

**Press Release – Announcing Speakers
7 September 2018**

From 1-2 February 2019, the Verbier Art Summit will present its third edition in partnership with museum director Jochen Volz of Pinacoteca de São Paulo, Brazil. The 2019 Verbier Art Summit will explore new intersections between art and innovation:

**WE ARE MANY
ART, THE POLITICAL AND MULTIPLE TRUTHS**

In times of increasing uncertainty, we are in need of a deeper understanding of the multiplicity of narratives around us. Art has the potential to give voice to forgotten and silenced narratives, but also to envision entirely new possibilities. By bringing together artists, museum directors, activists and academics, the Verbier Art Summit will engage the art world in critical reflection on their social and political responsibilities. Together, we will explore the political power of art.

Jochen Volz has invited speakers to contribute to the 2019 Summit programme based on their critical thinking and close connection with the theme.

Among the confirmed speakers are artists Tania Bruguera, Grada Kilomba, Ernesto Neto and Naine Terena; curator Gabi Ngcobo; Professor of Sociology Boaventura de Sousa Santos; Professor of Neurophysiology Dr. Wolf Singer; and Tate director Maria Balshaw.

Installation and performance artist **Tania Bruguera (CU)** is renowned for her international work that blends art and activism, striving for freedom and democracy across borders. **Gabi Ngcobo (ZA)** is an educator and curator who explores the different ways to revisit history and how historical narratives have been constructed by those in a privileged position of power. **Naine Terena (BR)** presents a uniquely interdisciplinary approach to the 2019 theme as an artist, activist and researcher whose work centers around society, art and indigenous rights.

Artist **Ernesto Neto (BR)** creates immersive sculptures encompassing symbiotic oppositions, most recently *GaiaMotherTree* in the Zurich main train station organised by the Beyeler Foundation. The artistic and written work of **Grada Kilomba (PT)** addresses memory, trauma, race, gender, and the decolonisation of knowledge and narrative. Complementing Grada's questioning of dominant narratives is **Boaventura de Sousa Santos (PT)**, Professor at the School of Economics at the University of Coimbra will contribute his expertise on issues of law and globalization, legal pluralism, multiculturalism, and human rights.



Ernesto Neto with his work Rui Ni / Voices of the Forest
Photo: Niels Fabaek / Museum of Modern Art, Aalborg

Professor Dr. Wolf Singer (DE) is a leading neurophysiologist interested in a naturalistic explanation for consciousness that accounts for material as well as immaterial experiences. **Maria Balshaw (UK)** has pursued a progressive vision throughout her career and became the director of Tate in 2017. Exploring the role of the museum in engaging art as a political tool, Maria's perspective and experience will uniquely contribute to a reflective, innovative 2019 Summit.

The 2019 speakers will come together in Verbier, Switzerland, for a weekend of dialogue to ask how we might shape and define a progressive role for art in our uncertain times. They participate in an extended debating programme with the Summit's members to generate further initiatives and visions. By bringing together artists, museum directors, activists and academics, the Verbier Art Summit will engage the art world in critical reflection on their social responsibilities.

“Each of our invited guest speakers have been an inspiration to us when conceiving the theme for the Verbier Art Summit 2019,” **Jochen Volz** explains. “Their voices, actions and work have shaped the way we understand diverse forms of knowledge as complementary. Ernesto Neto, for example, one of the greatest sculptors of our times, has over recent years developed a very profound collaboration with Huni Kuin artists, activists, political and spiritual leaders, which has allowed for new dimensions in his practice; and his insertion in the international art circuit has given their cause and their cosmology great visibility, highly inspiring for us all.”

The annual Verbier Art Summit connects thought leaders to key figures in the art world and creates a platform for discourse, innovation and change in a non-transactional context. It is an independent initiative organised by a non-profit association in partnership with a yearly rotating international museum director. The Summit is held in a unique location at an altitude of 1500m and with views across the Swiss Alps.

The Verbier Art Summit provides a free two-day talks programme which can be attended in Verbier and online via live-streaming. The Summit also partners with cultural organisations to provide educational art activities throughout the weekend.

Follow us on social media for updates on the 2019 programme.

For press inquiries or any further questions, please contact Noepy Testa at info@verbierartsummit.org



View of Verbier, Switzerland at 1500m
Frederick Jacobovits Photography