documenta fifteen or lumbung one?

by Bruce E. Phillips

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Britto Arts Trust, *PAKGHOR*, 2022. Photo: Bruce E. Phillips.



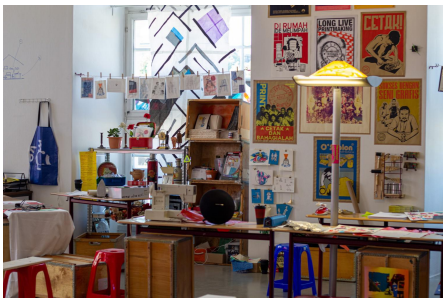
documenta fifteen, ruangrupa, back row f.l.t.r.: Iswanto Hartono, Reza Afisina, farid rakun, Ade Darmawan, Mirwan Andan; front row f.l.t.r.: Ajeng Nurul Aini, Indra Ameng, Daniella Fitria Praptono, Julia Sarisetiati at the installation Vietnamese Immigrating Garden by Tuan Mami (Nha San Collective), 2022. Photo: Nicolas Wefers.



documenta fifteen: FAFSWAG, 2022, installation view, Stadtmuseum, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



documenta fifiteen: FAFSWAG, *Whānau Wall (Portraits)*, without year, installation view, Stadtmuseum, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



Gudskul, *Gudskul Ekosistem*, 2022. Photo: Bruce E. Phillips.



documenta fifteen: Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR), INSTAR archive, *List of censored Artists*, 2022, installation view, documenta Halle, Kassel, June 12, 2022. Photo: Nicolas Wefers.



documenta fifteen: Music Group: Lair, 2022, Hübner-Areal, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Frank Sperling.

documenta is a large-scale quinquennial art exhibition that takes place across multiple venues in Kassel, Germany. Artists from Aotearoa New Zealand were included for the first time in the previous edition, in 2017, which HUM covered through several publications. For documenta fifteen, arts collective FAFSWAG were invited to participate as members of the lumbung process established by this year's curatorial collective ruangrupa.

Writer Bruce E. Phillips discusses how introducing a non-European exhibition-making concept into the heart of arguably Europe's most revered art event was bound to confound those unwilling to consider a differing perspective. Check back on HUM in a few weeks for a new essay by Will Fredo, focusing on FAFSWAG's contribution to documenta fifteen.

> "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."[01]

—ruangrupa

Indonesian artist collective ruangrupa were destined to unsettle expectations. This was indicated in early 2019 through promotional material surrounding ruangrupa's appointment as documenta 15's artistic directors. They unapologetically stated their intentions to introduce "a different community-oriented model of resource usage".[02] Evidence of this intention became public in 2021 with the announcement of selected artists and collectives that some critics described as being absent of "art-world luminaries".[03] This early publicity created a narrative that ruangrupa's strategy was to eschew the Eurocentric, extractive and reputation-based economy that has arguably driven the 'mega-exhibition' circuit since at least the 1990s.

Not expected were various reports of discrimination both against and by those involved in documenta 15. There is a lot to unpack here regarding the timeline of events, the agendas at play, the political context of Germany and questions surrounding documenta's future. In brief, the various allegations so far have included racist and security threats to ruangrupa, anti-Palestinian views and actions against exhibiting Palestinian collective The Question of Funding;[04] and, conversely, anti-Semitic iconography featuring in the large-scale banner work *People's Justice* (2002) by the Indonesian collective Taring Padi. This latter controversy led to an apology and the removal of the work.[05] Israeli educator and director of the Anne Frank educational institution, Meron Mendel, resigned as documenta advisor, later followed by Sabine

Schormann, director general of documenta. German artist Hito Steyerl, described in some reports as one of the few "noted" artists, also protested against documenta by withdrawing her work from the exhibition.[06] At the time of writing, the ramifications of each of these various controversies are still unfolding.

