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Educational Policies and the Labour Market in the Visual Arts – the Paradigm Shift

Abstract: This paper presents the key findings of an extensive research into the role of university-level visual art education in the preparation of visual artists for the successful transition from the academic environment to the art 'labour market'. Starting from an assumption that higher visual arts education may be a significant factor in redefining the career paths of the visual arts graduates in Serbia, it reviews the recent changes in concepts and programs of university-level visual arts education in Europe and in Serbia. Education policies increasingly foresee the necessity of conscious compliance of education with society as a whole, bearing in mind the wide range of social roles that visual art and professionals from this field may assume. This is especially important for Serbia, since culture is considered one of the country's most important assets in re-positioning itself on a mental map of Europe. In this paper I will map the main issues, briefly present the historical development of art school programs in Europe and in Serbia, and I will present the concept of the Management in Fine Arts course designed for the BA level at the Fine Art Schools which was designed to endow students with the opportunity to attain basic 'labour market skills', and provide them with knowledge and skills necessary to direct their professional development in such manner to enable them to easily find their place in various areas of contemporary society.

Keywords: fine arts, education policies, labour market

Introduction

Utilizing both the perspective of art education theory and educational policies, Glišić's thesis "Educational Policy and the Labour Market. A Paradigm Shift"¹ at-

¹ Jelena Glišić, "Educational Policy and the Labour Market. A Paradigm Shift", Ph.D. thesis, University of Arts, Belgrade, Interdisciplinary Studies, 2016.

tempts to define crucial elements of curriculum changes in the field of higher art education, introduced to increase the professional capacity of graduated fine art students through a more adequate, individual profiling during their studies. It also examines curriculum development of university-level education and the position of university-level art education in national education policy. The problem is approached from the position of the sociology of art, contemporary models of social policy in the field of arts, and the status of the artist, with special emphasis on visibility of fine artists and the status of artistic professions in the framework of state social policy and of labour and employment policies.

Art studies should enable students to develop a range of skills including visual thinking, creative, analytical and critical approaches, research experience, principles of project management, communication and presentation skills, and negotiation skills, as well as familiarity with the new technologies that will be needed in their artistic practices. Basic models for redefining the concept of university-level art education should come as a result of an exploration of possibilities to apply experiences from the fields of cultural policy and cultural management studies into the curriculum of fine art schools. The aim is to foster adequate academic and professional profiling of fine artists, in accordance with their creative capacities but also in regard to the circumstances of the art scene and in relation with the needs of the society in which they live. In the pursuit of a good model for the successful transition of fine art graduate students to the labour market, we analyse the issue from the perspective of theoretical disciplines but also the practical training experiences from fine arts schools, as well as the individual experiences of fine artists.

Art schools in Europe and in Serbia – a brief history and concepts

The European tradition of the art school begins in the Middle Ages, when painters and sculptors were considered craftsmen. The art schools often carried the name of St. Lucas and were, for practical purposes, places where craftsmen could exchange knowledge and experiences and organize trainings for newcomers. Such schools are mentioned in the 13th century in Venice and the mid-14th century in Florence, as well as in the late 14th century in Paris. Leonardo da Vinci founded a school called *Accademia Vinciana* in 1494. Baccio Bandini opened something similar in Rome. Yet, institutional arrangements still lacked for the establishment of an art *academy*, in the true sense of the word. The first modern art academy was founded by Giorgio Vasari in Florence in 1563. By 1587, similar academies continued to spring up across Europe. The School of Fine Arts in Paris had managed to alter the concept and perception of the artist, from that of a mere craftsman to that of an *educated* person. Following its model, several art academies were founded in Germany in the 18th century.

The first generations of artists from Serbia (in the 19th and early 20th centuries) were attracted to the Academy in Munich (and in many of their biographies one can

find a so-called ‘Munich’ period). The new generation, since the final decades of the 20th century, was mostly interested in German art schools, above all Kunstakademie Dusseldorf and Berlin. The history of the Academy of Arts in Dusseldorf began in 1773. The Academy is proud of its traditional base and modernity at the same time, which is reflected in the seal of the Academy, created by Markus Lüpertz, containing symbols that simultaneously present both artistic and scientific approaches and blend both the traditional and contemporary. The Academy boasts both an international faculty and student body.

