also indicates a mere temporal sequel. Therefore, the use of "post" in "post-Yugoslavia" encompasses both the violent rupture that occurred between the countries that emerged and what followed, as well as a certain continuity of its cultural, political, and social legacy.

The prevailing nationalist political and cultural elites, who continue to engage in nation-building processes based on ethnopolitics frequently hesitantly acknowledge or fiercely reject this continuity. Despite the political divisions, it can be stated that this continuity is represented by the existent shared linguistic and cultural space as well as the ongoing inspiration that artists

⁷ The SEE region is mostly understood to encompass the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia (also Central Europe), Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania (also in Central Europe) and Serbia. According to Švob- Đokić (2001: 41) the Southeastern Europe concept „seems to be geographically more neutral and based on a flexible mutuality: promotion of trade, common development projects, sharing of infrastructure, etc“, and therefore it seems to represent a more open and more general option than the term „Balkans“

⁸ Southeastern Europe countries that are not a part of the European Union: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

⁹ Former Yugoslav countries are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia.

and cultural workers continue to draw from socialist Yugoslavia as a partially successful but still a revolutionary modernist project, particularly within the independent cultural scene(s) which will be presented in the following chapters.

5.2.1. Development of cultural policy in Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

According to Karaulić (2023: 35), cultural policy after the Second World War in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia¹⁰ was characterised by a state bureaucratic-enlightenment model where the ruling groups, using the (ideological) apparatus, influenced all areas of social life with their centralist orientation. The cultural strategy of „state-engineer” was created to achieve the goal of strengthening socialist culture and thus, in accordance with the new political order, the inherited cultural infrastructure was rebuilt and reorganised. The state was not simply the main "investor" in culture; rather, it largely exercised control over all aspects of it, from organisation to representation to contents and style (Dragičević-Šešić, Stojković, 2011: 34). On the other hand, former Yugoslavia was a country that held a very specific political position between the West and the East unlike other European socialist

¹⁰ The establishment of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia was announced on November 29, 1943, at the second meeting of the AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia). In 1945, the constitutional congress declared its name to be the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia; in the constitutional amendments of 1963, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a federation of six so-called republics in a system that prevented overpowering by any national group. The ideology of 'Titoism,' named after the founder and lifetime president of SFRY Josip Broz Tito, claimed that political and economic unification could overcome religious and ethnic differences, leading to the establishment of a pan-Slavic workers' state (Volčič 2007: 22). Yugoslavia was established as a socialist country following the premise that a common belonging to a class identity—"the comradeship of the proletariat"—would overcome more regional forms of identification based on ethnic and religious identity. The hope was that Bosnians, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Slovenes would be capable of reconciling a strong sense of their distinct "national" identity—the result of a sense of combined ethnic and religious specificity—with an transcending identification with the Yugoslav state. This hope, however, was violently shattered in the 1990s. Yugoslavia translates literally as "the land of south Slavs." Because few of the republics had historical experience as autonomous nation states, it was conceivably envisioned as a pan-Slavic federation that gathered groups whose ethnic and religious identities were connected with a sense of belonging to a certain "country." In order to promote a sense of connection with each republic within the context of belonging to a larger Yugoslav state, the Yugoslav federation relied on this deeply embedded sense of national identity in each of the republics. Therefore, Yugoslav state supported two different ways of what may be called national identification: the first with what the Yugoslav federation referred to as "republics" (such as the Republic of Slovenia), and the second with the Yugoslav state. The socialist model of a self-managed workers' economy, which contained features of both the Western free-market economy and the Soviet system, was established in 1948 when SFRY broke apart from the Soviet Union, permitted foreign travel for residents, and legalised travel between countries.

countries that were under the surveillance of the Soviet Union. Therefore, cultural policy was somewhat more flexible and less centrally directed and planned in a way it possible to follow and some similarities between the cultural policies of Western countries and that of the former state. Experts gathered around the national report on cultural policy in the Republic of Croatia (1998) discuss three phases of Yugoslav cultural policy: centralist-statist, transitional and self-governing.

Following the end of WWII until mid- 1950s, the first phase is characterised by the Soviet model of administrative and statist management wherein socialist enlightenment and communist avant-garde are pursued. The growth of creative expression and the elementary diffusion of culture shows similarities with the Western European countries, particularly in urban centres where the number of cultural workers and institutions is expanding, as opposed to rural areas that were not as engaged in cultural life. At the time, the federal state's executive branch, which establishes and implements cultural policy, still operated under the centralist management philosophy¹¹. Union organisations have been working on cultural enlightenment through a variety of gatherings that have a cultural focus, including amateur societies, union libraries, collective visits to cultural institutions, and visits to the companies of individual artists or public cultural workers (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1998: 21).

The period from the mid 1950s until mid 1970s mark the transitional phase during which control over the cultural sector weakens and socialist realism ceases to be the dominant doctrine under the maxim "factories to workers (...) culture to cultural workers" (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1998:22). The dialogue with Western artistic practices becomes more pervasive which becomes visible when identifying neo-avant-garde approaches in some artistic practices

¹¹ The socialist model of a self-managed workers' economy, which contained characteristics of both the Soviet system and the Western free-market economy, was established in 1948 when SFRY broke apart from the Soviet Union, permitted foreign travel for its residents, and legalised travel between countries. The "neither-East-nor-West" perspective became one of the central principles of Yugoslavia's political identity with the development of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1950s (Hoffman & Neal 62). Self-management increased a society's openness to both internal expression of diverse opinions and the communication with the outside world. It also decentralised multiple aspects of power on regional levels. According to Seibel (92), Yugoslavia's self-management system was the best of both worlds: it combined the management potential of its professional managers with the management potential of its workers to maximise output. So, this may offer at least a partial explanation for Yugoslavia's remarkable economic growth since it was once a success story that was enviously compared to both the socialist countries of the East and the capitalist societies of the West. However, Slavoj Žižek comments on the paradox related to self-management in Yugoslavia in general: "The official ideology exhorted people all the time to participate actively in the process of self-management, to master the conditions of their life outside the 'alienated' Party and state structures. [...] However, it was precisely such an event, a truly self-managed articulation and organisation of people's interests, which the regime feared most (Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism? 2001: 91).

that developed concurrently on an international and Yugoslavian level. Exhibition spaces and opportunities were rolled out extensively and a new style of so-called ‘socialist modernism’ emerged across the region; an art that was allowed to experiment with the forms and ideas of the Western avant-garde, as long as the political content of the work was acceptable¹². There was an active cultural exchange between Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje, etc, and a common mental, cultural and art space far broader than we dare to imagine (Gržinić 2007: 200). In those and later decades, neo-avant-garde artistic were at the same time authentically rooted in the local community and situated within a European intellectual perspective as well as the global exposure of the country i.e. the politics of non-alignment.

Similar transitional processes were also evolving in the areas of legislation and funding since the federal government still retained statist and ideological tendencies on one side while there was also a progressive decentralisation, which resulted in a partial reduction in the federal government's control over culture in the nation. Numerous new organisations and prestigious international festivals for diverse art forms had been founded by the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s which reflected a strong transition from a previous union approach to a professional one, alongside the effort to achieve a certain level of material standard in culture based on the growing economic development of the country.

In relation to previous discussion on precarious conditions of work and the status of the artist, in self-managing socialist Yugoslavia the legislation nominally protected the status of the independent artist as a professional in the arts whose public work the state considered useful for the community: if she proved to have participated in solo or group exhibitions, the artist could apply to the Committee for Status Allocation, which then guaranteed her/ him healthcare and contributions record; some sort of pension. In the words of a conceptual artist Sanja Iveković:

“It wasn’t necessary for artists to make money from selling their art works on the market to prove that they were ‘professional’ artists, which is the case today. Being accepted into the Croatian

¹² Socialist modernism’ was important across the visual arts, with resistance to this compromise between party and visual culture only beginning to come into question in the later 1960s when artists started experimenting with new forms of production—performance, installation, process art, happenings—began to appear as a challenge to the socialist modernist consensus.

Association of Artists was enough. My artist friends in the capitalist West were stunned by this system. But it meant that the local art system institutions were powerful and that's why artists had good reasons for local 'institutional critique'. One of their demands was the right to be paid for their work like all the people working in the art system.” (Iveković, 2010: 342)

The final phase of Yugoslav cultural policy- lasting from mid 70s until the end of 80s was also marked by the specific policies that were undertaken to redefine the previous legal framework of employment of independent art workers, decentralise culture throughout the former Yugoslavia and foster self-governance. Whilst also embracing the concept of independent work, which regulated the conditions for artistic labour and ensured that art workers (along with other workers of liberal professions) were socially protected, the socialist cultural policy integrated freelance artists and cultural workers into the welfare state's regulatory framework. With the Law for Independent Artists in both Croatia (1979) and Macedonia (1982), as well as the Law for Independent Cultural Workers in Slovenia (1982), this system was ostensibly strengthened throughout the region. Self-employment, according to some researchers, reduced the unemployment rate and served as an employment option during a time when there weren't enough resources to produce new jobs but on the other hand independent artists and cultural workers gradually lost their labour rights and social protection (Praznik 2021: 98).

Parallely, the ruling regime devolved most cultural powers to the level of the government of individual republics- each republic had its own cultural apparatus and Union of Artists. This period was characterised by an effort towards democratic standards and values of the welfare state, but at the same time burdened by excessive bureaucratization and normativity. So-called “self-managing communities of interest for culture” were implemented in the organisational and financial aspects of the functioning of culture and, thus, cultural activities were carried out in accordance with the territorial (local, municipal, provincial, republic) and functional (cinematography, publishing, theatre etc.) principles (Cvjetičanin and Katunarić, 1998: 23). These self-managing communities of interest were defined “associations through which working people and other citizens satisfy their personal and common needs and coordinate their interests, governed by the principles of mutuality and solidarity” (Majstorović, 1980:65).

Besides this, the entire cultural system underwent transformation also in terms of "free labour exchanges" which facilitated stronger ties between local economies and cultural institutions. The tensions between different political value systems eventually leading to the break-up of the country were evident also in cultural policy documents such as the "Red book" from 1982:

"Contemporary capitalism has strongly developed the industry of consciousness (or industry of culture) as one element of a reproduction of civil society itself. Thus, culture has become an area of production of relative excess value. Socialism cannot take over the market on this logic, but it inherits the market. One could say that in this sense culture in our society is still determined not only by the influence of the state and the access of state-owned monopoly, but also by the market law." (Šuvar, S. and Grubiša, D., 1982: 25)

Subsequently, the liberalisation of the media played a significant role in the strong nationalistic movement that emerged in the middle of the 1980s among both official and unofficial political and cultural institutions as it contributed to the general radical departure from the promotion of a supranational sense of Yugoslav identity to the more local nationalisms of the republics (Volčič 2007: 28), which ultimately resulted in the breakdown of the state which eventually led to the disintegration of the state¹³. In the words of B. Pavićević, Yugoslavia started with "internationalism, continued with multi-ethnicity within borders and with multiculturalism, only to find ourselves in a region today which is obsessively talking about cultural differences" (2017: 37).

¹³ Prior to the 1980s, the symbolic divide of Yugoslavia into its northern (Slovenia, Croatia) and southern (Bosnia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia) regions was not viewed as insurmountable. Each republic was regarded as being significant to Yugoslavia and as such a part of a cultural whole that, despite internal diversity, aspired to share a unique but collective Yugoslav character (Volčič 2007: 22). Both Tito's passing in 1980 and the Yugoslavian economy's subsequent collapse posed a danger to the common Yugoslav sense of community and its supranational sense of identity. All of the former Yugoslav countries experienced a gradual transformation towards the end of the 1980s in the sense of supranational identification and collective Yugoslav identity. Slovenian and Croatian political elites in particular tended to see Yugoslavia's internal diversity as an obstacle to the republics' further development. Yugoslavia started to be seen as an unintelligible concoction of irreconcilable Western and Eastern (Balkan) civilizations, faiths, or cultures. A new framework of internally unified, integrated, and homogenous nation-states that required the assimilation or destruction of anything Yugoslav evolved in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

5.2.2. Cultural policy and the regional independent cultural scene in the transition

In countries of the former Yugoslavia shattered by conflict and nationalisms, the period of transition to market capitalism was characterised by a halt in the work of the independent cultural scene. What was once a vibrant transnational community abruptly disintegrated into a number of isolated entities, bounded by the borders of recently established states, cut off from the previous knowledge exchange and sense of community, and working and living in inadequate material conditions. In order to develop new national identities distinct from any historical ties to other post-Yugoslav nationalities, the policy of separation from Yugoslav society placed a great emphasis on the instrumentalization of religion and culture. The processes that went along with the dissolution, loss of human lives, ethnic cleansing and the war destruction, included the clericalization of society, the dissolution of cultural ties, linguistic purisms, the removal of literature from libraries, and the destruction of monuments (Lešaja 2012: 21). Overall, there were a number of elements that contributed to the extremely difficult conditions for the cultural sector in the region at the time such as: crisis in public policies and in the public sector; lack of communication flow between the three sectors (public/governmental, commercial, and civil); crisis in institutions and their social role; and crisis of participation in the local market (Dragičević-Šešić and Dragojević 2005: 28-29). During the nineties, only programmes and projects that belonged to the realm of the "national culture" and "national institutions in culture" was supported which resulted in a high degree of centralisation and institutionalisation of the entire cultural life, giving secondary importance to programme support, neglecting the importance of establishing a legislative framework, insufficient emphasis on the local and especially regional aspects of cultural development, the absence or the small number of programs aimed at the needs of marginalised cultural groups as well as the absence of organised education in the field of artistic and cultural management. Similarly, Zlatar (2001: 58) believes that war and transition have become an excuse for failures that were in fact the result of poor cultural management, an excuse for postponing essential infrastructural reforms and a cover for the realisation of private interests in the sphere of the public good.

However, in response to the war crises, civic initiatives and later formalised non-governmental organisations were widely and spontaneously spread. According to Vesić (Letunić 2017: 1), nineties were the period of NGO culture formation that, on one level, stands for an entrepreneurial model of work and on the other, implies certain independence in relation to the state apparatus. NGOs fought against the immediate effects of the war and the war regime (the plight of refugees and displaced people; increasing ethnic intolerance, which led to widespread violations of the human rights of members of ethnic minorities; discrimination in the most basic rights, such as citizenship status, home, employment, etc.) as well as the suffocation of the public and repatriarchalization of gender relations, among others. In this struggle, they represented the basic values of freedom, democracy, nonviolence, tolerance and solidarity and tried to play a constructively critical role in the construction of the rule of law in the newly formed countries (Dvornik 2009: 67).

Throughout the post-Yugoslav region, the independent cultural scene mostly began to develop along with the appearance of the civil society, often being a part of it with the support by the international community within the different financing schemes, mostly through the programmes of democratisation, human rights protection, civil emancipation, civil society building etc. Since the public opinion in these countries has developed extremely firm attitudes towards the NGO sector, taking positions on the issue could not have been avoided, ranging from extremely positive to extremely negative attitudes. Historically, the independent cultural scene has been a continuation of predominantly radical amateur art and cultural practices which produced critical interventions in the cultural, social and political spheres of Yugoslav society (Milohnić, 2011: 5). These entail Yugoslav neo avant-garde art practices from the late 1960s and early 1970s and alternative culture from the 1980s on, when several artistic, punk, feminist and LGBT social movements. According to Močnik (2014: np), alternative movements in Yugoslavia took over the ideology of civil society “from the vocabulary of alternatives in other socialist countries”. From the 1990s on, the anti-war movement generated the first actors of the independent cultural scene (especially in Croatia and Serbia) that then went through the process of “NGOization” with the support by the international community within the different financing schemes, mostly through the programmes of democratisation, human rights protection, civil emancipation, civil society building etc. Dragičević- Šešić (2018: 53) elaborated on the role of the independent scene within the cultural transition:

„The paramount role of the independent art scene was to produce new ideas, new concepts, which the official scene, half-dead and turned to the past, oversaturated with nationalism, could not produce. The independent scene combined aesthetic, ethical and intellectual criteria that questioned the views of the world officially imposed by the state and the church: nationalism, xenophobia, patriarchal values, hate speech, media manipulation of ethnic stereotypes, etc. “

According to Eckenhaussen (2019: 209), ‘independent culture’ in the post-Yugoslav region emerged as the cultural antipode of its ‘independent media’. Therefore, he concludes that “like in media, independence in culture implies: integrity; transparency about incomes and spending; party-political impartiality; absence of bias and (self-)censorship; the goal to be an uncompromising and corrective mirror to society” (ibid.). The independent cultural sector in this article is used interchangeably with at the time of the independent cultural scene that Eckenhaussen understands as a “lived context and the discursive fabric” in which this community of independent cultures exists (Eckenhaussen 2019: 229) and which Bennet and Peterson link to the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu’s of “field” and Howard Becker’s (1982) idea of “art worlds” (2004: 3). Geshoska (2011: 75) also uses a similar analogy by saying the sector is “a text woven of diverse threads that depicts various histories”, all in its attempt to create a political legitimacy of the broader community, and not only of the dominant narrative of the ruling group.

The aforementioned historical events of the fall of socialism caused what we might refer to as a "systemic cultural transformation" in the region, which Švob-Đokić characterises as "the transition from socialism to capitalism" (Švob-Đokić, 2008:37). Changes in the organisation, production and general cultural values, accompanied cultural transition processes in two stages within the newly capitalist countries. The first, according to Švob-Đokić, is "characterised by general liberalisation, partial privatisation of cultural infrastructure, partial market orientation, and reinterpretation of cultural identities" (2008: 39), whereas the second responded to the need to "relatively rationalise the chaotic transition processes" (ibid.) through the improvement of the regulatory apparatus, strengthening corporate governance, moving towards independence for monetary and fiscal institutions, eradicating corruption and strengthening judicial

functioning. She points out that in the second phase new technologies are increasingly gaining influence while at the same time the „import of products of globalised cultural industries” is also growing (ibid.).

In short, in post-socialist and post-Yugoslav countries, political systems have transitioned from one party to multiparty systems, and societies have experienced changes to public goods, the privatisation of industrial as well as other resources, the opening of the door for a free market or the facilitation of capitalistic reforms. Cvjetičanin (1995: np) also summarises how reforms have altered the setting in which culture is produced:

“In the process of democratisation, the role and influence of the state in culture undergoes a change. The state tries to reduce its own funding of cultural institutions and artistic creation, leaving them to the action of the market forces and private initiative (government budgets for culture are more than modest in most countries in transition, averaging between 0.6 and 0.8 per cent of the annual budget). An increasingly important role is played by regions and local communities (‘territorial collectivities’); new forms of support for culture are sought (sponsors, foundations, patronage) and attempts are made to privatise and commercialise parts of the cultural infrastructure. The Polish historian Bronislaw Geremek describes the situation in the following terms: ‘Today, the state no longer has a bad conscience, and sponsors and patrons do not have it yet. Neither the one nor the other support culture.’”

5.2.3. (Post)transitional cultural policy and challenges for the independent sector

Interestingly, European policies have developed the concept of "Southeastern Europe" as a new geopolitical zone in order to integrate those states within an approach known as Southeast European regionalization by policymakers. The term "regionalization," which frequently refers to the decentralisation of state power and enhancing the autonomy of subnational regions, here refers to the creation of a supranational geopolitical region with decentralised transnational

social networks, political cooperation procedures, and unrestricted movement of goods and labour (Valiavicharska 2010: 4). Various foundations and organisations, including the European Cultural Foundation (ECF) based in Amsterdam, the Soros Network (Open Society Institutes - OSIs), the Felix Meritis Foundation, and Transeuropéennes, have implemented specific programmes¹⁴ in Southeast Europe or have prioritised this region in their projects that encompassed Central and Eastern Europe (Dragičević Šešić and Şuteu, 2005: 93). Consequently, these processes have impacted the restructuring of the instruments and mechanisms in the field which became available to the independent cultural sector. Thus, one of the phenomena emerging organisations in the post-Yugoslav region encountered as a challenge during the transition, is the procedures of the Western European model of cooperation which introduced a value shift towards competitiveness and market-orientation in the cultural sector. Funders, of course, preferred those organisations that have organisational structures and skills compatible with their choice of methods and fields of action, and with their expectations of reliable resource management, monitoring and report making. The partners who spoke a similar language (not only linguistically, but also the "language" of projects, logic diagrams, etc.), who had professional staff, capable of writing projects and providing reliable management in their performance, drawing up credible reports and clearly led finances, were more acceptable. Flexibility, mobility, rapid adoption of new technological and media hybridised communication practices, all within low budget projects, were affirmed. As Dragičević Šešić and Şuteu (2005: 87) clarify, Western agencies, organisations and foundations applied their own specific rhetoric and models of cooperation equally, both globally and in the countries of South Eastern Europe. It is important to note that, with such models of collaboration, presumptions on the nature of social relations and significance of the political are also tacitly adopted. Vujanović (2012: 131) warns about the diverging histories of international and local scenes claiming that “while from the international perspective these processes might be understood as normativized precariousness, which should find off-hand creative solutions for the social and economic crisis, in the local context they are primarily a political critique, an act of resistance, and an alternative to the state system of art and culture”.

¹⁴ A number of these organisations have collaborated to pool their financial resources and amplify their influence in the region. For instance, the Gulliver Connect Programme was implemented from 1998 to 2003 through the collaborative efforts of the OSI Budapest (Soros), KulturKontakt (Austria), and Felix Meritis foundations (Amsterdam). Additionally, initiatives such as Art for Social Change and Kultura Nova, which aimed to building the capacities of NGOs, were established by ECF and Soros offices in Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Macedonia (Dragičević Šešić and Şuteu, 2005: 93).

From the early two- thousands, major international foundations that enabled stable development of non-governmental organisations (primarily, the *Open Society Institute* or the *Soros foundation*) have withdrawn from the region after assessing the good development of the countries "on the path of democratisation". The political elites of the post-Yugoslav countries adopted policies based mostly on isolationism in the era that followed direct conflicts and the turn of the decade was marked by the beginning of the normalisation of relations between these countries. While cultural policies of so-called representative culture still dominated the cultural production patterns which were more or less focused on enhancing individual national identities, a space for the reactivation of cultural cooperation in the region has also been created. However, in spite of peace and normalisation, the European Union's expansion has created tensions in the region because the dynamics of accession differs among its member states (Pavić 2011: 23). Access to European Commission programmes for Culture have been granted to Croatia in 2005 and to Serbia in 2008 and a part of organisations from the contemporary performance independent scene (such as BADco, Croatian Institute for Movement and Dance, Eurokaz, Drugo more, Walking Theory, Stanica) have become partners and coordinators of international projects with the support of European Commission.

The legacy of the maintained infrastructure of public cultural institutions of post-Yugoslav countries, with the associated resources (human, spatial, material, technical) which continue to exist as fundamental guardians of cultural tradition, heritage, and identity, is where the continuity of the past cultural-political system is most clearly sustained. As actors who will carry out the affirmation of the new general values of society, the public sector and traditional cultural organisations are prioritised (Vidović 2017: 487) highly above the private and the civil sector. A large amount of public resources is still invested in maintaining the status quo of the cultural framework, its infrastructure and paying the salaries of a high number of administrative, technical and artistic personnel. A smaller amount is invested in cultural programmes, mostly in the minimal programmes of these institutions. It is obvious that this financing system is not based on programme logic nor is it significantly determined by the evaluation of a programme.

According to Švob- Đokić, very similar cultural structures can be observed in the post-Yugoslav countries formed within a post-transitional context marked by "multiculturalism, cultural diversity, human rights observance and political and economic liberalism" (2011: 114).

Within this realm, structural fragmentations of national cultures also led to the emergence of various types of cultural production and the progressive development of cultural industrialization, both of which are significantly influenced by processes of globalisation and trends in global culture. This fragmentation is clearly visible in the contrasts within the public, civil and private sectors: the state-supported "institutional" cultures aim to preserve a certain level of national identifications; the "independent" cultures, which are entirely open to regional, European and global cultural communication while adhering to a variety of cultural trends as well as "market-oriented" cultures, which are closely related to pop-cultural consumerism (ibid.).

In general, cultural policy in the region is mostly the responsibility of the national governments, where the state is the primary architect¹⁵ of cultural policy, with some input and support from regional and local authorities. The ministries oversee a range of activities related to cultural preservation, promotion, and funding while consulting with the cultural councils around the processes of allocating the subsidies. In all of the countries, the Ministry of Culture, the Government, and the Parliament on the one hand, and consultative cultural councils, local government and self-government, cultural institutions, NGOs, and individual artists and their associations, on the other, engage in procedures and partnerships that determine and implement cultural policy.

Still, cultural policies are still profoundly dependent on old models of administration due to belated transition processes (Dragičević Šešić, Stojković 2003: 27) with centralisation and the public-administration cultural model at their core. Although decentralisation is used in political discourse for the last twenty years, realities of distribution of economic, educational, social and other benefits and resources in the region, show the opposite trend¹⁶. Government

¹⁵ The Architect model of cultural policy refers to a strategic and comprehensive approach to shaping and managing cultural development in a society. It involves intentional design and planning to create policies and initiatives that support the preservation, promotion, and evolution of cultural heritage, as well as the cultivation of contemporary artistic expression. The model emphasises the integration of cultural considerations across various sectors, such as education, economy, urban planning, and social welfare, to foster a vibrant cultural ecosystem that reflects the values, diversity, and aspirations of the society. It involves stakeholder engagement, research, data-driven decision-making, and a long-term vision to ensure sustainable cultural development and its positive impacts on society. See more at: Chartrand, Harry Hillman, and Claire McCaughey. "The arm's length principle and the arts: an international perspective—past, present and future." *Who's to Pay for the Arts* (1989): 43-80.

¹⁶ Besides Compendium of Cultural Policies & Trends, see for example Dašić, D. (2012) "Decentraliscija na srpski način, ili zašto kažeš Srbija, a misliš Beograd?", Foundation centre for Democracy, available online at: <http://www.centaronline.org/userfiles/files/preuzimanje/danijel-dasic-decentraliscija-na-srpski-nacin.pdf>

bodies, most investments, donors and media are located in the capitals, while smaller cities and remote communities are systematically neglected. Growing social inequalities are unevenly distributed geographically, and most smaller settlements are struggling with access to health, education and job market, not to mention organised cultural and artistic activities.

As stated by Žuvela (2022: 38), the tendency to avoid making significant changes to the cultural systems of the countries can be interpreted as suppressing potential crises that serious and long-term reform interventions would otherwise trigger, but it can also be said that the lack of action and reform procedures maintains, perpetuates, and normalises the current state of crisis in the cultural systems. The crisis-ridden state of cultural systems is represented by the external and internal dimensions of non-incentive measures. The position, function, and significance of culture as an important sector for overall social development are persistently ignored by the external dimension of political will. This is reflected in the fact that culture is not at the level of priorities of political and public agendas, and is most clearly illustrated by the low representation of public spending on culture at the national level, which does not reach the European minimum of 1%.

The internal dimension of the current challenges calls attention to the professional challenges facing the cultural sectors, such as the need for professional development, the production conditions, the reach of distribution, the extent to which collaboration is possible, the sector's openness to new work models, etc. Political interests have a strong influence on management in (post)transitional nations, but it also faces pressure from organisations, individuals, and audiences that are frequently excluded from the decision-making process. In order to ensure the elements of good governance, such as responsibility sharing, openness and transparency, and participation, key questions about centralised and politically influenced decisions and making radical changes in the direction of decentralisation, or the devolution of powers, are routinely disregarded.

In conclusion, it can be said similar problems related to transition dynamics, cultural ambiguities, unpredictability, and pressures brought on by the difficulties of (global) economic systems still persist throughout the region but with different gradations of intensity.

5.2.4. The performing arts landscape and the independent cultural scene in the region

Currently, there are no specific national strategies for performing arts in any of the post-Yugoslav countries so the cultural policy trends should still be read from the legislative and financial framework. The instruments¹⁷ are mainly based on yearly public calls for public needs in culture through more streams of financing (mostly divided into professional and amateur performing arts organisations). The allocation of financial support substantially reflects the traditional cultural-political divide of public theatre institutions and the independent performing arts scene¹⁸, which is especially exacerbated in the region. For example, the study “Performing arts policies and funding in Europe” from 2009 clearly detects that large repertoire theatres have been the focus of the funding strategies in the post-socialist and post-communist countries, whereas the independent performing arts sector is marginalised (in contrast to Western Europe where more diverse production models performing arts are supported and developed, such as companies, production houses, residential spaces etc). When looking at the funding categories within national and local open call, they reflect but also reproduce the common approach to performing arts which also implies the generic superiority of dramatic theatre over other performance forms, and thus supports the cultural representation characteristic of institutional theatre and national festivals.

The public theatre system has been repeatedly called for reform by many authors such as, for example, Pristaš claims (2010: np) that the established repertoire policy in theatres, which rests mainly on ensemble production, “the complete absence of international guest appearances outside of festival programs or national exchanges, and the lack of differentiation

¹⁷Currently, only Croatia has a specific Law on Theatres (NN 71/06, NN 23/23) while Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. have general laws that govern the arts and culture sector, specific provisions related to theatre may vary. Laws on culture set out the general principles for the development of culture, including the promotion of cultural diversity and equal access to cultural activities. The law also establishes the responsibilities of cultural institutions, including theatres, and provides for the financing of cultural activities. In relation to financing, cultural ministries consult the cultural councils for theatre and performing arts on performing arts-related activities.

¹⁸ For example, a recent analysis of cultural funding in North Macedonia shows that in 2021, only 6.5% of the overall budget for culture has gone to support the independent scene while the portion of the budget for cultural institutions' salaries in 2020 was 38%. See more at Jovanović, Branimir (2022): National financial policies in culture against socioeconomic working conditions in the independent cultural sector. Skopje: Jadro Asocijacija. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Otpxv-_Ih2LYGULeUDHWMYS_fanpgtBN/view.

of educational, information and development programs, have led to unitarity of the performing arts scene where the hierarchy of importance of individual events was built according to contextual or budgetary support from theatre institutions or its financing”. Besides decreased international mobility, the unfavourable situation in public performing arts institutions is a consequence of inadequate factors, such as unsatisfactory human resources policies that take political compatibility precedence over talent and skills, the long-standing ban on employment in the public sector as well as the participation of actors who are permanently employed in actors' ensembles in film and television productions. On the other hand, the independent performing arts organisations are more inherently more mobile but are mostly characterised by sporadic production of works, a lack of appropriate spaces for production and presentation, a lack of public visibility, ignorance on the part of public authorities, and cultural policies that are not supportive. Historically (especially during the turbulent nineties) the scene has been characterised as being in opposition to state-funded institutions, not only in terms of organisational and managerial practises but also in its dedication to critical practises and gestures that sharply challenge the hegemonic discourses circulated in the media and by politicians. As one of the examples, Cvejić (2006: 85) states that the turbulent conditions in the nineties resulted “in a discrepancy in development and a total disproportionality between the production of theoretical discourse and art production” referring to the critical performing arts journals that emerged from the regional context such as “Walking Theory” and “Prelom” in Belgrade, “Frakcija Performing Arts Journal” from Centre for Drama Art in Zagreb. These theoretical journals constituted a distinct discursive space and collective effort to problematize, theorise, and raise criticism in the field of contemporary performing arts and beyond.

Recent pandemic (and the earthquakes in Croatia) further uncovered and intensified structural inequalities as well as the precarious and dependent position of the independent performing arts in relation to the goodwill of public authorities in the context where the majority of public money is distributed to public cultural institutions. Despite the proliferation of organisations at the performing arts scenes, authorities tend to maintain a patronising relationship with them (if one even exists), along with a lack of tools to value their content and artistic vision. Thus, the struggle for the redistribution of public resources (finances and infrastructure) from the monolithic institutions of culture towards support of highly diverse independent actors serves as a manifestation of the efforts and actions for the development of independent cultural scenes and its sustainability. These attempts have been partly successful

in some parts of the region which will be elaborated more and detailed in the following chapters.

5.2.4.1. Development of the post-Yugoslav independent performing arts scene

Originating from the Moscow Art Theatre (MXAT), the model of repertory theatre has been the dominant framework of performing arts production in all Central and Eastern European countries, including Yugoslavia. According to Klaić (2012: 39) the investment of the state into the public theatre originated from a nationalist philosophy of the late 19th century when theatre becomes a representational institution and a cornerstone of the new nation states emerging from former empires (such as the Poles, Czechs, Serbs, Croats, and Hungarians). With the mission of national representation, repertory theatre remained practically the sole model of professional performing arts in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe before 1989 and many of these institutions have continued to operate according to the same inherited structure, procedures, and work ethics, even during the transition from socialism to capitalism. Klaić also discusses a few scenarios the repertory theatres followed in the transition with inevitably defeating results: doing nothing, hiding behind the artistic process, imitating the commercial theatre, and affiliating the public theatre with a political or a social movement or group (2012: 30). According to him, most of the institutional sector didn't manage to make significant reforms but continued maintaining the system without strategic planning, evaluation of the processes, and critical reflection of the institutional activities. In her work of theatre transition, Lončar (2013: 5) also detects how the entire theatre system collapsed, a new one was not established, and the theatre continued to use models and functioning patterns that no longer corresponded to the newly created reality throughout the transition. Further on, Klaić observes that, while being occupied with the repetitive circle of production and distribution, an internal culture of complaint and resentment that affects the creative process was developed and institutions became closed, self-referential and hermetic (2012: 32).

On the other end of the spectrum, the independent performing arts scene developed in parallel from the 1960s as an unofficial alternative in some semi-professional or non-professional groups, frequently composed out of university students¹⁹ who:

“... combined artistic experimentation with a disguised, allusive critique of the political system and of social hypocrisy, seeking to expand the standardised repertoire and create their own production material. More radical than the repertory companies, these groups had a limited outreach and less visibility, but enjoyed a small, loyal following and found some material support in amateur cultural associations and university cultural centres. When assaulted or even closed down by the repressive mechanisms of the regime, their idiosyncratic, critical energy was quickly resurrected in another group, or re-emerged in the next generation” (2012: 40)

These new artistic movements that had emerged in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Novi Sad, Subotica, Belgrade, and Split quite independently of one another, but they quickly converged along a line that maintains that the meaning of artistic creation lies in a distinct aesthetic language and a new context in which to practise it (Šuvaković 2003: 223). Student cultural centres throughout the region became sites for re-examining art-making by some of the most ardent participants of the student struggle. The young artists embraced performance making and conceptual art in their artistic practice because they believed that art should serve life rather than politics through a form of resistance to the culture by the middle class “Weltanschauung” and bourgeois values of art in the sense of “beautiful image in the rich interior.” In general, the artistic practises in the region’s Students centres at the in the sixties and seventies were formed through a critique of the repertory theatres, art market, welfare-state institutions, capitalist conformism, institutional bureaucracy, and hierarchy²⁰. However, they were also, in the sense of modernist

¹⁹ The critique of emerging bureaucratization of the state by the students was first articulated and continued spreading throughout the rest of Yugoslavia, most notably in Ljubljana and Zagreb. “Down with red bourgeoisie” was the slogan that epitomised “the mixture of radical movement for the abolition of the rigid and hierarchical communist politics and a legitimate demand for deepening the socialist self-management” (Grlja 2010: 133). According to the proclamation by the Students' Action Committee, the main problem was social inequality caused by bureaucratic structures within the Communist League of Yugoslavia.

²⁰ For example, a group of young artists (including the acclaimed performance artist Marina Abramović) within Student Cultural Centre in the 1970s generated “one of the most important and interesting experiments in the cultural history of the SFRY” (Grlja 2010: 133) both in the artistic and institutional sense.

formalism, self-contemplation and concept of autonomy of art, conceived through self-sufficiency, disciplinary enclosure, professional division of labour, etc. The independent performing arts groups have served as platforms for new ideas as well as laboratories for artistic growth, where many artists have gained skills and ultimately found vocation in various performing arts models as directors of organisations, venues, and festivals (Klaić 2012: 44).

These student cultural centres as sites for the independent performing arts scene show a complex mode of operation that, in some respects, resembles current cultural organisations. Although they were established and funded by the government, or the "society," it served as a venue for a critical production of culture. Despite being set up as a professional and administrative institution of culture, they operated non-hierarchically, paying no attention to the conventional boundaries between the audience and the cultural producers or to disciplinary or professional distinctions. Due to the national cultural funding's consistently low budget, the centres collaborated with foreign institutions to implement more than half of its activities. Its method of operation involved merging the efforts of volunteers and amateurs to introduce fresh types of cultural activism. Šuvaković (2010 np) that this was possible because in the wake of 1968, there were two concurrent processes in the official policy towards culture, allowing students to freely express themselves through art on the one hand and the institutional frame securing a socio-political control for the Party on the other. The work produced within the centres was eventually shown at wider national theatre platforms such as IFSK – International Festival of Student Theatre at &TD Theatre in Zagreb, Bitef festival in Belgrade and Young People's Theatre Days of Dubrovnik as a part of Dubrovnik Summer Festival, often with high acclamation of Yugoslav audiences.

Contemporary dance was also developed within the same scene, although not independently but *piercing through* in other experimental artistic fields such as visual arts, performance art experimental music and theatre (Janša 2013: 18). Examples of such performance were ones by the by the conceptual group *OHO* and the *Pupilija Ferkeverk* poets' collective (active in Slovenia in the late 60s) as well as *Kugla glumište* and Milana Broš (active in Croatia in the 70s). Dance and performance art were often created spontaneously, in inadequate material circumstances, and even on the verge of a social, political, or cultural incident. Artists were coming to the performing arts from a variety of artistic fields—such as literature, visual arts, art history and theory, and had no formal training in dance. Later, contemporary dance becomes was one of the media in the postmodern theatre of the late 1970s

and 1980s – admittedly, especially in Slovenia and Croatia (Vujanović 2014: 56). However, with the democratisation of new nation states and development of the civil sector, contemporary dance artists and workers started self-institutionalising more (in forms of artistic organisations and associations) and networking in the region, Europe and beyond. The dance scene evolved into a prism through which to observe the socio-cultural and political (non)conditions whereby dance, performing arts, and contemporary culture were formed.

According to Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski (2021: 104), dance has changed its position in recent years, starting in 2010, or even earlier in Slovenia and Croatia, critically reflecting the dance institution, production methods, political influences, and market. Contemporary dance nowadays is evolving as an independent art form in the majority of the region's countries, but new production models have been formed by a number of institutions, such as Španski Borci in Ljubljana and the Zagreb Dance Centre. Throughout the region, there are nowadays a number of collectives and long-term projects that are dedicated to the theoretical aspects of challenging hierarchies of prevailing epistemologies of knowledge, by overcoming the lines of demarcation between dominant and subordinate in the field of contemporary performance and dance as well as refreshing knowledge from seemingly peripheral positions. Such projects arise at the moment when several contexts and areas of knowledge come into contact and begin to integrate.

One of the key factors in the development of this approach has been regional cooperation in the Balkans and the countries of the former SFRY through theoretical productions centres such as Walking Theory in Belgrade, Frakcija in Zagreb, Maska in Ljubljana and regional platforms for contemporary dance such as such as Nomad Dance Academy. As already mentioned, the post-Yugoslav region relies on the legacy of socialism and in which the transition to a productive capitalist framework was carried abruptly. Similarly, in a recent edition of the performing arts journal Maska with the topic of archiving of choreographic practices in the region, Vevar expresses that, in the context of post-Yugoslav and post-socialist experience, the work of independent contemporary performance scene in the region aims to be developed inter- and trans-locally as well as to:

“bear witness to the heritage of the common Yugoslav art, cultural, social and political space and to emphasise that the process of identities

and differences can be turned into manifold opportunities for continuing this inspiring cultural context through other means and possibilities.” (2: 2017).

Therefore, the issue of cooperation, networking and togetherness in the region appear as a contemporary response to this legacy.

5.4.2.2. Networking and funding

As already stated, public subsidies for performing arts in the region are allocated to, above all, public theatres and cultural institutions and those programs that are of the national interest, which most often excluded all those who produce critical arts and culture programmes. At the same time, the financing is distributed through a one-year cycle, in a way that the most of the budget funds are spent on infrastructure maintenance which leaves a smaller part for the programs. Stronger demands for project-oriented work, which manifest themselves in increasing pressure on organisations to report an increasing number of projects and in an increasing growing of sources that organisations and institutions need to cover their basic costs, are also symptomatic of the political and financial context since within the economic sphere, subsistence and sustainability are being replaced by neoliberal global capitalism and profit-seeking logic.

Over the years, the cultural budget has consistently made up less than 1% of the total state budget (from North Macedonia with only 0.5% of the state budget allocated to culture, compared to Croatia which currently allocates 1.5%) maintaining the marginal status of culture as a part of public policies (Compendium 2023: np). This is partially compensated by mechanisms of international donors since numerous civil society organisations in culture in the region have a track record of participation in international cooperation, partnerships and calls. After the period of strong nationalisms in cultural policies, the countries have also become more receptive to cross-cultural dialogue, which enabled easier adoption of European trends and, concurrently, more effective internal restructuring. In this regard, the EU offered a context and structure that enabled the introduction of new cultural practices and innovative types of cultural development at local levels, while also fostering cultural dialogue and interaction at

the European and global levels. To be more precise, the European Union through its various programmes is the main international donors in the field, in particular Creative Europe, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, IPA pre-accession instrument (CBC), ESF and Balkan MED. After the civil society organisations of the post-Yugoslav cultural sphere during the 1990s formed from the “resistance to the chauvinist government and the affirmation of civil society’s values” (Mišković 2011: 34), the NGO cultural sector intensely worked with international organisations through various culture management education and training programs but nowadays, the needs of the sector have transformed in relation to the fast-changing environment. To be more precise, there has been a shift in the sector from being eligible for foreign funding (being designated as beneficiaries in democracy building geographies) towards competing for EU funding that is becoming increasingly present in the region.

Available statistics on and the participation of countries in collaboration projects funded by Creative Europe show a consistent trend in the distribution of non-profit organisations making up the largest number of project partners. For example, under the Culture sub-programme from 2014 until 2020, 48% of partnerships came from the independent sector, 30% from public cultural institutions and 21% from companies and sole proprietorships (Creative Europe Desk Croatia 2021: 16). Similarly, in the same period in Serbia, 43% participating organisations were from the civil sector, 24% from the public and 23% from the private sector (Creative Europe Desk Serbia (2021: 256). However, the administrative requirements during the implementation and reporting of the programs often represent a serious burden on the cultural sector, whose activities are therefore increasingly bureaucratized instead of encouraging creativity within cultural and artistic activities. Cultural sectors are also supported by the Goethe-Institut, Institut Français, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, British Council, US Embassy, and other foreign embassies. Moreover, Western Balkan Foundation and Visegrad Fund mechanisms, as well as other programs focusing on particular European regions, are open to most of the post-Yugoslav countries depending on whether they are an EU member or accession candidate.

Since the early 2000s, the contemporary independent cultural scene has been engaged in creating conditions for collective action in the field of culture and affirmation of the aesthetic dimension, “which actually dissolves the nationalistic culture that continues to dominate as a cultural paradigm” (ibid.). The field of cultural production becomes expanded in both the domain of social activism on one side and to the domain of cultural industries on the other

(Letunić 2017: 4). With the process of NGO-ization in the post-Yugoslav region, networking became one of the key strategies towards the capacity building and sustainability of the independent cultural sector. In a broader European context, during the 1970s and 1980s, the first wave of global cultural networks began to emerge. These networks were based on the national representation paradigm, which involved individuals or groups of national representatives attending international meetings. In order to overcome prevailing hierarchies and promote direct collaboration and exchange between producers, artists, and other cultural operators, the first European cultural networks²¹ were established in the 1980s²² (Minichbauer and Mitterdorfer 2000: 3). On the other hand, in the post-Yugoslav region it turned out that the model of "communicational" and "representational" networks in culture from the broader European context weren't able to meet all the needs of their members and their, until then, the primary function of information, communication and representation was not enough to implement "network projects" (Dragojević 2007: 34). When discussing the development of the independent cultural sector in the region, Šešić (2008: 63) places decentralised corporation capacity building as its' third phase after the individual cultural workers' activism and the establishment of independent cultural centres (such as Metelkova in Ljubljana, centre for Cultural Decontamination and Rex in Belgrade, Apostrof in Novi Sad, Lamparna in Labin, Mama and Pogon in Zagreb). Gradually, in order to respond to the new challenges and needs, network-led advocacy activities began to be formed. Dragojević calls them "operational networks" or "collaborative platforms". Cultural networking in the post-Yugoslav region started to contribute to the emerging public spheres that intersect traditional domains of knowledge. It also began to embark into new forms of intensive, dynamic, thematic and self-organised networks, that do not only exchange information and programs, but produce new knowledges and practices. These independent cultural sector's initiatives arise from below and, in times of culture's opening to the market, their logic is not the one of profit. Thus, intensive collaborative platforms and networks emerge as one of the models of collective and critical engagement of the post-Yugoslav independent cultural sector. According to Višnić (2007: 11),

²¹ Networks typically operate using the logic of inclusion and exclusion, and they are defined by their programme, which establishes the foundation for their objectives and rules. They are organized around flows, which are "streams of information between nodes" (Castells, 2009: 20).

²² The Council of Europe (COE) played a significant role in the creation of these networks since previously most international networks operated primarily inside the framework of nation-states. Projects of the Council of Europe, such "Culture and neighbourhoods" (Delgado, Bianchini, et al., 1996) and "Culture and Regions" (d'Angelo and Vesperini, 2000), have made it easier for civil society networks operating on a global scale to form in Europe.

the main features of these new socio-cultural practices are expanding the definition of cultural activities and the development of new collaborative practices and models:

“With regard to the issues dealt with (public domain issues, social transition, the hybrid model of public-private partnerships, intellectual property, etc.) as well as the methods used (activism, association of citizens, advocacy, the transfer of technology, and other practices to the area of culture, socio-theoretical activities), collaborative platforms greatly expand the area of culture, defining it not as arts and heritage ... but as an area of intense interaction between the social, technological and the artistic.”

