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Di Liu

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Unorchestrated Symphony: documenta fifteen as a Site of Resistance

Di Liu* 

Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom

Introduction

documenta fifteen (d15) was an exhibition composed largely of global south practices curated by the Indonesian artist collective ruangrupa. The curatorial concept of d15 was *lumbung*, which translates as ‘rice barn’.¹ As a fusion of habitation, granary, and sacred sites, *lumbung* preserves both tangible and intangible resources: rice and community valuables, energy, creativity, information, knowledge, network, and time.² With the indigenous concept of *lumbung*, ruangrupa transformed d15 into an experimental model based on the core principle of sharing and a set of values, including ‘humour, generosity, independence, transparency, sufficiency, and regeneration’.³ At d15, ruangrupa brought together a new corpus of artists, artist collectives, and artistic projects, as well as cosmologies from Indonesia, Palestine, Rojava, Bangladesh, Mali, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tunisia, Australia, and elsewhere, who engaged critically and creatively with painting, film, installation, storytelling, sound listening, assembly, performance, workshop-ping, ritual, cooking, and hangouts.

More importantly, d15 illuminated how artists from the global south and elsewhere were highlighting methods of making and exhibiting art that remained invisible to the global north. These artists were also developing alternate aesthetic sensibilities and political perspectives away from any perceived centre of global art. Or, to put it bluntly, what contemporary art should look like.⁴ Collectively the works forged a critique of the artist-genius approach to understanding art established by the Western art historical canon, reconnecting the art with forms of popular, collective, folk, indigenous, and spiritual knowledge that the Euro-American canon had systematically excluded from modernity.

However, d15 was not an exhibition about art *per se*. Critics have acknowledged ruangrupa’s decentralised curatorial method and the exhibition’s rhizomatic structure,⁵ yet many still examine d15 with a top-down lens, meaning that the

*E-mail: dl635@cam.ac.uk

exhibition's power structure emanates from ruangrupa's invisible hand and trickles down to each of the artists. They have focused primarily on the exhibition's overarching structure, curatorial framing, the curators' trajectory, and their collective methodology, alongside the dialogues of international mega-exhibitions. This approach to criticism is the same as for all previous documentas, those with a more centralised exhibition with a stronger, individual curatorial voice.⁶ What has remained largely unnoticed is the polyphony of bottom-up or inverted hierarchical practices that manifested themselves in a variety of works and projects within d15. These included spur-of-the-moment karaoke, communal feasting, potlucks, collective publishing, dedicated space for meeting, sharing, and conversation about struggles over land and natural resources, as well as women's and queer communities. Drawing from my own experience as part of the lumbung community,⁷ I argue that it is these bottom-up practices at d15, grown out of real concerns of local communities, rather than a singular, top-down curatorial concept, that enabled d15 to become a site of resistance to 'colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy': ruangrupa's original vision upon their appointment as the Artistic Direction of d15.⁸ In the following parts, I will address three clusters of d15 practices as examples of resistance and conclude that through these practices, the lumbung community have opened ways of developing a new understanding not only of making art but also of living, where different cosmologies and localities, as well as ecocentric values, could co-inhabit an increasingly politically divided and near-apocalyptic world.

Feasts and Festivals

Cooking, eating, drinking, singing, dancing, and coming together were among the most celebrated aspects of d15, as was its 'vibe' and 'festival-like atmosphere'.⁹ During my time in Kassel, it was common to hear lumbung artists say that they had been so busy *nongkrong-ing* (the Indonesian term for hanging out) every day that they had hardly had a chance to see any artworks until the last few days of their stay. For many lumbung artists the conviviality derived from feasts and festivals was a significant experience both professionally and personally.

I propose here that d15's feasts and festivals in Kassel functioned on three levels: as an art project, as an exhibition form, and as a set of alternative social relations. At each level, the prevailing capitalist modes of production and consumption in the art world were challenged in one way or another by subverting conventional artistic production, the exhibitionary complex, and the typically transactional relationships of the art world.

As an Art Project

Food sharing and collective cooking were ubiquitous during the 100 days, with communal kitchens a common feature across d15's sites. One notable example is the Gudkitchen operated by South Jakarta-based collective, Gudskul, situated in the backyard of the Fridericianum, which was *the* most popular hangout spot for the lumbung community across the 100 days. Another prominent site was

WH22, where Nhà Sàn Collective regularly hosted barbecues and other gatherings in their communal garden. Additionally, the kitchen of Jatiwangi art Factory's embassy in the Hübner areal served as an informal gathering space, primarily for lumbung artists and their friends who were exhibiting in that area.

The communal kitchen functioning as an independent art project is perhaps most overt with *PAKGHOR – the social kitchen*, located in an outdoor garden adjacent to the documenta Halle, operated by Dhaka-based Britto Arts Trust. As the project's name suggests, it was a kitchen (*pak ghor* in Bengali) and a living room, where family, friends and colleagues could gather to cook and socialise. The open kitchen was one of a kind in d15, as members of the public were able to sign up online to use the kitchen and share their menus and stories with no selection process. As the project was open to the public, it was incredibly popular with visitors forming lines outside the kitchen. The food was usually gone within half an hour, if not a few minutes. When space was available, some lumbung artists also signed up to activate this kitchen as part of their public programming in Kassel. The Britto Arts Trust team documented meals prepared by members of the public, with the aim of presenting 100 dishes from 100 nationalities.¹⁰

Artworks such as Rirkrit Tiravanija's *Untitled (Pad Thai)* in a New York gallery in 1990 and Lee Mingwei's *The Dining Project* in 1997 pioneered the genre of feast art in recent socially engaged or relational practices. These works mobilised embedded experiences of eating and drinking while activating senses that had previously been considered irrelevant to high art.¹¹ Both Tiravanija's and Lee's projects were imbued with social elements. Tiravanija would invite the audience to participate in cooking activities with him, while Lee would invite strangers to dine with him. Nonetheless, these projects were adapted to a white-cube gallery space, transforming a social event into an ultimately individual artistic endeavour. The artists, rather than the engaged public, were the main performers, cooking and serving. When the artists were not present, the cooking station or the dining installation could well be an independent artwork, even for sale, which is common for institutionalised art production.

In the case of the *PAKGHOR* project, it was the public, rather than the artists, who activated the site of the art: the kitchen. The public did the labour: preparing the food and consuming it; the artists merely facilitated this. The entire labour process was as public as possible, and this labour process was not performative by nature. The *PAKGHOR* project broke the institutional barriers by building a communal kitchen outside the ticketed gallery space, making it free and open to the public. Although conceived as an art project, *PAKGHOR* was not intended to be the final product. It was a social laboratory where ingredients could ferment, both literally and metaphorically. In this way, the project challenged conventional artistic production and notions of authorship, and pushed the social boundaries of feast art as per Tiravanija and Lee further towards a more collaborative approach.