It is interesting to note the experience of Lithuanian students at the Academy. Arunas Gelūnas (Arūnas Gelūnas, former dean and professor at the Academy of Arts in Vilnius, Lithuania) speaks about it in his editorial for the publication *Art Studies Between Method and Fancy*.² In his presentation we can see many parallels with the experiences that artists from Serbia had at this school. At the beginning of the text Gelūnas notes the great importance of the Kunstakademie for artists and art students from Lithuania, providing great wonder for both the young Lithuanian art students, but also for their groundbreaking professors in the early 1990s. This serves as one of the many parallels that can be made between art studies experiences in Lithuania and in Serbia. In both countries, an entire generation of contemporary artists practically grew up at this academy. What the academy concept had to offer was in striking contrast to that what these students were accustomed to in their art schools at home. In comparison to strict ideological control and rigid, outdated curricula, international star-artists who taught in Düsseldorf were perceived as a long-desired alternative and the academy was considered almost an ideal environment for studying fine arts.

The program of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade is based on the experiences of its founders – artists who studied at famous European art schools in Paris, Vienna, Florence, Munich and Budapest. European art schools also had a significant impact on the later generations of Serbian artists. In addition to Paris, which constantly remained attractive to young artists, other European art centres alternated in popularity – Düsseldorf, Berlin, Braunschweig, Weimar, Milan, Venice, Carrara, Rome, Vienna and Graz. Stanislav Živković, in the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition *Art School in Belgrade 1919–1939*³ provides one of the few detailed reviews of the early art schools concept in Serbia. Živković states the fact that during the First World War the archives of the Art School were destroyed when a flammable bomb caused a fire at the Kolarac Foundation, where the archives were located. About the school curriculum we learn mostly indirectly, from the archives of the Ministry of Education. From there we see that in 1920 the School was attended by as many as 76 students, divided into four groups: the beginners’ course, the advanced course, the sculpture course and the course for amateurs. In 1919 there was an attempt to establish a Grand School

² Arūnas Gelūnas, *Art Studies: Between Method And Fancy*, Vilnius, Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts Press, 2006.

³ Stanislav Živković, *Umetnička škola u Beogradu 1919–1939*, Beograd, Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1987.

of Applied Arts, but because of the conflicting opinions of authorities, the proposal was not implemented. Nevertheless, it served as a basic programming concept for the future organization of the Art School. At that time the school had three departments: the applied arts department, the fine arts department and the department for art teachers' education. A step further was made in 1921, when the school, now under a new name – the School of Arts – was on track to secure its place in the education system by finally resolving the status issues.

Conflicting opinions followed by violent confrontations over whether the school should be more 'artisan' (and closer to the secondary school level) or more 'artistic' (and closer to the level of the academy) led to further delays. However, the period from 1922 to 1931 is considered that of the rise of the school, particularly bearing in mind the names that appear both among teachers, and among the students. From 1932 to 1937, both in public and in the school the conditions were increasingly improving, leading to attaining the status of public school. In 1936, the gradual closing down of the School of Arts began, along with the founding of the Academy of Fine Arts and the School of Applied Arts in Belgrade in 1937.

