At a press conference held today, Chief Curator of MANIFESTA 10 Kasper König, together with Prof. M. Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum and Hedwig Fijen, Director of Manifesta, announced the curatorial approach and the artists participating in MANIFESTA 10, and made statements on current political circumstances.

The main objective of MANIFESTA 10 is to introduce contemporary art, with all its complexity and criticality, to the State Hermitage Museum. The Biennial is composed of the exhibition, which will be located in the General Staff Building and the Winter Palace, alongside a substantial public and education program. MANIFESTA 10 will reflect on the changes that have taken place within art and society since the fall of the Berlin Wall, presenting highly varied artists’ positions, and taking into consideration the current geo-political situation. Two-thirds of the exhibition will be located in the General Staff Building — the Hermitage’s newly renovated wing of modern and contemporary art — and one-third will be in the Winter Palace.

The Director of the Hermitage Prof. Piotrovsky has said: “Manifesta in St. Petersburg is a unique opportunity for audiences to broaden their ideas about contemporary art and its possibilities. It offers the opportunity for local and international people to come to St. Petersburg and engage with the program and dialogues. Preserving bridges and cultural connections is very important today, especially because the situation is not at all conducive to this.”

Hedwig Fijen commented: “Under Kasper König’s curatorial direction MANIFESTA 10 provides an inspiring and challenging exhibition and an extensive public and educational program of activities. As a nomadic European biennial we choose to operate within contested areas, outside the ‘safe haven’ of the ‘West,’ and do so because we believe art provides an alternative perspective and reflection on society. Manifesta stands for artistic independence and has a responsibility to art and artists and those who wish to engage with the context in which we situate ourselves. Our work is one of debate, negotiation, mediation, and diplomacy, that does not shy away from the conflicts of our time. At a time when everything tends to be read through a geo-political lens, art is there to provide complexity and nuance.”
Announcing a list of more than fifty-five international artists, with more than thirty-five specially commissioned artworks and projects, König commented: “MANIFESTA 10 will be a complex exhibition and project, with participants aiming to grapple with all the possibilities that art offers, and that approach the breadth of perspectives that it presents and opens up. This exhibition aims to inspire discussion and raise questions, and I have no doubt that it will have an impact even after its closure in the autumn of 2014. The artists in this edition of Manifesta were chosen because they represent, and have helped develop, key strands in contemporary art in the West and in Russia. For this reason they are not easily categorized. In a museum as historically diverse as the Hermitage, it was only fitting to select a diverse and complex array of contemporary positions.”

Among the group of participating international artists, Russian-born artists Vadim Fishkin, Elena Kovylina, Vladislav Mamyşhev-Monroe, Timur Novikov, Ilya Orlov and Natasha Kraevskaya, Pavel Pepperstein, and Alexandra Sukhareva will contribute to MANIFESTA 10. Vladislav Mamyşhev-Monroe (1969–2013) was a leading St. Petersburg-based drag performance artist, best known for his impersonations of prominent figures including Marilyn Monroe, after whom he was nicknamed. Visitors will also see videos from “Pirate TV,” an early Perestroika self-made TV series, founded in collaboration with Timur Novikov in 1989.

Elena Kovylina will present her video installation Egalite, which comments on endangered democracy in Russia today and points to the many double standards in post-Soviet society.

Other participating artists will include Ukrainian-born Boris Mikhailov, one of the leading photographers from the former Soviet Union. For his new project for MANIFESTA 10 titled The Theater of War. Second Act, Time Out, Mikhailov visited Kiev’s Maidan Independence Square, the camp of Ukraine opposition.

The works of three women painters Marlene Dumas, Nicole Eisenman, and Maria Lassnig, will be exhibited in the Henri Matisse rooms of the Winter Palace, while Matisse’s works will be relocated to the General Staff Building. Dumas (South Africa) has conceived a new series of portraits of prominent figures including Marilyn Monroe, after whom he was nicknamed. Visitors will also see videos from “Pirate TV,” an early Perestroika self-made TV series, founded in collaboration with Timur Novikov in 1989.