Such networks promote the critical function of culture in social production as well as sustainable cultural diversity which implies that all groups of people have a collective choice to cultivate their culture and, equally important, a collective choice to determine the nature and means of cultural change. Cultural networks possess a multimodal, diversified, and pervasive nature, causing them to be more susceptible to cultural diversity than any previous public space. Directing their own organisational culture towards collective action becomes a political choice, i.e., the resistance to the dominant individualistic paradigm of work in culture. According to Celakoski (2006: 389), the first characteristic of these networks relates to activities based on the project type, which means that their priority is not just the exchange of information and communication, but structurally driven processes designated by thematic, procedural, or other interests of the network members, i.e. advocacy. Following such a direction, another characteristic implies directing towards social and/or political agenda. The third refers to interdisciplinarity, or to a connection with other areas beyond primary cultural and artistic activity. It is clear that this role of tactical²³ networks require a complex

²³ Concerning the description of networks as “tactical”, Michel de Certeau has written extensively on the topics of strategy and tactics in reading the daily practices of consumers, finding in them the mechanisms of evading the dominant regime, and pointing out that “tactics of the *weak* within the order established by the *strong* lead to politicisation of everyday practice” (de Certeau 2003: 38). In the practices of daily life de Certeau believes that “the space of a tactic is the space of the other” (de Certeau 2003: 40). This is a type of social practice where the application of tactics enables manoeuvre interventions and actions against the entity that is located on the opposite side, and opposes the dominant order. Tactical interventions that de Certeau found in practices of everyday life are also applied to numerous actions of civil disobedience and they are an inevitable part of the culture. For the fight and the resistance to the ruling procedures to be possible and effective, transformative and pervasive, it is necessary to carry out the mobilisation of resources (material and human), to establish an

organisational structure (the fourth feature) that will be based on “communication and management principles, regulations and protocols” (ibid.). Within the networks, The most common activities exchange of information and the encouragement and initiation of direct program and project cooperation between independent actors in the field; strengthening the capacity of organisations for programming and organisational management, (which often includes an intensive exchange of experiences) and improving skills and knowledge in specific areas among member organisations.

For example, Clubture Network was founded in 2002 in Zagreb as a collaborative platform for organisations and informal initiatives of independent culture in Croatia with the goal of decentralisation of the cultural production in the country, which was to be accomplished through a model (created specifically for the network) of exchange of programs between different organisations and environments, as well as their cooperation on certain projects. In the first five years of the network’s activity, eighty organisations from all over the country participated in the linkage, and “over a hundred programs have been realised, with over a thousand diverse public events which have taken place in more than fifty towns” (Višnić 2007: 15). Until the emergence of Clubture (Savez udruga Klubtura), Croatian “independent culture” was fragmented, i.e. there was no cohesion between organisations. With the establishment of Clubture²⁴ in 2002, a network on the national level was formed, and Croatian independent culture started to function as a scene. Although the associated organisations are diverse in their programs and management, for the first time in the country's history, their networking denoted a creation of the critical mass of organisations that find the mutual denominator in the application of similar models of action and common problems, which originate from their position in the entire cultural system. Given the diversity and variety of contents, topics, cultural activities and artistic expressions which are present among the independent organisations participating in the cultural field, as well as their fragmentation, the establishment

organisational structure with clear procedures and protocols and to firmly set the requirements and raise awareness of the political influence in the negotiation process.

²⁴ According to the Clubture’s Statute (2002), the network’s goals are clearly defined as: “to create conditions for program and project connections between participants of the independent cultural scene in Croatia and the region; to advocate the cultural policy measures which serve the stability of the independent scene in Croatia; to increase the visibility of the independent cultural scene in Croatia and internationally” and “to secure a continuous transfer of values, knowledge and skills to the participants of the independent cultural scene in Croatia and the region.” Further on, the fields of the network’s activity are: “the development of cooperation between organisations of independent culture and youth culture in Croatia and the region; advocacy within the Cultural Policy, Youth Policy and other related policies” and “development of the capacity of civil society organisations in the fields of culture and youth in Croatia.” (Clubture 2002 np.).

of the Clubture Network is considered to be the first relevant actuating pulse in the formation of the scene of “independent culture” on a national level, because those who share similar views, organisational and functioning manners connect and fight a mutual battle for the betterment of their positions. With Clubture in their platform, the Policy Forum Network assumed “an important role in strengthening the influence of this scene and defining national and local cultural policies” (Višnić 2007: 11).

Clubture also played a vital role in linking the organisations of emerging cultures on a regional level which, out of initial intention to create a stable financial framework for program exchange in the region, overgrew into advocacy activities in the field of cultural policies on European and regional levels. Similar efforts emerged across the region such as Asociacija, Association of Arts and Culture NGOs and Freelancers in Ljubljana²⁵, Association Independent Culture Scene²⁶ of Serbia in Belgrade and Jadro – Association of The Independent Culture Scene in Skopje²⁷ as well as Kooperativa – Regional Platform for Culture, a regional network of organisations and national networks working in the field of independent arts and culture in Southeast Europe (SEE). Besides advocacy platforms, regional network cooperation through platforms such as Balkan Express, Balkan Dance Platform, Nomad Dance Academy and East Dance Academy was an educational, institutional and production framework that largely made

²⁵ Asociacija, the Association of Arts and Culture NGOs and Freelancers in Ljubljana, is an organisation based in Ljubljana, Slovenia, that represents and advocates for the interests of arts and culture non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and freelancers. The association serves as a platform for collaboration, networking, and professional development among its members, who span across various artistic disciplines and fields. Asociacija plays a crucial role in promoting the value of arts and culture in Slovenian society, advocating for policies and funding that support the sustainability and growth of the arts and culture sector, and fostering a vibrant and diverse cultural ecosystem in Ljubljana and beyond. With the aim of capacity building in the local context, the programme activities of the Asociacija include the Service programme unit for network members, non-governmental organisations as well as self-employed cultural workers in the field of culture. Within this programme, administrators of service conduct workshops and video interviews with experts from different fields, as well as in person counselling and mentorship programmes. Service also provides answers to questions related to the legal framework and key topics in the field of policies for culture and arts in Slovenia (Asociacija 2023: np).

²⁶ The Association Independent Culture Scene of Serbia (Nezavisna kulturna scena Srbije or NKSS) in Belgrade is a non-profit organisation that represents the interests of the independent cultural sector in Serbia. NKSS acts as a platform for cooperation, advocacy, and support for independent cultural organisations and initiatives in Serbia. It aims to promote and protect the freedom of artistic expression, diversity, and sustainability in the cultural sector, and advocates for favourable conditions for the development of the independent cultural scene through policy and legislative changes, capacity-building, and networking. NKSS plays a crucial role in promoting the independent cultural scene in Serbia and fostering its position within the broader cultural landscape of the country (NKSS 2022: np).

²⁷ Jadro – Association of The Independent Culture Scene in Skopje represents and advocates for the interests of independent cultural organisations and initiatives in North Macedonia. It had aims to "establish a critical and constructive dialogue regarding the implementation of progressive, inclusive and democratic policies and practices in culture and within the civil society sector and beyond" as well as to "stimulate culture as a constant process of dynamic, heterogeneous ideas, identities, and formats of artistic expression" (Jadro 2022: np).

contemporary dance visible and self-evident. In recent research by Karaulić and Letunić, the authors concluded that exchange of knowledge, skills and experiences among the independent cultural organisations in the region often results in better overcoming of obstacles they face in their daily work and, thus, increase their resilience. At the same time, the unified values that guide these organisations contribute to cultural democratisation in the region by applying inclusive, solidary, participatory models built into their organisational procedures (2022: 49). Similarly, while elaborating on the sustainability of the independent cultural sector in the post-Yugoslav region that promotes such cultural diversity, former president of European Cultural Foundation, Gottfried Wagner, claimed it was built “through ‘deep’ networking” (Wagner 2013 np).

5.2.4.3. Challenges and precarity

In the post- Yugoslav countries, employees of public art organisations are considered public servants, whilst those working in the independent art sector are either self-employed or sole proprietors/business owners. Unlike in the free socialist education system and the public health system, new generations of independent artists now live in precarious employment, either as sole proprietors/entrepreneurs or as self-employed workers who compete with one another on the market for artistic (or other types of precarious) labour. Dragojević interprets this disproportionate support between the public sector on one side and the non-institutional sector (profit and non-profit) on the other as the lack of "the establishment of a legislative framework that would ensure the stability of the entire cultural system on a long-term basis" (Dragojević 2006: 209).

According to the study by “The Centre for the Empirical Cultural Studies of South-East Europe (CESK) conducted in 2015 and 2016, cultural workers in the post-Yugoslav region belong to the group of professions, especially in the case of freelancers. The results of the studies from 2015, show that their average monthly income in Slovenia was 903 €, in North Macedonia was 380 €, Serbia 324 €, in Montenegro 255 €, in Bosnia and Herzegovina 230 €. In the post-Yugoslav region, cultural workers are among the low paid professions, particularly freelancers. According to the research' findings from 2015, the average monthly income was 903 euros in Slovenia, 380 euros in North Macedonia, 324 euros in Serbia, 255 euros in

Montenegro, and 230 euros in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Further on, the independent cultural workers in SEE, between 60% and 90% of respondents said they do not have fixed working hours, meaning they frequently worked longer than 8 hours (50%). Also, between 30% and 50% of respondents have regularly or always worked nights, while between 50% and 60% work weekends, between 40% and 50% during holidays, and between 40% and 70% of respondents do not receive compensation for their overtime. Further on in 2010, „Asociacija - Association of Arts and Culture NGOs and Self- Employed“, an advocacy organisation from Slovenia, conducted a comparative study between self-employed performing artists and those who were employed in a public theatre in Ljubljana. The survey showed a 40% lower income for self-employed artists in addition to severe inequalities in social protection (Apostol 2015: 12).

The situation has only gotten worse and the precarious status of cultural workers has become more insecure as a result of the Covid19 crisis. According to a more recent study (CESK 2022: 19), the average monthly income has decreased and continued declining since the start of the crisis. To be more precise, the average monthly loss in Montenegro was about 120 €, in Serbia 210 €, BiH 260 €, Croatia 470 €, Macedonia 280 €, and in Slovenia 530 €. As these funds most often don't cover the costs of their productions, independent performing arts workers often compensate with their own and other people's volunteer work, taking on and carrying out multiple roles in the productions, investing their own money, receiving financial support from parents or partners, receiving help and free labour from friends and co-workers, as well as working with whatever is available, all of which primarily require them to alter their aesthetic choices in their artistic work (Gojić and Banich 2018: 18).

Another research²⁸ commissioned by the network “Kooperativa– Regional Platform for Culture” mapped the main challenges for the independent cultural sector in the region, including independent performing arts organisations (Karaulić and Letunić 2022: 40). The challenges start with different concepts of funding and thus disagreements with the criteria of funders, in the context of a mixed fundraising model. Further on, the organisations mention lack of financial capacity for development and further professionalisation of organisations, in

²⁸ The research co-authored by the author of this thesis has been conducted within the „Regional Lab: New Culture Spaces and Networks as Drivers of an Innovative and Sustainable Bottom-up Development“ project, coordinated by the Kooperativa– Regional Platform for Culture. Regional Lab: New Culture Spaces and Networks as Drivers of an Innovative and Sustainable Bottom-up Development of Regional Cooperation (REG.LAB) project is coordinated by the Kooperativa platform. Therefore, this chapter contains a part of the research results.

terms of human and spatial resources, as this shortcoming demonstrates the complexity of parallel application processes to different donors. There is also an awareness of the overwhelming bureaucratization of work processes since, due to the small number of employees in the organisations, these work processes affect the possibility of creating initiatives and services intended to increase their professional capacities, joint project cooperation, etc. From the perspective of funding, the organisations point out the frequent lack of continuous support for the implementation of major and long-term programs that foster cooperation between them, so they are exposed to challenges that include negotiating with and adjusting to funding policies, their missions and visions, management and reporting methods (especially for EU projects) which additionally affects the bureaucratization of work processes.

An insurmountable issue continues to be the lack of work, production, and presentation space available to independent culture and the civil society sector as a whole since spaces available to mostly remain limited to a number of squatted, abandoned or rental properties. On the other hand, the limited number of venues that independent culture gained access to in the 2000s have been insufficient and inadequate to accommodate the needs of a large number of actors and their diverse activities. The independent cultural scene is continuously tackling the problem of space through collective effort, by creating shared-used models in an effort to maximise accessibility (Pogon in Zagreb, Jadro centre in Skopje, Magacin in Belgrade, Stara Elektrarna in Ljubljana, OKC Abrašević in Mostar etc). There are lobbying efforts taking on around the region with municipal governments to reclaim some of the areas that were initially abandoned during the privatisation processes of the 1990s. Observing the challenges in the functioning of organisations shifts the focus to unfavourable external socio-political, economic, legal and other factors that affect the capacities for sustainability and development of the organisations. This conclusion is accompanied by the finding of an evident lack of space for advocacy in the context of implementing practical public policies in the field of culture.

5.2.4.4. Social security and advocacy associations

When discussing an inner reconstruction of south-eastern Europe, Čopič (2011) claimed its key is a strong state and the strong civil society model, achieved through advocacy as a form of action. Several studies, such as the one on bottom-up cultural policy by Višnić and Dragojević (2007), elaborate on how the independent cultures had to uphold an effective flow of advocacy in order to reach out to the public and enter the public discourse. Inadequate financial, organisational, and professional conditions for the work of the participants in the independent cultural sector that are, as already mentioned, the key drivers of their engagement in cultural policy and their articulation of, more or less, precisely worded requests for specific changes.

According to Karaulić and Letunić (2022: 34), independent scene in the region has an active role in processes that include joint efforts in dialogue with decision-makers (national and international), and impact on potential institutional changes and visibility in the cultural field in relation to the systemic improvement of their structural working conditions, i.e. improvement of capacity for participation in policymaking and advocacy in the field of culture. By collecting and implementing the acquired knowledge and experience, the organisations contribute to solving challenges in the context of public action in the interest of the scene and formulating recommendations for decision-makers in the field of practical public policies. In advocacy processes, networks focus on systemic problems that affect the entire non-governmental sector and the self-employed individuals in the culture, and actively participate by forming proposals for the decision-making processes, regulations and new legal acts concerning the field of culture and art. In doing so, they start a permanent struggle against conservatism and open up a new area of social engagement, they are looking for a different type of social communication, and they are striving for free expression of diverse views, adhering to the principles that are based on the language of solidarity and inclusion, i.e. of openness towards the Other, the different, the minorities and the marginalised. Owing to the participation in the production of discourse on cultural policy, “they moved the system in a direction where the cultural field of action included also their activities where the values they represent became the values of the entire system, where their working methods and topics were recognized as legitimate in the field of culture”, or “by dealing with cultural policies, they

realised the possibility of dealing with culture” (Mišković 2011: 38). This resulted in new venues for the production and presentation; new financial support mechanisms for the independent scene; and legislation enabling independent culture to be acknowledged as a political subjectivity. However, the fact that they are involved in the cultural system also as a separate category does not “necessarily mean the fulfilment of all benefits arising from that status” (Mišković 2011: 38). Thus, as advocacy platforms, organisations often encounter conscious exclusion by decision-makers from discussions on relevant issues, which further affects the possibilities of the organisations’ influence on raising the capacity of the independent cultural sector as an important agent of change in society.

Regarding the legislation was mostly introduced during the transition, “Decree on self-employed professionals in culture” in Slovenia, the “Law on the Rights of Self-employed Artists” in Serbia and the "Law on the Rights of Independent Artists and the Promotion of Cultural and Artistic Creativity" in Croatia all regulate the status of self-employed persons in the cultural sector including their health, pension, tax exemption and disability insurance. On the other hand, in North Macedonia the distinction between independent professional and amateur artists is still absent from the “Law on Culture” (Compendium 2023: np). It should be highlighted, nonetheless, that all these regulations organise the social security of artists in a way that considers their artistic achievements and how significant their creativity is to the development of the national culture. The artistic labour of cultural workers who are not full-time employees has changed from the state-funded and socially protected art and culture sector of the socialist era to entrepreneurial work that is socially protected and economically evaluated only on the basis of the level of creative and artistic productivity. Therefore, the independent artists are the most socially vulnerable group of artists and cultural workers, which is prompting more and more public reactions and protests. The wage disparity between independent artists in various professions and artistic fields, which the existing laws and regulations do not sufficiently address, is undoubtedly a specific social problem resulting from this system. Additionally, when the legal and financial aspects of the status of independent artists are considered, this area of art policy is typically seen as a foreign element that belongs to the umbrella of social welfare rather than cultural policies (Lukić 2005: 106).

Advocacy activities lead also to creation of a new participatory governed venues as well as support mechanisms aimed specifically towards to the independent cultural sector such as

Kultura Nova Foundation²⁹ in Croatia. Establishment of new venues has been tightly tied to advocacy actions in the field of urban policies, since the gathered independent cultural actors also recognize the necessity of initiating changes at the level of content and procedures in the adoption and implementation of national and local public policies affecting the sector. This has also resulted in This study examines cultural movements related to the governance of public space, corruption in public governance for private interests, and the exclusion of citizens in spatial planning processes such the “Coloured Revolution” (*Šarena revolucija*) in Skopje, to the “We Won’t Let Belgrade D[r]own” (*Ne da(vi)mo Beograd*) and “Right to the City” (*Pravo na grad*) in Zagreb.

For example, Pogon - Centre for Independent Culture and Youth was established in Zagreb based on the agreement between the City of Zagreb and Alliance Operation City³⁰ according to which the founders make key decisions together under a civil-public partnership model. Its objective is to offer reliable services for the production, presentation, and promotion of independent contemporary art and cultural practises. Additionally, the centre aims to encourage the active involvement of young people in cultural and other activities in Zagreb. Nevertheless, the context within which Pogon operates is less than optimal; still, it serves as an exemplar of a potential collaboration between the civic and political realms. It also inspired the establishment of the Jadro Centre in Skopje by a national advocacy network “Jadro – Association of the independent cultural scene” in North Macedonia that was established in 2012 with the aim of mobilising the interests of organisations and individuals within the

²⁹ The aim of the Kultura Nova Foundation is to support and develop civil society as an additional measure within the system of financing culture in the Republic of Croatia, specifically in the areas of contemporary arts and culture. The Kultura Nova Foundation has been established as an independent foundation dedicated to the civil sector in culture, following years of successful collaboration among various civil society organisations and initiatives that advocated for its establishment. The Croatian Government and the Ministry of Culture have acknowledged and endorsed the initiative, providing ongoing support for the Foundation's continued development (Kultura Nova Foundation 2023: np).

³⁰ Formerly called Alliance for Independent Culture and Youth centre and today Alliance Operation City in Zagreb includes 27 members, gathered around the mission of advocacy and developing innovation in participatory management in culture with the aim of strengthening and improving the working conditions of independent culture and youth organisations. Operation City is implementing projects whose main goal is to apply the concepts of democratisation of public resource management in the direction of a public sector reform. The concept of participatory governance in the field of culture seeks to improve the development of public cultural policy based on the participation of citizens and civil society in the management of local socio-cultural centres. In this manner, it is strengthening the principles of transparency, reducing corruption, and positions the model of public resource management at the centre for the local community in which organisations operate. Various mechanisms and activities, including field research, analysis and mapping of socio-cultural activities, influence the development of knowledge and skills in the context of innovative models of cultural governance (Operation City 2023: np).

independent cultural scene. This hybrid cultural centre has also been governed through a partnership between a public body, namely a municipality of Skopje, and a civil society organisation, specifically Jadro association which ensures the involvement and inclusion of stakeholders from the cultural sphere.

Although still rare, these new venues have also become a means of new governance methods which enhance community-based approaches, i.e., participatory governance or "sharing authority, rights and responsibilities in establishing and maintaining culture and governance" (Kultura Nova 2018: 28). Although participatory governance is a model which is still seldom implemented in its full potential within the post-Yugoslav region, participation presents a framework that does not operate as a binary but rather as a continuum of varied gradations and nuances.

These new venues can serve only part of the needs of the independent performing arts scene due to limited capacities, which results in precarious working conditions especially in contemporary dance due to a lack of recognition of the field by the public authorities. For example, the former Mayor of Zagreb made a decision in 2016 that provoked a number of reactions regarding the allocation of premises of Zagreb Dance Centre, the only venue in Croatia that has been specifically designed and intended for the field of contemporary dance, to the Zagreb Youth Theatre. The absorption of the Zagreb Dance Centre by the Zagreb Youth Theatre resulted in the loss of autonomy of contemporary dance. In response to the mayor's contentious decision, the Croatian Dance Artists Association conducted a research and advocacy project titled "Keep Dance Autonomous 007-017", which aimed to summarise the past decade of dance. As per the official website (UPUH 2019: np), the project examines the art of the past decade through the lens of marginalised history on one hand, and an analysis of the circumstances and structural factors involved in working with different settings on the other. The project encompassed a variety of workshops, plenary sessions, and events with the objective of fostering cohesion within the dance community and, most importantly, a 90-day boycott of the annexed Zagreb dance centre initiated by members of UPUH (Croatian Dancers Association). Although Zagreb Dance Centre is still a part of Zagreb Youth Theatre, with the radical change of city government, advocacy processes for the autonomy of dance continued in the meantime on a more constructive level. This is unfortunately not true for similar advocacy processes in the rest of the region where there is still no development in establishing

a dialogue with the local and national cultural administrations (such as efforts Nomad Dance Advocates described in a chapter above) regarding establishment of participatory governed venues for contemporary dance.

5.3. Mapping of the field: agonistic discussions about conditions of work in the research contexts

During the earliest phase of the empirical research, ethnographic fieldwork was used as a method in order to inform, among other, the selection of case studies. With the aim of identifying the key issues regarding the precarious conditions of work and resistance strategies in the independent performing arts scene in Europe, several cultural conferences, seminars, advocacy events and performing arts festivals and meetings were participated in, most of them being listed in the introductory chapter. Among those, two events were chosen to be presented in a more detailed description within this chapter with the aim of illustrating the array of issues connected to the research topics, as well as for providing arguments towards new policy measures in the final chapters of the thesis.

These gatherings were chosen for two reasons. Firstly, they both bring together a multiplicity of artists, curators, and cultural policy workers who are diversely situated (professionally, culturally and politically) and do not usually engage in dialogue. This brings the understanding of these gatherings close to what Mouffe calls agonistic pluralism (200), i.e., an approach that places emphasis on the value of conflict to politics. Secondly, the events provide meaningful overviews of the old and new concerns raised by precarious conditions of work, (such as the inequalities of structural conditions, lack of financial and material resources etc) in the two main contexts of this research: post-Yugoslav region (and the Balkans) as well as Germany³¹.

³¹ It should be noted that more extensive versions of the reflections on these gathering were published in *An Untimely Book: Critical Practice (Made in Yugoslavia) 3* (collection of texts by Balona, A.; Fourtouni, N.; Georgiev, A.; Gojić, N.; Letunić, A.; Söderhult, E.; Szucs, A.) by Lokomotiva – Centre for New Initiatives in Arts and Culture from Skopje in 2018.

The first gathering was “Dance vs Circumstances”, an event hosted by Dachverband Tanz Deutschland, Tanzbüro Berlin, Zeitgenössischer Tanz Berlin e.V. within the framework of a contemporary dance festival Tanznacht Berlin in August 2016. Tanznacht Berlin is a biennial festival started by Tanzfabrik Berlin in 2000 with the aim of presenting work from dance artists based in Berlin. With a different curator for each edition, it experiments with both artistic and discursive formats in a dialogue with the local community of artists. Within this event, there were four rounds of talks on working methods and production conditions in contemporary dance with choreographers, curators, researchers, journalists and politicians based in Germany and Western Europe.

The second gathering was Nomad Dance Advocates, an initiative of the Nomad Dance Academy, a platform for contemporary dance in the Balkan area. Through different horizontal and decentralised models of self-organisation, Nomad Dance Academy has a strong influence on the development of the regional contemporary dance field. Unlike ‘membership networks’, NDA is a collaborative and tactical network (with partners from Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Sofija, Skopje and Zagreb) which established new organisations that took over the role of partners and organisers of the network. NDA thus empowered organisations in the field of contemporary dance through experimentation with different models and forms of self-organisation which had a role in reconnecting as well as creating new connections in the region. The network practises a unique horizontal system of decision making based on responsibility and trust, which has impacted different areas of collaboration, exchange, capacity building, mutual support, and advocacy in the field of contemporary dance.

5.3.1. Dance as a Circumstance gathering (Berlin): discursive tensions

In the context of the rising precariousness of Berlin’s contemporary dance scene, as well as its influence on production processes, it seemed only sensible to programme a symposium on working methods and production conditions as a part of the ninth Tanznacht festival in Berlin end of August 2016. The three-hour symposium “Dance vs. Circumstances” was structured as four rounds of talks where speakers were grouped by their professional orientation: artists,

curators, writers and a cultural policy maker, each of whom had a presentation limited to 15 minutes, with only the last session being followed up by a short discussion with the audience. Although the four different discourses are indeed porous and there is an interaction between them, this format made it difficult not to notice how some discourses make it virtually impossible to think outside of their basic postulates due to the hegemony of the discursive formation of the market.

Journalist Astrid Kaminski, moderator of the symposium, started the encounter with a call for self-reflection: “We need consciousness of what we're doing here!” During her introduction several loosely connected issues were raised in this spirit of a “permanent state of emergency” (Agamben, 2002). Kaminski warned about the scene sometimes being “too solipsistic and egoistic while not enabling enough space for critical awareness due to too much mutual dependency” i.e. precarious conditions of work. Consequently, she proposed thinking about the possible conditions for creating criticality. Another relevant issue brought up during her introduction was one of accessibility: “Whether art is for the chosen ones or it should be open for everybody?” In the array of dissonances laid out during the symposium, there were various responses to these subjects as well as propositions of other concerns.

While communicating the responses of the speakers, this chapter will try to disentangle the appearance of the discursive formation of the market – which signifies a post-political situation – wrapped around the presented topics. In addition to commenting on the symposium itself, this reflection will revolve around numerous fragmented and dichotomized issues while, hopefully, serving as one of the markers of a need for a deeper, antagonistic discussion.

5.3.1.1. Poiesis vs Praxis

The first participants, who were invited to propose any issues they considered most relevant, were the choreographers Jasna L. Vinovrški (Berlin/Zagreb), Martin Stiefermann (Berlin) and Andrea Božić (Amsterdam/Zagreb).

Jasna L. Vinovrški expressed her concerns in the form of a letter addressed to the “beautiful, powerful dance community”, which she associates with a feeling of belonging. In the letter, she confides in us regarding neuralgic aspects of the scene: the lack of financing that pushes

artists to work abroad in the residency system and the “loss of the source of creativity due to running between projects”. While the latter has been heavily discussed as self-exploitation in project-oriented cognitive capitalism (see Kunst, 2015), Vinovrški mentions a problem that hasn’t been elaborated on nearly so often: what she formulates as “self-organisation for selfish reasons”. This motive will continuously reappear during the symposium and therefore receive more elaboration in this reflection.

While Vinovrški partially employs the discourse of fatigue when mentioning the work of organising and curating, Andrea Božić considers doing “everything as a part of an artwork”. In proposing so, she views the gaps in infrastructure as an invitation to change the modes of production. Božić mentioned examples of her own self-organised work such as BAU, TILT, SPECTRA and the “Come Together festival. While also inviting the dichotomy of “artist in the studio” and “artist as citizen” into the discussion, she makes a pledge for the “reorganisation of infrastructures, as well as affects”. From the position of a self-organised cultural worker, she perceives several problems in the field: standardisation of the arts and the “impossibility to acknowledge diversity”, non-suitable quantitative criteria for evaluation of the arts and the big gap between project and institutional funding.

In my understanding, these recurring issues are all a manifestation of the pervasive dominance of economic reason in the arts today. To be more precise, the commodification of the arts demands reduction of arts’ cultural value to an economic value, while policies reproduce that logic by shifting attention from state subsidy to market survival, which ultimately leads to the unsustainability of “unpopular” artistic practices in the cultural field. What remains for discussion is how some of the practices that promote oppositional political content are appropriated and taken over by exploitative interests, such as the “self-organisation for selfish reasons” mentioned by Vinovrški. The phenomenon of curating and collaboration out of economic necessity, that I would like to call pragmatic solidarity, marks something of a contradiction to organisational culture since it is simultaneously employing post-socialist discourse and neoliberal strategies of work.

Due to all these issues, both Vinovrški and Božić are calling for change, as are most of the speakers of the symposium. Still, during the talks, the ideas of the “artists exhausting themselves with non-artistic work” and “getting out of the passive artist’s role” will be

repeatedly brought up. Unfortunately, to binarize poiesis and praxis in this way seems to contradict the demand for change, as it has long been recognized that the borders between them in today's capitalist society are deeply blurred. To be more precise, artistic production and creation (poiesis) is today inevitably entwined with the political activity of the artists as free citizens (praxis), especially when "dealing with its own conditions of work, which accompany the performing arts as their 'political unconscious'" (Vujanovic, 2011). Therefore, as if the political had never become conscious, calling the artist's role "passive" seems influenced by the modernist image of an artist as a "genius" in isolation from society and, in my view, risks oversimplifying the discussion by enabling the spectacularity of that image, as it stems from the discursive formation of the market.

5.3.1.2. Instrumental vs. Intrinsic

The second round of the discussion featured the curators and programmers Heike Albrecht (Berlin), Annemie Vanackere (Berlin) and Ash Bulayev (Athens/New York).

At the beginning of her presentation, Heike Albrecht pledged for a "more equal distribution of public money". In that regard, it is important to mention a policy measure of participatory budgeting that would facilitate her request: the situation where the members of the community directly (or through delegates) assume decision-making power in the distribution of public funds. Unlike this straightforward demand, another perspective on culture she proposed seems somewhat problematic: "Culture can be viewed as a strategy to enliven the city like the European Capital of Culture examples show us". ECoC is a project that is supposed to contribute to the strengthening of the European identity while having a significant economic impact; which makes it a well-known example of convergence of economic and cultural goals, i.e. the instrumentalisation of culture. Ultimately, that kind of logic leads to the valorization of culture only from an economic viewpoint. At the end of her presentation, Albrecht's call for the end of "the application culture" was welcomed with an applause, which underlined the fatigue caused by "project culture" and a need for a more structural funding, possibly within a participative decision-making process.

Annemie Vanackere warned about the importance of cultural political work in finding a balance between the roles of institutions and independent initiatives in the art scene. She uses

the term “ecology of an art landscape” that Markussen (2010) defines as “the complex interdependencies that shape the demand for and production of arts and cultural offerings”. In relation to this ecology, she emphasises the need for the mapping of positions but it remains unclear what would be the aim of this mapping. Since mapping is a primarily descriptive research tool, it appears as fairly neutral if not directed toward a particular, more defined action. Vanackere responds to the title of the symposium with a different one: dance with circumstances instead of dance versus circumstances. Although this change of (pre)positions implies a particular adaptation to the “unchangeable system” (capitalism as the only possible system of work), she advocates for a new form of solidarity. Again, without proper contextualization and implementation, the new form of solidarity might end up just being a motive appropriated to serve as one of the many ambiguities of the contemporary “marketplace of ideas”.

Ash Bulayev offered a more detailed overview of the areas where the symptoms of the neoliberal discursive formation are blatantly visible. He starts his speech with a quote from a cultural sociologist Pascal Gielen: “Artists are international or nobodies; curators are connected or nobodies” and right away emphasises the relevance that strategies of internationalisation and networking have for the art world at work. He then mentions “dance entering the museum” which could also be interpreted as the symptom of art market expansion, as well as the proliferation of intermediary organisations and networks in the performing arts field, which reproduce the NGO logic. Further on, by mentioning how the Culture 2000-2007, a European Union programme that had a priority of intercultural dialogue and artist mobility, “pushed the artists to work in a different way”, Bulayev shifted focus to the impact of cultural policy on programming strategies and modes of production. Finally, he makes a case for shrinking the discrepancy between national policies that impact the division between international and local artists; investments in production as well as presentation and rethinking the quantitative measures of arts evaluation.

These last points, in my view, seem to be in strong connection: while the culture of presentation and attention paid to the demands of spectators is developing more and more, the emphasis on financing the artistic production is seriously lacking. The care for the spectator, reflected in the current cultural political priority of “audience development”, is in accordance with contemporary populist politics. It praises arts and culture in a utilitarian manner which,

ultimately, leads to the impossibility of the arts to confirm its own generic value as art – rather only in the spheres of economy, society, politics – meaning it always has to be valorised through another logic.

5.3.1.3. Projective vs Institutional

The third part of the symposium consisted of the presentations by the authors Dorion Weickmann (Berlin), Kirsten Maar (Berlin) and Bojana Kunst (Gießen/Ljubljana).

Dorion Weickmann warned about the dance practitioners being “too busy with internal problems and artistic concerns rather than the public ones”. Her observation relates to the poiesis/praxis dichotomy established in the discourse around the artists, as well as to Kaminski’s statement in the introduction about the scene being “too solipsistic”. She notes another issue that was posed in the introduction: “Dance as an art form is made for the audience and should be understandable to everyone”. Again, there is a certain focus on reception by the audience in the overall discussion, now having to do with the matter of accessibility. I believe it is important to express the complexity of this issue, since the framework of “what is understandable to everyone” could lead to the perpetuation of standardized content at the cost of the emergence of new artistic paradigms. What Weickmann recommends that if “we want diversity in the audience and not only on stage” the solution is to “offer content beyond the limits of contemporary dance and ballet”. Still, it is possible that this focus on the audience is coming from the discourse of this (economic) justification for the arts, which, again, has a consequence, that programmers might take greater care of their audiences than of the artists with whom they collaborate.

Kirsten Maar, whose presentation began with the discourse of collaboration, also points to the problem of collaboration being motivated by economic needs i.e. pragmatic solidarity. The recurrence of this puzzle in the discussion, in my opinion, only points to the fragility of the ideology of solidarity in the face of pervasive market reasoning and calls for more dialogue on these complex political questions of being together, thereby making contemporary dance a relevant space for discussing current social-political concerns. One of the issues Maar wants to interrogate is sustainability in collaboration: “How do we work together on the long-term level”, or beyond the project’s timeframe, and how do we make contributions “beyond

institutions”?. She re-formulates her question even more broadly, asking the audience how can we “work beyond cognitive capitalism” in conditions where “artistic research gets more and more institutionalised”? Maar poses questions in a way that reveals her understanding of the institution as a fixed category, which makes for a valuable introduction for Bojana Kunst’s presentation, as she lays out a different perspective on the topic.

Namely, Bojana Kunst thinks it is important to conceive of “institutions from a temporal perspective, not approached as facts but as potential processes”. She observes a challenge in the simultaneous process of performing the institution and resisting the very process of it and asks: “What do we lose if we win in the process of institutionalisation?” Institutions supporting dance, she continues, are especially interesting to capitalism: in the nineties there was an overall economization of the arts and the discovery of Eastern Europe, then the rise of support for the highly educated and nomadic grew in a continuous search for young artists until, finally, we are now being governed by continuous fear of insecurity, i.e. precarization. Kunst reflects on ways to reach rearrangements between politics, economy and value and suggests “a radical shift in temporal dimension” through a “restorative dedication to present time”, in contrast to the tensions of project logic and its projective time. It is important to mention this might be an important layer of the “reorganisation of the affective” Božić appealed for at the beginning of the symposium. Towards the end of her presentation, Kunst asks questions that conclude not only her presentation, but, in my opinion, underline the variety of fragmented issues exposed during the whole event: “How to rethink the knot between cultural politics, cultural value and cultural production? How do we produce artistic value? And how are artistic, aesthetic values created in society?”

5.3.1.4. Arts vs Creative

The fourth and the final part of the symposium was hosted by Sabine Bangert (Berlin), cultural policy maker from the Green Party (Die Grünen), and was the only one accompanied with a short discussion between the speaker and the audience.

Coming from a decision-making environment, Bangert warned about the Berlin politicians not understanding “dance as a separate art form”, but perceiving it “as subsumed in performing arts and doing so great that nothing needs to be done”. That is, of course, in dissonance with

the array of imbalances other speakers previously mentioned, some of which Bangert reiterates in her presentation. Again, it is the lack of institutional funding for independent dance organisations in Berlin that makes “working conditions in dance unacceptable”. Since there is “no possibility in Berlin to develop smaller productions”, a misbalance occurs in relation to the number of graduates in the field of dance from schools such as the Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin. Besides the deficit of space to show productions, Bangert warns about the lack of time, as well, and proposes the implementation of a law that enables artists to have “the possibility to develop something in five years, since one or two years of funding are not sufficient”. Also, following The Greens’ focus on social sustainability, she calls for “funding bodies to implement minimum wages”. As a pathway to resolving these issues, she proposes dialogue with the government and cultural institutions “to arrive at long-term funding for the independent scene” as well as to reallocate the funds lost due to the “complexity of the application system”, i.e. bureaucratization. Bangert stays pragmatic in saying that, while advocating for more funds, “this demand has to be somehow justified to the politicians”. To justify, she would use the argument of culture as an “economic force which has extreme advantages for Berlin and is good for society” while opposing culture becoming a market with neoliberal tendencies in financing. In the struggle for better conditions of work and a stable dance house, Bangert claims “artists achieved a lot in the last five years in the political field, there is not much more to be done by the scene and it is up to the politicians now”. This mindset might also stem from the established dichotomy of poiesis and praxis since, at the end, she claims that: “When artists exhaust themselves in political work, the artwork suffers”.

In the short discussion after this presentation, initial comments reflected on the change of the artists’ language towards the funders since they feel “they almost have to beg and are treated as children”. In my view, the language currently adopted in the cultural sector by the funding systems in Europe, is defective not just because it fails to provide an adequate means of talking about culture, but because it is a language of dependency and supplication that fosters relations of inequality. Although the other sectors (such as the army) are also funded by the citizens’ tax, only the arts are described as a subsidised sector, being not-for-profit (if we define profit in an economic sense). Another audience member continues down this line of reasoning saying that “we have strong tendencies towards neoliberalism in the arts but art and culture are not a market”. Bangert replied to the malcontented statement that “everything we do points in the direction of creative economy” by saying that she as cultural policy maker “fought against

the ‘creative economy’, but other politicians let it pass”. It seems, I would add, the expansion of the market discursive formation is candidly visible in the way we name our policies: first there were arts policies, then the cultural policies and now, finally, we have the creative policies.

The third comment from the audience offered a short overview of the development of the dance scene in Berlin saying that “forty years ago in Berlin there were just ballet and opera; then Tanzfabrik came in to being with no money and a lot of engagement of the artists”, therefore, pointing to the relevance of artists’ praxis. The speaker continued saying that “in the 80s, scene changed by inventing the job of producer, firstly in Amsterdam and Brussels” and claimed that “this position should be more important again” since there are also “lots of big spaces in Berlin that are free most of the time”. She also implicitly describes a manifestation of the impact of cultural policy on aesthetics, by mentioning that “we have to allow artists to work until the end, not this short way – then people will be convinced it is an art form”. Although the discussion with the audience started become almost antagonistic, it was interrupted due to the predetermined- timeframe of the symposium.

5.3.1.5. Praxis vs Post-political

In conclusion, Kaminski stressed the need for more discussion since the “conditions are changing”. Considering that the format of the symposium left a very short time for dialogue, it seems the antagonism that “forms the essence of the political” (Mouffe as cited in Kunst, 2015) was constricted. Or, as Kunst stated when comparing the political stance of the artists to the ones of contemporary creative industries: “...they articulate their ideas by forming contexts and communicative social situations in advance, where particular relations can take place safely and without antagonism; this is where temporary communities can be formed, enabling the participation of different users, as well as the contingent and free-flow of various interests. It therefore seems as though it is actually the prevailing heteronomy that Žižek terms pseudo-activity” (Kunst, 2015). Further on, pseudo-activity produces a lack of real effect in society and marks the main characteristic of the post-political situation.

During the symposium, the invitation for change was often reiterated but still, it seems to belong to the normalised discourse of crisis and, without clarification of its normative relational

system, exists on the verge of becoming drained of meaning. In my view, for the demand for change to achieve a real effect, its politicality should be brought to consciousness. But, due to the establishment of the poiesis vs praxis dichotomy, it seems that a portion of the speakers were still relating to politics as something external to the art. In my belief, in order to achieve the desired change, it is vital to overcome this separation of the artistic work and artists' citizenship activity in society.

An example of such public activity by artists that resulted in interventions into actual social relations happened in Belgrade, shortly before this symposium, in May 2016. Due to contemporary dance in Serbia systemically being pushed to the outer margins of the cultural sector, members of the contemporary dance scene in Serbia sued their Ministry of Culture. Concretely, they demanded the annihilation of the results of the yearly tender for culture due to which nearly half of the budget for dance was given to a private commercial dance festival at the cost of 99% of the local choreographers not being supported for their independent work. The jury who made this decision consisted of three members that do not have any education or experience in contemporary dance; only one of them works in the field of dance in a broader sense- specifically, in classical ballet. Although the dance scene is still waiting for the reaction of the Ministry, this endeavour fostered a broader discussion with the aim of "a public and open dialogue between the independent dance scene and decision-makers in the Republic of Serbia through a long-term advocacy process".

In that sense, this action is an example of how civil society's members are equipped with the power to interpret and to transform the social and political structures within which they interact. In these times of the pervasiveness of the discursive formation of the market, it is necessary to remind ourselves of the role of civil society as the social space of freedom and solidarity, contrasted with the state but not reducible to the market.

Returning to the symposium, few other contradictions mark the situation where the prevailing political articulation is still imposed by the market, besides the recurring issues of the poiesis vs praxis around the discourse of the artist. For example, in proposing to dance with circumstances instead of against them, as the title of the symposium suggests, Vanackere implies certain conciliation with the way things actually are. Yet, such accommodation to the current conditions usually lacks a sense of history. It naturalises the present, forgets the past, and cannot imagine alternative futures. Coming from a similar reasoning, the mentioned

phenomenon of pragmatic solidarity shows the frailty of the ideology of solidarity in the face of the dominant ideology of economic servitude.

In order to abandon political pseudo-activity, it seems requisite to make these different discourses more porous and oriented towards constructing an inter-discursive domain that is emancipated from the dominant ideology of the market, allowing for antagonism and articulations of being together without calculation. In that scenario, dance would not need to be positioned as an entity separated from society and standing either versus or with circumstances. Hence, we can conclude a more powerful version of a highly heterogeneous discussion like this one, would be to recognize dance as a circumstance – as an activity in society – and, accordingly, to explore the grounds for possible cultural resistances that could lead to a more autonomous world of cultural production.

5.3.2. Nomad Dance Advocates gathering (Belgrade): proposals for deprecarization of the field

Over the course of 20th and 21th October 2017, Station Service for contemporary dance in Belgrade hosted a gathering of over sixty policy makers, cultural workers and dance activists from Serbia, the Balkans, Europe and the USA, who addressed new policies for contemporary dance on local, national and regional levels. Nomad Dance Advocates is an initiative of the Nomad Dance Academy, platform for contemporary dance in the Balkan area, created in 2012 as “a permanent program for advocating a more stable position of contemporary dance field in the region”. (NDA 2017: np). Although contemporary dance is one of the most dynamic artistic fields in the region, it still suffers from the lack of basic working conditions and stable support. After meetings in Skopje and Sofia, the NDA gathering “Make room for dance!” has been organised in the space of Magacin, an independent cultural centre in Belgrade, with the intention of imagining and planning for a future where dance will be supported by policies that enable its genuine development.

Marijana Cvetković (Belgrade), cultural producer from Station Service for contemporary dance and Nomad Dance Academy, explained that although the idea of this gathering was to facilitate the understanding of decision makers and public administrators on how this artistic

field works, “there was quite a reluctance from many of them to participate.” Nevertheless, she expressed hope that those who are present “will take this passion from our field with them” and gratitude to all the participants for being there “to play, to talk and to share with us” while advocating for dance.

5.3.2.1. Cultural policy frameworks and potential for change in the field of contemporary dance

In the introduction to the first session, Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski (Skopje), cultural producer from Lokomotiva and Nomad Dance Academy, shortly introduced Prof. Milena Dragičević Šešić (Belgrade), Head of the UNESCO Chair on “Cultural Management and Cultural Policy” and Professor of Cultural Policy and Cultural Management, as an expert who has been “very supportive to the work of the independent scene”. In a dialogue, they proceeded to address the possible ways of using the existing cultural policy frames to develop a stimulating environment for contemporary dance.

In Prof. Dragičević-Šešić’s opinion “in every epoch a certain kind of art takes the lead and, in this moment, it is really contemporary dance”. On the other hand, “cultural policy is, like all public policy, influenced by the routine”, which makes the field of contemporary dance encounter various setbacks. Firstly, contemporary dance has not yet been acknowledged as a specific art form in our region, which is visible in no experts from the field nominated in the ministries (only experts for performing arts). In many cases, theatre is dominating the performing arts field because it contributes to the national cultural identity in a higher level than contemporary dance, which is “often perceived as a global and not a nation specific art form”. Another issue is the neglect of the diversity of art forms when the European policy instruments deal with the working conditions in the arts. In the present policies, great emphasis is put on sustainability as a task “in front of artists, enticing them to become self-sustainable, instead in front of cultural policy to create conditions when art actually could become sustainable”. This is a topic already discussed in chapter 2 which proposes cultural policies are increasingly complicit with evaluation criteria pertaining to the market. Still, in comparison with many other marginalised art fields in the region, the dance field “did a maximum concerning self-organisation and using shared knowledge as a basic resource”. But, Prof. Dragičević-Šešić remarked that the contemporary dance scene (as well as the whole independent scene) has “not succeeded to involve media and to form a critical public opinion

around the dance scene”. To overcome this lack, “it is necessary to find links with other activists in other art sectors and, especially, the public sector”. Since the cultural policies are increasingly supporting those who have commercial success and sponsorship, there are less and less possibilities for research-based art organisations to receive funding. That is the reason “we need to focus on public cultural policies and use the unity of the independent cultural scene to create lasting systemic measures”.

Judging from the experience of Nomad Dance Academy that provided a case for strategies of collaboration and support making an impact on local levels, Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski posed a question about the possibility of systematic measures on the regional level. Prof. Dragičević- Šešić agreed on the impact of strategies of regional collaboration implemented by various organisations (e.g. foundation Kultura Nova, platform Kooperativa and now closed The Balkans Art and Culture Fund), with a reminder that it was the independent scene that first started these collaborations after the breakup of Yugoslavia. Besides continuing those collaborations, another suggestion by Prof. Dragičević- Šešić was to create alliances in the education and research sector, since this might give impetus to “contemporary art to do some more research, as well as greater visibility and more intersectoral collaboration”. Horizon 2020 is a good example of a research programme where such links might be created. Another link that could be created is the one with cultural tourism, since “contemporary art can be understood as intangible heritage”.

