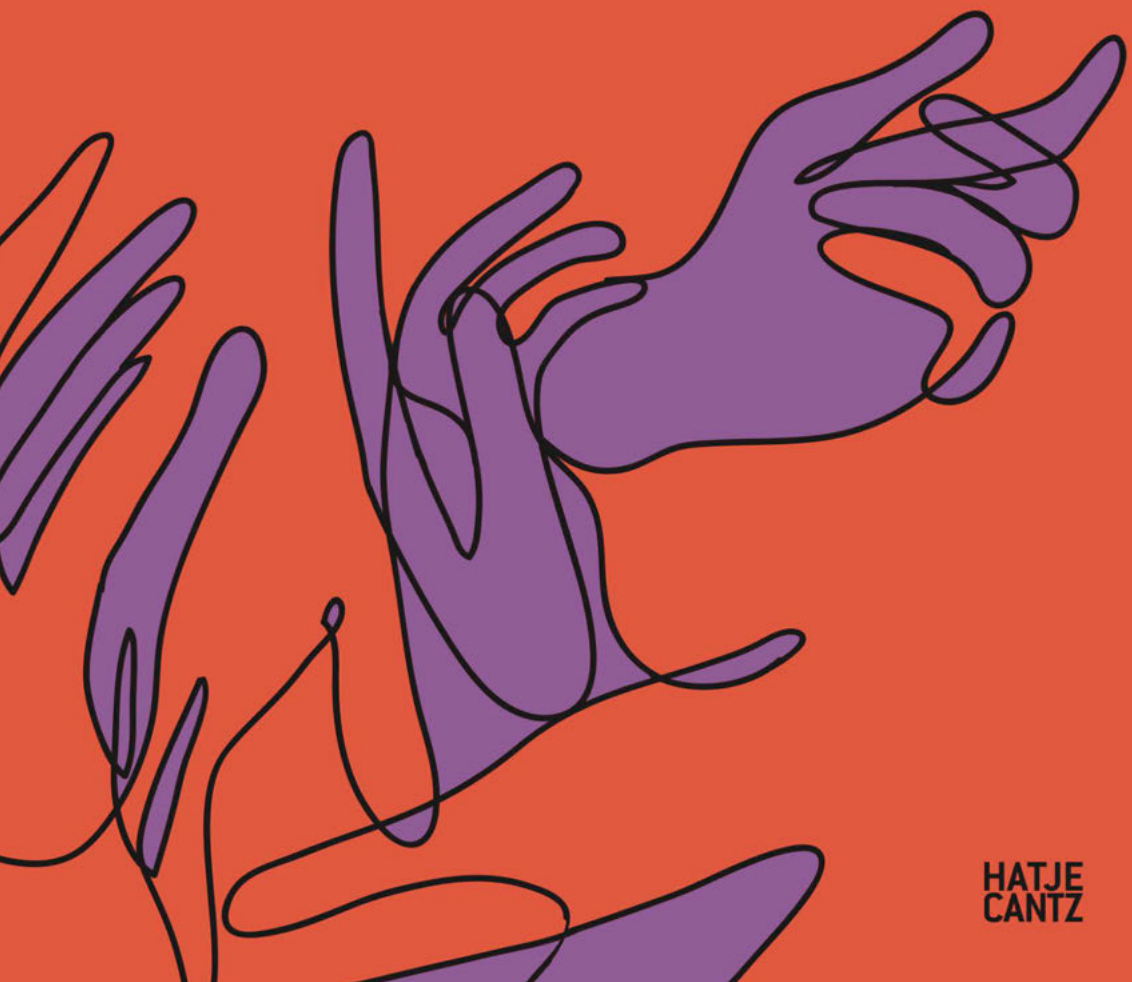


DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN

english HANDBOOK



HATJE
CANTZ

Collective Harvest
Leaves

Stem

Artist / collective
translation Kassel

Collective
Process

Root

Local Ecosystem
Translation

Sustain & Growth
Beyond 2022

Artist
production

Artist
seed money

Local
Ecosystem

live majelis akbar

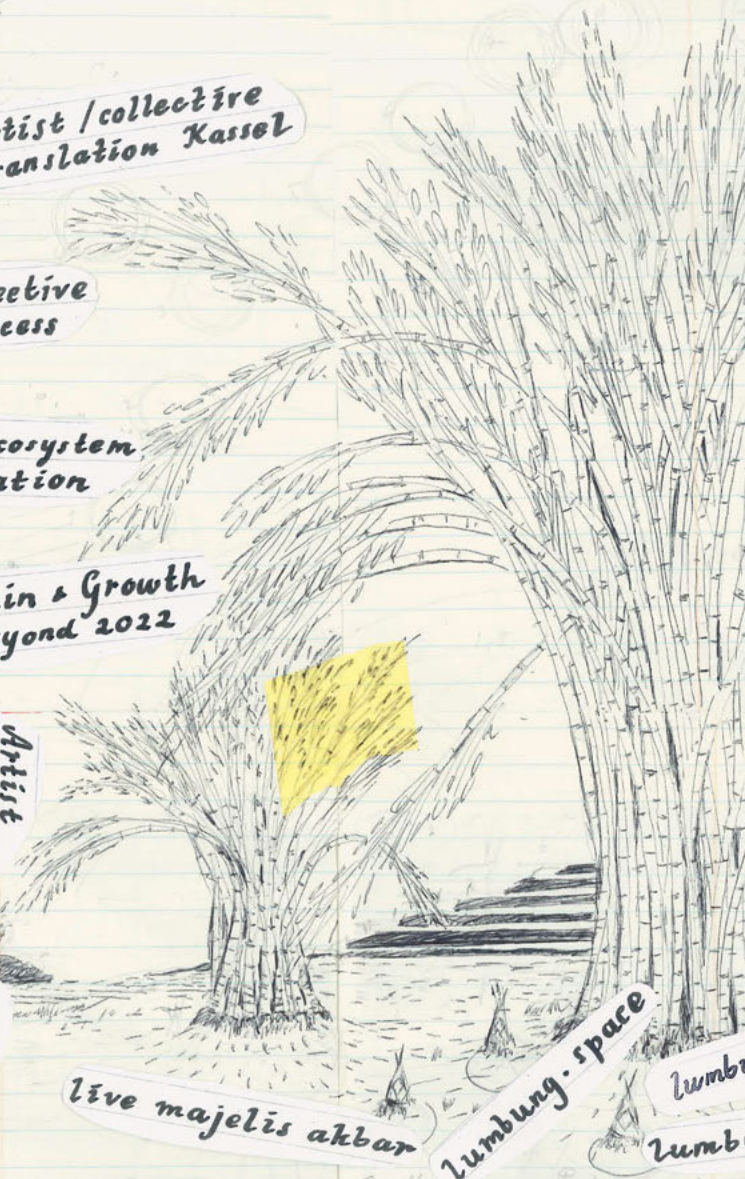
Lumbung space

Contribution
artist
lumbung inter-lokal

Mini Majelis

Collective Pot

Lumbung
Lumbung





Beyond 2022

documenta fifteen

Lumbung
Indonesia

Lumbung
artist

Karsel

ecosystem

Lumbung
interlokal

documenta gmbh

Lumbung kios

Lumbung press

Majelis Akbar

ng film

ung gallery

august. 2022

DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN

DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN HANDBOOK

english

ruangrupa and
Artistic Team

A.K. Kaiza
Alvin Li
Andrew Maerkle
Ann Mbuti
Annie Jael Kwan
Ashraf Jamal
Wong Binghao
Camilo Jiménez Santofimio
Carine Zaayman
Carol Que
Chiara De Cesari
Dagara Dakin

Enos Nyamor
Farhiya Khalid
Ferdiansyah Thajib
Hera Chan
Joachim Ben Yakoub
Krzysztof Kościuczuk
Marta Fernández Campa
Max Kühlem
Nuraini Juliastuti
Övül Ö. Durmuşoğlu
Pablo Larios
Ralf Schlüter
Rayya Badran
Skye Arundhati Thomas
Tina Sherwell

HATJE
CANTZ

Jimmie Durham

I Want You to Hear These Words About Jo Ann Yellowbird (Ars Poetica)

From what kind of yellow bird comes the name Yellowbird?
It must mean Kunh gwo, the sacred Yellowhammer.

Ka (But now), no more dreaming or explaining:
Jo Ann Yellowbird took rat poison and died.

A chorus was provided a year before in
A pamphlet concerning related events:
“STOP THE GENOCIDE OF INDIAN PEOPLE”
“Jo Ann Yellowbird, an activist in
the American Indian Movement, was seven months
pregnant when she was kicked in the stomach
by a police officer. Two weeks later her
baby, Zintkalazi, was born dead. Jo Ann
has filed suit against the officer who kicked her
and the authorities who refused her medical treatment.”

And to show that I am a sophisticated poet and
Not a pamphleteer, I quote from the Vocabulary
Of a Lakota Primer printed to educate those children
Of the Pine Ridge who have not been kicked to death:

