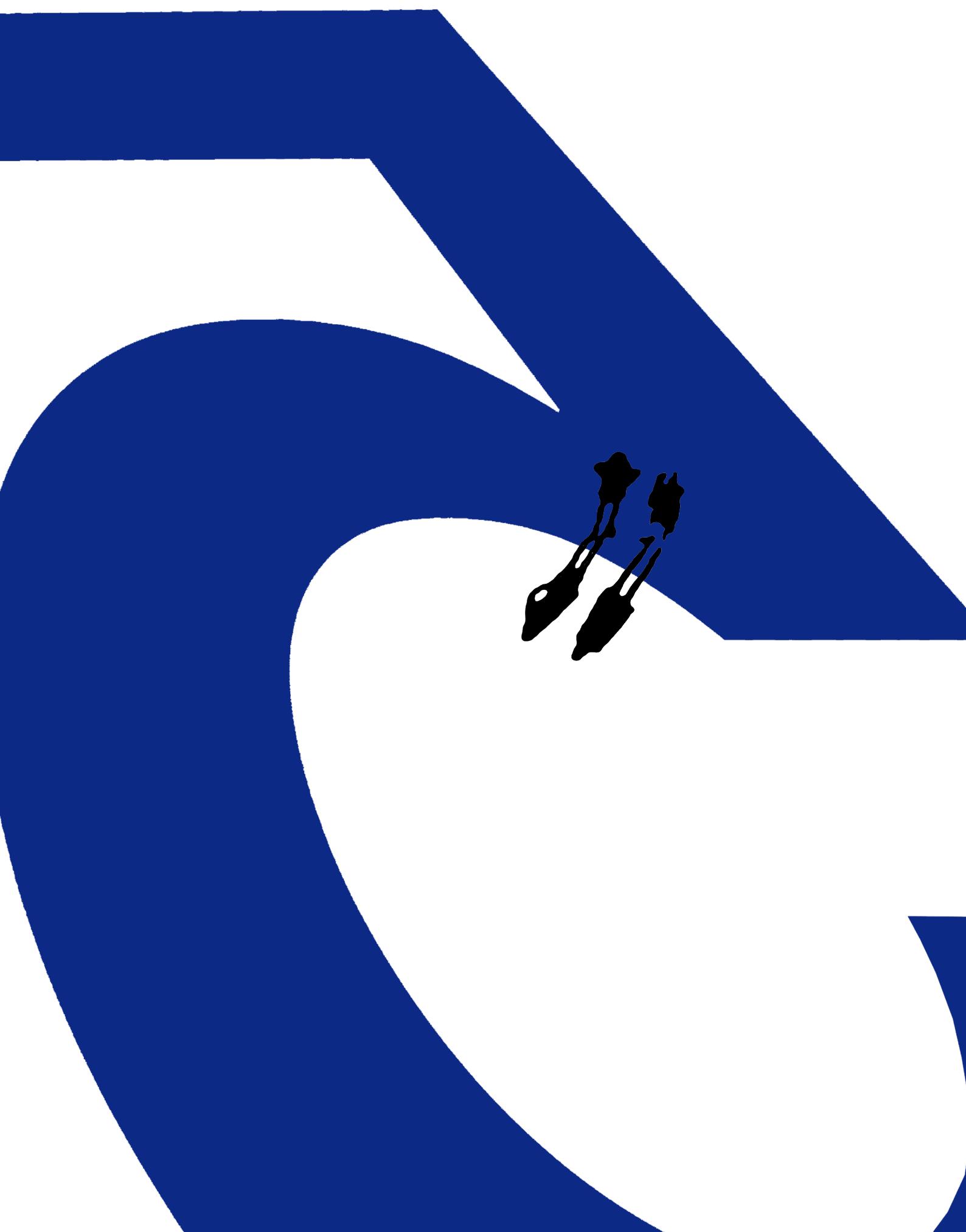


ART
REVIEW
OXFORD
AUTUMN
2022

‘DOCUMENTA’





CONTENTS

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|----------|
| Documenta and Anti-Racism | Ashkan Sepahvand..... | 5 |
| Broken Documenta | Hamja Ahsan..... | 11 |
| Censorship Must Be Refused | Lumbung Community..... | 15 |
| The Deadline Paradox | Cem A. and Frank Wasser..... | 19 |
| Survivance | Dr. Hannah Catherine Jones..... | 21 |
| Other Forms Take Hold | Lucy Grubb..... | 25 |
| AI and Creative Production | Devin Kenny..... | 29 |
| Review: Hew Locke, Tate Britain | Paul Majek-Oduyoye..... | 33 |
| Review: David Elliot, Art and Trousers | Jason Waite..... | 37 |
| Harmanpreet Randhawa | | Backpage |



EDITORIAL NOTE:

With the decline but continuation of COVID-19 (the majority of the editorial team had the virus during the making of this issue), the summer of 2022 brought a return to large-scale exhibitions in Europe. In particular, Documenta, under the direction of the Jakarta-based collective rurangrupa, that set up a collective structure for organising the historic show with fifteen other art groups. This novel approach to sharing the labour and authorship of the large-scale exhibition was critical in creating an infrastructural change to how such events are run, and the result was one of the best exhibitions of the twenty-first century.

The efforts of this large group collectively titled the Lumbung Community is the focus of this issue, with a communique from the group addressing controversies that arose along with contributions that provide the difficulties of the German context they were operating in and reflections from one of the curators. Much will be written about this show in the decades to come and this issue hopes to provide some immediate reflections to help translate the environment and actions undertaken by those involved and visiting. This Documenta underscored the continued problems of Europe to “understand” different ontologies and epistemologies of “art” and even in this “decolonial moment” highlights how much more work needs to be done.

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DOCUMENTA 15

AND

ANTI-RACISM

Ashkan
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This summer saw the exhibition Documenta 15 take place in Kassel, Germany from June 18 to September 25, 2022. Documenta is a major exhibition of contemporary art that takes place every five years in Kassel, initiated after the Second World War as part of the Allies' cultural-diplomatic strategy to "rehabilitate" German society. This link to the complex history of de-Nazification is important to keep in mind for what follows. Since then, Documenta has presented significant editions that have radically assessed and expressed contemporary Zeitgeists, such as Harald Szeeman's Documenta 5 (1972), Okwui Enwezor's Documenta 11 (2002), and Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev's dOCUMENTA 13 (2012). This year's edition was curated by the Indonesian collective ruangrupa. It was the first Documenta to be curated by a collective and by practitioners living and working in the Global South, from a Muslim country. Ruangrupa's framework for Documenta 15 was based on the Indonesian concept of "lumbung," a term that denotes a communal rice barn where the surplus harvest is stored for the benefit of a community. Lumbung is a principle of practice: an alternative economy of collectivity, shared resource building, and equitable distribution.

As such, Documenta 15 was not curated in the manner of a traditional exhibition. Various collective organizations from around the world were invited to practice lumbung. The exhibition budget was distributed to each of these groups, who then invited other groups to join them, further disseminating both the spirit of collectivity and the material resources each needed. Artists were encouraged to continue working on what they're doing, shying away from spectacular new commissions and instead, focusing on documenting their creative, communal, and activist processes. Almost the entirety of artists invited to participate in Documenta 15 were either living and working outside of Europe or had non-Western cultural heritages. This radical gesture proved to have unforeseen consequences. Germany, a Western European country priding itself on its supposed tolerance, open-mindedness, and self-reflexivity, had seemingly graciously invited the Global South to speak for itself. But once the Global South started to speak, it quickly appeared that many were unable to listen.

