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## Press Release no 1, Manifesta 6

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The International Foundation Manifesta (IFM) is delighted to announce that the city of Nicosia has been chosen to host Manifesta 6 in the autumn of 2006.

Nicosia, Cyprus, has been chosen primarily for its capacity to serve as a starting point in guiding Manifesta through a two-year period of investigation around the geographical and conceptual frameworks of Europe at large, particular with regard its relationship to the Middle East and North Africa. The city of Nicosia will serve as a microcosm for critical reinterpretation of the complex colonial and post-colonial history of Europe as played out within this broader territory of contingency.

Abandoning the overtly political and bypassing contemporary art's recent obsession with global issues, the Foundation aims to temporarily position itself in this part of Europe; an area that is currently in a process of re-identification and reconciliation with both its immediate and more distant neighbours. Manifesta 6 in Nicosia, and the region, intends to serve as an indicator of change; challenging Manifesta as a biennial to change its specific format and create more intensive and binding relationships with local and regional producers and artistic community. Manifesta 6, which aims to set itself in this bi-communal context, will not attempt to mediate over 30 years of complex Cypriot polemical and political conditions, despite the fact that Nicosia is a divided city as highlighted by the physical presence of the United Nations troops at the so-called Green Line.

Nicosia has been selected to host Manifesta 6 as it is viewed by the immediate West as the most peripheral zone of the new European Union's geographic limits. At the same time, Nicosia's historical past reveals, on one hand, its immediate relationship with the Middle East, and on the other, its continuous determination to preserve its

own identity throughout two thousand years of coexistence with its close neighbours and invaders.

The notion of cultural diversity is very much alive in this region, and holds a decisive position in the rethinking of the future of European integration. In this context, Manifesta aspires to be able to play a modest role in developing new forms of cultural partnerships, not only within the new Europe, but also between Europe and its immediate neighbouring regions.

With regards its curatorial selection, Manifesta has developed a new strategy. Previous editions of Manifesta have always been conceptualised by a team of individuals, often arbitrarily chosen to work together as a team. For Manifesta 6, the Foundation opted for a call for proposals, a process that began immediately following the opening of Manifesta 5 in San Sebastian. Manifesta invited over 40 professionals to compose their own interdisciplinary team and formulate general concepts. Thereafter, a special committee short-listed and interviewed five of the proposed teams and the final candidates were selected.

The International Foundation Manifesta is delighted to announce the new curatorial team for Manifesta 6 taking place in Nicosia in 2006:

**Mai Abu EIDahab, Florian Waldvogel and Anton Vidokle**

**Mai Abu EIDahab** is an independent curator based in Cairo. In 1997, she earned her degree in political science and philosophy from the American University in Cairo, and soon after became involved in the arts and culture field namely while working as program associate in media, arts and culture at the Ford Foundation (Cairo) and as assistant at the Townhouse Gallery of contemporary art (Cairo). In 2002, she participated in the Curatorial Training Programme at Stichting De Appel, (Amsterdam). Since, Abu EIDahab has been involved in the production of visual arts projects, curating exhibitions, and writing about contemporary art for institutions such as the Young Arab Theatre Fund (Brussels), Visiting Arts (London), Offical para Proyectos de Arte - OPA (Guadalajara), The Museum of Contemporary Art - MACRO (Rome), Platform Garanti (Istanbul), Centro de Arte Santa Monica (Barcelona), and e-flux (New York). She has also realized a number of independent public projects in Egypt including "Wasla Contemporary Art Workshop" and "Going Places: A Project for Public Buses". She is currently curator-in-residence at ISCP (New York).

**Florian Waldvogel** earned a degree in curatorial studies at the Stadelshule Academy of Fine Arts in Frankfurt/Main and worked as an assistant for Kasper König for many years. After his graduation he worked as a project co-ordinator of "Inbetween", the official art project of EXPO2000 in Hannover, Germany. He was invited in 2001 as a guest professor for cultural mediation at the Academy in Munich, and was appointed in the same year as artistic director of the Kokerei Zollverein Contemporary Art and Criticism in Essen. He has curated many shows for institutions such the Kunstverein Hannover, Museum of Modern Art, Koriyama in Japan, Portikus in Frankfurt/Main and Lentos Kunstmuseum in Linz. Author of *Who Let the Dogs Out* (2001), co-editor of *Campus* (2002), *Die Offene Stadt* (2003), *Julie Ault/Martin Beck Critical Conditions* (2003), *Bank 1-3* (2004) and *Just do it!* (2005).

**Anton Vidokle** is a Moscow-born, New York based artist. His work has been exhibited in international shows such as the Venice Biennale, Dakar Biennale, Lodz Biennale, and at the Tate Modern, London; Moderna Galerija, Ljubljana; Musee d'art Modern de la Ville de Paris; Museo Carrillo Gil, Mexico City; UCLA Hammer, LA; ICA, Boston; Haus Der Kunst, Munich; P.S.1, New York; amongst others. Together with Julieta Aranda, Vidokle put together e-flux video rental, which started in New York last fall and is currently travelling to Kunst-Werke, Berlin, as well as other venues. This summer, Vidokle will be working in residence and presenting a solo exhibition at ArtPace, San Antonio. As the founding director of e-flux, Anton Vidokle produced and published online projects and print publications such as Next Documenta Should Be Curated By An Artist, Do it, Utopia Station poster project, and others including an upcoming project and an exhibition entitled An Image Bank for Everyday Revolutionary Life, co-curated with Lauri Firstenberg and based on the photo archive of David Alfaro Siqueiros.

Manifesta 6 will be organised by Nicosia for Art Ltd., by assignment of the Municipality of Nicosia. The programme is supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation.

The Manifesta 6 management team will consist of Yiannis Toumazis, Director of the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre associated with the Pierides Museum of Contemporary Art, as the General Co-ordinator of Manifesta 6, and a financial manager, who will be announced at a later stage. The management team will be executing the Manifesta 6 Programme in co-production with the curatorial team and in close connection to the Manifesta Foundation in Amsterdam. In order to support the biennial projects of Manifesta 6, one member of the IFM staff will be based in Nicosia until the project's completion.

The offices and production centre of Manifesta 6 will be based at the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre, the old powerhouse of the city, in the heart of the old town. A new extension of the Arts Centre will house the local offices of Manifesta 6.

The International Foundation Manifesta is the initiator and co-producer of the Manifesta biennial editions and the network programme. Residing in Amsterdam at Manifesta at Home it is aiming to facilitate future host cities and partner organisations in terms of project management, production and international publicity and fundraising. The International Foundation Manifesta is not only responsible for the selection of the host cities and the appointment of the curatorial teams, but is also responsible for the transfer of know-how and information from one Manifesta host city to another and the setting up of the infrastructure in the host cities.

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