



Media information

Berlin

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PalaisPopulaire presents new exhibition:

## Opera Opera. Allegro ma non troppo

From April 27 to August 22, 2022, the PalaisPopulaire, in cooperation with MAXXI, the Rome-based National Museum of 21st Century Arts, is presenting the exhibition *Opera Opera. Allegro ma non troppo*.

From the perspective of visual art and architecture, *Opera Opera. Allegro ma non troppo* shows opera as an interdisciplinary laboratory for contemporary ideas, a testing ground for aesthetic and collaborative strategies. The show featuring significant works from the MAXXI Collection brings together around thirty positions of Italian contemporary art (among them, Monica Bonvicini, Luigi Ontani and Michelangelo Pistoletto) and international artists such as Kara Walker, William Kentridge, and Jimmie Durham, who died at the end of 2021 and to whom the exhibition curators dedicated this project. The spectrum of works ranges from the 1960s and 1970s to the present day. Among the most recent works on view are two new productions created especially for this occasion by Rosa Barba and Olaf Nicolai.

The exhibition explores the fascination with opera as a German-Italian phenomenon rooted in both cultures and their perceptions of each other. "At the heart of this exhibition is our collection, vibrant, always in motion, and in constant flux," said Hou Hanru, MAXXI Artistic Director. "The PalaisPopulaire's invitation to present our collection in Berlin encouraged us to rethink our works of art, reinterpret them, and narrate them by giving them new nuances and new meanings." "*Opera Opera. Allegro ma non troppo* is the culmination of a longstanding exchange and our partnership with MAXXI," says Svenja von



Reichenbach, the director of the PalaisPopulaire. "This extraordinary project embodies the interdisciplinary and innovative spirit of both institutions."

The exhibition, conceived by Hou Hanru, Bartolomeo Pietromarchi, director of MAXXI Arte, and MAXXI curator Eleonora Farina, transforms PalaisPopulaire's space into a Gesamtkunstwerk, a total work of art, which is narrated in four thematic sections. The Stage already begins outside, on the terrace. The sounds of the city mingle with the singing in Suzan Philipsz's sound installation *Wild Is the Wind*. Marinella Senatore conceived a light installation for Berlin that associates itself with folk festivals in the south of Italy, with long-lost collective community. On the border between outside and inside, Olaf Nicolai created a stage of meditation and collective interaction with a minimalist floor work. The Prelude chapter in the interior kicks off with *Climbing*, an oversized chandelier by the artist duo Vedovamazzei that dominates the rotunda. Right next door, a special work forms the musical prelude to the exhibition: Philippe Rahm's sound architecture, which fills an entire exhibition hall.

The Backstage section in the basement leads into history, the archive. In addition to models of pioneering architecture of opera houses and theaters, including those by star architect Aldo Rossi, Luca Vitone's *Sonorizzare il luogo (Grand Tour)* takes visitors on a musical journey through the regions of Italy, a collective memory that unites sounds, places, and cultures.

Upstairs, Jimmie Durham invites us to world peace, and also to the section Theatre of the Everyday, with a special video greeting. Rosa Barba's commissioned work *NO - Orchestra con nastro (2022)*, a kinetic film sculpture that combines sound, light, and celluloid, was inspired by the Archivio Storico Ricordi in Milan. The music archive, which belongs to Bertelsmann, contains what is probably the world's most important collection of manuscripts on Italian opera history, including numerous original scores by Verdi, Puccini, Donizetti, Bellini, and Rossini, but also manuscripts by contemporary composers such as Luigi Nono, whose notations are deconstructed and reinterpreted in Barba's sculpture.



Other theatrical performative works include a photographic work of Vanessa Beecroft's performance *VB74* hosted at MAXXI, in which she sets up a chorus of naked, veiled women reminiscent of Renaissance depictions of the Virgin Mary and the Passion. This idealized representation is juxtaposed with the staging of black, enslaved bodies in Kara Walker's silhouette work, which focuses on racism, sexism, and oppression. A highlight is *Preparing the Flute*, an animated miniature stage by South African artist William Kentridge. It was created in 2005, while Kentridge was working on a production of Mozart's *Magic Flute*. The work explores history, memory, and the historical role of Mozart's Enlightenment opera for colonial and racist ideologies.

With poetry, beauty, and irony, *Opera Opera* penetrates collective history and our everyday lives, paying tribute to the dramas and joys of life.

In cooperation with MAXXI, Rome

The show is supplemented by a comprehensive supporting program in cooperation with MAXXI and the partner institutions Bertelsmann/Archivio Storico Ricordi, the Italian Cultural Institute, the Hanns Eisler Academy of Music, and the Staatsoper Unter den Linden.

The exhibition is accompanied by a publication of the same name published by Kerber Verlag with contributions by the curators and the author Johanna Dombois.



We are happy to inform you about our digital offer on our Instagram account and on our website under #PalaisPopulaireForYou.

All information on the current coronavirus measures and the PalaisPopulaire program can be found at [www.db-palaispopulaire.com](http://www.db-palaispopulaire.com)

Press photos can be found at: [www.photo-files.de/db-palaispopulaire](http://www.photo-files.de/db-palaispopulaire)

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### About Deutsche Bank's commitment to art

Deutsche Bank has set standards worldwide with its commitment to contemporary art—be it with its art holdings, one of the world's most important collections of contemporary works on paper and photographs, with its international exhibition program, or with the PalaisPopulaire in the heart of Berlin. For many years, the bank has been Global Lead Partner of the Frieze Art Fair with its fairs in London, New York, Los Angeles and, from 2022, also in Seoul.

### About MAXXI

MAXXI, the National Museum of 21st Century Arts in Rome, is the first national museum dedicated to contemporary creativity. Designed as a large campus for culture, MAXXI was designed by Zaha Hadid, winner of an international competition, and is a great architectural work of innovative and spectacular forms. It produces and hosts art, architecture, design and photography exhibitions, as well as fashion, cinema, music, theatre and dance performances, lectures and meetings with artists, architects, and protagonists of our time. The collection is exhibited with free admission from Tuesday to Thursday with rotating works. The MAXXI is much more than a museum, however: It offers a platform open to all the languages of creativity and is a place for meeting, exchange, and collaboration, a space open to all, a laboratory of ideas and of the future.