Artist Tatzu Nishi (Japan) is renowned for transforming our experience of monuments, statues, and architectural details. Nishi will present a site-specific project in the Zapadina room of the Winter Palace, in which a domestic room, furnished in a typical, Russian style, will envelop one of the grand Winter Palace chandeliers. Visitors will be able to enter the sculpture and experience the domestication of the imperial interior setting.

Thomas Hirschhorn (Switzerland) will create a new work Abshlag, in which a block of six, identically sized ‘living rooms,’ will be constructed in the General Staff Building. Reminiscent of communal apartments of the Soviet era, the cross-section will display a selection of constructivist paintings.
Belgian-born Francis Alÿs’ project is based on a nostalgic recreation of the artist’s failed teenage attempt to drive from Brussels to Moscow in a Lada 1500. The second try will see the courtyard of the Winter Palace as the journey’s new and final destination.

Recognizing the unique opportunity to work in one of the greatest museums in the world, Lara Favaretto (Italy) will create an installation inside the elegant, Italian antiquities galleries where her works will punctuate the permanent display.

A car with a blinking neon sign mounted on the roof flashing ‘No? Future!’ will drive through the streets of the city throughout the Biennial. Spanish-born Jordi Colomer’s project echoes the fairground pitch, the official proclamation, the demonstrator’s slogan, the military order, and the religious sermon.

A seminal, but rarely seen work by Joseph Beuys (Germany), Economic Values (1980), is a monument to the past reality of Eastern Europe. The work is a statement of Beuys’ belief that the inner needs of a human being should be met first through the ‘production of spiritual goods’ in the form of ideas, art, and education, rather than in commodities.

The works of many exhibition artists like Beuys, Bruce Nauman, and Gerhard Richter, long mainstays of the art scene, have rarely been shown in Russia. Both König’s selection of artists and his curatorial practice spans generations. The themes dealt with by participating artists range from gender and sexuality, to social relations, history, and everything in between, united by their wit, intelligence, and their open-ended critical attitudes.

Kasper König has invited Joanna Warsza to curate the MANIFESTA 10 Public Program. The program will critically respond to the current socio-political circumstances; its conflicts, complexities, and the place of art within them. Contributing artists who have been commissioned to present performative projects include Pavel Braila (Moldova), Lado Darakhvelidze (Georgia), Alevtina Kakhidze (Ukraine), Ragnar Kjartansson (Iceland), Deimantas Narkevičius (Lithuania), Kristina Norman (Estonia), Ilya Orlov and Natasha Kraevskaya (Russia), Alexandra Pirici (Romania), and Slavs and Tatars (Eurasia).

MANIFESTA 10 will also include “Unlooped—KINO,” a film program devised by Nathalie Hoyos and Rainald Schumacher from Office for Art (Berlin). The program concentrates on surveys and anthological mini-retrospectives, including works by exhibiting artists. At the same time, the program aims to give an art historical insight into the major developments of time-based media (film/video) from contemporary art over the past decades. Each program is developed in cooperation with leading time-based media collections.

The exhibition catalogue will be published by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König in English and Russian editions of approximately 300 pages each. It includes contributions by major figures in art criticism and curating, such as Ekaterina Andreeva, Helmut Draxler, Ekaterina Degot and Silvia Eiblmayr, as well as short sections on each exhibiting artist.
The Manifesta Biennial was inspired by the changing European constellation of 1989–1991, and was initiated in order to build upon the increased artistic exchange made possible by these events. Now Manifesta will look back and take stock, introducing contemporary art to the Hermitage. The uniqueness of the museum — a palace of extraordinary collections with a continuous history of defending culture, regardless of times and circumstances — lends itself in a most unusual way to looking at varied moments in art history (local and global, recent and ancient). MANIFESTA 10 will critically explore gaps, and propose how contemporary art can offer a language to read them against the complexity and concerns of our times.

