

Kassel, February 22, 2019

Press Release**ruangrupa Selected as Artistic Direction of documenta 15
For the First Time an Artist Collective Curates the International Art Exhibition**

Nominated unanimously by the International Finding Committee the Supervisory Board appointed ruangrupa, a collective of artists and creatives from Jakarta, Indonesia, with a ten-member core as the artistic direction of documenta 15. This was announced by the general director of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH, Dr. Sabine Schormann, today. As a result, documenta will be organized by an artist collective for the first time. documenta 15 takes place from 18 June to 25 September 2022 in Kassel.

For the eight-member Finding Committee, Elvira Dyangani Ose (director of The Showroom, London) and Philippe Pirotte (director of the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste – Städelschule, and director of Portikus, Frankfurt am Main) gave the following reasons for the unanimous decision: “We have appointed ruangrupa because they have demonstrated the ability to appeal to various communities, including groups that go beyond pure art audiences, and to promote local commitment and participation. Their curatorial approach is based on an international network of local community-based art organizations. We are eager to see how ruangrupa will develop a concrete project for and from Kassel. At a time when innovative strength particularly stems from independent organizations active on the community level, it seems only logical to offer this collective approach a platform with documenta.”

The Indonesian word *ruangrupa* loosely translates as “a space for art” or “a space form.” This field of tension is already apparent from the collective’s central curatorial approach. Farid Rakun and Ade Darmawan, who represented ruangrupa today in Kassel, formulated their decidedly participatory curatorial goals for the international art exhibition in 2022 as follows: “We want to create a globally oriented, cooperative, interdisciplinary art and culture platform that will have an impact beyond the 100 days of documenta 15. Our curatorial approach aims at a different community-oriented model of resource usage – economical, but also taking ideas, knowledge, programs and innovations into account. If documenta was launched in 1955 to heal war wounds, why shouldn’t we focus documenta 15 on today’s injuries, especially ones rooted in colonialism, capitalism, or patriarchal structures, and contrast them with partnership-based models that enable people to have a different view of the world.”

The collective was founded in 2000 in Jakarta, Indonesia. ruangrupa runs an art space in South Jakarta and realizes exhibitions, festivals, publications and radio formats. The collective has participated in many cooperation and exhibition projects, including the Gwangju Biennale (2002 und 2018), the Istanbul Biennale (2005), the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Brisbane, 2012), the Singapore Biennale (2011), the São Paulo Biennale (2014), the Aichi Triennale (Nagoya, 2016) and *Cosmopolis* at Centre Pompidou (Paris, 2017). In 2016, ruangrupa curated TRANSaction: Sonsbeek 2016 in Arnhem, the Netherlands. In 2018, the participants founded GUDSKUL, an educational and networking project for creatives based on cooperative work.

At documenta 14, ruangrupa participated with its internet radio station as a partner of the decentralized radio project *Every Time a Ear di Soun*, which brought together eight worldwide radio stations. ruangrupa is a nonprofit organisation. At least one member of the organisation will spend a lot of time in Kassel for the preparation of documenta 15.

The Chairman of the Supervisory Board of documenta und Museum Fridericianum gGmbH, Lord Mayor Christian Geselle, welcomed the Finding Committee's selection:

"For ruangrupa, the principle of networking is of central importance. From Kassel, interdisciplinary artistic interventions will be initiated, which will make the documenta city visible internationally and bring the (art) world to Kassel, as it were. Our city can only benefit from this. I am pleased that documenta is looking to the future in such an exciting way."

The Hessian Minister of Higher Education, Research and the Arts, Angela Dorn, stresses the potential of social debate: "I am already looking forward to the fact that in three years, with documenta 15, Kassel will again be hosting the world's most important contemporary art exhibition. The state of Hesse is proud to enable this platform, which promotes discussion of cultural positions today as well as perspectives for the future. With the expansion of the documenta archive into an independent research institute we will further strengthen contemporary art in Kassel. I congratulate the Finding Committee, which proposed the Indonesian artist collective for the artistic direction of the next documenta, and am pleased that the Supervisory Board followed this suggestion. With the selection, documenta is consciously giving room to the non-European view of the art world and bringing the world to Hesse in a completely new way. ruangrupa uses art in its home country to address public issues and problems. I'm looking forward to seeing how they incorporate this idea in documenta 15."

Hortensia Völckers, director of the German Federal Cultural Foundation, is eagerly looking forward to seeing how the concept is developed further: "As the German Federal Cultural Foundation, we were very pleased about the successful course of the process to find the artistic direction of documenta 15 and congratulate all participants on a result that makes us expect an interesting and inspiring documenta. We are happy to be part of this process and to be able to contribute our expertise to such a renowned exhibition project."

Sabine Schormann paid tribute to the great commitment of all members of the international Finding Committee: "I would like to thank the international Finding Committee for a dedicated and intensive selection process, which with the presentation of ruangrupa as Artistic Direction sends a strong signal for a vibrant and sustainable documenta 15. I am looking forward to see how the participatory approaches are made more specific in the development process."

The Finding Committee for documenta 15 is composed of the following experts:

Ute Meta Bauer, founding director, NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore; Charles Esche, director of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands; Amar Kanwar, artist and documentary filmmaker, New Delhi, India; Frances Morris, director of Tate Modern in London, Great Britain; Gabi Ngcobo, curator of the 10th Berlin Biennale 2018 in Germany (South Africa); Elvira Dyangani Ose, director of The Showroom London, England; Philippe Pirotte, director of the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste – Städelschule Frankfurt/M., Germany (Belgium); Jochen Volz, director of Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil.