

## **Roma Exhibition at the 58th Venice Contemporary Art Biennale in 2019**

Chairman of the Board, Zeljko Jovanovic and Timea Junghaus, executive director for the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIANC) - as the Commissioners of the Collaborative event - publish the present call for the curator of the Roma Exhibition in 2019.

ERIANC has a unique and single mandate as the first, transnational, European-level organization for the recognition of Roma arts and culture. ERIAC acts as an international creative hub to support the exchange of creative ideas across borders, cultural domains and Roma identities in Europe and beyond. ERIAC promotes the Roma contributions to European culture and talent, success and achievement, as well as document the historical experience of Romani people in Europe.

European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture was launched in Berlin, Germany in 2017 as a joint initiative of the Council of Europe, the Open Society Foundations, and the Alliance for the European Roma Institute. ERIAC is the first European level institution of the largest minority in Europe - the Romani people -and as such it is a historical and ground-breaking development. ERIAC embodies the success of the recognition of Roma leadership and Roma arts and culture. The establishment - achievement of ERIAC contains the efforts made by the transnational, well-organized and persistent Roma cultural movement and its non-Roma allies and supporters throughout Europe, who understand that social inclusion is impossible without cultural inclusion, and who know that the security and well-being of the largest minority is a precondition for the stability and prosperity of a democratic Europe.

### **Call for Curator**

ERIANC is seeking the curator of the Roma Exhibition in 2019, to demonstrate the institution's founding principles – such as the highest quality standards in arts and culture, and Roma leadership – at the most prestigious art event of the contemporary art scene, the Venice Contemporary Art Biennale.

ERIANC seeks a courageous and visionary curator with a proposal for a group exhibition, which speaks deeply, sensitively and authentically from within the Roma subjectivity. The proposed project shall have the capacity to use the transformative power of art to make an impact on Roma lives. We foresee an initiative, through which the widely fragmented, diverse and dispersed Roma communities may have a transformative and inspiring opportunity to transcend national boundaries and invite universal participation.

#### **Requirements:**

- A demonstrated history in curating and/ or cultural management;
- Knowledge of the contemporary Roma arts and culture scene;
- Relevant education and experience;
- Ability to contact artists, prepare and manage the exhibition;
- Proven record in project administration and reporting;
- Demonstrated commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

In the curatorial proposal please include the following:

1. Proposed title for the Exhibition
2. List of the participating exhibitors (with their biographical information, max 100 words) and the description of artworks to be exhibited
3. Exhibition Concept (max 500 words)
4. Illustrative images of the works to be placed on exhibit, which meet the standards set for publication (minimum format 24 x 32 cm, 300 dpi, tiff/jpg file) with complete captions and photography credits
5. Exhibition graphics
6. Curator's biography (max 500 words)
7. A chart of the exhibition budget of maximum 25.000 Euros, including, artists' fees, material costs, installation, shipping, insurance, and other related expenses

Applications from all suitably qualified candidates, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, color, religion, belief, or sexual orientation are welcome. Candidates of self-declared Roma origin are particularly encouraged to apply.

**Submission:**

Please send your proposal electronically both as a word document and as one pdf document in English.

To be sent to: **eriac@eriac.org**

Deadline for applications: **10th October, 2018** 17.00 CET

**Evaluation process:**

To review the submitted proposals, the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture established an International Advisory Committee, composed of distinguished experts of the ERIAC membership

**Timeframe of the initiative:**

October 2018 – April 2018 Curatorial work, preparation;

May 2019 – Opening of the Roma Exhibition 2019;

June - November 2019 – Guided tours, education activities, connecting events, promotion;

November 2019 – Close Exhibition;

December 2019 - Evaluation, reporting.

**Location:**

ERIAC did not conclude negotiations for the future space of the Roma Exhibition, yet. The proposal shall be adaptable to a space of maximum 200 sqm, approx. 3.8 m-s internal height.

### **Background information:**

The First Roma Exhibition was established in 2007 in the frame of the 52nd Venice Contemporary Art Biennale. The exhibition, entitled Paradise Lost, curated by Timea Junghaus - exhibited 16 Roma artists from 8 European countries. It was a stance and claim in the existing frame of European Roma representation, and it proposed a transnational, contemporary and up-to-date vision for thinking about the Roma experience. It had over 200.000 visitors. The location was Palazzo Pisani S. Marina (piano nobile), Venezia, Cannaregio 6103, Cattedelle Erbe, Opening Time: June 10 – November 21, 2007. The website is not available any longer.

In 2011 at the 54th Venice Contemporary Art Biennale curators Maria Hlavajova curated the exhibition Call the Witness (based on Suzana Milevska's original idea) of a makeshift exhibition with a flux of live "testimonies"— works of art, performances, talks, and conversations by and with artists, thinkers, and politicians. It engaged many distinguished non-Roma artists, writers, curators, such as Salman Rushdie, Arnout Mik and Maria Hlavajova. The location was Palazzo Zorzi, UNESCO Venice Office, Castello 4930, Venice, Opening Time: June 1 – October 9, 2011. The website is not available any longer.

Both Roma Pavilions (in 2007 and 2011) were established in the frame of the Biennale as Collaborative events. The Roma minority starts with an outrageous backlog even before arriving to Venice:

- The Pavilion of the largest European minority is considered a „collaborative event“ and not a national pavilion. Collaborative events pay a fee to be included in the program.
- Roma do not have a national pavilion/building/space, while being the largest national minority to many of the exhibiting national representations.
- The precarious Roma minority's presence at the Biennale is only possible if Roma pay the entrance fee as a collaborative event (20.000 Euros) to the Biennale Office and spend on renting the exhibition space in Venice for 6 months.
- Apart from the above, Roma shall allocate a significant amount on promotion so the rented external site becomes visible in the Biennale structure.

ERiac aims for a permanent inclusion of Roma in the Biennale structure, and for a political alliance for the location of the Roma Pavilion. ERiac is spreading the pedagogy that there is a need, not just for another Roma Exhibition in 2019 (which is already a huge opportunity), but a Roma Pavilion which is a space for lobbying and networking, aiming for permanent presence for Roma within the Biennale structure. ERiac is going to continue addressing a waiver of the application fee and seek an alliance of supporters for a permanent location for the future generations.

The new, and permanent Roma Pavilion would be the place to motivate the development of innovative projects and experimental cross-disciplinary work of Roma. In the context of the Venice Biennale – the Roma Pavilion has the potential to be recognized as the space of intuition, new ideas, discourses, and trends in European contemporary art.