

## Some constitutional thoughts

There is a well know gap between theory and practice. A gap that may not matter for critics but that is very intriguing for critically thinking curators (who are practitioners in micropolitics). It is a classical paradox for a political philosopher to become a politician – as it is for a critical thinker to become a curator. Maybe this is one of the reasons why biennales and art shows based on elaborate theoretical concepts often suffer from a certain incoherency – an impossibility to translate criticality into the form of an exhibition. The challenge is to reconsider the physical and mental space of the exhibition in order to bridge the gap between critical imagination and making.

This challenge kept us busy after we had accepted the invitation to co-curate Manifesta 8. An immediate reference we had was to the social imaginaries which projections of an ideal polis have created in history. Could we apply this on the temporary construction of an ideal exhibition? An exhibition where all the pre-conditions, rules and modalities, where site, space, and time are re-thought and, as we hoped, would form a (zero) critical point for an ideal settlement? Or should not any universal be understood as born out of what is truly temporal and what is exchanged in actuality, in a community?

Now we see the exhibition that we invite you to work on together as a multi-authorial space; as a temporary space of its own rules in relation to the people that conceive and make it and the people that produce it by visiting and receiving; as an exhibition on actuality and the present that yet contains and reflects the histories of its making and therefore not as an image of the ideal polis, but as built structure reflects the temporality of human togetherness.

Our proposal to you is to work together on such a structure and to develop a Constitution for the exhibition in a process which is accompanying its production and setting up. This Constitution or Charter should freely define the different functionalities of the spaces and the internal rules of the exhibition.