



MANIFESTA
JOURNAL
around
curatorial
practices

#18

**THIS
SITUATION
NEVER LEAVES
OUR WAKING
THOUGHTS
FOR LONG**



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Notes from a Boycott

Mariam Ghani, Gulf Labor Working Group

Gulf Labor is a group of artists, writers, architects, curators, and other cultural workers who are trying to ensure that worker's rights are protected during the construction of new cultural institutions on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi, UAE. After letter-writing and meetings with the Guggenheim in 2010 produced insufficient change, we initiated a public boycott of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (GAD) in 2011. Almost two thousand cultural workers have signed on to the boycott, agreeing not to sell work to, accept commissions from, or participate in events on behalf of the GAD.

Like most long-term boycotts, the Gulf Labor campaign has undergone a number of shifts and has deployed a range of different tactics over the years following its public launch. Some signatories have dropped out, while others have joined in. Our working group—which is responsible for organizing, negotiating, and making public statements—has a rotating membership open to anyone participating in the boycott. That membership has changed over time, which naturally inflects the decisions made by the working group. At some moments, we have engaged in intensive behind-the-scenes dialogues with both the Guggenheim and their partners in Abu Dhabi. At other moments, we have withdrawn from conversations that seemed to produce no tangible results, and considered how we might change the dynamic, by intervening in other ways or arenas.

Gulf Labor's most visible tactical shift came in fall 2013, when we launched the *52 Weeks* campaign. Every week for a year, we are releasing one or more artist's projects. These projects call attention

to some aspect of the conditions of workers on Saadiyat Island, the political context that enables their situation, and the problematic compact between the western institutions building on Saadiyat and their partners in Abu Dhabi; or they make links between the situation of the workers on Saadiyat and similar struggles by other migrants and workers in other places and times. *52 Weeks* represents a move from the strategic use of artworks (withholding them, or imposing conditions on their sale, production and exhibition) as an activist tactic, to an attempt to apply the same kind of pressure through the production and distribution of artworks that directly address or enact that activism.

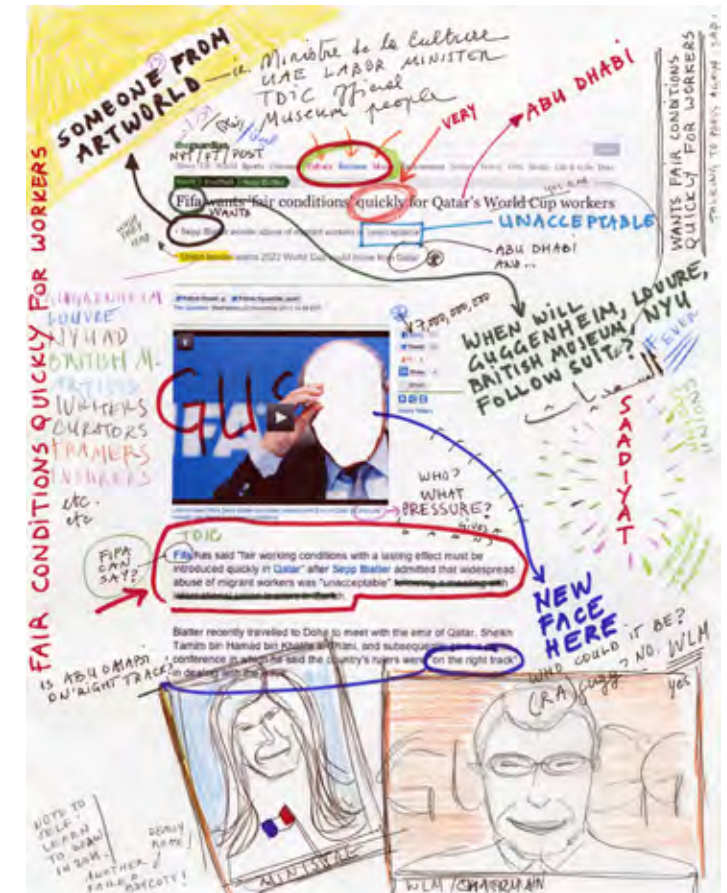
52 Weeks was initially conceived as a means to exert constant pressure on the Guggenheim, its chief Emirati partner TDIC (Tourism Development & Investment Company), and the other Western institutions imbricated in construction projects on Saadiyat (the Louvre, the British Museum, and New York University). *52 Weeks* also allows Gulf Labor to connect our efforts vis-à-vis Saadiyat Island to relevant issues and parallel activist projects outside Saadiyat—from the World Cup stadium construction in Qatar, to the globalization of university campuses, to the struggles of migrant tomato pickers in Florida, through the projects produced by a diverse group of artists and writers. *52 Weeks* additionally opens a space for direct actions to be performed as "weeks" within the ongoing campaign, by newly formed affinity groups (such as the Global Ultra Luxury Faction or G.U.L.F.). The flexibility of this format potentially broadens Gulf Labor's purview, without splitting the focus of its central demands.