Billy Boy said,
“I like the sheriff”
Overtake the night
Starve
Pneumonia
Wash your face
Your face is dirty
Comb your hair
Wash your clothes
Supervisor
Always take a bath
Be silent!
My eye hurts
Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Earth
Plow
160 acres
Shovel
Allotment
My chest hurts
I have none
Heaven
The Pope
Church
Your ears are dirty
My ears ache
Wrong procedure
Cut your hair

Billy eya
Canakaa wustuca lake
A han he ju
Aki ran
Caru na pere
Ete glu jajja
Ete nu sapa
Glak ca yo
Ha klu ja ja pi
Igmu wa pa se
Ye han nu wan po
Inila yanka yo
Ista mayazan
Ta kal Tunkashile ya pi
Maka
Maka iyublic
Maka i yu ta pi sope la
Ma ki pap te
Makove owapi
Maku mayazan
Manice
Marpiya
Oyublaye
Owacekiye
Nure ni sape
Nure opa mayazan
Ogna sni
Pehin gla sla yo

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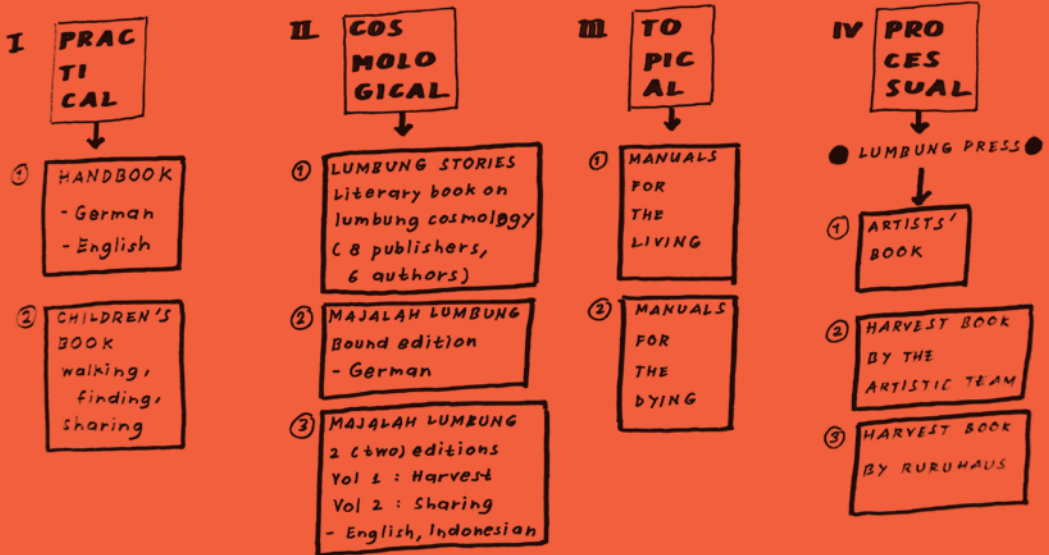
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INTRODUCTION

documenta fifteen publication plan



Harvest drawings by
Indra Ameng (left) and
Studio 4002 (right)

ASSALAMUALAIKUM¹, DEAR READER

With this handbook you will get detailed insight into documenta fifteen. While still containing general information about the exhibition, it is also informative about the important collective processes that preceded it and that permeate the show without necessarily being visible to the naked eye. The following section, titled *lumbung*, is a collectively authored chronicle of our journey towards the 15th edition of documenta. It starts with the collective “us” of ruangrupa, the Artistic Directors, and our extension, the Artistic Team, and spirals out to include more and more individuals and collectives who have joined us on the lumbung journey.

lumbung is a term you will hear a lot throughout this book and the exhibition. It refers to a concept of collective sharing that lies at the heart of documenta fifteen, and its meaning will become apparent in the coming pages. The images and drawings accompanying this section are from the *lumbung harvest*. The harvest is an artistic recording of discussions and *majelis* assemblies meant for passing forward knowledge and experience. It will also be present in the different venues of the exhibition.

