

Manifesta 8: new collaborative model

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PRESS RELEASE:

Manifesta 8,

Announcement of new collaborative model for Manifesta 8, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art. The Region of Murcia is selected as Host Region for Manifesta 8 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.

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 pre-condition 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.

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.