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### **Curator trio *Raqs Media Collective* from Delhi designs the opening exhibition of the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna for its return to Schillerplatz in autumn 2021**

The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna is pleased to have won over the internationally active Indian curator trio *Raqs Media Collective* for its opening exhibition after the relocation back to Schillerplatz in autumn 2021. Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula and Shuddhabrata Sengupta have been invited not only to take an external look at the Academy's collections and to accompany their thematic reorientation, but also to relate them to current contemporary art.

The opening exhibition in autumn 2021, offers the Academy, in cooperation with *Raqs Media Collective*, the opportunity to present the Academy's historical art collections in a reconfiguration developed through a collaboration with the Academy's own expertise, while taking the current decolonialism discourse in art and cultural studies into account. Thus, connections are to be located and re-established between the holdings of the historical collections of the Paintings Gallery and the Graphic Collection and the contemporary artistic work at the Academy. The collective works across media in the fields of installation, sculpture, video, performance as well as text and lexica. The members see their artistic and curatorial work at the interface of contemporary art, philosophical speculation and historical debate.

"From the collaboration with *Raqs Media Collective*, I expect an outside view of the academy – its collections, its history, but also its present, in order to set relevant new accents for further internal development. In addition to a clear geographical focus in Central and Eastern Europe, the Academy intends to further expand international cooperation with countries in the Global South and the North Atlantic region. The aim is to contrast the strongly Eurocentric view of the art scene with perspectives from the constructed periphery", rector Johan Hartle explains.

*Raqs Media Collective* also sees the "ways in which the world has made sense and cohered itself over the last few centuries" in upheaval. Art and artists now have the chance to "show new ways in which the world can be perceived by many different kinds of protagonists". "The Collection of an Academy is an intensive site where the sediments of history, and the stubborn narratives that accompany them, congeal. The task of prising them open to critical re-apprehension is both urgent and possible. We are excited to be part of this process with the faculty and students of the Academy in Vienna," says the team of curators from Delhi.

#### **Press Photo:**



Jeebesh Bagchi (rear left), Monica Narula (front), Shuddhabrata Sengupta (rear right), Photo: KATO Hajime, courtesy Yokohama Triennale 2020

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