

## PRESS RELEASE

# Çağla Ilk appointed curator of the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2024

## Director of the Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden takes charge of the German Pavilion

Stuttgart/Berlin, 1 March 2023 –

**Çağla Ilk, co-director of the Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, has been unanimously selected by a committee of experts from art theory and practice to be curator of the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale 2024.**

A curator and architect, Çağla Ilk was born in Istanbul (Turkey). She studied architecture at the Technical University of Berlin and at the Mimar Sinan University of Istanbul. Since 2020, she has been co-director of the Staatliche Kunsthalle Baden-Baden with Misal Adnan Yildiz. From 2012 to 2020, Ilk was dramaturge and curator at the Maxim Gorki Theatre. She works in a transdisciplinary way that encompasses the visual arts, architecture, sound, theatre and performance.



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**Commenting on her appointment, Çağla Ilk says:** “At a time when wars, man-made natural disasters and authoritarianism are increasingly revealing the state of crisis in our societies, it is more important than ever to question our previous way of life, which has been shaped by nation-state thinking, and to develop new ways of living together. I can’t think of a better place to do this than the German Pavilion, because it stands for a critical examination of German history and for a long tradition of groundbreaking artistic works. Against this backdrop, I want to harness art’s potential to change society in order to shape a new common future. I would like to thank the selection committee, ifa and the German Foreign Office for the trust they have placed in me and look forward to pursuing this path together.”

The Biennale Arte di Venezia is one of the leading international exhibitions of contemporary art. As commissioner, ifa is responsible for the German contribution, which has been coordinated and realised by ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen since 1971. For the first time, this year’s curator was appointed based on the recommendation of a selection committee set up by ifa and the German Foreign Office.

**ifa Secretary-General Gitte Zschoch comments:** “We’re delighted that a distinguished jury of experts with a diverse network has unanimously nominated the outstanding curator Çağla Ilk. The jury represents the art sector in its multitude of spheres and networks. By setting up this new selection committee, we have taken a major step forward in ensuring greater transparency and fairness in the process of appointing a curator.”

**Ralf Beste, Head of the Department for Culture and Society at the German Foreign Office comments:** “Çağla Ilk is an interdisciplinary curator who addresses the pressing issues of our time and their implications for the future. We are very much looking forward to her presentation at the German Pavilion.”

### **About the German Pavilion**

The Venice Biennale is one of the leading international exhibitions of contemporary art. As a commissioner, ifa is responsible for implementing the German contribution. Since 2023, the curator has been appointed by a selection committee. In 2023 the committee was made up as follows: Elena Agudio (Villa Romana), Nevin Aladağ (artist), Ralf Beste (German Foreign Office), Till Fellrath (Hamburger Bahnhof – Nationalgalerie der Gegenwart, Berlin), Kito Nedo (journalist), Susanne Pfeffer (MMK Frankfurt am Main), Stephanie Rosenthal (Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Projects), Joanna Warsza (CuratorsLab), Franciska Zólyom (Galerie für Zeitgenössische Kunst Leipzig) and Gitte Zschoch (ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen).

Since 1971, ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen has coordinated and realised Germany’s contribution to the Venice Art Biennale (until 2022 on behalf of the German Foreign Office on a project basis, since 2023 as part of the institutional portfolio). Artists such as Gerhard Richter, Joseph Beuys, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Hans Haacke, Nam June Paik, Katharina Fritsch, Rosemarie Trockel, Martin Kippenberger, Candida Höfer, Tino Sehgal, Isa Genzken, Ai Weiwei, Anne Imhof, and most recently Maria Eichhorn have been featured at the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale. To date, the German entry has won seven Golden Lions, including four for best national entry: 1984 Lothar Baumgarten and A. R. Penck (commissioner: Johannes Cladders), 1986 Sigmar Polke (commissioner: Dierk Stemmler), 1993 Hans Haacke and Nam June Paik (commissioner: Klaus Bußmann), 2001 Gregor Schneider (commissioner: Udo Kittelmann), 2011 Christoph Schlingensiefel (curator: Susanne Gaensheimer), and 2017 Anne Imhof (curator: Susanne Pfeffer).

### **About ifa**

ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen works with partners worldwide to promote freedom in the arts, research and civil society. It gives a voice to activists, artists and scientists, promotes cooperation. In the field of contemporary art, ifa promotes exhibitions by artists living in Germany and is involved in international networks and academic discussions on art and culture. Through its exhibition funding programme, ifa enables artists to participate in biennials worldwide and helps artists from developing and transition countries to participate in biennials in Germany.

ifa is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, the state of Baden-Württemberg and the state capital Stuttgart. [www.ifa.de](http://www.ifa.de)

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