

## **TBA21–Academy unveils upcoming initiatives including expeditions, symposia, performances, and commissions dedicated to knowledge creation, ocean conservation, and advocacy**

**With a cross-disciplinary program that aims to instigate change by investigations through the lens of art, TBA21–Academy’s fall season includes:**

- An interdisciplinary symposium and collaborative drafting of **The Henningsvaer Charter** to safeguard the oceans—with participants including artists **Susanne Winterling** and **Lisa Rave**, oceanographer **Jeremy Jackson**, and marine technologist **Ingrid Schjøberg**—culminating Norway’s contemporary art biennial, the **Lofoten International Arts Festival**
- The launch of the second cycle of **The Current**, TBA21–Academy’s fellowship program that brings thought-leaders on interdisciplinary voyages throughout the Pacific, and the appointment of its next Expedition Leaders, curator **Chus Martínez** and artist collective **SUPERFLEX**
- **Purple**, the new immersive six-channel video installation by **John Akomfrah** exploring climate change in the age of Anthropocene, co-commissioned with the **Barbican** and opening during Frieze Week in London
- An interactive program of ocean-related talks, installations, and performances, including artist **Trevor Paglen**, marine biologist **Tamatoa Bambridge**, oceanographer **Matthias Haeckel**, and research professor in the law of the sea **Davor Vidas** at the **Hamburger Bahnhof – Museum für Gegenwart** in Berlin
- A Convening marking the culminating **Ute Meta Bauer**’s tenure as an Expedition Leader of **The Current**, including public performances, discussions, screenings, and keynote lectures by **Taholo Kami**, **Kristy Kang**, **Armin Linke**, **Guigone Camus**, and **Lisa Rave** held during **Singapore Art Week**
- The ongoing presentation of **Tidialectics**, the first exhibition organized by TBA21–Academy encompassing key works and commissions resulting from the foundation’s maiden voyage in the Pacific, at **TBA21–Augarten** in Vienna

**London, United Kingdom—September 27, 2017—**TBA21–Academy announced today a line-up of cross-disciplinary programs—including expeditions, symposia, commissions, and performances—to foster new oceanic research, discoveries, and public engagement. Convening cultural producers with researchers, scientists and policy-makers, the upcoming season also includes the launch of the next phase of TBA21–Academy’s signature fellowship program, **The Current**, which leads thought-leaders from diverse disciplines on expeditions throughout the Pacific, with the aim of uncovering innovative solutions to the most pressing issues facing the oceans today.

Founded in 2011 by Francesca von Habsburg and building on her work with Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21), TBA21–Academy expands the nonprofit foundation’s practice of producing socially engaged commissions, exhibitions, and publications, to advance a deeper understanding and awareness of the ocean through the lens of art. Harnessing the power of the arts to catalyze action and

change, TBA21–Academy’s innovative program promotes transdisciplinary practice, collaborative knowledge production, and policy-making in support of our ocean.

“Since our inception in 2011, TBA21–Academy has fostered critical interdisciplinary discussion on a global level about the fate and the current state of our ocean,” said Markus Reymann, Director of TBA21–Academy. “Our program has drawn an overwhelming response from a wide-ranging network of experts and artists who have contributed generously, sharing their individual skill sets, time, and experience, because they believe in the benefit of taking a holistic approach to exploring the effects of climate change and in contributing to a collective and inclusive process of solution-finding.”

“With the formation of TBA21–Academy, we merged the mandate of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary foundation—which, for over a decade, has commissioned new artworks and projects that explore issues of social and environmental justice, cultural identity, and human rights—with a value system of concerned citizens about the plight of our oceans,” said Francesca von Habsburg, TBA21 Founder and Executive Producer. “TBA21–Academy’s programs seek to explore critical environmental issues through the lens of art, inciting a movement of creative thinkers and doers that are ready to face opposition and uncover new solutions with integrity and collaborative spirit.”

Details on TBA21–Academy’s upcoming season follow below.