From the very beginning, the organization of teaching at the Academy was carried out in three departments: painting, graphics and sculpture. The Art Academy in Belgrade, until then a unique association of art academies within the University of Belgrade, then received the rank of an independent University of Arts (1973) and its academies received the rank of faculty. It was not just a mere name change and the organisational changes: a new name signified the fundamental transformation that was reflected in establishing the new status of the theoretical work at the University. Sonja Marinković writes about this in detail, indicating the dynamic development of the University during the decades of existence and its competitiveness and readiness for transformation despite the challenges.⁴

Today there are roughly a thousand institutions across Europe that provide education in the fields of fine arts, design, theatre, music, new media, dance, film and other artistic disciplines. These institutions enable students to channel their creative potential, teaching them a wide range of artistic, professional and personal skills. The education of artists entails an emphasis on creativity, improvisation and questioning the existing principles. Learning and teaching in the visual arts has become more complex than ever, requiring teachers to have an open attitude towards tradition and innovation, while still providing a solid base where artistic practice and discipline within the fine arts are concerned. Contemporary art studies include an integrated approach to practical work, art techniques, production artwork and theoretical knowledge. They are based both on practical and conceptual grounds, and they implement those learning/teaching means that encourage creativity, innovation and critical thinking and often the ability to question the traditional.

⁴ Sonja Marinković, "Mesto teorijskog rada na Univerzitetu umetnosti: aktuelna pitanja statusa nauka o umetnostima", *AM Journal of Art and Media Studies*, Issue No. 1, 2011, 25–35.

Fine artist. Career patterns

In Europe and around the world there is an increasingly tendency to encourage a higher rate of employment of the highly educated, keeping in mind ever-increasingly competition and demands of the labour market. This trend is slowly becoming reality in Serbia, too. The debate regarding employment opportunities for fine artists focuses primarily on the question of the extent to which university education programs actually provide students with the skills to make them competitive. The position that specific skills closely related to one's area of study are no longer sufficient becomes evident. Studies of art should enable students to successfully find their place in artistic practice after graduation. Students learn to develop the necessary imaginative, intellectual, theoretical and practical skills that will prepare them for continuous personal development and professional practice in the field of art. They are expected to be actively involved in their own education by individually defining the scope of their practical work and their research, and by developing professional skills and theoretical knowledge that will be needed in their profession. Education of artists implies an emphasis on creativity, improvisation, and questioning the existent principles.

The interest in art studies is quite high. The enormous number of candidates that the public Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade had to contend with for decades was somewhat reduced following the emergence of several private faculties in Belgrade and in other towns in Serbia. However, every year nearly 200 fine artists graduate from the protected environment of the faculty, only to land on the uncertain terrain of reality where they need to build their artistic career. Recent research of fine arts graduates' career patterns revealed the existence of a gap between the knowledge and skills acquired at the faculty on one hand and the requirements placed on them by the so-called 'labour market'⁵. Some of the roads that graduated fine artists take up after graduation include the following professions: freelance artist, teacher of art in schools, curator, art administrator, art critic and other jobs in the domain of culture. Some of the skills they acquire at the faculty find use in other professions, too, especially in entrepreneurial activities that involve the creative component. Fine art studies are supposed to be comprised of an integrated approach to practical techniques training, artworks production and theoretical knowledge. The curricula are normally designed to focus attention on developing talent and artistic ability, which is supplemented by knowledge acquired at the theoretical courses that also primarily aim at improving the creative process.

In this paper, we will focus on artists who have completed the appropriate university-level art school, primarily the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade or other art schools whose program is based on the same or a similar concept. Is it possible to precisely define the term *visual artist*? How is this profession defined by the law, and how in practice? When we consider that in terms of education, an artist is a person who holds a degree from an appropriate educational institution. The Serbian Law on Culture defines a fine artist as a person that

⁵ Paula Karhunen and Kaija Rensujeff, *Preliminary Findings from a Survey on the Economic and Labor Market Situation of Finnish Artists*, Helsinki, Arts Council of Finland—Research and Information Unit, 2003.

creates artistic work in the art field defined in Article 8, paragraph 1. 3-8 of the same law. The law further defines the term “independent artist”⁶ as a person who, independently and in the form of (only or predominant) job, performs artistic activities and who has his/her status confirmed by a representative association. When trying to define what knowledge and skills the profession of fine artist is comprised of, the situation becomes more complex. Is the position of an independent artist the job the art faculties prepare their students for? The status of an independent artist can be acquired by a person who does not hold a degree in arts, as long as he/she has a proof of a continuous artistic practice that meets the criteria defined by the representative art association. There is an ongoing controversy about the need ‘to protect the profession’ in the same way as in some other professions, which would mean the necessity of holding an appropriate diploma to obtain a ‘license’. However, practice shows that the most important ‘license’ a visual artist can possess is simply a high-quality portfolio depicting a record of successful artistic activity.

