

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

Introduction

Manifesta 8

Manifesta, the European Biennial of Contemporary Art, is a roving, contemporary art event, showcasing the most innovative work by artists and curators from Europe and beyond. Kicking off in Spain on October 9 and running for a period of 100 days, Manifesta 8 will be taking place in historical buildings, museums, unconventional spaces, archaeological sites and other suggestive settings in the ancient cities of Murcia and Cartagena. Since its first edition 15 years ago, Manifesta has been concerned with the idea of breaking down barriers, crossing borders and building bridges. Incorporating exhibitions, performances, multi-media experiments and broadcasts, Manifesta 8 highlights the very best of creative thought, research and experimentation, involving individual artists and artistic communities from diverse backgrounds from all around the continent, this year with a special focus being placed on the dialogue between Europe and northern Africa.

Manifesta changes its location every two years in response to a variety of social, political and geographical considerations. Since 1996, it has been held in Rotterdam, Luxembourg, Ljubljana, Frankfurt, Donosti-San Sebastián, Nicosia and Trentino-Alto Adige. In past editions, Manifesta has often focused on the axis between the West and the former East bloc. The aim of Manifesta 8 will be to engage with the north-south divide, specifically with Europe's present-day boundaries with northern Africa and its interrelations with the Maghreb region.

The south of Spain includes a blend of Islamic, Judaic and Christian cultural influences, co-existing for many centuries. Murcia and Cartagena were selected as host cities for Manifesta 8, largely as a result of the intertwining cultures in the region, its strategic location as a Mediterranean enclave and its particular character as an authentic melting pot whose cultural heritage includes Roman architecture (including the amphitheatre in Cartagena and its related museum designed by Rafael Moneo), Visigoth cities, Arab medinas, Baroque churches and Modernist architecture. Given the current international concerns about migration, refugee status, trans-nationalism and the new borders of Europe, both psychological and geographical, the Region of Murcia is a conceptual launching pad for contemporary art projects about how artists respond to these issues within a broader, historical context.

One of the innovations arising from Manifesta 8 is based on the concept of collective curating, and the introduction of an artistic team made up of three groups of curators, composed of **Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum** (Egypt), **Chamber of Public Secrets** (Scandinavia and the Middle East) and tranzit.org (Central Europe), responsible for both the thematic approach and the selection of artists. As a dynamic exhibition, Manifesta 8 can be seen to exist at an intersection, a place where the three curatorial collectives will respond to the challenges posed by notions of trans-regional and trans-continental dialogue, using different formats. These range from a series of televised debates (including two episodes of a popular talk-show on the Arabic Al Jazeera network), the publication of a 420-page *Reader* to plot the links between conditions, imaginaries and narratives in both post-colonial and post-Communist

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

countries, and setting up an "incubator" to research the potential of producing a roaming, pan-African biennial.



Nada Prlja. *Foreign Language for Beginners*. Double screen video, loop. 2010. Curated by CPS

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

Alexandria Contemporary Arts Forum (Bassam El Baroni and Jeremy Beaudry) focuses on cultivating a deeper awareness of art in relation to all aspects of contemporary life and culture. ACAF's proposals for Manifesta 8 include *The Backbench Project*, loosely modeled on the British Parliament and those politicians who might not be in the forefront but who still create solutions. A mediator and four different artists' collectives (with members from Egypt, India, Italy, The Netherlands and the U.S.) are filmed during a discussion to resolve their dilemmas about the art world today, and specifically the pressures to perform in a spectacular way for the critics. The empty set where the meeting took place will be reproduced in the abandoned former post office headquarters. Another installation reveals how various artists-in-residence in Murcia produce new works in reaction to documents and files imported from the archives of the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art in New York, which closed in the 1990s. Meanwhile, in Cartagena, Egyptian artist Mahmoud Khaled stages an ongoing performance in which actors from a local drama school play the role of the archetypal contemporary artist, a professional man living in a precarious world, homeless yet armed with a laptop and an i-Phone.



Common Culture. *The New El Dorado*. Video Installation. 2010

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

Chamber of Public Secrets (Khaled Ramadan and Alfredo Cramerotti) have been collaborating since 2004 in the organisation, production and circulation of film and video festivals, art exhibitions, TV and radio programs, political fictions and documentaries. CPS also develops forums for debate and publishes books and articles about issues such as migration, mobility, representation, colonialism, gender and difference, and how media can support audience engagement. Their projects for Manifesta 8 include the publication of a weekly page in *La Verdad* newspaper devised by Fay Nicolson (London), five radio programs by Ralf Homann (Berlin) based on the idea of marriage and how it relates to immigration and border policies, (as well as the simple task of buying a wedding dress in a boutique), and a project by the social-activist group Wooloo (Copenhagen and New York) in which a series of local, blind people conduct guided tours in Murcia, in what CPS curator Alfredo Cramerotti refers to as "the transfer of hidden knowledge, to act as a filter of non-visual life in the city". Complete with an aggressive camera team, Thierry Geoffroy (Copenhagen) pokes fun at the on-the-street, in-your-face method of television news reportage. Meanwhile, British-based American artist Michael Takeo Magruder looks at how the media controls our interpretation of news events, compiling, revealing, hiding and re-evaluating information, in this case aligned to the Madrid bombings. He will install his work within the formal exhibition space of MURAM (Regional Museum of Modern Art), a prime example of Belle Epoque architecture in Cartagena.



