

“Lubricating the System” – Infrastructural Strategies of Precarious Archives

**A series of lectures and discussions within
the framework of the exhibition
“Archival Chain Reactions: Between and Beyond
Archivo Pinto mi Raya, re.act.feminism,
City of Women”**

Venue: Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (+MSUM), Ljubljana

Date: Friday, 19 June 2026, 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm

With: Corinne Brenko, Andreja Dugandžić (online), Ida Hiršenfelter,
Katja Kobolt & Dunja Kukovec, Mónica Mayer (online), Ana Obid,
Urška Repar, Suzana Tratnik, Rok Vevar, Jasmina Založnik

Curated and moderated by: Iva Kovač and Bettina Knaup

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This event explores the relations between independent, minoritarian, activist, or activist archives and institutions, foregrounding the practices and labour involved in building connections and enabling knowledge exchange in order to preserve and animate important collections. Inspired by the Mexican artist and archivist Mónica Mayer and her strategic, playful and subversive practice of “lubricating the system”, the event considers the various ways of infiltrating institutions when necessary, forming occasional partnerships, while preserving a critical distance and independence. Speakers from Sarajevo, Mexico City and Ljubljana will introduce individual projects as comparative case studies, thus offering space for a broader discussion.

Artist Mónica Mayer, co-curator of the exhibition and archivist of the Pinto mi Raya archive in Mexico City, will share some examples of her decade-long feminist practice of caring for archival materials through performative acts of “lubricating the system”. Andreja Dugandžić from Crvena, a cultural and educational organisation which created the digital archive of the anti-fascist struggle of women in BiH and Yugoslavia, will present the exhibition “Polet žena”, which is included in the permanent display of the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. The local dialogue will bring together artists, archivists, NGOs and institutions that work on preserving contemporary art and activist archives. Participants and projects include the Bring In Take Out Living Archive (Katja Kobolt & Dunja Kukovec), the Temporary Slovene Dance Archive (Rok Vevar and Jasmina Založnik, also the City of Women co-director), the Lesbian Quarter (Suzana Tratnik) in collaboration with the Museum of Contemporary History Celje (Urška Repar) and the Ljubljana City Museum (Corinne Brenko), as well as MG+MSUM’s archive initiatives such as RazUme (Ana Obid) and the Web Museum (Ida Hiršenfelder, editor from 2014-2021).

The event will take place within the framework of the “Archival Chain Reactions” exhibition, which emerged from a collaborative project dedicated to connecting and activating important yet precarious archives of feminist art. By addressing the historical erasure of women* and gender-nonconforming, queer feminist artists,

the project aims to counter the threat of disappearing feminist archives and emphasises the necessity of networking and exchange among archives in various global contexts. The project brings together Pinto mi Raya (Mexico City), an archive built by artists Mónica Mayer and Víctor Lerma; re.act.feminism (Berlin), a project that has been travelling as a living performance archive across Europe since 2008; and City of Women (Ljubljana), with its significant but dispersed archive accumulated over 31 years of festival and programme activities.

Produced by: Association City of Women & cross links e.V. Berlin

Funded by: Visual Arts Project Fund of the Goethe-Institut, City of Women (co-funded by the Municipality of Ljubljana and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia)

Made in collaboration with: Moderna galerija and Goethe-Institut Ljubljana

PROGRAMME (in English)

4:00 – 4:45 pm

Guided tour by Bettina Knaup & Iva Kovač

5:00 pm

Lubricating the System: International Examples of Feminist Archiving

Welcome and Introduction / Bettina Knaup & Iva Kovač

Lubricating the Art System: Some of my Favorite Strategies /
Mónica Mayer

In this presentation, Mayer will discuss the various ways in which she has created artworks based on archives, as well as works that constitute archives in their own right. She will examine how these projects often serve as strategies for reactivating her archives and those of others, or for incorporating elements of her archive into other archival frameworks.

