KEY RECOMMENDATIONS / THEATRE

During the NEW Conference: the Future of Performing Arts in Serbia – Perspectives and Challenges, Heartefact has defined a number of systematic issues regarding different segments of performing arts, from the institutions to independent scene and festival policies. Based on the defined problems, we suggest the following solutions.

- There is a need for establishing the Theatre Center of Serbia (Center for Performing Arts) which would improve, coordinate and follow the work of institutions, individual organizations and other subjects in performing arts. This umbrella organization should provide expert, specialized and sector-coordinated policies which would contribute to a simpler, more efficient and more focused support which is necessary for the further development of performing arts in Serbia.

- There is a need for establishing the system of standardization of evaluation, classification, questioning and adapting the systems of financing and functioning of the theatrical frames of Serbia in the context of trends and systems conducted in similar countries across the world. This is a necessary step towards establishing our theatre frames as vibrant, competent and free – and the key step towards nurturing and supporting excellence and talents.

- There is a need for establishing and improving the system of regular communication between all the figures of the scene, especially when it comes to the bridge between the decision-makers and the performing arts representatives. The Ministry of Culture should design and run specific dialogue programs and programs of sector counseling. What worries the most is the aging of ensembles and other theatre workers, the inability of hiring new people and the lack of conditions for improving the existing capacities. As it was suggested during the NEW Conference, one of the solutions would be the establishment of the Theatre Conference of Serbia (TCS) as an expert event which would be held once a year and provide a regular and high-quality communication of all the figures. The collaboration between the institutions and independent sector, as well as the establishment of the privately-public model in this field is also essential.

- There is a need to establish a theatre fund which would support the production, distribution, development, education and international collaboration. Just like many countries from the EU and environment, we need to provide long-term planning and funding and co-funding sources for all the segments of the scene. The contests conducted by the Ministries and local bodies need to be reformed. Besides that, there is a need for higher funding and better evaluation and quality control.

- It is crucial to develop specific cost-share funds in regards to Serbia's participation in different international contests and other forms of production, and nurture and support contemporary high-quality production. Besides international, regional and big productions, it is important to regulate and stimulate the system of compulsory distribution and support as the widest possible frame for the audience who will have access to the content regardless of their financial abilities.

- It is necessary to improve and create a map of all the spaces and scenes for performing arts and particularly to create conditions for the improvement of technical, infrastructural and human capacities. It is especially important to work on the technical aspects of theatres and stages, as well as on improving and keeping the technicians in theatres. It is also necessary to improve the catalog of working positions, classify the new professions and entice the inter-sector exchange and collaboration.

- It is very important to establish mechanisms for better international collaboration and exchange, as well as long-term planning in that field. In order to provide a better representation of contents and performances from Serbia on relevant stages, festivals and within the programs of different institutions, it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of institutions and organizations, create special programs and boos the coordination of different figures in the field of cultural diplomacy.

- It is necessary to classify festivals and manifestations, provide advanced models of financing, evaluation and promotion, and continual and coordinated government support in conducting festival policies. This suggestion could be conducted through a unified festival fund which would provide sustainability and continuity.

- Education and working on developing the capacities in each segment of theatre are essential. There is a need for supporting, developing and improving educational programs as well as the programs of additional educations for the cultural workers.

- It is necessary to work with the media on creating more content which follow and popularize performing arts, especially in the context of digitalization policies and providing as much content as possible to wider audiences. Also, it is necessary to develop special audience programs, and enhance their participation and specific education in that field.

The suggested solutions became the base of further collaboration with the authorities.