Festivals were also commonplace at d15. Loaded with noises, sights, smells, and tastes, festivals were an expanded form of feasting. Several lumbung artists

employed festivals—eating, drinking, singing, dancing, and celebrating—as core components of their presentation at d15. Examples include the Fondation Festival sur le Niger from Mali, the most prominent cultural festival in Mali and West Africa, with its diverse programme of music, dance, theatre, and visual arts;¹² Jatiwangi art Factory (JaF) from West Java, a community consisting of artists, musicians, managers, villagers and other creative practitioners, whose practices are inspired by their local rural life and the terracotta industry;¹³ and The Ghetto Biennale/Atis Rezistans from Haiti, a cross-cultural arts festival disguised as a biennale that has been held in the neighbourhoods of Port-au-Prince since 2009.¹⁴

For festivals that are sensorial in nature, the question of performativity in relation to art was once again brought to the fore. All three lumbung artists staged impressive performance art programmes in Kassel: Fondation Festival sur le Niger and JaF—both exhibiting at the Hübner areal site—activated the open space of the ground floor gallery of the site. They turned the venue into a space for impromptu dancing, singing, jamming, and playing musical instruments, along with tea ceremonies or clay-making rituals. Additionally, JaF restaged its renowned Ceramic Music Festival *Rampak Genteng* at the Fridericianum during the opening week of d15, culminating in a collective musical performance involving hundreds of participants, mostly local residents of Kassel, recruited through an open call.¹⁵ The Ghetto Biennale was one of the few lumbung artists to receive immediate critical acclaim from the mainstream art media for their installations and performances in St. Kunigundis Church, particularly for their dark, glittering and dreamy *Ghetto Gucci* show.¹⁶

Yet from the lumbung's community perspective, the staging of festivals and performances in Kassel was not meant to conform to the established mode of performance art. Rather it was a way of being, where art and life were innately one instead of a performance. All the three lumbung artists attempted to transplant this festive spirit to Kassel through on-site installations that included lengthy videos and interviews about their lives in their local contexts as well as a flow of spontaneous ceremonies and rituals throughout the 100 days. Once again the festival art at d15 defied the logic of conventional artistic production. The production was not the end product but rather an invitation to imagine what life was like in the various locations of the lumbung artists. Additionally, these spontaneous ceremonies and rituals, often with little notice to visitors, might appear bizarre to seasoned contemporary art practitioners.¹⁷ These performances were ephemeral and not archived by traditional means (recorded, photographed, or reviewed by critics). But arguably it was precisely in this way that these ceremonies and rituals resisted the appropriation and commodification of cultural traditions enabled by contemporary art.

As an Exhibition Form

In the cosmology of *lumbung*, festivals were celebratory occasions to express gratitude for another year's hard work and harvest. In this sense, from the lumbung community's perspective, the entire d15 experience—which built up over two

years of preparation and culminated in the grand gathering in Kassel—was a festival.

Within contemporary art exhibitions, the term *festivalism* has been used to critique international mega-exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale and documenta, suggesting scepticism towards the extravagant nature of biennial culture.¹⁸ By comparison, d15 encompassed more than just the festivalism adopted by lumbung artists as a way to strategically devise spectacle. It instead served as an alternative exhibition by default.

This was further reflected, firstly, by the official incorporation by ruangrupa of ‘harvesters’ who meticulously documented and devised creative responses to online lumbung community meetings over the two years of preparation.¹⁹ Secondly, over three Meydan weekends in July, August, and September 2022 there were free open-air music programmes by independent music bands (figure 1).²⁰ Thirdly, there was a variety of planned and spontaneous gigs and performances, mostly performed by lumbung artists themselves. These artists also cross-collaborated with new genres of cultural expression, for no particular programming purposes other than making itself. An example of this occurred in early July 2022, when the Chocó-based Más Arte Más Acción (MAMA), the Havana-based Instituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (INSTAR), and the Nairobi-based Wajukuu



Figure 1. White Shoes & The Couples Company performing on the Karlsaeue stage, Meydan weekend, 9 July 2022. Photo: the author.

Art Project collectively hosted an Afro Diaspora Jam in a meeting room on the third floor of Hafenstraße 76, where lumbung artists and the curatorial team got together and engaged in improvisational musical performances. Adding to the festival atmosphere in Kassel were the late-night karaoke sessions at Gudkitchen. These events became an interactive multilingual space where internationally known pop songs and local dialects intersected.

There may not be a clear distinction between ‘festival’ and ‘exhibition’ in Indonesia after all. For instance, writer David Morris and curator Grace Samboh have considered a spontaneous and playful music event called BINAL Experimental Arts ‘92 in Yogyakarta to be an alternative biennale.²¹ Back in Indonesia, ruangrupa was even better known for hosting music festivals, notably the annual RRREC Fest, than for their visual arts programmes.²² In the border context of Southeast Asia, there are also precedents for exhibitions more akin to festivals. Chiang Mai Social Installations in the 1990s is one example, which, in the words of its organisers and participants, was more like a festival than an exhibition.²³ A more recent example is the Singapore Biennale 2019, where curator Patrick Flores borrowed the concept of ‘the festival scheme’ from the Philippine artist Raymundo Albano, who in the 1980s envisioned ‘an Asian contemporary exhibition as a festival’—closer to everyday life, as against the ‘museum’ and the ‘modern’.²⁴

Yet we should be aware of the degree of incompatibility between festival and exhibition, especially in the context of the Western exhibitionary complex. What was celebratory for the lumbung community had proven a nightmare for documenta as an institution. The blurring of the boundaries between festival and exhibition at d15 resulted in a proliferation of public events, which to say the least, went beyond documenta’s control.

According to d15 regulations, *before* hosting a public event, lumbung artists had to fill in a form with the requested date, venue, and AV equipment (which came with expensive rental fees to be deducted from lumbung artists’ own budget) to the public events team. Then, on the day of the event, d15 staff would come to the venue with the equipment and supervise the event. However, in the first two weeks of d15, the extraordinary number of public events far exceeded the capacity of the small and overworked d15 public events team and the institution’s equipment pool. A wave of COVID-19 also broke out after the three preview days, and subsequently many lumbung artists and almost the entire d15 public events team fell ill. As a result, a number of public events were cancelled, even those that had been planned well in advance. From that point on, lumbung artists found ways to self-organise more spontaneous events that circumvented the institutional requirements. The official calendar on the d15 website was no longer an accurate guide, and often not updated in time. Information about events circulated mainly among the lumbung community through WhatsApp groups and other informal channels. Lumbung artists such as Gudskul and JaF, who had a greater need for hosting public events, invested in their own equipment without having to rent it from documenta gGmbH. They also offered to lend their equipment *for free* to

other lumbung artists as needed. This sharing of resources among the lumbung community, without the supervisory role of the institution, leads to what I will discuss in the third rubric of feasts and festivals: the alternative social relations.

As Alternative Social Relations

In Southeast Asia, feasts can function as mechanisms of subsistence or redistribution, with ritual and even political-economic significance.²⁵ During the 100 days, many lumbung artists stayed in Kassel for an extended period, though on a limited budget. Communal kitchens such as the Gudkitchen were thus of practical value. By sharing food and cooking together as a means of sustenance and community bonding, feasts functioned as alternative social relations for the lumbung community at d15.

Gudkitchen and other spontaneous feasts provided free food and drink, while festivals provided free entertainment, such as late-night karaoke sessions at Gudkitchen (figure 2) and skateboarding lessons with Baan Noorg Collaborative Arts & Culture on their giant skateboard ramp at documenta Halle. They were free because there was little monetary transaction required for lumbung artist to participate in these events other than an exchange of labour, skills, time, and care. There were also occasions where monetary transactions were made within the lumbung community but for specific purposes, such as fundraising. One example was an all-night party in WH22 in July 2022 where the collective T.I.G.A (Tindakan Gerak Asuh), who were brought to Kassel by Gudskul, sold t-shirts, CDs, and handicrafts to raise money for their airfares back to Malaysia after their travel plans had been disrupted by COVID-19 infections. These scenarios were common for Asian lumbung artists, as the COVID-19 pandemic was ongoing. Many lumbung artists had extended quarantine stays in Kassel and undergone multiple mandatory PCR tests before boarding a flight back to some parts of Asia, which became an unforeseen financial burden. These costs were alleviated by the lumbung community, who provided each another with accommodation as well as medical, social, and emotional support. The social relations that formed *within* the lumbung community became the *de facto* mode of resistance against the *external* realities of capitalism.

