



Berlin, 10 September 2021

PRESS RELEASE

Klaus Biesenbach is appointed as Director of Neue Nationalgalerie and the Museum of the 20th Century

– Check against original text in German –

Decision of SPK's Foundation Board: Klaus Biesenbach is appointed as Director of the Neue Nationalgalerie and thus also the future Museum of the 20th Century of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – The Artistic Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles and long-time chief curator at MoMA will take over the post in 2022 – Parzinger: An absolute stroke of luck for the National Gallery, for Berlin, for the art

Today, the Foundation Board of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, chaired by Monika Grütters, Minister of State for Culture and the Media, decided that Klaus Biesenbach shall lead the Neue Nationalgalerie of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (National Museums in Berlin) as its next director. The current Artistic Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (MOCA) is thus returning to the city where he began his career in the art world exactly thirty years ago at the age of 25. Back then, Biesenbach and a group of like-minded people turned an abandoned margarine factory on Auguststraße into Kunst-Werke and established the institution internationally.

In 1996, he was instrumental in launching the first, legendary Berlin Biennale. He was one of the pioneers in the era of reinvention of Berlin as a city of art after the fall of the Wall. In 2004, he was appointed curator at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where he rose to the position of chief curator just two years later, establishing a new department for media and performance and organizing groundbreaking exhibitions with, for example, Marina Abramović, Kraftwerk, and Pipilotti Rist.

In parallel, from 2009 to 2018, he was director of the contemporary experimental department MoMA PS 1, which has its roots in the international conceptual, minimal, and installation art of the 1960s and 1970s, but is also sharing the most thought-provoking modern and contemporary art.

Before moving to Los Angeles in 2018, Biesenbach was involved with other curators in planning the conceptualizing of the rehang of MoMA's modern and contemporary collection in the now expanded museum building in New York. His move to MOCA marked the founding of the first environmental Museum Council in the United States. He also introduced free admission to the museum, founded the performance space Wonmi's

DER PRÄSIDENT
MEDIEN, KOMMUNIKATION
UND VERANSTALTUNGEN

INGOLF KERN
DR. STEFANIE HEINLEIN (Stv.)

Von-der-Heydt-Straße 16–18
10785 Berlin

Telefon: +49 30 266-41 14 40
Telefax: +49 30 266-41 28 21

pressestelle@hv.spk-berlin.de
www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de



Berlin, 10 September 2021

DER PRÄSIDENT
MEDIEN, KOMMUNIKATION
UND VERANSTALTUNGEN

Warehouse, and made digitization of the museum a priority. Biesenbach brought the museum through the Corona Crisis without a financial deficit, and significantly diversified and expanded the collection with over one hundred new acquisitions of paintings, sculptures, and photographs by international artists.

With his return to Berlin, Klaus Biesenbach will further develop the Neue Nationalgalerie and the Museum of the 20th Century, which is currently under construction. He sees this not only as a challenge to rethink the nature and role of a museum in the 21st century, but also to reach a wide audience. Creating access, making connections, breaking down barriers, and at the same time listening to the public, opening up, is what drives him. He will take up his new post on January 1st, 2022.

Minister of State Monika Grütters: "Thanks to his many years of experience in working with globally important art museums, Klaus Biesenbach brings impressive international expertise to his new role. He knows Germany and the world and is correspondingly well networked. He is a first-class choice to set the course for the future of the newly reopened Neue Nationalgalerie and the new Museum der Moderne as its new director. With his openness to the new and unexpected, Klaus Biesenbach will be a great asset to the Berlin museum landscape."

"Having Klaus Biesenbach as designated director is a stroke of luck for the Neue Nationalgalerie, for Berlin, for art. And not only because he has his artistic roots here in this city. Wherever he was working, he has always paved the way for the new, has taken unusual paths, and has perceived the museum as a place for all and not just for the privileged. The museum, as he understands it, must open up, fulfil a social function, and may also be associated with the popular at times. It is also important to him that a museum intervenes in social discourse, setting its own accents and seeking formats for this. The collection of the Nationalgalerie will be presented by him in his very own way. I am deeply convinced that Klaus Biesenbach will lead the Neue Nationalgalerie into a successful future and get the Museum of the 20th Century, which is currently under construction, off to a good start. This appointment is also important for the whole Kulturforum, because Biesenbach is also a networker, he thinks in global interpretations and finds new focal points," said SPK President Hermann Parzinger. At the same time, the president addressed words of thanks to the previous director of the Neue Nationalgalerie, Joachim Jäger.



Berlin, 10 September 2021

DER PRÄSIDENT
MEDIEN, KOMMUNIKATION
UND VERANSTALTUNGEN

"Berlin is building a museum of the 20th century, connected to one of the most beautiful art spaces internationally, the Neue Nationalgalerie by Mies van der Rohe. This is a historic opportunity, challenge and responsibility to illuminate the unique Berlin collections of the 20th century with a contemporary, experimental view and to make them accessible to a broad public. At the same time, the enormous potential of the collections of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation offers an ideal basis for working in an even more open and interdisciplinary way. Art is also finding new forms in film, architecture, music and literature. It is a great honor for me personally to be involved and to be of service in this task. I look forward to working with the excellent team at the Nationalgalerie and to the many dialogues with artists and the Berlin public to engage in this project together," said Klaus Biesenbach.

Press Images: <https://www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/newsroom/presse/pressebilder.html>