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PRESS RELEASE

BEATRICE LEANZA NEW DIRECTOR OF THE CANTONAL MUSEUM FOR CONTEMPORARY DESIGN AND APPLIED ARTS (mudac)

The Plateforme 10 Foundation, which brings together three cantonal museums in the canton of Vaud on the site of the new Arts District in Lausanne, is pleased to announce the appointment of Italian museum director and curator Beatrice Leanza as the new director of mudac, the Cantonal Museum of Contemporary Design and Applied Arts.

Born in Milan in 1978, Beatrice Leanza is an internationally renowned Italian curator, critic and museum director. Now based in Lisbon, she has acted as executive director of maat (Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology) from 2019 to 2021. Prior to that, she was based in Beijing for 17 years from 2002 to 2019, where she led many prominent projects in the field of contemporary arts and design, notably as creative director of Beijing Design Week (2013-2016).

Beatrice Leanza convinced the selection jury with her professional profile combining a strong creative sense with internationally recognized know-how in developing innovative strategies for cultural enterprises from Asia to Europe. Her wide-ranging experience of cultural governance, from team management to relations with partners, sponsors, creative practitioners and the media, gives her all the assets needed to continue the development of mudac in close collaboration with all the Plateforme 10 teams in the museum's new setting in the heart of the Arts District in Lausanne. She will take up her post on 1 January 2023, on the retirement of the current director, Chantal Prod'Hom.

A unanimous commission

The decision to appoint Beatrice Leanza was announced by the Director General of the Fondation Plateforme 10, Mr Patrick Gyger, and was taken on the unanimous recommendation of the recruitment committee which met for the occasion.

The jury interviewed five high quality candidates from Switzerland and abroad. The recruitment committee was made up of eight people: two members of Plateforme 10's board of directors, three members of the Plateforme 10 Foundation's board, a representative of the State of Vaud's culture department, as well as two external experts from the museum and design world.

An international career

Beatrice Leanza has an MA in Asian studies and a specialization in the history of contemporary Chinese art from the Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia. She began her career at CAAW (China Art Archives and Warehouse), the historic alternative art space created in Beijing by the artist Ai Weiwei, and then went on to found two companies working on research-lead programs across the visual arts, design and architecture, in Europe and Asia. She has built a vast international network of professionals, cultural and educational institutions in the field of design and contemporary arts through numerous projects.



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From 2013 to 2016, Beatrice Leanza directed Beijing Design Week (BJDW), the largest public initiative in China dedicated to design and architecture, launched in 2009 by Beijing municipality and three national ministries (Culture, Education, Science and Technology). During her tenure, she oversaw the event's programming, managed international and diplomatic relations, international communication and partnerships.

Alongside her ongoing independent practice as a curator, lecturer and writer, in 2017 she co-founded The Global School (Beijing) an alternative pedagogical initiative predicated on multidisciplinary creative research and the development of impact-driven projects.

In 2019 she relocated to Portugal to take over the management of the Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (maat) in Lisbon as its executive director.

Responsible for increasing the international relevance and local awareness of this private institution founded in 2016 by the EDP Group, she led a full re-envisioning of the organization's branding, structure, programming and public outreach, while spearheading a strategic digital transition that turned vital with the outbreak of Covid-19, and included the launch of the new online platform - *maat ext.* (*maat extended*) - devoted to 'expanding' the museum's actions across the digital sphere. She managed a 38,000 m² campus comprising 2 buildings (6,000 m² of combined exhibition space) and gardens, two collections owned by the EDP Foundation and the corresponding archive and documentation centre.

Quote from Beatrice Leanza

"Joining mudac in its next-phase development as part of the new network of Plateforme10 is a thrilling challenge and a truly unique opportunity to shape a future-driven institution that can champion intellectual generosity and creative optimism in times when we need them the most. Design is a cultural expression of resourcefulness, critique and imagination – simultaneously a poetics and science of relations through which we both create and navigate reality, build an understanding of the world we are a part of for generations to come.

I am incredibly excited to embark on this journey with the team of mudac, building upon its achievements as an institution attuned with transformation and thus capable of offering itself as a public-facing platform of professional encounter, social debate and of practical agency to empower novel blueprints for cross-sectorial research, academic contamination and civic participation. "

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