About The Current

TBA21-Academy’s The Current is concerned with the state of the ocean and the discourse around it and seeks to provide a platform for the cultivation of interdisciplinary thought, the exchange of ideas and new knowledge production. Organised in three-year cycles, the programme centres around annual expeditions at sea and land-based Convenings linked to the exploratory theme of each ocean encounter. Each cycle of The Current is led by one or more Expedition Leaders selected by the Academy, who in turn nominate Fellows—artists, curators, scientists, and other cultural actors—to join a collective research project unfolding over the three years. The Spanish curator Chus Martínez and Danish artist collective SUPERFLEX have been appointed by TBA21-Academy as Expedition Leaders of the second three-year cycle of The Current. Their projects will run in parallel from 2018 to 2020.

About TBA21–Academy

TBA21-Academy leads artists, scientists, and thought-leaders on expeditions of collaborative discovery. Founded by Francesca von Habsburg and led by Director Markus Reymann, the Academy is dedicated to fostering a deeper understanding of the ocean through the lens of art and to engendering creative solutions to its most pressing issues. TBA21-Academy commissions interdisciplinary research that catalyses engagement, stimulates new knowledge, and inspires artistic production. Established in 2011, the nonprofit’s programme is informed by a belief in the power of exchange between disciplines and in the ability of the arts as a vessel for communication, change, and action.

Participants of the Summer School #1 at the Chiesa di San Lorenzo from the 24 to the 27 September – are:

Nora Berman, Anastasia Chaguidouline, Anna Diehl, Michael Etzensperger, Martina Henzi, Christopher Hunter, Nikhil Jain, Danielle Küchler, Till Langsched, Kaspar Ludwig, Simone Steinegger, Jan van Oordt (Art Institute, FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Basel), Raffaela Naldi Rossano, Luca di Bernardo (The Fondazione Morra), Claudia Cisneros, Berenice Olmedo (Fundacion Alumnos 47).

The Summer School is mentored by Ingo Niermann, Mathilde Rosier and Georgia Sagri, with the special participation of Dayne Buddo and Joan Jonas.
The Waves of the Oh!s and the Ah!s

Friday 28 September
Day One – The Night of the Oh!s
19:00 MARKUS REYMAN & FRANCESCA VON HABSBURG, Welcome
FRANCESCA VON HABSBURG is the Founder and Executive Producer of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21). Driven by the belief in the power of art to serve as an agent of change, Francesca has become increasingly engaged in environmental issues, with a particular emphasis on the oceans.

MARKUS REYMAN is Director and Co-Founder of TBA21–Academy. As a central programming unit of TBA21, TBA21–Academy’s mission is to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and exchange surrounding the most urgent ecological, social and economic issues facing our oceans today.


CHUS MARTÍNEZ is a writer and curator head of the Institut Kunst in Basel. She is currently also an Expedition Leader of the second cycle of TBA21–Academy fellowship The Current.

20:00 MARAH HARDT, Sex and the Sea or How We Are Not Able to Mate With the Sea, a Pity

MARAH HARDT is a scientist and storyteller, who works at the crossroads of research, creative communication, and strategy to build a sustainable future for people and the sea. Her last book is Sex and the Sea (2017).

21:30 GEORGIA SAGRI, The Creation of the Wave: Part I, Performance (approx. 30 minutes)

GEORGIA SAGRI is an artist who has been focusing on performances and installation work dealing with empathy, mimicry and the potentiality of transformation, both in the social and the biological sense.

Saturday 29 September
Day Two – The Day of the Ah!
11:00 CHUS MARTÍNEZ, The Ways to Awe: Part II, A manifesto

11:30 MATHILDE ROSIER, Sensing the Seas

MATHILDE ROSIER is an artist whose work deals with empathy systems, ways of merging through the body and movement experience with nature, with the ocean.

In the hope of fear, power abuse and its relation to the elements rather than only to the humans, and drawing on the thinking of many poets, writers, and philosophers about the importance of the complaint to raise awareness, the first day of our convening will be structured as a lament: a collective performance where activists and artists give body, form, and voice to what we lament. Lamenting the Ocean, but also current forms of inequality, considering how gender and racial inequality are in complete entanglement here.

On the second day, the lamenting voice will raise an Awe. Admiration, reverence, a series of acts, performances, and lectures on the issues we admire, on all in life that bring us to this strange space of generosity, since to admire means to go out of oneself.

Chus Martínez