Understandably, the importance of addressing these issues dominated media coverage of the exhibition in the lead-up to and soon after the opening. This reception, however, side-lined other pertinent issues such as documenta's Covid-related cancellations of public events throughout the exhibition's first month and efforts towards the exhibition's accessibility. Not to mention overshadowing the many impactful art experiences on offer. Plus, the lumbung curatorial approach became too quickly discredited by some reviewers, who could have taken the opportunity to discuss its paradigm-shifting potential.

ruangrupa explain that 'lumbung' is an Indonesian word describing a rice barn with an associated practice of communal wealth-distribution.[07] By translating this ethos into exhibition making, ruangrupa experimented with managing collective finances and resources with fourteen 'lumbung members' who each received €25,000 seed funding and a €180,000 production budget.[08] Members included art collectives from across the world, who in turn could invite 'lumbung artists' consisting of numerous collectives and individual artists—widely reported as over 1,500 documenta fifteen contributors. ruangrupa further divided this ever-expanding collective of collectives into geographical time zones and organised them through 'majelises' or discussion groups.[09] This substantial operational and curatorial framework gives credence to ruangrupa's insistence that "[w]e are not in documenta fifteen, we are in lumbung one."[10]

The *Fridskul*, which continues ruangrupa's Gudskul project, encompassing the Fridericianum museum's entire ground floor, is described as the heart of the lumbung ethos and takes the form of a hybrid school/studio/lounge. One half is dedicated to temporary workstations, banners with value statements, and walls covered with mind maps, and occupying the rotunda is a large discussion zone made from beer crates and repurposed furniture lashed together with cable ties. The other half of the Fridericianum

ground floor is called RURUKIDS—an extensive children's education, care and play space. Even when social activity is dormant, this intervention injects an energy into the staid museum environment.

Of further impact in representing the lumbung spirit is an installation by Acehnese artist Agus Nur Amal, also known as Agus PMTOH, named after the Hikayat PMTOH storytelling artform of Acehnian origin that his practice seeks to revive. Occupying the first floor of Grimmwelt Kassel, Agus' installation comprises assemblages of dollar-store plastic consumables and a series of monitors playing episodes of *TV Eng Ong*. This mock TV show, hosted by Agus using the exhibited plastic props, tells the backstory of lumbung members. "Please understand this is a manual television. Sometimes the monitor just [falls] off," Agus explains in one video after the curtain he raises comes crashing down within his cardboard TV-shaped stage set. Such slapstick moments typify his persona as an amalgam of village storyteller, news anchor, comedian and children's TV host. Agus' charm and occasional empathy is also a disarming ploy that helps humanise the lumbung members he interviews.

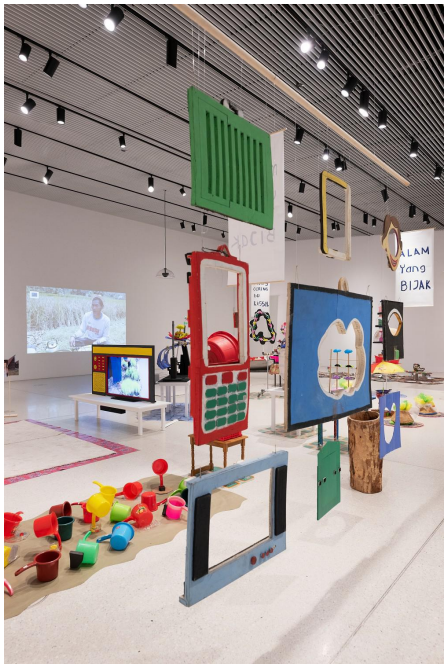
"What is soil without water? What is soil without creativity? What is culture without the land? (soil). Land issues, community issues, citizen issues. Especially in Jatiwangi," Agus sings when introducing the Jatiwangi art Factory (JaF), a collective from the Jatiwangi district in West Java. JaF have a major installation and networking project featured in the Hübner-Areal, a large former-industrial space. As Agus explains, JaF have been operating for 17 years and principally work on sustainable community-led initiatives in rural villages, in resistance to multinational corporations sweeping in to introduce economic 'progress' through industrialised methods of land management and ownership; changes that are said to threaten the environment, culture and wellbeing of village life. One of JaF's initiatives, the Ceramic Music Festival, has sought to instil community pride and reconnect people with their land by celebrating local expertise in producing clay roof tiles, a hundred-year-old community-run industry. This biennial event has involved orchestras of up to 1,500 performers from 16 villages using clay tiles as percussion instruments.