EXHIBITION ROOM



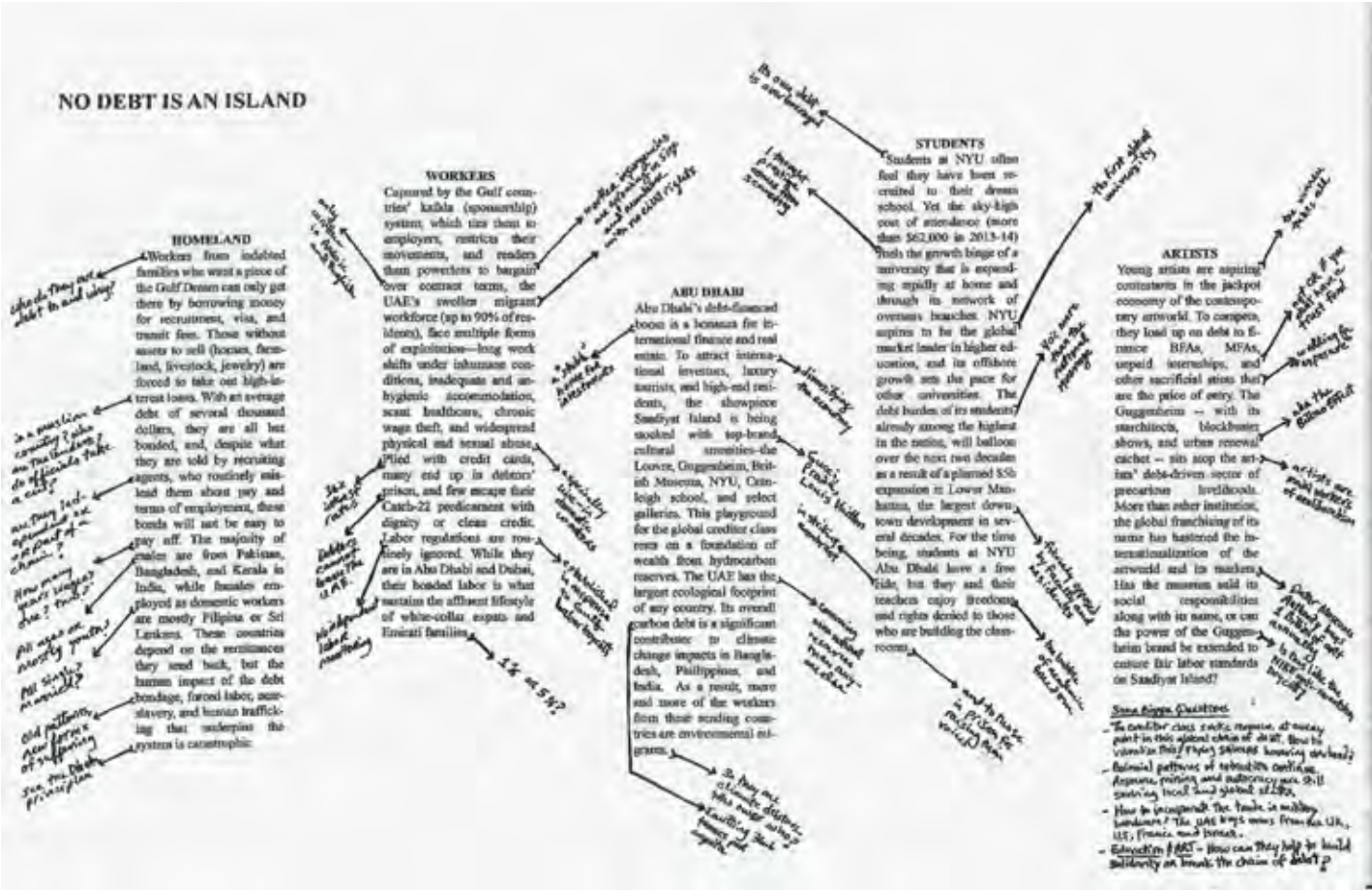
Gulf Labor, poster announcing the launch of *52 Weeks*, 2013

Farid Sarroukh and Maha Traboulsi in collaboration with Walid Raad for Week 9, *If FIFA did...*, poster, 2013



Santiago Mazatl for Week 37, *Farmworker Justice*, poster created in solidarity with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in Florida (ciw-online.org/about, last accessed 22 August 2014), 2014





Andrew Ross and MTL (Nitasha Dhillon and Amin Husain) for Week 10, *NO DEBT IS AN ISLAND*, triptych with multimedia components (<http://www.thinglink.com/scene/465544492976439298>, last accessed 22 August 2014), a printable PDF, and a solidarity initiative, 2013

Global Ultra
Luxury Faction
(G.U.L.F.) for Week
20, *Is this the
future of art?*, Front
of flyer dropped
during February
22nd action at
the Guggenheim
Museum, New
York (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WU-W_Ftyaw, last
accessed 22
August 2014).

Is this the future of art? Art, among other things, is about doing, living and imagining a better world. Art should not violate human rights. Art should not endanger workers lives. Art should not create debt slaves.

Today, as indebted people ourselves, we launch a solidarity initiative to protest the abusive living and working conditions of migrant workers who are constructing the Guggenheim, the Louvre, and the new NYU campus on Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island. This action is just the beginning.

G.U.L.F. calls on the Guggenheim to ensure that the labor and human rights of the Abu Dhabi workers are fully respected.

Gulf Ultra Luxury Faction (G.U.L.F.)
for more info visit www.gulfalabor.org

HUMAN RIGHTS
AND MIGRANT WORKERS IN ABU DHABI:

NEW PERSPECTIVES

JOIN US FOR A TALK BY
REGIONAL EXPERT
NICK MCGEEHAN
(HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH)

PRESENTING NEW FINDINGS ON
MIGRANT LABOR CONDITIONS &
THE HUMAN RIGHTS "SITUATION"
IN ABU DHABI

WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY
26
5:15 — 6:45 PM
GCASL
788 TRICKINGTON ST.
ROOM 369



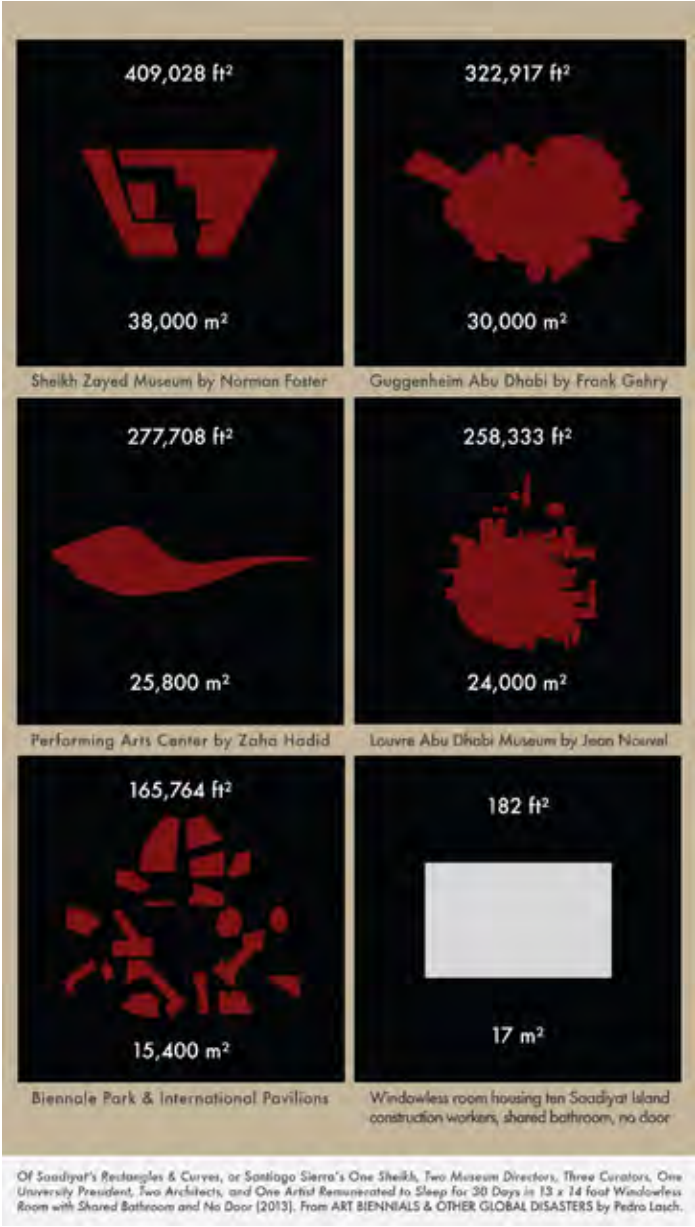
G.U.L.F., documentation of March 29th action at Guggenheim Museum, New York. Fake dollar bills were dropped into the atrium during the *Italian Futurism* exhibition. A fake globalguggenheim.com website concurrently launched a RFP (Request for proposal) for sustainable and ethical museum designs (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHphhnZhtNY>, last accessed 22 August 2014).