Flight of Women (Polet žena) exhibition / Andreja Dugandžić

“Flight of Women” (Polet žena), which opened in December 2019 at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina to commemorate the 77th anniversary of the founding of the Women’s Anti-Fascist Front (AFŽ), grew out of years of research into the Museum’s collections. After a long-lasting exploration of the archives, the corridors, boxes and forgotten corners of the institution, we discovered documents, photographs and objects that document the political and social function of women in the antifascist struggle and in the socialist reconstruction. Long overlooked in the presentations and public memory, these materials showed the way in which women’s contributions were quickly silenced in the dominant historical narratives. From the point of view of archival, conservational and curatorial work, mostly performed by women, the exhibition is an act of showing, transforming parts of museum collections into a permanent exhibition, and, symbolically, bringing back the collective practices of women and antifascism.

Discussion

6:00 – 6:15 pm

Break

6:15 – 7:15 pm

Feminist Queer Archives from Ljubljana: Collectivity and Circulation

Bring In Take Out Living Archive / Katja Kobolt & Dunja Kukovec

Dunja Kukovec and Katja Kobolt – long-time collaborators of the City of Women Association, which they also co-directed between 2007 and 2009 – will present the curatorial gestures of the post-Yugoslav feminist collective Red Mined. Their approach to formatting exhibition processes and radical inclusivity resulted in a series of Bring In Take Out Living Archive editions (2011-2015) and, later, to the 54th October Salon in Belgrade, No One Belongs Here More Than You (2013). The Living Archive is a contemporary art exhibition in the form of an open archive. Its methodology delivers the transformation of objective, interpersonal, and production relations. This mode of working shaped other subsequent collaborations, i.e., the artistic research platform n*a*i*s hacks facts fictions, presented at the City of Women in 2020, as well as the Collection of Illustrations by Yugoslav Women Artists (1945–1991).

Weaving Through Time: Negotiating Archival Practices between Individual Endeavour, Institutional Partnership and Collective Action / Suzana Tratnik & Urška Repar & Corinne Brenko

This project reviews the chain reaction of archival strategies spanning over four decades. Beginning with Suzana Tratnik's unofficial stewardship of the ŠKUC-LL records in the 1980s, it maps how informal activist archiving gradually formed collaborations with formal institutions — first through the digital ŠKUC-LGBT archive at the Institute of Contemporary History, then through the broad collaborative infrastructure of 40 Years of Ljubljana's LGBT Community: Spaces of Movement (2024–25), developed with Corinne Brenko and the City Museum of Ljubljana. Each step required negotiations between independence and institutional partnership. The latest development of this trajectory is a series of workshops co-developed with Urška Repar within the Lesbian Quarter Festival, examining archiving as a strategic, politicised practice — one

that consciously shapes what is preserved, how it is classified, and for whom, resisting the erasure of queer feminist memory through deliberate, collective action.

Discussion

7:15 – 7:45 pm

Break with drinks and snacks

7:45 – 9:00 pm

Archival Initiatives within and beyond MG+MSUM

RazUme / Ana Obid

Since 1971, the Documentation-Archives Department of the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana has systematically collected, processed, stored, presented and published data and materials on exhibitions in Slovenia and exhibitions of Slovenian artists abroad; on art exhibition venues and other spaces for the creation and presentation of visual art; on 20th and 21st century artists in Slovenia and on writers on 20th and 21st century fine arts.

In her contribution, Obid will provide a brief overview of the history of the department and its key projects, with a special emphasis on the development of the RazUme database in 1989 and 1992/93, which remains the department's central working tool today. The database currently contains data on more than 60,000 exhibitions and 30,000 artists, which is continuously being updated.

The department houses the most extensive collection in the aforementioned fields, which is used for scientific research, cultural, educational and journalistic purposes.