Fridskul Common Library, Fridericianum, Kassel, June 17, 2022.
Photo: Victoria Tomaschko.



documenta fifteen: press conference, performance of lumbung artist Agus Nur Amal PMTOH, Auestadion, Kassel, June 15, 2022. Photo: Nicolas Wefers.



documenta fifteen: Agus Nur Amal PMTOH, Tritangtu, 2022, installation view, Grimmwelt, Kassel, June 14, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



documenta fifteen: Jatiwangi art Factory, Terracotta Embassy, 2021–ongoing, installation view (detail), Hübner-Areal, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Frank Sperling.



Jatiwangi art Factory, rampak genteng, ceramic music festival, Jatiwangi Square, November 11, 2021. Photo: JaF Documentation Team.



documenta fifteen: Jatiwangi art Factory, Terracotta Embassy, 2021–ongoing, Rampak Genteng, 2021, installation view, Hübner-Areal, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Frank Sperling.



Fridskul, Fridericianum, Kassel, 2022.
Photo: Contemporary HUM.

Supporting community-grounded initiatives that care for the environment and/or care for people is a core value shared by all the lumbung members. Aotearoa collective FAFSWAG are well grouped

within these values. They exhibit a range of photographic, video and augmented-reality projects across three venues. One of these is *Alterations* (2022), a major new video work sited at the entrance of the Hübner-Areal. Here dreamlike actions and rites are staged in slow-motion by elegantly costumed performers set to a dubstep-style soundtrack with samples of Polynesian song and percussion. Certainly, the work's deeper references to Pacific traditions are mostly beyond my understanding and assumedly that of many documenta visitors. Yet the emotive and visual power of the footage transcends cultural illiteracy, and as a result it is easy to grasp FAFSWAG's stated intention of reclaiming the representation of lost knowledge systems for "a generation of Queer Indigenous Moana Ocean people".[11] FAFSWAG's other main contribution acts as a type of mini survey show in the Stadtmuseum Kassel, displaying works produced by its members since the collective's inception in 2013. Exhibiting existing work further honours the seed funding, one of the key aspects of ruangrupa's invitation, which seeks to value the long-standing contributions that lumbung members have made to their respective communities and as a "regenerative" gesture towards the members' futurity.[12] In an upcoming Contemporary HUM article, artist and writer Will Fredo Furtado will discuss FAFSWAG's contributions to documenta further in relation to international Queer Indigenous performance practices.

Sharing the Stadtmuseum with FAFSWAG is *Border Farce-Sovereign Murders-Alien Citizen* (2022) by Australian artist and activist Safdar Ahmed. This dual-channel video, vinyl record and zine-based body of work was produced in collaboration with a team of artists including the work's protagonist Kazem Kazemi—an Irani refugee and musician who spent six years detained by the Australian Border Force on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. Part music video, part *cinéma vérité*, the filmic component presents Kazemi's story with MTV-style edits while integrating candid footage of him emotionally belting out heavy-metal riffs on an electric guitar, and more prosaic scenes of him shuffling about his home and preparing a meal for his band mates. Kazemi's testimony reveals the inhumane treatment and conditions he experienced on Manus Island leading to long-term health effects; the killing of his fellow refugees; and accounts of institutional racism within

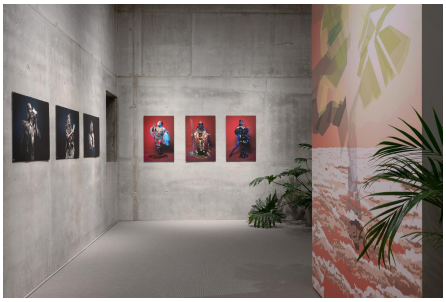
Australian society. Lumbung values of care, community and even humour radiate through this work in defiance of the state-sanctioned brutality. It also highlights the importance of creative flow as a means of self-care and collective solidarity.

Chronicling the treatment of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants is also the focus of Copenhagen-based Trampoline House. They have been operating since 2010 and provide legal support, a sanctuary and creative space for people immobilised and criminalised within the Danish asylum system. Many of Trampoline House's activities, and personal narratives of those they have supported, are shared via videos and information provided in a lounge-like installation in the Hübner-Areal.