These experiences of d15 are congruent with other cosmologies in the wider lumbung community. In the d15 publication *Lumbung Stories*, Mexican writer Yasnaya Elena Aguilar Gil introduced 'festival as a form of *tequio*' (*tequio* is a concept for community work in Mexico) to discuss festivals as a form of anti-capitalist resistance:

collective festivals of the Igra people were fundamental as mechanisms of opposition to capitalism. Each party could be considered as a *tequio* in itself, an enjoyment-oriented *tequio* with little intervention of money or market logic. While festivals within the capitalist system were used to demonstrate the wealth and power of those who organised them, the Igra population used them as a mechanism for distributing wealth for collective enjoyment.

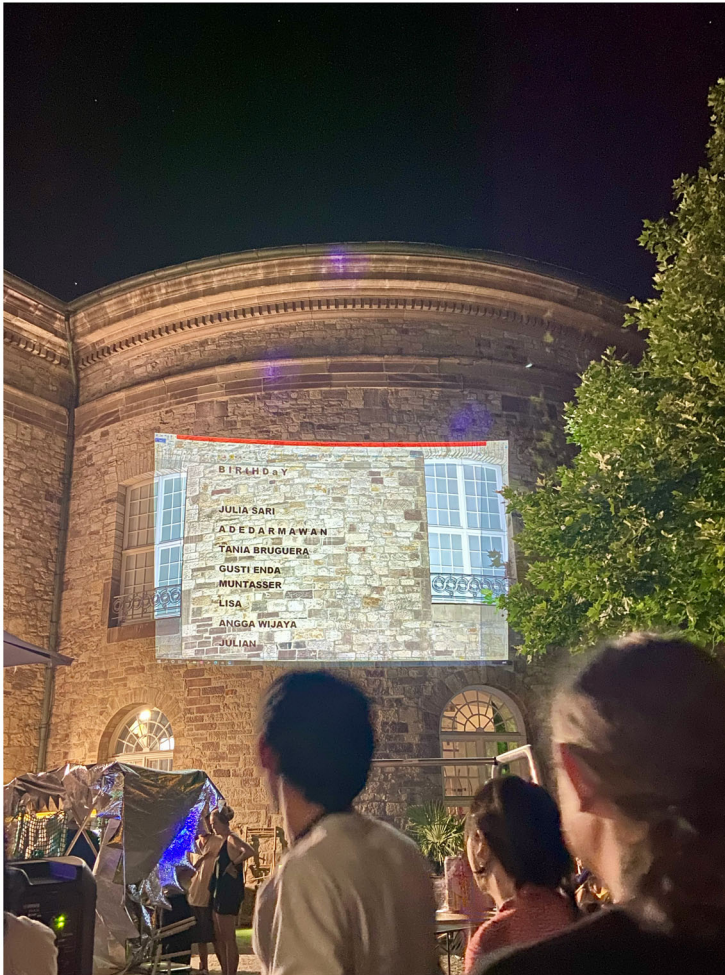


Figure 2. Late-night karaoke celebration of collective birthdays of members of the lumbung community, Gudkitchen, 17 July 2022. Photo: the author.

The farmers that had enjoyed a better harvest, or the fishing communities who had pulled a more bountiful haul, provided the food. Those who were not able to provide food, provide work, creativity, music or dance. Each contribution was celebrated equally.²⁶

Here Aguilar Gil explicates how festivals have functioned for the indigenous communities of the Igra people, which is consistent with how festivals functioned at d15. In both instances they signal a shift away from a commodity-based,

capitalist mode of production and consumption. Instead, they serve the purpose of redistribution and collective enjoyment within the community.

As I am writing from the perspective of the lumbung community, it is also necessary for me to acknowledge the limitations of what I am putting forward. The most significant limitation is the boundary of the lumbung community, between the community and the public, and between the community and documenta gGmbH. As mentioned above, many of these activities and social events took place primarily within the lumbung community. This constituted a certain level of exclusivity to d15 visitors who were outside of said community. The notion of exclusivity was never intentional though. If a visitor happened to stumble into the Gudkitchen or a lumbung community gathering, they would be welcomed.

The boundary between the lumbung community and documenta gGmbH was more self-evident. Despite the institution's provision for funding and platforming, it never coalesced with the lumbung community. From the lumbung community's perspective, d15 is an experiment in alternate economies, characterised by the availability of free resources, festivity, collaboration, mutual aid, and so on, thus becoming a site for resisting capitalistic production and consumption. From the perspective of documenta gGmbH, the festival-like experience of d15 was akin to the 'experience economy' or spectacle associated with mega-exhibitions, allowing documenta gGmbH to report 738,000 attendees, exceeding expectations by the end of 100 days, albeit slightly lower than the previous edition's 891,500.²⁷ These differing perspectives inevitably undermined the efforts of the lumbung community to resist the contemporary art economy or capitalist mode of production and consumption.

Land and Extractivism

Beyond the festivity and into real-life struggles, the issue of extractivism—namely, land grabbing since the colonial period—was another popular subject at d15, as land is at the intersection of indigenous cosmologies, agrarian cultures, and industrial development.

A common feature of lumbung practices around this theme is that lumbung artists focus on land issues through the lens of everyday experience and community engagement, casting a wider net for more constructive, localised research and strategies, rather than relying solely on discourses produced and circulated primarily in the Western-centric art world. Furthermore, as many lumbung artists stayed in Kassel for the 100 days, they were able to get to know each other, learn from each other, and build international networks. This aided interaction and mobilised resources that fed back into local contexts. In the following sections, I highlight three lumbung artists from Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Tunisia, respectively.²⁸

Jatiwangi art Factory and Neo-colonial Extractivism

The first example is Jatiwangi art Factory (JaF) from Indonesia, one of the most active lumbung artists in Kassel. Unlike ruangrupa, who are based in the urban

sprawl of Jakarta, JaF is anchored in the rural area of Majalengka in West Java. Their main concern is the rapid urbanisation of their surrounding area driven by the Indonesian government's ambitious development agenda, coupled with investment from multinational corporations, a characteristic of neo-colonial extractivism. This urbanisation process has led to land appropriation, causing the depletion of rural communities and forest landscapes. Over the past decade, Jatiwangi has integrated into a strategic industrial area known as the Segitiga Rebana, with at least three major infrastructure developments: Kertajati International Airport, Patimban Port, and Cirebon Harbor.²⁹

In response to this development, JaF launched a series of initiatives at d15 under the theme New Rural Agenda, a counterproposal to the United Nations' New Urban Agenda (2016), which positions cities as the future of all societies. During d15's opening week, JaF hosted a *New Rural Agenda Summit* in the Fridskul Common Library in the Fridericianum. It was one of the largest inter-local gatherings at d15, which brought together policymakers, local Kassel institutions, lumbung artists, village representatives and 'other-than-human inhabitants of the Earth'.³⁰ The summit itself was a parody of elite international conferences such as the G20 Summit, which the Indonesian government hosted in Bali in 2022. Like a festival, the summit featured various rituals and performances by lumbung artists from Palestine, Central Asia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Spain, and Indonesia. Among them was Agus Nur Amai (aka PM Toh), who told the following story in a chanting performance:

On the mountain in Sulawesi, Indonesia
There is a lake on top of the mountain
From the mountain, there is a river from the lake
Thousands of kilometres to the seashore
And it is a river, down down down down
On the river, there is what we call the catfish
This is the catfish, dang dang dang dang
In the early morning, when the sun comes up from the mountain
And the fish jump up and say hello, and say good morning
Very happy together, the fish swim in the lake of Poso
After singing together, dancing together, wedding together
The fish are preparing to lay eggs on the seashore

The lake is 70 kilometres from the top of the mountain to the sea
The catfish jump out of the lake
Sometimes resting in the village for a little while
And then continue again
After seven days the fish arrive at the shore of Lake Poso
After the fish give birth to their children to everyone in the village