Thus, the question lingers as to whether the faculties actually prepare their students for these career options. Is the profile of a graduated fine artist comprised solely of what the narrow definition of a freelance artist includes? Is it necessary that the students during their studies acquire knowledge and skills that will make them competitive in the so-called ‘labour market’? How could that be achieved within the existent concept of the faculty?

Studies show that no more than 40 percent of graduated fine artists have a career that fully corresponds to a narrow definition of the one of a freelance artist, especially at the beginning of their careers. Some opt for a job that will provide them with a stable income and allow some spare time to practice art. When we talk about patterns of careers visual artists, in addition to the freelancers, we can speak of several other possible choices. On one hand there are occupations in the narrower field of fine arts that faculties prepare their students for and where they are frequently encountered. There are also occupations where traditionally we find artists, although those jobs are rarely targeted by faculties in terms of preparing students for them, so sometimes some additional training is required (restorer, iconographer, artist, mural painter, jeweller etc., after specialization). There are also numerous occupations in which we would as a rule expect to find visual artists in accordance with their training, but we do not. This is often because the system does not foresee artists holding those positions (art editors in art galleries, art directors of various institutions and events, heads of cultural institutions, etc.). Legal mechanisms often do not enable the hiring of artists for those positions, even though artists possess the knowledge and skills needed to perform all required tasks. This results from either lack of foresight by legislators, or unawareness of the potential for artists to successfully execute such jobs (journalist, critic, blogger, etc.). Finally, there exist jobs highly likely to be adequate for visual artists, provided that additional knowledge and skills are obtained at the faculty. Slight

⁶ Cf. Carroll Haak, *Künstler zwischen selbständiger und abhängiger Erwerbsarbeit*, http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/11715/ssoar-2005-haak-kunster_zwischen_selbstandiger_und_abhangiger.pdf?sequence=1, ac. 10. 03. 2016.

changes in curriculum would further expand the range of occupations in which visual artists could be engaged. These are primarily jobs in the creative industries constantly expanding in Europe, thus representing a jobs generator of sorts. If the educational profile of visual artists would be appropriately modified (e.g via courses such as fine arts management), such jobs could be within artists' reach.

Management in fine arts course at the Faculty of Fine Arts – concept and experiences

In the process of reforming the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Declaration, the possibility to introduce new courses arose. Such courses were intended to provide knowledge and skills that would complement existing educational profiles and to better prepare graduates to transition from the academic environment to the labour market. One such course is management in fine arts, introduced into the curriculum in 2008. From its first generation of students onward, it has continued to receive the highest scores in student evaluations (typically reserved for practical art courses), and continuous positive reviews by alumni who had the opportunity to apply their studies to their post-graduation careers. Until recently, no courses existed dealing with practical (non-artistic) knowledge and skills that the artistic profession implies. Such skills include: creating artistic documentation, writing about one's own work, drafting an artist's statement, and formulating the concept of one's planned artistic work, as well as the preparation of technical guidelines for performing and setting up works of art, writing CVs and project proposals, budgeting, and personal bookkeeping basics – to name merely a few. Until recently, all above-mentioned skills were acquired *after* graduation, through practice and collaboration with fellow artists and other professionals in the field of visual arts. Although formerly the theoretical, the course Fine Arts Management designed for students of the fine arts involves no small amount of practical work. When introducing the course the idea was that the already overburdened students do not need *yet another* course. On the contrary, it had to be incorporated into their studies in such a way that everything heard during lectures had to be directly applicable to what they are currently dealing with in their work. In cooperation with professors teaching art-related courses, students are given tasks requiring that the acquired knowledge is practically applied in the creative process. The main objective of this course is to provide students with adequate knowledge and skills in the field of management in the arts, particularly the management of fine arts. A somewhat indirect yet very significant goal of this course is to introduce students with the general framework of the art world.⁷ In this regard, each lesson is used to illuminate a particular area, specificity or a rule common to the art world. It aims to help students create their own map of the art world – and to identify opportunities to position themselves in it. Many practical tasks allow students to learn about different profiles of various persons

