

# **dOCUMENTA (13)**

## **Press release**

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# **dOCUMENTA (13)**

## **Facts and Rumors**

1. Initiated by arts educator and designer Arnold Bode, the first edition of documenta opened in Kassel on July 16, 1955 and ran through September 18 of that year.
2. documenta means “lessons” in Latin (nominative plural of documentum). Latin is considered a “dead language” today. However, at the Vatican City it is used as the official language for all communications. [“documenta.Nominative plural of Latin documentum: lesson, example, warning; medieval Latin: instruction, official paper. (...) Documentum comes from 1) Lat. docere: to teach, instruct, inform, also to show and to tell; 2) Lat. mens: the intellectual faculties, the mind, understand, and also used figuratively as the soul or spirit of something. ‘The chief aim of the venture (documenta) was to instruct people’s minds (docere mentis),’ in the words of Ernst Schuh, Arnold Bode’s assistant at the first documenta.”]
3. Every 1,726 days, documenta takes place for 100 days.
4. 100 is a symbolic number for documenta: Arnold Bode called it “The Museum of 100 Days”; Joseph Beuys produced his “100 Day Office for Direct Democracy” for documenta 5 (1972) and Harald Szeemann called it “a 100-day event”; Catherine David organized “100 Days 100 Guests” for documenta X (1997), and dOCUMENTA (13) will publish “100 Notes – 100 Thoughts.”
5. The number of documenta visitors has constantly increased: from 130,000 in 1955 to 754,301 in 2007. We do not know if they know it, or if it really matters.
6. Victor Vasarely, who participated in documenta 3 (1964) and died in 1997, claimed he was born in 1705.
7. Bazon Brock did a school as an art project for documenta 4 in 1968 and Joseph Beuys opened an Office for Direct Democracy at documenta 5 in 1972.
8. documenta 6 (1977) was the first documenta to be televised.

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9. Walter De Maria created The Vertical Earth Kilometer for documenta 6 in 1977.
10. documenta 8 (1987) was in black and white.
11. dOCUMENTA (13) will go to Kabul where Alighiero Boetti managed a hotel in the 1970s, and dOCUMENTA(13) is interested in etymology, collapse, and recovery. In Sanscrit “Ka” means “the person.”
12. dOCUMENTA (13) is being planned by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev with a number of curatorial agents, advisors, and artists. Instead of taking place solely as an exhibition in Kassel in the summer of 2012, it will extend into the past and into the future.
13. Could dOCUMENTA (13) work as a spaceship or as a cave?