

Muzej likovnih umjetnosti

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The Museum of Fine Arts in Osijek

issues a

CALL FOR ENTRIES

for the 30th *Slavonian Biennial*.

Slavonian Biennial is a juried group exhibition at which

contemporary visual art is presented,

chosen by the Jury composed of the following members:

Tevž Logar, curator, chair of this Jury,

Lea Vene, curator

Vikotor Popović, artist

Róna Kopeczky, curator

Valentina Radoš, exhibition curator,

titled

30th Slavonian Biennial

This is not another biennial

This is not yet another biennial seeking to instrumentalise tradition and longevity as leverage for relevance, nor is it one that attempts to substantiate its credibility through a milestone anniversary; it is equally not a biennial that demands artists position themselves strictly within a thematic framework, or asks them to validate a sense of institutional gravity. Instead, through the exhibition's title, we recognise the cyclical nature of historical shifts, clearly deciphering the past within the very moment we inhabit here and now. With this exhibition,

we invite you to co-create a space that functions as a sanctuary - a site where we can gather in times of crisis, if only within a conceptual realm. In the age of artificial expansion, we want to return the human to humanity; in the digital noise, to find the analogue; and to restore breath and free speech to those who have been silenced.

This does remain a biennial that opens spaces for communication from a position outside the major global centres. Through decades of systemic growth, as a grassroots movement, our manifestation has proven the unexpected: the Slavonian Biennial is recognized by the shape of a human voice that is heard most clearly through the noise and exhaustion of a mandatory modernity – a voice that operates through oral and personal histories, as a chain reaction. The call we extend to artists year after year thus resonates much longer and further than could have been anticipated back in 1968, when the first biennial was staged in Osijek. With this 30th edition of the Slavonian Biennial, we engage directly with this very fact.

The question we ask ourselves is this: Does art possess a transformative and unifying power in times of crisis, if being contemporary means taking a step back, or returning to the autonomous parameters of the artwork? If we invert the dynamic of the call and give artists the agency of voice, what would they tell us?

Valentina Radoš

This is not a covenant of silence

No one recalls any of them signing it, for there was no ceremony, no ink, no glare of floodlights, no raised hands — only a gradual quieting, a fading of voices. It is as if we were warned long ago of a fissure between what we witness and what we are permitted to think, and an even greater one between what we think and what we dare to utter — yet, despite this, we continued to believe the spectacle. It began, as such things usually do, with minor civilities that were in truth merely polite forms of contempt: a laugh left unchallenged, a symbol left unquestioned, and words permitted only because halting them required too great a struggle. Someone once wrote that the most dangerous dissenting thoughts are not banned, but rather exhausted to the point of self-abandonment. Thus, the vow was born not of loyalty but of exhaustion and ignorance; silence became a form of hygiene, where people learned to purge their thoughts and words before they could even form them, as if suspecting that walls possess a longer memory than humans. Over time, it was not only the word that vanished, but also the mouths capable of speaking it — yet on screens, the world continued to practice its composure, smooth and orderly, as though normalcy had survived precisely because it had been rendered voiceless.

In the ancient lore of our world, empires asserted themselves through fire and sword; yet in more recent, modern iterations, they prefer the medium of light — whether bright and

unwavering, held within an intimate grasp, or staging a spectacle. Whatever the intensity, it operates such that everything in its glow appears clean, inevitable, and, naturally, utterly righteous. Under such light, even shadows lose their right to exist. The stage is crowded with people speaking constantly and loudly of many things, most often of roots, as if roots were incapable of draining the very soil that nourishes them. They speak incessantly of preservation, employing the gentle rhetoric of gardeners, even as their gardens grow tidier with each passing season, leaving fewer and fewer forms of life permitted to dwell within them. At times, it feels as though disparate thoughts and words haul themselves before a kind of invisible tribunal, where they never learn the charges against them, yet quietly vanish nonetheless. And the audience, relieved to be handed a simple text, bursts into applause on cue, immensely grateful to be spared the burden of doubt and resistance. Some even believe it to be applause, though it resonates more like a verification of whether their palms still retain the shape of compliance — as in a novel where the correct gesture was of greater consequence than genuine conviction.

