

DOC

SEPTEMBER

25,

2022

DOCUMENTA

JUNE

18

FIFTEEN

Kassel

Press Release

Kassel, May 31, 2022

DOCUMENTA AND MUSEUM FRIDERICIANUM GGMBH ON VANDALISM IN A DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN EXHIBITION VENUE

The exhibition venue of documenta fifteen WH22 at Werner-Hilpert-Straße 22 was broken into during the night of May 27 to May 28, 2022. The unknown perpetrator(s) gained access to the exhibition space and graffitied phrases including “187” and “PERALTA” on the ground floor staircase and on the second floor. “187” probably refers to the California Penal Code, for murder, which is taken up in parts of the youth scene. “Peralta” could be an allusion to the name of Isabelle Peralta, who is considered the leader of a extreme right-wing Spanish youth organization in Spain.

Among others, the collective *The Question of Funding*, which has been together with other documenta fifteen contributors a focus of the antisemitism accusations against documenta fifteen in recent weeks, will exhibit at WH22. In the context of the current heated debate and after anti-Muslim stickers were found with the slogans “Freedom not Islam! No compromise with barbarism! Fight Islam consistently!” and stickers saying “Solidarity with Israel”, the current incidents are taken very seriously. At this point in time, it cannot be ruled out that these are politically motivated offences.

documenta has filed a criminal complaint and the security authorities have been involved. The current incidents are being given special consideration in the documenta fifteen security concept. documenta fifteen staff will be specifically trained in the relevant backgrounds and security staffing at documenta fifteen locations will also be increased.

ruangrupa and the Artistic Team of documenta fifteen: “We consider the vandalist acts as a politically motivated threat at *The Question of Funding*’s and *Party Office*’s venue and as an attack on all of us, lumbung members and artists. We are wishing for a working atmosphere where acts of violence towards the artists’ persons, venues, and artworks cannot be tolerated. As all of us in the lumbung community are looking forward to host each other and the larger public soon in Kassel, we are counting on the solidarity and friendships that we have built together, including within the city’s ekosistem over the past years, to make this intention attainable.”

Lord Mayor Christian Geselle reacts clearly: “Having discussions about documenta fifteen is one thing, but intimidating artists by committing crimes goes far beyond the pale and damages the image of the city of Kassel as a place of artistic freedom and host to artists from all over the world. Here, all those involved should become aware of their responsibility and stand up for a common coexistence. Together with documenta and the local authorities, we will do everything necessary to ensure the safety of the participants and guests.”

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The Director General of documenta and Museum Fridericianum gGmbH, Dr. Sabine Schormann, emphasizes: "Together with its shareholders, documenta is doing everything in its power to carry out documenta fifteen with its special practice, which is built on being together, learning from each other and new perspectives, in such a way that everyone involved feels welcome and safe. We support the artists at all levels, including the field of safety, and are convinced that we can count on the people of Kassel in particular. With its lumbung process, documenta fifteen will set many impulses for more participation and solidarity in our society.

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