

dOCUMENTA (13)

The Book of Books

CATALOG 1/3

DOCUMENTA (13)

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dOCUMENTA (13)
is dedicated to
artistic research
and forms of imagination
that explore commitment,
matter, things, embodiment,
and active living
in connection with,
yet not subordinated to, theory.

*These are terrains
where politics
are inseparable
from a sensual,
energetic,
and worldly alliance
between current research
in various scientific
and artistic fields
and other knowledges,
both ancient
and contemporary.*

dOCUMENTA (13)
is driven by a holistic
and non-logocentric vision
that is skeptical
of the persisting belief
in economic growth.
This vision is shared with,
and recognizes,
the shapes and practices of
knowing
of all the animate
and inanimate
makers of the world,
including people.

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev

Kassel

9/6 – 16/9/2012

Kabul

20/6/2012 – 19/7/2012

Alexandria—Kairo

1/7 – 8/7/2012

Banff

2/8 – 15/8/2012

Foreword

documenta has become a synonym for contemporary art and is today's emblem of Kassel, a city of creativity, of the arts, and of outstanding cultural facilities—cosmopolitan, open-minded, welcoming. From June 9 to September 16, its fascination can be experienced for the thirteenth time. We look forward again to an intense dialogue with the participating artists and their works and to exciting encounters with hundreds of thousands of art-interested visitors from all over the world.

Every documenta has its own unique processes of genesis and communication. The work of shaping the project begins years before the exhibition opens. Ideas, suggestions, notes, and talks conducted across the continents come together to create the overall picture that makes this most important exhibition of contemporary art worldwide so unique.

The city will be the stage, scenery, actor, and spectator for dOCUMENTA (13) as never before. For Artistic Director Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev has opened herself strongly to Kassel and engaged intensively with the city's changing history and the ruptures in its identity. This will find expression in numerous works that are being produced directly on-site.

One can look forward to an extremely lively documenta, which, alongside traditional venues such as the Fridericianum, the documenta-Halle, and the Neue Galerie, is making use of more locations than ever with a special emphasis on the Karlsaue. "Worldly Companions"—citizens of Kassel—will act as guides through the exhibition, every bit as open and curious as the visitors. This, too, is an appreciative gesture toward the city and its inhabitants. Our heartfelt thanks go to the documenta team.

Welcome to Kassel. Welcome to the magic of the 100 days.

Bertram Hilgen

Mayor of the City of Kassel

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Acknowledgements

Preface

This book, the first volume of the dOCUMENTA (13) catalog, is the result of a slow process.

It references the participants of dOCUMENTA (13) and contains the 100 notebooks of the *100 Notes – 100 Thoughts* editorial project that have been published in small editions in advance of the exhibition over the past two years.¹ It also includes notebook no. 101, which is about the dOCUMENTA (13) projects in Kabul and Bamiyan—it is the excess that contradicts any closure.

Note-taking encompasses witnessing, drawing, writing, and diagrammatic thinking; it is speculative, manifests a preliminary moment, a passage, and acts as a memory aid. By commissioning essays over two years, we have progressively published texts so that each author might read what was already there before writing a new text, thus creating a cumulative form of writing. This choreography of publications is driven by the logic of the mind-at-work, presenting and drawing scenarios that point outside the normative bounds of academic text production; it is based on the wish to publish the *unpublishable*. The *100 Notes – 100 Thoughts* are an experiment in writing, imagining, and thinking through a chorality of voices from the past and the present, often exploring political emancipation through imagination in a cosmopolitan endeavor to forge possible alliances across the world today.

In dOCUMENTA (13), the physical world plays an important role, as does the precise, experimental, and non-specific knowledge of artistic practice. Through techniques of embodiment, witnessing, and engagement of text, even art history becomes physical, and discourse remains material. In this context, the series of *100 Notes – 100 Thoughts* could be described as a temporary rupture in discursive intelligence; they do not direct us toward reason as such, but toward a different understanding of the role of consciousness, of the mind in a prologue state; a space of mortal, finite, vulnerable life before decisions are taken as to what is to be done, but that informs those decisions, and risks taking them.

dOCUMENTA (13) was made over a period of almost four years thanks to the imagination and the concerted efforts of many—first of all the artists and other invited participants, then, of course, the lenders, patrons, and supporters, and not least the people who were part of the documenta staff (both those with temporary, precarious jobs and those with more permanent relations to the institution), the agents and advisors, the project management and curatorial assistants, the publications and design team, the researchers and the communication department, the technicians and installers, the gardeners of the Karlsaue park, the maybe education department, the people of Kassel who took part in that program, the students in Alexandria and Kabul, the people on retreat in Banff, the children, husbands, wives, partners, and pets—all those who imagined it with me, all those who questioned it, in order to make it real. I wish to thank them all. In particular, I thank Chus, Christine, Bettina, Bernd, Terry, Julia and Magda, Francesco, Rene and Ayreen, Raimundas, Kitty, Marta, Andrea, Pierre, Jakob, Abassin, Ajmal, and Aman, and, of course, Melissa.

C.C.-B.

¹ | All except one, Daniel Heller-Roazen's notebook no. 052, titled *Secrets of al-Jāhiz*.