Watching the neighbors across the street practice this game brings a distinct kind of loneliness, reminiscent of those ancient verses where people remained silent when they came for others, believing those others shared nothing in common with them. It always begins with the others; there is always the solace of distance. Without debate, the group agrees to look past the person standing on the edge — neither entirely inside nor entirely outside — until that person becomes a word, the word threat, and the threat an excuse. In truth, aside from the costumes, nothing has changed in all these years. The mechanism is older than memory: first the naming, then the repetition, and from this, suddenly, a miracle is born, whereby repetition begins to look like truth. And truth, repeated long enough, begins to sound like a song people know by heart, though they no longer remember where they first heard it. Yet, this devotion must also be meticulously maintained. It relies on the discipline of the people, on their willingness to swallow a bitter word, to overlook gestures, and to mistake the familiar for the harmless. It relies on their faith that the violence of history happens elsewhere — in other languages, on other bodies, on other plains, in other mountains, and on other shores. It relies on their hope that they will pass unnoticed if they only become quieter themselves.

But sometimes, late at night, when the streets are empty and the flags hang windless, there emerges the faintest hint of another sound — not yet loud, but persistent. Like the turning of a page, like a distant, almost forgotten verse; and as though someone, somewhere, is rehearsing how to speak once more, despite knowing that maybe no one listens. At that moment, it becomes plain that the covenant of silence was never intended solely for oblivion, but for waiting. It was a secret archive of the unspoken, a sanctuary where words outlived their prohibition. And perhaps, all along, it carried something else within itself: not consent, but refusal; not the end, but a beginning. For every imposed silence already bears at its core the seed of a voice that will one day return — not as a whisper, but as something that has lived too long without the shelter of the written word, like words that must be removed from

books in order to remain alive. And when they return, they return altered — sharper, more perilous, and finally free.

Tevž Logar

CALL FOR ENTRIES AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR THE 30TH SLAVONIAN BIENNIAL

All entries must include the following:

- personal information: first name, family name, date of birth, address, phone number, e-mail address;
- professional résumé;
- complete documentation on the submitted work, including the technical data about the display and making of the work (name, year, technique, dimensions, exhibitions to date);
- high-resolution photograph or draft, and in the case of performance art a detailed synopsis is also required;
- artist's statement about the artwork;
- signed consent for personal data usage (please find at www.mlu.hr)

Artists may enter only **one work**. All submitted works must be exhibition-ready.

Only works created after **1 July 2024** may be entered. The call is open for entries from its announcement **until 31 August 2026**. The exhibition will be held in several exhibition spaces in Osijek (while the Museum of Fine Arts is closed for reconstruction) from **December 2026 to February 2027**.

Works must be entered digitally **in one PDF document**. The Jury may ask for additional information or to see the work. In addition to the selected works, works by artists invited to participate may also be included in the exhibition.

The artists grant the Museum the right to use and reproduce submitted materials for the purpose of promoting the Slavonian Biennial in all media, as well as for the catalogue. The abbreviated artistic statements will be used in the exhibition setting and on the Museum's web-site and Facebook pages for the duration of the exhibition. By submitting to the open call, the artist also gives consent for the work to remain in the Museum for the entire duration of the exhibition.

The works exhibited at the Slavonian Biennial will be returned in the same way they were received, i.e. the authors will retrieve the works delivered in person, and the works received

by post will be returned in the same way, unless the artists and the Museum agree otherwise. In case of returning the works by mail, the postal costs are borne by the Museum.

Entries, containing everything required, is to be sent by e-mail to:

biennale@mlu.hr

For additional inquiries please call:

00385 31 – 251 280

00385 31 – 251 284

00385 91 522 1416

The entry is valid if it is received by e-mail **before midnight of the deadline day**.