While some of the *52 Weeks* artists perform or call for direct actions, others take a more laconic, analytical, or abstracted approach to highlighting the ironies and contradictions of the grand project of Saadiyat Island (literally translated, the “Island of Happiness”). One week might propose new architectural standards (see whobuilds.org for details), while the next might launch an activist Twitterbot, and the next might present an entry from an encyclopedia or lexicon. The tone can be playful or elegiac, reflective or sardonic.



John Jurayj for Week 32, *30 Untitled Men*, poster with portraits of the thirty British Museum trustees printed on vellum with burn holes, 2014.

Assessing the campaign from the two-thirds mark, it seems to me that *52 Weeks* and its many brilliant contributors have begun to re-imagine what a group like Gulf Labor can be and do—how an activist project based in a boycott might serve beyond that boycott, without abandoning it. *52 Weeks* is a reminder that a boycott can and should be the beginning of a larger conversation, rather than a means to shut down all dialogue around an issue.



Pedro Lasch for Week 14, *Of Saadiyat’s Rectangles & Curves*, or Santiago Sierra’s *One Sheikh, Two Museum Directors, Three Curators, One University President, Two Architects, and One Artist Remunerated to Sleep for 30 Days in a 13 x 14 foot Windowless Room with Shared Bathroom and No Door*, poster, 2013.

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dozens were admitted to hospitals, “Every day we receive between 30 to 50 workers suffering heat exhaustion and stroke,” one hospital official reported.

Up to 60 percent of companies openly ignore the Mid-Day Break rule, which does not hinge on a specific temperature being reached, but rather a duration of heat higher than 38°C typical during summer months. The UAE has a history of not fining companies for violating the Mid-Day Break law. The ILO’s 50°C standard is simply the upper limit by which the UAE government attempts to enforce the law. After three consecutive days of 50°C, night construction shifts are mandatory. In recent summers and despite global warming, the temperature has, according to local weather reports, hovered in the high-40s for weeks on end.

Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature. The body’s temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is no longer able to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 41°C or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided. As a point of comparison, chocolate typically melts at 32°C, candle wax melts starting at 55°C, and the body’s tissues are damaged when body temperature reaches 43°C.

Due to intense criticisms and negative reports from international monitoring groups like Human Rights Watch, a few companies have hired safety managers who monitor workers’ well being while keeping the project on track. Now, a pair of Australian scientists is helping those managers become more objective in their worker safety monitoring. The researchers have launched a study to observe and document the effects of thermal stress. Using an assessment tool called the Thermal Work Limit (TWL), they have determined that most healthy people can labor under very hot conditions if they stay well hydrated and modify their pace of work according to their level of fatigue. The study, admittedly small, suggests that men of varying fitness levels and ages work harder when they arrive at the site, and remain, well-hydrated throughout the day. Despite differences in strength and endurance, well-hydrated workers maintained similar and consistent heart rates while exerting themselves in hot conditions and did not experience a rise in core body temperature. Workers most at risk were those who did not drink or had limited access to water. Workers who had inadequate sleep the night or nights before were also at risk for heat-related illness.