The handbook gives basic information about *lumbung* practice and the members’ and artists’ *translation* of their local practices to Kassel, as well as about the other artists to whom they have extended invitations. We see the three-year preparation period and associated processes as an important part of documenta fifteen. In addition, the handbook contains information about our open space, *ruruHaus*, and the

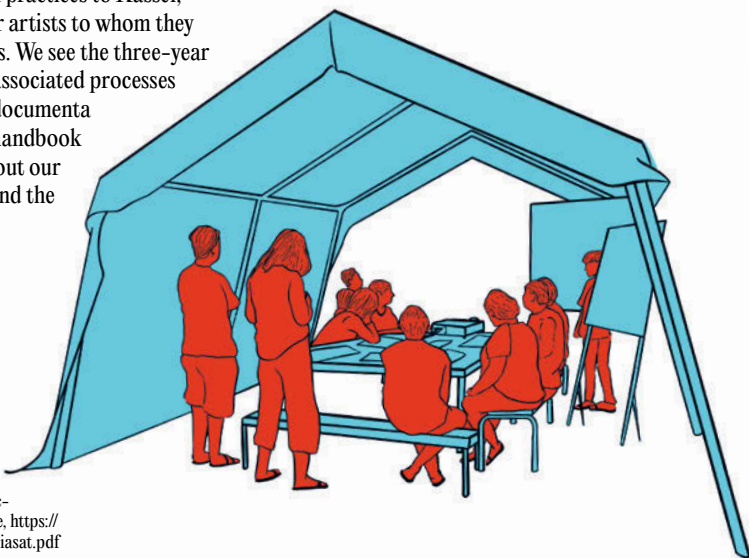
local *ekosistem* in Kassel, as well as the public program *Meydan* and the mediation program *sobat-sobat*.

This can always be only a snapshot, because documenta fifteen is not a static exhibition. Many contributions by *lumbung artists* and members will continue to evolve and change during the exhibition period and after.

In addition to the handbook, there are other publications dedicated to specific aspects of *lumbung* as practice, cosmology, experimentation, and playfulness that are, in themselves, results of *lumbung* processes.

We hope you will have a great time reading and spending time in the exhibition and with the *lumbung* members and artists. And remember! “Make friends not art!”²

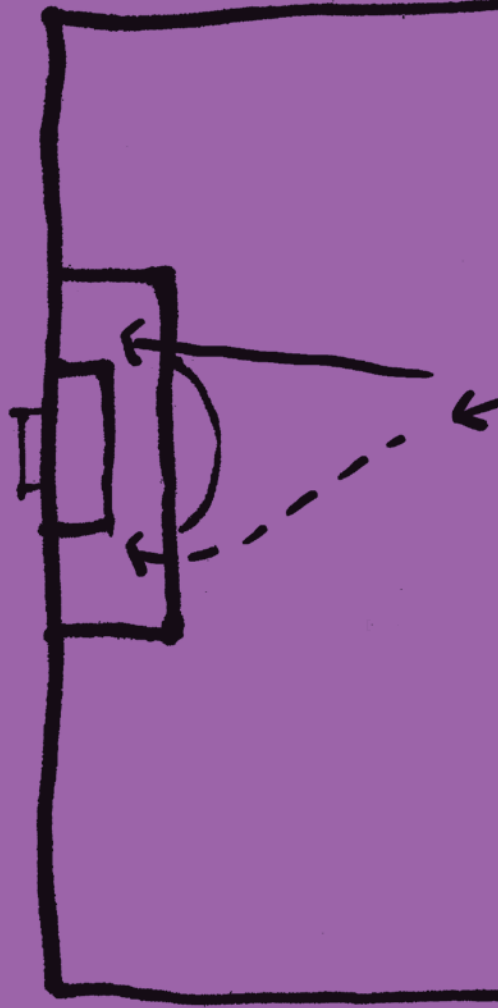
ruangrupa & Artistic Team
documenta fifteen



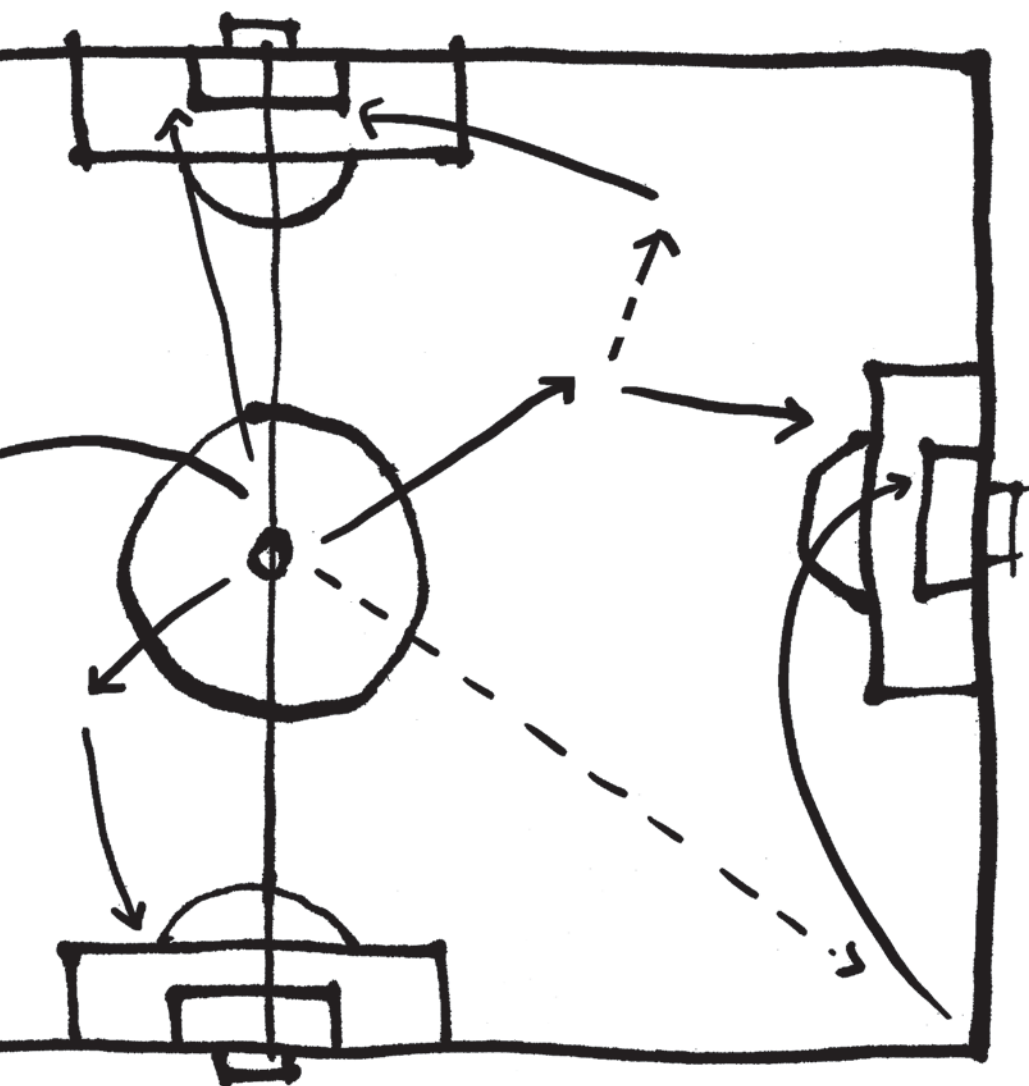
¹ *Assalamualaikum* is a common greeting in Indonesia, used both formally and colloquially, meaning “peace be upon you.”

