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Australian curator to head M+ Museum in Hong Kong



Australian museum director Suhanya

Raffel will leave the Sydney art world to head the forthcoming **M+ Museum** in Hong Kong, it was announced. Raffel will succeed previous executive director Lars Nittve, who left in January. She has signed up for a five-year contract and will assume office on November 1st.

The move might appear to be a step forward for the career of Raffel, who is currently the deputy director and director of collections of the **Art Gallery of New South Wales**. But becoming the executive director of the HK\$5 billion (US\$640 million) museum of visual culture will not be without its challenges. Both the local cultural sector and the increasingly politicized society of Hong Kong have contributed to the number of

difficulties that have faced M+ thus far in its development.

The board of the West Kowloon Cultural District, where M+ will be located, praised Raffel's vast experience in the art world and her longstanding involvement in Asian art. Raffel said she has been following the progress of M+ since its inception, adding that the museum, which will encompass 20th- and 21st-century art, design, architecture, and moving image, "reflects the local understanding of Hong Kong as a global city."

Raffel has more than two decades of experience in museums and curatorship under her belt. She began her career at the Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) in 1994. She remained there until 2013 as the acting director, before joining the Art Gallery of New South Wales. She has led the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art since 2002 and took the helm of building the Asia Pacific collection and the China Project at the Queensland institution.

Read [full article on ARTSY](#) and news item on [ArtForum](#)



[mplus-building-with-csf-1200px-jpg](#)

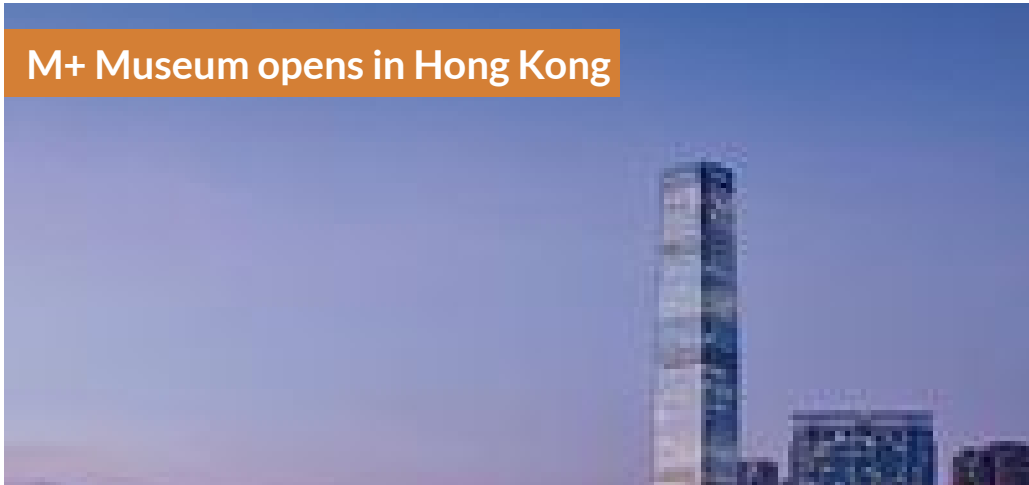
Following an international competition, the celebrated Swiss architecture firm of Herzog & de Meuron, working with Hong Kong-based TFP Farrells and Ove Arup & Partners HK, has been selected to design the **M+ building**. Scheduled for opening in 2019, the approximately 60,000 square metres gross floor area scheme will create an iconic presence for M+, and Hong Kong, on the museum's site overlooking Victoria Harbour. A strikingly slim, semi-transparent vertical plane, housing education facilities, a public restaurant and museum offices, will rise atop an impressive horizontal slab offering a diversity of well-considered gallery spaces. At ground and lower levels, generous access will be provided to the park and other West Kowloon Cultural District facilities, alongside a public resource centre, theatres, retail and dining, and back-of-house functions. Of particular note, Herzog & de Meuron—who are also known for their Tate Modern museum in London, Beijing's Bird's Nest stadium and other notable designs—have firmly anchored the M+ building on its reclaimed-land site, excavating a new "found space" for largescale installations from around the existing Airport Express train tunnel that runs underneath.

Top image: Suhanya Raffel will take up the post of executive director of the M+ museum in Hong Kong in November. West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

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