They swim away and never come back ever again
The catfish are getting to their age and going to die

Now we are telling the story of the catfish
Who are ready to go back to the lake on the mountain
But now there are a lot of problems
Because now besides the river, there is a factory
From Germany I think, one of them
A lot of chemicals inside the land
A lot of companies from China, Korea, Germany, not just Indonesia
It made it difficult for the little fish to go to the lake
Now they have met three dams on the river³¹

The story of the catfish is both a living example and a metaphor for how industrial development has drastically changed the lives of local people in Indonesia and elsewhere. After PM Toh's performance, several other lumbung artists came on stage to share their stories, some related to the forest, others related to colonial traumas. Approaching the end of the four-hour summit, all participants gathered outside the entrance of the Fridericianum to read a *Charter of Martabat Penghuni Bumi* (the Earth Inhabitants' Treaty of Dignities) in their own languages (figure 3). The summit concluded with a collective performance of JaF's



Figure 3. Closing session of *New Rural Agenda Summit*, hosted by Jatiwangi art Factory, 21 June 2022. Photo courtesy of Jatiwangi art Factory.

famous Ceramic Music Festival *Rampak Genteng*, joined by a hundred of volunteers recruited in Kassel through an open call.

Using the form of a festival to redefine a summit, JaF turned the *New Rural Agenda Summit* into a space for coordinating trans-local solidarity on issues of land, rural life, and development, which are of concern to many lumbung artists. The summit critiqued the developmental policies of industrialisation and urbanisation, drawing attention to the importance and urgency of creating a more ecologically sustainable rural future.

At a more practical level, JaF launched the PERHUTANA (Perusahaan Hutan Tanaraya) project at d15, which is a land-lot sale scheme that aims to reclaim eight hectares of land in the Majalengka region. The objective was to grow a forest that will be officially registered as an indigenous forest by the Ministry of Forest in Indonesia, thereby preventing the sale of land and forests to multinational corporations.³² Buyers could purchase land with a minimum area of four-by-four meters and receive a soil brick certificate. At d15, JaF set up a marketing office for PERHUTANA at Hübner areal, which successfully attracted dozens of buyers, including the city of Kassel, which purchased 25 lots of land.³³ As an ongoing project, JaF initiated a forest design competition for PERHUTANA and created an online gallery featuring some of the buyers who have become members of the 'PERHUTANA family'.³⁴ This project and its marketing office continue to travel with JaF to other exhibitions they have been invited to join following d15.³⁵

Both the *New Rural Agenda Summit* and the PERHUTANA projects reflect JaF's policy oriented approach and great skills in networking and mobilising international resources. JaF itself has strong links with the local government, or in their own words, 'the local government is part of the ecosystem', so the PERHUTANA project was able to directly address issues of land use and land ownership.³⁶ JaF also had great connections with local private entities. For example, at d15, JaF was able to set up an *apamart* (a pop-up market) to sell local products such as coffee, tea, and second-hand goods in the Hübner areal by bringing start-ups from Jatiwangi to Kassel through the sponsorship of a local bank (Bank BJB). Nevertheless, even with JaF's mobilisation and organisation skills, they still felt that it was always a challenge to translate what they were doing in Jatiwangi to other places.³⁷ This would be the challenge faced by almost all lumbung artists who work primarily in a local context, which inevitably affects the capacity of the lumbung community to utilise d15 as a site of resistance.

Centre d'art Waza and the Pre-colonial Imagination

The second example is Centre d'art Waza, an art centre based in Lubumbashi, the second largest city in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where there has been a long history of civil war and conflicts caused by natural resources.³⁸ Similar to JaF, Centre d'art Waza is concerned with the developmentalist agendas of the government, in particular the ever-growing mining industry, as well as the colonial history of extractivism in this region. However, compared to JaF's policy-oriented approach, Centre d'art Waza (*Waza* in Swahili means 'thinking' or 'imagination')



Figure 4. Centre d'art Waza, documenta 15, June 2022. Photo: the author.

places greater emphasis on social research with local communities, as well as building alternative social imaginaries that incorporate local cosmologies and a more equal principle of living and working together.³⁹ While JaF works towards a post-industrial social condition (following the decline of the local terracotta industry), the Centre d'art Waza seeks to record and restore local crafts and traditional industries, in particular the copper smelting skills that were well developed before the arrival of the Belgian colonisers.

At the Fridericianum, Centre d'art Waza presented several of their initiatives to address these concerns (figure 4). These included archival research on Lubumbashi's working classes during a period of ethnic conflicts; a video essay discussing local communities' traditional ecological knowledge and the green colonialism imposed by the global north,⁴⁰ made in collaboration with the community of a village located between a natural reserve and a hydroelectric dam project; and films made with artisanal copper smelters from Walemba in the Copper Belt.⁴¹

As a meeting place for artists and cultural workers, Centre d'art Waza applies the principle of non-extractivism to their programmes. For example, they started a project called Kirata, or 'a friend who accompanies an artist in carrying out his work without wanting to give him lessons', to encourage more localised research and collaboration with the local community.⁴² Centre d'art Waza is also part of Arts Collaboratory and Another Roadmap Africa Cluster (ARAC), two other

lumbung artists.⁴³ The overlapping members between lumbung collectives was not unusual and made it even easier to collaborate, share knowledge, co-host events within the lumbung community on issues of common concerns such as land and extractivism, and continue the conversation beyond the d15 framework. Therefore, the lumbung community valued d15 as a site of resistance not only for the presentation of static exhibition materials, but also for the opportunity to network in Kassel, build solidarity, and make things happen in a larger-than-local or inter-local context.

Siwa plateforme - L'Economat at Redeyef in the Aftermath of Colonialism

If the works of JaF and Centre d'art Waza manifested hope and optimism in reclaiming local resources and mobilising international support for the benefit of the local community, the third example, Siwa plateforme - L'Economat at Redeyef, exhibited a more apocalyptic, gloomy landscape. As 'a nomadic program for exchange between artists and thinkers from Tunis, Tunisia, Baghdad, Iraq, and Paris', Siwa plateforme was not 'local', but instead came to the mountainous region of Redeyef in Tunisia, which is home to one of the largest phosphate basins in the world.⁴⁴ The once prosperous mining town of Redeyef is now one of Tunisia's most marginalised, with a population of mainly miners and unemployed young people, including university graduates.



Figure 5. Poem by Redeyef miners, presented by Siwa plateforme - L'Economat at Redeyef, Fridericianum, June 2022. Photo: the author.

On the wall of Siwa plateforme's space at the Fridericianum there was a poem written by Redeyef miners, providing a catastrophic picture of the 'slow violence' caused by mining and the resulting environmental suffering that haunted local people (figure 5):

Tomorrow this valley be dry
This valley fat with phosphate
And the old men will emigrate
Tomorrow the sirens will fall silent
The trains slow down
The factory will drift into sleep
And everyone, to emigrate, will tie their laces
We will wander the valleys
In search of a grain of wheat
A seed
An ear
A loaf of bread
And fear will live in every house
Every street
Every mind
You will wander the valleys
In search of a grain of wheat
In search of a vine bearing a single bunch of fruit
The vine that had been so generous
To you with its gifts oh sleepless night
And so mocked on the dark nights
Fear is a death
And death has no limits
You run under the sun's fire
But
The gates will open
And the wind will come before the flood
The rain will fall
And the rivers will swell
And walls will be built on this earth
I swear that our land is good
Bring your heart to this LAND⁴⁵

This poem, handwritten in both English and Arabic, enveloped a corner space of the gallery for reading and reflection, like a silent statement. In addition to this poem, Siwa plateforme exhibited a variety of artworks, including photographs, sketches, manuscripts, and videos of traditional songs, some by artists, some by

local people, which portrayed a deserted landscape and contemporary youth life in the aftermath of colonial and capitalist extractivism. What remains for the local people, when the extractive industry declines and local resources are depleted? Sober and unromanticised, these artworks collectively expressed a lament for the irrevocability of the damage done to the local ecology and social fabric, as if providing a cautionary tale for other places still undergoing similar processes of development.