The exhibition and public program artists were sought out for their strong positions and their international relevance. While political and social statements form part of some artists’ works, others are invited for the elements of critique inherent in their practices, or for their ability to foster artistic discussion and illuminate aspects of artistic development.

In order to bring together the newly renovated and restored General Staff Building, which will house two-thirds of MANIFESTA 10, and the Winter Palace, which houses one-third of the exhibition among the historical collection, artworks will be exchanged between the two buildings. These include the works of three women painters, Marlene Dumas, Nicole Eisenman, and Maria Lassnig, which will be exhibited in the renowned Henri Matisse rooms in the Winter Palace, while his works will be relocated to the General Staff Building. It is a central idea that contemporary art should be experienced in dialogue with art from other periods and cultures.

MANIFESTA 10 seeks to bring a playful spirit to the task of discovering what is needed, what is plausible, and what is challenging within the context of the Hermitage. It aims to attract visitors for whom MANIFESTA 10 will be an initial first-hand experience with contemporary art.

Rather than offering an encompassing overview of contemporary art, the exhibition includes a number of artists’ standpoints represented by a number of carefully chosen artworks. As a guest in the Hermitage, we very much enjoy working with our colleagues at the museum, in awareness of the great and extraordinary challenge MANIFESTA 10 is presented with: bringing contemporary art into a unique universal museum, such as the Hermitage, in the current times.
In response to the comments I have received regarding the current geopolitical circumstances, I would like to stress that obviously I am very concerned with the escalating crisis, and because of it I do believe it is and should be our goal to continue to make MANIFESTA 10 happen. It is itself a complex entity, to prompt its artists and its viewers to assume their own strong political positions, to pose questions and raise voices. To neglect and quit, would be a sign of escalation. There is vulnerability of this situation, but also a challenge and we shall have a courage to go on, a decision backed up by many Russian colleagues. It is upon us not to be influenced by prejudices against minorities or nationalist propaganda but to reject it. It is more important than ever to continue our work with courage and conviction for the local and international publics.

As someone who has worked in many and various political climates and challenges, the experience tells me to stay calm and continue to work on the complexity and contradiction, that art has to offer and on how it can engage, and oppose the simplifications of our times.

I support all efforts — both in art field and at large — in that direction, and I am sure that the presence of critical contemporary art in the Hermitage and in the city will contribute to pluralistic and healthy debate on complexity, ethics and aesthetics and produce a necessary challenge.
PARTICIPATING ARTISTS
THE EUROPiEN BiENNIAL OF CONTEMPORARY ART
MANIFESTA 10

Francis Alÿs
Born 1959 in Antwerp, Belgium
Lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico

Guy Ben-Ner
Born 1969 in Ramat Gan, Israel
Lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel

Joseph Beuys
Born 1921 in Krefeld, Germany
Died 1986 in Düsseldorf, Germany

Karla Black
Born 1972 in Alexandria, Scotland
Lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland

Louise Bourgeois
Born 1911 in Paris, France
Died 2010 in New York City, USA

Pavel Braila
Born 1971 in Chișinău, Moldova
Lives and works in Berlin and Chișinău

Marc Camille Chaimowicz
Born 1946 in Paris, France
Lives and works in London, UK and Burgundy, France

Jordi Colomer
Born 1962 in Barcelona, Spain
Lives and works in Barcelona, Spain and Paris, France

Josef Dabernig
Born 1956 in Kötschach-Mauthen, Austria
Lives and works in Vienna, Austria

Lado Darakvelidze
Born 1977 in Kutaisi, Georgia
Lives and works in Arnhem, Netherlands

Rineke Dijkstra
Born 1959 in Sittard, Netherlands
Lives and works in Amsterdam, Netherlands

Marlene Dumas
Born 1953 in Cape Town, South Africa
Lives and works in Amsterdam, Netherlands

Nicole Eisenman
Born 1965 in Verdun, France
Lives and works in New York, USA

Lara Favaretto
Born 1973 in Treviso, Italy
Lives and works Turin, Italy

Vadim Fishkin
Born 1965 in Penza, USSR
Lives and works in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Katharina Fritsch
Born 1956 in Essen, Germany
Lives and works in Düsseldorf, Germany

Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster
Born 1965 in Strasbourg, France
Lives and works in Paris, France and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Ann Veronica Janssens
Born 1956 in Folkestone, UK
Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Thomas Hirschhorn
Born 1957 in Bern, Switzerland
Lives and works in Paris, France

Alevtina Kakhidze
Born in Zhdanivka, Ukraine
Lives and works in Muzychi, Ukraine
Ragnar Kjartansson
Born 1976 in Reykjavík, Iceland
Lives and works in Reykjavík, Iceland

Elena Kovylina
Born 1971 in Moscow, USSR
Lives and works in Moscow, Russia

Ilya Orlov and Natasha Kraevskaya
Born 1973 in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), USSR
Born 1972 in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), USSR
Live and work in St. Petersburg, Russia

Maria Lassnig
Born 1919 in Carinthia, Austria
Lives and works in Vienna, Austria and Carinthia, Austria

Klara Liden
Born 1979 in Stockholm, Sweden
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Erik van Lieshout
Born 1968 in Deurne, Netherlands
Lives and works in Rotterdam, Netherlands

Vladislav Mamyshev-Monroe
Born 1969 in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), USSR
Died 2013 in Bali, Indonesia

Henri Matisse
Born 1869 in Le Cateau-Cambrésis, France
Died 1954 in Nice, France

Boris Mikhailov
Born 1938 in Kharkov, Ukraine
Lives and works in Kharkov, Ukraine and Berlin, Germany

Yasumasa Morimura
Born 1951 in Osaka, Japan
Lives and works in Osaka, Japan

Olivier Mosset
Born 1944 in Bern, Switzerland
Lives and works in Tucson, USA

Juan Muñoz
Born 1953 in Madrid, Spain
Died 2001 in Ibiza, Spain

Deimantas Narkevičius
Born 1964 in Utena, Lithuania
Lives and works in Vilnius, Lithuania

Bruce Nauman
Born 1941 in Fort Wayne, USA
Lives and works in New Mexico, USA

Tatzu Nishi
Born 1960 in Nagoya, Japan
Lives and works in Tokyo, Japan and Berlin, Germany

Kristina Norman
Born 1979 in Tallinn, Estonia
Lives and works in Tallinn, Estonia

Timur Novikov
Born 1958 in St. Petersburg (then Leningrad), USSR
Died 2002 in St. Petersburg, Russia

Henrik Olesen
Born 1967 in Esbjerg, Denmark
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Pavel Pepperstein
Born 1966 in Moscow, USSR
Lives and works in Moscow, Russia
Susan Philipsz  
Born 1965 in Glasgow, Scotland  
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Giovanni Battista Piranesi  
Born 1720 in Mogliano Veneto, Italy  
Died 1778 in Rome, Italy

Alexandra Pirici  
Born 1982 in Bucharest, Romania  
Lives and works in Bucharest, Romania

Paola Pivi  
Born 1971 in Milan, Italy  
Lives and works in Delhi, India

Wael Shawky  
Born 1971 in Alexandria, Egypt  
Lives and works in Alexandria, Egypt

Slavs and Tatars  
Founded 2006,  
Eurasia

Alexandra Sukhareva  
Born 1983 in Moscow, Russia  
Lives and works in Moscow, Russia and Dubna, Russia

Wolfgang Tillmans  
Born 1968 in Remscheid, Germany  
Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Joëlle Tuerlinckx  
Born 1958 in Brussels, Belgium  
Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Otto Zitko  
Born 1959 in Linz, Austria  
Lives and works in Vienna, Austria
THE PUBLIC PROGRAM

The Public Program will critically respond to the current social-political circumstances, its conflicts and complexities, and the place of art within them. A series of time-based projects will intervene in the city of St. Petersburg and its cultural, historical, and social complexity with context-responsive commissions and debates, events, pop-up shows, and discursive platforms, as an integral part of the exhibition. Because the Program provides an opportunity to engage with the urgency of unfolding geo-political circumstances, the full list of the contributors and places is in flux.

