

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen

Member of the European Parliament for SF in Greens/European Free Alliance

Dear Bonhams,

We are pleased to invite you for a debate at the EU Parliament on March 20th, from 11:00 to 13:00.

The discussion will focus on art censorship in Hong Kong, and we will be addressing the responsibility of Western companies operating in Hong Kong.

We have invited a diverse panel, including art critics, artists, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), market experts, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to contribute their perspectives, and we believe your input is crucial to getting the full understanding and to comprehend the dilemmas faced by the art market.

The debate:

March 20th, 11.00-13.00: Hong Kong's Art Censorship, Western Responsibility, Collapse of the Art Market.

- Political Art Censorship in China and Hong Kong as a way of oppression.
 - Incl. firsthand accounts by artists.
- What role do Western Auction Houses play in political art censorship in Hong Kong?
- Can the Western Art Market accept that its auction houses perform political art censorship in Hong Kong?
- Is Hong Kong's Art Market about to Collapse? If so, will it create a Domino Effect?

Background for the Debate:

We observe with concern the increasing pressure on human rights in Hong Kong, particularly within its art scene, where political art censorship is on the rise while local artists have to leave the country.

Hong Kong is Asia's largest art market, with Western auction houses playing central roles. While the art market was once open, recent years have seen challenges in finding art that questions China's political agenda. Hong Kong's national security law makes it uncertain to handle art that does not fall inside the government's vaguely defined norms.

The dilemma faced by art dealers and auction houses is substantial. To practice political art (self)censorship or to stand for freedom of expression and insist that Hong Kong remains a place with civil liberties.

With the invitation, we invite you to share your assessment of the situation in Hong Kong and the possibilities and limitations for critical art sales, exhibitions, and production. Additionally, we encourage you to share your thoughts on companies' responsibilities and dilemmas regarding this issue.

We hope that a representative from your firm will participate in the debate. Your insights and concerns are essential to us.

Attached you will find an introduction to the exhibition and debates, as well as a list of participators in the debates.

Best regards,

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen Member of the European Parliament since 2019