I heard more than one friend praise the artistic quality and poetic sensibility of Siwa plateforme's presentation at the Fridericianum, and yet I did not come across any of their members in person in Kassel. Based on their limited online profile, Siwa plateforme does not seem to be projecting resources towards an ambitious future or attempting to restore a pre-industrial, pre-colonial social imagination; while their artworks at d15 reveal the traumas in relation to land and extractivism, their social impact seems to be focused on empowering local people, providing new opportunities for them to meet and create through art, as well as transforming the neighbourhood.⁴⁶ In this sense, Siwa plateforme's social impact is more similar to lumbung artists such as Uganda's Wakaliwood and Kenya's Wajukuu Art Project, both of which are located in urban slums and attempt to keep young people away from street crime or other vices through art, be it filmmaking, drawing, painting, music, or performance art.⁴⁷

So far, three different strategies of artistic intervention in resistance to colonialism and extractivism have been discussed: through policy-oriented mobilisation and fundraising projects, through restoring local imaginations of pre-colonial, non-extractive life, and through empowering local people with artistic expression. All of these have grown out of particular historical, social, and political conditions. Despite the similarities in these conditions, land-related extractivism is ultimately a *local* issue. Thus, the localised research and strategies are the greatest strengths of these lumbung practices, while at the same time posing the greatest challenges, especially in translating and articulating the necessity or efficacy of these projects to audiences outside their immediate communities. Even so, the lumbung artists still managed to enact their localised approach at d15 in order to engage international audiences, gain wider support, and share within the lumbung community, thus activating d15 as a site not only of resistance but also of solidarity.

Women, Queer and Patriarchy

Unlike many other exhibitions that highlight women's issues and LGBTQ+ topics, the presence of women and queer practitioners at d15 largely escaped media and critical attention. Rather than bringing the identities of women or queer groups to the forefront, women and queer practitioners at d15 were more concerned with ideas, sensibilities, and movements that come from their unique positions both in the *lumbung* cosmology and in reality. In this part, I will revisit the concept of *lumbung* through a non-Western feminist interpretation, drawing on writings from the lumbung community and some of the more aestheticised lumbung projects at d15,

and suggest how a queer approach might help the *lumbung* community resist patriarchy.⁴⁸

Lumbung as a Feminist Concept

Since *lumbung* was announced as the curatorial concept of d15, there have been numerous discussions about its meaning and application. While there is no uniform understanding, Indonesian writer Renal Rinoza offered a feminist reading of *lumbung* in a Gudskul publication. According to Rinoza,

We often associate the *lumbung* with the domestic sphere and the female realm, as it is inextricably related to ideas of reproduction and fertility. However, Waterson warns us against falling into the trap of gender ideas that originate from the West, which perceives the domestic realm as a form of female subordination. The *lumbung* domestic realm is not a manifestation of the separation between the domestic and public spaces; rather, it is more about a profound symbolic bond between women and rice grain. The bond reflects the important economic and production roles that women play. (This differs from the capitalistic division of gendered spaces that situates the female domestic sphere on the lower rank within the public space hierarchy and even identifies it as a powerless space.) The *lumbung*'s domestic sphere contains a close relationship between agricultural fertility and women, between women's nurturing capacity as a source of life and agriculture as a source of food.⁴⁹

This paragraph has multiple layers of meanings to unpack. Firstly, it recognises that in Indonesia the *lumbung* cosmology is often associated with the domestic sphere, 'the female realm', and ideas of fertility. Secondly, it emphasises the distinction between the *lumbung* domestic realm and the Western domestic realm: the former is part of the public sphere, where women symbolically connect domestic fertility with agricultural fertility, whereas the latter is considered subordinated and inferior to the public space. Thirdly, it implies that in both the *lumbung* domestic realm and the Western domestic realm, women are the primary actors. This interpretation of *lumbung*, which I would call a non-Western feminist approach, anticipated some of the women-centred practices at d15.

Further illustrations highlighting the significant roles of women in the *lumbung* cosmology in contemporary Indonesia can be found in the d15 publication *Majalah Lumbung: A Magazine on Harvesting and Sharing*. This magazine includes three case studies. The first examines the *Inya* of the Kodi community in Southwest Sumba, who are the women that manage all the planting activities until the rice is ready to be stored in the *lumbung*.⁵⁰ The second focusses on the Mosintuwu Women's School in Poso, Central Sulawesi, which focuses on resolving religious conflicts in order to revive an equal *lumbung* community.⁵¹ The third study is a woman participant's personal account of the process of harvesting rice in the fields, as well as the preparation of the *banten* (offerings) for the *mantenin* ceremony (the ceremony of lifting rice in the *lumbung*) in Bali.⁵² These case studies confirmed the pivotal



Figure 6. Graziela Kunsch, *Public Daycare*, 2022, documenta 15. Photo: the author.

role of women in rice harvesting rituals, or the *lumbung* cosmology, across various parts of Indonesia, which continues to this day.

How did *lumbung* practices at d15 exemplify the significance of women and fertility in accordance with the feminist aspect of the *lumbung* cosmology? The best example would be the RURUKIDS project, initiated by ruangrupa themselves, which occupied half of the ground floor of Fridericianum (the other half was occupied by Gudskul). RURUKIDS was a multifunctional open-door space for babies and children as well as those young at heart. It encompassed a playing area, a library, a screening space, and a communal workspace, as well as Brazilian artist Graziela Kunsch's installation *Public Daycare* (2022) (figure 6).⁵³ By placing a childcare centre in the most prime location of a documenta exhibition, the spatial arrangement of d15 affirmed the *lumbung* cosmology of placing the domestic realm and ideas of reproduction and fertility in a prominent rather than subordinate position.

The presence of RURUKIDS was important to the *lumbung* community, as many curatorial team members and *lumbung* artists brought their young families with them to Kassel. Toddlers to teenagers mingled and made use of RURUKIDS. Several *lumbung* artists adapted their public programmes and skill sets to accommodate younger audiences, thus contributing to RURUKIDS. Since 2021, the *lumbung* journey had been family-friendly oriented. Family members were

encouraged to join online *majelis* (meetings). So the parents did not have to segregate themselves from family in order to work in the so-called public sphere and their family members were integrated into this d15 experience. RURUKIDS was also very popular with families from the public during the 100 days, leading the city of Kassel to acquire Kunsch's artwork for its municipal and state collection.⁵⁴

Additionally, the projects located below and above RURUKIDS in the Fridericianum were connected to the female realm, including Uzbek artist Saodat Ismailova's *chilltan* project, Polish-Romani artist Małgorzata Mirga-Tas' *Out of Egypt* tapestry series, and the Archives des luttes des femmes en Algérie (the Archives of Women's Struggles in Algeria).

