

Press Release – Announcing the 2020 Verbier Art Summit speakers 18 October 2019

From 31 January to 1 February 2020, the Verbier Art Summit will present its fourth edition in partnership with Jessica Morgan, Nathalie de Gunzburg Director of the Dia Art Foundation in New York. The Summit is pleased to announce leading speakers based on their multi-disciplinary perspectives on the urgent theme:

RESOURCE HUNGRY *OUR CULTURED LANDSCAPE AND ITS ECOLOGICAL IMPACT*

The 2020 Verbier Art Summit will ask how to envision a way forward in finding harmony between art, ecology and resources. Jessica Morgan comments on the theme, *“How does culture move forward at a time of crisis such as now? It is essential to have artists, designers, architects, engineers and other thinkers be a part of this conversation.”*

The speakers will gather for an extended dialogue in Verbier, Switzerland, to consider questions raised around resources, land and culture. The framework of the Summit allows for the exploration of a variety of subjects, ranging from the history of land art and work made in and about the land- and urban-scape; the resources consumed by art and institutions; engineering and other man made forms in the environment; real and imagined landscapes and the future of art in the context of an ecological crisis.

When asked how she selected speakers for the 2020 Verbier Art Summit, Jessica Morgan said, *“I began thinking about people I have worked closely with, whose work has questioned key concerns we hope to address, and then thought of people who I would be interested and honoured to spend some time with, who again had produced work (writing, art, thinking, research) on relevant topics of this Summit.”*

Among the confirmed speakers are artists Jennifer Allora, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Joan Jonas, Lucy Raven and Dineo Seshee Bopape; architect Adrian Lahoud; curator Elvira Dyangani Ose; and El Ultimo Grito (Professors in Design Roberto Feo & Rosario Hurtado).

The 2020 Summit opens with the artist **Joan Jonas (US)**, a pioneer in video and performance art. Her dynamic practice recently focused on the present danger of climate change and extinction, including the works *They Come to Us Without a Word* and *Moving Off the Land* that combine drawings, sculptural elements, poetry, prose and texts with moving images of oceans.

An investigation into the nature and representation of systems and how these construct our ideas of reality is provided by El Ultimo Grito, the designer and academic duo **Rosario Hurtado (ES)** of HEAD, Geneva University of Art and Design & **Roberto Feo (UK)** Professor of Design Practice at Goldsmiths University, London. The talks continue with the artist **Dineo Seshee Bopape (ZA)**, a multimedia conceptual and visual artist exploring memory, narration, and representation by using earthly materials, archival imagery and symbols of femininity.



Joan Jonas, *Moving Off the Land*, 2016/2018. Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, San Francisco, 2019.

Photo: FMCAC/Justin Oliphant.

Our cultured landscape is explored by **Adrian Lahoud (AU)**, architect, curator, writer and educator who examines urban spatial forms and large-scale environmental change. He is the Dean of Architecture at the Royal College of Art in London, and curator of the first edition of the Sharjah Architecture Triennial (2019): *Rights of Future Generations*. A further interrogation into contemporary urban life is made by **Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster (FR)**, a cross-disciplinary artist who creates and reinvents 'environments' to study our relationship with urban utopia and architecture.

Adaptation of our resource hungry society is needed. Inspiration is found in the work of artists such as **Lucy Raven (US)**, a multidisciplinary artist examining the influence of the digital, technology and global infrastructures. The work of interdisciplinary artists **Jennifer Allora (US) and Guillermo Calzadilla (CU)** also provides food for thought. Based in San Juan, Puerto Rico, they collaborate on producing work which combines rich historical backgrounds with contemporary political opinions on landscape and populations. Further insight is shared by **Elvira Dyangani Ose (ES)**, writer, international curator and Director of the Showroom London focusing on new environmental forms produced in public spaces and socially engaged practices.

About the event

The 2020 Verbier Art Summit speakers will explore the ecological theme over a long weekend of dialogue in Verbier, Switzerland. Each speaker will present their innovative thinking through the talks programme on the afternoons of Friday 31 January and Saturday 1 February.

