

Therme Art Program Announces Partnership with Design Miami/ 2018

Therme Group™ set to co-host the esteemed Talks at Design Miami/ 2018 focusing on human-centered, “thermal” design and to commission Francis Kéré to design the Talks Theater

Basel, June 14, 2018 – Following the successful launch and implementation of the **Therme Art Program in October 2017**, the Therme Group™ announces its partnership this December with Design Miami/, the international and globally recognized forum for contemporary and historic design. Therme Group™, the technology-driven health and wellness company focused on human-centered, thermal design will serve as partner and co-host of Design Miami’s esteemed Talks Theater, presenting discussions on the design world’s most compelling current topics.

Therme Group™ will also commission famed architect Francis Kéré to create the layout of the Talks Theater, thus creating a more holistic context for the program, which will bring together leaders in the world of design that actively influence the field’s discourse and production. Taking place this December 2018, Design Miami/ will bring together the most influential collectors, gallerists, designers, curators and critics from around the world in celebration of design culture and commerce, and those participating in the Talks Theater events will offer insight into what drives creative output, criticism and the market.

Through the Therme Art Program, Therme Group™ is creating environments where art intersects with built and environmental architecture, opening up opportunities for artists, designers and architects to push the boundaries of their imaginations in order to create new forms of spaces for viewers to have a heightened sensorial experience. Therme Group™ has long shared these affinities along with its interest in creativity and innovation, making it a natural partner for Design Miami/.

“We see design in its broader dimension, in accordance with our company’s strong belief in the connection between ethics and aesthetics. We want to connect conversations around the design of objects, architectural strategies and urban planning, because all of these provide a framework for human interactions and relationships. This human dimension is exactly what the architecture of Francis Kéré represents for us.” – Mikolaj Sekutowicz, Therme Art Program Curator and Senior Vice President, Therme Group™

“Now, more than ever, we need design solutions to help us reconnect with our own bodies, natural rhythms and emotions. I see the Therme Art Program as a place where people can do this, where design is providing a pathway to self-care.” – Rodman Primack, Design Miami/, Chief Creative Officer

“Culture is timeless. We want to give artists platforms and we want to give society a platform to engage with ideas, to engage with the work, and to think about what the future can be. We believe that Design Miami/ has the correct platform to address and debate interdisciplinary and holistic approaches to these topics.” Dr. Robert C. Hanea, Therme Group™, Chairman of the Board

Therme Group™’s aims are to serve as a catalyst for ongoing research and dialogue focused on further developing the Therme Art Program projects as well as to bring together visual artists, designers, scientists, philosophers, architects and engineers to discuss the possibilities of realigning the future of architecture and city developments with the human body.

All future commissioned projects of Therme Art Program will be part of Therme Group™’s ongoing investment plans in various cities throughout North America, Asia and Europe. The Therme Art Program is working with internationally renowned artists as well as emerging talents to develop site-specific projects that will redefine how contemporary art can be viewed.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**About Therme Art Program**

Launched at the Royal Institution in London during the Frieze Academy Art & Architecture Conference in October 2017, the Therme Art Program is an innovative art initiative dedicated to supporting large-scale, complex artworks. Its mission is to fulfill artists' visions that cannot be realized in galleries or museum spaces—no matter how complex their production, installation and long-term maintenance may be. The program wishes to grant artists full access to the Therme Group™'s facilities and thus enable the creation of a significant and long-lasting cultural legacy, as thermal baths have been doing since Roman times. Historically, Roman baths were accessible, social and egalitarian settings. Drawing on this tradition, the Therme Group™'s new projects will allow artworks to reach a diverse public outside the familiar white walls of the museum or gallery.

The Therme Art Program aims to challenge the limitations of conventional art spaces, whether it be playing with the architectural elements of a space, creating entire ecosystems, immersive installations or designing sauna environments that transform the visitors' experience.

About Therme Group™

Therme Group™ is a leading global technology company and integrator of wellness and entertainment concepts focused on revolutionizing the wellbeing industry. The Therme Group™ is an internationally active trademark dedicated to planning, building and operating the most technologically advanced wellness and relaxation facilities in the world. Therme Group™ aims to support the international art community through various aspects of their new art initiative, the Therme Art Program.

About Design Miami/

Design Miami/ is the global forum for design. Each fair brings together the most influential collectors, gallerists, designers, curators, and critics from around the world in celebration of design culture and commerce. Occurring alongside the Art Basel fairs in Miami, Florida, each December and Basel, Switzerland, each June, Design Miami/ has become the premier venue for collecting, exhibiting, discussing, and creating collectible design.

About Francis Kéré

Diébédo Francis Kéré was born in 1965 in Gando, Burkina Faso and studied at the Technical University of Berlin. Parallel to his studies, he established the Kéré Foundation (formerly Schulbausteine für Gando e.V.), and in 2005 he founded Kéré Architecture.

His architectural practice has been recognized nationally and internationally with awards including the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (2004) for his first building, a primary school in Gando, Burkina Faso. Kéré has undertaken projects in varied countries including Burkina Faso, Mali, Germany and Switzerland. He has held professorships at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and the Swiss Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio). In 2017 he accepted the professorship for "Architectural Design and Participation" at TU München (Germany).

Kéré continues to reinvest knowledge back into Burkina Faso and other sites across four different continents. He has developed innovative construction strategies that combine traditional building techniques and materials with modern engineering methods.

Kéré's work has recently been the subject of solo exhibitions at the Architecture Museum in Munich and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (both in 2016) and his work has been selected for group exhibitions such as: *Small Scale, Big Change: New Architectures of Social Engagement*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010) and *Sensing Spaces, at the Royal Academy*, London (2014).

Francis Kéré was the seventeenth architect to accept the Serpentine Galleries' invitation to design a temporary Serpentine Pavilion on its grounds.