

Nice, August 22 2023

Dear Lisbeth Rebollo Gonçalves,
Dear members of AICA International,

Application for the position of President of AICA International

A member of AICA France since 2005 and Treasurer of AICA International since 2016 , I complete my two terms this November . This voluntary commitment to AICA makes sense to me because I define myself fully as an art critic. I write with the works, in collaboration with aesthetic experiences, leading conversations with artists. What interests me is engaging in a thought process that links what we experience, what makes up our time, and the works that move through us. I have published four essays on art, one of which was subsequently translated and published in English, edited a dozen collective works, and for the last twenty years I have been regularly writing articles for the specialist press. I also give many lectures in France and abroad. Being an art critic is a commitment to creation, an intellectual process, and also an activity of transmission, since I have been a professor of art history at the Pavillon Bosio, Art&Scénographie, in Monaco since 2006, and a visiting professor at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie in Arles. I work particularly on video installations and exhibitions, which are complex and fascinating formats that evolve and transform, requiring us to invent writing processes that are an extension of artistic processes. Following a lecture I gave this winter at Central Saint Martins in London on my book *Nager avec Laure Prouvost* (Swimming with Laure Prouvost), during which I initiated a reflection on the history and contemporary states of extended forms of art criticism, I coordinated a special dossier on the subject for the Belgian magazine « L'Art Même ». I brought together texts produced on art by novelists, poets, essayists and activists, to highlight the impact they have on our thinking and writing processes, and the need to keep art criticism porous with different forms of writing. Reflecting on what we do when we write art criticism is an essential part of my practice, which is also sometimes pursued through exhibition projects. I've curated around ten of them, always independently, responding to invitations and collaborating with museums, art centres and foundations.

I remember how important it was for me to join the French Section of AICA in 2005, and how proud I was to become part of this great association whose members have taught me so much through their books and articles. What I didn't expect was the generosity and vitality I found there,

which enabled me to take part in many collective projects and attend congresses. I discovered the importance of exchanges between Sections, met critics working in contexts very different from my own, and forged special relationships with figures from different generations. This experience motivated me to give my time to this association, which has fought so hard to gain recognition for our work, to unite countries and to create links and support. In 2020, I also joined the Scientific Committee of the Archives de la Critique d'Art, and the research I've been able to carry out on site in Rennes, in our archives, has made me enthusiastic about the rich history of AICA. It is fascinating to read through the letters exchanged in the 1950s when the first Sections opened, to leaf through the programmes of the various Congresses, to discover the programme that AICA set itself from the outset: to promote the activity of art critics in the art ecosystem, to support their professionalisation, to fight censorship, to develop activities that encourage meetings and exchanges. It was with great emotion that I discovered this postcard celebrating the first Congress, leaving a blank space for everything that was to be written, and I would like to place my candidacy in this spirit of enthusiasm in the face of all that is possible to do, to invent together, in the beautiful energy of exchanges and collaborations.



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I have always fulfilled my role as Treasurer with rigour and professionalism in monitoring the financial management of our activities, while participating fully in the necessary transformation of our Association. My participation in all our activities, meetings, congresses and seminars, and my command of AICA's three languages (French, English and Spanish), have enabled me to build up personal relationships of trust with many members and committees of the, national Section. I now have a clear inside knowledge of how AICA works, both administratively and in human terms,

which, if I am elected President, will save time and benefit the organisation.. I'm a great believer in the direct and friendly dialogue that our network offers, I'm very attached to it, and I want to make these special relationships with the national Sections central to the management of AICA International.

