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PRESS RELEASE

Open, Diverse, Cosmopolitan: Herzog & de Meuron Present the Revised Plans for the Nationalgalerie's Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts at Berlin's Kulturforum

– Check against original text in German –

A building that will develop a great deal of charisma and live up to the complex goals of a museum is being erected on the Kulturforum: the Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts. The architecture created in the coming years will increasingly unfold in its surroundings and facilitate interconnection more intensely. This is evident in the completed preliminary plans presented by the Herzog & de Meuron's architecture firm. Three distinctive features from the competition design continue to be central to the revised design: the building's form, the intersecting interior boulevards, and the open brick façade that allows light into the building. The building is now even more open to the outside. New entrances and opportunities to look inside have been added to reinforce the museum's connection to the surrounding urban area. This interweaving of inner and outer space will make it the central connecting point on the Kulturforum.

Minister of State for Culture Monika Grütters said: "The revised design for the Neue Nationalgalerie – Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts on Potsdamer Platz gives the new museum building a new quality. The new design makes a courageous, decisive architectural statement; it has a clear structure, a well-thought-out materiality, exciting perspectives, and a unique interior with intersecting boulevards. The building will have major urban planning impact and hold its own among the solo buildings around it. Above all, its function will have an effect, since the works of art will be getting an exclusive showplace that exhibits twentieth-century art treasures in a new and impressive way. In this outstanding building, the impressive collections will finally find their proper place. This museum experience will also gain international attention."

"The many reactions to the competition design in the media, from the experts, and the public show how important this venture is. They motivated us while we were developing the project further," said Jacques Herzog with emphasis. "Our urban concept for the Kulturforum is one of closeness, not emptiness. It organizes an interplay of buildings that have been brought into precise relationship with each other. It also initiates the interplay of the cultural institutions that are established here."

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The architects have been developing the design together with the Nationalgalerie (National Gallery) for months. The work includes planning the layouts of the four floors. Three of the floors will be open to the public. They will provide space for various exhibitions, art education, work with groups, visitor services, a multifunctional media room, and restaurant services. The non-public areas of the museum will house storage, restoration, offices, and technical facilities.

President Hermann Parzinger of the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, SPK) spoke of the good working relationship between the architects, SPK, and neighboring institutions: “The architects developed the original plans much further. The new quality of both the exterior design and the interior make the building a real hub between the Philharmonie, Staatliche Institut für Musikforschung, St. Matthäus-Kirche, and Neue Nationalgalerie on the one side, and Staatsbibliothek, Ibero-Amerikanische Institut, and the Gemäldegalerie on the other. That has always been important to us. An outstanding building is being built for SPK and its museums. It will show the Nationalgalerie’s unique collection of twentieth-century art, which grew together from collections in East and West Berlin, along with the Erich Marx collection and the Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch collection. It will also include works from the Kunstbibliothek and the Kupferstichkabinett. Today has brought us an important step closer to our goal: creating a new and outstanding place for twentieth-century art.”

Udo Kittelmann, director of the Nationalgalerie of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, paid tribute to the planning phase: “In recent months, the Nationalgalerie and the architects have had a very fruitful, creative dialog. Our common goals are to create both a building to house art and a social place where artistic and social viewpoints can be negotiated. This is already reflected in the revisions to the architectural design, which create ideal spaces for a variety of uses from traditional art galleries to places to be quiet, places to meet, and multi-media rooms.”

The design planning phase will be finished in summer 2019 and then the planning permit will be obtained. The groundbreaking ceremony is planned for late 2019.

The current plans will be shown in a small exhibit in the Kulturforum foyer starting in November 2018.