American artist to hold master classes and present project in Baku

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By Nigar Orujova

YARAT! Contemporary Art Space opens call for students and young artists to take part in the Animal Planet workshop by American artist Mark Jenkins in the framework of Participate Baku Public Art Festival on August 7-24.

Jenkins, 43, is an artist known in the world for his street installations created from duct tape.

Within Mark's workshops students create a series of projects for the urban environment. Sculptures are created from special transparent packing tape. The created objects will then be placed on the streets of Baku as artistic intervention.

Apart from the master classes, Mark will also present his interactive project called "Manimals". Curator of the project is Nailya Allakhverdieva and the coordinator is Margarita Mukhmadeeva.

The project could be seen as a caricature of the World Wildlife Fund, whose mission is "to prevent the degradation of the natural environment of the planet, to achieve harmony between man and nature, the conservation of biological diversity of the Earth."

In Jenkins' opinion, good intentions, like those of the WWF, can slide into the excesses of social hysteria, distorting their original purpose. Jenkins tried to reflect the "green" ideology in the "Manimals" series, which show the absurdity of utopian and similar installations.

"Manimals" comprises a set of furry or "zoomorphic" human figures. These modern "chimeras" aim to confuse boundaries between man and animal, the internal and external, life and death, nature and civilization.

Jenkins' black humor is embodied here in ironic characters; those who attempted to merge with their age-old natural past, yet find that man still

takes control and overcomes nature, confirming once again Stanislaw Lem's maxim that "man needs man".

Participation in the workshop may be confirmed via email:lana.s@yarat.az

In addition to the street-art interventions, Jenkins' works have appeared in galleries of the United States, continental Europe, Brazil and the UK. The artist's projects have inspired others to develop "Scotch culture" all over the world. He actively promotes new technology art online, at www.tapesculpture.org, and teaches the process of creating ephemeral sculptures during workshops in the cities he visits.

Jenkins' works have been referenced by such publications as Time Out New York, The Washington Post, and The Independent. One of the world's most popular blogs dedicated to street-art, woostercollective.com, specially reviewed Jenkins' creations.

The Participate Baku Public Art Festival is organized by YARAT! Contemporary Art Space, an organization dedicated to the promotion of contemporary art worldwide, and sponsored by Bank Respublika.

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