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## Antarctica to host floating Biennale in 2017

By Tom Anstey



Ukrainian artist Alexander Ponomarev is leading the project

**An exhibition of contemporary art is being planned for one of the world's most remote locations – Antarctica.**

Due to launch 27 March 2017, the Antarctic Biennale will feature around 100 artists and scientists who will travel for 12 days on board the Akademik Ioffe, creating works for temporary installation in different locations around the South Pole.

Sailing from Argentina via the Falkland Islands, the list of artists on the unique expedition will be revealed in full in early 2017. Ukrainian artist Alexander Ponomarev, who also hosted an Antarctic Pavilion at the 15<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2014, is the commissioner of the Biennial.

“The Antarctic is the last free continent,” said Ponomarev. “According to a 1959 international agreement it belongs to no state and is intended purely as a place for creative activity in the interests of all mankind.

“It is a white continent – like a clean white sheet of paper upon which artists of different countries and different nationalities will attempt to write new rules of cooperation.”

During landings which will take place on the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and through the Drake Passage, participating artists will make objects, installations, performances and stage actions. Their constructs are to be portable, designed to withstand relevant weather conditions and cause no harm to the polar environment.

Every landing on the 12-day voyage will be documented in detail with the help of a documentary team. The artists will account for around half of those on the expedition, with the rest including organisers, a technical support group, reporters, sponsors, museum workers and collectors. After the journey, several exhibitions are to be staged in museums around Europe with the artworks created.

Beyond the inaugural 2017 event, the Antarctic Biennale will set sail once every two years, with the aim to present itself as a floating laboratory of ideas about humanity. In the 12 months leading up to the Biennale, a number of public events are planned in Moscow, New York, Venice, Basel, Monaco, London, Tokyo, Miami, and Ushuaia.