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Date: Wed, February 14, 2007 3:09 am

It was with great alarm that I have read of the financial threat to Independent performance companies in Ljubljana. For many years I have marvelled that a relatively small country should produce so many great artists, who start with the freedom of the freelance, and go on to help shape a cutting-edge culture - the distinctive qualities of which are the envy of many other European cities. For me this was a voyage of discovery which began with NSK and Laibach and is brought up to the minute with next week's platform Gibanica. I was honoured to be invited to act as one of the three selectors for this promotional platform, and in researching the 55 submitted videos found an Independent dance scene of impressive diversity and achievement. It was not hard to select 17 works worthy of international promotion on behalf of the interests of my European colleagues who will attend. All the energy invested in Gibanica will be worthless if the performing companies are thereafter unable to accept invitations.

As Director of The Place in London, I have been able to offer regular invitations to Slovene dance companies since presenting Iztok Kovac in How I Caught a Falcon back in 1993. During the founding years of Aerowaves, our network uniting the dance interests of experts in 30 European countries, Bojana Kunst ably represented Slovene work. As a result we introduced to London and elsewhere Independent companies like Fico Ballet and the choreography of Jurij Konjar.

In London we are already laying cultural plans in preparation for the Olympics in 2012, so I am sure that Slovenija will be making similar plans if it is to fulfil its reputation when hosting the European Capital of Culture in the same year. Threatening the withdrawal of financial development from its liveliest artists is not a promising start: it attacks the heart of that creativity for which it is most admired in other European countries.

I will be visiting Ljubljana next week and look forward to the assurance that the future of Slovene performance is secure.

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12 February 2007