

PRESS RELEASE: 15.06.2022

Consonni, Bilbao's independent publishing house and cultural centre, to take part in the international exhibition documenta 15

- In addition to publishing the catalogues for the exhibition they organised in Kassel, Germany, Consonni was involved in 'Lumbung Stories', a multilingual anthology of fiction published in seven languages, including Basque.**
- Thanks to the Etxepare Basque Institute's ZABAL programme, the curators of the international exhibition, the ruangrupa collective from Indonesia, had a chance to visit the Basque Country in February 2020.**

The independent publishing house and cultural space in Bilbao, consonni, will be taking part in the highly acclaimed international exhibition documenta 15, opening on 18 June in Kassel, Germany. This is the outcome of work carried out by the Etxepare Basque Institute within the framework of the ZABAL programme, whose aim is to develop international networks to promote and facilitate exchange and long-term collaboration between creators, professionals, stakeholders, and local and international institutions.

Documenta 15 is held every five years in Kassel, Germany. The curators of the international exhibition, the Indonesian collective ruangrupa, were invited to visit the Basque Country in February 2020. Ruangrupa visited the Bilbao Fine Arts Museum, where they were presented with the documenta 15 project. They also visited the publishing house and cultural space consonni.

The discussions about collaboration that began then have now come to fruition in the shape of various projects. One of these is the exhibition guides, which consonni has produced and created the artwork for, working together with the publishing house Hatje

Cantz. Consonni are also one of the editors of the book 'Lumbung Stories', which reflects the nature of their work as publishers as well as the central idea around which this edition of documenta revolves – collective work.

Consonni participates in documenta from the confluence of art and literature, its *raison d'être*. Its director, María Mur Dean, feels that the work carried out this past year was particularly special. "The book we have created is a dream for us. Working with writers from so many countries, creating a multilingual project that is both collective and international, is very special," she said.

The book sets out to rethink the forms of publication in the art world, influence content, and reflect on the forms of production and distribution. In this sense, Mur considers that the show "expresses and even creates the trends of each period" and that through this project they will apply the idea of collective work that runs through this edition of documenta.

The literature project brought together international writers and created a network of independent publishers working together. In addition, literary fiction is used as a tool to convey the concepts that shape the exhibition.

The outcome of this project is an anthology, a book published simultaneously by eight publishers in seven languages: Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, German, English, Indonesian, Bahasa, and Basque. The Basque edition was produced by Txalaparta, and the Spanish version by consonni. Among the stories in the collection is one by Uxue Alberdi.

The consonni team, made up of Maria Macia, Dina Camorino, Marta Alonso, Munts Brunet, and Maria Mur Dean, will take part in various professional activities and roundtable discussions organised by documenta in July. From July 6 to 10 they will join the assembly of Lumbung publishers; on July 9 they will hold a public colloquium with consonni and the Indonesian publisher Marjin Kiri; on July 10, Idoia Zabaleta will present a reading of the book in Basque and Spanish, giving the project a voice and presence.

From ZABAL to consonni

The purpose of the Etxepare Basque Institute's ZABAL programme is to develop international networks that promote and facilitate exchange and long-term collaboration between local and international creators, professionals, stakeholders, and institutions. To carry out the initiative, the Institute has the technical assistance of Artingenium, the art office dedicated to project management in the field of local and international contemporary art.

The curators of documenta 15, from the Indonesian collective ruangrupa, were able to visit the Basque Country in February 2020. Since ZABAL was launched in 2019, several contemporary art professionals have been invited to the region to directly contact local artists and explore ways to work collaboratively. In November 2019 ZABAL invited Ruth Estévez, curator of the São Paulo Biennial, to the Basque Country, and after a hiatus forced by the pandemic, the project was continued in 2021 with Marina Otero Verzier, one of the curators of the Shanghai Biennial.

The independent cultural centre and publishing house, consonni, was one of the stakeholders that the ruangrupa collective met during their visit. Consonni is a veteran of the Basque art scene, celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2021. They have been producing critical culture since 1996 and are currently committed to the written word as well as other formats, as seen in the radio work they have been active in promoting for years. From the extended field of art, literature, radio and education, they publish books, podcasts and produce multiple cultural activities in collaboration with numerous partners and cultural organisations and artists.

About documenta and ruangrupa

The international exhibition documenta takes place every five years in the German city of Kassel. It was founded by artist, lecturer and curator Arnold Bode in 1955 to leave behind the dark times of Nazi culture and the wounds of World War II, and to bring Germany to the forefront of international modern art. The most recent editions of documenta have hosted works by international artists, achieving worldwide popularity. Each edition runs for 100 days, which is why documenta is also known as "the 100-day museum".

The ruangrupa collective from Jakarta, Indonesia, made up of ten artists, was selected to curate documenta 15 in 2022. The group was founded in 2000 with an eye to placing art in an urban and cultural context and to develop projects that mix art with social sciences, politics and technology. The intention is to cast a critical eye on contemporary conflicts in Indonesia. In these twenty years, ruangrupa has participated in international events such as the biennials of Gwangju, Istanbul, Singapore and São Paulo, as well as the Pompidou Centre in Paris and the Sonsbeek art exhibition in Arnhem, Netherlands.

For the exhibition's 15th edition, they have focused on the idea of collective work, and have developed a concept they call *Lumbung*. Lumbung is the name of a system of collective rice collection and storage often used in Indonesian communities to make rice available in the future as a shared resource. In their words: "We want to create a globally oriented and cooperative multidisciplinary art and culture platform that will extend beyond the 100 days of documenta 15."

Just as documenta emerged in 1955 to help heal the lingering wounds of the Second World War, the 15th edition will focus on current wounds that have their roots mainly in colonialism, capitalism and patriarchal structures, and set them against models of collaboration that enable people to have a different world view.

During the process, ruangrupa has worked with curators, technologists and economists, and with projects and organisations from around the world. These participants have first incorporate their views into their own contexts and will now display them in Kassel

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