

VESELINA SARIEVA

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Vesselina Sarieva was born in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. She's based in Sofia and Plovdiv. Vesselina is a cultural manager, curator, collector, author, initiator and founder of numerous internationally successful projects and organizations. Since 2004 she has been actively working to create innovative models for support, presentation, development and promotion in the field of art, culture and urban development, and her work has become an important factor for the country's artistic scene and its representation abroad, finding many followers. Vesselina is the founder of Sarieva/Gallery (2021) (successor of the family-run Sariev, 2004-2021), Open Arts Foundation (2007), café and community centre artnewscafe (2008-2023) and Kabinet Art Advisory - environment for dialogue, analysis and development (2022). The headquarters of these organizations are located next to each other at the end of Otets Paisii str. in Plovdiv, forming a cultural hub with an active cultural program. Their activities take place in Plovdiv, Sofia and abroad.*

Born: January 6th, 1979, Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Education:

Master's degree in Slavic Philology from Plovdiv University, 2003.

Specialisation in Croatian Language and Literature at the University of Zagreb, 2003.

A graduate of the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) - U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange programme, Changemakers group, 2015.

Organizations, led and found by Vesselina Sarieva:

2021 – to date: **Sarieva**, Plovdiv <https://gallery.sarieva.org/>

2022 – to date: **Kabinet* dialogues**, Plovdiv <https://kabinet.sarieva.org>

2007 – to date: **Open Arts Foundation**, Plovdiv, Sofia, <https://openarts.info/>

2012 – 2021: **Sariev Contemporary Gallery**, Plovdiv, together with Katrin Sarieva; <https://sariev-gallery.com/>

2008- 2023: **artnewscafe**, Plovdiv, <http://artnewscafe.com/>

2004 – 2011: **Sariev Centre for Contemporary Ceramics**, Plovdiv, initiated by Katrin Sarieva;

Key active clusters and projects:

2018 – up to date: **Open Art Files: Topics, People, Spaces, Files in Bulgarian Contemporary Art website / database / archive of Bulgarian contemporary art, online library and environment for art criticism /** <http://openartfiles.bg/en>

2016 – up to date : **FLUCA: Austrian Cultural Pavilion** / an open stage for art and culture with a curated programme / launched as an annual spring and summer project in 2016 in Plovdiv / a season in Sofia in 2018 / <https://fluca.info/>

2015 – up to date: **Working visits of international curators and art critics** / Regularly / [Link](#)

2011 – up to date: **Collectors' Forum** / lectures and collections / Plovdiv and Sofia / Regularly / presents international and Bulgarian private and corporate collecting practices, guides in compiling and maintaining a collection/ [Link](#)

2008 – up to date: **Artnewscafe bulletin** / a monthly publication in Bulgarian, offering up-to-date news on events in the arts, both in the country and around the world / launched as a monthly printed periodical in 2008 and an online publication since 2015 / Active to date / [Link](#)

Past Projects:

2021: **Future Unforgettable** / curated multi-genre situation in the visual arts, developed in six phases / exhibitions, documentaries, screenings, debates, exhibition tours, collaborations with collectors, publications / Plovdiv, Sofia, Veliko Tarnovo, Varna / <https://futureunforgettable.com/>

2020: **Circle of Friends for Bulgarian Art** / a joint initiative with Office for Art, Berlin / common platform for experts and art lovers, created to give support artists, initiatives, institutions and to network internationally / [Link](#)

2019: **Sariev + Markov sculpture projects** / a joint initiative with Markovstudio, Trebich district / projects in public space – artists' residencies, project implementation in urban environment, lectures, exhibitions / [Link](#)

2018: **The book Introduction to Bulgarian Contemporary Art**, authored by Vessela Nozharova / a research process started in 2012, published in Bulgarian and English in 2018 / [Link](#)

2015: **Focus: Bulgaria** / an overview of Bulgarian contemporary art, including a curatorial exhibition, a publication, a programme of discussions, performances, and a video programme / Venue: viennacontemporary, Vienna, Austria / [Link](#)

2013: **Lotus Debates** / A series of debates on the following topics: cooperation between municipality and cultural operators, cooperation between educational institutions and cultural operators, neighbourhood management, the multi-ethnic scope of cultural events / Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2013 – 2017: **An Alternative Map of Plovdiv** / together with Katrin Sarieva / a printed edition in 2013 and online since 2013, updated in 2017 / Active to date / <https://www.alternativeplovdiv.com/>

2012 - 2015: **A City Arbour** / with Katrin Sarieva / thematic lectures and discussions about the city / editions in 2012 and 2015 / Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2011 - 2019: **Introduction to Contemporary Art** / educational platform of lectures / annually / Sofia, Plovdiv and online / [Link](#)

