

## ***Intervention* marks Independence Day of Ukraine & six months since the invasion by Russia, amplifying the voices of Ukrainian writers and artists**



Image: Chris Payne

***Intervention*** is a collaborative project by Phil Collins and Oleksiy Radynski, co-commissioned by HOME and Manchester International Festival, re-contextualising the decommissioned statue of Friedrich Engels that stands in the centre of Manchester through the perspectives of writers and activists from Ukraine.

In response to Russia's invasion of its sovereign neighbour, Collins and Radynski have temporarily transformed Engels into a mouthpiece, amplifying the voices of Ukrainian writers and activists. Scrolling across one of two temporarily installed LED panels are a programme of texts by Svitlana Matviyenko, Mariia Volotilina, Olexii Kuchanskyi and Radynski, sharing their experiences of the last six harrowing months, and offering perspectives on notions of Russian imperialism.

On the second LED panel a newly commissioned text by social anthropologist Volodymir Artiukh combines analysis on the international economic impact of the war with personal testimonies of those most affected, and excerpts from Engels' own writings. Together, these voices articulate decolonial and anti-imperialist positions on ideas of power, oppression and resistance, in what is the biggest geopolitical crisis unfolding in Europe since the end of the Cold War.

To mark Independence Day of Ukraine, and six months since the invasion by Russia, artist Radynski's latest text will be uploaded to the first LED screen on Thu 24 August. Radynski's text will look back at events of the past six months, including the role and complicity of the west, and as such it will function as the closing chapter for *Intervention*.

Artist Phil Collins had this to say about the project: *The work of Friedrich Engels lies at the heart of Manchester's progressive, socialist, internationalist history, its relevance and meaning evolving with different historical processes. This has only deepened over the last six months as we witnessed the brutal rise of fascism from the Russian Federation, the extension of neo-colonial destruction and violence, the hypocrisy of the governments of Western Europe, and our craven dependence on consumer convenience and fossil fuels. Asking a statue to talk through the words of Ukrainian writers, activists and artists has been both an opportunity to press home the realities of life under prolonged imperialist aggression, which the Western imagination easily grows tired of thinking about, as well as to engage again with Engels' ideas. I'm hugely thankful to Oleksiy for collaborating on our Intervention, as well as to all contributors for sharing their work, critical thinking and insights.*

*Intervention* is a temporary installation adding to the original artwork and film *Ceremony* co-commissioned by HOME and MIF in 2017, which saw the decommissioned statue of Friedrich Engels transported from Mala Pereshchepyna, Eastern Ukraine to Manchester. *Ceremony* highlights the legacy of this German philosopher in the city where he lived and worked for more than twenty years.

The film follows the retrieval of the statue, its journey to the UK, as well as personal stories of people in Manchester and a large-scale inauguration event organised with local communities, making connections between Engels' work and present day socio-political conditions in Britain.

[You can watch Ceremony online by clicking here.](#)

*Intervention* will remain in place until Wed 7 Sep 2022, after which time the LED screens will be removed retaining the permanent installation of the original artwork *Ceremony*.

An online publication featuring all 8 texts by Volodymyr Artiukh, Svitlana Matviyenko, Mariia Vorotilina, Olexii Kuchanskyi and Oleksiy Radynski will be released on HOME's website at the end of the installation.

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors

For all press enquiries please contact Julia White, Head of Communications at HOME on [julia.white@homemcr.org](mailto:julia.white@homemcr.org)

Additional images are available on request.

### Contributors:

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**Oleksiy Radynski** is a filmmaker and writer based in Kyiv. His films have screened at International Film Festival Rotterdam; Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen; Docudays IFF; the Institute of Contemporary Arts (London); and SAVVY Contemporary (Berlin); among others, and have received a number of festival awards. After graduating from Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, he studied at the Home Workspace Program (Ashkal Alwan, Beirut). In 2008, he co-founded Visual Culture Research Center, an initiative for art, knowledge and politics in Kyiv. His texts have been published in *Proxy Politics: Power and Subversion in a Networked Age* (Archive Books, 2017), *Art and Theory of Post-1989 Central and East Europe: A Critical Anthology* (MoMA, 2018), *Being Together Precedes Being* (Archive Books, 2019), and *e-flux Journal*.

**Phil Collins** is a moving-image artist and filmmaker based in Berlin and Wuppertal, Germany. He is Professor of Video and Performance at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. Over the last two decades Collins has gained recognition for ambitious projects which explore the intersections of art, politics and popular culture. Manifesting as films, installations, performative situations and live events, his work foregrounds the aspects of lived experience, and voices that have often been disregarded or suppressed. Across geographies, ethnicities, languages and social classes, Collins' approach is guided by a commitment to long-term process and engagement with the local context. Reflecting critical consciousness and disarming immediacy, his works pull into sharp focus the contradictions which shape our relationships with one another.

**Svitlana Matviyenko's** research and teaching are focused on information and cyberwar; political economy of information; media and environment; infrastructure studies; and science and technology studies. She writes about practices of resistance and mobilisation; digital militarism, dis- and misinformation; Internet history; cybernetics; psychoanalysis; posthumanism; the Soviet and the post-Soviet techno-politics; nuclear cultures, including the *Chernobyl Zone of Exclusion*. She is a co-editor of two collections, *The Imaginary App* (MIT Press, 2014) and *Lacan and the Posthuman* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). She is a co-author of *Cyberwar and Revolution: Digital Subterfuge in Global Capitalism* (Minnesota UP, 2019), a winner of the 2019 book award of the International Studies Association and of the Canadian Communication Association 2020 Gertrude J. Robinson book prize.

