



Performing Arts | Audiovisual - Film, TV & Radio | All Europe Countries | News

## New dismissals of heads of Europe's cultural organisations raise concerns

# The new layoffs are accompanied by questions about the transparency of procedures and accusations of indirect interference in the work of artistic directors.

Only a few days after the public letter sent by nearly 200 European organisations to speak out about the attacks, bans, layoffs and cuts in the cultural sector across Europe, three new cases of dismissals of directors of cultural organisations have been added to this alarming list.

In a statement of concern, [Pearle\\*](#), the association of the music and performing arts sector, expressed its "regret at the Portuguese government's decision to dismiss Francisca Carneiro Fernandes from her position as President of the Board of Directors of the Centro Cultural de Belém Foundation in Lisbon". Pearl\* called for transparency and clarification regarding the reasons for this dismissal and the correct application of the procedures to be followed in such cases.

Linda Kapetanea was also unexpectedly informed that her mandate as Artistic Director of the [Kalamata International Dance Festival](#) would not be renewed. Linda Kapetanea has been at the helm of the festival for the past seven years. In a letter to the members of the Kalamata Municipality's non-profit company Faris, she says: "The mayor has informed me that he will continue with another artistic director, ending a period of difficult communication between us". Linda Capetanea had taken over as artistic director after a competition, and it is questionable whether a similar transparent process will be followed again, or whether the local authorities have already decided on her successor.

Yannis Sakaridis has also announced his dismissal as artistic director of the International [Short Film Festival of Drama](#) in a public letter. Yannis Sakaridis has been at the helm of the festival for the past five years.

In his letter, the former artistic director expressed his concerns about the way the festival was being run and criticised the new administration for trying to interfere in the style and

programming of the films selected for the competition sections. According to Yannis Sakaridis, the new administration of the Drama Festival implicitly demanded "the abolition of the Drama Queer Prize in the National Competition section and two other similar prizes in other competition programmes, expressing what we consider to be anachronistic, homophobic and highly worrying views".

In the recent open letter from European cultural organisations entitled "[Free Culture](#)", the signatories expressed their solidarity "with artists who have been dismissed or obstructed in their work, and with cultural institutions across Europe that are threatened with closure or have already been closed". Some time ago the [IETM](#) made public its concerns about attacks on artistic freedom.

--

Photo credit: Barry Goyette

Photo [source](#)