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**DOCUMENTA (13)**  
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My dear friend,

I have been away from home now for two years, and there are so many things to tell you. But information is not the obvious objective of any communication today. May I ask you where you are reading this, and whether you are comfortable?

I read a story on the Internet the other day, when I was looking for some inspiration so that I could perform my daily exercise of writing to you, and I came across a tale of origins, that I would like to share. But before I tell you that tale, there are a few more things I would like to bring up with you, perhaps as a form of deferral.

I remember you had written to me some time ago about a single orange tree that produced oranges all year round in the middle of a field on the edge of a contemporary city, and about how no one would cut it down, even though the oranges got smaller and smaller each year, so that the developers were unable to build there, and the property was magical and valueless. The story I read on the website, while looking for some inspiration to write my own, or perhaps while deferring from my obligation to invent a story from scratch, was about when the world began: there was a large grey cloud and it was raining and there was thunder and lightning. The cloud hit the tops of tall trees. The next day, after the storm, on the tops of those trees, eagles—or were they maybe falcons?—were perched. One bird spread its wings and flew to the ground, where it turned into a person. Others followed and so people were born. Over time, they forgot their lives as birds, but those who do remember them, know that wings have two sides—if they had only one side, they could not fly. On one side is the mind

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(the intellect), the body (movement) and the soul (emotion). When these three are balanced, a person is balanced as an individual. On the other side of the wing, there are three other elements: society (praxis: politics and the judiciary), process (the course of a person's life) and ceremony (the dance together), and when these three are balanced, then a person is in balance with others. When the two sides of their wings are also in balance, the eagles fly. But the curious thing is that they never worry about all that. They just fly.

I should tell you a little bit about the documenta, or rather about dOCUMENTA (13); what to expect when you arrive in Kassel in a year and a half, where to stay, where to eat, where the artworks will be located and who is making them. But before I do that, pardon my further deferral and lack of communication on the matter, which I am however considering with the utmost attention, to the degree that it is first necessary to digress once more.

Your intuition is right. dOCUMENTA (13) is for me more than, and not exactly, an exhibition—it is a state of mind. Its DNA is different from other international exhibitions of contemporary art mainly because it did not emerge from the nineteenth century trade fairs or World fairs of the Colonial period—bringing to the old European centers the marvels of the world. It emerged in the aftermath of World War II from *trauma*, and within the space where collapse and recovery are articulated. It emerged at the juncture of where art is felt to be of the utmost importance as an international common language and a world of shared ideals and hopes (which implies that art has indeed a major role to play in social processes of reconstruction of civic society, practices of healing and recovery), and during the so-called late modernist period when art was also still felt to be the most useless of all possible activities (within the legacy of the notion of the autonomy of art). At the juncture of both these spheres, where the social role of art and the autonomous field of art meet, lay “les enjeux de l’après-guerre” and the politics of the West in the mid-twentieth century, for better or for worse, of which documenta was also an expression.

Kassel had been a major political center (with its Landgraf and the Prince-Elector of Hesse) as well as an economic hub (its factories had produced locomotives, cars and weapons since the time of Bismarck in the 1800s, and consequently it was severely bombed in the 1940s). In short, it was a city whose traumatic past was for the most part wiped out when it was rebuilt in the 1950s and up to the 1970s. The financial crisis of the late 1920s led to the rise of the Nazi party at the elections

of 1933. Prior to this crisis, it was not a given that German Modernism would have collapsed into totalitarianism and war. documenta was therefore conceived at a time when the formal and aesthetic liberty of postwar abstractionism progressed hand-in-hand with the restoration of a liberal economy. Today, on the other hand, documenta provides a platform on which the extreme and often painful consequences of a completely liberal economy can be assessed through art and culture.

