

L'Internationale Public Statement on the recent events at MACBA

L'Internationale Confederation

21 Jul 2021



Minutes from the mediation group workshop in
January 2021.

L'Internationale wishes to publicly express its deep concern about recent events occurred at MACBA, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, a founding member of the confederation.

We have learnt about ongoing major structural changes to the organization that could significantly modify the structure and governance of the museum. This news came after the immediate dismissal of two senior staff members, and after the departure of the outgoing Director and without the involvement of the incoming Director, showing a profound lack of care for the institution and possibly compromising the start of her institutional project.

Making significant infrastructural changes, which have lasting effects on the output and governance of the institution, is a complex matter that requires time, dialogue, consultation and transparency, both in order to support the museum's workers in the transition period, and to ensure that the new direction creates a solid, operative and democratic institutional model.

We understand however that there has been a total absence of transparency and dialogue in taking these crucial decisions. We miss an open process of institutional reflection with artistic teams, workers' representatives, and all relevant agents implicated in such significant changes. We also think it is wrong to exclude the incoming Director from such discussions and make curatorial staff changes during an artistic interregnum. This is not the way to build trust within the museum or with its partners such as L'Internationale confederation.

The dismissal of Pablo Martínez, Head of Public Programmes, responsible for two fundamental areas of MACBA, without allowing time to handover core projects and

partnerships to the relevant teams in the museum is premature and irresponsible. In particular the departure of Pablo Martínez puts at risk the PEI Independent Studies Program and the L'Internationale programme Our Many Europes in both of which he has been a leader and core contributor. So we strongly encourage the General Council of the museum to reconsider this decision, and make public the organigram that has supported it.

In general we ask for fair and thoughtful governance for cultural institutions that is committed to long-term sustainability, especially at a moment after the pandemic when new forms of story-telling and gathering around heritage and memory will need to be invented. We therefore ask that the public administrations participating in MACBA's General Council to defend the right of the new Director to have a fundamental role in agreeing to any changes to staff and structure and that they publicly support the continuation of the democratic, participatory and transformative institutional model on which MACBA has established its international reputation and respect.

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