⁷ Cf. Viktorija Aleksander, *Sociologija umetnosti*, Beograd, CLIO, 2007.

and institutions with whom they will come into contact during their careers: those who will read their biographies, review their portfolios, check their websites and evaluate the concepts of their planned works, and, perhaps most importantly, those who will decide whether to allocate funds for certain projects or not. The concept of the fine arts management course implies ensuring that everything that is discussed gets immediately implemented if possible. Students are offered numerous models that can be used in the management of their careers. A critical attitude towards the course is constantly encouraged and there is always room to adapt the course to the needs and suggestions (identified through questionnaires and discussions) of students.

Following an introduction to fine arts management and what this discipline involves, in both a broad and narrow sense, students are introduced to the concept of cultural policy. What is the significance of solid and defined cultural policy at national and local level? How can visual artists influence the change and development of cultural policies and other public policies? Students then learn about the institutional system of fine arts. Through lectures and discussions the stakeholders (museums, galleries, non-governmental organizations, artistic associations) and their roles are identified. Then we discuss the importance of a professional approach to artistic documentation, which involves keeping track of the creative process and its results using text, photographs, video, internet links, archiving catalogues, press clipping and more. While keeping records, it is necessary to bear in mind that there are different target groups the documentation may intended for, as well as the various purposes for which that documentation can be used.

New technologies and social networks are continuously present and discussed for various reasons. Students and professors communicate intensively via the Internet and social networks. One practical task involves the design and launch of a professional website, typically based on a particular social network, mostly Facebook. This task is linked to that of creating a professional portfolio. Most often, students opt for a portfolio representing a cross section of all their past work. They are also introduced to the option of preparing a portfolio that targets only one competition or open call. In the era of new technologies and social networks, in addition to the classical printed portfolio, having a digital portfolio of a sort becomes a must. The importance of having a portfolio that is available online, usually in the form of pages on social networks, portals and other types is underscored. The experience shows that some students already have dedicated Internet accounts (usually Facebook, WordPress, and Instagram) where information about them is available online. However, most of them will use the Internet for professional purposes for the first time and will need support. This is an opportunity to explore and discuss the role of the Internet in the arts – not in terms of Internet-based art which is something reserved for art courses, but in terms of identifying the web's impact on the art market, its importance for the visibility of artists and their art, and its significance for networking, exchange, and promotion.

Students learn about which portals are currently most important for selling artistic works, and about the basic principles by which they operate. Students normally encounter various universal forms of professional biographies, which can certainly be

very useful for a number of professions, but not for artists. We often make a humorous example by saying that, for the artists, it does not matter whether they have a driver's license or whether they are team players willing to work overtime. Instead, good examples of artistic biographies are presented and the elements they should contain are identified. Students learn to always ask themselves a routine question – who will read this? It is important that the person to whom the 'message' is intended understands it to the fullest. Students are also introduced to the concept of project management.⁸ They learn about the project's lifecycle, about different models of cultural projects and about the potential ways of designing a project. The starting points are general definitions of cultural projects followed by concrete examples of projects specific to the field of visual arts.

To begin with, we explain that, in terms of fine arts management, an artwork can be considered as a *project* of sorts. In conversation with the students, we seek to identify the phases of such a project, starting from the conceptual phase when the artist focuses on the idea and where we can discuss elements of the creative process. When the concept and the objective of the project are defined, the preparations for implementation can begin. This phase includes primarily technical preparation because students already have adequate conditions provided for them at the faculty including workspace, models, materials, a professor's feedback and peer review. In a later phase towards the end of the academic year the issue of fundraising and other means of support for the realization of the work are considered (more about that later in the text). It is important to note that the conversation about artwork as a project also provides an opportunity to encourage students to discuss their work in general. Visual artists tend to be reluctant to talk about themselves and their work, especially in public. Often a considerable number of years of experience is required to overcome the discomfort of public speaking. Therefore, students are encouraged to start practicing this as early as possible, first in front of their fellow students and professors, and then whenever possible in front of the general public. Artists' sensitivity to criticism is almost proverbial. One of the indirect goals of the course is to overcome this *cliché* by providing students with the opportunity to evaluate their own and someone else's work as often as possible and to take different perspectives when assessing art and cultural projects.

Writing about their own artistic work is a challenge for students but also for professors who teach them how to do it. It is not easy to transform one abstract idea into a few clear and simple sentences, especially when it involves a strong emotional component, which is often the case when it comes to artists and their artwork. The statement is written in one way if we address the professionals in the field of culture, in which case many things can presumably be taken for granted. If the target group consists of not only professionals, then a different 'language' should be used. Adequately communicating the desired message is the main objective in any case. As a case study of sorts, one actual competition is chosen, e.g. an open call for exhibiting one's work in a gallery. Students are assigned to prepare a complete application for

⁸ Cf. Branimir Stojković, Milena Dragičević Šešić, *Kultura – menadžment, animacija, marketing*, Beograd, CLIO, 2011.

such a competition, which usually requires the preparation of a professional biography and portfolio of concepts of the artworks planned. Students are instructed how to present themselves and their work in order to fulfil the requirements, and regular discussions with professors and among each other are also helpful. Guest speakers, typically decision makers such as art directors or program managers of exhibition spaces, are invited to address students. Such lectures provide students with practical information and offer them the opportunity to ask important questions and clarify doubts, and also help dispel the certain 'mystical aura' that tends to revolve around certain exhibition spaces and personalities. This also presents an opportunity to discuss the next steps, those arising from a positive result, including the preparation of technical specifications for production and presentation of work, plus writing artist's statements, preparation of materials for the catalogue and the press release, among others. To this effect, it is important to choose an actual contest and to encourage students to truly apply once everything is ready, thus the 'ice breaking' is accomplished – and positive outcomes are not uncommon. While students often have the opportunity to put their planned project into practice and realize their artwork, which brings great satisfaction and an opportunity for initial professional experiences, the 'ice breaking' itself is the most important benefit as this way students undergo their first successes and failures in a protected environment, mentally process them and discuss it all with their professors and peers. In all, this exercise equips them with both experience and 'toughness' prior to graduation, making them automatically more competitive at the so-called labour market awaiting them afterwards.

When we talk about evaluating artworks within the fine arts management lesson, it should be noted that the artistic values of the artwork are not discussed, rather all the other elements that contribute to the success of a project. Artistic elements are a theme at practical art courses however, from the perspective of management in the arts, other elements are to be valued. We consider the options for marketing an artwork and finding its appropriate place within the art world. We attempt to perceive what our options are to position that artwork adequately within the art system in Serbia and abroad.⁹ Once again we turn to discuss the profiles of cultural institutions and the professions in the wider domain of culture that are to be encountered in an art career. While professors can give helpful suggestions and plenty of good examples, this remains a field where with ample room for different solutions. However, the main goal from the perspective of fine arts management is to communicate a message in a desired manner so that it is understood by an audience for whom an explanation was intended. Following an introduction to project management, the basics of arts administration follows – from the laws on culture and other relevant laws, to the forming of legal entities, such as artistic associations and their management. Another important issue is strategic management, wherein are introduced the concepts and basic elements of evaluating completed projects and activities of the institutions

⁹ Cf. Entoni Džej, Roz Džej, *Uspešna prezentacija*, Beograd, CLIO, 2006.