Yet, to make an exhibition into a meaningful experience for the audience is complicated. There is never one, homogeneous audience in a given place at a given time. There are many: the more cultured and aware of so-called “high art,” the people who by chance enter into the exhibition as *flâneurs*, those who think art is the only space left for activism, the local art world, the international or global or transnational art “tribe,” the many art worlds who will become aware of the exhibition only indirectly, the people who are suspicious of art, people from different communities and cultural backgrounds, people with widely different notions of quality. Therefore, an exhibition may be conceived as a network of many exhibitions, each shifting continuously between forefront and background, some visible, some invisible, some only visible many years after the event.

The rise of the art exhibition has its roots in the notion of “going public” and most of the first public museums arose in the late 1700s (British Museum, Fridericianum, Louvre), with earlier roots in the Musei Capitolini and the Uffizi galleries of the Renaissance period. This public and educational/nation-building notion of the public display was hybridized with the rise of the trade fairs and international fairs of the Colonial age, to produce the salons—public exhibitions of 2000 + paintings, held every spring in Paris. But it is in the twentieth century that the format of the exhibition became both the place to exhibit artworks made for the context of the exhibition, and the material itself of the artworks, as in early twentieth century futurist, dada and surrealist examples. In the second half of the twentieth century, in the late 1960s, about ten years after documenta started in 1955, the exhibition itself (its concept, its sites, its installation) became the object of the exhibition. For artists, art makers, critics and the emerging profession of the curator, more than for the general public, the exhibition itself is used to explore perceptions, ideas, understanding and knowledge. Merging theatre, history of display and phenomenology, theory of perception and psychology, and late-sixties thought, the contemporary art group exhibition was forged through the alliance of curators and artists who “displayed the display” and thought about the experience

of viewing art, and the social and radical potential therein, as the material of their labors.

Today the question is difficult and complex, and I really have very little to say, because I am so busy doing things, as you can imagine. I suggest we discuss it again later. The little I can say is that, on the one hand, a form of mannerism of the exhibition has evolved, so that, at times, specific contents have become neutralized, specific artworks have become almost expendable and interchangeable. On the other hand, the embodied nature of the gathering in an exhibition, the celebration of a “real” coming together, has become a performative ritual that resists the atomized, molecular organization of human transactions in the digital age, to the degree that this obsolete twentieth century object, the exhibition, takes on a new life as it mutates into a non-commercial place to intensely aggregate.

And there are innumerable digressions possible, time wasted, time stolen from the productive time of the new offices—new places where there is a form of forced leisure—where workers must play ping pong or with audio-video editing software in the afternoon, because our world is supposedly a *creative* one across the board. There is no more time left for old, hard assembly-line labor, or for picking up stones, or collecting seeds. We are much too busy today creating new ideas in the realm of immaterial labor to bother with such things.

Your intuition is right, my friend: I was being ironic. I am in favor of opening the boundaries of disciplines and fields of knowledge, especially now, when collecting and storing data, archiving and comparing data digitally, or even imaging, is changing science, art and consciousness. I believe that procedural questions are as meaningful, if not more, than the so-called “thematic content” or “subject matter” of an art project—how one exercises agency and relates to others, how one proceeds as an artist, or how one acts as a member of the audience, for example. Although the process through which one reaches a result might be “creative,” it is important to not turn that process itself into a new kind of product, and as a consequence, I am not fully in favor of the emerging, uncritical, dominant ideology of creativity.

Thus, a problem we both need to consider carefully today is how to proceed as artists, makers of culture and intellectuals in the emerging economy and hegemony based on the exchange of knowledge products.

But this would open up a long digression, into the writings and thoughts of many, and you might want to take a break from reading this, before we go on.

I will wait for you.

(If, on the other hand, you would like to talk about these questions, we might think together about today's world, where individuals have gotten used to sudden change, the unusual and to the unexpected; a reality which is repeatedly innovated and where the distinction between a stable "inside" and an uncertain and telluric "outside" blurs, a world of "not feeling at home," of homelessness. Some thinkers propose exodus and withdrawal as modes of resistance to this state of affairs. dOCUMENTA (13) proposes paradoxes, ways of speaking without speech, acting without performing action, and an archeological perspective, according to which every cultural project that moves forward can be grounded in a backward gaze, in an ecological relationship to the past, as well as constantly escaping itself in a play and display of lack.)