Highlighting the complications of global human movement, be that due to war, political persecution, environmental or economic factors, is one of many thematic similarities that documenta fifteen shares with the concurrent 12th Berlin Biennale, despite a difference in methodology and curatorial approach. So much so that the two could be considered as companion shows—particularly given their common emphasis on Germany's Vietnamese population. One example at documenta is by the Hanoi-based Nhà Sàn Collective who, among other contributions, have established a garden and seed library for the Kassel Vietnamese community to harvest from and contribute to. A comparable work is made by Britto Arts Trust (BAT) a Bangladesh-based artist-run non-profit. BAT have constructed a Bengali garden–kitchen complex for pan-immigrant cultural exchange through storytelling, shared meals and other events. While the social aspect was not active during my visit, the elaborately woven bamboo architecture and garden environment was still captivating.



FAFSWAG Arts Collective, *ALTERATION*, 2022 (still). Moving image. Photo: courtesy of the artists.



documenta fifteen: FAFSWAG, 2022, installation view, Stadtmuseum, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



documenta fifteen: Safdar Ahmed (from left to right), *Hazeen - Sovereign Murders*, 2022, *Border Farce*, 2022, Stadtmuseum, Kassel, June 13, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



documenta fifteen: Trampoline House, 2022, installation view, Hübner areal, Kassel, June 15, 2022. Photo: Frank Sperling.



documenta fifteen: Trampoline House, 2022, installation view, Hübner areal, Kassel, June 15, 2022. Photo: Frank Sperling.



documenta fifteen: Nhà Sàn Collective, Tuấn Mami, Vietnamese Picnic, Kassel, June 19, 2022. Photo: Victoria Tomaschko.



Britto Arts Trust, *PAKGHOR*, 2022. Photo: Bruce E. Phillips.



Tanu Gago and Jermaine Dean from FAFSWAG Arts Collective, *Atua*, 2022. Augmented reality sculpture. Courtesy of the artists.



Britto Arts Trust, *PAKGHOR*, 2022. Photo: Contemporary HUM.

Nearby, in the documenta Halle, are several works that also overcome the challenge of making the collaborative visible when there are no events running. One of the most engaging is by the Cuban collective Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR). The group formed in 2015 through a public action[13] in Havana that involved a collective reading of Hannah Arendt's seminal text *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). Despite political pressure, the INSTAR group aims to increase artistic freedom, civic literacy and social justice in Cuba through a range of initiatives including awards, scholarships, funding and an oral history archive initiative.

For documenta fifteen, INSTAR present *Operational Factography* (2022), a large gallery-based installation in the documenta Halle and a consecutive programme of exhibitions and events in Havana. The Havana component speaks to ruangrupa's concepts of 'inter-lokal' and 'ekosystem' that sit within the lumbung modality. Both concepts acknowledge the complex of ecological, social, cultural, political, financial and institutional systems within which each lumbung member is situated. More specifically, inter-lokal refers to the entwining of local with international systems.[14] Ekosystem, the Indonesian transliteration of 'ecosystem', is described as not just the web of relations within 'nature' but inclusive of human knowledge systems, resources and social dynamics.[15] Within this framework it appears the lumbung members such as INSTAR were given agency to have components sited within the locations and communities in which they are based while also maintaining a presence in Kassel.

Influenced by the 1920s Soviet avant-garde practice of factography, INSTAR have created a form of collective information organisation described as a 'wall newspaper' to assemble an environment of overlapping images, drawings, video, sculptures, posters and a giant floor-based map of Cuba. Giving a psychic charge to the installation is a series of surrealist pencil drawings depicting scenes of decapitated bodies spouting blood, a giant police truncheon floating zeppelin-like over a cityscape, and severed hands crawling out of the sea. An adjacent gallery space features a long list of names and a field of masks depicting the faces of Cuban artists and intellectuals who have been censored by government-controlled institutions.

Political challenges to artistic freedom are similarly the emphasis of initiatives led by the Palestinian collective The Question of Funding (TQoF). In collaboration with Gaza-based collective Eltiqa, TQoF curated an exhibition in the WH22 venue of work by six Palestinian artists contextualised by stories of personal and professional survival. Their experiences range from smuggling paintings in and out of Gaza to being stranded in the Egyptian desert for over a month due to conflict-related border closures.