(e.g. ULUS – Visual Artists Society Serbia) and operating policies of cultural institutions. Students learn about the principles of human resources management in culture, which is especially important regarding employment opportunities and professional engagement of fine artists. Does the system predict the positions for fine artists? To what extent the laws on labour and employment, as well as public policy in this area consider the peculiarities of the fine artist profession.

After the first semester, during which students are familiarized with good models of personal presentation and the presentation of their artworks (Fine Arts Management I), we address the issues of financing culture, fundraising, sponsorship in culture and understanding of the functioning of the art market in Serbia and abroad. We talk about the funding mechanisms in culture, in profit and non-profit sectors, private and public sectors and we point out the synergy of art and business that becomes increasingly important. We start with outlining a budget for a particular project and then discuss options to attain financial assets and other kinds of support. Guest lecturers in the second semester are, for instance, marketing managers of certain companies that introduce students with profiles of cultural projects that the company gladly supports, as well as with the mechanisms for applying for funds. Here we return to the role of fine artists in creating public policies and, we emphasize the importance of adopting appropriate legislation that will encourage sponsorship of the arts and simplify the mechanisms of financing the arts.

Importance of interdisciplinary cooperation

During the academic year cooperation with related departments and relevant cultural institutions occurs, and on such occasions the importance of interdisciplinary thinking is emphasized, while successful models of partnership and interdisciplinary projects are considered. A prime example is the project realized with the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, which included cooperation between fine arts students cultural management (production) students. Professors had previously reached an agreement with the Belgrade City Secretariat for Culture to support the realisation of some of the best projects and to present them during the event dubbed the Days of Belgrade. A topic was chosen and teams were formed and tasked with applying for funds for the realization of works of art.

This cooperation was valuable for students, who had the opportunity to cooperate with their future colleagues with whom they will certainly cooperate with much in the future. The quality of proposed projects prompted the City Secretariat to support more of them than initially planned. Additional results of this collaboration were the number of common cultural events initiated by the students of the two faculties, to which they invited students of the music and applied arts faculties, as well as students of private art facilities. Cooperation with students of dramatic arts (cultural management department) was an opportunity for the students of fine arts to learn the basics of project management in practice, and was an opportunity for them

to keep project management logic in mind even regarding their own artistic work. Internship in cultural institutions is another useful form of *learning by doing* that is recommended also to art students during their studies. The professor of fine arts management offers support in finding the appropriate positions for internships. One of the objectives is to establish lasting cooperation with the Student Cultural Centre in Belgrade, or another similar venue, in order to, on a regular basis, realize exhibitions near the end of the academic year. Such exhibitions would provide an opportunity to practically apply students' acquired knowledge and thus bring about tangible benefits to students. Such an exhibition would represent a useful tradition and a sort of summarization of knowledge and experience attained.

Conclusion

In order to achieve long-term, comprehensive and true change for the better when it comes to employment opportunities for graduates of fine arts faculties in Serbia, an important factor is the adaptation of university-level education of fine artists with the aim to create adequate academic and professional profiles that would enable students and graduates to position themselves on the modern labour market, on the art scene and in society more successfully and with greater ease. Relevant state institutions (such as the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy) do not address the role of higher education of visual artists in successfully positioning graduates in the labour market in a systematic manner. It is necessary to define effective instruments of cultural, educational and social policies that will deal with this, taking into account the specifics of artistic studies and profession. Responsible access to state institutions and the social status of the artist should also imply a more restrictive and demanding attitude towards the institutions that compete for the status of high art school. Here in particular such institutions should be required to propose studies that include innovative approaches to education and offer diverse theoretical and practical courses. Scant and inadequate programs of university-level education in the visual arts create professionals who are unable to successfully cope with the demands of modern reality in the field of visual arts and culture. A scientifically-based paradigm shift of university-level education in the visual arts is necessary in order to maximize the effective profiling of future professionals who will then be able to position themselves and survive in modern society and especially in the field of art and culture. A systematic revision of existent curricula is required, also because it could be a successful tool for tackling the issue of the social status of artists as well as their status on the labour market in the broader sense.