



[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / May 9<sup>th</sup> 2018]

**Eva Franch appointed new Director of the Architectural Association**

**London, UK – The Architectural Association announces the appointment of Eva Franch i Gilabert as the Director of the Architectural Association, effective July 1, 2018.**

Franch is the ninth director of the Architectural Association in its 171 year history and the first woman to be elected and appointed Director of the school. Franch succeeds Brett Steele who left his post in 2017 and Samantha Hardingham, who is currently serving as Interim Director.

Elected by the AA School Community, comprising students, academic and administrative staff, and members of Council in March 2018, Eva Franch i Gilabert was selected from a shortlist of three candidates to lead the AA School following a worldwide search.

Her majority vote of 67% represented the largest in a contested election since 1990. A total of 876 members of the School Community voted, representing a turnout of 81.3%, one of the highest levels of participation in Director elections in the last 30 years.

In her statement to the school Franch wrote *“More than a school, throughout its history the Architectural Association has been the referent—when not the origin—for the production of relevant forms of inquiry, discourse, and radical practice in architecture schools, cultural institutions, and architecture firms worldwide.”*

*“I am honoured to be entrusted with the privilege to develop a pedagogical and cultural project at the Architectural Association today”* says Franch. *“I look forward to building upon the incredible legacy of my predecessors, to work together with the AA Council, staff, students, members, alumni and the extensive AA network in London and abroad to contribute back to a world that needs new referents, new histories, and new ideas.”*

David Porter, the President of the AA Council comments: *“I am delighted that Eva Franch has agreed to serve as the next Director of the AA at this important moment. Eva was elected from an extremely strong list of international candidates and understands the importance of bringing the AA community together to build a shared vision for the future.”* He also added *“I and my fellow members of the AA Council would also like to express our sincere gratitude to interim School Director, Samantha Hardingham, who has steered the school through a period of significant challenge with the utmost dedication and professionalism.”*

From the students of the AA *“Eva’s recognition of and engagement with the student body lead to her enjoying the overwhelming support of its student members. The mandate she received during the election is a positive sign of things to come.”*

## **Notes to Editors**

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## **About Eva Franch i Gilabert**

Franch is an architect and has been Chief Curator and Executive Director of Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York for the past seven years. She has lectured internationally on art, architecture, and the importance of alternative practices in the construction and understanding of public life. In 2014, Franch, with the project OfficeUS, an experimental office for the production of history, ideas and work, was selected by the US State Department to represent the United States at the XIV Venice Architecture Biennale. Her latest book, published in 2017, *OfficeUS Manual*, explores the structures of labour and production within architecture offices. Franch is currently a professor at The Cooper Union School of Architecture. She has taught at IUAV Venice and GSAPP, and held the positions of Reyner Banham Fellow at SUNY Buffalo, and the Wortham Fellow at Rice University. Franch has served as advisor, juror, and visiting critic at institutions around the world.

After thirteen years in the US, Franch will relocate to London for her new role.

## **About the AA**

The Architectural Association is the oldest independent school of architecture in the world. Established in 1847 by students, the AA has been located in London's Bedford Square since 1917, and at Hooke Park, a rural campus in a 350 acre woodland in Dorset, since 2002.

The Architectural Association is home to 728 students, 242 teaching staff and 110 administrative staff over two campuses and in addition operates in over 35 Visiting School locations around the world. 7,000 members and alumni world-wide participate in the educational and public benefit activities of the Association, which includes an extensive public programme of special events, evening lectures, exhibitions and publications related to contemporary architectural culture, cities and the built environment.

For many decades considered a world leader in architectural education, AA graduates are today known as world-wide leaders in the profession, education, and many associated creative fields. They include Pritzker Prize laureates, winners of the RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects Gold Medal and Stirling Prize for Architecture, Young Architect of the Year awards, as well as many other UK and international prizes, and the school's graduates and former teachers lead offices at the forefront of UK and global practice.

Notable alumni and former teachers include David Adjaye, Will Alsop, Ron Arad, Ben van Berkel, Neave Brown, David Chipperfield, Jane Drew, Nicholas Grimshaw, Michael and Patty Hopkins, Steven Holl, Zaha Hadid, Eva Jiricna, Julia King, Rem Koolhaas, Amanda Levete, Neri Oxman, Cedric Price, Richard Rogers, Denise Scott-Brown, Bernard Tschumi and Eyal Weizman among many others.

For further information on the Architectural Association please visit

<http://www.aaschool.ac.uk/>

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