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Art

Manifesta 13's Artists by Gender, Race, and Nationality

Daria Harper Jul 2, 2020 12:06pm   

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Tuan Andrew Nguyen, *The Specter of Ancestors Becoming*, 2019. © Tuan Andrew Nguyen. Courtesy of the artist and Manifesta.

The art world, like all other industries, is past due for a shift in its representation, inclusion, and overall treatment of people of color, women, the LGBTQAI+ community, and those who fall within the various intersections of such identities. Spurred both by current events and long-standing demands for increased transparency, accountability, and equity in the art world, we decided to examine the demographics of some of the leading artists in contemporary art, a space historically dominated by white male artists. We plan to continue reporting on these demographics for forthcoming international biennials.

Manifesta, a nomadic European art and culture biennial, was created in 1994 in response to the end of the Cold War. Manifesta 13 Marseille will take place across the French city from August 28th through November 29th, 2020 (the show was originally planned to open June 7th, but was postponed due to COVID-19). This year's central exhibition, "Traits d'union.s"—the French expression for "hyphen"—was organized by the Artistic Team: curators Katerina Chuchalina, Stefan Kalmár, and Alya Sebti. The show aims to uncover new methods of exchange and collaboration between local institutions, cultural producers, and participating researchers, artists, and architects.

One of Manifesta 13's three distinct programs, "Traits d'union.s" will take places across six "plots," each one representing a different theme. The exhibition's 47 participants include prominent young and emerging artists such as Cameron Rowland, Hannah Black, and Bárbara Wagner and Benjamin de Burca, as well as multidisciplinary collectives like Black Quantum Futurism and Center for Creative Ecologies. We've compiled and analyzed data on these participating artists and

collectives to consider the breakdown of gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality.

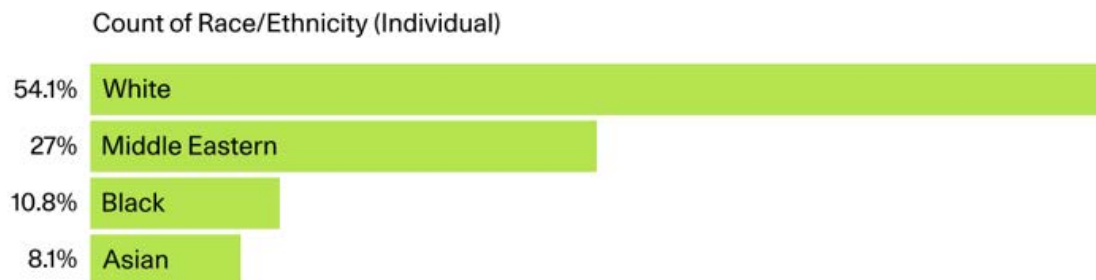
Of the 47 participants in the “Traits d’union.s” exhibition, there are six artist duos, four collectives, and 37 individual artists. Please note that while most of the data in this story is based on the participants’ self-identification, some race and gender data points are based on the perception of the writer.

Gender



The gender breakdown of this year’s biennial demonstrates a noticeable gap in representation, despite increased conversations surrounding the importance of women’s rights and equity in the world. While the show includes many prominent women artists—from the 74-year-old Armenian-Egyptian artist Anna Boghiguiian to the young French artist Sara Sadik—more than half of the participants are male. Of the 37 individual participating artists (excluding duos and collectives), 59.5% are male. Among the six participating duos—including brother-and-sister team Sofiane and Selma Ouissi, as well as Amy Lien and Enzo Camacho—five include both a male and a female participant. The remaining duo is composed of two male artists, Dennis Cooper and Zac Farley.

