

EAIPA Vision

by Ulrike Kuner, President of EAIPA

March 2019

The free scene in the performing arts field is existing for now about 40 years – or better: since then, in many countries and cities the free scene got some grants from public authorities.

The efforts of the artists who founded and established this form of artistic work, cannot be honoured enough. They do not only constantly invent new artistic formats, they also establish new forms of artistic processes, production structures, working, research and training methods, presentation contexts, audience collaboration – and even more.

Since the past 30 years, the artists also collaborated on structural levels. They established member's associations to follow up their needs on social and political levels – e.g. the LAFT Berlin was founded in 2007, the Austrian Association in 1988, A.C.T. in Bulgaria in 2009. The associations were established bottom-up directly from artists, and this makes them so unique. And that their common purpose is not an artistic one, but it is based on very practical issues: exchange of information, social security, visibility, structures, funding – and to speak with one voice with politicians and funders.

Since 1989, the free scene exploded. Well educated artists in the performing arts sector invented new and highly acclaimed artistic perspectives. Consequently, many countries and cities developed their supporting structures for the free scene.

For the first time, with EAIPA – European Association of Independent Performing Arts the national associations collaborate on a profound and trans-national level. They exchange about practical experiences, share information, talk about political argumentations, reflect infrastructural needs, examine different social security systems, identify best-practice models – and bring the independent scene to a next level of political awareness.

The aims of EAIPA for the next years should follow these experiences.

- To make this art form - and their special working processes - visible.
- To overcome the lack of structures and houses.
- To make people sensitive for the special requirements of this contemporary art form.
- To raise knowledge about the artists and their work

How do we do this?

- EAIPA should develop clear statistic methods and quantify the sector.
- We should continue with qualitative descriptions of the free scene in each European country and keep them constantly updated
- We must identify important tasks and working sectors – and develop special plans.
- We should publish our results permanently



- We have to establish constant exchange formats and keep working on comparable information
- We have to think about strategic partnerships and collaborations
- We must establish direct links to the artistic scene in each member's countries and always be aware of their actual needs or requirements. The artists must benefit from our work, directly or on a structural level in the future.
- We must take into account the discussions and demands of different generations of artists.
- We must reflect the work of EAIPA back into each country's artistic landscape and must inform the political levels constantly.
- We must establish and secure a working structure of the network that allows us to work continuously, spontaneously and on a long run.

EAIPA was established to work on a European level.

Therefore, as a pilot-phase, we have to develop a working plan until September 2020.

The aim of this pilot-phase is to prepare an application for a European Network Grant in the newly funded Creative Europe Programme 2021 -2027.

We have to agree about topics, about exchange and working formats as well as about responsibilities. And about finances.

We have to think bigger. We have to think for the future. For the future of the free scene, of the individual artists – and of the EAIPA association.