

# COUNTERPOINTS.



PRESS RELEASE

17 May 2019

## **International artists unite for artistic freedom at Tate Exchange for artists at risk and artists who risk**

Counterpoints Arts will hold a forum at Tate Exchange on 25 May for international artists to discuss risks and challenges to artistic freedom. Open to the public, artists from Berlin, Lebanon and Turkey will be among the participants, including Cuban artist Tania Bruguera, as well as freedom of expression groups from the UK.

Bruguera, who has faced arrest in Cuba for taking a stand against censorship, joins Counterpoints Arts in its call for support to artists. Her [installation](#) at Tate Modern last year, 10,148,151, paid tribute to the casualties of mass migration.

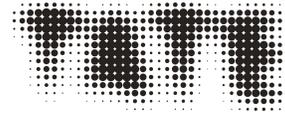
Áine O'Brien, co-director, Counterpoints Arts, says: 'With artistic freedom increasingly under threat and state censorship on the rise, it's more important than ever for art and civic organisations to defend the rights of artists they have commissioned.'

Frances Morris, director, Tate Modern, says: 'We place artists at the very centre of our activity. Artists live and work in the real world and we fully support their right to express their ideas freely and without threat. We welcome the opportunity provided by Counterpoints Arts to bring artists at risk and freedom of expression groups together with the public at Tate Exchange to engage in this vital discussion.'

The forum on artistic freedom was inspired by Tania Bruguera's creation of a local group of activists during her residency last year, Tate Neighbours, who supported Bruguera and fellow artists in their protest against a [Cuban government crackdown](#) on artistic freedom. 'These types of conversations are urgent,' says Bruguera. 'Freedom of expression for artists is being restricted globally, and we need to show solidarity and work together against a culture of silencing others.'

'More than ever we need cultural activists and brave if not persistent socially engaged arts practitioners like Bruguera to help initiate such projects, to enable groups like Tate Neighbours and the public at large to imagine itself as part of a democratic and diverse citizenry,' says [Áine O'Brien](#), 'where difference is seen as an integral civic value and not an inherent, endemic threat. And where art institutions are genuine civic spaces for everyone and authentic sites for social transformation.'

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This conversation takes place as part of Counterpoints Arts' [Who Are We?](#) project at Tate Exchange in partnership with the Open University.

The forum will take place on 25 May at Tate Exchange, 12pm-4pm.

**For further information about the artists at risk forum please contact Jo Glanville, 0771 302 0971, [media@counterpointsarts.org.uk](mailto:media@counterpointsarts.org.uk)**

To find out more about Tate Exchange please visit [tate.org.uk/tateexchange](http://tate.org.uk/tateexchange). For press information about Tate please email [pressoffice@tate.org.uk](mailto:pressoffice@tate.org.uk) or call 0207 887 8730 (for Tate Liverpool call 0151 702 7444). For high-resolution images visit [tate.org.uk/press](http://tate.org.uk/press).

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **Tate Exchange**

Tate Exchange is a platform at Tate Modern and Tate Liverpool that explores how art makes a difference in society. It does this through collaboration with a cohort of Associate organisations and the public, in response to an annual theme, and through a participative, process-led and socially engaged art practice. It can be found at Level 5 of the Blavatnik Building at Tate Modern, and in the first-floor gallery at Tate Liverpool. It was founded in 2016, the first of its kind in an art museum anywhere in the world, and it holds true that art, and the ideas inspired through art, can be the catalyst for change and exchange. Tate Exchange questions the role of art in society and of the lived experience in the world today and is a common space for the public to debate and reflect upon contemporary topics and ideas, get actively involved, to think through doing, and make a difference themselves.

### **Counterpoints Arts**

Counterpoints Arts is a leading national organisation in the field of arts, migration and cultural change. Our mission is to support and produce the arts by and about migrants and refugees, seeking to ensure that their contributions are recognized and welcomed within British arts, history and culture. Central to our mission is our belief that arts can inspire social change and enhance inclusion & cultural integration of refugees & migrants. We work across all art forms and collaborate with a range of people and partners, including artists, arts/cultural and educational organizations and civil society activists.