The Web Museum / Ida Hiršenfelder

The Web Museum is a digital repository dedicated to preserving and providing online access to Slovenia's audiovisual cultural heritage. It brings together diverse artistic practices that use media technologies, ranging from experimental film, video, and animation to contemporary digital, online, and multimedia art. The platform collects, digitises and archives artworks, event recordings, project documentation, and related publications, creating meaningful connections that enhance the understanding of the audiovisual

heritage. Through semantic linking, the Web Museum highlights significant yet underrepresented aspects of artistic production. Developed by the Modern Gallery Ljubljana, it also offers a shared open-source infrastructure that supports organisations and individuals in digitising, organising, and publishing cultural materials.

The Temporary Slovene Dance Archive / Rok Vevar & Jasmina Založnik

In the Slovene cultural milieu, The Temporary Slovene Dance Archive is an intervention into the systemic denial of contemporary dance and other non-institutional performing art presences that lack institutional or public representation. Established in 2012, the TSDA does not conform to legislative archival standards. It improves through the public time of dance, and through its activation through various media it functions as an alternative to the institutional archival and historiographic system. It moves and stays in its potential, rather than in the realization itself. Nomad Dance Academy Slovenia has been its main producer, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova its generous host. Dr. Jasmina Založnik and Rok Vevar are going to present its configuration from different selected perspectives without totalizing it with a definition.

Discussion

BIOGRAPHIES

Corinne Brenko is a historian and curator at the Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana, working at the intersection of community memory, gender, and marginalised histories. Her practice foregrounds participatory approaches to collecting, archiving, and exhibition-making. With Suzana Tratnik, she co-developed *40 Years of Ljubljana's LGBT Community: Spaces of Movement* (2024–25), weaving institutions, organisations, and individuals into a living archive of queer civic heritage. As part of an international curatorial team, she contributed to *"I-ON: Identity on the Line"*, which was awarded the 2022 European Museum Academy Award and the 2023 ICOM Slovenia Award.

Andreja Dugandžić is a researcher, cultural worker, and artist based in Sarajevo. She works at the Association for Culture and Arts CRVENA, where she has long been engaged in researching the history and legacy of the women's antifascist movement in Yugoslavia and exploring its contemporary artistic and political relevance. She is the co-author of the online *Archive of the Antifascist Struggle of Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Yugoslavia (AFŽ Archive)* and co-editor of the publication *Lost Revolution: AFŽ Between Myth and Oblivion*. Andreja also curated and authored the exhibition *Polet žena* at the Historical Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her artistic practice draws extensively on AFŽ archives, resulting in numerous works that reinterpret and activate this historical heritage in contemporary contexts.

Ida Hiršenfelder (beepblip) is a Ljubljana-based sound artist and archivist, primarily working in sound ecology and spatialisation, addressing themes such as the agency of non-organic others, non-human animal languages, and listening to the inaudible. Hiršenfelder was employed at the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (2014–2021) where she worked on projects related to digital archives as an editor of the Web Museum and the Modern Gallery Ljubljana's home page. She was an advisor to the Nomad Dance Academy network. Previously, she was an archivist of DIVA Station, Digital Video Art Archive at SCCA, Centre for Contemporary Arts-Ljubljana (2007–2013).

Katja Kobolt is a researcher at the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies at ZRC SAZU, focusing on the sociocultural and memory-related aspects of literature and art. Her research centres on the democratization of literature and art, their social roles, women's authorship, cultural production for children, and the participation of minority social groups. She is an associate professor at the ZRC SAZU Postgraduate School and teaches at the Academy of Arts, University of Nova Gorica. As part of her research into socialist Yugoslav children's literature, she created a Collection of Children's Illustrations by Women Artists in Socialist Yugoslavia (1945–1991).

Dunja Kukovec is an independent curator and critic. She has collaborated with institutions such as the Modern Gallery Ljubljana, the Venice Biennale, Manifesta, CRVENA Sarajevo, SCCA Sarajevo, etc. She co-directed the City of Women International Festival for two years, and she was also in charge of the Igor Zabel Association for Culture and Theory for two years. In addition to numerous exhibitions and texts, she is the author of time-based blog projects <https://melonlikeslemon-blog.tumblr.com> and artappluse.si. Lately, she has been advocating the transformative and metaphysical potential of art. Instead of being interested in social criticism, she focuses on structural and morphological ideas and on processual categories of existence.