Another TQoF project involves creating an alternative arts economy and funding structure to resist the imperatives of

imported NGO and neoliberal models. TQoF argue that these introduced economic systems have had a hegemonic influence on cultural production within Palestine and in other countries. A series of videos, posters and publications maps out their situation and possibilities of adopting different systems. One example given is the Palestinian custom of *an-nqoot*, described as a reciprocal and intergenerational practice of sharing resources and wealth within a community—not unlike lumbung. In drawing inspiration from this tradition, TQoF are using the duration of documenta to create a system called 'dayra' (Arabic for circulate/circulating). Dayra is an economy using block-chain technology in which 'validation points' are earned through sharing resources and services that can then be minted and spent within the community to circulate further.

Discussions surrounding sustainable versus exploitative economies continue in Karlsaue Park. Karlsaue, a major site for past documenta projects, seems underutilised in this iteration but the few works that did engage this space were among the most interesting. Of these was *Return to Sender* (2022) by the East African group Nest Collective. This short documentary, housed within an outdoor enclosure made of bales of used clothing, critiqued the annual export of second-hand apparel from Europe and the US to African nations which to Kenya alone is approx. 180,000 tonnes. The clothing is touted as a gift to 'developing economies', but interviewed experts suggest otherwise. They argue that it creates a situation whereby African countries are essentially forced to receive waste material of limited value, which is not worth the labour to salvage and hinders their industrial aspirations for producing new textiles.

Documentary film comprises another park intervention, by Colombian collective Más Arte Más Acción and Netherlands-based Atelier Van Lieshout, who are known for creating sustainable infrastructures and platforms for discussion around environmental and social justice. While not functional during my visit, their tent cinema-space promised to screen a series of seventeen films powered by a mobile generator fuelled by combusting plastic refuse, and a large table encircling a tree designed for discussions and workshops. Their composting toilet, however, was in operation. This throne-like open-air toilet is built

above ground into an organically shaped tower with spiral staircase. Its lack of privacy is compensated by a restful view over the treetops.



documenta fifteen: Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR), *Raychel Carrión*, 2020-2021, installation view (detail), documenta Halle, Kassel, June 12, 2022. Photo: Nicolas Wefers.



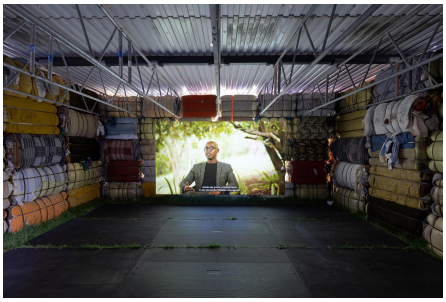
documenta fifteen: Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR), Raychel Carrión, 2020-2021, installation view (detail), documenta Halle, Kassel, 2022. Photo: Contemporary HUM.



documenta fifteen: Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR), INSTAR archive, *List of censored Artists*, 2022, installation view, documenta Halle, Kassel, June 12, 2022. Photo: Nicolas Wefers.



documenta fifteen: The Question of Funding hosts Eltiqa, 2022, installation view, WH22, Kassel, June 15, 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



documenta fifteen: The Nest Collective, *Return To Sender*, 2022, installation view, Karlswiese (Karlsaue), Kassel, June 14 2022. Photo: Nils Klinger.



Más Arte Más Acción & Atelier Van Lieshout, *Excrementus Megalomanus*, 2022. Photo: Bruce E. Phillips.



Más Arte Más Acción & Atelier Van Lieshout, *MAMA Doc Space* (2022), Photo: Bruce E. Phillips.

Given the collective ethos of lumbung, a significant emphasis had been placed on the events programme and interactive works. Unfortunately, but predictably, following the accreditation week a spate of Covid-19 cases spread amongst documenta staff.[16] The staff shortages led to some works not operating and all events being cancelled or modified. This situation remained in place for about four weeks, affecting close to 200 events. A reminder that perhaps the desire to have our old art world back again might not be so cohesive with the ongoing reality of this global health crisis. I wager that this issue will become too easily sidelined, as it seems the environmental critiques of international art tourism[17] have also become. Health and environmental crises aside, the event cancellations prevented the audience from partaking in the social experience that appears so vital to the lumbung spirit.