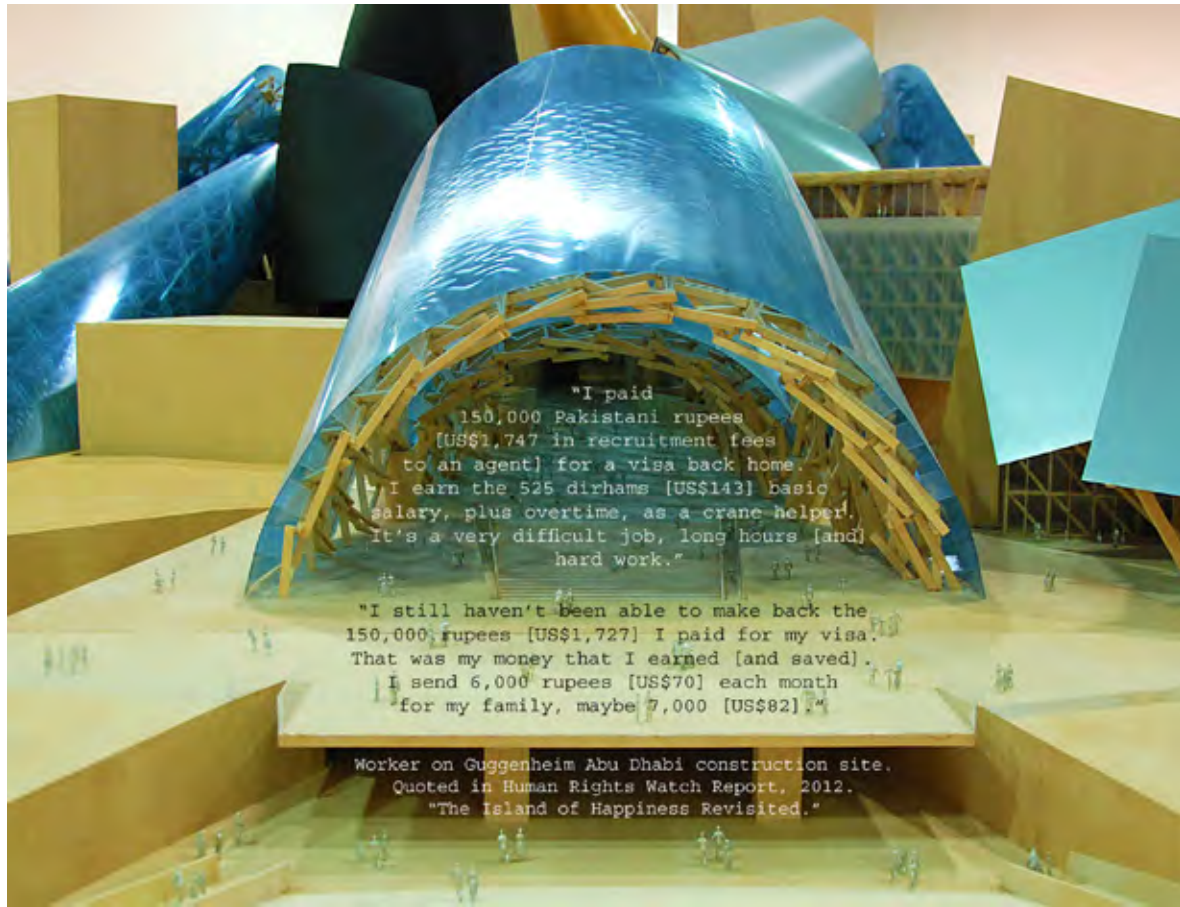
Next summer’s heat related challenges may intensify. Construction workers laid off during Dubai’s economic downturn in 2008 are increasingly desperate. Despite being homeless with little access to proper food and water, most are working odd jobs outdoors during the day and trying to get back on a construction site. They are stranded in the Emirates with no money to pay their way home, and still separated from the passports that brought them in to the country. Contractors, whose increasing knowledge about how to keep workers healthy and productive in hot weather by providing water on the job site, must avoid exploiting a labor force that has little left to lose.

50°C Dangerously hot, especially when coupled with humidity of 80 percent or more, as is often the case in the UAE from May to September. This temperature is the equivalent of 122°F and the basis of the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) standard that outdoor work halt and alternative shifts be offered. The UAE is a member of the ILO and as such, agrees to its labor standards. In addition to adhering to the ILO’s guidelines, the UAE adopted its own “Mid-Day Break” rule for workers in contracting and construction in 2003. The rule, applicable in summer months, means that between the hours of 12:30 and 3 p.m., outdoor work is prohibited in order to protect against heat exhaustion.

The labor force for construction in the UAE is vast, due to the pace of development. It is a workforce largely comprised of foreign-born laborers—from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan—who are paid low wages, offered no benefits, and live in crowded, camp-like conditions. They often have long commutes to their workplace and limited access to food. Employers hold their passports, which is illegal, but discourages workers from filing grievances.

Before the Mid-Day Break rule was established, as many as 5000 construction workers per month were brought to the accident and emergency department of Rashid Hospital in Dubai during July and August. During summer power outages in Sharjah in 2010, a 27-year-old Indian laborer died of heatstroke shortly after being brought to an emergency ward. Heatstroke cases quadrupled and

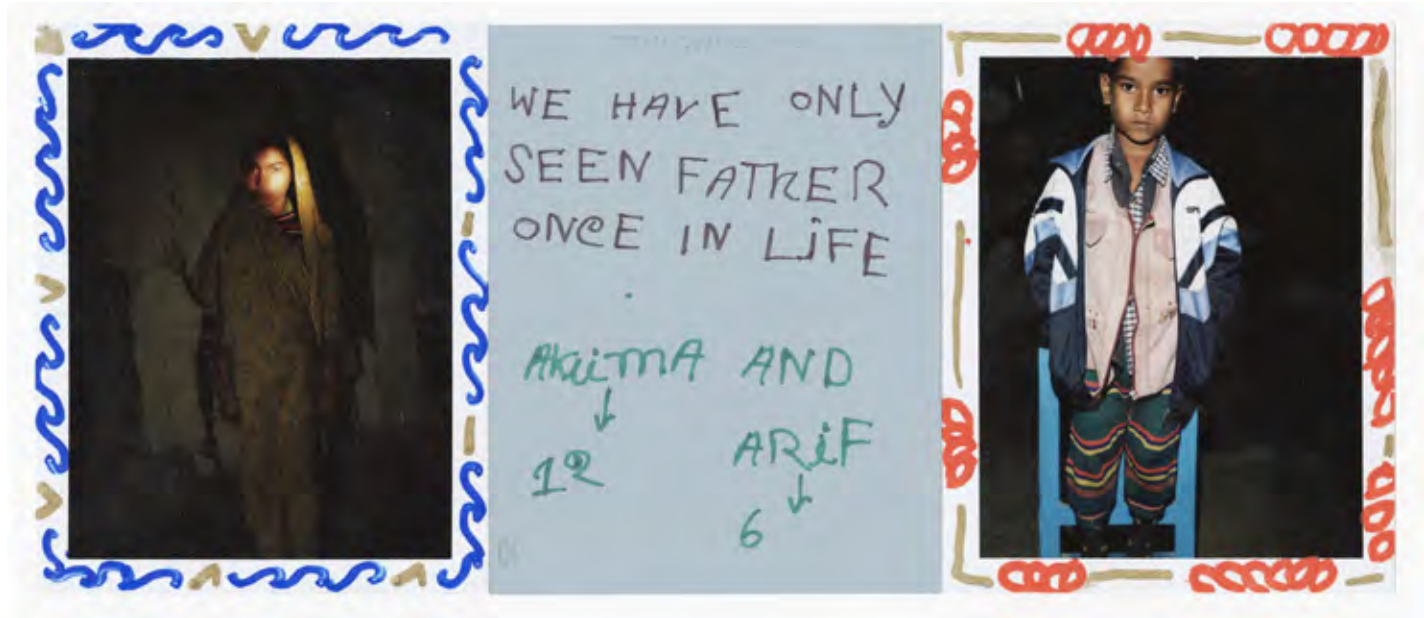
Lynn Love and Ann Sappenfield for Week 11, *50° Celsius*, page layout from 2010 Supplement to the New Emirati Britannica, Third Edition.