Anneliek Sijbrandij, the Founder of the Verbier Art Summit comments, *"The talks are free to attend either in person in Verbier, or online via our social media. Everyone with an interest in art, innovation and sustainability is very welcome to join us."*

A themed cultural events programme before and after the talks is organised in collaboration with cultural and institutional partners, and include film screenings, workshops, musical performances, interactive experiences, and guided tours. The programme will be announced very soon and seating can be reserved online in advance.

About the non-profit

The Verbier Art Summit is an international platform for discourse in a non-transactional context. In partnership with a yearly rotating international museum director, the non-profit Summit connects thought leaders to key figures in the art world to generate innovative ideas and drive social change. To expand the conversation into a global dialogue, the speakers contribute to the Summit publication series, available online and in art bookshops worldwide.

The Summit is held in a unique location at an altitude of 1500m and with views across the Swiss Alps. The talks programme can be attended on-site in Verbier and online via live-broadcasting. Follow us on social media for updates on the 2020 programme:

Instagram @verbierartsummit | Twitter @verbierartnow | verbierartsummit.org

"There are small and large gestures we can all make. This is a moment to reflect on doing less, better and for longer."

Jessica Morgan

About Jessica Morgan

Jessica Morgan joined Dia Art Foundation as Director in January 2015 and was named Nathalie de Gunzburg Director in October 2017. At Dia, Morgan is responsible for strengthening and activating all parts of Dia's multivalent programme, including its pioneering Land art projects, site-specific commissions, and collections and programming across its constellation of sites. Since Morgan's arrival at Dia, the foundation has grown and diversified its collection to include significant works by Mary Corse, Nancy Holt, Robert Morris, Dorothea Rockburne, Kishio Suga, Anne Truitt, and Lee Ufan among others.

Alongside an expanded exhibition programme, Morgan has continued Dia's commitment to site-specific commissions, facilitating major new work by artists including Isabel Lewis, Rita McBride and Joëlle Tuerlinckx, and in 2015 realising the first Dia commission outside the continental United States since 1982 with Allora & Calzadilla's *Puerto Rican Light (Cueva Vientos)*, situated in Puerto Rico. In 2018, Morgan announced a comprehensive, multi-year campaign, that includes the upgrade, revitalisation, and ongoing stewardship of Dia's key programmatic spaces and artist sites.

About Anneliek Sijbrandij

Anneliek Sijbrandij is the Founder of the Verbier Art Summit. Before changing careers to art, she worked as a tax lawyer for professional services firm Deloitte in Amsterdam and London for over 10 years. In 2012, she followed her passion for art and studied Modern & Contemporary Art and Art World Practice in London. Whilst living in Verbier, she began creating a not for profit event, where thought leaders would be connected to key figures in the art world, generating new visions and initiatives with each edition. One of these leading figures in the art world is Beatrix Ruf, who strongly believed in the concept. From there, exciting exchanges and long conversations initiated. In the summer of 2014 Sijbrandij founded the Verbier Art Summit, and ideas continued to develop among the Founding Members in the winters of 2015 and 2016.

By January 2017, the first Summit took place: *Size Matters! (De)Growth of the 21st Century Art Museum*, curated by Beatrix Ruf and her curatorial team at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. Then the Summit has partnered with Daniel Birnbaum, director of Moderna Museet Stockholm, *More than Real. Art in the Digital Age* and with Jochen Volz, museum director of Pinacoteca de São Paulo, *We are Many. Art, the Political and Multiple Truths*. Under the themes chosen by these directors, the Verbier Art Summit attracted thought leaders such as architect Rem Koolhaas; curators Michelle Kuo, Karen Archey and Gabi Ngcobo; writers/researchers Federico Campagna, Cissie Fu and Boaventura de Sousa Santos; artists Tino Seghal, Ernesto Neto, Grada Kilomba, Olafur Eliasson, Anicka Yi, Ed Atkins, Tania Bruguera and Rirkrit Tiravanija.

Anneliek Sijbrandij is the Managing Director of the Summit team, ensuring the international platform remains completely not for profit and continues to act as a catalyst for innovation and change.

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