Modern galerija is a national museum that works in the fields of modern and contemporary art. It was founded in 1947 as a museum of modern art. With Slovenia’s independence in 1991, Moderna galerija became the principal national institution of modern and contemporary art and an increasingly active link between the local and the international, in particular Central and Eastern European, contexts.

Since 2011, Moderna galerija has operated on two locations: in the original building of Moderna galerija (MG+) in the centre of Ljubljana and in the Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (+MSUM) located on the renovated premises of former military barracks. The concept of Moderna galerija as a museum of modern and contemporary art was initiated in the early 1990’s, at the time of a strong need to allow more space for the previously neglected contemporary art and form closer links with the international space as well as with the national history and the historical moment then marked by the war and the new political geography of Europe. In contrast to the past decades, Moderna galerija began to show the interest in the present moment, which involved a different, but no less responsible addressing of the past. This initiated the processes that acquired their first tangible form in the Instrument of Constitution of Moderna galerija (2004) that defines the difference between the museum of modern art and museum of contemporary art as follows.

As a museum of modern art it systematically explores, collects, and presents the art of Modernism and its traditions. It deals primarily with Slovenian 20th century art from the beginnings of Modernism around 1900, but also with contemporary artists who continue the tradition of Modernist trends.

As a museum of contemporary art it covers contemporary practices in the field of the visual arts. It presents new contents in and new ways of expressing, exhibiting and interpreting contemporary art. By regularly purchasing works by Slovene artists, it is building a permanent collection of the 21st century art and adding to the international Arteast Collection 2000+ by purchasing works by foreign artists.

Moderna galerija addresses both the museum of modern art and the museum of contemporary art from the aspect of multi-temporality derived from the critique of linear time and its universal validity. Different activities of both museums point out antagonisms rather than cover them by different virtual pluralities. Moderna galerija attempts to develop a different model of museum based on the criticism and redefinition of democratic institution. Its priorities include the construction of a local context and dialogues with different localities that follow especially similar priorities and interests in developing different institutionality and new models of cultural production.
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