Down in the basement of the Fridericianum was the mystic and mesmerising *chilltan* project, a series of films, installations, and performances unfolding across six interconnected rooms, created by Saodat Ismailova in collaboration with DAVRA, a Central Asian research group of predominately female practitioners. At the core of Central Asian spirituality, *chilltan* are forty gender-fluid, shape-shifting entities that take the form of 'young or elderly women, animals, such as snakes, birds, or tigers, animate or inanimate parts of nature, and even natural phenomena like wind or clouds'.⁵⁵ Thus, the number 40 and women-centred narratives are key to Ismailova's works. The women-centred storytelling and femininity prevailed not just in the exhibition, but throughout the 41-day series of public programmes that Ismailova and DAVRA created in Kassel. For example, on day 14, artist Intizor Otaniyozova performed a ceremony of pouring drops of tea from 40 cups into one and subsequently drank it. This referred to the local tradition of teaching girls how to serve tea from a young age in order to prepare them to become wives.⁵⁶ On day 19, artist Nazira Karimi and DAVRA members performed *Maidabofi*, a process of braiding a woman's hair into 40 braids, and by braiding each other's hair, they showed the sharing and caring of a female community.⁵⁷

On the light and airy first-floor mezzanine of the Fridericianum hung the beautifully embroidered tapestry works *Out of Egypt* (2021) by Małgorzata Mirga-Tas. It features an epic-like visual narrative about the nomadic life of the Romani people in the seventeenth century, celebrating mostly female figures with hunting, cooking, and child-bearing responsibilities. The works were part of the group exhibition *One Day We Shall Celebrate Again* of RomaMoMA (Roma Museum of Contemporary Art) curated by the lumbung artist OFF-Biennale Budapest, whose curatorial leadership team were almost all women.

One floor up in the 'archives' section of the Fridericianum was the Archives des luttes des femmes en Algérie, an open-access digital archive of stories that have been marginalised in Algeria's official history (figure 7). The exhibit included documents, manuscripts, and slide projections on demonstrations organised by women in Algeria from 1988 to 1993, fighting for democratisation of the public life, the right to vote, and equal work rights. It also showed a video interview with scholar Feriel Lalami discussing the struggle of Algerian women for gender equality as early as 1981 in opposition to the family code, which privileged men over women in 'marriage, parenthood, divorce, and inheritance'.⁵⁸



Figure 7. Archives des luttes des femmes en Algérie, documenta 15, June 2022. Photo: the author.

Delicate and yet resilient, the women-centred narratives and sensibilities positioned in folklore, nomadic life, and political movement respectively, echoed the significance of the female realm as well as the *lumbung* cosmology's blurred domestic-public boundary. Seeing and experiencing these projects at the Fridericianum in the summer of 2022, I was very moved by the thought that I was reading 'herstory', not just 'history'.

On reflection, however, such a female-centric approach to making and exhibiting art is not without its problems. By delegating a specific female realm and associating females primarily with fertility, marriage, family, or child-bearing responsibilities, these projects risk essentialising women's roles as mothers, caregivers, or symbols of fertility, while at the same time excluding men, even if this was not originally intended by *lumbung* artists themselves.

There is at least one *lumbung* artist that could have taken a position to convey a different image of women's liberation: *Komina Film a Rojava* (The Rojava Film Commune), who are based in the autonomous region of Rojava in northern Syria, an area well known for women guerrilla fighters and self-governed, direct-democratic, all-women villages.⁵⁹ Instead of featuring the women's revolutionary movement in this region or women filmmakers from this collective,⁶⁰ *Komina Film a Rojava's* presentation at the Fridericianum showed *Lonely Trees* (2017), a

documentary about the Kurdish folk music genre *Dengbêj*.⁶¹ Despite the stunning scenery, music, and songs of this documentary, stereotypical gender roles can still be observed: men predominantly take on the roles of singing and narrating, while women are mostly shown engaging in household chores; women sing as well, but primarily for weddings, brides, and children. It reveals the tension that exists between Kurdish women's revolutionary efforts in real life and a patriarchal family structure that is still normalised in visual representations.

Such are the limitations of the feminist *lumbung* cosmology. On one hand, the supposedly elevated status of the domestic sphere, fertility, and family values does not necessarily challenge the patriarchal family structure, as the cosmology, originating from agricultural society, precludes the possibility of women not fulfilling the reproductive roles ascribed to them by 'nature'. On the other hand, the non-exclusion of women from participation in public life does not challenge the domestic family structure, either. Women are still subject to the same 'cosmological' patriarchal social norms in the domestic sphere once they go home, as evident in the cases of Rojava and Algeria.

Moreover, the prominent presence of the domestic sphere in the *lumbung* cosmology and the aforementioned d15 projects overshadows the question of the legitimacy of the heteronormative family structure itself. This does not mean the *lumbung* community supported heteronormativity, as several d15 curatorial team members and *lumbung* artists themselves are queer or have diverse families. Rather, this is to point out that the heteronormative family structure still permeates all of these feminist discussions, and this is where a queer perspective might be helpful.

A Queer Perspective

The fact that the *lumbung* cosmology might embody non-dualistic and non-binary gender concepts remains underexplored. According to Roxana Waterson, the anthropologist cited by Rinoza, Southeast Asian world views differ from Western perspectives that are premised on the division between male and female (as well as between public and domestic spheres); in some parts of Indonesia, there was little attention paid to distinguishing the genders, while in other parts of Indonesia where such a distinction existed, the emphasis was not on 'separation and opposition', but on the 'complementarity' and 'fusion' of male and female.⁶² Following this perspective, a new reading of the *lumbung* cosmology might be possible. Instead of focusing on the female realm or the fertility of women, we can turn to the similarities as well as the collaboration between men and women that are *equally* indispensable for fertility, household, ritual making, and community building.

Further research suggests the existence of gender-transgressive practices with gender-ambiguous roles in rituals in Indonesia and Southeast Asia since the early modern period.⁶³ In a similar vein, in some of the *lumbung* practices, the concept of gender is not without fluidity. Ismailova's *chiltan* project, for instance, explicitly emphasises the gender fluidity of these shapeshifting figures of Central Asian mythology, although this element was not immediately apparent in the actual works. This is due to the overwhelming visual presentation of female imagery and



Figure 8. Fehras Publishing Practices, *Borrowed Faces No.2*, 2022, documenta 15, June 2022. Photo: the author.

the feminine ambience in her works, as well as the strong presence of female collaborators, which make a queer reading of her works muted, if not impossible. However, this also suggests that a queer perspective does not limit itself to practices advocated by self-identified queer groups only, but rather it opens a multiplicity of queerness in understanding practices, especially those hailing from non-Western cosmologies.

Feminist discussions can be queered, too. One such example is Fehras Publishing Practices, a Berlin-based artist collective founded in 2015 by Sami Rustom, Omar Nicolas, and Kenan Darwich, who creatively researched Middle Eastern and North African publishing practices using feminist and queer perspectives. In their photo-novel series *Borrowed Faces* (2019–ongoing), the collective cross-dressed as three female protagonists—a Syrian-American researcher with a PhD from Princeton University, an Iraqi translator working for a Soviet Union magazine in Beirut, and a Haifa-born bookshop owner—who visited archives, publishing houses, and international conferences in Beirut, Cairo, Bandung, Rome, Paris, New York, and Moscow.⁶⁴ The second instalment of this series, a photography installation at d15 at Hafenstrasse 76 in Kassel (figure 8), interweaved histories of the CIA-supported Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Afro-Asia Solidarity Movement, both active during the Cold War from the 1950s to the 1960s. Although there were some stereotypical elements in the protagonists'

female friendships, such as discussing their bodies, sharing secrets, and shopping together, they were primarily engaged in intellectual discussions and professional activities. Above all, they most strongly opposed the cultural coercion of the United States or the Soviet Union, represented by middle-aged, poker-faced, white men in suits—a classic image of ‘the patriarchy of international relations’.

