



Manifesta 13 Marseille in 2020

One Biennale, Three Programmes: *Traits d'union.s*, *Le Tiers Programme*, *Les Parallèles du Sud*

Press release — 1

Marseille
27th of February 2020

Over the course of the past 12 editions - starting in Rotterdam in 1996 and travelling to Marseille in 2020, via Ljubljana in 2000, Saint-Petersburg in 2014 and Palermo in 2018 and before going to Prishtina in 2022 - Manifesta has consistently chosen unexpected host cities to reflect upon the pressing issues and transformations that Europe is facing today. Given its nomadic nature, and the need to adapt to a different location and context for each edition, Manifesta is in constant transformation, investigating the current and specific geopolitical challenges within each host city, with new commissioning partners every two years. For Manifesta 13 Marseille, which takes place this year from the 7th of June until the 1st of November 2020, the ambition is to experiment with collaborative forms of knowledge production and where renewed models of collectivity, diversity and co-existence can be tested. The question of Manifesta's very identity, balanced between an art biennial of symbolic artistic practices and a civic instrument of social change, was specifically felt upon arriving in Palermo and Marseille, and prompted Manifesta to reinvent its research model, linking the biennial to the issues of each city.

Hedwig Fijen, director of Manifesta, said:

"In line with our long-term, experimental and democratic collective knowledge production, Manifesta 13 Marseille introduces an alternative mediation model in which a series of trans-disciplinary programmes now function next to each other. This new approach provides a more diverse and inclusive composition of Manifesta 13 Marseille's 2020 programme, which will take place in a variety of institutional and non-institutional venues in Marseille and its region."

The biennial's central exhibition *Traits d'union.s*, conceived by the Artistic Team of Manifesta 13 Marseille; **Katerina Chuchalina** chief-curator of the VAC Foundation in Moscow, **Stefan Kalmár** director of the ICA in London and **Alya Sebti**, director of ifa gallery in Berlin, will this year be accompanied by two analogue programmes: *Le Tiers Programme* and *Le Grand Puzzle*.

Consisting of various plots and multiple storylines, the central exhibition of Manifesta 13 takes place across most of Marseille's major museums,

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thus actively building “traits d’union.s” between seemingly specific local narratives and those happening elsewhere in the world. Through deep and critical engagements with the conditions of change, *Traits d’union.s* adds new voices to the often competing narratives existing within Marseille by going beyond the question of co-existence, instead asking “*How can we actually come together and create new bonds of solidarity?*” In March 2020, Manifesta will release all plots of its central exhibition *Traits d’union.s* alongside its full list of participants.

Le Tiers Programme - constructed by Manifesta 13 Marseille’s Education and Mediation Department led by **Yana Klichuk** and **Joana Monbaron** - has created its own space in Marseille. The Tiers QG, which opened its doors in December 2019, welcomes a varied public and shows the result of almost two years of research in Marseille, among which is the project *Invisible Archives*: a monthly exhibition programme that connects international artists with different local communities. Following a field research that aimed at identifying “what is already here” in terms of pre-existent knowledges and practices of resilience developed by the citizens of Marseille, the *Invisible Archives* is a suggestion for the creation of a space of exhibitions, creative interventions and discussions on citizens’ practices that urban projects too often exclude. Through artistic perspectives, *Invisible Archives* aims to re-activate these histories and narratives in dialogue with each other and claim recognition of these extraordinary examples of community synergies as common heritage, often invisible and unnoticed by institutions, but important to the understanding of current societal and urbanistic dynamics and conflicts in the city.

Parallel to *Le Tiers Programme*, the director of Manifesta invited a Marseille-based cultural producer, Béatrice Simonet, to compose an accompanying programme called *Les Parallèles du Sud* in which local cultural institutions, galleries and artists are co-curating and co-producing projects with international partners. Each selected project is based upon the concept of the biennial’s central project, *Traits d’union.s*. A total of 95 projects were selected by a jury and will be presented across venues in Marseille and the region during Manifesta 13 Marseille, ranging from workshops to academic lectures, from gallery and museum exhibitions to theatre and performances.

A pre-biennial format that now includes an urban research and workshops with a range of local communities: *Le Grand Puzzle* and *Tour de Tous les Possibles*

Building upon the earlier invitation for OMA (Office for Metropolitan Architecture) to participate in Manifesta 12 Palermo by conducting research into the transformation of the city of Palermo, in 2018 Hedwig Fijen invited the Dutch architectural studio MVRDV to create an urban study specific to Marseille. Led by Winy Maas and the Why Factory, the resulting urban study, *Le Grand Puzzle*, encourages us to rethink the future of the city of Marseille through a variety of pedagogical and architectural methodologies. The research was presented to a local audience in February 2019 in Marseille’s Alcazar Library and will be published in June 2020 by Hatje Cantz at the time of the opening of Manifesta 13 Marseille.

This pre-biennial format intends to inspire Marseille’s citizens to experience their city differently and aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of

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the city's urban realities as well as its cultural, social, and geo-political complexities. *Le Grand Puzzle* offers an urban study of Marseille and is complemented by a deliberative process called *Tour de Tous les Possibles* (Tour of All Possibilities).

For *Tour de Tous les Possibles*, Hedwig Fijen and Winy Maas invited two local city makers, Joke Quintens and Tarik Gezhali, to use the conclusions of the urban study *Le Grand Puzzle* as a point of departure for the development of 25 citizen assemblies. Inspired by, amongst others, the Belgian cultural philosopher and historian David van Reybrouck, these gatherings bring together more than 500 Marseille citizens from a variety of backgrounds to discuss societal, environmental and cultural issues directly derived from the narratives, data and analyses of *Le Grand Puzzle*. These encounters are currently organised within non-typical artistic venues such as prisons, co-working spaces or schools, and invigorate the citizens of Marseille to reflect on potential future transformations of their city.

Through its three analogue programmes: *Traits d'union.s*, *Le Tiers Programme* and *Les Parallèles du Sud*, and its new extensive pre-biennial activities, starting with an urban research and a series of citizen's assemblies, Manifesta shows a strong ambition to adapt its format to each host city through the creation of an experimental biennial model.

More information on the three programmes, *Traits d'union.s*, *Le Tiers Programme*, and *Les Parallèles du Sud*, as well as on the pre-biennial programme, can be found here: www.manifesta13.org.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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About Manifesta:

Manifesta, the European Nomadic Biennial, originated in the early 1990s in response to the political, economic, and social change following the end of the Cold War and the subsequent steps towards European integration. Manifesta has developed into a platform for dialogue between art and society by inviting the cultural and artistic community to produce new creative experiences with, and not for, the context in which it takes place. Manifesta rethinks the relations between culture and society investigating and catalysing positive social change in Europe through contemporary culture in a continuous dialogue with the social sphere of a specific place.

Manifesta was founded, and is still directed, by Dutch art historian Hedwig Fijen. Each new edition is fundraised individually and managed by a permanent team of international specialists.

Manifesta 13 Marseille is a non-profit organisation initiated by the International Foundation of Manifesta and the City of Marseille. Manifesta 13 Marseille is supported by the City of Marseille, the French Ministry of Culture, the Préfecture des Bouches du Rhône and the Departmental Council of the Bouches-du-Rhône.

Dates of Manifesta 13 Marseille:
7 June – 1 November 2020

Next Manifesta Host City
Manifesta 14, Pristina (Kosovo, 2022)

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)
Manifesta 12, Palermo (Italy, 2018)

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