

10 February 2017

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General Director of the National Gallery in Prague, Jiří Fajt, and the founder of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna (TBA21), Francesca von Habsburg, have signed a cooperation agreement on February 10th which will contribute to Prague's position as a world-class destination for contemporary art.

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Salm Palace, 2016,
Photo: Jiri Thyn, 2016

The National Gallery in Prague has invited Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21) to join it in a groundbreaking new collaboration. From June 2018, for a period of five years, a selection of the most representative pieces from the TBA21 collection will be on display in the Salm Palace as a long-term loan to the institution. The Salm Palace, adjacent to the historic Prague castle, is one of several locations of the National Gallery. In addition, several large installations and interventions will be installed and newly commissioned as part of a collaborative and curatorial engagement in the Grand Hall of the Trade Fair Palace.

“The collaboration with TBA21 will further enhance the transformation that we are working on to reinvigorate the National Gallery in Prague. Apart from the long-term exhibition of large selections of the TBA21 collection that visitors will be able to enjoy in Salm Palace, it also provides an opportunity for the joint commissioning of new works by the most important and emerging artists of our time,” said Jiří Fajt.

Daniel Herman, Minister of Culture, Czech Republic said: “I am very proud of this cooperation between the National Gallery and TBA21. In the times we live in, we should build bridges between countries and nations. Culture can unify and bring people together and I am sure this project will do so.”

Francesca von Habsburg said: “For TBA21, it is a formidable challenge to be asked to contribute some of our programming to the visionary reorganization of the museums in Prague. This represents to Daniela Zyman and myself undeniable recognition for 15 years of commitment and hard work towards developing a very personal style of collecting, commissioning and presenting art that defies traditional categorization. The Foundation has become more than just a collection, it is a pioneering institution which has managed never to lose its edge. The headquarters of TBA21 will remain in Vienna, from where it conducts a large-scale international program that spans from India to the USA, and from Iceland to Colombia.”

The TBA21 collections were founded by Francesca von Habsburg who continues the efforts of three generations of art collectors of the Thyssen family. Her father Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen founded the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, which is positioned among the most highly esteemed museums in the world. TBA21 Foundation, Vienna, built its reputation on pioneering and unconventional projects, and its collection includes works by Olafur Eliasson, Janet Cardiff, Ernesto Neto, Ai Weiwei and Ragnar Kjartansson.

Full details will be announced in a press conference in the Grand Hall in Trade Fair Palace in Prague at 11:00 am on March 16 in the presence of Jiří Fajt, General Director of the National Gallery in Prague, Adam Budak, Chief Curator of the National Gallery in Prague, Francesca von Habsburg, Founder and Chairwoman of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, and Daniela Zyman, Chief Curator of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary.

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