

NEWS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **In addition to OMA, Manifesta appoints team of 4 creative mediators for its 12th edition in 2018 in Palermo, Sicily**

The selection of Rotterdam-based Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) as the Manifesta 12 team for urban studies in Palermo, Sicily, has been followed up by the appointment of an international, interdisciplinary team of four creative mediators.

Italian architect **Ippolito Pestellini Laparelli**, partner at OMA working on preservation, scenography and curation, is both leading OMA Urban Studies, as well as the team of creative mediators, which includes the Swiss contemporary art curator **Mirjam Varadinis**, who works in Kunsthaus Zurich and was co-curator of TRACK, a largescale city-wide international exhibition in the tradition of “Chambres d’amis” in Ghent, Belgium; Spanish architect, artist and scholar based in New York and Madrid, **Andrés Jaque**, the founder of the Office of Political Innovation, working on the intersection of research, politics and design; and Dutch filmmaker and journalist **Bregtje van der Haak**, who has been directing international documentaries and transmedia projects on long-term social change with a special focus on urbanisation and technological culture.

In conjunction with the outcome of the urban studies conducted by OMA, these four creative mediators will collaborate collectively on the conceptualisation of the Manifesta 12 biennial programme. This newly invented biennial model of collaborative research, made by an urban office working together with a team of interdisciplinary mediators, is functioning as a curatorial intervention in the city of Palermo. This format corresponds perfectly with how a nomadic event like Manifesta can create a solid legacy in the host city.

“The need for in-depth research strategies to ‘unlock’ the host cities of Manifesta, and understanding more precisely the social, cultural and geographical textures of a city has been an urge felt for a long time”, says Hedwig Fijen, director of Manifesta and leading the new strategy. “Our nomadic nature, moving from one city to another, requires a far more specific strategy to unlock cities as a way of preparing the canvas on which a painter can later start working”.

This need to decode has been translated by working on two levels: urban and curatorial, each partially influencing each other. The aim of this synthesis is to provide all the people from Palermo the tools to claim back their city and to use Palermo as a kind of blueprint for reflecting, from a southern perspective, on migration, climate change, heritage and the condition of Europe.

For Manifesta 12, the city is considered as a form of engaged political governance and a complex physical body. It is here that contemporary art and other cultural practices can address the collective imagination of all of Palermo’s residents, a diverse mixture of identities existing side by side in a syncretism rooted in the city. In this way, the larger European and Mediterranean condition resonates, fostering a new sense of belonging between citizens and the temporal and spatial textures of their city.

The first part of the urban research of OMA will create a social, cultural and geographical framework of topics, recommendations and insights through which the creative mediators can start research on the biennial program, which is meant to interact with local communities, international visitors and art professionals.

The OMA urban studies for Palermo will be presented in the spring of 2017 and the curators, called creative mediators, who are developing artistic content based on a deep knowledge of the site, will present their plans for Manifesta 12 in mid-summer 2017.

## Annex: Biographies for M12 creative mediators

### **Biographies:**



**Ippolito Pestellini Laparelli** is an architect and partner at OMA. Ippolito's work has a focus on preservation, scenography and curation. Current and recent projects include the renovation of Kaufhaus des Westens (KaDeWe) in Berlin (ongoing); Panda, a research and exhibit for the 2016 Oslo Triennale, which explores the impact of sharing economy platforms; the transformative design of the 16th century Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice (2016); Monditalia, a multi-disciplinary exhibition focused on the current status of Italy, at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale; scenography for the Greek theatre of Syracuse in Sicily (2012); and the co-curation of Cronocaos, OMA's exhibition on preservation at the 2010 Venice Architectural Biennale. In addition, Ippolito is responsible for a wide range of projects for Prada and the Fondazione Prada. Ippolito studied architecture at the Politecnico di Milano and at TU Delft.