2010 - 2013: **Otets Paisiy Street Festival**, Plovdiv / held annually from 2010 to 2013 / [Link](#)

2010 – 2019: **BACKGROUND: Young Artists** / An exhibition project and a platform to support young artists and curators / regularly / Plovdiv and Sofia / [Link](#)

2005 - 2019: **Night of Museums and Galleries, Plovdiv** – known today as **NIGHT/Plovdiv** / A festival and platform in support of culture and urban development / held annually from 2005 to 2018, a special edition in 2019 / <https://www.night.bg/>

Selected curatorial projects:

In this segment are presented a few selected projects. Other curatorial projects have been realized within the programs of Sariev Contemporary, Sarieva Gallery, NIGHT/Plovdiv, FLUCA: Austrian cultural pavilion and others.

2022:

ECHO / group exhibition / The exhibition ECHO rediscovers the early artistic practices from the 1970s and 1980s of authors Vladimir Ivanov and Stanka Tsonkova – USHA in dialogue with current works by the young artist Sophia Grancharova / 11 February – 12 March 2022, Sarieva, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

Capsule / solo exhibition / Sasho Stoitzov / 10 June – 30 July 2022 / Sarieva, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

SIT / group exhibition and educational program / Driton Selmani, Luhezhar Boyadjiev, Pravdoliub Ivanov / 24 November – 24 December 2022 / LambdaLambdaLambda, Pristina, Kosovo / [Link](#)

2021:

FUTURE UNFORGETTABLE / curated multi-genre situation in the visual arts, developed in six phases / exhibitions, documentaries, screenings, debates, exhibition tours, collaborations with collectors, publications / Plovdiv, Sofia, Veliko Tarnovo, Varna / <https://futureunforgettable.com/>

Brittle Power group exhibition and educational programme / Rada Boukova, Luhezhar Boyadjiev, Pravdoliub Ivanov, Vikenti Komitski, Rudi Ninov, Nedko Solakov, Mariana Vassileva, Sibin Vassilev / Curated by René Block and Vesselina Sarieva / 5 June 2021 - 5 September 2021 / Kunsthall 44Møen, Møen, Denmark / [Link](#)

LET THEM DRAW III / curated by Pravdoliub Ivanov and Vesselina Sarieva / Alec Finlay, Galina Dimitrova, Hortensia Mi Kafchin, Mariana Vassileva, Sevda Semer, Vlad Nancă 12 February 2021 – 31 March 2021 / Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2020:

MAGIA NATURALIS / based on the ideas of Boyan Manchev and Vesselina Sarieva / Phase I/ Bignia Wehrli, Marta Djourina, L / Texts: Boyan Manchev, Vesselina Sarieva / 26 June - 28 August 2020 / Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2019:

BACKGROUND: Young Artists from Plovdiv/ Mitch Brezounek, Martina Vacheva, Dimitar Genchev, Velizar Dimchev, Yavor Kostadinov, Lyubomir Krastev, Trifon Tashev, Valko Chobanov, Dimitar Shopov / 5 July – 30 August 2019 / Sariev Contemporary, Danchova House in the Old Town, Cu29 gallery / [Link](#)

THE GALAXIES OF TEKLA – Drawings for book covers 1979-1989 / Tekla Aleksieva / 2 November - 27 December 2019 / Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2011:

POOR, BUT SEXY / Anton Stoyanov, Vikenti Komitski, Voin de Voin, Lazar Lyutakov, Lubri, Rada Boukova / 17 September 2011 - 30 October 2011 / Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

Selected symposiums and conferences :

2023:

"Contemporary Visual Sector in Perspective" Symposium, part of **BUNA**, ReBonkers, Varna
"The Rules of the Game" Lecture, part of the educational program of **Art Start 2023**, Credo Bonum Gallery, Sofia

2022:

Introduction to the presentation "**Expanding Imagination with New Imaging Tool**" / Shape Shift Festival / organized by Next-DC, Sofia
Discussion with Pravdoliub Ivanov "What and where is the place of art nowadays?" part of **Tuk-Tam Kosher**, Sofia

2021:

Part of the Challenge Chasers panel discussion at the conference „**Forbes Women Forum 2021**”/ [Link](#)
Panel moderator of **Missions and Policies** of eUConvArt Training Programme, organized by EUNIC and The British Council, Bulgaria

2019: Lecturer at the symposium **In the Belly of the Beast? Insights into the contemporary art market**, organized by HFBK University of Fine Arts Hamburg, Hamburg

2015: Lecturer at the **CULTURE, INOVATION, DEVELOPMENT** conference, The National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, Sofia

2013:

Lecturer at the **CULTURAL MANAGEMENT: CULTURAL POLICY** conference, Goethe Institut, Berlin
Lead lecturer at the **Private initiatives for developing an Eastern European art market** seminar, Institut Artmark, Romania
Lecturer at the **How to festivals?** conference, BFA, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2011: Participant at workshop, lectures and discussion “**Curating in the gallery field**”, de Appel arts center, Amsterdam and The Fair Gallery / [Link](#)

2012:

Lecturer at the **PLAY CONTEMPORARY: IT PAYS** symposium, Sofia Contemporary, Magazine 1, София
Artistic Production and the Audience in CEE, panel discussion participant, Istanbul Contemporary

2009: Lecturer at **Autumn curator academy**, Art Today Association, Plovdiv and New Bulgarian University, Sofia

2007: Lecturer at **Towards better practices - research and development in the cultural sector**, Interspace, National Art Gallery, Sofia

Presentation at the seminar and research **Good practices in the activity of museums in Southern Bulgaria**, Plovdiv

2005: Lecture on Night of Museums and Galleries - Plovdiv, as part of the British Council, Bulgaria focus study **Mapping the Creative Industries of Plovdiv**

Awards / *art-management, contemporary art and culture* /

2014 : Part of the selection for Darik's "40 under 40" project

2012 : Ranked 35th in Kapital's "100 of the most influential women in Bulgaria"

2011: Grazia Magazine's Woman of the Year Award for Night of Museums and Galleries, Plovdiv

2010: Ventsislav Zankov Iron Cross Award for Contemporary Art, first edition, 2010

2006: Art-fact of the year award for Night of Museums and Galleries

2006: Honorable citizen of Plovdiv

2004: Art Positive, Contemporary art hall "Banya Starinna", Plovdiv, breakthrough artist award

Awards / *poetry* /

2007: Vesselin Hanchev Award for poetry, His Excellency Jeremy Hill's Award at the 35th edition of Southern Spring, for her OSHT book of poetry

Media:

Vesselina Sarijeva's work and many of her projects have been featured by international media such as New York Times International, TAZ, Die Welt, Art Review, ARTE, Deutsche Welle, Calvert Journal, Artnet News, Forbes Bulgaria. They also receive regular coverage by all Bulgarian national press and television media.

Partner network

Vesselina has worked with numerous local and international cultural and commercial institutions as well as ministries, municipalities and foreign embassies in Bulgaria.

In connection to her activities in contemporary art she has collaborated with museums in the USA and Europe, public collections and cultural organizations in Germany, England, Belgium, Austria, Turkey, etc.To

support its public activities, Open Arts Foundation has maintained an extensive network of partners over the years, most of whom have long-standing collaborations with the organization within its projects. [link](#)

Venues

Plovdiv – in institutions and in public space

Sofia – in institutions and in public space

Within initiatives in Vienna, Shanghai, Rome, Turin, Cologne, Berlin, Basel, Brussels, Los Angeles, Essen, Istanbul, Hamburg, Paris, Marseille, Romania, Rotterdam, Venice, etc.

Activities

curating; collecting contemporary art; developing collections; educating about art; developing artists' careers; urban development; placemaking; cultural management; creating, developing and strengthening cultural organisations; creating, developing and strengthening brands and events; fundraising; building strategic partnerships; networking; long and short-term strategies; cross-sector projects - art and business; lobbying and moderating dialogue; communication; working with audiences, etc.

Participation in Exhibitions:

2021: Future Unforgettable Phase VI – The Sky is a Color - **The Mad Carpetmaker = Лудият килимар** (project with Luchezar Boyadjiev), Sarieva, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2020:**Magia Naturalis**, Sariev, Plovdiv / [Link](#)

2007: **In Search of Lost Time**, The Sofia City Art Gallery, group show, curators Vera Mlechevska and Svetlana Kuyumdzhieva / [Link](#)

2007: „Eskimo Cosmetics“, group show, gallery Pistolet, Sofia

2004 r.: **Art Positive**, Contemporary art hall "Banya Starinna", Plovdiv

Poetry:

2006: **OSHT book of poetry**, Janet-45 Publishing, editor Georgi Gospodinov, 2006. [Link](#)

2005: **Poetic installation the poetic cycle "osht" reading room**, a literary series that took place at the Ancient Bath, Centre for Contemporary Art, Plovdiv, 2005 and the "Red House", Sofia.

Publications (Poetry) :

Literaturen vestnik (Literary Newspaper), Capital Light, Edno Magazine, Literaturen vestnik (Literary Newspaper), Stranitsa (Page), Democratcheski Pregled (Democratic Review), Capital Light, and the Lirika (Lyrics) annual anthologies of the National Palace of Culture.

Languages:

Bulgarian

Croatian

English

Serbian

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