A few weeks before the exhibition was scheduled to open, an unknown German blogger started to post accusations that the exhibition was "anti-Semitic." This was presented as hearsay; the individual had nothing to support his claims. This random online opinion was, however, picked up on by the German mainstream news media, quickly snowballing into dramatic national speculation. Ruangrupa's Indonesian heritage was an issue. The presence of Palestinian artists was an even bigger issue. A postwar trend amongst the German left has been to argue that any critique of the State of Israel is equal to anti-Semitism, including support of the Palestinian struggle. The public rise of the German right with the political party Alternativ für Deutschland had steadily increased since the 2015 migrant crisis, based on Islamophobic, xenophobic, and anti-globalist sentiments. Thus, an uncanny alliance between both the left and the right had formed in Germany, with profound effects on public discourse on Documenta. At the opening ceremony of Documenta 15, the German President, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, made a strange speech in which he reminded ruangrupa and the invited artists that they were guests in Germany and should respect its traditions, including its highly formalized and codified national ritual of atonement for the Holocaust, commonly referred to as "memory culture" (*Erinnerungskultur*).

The German national psyche was hyped up for a scandal. The meltdown began with the unveiling of Taring Padi's monumental mural installation People's Justice on Friedrichsplatz, the main square in Kassel right in front of the Friedericianum, Documenta's iconic venue and the first public art museum in Europe. The work was shown for the first time since the early 2000s, revealed on the opening day. Taring Padi is a collective of underground artist-activists from Yogyakarta, Indonesia, formed in 1998 following the fall of the Suharto military dictatorship. Their work is based on community co-creation, taking form as murals, puppet shows, processions, concerts, and performances. The 8 x 12-meter banner People's Justice was made in 2002. It is an epic image, full of allegory, culturally specific references, and visual cues from Indonesia's modern political history and its traditions of theatre and protest. Figurations of everyday people, workers, and farmers, are counterposed with symbolic, cartoon-like representations of the dictatorship and its global, ideological partners, including satires of the USA and UK. In Taring Padi's own words, "the banner was born out of our struggles of living under Suharto's military dictatorship, where violence, exploitation and censorship were a daily reality. Like all of our artwork, the banner attempts to expose the complex power relationships that are at play behind these injustices and the erasure of public memory." Two figures representing the Israeli intelligence services Mossad, who have a documented record of supporting Suharto's dictatorship, were the cause for outrage: one figure is depicted as a soldier with a pig-like face, a Star of David on its helmet. Another figure appears to reproduce stereotypical depictions of Orthodox Jews.

The presence of these two problematic figures was immediately pounced upon by the German media, including politicians from all parties. The work was unequivocally deemed anti-Semitic. No other reading could be possible or even tolerated. It was quickly removed. It was unacceptable that there seemed to have been no oversight in advance. How could such a work be exhibited? What if the rumours about the exhibition were indeed true? What were other artists actually showing? What did the Palestinian artists really have to say? Could the curators be trusted? A statement was issued by both ruangrupa and Taring Padi, apologizing for the misunderstanding, but also making clear that the context of the work required further public discourse to generate new understanding, reflection, and solidarity between both Western and non-Western audiences. But the predominant modes of *Erinnerungskultur* seemed to prevail: there was no discussion to be had, for Germany's way of seeing the world was neutral, natural, Enlightened. The curators and artists of Documenta 15, especially the Muslim ones, would have to learn to see the world according to the rules of Western civilization. An independent Scientific Finding Committee was established by the Documenta gGmbH, the organization that administers the exhibition, to go through every artistic contribution and check for possible anti-Semitic content. Further cases were apparently found: the Archive des luttes des femmes en Algérie, Subversive Films/Tokyo Reels, The Question of Funding, and Hamja Ahsan were some of the collectives and individuals whose works were grossly decontextualized and singled out. What all these positions had in common was solidarity with the Palestinian cause.

Despite the scandal, the exhibition ran its full course, with an extensive public programme and a record number of visitors. Many of the artists received threats and harassment online. Many events had to be cancelled. Multiple statements were made all summer by the curators, team, and participating artists. Internal debates within Documenta gGmbH were made public: not everyone agreed that the situation was being handled fairly or even rationally. Though mainstream news revelled in the scandal, playing to populist anxieties, a massive amount of critical commentary and analysis was published, contributing towards a vibrant articulation of decolonial and anti-racist thought regarding Germany's specific context as well as the roles and responsibilities of Western cultural institutions. Open letters, expressions of solidarity, low-key conferences, and private conversations have all served to express the urgency of resistance many artists and cultural workers from around the world have felt needs to be vigilantly embraced following the Documenta debacle. Anti-racism means working to identify, reflect on, and process the racism that everyone is subject to and participates in asymmetrically. Intersectionality, positionality, and situatedness are key principles for an open, honest anti-racist process, meaning, the conversation is by default an unequal playing field. As such, anti-racist practice is collective work. There is no one absolved from undertaking it and no one is its leader. There are resources to distribute, much to learn and unlearn, and it is less a product as much as it is an ongoing process. In this sense, the actual experience of visiting Documenta 15 – with its multiple, unassuming venues, numerous festive events, de-dramatized formats, process-oriented work documentations, and joyful, funny, down-to-earth hang-out-spaces – expresses fully what both anti-racist exhibition-making and exhibition-experiencing can be for the future. This certainly comes with discord and discomfort, because life is messy. But it is exactly this that makes art, as an extension of life, so beautiful.

Ashkan Sepahvand is an artist, writer, and translator.



BROKEN DOCUMENTA

Hamja Ahsan

Note from the Editor:

Hamja Ahsan is a British artist, writer, curator, and activist whose work addresses state crime, contemporary Islamophobia, repression of civil liberties under the so-called War on Terror, and prison solidarity. He is neurodiverse and outspoken, unafraid to speak his mind and call out injustice directly. His book *Shy Radicals: Antisystemic Politics of the Militant Introvert* was published by Book Works in 2017. His work for Documenta 15 installed a series of tongue-in-cheek Halal Fried Chicken signs across eight exhibition venues. From the Documenta 15 website: “his artistic contribution employs vernacular iconography and humour in order to expose the fractures of social exclusion—in this case, with regard to Islamophobia and xenophobia. Ahsan founds a universe of competing halal fried chicken franchises, complete with LED signage. He also shows his new, ongoing series of khutbah (Islamic sermons) videos on fried chicken, theology, and politics—titled Theological Positions around Fried Chicken—on Documenta 15’s social media platforms.”

A public programme entitled People’s Chicken on August 13, 2022, with guest contributors including Ruskin’s own Oreet Ashery, resulted in online mobbing targeting him and his work. Upon Oreet Ashery’s recommendation, Art Review Oxford is honoured to be the first British arts publication to invite Hamja Ahsan to share some of his reflections on Documenta 15. Hamja and the Editors of Art Review

Oxford exchanged many emails, in which Hamja shared emotional, passionate articulations of how he experienced Islamophobia, de-platforming, harassment, and silencing in Germany. It has been a traumatic experience for him, to which he’s spoken openly across various online platforms, such as an interview with Phil Butland in *The Left Berlin* entitled “Documenta Racism Crisis.”¹ He was generous enough to forward many links to articles critically analysing the greater artistic-political implications of the Documenta 15 debate. To this end, he has been championing the hashtag #HandsOffDocumenta.

His contribution consists of raw, personal fragments, which also includes hate speech directed to him online. Many other Documenta 15 artists experienced this kind of violence, which a simple browse through public comments on Instagram or Twitter quickly reveals. The editors have selected from his materials, leaving the tone and quality of his language intact. Some, possibly triggering words have been redacted, but the reader should be warned that reading Hamja’s piece is necessarily discomforting.