² *ruangrupa*, *siasat* a short tactical guide for artist run initiative, <https://www.sculpture-center.org/files/siasat.pdf>

LU BUNG



THIS CAN BE
USEFUL



total football with many goals

ABOUT THE LUMBUNG PROCESSES AND HOW THE GUEST BECOMES THE HOST

ruangrupa is an art collective started in 2000 in Jakarta, Indonesia. Our experimentations with lumbung began critically. A vernacular agrarian term in Bahasa Indonesia, “lumbung” refers to a rice barn where a village community stores their harvests together, to be managed collectively, as a way to face an unpredictable future. Its initial use was as a metaphor, to explain the possibility of putting financial resources in a central account to be managed together.

This centralized financial account and our initial approach to resources as purely financial both proved to be false. Only after several trial-and-error attempts did we realize that even shareable resources can be held by different hands, put in different pockets, and communally governed whenever different needs arise over time. Since 2013, we—ruangrupa with other Jakarta-based collectives—have tried to build ekosistems based on an understanding that even a group of people, a collective, cannot stand alone, but must purposefully play a part in their larger context—just as in nature, where different species have their specific functions and roles to keep an ecosystem in balance.

The first of these ekosistems was dubbed the Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem, taking the name of the former-warehouse complex we occupied together in Jakarta and turned into the center of many of our activities. This way-too-large experiment gave way to Gudskul Ekosistem, an informal educational platform ruangrupa established with two other collectives, Serrum and Grafis Huru Hara, in 2018. With Gudskul, the notion of lumbung as the operational system for the ekosistem that believes and develops as a collective of collectives carries on indefinitely. Against this background, when we were invited to make a proposal for the fifteenth edition of documenta, instead of integrating ourselves into the long-established documenta

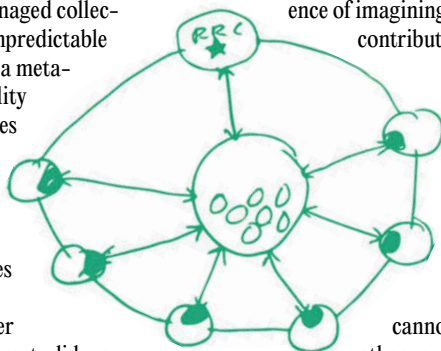
system, we decided to stay on our path. We invited documenta back, asking it to be part of *our* journey. We refuse to be exploited by European, institutional agendas that are not ours to begin with. We believe that we must make this experience of imagining an edition of documenta contribute back to our own endeavors.

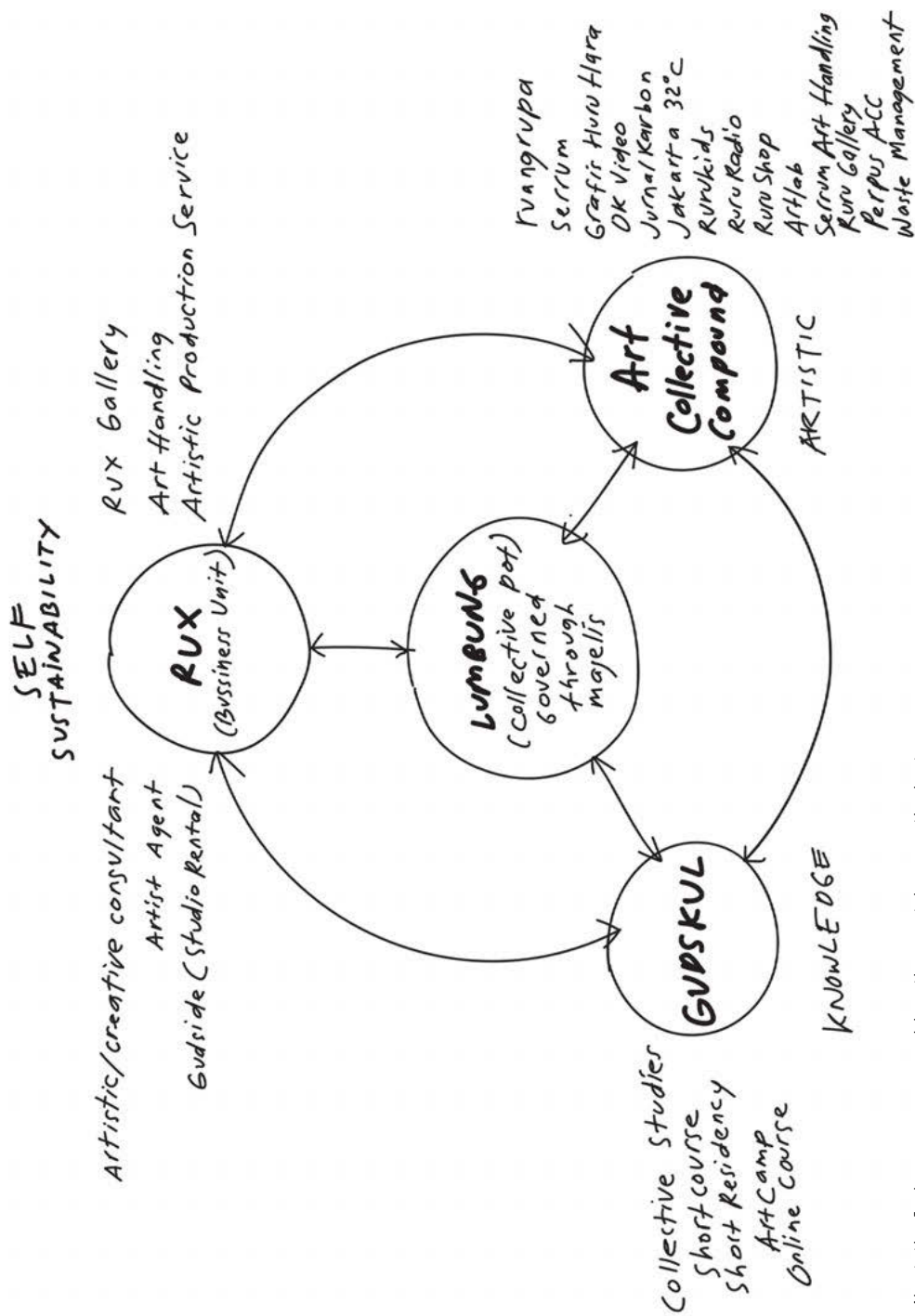
Gudskul can be understood as a miniature of what is to come with documenta's fifteenth edition. What ruangrupa has achieved together with Serrum and Grafis Huru Hara through Gudskul and the collective of collectives

