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BP to End Tate Sponsorship, Budget Cuts for Qatar Museums, and More

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The Tate Britain
(morebyless/flickr)

— **BP to End Tate Sponsorship:** BP is to end its sponsorship of Tate next year, after 26 years of funding the British museum. The oil firm cites the “extremely challenging business environment” amidst 7,000 job cuts and plummeting oil prices — not the relentless pressure from protestors over the past years. Nevertheless, the art collective **Liberate Tate** claims the termination of the relationship as its own victory. “We’re thrilled with the news Tate is rid of BP,” said group member **Yasmin De Silva**. “About 30 years ago, the tide turned on tobacco sponsorship, and now the same thing is happening to the oil industry. Of course Tate won’t rub it in BP’s face by acknowledging this decision is the result of the increasing public concern about climate change and the huge number of artists, members, and gallery-goers speaking out against the controversial deal.” [[Independent](#), [Guardian](#), [WSJ](#)]

— **Qatar Makes Massive Cuts in Culture Budget:** A sharp dip in global oil prices has coincided with budget cuts by **Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani**, the emir of Qatar. Hundreds of

staff members at museums across the Gulf State have recently been laid off, and multiple planned construction projects — including a children’s museum, an Orientalist art museum, and a pearl museum — have been put on hold indefinitely. “Sheikh Tamim Al Thani is looking at everything and cutting costs everywhere, but it doesn’t seem very structured or thought out,” an anonymous source commented. Many believe that the 2022 **World Cup**, which Qatar was controversially awarded to host, has taken precedence over all other spending. [[TAN](#)]

— **Critics Object to [Bjarne Melgaard](#)’s Death House:** [Bjarne Melgaard](#)’s “A House to Die In” is not endearing him to his new neighbors in a forest near Oslo, which [Edvard Munch](#) painted in his life. To be precise, critics are objecting to the black, angular conceptual art project/building with its glowing red interior for sullyng the ground once trodden by the painter of “The Scream.” But, Melgaard retorts, he is “planning something that adds to the neighborhood, not hurts it,” saying it would be a major boon for the artistic community there. [[TAN](#)]

— **Gagosian and Berggruen to Open Neighboring Galleries in San Francisco:** **Larry Gagosian** and **John Berggruen** have both acquired locations near the recently renovated **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**. Gagosian’s 16th outpost is slated to open in May, while Berggruen will have his first show in October. About the simultaneous move, Berggruen said, “The two galleries establish a small but significant critical mass.” [[SFGate](#), [Artnet](#), [ARTnews](#)]



— **KW Institute for Contemporary Art Appoints New Director:** **Krist Gruijthuijsen** has been appointed as the new director at Berlin’s **KW Institute for Contemporary Art**. He will be leaving his post as artistic director at **Grazer Kunstverein** and begin his tenure in July, following the closing of the **Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art**. [[Artforum](#)]

— **University of Iowa Severs Ties With Private Museum Donors:** A new building for the **University of Iowa’s Museum of Art** will no longer be funded in part by the **Hieronimus family**, the **Hodge Group**, and **Mortenson Construction**, following meetings held by senior administration at the university. The \$80 million project began as a result of flooding in 2008 that drove the collection out of its previous home. New funding plans have not yet been specified. [[Iowa City Press-Citizen](#), [Artforum](#)]

— **Bonhams** has appointed **Edward Wilkinson** as executive director of Asia and **Ingrid Dudek** as head of Modern and Contemporary art of Asia. [[AD](#)]

— Sketches from a WWII POW camp. [[NYT](#)]

— **Sasha Baron Cohen** on why he pulled out of the **Freddie Mercury** biopic. [[Pitchfork](#)]