Press Release

Friday, February 1, 2008, at 5 p.m. the Aarhus Art Building presents the opening of:

Irwin
STATE IN TIME

February 2 – April 6, 2008

For the first time ever the Slovenian art group Irwin will exhibit its works in Denmark. The group consists of the members Dušan Mandič, Miran Mohar, Andrej Savski, Roman Uranjek and Borut Vogelnik and is currently among Eastern Europe's most influential art groups. Irwin was founded in 1983 – the year before the five artists in the group co-founded the multimedia avant-garde commune Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK). With their controversial works, collective happenings, political interventions and use of classic avant-garde methods such as manifestos, montage and public provocations, these significant artists have played an important artistic and political role in the post socialist countries as well as in western art circles both before and after the collapse of the Berlin Wall and after the dissolution of Yugoslavia in 1991.

At the exhibition the group presents *NSK-State in Time.* This continuing communication project presents a utopian state without a concrete territory, but with several thousands of citizens plus formal national symbols such as a flag, stamps, emblems and a passport that everyone is free to obtain. One of the exhibited works, *Words from Africa*, is a collaborative work between Irwin and nskstate.com. In Aarhus *NSK-State in Time* will be documented in the form of video interviews, photographs, articles, artefacts and other kinds of visual material from the nearly 15 years of existence for this state. Recently, Esben Hansen a visual anthropologist and film maker collaborated with Irwin on the interviews with NSK citizens. Moreover a passport office will be opened where at selected times during the exhibition period it will be possible to become a citizen of the NSK-State.

Another important project, *East Art Map*, is an interactive installation and a comprehensive mapping of the forgotten history of eastern European avant-garde art from 1945 to the present day. And finally the group presents *Corpse of Art,* which is a reconstruction of the artist Kasimir Malevich exhibited in his coffin at the Artists' Union in Leningrad in 1935. The work, which also includes Malevich's painting of a black square and a vase with white lilies, calls to mind the symbols of the totalitarian regimes while at the same time it also acts as a re-enactment of a pre-existing work of art.

Curator Henrik Broch-Lips, director Thorsten Sadowsky, the Aarhus Art Building, and His Excellency Mr. Rudolf Gabrovec, Ambassador for the Republic of Slovenia in Denmark will give the speeches in connection with the opening. Two members of the art group Irwin will be present at the opening. At 6:30 p.m., following the opening of the exhibition, Alexei Monroe, Ph.D., will present the lecture *NSK: The State Which Ran Away With Itself*.

  In March 2008 the German publishing house Kehrer Verlag will publish a 160-page catalogue with contributions by Henrik Broch-Lips, Esben Hansen and Thorsten Sadowsky plus an interview with Irwin. The exhibition is sponsored by the Cultural Development Foundation, the Municipality of Aarhus, the Danish Arts Council's Committee for International Visual Art, Merchant L.F. Foght's Fund, The Slovenian Embassy and The Government Communication Office of the Republic of Slovenia.

For further information, press material or appointments for interviews please contact Anne Fogtmann Madsen at (+45) 86 20 60 55 or send a mail to af@aarhuskb.dk. Press photographs can be downloaded from our web site: www.aarhuskunstbygning.dk.

Sincerely,

Thorsten Sadowsky
Director, The Aarhus Art Building

The Aarhus Art Building is a contemporary art centre intending to function as a seismograph for current tendencies in the art world. With its 1000 square metres spacious and bright exhibition halls the Aarhus Art building is one of Denmark's largest and most beautiful venues for contemporary art.