- *Ashkan Sepahvand*

¹ Phil Butland, “Documenta Racism Crisis,” *The Left Berlin*, 28 August 2022. <https://www.theleftberlin.com/antisemitism-or-merely-allegiance-to-german-foreign-policy/>

I want to give the other side of the story to the “anti-Semitism debacle.” There was no debacle. It was and is an actual campaign of intimidation and scapegoating directed at black people and Muslims and other vulnerable demographics, which some of German media supported, the AfD incited, and other parliamentary parties turned a blind eye towards. The official stance of the German state to unconditionally support the Israeli occupation overrode discussion of other racisms.

“You sh-t Muslim Englishman!” “Never let you in Germany again!” “You asshole.” “Go back to your sh-thole country you brown....”

Post-Documenta trauma. I am currently under siege online by German racists. I am broken. I can only muster fragments. They wished death or expulsion on me, or “to be replaced by an Israeli artist.” I experienced this daily across my entire online presence, at peak over 100 times a day, until the final day of Documenta. But it’s not over. I felt totally helpless and powerless. I cannot work.

Below: Hamja Ahsan, Kabul Fried Chicken, 2022



It began before the exhibition even opened.

Vandalism. Someone broke into one of the exhibition venues, WH22. Neo-Nazi graffiti with the name of the Spanish Neo-Nazi youth leader Peralta on the site where my artwork was due to be installed. “187,” the graffiti code for murder was spraypainted next door on the walls of the space for The Question of Funding, my Palestinian friends.

My personal Instagram @hamjaahsan was hacked. Mobbing on Twitter, Wikipedia alterations, my Facebook history under McCarthyite surveillance. This is the legacy of my participation as an artist in Documenta.

“Only a dead Palestinian is a good Palestinian.” “Get the f- out of Europe.” “Muslim Nazi Pig.” “Send Hamja back to where he came from and that’s not England.”

The online targeting grew. Later my guest speakers were targeted after speaking at the first half of my public programme People’s Chicken. And then onto journalists and activist friends of mine across the UK, with no connection to Documenta, by the same online troll army. Anyone with any connection to me had to be punished. Some of the hate inciters came from within parties in the German government, who were also represented on the supervisory board. The FDP, SPD, Greens. So-called “traffic light” coalition.

I was alerted by internal whistle-blowers that some of the tour guide staff were associated with the “Antideutsch” movement. This supposedly leftist movement is Islamophobic and anti-Palestinian. They were monitoring me with screenshot evidence. The Antideutsch were banned from Berlin Pride as a racist movement. So I questioned the Documenta administration why they were still employed by Documenta. That was a red line for me. I was stonewalled and ignored by all departments and the CEO of Documenta gGmbH, both the former one Sabine Schormann and the new one Alexander Farenholz. My friends visiting from London felt afraid in this city.

I want to make an anthology called *document ghosts* consisting of all the letters from me they ignored, and from my supporters and all of us artists who faced racist assault. What did they do to help us? They ghosted us.

I initiated a solidarity campaign with artists from around the world under the hashtag #Hands-Off Documenta. Against racism, state censorship, and the far-right war on Documenta’s future, integrity, and existence. I feel mentally damaged as I write this. I struggle to complete this piece or get my head out of its broken state.

All the hate messages are real. They are documented here @hamjastudio.

To be clear about what I am saying:

1. There was a smear campaign directed at the Documenta artistic team, but also the artists and collectives.
2. There is an anti-Semitism problem in Germany, but it is mostly the German far right and white nationalists (not scapegoat Asian Muslims).
3. The German state crackdown on Documenta through censorship and attempted expulsion can be seen as part of the wider crackdown on Palestine Solidarity in Germany.
4. The anti-Semitism smears were done with internal complicity. The Documenta Executive Supervisory Board is run by politicians with little knowledge of art. The artistic team and Ruangrupa were thus under internal political bullying.
4. The racist campaign against Documenta 14 grew over
5. years into the racist campaign against Documenta 15 but with new allies. Documenta 14 was hailed in media as the last Documenta. Nigerian artist Olu Oguibe’s work in favour of refugees had multiple AfD-led protests and deemed a “waste” of taxpayer’s money.
6. We need to hold the racism and German establishment crackdown of Documenta 15 to account so it does not grow into the next Documenta 16. Hence, I am not letting this go.

Below: Documenta 15 artists at a public programme by Hamja Ahsan, 2022



I am so swamped by German racists and institutional failures that it drains and exhausts my ability to do anything. The institutions that are supposed to be supporting me aren't helping in anyway, flaking, or not showing up. I am quite determined to have some presence in this journal. I am feeling bad I couldn't produce something better.

I will eat dinner now and leave my studio.

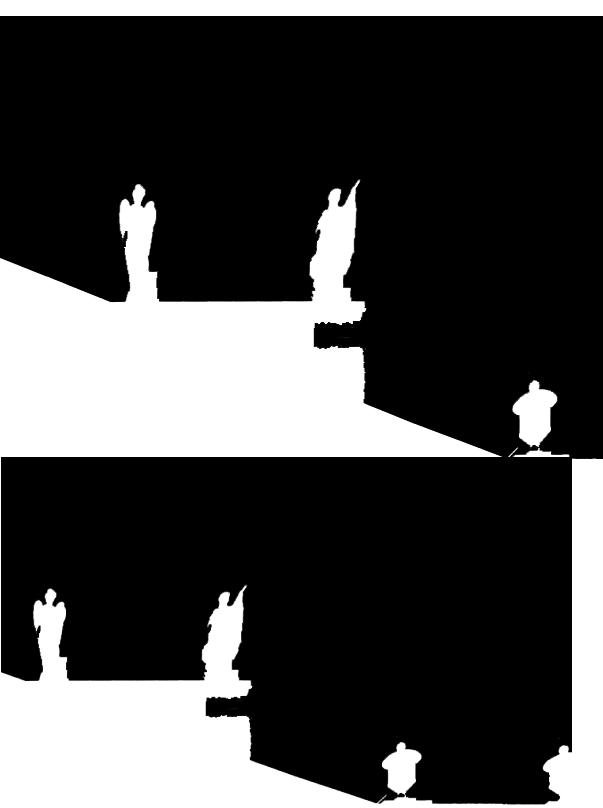
Hamja Ahsan is a an artist, writer, activist and curator based in London.

Above: Documenta 15 artists at a public programme by Hamja Ahsan, 2022, courtesy of the artist.

Censorship Must Be Refuted: Letter from Lumbung Community July 18

This letter was sent on July 18, 2022 from the artists, ruangrupa, and the artistic team of Documenta fifteen to the members of the Documenta supervisory board.





We, the signatories of this statement, address you today as the participating artists and collectives, along with ruangrupa and members of the artistic team of documenta fifteen. Following the statement by the supervisory board of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH dated 16 July 2022, we take the opportunity to write a statement in response to the recommendations initiated by the supervisory board of documenta, and specifically the recommendation to “enter a process of consultation with scholars from the fields of contemporary anti-Semitism.”

While we recognise and regret the pain caused by the sequence of events in relation to Taring Padi’s work “People’s Justice,” we believe that this should not lead to a general atmosphere of probing and censorship. We once again express our stance against all forms of discrimination, including anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia, sexism, transphobia, islamophobia, anti-Palestinian, anti-Roma, anti-Black, anti-Asian, ableist, casteist, classist, and ageist actions and attacks.

We are deeply disappointed that you chose to ignore the racism and violence that the artists and the artistic direction and team have been exposed to over the past eight months. Many of us have invested time, resources, love, and good will in the joint undertaking of documenta fifteen. Artists have spent months and years away from their homes and families to bring collective, collaborative work to Germany and Kassel-based communities. These gifts have not been acknowledged or valued in published statements by politicians, press releases, and/or media coverage.