Hans Haacke for Week 5, *I Paid...*, poster, 2014



Matt Greco and Greg Sholette for Week 7, *Saadiyat Island Workers Quarters Collectibles*, 3-D printed objects and packaging, shop-dropped in the Guggenheim NYC gift-store in October 2013 (video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMc8KsNwtpA>, last accessed 22 August 2014). Photos by Karin Cintron.



Jim Goldberg for Week 16, *Akima and Arif*, photos and text (<http://gulflabor.org/2014/week-16-jim-goldberg-akima-and-arif>, last accessed 22 August 2014) from a trip to Bangladesh in 2007.



Sarah Farahat and Aaron Hughes for Week 34, *Labor of Art, Art of Labor*, a downloadable organizing toolkit (<http://static.squarespace.com/static/50d3fa2ee4b0361e83376698/t/538f48f6e4b04cfd38730b17/1401899254528/Gulf%20Labor%20Action%20Tool%20Kit-Printout%20Pamphlet.pdf>, last accessed 22 August 2014) and Twitterbot campaign (#GulfLaborAction), 2014.

Anna Stump
for Week 19,
Migrant Labor
Did Not Exist in
the Wonderland
of Knowledge
Encyclopedia,
1938, gouache
and collage on
paper, 2013



Over the past year, the conversation around cultural boycotts in the art and academic worlds appears to be once again approaching some kind of critical mass. Renewed press around Gulf Labor’s boycott followed both the 52 Weeks launch in the fall and the front-page New York Times revelations around the NYU Abu Dhabi campus in the spring. The carefully-negotiated artist withdrawals from the Biennale of Sydney in protest of main sponsor Transfield’s involvement with widely criticized migrant detention camps resulted in the withdrawal of Transfield’s chairman from the board of the Biennale and the return of the boycotting artists to the show. The current edition of MANIFESTA¹ itself has been the target of a call to boycott, because of its location in Saint Petersburg and the manifold challenges to free expression (for dissidents and non-Russians, also freedom of movement) in the current political and cultural climate of Russia, including the so-called “homosexual propaganda” laws. The public program of MANIFESTA includes self-reflexive discussions on the “socio-political context of biennials” and the distinctions between “making art politically” and “making political art,” as well as “engagement and disengagement,” to echo the recent mini-conference

¹ Editorial note: See also Sarah Joseph’s text «Arts Boycott: The Controversy over the Nineteenth Biennale of Sydney,» included in this issue.

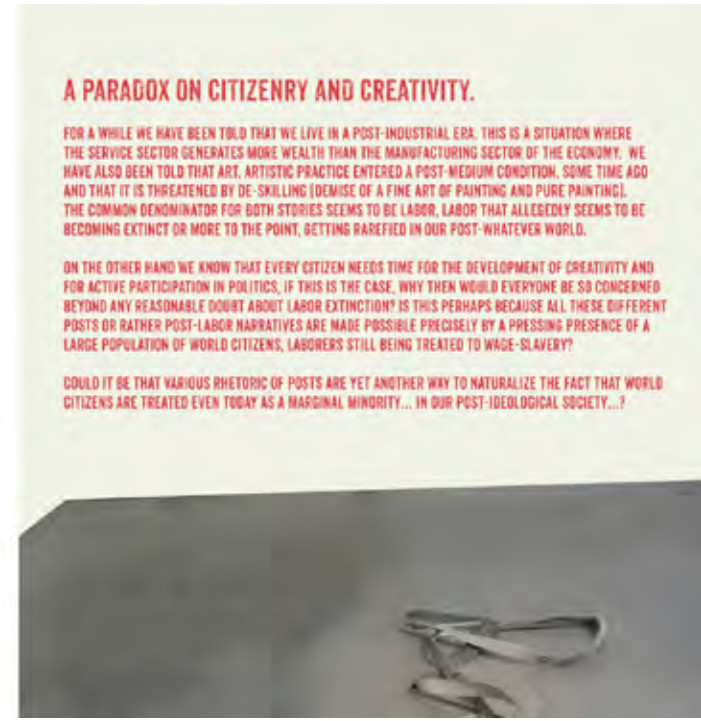
What Now?: Collaboration & Collectivity in New York co-presented by Art in General and the Vera List Center.

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israeli companies and institutions complicit in the violation of Palestinian rights received a fresh jolt of controversy when the American Studies Association voted to endorse BDS, and American politicians seized the opportunity to denounce professors who dare to take “left”-wing political stands. More recently, the Creative Time exhibition *Living as Form*, which is a survey of socially engaged art practices, was toured by Independent Curators International through their “Exhibition in a Box” program, and traveled to two venues in Israel—including the Technion, a university deeply embedded in the Israeli military-industrial-settlement complex—before notifying the participating artists, some of whom are BDS signatories. Creative Time and ICI have both stated that they do not participate in any cultural boycotts, because they believe it is more important to engage than to disengage. There are some contexts, however, where the line between presenting engaged work in order to shift the limits and possibilities of the discourse, and allowing that work to be used to paper-over real problems, becomes so fine that it can sometimes vanish entirely.

The question raised by Creative Time is, nonetheless, at the heart of every boycott dilemma. Can a given situation be changed more by engaging, or by disengaging? The answer may be different for every person, for every government, for every institution, for every situation. For some people, “boycott” will always be a dirty word—whether because of a reflexively anti-labor stance, or because of harsh experience on the wrong end of economic sanctions. For others—perhaps people like me, who grew up in boycotting households, always avoiding something or other (whether it was Chilean grapes, “Israeli” hummus, or clothes made with prison labor)—the boycott is just another bit in the activist toolkit, or really, just an ordinary fact of life: part of the endless, everyday struggle to live our ethics.



Rawi Hage for Week 25, *Carnival*, 2014 poster with excerpt from the 2012 novel of the same name, in six different languages.



Todd Ayoung and Jelena Stojanovic
for Week 28, *A Paradox on Citizenry and Creativity*, poster, 2014.



Pablo Helguera for Week 36, *At the very least...* from the series *Artoons*, 2010.



