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PRESS RELEASE

## Luca Massimo Barbero is the curator of the Art Studio, an art space that dialogues with social issues, in the Home of The Human Safety Net at the Procuratie Vecchie in Venice

- Arthur Duff's new exhibition will open on 15 April with the work 'The Hungriest Eye. The Blossoming of Potential'

Venice – The historian and art critic **Luca Massimo Barbero** has been named as the curator of the **Art Studio** inside the Procuratie Vecchie, Venice. His work will connect art and social issues within the Home of The Human Safety Net (THSN).

For the next two years, the collaboration will see him involved in a curatorial project to translate the mission of The Human Safety Net through an original and innovative vision. Active in 24 countries, THSN is a movement of people who help free the potential of others who live in vulnerable conditions through programmes for families with children aged 0-6 and the inclusion of refugees through work and entrepreneurship.

The **Art Studio** features works by artists whose sensitivities and creativity blend with the values of The Human Safety Net and are created specifically for the Studio's spaces. These works are closely related to the content and visitor experience in the '**A World of Potential**' exhibition, which includes a large open space dedicated to art which captures social issues. The exhibition offers visitors an immersive experience for understanding and connecting with their potential. They can explore their character strengths and discover their and others' best qualities through the stories of the beneficiaries, operators and volunteers of The Human Safety Net. This dialogue between the foundation, the exhibition and the works of the Art Studio expresses everyone's uniqueness and the commitment to having a concrete and positive social impact.

The first installation curated by Luca Massimo Barbero will be work by **Arthur Duff**, entitled '**The Hungriest Eye. The Blossoming of Potential**', that will open on 14 April.

With '**The Hungriest Eye. The Blossoming of Potential**' Arthur Duff, internationally renowned for works related to new technology and public involvement, draws inspiration from the extraordinary nineteenth-century Japanese woodblock prints depicting fireworks, which have captivated the entire world ever since. Through one of his distinctive mediums the creation of a laser system, the artist will create new, personalised and transitory forms and compositions involving thought, potential and eye of the visitor. Besides dialoguing with the space for which it was designed, the work will also express individual potential. The visitor will discover their strengths through the A World of Potential exhibition, whose uniqueness Duff will then convey through this kaleidoscope of lights. A new perspective through the lens of art enriches the dialogue with and between people, to echo the message that everyone has potential.

**Simone Bemporad, The Human Safety Net vice president and Generali Group Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer** said: "*The Human Safety Net continues its close association with the world of art, in a language that creates deep connections between people by stimulating dialogue on issues of social inclusion. We are pleased to work with Luca Massimo Barbero, a scholar and art critic with great experience, sensitivity, and vision, asked to build a conceptual bridge between the foundation's mission and society. The Art Studio displays pieces that interpret the central themes of the work of The Human Safety Net and the messages conveyed by the permanent exhibition 'A World of Potential'. It is a privileged space for interacting, sharing, and experimenting where visitors from around the world can engage, in an accessible way, with powerful and topical issues.*"

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**Luca Massimo Barbero** stressed: *“The Art Studio is a place of visual and personal experimentation that the visitor experiences throughout this extraordinary floor of The Human Safety Net, a floating place and visual touchpoint in the heart of Venice. The theme is creating a network that connects the activities of The Human Safety Net space to art and the social issues developed and represented here. The intersection of these themes with contemporary art will create a bridge necessary to enhance both missions and have a single programme that engages with an area such as Piazza San Marco, which maintains its international aspect and thus becomes a new point of reference.*

*Arthur Duff has created an intimate and visually intense experience that starts conceptually from the history of the visual, the ephemeral and the marvellous, such as the great Oriental firework tradition. He returns it to the modern world in the centre of Piazza San Marco. In this way, he involves the eye of the visitor in what we need to do daily in this extraordinary city and in life. The hungry eye is an incisive, albeit ephemeral, metaphor for the interaction between the eye, we human beings and our potentials, and not only perceptive, an echo of the work that The Human Safety Net carries out in its daily work in 24 countries.”*

**Arthur Duff** explains: *“The Hungriest Eye. The Blossoming of Potential” is an artwork that began as a collaboration with The Human Safety Net. As an artist, it was a unique opportunity to investigate the invisible aspects of art objects as interconnected physical and non-physical systems. I want to create collaborative spaces where the public can actively participate in creating the artwork through their personal experience of the museum in its entirety. The viewer's involvement is integrated into the artwork's structure and incorporated within the Home of The Human Safety Net. 'The Hungriest Eye – The Blossoming of Potential' is a project that examines the relationship between an artwork's potential and that of each person who visits the Procuratie Vecchie, as an exploration that questions the impact of art on humanity and focuses on objects beyond their simple relationship to human beings.”*

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Luca Massimo Barbero** is an art historian and critic, Director of the Institute of Art History at the Giorgio Cini Foundation, formerly the Associate Curator of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, a member of the scientific committee of the Farnesina Collection and Associate Curator of the Modern and Contemporary Art Collections of Intesa Sanpaolo.

He is a Curator at national and international modern and contemporary art institutions. He has curated exhibitions at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, the Kunsthaus in Zurich, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York and the Venice Biennale. He is one of the most authoritative scholars of post-war Italian and American art and the author of many contemporary art publications.

**Arthur Duff** was born in Wiesbaden (Germany) in 1973. After living in the United States, his parents' country, Korea, Germany and Japan, he settled in Italy. He now lives and works in Vicenza and teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Venice and Boston University. He has worked as a visual artist in the Italian and international contemporary art scene since the late 1990s. In 2010, he won the 2% prize at MACRO in Rome with the ROPE project. In recent years, he has created many works on a city scale, taking part in various group exhibitions including: La Finestra sul Cortile. Views of private collections at the GAM in Milan in 2017, The Muse at the Whanki Museum in Seoul in 2016, Themes & Variations, Writing and Space at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice in 2011, The word in Art. Cutting-edge research into the twentieth century From Futurism to Today through the Mart Collections, to the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto in 2007.

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## THE HUMAN SAFETY NET

The Human Safety Net is a global movement of people who help others. Our mission is to unlock the potential of disadvantaged people so they can transform the lives of their families and communities. The Human Safety Net's programmes support vulnerable families with young children (aged 0-6) and help include refugees within society through work and enterprise. To do this, we join forces with non-governmental organisations and the private sector in Europe, Asia and South America. The engine of the Human Safety Net is a foundation established by Generali in 2017. It operates in 24 countries, with a network of 77 NGOs and social enterprises as partners. To date, we have reached over 210 thousand people. Its programmes contribute to five of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The “For Families” programme supports early childhood indicators (SDG 3 and 4); the “For Refugees” programme helps create sustainable jobs and communities (SDG 8 and 11). Finally, all programmes are based on the principle that we can only make a significant impact through collaborations between different countries and stakeholders (SDG 17). The Human Safety Net is based in Venice, St. Mark's Square, at the Procuratie Vecchie.

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