

Artistic associations in Spain have been going through very hard times since the beginning of the economic crisis, to such an extent that some of the historical and most important ones, like the Catalonia association, disappeared, and a brand new one had to be created (PAAC). The one in Madrid has undergone a process of exhaustion that has taken to the executive director's withdrawal, and is currently being run by a group of artists trying to revitalize it. But there are other associations like that of Aragon that has totally disappeared. This situation has not been alien to the UAAV (Union of Visual Artists' Associations), which suffered a seizure of properties, its website was cancelled, lost its premises, technical assistance, agreement, came to conflict with different entities... all due to the decline and abandonment of its main responsible. When the last chairwoman resigned (2013), the UAAV was intended to disappear, but beginning of 2014 the new president Isidro López-Aparicio Pérez lead a new team and a new committed route and thanks to a great common effort and taking many risks, after some very hard years, the UNIÓN (UAAV) has been rescued and is now totally up to date with payments and has renewed its legal status. It has changed its name to UNIÓN AC (Union of Contemporary Artists of Spain) and has solved some fundamental problems such as the inclusion of the geographical denomination, including the word Spain in its name, which previously did not appear in it and it was vital to join the international association. It is also incorporating in its statutes not only those regional associations but also thematic ones, which allows contemporary artists working with different media such as action or sound art to join the UNIÓN AC, in a way that responds to the reality of contemporary art.

During this time, it has not only been possible to have its website active again (<https://unionac.es>), to repay the debts and to solve all legal problems, but the UNIÓN AC's managers have promoted the creation of new associations in regions where there had never been before, such as Extremadura, and to reestablish some lost ones, like the one in Galicia, the one of Madrid during many years was out of the national federation due to big problems of misunderstandings mainly with Cataluña but after the effort of resistance and mediation of our president it joint the new UNIÓN AC... us result for the first time the federation arrive to twelve association member. They have also participated in the creation of the first Sectorial Committee of Contemporary Art in Spain, and our Chairman López-Aparicio have been its first spokesman, its inclusion in the agenda of the Ministry of Culture, interlocutors with political parties at national level, etc.

Further steps have been taken towards the professionalization of the sector, and for this purpose, the publication of the research on the economic activity of artists in Spain, by Marta Pérez Ibáñez and Isidro López-Aparicio with the collaboration of the UNIÓN was fundamental. It is a primary source in which over 1000 artists have participated, and it allows us to highlight the precariousness in which artists live in Spain, becoming the main argument on which our claims are built. During the last three years we have been engaged in so many important matters for the profesionalizations of the visual artist work in Spain but one of the importants has been the elaboration of the statute of

the artist (we have already participated in a plenary session at the Congress of Deputies and elaborated collaboratively involving more than twenty associations a working document <https://unionac.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DOCUMENTO-DE-TRABAJO-ESTATUTO-DEL-ARTISTA-VISUAL-2017.pdf>), the definition of a new internal regulation of operations, the establishment of working committees, the claim for 20% of 1.5% of the investment in the promotion of public works infrastructures., etc.

After three times unanimously Lopez-Aparicio was elected president of the Union decided to resign on that responsibility asserting its commitment: that once the agonizing situation of UNION was fixed and with notable improvements it was time to make way for other people work and assume responsibilities. This has led to a transition process in which have been created a management board for a six-month period that have gave way to new elections in which Consuelo Vanilla president of the Association of Asturias and one of the most experience people in the artistic associative world in Spain was elected by the majority president of the UNIÓN AC, completing the management team with Francisco Cuellar, Concha Gay and Leandro Betancor vice presidents, Maria Dolores Nieto secretary, Lluís Fuster treasurer and Isidro López-Aparicio representative in the Sector Board and the IAA Europe.

Our resources are scarce but, at the same time, we do not want to lose the capacity of creating a sustainable and realistic structure that learns from the mistakes of past times, and allows maintaining a legitimate and solid interlocution at national and international levels in the defense of the professionalization of contemporary artists in Spain.

Isidro López-Aparicio Pérez.

President of the UNIÓN of Associations of Visual Artists UAAV (2014-17)

President of the UNIÓN of Contemporary Artists of Spain UNIÓN AC (2017-18)

Consuelo Vallina

President of the UNIÓN of Contemporary Artists of Spain UNIÓN AC (2018-until today)