Thomas Hirschhorn for Week 2, *Banners*, photocopies and tape, 2009. Published in conjunction with the text *My Guggenheim Dilemma* (full text at <http://gulflabor.org/2013/week-2-thomas-hirschhorn-my-guggenheim-dilemma>, last accessed 22 August 2014).

In the text published by Thomas Hirschhorn for the second week of *52 Weeks*, “My Guggenheim Dilemma,” the artist asserts that the real dilemma of a cultural boycott lies in the contradiction between the “politics of ‘good intentions’, ‘the good conscience’, ‘the engagement of the artist’... and my belief and conviction that Art, as Art, has to keep completely out of any daily political cause in order to maintain its power, its artistic power, its real political power.” If the real political power of art lies in maintaining a space that, in Hirschhorn’s formulation, can resist the simplifications of political idealism and realism, then why use art to enact real-world politics? Perhaps precisely because when culture is deployed for political purposes—as it often is by autocratic regimes that cloak their autocracy with performances of freedom—the weave between aesthetics and politics becomes so complex that the space of art is required to unpick it.

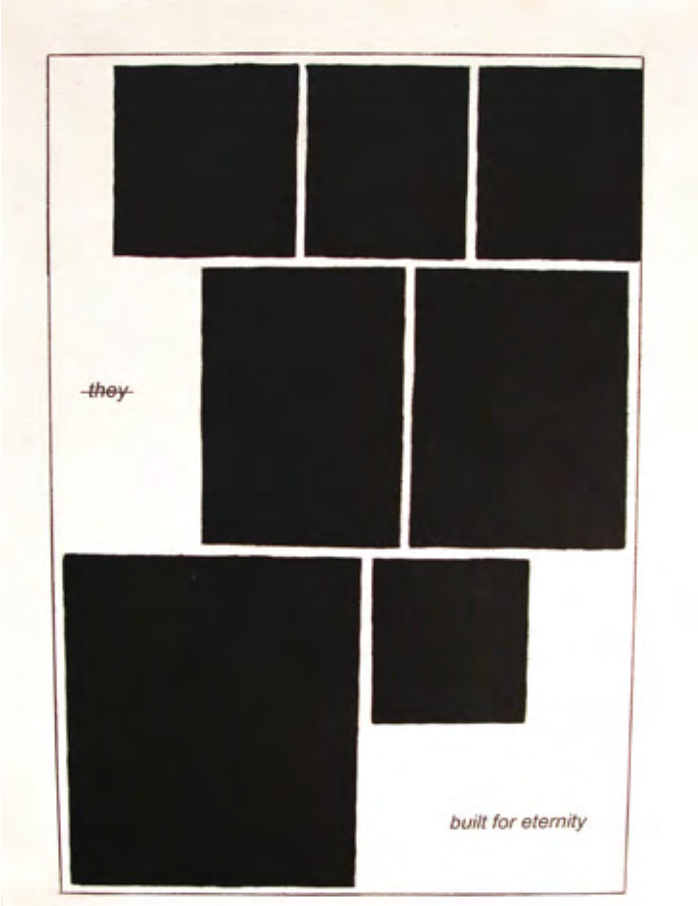
Hirschhorn’s text also brings up another critical point. In the last line, he says “My signature for the boycott of Guggenheim Abu Dhabi will make sense if I have to pay a price for it.” As the text was originally a letter sent from Hirschhorn to Nancy Spector and Richard Armstrong about a proposed exhibition at the Guggenheim Bilbao, the discussion of paying a price is quite apt. Yet the notion of paying a real, personal price for participation in a cultural boycott is not widely discussed these days. It seems more fashionable to describe joining what Hirschhorn himself calls a “fancy artists’s boycott” as either an essentially meaningless gesture of solidarity—just another e-signature on another petition—or, for the organizers, as some sort of esoteric career move. But if the boycott is to succeed, the price must be real—lost income, frayed relationships, a certain reputation for troublemaking—and signing must mean that one is actually willing to pay that price. Fewer signatories who have seriously weighed what it means to sign are more valuable than more signatories who sign without weighing the consequences.

Ultimately, a boycott should be a tactic of last, not first, resort. Public boycotts should be called only when private negotiation proves either impossible or fruitless. Furthermore, a boycott should be applied only when a boycott is likely to produce results. That is to say, a cultural boycott will work only if the creative work being withheld has significant and immediate value to the institution or government

being boycotted. If that government or institution does not in fact need cultural products for a specific purpose in this specific moment, cultural workers have no leverage with that government or institution, and a boycott will not work. Likewise, if the boycott does not include a significant portion of the most visible cultural workers necessary to the immediate purpose or project of the government or institution, the boycott will not work. A public boycott should not be called until enough organization has been done to ensure a minimum of consensus around the goal and necessity of the boycott in the community most important to its success. If the demand behind a boycott is vague or diffuse, the boycott will not work. In a long-term boycott, however, it is possible that the goal of the boycott may develop over time as the situation and relationships change, from one central demand into a series of more specific or interrelated demands. In the case of Gulf Labor, our specific demands with regards to Saadiyat have not changed—we are still seeking uniform and enforceable protections for the human rights of all workers on the island—but over time we have developed a second, less specific goal: bringing the conversation around labor, migration and cultural capital from the margins to the center of cultural discourse.



Jaret Vadera for Week 30, *Blue Skies, White Walls, Brown Bodies*, poster, 2014



Maryam Monalisa Gharavi for Week 21, *they built for eternity*, acrylic and inkjet, 2014



Hend al Mansour for Week 23, *Fist of the Day*, silkscreen print, 2014.

Translation, Treason, Transfiguration: The Biennial as an Agent of Political Consciousness

Nancy Adajania
and Rasha Salti

I am writing these notes from a moment that may be the beginning, or the middle, or nearly the end of a long boycott. Until the boycott ends, we will not know how to narrate exactly how it progressed from one stage to the next. We will not know if we succeeded, or failed, or reached some agreement where everyone involved felt they won a little and lost a little. The most recent development, the involvement of the ILO at the government level, gives some hope that the boycott may be resolved in a way that satisfies all sides. Yet at this stage we still do not know which moves will lead where; we can only hope that experience and principle will serve as good guides.