The issue of contemporary art as intangible heritage opened up the second part of the session with audience responses from various contexts. For example, Madeline Ritter (Berlin) noted a similar problem exists in Germany, since contemporary dance there is “not perceived as a part of cultural heritage and it is ascribed less value due to having no roots”. Currently, 80% of state funding goes to material cultural heritage (i.e. buildings and museums). Also, in negotiating contemporary dance as intangible cultural heritage, it is relevant to remember that “ascribing dance to a contemporary art field is already an exclusion”. Theo Van Rompay (Brussels) compared cultural policies from his context in Flanders with the French dance field. While in France “there is a much higher number of audiences and contemporary dance artists, all these developments are happening due to top-down policy making”. On the other hand, there is a “very active and organised cultural field in Flanders”, which was able to develop cultural policy measures that were adopted by the government. Another remark is that when

organising the dance field, “it is increasingly vital to think about individuals, besides thinking of structures such as companies”. Since the “performing arts field is tending to resemble more to visual arts in terms of working individually”, we need to come up with different models of organising the public funding. Additionally, it is “amazingly important to advocate for long-term funding in order to have quality planning”, as well as allow time for research. Another strong remark on the topic of strategic alliances came from Bojana Mladenović (Amsterdam). The question posed was “why are we always looking at the models of Western Europe although we observe its enormous crisis”, since there are many other places that share the same struggles, with valuable knowledge and discourses being developed (such as South America and Africa). In contextualising our discussion on “who is standing behind us”, she quotes a performing art theoretician Ana Vujanović by saying that “the contemporary scene needs to start asking; who are we standing behind?” and, thus, reminds us to rethink our alliances.

5.3.2.2. Proposals for dance centres of the future

In order to open up space for various perspectives, the following session was structured as an “imaginary travel to the future of dance”, where several dance artists and activists from the region were invited to dream about the dance centres of the future. This session was intended to produce the desirable scenarios in order to compare them with the existing conditions for dance in the following “reality check” session. Thus, when thinking of a future centre, Dragana Alfirević (Ljubljana) claimed, “it is clear that such a heterogeneous and rich dance scene should not be represented by one person, but have at least three to five directors”. It surely should be an institution supported by the state; yet, policy-wise it should be framed beyond the top-down and bottom-up cultural policy dualism, and “rather make different kind of waves or spirals”. Above all, since “currently the art scene is very atomized and everybody are closing in their own contexts”, the centre would have to change the paradigms of organisation and offer new ways “on how to be together as humans”.

According to Marko Milić (Belgrade), while this should be a space for exchanging interests with each other, it should contain “a room of sensory deprivation where you can withdraw”. As well, there should be a room called “who cares” for expressing unarticulated

concerns by unshaped, small and insecure voices. Milan Marković Matthis (Belgrade) added that the centre should have supporting structures for families, as well as “an archival space for documentation of everyday life (e.g., moments of people washing dishes)”. Also, a good balance should be found “between obligatory sharing and having a will to share”. Iva Nerina Sibila (Zagreb) suggested that the dance centre has to be “built for dance and comfortable for the body”. It needs to have a strong connection to different communities and “bring dance deeper into society since it has more to offer besides performances”. Policy-wise, it should be artist-led and independent but “under protection of the state”. Further on, it is a centre that is decentralised i.e. smaller, communal centres around the country “with activities circling around and not being owned.” In that line of thinking, she quoted Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld (Bruxelles/Zagreb) who proposed “a dance centre with transparent walls so we can openly share our practices”.

Rok Vevar (Ljubljana) pledged for a centre that will entice the public to be more attentive “to the physical voices who are always present but seldom represented”. In his words, this centre will “not have any audiences, but always the public”. In the view of Dejan Srhoj (Ljubljana), the centre will be an institution where “you will be able to move in a way that will be no of economic value to anyone”. Therefore, he advocated for a space where “the body and human will not be instrumentalized”. Besides that, it will foster the translation of knowledge we have in practising communities to a wider public sphere (e.g. “awareness about listening, giving space, taking space, creating instant propositions all the time”). After several other propositions from the audience, such as the regional dance centre and obligatory dance classes in schools, Selma Banich (Zagreb) elaborated on her imagining of a “space and practice of commoning for different communities”. By creating a space that is “self-governed, with means of labour brought back to the protagonists, the relationship between power, arts and profit would be broken. This is similar to what Sepp proposed when inquiring the independent scenes in the region about the process of commoning within civil society, always including “care, community-building, and the cultivation of common subjectivities” (2019: 59). In conclusion, she reminded us of being privileged and of our responsibility to include it in our fantasies by imagining a centre that takes a social and political responsibility.

5.3.2.3. Overview on the the current state of dance in the Balkan region and parts of Europe

After the imagining session, this part of the gathering encompassed concise and fast-paced presentations by Angelina Georgieva (Sofia), Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski (Skopje), Gisela Mueller (Berlin), Selma Banich (Zagreb), Rok Vevar (Ljubljana), Vava Stefanescu (Bucharest) and Ksenija Djurovic (Belgrade), who mapped out the current situation with dance centres throughout the region and Europe.

Angelina Georgieva (Sofia) described the situation in Bulgaria, where the Association for Independent Theatre, with the aid of the Sofia Municipality, began a process of extensive professional and public discussions and concrete work on preparing written proposals for two organisations as a result of a long campaign for the need of a production centre for independent arts in the last two years. The first is a renovation of an abandoned heating plant in Sofia's centre that is now city property and the organisational structure of a venue for contemporary arts called "Toplocentrala." The second is a model for establishing one of the five or six local cultural institutions into a hub for modern performing arts. Both cases include contemporary dance. Additionally, the Association for Independent Theatre organised a process in 2016 with the assistance of the Sofia Municipality to draw up a plan for the growth of the independent art scene in the City of Sofia. This was the first policy paper to propose an individual approach to dance on the cultural policies on the city level as well as establishing a centre for contemporary dance until 2020. All of these proposals are still in a written form waiting to be considered and voted by the City Council. Besides these important developments, it is relevant to mention two initiatives acknowledged as a successful example of cultural entrepreneurship and private-public partnership. Derida dance centre was opened in 2010 to provide regular training opportunities for professionals and non-professional dancers, to support new productions by securing the working conditions, to establish opportunities for international collaboration, as well as to produce and present the artistic work by Derida dance company. The other private space for contemporary dance was founded in 2015 when a former disco club in the National Palace of Culture was transformed into DNK, a space for contemporary dance and performance, which focuses on experimental work.

Biljana Tanurovska Kjulavkovski (Skopje) started her presentation on the context in North Macedonia by claiming "contemporary dance is still not recognized by the frames of

cultural policy, though there are different attempts by the scene to change the situation”. Changes are mostly visible in the formal educational system, as there are currently three programs for the field of dance. The two public programmes are dedicated to dance pedagogy and to (recently established) choreography, while a private faculty has a programme for education of dancers. The scene is facing a situation with no spaces, no mobility or research funds, which is a consequence of the political situation in the past eleven years”, marked by the right-wing government oriented towards the conservative arts support. In this ten years period, there were a lot of private initiatives, i.e. studios for dance mainly oriented towards commercial purposes. In these challenging circumstances, Lokomotiva and Theatre Navigator (a NGO for performing arts) identified an old cinema space, built by private initiative in 1939, which in Yugoslavia became public and oriented towards cinema distribution. In the 2000s, it was given back to the private owner in the process of denationalisation of the public spaces. In that moment, these two organisations got a part of the space and rebuilt it into a stage, which has been a project space for various actors of the independent scene until end of 2020 when the actors had to move out due to “lack of support by the state” (Kino Kultura 2021: np). The space also hosted a program called “Free scene”, that dealt with developing models of participatory governance in the independent cultural scene. Also, the programme advocated “for the support of the whole building and bringing it to a larger civil society”.

According to Gisela Mueller (Berlin), the Berlin contemporary dance scene started to ask for a dance house already thirty years ago, although such a project has not yet come to existence. In 2000, the scene formed an association (which is not active anymore) for everybody working in the contemporary dance community to articulate their needs (e.g. education and space). After founding an informal network with various strong players in the Berlin art scene (such as the Berlin ballet), the demands gained visibility with the politicians. The scene identified large halls and warehouses that once housed trams and buses and the site was rebuilt with the funds from lottery foundation to become today's Uferstudios. The space now hosts one BA and two MA programmes in the field of dance education (Inter-University centre for Dance Berlin and Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Art), as well as different players from the “Free scene” (Tanzfabrik Berlin, ada Studio and Tanzbüro Berlin). Other spaces are rented out to the actors of the independent scene by the system “first come, first service”, since it was very clear from the beginning that “Uferstudios are there to serve the whole scene”. The complex also contains a shared office for meetings, writing applications etc. The space is to

some extent supported by public funding since “most of the artists who come receive project grants”. Although this investment was supported with the resources from the lottery foundation, the “actors had to take a significant loan” and would benefit from receiving additional funds for infrastructure.

Selma Banich (Zagreb) shortly presented the events around the “Keep dance autonomous” initiative and the Zagreb Dance Centre venue. Currently, dance does not have an institution in Croatia and “it is entirely deinstitutionalised as a practice”. In 2009, an old cinema (Kino Lika) was renovated and equipped to become the first venue for dance in the country. One NGO was made responsible for governing the venue, but last year in April, the “mayor of Zagreb decided (behind closed doors and based on political eligibility) to put the space under the management of the Zagreb Youth Theatre”. Currently, the management and the programming is carried by the one single person who runs both the Zagreb Youth Theatre and the Dance centre. Therefore, “Keep dance autonomous” initiative is a struggle for a socially responsible dance centre and a demand for the establishment of an independent dance institution, based on a model of civil–public partnership. In that type of a partnership, the protagonists would take equal parts in establishing the institution with the city of Zagreb, being “not only subjects of a service but active participants in creating work conditions for production of art as a common”. Banich takes part in a Zagreb Dance Centre Assembly established by direct democracy principles, meaning it is “not only professionals taking part in it but a broader community that is interested in this agenda”. Beside the Zagreb Dance Centre Assembly, Croatian Dance Artist Association is the main protagonist of the “Keep dance autonomous” initiative. The struggle about claiming self-governance also included 90 days of boycott, yet currently the problem is “again getting normalised while the majority of protagonists are put in a situation to make autonomous decisions on how to position themselves towards this political problem”.

Rok Vevar (Ljubljana) started his presentation by claiming, “Ljubljana is not lacking spaces for presentation of dance, but is in need of studios” and offered a short historical overview of the Slovenian dance scene development. The dance scene of Ljubljana “burst out of a cultural, social and political temperature of the period between 1977 (with the start of punk) and 1991”. In 1994, the Dance Association started its activities with demands for space and, shortly, in 1995 received the first space for production and presentation of contemporary

dance. Between 1996 and 1999 contemporary dance and independent theatre production “grew by 60%, so the independent cultural scene became quite large for this small city”. Between 2003 and 2005, Municipality of Ljubljana introduced a three (and later four years) funding programme for the NGO sector. Between 2013 and 2016 the budget for culture was severely cut. Continuing on the issue of space for dance, Vevar says “cultural and congress centre Cankarjev Dom, opened in 1980, had a big influence on the scene since most of the productions were presented there”. Dance Theatre Ljubljana opened in 1985, but received its own venue in 1994 from the municipality. Besides these spaces that are currently available for contemporary dance, in 2004 The Old Power Station was opened for the presentations of NGO productions. Also, in 2008 Španski Borci and Kino Šiška started its activities, providing more spaces to present contemporary dance. In terms of education, a secondary school specialised in dance opened in 1990, and received its own theatre and studio two years ago. What still presents the biggest problem for the scene is that dance needs more space in comparison with other artistic practices. Recently, the Association for Contemporary Dance, suggested to the municipality of Ljubljana to buy a 1000m² space for dance studios but the initiative has not succeeded. Most studios in Ljubljana are not adequate for the studio practices (especially in the winter time), hence the Association for Contemporary Dance strongly continues its activities.

Vava Stefanescu (Bucharest) started her presentation by describing the activities prior to the establishment of the National Centre for Dance in Romania, which were formalised in the frame of an NGO founded in 1999/2000. Although this NGO functioned only for three years, “from its activities grew an initiative for making contemporary dance a separate and autonomous art form on a policy level”. Due to the initiative and “the enormous support from the international independent scene, in 2004 a National Dance Centre was created under the Ministry of Culture”. The National Dance Centre was awarded with a 3000m² space in the building of the National Theatre in the centre of Bucharest. The mission of CNDB consists of sustaining, developing and promoting contemporary dance through production, education and research programmes. In 2007, a multi-year research programme on Romanian dance history resulted with a series of re-enactments and publications, as well as more visibility for the centre. Currently, there are great challenges in maintaining the continuity of the centres’ activities. To be more precise, the organisation “was kicked out from National theatre building in 2011 and had no space for six years, which resulted in an Occupy CNDB that lasted for four months”. Recently, the government ascribed the former Senate building for the purposes of the Centre,

but the building still isn't equipped with the appropriate working conditions for the dance community.

Ksenija Djurović (Belgrade) emphasised that the Serbian context has “no infrastructural funding for dance, no dance centre, or any kind of support guaranteeing security of the field”. The space of Magacin was founded in 2007 through the efforts of a joint initiative of independent cultural scene organisations, called the Other Scene. Process to make the City of Belgrade take responsibility for the development of its' art scene was successful since “oddly, there was enough political will to realise the potential the independent scene has”. The first civil-public partnership run by the independent scene was supposed to be created but, unfortunately, “it became another situation where a space is administered through a city institution and the organisations belonging to the independent scene were organising the programme”. The space now exists for ten years, and for the first two years, organisations were given rights to work there through an open call. After that, the contract was meant to be prolonged but this never happened, which implies the protagonists in Magacin “could have been thrown out the space at any given time.” In this very long state of insecurity, the institution that was administering the space was very present in the beginning (e.g. by cleaning and guarding the place) but the its' presence gradually dispersed. Two years ago, the Association Independent Culture Scene of Serbia was having challenges with their space and Stanica invited them to come to work from Magacin to “make a join effort to position Magacin as a space for everyone (which it already was)”. Since then, Magacin operates through an open calendar system, meaning “everyone who wants to work in any type of field can use the space for free with a small participation in the basic costs”. This model of an open calendar has been “somewhat challenging to organise because the cultural workers are not in a position to properly plan their activities” due to the public funding timeline (the results of the grant schemes take a few months). Yet, in a situation with a clear lack of any type of structural support, Magacin produces around a thousand programs per year. A space open for everyone (and very much used for the performing arts) is currently the only dance space in Belgrade that is free.

In conclusion of the “reality check“ session), there were a few contributions from the audience on how to bridge the gap between “the dreams and the reality” when reflecting on contemporary dance centres. The idea of a centre as “one monumental building” was contested,

especially by the example of Movement Research (New York), which never had a space of its own and is running at five different spaces on a daily level. Luciana Achugar (New York) explained that this has been “monumentally challenging, it is also a great advantage because it allowed the organisation to work in multiple spaces and provide for different types of opportunities, audiences and artists.” Overall, there was strong support between the participants for the ideas of inclusion, horizontality, self-governance and intersectoral collaboration, with a reminder by Ivana Ivković (Zagreb) of the “huge infrastructure we already have, such as the national broadcasting system or education”.

5.3.2.4. Temporary Parliament for Dance: a performative and agonistic discussion on dance centres and dance education

The discursive programme of the second day started with a format partly borrowed from the British parliament. Structure of the format was organised as two sides giving different point of views on certain topics, followed by the other participants taking sides and engaging in a collective discussion on the ideas and values around the proposed themes. Moderator of the session Igor Koruga (Belgrade) shortly explained the choice of topics for the debate, evoked by the then recent events when the local arts and cultural scene was very much engaged in the discussion on the draft of the Strategy of Cultural Development of Serbia 2017-2027. The document was sent out to the public for comments and suggestions based on which the draft could, potentially, be rewritten and sent to the government. Among the stormy reactions from the professional public, one of the strong arguments against the draft was coming from the independent cultural scene staking “the scene is more nominally or superficially rather than structurally recognized” in this document. Indeed, as Koruga claims, independent cultural scene “has certain expertise and resources according to which it should be recognized as a valuable partner for the creation of strategies developed in cultural policy”. Keeping all this in mind (as well as that nobody from the Ministry of Culture and the City of Belgrade accepted the invitation to participate in the Nomad Dance Advocates gathering), questions of possibilities to establish collaboration with the public institutions needed to be brought up. Therefore, Temporary Parliament for Dance provided for a framework to discuss collectively and “engage in self-diagnosis about the current situation in the local scene” with the possible

outcome of concrete suggestions of principles, partnerships and policies that could be developed in order to create certain collaboration with the public institutions.

The topic for the first debate with Ivana Milovanović (Belgrade) and Marijana Cvetković (Belgrade) was the “lack of space for dance”, already discussed in the framework of the gathering. The first speaker was Ivana Milovanović, president of at Belgrade Section of International Dance Council CID-UNESCO, cofounder of the Orchestra magazine and initiator of one of the dance centres that previously existed in Serbia. In her opening presentation, she acknowledged lack of space for dance “as huge problem” while reflecting on her experience in CID-UNESCO that is “already engaged in decentralisation of dance since it has branches in Belgrade, Niš and Novi Sad”. In her opinion on the cohesion of the local contemporary dance community, “this a time be wise, to build a very strong community and not to make unpleasant situations”. When referring to the position of dance in the Strategy of Cultural Development of Serbia 2017-2027, Milovanović strongly advocated for the formation of a “working group with a pyramidal structure and members from public, private and civil sector” in the frame of Ministry of Culture.

The second speaker Marijana Cvetković, cultural producer from Station Service for contemporary dance, offered a different viewpoint. She claimed contemporary dance needs to get into official cultural system in different aspects, one of them being the space, because “everything the contemporary dance scene has done in the last fifteen years is very rich, but stays in the air since there is no physical space for artists to feel their own territory and achieve continuity in their work.” Cvetković advocated for a civil- public partnership because “public authorities have to invest in this space as a starting point for the real development of contemporary dance system in the future”. This model would allow the dance scene to be autonomous when it comes to programming and decision-making processes, as well as follow the principles of “openness, inclusiveness, invitation for all members of the scene and for other art practices which are also without a space”. The space would work on a daily basis and it would be financed by different levels of public funding, while the public authorities would “have the right only to follow the financial dynamics, never to interfere in artistic programming”.

What followed the opening presentation was a short debate on the “missed opportunity of a dance centre in 2007” between the two speakers and the audience members. Milovanović stated this was a great political moment for the realisation of a dance centre, highlighted her strong personal involvement in this initiative and was puzzled with “why the contemporary scene did not want to work there”. Cvetković stated this initiative failed because “it was not an inclusive process but a top-down process with no debate, so people did not feel this was their place”. For her, this was a clear lesson that this manner of operating does not work and that it needs to be done in an opposite way, “starting from the discussions, debates and agreement to then be followed by action”.

After positioning themselves in the space according to the presented viewpoint they support, audience members joined in the discussion. Dijana Milošević (Belgrade) proposed that instead of “fighting for one dance space that could be controlled and closed down, we need to think of many spaces that would be connected as network”. Further on, she proposed that instead of advocating for “institutional structures to recognize us, we should see what can we recognize from them and start negotiating from that position”. Angelina Georgieva (Sofia) mentioned the example of a good practice in Bulgaria, where the scene, after the advocacy session in Sofia, in 2014 managed to establish a civil-public partnership art centre with support from the municipality. Also, separating dance from theatre and positioning it as an equal to other forms “was an important step” for the independent scene. Madeline Ritter (Berlin) added it is important to “sit together with the politicians with the goal of realisation, not only planning” and to “speak to them with one voice” towards them because “only with integration something really new can happen”. Ivana Milovanović (Belgrade) said she believes “this strategy is the last chance for the scene, since currently we have strong politicization of the whole cultural space”. Cvetković replied that what is happening is “not politicization, but profit making and elitization”. She insisted that “if we make decisions in a pyramidal structure, it will fail again, therefore it is needed to start from the dance community and make a horizontal structure”. Selma Banich (Zagreb) perceived the major difference between these two models in the way how decisions are made. She claimed “us and any kind of practitioners should be not treated as the ones who are following up on a specific cultural policy”. What she sees as one of the main problems is that politicians “like to see a person to represent a cause” and therefore, with advocating for horizontality “we are actually trying to build a change in politics” since then “these processes cannot be appropriated towards someones private interests”.

Dragana Alfirević (Ljubljana) advocated for “fearless subjects instead of instrumentalised objects full of fear” while bringing up that “last night some contemporary artists were arrested for carrying photos of the Serbian president.” Rok Vevar (Ljubljana) recognized that “there are institutions founded in our region that don't represent anything but only few people at the top”, meaning “policies made without any politics”. To establish a kind of institution which would represent multiple presences would mean “the process of making policies would also include politics”.

Second topic for the debate was education, since, as Koruga framed it, “whenever we speak of the recognition of non-institutional expertise, a big part of it is that dance practices are being neglected within education”. Therefore, contemporary dance still remains somewhere on the edge of being institutionalised or taken into institutional framework. The first speaker was Gisela Mueller, dancer, choreographer, teacher, artistic and pedagogical director Tanzfabrik Berlin school and initiator of the BA programme at the Inter-University Dance Centre in Berlin (HZT). In her opening presentation, Mueller went back to when she had the chance to set up education in contemporary dance i.e. Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin, a program that started independently but is now integrated with the Berlin University of the Arts. In thinking what is education in contemporary dance today, the founding team were guided by the thought that “what is needed is to educate people in a different way”. Therefore, in the framework of this study, “students are able to discern the societal and political implications of the artistic approach to the body but also able to understand its ethical and philosophical dimension”. The idea behind this educational project was to be “radical and oppositional by influencing and shaping the contemporary aesthetics from an academic context”. In establishing an “intelligent way of self-guided study and research”, Mueller presented these guidelines: “doing dance without relying on techniques, proposing theory as a practical thing, history as an open-source situation, willingness to produce work in non-market-oriented terms, to imagine performances without public and to imagine public situations without performance”.

The second speaker was Dijana Milošević, cofounder of a DAH theatre and a Professor at the Institute for Dance, a private and currently only accredited higher educational framework for dance in Belgrade. Milošević began her opening presentation by saying “this is a little bit off a constructive debate because she can't agree more with the first speaker”. When reflecting

on the current socio-political context, she raised a quote by Jan Fabre who said that “it could be okay when art and power are flirting, but when they are married, their children are propaganda and dictatorship”. The other point she considered important is that “there is not one student currently in the room here” which she perceived as a serious symptom that students lack “the idea of them owning the dance scene, which should be transmitted through education”. The reason Milošević who comes from the independent scene chose to teach at a private school, is that she was “given liberty to design the programme, unlike she would if she accepted the invitation to teach at state funded school, she considers conservative”. Although the disadvantages of the private school model are that funding is scarce and directed by one person, she considers it a positive opportunity since there are “accomplished professionals teaching there, coming both from the independent scene and the institutions”.

In reflecting on why are no students here, Mueller added that, already within the education, it is crucial to “give a base for people to understand their field, the conditions of work and tools for organising their own artform because that is what they will face later on”. Ivana Ivković (Zagreb) claimed she is “not surprised that students are not here because this is question of ownership, feeling that you should be invested and that there is a common ground”. She went back to the proposal of the dance theoretician Ramsay Burt, who in his recent book “Ungoverning dance” (2016) speaks about the commons. She shortly explained the term of commons “dates from British history where it meant a big field where everybody can bring their cattle to graze”. Ivković suggested “contemporary dance underneath has this idea of the commons and that is why this top-down, institutional, hierarchical structure always fails”. She compared it to open-source software programming since there is also “a huge commons of how people share knowledge”. In conclusion, Ivković said the younger generations did not attend this gathering because “they have authorities and do not feel they can claim ownership over the field” unlike “most of the professionals from the middle generation who did not have the schools but were educated by sharing practices with each other”. Aleksandra Janeva Imfeld (Brussels/ Zagreb) reflected on the experience of Nomad Dance Academy as one of the possible causes in the latter establishment of two official higher education programs for contemporary dance in Skopje and Zagreb, since those institutions “were constructed after we moved”. In connection, Iskra Sukarova (Skopje) added a contribution on “how challenging it is for her to bring the experience from Nomad Dance Academy to an official educational framework”, but also very awarding when it happens. Both speakers, Mueller and Milošević,

reflected on raising awareness with the students on their ownership of the education process, since “dance is political” and already “creating a different platform on how to learn makes a change.” Selma Banich (Zagreb) warned about the dangers of knowledge becoming a commodity, when institutionalised in a contemporary context. She views “education as a question of privilege i.e. class, an entrance point for specific social networks and a mirror to one’s future professional networks”. Further on, she elaborated on the difference between the public and the common good, since the public good is “governed by the authorities and commons is governed by whoever wants to take part in the process”.

Barbara Bryan (New York) brought up the issue of the discourse around the dancers that “infantilizes it in an almost colonial manner, like there is no knowledge there”. According to her, dance has the power to shift the system “that is not working or only working for the privileged” and “it is up to us to make the younger generation know that the knowledge is already there”. Ivana Milovanovic (Belgrade) mentioned the state ballet school with three departments (ballet, contemporary and traditional dance), in the context of many other informal education frames that are not recognized by the government. The problem she perceived there is “bad selection and questionable teaching” based on which she posed a question of who will teach the teachers. Igor Koruga (Belgrade) replied that there are many practices of “teaching the teachers” (e.g. Nomad Dance Academy), but the problem is in “how the institutional frameworks recognize these practices”. He added that “when we are speaking of public and private, there is always the question of financing and how it controls and structures all these issues”. Rok Vevar (Ljubljana) reacted to the recurring question of where are the students by a proposal that “students are in the school in the 1930s so it is almost impossible for them to come, especially with the past constantly changing.” Iva Nerina Sibila (Zagreb) shared the insights from her teaching experience at the Academy of Drama Arts in Zagreb. Her concerns are “who are the students of our academies and how can we reach students of different backgrounds and social classes”. In her opinion, enabling wider access to higher artistic education, will lead to the a broader change of the educational system.

Towards the end of the collective debate, there were several observations raised by the participants who are not involved in the regional context and have “the benefits of an outside eye”. They felt there is already “a lot of people implementing effective strategies since this gathering feels as one of the discussed phantasy places”. Also, they perceived a disconnect

between helping the students to “feel empowered while a lot of people in the room refer to the people in power as if those people are not themselves”. Another question was raised on how can one establish a horizontal structure when the funding comes from above, in a vertical manner. This also led to the contradiction of “being outside of the system but wanting recognition by the system”. In conclusion of the Temporary Parliament for Dance session, Koruga emphasised “it is crucial to be recognized by the institutions” and that this is the moment when this change could happen.

5.3.2.5. Tanzplan Deutschland as an example of a systematic development for dance

Madeline Ritter, a lawyer, arts manager and dance curator from Berlin, was invited to speak about the cultural initiative Tanzplan Deutschland that worked as a catalyst for the German dance scene from 2005 until 2010. In 2002, German Federal Cultural Foundation was founded and in 2005 it decided to allocate 12.5 million euros to the non-profit association Tanzplan Deutschland, directed by Ritter, that will carry out the Tanzplan Deutschland project during the period of five years. In the beginning of her presentation, Ritter expressed her “personal feeling of frustration with local and regional funders because they would look at her as a person who was asking money” during her work as a dance curator. Therefore, she decided to “use the Tanzplan to change that relationship”. A condition for this change was that local and state decision makers had to start working together with the local dance scene and vice versa.

Concerning the phases of the Tanzplan project, its team firstly conducted research in the whole country in order to map out the current structures for dance. After that, the “team sent out official invitations to the scene (forty people from different sectors) for meetings with the members of the local and regional governments' ". As it was a first encounter of the local dance scenes with those representing cultural policy, the Tanzplan team asked a simple question to establish the ongoing dialogue: “if you had a chance to receive sufficient money, what would you change in your city for the betterment of dance?” What is relevant to mention is that the Tanzplan team made a rule that 50% of the funding for the projects had to come from the local or regional government. After a competition and jury selection process, nine projects have been awarded with the funds, such as Inter-University Dance Centre in Berlin (HZT), A Centre for Choreographic Development and Promotion at Kampnagel Hamburg, residence

centre in fabrik Potsdam, Bremen touring festival for independent and city theatre companies etc. Also, at the time when Tanzplan was being established, ten institutions for higher education in dance did not communicate among themselves, so the Tanzplan team decided to use the new educational centre in Berlin to create cohesion in the educational system. That resulted in Dance Education Conference that now regularly brings all eleven state-run dance training institutions around one table. After the first year, the Tanzplan team along with the local partners started the discussion on sustainability with the politicians, i.e. finding the model by which the 50% of the funding will continue beyond 2010. But, after the state funding through Tanzplan ended, the local and the regional governments did not continue advocating with the state bodies for the funding to continue. Therefore, in the last five years, “a pressure group was created to really work with the local and regional governments to advocate with the state”. Due to this initiative, a five-year funding scheme with six million euros was created at end of last year for the local and regional structures, again with the obligation of 50% match funding. Still, in between there were five long years of “bringing people to the table, talking and creating a field of shared responsibility”.

According to Ritter, Tanzplan made a strong impact on two levels: “inside the dance scene, the organisations from all sectors became much better in dealing with the cultural political field, rather than just being applicants for projects”. Secondly, Tanzplan serves as an example of how dance has the potential to become a model for other art forms since many similar initiatives (e.g. “Transformation project”) was made after it, as well in different contexts (such as Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland and Belgium). It is possible to deduct that “dance has a quality to do so since it is not organised within institutions and has to find its own way to reconnect.” Ritter concluded Tanzplan “changed the value of dance for the community”, which is also visible in the first mention of dance in the German “coalition contract”, claiming that “state should engage responsibly in funding dance as it is an important artform in society”.

5.3.2.6. Supporting contemporary dance towards the international context

Towards the end of the Nomad Dance Advocates gathering, a session with international dance houses' and international funding bodies' representatives covered the topics of financing models for contemporary dance in an international context. The speakers were:

Robert Alagjovski (Skopje) served as Minister of Culture of North Macedonia in 2017 and 2018. In 2015, he was appointed Head of the oppositions' Commission for Culture, after being involved in the "independent cultural scene as one of the few ministers who come from the field and represent the non-party structure". After eleven years of rule, the autocratic government was finally overthrown this June after the opposition allied with many individuals from the civil sector, so currently the "new authorities are many non-party people".

Madeline Ritter (Berlin), a producer and ex-coordinator of Tanzplan, suggested "funding has the duty to be innovative and adaptable as the artform itself".

Milica Ilić (Paris) from ONDA (*Office national de diffusion artistique*), a "national agency for circulation of contemporary performing arts, funded by the Ministry of Culture, with the objective of making sure the French audiences will be confronted with the most diverse and artistically experimental performing arts". ONDA provides "advice to professionals, a platform for collaboration and financing to support programmes or projects that are considered experimental" (ONDA 2022: np).

Julia Sundberg (Stockholm) from the Swedish Arts Council, "a public authority under the Swedish Ministry of Culture whose task is to promote cultural development and access, based on the national cultural policy objectives". The Council achieves this by allocating and monitoring state funding, alongside other promotional activities. It allocates one third of the state budget for culture (which is 0.8% of the overall state budget) with having the national cultural objectives in mind: "culture as a dynamic, challenging and independent force based on the freedom of expression; opportunity for everyone to participate in cultural life; creativity, diversity and artistic quality as integral parts of society's development."

Marie Christine Baratta (Vienna) has been the coordinator of the international communication of ImPulsTanz - Vienna International Dance Festival for more than fifteen years, and is currently working on the Life Long Burning (LLB) project supported by the Culture Programme of the European Union.

Marya Wethers (New York) has been the director of international initiatives at Movement Research, laboratory for the investigation of dance and movement-based forms. She

is also the director of the GPS/Global Practice Sharing, a platform for the international exchange of practices surrounding dance and movement, currently supporting exchange projects between the U.S. and Eastern and Central Europe, with the support of the Trust for Mutual Understanding.

Nevena Tudor Perković (Zagreb) is the Head of Sector for the Development of Culture and Arts at the Croatian Ministry of Culture. After being a part of the arts and cultural scene in Croatia for many years, she is currently leading the sector whose mission is to “establish financing that enables the development of arts and culture, in different phases of the production chain”.

Kristina Kujundžić remarked that, even though she is a moderator, she would like to speak from the perspective of Swiss Cultural Programme, which was giving special grants to independent and contemporary art scene in the region from 2001 until 2010 and, among others, supported Nomad Dance Academy.

When discussing whether fundraising is about “making compromising or innovations”, Ritter suggested it is “important to understand the intentions of the funders and move from compromises towards understanding and dialogue.” Baratta offered a critique of the Creative Europe programme by saying “it is not an artistic but an economic program that has nothing to do with artistic priorities in performance and contemporary dance”. She believes “compromise is not in the content of the artistic objectives of the networks, but rather in the wording of the application”. Therefore, Baratta concluded “it is very important to have a network with partners that have artistic priorities on which they are not ready to make compromises; because only through confidence and common values, we can work.” Tudor Perković proposed the ideal funder is the one in constant contact with the artistic scene while giving the example of the foundation Kultura Nova, as one of most important measures in Croatian cultural policy in the last ten years. Its relevance consists in “coming from the civil sector in a bottom-up procedure”.

In the continuation of the session, Alagjovovski explained one of his first actions as the new Minister of Culture. Firstly, his team recreated one call that was, with the premise of decentralisation, allocating funds from the state to municipalities to distribute the funds further. Now, these funds are distributed directly from the state to the beneficiaries in the civil sector, according to the new criteria that should prevent the prevailing clientelism. Also, since “calls were very sectorial”, the Ministry introduced the “new line of support for interdisciplinary

projects in order to match the different project-based initiatives”. Still, Alagjozovski mentioned that “whatever is your political will, cannot just be put in the system, since the staff is very clientelistic and hesitant to any change”. Ritter continued on the topic with the remark that the “administrative staff has to be educated and has to research the field to make any change”. Sundberg elaborated on a big cultural reform called “regional collaborative model” Sweden had three years ago. This decentralisation model consists in “all the state funding divided to the regions for them to decide how to allocate the money”. In a collective process, all regions are presenting their plans to the Art Council that then makes its’ judgements and assessments, according to the national cultural policy priorities. So far, “in the evaluation of this reform, there hasn't been any changes in the priorities of the regions or one regional application with dance as a priority”. Baratta brought up the study by the Flanders Art Institute called “Reframing the International”, that shows how, due to the funding cuts on national and regional levels, the increase of artistic coproductions in Belgium is 11% per a year. Baratta considers that, although this means “added value to development of work, the funding is even more fragmented”. Coming from an institution “that partly provides funding and has a corrective role”, Ivić was interested in looking into how can “cultural policy of a nation state respond to the practices of artists that are everything but national” and “how can we stop looking at artists as a way of promoting the glory of our nation”. Ritter also mentioned the example of “sub-funding set up as the International Coproduction Fund run by the National Performance Network, first established with Tanzplan and now functioning as a permanent fund”. Wethers explained the National Performance Network and the National Dance Project in the US that supports the creation, development and touring of new dance works and connects artists, cultural organisations, and audiences across the nation (“the touring subsidy goes from NDP to to the presenter, while the creation fund goes directly to the artist”).

Participants then reflected on the importance of continuity, starting with Sundberg who said it is crucial to “work on a long-term basis and evaluate everything along the way”. The Swedish Arts Council has the possibility to allocate funding for only one year but tends to “go around this rule a bit, in the field of dance, because artists couldn't continue working without the long term support”. Baratta noticed “precarity of the artists is only increasing” and, ideally, structural funding on a national and European level would last at least for two years. Ilić reflected on the importance of “continuity of dialogue and pressure since institutions have this tendency of looking for a status quo”.

Kujundžić then went back to the issue of labelling dance as heritage, that was shortly discussed in the first session of the gathering, and its implementation through the interministerial working groups. Baratta reacted by observing that “nowadays, dance is dealing with its own heritage, since the pieces that are presented are mostly reruns and repertoire pieces.” For example, part of the Impulstanz Vienna program is curated as Classics (with artists such as Rosas). She also noted a connection between dance and heritage is visible “in the strong presence of contemporary dance and performance in museums i.e. institutions which deal with heritage”. After reflecting on the case of the choreographer Boris Charmatz opening the program of Volksbuehne, iconic theatre in Berlin, she concluded that there is a dialogue in “dance bringing ephemeral communities, that no other form of art can bring, to the heritage context that is not ephemeral”.

Tudor Perković proposed that “we need to detect needs and react to them with making multiple sources of funding”. She gave an example from the Croatian Ministry of Culture, where her team “succeeded in integrating culture in European Structural Funds, so now there are three open calls within the European Social Fund that can be used for contemporary creation: Art and Culture for young age, for 54+ and for national cultural centres.” Also, the Ministry is very active at the moment on creating new funds with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and, recently, Ministry of Tourism, starting from the premise that “culture is everywhere”.

Former minister Alagjovzovski concluded the session by wondering “why the dance scene hasn’t received more structures and more reliable funding so far, since dance is such an innovative and progressive artform”. In that regard, he emphasised we need “more advocacy, alliances and pressure but also to rethink the values and the additional social benefits of why we need dance”. He proposed concrete multilateral initiatives with different ministries and governments allocating funds for the cause of contemporary dance.

Parallel to the previous discussion on supporting contemporary dance from an international context, a session with the directors of the Belgrade and Novi Sad theatre houses was held in the Gallery space, on the topic of the possibilities to bring contemporary dance back to the Belgrade theatres. Ivan Medenica, artistic director of the Bitef festival, briefly

shared the main conclusions from the session, focusing on the options of a future collaboration between the dance scene and the Bitef festival. Structure of this potential collaboration would consist in an open call for the independent scene, which would result in three or four projects per year at Bitef theatre (since “other venues too institutionally weak to support the collaboration”). In these partnerships, Bitef would provide “longer tech and rehearsal residencies with marketing and festival touring”. Medenica proposed a “bottom- up- bottom” model for these types of collaborations, and creation of a fund where the “venues would apply for a project, together with an artist.”

5.3.2.7. Conclusion: “Make room for dance!” gathering as a terrain of *ungoverning dance*

The intention of the gathering was, in the words of Marijana Cvetković (Belgrade), to “make decision makers and public administrators be with us and understand from a different perspective how the field of art works”. Since the gatherings’ horizontality might have produced connections that would disturb existing power relations, many of the local decision-makers invited did not respond positively to this invitation. This is not entirely surprising since, with cultural policies increasingly supporting market-oriented cultural actors, the institutions of the state appear to be blatantly complicit with the hegemony of capitalism.

To put this in a broader context, political theorist Chantal Mouffe in her conceptualization of “radical and agonistic democracy” (2013: np) maps the lack of an effective democratic debate as one of the main reasons for the rise of right-wing parties and the hegemony of capitalism. Still, between disintegrating state apparatuses and the invasive mechanisms of the market, civil society actors provide the terrain where conflicting points of view are confronted and thus contribute to agonistic democracy. By bringing together the dissonant voices of policy makers, artists and cultural workers, and programming formats that entice effective debate (e.g., Temporary Parliament for Dance), the Nomad Dance Advocates gathering enabled agonistic confrontation that took place in a multiplicity of discursive surfaces. These contributions indicate how the field of contemporary dance, due to its tendency for experimentation, claims of autonomy, expectation of critical viewpoints and attention to political matters, contributes in a variety of ways to the unsettling of the dominant hegemony of capitalism.

Therefore, following the proposition of Ramsay Burt in *Ungoverning Dance* (2015: 7), wherein “*ungoverning* is continually engaging in the maintenance and protection of the commons” by opening up spaces “for interaction, negotiation, and contestation as well as for sharing”, we can recognize this NDA gathering as an ungoverned space. To clarify, the commons has become a key theoretical concept, due to its unifying potential for many ongoing struggles, that challenges current political and economic systems. According to Helfrich and Bollier (2012: 12), public goods are those resources which are effectively controlled by the state and not by the people, which means that they are usually for the benefit of state elites and not for the public use. Harvey (2012: 23) distinguishes between public goods and commons, similarly but also differently, through the medium of political action. For example, public space is the space of political power exercised by the state and not necessarily accessible to all. It becomes a common space through political action that contests this situation, like Magacin in Belgrade which operates as an occupied space that is free (with minor participation in basic operating costs) for anyone who wants to work in the independent cultural sector. Still, when considering the strategy of withdrawal from the public sector, Mouffe (2013: np) reasons, “The power of capitalism is not going to disappear because we have a multitude of self-organising outside the existing institutions - we need to engage with those institutions in order to transform them profoundly”. It is relevant to understand how the concept of “commons” might translate into models of cultural policy; one possible way is participatory governance (mentioned repeatedly at the gathering), a model of governance that implies non-hierarchical relationships between public and civil sectors.

The participants of the gathering shared the ways they embody precarity due to lack of resources in terms of time (e.g. structural and long-term public grants) and space (e.g. dance centres adjusted for the body and governed by participation), while simultaneously rejecting hierarchical and vertical procedures, critically examining capitalism as a site of domination, and affirming the values of radical democracy. They also offer multiple diagnoses of the current situation, as well as suggestions on recommonizing the public in the field of contemporary dance, and thus *ungoverning* themselves from the exhausting and normativized precarity.

6. European project networks as landscapes for shifts in independent performing arts curatorial strategies: case studies

The Advancing performing arts project (apap) and LifeLong Burning networks are both long-term European contemporary performing arts networks that make for appropriate case studies since they have been active for more than twenty years, which resulted in changes of curatorial decision-making that might have followed the restructuring of the grant programmes by the European Union. In that long period, it is relevant to observe how these changes affected partners with different levels of support in their local and national contexts, with a focus on the last two cycles of funding (Culture and Creative Europe) this research puts an emphasis on.

First part of the chapter introduces two organisations from the analysed contexts of Germany and post-Yugoslav countries as well as the network itself. In order to reach generalizable conclusions, second part of this chapter uses curatorial analysis of the organisation programmes (Tanzfabrik and Student Centre Zagreb), interview with the curator of Tanzfabrik Ludger Orlok and transcript of the network's discussion "Passion and politics" organised by Creative Europe Desk Austria, Cultural Department of the State of Salzburg and Szene Salzburg and framed as a focus group for the needs of this research. This discussion invited apap artists and cultural managers (general manager apap Bertie Ambach, artistic manager Tanzfabrik Ludger Orlok and networks artists Ivana Muller and Maria Jerez) to discuss to what extent do concepts from cultural policy determine and restrict creative process, what makes EU programmes desirable for cooperation as well as other topics surrounding the tensions between artistic processes and cultural policy priorities. Therefore, the following chapter will convey parts of discussions that are relevant and symptomatic for the overall thesis, grouped within topics that connect the findings with the research questions.

Second part of the chapter uses the same principle when analyzing the network LifeLong Burning and the two pertaining organisations from the German and post-Yugoslav context. The two organisations examined in the research are Station- Service for Contemporary Dance Belgrade and Uferstudios Berlin, based on the analysis of their programmes throughout

the European funding cycles as well as semi-structured interviews with curators Marijana Cvetković (Station- Service for Contemporary Dance Belgrade) and Simone Weillet (Uferstudios Berlin).

6.1. Introduction to apap – advancing performing arts project

apap – advancing performing arts is an international network of eleven cultural organisations that has been established in 2000 and has been implementing several programmes with the support of the EU Cultural programs until the present day³². The network’s mission has been “to strengthen contemporary dance and performing arts in Europe and abroad”, as well as a “strong focus on enlarging audiences and a knowledge-transfer between cultural organisations” (apap: 2016, np). From 2016 to 2020, apap put a focus on audience development “by sharing knowledge and tools for community outreach” through the tailored „ABC“- project with expert advice and strategies to expand the exposure of contemporary performing arts by connecting performing arts institutions and creatives. The aim of the apap network with the “Performing Europe 2016-2020” was also to “generate a platform for exchange of knowledge, experiences and ideas” and to strengthen European ties to the Middle East by collaborating with Maqamat/Beit El Raqs in Lebanon (ibid.).

The projects supported within two recent cycles of European funding analysed within this research, Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020, were apap Performing Europe (2011 – 2016) and apap Performing Europe 2020 (2016– 2020). The partners on the project apap Performing Europe were Arts Centre BUDA (Kortrijk, BE), BIT Teatergarasjen (Bergen, NO), Centrale Fies (Dro, IT), Fundacja Ciało/Umysł (Warsaw, PL), Maison de la Culture d’Amiens (Amiens, FR), Student centre Zagreb (HR), SZENE Salzburg (AT) and Tanzfabrik Berlin (DE). By the second project cycle apap Performing Europe 2020 (2016 –

³² The present project, apap - Feminist Futures, is implemented over a period of four years (2020-2024), with the support of the European Union's Creative Europe Programme. The project's main objective is to bring about meaningful societal change via art and respond to inequalities within the contemporary performing arts, and it does so by employing the body of thoughts united by the phrase "intersectional feminism" to identify practical structural approaches and increase public awareness.

2020), the network was enlarged by three partners so the collaborating organisations were Arts Centre BUDA (Kortrijk, BE), BIT Teatergarasjen (Bergen, NO), Centrale Fies (Dro, IT), Fundacja Ciało/Umysł (Varšava, PL), Maison de la Culture d'Amiens (FR), Student centre Zagreb (HR), SZENE Salzburg (AT), Tanzfabrik Berlin (DE), Nanterre-Amandiers (FR), Teatro Nacional D.Maria II (PT) and RDF / LÓKAL (IS) along with a partner from a special „Satellite-project” with “Maqamat/Beit El Raqs” in Lebanon. By connecting artistic production, audience development and an optimized communication, the network understood theatre as a central place of encounter and exchange (“open theatre”, a classical forum) by introducing new presentation models and artistic focus projects. The network viewed contemporary art as having the power to give new thought-provoking impulses to the society and to bring important counterbalances “to reflect and react on the fundamental and radical changes of our time.” (ibid.)

apap – Performing Europe 2020 has implemented numerous coproductions of apap artists, guest performances of apap productions presented in festivals and seasons of the partners structures, residencies of apap artists at the partners organisations and in the apap production studio in Berlin, enabling all the artists involved in the network to cooperate internationally and to boost their careers. Moreover, apap artists toured with their projects all over Europe in several festivals and theatres outside the network. In the four years apap artists performed more than 700 times with non-apap partners, due to the visibility guaranteed by the network and residence possibilities such as the apap Production Studio in Berlin. According to reviews of the apap project (apap: 2020, np), another indicator of the successful outcome is the sustainability of new collaborations among partners and artists, as well many prizes won by the networks’ artists³³.