Anders Eiebakke during his stay in Murcia. July 2010

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

tranzit.org (Vít Havránek, Zbynek Baladrán, Dóra Hegyi, Boris Ondreicka and Georg Schöllhammer) is a network of autonomous art associations, existing in Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia since 2002, which work across borders, between nations, languages and histories. Challenging the accepted history of post-war European art, tranzit.org acts in constant dialogue with cultural narratives on a local and global scale. For Manifesta 8, their far-reaching *Constitution Project* is an experiment in theory versus the practices of exhibition-making, involving 30 artists, filmmakers, designers and choreographers based in countries as diverse as Bosnia Herzegovina, France, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Singapore, Slovakia and Sweden. As a work-in-progress, the contributors are meeting to write a constitution that will "rule" the relationship between curator and artist, between viewer and artspace, to be realized as an exhibition in venues in Murcia. According to tranzit.org curator Boris Ondreicka, "Since the organic nature of the collective spirit is based on interaction, it is hard to be attacked by irony ... or intimacy". Meanwhile renowned Andalusian artist Pedro G. Romero will exhibit his *Archivo FX* in a community space in the port of Cartagena, as part of his ongoing project about religious images in the region. A film by Val del Omar will be projected as a prelude to Romero's archives about iconoclasm (the destruction of Catholic icons and photographic reproductions of broken religious sculptures), and a sound piece, in which he recreates songs of protest.



Carla Filipe. *O povo reunido, jamais será*. Installation. 2009

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

About 90% of the works exhibited or staged in Manifesta 8 have been specifically commissioned for the event, based on extensive research conducted in the region over the past two years. Manifesta 8 also features artists coming from Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, French Guiana, Ghana, Morocco and other countries, often working on new collaborative projects with their colleagues from Europe and the Middle East.

Manifesta 8 will be utilising an exciting range of venues, including the autopsy pavilion of an 18th Century hospital, the San Antón Prison, an early 20th Century barracks built in the Moorish style, the old watermills on the Segura River in Murcia, the newly constructed ARQUA (National Museum of Underwater Archaeology) designed by Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra and also the open, glass structure of El Parque Cafe-Restaurant, located on top of the highest of the five hills surrounding Cartagena. Manifesta 8 will leave a lasting legacy in the region of Murcia, with several buildings restored or expanded especially for the event.

A 320-general catalogue and a smaller format pocket-guide will be published by Silvana Editore, Milano, designed by Bisdixit studio from Barcelona, partly inspired by the graphics, colours and logos of passports, immigration forms, visas, identity cards and travel documents, in keeping with the issue of migration as proposed by the curators of Manifesta 8.

MANIFESTA 8 PROGRAM

Many activities will be developed during Manifesta 8 including concerts, tours, workshops and performances with artists. A complete agenda will be published on the web www.manifesta8.es

The press days on October 6 and 7, 2010, and the official opening of Manifesta 8 on October 9 will focus on art exhibits, concerts and outdoor events, creating an authentic *festa* in the two host cities and across the region.

EDUCATION and MEDIATION PROGRAM

Education and mediation are at the core of Manifesta 8. Our program is set up to research and reflect together with our visitors on the artworks and concepts presented at Manifesta 8. We strive to facilitate the exchange of knowledge between professionals and the general audience alike, by supplying the resources and creating opportunities for dialogue, to help experience the very best in contemporary art.

Our program includes workshops for students, training sessions for primary and secondary school teachers, visits by students of international art schools and the publication of a special Manifesta 8 edition. We are responsible for the ongoing seminar *Manifesta 8 - Audience, Mediation and Participation* held in Murcia and at various institutions. A summer university course is being offered in Cartagena, based on the study of how cultural politics are related to such different exhibiting formats as biennials, contemporary art fairs and festivals. *Tenemos visita* has been set up to establish links and create discussions between visiting artists from Manifesta 8 and local social groups,

Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

especially those not formerly connected to contemporary art. The MEDULAR blog will provide a backbone, as a think-tank where the ideas and projects related to the education department can be expressed and discussed. Our aim is to start a cultural process which will become independent and continue to expand long after Manifesta 8. <http://www.manifesta8.com/medular/>

Two Manifesta 8 exhibition venues will host the main educational hubs and mediation spaces, forming the nucleus of our activities - Molinos del Río in Murcia and the Prison of San Antón in Cartagena.

mediacion@manifesta8.es

THE INITIATORS and PARTNERS

Manifesta 8 is an initiative of the Foundation Manifesta, based in Amsterdam since 1997, and CARM (the Region of Murcia). The team of Manifesta 8 is composed of international experts from former Manifesta biennials working with their colleagues from Murcia and Cartagena, under the guidance of Hedwig Fijen, founding director of Manifesta, and general co-ordinator Esther Regueira. The executive administrative partner is Murcia Cultural.