Mónica Mayer has developed an integral focus in her work that, in addition to performance, drawing, and interventions, considers writing, teaching, and community participation as part of her artistic production. She is considered a pioneer in feminist art, performance, and digital graphics in Mexico. In 1983, she founded the group Polvo de Gallina Negra (Black Hen's Dust) with Maris Bustamante, and in 1989, with Víctor Lerma, initiated the project Pinto mi Raya (I Draw the Line) of which the central element is a specialized archive of periodical clippings that has constituted the basis of diverse artistic proposals. Mayer has published several books, she had a column in the newspaper El Universal for twenty years and her texts have been published in various journals both in Mexico and abroad. She is a member of the Sistema Nacional de Creadores (National System of Creators) with a project on art and archives.

Ana Obid holds a master's degree in art history from the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. Since 2024, she has been employed at the Documentation-Archives Department of the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana.

Urška Repar is an ethnologist and cultural anthropologist and a senior curator at the Museum of Recent History Celje. Her work focuses on urban life and popular culture, sustainable approaches to exhibition-making, and women's histories in museums. She is engaged in gender-sensitive approaches to museum interpretation and exhibition-making. She curates museum collections and exhibitions and publishes scholarly and public-facing articles. In 2023, she received the ICOM Slovenia Award for the project "No Way Are We Throwing Things Away: On Destructive Habits and Better Practices."

Suzana Tratnik studied sociology, gender studies and anthropology in Ljubljana. She has been a lesbian activist since 1987 and is the cofounder of Škuc-Lezbična sekcija LL, the first lesbian group in Eastern Europe, and a programmer for Ljubljana's LGBT Film Festival and Lesbian Quarter Festival. She worked on the digital ŠKUC-LGBT archive at The Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana. Tratnik has published books of fiction, essay collections, as well as a monologue and radio plays. She received several literary awards, including the national Prešern's Fund Prize. Her short stories and books have been translated into approximately thirty languages. Tratnik is the Honorary President of the City of Women Association since 2025.

Rok Vevar is a curator, archivist, historian of contemporary dance, and founder of TSDA. He is also a co-curator of CoFestival, the international contemporary dance festival. He edited *Day, Night + Man = Rhythm: An Anthology of Slovenian Contemporary Dance Journalism 1918–1960* (2018) and wrote *Ksenija, Xenia: The London Dance Years of Ksenija Hribar 1960–1978* (2020). In 2019, he received the Ksenija Hribar Award and in 2020 the Vladimir Kralj Award. He co-curated the following exhibitions: *Autography, Enigma, Rebellion: The Photography of Božidar Dolenc*; *KNOWLEDGE! RESIST! REACTION! Performance and Politics in the 1990s in the*

Post-Yugoslavian Context at MSUM; Dance, Resistance, (Non)Action – Aspects of Dance as a Cultural, Political and Artistic Work in the Period of Yugoslavia and After (NDA, MSU Zagreb, MSUM).

Jasmina Založnik is a freelance curator, performing arts scholar, and producer. She holds a PhD from the Department of Visual Culture (University of Aberdeen, UK). She is the co-founder and long-time co-curator of CoFestival, an international contemporary dance festival, and the co-initiator of the digital database NADA (Non-Aligned Dance Archive). She is an active member of the Nomad Dance Academy Slovenia and the broader regional Nomad Dance Academy network. Together with Pia Brezavšček, she assumed programme co-leadership of the City of Women Association in 2026.

SCHEDULE

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5.00 Lubricating the System: International Examples of Feminist Archiving

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6.15 – 7.15 Feminist queer Archives from Ljubljana: Collectivity and Circulation

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