With these feminist discussions on *lumbung*, it is important to note that it was a queer project at d15 that featured modern, intellectual Arab women (and Afro-Asian women in general) as cultural elites and *not* fulfilling traditional gender roles in the domestic sphere, whereas critique of this project, if any, is also self-evident. As it was three queer figures who cross-dressed as women, they had to (over)emphasise feminine elements, including dress, jewellery, make-up, posture, and so on, in order to look like women, which arguably accentuated stereotypical female appearances rather than liberating female or queer identities. Nevertheless, there is no single ‘perfect’ practice for addressing women’s, feminist, or queer issues that can avoid all the pitfalls. The variety of *lumbung* practices discussed in this section demonstrates precisely the complexity of engaging with female and queer sensibilities and the ongoing struggles to resist Western or cosmological patriarchies.

Conclusion

This essay has addressed three clusters of *lumbung* practices exhibited at d15, namely feasts and festivals, projects revolving around land and extractivism, and women-oriented and queer practices. Each cluster of practices has illustrated a variety of approaches and strategies to address their concerns, through sensorial and social gatherings, community building, self-organising, mutual care, networking, fundraising, social imagining, knowledge sharing, parenting, storytelling, archiving, and queering, thus enabling d15 to become a site of resistance, or a multitude of resistances to capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. Although these resistances align with the initial vision that *ruangrupa* initiated upon their appointment as the Artistic Direction of d15, they were not strictly curated, coordinated, or orchestrated. They organically manifested themselves within the *lumbung* community, through the *lumbung* process, and with a deep understanding of specific local contexts. Despite the facilitation of *ruangrupa* and *documenta gGmbH*, it was the *lumbung* community who came to Kassel, bringing with them cosmologies, knowledge, experiences, networks, sensibilities, and multiple temporalities and spatialities, that activated d15 as such a site of resistance.

From the perspective of the *lumbung* community, however, such resistances are not without challenges or limitations. For practices of feasts and festivals, the boundary between the *lumbung* community and the institutional framework of d15 may still render the anti-capitalist efforts of the *lumbung* community in the form of art, exhibition, or social relations, as mere spectacles desired by mega-exhibition institutions. For projects related to land and extractivism, there was still a gap between exhibition-making and mobilising resources in Kassel and carrying out community-based research and strategies at a local level; while Kassel was the place where networks were developed, knowledge was exchanged, and strategies

were articulated, the real struggles and resistances must take place in the respective local contexts. For a feminist and queer reading of *lumbung* cosmology and practices, there are still conceptual and practical conundrums; persistent issues such as fertility, the domestic realm, and caring responsibilities in the patriarchal structure cannot be easily negotiated by reverting to an idealised *lumbung* cosmology.

Despite these challenges and limitations, it is crucial to recognise that there is no single, universal formula for the practices of the *lumbung* community (although many of them appear to be collectives), just as there is no uniform understanding of the *lumbung* cosmology. The practices and projects discussed in this essay represent only a fraction of the practices and projects presented at d15 and are by no means exhaustive. It is hoped that the bottom-up approach showcased in this essay will open a more nuanced understanding of the myriad of *lumbung* practices, more critical discussions on the legacy of d15, and more imaginations for alternative modes of art, exhibitions, and social relations.

As the *lumbung* community moves forward with their concerns and strategies, their resistances do not end with the documenta exhibition, but will continue. The conversations will continue, the struggles will continue, and the *lumbung* journey will continue to unfold into the future.

Notes

1. In this essay, the word *lumbung* will be set in italics when it refers to the concept in the Indonesian context, and set in roman when it appears in terms related to documenta 15, such as 'lumbung community'.

2. See the editor's introduction to the concept of *lumbung* in Armin Hari, ed., *Majalah Lumbung: A Magazine on Harvesting and Sharing* (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2022), 8.

3. 'Lumbung', *documenta fifteen*, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung/> (accessed 10 June 2024).

4. Discussions circulating the exhibition were encapsulated by the question 'where is the art?' For example, see discussions in Putra Hidayatullah, 'Where is the Art? Different Notions of Art in documenta fifteen', *Artlink* 43, no. 1 (2023): 30–35.

5. For discussions on rhizomatic curation, see Karen van den Berg, 'Fragile Infrastructures for an Art of Conviviality: Learning from documenta fifteen', *FIELD* 25 (2023), <https://field-journal.com/issue-25/fragile-infrastructures-for-an-art-of-conviviality-learning-from-documenta-fifteen>.

6. For the latest dose of top-down discussions on d15 by leading art historians and curators, see *Grey Room*, 92 (2023); for discussions on d15 in relation to d11 curated by Okwui Enwezor, see Sunil Shah, 'The Rise (and Fall?) of the Postcolonial Documenta', *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 54 (2023): 134–145.

7. The *lumbung* community is divided into several layers: the 'lumbung inter-lokal' consisting of fourteen 'lumbung members', the 'Kassel ekosistem' that is mainly associated with ruruHaus in Kassel, the 'lumbung Indonesia' that was established by twelve collectives in Jakarta, various *lumbung* working groups (*lumbung.space*, *lumbung kios*, *lumbung Radio*, *lumbung Press*, *lumbung of Publishers*, *lumbung Gallery*, *lumbung Land*, *lumbung Film*, *lumbung Currency*), as well as fifty-three 'lumbung artists' and their invited participants. In this essay, I refer to the *lumbung* community as encompassing all of these groups and use the term *lumbung artist* in the more generic sense to refer to all of the artists exhibiting at d15. For more information, see 'lumbung', *documenta fifteen*, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung/>.

8. At the time of their appointment as the Artistic Direction of d15 in February 2019, *ruangrupa* explained their curatorial concept as such: 'If *documenta* was launched in 1955 to heal war wounds, why shouldn't we focus *documenta fifteen* on today's injuries, especially ones rooted in colonialism, capitalism, or patriarchal structures'. See 'ruangrupa selected as Artistic Direction of *documenta fifteen*', *documenta fifteen*, 22 February 2019, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/press-releases/ruangrupa-selected-as-artistic-direction-of-documenta-fifteen/>. For a report of roundtable discussions that reiterated the topics of colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy in d15, see Jack Segbars, 'Reflecting on *documenta fifteen*: On the Threshold of

Half of the 21st Century', trans. Joshua Rackstraw, in *Lumbung Stories*, ed. Harriet C. Brown (London: Cassava Republic, 2022), 109.

27. At the end of the 100 days, documenta issued a press release declaring that d15 'came to a successful close' with '738,000 the number of visitors', exceeding the organisers' expectations despite the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The press release also reported on the success of d15 on digital platforms and social media. For more information, see 'documenta fifteen closes with very good attendance figures', documenta fifteen, 26 September 2022, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/news/documenta-fifteen-closes-with-very-good-attendance-figures/>.

28. Other lumbung projects on land-related issues, but not discussed in this essay, include Marwa Arsanios' *Who Is Afraid of Ideology? Part 4: Reverse Shot* (2022), in which the artist explores the legal possibilities of turning a piece of privately owned land in northern Lebanon into a common land; Richard Bell's project, *Tent Embassy* (2013–ongoing), which deals with land struggles by Aboriginal people in Australia; Cao Minghao and Chen Jianjun's long-term research on the ecological system in Southwest China, as well as their video work *Grass, Sand and Global Environmental Apparatus* (2022) made in collaboration with local farmers; and the lumbung Land working group, formed during the two-year lumbung process but not formally exhibited at d15. For more information on the lumbung Land working group, see 'lumbung Land', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-land/>.

29. For more information on the local context of Jatiwangi, see 'Story of PERHUTANA', <https://perhutana.id/story/>.

30. For further information, see 'CANCELED: New Rural Agenda Summit by Jatiwangi art Factory', documenta fifteen, 21 June 2022, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/calendar/new-rural-agenda-summit/>. The event went ahead in Kassel despite being announced as cancelled on the official d15 website.