**Bregtje van der Haak** is a documentary filmmaker and journalist. Since 1997, she has been directing international documentaries and transmedia projects on long-term social change with a special focus on urbanization and technological culture. Her documentaries include *Saudi Solutions*, *DNA Dreams*, *Satellite Queens*, *Lagos Wide & Close* and *Atlas of Pentecostalism*, and have been shown on television, in film festivals and in art exhibitions around the world. Van der Haak was the first woman filmmaker to film the lives of working women in Saudi Arabia in 2006 and was honoured with the Media Woman of the Year award. Van der Haak regularly directs episodes of the VPRO Backlight Series on Future Affairs and is a board member of the Prince Claus Fund and the Erasmus Prize. She studied dance in Paris, political science and law at the University of Amsterdam and the New School for Social Research in New York, and journalism at the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University in New York. She has been a Visiting Professor at USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and the School of Creative Media at the City University of Hong Kong.



**Andrés Jaque** is an artist, architect and scholar based in New York and Madrid. He is the founder of the Office of Political Innovation, an international practice that works in the intersection of research, politics and design. He is a recipient of the 10th Frederick Kiesler Prize; the Silver Lion for the Best Research Project at the 14th Venice Biennale; Alfred Toepfer Stiftung's Tessenow Stipendiat; the Dionisio Hernández Gil Award and the *Architectural Record's* Designer of the Year award. He is PhD Architect (ETSAM) Professor at Columbia University GSAPP and Visiting Professor of Princeton University SoA. His publications include *Everyday Politics*, *SUPERPOWERS OF TEN*; *PHANTOM. Mies as Rendered Society*; *Different Kinds of Water Pouring into a Swimming Pool* and *Dulces Arenas Cotidianas*. His work has been shown at Museum of Modern Art, MoMA, ZKM Karlsruhe, MAK Austrian Museum in Vienna, CalArts Center for Contemporary Arts, Schweizerisches Architektur Museum in Basel, Z33 Hasselt, Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine de Paris, JUMEX Museum, Tel Aviv Museum of Arts, Mostra di Architettura de la Biennale de Venezia, Gwangju Biennale, Lisbon Architecture Triennale, Chicago Architecture Biennial and London Design Museum.



**Mirjam Varadinis** has been curator and art historian at Kunsthhaus Zürich since September 2002. She is in charge of contemporary art and has organized various exhibitions, including among others, the group shows “Action!” (2017) and “Shifting Identities” (2008), as well as solo exhibitions with Akram Zaatari, Javier Téllez, Haris Epaminonda, Rosa Barba, Roman Ondák, Adrian Paci, Mircea Cantor, Tino Sehgal, Erik van Lieshout, Nedko Solakov, Urs Fischer and David Shrigley a.o. She has published numerous catalogues and artist books and contributes to international art magazines. In 2013, Mirjam Varadinis curated “0 Performance – The Fragile Beauty of Crisis”, a special project for the 5th Moscow Biennial of Contemporary Art. In 2012, she co-curated “TRACK” (together with Philippe Van Cauteren), a large-scale, city-wide international group exhibition in the tradition of “Chambres d’amis” in Ghent, Belgium. In 2006, Varadinis was also a curator of “Printemps de Septembre”, an annual festival of contemporary art in Toulouse, France.

**Previous Manifesta Host Cities:**

- Manifesta 1, Rotterdam (Netherlands, 1996)
- Manifesta 2, Luxembourg (Luxembourg, 1998)
- Manifesta 3, Ljubljana (Slovenia, 2000)
- Manifesta 4, Frankfurt (Germany, 2002)
- Manifesta 5, Donostia-San Sebastián (Spain, 2004)
- Manifesta 6, Nicosia (Cyprus, 2006 – cancelled)
- Manifesta 7, Trentino-Alto Adige (Italy, 2008)
- Manifesta 8, Murcia - Cartagena (Spain, 2010)
- Manifesta 9, Genk-Limburg (Belgium, 2012)
- Manifesta 10, St. Petersburg (Russia, 2014)
- Manifesta 11, Zurich (Switzerland, 2016)

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