Thank you for returning.

I have travelled extensively over the past two years, visiting artists, writers, scientists, anthropologists, archaeologists, conservationists, philosophers, activists. I have visited many places, small and large, remote and urban, sometimes with friends, sometimes alone. Much is based on trust, and taking walks, some on conversations. I went to Brazil with Chus and we had Japanese food with artists. We also visited the granddaughter of a great painter of the 1920s—her name slips my mind right now, and we spoke about multinaturalism with Eduardo in Rio. We reminisced about our previous journey to Helsinki and our intense discussions about the birth of the computer age from the 1950s through the 1980s, with Mika, Erkki, Perttu, Lars, Joasia and Alex. Just a few months prior, Andrea and I had gone to do research in Kabul, Herat and Bamiyan with Mario, Mick and Francis, Mariam, Kadim and Tom, and I remember the many illuminating conversations there with Jolyon and Ajmal and Aman and Ashraf and Rahraw, and the generosity of Afghanistan's cultural community. We spoke about how history repeats itself, and also never does, about globalization, internationalism, and the role art and culture might play in re-building civic societies in conflict or post-conflict situations, in how identity can grow as a paradox, and within contradictions. That reminds me of my journey to the central desert of Australia

with Hetti, Cesare and Rosa, where we met with Warwick in Alice Springs, listened to his stories, watched his films, and discussed the many open questions that this journey continues to raise, around tangible and intangible heritage and how to negotiate the contemporary practice of remote community indigenous people like Doreen, with what has been up to now considered as “art” in a place like Kassel.

Of course, there were also moments of thinking with Pierre, and also other journeys, to Mexico with Sofía, and Asia with Sunjung, and moments of working through dusty documents in Lukács’s home in Budapest with Livia, and talking about Mauritania ship cemeteries with Koyo and Javier. In Chicago with Jane and Mike and Madeleine, I met Theaster, and lost my last notebook, you know? I am still distressed by this unfortunate event, because it contained notes from my Skype conversation with William and Peter about time and clocks and the ways in which the metaphysical can be found in the physical. And then there were those wonderful talks about sex in Scandinavia with Marta, and about her dog—how it got stranded in Como due to border controls in Norway, which reminds me of our little dog, and about Donna’s wonderful lessons on the possibilities of thinking through multi-species co-evolution and de-anthropocentrizing cultural practice (do you remember how she wrote: “I love the fact that the Human genome can only be found in about 10% of all the cells that occupy the mundane space I call my body”), which is something I discussed with Kitty in Banff, where the bears are, and where I felt on a retreat.

Indeed, I believe in oblique and indirect agency, rather than in direct intentionality—and how we treat other species of animals and other forms of life on the planet tells us a lot about how we treat humans—ourselves (and I can never forget how the 1911 massacre of the dogs in Istanbul—a process of modernization—preceded the Armenian massacre by just a couple of years). I am interested in surrealist strategies in artistic practice and in questioning the boundaries of the fields of human activity that we accept passively; I am interested in the labor of artists because they are both very specific to a field (art) and also very *a-specific*, or non-specific, to any field; I am interested in love, because so few people are willing in the digital age to pay the cost of being in a state of love, as Etel put it so wisely when we met in Beirut with Walid.

But I am digressing again—and I would suggest interrupting your reading here, should you wish to stretch your legs, or read something more to your taste for a

while. We both know we will soon be together again, for better or worse.

I would like to tell you a little bit more about dOCUMENTA (13), and how its provisional title came about, a sentence I wrote some time ago—please excuse that it is only in German, and a bad German at that, but with the way English has been transformed over the last ten or twenty years through the Internet, multiplying and morphing into a myriad different variations, I am sure you can tolerate my broken German.

