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VIENNA CONTEMPORARY PRESENTS WINNER OF VCT SCULPTURE PROJECT 2023 AND CURATOR OF THIS YEAR'S ZONE1

Winner of Sculpture Project: Artist Carola Dertnig with sculpture 'Feldenkreis_FI_001_Lucia Westerguard'.

viennacontemporary is pleased to announce the winner of this year's VCT SCULPTURE PROJECT. The four-member jury awarded the sculpture 'Feldenkreis_FI_001_Lucia Westerguard' by Austrian artist Carola Dertnig, which will be realized in Vienna's Stadtpark until viennacontemporary 2023.

The jury is overwhelmed by the number and quality of submissions to this year's very first call for entries, which asked each gallery participating in the fair to submit designs by an artist they represent.

The sculpture of Carola Dertnig, who is represented by CRONE Gallery, was immediately compelling for its special visual aesthetic and historic relevance to the context of Stadtpark. "*What makes the proposal strongest for us is the narrative behind the object - a tribute to circus artist, dancer, and saxophonist Lucia Westerguard (1912-2008), who often played her saxophone to audiences in the park in the very place where the sculpture will be placed. We consider it an essential feminist gesture to publicly place a female artist into the currently exclusively male monument landscape in the Stadtpark. We congratulate Carola on this great work and the well-deserved victory!*", says the jury composed of Attilia Fattori Franchini, independent curator, author, and founder of KUNSTVEREIN GARTENHAUS; Lilli Hollein, General Director and Artistic Director of MAK; Reza Akhavan, Managing Partner of JP Immobiliengruppe; and Boris Ondreička, Artistic Director of viennacontemporary.

Carola Dertnig, born in Innsbruck, has been head of the Performative Arts Department at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna since 2006. In 2013, she received the Austrian Art Award, and in 2022 the Cultural Award of the Province of Lower Austria.

The artist describes the inspiration behind the sculpture with the following words: "*Jogging through the Stadtpark, one encounters monuments to Johann Strauss, Franz Schubert, Franz Lehar, and Robert Stolz, a marble statue of painter Hans Makart, bronze busts of composer Anton Bruckner and Vienna Mayor Andreas Zelinka, under whose reign the Stadtpark was designed. Jogging further across the Stadtparksteg (architect: Hermann Czech) to the Donald Judd installation, one eventually realizes that a broad number of gentlemen, in all their facets, histories, and memoirs, dominate the Stadtpark. Except for the Mother and Child Fountain and the Danube Female, there are no monuments of female read individuals. So it is necessary to create space for them in Stadtpark.*"

Lucia Westerguard performed with her saxophone in Stadtpark in front of Johann Strauss meadow until she was 96 years old. Dertnig knew the musician from her teenage years on: "When we demonstrated on the said meadow for "Sitting on the grass and being allowed to move on it", Lucia Westerguard serenaded us and supported us in our resistance. Despite profound poverty of age, she was jovial, loved to talk with us, and performed with a great passion for her audience," she recalls.

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Dertnig's sculpture, originally derived from movements and consisting of stainless steel tubes bent by hand, spans the arc to ephemeral performative art, paying homage to the luminary Lucia Westerguard.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The VCT SCULPTURE PROJECT was launched in 2022 by viennacontemporary in cooperation with JP Immobilien and Kursalon Betriebs GmbH. In the middle of Stadtpark Vienna, a sculpture is realized in public space every year. Galleries participating in the fair are invited to submit proposals by artists they represent. The winner will receive prize money of 10.000,- Euro and an additional production fee of 25.000,- Euro.

The selected sculpture will be unveiled for the first time at viennacontemporary 2023, which will once again take place at Kursalon Vienna from 7-10 September. It will be on display on its grounds until it is replaced at viennacontemporary 2024 by the winner of the following year.

Markus Huber, Managing Director of viennacontemporary: *"With the Sculpture Project, viennacontemporary is taking a first step towards offering galleries and their artists a prominent presence beyond the fair week. It is our goal to create new cultural formats and interfaces that ensure greater visibility of contemporary art in society and the art market. The Sculpture Project is the first of many ventures in this direction."*

"Our Sculpture Project has the potential to become an iconic Viennese landmark. The project combines the qualities of stability and solidity with regular renewal – so that it never becomes too predictable. Moreover, it will be made available to a large audience, providing a reason to gather and celebrate!", says Artistic Director Boris Ondrejčka.

Curator of ZONE1 2023: Francesca Gavin

viennacontemporary is pleased to have won author, editor, and curator Francesca Gavin as curator of this year's ZONE1.

Based between London and Vienna, Gavin is widely regarded as one of the most trusted voices in the contemporary art scene. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the biannual publication EPOCH, which looks at the intersection of history and contemporary culture. She co-curated the Manifesta11 biennial, as well as exhibitions at the Palais de Tokyo, Somerset House, and Fundacao Serralves. She is also a contributing editor at Financial Times HTSI Magazine, Kaleidoscope, Twin, and Beauty Papers, has written ten books on visual culture, and has a monthly show on art and music on NTS Radio. She was the founding curator of the Soho House collection, creating a collection of over 3.000 works.

"Although much of my curatorial work has focused on ideas around the psychedelic or technological, underlying everything is a dialogue between emerging points of view and the physical and emotional experience of contemporary human experience. My intention in ZONE1 is to showcase both the talent and caliber of work coming out of Vienna and how it demonstrates contemporary developments in aesthetics and ideas," says Gavin.

The exhibition format ZONE1 exclusively features artists under 40, who live, work, or have been educated in Austria. Since 2015, ZONE1 has been one of the highlights of the fair and is highly valued by art experts and visitors.