

**V
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**8-11 SEPTEMBER
2022**

**KURSALON
VIENNA**

VIENNA CONTEMPORARY REPOSITIONS ITSELF

Non-profit limited liability company founded / Chairman of the Board Dmitry Aksenov is leaving / New ownership structure / New team members / Positioning as the most important international fair for contemporary art in CEE remains / Ukraine Focus 2022 / Crypto, Digital Art & Digital Market / New location

Vienna, 28.4.2022. viennacontemporary, the most important international fair for contemporary art with a focus on CEE countries, will take place for the first time at Kursalon Wien from 8 – 11 September 2022.

RESTRUCTURING TO A NON-PROFIT STRUCTURE

In the run-up to the event, viennacontemporary has adjusted its organizational structure: in the course of the restructuring initiated in December of the previous year, the supporting organization of viennacontemporary will become a nonprofit organization based in Vienna and will operate under the name VC Artfairs. The former shareholder Dmitry Aksenov is leaving the company and is also resigning from his position as Chairman of the Board. The ownership structure is currently being adjusted and will be presented to the public in May.

Markus Huber will continue to act as the Managing Director of VC, and Boris Ondreička will remain the Artistic Director.

The management will be supported by an advisory board with prominent new additions: In addition to Boris Marte (Chairman of the Universitätsrat der Akademie der bildenden Künste, Chairman of the Board of ERSTE Foundation) and Tom Wallmann (entrepreneur), future members will be:

- Andrea Bier, art collector and initiator of the Artists in Residence program AIR101
- Bernhard Hainz, art collector, lawyer, and member of the Universitätsrat der Akademie der bildenden Künste.

The members will support VC on an honorary basis. Boris Marte will take on the position of Chairman of the Board.

Boris Marte: “The decision to change the supporting organization of VC into a non-profit basis is proof of the constant striving to build viennacontemporary on a broad social foundation with the aim of positioning itself even more strongly as a mediator between the regions in the future. More than ever, Vienna needs a clear purpose as an active bridge-builder between East and West. Current events like the warlike aggression on our continent dramatically point out this necessity. We must understand that Austria urgently needs international formats such as viennacontemporary in order to be perceived as a relevant player by the global art world. Our goal is to strengthen the cultural significance of the viennacontemporary- brand in Europe and for Vienna.”

VC founder Dmitry Aksenov: “Over the past years we have worked hard to put Vienna on the agenda of the international art scene. Our vision was always to strengthen Vienna and Austria as an international location by trying to interpret its historical role as a bridge between East and West in a contemporary way and to create a unique platform for contemporary art. Today we can say that with a clear focus on Central- and Eastern Europe as well as Austria, viennacontemporary has established itself as the most important international art fair in the CEE region – and as one of the leading art fairs worldwide. I thank the whole team for their tireless efforts so far and will remain on friendly terms with them and the fair.”

THE INTERNATIONAL TEAM IS GROWING

VC also receives active support in operational management through several new additions with extensive international experience:

- Yana Barinova (Ukraine): The former Cultural Councillor of Kyiv will join the team in an advisory capacity as Chief Business Development Officer to develop new partnerships in CEE countries, including Ukraine, and will contribute her skills in top international cultural management (Managing Director of the Babyn Yar Holocaust Memorial for many years) to the internationalization of the VC brand.
- Fruzsina Kacsó (Hungary) will completely restructure and lead the Guest Relations department with a focus on buyers and collectors. Fruzsina Kacsó previously worked as a freelance cultural consultant and was active in the areas of international relations and fundraising (including Central European University).
- Leonie Mir (Germany), who with her vast international experience – Thaddaeus Ropac Gallery (Paris and Salzburg), Christie's London, Phillips de Pury (London and Paris) – will bring to viennacontemporary a new quality of networking with international collectors.

CEE FOCUS REMAINS USP OF VIENNA CONTEMPORARY

In terms of content, the focus on art from Central and Eastern Europe and the fundamental idea of internationalizing the location of Vienna and Austria will remain. Managing Director Markus Huber: "Contemporary art from Central and Eastern Europe at the interface of Vienna and in partnership with our important Viennese and Austrian galleries remains the focus of viennacontemporary. Our outstanding international team embodies our deepest conviction of anchoring viennacontemporary as a platform between East and West in Vienna. Here, art and culture have always been important sensors and forms of expression for dialogue between regions and encounters in Vienna."

BOUTIQUE ART FAIR WITH HIGH OVERALL QUALITY STANDARDS

Nearly 70 selected galleries will be personally invited by Artistic Director Boris Ondreička and the viennacontemporary admissions committee to ensure high-quality presentations. With its rich accompanying program, special educational events, and a special focus on service and hospitality, viennacontemporary will offer four outstanding days of intensive art, knowledge, and networking experiences in the heart of Vienna. Artistic Director Boris Ondreička: "The main task of viennacontemporary – and any other art fair – is to offer a perfect service to the galleries. We do this very personally and with a high-quality standard. We are an invitation-only fair, which helps to fulfill our quality-oriented profile. Providing a perfect service to the galleries means providing a fertile ground or market for artists and their art. However, the market is not only the place of trade, but, above all, of social encounter, cultural exchange, and political performativity."

UKRAINE FOCUS 2022

As viennacontemporary has made it its mission to create space for critical reflection, discussion, and engagement and to stand up for democratic values such as peace and human rights, the addition of Yana Barinova to the VC team is of particular significance. It will give special expression to the commitment of the countries of the CEE region, and Ukraine in particular, to shared values. At the same time, Yana Barinova will make an important contribution to the Ukraine Focus of viennacontemporary 2022.

CRYPTO, DIGITAL ART & DIGITAL MARKET – NEW REALITIES

New generations have new art forms: Crypto, Digital & New Media were already explicit topics of VC's collaboration with Ars Electronica and other international partners in 2021. VC will present its own format during the art fair and dedicate a separate project to the theme of Crypto, Digital & New Media, which will launch initiatives throughout the year in the future.

NEW LOCATION IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY: KURSALON WIEN

Last but not least, the fair will take place from 8 to 11 September 2022 at an entirely new location. The decision to move to the city of Vienna, to the center, is guided by the conviction of being able to establish a new center for contemporary art and culture initiatives at and around the Kursalon Wien location together with adjacent partners.

Managing Director Markus Huber: "We believe that we will be able to appeal even better to the Viennese as well as to international guests and collectors at a location in the heart of Vienna, the global capital of culture. We are only at the beginning of promising cooperations to give the location around the Stadtpark Wien a new contemporary character - initially during viennacontemporary, but in the future all year round in the form of cooperative and own projects."

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