Since the first media attacks in January, Palestinian, pro-Palestinian, Black, and Muslim artists have been targeted and discriminated against by the media, the politicians, and already exposed to censorship by the institution in consequence. This discrimination has made it clear to us that we cannot trust the proposal of the supervisory board. To remind you of some of these incidents, we mention only a few here:

- | On 23 June 2022 without informing the artists or curators, WH22 Werner-Hilpert-Strasse 22 was closed for at least two hours until members of ruangrupa and the artistic team re-opened it. On the same day part of Hübner Areal, where Subversive Film's artworks were exhibited, was closed for the entire day.
- | On 10 July 2022 sections of archival material referring to Palestine were removed from the work of the Archives des luttes des femmes en Algérie (Archives of Women's Struggles in Algeria) collective without their knowledge or consent. It was only put back on 11 July 2022 upon the request of the artists. These attacks have created a climate of hostility and racism towards the artists, which lead to exposing them to more attacks. We remind you here of some more:
- | On 27 May 2022, WH22, the venue hosting artist collectives Question of Funding, Party Office, and Hamja Ahsan, was broken into and vandalized, with spray-painted slogans reading "187" and "Peralta." The artists suspected that the slogans referred to the California penal code section on murder and the Spanish neo-Nazi activist Isabel Peralta, who has encouraged violence against Islam. The artists decided to keep the graffiti at the venue, and documenta filed a criminal complaint.
- | On 13 & 17 June 2022, after 5 days of being watched by a woman in a car, the venue St. Kunigundis church, where the work of Atis Rezistans|Ghetto Biennale (Haiti/international) is exhibited, was raided by a man threatening and shouting at the Atis Rezistans|Ghetto Biennale artists present. He was also filming with his phone, and the video is circulating. On 17 June 2022 the same man was loitering outside.
- | On 2 July 2022, Party Office collective members were attacked by transphobic men on the streets of Kassel and then assaulted by the Kassel Police. The aggressors were let go. Party Office have demanded an apology as to how the situation has been handled and further steps to guarantee their safety and well-being.
- | Numerous cyberstalking attacks and threats to staff members and artists have been made by JuFo (Junges Forum DIG), notably on its Instagram account.

Many other documented incidents took place, as well as institutional racist, islamophobic, and transphobic discrimination. Artists and team members working for documenta fifteen are still experiencing multiple levels of harassment and bullying, up until this day

In conclusion, we expect the following from the Advisory Board:

- 1 That the recommendation to hire a board of scholars to review the artworks is immediately retracted.**
- 2 That artists and documenta fifteen team members (namely Party Office, Hamja Ahsan) who have sent numerous e-mails about both physical and cyber attacks be answered and followed-up on and that such messages on documenta fifteen official Facebook and Instagram pages are retrieved immediately.**
- 3 That the offenders and perpetrators of the recorded offenses thus far are held accountable by documenta and the city of Kassel.**
- 4 That a safer environment free of all forms of discrimination and attacks is ensured in Kassel by elaborating a code of conduct, protocol of complaints, and responsive structure (such as access to the documenta gGmbH lawyers) for said discrimination.**

We expect a retraction of your recommendation on the advisory board by 22 July 2022. Otherwise, we reserve the right to take further action collectively.

We also expect a public apology for ignoring to follow up on or mention the racist, islamophobic, and transphobic attacks as well as a specific strategy to address the above-mentioned discrimination towards many artists by 30 July 2022.

We are here to stay and want to keep this exhibition open, but with the guarantee of artistic freedom. We are convinced that the artworks can speak for themselves and we believe in the audience's agency to engage with the complexities of the artworks as responsible citizens without the supervision of the state. We are here for open and sincere conversation and collective exchange. We are here as humans with our vulnerabilities, strength, courage, and art, and we want to stay as long as possible to invite and facilitate critical

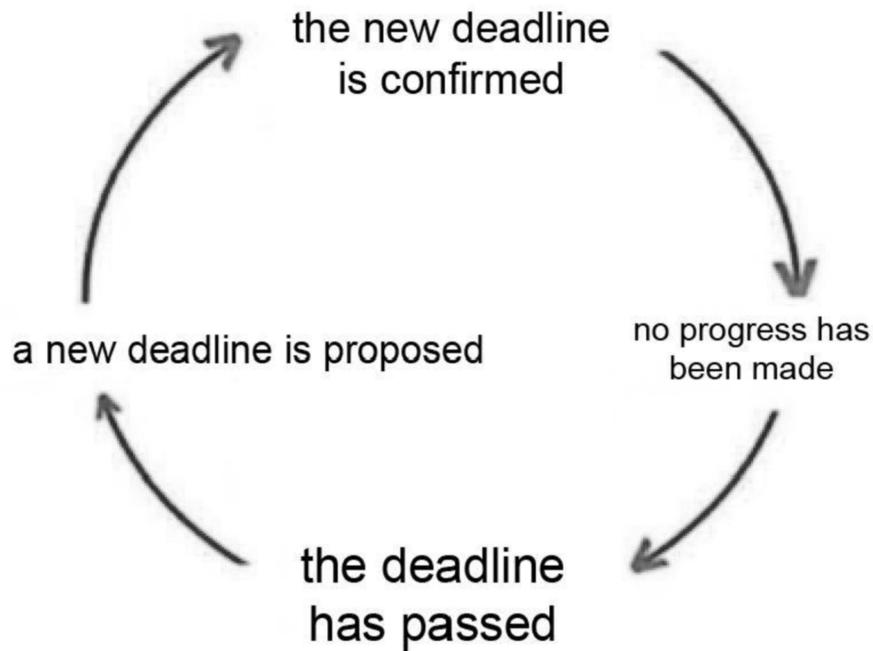
The artists Cem A. (@freeze_magazine) and Frank Wasser tried to conduct an interview about Documenta 15 (of which Cem A. was an assistant curator of) this proved impossible (through no lack of trying) due to their current workload and precarious work conditions.

The following meme is the result of their efforts.

Cem A. is an artist and curator with a background in anthropology and is known for running the art meme page @freeze_magazine.

Frank Wasser is an artist.

The Deadline Paradox



Owed to Survivance [Excerpt]

Dr. Hannah Catherine Jones

Dr. Hannah Catherine Jones (aka Foxy Moron) is a London-based artist, scholar, multi-instrumentalist, broadcaster, composer, conductor and founder.

Etymologically, ‘survivance’ is a portmanteau of ‘survival’ and/or ‘endurance’ and/or ‘resistance’ and/or ‘perseverance’ and for me, it’s open to some interpretation. It also evokes the word ‘resilience’ in both sound and meaning.¹

Survivance is a term most associated with Native American studies to describe the contemporary indigenous experience; those who exist despite genocide(s) and displacements, which are ongoing, most recently and prominently Standing Rock, the sacred land of the Sioux Tribe, who attracted worldwide support in protest of the Dakota Access Pipeline in 2017.

In a Guardian article on the ongoing displacement of the Sioux peoples of Standing Rock, Chief Arvol Looking Horse acknowledges the international support they have received: “Mni Woc’oni’ - Water of Life - people all over the world are now beginning to understand that it is a living spirit: it can heal when you pray with it and die if you do not respect it”.²

I didn’t encounter the term survivance through Native American Studies, but at the ‘Creating Interference’ conference at Westminster University back in June 2018 organised by Barby Asante and Amal Alhaag (shoutout to Barby and Amal).