Manifesta 8 is generously supported by a vast number of local, regional, national and international partners and stake-holders. In 2008, Manifesta was appointed Ambassador of Visual Arts of the European Commission.

PARALLEL EVENTS

A program of Parallel Events recurs at each consecutive Manifesta biennial. It is a cultural project and communication platform closely aligned to the Region of Murcia. Its main focus is to involve individual artists and interdisciplinary cultural producers who live and work in the region, and to work with local institutions, art organisations and other cultural events. paralelos@manifesta8.es

Initiated by Manifesta 8 together with Murcia Cultural, the Parallel Events program aims to give a broader view of all aspects of the local cultural scene, catering to the regional, national and international public. A core part of the project is our open-call to local artists, social groups and cultural events, to establish links with local and international projects in a diverse list of art spaces and non-conventional venues, including wine cellars hosting contemporary art exhibitions, offering the visitor a chance to taste the best regional wines, increasingly ranked among the world's finest.

Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

CULTURE

The Region of Murcia offers a wide variety of cultural programs, featuring Cartagena Puerto de Culturas, Lorca Taller del Tiempo, the Cartagena Jazz Festival, plus numerous performances, museums and festivals, existing as a perfect complement to Manifesta 8.

The Region of Murcia is a haven for culture, fine food, nature and relaxation, with health spas and world-class golf courses. It boasts two seas on a single coastline (the Mar Menor and the Mediterranean), impressive cliffs, secluded beaches, lively ports and wild coves with crystal-clear water, and mild temperatures all-year-round (average 18°C). No wonder that it is known as the Costa Cálida or the Warm Coast. Located at the South-East corner of the Iberian Peninsula, between the regions of Andalusia, Castilla-La Mancha and Valencia, the region of Murcia occupies an area of 11,317 square kilometres. www.murciaturistica.es

TRAVEL INFO and GUIDED VISITS: manifesta8@viajeseci.es

El Corte Inglés is the preferred travel agency for Manifesta 8 www.viajeselcorteingles.es

Manifesta 8 is connected by San Javier airport in Murcia, and also by Alicante airport (one hour by bus from Murcia) and Almería airport (Andalusia, 200 kms from Cartagena). Murcia and Cartagena are 54 kilometres apart, and connected by regular bus and train services.

PRESS: press@manifesta8.es

PRESS ACCREDITATION: accreditation@manifesta8.es Press days: 6 and 7 october



Martin Vongrej. *Self observing consciousness - Vedomvie*. Installation. 2010.

Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

Manifesta 8 venues in MURCIA

LOS MOLINOS DEL RÍO SEGURA HYDRAULIC MUSEUM AND SALA CABALLERIZAS



Today the old watermills on the Segura River in Murcia are used as the Cultural Centre and Hydraulic Museum, part of a heritage complex belonging to the City Council. Its program of exhibitions, conferences and concerts is designed to connect the museum's ethnographic and historic content with contemporary culture. Also part of this complex is the Sala Caballerizas, one of the few surviving examples of 18th Century civil architecture in the city of Murcia. This unique building once housed the stables for the watermills and the Parador del Rey (the King's lodge).

MUBAM - FINE ARTS MUSEUM OF MURCIA

Strategically located in the city of Murcia, close to the university campus and the bullring, MUBAM is an eclectic building designed in 1910 by the architect Pedro Cerdán on the site of the former Trinidad Convent. MUBAM owns and exhibits a collection of paintings, sculpture and artefacts from the 16th to 19th Centuries. The Edificio del Contraste is currently being refurbished in order to extend its exhibition space. Two new halls will showcase part of the Manifesta 8 program.

ESPACIO AV

Espacio AV is located in former business premises in a space of more than 500 square metres, with a view to hosting regular exhibitions of contemporary art, photography and video. Architecturally, Espacio AV is a neutral "white cube", so as not to interfere with the presentation of art works.

Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

CENTRO PÁRRAGA

This centre for the research and development of performing arts is located in Pavilion 5 of the former Artillery Barracks. Centro Párraga's versatile exhibition spaces are easily converted for different uses. The second floor of Centro Párraga has also been the home of the Manifesta 8 offices in Murcia since 2009.