Race and ethnicity



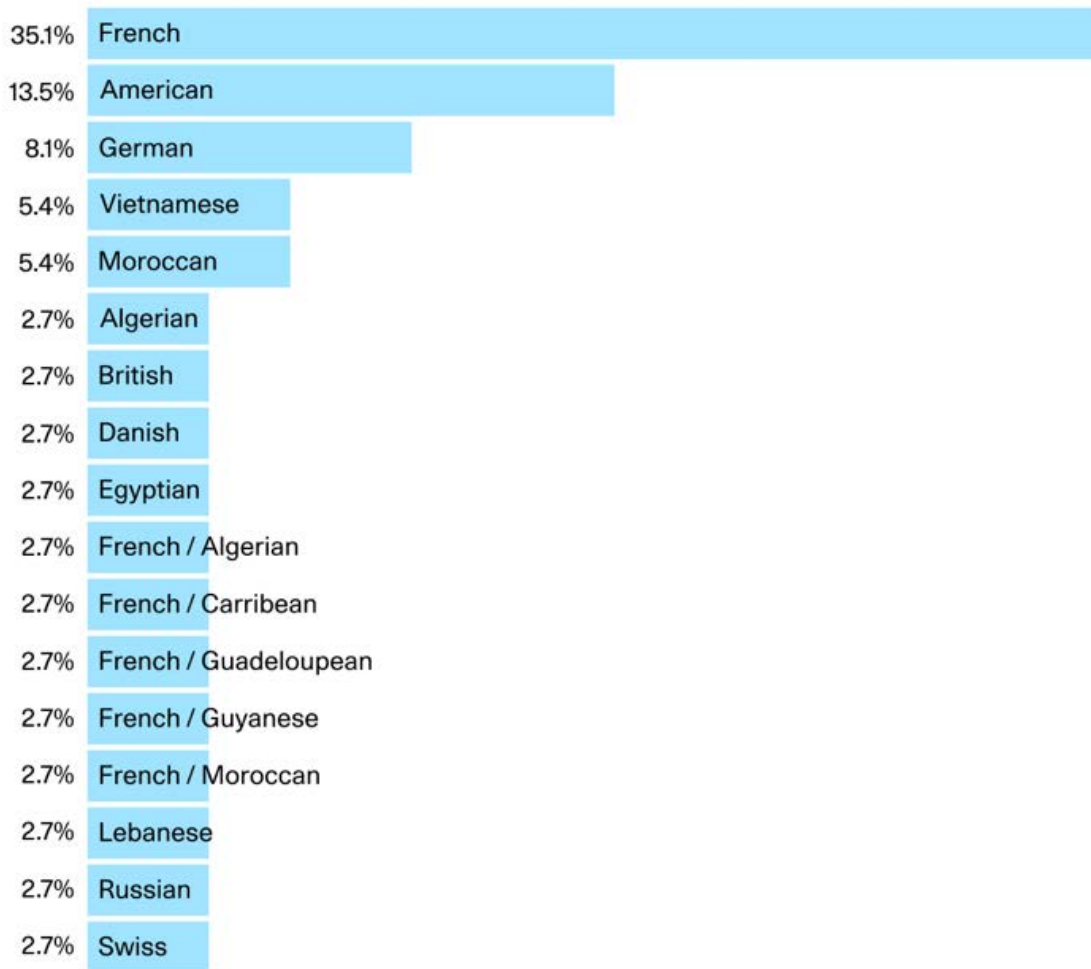
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The racial and ethnic demographics of Manifesta 13 Marseille’s participants reflect, to some extent, calls from many artists and arts workers for increased racial diversity, inclusion, and equity in the art world. Still, more than half of the individual participating artists, 54.1%, are white. Middle Eastern participants make up the next largest demographic, accounting for 27% of this year’s individual participants. There are only three individual participating artists who are Asian and four who are Black. Three of the six total duos are composed of individuals who are both white, while the one Latinx participant is Bárbara Wagner, who is part of a duo with her creative partner Benjamin de Burca.

Nationality

nationality

Count of Nationality (Individual)



Since Manifesta 13 is a European fair and takes place in Marseille this year, it is not surprising that there are many French artists participating. France and the United States make up the majority of the nationality demographics for this year's individual artists, representing 35.1% and 13.5%, respectively. The remaining 51.4% represents artists from a wide range of nationalities, including Ymane Fakhir and Yassine Balbzioui from Morocco, and Tuan Andrew Nguyen and Trinh T. Minh-ha from Vietnam.

Collectives

We have analyzed participating collectives separately to maintain the accuracy of the data and reflect the collaborative work of collectives. The four collectives of Manifesta 13 are Aoziz, Black Quantum Futurism, Center for Creative Ecologies, and Reena Spaulings.

Black Quantum Futurism, an interdisciplinary art practice, is made up of two Black female artists: Camae Ayewa and Rasheedah Phillips. Meanwhile, Aoziz—Béatrice Pedraza, Ludovic Mohamed Zahed, and Andrew Graham—includes one female and two male participants. The Center for Creative Ecologies, a part of the Department of History of Art and Visual Culture at UC Santa Cruz, includes two female and one male participant: T. J. Demos, Isabelle Carbonell, and Hannah Meszaros Martin. Reena Spaulings, the anonymous collective and art gallery with outposts in New York and Los Angeles, is not included in this analysis.

While Aoziz represents artists of British and French nationalities, the other three participating collectives are American.

The gender breakdown of the participating collectives varies slightly from the overall gender representation throughout the biennial, with more female artists represented within the groups. Similarly to the individual participants, the nationality demographics of the collectives represent primarily Western artists.

Daria Harper

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