Dr Karen Salt, founder of the first Black Studies course in Europe and professor at Nottingham University, used the term in relation to how BAME³ students must survive institutional racism in addition to surviving their workload. Karen emphasised the urgency for the (black) academic community to establish decolonial examining bodies to assess minority students’ work.

To give some perspective, of the approximately 19,000 professors in the UK, just 25 identify as black female or non-binary and 90 as black male⁴. This routinely renders these spaces inhospitable; from being mistaken as a cleaner (as Karen Salt was on her first day as a professor), to having to deal with insensitive and sometimes blatantly racist comments.

The negative effects and affects of being “the only one”⁵ materialise psychologically.

¹ Algerian-born French philosopher Derrida defines ‘survivance’ in *The Beast and the Sovereign* as ‘a sense of survival that is neither life nor death pure and simple, a sense that is not thinkable on the basis of the opposition between life and death.’ - Michel Lisse, Marie-Louise Mallet, and Ginette Michaud, ed., Geoffrey Bennington, trans., *The Seminars of Jacques Derrida*, The University of Chicago Press Ltd., London, 2011, p.130.

² Chief Arvol Looking Horse, ‘Standing Rock is everywhere: one year later’, The Guardian, [website], <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2018/feb/22/standing-rock-is-everywhere-one-year-later>, accessed 17th October 2018.

³ I later disregard this problematic term in *Owed to Humana 2.0*, p.117 - HCJ 2021.

⁴ Richard Adams, ‘UK universities making slow progress on equality, data shows’, The Guardian, [website], <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/sep/07/uk-university-professors-black-minority-ethnic>, accessed 10th October 2018.

⁵ Throughout the text, I utilise double quotations to signify air quote gestures, made in relation to problematic words when speaking/reading/performing the (tran)scripts - HCJ 2021.

Minority¹ staff (and students alike) report being simultaneously hypervisible, due to the obvious difference in skin-tone, whilst invisible in their opinions, observations, and complaints about racism being largely ignored by their white and white-passing² colleagues, who cannot, or will not, attempt to perceive their Othered experience.³

Educational institutions in the UK (and Europe, and globally), were founded upon wealth gained from enslavement⁴, which supported academic research into scientific racism: the foundation of white supremacy. These institutions are not built for us, and despite efforts to “diversify”, we still both look and feel out of place. Not being able to see yourself reflected in the institution means you’re not visually or culturally validated in the way white and white-passing Europeans are.

Rizvana Bradley gave an amazing talk, ‘The Aesthetics of Thrown-ness’ at Goldsmiths College in 2015, in which she discussed a Glen Ligon etching, ‘(Untitled 1992)’. Ligon’s landscape etching depicts two panels of text separated, like the pages of a book. The left panel contains the repeated and seemingly ink-splattered text: ‘I do not always feel coloured’, and the right reads: ‘I feel most coloured when I’m thrown against a sharp white background’, utilising Zora Neale Hurston’s words: ‘I feel most coloured when I’m thrown against a white background’¹⁰ from her 1928 essay ‘How It Feels to be Coloured Me’.

Ligon’s addition of the word ‘sharp’ penetrates and re-enforces, the whiteness of the canvas, of the gallery walls, of those who run and predominantly inhabit the institution (and even the white wine consumed at gallery openings)¹¹ and furthermore, the psychological wounds inflicted on the minority individual by the same institution that consumes their work.

Even as a member of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora myself, it took me a long time to realise that the West Indies are an entirely European construct and not just a series of paradises for “exotic” holidays. This is particularly potently represented by perhaps the signifier of paradise; palm trees, which were planted

⁶ ‘Minority’ is a problematic term that perpetuates false significations of inferiority that I have since disregarded, however, I acknowledge its use in the original [Tran]Script and broadcast, and believe it is important to leave this trace.

⁷ ‘White-passing’ is a problematic term that perpetuates colonial categorisations, however, I use it in absence of another term and with the intention of constructing/consolidating a new term in the imminent future.

⁸ Vini Lander and Ninetta Santoro, ‘Invisible and hypervisible academics: the experiences of Black and minority ethnic teacher educators’, Taylor & Francis Online, [website], <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13562517.2017.1332029?needAccess=true>, accessed 12th October 2018.

⁹ Catherine Hall, ‘Britain’s massive debt to slavery’, The Guardian, [website], <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/27/britain-debt-slavery-made-public>, accessed 19th October 2018.

¹⁰ Alice Walker, ed., *A Zora Neale Hurston Reader: I Love Myself When I Am Laughing And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean And Impressive*, The Feminist Press at The City University of New York, New York, 1979, p.154.

¹¹ J. V. Joyce, *I was tired of white walls, white wine, and white people, unpublished illustration*, 2017.

to line the plantation owners' driveways, and the particular layouts of the trees functioned as maps for the enslaved to navigate their routes back to their masters' house from the fields. Economic suppression post-abolition forced many immigrants, like my grandmother, to seek a better life in England. She sent for her children from Barbados, one by one, including my father. As we exist in the 70-year anniversary of the Windrush generation arriving in England, some Caribbean nationals living in the UK between 1948 and 1971 will not be granted citizenship, in a denial of the rights promised to them.¹²

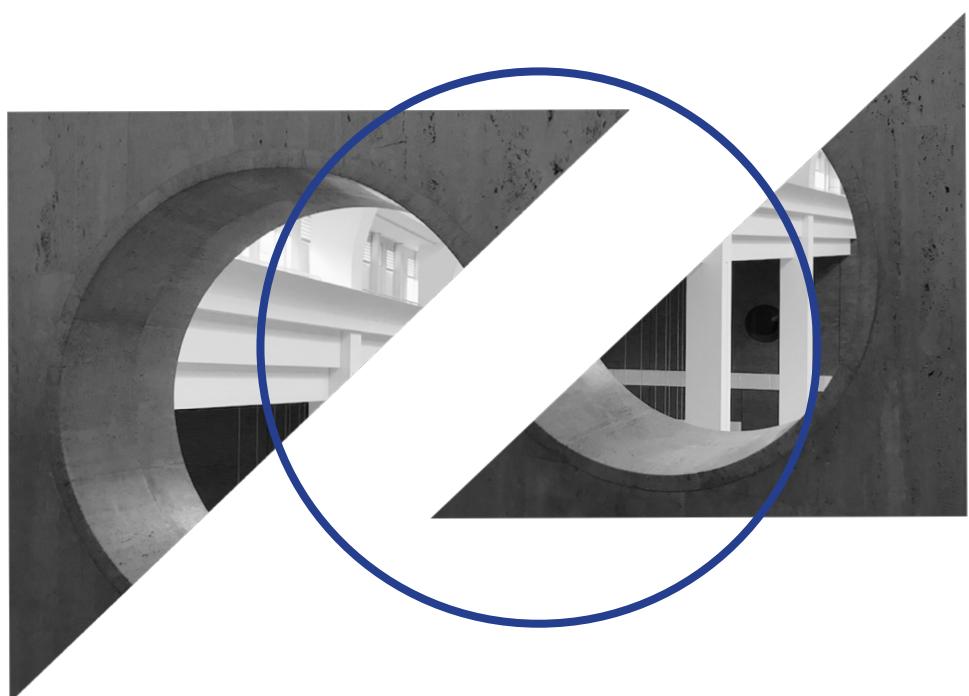
This denial of citizenship echoes an ongoing denial of humanity; inequity takes the form of exclusion of non-white individuals from the most powerful institutions.¹³ bell hooks articulates the intersecting systems as the 'white supremacist imperialist capitalist patriarchy'. These interlocking systems reinforce one another rendering it infinitely complex to tackle any one issue, including so-called "diversity" and "inclusion" within institutions.

