



Assembly

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Kingston, Jamaica

11-22 July 2016

Request for observer status in accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly on behalf of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Note by the secretariat

1. On 18 May 2016, the Vienna-based non-profit Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21) submitted a letter to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, requesting observer status in the Assembly of the Authority. The text of the letter and additional information provided by the applicant are contained in annexes I and II to the present note.
2. In accordance with rule 82, paragraph 1 (e), of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, non-governmental organizations with which the Secretary-General has entered into arrangements in accordance with article 169, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and other non-governmental organizations invited by the Assembly that have demonstrated their interest in matters under consideration by the Assembly, may participate as observers in the Assembly.
3. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of the same rule further provide that observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule may sit at public meetings of the Assembly and, upon the invitation of the President and subject to approval by the Assembly, may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities, and that written statements submitted by observers referred to in paragraph 1 (e) of that rule within the scope of their activities that are relevant to the work of the Assembly should be made available by the Secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are submitted.



Annex I

Letter dated 2 May 2016 from the Founder and Chair of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Francesca von Habsburg, addressed to the Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority

In accordance with part XVI, Observers, rule 82 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly of the International Seabed Authority, the Vienna-based non-profit Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21) is seeking to participate in meetings of the Authority as an observer, such as the twenty-second annual session, to be held in July 2016.

As mentioned in last year's opening address by the President of the Council of the International Seabed Authority, Peter Thomson, the Authority has become a pinnacle of international development in the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 14. TBA21 Academy has established a strong reputation for bridging disciplinary gaps in art and marine science, allowing us to find innovative ways to preserve marine ecosystems and to address Goal 14 from a novel perspective.

The Current, TBA21 Academy's latest programme, was launched at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris. It is a transdisciplinary field research fellowship that combines contemporary art with marine research, conservation and exploration and aims to spread awareness of the urgency of marine conservation and promote its implementation. TBA21 The Current is leading scientific and artistic expeditions in the South Pacific using varied methodologies, depending on the specific expedition, with highly valuable successes, including:

- (a) A recent collaboration between National Geographic and TBA21 The Current leading to the discovery of the first bioluminescent turtle in the world;
- (b) Raising over \$140,000 through auctions on behalf of marine conservation around Cocos Island, Costa Rica;
- (c) Recently endowed grass-roots non-governmental organizations in Jamaica, the Alligator Head Foundation and the Alligator Head Marine Lab, focusing on marine conservation and partnering with international non-governmental organizations to promote beach sanitation.

TBA21 looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Authority to specifically raise awareness through artistic engagement and, ultimately, expand the scope of civil society engagement within the Authority in the pursuance of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

TBA21 respectfully requests the granting of observer status in the International Seabed Authority in order to contribute to meetings, such as the 2016 annual session, and is respectfully looking forward to your response.

(Signed) Francesca **von Habsburg**
Founder and Chair

Annex II

International Seabed Authority observer status request

1. Name of organization

Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21)

2. Address of office

Kösterlgasse 1
1060 Vienna
Austria

3. Name and address of proposed primary representative

Markus Reymann
Director, TBA21
Kösterlgasse 1
1060 Vienna
Austria

4. Aims and purpose of Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary

Founded by Francesca von Habsburg in Vienna, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21) represents the fourth generation of the Thyssen family's commitments to the arts. After more than 14 years of collecting, commissioning projects and engaged exhibition practice, TBA21 has established a highly respected collection of more than 700 contemporary artworks in the field of new media, including film, video, light, sound and mixed-media installations, sculpture, painting, photography and performance. Its unique collection is the result of its ongoing commitment to commissioning and disseminating numerous art projects, including multimedia installations, sound compositions, endurance performances and contemporary architecture. This has led to its pioneering reputation in the art world. The foundation sustains a far-reaching regional and international orientation through a number of collaborations with other cultural partners around the world. In 2015, Francesca von Habsburg decided to dedicate the foundation's ongoing programme to becoming an agent of change by focusing on the complexities and urgencies of the "age of the Anthropocene", as well as today's pressing challenges caused by climate change, with a special focus on marine ecosystems.

The focus on marine ecosystems, specifically to present the consequences of climate change in an identifiable light, inspired Francesca von Habsburg and Markus Reymann to launch The Current, a three-year fellowship that aims to bridge the disciplines of science and art. Through it, highly acclaimed curators and artists and world-renowned researchers design ways to make the position of humans tangible as a geological force. In the course of the research carried out by the artists and scientists, they are taken on expeditions in the South Pacific. The findings, interpretations and extrapolations of these expeditions are presented in a Convening, the first of which took place in Jamaica in March 2016.

5. History

Founded in Vienna in 2002 by Francesca von Habsburg, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary represents the fourth generation of the Thyssen family's dedication to the arts. After 15 years of collecting, commissioning projects and engaged exhibition practice, TBA21 has established a well-respected collection of more than 500 contemporary artworks in the field of new media, including film, video, light, sound and mixed-media installations, sculpture, painting, photography and performance, and successfully co-commissioned around 50 projects, ranging from multimedia installations, to sound compositions and contemporary architecture.

6. Recent activities

The year 2015 saw the launching of an entire new programming cycle, The Current. The latest programme of TBA21, The Current was launched at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris. The Current is a three-year exploratory fellowship programme based in the Pacific that has had numerous successes since its launching at the Conference.

TBA21 has:

(a) Launched The Current at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in order to demonstrate the implications of climate change and marine negligence through contemporary artists and scientists;

(b) Launched and endowed the Alligator Head Foundation in Portland, Jamaica, to sustainably promote marine preservation in Jamaica;

(c) Endowed the Alligator Head Marine Lab in Portland, Jamaica, to promote research on marine conservation;

(d) Carried out numerous beach sanitation initiatives with the Alligator Head Foundation and Parley for the Oceans in line with Sustainable Development Goal 14;

(e) Completed two expeditions, led by Ute Meta Bauer, founding director of the Nanyang Technological University Centre for Contemporary Art in Singapore, and Cesar Garcia, founder, director and chief curator of The Mistake Room, Los Angeles.

TBA21 is currently planning two upcoming expeditions to French Polynesia in 2016.

7. Descriptive statement of the extent to which the purposes of TBA21 relate to those of the International Seabed Authority, including, in particular, the contributions that can be made to the progress of the Authority

The key contributions that TBA21 sees for the International Seabed Authority are twofold.

As mentioned in last year's opening address by the President of the Council, Peter Thomson, the International Seabed Authority has become a pinnacle of international development in the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 14. TBA21 Academy has established a strong reputation for bridging disciplinary gaps in art and marine science, allowing us to find innovative

ways to preserve marine ecosystems and to address Goal 14 from a novel perspective.

In addition to pursuing Sustainable Development Goal 14, TBA21 has an opportunity to communicate its pursuit of the Goal from a new perspective. By bringing artists and scientists to the table, TBA21 will be able to share the Authority's new perspective.

8. Structure

TBA21 is a non-profit foundation listed in Vienna, divided into various departments that are led by department heads. The foundation is supervised by a Board. Thus, TBA21 is under Austrian law.

9. TBA21 member organizations

Since TBA21 is structured as a non-profit foundation, it does not have member organizations.

10. Current member representatives and officers

Since TBA21 is structured as a non-profit foundation, it does not have member representatives.

11. Affiliated organizations

- (a) SCRIPPS Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego;
 - (b) Alligator Head Foundation, Portland, Jamaica;
 - (c) Alligator Head Marine Lab, Portland, Jamaica;
 - (d) Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California;
 - (e) Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, Zurich;
 - (f) Centre for Contemporary Art, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
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