**Mariia Vorofilina** is a researcher and curator from Ukraine, currently based in Hamburg. Her research interests include performative practice and visual arts within the thematic areas of feminist, queer and decolonial approaches. Since 2021, she is one of the co-organisers Decolonise Eastern Europe: Knowledge, Culture and Discourse, a course that aims to explore the potential of postcolonial perspectives in relation to 'Eastern Europe'.

**Volodymyr Artiukh** is a Postdoctoral Researcher with the European Research Council funded project *EMPTINESS: Living Capitalism and Democracy after (Post)Socialism*. Volodymyr completed his PhD in Sociology and Social Anthropology at the Central European University in 2020. His dissertation is an historically-informed analysis of labour in Belarus centred on workers' agency in the context of bureaucratic labour control. He has also written on the circulation of populist idioms in the dominant and opposition ideologies in Belarus in 2017-20. Currently, Artiukh is studying the movement of Ukrainian migrants between Donbass, central Ukraine and Belarus. His project situates their laboural and migratory experiences in the divergent political-economic trajectories of the two countries. Other research interests include the anthropology of work and labour organisations in post-Soviet countries, the anthropology of populism, and the comparative study of hegemonic practices in Eastern Europe.

**Olexii Kuchanskyi** is a Kyiv-based essayist, independent researcher and art writer. Born in Vinnytsia, studied at the Cultural Studies department of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Their main

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interests are in the Spinoza's philosophy, posthumanist feminism, Early Soviet philosophy and film theory, experimental moving-image art, philosophy of image, and visual culture. Contributed to *Prostory*, *Your Art*, *TransitoryWhite*, *Political Critique*, *East-European Film Bulletin*, *Arts of the Working Class*, *Moscow Art Magazine*, *e-flux Notes*, and others publications.

**Andriy Rachinskiy and Daniil Revkovskiy** are an artist-duo based in Kharkiv, Ukraine. Their projects are based on structuring and rethinking materials found in urban space, archives, and social networks. Their works have been shown at Kmytiv Museum, Artsvit Gallery (Dnipro), Kunsthalle am Hamburger Platz (Berlin), etc galerie (Prague), Yermilov Center (Kharkiv), and Galeria Labirynt (Lublin), among other venues. In 2020, they received the public choice award of the PinchukArtCentre Prize for their project *Mischievous*.

## Co-Commisioners

**HOME** is Manchester's centre for international contemporary culture. Since opening in May 2015, HOME has welcomed over four million visitors to its two theatres, five cinemas, three art galleries, book shop and restaurants. HOME works with international and UK artists to produce extraordinary entertaining experiences, producing an exciting mix of thought-provoking drama, dance and festivals, with a strong focus on new commissions and talent development. HOME's ambition is to push the boundaries of form and technology, to experiment, have fun, take risks and share great new art with the widest possible audience. The patrons of HOME are Danny Boyle, actress Suranne Jones, playwright and poet Jackie Kay CBE, artists Rosa Barba and Phil Collins, filmmaker Asif Kapadia, and actress and author Meera Syal CBE. [www.homemcr.org](http://www.homemcr.org)

**Manchester International Festival (MIF)** is an artist-focused festival of original, new work and special events reflecting the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture, staged every two in venues across Greater Manchester – from theatres, galleries and concert halls to railway depots, churches and car parks. MIF works closely with venues, festivals and other cultural organisations globally, whose financial and creative input helps to make many of these projects possible and ensures that work made at MIF goes on to be seen around the world. MIF also supports a year-round Creative Engagement programme, bringing opportunities for people from all backgrounds, ages and from all corners of the city to get involved during the Festival and year-round, as volunteers, as participants in shows, through skills development and a host of creative activities.

MIF will also run The Factory, the landmark new cultural space due to open in the heart of Manchester in 2023, designed by the internationally renowned Rem Koolhaas' Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) and backed by Manchester City Council and HM Government. The Factory will commission, present and produce one of Europe's most ambitious and adventurous year-round creative programmes, featuring bold new work from the world's greatest artists and offering a space to create, invent and experiment. At 13,300 square metres, The Factory will be ultra-flexible, enabling large-scale artistic work of invention and ambition that isn't made anywhere else in the world: from large-scale multimedia performances to epic installations, to intimate performances and ground-breaking digital experiences.



Attracting up to 850,000 visitors annually, The Factory will add £1.1 billion to the economy over a decade and create up to 1,500 direct and indirect jobs. Its pioneering programme of skills, training and engagement will benefit local people and the next generation of creative talent from across the city, whilst apprenticeships and trainee schemes are already underway during the construction phase. Located in the St John's neighbourhood next to the River Irwell, The Factory will be at the heart of a burgeoning city centre hub for culture, creativity and digital innovation.

**FUNDED BY:**



**FOUNDING SUPPORTERS:**



Did you know that HOME is a charity? We need your support to bring the best film, theatre and art to Manchester and inspire the next generation. Get involved at [www.homemcr.org/support](http://www.homemcr.org/support)