Our experience so far, however, suggests that the boycott dilemma of engagement versus disengagement is something of a false dichotomy. By which I mean that describing participation in a cultural boycott as disengagement, and refusal to participate in a boycott as engagement, can be a drastic oversimplification. Not only because a long-term boycott such as Gulf Labor's actually involves as much negotiation with as withdrawal from the boycotted institution, but also because a cultural boycott, while enacting physical or economic withdrawal from a particular space, simultaneously opens a parallel space for critical engagement with the issues motivating the boycott, and dialogue with all the players involved. One might even call it engagement by disengagement.

No matter how the boycott itself ends, Gulf Labor will have opened the space for a new conversation about labor, migration, and privilege in the art world. In large part, this is due to *52 Weeks*: to the shift in tactics it represented, the collective energy it generated, and especially to the slants, tangents and connections opened by various contributors.

The extract that follows is taken from a conversation that took place between Rasha Salti—scholar of Arab cinema and co-curator of the tenth Sharjah Biennale—and me, in May 2012. Rasha had curated the Sharjah Biennale the year before, and I was in the process of curating the ninth Gwangju Biennale as one of its artistic directors. We were comparing notes from our different locales of experience.

Rasha had recently faced the censorship of Mustapha Benfodil's work at the tenth Sharjah Biennale, in reprisal for critiquing the forces of Islamic fundamentalism and its patriarchal structures of systemic violence. This incident highlighted the problem of biennials functioning in authoritarian or conservative contexts, where spectacular cultural soft-power initiatives can draw attention away from the proscription of public debate.

My dilemma as a curator was of a different kind. Since the birth moment of the Gwangju Biennale was inscribed in a people's uprising against an authoritarian regime, the tendency has been to fetishize this revolutionary moment as a once-and-for-all achievement of an imagined popular will-to-democracy. How then does one bear witness to turbulences of the present political moment that do not correspond with this foundational myth, and

indeed, demonstrate that the "will-to-democracy" is always a work in progress? As one of my responses to this challenge, I folded a retrospective of the photographer-activist Noh Sungtag into the ninth Gwangju Biennale. It included a melancholy photograph from Noh's State of Emergency series (#5, 2006) that worked, for me, as a germinal moment of biennial self-critique. It showed a row of police helmets lying on the ground outside the Gwangju Biennale hall. They belonged to policemen protecting the US ambassador during a visit to an earlier edition of the Biennale.

By refusing to resort to self-censorship—an occupational hazard undoubtedly faced by biennial curators—at a time when the insurrections in Tunisia and Egypt (the early phase of the Arab Spring) had only just taken place, Rasha courageously "spoke truth to power" and confronted the consequences of moral policing in a situation where the absence of a vibrant public sphere renders hollow the "publicness" of a biennial. The rows of police helmets are never far from the republic of the biennial. We would ignore them at our peril.

Nancy Adajania



Contributors

Nancy Adajania is a Bombay-based cultural theorist and independent curator. She was the co-artistic director of the 9th Gwangju Biennale, 2012.

Mohammad al-Attar is a Syrian playwright and dramaturge. His plays *Withdrawal*, *Online*, *Look at The Street... This is What Hope Looks Like*, *Could You Please Look into the Camera?*, *A Chance Encounter*, and *Intimacy* have been performed in Damascus, London, New York, Seoul, Berlin, Brussels, Edinburgh, Athens, and Beirut, among others.

Burak Arikan is an artist working with complex networks through the media of software, prints, installations and performances. His work has been recently featured in the 31st Sao Paulo Biennial, the 13th Istanbul Biennial, the 11th Sharjah Biennial, and the 7th Berlin Biennial. Arikan lives and works in New York (US) and Istanbul (TR) <http://burak-arikan.com>.

Boris Buden is a writer and cultural critic based in Berlin (DE). He is a board member of the European Institute for Progressive Cultural Policies, Vienna (AT) and teaches cultural theory at the Faculty of Art and Design at Bauhaus University in Weimar (DE). Among his recent publications is *Zone des Übergangs Vom Ende des Postkommunismus (Zone of Transition: On the End of Post-Communism* [Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2009]).

Ilya Budraitskis (1981) is a historian, curator and activist. He is a member of editorial board of the *Moscow Art Magazine*. Since 2013 he has been the director of the multimedia library department of the National Center for Contemporary Art (NCCA, Moscow). Along with Ekaterina Degot and Marta Dziewanska, Budraitsikis co-edited and contributed to the book

Post-post-Soviet? Art, Politics and Society in Russia in the Turn of the Decade (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) and is the co-editor (with Arseniy Zhilyaev) and contributor of *Pedagogical Poem* (Venice: Marsilio Editori, 2014).

Keti Chukhrov holds an ScD from the Philosophy Department at Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow (RU) and lectures in the art theory department there. Among other works she has authored the book, *Theatre in Philosophical Art Criticism* (St. Petersburg: European University in St. Petersburg, 2011).

Julia Rometti (1975 Nice, France) graduated in 2000 from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Arts Paris-Cergy (FR) with congratulations from the jury. From 1999–2002 she was a member of Glassbox—an artist-run space in Paris, France.

Victor Costales (1974 Minsk, Belarus) graduated from the Instituto de Diseño Grafico Latinoamericano in Quito (EC) and studied at the CFP Riccardo Bauer as well as at the Istituto Italiano di Fotografia, both in Milan (IT). Since 2007 Rometti and Costales have been working as an artist-duo. Currently they live in Mexico City (MX) and Paris (FR).

David Riff is a writer, translator, artist, and curator based in Moscow (RU) and Berlin (DE). His artistic and curatorial collaborations have included Chto Delat, the Karl Marx School of the English Language (with Dmitry Gutov), the first Bergen Assembly *Monday Begins on Saturday* (2013), and the non-academic symposium *Reports to an Academy* (2014) (both with Ekaterina Degot). He teaches at the Rodchenko School of Photography and Media Art, Moscow, and is the Head of Publications at the Academy of the Arts of the World, Cologne (DE).

Ntone Edjabe is the founder and editor of Chimurenga (chimurenga.co.za).

Bassam El Baroni is a curator and writer based in Alexandria, Egypt. He is currently completing a PhD in Curatorial Knowledge at Goldsmiths, London, and is a theory tutor at the Dutch Art Institute, Arnhem. He has curated and co-curated projects and biennials in Murcia (MANIFESTA 8, 2010) and Madrid (ES), Oslo and Lofoten (LIAF 2013) (NO), Limerick (EVA international, 2014) (IE), Paris (FR), and Alexandria (EG).