cannot be transposed literally to other contexts, not least because the investment of time and space, with its build-up of trust and friendships, cannot simply be copy-pasted. After realizing this, the timeline we first proposed was as follows:

- 2019
warming up and research phase
- 2020
institutional and artistic building phase
- 2021
articulation and content finalization phase
- 2022
souk or istiqlal phase
- 2023
sustainability schemes implementation phase

Yet, in time, it became clear that many different forces prevented us from implementing the protocols laid out in the original timeline. Covid-19 was one big element, but other realities became evident, which meant we had to be ready to be tactical. Negotiation became the name of the game.





Timeline

meetings old & New Friends

sprouting
seedling-forming

trust
binding
roots-
city

cal-context

experimentation

engagement

hosting

collaboration

co production

translation

activation

During
1001 Days

speculation

communicating

negotiation

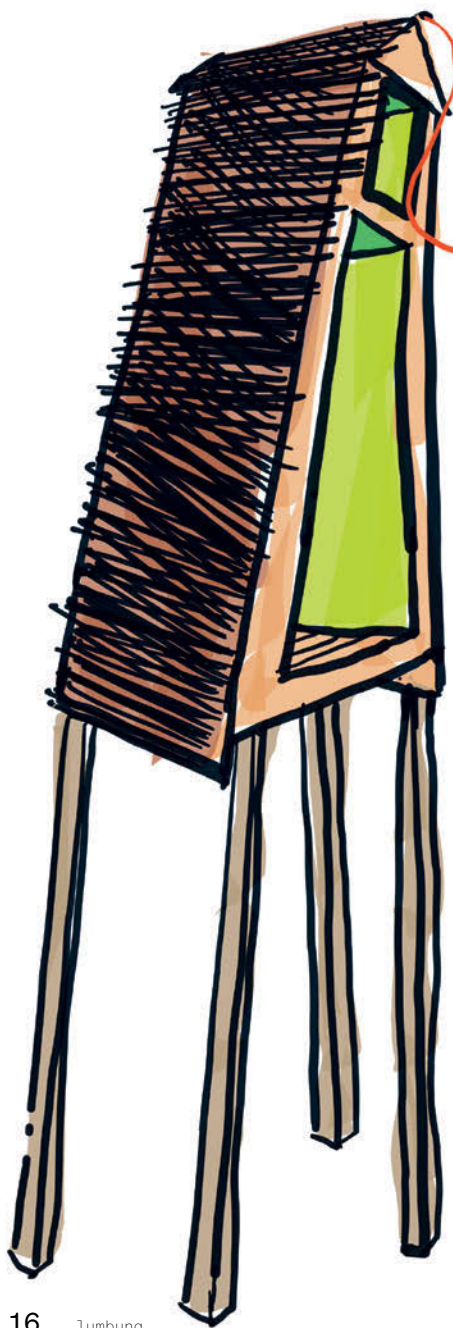
friendship

Where is the art

dissolve

About the lumbung processes and how the guest becomes the host

HOW TO DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY



After documenta accepted our invitation to join our journey and to become part of our ekosistem, we decided—with their opportunities and support—to keep on extending invitations to different people. First, to five individuals in Kassel, Germany, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Jerusalem, Israel, and Møn, Denmark, whom we believed could be an extension of ruangrupa.

We thus formed the group that would become known as the Artistic Team. But there were also other initiatives in the world which we felt were already practicing *lumbung* and its values. We called on them to join us in imagining together what documenta fifteen could be. The first fourteen initiatives we invited committed to becoming part of *lumbung*-building processes before and beyond documenta fifteen.

These initiatives became known as *lumbung inter-lokal* members. More than 50 other artistic practices, both individual and collective in nature,

joined afterwards, forming what has become known as *lumbung* artists.

Besides

these invitations, our own existence in our current

localities had to be carved out more deeply in Indonesia, more broadly in our international circles, and newly in Kassel. Thus, together, *lumbung Indonesia*, *lumbung inter-lokal*, and *lumbung Kassel* were formed, with the aim of their members identifying what resources were in their power and deciding how to use them. This way, we were sure that documenta fifteen would not be solely ruangrupa's but would also belong to others.

This was a high-risk move, as, in the time of writing, we are still curious to see whether the 100 days of documenta fifteen will only result in pragmatic exercises—a temporary “time-off” for artists and initiatives to learn from—only to swing back to the old system of doing things, relapsing to state funding and/or free art-market



WE MAKE THINGS UP.
BY SPECULATION,
WHAT MAKES SENSE
IN TERMS OF THE SCALE,
IN TERMS OF AFFINITIES.

WE NEEDED TODAY 2 HRS
TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES,
YOU SEE, COLLECTIVE
PRACTICE IS NOT
EFFICIENT...

WE SEE ALL THIS
AS A LONG-TERM
JOURNEY.
DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN
IS JUST A STOP ON
THAT JOURNEY.