### ***Tidalectics***

Ongoing through November 19, 2017

TBA21–Augarten, Vienna, Austria

The first exhibition organized by TBA21–Academy, *Tidalectics* offers a thought-provoking exploration into the cultural, political, and biological dimensions of the oceans, including the effects of climate change and sea-level rise, through the work of 13 artists, nine newly commissioned pieces, and artworks carefully selected from the TBA21 collection. Featuring a variety of media—including sound, installation, video, sculpture, and olfactory portraits—the exhibition marks the culmination of a 2011 expedition in the Pacific Ocean that ultimately helped form the foundations of the Academy. Artists include **Darren Almond**, **Eduardo Navarro**, and **Tue Greenfort**, among others.

### **The Henningsvaer Charter**

September 28 – September 29, 2017

Lofoten International Arts Festival, Norway

Located for the first time in the historic fishing village of Henningsvaer on Norway’s Lofoten archipelago islands, the 2017 Lofoten International Arts Festival (LIAF) culminates with the interdisciplinary symposium The Henningsvaer Charter. Building upon the festival’s theme that tasked artists to imagine life 150 years from now, the Henningsvaer Charter is an interdisciplinary gathering of artists, scientists, policy-makers, legal experts, and other researchers to support the future safeguarding to the oceans. Conceived as an event that takes place 50 years in the future, the meeting aims to initiate the drafting of a charter that outlines the fundamental values, responsibilities, and collaborations to have emerged out of ocean exploration and exploitation between now and then. The gathering will primarily focus on the on three economies of the ocean—food, transport, and the extraction of raw materials—and discuss their impact on ethics, aesthetics, and the environment. Both timely and topical, the event coincides with increased debate about opening the surrounding area to oil drilling, in the wake of recent parliamentary elections.

The charter convenes leading artists, including **Susanne Winterling**, **Lisa Rave**, and **Jana Winderen**, as well as key scientists from the international community, including **Jeremy Jackson**, Professor of Oceanography Emeritus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography & Senior Scientist Emeritus, Smithsonian Institution; **Astrida Neimanis**, Lecturer in Gender and Cultural Studies, University of Sydney, Australia; and **Geir Johnsen**, Professor, Centre of Autonomous Marine Operations and Systems, NTNU, Norway. The event has been co-organized by TBA21–Academy, LIAF, and NTNU Trondheim University.

### ***Purple by John Akomfrah***

October 6, 2017 – January 7, 2018

Barbican Centre, London, England

Thought-provoking and powerful, *Purple* marks the most ambitious project to date by award-winning British artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah, the 2017 winner of UK's leading contemporary art prize, the Artes Mundi. The immersive six-channel video installation explores climate change, shifting weather patterns, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events through hundreds of hours of archival footage interspersed with newly shot film and set to a hypnotic soundscape. The exhibition is commissioned by the Barbican, London, and co-commissioned by Bildmuseet Umeå, Sweden; TBA21–Academy; The Institute of Contemporary Art/ Boston; and Museu Coleção Berardo, Lisbon.

### ***Fishing for Islands***

A weekend of oceanic performances, installations and panels

October 27 – October 29, 2017

Hamburger Bahnhof - Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin, Germany

Featuring a series of events with leading thinkers in the maritime field and performances by renowned artists, *Fishing for Islands* aims to develop and instigate new innovative opportunities for ocean conservation. Drawing on past successes and discoveries achieved through TBA21–Academy initiatives, the content and the structure of the program is designed to be both temporary and ephemeral, mirroring the changing and transient nature of the tides and incorporating themes found within oceanic mythology. Questions of legality and biodiversity will be discussed, as well as the consequences of pollution on ecological balance and traditional methods of protecting the oceans.

Participants will engage with issues from a global perspective in a program curated by TBA21–Academy Director **Markus Reymann** and TBA21–Academy Curator **Stefanie Hessler**, with talks from key figures such as artist **Trevor Paglen**; **Davor Vidas**, Director of the Law of the Sea Program at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute in Oslo; **Tamatoa Bambridge**, Research Director, National Center for Scientific Research, France; and **Matthias Haeckel**, Senior Scientist, GEOMAR Helmholtz Institute of Ocean Research, Kiel, Germany. A selection of artworks will be on display partly from the TBA21 Collection, including a multi-channel video by **Armin Linke**, a giant floating sculpture by **Tue Greenfort**, and ocean smellscape by **Sissel Tolaas**. The program will be launched on Friday evening with a mime ballet conceived with artist **Eduardo Navarro** around images of the sea edited by **Tiphany Mall** from the TBA21–Academy visual archive, convened by **Chus Martínez**, Expedition Leader for the forthcoming 2018–20 cycle of *The Current*. This night marks the bond between TBA21–Academy and the Art Institute in Basel in their love for nature and the ocean. The program is presented by TBA21–Academy in association with the **Nationalgalerie –Staatliche Museen zu Berlin**.