This is the sentence:

*Der Tanz war sehr frenetisch, rege, rasselnd, klingend, rollend, verdreht und dauerte eine lange Zeit.*

In my journeys in and around Kassel, I came across a small monastery of the twelfth century that had been transformed into a prison in the nineteenth century and has continued to be a space of reclusion, or at least exclusion, since then. In the mid-1950s, and until 1973, it became a girls' reformatory, and a dance hall was built there for the detained women. That reminds me of my trip with Raimundas and Ruth to visit Dixie Evans, who used to perform as Marilyn in the 1950s, a true queen of Burlesque, and who told us the stories that made me understand, once again, how paradigms shift and things can swing from one extreme to the next, and—oddly enough—how the revival of Burlesque might well be a form of feminist practice today as it *re-performs* the transitional dance of veiling and unveiling, revealing and withdrawing, in an age of too simple on/off, covered/uncovered dichotomies. The dance hall in the girls' reformatory near Kassel performed a different function from the halls of the Burlesque in the 1950s, a form of entertainment that almost disappeared with the rise of television, when people stopped going out in the evening.

So I began to research a *Bamboule*—a slave dance performed in New Orleans interestingly after the successful slave revolt of 1791 in Haiti, a dance, it is said, that was banned out of fear that it might foster further rebellions in the Americas. This was well before the Civil War broke out.

So the German sentence inspired by descriptions of the *Bamboule* on the web, was my attempt to create a phrase that was both narrative and imaginative (through which one can imagine a sequence of choreographed gestures and movements), a phrase that would indicate a number of procedures, as opposed to any theory or a

concept. It was intended as a phrase that indeed might escape memorizing and the reduction to those *common places* that characterize language today. Dance grounds the subject into the here-and-now and reminds me of the embodied nature of being which can be achieved through training; at the same time, dance encourages a movement of the imagination beyond the here-and-now, suggesting “another” place—somewhere else.

That is why I do not follow a single, overall concept but engage in conducting, and choreographing, manifold materials, methods, and knowledge. dOCUMENTA (13) is a series of artistic acts and gestures that are already taking place, as well as an exhibition that will open on June 9, 2012, and that will run for 100 days.

Questions of personal and collective emancipation through art emerge in the process of making dOCUMENTA (13) by thinking through a number of “composite ontologies” (as Chus calls them) that generate paradoxical conditions of contemporary life and artistic production. These include: participation and withdrawal as simultaneous modes of existence today; embodiment and disembodiment, and their mutual dependency; rootedness and homelessness, as a dual condition of subjecthood; proximity and distance, and their relativity; collapse and recovery, occurring simultaneously as well as in succession; the flood of uncontrolled information and the contemporaneous obsession with control and organization; translation and untranslatability, and their negotiation; inclusion and exclusion, and their connectedness; access and inaccessibility, and their co-existence; the obsolescence of a Eurocentric notion of art and the paradoxical emergence of practices related to that same notion in the world at large today; human life and other forms of life facing multi-species entangled histories; advanced science/technology and its alliance with ancient traditions; tangible and intangible heritage and their interconnectedness with contemporary culture; the specificity of being an artist and the non-specificity of artistic practice.

Generally speaking, there are many things that are necessary in the world today. A clear sense of what is necessary, and the transmission of this sense to the artists participating in an exhibition, however, is not necessarily useful for the objective of creating a project where those necessities of contemporary culture are focused on and worked through collectively, by artists, curator and “audience.”

To hold a critical sense of the “present tense,” we need to understand it by relating it to ideas of the recent past. How does time pass, and what is time in terms of how

we experience it? The question is not how we historicize the past, but rather how the “present tense” was understood in the recent past, and how this notion was primarily constructed in the twentieth century. Looking at the various documenta exhibitions retrospectively suggests that there has been a shift from a diachronic movement of art to a synchronic movement of curatorial practice, from the experimental avant-garde’s historical self-positioning in a forward movement (from one generation to the next, from one art movement or concept of art to the next) to a practice which de-temporalizes art into a geographic and spatial expansion of the field (bringing artists from different parts of the world together, acting in-between geographies) which has gone hand in hand with an increase of projects related to struggles and causes around the world.