Another aspect worthy of discussion is the efforts made towards audience accessibility—particularly what could be documenta's first ever attempts at recognising neurodiversity by providing specially designed quiet spaces and easy-read guides in print and on the website. There are also exhibition tours and videos offered in over a dozen languages, including German and International Sign Languages. In terms of physical accessibility, it could be better, with seating not being offered in several spaces. Some video works only provide beanbags for viewers. I even witnessed an overzealous museum invigilator attempting to confiscate a walking stick from one visitor.

In weighing up ruangrupa's accomplishments and shortcomings, I wonder whether this 15th edition is really that different from the previous documenta. In comparison to the last two iterations, I think the answer is yes. Sure, documenta 13 had some significant social interventions. Of note was the collective AND AND AND, who ran assemblies and discussions, and cultivated tea gardens. Another was by Canadian artist Gareth Moore, who worked with locals to build a functional village in Karlsaue Park made of repurposed materials from previous documentas, and other waste. However, these collective contributions appeared to be contained within the projects themselves and not incorporated into the curatorial approach.

documenta 14 was similar to 15 in terms of its focus on decolonisation and representation of the Global South, which saw works by Aotearoa artists included in documenta for the first time. Nevertheless, its curatorial-team dynamic that sent curator envoys to the far reaches of the globe did have a nineteenth-century anthropological air about it. The ambition of 14 to be concurrent in Athens and Kassel was also not without debate, with some equating the approach to a type of curatorial colonisation.[18] In contrast, ruangrupa valued the geographical expertise of lumbung members—a respect made tangible through generous production budgets and in the gift of no-strings-attached 'seed funding' to the lumbung members, as already mentioned, which could be used by collectives to activate ideas and events where they are based.

Overall, what makes ruangrupa's efforts so refreshing is that within their way of working is an honest fallibility, messiness, inclusiveness and joy that is usually absent in curatorial models applied to large exhibitions.[19] This approach is evident in the opening pages of the guidebook and in a large timeline wall-work where the collective share how various life events disrupted smooth planning. Fraught attempts to make the budget a communal pot, which apparently led to some miscommunication between ruangrupa and invited lumbung members/artists, are also discussed.[20] Another aspect openly discussed by ruangrupa is the extent to which the lumbung approach can operate sustainably and effectively when expanded from the nucleus of a single community to the global scale that they have attempted for documenta fifteen.

[21] They explain that this expansion made it difficult to maintain trust amongst lumbung members, artists and the organisation of documenta, and suggest that there is room to make improvements.[22] On this point, ruangrupa concede that documenta fifteen might still be "a conventional artistic mega-event, despite the attempts to approach it in a more bottom-up, organic and accessible way."[23] ruangrupa may have intended and ultimately failed to change documenta, but this lofty goal, I think, distracts from the many learnings that could be derived from their attempt. With many more days of documenta left, perhaps there is time for some of these learnings to become more apparent.

Footnotes

01. ruangrupa, *documenta Fifteen Handbook* (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2022), 12.

02. documenta, "Press Release: Ruangrupa Selected as Artistic Direction of Documenta Fifteen," *Documenta* (blog), 22 February 2019, https://documenta-fifteen.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/190222_Press-Release_ruangrupa-selected-as-Artistic-Direction-of-documenta-fifteen_EN.pdf.

03. Artforum, "Documenta 15 Announces Participating Artists," *Artforum* (blog), 4 October 2021, https://www.artforum.com/news/documenta-15-announces-participating-artists-86874.

04. Stephanie Bailey, "Documenta Fifteen Is a Sum of Its Parts, Not a Single Event," *Ocula Magazine*, 14 July 2022, https://ocula.com/magazine/features/documenta-fifteen-is-not-a-single-event/; ruangrupa, "Antisemitism Accusations against Documenta: A Scandal about a Rumor," *e-flux Notes* (blog), accessed 14 July 2022, https://www.e-flux.com/notes/467337/diversity-as-a-threat-a-scandal-about-a-rumor.