In order to create a common programme for audience development on a European level, the network collaborated with specialised organisation ABC (Art Basic for Children), based in Brussels that has been working in the field of art education for over ten years. During audience development in collaboration with the ABC, one of the goals was to develop strategies to inspire the present and future teacher generations with informal learning expertise and lead them to a more artistic way of teaching in public schools. The content consisted of exploring

³³ The 2019 Leone d'Oro of the Venezia Dance Biennial awarded to Alessandro Sciarroni and the 2019 Leone d'argento (for emerging artists) won by Theó Mercier; the 2019 award Polityka's Passport in the category of Theatre won by Marta Górnicka and the Italian Prize UBU 2018 won by Teatro Sotterrano, among others (apap: 2020, np).

the following questions: “what is performance nowadays?”, “how can audiences engage with the performing arts?” and “how can audiences talk about performing arts?” (ibid.). In the selection of artists that apap supported, an important criterion was the level of interest and openness of the artist to involve the audience and to look for new relations with it. This means that next to the common strategy with ABC, another way to reach new audiences and deepen the relationship with them was through specific projects by artists that included workshops, meetings or direct involvement of specific groups of audience. The materials used in audience development sessions were visual film loops and audio material on the history of performance and from contemporary exemplary examples, excerpts from interviews with (apap-) artists about their work about their intentions, meanings, reasons, visual material from performances of the artists, interviews with artistic directors about their programme, research maps and similar materials. These materials were mostly presented in an info-box, formed as a flight-case that could be folded out easily and set up in the foyer of a theatre, in public spaces like schools, shopping centres, squares, universities, etc. Also, team members from all the partners were invited to take part in the labs on audience development at the headquarters of ABC. The partners then organised several workshops, artistic projects and events, inspired by the know-how accumulated by the two labs in Brussels and successfully implemented by the singular partners during the four years.

Responding to the priority of “new business models”, the apap network focused on the diversity of organisational structures and business models that were already in operation among eleven partners. To deepen the discussion, the network organised three labs, hosted by two partners, on the topic of philanthropic relations between the business sector and on possible strategies of the CCS (culture and creative sector) to more closely align itself with educational structures - as a means of sharing infrastructure and resources. Both workshops, however, made space for drawing upon a broader range of knowledge and expertise that could be shared among the apap partners, as well as the 38 artist groups that were engaged with through the network. SZENE Salzburg, for example, presented their experience in how “they are directly collaborating with the business sector by providing artistic services to different local companies and the renting of their spaces to the business sector” (ibid.). Also, since all partners have extensive experience in international co-productions of dance, theatre and performance, “many have developed new BMs designed for their individual situation that can be of interest to the other partners, as well” (ibid.).

After a successful application for another cycle of European funding, the network continued its activities within the project Feminist futures (2020 – 2024), with new group partners without the Student Cultural Centre in Zagreb. Project partners within the new project are Teatergarasjen, Maison de la Culture d’Amiens, Centrale Fies, InSzPer Performing Arts Institut, Reykjavik Dance Festival, STATION – Service for contemporary dance, Teatro Nacional D.Maria II, SZENE Salzburg, BOULEVARD Festival and Kunstencentrum BUDA (apap 2020: np).

6.1.1. Introduction to Tanzfabrik Berlin

Tanzfabrik Berlin is an internationally known centre for producing, performing and disseminating contemporary dance whose mission is to “focus on development, presentation and agency of contemporary dance in all of its diversity of choreographic and performative approaches”³⁴. According to the current manager Ludger Orlok (in Enders, 2018: 49), there are three main aspects of Tanzfabrik’s work: disseminating knowledge by offering opportunities for practice, conducting research and experimentation in artists’ residencies, co-productions and collaborations and promoting discourse in regular events. Most recent version of the Tanzfabrik’s Statute from 2010 states that this nonprofit association’s purpose is to promote “activities in movement, dance and music through instruction, performance and lectures” while making them affordable “to all sections of the population” (Tanzfabrik: 2010, np) as well as to support other groups conducting similar activities. Within these activities, Tanzfabrik creates and sustains an infrastructure for contemporary dance in various ways throughout more than forty years of existence. When analysing the numbers, one of the former directors Eva-Maria Hoerster (Sieben 2018: 31) estimates that over the last 25 years, the Tanzfabrik gave roughly 500 000 classes to some 10 000 students, made 86 independent productions, gave over 160 guest performances and, in 2002 alone, 74 choreographers used the rehearsal spaces.

The association was founded in 1978 in West Berlin as a collective of artists that lived and worked together, producing their own work independent of opera houses where dance was then revived (Hartling, 2018:12). Its beginnings are closely linked to the emergence of the

³⁴Tanzfabrik Berlin: “Profile and Partners”. Tanzfabrik: Berlin. https://www.tanzfabrik-berlin.de/en/profil_partner (last accessed on 8th June 2020).

independent dance and theatre scene and its search for the roots of the Modern tradition, ten years after the youth rebellion and student protests of 1968 when society, culture and politics were redefined. Unlike during its early years, today its focus lies on open work processes in contemporary dance and experimental forms of art and movement, and networking with the artists. The aspect of networks became stronger since the centre joined the apap- network in 2005.

In organisational terms, Tanzfabrik Berlin is nowadays a non-profit association with three board members and a total of seventeen members. According to the interview with Ludger Orlok (Letunić 2018: 1), the team is divided into two cooperating sections at two locations in the city: rented studios and studio stages in Kreuzberg (4 studios) and in Wedding (14 studios) as a part of the Uferstudios. Tanzfabrik does not have full-time staff and the board is working freelance on a fee basis. The management team next to the board of directors with artistic management, school management and commercial management are production management, communication management and the school office, where all collaborators are working on the base of part - time contracts or freelance between 10 and 30 hours per week. When the association is organising additional festivals, projects and workshops, more temporary staff is employed on a fee basis.

Looking at the history of Tanzfabrik through the lens of organisational cultures, we can observe a development from collectivity in the early years to one-person leadership, and now joint leadership by Orlok and the board members. In addition to the current leaders, Orlok (Letunić 2018: 1) states artists, curators and other actors exert a significant influence on programming. To be more specific, where previously the focus was on collectively developing and realising in-house artistic projects, today it is more about curatorial work; i.e. assisting and supporting artists and their projects with its expertise, rehearsal spaces, equipment and dramaturgical advice. Through the perspective of curatorial analyses, Tanzfabrik has maintained some of its basic criteria regarding content (contemporary dance and performance) and working methods (international, experimental, discursive) throughout these organisational changes.

Financially, Tanzfabrik is dependent on individual project funds since there is no structural support for the organisation, as well as income from its educational activities. In an interview (Letunić 2018: 2), Orlok explains financial sources are 50% commercial- from

workshops and a school with dance intensive programs- and 50% from artistic production. Tanzfabrik regularly applies for and receives basic funding from Senate Berlin and additional public funding from the EU programmes, Hauptstadt Kulturfonds³⁵ (Capital Culture Fund), Einzelprojektförderung³⁶ (Funding for individual projects). In Orlok's words (ibid.), EU funding stabilises the funding from Senate Berlin- a two-year grant "Basisförderung"³⁷- as the jury sees it as a "cultural-political sign". He also warns Tanzfabrik Berlin is not comparable to other international production houses having their own production budget since, for most productions, artists finance their production costs from the same public funds.

According to Hertling (2018: 13), Tanzfabrik has always been "chronically underfinanced" which resulted in "necessary self-exploitation of the participants", but it has created a multitude of innovative approaches despite it. The current Board of Tanzfabrik Berlin (Lanteri, Muller, Orlok, 2018: 15) views this situation as two-fold:

"On the one hand, this flexibility is a powerful resource that allows adaptation and reaction in different times and circumstances, thus avoiding the rigidity that often results as a function of institutionalisation. On the other hand, it places Berlin's oldest institution for contemporary dance in a state of constant precariousness."

They also state Tanzfabrik is operating from the political margin with a lack of infrastructural funding, but also understand margins as productive spaces where "where it is often easier to create political dialogue, make innovations shift meanings and experiment with new possibilities, as they are more sensitive to changes than the centre" (ibid.)

³⁵ Capital Culture Fund is a Berlin based fund for the independent scene that, by supporting contemporary cultural and artistic projects, aims to initiate and strengthen interregional and international cultural dialogue with Berlin as its starting point. (see more at: <https://www.hauptstadtkulturfonds.berlin.de/index.php?id=6&L=1>).

³⁶ Funding for individual projects by the Cultural Department of the City of Berlin is intended for the independent performing arts in Berlin in the form of a subsidy for production costs relating to projects of limited duration, the further development of existing productions or the programming of previous productions (see more at: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/kultur/en/funding/funding-programmes/performing-arts/artikel.229852.en.php>).

³⁷ "Basisförderung" is two or four year funding for the infrastructural costs of the independent performing scene, as one of the funding programmes provided by the City of Berlin. (see more at: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/kultur/foerderung/foerderprogramme/darstellende-kuenste-tanz/artikel.81996.php>)

6.1.2. Introduction to Student Centre Zagreb

Due to the political will of Union of Students of Yugoslavia, Student Centre Zagreb was founded in 1957 as a space for organising, leading and supporting, among others, cultural and artistic activities of students such as “exhibitions, cinematographic, theatrical and other artistic performances” (Čorić 2007: 28–29), holding social and entertainment events, various professional training courses, teaching activities etc. It was then divided into three sectors: Accommodation, Food and Culture which nowadays, together with the Student Service sector, altogether have around 1000 employees. There are several venues within the Student Centre that are intended for arts and culture: Student Centre Gallery, Multimedia (MM) Centre, Student Experimental Theatre (SEK), Theatre &TD, Music Salon and Student Centre Cinema. Throughout more than sixty years of SCZG’s activities, having all these venues working within the same location greatly influenced the organisation of labour (sharing administrative and technical staff), but also the artistic output in terms of more dialogue between programming more intermedia artworks, as well as sharing its audiences.

Although all the venues can host different art forms, theatre &TD has been the most relevant space for the performing arts scene. Founded as a venue for theatre aesthetics that is alternative to classical theatre, it had its beginnings within the Student centre’s Chamber Stage and continued its activities under the current name since 1966 until today (Čorić 2007:30). Albeit its mission is not officially documented and the theatre isn’t nominally genre-profiled, from curatorial analysis of it’s programme (theatre &TD 2020: np) throughout the years, it is visible it remained a platform for mostly young authors who question new art forms within the tradition of experimental and avant garde theatre.

In terms of the management structure, Student Centre Zagreb is a public institution financed by and under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, with its cultural programs supported by the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Department of the City of Zagreb. Under the Management of the Student Centre, the artistic leadership of the Cultural Department of the Student Centre is divided between Theatre &TD, Gallery SC and the Music Salon. Most of the technical and administrative staff is employed on the full-time basis and is shared between the different venues. Besides the artistic management, all the artistic staff works based on part-

time contract or freelance since the theatre &TD functions without an actor's ensemble within a model closer to the one of a production house. This model was rethought when the programme "Culture of Change " was established in 2004.

The programme of the Culture department of the Student Zagreb "Culture of Change" brought further diversification of financing by diversification of content, as well as more networking and internationalisation of its work. In the programme that lasted until 2018, the focus was on the contemporary production of culture and the creation of basic infrastructural and technological conditions for such work that insists on "permeating university content with the artistic and intellectual life of the city" (theatre &TD 2020: np). The main goal of Culture of Change was "to create innovative, economic and educational frameworks of cultural production in order to influence cultural practices in Croatia and internationally" (apap 2016, np). In that sense, programmes aimed at students and young audiences throughout the years connected young artists with the more established ones, enabling them to develop their poetics with infrastructural support of the Student Centre. Besides the students training to be performing arts professionals, Culture of Change became one of the main gathering places for the local independent scene due to its production model of an open platform.

The international collaborations supported by the European Union Culture 2007-2013 programme include several projects: Connections³⁸ from 2009 until 2010, with partners Theatre festival SPIELART (Munich), CAMPO (Gent), Republique (Kopenhagen), Forum Freies theatre (Düsseldorf), theatrehaus Gessnerallee (Zürich), Huis en Festival a/d Werf – (Utrecht), Choreographisches Zentrum NRW/PACT Zollverein (Essen), theatre im Pumpenhaus – (Münster), Mittetulundsühing Teine Tants (Tallinn); APAP (Advancing Performing Arts Project) – Performing Europe from 2011 until 2016 (partners listed above) and Gazing & Dancing from 2013 until 2015 with Mille Plateaux Associés (FR) and Frenák Pál Társulat (HU). The international projects supported within the Creative Europe 2014-2020 were APAP Performing Europe 2020 (partners listed above) and Re-imagine Europe (2017. – 2020.) with cultural organisations Sonic Acts (NL), Paradiso (NL), Elevate Festival (AT), Lighthouse (UK), Ina GRM (FR), Landmark / Bergen Kunsthall (NO), A4 (SK), SPEKTRUM (DE) and Ràdio Web MACBA (ES) as partners.

In the period of “Culture of Change”, the Student Centre in Zagreb acted as an open platform since it had an all-year-round application call for all interested students, young creators, NGO's, cultural organisations and workers, academic community and faculties to apply with their own projects for production support. Due to its resources in spaces, staff and technical equipment, SCZG has been able to support many of the local artistic, social or activists projects thus giving the opportunity to its audience “to not only be “consumers” of SCs regular programs but to also be active participants /co-creators of it” (Letunić 2018: 2). This strategy has allowed SCZG to stay open, connected with its circle of culturally or socially active audience and to act as a platform for newcomers, facilitator for projects, festivals, events, etc. Each project and initiative have brought in its specific audience, thus continually revitalising the regular SCs program while reaching new (or different) audiences.

Since 2013, the Student Centre has been under financial recovery, due to the numerous financial issues the institution has despite its relatively high subsidies. According to the writings of the local media, it is a process that completely lacks transparency and is focused on transforming SCZG’s “functions to be increasingly subordinate to the market logic” (Mihaljević, 2014: 24). According to Mihaljević, the problem of budget stability of the Student centre has been an issue since its establishment, “because due to the constant influx of students, the costs of providing services are constantly growing, so the budget incurs losses” (ibid.). This problem was explained then and now by the concept of “unrealistic prices”, i.e. low non-market prices of services. According to Parežanin (2018, np), the Culture department of SCZG has been under special scrutiny by the financial recovery management who “blames Culture as the most responsible department for piling up debt in SCZG”. Banović (2018, np) claimed it is only “thanks to the will, energy and knowledge of SC Culture employees who manage to fundraise from EU funds for certain projects, that the recovery director has not yet managed to shut down their programs.” She also mentions that all the financial reports on the SCZG speak of continuous rationalisation in Culture, but not of rationalisation in the financial recovery administration. Finally, in 2017, the Management of the Student Centre changed its organisational structure against its Statute in a way that makes Culture one of the services of SCZG, suspending its activities as an autonomous department. Shortly after, in 2018, the artistic director has been illegally suspended from her workplace as the leader of the Culture programme with the argument that the cultural productions under her mandate were “are too avant-garde, incomprehensible and insufficiently oriented towards students” (Ožegović, 2018,

np). This caused strong reactions from the independent cultural scene in Zagreb and marked an official end to the “Culture of Change” programme.

6.2. EU programme influences on curatorial programming of apap – advancing performing arts project

6.2.1. Influences of collaboration on individual partner’s sustainability

The infrastructural influences of collaborating in an EU network vary depending on the degree of the organisation’s support at the national and local levels.

Tanzfabrik has more diversified funding sources than the Student Centre Zagreb, i.e. 50% of funding is public and 50% is commercial stemming mostly from the organisation’s educational activities. Its public funding is also varied, consisting mostly of individual project grants applied for in collaboration with the artists, as well as a two-year infrastructural grant "Basisförderung"³ stabilised by the European Union funding. In comparison with the other network partners, Orlok warns that “in Germany there is a very privileged situation - good economic figures, bigger budgets, almost everything is possible” (Letunić 2018: 5). Still, concerning the high amounts of subsidies the public cultural infrastructure usually receives, in his words, “independent artists often have to work in precarious conditions.” The influences of being a partner in an EU network are quite beneficial in terms of funding as it “allows the Tanzfabrik Berlin to have at least program and production money, which the artists have to offer in addition to the small production subsidies in Berlin.” (ibid.)

The Student Centre in Zagreb, however, has stability in terms of funding for the infrastructural costs but not for its programme activities. According to Silvija Stipanov, the former curator for the performing arts in SCZG, “what really facilitates SCZG’s operating is that through the four years financing from the EU, it is possible apply to different international funding to bring in international artists... coupled with small local funding that is received for being in a European project, it is possible to somehow close the financial construction but it’s really a struggle, every time.” (Letunić 2018: 8).

By the time this research was finished, SCZG's "Culture of Change" programme was closed, the programme director was suspended, a different management continued to run the organisation and SCZG did not remain in the apap network as a partner for its new project "Feminist futures" (apap 2020: np). One of the main arguments for this thorough change by the financial recovery management team was the "that the Culture department was not financially sustainable" (Parežanin 2018: np), thus contributing to the valorization of culture through an economic logic.

Overall, when comparing the differences between the analysed organisations - Tanzfabrik in Berlin and Student Centre in Zagreb- there are two main discourses that emerge. In an interview, Orlok claims "the public funding Basisförderung is a two-year grant and must be applied for every two years stabilised by the EU's 4-year program Creative Europe, for the artists and also as a cultural-political sign" (ibid.). During the network's symposium, he also discusses the relevance of having received EU funds in order to secure the local matching funds by saying such a situation is "a great moment to convince the politicians". He also mentions that, due to taking part in the network, "Tanzfabrik Berlin as an institution could increase its reputation on the local, regional and international level, double the institutional funding from Berlin government as well as improve towards the possibility to become a main organiser for European projects". He continues that the number of productions, residencies and audience development projects would have not been implemented without the network that led to more long-term and sustainable exchange and cooperation between partners and audiences while "widening local perspectives, making mobility for the artists and the understanding of different socio-political environments possible".

On other hand, Silvija Stipanov who was representing the Student centre in Zagreb within the apap network, claimed that "it's basically virtually impossible to work without the European projects" for SCZG since they provide for "the base and security to work for and plan to work for four years" (Letunic 2018: 1). Apparently, even though SCZG is regularly subsidised on the level of employees and maintenance costs, the funds for the program can be rather unpredictable and lacking. In that sense, Stipanov claims the organisation is "totally dependent on the EU funds" since the four years financing from the EU then facilitates applying to different international, national and local funding.

Therefore, where the representative of Tanzfabrik speaks of the EU support as the one that *stabilises* the local funding, the one from SCZG viewed as support the organisation is *dependent on*.

6.2.2. New formats: focus on audience development

During the analysis of curatorial programming in Tanzfabrik and Student Centre Zagreb during the apap Performing Europe (2011 – 2016) project, supported by Culture 2007-2013 EU programme, and apap Performing Europe 2020 (2016– 2020) project, funded within Creative Europe 2014-2020 funding cycle, there is one main difference between the two projects coming to the fore within both analysed organisations. The data resulting from the programmes and interviews with curators of Tanzfabrik, “Culture of Change” as well as the reviews of the apap network (apap: 2020, np) from 2011 to 2020, clearly shows both SCZG and Tanzfabrik team has implemented more audience development projects during the apap Performing Europe 2020 (2016- 2020) project than in the previous project cycle (apap Performing Europe 2011 – 2016).

During the more recent project funded within the EU programme “Creative Europe 2014-2020” that announced audience development as the main priority, Student Centre Zagreb has employed one person as a part time audience developer and another person as an ambassador (promotor) of the theatre programme. According to the organisation’s former curator Stipanov, these collaborators were in charge (together with the artistic team of SCZG) of developing “specific strategies for communicating with wider audiences and developing long-term relationships with them” (Letunic 2018: 2). Also, SCZG established a lab for audience development as “an ongoing project -a space for research, exchange and try-outs of new audience development strategies and programs with workshops, lectures, ad hoc actions and projects, talks by invited apap artists and external experts” (ibid.).

It’s actions were mostly realised during Ganz New Festival that yearly presented many of the apap artists, funded by the network’s resources. Concerning the festival programme content, an audience development side program was implemented during the 2017 and 2018

editions of Ganz New Festival „Late Post- Performance Talks“ and „Kju-end-ej“ were explicitly referencing audience development as become cultural policy priority and experimenting with a format that “breaks free from the logic of that monologue and create space for reflection in an informal atmosphere” (SCZG, 2017: np). Further on, the Module 1- a basic info-box that gives an historical perspective and some contemporary examples of what performing arts is today, as well as interviews with and visual footage from apap artists and partners- was used during the last festival Ganz New Festival in 2018.

Besides such discursive format within the SCZG’s Ganz new international festival of developmental theatre funded within the apap network, audience development was implemented through workshops led by international and local artists. For example, in 2016, an audience development side program of free workshops dealing with rage (and how to express it and creatively transform it with artistic methods) was organised during the festival stemming from the artistic programme³⁹. Moreover, the Student centre implemented several audience development labs, composed of students, artists and experts to think of (and experiment with) audience development activities that would be connected to apap artistic projects, the SCZG’s context and the current needs of our society, addressed at wider audiences.

There was a similar increase of tendencies towards audience development programmes in Tanzfabrik, as well. During the project Performing Europe 2020, Tanzfabrik Berlin established a new audience development format as a part of the ABC Module 2 that continued after the end of the project.

The format “Dance Intensive meets apap” dealt with, among other topics, “with how one can discuss contemporary dance and receive the opportunity to try out a variety of communication formats: a plain post-performance discussion with artists, a sensorial or creative exchange format ranging from coming to terms with things using a piece of paper and a pen all the way to conversations in the dark” (Tanzfabrik: 2016, np). The aim of Tanzfabrik

³⁹ This format was inspired by Erna Ómarsdóttir and Valdimar Jóhannsson’s performance Black Yoga Screaming Chamber. All of the workshops dealing with rage were very well visited and have attracted audiences that have never visited the festival before, especially a workshop led by one of the most famous Croatian hip hop artists Edo Maajka (Edin Osmic). It has attracted new audiences- young Croatian hip hop artists that usually do not frequent the theatre venues, or the festival but also participants from the region. In terms of visibility and outreach, it has generated big media attention in mainstream (TV, radio, newspapers) and social media. (SCZG: 2016, np.)

was to involve the young dance students of the Dance Intensive Program (realised by the school department of Tanzfabrik Berlin) that were an “interesting target audience, but that have been hard to involve in the past years” (Orlok, 2018). From 2017 on, Tanzfabrik implemented a series of theory workshops (twice a year) about contemporary performing arts and dance with the dramaturge Silke Bake (and later on with the artist Peter Stamer). The task was to create two formats for an “After talk” following two different performances of apap artists and to find appropriate strategies to talk about contemporary art while reflecting on the experience of watching. According to Orlok (2018), the implementation was very successful, because not only the addressed students were consequently watching more performances, but also the innovative after-talk format engaged audience members in the issues from dance and contemporary performing arts.

The dialogue between artists and audiences was also strengthened through the public formats "Time to meet" which was “a series of open rehearsals and discussions, a meeting place for exchange and feedback on artistic processes”, the "Morning show” that hosted talks with apap artists as well as inside the apap production studio (Tanzfabrik: 2016, np). According to Orlok, Tanzfabrik will continue with programming these similar formats for deepening the understanding of contemporary performance and dance. As one of the main benefits of collaboration in the network, Tanzfabrik director sees in local audiences experienced artistic works and gets not only an insight in different aesthetics they never could have without APAP.

Besides new audience development formats, Orlok notices another curatorial influence of the network. While intermediality has been a part of Student Centre’s artistic programme since its beginnings, Orlok recognized that since joining apap in 2005, there has been exchange between artistic genres since the network’s artists not only work in dance or choreography, but also in theatre, visual arts and performance art that resulted in more diverse aesthetics.

6.2.3. New production models: diverse interpretations of “business”

According to the apap's „review to New Business Models in the arts and culture sector“ (apap: 2020, np), apap – Performing Europe 2020 also placed a strong emphasis on “New Business Models”, via theoretical exchange amongst experts, artists and interested partners and institutions and a practical implementation of three specific Business Models, which have been worked out during the four years period. The theoretical exchange took place in two laboratories, with experts from all partner organisations as well as apap-artists (e.g, Ivana

Müller and Michikazu Matsune) and experts from other cultural institutions (e.g, José Rodriguez from TransEuropeHalles/Creative Lens).

The network partner BIT in Bergen, Norway, organised a second laboratory in October 2018. In the second lab, the emphasis was on the role of art in the business sector as well as on transfer of value between culture, education, health and finance sectors with questions such as “Why do we regard Art as a necessary part of a society? Is it possible to talk about usefulness connected to an artistic experience? If yes, how do we translate this value into a concrete measure?” The results of the workshops contributed to the testing of three business models among the partners: Centrale Fies has set up a creative structure to administer tasks for artists that brought income, Superamas has created a model in France and Austria to raise funds for knowledge transfer and funding for young artists, and SZENE Salzburg used their venue to raise income for the artistic budgets. Similar business models were not implemented during the previous project cycle “Performing Europe (2011 – 2016)” or, at least, entrepreneurial production models were framed and highlighted in the way as during the “Creative Europe (2014- 2020) programme cycle.

The dynamic discussion between the EU cultural administrator, apap’s general manager and artists collaborating with the network on the implementation of business models in “Performing Europe 2020” at the symposium “Passion and politics” artists revealed a lot of tension between different discourses and modes of work.

Elisabeth Pacher from Creative Europe Desk Austria was very clear on the background of this new priority:

“You have to know that Creative Europe adopted this economic approach due to a necessity. It would have been impossible to maintain this program without an economic approach. And to argue a European program you need facts and figures. Because without showing evidence you will not convince the European level to design and finance a European program.”

The general manager Bertie Ambach mentions another reason for new business models as a priority were the cuts of cultural budgets: “The idea behind it is to ask cultural institutions to think about other sources to finance the work... So, it’s not the administration who is doing the guidelines and the priorities, but politicians. So it’s a political decision from the beginning.” Ambach also mentions there is a different understanding of “business models” in the arts as

there already exists a lot of know-how and “hundreds of tried out projects” from the apap partners already that was not so far framed as such.

On the other hand, Ivana Muller, the artist collaborating with the network suggests contesting the term of business: “What is a business? It is coming from this neoliberal jargon, it’s making profit. Let’s think about what is profit in the context of art? And who profits? Can we all profit equally? Can art and culture be democratic?” Peter Stamer, another artist, is much more critical: “When I listen to you guys, a lot of you, I am bit annoyed at the way how you use “business plan” without being ashamed, actually I’m shocked about the level of how we’ve been submitting ourselves to something that has nothing to do with what we are interested in. And of course, because since the 90s, all the marketing talk, there’s a lack of money, we say at least we do it because we are the experts in it. Rather than saying the whole idea is totally wrong. We are feeding, we are feeding ourselves with poison all the time.”

In the other part of the conversations Muller mentions a successful example of cooperation between public and independent theatre that took place in Salzburg:

“What they did is amazing, it should be a model for Germany- they took the money for one project of the Schauspielhaus, one project, they gave it to artists in residence and Thomas Frank and his team managed to have five co-productions, ten guest performances, and salaries for four people for the whole year. (...) But if they can all give the money for just one project to what in Germany is called Freie Szene, then a lot of people will have a possibility to show the work, present the work and also influence the (Schauspiel-goers) with some other ideas. (...) There are institutions that do have quite a lot of money. I am talking about the distribution of the money that is there. I mean, come on, Europe is the continent with the most public money for culture and art. So, we can already start from there..”

When suggested this might be a “business model”, Muller replies this rationale is actually “common sense”. Therefore, it seems there is a difference of the term “business models” between artists, managers and cultural administrators that will be addressed more in detail towards the end of chapter.

6.2.4. Evaluation criteria: qualitative vs. quantitative

Respondents from both Tanzfabrik and Student Centre Zagreb insist on a necessity to rethink the existing criteria for their projects. Orlok (2018) is very clear when he says “To put art in numbers does not make sense”, and proposes another mode of evaluation:

“As already mentioned, it is difficult to quantify art. In fact, I would see it most effectively if local experts attend the work process and if there is a performance (premiere and derniere) in 2 - 4 dates. Then in a short report with maximum half a page with an assessment by eye (a common evaluation method in social science). I think that would be the easiest way to save working hours and tons of paper and involve local experts in European working contexts.”

He also mentions the difficulties of evaluation of experimental practices in contemporary art and mediation of its value to the politicians: “The moment of the "avant-garde" in contemporary art with its fractures and irritations is strange enough, not easily communicable.” He associates this also with the pressures of market-oriented cultural policies since the cultural practitioners often have to adapt to the criteria to “meet the needs of the majority and their desires for a commercial and consuming art approach” which often appears as an issue in dialogues with local decision makers. He quotes a local politician’s statement from one of these dialogues: "Dance AND Contemporary" is a double niche". This mode of understanding of the field makes contemporary dance double marginalised.

Ivana Muller also suggests alternative modes of valuing and evaluating the arts, stemming from the logic of the art as opposed to monetary value:

“Yes, but you can introduce other elements. Okay, there is a monetary economy, which everybody works on, but how about putting either for instance what kind of relationship you develop. You know, what kind of, and think about other ways, which can be quantifiable, but they are diverse. “I think because the very important thing about art and culture, is that it innovates or invents (...) the way how we collaborate, it invents the way how we live.”

Silvija Stipanov from Student Cultural Centre Zagreb agrees that culture should be evaluated more qualitatively than quantitatively: “The impact of culture cannot be seen through one event, one festival, it’s really like a lifespan of somebody’s meetings with the arts.”

6.2.5. Influences of funding criteria on curatorial strategies

When speaking about possible influences on programming, a past artist Ivana Muller that collaborated both with the Student Centre Zagreb and Tanzfabrik is very straightforward:

“I think it is very important not to do these things because a cultural policy dictates us to do this. I think this rule about cultural policies for me is more there to bend them. When somebody says ‘you should do it like that’ it is exactly the place where I think, well how else can I do it? So in that respect of course I totally understand there are frames, but I think what is very interesting is how to negotiate those frames, and re-question them, and through this re-question the way how we live together, work together, etc.”

The general manager of the network, Bertie Ambach, is more pragmatic in regard to responding to certain priorities and objectives of the program but still artistic production at the centre:

“So it’s our job to deal with political guidelines, facing the most important reason we are doing this- helping artists to produce... That’s our main focus, it’s all about artistic production, this is the centre. And you have to follow the priorities and objectives of the program. Even if maybe from the outside it is not easily to understand immediately, how is audience development linked to artistic production, or new business models, which is one of the priorities we have to deal with, this is nothing we can choose, right? It’s the guidelines, and up until a certain point we have to follow and it’s our creativity, it’s our experience, it’s our know how, to do this in a smart way and to save as much as possible, let’s put it simple, as much as possible money for artistic production.”

While Ambach states there is not much choice to following the guideline, speaking from an artistic position Muller believes that, instead of “following the guidelines that the European administration gives us”, the network should use this opportunity to “teach the European administrators on how to do the production” since the artists and producers have a bigger understanding there in the European Union. Ambach partially disagrees since, according to her this is discussed on “another level, the different evaluation groups for the programs” where experts who are implementing the programmes can also provide feedback to constructing criteria for evaluation. But, in general, Ambach reiterates her opinion on influences of the programme’s criteria on the conceptualization of the project: “If you work on the application, you really have to follow the criteria very strictly, otherwise it’s a waste of money and everything.” When asked whether responding successfully to the criteria of audience development and new business models is possible only in “phrasing the application or is there actually something happening in this direction?” Ambach replies that the cultural practitioners take those priorities very seriously since “it’s not so easy to understand and get in the context of these priorities due to working in a field contemporary dance and performance”.

Again, Muller is quite critical towards such adaptation to the funding criteria:

The problem is when it gets forced. (...) It’s actually very colonising. Different people have different consciousness, why should everything have the same? I think what is interesting in thinking of society today is there are those different transversals, ways about how you can rethink culture. And I think it’s very important, I mean from the artistic point of view, of course you think about where can you place your work. (...) I have a project now that can be seen by only 120 people in 10 years. So there is one person per month. And this is of course, productionally speaking, suicidal. But there is a value in this project. (...) So I just think like we should not, the worst thing that could possibly happen is that we all do everything the same. And if everybody integrates those things that the European administration gives you, and everybody just does it as a kind of good soldier business, like we all do these kinds of numbers, and then it’s tick, tick, tick, then it’s over. It’s a total disaster. (...) And I understand that if people want to get public money, we also have to bend things in different directions because we are all there together. But what is really important is to think about the specificity of a project,

of a practice, and I think that any network should basically nurture that. It's a richness."

In this sense, Muller is speaking about value of culture beyond quantitative criteria and standardisation of artistic practices in order to receive funding.

Elisabeth Pacher from Austrian "Creative Europe Desk – Culture" elaborates on the flexibility of the priorities: "You have to interpret them and to adapt them to your needs." According to her, this is the responsibility of curators and project managers: "The job of the advisory services and of the project managers as translators between the cultural policy level and the artistic level." She believes the priorities of audience development and new business models are not in contradiction to the current needs of cultural practitioners:

"The project in general a European or an international cooperation project is a chance to network and to cooperate and these priorities are quite flexible (...) For example, audience development, I think every cultural organisation and every artist want to reach an audience. And a business model is an interesting concept but it is strange to the artistic field (...) A business model is an efficient way to organise your work and it could also be an investment in human resources. For example, training or education measures are a business model. It's an investment and some, at a certain point in the future there will be a return because there is training. (...) colleagues from the dance sector said, "well 'business model' is not the right term for the artistic field, rather say 'development model' because development is something positive that supports artistic careers", and this is what we are going to think about. I think the European project gives some room for freedom."

Still, Pacher takes in consideration the reasoning of the artists on evaluation and proposes a new practice for the conceptualization of the next Creative Europe funding cycle: "It will be good and interesting to engage artists in the evaluation phase and in the design phase of the future program. I am going to suggest this."

6.3. Introduction to Life Long Burning (LLB)

Life Long Burning (LLB) and its successor *Life Long Burning, Towards A Sustainable Eco-System for Contemporary Dance in Europe* (2018- 2022) are both projects supported by the two recent European Commission's framework programmes for support to the culture i.e. Culture (2013 – 2018) and Creative Europe (2014- 2020).

Collaboration between most of the project partners started already within European projects *CoDaCo* (1999-2000), *danceWEB Europe* (2002-2008) and *Jardin d'Europe* (2008-2013), all coordinated by *danceWEB*, a non-profit organisation based in Vienna and active in the field of contemporary dance since 1996 (danceWEB 2021 np). Most of the partners active in these five European projects have remained long term partners within the informal network coordinated by *danceWEB*, having a similar core mission throughout the years.

Looking at the predecessor of the two most recent LLB projects, *Jardin d'Europe* (2008-2013) was dedicated to “the establishment of a sustainable European infrastructure for the professionalisation of emerging dancers, choreographers, dance administrators and dance writers”. In reaction to the economic crisis in 2008, the aim of the project was to ensure sustainable conditions of an Europe-wide work for precarious contemporary dance professionals. Contemporary dance training centres, production houses, companies and festival organisers active in the project were *Danceweb* (AT), *4Culture* (RO), *Bimeras Culture Foundation* (TR), *Centre chorégraphique national de Montpellier* (FR), *Cullberg Ballet* (SE), *Lokomotiva* (MK), *Southbank Centre* (UK), *Station* (RS), *Ultima Vez* (BE) and *Workshop Foundation* (HU). Via eight core activities (Prix Jardin d'Europe. Critical Endeavour, ttt (teaching the teachers), NOMAD, SuSy Support System, danceWEB Scholarships, Wild Cards and Action Research), during a six years period the project provided support for nearly 600 dancers and 100 co-productions as well as 159 teachers and 49 critics and journalists. Overall, the project had an estimated reach of altogether 1.25 million people across Europe (European commission 2015 n.p.).

Its' project successor *Life Long Burning* (2013- 2018), financed within the Creative Europe programme, included more partners in a somewhat widened network: *4culture* (RO), *Institut Chorégraphique International – Ccn Montpellier* (FR), *Cullberg Ballet* (SE), *Danceweb* (AT), *Veem House for Performance* (NL), *Lokomotiva* (MK), *Station- Service for contemporary*

dance (RS), *Tala Dance Center* (HR), *Uferstudios* (DE), *Ultima Vez* (BE), *Workshop Foundation* (HU) and *Workspacebrussels* (BE). Besides the dedication to “the sustainable support of the European contemporary dance and performance field” (LLB 2020 np) similar to *Jardin d'Europe*, LLB had also the aim of the enlargement of audiences for the field. This was realised through ten activities that had aims of “strengthening transnational co-operations, fostering the mobility of artists and their works, contributing to career development, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue and promoting knowledge transfer, audience outreach and the public display of dance” (ibid.): European dance prize for emerging choreography *Prix Jardin d'Europe*, virtual PR platform *Dance Radar Europe*, co-productions *Dance Works!*, training for emerging dance writers *Critical Practice*, training for emerging dance artists *danceWEB Scholarships*, support of artistic development through residencies, workshops and scholarships *Wild Cards*, research and knowledge-sharing modules *Performance Situation Room*, research on teaching practices *teachback*, open source documentation/publications of LLB activities *Dance fiction* and trainings for emerging dance administrators *SuSy-Support System*.

European dance prize for emerging choreography *Prix Jardin d'Europe*, besides the award that supports young emerging dance artists on a European level since 2008, was accompanied a flexible modul *The Labo Prix Jardin d'Europe* which had the aim to increase the visibility and the mobility of artists and touring of their projects. *Dance Radar Europe* was focused on developing strategies for use of mostly digital tools as powerful channel in creating a PR platform for the network, as well as a symposium that would contribute to the visibility of the LLB network. *Dance Works!* was one of the central activities dedicated to co-productions involving artists from at least three different countries chosen via a public call. With this activity, perceived as an “important tool to develop dialogue and exchange both between artists and between dance organisations on the European level” by the project partners, in total 98 co-productions were supported through the five years period. *Critical Practice* was a time-flexible programme oriented towards “empowering discursive reflections on contemporary performing arts and their breakthrough to the larger public” (ibid.) including seminars, workshops and practical engagement at certain events for emerging dance writers. *danceWEB Scholarship Programme* is a five-week training program for young professional dancers and choreographers regularly taking place in Vienna in the frame of *Impulstanz* - Vienna International Dance Festival since 1996. *Wild Card* was an activity entailing training slots for residency and study visits of emerging or midcareer dance artists in another project partners

country and resulting in fifteen performance throughout the years. The *Performance Situation Room* was a flexible and dynamic research and knowledge-sharing model which served as a space for reflection on emerging key concerns in contemporary art practice. *teachback* was a research activity that explored the connections between existing ways of teaching and creating dance, while challenging current practices and develop new techniques in dance education via, mostly peer-to-peer discussions. *Dance fiction* entailed a digital archive of contemporary dance works produced in the frame of *Dance works!* activity, targeted mostly at students but widely accessible. Finally, *SuSy- support system* was a capacity building activity dedicated to professional development of young dance administrators and cultural workers, implemented in the form of two to twelve months internships or research residencies.

This project was succeeded by the currently active „Life Long Burning, Towards A Sustainable Eco-System for Contemporary Dance in Europe“ (2018- 2022) implemented by twelve organisations: *4culture* (RO), *Brain store project* (BG), *ICI- Center Chorégraphique National de Montpellier* (FR), *NDA Slovenia* (SI), *Stuk* (BE), *Tala Dance Center* (HR, until august 2020), *Uferstudios* (DE), *Veem House for Performance* (NL) , *Workshop Foundation* (HU), *MDT Stockholm* (SE), *Kik Melone* (HR, from August 2020). The difference in programming in the comparison with the previous project additions are visible in organisation of the activities into two strands: “boosting artistic development and fostering the professionalization of the scene as well as advocating and advancing the art form and widening its impact all over Europe.” (LLB 2020 np). This project edition has also condensed the number of activities from twelve to six, while keeping the activities of *danceWEB Scholarship Programme*, *SuSY- support system* and *Performance Situation Room* from the previous project cycle. The other three activities are *Creative Crossroads* (funding program that offers residencies, workshops, production cost subsidy, technical assistance etc. depending on the needs of participating artists), *Dance Hub* (education, residencies and production support for aspiring dance artists, administrators and writers) and *Choreographic Convention* (a platform that organises mostly discursive formats addressing current topics in contemporary dance). As mentioned, this project has a clearer capacity building aim than the previous ones or, in the words of project organisers: “We qualify dance artists and extend their skillset with activities in the fields of high-class training and on-the-job-learning.” (European commission 2021, np). Also, audience development is more highlighted within the project via two transversal approaches: “The first approach fosters the dialogue of dance with other art forms and urban

players, the second one develops a strong feedback attitude with relevant forms of audience engagement by each implemented activity” (ibid). What is also a new is do use of the notion of an ecosystem “as a lively and transformational space unfolding the potential of this forward-looking artistic field and outlining developments for future communities” (ibid.).

6.3.1. Introduction to Uferstudios GmbH

Uferstudios GmbH is owner and manager of Uferstudios, a historically protected area renovated into a space for contemporary dance in Berlin’s district of Wedding. It consists of 16 studios that range from 85m² to 415m² offices and workshops (Uferstudios 2019 np).

Historically, the space was used as an electrical trolley depot since the finalisation of its building in the 1920s. According to Barbara Friedrich, one of its founding members, it took a decade of advocacy processes to get a lease on the space from the city authorities (Srhoj 2014 145). In 2000, around hundred dancers and choreographers gathered into a dance association in order to advocate for better conditions of work and more space for contemporary dance in Berlin. In 2004, the association mapped the needs of all the venues involved in contemporary dance, realising it’s mostly lack of space, and found a network *Tanzraum Berlin* consisting of “all the main structures that are involved in dance – theatres, larger projects such as dance in schools and even *Staatsballet* (state ballet, a.c.)” (ibid.) Together, they drafted a paper about mutual goals of building knowledge transfer, developing contemporary dance education at the University level and securing production space for contemporary dance. This was the basis for more concrete negotiations with the city government. During the negotiations, it was clear the desired space for contemporary dance would be non-hierarchically governed and envisioned as a space mostly for production, research and exchange- thus, not only presentation which was the usual case with the dance venues until then. The involved venues then invested a smaller fee oriented towards a search for such a space in the city supported employment of two people at the Dance Office (*Tanzbüro Berlin*), who then also found in the space of today’s Uferstudios. The city government was clear about not wanting to pay the rent or running costs of the space but they agreed to invest the lottery money into the renovation of the space that then opened in 2010, which marked the beginning of Uferstudios activity as it is today.

6.3. EU programme influences on curatorial programming of the Life Long Burning network

6.3.1. Influences of collaboration on individual partner's sustainability

Very similarly to the previous case study, both parties experience different impact of their network involvement on their sustainability. For example, Weilet explicitly addresses this when she says that the Uferstudios “could survive without EU funding, but couldn't do any content without it” unlike NDA “whose structure depends on it” (Letunić 2019: pp). To clarify, Uferstudios is funded completely by rental of the studio spaces (8.7 € per square meter per month) by the freelance artists whose projects are funded by the Berlin Senate which also accepts rent costs in the project funding (Srhoj 2014: 149). On the other hand, gained a framework to curate content as well besides being a dance production centre.

On the other hand, Stanica in Belgrade operates within space of Magacin, a self-organised and self-managed venue established by non-profit organisations and artistic cultural collectives in Belgrade (i.e. by a former network Other Scene). The space operates through an open calendar system guided by the values of equitable use of common resources, solidarity, and social and cultural diversity which also means it is currently the only contemporary dance and performance space in Belgrade that is free with a small participation for the running costs. According to Đurović (Letunić 2019:), although it doesn't have any kind of structural support, interestingly enough the venue produces around a thousand programs a year. In such unstable conditions, Cvetković explains Stanica- Service for contemporary dance has two monthly half-time salaries for secured by the EU grant due to collaboration in two five-year long projects i.e. Jardin d'Europe (2008- 2013) funded within the Culture 2007-13 funding cycle and Life Long Burning (2013- 2018) funded by Culture 2007-2013 and Creative Europe 2014-2020

The gap between international and local funding, or more specifically, the absence of a strategy for Serbia's independent contemporary performing arts scene, is crucial for long-term sustainability of Stanica and similar organisations in the region. According to Cvetković, in this instance, European financing could serve as a good catalyst for local cultural policies that support what has been appreciated internationally. However, there is no chance for such

development of the contemporary dance and performance field because there is an apparent lack of dialogue with the local policy makers. Therefore, she frames this problem in very clearly:

And this is the paradox of our situation, where we have really benefited a lot as experts, artists, producers and so on from these projects and exchanges and collaborations but when it's gone, when the projects are over, we are not functional, because we don't have the structure in which we can function. Everything is embedded in our own bodies and minds, and can go away with our bodies and minds.

Thus, the curator of Uferstudios refers to the funding by European Union as supplementary to the local funding, while the grant received by Stanica is perceived as the support the organisation's sustainability *dependent* on.

6.3.2. New formats: focus on audience development

Both Life Long Burning project cycles had placed an emphasis on mediating contemporary dance to the wider public, mostly through discursive events. The first project cycle included the initiative Dance Radar Europe initiative which to devise tactics primarily employing digital technologies as an effective way of establishing a public relations platform for the network as a whole and its actions (LLB 2021 np). In the second project cycle, the audience development platform was widened into the programme Choreographic Convention consisting of eight distinct professional platforms throughout projects four-year duration, which tackled contemporary issues within the field of dance and its social value. These platforms consistently reinforced the concept of contemporary dance as a vital component of European cultural heritage. The programme comprised of various academic activities such as lectures, panels, workshops, presentations of works, advocacy activities, and actions that pertain to the local reality of the host of the convention (ibid.). Weilet also highlights this when saying Uferstudios was already working in this direction when performing “invisible work of connecting, networking, advocacy, discursive events” that its participation in the network enhanced.

Regarding the shift in priorities from intercultural dialogue to audience development, Cvetković accentuates the first priority in terms of international collaboration and connecting local to international context made “much more sense” than the one of audience development. In her opinion, the priority actually denominates market development or “enlarging number of buyers” unlike community building i.e. the way she understands audience development. Within the second chapter, it has been more thoroughly explained how the priority of audiences development converges towards economic rather than social goals.

