

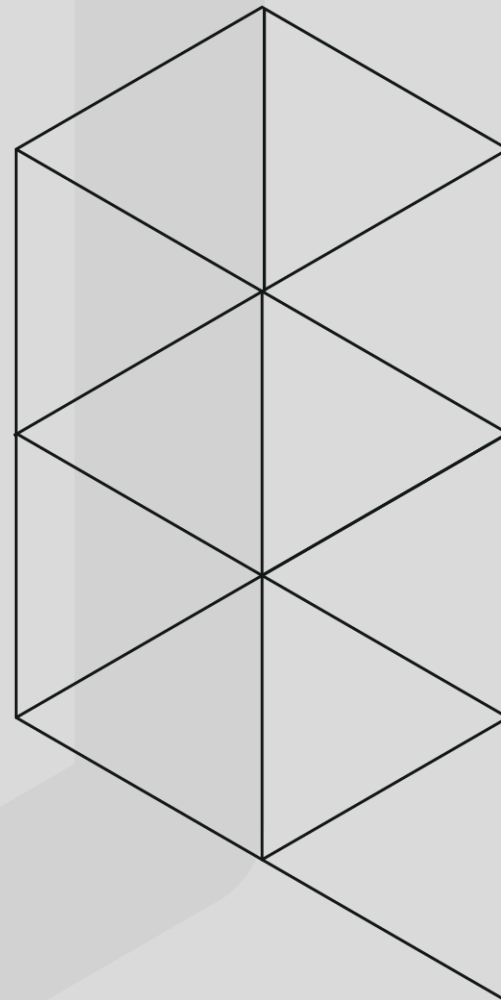
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Spatial Practices in
Art & Architecture for
Empathetic Exchange

Symposium Document Practitheorizing Counterinstitutions: Imagineart Symposium, Documenta fifteen, Kassel 9, 10 September 2022

SPACE X Deliverable, Work Package 5 (D5.6, D18)

Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, University of
Amsterdam
SPACE X Work Package 4: Archives
Secondments: Sirius, Mayday Rooms, Project
Art Centre, Prague City Gallery



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Symposium Description

Text courtesy of IMAGINART (<https://imaginart.site/previous-events/practitheorizing-counterinstitutions/>)

The workshop Practitheorizing Counterinstitutions is organized by IMAGINART at documenta fifteen in Kassel, Germany. In this collective thought exercise, we take lumbung in the form it is practiced within documenta fifteen as a starting point for reflecting on how imaginative institutionalism is being experimented with in different parts of the world. Lumbung is Bahasa Indonesia for rice barn, but it can refer, more generally, to places in domestic and community environments where agricultural produce is collectively stored. The artists' collective ruangrupa transformed it into a transnational tool for gathering different cultural institutions and artists/activists' collectives. The aim is to create an ecosystem that lasts beyond the 100 days of documenta. Lumbung blurs the boundary between art and social organizing. As such, it comes close to many grassroots projects all over the world that are using artistic means to obtain sustainable socio-institutional effects. Disrupting national frames, documenta fifteen's lumbung brings them together mobilizing a national cultural institution as a device for international, or rather transnational, institution-building of a new kind. Imaginative institutionalisms elsewhere then must be brought into the frame for the broader significance of the lumbung practice at documenta to be fully understood.

The lumbung method is based on agricultural community practice and explores collective structures and structuring in the world. Here, practice entails theorizing, and theory is a practice itself. Both modalities are embedded and produced through ongoing reflection and discussion within the communities of reference. In other words, the relationship between theory and practice is not rigid or hierarchical but rather recursive and constantly renegotiated. In the

spirit of this way of practitheorizing, we have devised a tripartite, dialogic structure within which participants engage with the possibilities of non-extractive instituting practices. Divided over nine panels of three people we ask: What are other examples of radical institutionalism mobilizing art practice? How can forms of dispersed yet networked instituting be theorized? What futures might open up if institutions are infused with a generative fluidity?



In the workshop, invitees alternately adopt the roles of Storytellers, Theoreticians, and Harvesters. They rotate through these distinct positions over a series of panels. These rotations and movements reflect our methodology within IMAGINART, where we are very conscious of the mutable, relational quality of positionalities and the importance of recognizing this fact. More importantly, by inviting

participants to shift between modes of engagement, we acknowledge that practice is produced and reflected upon at the same time, and that theory emerges from and exists in collective practice. This is the basis for our hopeful, practical theorization of yet-to-be institutional frameworks.

By combining practice with theory and reframing the latter as compost to fertilize crops from which to harvest institutional imaginaries, we seek to create the conditions for re-thinking the im/possible institutions we want to inhabit.



Participants of the workshop: Ann Stoler, Melani Budianta, Ilenia Caleo, Quinsy Gario, Paul Goodwin, Annie Jael Kwan, Lara Khaldi, Jeroen de Kloet, Wayne Modest, Christa-Maria Lerm Hayes, farid rakun (ruangrupa), Deborah Thomas, Ming Tiampo, Wet Hole Group (Nikita Kadan, Bogdana Kosmina, Alina Kleytman), and Mi You. This workshop is organized by IMAGINART at documenta fifteen in collaboration with lumbung interlokal members The Question of Funding and OFF-Biennale Budapest.

Practitheorizing Counterinstitutions Imagineart Symposium

Organizers of the IMAGINART workshop: Chiara De Cesari, Andrea Elera, Erick Fowler, Nuraini Juliastuti, Yazan Khalili, Abdulkerim Pusat, Aria Spinelli, Eszter Szakács, and Carine Zaayman.

Practitheorizing Counterinstitutions is the companion to the event “What kind of we could we be? Collective thinking by collectives” on September 11, 2022 organized at documenta fifteen by Asia Forum X Worlding Public Cultures.

IMAGINART: Imagining Institutions Otherwise: Art, Politics, and State Transformation is a research project at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis at the University of Amsterdam and is funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO).

Citation

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