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06. Tobias Timm, "Documenta Fifteen: Hito Steyerl Zieht Sich von der Documenta Zurück," *Die Zeit*, 8 July 2022, Culture, https://www.zeit.de/kultur/kunst/2022-07/documenta-fifteen-hito-steyerl-rueckzug?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2F; Artforum, "Documenta 15 Mired in Controversy as Noted Artist and Key Adviser Cut Ties," *Artforum* (blog), 11 July 2022, https://www.artforum.com/news/documenta-15-mired-in-controversy-as-noted-artist-and-key-adviser-cut-ties-88807; Hito Steyerl, "Hito Steyerl: Context Is Everything, Except When It Comes to Germany," *&&&* (blog), 4 June 2022, https://tripleampersand.org/context-everything-except-comes-germany/. All accessed 14 July 2022.

07. ruangrupa, *documenta Fifteen Handbook*, 12.

08. Ibid, 21.

09. Majelis is an Arabic term drawn upon by ruangrupa to describe a type of non-competitive 'learning space'. See: Ibid, 24.

10. Ibid.

11. FAFSWAG, “FAFSWAG Media Release,” (FAFSWAG, 10 June 2022), 4.

12. Ibid, 21.

13. Led by artist Tania Bruguera while she was under house arrest.

14. ruangrupa, “Glossary,” documenta fifteen, accessed 27 July 2022, https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/glossary/.

15. Ibid.

16. Terry Smith, “DOCUMENTA 15, 2022: Collectivism and Controversy,” *Artlink*, 11 July 2022, accessed 14 July 2022, https://www.artlink.com.au/articles/4983/documenta-15-2022-collectivism-and-controversy/

17. T. J. Demos, “Curating Against the Apocalypse: Documenta 13, 2012,” in *Curating and Politics: Beyond the Curator – Initial Reflections* (71–88), ed. Heidi Bale Amundsen and Gerd Elise Mørland (Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2015); T. J. Demos, *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016).

18. Helena Smith, “‘Crapumenta!’ … Anger in Athens as the Blue Lambs of Documenta Hit Town,” *The Guardian*, 14 May 2017, Art and Design, http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/may/14/documenta-14-athens-german-art-extravaganza; Angels Miralda, “Documenta 14: Athens – Empty Promises and Contradictions,” *Sleek*, 26 April 2017, https://www.sleek-mag.com/article/notes-from-documenta-14-athens.

19. Bailey, “Documenta Fifteen Is a Sum of Its Parts, Not a Single Event.”

20. ruangrupa, *documenta Fifteen Handbook*, 20.

21. Ibid, 40.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

Biographies



FAFSWAG was established in 2013 as an informal Queer arts collective from south Auckland. Responding to the lack of representation within the creative industries, the collective has come to redefine what it means to occupy a fluid sexuality & gender spectrum, a multi-cultural identity and a growing interdisciplinary practice. In 2017 FAFSWAG was the artist in residence at Artspace Aotearoa and delivered a series of community occupations that saw the ‘Auckland Underground Vogue Scene’ take over the gallery, which was documented in fafswagvogue.com. The collective has since exhibited and performed at HAU in Berlin, Germany, Centre Pompidou in Paris, France, Moku Pacific HQ in London, Emergency Gallery in Vevey, Switzerland, Rotterdam International Film Festival, ImagineNATIVE Toronto, Canada, Asinabka Indigenous arts Festival in Ontario, Canada, MGM Grand in Las Vegas, and in 2020 represented New Zealand at the 22nd Biennale of Sydney NIRIN.

FAFSWAG artists include: Jermaine Dean, Falencie Filipo, Tanu Gago, Tapuaki Helu, Elyssia Wilson Heti, Nahora Ioane, Moe Laga-Toleafoa, Tim Swann, Pati Solomona Tyrell, James Waititi.



Bruce E. Phillips is an independent curator and writer from Aotearoa currently based in Edinburgh. As a curator he has worked with over 200 artists including commissioning works by Tania Bruguera, Ruth Ewan, Rangituhia Hollis, Maddie Leach, William Pope.L, Santiago Sierra, Peter Robinson, Shannon Te Ao, Luke Willis Thompson, Kalisolaite 'Uhila and Ruth Watson. His writing has been published in *ArtAsiaPacific*, *Artlink Magazine*, *Art News New Zealand*, and in a number of exhibition publications for galleries such as Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Te Tuhi. Long-term research interests include environmentalism, neurodiversity, social psychology and legacies of settler colonialism.

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