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MAAT - MUSEUM OF ART, ARCHITECTURE AND TECHNOLOGY - OPENS IN LISBON

This Wednesday, 5 October 2016, the EDP Foundation will officially open MAAT - Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology - on the Tagus River in Belém, Lisbon, with a 12-hour public programme featuring exhibition openings, educational events, performances and music happenings.

Housed within two buildings and spanning a vast outdoor site, MAAT will explore contemporary culture through visual arts, new media, architecture, technology and science. It will comprise the elegant new kunsthalle designed by AL_A, the architecture practice headed by British architect Amanda Levete, and the recently renovated Central Tejo power station. The new museum complex is located on the EDP Foundation Campus, which is at the heart of an exciting urban revitalisation along one of Lisbon's most historic waterfronts.

Speaking about the EDP Foundation's commission, António Mexia, CEO of EDP Group and Chairman of EDP Foundation, said:

"MAAT will restore the historic connection between the city and the water. It will be a hub for attracting people who come here to enjoy art and architecture. More than that, however, it will draw people from the heart of the city to the panoramic views along the Tagus estuary, a riverfront area that has long been neglected, but thanks to MAAT, will become a vibrant new destination within Lisbon."

Pedro Gadinho, Director of MAAT, added:

"With its unique industrial heritage, a growing collection of Portuguese art and an innovative exhibition programme, MAAT will be a cultural space of discovery, critical thinking and global dialogue. MAAT will not only support the work of Portuguese artists and curators, but will also offer them a platform to connect with the international art community."

The new kunsthalle

AL_A's new kunsthalle, which contains four distinct gallery spaces, captures the essence of the exceptional 38,000 m² riverside site and its extraordinary light. Blending structure into landscape, and conceived to create significant new public spaces, it is designed to allow visitors to walk over and under, as well as through the building, while the undulating roof offers panoramic views towards the river and across Belém. The building creates a constantly changing place filled with aquatic reflections that interplay with the overhanging façade covered in 15,000 three-dimensional tiles, a reference to Portugal's rich tradition of ceramics.

The new kunsthalle will launch in two phases. Following its inauguration this month, the second phase is set to launch in March 2017 with the opening of an elegant pedestrian bridge, also designed by AL_A, that lands on the kunsthalle roof, making the campus and waterfront more accessible to the city. The completion of the architectural project will also include the opening of a restaurant, as well as a park designed by Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture.

Speaking about the design, Amanda Levete, Principal of AL_A, commented:

"In understanding EDP's ambition for Lisbon, our design draws on the context of the site, creating both physical and conceptual connections to the waterfront and back to the heart of the city."

"The waterfront is so essential to the project that the design literally reflects it. The overhanging roof that creates welcome shade is used to bounce sunlight off the water and into the Main Gallery, one of the four interconnected exhibition spaces."

Key inaugural project: Utopia/Dystopia, Part I and II

To celebrate the official opening of MAAT, the museum will present its first site-specific commission addressing the dual theme of Utopia/Dystopia. At nearly 1000 m², **Pynchon Park** will occupy the new kunsthalle's central Oval Gallery and is the third large-scale environment created by artist **Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster**, following *TH.2058* at Tate Modern (London, 2018) and *Ballard Garden* at De Singel (Antwerp, 2014). Bringing together media, literature and dystopia, the artist offers a fictional setting in which an extra-terrestrial has taken over the world and designed a park as a place to observe human behaviour under the best possible conditions.

The second part of the Utopia/Dystopia exhibition project will open in March 2017 to coincide with the completion of the MAAT site. Installed in the three remaining exhibition galleries in the new kunsthalle, ***Utopia/Dystopia Part II*** will be a large group show featuring more than 60 works by a range of international artists and architects. The show will reveal how the two fields have represented ideas of utopia, or anticipated emerging notions of dystopia, since the 1970s, with a strong focus on work produced over the last five years. Participants include Archigram, Andreas Angelidakis, Kader Attia, Pedro Barateiro, James Beckett, Jordi Colomer, DIS Collective, Didier Faustino, Cao Fei, Ângela Ferreira, Yona Friedman, Michael MacGarry, OMA, Tabor Robak, André Romão, Aldo Rossi, Michael E. Smith, Jonas Staal, Hito Steyerl and Superstudio, among many others.

Other opening exhibitions and inauguration events

The inaugural programme also includes the opening of two new exhibitions in addition to Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster's *Pynchon Park*. In its **Central Tejo** building, MAAT will present ***The World of Charles and Ray Eames***, organised in partnership with Barbican Centre in London. Coinciding with the opening of MAAT, the city-wide **4th Lisbon Architecture Triennale** will present one of its main exhibitions, ***The Form of Form***, in the power station's courtyard.