FOR US, IT'S
MORE LIKE
LOOKING FOR
NEW FRIENDS.



HOW TO BUILD THIS
TOGETHER WITH A
SIMILAR SPECIES?

systems, or even the biennial circuits. Based on our different past, collective experiences of operating within these existing systems, they have proven to be highly competitive, globally expansive, greedy, and capitalistic—in short, exploitative and extractive.

Will the much-needed dissolution of ownership and authorship happen in documenta fifteen? How will economy, credits, and aesthetics be practiced and therefore understood differently in the 100 days? These are things that we'd like to see happen.

There are different ways and practices of producing art (works). These practices are not (yet) visible, as they do not fit the existing model of the global art world(s). documenta fifteen is an attempt to clash these different realities against each other, showing that different ways are possible. Instead of fitting these various modes of production into what exists already, it should act

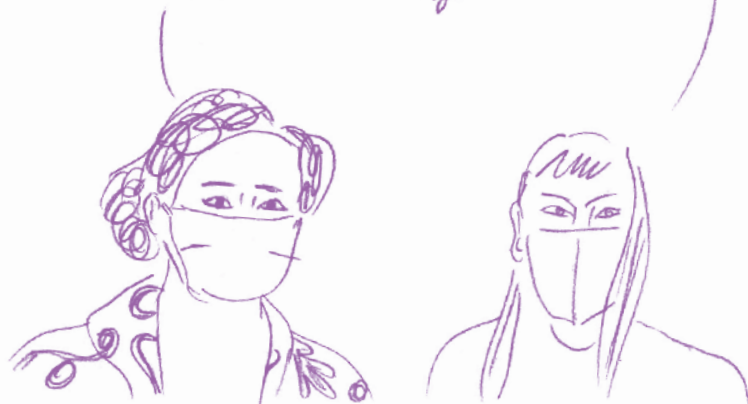
as a series of exercises for reshaping and sow seeds for more changes in the future. Different ways of producing art will create different works, which, in turn, will ask for other ways of being read and understood: artworks that are functioning in real lives in their respective contexts, no longer pursuing mere individual expression, no longer needing to be exhibited as standalone objects or sold to individual collectors and hegemonic state-funded museums. Other ways are possible. In this way, we are resisting the domestication or taming of these different practices.

RURUHAUS I

For many people
Kassel is an in-between,
before they move to
bigger cities.

A lot of people in
the cultural sphere
would like to change
that

Kassel has lots
of empty spaces,
even right here
in the center
at the city.



CH/RY ← KMMV → SASKIA
PRACTICE

a lot of the
cultural spaces in the
city center are very
institutional spaces,
so the other things
happen off-center

(I missed the
beginning of
this presentation,
sorry!)

APPROACH TO KASSEL: RURUHAUS AND THE FACT THAT “WE COULD SLEEP IN THE LIVING ROOM”

From the off, we have experienced Kassel as an urban organism and ekosistem of local initiatives and collectives, rather than as exhibition context and history. To open a dialogue with surrounding ekosistems, we identified a number of interlinked “acupuncture points,” using the analogy of the ancient Asian medical practice of healing the body with a slow but holistic method that looks at the workings of the body system and its millions of nerves and arteries. This logic of acupoints in a network of energy paths was used to approach the venues and spaces of documenta fifteen. Infiltrating the urban fabric of Kassel, decentralizing the center, and opening connections to the less culturally used areas in the East.

In Jakarta, out of necessity, ruangrupa would rent domestic houses and turn them into exhibition spaces, especially for art students to hang out, program, exhibit, and even live in. So, a bedroom and a living room could become exhibition spaces that would simultaneously be someone’s living quarters. In keeping with this approach, we started ruruHaus in the center of Kassel as a shared living room in the city. While “ruru” is short for ruangrupa, the idea of ruruHaus is not for ruangrupa to occupy space in the city center, but to be part of a context where initiatives from Kassel (and visiting artists and members) can connect, and where they can extend themselves into the future as a collective of collectives.

In Europe, there tend to be very centrist ideas about knowledge, history, and art, ideas that we would like to decentralize or decompress within the ruruHaus. In the summer of 2020, amid the pandemic, two members of ruangrupa moved to Kassel when the first window since lockdown began made international travel possible again. Their focus became hosting the Kassel community along with all the visiting members and artists for whom ruruHaus would not be just a living room, but also a laboratory to test their planned translations from their own locales to Kassel’s ekosistem.

Other than the 65-year tradition of documenta, we encountered many other local initiatives in the city, making it possible for lumbung to take on even more meanings in Kassel. We began looking at the initiatives to understand how (self) sufficient they were and

if they had a surplus that they would like to share. This could be anything: from something educational to diverse experiences.





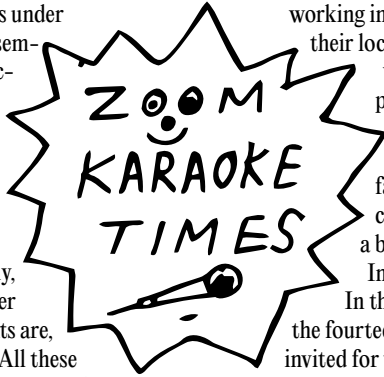
Harvest drawings by
Dan Perjovschi (left) and
Jazael Olguin Zapata (right)

* We later regretted this division of 20,000 Euro per artist, or communicating it this way to the artists. At times it created a sense of individual ownership of each 20,000 Euro in the common pot. If we had communicated the total sum, the conversations might have differed. In some mini-majelises, the conversations led to a consideration of the total sum of the budget, while in others the artists who were more present and active in the majelises felt like they could not govern the budgets of the absent artists, and so offered them back to the artists.

“YOU ARE MUTE” (COVID-19 REALITY HITTING) AND GOING FROM FULL LUMBUNG TO GADO GADO

While our collective experiences under Covid-19 relegated us to the disembodied space of video conferencing, they allowed us to reflect again on the value of solidarity. We needed to go even further in fostering new networking models and more sustainable structures for small-to-medium arts initiatives. Consequently, we needed to rethink still further what artistic practices and events are, what they could and should be. All these issues relate to socio-political problems faced in the members' respective contexts, from Jakarta and Chocó in Colombia to Jerusalem; Nairobi, Kenya; Havana, Cuba; Dhaka, Bangladesh; and many other cities and villages where lumbung members practice.