Similarly to Weilet, she understands audience development as events who which do not sell tickets but both communities, such as engaging discursive events, “programs for children, programs for debates and discussions, to conferences and lectures to performances”. What is interesting is that both project cycles repeat the same program called “Performance situation room” which openly addresses emerging situations in the field of contemporary dance both locally and globally. This is achieved through the creation of formats that are tailored to the specific scenario at hand, such as mediation, cultural education and inclusion. Finally, it can be concluded there has been a slightly stronger focus on audience development following the shift of priorities in Creative Europe calls but only if audience development is understood as a wider concept including discursive events, advocacy and educational activities.

6.3.3. New production models: diverse interpretations of “business”

When talking about business models that appear as a priority in Creative Europe, both curators focus on different economies within the network. For example, Weilet mentions that “in Berlin and further South- East”, the network partners mainly offer goods rather than money. Cvetković elaborates more in detail how the network partners negotiate their investments depending on the resources stemming from the (lack of) support in the local context, taking into account specific situations. Examples, Stanica- Service for contemporary dance does not have permanent funding or structural grants which makes their sustainability unstable but, on the other hand, there is a sensibility of the network partners to this situation. This is reasonable in focusing on the local needs within programs, such as the special program line intending just for the post- Yugoslav region, i.e. Nomad Dance Academy education program.

Within both Lifelong Burning project cycles, Partners managed to negotiate different financial positions based on their sustainable resources within the local context. For example, as Cvetković states, project partners in Riga as well as Stanica, don't have to pre-finance 20% of the project, but get everything refunded from the programme due to the very precarious situation as organisations.

Therefore, according to Cvetković, it is possible to adapt “every rule to the real needs if you have good partners”, which are sensible to difficulties and different situations that exist still in Europe and beyond. In a way, partners within the project contested the framework of Creative Europe programme which prioritizes cultural industries and bigger events that have the potential to become financially self-sustainable due to high revenues. She also highlights "measures to protect the banking sector" because there are many cultural players who take loans to co-fund European grants. The Creative Europe programme has developed the tools, the instruments to protect the loan-givers, banks, with about 6% of the budget, which is quite a secure budget for the banks. Therefore, in the unfortunate scenario that a cultural operator fails, European Union will return the funds to the bank in order to protect it, which is all aligned with the convergence with economic goals.

6.3.4. Evaluation criteria: qualitative vs. quantitative

Both curators are critical towards the question of evaluation within the open calls but they also do not want to conform to the existing criteria in any ways. For example, Weilet explains the network cut actions in the application although this usually lessens the chances of receiving the funding. Therefore, she believes it was a brave decision not to focus on how much work done as we are producers but rather follow a smaller number of artists for a longer period in opposite to hyperproduction.

This struggle to integrate more continuity rather than quantity is a direct result from the spillover of language and rationales from the profit-driven creative sector. Possibly, integrating culture and media in one program is also a result of this agenda. Demonstrated in chapter 2,

the language question is something that produces consequences in curatorial strategies but in this case, both curators recognise it and refuse to adapt. Seems to be the biggest problem is the criteria of visibility since this is a systemic problem that belongs to the whole field of contemporary dance and performance. The question of artistic research also appears as urgent since the field tends to engage in diverse research activities although they do not always produce visibility.

However, Cvetković elaborates on how the evaluation of both projects has always been positive since the diversity of activities reached out to an even larger territory than the original network. Apparently, there is always a way of negotiating with the criteria around the quantitative aspects of them.

6.3.5. Influences of funding criteria on curatorial strategies

When talking about evaluation and criteria, Weilet is very straightforward when saying the project applications do not have the language of the programs the curators refuse to use but they still try to explain how the projects fit the criteria:

And this is I think a very smart way of doing it because we don't have the feeling of selling out to those criteria, adapting to those criteria, but using them. And this is also one of the things that is always problematic with any funding applications, how far you give in to language of those programs, how far you give in to their evaluation markers etc., or how you can underrun them without, you know, lying, or without not passing basically. And I think a couple of terms, I mean yes, I mean it is kind of very influenced by economic terms, marketing terms, etc., and buzzwords like "sustainability" can be used in so many directions, and also artistic work, I mean the artistic field wants sustainability. So using the same term but with a different understanding and a different approach is always possible I think.

Another strategy both curators mention is to find spaces and timeframes for exchange within the project that allows to react spontaneously to the demands in the field. For example, in both project cycles the program Action Performance Situation Room what is envisaged as a very loose framework that reacts to actual demands and problems in the scene. Interestingly, during the application process, it is not explicitly articulated what are the content of this program would be which is something that could have been expected to be evaluated more negatively. Cvetković explains the rationale behind the programme:

We persuaded our partners that it is useful to create a program line that would allow us to not to promise exactly what we will do during five years, but would rather allow us a possibility to react in the moment with things that change, with situations that appear, with surprises that would happen, because we are in the arts field, and to have some money to be able to react on these new events. And this program that we created that saved an important portion of money within the whole budget, made us create, I think, ten times more, super important and very relevant events and projects on the European or international level because we were able to intervene in the moment. So when you look at this line, which was called, we gave it or actually the Danceweb gave it quite a general name, Performance Situation Room, meaning nothing but when you look at what happened under this line, you say like all the most relevant things in Europe are linked to this program because the partners could say like 'Ah I have some money, I want to invest', for example this Post Dance conference in Stockholm, a few years ago.

Further on, the issue of the precarity of dance artist is usually not well appreciated when mentioned in the application but in the case of Life Long Burning, explicitly addressing turned out to be successful. Interestingly, when discussing EU criteria, Weilet positions it as more open than local, national or other transnational policy instruments:

Within the logic of project application, you always need to know in advance what is going to be, rather than being able to make decision along the way of making. And I think also the structure of EU program is somehow easier than other funding bodies. You never have to be that concrete on contents, on certain topics, yes, but not that concrete on implementation and topics that you are going to do. It's more open with EU funding bodies than it is with other funding bodies.

Cvetković also reflects positively on the experiences around the dialogue with the Creative Europe criteria:

Their rules then are understood as a general frame but then you are free to somehow intervene within your local, within your specific situation. So in that sense these rules are not that rigid, there is always a possibility that you somehow intervene with your own needs. Performance Situation Room is for me another proof that it is possible to, how to say, model the program according to your needs, but you have to dare and you have to, you know, understand how it works and just, you know, put there what is really needed for you, and then it goes. It works.

It can be concluded that in comparison to the previous case study, as well as the mapping of the field, the curators from the Life Long Burning network offered a more positive outlook on perspectives of negotiating with the increasingly socioeconomic criteria. Therefore, this example opens up a space for further dialogue with policy makers and contesting the usual production models in the contemporary performance, theatre and dance field.

7. Conclusion: Perspectives of the dialogue between transnational policymakers and independent performing arts scene in Europe

Art is not a mirror to hold up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.
(attributed to Bertolt Brecht)

Amidst economic, humanitarian, ecological, and social crises, this research aims to make a contribution to the heated discussion in Europe regarding the value of the arts conducted by scholars from diverse fields within the social and humanistic sciences. The primary objective of this research was to examine the correlation between contemporary cultural policy frameworks and organisational cultures within the European independent performing arts sector, which is deemed precarious. The aim was to provide understanding that might participate in the creation of supranational European guidelines for the evaluation of contemporary arts that are more sustainable, open, and democratic. The qualitative analysis presented arguments and findings that aimed to contribute to a new perspective on the role of independent performing arts within society. Specifically, it explored the relationships between cultural policy and the value of arts, as well as the involvement of independent culture and arts organisations in the development of criteria for their work.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we witnessed redistribution of resources is possible as well as the significant importance of solidarity, networks, and mutual aid and support. For example, Fonds Darstellende Künste during and after the pandemic supported a series of artistic research laboratories during which research was approached as wage work (Fonds DaKu 2022: np). The pandemic also made us question the issue of the dominance of productive labour. The pervasive nature of quantitative assessment has permeated all aspects of the performing arts professions, encompassing the enumeration of new events and productions, as well as an unwavering preoccupation with quantifying impact. The pandemic of burn-outs, banality, and pollution can be attributed as the logical consequence of the aforementioned phenomenon (Perform Europe 2021: np). Therefore, it is recommended that funders of

different kinds shift their attention away from the quantity of activities and production, and instead prioritise the quality of processes, relationships, and experiences. Contemporary evaluation methodologies for project proposals, reports, and work in general must incorporate approaches that are attuned to these elements. This necessitates the inclusion of more qualitative data, diverse stakeholders, and varied evaluation criteria.

The use of the interdisciplinary approach in this thesis involved the examination of phenomena from various angles and disciplines, including theories pertaining to the sociology of arts, philosophy of arts, theory of performing arts, cultural policies and cultural management, performance studies and curatorial studies. In addition to the aforementioned theoretical frameworks, the thesis also incorporated several illustrative case studies that enhanced comprehension of the aforementioned dynamics and curatorial strategies in the contexts of post-Yugoslav, German and European independent performing arts scenes.

The second chapter focused on the consequences of post-political reasoning (Žižek 2013) on cultural policy in terms of explanation of most of the levels of value we can attribute to cultural products through economic logic which ultimately led to the discourse of *justification of the arts* and “post-capitalist cultural policies“ (Dragičević Šešić 2021). Further on, it demonstrates how the economic aspect of culture has grown significantly within the European Union cultural policy instruments since the early 1980s at the latest. Also, it shows how this convergence is visible in the discourse shift towards economic arguments and objectives in the field of culture.

The subsequent chapter examined the manner in which an independent performing arts scene in Europe provides a more piercing reflection of the previously mentioned social complexities and the transformations in European society. This is attributed to the extensive reach of its networks, which transcend national performing arts cultures, as well as the precariousness of its work conditions. This chapter analysed the impact of precarious work conditions on the development of new organisational cultures, resistance strategies such as collectivity, political potentials and forms of solidarity within the independent contemporary performing arts scene in Europe. The analysis is based on an interdisciplinary literature review and field research conducted through participation in symposia and gatherings focused on contemporary performing arts work conditions.

The fourth chapter explored the potentials of performing arts curation to challenge current European cultural policies. It opened with a brief comparison of the genealogy of the curator in the visual and performing arts. Suzana Milevska's concept of "curatorial agency" and contemporary understandings of the "curator as an intermediary" serve to highlight the discrepancies between the socio-political conditions of production and circulation in the two fields. The second part of the chapter draws on interviews with performing arts curators from independent organisations active within European project networks to further examine the implications of curating as a mediating cultural-political practice. Finally, in a context where cultural policies increasingly support market-oriented cultural actors, it calls for a stronger accountability of the performing arts curator in the negotiation of values between the artistic community, audiences, and policymakers.

The following chapter prepares the ground for the case studies and provides an overview of cultural policy developments performing arts landscapes in both Germany and the post-Yugoslav region. The introductory section of this chapter aims to lay the groundwork for case studies by presenting a thorough overview of the development of cultural policy systems in relation to the independent performing arts sector, along with the main challenges faced. The analysis of the independent performing arts sector prioritised the evaluation of material production conditions, including funding mechanisms, the instability experienced by artists and cultural workers, and the advocacy actions and organisations. The subsequent section of the chapter comprised reflections on two separate events („Dance vs Circumstances“ in Berlin and „Nomad Dance Advocates“ in Belgrade) that brought together artists, curators, researchers, and policymakers to examine the manifold issues encompassing the precarious nature of work and the corresponding tactics of resistance within the independent performing arts fields in Europe, with a particular focus on Berlin and Belgrade. The objective of the reflections was to illustrate how professionals from varied backgrounds acquire knowledge from each other's models and establish partnerships to foster a more diverse, self-governing, and resilient sector of independent performing arts in Europe.

The case study research methodology is used in the following chapters with four representative examples from post- Yugoslav (Stanica- Service for Contemporary Dance from Belgrade and Student Centre Zagreb), and German (Tanzfabrik and Uferstudios from Berlin)

independent performing arts scenes. These are part of two European networks—Advancing Performing Arts Project (apap) and Life Long Burning—that have been operating for more than twenty years and that have resulted in changes in curatorial decision-making that may have come as a consequence of the European Union's redesigning of its grant-making programmes. With a focus on the most recent two financing cycles (Culture and Creative Europe), which this research revolves around, it was pertinent to evaluate how these changes affected stakeholders with various levels of support in their local and national environments throughout that extended period. Within the case studies, the curators reflect on practices recapitulated by the policy instruments such as Creative Europe and its' priority of audience development. In the case of Creative Europe, this emphasis on “audience development” for them also indicates that the priority in the willingness to provide support is a carefully targeted plan that is oriented above all to cultural consumption, with a significant risk of cultural added value and output becoming predictable.

The main findings reached within the final chapter is that organisations due to the influence of shifts in cultural policy priorities tend to atomization of artistic work; objectification of aesthetic operations and processual aspects of works of art, the “audience turn”, focus on presentation and circulation of artworks rather than production and increased precarity due focus on quantitative rather than qualitative evaluation. However, the trends which appear are also the positioning of ‘curatorial agency’ as a cultural policy concept as well as “ungoverning dance” (Burt 2016), meaning that certain works of art and production strategies perform alternative communities or, on the one hand, highlight hidden power dynamics that result in precarious lives of performing arts workers, both as political activities.

The hoped-for result of the research is that it will provide valuable insights for policymakers and cultural practitioners alike, leading them to reconsider their thinking and practices regarding the intricate relationship between cultural politics, cultural value, and cultural production.

7.1. Policy recommendations

This chapter offers recommendations for transnational cultural policies that address the future of cultural policy for the independent performing arts and have as their guiding principles analysed notions of the value of the arts and the politicality of performing arts. Going back to Matarasso's theory on measuring methodology of impact of the arts (1997) from the second chapter, it is reasonable to claim that it still has resonance today, both within and outside of the European setting. The following motto is frequently seen at project-writing sessions for EU cultural institutions: "Europe does not fund projects, but finances its policies through projects." The European Education and Culture Executive Agency, which oversees funding programmes for the arts, has cleverly employed Matarasso's notion that art can be used as a tool for controlled policy-making. On the other hand, as a result of COVID-19 crisis, European Parliament recently voted a "Resolution on the situation of artists and cultural recovery on 20 October 2021" (2020/2261(INI)), which again emphasised the need to improve the working conditions of cultural and creative workers and called on the Commission to establish a European framework for their working conditions.

In all contexts of curators participating in this research, it is repeated the funding falls short of the demand and that the small amounts prevent the development of valuable artistic potential. Precariousness is nonetheless a constant concern for artists and theatre makers, despite the greater diversity and higher funds in Germany and the rest of western Europe. Even so, very few organizations in the scene are able to finance their artistic endeavours in a way that allows them to achieve their artistic goals without having to make compromises while also upholding the bare minimum requirements for the payment of the artists involved and the provision of social safety nets. This highlights the need for structural transformation, innovative improvements of the economic and social conditions for performing artists, and increased arts funding in each country. Additionally, this research demonstrates that securing minimum fees, preferential social security treatment for performing arts professionals, increases in funding, and flexible and reactive funding systems that reflect the needs of the performing arts community are solutions to permanently securing the diversity and sustainability of the field.

According to IETM (2022: 2), the European Union’s Work Plan for Culture did not specifically cover performing arts, but it did target other fields (such as music, audio-visual media production, and cultural heritage). The performing arts sector, which employs the most people in the cultural sector and was hardest hit by the COVID-19 epidemic, losing 90% of its revenue in the first year of the pandemic, is the largest cultural sector in Europe. Therefore, in the approaching years, both at the EU and Member State levels, the performing arts sector deserves unquestionably to receive more attention. Consequently, following policy measures can be recommended:

- Establishing a cultural policy model within countries of “Creative Europe” that can serve as a unifying principle across all levels of governance and build on growing practice of *commoning*. This model should promote positive civic values, social justice, solidarity, citizenship through culture, access to culture, cultural participation, and artistic creation. These European commons should serve as a platform for fostering cooperation, collaboration, and exchange among individuals and groups. The aforementioned commons are intended to coexist alongside and beyond the limits of established institutions. This area has the potential to serve as a dynamic testing site for novel concepts in societal mechanisms and as an ideal context for the emergence of new priorities for the European Union. Concretely, this can be done through two steps:
 - promoting *commoning* practices in the arts by providing support and funding for cultural networks and long-term arts collaboration initiatives. The member-states could provide support for artistic cooperation on a small scale across borders, while Europe should prioritise cooperation on a larger scale and over a longer period of time.
 - placing an emphasis on the groundwork that is carried out from the grassroots level for the development of the European commons model for cultural policy. This segment of the programme would facilitate research and consultation initiatives aimed at dealing with all facets of formulating the necessary policy structure for arts and culture across Europe. The proposed measure would enable the European Union to access the extensive range of experiences and suggestions that emerge from common practises, while also providing artists, cultural experts, and policy analysts a platform to express their perspectives.

- In order to address the precarious working conditions of the artists and cultural workers, Creative Europe should increase operating grants instead of funding that is solely project-oriented. It is imperative for the cultural sector to demand an immediate shift in funding schemes that addresses the unsustainable practices that artists and organisations currently face. This fundamental change is necessary to address the issue at hand. The integration of sustainability in both organisational and project aspects require its inclusion in budgetary considerations, alongside the provision of structural support and capacity building for artists, producers, and art professionals. The shared responsibility of encouraging this lies with both artists and policy-makers. Finally, it is important that contracts within the sector adhere to the principles of fair practices, which encompass an equitable allocation of power and benefits. Contracts should represent a structure of clear guiding principles that promote a fair and transparent artistic ecosystem.
- The involvement of civil-society actors should also be reflected in the European Union documents in the field of culture. The dependent position versus power structures that civil-society actors frequently find themselves in should be addressed and fought against by politicians and policy makers, regardless of a number of promising developments and examples of fair practices. Therefore, an open and direct dialogue about expectations and constraints between policymakers and the independent cultural sector would be beneficial in the development of tangible strategies and measures for the gradual transition to fairer practices in the arts such as better working conditions for artists, recognition of their status as artists, and the status of freelance artists.
- Reducing and streamlining the administrative tasks associated with funding access, particularly for project-based activities. allowing the costs associated with writing applications to be accounted for in funding application budgets. Comparing Creative Europe to earlier initiatives, the administrative and funding process was simplified, which is undoubtedly an improvement, but it also increased the possibility of uneven competition. The program's cultural component is specifically too vaguely defined, and since projects that are intended to make revenue are supported under this stream, there is a threat that they will predominate because they are better positioned to compete with other public or non-profit cultural activities. Evaluation and monitoring have to, more than anything else, be evaluated using qualitative criteria on top of quantitative ones.

These qualitative elements must be generated in collaboration with the civil society actors.

Finally, in light of the worldwide crisis brought on by the COVID-19 disease pandemic, it would be tragic to prioritise economic growth over environmental protection and the absence of policies that will assure the elimination of inequality, poverty, and other forms of exclusion. The status of the artists and autonomy of artistic expression should be given the highest priority in a cultural policy based on sustainable development because without them and a balanced approach to all other areas, it loses all relevance in the context of protecting cultural and artistic creativity and cultural heritage (McGuigan 2004: 21). Focusing on a new cultural policy necessitates, among other things, enhancing the significance of local cultural policies and enlisting the cooperation of stakeholders from all fields. This will empower all members of the cultural system to overcome the various cultural differences that lead to inequality of various kinds and to improve working conditions, both for cultural practitioners and artists.

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9. Appendix

9.1. Transcript of “Passion and Politics” symposium, a performing arts project and Szene Salzburg

co-organised by Creative Europe Desk Austria, Cultural Department of the State of Salzburg

Performing Europe festival, Salzburg, January 20th 2018

Martin Pesl:

Let's start by introducing our panel, I would like to introduce them one after the other, then I will ask one question before we start a general discussion. I have questions, but you might have some questions too, so don't hesitate to ask. We are going to open the debate in the end, for when something is very pressing, please signal me and you're going to be allowed to ask a question.

Bertie Ambach sitting here next to me is the co-founder and has been the general manager of the network since the year 2000. She is now based in Brussels and gets valuable peeks into the whole machinery of structural funding. Bertie looking back at 15 years, more of the European networking, what is the one or two things that have changed significantly in this time from your perspective. So, how does politics channel its passion for art, or lack of passion for art over the years?

Bertie Ambach:

It's not an easy one.

Martin Pesl:

I know.

Bertie Ambach:

There are two levels, one is politics, which of course is mirrored in all the programs of the European communities, and the other level is the administration of projects. So I would say on the administrative level I see development in the right direction. It's

getting easier to document, to present results, because first of all its more, you have to be more precise right at the beginning because its easier to do the reports at the end, you have to stick to what you said.

Martin Pesl:

The criteria are defined more clearly.

Bertie Ambach:

Yea, not only the criteria, its more about how to present, so it's very much about wording, about structure, strategies for evaluation. So it's really this simple administrative level. It was more difficult a few years ago from my point of view. The political situation, which is of course much more important than the administrative stuff, it changed to the better. That's clear, we have, We are facing challenging times, not only Europe, but also in Europe. A lot of crucial questions are raised the last couple of years, I don't know how, or we will see how to handle the actual situation for the Brexit, for the European Union to have less money at the end of the day, and how to distribute the money. It's a lot about lobbying of course, and therefor we are in a difficult position because there is hardly any lobbying for culture. So I am not too optimistic to be honest if I think about the future, because even the cultural program is in question. Yea so we'll see.

Martin Pesl:

At all?

17:58

Bertie Ambach:

At all, as such.

Martin Pesl:

Ok. We should definitely pick up on that later, also how, what are the signals that tell you that, but let's do that a little later. The APAP network, for those of you who don't know, currently has eleven partner institutions, dance and performance but also theatre institutions all over Europe in ten different countries, and one associated partner in Lebanon, and they make the applications and they work with the artists, and one of the APAP artists is Maria Jerez, sitting on my left. An artist and choreographer from Madrid where she also teaches a master's degree course in performing arts and visual culture. She showed her new installation and performance "Yaba" supported by La Noche, on Wednesday. Maria, you have been following and hopefully benefiting from European cultural network and cultural activities for a while now. Um, when I talked to Bertie yesterday she assured me that artists are never, and it is very important that they should not be involved in wording issues and filing applications for funding. How much do you get to see of all the networking that is going on, what's the main factor that you benefit from? What's your point of view?

19:32

Maria Jerez:

I think, I mean, I must, there is an institution that pays you, from the network, and that, I mean my relation with that institution went deeper, thanks to the network. So, I think, there were established, already established relationships with certain institutions and certain curators and certain programmers and that's where like, we benefited, both, to go farther in that relationship from the network. And other cases, I think there was an interest that was there, but the institution or the centre didn't have the resources actually to invite me. So in that sense APAP was the possibility to start that relationship, and a chain to continue it. So, I mean, it helps the interest, or the, in my case the already things that were there in between us, to push them farther, that was the main benefit. And of course I could produce certain works thanks to APAP.

Martin Pesl:

That you would not have been able to produce otherwise.

Maria Jerez:

I mean, I don't know. Maybe, but it would have been more difficult for me to find the way to do it, to find the resources to produce them.

Martin Pesl:

And when you say your relationship with the institution deepened, then you mean mostly the institution in Spain, the partner institution that invited you.

21:30

Maria Jerez:

No, the invited institution was in Belgium. Because unfortunately in Spain the situation is very bad, so, I mean, in that culture, in that certain part. So I mainly produce my work since I started out of Spain. I have never had like, a co-production in Spain for my work. This is the first year I got some money I mean, to do that. But I mainly produce my work abroad. So my, um, producing my work has always been in Europe, north of Europe, centre of Europe and my relation, or my, my, yea, relation with this institution, I have the feeling that this allowed us to do more things together. APAP allowed us to do more things together and to think farther.

22:38

Martin Pesl:

Fantastic. Ivana Muller, sitting over there, France-based Croatian choreographer, visual artist and author. Her wonderful piece "Conversations Out of Place" at this festival can be seen tonight, and it says about Ivana in the program book says that her work "rethinks the politics of spectacle", which fits this debate nicely. I was going to ask a different question but I changed it because when we talked before about flirting workshops in

the Netherlands you said you would never be able to flirt if you were told do it from above. Now in Elizabeth's presentation it said "you need to network and cooperate". It's also something told to you by an institution. How do you feel about this networking? Is it something you like to do? Or is it something that you have grown up to doing?

Ivana Muller:

There are many different ways that we network, and certainly I don't need Elizabeth to tell me that I should network. I mean network is a very basic pattern of being a social person, which we all are. Um, and I think that uh, I don't think there is, once we start to institutionalise the way to things I think we just never are going to be very happy, or we never going to do it very well.

And I think to go back to the idea of APAP, I think what is very good about this network, because I am also part of other networks, other European networks, that there is very different, there are very different kind of partners in it, like I am talking about theatres and dance festivals, and I am also talking about artists. Like you have young artists, you have emerging artists, you have established artists and also you have places, I mean big theatres that have a lot of money, or you know spaces that are more relaxed, uh, and I think that is good because there is a diversity of possible relations that can be developed using the network. Uh and I think that's actually quite unique. I mean I am not here to make publicity for APAP, APAP has its problems as well, but I think that's a very positive side of APAP. That means that I personally worked, ah for example in the beginning with two partners, which both, kind of together I think suggested me, into...

Martin Pesl:

Within APAP.

25:16

Ivana Muller:

Yea, before I became, before I became a supported artist, okay? But then, what is very interesting, for example, is that I am Croatian, but I never worked in Croatia before, because when I was 22 I left Croatia and went studying in Amsterdam and developed my practice abroad. But then since there is a Croatian partner in APAP, ah, which, ah, Silvija is here, here, they could because of APAP invite me to do a project in Zagreb. And this is the first time I worked in Croatian, normally I write in English and French, and it is very interesting that for example this would have happened.

An okay, back to your question about the network, I think relationship that I have, not only in APAP but in general, in the way I work, it's mostly with people, its not with institutions. And this for example I work with different programmers, directors, since years, in like, different institutions. There is also something about the sensibility. It's

not that, its never that you have an idea and then you read in the brochure, “this institution is doing that”, “I have”, no matter. I mean it can help of course, it’s very good to be informed but I think it also happens just through the practices, because we do all this, we do this together. Ah, for example in the theatre, its not, this kind of separation, media artists, video, it doesn’t work this way. And I think, but however, I think it is very important not to do the things because a cultural policy dictate us to do this. I think this, this rule about cultural policies for me are more there to bend them. When somebody says “you should do it like that” it is exactly the place where I think, well how else can I do it? So in that respect yes of course I totally understand there are frames, but I think what is very interesting is how to negotiate those frames, and re-question them, and through this re-question the way how we live together, work together, etc.

I can give you an example. There was an APAP meeting in February in BUDA and I raised the question, that I think I can develop through the network of APAP, that has nothing to do with my direct artistic practice, is for example I am very annoyed by the culture of using bottles in theatre, water bottles, plastic water bottles. I think it’s a disgrace. Because you know you have dancers, you have people, in every time theatre, in every dressing room there is stuff of plastic bottles. I think we cannot afford to do this today. So what I can do I want to make a chart and I want to ask all the APAP partners that in their institutions they don’t have plastic water bottles, but that they serve water just from the, for example like here...

Martin Pesl:

So it worked!

Ivana Muller:

No, no it didn’t. I haven’t been you know working on this issue thoroughly, no? But I think if I really insisted on it, I could make it, I could charm them. No but there are really good points worth noting, because I think if we don’t start changing practices on even that level, of how we function, you know, then who will? That’s also interesting in the network, because you can affect a bigger amount of people in a certain way of...

Martin Pesl:

At the same time, in one...

Ivana Muller:

Yea, basically, the fact that you are there, you basically have some sort of a trust. That’s another thing that is good, trust. I mean there’s people who, I mean, we maybe we are not interested in each other’s immediate lets say practices, or works, I mean they are not completely coinciding, but there is the idea of trust and acceptance, and that’s already quite a good place.

29:41

Martin Pesl:

Before I go on, to look at one quick question, because you said being in the APAP network does not affect your artistic work at all.

Ivana Muller:

Who said that?

Martin Pesl:

You just said that.

Ivana Muller:

No, I never said.

Martin Pesl:

Did you say (unintelligible) through the network but it doesn't have to do with your artistic work or....?

Ivana Muller:

No I said I could *also* suggest other things. No, no; it affects my artistic work very much.

Martin Pesl:

Ah *cool*. On my right on my very right we have Ludger Oorlok, from Tanzfabrik Berlin, defines itself as a base for diversity in dance and artistic research in Berlin, providing space for around 200 choreographers and hundreds of dancers per year. And you also have you continue to develop 14 dance studios including a stage for the performing arts in an old bus depot in Berlin. Ludger it looks like the special contribution of the partner Tanzfabrik Berlin is to offer vast amounts of space in Berlin, that you as I have learned often provide to artists from the other APAP partner institutions. Now one of these main catchwords of cultural funding programs has always been "mobility". Considering that everybody seems to come to you, anyway, what does mobility mean to you?

Ludger Orlok:

There are a lot of things around mobility, ideas of mobility. To connect it directly to the APAP network, um the great thing is because we are so diverse, and the group is so different, the artists are so differently working, um we have to be very mobile to get along with each other. So that's a challenge and also a responsibility we have and um it's always a pleasure to find that out that there are some frictions there are some questions we have to solve on a very practical level and on the other side we can see how we can connect, and this connection mode, I would say is this, how can we move, come together, how can we be mobile in that sense um...

Martin Pesl:

And in a very practical sense “meeting.”

Ludger Orlok:

Yes but also content-wise the main thing to work in Europe institution-wise, and artists you are thinking about your ideas and how can we be mingling in a way that they are just coincidence happening, and this is the nice thing about having the spaces. That for example the head of production school in Berlin, is the one where Maria has just been, and then sometimes it happens that the other studios where artists are, you can just have lunch and start to connect, and then let's see, so mobility means also to create openness for each other, and the lucky situation is in Berlin, to come to Berlin, to live in Berlin is not so expensive.

33:20

Martin Pesl:

But that means that you don't travel as much as the others in the network? How much travelling is going on anyway? Because it looks like how everybody is travelling around all the time, holding festivals, holding meetings. Is that a romantic ideal? Or is it actually happening?

Bertie Ambach:

You think it's romantic to travel?

Martin Pesl:

Not anymore!

Ludger Orlok:

No I love to travel but it's not so much, in my institution it is not the core of work to travel and to watch a performance of a work. It's a great thing for Tanzfabrik that we can do that now more often, or that we have the possibility to do that. But this travelling, well, it's dependent on the institution.

Martin Pesl:

There's one guest in the program that can't be here unfortunately. Edita Kozak from CU centre in Poland. She called in sick, at, which is a shame because the question I wanted to ask her is one that I am going to ask the artists now, because I figure about several networks, I don't know about Tanzfabrik Berlin as an institution...

Ludger Orlok:

Regional long-term networks.

Martin Pesl:

The non-European networks?

Bertie Ambach:

I am sorry I don't know your question but there are a few other partners here in the audience of the APAP network it's still, our friend from yea of course, Zagreb and Lisbon, Marta from Lisbon, and Silvija from Zagreb, of course but you decide.....

Martin Pesl:

Well, but then I am gonna pose this question to everybody who can say something about it, it's this being of being part of several European networks. I think its, sometimes for some people its practically necessary, I think the Polish institution depends on it financially, but I think it must also pose challenges, difficulties because different networks have different criteria, atmospheres. What's your experience with it?

Mrta:

I don't have any experience because we only have this, participate in this network. I don't know about this.

Silvija Stipanov:

So for us it's a basically virtually impossible to work without the European projects, because we are a huge institution consisting of 10 venues, which is not structurally supported, so this means we apply to competitions local and national just as any small organisation. Which is, you can't work like that in such a huge structure. So with the European projects we have the, lets say, the base and security to work for and plan to work for four years. So we are basically in this project and also, um, last year we are in another music, contemporary music network. And of course it depends, but the thing is how you connect with the people is always through the program and the similarities of poetics and the artists and the program that you want to develop together, so for us this is no problem, I mean it's the usual way that you collaborate in the arts.

36:50

Martin Pesl:

So there is no interference?

Silvija Stipanov:

In which sense?

Martin Pesl:

In the sense that you want to do something with this artist in this network and the other network wants you to do something different.

Silvija Stipanov:

Yea I mean these are different fields, one is music one is theatre dance more, so there is no interference in this way. But for example we were in another project Connections some years ago, and basically the artists didn't overlap. I mean these are practicalities that you deal with, its like everyday job, I do not make a big deal of it.

Martin Pesl:

In how far are you dependent, maybe this is, gets a little technical into the function, and functionality of the APAP network, and how far are you dependent on local or regional, national money?

Silvija Stipanov:

Totally. I mean totally. In a sense what, what really facilitates our operating is that through this 4 years financing that you have from the EU then you can apply to different international funding to bring in Maria or Ivana or I don't know any other artist from Belgium, or, so there are then different calls that you then apply to and of course coupled with a kind of small local funding that we get for being in a European project we can somehow close the financial construction but its really a struggle, every time. But basically we apply to anything that we can locally, nationally, internationally.

38:29

Martin Pesl:

Yes but what I meant is for the European funding are you dependent on the local funding?

Silvija Stipanov:

Of course.

Martin Pesl:

And in what way does that work?

Ludger Orlok:

It's a 50-50 moment, the EU, as other money givers also say, we give you 50% but you have to find the other, so you are running around, and you are not having stable balance, stability your finances, you have to ask for funding for freelance institutions so we have no other institutional support, so it's a great moment to convince the politicians, "Hey if you give me a bit of money we can bring in some money." With other houses its maybe different because they have the budget for the year, budget for (unintelligible) for the year, plans or...

Martin Pesl:

Does the funding have to be secured before hand or can you say APAP “we need this amount” and then you try to gather the rest by different...?

39:32

Ludger?:

Well I did sign already contracts, when it wasn't there other funding secured. No but that's actually that's a good moment for the European money, in other cases in the German funding system you cannot do it, you have to prove it, but with the European money you prove it with you signature and then you have to find the rest.

Martin Pesl:

What's the artist's perspective on this? How much of this complicated situation do you see?

Maria Jerez:

I got to understand this, I think, I am not sure, like, last year. So, life is a mystery, like, how does this work, how, because of what Ivana was saying because the venues are very different, in size, in scale, in resources, in interest, in artistic direction and everything, so how does this balance? For me it was very mysterious, I think it is very complicated, having a strong one, I have seen a chicken with many, like a hanging chicken, you need a strong voice and you need this hanger. And we always said that there was a mystery always behind it this, this organisation, I mean this organisation, not *this* one, how this works.

41:12

Ivana Muller:

It is really true, that there is something about um, when I entered APAP I was working with two partners and of course I knew about the existence of the others but it was very abstract, you know? And then, what APAP did, and it's interesting it's the only network that I know of that does that, maybe because is it so huge, and it's so nebulous, I mean and its also, I think its opacity is great, you know? Sometimes, that mafia is functioning, I think there is an interesting point, if we talk about policies, you know, not all transparency is always good, and also like, yea, ah it's a long story. But what they decided is that they invite artists on their meetings. That means artists are really part of the networks it is not just a cow that we milked, you know, or, I mean, there is really this more, this horizontal sort of plane where we could ask questions, “How much did you get?” “How much did you get?” How does this work?” I mean all sorts of questions, ah, because most of the time as artists you are asked to talk about your practice, about your intentions, about your ideas, about your past, but you know like, it is also interesting because you are in a relationship, that you ask the producers, what are your intentions? That kind of happens.

The other thing, which is really great about APAP, they are questioning the ethics of work. And also how this work is being, um, ah, yea, the validity or the (unintelligible), so basically you know, so when we go to the meeting we also get paid. I mean, you know, this is all quite small, but it's very good that it's also valued as the work. It is not only the producers that are paid, but also the artists, and I think this is very important in the understanding of those vision methods.

Because you know, we are often asked, in other contexts, artists these days are asked to do all sorts of things, we are writing PR texts, that are just being refurbished, often, to PR frames. We are giving after talks, we are giving extra master classes, we are, you know, we are producing content all the time. And this is ok, we always say yes to them, I don't want to do this, I don't have to do it, you know? But it's also nice to acknowledge that it takes time, it takes investment, and we are also constructing, let's say this kind of common knowledge or content that is available outside of something that we produce or present as our artistic work. And I think in APAP a lot of questions about that have been posed, and I think it's good. So it is not only like ah, product, product product, product, but there is also a reflection about the practices. And this is also I think, one and a half, two years ago, it really started to be integrated much more, very concretely, in the way how the meetings are organised.

44:26

Martin Pesl:

So I suppose it creates artist freedom, or freedom to work artistically on your projects? Does it only do that? Or are there drawbacks as well?

Maria Jerez: What?

Martin Pesl:

Disadvantages as well? So because ah, I think your current project that was shown here, it was originally designed for a public space, open air space, and it has now been shown, uh, in a closed space. Is it something where you say "well ok, it needs to happen so let's do it."

Marie:

Ah, it was meant to be outside but then while doing it, while starting to produce it we realised it was impossible, it because it was in outer Madrid and outside Madrid in July is 40 degrees. So we decided to do it in a non-theatrical space, in a pavilion, in a sport pavilion, but then it went, something went wrong, and then finally we did it in a kind of gallery, industrial space, eh, so this idea of going from there to a more conventional space with exhibitions happened during, by chance like this, work in progress, that's it.

And then when Angel and me, we were thinking about, because, I think the piece itself uh, has the many different possibilities. I think it can be for an alternative space, it can be for a theatre, now I realise it can also be in a theatrical space, it can be in a smaller space, or even you can see it from above that we also discovered these days because of the balcony, that was a treat to see from above.). Ah so it was a bit of dialogu then because of availability to space, and so it becomes a dialogue. I am, I don't feel, I never felt forced on what to do, or that they been invited me to challenge me to challenge the piece.

Martin Pesl:

Do you ever feel restricted?

Ivana Muller: You mean in life or in APAP?

Martin Pesl:

In networks.

47:03

Ivana Muller:

I mean networks are always restrictive. That is part of their nature, and one has to accept it as that. I mean am not in APAP expecting that everything (unintelligible). But what is interesting about it in terms of engagement, is that it is quite fluid and flexible, you know, so it's really, again, there are different forms of support that you can get through APAP, it is really depending on what your are working on, uh, and I think you can find let's say, different modules of how to engage collaboration with one of their departments, that's ok.

But it's definite, it's also possible, that, I mean, I thought of a project and nobody in APAP has something that I need, like that's not the end of the world, I can meet somewhere else as well. And also it's possible that I do some project that nobody in APAP is interested in, that s not the end of the world either. So I think it's very good, that it is rather, yea, it is a rather flexible and negotiable relationship, but still it's a frame and it is there. And you know you can count on it if you need it.

Maria Jerez:

But this frame is not only for us, I think it's also for them (laughs). This is something that I realised. At the beginning, I thought, I remember once something like, I think, I feel that I am dependent, and this feeling at the end like, you know, at a certain point kind of disappeared. But then I heard from, I don't know who in Zagreb, that we are

also dependent, you know and, and, and this restriction, I also realised how that this restriction is also, for the program itself, how can, you said, you know, how can we change things along the way, sometimes it's very difficult, because the obligation itself has to stick, to what was said, somehow.

So this, and also from certain, I guess political things that come from, from above, I don't know how to explain it, but that the, if the issue is audience, somebody, we are talking about something that maybe, we were not especially, so you know like, so then, restrictions are part of the network and its hold, because you have to stick to the application, first of all, so.

Male speaker/artist:

Another point also is it is very exclusive. So we are talking about us, but other artists are coming to me and saying, "Hey, how can I join the network?" In Berlin there are a lot of artists who, so there is this moment of "Ah, there is this big network, and I am not in, I am not in."

Ivana Muller:

But there is also some situation, no? Like there are other artists went out, and some new ones came in. I mean there is every, two or three years, a little bit of no?

50:16

Bertie Ambach:

I like to add anyhow, a few sentences to the mystery of APAP, because, you know, honestly we tried at the beginning, of course, to make visible what we are doing and to make first of all the artists but also an audience to understand what's behind the network. But it's a difficult, or, the structure is not that easy let's put it like this. And again you can read the concept, you will easily find out what APAP is mainly about if you just check the website, yea? Ah, the other thing is, um, if you look closer, yea, I think still it's our job also to protect the artists in a way why we are developing a concept and writing an application as ah, Elizabeth mentioned right at the beginning.

We also talked about it, ah, you have to follow, ah, the priorities and objectives of the program. So it's our job to deal with this, um, political guidelines, um, facing the, the, the most important thing we are doing this, ah, helping artists to produce, yea? Ah, that's our main focus, its all about artistic production, this is the centre. Even, ah, we did so many ah, projects with editions of APAP, different contents, different concepts, but always of course artistic production was the centre and still is. So, ah even if you follow, this is that a bit uh, maybe from the outside not easily to understand immediately, how is audience development linked to the artistic production, or new business models, which is one of the priorities we have to deal with, this is nothing we can choose, uh? It's the guidelines, and up til a certain point we have to follow and it's our creativity, it's our experience, it's our know how, to do this in a smart way and, and

um, to save as much as possible, lets put it simple, as much as possible money for artistic production.

Ivana Muller:

But you can also develop mentalities of working, you know, you should, by doing this, because it's a large group of people. It's also a decision not to, not to work internationally, it's also a decision to share, let's say one production between, ah, many partners. But it's also something that's very interesting, for example, when you say, "we have to follow the guidelines that the European administration gives us", I think it's always a very good opportunity to, to also teach the European administrators how to do, how to do the production. Because they don't...

Bertie Ambach:

But this is a different level.

Ivana Muller:

... do it on an everyday basis we know much more about how this is being done than people who sit there in the European Union and try to think about it from some kind of guidebooks.

54:27

Bertie Ambach:

Yea but this is happening on a different level, because if you work on the application you really have to follow very strictly, otherwise it's a waste of money and actually and everything. But the level where this is ah, ah, discussed is the evaluation groups, the different evaluation groups for the programs. I was already involved in several evaluation groups for the last program, ah, also nowadays because it is midterm now, so the evaluations started last year. And there are different, ah, evaluation groups working on national levels, and in, in, am, ah, in Brussels, organised by, by the agency there, so this is the place where one can give the feedback. And this is of course what I do whenever I have the possibility to do it.

Maria Jerez:

Is it who is going to this organisation, you?

Bertie Ambach:

You have to be invited to work there, and there is, ah, it started a few days ago, the big evaluation you can be published, you know. I think it was last week only. So it spreaded and you also will receive it the next days, it was published last week.

Martin Pesl:

You were invited as an individual? Or as the general manager of APAP?

Bertie Ambach:

As an expert, as an expert, you know, best practice.

Martin Pesl:

But not your function as APAP?

Bertie Ambach:

No, no.

Martin Pesl:

Now because you spoke of a certain mentality, and now the two of the concepts that are part of the criteria have been mentioned several times, new business models and audience development. Now audience development sounds rather obvious, because I think everybody wants audiences to see them. Is it, is there, what is there to do to meet these criteria? Is this something that only features in how you phrase the applications, or is there actually something happening in this direction?

57:01

Bertie Ambach:

No they take it seriously, but there, part of the question is coming from the EU is we should address EU audiences, you know? And, which means they are focused on parts of society that we really, we hardly can reach. Because we are working in a field contemporary dance and performance, it's not so easy to understand and, and uh, get in context, you know? So we try hard, we take it seriously, no doubt about that, but sometimes and this is what we also discussed last time same with the new business models. So, am, it's an illusion, or it's the wrong thing to ask us to start a dialogue, with, ah, I don't know, migrants, you know, or am, under-privileged societies. Yea, we tried, but...

Ivana Muller:

Mean, it can, the problem is when it gets forced. It's really, like, it's total nonsense, it's ridiculous. It's very, it's actually very colonizing. Different people have different consciousness, why should everything have the same, why should everything be for everybody? That's bullshit. And I think what is interesting in let's say, in thinking of the society today, this kind of post-colonial or whatever you want, there are those different transversals, way about how you can re-think culture. And I think it's very important, I mean from the artistic point of view, of course you think about where can

you place your work. You don't think, particularly I do this for (unintelligible). But you know, you know you that want to do this in a smaller venue, you know I mean, I don't know, I have a project now that can be seen by only 120 people in 10 years. So there is one person per month, you know. And this is, this is of course, productionally speaking it's suicidal. But there is a value in this project. There is, I think that it contributes, I guess, because it gets produced in different, in different, ah institutions, and in different festivals. So I just think like we should not, the worst thing that could possible happen that we all do everything the same. And if everybody integrates those things that the European administration gives you, and everybody just does it as a kind of good soldier business, like we all do these kinds of numbers, and then it's tick, tick, tick, then it's over. It's a total disaster. You know, then we will...

I mean the thing is like, you know, what is great in Europe, in different degrees of course, in the countries, is that culture, education and health is a public thing. This is still, I think this is a heritage that we can be very happy about in Europe. Because in the United States, you know what's the biggest part of the budget of culture in the United States? The United States doesn't have a ministry of culture, you know that, huh? The biggest part of their budget is firefighter's orchestras. So that is what (unintelligible) the taxpayer gives their money for. All the rest is being done to the private money. And this is really, it's very, very, very, different way of working. And I understand that if people want to get public money, we also have to bend things in different directions because we are there all together. But I what it is really important is to think about the specificity of a project, of a practice, and I think that any network should basically nurture that. It's a richness. It's really, ah...

1:01:19

Martin Pesl:

Yea and of course the concept of new business models sounds a little bit as if it is going in this this direction, of business, making business.

Ivana Muller:

What is a business, what is it?

Martin Pesl:

What is business?

Ivana Muller:

Yea in this context it's like where, you know, because business is coming from this neoliberal jargon, it's like, making profit. Let's think about what is profit in the context of art? And how do you, you know, and who profits? Can we all profit equally? Can art and culture be democratic? I don't know. You know (noise, unintelligible)...It's very marginal it's ridiculously marginal. You know like I make a piece that tours for ten years and what, maybe I mean, if there is if all together, with video, and

(unintelligible) and all that if in ten years 30,000 people see it, I'm like yea. I mean people will write about it. Like, I have friends that make television programs. You know what I mean, so if it's about numbers we can immediately like, just pack our backs and go home. But I think what happens, is like, we can produce movements, that can be very strong movements from the margin and that they will influence the centre. Because you know imagine there is a piece of cloth, you hold it and stretch it on the margin and you all do this, the movement will flow, it will hit the margin, uh, the centre, it will be a little bit tipped, not so strong, but it will still be recognizable as a kind of movement. So I think in order to, in a certain way, I think it is very valuable what we are doing. We should not think "oh shit", that's wrong, I mean, that's my opinion of course. But you know it's good to remember that.