31. The lyrics are transcribed from the recording of the summit on YouTube, with minor changes for clarity. See 'Jatiwangi art Factory: New Rural Agenda Summit', documenta fifteen on YouTube, 21 June 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmLQm7mGneQ>.

32. See PERHUTANA, <https://perhutana.id/>.

33. See 'Ankauf von documenta-Kunstwerken', Kassel: documenta Stadt, https://www.kassel.de/buerger/kunst_und_kultur/documenta15/index.php.

34. See PERHUTANA, <https://perhutana.id/>.

35. For example, JaF was invited to participate in the exhibition *Positions #7: Everything worthwhile is done with other people*, which was held at Van Abbemuseum, May–September 2023. At the opening event, JaF set up a temporary marketing office for PERHUTANA and successfully attracted several visitor buyers. For more information on the exhibition, see 'Positions #7: Everything

worthwhile is done with other people', *e-flux Announcements*, 8 May 2023, <https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/535680/positions-7everything-worthwhile-is-done-with-other-people/>.

36. In an interview, JaF members Ismal Muntaha and Al Ghorie explained the New Rural Agenda initiative and their relationship with the local government. See 'Ismal Muntaha and Al Ghorie in Conversation with Sophie Brunner, Marinella Sofia Gkinko, and Maria Mumtaz', *OnCurating* 54 (2022): 210–216, <https://on-curating.org/issue-54-reader/jatiwangi-art-factory-jaf-ismal-muntaha-and-al-ghorie.html>.

37. *Ibid.*

38. 'Centre d'art Waza', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/centre-dart-waza/> (accessed 10 June 2024).

39. For a more detailed introduction to Centre d'art Waza's work, see Christian Nyampeta and Feza Kayungu Ramazani, 'A Home in the World', *e-flux Architecture*, December 2023, <https://www.e-flux.com/architecture/interdependence/581960/a-home-in-the-world/>.

40. The term *green colonialism* is from French scholar Guillaume Blanc's book that inspired this project. See Guillaume Blanc, *The Invention of Green Colonialism* (New York: Polity, 2022).

41. 'Centre d'art Waza', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/centre-dart-waza/>.

42. For more information on Kirata see Denise Mahelo, 'RDC: Artistes et opérateurs culturels en atelier KIRATA', *La Guardia Magazine*, 30 May 2022, <https://magazinelaguardia.info/2022/05/30/rdc-artistes-et-operateurs-culturels-en-atelier-kirata/>; and Denise Mahelo, 'Documenta 15: Centre d'art Waza, ambassadeur du Congo', *La Guardia Magazine*, 15 September 2022, <https://magazinelaguardia.info/2022/09/15/documenta-15-centre-dart-waza-ambassadeur-du-congo/>.

43. Chocó-based Más Arte Más Acción and ruangrupa themselves are also part of Arts Collaboratory.

44. 'Siwa plateforme – L'Economat at Redeyef', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/siwa-plateforme-leconomat-at-redeyef/> (accessed 10 June 2024).

45. The poem was presented in handwriting on the wall of Siwa plateforme's exhibition space at the Fridericianum during the 100 days of d15.

46. See 'L'ECONOMAT DE REDEYEF – LE LIEUX DU POSSIBLE', Goethe Institut in Tunisia, <https://www.goethe.de/ins/tn/de/kul/sup/tup/qua/hum/lmd.html> (accessed 10 June 2024).

47. Wakalihood was one of the most popular lumbung artists at d15, with their ultra-low budget, hilarious mafia movies. Their worldwide success has inspired local young people to learn filmmaking and even kung fu. For a report on Wakalihood's presence at d15, see Hussein Kiganda, 'Wakalihood mesmerizes Germans in "Football Commando" premiere', *The Kampala Sun*, 21 June 2022, <https://www.kampalasan.co.ug/wakalihood-mesmerizes->

- germans-in-football-commando-premiere/. Also see 'Wakaliga Uganda', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/wakaliga-uganda/>. Wajukuu Art Project had a compelling installation at d15 that won the prestigious Arnold Bold prize awarded by the city of Kassel, and yet their founding story was heavy, as some of their members were lost through street crime. Wajukuu now runs art classes in the community, inspiring local young people to become artists. For more information, see 'Wajukuu Art Project', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/wajukuu-art-project/>.
48. Other more 'artist' feminist or queer lumbung artists include Delhi-based Party Office, Buenos Aires-based Serigrafistas queer, and FAFSWAG from indigenous groups in New Zealand.
49. Renal Rinoza, 'Lumbung: Sharing Strength, Sharing Power', in *Articulating Fixer 2021: An Appraisal of Indonesian Art Collectives in the Last Decade*, ed. Ninus Andarnuswari (Jakarta: Yayasan Gudskul Studi Kolektif, 2021), 219.
50. Diana D. Timoria, 'Inya – The Voice from the Field to the House', in *Majalah Lumbung: A Magazine on Harvesting and Sharing*, ed. Armin Hari (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2022), 22–25.
51. Melani Budianta, 'Equal lumbung of Culture: Poso Women's School', in *Majalah Lumbung: A Magazine on Harvesting and Sharing*, ed. Armin Hari (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2022), 64–67.
52. I Made Susanta, 'paderep: The Story of Women Harvesting Rice in Our Rice Fields', in *Majalah Lumbung: A Magazine on Harvesting and Sharing*, ed. Armin Hari (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2022), 94–97.
53. For more information, see 'RURUKIDS', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/rurukids/>.
54. 'Ankauf von documenta-Kunstwerken', Kassel – documenta Stadt, https://www.kassel.de/buerger/kunst_und_kultur/documenta/index.php (accessed 10 June 2024).
55. 'Saodat Ismailova', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/saodat-ismailova/> (accessed 10 June 2024).
56. 'Performance: Precious drops by Saodat Ismailova', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/calendar/performance-precious-drops/> (accessed 10 June 2024).
57. 'Nazira Karimi: Performance by Saodat Ismailova', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/calendar/nazira-karimi-performance/> (accessed 10 June 2024).
58. These struggles are elaborated in the d15 publication of Archives des lutes des femmes en Algérie, see Ferial Lalami, 'The deployment of the feminist movement from 1989 to 1991', *Archives des lutes des femmes en Algérie* (Algiers: Archives des lutes des femmes en Algérie, 2022), 30–34.
59. For studies on women's liberation in Rojava, see Michael Knapp, et al., *Revolution in Rojava: Democratic Autonomy and Women's Liberation in Syrian Kurdistan* (London: Pluto Press, 2016); also see 'Komîna Film a Rojava', documenta fifteen, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung-members-artists/komina-film-a-rojava/>.
60. For example, Sévînaz Evdikê of Komîna Film a Rojava, who is the founder of the Rojava International Film Festival and a member of the Kezî Collective for Women Filmmaker, directed *Berbû* (2022), produced by the Rojava Film Commune, which tells the story of three young Kurdish women facing difficult life decisions about marriage and family.
61. In addition to their Fridericianum space, Komîna Film a Rojava also hosted five days of 'Rovaja Film Festival' in Kassel, as well as joining the Lumbung Film program shown at the Gloria Kino. However, these events were much less visible to d15 visitors.
62. Roxana Waterson, 'Houses and the Built Environment in Island South-East Asia: Tracing Some Shared Themes in the Uses of Space', in *Inside Austronesian Houses: Perspectives on Domestic Designs for Living*, ed. James J. Fox (Canberra: ANU Press, 2006), 231.
63. Evelyn Blackwood, 'Gender Transgression in Colonial and Postcolonial Indonesia', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 4 (2005): 849–79.
64. See Fehras Publishing Practices, *Borrowed Faces* no. 1 (Berlin: Fehras Publishing Practices, 2019).

ORCID

Di Liu  <http://orcid.org/0009-0008-9746-0973>