*Time* is both the problem and the resource of documenta. Occurring every five years, documenta is characterised particularly in terms of time and duration, which contrasts with the speed and short attention span of today. It follows a slower pace than most biennales and art events around the world. documenta-time does not go in the direction of efficiency (the time of production) and of the “pseudo-activities” of productive society. documenta may locate itself where the gaps in speech, and the silences of psychoanalysis, and the words not said under hypnosis, find meaning. In that silence, emotions emerge that are able to break through the clutter of the “pseudo-activities”. It contrasts the embedded element of *timeliness*, to the constructed structures of *topicality*.

Following this logic, it might be time to intersect two points of view. This is possible by expanding in time backwards and sideways, in nonlinear, disobedient ways, while incorporating the shift of the field from time to space. Our times, similar in some ways to the Renaissance in their openness to new encounters, are also deeply aware of loss and of the past, as was the Renaissance. This ambivalence provides the key to conceiving both re-enactment and re-actualization.

But it is late, and I have not told you about walking in the Auepark with Raimundas, Jessica, Gerard, Roman and Gabriel, talking about Giuseppe’s bronze tree with river stone, and of the Bactrian polychrome stone princesses, and what it might mean that humans have been able to keep the fragments of those tiny sculptures together over thousands of years, from one generation to the next. Or how, in Bombay with Tejal and Nalini, the same conversation has come up, except for the fact that we also talked about the bees disappearing, and what food and the

world would be like when and if that were ever to really happen.

We live in and between geographies as well as in and between histories, since geography and history are not and were never distinct but are mutually engendered and are constantly reshaping together. This allows for the exercise of historically reconstructing chains of events in the form of story-telling, thus understanding time as a form of consciousness. Something from another time always persists, and it is possible to pit a linear and established vision of art history against a nonlinear, disobedient, argumentative and perhaps contradictory story of the consequences of artistic acts. Because there can be no history according to one point of view, this new story time can only be the stories of gestures, actions, relations and conversations between singular individuals in a series of interconnected, or disconnected places around the world.

This reminds me that I must tell you about the notebooks that we will publish. Yes, a hundred little pieces of bound paper in various sizes that Bettina is carefully overseeing and bringing together. As a prelude to the 2012 exhibition, they will start to appear next year, in 2011. Note-taking encompasses witnessing, drawing, writing, and diagrammatic thinking; it is speculative, manifests a preliminary moment, a passage, and acts as a memory aid or trace. With contributions by authors from a range of disciplines, such as art, science, philosophy and psychology, anthropology, economic- and political theory, language- and literature studies, as well as poetry, *100 Notes – 100 Thoughts* constitutes a space of dOCUMENTA (13) to explore how thinking emerges and lies at the heart of re-imagining the world. In its cumulative nature, this publication project is a continuous articulation of the emphasis on the propositional. Thoughts, unlike statements, are always variations: a note is a trace, a word, a drawing that all of a sudden becomes part of thinking, and is transformed into an idea. Chus says that this project follows the path of presenting the mind in a prologue state, in a pre-public arena, within the space of intimacy and not yet of criticism. It is a bit like publishing the unpublishable, she says, where the voice, and the reader, are our alibi and ally. I have been thinking now, while writing those last lines, whether I should mention some of the authors—like Susan and Emily, Anton, Christoph, Jalal, Mick, Vandana, Ian, or Paul with Rene and Ayreen.

But what is it that we are talking about anyway? What could the word “art” be a stand-in for? As a conventional term, it has been used to indicate an empirical and

practical form of knowledge formation through the making and experience of aesthetic objects that are at once metaphors, models and actual embodiments of how perception is elaborated into a form of knowledge and understanding in a specific place, time and society. It also proceeds by identifying the language of its investigation and the object of its investigation—glass with glass, language with language, color with color, gesture through gestures, representation with figuration, politics with praxis (or rather praxis with politics), social relations with situations of social interaction, etc. This notion of art I am describing, is however relatively recent in Europe. As an autonomous field of culture, it has existed only since the birth of the bourgeoisie at the dawn of the carbon fossil fuel age in the 1700s in Europe, and the ancient Greeks had only the work *techne*, which is closer to “craft” than to how I describe art.