Giving context to her program within the Manifesta project as a whole, Warsza has said: “MANIFESTA 10 is in fact one of those moments when art really is especially needed if it wants to engage in a critical way with the complexities and conflicts of our time. The projects will obviously not represent the position of the Russian government. I believe that as long as we can work in a complex manner and in a context-responsive way, and as long as we — curator, artists, team — are not exposed to self-censorship, and not intimidated or restricted, we will continue to do so. In this contested time, one should not equate people, and our audiences, as equal to their governments.”

The invited artists mostly originate from cities of post-Soviet and post-communist Europe including Vilnius, Tallinn, and Kiev. These cities are all accessible by train from St. Petersburg’s Vitebsky Station, which will be a key venue for the Public Program as the first train hub in Russia to connect the East and West — its name bearing homage to the famous city of the early twentieth century Russian avant-garde.

The Public Program also refers to the role of the private, the public, and their respective social and political contexts during the USSR era, as well as in the current post-Soviet condition and geo-political situation. During the Soviet Union, ‘public’ (understood as a critical exchange of free thoughts) almost exclusively took place at home universities, secret political gatherings, and through inner emigration and apartment exhibitions — where unofficial, nonconformist, engaged art was hosted as a form of resistance.

One of the projects will be an exhibition on Apartment Art as Domestic Resistance, cocurated with St. Petersburg-based art historian Olesya Turkina and located in one of the former communal flats.
Artists contributing with time-based performative works: Pavel Braila (Moldova), Lado Darakhvelidze (Georgia), Alevtina Kakhidze (Ukraine), Ragnar Kjartansson (Iceland), Deimantas Narkevičius (Lithuania), Kristina Norman (Estonia), Ilya Orlov and Natasha Kraevskaya (Russia), Alexandra Pirici (Romania), and Slavs and Tatars (Eurasia).

A number of artists and participants will engage in public events, including: Anna Baumgart and Andrzej Turowski (Poland), Kathrin Becker (Germany), Anna Bitkina (Russia), Ekaterina Degot (Russia), Glyuklya (Russia), Pavel Arseniev (Russia), Emily Newman (USA/Russia), Jonathan Platt (USA/Russia), Rimini Protokoll (Germany), Aaron Schuster (USA), Mierle Laderman Ukeles (USA), and many more to be confirmed.

Staging a dialogue between the informal and the official, the Public Program will look into St. Petersburg’s history and present, investigating the intricacies and contradictions of the city, revealing local idiosyncrasies, and exploring ideas of the private, the public, and the political.

Joanna Warsza
Head of the Public Program
Part of the Public Program, Unlooped—KINO, a film program devised by Nathalie Hoyos and Rainald Schumacher from Office for Art (Berlin), will offer a survey of time-based media, film, and video, by contemporary artists from the past decades.

Unlooped—KINO is structured into three autonomous programs exploring works of artists invited to Manifesta, the Eastern European art scene, and the important position of time-based media in the field of contemporary expression.

Each program will consist of around 20 to 25 single works making up an overall running time of four hours. The programs will be repeated at least twice a day. While the majority of the films are shorter than 10 minutes, each program will contain one longer film of duration not longer than one hour.

The Unlooped—KINO program is developed in cooperation with leading collections of time-based media including: Cumbusyan Collection, Istanbul, Turkey; Eksioglu Collection Istanbul, Turkey; Goetz Collection, Munich, Germany; Video-Forum at Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, Germany; Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Collection, Turin, Italy; Julia Stoschek Collection, Düsseldorf, Germany; and Garage Centre for Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia.

Press

For media enquiries and images please contact the relevant press officer below:

General Media:
m10press@manifesta.org

Russian Media:
Valeria Volkova — lera@manifesta.org
Marina Bachurova — marinabachurova@manifesta.org

International Media:
Rhiannon Pickles — rhiannonpickles@manifesta.org

German Speaking Media:
Kathrin Luz — kathrinluz@manifesta.org