In 2018 we are still bombarded with the motif: "the first black person to", for example, win the Turner Prize (shoutout to Lubaina Himid), due to the double jeopardy¹⁴ of being both black and female within the white supremacist imperialist capitalist patriarchy. Furthermore, black identifying trans and non-binary individuals, and anyone with a disability, must face further barriers that I, and many privileged others, will never have to endure.

12 BBC, 'Windrush victims detained 'unlawfully' by Home Office', BBC, [website], <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-44651105>, accessed October 7th 2018.

13 Richard Adams, 'British universities employ no black academics in top roles, figures show', The Guardian, [website], <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jan/19/british-universities-employ-no-black-academics-in-top-roles-figures-show>, accessed 12th October 2018.

14 bell hooks, *Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice*, Routledge, New York, 2013, p.4.

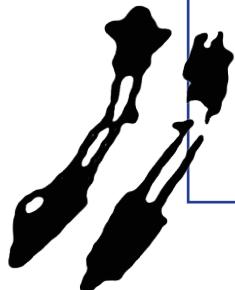


OTHER FORMS

TAKE

HOLD

Lucy
Grubb



When Astrida Neimas reflected that ‘we are all bodies of water’, and Anne Carson wrote, *Wildly Constant*, which writes of re-fragmentation of the library, there was a suggestion to a slippery and watery world¹. As Carson wrote, if the books from the library were made from glaciers, the glaciers would melt, and all the words, sentences, and punctuations confined in those books would slip and slide around the room. Therefore, constructing a bodily and biological method of messing up, understanding, re-trying, undoing, and figuring out different ways of wording.

The Corviale built by Mario Fiorentino, Michele Valori, Federico Gorio, Piero Maria Lugli (1972) is a public housing project in Rome, which imagined a future of social and collective housing. Although the Corviale project was an archetypical dwelling and very real its prosaic construction, the building itself became a site of intervention and imagined a future which was not planned. Victoria Watson, an architect scholar comments on the Corviale building, as those that live in the housing project have discovered a ‘New Architecture’, with some of the building becoming a quasi-art gallery due to the paintings, murals, and tags put onto the exterior walls, and outside spaces of the housing project.²

Our substances (like Carsons glacier-words) touch and intersect, producing knowledges that not just crash into, leak, seep, and meddle, but redescribe forms and re-activate existences. The body is a site of change, porosity, and transformation, but bodies, ‘and sexes, are neither fixed nor inert, [instead being] fluid and emergent’.³ Our bodies, like those living in the Corviale housing projects are not just inhabitants, but they are structures which intervene, structures which reject, and structures which disrupt – bodies, with their disruption and interventional power generate a stage (a new architecture where futures are re-imagined). Futures that fit into a world in which we live.

When a roundabout is void of its formal use or no longer acts as a roundabout, its site becomes redundant. This redundancy or failure brings forward potentialities, and ‘although potentialities are present, they do not exist in present things’.⁴ Commonly, the circle (or a wave, due to its repeatable gesture) denotes ideas of progress. Perhaps, re-repeating this particular action, via a glitch, or a re-composition, making a slight jolt, or a slight change to these production models could allow for glitch’s / interruptions (like Carson’s glacier words) to break pre-existing systems, so other forms take hold.

1 Astrid Neimanis, ‘Hydrofeminism: or on Becoming a Body of Water’ in *Undutiful Daughters: New Directions in Feminist Thought and Practices*, eds. H. Gunkel, C. Niganni, and F. Söderback, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).; Anne Carson,

Float. (New York: Knopf Publishing, 2016).

2 Victoria Watson, *Utopian Adventure: The Corviale Void*. (London: Ashgate, 2012), 95.

3 Nancy Tuana, “Viscous Porosity: Witnessing Katrina” in *Material Feminisms*, eds. S. Alaimo, S. Hekman, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 188-213.

4 José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 99.

Using incomplete, failed, or proposed architectures acknowledges a stage and gap for future thought where we can remake and re-propose. These stages provide a ground for reworking, but acknowledges also the fundamental lack of governmental assistance, where our own relations can be placed, and where we can enact our own (future) becoming's.

In 1962, when Robert Lax wrote, I lift one stone and I am thinking, I didn't see it as anything other than a matter-of-fact declaration of an action⁵. Now, I think differently, because what if Lax himself were throwing, flinging, or thumping the stone - how would the thoughts which one holds onto alter in relation to the act of throwing, holding, or thumbing.

Maybe Lax lifts a stone, whereas when planning the Radiant City (1930) Le Corbusier thought of the biological cell, and those that live in the Corviale thought of re-mak-



ing their living standards. As the spaces we come to make in are constantly shifting (an instability), the associations with which we stand upon have the ability to become broken down, further transitioning towards a re-imagination, a bodily and spatial enactment.

If we take Watson's gesture of 'New Architecture' and mix this with J.E. Muñoz's idea of Queer Performativity, then we could suggest Lax' stone movement as a new type of architecture, and a new way of thinking towards bodily, material, movement and association. These New Architectures acknowledge a becoming, with José Esteban Muñoz's acknowledgment that the "stage is a space of potentiality", a space where we can rehearse our future-selves, where we can mess up, re-try and practice different ways of being⁶.

We could remake and think about the use of these failed or proposed architectures, as sites of access in relation to bodies and imaginations. These failures generate stages, where bodily interruptions could completely disrupt the pre-existing reasons of these architectures' original usage. Refusal of these objects, and the acceptance of a provisional future stage to act upon gen-

5 Robert Lax and John Beer, Poems (1962-1997). (Seattle: Wave Books, 2013), 5.
6 Muñoz, Cruising Utopia, 111.

erates a thought that is held within the associations of these objects – an indexical towards the stage of potentiality (a new architecture). The spaces between this imagined and future stage, emerging next to the physically real object produces a thought-object, as it is the possibility of rehearsing a future-selvē that is not already here, there, or now that we hold on to - an indexical of something other than itself. These holds are yet to surcome to a realisation, as like mentioned before, potentialities are different in that although they are present, they do not exist in present things, hence a thought-object comes to form.



AI and Creative Production

Devin Kenny

AI is being used in the production of images. Artists are using AI to create art, and AI is being used as a tool for visual culture.

AI can be used to create new images, edit existing ones, and even generate new ideas for art production. It can also be used as a tool for visual culture research.

AI has been used to create artwork for a while now. With the advancement of AI, it is now possible to generate images that are indistinguishable from human-made ones.

AI is also being used in many industries such as finance, healthcare, and marketing.

AI is not just a tool for creating images. It is also a way to understand and expand the visual culture.

AI can be used for research in visual culture, generating new art pieces, or even generating new ideas on how we should see the world. Remember VVORK?

AI has been in use for photo-editing for a long while now, but it is starting to be used more and more in image-making. The technology can help artists create images that would otherwise take years to produce.

AI is changing the way we create images and art. With AI, we can produce images at a much faster rate than we could with human hands.

These new tools are also changing the way that visual culture is created, making it easier for people to create art without any formal training or artistic background.

AI will continue to impact the creation and distribution of images, as well as how we understand image-making.

AI is already impacting the creation and distribution of images. For example, AI can be used by artists to create art from scratch or by marketers to generate content for social media. AI is also changing how we understand image-making, similar to how wide access to video and photographic technologies did, but even beyond.

