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PRESS RELEASE

The Future of the Berlin Kulturforum Is Now: SPK Announces Ideas Competition for Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts

– Check against original text in German –

New museum complex will hold major Nationalgalerie collections – Ideas Competition to deliver architectural concept and suggestions for allocation in urban development

Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, SPK) is kicking off one of its most important projects. Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts (Museum of the 20th Century) is being built at the Kulturforum in Berlin. Together with the Neue Nationalgalerie by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the new museum will make it possible to tour art from the entire 20th century. A worldwide Ideas Competition announced by SPK will gather submissions for an architectural concept for the building and its integration into the outdoor urban setting.

Architects Roger Diener (Basel), Heike Hanada (Berlin), Arno Lederer (Stuttgart), Hilde Léon (Berlin), Till Schneider (Frankfurt), Enrique Sobejano (Madrid), and landscape architect Undine Giseke (Berlin) were chosen to be expert jury members. The procedural jury members include Minister of State Monika Grütters, Foundation President Hermann Parzinger, Director-General of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Michael Eissenhauer, Senate Building Director Regula Lüscher, Bundestag member Herlind Gundelach (CDU), and former Bundestag member (SPD) Petra Merkel. Marion Ackermann, director of Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, and Jörg Haspel, state conservator for Berlin, will be among the advisers to the competition.

The construction site is an undeveloped lot of 10,200 square meters located on Potsdamer Strasse between the Neue Nationalgalerie, Kammermusiksaal (the Chamber Music Hall), and St. Matthäus-Kirche (St. Matthew Church). The president of Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, **Hermann Parzinger**, called the Ideas Competition an enormous opportunity for the Kulturforum: "I am grateful to Minister of State Monika Grütters and the budget planners of the German Bundestag for enabling us to develop this location of modern art further. With our collections, our collectors, and with courage and daring as well. The Neue Nationalgalerie will be a museum with two buildings, but of course they can be experienced individually too. In the past decades, we have read with great regularity about what could possibly happen at this cultural hub in Berlin, but nothing

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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



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ever has. Today we can welcome the future: the Kulturforum is now located in the center of Berlin and is no longer next to the Wall. We not only need room for art, we also need an inviting gesture! For the first time, we have the chance to further develop Mies' contemporary architectural language and enter into a dialog with Scharoun. Not an easy job for the participants!"

In the words of Minister of State **Monika Grütters**, who took the initiative to plan the new building and was able to convince the Budget Committee of the German Bundestag to make €200 million available to carry out the construction, this was a pioneering decision: "We will finally be able to exhibit the full spectrum of outstanding twentieth-century art works in our collections, most of which are in storage. The decision to build the new building is a signal for Berlin as a cultural metropolis and the collection of the Neue Nationalgalerie, and for the Pietzsch, Marx, and Marzona Collections that will find new homes in the new building." Grütters defended the decision to locate the new building on Potsdamer Strasse. For one reason, at 10,000 square meters the lot is big enough for exhibitions that require around 14,000 square meters of usable area, and the location on Potsdamer Strasse offers more opportunities when it comes to urban development. The Bundesrechnungshof (Federal Audit Office) specifically applauded the decision to limit the Ideas Competition to one building site.

The new building will make it possible to experience the Kulturforum better as a whole, and improve and reinforce the accessibility of all existing buildings and functions. It is also important to take the diversity of interplay and sight lines between the Mies, Scharoun, and Stüler buildings into account. Senate Building Director **Regula Lüscher** called it a "historic opportunity" to sustainably stimulate the urban development of the Kulturforum's complete design in terms of its urban landscape. "For this reason, the State of Berlin will support the federal government where possible in completing this project. We already have political and technical experience in working together. I am excited about the urban planning ideas that will come out of this first stage of the process and am convinced that we will ultimately find an architectural design that will become the location's landmark."

As far as the requirements for the exhibition spaces are concerned, they should make it possible to have an overview of the total context of the holdings and identify individual thematic areas. **Michael Eissenhauer**, the director-general of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (National Museums in



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Berlin), is convinced that the submitted designs will produce good ideas. “Soon after it opened, the Neue Nationalgalerie was already too small to show the full spectrum of our twentieth-century holdings. We are very happy that we will be able to present this collection and the outstanding donations in suitable spaces in the future.”

Younger architects who have not built a large museum building yet can participate in the open Ideas Competition, which will last for six months. In spring 2016, the ten to twenty contestants that are nominated for the following Design Competition will be determined, and a similar number of architects will be invited to participate in the second phase. In late 2016, up to six submissions will be chosen for the final round. The new building will be built as a public-private project: a partnership with a private investor. Minister of State **Monika Grütters** commented: “We are currently investigating possible general conditions with the hope of being able to carry out the project more quickly and economically. But no decision has been made yet. This option will only be used if an economic feasibility study convincingly demonstrates that a public-private project is more economical than the usual approach. The Bundestag will decide on this, as the funding for this project is still to be released.”