Although defined as autonomous and nonproductive, art was “read” and vehicled since the late 1800s with the birth of modern art criticism, as somehow interpretable, translatable, analyzable and meaningful. The early-twentieth century avant-gardes positioned art as an experimental field where ideas were to be tested, albeit freely from any use, as well as a field that needed to loosen and give up its autonomy in favor of its fusion with real life (bringing art close to life, in an obsession for the “real”) through its socially engaged nature, or through a new form of functionalism (Bauhaus) and through its directly political potential.

On the other hand, science is traditionally the production of knowledge through scientific methods. Divided into natural sciences and human sciences, it employs a systematic practice, where experiments can be verified and repeated, and they are based on observation, hypothesis, prediction, experiment and conclusion. In art practice, the order is often different, and it is accepted that there can be no conclusion to any experiment. At times, I remember that for the alchemist, a so-called pre-scientific researcher, the transformations of the self and of the world go hand in hand, so that ideas cannot be separated from the sensual, as Mariana always says.

Truthfully, I am not sure that the field of art will continue to exist in the twenty-first century. There may be some redefinitions of the fields, both in the sciences and in the human sciences, and also in between these, that may result in different ways of organizing culture and exhibitions. This is a doubt and a question, and I would like to learn from you and share your thoughts. But did I tell you about talking with Ayreen and Rene late at night from Budapest on Skype? About

authorship and anonymity, and about their friends of AND AND AND? They told me it was an artist run initiative, which would use the time between now and 2012 to consider with individuals and groups across the world the role art and culture can play today and the constituent publics or communities which could be addressed. Rene and Ayreen say that the series of interventions, situations, and occurrences entitled AND AND AND have now become part of dOCUMENTA (13) and are composing a map of emergent positions, concerns, and possible points of solidarity.

This evening—but it is late already, and we must soon adjourn—I would have liked to look at some photographs with you. Together, they form possibilities of attention, and complications. Instead, because there were so many to say, we have only spent time with words, but we can imagine the images.

I realize this letter may seem endless, and it might take you time to read through it all. Please feel free to stop, whenever you have had enough. We are facing a period of extreme instability. We are told that we live in a state of permanent crisis, a state of emergency and thus of exception. Since the early 1990s, the Internet has widened our access to information and fostered the exchange of opinions and the digital elaboration of forms of collective and shared knowledge, building interconnected networks and archives, but its *bits*, blogs and summaries have also introduced an experience of knowledge that is increasingly indirect and a partial collapse of intellectual endeavor, as well as a crisis in ethics and behavior, generosity and integrity.

Two questions, only apparently unrelated to this, have occupied much of the debate around contemporary art in recent years. On the one hand, there is the question of collaborative artistic practice and collective action, while on the other lies the question of the archive and the practice of archiving.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, technological devices have constituted “molecular” networks where people are both more and more connected, yet more and more separated. Access to information is quicker, so more information needs to become available—hence the obsession with scanning as much as possible of our past and present lives. In the digital age, the past haunts us like never before, a potentially inexhaustible repository of traces of history, from which memory (and hence subjectivity) might possibly emerge. A different definition of the archive has therefore developed, according to which an archive is a tagged storage space,

a mediated collection of digitalized materials to be experienced second-hand and from anywhere. These digital archives, like Wikipedia or YouTube, are keyed towards increasing access, developing modes of self-regulation and knowledge-sharing. These become, progressively, the expression of a collective subjectivity which is un-authored and shaped by data flows (and, to a certain extent, this letter is like that too). To build these archives of everything, more and more people must be put to work collaboratively, in an economy that functions on the basis of the products of this immaterial labor.