Hu Fang is a fiction writer and curator based in Guangzhou and Beijing (CN). He is the co-founder and artistic director of Vitamin Creative Space in Guangzhou and The Pavilion in Beijing, and the author of several novels.

Mariam Ghani (kabul-reconstructions.net/mariam) is an artist, writer, curator, teacher, and member of the Gulf Labor Working Group. Gulf Labor (gulflabor.org) is a coalition of cultural workers that attempt to ensure that workers’s rights are respected during the building of new cultural institutions on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi (AE).

Sarah Joseph is a Professor of Law, and the Director of the Castan Centre for Human Rights Law at Monash University, Melbourne (AU). She has a special interest in activism, freedom of speech, and the intersections between art and human rights.

Hassan Khan is an artist, writer and musician. He lives and works in Cairo, Egypt.

Nikita Kadan is an artist and lives in Kyiv. Since 2004 he has been a member of R.E.P. (Revolutionary Experimental Space) artists’s group and since 2008 he has been a co-founder and member of the curatorial and activist group HUDRADA (Artistic Committee). Kadan often works

collaboratively with architects, human rights activists and sociologists.

Erden Kosova is an art critic based in Istanbul (TR). He recently contributed to the organisation of the exhibition, *Berliner Herbstsalon* at Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin (DE).

Koyo Kouoh is an exhibition maker and the founding artistic director of RAW Material Company, a center for art, knowledge and society in Dakar (ZA).

Amanda Lee Koe is the fiction editor for Esquire, in Singapore. Her first book of short stories, *Ministry of Moral Panic*, was longlisted for the Frank O’Connor International Short Story Award.

Donna Kukama (1981, Mafikeng, ZA) currently lives and works in Johannesburg, South Africa. Her practice navigates the spaces of performance, video, text, and sound installations.

Matteo Lucchetti is a curator and an art historian based in Brussels (BE). He researches socially engaged artistic practices in a global context through the Visible project, which he has been co-curating since 2010. He is interested in the transformative potential of the visual arts and conceives exhibitions as spaces where this can be put to work. One of his most recent curatorial projects, *Don’t Embarrass the Bureau* (Lunds Konsthall (SE)), features artistic practices that disrupt the regular functioning of bureaucratic apparatuses in a time of so-called “leaked democracy”.

Viktor Misiano lives in Moscow (RU) and Ceglie Messapica (IT). Misiano was member of the curatorial team for MANIFESTA 1, Rotterdam (1996) and curated, amongst other exhibitions, the Russian section of the 3rd Istanbul Biennial (1992), the 46th and 50th Venice Biennial (1995, 2003), the 1st Valencia Biennial (2001), the 25th and 26th São Paulo Biennial (2002, 2004). He is founder and

editor-in-chief of Moscow Art Magazine. In 2003 he founded *Manifesta Journal: Journal of Contemporary Curatorship*. He is the president of the Manifesta Foundation.

Gleb Naprenko is an art historian and critic based in Moscow (RU). Published in *Moscow Art Magazine*, magazines *DI (Dialog Iskusstv)* (Moscow), *Iskusstvo* (Moscow), *Artchronika* (Moscow) and *Translit* (St. Petersburg), *e-flux* (New York), websites OpenSpace.ru (Moscow), Openleft.ru (Moscow and St. Petersburg) and Art-Agenda.com (New York), Naprenko is one of the editors of the Russian website Openleft.ru.

Veronica Nosedá is a Paris-based AIDS and LGBT activist. She discovered football in her late thirties, and is the goal-keeper for the lesbian team “Les Dégommeuses”. Since then, she has been actively taking part in the activities of the organization, which uses sports as a tool to protest discrimination on the basis of gender and sexual orientation.

Alexandra Novozhenova, is an art critic and art historian based in Moscow (RU). As an author and an editor she works for several figureheads in the Russian art media such as *Colta.ru* *Hudozhestvenniy zhurnal*, *Iskusstvo*, *Artchronika*, *Openleft.ru*, among others.

Andrei Parshikov is a curator and art critic based in Moscow (RU). He is the author of articles in *Art-Chronicle*, *Zaart*, *Afisha*, *Vremya Novostey*, *Independent Newspaper*, and the internet-portals *Gif.ru* and *Art-Times*, as well as articles for catalogues, both in Russia and elsewhere.

Tan Pin Pin directs essay films on the theme of Singapore. They include *Singapore GaGa*, *Invisible City* and her latest, *To Singapore, with Love*. She is preparing for her next film, about time capsules. In her spare time, she listens to the radio.

Alfian Sa’at is a Resident Playwright with Wild Rice, a theatre company based in Singapore. He is also a published author of poetry and fiction.

Rasha Salti is an independent curator, freelance writer and international programmer for the Toronto International Film Festival (CA).

Moses Serubiri currently works as an independent art writer for *C&*, *Platform for International Art*. He is also co-curator of the 2nd edition of the Kampala Contemporary Art Festival, KLA ART 014. He lives in Kampala, Uganda.

Ana Teixeira Pinto is a writer from Lisbon (PT), currently living in Berlin (DE). She is a PhD candidate and occasional lecturer at the Humboldt University, and a regular contributor to *e-Flux Journal*, *Art-Agenda*, *Mousse*, *Frieze/de* and *Domus*.

Joanna Warsza is an independent curator in visual, performing arts and architecture. Head of the public program of MANIFESTA 10 in St. Petersburg, she has unexpectedly been involved in some controversial projects over the last few years. She was the associate curator of the 7th Berlin Biennale, with Artur Żmijewski. She has also curated the Georgian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale and many projects in the public realm in Warsaw (PL), where she comes from.

Veronica Wiman is a curator and professor of contemporary art at Tromsø Academy of contemporary Art in Norway. Her current research is focused on urban gardening and archives. She recently curated EAC at Museo la Tertulia in Colombia, as well as built *La Vida es un Teatro* in Nashira, Colombia.

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Cover image:
Film still from *To Singapore, with Love*, a
film by Tan Pin Pin, 2013. Ho Juan Thai
stands on the Malaysian shore, looking
out to Singapore.

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