Incomplete or late entries will not be considered.

Please see all other information and *Rules for the Slavonian Biennial Exhibition* at www.mlu.hr or follow us on <https://www.facebook.com/mlu.osijek/>

Visual identity of the 30th Slavonian Biennial: **Igor Kuduz**

Jury for the 30th Slavonian Biennial:

Róna Kopeczky is a curator and art historian based in Budapest. Between 2006 and 2015 she was curator at the Ludwig Museum – Museum of Contemporary Art in Budapest, where she focused on site- and situation-specific art practices of young and middle-generation artists from the Central and Eastern European region. Since 2015, she acts as the artistic director of acb Gallery in Budapest, and is an active contributor to the research programs and publications of Acb ResearchLab. She worked on the implementation of the first OFF-Biennale Budapest (2015) and joined the curatorial team of its second edition (2017). She is the co-founder and co-leader of the Easttopics platform, dedicated to representing the Central and Eastern European contemporary art scene. She was the curator of the 18th Tallinn Print Triennial, which ran in 2022 with a Central-Eastern European focus, takes care of the Hungarian contributions to the Secondary Archive platform since 2020, and has been advisory curator for Central and Eastern Europe at Donumenta Regensburg public art program since 2022. She was the curator of the Hungarian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2024. She received her PhD from Sorbonne University in 2013.

Tevž Logar works as an independent curator, editor and author. He has curated or co-curated a number of group and solo exhibitions, including Art Encounters Biennial – Bounding Histories. Whispering Tales (2025); U3 – Triennial of Contemporary Art – Against the Stream of Time (2024); Lost in the Moment That Follows, The Ovidiu Șandor Collection (2023); When in Doubt, Go to a Museum (2021); the Triennial, 54th Zagreb Salon – Without Anesthesia (2019); Ulay: I Other (2017), Vadim Fishkin: Light Chaser (2016); Ulay: Irritation (2015); Crossings (2014); Jasmina Cibic: For Our Economy and Culture for the Slovenian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennial (2013); Bas Jan Ader (2012); Tanja Ostojić: Body, Politics, Agency (2012); Accretions II (2011),... and collaborated with institutions, galleries, collections and publishers, such as: Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Łódź; The Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin; Kunsthalle Praha; TBA21, Vienna; The Ovidiu Șandor Collection, Timișoara; Kunsthalle, Bratislava; Biennial of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana; Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka; Ludwig Museum, Budapest; James Gallery, New York; VOX, Montreal; Cooper Gallery, Dundee; American University Beirut; CAC Geneve; Kontakt Collection, Vienna; National Gallery of Kosovo; Galerija Gregor Podnar; Suprainfinit, Bucharest; Mousse Publishing, Milan; Routledge, New York; and Artforum, New York. For the 58th Venice Biennial in 2019, he worked with the Pavilion of Republic of North Macedonia as curatorial consultant and the Pavilion of Republic of Kosovo as a writer. In 2018, he edited a monograph about the work of the Croatian conceptual artist Goran Trbuljak. From 2009 to 2014, he was the artistic director of the Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and a lecturer in 20th Century Art History at the Academy of Visual Arts (AVA) in the same city. He was the screenwriter of the full-length documentary Project Cancer: Ulay's journal from November to November (2013) and is a co-founder of the Ulay Foundation (2014) in Amsterdam, where he now sits as a member of the Advisory Board. Between 2022 and 2026 he acted as a president of the acquisition board of NLB SEE ART Collection in Ljubljana, Slovenia. In 2014, he was nominated for the Gerrit Lansing Independent Vision Award (Independent Curators International) in New York. He lives between Ljubljana, Slovenia and Rijeka, Croatia.