I have been able to integrate voluntary work within AICA with my active professional life in order to address the necessary challenges and battles and to assert AICA's role alongside artists and institutions to defend a vision of art that is open, democratic and professional. Here are few elements that I'd like to share as a programme for my presidency

- Promoting AICA International within the professional art network:

At our last meetings, we discussed the need to forge closer links with ICOM and IKT in order to assert our place more strongly in the art ecosystem. I will make this a priority during my term of office, taking the time to meet the Presidents of these associations and to learn more about their activities in order to raise our profile. More broadly, I will devote a great deal of energy to raising the profile of AICA, and I will also suggest to the Vice-Presidents that they take on this role fully during their term of office. Since becoming Treasurer, I have been involved in the Digital Strategies Committee, looking in particular at our presence on social networks, by managing our Instagram account at our Congresses. Instagram is a valuable tool for sharing our activities (seminars, Congresses, meetings) with our members and for promoting the work of the national Sections., but social media need to be managed professionally. Finding and allocating real budgets for communication is a central point of my project for this Presidency, continuing the work to raise the profile of the national Sections undertaken in recent years by Secretary-General Marc Partouche, which has resulted in a very fine graphic document (available to download from our website).

- ! Raising AICA's profile among the younger generation: with Secretary-General Marc Patouche, I have set up the AICA Academy programme. Initiated in Paris with the support of the Sorbonne University through training sessions on art criticism, then halted by the pandemic, we are relaunching it this year in collaboration with the Congress in Krakow. The AICA Académie will be offering financial support to ten young critics wishing to attend the Congress, and will be organising a collaborative session on art criticism. I have enlisted the support of Emmanuel Lambion (AICA Belgium) and Dominik Czecho (AICA UK) for this programme, and we are working closely with Malgorzata Kazmierczak (AICA Poland). The

large number of very international and highly professional applications received for this programme testify to AICA's strength.

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! Putting women art critics at the heart of the next mandate: women have been strongly represented within AICA since the beginning of its history, not only as members, but also as presidents and officers of national sections, and as committee chairs. This is a great strength which we should promote as an exemplar for greater parity in the visual arts. The Africa project within the Unesco programme, which aims to highlight women in the art world and support them by creating opportunities for meeting, discussion and collaboration, is a good example of how AICA can play a part in shaping social change.. Future publications in the Great Critics series might also be dedicated to women art critics.

- Supporting and strengthening AICA's publications activities: the Publications Committee has historically been one of AICA's strong points, and the collection Grands Critiques, directed by Jean-Marc Poinot, has contributed greatly to a better understanding of art critics who have played important roles in the countries where they have worked. Today, the committee is undergoing a major overhaul, and I would like to support it in this process, while at the same time building on the dynamism of the AICA E-MAG, a project spearheaded by Jean Bundy. AICA E-MAG offers a more flexible and responsive format, publishing articles and reviews of exhibitions and books and sharing them via our website. There are many avenues to explore in this vein.

- Making AICA a driving force for solidarity: beyond the differentiated rates of contribution, AICA can really develop tools for solidarity between its members. I would like to see this role developed more actively within AICA, with a dedicated budget line and a clearer commitment to helping Sections facing crisis situations.

! Encouraging relations between Sections: when after the covid crisis we were able to dedicate a specific fund to new projects, I proposed that this fund be dedicated to projects carried out by different Sections. While many Section are very dactive , many members of AICA International are unaware of the richness of the network as a whole. A communication strategy is needed to make the most of them, and pooling can also be envisaged in certain contexts, and closer links encouraged, as at recent Congresses (Chile/Argentina and Poland/Romania).

During the covid pandemic, I carried out and published a survey on the economic conditions of art criticism in close dialogue with the various AICA sections that relayed my survey. The article can

be consulted online: <https://www.switchonpaper.com/science/sciences-sociales/la-critique-dart-face-a-la-crise/>

I have also set up a partnership with the magazine Switchonpaper by devising a call for contributions specifically aimed at AICA members, ensuring complete freedom to write and good remuneration.

I have the honour and pleasure of standing today for the position of President of AICA International, with the invaluable support of the Board of my Section, AICA France, and in particular of its President Elisabeth Couturier, to whom I extend my warmest thanks. I see my candidacy as a continuation of my previous role as Treasurer, with energy and commitment that are as motivated as ever by the richness of our Association and all those who make it up. An association is a collective organisation, and the role of the Presidency is to orchestrate and encourage energies, which I wish to lead with intellectual pleasure and a humanist commitment. This year, 2023, we will also be electing a new Treasurer, Vice-Presidents and International Members, and the Presidency will work with all those elected to deliver AICA's many and diverse projects.

With kind regards

Mathilde Roman