The new exhibitions at MAAT Central Tejo will join **Second Nature** which draws on research into the archive of the EDP Foundation Art Collection, taking account of current debates on the natural world and its representations. In the monumental Boiler Room, **Artists' Film International** represents the 2016 iteration of the programme dedicated to exhibiting videos, films and animations produced by artists from around the world, launched in 2008 by the Whitechapel Gallery in London. The London-based Portuguese photographer **Edgar Martins** takes over the Astray 8, also in MAAT Central, to present *Siloquies and Soliloquies on Death, Life and Other Interludes*, the result of a long period of research at the Institute of Forensic Medicine in Lisbon.

A special 12-hour public programme taking place from midday to midnight on Wednesday 5th October, also features a series of unique one-off events: the first presentation of the video, *Where Shapes Come From*, by **Semiconductor (Ruth and Joe Gerhardt)**; the installation of a site-specific piece by **Lawrence Weiner**; the presentation of *C'mon* (modulations with two microphones and two amplifiers) by **Nuno da Luz**; and live AV performances, such as *Emerging Paradigm* by **Haroon Mirza** and *Supercodex* by **Ryoji Ikeda**. **Nástio Mosquito** will perform *Respectable Thief*. The Portuguese duo Von Calhau will present a new show, and **Colectivo ensemble**, led by Pedro Carneiro, will perform Michael Gordon's *Timbers*. DJ sets feature **Nigga Fox**, **Zebra Kats**, **Fátima Al Qadiri** and artists from the Prince Records label.

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NOTES TO EDITORS**About MAAT**

The Museum of Art, Architecture and Technology (MAAT) focuses on contemporary culture through a combination of visual arts and media, architecture and city, technology and science, society and thought. Committed to creating an environment in which diverse audiences can access contemporary art through educational programs and special events, the EDP Foundation's new museum will be a space for discovery, critical thinking and international dialogue with its unique heritage, an expanding Portuguese art collection and an innovative exhibition programme.

About the EDP Foundation

Established in 2004, the EDP Foundation, chaired by António Mexia, CEO of EDP Group, is one of the most prominent private foundations in Portugal. Focused on culture, innovation, science and energy, the Foundation is one of Portugal's largest social investors. One of the main sponsors of the arts in Portugal, it has commissioned and supported more than 120 exhibitions in the last decade and produces dozens of cultural events every year. With a 38,000 m² campus along the Tagus River in Lisbon, MAAT is an ambitious international project that embodies the unique and contemporary vision of the Foundation.

About Central Tejo Power Station

Constructed in the early 20th century, the Central Tejo power station holds enormous heritage value from architectural, historic and social perspectives. Formerly a thermoelectric power plant owned by the Companhias Reunidas de Gás e Eletricidade, it supplied power to the city and the entire Lisbon region. Officially closed in 1975, in 1986 it was classified as an Asset of Public Interest and was later transformed into the Museu da Eletricidade in 1990, an industrially based science museum and a cultural centre that endorses contemporary art. It has recently been redesigned and transformed into an exhibition space for MAAT. With the renovations, the power station's permanent collection and remaining machinery continue to be exhibited as a unique example of industrial heritage.

About MAAT Director Pedro Gadanho

An architect and writer who previously held the role of curator in the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Pedro Gadanho was appointed by MAAT in October 2015, and is responsible for its cultural programme. A graduate of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto (FAUP), he holds an MA in Art and Architecture from the Kent Institute of Art and Design in the UK and a PhD in Architecture and Mass Media from FAUP, where he was also a lecturer. The co-founder and director of CUC, the Centre for Contemporary Urban Culture, Gadanho was also a member of the strategic council of the British Pavilion at the 2010 Venice Biennial, a consultant with the DAC/REALDANIA Urban Features Think Tank in Copenhagen in 2011 and a curator for the Portuguese Pavilion at the 2004 Venice Architecture Biennial.

About AL_A

AL_A is the award-winning architecture and design studio founded in 2009 by the RIBA Stirling Prize-winning architect Amanda Levete with Directors Ho-Yin Ng, Alice Dietsch and Maximiliano Arrochet. In 2011, the practice won the competition to design and implement the highly anticipated expansion of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. On completion in 2017, the V&A project will see AL_A realise a new entrance for the V&A, with the world's first porcelain courtyard above a new underground gallery housing spaces for headline exhibitions. The project will be the V&A's largest expansion in over 100 years and will be completed while the museum remains open to the public. Ongoing commissions around the world include the remodelling of the Galeries Lafayette Haussmann flagship department store in Paris; Central Embassy, a 1.5 million sq ft mixed-use development on the former grounds of the British embassy in Bangkok; a new centre for the cancer care charity, Maggie's, in Southampton; and The Courtyard, a series of community mixed-use developments on 39 sites across Moscow.