

PRESS RELEASE

EXPO-2017 – The first world exhibition in Central Asia is still open until 10 September

Future Energy with extensive art and cultural program

(Astana / 4 September 2017) The first EXPO on Asian soil is in its final stage. It deals with one of the current biggest challenges facing mankind – the energy supply of tomorrow. In addition to scientific topics, an extensive art and cultural program is on offer at the Astana Contemporary Art Center. More than 100 country pavilions and theme pavilions such as the Cirque du Soleil, the Astana Contemporary Art Center (ACAC) with the Creative Energy Area (CEA) and the Energy Best Practice Area (EPA) can still be visited until 10 September in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan.

An interview with Jama Nurkalieva, Art & Education Program Manager Astana EXPO-2017:

What can you strongly recommend to spontaneous travellers who still want to visit the world exhibition in Astana?

Jama Nurkalieva: “We can only suggest to hurry up in order not to miss this once-in-a-lifetime event in the young capital of Kazakhstan, which is celebrating its 20th birthday this year. It is the mixture of futuristic architecture in town and on the EXPO fair ground, the very special atmosphere which is not comparable with other destinations around the world and the enthusiasm of all parties and team members involved. The Astana EXPO-2017 in all its variety is an outstanding experience with emotions you cannot forget.”

Why should passionate art lovers and culture enthusiasts who usually visit the Biennale in Venice or the Documenta in Kassel come to Astana before the end of EXPO-2017?

Jama Nurkalieva: “First of all it is necessary to say that the EXPO-2017 in general is not specialized in art, like the Biennale or the Documenta. However, talking about the Astana Contemporary Art Center (ACAC), it is important to say that this project has been established within the brand policy of the EXPO with the strong wish to give the ACAC a future life after expo. We succeeded in having in one art exhibition center two cultural institutions, the Rmn-Grand Palais from Paris and the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art from Moscow. This is quite a new format and has been done on purpose because with them we wanted to make a big statement in contemporary art with international importance. With the high level expertise of Rmn-Grand Palais we show the exhibition ARTISTS & ROBOTS featuring the most influential contemporary artists in this field and the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art – the most hype cultural institution nowadays– established a very sophisticated, but easy to understand art program for a wide audience. It was our goal to make people comfortable who might have not been in contact with the current art yet. With the help of these institutions, we created an atmosphere to ensure that most of our visitors came back.”

It was a vision to continue the exploration of contemporary art and culture taking place at the EXPO 2017 at the Astana Contemporary Art Center ACAC after the end of the world exhibition.

EXPO-2017 evoked many magical moments in Astana, in collaboration with internationally renowned museums in Paris and Moscow, the Rmn-Grand Palais and the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, under the leadership of the creative agency Avantgarde as the main contractor.

What does this international cultural exchange mean for the social development of your country?

Jama Nurkalieva: “We are geographically and politically different from the European culture, but we are sort of in the same world of aesthetics and we are at the edge between tradition and innovation. However, this is not only an inner topic of Kazakhstan. The constant cultural exchange is important for everyone and with the EXPO-2017 we enhanced the global dialogue and interaction with the world. Especially in art, in the collaboration with international professionals it is so important to listen, hear and gather all the ideas and people together to exchange and then to enrich the experience and investigate it. And, finally, to think about it and put it in a different context, which is a main idea of the EXPO-2017.”

The Moscow Garage Museum developed an extensive children's and inclusion program, for example for the blind and the deaf. How was it accepted?

Jama Nurkalieva: “It was absolutely successful – the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art established a unique education and inclusive program, the program has been received very well, with a huge outcome and feedback. All of us who work with Garage on this program are completely satisfied and I think our audience and we all understand that this is just the beginning of something new and big, and thanks to Garage it happened.”

What is your general conclusion shortly before the end of the EXPO 2017?

Jama Nurkalieva: “Thanks to Astana EXPO-2017 that Astana Contemporary Art Center (ACAC) project could be realized and I am personally very thankful to work as a organizer of this project. It is the first attempt at establishing a contemporary art center within the current understanding of modern museums’ ideas. I probably had to doubt that our audience is ready to accept or understand the conceptual approach, but to my great, great pleasure we got such positive feedback from all over. What is most important to me is that everything we imagined came true and I sincerely hope that the story of the ACAC will go on.”

About Avantgarde

Avantgarde is an international creative agency, founded in Munich in 1985. According to its claim “Creating Fans” over 500 employees in ten international offices develop integrated brand experiences that create excitement and spark conversations around the world. Apart from its headquarters in Munich, the agency operates offices in Berlin, Dresden and Cologne, as well as Dubai, London, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Vienna and Zurich

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Captions Avantgarde | Expo 2017-09- Open until 10 September

01 Art & Education Program Manager Astana EXPO-2017

Jama Nurkalieva is thankful to work as a curator and organizer of the Astana Contemporary Art Center. She recommends spontaneous travellers to hurry up and visit the first world exhibition on Asian soil.

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02 Cultural exchange with Avantgarde

The Cirque du Soleil team of EXPO-2017 visited the Astana Contemporary Art Center and made a stop-over at the artwork of Austrian artist Peter Kogler.

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03 Cultural exchange with Avantgarde

An extensive art and cultural program is on offer at the Astana Contemporary Art Center and the Creative Energy area, including parties not only for visitors but for all staff members as well.

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04 Robotic art at the Astana Contemporary Art Center

The most influential contemporary artists in robotic art present their works in the exhibition ARTISTS & ROBOTS at the EXPO-2017. Among them, from left to right, Lionel Moura, Miguel Chavalier, Raquel Kogan, Jacobo Baboni, Elias Crespín, with Jama Nurkalieva.

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05 Art education at the Astana Contemporary Art Center

The Garage Museum, Moscow, established a sophisticated but easy to understand art program for a wide audience. The goal was to make people comfortable who might have not been in contact with the current art yet.

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