



Dear Fiac and Paris Photo audiences,

As you may have read in the press, on December 8th, an open call for applications was announced by the Rmn-Grand Palais (Rmn-GP) for the organization of two art fairs and the allocation of the Grand Palais Ephémère (GPE) and the Grand Palais on the Champs-Élysées. The purpose of this initiative is to allocate the usual dates of the FIAC and Paris Photo in two separate lots, one for the organization of an "international contemporary art event" (in October) and the other for a "photography event" (in November) for the next seven years.

The Rmn-GP bases its action on the reception of a spontaneous expression of interest by an unidentified third party, without any consultation whatsoever with us, its occupant and historical partner for decades. We find this decision totally incomprehensible in several respects and are deeply concerned for the future of the two historic French art fairs as well as the repercussions for the numerous actors in the sector, for whom the fairs are a driving force.

Officially, the Rmn-GP's justifies this open call on the absence of a contract duly signed between RX France for the Grand Palais Ephémère for 2022 and 2023 ; this, however, does not stand up to scrutiny.

On the one hand, the months of October and November the GPE has been allocated to hosting the FIAC and Paris Photo since 2018, the year the city of Paris granted the concession of the Champs de Mars for the construction of the GPE. The precise dates of 2022 and 2023 have, moreover, been confirmed to RX France on several occasions directly by the Rmn-GP.

On the other hand, the complexity of the GPE and even more so of the complementary building (the Galerie Eiffel) required long months of negotiations in 2021, both for technical and commercial reasons. The usual three-year contracts were suspended and replaced by annual contracts. The 2021 contract was signed later than usual, to allow time to finalize all the commercial terms and conditions to ensure the best possible cost control and to minimize the impact on our exhibitors, partners and audiences. All this in a context of great uncertainty associated with the evolution of the health situation. We were in the process of finalizing the contract for 2022.

Our incomprehension also stems from the terms of this call for proposals. The deadline for proposals was ridiculously short – a 3 week delay, and the eve of the end-of-year holidays - and inversely proportional to the duration and the considerable - and unusual - amount of investment at stake: 7 years and a minimum firm commitment of 20 million euros.

We therefore responded urgently to this call for proposals for the two lots, despite our opposition to its merit, in order to protect our rights.

It is obvious that such a project from the third party in question required months of preparation and good knowledge of the particular context linked to the Rmn-GP and its calendar. Also, the speed of publication of such a call for proposals, the extremely short deadline for a response, as well as the Rmn-GP's positioning cited in the columns of a major daily newspaper according to which "it is perhaps necessary to rethink new exhibitions", all raise questions for us.

It is too early to know, with certainty, the name of this mystery third party, but it is not difficult to assume that it is a professional with the necessary experience to organize art fairs of this level and sufficient financial resources.

If this third party turns out to have a significant presence in the field of international art fairs, the question would then arise, if it were chosen by the Rmn-GP, concerning the future of the diversity of offers and the risks inherent in any monopolization that could affect, in the short or medium term, all the actors of the art sector.

As you know, whether at FIAC or Paris Photo, we have always been committed to offering a panorama of contemporary art and photography that is as broad and diverse as possible.

Our ambition is and will remain to support the presence of as many different galleries as possible (young or established, French or international, small or large, from all sectors, for all visitors) and by developing new segments or sectors.

This support has notably been reflected in moderate increases in booth fees (+3% in 2021 despite the significant increase in the GPE), full reimbursement of booths in 2020, and unprecedented support measures in 2015 during the early closure of Paris Photo. As for the future, we intend to maintain the same state of mind and continue to apply participation conditions with discernment and moderation.

We will not let FIAC and Paris Photo, which have been French flagships for several decades and are renowned throughout the world, and which bring Paris and France to the forefront of the world cultural and artistic scene, disappear.

We will not let ourselves be robbed of the historic dates of FIAC and Paris Photo. We owe it to our exhibitors and partners, but we also owe it to all the actors of our eco-system, committed and involved, with whom close relations have been woven for many years, to put forward the best of art and make it known to the greatest number.

For your information, from a legal point of view, we have already initiated a suspension action before the administrative court of Paris in order to obtain from the Rmn-GP the resumption of contractual relations. Depending on how the situation develops, other legal actions may be considered before the competent courts.

We sincerely hope that it will not come to this and that we will be able to resume discussions with the Rmn-Gp.

If you wish to contact us to set up an appointment, you can reach Joanna Pazdur at +33(0)147565141 or [joanna.pazdur@rxglobal.com](mailto:joanna.pazdur@rxglobal.com).

You can also exchange with us or send us your questions to one of the following addresses: [michel.vilair@rxglobal.com](mailto:michel.vilair@rxglobal.com), [florence.bourgeois@rxglobal.com](mailto:florence.bourgeois@rxglobal.com), [jennifer.flay@rxglobal.com](mailto:jennifer.flay@rxglobal.com), [katherine.colin@rxglobal.com](mailto:katherine.colin@rxglobal.com).

We take this opportunity to wish you an excellent year in 2022, marked - we hope - by the pleasure of a renewed unrestrained in-person exchange and the full recovery of your activity.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the Grand Palais Ephémère.

Michel Filzi



President of RX France