### **The Convening: Ute Meta Bauer**

January 27 – January 30, 2018

Singapore

Marking the culmination of Professor Ute Meta Bauer's final expedition as *The Current* Expedition Leader, the Convening in Singapore will foster dialogue and enact positive change by bringing together her fellow expedition participants, members of the indigenous communities, and key artistic and scientific influencers. Following expeditions to Papua New Guinea (October 2015) and to French Polynesia (July 2016), Bauer travelled to Fiji and the Lau Islands in July 2017 for her third and final voyage, exploring how indigenous Pacific communities are protecting the ocean through the integration of traditional customs with contemporary practices. The Convening offers the opportunity to transform this research into action, creating a dynamic platform that invites creative and active participation and exploration on how this approach can be integrated and applied to international law, policy-making, and education. Keynote lectures and presentations by artists **Armin Linke** and **Lisa Rave**; **Taholo Kami**, Special Adviser for Pacific Partnerships and International Civil Society for the UN; **Frances Cresantia Koya Vaka'uta**, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji; and **Tamatoa Bambridge**, Research Director, National Center for Scientific Research, France; among others.

In conjunction with this event, NTU Center for Contemporary Art Singapore (NTU CCA) will present the exhibition *The Oceanic* (December 9, 2017 – March 4, 2018), the first in a series of shows dedicated to investigating the cultural history of the Pacific and its Archipelagos, as well as the impact of recent geopolitical, cultural, and ecological activities on the surrounding area. The project features research and artworks that developed out of the first cycle of TBA21–Academy Current expeditions. Contributing artists include **Laura Anderson Barbata**, **Nabil Ahmed**, **Per Magnus Lindborg**, and **Newell Harry**; their works, which were created with input from local residents, researchers, and a diverse range of experts, will explore the environmental, cultural, and social transformations that have taken place on the island groups.

## **The Current II**

Spring 2018

The Pacific Ocean

The TBA21–Academy fellowship program is a pioneering initiative that cultivates transdisciplinary practice and the exchange of ideas, bringing thought-leaders from diverse fields on expeditions throughout the Pacific. Taking inspiration from the ocean tides, the program is called The Current, organized in three-year cycles, and led by curators (Expedition Leaders) selected by TBA21–Academy. Expedition Leaders guide one expedition annually and propose fellow participants to join on the journeys aboard the *Dardanella*. Leaders and participants subsequently contribute to a Convening, held approximately six months after each expedition, that engage local communities and the public with experiences and lessons learned from their fieldwork in the Pacific. The next leaders of The Current are:

- **Chus Martínez**, curator, art historian, writer, and Director of the Art Institute at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Basel, where she also runs the Institute's exhibition space Der Tan. Martínez's first expedition with TBA21–Academy will start in New Zealand in March 2018.
- **SUPERFLEX**, the artists' group founded by Jakob Fenger, Rasmus Nielsen, and Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, whose works invite public participation and communication in exploring alternative models of social and economic organization. Their first expedition with TBA21–Academy will take place in 2018. In addition to being the next leaders of The Current, SUPERFLEX is working with TBA21–Academy on a long-term commission. Their newest installation will open in October in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern.

## **ABOUT TBA21–ACADEMY**

Founded by Francesca von Habsburg and drawing on her experience as a producer of cross-disciplinary art installations and socially engaged cultural programming, TBA21–Academy leads artists, scientists, and thought-leaders on expeditions of collaborative discovery. Its mission is to foster a deeper understanding of our ocean through the lens of art and to engender creative solutions to its most pressing issues. Led by Director Markus Reymann and supported by curator Stefanie Hessler, the itinerant Academy commissions interdisciplinary research that catalyzes engagement, stimulates new knowledge, and inspires artistic production. Established in 2011, the nonprofit's program 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.

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