Martin Pesl:

Well, its probably not when I say it well, I am a new artist, and ah, I have a new business model, which caters to new social layers that have never been to a performance before, will you add me immediately to your network?

Ludger Orlok:

I will have to ask the other 10 partners.

1:03:38

Martin Pesl:

OK. So it's ah, always a mutual decision.

Ludger Orlok:

Yes, yes absolutely. No, but I would, just to add this model sure it's created on another level, just one example, I, I went to a culture secretariat in Berlin a few years ago and asked him also for um, other support ideas, and he said, "Ah, you are not marginal, but you are double marginal, you are contemporary and you are dance, so (unintelligible, laughs) but I also have this (unintelligible) what do you want?" What I got that reaction. And you know um, but this is that, and I, I that love your example, maybe we find strategies, ideas and creativeness in what we are doing. On the other side I saw the budget um, for Creative Europe it's smallest one, one point half million (unintelligible). So the other amounts are much, much, more. Also that, so "if you don't treat us well, when you decide on budgets, so what do you expect?" that you could also say.

Ivana Muller:

And the other thing is this that sharing of resources that exists, you know? I mean, that, we all know that in these times that now there is more and more people who don't have money, you know, and people who a have lot of money. So I have an example from our

practice, I was developing a piece, uh, we were performing here and actually there is a stage dance, and it used to be the rehearsal stage of Schauspiel House, which is like the city theatre, right? And what they did, and this is amazing, I mean it should be a model for Germany, they took the money for one project of the Schauspiel House, one project, they gave it to residents, ok, and in residence, Thomas Frank and his team managed to have five co-productions, ten guest performances, and salaries for four people for the whole year. Well you can imagine, in terms of ah, in terms of chunks money that go, to let's say these Stadtstheatre Culture, and of course it is important, it's part of people's culture, it's great that they are there, nothing. But if they can all give just one money for one project what in Germany is called Free Szene then a lot of people will have a possibility to show the work, present the work and influence also the (Schauspielgoers) with some other ideas.

Martin Pesl:

It's a new business model. One that, ah depends on...

Ivana Muller:

It's a common sense.

1:06:16

Martin Pesl:

Yea, it also depends on that you *have* quite a lot of money that you can...

Ivana Muller:

But there are people, there are institutions that do have quite a lot of money. I am talking about the *distribution* of the money that is there. I mean, come on, Europe is the continent with the most amount of public money of culture and art. So, we already can start from there, from that place.

Bertie Ambach:

And then the background for the business model, this idea, and to force the topic is ah, of course, we have a lot, in, in several countries, there were cuts of cultural budgets. So, the idea behind is, to ask cultural institutions to think about other sources, ah, to finance the work, yea? So, and it's not the administration who is doing, uh the guidelines and, and the priorities, it is politicians uh? So it's a political decision at the beginning. And with this priorities all the priorities are mirrored in the programs, so also mirrored in the Cultural Creative Europe program. Yea. So, am, talking about new business models is really strange in our context. Because we had this workshop in Amiens organised by APAP and if you look at these eleven partner organisations it's incredible the know-how. You know everything is there, yea?

Martin Pesl:

Diverse business models already?

Bertie Ambach:

Yes. We tried out hundreds of projects together, yea? But, yea, some are working, some are not. We have the most important crucial potential, we have creativity, we work with artists. We have invited an expert from a European institution, financed, highly financed by the European Commission, he really has no clue at all no, what he was talking about.

Martin Pesl:

So Bertie you are now involved somehow, in the, being involved slowly in the evaluation of the Creative Europe Cultural program 2014-2020, and then some, hopefully some new cultural program is going to come along. In your expert opinion what do you think is the best-case scenario that we can realistically hope for, in terms of cultural program?

Bertie Ambach:

It sounds maybe a bit stupid but at the moment I really think if there are not too many changes we can be satisfied.

1:09:38

Martin Pesl:

What kind of changes would that be?

Bertie Ambach:

Well yea we have this raise of nationalist parties all over, right wing parties ruling countries, so I don't know, I'm a bit scared if, if I think about the near future.

Ana Letunić:

I just wanted to ask are there any artists in these evaluations now?

Bertie Ambach:

Sure they are also involved I don't know in Austria so much but there are also artists involved in the evaluation of the program.

Elizabeth Pacher:

Wellthe, the consultation was public.... ah.... and you can give an online. Artists invited to the evaluation...

Bertie Ambach:

Yea, yea it's public.

Maria Jerez:

The artists were invited to the evaluation also or not?

Bertie Ambach:

The public, the one was published last week, yes.

Maria Jerez:

But being there, actually there?

Bertie Ambach:

Yea, but this is really happening only twice per period, it's, I don't know, I really don't know.

Silvija Stipanov:

I just wanted to comment, because we have a person that is in the EU administration, I was thinking you know what if you have an operating cells of any hospital, and the way this is set up, like if this was decided from director's office that was never in an operating cell, it would be weird. So I am just saying it would be great to make this more visible, because the artists also don't know when these calls are published. I didn't even get this link yet from our creative desk, for example. And I also wanted to comment on another thing, is that Ivana was already saying, culture when it was coined, in a way, it was always something other than that that can be quantified. So now we are all using these quantifiable measures to measure culture and to give it, give it its value, while it was always actually that which could not be quantified in terms of numbers, so we have to, am, measure then it differently, like qualitatively.

That's why I don't think that the numbers of audiences are, are the, um... and the impact of culture cannot be seen through one event, one festival, it's really like a lifespan of somebody's meetings with the arts.

Bertie Ambach:

But to spread the call is also our job....More people are sending it out is...feedback won't be there at the end of the day.

Maria Jerez:

I think, it's a bit tricky, the idea of a public thing, because then it seems the responsibility is on you? Do you know what I mean?

Silvija Stipanov:

But this is good!

Maria Jerez:

Ah but I think there is also the gesture, to invite, the responsibility of who do you invite, not only the open call I think it is good, unintelligible but the responsibility to invite representation of artists inside the thing which I think is a completely different movement.. You cannot really rely on the fact that there is the public as a thing, and because you also have to be aware that the representation of the evaluation is through the experts.

Because artists are experts for this.

Bertie wrote

Involved also on the level of am, maybe you would like to...

Elizabeth Pacher:

This public consultation, it is accessible everybody and last year we made a workshop with Austrian project managers and partners and we invited them and organised a discussion on future priorities. An, for example this business model was ah, an issue. You have to know, that Creative Europe became this, economic approach due to a necessity. It would have been impossible to maintain this program without economic approach. And ah and to argue a European program you need facts and figures. Because without showing evidence you will not, you will not, convince the European level to design and finance a European program.

1:15:21

Ivana Muller:

Yes, but you can introduce other elements. Ok let's say there is a monetary economy, which everybody works on, but how about putting either for instance what kind of relationship you develop. You know, what kind of, and think about other ways, which can be quantifiable, but they are diverse. And I think because the very important thing about art and culture, is that it innovates or invents not only like some kind of romantic far out ideas, no it also invents the way how we collaborate, it invents the way how we live.

Completely! It's not only programs, its not only what you see onstage, and what can be quantified, like my piece cost that amount of money it really like the way...so how we, yea, how we... So how about constructing something like this as a new way to make evaluations.

Peter Stamer:

So apparently there is no need for a mutual understanding when you talked about it. Because when I listen to you guys, a lot of you, I am bit annoyed at the way how you

use “business plan” with not being ashamed, actually, it’s to me a total surprise. How dare we to speak about something that is so far away from what we are interested in. I mean I’m shocked about the level of how we’ve been submitting or submitting ourselves to something that has nothing to do with what we are interested in.

Ivana Muller:

Yes (unintelligible) we talk about this in the beginning every single...

Peter Stamer:

I want to add something because what I still find annoying, the level of self-chastising, what we are going through, us also.

Ivana Muller:

The level of what?

Peter Stamer:

Self-chastising. What I find annoying, that we are taking on the objectives of a business plan, yea? We are taking it on ourselves! We say ok, there’s an evaluation, let’s at least find a way that we evaluate ourselves. So of course right now at this very moment there’s a congress in audience development on artist development, Vermittlung. So...

1:17:29

Female voice:

What’s Vermittlung?

Bertie Ambach:

Audience...

Peter Stamer:

Ah how do you, what is the English word?

Male voice:

Outreach, outreach.

Peter Stamer:

Outreach.

Female voice: Thank you.

Peter Stamer:

And we start working from the field. And of course because now since the 90s, all the marketing talk, there’s a lack of money, we say at least we do it because we are the

experts in it. Rather than saying the whole idea is totally wrong. We are feeding, we are feeding ourselves with poison all the time. But, and I think there is no doubt about it let's stop that.

Bertie Ambach:

But you do not have to apply.

Peter Stamer:

I'm not sure that's an artistic decision, I am not sure that there is a choice...I'm also not sure that sure that if you are right about if I contributed with collaboration, yes, you are right, but at one point I would be saying, it doesn't even matter, we are being fed peanuts by a program they don't give a, and so on.

Ivana Muller:

Yes, again but then what is the other option? Let's talk about this very issue because.

Peter Stamer:

Ok, please but let's not talk about a business plan. Let's not talk about a business plans, because there is no business, and there's are plans but there is no business.

1:18:33

Martin Pesl:

This seems to have devolved into a slightly different but also very important discussion.

Maria Jerez:

Because I think that what, what Bertie was saying about the right thing and the future of this, is that is the present. I mean, this is actually, what, maybe what, the fear or the thing that it's inside us. Maybe its not, they cut it and we disappear. Maybe its, they are getting in, we are becoming. You know, like a science fiction movie. We are actually working for them, and then you realise its like, ah, its so, green, I remember this, what we are eating us. Maybe the right wing is there. It's putting as working...

Peter Stamer:

It's not the right, sorry its social democratics policy that's terribly wrong, because there's a beautiful comparison to quantify in terms of quality management. Suppose that you go to Bundesland with Teresa Hayward and Slavina Trieste and fantastic artists, say yes or no. This is a bit, the idea would be nice actually, no, we have to have a checklist, there is the criteria, in Vienna, what is the impact, how do your works relate to Vienna? And of course you suck on your fingers by writing applications, and at the same time these talks are futile, because you are dealing with people who are not in the

same field you are working on. And we all know about the dilemma. So my answer is let's bring it on the table.

Ivana Muller:

But we are bringing it on the table all the time Peter!

Peter Stamer:

I know but maybe we got to change our words.

Ivana Muller:

That's what I am saying let's try to find other ways to think about...

Peter Stamer:

Lets say about collaboration, because my model of, of, how I want to live with it has nothing to do with the level this is quantifying, quantifying on these papers.

Ivana Muller:

Ok you can be either marginal, and start to create networks, which are not affected by this, if you want to be purist, but try to show your work in that sense, I don't know.

The other thing is that you become a smooth operator. That means that you, that you ah, kind of function in the system and that you try to induce different ideas once in a while, and you can't change the system. Let's not be naive, Peter. We are not the only one aware of the fact that the whole system is rotten.

Peter Stamer:

I would say let's behave for a second again, let's do it again, because I want to be neither, I don't want to be put in the position of poisoning yourself or hanging yourself. And I think this is, I don't accept the system you know?

Ivana Muller:

But how do you feel this in your everyday practice?

Peter Stamer:

That's a good question. I want to say, if we speak, if we kind of keep speaking about a business plan with a smile on our face, and this, I don't blame you for that, I'm just blaming the way...

Silvija Stipanov:

This is how society is set.

Peter Stamer:

I don't accept this, I don't agree with this.

Silvija Stipanov:

Yea I know but it is like that.

Martin Pesl:

Very interesting discussion but it is much more fundamental than what we were going to talk about here. I would like to give you a last chance to comment on this science fiction scenario, and I am very excited about what you are going to say about it, and then maybe we should end this discussion officially because we are already over time, which might be a chance to continue it with a vengeance at lunch.

Elizabeth Pacher:

I see you. The job of the advisory services and of the project managers as translators between the cultural policy level and the artistic level. The project in general a European or an international cooperation project is a chance to network and to cooperate and these priorities are quite flexible.

You have to interpret them and to adapt them to your needs. For example audience development, I think every cultural organisation and every artist want to reach an audience. And a business model is an interesting concept but it is strange to the artistic field, and personally I would like to know more about business models, and we will organise a workshop in Vienna on 9 March, and I invited an international expert on business models, I met her in Brussels. And according to her a business model is an efficient way to organise your work. And a business model could also be an investment in human resources. For example training or education measures are a business model. It's an investment and some, at a certain point in the future there will be a return because there is training. And we had a discussion in our (coughs) about the future of the program and ah, colleagues from the dance sector said, "well 'business model' is not the right term for artistic field, rather say 'development model' because development is something positive, ah, something that supports artistic careers", and this is what we are going to think about. And, well, I think the European project gives some room for freedom, still, some room for freedom, and I, I think, ah, it will be good and interesting to engage artists in the evaluation phase and in the design phase of the future program. I am going to suggest this.

Martin Pesl:

Thank you.

Peter Stamer:

I don't want to be efficient. I don't want to be efficient but let's have lunch.

Martin Pesl:

Which is quite efficient. Ok, thank you very much for your attention and for new discussions that I really hope continue now upstairs.

Applause.

9.2. Interview with Ludger Orlok, former artistic manager of Tanzfabrik Berlin

Berlin, Germany, June 16th 2018

1. Please describe the main programs of Tanzfabrik from its foundation to date? What were chronologically the topics and keywords of your programs? What are the topics and keywords of your major international programs since its inception to date?

(this question can be answered shortly if it is possible to receive materials on the history of Tanzfabrik)

Tanzfabrik Berlin has been a NGO from the beginning on and has a strong history as a collective working space for contemporary dance offering the best environment researching, developing and communicating artistic approaches in a strong relation to personal and socio-political questions and desires.

Attached articles what will be published August 2018 in the Book "Remembering the Future"

40 Jahre Tanzfabrik Berlin

Irene Sieben 2003

Angelika Endres 2015

Kirsten Maar 2017

Susanne Karow 2018

Feest / Hoerster 2018

Orlok 2018

2. How do you feel the thematic focus of your projects changed from the beginning of the organisation's work to today? How has it changed since you joined the European network APAP?

In 1998, I did my first steps in the Tanzfabrik Berlin as an artist and choreographer in the performance series "Tanz im Studio 1" at the Mutterhaus in Kreuzberg. This was when the

artists in the choreography reached a milestone and the concept dance was criticised as a non-dance. This moment was the last big wave in the history of dance I would assume. I believe that in the history of the Tanzfabrik Berlin, the result and the process with taking risks and looking at the unknown was always the goal. The topics change though such as the body as a material, the body as part of an ecology,

As part of APAP since 2005 we have more exchange between the genres again. The APAP artists not only work in dance or choreography, but also form theatre, fine arts and performance art. So we can collaborate with artists who implement other methods and techniques, eg. recently Raquel André from Portugal, who is working on a trilogy of "Collections" with interview techniques and intimate encounters to find out what drives people on this planet in their lives.

3. Please describe the organisational capacities- how is your organisation structured (specify the main administrative and executive bodies); how many employees and freelance associates (professional and volunteer engagement) do you have for the implementation of programs and projects; specify the names of permanent job positions?

Tanzfabrik Berlin is a non-profit association with 3 board members and a total of 17 members. The work fields are divided into two cooperating sections at two locations in the city with studios and studio stages in Kreuzberg and in Wedding in the Uferstudios. Overall, we do not have full-time staff, the board is still working freelance on a fee basis. The management level next to the board of directors with artistic management, school management and commercial management are production management, communication management and the school office respectively in part - time contracts or freelance between 10 - 30 hours / week (about 9 persons and 5-8 persons work additively at the check - in counter

For additional festivals, projects and workshops additional staff are employed on a fee basis.

4. Please describe the financial and material resources of your organisation- which are the main sources of funding and how stable are they; how much opportunity and need for self-financing do you have?

50/50 Commercial (workshop and school with dance intensive program) and artistic production (basic funding - Senate Berlin and additional budgets (EU Creative Europe, Hauptstadtkulturfonds, Einzelprojektförderung). The public funding "Basisförderung" is a two-year grant and must be applied for every two years stabilized by the EU's 4-year program "Creative Europe", for the artists and also as a cultural-political sign. Other projects are realised on a project basis, there is no structural support for the organisation.

It is very important to note that for most productions artists finance their production costs from the same public funds and that the Tanzfabrik Berlin is not comparable to other international production houses having their own production budget.

5. How do you see the organisation's sustainability? How do you see your contribution to the social sustainability of the community?

40 years speak for themselves. But there is one thing: the many periods and moments when the team and artists are working at their economic and personal limits. And what is often forgotten - viewers and experts rate the results compared to a full-featured production in other work contexts such as the City and State theatre.

I'm not sure what you mean by sustainability when we talk about the social and community level.

If we talk about the artist community with hundreds of artists in Berlin who work with us and in our rooms, then the Tanzfabrik Berlin is a guarantor to make work possible. At the level of a discourse on contemporary dance, we are the only institution at this funding level and beyond that continually offering platforms for discussion and contextualized programs for local artists and audiences. People who do not have much to do with contemporary dance will be given the space to come into contact with artists, even if they have a strong scientific research approach.

6. How do you see the priorities of major international grant programmers of the European Union (Culture 2000, Culture 2007- 2013, Creative Europe 2014- 2020) from which you have been and are funded?

I think it is a delicate issue since we are dealing with the implications of a neoliberal approach and we – the network - like to use it in the best way for the art. It is my subject point of view but it seems very obvious that art and art culture funding has a low significance in the whole budget of the EU since the Program Creative Europe has only about 4 Billion and other budgets have 100rds. Nevertheless I see the direct impact of our network in personal and working relations, in understanding regional aspects in a global system and simply the moment of meeting each other to connect although our personal and cultural and maybe also the social background is very different.

7. How do you feel these European grant program influence the curatorial strategies, aesthetics development and organisational changes in Tanzfabrik?

The EU grant allows the Tanzfabrik Berlin to have at least program and production money, which the artists have to offer in addition to the small production subsidies in Berlin. At a higher level, the opportunity for a European and even international exchange with wonderful creators is the core of this much needed program. It makes me feel like living in a world when we (the 11 apap partners) sit down at a table in Beirut and have a goal in addition to all the regional peculiarities, to our social relationships and our understanding of the world with a diverse debate on artistic improval strategies. In addition to this pathetic moment, the program not only triggers the debates we need to understand the complexity of the sociopolitical environment, it also influences it, even if it is difficult to quantify it and put it on a scientifically evaluable footing. To put art in numbers does not make sense.

8. How does your initial idea for the project fit into the priorities of the program grant? Do you have any difficulties in fitting into their evaluation criteria?

The main goal is to support the work of artists and to enable the best exchange and mobility. We use other criteria optimally and adapt the ideas to the needs of our institution and the network. For example: Audience Development has a great focus on the EU Commission, so that as Tanzfabrik Berlin - a centre for contemporary dance for its development and practice, artist support and presentation - we have to adapt this term. We can intensify and deepen a

debate on contemporary dance and therefore offer a program for multipliers: young artists should learn to communicate their work and think about the question of how to speak about contemporary dance. This achieves a double effect. The audience involved experiences the process of contemporary art creation with its specific questions and the attempts to contextualize them.

9. What is your relation to the evaluation process in international projects? What would, in your opinion, be an ideal evaluation?

As already mentioned, it is difficult to quantify art. In fact, I would most effectively see it if local experts attend work process and if there is a performance this too (premiere and derniere) in 2 - 4 dates. Then in a short report with maximum half a page with an assessment by eye (a common evaluation method in social science). I think that would be the easiest way to save working hours and tons of paper and involve local experts in European working contexts.

10. How do you perceive the role of the performing arts curator in negotiation of priorities and influences between the policy makers and the artistic community? How do you feel this position is changing in the scene since you started working with Tanzfabrik in 2005?

Tanzfabrik Berlin started in 2005 as part of the APAP network, 2000 I personally as a freelance production manager of the Tanznacht Berlin, a biennial festival of the Tanzfabrik Berlin. In relation to or within the Tanzfabrik Berlin, I would say that the relationship between the curator and the artists is getting stronger, and with more experience together and in longer periods of time, the bonds are also getting stronger. Taking time is a keyword. Contemporary art (dance, theatre, music, visual arts, performance art) has always had a hard time with political decision-makers. The moment of the "avant-garde" in contemporary art with its fractures and irritations is strange enough, not easily communicable. This, in my experience, does not get easier and the market is often used as a criterion that "we" have to follow to meet the needs of the majority and their desires for a commercial and consuming art approach. This often happens when negotiating for more professional financial support. I quote a Berlin

cultural politician: "Dance AND Contemporary" is a double niche". It seemed that contemporary dance is twice less important as other arts.

11. Tanzfabrik was founded in 1978 as an artists' collective. Looking at today, how do you feel austerity measures and precarious conditions of work influence new organisational cultures and forms of solidarity in the independent performing arts scene?

In Germany we are in a very privileged situation - good economic figures, bigger budgets, almost everything is possible. On this point, I think that the responsibility for solidarity with the weaker has increased, although independent artists often have to work in precarious conditions. This also means that artists and institutions with less influence or public visibility can not take on this responsibility. Berlin is in a privileged situation as well due to its large artistic community and its special history. The solidarity within the artist group is great, as Berlin has a strong sense of solidarity. Ethical work is a keyword that I hear often. Unfortunately, I also see the distracting moment when money comes into play. Disagreements and the dynamics of working together seem to be a stronger agenda than an affirmative moment and openness that we practice and reflect in our art. Artists have always had to find a way to distinguish between artistic work for a living and work for their art - doing both together seems to be the best situation at the moment. Maybe this also helps as an assertion.

9.3. Interview with Marijana Cvetković, co-founder of Station Service for contemporary dance and Nomad Dance Academy

Belgrade, 29th March 2018

Ana Letunic:

Could you tell me something more on the infrastructural conditions Station operates within? I am referring to structure of the organisation, organisational resources (human, spatial, financial) etc.

Marijana Cvetkovic:

For the space, from the beginning it was very clear that the contemporary performing arts scene was lacking a proper space and very quickly after we were founded, we managed to come up with a space that was meant to be a temporary space for contemporary dance, a shared space with other independent arts organisations and initiatives. And this is Magacin, the place where we still work. When we started our let's say, campaign for the space we believed a solution of Magacin would be temporary, with one studio that at that moment was important and valuable resource for the whole contemporary performing arts scene. But then ten years later we are still there with this temporary solution, and ah, we need the space now more than ever, because in the meantime many, many important public and non-public programs have been developed. Much more audience appeared. public programs also have grown, and we understand today that it is really absurd not to have any kind of dance space in Belgrade today. When I say 'any kind' I mean even, not a regular dance program in a theatre or other institution, which could host dance programs. So Magacin is the only regular mostly working space for dancers and dance artists, with a few other places where dance has been programmed from time to time. Like a bit of theatre for a couple of years only, then more and more these independent culture centres, mostly oriented towards profitable programs. So they program dance. Ah, public theatres do not program any dance, in Belgrade at least, and that's it. When it comes to people we don't have any permanently employed person. Right now we have two half-time collaborators, which is one person is myself the other is producer, Ksenija. And we

have our monthly salaries funded by the EU grant. This was the only way we could secure some regular income for these people through the EU grant, because it's regular and it's long-term. So it's like due to two five-year long projects we managed to have people engaged permanently in the office for ten years. These programs are finishing in June this year, which means that there will be nobody who will run the organisation on a regular basis. Ahm, and it's probably, ah it's no, there is no other option that might appear soon. On the other side, this is maybe just a little bit off the topic, but it's also connected, but the Minister of Culture in Serbia has been under pressure for many years by the independent scene to introduce these structural grants, these grants for organisations. So they are aware that this is a need, that there is a pressure, that there is really like, a substantial reason why they should do that. Plus the new law for culture also gives this opportunity, which they don't use. So we, after our advocacy went last year, when nobody came from the Ministry, we continued to go and see them, and make, or show or no just present the situation as an urgent one, that there will be many organisations that will just disappear, Station included. Now there is a slight chance that we go to the next level of dialogue with the Ministry, and that we start a series of public debates about what is needed, what they need to do to integrate certain parts of the independent scene into a system, that is there but it's not acknowledged. So we exist, our work exists, it is efficient, it influences the situation, but it is not acknowledged by the Ministry. So somehow we are navigating this dialogue where we, and them, can say something about it in the sense of what can be done. And this might be, there I see a little bit of chances, that the Ministry in the, I don't know, next period, appears, or proposes or does this kind of change, introducing these structural grants. So of course it's just a little part of the solution, because then there are questions who will do it, what criteria they will use, who will be, who will judge, you know, applications, and so on. So it's a long process but still somehow I think it's important to come up with this moment where they say yes, this is important and we have to do it. So it's a little bit of like, background, but maybe I need some hopeful elements in my talk as well.

Ana:

Would you understand your efforts as a bottom up cultural policy?

Marijana:

Exactly, it's all about it. And unfortunately we haven't had anybody at the top in the authorities who would understand it, as like, a dialogue position and engage themselves into this dialogue position, because then it would be great, things could be could have been done. Because we are open for collaboration, because we also know that we have the expertise that nobody else has. This is exactly what we are offering. We are offering the expertise in the field to come up with some structural solutions for the field.

Ana:

Great. Now I am interested in this development of the programs, from when you started and when you entered international projects until today. How do you feel it was changing, I mean was it changing? Was it mostly based on the local needs, with some influences from the network as well? I wonder have the main motives of your work changed from the beginning?

Marijana:

We have had five or six EU projects. But these five years are the, how to say, the most important. Because they were long-term, they are five years both, so it's ten years and they gave us this stability of the organisation, and they allowed the development of the organisation. This is very important. Because it was a small organisation that started in 2006, and already in 2008 we had the first EU program. Of course this EU program came through our regional network, because in a way we were representing the regional network Nomad dance academy. And we were financing, through this grant, our regional activities. So it was only a part of this grant that was going to Station local programs. Larger part was going to the regional programs. Which means that these EU projects had really double function in our case. One is strengthening the local situation, meaning organisation, programs of the organisation for local artists, for local audiences for local professionals, and the other was regional for the NDA network, where we managed to finance, support regional artists from five different, five other countries, structures, capacity-building , programs exchange international visibility, and so on and so on. So that's I think it's a huge impact of these let's say, two cycles of the project, and, I tried to make a list, I have it still, of the artists who benefited of this, of these two cycles, local artists, regional and international. Like those who attended some programs,

like educational, or residencies, or professional development and so on, or those who, ah, participated, and were paid to work, ah like teachers, trainers, experts and so on. I think it was a list of 200 names, and so, just through one organisation.

Ana:

Great, I mean, this is really, this is really important. What I am interested in is this change from, in how, in your relationship to the priorities of these funding cycles. that's the Culture 2000-2007 then 2007-2013 and now Creative Europe. How do they respond to your needs, how do you negotiate your priorities with the priorities of these grants? Has there been a change there?

Marijana:

Ok, so what is interesting in both situations, so with Cultures 2007 and 13, and this other project that we have under Creative Europe program, we managed somehow to negotiate conditions, let's say, so, like under conditions, sub, I don't know how to say it. So not the general but those within the network that take into account our specific situation. Which means that we don't have permanent funding, we don't have structural grants, we don't have secured funding, we are always in this unstable situation. So every time we managed to have a sensibility of our partners to our situation. Which was great and it's a good thing about these networks. The other thing, our needs in that, again, this specific context are a bit different than our big partners who live, work in more stable cultural political contexts, which means that we were somehow able to focus on those needs, which are more local, and for example in this first program we even had a special program line that was just for our region, it was Nomad Dance Academy education program. It was our big project, we needed it, they understood it, and they gave us the whole program line that is to be realised by only partners from the region. So it was possible. And it's always possible, if you negotiate and if you have the partners who really want you to develop with this project and not to be just another machine that takes the money and produces some products. And then in this Creative Europe project we also managed to have a different financial position. So the partners in Riga which is in the more or less similar situation, and us in Belgrade, are the only partners who for example don't have to pre-finance the project, but we get everything

back from the program. You know what I mean. Like usually European program is made in a way that everybody pre-finances 20%. So Station and Riga don't have to do that because they understand that we are in very precarious situation as organisations, so they allow us to get everything refunded during the program. And that's great.

Ana:

You can do that within the network?

Marijana:

Within the network, this is what I say to everyone who is very often afraid of, I say: first, for me, it's not a good idea to make a network with partners that you don't know, and the second thing is you can adapt every rule to the real needs if you have good partners. So you can make things work for everybody, if there is a network, which is sensible to difficulties and different situations that exist still in Europe. You know, it is possible.

Ana:

And was it necessary to negotiate your internal, I mean within the network, compromises to the European administration or it was all fine?

Marijana:

It was fine, because if the network wants these internal rules to be as such, I think they just need to know, and because it's not against their rules, you know? Their rules then are understood as a general frame but then you are free to somehow intervene within your local, within your specific situation. So in that sense these rules are not that rigid, there is always a possibility that you somehow intervene with your own needs. What happened also in this, this is another proof, our project Life Long Burning, when we made application for it, now five, six years ago, Nomad network proposed a format that was new for the new application... We persuaded our partners that it is useful to create a program line that would allow us to not to promise exactly what we will do during five years, but would rather allow us a possibility to react in the moment with things that change, with situations that appear, with surprises that would happen, because we

are in the arts field, and to have some money to be able to react on these new events. And this program that we created that saved an important portion of money within the whole budget, made us create, I think, ten times more, super important and very relevant events and projects on the European or international level because we were able to intervene in the moment. So when you look at this line, which was called, we gave it or actually the Danceweb gave it quite a general name, Performance Situation Room, meaning nothing but when you look at what happened under this line, you say like WOW, like all the most relevant things in Europe are linked to this program because the partners could say like 'Ah I have some money, I want to invest', for example this Post Dance conference in Stockholm, a few years ago. Actually it was made possible by two of our projects, European projects, one was Life Long Burning, the other one was Departures and Arrivals. NDT was in life Departures and Arrivals, and Culberg Ballet was in LLB. They put together money and they made a conference. And then there is a series of these programs and projects. Advocacy for example is completely under, on this line, because it appeared, and we said like we have to do it again, and we started doing it as Performance Situation Room with the money from LLB. So, this is for me another proof that it is possible to, how to say, model the program according to your needs, but you have to dare and you have to, you know, understand how it works and just, you know, put there what is really needed for you, and then it goes. It works.

Ana:

So how was that situation treated within the evaluation period of that project?

Marijana:

The evaluation was always fantastic, because we had so many activities, with so many partners, touching even larger territory than the original network, and I think that it was evaluated very highly. And it is definitely a lesson. But then I also think it is also important for the actors, cultural actors who participate there, to understand that it's not that rigid as it is usually considered. Because people are somehow afraid of this bureaucratic aspect of it, and then they are afraid to do anything with it or around it. And this is trap, this is a trap that cultural actors actually get in to.

Ana:

So in a way you contested this, this frame of this European project. And do you feel usually with the projects that it needs to be contested? Or do their priorities and their guidelines partly also inspire your decisions in a positive manner?

Marijana:

Yea, well, with the Creative Europe program I must say that it's very disappointing, because it's clear that they prioritize cultural industries, big events, festivals, money-making programs, and that they support cultural actors to think in that direction; how to become self-sustainable as they say, in other words, how to start making money and being financially sustainable. Ah, which is immediately making the entire European landscape, cultural landscape, different because there are so many small actors who are important at the local level and who cannot compete in such a game, because their mission is not to be profitable, their mission is not to be big, and their mission and way of working is not adaptable at all to the market situation. On the other hand these kind of guidelines or program priorities also prioritizes big players, those who have infrastructure, who have stable financing, who have huge programs so that they can make huge revenue. Which means that they will be the only ones who will be able to fulfill criteria for such a program in the future if it continues to go in that direction. The other important element that I think that is not enough discussed in the cultural sector is the measures to protect banking sector, because there are many cultural players who take loans to co-fund European grants and the European culture program has developed the tools, the instruments to protect the loan-givers, banks, with some six point something percent of the budget, which is like the secure budget for the banks. So if, if a cultural operator fails, then the Europe gives this money back to the bank, so that the bank is not damaged. And for me it's really like an insult. But it's not as far as I know really discussed and debated. So to come back to the programs, they of course have changed because we had this kind of funding, and because we had access to the networks with funding common activities, which of course then encouraged us to either introduce some new programs or make some of the project activities as permanent programs. For example, we had from the very beginning this exchange of residencies with our partners. It is a program line for our, both of our project cycles, so Jardine d'Europe and Life Long Burning. And we realised that it is very beneficial for our artists to go to residencies around, but also to have incoming artists, guest artists in our

environment in Belgrade. Because then these coming artists, have the role of outer, eye, external eye, to the processes happening in this dance scene, in this dance community. There are also those who with their long-term engagements somehow initiate new collaborations, new projects, new ideas, and this is how we decided to create the residency program. Like a permanent program of Station, and the only dance residency in Serbia, still, which doesn't receive any support. So we are fighting now to make it survive, ah, because it's very difficult without - of course in the meantime we developed other collaborations based on these exchange of residencies, like with Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, with our US partners we also have these exchanges but it needs more substantial support so that it can survive. So this is one example of how, in the program terms, it contributed to the development of the let's say program and structure, of the organisation. What else? We created our festivals also within the first EU projects in Belgrade, Skopje and Sarajevo, and ah, Sofia and Sarajevo. So our festival was at the beginning the project activity, but then of course it remained as a regular annual program, ah, and one of the most recognizable programs of Station: Kondenz Festival.

Ana:

So in the last cycle the priority was into cultural dialogue, and now it's been audience development. How did you feel when you were dealing with the priority? Did the way it was treated in the guidelines harmonized with how you perceive it and if not, did you manage to make a way around it?

Marijana:

Well the first element, like this intercultural dialogue, for me was actually the international collaboration and the connecting of this cultural environment with international context. And it was very important for us of course, and I think that it did bring a lot of positive results, through connecting artists from here with international contexts, contributing to capacity building of artists mostly, bringing international artists here, and so on. Like in this sense, it did make sense and it was successful at the end. But then, with this audience development, in that context I think it's actually rather market development. And I hate this symptom and this topic of audience development, because it's about users and not audience development, its about enlarging number of buyers, in other words. And here in this context of ours I see this audience development

as it's something that we do from the very beginning, like, how to make community and not audience development. So for me it's more like, about making communities that would be touched by what we do, and that would in return contribute to what we do, on their own, with their own, I don't know, inputs, of any kind. So not just by buying the tickets because we don't sell tickets, but really like coming back and looking for their place in what we do. And then we come back again to this question of space, why I think it's so important to have space now, because if you want to build these communities, stronger or looser, you really need to have space with permanent activities. These activities do not necessarily have to be the products to be sold, like performances, but really like ah, engaging discursive events that allow these people to engage, from like, programs for children, to programs for debates and discussions, to conferences and lectures to performances. And this is where European projects cannot help us. This is something really dependent only on the local situation, where we do need understanding of local policy makers, how and why this is important, to have a proper space. I mean to have a dance space that will be really a place for community gathering, or for community development.

Ana:

Ok, and now the last question or two questions. We were speaking at the beginning about sustainability. So, it would be good now to articulate that again, about this gap between the, the international and local financing, and how do you see your sustainability in the future? Since we concluded that these opportunities did contribute a lot.

Marijana:

Yes, but they are not enough to make a long term influence on the scene. They are good as instigators, but they are not enough because if you don't have the local support and the policies that support what you do and that somehow take over what you did then it's gone, all is gone. Why? Because when we finish with these grants we will not have the office, people to work in the office, there will be nobody to work regularly for the organisation and for the development. Ah, because in the meantime we didn't manage to persuade the local policy makers to capitalize on these European projects and all the work that is the result of these projects, to support the continuation. Or to support the

little structure as we have, to continue to exist and work on the strategic development of the dance field. And this is the paradox of our situation, where we have really benefited a lot as experts, artists, producers and so on from these projects and exchanges and collaborations but when it's gone, when the projects are over, we are not functional, because we don't have the structure in which we can function. Everything is embedded in our own bodies and minds, and can go away with our bodies and minds.

Ana:

You mentioned something that the strategy of survival is basically the strategy of adaptation, then it's coopted by-

Marijana:

It's a strategy of defeat, for me because it means adapting to the dominant capitalist system in order to survive.

9.4. Interview with Simone Willeit, managing director of Uferstudios GmbH

Berlin, 23rd February 2019

Ana Letunić:

How do you feel the thematic focus of the Uferstudios' projects changed since the beginning of organisation's work until today, and especially after you joined the European network? Do you feel there were some influences by the network?

Simone Willeit:

Well I think the beginning of Uferstudios was just very much basically in getting this place running, also dealing with pragmatic stuff, getting adequate collaborators, having all this structural and organisational questions in the back. Because I think the development of Uferstudios was basically a joint effort of the complete dance scene, with a lot of partners that were in the game so I think this was the setting up of the space with this whole collective structure behind it that then got narrowed down was basically taking up in the first couple of years and just getting practical things running like booking calendars, etc. So the coming in of the other partners like the university, ADA and Tanzfabrik until they got settled. Having this place of collaboration and synergies at the beginning took a lot of work behind the scenes until they all got settled etc. Then I would say it developed quite organically that those partners actually started working together on an exchange of resources, exchange of topics, etc., common events organised together, etc. Um, so I think this was the beginning years and I then think Uferstudios actually joined the network right after that initial work has been done. And, in fact it was one of the only programs content wise now Uferstudios did back then. Cause first it was running the space etc., it was basically the first budget Uferstudios held to do other work rather than doing the rental and doing the non-finance part of networking, cultural policy, etc., cultural advocacy, etc. So it was basically making the first content-wise, ah, change for Uferstudios and also the only possibility of getting into exchange with international partners.

So because also that, because we have a lot of international people here but not with real sustainable connection but they come and they leave. And, with Life Long Burning was the first part of actually setting up those networks beyond the private networks

back then Barbara brought with her. This connection to the other spaces was interesting I think also in terms of that k Life Long Burning holds quite different partners. Um, like I don't know ICI de Montpellier works with one artistic director, and there was Cullberg Ballet that has completely a different form, and then there were NOMADs that also in terms of organisation on how they work they're very different from the others. And Uferstudios was of course in that sense also very different, because we are like privately run, we get no funding and we are basically living off the rent income. So also just on that organisational financial structure all partners are set up very, very differently, and you really feel that also in the offers they can make... like from the northern countries you always have offers with blank money on the table, then you see the further southeast you go and even in Berlin we mainly offer goods rather than money.

So and then I think one of the issues in the network and how also the topics were set, because I mean they never really went that much into production, presentation and touring like more classical networks would work, but it had very widespread programming in sense of also touching other fields like writing discourse advocacy etc., so all these soft makers that form a dance field or art field, were made strongly in that project and I think it also fits very well to Uferstudios because we are not a classical theatre in sense of menu of programming and presentation but rather like a anchor hub for the dance scene also on information, on networking, on advocacy, on accompanying artist etc. rather than focusing on the product. So I think this kind of philosophy of the network fit very well to the general profile. In fact, what Uferstudios was set out to do was financially made possible also by this network. I think for us it was also interesting to see, or also as the European funding would call it, to see for example the coming together and structuring of NOMAD Dance and how you kind of spread over countries and how you self-organised yourself as basically best practice example for Berlin. So I think there was a lot of intersectional interest between those two types of organisation of a scene, and of a self-organisation of a scene.

What it also I think made possible is all that, also besides the fact that, or that we've rather focus on not programming, not presenting but on those other fields of a dancer's life, I think it also made possible to kind of cherish a little bit that invisible work that is always active in an artistic life and to actually kind of also be able to kind of make it

more visible not just to the audience or to the funders but also within the scene. I think like having those possibilities of hearing visions on how do we work it, on having interchanges on how do I write as an artistic practice or for my artistic practice that was always happening kind of lonely at home. And the program of Life Long Burning made it possible to do that together or at least to find spaces and timeframes of exchange within those topics and I think it's important that all this work that is beyond the pure production work is, yea, is made visible, is exchanged, is shared, etc. So, and I think with this Action Performance Situation Room that actually reacts to actual demands in the scene or actual problems in the scene so its framed quite loosely. It doesn't really tell what the content is but it really reacts to whatever the local scene might need and reacts to what could be exported to one of the partners. I think that was one action within this program that was cherished by many because it made possible what normally is not made possible through the funding, reacting to the actual needs.

Ana Letunić:

That was the last cycle of Life Long Burning?

Simone Willeit:

We also have it in the current one, yes. I must say between the first and second cycle of, are we there yet or is there another question? The first and second cycle... I mean we kept many actions formulated in the first proposal. We as a network decided that we wanna, rather reduce in numbers, but go more for continuity of following certain streams within the actions. We kind of kicked out things that were really basically installed to make the project more visible. Like some activities were a very glamorous thing that kind of kept this network alive for a very long time, but none of the partners were really d' accord with it and because it also was, I think it was established also as a good, kind of a reward good for the European funding, but nobody kind of understood it anymore. And so we basically cut that, which I think was a very brave decision to do it because it of course lessens your chance of getting the funding. But, so we decided that we don't look that much at how much work do we produce, how many sessions do we have, etc. kind of lessened that in number, and said ok that we rather follow a lesser number of artists for a longer period, a longer stretch of time and that we don't have one production after the other one.

Ana Letunić:

So you managed to achieve that in the second cycle? Good.

Simone Willeit:

Yes, at least on paper.

Ana Letunić:

And you also mentioned that NOMAD Dance advocates represent to you one of the best practices of self organisation on the scene?

Simone Willeit:

Yes, I wouldn't say the "best practice" because that's one of the terms in EU funding that always comes up and it's a very strange term for me but of course it's a very interesting and very strong and organic way of self-organisation. But also with a very specific local color because I mean the historical background of those countries is so much different than, maybe not in Berlin because we have some communist reservements, but like for example in Belgium or somewhere it would never be adaptable but you know in that sense it is very exotic and very interesting to look at with and with a lot of gains that other countries could actually use, you know? So absolutely.

Ana Letunić:

And do you feel that inspires some of your production models? Or at least, inspire to start rethinking your models?

Simone Willeit:

Yes I think we actually adopted a couple of things but it's also hard to say specifically from the network because a lot of people from NOMAD dance, or like Gisela who is involved with NOMAD Dance, a lot of people from NOMAD DANCE are collaborators or live in Berlin so the exchange also happens through biographies not only through this network so it is hard to ascertain what is what.

Yes I think there are a lot of formats, a lot of invitation models, etc. have been adapted, I think form input from NOMAD Dance. And this also I would say the organisational part of the dancers, choreographers in Berlin that's so similar also to your way of organisation and so I think they kind of fit quite organically. I mean better than a space like Montpellier and their structure couldn't do much to produce examples from NOMAD Dance, just because their way of working is so different it wouldn't make sense there, you know? For Berlin it definitely does make sense and also having certainly people who are in between those two or seven countries it makes it easier.

Ana Letunić:

Yes, the transfer knowledge is much easier. Ok. Ok so we talked a bit about how you changed some actions from the last cycle. That you decided not to look at the numbers so much and to follow particular artists.

Simone Willeit:

Yes, to kind of integrate more continuity rather than quantity.

Ana Letunić:

And do you feel that this framework of the program Creative Europe allowed it easily?

Simone Willeit:

(Laughs) I must say Marie Christine from Vienna who actually does the writing of the application is great in kind of really collecting what all the partners want and how they work and what the main issues are. Kind of comparing it to the EU funding criteria and formulating it in such a way that it fits both. I must say she does a great job in that. And she's a very, very experienced in cultural policy in all kinds of realms. So I think yes our application does not use these key terms that EU funding requires, it doesn't have that language in it, but still in content she tries to explain how it still fits the criteria. And this is I think a very smart way of doing it because we don't have the feeling of selling out to those criteria, adapting to those criteria, but using them. And, so this, yea this also one of the things that is always problematic with any funding applications, how far you give in to language of those programs, how far you give in to their evaluation markers etc., or how you can underrun them without, you know, lying, or

without not passing basically. And I think a couple of terms, I mean yes, I mean it is kind of very influenced by economic terms, marketing terms, etc., and buzzwords like “sustainability” can be used in so many directions, and also artistic work, I mean the artistic field wants sustainability. So using the same term but with a different understanding and a different approach is always possible I think.

Ana Letunić:

You mentioned there were a few influences from the partners. Except for the production models, how do you thematic focuses of projects changed since joining European network?

Simone Willeit:

Topic-wise I would say kind of making this invisible work visible. It was also strongly on the topic of how does dance relate to word and word to dance basically with the writing that we kind of made strong. We had a strong impact on, the action was called Teachpack we kind of interpreted it towards feedback and made a big stream out of feedback in processes how can it, how does it, how is it used by artists and how is it used by a dramaturge, and also the whole field of organisation in the dance field, those are the kinds of topics we followed most strongly.

Ana Letunić:

Great. Ok we will go back this, to the programs, but now I have a few questions about Uferstudios itself. It's about the organisational capacities, how is the organisation structured, how many employees and freelance associates you work with for the implementation of programs, the permanent job positions etc.

Simone Willeit:

In not sure if you mean for the implementation of just the EU program or in general?

Ana Letunić:

In general and the EU programs. I mean, it does not have to be a specific number, but first let's talk about the employees.

Simone Willeit:

I can say that we have four full time positions, two part time positions, two hourly based positions, and then it becomes difficult, because we have, depending freelancers how many project money we have or how many artists work here so this is difficult I would say. But mainly the freelancers work in the field of stage technicians, but this is five, on a more or less regular basis but never full time. That always depends on whatever project money we have. And for the EU project we have, I can send that to you, a small percentage of my position, like two percent of my position. I think it was two percent I have to look at the new financial plan. Ah, and I think also two percent of a financial assistant or office management assistant, that's it.

26:21

Ana Letunić:

I can then remind you to tell me the exact name of these full time positions and part time positions. Then the financial and material resources of the organisation. I mean the main sources of funding, which is private funding and the stability of these sources of funding... So it is completely self-financed?