To understand our time, there are conversations to be had with the past, through an archaeological approach, excavating backwards. In what appears to be a work about the past, a reading through and a building up of archives concerning specific twentieth-century events, one can build a project about our own time, and about our future that is enigmatic. Just as when Picasso created his famous painting only a few months after the bombing of Guernica, and while the world fair in Paris in the summer of 1937, where it was first shown, seemed blissfully unaware of the incumbent disaster of World War II in a parade of contrasting nationalist self-representations and political ideologies in the different countries' pavilions, our post-9/11 times seem also unable to fully register, understand and act. With all the imaginable facts before us, we seem nonetheless to know nothing. Unique events, echoed through time by similar events, can however be connected by a storyteller—they become related. As in a dream, they occur synchronically and thus enter into a form of kairological time, where meaning condenses and the instant expands and thickens into consciousness. Authoritarian language is one-directional, it imposes itself. We try to create more equal forms of exchange and conversation, but even those are fraught today, in our times of social networks. Storytelling is also one-directional, but it openly declares itself to be an interpretation, a negotiation of history, a possibility amongst many. It denies its own factual authority by the very nature of its stated fiction. The exercise in learning how to tell stories—where human actions are repeated yet always different, layered in repetition, is an exercise in the appearance of past events and their simultaneous disappearance in the projections onto the present. Time becomes mythic time, not linear time, and the ability to tell a story is related to constantly adapting it to the subsequent contexts within which it appears.

Therefore, an exhibition is not so much a multi-layered, revisited archive, as it is an expression of the possibility and desire to build this archive; it is not so much a space for creating collaborative and collective projects through meetings as it is a

space to discuss how and why—and even if—collaboration is possible today. In counterpoint to the apparent heterogeneity of the space of congregation that we will set up together, the platform of enunciations that might take place in dOCUMENTA (13) constitutes a locus of experimentation of a collective and anonymous murmur—a celebration and a place of enactment of subjectivity that is both singular and plural, that resists disembodiment and uses fragmentation of the self against that same fragmentation, through the potentiality of provisional aggregations.

In a further slippage and celebration of the transformative powers of art, within dOCUMENTA (13) is a belief in the potential of re-enactment, in the hope that by allowing more layers of meaning to be added, a form of closure can be avoided. Aware of the provisional, anonymous and often corporate nature of online archives based on word searches, as occurs with Internet search engines, we intervene on those platforms as well, potentially affecting them. We contrast the digital with the embodied, while at the same time interfering in the virtual world of immaterial knowledge organization. At our still embryonic historical stage of the web, indeed, it is possible to re-direct and alter the imaginary constellations to which we are subjected: the field of information around these spaces has morphed into a much more complex space of awareness of the contradictions of truth, histories, humanity, and life in general.

My friend, we must soon part. You see, you ask me for a program, and I have barely been able to provide you with an affect or intent:

In 2007, while thinking of the surge in attention towards the contemporary and towards the visual arts, I wrote you a letter, which you may remember and I excerpt here:

The question today is how *not* to be contemporary, how *not* to make a festival, how *not* to communicate, how *not* to produce any knowledge, and yet somehow manage to articulate intelligence and love. For a curator today, to do a project means to learn from artists and others how to navigate these misunderstandings, how to create an exhibition with them as a *decoy*, how to open up spaces of revolt with them, how to deny, withdraw or defer, while celebrating with them.

I think I still agree with myself. I have been writing now for several days, and

have been to Central Asia and back since starting it, and I still have so many things to say, so many stories to tell, so many thoughts to note down, and I have only you to write all this to: I know you are my alibi, my reason for being, myself. And that “myself” is only a pale reflection of you, ungraspable, unfathomable, singular and choral, so beautiful—a beautiful thing, a poet wrote once, about a person he had seen with a black eye. A well of humanity irrupting into the text, and just as swiftly smothered.

I look forward to our future exchanges, and promise I will write again soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cawley" followed by a long horizontal line.

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