Following ruangrupa's longstanding practice of dividing money and resources according to needs (a duo has different needs to a large collective, the needs of a person living alone and a parent with a big household are not the same), we considered our options, one of them being paying basic income to everyone for the entire time of working with documenta fifteen. Having looked into the figures, we faced the fact that, if we paid everyone a basic income, we wouldn't have sufficient budget for even a medium-sized exhibition. One solution, which we dubbed “full lumbung,” was to stick to the 25 lumbung members that ruangrupa proposed in their original invitation to documenta and ask them to involve more of their ekosistem in their translation of their local practice to the exhibition in Kassel. The stakes were high, given that many commentators in Germany and beyond took ruangrupa's appointment and the lumbung concept to mean there being no exhibition at all, or an exhibition of non-art, in 2022. Furthermore, we were having Zoom visits with many artists who were



working in and out of collectivity in their locales, and whom we felt would enrich the lumbung process and the exhibition. So, we had to come up with a model that would be fair, even if not ideal, that we called *gado-gado* (a dish with a bit of everything from the Indonesian kitchen).

In the end, we decided to stick to the fourteen members we had already invited for the long haul and invite about

50 artists, mostly collectives, to commit to the lumbung process and the 100 days in Kassel. The production budget for each lumbung inter-lokal member is 180,000 Euro, and 25,000 Euro seed money. Seed money is a budget paid upfront, which we see as an acknowledgment of the years of work in the artists' localities and as a seal of our agreement to find translations of that work to Kassel in 2022. This translation in its turn is made in such a way that it becomes (re)generative for the work beyond documenta fifteen. For many, the budget came at a crucial time, strengthening their sustainability during the pandemic. While the artists received the equal amounts of 60,000 Euro for production, with 10,000 Euro seed money for collectives, and 5,000 Euro for individuals. This came out of a long discussion among the Artistic Team members and the documenta gGmbH. The discussion started with the aim to distribute part of the available budget to all the involved artists as basic income, or for basic needs. However, as the discussion ensued the idea of a common pot occurred, with 20,000 EUR per participating group in collective management, in order to leave it to the artists themselves to decide how to use it in the exhibition.*



TIME
AND IN THE
LAST

DIFFERENT
STRUGGLES

LUMBER
POLITICS

OUR MERE
EXISTENCE
AS KOL
DECENTRALISE
EUROPE

ONE HAS TO
FOLLOW GERMAN LAW
IN ORDER TO MAKE ART

MORE
THAN
EVER
A
SCROLL
DOWN
IN MY
LIFE

LET'S GO TO THE
MUSIC BREAK

LACK
OF RESPECT

PO
T
LAND

DIFFERENT
PLACES OF ENLIGHTENING

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT BEHIND

WE HAVE
TO ANSWER
TO THEM ALL
THEIR
QUESTIONS

HOW
SAVE IS
KASSEL?

BUYING LAND
IS TREATING
TO I
RACIST A

COLLECTIVE

CLARANCE
BENEFIT

WE ARE
INTO THEIR
BATTLE FIELD

collectively own
land

Priority

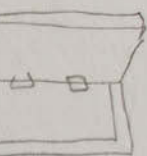
TO BE WITH
ALL OF YOU
TO TAKE
ACTION

- g GMBT
- g GMBT
- MM
- Lumbany
- etc

SPEED IT
BEFORE SEPTEMBER



FINDING COMMONALITY
BUT PEOPLE GETS SAD



DEL
THE P

FROM MINI TO AKBAR: “WE ARE NOT IN DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN, WE ARE IN LUMBUNG ONE”

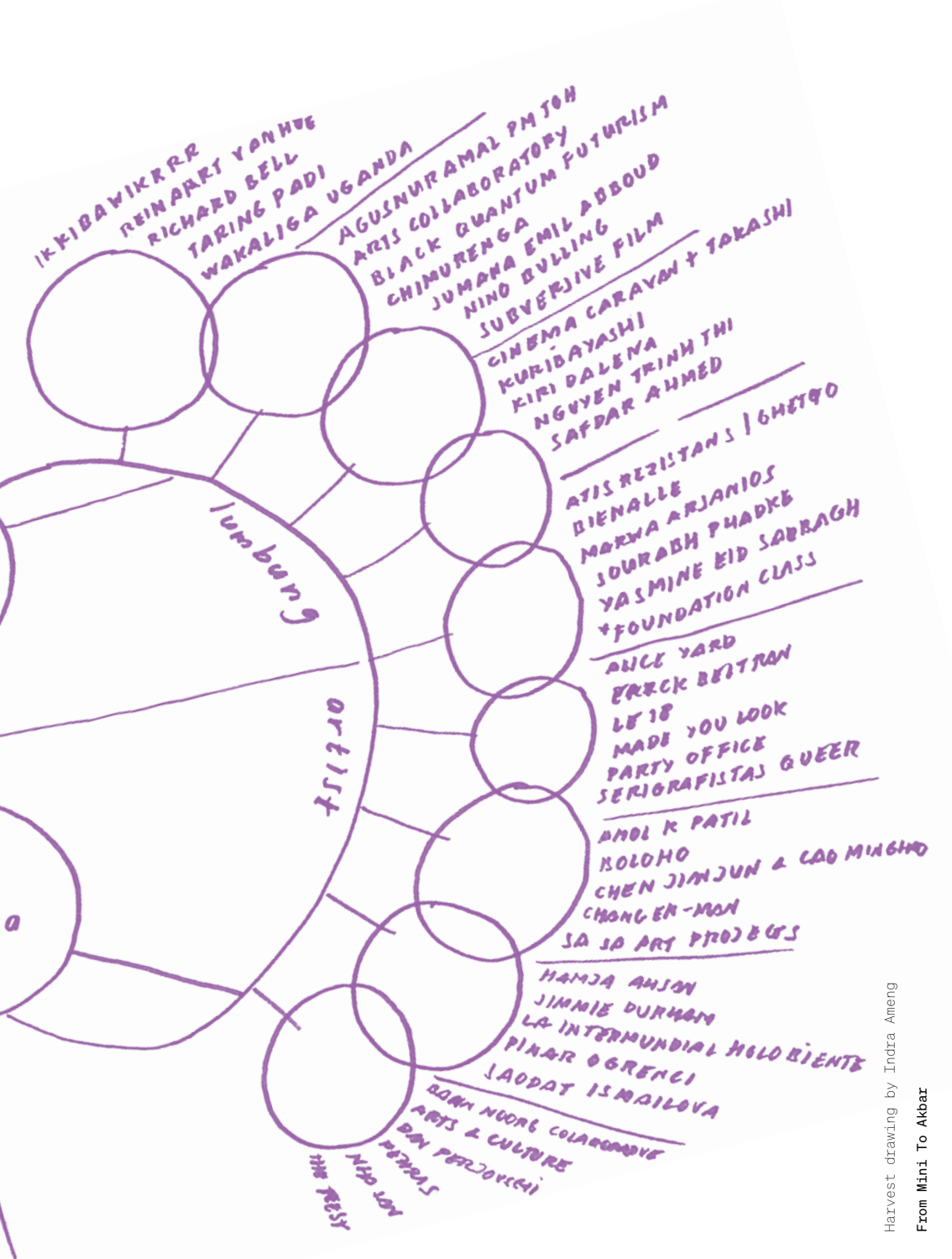
Through majelises, the lumbung artists and lumbung members could become part of the collective curatorial process and the wider documenta economy, or documenta lumbung. Before the pandemic, our idea was for majelises to occur every 100 days in order to decide collectively on the building of the exhibition, the principles of how to distribute resources, and other matters. The majelis is a learning space, where there is no competition. The majelises were to be held in a different city every time, and to be hosted by lumbung members. However, as a result of the pandemic, it was necessary to hold the majelises online.