Simone Willeit:

For the financial material resources, we have a lease on the premises for 196 years, so that's worth a lot. I'm not sure whether I want to have those numbers published but on the basically balance, I don't know how it quite is in English, the financial proof to the Finance Office it is worth four millions, but of course depending on the market prices it's worth much more. I just want to explain, a comparison, when we moved into here, the other side was sold for I think six millions back then, and now it has been bought for 23 millions. So I think what we have here is worth a lot of money, but basically our material resources, our main anchorage, it is secured for 196 years, so it is secured for the arts basically, this is quite the biggest chunk we have.

Ana Letunić:

And when did you secure it, it was already at the beginning in 2000?

Simone Willeit:

We came in as renters, and then in 2012 we bought a hereditary lease for those 196 years. So that also means we have that. We didn't have the money to pay that, so in Switzerland we have to follow up on with quite high interest rates. So, this is the financial situation of the main business basically. Other than that we have no funding. We really run the place through, through rental income, which means we are depending on independent project money for artists. And how stable are they? It's a bit difficult to say, I mean we are depending on the artists' money and their rent, and the more normal living costs raise like heating, water etc., the more expensive it gets for us. On the other side the funding doesn't really grow, so we have not had, we didn't raise our prices in renting since we started, so slowly it becomes a bit imbalanced, we would have to ask more but the funds didn't go. So, it's semi-stable I would say and not really using the resources at its best. So it's very, very basic financial ground on which we are running.

Ana Letunić:

The European funding you already said that it partly covers two positions and that's it.

Simone Willeit:

Yeah but only two percent or five percent of those two positions, yes. So basically the positions are financed by the rent income and anything else we get for project funding we really put into the projects.

So it is a bit different from that than I know a lot of partners do, also from NOMAD that actually will structure also and whose structure depends on EU funding. For us not really, we could survive without it, but we couldn't do any content without it. With EU funding we can do content.

Then we have a couple of different other projects, I don't know whether that's relevant. We are part of a project that works with refugee houses where we get 6,000 euros a year. Yea, so it always depends on the application decisions but it's always project money and fully goes then into the program.

Ana Letunić:

Then there is the question about the organisation's sustainability- we already touched upon that question so we don't have to go longer into it. So the material premises are

secured, and you're saying that the income is a bit unstable. And there is also the social sustainability, your contribution to the social sustainability of the communities, I mean it's big of course and also there are the projects with the community in the neighborhoods in Wedding. So maybe we can talk very shortly about that, maybe one line. About how do you see...

Simone Willeit:

Well I think for the artistic community the space is anchored because we are not basically excluding by programming or curating, but its basically open to everybody. I think because also because a lot of different partners are settled here on the premises kind of the accessibility for artists is quite easy and also quite diverse. I mean they get partners to talk to more about education, more about productions or presentation. I think the kind of the synergy between HZT and ADA studio that is kind of presentation studio for emerging artists is quite organic.

You have Tanzburo that works on policy making, on advocacy, on marketing for the dance scene but also gives workshops for dancers and artists in terms of self-organisation, in terms of production work, in terms of application writing etc. So I think the offers here are quite diverse so a lot of people actually feel like coming back here for diverse reasons. Not just to kind of seclude them into their studios and work on their own stuff but also to use kind of those different partners and knowing that a lot of people are here to re-attach again once they're out on tour or on different residencies and come back into Berlin. Kind of they know somehow they can meet here. I think that's one of the big issues for a lot of people working in Berlin because they kind of are so secluded and alone somehow and left with all the work and it's hard to find exchange. And I think Uferstudios with its partners and also with a couple of initiatives also through Life Long Burning makes this exchange quite easy and good for people that are floating and so I think that's one of the biggest terms that we also do for them. Kind of continuity thinking in artistic practice in an urban scene.

And, I mean we're also heavily involved in cultural policy, advocacy, orshaping the funding instruments from the Berlin city, etc. So this is also the kind of things that we are kind of in consistent dialogue with the scene artists. I think due to the fact that we

don't have any substantial money we, but also as a philosophy we never accompany single artists for a longer time but are rather we are accompanying the whole scene, whatever that means. The scene is not one in Berlin but it's probably many, but we try to stay as quite open for the scene as possible.

Ana Letunić:

You mentioned you're also shaping the funding instruments from the Berlin centre. Ah, is that mostly through Tanzburo or through Tanzraum network?

Simone Willeit:

Well, it's normally the association of independent dancemakers that is basically an artist's association and the network Tanzraum Berlin is more like a operative level of the venues in Berlin. And those three organisations basically work together on the cultural policy-making in Berlin. Yea but I am also involved in the speaker round of the Coalition of independent arts where all arts, so and this is also the other path working on cultural policy.

And this kind of the, is also the wishes and obligations of Uferstudios to stay in the city in wide and relevant structures, to stay active there because it immediately touches all the artists working here.

Ana Letunić:

Ok so you are envisioning all the other colleagues as one of the representatives for the dance scene. And how do you feel that the dance scene is represented in the Frei Szene and how many other representatives are, in comparison to the whole coalition in percentage?

Simone Willeit:

I'm there since the beginning when it was founded in 2012. The coalition does not have an organisational form. It is everybody who feels to belong to the independent scene. And we have the plenum where everybody is open to come. And then we have this speaker board, which is not a board but a speaker or sorts that are a kind of then representatives of the independent disciplines. I'm alone in there for dance. And I must say in general the participation for example in the plenum or through working groups

or something was stronger in dance between 2012 and 2016 I think, and now there is not many people from choreography joining the plenum. But its also that we...like in 2018 we had this thing called Roundtable Tanz, I don't know whether you have heard about it?

Ana Letunić:

In September.

Simone Willeit:

That was the symposium but the process was actually going on the whole year.

Ana Letunić:

Yes, I was at the symposium.

Simone Willeit:

So I think this was because there are a lot of artists were in the working groups. I think this was a lot of cultural policy work for the dance scene already. It takes time, it's not paid etc. So I think this is where they engaged rather than the coalition of independent artists.

Ana Letunić:

So that was the final symposium and the work of Roundtable Tanzraum?

Simone Willeit:

Yes, it was a plenum of twelve people that met four times, and there were the two coordinators that then we finalized the paper on whatever the working groups decided. And it has been presented last week in the parliament in the Kulturfonds it's called, cultural assembly of the parliament. I have no idea what it is in English. And it is now at the Senat and it will be published probably next week.

Ana Letunić:

Ok that was a bit of a digression because I you are really involved in cultural policy, bottom up cultural policy for dance so I wanted to take the opportunity to ask you a bit about that, to get a better idea of mapping the situation. Ah, but now we can return to the EU funding. So how do you view the priorities of major international programs, how do you view audience development for example?

Simone Willeit:

Well I think, one of the main changes I think of course was to put culture and media together, that revealed basically their look on what the arts are. Ah, yes and of course the whole language question is critique-able I would say, just to talk about sectors and bench markers etc., so the use of language of course does something about how you see the arts. It is strongly about visibility without actually looking or, looking more into what is there to be made visible before it is visible. We have taken quite a bit on the issue of the precarity from dance artists and quite overtly kind of mentioned that in the application finding, so which is normally not seen very well. But we kind of really explicitly mentioned it and it worked. So, and this is also something where I say like ok they might use the term “professionalization”, which is very strange and very career oriented thinking behind it, and ah, um you know very neo-capitalistic approach to the arts to call it that but on the other side you could also of course interpret it as fair payment and non-precariization . So this is, kind of the two sides of it. So we have, I think the spill over of language from the creative sector from the economic systems is quite visible. And of course because I also looked at the criteria and um, it also struck me quite strong in the earlier period was the, the, the question on identity building, on our common history, which, or on our common European thinking space, which I found quite interesting. Rather in the second it shifted to identity and diversity and integration, so that was quite an interesting I think shift in use, in terms of terminology used.

Ana Letunić:

You are talking about 2015?

Simone Willeit:

Yes.

Ana Letunić:

Ok let's continue.

Simone Willeit:

The question of audience development, of course that is a big marker issue and I think in the new program they explicitly understand audience development on a more participatory level, which I found interesting. And... to some extent it actually does fit our work because also kind of while we were starting working with involvement of the neighborhood for example, this is exactly what we were also doing to make it a bit more permeable between professional dancers and audience and a lot of artists actually like working this direction.

47:56

Ana Letunić:

But is that what you are doing in the frame of the European project or you are thinking of the other projects of Uferstudios?

Simone Willeit:

We started doing it with the other projects, we had Concession Feedback Lab Goes Public where it was about different transmitting formats from presentations towards the audience but making the audience active, etc. So these were kind of already in the first period of Life Long Burning. Also, Neighborhood that is different project but I also kind of planning to implement a couple of those things through the network as well. Basically this audience development is a very strange factor in the application writing systems but to some extent I think we were working already in this direction you know? And it's not maybe necessarily only about marketing, its not only about glamour of representation of artistic work but you can understand it differently and can actually use it in an artistic way.

Ana Letunić:

Then there is a question that we already discussed, how do these European programs influence the curatorial strategies, aesthetics, development and organisational changes

in Uferstudios? We talked about, a bit about organisational strategies. Like for example the influence from the methods of your partners like the self- organisation from the NOMAD Dance Academy and the curatorial strategies. So talking about audience development, there is a bigger emphasis on audience development, as I understand. Since the beginning of working in these networks or in the last cycle, or?

Simone Willeit:

I think there was in an earlier cycle of the program as well already, I don't think it is stronger.

Ana Letunić:

Ok. Before Creative Europe?

Simone Willeit:

Yes.

Ana Letunić:

Ok good.

Simone Willeit:

It depends on, I mean just because they mention it, their system is some kind of evaluating each strand that you apply for and you have to tell them: this is how much audience development we do, this is how much I don't know, professionalization they do.

50:46

Simone Willeit:

And in their system of evaluation they kind of weight it differently, you know?

I don't know how many points you get because you have too little audience development. So this is something I can't say. Because this is really you see on the schedule how much points you got for what. But this cannot just be read out of kind their funding calls are, and it cannot be read out of our applications, it can only be read out of the, the evaluation of the funding. And this I don't know how they weigh the

certain, am, things, you know? I think they were unhappy with us this time or that's where we got the least points, ah, was in the concrete description on how the partners collaborate. I think that was formulated too loosely and that seemed to kind of important to them. For that I think you have to look at the response of the funding body in percentage to each topic. To each um...

Ana Letunić:

To each section, to each criteria.

Simone Willeit:

Yes. Curatorial strategy, I would say seeing that we are not necessarily curating in the strict sense I would just repeat what I said- before that a lot of these invisible and connecting, networking, advocacy, discourse things that Uferstudios was doing already were enhanced by the network work. And as I said before it was basically the first chance to really have a bit more structure to reliable partnerships with other countries, which we didn't have before, except on a individual basis. And, I wouldn't say it changes much in the aesthetics. Like for example what I said that the beginning where, you have the sense for the bigger networks that sometimes it becomes very homogenized in aesthetics in what work they tour. I think for our network it's quite different because the partners are organised so differently.

Because we are not so strongly, our actions don't go so strongly towards production and presentation that much. I think we have quite a good mixture on kind of having the diversity of the partners and keeping it, but nevertheless kind of infecting each other with it. Yea.

Ana Letunić:

And then this question, well this is mostly about the language that we already discussed quite a bit. So how does your initial idea for the project fit into the priority of the program grant, and do you have difficulties fitting into their evaluation criteria. So, yes, we already said that the writing part happens in Vienna, where this language is basically translated your needs to their criteria.

Simone Willeit:

I mean of course there's a certain things then we have to fill out where you just, and while you are filling it out you think they are crazy. Like how many numbers, like how many audiences there, how many participants there, how many are affected, how many other artists are affected at these.... It should be realistic but it is to some extent I say a fiction. It's not plan-able but it's also not really prove-able unless you start making real statistic on audiences are visiting your programs, etc. which is something in the independent scene that we don't have and we hopefully we will never have. To a certain extent it just really goes beyond reality I would say.

Ana Letunić:

I mean as I understand these impact studies for the performing arts are really strong i.e. in the Netherlands, where each production has its impact, producers calculate these things. And it is one of the practices supported by European funding and it's really, it comes from a completely different logic, it's not applicable to the field. Ok so that's for example some sort of remark to these programs.

Simone Willeit:

And also to then you next question on the evaluation.

Ana Letunić:

Yes, yes the evaluation. So what would in your opinion be a better evaluation or an ideal evaluation?

Simone Willeit:

I think it is, it needs to be a qualitative evaluation and not a quantitative evaluation as you said. I think, like for example the things, all evaluation on visibility is very difficult, you know, because especially for dance we don't get much visibility anyways but this is also a structural problem in the newspapers, in the whole market of newspaper that don't survive any more and can only follow certain topics, etc. So this is, it's always seen on it that one little field trying to be gain visibility is a much bigger systemic problem than the one of the field you know? And also many of the actions we do might also be ah, focused more on the organisation of the dance scene and might not kind of reach like a wide audience but nevertheless it doesn't mean that it's not important to

maybe at a later point gain more visibility or I don't know, maybe not, never gain visibility. So the topic is "research needed and allowed" you know, and of course that is always a schism then with visibility because research does not always produce visibility. Visibility criterias are always difficult one to address I would say.

Ana Letunić:

Ok great. Now this is something, this is another topic, and its maybe not that, not that applicable to the situation in Uferstudios, but if we broadly understand this idea of performing arts curator, meaning also the artistic director, I mean as the representatives in the networks. So let's say that's also the role of the performing arts curator- how do you feel the position is changing in the scene in the last 10 years? Do you feel that it's gaining more weight?

Simone Willeit:

In not the EU anymore, right? That's policy makers in general?

Ana Letunić:

Policy makers in general. Of course, if there is a special emphasis on the EU that's good, but this is in general. Because there is this whole discourse about performing arts curator, and this dialogue between the visual arts and the performing arts. Ah, so I am looking at it from the cultural policy side. Like are there some changes happening there. So it's not only the figure that deals with the program and the artists, but that also deals more with the context and with the policies. And also it's a very contested figure in a way, the curator, is it? Because in the visual arts it can be quite market oriented, and here it's somehow more about providing the context.

So, do you feel there is anything interesting happening around this discourse around the curating? Because recently there has been also there has been also a growth of educational programs for performing arts curating, in Das Arts in Amsterdam, then this program in Munich and Salzburg. So I think there is something relevant to observe there. Also the book published by the House of Fire network, edited by Malzacher around the curating. I wonder if it's just another trend, another buzzword around the curating and if there are some practices there that could be a bit dangerous, like the ones from visual arts making the curator somehow appropriating the work of the artist to

make their own work. Or is there something valuable there? That's why I'm also wondering a bit what's your opinion about this or if you even need the term. You probably don't even need it. You are not using it so...

Simone Willeit:

I am surrounded by curators! No it is a very difficult term I think and I mean you described also the span from where it goes, it really goes from curating in the sense of helping and nourishing the work of artists towards the more authoritarian, author-like connotations of it, of being the artists themselves just using, using the artistic work of the others, so, absolutely. We are that, in none of those senses we curating. Whatever we have on artistic choices to make we try to kind of make it together with other artists. And...

Ana Letunić:

Do you notice it in the scene, ok for Uferstudios we know how it works, that it is self curated in a way. But do you notice it generally in the scene, this role appearing, becoming more highlighted...?

Simone Willeit:

Absolutely, yea. And it, but it always depends I think, not on the fact of the term curator, but on the connotation of how somebody understands it's curation. On to some extent this second one, where the curator is actually the author is growing. All the way to kind of stimulating artists to follow certain topics, certain discourses also etc. So the word of curation or selection is whether an artistic work is there first and then you kind of give it the context, or rather you set the context and the work needs to feed into it. The second one where the artistic work actually follows some curation of a trends is quite big.

Ana Letunić:

And do you feel that these, that the setting and following certain topics, that these topics that curators set that they are also coming from cultural policy, or its coming from other discourse, like philosophy, theory of arts?

1:05:10

Simone Willeit:

For Berlin I would say it does not necessarily come from cultural policy.

Ana Letunić:

Good, good.

Simone Willeit:

Of course there are certain schemes where you can very clearly see ok there is another funding instrument popping up, people are using it, and, of course you see that. Yes, but I would say its more like from theory artistic, philosophy, sociology, (unintelligible) artistic theory related to art.

Ana Letunić:

But you do feel this figure is growing somehow and its mostly...

Simone Willeit:

Yea.

Ana Letunić:

It's mostly the dramaturges probably?

Simone Willeit:

Yea, yea. And also kind of the glamour and the fear has grown around that figure. Whether they become as influence-able as in the visual arts, It's, it's hard to say, I think that, that the market behind it is so different, you will never have the same rigidity on capitalism in the performing arts as you can have in the visual arts. So this is, I think this is less a danger in the performing arts, on the production of goods we are not so good, no commodity yet. So so. Or no speculation objects. But this is the very, the very extreme version of curating, if you go into the speculative market of curation.

Ana Letunić:

Ok, ahm...

Simone Willeit:

And yes it, I think it has grown in Berlin also because, I don't know, there's more artists, which kind of make selection. There's ah, stronger venues that have to kind of reshape their profile also, in competition to the others, etc. So I think yes, it has grown. There's less free spaces where people can do other things rather than having to go to HAU, they could establish their own spaces and all this has collapsed in Berlin, so it has become much more narrow. And in that sense the role of the curator also of course gained power.

1:08:11

Simone Willeit:

Yea, normally, I mean that's a bit, I don't know how it is in other countries but normally the, what used to be the program maker or a dramaturge at the theatre or at the venue is now called the curator. So it's not external independent curators who do it sometimes, but normally it's the curators of the houses themselves. What I forgot, important is the fact that, not the other way around, its not the policy makers that pre-inscribe certain topics to, but very questionable is also the fact that as a not-curated space you don't get any funding. So in the sense of if you don't have the certain profile, if you don't have the certain programming, but rather kind of leave it more open or based on a collective decision making in the process of making, it's impossible to get funding. Which to a certain extent I understand, but there is also this ah, the logic of project application you always need to know in advance what is going to be, rather than being able to make decision along the way of making. And this I think also do to the structure of EU program is somehow easier than other funding bodies. You never have to be that concrete on contents, on certain topics, yes, but not that concrete on implementation and topics that you are going to do. It's more open with EU funding bodies than it is with other funding bodies.

Ana Letunić:

Ok great. Ok I don't know if there is anything more to add on this question, we are at the last one then. This one is pretty wide. It about how the austerity measures and precarious conditions of work, how do they influence new organisational cultures and forms of solidarity in the independent performing arts scene. I mean it's pretty wide but you have been involved in the field for long in various positions and you probably observed how did, with the rise of precarity, how did the forms of solidarity and self-organisation and new organisational cultures, how they changed?

Simone Willeit:

I say the dance scene in Berlin, ahm, was actually one of the first ones that got self-organised. I mean there was the visual art association that existed for a pretty long time but the independent dance scene kind of gathered quite quickly and there was actually also a time where already where space seemed to collapse because it got more expensive and there was much more artists coming into the city so it was a moment where there was like three theatres or companies closed in dance in Berlin.

1:11:58

Simone Willeit:

That kind of left a lot of dancers in Berlin but with no jobs. Um, so it was a moment of sudden um, precariousness that got them organised. I think they kept through quite well. I mean all these, basically all these structures that we have now were done by self-organised working together and policy making together. Uferstudios was collectively elaborated, Tanzbiro was collectively implemented. So they were quite active I must say and they also kind were initiatives for the speaking theatre to get organised, you know? So dance was quite, quite far off in that sense. And also now I mean the think the political consciousness in Berlin within dancers, let's exclude 2018 now.

Simone Willeit:

So the political consciousness, excluding the year 2018 in the dance scene was volatile I would say. They kind of got appeased after getting like the most urgent things done like Uferstudios so, ah, for a certain period of time there was enough rehearsal space. And the budgets kept growing, slowly but were growing a bit. But the number of artists of course got more, so the precariousness was quite high. But they never got really well

organised any more in the sense of really coming together collectively demanding things, etc. So it was often initiated by Tanzburo, um, to get kind of this organised and also the implementation of this was organised by Tanzburo. But this also had the effect of giving it over and not doing it yourself anymore, which is always a dangerous setting if you don't feel self-responsible for it any more because then to a certain extent it also drifts apart in content, in issues. If you don't have that bottom up engagement it's a danger of losing contact and losing then the real issues to follow up.

I guess, I think we slowly start also feeling, kind of the number of artists still moving to Berlin but also the number of artists coming from the HZT that a lot of times stay in Berlin, and they, I would say they try to organise themselves in rather smaller networks and or in collectives where it's more on their own artistic work supporting your peer fellows etc., but, um, have a bit of a difficulty to come together as a complete scene, which I touched on a little bit at the beginning of this. Probably the dance scene in Berlin it's like, 2006 and now 3,000 people is too wide and also too diverse to actually have everything in common. So it's, it's an illusion to kind of want or strive for that. And that's always also a question also for the CTB. Who do they represent, and it's also a question for me as the speaker of the Coalition for Independent Dance, who do I talk for, etc.

1:16:28

Simone Willeit:

And it goes in waves you can really sense sometimes there's funding decisions where people really gather, where people really start getting involved again and then I think their normal life and their normal seeking of surviving kind of takes over and they kind of lose touch again.

And it's, on one side it's, it's very hard to get people also together, just because they have such a volatile and unstable life that they can't really find into that regularity and they are like somewhere else all the time. And on the other side that of course sometimes also brings in very good things, they get to learn new funding system that they can propose here, etc. So this interchange like for example with the symposium is

then quite valuable and the dance scene whatever that means, needs, they all want it more and want to meet more often and want to do it again and then you initiate it and nobody comes. So I think this momentum only comes to very specific times and it's hard to kind of keep it on a continuous level. And I think it's really because probably politics has taken a different form of engagement but it is also due to survival fear, not having time, etc. So this is, and maybe also the identification with Berlin is not a hundred percent, because people sometimes live here for two years and then they live somewhere else for two years so this engagement for changing structures, structures that have been built for like twenty to thirty years and move very slowly, if you talk in terms of cultural policy, until something really effectively changes sometimes it takes five or ten years, and if they don't see results they resign, you know, and they kind of lose that momentum of protest maybe.

Ana Letunić:

Ok but this report from the Roundtable Tanz being presented in the Senate is a really big step for the scene in terms of bottom up policy, I mean do you feel it like that?

Simone Willeit:

Um hum, yes.

Ana Letunić:

So the situation is more optimistic in terms of policies for dance?

Simone Willeit:

Hopefully, yea. I mean but the, the path to prepare that, that was the time I was in Tanzbiro it took such a long time because like, we were there explaining how precarious the situation for dance is etc. and until they politicians realised to maybe make it a topic within their work that really took, I don't know, ten years until they made a decision to talk about it.

1:19:48

Simone Willeit:

That doesn't mean they are going to implement anything on what we now have elaborated, so this is the next five to ten years that we have to follow up on that, but even, kind of, until some of the politicians said "ok let's dedicated a specific focus point on dance" took a while. I mean the one big step, the one big development step with all this that was in 2008-10 and there it was also part of the coalition agreement between (unintelligible) to do something for dance and then, I don't know, nine years later there was the second step.

Ana Letunić:

Because they basically always put it in the same category of performing arts and they didn't see dance as a separate...

Simone Willeit:

That is one big issue yes. And of course then in Germany we still had to fight a lot on the value of the independent art scene versus the institutionalised scene, etc. And there's a couple of things that needed explanation towards the politicians. But in general I must say unlike other countries in real terms of dialogue with the politicians and administration also, I mean things have gotten better, not worse. There were no major cuts and there was slight budget raises in the last couple of years. Of course the situation stays as precarious because rents went up double etc., so it didn't really effect each individual life, and Berlin could have done more, but it's not that they didn't do anything or that they had dramatic cuts like in the Netherlands but this did not happen in Berlin yet. And they tried, finally they tried to kind of really understand the participatory way of talking about cultural policy making, etc. Tried. They did not succeed but...

Ana Letunić:

That was through the efforts of the Coalition?

Simone Willeit:

Yes. I mean, yes it was through the efforts, it depends. I think I would say the dance field always had relatively good dialogue, conversation with politicians and also with the administration quite openly. For example the visual arts didn't have that at all, and

the music field never had talked to them, you know? So in the Coalition for Independent Arts one of the main successes of that also was to really learn from the other fields on how they deal with policy making, how they deal with administration, ah, the, the question of wage minimums etc., how can they be adapted to the other art form etc., so also this exchange on just that level was quite important I think for the art scene in Berlin. So beyond did we reach any political aims that we aimed for, but also that exchange and that also comparison, what funding instruments do you have which we do not have, and could it be useful, or something like that, that kind of knowledge transfer that was very valuable initiated through the independent scene.

Ana Letunić:

I think we covered everything now.

9.5. Interview with Jelena Vesić, an independent curator, writer, editor, and lecturer

Belgrade, 16th July 2017

AL: In the post-yugoslav cultural sphere, nineties were a period of formation of NGO culture with the support of international foundations that have withdrawn from the region during the early two thousands, after assessing the good development of the countries "on the path of democratization". My question is how has that socioeconomic dynamic influenced the further development of the Serbian independent scene, with the focus on the events in the last decade?

JV: Nineties were the period of NGO culture formation that, on one level, stands for an entrepreneurial model of work and on the other, implies certain independence in relation to the state apparatus. That was relevant in the context of then rump state of Yugoslavia and in relation to its governing structures since the work of the NGOs was anti-Milošević⁴⁰ and, often, anti-war. Consequentially, a kind of inner cohesion was formed between subjects and protagonists of this new cultural position.

Also, the first transfer of educational structures from the state system happened then, such as the School for Theory and History of Images, Centre for Contemporary Arts that I also took part in. All these cultural groups represented resistance to the official state politics that was a politics of war and Serbian irredentism. That was the basis of unity of this cultural block of NGOs in opposition to state institutions that were under some kind of occupation by various bureaucrats, nationalists and supporters of Milošević politics.

The main difference between nineties and two thousands is that, during the nineties, in the wider economic sense of this post-Yugoslav context, the war was the basis of re-curating the political system that opened up the space for so called "wild capitalism". The fact it wasn't the sophisticated capitalism of the West caused unhappiness of some, as it was a period of first accumulation, known under the term of transition or normalisation in the direction of establishing the capitalist system and entering the global processes of deregulation.

⁴⁰ Slobodan Milošević was a Yugoslav and Serbian politician who was the President of Serbia from 1989 to 1997 and President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1997 to 2000, charged by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia with war crimes.

What also makes a big difference is that the NGO sector, that was employing cultural actors who were exiting institutions more and more, was much better financially supported than it was the case from two thousands on. Maybe, by observing the practice from the nineties and what came later, cultural actors from then weren't entrepreneurs in the full sense of the word, meaning to say they didn't belong to the popularized entrepreneurship culture that conditioned an atmosphere of competition between actors whose numbers are still growing. Because, of course, by re-curating the system, the state freed itself from responsibility to support and recruit all those new generations of cultural workers who were educated to work in those institutions. A problem of unemployment happened, creating a kind of, using Marxist terminology, reserve army of labour so a much bigger competition arisen, which is a relevant category of the entrepreneurial modus operandi. It seems to me that the generations that participated in these processes from nineties on were a little surprised with the decrease of funds and with the fact that this model does not work by itself in a way that maybe was an illusion established in the nineties, with the focus of various international foundations to this region as a part of a broader political cause.

Before that, in the socialist model, there was mostly state money on one side and, on the other, there were embassies that by the allocation of funds for development of cultural programmes regularly secured some resources, through which the local actors always had the opportunity to invite international guests and to participate in international programmes. That was the modus operandi that was partially in the frame of practice which we associate with socialism or the institution of the state and partially in the frame of the other practice we rehearse today, lets say the model of the Student cultural centre, in which both employed and unemployed participated in the creation of the programme, and performed the programme through two fields- field of state financing and, on the other side, field of project fundraising (mostly embassies and a few foundations at the time) and peer to peer institutional form that fostered institutional exchange.

At the beginning of the two thousands, the threshold of normalization is reached, at least for the fact there is no more war in the region. But of course, the war continues in other spheres- above all, in the industry sector through the domain of privatization and in the cultural sector, through an endless process of budget cuts for culture and the reduction of funding sources that during the nineties supported development of culture in the region.

To summarize, the main difference is in the intensity of the entrepreneurial paradigm- it was obvious that now a bigger competition is created and a much bigger self-reliance of the actors

to create their own paths and careers, payments, retirement and such; to manage their existence themselves instead of the state.

The question is how possible is it to secure a living on the basis of pure wage labour that is not constituted through concepts of working hours and all those rights that the workers obtained at the time. In a way, we cannot even use the term *worker* for the contemporary entrepreneur in the field of culture because her or him is in a position that comes before the social contract, achievement of wage labour that implies eight hours working time, free weekend and such... All that, in the context of deregulation, completely lapses in a model where intertwining between life and labour happens in a manner of a cynically realised invitation for the intersection of life and art from the seventies. It comes to a process in which work is not located or regulated in the frame of time and space as it, after the two thousands, becomes something that is literally inscribed into the body of the protagonist of culture.

AL: In the context of the normativized precarization, how are the values of cognitive capitalism that are often internalized by cultural workers, correlating to the forms of solidarity and self-organisation on the scene? Does a community exist?

JV: Firstly, on a micro-level there is always a solidarity realised by individuals placing themselves in a legal-institutional form that doesn't imply employment but a collective risk of an initiative to represent some ideas that can be better represented in a collective, through forms of solidarity, than independently. That is the smallest possible measure of the solidarity that exists in the independent scene.

Other form of solidarity is projects, where we can also include the aspect of interest that is usually imposed externally but also internalized through practice. That is another form of oppression that again deregulates some possible forms of grassroots affiliations, because now production needs to be thought through projects, projects need to be thought through collaborations and in these collaborations you always have to be "creative" which often implies the fact that those collaborations always have to be different and displaced. Meaning, you cannot have the same partners for ten years and work with them on a certain kind of problem and these partners often cannot be related to the surroundings you work in. Consequentially, the forms through you work in additionally make you more precarious since every attempt to reach something close to the old concept of a syndicate or a syndicalist fight is too farfetched. That is because you are always asked to form an international partnership which causes an

impossibility to legally secure all those individuals in terms of personal needs and demands of their everyday lives, since a project is always a singular thing and life can't be regulated on the basis of it.

Third form of solidarity that arises comes from the politics and pragmatism of solidarity. That's a need to examine, from this structural and not syndicalist context, a possibility of a front that can articulate a demand referring to protection of the workers', citizens' and cultural protagonists' rights.

On that basis, now arise different meta-organisations that imply alliances of organisations that participate in the field of cultural production.

Now, the field of cultural production is also expanded in both domains, to the domain of social activism on one side and to the domain of cultural industries on the other side.

The sector that was earlier formulated as high culture, where art and humanism belonged, now is always in fusion with these two models. Those are the models that are not always clearly articulated but become fused when entering a project. Project goals and the way the project can be conceptualised usually imply both, at least in the nominal sense. And the question is how to manage that nominal sense towards the actual needs of the protagonists.

In conclusion, it seems to me the question of solidarity often arises only when pragmatic conditions for posing the question appear. The question of solidarity arises when there is no more money.

AL: How does that contradiction of the organisational culture, between employing discursive postcommunism and neoliberal strategies, manifest itself in the local scene? Who are its main protagonists?

It is so because those organisational cultures also develop in a kind of contradiction towards themselves and they are positioned in a broader field of contradictions. Allegedly, in the moment when you take things in your own hands, you have the opportunity to create superstructures in which you act, for your work to be liberated from institutional control, bureaucracy and so on. However, that was a myth, because, of course, to believe something, there needs to exist a promise of something that is a better, freer model of work. As Marx says, we choose the circumstances and the circumstances choose us. In other words, we choose the situation and the situation chooses us. Situation did choose us as a combination of objective social circumstances but as subjects, we (cultural protagonists) worked in relation to those

circumstances as in relation to a promise of what could be a better model, because now bureaucracy didn't dictate projects or exchanges but those projects or exchanges could be created from within. But, with time, various forms of restrictions appeared that are inherent to the model and its consequences. I am saying that these consequences just became visible, in a brutal sense where they could be really noticed, at the beginning of two thousands.

And then, in the context of Belgrade, a meta-organisation that included various independent organisations, called the Other scene⁴¹, appeared. It was also, through the forms of direct democracy, negotiations and long meetings, trying to establish, conditionally speaking, a contract that was named the principles of the Other scene.

The first document was formulated in 2005 but then, through the process, changed significantly since a majority of actors, from those principles that were firstly very widely articulated, had a need to make a contract that would declare certain tendencies more. The second document, a few years later, was articulated more politically and not only through, conditionally speaking, non-violent and neutral principles of horizontality, inclusivity and such... So, not just a form of easy regulation between the members of the group but declaring that this scene and these actors also have some tendencies and a certain vision of how culture and cultural field needs to look like.

In comparison to the models of Clubture⁴² and Pogon jedinstvo⁴³ in Zagreb, we can say that the lack of certain constructiveness and pragmatism is characteristic for these processes in Belgrade, which was difficult to handle for the actors. In Zagreb the different actors decided to consent to certain formulations or phrases in order to try accomplishing a better position in relation to the actual situation. In Belgrade, within the Other scene, always domineered something that is, in the political history of the Left, called political factionalism. I was part of the faction that, in these contextual circumstances, was against advocacy and constructive pragmatic model of acting. The reason was that in the concrete experiences I had in various encounters, I recognized a situation where from a position of an artist or an intellectual, one

⁴¹ The Other scene was a self-organised initiative of a group of independent artistic and cultural organisations and informal groups in Belgrade, established in 2005. More on: <https://drugascena.wordpress.com/2012/03/22/other-scene-from-local-self-organised-initiative-towards-a-national-cultural-policy-platform/>.

⁴² Clubture is a Croatian non-profit, inclusive, and participatory network active in empowering the independent cultural sector, established in 2002.

⁴³ POGON – Zagreb centre for Independent Culture and Youth is a public non-profit institution for culture, based on a new model of civil-public partnership which was founded by and is managed by the Alliance Operation City and the City of Zagreb from 2009.

was expected to make a transition to the position of a cultural manager, what would mean for someone who practices art or intellectual activity that she also needs to neglect it and to additionally educate herself to become skilful in this field. All that would be needed to teach illiterate capitalists to be literate in order to accomplish a minimal possibility to fight against them. Through series of these meetings, I had the impression that even myself am losing direction... As if these negotiations are actually leading to another creation of meta-projects that would need to be intolerably hybrid as if they would need to make a block that will again advocate something.

I realised that it is all a much wider process of NGO-isation, now executed from certain positions that are just about only that- the further distribution of NGO bureaucracy and the reproduction of that model. That was the complete opposite of the reasons my organisation (Prelom kolektiv⁴⁴) and many other organisations (such as Walking Theory, Women at Work, Context collective...) that advocated for a certain politics that was different than the ruling politics and theory. We teamed as minimal NGOs, meaning that NGO for us represents just a mean to pursue a tendency or a project that we are realising (in our case it was PPPYU⁴⁵) and our NGO existed just because of that. We didn't want to accept NGO thinking and we fought against the mainstream of NGO-isation, paradoxically, using the form of the NGO since it was a tactical activity.

**AL: How has the form of a minimal NGO influenced the sustainability of your work?
What is the legacy of the Other scene?**

In the moment of rewriting the principles of the Other scene, the second principles were much more criticised than the first. There were individuals that were thinking in different ways, i.e. that the Other scene needs to gain a better position and they didn't think that much of the political good and evil as they were observing the field of popularization as a field of support. Very shortly after that, in a year or so, the Other scene started to disperse and disappear when

⁴⁴ The Prelom journal for images and politics was established in 2001 as a publication of the Belgrade centre for Contemporary Art. Prelom kolektiv, founded in 2004 asserted itself as a space for the critique of political constellations within social theory and political philosophy, contemporary art and film theory in the contemporary post-Yugoslav context. Besides publishing Prelom journal, it organised exhibitions, conferences and discussions. Free download of all issues in pdf format on www.prelomkolektiv.org.

⁴⁵ A regional research project "Political Practices of (Post-)Yugoslav Art". Link: <http://www.kuda.org/?q=node/555>.

on its structural position, appeared Association Independent Culture Scene of Serbia⁴⁶ (NKSS), a meta-organisation of NGOs in culture on the territory of Serbia. Some organisations that were belonging to the Other scene joined NKSS and, obviously, in a sense, NKSS turned out to be more functional, at least in the pragmatic context.

But, I believe we can't completely say that this attempt of the Other scene failed since some things were realised just through the process of thinking together about organisation models. In these tendencies, that could not be fully realised in those contextual circumstances, we opted for another term to describe our activity and that is- resistance. There were different forms of protests and resistances of the cultural workers in the meantime, although all those movements were very hybrid and very politically stretched. Still, it seems to me, on the whole space of former Yugoslavia, a step was made.

The Other scene did work on the whole set of these micro-questions that appear during project making. Questions of collaboration not just as pressing the button and performing the job, but as a wider tendency and an attempt to create more human, fairer, freer and better conditions of work than the existing ones. So that the work is not just filling out the form and ticking the boxes but an attempt to focus on the process and change it towards a different, freer model. Therefore today, in relation to some local and international contexts of work and collaboration, I feel as if I am in a social welfare state when I collaborate with minimal NGOs or the bigger part of the politicized protagonists of the independent cultural scene in the region.

AL: Concerning the Serbian contemporary performance and dance scene, education is one of its main problems, which results in the brain/body-drain⁴⁷. What are the possibilities of education for contemporary artists and theoreticians in Serbia in relation to both the state and the self-organised context?

One of the biggest problems in the local context that is already thematized, at least implicitly if not that explicitly, is the problem of arts education or the education at the academies of art. That problem is inherited from socialism and artists who were working and creating in the 60s and 70s have already encountered it. It is very interesting that the appearance of conceptual art

⁴⁶ The NKSS - a network of the independent cultural scene - was formally established in 2011, and at this moment it brings together 90 organisations from more than 20 cities across the country. Link: <http://www.nezavisnakultura.net/index.php/en/>.

⁴⁷ More on these issues can be found in the text on the status of contemporary dance in the Serbian context, by Marijana Cvetković «Overview of the main Contemporary Dance Scene – the Serbian case» (2015) in the Identity Move publication: http://www.identitymove.eu/assets/pdf/articles/identity-move_ebook_13.04.pdf, pg 234.

in the Republic of Serbia (that then encompassed Socialist Autonomous Province of Vojvodina) developed in Belgrade the latest, since before that it was developed in Zagreb and Novi Sad by people who were linguists, poets and did not take part in the visual arts. We can say, paradoxically, the arts academies do not just not help the contemporary artist but also make it harder for her/him because after that education, a process is needed for him or her to emancipate from all that. So the problem with the arts academies is historically inscribed, as well as the one with the history of the art department which, with the paradigm shift from the nineties on, puts bigger and bigger emphasis on the medieval ages, a key point in the discourse of superiority between small Balkan nations. Consequently, the individuals who wanted to engage with contemporary arts had to develop their own path through a process of self-education and self-organisation.

Because of that, from the nineties on, education more and more retreats to informal contexts and structures of self-organisation. In the nineties appeared the Centre for women studies, Alternative academic educational network, School for history and theory of image, Centre for contemporary arts and other initiatives. Later on, in a way, there was the Other scene, but above all, Walking theory which started the “Deschooling classrooms”⁴⁸ project and always, with every artistic project, followed upon an ideal of the new paradigm of art as an educational turn. A new paradigm suggests that knowledge production is frequently talked about in the context of art production, through meaning and form of artistic activity that borders more and more with the research model and hybridises with it.

I can't say much of the academies of drama arts but I think there are also problems of insufficient staff competencies and knowledges in the field of contemporary arts. It is interesting that from mid nineties on, the state institutions didn't want to modernize, in the sense of including some protagonists who in the meantime confirmed their work in the international context through some professional criteria. So, there also appeared a problem with employment that is in line with the general politics of precarization of work. There is less and less full employment so I believe that most of the active colleagues, that are not anchored in

⁴⁸ Deschooling Classrooms is a project that addressed the contemporary independent cultural scenes in the region, researching and offering an alternative to the hierarchical models of education in the art and culture. It was started in 2009 by the platform Walking Theory from Belgrade (<http://tkh-generator.net>) in partnership with Kontrapunkt, from Skopje (<http://kontrapunkt-mk.org>). Link: <http://www.deschoolingclassroom.tkh-generator.net/>.

the institutional, aren't participating in that field and we can say the flow of generations isn't happening since everybody are repressed more and more into the field of precarious work.

Only two educational places opened in the last fifteen years, one of which is the Centre for Interdisciplinary studies at the University of Arts in Belgrade, which should transfer a set of theories that are mainstream in the interdisciplinary education at the universities (mostly in Western Europe). Second educational place for recruitment in the field of contemporary critical theory is the Faculty of Media and Communications, a private faculty in Belgrade.

I was a student at the Faculty for Philosophy in Belgrade before the Bologna process started, in a different model of education that has its flaws but also advantages in the sense of detachment from quick solutions. Since the paradigm of everyday life «time is money» was not so clear then, the approach was connected to the use of time in socialism (paradoxically, the experience of socialism lasted longer than socialism itself- in the second part of nineties professors spent hours and hours talking to me about art in their cabinets), meaning there was a different and more traditional relationship between time and scientific work.

What is really interesting to me, during encounters with new students from international educational context, is that I don't know what these people know anymore. I do not know how to teach curating since they are not acquainted with the history of art, mostly because of fragmentation of knowledge and course modularity.

What gets lost is what is usually lost: history. And history does matter; also in the domain of rethinking politicality and institutional practices and by that, rethinking counter-institutional practices as well. A historical education in the frame of a discipline can maybe make clearer to someone the function and operating of a model or a space of development, e.g. if someone studies discipline of performance studies, he can apply that knowledge to another field and translate it into different contexts.

It seems the education becomes just a collage of micro-fragments from critical theories and inter-disciplines while a wholesome passage through any kind of an entirety, that would connect those fragments and give a context, does not exist.

So I think that the students of today realised that their position is a position of success through the market or a position of production of a critical- something, where they fit in into this NGO culture and project-isation. Because, criticality towards this or that belongs to the domain of contemporary keywords and the good manners of operating at the contemporary arts scene while, paradoxically, contemporary art is by definition in itself somehow critical and political. So they accepted it as a cannon and not as a struggle against the cannon, which seems to me as

a structural mistake. It is interesting to observe where will that lead to in the new generations of cultural producers, because I think these processes are just at the beginning and a certain time needs to pass for them to have some kind of a manifestation.

AL: How are the artforms of theatre, performance, visual arts and contemporary dance connected in the context of the local scene? You mostly work as a curator within the visual arts, but you have experience with performance as well, i.e. the Lecture performance project⁴⁹. How do you comment on the debate about the position of a performing arts curator?

When I was reading *Frakcija* dedicated to curating performing arts⁵⁰, I realised the questions asked there are the set of basic questions connected to curating in general and that actually, in some level, there isn't a specificity to how curating exists in the performing arts. The question is the same because, in a way, the director of a performance is a curator, as well is the programmer of a festival. And maybe a curator in the visual arts would work in the crossroads of these two since in the visual arts it is necessary to invest, by artistic and intellectual means, in the process that is called mediatisation.

Actually, that is the same to what the director does in the context of theatre- a kind of mediatisation addressing the totality of a performance. Similarly, within a process of negotiation with the artist, the curator writes the script of an exhibition. I generally believe that every form of production in art is collective since today a situation where an artist produces something by herself in a studio doesn't exist, but the processes of production are usually structured dialogically. Exhibitions of contemporary art usually revolve around an installation and an installation is something that happens in a certain place, so the place where the work is exhibited is not the secondary but the primary place of its becoming. Because of that, I don't think there is a significant structural difference, between performing and visual arts, on the contrary. I think that what is interesting is that the model of performance- perform of else! - is a model that the visual arts adopted, not the other way around.

The verbs "perform" and "curate" are the buzzwords of today. We can say "curate or else" and "perform or else" and we will be always on the right trace of grasping the contemporaneity

⁴⁹ Lecture Performance is one of the first projects directly concerned with this art form, realised in 2009/2010 by Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade and Koelnischer Kunstverein in Cologne.

⁵⁰ This issue of *Frakcija*, a performing arts journal, is now free for downloading at https://www.academia.edu/14516040/Curating_Performing_Arts.

because we are all curators, even in a wider process of contemporary life, from organisation of our social media to writing emails, organisation of personal work process, scheduling- all that is a kind of curating where we curate ourselves.

So, I believe, that is where the figure of the artist gets lost although I am searching for it. Still, we can say that today the institutional field is not disciplinary divided anymore, e.g. in search of the Otherness it is always interesting to invite, within exhibitions, a dancer, researcher, sociologist to tell you something, to make a change of the seats in this field. Actually, I believe the question of identitarian Otherness throbs through contemporary art as an unspoken must. In the same way, lecture performance is a symptom of supporting Otherness in a gallery space. It appears more and more as a tendency and a break with the old regime of institutional division by disciplines, that happened in the 60s and 70s, with the need to form something that would be called the theory of the artist. Meaning, the need to break with this field of representation in art and its mode of production where the artist produces the work and then, the work is exhibited by a curator and interpreted by a critic.

Talking about lecture performance, we need to talk about a history of artistic struggle to take their voice in their own hands. That way, it is interesting in the same way performance appeared as a form that breaks both with theatre and visual arts.

Also, curating in performing arts encompasses a broader question of exhibiting performance and its practices, which was mostly tackled in the nineties when the practice of collecting and archiving the performance practices appeared, accompanied with the question of the relationship of the document and the original.

All in all, my commentary on the question of relationship between performing and visual arts is that, actually, it is not about something being taken from the visual arts and transferred to performing arts, but, au contraire, a whole set of problems that was inherent to performing arts was translated to visual arts, but in pure practice so that's why much thought wasn't given to that. Also, I believe the contemporary visual arts is absolutely determined by performance paradigm and that the institution of contemporary arts is, in its essence, performative and scenographic. The work is happening on site, under a certain direction in that space, a process in question is collective since it includes a multitude of dialogues and negotiations which is resulting in a form of collective authorship (that, of course, institution of art doesn't observe in that way but I am defining it structurally). Also, we are talking about a scenographic form because the contemporary institution is more and more mobile. I am meaning to say we cannot

talk much about the figure of the contemporary artist, because the contemporary artist is a curator and we are actually talking about the universal practice of curat-isation.

AL: Speaking of the identitarian Other, in the last decade there has been a discussion at the contemporary performance and dance scene in Serbia on its ambiguous position between the East and the West⁵¹. How do you think the constructs of the East and the West resonate today in contemporary art, regarding the local context?