Viktor Popović lives and works in Split. In his installations and objects, he often uses found objects, archival materials and raw industrial materials, exploring the relationship between the artwork and the audience, as well as the historical and physical context of the exhibition space. In his recent works, he focuses on the modernist heritage of Croatia from the socialist period, especially the recontextualization of architecture in the 1960s and 1970s. He has exhibited in galleries, museums and alternative exhibition spaces in Europe and the United States. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. He has received a number of prestigious awards and scholarships, including: Special Mention at the 15th Triennial of Croatian Sculpture (Glyptothèque of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, 2025); Ex Aequo Award at the 29th Slavonian Biennial (Museum of Fine Arts, Osijek, 2024); Grand Prize at the 9th Croatian Triennial of Printmaking (Cabinet of Printmaking of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, 2024); Ex Aequo Prize at the 27th Slavonian Biennial (Museum of Fine Arts, Osijek, 2020); Award of the Croatian Section of the

International Association of Art Critics at the 54th Zagreb Salon (Croatian Society of Fine Artists, Zagreb, 2019); Art Omi Residency Program (Art Omi, Ghent, NY, USA, 2017); Award of the 36th Split Salon (Croatian Society of Fine Artists, Split, 2009); ArtsLink Residency Program (Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Portland, OR, USA, 2006); Cité internationale des arts Residency Program (Cité internationale des arts, Paris, France, 2005); and Grand Prize at the 8th Triennial of Croatian Sculpture (Glyptothek of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, 2003). His works are in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, the Art Gallery in Split, the Art Gallery in Zadar, the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka, and the Carinthian Gallery of Fine Arts in Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia. Since 1998, he has been teaching painting and drawing courses at the Department of Painting of the Academy of Arts in Split, where he was promoted to the permanent title of full professor in 2018.

Valentina Radoš is a curator at the Museum of Fine Arts, where she is the head of the Collection of Paintings of the Second Half of the 20th Century (from 1945 to the present), the Collection of Drawings and Prints of the Second Half of the 20th Century (from 1945 to the Present) and the Collection of New Media (video, DVD, digital graphics, installations). Her professional interests include artistic practices of the 20th and 21st centuries and visual communication. Since 2010 she has been the curator of the Slavonian Biennale. Some of her recent significant projects are: 24th Slavonian Biennale – Once Upon a Time There Was a Traveler; (MLU, 2014-2015); I was call you tomorrow – Krunoslav Stipešević; (MLU, 2015); Borders of Visibility – 25th Slavonian Biennale, (MLU, 2016–2017), Ivan Faktor – A Film that Only I Watch, (MLU, 2017); Tarwuk - 20170621_141332 (2)., (MLU, 2017–2018); 26th Slavonian Biennale – Flat Earth (MLU 2018-19); Davor Sanvincenti – The Earth Shall Once Be the Sun (MLU 2020); 27th Slavonian Biennale – The Image as a Virus (MLU 2020); East of Eden (MLU 2021); How Fruk's Works Continued to Live (MLU 2021); Alignment – Miran Blažek (MLU 2022); 28th Slavonian Biennial, *New Paradigms of Happiness – from Osijek Dada to Contemporary Chaos* (MLU 2022); *29th Slavonian Biennial, Institute of the Invisible – spaces of perception* (MLU 2024.); *Tomo Savić-Gecan, Without Title* (MLU 2025.); *Julije Knifer, Papers – the measure of freedom* (MLU 2026.). She is a member of the Association of Art Critics AICA.

Lea Vene is an art historian, cultural anthropologist and fashion theorist. She completed a post-master's degree in Critical Images and R-Lab at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm, Sweden. She has worked as a curator at the Kic Photo Gallery and the Miroslav Kraljević Gallery. She currently curates programs for the Organ Vida International Photography Festival and the Močvara Gallery. She works as a researcher at the Center for Fashion and Clothing Research – CIMO and teaches as an external associate at the Faculty of Textile Technology, the Academy of Dramatic Arts and Die Angewandte in Vienna.