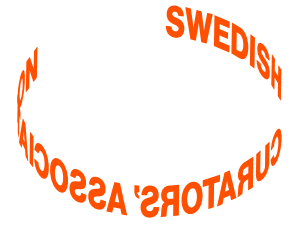


The Swedish Curators' Association opposes the merger of Moderna Museet, ArkDes and the Public Art Agency Sweden



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The Swedish Curators' Association, a politically unaffiliated and non-profit organisation that promotes and defends the professional, economic and social conditions of curators, questions the Swedish government's proposal to merge Moderna Museet, ArkDes, and the Public Art Agency Sweden into a single authority.

Independent art, public art, architecture, and design have differing working methods and societal roles that are often difficult to reconcile. This overlap and friction is productive, constituting a vital part of any diverse cultural life. Although there are points of contact between these fields, they must be allowed to develop within their own conditions. This independence and interdependence is what allows them to best benefit culture in Sweden. The proposed new authority, described in the inquiry as "Moderna – myndighet för modern konst, arkitektur och design" ("Moderna – the National Authority for Modern Art, Architecture and Design"), would impose an overarching bureaucracy with little or no benefit for neither architecture, design, nor independent arts.

The inquiry contains factual errors, misunderstandings, and lacks a proper risk analysis. As such, a hasty process simply cannot be justified. Without supporting evidence, it is irresponsible of the government to implement a large-scale restructuring that could lead to irreversible and negative consequences. It is important to consider that these three institutions have great international and historical value for both the art world, as well as for other actors in the fields of art, architecture, visual arts, design and architecture in Sweden.

We strongly oppose the inquiry's articulation that the number of curators within the institutions in question is high, along with the suggestion that this could be made more efficient by way of a merger. The fact that these institutions work with exhibitions, public program, and knowledge creation does not mean that their roles are interchangeable. Sweden's cultural ecosystem, for which curators form an integral and often underacknowledged part, is fragile. The inquiry simplifies this complexity, pays little attention to the reality of the situation, and ignores the ways in which the institutions' subject-specific focuses affect the long-term knowledge development between museums, leadership, and the audiences that they serve.

By blurring these differences, there is a risk of weakening the specialisms and competences that are crucial for each institution's national and international relevance and activities. We foresee consequences that would seriously hold back and even damage opportunities for Sweden's cultural life to develop freely. As such, we intend to submit a formal response (a remissvar) to this proposal.

The Board and the Operations Managers of the Swedish Curators' Association