



NEWS RELEASE

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Collecting Europe opens at the V&A

1 - 7 February 2017

A collaboration between the Goethe-Institut London and the V&A in partnership with the British Council

vam.ac.uk/collectingeurope | #CollectingEurope

As the debate about the future of Europe continues, on Wednesday 1 February 2017, 12 new contemporary art installations imagining what Europe might look like 2,000 years from now, and how our present might be viewed from the future, open at the V&A. The installations are commissioned by the Goethe-Institut London and the V&A and go on display as part of the free week-long festival, Collecting Europe. The festival also includes a range of talks, discussions, live performances and workshops to encourage debate around what Europe and European identity means to people today, following the result of the UK referendum on EU membership in June 2016.

Created in a range of media from digital and interactive installations to film, sugar sculpture, tapestry, live performance, musical interventions and pocket-sized publications, the artworks transform spaces across the Museum, including the Europe 1600-1815 Galleries, the British Galleries, the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Sculpture Galleries, and the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries. The artists commissioned offer a range of viewpoints from within and outside Europe and include Raqs Media Collective from India, the Berlin-based Italian film-artist Rosa Barba, Dutch digital and performance artist Constant Dullaart and one of Taiwan's leading artists, Tu Wei-Cheng.

The 12 selected artists and designers are:

- Rosa Barba, *Let Me See It*, Italy (based in Germany)
- Thibaut de Ruyter, *A Song for Europe*, France (based in Germany)
- Constant Dullaart, *The European Classes*, The Netherlands
- Fru*Fru, *Eurasic Bath*, Spain

- IC-98 in collaboration with Kustaa Saksi, *A World in Waiting*, Finland
- IF in collaboration with oo, *Europa*, UK
- Jasleen Kaur, *Yoorop*, Scotland (based in London)
- Onkar Kular and Common Initiative, *4017 Enacted*, UK
- Tasha Marks - AVM Curiosities, *Alabaster Ruins*, UK
- Raqs Media Collective, *The Return of Tipu's Tiger*, India
- Remco Torenbosch, *EU, 2017*, The Netherlands
- Tu Wei-Cheng, *Enfolded World: Mysteries of Lost Civilisations*, Taiwan

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: *“Our city is entrepreneurial, it is international and the key ingredient of our success is the flow of ideas and talent from all over the world. This fascinating festival takes place at a time when I believe it is more important than ever to show that our city is united, open for business and open to the world.”*

Angela Kaya, Director of the Goethe-Institut London, said: *“For some people, Brexit is an expression and strengthening of British identity; for others it means alienation from their own or adopted country. Beyond Brexit, migration and nationalisation tendencies make this a critical moment for us to ask: What defines Europe and European identity today? What does Europe mean as an idea? Through Collecting Europe, we want to take visitors on a journey 2,000 years into the future to look back on the world we inhabit. It is only with this historical distance that we can get a clearer sense of what Europe means today.”*

Tim Reeve, Acting Director of the V&A, said: *“As major global events continue to unfold, citizens are inevitably questioning what Europe stands for and how they see their place within it, the arts have a unique and important role to play in encouraging debate around the big questions of the day. Collecting Europe is a responsive and thought-provoking project, tackling these issues through the lens of art and design. Visitors encounter exciting and provocative installations that interact with our world-renowned collections and historic spaces, created by artists living both inside and outside Europe. They also have the chance to share their own opinions and ideas about the world we live in, through a series of workshops, forums and open discussion.”*

Collecting Europe includes a digital element, with a new micro-site developed in partnership with the British Council. The site, created with the design agency The Beautiful Meme, asks questions and invites people across the globe to join the dialogue in a playful and interactive way, contributing opinions to change and shape a digital Europe.

Rebecca Walton, Regional Director for Europe at the British Council, said: *“We are very excited to be bringing Collecting Europe within the reach of audiences who would not otherwise enjoy it. Across the world people will be able to join the debates about Europe, and about identity, which*

this festival will trigger. We hope the conversation will roll on, gathering wisdom and new ideas as it goes.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

About the Goethe-Institut

The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach. It promotes knowledge of the German language abroad, fosters international cultural cooperation and conveys a comprehensive image of Germany with 159 locations in 98 countries.

goethe.de/uk | @gi_london1

About the V&A

The V&A is the world's leading museum of art and design with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. It was established to make works of art available to all and to inspire British designers and manufacturers. Today, the V&A's collections, which span over 5000 years of human creativity in virtually every medium and from many parts of the world, continue to intrigue, inspire and inform.

vam.ac.uk | @V_and_A

About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Using the UK's cultural resources we make a positive contribution to the countries we work – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society.

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