



Portrait of Prem Krishnamurthy and Tina Kukielski. Photo by Sebastian Bach.

PREM KRISHNAMURTHY AND TINA KUKIELSKI NAMED CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS FOR 2021 EDITION OF FRONT INTERNATIONAL

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CLEVELAND, January 4, 2019 – Prem Krishnamurthy and Tina Kukielski have been named Co-Artistic Directors for the second edition of FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art, which will run from July 17 through October 2, 2021. FRONT is a contemporary art triennial based in Northeast Ohio that is a collaboration with the region’s major arts and culture institutions. The inaugural edition of FRONT in summer of 2018 enjoyed wide recognition and strong attendance.

Prem Krishnamurthy is a designer, exhibition maker, writer, and teacher who divides his time between Berlin and New York. As a founding principal at the award-winning design firm Project Projects and now partner and director at Wkshps, Prem has led strategic identity, exhibition, publishing, and interactive projects with artists, architects, museums, and non-profit institutions. As an independent exhibition maker, Krishnamurthy has curated and organized numerous exhibitions and projects at galleries, museums, and other institutions in the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Between 2012 and 2017 he founded and directed P!, the experimental “Mom-and-Pop-Kunsthalle” that was located in New York’s Chinatown.

Tina Kukielski is based in New York City where she is Executive Director and Chief Curator of Art21, a nonprofit art organization specializing in storytelling about contemporary art and producers of award-winning documentary films on

FRONT

FRONT International
Cleveland Triennial for
Contemporary Art

artists. Kukielski previously held curatorial positions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, and has independently curated exhibitions in Dubai, Milan, Naples, and Miami. She was a co-curator of the acclaimed 2013 *Carnegie International* with Daniel Baumann and Dan Byers.

“I am thrilled about beginning work on FRONT 2021 with Tina and Prem. I have immense admiration for their experience and talent and I know that they will bring tremendous energy to this project”, said Fred Bidwell, FRONT founder and Executive Director. “Even though we had incredible success this past summer, under the artistic direction of Michelle Grabner, it is not our intention to duplicate the experience. I know that this team will bring new ideas and perspectives to the exhibition in partnership with the curatorial teams of our Presenting Partner institutions.”

According to Tina Kukielski, “Having previously worked in Pittsburgh, I’m looking forward to returning to the region and, with Prem, exploring the potential of art in a time of immense change. Opportunities like those presented by FRONT 2021 are uniquely impactful for audiences locally and internationally. We are fortunate to have such impressive cultural partners in the Cleveland area and it is a pleasure to guide this project alongside them.”

“It is an incredible privilege to be named Co-Artistic Director with Tina Kukielski of the next FRONT International,” said Prem Krishnamurthy. “Now in its second edition, FRONT 2021 has the opportunity to rethink conventional approaches to contemporary exhibition making and artistic production. Given the pressures impacting Ohio, the United States, and the world, what will our collective futures look like? I’m eager to delve into such timely questions from a long-term perspective.”

PRESS INQUIRIES

Jennifer Joy
Sutton
jen@suttonpr.com
+1 212-202-3402

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NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Prem Krishnamurthy, Artistic Director

Prem Krishnamurthy is based in Berlin and New York City. His multidisciplinary work foregrounds contemporary and historical intersections of art, design, architecture, and writing; the politics of display and installation methods; and experimental institutional formats, exhibition models, and collaborative frameworks.

Krishnamurthy was a founding principal of design studio Project Projects, winner of the Cooper Hewitt's National Design Award, and is currently a partner and director of Wkshps, a multidisciplinary design workshop focusing on visual identities for cultural organizations and brands. Through his professional practice and teaching over the past fifteen years, he has championed graphic design's significant role in structuring narratives that shape a shared social context. Having led strategic identity, exhibition, publishing, and interactive projects with artists, architects, museums, and non-profit institutions, he is a member of the Creative Team for the *Carnegie International, 57th Edition, 2018*. In this role, his responsibilities include developing all editorial and design throughlines for the exhibition, publications, and communications.

As an independent exhibition maker, Krishnamurthy is an Artistic Director of *Ministry of Graphic Design*, the inaugural Fikra Graphic Design Biennial in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; co-curator of the 13th A.I.R. Biennial, New York; "Endless Exhibition Maker" at the new Kunsthall Gent; as well as curator of projects and programs such as *Container Artist Residency 01* and *Design and Empire [working title]*. He has collaborated closely with polymathic figures Brian O'Doherty (a.k.a. Patrick Ireland) and Elaine Lustig Cohen and has developed exhibitions, publications, and projects with Åbäke, Amie Siegel, Barbara Bloom, Céline Condorelli, Christine Hill, Christopher Kulendran Thomas, HOWDOYOU SAY AMINAFRICAN?, Judith Barry, Karel Martens, Katharina Grosse, Klaus Wittkugel, Maryam Jafri, Mathew Hale, Omer Fast, Sarah Oppenheimer, Wong Kit Yi, and many others. He has staged exhibitions at the Austrian Cultural Forum, New York; The Jewish Museum, New York; Para Site, Hong Kong; Stanley Picker Gallery at Kingston University London; and P!, the "Mom-and-Pop-Kunsthalle" that he founded and directed in New York's Chinatown from 2012–2017. In 2018, P! launched *K*, a yearlong "workshop for exhibition making" in Berlin-Schöneberg, established in collaboration with KW Institute for Contemporary Art.