AI has been changing the way we create images. It is opening up new possibilities in art production. AI is used to generate images that are photorealistic and have a high level of detail. It can also be used to make stylized, abstract or low-resolution images that are more artistic and expressive than traditional photography. Text-based image generation platforms are widening access to a wide variety of aesthetic objects, people who wanted backgrounds or character designs for their Dungeons and Dragons games or online avatars can have it in seconds or minutes, no longer will artists and illustrators in these communities have to take the brunt of the creative labor. While this may not impact art so much, for the wider world of visual culture, this is huge. Talented illustrators who cut their teeth in DeviantArt or oekaki platforms online, surviving off of commissions and a passion for the activity, may find interest from paying customers who wanted their skills begin to dwindle. Simultaneously though, for those who have already built large followings, if they choose to learn this new set of tools, it could be an asset.

AI can be used for image editing, color correction, and photo enhancement. AI can also be used for image creation by using machine learning algorithms to transform existing images into new ones. The implications of this technology on the political landscape, and the production of libelous, and incendiary graphics or agitprop can't be ignored either. It has been a long time since "seeing is believing", but now everyday people will have unbelievable image production tools within easy reach.

One of the biggest demands for artists today is experiencing an increased production on artworks. Now, with AI's images, we can multiply the speed and efficiency of creating things. Of course it depends on the industry, and your stature within it, or maybe more accurately : the market's demand for what you do. It's very possible that the hypothetical demands of clients are different from that of fine art collectors, and different from one's own desires and proclivities as a person tasked with image-making or creating things that will enter the field of visual culture. Even if you are high in demand as a fine artist, it's rarely a volume-based approach, and in some cases artists may be goaded to inject artificial scarcity by producing or releasing fewer works annually. The recent explosion in profile pic based NFT art is a noteworthy exception, but still an exception.

ventually, AI will be able to create specific styles automatically dependent on its newly-gathered dataset containing all of the artists' newest art pieces. Perhaps one day the world will have AI-made works of art that are indistinguishable from human-made ones.

This already exists to some extent, but the problem is that more often than not, the produced images are hokey or 'bad'... pictures that you wouldn't want to look at for long periods of time, images that you wouldn't want to return to, pictures you wouldn't want to live with. Do they so often have this quality because they are the definition of formulaic? If so, why don't many conceptual or process-based images have the same quality? Is it because human presence interjects a degree of wonkiness that soothes our apoplectic brains and gives us something to do while looking at a thing, a side quest if you will, parallel to the main event being presented.

Anyone who's watched someone learn to draw with a graphics tablet understands the powerful impact that new technologies have on our society. Artificial Intelligence, or AI for short, continues to evolve in its complexity-humans aren't artistically superior, but we humans are more adaptable depending on the imagemaker's needs.

What do we need from an image? What do we need from the act of making a picture? A good friend of mine is a talented painter and draughtsperson, but also is very skilled as an illustrator, graphic designer, and web developer. When I inquired about graphics tablets, because I wanted to get back into drawing, he told me that if I like the physical act of drawing...I should draw on paper, because choosing brush sizes, hardnesses, and using a graphics tablet is an entirely different experience by comparison, and it's routinely frustrating, for someone who has a background in analog art-making at least. Simultaneously, for mundane tasks and painstaking aspects of photo-editing, using a tablet and stylus is far superior to a tiny touch pad or mouse. AI can be used to alleviate some of that drudgery.

AI art hasn't been around long enough to know what impact it will have on the visual culture of people at large but if you're wondering where AI art stands and how far it has come in such a short amount of time, see [HERE](#):

[images redacted]

images can be seen as an expression or interpretation of meaning or message.

AI assisted art and image creation is already dominating the field. More artificial intelligence-created images like Jitish Kallat's Final Image of Cindy Sherman are on the way. This series may not yet exist, but it could! The AI text generator helping me write this text prophesied it.

AI is not just a trendy tool, it has a lot to offer in the world of art. With AI-assisted art and image generation skills, visual culture will never be the same and all that is at our fingertips with just a few clicks. While this is all taking place, we have to be aware of artists who were exploring AI as well as generative practices before this wave, such as Siebreen Versteeg, Katya Grokhovsky, Stephanie Dinkins, Future Wake, and many more.

Devin Kenny is a DPhil Candidate at University of Oxford, he has a new series dealing with artificial intelligence, the archive, and art institutions, "Ongoing Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit" view now at the Whitney Museum's online venue Artport.

REVIEW
TATE
BRITAIN

Hew Locke: *The Procession*

Paul
Majek-Oduyoye

The Procession at Tate Britain is an historically layered work by Guyanese-British artist, Hew Locke. The new commission is a parade—a march reflective of society—where we can all see ourselves in the figures migrating through the space. Locke says, “people gather to celebrate, worship, protest, mourn, escape or even to better themselves,” yet the history of Tate Britain creates an unsettling environment for these figures to occupy¹. The Tate’s wealth and power is rooted in the importation and refining of sugar; this history is inseparably linked to slave labour in the Caribbean and the atrocities of slavery still reside in the structures of this institution. *The Procession* creates a necessary space for the African diaspora to process these histories and reminding British society of its past.

The figures in *The Procession* are human scale: we confront the work at eye level; we do not have to look up; we aren’t placed below them. What creates the momentous experience of the work is the unity of these figures. The honesty and emotion are felt on the surface of the cardboard, the fabrics, the materials are throw-away adorned and embellished. The work questions materials like stone or marble, their permanence and rigidity, rebelling against the characteristics of these structures and their permanence in history. The ambition of *The Procession* is to disrupt this.

The Procession offers a true, layered, complex history—we see all sides of its face—unfiltered. What is it to see artists as both unreliable and reliable historians? Mark Godfrey’s ‘The Artists as the Historian’ argues that contemporary artists are historians not because of the contents of their work but instead their modes of working². Locke explores the archival, a mode of working that seems foundational in its imaginative beauty and complexity. The historical references layered throughout become a medium to hold onto a dissolving present.

The work becomes a vehicle to travel to the past. The archive here functions to question the historical and the imagination—warping time, exposing the fluidity of history and amalgamation of ghost stories.

Locke examines the blurred nature of memory and its relation to a questionable history and what is left. He describes Guyana as a “land of many waters”³. *The Procession* becomes a sea of people, the motif of the ship and the voyage. The ship is the hold or the container for movement of goods and exchange. This is a voyage that many have taken, a voyage repeated throughout history. It is the story of the enslaved, the story of the immigrant, the story of the person who flees. We all join this voyage in motion, on foot, escaping, finding home, outsiders, anomalies. The people who have embarked on this migration, those who are lost at sea seeking a new world, death, rebirth, and the voyage are inseparable: the immigrant in search of the unknown.

In *The Procession*, figures start to embody the souls of those lost, in motion in flight, in escape—the work becomes a commemoration, or shrine. I’m reminded as a person of Nigerian descent of the journey my parents took, and those before them. To begin to listen and honour our ancestors, spirits, and lineage. We know this world and they know the unknown world. *The Procession* is almost like a returning of these spirits, telling us that death is not the end. The archival and historical becomes spiritual, a shrine for the lost souls, to remember the forgotten and unimaginable. The work becomes a celebration of the diaspora, Locke describes this remembering as the burden of our

1 Hew Locke, “Tate Britain Commission Hew Locke: *The Procession*”, <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/hew-locke>.

2 Mark Godfrey, “The Artist as Historian.” October, vol. 120, 2007, pp. 140–172. www.jstor.org/stable/40368473

3 Hew Locke, “Tate Britain Commission Hew Locke: *The Procession*.”

history. We begin to connect to the immigrant, the citizen, the refugee. Questioning national identity, nationhood. The unwelcomed. The voyage of the diaspora and the politics of this movement, migration in relation to a sense of place and belonging.

