

June 22, 2009

Manifesta 8, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art



Host agreement is signed.

On the 22nd of June the Host Agreement has been signed by the representatives of the involved parties: Hedwig Fijen, Director of the International Foundation Manifesta, and Antonio Martinez Lopez, Maria Luisa Lopez Ruiz, Jose' Gabriel Ruiz Gonzalez and Eriquer Ujaldon Benitez on behalf of the Region of Murcia.

<http://www.manifesta.org>

Manifesta 8 will take place in the Region of Murcia in dialogue with Northern Africa

Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art, is constantly changing its artistic parameters as well as its geographic locations every two years. The next edition, Manifesta 8, will take place in 2010. After Rotterdam (1996), Luxembourg (1998), Ljubljana (2000), Frankfurt (2002), Donostia-San Sebastián (2004), Nicosia (2006 – cancelled) and Trentino-Alto Adige (2008), the region of Murcia, Southern Spain, has been selected by the International Foundation Manifesta (IFM) to be the central location of a new extensive collaborative model for Manifesta 8.

Murcia in dialogue with Northern Africa

Manifesta aims to constantly reinvent its own curatorial methodology and exhibition model. In the past 15 years, Manifesta has moved from the more representational format of the first five editions, to the reflective format of a school in Manifesta 6, to the emphasis on site specific artistic production and the use of public spaces in Manifesta 7. Now, after Manifesta 7 in the 'heart of Europe', Manifesta 8 will explore the idea of Europe in the 21st century at the edges of the continent. More specifically, the aim of Manifesta 8 will be to engage with Europe's present-day boundaries with Northern Africa and its interrelations with the Maghreb region. The South of Spain, specifically Al-Andalus, has been a historical blend of Islamic, Judaic and Christian cultural influences co-existing together. This is an inspirational organic ground on which the next Manifesta 8 biennale can explore new topologies and journeys.

The intellectual and artistic context of Manifesta, as well as its social and political issues become more relevant than its economical potential when put in relation to other continents. Common European issues like migration and water are a necessary precondition for the existence of a natural as well as an economic system. The Autonomous Province of Murcia is an example of how an European borderline area, positioned in the East of Spain and close to the coast line of Northern Africa, is coping effectively with a

growing number of issues, which are also felt and dealt with in the rest of Europe. water and migration are the main issues and also important economic factors, essential for agriculture. The city of Murcia is located 30 miles from the Mediterranean sea and is connected to the shore through the city of Cartagena, the former Roman Cartago Nova, one of the most important Iberian cities of the Roman Empire.

Manifesta Curatorial Selection

Besides Manifesta's inherent dynamic of change based on its geopolitical itinerant model, Manifesta also aims to experiment with innovative curatorial models and methodology. Previously, the Board and the Director of the International Foundation Manifesta as well as the coordinator of Murcia made a pre-selection of candidates, and then, after an intense process of interviews, individual candidates were selected for the Curatorial Team in which they were partially independent, partially bound to create collaborative structures with the other members of the team.

Under the new Manifesta 8 approach, the Board is not inviting individual art professionals for the position of Curator, rather Manifesta is inviting existing curatorial groups, artistic and interdisciplinary collectives and/or existing institutions to be part of the Curatorial Team of Manifesta 8 in order to take note of the present tendency of self-origination and to stimulate a collaborative working method connecting different geo-political regions. After a thorough and wide-ranging investigation, at this stage a number of selected collectives are being invited to submit a proposal.

Manifesta 8 is an initiative of the International Foundation Manifesta in Amsterdam, The Netherlands and the Autonomous Region of Murcia, Spain.

Manifesta 8 will take place in the autumn of 2010 during 100 days of existence. The exact dates will be announced at a later stage.

The Permanent Team of Manifesta

Based at its headquarters in Amsterdam, the permanent team of Manifesta provides the backbone to our multi-faceted organization. While our core business is the governance and production of roving biennials, the day-to-day activities of Manifesta include overseeing the publication of catalogues, books and the tri-annual Manifesta Journal, maintaining our ever-growing archives and staging symposiums, international cultural events and our own Coffee Breaks.

The survival and growth of Manifesta's organizational model is due to its openness of policy, its facility for adaptation, its key desire for the of transfer knowledge, and its continuous stream of activity, of which the exhibitions play an essential role. The importance and success of Manifesta since 1996 as an itinerant European art event has led the European Commission in Brussels to award Manifesta the status of Ambassador of European Visual Art.

The Manifesta team structure is based on a policy of sustainability, a sense of invention and an ongoing spirit of enthusiastic collaboration. Manifesta presents a dynamic synergy of local expertise with international and Dutch experience and pragmatism. With each subsequent edition of Manifesta, the curators conceptualize a new project - and they become our artistic partners.

Given the complex organization of such a large-scale enterprise, taking place in a different European host city or region every two years, the permanent team of Manifesta is a broad-ranging, flexible group of international experts who constantly focus on relaunching, elaborating and fine-tuning the biennial and all aligned Manifesta events.

The permanent team of Manifesta is composed of long term specialists who have been working on several of the Manifesta biennials and are responsible on the spot for the overall development of each department within the Manifesta. This permanent team has the task to create a sustainable flow of knowledge and information from one biennial to another. Without this team the Manifesta biennial would not be able to develop itself in one and a half year intervals, aiming to create a synergy between the local and the national team on all levels.

Hedwig Fijen, Director since 1993 (Master in Art history and historic sciences, trained as a curator, consultant and cultural producer, founding director of Manifesta in 1993 after working for the Netherlands office for Fine Arts)

Yoeri Meessen, Head of Education (Master in arts policy and management specializing in arts and social theory, first degree certified teacher in visual arts and art history, worked at the education department of the Groninger Museum before setting up the education department of Manifesta)

Lisa Mazza, Project Coordinator, liaison officer for Manifesta 8 and editing manager of the Manifesta Journal (educated in cultural management, experienced in both curatorship and cultural management worked before as curatorial assistant at Halle fuer Kunst in Luneburg, was assistant coordinator of Manifesta 7)

Peter Paul Kainrath, Production advisor (cultural producer trained in piano and classical music, organiser of cultural events in the field of contemporary art, music, dance and performance in Italy and Austria. Was Head of the production of Manifesta 7)

Marieke van Hal, Grants advisor (art historian, former curator at the Netherlands Media Art Institute, general coordinator of the International Foundation Manifesta and director of the 1st Athens Biennial for which she initiated the European Biennial Network; PhD candidate at the Royal College of Art, London, and founding director of the Biennial Foundation. She is co-curator of the Bergen Biennial Conference and has been Grants Advisor for Manifesta 6 and 7).

Sofia Patat, Office Manager and former assistant in the communication team of Manifesta 7 (Master in art, culture and communication management with specialization on contemporary art and cinema, with working experience as marketing and project management assistant at the New York Guggenheim and at the UNESCO in Paris, before working for Manifesta 7 in 2008).

The International Foundation Manifesta is supported by the European Commission Culture Framework program, The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of The Netherlands.

Sponsors and Collaborators

Government of the Autonomous Region of Murcia · City Hall Murcia · City Hall Cartagena

For more information please contact:

International Foundation Manifesta
Prinsengracht 175 hs
1015 DS Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Phone: +31 20 672 14 35
Fax: +31 20 470 00 73
E-mail: secretariat@manifesta.org

Manifesta 8 is initiated by:



The International Foundation Manifesta is supported by:



Hedwig Fijen, Director