The fourteen lumbung inter-lokal members have been discussing how to build both the exhibition and the longer term lumbung economy—beyond documenta fifteen—since June 2020, at first in bi-weekly majelises with the entire lumbung inter-lokal, and later in smaller groups. These discussions have produced several working groups that have taken on topics that are of common necessity. Most collectives in the lumbung inter-lokal come from contexts where the state had failed to support the development of infrastructure and a support system for art and culture.

Since the model of the stable institution had failed, they had seized the opportunity to rethink institutions. So, the questions of economic survival and autonomy were central in the lumbung inter-lokal. An economy working group grew out of discussions around what sustainability is and various experiments with currencies and circular economy, inviting economists to work sessions and putting forward ideas and mechanisms. Out of this working group, new ones formed: *lumbung Gallery*, *lumbung Kios*, and *lumbung Currency* working groups were set up to experiment practically with various ways to sustain and ask cultural questions through economic projects, as well as sustaining the lumbung pot after documenta fifteen. Another pressing issue in the lumbung inter-lokal mem-

bers' localities is land, since, whether endangered by corporate, political, or urban infringement, the sustainability of the members' ekosistems is at stake in the long run. The important discourse around the lumbung members' artistic practices led to another dynamic discussion and what we called the “*Where is the Art?*” working group. *lumbung.space* and a lumbung of Independent Publishers grew out of the need to amplify those discourses, where art and life are one.





With all the different majelises established—ten in total—we needed a gathering space for the majelises to come together and to get an overview of all the discussions going on. Our answer was to host a mega assembly, known as *majelis akbar*, on a regular basis. These online meetings have been attended by 150 to 200 artists and members. In these meetings, members and artists talk about specific projects for artists and members to collaborate on, as well as on how to be in solidarity with each other, and how to share space, knowledge, program, and equipment together during the 100 days. Examples of this are: Cinema Caravan opening their cinema for others to use, the ZK/U turning their building's roof into a boat and bringing it to Kassel for other artists in the lumbung to activate, Party Office opening up the public program they host in their venue in WH22 for other artists to organize, and Richard Bell opening his *Tent Embassy* for artists to converse in during the hundred days and many more.

The majelis akbar was also a place for discussions about issues in the local context of lumbung members, for exchanging ideas about collaboration, and for forging solidarity. For example, we also talked about how we should respond to accusations of anti-Semitism that emerged from a Kassel blog in January 2022 and were picked up by German media. documenta fifteen, the artistic direction, team members, and individual artists were attacked in a way that we understood as racist. This was a shock to us and even led to concerns for our safety. During majelis akbar in January 2022, the artists discussed how both the lumbung and documenta could stand behind and, in the spirit of lumbung, support those affected. documenta also published several statements in which it rejected the accusations and made it clear that anti-Semitism and racism have no place at documenta fifteen. At the same time, it emphasized the right to freedom of expression in art, culture, and science. The majelises have been important tools to develop common understandings and

solidarity with everyone's local contexts, allowing us to learn from differing situations and conditions in each of the lumbung localities, especially where there has been political upheaval over the two years leading up to documenta fifteen, such as in Colombia, Palestine, Cuba, and Mali. This has

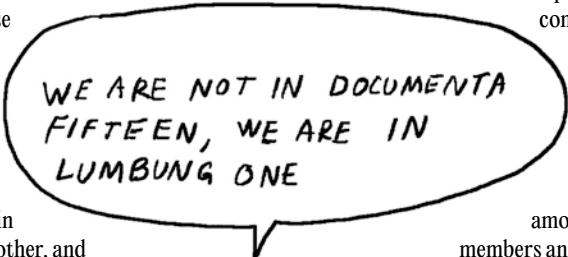
also compelled us to develop a common discourse on our artistic practice. The Where is the Art? working group grew out of this strong, shared necessity among lumbung

members and artists to discuss

how art is rooted in life and their social, activist, economic practices, and not limited to disciplines or definitions. Every inter-lokal member experiences a distortion in the way their practices are translated to the mainstream international art scene, and what it tends to define as "art." We established a working group that organizes workshops in local ekosistems and among artists and members, which formed the basis of building a collective language and knowledge base across practices and contexts.

The *lumbung land* working group, on the other hand, has been discussing developing a way of "investing" by using the collective pot in specific land projects run by members—projects that question ownership of land, that start from community needs and collective use and governance, and that combine agriculture, biodiversity, culture, and the spiritual. Combining experimentation on land with experimentation on currencies and decentralized autonomous organizations would be a start towards building a true, inter-locally connected and collectively governed economy.

While the conversations in the economy working group about how to sustain ourselves beyond documenta fifteen were ongoing, we learned from the permanent staff that has produced previous editions that most of the artworks exhibited are sold backstage by gallerists during the hundred days of the exhibition and shipped to the collectors afterwards. We decided to move this to the front stage to make questions about



WE ARE NOT IN DOCUMENTA
FIFTEEN, WE ARE IN
LUMBUNG ONE