PAVILIONS 1 & 2, ARTILLERY BARRACKS

The story of these barracks dates back to the first quarter of the 20th Century, when the Ministry of War commissioned the construction of buildings to accommodate the 33rd Infantry Regiment of Seville. Comprising six pavilions, built from 1921 to 1926, the eclectic complex of buildings boasts many decorative elements borrowed from Al-Andalus, neo-Mudéjar and the Moorish style.



Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

ANTIGUA OFICINA DE CORREOS Y TELÉGRAFOS

The former Post Office remains an architectural icon with a strong presence in the urban memory of Murcia - to such an extent that the street where the building is located is popularly known as Calle Correos (Post Office Street). In 1930, the architect Pedro Muguruza was commissioned to design of this building. Muguruza, who ideologically supported the military uprising against the government of the Second Republic, played an important role in Franco's regime, aesthetically redefining Spanish architecture following the end of the Civil War. He borrowed certain features from the Herrerian baroque style named after the celebrated 16th Century Spanish architect Juan de Herrera, as well as other references to the imperial Spain of the 16th and 17th Centuries. The building was the headquarters of the central post office in Murcia until it moved to a new building in the late 1980s. Since then the original building has been abandoned.



Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

Manifesta 8 venues in CARTAGENA

CASINO DE CARTAGENA

Located on the main street of Cartagena, it was built in 1853 as a private residence of the Marquis de Casa Tilly. In 1837 it became the headquarters of the Society of the Casino which grouped all the social classes of Cartagena: the economically more settled and those involved in the political and business life of the City. A Bourgeoisie enriched thanks to the mining boom from the mountains of La Unión in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This aristocratic building, with more than 2000 square meters, is a baroque building of eclectic and modernist style, with four floors arranged around a central patio with galleries and dome light. Between 1870 and 2005 it was refurbished and restored in four occasions. The most important intervention was done in 1875 by the architect Victor Beltrí and the designer Rafael Amaré in pure modernist style. In 2004 the building was declared cultural heritage.

MURAM - REGIONAL MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Located in Palacio Aguirre, an eclectic building designed by the architect Victor Beltrí in 1901, MURAM is an emblematic example of the Belle Époque in Cartagena, coinciding with the prosperity of the local mining industry and business activity, which favoured the emergence of a bourgeoisie who supported the city's political, social and cultural life. During the 20th Century, the building has served several purposes. In 2009, MURAM was opened after the addition of an annex designed to increase the exhibition space.



Manifesta 8

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

09/10/10
09/01/11

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

EL PARQUE CAFE-RESTAURANT

Built in the 1960s, El Parque Cafe-Restaurant is located on top of Cerro de la Concepción, the highest of the five hills surrounding Cartagena. A typical example of the international architecture from the time, El Parque features an open, glass structure. Located in the landscaped environment of Parque Torres, the café was very popular for its panoramic views of the coast.

AUDITORIUM, PARQUE TORRES

The auditorium in Parque Torres is close to the Roman Theatre and next to the El Parque Cafe-restaurant. Since it was opened, the amphitheatre has been used for most of the performances in the annual La Mar de Músicas International Festival. Its program, coinciding with Manifesta 8, will also unveil improvements currently being implemented.



Manifesta 8

09/10/10
09/01/11

La Bienal Europea de
Arte Contemporáneo
Región de Murcia (España)
en diálogo con el Norte de África

The European Biennial
of Contemporary Art
Region of Murcia (Spain)
in dialogue with northern Africa

ARQUA - NATIONAL MUSEUM OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY

Located on the promenade in Cartagena, the new ARQUA (National Museum of Underwater Archaeology) was designed by Guillermo Vázquez Consuegra, winner of Spain's National Architecture Award. The design was showcased at MOMA in New York. Apart from its outstanding permanent collection and program of temporary exhibitions, the museum also has a modern restaurant overlooking the bay of Cartagena. Open to the sea, ARQUA is an ideal venue for the trans-continental dialogue proposed by Manifesta 8, the perfect setting for rethinking and remapping a history of cultural journeys.

FORMER AUTOPSY PAVILION

Built in 1768, this pavilion was originally part of the Royal Navy Hospital. Surgeons used to take their anatomy classes in this building and it was also used for research during the epidemics that ravaged the city in 1785. In the 20th Century, due to its proximity to the old bullring, bulls were transported to the pavilion after bullfights. Today, the pavilion hosts exhibitions and art projects conceived specifically for the space.

SAN ANTÓN PRISON

The building work on the San Antón prison, with its unusual pentagonal plan, was finished towards the end of the Second Republic. After the Civil War, the prison was overcrowded with political prisoners. During the following decades, the San Antón prison forged a special relationship with its surrounding neighbourhood, becoming part of the community's everyday life.



manifesta°



www.cartagena.es



Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en
Wetenschap



Culture Programme