Krishnamurthy has co-edited books such as *The Death of the Artist* (Cabinet Books, 2018), *Speculation, Now* (Duke University Press, 2015), *Draw It With Your Eyes Closed: The Art of the Art Assignment* (n+1 publishing, 2012), and *MATRIX/Berkeley: A Changing Exhibition of Contemporary Art* (D.A.P., 2009), and has written for various magazines, exhibition catalogues, and artist publications. His

first book, the experimental memoir/monograph/manifesto *P!DF*, was published by O-R-G in 2017.

Tina Kukielski, Artistic Director

Tina Kukielski is based in New York City. She is Executive Director and Chief Curator of Art21, a nonprofit art organization specializing in storytelling about contemporary art and producers of award-winning documentary films on artists. During her three-year tenure, Kukielski led the organization's digital transformation and has become Executive Producer of Art21's longest running TV program "Art in the Twenty-First Century" whose recent season featured artists Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg, Olafur Eliasson, David Goldblatt, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Zanele Muholi, Hiwa K, and the artists of Creative Growth Art Center, among others. As lead curator at Art21, Kukielski collaborates with all team members on the curatorial, production and digital teams identifying artists to be featured across all Art21 platforms, including its two digital shorts programs, its broadcast TV program, and its magazine.

Kukielski previously held curatorial positions at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, and has independently curated exhibitions in Dubai, Milan, Naples, and Miami. She was a co-curator of the acclaimed *2013 Carnegie International* with Daniel Baumann and Dan Byers, which brought together 35 established and emerging artists from 19 different countries, including Nicole Eisenman, Rokni Haerizadeh, Pedro Reyes, Mladen Stilinovic, Henry Taylor and others. One feature of the exhibition was a community project known as the Carnegie International Apartment where international artists intersected with Pittsburgh-based artists, filmmakers, and cultural producers. As lead curator on the Hillman Photography Initiative at the Carnegie from 2012–2014, Kukielski launched a number of digital initiatives and films series. In 2014, Kukielski co-produced a documentary film about Andy Warhol in partnership with artist Cory Arcangel documenting a digital conservation project which brought renewed attention to nearly forgotten artworks Warhol had made on an Amiga personal computer in 1985.

She has curated U.S. museum exhibitions with Arcangel, Sadie Benning, Antoine Catala, Omer Fast, Taryn Simon, and Sara VanDerBeek among others, as well as collection exhibitions at the Whitney and Carnegie. Other recent projects include co-curator of *Difference Engine* with Cory Arcangel (Lisson Gallery, NY 2018); Susan Te Kahurangi King (ICA Miami 2016); *The Drawings of Guo Fengyi* (Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, 2015); and *All Watched Over* (James Cohan Gallery, New York, 2015). She has written for catalogues like *Mass Effect: Internet Art in the 21st Century* (MIT Press, 2015); *2010 Whitney Biennial*; *The Hidden Art: 20th and 21st Century Self-Taught Artists* (Rizzoli, 2017); and numerous art magazines. She is currently writing a long-form essay on the self-taught artist James Castle.



FRONT International
Cleveland Triennial for
Contemporary Art

About FRONT

FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art is a triennial exhibition comprised of artist commissions, performances, films, and public programs that launched its inaugural edition in July of 2018. The first Artistic Director of FRONT in 2018 was Michelle Grabner, a renowned artist, educator, and curator based in Chicago and Milwaukee.

The inaugural edition of FRONT, titled *An American City*, presented work by more than 120 artists from around the world in 28 institutions and unconventional spaces across Northeast Ohio. Many of the projects and installations were commissioned for the exhibition. Over 90,000 visitors from more than 25 countries generated \$31 million in new economic activity for the region.

The second edition of FRONT will take place in Cleveland and Northeast Ohio in summer 2021.

Fred Bidwell, Executive Director

Fred Bidwell is a philanthropist, collector and community leader. After a 35-year career as an advertising and marketing entrepreneur, in 2011, he and his wife established the Fred and Laura Ruth Bidwell Foundation. In 2013, they founded the Transformer Station, a contemporary art space on Cleveland's West Side. Transformer Station alternates between acting as a venue for exhibitions curated by the Bidwells from their renowned collection of photo-based contemporary art and as a venue for exhibitions organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art. Fred Bidwell served twice as board president of the Akron Art Museum and is currently on the board of the Cleveland Museum of Art and on the Visiting Committee of the Allen Memorial Art Museum.

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