A procession, a march, a revolution, a rebellion. I Imagine a tearing down of Empires colonies, the commonwealth. In the installation there is a repetition of Winston Churchills name, this doesn't feel like a commemoration, like the many statues built in his name. It feels like an exposing of the violence inflicted on former British colonies. The millions of Indians who died under the rule of British imperial, the partition of India. How nations are formed, a space, location, position, mapping, longing. How we accept colonial geographies, through the images we are given.

In Guyana, Locke would walk past a statue of Queen

Below: Hew Locke, *The Procession* 2022 Tate



Victoria, and living in London he would also see the Victoria Memorial in front of Buckingham palace. The presence of these statues, hold and preserve a colonial history and British identity, which is inevitably interwoven with the transatlantic slave trade. *The Procession* draws us closer to a different thinking, a more hopeful thinking which challenges the dominant white narratives which uplift and celebrate the British empire, the 'monument' that exposes the horrific stories hidden and masked with marble and magnitude. The public monuments scattered throughout the UK perform greatness, a costume to hide the atrocities, tragedies inflicted on people. The voices which are suppressed in these stories of nation heroes and fantasies, the western world uphold.

Locke speaks of a beauty in the messiness, and the complexity in this, creating an emotionally charged environment. He says "What I try to do in my work is mix ideas of attraction and ideas of discomfort – colourful and attractive, but strangely, scarily surreal at the same time" the materiality of the

work embodies this emotional layered and conflicted feeling, the fabrics that contrast against the plastic, sheltering these mannequins, masks¹. The material becomes an access point, that doesn't separate us from it, this is through the commodity of the materials and objects placed over each other. The layering of meaning and history starts to align with the process of creating this work. Drawing and sculpting is prominent in *The Procession*, the drawing becomes, physical and three dimensional, we start to walk amongst the colour and form of these materials, Locke describes his process as moulding, as a form of sculpture, instead of carving away, there is an adding, layering, drawing people in, to ask questions and

wonder.

The relationship the viewer has with the work is intentional, the way we are asked to navigate the work, I start to consider the ethics, belonging and politics of sculpture/objects. The monuments that we are forced to see throughout Britain, but also the sculpture looted from former British colonies. Who should be in the presence of these objects?

Locke reminds us that “There are very few people of colour, as statues in this country” the face of nationhood, ceremony, royal insignia. Images of power and control.² The elevating of material in *The Procession* starts to feel like a rethinking of giving meaning to nothingness, something timeless, nameless. Locke says he looks back at his life, to see

endless rooms with a long line of nameless people, a procession. This reminds us of Lubaina Himid's *Naming the Money* (2004) an installation including 100 life cut-out figures. Both works begin to tell the story of the other, the enslaved, the emigree, the asylum seeker, and acts to amend the erasure of a whole people, and in this reclamation, Locke creates a work which is painful, cathartic, frustrating while being hopeful. Carrying your histories with you, a history which doesn't try to eradicate the enemy, but creates an awareness, accepting a complex history within the diaspora and supplementing the silences – *The procession* brings life to the stories which were once lost.

Paul Majek-Oduyoye studied at the Royal Drawing School, and is currently at the Ruskin School Of Art. Painting in oil, acrylic and charcoal on wood panels or canvas, his practice takes his own blue-hued lucid dreaming and family archive as a point of departure to probe the materiality of liminal spaces.

4 ibid.
5 ibid.

Hew Locke, *The Procession* 2022 Tate



David Elliot, *Art & Trousers: Tradition and Modernity in Contemporary Asian Art*, Art Asia Pacific, 2021

REVIEW

Jason Waite

The cryptic title *Art & Trousers* belies a multi-faceted volume that is part a selection of writings of over forty years by the British curator and historian David Elliot, a curatorial autobiography, and new study of historical research.

Born and raised in the midst of de-colonizing twentieth century Britain, Elliot unique career spanned over many decades and geographies. At the age of twenty-seven he was appointed as director at Museum of Modern Art Oxford, now Modern Art Oxford [MAO]. He was the founding director of two major international museums and curator of numerous large-scale exhibitions including the Biennale of Sydney and the Kiev Biennale. Elliot's career was a bridge between the more traditional role of institutional curators and the transient international curators of the 1990s such as Okwui Enwezor, Hou Hanru, and Hans Ulrich Obrist. Unlike that subsequent generation which focused on temporary international biennales, Elliot maintained a practice of international institution-building. Over two decades in Oxford, he transformed MAO into kunsthalle focused on urgent contemporary practices across both sides of the Atlantic while initiating a number of survey shows from Asia that extended the scope and understanding of contemporary art. Elliot founded Mori Art Museum, Tokyo which, while based in Tokyo had a wide focus, and has gone on to become one of the most important museums of contemporary art in East Asia. Elsewhere Elliot served as the first director of Istanbul Modern and instituted a similarly ambitious program. Unlike the early 2000's disney-fication of contemporary art museums looking for mass audiences—Motorcycles in the Guggenheim, Jeff Koon's puppy, among many ignominious examples—Elliot's shows were either historical and deeply researched or supporting contemporary artists from varied geographies. The collected writings are largely organized to

traverse Asia from Turkey to Russia across Central Asia to South, East, and Southeast Asia. In contrast the section entitled "Migrations" details connections, overlaps, and cross pollination between largely Europe and the US with Asia, that complicates a more isolated reading of culture. Interlacing these sections Elliot weaves together new research on trousers, modernity, and culture that is reliably wide-ranging and thorough, it offers surprising insights to highlight how the notion of "modernity" is misunderstood—spoiler alert—trousers originated in Asia. These overlapping strands of criticism, storytelling, and research help to unpack part of the long durée of Elliot's multivalent practice.

In the context of ARO, one of the most fascinating chapters "Going Global: Alterity and Other Things at the Museum of Modern Art Oxford," chronicles the desires, encounters, and nuts and bolts of some key exhibitions at Modern Art Oxford that Elliot curated including *India: Myth and Reality* (1982), *Reconstructions: Avant-garde Art in Japan 1945-65* (1986), and *Silent Energy: New Art From China* (1993). He narrates how the shows came together, the world events that impacted their realizations, his thinking and those of his collaborators in constructing and framing the works and ideas, which allows for an accessible introduction into how and why such "nation-centric" shows came together. While there has been much critical debate about the format of such shows, their tendency to read artists work through a single culture when some artists included have traveled widely or are even based outside of the country, or at times a more ethnographic approach to texts instead of an art historical reading that might be given in other shows. Elliot doesn't wade into these contemporary debates or the persistence of these shows as a grouping method for works even today, rather he details the forces and thinking at work at the

he details the forces and thinking at work at the moment, and in some cases other institutions in Europe that were putting on similar shows at the time. These reflections are critically important to the budding field of exhibition histories as they provide a retrospective first-person account of how and why such shows came together at that time. This lays the groundwork for understanding even to this day the curatorial philosophy that underpins Modern Art Oxford programming and its more global scope. While the remit of Elliot's present volume centering Asia focuses primarily on those related group shows he organized. The book leaves us wanting for another book that lays out his two decades at MAO and all of the other landmark exhibitions that he organized. The generously illustrated volume gives us a deeper view into the shows, artists, and material that Elliot was working with and from.

At its base this is essential reading for curators, contemporary art historians, and those passionate for how culture not only reflects our reality but actively shapes the culture through which we see the world. If in the twenty-first century we see a hegemonic shift toward Asia, or at least a gaping fracture in the present order through which a multiplicity of epistemes gain wider recognition, than this book serves both as an account of this hinge moment in culture, but just a critically traces the deep historical contours of the cultural geographies to put into a wider scope this period and its historical mechanisms working to create it.

Jason Waite is a curator and editor of Art Review Oxford