Structurally, the phrase today is *former West*, although the way the West survives is through the fact the West is the author of Enlightenment. So, if we rouse the West, we will also rouse the arts, education etc. The question whether the project of Enlightenment will be criticised or not is a part of a very heated debate whereas very big doubts and negations appear today in various discussions about the project of Enlightenment, modernisation and all the characteristics of a society of welfare state, that was, I believe, the utmost consequence of Enlightenment. I believe socialism is an ultimate achievement of freedom from Enlightenment and maybe, that in a happier historical turn, it should have continued in a different direction and not made a retrograde return to the past.

I believe that today, we are not going forward but going back and we have yet to see how far. I hold to the speech about history and oppose the governing ahistoricity and, speaking in historical terms, this difference between now and ten years ago doesn't mean much for historical processes, even if things are speeding up to the todays measure. They are not speeding up in a drastically different sense as they are also accelerating in the direction of dissolving the Enlightenment project.

Nothing new, except for that, has not appeared, whether we talk about political events, terrorism, processes of precarization, environmental pollution, export of pollution to poorer countries, deregulation of market- all of that is a product of collective doubts about the project of Enlightenment, whether those doubts are directed from the left, the right, or the centre.

⁵¹ More in this topic can be found in the text by Ana Vujanović «Not Quite-Not Right Eastern Western Dance» (2011) that gives a historical and theoretical analysis of contemporary dance in Serbia: <http://www.old.tkh-generator.net/sr/openedsources/not-quite-not-right-eastern-western-dance>.

9.6. Резиме на српском језику

Циљеви докторске тезе Утицај финансијских инструмената европских културних политика на стратегије кустоских пракси у савременим извођачким уметностима је испитивање утицаја финансијских инструмената културне политике Европске уније на формирање организационих култура, кустоских стратегија и развој естетике на европској сцени независних извођачких уметности на примерима из Немачке и пост-Југославије. сцене независних извођачких сцена као студије случаја.

У поглављу „Увод“ (стр. 8-17) дефинисани су предмет истраживања, шест истраживачких питања, циљеви истраживања, главна хипотеза, четири помоћне хипотезе, методологија истраживања и кључне речи. Што се тиче предмета истраживања, феномени на независној сцени сценских уметности у постјугословенском региону упоређују се са Немачком, са циљем да се сагледају поступци креирања политика у односу на европске културне политике. Анализом конкурсне документације Европске уније у области савремених извођачких уметности, кустоском анализом програма и активности независних извођачких уметничких организација и интервјуима са директорима релевантних извођачких организација и платформи у Немачкој, ово истраживање има за циљ да допринесе развоју нових критеријума за вредновање и валоризацију уметничке продукције изван дихотомије унутрашње вредности и инструментализације културе. Тачније, истраживање има за циљ да сагледа и анализира партиципативне културне политике и сарадњу јавног и цивилног сектора у оба контекста како би се предложили нови критеријуми за вредновање и валоризацију уметничке продукције изван дихотомије унутрашње вредности и инструментализације културе. Тачније, основни циљ овог интердисциплинарног истраживања је анализа утицаја финансијских инструмената културне политике на кустоске стратегије, развој естетике и организационе културе, пре свега на постјугословенску независну извођачку сцену и немачки театар Фреиес, и затим на европској сцени савремених извођачких уметности са фокусом на независне извођачке уметности. уметничке организације које одговарају локалним и европским критеријумима за вредновање пројеката и валоризацију уметности. Ово истраживање ће такође анализирати како су ови критеријуми евалуације пројекта и валоризације уметности конструисани у односу на европску дебату о

вредности уметности. То такође значи преиспитивање политике различитих организационих култура на немачкој и европској сцени независних извођачких уметности, као и улоге нове фигуре кустоса извођачких уметности. На основу стеченог знања, ово истраживање има за циљ да допринесе развоју нових критеријумских модела за уметност и културу на ширем, европском нивоу.

Постављају се следећа истраживачка питања: Какав је утицај финансијских инструмената европских и других релевантних културних политика на кустоске стратегије и развој естетике у постјугословенским и немачким независним извођачким сценама (савремено позориште, перформанс и плес)? Како се конструишу критеријуми за оцењивање уметничких пројеката перформанса у оквиру постјугословенске и немачке независне перформанс уметничке сцене, у контексту расправе о „вредности уметности“? Која је улога кустоса извођачких уметности у преговорима о приоритетима и утицајима између креатора политике и уметничке заједнице? Како мере штедње и несигурни услови рада утичу на нове организационе културе и облике солидарности на постјугословенској и немачкој сцени независних извођачких уметности? Под којим околностима би европске независне организације извођачких уметности могле да донесу приступ одоздо према горе у креирању културне политике? Да ли је могуће допринети развоју нових критеријума вредновања и валоризације уметничке продукције изван дихотомије унутрашње вредности и инструментализације културе?

Рад полази од основне хипотезе да критеријуме евалуације уметничких пројеката треба конструисати на европском нивоу, који би исказивали вредност уметности мимо квантитативних показатеља и социо-економског утицаја. Основна хипотеза заснива се на четири помоћне: (X1) Тренутно су критеријуми за валоризацију уметничких пројеката на европском нивоу конструисани тако да више мере социоекономске резултате него уметничке, што је видљиво кроз промену приоритета између европских. Програми синдикалног финансирања културе. (X2) У зависности од своје одрживости, актери независне сцене извођачких уметности са седиштем у ЕУ делимично прилагођавају своје програмске стратегије и естетски развој социоекономској валоризацији уметности, док други, попут актера европске независне сцене извођачких уметности, захтевају редефинисање критеријума вредновања њиховог рада. (X3) У условима сарадње и колективне организационе културе, на немачкој и

постјугословенској сцени независног перформанса појављују се примерни приступи креирању политике одоздо према горе који заговарају изградњу нових критеријума за оцењивање пројеката савремених извођачких уметности. (X4) Нова фигура кустоса извођачких уметности веома је релевантна за преговоре о приоритетима финансирања између креатора политике и уметничке заједнице.

Методологија обухвата теоријска истраживања као и емпиријска истраживања у постјугословенском региону и Немачкој комбинујући различите методе као што су интервјуи, мапирање и студије случаја.

Формулисање теоријског оквира за емпиријска истраживања је првенствено интердисциплинарно, с обзиром на бројне области истраживања. Литература из различитих области стављена је у контекст теме докторске тезе у прелиминарној фази истраживања. Методологија обухвата филозофију уметности (расправе о вредности уметности, јавној сфери, итд.); социологија уметности (нови институционализам, студије заједнице итд.), теорија извођачких уметности (естетика независног позоришта, постдрамског позоришта, студије савременог плеса) и културна политика (модел културног менаџмента, студије утицаја итд.).

Фаза деск истраживања ће укључивати широк спектар секундарних извора података, укључујући План рада Европског савета за културу (2015-2018), базе података националних влада, Зборник културних политика и трендова у Европи и многе друге, као основу за емпиријска истраживања на постјугословенском простору и Немачкој. Методологија такође представља истраживања о независној сцени перформанса, као и постојеће материјале о постјугословенским и немачким културним политикама, укључујући националне и локалне стратегије за културу и јавне позиве. Други део емпиријског истраживања заснивао се на квалитативним методама истраживања укључујући мапирање, дубинске интервјуе и директна и индиректна запажања.

Надаље, у одељку о методологији објашњава се како она излази из оквира будући да се бави темом вредности уметности која се развија у оквиру дисциплина филозофије и социологије уметности. Стога се као главни теоријски оквир студије користе теорије критичке анализе културне политике (Беннетт Т., 1992, 2000; Драгичевић Шешић 2017,

2018; Гиелен 2013; Хабермас 1996 [1992], МцГуиган, 1992, 1996, 2018, ; Миницхбауер 2000, 2005; Видовић 2017), са посебним нагласком на вредности теорија уметности (Белфиоре и Бенет О., 2007, 2008, 2010; Боурдијеу, 1993; Холден, 2004, 2004, 3, 2010; 2001, 2010) и, за анализу развојне естетике, студије сценских уметности (Цвејић, 2005; Јанша 2013; Кунст 2013, 2015; Леман 2006; Шнајдер, 2017; Вујановић, 2012).

У истраживању ће се користити теорије из области филозофије и социологије уметности како би се успоставиле јасне дефиниције и успоставиле корелације између појмова везаних за неизвесност и несигурну природу уметничког рада (Бутлер, 2004, 2005; Лореи, 2010, 2013; Кунст, 2015; Лаззарато, 2006; Певни 2011; Вирно 2004) до концепата од новог институционализма и нових модела управљања уметношћу (Гиелен 2010; МцРоббие, 2001; Празник 2020, 2021; Ранциере, 2002; 2006; 2006). Анализирајући нове организационе културе и предлажући организационе моделе који доприносе креирању политика одоздо према горе, истраживање ће се фокусирати на сарадничке и колективне организационе културе (Бисхоп, 2006; Цвејић 2012; Кунст 2015; Празник 2020; Вирно, 2004) и улога кустоса извођачких уметности између уметничке заједнице и креатора политике (Маџоски 2013; Малзацхер 2011; Милевска 2008; Морланд & Амундсен, 2010; Стаал 2018). Коначно, биће засновано на истраживању критеријума евалуације и критици студија утицаја (Белфиоре, Е. & Беннетт, О., 2007, 2008; Космос 2022; Матарасо 1997; Повер 1994; Сцуллион и Гарциа 2005; Селвоод 2002).

Културно мапирање се користи како у постјугословенском региону тако и у Немачкој као припрема за креирање студија случаја, као и као метод у другој фази емпиријског истраживања. Аутор позиционира метод културног мапирања као нов начин описивања и категоризације културних ресурса заједница и места. У циљу идентификовања кључних питања културне политике која се односе на независну сцену извођачких уметности, у овој фази истраживања посећено је неколико културних конференција, семинара, фестивала извођачких уметности и симпозијума у Аустрији, Хрватској, Холандији, Немачкој, Србији и Шпанији. На основу учешћа и посматрања стручних кругова културне политике и сценских уметности на овим манифестацијама, направљено је четрнаест кратких интервјуа са кључним актерима из области културне политике и извођачких уметности из Немачке, Белгије, Шведске, Словеније, Румуније, Хрватске, Србије, Македонија, Пољска и Аустрија, које учествују у европским

пројектима. Материјали са мапирања спроведених на догађајима и интервјуима биће коришћени као ресурс за мапирање јер аутор документацију идиосинкратичног, локалног знања поставља као кључни елемент истраживачког процеса.

Главна фаза истраживања заснована је на методи студије случаја и анализира четири специфичне студије случаја независних организација и платформи извођачких уметности у постјугословенском региону и Немачкој. Критеријуми за избор организација засновани су на партнерству између организација из постјугословенског региона и Немачке у оквиру два дугорочна европска пројекта савремених извођачких уметности, тј. Унапређење пројекта извођачких уметности/АПАП и Лифе Лонг Бурнинг Нетворк. Док су дубински интервјуи коришћени као средство за успостављање фокусних тачака студије случаја, штампани и онлајн извори су такође коришћени за припрему студија случаја. Након обављених интервјуа (на енглеском) са кустосима и партнерима организације, рад успоставља основу за поређење организација из постјугословенског региона са онима у Немачкој. Главне аналитичке методе које се користе у овој фази истраживања су интегрисана анализа и поређење политика, кустоска анализа, анализа садржаја и анализа дискурса. Анализа дискурса се примењује на податке из мапирања и интервјуа. У циљу утврђивања утицаја динамике локалне, националне и транснационалне културне политике на њихове програмске стратегије, организационе културе и естетски развој, примењена је кустоска анализа програмских вредности (избор кустоса) на програме релевантних организација из студија случаја. .

На крају, кључне речи тезе су: савремена сценска уметност; финансијски инструменти културне политике Европске уније; инструментализација културе; студије утицаја, заговарање, вредности културне политике, кустоска агенција, европске мреже пројеката.

У 2. поглављу „Промене у дискурсу културне политике Европске уније” (стр. 16-42) аутор има за циљ да истражи начине на које се постполитичко стање, одржано хомологијом између несигурности културних радника и идеологије слободног тржишта, утицала је на разумевање вредности културе и њених критеријума вредновања. Кроз критичку анализу доступних истраживања на тему вредности уметности, аргументована је потреба за конструктивнијом артикулацијом вредности и уверења у контексту

културних политика коју инструментализација уметности оставља по страни због значајног притиска на сектор уметности да брани вредност и јавна улагања у њега.

Даље, аутор даје кратак историјски преглед креирања културне политике у ЕУ како би се уочио постепено померање ка економским аргументима и циљевима у области културе. Завршни део поглавља бави се анализом дискурса како би се откриле промене парадигме од програма финансирања „Култура“ ка програму финансирања „Креативна Европа“. Ове транзиције видљиве су кроз употребу дискурса о 'потрошачима' наспрам дискурса о 'публици', што се критички одражава у контексту вредносне дебате о уметности јер „улога 'потрошача' умањује улогу 'грађанина' (МцГуиган 1992: 165). У поглављу је дат и преглед расправе о инструментализацији културе и вредности уметности коју аутор ставља у контекст постполитичке ситуације коју карактерише доминација менаџерске логике у свим аспектима живота, тј. свођење политичког на администрацију, где се одлучивање све више сматра питањем стручног знања, а не политичким ставом (Жижек 2006 : 36). Истовремено, у овом поглављу долази се до закључка да за културни сектор ово постполитичко резонување често значи претпоставку креатора културне политике да логика слободног тржишта објашњава већину нивоа вредности које можемо приписати културним производима. – што у крајњој линији доприноси дискурсу оправдавања уметности.

У другом делу поглавља, расправа о валоризацији културе стављена је у контекст одрживог развоја. Истовремено, фокус је и на историји концепта одрживог развоја, који је настао као покушај да се легитимизује и продужи економски раст, који данас доводи до опасности од „зачараног круга“ у који неминовно упадамо када ми тумачимо културу као средство за укључивање развоја схваћеног као економски раст. Наиме, актуелни трендови у Европској унији и ван ње – на локалном, националном и транснационалном нивоу – смањују јавно финансирање и подстичу приватно финансирање. Аутор упозорава да програм Креативна Европа почива и на подстицању културних индустрија, које се као инструмент привредног развоја савршено уклапају у економски стуб одрживог развоја.

Кандидат затим износи дискусију о вредновању уметности према критеријумима који нису специфични за област уметности, углавном економске и друштвене, фокусирајући

се на ауторе као што су Белфиоре (2007, 2010, 2012), Космос (2022), Матарасо (1997) и Селвуд (2002) од којих већина критикује допринос 'културног мерења' инструментализму у културној политици. Наиме, иако је лако сложити се са Белфиореом и Бенетом да се појам културне политике засноване на доказима заснива на низу поједностављујућих претпоставки, у распону од идеје да постоји недвосмислена дефиниција уметности и културе до идеје да њихов утицај може се измерити и да ће то обезбедити јавно финансирање, ово поглавље сугерише да је такође неопходно уважити њихову сугестију да се дискусија о културној вредности не наставља у тако поједностављеном облику, заснованом на „лажној и стерилној дихотомији између унутрашњег и инструменталног вредности“ (2007: 228). Ово уверење води ка другом приступу концепту културне вредности који истражује како изразити или артикулисати оно што одређује културну вредност без разматрања разлога за јавно финансирање.

Стога се кандидат бави и темом вредности културе мимо инструментализма, с обзиром на ставове аутора као што су Боурдијеу (2013), Тхросби (2001, 2010), Кламер (1996) и Абинг (2008), бавећи се појмовима као што су као културни капитал и културна економија. Узимајући у обзир раније уведени концепт „пост-политичке државе“, још више долази до изражаја велики притисак на уметнички сектор да оправда своју вредност и јавна улагања. Из тог разлога, ово поглавље представља дебату о вредности уметности и културе између културних актера који покушавају да развију језике и методе које могу боље да опишу вредности културе. Премиса тезе је да је језик који тренутно прихватају системи финансирања у Европи у сектору културе мањкав не само зато што не пружа одговарајуће средство за разговор о култури, већ зато што је језик зависности и молбе који подстиче односе. неједнакости. Иако се и други сектори (као што је војска) такође финансирају порезима грађана, само се уметност описује као субвенционисани и непрофитни (ако профит дефинишемо у економском смислу) сектор. Закључак поглавља сугерише да дебату о културној политици треба одвојити од фокуса на инструменталну вредност уметности и, посебно после мера штедње, њену „економску вредност“ као главно оправдање „јавног улагања“ у уметност и културу. Драгичевић Шешиић дијагностикује проблем као забринутост „у којој мери јавна културна политика треба да игнорише капиталистичка тржишта као механизам рангирања вредности“ јер „капиталистичка логика ствара дисторзије у културном животу“ (2021: 11). Ако уметност већ афирмишемо у оквиру економске логике, Кунст (2013: 118) уметност

поставља ближе „бесмисленој потрошњи” него економији производње вредности. Када се расправља о валоризацији уметности у смислу друштвеног утицаја, Гилен такође тврди да се „креативност често поистовећује са 'решавањем проблема' (тј. 'крпљењем рупа' у истом систему који их производи, оп. а.); што је нешто сасвим друго од изазивања проблема или, боље речено, проблематизовања питања, задатка који је донедавно био резервисан само за уметника“ (2019: 80). Стога инструменталне културне политике нису дугорочно одрживе и лако се могу окренути од културних политика „опстанка” ка културним политикама „смрти” (Белфиоре 2004: 202). Последице тврдњи о неважности културе за политичке актере видљиве су у хиперинструментализацији. Према Драгичевић Шешифу, „посткапиталистичке културне политике треба да буду у стању да вреднују оно за шта тржишта нису способна“ (2021: 12). Стога, у закључку поглавља, кандидат предлаже да се унутар културног сектора развије јачи аргумент како би се омогућио континуитет аутономне сфере уметничке и културне политике.

Други део другог поглавља даје кратак историјски преглед креирања културне политике у Европској заједници у контексту све веће тежње ка економским циљевима. Почетни део поглавља објашњава развој европске културне политике од раних фаза процеса европских интеграција када је култура замишљена само као симболички додатак идентитета и различитости заједници у развоју. Штавише, државе чланице нису добро прихватиле идеју о формалној координацији културних политика јер је преовладао принцип супсидијарности (Ромаинвилле 2015: 193). Стога је експлицитна културна политика у Европи била искључиво у надлежности националних влада уз одређени допринос Унеска и Савета Европе све до 1992. године, када је култура уврштена у уговоре Европских заједница усвајањем члана 128. Уговора из Маастрихта. (сада 151 у измењеном Уговору из Амстердама). Пошто је чланак створио правни темељ за касније програме и акције Европске комисије (Сиеверс Вингерт 2012: 36), у следећем делу поглавља, књига кандидата представља своје најважније ставке. Чланак је био прилично критикован због своје недоречености и контрадикторности (Схоре 2006: 16), али је представљао и симболички значајан помак ка новом транснационалном нивоу креирања и регулације културне политике. Политички дискурс се померио од „плуралне деценије“ која је доминирала 1980-их и раних 1990-их до „декаде конвергенције“ 1990-их и до 2000. године, а затим и до садашње ситуације у којој дискурс о културним и креативним индустријама (Шлезингер, 2015). Кандидат такође види чланак као почетак нове фазе у

развоју европске културе у ЕУ како би се ојачао легитимитет Уније и широка подршка јавности и проширио домет њене моћи и утицаја.

Надаље, кандидат представља трендове у европској културној политици након 2000. године и анализира промену приоритета финансирања између програма "Култура 2007-201". и „Креативна Европа 2014-2020“. При томе се фокусира на значајне семантичке промене у приоритетима и језику културне политике ЕУ јер се „културни и креативни сектор“ сада односи на оно што је некада био културни сектор, што га чини изазовнијим за све који су укључени у непрофитне или јавне културне организације . Штавише, Комисија се фокусира на „конкурентност“ и „раст“ користећи термин „потрошачи“ уместо „публика“. Нови фокус на „стварање стратешке публике од стране културних институција кроз културни маркетинг, истраживање посетилаца, позиционирање циљне групе и културни пренос“ подржан је, пре свега, „изазови нашег времена“, „дигитални помак“, „нове технологије“ и „економски раст“. У закључку, кандидат поставља тезу о тумачењу овог феномена као политичког одговора на економске трендове и различите кризе, чиме се одговорност финансирања културе са јавних органа пребацује на публику, односно „потрошаче“.

Треће поглавље, „Реакције из поља извођачких уметности на промене у дискурсу европске културне политике“ (стр. 42-75) анализира начине на које независна сцена извођачких уметности у Европи оштрије одражава ове друштвене сложености и промене у европском друштву, због својих далекосежних мрежа. изван националних сценских уметности и несигурне природе услова рада. На основу интердисциплинарног прегледа литературе и теренског истраживања које укључује учешће на симпозијумима и скуповима који се баве условима рада у савременим извођачким уметностима, ово поглавље испитује како несигурни услови рада утичу на нове организационе културе и облике солидарности на независној сцени савремених извођачких уметности у Европи. На почетку поглавља кандидат износи увиде из неколико студија из области извођачких уметности и европских културних политика (ЕИПА 2021; ИДЕА Цонсулт, Гоегхе-Институт, Аманн С., Хеинсиус Ј. 2021; КЕА 2006) који указују на распрострањеност слабо плаћеног и волонтерског рада заснованог на пројектима на независној културној сцени, са веома изазовним дугорочним ефектима који се односе на професионални и приватни живот слободних културних радника. Након тога, у поглављу се анализира

несигурност као норма међу уметницима перформанса у пројектно оријентисаном режиму рада ((Бутлер, 2004, 2005; Лореи, 2010, 2013; Кунст, 2015; Лаззарато, 2006; Певни 2011; Вирно4). , уметници перформанса се често сматрају претечама у данашњој институционализацији овог пројектно оријентисаног режима рада, јер се пројектни рад извођачких уметника може сматрати јасним примером актуелних друштвено-економских трендова у оквиру културне и креативне економије.

Следећи део поглавља показује како, упркос чињеници да се уметници перформанса могу сматрати архетиповима постфордистичке парадигме рада, они су и ти који се највише боре да је оспоре.

Дискусије о блискости између сценских уметности и политике саме по себи нису ништа ново, почевши од атинске демократије у којој је Хана Арент приметила да „сценске уметности заиста имају јак афинитет са политиком“ (Арент 1998: 154) због перформативних механизма. политичке праксе и политизације уметничког извођења. Дакле, политика сценских уметности се материјализује не само кроз директну употребу политичких мотива у извођачким уметностима, већ и кроз начине представљања на сцени, као и начине њене продукције.

Наиме, уметност перформанса често поставља питања критичког позиционирања дела и међуодноса садржаја и форме у односу на друштвено-политичке специфичности контекста. Најчешће се бави односом, учешћем и заједницом и укључује формате као што су колаборативно ауторство, партиципативни пројекти и активни облици гледања или ангажовања публике. Узимајући у обзир Раунигово залагање за „културну производњу као дисиденцију, као опозицију и као стварање јавних сфера“ (2011), велики број уметника и кустоса на постполитичко стање одговара директним политичким ангажманом у условима неолиберализма. Како Рансијер примећује, овај „повратак политици“ потврђује „способност уметности да се одупре облицима економске, политичке и идеолошке доминације“ (2010: 34).

Надаље, кандидат се бави темама самоуправљања и колективитета као стратегије отпора. Као што је показано у претходном делу поглавља, уметници као креативни радници у нематеријалном капитализму су посебно рањиви на неолиберални режим вредности због обећања индивидуалне независности и могућности за самоостварење кроз рад. Као одговор на то, у последњој деценији 20. века дошло је до обновљене

афирмације колективитета јер је колектив почео да служи као контра модел моделу флексибилног, мобилног, неспецијализованог радника који се може прилагодити различитим условима. У ситуацији када нема сталних уговора и стабилних примања, очување јединства захтева посвећеност свих чланова и отпор струјама које вуку ка огромном индивидуализованом тржишту савремене уметности и културе. Нагласак на колективности у уметности је од почетка исполитизован јер Дебор објашњава да је сама идеја колектива у авангардним покретима укључивала транспозицију организационих метода из револуционарне политике у уметност (1961: нп). Колективност је уско повезана са самоорганизацијом, концептом који се користи за организовање и процесе доношења одлука који су део организација цивилног друштва, што укључује и независну сцену извођачких уметности. Према Вујановићу, „самоорганизација подржава трансформациони потенцијал уметности да интервенише у друштвеним односима“ (2006: 63). У историји сценских уметности различите групе и колективи су развијале своје уметничке стратегије и методе продукције као отворену алтернативу институционализованој и бирократизованој инфраструктури репертоарских позоришта (Клаић 2012: 44). Надаље, кандидат представља могућности оспоравања актуелних политика након увјерења извођача и културних радника да стварају аутономне сфере које се одупиру доминантним режимима несигурности изградњом веза које сежу далеко изван националних граница.

На основу досадашњег мапирања проблема који произилазе из политике услова рада на терену, четврто поглавље „Кураторство у сценској уметности као носилац промена у културној политици“ (стр. 60-75) предлаже јачу одговорност улоге. кустоса у сценским уметностима у вези са преговарањем о приоритетима између креатора политике, публике и уметничке заједнице. Будући да је у последње две-три деценије глагол „курист“ ослобођен контекста визуелне уметничке сцене и постао поштар на међународној сцени извођачких уметности и њених пројектних мрежа, кандидат у овом поглављу се пита шта је то трансфер? праксе и терминологије заправо чини. Да ли су искуства и резултати из области визуелних уметности, у којима већ неко време постоји кустоска пракса, лако преносиви на извођачке уметности? Зашто су еквивалентне улоге у извођачким уметностима (као што су селектор, драматург, продуцент и критичар) сада незадовољавајући означитељи? И, коначно, какав потенцијал има фигура кустоса

сценских уметности за преговарање о културним политикама у европском сектору независних извођачких уметности? Ово поглавље представља ставове различитих аутора и професионалаца у сценским уметностима (Бисмарцк 2011; Брандстеттер 2011; Малзацхер 2011, 2014; Весић 2011) о томе да ли је ова увезена терминологија само ребрендирање или хибрид већ постојећих улога и функција, или је заправо примењује нове праксе.

Кроз размишљање о томе како се термин појавио у визуелним и извођачким уметностима и поређење кустоских пракси у оба медија, први део овога разматра да ли кустос има потенцијал да произведе сличне утицаје у извођачким уметностима као иу визуелним уметностима и како потенцијал ове посредничке праксе протеже се на питања политике и/или културне политике. У другом делу поглавља, изјаве из интервјуа са неколико кустоса извођачких уметности из Хрватске, Србије, Пољске и Немачке активних на европској сцени независних извођачких уметности дају преглед дилема у овој области у погледу њихове кустоске одговорности према културној политици. као и како заговарају културну политику усмерену на уметност, како у свом националном контексту, тако и широм Европске уније.

Док су ови аутори наглашавали односе моћи у свету уметности, они су били мање забринуте за то како је поље политички структурисано и вођено. Да бисмо размислили о томе како кустоске праксе могу интервенисати у културну политику, корисно је ослонити се на поређење кустоске и политичке активности које је направила кустоскиња, списатељица и едукаторка Марија Линд (2009, н.д.): „Кустоирање се може упоредити са Појам 'политичког' Цхантал Моуффе, аспект живота који се не може одвојити од дивергенције и неслагања, скуп пракси које ремете постојеће односе моћи." Стога, ово поглавље сугерише да таква производња кустоске субјективности може бити кључна за оспоравање актуелних политика и пружање потенцијала за политичку акцију. Кустос као посредник тако постаје агент који делује између онога што је сада и онога што би могло бити другачије у начину на који се друштвено-политичке структуре регулишу и управљају.

У циљу давања видљивости кустоским дилемама у оквиру актуелних политика, у другом делу овог поглавља представљени су увиди из неколико полуструктурираних интервјуа

са кустосима независних организација из области савремене сценске уметности из Хрватске, Немачке, Пољске и Србије, сваке од који је субвенционисан програмом ЕУ за културу 2007-2013 и Креативна Европа 2014-2020. Организације су: БАДцо (Загреб), Стари Бровар Нови Таниец (Познањ), Станица: Сервице фор Цонтемпорари Данце (Београд), Уферстудиос фор Цонтемпорари Данце (Берлин) и Валкинг Тхеори (Београд). Закључак који произилази из овог мапирања је да се интервјуисани кустоси не придржавају постполитичке „логике бројева“ већ квалитативног приступа својим пројектима (нпр. „навођење публике да схвати да су њихова тела бојно поље за идеологије и стратегије“, како је горе наведено) и тиме активирају своје трансформативне кустоске агенције. Судајући по њиховим одговорима, они критикују доминантни културно-политички дискурс и изражавају потребу да се боре за конструктивнију артикулацију вредности и веровања у уметности која превазилазе квантитативно. Образложење интервјуисаних кустоскиња препознато је као могућности које се разликују од претварања у послушне културне агенте. Артикулишући широко распрострањено неслагање, ове кустоске агенције доприносе трајној традицији независне критике доминантне моћи и идеологије у културној јавној сфери.

На основу овог прегледа, разлика између кустоса визуелних и извођачких уметности, тј. у мери у којој је сектор извођачких уметности мање усађен у тржиште него у јавну сферу, могуће је закључити да кустос извођачких уметности има шири потенцијал за деловање у оквиру јавне политике од кустоса у области визуелног. уметности (из којих ипак проистиче његова савремена позиција). Стога би недавно повећање видљивости кустоса у сценским уметностима могло да значи помак у правцу већег увида у кустоску одговорност не само унутар области уметности, већ и у односу на друге сфере друштва. Док постполитички дух капитализма доноси мерљиве вредности и компетитивност, осврт на историјски развој позиције кустоса у друштву подсећа нас да је он увек са собом носио дужност бриге и стога је једино логично ако настави да изазива данашње неједнакости. Признајући одговорност таквих кустоских агенција да се залажу за доносиоце одлука и да унесу критичку теорију у културну политику, кустос извођачких уметности може произвести шири утицај у политичком контексту. Стога, изазивањем економског и политичког оквира у коме кустоси сценских уметности делују и њиховим залагањем за политике оријентисане одоздо према горе, стварају се могући културни отпори који би могли да доведу до аутономнијег света културне продукције.

Пето поглавље „Представљање контекста: независне сцене савремене перформансе у Немачкој и постјугословенском региону“ (стр. 75-162) мапира културно-политички контекст независних перформанс сцена у оквиру два главна контекста овог истраживања и њиховог селекција у оквиру истраживања. Прво, за разлику од већине западне и јужне Европе, пејзажом извођачких уметности у Немачкој и постјугословенском региону и даље у великој мери доминира дихотомија модела репертоарског позоришта с једне стране и веома разнолике независне сцене с друге (Клаић 2012). : 37). Већина јавних субвенција за извођачке уметности у овим контекстима дистрибуира се првенствено јавним позориштима, што подстиче снажне напоре заговарања да се јавна средства из централизованих културних институција усмере како би се подржао развој широког спектра независних организација извођачких уметности. Иако ови недостаци у финансирању имају веома различите интензитете и градације у два контекста, процеси трансформације обе сцене извођачких уметности након пада Берлинског зида и актуелни структурални проблеми остају слични, посебно у области савременог плеса (Танзбуро 2013: нп.).

Друго, иу историјском иу савременом контексту, постојао је јединствен скуп утицаја унутар пејзажа извођачких уметности између два истраживачка контекста. Историјски гледано, поред репертоарских позоришта у региону које су обликовали продукцијски модели из земаља немачког говорног подручја, постојао је снажан уметнички утицај облика као што су Брехтов театар и Танзтеатар у позоришту и савременом плесу. Данас постоји значајан степен сарадње и размене између савремених плесних заједница у два контекста, са акцентом на Берлин због градске конвергенције два бивша система (Истока и Запада). Тренутно, град функционише као средиште за високо мобилне и мрежно оријентисане професионалце извођачких уметности јер се развио у једну од најдинамичнијих и најразноврснијих уметничких сцена на свету, иако са све већим трошковима живота и продукције. Штавише, са све већим одливом мозгова и тела висококвалификованих појединаца из постјугословенског региона (Кинг & Оруц 2019: 2), Немачка и Берлин посебно постају пожељна база за извођаче и културне раднике из региона, као и високо међународне уметничке школе као што је ХЗТ (Међууниверзитетски центар за плес) Берлин. С друге стране, као што показује ово

поглавље, теоретичари и културни радници са постјугословенског региона стварају снажан дискурзивни простор који је резултат колективног настојања ка критичком промишљању савремене извођачке уметности, што је коначно мотивисало дубље промишљање политике производње. модела у ширем европском контексту.

У циљу успостављања основе за студије случаја, први део овог поглавља дао је преглед развоја система културне политике у односу на област независних извођачких уметности, као и главне изазове у том погледу. У оквиру анализе независне сцене извођачких уметности, фокус је на аспектима материјалних услова производње, као што су системи финансирања, несигурност уметника и културних радника, и процеси и организације заступања. Други део поглавља састоји се од размишљања о два догађаја који су окупили уметнике, кустосе, истраживаче и креаторе политике који су мапирали више дилема око нестабилних услова рада и одговарајућих стратегија отпора унутар европских независних извођачких сцена са нагласком на Берлин и Београд. Циљ размишљања је такође био да покажу како практичари из различитих контекста уче једни од других модела и стварају мреже како би створили разноврсније, аутономније и одрживије поље независних извођачких уметности у Европи.

У средњем делу поглавља дат је преглед културне политике у Немачкој и немачке независне изведбене сцене (Фреиес театар), развоја културне политике у Немачкој, карактеристике актуелног модела културне политике у Немачкој и модела европске сарадње. , главни изазови у актуелној културној политици, пејзаж извођачких уметности, и теме умрежавања и финансирања, изазови и несигурност, оквир социјалног осигурања и удружења за заступање на немачкој сцени независног перформанса. Надаље, кандидат износи преглед самосталног културног сектора у постјугословенском региону и његове борбе за афирмацију као политичког субјекта, развоја културне политике у СФРЈ, културне политике и регионалне независне културне сцене у транзицији, (пост) транзициона културна политика и изазови за независни сектор, пејзажне сценске уметности и независну културну сцену у региону, развој постјугословенске независне сцене извођачких уметности и њени модели умрежавања и финансирања, изазови и несигурност, оквир социјалне сигурности и удружења за заступање.

Последњи део поглавља садржи информације из мапирања поља агонистичке дискусије о условима рада у контексту истраживања. Током најраније фазе емпиријског истраживања, етнографски теренски рад је коришћен као метод за информисање, између осталог, за одабир студија случаја. У циљу идентификовања кључних проблема везаних за несигурне услове рада и стратегије отпора на независној сцени извођачких уметности у Европи, кандидат је учествовао на више културних конференција, семинара, скупова заговарања и фестивала и скупова из области савремених извођачких уметности, нај од којих су наведене у уводном поглављу. Међу њима су одабрана два догађаја за детаљнији опис у овом поглављу са циљем да илуструју низ питања у вези са темама истраживања, као и да дају аргументе за нове културно-политичке мере у завршним поглављима дисертације.

Ови догађаји су изабрани из два разлога. Прво, оба окупљају мноштво уметника, кустоса и културних радника који су различито (професионално, културно и политички) ситуирани и обично не учествују у дијалогу. Дакле, разумевање ових скупова приближава се ономе што Моуффе назива агонистичким плурализмом (200), односно приступу који наглашава вредност сукоба за политику. Друго, догађаји пружају садржајне прегледе старих и нових проблема узрокованих несигурним условима рада (као што су неједнакости у структурним условима, недостатак финансијских и материјалних ресурса, итд.) у два главна контекста овог истраживања: постјугословенски регион (и Балкан) као и Немачка. Први скуп је био „Плес против околности“, догађај који су организовали Дацхвербанд Танз Деутсцхланд, Танзбуро Берлин, Зеитгеноссицхер Танз Берлин е.В. у оквиру фестивала савременог плеса Танзнацхт Берлин у августу 2016. Танзнацхт Берлин је бијенални фестивал који је покренуо Танзфабрик Берлин 2000. године са циљем представљања стваралаштва плесних уметника из Берлина. Са различитим кустосом за свако издање, експериментише са уметничким и дискурзивним форматима у дијалогу са локалном заједницом уметника. У оквиру ове манифестације одржана су четири круга дискусија о методама рада и условима производње у савременом плесу са кореографима, кустосима, истраживачима, новинарима и политичарима из Немачке и Западне Европе.

Други скуп је био Номад Данце Адвокатес, иницијатива Номад Данце Академи, платформе за савремени плес на Балкану. Кроз различите хоризонталне и

децентрализоване моделе самоорганизације Номад Данце Академи има снажан утицај на развој регионалног поља савременог плеса. За разлику од „мрежа чланова“, НДА је колаборативна и тактичка мрежа (са партнерима из Љубљане, Сарајева, Београда, Софије, Скопља и Загреба) која је основала нове организације које су преузеле улогу партнера и организатора мреже. НДА је тако ојачала организације у области савременог плеса кроз експериментисање са различитим моделима и облицима самоорганизовања који су играли улогу у поновном повезивању, али и стварању нових веза у региону. Мрежа практикује јединствен хоризонтални систем доношења одлука заснован на одговорности и поверењу, који је утицао на различите области сарадње, размене, изградње капацитета, међусобне подршке и заступања у области савременог плеса.

У закључку, кандидат наводи да су учесници оба скупа делили начине на које оличавају прецарнорст због недостатка ресурса у погледу времена (нпр. структурална и дугорочна подршка јавности) и простора (нпр. вођени плесни центри), а истовремено одбацују хијерархијске и вертикалне процедуре, критички испитују капитализам као место доминације и афирмишу вредности радикалне демократије. Нуде вишеструке дијагнозе садашњег стања, али и предлоге за редефинисање онога што је уобичајено у области савременог плеса, и на тај начин отргнути се од исцрпљујуће и стандардизоване несигурности.

У поглављу 6 „Европске пројектне мреже као пејзажи за промене кустоских стратегија независних извођачких уметности: студије случаја“ (стр. 162-194), кандидат анализира четири студије случаја из пост-југословенске (Станица-Сервис за саврени плес из Београда и Студентски центар Загреб) и немачка (Танзфабрик и Уферстудиос из Берлина) независна сцена перформанса. Они су део две европске мреже – Пројекта унапређења извођачких уметности (апап) и Лифе Лонг Бурнинг – које функционишу више од двадесет година и које су доживеле бројне промене у стратегијама кустоса. Фокусирајући се на последња два циклуса финансирања (Култура и Креативна Европа), који су у фокусу овог истраживања, ово поглавље процењује како су ове промене утицале на заинтересоване стране са различитим нивоима подршке у свом локалном и националном окружењу током овог продуженог периода. Ово поглавље представља главне увиде у то како су ове промене током овог дугог периода утицале на partnere са различитим нивоима подршке у њиховом локалном и националном контексту, са

фокусом на последња два циклуса финансирања (Култура и Креативна Европа). Пројекат унапређења извођачких уметности (апап) и мреже Лифе Лонг Бурнинг су погодне студије случаја јер су активне више од двадесет година, што је резултирало променама у кустоском доношењу одлука које су можда уследиле након реструктурирања програма грантова од стране Европске уније. .

У оба потпоглавља представљају две организације из анализираних контекста Немачке и постјугословенских земаља, као и саме мреже. Да би дошао до генерализованих закључака, у оба пододељка поглавља кандидат користи кустоску анализу програма мреже, интервјуе са кустосима (Маријана Цветковић, Лудгер Орлок, Симоне Веиллет) и транскрипт мрежне дискусије „Страст и политика“ организоване од стране Креативне Европе Деск Аустрија, Одељења за културу покрајине Салцбург и Сцене Салцбург у оквиру фестивала Перформ Европе. Та дебата је окупила апап уметнике и менаџере у култури (генерални директор апап Берти Амбах, уметнички директор Танзфабрика Лудгер Орлок и уметнице Ивана Муллер и Марија Јерез) како би расправљали о томе у којој мери концепти из културне политике одређују и ограничавају креативни процес, што чини ЕУ програме пожељне за сарадњу као и друге теме везане за тензије између уметничких процеса и приоритета културне политике. Стога ће поглавље пренети делове дискусија који су релевантни и симптоматични за целокупну тезу, груписане у оквиру тема које повезују налазе са истраживачким питањима.

Главни увид до којег се долази у последњем поглављу јесте да организације теже атомизацији уметничког рада услед утицаја промена приоритета културне политике; објективизација естетских операција и процесних аспеката уметничких дела, „окретање ка публици“, фокус на презентацију и циркулацију уметничких дела, а не на производњу, и повећана несигурност због фокуса на квантитативно, а не квалитативно вредновање. . Међутим, трендови у настајању такође позиционирају „кураторску агенцију“ као концепт културне политике, као и „несавладани плес“ (Бурт 2016), што значи да одређена уметничка дела и производне стратегије изводе алтернативне заједнице или, с једне стране, истичу скривене динамика моћи која резултира несигурним животима радника извођачких уметности и као политичке активности.

У закључку „Перспективе дијалога између транснационалних креатора политике и независне сцене извођачких уметности у Европи“ (стр. 194- 202) налазе се и препоруке за културне политике попут успостављања модела културне политике у оквиру земаља „Креативног Европа“ који може послужити као обједињујући принцип на свим нивоима управљања и надограђивати се на све чешћу праксу заједничког деловања. Овај модел треба да промовише позитивне грађанске вредности, социјалну правду, солидарност, грађанство кроз културу, приступ култури, културно учешће и уметничко стваралаштво. Ова европска добра треба да служе као платформа за подстицање сарадње, сарадње и размене између појединаца и група. Претходно поменута заједничка добра имају за циљ да коегзистирају поред и ван граница успостављених институција. Ова област има потенцијал да послужи као динамичко тестно место за нове концепте друштвених механизма и као идеалан контекст за појаву нових приоритета за Европску унију. Конкретно, ово се може урадити кроз два корака:

- промовисање заједничких пракси у уметности кроз пружање подршке и финансирања културних мрежа и дугорочних иницијатива за сарадњу у уметности. Државе чланице би могле да подрже уметничку сарадњу у малом прекограничном обиму, док би Европа требало да даје приоритет сарадњи у већем обиму иу дужем временском периоду.
- истицање основа имплементираних са најнижег нивоа за развој модела заједничког европског добра за културну политику. Овај сегмент програма би олакшао истраживачке и консултативне иницијативе које имају за циљ да се баве свим аспектима формулисања неопходне политичке структуре за уметност и културу широм Европе. Предложена мера би омогућила Европској унији приступ широком спектру искустава и предлога који произилазе из уобичајених пракси, док би у исто време пружила платформу уметницима, културним стручњацима и политичким аналитичарима да изразе своје ставове.

Штавише, како би се позабавила несигурним условима рада уметника и културних радника, Креативна Европа би требало да повећа пословне грантове уместо финансирања које је искључиво усмерено на пројекте. Наиме, сектор културе наставља да захтева хитну промену у шемама финансирања које се баве неодрживим праксама са којима се уметници и организације тренутно суочавају. Интегрисање одрживости у организационе и пројектне аспекте захтева њено укључивање у разматрање буџета, истовремено пружајући структурну подршку и изградњу капацитета за уметнике,

продуценте и уметничке професионалце. Заједничка одговорност да се ово подстакне лежи и на уметницима и на креаторима политике. Коначно, важно је да се уговори унутар сектора придржавају принципа поштене праксе, који укључују праведну расподелу моћи и бенефиција. Уговори треба да представљају структуру јасних водећих принципа који промовишу правичан и транспарентан уметнички екосистем.

Коначно, учешће актера цивилног друштва требало би да се одрази иу документима Европске уније у области културе. Зависни положај у односу на структуре моћи у којем се актери цивилног друштва често налазе, политичари и креатори политике морају да се позабаве и да се боре, без обзира на низ обећавајућих дешавања и примера добре праксе. Стога би отворен и директан дијалог о очекивањима и ограничењима између креатора политике и независног културног сектора био користан у развоју опиљивих стратегија и мера за постепени прелазак на праведније праксе у уметности, као што су бољи услови за рад уметника и статус уметника. .

Такође, кандидат предлаже смањење и поједностављење административних послова везаних за приступ финансирању, посебно за активности засноване на пројектима, уз омогућавање да се трошкови везани за писање пријава укључе у буџете за апликације за финансирање. Упоредјујући Креативну Европу са ранијим иницијативама, поједностављени су административни процес и процес финансирања, што је несумњиво напредак, али је повећана и могућност неравномерне конкуренције. Културна компонента програма је превише нејасно дефинисана, а пошто овај ток подржава пројекте који имају за циљ генерисање прихода, постоји опасност да ће они преовладати јер су у бољој позицији да се такмиче са другим јавним или непрофитним културним активностима. Евалуација и праћење морају се, више него било шта друго, вредновати уз помоћ квалитативних критеријума поред квантитативних. Ови квалитативни елементи морају бити креирани у сарадњи са актерима цивилног друштва.

Коначно, у закључку се наводи да би у светлу глобалне кризе изазване пандемијом болести ЦОВИД-19 било неправедно давати приоритет економском расту у односу на заштиту животне средине и одсуство политика које ће обезбедити елиминацију неједнакости, сиромаштва и других облика искључење. Статус уметника и аутономија уметничког изражавања требало би да имају највиши приоритет у културној политици

заснованој на одрживом развоју, јер без њих и уравнотеженог приступа свим осталим областима, она губи сваки значај у контексту заштите културно-уметничке културе, креативности и културног наслеђа (МцГуиган 2004: 21). Фокусирање на нову културну политику захтева, између осталог, јачање значаја локалних културних политика и укључивање заинтересованих страна из свих области у сарадњу. Ово ће оснажити све чланове културног система да превазиђу различите културне разлике које доводе до неједнакости разних врста и да побољшају услове рада и културних радника и уметника.

Теза садржи пет анекса (стр. 228- 303): (1) транскрипт симпозијума „Страст и политика“, пројекат ап- перформинг артс и Сзене Салзбург; (2) интервју са Лудгером Орлоком, бившим уметничким директором Танзфабрик Берлин; (3) интервју са Маријаном Цветковић, суоснивачом Станице-Сервице за савремени плес и Номад Данце Академи; (4) интервју са Симоне Виллеит, шефом организације Уферстудиос ГмбХ; (5) интервју са Јеленом Весић, независним кустосом, писцем, уредником и предавачом.